

KADİR HAS ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
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THE POST-HARAWAY CYBORG IN SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

ÖZGE TURGUT

Eylül, 2012

# THE POST HARAWAY CYBORG IN THE SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT

ÖZGE TURGUT

İletişim Bilimleri Programı'nda Yüksek Lisans derecesi  
için gerekli kısmi şartların yerine getirilmesi amacıyla  
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teslim edilmiştir.

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“Ben, Özge Turgut, bu Yüksek Lisans Tezinde sunulan çalışmanın şahsıma ait olduğunu ve başka çalışmalardan yaptığım alıntıların kaynaklarını kurallara uygun biçimde tez içerisinde belirttiğimi onaylıyorum.”

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Özge Turgut

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE POST-HARAWAY CYBORG IN THE SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT**

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Master of Arts in Communication Studies

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Eylül, 2012

Cyborg has always been a metaphor of a subject in the world that is defined in technological contours. Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto has been accepted as cult text in cyborg studies from different realms of thought. In the era of new media technologies the “new subjectivity” is increasingly defined as cyborg thus this thesis aims to define the post Haraway cyborg as a metaphor to discuss the contemporary subjectivity due to its similarities and differences from Haraway's cyborg. While analyzing numbers of cyborg films and television series produced after 2000, this thesis argues that our cyborgization is a byproduct of the society of enjoyment. This symbiotic relation between cyborg and the society of enjoyment has been discussed in the light of the Lacanian cultural critics like Todd McGowan and Slavoj Žižek.

Keywords: Post Haraway Cyborg, Society of Enjoyment, Lacan, Haraway.

## ÖZET

THE-POST HARAWAY CYBORG IN THE SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT

Özge Turgut

İletişim Bilimleri, Yüksek Lisans

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Sayborg teknolojik konturlar içerisinde yeniden tanımlanan özne için kullanılan bir metafor ola gelmiştir. Donna Haraway'in Sayborg Manifesto'su farklı düşünce pratiklerinde yer bulan sayborg çalışmaları için kült bir metin olarak kabul edilir. Yeni medya teknolojileri döneminde, yeni öznellik artan bir biçimde sayborg olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma Haraway sonrası sayborgu güncel öznelliği tartışmak üzere bir metafor olarak, Haraway'in sayborgu ile farklılıkları ve benzerlikleri üzerinden tanımlamaya çalışmaktadır. 2000 sonrası üretilmiş çeşitli sayborg sinema ve televizyon dizilerinin incelenmesi ile bu tez sayborglaşmamızın eğlence toplumunun adeta bir yan ürünü olduğunu tartışmaktadır. Eğlence toplumu ve sayborg arasındaki simbiyotik ilişki Todd McGowan ve Slovaj Žižek gibi Lacancı toplum eleştirileri ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Post Haraway Cyborg, Society of Enjoyment,  
Lacan,Haraway

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## INTRODUCTION:

*A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction.*

*This experience is a fiction and fact of the most crucial, political kind...*

*By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs (Donna Haraway 1991).*

Donna Haraway has claimed our cyborgization in 1991. In her Cyborg Manifesto she defines a position, in which the diffusion and the effects of technology have already begun to determine new conditions of life and of subjectivity. Considering this as an ongoing reconstruction Haraway wrote the manifesto as a political call to take the opportunity from possibilities and potentials that such reconstruction provides. It was an optimistic belief sparked from Haraway's conception of the cyborg as a metaphor that is crucial to reveal the dissolution of the binary oppositions, discriminatory hierarchies, and pre-constructed, taken for granted definitions of the Western tradition of thought.

The manifesto “is an effort to build an ironic political myth faithful to feminism, socialism, and materialism” (Haraway 1991). Nevertheless, this thesis, written from twenty years after the manifesto aims to elaborate the post Haraway phase, in which a cyborg subjectivity has not realized Haraway’s socialist feminist hopes, on the contrary it has become integral to global capitalist society. That is to say that our cyborgization has fostered “the society of enjoyment,” the term that Todd McGowan uses to define contemporary American society.

Todd McGowan in his book *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (2004) describes the prevailing society that commands enjoyment in the era of global capitalism from Lacanian perspective. He suggests that as a result of the decline of the symbolic authority, the imaginary prevails in the society of enjoyment. I believe this is the condition of the post Haraway cyborg that is contrary to Haraway's suggestion has not led to the liberation of the subject but has been confined in the imaginary. Thus I argue that Haraway's vision is optimistic because she has suggested that the hybridity of cyborg signifies its subversive power against the patriarchal authority and binary oppositions, which would flourish revolutionary possibilities. In other words, in this thesis I attempt to argue that Haraway was right to point out the decline of the symbolic authority although its consequences have not led to the emancipation of the subjects as Haraway foresaw but led them to be more deceived by and confined in the imaginary as McGowan reveals in his theory of “the society of enjoyment.” Therefore, in order to elaborate the post Haraway phase in terms of our “cyborgized” subjectivity that has a symbiotic relationship with the prevailing “society of enjoyment” I will define and contrast these two specific theories in the first two chapters to specify the base of my argument. After a brief explanation of these theories

as departure points, I will try to discuss through the examples of contemporary cyborg films and daily practices of contemporary subjects that cyborg has become integral to the society of enjoyment. To point out to the relation between our cyborg subjectivity and the society of enjoyment I will analyze Jonathan Mostow's movie *Surrogates* (2009), which I believe ironically reproduces our subjectivity and the contemporary society due to the effects of new media and mobile technologies; Neil Burger's film *Limitless* (2011) portrays the desire of the contemporary subjects of the society of enjoyment; and a series of other films and television series that produced after 2000 to exemplify the relationship.

Although it is widely accepted as a motif of science fiction, Sue Short, in her book *Cyborg Cinema and Contemporary Subjectivity* (2005) defines cyborg cinema as a distinct subgenre of science fiction. In this thesis I adopt to this understanding of cyborg films as a definitive cycle even though I have not limited myself to the cinema. That is to say that the term cyborg is considered in a wider concept in this thesis. Due to this understanding of cyborgs this study will analyze clones, cylons, cybernauts, intellectually or physically improved beings, androids, and robots. From this perspective I have included a series of films and television series that are produced after 2000 because this is the period, in which that kind of broadened cyborg imaginations have been popularized again as a result of the intervention of new media technologies and increasing scientific research on genetics and cloning.

## CHAPTER 1

### DONNA HARAWAY'S CYBORG

Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, , And Socialist Feminism in The Late Twentieth Century" has been accepted as a cult text (Penley and Ross 1990; Franklin 2002) that has been bred to many other works about cyborgs, cyberculture, and other intellectual realms. As a socialist feminist, Haraway asks multidisciplinary questions from heavily politicized point of view to suggest the cyborg as a useful tool to reconstruct the conceptions of the traditions of Western science and politics that is "the tradition of racist, male-dominant capitalism; the tradition of progress; the tradition of the appropriation of nature as resource for the productions of culture; the tradition of reproduction of the self from the reflections of the other" (Haraway 1991: 150-151). Her later works have continued this effort to take responsibility in the construction of the confused boundaries that had been established by the Western tradition. For instance in *Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (2003) she suggests the word "natureculture" to define dogs. By doing this she claims that nature and culture is not oppositional terms. So, it is a truism to say that starting with the manifesto, Haraway continuously tried to underline the reconstruction of culture and the nature split. But in the Cyborg Manifesto, as she points out, she offers a technostrategic discourse in the Reagan era of the post-Second

World War of America (Haraway 2003). The fact is that the manifesto belongs to a specific time and her motivation was derived from the heavy militarization of technology. Haraway states that the manifesto was the first piece that she wrote on a computer. This fact reveals the condition in which Haraway has felt the irreversible diffusion of the technology into daily life. While experiencing her own cyborgization with her computer she understood how it changed capacities and abilities of the subjects thus she points out that the body, the life, the meaning of being human, etc. have already changed with the influence of the technology. In other words Haraway observed the constant changes in the context of a technologically and scientifically advancing world and her manifesto is a call to be involved, to take a stance in the reconstruction that process offers. “At an extremely deep level, nature for us has been reconstructed in the belly of heavily militarized, communications-system based technoscience in its late capitalist and imperialists forms” Haraway says to Penley and Ross in her interview<sup>1</sup>(1990: 6). From this point she suggests “to be inside the belly of the monster, trying to figure out what forms of contestation for nature can exist there” (Penley and Ross 1990: 7). I think this kind of move is not a reproduction but it is a call for deconstruction. She names it as a reconstruction, in which she has inhabited cyborgs critically.

I would like to remind you that with the help of post-structuralism, the instability of meaning has been declared and thanks to Derrida that we know there is no fixed meaning; when we look for a meaning of a word all we have is another signifier in the signification chain. Similarly unstable layers of meaning have been attributed to

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<sup>1</sup> The interview has published in *Social Text*, 1990. But this, also with others, has been published in the book *Technoculture* (1997, [1991]).

postmodern thinking by Fredric Jameson (1991). These are similar concerns: Derrida points to Western Metaphysics; Haraway focuses on the tradition of Western science and politics. They both point at postmodernity and its possibilities of change. I believe they rightly diagnose the floating layers and ongoing reconstructions, however as I will try to discuss in the following pages consequences have not been realized as Haraway expected. Instead, the global capitalist system has used these possibilities of the stretching realms to foster itself. My assertion is that as a result of the prevailing importance of the enjoyment one can argue, by remembering Marx, the illusion of enjoyment together with illusion of the freedom keep subjects under the sway of the system. The difference is that it is not be achieved by the authority of the symbolic order, but, the prevailing imaginary mellifluously enables the new authority works on different levels to keep its subjects under the sway. Aiming the subconsciousness of the subject global capitalist market creates desire while commanding to enjoy.

Since in this thesis I contend that contemporary cyborgs have departed from Donna Haraway's conception I would like to make a short list of the characteristics of cyborg that Haraway states in her Cyborg Manifesto. I believe this is necessary because I will argue that Haraway has well defined the nature of the cyborg although the potential she saw has not been realized in a way that cyborg has become an integral part of global capitalism.

- The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has no truck with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to organic wholeness through a final appropriation of all the powers of the parts into a higher unity.

- The cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy, and perversity.
- It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence.
- No longer structured by the polarity of public and private
- The cyborg does not dream of community on the model of the organic family,
- Cyborgs are not reverent; they do not re-member the cosmos.
- They are wary of holism, but needy for connection...
- They are the illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism.... But illegitimate offspring are often exceedingly unfaithful to their origins. Their fathers, after all, are inessential.

Donna Haraway 1991.

Specified by Haraway's conception of the cyborg in the list above, I will define and contrast the post Haraway cyborg in the following pages to indicate that the cyborg has been integrated with society on the condition that it is not only articulated in the imaginations of contemporary cyborgs but it defines our contemporary subjectivity. But before revealing the characteristics of the post Haraway cyborg let me set out some of the stakes and assertions of "the society of enjoyment" theory that undergirding my argument that is the post Haraway cyborg is collaterally linked to the evolution of the society of enjoyment.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT

My argument suggests that the post Haraway cyborg is integral to the contemporary global capitalist society in a way that in contrast to Haraway's cyborg's subversive potential, the post Haraway cyborg fosters the society of enjoyment. To elaborate this relation let me refer to Todd McGowan who in his book *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment* (2004) comprehends the contemporary society in comparison with the traditional society that is the society of prohibition. From a Lacanian perspective he does not dismiss or exclude economic and political relations, yet, he considers the very logic of social organization. In short, contrary to Marxist prioritization of economic relations, he suggests that enjoyment and our relationship to it have primacy in determining historical movement. Thus McGowan, informed by Freud, argues that the subjects' capacity to act against their self interest should not be underestimated. Thus, psychoanalysis, especially Lacanian theory allows McGowan to rethink sociopolitical history around the question of enjoyment. Although there are striking similarities between Slavoj Žižek and Todd McGowan -both bring Lacanian psychoanalysis into Marxist cultural critics- McGowan further elaborates the society of enjoyment. Therefore, I will cross over both theorists' arguments to discuss the symptoms and characteristics of the society of enjoyment. While diagnosing symptoms of the society of enjoyment and its differences from the



society of prohibition, McGowan calls us to engage in politics of enjoyment. I will return to his suggestion to accept the partiality of enjoyment as a way out, but for now I will content myself with discussing the symptoms that he observed because I think they are related to our contemporary “cyborgization” in a way that our cyborg subjectivity is characterized by these symptoms, meanwhile this cyborg subjectivity reinforces the society of enjoyment.

Both Tod McGowan and Slavoj Žižek indicate that the cultural realm has been changed as a response to a substantial change in the socioeconomic basis of our lives. There is a clear connection between these theorists of postmodernity similar to Fredrich Jameson’s influential theory that is postmodernism as the cultural logic of late capitalism. Indeed, alike Donna Haraway, Žižek and McGowan contend these changes in terms of their own point of views. For instance Haraway specifically emphasizes technological changes, Žižek contents risk society, and McGowan focuses on the characteristics of the society of enjoyment. I think these theories are consistent and intertwined with each other.

To introduce his theory McGowan refers to Levi-Strauss's *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Freud’s *Incest and Taboo* and Lacan’s conception of the symbolic order to reveal that traditional societies create societal coherence through prohibition. This is to say that subjects are able to enjoy within socially defined limits. In Lacanian terms: society by prohibition defines the limits of the subject. This definition of limits is accorded by the Law of the big Other. The big Other is not specifically someone but an invisible, an unidentified symbolic entity that defines the rules of the social order. Thus *the symbolic* refers to the defined limits and rules of social order. It is not necessarily in the form of written rules like laws although it includes laws and other socially defined

rules that subject has to live within. Hence, that confined and constrained enjoyment within clear limitations leads subjects to feel secure under the social order's sway. This is how the symbolic order operates. Thereof in the society of prohibition the societal coherence comes from subjects' sacrifice of enjoyment (that is prohibited) for the sake of the society's good. Which means enjoyment can be experienced with a clear conscience within the symbolic order.

Similarly Freud argues in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, civilization requires the repression of the id. This repression of the id is acquired by the symbolic order. In the society of prohibition, the symbolic order prevails and shrouds the Real. Similar to the id, enjoyment without prohibition would threaten the stability and the security of social order. But the prohibition has double effects: the prohibition of enjoyment creates the possibility of enjoyment. Because the lack of enjoyment creates a desire to enjoy. It is the nature of the desire, in which there is a distance, a lack, an absence of the object of desire, or as Lacan calls *objet petit a*. In the society of prohibition, subjects feel secure under the sway of social order because this lacking of enjoyment is valid for everyone. This bond of the lack makes them see each other not as rivals but as partners, says McGowan.

In the case of the society of prohibition the imaginary is supplementary for the social order due to the fact that the unpleasant feelings of being dissatisfied needs to be moderated. Therefore McGowan suggests the imaginary as an easy avenue of procuring enjoyment that offers "an imaginary enjoyment for those who suffer from the prohibition of enjoyment in the Real" (McGowan 2004: 18). Briefly, the subject experiences the power and obeys to the social order in the symbolic, in relation to the Law of the big Other but in the imaginary, he or she does not have to recognize the confines of the

symbolic. From this perspective the subject seems more independent in the imaginary.

The difference between the society of prohibition and the society that commands the enjoyment manifests itself on sexual discourses of contemporary cultural critics. For instance, Can Dündar, one of the famous journalists and writer in Turkey, states that in his last book *Aşka Veda* he tries to demonstrate the shift from marriages without enjoyment to enjoyment without marriage, from love without sex to sex without love. In the society of prohibition one is not allowed to engage in sex with anyone else except his/her official spouse because the symbolic order prohibits the freedom of sexuality. But s/he can imagine having sex with anyone who desires. That is to say the enjoyment possible on the imaginary level. Thus, it is a truism to say that while society of prohibition prohibits enjoyment -sex in this case- the society of enjoyment promotes it. Accordingly, Can Dündar's complaints of sex without love points to the shift of the society of prohibition to society of enjoyment. By claiming that love has ended with the immanence of sex he proclaims that the society of enjoyment makes the enjoyment all inaccessible by erasing the barrier to it, at the same time commanding it.

Žižek following the late Lacan argues that the superego commands enjoyment. In contrast to the general Freudian understanding of superego as an internal agency of the symbolic Law, he argues that the superego observes the Law but, as closest to the id, acts on what the Law represses. From this point the rise of the superego and its demand for enjoyment is correlative to the transformation from the society of prohibition to the society of enjoyment. It is important at this moment to see the relational difference between these three orders in societies: In the imaginary there is only an image, not an object itself but the image of the object. The object is not present also in the symbolic, in which instead of the object we have its symbol. We can grasp the object only in the Real.

Thus, we can enjoy only in the Real. This information shows that neither in the society of prohibition nor in the society of enjoyment we can enjoy in the Real. Although, the former aims at policing both the Real and the imaginary enjoyment and the latter promotes the imaginary enjoyment neither one offers the Real enjoyment.

What is problematic in the society of enjoyment is, as I stated above, in contrast to its command to enjoy this society makes enjoyment impossible. Because when enjoyment becomes compulsory it is no longer enjoyment. Thus Žižek points out that “the superego’s imperative to ‘Enjoy!’ is far more effective as a way of hindering access to enjoyment than a direct prohibition from the Law not to enjoy” (Myers 2004: 55). That is to say that the society that commands and boosts the enjoyment keeps its subjects away from the real enjoyment. Since enjoyment requires desire, it slips through our fingers and becomes inaccessible at the moment it becomes commonplace (McGowan 2004). As it is stated above the nature of desire requires a distance, a lack, an absence. Due to this fact the society of prohibition creates the possibility of enjoyment while prohibiting it (as Freud argues in *Totem and Taboo* (1999 [1913])) and the society of enjoyment erases the possibility of enjoyment while commanding it (as McGowan suggests in *The End of Dissatisfaction...* (2004)). Since the direct experience of enjoyment is impossible, the immanence of enjoyment erases the value of enjoyment as it exemplified by Can Dündar. Though, the contemporary subject whose duty is to be happy and to enjoy has lost the Real enjoyment, yet, s/he confined in the imaginary enjoyment. This is the salient feature of society of enjoyment that is the precedence of the imaginary over the symbolic.

### **CHAPTER 3**

## **THE POST HARAWAY CYBORG IN THE SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT**

After introducing the theory of the society of enjoyment and Haraway's conception of cyborg, in this chapter and the followings I attempt to define the post Haraway cyborg subjectivity. To do this I will first analyze the director Jonathan Mostow's film *Surrogates* (2009), which I believe best exemplifies our subjectivity in the new media era. The film portrays a society in which more than ninety-eight percentage of the world population use the technology of surrogates that is synthetic bodies that people operate in their daily life. People plug into chairs in their private rooms that connect them to their surrogate robots. Those who have replaced bodies of people. In the social life almost no one uses his/her own body to interact with other people. Because the real body is fragile, perishable and imperfect, people use surrogates to have "perfect bodies" with "perfect looks." In so far as the image dominates the capitalist society, *Surrogates* is the apotheosis of the social relations that is mediated by images. Our experience with 3G technology that we communicate through our images can be seen as a premature condition of surrogates. From this point surrogates can be named as 8G technology.

I believe surrogates are a dream of *pathological narcissist* subjectivity of global capitalism who takes his/her own ego as a love object. People buying themselves an image, a surrogate body to replace their body indicates the image's primacy. Today's increasing currency of plastic surgery and use of social media are parallel to this condition in which subjects are concerned with their image rather than on their beings.

According to Lacan, the subject first develops an ego as a bodily image. In the mirror stage, an infant sees its own image in the mirror and becomes amazed by the illusion of wholeness that image offers. Thus the infant loves the image and takes the image as its ego. This illusion of wholeness is decisive because it obscures the lack in the subject and in the Other. The love relation with his/her own image marks narcissistic subject. In *Surrogates*, Maggie (Rosamund Pike), detective Tom Greer's (Bruce Wills) wife, is a portrait of this the narcissistic subject.

Tom and Maggie have lost their son in an accident. This is the Real, the lack, a painful experience that they have to face with. But Maggie while refusing to face with the Real becomes more absorbed with the imaginary. She becomes obsessed with the image of her surrogate so that she does not go out of her private room without her surrogate even to talk to her husband. For instance in their first encounter at their home Maggie uncomfortably asks "Where is yours...?" She means his surrogate of course. When Tom tells her that he wants to be with her she replies that "We are together every day." Tom rejects: "Surrogates, not we." But Maggie seems determined "It is better." It is obvious that Maggie prefers the imaginary instead of the Real because she avoids facing the lack in the Real. As we see, her real body is damaged, aged and bedraggled in contrast to her surrogate which is perfected, attractive and stylish. This is the case for all other bodies that we see through the film. People obsessively use surrogates because of

their obsession of the image besides their dissatisfaction of the real. Accordingly, alike people absorbed on the internet their obsession with the imaginary keeps them isolated in the Real. As long as they interact through surrogates real bodies are exiled.

One can ask why the imaginary is emphasized over the real and the answer would be because in contrast to the Real's traumatic dimension –as Greers have to face with- the imaginary offers security, stability, “promises completion and plenitude” (McGowan 2004: 70). The Real offers no security. The perfection of the image and the assurance of security promoted by the media as advantages of using surrogates explain why contemporary subjects steer for the imaginary. As Maggie tries to escape from her dissatisfaction and unhappiness in the Real she gets more obsessed with the imaginary. Contemporary subjects of the society of enjoyment pursue imaginary enjoyment and narcissist satisfaction because of their lack in the Real. The feeling of security even if you are confined to in your cave, that is the chair in a private room in that case, is a kind of preference that is visible in the society of enjoyment. Similarly, McGowan underlines “personal caves” as a symptom of the society of enjoyment in which subjects voluntarily prison themselves for the sake of their imaginary enjoyment with the feeling of security. This situation also articulated by the contemporary critics claiming people increasingly get isolated from social life while they have increasingly spent their time on the internet.

Although it is not specified the film depicts probably some years later from this moment. It starts with a voice over, a man who calls people to unplug from their chairs, get up and look in the mirror. “What you see is how God made you. We're not meant to experience the world through machines.” This is a religious call to refuse to live through machines and turn back to the “natural” condition of being human. Religion is the

established symbolic order and this call is the call to turn back to the symbolic. I will return to this point at the end of this chapter while discussing the statement of the film but for now I believe it is important to note the prevalence of the imaginary over the symbolic .

At the beginning of the film we are informed about the technology of surrogates through the media images in the form of television news. Although we see images of talking heads -like news anchors, or academic persons and CEOs- some of the images seem like they are from advertisements of surrogates. Thus advertisement like images are mixed with the images that look like news footage. This is how society gets informed through the media. It is difficult to define if it is from news or from an advertorial. Although in the form of a documentary, it could be advertisements of something, or it could propagate anything. Because we know that documentaries and even news can be partial, they can reflect perspectives of who has produced or who has sponsored them. I think this is rather an informative introduction also indicating the society's condition. It is a *mediascape* that we are introduced to. Thus, cut-ups, talking heads, overlapping images, all these televised images portray the postmodern era. As Scott Bukatman states television is the aesthetic model for the postmodern era (2004: 62).

We learn from the media that it has started fourteen years ago with the introduction of a new technology that offers the ability to operate robotic prosthetics by mind. It is represented as a great advantage for those physically disabled people who would be able to operate fully synthetic bodies by plugging in. Thus the technology is presented as a hope for future. As it is always, the technology and the military are in close relation thus eventually it is used by military purposes. This military and industrial usage creates demands and the manufacturing capacity expands this demand gradually.



Thus, three years later surrogate technology becomes affordable for public use and “causes a revolution” in how people live. Four years later it is declared that more than 98% of the world population has used surrogates in their daily life. News reports a significant decrease in the violent crimes, infectious diseases and discrimination. These results are not surprising. Since the physical contact is eliminated infectious diseases cannot threaten people. Homicide is also impossible because robots cannot be killed, they may be broken or damaged but they will be repaired or will be replaced while real bodies of operators are safe in their home. And discrimination is said to be decreased but as we understand from the phrase “meat bag” it continues in a different appearance.

After four years, news reports about a minority who refuse to use surrogates. These protesters have a leader, Zaire Powell whose voice was heard in the religious call at the beginning of the film called as ‘prophet.’ These protesters have established camps that are free from robots. And then informed with the pre-diegetic history we arrive the present day of the diegetic time. The young rich man at the back seat of a luxury car speaks to his father through speakers. He thanks his father for letting him use his surrogate. He goes to a club to have fun. Throughout these scenes on the present day, we only see perfect(ed) bodies, perfect(ed) skins and the details of the luxury car. A motorcycle follows the car to the club, and when the man goes out with a blond woman to have sex, the man with the motorcycle shoots him with a strange gun that has blue laser light. After the murder detectives Tom Greer and Jenifer Peters (Radha Mitchell) arrives at the crime scene and start to investigate the case. They find out that the murdered young boy is the son of Lionel Canter (James Cromwell), who is the inventor of the surrogate technology. Since the rate of violent crime had decreased dramatically, it was the first murder for a long time. But its importance comes from the gun that is able

to kill not only surrogates, but also the operator of a surrogate. In my opinion the gun indicates the return of the Real. Since media and the company foster the concept of security as an advantage of imprisonment in the imaginary as the big Other of society of enjoyment, the gun represents a danger for the company and for the social order. This threat has to come from the Real. It connects the imaginary with the Real by threatening both at the same time. In that way the Real clashes with the imaginary, breaking it into pieces. Although these two and the symbolic are implicit all the time, it is impossible to imagine either of them being able to destroy each other. Rather, it is the matter of prevalence that one has over the other. In the society of prohibition the symbolic, in the society of enjoyment the imaginary prevail and both shroud the Real. Žižek reminds us that once we enter into the realm of language we enter into the realm of the symbolic. Because we know the world through the mediation of language, within the symbolic, we cannot know the Real. As Tom Myers states “[i]n this sense, the Real is the world before it is carved up by language” (2004: 25). That is to say that the Real is beyond our grasp but immanent. For instance when Greer comes back to his home he first looks at his death son’s room. This kind of traumatic pain reveals the Real, it resists symbolization, and it is beyond words. Thus, insistent return of the real causes Tom to be dissatisfied with the imaginary enjoyment. On the contrary Maggie tries to escape from the Real she rather satisfies her narcissistic ego in the imaginary. When she plugs off, she takes anodynes. However Tom’s acceptance of the Real keeps him dissatisfied in the imaginary. Aware of the lack in the imaginary he desires to turn back hence he pursues to restore the symbolic. In short that's why Tom is able to desire outside the imaginary because he is not satisfied with the imaginary.

When Greer's surrogate is destroyed while chasing the murderer he experiences a breakdown. His physical body is also injured and he stays in the hospital for a while. Eventually he gets out of the hospital with his own body and he experiences difficulties walking on the street by his own body. Even a car horn is far loud for him. But he refuses to have another temporary surrogate and continues the investigation on his own. He goes to the dread camp –the robot free zone- where his surrogate is crucified. He tries to speak to the prophet but instead he is beaten. The experience that he has in that zone, without his surrogate, changes Greer's perception. After a long time he experiences and feels the physical pain, the Real. He returns home and sees his wife having fun with her friends who are using some kind of drug that gives electroshock to their surrogates. This scene is also informative about Maggie's narcissistic obsession with her image; instead of using the drug to enjoy she enjoys with her image by looking through the mirror. Greer bursts with anger, and he beats up one of the Maggie's friends until his synthetic face is destroyed and the metallic robot face is revealed.

We observe throughout the film that surrogates can have fun, can smile, can have sex, even can take drugs but they cannot cry. When Maggie, as did Lionel Canter before, up to cry plugs off and the real bodies cry. Crying is not something that an enjoying subject does, so, it should not have to be seen by others. In the society of enjoyment, any appearance of dissatisfaction or misery indicates a castration that subjects want to hide while exaggerating to show off their pretend enjoyment. A good example would be Facebook.

I contend that in *Surrogates* we see the apotheosis of imaginary satisfaction that today's "wired" experience offers. Since the real enjoyment is impossible, or inaccessible we are increasingly absorbed by the Internet to fulfill this lack with an

imaginary enjoyment. The imaginary enjoyment deceives the subject but at the same time it is used by the subject to deceive the others. Thus our voluntarily “cyborgization” through the Internet is a symptom and a motivation of society of enjoyment. We continuously occupy ourselves with enjoyment in the imaginary, or at least to show off our enjoyment to others. Efforts of the perfection of the image are the same due to its double functioning. Being reduced to the image means that image defines who you are.

Since the real bodies are dismissed for being a prerequisite for the self and become invisible in their private rooms it is impossible to know who is who. That is either you can become anyone, or anyone can become you. For instance, in the case of the murder, the blond woman’s operator is a fat, bold, middle-aged man. Also, detective Peters is murdered and her surrogate is transferred to a remote operator and is used by criminal. The condition again corresponds to our subjectivity in the internet. Haraway states that no one knows who you are in reality on the internet. One can create and use any avatar, any photo, or moreover any 3d generated image as a photo of herself, and one can act as however s/he wants. It is true that surrogates similar to Haraway’s characterization of cyborg. As Maggie only realizes herself through her surrogate, in the majority in the film, the boundary between machine and human almost disappeared. For that matter, the housekeeper we see at the blond woman's operator's house is using a primitive model of surrogate because her surrogate is at the technical service. The model she uses cannot fully function, it cannot even open the door, but she uses it instead of being in her own body. As it is emphasized in other instances of the film it is impossible to know who is a male and who is a female in their real body. So it loses its importance, what you see as a woman's body does not signify it being female in that case. Because you are not dealing with the sign that has a stabilized signified. You are dealing with the

image in the imaginary, *floating signifiers*. Or to put it in Baudrillardian terms you are dealing with an infinite set of surfaces – a fractal subject- an object among objects (1988: 40).

The leader of a minority group against surrogates, the prophet uses religious discourse to defend “human nature,” and humanity in its pure form. However, at the end of the movie it is revealed that the prophet is just another surrogate of Canter. When Greer meets him Canter explains his willingness to destroy what he invented. “I changed the course of human history when I invented surrogates. Now I’m going to change it back”. Greer’s reply is meaningful: “You can’t change what has been done.” Actually, those objections of contemporary situation that call to return backwards are not meaningful. What has been done cannot be changed. We should find new ways from now on. The situation of Canter is a leitmotif of the arguments on technological innovations. The myth of an inventor who believes that he/she offers something good for the humanity yet his/her discovery leads to nightmarish results is a well known trope of science fiction. Canter is about to kill anyone who is plugged into a surrogate. But Greer finds a way to save people and destroy surrogates. At the end, all people are safe but all surrogates are destroyed, people get out from their private caves and interact with each other. They are mostly in their pyjamas in contrast to their surrogates’ fancy clothes.

Before he dies Canter says that surrogates are perversion, addiction. To condemn something as perversion means to condemn its rupture from the symbolic. This implies that Canter like Tom Greer wants to return to the symbolic. The film depicts that if the symbolic decays the imaginary would dissolve into the Real. From this perspective Canter’s and Tom Greer’s desire is not to turn to the Real, but avoid the Real. Indeed, both Greer and Canter are father figures who desire to restore the symbolic order. If my

analysis is true then the film can be read as an invitation to common sense. Representing surrogates as a corruption, our cyborg subjectivity through the Internet and 3G is criticized.

At this point I believe that *Surrogates* like *Matrix* (1999), questions the society of enjoyment's primacy of the imaginary over the symbolic by representing the imaginary as corrupt prioritizes the symbolic. One can conclude that contemporary cyborg films and television ask the question what if the imaginary continues primacy while the symbolic decay. These films further elaborate the contemporary condition in their own points of views. For instance in *Matrix* series we see that binary oppositions constitute the film's point of view. There is a real world outside the Matrix. Although the Real world with acid rains is represented like a catastrophic place to live and the imaginary Matrix offers the illusionary enjoyment, the film calls for a return to the symbolic. On the contrary, in *ExistenceZ* (1999) we see this shift as a parody. It represents a society where the distinction of the illusions becomes irrelevant. In *ExistenceZ* "realists" who fight against game companies are represented as more pathetic than the others. The film itself twists the realities in a way that it is impossible to determine where the game starts and the reality ends. For this *ExistenZ* is different from *Surrogates* and *Matrix* because it does not suggest returning to the symbolic, in contrast, it demonstrates that separation of the illusion is irrelevant.

In *Surrogates* we do not see any state intervention. Just in the beginning we learn that the state has approved the law that permits the use of surrogates in daily life. The company that produces surrogates is VSI, an American company, but as a result of global capitalism surrogates are used all around the world. This subversive pleasure of people is never being a threat to society as long as it keeps subjects confined in private

enjoyments, and obey exactly what the system, or the market commands to do. As it is clear in this case, in the society of enjoyment, the Law of the big Other works differently. Subjects have not been liberated from the social order's demands, on the contrary, the difference is whereas in the society of prohibition it is obvious that subjects obey the prohibitive authority, in the society of enjoyment subjects' obedience to the commands of the social order is voluntary and almost invisible so that the subjects most of the time are not even aware of it. That is to say that the cyborgized subject in the society of enjoyment voluntarily abandons the Real for the sake of the imaginary.

As a conclusion the post Haraway cyborg renounced the boundaries between human and machine and between man and woman, yet become a perfect global capitalist subject whose being is reduced to an image. And images are for sale. As I discussed above the post Haraway cyborg is a pathological narcissist whose main concerns are its own security and private enjoyment s/he thinks that one can buy on the market.

It is a truism that ourselves and our lives have been integrated with technologies that are almost impossible to avoid. We are increasingly absorbed by the cyberspace, and become *cybernauts* since Haraway has warned us to be aware of new possibilities that spread from these changes. Not always parallel to Haraway's view but the concept of cyborg has diffused other realms of thought (Clough and Schnieder 2001; Sofoulis 2002; and Christie 1992). The fact that, today, it is not only film studies or scientific researches that argue with the concept of cyborg but religious studies, and anthropology are also concerned with it. Yet, by the twenty first century, with the advent of the new media technologies cyborg studies have gained importance again. Same reason led to an increase in the debates around posthumanism. In both ways our subjectivity is linked to the cyborg subjectivity. For Haraway we are cyborgs who become coded texts under the

genetic studies. We are cyborgs who use technological tools as an extension of our body. We are cyborgs who use technologic prosthetics, etc. And today, the technologies that we imbedded and wired have turned us into cyborgs as it has never been before. We are spending most of our time on the internet. We are working through, communicate through, enjoy through the internet. Thus, it is the fact that with self-indulgent technologies that are taken for granted we define ourselves as cyborgs. This “cyborgization” has boosted the enjoyment in a way that the subject exhibits his/her selves in a narcissistic manner. We observe this fact on the increasing social media usage. In popular social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter the subject exposes his/her self, his/her private information. In the society of enjoyment, the exhibition of the private life has turned into a spectacle. Or, to put it differently it has become a manifestation of the “spectaculation” of the self. Let me remind you of those photographs on the social media, in which people have almost identical poses. I think especially self-taken photographs reveal this narcissistic obsession of the image, which is one of the characteristics of the society of enjoyment. Thus it is not only private lives but our body that we expose to public scrutiny. Cyberspace becomes a place where subjects show off their enjoyment of their bodies and their purported full enjoyment of life. Because the degree of enjoyment defines subjects’ status in the society of enjoyment, subjects show off their enjoyment, even if it is not the case in the Real. This exposure of selves will be discussed in the next chapter in relation to privacy and intimacy concepts of the post Haraway cyborg.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **WE EXPOSE OURSELVES, THEREFORE WE ARE : THE END OF INTIMACY?**

I have discussed the condition of the post Haraway cyborg in the society of enjoyment in previous chapters. According to my analysis salient features of the post Haraway phase are subjects' primacy of the enjoyment, the decline of the symbolic authority and the prevalence of the imaginary. If my analysis is true the post Haraway cyborg is a pathological narcissist who is deceived by the illusionary freedom that the imaginary offers and s/he deceives him/her self by the illusionary enjoyment of the imaginary. As I mentioned above the post Haraway cyborg in the society of enjoyment while indulging his/her narcissistic ego through the Internet voluntarily expose his/her private life with the constant uploading of intimate photographs, videos, etc. Thus in this chapter I contend that we live in a society in which we expose ourselves therefore we are. In that condition the subject has nothing to hide.

Baudrillard argues in *“Ecstasy of Communication”* (1988) that we have already lost the privacy, even we lost the illusion of having secrets. If we do not have any secrets it means that we do not have anything beneath the surface. This is what Jameson calls as a new depthlessness. Everything appears on the surface there is no depth beneath. From this point the concept of private life, and privacy belong to the modern subject.

Indeed for a long time ordinary individuality remained below the threshold of the invasion of the private life. To be looked at, observed, showing off the intimate feelings, being followed by the media and by other people were privileges or disadvantages of being a celebrity. But since the spectacle “says nothing more than ‘that which appears is good, that which is good appears’” (Debord 1967: #12) ordinary individual’s desire to appear has been fully realized through the social media. Culture industries have glorified the bourgeoisie life style. The increasing bombardment of culture industries commands subjects to enjoy as the bourgeoisie, as the celebrities. Thus ordinary people idealize this enjoyment, and imitate this life style by showing off their private life and narcissistic images. Proliferation of reality television has already marked the voyeuristic enjoyment, which becomes a daily practice, a norm with Facebook. Social media offers a place where we both expose ourselves and follow the others’ private lives.

In reality television subjects under total scrutiny are ridiculed most of the time. They insult each other -or as in talent shows they are insulted in front of the public-, they fight with each other, they cry, or fall in love, etc. One of the reasons they submit themselves into this game is their desire to be visible, to be famous, even just for a short while. This tickles their narcissistic urge. They volunteer to look pathetic because they know that they are part of the game, which requires renouncement of their individuality. It is the realm of the imaginary where personalities are fake. Thus, we can conclude that for the subject of the society of enjoyment there is no personality that s/he can dignified. Moreover to be appeared, to be visible, to show off enjoyment, fame and money have primacy over dignity. I will discuss these points in terms of ethical dilemmas in society of enjoyment later. But for now, I intend to focus on the waning of the intimacy.

Since postmodern subjectivity has reduced to a surface it means that there is no secret, the intimacy as we know it is ended. Today there is a new live-web professionalism, in which subjects accept to live online. Numbers of cameras are placed in their house to broadcast their whole life. Being watched while eating, sleeping, bathing, peeing, having sex, etc. These are mostly college girls and they are not marginal anymore. In the society of enjoyment there is nothing you have not seen before. Sense of shame is waning in to disappearance.

Referring to Laura Mulvey we can argue that sense of shame from nudity comes from the gaze of the other. Since the gaze is the male gaze, narcissism of woman can be identified as secondary narcissism that directed through the gaze of the male. From this perspective one can argue that when the patriarchal authority collapses woman has a chance to enjoy from her own gaze that is free from the hegemony of the gaze of the other-of man. Thus, the post Haraway cyborg possibly defines a new enjoyment for women: from secondary narcissism to primary narcissism.

In a manner parallel to this argument Levent Soysal in his article "*Intimate Engagements of the Public Kind*" (2010) goes beyond Micheal Herzfeld's notion of "cultural intimacy" (2005 [1997]) as a tool in doing ethnography. He suggests the notion of "public intimacy." Soysal defines a "new individual" that eradicated on the dissolution of the nation state and proliferation of globalized world in the new media era. "[T]he new individual achieves intimacy in public: she lives her sociality and establishes her intimate relations primarily on public stages. She is at the center of multiple, and ever increasing, life spaces, synthetically enacting modular lives. She may even have a virtual self"(Soysal 2010: 394). I contend that the new individual is the post Haraway cyborg who indulges herself with new media technologies. Soysal underlines the new

socialities of virtual worlds and the proliferation of spectacle around the world to point out the new individual's publicness of intimacy. He argues that similar to the grotesque, embarrassment becomes hard, if not impossible, to achieve and maintain in public because everything is seen in "today's globalizing sociality"(2010: 391). Quoting from Soysal "There is no secret, no space for shocking and unanticipated, and no wonder. Inversion is redundant, and tension is hard to locate" (2010: 390). Soysal does not elaborate on the society of enjoyment, nevertheless, he suggests the proliferation of the spectacle as an evidence to amplified sociality of the new individual. In my opinion the proliferation of spectacle around the world also reveals the commandments of the society to consume and enjoy.

Contrary to Soysal, McGowan identifies a missing public world as a symptom of the society of enjoyment. He refers to Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* to state that subjects spend much more time in the isolation of their private worlds instead of involving themselves in public activities (McGowan 2004). Leisure activities like watching television, surfing the web, playing video games cause the abandonment of the public world. Although our activities on the internet has been claimed to represent an effort to restore the public world in the form of a "virtual community," McGowan argues that "rather than fostering a restoration of the public world, the internet provides another imaginary escape from that world, a place where the subject can avoid the big Other and interact with series of alter egos" (2004: 157). As surrogates offer "security" by preventing public interaction with the threatening other, the internet provides diffraction of the big Other. One can dismiss the other on the Internet. She can block or erase the other. One can choose who to communicate with. Thus s/he can create a virtual public world through his/her own choices. In forums or on

chat rooms one can communicate with people who have the same interests, have similar likes and dislikes. This is the “privatized version of the public world” that the Internet provides.

Consequently as Haraway claims that cyborg “is no longer structured by the polarity of public and private...” today we also witness the dissolution of the public either we call it the “privatization of public” (McGowan 2004) or “public intimacies” (Soysal 2010). In my opinion these two are consistent although they seem to contradict to each other. The former argues that public world is waning the latter argues that the new spaces of the virtual world and the increasing number of festivals and carnivals reveal the proliferation of sociality. But it is the fact that the proliferation of sociality does not indicate any restoration of the public world that informed by and focus on the collective interests as McGowan suggests but reveals the commandments to consume and to enjoy because subjects pursue their own personal enjoyment through intimacies that are acted out in public.

The end of privacy as we know it is also explicit in our relation with today’s vast surveillance mechanisms. To be watched does not bother us anymore. We do not hesitate to use mobile phones, even when we are fully aware of their surveillance function. Today’s celebrated cloud computing technologies had not been imagined by George Orwell as a big brother in *1984*? Today, we live in a society that once had been defined as dystopian future yet we do not interpret it as such anymore. Hence the definition of dystopia has been changed. Loss of privacy and being under total surveillance do not make us feel like live in a catastrophic future. As I have stated it is related to our main concern on security, because we understand the world as a dangerous place in which terrorists could attack us at any moment. We want be watched because we are so afraid

that someone would try to steal or attack our enjoyment. Hence we are isolated from the real contact with people, we mark them as potential threats to ourselves. Thus, as we imprisoned ourselves in the imaginary enjoyment, we submit ourselves to a vast surveillance mechanism without questioning. Concurrently since the narcissistic subject exposes him/herself voluntarily, eyes watching her/him does not bother him/her anymore. Today, being departed away from the huge mechanism of social networks seems more threatening than others. We see this fact in new medical conditions like the anxiety one feels when s/he find himself without his/her mobile phone is “nomophobia”, an addiction to surfing the Internet “technoholism”, repetitive strain injury caused by excessive use of computer mouse “mousewrist” (Rauhofer 2008: 185).

This condition can be seen in the television series *Person of Interest* (2011-Present) created by Jonathan Nolan. The series illustrates the fact that a surveillance does not evoke dystopian feelings anymore. In *Person of Interest*, Harold Finch (Michael Emerson) was hired by the government to create a Big Brother like mechanism after 9/11 to prevent terroristic crimes. But the Machine has the ability to detect ordinary crimes (too) before they happen. Finch decides to prevent these crimes to save the innocents without the help of the government, because the government is not interested in these results. He finds John Reese (Jim Caviezel) who is a former CIA agent with a mysterious past, is presumed dead but lives homeless and they become business partners. The Machine, is far from being dystopian but utopian in the sense that it enables to prevent crimes and save people’s lives.

It is true that today we do not question these surveillance cameras or any collection of information from our computers. Judith Rauhofer argues in “*Privacy is Dead, Get Over It! Information Privacy and The Dream of a Risk-Free Society*” (2008)

underlines the fact that the mere existence of databank pools that a vast amount of personal information about individuals, their opinions, habits is generated and stored created the desire in public and private organizations. These organizations demand these data pools for their own purposes. As a consequence the market value of privacy is created. She concludes that the right to privacy should be accorded equal status as a public or community value, thus, “rather than justifying privacy intrusions on the basis of security needs care should be taken”. However she adds that “the repeated message that those who have nothing to hide have nothing to fear has contributed to an almost unquestioning acceptance of the predominant sentiment that privacy and other social and community goods like security are mutually exclusive” (2008: 195). The wide currency of the security systems reveals the fact that as long as the security questions used in discourses no one considers the constraints on personal freedom or on private life. On the other hand these systems restrain the subject from his/her own enjoyment. As governments’ surveillance system regard everyone as a potential criminal who has to be watched, security systems block everything outside as a danger. House alarms, car alarms, surveillance cameras all these technologies are taken for granted in the society of enjoyment.

*Person of Interest* also indicates the subjects’ disbelief of the authority. Finch and Reese collaborate to prevent crimes that government does not care about. This disbelief in authority marks the subjectivity as cynical in contemporary society (Salecl 2009[1998], Žižek 1989, McGowan 2004) but I will discuss this point later. For the moment I think it is sufficient to say that it is not revealing or surprising to see corruption with in the society in *Person of Interest*. For instance Detective Lionel Fusco (Kevin Chapman) whom coerced by Reese helping them is a corrupt cop figure. Also,

Carl Elias (Enrico Colantoni) who is trying to revive the mafia families of New York collaborates with the police department. But these have become norms of the society of enjoyment. There are no ethical questions raised against the enjoyment. This point leads me to my argument that is the post Haraway Cyborg is a pragmatist whose main concern is his/her enjoyment thus ethical dilemmas are not subjects of her/his.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN SOCIETY OF ENJOYMENT**

As I have asserted that the post Haraway cyborg is a pathological narcissistic subject of the global capitalist society who increasingly exposes itself thus the privacy and the intimacy have already inverted to the degree that if intimacy is not dead yet it became the “public intimacy.” I argue that the primacy of the post Haraway cyborg is her enjoyment. For the sake of the security and the illusionary enjoyment subjects volitionally expose their privacy and reduce themselves to an image. Everything can be legitimated under the commandment of enjoyment.

Todd McGowan states greed was a sin in the society of prohibition, yet it is promoted in society of enjoyment (2004: 2). This statement reveals the shift of the ethical concerns in the society of enjoyment. Today, rather than being honest, people are expected to be politically correct. “Be a good person” has become “be a smart person!” Global capitalist subjects are pragmatists whose concerns are wealth and personal enjoyment. The important thing is to be rich, as the only way to total enjoyment. It is neither the society’s good nor people's freedom, emancipation or virtue but the personal enjoyment we are fighting for. Therefore it is not surprising to see the public world is waning and public intimacies are instead emerging.

In Neil Burger's film *Limitless* (2011) it is clear that the subjects of the society of enjoyment are ready to set their hands dirty, and to risk their lives to achieve what the global capitalism promoted as a successful life that is the life full of enjoyment. Eddie Morra (Bradley Cooper) is a "failed", "ineffective" writer who takes an experimental drug that improves his brain capabilities, as it is said, it helps him use hundred percentage of his brain: the ultimate fantasy of the contemporary subjects. Being smart! But for what? What would you do if you become the smartest person on earth? The film answers these questions while successfully indicating the norms of the current society.

The film starts when Eddie is on top of the balcony of a skyscraper while some people try to break down his door. He is also at the peak of his life. He starts to narrate his story of how he ends up there. Then, with the vision of the surveillance camera that zooms into the guy who is walking on the street he asks "Do you see that guy? That was me for not so long ago. What kind of guy without a drug or an alcohol problem looks this way? Only if you are a writer." Eddie is a writer who has a book contract but cannot write a word. As we can understand from his words, the image is predominant in the society in which the appearance and the way of dress of the subject defines who he/she is. From his girlfriend to the fellows at the bar, his householder's wife to his editor, everyone including Eddie himself criticize him because he does not fit in with the norms. The image of Eddie indicates that he does not achieve what the big Other asks from him: earn and spend money. In other words he does not enjoy life! His castration is apparent so that he cannot hide. Everybody else looks fine, dressed well with properly styled hair. Eddie, because he does not fit into the norm is accused of being pathetic, or looking like a homeless person. Being a writer does not mean anything to anybody,

unless one earns money and fame from it. Eddie is a loser, even his girlfriend dumps him. So, when Eddie comes across to his old brother-in law who was a drug dealer and gives Eddie an unknown drug by saying that it will increase his brain functions he does not hesitate to try it. He tries it, the promise materialized and everything changes. Eddie feels the effect of the drug when he enters his apartment, and encounters the wife of the owner of his house, while the woman insults him the drug starts to effect Eddie and he ends up having sex with the woman. The first prize is having sexual enjoyment.

Eddie cleans his house and finishes the first draft of his book. But it is not enough for him, he goes to see his brother in law to ask for more, but he is murdered and Eddie finds his stash of drugs. He has already become a criminal who deceives the police, and keeps the stash for himself. He uses it every day and his life begins to change drastically. One of the first things that he does is to change his look, getting a haircut and new clothes. While he continuously increases his skills, learns new languages while jogging, learns to play piano in three days, etc. he gains increasing social acceptance. These scenes show how he enjoys his life, with full of rich people at parties, having sex with beautiful women, etc. But this life full of enjoyment is not the Real. It is the effect of the drug that lasts for one day. When mafia starts to follow Eddie and he almost loses his pills, the real returns. But Eddie runs away.

Eddie perfectly reveals the passions and ambitions of the subject in the society of enjoyment. Money and success are interconnected in that society. As Baudrillard argues money being no longer the equivalent of anything, becomes the object of a universal passion (2005). It becomes a fetishism. What brings Eddie success and access to full enjoyment is the super human abilities that he gains through illegal pills. He kills people. He drinks the blood of the man he shot because the man has taken the drug before Eddie

kills him. Although he learns the side effects of the drug that may cause his death, it does not enough for him to stop. Eddie's ambitions never end. It is the nature of the desire, the moment the desire is satisfied, it loses its meaning. The condition of desire is absence. Therefore Eddie is never satisfied, always finds new things to desire. At the end, we see that he is close to being a senator. It would be interesting to see what Eddie would want after he becomes a president. Possibly he will die, yet he may build a spaceship to reach the farthest point of the galaxy. Even with his excessive capacity we do not see that Eddie is working on any social change. Instead of using his brain to find a cure for an incurable disease for instance, he uses his abilities to earn more money as a specialist of the stock exchange. His new look and success make his girlfriend who left him in the beginning of the film to return to him. Thus, as we see, one can be a drug addict or a murderer but still be respected if he or she looks good, wears nice clothes, has money, and enjoy. In the beginning he was just a decent writer he was accused of looking like a drug addict, yet, in the end he is a drug addict but with the access of the enjoyment he is admired. Thus, the post Haraway cyborg is "without innocent" yet it is not utopian, but a pragmatist capitalist who worships his/her enjoyment.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **BODY-MEMORY-DESIRE**

I contend that the post Haraway cyborg is a pragmatist narcissist who is a byproduct of the society of enjoyment. The proliferation of spectacle and the decay of the symbolic authority correlates with the primacy of enjoyment and prevailing of the imaginary. In this chapter I discuss the science fictions' one of the highly discussed topics, the triangle of body-memory and desire in the post Haraway phase. I contend that although the commodification of the body, the manipulation of memory and desire are not new subjects for science fiction; the commodification of memory, and manipulation of subconsciousness are highly popularized topics for cyborg film and television.

Renata Salecl points that in post-modern society we have a total disbelief in authority and in the power of the symbolic order, the so called-big Other but this disbelief has not simply resulted in the subject's liberation from the law or other forms of social coercion (2000[1998]: 150). She suggests that in the process of freeing the subject from the big other, one can observe the subject's anger and disappointment in regard to the very authority of the big Other. However she underlines that the belief in the big Other is the belief in words, even when they contradict one's own eyes. Thus she suggests that what we have today is precisely a mistrust in mere words. (2000 [1998]: 151). As we see in *Person of Interest*, *Surrogates* and *Limitless* the big Other, as in the form of state, is dysfunctional which does nothing to prevent crime or mostly corrupted.

The disbelief in the authority marks the subject as a cynic in the society of enjoyment. Slavoj Žižek identifies cynicism as a general mode of subjects in contemporary society. Cynic suspects and does not trust the authority. She/he believes his own knowledge and perception; s/he believes his/her own eyes. However, I suggest, the contemporary subjects are aware of the fact that one cannot believe what he/she sees anymore. Echoing Baudrillard and Guy Debord, we know that life is not something we experience directly. It is a simulated reflection of what spectacle projects for us. That's why contemporary cynic, who has seen a lot s/he does not believe what she/he sees and hears from the media anymore. However as Žižek updated Marx's sentence on ideology: "they know very well what they are doing, but still, they are doing it" (1989: 33). In other words, subjects are aware of the profound illusory nature of distorted reality, however they still get information from this mediation. Being aware of the illusion does not stop them to continue to live according to the illusion. What is significant here is as long as they live in the mediascape, that is to say, as long as they are informed through the media; as long as they live in a simulation of the spectacle, although they are aware of the illusion, the illusion works on their subconscious level. This is how the system works on us. What surrounds us diffuses into us. Thus the post Haraway cyborg's subconscious is vulnerable. It is neither secure nor trustful.

Christopher Nolan's *Inception* (2010) is a fruitful movie for further analysis however here I just refer to it superficially to demonstrate the vulnerability of the subconsciousness of the post Haraway cyborg. In *Inception*, Cobb (Leonard DiCaprio) is a highly skilled thief who enters the human subconscious through dream invasion to steal their secrets. In *Inception* Cobb is a guilt ridden hero, who because of his enjoyment in the imaginary has lost his wife. The guilt represents a return of the

symbolic. He does not enjoy in the imaginary anymore. He once has sacrificed his wife and his kids for the sake of the imaginary enjoyment and wants to return to the symbolic. At his last mission that would lead to his redemption he tries to plant an idea in a man's mind, to change his desire. I think what is significant here is the demonstration of the manipulations of desire through the imaginary in the society of enjoyment. Because the desire is the constitutive of the subject, global capitalism constitutes subjects as global capitalists by implanting desires in their subconsciousness.

Nonetheless, as I state above memory alterations or creations are well known motives of cyborg cinema. As Scott Bukatman underlines much science fiction is concerned with the status and the commodification of memory, which seems to produce an ersatz humanity" (2005: 248). In *Moon* (2009) an astronaut Sam Bell (Sam Rockwell) ascertains that he is a clone of the "real" Sam Bell. He discovers the truth that he, like other clones that are waiting to be activated has a limited life span that is three years. Thus, his memories and feelings are not real. He misses his wife and his daughter, and the life that he never had. As in *Blade Runner's* replicants' uploaded memory defines identity and makes cyborgs indifferent from human. Nevertheless its alterability represents its uncertainty. Because it is alterable and erasable one cannot trust its truthfulness, yet it is still defining the subject. I assert that it is same for the subconsciousness and the desire of the subject.

A television series *Dollhouse* (2009- 2010) is about an underground corporation that serves its wealthy clients "Actives" that whose personalities and skills are programmed and imprinted according to clients' wishes by uploading different memories. This commodification of people can only find its correspondence in the society of enjoyment. In *Dollhouse* clients buy fantasies, fantasies that they could not

have in the real life. A dead wife, a perfect lover, an associate thief, a killer, whatever the need, they can buy it. Whomever they ask for is created without the deficiencies of ordinary human nature; therefore, he/she is more perfect than the real. There is no limit: obscenity, immorality or crime. All are welcomed as in the society of enjoyment. This is because there is no prohibitive authority in the society of enjoyment. On the contrary, global capitalism's command to enjoy is beyond the law. However, Dollhouse represents the memory uploads also as a way to immortality. In other words a being can continue its existence in any form of a body, since the subject has been defined by consciousness that reconstituted by memory. Scott Bukatman reminds "[t]he body is already an interface between mind and experience" (2005: 260) thus for the post Haraway cyborg the body is changeable. It has to be upgraded and dismissed when necessary.

As I tried to argue above, for the post Haraway cyborg both body and memory are commodities. The memory can be sold, bought, implanted or erased. The body as an interface requires upgrades with plastic surgeries, vitamins, sports, etc. In other words, it needs to be upgraded as in *Surrogates* for the perfection of the image, as in *Limitless* to increase abilities, or for the elimination of weaknesses. Thus the body decreases its value as a prerequisite of the self, yet, it is seen as a barrier for immortality. On the contrary memory as the constitutive of the self carries its own contradictions. Both the consciousness and subconsciousness are vulnerable.



## **CONCLUSION:**

Donna Haraway wrote the manifesto 1991. It was the Reagan era of post Second World War of USA, the time computers came into daily life, the speed of technology and of scientific developments have increased enormously and arguments on Posthumanism have started to resonate. The result was a major earthquake that caused a massive tectonic plate movements, has shaken the ground that was the base of the traditional Western thinking. Or to put it in Lyotard's terms, *the metanarratives*. Haraway points out the conceptual shifts in the definitions that are based on binary oppositions. By emphasizing the blurring borders and the stretching realms, she asserts the changes in the symbolic. Haraway is famous for her post-modernist feminist belief on the potentials of these shrinking and stretching realms. She emphasizes the need for taking responsibility and asks us to reconsider what it means to be human, or are we human at all. Although there are arguments claiming humans were cyborgs from the moment they first used a tool. Suggesting that using a basic tool makes humans cyborgs because it is an extension for the body. Like Haraway, I do not agree with this thinking.

Haraway defines the cyborg as a very specific, historically located figure and practice and embodiment and form of hybridity between human beings and other kind of actors. "Cyborg is not about 'we have always already been cyborgs', it's about specifically mid and late twentieth century historical production." By saying that

Haraway underlines the fact that science and technologies create fundamental transformations in the structure of the world for us, and they also provide fresh sources of power (1996: 16). Her works are important because they indicate the power relations. The decay of the symbolic has caused the prevalence of the imaginary in the society of enjoyment. In this “new” social order, as a matter of course, power relations have metamorphosed.

It is true that we increasingly define ourselves within the latest establishment of the technological and sociological frameworks, but, this has not led us to be freer. Exploitative power relations still exist in the contemporary society although subjects experience that power differently: that is not in the form of prohibitive authority but in the form of what Žižek call as “anal father” who unlike an authoritarian father commands enjoy. If cyborgs are the ‘illegitimate offspring’ of the military-industrial complex as Haraway states, then, the post Haraway cyborgs are the children of the society of enjoyment. They are not revolutionists but pragmatist capitalists who constantly indulge themselves with the technology to satisfy their narcissism. They are passivized cynics, paranoid voyeurs, obsessive exhibitionists and deadly conformists.

Referring to the arguments of Adorno and Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* we can conclude that the ideology of enlightenment itself is problematical. Despite its discourses of equality, freedom, plurality; inequalities, discrimination and exploitation have continued. Thus in contrast to being liberated, subjects -who may think they have freedom – have been under the influence of the capitalist system, more than ever. Neither tradition, nor the Law but spectacle and commodification have rule over the subject and command to enjoy. I contend that it is more than the “false consciousness”, through the creation of *false sub-consciousness*, subjects are confined in

the loop of constant desires. The society of enjoyment commands endless consumption. Deceived subjects are programmed to live to earn more money, to spend more, and to possess more commodity. They think they are free because of their choices over commodities, which is actually a forced choice. Commodification has expanded to include body, memory, consciousness, subconsciousness, privacy and intimacy in the society of enjoyment. In such an environment -since in the imaginary notions can be picked up by subjects- masculinity and femininity become just selectable notions. Thus, cyborg without innocence becomes sexual free. Also as a result of the decline of the paternal authority the new woman's enjoyment emerges in which woman satisfies her narcissism through her own gaze.

This thesis, written from twenty years later from the manifesto is an attempt to capture another transient moment, the post Haraway phase, to mark the condition at which we have arrived. As I have attempted to discuss, not only definitions but conditions and the whole social order have been changed accordingly. Haraway's manifesto was a call to take responsibility, to think and to act with the insights she provided. What the post Haraway cyborg suggests is that the ongoing deconstruction has not finished but accelerated due to the effects of new media technologies. New spaces and new possibilities are open for the new subject. Neither authority nor subjectivity can be defined and discussed by any of the previous conventional idioms. We should mind the gap!

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