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SOCIAL NETWORKS PERCEPTION FUNCTIONING AS SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IMPROVEMENTS – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA EXAMPLE

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Abstract:
The revolution in the field of communication technology and new media affects the global, regional and local democratic processes of the modern/postmodern society in various ways. It is clear that the market economy is not the same as the market society, but the global crisis of knowledge and information management confronts us with new dilemmas. The question is whether and how internet and social networks changed the relationships within the political process and the new social movements. The failure of political and economic transition, as is the case in Bosnia-Herzegovina, constantly reminds us of the need to encourage thoughtful civic engagement, where users of the site networks advocate for socially responsible democracy and new forms of civic solidarity rather than market democracy. The aim of this paper is to present quantitative and qualitative results of research on the attitudes of users of social networking websites and their perception of the possibilities to strengthen social democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Keywords: global knowledge society, social networking, social democracy

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1.   INSTEAD OF INTRODUCTION

We are living in the information and communication mediated universe which has been networked in many complex ways. Our business relations, social contacts, forms of entertainment and making friends, are all formed with the help of the network communication. Our world is becoming smaller thanks to the new media, internet, long distance relationships, e-mail and cellular phones (Mayerson, 2000). Internet dominates our lives and the word *network* appears in the titles of the companies and popular magazines.

Media convergence, in the sign of *mediamorphosis*,[1] coexists with the "mass individualism" (Virilio, 2005), as a new form of what we have referred to as estranged, some time ago. Human beings are in the networks, but they are still lonely. Today's experiences are mostly virtual realities. According to the predictions of the media philosophers, it will soon be unable to compare human history with a lot more interesting history of the movies, sports or music industry (Alić, 2012). Media culture combines culture and technology in new ways and configurations and that way creates new types of society in which media and technology become organizational principles. Performances of media culture clearly indicate who has the power and who does not.

Over the last few years, the path has led us to the discovery of new features of our fascinating network-driven universe. The mechanisms that govern the evolution of networks have helped us estimate the universality of arsenal tools that nature relies on when creating the complex world that surrounds us. Today, scientists from different fields such as: microbiology, business, mathematical sociology, media, etc. are beginning to explore the consequences of newly discovered complex topologies. Our organizations have turned into network organizations. We communicate with our "friends" through social networks. Today's children tend to spend huge amounts of time glued to their computers and cannot experience the world as it is, but instead they see it through the eyes of the internet. Internet and multimedia technologies are the dominant expression of the will and ours difficultly appointed epoch.

Social networks became present almost everywhere. We started to use them before the scientists could define their social value and other effects, which brings us to one of the most important issues and that is understanding and research of the relationship between technology and society in a broader sense, and how it affects the role of professional knowledge in public hearings. Social networks are changing, modifying and transforming traditional forms of sociability in a number of unpredictable ways (Castells, Jan van Dijk, 2006). They have become our new reality. It is difficult to challenge the views of those who are in favour of information globalization and support the claim that networks shape and deconstruct global reality. Even conservatives who oppose neoliberal globalization and the ideology of "technological determinism"[2] rely on social networks so they could spread their ideas and attitudes more effectively (Klein). In recent years, there were rumours about a new science - the *science of networks* (Barabasi, 2002).

Science about networks is *transdisciplinary*. The basic concerns in this area are studied within the frame of transdisciplinary study of *science*, *technology* and *society*, rather than in the narrow framework of special technical subdisciplines. There are new areas of empirical research (with the emphasis particularly placed on the social side of internet). Working on internet-related issues includes a series of studies, ranging from ethnographic approach of virtual communities to the quantitative study of the impact of internet on social epistemology, methodology and research methods (Hine, 2000). Castells research of the background assumptions of the new knowledge economy has proved to be useful in terms of *methodology*. If there is a new economy, the reason for its birth is a substantial increase in productivity, according to Castells. Without rapid productivity growth, we would still have argued that there is a technological revolution, but not necessarily the new economy. As a result, we have the debate which has been raging among economists for years and it is to do with the actual evolution of the rate of productivity, as well as its sources.[3]

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[1] About the meaning of media convergence and mediamorphosis there is more to see in Roger Fidler, *Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media*, Sage Publications Ltd. London, United Kingdom, 2006
[2] Technological determinism has been summarized as an (essentially stientistic) attempt to define, describe, organize, improve and control human society, according to the principles and laws of the technologically applied natural scientific epistemology and ontology of knowledge.
[3] Castells explains why measuring productivity is so complex, arguing that it is particularly complicated in the new knowledge economy, due to three main reasons: (1) most of the people are working in the service sector where it

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The goal of this paper is to present that the new information knowledge economy is *not value-neutral*. On the contrary, it is completely saturated with "cognitive capitalism" [4] and a variety of sophisticated strategies for commercialization of the mere idea of knowledge. In this sense, *reductionist understanding* of *new knowledge economy* in many socially sensitive contexts (e.g. a situation we have in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina), can be very cognitively limited unless all economic activities are "embeddedness"[5] in a specific social context. The economic modification of the *idea of knowledge* as such, that is the modification that takes place in the mainstream of economic science in the West, is characterized by the lack of *multicultural*, *critical*, *pluralistic*, *post-colonial* experiences of *neoliberal globalization*. As opposed to the reductionist conception of the idea of knowledge, which is promoted and imposed by commercial discourses and institutions, there are many sets of critical approaches to knowledge. These approaches are not part of the mainstream science and are not rooted in the privileged institutions of knowledge and power. They are characterized by openness to different experiences of neoliberal globalization, especially *pluriperspectivism* and *multicultural epistemology of knowledge*. Insisting on a higher principle of *knowledge democracy* and *corporate responsibility* is another aspect typical for critical approaches. Such approaches insist on the social and ecological responsibility of science, though they are aware of the possibility that science can be misused (Harding, 1998).

It is questionable whether the new science of networks can extend social objectives of science and there isn't just an unambiguous answer to this question. Goals of science and technology are not only goals of science and technology, but they are also social goals. Advancement of science, economics and technology can be considered a true social progress if, and only if, there is a global, regional and local democratic progress in mutual understanding of people. Even among the scientists who belong to different research areas that deal with specific aspects and dimensions of social networks, creative and socially responsible cooperation is required. In other words, to discuss the progress on global information knowledge society is only possible on the condition that the expansion of horizons of *freedom* around the world is a true *democratic expansion*, or that it is in the service of the following two: improving the quality of life and strengthening *solidarity* among the largest number of people.

Networks are gaining in importance, not only because they suppress some traditional ways of thinking and orientation in the world, but because they have become present almost everywhere, in other words they are inseparably connected with our perception, selection, memory and distribution data. To sum up, the networks are not only technically linked to the new conditions and new practices of understanding and explaining the changing character of our world (whether we call it information capitalism, knowledge society or global society of control or information society of risk[6]), but they also determine the bare conditions of our own knowledge and social action. It is thanks to social networks and the increasing speed of information exchange, that the modern information society cannot avoid structural changes in perception and experience of time and space (Giddens, Sholte).

There are many tensions and controversies over the impact of social networks on our social life. Researchers, theorists and activists are searching for an answer to a question of whether social network can affect the economic, political and democratic developments, whether networking of various civic initiatives leads to increased social cohesion and solidarity, or it leads to new forms of alienation, isolation and exhibitionism. These issues have become more difficult in recent years, in this time when we suffer the consequences of the great financial crisis, which additionally complicates and produces a range of other social, political and moral crisis. In this context, it is important to reflect upon the fact that critically oriented economists and other scientists detect crisis of privileged economic

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is extremely difficult to measure labor productivity (2) statistical categories, that occurred during the industrial era, are desperately inadequate for measuring the information economy (e.g. until the year of 1998. U.S. Department of Labor has counted the expense of software as a consumer, not as an investment), and (3) the company works in the global network of production and distribution, so the calculation of productivity, should take into account the contribution of productivity along the entire value chain, which is beyond the reach of current methods of calculation. You can read more about this in the third chapter of Castells' book, titled: The Internet Galaxy, Reflections on the Internet, Business and Society, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

[4] More about this in Carlo Vercelone (ed) Cognitive Capitalism: Knowledge and finance in the post-Ford period, Politička kultura, Zagreb, 2007.

[5] The term "Embeddedness" is used by economic sociologists Mark Granovetter and Brian Uzzi, in order to emphasize that all economic activity is deeply immersed in a social context, and also characterized by this specific social context.

[6] More on that in the third chapter of Andjelko Milardovic's book, titled: "Global Village: Sociology Information society and culture cyber", Centre for Political Research, Zagreb, 2010.

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paradigms of knowledge more often and more openly. They warn us of the crisis idea and practice of democracy, particularly in the context of the negative consequences of globalization[7] and transition which is very difficult to analyze if we maintain a narrow economistic approach. Many different views on what causes the crisis are reminding us that it is not only concern of economy, but also an (in)curable concern of global, regional and local value orientations and / or turmoil of identity.[8]

The aim of this paper is to show that the tension between national democracy, neoliberal ideology and all vocal global demands for social justice and solidarity cannot be resolved within the framework of the old ways of thinking in terms of what democracy is and how the very idea of democracy should be exported and imposed on others[9]. In his book "The Age of Consent: A Manifesto for a New World Order", George Monbiot declares that everything is globalized except democracy (Monbiot, 2006, p. 63). No matter how brittle recent processes of democratization in "post-capitalist society" (Drucker, 1993) are, they are associated with a number of different and quite dispersed movements for global justice and global solidarity. There is a big theoretical and conceptual confusion present regarding the democratic role of networking in those processes. It seems that the creators of global economic policies, who possess a symbolic and institutional power, seem to be the ones to impose binding definition of knowledge, skills and management. Critics argue that they are not sufficiently engaged in finding alternative models of development for middle income and poor countries. On a global scale as well as in many other places, there is an apparent *deficit in democracy*, lack of *institutional accountability* and lack of *civic solidarity*. The question here is whether the rise of the network society, the progress of ICT that leads to a virtual reduction of distance between nations, groups and individuals (especially those who have been affected by the *negative consequences of globalization and the transition*), may lead to new forms of civic solidarity. Another question that follows is whether these new forms of solidarity could improve the traditional understanding of the idea of democracy (which is obviously in a dramatic crisis of self-understanding).

According to the "new theory of management" it is possible to include the citizens directly in the work of the government - through deliberative democracy at the local level, e-democracy, [10] public discussions, participation in the formation of the budget and finding alternative solutions to the problems (Giddens, 2009: 266). E-democracy means the combination of the words "electronic" and "democracy." It revolves around the use of electronic communication technologies, such as the internet or mobile phones, in order to improve, enhance and pragmatize democratic process. This process is at an early stage of formation and is subject to discussion at the level of governments, civic associations and political communities especially in societies where information has been developed. Central limitation of e-democracy is an overall virtualization of democratic process, so is the fact that governments, that insist on the advantages of e-democracy, should provide free technology during the entire process associated with the specific act of voting to all citizens and guarantee them full transparency of the entire e-democratic process.

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[7] At the beginning of the 10th chapter of his book *Making Globalization Work: The Next Steps to Global Justice*, entitled "Democratizing Globalization" (by: Joseph E. Stiglitz), he writes: "... economic consequences of globalization outweigh our ability to understand and shape globalization as a way of coping with the consequences through the political processes ". Stiglitz goes on to indicate a *deficit of democracy* in our global economic institutions several times in his book.

[8] More on this in Delic, "Brightness and Austerity of the Globalization Theory: The Ideological Foundation of Cognitive Capitalism", in the book titled *The Systemic Dimension of Globalization*, edited by Piotr Pachura, InTech, first published July, 2011.

[9] At the beginning of the seventh chapter of his book titled: "Voyous (Deux Essais sur la raison)", Rogue States: Two Essays on mind. French author Jacques Derrida analysis performative implications of an implied statement that "everyone should be able to understand what the meaning of the word democracy is." For this author, democracy does not exist. It has yet to come, it is on the way. Derrida clearly separates this "journey of democracy," from a regulatory ideal. In his book titled: *La Democrazia: Storia di un `ideologie*, Italian scientist Luciano Canfora, refers to democracy as if it was an ideology, linking its history to the history of ideology.

[10] E-democracy consists of two words: "electronic" and "democracy." It revolves around the use of electronic communication technologies such as the internet or mobile phones and is used for speeding, improving, enhancing, and operational pragmatizing of the voting act, but also electronic acceleration of the entire democratic process. This process is at an early stage of formation. The subject is discussion at the level of governments, civic associations and political organizations, particularly in the information developed societies. Central limitation of e-democracy is neglect, or exclusion, of the living social context, that is complete virtualization of the voting process and the act of voting. Also added here is the fact that governments, who insist on the advantages of e-democracy, should provide free technology and guarantee the real transparency of the whole e-democratic process to all her citizens.

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2.   CONTRADICTIONS OF NETWORK SOCIETY, DEFICIT DEMOCRACY AND SOLIDARITY

Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells has become famous through his writing about the rise of the network society, global galaxy and the power of communication. Over the last few years, many papers dealing with the global network society, information economy and the emerging global society of knowledge and skills have been composed. Global knowledge society with skills, which are emerging as a new *epistemological basis* of "cognitive capitalism" is more of a *normative ideal* derived from the new socio-economic and communicative situations, when compared to reality that we can diagnose within the reality itself. It is a common belief that network based on democratic principles of *solidarity* and *responsibility* should bring wealth and prosperity across the globe. Therefore, the society as described in the main streams of science is to be understood as a complex social network. General location of recent theories of globalization has brought us to realize that nothing is done in isolation. Networks have become a new reality or in other words virtual reality which has largely replaced the reality as such. There is a hot debate about the democratic *effects* of the internet, regarding the distribution and control of information on the internet in the West but also in China and other countries. In recent years we have been overwhelmed with the critical literature that detects the idea of crisis of a knowledge society and a global deficit of democracy in the 21st century (Monbiot, 2006, Giddens, 2009; Chossudovsky, 2008). It is believed that large multinational companies, international financial institutions and banks rule the world. They do so with the help of the wealthiest countries and governments simply by defining rules of the game and imposing definitions and development policies and most importantly they manage the cash flow. The Governments of majority of countries, particularly those in poverty, have lost independence and sovereignty.

While some authors claim that, just before the 90-ies, we lived in a state of "democratic melancholia" (Bruckner, 1990), others consider the beginning of the 21st century to be the "*post-democratic Age*" (Crouch, 2007). Disappointment with democracy, strengthened by a post-democracy thesis, could be a widespread feeling but not a good guide to smart and responsible view of the future. Crouch thesis on *post-democracy* is scientifically well-reasoned. However, it did not hit a chord with mainstream economics. The hardest of disputes are to do with the issue of background assumptions on overall idea of crisis and practice of democracy, but also in the field of analysis of the causes of crisis of economic globalization.[11] This helped open many dilemmas for cooperation (or lack of cooperation) among scientists belonging to different disciplines, different research cultures and different value orientations. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the relationship between science, higher education, research, innovation and development, is becoming top news in a conversation. Various authors cite a number of arguments in favor of the hypothesis that the ratio of research, innovation and social and economic development changes with the transition from industrial to post-industrial society, along with a maturing economy based on knowledge and services.[12]

Discourses on economic globalization from the 90-ies of the 20th century were generally optimistic. They didn't have negative implications that were associated with the word globalization in 2000 and 2001. After the year of 2008 the confidence in the scientific science and the democratic legitimacy of *neoliberal economic globalization* begins to decline. However, it is undisputed that ever since the 70-ies, and explicitly from the 90-ies in the mainstream of social sciences there is a beginning of something referred to as unique, discursive order of globalization, and that very order happened to go hand in hand with "market fundamentalism" (Akbar S. Ahmed, 1992), the most dangerous *ideology* whose consequences we continue to suffer. That system is inextricably linked to the institutionalization of the global knowledge society and global politics of managing agricultural knowledge and information which is inseparable from power.[13]

Critics argue that the economically *privileged* access and their own *discursive order* as well as their cognitive assumptions have been imposed in many other areas of study of our social universe. Neoliberal approaches to the global network society are not sufficient for understanding one of the most

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[11] More about this in 'The beginning of democracy: the reasons for the rejection of democratic political theory´.

[12] More on this in Luc Soete's "Paradigm knowledge-based economy and its consequences", in the book *Global Europe, Social Europe*, edited by Anthony Giddens, Patrick Diamond and Roger Lidl, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2006.

[13] More on this in: Ulrich Beck, *Macht und Gegenmacht im Globalen Zeitalter Neue weltpolitische Ökonomie*, Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2002.

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important consequences of globalization - and that's *democracy deficit*, the loss of confidence in the policy based on *neoliberal ideology* and widening gap between rich and poor. It became clear that the cognitive assumptions of unbridled market economy are very limited, especially when it comes to the need to establish a global democratic society based on knowledge and responsibility. *Economic reductionism* is no longer a challenge, but the real problem immanent to the logic of the functioning of the global information society, knowledge and skills. This is to ensure that all segments of society, including education, health care and public information tools, offices according to market principles of efficiency, effectiveness and efficiency. *Economic reductionism* can be dangerous because, by definition, it turns all social values or attempts to turn them into market or commodity-monetary value. *Economic reductionism* is in the same time *epistemological reductionism*, and as such it seriously interferes with, or in other words prevents objective research of focal economic and *social problems*, such as long-term poverty, *surplus of people*, *structural unemployment*, *social exclusion* and *structural irrelevance* of certain regions.

3.   SOCIAL NETWORKS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

With the advancement of economic globalization and the network society, states and governments are losing a part of their traditional sovereignty. Instead, they are becoming increasingly dependent on international financial institutions, markets and banks. Along with globalization of violence and the global economic crisis, what is on rise is also the awareness of the need to develop new *transnational forms of solidarity* among people living in different regions and localities. Worldwide financial crisis is intertwined with the unintended consequences of the operation of market fundamentalism, and takes on the shape of the international geo-political, geo-economic and **orientation crisis**, which threatens to undermine peace in the world. The fact that capitalism has become a global system means that it also became sharper and unbridled to much greater extent (Kagarlitsky, 1999).

Men and women from Bosnia and Herzegovina, much like anywhere else, are engaged in different kinds of social networks. This represents a significant factor in the promotion of what Robert Putnam called social capital (Putnam, 1993), twenty years ago. There is much evidence to support the thesis that, especially with the help of ICT, unification of the world on the technological level is already achieved. However, it is also evident that in terms of the qualitative areas of human existence, such as the crisis of higher education, understanding of humanism, political understanding and trust, solidarity and social democracy, there has been hardly any progress. Such is the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but because of limited amount of text, it cannot be discussed here any further. [14]

Bosnia and Herzegovina is specific in one thing: for centuries it represented the *cosmopolitan model* of peaceful *coexistence and multiculturalism*: it is the paradigm of existence of unity within its diversity and vice versa. Until the 90-ies of the 20th century, it was an exemplary *multi-national* and *multi-religious community* with high *social intelligence* and expressed *solidarity* among its citizens. The war against both, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was conceived in an attempt of realization that the monstrous idea that the common life of the people belonging to different cultures, is not possible. [15] Since Bosnia and Herzegovina has a *cosmopolitan potential*, had it been globalized it could have

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[14] According to the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina was administratively divided into two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska, back in 1995. These have remained distinct and separate constituencies up to this day. Citizens of the Federation cannot choose their representatives in the other part of the country, which is in the Republic of Srpska, and neither can citizens from the Republic of Srpska choose, or be elected, at any formal level of authority in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such an election law is profoundly discriminating because it recognizes the political citizen as a subject of parliamentary democracy throughout the overall territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this sense, what remains to citizens, is the fragile, alternative forms of resistance, such as various social networks and engagement in the social networks on the principles of responsible civic solidarity. The role of economy and network-related way of thinking, along with the role of certain institutions of democratic control over the misuse of political institutions, becomes crucial for democratic consolidation and overall socio-economic and moral recovery of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

[15] Such ideas are strategically promoted by the media. First of all, mass media under the control of Slobodan Milosevic and Radovan Karadzic. These mass media, who advocated the ideal of creating an ethnically "pure culture" (Z. Bauman) kept repeating that "Serbs cannot live with other nations." The consequences of such ideas were programmed destruction of multiculturalism, ethnic cleansing and "humane resettlement of the population" which was in the function of creating the so-called ethnically pure territories which in the end, allowed the genocide in Srebrenica to happen, back in 1995.

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served as a paradigm of the global crisis and the crisis of the idea of cosmopolitanism protection of universal human rights.[16]

Fortunately, it seems that in recent years, within the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thanks to the social networks and new forms of distance communication, emancipated identities of resistance to all kinds of institutional or non-institutional violence are strengthened and so is the awareness of universal rights and responsibilities of individuals, groups and institutions. With the help of social networks and transnational forms of communication, the artificial barriers are about to be broken down with the widely spread nationalist *culture of peace*, *non-violence* and mutual *solidarity* between people. Unfortunately, networks are not resistant to spreading the speech of hatred.

However, the movement of social democracy and on-line network movements appear to be the most important counterweight to various forms of fundamentalism: whether it be to oppose market-based, nationalist or religious fundamentalism, or rather their various combinations.[17]

4. METODOLOGY AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS BASED ON THE ON-LINE SURVEY

The study was conducted online on a survey sample of users of social network Facebook in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The study was conducted during the period from December 2012 to February 2013. The survey sample is based on author's FB contacts. The first systematic subsample, consisting of a total of a100 users, is formed from the author's 3398 contacts. The average number of contacts that the members of subsample have is a total of 823 contacts. On the basis of a given average number of contacts, the further systematic sample of 800 contacts was formed. This number was reached by having eight contacts examined for each member of the subsample. This way we have achieved a totally random research sample. The number of completed questionnaires is a total of 711, which represents 88.88% of feedback. Average age of the respondents was 36.53 years of age. The distribution of respondents by gender was 55.98% of females and 44.02% of males.The first question in the questionnaire was directed to the character of contents displayed on personal profiles of respondents. Table 1 provides us with an overview of the character of the published content.

Table 1: The Character of Displayed Content

Personal Contents	Adding Friends' Contents	Contents from Other Internet Sources	Contents from the Daily Newspapers	Other Contents
329	131	152	63	36
46,3%	18,4%	21,4%	8,9%	5,1%

Based on the table number 1, it is evident that the personal content (46.3%) dominates, which reflects the orientation of the respondents to self-promotion through social networks. However, all other mentioned contents are represented by 53.7%, which reflects the interest and willingness of respondents to download content from the community (in this case electronic community). Therefore, a potentially high level of socialization is noticed.

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[16] Michel Chossudovsky writes: "By relying on the Dayton Agreement, which created the Bosnian " constitution ", the United States and European allies have introduced a complete colonial rule over Bosnia ... The new "constitution", which is attached as a separate supplement to the Dayton agreement, has placed the reins of economic policy in the hands of institutions emerged from Bretton Woods, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), headquartered in London. The International Monetary Fund had the authority to appoint the first governor of the Bosnian Central Bank, who along with the High Representative, "would not be a citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina or any neighboring state" ... From the very start, Bosnia has been denied the opportunity to self-finance its own reconstruction, starting from an independent monetary policy ... while the West was committing to the support of democracy, the real political power was transferred to a parallel Bosnian "state" in which the executive authority is in the hands of foreigners and not Bosnian citizens. Western creditors have integrated their interests in the Constitution, which was hastily written on their behalf. They did this without convening a constituent assembly and without any participation of the organization of Bosnian citizens." (Chossudovsky, 2008).

[17] More on this in: A. Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, 2007; T. Coady and M. O 'Keefe, *Terrorism and Justice: Moral Argument in a Threatened World*, 2002; E. Hobsbawm, *Globalisation, Democracy and Terrorism*, London, 2007; G. Monbiot, *The Age of Consent: A manifesto for a new World Order*, 2004.

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The second question in the questionnaire was directed to the respondents' communication, where a parallel was drawn between the communication with friends and visiting business contents.

Table 2: Communication of Respondents

Primary Communication with Friends	Visiting Business Pages
620	91
87,2%	12,8%

Based on the table number 2, we see that a total of 87.2% place their communication with friends through social networks first which reflects their willingness to socialize and share. The third question of the questionnaire was directed to the willingness of respondents to participate in online activism related to the significant political issues or other issues of the local community. The results of the previously mentioned perception are displayed in the table below, table 3.

Table 3: Perception on importance of Social Networks in Spreading Democracy

YES	NO
418	293
58,9%	41,2%

Based on the table number 3, it is evident that the majority of respondents expressed a willingness to participate in online activism. This is a significant fact in terms of potentials of social networks in the process of spreading democracy. The fourth question of the questionnaire was directed to the students' perceptions regarding the impact of social networks on political currents.

Table 4: Perception of Respondents Regarding the Impact of Social Networks on Political Currents

YES	NO
61	650
18,6%	81,5%

Based on the table number 4, it is clear that a total of 18.6% of respondents have a positive attitude that social networks influence the political currents. Therefore, there is a certain amount of skepticism in respondents regarding this issue. The results here significantly differ from the respondents expressed willingness to participate in online activism (as mentioned above). This may be partially explained by the lack of previous visible results of the use of social networks to influence the political and social trends in BiH. The fifth question of the questionnaire was directed to the perception of the respondents in terms of mutual solidarity among social networkers.

Table 5: Perception of Mutual Solidarity among Respondents

Extremely a lot	18,28%
A Lot	21,66%
Sufficient	14,91%
A little	9,70%
None	35,44%

Based on the table number 5, it is evident that the majority of respondents believe that social networks may encourage solidarity among all users (14.91% said it could be achieved sufficiently whereas 21.66% said that a lot could be achieved and 18.28% said that extremely a lot could be achieved). To conclude, the respondents have a largely positive perception on communication through social networks and see it as a possibility of mutual solidarity. This largely reflects the experiences of respondents so far. Therefore, the perception of a positive potential solidarity is present.

5.   INSTEAD OF CONCLUSION

"Global knowledge society" is not possible to happen at once and not without higher spiritual or social awareness but only through the responsible intervention of the ICT. Socially responsible

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communication that is appropriate to the emerging global knowledge society can be achieved and corrected only in an un-discriminated world community among subjects who share equal thinking. It seems logical to assume that it is necessary to leave unresolved ambiguity of the current and future impact of cyberspace on the development of democracy and solidarity, as the quality of network communication does not necessarily depend on technology alone as such, but it also depends on the way its social application is applied. [18]

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[18] The key international agencies, such as: United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) - made many declarations that supposedly should improve and enhance socio-economic development indicators. That brings us to constantly growing scholarly interest in the study of social dimensions of social networks, because it is the networks primarily that appear as spaces of freedom and critical thinking, an interpersonal space that has not yet fully been colonized and enslaved.