

**ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE AND
CYBEROCRACY: SPECULATING THE NEW
SOCIAL MACHINE IN DAVE EGGERS' *THE
CIRCLE* AND MT ANDERSON'S *FEED***

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**Algorithmic Governance and Cyberocracy: Speculating the
New Social Machine in Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and MT
Anderson's *Feed***

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Algorithmic Governance and Cyberocracy: Speculating the New Social Machine in Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and MT Anderson's *Feed*** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Algorithmic Governance and Cyberocracy Speculating the New Social Machine in Dave Eggers' *The Circle* and MT Anderson's *Feed*

With an increasing integration of human beings with technology, human society has turned into a social machine where maximum human participation is ensured by entrapping them in feedback loops to extract maximum data from their online and real world through algorithmic governance. This data extraction is monetized by selling it to companies for prediction products and used further for their behavior modification. In this whole process, human privacy, freedom, sovereignty and human nature is at stake. The present study aims to read two dystopian science fiction novels that are *The Circle* (2013) by Dave Eggers and *Feed* (2002) by Mathew Toby Anderson by using the theoretical underpinnings of surveillance capitalism, the term coined by Shoshana Zuboff and Gilles Deleuze's concept of societies of control, supplemented with the concepts of algorithmic governance, cyberocracy and social machines. Surveillance capitalism is the new economic system where human experiences are collected as data and get parsed and analyzed via algorithmic governance and become an asset for surveillance capitalists who monetize it by organizing it as information. This new emerging Instrumentarian power gained through collection of information may be equated with Cyberocracy. The objective of the present study is to investigate the role of social machines in behavior modification; the threats posed to privacy and freedom; and deployment of information as power and the depiction of resistance to such power in the studied novels. The novels depict the controlling power of internet companies adversely impacting human nature and privacy. The characters in the novel are portrayed as helpless to resist the unprecedented rising Instrumentarian power. The study has concluded that technology enters our lives as a need but the puppet masters use it for controlling human society for it demands the rendition of bodies and souls to it by our full participation in the social machines. These social machines are helpful in behavior modification as each participant presents itself in a way to receive social approval. This ubiquitous participation in social media platforms makes our privacy vulnerable and this access to each and every type of information thus paves the way toward cyberocracy. Human beings must have to stop and think about their endangered future.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Human beings were enslaved in the feudal system of the past; but along with the modernization human beings were given the illusion of freedom but in fact factories and industries replaced the slaves in the feudal system with the laborers paving the way from feudalism to capitalism; in the contemporary era, with the evolution in the information and communication technologies, human beings have made much progress which has made this world a global village in which humans may feel free to use these technologies but capitalism has taken a new form and the humans are still kept under control. This new mode of capitalism that is surveillance capitalism exercises its forces of control through information and communication technologies. For operating these forces, the surveillance capitalists engage the human beings in an environment where they could access maximum data via algorithmic governance of the social platforms which would be termed as social machines in this study. The access to information gives way to a new form of government that is called cyberocracy by David Ronfeldt in his article “Cyberocracy is Coming” (1992), which may become problematic for human privacy and autonomy. The present study intends to highlight the new modes of control practiced in the era of information and communication technologies. To interpret the said issue, the researcher has chosen two dystopian science fiction novels: Dave Eggers’ *The Circle* and Mathew Toby Anderson’s *Feed*. The study has got support for its argument from Shoshana Zuboff’s concept of surveillance capitalism and Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of civilized capitalistic machine and Deleuze’ concept of societies of control. The study also uses secondary sources from Nello Cristianinni and Teresa Scantumburlo’s concept of algorithmic governance via social machines and David Ronfeldt’s stance on cyberocracy to support the argument. The novels are dystopian science fiction but they symbolize the real world scenarios theorized by the above-mentioned theorists.

Oxford dictionary defines dystopia, an opposite of utopia (an ideal place of living), as an imagined world or society where people live in utterly bad and fearful situations. Dystopian fiction, a genre of speculative fiction, portrays imperfect societies covering a vast range of themes including government control, societal control, technological control, environmental pollution and survival. It manifests the theme of control to its extreme level within the realm of the social and political structure not based

upon prediction but fear of what might happen in future. In the selected novels, the researcher has analyzed the problem of controlled society exercised via internet and cyberspace. The novels have been explored earlier from different perspectives but the new forces of control have not been analyzed in the novels yet.

The present study builds its argument on the concept of control through behavior modification in terms of Zuboff and modulation in terms of Deleuze that is done via algorithmic governance and social machines. Control and social machines have an intimate relationship that comes under the umbrella term of cybernetics. Steve J. Heims's letter published in Norbert Wiener's book, *Human Use of Human Beings* (1990), states that the term 'Cybernetics' is coined by Norbert Wiener, a mathematician, to characterize a general science of 'control and communication in the animal and machine and developed the concepts of 'information', 'message', 'feedback' and 'control'. "Society can be better understood through investigating the communication systems between man and machines, between machines and man, and machine and machine" (Wiener 16). Katherine Hayles in her book, *How We Became Posthuman* (1999), traces the birth of Cybernetics out of the marriage of control theory with the theory of information (8). Cybernetics derived from Greek word means 'steersman', a pilot that steers a ship "signals three powerful actors —information, control, and communication" (Kelly 105, Hayles 8). The term cybernetics was also used for a governor of a country in ancient Greece. "Plato attributes Socrates as saying, "Cybernetics saves the souls, bodies, and material possessions from the gravest dangers," a statement that encompasses both shades of the word" (Kelly 105).

Cybernetics has also its affinities with posthumanism because both the terms have their association with machines. Hayles associates the three waves of cybernetics with the construction of posthuman and explains "how information lost its body" in its first wave; "how cyborg was created as a technological artifact and cultural icon" in the second wave; and "how human became posthuman" in its third wave (1999: 2). The construction of posthuman blurs the difference between man, animal, and machine (Hayles 3). In the posthumanist view, there is "no agency, desire, and will that belongs to the self and cannot be differentiated from the will of others" (Hayles 3). Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari link the posthuman with capitalism, "arguing for the liberatory potential of a dispersed subjectivity distributed among diverse desiring machines they call "body

without organs”” (Hayles 4). Although posthumanism challenges the liberal humanism but in some ways, their locus is common; liberal humanist focus was on mind rather than body and the posthumanist locus is upon cognition rather than embodiment. Norbert Wiener doesn't subvert liberal humanism, but extends it by making the point that man is a machine rather than saying that a machine can perform like a man (Hayles 7). Machines are not individuals so we should be more like machines, so, like machines we must mimic each other and move in confluence (Zuboff 388). Zuboff considers this notion of “marching in certainty like the smart machines” as a danger against individual freedom (389). The present study problematizes this notion of man becoming a machine whose every experience is computable and is used as information and through that information human beings' behaviour is calculated, predicted and modified.

With the publication of Cybernetics, feedback penetrated almost every technical field, “electronic control circuits revolutionized industry” (Kelly 105). Thus the notion of control in cybernetics relates it with capitalism. There is one general cybernetics principle that is if all the variables are tightly coupled, then by manipulating only a single one, all of them can be indirectly controlled (Kelly 105). The theme of control has also been theorized by many other philosophers. Michael Foucault theorized the concept of panopticon in his book, *Discipline and Punish* (1975). He gives the concept of disciplinary societies where one becomes docile due to constant surveillance of enclosed systems like family, school, hospital, and factory etc. Gilles Deleuze argues in his essay, “Postscript on the Societies of Control” (1992) that disciplinary societies arose in the 18th and 19th centuries and reached their peak till the beginning of 20th century, but with the beginning of the 20th century, disciplinary societies transformed into societies of control where one is not enclosed, but controlled through modulation (Deleuze 3). Technological evolution has mutated the form of capitalism. Individuals have become “*dividuals*,” data, samples, markets, and “*banks*”. Societies of control operate through computers (Deleuze 3). Deleuze's concept of modulation is aligned with Zuboff's concept of behavior modification through ubiquitous computing apparatus, which she calls *Big Other* (Zuboff 331). Thus, *Big Other* is related to the notion of new types of machines, computers as predicted by Deleuze. This *Big Other*, the computing apparatus, is used for algorithmic governance to get access to information, a new source of control, which is associated with the notion of cyberocracy, a hypothetical form of government, which rules by way of information (Ronfeldt 245). David Ronfeldt in his article, “Cyberocracy is Coming”,

declares the derivation of the term ‘cyberocracy’ from cybernetics (derived from French word, *cybernetique*, meaning ‘art of government’). Such kind of government is also named as ‘informatization’ of government or ‘informed’ bureaucracy by Zuboff in 1984 (Ronfeldt 245-246). The concept of *big Other* has also been theorized by Jacques Lacan, who considers *big Other* as a hypothetical observer for whom one performs in a certain way. Lacan’s *big Other* may be considered as a symbolic order in the form of language or social and cultural norms and plays its role in social engineering. Thus, it is relatable to Deleuze’s and Zuboff’s concepts of modulation and behavior modification respectively. It is not a particular person or a group of persons but it is the supposed other subject which we keep in mind while performing a particular action or behaving in a certain way. Thus we always consider the do’s and don’ts while living in the society. Lacan’s *big Other* is in abstract form and is comparable to Deleuze’s notion of social machine if we consider it as Slavoj Žižek puts it that we are embedded in the *big Other* and cannot get out of it but Zuboff has concretized *big Other* as the computing apparatuses which calculate each of human experiences. But both *big Other[s]* contribute to social control. Therefore, it’s relatable to Deleuze’s societies of control.

The concept of social machines is theorized by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their book, *Anti-Oedipus, Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1983). A social machine may be the body of the Earth, the Despot or Money whose primary function is to codify the flows, inscription and record of desires and to see that no flow exists without a proper channel or regulation. Social machine or *socius* may be categorized into three types; primitive territorial machine, barbarian despotic machine and civilized capitalist machine, which codify the flow of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 33). Desire always needs a machine for its flow. The flow of desire can be illustrated with the example of a circuit whereas a circuit is a social machine and the circuit breakers are the desiring machines interconnected with each other causing a break and a flow of desire at the same time. In a discussion between Michael Foucault and Gilles Deleuze recorded on March 4, 1972, Deleuze relates the production of desire with class interest (Kay 2006). It can be explained in terms of Lazzarato who explains the modulation of desire through public opinion, collective perception, and collective intelligence inculcated through internet and television or radio. It means that desire is modulated in a way that benefits class interest. For instance, if the desire of using information and communication technologies is inculcated in public then it would go in favor of surveillance capitalists. Modulation

means the process of conversion of data into radio waves by adding information to the signal carriers. It is also applied on computer networks and current (Slattery and Burke, 2021). Modulation regulates desire; “The deterritorialisation of desire through capitalism has led to a reterritorialisation as ‘control’ which no longer outwardly constrains the individual, but keeps them in a perpetual state of ‘metastable anxiety’ through which their potential for control is never exhausted” (Bluemink 2021). Deleuze doesn’t agree with Lacan’s concept of desire based on lack. “We never desire against our interests, because interest always follows and finds itself where desire has placed it”

(Kay 2006). Deleuze argues that everything is a machine and calls human beings as desiring machines. He explains that neither the social machines can exist without the inhabitation of desiring machines in them nor the desiring machines outside the social machines (Deleuze and Guattari 340). “Not that man is ever the slave of technical machines; he is rather the slave of the social machine” (Deleuze and Guattari 254). Deleuze’s notion of considering everything as a machine aligns with the concept of posthumanism, the proponents of which undermine the binaries between man, animal and machine. Katherine Hayles argues that “even biologically unaltered Homo sapiens counts as posthuman” (1999: 4).

The concept of social machine is further theorized by Nello Cristianini and Teresa Scantumburlo, who argue that integration of human society with an algorithmic regulation give rise to a social machine (2019). Merriam Webster dictionary defines algorithms as a set of rules and procedures to solve some problem. Cristianini and Scantumburlo in their article, “On social machines for algorithmic regulation” (2019), discuss the problematic consequences of social machines on political, technical and ethical grounds. Social machines are used for algorithmic regulation and thus pave the way for monitoring citizens and influencing their behavior (Cristianini and Scantumburlo 2019).

The present study premises its argument on the interwoven concepts of technology, control, information, and communication and has collected its data from two dystopian science fiction novels: Dave Eggers’ *The Circle* (2013) and Mathew Toby Anderson’s *Feed* (2002). The researcher highlights the issues of privacy and freedom in the era of communication technologies speculated in the selected novels. Zuboff calls such a digital age as information civilization (2015). The argument of this study is not

against technology but it is based on Zuboff's statement that "hunt the puppet master not the puppet", which means that technology is the puppet which is used by surveillance capitalists, the puppet masters (Zuboff 21). The study uses the concept of societies of control presented by Gilles Deleuze and supplements the argument with the concept of surveillance capitalism proposed by Shoshana Zuboff in her book, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism, The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (2019). It also validates the argument by using Deleuze and Guattari's, and Cristianini and Scantumburlo's concepts of 'social machines' and David Ronfeldt notion of 'cyberocracy'.

1.1. Problem Statement

The present study has chosen two dystopian science fiction novels in which the characters are kept engaged with social machines where their data can be extracted, analyzed and monetized. The researcher argues that this engagement with the social machines has mechanized the whole society and helps to predict and modulate the behavior and causes the flow of information which paves the way for surveillance capitalists to exercise power by way of information. The problem with such kind of information flow is that it is really a threat to human privacy and freedom which needs to be brought to limelight.

1.2. Research Objectives

1. To analyze the role of social machines in behavior modification/modulation of the characters in the selected novels?
2. To explore the threats posed to human privacy and autonomy of the characters by their engagement with the social machines.
3. To investigate the use of information as power exercised by the internet companies in the selected novels and to examine the resistance shown by the characters to such power.

1.3. Research Questions

01. How does the behavior of the characters in the selected novels get modulated by their engagement with the social machines?

02. How do the selected novels portray social machines as a threat to the privacy and autonomy of the characters?

03. How do the internet companies in the selected novels exercise information as power and what are the consequences of resistance to such power portrayed in the novels?

1.4. Research Methodology

The design of the research is qualitative in nature. The researcher has done the textual analysis of the selected novels subjectively and descriptively. For this study, the researcher has used Catherine Belsey's method of textual analysis which she explains in her essay, *Textual Analysis as a Research Method* (2005). The present study has chosen two dystopian science fiction novels as data for analysis and after reading the texts twice, the researcher chose the sentences and paragraphs for interpretation using the theoretical lens provided by Gilles Deleuze in his essay, "Postscript on the Societies of Control" (1992) and Shoshana Zuboff's concept of 'surveillance capitalism' and Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'social machines'. The researcher has raised the issues of privacy, freedom and control in the digital age depicted in the selected texts and analyzed the dystopian setting based on the controlling nature of internet companies and their impacts on the social, cultural and political structure as portrayed in the selected novels.

1.5. Significance and Rationale of the Study

The present study intends to give an insight to the complex mechanism and operation of social machines, their usage for algorithmic regulation and their role in modulation. It probes the matter of information usage for gaining power and investigates the threats posed to privacy and freedom of society due to its integration to cyberspace. It examines the process of extraction of behavioral data for capitalistic purposes and invites the readers to look into new modes of capitalism proposed by Deleuze and Zuboff manifesting the relation of surveillance with commercialism. The present study is very much relatable to the current era as it is the age of information and communication technologies in which each one is engaged in social machines like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tiktok and many others and uses smart devices; and knowingly or unknowingly everyone has rendered himself to these new technologies which leads to the vulnerability of human privacy and sovereignty. Therefore, the present study may be utilized for looking into the virtual world of cyberspace where our data is stored, analyzed and

monetized as the present study is the analysis of two dystopian fiction novels in which the new modes of control by the internet companies are manifested. The study adds to the already existing literature as the theoretical underpinnings used for the present study have not been used for the analysis of the selected novels before.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

The present study has delimited itself to the textual analysis of two dystopian science fiction novels, M.T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002) and Dave Eggers' *The Circle* (2013) using the conceptual framework of social machines with its relation to surveillance capitalism (2019) proposed by Shoshana Zuboff. It intends to address the issues of mechanization of society through algorithmic regulations by use of online information forming social machines as demonstrated in the novels. It intends to explore the use of personal data for exploitation, advertisement and monetization extracted through cyberspace.

1.7. Organization of the Study

The document is divided into six chapters.

First chapter is introduction which contextualizes the study and after providing its background it includes the problem statement, the research objectives, and the research questions. It also includes the research methodology used for the present study. Significance and rationale of the study is also included in the same chapter.

Second chapter is the literature review which includes the articles reviewed that are related to the topic of the present study. It also includes the works already done on the selected novels to find the gap in already existing body of literature.

Third chapter includes the theoretical framework used for the study at hand.

Fourth chapter is the discussion and analysis of the novel, *The Circle* (2013).

Fifth chapter includes the discussion and analysis of the novel, *Feed* (2002).

Sixth chapter is the final chapter that includes conclusion based on the findings and analysis of the selected novels and includes the recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes the literature reviewed by the researcher on the topics related to the present study which include the representation of technology in dystopian science, cybernetics with its relation to control theory and the role of social machines in algorithmic regulation and the concept of cyberocracy in relation with power. The works already done on the novels are reviewed to find the gap in the existing body of literature.

Science fiction represents technology both optimistically and pessimistically but dystopian science fiction has always speculated the fear of technology. Hardesty (1987) examined three types of narratives: traditional utopias and dystopias, utopias and dystopias within science fiction and science fiction without utopian and dystopian elements. He explicates that science fiction may or may not be utopian or dystopian but utopian or dystopian fiction is always based upon science or pseudoscience depending upon the extrapolation by its writer. He elaborates his argument by examining different utopian, dystopian fiction and science fiction.

Beuchamp (1986) in his article quotes George Gissing to bring the fear of science to limelight. He says that futuristic dystopian fiction is informed with two types of fears, first one is fear of utopia and the other is fear of science, by which he means technology. He further contrasts between technophilia and technophobia and states that technophiles think technology as value-neutral, which means that it can be used for good and bad as well depending on its user. Technophobes think that once technology is created, it takes an independent status and becomes our master because of our extreme dependency on it. The researcher then exemplifies different dystopian novels like Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, Orwell's *1984*, Huxley's *Brave New World* to build an argument on technological control. He further cites the mechanomorphic dystopias like Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* and Vonnegut's *Player Piano* to reveal the imaginary advances in biotechnology and concludes that the greatest threat of technology is its rule over humanity owing to its over usage, and eventually a day would come when man would become a machine himself. The present study also intends to argue the mechanization of human society but using a different lens and different texts.

Mahida (2011) states that writers develop either utopias or dystopias in science fiction to predict the future of humankind based on either demonstrating positive view of scientific and technological advancement for the betterment and progress of humanity, or its negative impact on humanity. The researcher has examined different science fiction dystopias including Huxley's *Brave New World*, Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451*, Orwell's *1984*, Yevgeny Zamyatin's *We*, and concludes *Brave New World* as an ideal science fiction representing dystopian world. This study is an analysis of different dystopian science fiction novels till twentieth century which represent the negative impacts of technology which relates it with the study at hand which also intends to analyze the negative of integration of human society with technology.

Hall, Alex (2009) has researched the representation of technology in literature and states that once it was represented optimistically as a means of utopian society but after the nuclear attacks on Japan in WWII in 1945, it has also been used pessimistically. He argues that now there has been observed an optimistic shift towards utopian renaissance, which is according to the researcher a benefit to the whole society owing to its facilitation to idealistic cultural production – literature, music, visual arts, media as Martin Heidegger calls it as “a way of revealing” i.e., of truth. This study has concluded that optimistic representation of technology in literature has got a revival. The Present study does not agree with this notion and works upon the twenty first century novels which still demonstrate the dystopian picture of advanced technology.

Dystopian fiction also portrays the adverse impacts of cybernetics, the field that is associated with the control and communication system. Gladden (2015) has analyzed Cybernetic Information System in the contacts of utopias and dystopias, where data is received, stored, generated, processed and transmitted from human mind to cyberspace. The study shows that the growth of neuroprosthetic technological use would reshape the ways in which human mind access, manipulate and share information with one another. Such technology may give rise to posthuman “neuropolities” in which human mind can interact with its surroundings using sensorimotor capacities, dwell with in shared virtual cyberworlds, can form new social organizations by linking with one another. Such implications of cybernetics determine the new kinds of utopias and dystopias which were previously impossible to realize but they have already been pre-engineered in the works of science fiction. This study argues about the implications of cybernetics in the context

of utopias and dystopias; the present study specifically uses the concept upon dystopian text for analysis.

Krivý, M. (2018) critiques smart city for becoming an authoritative notion of urban governance, modulation and planning. He discusses three different arguments against smart city presented by different scholars; firstly, smart city is incompatible with an informal character of city, secondly it subjects itself to corporate control and thirdly it reproduce urban and social inequalities. The researcher presents an alternative critique of smart city and argues that it can be better understood as an embodiment of Deleuze's society of control. Smart city is enmeshed in the complex network of second order cybernetics and is subjected in terms of data flows. The notion of smart city as an embodiment of society of control is very much related to the present study.

Brusseau, James (2020) relates societies of control with economic imperatives based on their collecting personal information, big data, predictive analytics, and marketing. The researcher claims that the advancing society of control modulate us without facing any resistance through exciting incentives because they force the individuals to obey their own personal information. He suggests two strategies of living in such societies which are unexplored as the society of control itself. The present study is also based on the modulating and predictive capacity of the society of control for marketing purposes.

Hardt (1998) claims that Gilles Deleuze's society of control is not premised on Michael Foucault rather the term is borrowed from the paranoid world of William Burroughs. The society of control operates in a smooth space of flexible, and modulating networks rather than the enclosed institutional systems of families, schools, hospitals and factories. The researcher argues that the demolished walls of these institutions should not be considered ineffective in the global society of control but the individuals are now more confined in an open environment. The study at hand also agrees with the notion of confinement in the open digital environment.

Fisher, et al. (2001) argue about the implications of the internet for its capacity to change the modes of human interaction and its access to information. Theoretical framework used for covering utopian and dystopian perspectives is William Ogburn's theory of cultural lag (1964). Lag states that the effects of technology will not be apparent to social actors for some time after it is introduced to a society. The present study is

related to this study owing to its argument about negative implications of the internet and its connectivity with information.

One of the adverse impacts of internet is that of algorithmic governance through which it keeps surveillance over the society. Trottier, Christian. et al. (2015) proposed a theoretical model based upon social media surveillance which is a new form of surveillance according to them. The model demonstrates the process and its threats imposed upon the society. As commercial surveillance collects our data and uses it for advertising and providing new offers. The study differentiates such surveillance from the concept of power and surveillance presented by Foucault and Giddens which incorporated the idea of automatism of resistance but it necessarily isn't a part of social media surveillance. The article concludes that this emerging totalitarian surveillance needs to be studied under Critical Social Media Studies to encounter it and to establish a participatory, sustainable and equitable information society. This study proposed a model for social media surveillance which is related to the present study but different in its implications.

Zuboff (2015) in her article sheds light on the implications of emergent economic order, surveillance capitalism on information civilization. Google chief economist Hal Varian asserts four uses that follow from computer mediated transactions: "data extractions and analysis", "new contractual forms due to better monitoring" "personalization and customization" and "continuous experiments". Analysis of these uses reveals the implicit logic of surveillance capitalism and the global structure of computer mediation upon which it depends. This architecture produces a new power that is called "Big Other", which extracts the data to commodify and control the persons, exiled from their own behavior, by producing new markets of behavioral prediction and modification. The study concludes surveillance capitalism as a threat to democratic norms. The present study uses Zuboff's concept as its theoretical framework in its relation to algorithmic governance and Cyberocracy.

Brooke Edin Duffy (2019) states that due to imagined surveillance, youth present themselves through branded identities. The researcher examines three distinct responses to imagined surveillance including privacy settings, self-monitoring and pseudonymous accounts and concludes its implications on social culture when social media users normalize the ubiquitous surveillance, and present themselves as "professional". The

present study is also relevant to surveillance and social media but uses a different theory to develop its argument.

Katzenbach Christian and Ulbricht, Lena (2019) have researched the implications of algorithmic governance on the integration of human society with cyberspace which includes social ordering, regulations and behavior modification. The research concludes that governance due to algorithmisation and datafication has become powerful, intrusive and pervasive. The results of this study share some commonalities with surveillance capitalism where Zuboff also states the behavior modification due to online data extracted.

Algorithmic governance is also associated with social machines. Nello Cristianini and Teresa Scantamburlo (2019) define the machines, social machines and the autonomous social machines and their role in algorithmic regulation and substantiate the role of algorithmic regulation in monitoring and controlling human society. They argue that autonomous social machines' design pose problematic technical, ethical and political consequences. On a technical level, it engages the society in feedback loops, where each individual's reputation is calculated through credit scoring, which may put an individual's reputation on stake. Feedback loops control social systems threatening their privacy and freedom. Social machines may manipulate the information and their ultimate goal of regulating human behavior may give rise to a new kind of dictatorship. The paper analyzes the impacts of social machines on society, politics and ethics. They raise a few questions regarding human freedom in this digital scenario. If one decides to embrace this digital milieu, he would present oneself for commodification and thus strengthening the quantifying system and if one decides to opt-out of this social machine, he will be stigmatized and lose access to opportunities. The present study has used this concept coupled with the concept of Deleuze's societies of control for the analysis of the digital milieu portrayed in the selected novels.

Algorithmic governance may be equated with cyberocracy as both of them are related to information. Ronfeldt (1992) argues that a new form of government may be foresighted in this era of information and communication technologies. He proposes the concept of cyberocracy associated with the use of information as power. David Ronfeldt in his article, "Cyberocracy is coming" identifies the term "cyberocracy" by its roots, "cyber" and "cracy" which signifies rule by way of information. Data after going through algorithms gets organized and becomes information; therefore algorithmic regulation may

be equated with cyberocracy, a supposed form of government, which rules through effective use of information usually through interconnected computer systems. He foresees how the information revolution and communication technologies would affect politics of twenty first century. The information revolution is a social, economic, cultural, and psychological, as well as technological revolution. He quotes Zuboff who used the term “informatization” of government and the “informed” bureaucracy for this new emerging form of government that is based on information. He has portrayed rather the dark side of cyberocracy. In this new informed civilization, the concepts of power are being changed. Information of money is more important than the money itself. Now the companies are interested in buying, selling, storing and transmitting information rather than products. Banks need credit information instead of cash. The nature of markets has changed from places to networks. The distribution of power lies in terms of information haves and have nots or information-rich and information-poor, giving rise to a new class of elite. The third world war would be based on economic information. Information revolution undermines democracy and human sovereignty. Surveillance capitalism is a new economic system based on data extraction and cyberocracy is concerned with the use of that data or information as power. New technologies comprising computerized communication networks have formed a cyberspace, a new domain of power and property. It is not only an information infrastructure but also a virtual reality. Cyberocracy is concerned with governance via information, thus it encapsulates the notion of algorithmic governance as algorithmic governance is possible through cyberspace only. The concept of cyberocracy has its affinities with algorithmic governance and surveillance capitalism which are used in the present study to analyze their impacts in dystopian setting of the selected novels

Thus, from the literature reviewed, the background of the present study finds its way. The above-mentioned literature reveals that the integration of human society with technology and its implications has been theorized, and problematized in dystopian science fiction by many scholars before. Thus, it paves the way for the present study. But the concepts of social machines and cyberocracy have not been used for the analysis of the selected dystopian fiction as yet.

2.1. Works Already Done

2.1.1. . M.T.Anderson’s *Feed* (2002)

Bullens, Elizabeth and Elizabeth Parsons (2007) analyzed dystopian novels, M.T. Anderson's *Feed* and *Mortal Engines* by Philip Reeve as prototypical texts which they called "risk societies", a concept proposed by Ulrich Beck. The future depicted in the novels explored the adverse impacts of techno-economic progress, assaulting global politics and capitalism excesses of consumption. The novels depict the politically ambivalent phenomenon of individualization in ways which can be observed in Beck's distinction between the adverse impacts of globalism and the potential community under globalization. The novels have rejected the narrative common and traditional in children literature as these novels, unlike other children literature, don't have happy endings. In the present times, individualization is considered as a threat to the perspective of globalization. The children have to be adaptable citizens but they should be able to view this scenario critically. For this purpose, one has to stand outside culture and ideology, so, individualization is both a problem as well as a solution. These unsettling texts are not only thought provoking but they provoke their readers to do action.

Wilkison, Rachel (2015) highlights the significance of dystopian literature at academic level and states that it should be taught to consumer class. He exemplifies Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and M.T. Anderson's *Feed* which brings the traits of modern consumerism to limelight highlighting powerful advertisement and industry, mindless consumption based on instant gratification, dependency on technology, and the resulting degradation of language. The study suggests that through such texts taught, we can become responsible, aware, knowledgeable and moral consumers.

Bradford (2010) examines the consumer media culture depicted in dystopian novel, *Feed*, by conceptualizing framework proposed by Stuart Poyntz, who in preparation for the ARCYP round table "Participatory Ontologies and Youth Cultures," which is: "Beginning in infancy, young people now grow up learning the language of consumer media culture through a constant diet of screen images, audio messages, and text-based communication that compete with schools and families as primary storytellers and teachers in youths' lives." As Poyntz argues that the engagement of youth with consumer media is not a new phenomenon, but social media networking has enhanced this text-based communications and products information. In Anderson's *Feed*, the characters are implanted with feeds, which enable the text-based communications, audio messages and the circulation of images. Through this communication and circulation, consumer culture gets promulgated.

Canady (2012) analyzed the characters of Anderson's *Feed* by applying the concept of censorship in liberal democracies proposed by Slavoj Žižek, Gilles Deleuze's concept of controlled societies as opposed to Foucault's disciplined societies, and to determine the resistance to feed by Violet's character, contrasting Antonio Negri's defense of difference as resistance in his *The Porcelain Workshop* and Brian Massumi's view of difference as a necessary condition for capitalism to subsist. The Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek starts his *Welcome to the Desert of the Real* by telling a joke from the German Democratic Republic about a German worker who finds a job in Siberia. Knowing that all his letters will be read by the censors, he decides to create a secret code with his friends: if the letter he sends is written in blue ink, he is telling the truth; if the letter is in red ink, everything in the letter is false. A few weeks after he has left, his friends receive his first letter, in blue ink, in which he explains how wonderful life is in Siberia: "Everything is wonderful here: the shops are full, food is abundant, apartments are large and properly heated, cinemas show films from the West, there are many beautiful girls ready for an affair—the only thing you can't get is red ink". By this he explains the impossibility of lying in the liberal democracies in which one feels free but is unable to find language to articulate one's unfreedom. Same happens to the characters of *Feed*. He relates controlled society as depicted in *Feed* with capitalism, using Deleuze's concept.

Marlina (2014) analyzed Anderson's *Feed*, by using Nikolajeva's model of characterization; and to discuss the readers positioning based on point of view, focalization and characterization as part of narrative strategies which significantly function in inviting the readers to engage with the narrative as well as to position the readers in young adults text. It is found that the homodiegetic narrator and another focalizing agent in Anderson's *Feed* informs the readers that a futuristic universe which is maintained through technological and corporate control will cause the worst effect to humans. By using multiple characters' focalization, Anderson's *Feed* situates the implied readers into various and challenging positions.

Schwalb(2014) explored Anderson's *Feed* and *Octavian Nothing* in the context of 9/11. As *Feed* published in 2002, the trauma of the collapse of the world trade center became the backdrop of Anderson's *Feed* and the American teenagers as the characters of *Feed*'s futuristic dystopian setting. The technological advancement enabled the implantation of feednets in the brains of American citizens, where they could track the

current trends and fashions prevailing on social media, patch up and break up in love, and apathy to and alienation from local and global politics they are subject to. Though the setting is futuristic, it is still recognizable in American society. The opening lines of the novel, *Feed*, when the visit to the moon is described, shows the luxurious but selfish and self-centered lives of American society.

Hanson (2015) examined Anderson's *Feed* as a depiction of characters' alienation from their historical memories in the digital age, which is a satire on US youth. The characters in the novel, having feed implanted in their brains, connect them with cyberspace, where they get mesmerized by decontextualized images saturation and become voracious and thoughtless consumers being unaware of the cultural logic of late capitalism. The researcher argues that Anderson posits human acts of remembering and dreaming, as opposed to digitally archived "memories," as moments of transformative potential that might rekindle a critically and socially engaged historical consciousness.

Russel (2016) did a Marxist analysis of Anderson's *Feed*, in which the human mind is depicted to be an object "the man" probes for consumerism which ultimately profits the market by selling its products. People are bombarded with advertisements and they accept it as knowledge.

2.1.2. Dave Eggers' *The Circle* (2013)

Lilbum (2015) has worked upon social media and libraries and analyzed Eggers' *The Circle* through this perspective. The study argues that within Libraries and Information Sciences, social media tools and platforms were described as open and user-centered and empowerment of individuals and communities through Facebook and Twitter was emphasized to promulgate greater interaction and participation. But the governments and corporations also get empowered through the same tools and this fact remains unexamined that many of the 2.0 tools being adopted by libraries are owned by companies that track and monitor user behavior to use it for their own purposes and profits. The study focuses on this scenario of surveillance and its threats to privacy that has been demonstrated in the novel.

Nieuwenhuizen (2016) compared George Orwell's *1984* and Eggers' *The Circle* examining the role of surveillance through which society is controlled by big brother.

Meulen (2017) contrasted Eggers' *The Circle* with Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One*. Both novels are a critique on online media using the protagonists as the authors'

mouthpieces. In the novel, *The Circle*, the protagonist prefers to live in the online world whereas the protagonist of *Ready Player One* prefers to come back to the real world. The study discovered that both novels give a warning against online media.

Hobbs (2017) explicates the rapid growth of business in the contemporary era, where corporations spread their assets worldwide to maximize their profits, but the people are still suffering the consequences of the financial crisis. Besides impacting human life and ecosystem adversely, individuals also have to suffer their commodification as market actors. This scenario is not a natural disaster but the product of neoliberalism and unfettered capitalism. The researcher examines the novel as a dark satire of contemporary technoculture in the workplace, where the employees become the subject of neoliberal ideology and the novel critiques the thoughtlessness with which they surrender their freedom and lives to corporate control.

Gouck (2018) examined Eggers' *The Circle* by using the lens of several key theorists including Matheisen's the viewer society and the three theorists of Panopticism: Jeremy Bentham, Michael Foucault and Giles Deleuze. The study discovers the phenomenon of "new Panopticism" in the novel. It also examines two modes of surveillance in the novel, panoptic and synoptic, and the fusion of both modes combined with the infiltration of the body, posits a transhumanist element in the novel.

Maharai, et al. (2019) analyzed the loss of privacy depicted in Eggers' *The Circle* and probed the reason behind the author's writing of this novel. The research used the theoretical underpinnings taken from Sociological Perspectives, the three sociological perspectives proposed by Swingehood and Caurenson (1972) and three sociology of literature principles presented by Welleck and Warren (1948). The study concludes that the loss of privacy depicted in the novel was due to the creation of a program called TruYou. It articulates the negative impacts of technology on society and warns about its threat to privacy.

Filip (2019) examines the ways in which cultural and literary texts actively mold the discourse on human enhancement as depicted in the novel. First it identifies the emergence of a "science of wonder" in TED talks that promote transhumanist ideals. Second, it examines the critical and ethical potential of the novel to challenge the idea of "post-bodied future".

Maurer, et al. (2020) has researched the novel, *The Circle* and examined its dystopian setting as a political model called as *demoxie*, which incorporates the notion that everyone having a circle account is also a registered voter, who can vote on issues like healthcare, companies policies and international politics via internet platform. The study examines both positive and negative aspects of internet technologies based on this novel.

Isik (2020) has studied the novel, *The Circle* through Foucauldian lens. The study used the concept of Panopticism which was first put forward by Jeremy Bentham. This concept explicates the phenomenon of surveillance used to enable discipline and control in the society. The study analyzed the dystopian setting of the novel and examined the surveillance applied through technology.

Abdulzahra, et al (2020) also have done a Foucauldian study of the novel and explored that surveillance enabled people to make the people docile bodies. This surveillance is not only repressive but also productive or profitable as well. The study reveals that the surveillance culture is depicted as harmless in the beginning but later on it became a threat to freedom of people. The circle company deceived both its customers and employees and made them to give up their old lives voluntarily and adopt a new shallow and unsatisfactory system.

From the above-mentioned works done, it has become obvious that the concept of surveillance has been applied for the study of these novels, but the concept of surveillance capitalism coupled with the concepts of Algorithmic governance, Cyberocracy and social machine have not been applied so far. Surveillance capitalism is a different concept from the surveillance concept proposed by Michael Foucault and David Lyon as it relates surveillance with commercialism and its impacts on human nature. Thus, the argument of this study would be slightly different from the above-mentioned works.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical underpinnings for the present study are derived from Gilles Deleuze's "Postscript on the Societies of Control" and Shoshana Zuboff's concepts of surveillance capitalism, *Big Other* and instrumentarian power. Secondary sources for supplementing the argument are derived from David Ronfeldt's notion of cyberocracy and Nello Cristiano and Teresa Scatumburlo's concept of social machines for algorithmic regulation which have been explained in literature review.

3.1. Deleuze's Societies of Control

Deleuze differentiates societies of control from Foucault's Disciplinary Societies which were based on the concept of panopticon or enclosure. He argues that disciplinary societies were a transience from the societies of sovereignty recognized by Foucault. But now, "new forces are knocking at the door" according to Deleuze which are called societies of control. They express new freedom but equate "the harshest of confinements". "Enclosures are molds, distinct castings, but controls are modulations, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other" (Deleuze 1-2). Unlike disciplinary societies, in the societies of control there is neither a signature nor a number, but a code which is a password. "The numerical language of control is made of codes that provides an access to information, or reject it. There is no longer the existence of mass/ individual pair. Individuals have become "*dividuals*," and masses, data, samples, "*banks*", or markets" (2). An individual means indivisible being but by *dividual*. Deleuze means that now a human being has become divisible; he belongs to different communities at the same time. Deleuze recognizes money as a differentiating factor between the two societies. The old monetary mole is the animal of the space of enclosure, but the serpent is that of the societies of control (2). In the disciplinary society, man was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man in the societies of control is "undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network". "Everywhere surfing has already replaced the older sports" (2). Societies of control use a different type of machine that is a computer, "whose passive danger is jamming and active one is piracy" (3). By active danger one may interpret that this danger is the action doer which is that of jamming and by passive danger one may think of the object to whom the action is done or danger affects without knowing the action doer, for instance, piracy. About piracy nobody knows

who does it but only the endangered one is known or emphasized as an object of the action. Technological evolution is a mutation of capitalism. After WWII, it has become a higher-order production. “It no-longer buys raw materials and no longer sells the finished products: but it sells the finished products or assembles parts. What it wants to sell is services but what it wants to buy is stocks” (3). Factories of disciplinary societies have given way to corporations whose soul is marketing. Man is not imprisoned but indebted now. In the corporate system, there are new ways of handling money, profits and humans. It is a new system of domination which poses certain questions. “Can we be able to adapt ourselves in this new system or shall we be able to resist against the societies of control? But the coils of the serpent are even more complicated than the burrows of a molehill” (5).

The essay is of very short length, therefore, the researcher has reviewed another essay, *The Concepts of Life and Living in the Societies of Control* (2006) by Maurizio Lazzarato which explains the key notions of Deleuze’s essay. According to Deleuze, societies of control are not enclosed, ‘which confine multiplicity but what is confined is an informal, virtual outside the power of metamorphosis, becoming’ (Lazzarato 175). Society of control operates in an open space and exercises its power through modulation generating new technologies and processes of subjectivation (Lazzarato 180). New forces that are knocking at the door take place through new institutions like public opinion, collective intelligence and collective perception which are characterised by the use of new technique that is of acting at a distance which means through internet and television.

An individual can belong to a single class or crowd at a single time, but he/she may belong to different publics at a single time (multi-membership) (181). Through internet or television, an opinion is inculcated in these publics and these publics produce new forms of socialisation and thus create new subjectivities (181). Therefore, an individual, becomes a *dividual*, belonging to different publics (religious, political, aesthetic, economic) at the same time. In this way, the social segmentation becomes flexible and deterritorialized (182). Thus the new forces of control didn’t replace those of disciplinary society but superimposed upon them, “infinite at the top – the virtual – and closed at the bottom – the actual” (185).

“Memory, attention and the relations if get actualized become social and economic forces which must be captured to control the assemblage of difference and repetition” (185). Lazzarato explains modulation in terms of modulation of desires,

beliefs and forces (memory and attention) which help capturing, controlling, and regulating an action from a distant place (internet, radio or television); in this way social machine operates through cooperation of desiring machines (Lazzarato 185; Deleuze and Guattari 254).

3.2. Shoshana Zuboff's Surveillance Capitalism

Shoshana Zuboff, an American author, a social psychologist, philosopher, and scholar, influenced by Marxist philosophers, in her latest book, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism, The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (2019), has introduced many original concepts including 'surveillance capitalism', 'Instrumentarian power', 'economies of action', 'means of behavior modification' and 'information civilization'. A few of them have been used in the present study.

3.2.1. Surveillance Capitalism

“Surveillance capitalism is a new economic order in which each casual search, like, and click is asserted as an asset to be tracked, parsed, and monetized by some company” (Zuboff 55). It operates through the instrumentation of the digital milieu, as it relies on the increasingly ubiquitous institutionalization of digital instruments to feed on, and even shape, every aspect of every human's experience (Zuboff 2019). These experiences are then translated into behavioral data and then claimed as behavioral surplus (Zuboff 2019). “It's not technology but a logic that imbues technology and commands it to action”. Technology is the puppet and surveillance capitalism is the puppet master (Zuboff 21).

3.2.2. Economic Imperatives

The accumulation of behavioral surplus is the master motion of surveillance capitalism from which key economic imperatives can be induced (Zuboff 2019). The first economic imperative is extraction imperative which is the necessity of the economies of scale; it needs behavioral surplus on a large scale not only from online world but from the real world as well. The second imperative is the prediction imperative, whose force is the economies of scope. It derives the surplus deeper from the self. “It violates the inner sanctum, as machines and their algorithms decide the meaning of your sighs, blinks, and utterances; the pattern of your breathing and the movements of your eyes; the clench of your jaw muscles; the hitch in your voice; and the exclamation points in a Facebook post once offered in innocence and hope” (Zuboff 2019). Social machines like Facebook,

Twitter and other communication platforms convert human experience into data via algorithmic governance and convert it into highly profitable algorithmic products designed to predict the behavior of its users (Zuboff 67). The third economic imperative is the real business of surveillance capitalists which is called as economies of action. These are associated with behavior modification achieved through tuning, herding, and conditioning of individuals, groups and populations. “It is no longer enough to automate information flows about us; the goal now is to automate us” (Zuboff 2019). It is against democratic legitimacy. “The coda is once I was mine, now I am theirs” (Zuboff 2019).

3.2.3. Dispossession Cycle and Body Rendition

Extraction of data is normalized through dispossession cycle. It has four stages namely, incursion, habituation, adaptation and redirection (Zuboff 136). The first stage, incursion is a raid into laptops, phones, web pages, GPS locations, emails, photos, recreational activities, shoppings and all everyday life activities. The second stage, habituation force the people to habituate to the incursion through terms and conditions policies. The third stage of adaptation is the amendments in policies without the users’ awareness. The final stage, redirection is the renewal of policies that appear to be compliant to the social and legal demands (Zuboff 138). This act of digital dispossession by the surveillance capitalists is a new kind of control over the society and a threat to human privacy (Zuboff 185).

The gap between human experiences and its becoming into data is filled through rendition, which means surrender of human beings to datafication (Zuboff 223). This is done via dispossession cycle; without rendition, there can be no surveillance capitalism (224). Rendition of body and relations starts with our phones when we enter the dispossession cycle (Zuboff 230).

3.2.4. Rise of Instrumentarian Power

Behavior modification is not possible without a certain power and Zuboff calls such power as Instrumentarianism which she defines as “the instrumentation and instrumentalization of human behavior for the purposes of modification, prediction, monetization, and control” (Zuboff 2019). “Instrumentation refers to the ubiquitous computing apparatus known as *Big Other* by Zuboff that renders, interprets and actuates human experience” (Zuboff 331). Instrumentarian power may be called as digital totalitarianism but it doesn’t control through violence like the *Big brother* of George

Orwell in the novel, *1984* but through behavior modification. Surveillance capitalists declare their right to modify others' behavior bypassing human awareness, autonomy and self-determination, which are recognized as "freedom of will" by philosophers (Zuboff 282). Surveillance capitalists exile us from our behavior and shift the locus of control from "I will" to "you will" (Zuboff 292). "Instrumentarianism's radical indifference is operationalized in *Big Other's* dehumanized methods of evaluation that produce equivalence without equality by reducing individuals to the lowest common denominator of sameness—an organism among organisms" (Zuboff 2019). Instrumentarian power shapes human relations in a way that we become more like machines as machines are not individuals; they mimic each other and move in confluence so must we (Zuboff 388). This Instrumentarian power exerts pressure through social media or communication platforms like Facebook for harmony because individuality is a threat to an Instrumentarian society, "a troublesome friction that sucks energy from "collaboration", "harmony", and "integration"" (Zuboff 411).

3.2.5. Next Human Nature

In this milieu of social media what is at stake is human nature as according to the psychologists, social media like Facebook creates social comparison among people through feedback loops. One consequence of the new density of social comparison triggers and their negative feedback loops is a psychological condition known as FOMO (fear of missing out) which forces to stay online mostly all the time (Zuboff 434). Social comparison is also associated with self-objectification; we present ourselves as data objects (Zuboff 435). Industrial capitalism deteriorated nature while surveillance capitalism exploits and control human nature (Zuboff 440). Zuboff calls this social media milieu as life in a hive, where each exit is a new entrance. To exit means to enter a place where a self can be birthed and nurtured; History calls such place a sanctuary (444). *Big Other* has swallowed this sanctuary or refuge for there can be no secret hiding places because there can be no secrets (Zuboff 447). This new era may be called as information civilization whose aim is to dominate human nature (Zuboff 481). Rise of Instrumentarian power will make the human nature as seventh extinction. "The will to will, the sanctity of the individual, the ties of intimacy, the sociality that binds us together in promises, and the trust they breed. The dying off this human future will be just an intended as any other" (Zuboff 482).

CHAPTER IV

THE CIRCLE: A SOCIAL MACHINE FOR ALGORITHMIC GOVERNANCE

This chapter includes the discussion and analysis of the novel, *The Circle* (2013) and is divided under the headings which are based on the research objectives of the study.

4.1. Short Summary of *The Circle* (2013)

The novel, *The Circle*, is the story of Mae, a girl, who gets employed at Customer Experience in an internet company, The Circle, owing to her reference given by Annie, her school friend, already employed at the Circle at a good post. Mae is very happy as she has access to advanced technologies, gyms, recreation activities and parties at the Circle. The Circle has three administrators, Ty, Stenton and Bailey. Ty introduces a new app TruYou, an account based on true identity. Stenton and Bailey monetized the app making the company a powerful one by encompassing Facebook, Twitter, Google, and a few others. Later the Circle develops a new technology called See Change device, which are cameras supposed to be worn as bracelets by Circlers and are installed everywhere, capable of recording audio and video of surroundings. The Circle introduces a few more apps like PastPerfect through which the past of anyone could be known. Like Violet in the novel *Feed*, Mercer, Mae's childhood friend, does not like the Circle and warns Mae about its future implications. The Circle wants everyone to have its account, rather wants everyone to be its citizen. It wants transparency of everyone. Mae accepts complete transparency by wearing a SeeChange camera. Kalden, whose identity is disclosed towards the end of the novel, is actually Ty, informs Mae that the completion of the Circle will be a nightmarish totalitarian regime, which is going to make it a surveillance society. The novel ends, when Mae visits Annie, the past of whose ancestors was revealed before everyone because of PastPerfect, is now in coma, and Mae shows her desire to have a new technology launched by Circle which should be able to know the thoughts of a sleeping person. This novel is a satire on surveillance culture, its threats to privacy and freedom, indulgence in consumer culture and its impact on family relationships (AbdulZahra et al. 2020). In the novel, the personal data and experiences of the employees in Customer Experience are shared with customers to get their ratings high,

which Zuboff defines as a new economic system where the personal data is used as “raw material” for making profit.

4.2. The Circle: A Social Machine; An Assault on Privacy

This is actually a machine. Or inside it is. It’s a storage unit (Eggers 219)[...] It’s the storage of raw data, and then the capacity to run all kinds of scenarios through it [...] it helps map the world and everything in it (Eggers 220).

Kalden says that the company of the Circle is a machine or inside it there is a machine. A machine is an apparatus composed of various parts each with a specific function to perform and collectively these parts achieve a specific goal (Cristianini and Scantamburlo 647). The goal of this social machine is the completion of the Circle based upon each one's transparency. “That’s where the Circle closes. Everyone will be tracked, cradle to grave, with no possibility of escape” (Eggers 481). The Circle becomes powerful because of encompassing Google, Facebook, Twitter, Zing and many others (Eggers 23). Social machines comprise both human and machine components to perform specific tasks to achieve the goal (Cristianini and Scantamburlo 647). Thus Facebook, Twitter, and Zing inside the Circle are social machines, which are storage units of users’ data that help to shape the world and everything in it. According to Zuboff, this data like our searches on Google, likes and comments on Facebook is tracked, parsed and monetized by some companies (55). Zuboff further argues that these searches and clicks form a behavioral surplus which is used to predict and modify the behavior of users.

And those who wanted or needed to track the movements of consumers online had found their Valhalla: the actual buying habits of actual people were now eminently mappable and measurable, and the marketing to those actual people could be done with surgical precision (Eggers 22).

Here, Eggers expounds the commercial implications of TruYou, invented by Ty and monetized by Bailey and Tom Stenton, the three administrators of the Circle. “It started with the commerce sites” (Eggers 22). TruYou is first welcomed by commerce sites. The Circle encompasses Facebook, Twitter, Google, and Zing and makes it powerful enough to extract data through algorithmic governance and to use human experiences as raw material for behavioral modification. Deleuze identifies a new kind of machine for operation of society of control that is a computer, whose passive danger is jamming and the active one is piracy. Jamming means that the accounts may be blocked for several

reasons. The companies have the authority to block one from one's own account and also have access to the accounts' information and may hack the accounts secretly. The Circle pirates each one's privacy through its account on TruYou. It extracts data through social machines like Facebook, Twitter, or Zing and claims it as its asset, which Zuboff explains in terms of economic imperatives. The compulsion of extraction of data lies behind the economies of scale, that need an extraction on a large scale from not only online presence, like what they search on Google, upload on news feed of Facebook and Twitter but also their offline presence including their daily life experiences, activities in the real world, their feelings and emotions, likes, dislikes, and preferences become available for computation through sensors everywhere, mobile devices, laptops with cameras and GPS detecting our location and behavior and everything. TruYou provides a nurturing place for commercial practices. The inventor of TruYou, Ty is portrayed as an innocent character in the novel, who is shown to be unaware of its future implications, and Bailey and Stenton are depicted as the real culprits who monetized TruYou. Eggers depicting Ty as an innocent character aligns with Zuboff's notion of hunting the puppet master and not the puppet. Eggers calls this TruYou as the Valhalla of surveillance capitalists, for whom our experiences are an asset to be used for accurate predictions. Mapping and measuring buying habits substantiate Zuboff's stance of instrumentalisation, by which she means that our experiences and habits have become computable. This computation is the algorithmic governance forcing us to be an instrumentarian society. Our daily life experiences and activities go through algorithms in cyberspace, the network of computer systems, for calculations and measurements. When Mae requests Francis to delete their video, he doesn't delete it. When Mae's SeeChange camera records her parents' bedroom video, she requests Bailay, who could delete it, but he says that you know, "we never delete" (Eggers 369). They don't delete anything because every click, view, search, like, dislike, and comment is an asset to be monetized.

Infocommunism. And he's entitled to that opinion. But paired with ruthless capitalistic ambition—(Eggers 484).

Infocommunism as is indicated by the root terms it is formed of: info and communism, relate the term with information and communism. Communists are the proponents of the elimination of public property, therefore, infocommunism means that information should not be a private thing. Bailey is of the opinion that there should be no knowledge hidden; every information should be accessible to everyone. The notion of infocommunism paired

with capitalism is very much related to Zuboff's concept of surveillance capitalism, and Cristianini and Scantburlo's notion of social machines for algorithmic regulation; the logic of infocommunism means providing communication platforms or engaging people to participate in social machines so that through algorithmic governance their information could be accessed and then this information is used for commercial or capitalistic purposes. "[...], the businesses counting on the Circle to get the word out about their products, to track their digital impact, to know who was buying their wares and when—it became real on a very different level" (Eggers 55). **ALL THAT HAPPENS MUST BE KNOWN**" (Eggers 68). In these social machines, the input is the clicks and searches stored as behavioral surplus which goes through the search engines of cyberspace and gives the prediction products as an output. The sources of this behavior surplus are online presence, physical presence, daily life experiences, body movements and modified behavior (Zuboff 2019).

Secrets are Lies, Sharing is Caring, Privacy is Theft (Eggers 303).

Mae is provoked by Bailey to utter the above words and immediately after uttering these words she is supposed to go transparent. Transparency of Mae substantiates her exiled life in the digital milieu of the Circle because everything is on sensors. After her transparency there is no secure place left for her to live in, neither at the Circle nor at home. Her health monitor instrumentalises her rate of heart beat, her thoughts, feelings and every function of her body. Thus, she becomes a commodified organism. She is dispossessed of everything that ought to be hers. Her secrets, family life, social life and everything no longer remains a private thing of hers. Secrets and privacy is something related to one's self. The Circle wants to destroy this self-consciousness, and self-awareness. The Circle wants everyone to behave in the same way. It wants transparency of everyone. So that it can monitor the whole society. It even monitors the internal health of Mae, her heart beat, her blood flow, so that her emotions could be calculated with accuracy and she cannot become able to hide her inner feelings. The impact of surveillance capitalism goes beyond commercial implications and its target is to scratch human nature. It wants nothing to be hidden from it. Every experience must be shared with others, so the Circle would monitor it for future predictions. It dispossesses one from one's own experience by calling privacy as theft as if it were something that should not be owned by oneself rather it is supposed to be the asset of Circle and it would be considered a crime if one keeps privacy. It snatches from the humans the right to determine their future. They can't say that they will

do something or behave in some way of their choice. Its right is snatched by the *Big Other* through behavior modification. The Circle controls social relations in a way to benefit itself. It doesn't allow people to live a life that may become a threat to its monopoly. It wants them all to live in a harmonious way in order to create a society of certainty where there is no doubt in someone's action. The only place where Mae could turn off her audio and video is when she uses the toilet. So, if she spends more time there, she becomes doubtful. She cannot converse with Kalden after her transparency. Her talks with Mercer are seen by everyone. In the milieu of credit scoring, she has to spend all the time dealing with the queries of her observers.

4.3. The Circle's Control through Modulation

As explained earlier in the Introduction "every man is a slave of a social machine" (Deleuze and Guattari 254). "A social machine cannot exist without the inhabitation of desiring machines in it nor can the desiring machines survive outside the social machine" (Deleuze and Guattari 340). Thus, every Circler is a slave of Circle, whose "infinite forces at the top operate virtually and closed at the bottom actually" (Lazzarato 185). The Circlers work hard to get promotion and desire to reach the top as Mae wishes to compete with Annie, who is her senior but reaching the top in a social machine is an illusion; it only keeps the interests of the people at the bottom with those at the top through a flow of desire according to Deleuze (Kay 2006). Mae is given the illusion of reaching out to advanced technologies, gym, and recreational activities but she hardly finds time for them. Thus, the Circle controls the Circlers by giving them the illusion of freedom.

If you visit a coworker's page and write something on the wall, that's a positive thing. That's an act of community. An act of reaching out (Eggers 94).

Deleuze's society of control exercises the new mode of capitalism through the modulation of desires inculcated through new institutions like public opinion and collective perception (Lazzarato 181). As mentioned earlier in the Introduction, modulation of desire is associated with class interest. The capitalists inculcate an idea through internet or social machines like Facebook, Twitter or other social platforms and create a common opinion in public and a collective perception about that idea which benefits the capitalists themselves. The Circle invokes the notion of participation in social machines in its employees as a symbol of being kind and friendly. Thus, the desire to become social, kind and friendly flows in the social machine of the Circle to gain fame and ranking among the

Circlers and wants the people's interests in alignment with its own. This way, the desire is modulated for the service of capitalism.

The words dropped onto the screen: ALL THAT HAPPENS MUST BE KNOWN.
 [...] He turned again toward the screen and read it, inviting the audience to commit it to memory. ALL THAT HAPPENS MUST BE KNOWN (Eggers 68).

Memory also plays a role in the modulation in the societies of control, as mentioned earlier in the theoretical framework. A common opinion and a collective perception is inculcated in people by forces of memory and attention. The Circle makes the people internalize by repeating the above mentioned lines again on the screen.

“Well, first of all, we all agree that we'd like 100 percent participation, and that everyone would agree that 100 percent participation is the ideal” (Anderson 387).

The Circle would set the ideal of 100 percent participation through modulation of desire. Interest follows and finds itself where desire places it (Kay 2006). Thus, the interest of the public aligns with the interest of the Circle through flow of desire. Through its employees, the Circle sets an example of becoming social and an active participant for general public. The desire of 100 percent participation flows in different segments of the society and everyone would agree with the standard set by the Circle. The logic behind 100 percent participation is ubiquitous computing of its users behavior. The Circle wants to keep a dogwatch on users' likes, dislikes, comments, followings, followers, which is extracted and translated as data and sold to commercial sites for predictive analysis (Zuboff 67). The administrators of the social machine of Circle have designed it in a way to buy maximum time of Circlers. For this purpose, they use credit scoring in terms of Cristianini and Scantburlo (650).

This is your Participation Rank, PartiRank for short. Some people here call it the Popularity Rank, but it's not really that. It's just an algorithm-generated number that takes into account all your activity in the InnerCircle (Eggers 100).

The trap of Participation Rank enmeshes Mae in the feedback loop mechanism, thus pressurizing Mae to maximize her social participation to achieve maximum score. She becomes the enslaved desiring machine of the Circle. The notion of Participation Rank instantiates the credit-scoring mechanism of social machines used for monitoring through algorithms. Mae's ubiquitous online presence and news-feed in turn keep her observers online all the time entrapping them in a feedback loop as well; not only her online

presence, but her real life experiences through her transparency, her body movement, her heart beat, her emotions and feelings through her health monitor, everything goes under algorithmic governance. Through credit scoring, participation rank or Popularity ranks, users are engaged to use social media all the time, which makes them social media addicts. According to Zuboff, social media addiction is associated with FOMO, Fear Of Missing Out, which keeps the users available all the time, as Mae willingly keeps the camera on even during her sleep, for she thinks that it would be some valuable thing someday (434; Eggers 333). This sentence may be considered as a satire that one day Mae's sleeping posture would also be considered as a valuable thing, because Circle keeps surveillance over its employees and never delete anything but keep it saved as an asset. As Bailey's words mentioned earlier signify the same thing that "all that happens must be known". It also implies Zuboff's notion of extraction imperative which means that every experience of human being is claimed as behavioral surplus and used in monetization.

Thus, the Circle incites the notion of transparency in through modulation of her desires, as the interest of the Circle lies in each one's transparency. Full transparency would bring full access, and there would be no more not-knowing (Eggers 465). The Circle convinces the public about transparency by exemplifying the transparency of criminals and government. Mae persuades her parents to install Seechange cameras in their house. Her parents were glad to see their daughter's power of persuasion and logic (Eggers 363). The social machine of the Circle operates through the connectivities of such desiring machines like Mae's connection with her family, and her relationship with Francis, everyone becomes the inhabitant of social machine, the Circle. Mae's desire goes along with the interest of the Circle because, in the autonomous social machine of the Circle, each Circler becomes its goal-driven agent (Cristianini and Scantamburlo 649). Moreover, Mae's desire for promotion at the Circle up to the position of the Circle's administrators keeps her interests aligned with those of the Circle's administrators.

[...] the tools you guys create actually manufacture unnaturally extreme social needs (Eggers 133).

Mercer clarifies that he is not an antisocial person, but he is against the manufactured social needs which are determined by the Circle. Eggers makes the character of Mercer his mouthpiece and reveals the secret economic interests of Circle, which it achieves via modulation of collective perception. It makes people believe that communication is

utterly significant for survival in the society. So, everyone should use Circle's services. Thus, the Circle through algorithmic governance enables itself not only to know its users' behavior but also has the power to automate it as Zuboff puts it (2019). The Circle's administrator, Ty, introduces a new app, TruYou based to each one's real identity but nobody opposes it. The Circle continues introducing new applications like SeeChange cameras to be worn as bracelets, PastPerfect to know anyone's past but public always welcomes its innovative policies. Such applications are not really needed by people but the Circle creates a collective perception of the positivity of them as first of all they are welcomed by the Circlers themselves.

4.4. From Individuals to *Dividuals*

The Circlers are Deleuze's *dividuals* whose multiplicity makes the process of social segmentation flexible and deterritorialized. As mentioned earlier in the theoretical framework, Deleuze says that individuals have become *dividuals*, samples, data and *banks*. The community of the Circlers has a flexible segmentation. All of them are involved in multitasks of interacting with different communities at the same time: their customers, general public, and the Circlers community itself. They work in the same place but their interaction never allows them to get integrated or united.

Individually you don't know what you are doing collectively (Anderson 259).

Mercer tells Mae that each Circler is merely a component of this machine who are kept busy in their own tasks, but they don't know the real goal of the Circle.

Here, though, there are no oppressors. No one's forcing you to do this. You willingly tie yourself to these leashes. And you willingly become utterly socially autistic. You no longer pick up on basic communication clues. You're at a table with three humans, all of whom are looking at you and trying to talk to you, and you're staring at a screen, searching for strangers in Dubai (Mercer 260).

Mercer is annoyed with Mae's behavior when she remains busy on her social accounts all the time. The Circle has shaped the social relations of Mae since her employment. Though she wants the job in order to secure her parents' health and well-being, the Circle creates a chasm between her and her parents. The Circle installs her in its social machine in a way that she gets her family ties loosened, she gets annoyed with her childhood friend Mercer, when he chooses to live free from the Circle's surveillance, she uses all the Instrumentarian powers available to trace him, and when Mercer prefers to suicide rather

than living under surveillance, she shows no regret upon his death, rather he is stigmatized as an antisocial person, who is thought to be responsible for his own death. She even doesn't bother about her relation with Kalden, who warns her about the totalitarian regime that may follow the Circle's completion, rather she informs the other two administrators about his defiance of the completion of the Circle. She even shows no interest in Annie's health, rather she is interested in what might be her thoughts during coma, which should not be unknown and there should be some new technology to read them out. Mae becomes a part of a community of strangers, who despite not meeting ever with one another, are always observing one another, they actually present themselves as data objects (Zuboff 435). The Circle doesn't force Mae for any action, but modifies her behavior that she renders herself to the Circle and becomes a role model for her observers, she propagates the mission of the Circle that is to rule the whole world through information.

4.5. Power of Information

What if, your Circle profile automatically registered you to vote? (Eggers 385)

After TruYou, Circle continues to introduce new applications for plundering information of each user and it inculcates the notion of transparency into public by demonstrating it through the character of Mae. When Mae utters the words that secrets are lies, sharing is caring, and privacy is theft, they appear on a large screen so that public memorize the words and internalize them.

The Circle's distributed services among different segments of society including government officials is also a source of accessing their information. When the Circle approaches government officials for the purpose of automatic registration of voters, they showed their agreement to it which shows their unawareness to Circle's secret plans. The Circle's interference in the electoral process is a glimpse of Cyberocracy, where the Circle has enough information of each citizen to register them automatically. The Circle propagates the perception of transparency of government as a positive step towards democracy and helpful for exposing the criminals as well.

How can anyone rise up against the Circle if they control all the information and access to it? (Eggers 483)

In the above line, Eggers demonstrates democracy under assault; a step towards cyberocracy. The Circle wants everyone to have a circle account, so that it may have

access to each one's personal information and it can rule the whole society through information. Eggers calls such democracy as *demoxie* (483) in the novel. The term *demoxie* is coined by Egger himself, which he has used satirically for the kind of democracy he has depicted in the novel, *The Circle*. In fact, the term *demoxie* exemplifies cyberocracy— as the Circle has the authority to register the voters through TruYou account. The Circle wants to rule by way of information. Under the regime of cyberocracy, a question arises who can access this information. Access to information determines power, so if the government has this access, it can be used for the betterment of society, to trace the criminals and other suspects, but the government is itself manifested as vulnerable in the novel. Eggers instantiates the representatives of people in the government to be manipulated by the Circle whose information of every kind is also accessed by the Circle. If the government collaborates with such a digital bureaucracy then it would be a different kind of government, not democracy but *demoxie* as Eggers calls it. Democracy is the government of people, but collaboration with digital bureaucracy would exemplify it as digital totalitarianism, when algorithmic regulation would be used for law enforcement. When the public is kept unaware of the logic behind the economic systems and information would be confined to a limited people. Government would only benefit the surveillance capitalists who are interested only in their business and want to herd the people in that direction. Interests of people would be pushed aside and the power gained through information would be limited to a few hands. Thus the power of people's votes would be transferred to those who have access to information. Thus, power is attained through information and information is gained through power, marginalizing the people's will and representation. David Ronfeldt argues that data is organized as information, more information means more knowledge (245); the relation of information and power may be comprehended in terms of Michel Foucault's concept of power/knowledge, which means an inextricable relationship between them. Power cannot be exercised without knowledge and knowledge has no force without power. Knowledge may be used in terms of information. Now, instead of money information is power, economic information means economic power (Ronfeldt 247).

There used to be the option of opting out. But now that's over. Completion is the end. We're closing the circle around everyone—it's a totalitarian nightmare (Eggers 481).

In the above lines, Eggers uses the word totalitarian nightmare, by which he is recalling the totalitarian regime as portrayed in George Orwell's *1984*, where big brother is watching everything. But the closing of circle substantiates the ubiquitous computing apparatus that *Big Other* as it is called by Zuboff whom we are under their the surveillance of, with no exit option. Circle wants complete control over society not through means of violence like totalitarianism but through modulation through its digital apparatus in terms of Deleuze and Zuboff. It wants the whole society to use its money for each purchase so it may observe all transactions, buying habits and priorities of citizens. It wants all government services to be channeled through it. It wants transparency of government to make it accountable to it. This is not for the betterment of humanity but for the sake of gaining ultimate power and control.

The manifestation of cyberocracy in *The Circle* makes the deployment of information as power obvious. The Circle's involvement in legislation and electoral processes and defaming the ones who defy its monopoly shows a dark face of Cyberocracy. It has rather two faces, it may be used in favor of democracy and totalitarianism as well, but as Zuboff has expounded the unequal division of learning in society, it becomes clear that the public doesn't know who knows, who decides and who decides who decides. Under the regime of Cyberocracy, the public is always under surveillance out of its awareness, if not awareness then helplessness. Zuboff calls this species of power as instrumentarianism, the instrumentation and instrumentalization of behavior for the purposes of modification, prediction, monetization and control. This species of power dispossesses us from our own behavior and has power to automate our behavior just like Mae becomes a puppet in the hands of the Circle. She has also become an agent of the execution of this power as she has a huge number of followers who approve of Circle's owing to their lack of knowledge of the secret plans of the Circle. Eggers has demonstrated the public as ignorant of Circle's plans, and they are always shown to give approval and applause of the Circle's policy declarations.

Surveillance shouldn't be the tradeoff for any goddamn service we get (Eggers 367).

The Circle provides health insurance to Mae's parents, so its administration convinces Mae to install SeeChange cameras in her house to monitor her parents. The Circle justifies its access to homes for making everyone a citizen of the Circle, who should be accessible for ubiquitous computing. Zuboff calls the apparatus of this ubiquitous

computing as Big Other. Thus, the apparatus here is the Circle, the social machine that may be called as Big Other. This *Big Other* is different from the Big Brother of George Orwell's *1984*. In *1984*, it was a totalitarian regime where people were forcefully kept under surveillance. But in the Circle, owing to the internet services provided by the Circle, people's behavior is modified in a way that they surrender themselves for data extraction willingly. Their willingness is demonstrated by Eggers in *The Circle* when after each declaration of the Circle, the audience always appreciates its services.

Zuboff explicates the surplus extraction mechanism through a complicated convergence of administrative, political, social and technical network of operations that she calls the Dispossession Cycle, which normalizes extraction imperative. When Mae gets employed in Customer Experience at the Circle, Mae enters a dispossession cycle designated for behavioral surplus extraction normalization. She is asked to bring her birth certificate, a photo already given to them by her school friend, Annie, in order to gather her personal information. Dispossession cycle starts with the stage of incursion when she is given a new tablet where all the stuff including her information and accounts from her laptop is transferred. Then a new phone with all the photos, music, messages and data transferred in it from her old phone. The first stage of dispossession cycle, incursion is to extract behavioral surplus from her daily life, her likes, dislikes, interests, hobbies and preferences. Next stage, Habituation begins when she signs the agreement with the company, and after starting her job, her task is to deal with the customers queries as fast as possible in order to get high ratings. So that she is compelled to habituate to the incursion either willingly or unwillingly. The operation of extraction is mechanized through the feedback loop. In order to entrap the customers in this loop, they are asked to fill the survey form for credit scoring of circle services. Mae is also entrapped in this habituation stage of dispossession as in order to get a high credit score, she has to respond to all the queries as fast as possible so as to extract the behavioral surplus from maximum customers in a short time. These click-through ratings on one hand become the source of users' behavioral surplus and on the other hand, they serve for regulating Mae's behavior that she responds quickly in the interest of her high reputation at the Circle which later on may become the reason for her advancement. To keep a check on the Circle's activities, there are cameras installed everywhere other than walls made of glass. "Yeah, everything is on sensors, Renata said" (Eggers 6).

What would completion mean? ...Everyone on Earth has a Circle account! [...] The Circle solves world hunger! [...] The Circle helps me find my ancestors! [...] No data, human or numerical or emotional or historical, is ever lost again. The Circle helps me find myself (Eggers 311).

The name of the novel is after the name of the internet company manifested in the novel, the “C” of the Circle is enclosed within a network on its logo. The “C” may stand for Circle, Completion or Control or Center whereas its enclosure within the network epitomizes its central controlling position which it gains through the network spread all around. The nature of markets has changed from *places to networks* (Ronfeldt 247). Its completion substantiates its complete control over the whole world, its compulsory citizenship which means that everyone must have a circle account consisting of personal biodata. It would automatically register each citizen to vote as a compulsion which instantiates the implication of cyberocracy. Transparency of Mae also epitomizes the goal of the Circle’s completion. It wants transparency of each citizen. Solving the world’s hunger means its control over the economy of the whole world. Economic information means economic control (Ronfeldt 247). It wants each one to use Circle’s money and monitor each one’s bank account details, transactions and purchases they make and enable its control over the economic system as well. Its power to dig out the historical background would make each one’s privacy vulnerable. The Circle would be able to retrieve each kind of information from personal details of humans back till their ancestors, from numbers to emotions, which instantiates the instrumentalisation of emotions. The Circle would tell one about one’s self; who he is and where he has come from, what is his origin, what he needs, what he wants, what he ought to want, and what he would want in the future. The cyberspace of the Circle wants to become a domain of power and property (Ronfeldt 265). In Deleuze’s terms, the civilized capitalistic machine of the Circle subjectifies the whole society and impacts the social, ethical, economic and political system of society through modulation of exercising power. Its control over economics, politics and social relations has affinities with Ronfeldt’s notion of cyberocracy.

Eggers doesn’t show bias and prejudice against technology but he is against its use for surveillance capitalism for its being a threat to human privacy and democracy, as Zuboff declares herself that surveillance capitalism is not technology but a logic that uses technology for its purposes. Eggers shows three administrators of the Circle, Ty, the

inventor of TruYou, is in fact Kalden who doesn't want the completion of the Circle, nor he had presumed about the Circle's declaration of its mandatory citizenship. Among the other two, Stenton is called as Capitalistic prime, CEO, whose name shows the connection between surveillance and capitalism and Bailey is the one who convinces the audience about the newly launched applications of the Circle. He is the real executive of the Circle's plans. Thus, Eggers is not against Ty, the inventor of TruYou but he shows his disapproval of its commercial implications, its adverse impact on social relations and its threat to democracy. He ends the novel with the continuation of the scenario when Mae expects the Circle to introduce a new technology for knowing human thoughts during sleep. Thus Eggers demonstrates the modified technophilic behavior of Mae, through which he wants to reveal the endless human desires and expectations from technology. Thus, the novel manifests instrumentarian power as a means of behavior modification. Though the completion of the Circle doesn't take place in the novel, but Eggers speculates its implications earlier and demonstrates the intentions of the Circle of trying to make each one a citizen of the Circle. Eggers has portrayed a dark side of cyberocracy where the Circle has access to each kind of information which it could manipulate out of citizen's awareness.

CHAPTER V

FEED: THE NEW KIND OF MACHINE FOR MODULATION

This chapter includes the analysis and discussion on Mathew Toby Anderson's novel *Feed*.

5.1. Short Summary of *Feed* (2002)

The novel *Feed* is set in the near future, where 73% of the American citizens have got feednets (an advanced form of internet) implanted in their brains. The feeds are just like computers but they are not used by hands rather they are inserted in their brains and thus are an integral part of the human brain. Through this feed, they can chat with each other; they are constantly bombarded with advertisements, so that they keep them updated with new trends and keep them shopping for new products. The book is divided into four parts, the first part reveals a group of friends—Loga, Quendy, Calista, Link and Titus who pay a visit to the moon during their vacation, thus, the novel shows technological advancement at its climax. Second part is named Eden, when their feeds get decrypted. Third part is the Utopia as when their feeds were fixed again, so they thought it to be an ideal state. The fourth part, Slumberland portrays the consequences of malfunctioning of Violet's feed whose health is calculated by the percentage of feed's functioning. The story is narrated by Titus, who becomes friends with Violet. Unlike other characters in the novel, her character is the one who understands and criticizes corporate control, surveillance, behavioral modification because of feeds. She is the one who resists the feed but she is considered inferior as if she were a technically retarded person because she doesn't obey her feed's suggestions. This novel is a satire on corporate control, surveillance culture and consumerism enabled through online advertisements. The novel manifests surveillance capitalism through the feednets of characters. It demonstrates the means of behavior modification of characters through targeted advertisements on their feeds.

5.2. Feednets: New Machines for Modulation

The novel *Feed* manifests an intimate integration of human society and technology for it depicts 73% of the American citizens transplanted with feednets in their

brains (Anderson 75). Feednets are the new sorts of machines designed for societies of control in terms of Deleuze. Due to these feed chips, the whole American society gives the impact of a social machine, composed of both human bodies to act and machinic brains to command (feeds). The whole society is portrayed as a lobotomized and fully mechanized society, unable to think or decide on its own for every action as suggested by feeds. Feeds are monitored and controlled by an internet company, FeedTech. The company exercises its power virtually as there is no administration of FeedTech demonstrated in the novel. It acts an autonomous social machine which uses algorithmic regulation for automation of feeds. The novel expounds the operation and mechanism of surveillance capitalism practiced by FeedTech, and manifests an information civilization, giving a glimpse of what cyberocracy may look like.

SchoolTM is not bad now, not like back when my grandparents were kids, when the schools were run by the government, which sounds completely like, Nazi [.....] and nothing was useful. Now that school is run by the corporations, it's pretty brag, because it teaches us how the world can be used, like mainly how to use our feeds (Anderson 74).

Feed depicts Deleuze's society of control, in which corporations have taken over the institutions but the institutions don't give the impression of controlled environment, rather society has been modulated like a self-deforming cast that continues to change from one moment to another. Schools are trademarked which means that they are also under the control of FeedTech corporation. In schools, the students are inserted with chips, and they are taught how to use their feeds which shows that schools train the students to live controlled lives and they are happy to do that. The schools of Nazis exemplify Michel Foucault's enclosed institutions of disciplinary society, but the trademarked schools in Deleuze's terms are not enclosures but modulations. FeedTech company exercises its power through feeds from a distant place, the students no more feel themselves in enclosures but what is confined is the outside, the open space and that's virtual. They are not imprisoned to stay disciplined rather indebted owing to their feeds controlled by FeedTech which is new a form of domination.

No one with feeds thinks about it, she said. When you have feed all your life, you're brought up to not think about things. Like them never telling you that it's a republic and not a democracy [.....] Because of the feeds, we're raising a nation of idiots. Ignorant, self-centered idiots (Anderson 76).

The citizens have almost lost their will power; they follow what is suggested by their feeds. The language is also codified by feeds. The feed suggested 'supple' (Anderson 15). The whole American society depicted in the novel shares common features with Deleuze's concept of a civilized capitalistic machine where the citizens are the desiring machines inhabiting the virtual social machine. The goal of this machine is to modulate the desires of citizens for capitalistic purposes. The social machine operates through the modulation of desires and beliefs, for instance, when feeds are introduced, the citizens welcome this new kind of computer inserted in their brains because they no longer need to use their fingers to operate it and they think that feed is an educational thing. It would give them access to encyclopedia and they would have access to information and knowledge. "Why don't you use your feed? It's way faster" (Anderson 49). The citizens think feed to be a beneficial thing for themselves but they are unaware of the fact that they would lose their power of control over themselves.

I could feel their feeds shifting toward a common point (Anderson 78).

The sentence epitomizes the controlling nature of feeds and how feeds could bring them to a common thing to believe and impact their opinions and perception of things. Zuboff calls such a society a confluent society which is tuned, herded and conditioned through behavior modification in order to minimize individuality for it is a threat to surveillance capitalism.

The feeds were burping all sorts of things what to eat and where to stay (Anderson 9).

When Titus, Link, Loga, Quendy, Calista and Marty visit the moon to spend their vacation, their feeds bombard them with ads of all sorts of things available in the location their feeds track. The feeds suggest the restaurants in that area. The feeds modulate their desires and suggest what they should eat, where they should go and which restaurant they should live in. Though they are free to move but are undulatory, in an orbit, in a continuous network to serve the marketing purpose of FeedTech. The goal of FeedTech is not explicitly narrated by Anderson but it aligns with Deleuze's notion of the corporation as a spirit, a gas which is invisible.

This is the music you heard. This is the music you missed. This is what is new. Listen (Anderson 10).

The above lines show the controlling nature of feeds which manifest economies of action associated with behavior modification. That encapsulates the notion of automated behavior through glamorized advertisements of products; how the companies do business by creating trends through ads and persuading the people to follow them. The feeds tell them which music they should listen to. This way, economies of action modify the behavior in such a way that the people should take action of not their own choice but the action of feeds' choice.

Calista had her hair up in this new way, and on the back of her neck was this totally insane macro-lesion [...] Now that lesions are “brag” (Anderson 121).

When the people see lesions on their bodies, Calista gets it artificially and flaunts its appearance by tying her hair up because she thought it to be a hip thing. Lazzarato explains Deleuze's new forces knocking at the door in terms of public opinion, collective perception and collective intelligence. FeedTech publicizes an opinion through feeds and all of them perceive the thing either as trendy, hip, or outdated. It means that feeds suggest them trends and fashions they should follow. The people do such actions which may gain them social appraisal and avoid such things which may cause embarrassment for them. The friends of Titus stay updated with the current trends and fashions and mock at the ones who don't seem to be hip. Violet also becomes a target of such criticism. “What the hell she's wearing?” (Anderson 20). Such sentences show that the people stigmatize the people for not being hip or up to date, so one has to follow the trends for social approval. This trend following is in fact an automated behavior, the goal of this social machine which makes all of them do the actions suggested to them via targeted advertisements. In the novel, the characters are attracted toward purchasing products through sale alerts. These sales alerts are actually the economies of action which persuade them to respond according to the choice of *Big Other*, the ubiquitous computing apparatus.

[...] they keep like everyone in the world employed, so it's not like we could do without them (Anderson 37).

The employment of everyone means the flexible segmentation of society into *dividuals*, masses, samples, *banks*, data and markets. Not the whole world is united or integrated or on the same page but still they collectively work under the confined system of corporations. People like the desiring machines cannot exist outside the social machine in

terms of Deleuze. Corporations have created new ways of handling money, profits and humans.

The citizens were really very excited when feeds were introduced for the first time. They were happy to have access to encyclopedias without using their fingers to operate computers lying outside their body (Anderson 37). They could carry all the information inside them. They considered this to be an educational thing which would make them super smart. But all of these services are provided to them at the cost of privacy. Encyclopedias and other information available on feeds engage them in surfing and from the search operations like viewing, liking, commenting, future products can be predicted for them. The people think that feeds are for their good and a source of information to them but actually feeds are the source of their information to the company, FeedTech and for its benefit only.

I couldn't find the lunar GPS to tell me (Anderson 33).

The above line implies the significance of feeds in the eyes of people. This way, FeedTech facilitates the people and entraps them to surrender their bodies, entailing a society under digital totalitarianism. GPS software traces their location and send them targeted ads. The company normalizes the extraction of behavioral surplus through a dispossession cycle. It dispossesses them from their own life experiences and claims this data as an asset for itself. Through feeds, the company raids into people's thoughts, feelings, conversations, choices, likes, dislikes, buying habits and everything. As the feeds are permanently transplanted, they automatically habituate to this incursion stage. Next stage is adaptation, when people protest against the chips/feeds (Anderson 26), the company shuts down their systems and is capable of decrypting their feed histories and the people feel empty headed and disconnected (Anderson 33), then the company redirects its policies that apparently look in favor of people so the people think feeds to be an essential part of themselves, without which they could do nothing.

5.3. Algorithmic Governance: An Assault on Privacy

Everything we do gets thrown into a big calculation (Anderson 66).

Deleuze identifies a mutated form of capitalism enabled through technological revolution; corporations have replaced the factories; the soul of capitalism is marketing; that is a new process of handling money, profits and humans. This whole notion of capitalism is reconceptualized by Zuboff in terms of economic imperatives of surveillance capitalism.

The above line is incorporated with the notion of extraction imperative, the force behind the economies of scale. Economies of scale need an extraction on a large scale. It extracts life experiences from our online presence, real world experiences, daily activities, body movements called behavioral surplus. For extraction normalization, feeds are already inserted in their brains, due to which there is no need for smart devices like smart mobile, laptops or computers or smart TVs, everything can be monitored anytime through feeds. Anderson speculates a farsighted form of this computation apparatus that is called as big other by Zuboff. Feeds substantiate a future version of big other that is able to do all the tasks already being done through algorithmic governance. Due to feeds, the accumulation of behavioral surplus on a large scale becomes easy marketing for FeedTech. They are never offline, thus each activity of theirs is under observation.

The feed is tied to everything. Your body control, your emotions, your memory. Everything (Anderson 110).

The above sentence epitomizes the extraction of data which the surveillance capitalists need on a large scale. The feeds are also concerned with their bodies' inner systems. Anderson demonstrates an instrumentarian society where each thing including body movements, feelings, memory is instrumentalised through computation. Feeds are not concerned with the meanings attached with emotions and memories, rather they are tied to steal every private thing of theirs and corner them from their own property. This intrinsic relationship of the human body with feeds not only entails extraction normalization but also the capability to automate their attitude. When feeds know and control everything and they are demonstrated as a part of the brain in the novel, it entails encroachment of feeds into their lives. When Violet becomes sick due to her feed malfunctioning, it does nothing for her recovery for she was of no use for FeedTech rather she was a mismatched component of the machine which needed to be replaced as she learned to resist the feed's suggestions. Anderson shows the nature of FeedTech control over society that monitors and administers the society through algorithmic governance. It not only extracts data from the surroundings of citizens to target them with ads according to their location but also from their bodies, their inner feelings, emotions and thoughts so that nothing should be hidden from the company. The company wants to know everything about the citizens. This leads to precise predictions about them and to observe any kind of resistance as well. When Violet doesn't buy the suggested things, she is approached by the company via a computer generated call to know the reason behind

this. The company can not afford the individuality of Violet, because it does not go in the favor of their business affairs.

5.4. Economic information: Economic Power

Hudson (2019) equates algorithmic regulation with cyberocracy as FeedTech has access to each kind of information via algorithmic governance of feeds and govern people by way of information.

[...] evil corporations, oh they're so bad, we all say that, and we all know they control everything (Anderson 37).

The above line also shows the dilemma of American society, such a situation is expounded by Zuboff as a no-exit situation. On the one hand, they know that they are being controlled but on the other hand they are missing the feeds as well after their feeds are hacked; after being hacked feeds stop working properly and the citizens lose everything for that duration like GPS location and their memory as well (Anderson 37). As feed is tied to everything: their emotions, memory, and location, they have the collective positive perception of feeds in their minds which is again owing to the modulating power of feeds.

But the braggest thing about the feed, the thing that made it really big, is that it knows everything you want and hope for, sometimes before you even know what those things are. It can tell you how to get them, and help you make buying decisions that are hard. Everything we think and feel is taken in by the corporations, mainly by data ones be like Feedlink and OnFeed and American Feedware, and they make a special profile, one that's keyed just to you, and then they give it to their branch companies, or other companies buy them, and they can get to know what it is we need, so all you have to do is want something and there's a chance it will be yours (Anderson 37).

The extraction of the behavioral surplus is the product of algorithmic governance. Whatever they do online gets translated through algorithmic governance and transformed into data. After extraction, translation and transformation, behavioral surplus is monetized by the companies by selling it to their branches or other companies for prediction products. The above passage fully exposes the operation and mechanism of surveillance capitalism practiced by FeedTech, which keeps a dogwatch over the consuming activities of the citizens. Feeds know everything they want or hope or may want in the future. This

instantiates the concept of extraction imperative, the force behind the economies of scale. The FeedTech company extracts the behavioral surplus from the feeds transplanted, through which each citizen is known by the company as each one must have a real ID, through this ID, citizens chat with one another, make purchases, and all their feelings, emotions, thoughts and activities are known through feeds. Their shopping experiences are extracted and translated into data and claims it as behavioral surplus and sold to other companies for prediction products. The more the extraction of behavioral surplus is, the more accurate the predictions can be made. Through feeds, FeedTech extracts behavioral surplus and translates it on an individual basis and keeps a specific profile of each one, hence it enables predictions about each one, that's why feeds know what people may want in future. Thus, the life experiences of the citizens after translation and transformation into data are monetized by the company by selling it to its branches or other companies for predictions and thus they are sent targeted advertisements. Targeted advertisements in themselves are not a threat but the logic used behind this operation is really a threat to human privacy and sovereignty. Targeted ads are based on predictions about each person, which means that the company knows everything about each one, but just knowing each one and sending him targeted advertisements is not the goal of the corporations, rather they need a positive response to those ads. The goal is not to automate information flows about us; the goal now is to automate us (Zuboff 2019). They want each one to click the buttons suggested by them such as "buy" button, "like" buttons and "rate now" buttons. This is when the economies of action come into play, the reality business of surveillance capitalism that is the behavior modification or modulation in Deleuze's terms. For this purpose, the social approval from society motivates one to follow the do's of the society and avoid the don'ts of the society. This is the target of surveillance capitalists, for them, a human is merely an organism among other organisms having no secrets and privacy. One has to sacrifice his free will, privacy, and freedom for survival in such kind of information civilization. People believe that they have access to all kinds of information due to internet companies but they don't know that they themselves are actually the natural human resources for the capitalistic machine. In fact, information about them is an asset for the companies. "Deleuze argues that corporations no longer buy raw materials and no longer sell finished products rather they buy finished products and stocks and sell their services" (3). Same is the case with FeedTech; it sells its services and in return it buys information. He also calls individuals as data and samples (3). Zuboff puts it in terms of data objects. Individuality is a threat to

surveillance capitalism, they don't want people to respond on an individual basis rather they want all of them to behave in the same way, to obey their commands.

We went into the store, and immediately our feeds were all completely Bebrekker & Karl. We were bannered with all this crazy high-tech fun stuff they sold there (Anderson 67).

The above line expounds the tracking nature of feeds for commercial practices. The feeds know the location of people and bombard them with targeted ads accordingly. The ubiquitous computing of feeds not only makes predictions but also has the commanding capability to modify the behavior of people in a way that complies with the aims of FeedTech.

I was trying to talk to Link, but I couldn't because I was getting bannered so hard. (Anderson 12).

The totalitarian nature of feeds impact the social relationships as well. The friends can't talk to one another if they want to, rather it is the feed that allows or disallows them to do so. Feeds engage them only in those activities which are associated with the business of FeedTech. When they plan to go somewhere, or talk about the current trends, or they decide to visit some restaurants, or they have to order something to eat, they could chat with one another, otherwise they are bannered with ads every now and then. Their each action is monitored and modified by feed. The whole society exemplifies the life in a hive, where each one is merely an organism not different from the other in structure and function. Being same in structure is a biological factor but being same in function goes against the individuality and human nature that makes us unique and different from others. Each one is a natural human resource for the surveillance capitalists like commodities. In fact, human beings are not the consumers of their products but themselves are products and the real consumers or customers are the surveillance capitalists who buy their data and consume it like raw material. They are waiting to make us want things (Anderson 66).

Everything we're grown up with – the stories on the feed, the games, all of that – it's all streamlining our personalities so we're easier to sell to. I mean, they do these demographics studies that divide everyone up into a few personality types, and then you get ads based on what you're supposedly like. They try to figure out who you are, and to make you confirm to one of their type for easy marketing. It's

like a spiral. They keep making everything more basic so it will appeal to everyone. And gradually, everyone gets used to everything being basic so we get less and less varied as people, more simple (Anderson 67).

The above passage exposes the reality business of surveillance capitalism, which is the forces of economies of action. They modify our behavior in a way to act according to their will. Streamlining the personalities is explained by Zuboff in terms of tuning, herding and conditioning to create a confluent society, unable to resist surveillance capitalism and each one should behave in the same way, so that their predictions go right. They don't want us to use our own will. 'I will' has changed into 'you will' (Zuboff 292). This is the alarming threat to human nature as human nature is prone to investigate the things, it interrogates everything, analyzes the things, it has a relation with self-determination, self-analysis, self-recognition, will-power, decision making and self-control. As the industrial age destroyed nature, surveillance capitalism destroys human nature (Zuboff 2019). Feed replaces these functions of the brain by itself and takes control over them.

The novel sheds light on information civilization by which the dark face of cyberocracy may be interpreted. Anderson substantiates the political impacts of corporate control that has become possible through FeedTech access to every kind of information. The citizens are already known personally by FeedTech. Students are tracked as well. Every activity is under surveillance. Such scenarios encompass the notion of totalitarianism but the citizens are unaware of its implications. The feeds are the means of behavior modification, which make them unable to think about anything, they are just fed to purchase the suggested products and become addicted to feeds. This integration of feeds and the human brain exemplifies the commodification of human beings transforming it into a social machine, who should behave like a machine. FeedTech rules over the whole society through information. I followed my feed's directions to her house. (Anderson 90).

Anderson portrays the character of Violet in order to expose the logic of surveillance capitalism, who is aware of the conspiracy behind the feeds and is capable of resisting the feed. "Resist the feeds. Look into ox-carts" (Anderson 81). She is aware of the feed's role in their lives, how the whole society has become a consumer society as they keep them busy in shopping but in terms of Zuboff and Deleuze, human beings have themselves become a data objects for the surveillance capitalists who buy the data ; their

experiences, purchasing histories and thoughts are sold and bought for predictions of new products they should buy in future. Through the character of Violet, Anderson exemplifies resistance to feed. “Looking at your purchase history, I notice that you’ve expressed interest in a lot of products you haven’t bought” (Anderson 100).

Violet stops herself from buying the products suggested by her feed. She doesn’t let her feed control her, rather she controls herself. Violet knows the importance of self-control. She had this whole thing about self-control, okay, and the importance of self-control (Anderson 95). She doesn’t follow the suggestions of the feed, or when she pretends to follow it, she doesn’t let the feed know about her own will. So, her behavior is not predictable in this way, or when her feed gets bannered with some ads based on her location, she would not purchase those things or look at those things. She keeps her individuality maintains her individuality, which is a threat to surveillance capitalism. She doesn’t follow the trends and fashions proposed by the feed, rather she wears or buys what she herself wants.

And the feed whispered to me about sales (Anderson 132).

When Titus is accompanying Violet on her death bed, feed starts bombarding him with ads of sales, which instantiates that the surveillance capitalism impacts have leaked out beyond commercial activities to social relationships as well. Feed tries to distract Titus from Violet’s message and tries to engage him in shopping by targeting him with ads of sales. His feed suggests to him that everything must go so that he should not feel sorry for Violet. Moreover, Violet’s conforming attitude against feed makes her the target of stigmatization as an antisocial person. Violet bears the criticism of her friends for being an antisocial person, who doesn’t go in confluence with society. Zuboff explicates the scenario in terms of social proof. Social machines like Facebook and Twitter create social comparisons between their users. They are structured and designed in a way to keep the users connected all the time. This creates FOMO, fear of missing out, in them if they don’t use it. In the novel, when the feeds are not working properly, they are missing the feeds and feeling disconnected from society. Social comparison motivates them to buy the suggested products so that they may present themselves as hip and up to date. This way, a confluent society is created in order to receive minimum friction to the corporate control.

Anderson shows how access to information may be employed as power. It is the access to information through feeds, that FeedTech knows and controls everything, thus, the reign under FeedTech corporation may be called what is defined as cyberocracy by Ronfeldt. FeedTech rules over society through information. Nobody can escape this digital totalitarianism because of inserted chips. It monitors both their inside and outside, their relationships, and all their activities.

Towards the end of the novel, the fourth part, Slumberland, Violet's health declines day by day, her inner system due to malfunctioning of feed shuts down gradually. Violet's malfunctioning feed also substantiates the adverse impacts of cyberocracy, for her feed was hacked by some hacker; by this Anderson explicates the nature of governance through information; Zuboff puts this case by posing some questions: "Who knows? Who decides? Who decides who decides?" (Zuboff 176). The answers to these questions expose a dark side of cyberocracy where nobody knows who can access his information, for what purpose it can be manipulated and to whom it may be sold. The feeds are hacked by hackers and later on their feeds are decrypted and their memories of a certain duration were erased. That incident epitomizes the manipulation of access to information.

Violet doesn't let herself be driven by feed, although her body's inner systems are shown to be dependent upon feed, but Anderson illustrates that humans are after all humans, they are not robots to behave that way, like Violet has learnt to resist the feed. Anderson portrays a dystopia but also illuminates a ray of hope by trying to create awareness about the threats posed to the human future and through awareness a counter strategy may be formed.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The first research objective of the present study was to investigate the role of social machines in modulating people's desires, thoughts, opinions and perceptions through algorithmic governance. After the textual analysis of both the novels, it has been inferred that algorithmic governance becomes possible only through use of technology or the smart devices like mobile phones, laptops, computers and smart TVs and other digital devices. Technology first enters our lives as a need, then it continues to make us dependent upon itself that demands rendition of our bodies to it. Our smart phones, laptops and tablets are the small windows through which everything becomes available for computation, commercialization and monetization by corporations. It appeals human society due to its unlimited benefits like comforts, ease, time saving, access to information via Google and other internet services, GPS location tracking and monitoring and watching someone through cameras and social media providing communication platforms, news updates and many others but all these facilities that apparently meant to be beneficial for us are actually for the services providers. They provide us access to information to access information about us. By providing the facility of GPS location tracking, they track our location instead and then on the basis of location send us targeted ads. By providing social media communication platforms where we update our news feeds, they observe our moods, behavior and activities. All these services are provided at the cost of privacy and freedom. Technology is the medium of this give and take between users and service providers. Technology has made us dependent upon itself that we have rendered ourselves to it which is destroying human nature. Human nature is being destroyed in a sense that we are losing will power, decision making power and self-control. We are losing the will to use future tense for we cannot say what we shall do, rather what we shall do is decided and controlled by the *Big Other*, the ubiquitous computing apparatus that translates, transforms, monetizes and modifies our behaviors. In this digital age, dependency and reliance upon technology has made human society mechanized and lobotomized which demands from human participants to act like or perform like machines as machines cannot perform like humans so human components must act in correspondence and coordination with machines for the efficiency of a social machine. Technology itself cannot control human society but the logic behind this digital

milieu is to control it via technology. Social machines are autonomous bodies offering no authority to humans, rather they are just human natural resources used for the proficiency of social machine. This enactment of humans like machines causes destruction of human nature which is a distinguishing feature between humans and machines. Human nature keeps them aware of self-importance, self-recognition, self-determination and self-control. Plundering into our information and streamlining our personalities via technology empowers the capitalists in economic and political terms. Human society surrenders to this algorithmic governance having no other choice.

It influences our social lives; apparently it provides us communication platforms but such platforms engage us to make bonds with strangers rather than focusing on family ties. Making bonds with strangers is not a bad thing to do but it entails a desire for a high social profile and consequently convinces us to modify our behavior according to the demands of social elites. These bonds with strangers are forced by surveillance capitalists to be built, so that they could collect our shared experiences as raw material and organize it into information and translate it for making profiles of each one and monetize it by selling it to companies for making predictions about us and finally modify our behavior. The architecture for the computation of our behavior is the instrumentation and the computation of behavior and social relations itself is instrumentalization which makes our experiences quantifiable without bothering about the possible meaning associated with it. This instrumentarian power makes this society an instrumentarian society in which computation plans replace governance through politics. Such society creates a social pressure for harmony, as individuality is unaffordable for such society, thus, behavior modification can be understood in terms of social comparison and social approval. When we try to become like other people on social media or engage ourselves in those activities which would gain social approval and admiration, thus the targeted ads presented in a glamorized and forceful way forces us to compare and contrast ourselves with the people on social media and consequently our behavior is modified in a way to benefit the surveillance capitalists. Instrumentarian power is exercised by surveillance capitalists using big other or in other terms the social machine or instrumentarian society is monitored and controlled through algorithmic governance, this way the social machine is operational through algorithmic governance. Instrumentarian power manifests its control through shaping social relations as well. While becoming the goal-driven agents of these social machines, we completely ignore our family relationships and our moral and ethical

standards. Nothing remains private and secret in this social machine. It can be concluded that technology itself is not the master but the puppet and the puppet master is the surveillance capitalism which instrumentalizes our experiences and gains an instrumentarian power through which human society has been made a social machine, an instrumentarian society or a confluent society in which individuality is going to die and human nature is going to be an extinct thing. Social machines in the digital milieu cannot be called a sanctuary or a home but the life in such a society is an exiled life where everything is on sensors. Surveillance capitalism is not limited to commercial activities but it monitors every walk of our lives. It paves its way the way to access every kind of information. Thus, the second research objective is achieved by analyzing the operational forces of economic imperatives in threatening human privacy and autonomy in both the novels.

Both the novels have manifested the dark side of information and communication technologies. The information revolution has trapped all of us in it that willingly or unwillingly every citizen and every student has to register himself online in any way, whether it's school , social media apps, digital libraries, smart phones, laptops, all of us must have an account providing all necessary information about us. Through communication technologies which involve the social machines like Facebook, Twitter and many others, people upload their news feed ubiquitously which is collected as data and then organized as information. Thus besides personal information, our daily routines and activities, our interests and hobbies everything can be accessed. Our Internet surfing for accessing electronic texts to read in turn provides a shadow text revealing about our types of searching, likes, dislikes, comments to the big other that monitors, computes, translates, transforms them into data and analyses this data for predictions of future behavior. Information is accessed through these operational mechanisms of algorithmic governance. Internet companies are capable of plundering all information about each netizen (citizen of internet), and thus monitors every activity of ours associated with our secrets and privacy. Algorithmic governance also provides economic information that becomes the source of economic power entailed by the access to all sorts of credit and debit cards transactions and revenues. Information about money is more significant than the money itself. This feature equates it with cyberocracy that is informed civilization or digital bureaucracy. Such kind of governance through information not only regulates social relations but also impacts economic and political systems. We can easily be tracked

and monitored anytime. Ruling via information distinguishes cyberocracy from totalitarianism. Under such a regime, we are not ruled with an iron hand like totalitarianism rather through behavior modification. We willingly surrender ourselves to be governed and controlled. This algorithmic governance leads to digital totalitarianism and ultimate control over society. It demonstrates the political control of surveillance capitalists over the society via algorithmic governance. They have an approach to the electoral process for having access to each sort of information about the political bodies and voters as well. David Ronfeldt expresses that the information revolution can favor both democracy and totalitarianism. Either these technologies are used or discarded, both ways we get subjugated under this instrumentarian power. The novels depict adverse impacts of the internet corporations upon democracy. Thus, this impact on the political system overthrows human sovereignty and under such a regime humans are left with no power. Their individuality is crushed for the so-called collective order, the confluent society, a herded, tuned and conditioned society. Democracy symbolizes human power of legislation and law enforcement but in this digital era, the corporations control each and everything owing to their access to information. They gain power through information and then gain information through power. They may have access to secret information about a country's affairs. Technology is not demonstrated as a bad thing in itself in the novels but it depends upon mind-sets that use it and offer to use. The danger lies in the logic of this new economic system that has involved each one of us with no way to escape. This way, information is deployed as power socially, economically and politically. Thus, access to information is problematic in terms of privacy; it may be used to control and rule the whole society, which was the third objective of the present study.

Resistance to such communication and information technologies would lead to marginalization of such individuals or the whole community that try to resist it. In the novel, *Feed*, the character of Violet depicted manifests resistance to feed. But she is incapable of living without feed and her health declines day by day. This shows that the intimation of technology or the involvement of technologies in human lives has reached to that extent that there is no way back. In the novel, *The Circle*, the character of Mae shows her deep intimation with technology. Access to multiple technologies modify her behavior that she completely goes transparent and she thinks privacy is an illegal thing. This also shows Mae's inability to show resistance to surveillance capitalism. This situation aligns with Cristianini and Scatumburlo's stance on social machines, who

concludes that if we participate in social machines then we present ourselves for algorithmic regulation and if we opt out of these social machines then we would be marginalized and lose our access to opportunities offered by advanced technologies. Mae accepts her engagement in the feedback loops offered by the Circle and becomes a goal driven agent of this social machine. On the other hand, Mercer, Mae's childhood friend, prefers to live a solitary life in mountains or woods rather than living under surveillance but he could be tracked and traced wherever he would go and to get rid of being monitored he chose to give up his life. This shows the totalitarian nature of cyberocracy; Mae used every possible way to track him, and she succeeded, which means that Mercer could not escape surveillance anywhere till he ends up his life neither in the mountains nor in the woods. Mae's and Mercer's characters are two opposite personalities; Mae is a technophile and Mercer is a technophobic character, but both are incapable of escaping surveillance capitalism. This shows that either willingly or unwillingly the people are subjected to digital totalitarianism.

The novels portray bad consequences of resistance towards surveillance capitalism. The characters who resist it have given up their lives to get rid of this digital milieu. Their deaths are not mourned by their friends rather, they are themselves kept responsible for their deaths and stigmatized as antisocial persons by other people. Although, it has been conveyed in the novels that resistance is only possible when we become aware of the threats posed to us, only that way we enable ourselves to fight or resist the threats to our privacies, secrets and sovereignty. Like both Mercer and Violet know the conspiracies behind these communication and information technologies but there was no other character to understand their perspective. Titus tries to understand Violet's notion of resistance but till she makes him comprehend this conspiracy, she herself becomes the victim of malfunctioning of her Feed, which shows her helplessness and dependency on Feed and before Titus could ponder over Violet's stance, he is again engaged in activities suggested by Feed. This also manifests that our behaviors are automated in the way that we should not think about things rather we should behave how we are directed. Both the novels demonstrate that individuals alone are not in the position of resisting this surveillance capitalism but this surveillance capitalism's success become possible because of individuals like Mae in *The Circle* and the friends of Titus in *Feed*. But awareness to such threats posed to our future must be brought to limelight, only this way we would become able to take a collective stance on it. The rising instrumentarian

power has transformed human society an instrumentarian society where human nature is being destroyed and to counter this power, first its awareness is essential.

Both the novels end with the continuation of the same scenario, *Feed* ends with leaving Violet on bed in coma while Titus is again bombarded with an ad about a sale and his feed goes on, saying to him that “Everything must go”. *The Circle* ends with the desire expressed by Mae that the Circle should create a new technology that should be able to read the thoughts of a person during sleep.

The novelists speculate the problems posed in this digital era under dystopian setting and end the novels in the continuation of the same scenario. The novels have created an awareness about the algorithmic regulations of the social machines but as a matter of fact there is no exit from such situation; now we cannot say goodbye to technology but at least the uses of technology for capitalistic purposes should be brought to limelight. The novels have served the purpose by informing the reader about the new modes of capitalism. Therefore, the selected novels may be taken as symbolic of Zuboff’s and Deleuze’s narratives of surveillance capitalism and societies of control.

The aim of this study is to create an awareness about the new modes of control demonstrated in the novels. A vaccine can only be made if the disease is known. Therefore, the first step to resistance to the controlling forces is to get an awareness of those forces. The reason of success of such forces is that they are always unprecedented. Before we get aware of it, its mode is changed by these forces. Another reason is our over-dependence upon technology. We always welcome new technologies with new modes of control unknowingly. So, there is a dire need of decision making power of what we do actually need and we do not. For instance, most of the youth has engaged itself in social machines like Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok and many others just for the sake of getting fame or projecting an acceptable image of theirs in the public. Many people make money and do business through these social machines, but this involvement in social machines without any business leads to behavior modification and modulation of desires. Thus, we should ourselves decide what we actually need rather than it being decided by the capitalists and we should ourselves keep a control on our behavior and desires. The solution to the problem of privacy and control studied in the selected novels may be sorted out in a way Zuboff has concluded when she ends her argument on an advice note that no more should be our declaration otherwise we would lose our self-importance, self-recognition that is the essence of human nature.

6.1. Recommendations for Future Studies

The present study has probed the role of social machines and the operations and mechanisms of surveillance capitalism using the concept of Deleuze's social machine in the selected novels. The theoretical framework may be used for other novels manifesting digital technological advancements. The role of social machines and the pros and cons of cyberocracy in the context of cybernetics and posthumanism is a new field to explore. Thus, the present study invites the readers to explore the area of cybernetic posthumanism in the science fiction. Also, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of social machine and the role of desire in it is a new perspective of looking into some text.

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