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Performed Consumption and Consumed Performance:

Desire territorialisation in Korean Beauty Vlogs

Par

Marie-Eve Jodoin

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Chercheur principal :
Marie-Eve Jodoin,

Directeur/codirecteurs :
Marie-Agnes Parmentier
Professeur - HEC Montréal

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Maurice Lemelin
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Chercheur principal :
Marie-Ève Jodoin, étudiante M. Sc.
HEC Montréal

Directeur/codirecteurs :
Marie-Agnès Parmentier

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Maurice Lemelin
Président du CER de HEC Montréal

Abstract

Witnessing another individual's material consumption, performed and rendered widely available on the Youtube platform, is an enticing experience which I aimed to understand by conducting this study. In this paper, I investigated desire theorized as energetic flow (Deleuze & Guattari,1987), in a technologically enabled network of desire (Kozinets, Patterson, & Ashman, 2016). Conducting a netnography, based on the network forged around Korean-Beauty (K-Beauty) vlogs, I participated as both consumer and producer of K-Beauty related content on Youtube. While identifying the desiring-machines, desirously connected components (De Landa, 2006; Kozinets et al., 2016), implicated in this network, I found that the K-Beauty market, with it's ideals, products, brands and so on, was closely intertwined with Youtube, the mediatic and technological vehicle used to convey a message between a producer and a consumer of K-beauty related content. The desiring-machines gravitated towards each other, driven by desirous energy to create the network by situating, or territorialising (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), desire on it. I was able to identify three types of connective desire territorialised on the network: Material consumption desire, Social desire and desire for Otherness. These specific types of connections are part of a process which renders territorialised desire increasingly dependent on the network's settings, thus progressively sustaining desire on the network as the connected desiring-machines evolve and their connection to the network itself mutates. I discuss how these findings affect the way we understand networks of desire and consumer desire as a broader concept as well as the relations between them.

Keywords: Desire, Networks of desires, Desiring-machines, Korean-Beauty, Youtube, Vlogs.

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1   INTRODUCTION

«Nothing gave her so much pleasure as to hear about the world above the sea (…) To her it seemed most wonderful and beautiful to hear that the flowers of the land should have fragrance, and not those below the sea; that the trees of the forest should be green; and that the fishes among the trees could sing so sweetly…» - (Andersen, 1837)

In a situation where they have an array of consumption choices, individuals often feel the urge to summon the opinion of others to make the best choice possible. With today's technological tools, you can get thousands of opinions and perspectives on a product with the touch of a screen. Rather than turning to friends and family for a reference, many consumers seek the opinion of Youtubers; vloggers who have made a name for themselves reviewing a category of products, becoming experts in the opinion department. Beauty vloggers for example will build a following by reviewing beauty products and trying them out in front of a camera. In the hopes of attracting subscribers, beauty vloggers will start to upload videos on the video-sharing social media platform that is Youtube. Filming themselves consuming and rating products, they add a variety of video files to a channel that an audience can subscribe to. These videos are publicly available for the consumption of others on the platform where views, subscriptions, comments and shares are recorded.

This phenomenon will be the ground floor of this research, focusing on the Korean-beauty vloggers. Korean-beauty (K-Beauty) is a segment of the cosmetics market which includes Korean made makeup and skincare products. K-beauty is an innovative and trendy niche of the cosmetics market which focuses on treating the skin with various products and daily practices. It will be further addressed and elaborated upon throughout this research. What is of particular interest in this context are the concepts of consumption and performance on social media, specifically on Youtube channels, and how desire is channeled through them.

Although a more thorough explanation of the theories relative to consumption and desire on which this study is based will be outlined in the literature section, a quick overview of the concepts is provided here to contextualise the investigated research questions. Desire, in the context of this study, will be understood as a flow of energy which connects different desiring-machines in creating the reality we experience (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Desiring-machines can be humans, institutions, objects, any environmental, social, political entities and so on that are defined by their desirous connections to other desiring-machines without implying any hierarchical structure (Kozinets et al., 2016). The point made by Deleuze and Guattari (Holland, 2013), is to situate desire

as the connective force driving the interactions between desiring-machines to forge what we perceive as reality (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Desire is territorialised, situated within a specific connection between desiring-machines, to determine the set of outcomes that is real to us (Žižek, 2004).

Within these theoretical parameters, I try to elucidate how desire, as an energetic flow, is entrenched in performed consumption on social media by researching how it is territorialised on a network. First, by asking what the network consists of: **What are the components of the Korean-beauty vlogging network and how do they interact with each other?** Then, by investigating how desire is territorialized on the network through these connective components: **How is desire territorialized in a networked environment?** Finally, by investigating this territorialised desire to understand how it is cultivated on the network: **How is desire sustained on the network?**

To answer these questions, I have immersed myself in the online culture of K-beauty vlogging. Data collection was done in a netnographic fashion, as I participated in Youtube Korean skincare vlogging for a period of over 10 months, both as an observing subscriber and a content creator. To contextualize this netnographic endeavor, I was interested in understanding how the performance of consumption, and the consumption of said performance, is actualized in Korean beauty vlogging and how it channels and territorialises desire. The components of the network will be theorized as connected desiring-machines, and will be investigated to understand their territorialising effect in desire networks (Kozinets et al., 2016).

This study aims to understand how consumption related desire, as theorised by Belk, Ger, & Askegaard (2003), can be analysed in a different angle, through the lenses of Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) energetic desire, in a technological setting, using the theory of Networks of Desire (Kozinets et al., 2016). Based on the findings brought forward by this project, I try to reconciliate the notion of embodied desire(Belk et al., 2003), or the human experience of desire, with the wider concept of energetic desire connecting various desiring-machines in a technologically networked environment (Kozinets et al., 2016). Furthermore, this paper aims to investigate the notion of sustained desire (Belk et al., 2003; Holland, 2013), in the technologically enabled network forged around K-Beauty vlogs.

Taking you with me on the journey that as been this study, I will start with an exploration of the literature on desire, consumption and performance. In the contextual part of this research, I will then lay out K-beauty vlogging as a desiring-machine, highlighting the components and processes

that define it. Positioning it at the intersection of the Korean-beauty market and the Youtube platform, I will then define how K-beauty vlogging interacts within these larger desiring-machines (in the sense that they incorporate more desiring-machines and not in a hierarchic sense). All of these desiring-machines connected together are the constitutive components of the network.

Once a clear picture of the network of desire surrounding K-beauty vlogging has emerged, I will give a detailed report of the methods used to analyse desire territorialized on the network before diving into the insights that these methods yielded. The findings will encompass a categorisation of desire territorialisation types as well as a description of the process through which it is sustained on the network. A discussion about the findings, limitations and future research will follow.

Before going any further in the exploration of the context within which I will probe at networked desire, let's dive in the literature to understand desire and the related elements that I will use as theoretical grounds in analysing the collected data.

2   LITERATURE

In this section, I want to establish how desire has been observed, analysed and theorised in relation to consumption to situate this study within the chosen framework. First, I will explore embodied desire and the human cyclic experience of it through Belk et al.'s (2003) multisided inquiry into consumer desire to establish the links between consumption, desire and the human experience of these linked elements. Then, as Kozinets et al. (2016) have done before me, I will situate desire theorised as an energetic flow by Deleuze & Guattari (1987) as a conceptual lens through which I will observe consumption. Finally, I will lay out the theory of Networks of Desire (Kozinets et al., 2016) as a specific way to understand and investigate energetic desire within a technologically enabled field of study.

2.1   DESIRE

Consumer research as a long history of trying to understand what people want as well as how and why they want it, but prior to Belk, Ger and Askegaard's research on desire (2003), little was known of the intensity with which we relate to consumption. In this article, desire for objects of consumption are determined as experientially lived and focused on «a specific something shaped by social and historical circumstances» (Belk et al., 2003, p. 328). Desire, as a consumption related phenomenon, has been posited by their analysis as a cycle of embodied passion that relies on desire to desire. The consumer is passionate about a particular object and he renders in such passion until

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the acquisition of the object transpires or the definitive impossibility to acquire the object becomes inescapable. Once the consumer is without an object to desire, he seeks the rebirth of the passionate feeling associated with desiring by aiming its desire at a new object, thus creating a cycle. What is unique about their findings is the identification of desire to desire, rather than the frustration of a particular desire, as the driving force of the cycle's repetition (Belk et al., 2003, p. 347).

According to Belk et al.'s (2003) observation, consumers experience a perpetual loop of desiring commodities to alter or escape their reality, to connect socially, to play with the moral limits and to sustain desire with distance and inaccessibility of the objects of desire. In their account of consumer desire, the authors refer to the cycling or recycling of desire as the mechanism through which passion is embodied and underline the consumer's active role in «co-constructing the subject and the object of desire» (Belk et al., 2003, p. 345). They also identify a fear of being without desire as an explanation of consumer' attachment to the state of desire and not to the outcome of it. They contextualize this desire to desire in global capitalism and the consumerist ideology and conclude that desire to desire is likely to be channeled onto objects of consumption. What this perspective misses to address, however, is the rise of technologically mediated consumption of abstract objects and the various actors implicated in such consumption. This research is thus focused on identifying and understanding how and why desire to desire is actualised in technological networks such as social-media, building on Kozinets et al.'s (2016) theory of networks of desire, which will be outlined in a subsequent section.

Introducing this study in the tradition of consumer research adaptations of sociological, psychological and philosophical theories (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), I will be using what I believe is an informed theory on the notion of desire, constructed by Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) which will be referred to as D+G in this research, to investigate desirous energy.

2.2 ENERGETIC, CONNECTIVE AND CREATIVE DESIRE

Embarking on a journey to understand desire could take me on numerous different paths. So, as to insure I wouldn't get lost, I chose D+G's philosophical mapping of the human experience as a conceptual starting point, as Kozinets et al. (2016) have done before me. In the interest of the reader, I will now briefly describe the core principles used to define desire as energetic, connective and creative, based on (Holland, 2013) structuration of D+G's theories.

To situate desire, I must first address that time, according to D+G, is understood as a non-linear, emergent causality (Holland, 2013, p. 17), which means that our experience of reality is simply one of various possible outcomes. i.e. if evolution would occur 100 times, you would get 100 different outcomes. The present is an actualization of a particular potentiality, a temporal moment of being in the greater scheme of *becomings*, to use D+G's terminology. It is but an expression of antecedent conditions, which could have been actualised in various other forms, had one element been different. The virtual potentialities, non-actualised possibilities, are called multiplicities.

These multiplicities have the potential to be actualised on the plane of consistency when desire connects a particular constellation of desiring-machines (humans, technologies, materials, institutions and so on). Desiring-machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Holland, 2013; Kozinets et al., 2016) is the term used to describe connecting elements (at individual, organisational, contextual and technological levels) indiscriminately. The elements are understood as machinal entities driven to assemble or disassemble by desire. Us humans, as well as our cellphones, the air we breathe, the governments we elect (or not), the countries we live in and so on, are desiring-machines that exist as such and are connected within wider concepts in our experienced realities because of desirous energy. The presence of any element as part of an actualised multiplicity at a specific point in time is dependent, according to D+G, on the gravitational force of desire. The term desiring-machine is thus used to label any and all components of reality as they are all equally important and their existence in a precise state is determined by the desire that connects them to other desiring-machines.

«Desire is a force that scans the past from the perspective of the present in search of possible combinations to actualise» (Holland, 2013, p. 21). From various becoming multiplicities, being is consolidated by territorialisation of desire. Territorialisation is where (or rather when) desire is placed on the plane of consistency to connect desiring-machines and actualise a potentiality. Territorialisation happens when energetic desire passes through a desiring-machine, connecting it to other desiring-machines to forge a moment. My own way of picturing territorialisation can be illustrated by any discovery, from Colombus stumbling upon the Americas to Benjamin Franklin connecting lightning to electricity. Electricity was always there, as were the Americas as a continent, it is their discovery, the connection between a human mind, a precise historic setting, technological specificities, environmental, social and even political conditions, that actualised the concepts and defined how they would be connected to other desiring-machines from that point on. Desire is

territorialised when it connects desiring-machines in a specific moment in time. It is a momentary manifestation of connective desire that is actualised.

A very telling example of desire territorialisation would be love at first sight. Modern humans want to fall in love, they want to desire and feel desired by someone, yet, without this someone, they are left wanting desire rather than desiring. Before desire connects me to another desiring-machine, desire is external to me, but upon meeting this someone desire is territorialised within me, embodied and experienced. I cannot specifically desire the other before meeting him, i.e. desire is the energetic connection that brings us together through a territorialisation, embodiment, of desire. Desire isn't created within me, it doesn't growth from a lack but is rather created on contact. Desire is embodied when territorialised onto a human body, for example, to connect him to an object of desire so he can desire rather than want to desire (Holland, 2013).

Inspired by Kozinets, Patterson and Ashman's publication on networks of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016), I will built upon their adaptation of D+G's theory of desire to frame this research as it encompasses technologically enabled consumption. The New Theory of Desire (Kozinets et al., 2016) is the adaptation of D+Gs theory of desire to the increasingly technologically networked reality consumers live in. This theory, laid out below, will be the springboard used to gain perspective on the investigated phenomenon.

2.3   THE NEW THEORY OF DESIRE

Following Kozinets and al.'s (2016) adaptation of D+G, desire is understood as being an energetic flow that exists on its own, rather than referring to lack. Desire as a flow then acts as the connection between various actors and systems which come together to form the entities we experience in our everyday lives. Frequently used under the terminology of assemblages (De Landa, 2006), this part of the theoretical framework states that every perceived entity is in fact the result of an array of connecting actors, driven by desire. These actors constantly interact with each other to create the fluctuating reality of entities we frequently summarise as wholes in human experience. The actors can be humans, machines, platforms, government, industries and so on. These actors, instead of being termed assemblages, will be referred to as desiring-machines throughout this study, using the original terminology elaborated by D+G and highlighted by Kozinets et al. (2016, p. 662). These desiring-machines connect and disconnect at different systemic levels creating networks of desire in the process (Kozinets et al., 2016).

These networks of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016), are an assemblage theory (De Landa, 2006) and ANT related theoretic. Networks of desires are the open systems that are created by the connections between desiring-machines and within which desire flows between people, computers, social media platforms, social systems, retailing sites, products, brands, governments, and so forth. The network of desire formed around the Korean cosmetic consumption will be analysed through these lenses. With networks of desire, Kozinets et al. (2016) take the connective properties of desire further in a conceptual framework that includes entire systems and various desiring-machines, specifically technological components and, in our case, social media platforms. Their research situates energetic desire as reterritorialized from bodies to networks.

Before going further, I want to question Belk and al.'s (Belk, Ger, & Askegaard, 2000, p. 104; Belk et al., 2003) understanding of desire as the result of a lack and their dismissal of D+G's theory of desire as being an energetic flow, as argued by Kozinets, Patterson and Ashman (2016, p. 676). Their identification of desire to desire, rather than unfulfilled other desires or lack, as the driving force of the desire cycle is indeed noteworthy. Isn't the concept of desire to desire just another way of stating that desire exists on its own and isn't consequential to human experience? Isn't the fact that there is a preceding notion of desire to the desire we actively engage in, pointing towards desire as energy? In this regard, desire to desire could be interpreted, as theorized by Belk and al., as a flow of energy that connects people to the action of desiring objects. The authors defined the desire observed in their study as embodied passion, which also aligns with D+G's theory of desire as an energy that can be territorialized in bodies.

If desire to desire and desire as an energetic flow are understood as two sides of the same coin, then networks of desire are the technological extension of embodied passion, i.e. desire reterritorialized from bodies to networks. If desire, when territorialized in bodies, can break free from its repetitive cyclic nature by the process of sustaining desire through distance and lack of control (Belk et al., 2003, p. 342), can desire be sustained, and not only cycled or recycled in a networked environment? What is the line of flight, to use D+G terminology, that enables desire to be sustained, and not endlessly rekindled, in a networked perspective? In other words, how does the networked desiring-machines enable a breakage from this cycled desire, a creative new outcome to the repetitive tempo of our experience of desire (Holland, 2013), to enable new ways of maintaining a desirous state?

Sustained desire, as illustrated by D+G (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Holland, 2013), is exemplified by courtly love which is the infinite delay of pleasure, the state in which desire «fills itself»(Deleuze &

Guattari, 1987, p. 156). Deleuze (Deleuze, 1991) also identifies the masochist use of pain as a way of delaying pleasure, thus preventing orgasm from interrupting positive desire, opening up a space where «desire constructs its own field of immanence» (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 156). In his book on Deleuze, Organs without Bodies (2004), Zizek points to the schizophrenic explosion of the self into a multitude of desiring intensities as well as the masochistic delay of such intensities, clinging to tension, as two ways for desire to incarnate itself. These analogies refer to an individual experience relative to a single object of desire. In the context of networks of desire, continuously expanded by technology, how can desire fill itself?

In his book The Plague of Fantasies (Žižek, 2008) one can find an interesting link between sustained desire and fantasy. If distancing one's self from the pleasurable ending of desire is sustaining it, isn't fantasising, as described by him (p.14), the ultimate delaying of pleasure? The impossibility imposing nature of fantasy thus prohibits the full enjoyment of anything, letting us believe that better is achievable in our enculturated minds. The total satiation of desire, *jouissance*, was never there because it is always just imagined, symbolically castrated (p.19) by the fantasy. It never was achieved, this perfect *jouissance*, because we always come around wanting more (cycle). *Jouissance* doesn't exist in as much as it is a fantasised reality, a distance, a desire, sustained to keep us wanting. What I try to elucidate in this research is how this distance between subject and object of desire is actualised on the network; how the network becomes a space where desire is sustained by the fantasies it creates.

2.4   PERFORMED CONSUMPTION

Laying out K-beauty vlogging as a network of desire, the centrality of the videos as performances in connecting the networked desiring-machines was undeniable. The multiple levels of interactions between the platform, the vlogger, the audience, the market and the technological components, which will be defined in the context section, are the very fabric of the network around K-beauty vlogging. These interactions are all based on the desirous connections attached to the components of performance and consumption. These components are alternated, enabling the desiring-machines to connect in a network and territorialize desire. Indeed, it is the performance of the vloggers for a consuming audience that situates the desiring-machines on the network. The K-beauty vlogging phenomenon is both the performance of consumption by vloggers and the consumption of the performance by the audience, for they are mutually relying on each other.

Performed consumption here means shopping for, purchasing and/or utilizing commodities for an audience. In the case of this research, the focus of our attention will be on the consumption of Korean beauty products that is displayed by beauty vloggers on Youtube as a social media platform. It is created when the vlogger, in his cultural and geographical setting, captures his beauty consumption by using a recording technological instrument and uploads the edited footage on Youtube for an audience to watch. It is the epitome of «documenting the self for the consumption of others» (Arvidsson, Caliandro, Alan, Itai, & M., 2016; Schwarz, 2010, p. 165; Winston, 2013) but not only as means of publicity but as a product itself, a performance for the consumption of others.

Consumed performance implies an audience consuming the posts of the vloggers on said platform through a technological device in his own environmental setting and having the possibility to react to it by liking, subscribing or commenting the post. This cycle of performed consumption is fueled by the attention economy principles since the value of a performance and its probability of being consumed are measured by the attention they harvest (Humphreys, 2016; Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009).

In trying to understand k-beauty vlogging as a network of desire, I try not to compare performance and consumption in a dualistic way but rather, to understand how they perpetually influence and define each other. The cyclic relation of give and take, the process between performance and consumption, is what defines the boarders of K-beauty vlogging as a networked entity. This definition of the subject as the process is motivated by Zizek's account of Deleuze's work on desire (2004), in which he states that monism, a doctrine that denies distinction between concepts such as matter and mind and theorise them as two dimensions of the same concept, is challenged by the very fact that it tries to relegate one as a substitute to the other. To illustrate the deadlock emerging from this substitution, Zizek used D+G's understanding of «desire as the encompassing unity of itself and its repression» (Žižek, 2004, p. 64), highlighting the opposition that creates a new dualism within the subject itself, as repression inevitably affects the nature of desire once it is created within desire.

To escape dualism, the subject of interest must become the process between the subject and its predicative adjective, following Hegelian «speculative judgement» (Žižek, 2004). By this Hegelian twist on Deleuze, Zizek's monism thus becomes the process that relates one concept to the other and vice versa. Following this logic, the subject of this study is neither consumption nor performance but the processes between performed consumption and consumed performance. Without further ado, we can now situate K-beauty vlogging within this theoretical framework and lay out its composition as a network of desire.

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3   CONTEXT

This research was sparked by my discovery of Korean beauty products and practices through Youtube watching. I must now let you in on K-Beauty secrets to be able to take you with me on my analytical journey. Prior to defining K-Beauty vlogging itself, I will give a contextual account of how it inserts itself within the larger Korean beauty market. When K-Beauty vlogging is effectively situated as an interrelated part of this market, I will be able to better describe K-beauty vlogging and further situate it as a unique desiring-machine within Youtube.

The following Figure is presented as a mapping of the connected desiring-machines composing the field explored in this research. It will be briefly explained underneath before I go into further details about its components in the subsequent sections.

Figure 1-Coupled desiring-machines
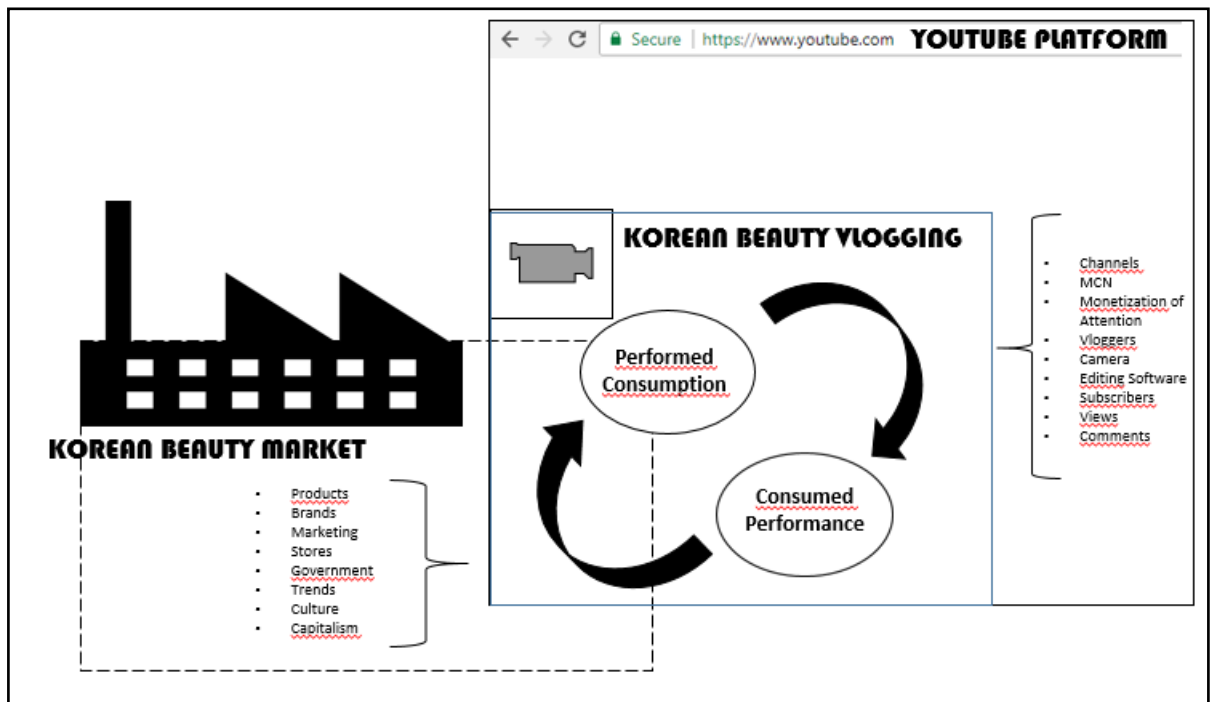
The figure above is a portrait of the desiring-machines connected in creating the K-Beauty vlogging desire network. First, we have the Korean Beauty market, represented by a factory like shape. It is an external desiring machine including K-Beauty vlogs as one of its components. The subject of Korean Beauty, as a marketable commodity and an attainable standard, accessible through the consumption of cosmetics, makes it impossible for K-Beauty vlogs to exist independently of this market. Indeed, the market for Korean-Beauty is the source of the various products and brands tested by vloggers as well as the stores and spas visited in vlogs. The market provides a unifying

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consumption interest, without which this branch of Youtube channels couldn't be realised in their actual format.

The figure also includes a web page shaped component which represents the Youtube platform as a whole, which is itself a desiring-machine connected to the Internet as a wider desiring-machine. Youtube is composed of various channels, multi-channel networks, technological components such as computers, editing software and an all-important algorithm (Rosen & Gielen, 2016) which determines the ranking of videos and, ultimately, the monetization of attention (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009).

Encompassed within the Youtube platform and heavily connected to the Korean-beauty market is the K-Beauty vlogging desiring-machine where we find the networked components I've investigated. This central desiring-machine is composed of various other desiring-machines that are networked together via the desirous connection between performance and consumption. Let's now immerse ourselves in the Korean-Beauty vlogging world as I describe the sights.

3.1   KOREAN BEAUTY MARKET

Through my own experience with the Korean beauty routine and products, I've changed my skincare routine from inexistent to a 10-step ordeal every morning and night. I have obtained, in a time frame of about a year, a large number of products varying in purpose, brands and prices and most of these purchases have been sparked by information gathered on vlog posts. I've also become quite knowledgeable about the Korean beauty market, the fandom around k-drama (Korean tv shows) and k-pop (Korean popular music), as well as about the context surrounding the exportation of Korean culture to other oriental countries and to the western hemisphere. In this section, I will attempt to summarize the prominent features of the Korean beauty market that are relevant to its vlogging counterpart.

An essential element to establish early on is the ubiquity of beauty in Korean culture (Ko, Chun, & Lee, 2011). Although beauty related consumption is prominent, acceptable and encouraged, as to fit certain beauty criteria in most modern cultures, in South Korea, men and women go to even greater lengths to fit certain beauty ideals, form skincare to surgery. Beauty is culturally entrenched in South Korean practices and heritage and it is increasingly actualised through material consumption as Seoul's economical and technological power continues to increase (Ko et al., 2011). Medical procedures to alter the appearance of facial features is common in South Korean and is part of the struggle of many Koreans to get married, get a career and succeed as individuals (Lee, 2012).

This fascination for beauty is also infused in self-care rituals such as the extensive Korean skincare ritual. The Korean approach to beauty when it comes to skincare is to treat your skin as you would other essential organs of your body. In treating the skin according to its needs, beauty becomes an exercise in prevention and routinized care of the skin (Cho, 2015). In comparison to a more westernized approach of reactively treating breakouts or aging and covering up the damage with makeup, the Korean philosophy takes into account the ingredients and their proprieties to prevent damage and encourage skin health (Carlson, 2016). To treat the skin, the Korean routine includes 10 different steps, oil-based cleansing, foam cleansing, exfoliation, toner, essence, serum, ampoule, emulsion, moisturizer and sunscreen. Not every step is done morning and night, as the steps depend on what your skin needs, whether it's brightening, plumping or hydrating, and on the time at hand to treat it. Another particularity is that most Korean women will possess various products for each step, using the one she feels best suited for her skin at a given moment. What truly differentiates this routine from a westernized one is how knowledgeable about skin, products and ingredients Koreans, mostly women but also numerous men, are (*Fung Global Retail & Technology*, 2017). These knowledgeable consumers are demanding innovation and effectiveness from their products which pushes Korean brands to constantly be immersed in R&D, giving birth to surprising formulations using snail mucus, pig collagen, bee venom and other ingredients which the average western consumer cringes at, except of course if the product effectively enhances their beauty, in which case they run to the shelves (Shin, 2014).

The *hallyu* or «Korean wave» is the spreading of Korean culture to a broader Asian based public (Jin & Yoon, 2016; Kim, 2007). It first occurred in the 1990's with Korean media and entertainment like K-dramas (series) and K-pop (music) (Schaefer, 2015) being popularized in other Asian countries. The first wave is now followed by a second one, *hallyu* 2.0, with the spreading of Korean culture to an international audience with a Western fan base engaged with social media and networked with other fans (Jin & Yoon, 2016). The second wave is broader in terms of public and its expansion is based on the relatively recent explosion of social media platforms, like Youtube (since 2005). The future of this Korean wave as already been termed *hallyu* 3.0 in which Youtube stars and creators effectively introduce genre diversification (Bok-rae, 2015).The exportation of Korean culture is now diversified in terms of content, as it includes the popularization of Korean beauty products, brands and practices. This occurs mainly via Youtube channels, which is the field of this research.

Most popular in neighbouring countries like China, Korea's innovative take on beauty officially reached the epitome of westernised countries, the United States, in 2011. That year, BB creams,

which essentially are skincare bind with makeup, made a revolutionary arrival in the western cosmetics (Shin, 2014). From that point on, western cosmetics have been playing catch up with the Korean trends. In 2015, Korea exported more US$2.64 billion in cosmetic goods, with a rising proportion of this exportation going to Western countries (Arthur, 2016).

One of the benefactors of the Korean-beauty market is the Korean government itself (Schaefer, 2015). Korean beauty, as Korean media and entertainment, is considered a national resource and is thus funded by the government for its exportable value. Attracting beauty tourists, even spas receive government funding; but most of the funds go to Korean brands effectively exporting beauty products. This investment is put towards researching and developing new products, which accounts for the Korean brands unmatched innovativeness (*Fung Global Retail & Technology*, 2017).

In Korea, the road shops in the beauty district called Myeong-dong provide a themed atmosphere where cute affordable beauty products can be purchased quite inexpensively (Schaefer, 2015). The cuteness of the packaging is also a hallmark of Korean-beauty products and visiting the beauty district seem like an experience in itself, although I can only account for what I have seen through the lenses of vloggers cameras, like many other subscribers. The K-Beauty market is differentiated by the extensive routine it supports, by the product's formulations geared towards prevention and by the innovation and cuteness focus of its brands. Korean brands have also embraced new technologies and social media as part of their marketing strategies, differentiating themselves from more conservative western cosmetics brands (*Fung Global Retail & Technology*, 2017). It is a shapeshifting desiring-machine connecting brands, products, stores, consumers, government, innovation, R&D, trends, culture and marketing strategies and infusing it into K-Beauty vlogging. The Korean market's cultural take on beauty is enticing, exotic, and access to this magic land of skincare is provided for an international audience by K-Beauty vlogs.

The market is itself composed by the connection of Korean culture, to the marketable longing for beauty. This connection creates an array of profitable endeavors in offering material goods that promise to bring you closer to the cultural beauty standards (Fung Global Research and Technology, 2017). The hallyu 3.0 mentioned earlier is the propagation of Korean culture and an expansion of the Korean Beauty market to an international public. The Korean government plays an important part in this market, as beauty products are considered exportable resources. Funding the cosmetic industry and orienting its development, the government makes the first stride, followed by K-Beauty vlogger, in exporting K-Beauty to an international crowd (Shin, 2014). The marketing strategies based on k-pop culture and its idols is also crucial to convey the beauty standards and translate the

first *hallyu*'s enthusiasm onto Korean-beauty products. The market connects with K-Beauty vlogging in providing it with its consumption based topic and its overall cultural background. The market can be transformed by the participation of consumers (Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Martin & Schouten, 2014; Parmentier & Fischer, 2015; Scaraboto & Fischer, 2013), notably by the megaphone effect (McQuarrie, Miller, & Phillips, 2013), providing ordinary consumers with access to vast audiences on social media platforms, like Youtube, where the reach of a message is based on social capital, the number and strength of social connections on a platform (Humphreys, 2016), rather then on institutional mediation.

3.2 YOUTUBE PLATFORM

Although the K-Beauty theme is provided by the connection established with the market, K-Beauty vlogging as a desiring-machine is more than its subject. Its embedment within the Youtube platform is crucial to the territorialisation of desire and its networked expansion. As a platform, Youtube is a system that coordinates the interaction between vloggers and users as a two-sided market where value is provided for both consumers and producers (Humphreys, 2016; Rochet & Tirole, 2003). Youtube facilitates access to wide audiences for desiring-machines outside of the more traditional frame of mass media as part of the democratisation of communication, called demotic turn (Jenkins, 2004), enabled by technology and amplified by the widespread use of social media (Humphreys, 2016; McQuarrie et al., 2013).

Youtube is a desiring-machine based on attention as an exchangeable currency (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009; Simon, 1971) and the monetisation of attention in the larger context of technocapitalism, according to which consumption is increasingly convoluted with technological development (Kozinets et al., 2016). Youtube's technological settings thus define the consumption of both videos and material goods in the K-Beauty realm. The Youtube platform and its technological components are the connective elements on which K-Beauty vlogging relies to be able to connect with other desiring-machines. The discursive medium of video documentation of the self is inherent to the attention economy based culture of Youtube as a social media platform (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009; Kozinets et al., 2016).

Based on the attributes of social media messages, as described in Humphreys (2016), I will describe the content produced on the Youtube platform. The video format, as a communicative medium, conveys social presence (Short, J. A., Williams, E., & Christie, 1976) as vloggers sit straight in front of the camera an directly address the public as if they were with them. The media is rich as far as it

transfers a large amount of sensory information from the sender to the receiver (Daft & Lengel, 1986). This richness however cannot be reciprocated by the receiver as the videos are mostly discursive and only written comments can be produced in response to videos, which makes Youtube communications asymmetrical. Said comments are also sent in an asynchronous fashion after the video is uploaded in its entirety. The video posts are meant to be permanent, although it is possible for the vlogger to remove the content, and are accessible everywhere through the Youtube platform, as long as they are public. The informational content as well as Youtube are in a sense easily replicable but the masses of users and the social capital acquired on the platform cannot be duplicated (McQuarrie et al., 2013), which makes Youtube's content rather immobile.

The vlog format of K-beauty channels, providing information and opinions on beauty products, is a remediation of the blog format (Humphreys, 2016). A beauty blog, a blog subgenre itself, is a web based form of written communication through which a single author regularly posts informational content about beauty products and provides his or her recommendations. Beauty channels, including K-beauty channels, are the remediation of blogs to the video format (i.e. vlogs).

Youtube ultimately provides a networkable space for desire to connect various desiring-machines. By providing a pool of technologically enable human attention (through screen and algorithms), the platform effectively positions itself as a valuable connective pathway for the territorialisation of desire on the network. Youtube uses the freemium business model, providing their services for free and monetizing the attention gathered on the platform in relation to the attention economy (Humphreys, 2016, p. 275).

As posited in the theory of networks of desire, public and professional forms of participation on the network inevitably include attention seeking motivations (Kozinets et al., 2016). This desire for attention occurs because the social media platforms, enabling participation on the network, are based on attention economics, through which people's attention come to have value and are considered as currency (Davenport & Beck, 2001; Humphreys, 2016; Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009). The value of attention is measured in steps (attention, engagement and conversion) that are combined in an algorithm to ultimately monetize attention (Humphreys, 2016). For Youtube precisely, attention translates to views and time watched, engagement translate to likes and shares, and conversion translates to subscription (Rosen & Gielen, 2016). Flows of attention facilitate the territorialisation of other forms of desirous energy on the network motivating the expansion of the network by public and professional participation. Attention thus becomes the price paid to indulge in networked desire, as I will lay out in the findings section.

Youtube connects users producing content to users consuming content and thus depends on user creation to exist. Coherent with attention economics principles, professional users attracting and maintaining a decent following are paid for their creation of content in relation to the attention they draw. This user based production of content is called co-creation and is a staple of social media's participatory culture where audiences both consume and produce cultural products (Humphreys, 2016; Jenkins, 2008). What is also important to notice is that even the users, considered to be consuming videos, are implicated in the creation process as curator of the content, through the recording of attention, engagement and conversion (Humphreys, 2016).

K-Beauty vlogging, as a desiring-machine part of Youtube is composed of technological instruments such as the camera, microphone, editing software and the various screens through which content is consumed. These technological parts are connected with creators and subscribers as well as the video footage, comments and likes. The investment of attention, by the consumption of performance, thus fuels the performance of consumption and provide a desirous networked environment where desire is territorialised, which we'll discuss in the next section.

3.3   KOREAN-BEAUTY VLOGGING

K-Beauty vlogging is the act of a Youtube content creator, filming herself consuming, reviewing, unboxing or simply chatting about Korean beauty products as the main topic of her Youtube channel. A channel is a personalized space on Youtube where a vlogger can upload the video material to make it publicly available to anyone with an Internet connection (Bathelot, 2016). The vloggers are considered micro-celebrities because they are famous within this niche of K-beauty fans, but also because they present themselves as such, developing a relatable persona and content aimed at a specific audience in the hopes of attracting attention (Humphreys, 2016; Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009; Marwick, 2013). To show support and to be informed of any new content being uploaded, the public members can become subscribers with the touch of a button. Viewers can also like or dislike the video, giving it a thumb up or down and they can share their opinion to the vlogger and public by commenting in a section reserved for comments below the video itself.

Since beauty vlogging is vast and includes various niches, my research is focused on Korean beauty vlogging based on my familiarity with this subject. Korean-Beauty vlogs offered a fascinating cultural component and an invested group of followers which made for a rich observational field. The fact that I can't understand the Korean language oriented me towards Korean-beauty vloggers that produced content for an international public, trying to inform viewers mainly based outside of Korea

on the subject of Korean beauty. In the next figure, you can get to know the 4 vloggers whose channels became the core of the data collection for this study.

Figure 2-Main vloggers

Gothamista	TheBeautyBreakdown	Joan Kim	Edward Avila
Describing herself as a skin-thusiast, New-York based Renee has been in the beauty industry for more than 10 years and uses her channel, as well as a newly launched blog, to spread her love and knowledge of K-Beauty products. Her highly informative content covers ingredient lists, effects and value of skincare products. After 2 years and 92 videos, she amassed 219 243 subscribers.	Although she always has new products to talk about, whether she tries them in front of the camera, reviews their efficacy or just documents her purchases while on a Seoul shopping trip, Morgan also shares her opinion and beliefs with her 452 232 subscribers. Uploading more than 400 videos on her beauty channel in the last 3 years, she also as a travel related vlog and collaborates with fellow K-Beauty Youtuber when she travels to Korea. Most of her content is filmed in her United States living quarters.	This Seoul based vlogger has had a channel dedicated to K-Beauty, mostly product reviews, for two years and a second channel documenting her daily activities for a year. Famous for her first *Innisfree* empties video, Joan has an invested following of 268 571 subscribers on her main channel and 166 283 on her daily vlogs channel. Edward Avila encouraged her in pursuing this path, producing Youtube content full-time.	Having traveled around his fair share, accompanying his military family, Edward chose to settle down in Seoul where he finds inspiration to entertain his 564 586 followers through his eclectic channel, mostly focused around makeup application. His flamboyant personality alone is enough to fuel his subscribers' participation in the comment sections of his videos. He has been producing Youtube content regularly since 2013 and frequently vlogs with other K-Beauty Youtubers. He recently released a music video, broadening his reach into K-pop beyond make-up artistry.

These 4 channels were the center of observational data collection and were also used as communication tools to reach out to potential participants, which I'll explain further in the next section.

These 4 Youtubers, much like every content producer on Youtube, produce videos and upload them to their personal channel, where all of the content they want to share is gathered. Figure 2 stands as an example of the type of content a K-Beauty channel contains. The channel used for the figure is TheBeautyBreakdown.

Figure 3-Korean-Beauty Channel content

Beauty vlogs can take various forms which dictate the content and the structure of the videos. I will briefly resume the typology of the most common video formats in K-beauty vlogging and link a relevant example to convey the vlog experience in the figures below.

Figure 4-Haul video

A haul or unboxing video is the documented aftermath of a shopping trip, sometimes even including parts of the shopping trip itself, which consists of displaying the products acquired for an audience on a social media platform. It is this type of consumption documentation and material consumption sharing that prompt my interrogations on the role of these performances in the perspective of energetic desire.

(Fig.3:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-htf83t-Hvw&t=300s)

Daily vlogs are the documentation of what a vlogger does in a day. One of the vloggers in this study as a channel dedicated to daily vlogs which you can consult as a reference: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAo41QETLlwvJ-oqjmEPt8A/featured.

Figure 5-Empties video

In empties videos, vloggers go through products they have finished during a set period of time and voice their opinions on these products and whether or not they would consider repurchasing the items. (Fig 4: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oJkrWvfPQbA&t=132s).

Figure 6-Best products videos

In «Best of» or «fails» videos, vloggers give their opinion on the best and worst products on the market. (Fig 5: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJx9hUUgK0A&t=154s).

Figure 7-Q&A

Finally, in «About me» or »Frequently Asked Questions» videos, the vloggers reveal information about themselves according to the questions addressed to them by their fans on social media platforms (Fig 6: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHWPfbmO9P4).

These posts can be done by a single vlogger, or by a team of vloggers posting variations of the video on their various channels. As I learned in a Q&A video, vloggers producing videos together is a marketing strategy in Korean-beauty vlogging that is encouraged by Multi Channel Networks, acting as managerial umbrellas under which Youtubers are offered publicity and sponsorships (see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kInrSpnQ0V4&t=3s).

Each video is a chance for Youtubers to connect with their audience on a professional level in relation to the subject, but also on a personal level by disclosing information about themselves

(Humphreys, 2016). A channel becomes the space where a vlogger communicates periodically with its audience, usually in one of the discursive video formats mentioned above, which are the various shapes and forms assumed by performed consumption.

These forms of performed consumption thus initiate the cycle of successive production of content (videos, comments and replies) and consumption of said content, by vloggers and their following on Youtube, as a social media platform. It is important to mention that, although the digital actualisation of the cycle is activated by the production of content, the performance is nevertheless realised for potential consumers on Youtube; again, illustrating how the consumption of performance affects the performance of consumption and cannot be understood as part it.

The blurred lines between producer and consumer are typical of the participatory culture that is present in social media (Jenkins, 2008). This process relies on, and is fueled by, connecting desiring-machines producing value, either in the form of content or attention. The content value is thus consecrated by the viewers through the allocation of attention. This provides the vlogger's channel with the status of earned media as the coverage they acquire is allocated by a force external to their control (Humphreys, 2016). This status is what makes vloggers valuable to the Korean cosmetics companies because their recommendations are perceived as credible word-of-mouth (Kozinets, de Valck, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010) and are spread across a vast audience through Youtube; thus liking the market, the platform and the K-beauty vlogs in the creation of the desire network. The network of desire structured around K-Beauty vlogging includes its desiring-machine parts and the desirous connections liking them together in the process of performed consumption.

The process of performed consumption is a pathway to desire territorialisation, a way in for desire to be territorialised on the network. The vlogs are a ballet between performed consumption and consumed performance and they exist at the junction of the Korean market's material consumption and Youtube's attention economy (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009), using attention in the form of likes, comments and views in lieu of money in a technocapitalist twist (Kozinets et al., 2016), i.e. technology altering value attribution, in the social-media realm, to the point where capitalism is based on attention rather then capital.

This section provided the informational guidelines needed to understand the field within which I have conducted my research and defined the technological specificities of K-Beauty as a desiring-machine. The contextual components outlined were the decisive factors in the choice of method and tools used to gather and analyse data.

4 METHOD

I've been interested in Korean beauty vlogs, more specifically the ones addressing the topic of skincare, since November of 2016 and as I began following vloggers, I was shocked at the amount of people who had subscribed to some K-beauty channels. A lot of subscribers were also taking the time to leave comments, getting invested in the consumption of videos. Once I had exhausted my favorite vloggers' posts, left wanting more, I came across a Youtube video of a woman opening a box full of Korean products, simply unboxing them as she received her online order of Korean cosmetics. I was fascinated by the fact that this video had 107 651 views and over 200 comments, even though hardly any informational content was shared as she enumerated products, just recording her emotional reactions upon revealing the packaging of each individual item.

Figure 8: The spark!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQvlhamKj4Y&index=8&list=PLNVUHG-m9CosLki8vK906L4YWOi61Tph0
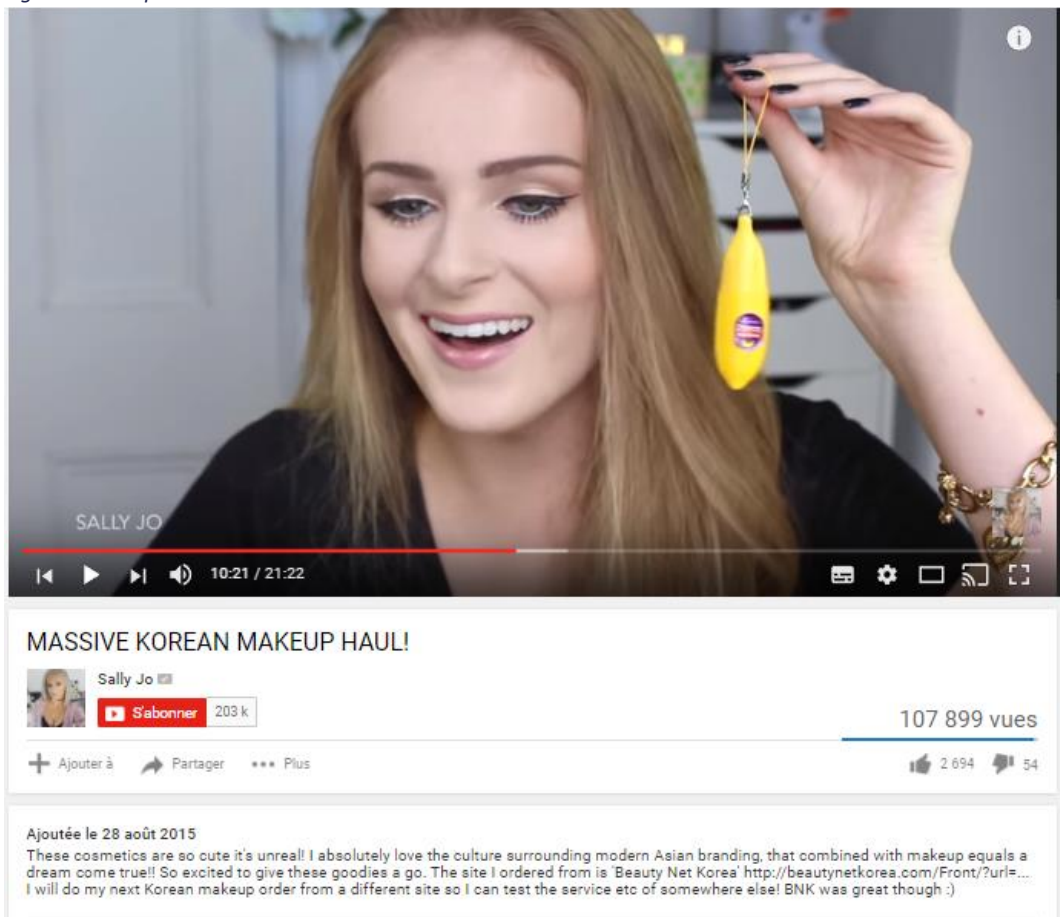
It was intriguing to me since I watched the whole video and really enjoyed discovering the products as she unboxed them. Even if I wasn't learning anything about skincare, I just stared at the products

with her, getting nothing else then a look at her consumption, as more than 100 000 people (in theory, at least, as we know numbers can be tampered with and views do not necessarily mean individuals) had done before me. It then hit me that Korean skincare vlogging was an intriguing phenomenon deserving of scholarly attention. This was the spark that ignited the redaction of this research. I started by researching online press for external information about Korean beauty and about vlogging as contextual elements. This understanding of the context via press articles and business reviews oriented the development of my research questions as it crystallised my understanding of K-Beauty vlogging within the desiring-machine theoretic deployed to understand the phenomenon.

Following the hermeneutics tradition (Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2013), I aimed to understand how the participation in Korean beauty vlogging, as a virtual space of interaction, affects the territorialisation of desire on the network it creates at the junction of Youtube as a social media platform and Korean-Beauty as a market. The methodology best suited to undertake this investigation was netnography (Kozinets, 2015), which continued to unfold as I had already started my own immersion in Korean-Beauty vlogs. The deployment of this method and its adaptation to the Youtube platform natives' way will be detailed in the section titled netnography. Before doing so, I want to address how the literature has affected the application of the netnographic method in guiding me through the iterative trajectory of data collection and analysis.

4.1 TRANSFORMATIVE DIVE INTO LITERATURE

I have noticed through my reading of articles in the vast field of marketing and consumer research studies that although theoretical foundations are inevitably mentioned, rarely do researchers explain how the discovery of a string of theoretical knowledge as shaped or altered their views of both the studied subject and methodology. Here, I try to convey how forging and polishing the lenses I've used to look at K-beauty vlogging has changed me, as a researcher, and my views of social interactions online.

Reading about networks of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016), I was instantly fascinated by the idea of connective desire bringing together beings as machines and expanding the possibilities of desire territorialisation itself. When I started reading about assemblages theory (De Landa, 2006), a new way of looking at K-Beauty vlogging took shape, as I begun to see technology and material components of K-Beauty vlogs as important as their human counterparts. I saw the market as an industrial assemblage fueling the K-Beauty vlogs with desirable content; Youtube as a technological

assemblage expanding desirous connective potential for K-Beauty vlogging to bloom into a networked actualization of desire.

Then, when I dove further into the philosophical theories of Deleuze and Guattari (Holland, 2013), I began understanding the whole world as being only one actualisation of connected particles, only existing in the now and through my cognitive filters. I let myself be transported by the train of thought but not driving it, just gazing at the panoramic view of all connecting entities through the windows; adopting nomadic thought (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Holland, 2013, p. 49) as an introspective and analytical stance to look at the involved desiring machines in the k-Beauty vlogging network.

This free flow of thought enabled me to pick out and analyse the collected data in a distanced yet involved manner, identifying what was brought on by my individual experience and examining it along what the data was highlighting by itself within this experience. Seeing desirous energy as the connective glue of reality, but only my own reality, as I humbly realise nothing is real except this moment, the actualized reality of my experience, looking at the data that only I see at this particular angle. Passive contemplation became analytical attention as I traced desire as an energetic flow bringing desiring-machines closer in creating the network.

This approach showed me to look at the process of positioning K-beauty within strings of both literature and research traditions as part of the research itself. Combined with Kozinets' methodological stance, including researcher's introspection and field notes in the form of reflective data (Kozinets, 2015), I adapted the data collection to include both a symbolic netnography based on coding Youtube user's comments and testimonies as well as a more introspective journal writing to share part of my own experience in an auto-ethnographic fashion, attempting to unveils similarities, differences and relatable uniqueness.

4.2   NETNOGRAPHY

Wanting to delimitate the parameters of my netnographic endeavor, I chose 4 vlogger's channels to be the core (field) of my data collection. They were selected primarily because their main topic was Korean beauty and the English language was used to talk about it. Two of them were based in Korea and the other two were based in the United States which gave an interesting perspective into Korean beauty in Korea's cultural setting and the challenges of trying to experience Korean beauty practices and products internationally. The 4 of them had between 100 000 and 400 000 followers and an engaged public in the comment section, providing me with tangible information to

understand the phenomenon in the pragmatic-interactionist approach (Kozinets, 2010), according to which the unit of analysis is the gesture rather than the person (Mead, Brewster, Dunham, Miller, & Morris, 1938) and, in our case, a textual act which is considered a social action as it is publicly posted online (Wittgenstein & Anscombe, 1997). I focused on textual comments from vloggers and subscribers as the forms of social interaction in the cultural setting of K-Beauty vlogging, defined as the performed consumption of K-beauty products on a Youtube channel. The vloggers on these channels also uploaded new content regularly (sometimes daily for two of them) which assured a continued possibility to be in contact with the cultural setting. Undividable from these technical criteria was my own fandom of these 4 individuals and their content, which I was striving to understand along the way.

While identifying the targeted vlogs for this research, I came across a lot of other vlogs that were useful to my understanding of the context of Korean beauty vlogging, especially vlogs produced by American online retailers of Korean-beauty products. I kept on following the activity of these vlogs and others, produced by vloggers who made co-appearances on the channels I followed, which came to a total of 15 followed channels. By following these 15 channels, I was able to stay on top of informational content and production style of the K-Beauty vlogging niche. I also followed the 4 main vloggers on Instagram and Snapchat to situate K-Beauty vlogging in the multi-social-media platform approach, through which they engage their public. All this contextual information was used to make sense of the phenomenon but also to organise my cultural entrée (Kozinets, 2015), aimed at subscribers, which will be detailed later on. Following the netnographic method (Kozinets, 2015), I immersed myself in the cultural world of beauty vlogging subscribers. Focusing on the four vloggers identified as the core of my data collection, I started by keeping up with video posts on Youtube and the comments they reaped. Receiving notifications every time a new video was uploaded, I made a point of listening to it within 3 days, but would usually be able to it play right away. Of course, in my netnographic journey, the fact that my own attention is a limited resource prevented me from ever seeing all related posts and comments pertinent to this research. It is a limit associated with my own adaptation of netnographic guidelines, fitted for a Youtube based netnography (Kozinets, 2015). I rigorously consulted at least one post a day, up to 5 posts depending on both the time at hand and the upload schedule of the vloggers. After having seen the video post and taken notes on the content, I would wait a 12-hour period for most of the action in the comment section to be over and would read the whole of them in the same sitting, collecting and coding the ones that stood out as related to desire. The comments varied in number, 100 to 1000 per post.

This part of my netnography was strictly based on the stance of observation, although I would strongly argue that this dedicated observational stance is in itself participative as it resembles the involvement of many subscribers of K-Beauty channels. After analysing more than 16 hours of Youtube content in the form of 73 video posts, mainly filmed and edited by the 4 vloggers who constitute the core of my data collection, and reading over 16 255 comments from subscribers about these posts, categorized into 168 coded entries, I looked at the data as a whole an focused-on recoding to identify patterns and contradictions in relation to sustained desire as the subject.

With the first part of this research resting upon passive observation only, I had been following Joan Kim, Edward Avila, Gothamista and TheBeautyBreakdown and keeping up, as much as is humanly possible for me to do during the time allocated to this research, mostly with their video posting on Youtube but also, to contextualise the data, on Instagram and Snapchat. In an effort to integrate my observation in the larger theme of K-Beauty's virtual presence, I also followed official Korean brands, other k-beauty vloggers, as well as curators and sellers for western based k-beauty retailing sites on social-media. Limited by my inability to understand the Korean language, the content had to be in English, and thus, was aimed at an international public.

All the collected data and the related reflective field notes were utilised in «interpenetration» to develop an understanding of desire embedded in K-beauty vlogging according to shared themes that are parts of a meaningful whole (Kozinets, 2015). This exercise gave a primary interpretation, which will later be laid out in the field notes summary section. According to the netnographic methodology (Kozinets, 2015), an iterative interpretation of the findings occurred as I went back to observational data collection. The codes were inclusive of the new information retrieved from comments related to desire. The coding based on observations proved to be all encompassing, as every new entry would fit into the codification. Since this is as far as I could go with passive observation, I produced an organised document summarizing the emergent themes which were brought to the surface by the second round of coding. This document was then used as a bench work to forge around while other data was being collected.

The observational first step of my research provided insightful orientation for the orchestration of my cultural entrée (Kozinets, 2015). Trying to push further into the cultural setting of K-Beauty vlogging, a participative observation strategy, eliciting subscriber's testimonies, was deployed. Setting up my own researcher's channel on the Youtube platform, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT5q9SywMltGs_YhSnIbXAg?view_as=subscriber, I used the video format to interact with potential participants. I created a video explaining my research an

uploaded it on Youtube, adapting interaction research to the investigated field (Kozinets, 2015). The participants were selected by purposive sampling as I informed them of my presence and intentions in the comment section of precise videos produced by K-beauty vloggers. Starting with my 4 core vloggers, I used the cultural practice of clicking on the video notification that the vlogger as uploaded a new video as soon as it popped up and commented right away, inviting people to visit my channel to reach as many involved subscribers as possible (see appendix 1). I then turned to vloggers who had made co-vlogging collaboration with the core vloggers to encourage more testimonies while staying in the K-Beauty vlogging circle targeting international crowds.

If the viewers chose to watch my video and were interested in participating, I addressed them questions in the description box of the video and instructed them to answer these questions, ideally in a video format uploaded to Youtube, or by sending me a private email of their recorded or written answers to the short questionnaire.

Figure 9-Research channel
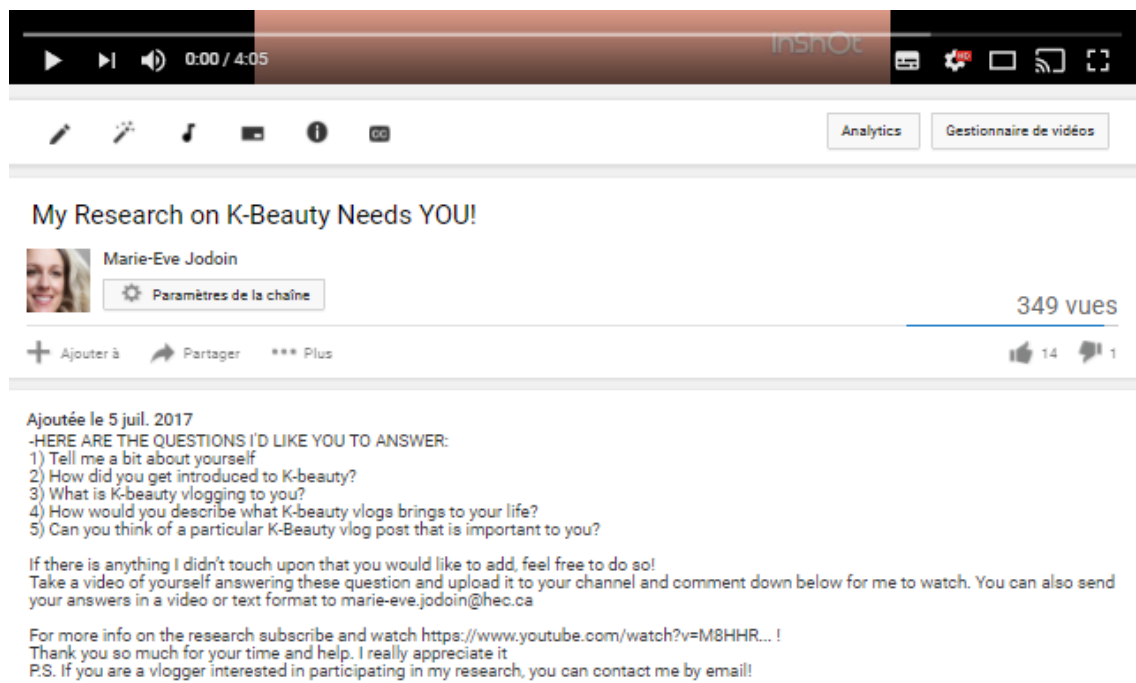
My first video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imLPnYgzDhc) detailed the subject of this research and reached out to potential participant in addressing them 5 questions about their personal experience with K-Beauty vlogging, as illustrated in Figure 8. These internet interviews led to an email correspondence with 7 participants, 2 of which ultimately kept an internet daily journal recording their K-Beauty vlog consumption experience for a 7-day period. Experiencing the creator's side of K-beauty vlogs was also helpful in understanding K-beauty vlogging:

On a very personal level, I had been putting off filming and uploading a video of myself on Youtube for quite a while and did so only because it felt necessary to deepen my understanding of K-Beauty and the desire it channels. Once I had uploaded it though, I ended up constantly checking how many views and likes I had. It was an invigorating experience and the attention received was addictive. I started taking reflective notes about the experience to extend my understanding of the Youtuber desiring-machines and as an approach to track my own amateur vlogger experience. The fact that I am unable to contact a vlogger will be compensated by my own account of the experience, even enhanced, as I will note how it feels and where connective desire takes me and my (hopefully) growing audience. I will produce tomorrow's video as a transition from strictly soliciting participation to offering content. I will explain that I am doing a netnographic research in creating a vlog to experience the creator's side and to entertain the audience in the hopes of getting them more involved. To get as much traction as possible with a potential audience of research participant, I will survey the vlogs to get a sense of which topic gets more views and more involvement from people and make it the subject of my first K-beauty vlog (Researcher's journal entry, 2017-07-13).

As this journal entry illustrates, the interactive data collection strategy evolved. Since the first video did well, I began filming and uploading content about both my research and Korean-beauty to experience the creator's side of things first hand, but also to establish a connection with a public interested in K-Beauty vlogs and encourage shared experiences related to my research inquiries. By managing my own channel, I was able to develop a close understanding of the desirous energy channeled on the network through the vlogger's time and energy investment in the creation of content. This strategy yielded one participant sharing her experience in the comment section of my researcher channel.

My sixth and last video was used as a member's check instrument in which I summarised my key findings to see if they resonated with the participants. (Here is a link to the video but it includes spoilers for the finding's section so beware: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yY0JhOTlWSk.) I uploaded the video for my followers to watch and sent a link to the email correspondents I had acquired through the first video's questionnaire. I received three positive responses, one from the channel and two from correspondents (see appendix 2, again spoilers!).

The observational data collected was organised in single entries, filling the textual data imported from Youtube and linking it to the relevant date, field notes, video type, channel and codes. The comments were extracted and replicated and were also saved as screenshots to ensure the context could be referred to later on. The link address was also attached to the data to insure the ability to return to the raw data if further contextualising was needed.

Here is an overview of the sources used in this netnographic research:

TABLE 1-DATA SOURCES

Name	Sources	Data set	Purpose of usage
Youtube footage	-Youtube Channels: Edward Avila, Joan Kim, Joan Day, Gothamista, TheBeautyBreakdown	-73 video posts	-Understanding the creators' role, practices and content
Netnographic data from case studies	-Youtube videos' comment sections	-16 255 comments	-Emic coding and identifying preliminary findings
Reflective field notes	-168 coded field note entries on vlog experience -Researcher's journal	-10 pages field notes summary -12 pages journal entries	-Tracking of my own cultural immersion and observations -Etic coding
Elicited data	-Research's Youtube channel -Email interviews -Internet journals	-6 comments -25 emails -14 journal entries	-Access to contextual information -Reinterpreting preliminary findings
Member check	-Response to preliminary findings video on researcher's channel	-1 comment -2 emails	-Insuring resonance of findings with members
Archival data	-Press articles -Business reviews -Reddit boards	-10 articles -2 business reviews -28 conversations	-Culturally situating the phenomenon and providing context

4.3   DATA ANALYSIS

The method used to analyse these sets of data was an hybrid of manual coding and hermeneutic interpretation, once a certain level of coding was reached, which is coherent with interpenetrating (Kozinets, 2015) i.e. going back and forth between interpreting the data and being immersed in the field with the interpreted data in mind. Emic coding was first used to situate desire in the language used on the field and etic coding was subsequently juxtaposed to situate the entry in relation to the literature (Belk et al., 2013). As «illuminating grasps of meaning» (Spiggle, 1994) emerged from the entanglement of the literature and the data, the coding gave way to a process of going back and forth between the textual data and the developing whole. The whole organized through coding then sent me back to the entries, which helped me in giving a new consistency to the whole and organize and understand specific coded data (Arnold & Fischer, 1994). This hermeneutics method was especially helpful as I tried to converge with Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic thought (Holland,

2013) in an effort to truly understand desire as a free flowing energy. Nomadic thought is the effort to liberate the thought process from constraining steps and to let the educated mind reach a coherent understanding by way of unique processing of the data. The nomadic thought could be used in netnographic methodology, as an extension of the hermeneutic interpretation, to reveal an even more literal use of the «researcher as a tool». In the case of this research, cultural knowledge of k-beauty vlogging defined the thought currents I followed in identifying emergent themes.

The elicited data set was where I could deepen the themes identified through my observational participation in K-beauty vlogs and their comment sections. As the testimonies started pouring in, I could better understand the human narrative behind the territorialisation of desire on the network. I analysed the testimonies by juxtaposing them in their entirety and by organising them in amalgams of answers to specific questions. The data analysed unveiled the process inherent to the parts when assembled as a whole. Interpenetrating this data set gave both richness to the parts and further cohesion to the whole.

At this stage of the research, my observational stance had produced inclusive codes, so I reverted to a more laid-back type of observation to be able to immerse myself again in the passiveness of the experience of Youtube watching, which had been identified as a key component of the human experience through testimony analysis. While pursuing my active participation as a creator and focusing on analysing elicited data, I could regain my own enjoyment for K-beauty channels, as this journal entry illustrates:

> *I have found that through the process of collecting and coding data, my excitement for the videos as diminished as the task of reading 1000 comments for 2 hours after having consumed the short video content seemed daunting. At first, I was really motivated and interested in the comments but after 15 000 of them, the repetitive nature of both the content and process sucked the motivation right out of me. As I have been able to code and deepen my understanding of the categories emerging from the comments data, I will go back to watching the vlogs to convey back the «natural» enthusiasm I shared by being part of the actual audience, looking up at the show rather than taking pictures of it if you will, living the experience instead of recording it (Researcher's journal entry 2017-07-13).*

The first part of data analysis focused on coding and identifying recurrent desire related themes. As it provided a clear understanding of the forms of desire territorialised on the network, I though helpful to share them with you as they emerged of the raw data. This will serve as a gateway to the findings, which will go deeper into the desire territorialisation on the network, according to desire

forms and the united gravitational force they acquire in the process of sustaining desire on the network.

4.4 FIELDNOTES SUMMARY

After analysing more than 16 hours of Youtube content in the form of 73 video posts, mainly filmed and edited by the 4 vloggers who constitute the core of my data collection, and reading over 16 255, mostly short, comments from subscribers about these posts, categorized into 168 coded entries, I took the time and space to organize my field notes and codes into preliminary findings.
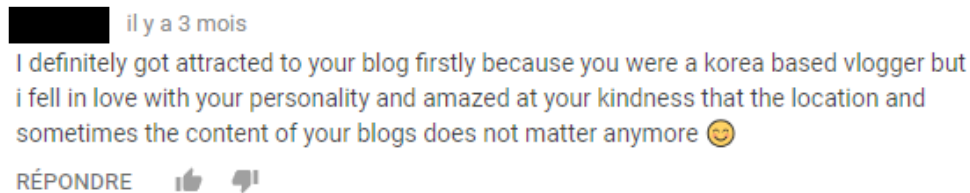
Looking back at my observational log, I analysed the data as a whole for the first time as I made a recoding effort using sustained desire as the lens through which I approached K-Beauty vlogging. Here is an overview of the salient themes for the passive observational step of my research, which emerged from a hermeneutic interpretation following the second coding process.

First, the theme of material consumption seemed like a core subject and base level of connection for the networked desiring-machines around K-Beauty vlogs. As this field note describes, it is in trying to advocate responsible consumption that a vlogger underlined the acute importance of material goods and rendered it evident to me:

> The omnipresence of consumption in a youtuber lifestyle, as well as in the content she creates, sometimes contradicts the values she promotes, such as responsible consumption. She opens a new jar of product every other day, advocating less buying but still recommending new products in the same video. These contradictions render evident the consumption aspect of youtubing and the inevitable market frame within which it occurs (Researcher's field note, 2017-06-13).

This insight was revealed upon listening to a vlog explaining the concept of skincare diets. Produced by a Gothamista related vlogger, Liah Yoo, the video highlights an interesting contradiction based on the material consumption related desire: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGbRD47cQoo. This material consumption theme integrated various codes including knowledge, endorsement and Youtuber motivation.

Second, the frequency and intensity of comments expressing the connection felt towards the vlogger and the inseparable nature of this connective bond from the self-identification as part of the K-beauty network made social desire stand on its own as a desirous form of energetic connection. The realisation of the centrality of social desire is well illustrated by the following entry: « The fact that a lot of subscribers said they would still listened to her channel even if the subject changed all together is a sign that she became part of their social circle» (Researcher's filed notes, 2017-05-19). The image below illustrates the nature of comments that inspired this field note.

il y a 3 mois

I definitely got attracted to your blog firstly because you were a korea based vlogger but i fell in love with your personality and amazed at your kindness that the location and sometimes the content of your blogs does not matter anymore 😊

RÉPONDRE

Social desire was identified as a recurrent theme with the inclusion of codes such as FAM, asymmetrical relation and background consumption.

The third and last emergent theme was a desire for Otherness, found in entries under codes escape, living through and therapeutic. It was rendered salient as users mentioned the vlogs as an escape route from their experienced realities when they became connected to the network to experience someone else's reality through consumption of performance. This field note marks one of the moments where this desire was identified: « Subscribers are showing interest in watching him do anything. They want to watch him almost as if it equates being with him. A vlogger's activities are worth more than a subscriber's, as they would bypass their own activities to watch him do his» (Researcher's field notes, 2017-06-06).

The adjacent screenshot is a representation of this desire for Otherness performed by vloggers, as this commenter ask Joan to visit a restaurant which he can't physically visit himself.

Can u please go to exo chanyeol mum's restrauant viva polo please and vlog it

• 2 weeks ago

Because I live in the uk and probably never be able to go

• 2 weeks ago

I'll try! It's a popularly requested one :)

joanday • 2 weeks ago

These three themes, derived from the observation of Youtube participation, were later expanded upon by a more active participation on the network and by the testimonies and journals of individual participants. This section identified the core findings of this research as they emerged of the data. Let's know take a deeper look at desire on the network as we explore the three types of desirous energy territorialized on the K-Beauty vlogging network.
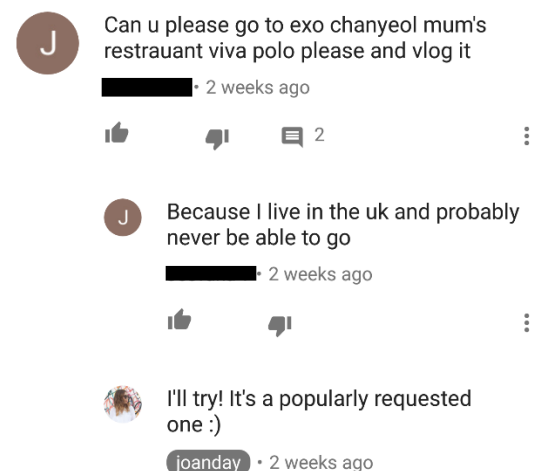
5 FINDINGS

5.1 DESIRE TERRITORIALIZED ON THE NETWORK

The desirous connections highlighted in this research were identified as three major connective arteries territorialising desire on the network in three distinct forms. The following sub-sections will address each specific level of desire and its territorialisation on the network. The next section will then explain how the three levels of desire are connected in the deepening of the intensity of desirous energy to effectively sustain desire on the network surrounding K-Beauty vlogging. Constituting various levels through which desire is oriented, expanded and abstracted, the progression of desire is how the network sustains desire onto itself (and ultimately gives sense to the concept of attention economy).

5.1.1 MATERIAL CONSUMPTION DESIRE - THE BAIT

The first form of territorialised desire on the network is desire for the consumption of cosmetic goods. I want to start by situating material consumption, consuming k-beauty products, as an obvious shared interest of vloggers and subscribers alike. Such a material consumerism is what brings the consumers to the vlog, it is the bait bringing the fishes to the line. The bait is the possibility to indulge in our passion, in the form of material interest for Korean beauty products. This desire for K-Beauty consumption is what D+G describe as a capitalistic channeling of desires into interests (Neu, Everett, & Rahaman, 2009). I will begin by defining interest based connective desire and then illustrate it using collected data.

A Youtube search for any interest based passion will yield a multitude of channels, offering tips, tutorials and questions and answers videos, to help consumers dive deeper into their passionate consumption. K-Beauty vlogging is no exception as it offers virtual access to a variety of K-Beauty products and information on the topic. Once the interest in K-beauty links a desiring-machine to the network, it fuels its passion by providing knowledge relative to said interest. Subscribers look for information on products, routines and ingredients to better treat their skin with Korean products. To subscribers, an informative review on a product that appears as accurate to the viewer, translates to trust in a vloggers opinion. The subscribers come to trust a vlogger's endorsement of products when they feel as if the vlogger as effectively conveyed knowledge. The endorsements become a way to stimulate the imagination for material consumption. Seeing products used by the vloggers is inspiration to consume. It is an information based form of self-seduction (Belk et al., 2003), where we seek out knowledge about K-beauty product to justify indulging in our material consumption

passion. This comment illustrates how the process is enabled specifically on the network, as it is compared to skincare advice from the more traditional in-store buying experience:

> A vlogger gains my appreciation and their opinion gains value when I really see knowledge being passed along… So she, who offers real knowledge and advice gains my trust and I will purchase products off of her recommendation. I think it's because in stores you never get honest and straight forward help (C.J., Youtube comment, Researcher's channel, 2017-08-07).

Knowledge becomes connected to territorialise material consumption desire. An exemplary case of this quest for K-beauty knowledge acquisition would be Gothamista's channel. She produces educational and information focused videos on the topic of K-beauty and, as poster Barbara Smith commented, «…must have a PhD of K-Beauty by now!» (Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-22). Her comment section, compared to other vloggers studied where social interaction and personal comments are greater in number, i.e. within which the K-Beauty subject matter is understood as common interest between socialising parties, is much more focused on informational content about skincare and product formulation. The informational content his present in the video content as well as in the comment section, as this poster underlines:

> Thank you for being so accurate when it comes to understanding chemical compounds. I'n a chemist, and I have came across so many "gurus" who dont do their research and understand that not all chemicals are bad. And even the ones that are hard to pronounce aren't bad! Thank you thank you thank you! You're so freaking perfect! (yi ha, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-23).

This display of knowledge seems to convey the subscribers' trust and bestow value upon her endorsements, which are often converted in subscribers' market consumption. This specific use of vlogs as informational tools for material consumption is also seen in her comment section as subscribers openly mention buying, « I only trust your reviews! Going out to buy all the products you mentioned first thing in the morning. #gothamistamademebuyit☺ Thank you Renee ❤ You're lovely!» (hooraaeh, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-21). This poster puts emphasis on the fact that Gothamista is responsible for her beauty product consumption, even though she chose to listen to her video content to get information and recommendations. The vlogger's opinion is ultimately used as justification for her beauty purchases.

Product consumption is the heart of the performed consumption enacted by the vloggers. They use the «Youtube life» as a way to indulge in consumption. A vlog, post during which 3 vloggers take the camera along for a shopping trip, is a good example of the activation of the network around K-

Beauty to inspire consumption. In this vlog, Joan Kim states «I just filmed a haul for stylenanda and I just bought more! This is dangerous everyone», to which Edward Avila avidly responded, «That's the Youtube life! » (Youtube video, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-04-26) (see video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOLZohnbbdE&list=PLNVUHG-m9CosyZZPTOB386SoRcWUPgmdb&index=4&t=18s). Another example of a vlogger desiring – machine connected to the network through consumption based interest is the following statement by Gothamista, on the subject of K-beauty product consumption in a OhLolly haul review: « as a consumer addict, I love to find new places, great and trustworthy places where I can just, feed my soul. And, if my experience is great, I get to share it with you guys! » (Youtube video, Gothamista's channel, 2017-06-06). Here, the vlogger literally mentions her addiction to beauty product consumption, identifying said consumption as a soul feeding, utterly fulfilling experience. She also points out the concept of sharing her consumption based passion on the network and how it magnifies the experience.

This material consumption part of k-Beauty vlogging is desire channeled into interests, or rather onto beauty products as desired objects, and is situated as a part of vlogging that is strongly connected into the K-beauty market. It is the reason why brands and retailers send products to Youtubers for them to review, to cultivate and harvest that desire to consume physical objects, by having them display their enthusiasm through performed consumption. It is the market's way of taking over the excess of the territorialized, interest based, desire on vlog channels (Žižek, 2004). By allowing their attention to a beauty vlogger, subscribers who seek material consumption inspiration patiently await to be seduced (Belk et al., 2003) and the market, as a desiring-machine, makes itself to be the aim of said desire, shape shifting into an array of desired commodities. Desire can be sustained at this level by the constant display of unattainable products that keep the subscriber's wish lists alive. Whether they are unavailable for international shipping, too expensive or just that the sheer number of products presented makes it impossible to buy it all, this discovering of unattainable objects keeps the desire alive and prevents *jouissance* from interrupting desire. This comment embodies the positive feeling relative to the discovery of an array of unattainable object: « Just found your channel and I am obsessed! My skincare wishlist is sooo long now haha ☺♥» (Diana Wolf, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2016-09-06). The fact that the vlogger provided poster Diana Wolf with new products to desire has made her obsessed with the channel, wanting to be drenched in desire, fantasising about material consumption. Desire is sustained on

the k-beauty vlogging network by the very fact that it extends the desiring-machine' realm of possible fantasies when networked as a wider system (Kozinets, Patterson, & Ashman, 2016).

This shared interest is the energetic desire, the sticky cobweb, uniting desiring-machines in the actualisation of the network. Consociality (Kozinets, 2015, p. 11), a relatively loose and temporary type of social connection based on a shared interest, is thus, in the case of the participants in this research, based on interest in Korean-beauty products. It is what sparks the vlogger's performance of consumption and unites the flock of consumers to «attend» the performance; all in search of a deeper investment in relation to the material consumption based interest, indulging in desirous connection in the most domesticated capitalist way (Neu et al., 2009). This is what was termed disciplined desire, observed in the private participation in the food porn network of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016). I am in disagreement with the idea and the terminological implications of disciplining desire. In light of the data collected for this research, I would argue that desire is oriented towards, rather then being disciplined into, interests, by both private and public participation on the network. The desire channeled onto material consumption objects is only a momentary confinement of desire, as it is funneled by capitalist interests, only to be later expanded by the continuous participation and need to activate the network formed around our interests, to «feel» the connective desire. The interest in K-Beauty and the participation on the network, private or public, eventually shifts into a feeling of belonging, bestowing relatability upon the vlogger, mutating oriented desire and expanding it, as desire becomes socialisation amongst interest sharing networked desiring-machines. This shift will be further explained in the section demonstrating the links between the forms of territorialized desire providing cohesion to the network.

Although desire can be sustained by consumption interests on the network, it is not sufficient to explain the vast network of desire around K-Beauty vlogs and how sustained desire keeps its desiring-machines components connected. The desire for material consumption territorialised on the network is often deterritorialised, embodied by consumers and actualized by the consumption of cosmetic goods, through which process it becomes cycled (Belk et al., 2003). Purchasing products and «giving in» to desire, effectively interrupting the desirous connection to the network, meaning that desire has to be initiated again, through Youtube watching, in search of material consumption inspiration. This connection between consumers and new objects of desire, activates the network in cyclic motions. As A.A. highlights in her daily consumption of vlogs: «The reason I watch the video is because I want to know what products the youtuber is using. This is so that I could, maybe, take it into consideration for my future purchase of masks» (A.A., Journal entry, 2017-07-17). This

personal journal entry can also illustrate how I connected to the network through consumption interest as well as my obvious desire to remain connected to it: «: I am doing a current shopping cart and can't resist the urge to just «edit» my wishlist and cart. I frantically watch and rewatch videos of recommendations» (Researcher's journal entry 2017-06-08).

Material consumption desire can account for part of the sustained desire on the network, but the fact that it is subject to deterritorialisation makes it insufficient to explain the cohesive network around K-Beauty vlogs. A deeper look into the two other forms of desire territorialisation in the following section will outline the missing desirous links justifying the network's existence.

Desire for material consumption is the first point of contact, the outline of the network but it is not the only form of desirous connection on the network; and enlarging the realm of possible material consumption goals is certainly not the only way desire is sustained on the network. The consumption of the performance itself actualises desirous connections on the network, expands and further sustains desire on the network through social desire and desire for Otherness, which are similar to the themes of Desire for Sociality and Otherness (Belk et al., 2003) but in a technologically networked manifestation. As expressed by this subscriber's comment: «We come for the subject (in this case, Korea) but we stay for the interesting person behind the camera» (Lisa, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-02-19). If material consumption is the bait bringing viewers to the vlog, the desire for social connection is the hook that transform viewers into subscribers, fishes into catches.

5.1.2 SOCIAL DESIRE - THE HOOK

As previously mentioned, desire funnels desiring-machines, orienting them according to interests, connecting them together to outline the network. The network thus formed becomes host to the territorialisation of other forms of desire that are intensified through their connection to the network. In discussing the second form of desire, social desire, I want to put emphasis on the desirous intensity present on the network. To do so, let's explore the addiction related vocabulary that saturates the comment sections of our vloggers. Two previous comments employ words such as «consumer addict» and «obsessed»; this use of addiction related terminology always relates to the vlog as being the trigger.

First, the produced videos are there to be consumed avidly, as the number of binge watching references are recurrent for newcomers and old subscribers alike, on all channels: « All day yesterday I've been binge watching your video/ vlogs! I love them so much and you just make my

day so much better Joan! Love you girly❤️❤️» (Amanda Chavez, Yoututbe comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-15). The addictive proprieties of the vlog are even a bench mark of the vlog's quality; if it is worth binge watching, undivided attention is given as reward:

> I rarely add new subscriptions because for most youtube channels it's only worth favoriting one or two videos, but your channel is just full of useful, pertinent information! It's very refreshing. When I do subscribe it's like starting a new tv series. Time to binge-watch (Angie035, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-06-23).

Second, the compulsive urge to watch immediately any new material that is added is also relevant to addiction, as *axlogic*'s comment exemplifies here: «fuck. here i am, writing my criminology exam essay (due tomorrow), and the notification to this video pops up. i mean, now you're basically making me eat my lunch an hour early just so i can watch this» (Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-05-13). Sofia G even mentions the unhealthy aspect of her vlog consumption:

> I've been watching joanday everyday and also catching up on previous ones all day long just on the background and yesterday I dreamed about watching your vlogs!😊 this is the first time I dreamed about watching youtube. This is unhealthy lol (Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-13).

In investigating how desire was territorialized on the network, I observed the subscribers' avid search for the ignition of their desire, communicated passionately through addiction metaphors. As desiring-machines, they were looking to connect and expand desire on the network in a way that is resonant with self-seduction(Belk et al., 2003): « I was bored af at work when I found his channel now I'm hooked and making it my mission to watch all his vids bye ✋» (Boom Jimin's Profile, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-04-14). Subscribers territorialize desire on the network when their very search for passion is met with an addictive social persona: « There is something in you that captivates me watching and hearing you talk. You are so addicting» (Glass half Full, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-21). The addiction even transitions to other social media platform as it is relative to the persona rather then the produced content:

> Besides the fact that I was in Renee withdrawal and have been rewatching some of your videos (I swear sometimes I take notes!), this is an amazing video! I was really curious about this brand, especially since you've been instagramming some of their products more than once lately (Ronda, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-09).

This last comment, with a reference to withdrawal, refers to the constant need to feel connected to the Youtuber. The longing for a social connection shifts vlogging from a shared interest based activity to a pre-existent state of addiction. This social addiction is pre-existent in the sense that the vlogger's performed consumption already called for the passionate attention and the viewer was effectively looking to trigger desire. When the waves of passionate attention and the desirable social performer meet, the addiction is actualised (reified in the quantum physics term), activated by their encounter in the place where it already was, in the Deleuzian sense of «generating bodily reality from virtual intensities» (Žižek, 2004, p. 21). Desire is territorialized on the network by that encounter, between the lurking public in need of and object to desire and the vlogger as social fodder. It is the relatability of the vlogger that is addictive and attention worthy on the K-Beauty network of desire. «Maybe that connection is the fact that she has experienced having acne before, and now that I am having acne I feel that her topics are more relatable to me» (A.A., Email correspondence, 2017-07-13). Talking about Morgan from TheBeautyBreakdown channel, this participant also underlines how relatability is what motivates the attention she invests on Youtube: «She seems like a wonderful person and an excellent role model. Plus, she is entertaining to watch and I can definitely relate to her» (Z.R., Email correspondence, 2017-07-10).

Addiction vocabulary acts as a communicative tool of excess, it underlines the fact that the vlogger is the ultimate desired object that they consciously indulge in watching. The desire is attached to the vlogger as a social being and the need subscribers feel to have them around is met on the network. This desire to be «with» the vlogger is illustrated by both the habit of listening to their videos in the background while doing something else and, in an opposite but complementary way, to the willingness to watch the vlogger doing anything: «Oh my gosh I loooove your reviews so much; a lot of times I even just have you playing in the background as I do my makeup in the morning. There's just something really wholesome and soothing to hear your voice! » (darkflaminghair, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-03-20). This background consumption of the vlog is equated with a social presence, as is watching a vlogger while they perform chores not even remotely related to the subject of K-Beauty:

> Just place your camera somewhere and do your thing, do a time lapse of you doing work & cleaning. I personally don't mind watching you sit at your computer and edit, or eating at your dining table, or watching tv, or cleaning your room (77 likes) (Ania Ludvig, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-21).

The subscribers want to spend time with the vlogger to whom they feel socially connected and do so by living in the virtual presence of the vlogger. TheBeautyBreakdown channel's vlogger, Morgan, responds to Leticia Palma expressing her desire to «meet and talk about beauty all day» (Youtube comment, TheBeautyBreakdown channel, 2016-05-10) by commenting: «hahahaha follow my social media :) That's kind of like hanging out all day! <3» (Youtube comment, TheBeautyBreakdown channel, 2016-05-10). This illustrates the virtual nature of the relationship, the online, networked experience of sociality. The relationship and the closeness felt are real, but they can never be actualized in full. It takes fantasy to bridge the fact that a social connection is felt but can never be fully realized other than in this networked environment. Fantasy is the narrative created to keep the impossible seemingly attainable (Žižek, 2008) which sustains desire on the network. This previously stated comment will here be used again to illustrate the role of fantasy in sustaining desire on the network:

> I've been watching joanday everyday and also catching up on previous ones all day long just on the background and yesterday I dreamed about watching your vlogs!😊 this is the first time I dreamed about watching youtube. This is unhealthy lol (Sofia G., Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-13).

As she lingers in the vlogger social world, she feels ultimately as if she is always with her, even in her dreams. She remains in this networked desirous state even as she recognises the tension; she stays with the uneasy feeling, effectively sustaining desire.

The excess underlined by the addiction vocabulary used in the comments and private testimonies are coherent with the theme of excess and transgression, relative to desire territorialized on the network through public participation, identified by both Belk et al., (2003); and Kozinets et al., (2016). This excess is related to the social ability to «connect» displayed by the vlogger, to be relatable:

> I have found that I don't connect with all I watch. So I guess just like in real life you have to "click" with them. For example Gothamista and Caroline Hirons are THE experts to me when it comes to skin care and I'm sure are wonderful obviously smart, hard working women and only can be admired for. But I haven't clicked with them and I'm not desiring to "spend" time with them just out of affection. But it has happened to me with 2 other vloggers (although in makeup) Emilynoel and Lisa Elridge. It's almost like love. It's very odd because obviously it is virtual. But you just appreciate that person for who they are and their craft and knowledge (C.J. Youtube comment, Researcher's channel, 17-08-07).

This participant expresses the fact that, although she hasn't felt an uncontrollable urge to watch the studied vloggers, she had experienced this intense social connection felt towards Youtube vloggers with others. She compares the experience to love, which is a strong choice of word to describe a virtual connection. She reflects upon this association by saying it's odd but nevertheless real. Social relations developed with a vlogger are mostly virtual, in the sense that they can only be symmetrical within an imagined space, and rely on «digital intimacy» (Thompson, 2008) to convey relatability. The subscribers truly feel connected to the vlogger at a personal level but the vlogger, even if he acknowledges and feels connected to his audience as a whole, is not personally acquainted with each subscriber. This asymmetry leaves space for fantasizing about the missing part of the felt relation using the framework of other experienced social relationships. Expressions related to friendship and family demonstrate the close bond subscribers feel with the vlogger and conveys the nature of the relation elaborated through fantasy:

> Can't wait for your future meet & greets in different places, Joan! You're going places and idk I feel like a proud parent or something!!!! WAAH SO PROUD OF YOU 💔 Keep on creating, inspiring and making people happy!!! ✨» (Josi B, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-25).

This proud subscriber feels affirmed by Joan's success which reinforces the affectionate connection she feels towards her, as if she were her child. The next comment illustrates how these virtual social connections are experienced as bodily-real:

> You're so cute and humble. I just started watching you a few days ago but I already feel so comfortable watching your videos like I've been watching you for years! (Cassandra La Reed, Joan Kim's channel, Youtube comment, 2017-02-19).

The social connection is here equated with bodily-real relationships as this poster uses the analogy of feeling comfortable with someone and feeling like you have known them for years upon meeting them. This comment also expresses how this connection is felt instantly and depends on the vlogger's style and relatability. Subscribers even refer to vloggers as family members: Renee as «Skin Mom» (Cartoon Film, Yoututbe comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-09) and Edward as «Dad» (literallycarmella, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-05-18). This elaborate comment, liked by 171 subscribers, outlines the way consumers feel about the vlogger but also how the subscribers share a familial bond in being connected to Joan:

> Note to self Joan, never say sorry for being tired because you deserve resting!!! We, Subbies (*subscribers*) will totally understand :) And you tired and lack of sleep will make us sad, because a lot of us see you as our Big sister on youtube <3 take care :) and we're happy to see that you had a safe trip back!!! Also, I'm so jealous that you guys are having your summer, at Australia it's Winter so it's freezing cold and gloomy!!! Watching your vlogs makes it seem like everyday is summer haha :) (Patrick Lee, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-07-23).

The vloggers rarely respond to comments outside the first few posted and the highest ranked, and even then, their response is limited to a few words. The previous comment, part of the most popular comment on a video, as well as elaborated and full of sentiment, simply reaped the vlogger's usual response: «Aww, thank you so much !! ♡» (Joan Kim, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-07-23). This emphasises another dimension of the asymmetrical relation; the vlogger's possibility to self-disclose and ability to convey relatability, which can't be mirrored by the subscribers. The videos are seen as being a part of the vlogger's self, offered to their following. The subscriber's only opportunity to directly connect with the vlogger is through watching the content and commenting as way of social reciprocation: «I recently found your channel and I love it. Doing daily vlogs and the main channel is a lot of work! Thank you so much for working so hard and giving us a little of you every day :**» (Glittery Vegetarian, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-24).

The subscribers are thankful to be able to consume her vlogs and don't seem to see their attention as sufficient retribution for the vloggers work: « We're thankful enough you're willing to bring us along with you everywhere you go on a daily basis» (Olivia Lee, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-06-01). It is the asymmetrical dimension of the social relation that provides the space for fantasy to develop and social desire to grow into addiction linked behaviors. Since it is impossible to fully experience the fantasy of sharing a «bodily» relationship with the vlogger, the subscribers are left virtually living the fantasy on the network. Desire is ever present on the network, sustained by the fantasy that is, in part, made real by technology. It is reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor of courtly love (Holland, 2013, p. 97), the renunciation of orgasmic pleasure to sustain a state of pure desire intensity. The subscribers indulge in the virtual relationship with the vlogger on the network as it is the only space where this desirous connection can be felt since the vlogger and the subscriber ultimately only exist in their performed networked format. They renounce the «bodily» pleasures of social exchange, to remain in the virtual fantasy where they keep social desire alive. This can be coupled with the idea of public participation on the network as opening pathways for desire to transgress it's more restrained bodily confinements (Kozinets et al., 2016). The fantasy

is inspired by the unlimited possibilities to connect created by the technological proprieties of the network, where social connections run free from society norms, geographic boundaries and reciprocal attachment and investment. This sociality can even be felt in private participation on the network, i.e. when a subscriber consumes the vlog without interacting in the comment section, as this email testimony underlines:

> What I really enjoy is that there is no feedback, I don't need to comment or engage (I spend all day long at work collaborating with people, I have two film podcasts and unlike these things or housework, watching vlogs doesn't ask anything from me, no mental or emotional energy) I can just passively watch and enjoy videos (E.F., Email correspondence, 2017-07-06).

The fact that there is interaction isn't mandatory for social connectedness to be felt, the asymmetrical nature of the vlogger/subscriber, relation is an advantage to correspondent E.F. She appreciates the fact that sociality can be passively consumed, along with the video content, in the vlog format.

The malleable nature of social relations is a decisive factor in the territorialisation and sustaining of social desire on the network. Desire is sustained on the network by the offering of a virtual replica of a social fantasy while actively prohibiting the fulfilment of said fantasy (Žižek, 2004). In this virtual sociality verging on fantasy, the subscriber controls its desirous connections by having access to «on tap» presence of the vlogger without being imposed any effort to engage in socializing: « I feel like I be havin' a cute crazy friend who lives in my Youtube app on my phone» (DailyDoseOfIrony, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-01-14). Nevertheless, it is categorized as a real connection to the subscribers as expressed by this passionate subscriber: « I love you bothhhh. my truest friendship» (wendy14, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2016-07-06). It feels real because you truly get to know the person and the part of her she is willing to disclose on her channel but at the same time you can never get more, since interactions in comments and even in meet and greets are limited in time and are characterized by a fan/celebrity relation rather than a personal relationship (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009).

This possibility of abusing the control of the piece of vlogger you have, his unconditional video presence, coupled with the impossibility of accessing the actual vlogger, is putting the spotlight on the distance, the gap between your real and his real (Žižek, 2008). The materiality of the other's real, the fact that you are attached to this person but yet you'll never share a bodily social relationship seems to put emphasis on the enormously small space of impossible real (Žižek,

2008).You'll never meet, be friends, family and so on but this person is situated in reality, accessible yet out of reach. The vigorous control over the part you possess renders saliently real the part you can never have. The distance between the virtually enabled possibilities for relationships and the impossibility to actualize them is what sustains social desire on the network. That is, the only way the social relation can continue to be felt is if subscribers continue to live the fantasy, to invest energy in the form of attention, to get to know this person and her life, by deterritorializing desire from bodies to reterritorialize it the network. « I'm sorry to say I had forgotten why I love you. Your videos make me feel like we know each other. Makes me feel great. Love you!» (Irene Voltagio, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-01-14). This subscriber kept listening to the vlogger, although he had briefly shifted style for a more produced content, and here she expresses her satisfaction upon feeling reconnected to the vlogger as he goes back to a more conversational type vlog, addressing his followers directly.

Social desire is territorialized on the network when attention is connected to a relatable social desiring-machine. Positioned on the network, social desire is virtually materialised through a technologically created fantasy in which consumers socially engage. This social fantasy is the object of desire that you've been deprived of but you never really had, like in Lacan's symbolic castration (Žižek, 2004). Wanting a fantasised version of a social connection emphasises the fact you can never really have it, like this subscriber expresses: «I would kill to just spend 10 minutes talking with you. You seem so fun. It isn't fair that I live literally on the other side of the world. kill me» (Designed Aria, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2016-07-06).

The vlogger's understanding of the social aspects of vlogging is, at least in part, quantified, in relation to the attention economy it is based on. Edward Avila mentions wanting is personality to come before content, he wanted to produce a friendly channel. It is, by his own admission, this friendliness that in turn became audience retention and views, which made him more money and it is the reason he keeps doing it, as rendered evident with this advice he gave to wannabe Youtubers «Don't do youtube for money... but obviously I'm doing it for money at this point» (Edward Avila, Youtube video, 2017-05-15).

The channeling of social desire through relatability in performed consumption of a shared interest is our vloggers' main goal. They do so, although not exclusively, to make money based on the attention economics since Youtube, for at least 3 of the 4 vlogger studied, is their full-time job. It is the common interest as territorialized desire that is the bait connecting the various desiring-machine onto the k-beauty vlogging network. The attention economy based motivation to create

content is a paramount component of the territorialisation of social desire on the network (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009). Social desire, and specific desire for attention in the case of the vloggers, is the hook that keeps the desiring-machines networked around K-Beauty vlogs. These two separate entries from my personal journal, both on the topic of Youtube content creating, illustrate the social connectedness felt in relation to attention as a form of socialisation, they also underline the same addictive traits as in the consumer's comments about the social aspect of vlog watching.

> *Even though I've only got 8 subscribers and little attention (admittedly borrowed for my studied vloggers) I already feel a need to produce, be honest, be genuine and, most of all, be entertaining enough to keep their attention, as if it were an ever-fleeting sweet currency. I got a lot of attention (45 likes on my comment as the highest raked on Gothamista's sunscreen post) and I was riled up upon waking up and responded to the comment before getting out of bed and delayed attending to my real life responsibilities. Fulfilling enterprise, it seems like you cannot really organise a time of day to it... it is constant and immediate in the same way, and I admit, it feels good (Researcher's journal, 2017-07-14).*

> *The moment it (the video) is uploaded (on the Youtube platform) and the hardships are behind, seeing the response and the views climb is an exhilarating feeling. Also, a sense of accountability is developed towards the people who have chosen to follow you. The uploading part relies on the maintaining of fame and following for your own sense of self, to not disappoint the subscribers (Researcher's journal, 2017-08-01).*

The vast technological expansion of networked desire (Kozinets et al., 2016) organised around K-beauty vlogging also provides, beside a social desire harvesting infrastructure, an escape from your own (experienced) reality to a different but nonetheless «real» reality. Although social desire experienced on the network is already desire for social Otherness, desire for Otherness can be abstracted to other parts of the subscriber's reality. It is the technologically expanded concept of «the grass is always greener», through which desire is sustained by the inability to really possess this life, this family, this environment, this culture and so on. Truthfully, even the vlogger doesn't live the life portrayed on the vlogs as the footage is edited and the recording at least minimally staged, but the video posts as desiring machines become templates to imagine what your life could be, to live through the immersion in the footage, the camera as the extension of yourself. If a shared interest is the bait bringing the fishes to the vlog and social desire is the hook that keeps them on the network, then desire for Otherness is the line that yanks them out of the water, transporting subscribers to a fantasized reality.

5.1.3   A TECHNOLOGICALLY TRANSFUSED LIFE - THE OTHER WORLD

The metaphorical fishing for desirous connection as served as an image to conceptualise the vlogger desiring-machine as a fisherman, throwing lines into the water in the hopes of «connecting» with the viewers, the fishes. Material consumption, interest in K-beauty products, is used as the bait, the common ground where desire can connect viewers to vlogs.

Subscribers and vloggers alike then get more invested when this simple connection plugs them into the K-beauty vlogging network, providing a deeper experience of connective social desire. They are hooked by this networked feeling of connective social desire.

Human desiring-machines come for the material consumption bait, get hooked by the social interaction and then get dragged into another world, a virtually fantasised world where fishes join fishermen and where fishermen feel like celebrities, all sharing an experienced reality through the network. Like Disney's little Mermaid, they get to feel what it's like to escape their reality and experience the life on land, sustaining desire by stepping foot in the virtual space where desire is the only real, as their legs are only borrowed to the sorceress of the technological sea. The desire to escape one's reality through the network is desire for Otherness (Belk et al., 2003), as it refers to desirous energy, connecting desiring-machines to altered realities and providing a feeling of Ohterness to subscribers and vloggers.

To situate desire for Otherness on the network, I will begin by quoting a subscriber's reaction to the concept when exposed to it:

> The escape or living life through the other, I can't and I don't want to. That is the reason I'm not on Instagram and I hardly watch "a day with me" videos. It's not my life and I don't want to want something that could be real but is not. I'll never launch a product with lancome or fly from city to city with celebrities. It could become depressing and I would probably begin to be less content with my own life, which it is OK, not glamorous but ok. But obviously everyone has their escape. I just do it the old-fashioned way and watch TV☺or listen to music. I think everyone does have an escape from whatever stress is in their life (C.J., Youtube comment, Researcher's channel, 2017-08-04).

This subscriber's refusal to indulge in Otherness testifies of the intensity of the desirous energy territorialised on the network through the connection to virtual fantasies. Isn't vlogging, the showcasing of another's life, not just fuel for social fantasy and desire for Otherness, as in all of what I can't have but can indefinitely desirably gaze at? If that is true then C.J.'s avoidance technique when it comes to desire for Otherness is just confirmation of the existence of this desire

territorialised on the network and her unwillingness to give in to the tension of bathing in such powerful desirous energy. She equates this desire for Otherness to danger which is aligned with Belk et al.'s (2003) finding that desire, as a powerful emotional condition, opposes itself to qualities such as self-control, such opposition is used to highlight the intensity of desire by the authors. Her statement also sustains the social comparison theory according to which we establish our self-worth through comparison with others (Festinger, 1954; Humphreys, 2016), in refusing to experience the life of the vlogger she feels as if she is protecting herself from this harmful comparison which would leave her dissatisfied with her existence.

Desire for Otherness can be avoided but can also be indulged in by being connected to the network. The subscribers often seemed surprised by the insidious power of desire for Otherness:

> So I just realized that recently I have been living for your updates whether that be here on youtube or snapchat and I'm not complaining or anything at all. I just want to know how I became so invested in someone else's life lol. Anyway's I look forward to the next upload~» (Jocelyn V, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-01-14).

Here, the social desire to be close to the other becomes blurred with the desire to experience «being» the other, to live through him. Other examples of this state can be observed in the comment section of Joan Kim's daily vlog upon her return to Korea after a 2 weeks long trip: «Yay!!!! I feel as if I am home. What is this feeling haha.» (HWA Fan, Youtube Comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-07-23). This subscriber expresses that she herself feel like being back home watching Joan in her usual setting. Poster Lollylla also mentions experiencing events portrayed on the vlogs a if they were happening to her directly: «I love to see you opening boxes, makes me feel like I received packages too :) (Lollylla, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-07-23).

This consumption of someone else's experience of life territorializes desire on the network by connecting desiring-machines in Otherness (Belk et al., 2003). Desire for Otherness stands for wanting a taste of something different from our own experienced life. The desire to escape material reality in imagining a slightly different one. In the case of k-beauty vlogging, it's the vlogger's life-style, friends, family, cultural and geographical surroundings that is the fuel for fantasising in Otherness. Given access to this other material reality through the lens of a camera, desire for Otherness is territorialised on the network by the consumed performance. The human desiring-machines' desire for Otherness is expanded and sustained by its territorialisation on the network.

Engaging with another person's life is a way to escape one's reality in accessing Otherness, as this subscriber outlines:

> We get to live vicariously through you guys and feel like we're a part of this culture by seeing vlogs from Seoul. I think in a weird way it makes you feel closer to your fave idols, or at least gives you a better understanding of their roots. Not to fetishize an entire culture, but I think many still see Korea as a faraway exotic land and the ability to transport yourself there via YouTube is a nice form of escape from our regular lives in other parts of the world (girlyviolette, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-06-09).

It is the networked representation of an idealized life that provides a refuge, a getaway, a pre-made fantasy. For some subscribers, it is a way to escape their scholar reality: « This is my getaway from college» (63 likes), (Fiona Winds, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-16), as well as «For a student like me (back when I started watching k-beauty blogs), it was my escape because I couldn't possibly travel to korea and buy all the products so I lived through the vlogs» (C.V., Email correspondence, 2017-07-11).

The imaged notion of vicariously living through the vlogger was textually expressed by various subscribers and confirmed by the approbation of many others: « love this eddy, BUT when we gonna get that house tour video. Im living vicariously through you at this point so I wanna see it lol» (594 likes), (Brenda Colbert, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-05-18). Subscribers often ask the Korean based vloggers to visit sites they'll never see, just to experience it through them as this email correspondent expresses: «I also like that it allows me to see products that I might not otherwise, and just "visit" the beauty shops and Korea virtually» (E.F., Email correspondence, 2017-08-06). The notion of imagining being the vlogger is even mentioned: « Whenever i'm going out to eat or shopping, I imagine myself doing a joanday, Lol» (Naranja86, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-16). The networked desire expands the possibility for a virtual experience of reality. Networked and intertwined between the public, the vloggers, the channel, Youtube, the screen through which it is consumed, the products showed and the market it sustains, desire for Otherness can take an infinite number of shapes and forms. Desire territorialized on a network is inevitably greater than the sum of its desiring-machine parts, since without being connected, the desiring-machines potential for sustaining desire are limited by their bodily realities: the exactitude of the image created by a camera ceases to be limited by technological technicalities when coupled with the imaginative power of a human and, simultaneously, the human mind isn't bound to its bodily reality when accessing images on a screen, through a k-beauty channel. Desire is

territorialised on the network by the connections enabling desire to shapeshift and expand the boundaries of Otherness.

The desire for Otherness territorialised on the network is a virtual-real fantasy. It provides an out-sourced imaginative plot for fantasy, a Lacanian *Objet petit a,* providing an «almost jouissance» fueling the desiring-machines connections through which desire reproduces itself (Žižek, 2008, p. 53). In other words, by connecting with Otherness as the figurative target of desire, the target here being the fantasy of the vlogger's real, the networked desiring-machines stage a perfect space where desire can «fill itself». The fantasy can never be fully fulfilled and the subscriber is left on the network where he is drenched in desire, virtually experiencing the fantasy but prohibited to actualise it.

This desire for Otherness, connects various desiring-machines to create a momentary escape form bodily reality. This aligns with the theory of the extended self (Belk, 1988), expanding our capabilities beyond human bodies through a technologically enabled experience of reality. A post-human hybrid of machines and bodies that syncs the virtual and brings it ever-closer to the «real» (Hayles, 1999; Humphreys, 2016; Kozinets et al., 2016; Žižek, 2004).

Experiencing virtual otherness on the network, the subscriber becomes a fish out of water. This escape is felt as therapeutic relief from bodily reality. The therapeutic effects of watching a beloved vlogger and the soothing sound of his or her voice is a recurrent theme in the comment section, as this subscriber textually expresses: «a therapeutic haul !!! you made my day , love you , kisses » (cena cena, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-13). The subscriber's mood is lifted by the consumption of the vlog, as poster Linda points out: «This whole week has been filled with such bad news for me but that notification that Renée has a new vid out put the biggest smile on my face! When u say "hi everyone, Renée here" i always always say hi back sometimes while waving» (Linda Dorothy, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-06-21). It can even literally become a calming treatment:

> Fun fact: it is currently 4am and I've been having anxiety attacks all night and now morning and I just wanted to go to sleep but I was still anxious and then I saw that you uploaded so i started to watch the vlog and now I'm successfully calmed down so thank you Eddy <3 (Helen Carley, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-01-14).

The virtual company of the vlogger as well as the relatively trivial subject addressed in K-Beauty vlogs are a welcome escape from pressing matters; for this correspondent, it provides a break from her bodily-real experience of life:

> K-beauty vlogging is first and foremost relaxing, I deal with a lot of anxiety and watching people talk about cutely packaged face creams is calming. It's how I like to unwind (E.F., Email correspondence, 2017-08-06).

The act of engaging in watching the vlog provides happiness and can also make up for a bad day, as this subscriber points out:

> +Edward Avila sorry I'm really random. ☺ and awkward and weird so umm......yee. BUT your my favorite YouTuber and when I'm sad I watch your videos and they make me happy ☺♥ keep doing what your doing, you make many people smile (Blackandblue, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2016-05-24).

The association of vlog consumption to medicine and pills illustrate the therapeutic escapism the vlog provides, as conveyed by these two commenters: « Hi Joan! My daily happy pills ☺» (gangofskank, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-13) and « This is the medicine for me right now hehe Love you Joan ✊» (Ophelia RaviLove, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-05-13). The vlog as a medicinal boost is related to social desire, as the familiarity of the vlogger is soothing, but is ultimately rooted in the momentary escape from reality it provides for subscribers like Becky: « I just got my wisdom teeth out and there's no better medicine than going on a Morgan marathon ☺» (Becky B, Youtube comment, TheBeautyBreakdown channel, 2016-08-24). This use of the vlog as a therapeutic or medicinal remedy brings us back to the very beginning of the social desire section. I want to make a parallel between therapeutic usage and the concept of addiction detailed in the previous section. The cohabitation of addiction related vocabulary and the therapy related vocabulary seem quite contradictory at first glance but if you take a closer look, they are one and the same. It's the manifestation of an addiction to the therapeutic benefits of this sociality and escapism on steroids, the expansion of experienced desire on the network.

Isn't the vlog, by way of bringing the vlogger and its reality closer, the fix, the daily dose of social interaction and entertaining transportation to Otherness? It provides an escape from traditional «real life» sociality, territorializing desire on the network, sustaining it by pushing it further out of your body. Without the need to interact with the vlogger, subscribers get the social sharing as a substitute, a daily dose of hassle free sociality. The relation to the vlogger isn't based on reciprocity,

it simply requires an investment in attention, yet still feels as real as the «real thing». Social escapism, the desire for social otherness is the way through which social connections are transformed from routinized consumption to sustained desirous energy.

5.2 THE PROCESS OF SUSTAINING DESIRE ON THE NETWORK

This section aims at providing a summary of the findings and situate them in relation to each other. This exercise is done to create a clear picture of the territorialisation of desire on the network and highlight how it is sustained.

The Korean-Beauty vlog's network of desire, as I established in the context section, is actualised or comes to existence when the various desiring-machines it is composed of are connected together in being part of the cycle of performed consumption, where performance and consumption fuel one another in creating a desirous gravity center around which desiring-machines are networked.

On the network, desire is territorialized by three different desirous connections, thus highlighting three types of territorialized desire which we've defined in the previous section. Since these types are, as I've tried to illustrate through the fisherman's analogy, defined by an intensification of the territorialisation of desire on the network, they will be called desirous levels. The desirous levels of material consumption, social desire and desire for Otherness intensify the desiring-machines' involvement on the network and progressively sustain the desirous state encountered on the network.

In the hopes of adequately situating my position as researcher and data analyst, I'd like to situate this progression of desirous connectedness to the network by sharing my personal implication with the subject of K-Beauty vlogs. As my own subscriber experience hopefully communicates, the fluent nature of the intensification of connective desire is what makes this process of sustaining desire on the network so subtle, yet so evident. I will then explain the stages of connectedness to the network and provide a visual representation of the process they are part of.

> *Taking care of my skin was a revolutionary concept for me as transitioned from sleeping with makeup on to a 10 step Korean skincare routine in a 4-year time period. What happened? I had kids, and let's say that taking care of myself took a serious backseat. What previously felt as wasted time in front of the mirror cleansing and moisturizing my skin now was a cherished routine, taking time for myself. When my second child was born, I took the hit of becoming selfless again pretty hard and turned to skincare information, routines and product shopping as an outlet, accessible from my phone while breastfeeding the day away.*
>
> *The process of researching skincare and products led me to the perfect realm of consumption based self-care that Korean Beauty has been for me. I discovered Asian beauty, a world*

where you can never have enough products and knowledge to care for your skin. The format in which I preferred to digest my knowledge was Youtube videos. Deprived of my usual consocial life, beauty vloggers and their extensive knowledge became my trusted advisors for my daily virtual shopping cart management. I would not buy products often, but I would listen to reviews and add things to online shopping carts on retailing sites, endlessly arguing with myself and my wallet whether I needed this toner more than this essence.

I found myself smiling at the screen when beloved Youtuber tried their hand at comedy, growing my wishlist along the way. After my four months of exclusive baby duty, I had extended my routine to a morning and night multiple steps ordeal, depending on how my skin felt, knowing my skin needs, the products, the ingredients' proprieties and the order in which I should apply them, all thanks to Youtube vlogs. I had accessed a way to change my experience of daily life. As I watched these vloggers, they provided me with an escape route to be able to cope with bodily reality. I even «downloaded» some of their lives into mine through beauty routines and keep going back to the network when in need of a break (Researcher's journal, 2017-06-13).

As my own experience can testify for, channeling Otherness is sort of already present from the moment you are connected to the network, but it is only actualised after the desirous connections to the network grow stronger by progressing through stages. This deepening of the connective desire on the network will be outlined below as the process linking all forms of desire territorialised on the network.

The first surface level is the desire for material consumption, it is territorialized on the network by the connection between the knowledge provided on the vlog and the trust it conveys in consumers. When knowledge is effectively coupled with trust, desire for material consumption is territorialized on the network. The conversion of knowledge in trust is a rather private exercise, as it is an individual feeling that comes in response to the consumption of performance. It gives shape to desire in channeling it in material consumption interest. This definitely echoes the relation between private participation and disciplining of passion into interests observed by Kozinets et al. (2016). Here, I wish to reiterate the fact that orienting desire, rather than disciplining it, seems like a better choice of words since desire for material consumption is territorialized on, oriented towards, the network only to be later expanded and transformed into lusher forms of social desire and desire for Otherness when connected to more desiring-machines. Desire isn't disciplined or contained to material consumption, it passes through a process, of which material consumption is only a stage.

The second median level connects the vlogger's relatability to consumer driven attention, combining these elements to territorialise social desire on the network. Again, this level can only be attained with a prior connection through the first level in consumption interest. If we agree with

Belk et al. (2003) to say that underlying most desire is a longing for social connection and approbation (p.337), this social desire created from the investment of energy is a good cue in understanding the unequivocal importance of the concept of attention economy (Humphreys & Kozinets, 2009). The social desire on the network is a mixture of both private and public practices, whether the consumption of the vlog leads to active participation in the comment section or the sociality is privately felt. The social desire drenched public participation, observed in the comment section, is where the majority of the addiction related vocabulary was uncovered. This excess, contained in the unconventional and virtual social relations on the network, can be equated to a transgressive manifestation of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016). In transgressing the norms of sociality by participating in social connections based in virtual-reality (virtuality?), the networked desiring-machines expand desire territorialised on the network. Virtual-real sociality here means both enabled by an online platform and partly realised in fantasy, not «bodily-real» (Žižek, 2008).

The third and deepest level of territorialized desire on the network is desire for Otherness (Belk et al., 2003). This desire was mainly expressed by comments highlighting the therapeutic uses of the vlogs and the escapism they provide. Desire for Otherness is territorialized on the network when the pre-packaged fantasy that certain vlogs become to users, is met with not only attention but fandom and recurrent attention. This level can only be attained if the consumers shares the material consumption based interests and feels some type of connection to the vlogger, to be able to put themselves into their shoes or to feel as though they were with them. This is where the abstraction of desire, or desire for virtual objects of desire (identified by Kozinets et al. (2016) as the transfer of connective desire from food, as a commodity, to representations of sustenance in food porn), is most evident. This abstraction of desired object is achieved by the professional participation, as the relatable professional vlogger and his equipment must create a video that truly conveys an experience. In a theoretical leap, I want to associate this abstraction of the object of desire to the idea of sustained desire (Deleuze, 1991; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Holland, 2013), as it is the networked abstraction of desire that sustains desire on the network. Indeed, the shift from bodily-real objects of desire, like K-Beauty products, to virtual objects of desire, like the vlogger's social persona, keeps desire situated on the network, outside the bodily-real.

Desire for material consumption, social connection and Otherness can be sustained on the network most effectively through the abstraction of the object of desire, provided by the escape in Otherness on K-beauty vlogging network. In living through the vlog, the subscriber bypasses the cycling of desire by only partially surrendering to it. Since the fantasised reality of the vlog is never completely

actualised and must be consumed on the network, desire is sustained by the desire for Otherness on the network. Even seemingly purely interest based desire is sustained when coupled with desire for material Otherness:

> The vlogs that were important to me early on were hauls, especially Jen Chae at FromHeadToToe and Jennifer Kim at Meejmuse's hauls (this was before she moved to Korea). I like to collect things, I admit I am rather materialistic, and I get joy out of owning things that are unique. With makeup and skincare, K-beauty is very unique especially here in Alberta. The novelty is part of the value of it for me, so these hauls were almost aspirational at first. Now I like watching videos so I can see the products but not feel the urge to purchase them myself. At first I wanted everything they were showing, but I no longer feel the urge to own everything myself (E.F. email interview, 2017-07-06).

Social desire can only be effectively sustained by the distance between the possibility of a bodily-real relation and the impossibility to actualise it outside the virtual space of the vlog (Žižek, 2008). Social desire also channels desire for Otherness since it entails a transgressive, non-traditional, asymmetrical relationships, liberated from the restrictions of the human body. Desire for Otherness in sociality abstracts the object of desire in shifting the connective point of desire from the actual relation to the vlogger to the virtual representation of it.

The abstraction of desire provides the space for desire to fill itself (Žižek, 2004) and effectively be sustained. Roaming on Youtube, performing and consuming endlessly, vloggers and consumers alike are virtually immersed in desire yet never fulfill them other than through a virtual space. Vloggers long for fame and evermore attention in the space professionally created by Youtube as a virtual market place fueled by attention. Consumers live through the content vloggers professionally create, sustaining desire on the network. The abstraction transfers desire from objects of desire outside the network to virtual objects on the network itself, sustaining desire and connecting desiring machines immersed in the desirous tensions.

Desire for Otherness can effectively transform oriented (or disciplined desire (Kozinets et al., 2016)) from desire channeled onto interests (Neu et al., 2009) to desire sustained on the network through the partial (virtual) actualisation of material consumption. The pinnacle of sustained desire on the network is thus attained by the transformation of material consumption desire and social desire into desire for Otherness, a partially fulfilled fantasy, enabling the smallest part of *jouissance* to keep desire alive (Žižek, 2004).

The following figure illustrates the network and the territorialisation of the identified forms of desire on it. These three forms of desire, material consumption desire, social desire and desire for Otherness, are then aligned together to display the process through which the desirous energy is amplified on the network, to eventually sustain desire as part of the network, desire filling itself (Žižek, 2004).

Figure 10-Levels of Desire
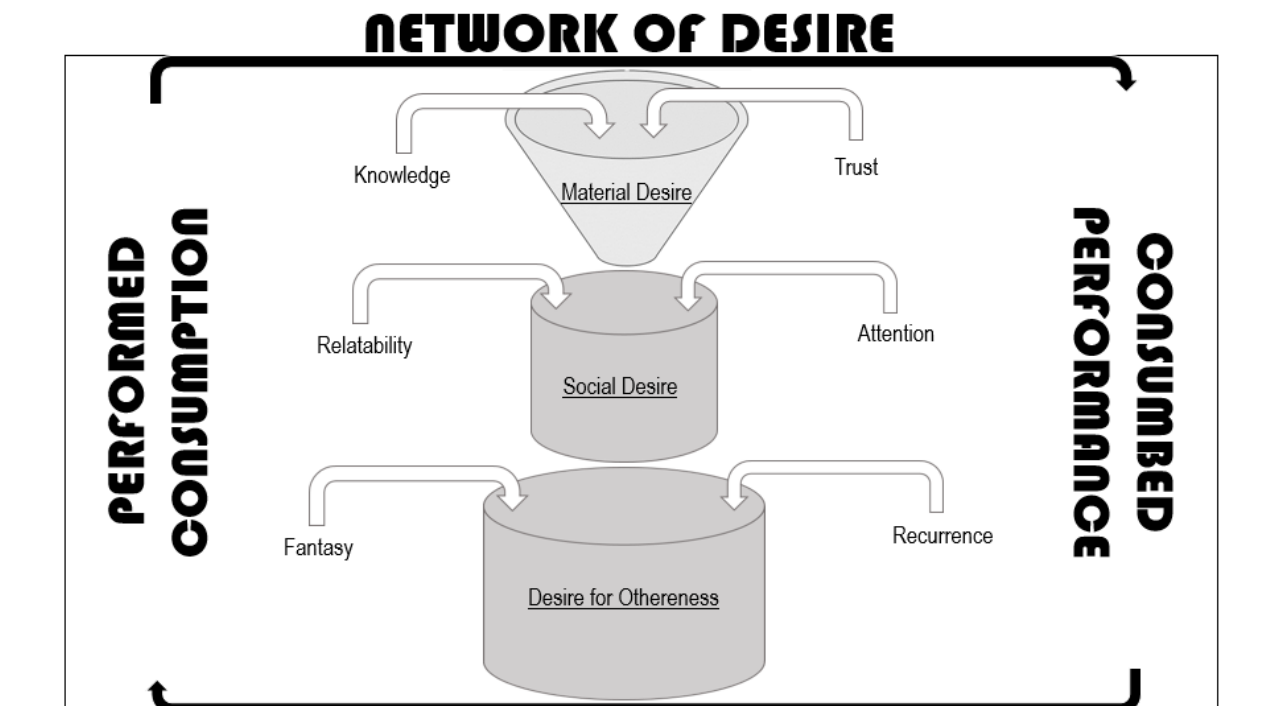
In relation to figure 8, let's first state that the network of desire including a constellation of previously stated desiring-machines comes to existence through the performance of consumption and the consumption of said performance. These two actions provide elements connected through desirous energy that territorialise desire on the network in 3 different forms. When the performed knowledge meets the consumers trust, material consumption desire is territorialised on the network. When performed relatability is met with consumer's attention, social desire is territorialised on the network. And when the performance succeeds in conveying a fantasy, the consumers come back to the vlog, territorialising desire for Otherness on the network.

The territorialisation of the desire is actualised through a process. First, material consumption, or interest based, desire connects desiring-machines together and situates them on the network. Second, social desire is territorialised on the network as a routinization of performance and consumption creates a sense of familiarity. Finally, desire for Otherness is territorialised on the

network when the desire shifts to virtual, abstract, material and social objects of desire. Desire territorialised on the network in the form of desire for Otherness is deeply rooted into, as well as dependent on, the network. This desire is sustained on the network and sustains the existence of the network in linking all its composing desiring-machines together.

5.3   SITUATING FINDINGS: NETWORKED CONSUMERS

Contented and discontented connected customers have been proven to have an impact on institutions and markets, whether they intend to or not (Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Parmentier & Fischer, 2015; Scaraboto & Fischer, 2013). In the case of Korean cosmetics and the attention economy based dynamics of Youtube, vloggers have recognised opportunities to reap profits from this fact, just like the connected customers in Dolbec & Fischer's (2015) article. As contented customers of Korean cosmetics and critical agents towards the western cosmetics industry, K-beauty vloggers have become desiring-machines component of a network of desire. This research strove to understand how these vloggers, as well as subscribers and various other desiring-machines including markets and institutions, are integrated together as a network constructed by connective desire.

In line with the theory on networks of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016), my observation of K-beauty vlogs related human desiring-machines as yielded some similarities and differences in relation to the concepts of subcultures of consumption, brand publics and virtual communities of consumption.

The human desiring-machines on the network function according to the audience network model (Kozinets, 2015, p. 41), because all the subscribers are rallied around the vlogger, unified by the direction they are looking in. The interaction between subscribers is secondary to the vlogger's attention. The vast majority of comments are addressed directly to the vlogger and primarily seek to convey her response and access her personal opinion, which rarely occurs. Even when they produce a subscriber exchange, the intended recipient of the comment's message is generally the vlogger, which so far fits the definition of a (personal) brand public (Arvidsson et al., 2016), since the communication is discursive and mediated by a vlogger's Youtube channel. The community feeling, around skincare as an interest, is rallied behind the vloggers presence, the mediating device is thus a personally branded Youtube channel. The comment section of a Youtuber's channel fits the definition of a brand public in as much as it is a crowd with a lasting focus aggregated around a mediated event as defined by Gabriel Tarde (Tarde, 1967). Indeed, the subscribers would effectively dissolve if the channel were to cease existing. Although the communicational space offered by the

comment section is generally used to address comments to the vlogger, it is ultimately a discursive exercise since reciprocity isn't expected as the vloggers answer very few comments.

The comment section communication is structured by private affect like desire for attention and collective affect that is rooted in imitation behaviours, which is also coherent with the definition of publics. The collective vlog subscribers' imitative behavior can be exemplified by the practice of calling out to the notification squad (subscribers who get notified of a video upload and instantly watch it), trying to be amongst the first to comment on a video. This practice is frequent and signifies that the viewer is part of a self-selected group of fans who immediately watch the video as it is uploaded « EARLY YAY!!!!! NOTIFICATION SQUAD WHERE YOU AT?!!» (MILITARY REAL, Youtube comment, Edward Avila's channel, 2017-05-13). This behavior can also be perceived as a practice confirming membership and shared identity as subscribers, which cannot be accounted for by the brand public or audience related definitions (Arvidsson et al., 2016; Humphreys, 2016).

Here we part from the definition of publics in highlighting the shared meaning and sense of identity expressed in the comment section, defining the subscription to the channel as literally life defining. This situates at least part of the audience in a category better defined by the concept of online communities (Humphreys, 2016; Stewart, 2010). Two previously stated comment will be reproduced here to convey the sense of shared identity: « love this eddy, BUT when we gonna get that house tour video. Im living vicariously through you at this point so I wanna see it lol » The use of the pronoun «we» referring to the public as a group in conjunction with the fact that 594 subscribers like the comment is indicative that their being part of the vlogger's life through Youtube is self-defining as the comment underlines the idea of living vicariously through the vlogger as a shared self-defining trait rooted in desire for Otherness. Perpetuating the same idea of coherent collective identity as a vlogger's public is this comment:

> We get to live vicariously through you guys and feel like we're a part of this culture by seeing vlogs from Seoul. I think in a weird way it makes you feel closer to your fave idols, or at least gives you a better understanding of their roots. Not to fetishize an entire culture, but I think many still see Korea as a faraway exotic land and the ability to transport yourself there via YouTube is a nice form of escape from our regular lives in other parts of the world (girlyviolette, Youtube comment, Joan Kim's channel, 2017-06-09).

The emergence of an informational skincare sharing amongst subscribers on product consumption and skincare related topics in the comment section could situate our participants as better defined as members of a subculture of consumption (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995) or a virtual

community of consumption (Kozinets, 1999), as it is their consumption interest and the related practices that unite them on the platform: « I love this skin care community we have. If someone has a problem, so many people want to help. It's great!» (Anthonia Merkel, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-05-21). Subscribers will sometimes answer each other's questions if the vlogger isn't providing a response to a beauty related inquiry. The vloggers endorsement is the most valued stamp of approval but the shared fandom of said vlogger effectively attributes residual trustworthiness of endorsement to other subscribers, as members of the Korean-beauty subculture of consumption (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995). Although this communal aspect is experienced and commented upon by subscribers; the interactional fragments of the comment section tend to be few in numbers as the discursive style is dominant, which brings us back to the notion of brand public (Arvidsson et al., 2016), since the vlogger's personal brand, mediated by a Youtube channel, is a space where subscribers mostly share their affect towards the vlogger without the expectation of reciprocity. However, this personal brand public as a communal sense of identity epitomised in the attachment to the vlogger (as a shared social connection) « Please make more vids that include convos like this one. Helps us relate with you, as well as each other» (Coshirs96, Youtube comment, TheBeautyBreakdown channel, 2017-06-19) and to the topic (as a shared interest). Their shared love for the vlogger and feeling like a part of his inner circle provides a social connection and shared identity to this public, contradicting Brand Public (Arvidsson et al., 2016).

I argue that a personal brand based in a social media context can provide a shared identity as members of a family. The expression FAM which is employed frequently in social-media, refers to this idea of a group of people considered as family, socially united by their common focus, giving them a shared identity (Chris, 2003). Interactions with K-beauty vlogs provide a sense of acceptance to its participants as members of this familial unit forged around interest in K-beauty and accessed through vlogs which could only be encompassed by a definition geared more towards online communities (Humphreys, 2016; Stewart, 2010). This subscriber comments on how this community, built around the subject of K-Beauty on Youtube, as given her a new sense of validity:

> I'm pale, and in the Asian beauty I feel welcome with my skin and my sunscreen obsession… K-Beauty has done a big difference on my feeling of acceptance» (Sia Sweethickery, Youtube comment, Gothamista's channel, 2017-07-13).

Not only does this next correspondent's participation in the virtual K-Beauty community gave her a sense of belonging, it also made her feel as though she was not alone, part of a group:

> My skin got really deshydrated and irritated; so far K-beauty vlogging really helped to soothe these issues. I am also super pale (most foundation or BB crème are too dark) so let's just say I don't feel alone or too pale (compared to western aesthetics)! (M., Email correspondence, 2017-07-14).

It's the fact that Korean cosmetics have no sizes that made this participant embark on the K-Beauty vlogging induced material consumption, she found refuge in this subject matter and this mode of consuming with the help of vloggers:

> While I had been interested in makeup and to an extent skincare in the past, it became a full on hobby as suddenly I could afford to buy a lot of it and I didn't have to worry about whether it would fit my new larger body (E.F., Email correspondence, 2017-07-06).

This acceptance, related to social desire territorialised on the network, is an example of how participation provides self-defining value to vlog subscribers, even though their discursive participation pattern is more in line with person brand publics. In taking bits and parts from different labels attributed to online groupings of individuals, I could better define the essence of participation of K-beauty vlog members. Ultimately, this exercise was conducted to justify the use of networks of desire (Kozinets et al., 2016) to define online groupings, as participation isn't a fixed component.

The theory of networks of desire seems better suited to describe the participative patterns of targeted human participants as desiring-machines. Networks of desire defines consumption collectives as fluctuating desire machines in relation to their composition and definition; a consumer collective can vary through time depending on other desiring-machines and only requires connection through material consumption based interests (Kozinets et al., 2016). This definition provided a relieving notion of adaptability to consumer collective affiliation, depending not only on a categorization of consumers themselves but on other non-human desiring machines, such as technology. Networks of desire include the idea that consumer implications with a consumer collective can vary over time and across mediating devices, according to related desiring-machines' composition. It includes different levels of involvement, private, public and professional, that can affect and be affected by the network's composition (Kozinets et al., 2016). The «shades of participative possibilities» unlocked by the technological shift of social arenas (Kozinets et al., 2016, p. 665) prohibits the labeling of an entire audience or community, since the investment levels between members and over time may greatly vary. In networks of desire, the audience is an ever-

changing constellation of subscribers that can be included in various categories depending on their implication within the collective at a precise moment.

The co-hosting trends in the Korean vloggers niche, creating value for an audience in sharing publics in an attention economy setting, is a perfect illustration of the inadequacy of the definitions of publics and communities, as well as other fixed definition of online collectives, in defining K-beauty vlogs subscribers. These static definitions fall short in defining the consumers of K-beauty vlogs as they progress in their involvement in the collectives, connected to various related personal brands through multiple channels according to which their engagement level varies. Subscriber's involvement fluctuates, both over time and when compared to each other.

Networks of desire, as a conceptual tool, integrate the co-existence of various labels for the human desiring-machines it connects and makes these definitions neither fixed nor exclusive (Kozinets et al., 2016). For these reasons, I argue that networks of desire are valuable when defining an online collective included in a contextual setting such as the ones studied in netnographic research. This perspective on consumers' implication in collectives as their engagement varies depending on the composition of the network at any given time, is also better fitted to the fast-paced realm of the online activity observed in this study.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 THE FIRE OF NETWORKED DESIRE

Networked territorialisation of desire enables the expansion of embodied desire, characterized by its social tendencies and channelling of Otherness, consistent with Belk's findings (Belk et al., 2003). However, instead of promising «real» otherness, the networked territorialisation of desire provides digital otherness and escape. Addiction vocabulary was used by the subscribers to describe networked desire, just like it was used to describe embodied passion in Belk et al.'s (2003) article. The expression of excess related to desire remains when communicated on the network itself. Distance and inaccessibility were identified as fuelling the addiction behaviors and were expanded by the technological proprieties of the network. It is the minimal distance (minimal difference in (Žižek, 2004), the closeness and digital realness of the inaccessible that sustains desire. The cycling of desire wasn't observed on the network as it exempted from the restrictions of the human body, desire was sustained by its networked territorialisation. Desire fuels itself on the network and uses computer, cellphones, camera lens, constant scattered human attention and so on, to reproduce itself in-itself (Žižek, 2004), and lingers on the network for subscribers to *log-into* to *get a life*.

To some extent, this research as yielded the conclusion that desire itself doesn't change in nature, it's its territorialisation that defines how it is perceived, as every subscriber expresses a personalised experience of desire while connected to the network. All the desiring-machines of K-beauty vlogging collectively territorialize desire on the network, where it already was in a sense, offering bigger than life mirages, sustaining desire and thus assuring the network's existence.

The theory that technology transgresses bodies with other desiring-machines, reterritorializing desire form bodies to networks (Kozinets et al., 2016) blurring and expanding the limits of desire was the theoretical angle used to approach the subject. Consistent with Kozinets and al. (2016), I witnessed a channeling of desire into consumption interests, that I elaborate upon in the material consumption part of my findings, as one facet of networked desire. Instead of being attributed solely to the private participation on the network, the channelling of passion into consumption interests was found imbedded in multiple desiring-machines as a momentary component of desire, regardless of participation type in this research. The consumption interest, oriented passion, is where the embodiment of networked desire is made possible, it is the Cradle of Mankind's material consumption fantasy.

Abstraction of the object of desire, encompassing material consumption interest and social connectivity, but ultimately achieved through Otherness is how desire is sustained on the network. Following Denegri-Knott & Molesworth (2010), Kozinets et al. (2016) and Belk et al. (2003), I've witnessed a virtualisation of consumption, an abstraction of desired objects and a disembodiment of desire.

6.2   DIGITAL VIRTUAL CONSUMPTION

Here I want to address digital virtual consumption as conceptualised by Denegri-Knott & Molesworth (2010) as a place between imagination and the material where the stimulation of imagination and the actualisation of ideals is made possible through digital consumption. My research highlights one slight divergence from this definition as digital virtual doesn't exist as part of or between the imaginative human process and material experience per but rather exists on its own, generating complete fantasy narratives. The network of desire theoretic (Kozinets et al., 2016) through which this research as engaged the digital virtual space makes it part of various connection within which the digital virtual exists on its own, as a virtual space of imagined realities and a digital real world not in anyways substituting or mimicking the bodily-real but simply co-existing with it. In other words, virtual situated online exists outside of the consumer's imagination narratives and the

digital exists as a desiring-machine space of consumption of its own, before it is part of the material consumption plot. This digital virtual desiring-machine can become connected to human consumers which translates to an outsourcing of the virtual, the imagination. Imagination and consumption exist outside bodily reality when territorialised on the network where they become an outsourced form of fantasising and consuming. The network connects consumers with pre-made fantasies and complete consumption experiences liberated from the need to be incarnated in bodily-reality. This has been identified by Denegri-Knott & Molesworth (2013, p. 1573) as a delegation of affective investment from users to software, which fits the networks of desire definition, as desire is spread throughout and collectively invested by all types of desiring-machines composing the network. The fact that they understand this diffused affective investment as a rationalization of consumer desire is where my field work forces me to disagree. Consumers can get connected to or tap into digitally enabled sources of imagination and consumption to expand desirous energy experienced on the network. The fact that desire isn't embodied doesn't mean it is rationalised or tamed but rather it underlines the external nature of desire which we can tap into without having to invest affect (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

I've found, in accordance with Kozinets et al. (2016), that the flows of desire within webs of networked desiring-machines are assembled in ways that are complex and contraindicates the rationalisation of consumers' desire in digital virtual spaces. This comes in contradiction with Denegri-Knott & Molesworth's (2013, 2010) conception of technological platforms as rationalising desire and decentering desirous affect from humans to software.

In the network of desire, I've found what I understand as an outsourcing of imaginative process that provides cognitive misers with premade fantasies narratives to indulge in. Desire is not displaced from consumers to computers in a rationalising fashion but rather imagination or virtual representation of ideals are premade and digitally available for consumers'. It is the consumption of «virtuality» itself that becomes consumers' desirous link to the network. The step taken by Denegri-Knott & Molesworth (2013; 2010) from the identification of this outsourcing of desirous connections to the assumption of rationalisation of desire is where my findings differ from their conceptual work. Consumers digitally experience Otherness through the networked creation of fantasy narratives which makes their channeling of desire dependent on their connection to the network, craving for connection to experience desire outside of their bodies instead of rationalizing their relation to digital virtual consumption.

7 CONCLUSION

Networks of desire are composed of various desiring-machines all connected in the creation of a digital-real fantasised experience accessible online. With all the focus on co-creation and participatory culture in the context of social-media's attention economy (Humphreys, 2016), the importance of passive consumption has been put on the back burner and I think its importance should be highlighted. Consumers seek the desirous connectedness of the network in part because it doesn't require any investment of energy to fantasize and socialise. The network provides an easy access to Otherness that is experienced as real, through the video format it's delivered in and the authenticity of the social bond attached to the vlogger.

Co-creation, in any particular context, is actively undertaken by around 10% of users, which indicates low rates of active participation (Humphreys, 2016, p. 64). Furthermore, the content created by users on the Youtube platform is partly irrelevant in the context of co-creation since, in the cases used in this study, they are entrepreneurs themselves making money on the platform. The curation of the content by users through the allocation of attention can't be understood solely as an active act on the network as it is also a by-product of passive consumption. I thus want to conclude by underlining the overlooked importance of passive consumption, which I only got glimpses at through the active participants willingness to disclose this more private part of their vlog consumption.

It isn't the networked components that were studied in this research but the salient absence of participation by most human desiring-machines that makes private consumption a central theme in this research. The automation of the network through desiring-machines connectedness and the territorialisation and sustaining of desire on the network itself, provide an all-inclusive experience of real-Otherness. The fact that a Youtube vlog is a product to be primarily consumed and not interacted with underlines the importance of providing a full package of social and consumption Otherness which is being experienced on the network. This effortless escape, normless sociality and abstract material consumption is what is awaiting consumers on the network and the main reason why they connect to it. The importance of the passive quality of digital virtual networked channeling of desirous energy shouldn't be overlook, neither by the real-life markets nor by consumers.

7.1 MANAGERIAL RECOMMANDATIONS

To be able to provide and all-inclusive passive experience of Otherness, the vloggers most convey authenticity and an enticing consumption experience. To do so, it must include a vast range of

products and embody real-life experiences performed by the vlogger. This can only be done by connecting with the desiring-machines imbricated in the market. The channeling of Otherness through video footage must be natural, yet staged enough to evoke a fantasy that is partially fulfilled by witnessing others actualise it in their bodily-reality. It must be digestible as a whole without depending on investment from the audience, except the effortless investment of attention.

The cosmetics industry should work with vloggers to make the integration of their products as part of the experience and skillfully place opportunities to purchase products, prolonging the digital experience rather than rely on the human imagination to continue to fantasise about a product and maybe, eventually actualise it on the market. Interactive links to purchase products, endorsed by the vlogger and coherent with their subject matter, should be integrated in the video format conveying Otherness through a performed real-life experience. For example, a vlog about a shopping trip could include clickable shelved items, to shop along on screen, prolonging the experience of Otherness, instead of sending customers back to online stores where they are back to their own digital-real.

Sending products to social capital wealthy, interest related vloggers to try, seeding (Humphreys, 2016), is definitely important for cosmetics companies since it can be perceived as earned media based positive word-of-mouth (Humphreys, 2016). This must be done in an informed fashion to be able to convey trust from the consumers. The addition of some training programs or informational event for vloggers could increase their ability to talk about product ingredients, proprieties and usage. This would be an excellent way of insuring that the seeded products are reviewed in a knowledgeable way.

In two opposite multi-channel approaches, the social media industry should strive to create partly actualised fantasies, offering a digital experience of bodily-real Otherness to sustain desire on the network, and the cosmetics market should embark on a journey to digitalise real life shopping experience and integrate it to felt Otherness to reterritorialize desire on the market.

Consumers, us human desiring-machines, as well as policy makers, should pay more attention to the desirous connection we mingle with, as they are powerful incentives to consume and be consumed by. The networked expansion of our desires in a digital virtual space is real and is gaining ground as our lives online become as important as the ones we lead in the flesh. Addiction to this effortless sociality and Otherness is part of the game and consumers should be aware of this consumptive side of the online world.

The fact that this virtual environment is home to many vulnerable populations, especially teens and young children, makes it event direr to understand its addictive proprieties. Policy makers should familiarise themselves with the virtual phenomenon and conduct research on how much time and energy is invested in vlog watching and how it affects subscribers. To educate and protect the very young population consuming vlogs, informational campaigns should be put together, based on afore mentioned mandated research, to provide healthy guidelines about time spent consuming other people's lives. In the years where socialisation is important, especially in teenage years, consuming too much asymmetrical sociality could affect some members of society in unsuspected ways.

A dose of bodily-real desirous connections to balance networked expanded and abstracted desires could be the key to preserving our humanity.

8 FUTURE RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS

This research's netnographic methodology (Kozinets, 2015) implied an iterative data collection according to the path of my own immersion in the online world of K-beauty vlogs. Following this method, I couldn't watch all videos ever produced on the 4 channels used as a field and couldn't always watch the content as soon as it was uploaded. Attention is a scares resource, as we have previously established, and so was mine during this research. My inability to understand the Korean language and my exclusion of the related fandom around K-drama and K-pop sometimes affected my ability to contextualise the data. Online research about precise topics, when needed, compensated this lack of personal knowledge, as I educated myself along the way.

It is important to mention that only a small percentage of the subscribers and viewers make their presence known by commenting on the video posts. Silent viewers certainly exist and are important in numbers but eluded the first stage of this research as it focused on the actively engaged public in the comment section. Although it is important to mention that public users, or even creators who produce Youtube videos for a living, also participate on the network on a private level when listening to other Youtube content. This situation was partly remedied with the second participative stage of my research where I was able to access personal testimonies from members.

The absence of professional vloggers as participants to this research limits the comprehension of the creator's role to my own experience, which is far from encompassing the components of fame and attention economics. That being said, my own vlogging experience and the legitimate excitement relative to getting attention, coupled with the numerous Q&A videos where the subject

is mentioned by popular vloggers, gave me a decent contextual understanding of these desiring-machines.

Future research should thus consider further investigation of vloggers' as part of desire networks, when attention is flowing. Consumer research should also continue the process of defining and understanding the mix of private and public participation as well as consumer collectives online, as these notions evolve over time and according to the network's composition. It will also be interesting to see how technological breakthroughs in virtual reality and artificial intelligence will affect social-media as networks of desire. Finally, it is crucial for consumer culture researchers to investigate how addiction behaviors are related to network based sustained desire, in the hopes of helping today and tomorrow's human desiring-machines.

In the end, isn't desire for Otherness only a manifestation of desire to desire, this deep need to be connected by energetic desire to something outside the reach of our bodies? The technological expansion and cultivation of desire makes a wider range and a greater number of connections possible, but these connections are ephemerid and their depth questionable, in the alleviation of social norms of reciprocity. Let's be networked by desire online and in real life to hopefully understand our own worlds as someone else's fantasied Otherness and immerse ourselves in it, unapologetically.

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10 APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

Marie-Eve Jodoin il y a 3 heures

Hello Joan and fellow JoanDay subscribers! As a master's student at HEC Montréal, I am currently researching K-Beauty vlogs for my thesis. I would be very interested to know what K-Beauty vlogging means to each of you. I have created a video in which I give detailed information about my research and ways in which you can participate!
Go and have a look if you are interested! Thank you for taking the time.

Répondre · 19

Masquer les réponses ⌃

il y a 10 minutes

Marie-Eve Jodoin why are you allowed to use this for your thesis!? I want it, too!

Répondre ·

Marie-Eve Jodoin il y a 7 minutes

I feel you! It's heaven on earth to be able to watch Youtube as a professional endeavor! K-Beauty vlogging is the field of my qualitative research on desire ;)

Répondre · 1

il y a 4 minutes Réponse sélectionnée

Marie-Eve Jodoin what are you studying exactly?

Répondre ·

Marie-Eve Jodoin il y a 26 secondes

I'm interested in consumer culture and how k-beauty vlogging is related to desire and passion. So many comments are themed around addiction vocabulary in relation to vlogs I would love to understand how it works its magic on us! I would appreciate it very much if you'd help me get closer to enlightenment by answering my questions !

Répondre ·

72

As mentioned in the method section, the production of a Youtube video summarising the preliminary conclusions I had come to during data collection was used as a way to insure that my findings resonated with the K-Beauty vlog consumers. I asked the participants to give me their feedback to know if what my analysis of the data had highlighted resembled their own experience and here are the responses I received:

(Z.R., Email correspondence, 2017-08-20)

I think that the way you explain things really goes into the heart of why we all are followers of Korean beauty and how it has changed our daily lives in ways that aren't so materialistic as people would think. I definitely agree that the social connection that we receive through the whole sort of community itself is one of the reasons for having interest in Korean beauty. I could never put my finger on what exactly to describe it as, but you have done so really well.

(A.A., Email correspondence, 2017-08-07)

After watching your video with regards to the findings, yes I do resonate with the three levels that you have mentioned. It all started with a desire to learn about something and when you decided to "like" that person you get attached and for some reason looking forward to what they are uploading next. Regardless if we decide to buy the products they recommend or adopt their lifestyle.

(C.J., Youtube comment, 2017-08-07)

I think the 3 levels you have identified can be accurate.

Especially the first one you described. A vlogger gains my appreciation and their opinion gains value when I really see knowledge being passed along. (that's why hauls are useless to me and I don't enjoy watching them because no knowledge or experiences with the product can be passed along)

I have no use of giggling nonsense. I struggle with my skin and watch Korean skin care to find a solution. So she, who offers real knowledge and advice gains my trust and I will purchase products off of her recommendation. I think it is because in stores you never get honest and straight forward help.

The second level, the social connection is a little more tricky for me. As I have found that I don't connect with all I watch. So I guess just like in real life you have to "click" with them. For example Gothamista and Caroline Hirons are THE experts to me when it comes to skin care and I'm sure are wonderful obviously smart, hard working women and only can be admired for. But I haven't clicked with them and I'm not desiring to "spend" time with them just out of affection.

But it has happened to me with 2 other vloggers (although in makeup) Emilynoel and Lisa Elridge. It's almost like love. It's very odd because obviously it is virtual. But you just appreciate that person for who they are and their craft and knowledge.

But then the 3rd level, the escape or living life through the other. I can't and I don't want to. That is the reason I'm not on instagram and I hardly watch "a day with me" videos. It's not my life and I don't want to want something that could be real but is not. I'll never launch a product with lancome or fly from city to city with celebrities. It could become depressing and I would probably begin to be less content with my own life, which it is OK, not glamorous but ok.

But obviously everyone has there escape. I just do it the old-fashioned way and watch TV😊or listen to music. I think everyone does have an escape from whatever stress is in their life.