

ALGORITHMS AND THE (NEW) CULTURE INDUSTRY

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Antonio Gramsci (1971) underlined the fact that the capitalist hegemony was not merely constructed through repressive instruments but also by means of cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie. Likewise, Adorno and Horkheimer (2002) claimed that, in modern societies, culture has become a part of the ideological apparatus. Along with the Fordist mass production and consumption paradigm, culture industry was characterized by standardized cultural goods in every “sector” of culture. Following the structural crisis of 1973 and the transition to the Post-Fordist paradigm (Piore & Sabel, 1986), culture industry and the audio-visual production in particular, experienced a fundamental transformation, diversifying its product range, customizing and individualizing its goods targeting different consumer groups. In accordance with the new paradigm, while video games as personalized audiovisual experiences became popular, television channels were rapidly diversified to attract different spectator clusters in 1980s with the backing of the new cable TV technologies. Cultural consumerism in contemporary digital platforms are characterized by even more flexible specialization, further individualization, commodification and diversification like in the example of Netflix providing personalized digital TV services (Shapiro 2020). Thanks to “data behaviorism” treating the big data obtained by way of the users’ behavioral surplus (Rouvroy & Berns, 2013) enabled the manufacture of individualized cultural goods which further incites the users’ consumptive drives, promising easy pleasures founded on the individuals’ psychological consciousness shaped by ideology. Against this background, this paper focuses on the increasing use of artificial intelligence and algorithms in the culture industry in a period of transition from Fordism to Post-Fordist paradigm, with a view to revisit Frankfurt School’s critiques of mass society, in the context of the contemporary digitalization of media. With a focus on Netflix, operating through algorithmic behavior analyses, it stresses the contemporary relevance of Frankfurt school in its critique of the individualization, specialization and the oxymoron of the ‘mass individual’. Overall, the paper aims to think together Frankfurt School’s critiques of mass society and contemporary analyses of digitalized media.

Following his major BS degree in “Industrial Engineering” and minor degree in “Philosophy of Science and Logic” at METU in 2006, **Ömer Ersin Kahraman** obtained his master’s degree in “Science and Technology Policy Studies” at METU in 2010. During his studies at METU, he took Video Production courses from Thomas Balkenhol in GISAM (Audiovisual Systems Research Center). His documentary film “Kurban (Sacrifice)” he prepared within the scope of these courses was projected in Istanbul Short Film Festival in the competition section in 2006. Between 2008 and 2009 he worked in Nancy Aye Aye Film Festival in France for a year and organized a special screening day for the short films from Turkey as a part of the festival. During his BS and MS studies, he took an interest in the problem of consumerism. Accordingly, in 2011 he started his PhD thesis at Rennes 1 University in order to investigate the problematic relationship between the rationalism and the excessive consumption phenomena in the occidental societies. In 2015 he defended his thesis “Consumable Freedom” he wrote under the supervision of Prof Catherine Colliot-Thélène and obtained his PhD degree with the mention of “Très Honorable” (High

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