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## Social Media: Critical Theory and how the Platform Society Affects Us

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## Introduction

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Our society has gone through a rapid augmentation in the form of digital transformation from data storage, vetting after job applications, and the social media presence of our most recognized state leaders. The shift of many physically present forms of cognition, communication and co-operation to the virtual realm has been deemed as platformization. Hence we live in both a physical network and virtual network society. The motivating factor for understanding how this “platform-society” affects us, we look at Critical Theory, power theories, network theories, platformization and platform governance. When we come to the discussion of digitalization, we must primarily understand critical theory and ideology precisely – as technology is seen as a boon, Critical Theory gives us an understanding of the critiques. This thesis uses the view-point of Critical theorists and Critical Political Economy theories to attain a better understanding of the criticisms of the platform economy and society. Philosophical thought will help in learning what makes social media and social platforms in particular; Social. This thesis will also look into the sociological theories of Durkheim, Weber, Tönnies, and Marx with the help of Christian Fuchs’ “Social Media: A critical introduction” to separate the world wide web into “Web 1.0 to 3.0” in relation to cognition, communication and co-operations – the actions which make us social. Then this thesis will focus on Manuel Castell’s – network society theory and the forms of power that exist with the theories of John B. Thompson and James Curran as well as Christian Fuchs and how they pertain to virtual platforms. Next, platforms such as Facebook, Google, Amazon, Apple, Microsoft (will be referred to as the “big five tech giants”) and will be the focus subjects of this thesis in the second segment as we talk about the transformation of news, education, healthcare and transport and their specific impact on the platform society. In regards to governance – we must first differentiate platform governance and the governance of platforms. Then look at the specific ways platforms govern themselves, how they can be governed by legislators and the issues legislators face when attempting to govern said platforms. For this segment we will look at the theories of Amrit Tiwana and Dr. Cristina Alaimo.

Christian Fuchs is a critical theorist of communication and society, introduces a framework in which we can understand critical theory and thereby relate social media platforms and the transformation of our society. The framework includes topics such as: “Being social, participatory culture, communication and media power... power and collaborative work” and the commons in his novel ‘Social Media: a critical Introduction’. (Fuchs 2017, 2), hence it will be the most efficient way to connect to the platform society’s

effect on our society in the first segment of this thesis. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal who have authored the book “The Platform Society” will help us understand the second segment of this thesis. This thesis by the conclusion will be able to give the reader a deeper understanding of the effects of new media and platformization has had and will have on our society as well as relate the platform society to the critical theory and the understanding of power relations within this society.

## What is Critical Theory?

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The author Christian Fuchs gives great importance to “Critical Theory” when it comes to understanding the modern-day digital transformation. He focuses on “Frankfurter Schule” critical theory and the Critical Political Economy in order to help us understand the significance of digitalization and its connection to capitalism, social dimensions as well as the nature of consumer culture. Critical theory is a form of critical thought; it is defined as an “evaluative approach to social science research – it claims to criticize as well as analyze society – opposing the political orthodoxy of modern communism, its goal is to promote human emancipatory forces and to expose ideas and systems that invade them” (Education Resources Information Center, 1990). “It finds its origins defined as a “school of thought” in the work of several thinkers notably from the “Frankfurter Schule” and traces some influence from Karl Marx, a man who is defined as a thorough theorist, critic of capitalism, a public intellectual, a critical journalist, a polemicist, a philosopher an economist, a sociologist, a political scientist, a historian, a Hegelian, and co-author with Friedrich Engels of the Communist Manifesto. (Fuchs 2017, 12) Critical theory helps us understand what puts the social in “Social Media” and the “pro et contra” of social media platforms and today's transforming society. Karl Marx predicted that the use of the telegraph would extend as an instrument for globalization in every sense of the word. This inherently established him as one of the leading recognized or notable figures which understood the importance of the “information era” as we know it today as he “anticipated the role of knowledge labor and the rise of an information society” (Fuchs 2017, 13). Christian Fuchs views on the Critical Theory are understandably based on the ideology of Karl Marx and Ben Aggers book the Critical Social Theories, 2006. Ben Agger crystal clear explanations gave an analysis of current social as well as cultural theories. This gave Fuchs a better understanding of Karl Marx's works and helped him to concise Marx's theories into six dimensions of critical theory. Furthermore, Fuchs used these “dimensions” to define Marx's critical theory in layman's terms.

The first “dimension” as defined by Fuchs (Fuchs 2017, 15) is ‘critical ethics’. In this Fuchs describes

critical theory as having a normative dimension. He stems this thought from an excerpt from 'Writings of the young Marx on philosophy and society, 1997' – "measures individual existence against essence" (Marx 1997, 61-62). This dimension states that it is possible to soundly deliver an argument which defines a "good society" – explaining that a good society encompasses all the prerequisites that allow humankind to survive. It also emphasizes that we are able to determine the good to bad societies depending on the conditions of the humans which live in them. Hence a good society would be one where most if not all its inhabitants had not necessarily equal opportunity but had access to humane conditions – food, shelter and water. A bad society would be judged as one without the existence of these conditions.

The second "dimension" as defined by (Fuchs 2017, 15) – is the "critique of domination and exploitation". The actions of domination and exploitation have existed since ancient history and beyond. We see it in the midst of nature as well as amongst ourselves. It spans from multi-national issues to domestic abuse. The critical theory – "questioned all thought and practices that justify or uphold domination and exploitation" (Fuchs 2017, 15). Fuchs made sure to create an understanding between the difference of domination and exploitation. Domination as defined by the Cambridge dictionary is – "power or control over other people and things" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020) whereas exploitation is "the use of something in order to take advantage of it". (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). In order to understand the relevance of dominance and exploitation in today's digital world we can take the example of Facebook. Facebook has quite a few users, who post content in the audio-visual or even written form. Facebooks user data is often sold to advertising companies which specialize in connecting an advertiser with its preferred demographic.

Hence it is safe to say that Facebook makes an income through its user data – however its users do not see any income stream from this sold data. Hence according to the definition of exploitation conclude that Facebook exploits its users' data while staying true to its "free-platform" virtue. (Fuchs 2017, 15 -16)

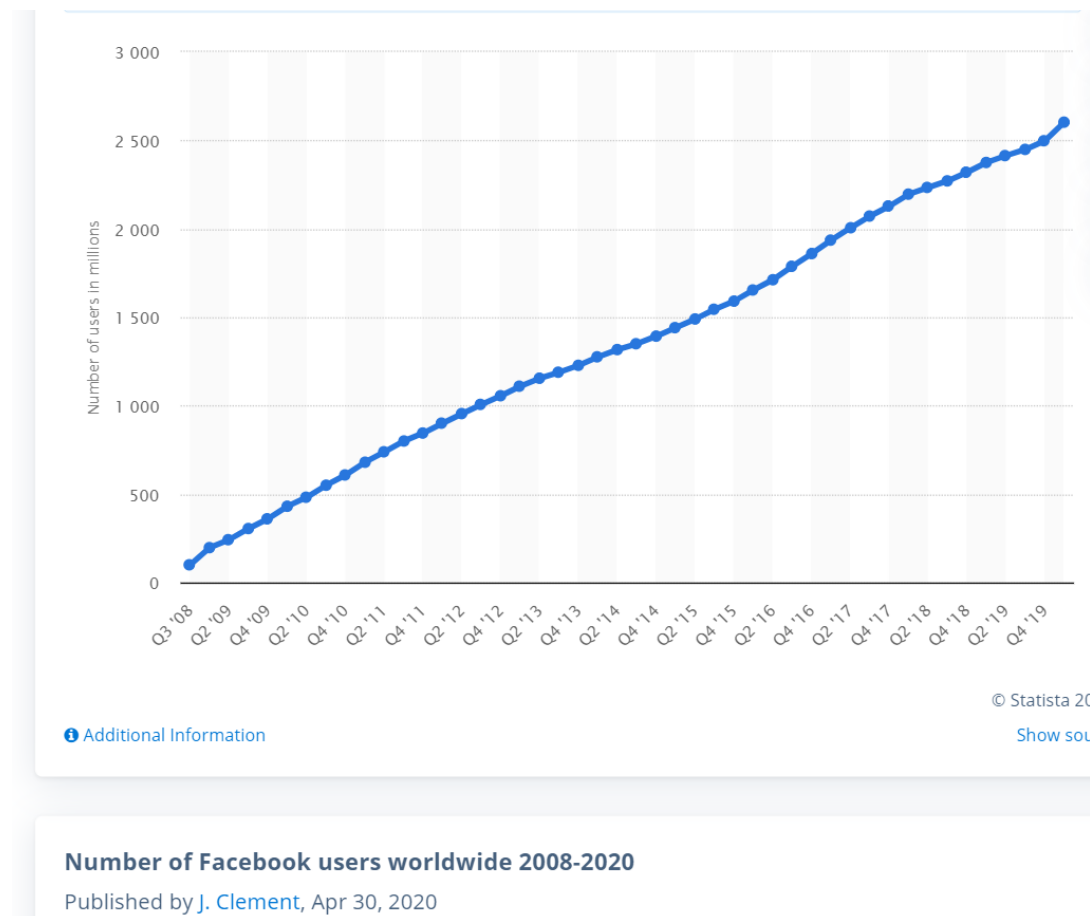
In the definition of Fuch's critical theory's dimensions we also have "dialectical reason" (Fuchs 2017, 15). Fuchs states that critical theory makes use of dialectical reasoning. It takes into account contradictions which fuel it and then show how this contradiction exist while being co-dependent and having opposite characteristics. For example – workers rely on "richer" employers for wages and these employers rely on the labor these workers produce; additionally, workers are not allowed to set their own wages. Without each other these "poles" would in fact collapse. In a capitalistic state these poles are often burdened by tension amongst themselves. This tension is according to German philosopher Georg Hegel as well as Karl Marx can be resolved by the process of "sublation". This word originates from a German word which is

lost in translation – “Aufhebung” – nonetheless the Cambridge Dictionary defines it as the verb “to repeal” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020). Fuchs defines it as a combination of elimination, preservation and “to lift up” (Fuchs 2017, 17). How does this tie into today’s digital world? Well there are many examples of digital transformation which represent “Aufhebung” the transition from radio to video marked the first great digital transformation representing “Aufhebung” where video “killed” the radio star. “The recording ended up losing its supposedly permanent status as a mere recording machine” “What simply happened is that over time, as cinema became institutionalized, the moving picture camera became something other than a machine for capturing and reproducing” (Gaudreault and Marion 2015, 94) – the transition from traditional movie theaters to “Netflix/Hulu/Amazon Prime Video” has led to many premature transitions from traditional movie actors to starring in “Netflix” original series. In Fuchs interpretation of Marx’s critical theory, he derives that critical theory is an intellectual dimension of struggle. He states that critical theory can help to explain causes, conditions, potentials, as well as limits of struggles (Fuchs, 2017, 18). What Fuchs continues to describe is quite important because from this we understand that individuals’ thoughts, interests, theories and social interactions derive from the existence of “conflicts of interest” from our modern society.

The 5th dimension envisioned by Fuchs focuses on critiquing ideology. Assuming much like Marx that capitalism is roughly an “ideology due social relations existent in capitalism are based on the concept of money and commodities” (Fuchs 2017, 18). Hence the entire basis of capitalism is ideology. According to Fuchs this obsession with acquiring commodities which are largely ideological creates a static state of mind in our society. He gives the example again of Facebook. Its large platform allows individuals access to an extremely large number of commodities, due to which we may come to believe that there are no alternatives to its use. The graph presented below gives us an idea of the sheer size of Facebooks world-wide userbase from 2008 to 2020 in the unit of millions (Statista: Clement J, 2020) from the Statista website. We can see the Y-axis representing the number of users in millions and the X-axis representing the yearly quarters. In the 3rd quarter of 2008, there are a hundred million users which eventually grow to become a total of a whopping 2.6 billion users in the last quarter of 2019. If we take the total amount of Facebook users by the end of the 4th quarter in 2018, we can see that the percentage of Facebook users is 31% of the Earth’s population if calculated by 2018’s world population (7.594 billion. according to the World Bank) (World Bank, 2018). The critique that Fuchs focuses on is that ideology claims that change is non-existent and that society will remain the same – but considering that the mere existent of our society

is created by social relationships which can be changed (Fuchs 2017, 19) which essentially implies that society can see change if we change our way of social relation.

Graph 1. Number of Facebook Users World-Wide 2008-2020



Fuchs interpretation of Marx's political and/or economic views focus on the criticism of the political economy. It shapes our understanding of "commodity fetishism" – "commodification" and other variables such as accretion of capital – and exploitation of profits from the working class (Fuchs 2017, 19). When it comes to the relevance of social platforms particularly online social platforms, we again come back to the example of Facebook which has in crux created its own sort of "political economy" fueled by information which has been for the most part free of regulation. Whereas we see print and television media which are much more apparent actors whose actions are physically visible to a great part of society. These six dimensions are brought to light in the "Frankfurt School's" or "Frankfurter Schule's" understanding of critique (Fuchs 2017, 20).

Two main approaches to critical theory emerge from the Frankfurter Schule and the Critical Political

Economy.

### The Frankfurter Schule

This “school” is considered as a tradition in the way of critical thinking and pays homage to the scriptures of Herbert Marcuse, Mark Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (Fuchs 2017, 20). David Held in his book of ‘Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas’ stated that the Frankfurter Schule dealt with socio-economic and political issues that justified or rationalized social change through introducing rational social institutions (Held 1980, 15). Held also stated that Leo Löwenthal and Friedrich Pollock were influential figures in this regard (Held 1980, 15). These texts give us an understanding of how these thinkers wished the society to be studied.

### The Political Economies of Media – The Transformation of the Global Media

Dwayne Winseck is a Professor at the School of Journalism and Communication, as well as the Institute of Political Economy at Carleton University (Carleton, 2020). In his book he wished to portray the different capabilities and parts of political economies in media. He states that “Communication and media studies ... under the illusion that political economy comes in one flavor” – he goes on to then define four viewpoints which are immensely relevant when speaking about media and the political economy: (Winseck 2011, part 1 pg.1).

1. Conservative and Liberal Neoclassic economies
2. Radical media political economy which segue into
  - Monopoly capital
  - Digital capitalism schools
3. Schumpeterian institutional political economy which segue into
  - Creative industries
  - Network political economy
4. Cultural industries school

(Winseck 2011, part 1 pg.1).

The most important part about Winsecks’ dissection of the political economy is that until now the “radical/Marxist/critical political economy” had been the most important approaches and this dissection has moderated the importance of Marx’s theories as well as Marx himself. (Fuchs 2017, 21). Fuchs emphasizes on other Professors who also acknowledge or build upon the dissection of



Winsecks works such as Dr. Vincent Mosco a retired professor who held the “Research Chair in Communication and Society” in Queen’s University Canada (as of 2020). Moreover he also introduces the importance of the five features of Critical Political Economy of Media from Graham Murdock and Peter Golding.

1. “Holism
  2. Historicity
  3. Realist and materialist epistemology
  4. Moral and philosophical foundations
  5. Analysis on cultural distribution and distribution between private and public control of communications”
- (Fuchs 2017, 22).

Fuchs also goes on to say that when we speak about social media and its correlation to the critical political economy, we tend to focus on the “power relations that govern the production, distribution and use of information of platforms such as – “Facebook.....Reddit and Imgur” (Fuchs 2017, 22) This acknowledges the existence of social media and online platforms as integral parts of today’s political economy. They lie depending of the thinker on different planes of existence. According to Vincent Mosco – the current political economy is correlated to the production/distribution as well as consumption of communication and related resources – (Mosco 2009, 2) whereas Marxist theory dictates that communication and media is bound to capitalism and social inequality especially in terms of commodities, wealth and is full of illogicalities due to its inclusion of variables on opposite spectrums. By this point we have understood why these theories exist and their significance however – Do we need both critical theories in order to understand the ways of digitalization?

The answer is simply yes. Both the Frankfurter Schule and the Critical Political Economy in fact can be symbiotic theories. In the sense that they are harmonizing. The key difference between these two is that the “inner-circle” of the “Frankfurter Schule were fixated on historical reasons which in context included the rise of German Fascism – Stalinist praxis and capitalism in America .... Whereas the “Anglo-American” point of view took more to ideology and accumulation of capital perhaps because they had not yet experienced the rule of fascism”. (Fuchs 2017, 23). Capitalism in the North Americas was very ideological and liberal in the ideology that it preached with immense focus on consumer culture – we can go as far as

to even say the North Americas were “breeding” materialism in order to increase consumer culture hence these thinkers focused on understanding it. Herbert Marcuse (a German-American philosopher) proposes the idea of “technological rationality” in 1941 – which gained traction only in 1964 in the “One Dimensional Man”. “The essential Frankfurt School reader” comprises of a work by Marcuse “Some Social Implications of Modern Technology” page 133 of this text speaks in context of Nazi Germany being a “technocracy” he states how National Socialism in Germany showed that even a technologically advanced and seemingly rational state can fall into a totalitarian regime “highly rationalized and mechanized economy with the utmost efficiency .... general welfare” (Marcuse 1941, pg. 139). According to Fuchs – Horkheimer and Adorno’s, Dialectic of Enlightenment’s (1944) – “notion of instrumental reason” along with Marcus’ ‘One Dimensional Man’ – “notion of technological rationality” connected the two approaches (Fuchs 2017, 23). Douglas Kellner in his book “Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity, and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern” – expresses that society is built upon dominance and that the culture of media is inevitably responsible for fueling this trait of society – he further addresses that dominance and oppression go hand in hand. (Kellner 1995, 4)

From the analysis of critical theory, we state that social media platforms are propagators of “Aufhebung” and from further understanding of critical theory we can consider that there has always been the occurrence of “Aufhebung” whenever new technologies are invented. With new ways to acquire capital, consume and produce we see new ways for capitalists to dominate and exploit society. This very clearly paints social media in a negative light. Fuchs states that “when doing a critical analysis of social media, then we require a critical philosophy as a foundation” – (Fuchs 2017, 25). Agreeably this is how we create a foundation for understanding the pros and contra of social media and today’s digital world.

### The World-Wide-Web in the Eyes of Philosophical Thought

What Fuchs achieves to express is relating the invention and integration of the world wide web to the philosophical ideals communicated by Durkheim, Weber, Marx and Tönnies. He derives processes to relate to the world wide web – “an information network of text, pictures, and sound that people have access to when they use the Internet” – (Cambridge Dictionary 2020). This of course then implies the processes of “cognition, communication and co-operation” – Fuchs also states that “cognition is a necessary pre-requisite for communication and the precondition for the emergence of co-operation.” (Fuchs 2017, 44). Simply stating that co-operation cannot exist without communication and

like-wise communication cannot occur without cognition. Social networking capabilities today allow for cognition, communication and co-operation to occur virtually where as before these actions required strictly physical presence. Computers allow us to transform menial tasks such as posting a letter from time-consuming to instantly gratifying (as it does for many other production and labor tasks). "You only use one tool, the networked computer, for these three processes." (Fuchs 2017, 45). Fuchs indirectly refers to these networks that enable sociality as chains of information- information passes from human to human while this information is being augmented and constantly changing depending on the comprehension of the received information to the receiver and conveyer (A similar chain to the butterfly effect stated in the chaos theory) however Fuchs relates it to the theories of Marx and Tönnies as it has more specifically to do with the "level of co-operative labor and community" (Fuchs 2017, 45). Fuchs further states that specifying the level of study in relation to digitalization and the world wide web is essential as well as to refer to the "dimension of sociality" (Fuchs 2017, 45). This is simply because many times scholars do not speak about power-relations and criminal actors in heteronomous societies by disregarding technological capabilities and social relations (Fuchs 2017, 45). Fuchs explicitly states the dangers of the internet and its social implications by discussing how the structure of the internet has changed in regards to the "continuity of commodity culture, exploitation, surplus value generation and capital accumulation". "Therefore, the technological... continuities and discontinuities" (Fuchs 2017, 46)

Figure 1. Sociality of the World Wide Web: Fuchs to Durkheim, Weber, Tönnies, Marx.

**TABLE 2.1** Different understandings of sociality on the web

Approach	Sociological theory	Meaning of sociality on the WWW
1 Structural Theories	<i>Émile Durkheim:</i> Social facts as fixed and objectified social structures that constantly condition social behaviour.	All computers, the Internet and all WWW platforms are social because they are structures that objectify human interests, understandings, goals and intentions, have certain functions in society and effect social behaviour.
2 Social Action Theories	<i>Max Weber:</i> Social behaviour as reciprocal symbolic interaction.	Only WWW platforms that enable communication over spatio-temporal distances are social.
3 Theories of Social Co-operation	<i>Ferdinand Tönnies:</i> Community as social systems that are based on feelings of togetherness, mutual dependence, and values. <i>Karl Marx:</i> The social as the co-operation of many humans that results in collective goods that should be owned co-operatively.	Web platforms that enable the social networking of people, bring people together and mediate feelings of virtual togetherness are social.  Web platforms that enable the collaborative production of digital knowledge are social.
4 Dialectic of Structure and Agency	<i>Émile Durkheim:</i> Cognition as social due to conditioning external social facts.  <i>Max Weber:</i> communicative action.  <i>Ferdinand Tönnies, Karl Marx:</i> Community-building and collaborative production as forms of co-operation.	Web 1.0 as a system of human cognition.  Web 2.0 as a system of human communication.  Web 3.0 as a system of human co-operation.

(Fuchs 2017, 47)

The above graphic contains a great deal of information that boils down to relating sociological theories of the above stated sociologists to the World Wide Web. From the structural theory approach and Durkheim's social theories we can derive that internet platforms are social and effect sociality – and with the “dialectic of structure and agency” approach we can understand that the web is as aforementioned a three-part social process in relation to Durkheim. The social action theory approach from Weber's sociological theory relating to social behavior we confirm that even “spatio-temporal” interactions are social. From Ferdinand Tönnies and Marx's social theories with the social co-operation approach Fuchs derives that social networking through group mentality and “togetherness” the web is social.

Fuchs has divided the world wide web into 3 divisions – “Web 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0” (Fuchs 2017, 46). He wished to relate the three-part – cognition, communication and co-operation to the theories of the aforementioned sociologists. Hence Web 1.0 – he deems as a system based on human cognition – “Durkheimian” – Web 2.0 – a system based on human communication – “Weberian” – and Web 3.0 – based on the system of human co-operation - Tönnies and Marxian, (Fuchs 2017, 46). The Web (short for World Wide Web) – is a cumulation of these 3 parts and is a “complex techno-social system” consisting of multiple layers or organization and sociality which constantly change within the Webs capitalistic

existence (Fuchs 2017, 47).

#### The Power of Social Media: Google, Facebook, Twitter

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In order to understand the power of social media we must first understand what power is. The word power has many definitions given to it by many philosophers and thinkers. In the context of social media power has to do with popularity which legitimizes the worth and use social media cites and applications. In the digital world power comes in the traditional sense from monetary backing and word-of-mouth. Advertisers and the rise of so called “Influencers” who are popular social media companies are often paid to promote new applications and social media cites. The latter are able to influence a large mass of the society while the influence of digital platforms give them the ability to carry out such influence. The movement from one social media site to another is fluid – or even possible simultaneously. This is only discussing the popularity in use of social media sites however. When it comes to the actual influence in regards to power that these sites have – Google, Facebook, Twitter, Weibo and Wikipedia are amongst or if not the most influential social platforms that exist in today’s world. Alphabet – the parent company of Google (a web-browser) allows users access to billions of other websites from communications websites such as electronic mail to information distribution sites such as Wikipedia. To comprehend the influence of google over today’s society – we must look at numbers. Google alone had more than 1.2 trillion “searches” on its browser in 2012 (Search Engine Land, 2016) it also provides users with its platform to communicate via electronic mail, look at maps, an application store, video-chat, store contacts, upload documents to a shared drive, organize a calendar, translate languages, upload and access photos, and even shop online . With the expanse of internet availability in developing nations we can only imagine that the number has increased considering Google is very relevant today when it comes to accessing other social platforms especially because the increase of substitute social platforms creates an increase in searches. This does not take into consideration other large subsidiaries owned by Alphabet such as YouTube. As per our knowledge – google collects “It collects data on what videos you watch, the ads you click, your location, device information, and IP address and cookie data” (CNBC, 2017) and claim to not “sell our personal data or information to anyone” and claims that it collects the data in order to show users more relevant information that they may wish to see in order to keep the use of google free. Regardless of this sort of transparency we now have a grasp of the power and influence google has over the social media and over our global society.

## The Network Society for Manuel Castells

Using Fuchs as a guide we understand that the leading force as of 2017 in the field of communication power in relation to social sciences is Manuel Castells – Castells considers social media as “mass-communication” “Manuel Castells conceives... counter-power are exerted” (Fuchs 2017, 110). He was the “Professor of Sociology at the Open University of Catalonia in Barcelona as well as Professor of Communication Technology and Society at the USC Annenberg School of Communication” (Fuchs 2017, 86). Unfortunately, even though many claim the superiority of Castells communication and media theories he fails to compare and contrast his theories with other existing theories – hence he does not give scholars a reason to necessarily consider his theories as exceptional.

Castell mainly focuses on “the network society” in the book “The Rise of Network Society” (originally titled “Flows”) which was published in 1996. – In an international seminar on Network Theory in USC Annenberg Castell gives his reasons for writing the book and his opinion on the network society. He states that he truly believes in Network Theory and as previously it had been used as a metaphor rather than a concrete concept to be used in research. We know that the study of networks has existed for decades – understanding networks is part of everyday life as well as subject to research by scientists and social scientists. Castell managed to take the Network Theory and create a broader or macro-social analysis of networks. He hoped that his research would spread the understanding of diversity in the scientific world in communicable findings – not just a singular language which is mathematics – but with networks as well. “Nature and society through the fundamental shared networks of biological networks, neural networks, digital networks, and human communication (Castells in USC Anneberg, 2010) – Fuchs has several criticisms of Castells works – notably Castells definition of love as “power relationships”, he states that Castell uses technocratic language in his description of networks and criticizes him regarding his lack of consideration to social theories, Castells inability to discuss the potential of “counter-power” (Fuchs 2017, 88-92).

The 3 tables below are taken directly from (Fuchs 2017, 93-96) the definitions are however provided as scripts of Thompson and Currans works – Table 4.1 and 4.2 dictate the types of power that exist according to John Thompson and James Curran. We can understand through their interpretation that social media does not have a specific or singular form of power. Looking at Thompsons four forms of power we understand that social media comes linked with economic, political and symbolic power (brand recognition, “influencers” or celebrities/elites).

Table 1. John B. Thompson's four forms of power

**TABLE 4.1** John B. Thompson's four forms of power

Type of power	Definition	Resources	Institutions
Economic power	"Economic power stems from human productive activity, that is, activity concerned with the provision of the means of subsistence through the extraction of raw materials and their transformation into goods which can be consumed or exchanged in a market." (14)	Material and financial resources	Economic institutions
Political power	Political power "stems from the activity of coordinating individuals and regulating the patterns of their interaction". (14)	Authority	Political institutions (e.g. states)
Coercive power	"Coercive power involves the use, or threatened use, of physical force to subdue or conquer an opponent." (15)	Physical and armed force	Coercive institutions (military, police, carceral institutions, etc.)
Symbolic power	Symbolic power is the "capacity to intervene in the course of events, to influence the actions of others and indeed to create events, by means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms". (17)	Means of information and communication	Cultural institutions (church, schools, universities, media, etc.)

Source: Based on Thompson 1995, 12–18.

(Fuchs 2017, 93)

Table 2. Three forms of power – Based on James Curran (2002)

**TABLE 4.2** Three forms of power

Dimension of society	Definition of power	Structures of power in modern society
Economy	Control of use-values and resources that are produced, distributed and consumed.	Control of money and capital.
Politics	Influence on collective decisions that determine aspects of the lives of humans in certain communities and social systems.	Control of governments, bureaucratic state institutions, parliament, military, police, parties, lobby groups, civil society groups, etc.
Culture	Definition of moral values and meaning that shape what is considered as important, reputable and worthy in society.	Control of structures that define meaning and moral values in society (e.g. universities, religious groups, intellectual circles, opinion-making groups).

Source: Based on Curran 2002, Chapter 5.

(Fuchs 2017, 95)

The above table by James Curran as interpreted by Fuchs states that Curran only defined power by 3 means. He did not acknowledge physical violence assumingly due to it being a sort of effect of the other 3 forms of power – in fact economic, political and cultural power can influence the occurrence of violence. The structures of power remain very similar without any concern for social medias. In Currans "three forms of power" (Fuchs 2017, 95) we can state that social media falls under economy and cultural forms

of power quite similar to Thompson if we equate the “symbolic power” and “cultural power” as having the same characteristics. We must understand however, that even while power and in particular media/communication power is quite prevalent there are also quite a few “counter-powers”. Fuchs on the table below gives us a well-versed understanding of said powers. Fuchs speaks about economic media power stemming from high barriers to entry – new media being forced to create/report mainstream content/issues – wage/income inequality that continues to increase and give power to celebrities and notable figures in society. Fuchs state in figure 4.3 below that one of the forms of counter-power are “grassroots media”

“mass media news outlets are struggling mightily with changing gatekeeping standards due to demands for interactive content produced by audiences themselves.... most revolutionary aspects of the new media environment” (International Journal of Communication – Castells 2006)

This is a quote from Manuel Castells in “Communication, Power and Counter-power in Network Society” – it essentially counters Fuchs’ argument by addressing the fact that grassroots media is on a slow decline and unable to stop the emergence of new media’s effectively. By grassroots Fuchs seems to be referring to traditional 20th century media outlets such as television, radio, cinema, theater – grassroots according to the Cambridge dictionary - “involving the ordinary people in a society or an organization” (Cambridge Dictionary 2020). This is essentially due to the emergence of the ongoing merges we see between “self-communicatory media” and traditional media. With certain individuals who do not need large sums or funds in order to create a following by using already existing “powerful” media as their platform.

Example: - YouTube content creators are often individual content creators – they have become influential forces in today’s youthful society by gaining large followings i.e –Felix Kjellberg a.k.a “PewDiePie” who has a following of 105 million subscribers to his personal “channel” as of June 7, 2020 or Olajide Williams a.k.a K.S.I who has 30.75 million subscribers as well to his 2 separate YouTube channels (YouTube 2020). These individuals started off with very little financial backing and were able to amass a great following without participating (initially) in traditional mainstream media (television/radio/cinema etc.) From what we see in today’s world, the attention span of youths and the general society has shortened undeniably since the introduction of social media and cellular phones and other technological gadgets for private consumption use. We can see this from a study conducted by the Technical University of Denmark - “The negative effects of social media and a hectic news cycle on our attention span has been an on-going discussion in recent years... A new study in Nature Communications finds that our collective attention



span is indeed narrowing, and that this effect occurs - not only on social media - but also across diverse domains including books, web searches, movie popularity, and more” (EurkAlert! 2019).

What defines influence on online platforms today?

When we look at the influence of videos uploaded to the YouTube platform it is more imperative that we look at the continuous viewing habits and the consecutive view counts of a content creators’ uploaded content as well as subscribers (returning users). If we look at a “channel” gathering millions of views concurrently on each and every upload, we can consider this as a sign that this content creator has a larger influence. The image below shows the highest number of views accumulated for the top 10 videos uploaded to YouTube as of May 6th, 2019:

Table 3. Top 10 Most Viewed YouTube Videos of All Time



• <b>Top 10 Most Viewed YouTube Videos of All Time</b>
◦ 1. Despacito by Luis Fonsi featuring Daddy Yankee – 6.15 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 2. Shape of You by Ed Sheeran – 4.17 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 3. See You Again by Wiz Khalifa featuring Charlie Puth – 4.08 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 4. Masha and the Bear: Recipe for Disaster by Get Movies – 3.55 YouTube Views
◦ 5. Uptown Funk by Mark Ronson feat. Bruno Mars – 3.53 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 6. Gangnam Style by Psy – 3.3 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 7. Sorry by Justin Bieber – 3.1 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 8. Sugar by Maroon 5 – 2.94 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 9. Roar by Katy Perry – 2.8 Billion YouTube Views
◦ 10. Shake It Off by Taylor Swift – 2.76 Billion YouTube Views

(Oberlo May 6th 2019)

majority of this list is filled with music chart topping artists who create content owned by major music labels and studios. But a look at the channel subscription numbers we see a whole different story unfold:

Table 4. YouTube channels with the highest number of subscribers

YouTube channel	Number of subscribers
WWE	60.4 million
5-Minute Crafts	66.7 million
SET India	72.8 million
Sports	75.2 million
Cocomelon-Nursery Rhymes	82.6 million
Gaming	84.8 million
PewDiePie	104 million
Music	111 million
YouTube Movies	112 million
T-Series	139 million

(Source: Digital Trends 2020)

First off, the table above is charted in a clear decreasing order from 10 to 1. As we can see – most of these “Top 10 viewed videos” come under the “Music” channel. This channel has less subscribers than ‘T-series’. Meanwhile ‘T-series’ has generated far more “views” and become the most viewed “channel” on YouTube with over 60 billion views by May of 2019. (BBC, 2019) It is an Indian music record label which “holds a 70-80 percent market share” of the Indian music industry (BBC, 2019).

Hence, when speaking about Political power and cultural power we see according to Fuchs that the greatest adversaries for media power are political institutions such as a ruling government or certain “counter-organizations” rather than other economic powers.

We have in the past and even in the present with the untimely demise of George Floyd an American man who was a victim of police brutality seen that several political revolutions today have transgressed and found their niche in social media sites such as ‘Twitter’ and ‘Facebook’ along with newer media such as ‘Instagram’, ‘Snapchat’, ‘Weibo’, ‘Reddit’. While news-media reports the current events – society responds by spreading a message through the internet. Fuchs talks specifically about the “emergence of movements which were born on the internet and conveyed protests, and based on the internet are based on the logic of technological determinism” this basically conveys that he disagrees on this “logic of technological determinism” (Fuchs 2017, 100). The fact being technology has not created itself; For whatever the reason certain technologies have been developed – righteous or not, were and are being made for the

ease of use of certain tasks by society. Technology and more specifically social media do not have intentions further than that of the society which created them– and this is what Fuchs believes that “Castells fails to see” “The internet is a techno-social system...effects or determinations” (Fuchs 2017, 100). Fuchs then goes on to convey that the media cannot be held solely to blame because they are counter-powered by - “politics and ideology/culture” (Fuchs 2017, 100). This can be clearly shown in a case study of the Egyptian revolution in 2011. Internet service providers and mobile networks were shut down and protestors and revolution supporters were forced to take to the streets in order to protest their cause and understand the depth of the ongoing situation. This proves Fuchs point about the fallacy of technological determinism.

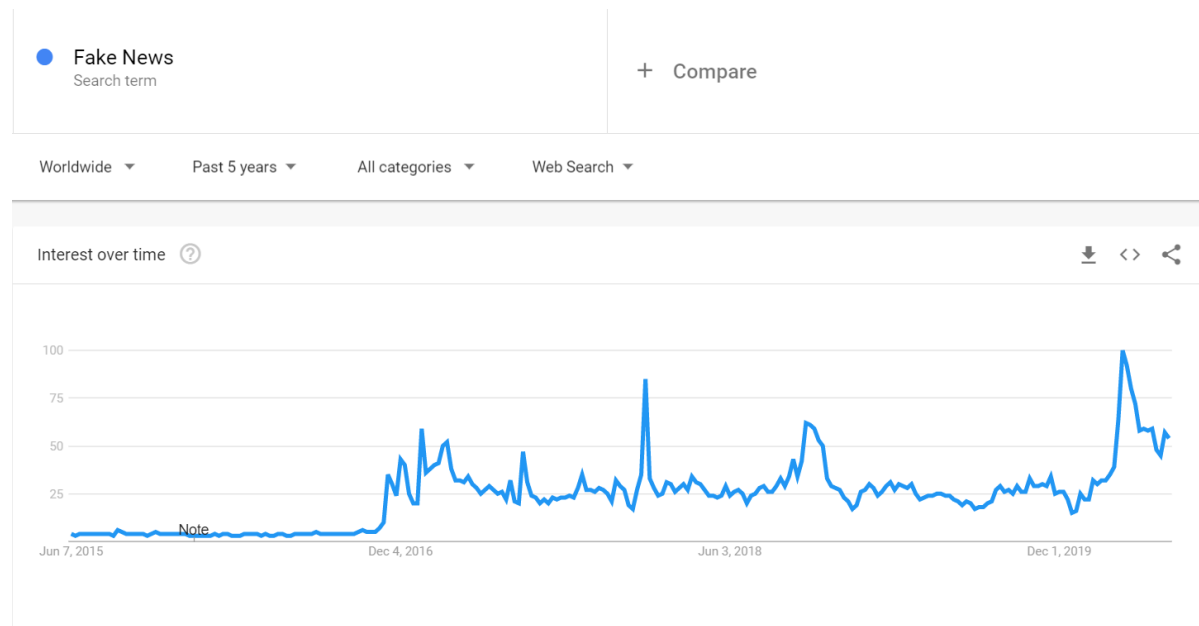
#### Transformation of News, Healthcare, Transport and Education

This segment of the thesis will rely on “The Platform Society” (2018) by Jose Van Dijck, Thomas Poell and Martijn de Waal as a sort of spine to understand the transformation of news, healthcare, transport and education. Primarily we will focus on the transformation of News – in essence one of the first kinds of media that took a turn to social media from television, radio and printed press.

Who is to stop the internet but “counter-powers”? In the 2016 United States presidential election, political and cultural/ideological counter-powers seemed to display their ‘Achilles heel’. The normative counter-powers as described by Thompson and Curran as well as Fuchs had failed to regulate the flow of information meddling on Facebook and other social media platforms. According to Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal, the fake-news spreading right-wing content over Facebook were “young Macedonian” nationals (Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal 2018, 49) We can refer back to the critical theory of domination and exploitation to understand that users of Facebook and other social platforms were exploited to create revenue as “content went viral... advertising networks such as Google AdSense” (Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal 2018, 50). This was in fact a story (regardless of if it showed support or denied these actions) covered by all the major and minor media outlets with Facebook facing severe criticism from most western media. We can see by this example that it is quite difficult to govern and regulate large “new” media platforms that reside in the internet world. It is in a way a vaguely parallel world in operation where crimes and good deeds alike may occur. This action or better – failure of action by Facebook was one of the more trivial situations that we could find ourselves in. The notion of “Fake-news” was

popularized by this very incident – in fact after using the “Google trends” feature we find that the term “Fake News” started gaining traction on the google web browser around the time of President Donald Trumps appointment as can be seen by the graphic below – The Y-axis represents Google’s own unit of measurement as they do not wish to reveal specific data – they have set the unit of measurement from 0 – 100 to measure popularity (of searched terms) :

Graph 2. Search popularity of the term “Fake News” from 2015 - 2019



Source: (Google, 2020)

The term “Fake-news” according to Google trends can be seen peaking at the search popularity unit: 59/100 on the 8th of January, 2017 – 12 days before President Trumps inauguration. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal note that this incidence has created a trivial discussion on the integrity of journalism and mass media as they play an important role in our society – they (should) present the truth – the whole truth. “The key question is how these developments reshape public values... governments, and corporations publicly accountable” (Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal 2018, 50). Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal state that there is in particular, a value of “accurate and comprehensive news coverage” that we expect journalists and news media to abide by (Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal 2018, 51). This value is hard for individual and news organizations to abide by as they rely on advertising revenue. If a news agency is ‘black-listed’ (advertisers refusing to show support by withdrawing adverts in relation with the news agency) they will fall short on revenue. Hence their actions are very dependent on economic powers as well as political – many journalists rely on government officials for “scoops”, intriguing and important news (ex. The White

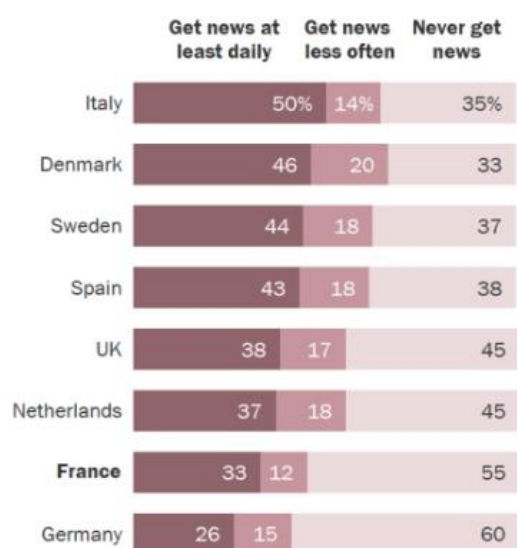
house). They can easily fall prey to the influence of these political actors for a “first-hand” source – while being the first journalist to uncover a potentially important news.

When speaking about the transformation of news, the most important aspect is the shift of news platforms. (Sumida, Walker and Mitchell 2019)– conducted research over Western Europe- this research was to understand the role that social media has in news. They state that Facebook is the most common social media site that Western Europeans use for news. They have compared the usage of adults who receive news daily through social media platforms from Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, the U.K, Netherlands, France and Germany. As can be seen by the below graphics –

Graph 3.1 and 3.2 (3.1) Left (3.2) Right

### A third of French adults get news daily from social media

% of adults in each country who \_\_\_\_ from social media



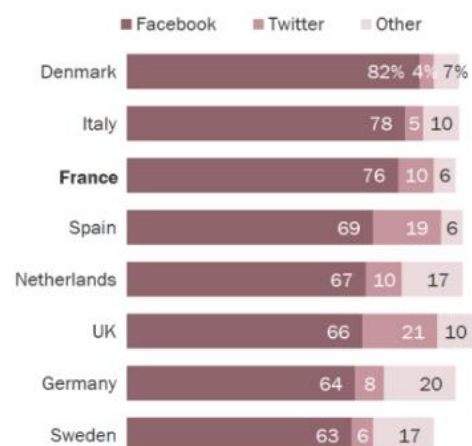
Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

"News Media Attitudes in France"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

### Facebook is the top social media site for news in Western Europe, including France

% of social media news consumers in each country who use each social media site most often for news



Note: "Other" includes social media sites mentioned by 5% or less of respondents. Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Survey of eight Western European countries conducted Oct. 30-Dec. 20, 2017.

"News Media Attitudes in France"

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The Platformization of news often “pressurizes” the values that were mentioned by Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal that news and journalists should stand by. This makes it harder for news media to be regulated and governed.

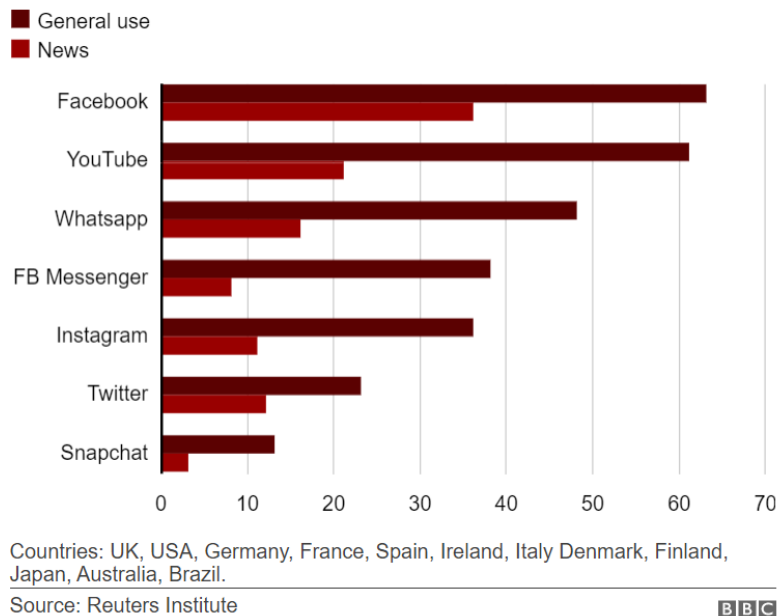
Social Media, as mentioned before is a great host for news agencies as it allows for a audio-visual interaction between the platforms and consumers. The graphic below shows the percentage of social media users that obtain their news from the mentioned platforms in the United States, Brazil , Japan and

several European countries.

Graph 4

### News use vs non-news use on social media

Percentage of people who used the social network in the past week



(Source – Amol Rajan, BBC 2020)

### Repercussions on the old platform(s)

What we have seen over the years is print media slowly being dethroned – initially by advertisers on websites such as eBay or craigslist and then this was furthered by the introduction of news applications – online news websites and other digital sources of news based on the internet platform. (Van Dijk, Poell and de Waal 2018, 52). Now a days the youth in Western European countries and most definitely in North America are relying heavily on online sources rather than offline sources for their daily dose of news. A study by the Pew Research Center in 2017 shows that 69% of young adults in France received news from social media daily, whereas the percentage of adults from the ages 30-49 and 50+ who received news daily from social media was 38% and 17% respectively (Sumida, Walker and Mitchell, Pew Research Center, 2019). They also state that when it comes to news consumption in Western Europe – and especially France, the news encountered on social media sites does not echo the same views as the consumer. Whereas in the case of group discussion amongst friends or family one is likelier to experience an echo chamber. To rephrase – an individual is conditioned to expect and seek similar or the same

response (in agreement) from their conversation with others. The term echo chamber defined by the Cambridge dictionary is “a situation in which people only hear opinions of one type, or opinions that are similar to their own” (Cambridge Dictionary, 2020), initially only used as a metaphor the term grew in popularity to describe this phenomenon. We can claim that if news we see on social media does not align with our views then there is no chance of an echo chamber. However, this does not mean that these differing political views will not have an effect on our political thought and inclination. In fact, the agenda of most political views and news we see online is to change our inclinations. Social media platforms are well known for tracking our search and activity habits online. They are able to gather immense information about us – “companies such as Google Analytics, Omniture, Hitwise, and Quantcast trace audiences... internet service providers” (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 54). This data is then sold to news media in order to cater to certain demographics in order to gain political support. There are organizations which track the amount of times an individual clicks on a news link and how much time they spend on the specific webpage and which webpage they go to next – they have the ability to also change certain webpages to better suit the individual's needs depending on the characteristics of the individual they have gathered from their previous actions – one such organization is called “Chartbeat” – another organization called “Newsbeat” helps news organizations and journalists discover trending topics over many social media sites which gathering increasing amounts of data every 2 minutes. (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 55). This is indeed no small matter considering that we have social media giants such as Facebook establishing applications such as “CrowdTangle” which was created to help journalists gather trending data from Facebook owned as well as competitor applications and sites ((Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 55). In fact, these authors have described this phenomenon as “Data Driven News Production” (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 56). It is indeed hard for an individual to escape this data-tracking and targeted news cycle. Recently, Google was criticized for allegedly tracking the activity of ‘incognito’ users and faces a 5-billion-dollar lawsuit (Mihalcik – Cnet.com, 2020) which will be later discussed in the “Governing a Platform Society” chapter of this thesis. Data driven news production is a very trivial topic especially when it comes to news media. This is because – we as a society tend to expect a certain quality of: unbiased and straightforward factual news. It leads us to question the integrity of the news that we hear and read about in the online realm especially when it comes to social media sites which are not necessarily established as legitimate news platforms. They create a sort of echo-chamber with such rigor and quantity that many of their news articles are quite irrelevant to be deemed important

in the sense of “societal impact”. What is trending today may not necessarily be trending tomorrow. The ability to quickly grasp trending topics over social media and propel them through many and various sources has become the key to generate revenue and influence that propeller seeks. The key to understanding the difference between social media news/newer “strictly online” news agencies and “legacy news media” is to understand that new news media tends to proactivity – to create and promote topics which could potentially gain traction and pander to the likeness of their preestablished audience , whereas most “legacy news media” is reactionary in nature. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal take a look at the social sites “Buzzfeed” and “Huffington Post” (arguably two news agencies with the poorest reputation for news integrity for being very opinionated in the content they produce) however Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal tend to focus on their data gathering capabilities and their ability to cater to their audience. Both sites use data gathering technology such as “ChartBeat” and were established as “news aggregating” agencies originally (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 56). While Huffington Post panders to a certain audience to retain viewership rather than gather new viewers and also report on viral trends– BuzzFeed tries to create viral trends as well as reports on them by identifying what makes topics viral hence even without being “Legacy News agencies” they have gained immense traction over the years. This very activity according to Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal creates a sort of economic model which replaces the autonomy of journalists and editors. Rather than reporting news reactively – they use data to be proactive and aggressively push topics they believe will become viral. We already see many news agencies which previously used the television or printed papers as a platform adapt to the online news realm. They have created applications available to mobile phone or tablet and even computer uses as well as websites in order to stay relevant in today's digital world. While they haven't completely abandoned their previous platforms (as there is still a demographic for those platforms which holds many loyal consumers) they have been struggling to find the balance in allocating resources between their legacy platforms and new online platforms. “A clear signal that fundamental changes... Times Innovation Report that was leaked in May 2014” (Van Dijk, Poells, De Waal 2018, 57). As of today, printed news (and other) media has created a symbiosis between print and online as well as television news media as applications and websites do exist with updated daily news for agencies such as The New York Times and BBC. They focus on the more traditional data gathering style as well as “data-driven”. We have understood at this point that most media online including news media relies heavily on advertising – this according to (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 59) has created multi-sided markets (originally were only two-sided) as



they now have great influence over the “advertising market”. Google and Facebook have as a consequence become monopolies in this sector due to their “network effects”. (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 59). Ian Burrell from (Raconteur.com 2019) (a website focused on publishing articles relate to businesses) published an article on the duopoly that Google and Facebook have created in the advertising market. He speaks also asks the question “Could news-brands collaborate to take on the duopoly?” (Raconteur.com 2019) He acknowledges the toll taken on news agencies by this duopoly and quotes several reputable sources from the news media world. According to the former executive chair of Dentsu Aegis Network – Tracy de Groose (A digital media company involved in marketing and communication) and current executive chair for Newsworks (a British media company centered on marketing for national newspapers) – “I’m not sure there is fair-competition” while pointing out the unfair practices of this duopoly which strives in an unregulated platform.

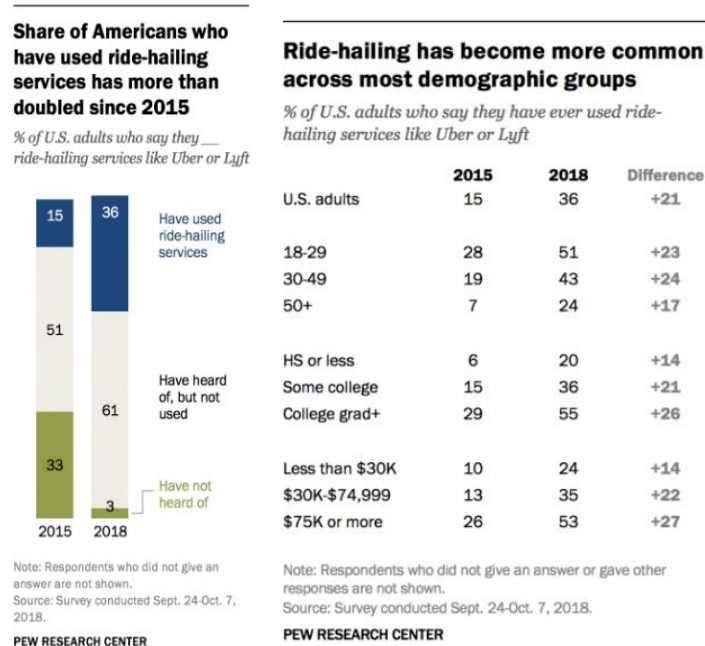
In an article in 2019 by Stephen Lepitak an editor for “The Drum” a marketing firm for the media industries in – Tracy De Groose expressed her disappointment of selling advertising rather than journalism she also states that today’s news outlets are more focused on quantity over quality. Further on she expressed her frustration by stating that while quality and news at a lower caliber was being produced it was all being sold to the same advertisers in a pack and hence a large volume of this “quality news” is being diluted. Moreover, she stated how now adays advertisers do not even know if their content is being viewed by real human beings or if the ratings are being manipulated by “bots”. (The Drum, Lipseck 2019) This plays back to our understanding of a negative effect the platformization of news has had on today’s society for a majority of its stakeholders. In fact, the only stakeholders who benefit from the platformization of news media are the platforms such as Facebook, Google, firms which collect data, and viral trendy sites such as Buzzfeed. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal conclude by emphasizing on the sheer size of the platform ecosystem that exists today consisting of “platforms, ad networks, news and fact-checking organizations, advertisers, and billions of users” not just platforms and users; While behind the scenes we have the aforementioned actors engaging in data acquisition, commodifying (packaging of said data to be sold/distributed), and selection (to whom the said data produced content will be catered to) mechanisms (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018, 71). This is relevant for the news media as they use the products of these very mechanisms to fuel their news production. Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal state that society and most importantly political institutions must focus on the mechanisms of this platform ecosystem rather than on individual actors – as the “key public values of journalistic... be realized” (Van

Dijk, Poell, and De Waal 2018. 71). It is an easy dilemma to understand yet difficult to solve – it is hard to regulate the platform society because activities are virtual and it sees no territorial borders – has no political obligations. In essence we must rely on legacy or sizeable news organizations to maintain their own “accuracy” and journalistic values (Van Dick, Poell, and De Waal 2018. 72) and hope that they do not fall prey to the “counter-powers” mentioned by Fuchs.

### Urban Transport

When speaking about the platformization of urban transport we focus more on the private sector. This implies companies such as Uber, Lyft, Car2go, Zipcar etc. Uber is by far the largest “taxi for hire” company in the world. They do not own any vehicles in the taxi sector and do not pay a fixed income to the drivers. They are simply application-based corporations that connect passenger and driver while ensuring the quality of the drivers’ service and earn revenue through this “connection-procedure”. Essentially competent driver is qualified to sign up and become an Uber or Lyft driver (as they conduct It is very popular due its easy to use application which allows a customer to “order” or call a taxi to their front door or wherever they may be. It also provides a decent amount of customer preference selection (type of car: low quality to luxury – payment methods – timing etc.). Ride “hailing” applications such as Uber and Lyft have become immensely popular not just in the Western world but also in the East in countries such as India where Uber functions as well along with an Indian ride hailing platform called “OLA”. This market is regulated to ensure the safety of the passengers who use ride hailing services not just physical (by vetting the drivers) but also financial by regulating pricing. We must understand that the increase in use of ride-hailing applications reduces government revenue from public transportation and increased regulations on the private taxi sector will help to back public transport financially. The graphic below created by JingJing Jiang in collaboration with the Pew Research center shows the increase in usage of ride-hailing applications that Americans have used since 2015 as well as the popularization of said applications within the age groups of 18 to 50 and above (Jiang 2019 – Pew Research Center) –

Figure 2 a (Left) & 2 b (Right)



(Source – Pew Research Center, 2019)

The spread in popular use of these lift platforms are not quite even however as they are primarily used by residents in more urban areas. The issue with accessibility of these services in rural areas stems to a lower population – less demand inherently incentivizes less supply. According to Pew Research centers JingJing Jiang – only 19% of rural resident Americans have used these services while in urban and suburban areas the percentage figure shows 45% and 40% respectively. The research also goes on to present (as shown in figure 4.1 b) that individuals with a salary of 75,000 dollars and more are likelier to take these ride-hailing services. (Pew Research Center, 2020). Uber in particular engages not only in ride-hailing services but also bicycle renting services which they have named ‘JUMP’ as well as a home food delivery service called “UberEats”. The issue that many in the transportation sector have with Uber and Lyft and such corporations is that they are cutting down business for local and individual taxi drivers by charging lower prices for rides. This point is furthered by Ubers lack of infrastructure cost. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal conclude that in regards to “sectoral agreements” such as market oversight, workers’ collective bargaining agreements and regulations as anchored and the transition from this physical sector to a digital platform has made it difficult for the laborers and regulators to take action – clearly this sector is now market-based and the only way to manage and govern such a sector is by creating bodies of governance which directly address these “connective and infrastructural platforms” (Van Dijk, Poell, and De Waal)

Healthcare

This is undeniably one of the most controversy ridden sectors that platformation has been sprung upon simply because it is filled with the new monetary currency of capitalism: data. There are in fact several companies and firms which have contributed or sought to contribute to the integration of AI into healthcare systems all around the world. AI is defined as “a computer program which is able to replicate certain human behaviors such as the ability to understand language, recognize pictures solve problems and learn” (Cambridge Dictionary 2020) – they are also programmed to respond to several questions (ex. Siri on Mac/iOS). They fulfill some characteristics of sociality (mentioned in Chapter 4 of this thesis). AI can be focused on many fields of healthcare such as diagnosis, treatment and several menial administrative tasks. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal mention the incorporation of “Google’s DeepMind” program with the NHS – (the U. K’s national health service) in order to track patient health and try to make diagnoses and inform doctors of their patients’ illnesses at an earlier stage. The application depends on the data that is provided by the NHS on its patients. Much like any other application of AI program – there is no service without data. This has as could be predicted stirred up a moral controversy in the United Kingdom as Google now has the access to all of the NHS’s data regarding patients because there is of course the potential that personal data can be leaked/hacked and used for malpractices. In part google may have more information about your health in the U.K than yourself. Google of course makes a profit from this NHS data as it sells the NHS diagnostic software while the NHS has provided the data to Google at no cost. (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 97-98). As far as treatment procedures go many surgical procedures have the help of surgical robots (almost always for “minimally invasive” surgeries rather than complex surgeries). Innovation in regards to AI and surgical treatment or even general practice would be an immense positive achievement for patients however potentially a contra for practitioners; AI may help to patients who face taboo in relation to certain cultures as to face an AI would be a more straightforward process than to face a human with “embarrassing” or “taboo” who has better communicatory skills. If AI is implemented there mustn’t be consumer bias in the healthcare industry due to ideological or cultural counter-powers. In regards to administrative tasks – nowadays we have the existence of websites and applications that can inform the hospital staff of a patient’s arrival beforehand. Chat rooms operated by AI are an administrative tool which converse with patients in relation to queries and doubts about their health. Appointment setting applications have been applied by many doctors’ clinics around the world. The platformization of health care has not only transgressed to applications and AI however – according to Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal there has been a surge in popularity for fitness gadgets such as the “Fitbit”

which tracks an individual's heart rate and caloric burning etc. While gadgets such as the Apple Watch by Apple Inc. have incorporated health related software codes that identify when a user falls through its "Hard Fall" feature and has the potential to save lives ("Apple Watch's 'Hard Fall' feature automatically calls 911 for hiker stranded on cliff" – (NBC News 2019)) or has irregular heartbeats (atrial fibrillation) through its ECG application feature even though a majority of patients who suffer from atrial fibrillation are senior citizens above the age of 65 and are not avid users of modern technology hence the efficiency of this feature and this is a potential over-treatment risk for youthful users (Cnet 2019). The purpose for most of digitalized health related platforms is to collect data – Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal ask a very insightful query into why individuals would be willing to share their personal data. They state that there must be the implication of "collective gain" – individuals seemingly get medical advice instantly, while these data collecting applications/sites/gadgets attain data. On the surface we cannot see this as exploitation as it is seemingly beneficial transaction between two parties and Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal state that the chief beneficiary is unknown (from this transaction) (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 99 – 100). However, it is quite clear that the stakeholder which benefits the least is the data sharing patients. They may be prized with potentially life saving information due to the data collection capabilities and actions of the big five tech giants (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, and Google), but in many cases this may not help all patients equally, especially underprivileged financial classes. While the big five still would be collecting the data of underprivileged communities – these communities in many cases especially in the United States where healthcare is not free – would receive hardly any benefit as compared with the tech companies who receive data that is uniformly beneficial for their financial profit.

## Education

Education has been unlike most of the sectors mentioned in this thesis. It has mainly existed in the public sphere – and helped the development of many modern nation states. When speaking about the platformization of education and a transformation in the use of online educational tools we must speak about applications such as "Zoom" and Cisco "Webex". With the current COVID-19 pandemic much of the globe from Japan to the United States have shifted from physical classrooms to the aforementioned virtual platforms. Much of the education sector is already running their administrative tasks through the help of computer network systems such as students who pre-emptively register for examination sessions to the accessing of educational tools either online or through downloadable software. The Big Five tech giants are invested in the education sector through many pathways not just through software but also hardware

(Googles Chromebook a financially feasible laptop option for students, MS Education (Microsoft), Classroom App (Apple to monitor I-pad activity in a classroom setting) etc. (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 119). These authors also speak about education data as being one of the most valuable currencies. Not just because young minds become molded to certain products through intensive classroom and entertainment usage but due to this platformization bridging the gap between the public and private sector quite well in these young individuals they state also “Bildung vis-à-vis skills...corporate platforms” (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 119). Furthermore, AltSchool a venture by an ex-google employee has drawn investors such as Mark Zuckerberg and Peter Thiel – its aim is to transform education for Americans. It’s a virtual school platform which eliminates the necessity of administrative and secretary staff (Van Dijk Poell and De Waal 2018, 123). This reduces the cost of a schools infrastructure drastically – no employees except teachers themselves and no janitorial or upkeep costs (except for physical tech-server which are low maintenance). The frightening aspect of this is that children in these “micro-schools” (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 123) – are being constantly monitored for every single action that they take on their prescribed computing devices (Apple I-Pads and/or Google Chromebooks). They are able to track the progress of these children in an un-canny precise fashion while also singling out the fields in which these students progress – on top of this students who excel in certain areas will be “pushed” to excel even further in those paths. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal state that this could be a sort of educational filter bubble (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 125). If ventures such as AltSchool become a main-stream education process – a question we cannot answer is “will this venture cause a sort of predefined path for young students to pursue a specific career and diminish their creative abilities and hinder a curiosity to potentially explore new learning paths?” and is this a boon or bane for our future society – What will the lack of physical human interaction from such a young age mean for this society and will it hamper any of the 3 aspects of our society (discussed in chapter 4) which make it a social network (lack of communicatory skills or co-operative skills)? Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal speak about the process of “learnification and datafication” – they define learnification as the advancement of traditional teaching theory and practice through the implementation of data-driven – personalized learning as learning in this case has become a quantifiable and computable process.

Governing a platform society is one aspect of governance, however responsibly governing a platform society is another. What we find out is that there is a difference between 'platform governance' and 'governance of platforms'.

We can analyze this difference by looking at the teachings of Dr. Cristina Alaimo, professor of Digital Economy in LUISS Guido Carli. Platform governance is the type or kind of governance carried out by the platform itself in order to keep the platform ecosystem in check. Amrit Tiwana – author of "Platform Ecosystems" explains the complexity of platform organization and coordination with a metaphor of an orchestra – with the platform owner being the conductor. In regards to governance of platforms, we question how, who and what level platforms must be governed (by external forces) such as nations or a union of nations (European Union) etc as well as what parts of the platform must be governed. We essentially need uniformity in international governance of platforms for it to be effective. Counter measures in accordance with governance of platforms is a very recent and juvenile occurrence. Platform governance according to Tiwana requires use of "content policies, terms of services, algorithms, interfaces and other socio-technical regimes" (taken from the notes of the course – Digital Economy, academic year 2020).

Essentially, platform owners believe that good governance must be executed this includes –

1. Shaping and influence of an ecosystem rather than directing it
2. Maintaining developer autonomy and allowing developers to contribute to the ecosystem
3. Distribute innovation and be able to profit from it

Dr. Alaimo does criticize Tiwana's approach as being bi-lateral. Tiwana focuses solely on platform owners and application developers. He fails to recognize the impact of the lack or integration of platform governance on end-users or content and data. Hence a failure in acknowledging other actors in the ecosystem while using very traditional and out-dated economic frameworks to analyze the platform economy. The reason to take Tiwana's definitions and studies into account is because they give a simpler point of view while the core of the topic remains quite accurate.

Dr. Alaimo focused on discussing Tiwana's 3 dimensions of platform governance.

1. "Decision rights partitioning – division of authority and responsibility for platforms by the owners/developers.
2. Control Portfolio design – Gatekeeping, Process and Relational control, Metrics

### 3. Pricing – pricing policies and cross-subsidisation

- Interrelated dimensions
- Expense of governance
- Also states that governance structures are inseparable from architecture”

(source: Digital Economy, LUISS class notes, 2020)

In regards to the 1st point mentioned above, the authority over commodity is placed with different actors.

Hence platforms have decision rights over their own platform, app decision rights are over their applications (developers) and end-user decision right is derived from the ability of users to either share or withhold their data. Dr. Alaimo gives the example of the platforms on two different operating systems – Google Play (Googles Android) and the App Store (Apple Inc.’s iOS) – Apple has very stringent rules and regulations over their App Store platform. They have a lengthy process called the “Apple Developer Program” which a app creator needs to be “accepted” to by the platform in order to publish an application in order to vet the application and its creator. Googles Android - Google Play (store) does not have any regulation or vetting process hence the platform is liable to applications that indulge in financial scams or vulgar content.

In regards to the 2nd point mentioned above, ‘Control portfoglio design’ or ‘CPD’ – “the platform owner ensures that stakeholders’ interests are aligned with what is in the best interests of the platform” (Notes from Digital Economy, Dr. Alaimo 2020). This concept has to do with policing user activity, rewarding and punishing bad behavior – this occurs in many platforms such as video games, players are rewarded for being “good-sports and friendly team-mates” and punished for uttering profanity, cheating (hacking) etc. Of course this is just behavioral control – CPD focuses also on input control from the developers as well as output control (content). The table below sourced from Tiwana’s “Platform Ecosystem” categorizes the 4 control mechanisims that are most important in platform governance and the pre-requisites required in order to regulate and govern these said platforms. Gatekeeping, process and metrics are formal methods of control while relational control is considered informal because it entails “shared norms” and values which promote certain behaviours – “community, identity” such as Wikipedia and other open-source (public domain) content. (sourced from Digital Economy, Dr. Alaimo, 2020).

Table 5. Control mechanisms and prerequisites.



<b>Table 6.1</b> The Four Control Mechanisms and Their Prerequisites		
<b>Control Mechanism</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Prerequisites</b>
Gatekeeping	The degree to which the platform owner uses predefined criteria for what apps are allowed into the platform's ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform owner must be competent to judge</li> <li>Platform owner must be fair and speedy</li> <li>App developers must be willing to accept such gatekeeping</li> </ul>
Process	The degree to which a platform owner rewards or penalizes app developers based on the degree to which they follow prescribed development methods and procedures that it believes will lead to desirable outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Platform owner must have the knowledge to mandate methods to app developers</li> <li>Platform owner should be able to monitor app developers' behaviors or verify compliance</li> </ul>
Metrics	The degree to which the platform owner rewards or penalizes app developers based on the degree to which the outcomes of their work achieve performance targets predefined by the platform owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metrics must be set by the platform owner, predefined, and objectively measurable</li> </ul>
Relational	The degree to which the platform owner relies on norms and values that it shares with app developers to shape their behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of shared norms and values between app developers and platform owner</li> <li>Low app developer churn</li> </ul>

## Governance of Platforms

Governance of platforms is important, when we think about the platform society we see a market dominated by the corporate sector – private sector – due to this being the virtual “world” it is hard for end-users/ consumers to see public domain / sector products unless they specifically seek it. Users of online platforms usually have no idea as to how their data is monetized or why their data is a commodity.

Platform owners are happy to take advantage of the lack of consumers awareness as this for them means a greater profit. This lack of transparency along with monopolization of the platform society needs to be regulated. The big five tech giants have as stated before managed to infiltrated almost every single aspect of our lives. They have managed to engage users globally – this is unlike any other economic occurrence in history and data in itself is an almost untracable digital currency due to its vast arrays of input and output ability to flow from “hand-to-hand” – one owner to another hence there is a constant struggle to find actors that can take responsibility for virtual actions. However there are also good side-effects of “datafication” (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 141) – such as “improving learning, circulation of news, ... could contribute significantly to the common good”.

According to Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal – 2017 was the year that turned the tables and finally we saw the introduction of adequate counter measures against the big five tech giants as well as their subsidiaries (Alphabet -> Google -> YouTube). YouTube in 2017 faced an advertising strike against the platform from

many large brand names such as “Walmart, Starbucks, and the Guardian (news agency).” (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 137). The strike against YouTube was popularly called the “Ad-pocalypse” by its independent content creators as they saw a decline in revenue and many ventured off to other video sharing sites such as Facebook, Tik-Tok, TwitchTv etc. This began essentially due to the actions of several influential content creators who propagated hate speech. This then spiraled into an action taken against content in relation to violence, vulgar language and fake news. (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 137).

As of June 16, 2020 – the European Union has launched an investigation into Apple and issues related to its payment feature on devices called Apple Pay - which potentially with the increase of online purchases due to COVID-19 is having a negative impact on competition and may fall privy of violating Article 101 of the TFEU and Articles 102 of the TFEU (Arianna Podesta of the European Union Press 2020) “Mobile payment solutions... impact on competition” a quote from the Executive Vice-President of the EEA (Arianna Podesta of the European Union Press 2020). Similarly the EU has taken action even in the past against some of the big five tech giants – when it sued the parent company of Google – Alphabet as it was using its platform to deter the speed and quality of products that were created by other parties (falls under antitrust). (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 137). These authors also speak of the necessity to integrate common societal values into platform ecosystems to regulate them to be beneficial for not just platform owners and developers but also for end-users (not just capitalistic values).

Focusing on government regulation in the European Union, the EU has decided that regulations against online platforms must be set by the country itself. In most cases in the EU, municipal governments are in charge of legislation and this sort of autonomy is beneficial for the gatekeeping process when it comes to intrusive tech companies. One of the most negatively affected companies by this method of governance is Uber as it faces physical hurdles as well as virtual. Governments must attempt to also create a “comprehensive platformization.. playing field” (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 157). This sort of fairer governance would include “regulating algorithms, data, and ensuring anti-trust legislation is kept under check” As of today in the EU the most effective form of legislation has been anti-trust (competition law) and privacy law – (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 157). The problem faced with governance of platforms is explained by Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal as a result of a singular legislative focus by regulation institutions. They state that there must be a more overall focus issues of power and socio-economic issues that technology companies create (Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 157). These authors also claim four major difficulties in regards to governance of platforms.

1. National legislatures struggle with neo-vocabular issues. (traditional legislation has not adapted well to the complexity of the technological platform society hence creating legislative scripts has become quite difficult especially when pin-pointing several violations –example: phrases such as “datafication” have come into effect.
2. National legislatures struggle with establishing regulations to control power-disparities in the platform ecosystems (anti-trust)
3. Legislators lack technological knowledge in order to execute orders against injustices. Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal give the example of “digital bots” which pretend to be human beings and perform tasks that may hinder social activities such as voting polls.
4. Technological companies reside in between both the private and public sector while sometimes owning little infrastructure that can be traced back to them. This makes it difficult for legislators to find culpability and liable actors in criminal acts.

(Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal 2018, 157 – 158)

## Conclusion

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In conclusion this thesis has helped bridge the gap between political sociology and the platform society, We have learnt that the platform society raises an enormous amount of social, political , economic and even ideological concerns that need to be addressed as well as how Tech giants have capitalized by collecting data which encompasses information about the users of their platforms. The platform society affects us in ways which many individuals may not even imagine especially without knowledge in the field of technology and the business models of datafying and commodifying tech firms. If we take a look from the point of view of Marx’s critical theory we see that new technology firms are simply capitalistic and are dominating and exploiting today’s society. On the other hand Fuchs and other sociologists help us understand that there are several counter-powers in place that may regulate the technology firms’ domination over the information. However Van Dijk, Poell and De Waal help us to realize that as of now there are no counter-powers fit to deal with the immense power and influence that the big five tech giants have over our society. In fact, the end-users or society in itself that is/are (respectively) responsible for the utter size of these firms as we consent to allow them to collect our data. Data is not made or created, it is simply collected. As Castells states social media is a form of mass “self-communication” (Fuchs 2017,

110). Karl Marx stated that society does not change because it does not see any other ways of societal existence and that we must see past this “insurmountable” barrier to seek change. Hence static, however if we take examples from history, such as the turn from feudalism – absolutism to consitutional monarchy and democracy (birth of the modern state in europe and the United States (13 colonies)) we see that societal change is subject to anachronism and not rational and predevised decisions (not teleological). Society so far, when it comes to revolution has been reactionary rather than proactive in most cases. To deter the exploitation and invasion of these tech-firms into our personal lives would potentially be a reactionary revolution through political and economic counter-powers. This is not to say that tech firms are inherently causing a negative effect on our society or that they are “evil”. In may cases such as healthcare, education, transportation and even news media they can be quite helpful in discovering new technologies and create higher paying job opportunities for the economy (while taking away jobs from blue collar workers). Tech firms have sucessfully infiltrated both the private and the public sector and due to the vagueness of the virtual world legislators have had a seemingly insurmountable task to regulate them. It is merely impossible in todays society, even for societies in impoverish conditions, to escape the mention of some of the Big five tech giants. This thesis clearly has given more emphasis to the actions of platform owners in the private rather than the public sector due to the sheer amount of political and economic controversies that stem from that sector, as well as their intrusion in all aspects of our society making them a part of our social lives that are new and must be addressed. The thesis goes to understand societal implications by assessing the emergence of digitalization through platformization. Primarily to criticize and question the existance of new techonology firms, through Critical Theory and the Critical Political Economy as seen through the works of Fuchs. Secondly, philosophical thought helps us realize the significance of cognition, communication and co-operation taken from sociological theories of Durkheim (structural theory and dialectic of structure and agency) , Weber (social action theories and communicative action), Tönnies, and Marx (communal group production as co-operation) when incorporated into the social platform ecosystem. We differentiate the world wide web by using “Web 1.0 to 3.0” (Fuchs 2017, 46). Next, we study the network ecosystem and network society and Manuel Castells point of view on the scale at which digitalization has occured, power-disparities as well as ethical questions that arise. Specifically we look at the forms of power of technological firms and take a look at the work of Thompson, Curran and Fuchs to learn what power means in the platform society and what counter-powers exist and their capabilities. Then, we take a look at platformization with importance to

news, healthcare, transport and education. When studying news we look at journalistic ethics and fake news as well as the concept of “online virality” so far, platformization of news has had a more negative impact on society – while information about criminal actions (especially of celebrities can spark global movements “#MeToo”, “#BlackLivesMatter”) becomes global public knowledge, fake-news exists even regarding these issues. In regards to transport we study the anti-trust actions of urban transport systems and regulatory issues faced due to their lack of infrastructure, and firms such as Uber have been globally criticised for their monopolistic market capture and has had a negative impact on competition. In regards to healthcare, there has been a beneficial impact on our society than negative. Other than the issue of data-ethics which does not necessarily harm our physical or mental well-being as of now, it is a more “potential issue” – meanwhile strides in technological developments in regards to health care are helping medical institutions to streamline lethargic administrative processes and save lives. The impact on our society of the privatization of education is not yet to be seen clearly. We can only predict the impact of platformization of education, and if organizations such as AltSchool become mainstream then we may see a grim existence for our future generations. Finally, we make the differentiation between platform governance and the governance of platforms with the help of Amrit Tiwana. We understand how platforms can/must/are govern(ing) themselves and the issues that are faced when legislators attempt to govern platforms. In resolution, the platform society so far has done less for society than society has done for it at least financially and due to the seemingly “untouchable” status of the “Big Five Tech” firms and the fact that we cannot seem to regulate their actions effectively, in the future we can predict that they will have a quite negative impact on our society.

## Abstract

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Questa tesi si compone di due parti, la prima si concentra sulla teoria critica, il World Wide Web (che sarà indicato con la sigla "WWW") agli occhi del pensiero filosofico ed il "potere" delle piattaforme di social media. La seconda si concentra sulla "platformization" di notizie, assistenza sanitaria, trasporti e istruzione, nonché sul governo di una platform society. Il caposaldo di queste due sezioni è il libro "Social Media: A Critical Introduction" di Christian Fuchs, sociologo, professore e direttore dell'Istituto di ricerca sulla comunicazione e sui media dell'Università di Westminster, ed il libro "The Platform Society: Public Values in a Connective World" di José Van Dijk, Thomas Poell e Martijn de Waal, professori di media, società digitale, nuovi media & cultura digitale, e scienze applicate rispettivamente nelle Università di Utrecht e Amsterdam. Questa tesi fa inoltre riferimento a numerosi studi del Pew Research Center, il Centro di informazione sulle risorse educative (ERIC), la European Union Press, la B.B.C e altre agenzie di stampa e siti web di analisi dei dati per fornire dati quantitativi e qualitativi (sotto forma di grafici e tabelle) a supporto delle sue affermazioni e argomentazioni. La prima parte inizia con una comprensione globale della ricerca di Fuchs sulla "Teoria Critica" di Karl Marx, ed in particolare le loro cinque dimensioni. In secondo luogo, la tesi mira ad esaminare gli approcci alla teoria critica della Frankfurter Schule e della Critical Political Economy che approfondisce la trasformazione dei media globali e il concetto di "Aufhebung". Infine, questa tesi guarda il World Wide Web attraverso gli occhi del pensiero filosofico, e spiega la connessione tra alcune teorie sociologiche di Durkheim, Weber, Tönnies e Marx e gli approcci alla socialità dietro il "WWW". Questo viene fatto attraverso la comprensione del lavoro di Fuchs relativo alla suddivisione del "WWW" in "cognizione, comunicazione e cooperazione", giustamente etichettati "Web 1.0 a Web 3.0". Da questa suddivisione arriviamo a comprendere la platform society in senso strutturale e di come sia composta da più livelli organizzativi, o meglio, da un "sistema tecno-sociale complesso". Successivamente, verrà analizzato il significato di "potere" nella platform society virtuale. Ciò che significa potere in questa società e in che modo piattaforme come "Google, Facebook, Twitter, Apple, Amazon" hanno accumulato una così grande influenza su di noi. Durante la revisione delle dinamiche di potere, la tesi si assicura di guardare alla società della rete come definita da Manuel Castells, considerato un'autorità nel campo del potere della comunicazione e delle scienze sociali secondo Christian Fuchs che è professore all'Università della California Anneberg. Si guarderà alle relazioni di potere e alle misure di contrasto del potere che Castells menziona in una videoconferenza all'Università di Anneberg e quindi analizziamo le

forme di potere definite da John B. Thompson (professore di sociologia all'Università di Cambridge) e James Curran (professore delle comunicazioni alla Goldsmiths University di Londra) che identificano rispettivamente 4 e 3 forme di potere nei confronti della società generale. Questa tesi continua a colmare il divario tra il loro lavoro per collegare questi poteri alle piattaforme online e fornisce anche una spiegazione delle misure di contro-potenza che possono essere prese per tenere sotto controllo dette piattaforme che completa la prima parte di questa tesi.

La seconda parte di questa tesi cerca di capire la trasformazione delle news, dell'assistenza sanitaria, dei trasporti e dell'istruzione e la creazione della "platform society". Per quanto riguarda i media, si tiene conto del valore dell'integrità giornalistica e del modo in cui la platformization ha cambiato il modo in cui le notizie vengono riportate, nonché la tendenza emergente delle "fake news" e il modo in cui giganti della tecnologia (come Facebook, Amazon, Google, Apple e Microsoft) siano responsabili della loro propagazione analizzando l'uso dei social media da parte della società per ottenere informazioni sulle notizie e dati demografici interessati da questa *platformization*. La tesi prosegue anche tenendo conto dell'aspetto positivo della news platformization, come i "social media movement" che hanno avuto un impatto globale e hanno effettivamente messo in luce i crimini dei più potenti della società (ad esempio il movimento #MeToo dopo lo scandalo Harvey Weinstein, ed il movimento #BlackLivesMatter che di recente ha portato ad indagini più approfondite sulla questione della discriminazione razziale negli Stati Uniti dopo la morte di George Floyd). Successivamente, la tesi affronta il trasporto urbano e le questioni antitrust e normative che derivano da esso, in particolare dall'emergere di Uber e Lyft. Quindi, la tesi si concentra sull'impatto che la platformization ha avuto sull'assistenza sanitaria in Europa e negli Stati Uniti e pone domande sull'etica dei dati (es. Collaborazione di Google e del Servizio sanitario nazionale). Inoltre, discute dell'impatto della privatizzazione del settore dell'istruzione e del suo impatto sulle generazioni future, nonché dell'impatto del COVID-19 sulla digitalizzazione delle lezioni accademiche a livello globale. Inoltre, la tesi si conclude con spiegare la distinzione tra Platform governance e governance delle piattaforme attraverso l'uso di appunti di classe derivati da una lezione di Economia Digitale presso la LUISS Guido Carli tenuta dalla dott.ssa Cristina Alaimo, dalle teorie di Amrit Tiwana (professore all'Università della Georgia) e con riferimento a "The Platform Society" di Van Dijk, Poell e De Waal, discutendo il tipo di Platform governance ed i tipi di governance delle piattaforme esistenti, sottolineando anche i problemi che i legislatori affrontano nel tentativo di governare piattaforme che creano monopoli o duopoli nei mercati creando questioni normative e antitrust. Infine, la tesi conclude che l'effetto della platform society su di noi

è stato sia positivo che negativo a seconda del settore “platformization”. Per quanto riguarda il settore delle notizie, la platformization è stata più una rovina che un vantaggio, poiché le agenzie di stampa inseguono la viralità rispetto all'integrità. Nel caso del trasporto urbano, ha creato varie questioni in merito alla legislazione e alle leggi antitrust. Per l'assistenza sanitaria, anche se ha sollevato preoccupazioni sull'etica dei dati, è stata molto utile nel semplificare i processi amministrativi nei centri medici e ha aiutato diversi pazienti nella diagnosi e in altre attività mediche. Infine, per l'istruzione non crea preoccupazioni per la privatizzazione di questo settore al giorno d'oggi, ma aumenta la consapevolezza del suo impatto sulle generazioni future.



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