

## 2000-2010 Decoding the Decade: Buzzwords

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Theme: [History](#)

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Words new and old — The 3rd millennium's first decade was replete with buzzwords, many of them neologism arising from unremitting cyber innovations. As the world careened into what will henceforth be known as the Internet Era, we had such neologisms as

- the dotcom revolution, so named for the way internet addresses are written, "com" suggesting the commercial focus of the medium. This term along with Internet itself dates from the Stone Age of the 20th century internet

- wikipedia (2001), "wiki" being Hawaiian for "quick", the world's first collective encyclopaedia, produced online by millions of users, now in dozens of languages, though increasingly regulated, especially when dealing with living persons;

- blogging (2002), referring to the explosion of personal sites which the Internet allows;

- photoshopping (2006), referring to the now common practice of touching up electronic images or making collages to suit one's needs;

- twitter (2006), mobile software allowing anyone anywhere to link instantaneously with anyone anywhere (as long as they are wired in);

Oh, and don't forget the great spoof of the decade, Y2K, the gimmicky shortform popularised by the fear that the now-computer addicted world would "crash" when the clock struck 2000

These neologisms are entering all world languages, including Arabic, as the world gravitates towards an English-language based new world order. They are not such innocent playthings, however. In the world of politics, they represent a powerful means for their owners to promote an agenda other than greater freedom of communications. Moldova's communists were displaced in a twitter revolution, and Iran's Ahmedinejad almost was, as crowds of Western-savvy young people converged on their respective capitals, intent on overthrowing their governments after disputed elections. China especially is attempting to prevent these innovations in the blogosphere from being used to erode government authority.

The fact must be confronted that most of the Internet is in Jewish hands (Google, Yahoo, Facebook), and, given the organisation and power of the Israeli Lobby in the US and Europe, the ability to monitor, tap and store infinite quantities of personal data as well as control access to certain information suddenly brings us face-to-face with the spectre of Orwellian mind-and-body control. The highly lucrative world of Google and others is a boon whose owners are Zionists. Google co-founder and billionaire Sergei Brin is a big supporter financially of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which just happens to fund Jews from the diaspora to settle in Israel. Blog and youtube sites considered harmful have been

“disappeared” without explanation. Anti-Zionist/ Jewish critique has been blocked as “hate promotion”, and anti-Muslim/ Arab critique condoned as “freedom of speech”.

Many existing words took on new significance as buzzwords during the decade. Buzzwords include

- Taliban, Al-Qaeda, jihad and caliphate, all Arabic, reflect the great irony of the decade – just as every action results in a reaction, the Western invasions of the Arab/ Muslim world following 9/11 have led to a much greater awareness of Arab/ Muslim culture, even a realisation that many of the accoutrements of Western life – from silk pajamas to date squares and hookahs – come from their rival in the clash of civilizations.

- Not to be left out, the Jewish world became more and more the object of outspoken support and, at the same time, of critical attention throughout the decade, with the Holocaust (denial), (anti-)Zionism, Jerusalem and Gaza never leaving headlines for long.

- Refugees (2005) are on the increase, not only due to US invasions and civil wars around the world, but in the US itself, reflecting the shameful destruction of New Orleans by a particularly powerful hurricane Katrina, the severity now admitted by the legal system as due to government incompetence and the US’s crumbling infrastructure, even as its military budget goes through the stratosphere.

- Derivatives and subprime lending (2007) refer to particularly odious financial schemes dreamed up and regulated by those who made billions from them, providing no real benefit to anyone but themselves.

- Bailout (2008) is a constant reminder of Western governments’ obeisance to the world’s bankers.

- Obama and Obamania (2008) have reached every nook and cranny in the world with the first black US president in office, as he continues to wrestle with the problems of the US empire, another buzzword which came and then went, as the US faces decline on all fronts – political, economic, environmental and health.

- Two Bushisms that strike terror in the listener are surge (2007) and Shock and Awe (2003), the ghoulish name given to the invasion strategy in Iraq in search of nonexistent WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction). Bush’s Hollywood-inspired “Bring ‘em on!” challenge to the Iraqi insurgents was taken up vigorously with close to 5000 US soldiers returning in body bags (officially). One of his more memorable malapropisms was underestimate (2002), and forever associated with his reign is hanging chad (2000), referring to faulty election ballots in Florida, which contributed to what was almost certainly a rigged victory of Bush over Al Gore. Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and rendition – all legacies of Bush – speak to the shameful fact that the empire promotes and even revels in torture.

- Chinglish (2005), albeit a neologism, is no doubt what we will all speak in another few decades if China maintains its present meteoric rise.

- Nanotechnology highlights the increasing importance of miniaturization in technology to the point of operating on the atomic level; though it dates from the 1950s, it is just now coming into its own.

-Global warming consequences, such as increasingly violent and frequent hurricanes and tsunamis (2004), have literally flooded the world of economics, where financial tsunamis threaten the world economy, now that it is connected electronically and mostly free from government control. The 2008 world financial meltdown showed that with a vengeance.

-The world faces unremitting pressure from Disneyfication, as movies turn to fantasy worlds, 3-D effects and virtual reality to distract audiences.

-From playstations to the more pseudo-high-culture Harry Potter, and sci-fi serial movies such as Star Trek and Matrix, fantasy and virtual reality displaced our connection with reality.

-We now are satisfied with truthiness (2005), popularised on US political satire programme "The Colbert Report", reflecting the lack of honesty in our public life and the distorted reality which our media feeds us.

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Canadian Eric Walberg is known worldwide as a journalist specializing in the Middle East, Central Asia and Russia. A graduate of University of Toronto and Cambridge in economics, he has been writing on East-West relations since the 1980s. He has lived in both the Soviet Union and Russia, and then Uzbekistan, as a UN adviser, writer, translator and lecturer. Presently a writer for the foremost Cairo newspaper, Al Ahram, he is also a regular contributor to Counterpunch, Dissident Voice, Global Research, Al-Jazeera and Turkish Weekly, and is a commentator on Voice of the Cape radio. Eric Walberg was a moderator and speaker at the Leaders for Change Summit in Istanbul in 2011.

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