

# **Information – Knowledge – Power.**

## **Dark Sides of the Information Age?**

Marko Maglic  
marko@maglic.de

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### **■ Introduction**

### **■ The Information Society in Past and Present**

#### **■ Privacy in Past and Present**

#### **■ Technology vs. Privacy?**

#### **■ Information Man vs. Information Society?**

#### **■ Conclusio and Outlook**

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## ■ Introduction (1 / 3)

### ■ Methodology

- Holistic approach: „Looking through the digital glasses is not enough to understand the digital world“
- literature research, qualitative content analysis  
(Mayring: *philological-historical hermeneutics as general text interpretation*)

### ■ Research Questions

### ■ General Background

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## ■ Introduction (2 / 3)

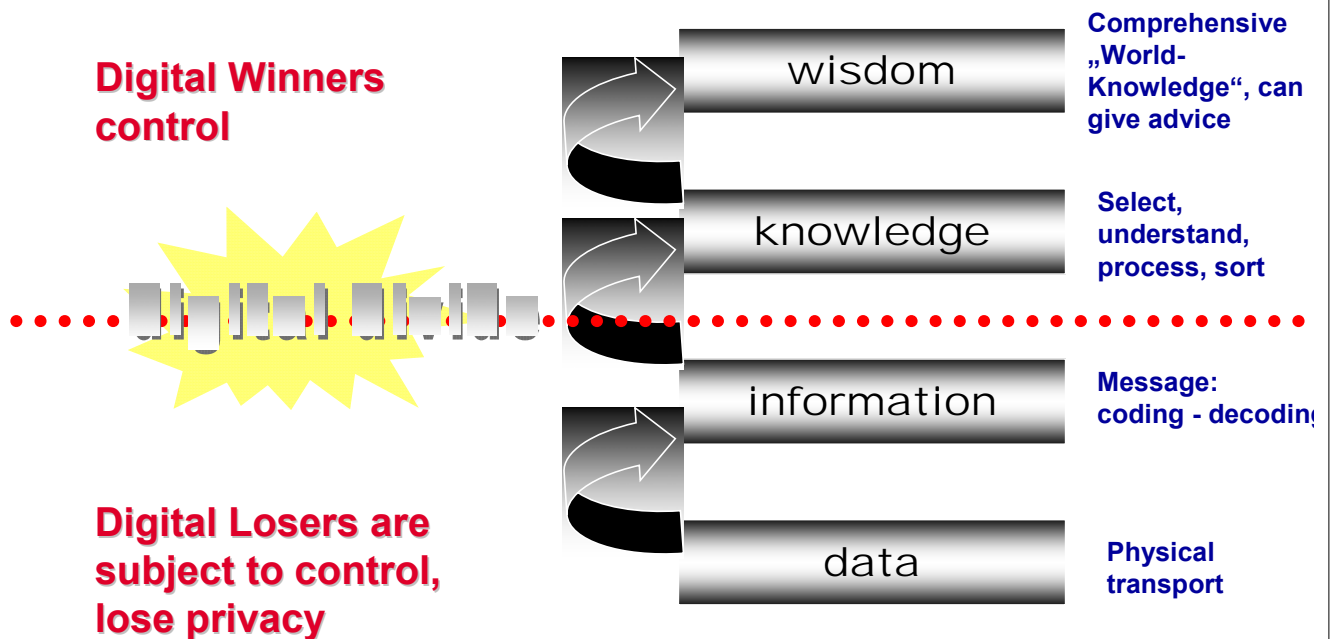
### ■ general background

- information, knowledge and privacy in its socio-historical context
- Information = enabler for power and social sorting
- Knowledge = power, but:  
information ≠ knowledge

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## ■ Introduction (3 / 3)

### ■ general background



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## ■ Privacy in Past and Present (1 / 1)

### ■ Towards a Definition of Privacy

→ no fully comprehensive definition until today, **BUT:**

**“Privacy is freedom from social contact and observation when these are not desired, and Solitude is the lack of desired social contact.”**

(Paul Halmos, 1952)

**Privacy is a modern right sacrificed as part of the price of participation in post-modern information societies.**

(Lelia Green, 2002)

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## ■ Technology vs. Privacy? (1 / 4)

- “Cybercrime”
- I-War and Information Warfare
- Echelon
- **DATA MINING AND KDD**
- RFID-Technology
- **Opinion: Makers and Manipulators**

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## ■ Technology vs. Privacy? (2 / 4)

- **DATA MINING AND KDD**
- algorithms to process knowledge about target groups
- these can be clustered, grouped for ? purposes
- misuse in form of **social sorting** (David Lyon, 2003)

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## ■ Technology vs. Privacy? (3 / 4)

### ■ DATA MINING AND KDD



= **THE central technology in the Information Age**

= **an enabler**

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## ■ Technology vs. Privacy? (4 / 4)

### ■ Opinion: Makers and Manipulators

- attention > content  
quantity > quality

⇒ impedes creation of knowledge

- mass media manipulate public opinion

**War is Peace!**

**Minitruth.**

(Orwell 1984)

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## ■ Information Man vs. Information Society? (1 / 2)

### ■ The Need for “Data **Hunting**”

#### **Knowledge = Money = Power**

- Governments, institutions etc. have no interest in empowering the “common” people, they want power for themselves.
- example legal situation:
  - no definition of privacy means no protection  
→ missing legislation
  - privacy endangering legislation (**Patriot Act**)
  - people must protect themselves!

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## ■ Information Man vs. Information Society? (2 / 2)

### ■ The Need for “Data **Protection**”

#### **key observations:**

- **continuous and self-generating conflict** between state and individual
- man’s need for privacy ↔ society’s need for security = “**pass par tout**” argument
- man is not aware of his situation because of **lack of education & enlightenment**

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## ■ Conclusio and Outlook (1 / 1)

### ■ Status Quo:

Surveillance networks operate in so many parts of daily life today that they are **practically impossible to evade**, should one wish to do so. (David Lyon, 2003)

### ■ Recommendations:

- raise **awareness** for privacy-endangering technologies
- “My **mind** to me a kingdom is.” (Sir Edward Dyer)
- escape from constant exposure to **mass media** and create **consciousness through reflection**, because  
Knowledge + reflection = wisdom = ability to take action

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# **Kölsche**



***Thank you  
for  
your kind attention!***

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## ■ Backup (1 / 2) – Research Questions

### ■ Summary – Research Questions:

- RQ1:** Where does the complexity of the handling of information origin, and which impacts does it have on society.
- RQ2:** Which kinds of technologies are being or might be used for data collection?
- RQ3:** Who is using them and thus endangering the privacy of the individual?
- RQ4:** Why does he / do they strive for this data/information?
- RQ5:** Which countermeasures can be undertaken by the concerned individual?
- RQ6:** What exactly could – and why – be regarded as part of the “dark sides” of the “Information Age”?

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## ■ Backup (2 / 2) – Emerging Questions

- emerging questions
  - individual vs. society ?
  - wish for privacy = supporting terrorism ?
  - ignoring mass media = isolation ?
  - digital losers = anticipated reality or utopy ?

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