

“When I think about the Digital Revolution, I am aware that 5 billion people spend an average of 3 and half hours on their mobiles daily: engaging with platforms by sharing content, communicating with others, discovering products and services, making purchases, and playing games. So, most of our life is mediated by software: from entertainment, education, communication, finances, health, and even romance (swipe right on an App, and then you have the slight chance of meeting your life-partner!). in short, we are living in a software-driven world. Very soon, there will be a software-driven ecosystem interconnecting 7 billion-plus people on the planet. Thus, the ones in charge of the software (writing it, owning it, managing it, and implementing it) will oversee the functioning of the world”

Angela Nickel (CEO of COMO Group, CEO and Board Member of iBAN-X by COMO).

Even though our CEO is right regarding our living in a software-driven world, it is our responsibility as informed citizens, to become literate participants in technological decision-making. But this is not about technology alone, but the matching of two elements that we are not sure are really separated.

Where in this Information Age, can we draw the line regarding the types of technology and their relationship to culture? If computers are communication technology, so too are robotics and genetic engineering. It no longer makes sense to think just about radio, television, telephone, and computers as communication technology. The lines between industrial technology, communication technology, and biology have been blurred beyond meaningful distinction. The concepts, debates, and practices we are exploring here can be applied in meaningful ways to any technology you can name, but more importantly, they can be applied to rearticulating the role of technologies in everyday life in what we can call technological culture.

From the perspective of the common view, culture and technology are separated entities. When these are taken to be separable, the task becomes to explain the nature of the relationship between the two. From this perspective, the relevant question include: is culture a container from which technology emerges, or into which is put? How does culture affect technology? Or the other way around, how does technology affect culture? This construction and these questions are, for the most part, what is understood to be an issue. We call it Technological Culture.

I. The Social Sciences

We are in the midst of enormous technological and cultural change with enormous implications for the nature and quality of life on Earth.

Our primary goal is to understand *the relationship between culture and technology*. Then, we will see how the digital revolution has transformed the way we live our lives. So, let's look at the basic definitions.

1. **Culture:** we take the simpler and most sophisticated definition the late anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) left in his body of work: Culture is everything I do (behavior); everything I have (finances and the material world); everything I think (inner life) as a member of society.

2. **Technology:** is the central defining characteristic of what means to be human at any particular time. We move through ages representing a mixture of both:
 - a) **Stone Age:** it is characterized by when early humans, sometimes known as cavemen, started using stones, such as flint, for tools and weapons. They also used stones to light fires. These stone tools are the earliest known human tools.

 - b) **Bronze Age:** The Bronze Age (3300 B.C.-1200 B.C.) marked the first-time humans started to work with metal. Bronze tools and weapons soon replaced earlier stone versions. Humans made many technological advances during the Bronze Age, including the first writing systems and the invention of the wheel.

 - c) **Iron Age:** The Iron Age (1200 BC-600 BC). During the Iron Age, people across much of Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa, began making tools and weapons from iron and steel.

 - d) **Industrial Age:** The Industrial Revolution shifted from an agrarian economy to a manufacturing economy where products were no longer made solely by hand but by machines. This led to increased production and efficiency, lower prices, more goods, improved wages, and migration from rural areas to urban areas.

 - e) **Electronic Age (1840-1940):** Heralded the beginnings of telecommunications as we know it today. Several revolutionary technologies were invented in this period, such as the Morse code, telephone, radio, etc.

- f) **Information Age:** is a historical period that began in the mid-20th century, characterized by a rapid epochal shift from a traditional industry established by the Industrial Revolution to an economy primarily based upon information technology.
- g) **Digital Age:** It refers to the time period in which personal computers and other subsequent technologies were introduced to provide users the ability to transfer information easily and rapidly. The 21st Century is often referred to as the Digital Age. Former ways of communicating ideas and communicating with each other are becoming obsolete as cyberculture takes over.

Looking at this panoramic view of the development of our species, we can safely say that Culture and Technology have existed in a dynamic reciprocal relationship. The evolutionary story of Homo Sapiens tells the tale of increasingly sophisticated use of tools. As we evolved, so have our tools. When we used only crude stone implements, we were one kind of human being living in a certain kind of cultural existence. As we developed the wheel, writing technologies, and industrial machines, what it meant to be human, and the nature of culture changed. We continue this process of evolution as we develop a human nature and culture based on computers, artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, and nanotechnology.

Technology is thus:

- the end-product, the ultimate effect, and the purpose of the age.
- The purpose of the Digital Age is to take information, software, digitality, and culture as far as they can go.
- It is the central character and actor in our social drama and ends as well as a means. At each turn in the historical cycle, it appears center stage in a different guise promising something totally new.
- It plays a central role in defining who we are.
- It shapes our culture: concurrently, culture is organized to give the technology its central role.
- *Is the process (es) by which an organism transforms labor, capital, materials, and information into products and services of greater value—a definition given by Clayton M. Christensen in his book The Innovator's Dilemma. 2016 Harvard University Press.*

We are living in a transitional world: digital life is replacing analog life. An old world is dying to give birth to a new one. In this process, the impact of new technology is radically transforming the culture of every single society on the planet.

Cross-culturally, there has been plenty of thinkers and spiritual leader working and developing this idea. Let's look at a few of them through time.

Joseph Alois Schumpeter

Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883-1950) a former minister of finances of German-Austria, coined the term *Creative Destruction*, describing the primary engine of economic progress. The process of industrial mutation that continuously revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, and incessantly creating a new one. He considered this process *the essential fact about capitalism*. In a nutshell, creative destruction or Schumpeter's gale refers to the process in which new entities in the economy replace obsolete ones.

The term refers to capitalism's ability to innovate, destroy, and then reinvent itself. In nature, winter kills off weak life forms, thus making space for new ones to take their place in spring. Innovation in our economy creates the new "life forms" which displace outdated ones.

In other words, old firms, and industries, which are not profitable anymore, close down. Their destruction enables the resources to move into more productive processes. The term 'resources' in this context refers to capital and labor.

The Gods

In Hinduism, the **god Shiva** is simultaneously destroyer and creator, portrayed as Shiva Nataraja (Lord of the Dance), which is proposed as the source of the Western notion of "creative destruction".

Shiva is All and in all, the creator, preserver, destroyer, revealer, and concealer of all that is. He is not only the creator, but he is also the creation that results from him. He is everything and everywhere.

In Christianity, the **god Jesus** is simultaneously the creator and destroyer of the world (the Alpha and Omega). He will be judging and destroying the world in order to create a spiritual one as the final abode for the members of his faith (he is the creator, the sacrificial victim, the judge, the destructor, and the redeemer at once). The concept is the same: the new and more efficient world is displacing the obsolete one going extinct.

The Philosophers

1. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich **Hegel** (1770-1831) created what we know as The Hegelian Dialectical Model where a thesis has a counterproposition or antithesis, creating a synthesis, that it becomes a new thesis opposed as well by a new antithesis, able to create a new synthesis. To reach the synthesis, the thesis doesn't disappear completely but is preserved in part. *Sublation* is that preservation. Thus, every part counts, even the ones negated, because, from the 'dying order', a new one is being born.

Aufhebung is a central term of Hegel, usually translated into English as 'sublation'. Sublation means to negate...but preserve as a partial element in a synthesis. Thus, an older thesis may be done with (negated) but preserved in part, namely that part that has been shown to be reasonable. A new or wider understanding has emerged from a critique of the old. The 'sublation' of a concept or thesis in its broadest conception has reformed its implicit assumption (and even antithesis), by both preserving and negating them in a higher thought that includes the truth of subsidiary or partial aspects.

2. Karl Heinrich **Marx** (1819-1883). Although the modern term "creative destruction" is not used explicitly by Marx, it is largely derived from his analysis, particularly the work of Werner Sombart (whom Engels described as the only German professor who understood Marx's Capital), and Joseph Schumpeter, who discussed at length the origin of the idea in Marx's work.

The differences between Marx's usage of the concept and Schumpeter's, according to the social geographer David Harvey: "both Karl Marx and Joseph Schumpeter wrote at length on the *creative-destructive* tendencies inherent in capitalism. While Marx clearly admired capitalism's creativity, he strongly emphasized its self-destructiveness. The Schumpeterian have all along gloried in capitalism's endless creativity while treating the destructiveness as mostly a matter of the normal cost of doing business."

In the classical Marxist view, the old world of capitalism must die to be replaced by the Socialist world.

The Biologist

Charles **Darwin** (1818-1883).

The extinction of old forms is the most inevitable consequence of the production of new forms Origins of Species. 1859.

Progress and evolution are often conflated, in part due to pervasive misunderstanding of the idea of evolution. The misunderstanding asserts

that as we evolve, we are likewise progressing, that is, we are becoming better, more perfect human beings. In other words, as we evolve toward something, we are progressing into something better –meaning old species are replaced by newly evolved ones. Evolution is thus given a “progressivist” twist in popular accounts. But this is not the intent of the theory of evolution.

Evolution is the slow adaptation of living creatures to environmental conditions over the course of generations. The creatures that do not survive do not pass their genetic attributes to future generations. Groups are selected to survive based on randomly occurring genetic mutations. The idea of natural selection is often oversimplified to the idea of the “survival of the fittest”, which purports that surviving generations are stronger, faster, smarter, and more complex, from single-celled organisms to multi-celled ones. However, this in no way guarantees the survival of the most complex organisms in the face of changing environmental conditions. Consequently, evolutionary theory resists the notion that humans are necessarily better or more advanced than other species. We have merely evolved differently.

CONCLUSION FOR THIS SECTION

Digital Technology has influenced culture as much as culture is influencing digital technology production. Technology has strongly influenced the course of history and continues to do so. Thus, it is largely responsible for the change of our culture today; not only locally but also globally. Technology and culture directly influence each other. as cultures change, so does the technology it innovates. Much of this change is apparently for the greater good. it is, for example, massive aid to—among many areas—global communication, banking, entertainment, and –as our CEO has pointed out—even romance.

- **Communication.** With more cell phones than humans, there is a global interaction in real-time. Mediated by software, people are chatting, emailing, exchanging files, keeping in touch, and sharing news across oceans and continents. For the first time in the history of mankind, communication is global and instantaneous, and gone are the days when people were making lines at the post office or at the payphone to send letters or to make a phone call.
- **Banking.** Mediated by software, people are processing loans, looking at their balances, and instantaneously transferring money by using Apps on their smartphones. Gone are the days when people were making endless lines in the bank branches trying to cash a check or make a deposit. Online platforms are providing the services of the legacy bank, but now faster and cheaper. Digital banking is our new reality.
- **Entertainment.** Mediated by software, people are using social media to keep in contact with friends and family regardless of

distance; they are streaming movies, playing games, “going” to live theatrical performances, “visiting” museums; and joining “live” presentations, conferences, concerts, award ceremonies, etc.

- **Romance.** Mediate by software, we can swipe right on a Dating App, and we can find a date or –if we are really lucky, our life partner.

Thus, it is easily possible that soon we will have a single global digital ecosystem, or platform, linking every human being on the planet. And, for sure, we’ll be living in a software-driven world.

Thus, digital technology has changed every aspect of our global culture, and its creative destruction will inevitably destroy the analog world, to create a digital world—the Software-driven world.

THE DOWNSIDE

But not everything in technology is about happiness and progress. The other side of the coin could be radically different: There are approximately 13,080 nuclear warheads worldwide as of January 2022 and almost 90 percent of them belong to two countries: the United States and Russia. Even though the number of nuclear weapons worldwide has been decreasing since the Cold War, still the same two countries possess the majority of them. Analog technology in the wrong hands, can destroy the planet many times over. Digital technology can be as dangerous as analog technology (cyberterrorism, ransomware, hacker attacks, etc.).

Margrethe Vestager, a Danish politician, and European Commissioner in the Von der Leyen Commission, currently serving as Executive Vice President of the European Commission for *A Europe Fit for the Digital Age* since December 2019, and *European Commissioner for Competition* since 2014, has expressed her concerns regarding the ill use of technology:

“Europe and the U.S. have come together before to promote democracy. Today, our liberal institutions are imperiled not by the blazing sound of bombs, but by the harmful silence of technology. Everywhere we see democracy fragmented into bubbles, driven by profit-making algorithms. To different extents, the rioters of the U.S. Capitol and the terrorists of the Paris and Brussels attacks were indoctrinated on social media before they took their plans offline. That is how the EU-US Trade and Technology Council was born a few months ago. Don’t get me wrong: the road remains long before we come up with tangible solutions. But we have already agreed on a common approach to limit the risk of artificial intelligence, combat unlawful surveillance, and ensure the tech market remains fair.”

Even though our new technology and our new cultural environment have moved humanity forward in different areas of our lives, there are hidden perils we must face and neutralize if we want to live in a peaceful world. It is up to us, to ensure that safety becomes the sign of digital life and the pillar of our democracy.

II. Our Corporate World

Strategy is how companies will achieve success and Culture is the ability to execute that strategy. If we care about the success of your corporation, we really need to put attention to and care about your culture. That is why we say that Culture eats strategy for breakfast.

Employee retention is in the mind of every human resource officer, but CULTURE is on the minds of the employees that companies are trying to retain. Nearly two-thirds of employees listed corporate culture among the most important reasons they stay at their current job—or not. Culture is the single best predictor of employee satisfaction, ahead of compensation, and work-life balance.

The right environment for a high-performance Culture for Success.

- Everyone understands why our work matters.
- People give their 100% when they connect to a greater purpose.
- Throughout the organization give value to the teams and our customers.
- Efficient Culture prevents waste of time and resources.
- People's roles match with their passion and capabilities. The more they are connected to a greater purpose, the more productive and dramatically efficient they become.
- Teams grow and flourish without dependency on individual leaders.
- Delegating responsibility and authority so teams are empowered to make decisions.
- Bottom line: results and goals are achieved.

- A great Culture is the foundation for success.
- Consequently: Building a Great Culture is great for profitability and growth.

But let's be careful here: if Culture eats Strategy for breakfast, Leadership eats Culture for breakfast. And this is the recipe for a High-Performance Culture: Strong leaders become Great Performing Leaders able to build a High-Performance Culture.

Conclusion:

Leadership is our key. We might have great leaders in our corporation but that is not enough. Each one of the members of your team must become a leader embracing the Greater Purpose of your corporation. Culture and Technology are crucial to understanding your corporation, but leadership is the cornerstone to make your corporation successful beyond your own imagination.