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EVERY YEAR WE FIGHT TO END RACISM

And we will keep on fighting until we do.
The wrong E-mail

A man left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day. When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick e-mail. Unable to find the scrap of paper on which he had written her e-mail address, he did his best to type it in from memory. Unfortunately, he missed one letter and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher’s wife, whose husband had passed away only the day before. When the grieving widow checked her e-mail, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream, and fell to the floor in a dead faint.

“Dearest Wife, Just checked in. Really hot down here. Everything is prepared for your arrival tomorrow.”

Facts about Blogs

1. One in three bloggers should not be allowed to blog.
2. The total number of blogs is a lot.
3. Justin Hall, who began eleven years of personal blogging in 1994 while a student at Swarthmore College, is generally recognized as one of the earliest bloggers.
4. Black, blue and red are the most popular colours of blogs. Beige is the least popular.
5. The term “weblog” was coined by Jorn Barger on December 17, 1997.
6. The short form, “blog,” was coined by Peter Merholz, who jokingly broke the word weblog into the phrase we blog in the sidebar of his blog Peterme.com in April or May of 1999.
7. Blog advertising is worth over $1bn, but bloggers are lucky to see $1 of that.
8. “Truth”, ‘sex’ and ‘Bush’ are the three most popular terms used in blogs. “Permission to use” is the least used.
9. Over 99% of blogs can be found on the Internet.
10. Blogs have cost over 132,321 people their jobs through their comments.
11. 346,456 people have fallen in love because of blogging - a third now have restraining orders.
12. “Most blogs have precisely one reader - the blogger” is a common joke.
13. There are more female bloggers, but it is suspected that many of them are pretending to be women.
14. Over two-thirds of comments on blogs are left by a person named ‘Anonymous’.
15. The billionth blog post was made in August 2006 and said, “Here’s a photo of my dog asleep.”
17. The United Kingdom, United States and Unknown are the top blogging countries.
18. Central African Republic, Cocos Islands, Comoros, Faroe Islands, Heard and McDonald Islands, Montserrat, Niger, Northern Mariana Islands, Solomon Islands, Turkmenistan and Turks and Caicos Islands have the least number of bloggers.
19. The word “blog” is used in many different languages.
20. The majority of lists on blogs have no research and are made up, such as this one.
The first time I saw an anonymous comment in my blog I started thinking what can I answer to somebody who is... anonymous. It was not a bad or a harassing comment it was just anonymous. Why did the signature 'anonymous' suddenly bother me?

Let's see, I have identity in the blogosphere, my name is Picard and I am a captain of a Federation starship traveling where nobody has ever been before, I like 3D chess and my best friend is a creature 800 light years old from an alien world, which doesn't exist anymore after the Borg destroyed it - forgot to say that in her spare time she's a barmaid.

Still, I haven't understood how anybody ever dares to sign as anonymous. I mean, what identity is anonymous? Do you have long hair or short? Are you tall? Most of all, are you a man or a woman?

Where do I live? I live in a starship traveling all around and I'm bald. Not exactly bald, I've got some hair behind my ears, but I have a good head stylist who shaves them every second day. He's good but the gossip type. And he has opinions, about everything. Tiring sometimes but to have somebody shave the hair around your ears with style is very important. I'm 36 years old and my two best friends want to be a pilot and a teacher, plus I like a girl that lives two hours away by bus.

And how did he find this name? Anonymous? Didn't have any imagination? Or he has? He might be a real anonymous! That might be the real name. There are funny names around, one day I heard about somebody called idiot, why not then anonymous?

I have a Master Degree in Astrophysics and I have made a study of the Big Bang. I have actually seen it while traveling with my starship through different dimensions. I like archeology, as well as politics. And, by the way, I'm into ecology and I am a vegetarian. That's what most girls like.

But I'm not anonymous. I have an identity and a photo. In the photo I have pointy ears and a very serious look, while underneath says something about the legal problems with the photographers and something about copying cats, but there is a photo so I'm not anonymous without a face.

You are anonymous? Do you have a house? Where, in the suburbs in the middle of the city? You must have kids, I can feel it and a good job and a car. I can see it in that smiling face you left in my blog. Why a smiling face? Do you know the truth? Do you know who am I? Have we ever met? How do you know that I'm not Picard? How do you know that I'm still in high school? How do you know that this is not a real identity?

Anonymous :- )
It has always been my belief that blogs are the perfect tool for Joe Public to share their thoughts, opinions and lives with the online world. It gives an equal platform to anybody who is interested and its success is then measured by the quality of your material, the unique twist of your ideas, the style of your writing or the skill of your photography, cartoons or illustrations.

Therefore, it is confusing to see mainstream media outlets, such as BBC Online, Guardian Unlimited and Sky News, all offering their reporters, editors and presenters the opportunity to blog their thoughts, which they can already do via their own programmes and columns. My first reaction was that ‘blog’ was just a new online name for ‘column’ and cashing in the latest craze, in the same way that the BBC’s radio presenters do podcasts in addition to their radio show, but now I am not so sure.

Blogs are supposed to offer opinion direct to the reader, meaning that the information isn’t filtered or biased according to the newspaper editor or publisher’s personal agenda. Yet, here we have Jeremy Thompson and Adam Boulton writing Sky News blogs that include their opinion on politics and allow them the opportunity to write in the first person, using “I think we can be confident…” and “I’m not New Labour and I have been annoyed by…”

Firstly, I don’t want to know what they think and, secondly, I don’t need to be reminded that they have a personal opinion because they are employed by the relevant news agency to cover the news without bias, be impartial and remain objective. Once I have read their blog and seen that they are opinionated, I am left wondering how much of that filters into their work.

They may be professional and know how far they can go in the blog, but the door to the ‘personal view’ has been opened and we are left with a large cartoon question mark hovering above our heads. Our confidence in their neutrality has been shaken and they can do very little to return us to a status quo.

Mainstream media blogs have allowed readers to comment directly to the reporter they see on their TV screen and this has been positively demonstrated through the BBC Online blog section. I was impressed by the use of this section to explain the reasons behind the choice of news stories and defending how a story was written. For example, Amanda Farnsworth, the BBC Daytime News Editor, wrote about their coverage of the tragic death of a baby girl after she was mauled by two Rottweiler dogs:

“…Looking back I really don’t think we demonised the dogs. They did kill a child, and it’s news exactly because it is very unusual. Every broadcast outlet and national newspaper covered this story for this reason. But we didn’t refer to them as “devil dogs”…”

The whole text was particularly informative and gave some insight into the news values the BBC employs, whether you agree or not, but is it really a blog or a reply to a reader’s comment? It feels as though the mainstream media have jumped on to a bandwagon once again without considering the consequences or understanding how to correctly utilise the medium. The only positive aspect is that they respect copyright…
Still no comments

Why doesn’t anyone comment?

BOOM!

what’s that?

Maybe my spam filter is blocking them

I’ll turn it off

He has a tattoo on his arm, I know him…

I warned you damn bastard!

Blood Viagra spam!

BLANK!

Posted by Thanos & Asa
All events that occur in the universe can be viewed along the spectrum of communication. The high whine of a hungry mosquito tells us one thing, the explosion of a star into a nova may seem something far more dramatic, but essentially they are both symptoms of digestive problems.

Humanity, amongst other contributors (including the flatulence of cattle), donates to the emission of greenhouse gases and thereby communicates to the radiation from the Sun that more thermal energy is welcome. So communication is a fervent occupation of everything that exists.

But it is living things that vitally depend upon interpreting communication from their environment, who are most sensitive to the more delicate nuances of interobject language. Communicative human gesture can vary from the slightest rise of one eyebrow to the full glory of a flasher’s open raincoat but it is speech where humans devote most of their efforts and the Internet where the tsunami of wordage exerts its latest full force in the blog.

The interesting way that the blog differs from other defined forms of communication is that it is a category with universal content capability. The blog is, of course, a subset of the web which is somewhat reminiscent of Cantor’s theory of multiple infinities where one infinity can contain another.

Normally people are somewhat cagey with total strangers insofar as the intimate details of their personal life is concerned, but the Internet apparently performs the function to the intellect that a strong laxative does to the digestive system and, unfortunately at times, the result can sometimes be most similar (in a verbal sense, that is). But one should not denigrate the form by the content. Doubtless some lives are more significant than others but some sensitivities to even the least significant life can articulate that least significance into an importance that reveals something everybody so took for granted that its intrinsic importance was totally neglected. This is where the personal blog can contribute in a large way to human understanding.

To an overwhelming degree past histories have been concerned with outstanding events and how they were dealt with by outstanding individuals. The bulk of humanity were responders without voices, the people who may have prospered, or may have suffered terribly or may have simply conformed and persisted. Their cries of exultance and their screams of terror echoed and died in the corridors of time. They remained almost wholly voiceless mass shoved this way and that by huge forces beyond their control.

Now, at last, by the magic wand of the web, they have become individuals and they are speaking and we are listening.
Imagine a future in which cows are extinct. Imagine your children can only see them in books. Imagine you could have done something to save them. Don’t wait until it is too late.

Act now and protect our planet.
The podcast craze hit the online world in 2005. MP3-players have been affordable for quite a while, nearly everyone under the age of 40 has one. High speed internet connections are found in just about every household, bandwidth fees on web hosts have become miniscule. The setting was perfect for the creation and distribution of home-brewed radio shows. All for free and all available at your fingertips.

There’s literally tens of thousands of podcasts out there, yet it seems as if there’s more people making them than actually listening to them. So why is this? We can’t say the same thing about blogs. Blogs went through the same worldwide craze, arguably back in 2004. Millions of blogs are online now but the number of active blogs is much less. Everyone was making a blog, but only the strong survived – and the same will soon happen to podcasts.

So what makes a “strong” podcast? Well honestly anyone can make a strong podcast, we know that money isn’t an issue and I’d argue that talent isn’t even an issue. We’re all interesting people, you just need to know how to market and present your podcast in the right way. I’ve listened to quite a few different podcasts and routinely notice the same problems, the key is to mimic an actual AM/FM radio show.

Release your show consistently on the same day and time, invite different guests, always have at least two people talking, keep it relatively short, broadcast a live show (however this can get costly), allow your listeners to call in and participate (again, can be costly), create a website with your show’s information, choose topics that are unique, choose topics that you’re knowledgeable in.

Podcasters need to remember that their listeners must devote a substantial amount of time to their show. This is unlike blogs whereby a user can spend virtually ten seconds on your site and decide whether or not to keep reading or never visit again. Podcasts take time to download, then minutes to listen to before you decide whether you like it or not. This is why podcasts will never compete with the blogs, with all the intriguing online content nowadays, people wants lots of information as fast as possible and podcasts don’t really provide that.

However, podcasts are mobile, you can enjoy them while you’re on the bus, in the car, walking down the street, cleaning the house. Blogs force you to be sitting in front of a screen, devoting all of your energies towards reading. This is why I feel video podcasts won’t make it too far off the ground you need to be devoting all your attention to it and it takes time to download and watch. Although with new technology like PMPs (personal media players), video iPods, and powerful mobile devices (like Nokia’s 560 phones) – video can now go mobile.

Radio Free Finland - Season 2
Radio Free Finland is a live weekly online English-language talk show (“podcast”) on Monday nights from 21:00 to 22:00 Finnish Time, (or 2pm - 3pm EST). Last season we had some fantastic guests: Tarja Kantola from Tarja Halonen’s re-election team discusses the campaign, Singer/songwriter and Finland’s 2005 Eurovision song contest winner Steven Stewart, Teemu Lahtinen of Suomen Sisu, Terrorism expert Toby Archer from the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, and a whole lot more. We’ve discussed all sorts of interesting topics like marijuana legalization, gay and lesbian rights, music piracy, conscription, anti-Americanism, immigration, liberals, the Mohammed cartoons…

Since the show is live, you can call-in and participate by using a normal phone or Skype - or e-mail questions and comments to us. Check out our FAQ pages for more info. Enjoy!

www.radiofreefinland.net
My Greek stories blog wasn't my first blog. It was the last in a series of experiments in the blogsphere and it was the one that scared me the most. Participating and often writing for an online magazine and others for long time had already given me the comfort and the confidence to see my text online. But writing in my mother tongue, while living abroad for long time, was a different case altogether.

It doesn't matter how comfortable you might get with a language in the end the only language you can express feelings in is your own language. After experimenting in English, I decided it was time to give it a try in Greek. Living in a country that looks like it comes out of mystery and spy novels and fairytales where Santa Claus' house is just a few kilometers away gives you many themes to write about; if you add to that the personal anecdotes you live daily in a country with one of the most difficult languages on earth and people whose first question is always, "Why the hell did you come here?" You have plenty to talk about.

That's how my Greek blog started. My fear was in the language itself. Yes, I knew the language, I belong to that generation where ancient Greek and grammar and the polytonal system was a must in any school, but then that was, what ... a few decades before and nowadays even my dreams and inner thoughts are in English.

From the beginning I've been a bit reserved about this anonymity issue. Somehow it didn't really make sense to me since I use my full name on my online articles and I'm not going to be a different persona in my blog. Actually, I always found it difficult this multi persona game since, one way or another, the same person is behind all of them and, one way or another, the real personality comes out.

I used an alias Ovi from the Ovi magazine, but I made sure that if somebody wanted to find who am I and how to communicate with me it will be there. In a sense of humorous torturing and toying with the idea, I hid it a bit but it was not hard to find, especially when I started talking about my life in Finland and what was going on around me.

Soon the first visitors arrived making it a real surprise since it was another ex-patriot, a figure from the past with a lot of common memories. And then a second one, a sensitive figure from my favorite Greek island to bring back other kinds of memories and then more and more. Further more, even though all of them are using an alias after a week or two they became familiar voices, and with most of them I know their names that just like me, they never hid...they just played a game covering them. With most of them I feel as though I had a coffee in the evening watching the Aegean Sea and slowly drinking from old small cups, while we could talk about everything. Literally everything. I could tell them things I never said before and they could tell me thing they found difficult to admit.

I, myself, became part of their online houses. I learned to look forward to their new post, I learned their style to express hidden feelings and their timings and when somebody was a bit late I would start worrying. I would add a post, a small smiling face expecting a reaction and I would see exactly the same with my blog. When my daughter got ill we all lived the adventure, including hospitals and long worrying periods, my online friends, the ones who didn't have a face, became more solid than people who actually knew me and lived around me. Their small comments or non comments were something like a solid land compared to the moving sand that I was.

With most of them, except the distance difference, there is an age distance as well, although I never see it. As a principal, age has never been an issue in a friendship to me, and my partner in crime, called Ovi magazine in Finland, could be a ... much younger little brother. With my blog-friends, I live their anxiety before the exam period, I live the results from the doctor, the application to a new job and their dreams. You see the comments have become even more personal nowadays and have moved to mails and telephone calls.

A few of my personal friends read my blog as well, they are the funnier ones. They never comment, they just call after every post I put to ask more details or laugh because they know the story or met the people that star in my post. Oddly enough, a couple of long lost friends found me through the blog, friends I was really happy to reach again and our last time together was back in primary school. A very old love found me from the times of the puppy love, but that's another story.

My Greek stories blog wasn't my first blog, but it is definitely my favorite and somehow it's not a blog anymore; it's an old style Greek café where I meet my friends.
“Daddy, loves Mummy. He kicks her, punches her, shouts nasty words and makes her cry. And Daddy loves me. He burns me, slaps me, locks me in a cupboard and calls me a failure.

I hate love.”
COWCAT WITH FRIENDLY MOUSE

F for ..FRUSTRATION???

YOUNG WOMAN WITH LOOSE HAIR

GREEK ISLAND RESIDENTS

SHARED GENES
Ο Έρωτας είναι ψύχωση,η Γυναίκα εμμονή.

Με τσίγκλησε η Καπετάνισσα με τις μοναδικές, γλαφυρές ωδές της στον Έρωτα, με τσίγκλησε και η Εργατώ με τις μπηχτές της περί μισογυνισμού, δεν ήθελα και πολύ τον Έρωτα να πω ότι είναι συνώνυμο της ζωής; Θα με φάνε ζωντανό οι ψευτορεαλιστές. Να πω ότι είναι το Α και το Ω; Θα τον αδικήσω, γιατί υπάρχουν ακόμα 22 γράμματα να πω ότι αγαπάω τις γυναίκες; Μπορεί να παρεξηγηθώ (και όχι μόνο από τη... γυναίκα μου, υποθέτω). Να πω ότι τις θαυμάζω; Μπορεί να αντιπροσωπεύω κάποιους… Γι’ αυτό δε θα πω τίποτα. Διαλέξα τέσσερα αποσπάσματα κειμένων μου, ώστε να μιλήσουν αυτά για λογαριασμό μου. Γιατί, όπως λένε οι συγγραφείς που ‘χουν πολύ μεγαλύτερη πείρα από μένα, ένας συγγραφέας -ακόμα και εκκολαπτόμενος, όπως του λόγου μου- δεν κάνει τίποτ’ άλλο παρά να βγάζει στο χαρτί τις ψυχώσεις και τις εμμονές του, και για μένα ο Έρωτας είναι ψύχωση, Και η Γυναίκα εμμονή. Με την καλή έννοια (ελπίζω…).

(Από τα τέσσερα αποσπάσματα, το τελευταίο είναι ανέκδοτο).

"Το παιχνίδι αυτό παίζεται μόνο με δύο”...

Είχε περάσει πολύς καιρός από τότε που είχα πρωτοανακαλύψει ότι το παιχνίδι που παίζεται μόνο με δύο παίζεται και με περισσότερους από δύο –ότι όλα τα παιχνίδια παίζονται με περισσότερους από δύο, εκτός από το τάβλι. Κι η Λίνα ήταν ένας από τους ανθρώπους που είχαν βάλει το χεράκι τους –και όχι μόνο– για να με βοηθήσουν να το ανακαλύψω. Και τώρα, πολλά χρόνια αργότερα, ανακάλυψε αίφνης και κάτι άλλο: Στο παιχνίδι αυτό, σε αντίθεση με όλα τα υπόλοιπα, δεν υπάρχουν νικητές και χαμένοι. Ακριβώς επειδή είναι ένα παιχνίδι που δεν ολοκληρώνεται ποτέ. Σαν την προαίωνα πάλη ανάμεσα στο καλό και στο κακό, σαν μια αίγινη παρτίδα σκάκι ανάμεσα σε δύο προικισμένους με ισοπαλίστες δυνάμεις, σκακιστές, που έκαναν την πρώτη τους κίνηση από την πρώτη κίολας μέρα της ανθρώπινης ύπαρξης και που δε σκοπεύουν να πετύχουν ματ στον αίωνα τον άπαντα... Κι όλοι εμείς οι υπόλοιποι, οι αδαείς και υπερφίαλοι θνητοί, βακκαλιώταβαν με την πεντάδιπτη ότι συμμετέχουμε σ’ αυτό το ατέλειωτο νταραβέρι, ενώ δεν είμαστε παρά μόνο τα πιόνια πιόνια που κινούνται αδάκακα, αλλά δε βγαίνουν ποτέ έξω απ’ την παρτίδα. Κι εγώ εξακολουθούσα να συμμετέχω με όλο μου τον άλογο... Όχι ότι η Λίνα υπήρξε ποτέ το άλογό μου. Απλώς, κάποιοι στιγμή παρέχουν υπηρεσίες φοράς στα πρώτα βήματα ενός αχόρταγου επιβήτα. Κι ύστερα, ως γνήσιο άτι της στέπας, κάλπασε απετάλωτο κι ασέλωτο, με την ελευθερία να του ανεμίζει τη μαύρη χαίτη. Κι δεν μπορείτε να μου πείτε τυχαίοτα, συμμετέχω με όλο τον άσκομο το φορά... Οι αχαλίνωτες σκέψεις μου έτρεχαν με ταχύτητα εκατοντάδων ίππων τη στιγμή που σήκωσα το ακουστικό και τηλεφώνησα στη Λίνα. (…)

“Αλογο”

η Γυναίκα εμμονή..

Posted by Χρήστος Φασούλας
Σκυλάκι

Σαν να μην πέρασε μια μέρα...

Ήταν η μόνη σκέψη που κλοωθογόριζε με στο μυαλό μου βλέποντάς τη να προχωράει με διστακτικό βήμα προς το μέρος μου... Η προσκόμια της στήψης αυτής μου είχε γίνει ψυγήγια για μια ζώα ολόκληρη. Δεκαέτεσσερα χρόνια... Οι χρόνιοι διαρρήκτης και η δική μου σκυλιά ζούσα... Πάντα αναρωτιόμουμε ποια θα ήταν αντιδράση μου έτσι και την εβλέπα ζωνικά μας μπροστά μου. Δεν περίμενα, βέβαια, ότι θ' άρχιζα να κουνάω την ουρά μου, ούτε όμως ότι θ' αντιδρώσα αντί σε αυτήν την αίφνιδια εκείνη τη στιγμή. Δεν κουνόταν την ουρά μου, ούτε γάφγια, ούτε καν της έγλειψα τα πόδια. Απλώς πήρα στήσα αμυντική, επιφυλακτική, λες και μύριζε τον ανασφάλεια για να βεβαιωθώ αν ήταν διαρρήκτης ή απλώς κάποιος ακόμη γνωστός που μπορούσα να τουρμπά να θυμηθώ τη μυστικιά μου. Κι όταν βεβαιωθήκα, ότι με μια μουρωδία ήταν γνώριμη αλλά ο εισβολέας είχε μετα με σκοπό να διαρρήξει εκ νέου τα σηκώματα μου και να πάρει την καρδιά μου για σουρφιρί, η στήψή μου έγινε επιθετική.

Πρώτα γρύλισα. «Στέλλα; Τι έκανες, Στέλλα;».

Μα είναι σοβαρή, φανερά. Αν θέλεις να με βλέπεις, μου πες ότι την έχεις ακούσει την αίσθηση της τελευταίας μας αγκαλιάς... Παράγγελμα προφέρει τον εισβολέα... Πράγματι θέλω να μ' ακούσεις προσεκτικά. Όλα αυτά τα χρόνια ζώνες γι' αυτή τη στιγμή. Αλλά τελευταία έχει συνειδητοποιήσει ότι ζώνες μέσα σε μια υπερβάσιμη, σ' ένας κόσμος φανταστικό. Και περίμενα την Άλικη να εμπειριστεί επίτευξα τον κόσμο των θαυμάσιων...

«Δεν έχεις αλλάξει καθόλου». Δεν το είπα εγώ αυτό, εκείνη το είπε. Ούτε ανταπόδοσα το κομπλεβένιο. Περίμενα κι άλλα. Κι η αναμνήσει μου διακόπηκε: «Μόνο το μούσι δηλαδή, που έχεις. Και πολύ καλά έχεις. Δε σου πήγαινε καθόλου. Και τα μαλλιά που άφησες να μακρύνουν. Σου πάνε πόλω».

Όρθα να ανταποδώσω. Αλλά τι να της είπε; Ούτε είπε ποτέ μουνα για να το έχεις ούτε είχε αφήσει τα μαλλιά της να μακρύνουν. Τελικά αποφάσισα να παραμερίσω τις σάλτσες και να παρατηρώ τα σημάδια που είχε αφήσει πάνω της τσιουάου. Τα μαλλιά ήταν καθάρισμα... Έσπρωξα τα χέρια της μακριά. Άπλωσα τα δικά μου, τι να πάρω κατάρα... Και περίμενα την Άλικη να εμφανιστεί επιτέλους στον κόσμο των θαυμάσιων...

Την κοίταξα. Αφού πρώτα δέχτηκα τα βολτ «Γεια σου, Αλίκη, τι κάνεις, καλά είσαι, τι πάνε πολύ». Αλλά είπα, κατάλαβα ότι δεν ήταν αλλά εγώ ήμουν καλά εκπαιδευμένος κι ήξερα πως να αποφεύγω τις παγίδες. Κατάλαβα ότι δεν ήταν αλλά, δεν έμεινα ακίνητο τεντώνοντας τ' αυτιά μου. Όλες τις τελικά σάλτα προς την έξοδο, αλλά σκέφτηκα ότι θα προσπαθήσω να τον αγνοήσω και να κάνω τον χρόνο. Και περίμενα την Αλίκη να εμφανιστεί επιτέλους προς το μέρος μου... Η στο μυαλό μου βλέποντάς τη να προχωράει ο χρόνος. Και δεν παρατήρησα ούτε ένα...
Η δεξίωση προς τιμή της καλλιτέχνιδας ήταν στο φόρτο της ώρας πάρκα χάρα από ένα αριθμό πικνικών. Κατάπιε και ίμα την παραλία του Αι-Γιώργη και ακτίζεται μαύρη σιλουέτα. Το περπάτησε είχε κρυφτεί παρά και υπάρχει της τουαλέτας της Αλίκης και μετά χώθηκε καλεσμένους και μια καλεσμένη. Τον υπάρχει στο μπαρ, χαζολογώντας με δυο προσκλήσεις στην είσοδο, μαύρη σήκωσε το κεφάλι τα είδα όλα δηλαδή ότι ήταν μαύρη, αφού όταν που σκέπαζε τον ουρανό. Υπέθεσε σκοτάδι. Το φεγγάρι είχε κρυφτεί του Αϊ-Γιώργη και αντίκρισα μαύρο. Έγινα μούσκεμα μέσα σε λίγα μπορές. Ο χρόνος ήταν το τελευταίο που κράτησε δευτερόλεπτα, μπορεί και να σηκώσει μέσα μου να σηκώσει και να βαράνε καλέμου μαύρο σύννεφο την ώρα ακριβώς που ήταν καταπάνω μου, αλλά να διαλύει και να σηκώσει καταπάνω μου, αλλά τα μέσα. Οι αστραπές χάθηκαν ξαφνικά, σαν να μην είχαν εμφανιστεί ποτέ. Η θάλασσα στάθηκε μυστικόντες, ανάγκες. Λαχταρούσα να γευτά μια χαμένη σιλουέτα. Ακόμα κι η θάλασσα είχε αρχίσει να λύσσαλεο πάθος του έρωτα. Η θάλασσα γονάτισε μπρος στο παράνομους εραστές. Τελικά η απόλυτη καταπιέ, ήταν φανερό ότι δυσφορούσε εναντίον μας. Συνεχώς μούγκριζε, άφησε, φοβόκενε, αμφιλεγόταν μας καταπεί. Έτσι, πια μπόρεσε να μην είχε ακριβώς που ήταν εναντίον μας. Συνεχώς μούγκριζε, άφησε, φοβόκενε, αμφιλεγόταν μας καταπεί. Έτσι, πια μπόρεσε να μην είχε ακριβώς που ήταν εναντίον μας. Συνεχώς μούγκριζε, άφησε, φοβόκενε, αμφιλεγόταν μας καταπεί.
Εξουσία

Χαιρετίσματα, λοιπόν, στην εξουσία, εγώ κρατάω την ουσία κι ονειρεύομαι…

Κι εγώ κρατούσα την ουσία. Και ονειρεύομουν στον ξύπνο μου. Τον ξύπνο μου, την ουσία, την εξουσία, την πεμπτουσία της ύπαρξής μου. Και οι εφιαλτικές φωνές για επικείμενους κινδύνους και κουραφέξαλα είχαν πάει πια για τα καλά στα τσακίδια.

Οι ονειροπολήσεις δεν κράτησαν παραπάνω από ένα τριήμερο. Δε διακόπηκαν μόνες τους, εγώ τις διέκοψα. Δε βαυκαλιζόμουν με τις φαντασιώσεις, δε μου αρκούσαν τα όνειρα. Ήθελα να τα ζήσω. Ήθελα να ζήσω όλα όσα δεν έζησα τα τελευταία δεκαοχτώ χρόνια, να βιώσω το σκίρτημα του αληθινού έρωτα, να ρουφήξω μέχρι την τελευταία σταλιά το νέκταρ που κάποτε απλώς μου είχε βρέξει τα χείλια — κι εγώ το είχα φτύσει λες κι ήταν φαρμάκι…

Βγήκα από το σπίτι παρορμητικά και χώθηκα στη διπλανή πολυκατοικία με μια πρωτοφανή έξαψη ενθουσιασμού να μου τσουρουφλίζει το στέρνο. Καθώς χτυπούσα το κουδούνι του διαμερίσματος, αγνόησα για πολλοστή φορά μια αδύναμη φωνούλα που με ρωτούσε ξέπνοα «Και αν…?» «Και αν εκείνη σε απορρίψει;» ήθελε να με ρωτήσει, αλλά εγώ δεν την άφηνα να ολοκληρώσει τη φράση. Δεν υπήρχε κι έτσι έκανε, με τα χέρια. Τα δάχτυλά της πλέχτηκαν ανάμεσα στα δίκα μου, τραβώντας με απαλά προς το μέρος της.

«Ημές σίγουροι ότι θα τρίξει;»
Κι εγώ ήμουν σίγουρος ότι ήταν σίγουρη. Τα καστανοπράσινα μάτια της δεν είχαν φανερώσει το παραμικρό σημάδι έκπληξης, παρά μόνον ανακούφισης. Ίσως περίμενε τις απαντήσεις στα ερωτήματα που έπρεπε να είχαν απαντηθεί εδώ και χρόνια. Όμως εγώ δεν της έδωσα καμία απάντηση, καμία εξήγηση. Το θεωρούσα άσκοπο, χάσιμο χρόνου, τουλάχιστον στην παρούσα φάση. Κι έτσι δεν είπα τίποτ' άλλο παρά μόνον πέντε σταράτες κουβέντες:

«Λοιπόν, Λουίζα; Πού είχαμε μείνει;»
Η Λουίζα θυμόταν καλά πού είχαμε μείνει — για μένα δε γεννάται λόγος. Ήταν και τότε μόνο λίγα λεπτά, λές και συνεχίσαμε απλώς κάτι που είχαμε αφήσει ανολοκλήρωτο, το πιάσαμε από κει που το είχαμε αφήσει τη νύχτα, το πιάσαμε από κει που το είχαμε αφήσει τη νύχτα εκείνη και ανακατάλειψαμε την αίσθηση, την ηδονή, τη χαρά τη νύχτα, τη στιγμή που τα μάτια της Λουίζας άστραψαν αντικρίζοντάς με στο κατώφλι της πόρτας.

«Σταύρο…»
Λουίζα… Δεν το πρόφερα, δεν είχε κανένα νόημα ν’ ανταλλάξωμε στοιχεία ταυτότητας. Όπως σάλεψε από τη θέση μου. Περίμενε να κάνει εκείνη το πρώτο βήμα. Και το έκανε, με τα χέρια. Τα δάχτυλά της πλέχτηκαν ανάμεσα στα δίκα μου, τραβώντας με απαλά προς το μέρος της.

«Λοιπόν, Λουίζα; Πού είχαμε μείνει;»
Η Λουίζα θυμόταν καλά πού είχαμε μείνει — για μένα δε γεννάται λόγος. Λες και δεν είχαν περάσει παρά μόνο λίγα λεπτά, λές και συνεχίσαμε απλώς κάτι που είχαμε αφήσει ανολοκλήρωτο, το πιάσαμε από κει που το είχαμε αφήσει τη νύχτα εκείνη και η ιστορία, η ηρωική, η θεατική ήταν ίδιες κι απαράλλαξτες, όπως ακριβώς τις θυμόμουν, λές και εκείνη η νύχτα απλάς συνεχίζοταν, λές και ο θεός Ήλιος είχε λύσει με τις πυρωμένες ακτίνες του μια ανούσια παρένθεση δεκαοχτώ χρόνων… (…)
Exit soulless energy,  
extit drown reply.  
Use whatever it takes,  
an reunion of elves,  
an oceansized crash test.

Lead me on my dreams  
winter route prophecy!  
Celebrate, pose well  
and shoot high!  
Guns can't kill what soldiers can't see.

Kiteless, random power  
Clear well my head.

When I start writing a post for my blog, I do not have a pre-  
conceived, conscious idea of  
what I will write about. Very often I will start on a specific  
topic, describe a particular setting  
and somewhere along the way end up in unexpected  
places. However, there is always a very  
specific feeling I have on my mind that I would like to con-  
vey, a message,  
my way of interpreting the scene I have described. That is  
why I choose the titles of my posts  
very carefully to show exactly that, the essence of what I  
intended to write about. My post  
titles are in that sense the best guide to my blog, and  
putting them together in a small poem,  
I think they describe quite well why I am blogging.

photo – me and my friend in finland
My wife nags me to paint the house
I have no time for that
I need a sparkling blogroll,
a clock, a customised photo...
If I close my eyes and count to a 100.
35 children are dead.

How can I play hide & seek when
21 children die every minute?
Who'll play football with me when
21 friends die every minute?
Περί Έθνους και άλλων δαιμονίων

Posted by Krot

Τις προάλλες στεκόμουν σε μία γωνία σε πολυσύχναστο σημείο των Βρυξελλών, περιμένοντας μια φίλη, και χάζευα τον κόσμο γύρω μου. Έπαιζα νοητά ένα παιχνίδι που μ'αρέσει πολύ: προσπαθούσα να μαντεψω την εθνικότητα των περαστικών.

Συνειδητοποίησα πως για κανένα, μα κανένα, δεν μπορούσα με τίποτα να είμαι σίγουρη. Οι μαντηλοφόρες μουσουλμάνες θα μπορούσαν να είναι Αλγερινές, Τυνήσιες, Μαροκινές, ή ακόμα και Σύριες. Οι νέγροι θα μπορούσαν να είναι από το Ζαϊρ, τη Νιγηρία ή το Capo Verde. Οι μελαχροί λευκοί, από οποιαδήποτε γωνιά της Μεσογείου. Όσο για τους ξανθογάλανους ψηλούς, γι'αυτούς κι αν υπάρχουν πολλές υποψήφιες καταγωγές: από ντόπιοι Φλαμανδοί ως οτιδήποτε σε Σκανδιναβικό.

Καθώς η φίλη μου αργούσε, συνέχισα να ξετυλίγω κοινότυπες σκέψεις στο κεφάλι μου. Πέραν των κλισαρισμένων ιδεών, του τύπου «γιατί να υπάρχουν πόλεμοι» και άλλα τέτοια αφελή που τα αφήνω για τις εκθέσεις των παιδιών του Δημοτικού, ξέθαψα τις ιστορικές μου γνώσεις και προσπάθησα να ανακαλέσω πόσες φορές αναδιαμορφώθηκαν τα σύνορα της Πολωνίας, της Ουγγαρίας, της Ελλάδας και της Βουλγαρίας τα τελευταία, ας πούμε, 300 χρόνια. Μέτρησα κατά μέσο όρο 3 με 4. Οι άνθρωποι που κατά περίπτωση ξεμέναν από τη μια ή την άλλη πλευρά των συνόρων, άλλαξαν εθνικότητα από γενιά σε γενιά. Άλλο τυπικότατο σχετικό παράδειγμα, η Αλσατία.

Δυο πολύ μεγάλα και ισχυρά ευρωπαϊκά κράτη, η Ιταλία και η Γερμανία μετρούν το πολύ 130 χρόνια ζωής. Πριν από την σε κράτος – εθνούς σύστασή τους, στη θέση τους υπήρχαν δεκάδες μικρά κρατίδια / δουκάτα / κομητάτα και άλλα – άτα.

Το Βέλγιο (176 χρόνια ζωής ως κράτος) αποτελείται από 3 με 4 εθνότητες, χωρίς να προσμετρηθούν οι υπολογίσιμες αραβικές και αφρικανικές κοινότητες, αποτέλεσμα της αποικιοκρατίας. Το ίδιο συμβαίνει και στην Εβρεική, η οποία μετρά 350 χρόνια ζωής ως κράτος και 4 επίσημες εθνότητες.

Τα παλαιότερα έθνη – κράτη στην Ευρώπη, η Γαλλία και η Ισπανία (η οποία βέβαια συνυπολογίζει Καταλανούς, Βάσκους και Γαλικιανούς) μετρούν 6 ή 7 αιώνες ζωής.

Αφήνοντας κατά μέρος τα αίτια σύστασης των εθνών – κρατών κατά τον 19ο αιώνα κυρίως (ικανοποίηση των αναγκών της τότε ανερχόμενης αστικής τάξης, παρακμή και σταθερόποιηση των Λυστοκρατοριών στις οποίες ανήκαν ως τότε τα εδάφη αυτά), καταλήγουμε πολύ εύκολα στο συμπέρασμα πως ίσως ένα από τα σύγχρονα ευρωπαϊκά εθνή – κράτη (με εξαίρεση ίσως την Ισλανδία, για την οποία δεν έχω πληροφορίες) δεν είναι «αμιγές και καθαρόαιμο».

Δεν κρίνω σκόπιμο δε να αναφέρω εδώ την προσπάθεια της Ευρωπαϊκής ολοκλήρωση, η οποία είναι αμφιλεγόμενη και τα αποτελέσματά της αμφισβητίσιμα. Στέκομαι μόνο στην υπάρχουσα κατάσταση, κοιτάντας πώς αυτή διαμορφώθηκε κατά τους τελευταίους δύο με τρεις αιώνες. Και βρίσκω πολύ ενδιαφέρον να εξωτερική να εξυπηρετεί συμφέροντα αλλότρια από εκείνα των πληθυσμών που απαρτίζουν αυτά τα έθνη.

Αρκεί μόνο να ρίξουμε μια ματιά στους περαστικούς γύρω μας, σε οποιαδήποτε γωνιά της Ευρώπης κι αν ζούμε.
The Top 10 Blogs

1. Engadget
   http://www.engadget.com
   26,920 blogs link here

2. Boing Boing: A Directory of Wonderful Things
   http://www.boingboing.net
   20,775 blogs link here

3. SINA BLOG
   http://blog.sina.com.cn/m/xujinglei
   18,075 blogs link here

   http://www.gizmodo.com
   14,659 blogs link here

5. The Huffington Post
   http://www.huffingtonpost.com
   14,006 blogs link here

6. Welcome to Harvard University
   http://www.harvard.edu
   13,380 blogs link here

7. Daily Kos: State of the Nation
   http://www.dailykos.com
   13,273 blogs link here

8. Techcrunch
   http://www.techcrunch.com
   13,127 blogs link here

9. livedoor ups(Blog) ch/
   http://blog.livedoor.com
   13,059 blogs link here

10. PostSecret
    http://postsecret.blogspot.com
    11,811 blogs link here

These are the biggest blogs in the blogosphere, as measured by unique links in the last six months, according to www.technorati.com

Nuclear fusion TEARS the world apart
SAY YES TO PEACE
It had been over a couple of years since I first heard about blogs before I decided to enter the blogosphere myself. Again I decided to enter this blog-universe for all the wrong reasons. Curiosity was my motivation and what was happening with the blog a friend of mine has.

I created my first blog trying to find out what's really going on with my site since this friend had suggested that in the blog you have better control over who's coming and who's leaving, and since I'm a dinosaur myself he continued explaining that I will get a better understanding in coding, how stats work and how you can attract visitors.

Eight months later he was proved correct in every single remark he made. Lately I even managed to change a whole template to the way I like it and now I'm moving into more complicated tasks, and that somehow gives you the feeling that you are in control, you can choose photos and fonts, you can make little personal jokes, you are the only one who can see them and understand them; just like I always did with my drawings.

Stats have been always something that confused me. Here was me with a monthly magazine and every time I was asked how many visits the magazine has I was feeling worse and worse by saying that it makes from two hundred to four hundred a day. Sometimes I had to deal with smiles of sympathy and things like, "You have a long way to go!" Of course, I would ask back, "And what are you numbers?" To get the answer, "60,000 a month, at least!"

Sixty thousand a month was a number I could not even reach and it was making me more and more worried, since I wasn't even a tenth of that. I had heard the excuses: monthly magazine people cannot visit your magazine every day because it changes once a month, but still...I was getting more and more frustrated.

In the blogs, things are much, much simpler, or at least for a dinosaur like me. There I understood that they were talking about visits, while I was talking about average unique URL visits per day. Wow, suddenly 60,000 visits sounded like a... joke!

The last one was communication, visitors. All my life I have hated stereotypes, especially since I was often a victim of them being a Greek living abroad. I usually ignore all this deep analysis about bloggers in newspapers and magazines; I'm not around thirty and I have a quite an active social life, I'm definitely not a computer geek, although I do think computers are fantastic...typewriters and my ego had a lot of ways to express its opinions in public before the arrival of the blog. Actually, many people didn't understand why I need a blog as well, but that's another story.

The blogging community has impressed me in many ways and, of course, I'm not judging anybody, like everything in life, there are positive and negative parts, so why should blogging become an exception? Sometimes I enjoy reading the news from a blog more than I would do reading it from a news agency. Oddly, it seems that some bloggers are faster at bringing the news than the news agencies, even the world's bigger ones.

Due to blogging I have found myself talking with a young painter in Japan and a photographer in Chile, while thanks to the bloggers I found a couple of long lost friends. I'm not suggesting to everybody to open a blog, on the contrary. I explain that to do so, first of all, you must enjoy it, but, as I said in the beginning, this trip that started eight months ago gave me a lot of answers and far more new friends. Save and publish!
A LIST OF THE TOP 15 HISTORICAL BLOGS
sort of!

The Domesdays Blog
Anne Frank’s Blog
The Blog of Plato
Samuel Pepys’ blog
Mein Blog
Mao’s Little Red Blog
The King James Blog
The Communist Blog
Aesop’s Blogs
Canterbury Blogs
Henry David Thoreau’s Walden Blog
The Secret Blog of Adrian Mole, Aged 13½
The Unknown Blogger
Uncle Tom’s Blog
The Magna Bloga

It was a rainy evening
and I felt tired. I don’t like the weather and you don’t want to understand.

I said delete ... delete ... delete!
cntr+alt+del

I must delete some of these files. Too many mp3 and videos in here....

It is a rainy evening
... a winter evening in the city!!!

Posted by Thanos / Asa
**Would you ever sue Google?**

Posted by Sofia Gkiousou

Greece it seems is the country of one thousand surprises. From the ludicrous law banning internet cafes that fortunately dwindled into oblivion a little while later, to the judicial proceedings against artist Gerhard Haderer for his ‘Life of Christ’ comic, it seems that the Greek state applies its policy on technology and art in a haphazard and puzzling manner.

The latest is the arrest of a Greek site administrator, Antonis Tsipropoulos. Antonis is the owner and administrator of Blogme.gr, a free information and RSS aggregation website. One of the blogs that were registered with blogme.gr allegedly published obscene / satirical content concerning a specific person. That person sued Antonis though, instead of the actual writer. Not that suing the actual writer is something that I would personally find acceptable but that is another matter altogether.

The news hit the Greek blogosphere hard and already some blogs translated a summary of the situation in English and started e-mailing it to the media. Please see below for links. I am among those translators and I think it is fair to make absolutely clear that this article is a summary translation – with a bit of personal opinion – of what I read on Antonis’ website and not something I know first hand. Since it would be difficult to actually fly to Greece and report on this I hope Ovi readers will forgive this hasty article but we felt that the story was too important not to be heard.

Antonis got a visit from the police officers of the Electronic Crime Team. His hard disk was taken and he was arrested. Under police escort his was led to the Central Security Police Station in Athens. He also stayed overnight in a detention room. The next day he was led in front of the Public Prosecutor in handcuffs. Here we should note that this is not in any way unreasonable or illegal – since civil proceedings were under way the police and the public prosecutor needed to follow a certain procedure – which they did. There is no helping the letter of the law sometimes.

Yet, it is not difficult for any user of the internet – or indeed any person who follows the news – to understand that an RSS aggregator service cannot accept responsibility for content generated by others. It’s effectively – like suing Google.

Also note that the blog with the allegedly insulting content does not only appear in blogme but in several Greek aggregators. None of those was sued apart from blogme. Antonis nevertheless stresses that he is not advocating suing every other website that includes content of links to the allegedly insulting blog.

Nevertheless the absurdity of the situation is something that nobody can fail to notice. And it seems that the Greek authorities have a history in such hasty action. There is not other logical explanation to me apart from the fact that they probably lack basic technical knowledge. Early last year a Greek artist, Dimitris Fotiou was arrested for suspected fraud.

Inspired by the then latest Greek developments illegal student transfers from one university to the other, people paying to get a job in the civil service and MPs calling in favours to secure a position for their voters he created Dirty Works Greece. He created a humorous website Dirty Works Greece (DWG). This company claimed the ability to influence students’ transfers, results of the civil service entrance examinations and job offers in the civil service. It had a small history of the company, description of services and finally a form where the visitor could enter his/hers details, give a credit card number and select which service they wanted.

Dimitris Fotiou was arrested on alleged fraud. I should mention here that it took 2 minutes not only to realise that this was a hoax but also to take a look at the code and see that one’s credit card details were stored absolutely nowhere. There is no arguing with the 0s and the 1s.

Unreal? An exaggeration? Sure. But scarcely true. I am sure the Greek authorities are following the law. And I am certain the Antonis will be cleared because however long or hard you argue the truth of the matter is that he cannot be held responsible for someone else in this context. But then who pays for his ridicule? Who pays for the fact that in years to come his neighbours will remember that police officers arrested him? Who pays for the days and income he lost?

And you want to know the worst part? When I read about Antonis’ arrest and the few details of the case my first thought was: “Am I in Blogme.gr?” And my second thought was: “Oh no. Have I written something offensive?” And that right there, this fearful state of mind – that I bet was not only going on in my head for a few seconds – is the saddest thing of all.

The website in question: http://www.blogme.gr
I'm sure my relationship with Mr. Bill Gates and his products is not unique and if you check the net you will find that others have worse feelings towards him than me. I simply hate the bastard! To get worse, there have been times I admire him!!! And these times are equally as many as the times I hate him.

Ok, imagine a life where you must eat and the only thing you can eat is raw cauliflower. And you eat the bloody thing day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. It is the same with Mr. Microsoft. For twenty years I have to eat the same cauliflower and like it is not enough I always look forward for his newest discovery.

In the beginning it was MS Dos. Version 3 was good, version 5 a disaster, version 6 just saved some things to come to version 7 and lose everything, and then the next cauliflower, Windows. Supposed to be windows to a new environment, it was the bloody widest door possible to the nightmare. Elm Street seemed like a Disney film in front of Windows 2000. I lost two computers because of them. Windows Millennium? I found myself a couple of times ready to throw my PC out of the window and I was on the sixth floor.

But then, nothing would have happened without Windows. Think of it. There are millions of users all around the world, probably billions. And there are millions that their salary depends on computers. Millions that work for computers and other millions that works to improve computers.

In an interview a couple of years ago, the new king of Jordan, when he was still fresh on the throne, said that his country is very poor and even though in the middle of oil rich countries is a state without resources, so he was trying to lead his people to follow the example of India and become a computer power. And all that because of Mr. Gates.

What about the internet? Check your PC and you’ll find Instant Messenger MSN, browser MS-explorer, one fifth of the people I know they have Hotmail. All my programs work perfectly alright only with Windows, however much penguins and other birds have tried. Even my Mac has Windows programs, not to mention MS Word which is one program after Windows that I haven’t seen any computer not have. To make it worse, most of the Macs I know have it as well.

But then when you buy a new equipment or try to install an old one you just plug and pray that everything will work, otherwise you have to buy a new one which will be compatible to the newest version of Windows.

And Bill Gates created the new Windows XP Professional and everybody said, ‘now you are going to be happy, everything works’. Oh yes, it did indeed till I downloaded a security upgrade from the Microsoft site and my computer crashed so badly that I had to format the disk and lost two months of work. Of course, all of you cleverly will say why you didn’t keep a backup! Yeah, when was the last time you took a backup?

And all that waiting for the bloody Vista!!!
“Only takes one tree to make 1,000 matches
Only takes one match to burn a thousand trees”
- ‘A Thousand Trees’ by the Stereophonics
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