

HOMO CYBERNETES: IN SEARCH OF AN AIM

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This paper deals with the basic features of life-space which has been decisively shaped by information technology, as well as with the dominant attitudes towards the opportunities and limitations that information technology brings. We will address the issues of the quality of public discourse, of alienation, creativity and solidarity. We discuss the possible consequences of the global homogenisation and of the cultural historicities, which are being promoted by information technology. On the positive side of this 'global culture of the present' we will illustrate a possible increase in global solidarity and on the negative side, we will illustrate the flattening and shrinking of the space for human experience, which this uniform culture of the present imposes.

Keywords: information technology, public discourse, time, alienation, creativity, homogenisation, solidarity.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the basic features of life-space created by contemporary information technology. It also deals with the various attitudes towards the opportunities and limitations this life-space offers and imposes. In section 2 we will discuss some of the pragmatic aspects of life in the world pervaded and shaped by information technology. We will speak of the noise that dominates contemporary communication space. We will also discuss the quality of public discourse and the possibilities of new freedom and we will discuss the new limitations that information technology may impose on us. In section 3 we will discuss the three traditional attitudes towards life - the aesthetic, the moral, and the religious - and these will be considered in the context of the opportunities and limitations created by information technology. We will argue that despite an values the aesthetic and the religious attitude may have, the information age needs - and should promote - primarily a new *moral sensibility*. In section 4 we will deal with the *global homogenisation* of the space of human thoughts and behaviour, and we will deal with the new *culture of the present*, created and promoted by information technology. Among the positive tendencies that the *homogeneous culture of the present* that could be promoted we will illustrate the possible increase in global human solidarity. The basic drawback of such a global culture could be precisely its globality; namely, the new technological culture overpowers all other visions in relation to which it could evaluate its own state and results, while at the same time shape new visions of the possible human future.

The issues discussed in this paper were the subject of a survey carried out among a group of students of the University from Rijeka (Croatia). The issues were presented as short theses,

each followed by a few questions. The theses and questions were arranged into a questionnaire, and put on an interactive Web page. A hundred randomly chosen students from the departments of Informatics, Pedagogy and Mathematics were invited (by e-mail) to visit the Web page and take part in the survey; 43 of those invited answered the questionnaire. By taking into account the fact that those students who were invited could be expected to be personally interested in the issues the survey dealt with, the response was slightly lower than we expected. We think – and when we talk to the Students later they confirmed our suspicions – that the relatively low response to the survey is primarily a consequence of the fact that these with ‘invitations’ and ‘offers’ we are permanently targeted; with are used for too much such a saturation creates not only a sort of indifference but also an active resistance on the part of the recipients. The results obtained by the survey are not presented here in detail, but are used primarily as (partial) confirmation or rejection of the specific positions presented and discussed in the paper.

2. MASTERING THE MEANS

The computers used nowadays ‘will evolve’, says E. Fredkin from the MIT AI Laboratory: ‘intelligent computers will design others, and they’ll become smarter and smarter’. With such a progressive increase in computer intelligence, it becomes ‘difficult to imagine’ how ‘a machine that’s millions of times smarter than the smartest person’ could still be ‘our slave, doing what we want’. The most we could hope for in the future, says Fredkin, is that such machines ‘may condescend to talk to us’, or perhaps that ‘they might keep us as pets’ [3, p. 1]. Fredkin’s prophecy should be considered a sort of playing with words rather than a prediction (or speculation) based on the present state of the art equipment involved in computer science. A criticism of such prophecies is given in [11] and [12], and we will not deal with this issue here. However, we will take Fredkin’s statement here as a sort of invitation to discuss the basic features of the technological age, and we will also use it to illustrate the opportunities and dangers it brings. In this context the problem of ‘slavery’ does deserve our full attention; however, this is not because machines could become ‘millions of times smarter’ than humans (and in turn, be our masters), but because they already are millions of times *faster and more productive* than humans are. Hence, unless we find a way to limit the absolute dominance of the information industry, we could indeed gradually slip/fall into a new form of ‘slavery’ and be under the rather dull but omnipotent and omnipresent master created by ourselves. Let us consider some specific issues which deal with the present situation and to the current tendencies.

2.1. Communication and Noise

The concept *signal-to-noise ratio* designates the ratio between the magnitude of a useful signal and the magnitude of the unwanted noise generated by the system which produces and emits the signal. The development of information technology has been accompanied by the steady *diminishing* of the signal-to-noise ratio in our communication space. In other words, our life-space is becoming more and more noisy. To overcome the noise and to penetrate the defensive barriers of the targeted subjects, senders of messages are compelled to make their messages louder and louder, and more provocative. In their attempts to ‘raise their voice’ above the level of global noise, they create more and more noise; and *aggressiveness and vulgarity* increase alongside the noise, and this means that our life-space is becoming more and more ‘crass’ [13, p. 103]. Let’s say that among the participants in our survey, 37 per cent hold the above description of contemporary communication space to be completely accurate; while 51 per cent find it partially accurate, yet 12 per cent do not think there is anything

wrong with the present communication space.

One of the specific problems of the information age, the increase in *Attention Deficit Disorder* (ADD) has been reported; ADD manifests itself as the loss of the ability to remain concentrated on any specific subject for more than a few moments. E. Schwartz calls ADD 'the official brain syndrome of the information age', and according to Shenk, 'we may be on the verge of an ADD epidemic' [13, p. 36]. Kearney reports that since the appearance of multi-channel televisions with remote controls 'less than 50 per cent of American children under the age of 15 have ever watched a single programme from start to finish' [9, p. 1]. Therefore, the spread of ADD was not started by the massive use of computers; however, the Internet's *hypertext style* of organising information seems to be the right thing to do to make the situation worse.

2.2. Public Discourse

More than half a century ago, it was announced that television would provide a 'truer perception for the meaning of current events, ... and a broader understanding of the needs and aspirations of our fellow human beings'. However, television has been used mainly in promoting 'consumerism, political apathy, and social isolation' [13, p. 60]. The history of television illustrates an example of the radical discrepancies between the opportunities created by the technology and the ways these opportunities are being used. Hence, despite the huge advances in information technology, it seems that the present 'cizenry' is 'no more interested or capable of supporting a healthy representative democracy than it was fifty years ago, and may well be less capable' [13, p. 68]. There are probably far more reasons for this state of affairs than those that can be mentioned here. Let's take a look at one of them. The news industry is compelled to compete with the entertainment industry; consequently, it tends to produce a mixture of news and entertainment, rather than offer complete information about the events which are relevant for people locally or for the global society. *News reporting* is gradually being replaced by *news making*: the attractiveness of an event became more important than its real relevance, and perhaps it also become more important than its objective presentation. Consequently, there are claims that the news industry, rather than promoting a general understanding of relevant events, increases the general distraction of the people, and with that it contributes to the degradation of political and social discourse.

The positions of the participants in our survey are not as pessimistic; namely, *all* of them hold that the information industry does increase the general level of the fact that people are being informed. However, only 23 per cent think this increase is essential, while 77 per cent think it is only slight, because information has become a *commodity* whose basic aim is not to increase understanding, but to be attractive and entertaining so that it can be "sold successfully".

2.3. Privacy

There are specialised companies which deal with collecting of the all available data about individuals and social groups. By using this they can form a *consumer profile* for each individual and for each specific social group. The Internet created new possibilities for data collection. For example, there are profile-making companies which register and process every message posted to any of the *Usenet groups*, and on the basis of the content of these messages, they form consumer profiles of their authors. On the basis of such profiles, marketing companies can directly address possible consumers with offers shaped in accordance with their consumer profiles. Such profiles are (allegedly) being made and used only for marketing purposes. However, the same or similar profiles can be used in political or

personal contention of any sort, and also against anybody. In any case, such data collecting is - or can easily lead to - a serious violation of privacy.

There are various proposals for resolving the problem of protecting privacy. In essence, these proposals could be reduced to the following basic request: *all* companies and agencies should be prohibited by law from using information they find at in the framework of their specific activities for any other (unauthorised) purposes. In other words, 'information collected for one purpose should not be used for another purpose, unless and until specific permission is granted by the individual involved' [13, p. 209]. However, it would be difficult to implement such a request, and it is not clear who could have enough power *and* interest to do so. In the meantime, by threatening our privacy, the information industry will continue to threaten our basic human rights.

Among the participants of the survey, 7 per cent believe that data collecting does not threaten their privacy, 54 per cent believe that it does, but not essentially, 19 per cent believe that it threatens their privacy essentially, 20 per cent do not have an exact opinion concerning this matter because they do not have any insight into the scope and ways of data collecting, nor do they understand the (possible) ways one could use them. Whilst considering the use of consumer profiles, as well as considering the various mailing-lists containing addresses obtained by data collecting, most of the participants in our survey (72 per cent) do not believe it is acceptable that companies and agencies send e-mails to persons who did not *ask* to be included in their mailing-lists, while 12 per cent find this sort of advertising acceptable; 16 per cent do not have an exact opinion concerning this matter.

2.4. The Trap of Upgrading

Our life-space is getting more and more complex, and this means that each of us is able to *operate* a lesser and lesser part of it, and it is even more difficult to *understand* the ways it functions 'under the surface'. For example, a thorough mastery of any software product is becoming more and more difficult because of the incessant 'upgrading' of such products; new products are overloaded with capacities that hardly anybody needs, but these capacities make learning and using the product more demanding. Sometimes it seems as if producers have forgotten what the *real purpose* of the specific product was; however, upgrading proliferates primarily because it is profitable to the software producers, as well as to the information industry in general. Namely, an upgraded software product usually also requires additional hardware capacities, as well as new manuals and training of the users.

As a reaction to such situations, a movement called *voluntary simplicity* appeared, with the aim of exploring and promoting a simpler ('sustainable') lifestyle in a world increasingly dominated by technology (cf. [4]). The movement advocates the use of the simplest means (devices) that could can successfully perform a function or accomplish a given task. The idea of simplicity seems sound and welcome, by itself. But the technological age promotes and imposes the use of *uniform* means and methods; to be able to 'function' in the technologized world, one is compelled to behave in a way which is *compatible* with the global system (an *upgraded*, system, of course). Hence, it is nearly impossible to follow the idea of simplicity without excluding oneself from the production and social system. And most of the people cannot afford it; consequently, we can consider ourselves captives of the technological progress. We should mention that 95 per cent of the participants in the survey noticed the resistance towards technology in their own environment, and 19 per cent of them feel such a resistance personally, while only 5 percent did not notice any resistance towards technology.

3. MEANS AND ENDS

Technology emerged as the result of human needs, and because of authentic human creativity. On the other hand, technology itself - as a *means* - provides major new opportunities for expressing authentic human creativity. However, in the present age, technology is often considered not only a means but also the *supreme end* itself. There are claims that technology - besides giving enormous power and freedom to humans - is the embodiment of a *supreme harmony and beauty* that could ever be created or encountered by human. 'The disappointment with the ends yields to a fascination with the means', says Borgmann [1, p. 62]; however, as far as the ends are concerned, things have long since ceased to be simple. Indeed, besides the notorious - but rather vague - ideas of 'happiness' and 'eternal bliss', humans were hardly ever able to specify (and especially to pursue) a commonly acceptable end. Now we shall look at some of the typical attitudes concerning the means and ends.

3.1. Searching for the Timeless

Technology has radically shortened the time necessary to produce a certain object, to reach a certain place, or to create some situation/state. By taking this feature of technology as the most important one, Simpson holds that the 'central goal of technology is to *stop the clock*, to de-realise time', and with that, to bring us 'closer and closer to being immortal' [14, p. 23]. Unfortunately there is no way for a finite material being to 'come closer' to infinity. However, technology creates new possibilities *with dreaming, for creating, and for destroying* - it intensely *engages* and with that it brings humans closer to *being oblivious* to their own limitations. A human, as a finite conscious being, who is driven by anxieties and cravings, is a *paradox* in the heart of the indifferent, unattainable and inevitable; hence, what humans really search for is not simply 'more time' but a *way out* from this paradoxical state.

Searching for a relief from the tension which stems from their paradoxical condition, humans have created various 'opiates', from myths and religions to science and technology. Such opiates have practical functions in the organisation of a social life and production; however, it seems that their opiate effects exceed their practical functions. Opiates generally create a state of *ecstasy* in which the awareness of time disappears. Fraser [5] lists the basic kinds of ecstasies, together with the opiates which cause them. The most widely known among these ecstasies/opiates are the *ecstasy of dance*, the *ecstasy of chalice* (created by the feeling of the presence of all that is sacred), and the *ecstasy of the mushroom* (caused by means of drugs). It seems that we can add to this list a new kind of ecstasy - the *ecstasy of the immediate* - which has been created by the products of information industry. Namely, these products keep us permanently engaged with the *timeless present*, and in that way they raise us 'above time'. However, as with every other kind of ecstasy, the ecstasy of the immediate also has its drawbacks. The abandonment to the immediate weakens and tends to eliminate the authentic human desire to discover and of understand the *lasting* in the transitory and ephemeral - to discover the Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in the transient world and in humans themselves. By seeking refuge in the immediate, humans narrow their horizons and deprive themselves of their most authentic and, perhaps, most sublime possibilities.

3.2. Searching for the 'Focal Thing'

Borgmann points out the lack of 'focal things' and that 'focal practice' in the technological world has been reduced to mere 'efficient functioning'. He describes the focal thing as a sort of psychological fixed point in the transient world; a focal thing is something

'concrete, tangible, and deep, admitting to having no functional equivalents' and the focal practice is 'the resolute and regular dedication to a focal thing' [1, p. 219]. According to Borgmann, technology did not arise out of a 'founding event' which would have a 'focal character' (as traditional religions did); hence, technology cannot be a true focal thing. And humans *do need* focal things. By taking up some thing and practicing it as focal, humans obtain 'clear and principled answers to life's endless and distracting demands'. By concentrating in one's own life on an 'ultimate concern', a human experiences a feeling of 'clarity and liberation', so that he or she is 'no longer caught up in having to reach other people's expectations' [1, pp. 214-215]. Borgmann is aware of the dangers of *fanaticism and inhumanity* which appears when 'the narrowness of the goal commits violent acts on to the breadth of human capacities' [1, p. 214]. However, his discourse about focal things and practice does not pay sufficient attention to the question of the *possible kinds* of 'resolute commitments' which could be socially acceptable and desirable. Moreover, his discussion itself looks exactly like a sort of resolute search for a 'narrow goal' which could lead to a 'clarity and liberation', but which could at the same time lead to fanaticism and inhumanity.

Among those thinkers who deal with the problem of the human need for a 'focal practice', the most famous seems to be Kierkegaard. He speaks about three possible attitudes towards the human existence: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. According to Kierkegaard, the aesthetic attitude extols human creative imagination and *passion for the possible*, driven by an unbounded desire. The ethical attitude sets limits on the freedoms and passions of the aesthetic kind. Ethics confronts us with a *responsibility* towards others; it moves our 'ultimate concern' from unbounded freedom to universal obligation. Finally, the religious attitude transcends both the aesthetic and the ethical attitude, with a resolute *leap of faith* towards God. Kierkegaard cannot offer a positive rational justification for such a leap, a real leap of faith can only be committed out of a feeling of the absurd, and under the pressure of anxiety and craving. Kierkegaard holds that the aesthetic and ethical attitudes cannot satisfy the most profound need of human beings, and hence he made (and required) this leap into faith. He takes Abraham (who responded to God's call to sacrifice his own son) as an exemplary figure of about *man of faith*. However, it is hard to believe that a faith of Abraham's kind could bring much good for humanity, because this sort of faith is rather close to fanaticism. And fanaticism seems to be especially dangerous in the technological age, when the massive 'sacrificing' of sons and daughters has become far easier than it was in the time of Abraham.

3.3. Searching for Beauty

A human must become *an artist* who freely shapes his or her arbitrary existence in an absurd world into a *work of art*, holds Nietzsche. We must transform life and existence itself into an *aesthetic phenomenon*, and with that render them enjoyable, despite the horrors which are inherent to life and the world. Nietzsche acknowledges the fundamental anguish of human beings (on which Kierkegaard bases his philosophy), but rejects a salvation-bringing 'leap' into a 'faith'. To be able to reach and to express their supreme possibilities, humans must face existence in all its terrifying and magnificent nakedness. Nietzsche reversed Kierkegaard's evaluation of the three basic attitudes: he holds the *aesthetic* attitude as the highest expression of human existence, which radically transcends the (traditional) ethical and religious attitude. He considers the unlimited human imagination to be that power by which humans can and must create their own world of values and truths, and in that way experience and express an endless multiplicity of possible states and meanings.

On the level of *means*, the technological age offers excellent opportunities for the

aesthetic way of human existence. However, Nietzsche's invitation to vigorous *dance* above the abyss of the absurd, although admirable by itself, should be considered one-sided because his 'dance' does not pay enough attention to *real* human abilities and limitations. His attitude (or fantasy) neglects human suffering and the destruction that an 'unbounded imagination' can bring about (as modern history has in fact shown). It seems that not many people can transform their own existence into a 'masterpiece' of art. On the other hand, in a world from which the very idea of the *lasting and profound* (which binds and bounds) has been expelled, the unbounded 'dance' of poor artists has a far greater chance of taking us into a new captivity than leading us towards a new freedom.

3.4. Searching for Goodness

According to Greek mythology, the art of creating things (*techne*) was bestowed upon humans by Prometheus (together with the art of fire). However, humans lacked the *art of social life*, so they used this skill - and the newly-gained power it brought them - to committee crimes and injustices against each other. Therefore, *techne* proved insufficient in itself. Zeus punished Prometheus for what he did; but fearing the total destruction of the human race, he also sent Hermes 'to impart to men the qualities of respect for others and a sense of justice, so as to bring order into ... cities and create a bond of friendship and union' [10, pp. 319-320]. Therefore, Plato points out how perilous it may be to extol *techne alone* to the level of a supreme value. The current state of affairs in the technological age shows that even though technology delivers us from many of the constraints of the *given* (natural) world, at the same time it tends to enslave us into a *created* (artificial) world in which we face new constraints and limitations. Moreover, there are claims that the information industry brings with itself problems/difficulties for the very civilisation from which it emanates. Namely, the products of the information industry are constantly weakening - and tend to eradicate - the *subjective inwardness, referential depth, historical time and narrative coherence*, and these are considered the essential features of the human experience. Whilst considering such tendencies, Saul Bellow claims that 'the expanding empire of mindless *light and noise*' created by the information industry threatens 'the very basis of Western civilisation' [9, p. 321].

The *present surface play* has seized the consciousness of the contemporary human. Such flattening and shrinking of the human experience threatens the very basis of Western civilisation, which springs from the authentic human desire to discover and understand the *lasting* in the superficial, transient and ephemeral. The only way to improve the present state is to promote *ethical sensibility* in a world which has given up the search for Truth and which has lost its way in the search for Beauty. The inclination towards unbounded play with the possible should be bounded by the ethical feeling for the suffering and dignity of others. We must (re)discover that beyond the play of images there are real human beings who suffer and struggle, live and die, hope and despair. The awakening of such feelings, even if of no direct use to those towards whom they are actually directed, could be the first step towards a new consciousness which exceeds empty surface play and 'resolute commitments'. Understood as a demand to respect human needs and dignity, *ethos* does not contradict *techne*; moreover, taken as the supreme principle, *ethos* allows for the possibility that *techne* itself attains the splendour of its original promise. Indeed, according to the classical vision with which we started this section, *techne* and *ethos* should join in the unique practice of *poiesis* - the practice that aims towards creating the good and the beautiful.

4. TOWARDS A NEW HUMANITY

We have concluded that the power of technology should be limited by moral sensibility. In this section we will argue that technology by itself *promotes* a moral sensibility in the global human society. But such a promotion may also have its drawbacks.

4.1 Technology and Homogenisation

Technology has an enormous impact on the way people perceive the world and themselves. The increasing presence of information technology in the professional work fields, as well as in a person's private life, means that people all over the world spend an increasing amount of time in essentially the *same local environment*, thinking and acting in a similar way, independently of the differences between the specific cultures to which they belong. For example, to use a text editor, an operating system or a Web browser, a person working with a computer in Guatemala and a person using the same (or similar) thing in Mongolia must think and act in essentially the same way (determined by the means in question) which is independent of the differences between the cultures they belong to. In this way information technology promotes a *homogenisation of the space of human thought and behaviour*. Such homogenisation has been intensified by computer-based communication systems (the Internet), which introduced massive *personal communication* between people all over the world. With the homogenisation of the global life-space, specific cultural traditions and ideologies (that are usually hostile toward each other) are gradually losing their absolute dominance over the individuals that belong to these social traditions. In this way technology makes people all around the world ever more similar and psychologically closer to each other (despite all the local and global antagonisms).

Information technology promotes an image of itself as being the dominant form of communication. An image expresses a message almost instantly, and crosses linguistic, cultural and political borders far more easily than the printed word ever could. By promoting graphic communication, information technology has made an essential contribution to the development of a new *global culture of the present*. By concentrating on the present, this new global culture has dislocated itself from 'history' i.e. "history" that was understood as a set of stories about the past, created by and written about specific social groups. Hence, we can say that the culture of the information age is *ahistorical*. Such a cultural ahistoricity could be an essential step towards the development of the *global human community*, because it seems easier to establish co-operation and to promote solidarity between people 'without history' than to do this between people strongly bound to the different (and usually antagonistic) cultural traditions and histories.

The homogenisation and ahistoricity of the contemporary world also means that prompt some concerns arise. A culture can be evaluated by comparing with other cultures, however, in no age was there ever a dominant culture or ideology that was prepared to accept impartial comparisons of this kind. In this regard, the global culture of the present is not an exception, it dominates the present life-space, and pays little attention to those voices that do not approve of the current situation and tendencies. And in the absence of different visions or when different visions are suppressed, *every* culture shows a tendency to deviate towards some extreme situation.

4.2. Communication and Solidarity

Science and technology are not dogmatic; every scientific theory is open to criticism and refutation. The same holds for technology, since its products are transitory and of passing

value. It could be expected that for them to have a radically different impact on the relationships between social groups than the traditional religions and ideologies often had. However, this modesty of the spirit of science and technology has *not* made life in the modern age less violent and destructive than it was in previous ages, on the contrary, the twentieth century has been considered the most violent period in human history. Does this mean that the creative and destructive inclinations are equally authentic and *equally powerful* features of human man? Currently we do not have a definite answer to this question; but this question deserves special attention because technology creates great opportunities for creation, as well as for destruction. A question closely related to this concerns the *impact* information technology has on creative and destructive inclinations. Among the participants in our survey, 26 per cent believe that information technology stimulates creativity and diminishes the inclination towards destruction, and 14 per cent believe that this technology has the exact opposite effect, while 60 per cent believe that technology by itself does not have a major impact on human inclinations: technology only intensifies the *effects* of human inclinations and activities, and it intensifies the creative and the destructive inclinations.

Although values are often claimed to be relative, there is a value which almost nobody negates: *solidarity*. However, solidarity has always been limited to the members of one's own racial, national, religious, political, group or some other type of group: to some it is limited to 'us', and it is almost always limited against some 'others'. This kind of solidarity does not lead towards a minimisation of the destructive conflicts between social groups. Can we really hope that the homogenisation of the global life-space, and the intensive communication between people all around the world, could gradually enlarge the range of 'us' to include the *whole of humanity*? Among the participants in the survey, 85 per cent believe that homogenisation and intensive personal communication could lead to a new global solidarity, and 15 per cent do not believe in such a possibility because homogenisation and communication do not remove the real sources of conflict.

5. CONCLUSION

Humans are no longer mere dwellers of the world created by god(s), but they have become creators of their own world. Hence, it has become more important than ever to evaluate the good and bad sides of the world we create, as well to evaluate the good and bad sides of the worlds we destroy. Information technology seems to be the most complex and the most impressive creation in human history. Indeed, our age created impressive *means*; but do the humans of our age have anything to *say* that would be worthy of such means? Are the means the only impressive thing our age was able to create?

Humans are restless creators who are prone to become captives of their own creations. Technology delivers us from many of the constraints which are inherent in the natural world; but at the same time, technology tends to enslave us in its own desensitised world of light and noise. Have the people of our age irrevocably abandoned themselves to a life in the shallow and noisy immediacy, deprived of clear aims and direction? Or are humans still capable of sublime aims and great excitement? And of *what sort* of aims and excitement? Such questions deserve much more public attention than they are receiving these days.

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HOMO CYBERNETES: U POTRAZI ZA CILJEM

Sažetak

Članak se bavi temeljnim osobinama životnog prostora kojeg presudno oblikuje informacijska tehnologija, kao i sa dominantnim stavovima prema mogućnostima i ograničenjima koje informacijska tehnologija donosi. Bavimo se pitanjima kvalitete javnog govora, otuđenja, kreativnosti i solidarnosti. Razmatramo moguće posljedice globalne homogenizacije i kulturne historičnosti koje promiče informacijska tehnologija. Kao pozitivnu stranu te 'globalne kulture sadašnjosti' ističemo moguću porast globalne solidarnosti; kao negativnu stranu, ističemo pljoštenje i sužavanje prostora ljudskog iskustva, koje ta uniformna kultura sadašnjosti nameće.

Ključne riječi: Informacijska tehnologija, javni govor, vrijeme, otuđenje, kreativnost, homogenizacija, solidarnost.