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AESTHETIC DISSONANCE. ON BEHAVIOR, VALUES, AND EXPERIENCE THROUGH NEW MEDIA¹

[...] artists have a very specific responsibility: it is in the work of art that what constitutes the libido makes itself most purely visible. What is the work of an artist—say, a painter? To produce an eye. The eye is not simply that which is found in the eye socket in the skull. No more than the tongue is only in the mouth. The tongue [*la langue*], the organ that is in our mouth, is our tongue, not a cat's tongue [*langue de chat*], only inasmuch as it also produces language [*la langue*]. As for our eye, it is painting, sculpture, architecture, the entire visibility of that which has been seen by those who have seen it only to the extent that they knew how to bring it to sight, that weaves it into a noetic eye—and by which it trans-individualizes itself.

Just as the tongue/language [*la langue*] is constructed, the spiritual eye that visible works give us to see is woven by the hands of artists. Therein it appears that a noetic organ always forms a system with one or several other organs that are themselves as such noetic, and that what links them passes outside the body, through a social body that is woven by a *tekhnē*: the tongue with the hand of the writer, the eye with the hand of the painter, the ear with the hand and the eye of the musician, and so on—all of which is articulated by words, papers, brushes, pianos, and other instruments." (Stiegler, 2011, p. 227-228).

1. A General Description of Aesthetic Dissonance

The state of violating preexisting mindsets concerning experience related to aesthetics—cultural conditioning concerning human relationships with art, sensation, sensibility, attraction and repulsion,

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pleasure and suffering, patterns of choice and preferences, judgements, practices, and emotional values, or “knowledge”—subsists in an existential state of discord between an experienced perceptual act and the expected aesthetic experience, which gives rise to something unforeseen or unexpected: it is perplexing, mystifying, and disorientating. This dynamic, which I will call Aesthetic Dissonance, is imperative to aesthetic responses and a relative of cognitive dissonance and sensory dissonance.

Cognitive dissonance results from a conflicting worldview and concerns psychological stress of an individual performing an action, or confronted with new information, that is in disagreement with personal beliefs, ideas, values, or emotions. It is frequented by what Dan Ariely calls predictable irrationality, where an individual’s formation subverts rationality by unconsciously adapting a behavior pattern, which alters preferences in spite of the availability of other options. This results in the act of an individual criticizing their object of desire as worthless, which is commonly known from Aesop’s fable *The Fox and the Grapes* by the idiom of “sour grapes”, which I can also see to be diffracted as a form of miswanting utilized by commercial marketing and advertising industries, objects of indifference and/or misery are cherished as valuable, which we might call “sweet lemons”².

Sensory dissonance, on the other hand, usually refers to musical phenomena; however, here I will adopt it as an expanded synonym for Fredrick Matthias Alexander’s notion of “debauched kinesthesia” or faulty sensory appreciation³. According to him “All people whose kinaesthetic systems are debauched and delusive develop some form of perversion or abnormality in sensation” (Alexander, 1946a, p. 42). This

² According to the Urban Dictionary “sweet lemons” is “an idiom that is roughly the inverse of ‘sour grapes’, though much rarer: insisting that something unpleasant is in fact desirable, esp. if it was actively sought for earlier.” Example of usage: “I know the guy’s miserable at work, but he keeps telling me he loves it. Sweet lemons, right?”. See: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=sweet%20lemons>

³ “I had proved in my own case and in that of others that instinctive control and direction of use had become so unsatisfactory, and the associated feeling so untrustworthy as a guide, that it could lead us to do the very opposite of what we wished to do or thought we were doing. If, then, as I suspected, this untrustworthiness of feeling was a product of civilized life, it would tend, as time went on, to become more and more a universal menace, in which case a knowledge of the means whereby trustworthiness could be restored to feeling would be invaluable.” (Alexander, 1946b, p. 22).

relates to the unreliability of subjective feelings, since that what “feels right” or is habitually formed and comfortable, is in conflict with new experience, or what “feels wrong” or uncomfortable. Its fault lies in an instinctive form of misdirection, which results in a malformation of bodily sense that requires behavioral re-formation due to mislearned habits of psychosomatic sensation. The perception of the physical self is unreliable, thus humans must supplement themselves with external techniques, which subjectively feels “wrong” during the early stages of practice, yet in itself this negative feeling is a delusion in regard to any objectivity, since such feelings arise from relativity. The negative sensations have not yet become habitually internalized, both judgement and execution need to be synchronized. What feels comfortable, familiar, or “right” can switch places with that, which feels uncomfortable, strange, or “wrong”, hence processes supersede products. This rests at the heart of acquiring knowledge in learning the know-how of different fields of producing art objects (such as musical performances and skills) necessary for the lovers of art, the amateurs⁴.

Aesthetics is thought of as not only a theory of art or beauty, but also includes sensibility, experience, judgement, and relationships. It is regarded as widely as possible in terms of *aisthesis* (gr. *αἴσθησις*). Aesthetic dissonance is the case of the mutual interaction between cognitive dissonance according to the cognition or reception of art objects and that of sensory dissonance in terms of the production of art objects. This implies the capability of what Stiegler refers to as the continuous reformation of aesthetics as a communal discovery of an alterity or otherness (fr. *l'altérité*) of feeling and in its becoming a promising future⁵. I would add that this consists in the quality of what is Other, the recognition of the other in its *différance*, whether ethnic, social, cultural, political, or religious. Sensory dissonance is a psychosomatic phenomenon that signals the presence of sensual otherness. Instead of intuitively resolving this dissonance, the trick is to take the step into the *being with dissonance*. In terms of art it could be said that it is approached with expectations formed on previous experience. Those expectations can be fulfilled, but they also could lead to surprise or offend presumptions and expectations. Techniques of

⁴ I would like to make a note that I use the term amateur in Bernard Stiegler's interpretation. See (Stiegler, 2017b).

⁵ « pour découvrir l'altérité du sentir, son devenir porteur d'avenir. » (Stiegler, 2005).

shocking anticipations result in art objects, which are among others funny, confusing, intimidating, or a maddening hot mess. The experience of sensory dissonance demands to take care of the cognitive dissonance that conditions comfort, attitudes, and habits. It demands to pause, break, and stop. It calls for a re-cognition of the object of art.

This is especially true for the performance or production of art objects. Consider the situation of *knowing-how* to *do* something, but without being able to trust if you *can-do* it to reliably achieve it when you will it into being. Similarly, it can be thought that imagined knowledge about some action does not lead to producing desired *æffects*⁶. Or the opposite, the ability to do something without understanding or being able to put into words by the active intellect or nous (gr. νοῦς) about how it was accomplished. In my experience as a music teacher, I have encountered explanations by students that they know how to play a piece, yet can't reliably execute it, explaining away that their practicing at home was much more successful than the performance during a lesson. A slip into a narrow form of *aesthetic dissonance* has occurred on the level of the individual confronted with the violation of what is habitually felt as normal, and with what their beliefs about their actions are. It is an important signal. It prefigures intentionally giving yourself permission to take care of Other or unfamiliar and strange feelings, which arouse within the body. This psychosomatic feedback is an opportunity, which allows for the consideration and reflection on the acting upon the revelation of surprise or of unexpected information about the current set of circumstances. In the case of a music instructor, it is an act of engaging in the aesthetic sensibility of the other. I believe this phenomenon can be looked at on the level of the community, even a globalized one.

If, instead, an art object comfortably reinforces previous patterns of behavior and thought, then it is what August Schulenburg calls entertainment, and what I would add, be part of a system belonging to the industries of producing culture. In my reading, Schulenburg continues by claiming that the *force* of cognitive dissonance brought into consciousness is transformative if we remain in the *being with dissonance*, which has the power to push an individual towards a re-formation of cognitive beliefs. I claim that the same holds true for

⁶ As both affect and effect.

sensory dissonance, where the experienced friction necessitates a change of belief about what feels “right” on the somatic level. Schulenburg calls the act of forcing change of belief in regard to “uncomfortable truths in our minds” to be art and considers entertainment as the conditioning that reinforces prior belief. The criteria of distinguishing art from entertainment is dissolved, wherein the condition of cognitive dissonance that is produced by an art object within its deceptive pleasure is decided by cultural, social, technological, ethnic, political, and mundane contexts. The shifting contexts insist on what is art and what is entertainment. So, a singular art object is a singularity that manifests itself as either art or entertainment or both.

So, cognitive dissonance is to values as sensory dissonance is to behavior. Their combined æffects results in the experience of aesthetic dissonance, which has always been conditioned and mediated by nonexistent or imagined art objects. What we perceive is learned, conditioned by our environment in its totality as an external milieu and through the formation of the senses themselves, as can be observed in the differences in color perception across cultures, differences in values such as the relationship between the individual and Others, perceptions of emotions, perceptions of reality, and other æffects arising from culturally conditioned pre-behavioral processes of perception and cognition.

2. A Reading of Aesthetic War and Symbolic Misery

The major political question of tomorrow is, then, that of artists, who have a very important role to play in an aesthetic war that will be carried out with new arms—those of transindividuation. (Stiegler, 2011, p. 235).

Bernard Stiegler’s approach to aesthetics is at the same time an approach to politics, for him the separation of the artworld from policymaking and politics from the discipline of aesthetics is a disaster. Aesthetics in the widest sense of the word is concerned with general feeling and sensibility, within which the sense experiences of the Other are retained at the core of aesthetic objects, such as those created by artists. Politics in turn is concerned with sympathy (gr. συμπάθεια – *sympátheia*) or fellow feeling, which establishes affection or affinity, and

a relationship with the Other, or the circumstance-of and manner in which an individual is related to an-other. Politics conditions the ability to feel together, a degree of mutual feeling, within which concern and care are implied, a desire to reduce negative feelings the Other(s) experience(s), a sharing of emotion. A political practice is orientated towards unification for a desired common future, which is united through feeling and the capability of a collected ability to love, which is a sharing of the aesthetic, the sensibilities and feelings.

In my understanding of Stiegler's writing, the act of severing such relationships, by something that "casts through" by means of calumny, which malignantly and unjustly hurts and condemns the possibility of feeling together or sympathy is diabolic. The words symbol (*sym-ballo*, gr. συμ-βάλλω) and diabol (*dia-ballo*, gr. δια-βάλλω) are etymologically related. Particularly, that which brings together, forms community, a meeting, or union is a symbolon (gr. σύμβολον), whereas its etymological opposite can be called the diabolon (gr. διάβολον), which introduces division, estrangement, falling-out, and separation. I claim that just as symbols are the condition of *eudaimonia* (εὐδαιμονία), diabols are the condition of *dysdaimonia* (gr. δυσδαιμονία⁷). Aesthetic dissonance is an experience, which can become either diabolical or symbolical depending on circumstances, relationships, devices and context. It leads to a re-formation of habits, beliefs, behavior, values, and institutions. The experienced violation of aesthetic expectations can be done in such a manner that it conditions

⁷ „The noun *δυσδαιμονία* and especially the adjective *δυσδαίμων* are common enough, and they are usually taken to indicate unhappiness or misery; hence, the translation of *δυσδαιμονοῦσιν* offered above has been “unhappy men.” Yet, the reiteration of the chiasmus of men and gods in the participle *δυσδαιμονοῦσιν* entails that the second compound, *δαίμων*, meaning god, has to be retained. And it has to be retained in a manner that brings the action in the participle to the fore. From one point of view, this makes the participle impossible to translate. And yet, simultaneously, it makes the participle a very accurate description of the *ὑψος* that characterizes the subject as it becomes involved in the divine but without rescinding the human. From this latter perspective, the subject becomes an allegorical function. What differentiates the subject from the gods, as the presence of the prefix *δυσ-* indicates, is the presence of unhappiness, unfulfillment, incompleteness. However, this “disaster” for humankind may not be so disastrous after all: for it is the absence of such a prefix that banishes the gods from good fortune, so that their misfortune (*τυχία*) is everlasting. For humans, on the other hand, there is an end point that can redeem them: the harbor of death. This point provides the interruption between the eternity of godly misfortune and the particularity of human unhappiness” (Vardoulakis, 2010, p. 99-100).

its æffects, which is to say it is an æffect of that, which grants significance, powers or authority to cults and religions, as well as to philosophers, healers, magicians, rhetoricians, and poets. The empowering, impactful, dangerous, and trans-formative *pharmaka* are not only remedies and poisons, but also a supplement, an antidote, a drug or narcotic, a sacrament, a source of intoxication, madness, ecstasy, and trance, or a device such as talismans, amulets, wine, cosmetics, paint, dyes, perfumes, poetry, and in my conviction, music.

The inability to feel with, or care about, the Other is diabolic. The role of aesthetic dissonance would be to take care and transform the diabolic into the symbolic. This leads us to Stiegler's question of symbolic misery. It is a shortage of symbolic exchange resulting in feeling of no longer being someone, being a nobody, a defective libidinal economy of desire. I understand this as analogous to *time poverty*. Time poverty results from the exploitation of free time, of Aristotelian *scholē* (gr. σχολή), which is colonized by external efficient or productive ends that occupy the intrinsically good noble leisure, thus it occupies the condition necessary for *eudaimonia*, resulting in *dysdaimonia*, since such activities separate us from community and from the time needed to love oneself. Stiegler's idea of symbolic misery consists in a poverty of communal feeling, an underdevelopment of the aesthetic since, in his terms, it is originally "engaged" in the sensibility of the Other, or the sharing of sensory experience, cognition and feelings. Individuals don't feel part of a society or part of undergoing events of the world. Symbolic violence is ensued through a loss of individuation and participation in the creation of symbols. Such social isolation creates a mass case of collapse: the separation of individuals, for whom the experience of misery is universal, yet not shared. I believe this is signaled by studies that show the epidemical and shocking rise in depression, loneliness, or being in the state that Sherry Turkle called "alone together", and a general unhappiness or ill-being, which definitely is one of the greatest problems humanity needs to face in the 21st century. I think the æffects of such isolation emerge through crises, violence, suicide, terrorism, or the general seeking redemption via the absolute form of interruption, which is through Death, since *dys-daimonia* cuts mortals off from the infinite immortality of spirits, who are plagued with everlasting misfortune. This sight is part of the field of aesthetic war.

The war is foremost a conflict of values, that of the market and that of “spirit”. Marketing and advertising are a hegemonic force that fight to capture human attention and desire, which are fundamental for “spirit”. Those suffering from symbolic misery, which is composed of humiliation and offence, are subject to aesthetic conditioning, which is segregating, alienating or diabolic, which replaces aesthetic experience and renders it impossible, decomposing it into drives. The aesthetic is dis-ordered. The aesthetic war is a *stasis* (gr. στάσις) that means political standing, faction, as well as civil war. *Stasis* sets humans against each other, a division rising from political standing with the nastiest of overtones.

There is a struggle in contemporary society between domains of social life like family and politics. One case encompasses Stiegler’s observation that an individual’s sensibilities, the emotional and aesthetic dimension, have been functionalized to make a consumer. Such a process is part of an everlasting functionalization and defunctionalization process, which modifies the psycho-physiological sense organs and art, its history, artefacts, symbols, and works. Aesthetic power is shaped by the body, artificial organs composed of techniques, objects, tools, instruments and art, and by social organs of emergent institutions, which for Stiegler compose the key areas of study for his *general organology*. The origin of the struggle between market values against spirit values, human life and consciousness, has been dated to be in the early 20th century, with Edward Barnays’ techniques of marketing overproduced ‘sweet lemons’, which developed an industrial aesthetic audiovisually mediated with the power to functionalize the aesthetic dimension of an individual so as to nudge them to behave as a consumer. A manipulation of desire to economically combat the problem of diminishing rate of returns on profits as described by Marx. This result in a loss of aesthetic attachment to singular objects, to symbolic misery, and an ill-being of desire and affect. The aesthetic experience is threatened by the hegemony of lived experience within neoliberal hyperindustrial society, which has become calculable, and prevents people from creating affective and meaningful attachments to symbols in relation to our retentional apparatuses, technology and memory. The factors that make life worth living are replaced with emptiness that is overwhelming, instead of aesthetic

dissonance, we are left with aesthetic deprivation, the anesthetic or diabolic condition of symbolic misery. Such tension can be thought of as a dissonance between overlapping domains of social life, private and public.

What can be learned from *being with dissonance* is that compelling, beautiful, and dramatic stories and narratives, as well as music, are invitations to experience it. A resolution is possible if we will to stay with it, the resolution of which is a narrative of hope or redemption. The formation of the aesthetic feelings and sense of curiosity towards dissonance bring to the unexpected, the uncalculatable and unmeasurable, a synergetic sense of wonder and awe in regards to being human and can be part of the artificial organs which develop mental stability and even courage, instead of fearing the unexpected and immediately resolving the tension of aesthetic dissonance with that, which feels “right” or has been culturally conditioned by competing entities for our desire and attention within the ramifications of aesthetic war, an arms race of behavioral nudges and cognitive heuristics. This is also a practice of loving oneself, since it asks for us to pay attention to and care for with our conscious presence any uncomfortable experiences, it is a re-cognition of values. This requires those in symbolic misery and artists to engage *with* suffering, as opposed to avoiding it through “debauched kinesthetics” shaped by the aesthetic conditioning of marketing. This opportunity is a lesson to learn the communal sharing of discomfort and ill-being, trans-forming the diabolic into the symbolic. To remain *with* silence, a busy mind, withdrawal symptoms or even an itch. A communal knowing of how-to-live can develop, of how-to-stay or return to conscious presence and attention in spite of tendencies to break the silence, write down our thoughts, reinforce addiction patterns, or scratch an itch.

3. Aesthetics and New Media

Art holds up a mirror to shifting attitudes. Initial tags of 'ugly' sometimes get forgotten as once-derided subjects become valued. Impressionism of the 19th century – now featured in blockbuster exhibits – was initially compared to mushy food and rotting flesh. When Henri Matisse's works showed in the US at the Armory Show of 1913, critics lambasted his art as 'ugly', while art students in Chicago burned an effigy of his Blue Nude in front of the Art Institute. The same institution mounted a major retrospective of his work a century later. Jazz and rock'n'roll were once considered 'ugly' music, threatening to corrupt entire generations (Henderson, 2016, para. 12).

What develops through digital technologies and the networks they weave are associated technical milieus that allow a true symbolic life—and it is within this milieu that free software and the Linux platform could appear: the relations of industrial work formed here are not those of the division of labor and the social roles that nineteenth-century productivity and twentieth-century consumerism had imposed: they are associative and participative. (Stiegler, 2011, p. 233).

The aesthetic community to come is formed by conflicts as processes of building sympathy, a new common sensibility of a transformed world. Breaks with tradition are points that insist on and discover a feeling, which is not shared by all. Historically the multiplying conflicts of aesthetics from the 19th century onwards, some of which functionalize the aesthetics and emotions of individuals for the admiration of power, recruitment of believers, or for free-thinking and exploration of the unlimited possibilities which make the body resonate are shared with Others, the world and its future aesthetical or artistic becoming.

New Media is at once a diffractive mirror of *us* and a reflection of aesthetic dissonance. In it, conflicting experiences such as being bored and entertained at the same time are possible. They are persisting organs of re-functionalization that arouse antagonistic experiences, values, and behavior. They shape what feels "right" and what feels "wrong". New media can be a vehicle for creating aesthetic dissonances in regard to at least what is perceived as art and in general to that, which arises from encountering conflicting beliefs and feelings. It is a breeding ground of "fake news", conspiracy theories, and also of beneficial mass cooperation and community, of rebuttal and verification. It breeds antivaxxers, incels, and populism but it also brings together social institutions, grassroots movements, and is an

extension of an individual's biological eyes and ears through video-recording and live transmission. An opportunity for us to take responsibility for actions, consider the significances of our behavior and objectify imagined beliefs about social reality. New Media without proper care for the *energies* of symbolic misery become destructive *pharmaka*, and with proper care, tools such as the Internet, become magical artistic mediums of the *amateurs* in spite of the loss new technology inherently brings and supplements. New media is at once a medium of customizing aesthetic experience individually, however it is threatened by the practice of prioritizing calculability and modeling consumer behavior in favor of capitalistic effectiveness, *ascholia* or the state of being permanently busy, which results in the simultaneous categorization of an individual as a data point, punishing those who do not fit an algorithm's premises, which Cathy O'Neil has described in *Weapons of Math Destruction* and Marcus Gilroy-Ware in *Filling the Void*.

Behavior, values and experience are shaped by New Media; however, a new knowledge needs to individuate like the way an athlete stretches or a musician practices scales. Bodily organs, artificial organs, and social institutions should preferably lean into persisting, insisting, and consisting aesthetic experiences for their exploration, developing a know-how in regard to stretching and *being with dissonance* rather than realizing impulsive behaviors, which are rationalized for the reclaiming of symbolic control. The aesthetic re-conditioning teaches not only exploration of presented dissonances and experiences, but also cultivates curiosity, increased compassion or sympathy, and develops the capability to distinguish the suffering of the other from our own. This can of course be accomplished with episodes of dissonance and resolution experienced through music, literature, fairy tales, and cinema. A holistic narrative that accents dissonance with its accumulative crescendo before its climax and resolution. Learning to generate art objects, such as to play music is practicing of dissonance. Conscious awareness and acute attention towards each articulated note precede later awareness of the overall coherence of action and *æffects*. When faced with *stasis*, horror, misery, and suffering, emphatic response does not "feel" right, it is not "natural", speaking in terms of aesthetic war. These natural responses are pain avoidance and circumvention of the disagreeable or "ugliness", or what feels "wrong" in search for

comfort, calm, and tranquility. However, art does not emerge from mindless harmony, but is discovered with patience and after delving into the dissonances that are avoided. It makes us acknowledge and recognize emotions and their sources.

Since new generations also spend over 10,000 hours playing video games before maturing into adults (Zimbardo, 2016), I would like to comment on ludonarrative dissonance. This device *forces* players of video games into discomfort, which these narratives foster. The most adored stories come from dissonant characters “as it is the surprise, the disturbance, the accident, the sacrosanct disruptive element, that justifies the very act of telling a story” (Seraphine, p. 8). Such a device is described as the violation of immersion, which is to say it is an emersion, since it draws players out of the work and violates a state of detachment and disinterested delight. Desire for the object itself is a condition of love, if not, then what we are left with is what Stiegler describes as cultural philistines or new barbarians, who only perceive art as “interesting”, a consumable, and nothing more.

Video games are new *pharmaka*: “Games players are also more likely than non-games players to participate in other forms of culture, especially through active participation (e.g., creating digital video, photography or animation or writing stories or poetry), but passive participation (e.g., attending cultural festivals) is also common.” (Borowiecki, K. & Bakhshi, 2017, p.1). The Internet is the new gallery of art, and even art itself, at least according to Virginia Heffernan, where these works are published and with which individuals participate, share, and engage in symbolic exchange, what I would describe as one instance of symbolic fertility.

4. Coda

To arrive at an aesthetic experience was to be inscribed within a social process of participation that engaged one in a practice: this was not a consumption, but a sociation that was also a cultuality carried through practices, an active relation, compared with which cultural consumption had no meaning. (Stiegler, 2011, p. 233)

In going to see an exhibition at the museum, in reading a novel, in watching a film in a non-consumerist manner, in opening my eye to expand my view (by means of my hands, from Lascaux to Cézanne, and after Cézanne, the hand is seized by the reproducibility set off by the fingers) —just as my tongue [ma langue] gives me access to language [la langue] as a process of individuation of a symbolic milieu, binding and unbinding, with my ears that heed it, with the tongue that is in my mouth—in going to see an exhibition and in reconnecting through all these paths works that I thus take care of while taking care of myself and of others, I participate in the weaving of the long circuits of transindividuation (Stiegler, 2011, p. 234).

Art as a product of negentropy, however, can reconcile the entropy or dis-ordering of *stasis* in the fight against symbolic misery. According to Plato, music (μουσική), especially enchantment by playing the aulos or *kataulein*) can be the cause of mania, which is rooted i.a. in fear, and at the same time its medicine consists in a reintegration of an individual within a group, counteracting fear. This was the ancient practice of *mania* of the Elysian mysteries and rituals of Dionysic cults of the Bacchantes or the Korybantes (Plato, 1967/1968, 791a-b). Music must save the world according to Stiegler, it is an art of creating protentions or anticipating, waiting, and making people behave a certain way. It is transformative and pharmacological. In the context of aesthetic dissonance, the exploration of the possibility of creating new sensibilities and re-cognitions, patience with conflict without seeking immediate resolution of tension, an opportunity for healing symbolic misery arises. This is not simply cognitive or behavioral, but an artistic act of mastery, or action, which demands patience, attention, and curiosity. It challenges the drive to turn away from the displeasing, discord, suffering and tension through the exploration of their nuances, and the possibilities they unfold.

Aesthetic dissonance is not simply a state of arousal or conflicting feelings and emotions. It is a lens through which practices, behaviors, politics, psychopathology, and other issues can be viewed. It

is a condition of making insights on the role of aesthetic and cultural capital on our social behavior, as well as the result of mutual æffects from the study of culture that expand understanding on the phenomenon of dissonance. Internalized standards from culture, society, and family and one's personal beliefs about themselves, create the measuring tools of cognitive dissonance, which has a tendency to lean towards the normative practice of marketing, nonetheless, a dissonant habituation in an individual's environment can also make participatory standards more accessible.

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ABSTRACT

Aesthetic Dissonance. On Behavior, Values, and Experience through New Media

Aesthetics is thought of as not only a theory of art or beauty, but also includes sensibility, experience, judgement, and relationships. This paper is a study of Bernard Stiegler's notion of Aesthetic War (*stasis*) and symbolic misery. Symbolic violence is ensued through a loss of individuation and participation in the creation of symbols. As a struggle between market values against spirit values human life and consciousness within neoliberal hyperindustrial society has become calculable, which prevents people from creating affective and meaningful attachments to symbols in relation to our retentional apparatuses, technology and memory. Such tension can be thought of as a dissonance between overlapping domains of social life, private and public. New Media is a reflection of aesthetic dissonance, an experience such as being bored and entertained at the same time, between antagonistic experiences, values, and behavior. Moreover, new media is at once a medium of customizing aesthetic experience individually as well as the threat and practice of prioritizing calculability and modeling of consumer behavior in favor of capitalistic effectiveness, which results in the simultaneous categorization of an individual as a data point, putting those who do not fit an algorithm's premises at a disadvantage.

KEYWORDS: Aesthetics, Symbolic Misery, New Media, Cognitive Dissonance, Faulty Sensory Appreciation, Behavior.

ABSTRAKT

Dysonans estetyczny. O zachowaniu, wartościach i doświadczeniu poprzez nowe media.

Estetyka jest rozumiana nie tylko jako teoria sztuki lub piękna, ale także obejmuje wrażliwość, doświadczenie, osąd i relacje. Artykuł ten jest studium Bernarda Stieglera na temat pojęcia wojny estetycznej (*staza*) i nędzy symbolicznej. Przemoc symboliczna następuje w wyniku utraty indywidualności i udziału w tworzeniu symboli. Jako walka między wartościami rynkowymi a wartościami duchowymi życie i świadomość ludzka w ramach neoliberalnego społeczeństwa hiper-przemysłowego stała się obliczalna, co zapobiega tworzeniu przez ludzi afektywnych i

znaczących przywiązań do symboli w odniesieniu do naszych aparatów retencyjnych, technologii i pamięci. Tego rodzaju napięcie można postrzegać jako dysonans zachodzący pomiędzy nakładającymi się na siebie dziedzinami życia społecznego, prywatnego i publicznego. Nowe media są odzwierciedleniem dysonansu estetycznego, takiego doświadczenia jak bycie zanudzonym i rozbawionym jednocześnie, pomiędzy antagonistycznymi doświadczeniami, wartościami i zachowaniami. Co więcej, nowe media są zarazem medium indywidualnego dostosowywania doświadczeń estetycznych, a także zagrożeniem i praktyką nadawania priorytetu obliczalności i modelowaniu zachowań konsumentów na rzecz kapitalistycznej efektywności, co skutkuje jednoczesną kategoryzacją jednostki jako punktu danych, co stawia w niekorzystnej sytuacji tych, którzy nie pasują do założeń algorytmu.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Estetyka, nędza symboliczna, nowe media, dysonans poznawczy, nieprawidłowe wrażenia sensoryczne, zachowanie