Psychotic Society: An Introduction with a Glossary

Fred Perez

Abstract: **One of the best-supported assumptions in the philosophy of information literature is that ICTs need an ethics. The counterbalance theory claims that digital/internet technologies have been growing much more rapidly than our morals, so we have to resist absolutist inclinations to privilege naturalism over constructionism and seek some sort of balancing between unavoidable moral evil and more moral goodness. This paper will discuss the counterbalance theory and explain why ICTs don't need an ethics: the gap between naturalism and constructivism has been bridged by the psychotic.**

Keywords: **Binary oppositions, binarisation, dualism, ethics, infosphere, international crimes, philosophy of information, philosophy of mind, political philosophy, psychosis, state crime, terrorism, transnational crime.**

Fact or fiction? As a non-pro of the philosophical game, I don't respect the distinction. The two things are irrevocably mingled. In the *Disclaimer*, it would have been less dishonest to say that my paper follows a tradition that goes back to the earliest days of animation movies where live actors interact with cartoons. Remember the animated sequence in the 1945 film *Anchors Aweigh* in which Gene Kelly dances with an animated Jerry Mouse? Well, Usuk is Jerry Mouse and US/UK is Gene Kelly. Of course, real people and live political actors are mentioned here by name. Still, if you feel offended or cheated by what you are about to read, go ahead and sue me. I have nothing to lose.

The thing is, truth is not absolute. For thousands of years it was absolutely true that the earth was a stationary flat slate at the centre of the universe around which the sun, stars, and moon revolved. In 1632, when Galileo argued that the earth was a ball spinning on its axis and orbiting the sun, he was summoned to Rome by the Inquisition and put on trial for heresy. Galileo's heliocentric model conflicted with the inquisitors' understanding of physics and theology; it also displaced the earth, humanity and the Roman Catholic Church from the centre of the universe. The next big upset came in 1859, when Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*. Complex life forms could arise without a divine mind to guide them from the combined effect of mutations, environmental changes, and natural selection. After Darwin, humanity can be neither special nor biologically separate from the rest of the animal kingdom. Another huge upset came early in the 20th century in the shape of the theory of psychoanalysis by Freud. He argued that unconscious motives control much of our behaviour. Subject to defence repression mechanisms, driven by sexual urges and not entirely rational, the human mind is not entirely transparent, as Descartes thought. Perhaps you would like to add a few other intellectual controversies, considering my tripartite list a gross simplification. Yet this is not my list – I am not original; it is Freud's synthetic reconstruction of the history of science. [1] So I am going to rely on Freud's authority to introduce the next big upset: 'We are all psychotics.'

Knowing the difference between 'good' and bad' can only be understood on the model of the delusions of psychotics; good/bad, man/woman, day/night, sun/moon, West/East, and so forth, are life-and-death patterns produced by thousands of years of evolution. [2] If they are extraordinarily powerful it is because they have been 'repressed' and are constantly

---

[1] Sigmund Freud, 'A difficulty in the path of psycho-analysis' in *The Standard Edition*, vol. XVII (1917-1919), pp. 135-144.

[2] All thinking (whatever it may be) is forced into definite channels by evolutionary constraints. The differences and variations that have figured so profusely in classic evolutionary accounts are not as important to the development of the

returning from 'before' (oblivion) to assert themselves with a peculiar force in the collective conscience of individuals (a collective mind set which can be accessed by each individual unit of the social mass). They exercise an incomparably powerful influence on people in the mass, raising an irresistible claim to truth against which logical objections remain powerless.[3]

It wasn't a philosopher but the father of psychoanalysis who facilitated my passage from 20th-century neurosis to 21st-century psychosis. In his last work, *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud seemed excited about the potential of psychosis to explain monotheism. But he left psychosis as a hint or sketch. He didn't dare to develop it further; perhaps, because he was dying. Or did he foresee the political implications it would have? Studying the psychotic is as dangerous as playing with fire or keeping lions as pets; eventually you get bitten or burnt. For how can it be possible for schoolteachers all over the world to narrow the cause of a war to a single person or act? How is it still feasible for today's world leaders to reduce the Cold War to a conflict between Russia and America, or between the East and the West? And how can the complex issue of slavery from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries be reduced in children's history books to the three stages of the voyage that were made by slave trading ships: from Europe to Africa, from Africa to America and from America back to Europe, which formed a triangular trade pattern? These are just three examples with which I am trying to expose three fundamental lies related to One-Two-Three psychotic patterns in the mind/brain. Blaming One single person or event for a war is a lie. Dividing the totality of the world into Two equal and opposite parts is a lie. Reducing the slave trade to the Three sides of a triangle is a lie. And yet, even if they are individually false, these lies, as a group, are very powerful: they are psychotically true!

Let us think psychotically, then. Without the lie of One, we wouldn't have One God, One president, One country, One flag (Christ-Allah-Yahweh / Cameron / United Kingdom / the Union Jack). Thanks to the lie of One, the police can link a name to a person, a crime to a suspect, and the courts can convict a criminal for a crime. Without the lie of Three (which is closer to the lie of One than to the lie of Two), we wouldn't have walls, boundaries, fences, and equations. Thanks to the third-middle '&', we have right & left, good & evil, man & woman, black & white, human & animal, east & west. Without the lie of Two, we wouldn't have wars, revolutions, genocide, terrorism, collective punishment, aerial bombardment, organised famine, concentration camps, death factories, mass executions, slave labour, systematic rape, ethnic cleansing, racial segregation, and Jewish pogroms. Most of these actions rely on hate, and for hate to exist love is needed as its reverse in One's love/hate vibration.

Both love and hate feed of abstraction. Mere hatred as a feeling, instead of the particular set of ideas behind it, is dangerous because it blinds those who indulge in it against the real threat: Love as One binarised from the love/hate distinction. In Plato's *Symposium*, Diotima's shattering discovery is that we can transfer the affection which carries our love from a given object on to another; an 'affection' (or short thought) being a decision to move from A to B from a third point in space occupied by a collective conscience or social switch that I have called 'I/eye'. [4] The triangular oscillation between love and hate is observable throughout history, (particularly after the Treaty of Westphalia) as European nations tend towards One banner, One nation, One leader, One king, One God, One abstract idea, One absolute value; and fight against the Other banner, the Other nation, the Other leader, the Other king, the Other God, the Other abstract idea, the Other absolute value: a clash of converging worlds, two opposite sides (One & the Other) stuck in a binary where there is only room for One; with Two as the shadow of the voluptuous multiplicity of the wider world from which it shrinks.

---

human mind as those silly constants, patterns and repetitions which, over thousands of years, have been ploughing our mind field into straight parallel furrows: actions like seek and hide, fight and flight, rest and digest, sleep and wake, and many other vital automatisms and decisions to switch or chose between A and B; the succession of night and day, the recurrence of the seasons, the cycle of birth and death, the tendency of men and women to come together and issue shorter and crazier versions of themselves. Evolution is the coming together of minds rather than their separation or struggle. In England, Herbert Spencer and Thomas H. Huxley popularised the idea that the bitter struggle for the means of existence among animals belonging to the same species is the main factor of evolution. I do follow Peter Kropotkin in thinking that the law of mutual aid is far more important than the law of mutual contest in the evolution of species. See Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2006).

[3] 'Each portion which returns from oblivion asserts itself with peculiar force, exercises an incomparably powerful influence on people in the mass, and raises an irresistible claim to truth against which logical objections remain powerless [...] This remarkable feature can only be understood on the pattern of the delusions of the psychotics.' Sigmund Freud, 'Moses and Monotheism: Three Essays', in *The Standard Edition*, vol. XXIII (1939), p. 85.

[4] For 'I/eye' and other concepts see 'Glossary' at the end of this article.

In our information age, however, the art of government in Usuk has changed dramatically. It now consists in placing Us, your subjects, in tightly restricted (enveloped) environments, and in placing Them (your potential enemies) in unpredictable ones. Thus you provoke wars and encourage rebellions/revolutions abroad, while you keep your own people under tight control through ICTs-mediated interactions, such as mass-digital/internet media and mass-surveillance. The disproportion between action and reaction after the 9/11 attacks brings to my mind the suspicion that the disproportionality found in any equivalent distinctions, such as attack/revenge or crime/punishment, is energised by the binary oppositions which make up the moral code of a psychotic society. Classic binaries such as man/woman, sun/moon, reason/passion, follow the same asymmetrical patterns as attack/revenge. This means that the disproportionate revenge and punishment normally administered by the democratic state can be psychotically read from the I/eye as symmetrical equilibrium following the mock justice of before/after, in/out, yes/no, us/them, and other less apparently asymmetrical binaries. In a psychotic society, no member with access to the I/eye can read the moral code satisfactorily until a perfect psycho-symmetry, in other words the phantom of justice, is incorporated into it.

Asymmetry is the most important aspect of binarisation that is hidden from us because of its simplicity and familiarity. One is unable to notice something because it is always before one's eyes. It is so automatic, so familiar, we never give it a thought. Basically, the I/eye is the 'eye' of a society that has become cortically blind; that is, it has lost the very idea of seeing. The entire history of dual visuality, of seeing two things in a binary, has been erased permanently. This society is not only unable to recognise passivity, moon, nature and night, but unable to imagine or remember any of the faces of justice. The power of binarisation to divide social reality into two realms where only One 'really' matters has no boundaries: it is blind and TOTAL. This means that the same industries that produce weapons to kill people or to protect our soldiers abroad also produce less-lethal products for home consumption. For example, the *710 Warrior* robot for explosive disposal and the *Roomba 700* vacuum cleaner are produced by the same company (iRobot). Your children can be playing in the local park with a drone manufactured by the same company that provides the government with unmanned aerial vehicles to kill people on their hit list. Of course, you can fantasise about being killed by a drone as much as you can fantasise about being tortured by a rogue KGB agent in a James Bond film. Legal substance in international human rights and humanitarian law makes it increasingly difficult for a state or government (however powerful and resourceful) to endorse torture or to maintain a hit list and carry out assassinations – unless it is in 'self-defence'. It is not a coincidence that, among the papers Snowden leaked in 2014, there is a list of US intelligence targets in both Afghanistan and Pakistan from 4 years earlier. It includes 669 individuals, some of whom are marked 'kill only' while others are to be captured or tracked. The US government routinely denies its allies are involved in the targeting process. But many of the targets have code names, and some of them are culturally so 'British' (Taggart, Shetland, Fawkes, for example) that is likely British operatives dreamt them up. At least seven on the list were nominated by units either involved in British forces or within the British line of command. And all seven targets are located across the border in Pakistan, a country against which neither US nor UK is currently at war. Although the foreign office would not comment on intelligence matters, it is not difficult to see how the killing by drone requires a list of targets to be passed on to drone commanders.

Strikes against individual terrorist suspects in countries against which Usuk may not be currently at war are controversial, to say the least, under international law. Yet they don't represent a 'new departure', as David Cameron put it in Parliament. Drones have been used to shoot to kill on British and American orders for years, in a policy never sanctioned by Parliament. The list leaked by Snowden in 2014 can be seen as a precursor of the 2016 film *Eye in the Sky* which stars Helen Mirren as Colonel Katherine Powell, a UK-based military officer in command of a top secret drone operation to capture terrorists in Kenya. Through remote surveillance and on-the-ground intelligence, Powell discovers the targets are planning a suicide bombing and the mission escalates from 'capture' to 'kill'. But as American pilot Steve Watts is about to engage, a nine-year old girl enters the kill zone, triggering an international dispute reaching the highest levels of US and British government over the moral, political, and personal implications of modern warfare. Both the Snowden list and the film have been carefully planned as a propaganda exercise whose aim is to contribute to the effort to 'normalise' the shoot-to-kill policy of Usuk. But with two Parliamentary committees now investigating Britain's first admission of targeting killings, the line between fact and fiction is blurring all the time. The phenomenal success of the James Bond series has contributed to the 'normalisation' of the shoot-to-kill policy favoured by certain sections of the military and the secret services.

According to a recent *Report on In Amenas* by professor Jeremy Keenan, the involvement of the Algeria's secret intelligence service (DRS) in the 2013 Tinguentourine gas plant terrorist attack points to a widespread practice by Western powers of fabricating terrorism abroad for home consumption. The report 'provides evidence to show that the US, UK and French authorities had long been aware of the DRS's infiltration of terrorist groups and its subsequent working relationship with them, especially in false flag operations designed to further US and other Western interests in the global war on terror.' [5] This means that 'kill lists' are not the product of some remote surveillance or on-the-ground intelligence as the film *Eye in the Sky* seems to suggest, but the result of a close working relationship between Western powers and their allies in Africa and the Middle East.

What interests us here about these 'kill lists' is what they tell us about the society that 'reads' them but doesn't become immediately suspicious of them because nobody has noticed the lack of a 'referent'. Under the psychopathy of One, a society of dephysicalised, typified and interactable individuals loses the ability to see that a hit list is not a single isolated entity but part of a network of lists. Let me explain. Our society has bridged the signifier/signified distinction by psychotic binarisation; that is, there can be only One (signified) in the binary. A signified no longer needs a signifier or referent to 'mean'. It can transform itself into a 'proxy' acting vicariously and standing for something else. One can adapt this conceptual framework to make sense of those individuals marked 'kill only'. The 'proxy' for 'kill only' is another list with biometrical data which can be used on behalf of or instead of the dead body, once the killing has taken place – for the purpose of verification. Snowden didn't publish this list. Why? Because it would have shown Western participation in the recruitment and training of terrorists abroad, as sensitive biometrical data (DNA samples, fingerprints, birth marks, facial and iris data, and so on) are gathered during the recruitment process. This implies that commanders in training camps and terrorist leaders themselves might be the main providers of biometrical data for Western counter-terrorist operations.

The general point I want to make here is that the secret services, far from being a neutral investigatory force, depend on the preservation of what they reject (and fight against) for their own survival. If 'Islam' as a monolithic entity is becoming an inextricable moral oppositional force to the West according to the friend/enemy distinction, it is because neither the 'West' nor 'Islam' do exist in 'reality'; as One-related effects of binarisation, they are 'psychotic' products. Here the friend/enemy distinction is heading a stack of binaries that include democracy/despotism, tolerance/intolerance, philogynism/misogynism, homophilia/homophobia, and so on. These ultra-simplistic binaries seem to float over the freezing waters of Western/Eastern international relations like tips of icebergs over complex social, economic, historical, and political underwater currents.

By resorting to what they reject for their preservation, Western democratic states are playing a very dangerous game; mainly because this can be seen as a sign of weakness. The use of terror/terrorism by the state is, and always has been, a symptom of lack of administrative resources. For example, Isis is said to control large areas of Syria and Iraq. But they forgot to say that this is an area very thinly populated. The very existence of great masses of people would make it impossible for Isis to control this territory due to their lack of technical administrative means. Further, the Isis leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who fancies himself a caliph, has assumed the tone of an absolute monarch, but he does not possess the practical means to make his subjects obey his will in any defined way. He has neither police nor civil servants. All he can do is coerce a few persons and make examples of them. Beheadings and stonings are accepted penalties for a range of offences in the Muslim world; the bleeding cadavers and their heads are left on the floor, often on the tarmac outside the mosque after Friday prayers. Yet there is still no means for securing efficient action, as terror is only exceptionally a technical means. Every kind of local fancy is encouraged under the guidance of the lord of the place or the imam.

Isis's improvised legal framework is too close to the moral code to be called 'modern law'; the judicial process here is hardly coordinated and the law of the land is only sporadically applied. It is astonishing to note that no one, to the best of my knowledge, has emphasised this fact. What Isis supposedly controls is a land scarcely populated where it is hardly possible to apply a technicised administration. This is an unpredictable environment where there are energy and food shortages, electricity cuts, and mobile phones don't always have reception. Farmers in areas under the control of Isis cannot plant the regular amount seed to feed their families; being under constant aerial bombardment, they cannot always

---

[5] Jeremy Keenan, *Report on In Amenas: Inquest Cover-up and Western Involvement in Algerian State Crimes* (London: International State Crime Initiative, Queen Mary University of London, 2016), p. 10. For state-funded terrorism in the pre-digital age, see Daniele Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe* (London & New York: Frank Cass, 2005).

access their lands, nor can they have the proper fertilisers and fuel, nor can they find buyers for the extra crop. To turn this precarious agrarian society into a global threat is an ideological crime of magnificent proportions. It is mental terrorism by Usuk. For Isis fighters are not as well trained or well equipped as Usuk wants us to belief. They are struggling. The truth is that the US and the UK have the military capability to reduce Isis to ashes in one month, if they wanted. The main motive why they don't eliminate them is that these 'highly exotic medieval-looking fighters' must serve as a reminder of the terrorist threat; they are a fundamental ideological tool for desperate democratic leaders who must rely on the myth of the external and internal enemy for their survival.

Both the assassinations of al-Qaeda/Isis leaders by SAS commandos and drone strikes are clear examples of terrorism by the state. They are unnecessary moves, engineered to keep the pretence of a war which cannot be played on TV and would have low entertaining value for audiences at home, if shown. Seeing the blurred film of something going up in smoke in a desert can be hardly called 'entertainment'. Whatever is forbidden to be shown will soon turn up on social media, with more or less absurd consequences: terrorism by the state is covert, hidden, and not prone to publicity, because it tries to hide its entire organisational structure. It is serious, boring and deadly.

The problem with this common home/abroad_peace/war binary oppositional practice encouraged by democratic governments in the West is that it ends up backfiring. Because those who have been placed in unpredictable environments eventually outperform those who have been coercively controlled by the state. Look at Algeria now. It is about to blow up and Western powers are scared of it, since the country not only has 40 million people who would be heading for Europe, but it also has the best counter-terrorism experts in the world. So one can expect another Syria: a long and bloody civil war.

The explanation for the relative fighting success of al-Qaeda, Isis, and other Islamist terrorist groups is not found in religious fanaticism but in science; particularly, in that shop-worn research subject, the laboratory rat. It's surprising how much the laboratory rat resembles the human. I personally love rats. And I keep a few of them at home. Because I hate to see them depressed, I devised an experiment so they could become optimistic by imagining hope. I placed them in tightly restricted environments and played a particular pitch over the speakers into their cages. It was a prompt to press the lever: the lever triggered the arrival of food. The rats quickly associated that particular pitch with the arrival of food. To make sure that they were imagining hope, I had to instil the opposite feeling in them. So I played a different pitch and when the rats pressed the lever, they were greeted with an unpleasant sound and no food. All the rats learned to distinguish between these two sounds. One meant food, the other meant no food. I was satisfied that I had proved a connection between the phenomenon of binarisation (that is, the overwhelming superiority/value given by a social group to one side of a binary opposition such as optimism/pessimism_hope/despair) and coercive control.

But my experiment backfired when I decided to place some rats in unpredictable environments, where the bedding, cage mates, and the light and dark schedule were always changing. These rats were placed in a warlike environment, like Isis, so to speak. They also learned to differentiate between the different pitches but, unlike the ones that had been housed in a predictable environment, they didn't assume that there were only two sounds in the world, a 'good' sound and a 'bad' sound. When the rats where played a new sound, one between the two learned pitches, those who had been coercively controlled interpreted the new sound to mean *food*; those in the unstable environment did not. To watch rats in the predictable environment jump with enthusiasm at every new sound was like watching members of Usuk's society casting their ballots at polling stations on election day – hoping for a better future.

Every four or five years, Usuk's citizens are given the chance to choose a new government. Their choice is binary: Republican/Democrat in the US and Conservative/Labour in the UK. But their choice is 'moral' too: I vote for the party that I consider 'good' for me and my family, and reject the party that I consider 'bad' (or less 'good') for me and my family; that is, casting a vote is like pressing a lever that is going to trigger the arrival of food, shelter, and job security. Early 21st-century digital/internet humans are like rats housed in predictable environments. They live in environments where the digital/virtual has become more 'real' than the physical. Indeed, 70% of Usuk's GDP now depends on intangible/immaterial goods that are information related, not on the physical output of manufacturing processes or

agriculture. [6] The citizens of Usuk are spending an increasing amount of time online. The next question is: Does this hyperreality inhabited by the citizens of cyberspace require the development of an information ethics?

The general consensus in both academic and government circles is to answer in the affirmative: 'Yes, cyberspace requires a strong and consistent information ethics.' The main difference between academics and government officials is that the latter are bent on imposing strict legislative measures (such as the UK Investigatory Powers Act, 2016) and on empowering spying and monitoring organisations like the secret services 'to keep you and your family safe'[7] , whereas the former argue in favour of a collaborative international effort to develop an ethics that would allow us to build an equitable information society.

Let me superficially look at the government and its secret services first. Since 9/11, and in parallel to the development of the Web 2.0 and cloud computing, the Usuk government has embarked on global surveillance programmes using analytical digital/internet technologies directed at group level rather than at particular individuals – notwithstanding single celebrity killings like Osama bin Laden and Jihadi John. Their view is that the moral evil caused by terrorism, cybercrime, child sexual exploitation, people trafficking, money laundering, drugs smuggling, and so on, is inevitable and unavoidable, so their objective lies in preventing it and counterbalancing it (with larger and more sophisticated ICTs) rather than aiming for its total destruction or elimination. Indeed, intelligence agencies, having outlived their original functions, must now rely on the same terror they are trying defeat for their survival. Perhaps this explains why UK's leaders supply despots with weapons, assassination equipment and the latest anti-terrorist technology. They send security personnel, including MI6 secret agents, to train novices in 'torture' techniques and authorise MI6 participation in CIA rendition operations. They also provide friends and allies with contacts in a global network that include weapons manufacturers, diplomats, military and intelligence officers, weapons merchants and shippers, businessmen and bankers. [8] Is this making good use of taxpayers' money?

So what mass-surveillance by the security forces really means? It means that spy bosses have been playing the role of CDOs (Chief Data Officers), desperately trying to pull various elements of data together [9] so senior politicians could make decisions informed by data at a scale that has never previously been possible. But this increasing reliance of the political class on the spy agencies adds a new dimension to their helplessness: data impotence, or the inability to fend for themselves in the new BD world. The problem is that the spy agencies may have the financial resources, but they lack the knowhow. It's not difficult to make allowances for the gargantuan problems these civil/military servants face: unlimited networks of machines and people, large volumes of data and algorithms that are already questioning the assertion of sovereign power by democratic states on a daily bases. Of course, we understand that the state is giving its secret services extra help at this most difficult time in their long and distinguished existence, but we also see them in a collision course with Gafa platforms that can only end in fusion/confusion. Democratic states still believe that their secret services are the only governmental institutions capable of challenging or resisting the gravitational force of Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon. The UK Investigatory Powers Act 2016 [10], for example, is an attempt to reconnect with the old binary

---

[6] By 'information-related' goods, I mean services from finance and insurance to property and business services, from entertaining to communications and internet services. Also, information-based public sectors, such as health, education, tax collection, policing and justice.

[7] So reads a fragment of section 16 (Extremism Bill) of the *Queen's Speech* delivered from the Lords Chamber on Wednesday 27th May 2015.

[8] A letter was recently 'discovered' by investigators examining whether British Intelligence officers should face criminal charges over the rendition of an exiled Libyan opposition leader, Abdul Hakim Belhaj. The letter is from the head of MI5, Eliza Manningham-Buller, to the then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair. Manningham-Buller was writing to complain to the Prime Minister for his policy of authorising MI6 agents to aid and abet the CIA in abductions that led to suspected extremists being tortured. Mr Belhaj was seized in Bangkok in March, 2004 in a Usuk rendition operation, and handed over to the CIA. He was tortured and injected with 'truth serum' before flying him and his family to Tripoli to be interrogated by Gaddafi's henchmen. British MI6 agents can be neither charged nor prosecuted because they were following government policy.

[9] Algorithm data, scientific data, fraud detection data, structured data from tablets/records, risk analysis data, marketing data, financial data, tax avoidance data, economic forecasting data, infrastructure data, logistic data, demographic data, time series data, web log data, geospatial data, clickstream data from websites, real-time event data, internal text data from emails/calls, external social media data, machine-generated data, etcetera.

[10] The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 is a curious piece of legislation presented by its drafters as a means to give the police and intelligence agencies unprecedented powers to survey private communications and internet activity, and yet it

friend/enemy, or the logic of 'us against them', through a contract between the state and internet service providers. Since Snowden, it has become public knowledge that the world of intelligence is an immense and carefully woven mesh composed of shared technology and shared databases that contradict the safe-harbour or schengen-routing mentality of individual states. [11]

Usuk's observable overdramatisation of the terrorist threat in groundbreaking pieces of legislation tends to relativise, sometimes supplement and sometimes outdo other global threats like, for example, the threat of nuclear war. So long as legislators are allowed to interpret data sets in binary oppositional terms, terrorists would still be considered as 'causes' and guilty parties in a world of shared responsibility and shared intelligence. Both spy bosses and politicians in search of a cause for terrorism tend to fall, so to speak, into the black hole of irrationality; and their hastily assembled argumentation takes binary shapes under the friend/enemy distinction. When they find themselves in the public pillory as terrorist advocates, they refute people's arguments as well as they can, with the aid of a few statistics and a counter-science of moral stereotypes.

Many spooks will struggle to even start the data-sifting process. They will never extract true value within their data. True value comes from identifying patterns and trends and pushing insight to decision makers in real time. Their resource-intensive and large-scale programmes have been an utter failure. Regarding war and military action abroad, we find a consistent pattern of disastrous intelligence gathering being passed on to the Usuk government. Tony Blair's tragedy was to forget that it is critical to always sense-check the data input and acknowledge whether data accuracy or sample size is good enough to launch a military campaign. The documents leaked by Snowden revealed details of Tempora, a programme run by Britain's spy agency GCHQ, a sprout of the Enigma glory and Bletchley Park. Its operatives are as naïve and schmucky as the code breakers of World War Two.

Both the UK's GCHQ and the NSA, its corresponding American counterpart, have received millions of pounds from the taxpayer to analyse, monitor, profile and track people's movements and behaviour. The rise of the smartphone in particular has been very useful for these spy agencies to visualise and monitor users' movements and location, since they produce all sorts of signals and facilitate various connections, from GPS to wifi and cell tower connections, from IP addresses, search and network environmental media to Bluetooth sensors, from credit card transactions to CCTV and satellite images.

Academics have rightly criticised Western governments' approach to the challenges and threats posed by the cyberspace as being somewhat old-fashioned. It is understandable that nation states that have been built on the modern project of dominating nature are struggling to cope and understand this new intangible and immaterial environment which, unlike the physical world, doesn't demand full control or mastery. Misquoting Descartes, the misguided goal of the state and its secret services today is 'to use ICTs as artisans use their tools for all the purposes for which they are appropriate, and thus

---

takes the shape of a contract between the internet service providers and the government – a clear symptom that analogic governments now aspire to govern the world as Gafa platforms govern the internet. The IP Act 2016 is particularly aimed at university academics working in the fields of security and terrorism. While it is reasonable to expect that the government would want universities to curb attempts to radicalise or recruit students, the IP Act (together with the Prevent strategy) could be seen as an unfair, ignorant and philistine attempt by politicians to regulate, or even ban, intellectual discourse and exchange. Until recently, science was the one area where researchers could share information and exchange views between peers. Now the spy agencies have placed much cutting-edge science beyond the reach of highly qualified scientists and in the hands of competing teams that don't share information. A world that is controlled by competing nations and owned by large corporations whose main concern, apart from making money, is to limit access to their data, contributes not only to the annoyance of a few scientists but also to the radical intellectual impoverishment of the rest of the population.

[11] 'Safe Harbour' is a bilateral agreement between US and the EU according to which American companies abide by the Directive 95/46/CE of the EU regarding the protection of private data. The original 1985 Schengen agreement between France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands called for the elimination of all passports and other checks between participating countries and established a single external border. In November 2013, shortly after Snowden's revelations, Rene Obermann, exboss of Deutsche Telekom, proposed the creation of a 'Schengen Routing' and a 'Schengen Cloud'. The idea was to create EU-only data farms and network services that didn't cross the Atlantic. Obermann's plan was to configure the routing of European internet traffic so the routes that transferred masses of information beyond its frontiers could be avoided.

to make themselves, as it were, the lords and masters of the cyberspace.' [12] Their ultimate aim is the full control and mastery over a *mare tenebrarum* containing unimaginable monsters, boogie men, terrorists and sexual perverts. The good news is that their mass-surveillance project is doomed, not just because it belongs to a previous age of scientific colonisation and domination of nature, but also because digital/internet technologies are not 'tools' but hermeneutical apparatuses which carry social weight and value. The bad news is that cyberspace has become a new arena for human conflict. So cyber warfare, as the fifth domain of warfare, is now geared to war – the other four domains are land, water, air, and space.

The good guys of the philosophical world (John Searle, Luciano Floridi, Matteo Turilli, *et al*) can see the war coming and want to prevent it. Their departing assumption is that 'our technological tree has been growing its far-reaching branches much more widely, rapidly, and chaotically than its conceptual, ethical, and cultural roots' [13] ; or 'technological power and moral responsibilities are not necessarily followed by ethical intelligence and wisdom. We are still like children, light-heartedly and dangerously toying with a marvellous universe.' [14] So they want to redress the balance by shifting the focus from the paranoid control of cyberspace by the spy agencies to the ethical creation and construction of alternative environments where universal access, sharing, exchange, free flow, pluralism, ownership and privacy are respected. Because 'we can do much more than we can understand', this humanitarian project involves digging deep and top-down in order 'to expand and reinforce our conceptual understanding of our information age, of its nature, its less visible implications, and its impact on human and environmental welfare, and thus give ourselves a chance anticipate difficulties, and resolve problems, conflicts, and dilemmas.' [15] Basically, the good guys want to develop an information ethics. [16]

But I come from a very different philosophical tradition. Unlike the good guys who want to enlighten society and build alternative, better worlds, I wait for the catastrophe to happen. Then I follow the high standards and painstaking procedures of accident investigators in the aviation industry. The main difference is that I don't investigate aircraft accidents, but historical mental crashes – from the Westphalian crash that signalled end of feudalism and the beginning of modernity to the current informational crash that marks the end of modernity and the beginning of our digital/internet information age. There is, however, a striking similarity between my methods and those used by aviation industry crash investigators: we both rely on black boxes. These are very sturdy recording devices that generally survive the crash.

A modern commercial aircraft black box contains two distinct recorders: the flight data recorder (FDR) records data from a variety of sensors and systems regarding the flight, such as altitude, air speed and position; the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) documents sounds in the cockpit, such as pilot's conversations and radio transmissions. My imaginary black boxes record two types of data too: opaque, inscrutable and high-dimensional data from algorithm-based programmes, control structures, and networked machines, which I interpret with the help of computers; and texts, short sentences and conversations produced by humans; particularly slips of the tongue, jokes, out-of-the-blue statements, memes, short phrases/sentences and other bits of linguistic communication where I can detect certain 'psychotic leaps' – these can be leaps or gaps in a horizontal line of reasoning by celebrities, politicians and other public personae, which can either be filled up by bullshit or be left unfilled, because they belong to other (dimension) order of reality. But they can also be vertical logical distinctions (such as man/woman, day/night, public/private, West/East, and so forth) which are often too familiar, too obvious and in-your-face to be perceived as 'psychotic leaps'.

---

[12] According to Descartes, the aim of modernity was 'to use this knowledge - as the artisans use theirs – for all the purposes for which it is appropriate , and thus make ourselves, as it were, the lords and masters of nature.' Cottingham, Stoothoff & Murdoch (eds.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 142-3.

[13] Luciano Floridi, 'The Information Society and Its Philosophy: Introduction to the Special Issue on "The Philosophy of Information, Its Nature, and Future Developments"', in *The Information Society: An International Journal*, 25:3, p. 154. The techno/ethics binarisation is behind that departing assumption which I have called 'counterbalance theory' in the abstract.

[14] Luciano Floridi, 'Information Ethics: An Environmental Approach to the Digital Divide' in *Philosophy in the Contemporary World*, 9:1, Spring-Summer 2001, p. 2.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

[16] Some key aspects of this ethical framework can be found in Mariarosaria Taddeo & Luciano Floridi, *The Ethics of Information Warfare* (New York: Springer, 2014). See also Luciano Floridi, 'Information Ethics: An Environmental Approach to the Digital Divide', in *Philosophy in the Contemporary World*, Volume 9, Number 1, Spring-Summer 2001.

Academics are very aware of this neo-dualism which they see behind profiling algorithms, identifying correlations, and predictive analytics everywhere. They can see data-driven discriminatory treatment and algorithmic decision-making being fuelled by prejudices such as gender, age, social class, ethnicity, sexual preference, and religion. Indeed, the creation and development of algorithms is neither neutral nor bias-free; binary oppositions become frozen into the code. Even professional philosophers are using distinctions like data/information, patterns/meanings, quantitative/qualitative, and syntax/semantics. Most academics would like to get rid of these distinctions. And yet, in every conference, seminar or lecture on PI (Philosophy of Information), you can hear people saying: 'I deal with patterns, not meanings' or 'Computers are syntactic machines, they don't do semantics', or 'I care about data, not information'. These strange mental phenomena, I have called 'binarisation'.

You have to think counter-intuitively to understand this concept: binarisation is the psychotic effect of having 'just' one term in a binary – for example, there can be only 'man' in the binary man/woman. I say that the man/woman distinction is binarised when, for example, a baby gets the father's last name or a baby gets killed because she is born 'female'. In order to make sense of the man+woman=man equation, you can psychotically (and horizontally) leap from man to man by making woman Zero and man One, so 1+0=1. But you can also make sense of the man+woman=man equation through a vertical psychotic leap via triangulation; by imagining, for instance, a third point in space from which an imaginary observer (I/eye) misreads the equation as man(=)man. This must be good news for those academics who still feel the need to fight against neo-dualism by assuming that these distinctions need bridging: binary oppositions have already been bridged by the phenomenon of binarisation. In our psychotic society, there can only be One in a binary.

There is a moral code made of binary oppositions in every society. But to assume that it stays the same throughout the history of that society would be an act of intellectual negligence. Our current Usuk society is torn between two contradictions pertaining to the state/cyberspace binary, namely the following among numerous other psychotic antitheses:

US_state   as antithesis of cyberspace

UK _state   as antithesis of cyberspace

legal   as antithesis of cyberspace

cultural   as antithesis of cyberspace

economic   as antithesis of cyberspace

Following the man+woman=man psycho-equation format, Usuk has resolved that state+cyberspace=state. The deeper thinkers of the 21st century have soon recognised this. Luciano Floridi, for example, clarifies that cyberspace (in particular, the Web 2.0 and its cloud technology) is 'part of a space made of information, the *infosphere*, where *memory as registration and timeless preservation* (the Platonic view) is replaced by *memory as accumulation and refinement*.' [17] Rather than describing/prescribing the world in mathematical formulae as Galileo, we (citizens of the infosphere) are inscribing new pages in the book of nature and wrapping it in digital format. This means that my internet-connected digital TV is not just another electronic unit of entertainment integrated in my living room furniture set but a smart machine or robot that has transformed the whole living room into an ontology of which I am the interface. Literally, I am the one who has to press the keys of the remote control to turn my TV experience into a successful one. I am an informational organism that interacts with machines and lives in the infosphere. It is not that the physical world contains my TV set but that with my help the TV set creates new intangible, typified and perfectly clonable inforworlds.

Curious observers currently living in the UK would have noticed the proliferation of TV cookery shows, from the Bake Off and Master Chef competitions to Nigella, Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsay, Nigel Slater, Rick Stein and the Hairy Bikers. We are fed 434 hours of TV cookery a week. [18] Rick Stein, for instance, invites you to participate in his globetrotting and luscious culinary adventures: Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey, Rick Stein's French Odyssey, Rick Stein's India, Rick Stein German Bite, Rick Stein's Spain, and so on. These are variations on the same TV format characterised by clonation, repetition and typification. Stein's kitchens are set in picturesque locations. His cooking ingredients are fresh, colourful, tasty, often unaffordable or unobtainable at home. And his cooking skills are those of the ultimate professional. In comparison, my kitchen is basic. The ingredients I can obtain in the local supermarket are very

---

[17] Luciano Floridi, 'Web 2.0 vs. The Semantic Web: A Philosophical Assessment' in *Episteme*, 6:1, (2009), p. 32.

[18] *MailOnline*, 27th September 2014.

limited and often tasteless. My cooking skills are almost nil. The choice is clear. I watch Rick Stein's TV program from the sofa with my hand in a bowl of chips.

The infosphere gives us entry into an immediately shared life, a psychotic existence in popular culture, regardless of what the government has in store for us. In Usuk, for example, to mean something, to mean anything, the fast-food eater watches Rick Stein's cookery show, the secret services enter into the spirit of the James Bond movies; and the police act as if they were filming a TV police soap; doctors and nurses recreate the series *Doctors*; politicians play *Game of Thrones* or *House of Cards*; and working-class people watch *East Enders* or *Coronation Street*. Yes, we watch these TV programs as if we were watching from the outside. But where is *he* who watches Rick Stein's TV program from the sofa? It doesn't matter whether I am at home or in the street, I am within the envelop. I never leave the program. I am so much inside my TV that I don't even know I am inside!

In a psychotic society, the strengthening of the moral code can conceal this simple fact to the working poor: human beings must first eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before they can watch *East Enders* or pursue politics, science, art and religion. Under a stringent moral code, the working classes can be coercively controlled by the establishment without chaos and violence issuing at the end of the process. In fact, the working poor have been sold down the river by the political establishment and by the financial slave-owning classes, but no real, serious, or prolonged violence has occurred.

To understand what this means we must make a distinction between hope and expectation. Before 1945, Usuk's working classes trusted the goodness of nature or had faith in the charitable desires of a 'good/rich' person from whom they awaited a gift. Since 1945, the working class has experienced a positive outcome. Western democratic politicians have increasingly focus on both social justice – helping the very poorest – and social mobility – helping the brightest among the poor. Socialist parties have boosted their self-esteem and political power, achieving a relative redistribution of income due to the abolition of mass-scale unemployment. In the 1960s, a drop in the price of home appliances together with an increase in salaries meant that many working class families could afford commodities such as a car, washing machines and televisions, which previously could only be bought by middle and upper classes. The working classes' expectation of owning a home, a car, and a TV looks forward to satisfaction from a predictable process which will produce what they have the right to claim. But this expectation has destroyed hope, as voting has eclipsed violence.

In the UK, for example, the Battle of Orgreave in 1984 can be considered the turning point when the working class lost its revolutionary potential. About 10,000 strikers and 5,000 police were involved in violent clashes. And yet nobody died. Had the miners been properly armed with knives, pikes, spears, guns, rifles, grenades, etcetera, and trained in the use of those weapons, they could easily have defeated the police. But the miners were unarmed and unwilling to kill policemen. So what do we make of this lack of 'killing instinct' in the working classes? What has happened to the intelligent, reflective, resentful, and violent human beings who helped Napoleon conquer Europe? And what has happened to those enthusiastic bourgeois-haters and Jew-killers who helped Mussolini, Franco, Hitler and Stalin bring both fascist and communist revolutions? How could such clever, honest, generous and courageous people end up being scared of the police?

Following Freud/Nietzsche's work on 'civilisation', one could argue that the post-1945 welfare state was built on the taming of the working classes' most aggressive instincts. A universal and compulsory education might be responsible for the transformation of our sexual/killing instincts into popular cultural products. But recent electoral results in the US and the UK seem to suggest that the moral gun that produced the hate and the killings is still there for everyone to see; and yet, on closer inspection, the gun is deactivated. Racism, sexism, Islamophobia, and xenophobia have driven the working classes to wake up from their electoral slumber and vote in their millions for Trump and Brexit. The same moral binaries that used to produce death and violence on an unimaginable scale are now deactivated to the point of no return, because no violent revolution has taking place. Direct action and violent confrontation seem so 20th century. Where are the working classes now? They are where nothing happens. In any place where democracy works. Here and there, where the normal situation reigns, you find a bunch of lambs queuing to vote on election day. Softer tactics such as cyberstalking, flaming, exclusion, outing, masquerading, and other forms of cowardly harassment online are increasingly substituting the old body-to-body confrontations.

The next question is: Can we get out of this space made of information and survive the exit? To put it simply, as informational organisms we have created a new environment and got use to it in such a way that to abandon it would mean death. So the question is not who is going to play 007 in the next Bond film but what would happen if the series finished tomorrow? Would MI5/MI6 and GCHQ disappear too? The fact is: nobody wants to take that risk. Stopping the

James Bond series would be an act of informational terrorism. The same applies to *East Enders* and *Coronation Street*. It is 'impossible' that these series will finish tomorrow. Rupture must be avoided at all cost. The lives of millions of people depend on their continuity. Theoretically, we can conceive the possibility of one of these series reaching 2,000 years of age, like the Catholic Church. So what are we going to do about it?

How many more years must we be subjected to the James Bond series? As an average unathletic middle-aged male, I have appreciated the amazing feats of Daniel Craig in *Casino Royale*, *Quantum of Solace* and *Skyfall*. But now I am bored of him. Worse, I worry that other fans will get bored too and the SIS agency will stop receiving applications from people who think that being a good shot is an advantage. [19] I worry that, without the success of the James Bond series, the spy agencies will be doomed. But I am intellectually excited at the same time because, once the point of catastrophe is reached, I can start thinking backwards, like an aviation crash investigator. Let's open the black box:

1. When the spy agencies stopped functioning, it wasn't because someone left the infosphere and stopped 'breathing' information. It was because someone removed the mask that hid the 'horror' – the face of the psychotic. Liberal democracy had not eliminated the psychotic from the face of the earth but only had hidden it by means of a Platonic anti-psychotic discourse and a set of practices that effectively mark out in reality what does not exist. Voting, for example, is one of those practices that marks out in reality that which does not exist and legitimately submits it to the division between good and evil, yes and no, in and out, and so on. The problem with voting doesn't start or end with the accusation of being 'irrational', 'ritualistic' or 'superstitious', but with the realisation that its most benign effects produce binary oppositions: legitimate governments with legitimate oppositions; that is, binary oppositional political forces such as Conservative and Labour in the UK and Republicans and Democrats in the US. But there can only be One in a binary. Perhaps the phenomenon of 'binarisation' explains why only One party rules, while the other watches from the shadows.

2. The psychotic has not killed democracy but only an understanding of democracy and, vice versa, democracy has not killed the psychotic but only an understanding of the psychotic. The psychotic has killed the illusion of reading democracy as individual freedom. For the I/eye reader of the moral code is not 'individual' but 'group-based'; it is common and shared by all the units of the social mass whom we call 'individuals'. There is no such thing as a personal 'I' in the infosphere. There is no such thing as a 'self' within its grammar. There is no such thing as 'one vote one person one time'. There is a simple binarisation of democracy as face/mask by a third-party observer. So any attempt to create an ethics for the infosphere, requires getting out of it, and this can only be done by 'leaping'. Basically, one can only produce maps of the expanding universe by not asking the question 'Where?' Where am I? Where is she? [20] These maps without 'Where?' betray the human mind as an invention, a psycho-product.

3. The question 'Where?' is no longer easily answered with a 'here or there'. The computers that hold your data and applications are hidden away. Unlike your tablet, smartphone, laptop or pc, you can't see them. Nor can you tell where they are. An idea or concept is suspect of being a psychotic product when it begins to return positive answers to the question 'Where?' Any state body or institution where the question 'Where?' fits perfectly well is psychotically suspect. So, for example, where are the files the government and its spy agencies are so desperate to access? Are they in the Frankfurt De-CIX node, in an Icelandic data centre, or in a computer farm in California, US?

4. We can no longer say anything worthwhile about our psychotic society without first becoming aware of our own digital/internet situation. When asked the question 'Where?' the digital/human can hardly cope with a psychotic answer/return/reply such as 'In the infosphere' or 'In the Data Commons.' Both the accumulation of instances of the same/similar [21] and the sheer number of online queries are transforming individuals into fully-fledged informational organisms and members of the DC. But compression and accumulation, together with the common and shared reading of the moral code from the I/eye, make each member of the psychotic society too similar to each other not to become a clone. DC members are indistinguishable from each other except by moral labels. So spy agencies and corporate firms

---

[19] See 'The new MI6: less white and less like Bond' in *The Guardian*, 03.03.2017.

[20] Hélène Cixous proposed a classic set of binaries (Activity/Passivity, Sun/Moon, Culture/Nature, Day/Night) under the question 'Where is she?' See Hélène Cixous, 'Sorties', in *New French Feminisms: an Anthology, translated and edited with introductions by Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron* (London: Harvester Press, 1981), p. 90.

[21] In his *Treatise on Probability*, chapter XX, on 'Pure Induction', Keynes not only expands on Hume's fumblings with cause/effect interactions but also improves on Hegel's flirtations with quantitative/qualitative relations (pls. see Hegel's *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences, Part 1. The Logic*, secs.107-111 on 'Quantity C. Measure'), explaining stagnation and the limits of growth with elegant simplicity by a mere multiplication of instances increasing towards certainty.

that intentionally identify a subject in the DC should be declared 'unreal', as the labelling of equal members with moral tags is psychotically suspect. Anonymisation techniques should replace corporate labelling and privacy policies. Data sharing starts with the delabelling of the digital/internet human.

5. In order to remove the mask from the face of democracy, (a) the psychotic must be made apparent as such and become simply undeniable, however difficult may be to believe/understand; (b) the mask/face interaction must be left to run its course. The 'reality' or 'face' as the 'horror' must be brought out of the concealment into which the psychotic (through binarisation) has cast it, so that the question of the state can be seriously put. In practical terms this means that (a) sovereignty of the Data Commons replaces parliamentary sovereignty as the lack of transparency on the part of the government and its secret services depletes the Commons to the detriment of those who decide on the exception. So (b) when the details of the exception (an emergency, a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the state, or the like) can be neither anticipated nor known to the executive because of data privacy and copyright practices, or because of deliberate removal of data by the spy agencies, then the object of the decision must be externalised and shared across the whole of the population. Instead of demanding more privacy, (c) we should force democratic governments and their new partners, the Gafa platform operators, to open their data. Because the more they open their data the more informed our sovereign decision can be. Moreover, the more open data becomes the more queries can be contrasted while applied.

GLOSSARY

Algorithm. A mathematical construct with 'a finite, abstract, effective, compound control structure, imperatively given, accomplishing a given purpose under given provisions.' [22] In order to take certain actions and have particular effects, algorithms must be implemented and executed by/into a technology configured for a specific task.

asymmetrical equilibrium. Another term for '**binarisation**'.

BD. Acronym for Big Data. The concept of BD matters today not because it is 'big' but because Big Data can be managed by 'small patterns'. Similarly, the epistemological problem with big psychotic societies like Usuk is binary oppositions. Precisely because such huge, complex and highly-developed societies with millions of informational organisms can now be governed cheaply, quickly and efficiently, with a stringent moral code made of 'small patterns'.

binarisation. The process by which the human mind can imagine only one side of a binary opposition; that is, the process of gradation, repression, consistency, transparency and value that gives mass to the moral code of a psychotic society. A vital component in the process of binarisation is the reader **I/eye**. This is an imaginary point from which the moral code made of binary oppositions is read. For example, in a simple code made of binary oppositions headed by good/bad, sun/moon, reason/passion, and white/black, the reader I/eye returns 'good, sun, reason, white' completely ignoring the existence of the other side; so 'bad, good, passion, black' is masked, repressed, downgraded, under-valued, and ignored. The psychotic process of binarisation was first noticed (though not defined as such) by Carl Schmitt in *The Concept of the Political*: 'Democracy must do away with all the typical distinctions and depoliticalizations characteristic of the liberal nineteenth-century, also with those corresponding to the nineteenth-century antitheses. . . namely the following, among numerous other thoroughly polemical and thereby again political antithesis: religious as antithesis to the political, cultural as antithesis to the political, economic as antithesis to the political, legal as antithesis to the political, scientific as antithesis to the political.' [23]

binarise. To read binary oppositions from the **I/eye**.

DE. Acronym for Data Equality.

DT. Acronym for Data Commons: a term coined by Jane Yakowitz to designate anonymised research data 'comprised of the disparate and diffuse collections of data made broadly available to researchers with only minimal barriers to entry. We are all in the data commons; information from tax returns, medical records, and standardized tests seed the pastures. We are protected from embarrassment and misuse by anonymization.' [24]

---

[22] R.K. Hill, 'What an algorithm is' in *Philosophy & Technology* 29:1, (2015), p. 47.

[23] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 23.

[24] Jane Yakowitz, 'Tragedy of the Data Commons', in *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*, Volume 25, Number 1, Fall 2011, p. 2-3.

digital/internet slave. Someone whose online labour is controlled, managed, owned and traded by others. Digital slavery refers to digital/internet users being classed as data property and working without financial remuneration. A psychotic society is a slave-owning society. Instead of being branded with a hot iron, you are 'digitalised' through your online queries. Both social media platforms and advertising companies turn you into queries in one of hundreds of databases. Wherever you go on the internet, you are in the master's house. To refine the concept of digital slavery in a psychotic society, one must rely on the logical distinction between the syntax in computer systems and the semantics of human cognition. It is as semantic engines that we participate in digital/internet social networking with our feedbacks, posts, pics, videos, and data; that is, syntactic engines (computers) use semantic engines (humans) to give meaning to their systems. The success of Gafa and the Web 2.0 relies on huge databases built with the unpaid human labour of billions of users. Further, the syntax/semantics distinction is binarised as 'syntax' in the same way as the man/woman distinction is binarised as 'man'. If 'governing' a psychotic society means to frame it with a stringent moral code, to algorithmically coordinate the flows of data/decisions that are spontaneously produced in the social body, Gafa platforms use millions of hours of unpaid human labour. This is how they feed their greedy little patterns: with the labour of billions of voluntary digital/internet slaves. Thus Gafa platforms are forms of domination/government rather than neutral search engines or social media sites.

Gafa. Acronym for 4 major platforms offering free Web 2.0 infrastructure and applications to users for digital/internet communication, online expression and social networking – Google, Apple, Facebook, and Amazon. See **OSPs**.

good/bad psychosis. 'Good' psychosis is the tendency towards coherence, perfection and propriety between the binary oppositions that make up the moral code of a society without any link or connection to the reality to which they supposedly refer; 'bad' psychosis is a viral mental infection that attacks some people's Super Egos, altering their ability to think clearly, to make good judgements, to respond emotionally, to communicate effectively, to understand reality, and to behave appropriately. In severe cases, symptoms may include delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, depression, bi-polarity, and mood swings.

ICTs. Acronym for Information and Communication Technologies.

I/eye. The site of sovereignty in a psychotic society. An imaginary point from which the moral code is read/shared and the binarised decision is taken. Thus the I/eye is a borderline concept: it is the imaginary point of disengagement with 'reality' in a psychotic society which is also the point of moral decision making. The I/eye has two components. The 'I' is an 'identity' component. It is the point of quantitative/qualitative transformation or compression of otherhood into selfhood by accumulation of instances of the same and the similar. So it is the psycho-point that makes you feel superior to other people and also the point from where each side of a binarised relationship can feel superior to the other. In the quest for survival and flourishing, the 'I' strives to maintain and even augment its own delusional power and will naturally be in conflict with the 'Other'. Basically, 'I' is a 'we' that is a 'they' being seen from an 'us'; and the 'eye' component will work that through its lens. The 'eye' is the optical component of the I/eye; a kind of digital lens whose job is to turn chaotic, fuzzy, or distorted reality into crystal-clear images, full of sharp edges and visible details. The affliction of abundance or superabundance of people in a society produces a mental contraction/condition called 'morality'. Individuals acquire existence by accessing the 'moral code' of their society through the I/eye.

Isis. Acronym for Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, also called IS, Isol, Isil, and Daesh. The unstable multiplicity of names for al-Dawla al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham denotes a terrorist organisation which is at such an early stage of its activities (for example, in comparison with IRA or ETA) that it is often portrayed as a ghostly/vaporous presence or god rather than a terrestrial group.

moral code. A hybrid mental zone where message and messenger or code and instrument coincide. The message is a default language made of binary oppositions which substitutes Law, Sovereignty, Social Contract and any other universal formula inherited from the Enlightenment. In Foucaultian terms, the binary message would be a procedure or technique of governability, whereas the messenger (the I/eye) would be a psycho-instrument that enables processes and practices of subjectivation.

One. The psychopathy of One can be expressed as: One/One is to a(=)a as One/Many is to exception/rule. a(=)a can be defined as 'the relationship '(=)' between 'a' and 'a', where 'a' can be either 'a' or the delusional 'a' which is more like a 'b' and where '(=)' being variable can be anything from 'wanting to be'/ 'more or less equal to' / 'not completely being' to anything that can be similarly and randomly thought around the concept of familiarity.' '(=)' implies that two things cannot be exactly the same unless there is an observer imagining that they are the same. The first [qualitative,

a(=)a=One/One] relationship is related to the 'identity' component of the psychotic desire, mania or obsession for total equality as read from the **I/eye**. The second [quantitative, exception/rule=One/Many] relationship is related to the extreme/borderline 'value' of the psychotic experience. It is about the rarity, uniqueness, exceptionality, oddity, scarcity, and life-changing potential of the psycho/semio experience.

OSPs. Acronym for Online Service Providers – such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, AOL, Apple, LinkedIn, Google, Yahoo, and Microsoft. Since the rise of Web 2.0, **OSPs** have acquired a central role in the management of digital/internet information resources that are crucial for psychotic societies to thrive. See **Gafa**.

person/individual. The 'individual' is defined as the 'unit of measurement of the social mass'. S/he is standardised and knowable as an ID, an object endorsed by the Home Office, the Police, and the society *where* that individual is registered. The limit of the 'individual' is the 'person'. Can we have a concrete and immediate knowledge of a person? Can we access him/her by the mere force of natural reason?

The intelligence agencies were originally created to protect 'persons' not 'individuals'. It was important 'persons' such as the King and Queen who needed to be protected from plots and conspiracies to depose/replace them for another 'person'. Today, the security services still work around VIPs and 'persons of interest'. But they don't know that. They are living in denial. Because they have outlived their original function (to protect 'persons'), they claim to be in the business of making difficult decisions in order 'to keep you and your family safe by tacking all forms of extremism.' But this is a lie. Why? Because they are not interested in 'individuals' like you and I; they are only interested in 'persons'. So when the security services mistake the man for the idea, as they normally do when they focus on certain suspects, drawing lists, and giving their suspects nicknames, what they're are doing is turning 'individuals' into 'persons'. A person is not an object, therefore, we cannot have a direct and intuitive knowledge of him/her; nor is it an abstract and universal concept; then, of the person we can have neither intuitive or abstractive knowledge; or, to put it simply, the person cannot be reached either by the senses or the intelligence. The existence of a person is not an appropriate object for reason, nor is it susceptible to rational demonstration. The existence of a person may be asserted only through 'faith'; that is, acceptance, belief, confidence, conviction, hope, loyalty, allegiance, assent, certainty, certitude, credence, credit, fidelity, and sureness. Only we could have abstractive knowledge of a person if the person himself/herself infuses in reason that knowledge. But this is not likely to happen unless the person is God. Then the person himself/herself would cause in the soul an abstract notion of divinity – though it would be a notion of himself/herself, not a demonstration of existence.

psychotic society. A society framed by a stringent moral code made of binary oppositions. A large, complex, transversal, diverse, transnational, longitudinal, advanced, overabundant, rich, post-industrial, post-truth society growing and running quickly, cheaply, and efficiently on *small patterns* – in/out, yes/no, good/bad, native/immigrant, white/black, us/them, like/not_like, Christian/Muslim, man/woman, day/night, and so forth. To put it simply, our information society is a psychotic society.

stack *n.* **stacks**, *pl.* To be One, as opposed to being Many, a human being must learn the difference between good and bad; which, in the moral code of a psychotic society, are the headings of strings of binaries called 'stacks'. Sun/moon, warmth/cold, food/hunger, seek/hide, life/death, are binaries of the stack 'good/bad'. Most humans would choose 'sun, warmth, food, seek, life' over 'moon, cold, hunger, hide, death'; that is, they would choose to be on the 'good' side of the stack headed by good/bad. The choice is made automatically and unconsciously by the I/eye. And yet in the sinking of the Titanic on the night of 14 April through to the morning of 15 April 1912 in the North Atlantic Ocean, many people chose the 'death side' over the 'life side'. Why was that? One can do worse than replying that under the tip of the iceberg of stacks (the bit that you can see floating above the water of consciousness), lies the bulkiest part which is made up of thousands of binaries arranged unconsciously in a magma of stacks, some of which are so lethal that they need to be 'repressed'. Strong binaries such as 'man/woman', 'human/animal' are among the 'killer binaries' which energise contradictions within the stacks. For example, the expression 'women and children first' betrays the intrusion of hierarchies of class and gender, positioning 'male thinking' in a line on progress where 'death' might be the better option.

Usuk. A composite of the US and the UK. To understand it, one has to make sense of the ongoing reconfiguration of political geographies; for example, by imagining that London is, in some domains, more closely connected to New York than to the rest of the UK. Although there are significant differences between the US and the UK, they are also extremely close politically, culturally, militarily, and historically. These two very different countries, one so big, the other so small, walk side by side, usually in violent opposition to one another, inciting one another to ever more dangerous enterprises (e.g. the selling of retail/merchant financial and insurance products and services), perpetuating the struggle of the

Page | 416

opposition only apparently bridged by the English language. In the twentieth century, the level of cooperation between the US and the UK has been described as 'unparalleled' among major powers. In the UK, the media calls it 'The Special Relationship'. For decades there has been talk of the 'Presidentialisation' and 'Americanisation' of British politics. Detractors see Britain as Uncle Sam's puddle.

Usuk is also a borderline concept which takes the 'special relationship' between the US and the UK into another dimension. It is a sinister weapon of mass destruction belonging to two countries with standing armies which has been deployed in the Gulf War (1990-1991) and in the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan in the twenty-first century. These wars have left many bereaved. They have exacerbated the problems in the region and the global terrorist threat. They have belittled the US and the UK internationally and all but destroyed the notion of a just war in protection of human rights. When it comes to psychopathy, shallowness and brutality, British and American foreign policies of the past 15 years take some beating. Ultimately, Usuk is an imaginary union which represents barbarism on an unimaginable scale.

terror/terrorism. A distinction based on the fear/panic/terror magnifying element. In 'terror', magnification is reception-based, that is to say, reliant on the level of absorption of popular culture by the audience. For example, the 9/11 attacks relied for their success on a Hollywood tradition of disaster movies – e.g. *The Towering Inferno* (1974) and *Airplane!* (1980) – which were already known to the audience. In 'terrorism', however, magnification is production-based in the sense that both secret agents and terrorists are encouraged to add more information to their dossiers by fabricating evidence. Sensationalism here is normally related to professional competition and high expectations. Like terrorists, spies tend to hold themselves to unreasonable standards. The fatter, more detailed and salacious the dossier becomes, the higher the chances of the author to aspire to higher salary and a better job within the organisation or even outside it. However, in terrorist organisations, you can find the 'big' psychopathic lie, with its elements of emotion, meanness, and nastiness, working together with the rational, the deliberate, and the strategic.

The above definition of 'terrorism' blurs the distinction between state and non-state terrorism. Traditionally, terrorism has been defined as non-state political violence with a deliberately terrorising or psychological dynamic to it. However, when we look at covert operations by al-Qaeda, Hamas, ETA, IRA and CIA on the one hand, and MI5/MI6, Mossad, FSB on the other, there is enough family resemblance between certain things that they do for us to be able to say that there is something on both sides we can call 'terrorism'. Apart from being 'covert', 'hidden' and 'secret', their use of 'violence' is the other element which (among other perfectly legitimate things that they do to survive) they have in common. But, because both state and non-state terrorist organisations are marked by 'failure', much of their motivation and sustenance comes from both gaining revenge against enemies and tactical successes, such as certain operations they carry of (rendition, for example), gaining publicity, or undermining opponents and their strength within their own political organisation. Both state and non-state terrorist organisations use 'violence' but are dependent on oxygen, fuel and attention from legitimate governments. So they need the state to legitimise that 'violence'. Both state and non-state terrorist groups tend to see themselves as being in a struggle that is a necessary war (say 'war on terror'). And however unthinkable the violence and torture which they carry out may seem to the uninitiated, explaining why they do what they do (say, 'to keep you and your family safe' or 'to keep the English out of Ireland') probably needs us to acknowledge that there is a strong family resemblance between state and non-state terrorist groups.

Another difference between 'terror' and 'terrorism' is that with the former, 'you know it when you see it' (it is a grotesque and in-your-face pornography of representation), whereas 'terrorism' is mainly about hidden networks of power that are very difficult to either see or notice; that is, the state/non-state distinction is binarised – this explains why state-funded secret services that use terrorist tactics, such as CIA and MI6, are not seen or perceived as 'terrorist groups'. Yet the terror/terrorist distinction is too abstract not to be psychotic; it relies on the delusion of a moral code that is common and shared by all members of a psychotic society; it is both 'cultural' and 'un-real': How do you destroy something that doesn't 'really' exist? If you want to understand how to destroy this or that terrorist organisation, whether it is a government organisation using drones (unmanned aerial vehicles) to kill people on their hit list or using remote-control guns to shoot migrants, whether it is a smaller and less technologically prepared group that wants to liberate an 'imaginary' nation from foreign occupation (like the IRA in Ireland and ETA in Spain), you have to look for their vulnerabilities, and to look for their vulnerabilities you have to understand their networks. What we call link analysis or network analysis is the absolutely critical tool in finding covert/hidden networks, terrorists or crime networks, government or secret service networks. How can I find these people or this place? Where are they? Well, these people and their whereabouts can be found using network analysis. Perhaps this explains why IRA and ETA have been infiltrated by the secret services and most of their members have been apprehended by the security forces at one time or another.

Basically, with 'terrorism', you are dealing with people, and people can be found, captured and put in prison, tortured or killed. With 'terror', however, you are not dealing with people, you are dealing with ideas that provoke disproportionate responses by states and societies. Overwhelmingly emotional responses to the killing and maiming of innocent people by terrorists might be morally coded psychotic responses to the One/Many_exception/rule distinction; a reflection of common and shared ideas that provoke social outrage. Yet feelings and ideas are too difficult to pinpoint, too slippery to capture, and too abstract and immaterial to be put in prison, tortured or killed. The history of censorship testifies to the human animal's failure to grasp this obvious distinction.

TOTAL. Following Baudrillard, TOTAL is a new hegemony which is totally 'evil'. Baudrillard says that 'this absolute Evil comes from an excess of Good, an unchecked proliferation of Good, of technological development, of infinite progress, of totalitarian morality, of a radical will to do good without opposition.'[25] TOTAL is the maelstrom that sucks everything and everyone; the integral reality we are in – which cannot be challenged with or resisted by conventional means such as revolution, revolt, civil disobedience, street demonstrations, strikes, rioting, and so on. Because the maelstrom sucks at the vortex, hegemony brings extreme polarisation: unparalleled economic growth driven by improvements in technology and population growth together with extreme poverty caused by the depletion of natural resources and the exploitation of the many by the few – this is the One/Many asymmetrical binary which can be equated with the person/individual distinction in tandem with the exception/rule relationship explored by Kierkegaard in *Repetition* and tied up with the concept of sovereignty by Carl Schmitt in his *Political Theology*. Both extremes tend towards anarchy, which can be understood not as the absence of all order in terms of linear thinking but as a kind of fractal or nonlinear dynamic system driven by recursion – or a(=)a observer-based repetition – rather than by the sovereignty of One/Many_exception/rule.

But the maelstrom of hegemony also has considerable downdraft. It pulls things down, downgrading and devaluing everything and everyone. There are no longer masters and slaves, we are all 'equal' in the sense that everybody is caught up in the digital/internet network and submits to its hegemony. Our relation to hegemony and/or *in* hegemony is similar to our relation to death and physical gravity. It is universal. In/reversed thinking from the point of death is now more useful than thinking in the 'right' birth/death direction. For we are already 'politically' dead. Going back to Hobbes's *Leviathan*, hegemony – being a permanent state of emergency – is very close to civil war, insurrection and the right to resist. Since civil war brings the death of the Leviathan, according to Hobbes, and we are living in a paradoxical political state which could be defined as 'legal civil war' in which the democratic state/government, faced with the gravest kind of internal/external 'terror' conflict splits into domination/hegemony–mask/face–rule-of-law/decisionism, we can safely say that the democratic state is dead; or, if alive, it must be living in a zombie/vampire state. The single, isolated thinker can no longer claim to know what's going on anymore than the organised group of scientists taking samples from every corner of the world aided by powerful computers. One must guess. One must hope. One must gamble.

---

[25] Jean Baudrillard, 'The Roots of Evil' in *The Agony of Power* (Los Angeles: Semotext (e) Intervention Series, 2011), p. 109.