FLUID GEOGRAPHIES / RISKY TERRITORIES
LAND & SEA
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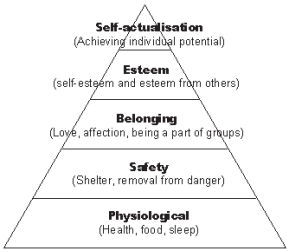
The Appearance of the Border

Paul Virilio states “who controls the territory , possesses it.” The relationship between the two words, possession and control needs clarification. Possession is the state of having, owning or controlling something and control is equal with the power of influence on direct people’s behaviour or on the course of events.

Human nature was always strongly based on the notion of possession with the combination of rapacity. Since human capacity itself became too low to take ownership of certain things without any support, a constant need for technological inventions - in order to soothe human hunger for control - appeared. The text investigates the chances for a paradoxical phenomenon where the overload of necessary tools / devices while supporting us in the “taking over control” procedure - by opening new platforms for extrinsic manipulation - makes us actually loose the control.

Possession out of control, the need for positioning

Hypothesis.: There is a need for a position in time and space not only for ourself but also for the object of possession in order to be able to have control over it. Sea is not positionable in space and the image is not positionable in time for the human brain. They change real-time.



1. An interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs
2. The realization or fulfilment of one's talents and potentialities, especially considered as a drive or need present in everyone.
3. "Rare, exciting, oceanic, deeply moving, exhilarating, elevating experiences that generate an advanced form of perceiving reality, and are even mystic and magical in their effect upon the experimenter. " There are several unique characteristics of a peak experinece, but each element is perceived together in a holistic manner that created the moment of reching one's full potetnial. (Maslow, Abraham (1968). Toward a Psychology of Being. New York, NY: Van Nostrand-Reinhold.)
4. I can...: Statements of ability show how a person identifies themself in terms of what they can do. This can be anything from assertion of rights to skills and career item.
I have...: Possessions say a lot about a person. Some possessions in particular are strongly related to how people define themselves, such as cars, clothes and cameras. Another very strong 'have' item is about family and people will talk in particular about their children.
I like... : We associate our identity with the things and people we like. This when a person says they like flying or like a particular rock group, they are connecting their self with these and including associated concepts into their identity.
I am...: The verb to be associates any concept very closely with identity and this can be used to connect

Possession as a tool for finding identity

Abraham Harold Maslow, American psychologist is best known from his diagram, called the hierarchy of needs.[1] He believed - as other humanistic psychologists - that every person has a strong desire to realize his or her full potential, to reach a level of "self-actualization [2]". His theory was informed by studying mentally healthy individuals who were trying to self-actualize themselves. As a result he states that on one hand a person enjoys "peak experiences" when he/she is in harmony with himself/herself and with his/her environment and on the other hand the amount of "peak experiences" [3] during the day depends on the status of the individual' s self-actualization.

Maslow depicts the spectrum of human needs starting from the more basic to the more complex ones in the pyramid diagram. The hierarchy starts with food, health and sex as physiological needs and it continues with the "safety needs": security, order and stability. These two steps play important roles in the physical state of the individual. The 3rd and 4th level focuses on the psychological state of the person as love and belongings, self-esteem, confidence and respect. In order to be able to climb up on the pyramid , control and also the "sense of control" is necessary. We often use verbal tools in our sentences for rationalising our status on the pyramid.[4] From an evolutionary standpoint, the more we are in control of the environment, the higher our chances also to survive.

If Maslow 's theory about the necessity of self-actualization is true which is determined by the amount of peak experiences during the day where this number is dependent on one's position in the pyramid where control and the sense of control are the tools for climbing upwards, we can easily bring parallel connections between the self-actualization and the precision in self-positioning in time and space. When we talk about possession we mainly focus on the 3rd step of the pyramid (belongings) which deals with the psychological state of the person. The flip side of possession is loss. When we own things, then we fear loss. When we lose things, the identification

effect makes it feel like we are losing a part of ourselves, making this an uncomfortable experience. So we hold tight, worry about security and, in our jealous possession, push others away who seem envious. Possession can also lead to confusion as we constantly have to check that all we have is still all we have.

other types of identification item. This can include emotions (I am happy), career (I am an accountant), religion (I am Buddhist), social position (I am popular) and so on.
I remember....: We also identify ourselves through our memories and any form or recall, especially of personal and emotionally significant events, younger days and other nostalgia offers further clues to a person's sense of identity. (Maslow, Abraham)

Technology, the tool for possession

In order to have proper control over something we need to place ourselves into a state which includes the (A)sense of certainty, the (B)completion of outstanding things, the (C)understanding of how things work, the (D)ability to predict what will happen and the (E) understanding of consistency between people and things.
As mentioned before, the human brain has its own limits. The first domain where it is losing its special status is the calculation. Computers today are billions of times ahead of it in their speed and breadth of number crunching. Also its mental „central executive" is strongly limited. It can process only one thought at a time, at a meager rate of five or ten per second at most. Human brain is a parallel organization which means that it is a very slow serial processor. The „attentional blink"paradigm explains that whenever the brain is into the processing of one object, it becomes literally blind to other items that would require its attention. Other than that, it also suffers from an „illusion of seeing". While it makes us feel that it can perceive the whole visual scene and see it all at once ,actually the image can be changed surreptitiously. Our brain's combinatorial faculty only works on small number of core systems for number,space, time, emotion, conspecifics etc. And even in these areas it has some issues like in the brains number system where it gives only the sense of approximate quantity.
The discovery of these limits of the human brain defines new ways for machine design which can go beyond them. (Some would say that by the time human operator will be considered from asset to nuisance.) These machines play important roles in achieving the requirements for proper control over our environments.
Domains where our brain maintains apparent superiority are visual

recognition (superb face recognition software get close to human performance though), smooth navigation through a complicated 3d space, semantics and creativity (human ability to make sense of a story and to pull out relevant knowledge from a huge store of potentially useful facts). Creativity is maybe the biggest power, the human brain can proceed uniquely. The fact that it can find the coherence between different part of certain patterns without the need for huge amount of examples (Machine learning[5]) is something that should be emphasized .(-)

In order to be able to use the human brain for pulling out relevant knowledge from that huge storage of potential useful facts, it should first collect those facts by using technological tools, called :devices[6].
A Device can be analog or digital. They are able to categorize and systemize, to correct, to define positions without the notion of „relativity". They can place things precisely onto a domain between 0 and 1 without having another point for comparison. (The biggest strength and weakness of human beings is that they can only perceive things in the world of relativity and this notion creates the broadest platform for manipulation[7].)
A Device filter[8] (remove, select and reorganise) data. We have to distinguish though between the „old" and the „new" data. The old data is representation of visual reality and human experience while the new data is numerical data. Mainly because of this transformation, most of the operations – done by the device – can create several versions of the same object. For example an image stored as matrix data can be manipulated and altered according to the additional algorithms implemented, such as colour inversion, grey-scaling, sharpening, rasterizing, etc. Because of the same reason, information (data pattern) can be customized in any cases.(-)
"In order to understand the effect of the device on the database we have to understand the relationship between data, information and knowledge. „Data is collected and analysed to create information suitable for making decisions, while knowledge is derived from extensive amount of experience dealing with information on a subject...Data becomes information by interpretation...It is people and

5. Machine learning explores the study and construction of algorithms that can learn from and make predictions on data. Such algorithms operate by building a model from example inputs in order to make data-driven predictions or decisions, rather than following strictly static program instructions.
6. Device: a thing made for a particular purpose;an invention or contrivance, especially a mechanical or electrical one.
7. Media Manipulation is a series of realted techniques in which partisans create n image or argument that favours their particular interests. Such tactics may include the use of logical fallacies and propaganda techniques, and often involve the suppression of information or point of view by crowding them out, by inducing other people or groups of people to stop listening to certain arguments, or by simply diverting attention elsewhere.
Data Manipulation:
Any open-world manipulation must (by definition) be performed from outside the closed system associated with the DataSpace, and thus will be based on the reason the DataBase exists. This reason will involve either or both of: Reflection -- making sure that the information in the DataSpace is consistent with some external world Projection -- where the data defines the world, albeit a virtual or simulated one, so updating the data updates the world Any closed-world manipulation will have a purpose grounded in computational costs because one may neither gain nor lose real information and continue calling the manipulation closed-world, and thus will be either or both of: Inference -- creates more value from existing data. One might use induction or deduction to obtain valuable information from less-valuable data (e.g. in response to a query), or attempt to shift anticipated computational costs from a time

computers who collect data and impose patterns on it. These patterns are seen as information which can be used to enhance knowledge. These patterns can be interpreted as truth, and are authorized as aethetic and ethical criteria. Events that leave behind perceivable physical or virtual remains can be traced back through data. Marks are no longer considered data once the link between the mark and observation is broken." (Wikipedia_ Data, information, Knowledge)

A device does not produce data. It is the information already - a strict pattern which is not defined by us - what it creates. It follows a preset logic given by a third system to prepare a ready-made structure. What we get is one step closer to the knowledge which can be gained.

A device manipulates data. The data gets modified. In our world everything becomes a collaboration between human and device. For that reason the focus should be on the analyses of the factor of our consciousness during such collaboration. The investigation of the „third-system" which controls the device becomes crucial and also necessary. It is important to pre-map its (third-system) possible purposes and goals even when there is no ultimate truth. Human 1 uses machine in order to control his/her environment. The machine controls (manipulates) human 1 by pre-patternizing data and providing only information. The machine is controlled by human2 who has access to its brain and can set the rules for the data patternization. Human 2 controls human 1. The more abstract the object of possession becomes the more devices we need to collaborate with. The more devices are involved in the procedure, the higher the chance for additional manipulation and externally controlled information gain. (The more machines, the more controllers).

While considering such effect of the use of devices there is another danger which we should look at. The addiction towards the use of machines can make our body disabled without. The human need for possession invoked technology in order to achieve its aims but meantime it became also dependent on it and the machine turned to be essential for our world. As Virilio says, the world where technology plays such a role create a new world proper in favour of a virtual[9] world...

when they are more expensive to a time when they are less expensive (e.g. in anticipation of a query). The latter could include performing induction or deduction ahead of time, but also includes such things as indexing, which is a form of inference in the sense that it adds a data-object (in particular a meta-data-object, the index) to the database.

8. Filter: in optics and photography, a device to remove or to enhance certain ranges of wavelengths(colors) of light. In Chemistry, a device (usually a layer or membrane) that is designed to phisically block certain objects or substances while letting others through. In mathematics, a higher-order function that processes a data structure (typically a list) in some order to produce a new data structure containing exactly those element of the original data structure for which a given predicate returns the boolean value true.

9. Virtuality: the quality of having the attributes of something without sharing its (real or imagined) physical form.Not physically existing as such but made by software to appear to do so.

10. Christiaan Huygens, Dutch mathematician patented the first working pendulum clock in 1656 and later devised a watch regulator called a balance spring.
11.timeandnaviagtion.si.edu
12.Wikipedia_Navigation

Possession of the sea

As investigated above, self positioning in space and time is one of the key elements required for possession and control. Since the human brain can only process in the relative world and it is not able to keep units and to define coordinates without reference points in time and space, our devices from early on are focusing on solving such problems. The appearance of the clock which by dividing time into equal units makes it also measurable and by that makes positioning in time possible. The compass whose magnetized metal needle aligns itself with the magnetic field of the earth, causes one end of the needle to point north and by that provide a constant reference point for positioning in space. If we would translate the latter example to a numerical language we could say that while we are constantly positioned on the domain 0-1 with the compass we can define the point (or direction) we are moving towards but never our exact position. Even if we find more points to refer to or if we have the chance to experience and memorize the whole path of the domain we could only have a better guess regarding our position. To define where we are we need a new device which pre-unifies the domain and is also able to detect us on that grid. Which works like a clock. It divides space into units inside units to get closer and closer to the absolute location.

Navigation on the sea has a long history. Early sailers relied on dead reckoning- estimating a new position based on knowing a ship's last position, speed, and direction but over long distances, it was subject to ever-increasing errors. With the invention of angle-finding instruments (celestial naviagtion), finding latitude became easier but till the appearance of the seaworthy clock was never perfect. Till the 1700 finding the latitude became routine but positioning on the longitude was mostly guesswork. In order to improve precision, astronomers invented both a good clock and a good sextant. [10]

In the 19th century the Chronometer movement started, made by John Roger Arnold. Chronometers were precise, specialized clocks for finding longitude at sea. In 1838 the United Stated dispatched an ambitious mission. The expedition broadened knowledge of

uncharted areas of the world and helped expand American commerce, industry, and scientigic knowledge. [11] Today most modern navigation relies on positions determinded electronically by recievers collecting information from satellites. Others use LOP technique (crossing lines of position) or radar navigation uses a radar to determine the distance from or bearing of objects whose position is known. Driving future system planning is based on electronic integrated bridge concepts. Integrated systems take inputs from various shop sensors, electronically display positioning information, and provide control signals rewuired to maintain a vessel on a preset course. The navigator becomes a system manager, choosing system presets, interpreting system output, and monitoring vessel response. [12]
The sea itself does not provide reference object. Its size and geometrical monotonity brings us into a timeless space where our vision is constantly framed by its adabtable borders. We can only rely on a series of analog and digital tools which help us to detect those necessary reference points in the 3 dimensional invisible space.

"The loss of nothing: It is useful to return to an even more extreme formulation of technological impact – the theories of Paul Virilio, in which the technological possession that was the groundwork for Kroker's „possessed individual" becomes fully debilitating. For Virilio, it is no longer simply technological „extension" or „possession" that is the result of new technology, but a body that is literally disabled, rendered redundant by a climate of technological perception. In the formulations of Virilio, the eye no longer sees, replaced by a technological gaze that sees in more detail, in more depth, with more understanding. The technological gaze opens up to macro and micro levels of vision, from telescopic to microscopic, from virtual to panoptic. The technological eye sees everything, rendering the human eye functionally obsolete. Mediums without messages – what goes for the eye, goes for the entire body in a technological world. The skin is the discarded symbol of lost humanity and, for Virilio, the result is a spectral body fully conquered by the force of technology:"New technologies are responsible for the loss of both the body proper

in favour of the spectral body, and the world proper in favour of a virtual world. ...Technology is colonizing the human body just as it colonized the body of the Earth. But perhaps this is how the medium of possession has always worked , and the possessed body cab be quickly and easily forgotten because of the attraction of its newly extended form. Perhaps there has never been a body proper, and the body to which Virilio refers was already virtual. "
(Hiebert, Ted: In Praise of Nonsense: Aesthetics, Uncertainty, and Postmodern Identity)

Ownership of the virtual(visual)

The statements of Paul Virilio saying „the image has taken over the power" and Guy Debord: In a consumer society, social life is not about living but about having; the spectacle uses the image to convey what people need and must have. Consequently, social life moves further, leaving the state of „having" and proceeding into a state of „appearing";namely the appearance of the image - Once this becomes so important for the society there is an urge for the investigation of the object of possession which is transforming from physical to visual (virtual). We have a need for possessing the image. "An image worth a 1000 words"[13].The image is not still and silent, its power is in the ability for circulation as a result of the easy application of different device filters it is highly manipulatable and customizable. Filters modify the image and the appearance. The more modifiers (tools) we use on the image of appearance the more its loosing connection with its prior purpose - the representation of potential qualities. The visual becomes stateless and can operate with constant change. The amount of tools which are applied on are complicated to count and follow. It is loosing its position in time and space which are the mentioned criteria for proper control. The image is space- and time- less in our physical world. It operates in a different dimension where the bridge remains purely contextual. The context is the only tool for defining its position which remains subjective, relative. We are living in the world of relativity. Devices, tools we invented

13. Hiebert, Ted:
Flesh Shadows & Cool Technology First Meditation: On Technological Paradox
There are images that are not images, or rather they are but the plurality is required. Images are worth a thousand words, it is said -- once -- a simple assertion of the limitations of meaningful language which must then always defer to the possibilities of the image. Always paradoxical, if an image is worth a thousand words, should we not be able to articulate at least several of these? But what then of the representative power of the image? A thousand representations mashed-up into the same pictorial space? Representation multiplied, breeding further representations of their own, each fostering another conceptual image and a thousand more words in the process. It's a wonder that meaning was ever invented to begin with. Screened in and screened out, and both at the same time. /delirious screens

helped to bring us to the world of objectivity. They translated the relative measures into fixed units. Technology used to be a support for positioning but today its main role turned to be modification and manipulation. We are loosing track and the sense for overview. It is more and more difficult to zoom out and summarise. We start to live in disconnected micro worlds.

The sea is the unsummerizable collection of images, visual world where if we find an island after the long struggle, being lost in the overview less system we just start to treat it as the whole world and don't realize that it is just a tiny piece of land, only the small part of the whole we used to have before we left it for the sea.

The fear: The image/sea instead of being only the tool for providing information about the content it becomes the focus of our interest of possession while manipulation takes over the main role of technology and transforms the image/sea into a contentless content.

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