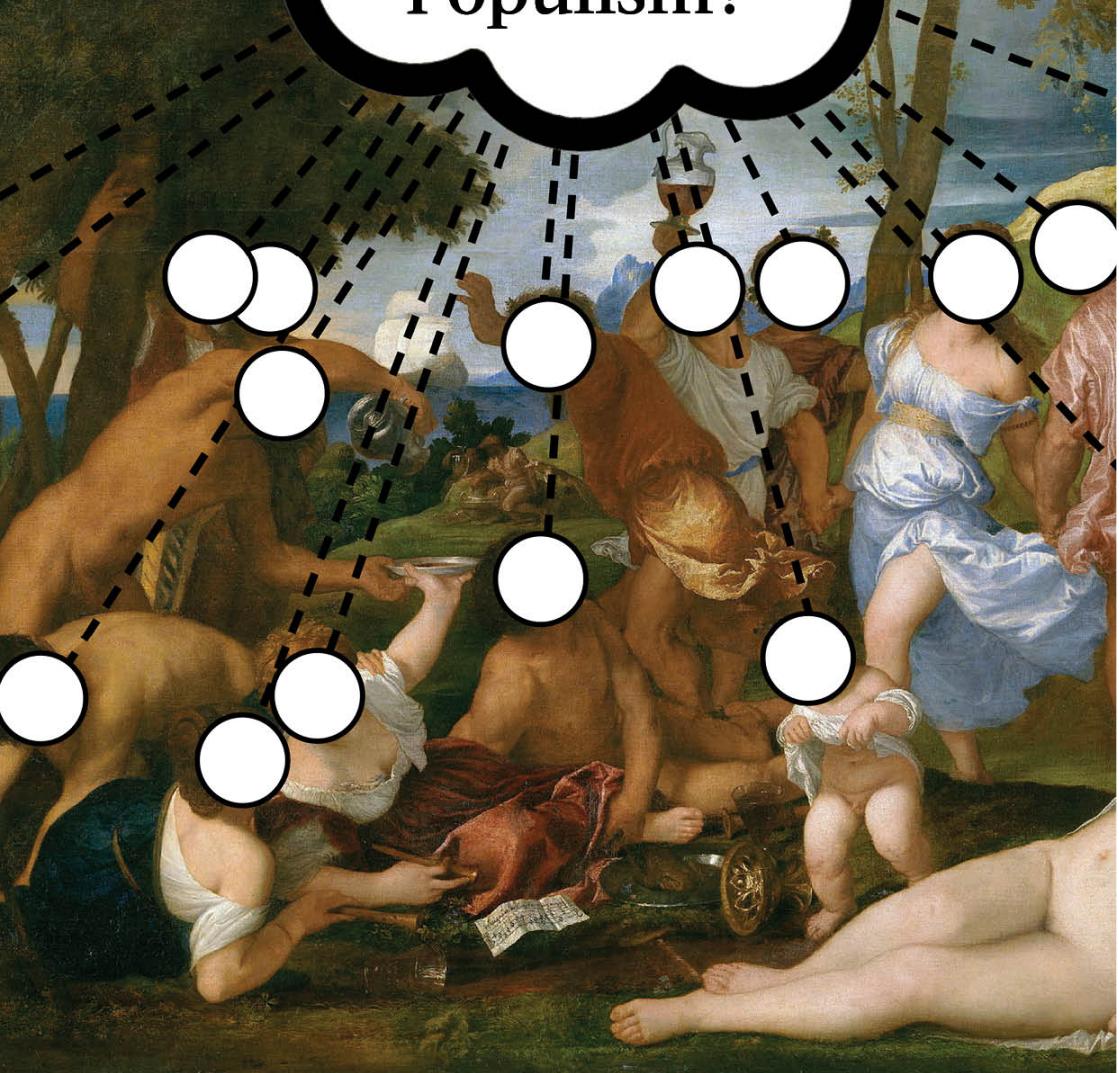


What are Governments in the Age of Populism?



Prologue

*I like to think (and
the sooner the better!)
of a cybernetic meadow
where mammals and computers
live together in mutually
programming harmony
like pure water
touching clear sky.*

*I like to think
(right now, please!)
of a cybernetic forest
filled with pines and electronics
where deer stroll peacefully
past computers
as if they were flowers
with spinning blossoms.*

*I like to think
(it has to be!)
of a cybernetic ecology
where we are free of our labors
and joined back to nature,
returned to our mammal
brothers and sisters,
and all watched over
by machines of loving grace*

- Richard Brautigan, *All Watched over by Machines of Loving Grace*

Introduction

Throughout history, society is trying to find the right system for how to govern the world. Asking the questions who should rule the world? What is the proper role of government? What is more important, individual or the group? What is the relationship between the citizen and the government? Apparently, none of these questions are easy to answer or apply in practice in such a way that it serves everyone equally.

To try and understand the government and political systems, I look back at the more essential ideology, described as the state of nature. Many philosophers had researched how the society looked before it got civilized. A non-governmental society. In the state of nature the case is one, where you have elaborate rights and duties, but no effective means for their enforcement. Each person has natural liberty, but the place where we stand now as a society is far from any essential idea of individual liberty.

Most of the previous systems existing were based on the ideology of collectivism. Whose followers, collectivists, believe that the rights of a group are more important than the rights of an individual. Its strongest tool is propaganda and massive manipulation. From strong nationalistic statements to fake news and creation of pseudo-reality, the promises of prosperity, freedom and national growth, which leaders often bring along them, are the thing that leads the citizen's trust and makes one follow those authorities.

Thanks to technological growth, we've created a new platform that was presented as the space free from any political powers, space where we are all free individuals - the internet. But something went wrong. The internet became a totally controlled collectivist space. The internet, in its many forms, now has features of a state. We are all citizens of this platform and the internet became a strong political, manipulation and market tool. The data privacy terms and conditions - are the internet's biggest move against democracy. This created a shift in power. People that own data, rule the world. My thesis looks closer on the journey from the state of nature into the cyber world, the shift from the citizen to the user, and how the individualistic dream of Ayn Rand turned into a new form on the totalitarian system where we, human beings, became just numbers.

State of Nature

When one refers to a state of nature, it means referring to the individuals without any central authority. A none governmental society. A situation in the state of nature is one where you have elaborate rights and duties, but no effective means for enforcement. Each person has a natural liberty. What happens in many cases is that the balance of power starts to become awkward and individual lives and property are threatened.¹

Many philosophers analysed what state of nature means and what it would have looked like to live in one. The most romanticised hypothesis had Jean-Jacques Rousseau who thought that civilisation did not improve people. Instead they had exacted a terrible destructive influence on the morality of human beings, who had once been good. He explored his opinions in his book "The Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality". Rousseau's arguments are simple. Individuals had once been good but as people had emerged from their pre social state and joined society, they had become plagued by vice and sin. He sketched how it might have looked like at the beginning of history, in his might an idyllic period that he refers to as state of nature. Rousseau saw this period as a time when people had more of an understanding of their own minds, and so being drawn towards essential features of a satisfied life. In his mind, the state of nature was moral and guided by spontaneous pity and empathy. He claimed that moving towards civilisation had awakened unhealthy form of self-love. This destructive form of love had emerged when people moved to cities and they started to compare to others and created their identities based on other people.²



Fig.1. Rubens, Pieter Paul ,*The Bacchanal of the Andrians* [Oil Painting]. (1523-5). Retrieved from https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bestand:Peter_Paul_Rubens_012.jpg

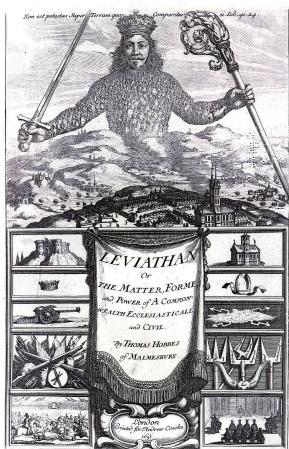
A similar perspective on state of nature also had John Locke. In his book "The two Treatises of Government". In this Second Treatise he discusses the state of nature. He argues that state of nature would have been very peaceful and that in agreeing to submit to governments people have therefore not, fearfully agreed to all their rights.³ What happened is that people possessed a range of alienable or natural rights that no ruler could ever take away. The stronger the grounds for accepting Locke's

¹ "State of Nature." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 14 Nov. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_nature.

² "Review and Analysis: Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 'Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men.'" *The Philadelphia Historian*, 19 Dec. 2014, thephiladelphiahistorian.wordpress.com/2014/12/19/review-and-analysis-jean-jacques-rousseaus-discourse-on-the-origin-and-foundations-of-inequality-among-men/.

³ Locke, John. Two Treatises of Government .. 1772., <http://www.yorku.ca/comminel/courses/3025pdf/Locke.pdf>

characterisation of people as free, equal, and independent, the more helpful the state of nature becomes as a device for representing people.



Thomas Hobbes had a totally different opinion. He characterised the state of nature as a "war of every man against every man," a constant and violent condition of competition in which each individual has a natural right to everything, regardless of the interests of others. Existence in the state of nature is, as Hobbes famously states, "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." ⁴The only laws that exist in the state of nature (the laws of nature) are not covenants forged between people but principles based on self-preservation. In the absence of a higher authority to adjudicate disputes, everyone fears and mistrusts everyone else, and there can be no justice, commerce, or culture. That unsustainable condition comes to an end when individuals agree to relinquish their natural rights to everything and to transfer their self-sovereignty to a higher civil authority, or Leviathan.

Fig.2. Abraham Bosse, *Leviathan* [Engraving]. (1651). Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leviathan_\(Hobbes_book\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leviathan_(Hobbes_book))

Nowadays in society we try to believe that the modern idea of state of nature can be achieved through machines which will create a total democratic system. Unfortunately it only shifted the power from governmental authorities to global economics, technology and internet. We are moving forward to hybrid of machine and organism which Donna Haraway describes as Cyber organism. Cyber organism represents social reality as well as fiction and the technological growth we are already facing. We manifesto shows how attached our society is to technology. Throughout her Cyborg Manifesto she analyses a relationship between organism and machine arguing that machines are becoming more vivid while we are becoming more and more inert. Simple example is a person behind the smart phone. The smartphone is doing all the work while the human is barely moving. The paradox is that machines are more alive while organisms are settling in and becoming objects.⁵



We have come to believe that the hierarchy of power can be replaced by the self organising networks. From internet utopianism to the global economic system and above all the eco system of the natural world. Today we dream of systems that can balance and systemise themselves without the intervention of authoritarian power. But in reality this is the dream of machines. It reflects how they are organised. It has nothing to do with nature. And as a model for human society and for politics it is holy adequate in the face of a powerful dynamic forces that really dominate the world today.

Fig.3. Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* [Film shot]. (1927). Retrieved from <https://josephnechvatal.wordpress.com/2015/08/01/book-review-of-the-posthuman-by-rosi-braidotti/>

Government and Citizen

In order to discuss a government and its role it is important to understand the relationship between government and its citizens. In Giorgio Agamben's book "Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life" a big underlying question is why modern democratic states turn into totalitarian

⁴ Schmitt, Carl, and George Schwab. The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol. Univ. of Chicago Press, 2008.

⁵"A Cyborg Manifesto." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 29 Oct. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Cyborg_Manifesto.

states.⁶ It is important to look at the distinction between Bios and Zoe. Bios means a political life, life in society, social life on the other side Zoe means bare life, animal life, life given by God. We can look at Bio and Zoe as mind and brain, is my mind controlling my body or is my body experiencing my mind. In Roman society Homo Sacer was somebody who was punished and exiled from society. His Bio was removed and he was left with bare life, Zoe. The right to kill or exile someone is a definition of sovereignty. In the age of monarchy the sovereign was the king. It is a typical social structure where the king is the subject and all others are objects. Later the Declaration of Independence changed it and now every man became subject, they were all equal. But sovereignty and right to kill still remains but it is a collective, not individual responsibility.



Fig.4. SA members carrying out a boycott of Jewish shops, [Photo]. (1930). Retrieved from https://www.taringa.net/+imagenes/9-11-1938-la-noche-de-los-cristales-rotos_whpog

citizenship of an individual, they can be killed without committing a crime. Looking at Nazi Germany. It was so important to get rid of Jews citizenships before they would be killed. The state defined by bare life that constitutes it sought to purge the abnormal from its body.⁷

Biology gives democratic states the opportunity to create a Homo Sacer position. The device used by States to expel people to reduce them to bare life is the state of exception. In Agamben's mind the state of exemption is a normal thing that modern states do. It means that a citizens political life, Bio, the only thing that protects him from being killed exploited are being denied or refused is only giving with the understanding that it can be removed if he is placed in state of exemption. Basically what it means is that all your rights can be taken away. Because biology makes the state focus on its citizens as bare life then if you happened to be perceived as a threat to its bare life, your expulsion abuse can be legalised and justified. As modern democracy has this inherent totalitarian control over life it is a totalitarian system of course not as extreme as Nazi Germany but fully capable of becoming so. What why the modern democratic nation-state supposed to deliver equal right to man as in the foundation of its design the ability to deprive those very rights. For Agamben the power to become a totalitarian state makes you totalitarian state.

The intriguing idea that all your rights can be taken away brings the concept of origin of human rights. From the point of individualist ideology where individualists believe that human rights are God's given rights. Human rights comes with each individual when he is born. These rights are not given to us as they are part of us. Collectivist, on the other hand, believe they are granted to us by the state. You do not have rights, you are given rights by the state. This makes a very important difference. If you read the documents of all the totalitarian systems, it says in plain English that the rights are given to you and of course after this statement you have written all the great human rights. So if the state can grant you the right they have every right to take it away from you. A totalitarian control over life.

⁶ Agamben, Giorgio, and Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford University Press, 2016.

⁷ Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, www.iep.utm.edu/agamben/.

Agamben as well as Foucault thought that biology is the emergence of modernity it is a totalitarian ideology in its very nature. The way, how biology measures life, it reduces people to their animal qualities. In a way it measures life of citizens to objects, Zoe. But nation state designates its citizens as subjects, Bios. This is where the concept of Bio and Zoe become combined. In modern state the subject is defined as an object within the system, biological object with political rights. It conceives of itself as made up from the bodies of citizens. The state has a stake in the physical life of its constituents. It is responsible for the health of its citizens. And this is biopolitics. A political control over bare life, which also means political control of death when you take the

Government under populism

Throughout history there was a constant search for finding the perfect way how to govern society. It seems almost impossible to find the right way, maybe because the right way does not exist. All the systems, ideas, beliefs were, in their basic, the same. Looking at the history, there was Communist versus Fascist and they fight wars, but when you examine Communist, Fascism or Nazism you find out there is not that much of a difference between the sides. And you get bigger arguments between Capitalists so called and socialist so called and liberals and conservatives, democrats and republicans, and all these world are flying around and nobody is able to really defend what they mean, they have emotional understanding of them but then you ask them to define the world most of the time it agrees with the dictionary definition and most of the time there is not depth to it, people respond in the way they feel about it. All of these isms are a variant of collectivism. When you look at them closely they are all the same, the same substance underneath if you peel of the label and you ignore the design of the uniforms worn by the military of those regimes and if you ignore the design of the nationalistic flag, you get down to the hardcore of what they believe, you will find that what they believe is exactly the same.⁸



Fig.5. Under the Leadership of the Great Stalin - Forward to Communism[Propaganda Poster].(1946).
Retrieved from <http://guweb2.gonzaga.edu/faculty/brunell/EE%20Stalinism.htm>

Milton Friedman had the ideal perception of a perfect role of government. In his mind the key element was the opposite of collectivism, individualism. To society where individuals have a maximum freedom to pursue their own objectives in any direction they wish as long as it doesn't interfere with the rights of other individuals. Of course also in a society like this, you would need government, but a government with very limited power. The government should protect an individual from coercion and finally to provide a mechanism that would formulate rules that will

⁸ Collectivism is the idea that the individual's life belongs not to him but to the group or society of which he is merely a part, that he has no rights, and that he must sacrifice his values and goals for the group's "greater good." According to collectivism, the group or society is the basic unit of moral concern, and the individual is of value only insofar as he serves the group. As one advocate of this idea puts it: "Man has no rights except those which society permits him to enjoy. From the day of his birth until the day of his death society allows him to enjoy certain so-called rights and deprives him of others; not . . . because society desires especially to favor or oppress the individual, but because its own preservation, welfare, and happiness are the prime considerations."

properly govern. To regard private property, rights of individuals legislative process and as part of that a mechanism for judging differences of opinions. So in a perfect kind of society you have government devoted to the tasks of defence of justice, legislating rules and very little else. The rest would be left to the free individual activities joined together through the operation of private and competitive market.⁹

Very similar opinion shared Ayn Rand. In her philosophy of objectivism, she claims that human beings were lone in the universe and they should free themselves from all political and religious control and live a life for their selfish desire. If they did this they would become heroic figures. If man wants to live on earth his highest moral purpose is an achievement of his own happiness. He must not be forced by other people nor accept their right to force him. Each man must be at the end himself and power his own rational self interest. She predicted a dictatorship and an economic disaster for the United States, if the collectivist trend continues, but she also believed that people do not have to go in that direction, men have the free will to choose and think. If people change their thinking, they do not have to go into dictatorship.¹⁰

Ayn Rand brings the idea of altruism, the care of others as on organising principle of society and she became a great inspiration for Silicon Valley. Many of people in Silicon Valley are greatly inspired by Ayn Rand, entrepreneurs who were building computers, entrepreneurs in biotech, software, internet, networking. For them she represented vision, vision of a moral exciting project.¹¹ The project was about much more than being Rands's hero. The idea was that computer technologies could turn everyone into heroic individuals. It was a vision of the society where the old forms of the political control would be unnecessary, because the computer networks would create a society without central control. Ever since 1970 computer utopian believed that if human beings are linked by computers then together they could create their own mind of order. That was a naive idea of creating a self-stabilising system. The feedback of information between all the individuals connected as nodes and networks would work to create a self stabilising system. The world would be stable and everyone would be heroic, Rand's hero completely free to follow their desires. Of course what happened is that the essential idea of individualism slowly disappeared and we all became fragments of the "uncontrolled" cyber system.

In this cyber system there was created a new model of collectivism, a cyber-collectivist. New threat to our liberties, for this threat is real and imminent. This threat is manifested in policy battles over net neutrality regulation of communications networks; efforts to "save journalism" through a massive infusion of State subsidies; proposals to impose a variety of "localism" or "diversity" requirements on local media outlets; efforts to abolish virtually any sort of copyright / IP protection; and in a renewed war on commercial advertising and marketing, which have traditionally sustained a free, independent press. Cyber-collectivism refers to the general belief that cyber-choices should be guided by the State or an elite class according to some amorphous "general will" or "public interest."

Unfortunately the idea of creating a system without any central control is naive. Looking back at Thomas Hobbes who strongly believed that society needs a ruler, government seems to be true. Perhaps, it is deeply embedded in a human subconscious a need for higher power, leader. Maybe

⁹ BasicEconomics. "Milton Friedman - The Role of Government in a Free Society." YouTube, YouTube, 25 Apr. 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=LucOUSpTB3Y.

¹⁰ Sr, Justin Templer. "The 1959 Mike Wallace Ayn Rand Interview." YouTube, YouTube, 1 Nov. 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouBZ-YqOnsU.

¹¹ In her book "Atlas Shrugged" the government and the state control everything, but one by one, the creative individuals , industrialists, inventors and artist are mysteriously disappearing, they have gone on strike, they hide out in a mountain valley as America falls apart. At the end of the book they reappear and set up to build a great vision of the world to come. The world in which politics disappear, and is based on virtues of selfishness as see called it.

it is impossible to create a system in this world that will function for everyone equally. The world would be always ruled by specific group of people. The only thing that is visibly changing is the power shifts from government and politicians to businessmen and technology.



Fig.6. Robert Cenedella , Fín del Mundo, [Painting]. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.rcenedellagallery.com/content/3064-f%C3%ADn-del-mundo-end-world>

Power shifts, technology growth, cyber system, collectivism, nationalism, all elements, lead to the present trend of collectivism, based on nationalistic beliefs, called populism. Populism is easily applied political belief that the hardworking majority is undermined by a small, elite minority. The populist politicians claim to represent the interest of average working class and unite the population against a common enemy. For a politician like Donald Trump the enemy were immigrants. Most of the citizens tend to follow populists idea because of their lack of trust in traditional institutions.

Populism is always presented with charismatic demagogues as these personality types are often successful at galvanising the masses. The result of the populism was also behind the 2016 Brexit referendum, as many working class Brits felt that globalisation provided by EU was not to their best benefit. For people like Trump the populism is used to tap into voters frustrations with bureaucrats and general distrust of the federal government. The social and economic problems that we are currently dealing with started decades ago and have gradually increased over time. These social and economic problems pushed many voters to embrace radical change. In current situation it is not only Donald Trump as a populist figure. In Europe we are facing the same populist trend. In France it is Marine Le Pen, in Germany there are Alice Weidel and Alexander Gauland, in Holland Geert Wilders and they all fight for similar goals, reducing refugees, rise of nationalism or de-islamisation. The danger of populism is that it has tendency to shift from populism into authoritarianism.¹²

Each populist leader has a great power to manipulate with people and give exactly what the majority asks for. Thanks to the rise of terms such as *fake news* and *post truth*, democratic states have also become a serious part of the propaganda debate. But what does that word actually mean, "propaganda"? And in what way does it give concrete shape and substance to our reality?

¹² Molloy, David. "What Is Populism, and What Does the Term Actually Mean?" BBC News, BBC, 6 Mar. 2018, www.bbc.com/news/world-43301423.



Fig.7. Philipp Foltz . , *Oraison funèbre de Périclès* [Painting]. (1877). Retrieved from https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oraison_fun%C3%A8bre_de_P%C3%99ricl%C3%A8s

Government in the age of populism/ Alternative facts

In January 2018 the white House press secretary Sean Spicer's false claims about the size of the crowd at President Donald Trump's inauguration. He said it was the largest audience to ever witness on inaugurations. By the photo comparison to Obama's inauguration, it was clearly not true. When Chuck Todd asked, Kellyanne Conway, Trump's Counselor, in his interview why the president ask the white house press secretary to tell a provable falsehood, her answer was impressive. Conway said it was not a falsehood it was an "alternative facts". Clearly, Donald Trump is attempting to twist the norms of our democracy to his own will.¹³ The alternative facts shows that there are people in politics who understand that you can create a different understanding of reality you can change politics or anything else.

¹³ "Kellyanne Conway: Press Secretary Sean Spicer Gave 'Alternative Facts'." YouTube, YouTube, www.youtube.com/verify_controversy?next_url=/watch?v=U1Qt6a-vaNM.



Fig.8. Media Manipulation [Photograph]. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/Why-do-people-thank-post-Korea-U-S-veterans-for-protecting-their-country-They-lost-a-useless-war-in-Vietnam-fought-a-useless-war-in-Iraq-and-killed-civilians-The-war-in-Afghanistan-was-somewhat-justified-but-wasn%E2%80%99t-%E2%80%9Cprotecting-the-US%E2%80%9D-border>

Already Socrates knew about power of demagogues. He asked us to imagine an election debate between two candidates, one who was like a doctor and the other who was like a sweet shop owner. The sweet shop owner, a demagogue, would say of his rival: Look, this person here has worked many evils on you. He hurts you, give you bitter potions and tells you not to eat or drink whatever you like. He will never serve you feasts of many and varied pleasant things like I will. As a result, we have elected many sweet shop owners, and very few doctors.¹⁴ Most of the populists are sweet shop owners, they promise you great changes but most of the time it is very temporary solution.

A demagogue is a voice of political manipulation. We had many "great" demagogues throughout history. Edward Bernays studied group dynamics and become the father of public relation. In 1928 he authored the book "Propaganda". He describes how to consciously manipulate the habits and opinions of masses within a democratic society he went on to state that those who harness this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government and are the true ruling power. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind, who harness old social forces and cognitive new ways to bind and guide the world.¹⁵ Modern democratic propaganda, which shapes reality without the general public having the impression that its democratic rights and freedoms are limited. In other words, democratic propaganda has the task of never being visible or recognisable as propaganda.

Perfect example of modern propaganda is Steve Bannon, the former campaign manager of Trump and is also a Hollywood producer. Bannon rejected the progressive-liberal culture of Hollywood and linked himself to radical nationalist movements, including the later Tea Party movements.

¹⁴ Cotton, Jess. "Why Socrates Hated Democracy." *The Book of Life*, 21 June 2018, www.theschooloflife.com/thebookoflife/why-socrates-hated-democracy/.

¹⁵ Bernays, Edward. "Propaganda ." *Robber Barons And Rebels*, 1928, www.historyisaweapon.org/defcon1/bernprop.html.

When we look at Bannon's documentaries that he directed between 2004 and 2016, there is a trumprism in concept form. The obsession with great leaders who have a final battle between good and evil is already central in *In the Face of Evil* (2004), in which Ronald Reagan is depicted as a heroic warrior in the face of communist evil - an evil that is now, in Bannon's eyes manifest in the form of Islam fascism. There is a version of Trump in *The Undefeated* (2011), in which the former Republican Vice President Sarah Palin is central as an epic embodiment of economic nationalism, religious and family values and opposition to Islamism and migration. And the apocalyptic character of Trump's geopolitical provocations is reminiscent of Bannon's latest film, *Torchbearer* (2016), which announces an inevitable final battle between Christian free market nationalists on the one hand and Islamists and progressive secularists on the other. Propaganda art, Bannon teaches us, is not about sending messages in the world as it is: it is about *making worlds*.¹⁶



Fig.9. Trump congratulates White House strategist Stephen Bannon [Photograph]. (2017). Retrieved from <http://time.com/5089028/donald-trump-steve-bannon-cease-desist/>

Our contemporary propaganda struggle is shaped by various performances of power. Each with their own infrastructures, each attempting to shape reality after their particular interests. We can see the particular relationship between power and form. In recent times we have witnessed that propaganda can bring into motion vast geopolitical processes from the Brexit vote to the election of Trump, many examples of the new authoritarian world order. It is important nowadays that we understand propaganda and to analyse different propagandas that shape our world today. But if we also want to oppose them we will need infrastructures of our own, we will need our own narratives to mobilise the imagination to construct a different world instead, for this we need an emancipatory propaganda. Because the core, if we talk about post truth, that there is no reality to return to, there is nothing to go back to, there are only realities that we collectively offer ourselves.

¹⁶Staal, Jonas. "Jonas Staal over Hoe Emancipatorische Propaganda Ultranationalisme En Alt-Right Kan Verslaan." *De Groene Amsterdamer*, De Groene Amsterdamer, 17 Jan. 2018, www.groene.nl/artikel/eis-het-onmogelijke.

The Power Shifts



Fig.10. Loren Carpenter, *Pong Experiment*, [Film Shot]. 1991). Retrieved from <https://1500wordmu.com/2018/when-pong-played-humans>

In 1991 Loren Carpenter, leading computer engineer from California, created an experiment to project the early computer game Pong. Each half of the audience jointly control the paddle on their one side of the screen. If an individual helps up red on their paddle the computer sense would pick it up and the ball on the screen would go down. If they hold up green it went up. But people had to operate it together. Carpenter thought that in this experiment he created society, where there is no hierarchy, where everyone makes their own choice, without guidance, and because people were led by the machine there was a balance between stability and the order. This experiment created a subconscious consensus.¹⁷

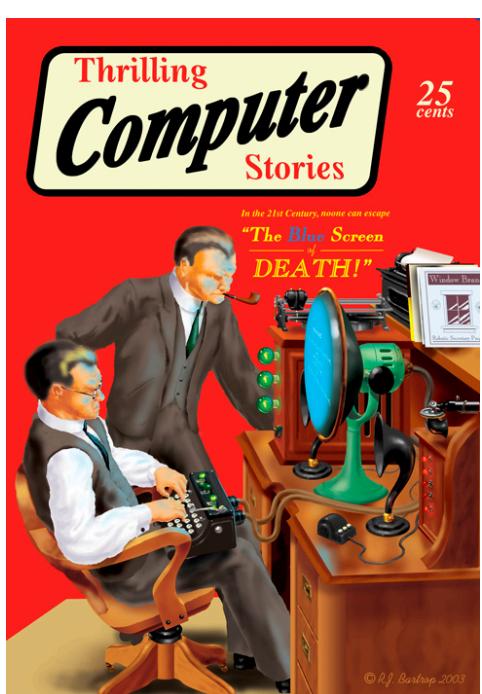


Fig.11. R.J. Bartrop, *The Blue Screen of Death!*, [Illustration]. (2003). Retrieved from <https://www.deviantart.com/rjbartrup/art/The-Blue-Screen-of-DEATH-28270379>

Similar concept was also behind the Californian Ideology.¹⁸ It was a combination between radical individualism and utopian theories about computer systems. Their united vision that the world was one interconnected system, nations and states were irrelevant and politicians should not try to control the system, they should let it free to create a new kind of democracy and the internet is going to spread and create a different kind of global government.

The important person in this new power shift was Alan Greenspan, who was friend of Ayn Rand, became Chairman of the Federal Reserve. He persuaded Bill Clinton to let the markets grow, cut taxes, and to let the markets stabilise themselves with the help of computer technology, to create the New economy. This involved using computer models to predict risks and hedge against them, in accordance with the Californian Ideology. Like Rand economists of the 90's believed in a system of self-regulation, in this instance governed over by computers, which would minimise the chances of financial collapse by carefully monitoring investments and the rise and fall of global markets. It was a belief that ultimately led to a disastrous recession in Asia,

¹⁷ "Loren Carpenter Experiment California 1991." Annotated Captions of Brené Brown: The Power of Vulnerability in English | Dotsub, dotsub.com/view/2ba18e4f-3d43-4abf-85ab-f8b3f7741a90.

¹⁸ "The Californian Ideology." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 10 Sept. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Californian_Ideology.

and in 2008, a similar financial catastrophe in the West.¹⁹

People began to see that the computer networks and the global systems that they had created have not distributed power, they have just shifted it and concentrated it to the new forms. Some of the computer utopians from Silicon Valley were also beginning to realise that the world wide web was not a new kind of democracy but something much more complicated, where power was exercised over an individual in a new, very surprising way.

We are now living in very strange moment we know that the idea of market stability has failed. The Californian ideology's promise that computers would liberate us from all the forms of political control and we would become Raynd's heroes and create our own destiny, turned into total opposite. We became hopeless components of a global system, a system that is controlled by rigid logic, that we are powerless to challenge or change. We moved from the idea of individualism and state of nature into self-stabilising network system and we treat it like existing world.

The Ecosystem of Machines

Sigmud Freud had an interesting theory that the human brain was actually an electrical machine. That all that we get from our senses creates a certain energy that flowed around networks inside of the brain. Just like electrical circles. Arthur Tansley, who was a pioneer in the science of ecology dived into Sigmund Freud's theory. He became convinced that, as the brain was interconnected, so was the whole of the natural world, in networks, *ecosystems*, which he believed were inherently stable and self-correcting, and which regulated nature as if it were a machine.²⁰

The ecology movement adopted this idea and viewed the natural world as systems. It explained how the natural system could stabilise the natural world, via natural feedback loops. Norbert Wiener laid out the position that humans, machines and ecology are simply nodes in a network.²¹ He is talking about how one can link the behaviour of machine and the behaviour of a human through mathematical formula and you if you can module this formula or predict this formula using computers then you end up in the world where humans and machines seem to be one. That we are all now part of universal system link together by informations.

The ecosystem At the end of 1968 group of computer pioneers gave up developing large main frames and instead they would create a way of linking small personal computers in networks. These pioneers believed that in the future the computer networks will allow you to create a society that was created in the communes but in a global scale. Everyone could be free as an individual, not dominated any longer by any old hierarchies or controlled politically. Instead they would be linked together in global system that would find its own natural order. It can do it through the feedback information between millions of people on their personal computers. By the late 1960s the idea of modern nature, the ecosystem, and cybernetics theories about computers had fused together. Part of it had come to an epic new vision of how to manage the world without the old corruption of power. It was an vision that seemed to be different from all past political attempts to change the world, because it was based on natural order.

¹⁹ Kenton, Will. "Asian Financial Crisis." *Investopedia*, Investopedia, 13 Dec. 2018, www.investopedia.com/terms/a/asian-financial-crisis.asp.

²⁰ "Sir Arthur George Tansley, 1871–1955." Tansley and Ecology, www.newphytologist.org/trust/tansley/ecology.

²¹ "Cybernetics: Or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 7 Oct. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cybernetics:_Or_Control_and_Communication_in_the_Animal_and_the_Machine.



Fig.12. View of Biosphere 2 [Sketch.] (n.d.) Retrieved from http://blog.daum.net/_blog/BlogTypeView.do?blogid=0bgfa&articleno=15325&bloghome_menu=recenttext

Tord Bjork, the environmental activist, explained the trick of environmental movement. Claiming that you have something like nature and in nature you have a certain balance and we need a society to have the same balance. Then it becomes unquestionable because you cannot change nature and you cannot change society because society should be the same as nature.²² The concept of nature was needed to protect the system and lead. What began to rise up in 70s was the idea that we and everything else on the planet are connected together in complex webs and networks. What was beginning to disappear was the enlightenment idea that human beings are separate from the rest of nature and masters of their own destiny. Instead we started to see ourselves as components in the system and our duty was to help the system maintain its natural balance. What made this systems idea so powerful was that it did not seem to be based on any political ideology but on a scientific idea of organisation that mirrors the natural world.

But the new a generation of ecologist began to produce evidence that showed that eco system did not tend towards stability. But the very opposite was true. The nature far from seeking equilibrium was always in a state of dynamic and unpredictable change. There was no stability. Hurricanes, tornados, storms or fires, you get disturbance but the nature never came back the same way it was. Disturbance comes along and it resets the system to something new. Dr. Steward Pickett said that the balance of nature is a total illusion and we hold to it so tightly in our culture. Contemporary ecology tells us that we live in very dynamic world and you have to replace the assumption of a balance of nature and you have to get rid of the myth. The scientific bases had fallen away but the ideologist vision of self- organising system continued to grow.

In the early part of this century the idea of self- organising network remerged in was seem to be its original radical form. Beginning of 2003 a wave of a spontaneous revolutions ran through Asia and Europe. In each case hundreds and hundreds people floated to capitals of Georgia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and they forced the old corrupt leaders from power. In all these cases no-one seemed to be in charge. The internet played the key role. It brought millions of people together to create revolutions that had no guiding ideology except to desire for self determination and for freedom. But as in all revolutions that new sense of freedom lasted only for a moment. What we often forget in the optimism of revolution was what it really happened in the original experiment of the communes.²³ They all failed, lasted no longer than 3 years, some for less than 6 months. What made them fall apart was the very thing that was supposed to be vanished, power. People in communes discover that some people are more free than the others, strong personalities started to dominate the weaker members of the group but the rules of a self organising system refused to allow any organised opposition to it. The failure of the commune movement and the faith of the

²² "All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace - Episode 2 - The Use and Abuse of Vegetational Concepts." Vimeo, 5 Aug. 2018, vimeo.com/groups/96331/videos/80799352.

²³ "Commune." Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 28 Nov. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commune#United_States.

revolutions show the limitation of the self- organising model. It cannot deal with the central dynamic forced by a human society, politics and power. The hippies took the ideal of the network society because they are disillusion with politics. They believed that this alternative way of ordering the world was good because it was based on the underline order of the nature but this was a fantasy. In reality what they adopted was an idea taken from the cold and logical world of the machines.

Now we are all disillusioned with politics and the machine organising principles became the ideology of our age. What we are discovering is that if we see ourselves as components in the system it is very difficult to change the world. It is a very good way of organising things even rebellions but it offers no idea of what comes next. And just like in the communes it leaves us helpless to those already imposed in the world. We moved from Rousseau idea of the essential state of nature towards artificial intelligence where we do not support the right of individuals but used them in the system as Zoe, bare life but we replace and govern them by machines. But what is the world we live in? The Internet seems to be a new world where we all play a role of citizens, we have our number, personal date, communication, entertainment and rights.

The states as a cloud platform

The Internet is a \$11 trillion US economy, globally. It can be called post-national economy, of it serves specific individuals. Internet is like populist demagogue. In the beginning it promised to bring freedom, stabilising system, a ground free from religious or politics. As it often happens with populists they turn into authoritarianism. Now it seems like the hardest job to liberate a society that lives in the internet era where everything is connected through massive networks and is overshadowed by the “cloud.”

The cloud was first made possible by an incremental rise in computing power, server space, and trans-continental fiber-optic connectivity. It is a product of the global (information) economy, enabling a digital (social) marketplace on a worldwide scale. A “cloud” of networks situated between routers linked up by Internet Protocol (IP). But it wasn’t until 2004 that the notion of “cloud computing” was defined by Google CEO Eric Schmidt:

I don’t think people have really understood how big this opportunity really is. It starts with the premise that the data services and architecture should be on servers. We call it cloud computing—they should be in a “cloud” somewhere. And that if you have the right kind of browser or the right kind of access, it doesn’t matter whether you have a PC or a Mac or a mobile phone or a BlackBerry or what have you—or new devices still to be developed—you can get access to the cloud. There are a number of companies that have benefited from that. Obviously, Google, Yahoo!, eBay, Amazon come to mind. The computation and the data and so forth are in the servers. Google, one of the world’s seven largest cloud companies, has recently compared itself to a bank. That comparison is apt. If data in the cloud is like money in the bank, what happens to it while it resides “conveniently” in the cloud?²⁴

The internet thanks to the cloud became the biggest source of personal informations that can be easily sold or misused. Security expert Bruce Schneier says we must “take back” the internet: “Government and industry have betrayed the internet, and us ... We need to figure out how to re-engineer the internet to prevent this kind of wholesale spying. We need new techniques to prevent communications intermediaries from leaking private information.”²⁵

The online world is a new form of collectivism that leads to a totalitarian system with a total control even thou it was created as a democratic platform disconnected from politics or economy. Internet became a new form of a state. We can look at the people on the internet as a live in territories. They have citizenship. But this feedback loop doesn’t activate political agency. No one talks about political revolution, but the “Twitter Revolution” makes headlines in mainstream media. In the Netherlands you

²⁴ “Search Engine Strategies Conference.” Google Search, Google, www.google.com/press/podium/ses2006.html.

²⁵Schneier, Bruce. “The US Government Has Betrayed the Internet. We Need to Take It Back | Bruce Schneier.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 5 Sept. 2013, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/05/government-betrayed-internet-nsa-spying.

have a DigiD governmental system. Your DigiD consists of a username and a password of your choice. With your DigiD you get access to hundreds of Dutch government websites. Government authorities use the BSN, as a unique personal number, to communicate with citizens and improve (electronic) services. This Dutch system is great example of the online citizenship. If the internet holds the power over your citizenship and personal data there is nothing to stop it from a totalitarian power.

It looks like we have no control over our societies, the governance of almost every aspect of our lives has been relegated to centralised authorities that have entirely disjoint value systems from the general public. The internet has more power than any political regime we ever had. We became prisoners of the internet with no clear idea how to liberate the internet again. The spectacle of technology needs to be unleashed to further the ends of those who wish for a way of their own, rather than rule over others. People are real. The internet is not. One of the ironies of planetary scale computation and mainly the challenges that it brings to the traditional sovereignties of the modern nation state is that on one hand global cloud platforms take on the role and provide services that have traditionally been provided by the state. But it does not mean that the state is somehow virtualising and going away. The states themselves become cloud platforms. One example where we can see this is the way in which we used to call traditional media shift in term of their relationship to their state sponsors.

Conclusion

The idea to become a Ayn Rand's hero brought us to a new system that is far from equality and individual freedom. It's called neoliberalism. Those ideas include economic liberalisation policies such as privatisation, deregulation, free trade and reductions in government spending in order to increase the role of the private sector in the economy and society. Neoliberalism came to us under the banners of democracy and freedom, but in fact, it denies all its principles, and even is unable to guarantee respect for human rights, as it rejects the principles of solidarity. The consequences of neo-liberalism in the form of social inequality, the collapse of the ecological system, and the collapse of international order, are creating more and more security threats. The uncertainty created by these threats, as well as the general disappointment of people from cowardly lives, have already awakened from the grave the classic fascism with which neoliberalism can eventually merge, and thus create a new, yet unknown form of authoritarianism.²⁶ Also, by removing the influence of the state, democracy will eventually collapse, as sooner or later the market will dominate corporations, and consequently nothing will stand in the way to privatise the weak state and create totalitarianism.²⁷

The result of removing the state in its classical form the modern networks are trying to recreate something that is in many ways similar to state. Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook, presented his plan to connect the entire world under Facebook platform. Facebook's mission is: "To give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected. People use Facebook to stay connected with friends and family, to discover what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them." ²⁸ It is a great populist promise but it has its own grand project. To turn the human world into one big information system. But the imperative to "connect people" lacks the one ingredient essential for being a good citizen: Treating individual human beings as sacrosanct. To Facebook, the world is not made up of individuals, but of connections between them. The billions of Facebook accounts belong not to "people" but to "users," collections of data points connected to other collections of data points on a vast Social Network, to be targeted and monetised by computer

²⁶ Chomsky, Noam. "25. Neoliberalism and the End of History - Part 6: Populism & Big Data, Facebook Dark Posts." YouTube, YouTube, 16 May 2018, www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEUo2faDJNA.

²⁷ Harvey, David. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. W. Ross MacDonald School Resource Services Library, 2014.

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/pg/facebook/about/>

programs. The data privacy is an internets biggest move against democracy. Data created a shit in power. People that own data rule the world.²⁹

Everything suggests that the most difficult struggle for democracy is waiting for us, struggling with a system that has declared itself to be an integral part of it, but in reality denies it. So, those who protect democracy will be the names of her enemies, but if we remain faithful to democracy values and remain uncompromising within her boundaries, then we must win, because every tyranny must end once. Everything is in the mentality of people. We have to wake up as the human species. We should become our own leaders. That might be the next step forward. The question is do we really need leadership? If we need leaders that suggests we are infants and we are not capable of making mature decisions ourselves. The role of leadership in society should get reduced.

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²⁹ Farrell, Henry, et al. "Mark Zuckerberg Runs a Nation-State, and He's the King." Vox.com, Vox Media, 10 Apr. 2018, www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2018/4/9/17214752/zuckerberg-facebook-power-regulation-data-privacy-control-political-theory-data-breach-king.

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