

An Article

## **“The Birth of Digital God”**

by Shah Shahban

Understanding anything truly matters. It's not only subjective but a universal need of human beings. We will always find ourselves in a spiritual desert without it. To recognize the attitude of the society it is better to know what they fear the most. The essential ingredient of creativity is to be besieged by questions that needs to be addressed to overcome that fear. And the questions for 21<sup>st</sup> century is mostly about exponential technologies (Blockchain, Artificial intelligence, IoTs etc.) in western societies if not in the rest of the world. The encounter with these new technologies is so vivid, so immediate, so personal that it seems hardly to belong to ordinary world.

Being a commoner, in order to survive in the new digital order, you don't need a degree in computer science but do need a better understanding of what's happening and what's coming. Because its relevant to our social, financial and political decision than ever before.

In order to address such urgency, the Afro Asian Institute Graz helped our initiative i.e. Dialogue4society to search for the right minds that can help to navigate us in building a realistic and better understanding of the digital future. It was our immense honor to have David Orban (Singularity University) and Dirk Helbing (ETH Zurich) from the best-known universities here in the city of Graz as our guest speakers on October 22, 2019 for our first topic, “The Birth of Digital God”.

Initially, a brief foundation of the impact of digitalization was placed by David for an audience attention by enquiring the first question, how do you see the world in 2019 and at which speed its changing? Onwards as we know today's era seems in rolling towards digital philosophical bankruptcy therefore the ingredients of classical enlightenment of last centuries and digital enlightenment of this century were related and debated. Professor Helbing added new needs like role of data, collective intelligence, digital innovation and optimization next to reason, nature, empathy and objectivity and introduce his book, “igod”. Both of our speakers agreed that democracy and capitalism can't survive in medium of big data or artificial intelligence i.e. with totalitarianism or surveillance capitalism. They urged to have a new system compatible with ongoing disruptive digital entropy. David on other hand suggested how exponential technologies will play their part in the decentralization of institutions and industries creating a better future and opportunities in long term for common person. In this digital revolution to educate or include the society on an individual and collective level Professor Helbing presented the idea of “digital ecosystem” that can benefit us all, not just few and will be characterized by principles such as co-creation, co-evolution, self-organization and self-regulation. In total the panel discussion portrayed different point of views and created more clarity to spectators when speakers disagreed upon certain thoughts which always carries the true beauty and meaning of a dialogue i.e., we agree to disagree.

Common sense and involvement teach us many things if we heed them closely and examine wisely. The key to get persuasiveness is to know what people doubt in the community. Argument is sometimes more vital than just explaining ideas. The grouping of risk-taking, passion and energy with emerging technologies from the digital transformation through inclusion, diversity and debate will generate incredible outcomes for communities, cities, regions and nations. As Nietzsche writes: "In the world even the best things are worthless without someone who performs them: those performers the people

call great men." For us the performers were our two guests and it was truly an honor to have an interaction on such a vital topic at a time where humanity is standing on a completely new horizon where everyone is lost in the confusion towards future.