Sustainable Interactions as Design Objects that promote Digital Humanism

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The main purpose of Sustainable Interaction Design is to meet global challenges in society, economy and environment to an extent that goes beyond the well-being of human beings, but looks forward to the well-being of all beings (Blevis, 2007). This paper examines the relation between Sustainable Interaction Design and Digital Humanism. We seek answers related to the contribution of sustainable interactions in shaping humane technologies that are based on more humane interfaces and their corresponding systems and products which can be designed on the basis of user experience, societal development and environmental sustainability.

Humans can be thought of as emotional and social 'tool beings' that act in order to shape their environment and form their society for a better living and survival. To do so they construct and use 'tools' to carry out particular functions towards their goal. Objects of this design process in general, could/should be characterized as able to afford sustainable behaviour for the following reasons: their very existence is sustainable, they are designed to evoke sustainability, or they are part of a sustainable system.

From our point of view, we see *sustainable interactions* as objects of design and not just an action that arises as a result of the design processes or the actual form or functionality of the designed artifacts and their interfaces. These objects can be used in technology to trigger user experiences aimed at sustainable development. We consider Sustainable Interaction Design as an iterative process in which sustainable interactions can be designed by designers with a humanitarian vision who focus on sustainable design activities and processes.

Our philosophical position is based on an ontologically flat model of existence which rejects ontology of transcendence or presence that privileges one sort of entity as the origin of all others and as fully present to itself (Harman, 2002). In a flat ontology objects, of all sorts and at different scales, equally exist without being reducible to other objects and that being is composed entirely of objects, properties, and relations such that subjects themselves are a variant of objects (Bryant, 2011). Consequently, we identify design activities as iterative processes of meaning making based on quasi-representations and prototyping within a network of collaborating actors (Stavrakis, 2009). Inspired by this analysis, we treat interactions as equally important objects for the design of products, systems and services. We investigate how these designed entities could be used in order to create the dialogue between the interface and the user and then transform the way we think and behave as members of society and world beings. We further challenge ourselves to reconsider concepts that we take for granted and see their different interpretations, such as the user being a member of an interactive system versus the user as a part of the world and

interaction as a part of an interface versus interaction as a part of a society culture with focus on sustainability and humanism.

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