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Information Ethics from a Marxian Perspective

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Content:

Reviews:

Editorial: On IRIE Vol. 26

Marx is en vogue. That is a matter of fact - not (only) due to the 200th anniversary of his birthday in 2018. It's the issues Marx has dealt with (exploitation, alienation, inequalities etc.) that are (still) omnipresent and that keep his struggle with them modern over the years and years to come.

While Marx himself never finished his own elaborations on them he inspired many followers to do so (followers: what a modern term as well - Marx definitely would be a twitter star). That is both, a blessing and a curse. So many epigones claim Marxism for their (non-Marxian) purposes; they found a useful interpretation for their changing of the world to their own advantage (how ironic). On the other hand, so many scholars gained both: a strong motivation as well as an intellectual approach to ask the right questions and find the right answers to improve the conditions of the socially deprived and deal with injustice, poverty and overcoming social disadvantages.

As a philosopher, the best way to handle this area of tension is: "Forget about Marxism, read Marx!" If you look into the references in this issue that is what our authors have done and the insights they found on the interplay between the ideas of Marx and the issues of information ethics are both profound and inspiring themselves. But forget about this foreword, read the issue!

Sincerely yours,

the editors of IRIE

Marco Schneider, Ricardo M. Pimenta:

Introduction to Information Ethics from a Marxian Perspective

October's 1917 Russian revolution was about the effective universal achievement of justice and freedom, despite the ulterior distortions that left it wanting. And while the revolution fell short, its failings should not detract from the principals of its underlying struggle for effective universal justice and freedom. Is not this struggle ultimately an ethical struggle? If so, how do the ethical foundations of its theory apply to contemporary information cultures in the digital age?

Lenin once wrote in a personal notebook that it was impossible to understand Marx's Capital completely without first possessing a deep understanding of Hegel's Logic. It was his contention that, for the most part, the communists of his time did not understand Marx. Whether or not Lenin was correct in his assessment, the great strategist of the Russian revolution was seriously concerned about theory, and mainly Marxian theory. Marx, himself, despite the claims of many interpretations of his 11th Thesis on Feuerbach, was obviously not against theory, only against theories detached from history, especially those that, masked as scientific ones, legitimated class exploitation ideologically.

In 1917, exactly a hundred years ago, the spread and applicability of Marxism in the world was incontestable, even if a rigorous understanding of Marx's thoughts were insufficient. A great amount of his work remained unpublished at the time and what was published was not always correctly understood and diffused.

We do not argue that this lack of theory is the only, nor the main reason, for the distortions of the Russian revolution and of the collapse of Soviet Union. The reactions of imperialism, mainly through its Nazi flank, and, after the Great Second War, the Cold War, were surely more decisive in the matter than any theory. However, the default neglect of Marxian theory based on history disservices its epistemological and socio-historical rationality and power, especially in contemporary times when proto fascist forms of political actors and discourse are re-emerging everywhere.

Information science, ethics and Marxism should become keywords that are increasingly associated. With Information Science as a strategic field for modern ethics and Marxian praxis, ethics and the Marxian tradition could protect against information science's tendency towards a servile and technocratic kind of knowledge. The last increases worldviews that grow in the wake of a scenario where the digital, with its means of intermediation, represent exponentially an increasingly cruel and rhizomatic market control of all spheres of life, from macro-economy to individual tastes.

The papers of this IRIE issue deal with Information Ethics from a Marxian perspective, but some of them do so only in an implicit or indirect way. Marxist intellectual tradition, indeed, with few exceptions, does not talk directly about ethical issues. At the same time, ethics is at the core of this tradition, Marxism being a radical criticism of human reification, exploitation, and alienation. It is a cross-generation call for new concrete historical forms of freedom, justice, rationality, and human self-determination. Explicitly or not, all the papers in this issue push these questions, particularly in relation to informational problems, from Marx's foundational problems to modern challenges, from the formal subsuming of labour to capital, to the new algorithmic capitalism based on surveillance techno-politics.

This dossier does not intend to offer exhaustive answers to the discourse around such discussions but rather aims to publicize good reflection around Information Ethics in a bid to develop serious dialog with the Marxian theoretical tradition. The articles selected bring a rich and fresh contribution to the Marxian perspective in front of the difficulties and contemporary issues of Information and its implicit and explicit Ethics.

The first article of this dossier, written by Wilhelm Peekhaus, examines the capitalist model of academic publishing using Marx's concepts of 'primitive accumulation' and 'alienation.' Primitive accumulation offers a theoretical framework to explain contemporary erosions of the knowledge commons that result from various enclosing strategies employed by capitalist academic journal publishers. The article also unveils some alienating

elements experienced by modern producers of academic publications. Finally, it proposes an alternative for capitalist control over the scientific publishing field, based on open-access projects.

Rodrigo Moreno discusses the contradiction between information and knowledge based on the notion of general intellect developed by Marx in the Grundrisse. The author shows how the privatization of the social production of knowledge is a contemporary process of capitalism genesis, becoming more acute in our time, precisely when knowledge becomes the main factor in the production of wealth with information its path. He warns that contemporaneity, contrary to what postulates visions such as that of Andre Gorz, should be characterized not as the realization of Marx's most optimistic bets on but as the development of opposing tendencies.

Figueiredo and Bolaño relate the passage in course from the political economy of the cultural industry to that of the new media with the intensification of the colonization of the world of life by the system (Habermas) and with the changing from the disciplinary society to the control society (Deleuze). This process involves a refinement of the articulation among the economical function of advertising, the political function of propaganda and the cultural function of programming, with the substitution of the latter for interactivity. The ethical debate remains implicit here, as in many authors of the Marxian tradition. Nevertheless, it is the leitmotiv of the paper, looking towards free communication and democracy against the veiled but highly efficient actions of capital in the Information field: surveillance of the market and of the state over the individual.

Bianca Rhian denounces in her paper the relationship between the development of information technologies and their flows with the needs of increased reproduction of capital in the face of the global fall in the rate of profits that began in the 1970s. She also demonstrates the economic, ideological and cultural function of the informationally legitimizing element of neoliberal politics, which presents itself worldwide as a universal spell, while in serious theory and concrete practice it reveals itself as a sectarian imposition of the capital, which generates above all the sharpening of exploitation and inequality. Bianca Rhian also criticizes the positivist perspective of the axiological, and therefore political, neutrality of science.

In an original and risky exposition, Carla Viola proposes a reflection on class struggle, having as one of the conceptual components of her viewpoint Gilbert Simondon's concept of individuation. Is it possible to find in the concept of individuation sculpted by Gilbert Simondon one direct relationship with Marx and Marxism in general? Furthermore, for Viola, critical information literacy is not only the path to overcoming class struggle but also to achieving a global information society.

Tomas Aquinas defined truth as the correspondence between things and understanding. Castro Alves paints the horror of the slave nautical traffic. In his essay On the Concept of History, Walter Benjamin reminds us: "The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'emergency situation' in which we live is the rule." This 'emergency situation' was Fascism. Albert Camus defended his romance La Peste against the accusation of Roland Barthes that is was "dehors de l'histoire", pointing out that it was not only about the recent historical phenomenon of Fascism, but also about the permanent risk of its rebirth. Agnes Heller associates faith with prejudice and alienation. Thus the contribution by Marco Schneider and Ricardo Pimenta explores the Thomist concept of truth, Benjamin's concept of history, Camus' allegory of the plague, Agnes Heller's notion of faith and Castro Alves' powerful denouncement of slave traffic, in order to criticize the phenomenon of post-truth imderstood as a rebirth of fascist information practices

In his article, Ivan Capeller presents an original study on the Golem's legend, based on an innovative reading of Walter Benjamin, perhaps the most heterodox of Marxists, and perhaps one among those who best understood Marx's work. Expanding on Benjamin's relationship between myth and allegory, Capeller commends epistemologically Benjamin's original reading of "allegory" (Walter Benjamin, in his seminal work Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels), not only as an important object of study, but also heuristically, for the understanding of the broader relationship between knowledge and language. Capeller shows a fine dialectic domain in his criticism of the usual readings of the relationship between Benjamin, vulgar Marxism and theology. By "fine dialectics" we refer here to the insight in Capeller's analysis of the contradictory elements of Benjamin's readings that either infer a simple association between dialectical materialism and theology, or that briefly ignores it. For Benjamin and Capeller, it is a question of understanding, through irony, the problematic character of this connection. It is problematic in the very concrete terms of the political history of culture of his time and of the

cultural history of the politics of his time, both referring to the statute of philosophical legitimacy of dialectical materialism itself in the face of its popular proto-theological "materialist" versions. Yes, Benjamin's theological heritage is unquestionable, but not as the positivist theological heritage shared by social democracy, liberalism and vulgar Marxism, namely the conception of history as a linear progress. On the contrary, it is true in its disruptive, revolutionary element. What Benjamin retains from theology is essentially messianism as a revolutionary trans-historian potency, made relevant in each epoch as a material power of rupture of usual categories of time, space and action, articulated by the uses of time and space in the spheres of work, property regimes, and narratives.

Gustavo Saldanha touches on very important aspects for a contemporary Marxian reading of language and its ethical implications for the power and agency that it carries within itself. Saldanha establishes an original and erudite dialog between the marxist linguist Mikhail Bakhtin – for whom the linguistic sign is an arena of the class struggle, anticipating Bourdieu's notion that class struggle is always, also, a struggle of classifications – and other philosophies of language. In a kind of language ontogenesis, the author seeks to expose nature in dialogue with the concept of trivium in the light of post-truth times when information, driven by algorithm "intelligence", produces logic, grammar, and rhetoric forms.

According to Sylvia Moretzsohn, whose critical theory of journalism is a reference to Brazil, ethical themes infuse and guides Marx's entire work, dating all the way back to his more youthful writings such as "Reflections of a Young Person on the Choice of a Profession" of 1835 (Marx was 16 or 17 years old). In this article, in constant dialogue with Marxian theory, the author unveils the authoritarian specificity of the capitalist constitution of the communications system in Brazil during the Military Business Dictatorship. In an original inflection, Moretzsohn also explores the notion of "culture of silence," based on Paulo Freire's reflections on the sermons of Father Antônio Vieira (seventeenth century), which are matricial in the constitution of Brazilian culture. The author also picks up some ideas from Álvaro Vieira Pinto, a Brazilian theoretician who produced fundamental contributions to a universal philosophy of technique, little studied even in Brazil.

Michael Eldred says in his article there is a critique of capitalist market economy that consists in claiming not only that capitalist social relations are uncaring and alienating, nor only exploitative of the working class, but that the process of capitalist economy as a whole is a way of living, today globalized, that has gotten out of hand. For him there is a possible hermeneutic alternative to face capitalism as a "gainful game". Considering it by one philosophical view that allows social actors to fight through it in pursuit of free and fair social interplay, Eldred suggests that this kind of Marxist rereading is needed for an increasingly invasive and attractive cyber world. Once the political and ideological preferences of each author are here preserved, his article contributes greatly to the confrontation of looks and to the dialogue, or even the dialectic present between Marxian perspectives.

We believe that there is something still extremely relevant to say inspired by Marx's thought. We may perceive that its untimeliness is a proof that its theoretical and critical applications are still resonant today in a world that speaks increasingly of openness and access in the same way that markets and strategies of control of the means of information and knowledge production stand behind the rhetorical "varnish" of the hyper-connected global village. Its actuality, moreover, is not exclusive a Marxian's territory. It provides compelling and fundamental critical support for new conceptual and epistemological "flights" even as they become more distant from original Marxian thinking, despite having Marxian as a starting point.

It is not a question here of discussing what "Marxism" is, but only of exploring how much of the critical fortune inspired by Karl Marx's thought may be useful for discussing contemporary ethical-informational issues.

We hope we have flagged some sensitive points.

Wilhelm Peekhaus:

A Marxist Account of and Suggested Alternative to Capitalist Academic Publishing

Abstract:

This paper examines and situates theoretically from a Marxist political economic perspective the capitalist model of academic publishing using Marx's concepts of 'primitive accumulation' and 'alienation.' Primitive accumulation, understood as a continuing historical process necessary for capital accumulation, offers a theoretical framework to make sense of contemporary erosions of the knowledge commons that result from various enclosing strategies employed by capitalist academic journal publishers. As a theoretical complement, the article further suggests that some of the elements of alienation Marx articulated in respect of capitalist-controlled production processes capture the estrangement experienced by the actual producers of academic publications. After offering a short assessment of the open-access movement as a remedial response to the enclosing and alienating effects inherent in the capitalist-controlled academic publishing industry, the article briefly outlines a suggested alternative model for academic publishing that, building on open-access projects, could radically subvert capitalist control.

Agenda:

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- Relevant publications:
  - Resistance Is Fertile: Canadian Struggles on the Biocommons. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013.
  - Conceptualising and subverting the capitalist academic publishing model. In: C. Fuchs & V. Mosco (Eds.), Marx and the political economy of the media (pp. 363-406). Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2016.
  - How library and information science faculty perceive and engage with open access." Journal of Information Science, 41, 640-661.

Introduction

> *"It becomes the task of science to be a means for the production of wealth; a means of enrichment … science appears as a potentiality alien to labour, hostile to it and dominant over it."*[1]

Already a century and a half ago, Marx registered the expanding capitalist appropriation of science and other abstract knowledge that are constitutive of what he referred to as the general intellect. Although Marx was illuminating the appropriation of science from direct producers in service of capitalist accumulation imperatives within the factory and how the various forms of abstract knowledge encapsulated in the collective social intelligence of the general intellect were being objectified in the fixed capital of machinery, his basic argument is applicable to the contemporary capitalist scholarly communication industry; a multi-billion dollar industry in which majority control is exercised by a handful of publishing giants that exploit the free labour of academics and lockdown content through strict application of copyright and licencing restrictions in order to extract monopoly rents from institutions of higher education.

In response to the call informing this special issue about information ethics from a Marxian perspective, this article illustrates briefly and situates theoretically the contemporary capitalist model of academic publishing using Marx's concepts of 'primitive accumulation' and 'alienation.' Drawing mainly on Volume I of Capital, my goal is to demonstrate that primitive accumulation, understood as a continuing historical process necessary for capital accumulation, offers an apropos theoretical lens through which to contemplate contemporary erosions of the knowledge commons that result from various enclosing strategies employed by capitalist academic journal publishers. As a theoretical complement, I will further suggest that some of the elements of alienation Marx articulated in respect of capitalist-controlled production processes capture the estrangement experienced by the actual producers of academic publications. The exegetical account of alienation offered here relies primarily on Marx's discussion in the Economic and philosophical manuscripts. Following an assessment of the capitalist academic publishing system using this theoretical framework, the article then briefly critiques the current open-access regime and proposes an alternative system of academic publishing.

A Brief Outline of the Capitalist Academic Publishing Industry

Similar to other information and communication sectors, the academic publishing industry has experienced significant levels of consolidation over the past two decades, with the field now dominated by ten major corporations. The top three publishers of scientific journals (Elsevier, Springer, and Wiley-Blackwell) account for approximately 42% of all articles published. Although, according to Campbell,[2] scholarly societies own and control approximately half of all peer-reviewed journals, no other publisher beyond the big three accounts for more than a three percent share of the journal market.[3] In part, this concentrated degree of control has been made possible because these large capitalist publishers have been very successful in acquiring many of the most prestigious and high-circulation journals across almost all academic disciplines.

In addition to an increasingly consolidated industry, there are structural characteristics specific to the market for journal articles of which capital is able to avail itself in asserting its grip on academic publishing.[4] One

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1 Marx, Karl: Economic Manuscript of 1861-63. 32, 34 (emphasis in original)

2 Campbell, Robert: Overview of Academic and Professional Publishing.

3 McGuigan, Glenn and Robert Russell: The Business of Academic Publishing.

4 I would like to clarify my use of the term 'capital.' My intent is not to hypostatise 'capital' as a monolithic entity that develops and executes an internally consistent program of accumulation. Instead, I employ 'capital' as shorthand for the aggregation of individual

particularly potent mechanism of control is the almost universal practice among capitalist journal publishers of making publication of scholarly articles contingent upon the author agreeing to transfer the intellectual property rights in a work to the publisher.

The nature of academic scholarship has also contributed to the power of capital. Unlike typical goods, competing journals and journal articles, although often complementary because of overlapping subject areas, are rarely substitutes for one another. This lack of fungibility substantially augments the monopoly power of publishers, particularly those that control the top-ranked journals in their respective fields, because academic library collection development policies are driven by the underlying objective to maintain and expand research holdings, which motivates collection development librarians to subscribe to as many of the key journals of record as is fiscally possible. Indeed, because of pressure from faculty to ensure easy access to key disciplinary journals, demand is relatively price-inelastic and differences in quality across journals are not typically reflected in price differentials. Cognisant of this captured market situation, publishers engage in profit maximising behaviour, such as price increases far in excess of inflation.[5]

Industry consolidation, working in tandem with the captured demand side of the market, gave rise to what is commonly referred to as a 'serials crisis,' which is shorthand for a double-pronged dilemma faced by academic libraries beginning in the 1990s: skyrocketing journal prices coupled with static or declining library budgets. Even in the most recent years following the global economic meltdown of 2008, serials prices rose at rates between four and five percent, well above the negative average rate of inflation in 2009 and the 1.64% average level of inflation in 2010 in the United States.[6] According to EBSCO, between 2007 and 2011 journal prices increased by almost 30% for U.S.-based titles and almost 34% for non-U.S. titles.[7] Serials prices increased, on average, by another 6% each year between 2012 and 2016. This compares to average United States consumer price inflation rates of 2.07%, 1.47%, 1.62%, 0.12%, and 1.26% over the same years, meaning that journal prices have continued to far outpace both library budgets, which remain relatively flat, and broader levels of consumer price inflation.[8] Average journal price increases for 2017 are forecasted to continue this trend and remain between 5% and 6%.[9]

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capitalists who, in general, represent a class in the broader system of capitalist social relations. Along similar lines, and taking a cue from Massimo De Angelis (2007), who himself follows Marx's usage of the term, I will avoid the ism of 'capitalism' and instead discuss 'capital,' 'capitalist production relations,' and 'capitalist social relations.' Indeed, Marx talked about the capitalist mode of production rather than 'capitalism.' By adopting this perspective, Marx was in a position to develop a critique of capital as an all-encompassing social relation or, what Mészáros (2008, 75) refers to, as a system of social metabolic control: "Capital is not simply a material entity. We must think of capital as a historically determinate way of controlling social metabolic reproduction. That is the fundamental meaning of capital." Such a conceptualisation permits us to apprehend capital, or a capitalist mode of production, as one mode of organising livelihoods that co-exists with, and is related to, others. In this way, we can conceive of the social field as a space open to strategic contestation among different social forces.

5 Bergman, Sherrie: The Scholarly Communication Movement.

McCartan, Patrick: Journals and the Production of Knowledge.

6 Bosch, Stephen, Kittie Henderson, and Heather Klusendorf: Periodicals Price Survey 2011.

7 EBSCO: Five Year Journal Price Increase History (2007-2011).

8 These figures are the average of the 12 monthly inflation rates of each calendar year (http://www.inflation.eu/inflation-rates/united-states/historic-inflation/cpi-inflation-united-states.aspx).

9 Bosch, Stephen, and Kittie Henderson: The Winds of Change.

Bosch, Stephen, and Kittie Henderson: Steps Down the Evolutionary Road.

Bosch, Stephen, and Kittie Henderson: Whole Lotta' Shakin' Goin' On.

Bosch, Stephen, and Kittie Henderson: Fracking the Ecosystem.

Bosch, Stephen, and Kittie Henderson: New World, Same Model.

Bosch, Stephen, Kittie Henderson, and Heather Klusendorf: Periodicals Price Survey 2011.

Given the space limitations of this journal, the foregoing sketch of the capitalist academic publishing industry has had to be extremely brief. Nonetheless, this outline highlights the extent to which academic publishing is increasingly subsumed within the capitalist mode of production. The following section of the article seeks to demonstrate that Marx's concepts of primitive accumulation and alienation provide apposite theoretical lenses through which to make conceptual sense of this situation.

Conceptualising Capitalist Control of Academic Publishing through the Lenses of Primitive Accumulation and Alienation

Marx provides his deepest discussion of primitive accumulation in Volume I of *Capital*, where he develops a critique of the 'so-called primitive accumulation' articulated by classical political economists. As Marx is at pains to point out throughout his work, capital must not be simply equated with a particular stock of wealth but must instead be understood as a social relation. Wealth is certainly a necessary precondition but by itself is not sufficient to explain the emergence of capitalist social relations. According to Marx, the appearance of capitalist social relations must be traced to the transformation of social property relations, which facilitates the translation of wealth into capital.[10] At its most basic, primitive accumulation can be understood as providing the origin of the separation between producers and the means of production that characterises capitalist social and production relations. Primitive accumulation thus represents an historically specific and class-differentiated relationship of control over the necessary means of social production.

Most contemporary scholars engaging in a re-invigoration of primitive accumulation as a theory for comprehending contemporary capitalist development tend to agree on three additional basic points about this concept.[11] First, primitive accumulation should be understood as a continuous process that remains vital for capitalist accumulation. As Marx informs us,

> "the capital-relation presupposes a complete separation between the workers and the ownership of the conditions for the realization of their labour. As soon as capitalist production stands on its own feet, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a constantly expanding scale." [12]

That is, the separation between producers and the means of production, a central category of Marx's critique of political economy, is the constitutive presupposition of accumulation and thus common to both primitive accumulation and accumulation in general – capital presupposes this separation. In Marx's own words,

> "the manner in which the capitalist mode of production expands (takes possession of a greater segment of the social area) and subjects to itself spheres of production as yet not subject to it … entirely reproduces the manner in which it arises altogether."[13]

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[10] Marx, Karl: Capital, Vol. I.

11 Depending upon the theorist to whom one refers, the nominal term employed to reflect the phenomenon of primitive accumulation differs. Glassman (2006) discusses 'primitive accumulation,' 'accumulation by dispossession,' and 'accumulation by extra-economic means,' though he seems to favour the original term coined by Marx. McCarthy (2004) speaks of accumulation by 'extra-economic means.' Bonefeld (2001, 2002) and De Angelis (2001, 2007) remain true to Marx. Harvey (2003, 2006) prefers to substitute the expression 'accumulation by dispossession' for what he believes is the dated 'primitive accumulation.'

12 Marx, Karl: Capital, Vol. I. 874

13 Marx, Karl: Economic Manuscript of 1861-63. 327 (emphasis in original)

Thus, once produced, capital must reproduce the separation between producers and the means of production (and, indeed, expand this reproduced separation to additional forms of social labour). We thus note that Marx's discussion of primitive accumulation contains a basic ontological connection between primitive accumulation and expanded reproduction, such that accumulation, in general, represents a form of intensified primitive accumulation.[14]

The second additional point about primitive accumulation is that it manifests itself in a variety of forms, including the privatisation of once public goods, which has the ultimate effect of re-organising class relations in favour of capital. The public good character of academic research and its dissemination has been transformed through extensive enclosing practices into a relatively new source of capital accumulation. The third additional feature of primitive accumulation speaks to its spatial ambition. Despite a general ethnocentrism present in Marx's work (an ethnocentrism that Marx readily admits), he discusses both the historical and the global elements of the processes of primitive accumulation, through which a privileged minority relentlessly pillaged the means of production from the people of pre-capitalist civilisations around the world:

> "*The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the indigenous population of that continent, the beginnings of the conquest and plunder of India, and the conversion of Africa into a preserve for the commercial hunting of blackskins, are all things which characterize the dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation.*"[15]

Ensuring an expanded reproduction of capital depends upon enveloping new spheres of production and peoples within the web of capitalist social relations of (re)production. Having historically extended the territorial reach of capitalist social relations through colonialist expansion and the imposition of private property rights across the globe, primitive accumulation in the twenty-first century has become both more extensive and intensive, affecting an ever-increasing range of social activity. In practice, primitive accumulation motivates efforts by capital to enclose more and more areas of our social existence that can be mined for extraction of surplus value. Thus, primitive accumulation processes of enclosure all share the basic universal character of separating people from access to any social wealth that falls outside the purview of competitive markets and money as capital. That is, in line with the elaboration above about the basic element of the theory of primitive accumulation, enclosures provide a mechanism for realising the ex novo separation between producer and the means and objects of production.[16]

This separation is responsible for the alienated character of labour and thus for defining the opposition inherent in capitalist social relations. As articulated most fully in the Economic and philosophical manuscripts, the alienation of labour under capitalist social relations manifests itself in four ways, two of which are most germane to the present work.[17] The first consequence of the estrangement of practical human activity – of labour – is

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14 Bonefeld, Werner: The Permanence of Primitive Accumulation.

Bonefeld, Werner: History and Social Constitution.

De Angelis, Massimo: Marx and Primitive Accumulation.

De Angelis, Massimo: The Beginning of History.

Mandel, Ernest: Late Capitalism.

15 Marx, Karl: Capital, Vol. I. 915

16 De Angelis, Massimo: The Beginning of History.

Harvey, David: The New Imperialism.

Harvey, David: Spaces of Global Capitalism.

17 In elaborating his third characteristic of capitalist alienation, Marx contemplates the effects of alienation on the person's relationship to other people when engaging in productive activity, itself a fundamentally social activity. The fourth type of alienation that Marx

a resulting alienated relationship between the worker and the product of labour, which, because of private property and the capital-labour relation, appears as something alien – as a power independent of the actual producer. Since the product of the worker's labour is an alien object that belongs to the capitalist paying her wage, the more that she toils under capitalist social relations the more powerful becomes the alien, objective world she brings into being against herself. Although this basic idea inheres in the production of academic journal articles, it does require a slight adaptation. Publishers own the means of dissemination not production, as is the more traditional Marxist understanding of the alienation inherent in capitalist social relations premised on wage labour. Although an argument could be made that, because journal content is a necessary factor of production in subsequent research, the capitalist ownership of such content represents partial capitalist control of the means of production. In any event, the perhaps stronger argument is that this type of control facilitates an even more insidious form of exploitation and alienation since capitalist publishers provide neither a wage nor the means of production (in the strictest sense), yet accumulate the benefit of the product of intellectual labour. At an even more fundamental level, an argument could be advanced that, from Marx's dialectical perspective, alienation reaches farther back than the estrangement of direct producers from the means of production and the resulting products of social labour to include the alienation inherent in the disconnect between the driving motivation of capital, the profit motive, and the fulfilment of socially-produced human needs, including those for research and knowledge.[18]

A second, and related, aspect of the alienation of labour encompasses the relationship of the worker to the act of production within the labour process. Under the control of capitalist production processes, not only is the product of labour objectified in an alien object that holds power over the actual producer, but the corresponding form of productive activity renders the worker's own labour as something alien and opposed to him, reflecting an estrangement from himself and from his own activity. Rather than offering satisfaction in and of itself, alienated labour is external to the worker, something sold to and thus belonging to someone else. Through its alienability, the relationship of the worker to her activity becomes an example of what Marx refers to as 'self-estrangement':

> *"… estrangement manifests itself not only in the result, but also in the act of production, within the activity of production itself. … So if the product of labour is alienation, production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation. The estrangement of the object of labour merely summarizes the estrangement, the alienation in the activity of labour itself."*[19]

Under the dominance of capitalist social relations, we witness the social separation of the conditions of production from the control of the direct producers. This dual form of alienation inheres in the scholarly communication process that is dominated by commercial publishers, who have been quite successful in wresting the outputs of scholarly research from the control of direct producers in service of capitalist accumulation imperatives.

Capitalist Academic Publishing as an Alienating Instance of Primitive Accumulation

Recognising new opportunities for accumulation associated with the burgeoning volume of journals and research articles being produced by academics, capital began exerting a stranglehold over this industry and the processes of scholarly communication in what can be interpreted as yet another area of social existence now

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develops in the Economic and philosophical manuscripts is the notion of alienation from species-being – alienation from a person's being as a member of the human species.

18 Burkett, Paul: Marx and Nature.

Mandel, Ernest: Marxist Economic Theory.

19 Marx, Karl: Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts. 326 (emphasis in original)

brought under capitalist control, thus reinforcing the idea that primitive accumulation remains a continuous social process.[20] By appropriating the free labour that sustains the production, peer review, and editing of scholarly research and then locking the resulting content behind intellectual property rights, licencing agreements, and technological protection mechanisms, capital has developed a very lucrative model of value extraction in service of its own accumulation imperatives. Put another way, capitalist academic publishing is premised on the private expropriation of much of the value that is produced in common through the cooperative relationships inherent in scholarly research production.

The result of these processes is an increasing individuation and alienation of scholarly producers that dispossesses them of their material capacity to consciously control their product and potentially their labour processes. While there might not be a formal separation of academic producers from the most basic means of production, the dissemination and use of the products of research production are subsumed increasingly within capitalist modes of production and exchange. This intensifying enclosure of academic publishing within the capitalist market nexus that is informed by property rights, alienability, and capital accumulation represents a contemporary instance of primitive accumulation and alienated productive activity.

Capitalist control of academic publishing industry is similarly testament to the expanding range of actors caught up in practices of primitive accumulation and capitalist control of social production processes. The increasing integration of academic journal publishing into capitalist relations of production and exchange similarly demonstrates how contemporary processes of primitive accumulation and the consequent expanding capitalist control of social production processes are exacerbating the alienation Marx elaborated to include new strata of producers beyond the orthodox Marxist emphasis on the industrial proletariat and waged labour. That is, despite a still relatively privileged position vis-à-vis other workers (albeit one increasingly under attack), it is precisely through such capitalist-controlled processes that cognitive workers in the academy are being caught up within and subject to some of the constraining and exploitative practices of capitalist accumulation processes.

However, the imposition of an ex novo separation of the conditions of production from the control of the direct producers represents a social process that is susceptible to contestation by oppositional social forces seeking to recover those social spaces appropriated by capital and to re-invigorate them as spaces of commons. Capital is thus compelled to wage a two-front war in its battles for enclosure: invading and enclosing new realms of social existence that can be subverted in service of capital's accumulation priorities, and defending those enclosed areas governed by commodification and accumulation imperatives against ex novo guerrilla movements struggling to liberate enclosures from capitalist control.[21] Enclosures, and the resistance they engender, thus represent strategic problems for capital. Such resistance poses limits that must be overcome if capital is to be successful in colonising new areas of social existence or in sustaining those areas already enclosed from attacks by alternative social forces seeking to de-commodify and transform them into commons. Very much aligned with Marx's dialectical method, we thus note that commons can emerge out of struggles against their negation.

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20 The contemporary commercialisation of academic journal publishing has been traced to the 1946 launch of Biochimica et Biophysica Acta by Robert Maxwell, who built and later plundered a major publishing empire in the United Kingdom that began with academic publishing (Campbell 2012)

21 De Angelis, Massimo: The Beginning of History.

Open Access as a Response to Capitalist Control of Academic Publishing?

In response to several of the trends in the academic publishing industry that have clearly disadvantaged both authors and libraries – that is, the producers and the purchasers of scholarly output – a sustained movement that advocates for and develops open-access models to academic research began emerging around the turn of the millennium. Open access refers to the free and unrestricted availability of scholarly literature on the Internet that people may access and use for any lawful purpose. The two major types of open access are gold and green. Gold open access refers to peer-reviewed publication in an open-access journal that does not levy subscription fees but may or may not require authors to pay article-processing fees. Green open access involves uploading the work to an institutional or subject electronic repository.

Research provides evidence that the gold model of open-access journal publishing has matured into a sustainable form of scholarly publication.[22] In fact, a quick search of the Directory of Open Access Journals revealed over 9,400 registered journals as of June 2017. Further, albeit disconcerting, evidence of the growing sustainability of open-access publishing comes from a number of capitalist publishers, which have begun to offer open-access options to individual authors in what are otherwise subscription-based journals. In exchange for payment of an open-access publication fee typically in the range of US$2,000–US$3,000, commercial publishers, such as Elsevier, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Sage, among others, provide electronic open access to the published version of an author's journal article. These hybrid models are especially lucrative for publishers since they are essentially paid twice for the same article, which is why this practice has come to be known colloquially as 'double dipping.'

Capitalist publishers have also adopted gold open-access models and now offer a large number of fully open-access journal titles across an array of subject areas. Article-processing fees levied on authors vary widely by publisher and journal, from as 'little' as US$500 to US$4,500 or more. The fact that there is such a range of article-processing fees indicates that they are less a reflection of actual production costs and instead based more on a calculus of what the market will bear. Similar to the captured demand side of the market that offers publishers the opportunity to grossly inflate journal prices, at the production level a similar logic applies given that authors, or at least well-funded authors, will likely remit high fees to publish in high-impact journals.

What these brief examples clearly demonstrate is that open access per se is not inherently anti-capitalist and likely will not improve the long-term financial sustainability of the scholarly communication system or help the actual producers assert control over the system. Instead, these corporate adaptations to open access represent a direct response by capitalist publishers to subvert the open-access model in service of their own accumulation imperatives. Indeed, content delivery through the online open-access model contributes to publishers' profits by lowering marginal costs of production to almost zero and eliminating many of the traditional costs associated with physically publishing a paper journal (for example, materials, printing, inventory management, and distribution costs). Moreover, with funding agencies and universities beginning to apportion more funds to cover publication fees, there exists the potential for capitalist publishers to retain their control and their rent-seeking behaviour as they shift their revenue models from being subscription-based to instead rely on author fees. Given the historically, often-successful ability of capital to decompose class struggle and re-appropriate for its own ends the creativity produced in common by autonomous workers, the increasing adoption of open-

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22 Laakso, Mikael, Patrik Welling, Helena Bukvova, Linus Nyman, Bo-Christer Björk, and Turid Hedlund: The Development of Open Access Journal Publishing from 1993 to 2009.

access models by capitalist publishers is a worrisome trend that demands a counter-response by the academic producers who sustain the scholarly communication system.

A Suggested Strategy to Re-appropriate Academic Publishing

As perhaps the first part of that response, we need to sharpen the distinction between open access that can be harnessed to serve capital, and explicitly anti-capitalist open access, in what we might term a commons-based open-access regime that more accurately reflects the true nature of peer- and commons-based scholarly knowledge production. As mentioned previously, academics provide the majority of labour that sustains the production of scholarly knowledge, including the actual research and writing, peer review, and editing. It is time for academics to re-appropriate from capital the products and processes of their collective labour in order to revitalise the knowledge commons in ways that serve the public good rather than capitalist accumulation imperatives. I therefore suggest that we need to become more radical in our thinking and our actions in order to wrest control of academic publishing from the current capitalist oligarchs. And although this might require significant amounts of persuasion among some of our more conservative colleagues, I want to suggest that logistically such a re-appropriation would be less difficult.

There already exists a basic publishing infrastructure in the form of non-profit university presses, which should be able to substitute easily for capitalist publishers in ways that would not require the assignment of copyright by authors or the imposition of onerous pricing and licensing contracts on library customers. Indeed, university presses have substantial historical experience in facilitating the dissemination of scholarly research across multiple product lines (trade books, scholarly monographs, textbooks, and journals). Moreover, there is a variety of freely available, technologically sophisticated digital publishing platforms (for example, Open Journal Systems) that university presses could employ to produce electronic journals. I therefore contend that university presses are best positioned to fulfil the key aspects of the scholarly communication system in ways that would promote access, remedy the fiscal instability of the current capitalist-dominated model, and restore control to the actual producers and users of the system.

Conclusion

As elaborated above, Marx critiques capital as an alienating social form because it privatises the product of another's labour as property, thus rendering it susceptible to the exigencies of atomised market exchange from which an inequitable distribution of the wealth generated by social production obtains. The object of labour increasingly appears as alien property to the actual producers as the means of their existence and the products of their activity are concentrated progressively in the hands of capital. Capitalist control of academic publishing through strategies and practices such as industry consolidation and forced assignment of copyright represents a new modality of primitive accumulation that strives to appropriate and enclose the knowledge commons that otherwise would emerge from the unrestricted flow of academic research. That is, through such means of control, capital is able to appropriate for its own accumulation imperatives the massive amounts of 'free' labour that sustain the content production and evaluation elements of the academic journal publishing industry.

Yet, there is hope. The success of the open-access movement and models has demonstrated that there are viable alternatives to the capitalist control of academic publishing. However, the dominant open-access regime suffers from inherent neutrality in respect of economic model that renders it susceptible to capitalist appropriation and exploitation. I therefore suggested that we need to become even more radical in our solutions to the capitalist enclosure of our scholarly communication system. The requisite technological, logistical, and financial capacities exist for scholarly journal publishing to be reclaimed by members of the academy through their non-profit university presses. What remains to be effected is an awakening among producers and users of the scholarly communication system to the need to avail themselves of these capacities in order to exert autonomous self-control over this system that remains so vital to the research and educational missions of universities.

If nothing else, my hope is that this article engenders further discussion, elaboration, and eventual implementation of strategies that return complete and common ownership of the products and processes of academic knowledge creation to the actual producers and users.

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Rodrigo Moreno Marques:

Polarization of information and knowledge: a dialectical approach

Abstract:

This article discusses the polarization of information and knowledge, a phenomenon that is increasingly relevant in different spheres of the contemporary socioeconomic dynamics. According to this notion, founded mainly on the works of Karl Marx, information and knowledge are central elements in the contradictions between capital and labour, as well as in the internal contradictions of the working class. The idea of polarization of information and knowledge offers a critical point of view against the authors who, while trying to grasp the socioeconomic dynamics of our times, are captured by the enchantment of the techno-scientific progress. The article also adopts the Marxian concepts of universal labour and general intellect to argue that information, knowledge, and science are social constructions built collectively and should be treated as common goods. However, currently, the emancipatory perspective of the general intellect envisioned by Marx has been replaced by an opposite tendency: the private appropriation of the general intellect.

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  - Marques, Rodrigo Moreno; Kerr Pinheiro, Marta Macedo. Cognitive capitalism or polarization of knowledge? Voices from Silicon Valley unveil myths of the information age. In: III Journées Scientifiques Internationales du Réseau MUSSI, Toulouse (France), v. III, 155-172, 2016.

Introduction

The socialism advocated by Karl Marx was not based on a subjective moral demand, but on a theory of history that is dialectically set in motion by its internal contradictions. Following Hegel's critique of moralism, in Marx's theoretical framework the subjective moral demand becomes powerless in comparison with his insight into history, which is pictured as a movement towards the realization of a better and more humane social order. Although Marx's political economy was not conceived to be a moral judgment of the capitalist mode of production, his description of the negative consequences of capitalism embodies moral valuations. These negative aspects are recognized as historically necessary steps for the historical progress (Fetscher 1991). The rising of socialism would make, according to Marx (1853), "human progress cease to resemble that hideous pagan idol, who would not drink nectar but from the skulls of the slain".

For Marx, overcoming of the capitalist mode of production requires unveiling commodity fetishism, which would reveal the social relations of production between the owners of the means of production and owners of labour power. The historical process by which capitalism is overcome will be determined by the contradictions between the forces of production and the social relations of production. As a result of this dialectical perspective of history, a transformation is expected to occur in the way society distributes the value and the surplus value produced by the working class. The understanding of capitalist contradictory dynamics would enable the proletariat to accelerate the historical process of emancipating the human being or, in Marx's terms, to "shorten and lessen the birth-pangs" of a new society (Marx 1996 [1867], p.10).

These considerations provide the background to the question that drives the exposition presented in this article: What is the role of information and knowledge in a Marxist perspective of overcoming the capitalist mode of production?

In this article, I argue that overcoming capitalism will require the abolishment of the polarization of information and knowledge, a phenomenon that is increasingly relevant in different spheres of the contemporary socioeconomic dynamics. According to this perspective, information and knowledge are central elements not only in the contradictions between capital and labour, but also in the internal contradictions of the working class. In different realms of society, the asymmetric distribution of information and knowledge can be a source of socioeconomic inequality or an instrument for exploitation. Although Marx did not adopt the expression 'polarization of information and knowledge', this idea is, from my perspective, clearly present in some of his most important works, such as in Capital (1996 [1867]) as well as in the manuscripts Theories of Surplus Value (1994a [1863]) and Chapter Six - Results of the Direct Production Process (1994b [1864]).

The idea of polarization of information and knowledge offers a critical point of view against authors who, while trying to grasp the socioeconomic dynamics of the twenty-first century, are captured by the enchantment of the techno-scientific progress. The optimistic description of the contemporary society presented by André Gorz exemplifies this kind of misconception:

> [The] "main productive force, knowledge, is a product that is [...], to a large extent, 'general intelligence', shared culture, living and lived practical knowledge. It has no exchange-value, which means that it can, in theory, be shared at will, as anyone and everyone sees fit, at no charge, particularly on the Internet. But the fact is that the portion of knowledge that is not originally shared and common, namely formalized propositional knowledge – detachable from its producers and existent only because it has been formally produced – is also potentially free, since it can be reproduced in unlimited quantities and shared without having to pass through the value-form (money). It is, moreover, generally accessible, at least in theory, thanks to the Internet, which means that the main productive force and the main source of value can for the first time be put potentially beyond private appropriation" (Gorz 2010, p. 52-53).

Gorz's analysis falls into the trap of technological determinism since his misleading optimism about the Internet prevents him to realize the contradictions of the so-called information society. According to this frequent type of misunderstanding, the Internet and the contemporary sociotechnical networks are supposed to allow unlimited sharing of information and knowledge, which are taken as elements that can flow without any

restriction and cannot be privately appropriated. Contrary to this beautified discourse, I advocate that the analysis of the role of information and knowledge in the current socioeconomic dynamics requires firstly the recognition of the contradictory essence of information and knowledge.

The article is divided into five sections. After this introduction, the two next sections present the main arguments of the polarization of information and knowledge approach. According to the first one, from the early days of capitalism to present, information and knowledge have been central elements in the contradictions between capital and labour. This position draws from a historical perspective built upon the works of Mandeville (1792), Babbage (1832), Marx (1994a, 1994b, 1996), Taylor (1911), and Braverman (1998). The second key argument states that information and knowledge have a fundamental role not only in the contradictions between capital and labour, but also in the contradictions within the working class. This argument is founded on the works of Braverman (1998), Rubin (1972) and Marx (1994b, 1996). In the fourth section, I use the Marxian concepts of "universal labour" (1998) and "general intellect" (1987) to argue that knowledge and science are social constructions built collectively and should be treated as common goods. However, I conclude that currently, the emancipatory potential of the general intellect as conceived by Marx has been replaced by an opposite tendency: the private appropriation of the general intellect.

Polarization of information and knowledge between capital and labour

The idea of polarization of information and knowledge draws from a historical perspective to sustain the first key argument: from the early days of capitalism to present, information and knowledge have been central elements in the contradictions between capital and labour.

Since the 18th century, when the capitalist mode of production was born, the adoption of information and knowledge as instruments of domination or emancipation has become a strong tendency, not only in the workplace but also in broader social spheres. Throughout its history, capitalism has not demonstrated any commitment to the universalization of information, knowledge or science. Capital has certainly a progressive character, but not a reputation of being an educating force for the working class. On the contrary, in capitalism, the production processes are conducted in an arena where workers struggle against capitalists to dominate and control the use of information and knowledge.

The words of Mandeville (1732) reveals how the ideology of the emerging bourgeois was very explicit in the early days of capitalism. His prescription about what kind of knowledge should be accessible to workers was based on restrictive and functional criteria. According to him, workers' education and instruction should be limited to the skills that were useful to their labour. Any other kind of knowledge was considered harmful and dangerous to society. In his terms:

> "*To make the society happy and people easy under the meanest circumstances, it is requisite that great numbers of them should be ignorant as well as poor. Knowledge both enlarges and multiplies our desires [...] The welfare and felicity therefore of every State and Kingdom, require that the knowledge of the working poor should be confined within the verge of their occupations, and never extended (as to things visible) beyond what relates to their calling. The more a shepherd, a plowman or any other peasant knows of the world, and the things that are foreign to his labour or employment, the less fit he will be to go through the fatigues and hardships of it with cheerfulness and content. Reading, writing and arithmetic are very necessary to those whose business requires such qualifications, but where people's livelihood has no dependence on these arts, they are very pernicious to the poor*" (Mandeville 1732, p. 288).

Expanding Adam Smiths' thoughts, Sir Charles Babbage, the pioneer proponent of the "division of mental labour" (Babbage 1832, p. 191), recommended that the division of work in industries should be conceived with the aim of minimizing the skills workers would require to conduct the labour processes, in order to increase child labour and, consequently, reduce wages.

"The facility of acquiring skill in a single process, and the early period of life at which it can be made a source of profit, will induce a greater number of parents to bring up their children to it; and from this circumstance also, the number of workmen being increased, the wages will soon fall" (Babbage 1832, pp. 170-171).

Although Marx emphasises the importance of knowledge in the capitalist production process, he also highlights that the fractioning of the labour process institutes a social organisation of work that deforms the workers, imprisoning each one of them in a fraction of their profession. Hence, the collective labourer that constitutes the live mechanism of manufacturing is based on a partial and limited kind of worker, characterised by Marx as a "crippled monstrosity" (1996, p. 365). Thus, the intellectual forces of the production process become contradictory forces against the partial worker, and scientific knowledge becomes a force that benefits capital instead of the working class.

"Intelligence in production expands in one direction, because it vanishes in many others. What is lost by the detail labourers is concentrated in the capital that employs them. It is a result of the division of labour in manufactures, that the labourer is brought face to face with the intellectual potencies of the material process of production, as the property of another, and as a ruling power. This separation begins in simple cooperation, where the capitalist represents to the single workman, the oneness and the will of the associated labour. It is developed in manufacture which cuts down the labourer into a detail labourer. It is completed in modern industry, which makes science a productive force distinct from labour and presses it into the service of capital" (Marx 1996, p. 366).

Faced with this understanding, Marx (1996, p. 367) agrees with Ferguson (1782 [1767], p. 305) according to whom "ignorance is the mother of industry as well as of superstition".

In his discussion on the application of the machinery in the modern industry, Marx returns to this point. As he explains, the machinery, instead of facilitating the labour, becomes a mean of torture, since it "does not free the labourer from work, but deprives the work of all interest [Inhalt]" (Marx 1996, p. 426).[1] The ability of the machine operator, deprived of all content, is no longer relevant when the scientific knowledge is incorporated into the factory production as a power of the master.

"The separation of the intellectual powers of production from the manual labour, and the conversion of those powers into the might of capital over labour, is, as we have already shown, finally completed by modern industry erected on the foundation of machinery. The special skill of each individual insignificant factory operative vanishes as an infinitesimal quantity before the science, the gigantic physical forces, and the mass of labour that are embodied in the factory mechanism and, together with that mechanism, constitute the power of the 'master'" (Marx 1996, p. 426).

Therefore, in Marx's (1994a, 1994b, 1996) analysis of the capitalist production processes, science and technology are presented as productive powers of capital or, more specifically, as fundamental elements of the productive forces of social labour, which are dominated by capitalists against labour to conduct the production of value and surplus value. So, science and technological knowledge not only appear to be an intrinsic property of capital but also appear as the development of capital.

"Science, the general intellectual product of social development, [...] appears here as directly incorporated into capital [...] and the general development of society, because it is exploited by capital against labour,

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1 The English word content, instead of interest, is a more appropriate translation of the German term inhalt adopted by Marx: "die Maschine nicht den Arbeiter von der Arbeit befreit, sondern seine Arbeit vom Inhalt" (Marx 1962, p. 446).

because it acts as a productive power of capital over against labour, appears as the development of capital" (Marx 1994b, p. 457).

In the early twentieth century, Frederick Taylor, an engineer and manager who was not a Marxist, proposed what he called "scientific management", which presents a capitalist point of view that also corroborates the notion of polarization of information and knowledge. According to "scientific management", the deskilling of workers is a fundamental strategy to be adopted by managers and directors, who should be the sole controllers of all information and knowledge about the working processes. Taylor prescribes a fundamentalist idea of work control, recommending that managers and directors, instead of workers, should be in charge of all decisions about the production process, especially the subjective decisions. Managers should avoid situations where they become dependent on workers' initiatives and ideas. To reach this objective, all information and knowledge about the working processes dominated by workers should be collected, registered and systematized by managers and directors (Taylor 1911).

Expanding the Marxian point of view, Braverman (1998 [1974]) transposes the discussion on the role of information and knowledge onto the universe of working relations of the late twentieth century. As he explains, the fact that nowadays production has become more dependent on science and knowledge does not benefit the mass of workers. In his terms, "the more science is incorporated into the labour process, the less the worker understands the process; the more sophisticated an intellectual product the machine becomes, the less control and comprehension of the machine the worker has" (1998, p. 295).

Polarization of information and knowledge within the working class

Besides the first key argument of the polarization of information and knowledge approach, there is a second key point that sustains this perspective: information and knowledge have a fundamental role not only in the contradictions between capital and labour, but also in the contradictions within the working class.

As Braverman (1998 [1974]) argues, the detailed division of labour, deeply strengthened throughout the evolution of the capitalist mode of production, is currently present in all hierarchical levels of the companies. Thus, this division is not limited to fractioning the simple or unskilled duties conducted on the shop floor but also includes the skilled and eminently intellectual activities. Every phase of the capitalist process of production is "divorced, so far as possible, from special knowledge and training and reduced to simple labour". In this situation, the tasks of unskilled labour will occupy the mass of workers, while the relatively few workers who monopolise knowledge and skills will be freed from the duties of simple labour. Therefore, in every working process emerges a structure that "at its extremes polarizes those whose time is infinitely valuable and those whose time is worth almost nothing". This polarization within the working class can be considered the "general law of the capitalist division of labour", which "is not the sole force acting upon the organization of work, but it is certainly the most powerful and general" (1998, p. 57-58).

Contrary to the critics of Braverman's ideas, Foster (1994) explains that the author does not advocate a simplistic idea of general deskilling. Braverman does not affirm that there would be a reduction in the average skill level of workers as a consequence of capitalist development. Instead of this conclusion, he provides evidence of tendencies of increasing gaps within the working class and expanding inequalities among it. This polarization harms the majority of workers and benefits the few. In Braverman's words:

> *"Since, with the development of technology and the application to it of the fundamental sciences, the labor processes of society have come to embody a greater amount of scientific knowledge, clearly the "average" scientific, technical, and [...] "skill" content of these labor processes is much greater now than in the past. But this is nothing but a tautology. The question is precisely whether the scientific and "educated" content of labor tends toward averaging, or, on the contrary, toward polarization" (Braverman 1998, p. 294).*

Therefore, the contradictions in the universe of labour are strengthened by the uneven access to knowledge and professional qualifications. As Rubin (1972 [1924]) puts, the long qualification periods of some professions

and expensive learning costs constitute obstacles to the distribution of works between different sectors of social production as well as obstacles to the transference of works to different occupations. Accordingly, the high level of skills required to be admitted in some activities turns these occupations into professional monopolies.

Huws (2001) disagrees with the idea that the information and communication technologies would inexorably tend to emancipate the working class. On the contrary, the author points to an expanding gap within the contemporary workforce. On the one hand, there is a growing complexity in some working processes and some of them are becoming multi-skilled. On the other hand, other working processes have become taylorised and deskilled. Although is possible to note the emergence of new opportunities for workers, it is also possible to realize that new forms of exclusion and exploitation are rising.

The concept of the collective labourer proposed by Marx (1994b, 1996) is also an important reference for the notion of the polarization of information and knowledge. When Marx discusses the advanced capitalist production and the labour process on a large scale, he asserts that the single worker is no more the real agent of the working process. In this context, what is determinant to the production of value is the combination of multiple activities, including those that are mainly manual or unskilled and the ones that are eminently intellectual and skilled. In other words, what is relevant is the socially combined capacity to work. This aggregated work force, constituted by different individual workers, comprises the organs of what Marx terms the "collective labourer". The collective labourer is a social being composed of a complex and heterogeneous mass of individual workers with different capacities to work, qualifications and skills. Some of them have superior education and high skills, such as engineers, managers, and technicians, while others conduct mainly unskilled and manual tasks.

The category collective labourer is increasingly relevant to discuss the contemporary socioeconomic dynamics, given the growing importance of the global production chains, by means of which the production processes are fractionated and allocated in different regions across the globe. The idea of collective labourer is more insightful than the dichotomist proposition of some authors, such as Gorz (2010) and Moulier-Boutang (2011), who divide the manual activities (production) and the intellectual ones (design) into different spheres, attributing the capacity to create value only to the second type. Nevertheless, in fact every production process indispensably needs the prior phase of design, which in turn can only be realized through execution (Jeon 2012). Therefore, there is a contradictory dialectical unity between the conception of a gadget such an iPhone, conducted by some kind of labour aristocracy in Silicon Valley (United States), and the manufacturing of this apparatus in the terrible sweatshops in Shenzhen (China).

Albeit the fact that Marx's concept of collective labourer presupposes the integration between skilled and unskilled labour or, in other words, between manual and intellectual duties, his theoretical framework reveals some contradictions within the collective labourer. The Marxian analysis of the division of labour in the factories presents the engineers, mechanics, and joiners as a privileged class in comparison with the operative class: "this is a superior class of workmen, some of them scientifically educated, others brought up to a trade; it is distinct from the factory operative class, and merely aggregated to it" (Marx 1996, p. 423). In another passage, he states that, with the emergence of the collective labourer that takes place when labour assumes a social scale, the labour of the hand and of the head "part company and even become deadly foes" (Marx 1996, p. 509). Marx also returns to this point in another text where he claims the necessity to overcome the antithesis between mental and physical activities as a condition to overcome the capitalist mode of production. In his words, to build a communist society and cross "the narrow horizon of bourgeois right [...] in its entirely", it would be necessary to abolish the "the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour" (Marx 1989, p. 87).

If the contradictions involving information and knowledge can be considered germs for overcoming capitalism's inequality and uneven development, the effective realisation of this possibility will require the abolishment of the polarization of information and knowledge. In other words, it will require the understanding of information, knowledge and science as common goods, that is, as what Marx terms "universal labour" or "general intellect".

Towards the private appropriation of the general intellect?

Every intellectual product is fundamentally a social product built collectively since an idea of any person is based on the ideas of his predecessors. The evolution of knowledge, science, and technology is a cumulative historical process. The statement by Isaac Newton in a letter to Robert Hooke is well known: "If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants" (Newton 1675).[2]

Rarely is scientific progress the result of one sole researcher. On the contrary, science is a process developed through networks and it advances by means of a cross-pollination. Scientists learn through connections with other scientists, seeking information and inspirations within their own research fields and among distinct ones. The inspiration for new ideas has its origins in varied sources which frequently are not evident. In some cases, it is impossible to have the full consciousness of which sources were the inspiration for an innovative achievement. Even if it were possible to identify all contributors to a scientific or technological advance, it would be impossible to determine the exact quantity of each contribution (Perelman 2002).

The collective principle that characterizes the social construction of knowledge was also recognised by Marx (1996, p. 375): "A critical history of technology would show how little any of the inventions of the 18th century is the work of a single individual. Hitherto there is no such book". Thus, knowledge and scientific progress is never a product of an individual but arises from what Marx terms "universal labour" (1998) or, in the German original, Allgemeine Arbeit (1962). In his words, "universal labour is all scientific labour, all discovery and all invention. This labour depends partly on the co-operation of the living, and partly on the utilisation of the labours of those who have gone before" (Marx 1998, p. 106).

Therefore, knowledge is intrinsically a collective and communal resource, despite the fact that throughout history it has been privatized and appropriated by the ruling class at the expenses of the less privileged. As Perelman (2002, p. 8) notes, "a small minority of the population has become wealthy by claiming property rights to land or other goods that belonged to the community at large". As the author completes, we "should not be surprised that today, when knowledge and information are so crucial to the economy, the tradition of looting of the commons should extend to knowledge and information".

In the Grundrisse, a manuscript that can be considered a draft version of Capital, Marx (1987 [1857-1858]) perceives a future when the creation of wealth would become "less dependent upon labour time and the quantity of labour employed than [...] upon the general level of development of science and the progress of technology, or on the application of science to production". Faced with this hypothetical scenario, Marx conjectures: "as a result, production based upon exchange value collapses" (1987, p. 90-91). In other words, he presents the hypothesis of overcoming capitalism and its intrinsic logic of value through the collective knowledge, which he terms the "general intellect". So, in this brief excerpt of the Grundrisse, Marx explicitly attributes to knowledge an emancipatory power.

As predicted by Marx, currently the creation of wealth increasingly relies on the progress of science and technology, as well as on the application of science to production. Nevertheless, contradicting what Marx glimpsed about the general intellect in the Grundrisse, nowadays, the strengthening of the polarization of

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2 It is worth noting that Newton is not the original author of this statement. John of Salisbury wrote in the twelfth century in his work The Metalogicon: "Bernard of Chartres used to compare us to [puny] dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants. He pointed out that we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their giant statute" (Salisbury 1955, p. 167).

information and knowledge is evident in different contexts, at both the micro and macro socioeconomic levels. It is worth noting some examples.

Firstly, the charges to access the web are unaffordable for many people around the world, preventing the effective universalization of Internet access. Besides that, the commoditisation of the web and the evolution of the Internet governance have led to national policies that allow Internet service providers to abandon the principle of net neutrality [3] in favour of zero-rating [4] plans. Because of this tendency, the World Wide Web has turned into a "walled garden", especially in poor nations (Ramos 2014). A shocking result of this trend is the revelation that the majority of people in some poor and developing countries believe that "Facebook is the Internet" (Mirani 2015). So, in the realm of Internet, there is nowadays an increasing asymmetric distribution of information and knowledge.

In the sphere of world economy, the global production chains of information and communication technologies set in motion a contemporary collective labourer constituted by a heterogeneous and complex labour force that includes not only the intellectual labour aristocracy that design hi-tech apparatus, but also the Congolese slaves who extract minerals used in the IT industry, as well as the unskilled and highly exploited workers of manufacturing plants in China (Fuchs 2014; Smith 2016).

The polarization of information and knowledge is also a hallmark of some uneven education systems not only in poor countries but also in wealthy areas such as in Silicon Valley (Marques and Kerr Pinheiro 2014, 2016). In Silicon Valley, one of the most innovative places of the world, considered the "new Mecca for the high priests of high tech" (Siegel and Markoff 1985, p. 5), almost 30% of households were living in poverty and below self-sufficiency standards in 2012. As exposed by a recent report, "nearly 30% of all Silicon Valley households do not make enough money to meet their basic needs without public or private, informal assistance" (Silicon Valley Index 2017, p. 27). The report also states that "self-sufficiency varies significantly by race/ethnicity; nearly 59% (81,245) of all Silicon Valley households with a Hispanic or Latino householder live below the Self-Sufficiency Standard".

These examples reveal not only the phenomenon of polarization of information and knowledge but also some manifestations of what I term private appropriation of the general intellect. The adoption of this expression has, as a reference, Marx's (1987) discussion on the general intellect. However, it represents socioeconomic dynamics that goes in the opposite direction of what Marx had depicted in the Grundrisse. If society does not prevent the current tendency of private appropriation of crucial intangible collective goods – such as information, knowledge, and culture – humankind will be increasingly captured by the rentist logic of capitalism.

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3 The net neutrality principle states that those who are responsible for providing the infrastructure of the Internet, such as telecommunications companies and Internet service providers, are not allowed to discriminate contents that circulate throughout the web. In other words, according to this principle, every content must be treated with isonomy, that is, without any discrimination based on its features such as type of content, origin or destiny, software or hardware adopted.

4 Zero-rating is a price discrimination practised by some telecommunications companies and Internet service providers by means of which they discriminate the conditions to use the global network. Zero-rated plans allow at no charges the free flow of content associated with some specific applications or services (such as Facebook and WhatsApp), while access to all other web content is conditioned to extra payments.

Acknowledgments

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Carlos Figueiredo, César Bolaño:

Social Media and Algorithms: Configurations of the Lifeworld Colonization by New Media

Abstract:

Social media is a pervasive part of everyday life. That is, new media occupies more and more spaces in individuals' lives both in intimate and work sphere. In addition, due to convergence, new media brought together interpersonal and mass communications in the same environment. This fact has caused a wide range of changes in cultural industries. One of the main changes brought about by social media in relation to the mass media is the construction of a flow of content, advertising and propaganda customized for each individual, and constructed from surveillance and control of individuals' interactions in digital networks. For so doing, one element is central: Algorithms. It is not only by means of contents produced by cultural workers or amateurs that social media guarantees the life world colonization by the system, but mainly through the tracking of user interactions. That is possible thanks to the data gathering performed by algorithms. Therefore, social networks colonize the life world in a more constant and pervasive way than mass media, facilitating surveillance and social control that are vital for both, the digital conglomerates economic power and the state capacity to watch individuals, either to strengthen the sales effort or to ensure citizen vigilance.

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Introduction

Social Media, as technological platforms, are inserted in increasingly pervasive ways into the individual's daily life. Our closest friendships, news, interest groups, interpersonal communication – everything converges to these spaces of interaction. Convergence between interpersonal communication and mass communication makes stocks of companies that own social network sites extremely valued, as these platforms perform functions of both telephone companies and media. The insertion of social media into the daily lives of individuals in both exponentially increasing and very personal ways allows social media to gradually function within a capitalist system, as exclusive to the Cultural Industry, with greater efficiency.

The transition from the Culture Industry prevalent in the second half of the XX Century, which centered around TV broadcasting systems, to the new mediation structure, centered on the Internet, promotes fundamental changes in the traditional Monopoly Capitalism functions of (Bolaño, 2015) advertising, propaganda and program. These functions are vital for the lifeworld colonization by the system (Habermas, 1981).

Advertising is aimed at mediating between the market and consumers, that is, guaranteeing the lifeworld colonization by the economic subsystem. Propaganda is responsible for mediation between State and citizenship, facilitating the colonization of the lifeworld by administrative subsystem. Bolaño's definition of program – whose role is to offer content within a flow capable of attracting the attention of a public that will be transformed in commodity audience – as a third function aims to represent lifeworld determinations over mediating structure. In a public broadcasting system, on the other hand, that third function can be accomplished, for example, by public services, accountability, etc.

The critical point that needs to be made as such is that, in the case of Internet and social media, this central function manifests as interaction. We will not discuss here the much more complex problem of how the propaganda function is accomplished in the present capitalist mediation structure. Currently, the main form of lifeworld colonization by State is Internet surveillance. In addition to the distribution of content anchored in the lifeworld, the interaction function allows the surveillance of both social networking sites, which produce users' dossiers, and the state.

Unlike broadcasting where content is rationally organized via radio or TV programming by a certain (powerful) sector of the media staff (Williams, 2003), social media makes this task automatic, organizing content to the user's disposition, taking into account interactions with other users, business companies and other organizations profiles. Traditional mass media sells the audience commodity (Smythe, 1977). Audience prices vary according to schedule, to when advertising runs and is calculated according to the demographic group profile of the current television-watching audience. Profiles are determined by qualitative and, mainly, quantitative surveys based on samples from the total number of people who watch television or listen to radio at any given time (Bolaño, 2015).

In these surveys, the fact that many individuals not interested in the advertised products are part of advertisers' target, the whole system is functionality stymied, introducing inefficiencies and increasing costs. In social media, this problem is radically reduced and the mediation between market and consumers presents an efficiency never seen before. In order to accomplish all its mediation functions in social media environments, a new element is central: Algorithms.

According to Gillespie (2014, p.167), '[algorithms] are encoded procedures for transforming input data into a desired output, based on specified calculations'. Algorithms are pervasive and ubiquitous (Wilson, 2016) and work to make things like Facebook newsfeed, Google searches, Twitter trends, and Netflix recommendations work. Even interactions between friends in social media are organized according to patterns determined by algorithms. Algorithms make it possible to track user navigation over the Internet, generating data used to construct highly personalized advertising. Social media tracks users' interactions with other profiles, whether from companies, content producers or individuals; to distribute content, advertising and propaganda within a personalized flow.

The objective of this paper is to, starting from Bolaño's (2015) theorization about information commodification in Monopoly Capitalism, mark the crossing from a political economy of mass media to a political economy of Internet and social media, emphasizing the centrality of algorithms in the new social mediating structure. In the first part, we present the definition of algorithms as a concept related to the development of capitalism and, in sum, to the change from a disciplinary to a control society, as argued by Deleuze (1992), in his reception of Foucault (1987).

In the second part, we redefine the definitions of algorithms and social media, focusing on the functionalities of the former at a micro level, and in the characteristics of the later proposed by Van Dijck and Poell (2013). We largely adopt the above authors definitions, proposing, nevertheless, two corrections: The inclusion of the idea of "datafication" in the more essential historical tendency of quantification and abstraction (not developed in this paper) and the incorporation of the concept of interactivity, building from the authors' definition of connectivity.

In the third part, we propose some ideas for the critic of interactivity, concluding with the problem of surveillance capitalism, building from the discussion proposed in part one. In the conclusion, we summarize our main arguments and indicate a need for social movements to fight for the opening of algorithm codes in order to guarantee free communication and democracy.

Algorithms, Social Media and Big Data

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been one of the drivers of the capitalist system restructuring that begun in the 1970s, resulting in the end of the Fordist accumulation regime and the advent of the flexible accumulation regime (Harvey, 1989). ICTs have accelerated a trend of creative destruction of the capitalist system, presenting a strong disruptive character to old technologies. In addition, ICTs have contributed to the strengthening of what Marx calls the labor subsumption by capital, codifying various tasks in software and automating them (Bolaño, 2002). Cultural Industry has been experiencing the impact of ICTs since the last decade, including the decline in circulation of newspapers and magazines, and more recently the adoption of second screens by audiences, leading to a decline in attention by spectators. That is, the commodity audience of cultural industries has gone through a brutal process of devaluation.

This process is related to the search for profitability in the Internet market, one of the main reasons for the bursting of the NASDAQ stock market bubble. There was a promise of high profitability, based on the expectation of an Internet popularization in the 2000s, leading to indiscriminate opening of technology companies and corresponding speculation. However, the vast majority of businesses had no real profitability to justify the high investments in that sector by speculative capital. The truth is that search and content sites on the Internet had not found, by the end of the last millennium, a way to make the digital world profitable beyond financial speculation. Several attempts were developed, such as the subscription system or ads that popped up on the user's screen when they entered certain websites. However, most Internet users were reluctant to pay for content and viewed the pop-ups experience as disruptive, since such advertising expectantly pops up on the computer screen rather than through regulated and expected television ads included in regular programming.

According to authors such as McChesney (2013) and Van Dijck (2013), the way out of the above deadlock was to track Internet users through cookies, files downloaded by Internet browsers when users visit certain sites, and collect data about users' paths. From that data, it was possible to trace users' profiles and offer them personalized ads. Social media have honed this logic by combining user tracking and real-time data gathering, which have been able to offer users a personalized experience of both content and advertising. That transformation can be seen as a defeat for large media companies that are no longer the big targets of the advertising industry, although they remain as major producers of content such as news, videos, series, and movies. Power to distribute the flow of content and advertisements passes to social media companies through their algorithms that mediate individuals' interaction with other individuals and with mass-communications companies.

Those companies anchor themselves in a pretended mathematical objectivity of algorithms to be neutral intermediaries between users, content producers, and advertisers. Pasquale (2015) notes that "despite their claims of objectivity and neutrality", algorithms "are constantly making controversial, value-laden decisions". These devices construct images of the world, but their owners claim that algorithms only show the world. Pasquale reminds us that the algorithms of giants like Google and Facebook know a lot about their users, but individuals know very little about them. According to Pasquale, algorithms are black boxes.

Cormen et al. (2009: 5) notes that, "an algorithm is a well-defined computational procedure that takes some value, or set of values as input, and produces some value, or set of values, as output." Therefore, an algorithm is a series of computational steps that transform input into output. The computational codes behind the software we use are examples of algorithms. Inserted into algorithms are instructions on how software will react (output) to user commands (input). Therefore, computational algorithms are the result of a series of developments in mathematics and computer science used by industry to manufacture new products and produce their profits.

Algorithms command interactivity between humans and software, and software and computers mediate human interactions in social media.1 For social media algorithms, data extracted from the tracking of user interactions with other users' profiles and companies' profiles would be the input while the ads and contents recommended for this user would be the output. That output is result of statistical calculations made from large volumes of data compiled with help from high processing power computers. The presence of algorithms in everyday life takes on a pervasive form. They act on financial markets, on Netflix movie recommendations, on Google search results, and on social media sites, transforming Lawrence Lessig's (2006) famous phrase "the code is the law" into an inconvenient truth.

Computational codes also begin to invade our interactions through social media. According to Van Dijck (2013: 11-2), social media can be seen as human interaction facilitators, a people network that promotes interactions as a social value. However, these sites are automated systems that engender and manipulate interactions in order to recognize what users want and like. "Facebook and other platforms track users by coding relationships between people's things and ideas" (idem: 12). According to the author, social media companies tend to emphasize in their institutional propaganda the ability to facilitate interactions between people and minimize the automation of interactions. Automation of interactions by algorithms allows a "detailed and intimate knowledge of the desires and tastes of people" (ibid.) used by the platforms in the development of tools whose purpose is to create and guide specific needs.

Algorithms were designed to solve problems, but they are inert (Gillespie, 2014: 169), and work only with data. Algorithms need a sheer amount of data, resulting from tracking user interactions, to deliver personalized content and advertising. That huge amount of data is compiled in real time by social media algorithms thanks to computers with high processing power. Large masses of data whose compilation is only possible with the help of powerful computers is conventionally called Big Data. There is a false understanding according to Shutt and O'Neill (2013: 25) that Big Data would be a mass of data in which N = All, i.e. the sample would be able to encompass all individuals of a given population. Such reasoning would silence those who are not reached by

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1 In fact, we must define the capitalist mediating structure between man and machine related to the Third Industrial Revolution (BOLAÑO, 2012) in two steps. In the paradigmatic commodity production field, for instance, algorithm is the tool by which man transfers a logical/mental structure (the semantic step) – the one, which commands the software that, on its turn, controls the machine operations (the syntactic step) – to an element of constant capital. The total mediating system is obviously much more complex than the ancient use of simple tools and even the machine system studied by Marx, but it is not yet enough to confirm the science fiction's artificial intelligence dystopias. Human interaction, even mediated by more and more technical layers that amplify the separation between man and nature, is still necessary.

Big Data radar. In that case, a sample would coincide with an entire population, something impossible to achieve in statistics.

On the other end of the spectrum, equally mistaken for the authors, is the understanding that N = 1. Statically, this would mean that it would be possible to infer the characteristics of a given population from a single individual. However, N = 1 gains a new meaning in the Big Data era, where it is possible to store a large mass of data on a single person, and actually produce a sample that includes all the events and actions of that individual, making it possible to make inferences about him or her. It is what data scientists call user-level modeling, that is, construct data models capable of predicting the desires and actions of the user of a given service (Idem: 26). "A model is an attempt to understand or represent the nature of reality through a particular lens, be it architectural, biological or mathematical" (ibid, 28). Therefore, considering that models are constructed from a particular lens, the objectivity claims for social media are difficult to sustain.

Adorno and Horkheimer (1949: 102-3), in their extremely pessimistic analysis of the Cultural Industry, affirm that within this sector "for everyone something is foreseen; so that no one escapes". In fact, the two German philosophers considered that differences between the various contents produced by the Cultural Industry were merely a strategy for categorizing and quantifying consumers statically for purposes of industry planning itself. Thus, using Habermas' (1981) terms, Cultural Industry would promote a lifeworld colonization, of everyday life. It was the continuation of an instrumental rationality of the system, to which the worker would be exposed during work, in free time. Adorno and Horkheimer's perspective is commonly considered a one-sided view about Cultural Industry that completely strips the individuals' agency, and presents an extremely exaggerated view about the mass culture firms' power to predict audience desires.

Social media algorithms actually predict something for each person, and it is not a force of expression, or metaphor, but it is a power of right prediction and distribution of content or ads for the right person with a margin of error much smaller than that observed in traditional Cultural Industry. That surveillance and control over individuals' everyday interactions also constitutes a previously unseen lifeworld colonization by economic and administrative subsystems' rationality. Of course, we cannot make the mistake in denying the existence of utopian energies. Social media are also instruments used by social movements to mobilize and disseminate their demands. Just as there are movements that stand against the invasion of instrumental rationality within digital networks. It is inherent to capitalist contradictions. However, when we think of the ads and individual content received by users based on the data gathered by social media, it is very difficult not to remember the Frankfurter statement.

We can also conclude, from another perspective, that algorithms guarantee all the general Culture Industry functions in a much more invisible, market oriented form than in Foucault's (1975) analogically organized "disciplinary society" in which the submission of the individual is related to the division of space into closed places and a subsequent ordering of working time. Algorithms and the economy of the Internet seems to reinforce Deleuze's (1992) perspective of a transition from that analogical disciplinary society to a digitally organized "control society", in which spaces interpenetrate without definite limits and the establishment of a continuous time makes it impossible for individuals to finish their tasks.2

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2 Deleuze have proposed that concept to understand the transformation of an analogically organized "disciplinary society" (FOUCAULT, 1975) in which the submission of the individual is related to the division of space into closed places and a subsequent ordering of working time; into a social organization, organized numerically, in which spaces interpenetrate without definite limits, and there is the establishment of a continuous time, making it impossible for individuals to finish their tasks. There is a transformation in the surveillance exercise, in the transition from disciplinary to control society. In the former, the act of watching referred to confinement and, therefore, to a physical situation that symbolized the concerns of this model of society. "The problem was the individuals' physical movement, their spatial displacement. Watching was basically regulating people's footsteps, it was looking. With the explosion of communications, a new

Algorithms, Mass Communication and Social Media

In relation to the microeconomic and microsocial aspects of the different culture industries, we can define the algorithmic task as follows:

Algorithms organize the culture commodity offered on the web, substituting the ancient TV timetable by an automatized tool that articulates habits and desires of the audience to advertisers needs. Producers and customers seems to be independent subjects that find in the web a perfect instrument to preserve their mutual autonomy, in a pure mercantile structure. The ideological character of that operation is evident (Bolaño, 2016), arriving, in the more radically fetishist interpretation, to confound both roles in the simplistic idea of "prosumer". In all cases, it is true that programmers lost power, favoring advertisers, but by an operation that produces an irresistible appearance of equality.

Algorithms, in so doing, automatically direct public attention and construct different types of audience commodities that Internet players sell to advertisers in an extremely efficient form. The weakness of this social logic is how to preserve attention in a total dialogical communication apparatus. In fact – and this is the paradox solution – what is sold is not just audience, such as in the broadcasting system, but also an apparently direct channel between customers and advertisers, not mediated by other human interests. This appearance is due to the automatic character of the system that reinforces the myth of technological neutrality.

Algorithm facilitates an interactive communication that was impossible in the XX Century's Culture Industry organization. Interactivity, as we said above, has the same function than program or public services in constructing audience but, in order to make it useful to State and capital, it is necessary to neutralize its critical and revolutionary potentials. In the last instance, the classic bourgeois public sphere faced the same problem, according to Habermas (1961), in the transition from competitive to monopolist capitalism. Culture Industry, for him, was the solution to this problem. In that case, reactivity replaces interactivity (Williams, 2003). A very similar process takes place now.

The complete social logic is the result of micro decisions made by individual capitals in competition. Algorithms represent the essential advantage of individual capitals fighting for conquest or preserve barriers to new competition in Internet based markets. Algorithm production and its control as a secret provides monopolistic advantages and represents, in the last instance, the crucial objective of any capital and the core of each particular business in digital economy. We are, therefore, far from information democratization. The typical market structure in Internet economy remains oligopoly and the main tendency is concentration and centralization, exactly as argued by Marx and Engels when considering the tendencies of capital accumulation.

On the other hand, far from being neutral, both mass media and social media are of great importance in shaping everyday interactions in contemporary times, as Van Dijck and Poell emphasize it (2013: 1). The authors enumerate four characteristics of social media that are present in an increasingly pervasive way in daily life: programmability, popularity, connectivity and datafication. These four characteristics are interesting to demarcate the socioeconomic changes of a time dominated by mass media as social mediators to a historical moment in which social media companies begin to impose their logic in the mediation between individuals and

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figure is gaining momentum: the surveillance of messages, of communications traffic" (COSTA, 2004, 164). After the Internet advent, the concern, thanks to Internet architecture itself, becomes the way individuals access this information. Surveillance is exercised on the dynamics of communication not only between people, but also between people and businesses, network services, financial system, that is, surveillance extends wherever messages circulate.

economic and administrative subsystems. ICTs are rapidly eroding the barriers between mass communication and computer mediated communication.

That flow of programs, news and ads has a cultural significance and an economic function. News flow on a newscast, for example, hierarchizes certain facts and interferes in its meaning with audiences. Programming flow is also organized from economic interests. Programs are placed at certain schedules with expectation to reaching an audience with a certain profile that would be free to attend that broadcasting program. As Jost (2010: 75-6) points out, a broadcast program's chances of success depend on the schedule of its broadcast, as it may not reach the intended audience or interest it less than the content broadcast by the competitor. Thus, one of the strategic functions of a broadcaster is to establish a programming flow that transmits the appropriate television genre to the audience to be reached, at a given time, taking into account the content offering of the other channels. There is another requirement that must be added to these two, it comes from the advertiser: "to build a stable public, with more or less the same characteristics from week to week, a target".

In social media, programmability is not based on the flow of programs previously scheduled in the course of the day, but in the tracking of users' interactions. Thus, social media organizes the content flows available to individuals according to metrics and parameters that are not available to users' accountability, since social media algorithms are proprietary, and regarded as trade secrets. In addition to automating the flow of content and interactions, it presents a new way to sell audiences. Advertising and propaganda that reach individuals are tailored to their prior interactions, ensuring that the right ad reaches the right consumer.

The second social media feature would be popularity. Social media sites have become popularity legitimators, a power that mass media still possesses. More and more actors, politicians, and musicians appear to the public or increase their symbolic capital from exposure on social media. In this way, those agents who master techniques capable of leveraging their visibility and popularity in new media can gain followers for their work and ideas without going through the mass media filters. The third social media characteristic would be connectivity. Connectivity, according to Van Dijck and Poells (2013, p.8) is a term derived from technical hardware language, which designates the socio-technical ability to connect content and advertisements to users' activities. We prefer the term computer-mediated interaction (Primo, 2007) to connectivity or interactivity.

The fourth feature would be datafication: the ability of networked platforms to transform into data many aspects of the world that have never been quantified before. It is not only the demographic or profile data produced by customers in online surveys that are quantified, but also the ability to automatically derive, from user interactions and actions, metadata from smartphones, such as those produced from the user's location, for example. (Idem, p.9).

We prefer here the idea of quantification that represents an ancient trend begun, according to Crosby (1997), in the XII Century. It represents the inner process of abstraction that characterizes the capitalist development from its beginnings and, more, the general division between manual and intellectual labor in ancient Greece (Sohn-Rethel, 1995). The development of informatics, the logic separation between hardware and software, the subsumption of intellectual labor (Bolaño, 2012), that characterizes the present capitalist restructuration, are recent developments of this long-term tendency. Datafication could be better understood in this perspective, but we will not develop it in the limits of this paper.

Interactivity, Social Media and Surveillance

The possibility that the media allowed individuals to be both producers and receivers, thus effecting a kind of popular, communitarian, contra-hegemonic communication, free from the control of capital and the state, was already a claim of Marxist thinkers such as Brecht in the 1930s and Enzensberger (1970) in the 1970s. Brecht considered that it was necessary for radio to also be an apparatus of communication and not just of diffusion so that there was the possibility of confronting the forces of disconnection through the organization of the disconnected (Brecht, 1964: 52), which Bolaño (2015), paraphrasing Williams, called the "listener rebellion".

Williams (2003) differentiates reactive and interactive media in the 1960s, when he surveyed television as a cultural form and possibilities for truly democratic communication offered by that technology.

The search for more interactive media, on the other hand, has always been a concern to the electronic industry. But, as Van Dijk and Des Vos (2001) and Primo (2007) point out, this demand for technological advances that increase interactivity has always been commercially motivated, and focused on human-machine interaction, based on parameters previously established by technological system programmers. Apparatus like television remote control, or user-friendly interfaces of operating systems used in personal computers and other technological advances were meant to seduce consumers. They were advertising strategies for electronic products, "selling arguments" (Sfez, 1992). Emerging technologies' "new communicative possibilities", in this bias, are characteristics that justify purchase and use of new products.

From that perspective, interactivity has a transmissionist meaning, present in many of its definitions in communication sciences, which fits into the emitter-message-receiver model (Van Dijk; De Vos, 2001: 447). Rafaeli's first definition of interactivity, one of the first and most famous in the Communication field, follows this model: "Interactivity is an expression of the extent that in a given series of communication, any third (or later) transmission (or message) is related to the degree to which previous exchanges referrer to even earlier transmissions" (Rafaeli, 1988: 111). Notwithstanding, for Williams (2003), an interactive system should offer to the viewer the possibility of creating and responding in an unforeseen way. On the other hand, in reactive systems "the range of choices, both in detail and scope, is pre-set" (Williams, 2003: 144). For television to be interactive, according to Williams' definition, it would have to allow for "viewer rebellion". However, Williams, according to Primo (2007: 27), would consider much of the technological resources currently available on television sets reactive.

Those different meanings of the concept of interactivity come from the fact that interactivity is a multi-discursive concept (Jensen, 1988: 188). Jensen maps the different concepts of interactivity and analyzes their application in three different fields of knowledge: "1) the concept of interaction of sociology, 2) the interaction concepts of communication studies, and finally 3) the concept of interaction of computer sciences" (Idem).

In sociology, the concept of interaction is modeled on the relationship between two or more people who, in a given situation, mutually adapt their behaviors and actions to the other. Social systems and specific situations with sharp contours are part of this social process, and interactive patterns are more similar to physical interactivity. In addition, the concept also involves "symbolic interaction". "In other words, a mutual exchange and negotiation around meaning takes place between partners who find themselves in the same social context. A situation that communication and media studies would call communication." (Ibid.). Thus, in sociological studies, there may be communication without interaction (unidirectional communication), but not interaction without communication.

In Communication and Media Studies, there is no consensus or clear outline regarding the concept of interaction. Interaction may mean the construction of meanings by audiences when they come into contact with certain content, interpersonal communication processes, or a closer meaning to the sociological in communications research within groups of audience studies (ibid, 189). Another model of the concept of interaction in communication studies is the transmissionist model, as previously noted, which has a purely technological dimension.

The Interaction model in computer science has as its starting point the relationship between people and machines, so-called human-computer interaction (HCI) or human-machine interaction. That model, according to Jensen (Ibid, 190), originated from batch processing, in which a large amount of data is collected before being processed by computers. Users could observe partial results, use choice menus, and dialog boxes to intervene in the process. In this way, users were able to intervene in the program's performance through "dialog traffic" or an "interactive mode". The Computer Science model of interaction does not cover communication between two people mediated by a machine, or what is called computer-mediated communication. According to Jensen (Ibid.), in computer science, then, it is possible to have interaction without communication (man-machine), but not communication (computer-mediated) without some interaction (human-computer).

The interaction concept of "control" in Computer Science (Jensen, 1998: 190) is important for the development of our argument. Jensen uses the Workshop Seillac example in which computer scientists seek to arrive at a consensus definition of the concepts of interaction and interactivity: "Interaction is a style of control and interactive systems exhibit that style" (Guedji, 1980: 69). And, "while sociology doesn't normally use the derivative 'interactivity', the concepts of 'interaction' and 'interactivity' in computer and media studies appear to be synonymous" (Jensen, 1998, p.190). Synonymous use, in connection with the advent of "new media", has also become widely used in the field of media studies. In this way, "the concept 'interactivity' or the combination 'interactive media' is often used to characterize a certain feature of new media that differs it from traditional media" (Idem).

Jensen considers that it would be more productive to maintain the interaction concept linked to its strong sociological definition, except for mediated communication. Interactivity would be the term used to refer to the use of media and computer-mediated communication. In that way, Jensen conceptualizes interactivity as "a measure of a media's potential ability to let the user exert influence on the content and / or form of mediated communication" (Ibid, 201).[3] Jensen's concept of interactivity – even in its later version (Jensen, 2008), by adding the possibility of social media users to act as prosumers (Toffler, 1981) – is not productive if we want to understand the role of social media contemporaneously in that it dismisses the sociological aspects of the interaction concept. We believe that interactivity, in the man-machine sense, and interaction, in the strong sociological sense, are closely linked in social media.

Social media platforms encode human interactions (Van Dijck, 2013) and, through that codified architecture, standardize human interaction in order to insert content, advertising and propaganda in a personalized way in users' flow while at the same time monitoring them. Thus, interactivity in social media becomes a form of control and surveillance from the data generated by the users' interactions of those platforms. That interactions coding is central to what Foster and McChesney (2014) call "surveillance capitalism", an unfolding of Warfare State: a political-economic arrangement in which the US government makes massive investments in military technology to leverage its domestic economy and ensure global military hegemony. The union of interests between industry corporations and US military gave rise to what Daniel Guerin (1973) called Military-Industrial Complex.

According to Foster and McChesney (2014, p. 2), since the 1970s, the digital communications revolution – associated with technological advances such as computers, digital technology and the Internet – was strengthened by three means of absorbing surplus value: massive military spending, sales effort, which involve large investments in advertising, and, with the crisis of Fordism, financialization. As noted, "each necessitated new forms of surveillance and control. The result was a universalization of surveillance, associated with all three areas of: (1) militarism/imperialism/security; (2) corporate-based marketing and the media system; and (3) the world of finance" (Foster; McChesney, 2014).

Social media and algorithms fulfill new needs for surveillance and control and, in this way, make sales effort, diffusion of advertising and economy financialization more efficient. New technologies have increased the ability of the market and state to monitor individuals. Algorithms are the devices through which surveillance and control are exercised by State and market together. However, digital giants regard those algorithms as trade secrets. While large technology corporations possess a huge range of information about social media users, individuals know very little about what these companies do with the data that is collected about them, creating

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3 That concept of interactivity can be divided into four sub-concepts or different dimensions: transmission, consultation, conversation and registration (Jensen, 1998).

a huge asymmetry of information and power. "Dataveillance" results in a synergistic exchange of intimate details about individual lives (Pasquale, 2015, p.21).

They are black boxes. Social media users do not know what parameters are used to rank them, categorize them, and are totally ignorant of how that data is used and who has access to it. In that way, we can say that social media exerts a lifeworld colonization much more conspicuous than mass media exerts by mediating the interests of market and State by inserting advertising and propaganda into the flow of programs. Algorithms not only produce what Gillespie (2014) calls calculated audiences, but also insert themselves into our daily lives (Wilson, 2016), build social reality by working as gatekeepers and setting the agenda of certain groups (Just; Latzer, 2017). Furthermore, they are the technological base of monopolist companies like Google and Facebook.

Conclusions

Social media sites are devices increasingly present in our everyday lives, platforms that encode certain social relationships and gather personalized data from their users' interactions. Social media sells the audience commodity, but in a more efficient way. The target is the individual and their desires, not demographic groups, as mass media does. In social media, the flow is custom-built for individuals and not based on audience surveys that take into account habits of demographic groups portrayed from samples of a given population of individuals. Mass media colonizes the lifeworld through advertising and propaganda. Program, public services, and accountability all have the role of attracting audiences to the flow of broadcast content to expose them to advertising and propaganda.

In social media, the program function is largely substituted by what we defined here as the interaction function. Internet players, by means of algorithms, distribute the flow of content, advertising and propaganda according to individuals' interactions with companies, content producers and other individuals. Mass media has long been the mediator between State and citizenship and between market and consumers. Large communication conglomerates will continue to do it, producing content and being part of the lifeworld colonization complex, but they will do their mediating job in the company of other important partners: the so-called social media and Internet players.4

Social media algorithms increasingly automate content, advertising, and surveillance streams. In addition, they perform a function that the mass media cannot: surveillance and control of individuals and not only the masses. In disciplinary society, surveillance took place in enclosures, such as factories, hospitals, and schools. They are molds or different castings. The individual was always restarting their tasks when they returned to these enclosures. In control society, however, surveillance takes place in open spaces, in any space. Controls are modulations, "like a self-deforming cast that continuously change from one moment to other, or as a sieve whose mesh will be transmuted from point to point" (Deleuze, 1992: 4). Individuals can no longer complete any task; they are always in debt.

Powers and Jablonski (2015) and McChesney (2013) emphasize the international hegemonic character of the system, referring to the coalition between digital economy giants and the US government as a "military-digital complex", an update of the "military-industrial complex" thought by Daniel Guerin. McChesney (2013, p. 162) highlights the existence of economic interests that make Silicon Valley companies support citizen surveillance by government agencies. Technology is fundamental in the maintenance of this "surveillance capitalism" (Foster; McChesney, 2014; Mattelart, 2008) and of the lifeworld colonization by the system in the neoliberal

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4 We can say that the capitalist social mediation structure in the XXI Century doubled, but we cannot discuss it in the limits of this paper.

era, in a much deeper sense than in original Frankfurt definition (Adorno; Horkheimer, 1949), bringing current control closer to the vigilance described by Phillip K. Dick in the Minority Report narrative.

Social movements for free communication should focus on pushing government over constructing laws in order to open the codes of the mainstream Internet players' algorithms, because in addition to increasingly regulating the daily life of individuals, they enable the surveillance of them by the market and State apparatus. It is a brutal instrumental rationality invasion in individuals' daily life, based on a real black box system, and secrets of this magnitude are not compatible with democratic societies, where communication is supposed to be free. It is necessary to know the laws governing cyberspace. The free software movement is an example of a community of technically trained users, such as Linux-based operating systems, that could curate social media algorithms.

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Bianca Rihan Pinheiro Amorim:

Produção informacional na era do capitalismo neoliberal: uma crítica ética e dialética

Abstract:

This article discusses an ethical conception for informational production based on historical-dialectical materialism. Starting from the notion of ethics as a critical attitude towards hegemonic morality, we will make use of the categories of totality and historicity to formulate a critical argument for information submitted to the control of capital and as an instrument for the creation of a "morality" based on the values of the ruling class, both in the sphere of epistemological production, and in the economic and media spheres in times of neoliberal globalization. However, as a historical product, it also seems essential to present the information from the intervention of the human being in the world and, therefore, in permanent movement and dispute, being able to become an effective pillar for the ethical-political project of human emancipation, or the good in a universal sense of fact.

Resumo:

O presente artigo discute uma concepção ética para a produção informacional baseada no materialismo histórico-dialético. Partindo da noção de ética como atitude crítica diante da moral hegemônica, faremos uso das categorias de totalidade e historicidade para formularmos argumento crítico à informação submetida ao controle do capital, e enquanto instrumento para a criação de uma "moral" baseada nos valores da classe dominante, tanto na esfera da produção epistemológica, como nas esferas econômica e midiática em tempos de globalização neoliberal. Porém, como produto histórico, parece-nos também imprescindível apresentar a informação a partir da intervenção do ser humano no mundo e, por isso, em permanente movimento e disputa, podendo converter-se em um efetivo pilar para o projeto ético-político da emancipação humana, ou para a produção do bem em sentido universal de fato.

Agenda:

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Bianca Rihan Pinheiro Amorim:
Produção informacional na era do capitalismo neoliberal: uma crítica ética e dialética

40

Ética, totalidade e historicidade

A objetividade dos valores está baseada no fato de que eles são partes moventes e movidas do desenvolvimento social

G. Lukács

Comecemos a falar de ética que, por tantas vezes, no terreno das cotidianidades, é usada como conceito sinônimo de moral. Apesar de reconhecermos certo bom senso na indução do uso dos termos a partir da similitude de seus significados, cabe diferenciá-los enquanto conceitos.

Ética, em sua etimologia, vem do grego ethos, podendo ser traduzida como hábitos, costumes, modos de ser; já moral, deriva da palavra latina mores, que também aponta para algo como costumes. Logo, os campos da moral e da ética são comumente evocados para fazer relação a conjunto de valores, regras e normas que orientam os indivíduos.

Porém, como ressalta Sodré (1995, p.51), há uma significação diferente para a ética, derivada de um outro e antiquíssimo ethos (que aparece no grego com eta longo), designando o ato de morar, ou a organização de um grupo de indivíduos em um determinado lugar em busca do supremo para a comunidade, ou seja, de seu bem. Em Heráclito, essa ideia aparece no fragmento "ethos anthropos daimon", traduzido como "O caráter do homem é seu deus ou seu demônio", ou "Deus é a morada do homem".

Também em Aristóteles, em sua "Ética a Nicômaco", percebemos a ética como teoria conduzida a interpelar os fundamentos da prática especificamente humana, que devem ser determinados pelo bem; ou seja, "a ética como lugar ontológico do homem, e o bem como ponto para onde convergem todas as forças de ordenamento ou de ação certa para a comunidade" (SODRÉ, 1995, p. 53).

Para Sodré, a não observância de tal distinção - entre a universalidade de fato e a universalidade de direito - é que coroa, na modernidade, um sentido limitado para a ética (segundo a tradução latina), obediente aos regulamentos institucionais ou às corporações profissionais. Ao passo que pensar a ética em sua ideia original, deveria incorporar uma atitude desviante da autoridade de um saber estabelecido ou de um poder técnico sobre o mundo, e aproximar-se cada vez mais das perguntas, do vigor da procura, da liberdade: "A 'theoria' ética resulta da esfera da liberdade, das escolhas de modos cada vez mais atualizados de se por em relação com o outro" (BATISTA, 1995, p.41).

Assim, tomamos como certeiras as considerações de Rios (2006, p. 81) quando defende que "é de acordo com a moral que se diz: faça isso; não faça aquilo". Contudo, somente quando procuramos questionar os valores que sustentam a moral, quando buscamos seus fundamentos, é que entramos no terreno da ética. "A ética pode, então, ser definida como uma atitude crítica diante da moralidade, uma investigação sobre a consistência e o significado dos valores morais".

Resgatando E.P. Thompson (2001), um dos autores mais atentos às normas, aos valores, ao conjunto de elementos morais presentes em uma sociedade - e ao aumento significativo que o estudo desse conjunto pode propiciar ao conhecimento sobre tal sociedade - explicitamos, assim como ele, a necessidade fundamental de situarmos esses elementos em seus contextos históricos, assim como localizarmos os diversos ângulos sob os quais se apresentam, e o relacionarmos às tantas variáveis que os produzem e os mantêm.

Seguindo a linha de raciocínio thompsoniana, devemos estar atentos para a necessidade de os significados das regras e normas sociais, ou os significados da moral hegemônica em determinados períodos históricos, serem sempre contextualizados, assim como priorizadas as relações reais que neles se expressam, afinal:

> *Todo significado é um significado no contexto, e, quando as estruturas mudam, as formas antigas podem expressar funções novas e as funções antigas podem encontrar sua expressão em novas formas (THOMPSON, 2001, p. 238)*

Portanto, se devemos chamar a atenção para o fato de que a vida social produz valores e regras morais, que informam o indivíduo e contribuem para suas ações e decisões, importa também relembrarmos que eles não são universais de fato e nem sempre representarão o bem. Ou seja: não confundamos moral e ética.

Partindo da inspiração acima, sublinhamos que a noção de ética aqui defendida fundamenta-se na razão dialética, ou em um todo orgânico, sempre em movimento e atravessado por conflitos, pois é a partir de uma visão da totalidade - considerando os contextos econômico, político e cultural -, e da historicidade das partes em conflito reclamando o bem, que poderemos observar a universalidade de fato (como sublinhado por Sodré).

Em outros termos, trata-se de travarmos uma crítica radical ao conjunto de valores hegemônicos - da moral hegemônica em nossa sociedade de classe - partindo das categorias de totalidade e historicidade para apreendermos o real.

Nesse sentido, buscaremos debater a utopia da sociedade informacional, que pautada pela retórica tecno-científica, construtora da ideia de informação como "objeto" neutro, e por discursos midiáticos moralizantes (leia-se, formadores de valores), direcionados pela visão de mundo das classes dominantes, afastou-se da ética e do "bem", no sentido da "vida em liberdade" (SODRÉ,1995, p.56), para torna-se um importante instrumento de implementação moral do capitalismo financeiro e da globalização neoliberal ao redor do mundo, onde o "bem" é garantido apenas para uma parte privilegiada do todo.

Uma crítica dialética à neutralidade axiológica dos estudos informacionais na sociedade de classe

Contemporaneamente, as novas tecnologias digitais avançam com grande velocidade, influenciando de maneira decisiva todos os âmbitos da vida humana (CAPURRO, 2015, p.13). Como ressalta Schneider (2015), não é pouco o peso dos fluxos informacionais, em especial aqueles midiatizados, na construção de valores, gostos e da moral hegemônica em nosso tempo.

A grande euforia quanto às benesses da chamada sociedade da informação ganhou eco em meados da década de 1950, época atravessada pelas significativas transformações decorrentes da II Guerra Mundial (1939-1945), e pela ideia de que os avanços tecnológicos, a partir dali conquistados, poderiam resolver boa parte dos impasses e problemas da humanidade.

Assim, o repertório retórico dos estudos informacionais passou a alardear a prontidão dos novos sistemas tecnológicos de informação em responder às demandas de modernização e reconstrução dos Estados e das sociedades, assim como defender a objetividade e leis universais conformadoras de padrões de regularidade e progresso para a informação, tal qual sugerem os modelos matemáticos (teoria da informação), físicos (entropia) ou biológicos (teoria epidemiológica).

Claramente, tal manifestação indica grande influência do movimento sócio-histórico que pautou o positivismo como principal expressão da razão moderna e, logo, como suporte teórico e metodológico privilegiado para justificar a produção de conhecimento e, também, para apreender a informação.

> *Como na definição das leis sociais, todas as categorias desse modelo de apreensão informacional – representadas, dentre outras, pela bibliometria, cienciometria, informetria e webometria – constituem-se intimamente relacionadas aos princípios positivistas e à análise pura dos objetos investigados, ou seja, à procura de uma precisão que conduz a previsões de comportamento, como no desiderato comtiano "ver para prever" (BEZERRA, SALDANHA, 2013, p. 44).*

Da cibernética de Wiener (1947), passando pela teoria da informação de Shannon e Weaver (1948) e pela teoria geral dos sistemas de Bertalanffy (1951), a utilização de sociogramas para o mapeamento dos fluxos de informação, a aplicação de questionários a grandes amostras de usuários, e a busca de invariantes cognitivos para a construção de sistemas de informação são apenas alguns exemplos das abordagens que olham para a realidade social a partir de perspectiva puramente estatística e quantitativa (ARAÚJO, 2003, p. 24). O efeito dessas concepções é o alijamento entre informação e sujeitos, tratados apenas como cognoscentes, portanto isolados dos condicionamentos sociais e materiais, próprios ao existir humano (CAPURRO, 2003).

Por tudo isso, como bem ressalta Capurro (2003), é urgente combatermos a ideia de informação como representação/ duplicação, uma vez que sua existência é, antes, a relação dialética entre sujeitos e um vasto complexo material e simbólico. Isso quer dizer que a informação, e também sua produção epistemológica, não acontecem em uma dimensão etérea, que paira democraticamente em um espaço neutro, sendo essa "uma ficção interessada que permite aparentar como científica uma forma neutralizada e eufêmica (simbolicamente muito eficaz porque irreconhecível) da reprodução dominante do mundo social (BOURDIEU, 1994, p. 142)".

Nesse sentido, a produção do italiano Antonio Gramsci (1987) se torna um interessante instrumento para pensarmos criticamente a informação e a sua produção epistemológica, uma vez que sua obra nos inspira uma concepção de análise da realidade baseada na totalidade e na historicidade. Negando esquemas classificatórios que reduzam o econômico especificamente à infraestrutura e os demais "domínios" da sociedade - o político, o cultural ou o ideológico - ao espaço superestrutural - de reflexo; mas por outro lado enfatizando, sempre, a conexão profunda entre a história das ideias e o desenvolvimento das forças produtivas, o autor destaca como os discursos (e aqui apontamos para o discurso científico) podem ser considerados como uma das dimensões organizativas das classes e do próprio Estado (MENDONÇA, 1996), na medida em que ajudam a formular e a legitimar uma gama de exigências, normas e ideias a serem seguidas pela sociedade em geral.

Ao atualizar a noção de Estado a partir da categoria de "Estado ampliado", ou seja, tomando o Estado não apenas a partir da sociedade política [estrito senso], mas considerando as pressões e contrapressões entre sociedade política e sociedade civil na luta pela hegemonia na direção do Estado (MENDONÇA 1996), Gramsci certamente concordaria com a inclusão do campo científico em uma dessas frentes de disputa entre classes/frações de classe. A partir da ciência, a luta de classes torna-se também luta de classificações. E, ao passo que os discursos científicos são defendidos pelos "autorizados" do campo científico como orientados para o bem comum sua força de consenso amplia-se de maneira brutal.

Ao estabelecer um conjunto de "verdades universais" / "regras morais universais" a partir da ciência, quando essas estão, na realidade, diretamente imbricadas aos interesses econômicos, político e culturais de determinadas classes/frações de classe, a ciência autoproclamada como "pura" está, além de produzindo conhecimento[1], reproduzindo ideologias e garantindo orientações morais classistas para o Estado, o que muito se afasta de uma concepção de ética pautada pelo bem universal de fato.

Logo, é a universalização de interesses particulares - e de uma moral particular - que explica a ocultação do caráter de classe do Estado, assim como o silenciamento das lutas de classe e classificação que inundam seus inúmeros campos de reprodução, como o campo científico.

Como bem destaca Mészáros (2004), a produção científica não pode ser descolada de sua relação limiar com o complexo geral do desenvolvimento capitalista. Devendo, portanto, ser examinada à luz das contradições

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[1] Como também destaca Mészáros, é importante reconhecermos um certo aspecto relativamente autônomo do desenvolvimento científico, cuidando porém para não tornar absoluta a lógica da autonomia no desenvolvimento científico ao desconsiderar as determinações sócio-históricas, como é costumeiro no processo de reprodução da ideologia dominante (Mészáros, 2004).

que caracterizam as práticas produtivas capitalistas em sua totalidade. Logo, nenhuma posição privilegiada deve ser atribuída a uma ciência idealizada ou "neutra":

Como as formas e práticas existentes da ciência eram manifestações também da alienação e da divisão do trabalho prevalecentes, todo o complexo tinha de ser radicalmente questionado, em todos os aspectos, caso se quisesse explicar como as imensas potencialidades criativas das tendências em desenvolvimento foram transformadas – inclusive no da ciência – em realidades destrutivas pelas contradições estruturais do capital (MÉSZÁROS, 2004, p. 248).

Segundo o autor, desde a formulação das doutrinas de Auguste Comte e seus seguidores, o "positivismo acrítico" tratou de interditar qualquer debate quanto à dimensão histórica da visão de mundo dos dominantes. De modo que o grande sucesso do positivismo (e do neopositivismo) desde então se relaciona mais a este esmagamento radical da dimensão histórica do que a qualquer outra coisa. Assim, a autoridade da ciência - para Mészáros uma caricatura da ciência, definida como um constructo inteiramente anistórico - foi utilizado para disfarçar a substância social altamente conservadora dos pontos de vista defendidos.

Outra seara de grande valia às pesquisas recentes sobre a epistemologia, colocada por Mészáros, trata-se da problematização da ideia de "progresso científico", que ainda hoje se fortalece nos trilhos e desdobramentos do positivismo "combatente" da dimensão histórica e crítica da teoria social. Negligenciando a dinâmica historicamente manifesta dos processos e contradições sociais objetivos, passa-se a evocar uma "temporalidade abstrata", baseada na pretensão autorreferente de um suposto progresso linear da ciência, porém, estreitamente associada aos modos de produção e acumulação capitalista.

Com a introdução da ciência (interpretada de modo positivista) na concepção geral, uma nova relação de identidade poderia ser estipulada. Tratava-se da identidade entre o "progresso" – representado como "progresso científico" – e o próprio modo de produção capitalista, porque imaginava-se este último não somente como o equivalente produtivo ideal das determinações naturais originadas diretamente das necessidades básicas, mas também como a única incorporação adequada do "espírito científico" como tal e dos benefícios "evidentes que ele proporcionaria às pessoas da "sociedade industrial moderna" – Isto é, da sociedade que realmente correspondia às exigências internas desse espírito científico" um tanto mítico (MÉZÁROS, 2014, p. 253).

Nos estudos informacionais hegemônicos, sobretudo na área do conhecimento institucionalizada, designada Ciência da Informação, a ideia de progresso é apresentada como resultante da técnica aliada às novas tecnologias, o que definiria uma ciência dinâmica e moderna. Por sua vez, o diálogo com as ciências sociais contribui para garantir as possibilidades de sua originalidade, elevando a validação e reconhecimento da CI entre os pares e o senso comum (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER e CASTRO, 2015).

Porém, apesar dos discursos sobre a interdisciplinaridade e a própria classificação da área enquanto ciência social aplicada, permanece um grande déficit acerca do "social", e o quase nulo questionamento sobre as ideologias[2] contidas nos seus "aparatos classificatórios, cientométricos e bibliométricos", tidos até hoje como instrumentais inquestionáveis.

Para nós é clarividente que o dito "progresso" encontra-se orientado para a lógica desenvolvimentista e mercadológica, que parece responder às pressões inscritas na ordem do Estado ampliado e da globalização

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2 Aqui adotamos o termo ideologia a partir da perspectiva gramsciana, referente à visão de mundo.

neoliberal, cerceando os objetos de pesquisa e promovendo uma espécie de unificação teórica e metodológica para a abordagem informacional.

> *A pressão por produtividade e por uma maior contribuição ao desenvolvimento e ao crescimento econômico [...]o que implica também uma maior permeabilidade às demandas (tecnológicas, inclusive mão de obra qualificada) do capital privado – pressões em geral localizadas no próprio aparelho de Estado, que se materializam muito claramente na (permanente) ameaça de desfinanciamento, expressão eloquente, quase obscena, da intimidade nem sempre aparente entre a dominação econômica e a simbólica (BEZERRA, SCHNEIDER e CASTRO, 2015, p. 61).*

Tal análise, sobre a produção epistemológica informacional em uma sociedade de classe, fornecerá algumas pistas de como a informação tecnológica "defendida" para toda a sociedade a partir de um discurso técnico e instrumental torna-se um grande aliado para colocar em marcha a valorização do capital em escala global, sobretudo em tempos de "desmoronamento" de fronteiras ou da chamada globalização neoliberal. A informação supostamente "neutra" mobilizada por um grupo de "experts" ajuda a construir o que Bourdieu (2002, p. 15) chama de lugares-comuns, no sentido aristotélico, ou ideias de verdade e de bem comum, "sob os quais se argumenta, mas sobre os quais não se argumenta".

A informação em tempos de globalização neoliberal

Em sua aclamada obra "Era dos Extremos", o historiador Eric Hobsbawm nos conta sobre o tabu de quase meio século sobre o uso do termo "depressão", mesmo que a tão alardeada estabilidade do pós-guerra estivesse praticamente em ruínas a partir da década de 1970. Assim, foi enfático ao afirmar que "a história vinte anos após 1973 é a de um mundo que perdeu suas referências e resvalou para a instabilidade e a crise. No entanto, até a década de 1980 não estava claro como as fundações da Era de Ouro haviam desmoronado irrecuperavelmente" (1995, p. 393).

Entre outras esferas, a crise repercutiu na articulação da burguesia internacional para manter suas bases de sustentação e garantir hegemonia na direção global. Com as justificativas pautadas no enxugamento dos Estados, as políticas de bem estar social foram paulatinamente abandonadas para que o programa neoliberal passasse a dar as cartas, sobretudo a partir do ciclo de privatizações e desregulamentação dos serviços públicos. Com o coroamento das leis de mercado como sistema regulador da economia mundial, os interesses das classes dominantes em escala transnacional - ou do bloco histórico hegemônico - descortinaram a precariedade dos sistemas políticos e institucionais anteriores, assim como precipitaram a gritante desigualdade social ao redor do mundo.

Segundo Hobsbawm (1995, p.413), organizações cujo campo de ação era efetivamente limitado pelas fronteiras territoriais saíam de cena para a entrada catastrófica de organizações não limitadas, como empresas transnacionais, o mercado de moeda internacional e os meios de comunicação e informação. Enquanto se intensificava a corrida global por custos mais baixos de produção, levando espoliação, sobretudo, aos trabalhadores de países periféricos, os Estado nacionais eram solapados pelo desmonte de atividades até então exercidas por órgãos públicos, deixando a vida das pessoas à mercê das vontades do mercado.

> *Como detalha Demuner (2017, p.16)*

> *O caminho traçado pelas elites político-econômicas para a retomada do crescimento da taxa de lucros foi um conjunto de medidas econômicas e políticas conhecido como neoliberalismo. Este modelo foi, e ainda é, o responsável pela eliminação mundial de todas as barreiras sobre a expansão das forças de mercado, o que significou a formação de um novo projeto de desenvolvimento capaz de reorganizar material e ideologicamente o espaço de produção capitalista, que iniciado minimamente no final dos anos 60 se consolida no decorrer dos anos 80, e na década de 90 assume total liderança nas forças sociais globais. [...] No caso da América Latina, o Consenso de Washington representa bem qual é o caminho colocado pelo capital transnacional à região. O início deste processo é verificado por Cox como a "internacionalização*

da produção" (COX, 1981, p.) em que a transnacionalização do capital ocorre em larga escala com a expansão de multinacionais na cadeia produtiva internacional através do financiamento de bancos privados, as quais fragmentam o processo de produção e se movem para a região do Sul Global em busca dos recursos proporcionados pelos Estados periféricos: mercado consumidor, mão-de-obra, matéria-prima, além de impostos inferiores.

Assim, observamos as artimanhas do capital para se expandir em seu processo de financeirização que, para o autor, atua em via de mão dupla a partir do rentismo/especulação dos organismos financeiros internacionais e da precarização da força de trabalho, principalmente nos países periféricos.

O discurso da globalização enquanto fenômeno inevitável dos elevados fluxos de capital e comunicação serve para legitimar as práticas neoliberais voltadas para a abertura dos mercados nacionais e a ausência declarada dos Estados na administração de setores sociais e públicos. Deste modo, entendendo a relação nodal das forças locais e globais na formação da realidade doméstica (Estado) e internacional (Ordem Mundial) no desenvolvimento desigual e combinado da globalização, é possível percebermos qual classe mais se beneficia/prejudica com as políticas adotadas e os principais mecanismos nas relações internacionais e nacionais adotados neste processo. As classes "(...) possuem suas origens em sociedades nacionais, mas formam links entre as fronteiras que separam as sociedades nacionais" (COX, 1987, p. 357). A Classe Capitalista Transnacional e as Organizações Internacionais (OIs) - principalmente as econômicas - estiveram inter-relacionadas e ativas diretamente na construção deste bloco histórico que se formava (DEMUNER, 2017, p.17).

Nesse contexto, um fator decisivo para a virada no "controle mundial" por um capitalismo de tipo neoliberal, trata-se do protagonismo ainda maior das chamadas novas tecnologias de informação e comunicação (TICs), que naquele momento foram diretamente associadas ao aumento de fluxos monetários entre as já tímidas fronteiras estatais. Os espaços da organização econômica mundial, em que acontecem as relações de produção, deixam de responder aos "limites" territoriais dos Estados, ao passo que as TICs precipitam-se como ferramentas exemplares para o encurtamento de distâncias e para a internacionalização de capitais em transações dinâmicas e acumulação de grande porte, sem os pesados ativos que, outrora, se constituíam como empecilhos a sua rentabilidade.

Fazendo alusão a Marx, David Harvey exemplifica a questão de como o capitalismo sente-se impelido a "aniquilar o espaço por meio do tempo" e como, nesse movimento, a redução do custo e do deslocamento no espaço tem sido um foco contínuo de inovação tecnológica e informacional (HARVEY, 2004). Ou, como explica Moraes (2002), o capital precisa de grande fluidez para se deslocar mundo afora, portanto, os sucessivos e empolgados discursos da mídia global sobre os feitos extraordinários da era eletrônica e das novas tecnologias de comunicação e informação fazem todo o sentido. O agravante é que, "na era da revolução digital" sob a outorga do neoliberalismo, as possibilidades de beneficiar-se da "incrível velocidade" das novas tecnologias de informação e comunicação ficam praticamente restritas às grandes empresas e corporações que controlam e agenciam a grande maioria da população e, à custa dela, multiplicam seu poder de acumulação.

Vale ainda ressaltar que, desde o fim da década de 1970, podem ser observadas as diretrizes de organismos multilaterais, como o Banco Mundial e o FMI, descaradamente atrelados às necessidades do capital em se reconfigurar, pautando não apenas o modelo econômico a ser seguido, mas também o exemplo de linha política a ser adotada em escala intercontinental. A cartilha das organizações financeiras foi paulatinamente imposta em todas as partes do mundo, com o mercado assumindo a função de regulador das demandas coletivas e o seu discurso, a partir da indústria cultural e da informação globalmente massificada, ganhando ares absolutos e incontestes em detrimento dos diferentes costumes locais, dos laços de solidariedade e da produção do comum.

Conforme Arantes (2006, p. 63)

A geopolítica mundial se assenta, desde o fim da Segunda Guerra Mundial em instituições globais que definem paradigmas para a gestão monetária, do desenvolvimento e do comércio – o Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI, o Banco Mundial e o Gatt (posteriormente Organização Mundial do Comércio – OMC). Foram elas que lançaram, ao mesmo tempo em que caíam as bombas nucleares, as bases do novo regime internacional sob hegemonia norte-americana. Do nascimento, na conferência de Bretton Woods, às manifestações de Seattle – as quais iniciaram o movimento mundial antiglobalização, em 1999 – o poder das três instituições pareceu inquestionável. Associadas a elas estão uma dezena de outras instituições internacionais e regionais, como o Banco Interamericano de Desenvolvimento, o BID, fundado em 1959. Elas modelaram durante décadas as políticas econômicas e sociais do chamado terceiro mundo. [...] Sua permanência no tempo, mesmo acabada a Guerra Fria, deve-se à forma como souberam exercer seu domínio – uma hegemonia na qual a coerção se constrói pela dependência financeira e o consentimento pela "racionalidade" de um discurso que se pretende técnico-científico.

Assim, a retórica "respaldada" da globalização vem fortalecendo a imagem de que somente o mercado seja capaz de prover a chamada "organização societária". E tanto os discursos científicos quanto a mídia privada, produtora de uma informação de classe, ao construírem os aparatos de sustentação ideológica para a reprodução ampliada do capitalismo na esfera social global estão, em outras palavras, fabricando "o consenso de que não há alternativa fora dos pressupostos neoliberais", ou "o consenso sobre a superioridade das economias abertas e globalizadas" e de seus serviços para a população (MORAES, 2002, p.8).

Não raro, sem querermos ou pensarmos somos inundados pelo "pensamento único" - feliz expressão de Ignacio Ramonet para designar a matriz ideológica que subordina os direitos sociais dos cidadãos à razão competitiva dos mercados financeiros' - oculta, intencionalmente, a carga atômica de desigualdades e exclusões. Ao mesmo tempo em que reverberam o que Pierre Bourdieu define como "a doxa invasiva e insinuante do neoliberalismo" , os conglomerados de mídia atuam como agentes econômicos globais. Segundo o banco de investimentos Veronis Suhler, as indústrias de informação e diversão foram o setor de crescimento mais rápido da economia norte-americana entre 1994 e 2000 - à frente dos mercados financeiro e de serviços. [...] A grande mídia assim opera tanto por adesão ideológica à globalização, quanto por deter a capacidade única de interconectar o planeta, através de satélites, cabos de fibra óptica e redes infoeletrônicas.

Ao longo de uma história regida pela luta de classes, trata-se de não deixarmos de observar a informação, tanto inscrita em uma perspectiva tecno-científica quanto midiática, permanentemente concentrada sob a hegemonia do capital, que controla cotidianamente a sua produção, distribuição e acesso.

Como ressalta Dantas (2000), a informação é algo essencial à produção e realização da vida, mas comandada pelos objetivos de acumulação torna-se centralizada, hierarquizada, verticalizada e mercantilizada. Ou melhor, torna-se uma informação de classe, porque privadamente capturada, apropriada e utilizada. Essa observação possui uma grande importância metodológica ética e política, na medida em que constata a informação como lócus de produção de valor, além de deslindar a dimensão ideológica dos discursos científicos e midiáticos apresentados como "verdades factuais" (SCHNEIDER 2015).

Na atualidade as próprias condições de globalização do capitalismo avançado têm gerado uma série de esperanças quanto à democratização da informação. Tais perspectivas desenrolam-se sob um debate pautado na hermenêutica[3], nas possibilidades de uma ética intercultural da informação como teoria crítica

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3 Segundo Rafael Capurro (2003) a palavra hermenêutica, derivada do grego hermeneuein e de significado interpretar, configura-se em um método de grande valia à ciência da informação, na medida em que se baliza na busca de uma verdade histórica sempre aberta e

emancipatória, levando em conta as distintas identidades políticas e culturais espalhadas pelo mundo e relegadas durante a modernidade, que neste momento poderiam superar a condição de isolamento e invisibilidade. Porém, vale a ressalva de que, no modo de produção capitalista, a celebração das diferenças culturais tem uma ligação muito maior com as próprias necessidades dos "negócios" do que com uma suposta ideia de alcance da informação (produção/acesso) para todos (DANTAS, 2000).

Como coloca Schneider (2015, p.119), sobre a informação submetida ao modo de produção capitalista, operada predominantemente pelas TICs, deve-se sempre atentar para o seu caráter fetichista:

> O termo fetichismo, aqui, deve ser entendido em sua mais ampla acepção, a saber, enquanto denominação do processo histórico de subsunção da cultura ao princípio de valorização do valor e ao mesmo tempo de reprodução ideológica e fixação libidinal, processo triplamente funcional, que obtém amplo sucesso em adequar as representações, o imaginário e as sensibilidades sociais às necessidades de reprodução ampliada do capital.

Assim frisamos a necessidade de problematizarmos o fenômeno da informação, principalmente enquanto atrelada à moral do capital, de modo que o debate sobre as possibilidades de uma informação para emancipação ou para a cidadania ampliada - com um mundo regido pela ética, pelo bem de fato – passe, antes, pela elaboração profundamente crítica sobre as condições extremamente violentas da produção informacional, enquanto processo de expropriação submetida ao capitalismo e à globalização neoliberal.

No seio de um projeto econômico organizado pelo capital financeiro, o sistema global de informação com hegemonia das tecnologias digitais, ao invés de produzir o bem, tem descambado para a terceirização, a espoliação da força produtiva, o rentismo de organismos financeiros, a fragmentação e efemeridade da vida social e a imposição do neoliberalismo em todas as esferas da existência, contribuído, paulatinamente, para "tratorar" os laços de solidariedade e as formas tradicionais de organização e de resistência.

Logo, percebemos a imensa dificuldade quanto à organização de uma resistência efetiva, capaz de fazer frente ao poderio disciplinador e monopolizador do sistema financeiro global, com consequências violentas não apenas no terreno econômico, mas também na produção intelectual e cultural (DEMUNER, 2017).

Isso não quer dizer que exista um caminho único e destino certo para a informação, pautados pelo capital. Em todo o mundo, fazem-se presentes lutas históricas que descortinam o movimento das contradições. Em uma concepção dialética da realidade, olhar para o fenômeno da globalização neoliberal, conduzido de cima para baixo, é também estar atento para projetos alternativos de informação, organização social e resistência, pautados em uma ética do comum e não na moral das classes dominantes.

Informação, ética e liberdade: ou uma conclusão de esperança

Recuperando a obra de Marx, Alessandro Baratta (1995) considera que um momento determinante sobre sua visão de homem e de sociedade está em sua concepção das necessidades. Como explica Baratta, ao retomar e desenvolver a posição hegeliana, Marx elabora a dimensão histórica e social de uma teoria das necessidades sem se descuidar da dimensão própria de uma antropologia fundamental. Em Marx, estas duas dimensões se encontram no conceito de trabalho:

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em constante transformação, bem mais condizente ao entendimento da vida humana do que as explicações causais, baseadas nos métodos das ciências naturais.

Do ponto de vista da antropologia fundamental, a necessidade não é considerada por Marx no sentido negativo de "carência", mas no sentido positivo de realizar as próprias capacidades e de objetivar-se na relação com a natureza e com os outros homens. O trabalho, entendido como transformação da natureza e como produção, não é, como dizia Marx nos seus primórdios, um meio para satisfazer as necessidades, mas sim a necessidade primária do homem. Por isso, o dever ser é entendido como potencialidade inerente ao ser. [...] Não obstante, a dimensão antropológica se cumpre na dimensão histórica e social. De fato, para Marx, a interação com a natureza não é obra do indivíduo isolado, mas sim dos homens associados na produção de bens não existentes em forma natural. É com a interação produtiva que a história natural das espécies transforma-se na história da sociedade. Com a linguagem, que é condicionada pela interação e que, por sua vez, a condiciona, inicia-se a história da cultura. (BARATTA, 1995, p. 118, 119)

Apesar de uma série de acusações ao marxismo, principalmente quanto a um suposto determinismo sobre o papel da economia na organização das relações sociais, podemos dizer que a formulação de Marx apresentada na citação acima inaugura, na filosofia, os preceitos de uma dialética ontologicamente histórica, redesenhando uma série de discussões quanto à relação dos homens com suas histórias, mas também dos homens consigo mesmos.

Conforme Alves (2010, p. 2), a concepção marxiana de sujeito se recusa a determiná-lo apenas na/pela história, mas tem como fundamental o seu caráter de transformador da história, sendo a práxis a forma por excelência dessa relação (ALVES, 2010, p. 2). Ou seja, a compreensão dialética da realidade quer dizer que as partes estão em permanente relação de interação entre si e com o todo, mas também que o todo não pode ser congelado como abstração situada por cima das partes, visto que o todo cria a si mesmo nas interações das partes (KOSIK, 1978, p. 34).

O que tal reflexão nos apresenta é uma lição emancipatória do marxismo. Como defende Baratta (1995, p. 127), "trata-se de produzir uma operação, com respeito à obra de Marx, que deixa o espaço necessário para as opções e para a responsabilidade do sujeito, sem renunciar à análise radical da realidade"; superando, ao mesmo tempo, as contraposições formuladas pelo positivismo entre sujeito e objeto, ego e mundo, espírito e matéria, razão e paixão, entendendo por paixão, o movimento das necessidades, das pulsões, no qual a história do homem, da sociedade e da cultura, encontra sua continuidade na história da natureza (BARATTA, 1995, p. 120).

A partir da dialética materialista, parece-nos imprescindível pensarmos na informação, fundamentalmente, como produto histórico, ou seja, localizado no tempo e no espaço, mas nascido da intervenção do ser humano no mundo e, por isso, em permanente movimento e disputa (MARX, 1993).

Como observa Sodré (1995, p.56),

o empenho é colocar o indivíduo livre frente às afecções que o tiranizam. Porém, a liberdade não é uma idiotia, uma ação de singularidade ilimitada, mas a expressão de um singular que se admite regido por forças delimitantes, por marcas da comunidade, de grupo. Liberdade é assim, o empenho que se tem em viver. A liberdade faz-se quase sempre contra a metafísica, introjetada na consciência do sujeito. A crítica radical da metafísica faz aparecer, de uma maneira ou de outra, a ética. Quando Marx critica a metafísica do valor entronizada pela economia política burguesa, desenha-se no horizonte do sujeito a revolução como um imperativo ético.

A lição está, justamente, em uma luta pela desmistificação da falsa liberdade, ou ao aspecto estático das instituições que constroem um "bem de direito" para apenas uma parte da sociedade, dando lugar a uma possibilidade ética em que a informação esteja a serviço do bem universal de fato, com abertura para a historicidade, novas possibilidades e rupturas. Ou seja, a informação a serviço da verdadeira liberdade e da emancipação humana.

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Carla Viola:

Information ethics and information literacy: A material-historical study between capital and class struggle in the Marxian perspective

Abstract:

The present article analyzes ethics in Karl Marx perspectives, going through information ethics and information literacy that permeate individuation and class struggle in capitalist society. The objective is to approach critical reflection about dominated and dominant class's ethics values proclaimed by author. In order to provide the desired research, I did literature review and digital documents consultation about the themes. Through this work, it is possible to identify that the author's description of reality through historical materialism sought the dissemination of ethics through the ascertainment that individuals generate their stories, but these are not linked to their wills but directly linked to class formation and struggle as factors determining the circumstances under which the reality of society is constituted. It implies the search for mastery of language codes and information literacy to know, seize and disseminate information ethics aiming at the effective strategies elaboration to combat the ruling class hegemony.

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  - Transparência da Informação e Ética da Comunicação: Um estudo político-social sobre o Portal da Câmara dos Deputados: ULEPICC, Brasília, Brasil, 2016, 15 p.
  - A individuação da mulher na política entre dominação, objetos técnicos e dispositivo de enunciação: 13ª edição Women's Worlds Congress & Fazendo Gênero 11, Florianópolis, Brasil, 2017, 13p.
  - Um estudo do cenário jurídico-social do acesso à informação no Brasil: XIII CINFORM, Salvador, Brasil, 2017, 15 p.

Introdução

Os dilemas éticos implícitos e explícitos da atualidade permitem que se pondere sobre acepções, confluências e divergências dos valores morais visando a investigação das questões que envolvem a conformação da informação e da competência em informação a partir das teorias e práticas político-econômicas.

Marx deu à dialética a configuração materialista necessária para adequá-la ao trabalho científico, possibilitando inferências sobre o conceito de ética no sistema capitalista e seus regentes sociais e políticos.

Nesse sentido, para a melhor apropriação dos conceitos, Schneider dispõe que eles

"Só podem ser adequadamente compreendidos à luz de sua relação muitas vezes antagônica e contraditória com o universo conceitual no qual fazem sentido e com o real extra conceitual, bem como com outros conceitos específicos, e, é claro, consigo mesmos. Em todas essas relações, a mediação de um terceiro elemento é sempre necessária para uma adequada compreensão de sua natureza/identidade dinâmica e para a superação de eventuais antinomias internas ou externas (de um conceito consigo mesmo, entre um conceito e outro conceito, entre um conceito e um universo conceitual ou entre conceitos e fatores extra conceituais)".[1]

Seguindo esses preceitos, adota-se, para fundamentar a teoria abordada, o conceito de informação à luz da compreensão de Wilden (2002), Capurro e Hjorland (2007). Os estudos sobre ética, códigos linguísticos, formação e luta de classes são realizados de acordo com Aristóteles (2014), Marcondes (2015), Bernstein (2003), Marx (2007, 2011, 2013) e Eagleton (2012). Já as deduções sobre competência em informação são embasadas pelos preceitos do Association of College and Research Libraries Board (ACRL Board) (2015) e Elmborg (2012) e a concepção de individuação, inspirada em Simondon (2005).

Para amparo da investigação pretendida, realizaram-se consultas bibliográficas e documentais, buscando reflexões sobre os principais termos e expressões versados.

Assim, para estabelecer referenciais teóricos entre informação, competência em informação, formação e luta de classes, fazem-se inferências sobre ética, de acordo com Marcondes, em três dimensões. Em primeiro lugar encontra-se o sentido básico, ou seja, a ética como o conjunto de costumes, hábitos e práticas de um povo. Em segundo lugar, a ética se apresenta como sistema em sentido normativo, isto é, como conjunto de preceitos que estabelece valores e deveres. Por fim, em terceiro lugar, a ética tem um sentido reflexivo ou filosófico que diz respeito as teorias e concepções.[2]

Dito isso, primeiramente, tecem-se os sintomas éticos para se fazer alusões aos fenômenos e virtudes morais, englobando o conhecimento adquirido pela práxis. Em um segundo momento, evidenciam-se as confluências entre as dialéticas da informação e da ética do capital. No último tópico, busca-se tematizar referências sobre competência em informação, códigos linguísticos, formação e luta de classes, salientando questões teóricas e práticas da ética exercida em seus contextos. Finaliza-se com o corolário das vertentes que abrangem a ética em informação nas realidades costumeiras da economia política.

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[1] Schneider, Marco: A Dialética do Gosto: Informação, Música e Política. 212

[2] Marcondes, Danilo: Textos básicos de ética: de Platão a Foucault. 10

Sintomas que evidenciam a Ética

As doutrinas éticas fundamentais nascem e se desenvolvem em diferentes épocas e sociedades como respostas aos problemas básicos apresentados pelas relações entre os homens, e, em particular, pelo seu comportamento moral efetivo.[3]

Informações, princípios, conceitos, valores e normas estão representados na realidade social de uma época. Assim, as bases morais são apreendidas e reconhecidas com apoio do momento histórico-social que se deseja pesquisar. Contudo, os fundamentos da ética são nativos dos preceitos de sustentação das boas práticas.

Segundo os ensinamentos de Aristóteles, "toda arte, toda investigação e igualmente toda ação e projeto previamente deliberado parecem objetivar algum bem. Por isso se tem dito, com razão, ser o bem a finalidade de todas as coisas".[4] Manifestações, sensações, percepções e inspirações que contemplem o bem em sua essência terminam por englobar sintomas éticos inerentes ao ser humano.

Como bem explica Aristóteles, "parece, portanto, como tem sido afirmado que o ser humano é o princípio-fundamento das ações e que cabe à deliberação ocupar-se das ações a serem realizadas pelo próprio agente, estando ciente de que todas as nossas ações visam a fins que são distintos delas mesmas".[5]

Para se identificar as práticas morais desejáveis, observa-se, na linha do pensador, a doutrina do meio-termo por ser um critério de análise das diversas manifestações sintomáticas do indivíduo na práxis das inferências éticas.

Aristóteles estabelece que a mediania de uma coisa é "um ponto equidistante de cada um dos extremos, que é um e o mesmo para todos", contudo para a mediania relativa ao indivíduo é "aquilo que não é nem excessivamente grande, nem excessivamente pequeno, o que não é um e o mesmo para todos".[6]

Ademais, essa mediania eleita pelo singular "evita o excesso e a deficiência, procurando e elegendo o ponto mediano", permitindo que tal atitude qualifique o indivíduo de virtuoso por fazer "as coisas certas, para o propósito certo e da maneira certa" correspondendo "à justa medida (mediania), a qual é a marca da virtude".[7]

Contudo, observa-se que nem sempre o que parece moralmente correto em uma situação, será moralmente adequado em outra situação. Importa avaliar, no momento em que se vai implementar essa ou aquela atitude, quais são os elementos que compõem o evento em si e qual singularidade ou particularidade, ou até mesmo universalidade está em questão.

Segundo Aristóteles, "a virtude moral ou ética é o produto do hábito, sendo o seu nome derivado, com uma ligeira variação dessa palavra".[8] É incontestável que a prática leva à perfeição, estando o indivíduo suscetível à constância do exercício moral, para se alcançar a excelência ética.

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[3] Sánchez Vázquez, Adolfo: Ética. 269

[4] Aristóteles. Ética a Nicômaco. 45

[5] Aristóteles. Ética a Nicômaco. 117

[6] Aristóteles. Ética a Nicômaco. 91

[7] Aristóteles. Ética a Nicômaco. 92

[8] Aristóteles. Ética a Nicômaco. 81

Assim, encaminhar o comportamento na direção da ética e exercê-lo com habitualidade resulta em frequentes ações morais envolvidas por adequadas informações utilizadas em contextos corretos, proporcionando a busca do bem como finalidade primordial. Esse bem se alicerça na felicidade alcançada de forma justa e moderada, referendada pelo cuidado de si e dos outros.

Nessa conjuntura, ações virtuosas provêm da excelência de caráter, possibilitando o implemento de ações positivas e, consequentemente, informações profícuas. De acordo com Sánchez Vázquez "a virtude supõe uma disposição estável ou uniforme de comportar-se moralmente de maneira positiva; isto é, de querer o bem"[9].

Esse comportamento exige moderação, ou seja, temperança para que se possa avaliar as atinências morais da informação e da ação. Quer em situações estáveis ou instáveis, é necessário avaliar com ponderação o implemento das atitudes requeridas em razão dos elementos informacionais apresentados.

Outrossim, Aristóteles aduz que "o indivíduo moderado é aquele que anseia pelas coisas devidas, da maneira devida e oportunamente, que é o que determina a razão".[10] As questões devidas e oportunas são em diversas situações coroadas pela generosidade que requer se doar ao próximo, sem esperar a contraparte. Ao desenvolver o tema, Aristóteles argumenta que:

> "O generoso destaca-se mais por dar aos indivíduos certos do que por obter riqueza das fontes certas e não obter das erradas. Com efeito, a virtude consiste mais em beneficiar do que ser beneficiado e mais em realizar atos nobres do que não realizar atos vis, mas é evidente que beneficiar e agir nobremente se relacionam com dar, ao passo que ser beneficiado e não realizar atos vis se relacionam com o obter".[11]

Outros sintomas, que merecem destaque no percurso da primazia da conduta ética, são a prudência e o discernimento, que exigem referenciais equânimes e análogos para a justa decisão. Ambos são faculdades do indivíduo, as quais tornam possíveis o exercício de ações morais pertinentes.

Ainda para Aristóteles, o discernimento se ocupa daquelas coisas que se pode questionar e deliberar, sendo seus objetos "os mesmos da prudência, o que não quer dizer que discernimento e prudência sejam idênticos, pois enquanto esta última emite comandos (já que seu fim é instruir sobre o que se deve fazer ou não fazer), o discernimento se limita a julgar".[12]

A partir dessas reflexões éticas, sai-se da ciência da política dos meandros da busca do bem comum de Aristóteles, para concentrá-la no lugar concreto da luta pelo poder, operando o deslocamento da economia política para a luta de classes e os dédalos do capital elucidados por Marx.

Informação e a Ética do Capital

O conceito de informação, como preceituado por Wilden, se alarga para além de sua significação fundamental e cotidiana de dar estrutura ou forma, englobando dois sentidos. O primeiro se limita ao âmbito técnico que

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[9] Sánchez Vázquez, Adolfo. Ética. 214

[10] Aristóteles, Ética a Nicômaco. 141

[11] Aristóteles, Ética a Nicômaco. 146

[12] Aristóteles, Ética a Nicômaco. 237

considera a informação como uma quantidade (mensurável em bits) e o segundo é "a informação qualitativa, antes de ser quantitativa"[13].

Revelando questões que fariam parte das características qualitativas da informação, Wilden entende informação como a organização de uma variedade real que se apresenta nas

> *"Estruturas, formas modelos, figuras e configurações; em ideias, ideais e ídolos; em índices, imagens e ícones; no comércio e na mercadoria; em continuidade e descontinuidade; em sinais, signos, significantes e símbolos; em gestos, posições e conteúdos; em frequências, entonações, ritmos e inflexões; em presenças e ausências; em palavras, em acções e em silêncios; em visões e em silogismos".[14]*

Partindo dessa premissa, concebe-se capital como um conceito de conteúdo e significação abrangentes, inferindo a análise da ética em informação a partir de suas divisões, determinações e utilidades. Capital é um termo cunhado na visão marxiana não só por seu sentido valorativo, como também na variedade de informações que dele deriva.

No texto "Capital fixo e desenvolvimento das forças produtivas da sociedade" [15], Marx descreve o "capital fixo" como "meio de produção" (ou seja, "meios de trabalho") que se consome no próprio processo de produção, isto é, ele é o "agente" que transforma a matéria-prima em produto. No que concerne à sua existência material, como material de trabalho, o capital se divide em proporções quantitativas diferentes entre si, perfazendo-se em três elementos: "material de trabalho", "meios de trabalho" e "trabalho vivo". Esses elementos, de valor diferenciado, são fundamentais para o próprio "processo do trabalho" do qual o próprio capital se apropria.

Diferentemente, o "capital circulante", composto de "matéria-prima" e "produto", apresenta-se como a diferença qualitativa do capital enquanto determinante de seu movimento como um todo.

Já a "atividade do trabalhador" é determinada e regulada pelo movimento da maquinaria. Tal atividade apenas medeia o trabalho das máquinas, supervisionando-as e mantendo-as livre de falhas. A tendência do capital é o "aumento da força produtiva do trabalho" e a "máxima negação do trabalho necessário", transformando o meio de trabalho em maquinaria. Assim, o valor objetivado das máquinas, que forma o produto, se contrapõe ao trabalho vivo, ou seja, a força produtiva formada pela acumulação de saber e da habilidade, que é absorvida pelo capital.

O capital confere a si mesmo a forma adequada no interior do "processo de produção", fazendo da maquinaria a forma mais adequada do "valor de uso", do "capital fixo". Ele promove, assim, a manutenção do trabalho em um ramo de produção pelo "trabalho coexistente", que, em outro ramo do capital, quando se põe como mediador entre os diferentes trabalhadores, aparece agora como qualidade do "capital circulante".

É nesse entrecho que o capital compartilha fenômenos éticos diferentes, dependendo das informações emanadas da sua essência funcional ou delegada. Ademais, o capital só emprega a máquina porque ela capacita o trabalhador a trabalhar uma parte maior do seu tempo para o capital, se apresentando apenas quando a força de trabalho é abundante.

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[13] Wilden, Anthony. Informação. 11

[14] Wilden, Anthony: Informação. 11

[15] Marx, Karl: Grundrisse. 578-596

Para Marx fica evidente que o "meio de trabalho" torna o trabalhador independente e proprietário, e a "maquinaria", como "capital fixo", coloca-o apropriado e dependente. Assim, a troca de trabalho vivo por trabalho objetivado se apresenta como razão pela qual o trabalho social é colocado na forma de oposição entre o capital e o trabalho assalariado, sendo o último desenvolvimento da "relação de valor" e "da produção baseada no valor".

Importa destacar que cada interrupção do processo de produção influi diretamente como redução do próprio capital, fazendo com que o valor do "capital fixo" seja reproduzido na medida em que é consumido no processo de produção. Se não for utilizado, ele perde seu "valor de uso", deixando de passar o valor para o produto.

Como bem alerta Marx, o "próprio capital" é a "contradição em processo", pois procura reduzir o tempo de trabalho a um mínimo, ao mesmo tempo que, por outro lado, põe o tempo de trabalho como única medida e fonte da riqueza. A perspectiva do capital é criar "tempo disponível", se utilizando dos meios da arte e da ciência, para depois convertê-lo em trabalho excedente que é apropriado por ele, objetivando seu próprio desenvolvimento.

Assim sendo, Marx apresenta uma solução para tal contradição, sugerindo que a própria massa de trabalhadores se aproprie do seu trabalho excedente, convertendo-o em tempo disponível, permitindo, assim, que o tempo necessário de trabalho seja medido pelas necessidades do indivíduo social. Tal situação permitirá o rápido crescimento do desenvolvimento da força produtiva social, pois embora a produção tenha sido calculada com base na riqueza de todos, o tempo disponível de todos também aumentará.[16]

É nessa perspectiva, em que o tempo passa a trabalhar a favor do fluxo de informação e do conhecimento adquirido pelo trabalhador, se distanciando da ética dominada pelo capital, que se instiga a análise da competência em informação das classes em conflito.

Competência em Informação e a Luta de Classes

O ACRL Board, em suas orientações didáticas destinadas aos colaboradores, descreve competência em informação como "o conjunto de habilidades integradas que englobam a descoberta reflexiva da informação, a compreensão de como a informação é produzida, valorizando o uso da informação na criação de novos conhecimentos e a participação ética nas comunidades de aprendizagem".[17]

Quando os indivíduos idealizam a informação que deve ser valorada, transmitida e reproduzida, ela reflete princípios, conhecimento e o intelecto desse indivíduo. Tais elementos são componentes de sua competência em informação, usada para avaliar o código adequado para que sua mensagem seja reconhecida na sua classe e valorada em uma classe diferente, servindo inclusive como instrumento de luta por direitos reconhecidos.

Nesse contexto, Bernstein mostra que os códigos são induzidos pela relação social, expressando e regulando suas características e que a habilidade de alternar entre códigos restritos e elaborados termina por controlar a capacidade de mudar os papéis na relação social. Notadamente, nem todos os aspectos da estrutura social são traduzidos em elementos do código linguístico, mas se considera que os principais são assim traduzidos. [18]

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[16] Marx, Karl: Grundrisse. 590-591

[17] ACRL Board. 3, tradução nossa

[18] Bernstein, Basil: Class, codes and control. 100-101

Deste modo, visando complementar tal concepção e, ainda, compreender as manipulações que ocorrem nas luta de classes, concebe-se, assim como Elmborg, que o indivíduo competente em informação:

> *"Consegue determinar a extensão das informações necessárias, acessar a informação necessária de forma eficaz e eficiente, avaliar criticamente as informações e suas fontes, incorporar informações selecionadas em sua base de conhecimento, usar a informação de forma eficaz para realizar um propósito específico, compreender as questões econômicas, legais e sociais que envolvem o uso da informação, e acessar e utilizar as informações eticamente e legalmente".[19]*

Ao dominar as vertentes dos códigos e desenvolver tais competências, o indivíduo passa a ter capacidade de compreender as divergências existentes entre as classes sociais e maior capacidade de analisar e intervir nos contextos social, político e econômico.

Contudo, Bernstein coloca que tanto a formação de uma determinada classe social, como a interiorização do indivíduo na prática do código adotado por esta classe, está diretamente ligada à orientação do sistema familiar, o modo de controle social e o resultado das relações linguísticas. Isso faz com que o código herdado, seja ele, restrito ou elaborado, simbolize a identidade social do indivíduo, além de retratar as características inerentes à forma da classe.[20]

Ademais, quando se analisa o indivíduo competente em informação e no uso de código linguístico, é necessário perceber a importância da individuação do sujeito, da sua representação no meio e das repercussões da informação em contextos éticos e não éticos.

Nessa conjectura, Simondon reconhece que o indivíduo existe enquanto uma apreensão de "uma realidade relativa, uma certa fase do ser que supõe antes dela uma realidade pré-individual". Esta realidade, assinalada em suas proposições, não existe sozinha, mesmo após a individuação, "pois além de a individuação não esgotar de uma só vez os potenciais da realidade pré-individual, aquilo que ela faz aparecer não é somente o indivíduo, mas o acoplamento indivíduo-meio".[21]

O meio e as circunstâncias estão impregnados de informações criadas e emanadas pelos indivíduos, que configuram o social e regressam ao ser singular, influenciando seu comportamento ético na sociedade. Dessa forma, infere-se que a consciência que determinará se uma ação ou uma informação é ética ou não, é a consciência do ser prático-material que recebe, compreende e dissemina o contexto vivenciado para outros dentro da estrutura social. Estabelece-se, então, a lógica do pensamento que se torna a reprodução teórica da dialética originária inerente a cada ser.

Capurro e Hjørland norteiam tais reflexões quando preceituam que informação é "uma categoria antropológica que diz respeito ao fenômeno de mensagens humanas, cujas estruturas verticais e horizontais estão relacionadas ao conceito grego de mensagem (angelia), bem como ao discurso filosófico (logos)".[22]

Dito isso, com o objetivo de evidenciar vertentes que envolvem competência em informação, ética, códigos e, informação, direciona-se tais perspectivas para identificar, em certa passagem da obra de Marx "o 18 de Brumário de Luís Bonaparte", conjecturas indutoras de tais premissas, sem que o autor faça qualquer menção

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[19] Elmborg, James. 87, tradução nossa

[20] Bernstein, Basil: Class, codes and control. 106-107

[21] Simondon, Gilbert: A individuação à luz das noções de forma e de informação. 2

[22] Capurro, Rafael; Hjørland, Birger: O conceito de informação. 161

Carla Viola:
Information ethics and information literacy: A material-historical study between capital and class struggle in the Marxian perspective

57

a esses termos. Marx faz ilações sobre indivíduo, luta de classes e partidos políticos, perpassando a situação política da época. O autor infere percepções sobre a analogia existente entre a vida privada, na qual "se costuma diferenciar entre o que uma pessoa pensa e diz de si mesma e o que ela realmente é e faz" e as lutas históricas, nas quais se identifica que quanto mais os partidos políticos exacerbam fraseologias e ilusões nutridas sobre seu verdadeiro organismo e seus reais interesses, eles terminam por estar em oposição à realidade de suas concepções.[23]

Eagleton faz saber que Marx "estava ciente de que as ideias que realmente prendem homens e mulheres surgem da prática rotineira, não do discurso de filósofos ou de sociedades debatedoras". O autor salienta, ainda, que "quem quiser saber aquilo em que homens e mulheres creem precisa dar uma olhada no que eles fazem, não no que dizem". [24]

Assim, a dialética da ciência moral concernente à política referenda também a economia no sistema capitalista, determinando sua função de

> "Proteção do modo de produção e das estruturas de classe em cada tipo de sociedade: cada modo de produção gera determinadas ideias e sentimentos sobre o bem e o mal, que são necessários para manter esse modo de produção. Tudo o que constitua forma de o manter é moralmente bom; tudo o que possa pô-lo em perigo ou contrariá-lo é moralmente mau. Ora, como na sociedade burguesa há luta de classes, há necessariamente uma moralidade de classe - conservadora ou revolucionária. Existe assim um relativismo da moral: a moralidade burguesa é uma coisa e a moralidade proletária é outra, porque para esta é justo tudo aquilo que conduzir à derrota da burguesia e à vitória do proletariado - mesmo que para tanto seja preciso mentir, trair, matar ou roubar, atitudes que a moral burguesa condena".[25]

Percebe-se, nesse entrecho, que, para reconhecer as peculiaridades éticas nas contendas existentes na economia capitalista, onde persistem os papeis de dominador e dominado, explorador e explorado, faz-se necessário conhecer a ideologia político-econômica que norteia a classe hegemônica, para reunir as informações indispensáveis à articulação de estratégias dentro do sistema.

Assim, Marx faz ponderações no sentido que a mesma verdade não serve a dois senhores, quando estes estão em estruturas diferentes.

> "No elemento governamental do poder legislativo, a inacessível singularidade empírica do príncipe tomou forma terrena em um certo número de personalidades limitadas, palpáveis, responsáveis; no elemento estamental, a sociedade civil tomou forma celeste em um certo número de homens políticos. Os dois lados perderam sua intangibilidade. O poder soberano perdeu o seu inacessível, exclusivo, Uno empírico; a sociedade civil perdeu seu inacessível, vago, Todo empírico; um a sua rigidez, a outra sua fluidez. No elemento estamental, de um lado, e no elemento governamental do poder legislativo, de outro, que pretendiam juntos mediar sociedade civil e príncipe, a oposição parece, portanto, ter se tornado primeiramente uma oposição belicosa, mas também uma contradição irreconciliável".[26]

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[23] Marx, Karl: o 18 de Brumário de Luís Bonaparte. 60-61

[24] Eagleton, Terry: Marx estava certo. 49

[25] Amaral, Diogo Freitas do: História das Ideias Políticas. 164

[26] Marx, Karl: Critica da Filosofia do Direito de Hegel. 108

Conclusão

Inicialmente, teceu-se considerações sobre a ética de Aristóteles, por entender que, mesmo de forma secundária, esses pressupostos serviram para a fundamentação da crítica à economia política elaborada por Marx. Percebe-se que o autor considerava que a ética, como qualquer outro componente da superestrutura, estava condicionada pelo modo de produção dominante, defendendo que "não é a consciência que determina a vida, mas a vida que determina a consciência".[27]

Em consonância com tal questão, Eagleton salienta que "Marx acreditava que a ética que governa a sociedade capitalista — a ideia de que só poderei servir a você se isso for lucrativo para mim — era uma forma detestável de vida"[28].

Em comunhão com os fundamentos da ciência moral, Marx aduz que a ética se evidenciava de maneira mais óbvia na convivência entre indivíduos a partir da observação de suas atitudes cotidianas e não devido a discursos superficiais e eventuais, da mesma forma que o partido político se concebe ético a partir de sua realidade fática e não em razão de intenções forjadas pelos dominantes.

Nesse sentido, presume-se que Marx tentava demonstrar que faltava, à classe dominada, competência em informação para mais entendimento sobre o código linguístico elaborado e utilizado pela classe dominante, a partir de sua ética de poder e acumulação de capital.

Assim, o estudo da ética, em conexão com as informações que envolvem um Estado precursor das perspectivas econômicas e político-morais almejadas pela sociedade na perspectiva marxiana, representa um desafio para os estudiosos da área. O movimento que se institui sobre a ética em informação deve ser acompanhado pela competência em informação, agregada ao conhecimento mais apurado possível das situações concretas, nas quais se dão as práticas informacionais bem como os limites, potencialidades, agentes e interesses envolvidos.

Nesse contexto, Schneider faz relevantes considerações.

> "Também sabemos que o conhecimento é uma produção social, um patrimônio da humanidade - pois para o seu desenvolvimento não foram e são necessários somente os "gênios criadores", mas gerações de multidões anônimas que permitiram e permitem a esses "gênios" trabalhar. Deve, portanto, servir a todos, constituindo-se em instrumento de libertação e melhoria da vida de todos".[29]

A ética, quando referenda a política, se dispõe como normativa para a sociedade e, ao se harmonizar com a economia, representa a fundamentação dos costumes que resultam em ações da classe dominada tentando conciliar seus interesses singulares e particulares com as universalidades das informações emanadas pela classe dominante. É importante notar que a ética pode ser evidenciada pela natureza do ser, pelo exercício do hábito e pelo conhecimento das práticas morais costumeiras.

Tal questão justifica a compreensão de Aristóteles de que "cada indivíduo julga corretamente o que conhece, sendo disso um bom juiz".[30] Em harmonia com tal assertiva, conclui-se que Marx inferiu considerações sobre ética, capital e luta de classes buscando a articulação dos saberes individuais com a ciência moral em sentido

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[27] Marx, Karl: A ideologia Alemã. 94

[28] Eagleton, Terry: Marx estava certo. 95

[29] Schneider, Marco. A Dialética do Gosto. 214-215

[30] Aristóteles: Ética Nicômaco. 48

universal. Atenta-se para suas singularidades, nas diversas práticas informacionais que se sobressaem nas luta de classes em cada contexto particular, propiciando a adaptação do objeto, o aproveitamento do uso prático e a eficácia do resultado evidenciado em um sistema capitalista.

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Marco Schneider; Ricardo M. Pimenta:

Walter Benjamin's Concept of History and the plague of post-truth

Abstract:

Tomas Aquinas defined truth as the correspondence between things and understanding. Castro Alves paints the horror of the slave nautical traffic. In his essay *On the Concept of History,* Walter Benjamin reminds us: "The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'emergency situation' in which we live is the rule." This 'emergency situation' was Fascism. Albert Camus defended his romance *La Peste* against the accusation of Roland Barthes that is was "dehors de l'histoire", pointing out that it was not only about the recent historical phenomenon of Fascism, but also about the permanent risk of its rebirth. Agnes Heller associates faith with prejudice and alienation. The following article will explore the Thomist concept of truth, Benjamin's concept of history, Camus' allegory of the plague, Agnes Heller's notion of faith and Castro Alves' powerful denouncement of slave traffic, to better criticize the phenomenon of post-truth, a rebirth of fascist information practices.

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Introduction

Columbus, close the portals of your seas!
(Castro Alves)

In the 13ᵗʰ century, Tomas Aquinas defined truth as *adequatio rei et intelectus*, translated approximately as the correspondence between things and understanding, curiously similar to the positivistic notion of scientific knowledge.

The problem with the definition is not that it is wrong, but that it is not true enough, if we only keep in mind the linguistic turn in 20th century philosophy over the performative, expressive, constitutive relations between language and any conceivable understanding of reality. We know now that language is not only referential, nor a transparent instrument of communication; it structures our sense of reality, even our unconscious, if we agree with the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. Besides, reality, whatever it is, is only thinkable and understandable through language.

Nevertheless, the recognition of the fact that language mediates any conceivable relation between things and understanding does not solve the problem of truth. So, as our aim is not to solve it, but to criticize the social phenomenon of post-truth, we will explore the hypothesis that the Thomist definition of truth, articulated with Benjamin's concept of history, Camus' allegory of the plague, Heller's notions of alienation and faith, and Castro Alves' powerful denouncing of the nautical slave market, might be heuristically useful.

Post-truth, as we shall demonstrate, is a sociotechnical actualization of traditional fascist information practices that takes place in cultural industry and the internet.

Approximately seven centuries after Thomas Aquinas, Walter Benjamin states, in his 1940 essay *On the Concept of History*:

> *"The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'emergency situation' in which we live is the rule. We must arrive at a concept of history that corresponds to this. Then it will become clear that the task before us is the introduction of a real state of emergency; and our position in the struggle against Fascism will thereby improve. Not the least reason that the latter has a chance is that its opponents, in the name of progress, greet it as a historical norm. – The astonishment that the things we are experiencing in the 20ᵗʰ century are 'still' possible is by no means philosophical. It is not the beginning of knowledge, unless it would be the knowledge that the conception of history on which it rests is untenable."*[1]

By "'emergency situation' in which we live", Benjamin was talking about Fascism. The mentioned "astonishment" came from a wrong positivist linear evolutionary concept of history, shared by social democrats, liberals and vulgar communists of his time (different from the philosophical astonishment that reveals new ways to understand old things). For this perspective, such a monstrosity like Fascism could not happen in the 20ᵗʰ century, an age of Science, progress and reason. On the other hand, those seriously schooled in Marxist theory, as was the case with Benjamin, were not ingenuously astonished. From a Marxian perspective, Fascism was a somehow predictable extreme reaction of the ruling classes – allied with large sectors of the *petite bourgeoisie*,

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[1] Benjamin, Walter: On the Concept of History. Available at: https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm. Access on October 2017. All the quotations of this text in this paper come from this source. As there is no page numbers, and being easy to find the quoted texts by the Ctrl+F reseasrch tool, we will not repeat this reference.

the lumpen proletariat and the most alienated sectors of the working class – against the growing of the organized working class movements amidst the imperialist crisis of the first half of the 20th century. From this perspective, spanning the beginning of the 1920s until the end of the 1940s, Fascism grew as the institutionalized actualization of the plague of irrationality in intercourse with extreme oppression and brutality, an "emergency situation" about which "the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that [...] is the rule."

A decade and a half after Benjamin, the Algerian writer Albert Camus (who was the winner of the 1957 Nobel literature prize and member of the French resistance in the Second War) defended his romance, *La Peste* (1947), against the accusation of Roland Barthes, in a letter (1955) to him, positing that it was not "dehors de l'histoire".[2] Camus answered that *La Peste* was not only about the recent historical phenomenon of Fascism, but about the permanent historical risk of its rebirth; that it should lead us to be aware. In this sense, *La Peste* reminds us that Fascism was not destroyed forever. As the bacillus of the Great Plague, it can be reborn, since its inner entropic potency has not ultimately been destroyed, if ever it could be, despite its apparent and provisory defeat in 1945.

In 1970, Agnes Heller associated faith with prejudice and alienation. For Heller, faith is the affection of prejudice, an expression of alienation, which "is always alienation in the face of something and, more precisely, in the face of the concrete possibilities of the generic development of humanity." (2004, p. 38)

In a vigorous and, as far as we know, original criticism of the capitalist system as a whole, she defines it as the most intense form of alienation in history, presenting the following arguments:

> *"There is alienation when there is an abyss between human-generic development and the possibilities of development of human individuals, between human-generic production and the conscious participation of the individual in this production. This abyss did not have the same depth in all ages or in all social strata; thus, for example, it closed almost completely in the epoch of the flourishing of the attic polis and of the Italian Renaissance; but in modern capitalism, it has gone deeper. (Heller, 2004, pp. 38-9)"*

One of the most infamous expressions of this deepening of alienation, before Auschwitz, was the capitalist slave nautical traffic. In 1869, Castro Alves, a young Brazilian poet and abolitionist, published *The Slave Ship* three years after the first successful intercontinental transmission by submarine telegraph cables from Europe to the USA: "*Glory to God in the highest; on Earth, peace and good will towards men*".

Meanwhile, we can read in Castro Alves' poem[3]:

> *"Lord God of the unfortunate!*
> *Tell me Lord God!*
> *If it is madness or truth*
> *So much horror under the skies?!"*

We can incorporate here the horror under the seas: telegraph cables and all kinds of communication and informational advances achieved on the backs of the nautical traffic of black men. Even when cables and slaves were not transported by the same ships, they were by the same capitals or, at least, by kindred ones. These nightmare trade journeys also allowed the establishment of new forms and technological structures of

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[2] See https://etlettera.wordpress.com/2015/01/15/1s-es-l-lettre-dalbert-camus-a-roland-barthes-sur-la-peste-janvier-1955.

[3] Disponível em: http://www.dacostaex.net/livros/NAVIO%20NEGREIRO.pdf

exploitation. Decades later, new cables spread all over the world, replacing the telegraph and establishing more perennially the informational and communicational infrastructure of what we now know as cyberspace.

Together with the emancipatory, democratic and deliberative possibilities present in the territory of cyberspace and the Internet, we must not ignore the fact that this whole "simulacrum", which certainly influences the social physical space, remains anchored by a system that is not virtual, but in fact very real. As discussed by Pimenta (2016), submarine cables and large servers continue to evidence an old form of socioeconomic domination and control. From the monopoly of the technology necessary for the production and circulation of material goods, to the monopoly of technology necessary for the production and circulation of information on a global scale, these things play a strong economic and ideological role in the global political economy of info-communications.

Information Ethics and post-truth

The following section addresses the phenomenon of post-truth from the above perspective. Our Marxian approach to Information Ethics connects it to Information Epistemology and to the political dimensions of Information.

First, we engage Epistemology in its broadest sense as that which aims to distinguish objective, realistic, rational knowledge from subjective, fictional, irrational opinions and beliefs. We note that, while subjective, fictional, irrational opinions and beliefs are also objective phenomena and contain their own inner rationality, their own particular truth, it is important to differentiate their narratives from scientific ones. The former are particulars. The later aim to be universal.

Second, we posit that truth (however defined), opinion and beliefs – whose constitutive intersubjective body is Information, the material of any performative language (i.e., potential or actual *communication*), in all kinds off records – are always, somehow, expressions of social power relations.

Our intent is not to claim that truth and science always side with each other and that opinion and belief are necessarily falsehoods. Epistemology positions truth in rationality, while information ethics and politics position truth in practical judgements about the relationship between moral values and consequences of information processes. The two are not always homologous.

The goal of this article is to establish a basis for distinguishing good knowledge from bad knowledge, good science from bad science and good opinion from bad opinion, where good is defined ethically, politically and epistemologically.

We can find good and bad knowledge in both science and opinion. Following Plato (see Menon, 1950), the difference between Episteme and *doxa* is not the distinction between truth and lie, but rather between a kind of knowledge that reflects self-critically with an aim towards establishing its own logical basis and another that does not. Science is founded on a rigorous commitment to the production of true knowledge through rational self-criticism and sound argumentation. There is, indeed, a scientific *doxa*, as Bourdieu demonstrated, and critical thoughts in popular culture, as Gramsci demonstrated, but the first is not good science, while the later is good opinion.

Epistemology deals with true and false knowledge; Politics deals with freedom and oppression; Information Epistemology and Information Politics are Information Ethics issues.

The most radical ideas of Enlightenment are Reason and Freedom. The concept of Reason, different from instrumental reason and from mere understanding, is necessarily universal, but not necessarily contradictory to particular forms of instrumental reason or understanding. Nevertheless, the historical efforts to reconcile the two have traditionally favoured totalitarian particulars masked as universals (false universals) or totalitarian assumed particulars against the concrete universal in its rational historical development, to put it in Hegelian

terms. Christianism, Islamism, colonialism and historical communism, we say, are examples of the former; Fascism of the later. On the contrary, the idea of Communism, as the effectiveness of its concept, points towards a dynamic, never ended conciliation, among individuals, particulars and universals; to a rational common freedom. It does not mean homogeneity, but equality, an open state of no mutual oppression of the diversity, nor of oppression of false universals against particulars, nor of individuals or particulars against individuals or other particulars. It does not necessarily lead to universal love or fraternity, but to universal respect and dignity as inflexible categorical imperatives.

We must add that, as much as the definition of truth is not an easy one, so too is the definition of freedom not easily ascribed. We do not intend to solve either, but rather to present potentials for both in the dichotomy of lie and oppression, the unethical political and epistemological essences of Fascism. Fascism – more than any other known socio-system – admittedly construes falsehoods as truths, political and economic oppression as the right of the strongest, and the wealthier as the pure and superior race, all at the expense of the weak, the invalid, and the "inferior", and it does so apart from any rational grounding. Thus, Historical Fascism is an excellent example of what truth and freedom are not.

Goebbels' well-known statement, "Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth", exposes the core of the information ethical, epistemological and political problem of Fascism. A lie that becomes truth in public opinion is an ideology. Ideology, in the pejorative sense of the word, is a false consciousness that rationalizes and legitimates human exploitation through generalizations, ignorance and lies. At its worst, it legitimizes genocide, the best-known example of this being Nazi Germany.

Despite the realization of Goebbels' maxim in Nazi Germany, it was not true that the Jews were the cause of communism and capitalism at the same time, or not, despite the existence of influent Jewish capitalists and communists. It was not true that there was a Jewish conspiracy to conquer the world. The Nazi's "final solution", besides being an ethical abomination, cannot realistically be taken seriously as a logical methodology, since, if successful, it would not have even superficially stopped capitalist exploitation nor the growth of communism. In fact, "national socialism" contributed to the transformation of communism into Stalinism, to the grow of western imperialism, to the emergence of the cold war, to nuclear proliferation, and to right wing Zionist justification of the oppression over the Palestinians. It was not at all true that the Nazis fought against capitalist exploitation, but to better position the German ruling class among the imperialist spoils of global economic, political and cultural control. Nevertheless, repeated lies and misinformation become so prevalent among the population, as ideology, as belief, as prejudice, as faith, that they become a material force in place of grounded theory; here noting Marx's statement on the *Introduction* of his *Critic of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (2005, p. 151). Marx knew that the weapon of criticism required comprehension and adoption by the masses or it remains ineffective.

Following Burawoy (2010, p. 77), the problem with the notion of ideology as false consciousness, for Bourdieu, does not lie in the adjective "false", but in the idea of consciousness. The symbolic domination or violence operates unconsciously as beliefs that favour the reproduction of the same economic and symbolic domination that produces these beliefs.

For the Hungarian philosopher Agnes Heller, one can only understand prejudice via the nuances of everyday experience: momentary character of effects, ephemeral nature of motivations, rigidity of the way of life, thought fixed in empirical, ultra-generalizing experience. We come to ultra-generalizations by stereotypes. Ultra-generalizations can arise from both tradition and attitudes that oppose it.

Another source of prejudice is conformism: "Every man needs [...] a certain amount of conformity. But this conformity becomes conformism when [...] the motives of conformity of daily life penetrate into the non-daily spheres of activity, especially in moral and political decisions [...]". (2004, p. 46)[4]

Turning to the question of the genesis of prejudice in provisional judgment, Heller argues: "Provisional judgments refuted by science and by a carefully analysed experience, but which remain unshaken against all arguments of reason, are the prejudices. […] Hence, it was illusory that the Enlightenment had hoped to eliminate prejudice in the light of reason. Two different affections can connect us with an opinion, vision or conviction: faith and trust. Faith is the affection of prejudice. "(2004. p. 47)

At this point, Heller develops an important distinction between faith and trust, and prejudice is the differentiating element. She develops the analysis at three levels, the anthropological, the epistemological and the ethical, where the anthropological serves as the basic function of the others.

At the anthropological level, faith refers to individual particularity, and trust, to conscious individuality; in the epistemological, faith is knowledge that resists knowledge and experience, while trust is based on knowledge opened to change; on the ethical level, finally, the mark of faith is emotional intolerance; that of trust, the potential openness to tolerance.

Prejudice constitutes a system indispensable to social cohesion the more threatened it becomes:

> *"The system of prejudices is not essential to any [social] cohesion as such, but only to the threatened cohesion.*
> *Most, but not all, prejudices are the products of the dominant classes [...] The foundation of this situation is evident: the ruling classes want to maintain the cohesion of a social structure that benefits them and mobilize in their favour even the men who represent diverse interests (and even, in some cases, the dominated and antagonistic classes). With the help of prejudices, they appeal to individual particularity, which – because of their conservatism, their complacency and their conformism, or also because of their immediate interests – is easy to mobilize against the interests of their own integration and against oriented praxis in the human-generic sense. [...] The cohesion of bourgeois society was, from the first moment, more unstable than that of classical antiquity or Feudalism. Therefore, the so-called group prejudices (national, racial, ethnic prejudices) only appear in the historical plane, in its proper sense, with bourgeois society.*
> *The contempt for the 'other', the dislike of the different, is as old as humanity itself. Nevertheless, before bourgeois society, the mobilization of entire societies against other societies, through systems of prejudice, has never been a typical phenomenon. (Heller, 2004, pp. 54-5)"*

On the other hand, the dialectical element present in Heller's thought keeps her analysis from stagnation, since, although she acknowledges the impossibility of a complete elimination of prejudices, "eliminating the organization of prejudices in a system" remains, in her view, possible:

> *"[...] prejudices could cease to exist if the peculiarity that functions with complete independence from the human-generic, the affection of faith, satisfying this particularity, disappears, and, on the other hand, all social integration, every group and every community that feel threatened in their cohesion.*
> *We believe that such a disappearance is by no means utopian, since it appears with the idea of a society in which every man can become an individual, can configure the conduct of life by himself, and in which*

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[4] Quoted from the Brazilian edition. Translated to English by the authors.

particularity ceases to function, independently of the human-generic. In such a society, the false provisional judgments would not be suppressed, but adherence to them, dictated by faith, would be abolished, that is, their crystallization in prejudice would disappear. [...] But as the possibility of elevating oneself to the condition of the real individual is given only to each singular being (which in no way means that every single being becomes individual), it becomes evident that prejudices can not be totally eliminated from social development. But it is possible, in return, to eliminate the organization of systemic prejudices, their rigidity and – most importantly – the discrimination effected by prejudices. (Heller, 2004, pp. 58-9)"

The term *post-truth* was the Oxford Dictionary Word of the Year for 2016. Being thus timely, we propose a definition of *post-truth* as the Oxford Dictionary defines it: Post-truth is "an adjective defined as 'relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief'."[5] Post-truth also has a very important sociotechnical particularity, that being its far-reaching ability to influence action as broadcast and through mass niches and expedited in articulated performances of cultural industry, algorithms and robots.

While Cultural Industry can propagate equal "appeals to emotion and personal belief" at a large scale, algorithms and robots are able to reproduce the same appeals with precision, also in large scale, but for specific groups of customers. These devices identify and reinforce beliefs, opinions and tastes through ubiquitous digital surveillance processes, from Google searches, Amazon shops, and Facebook "likes", with the goal of gaining adhesion and increasing circularity among the internet's social networked users.

While the Thomist notion of truth defines it as the correspondence of things and understanding: *Veritas est adaequatio rei et intellectus*, post-truth is the correspondence of beliefs, prejudices, faith and understanding. In both cases, what mediates things, beliefs, prejudices, faith and understanding, is Information, the activation of language's potency towards enlightenment or mystification, freedom or oppression.

We do not advocate that the old Thomist notion of truth solves this fundamental philosophical question, only that we should consider it, since doing so can help contribute to a clarification of the contemporary information ethical problem of post-truth, as outlined below.

Thus, we propose to conceive truth once again as the correspondence of things to understanding, keeping in mind Hegel's (2010) distinction between understanding (more particular, superficial and fixed knowledge) and reason (deeper, dynamic and universal knowledge), and between existence (sometimes contingent) and reality / effectiveness (always necessary), in their historical developments. As such, truth becomes the fruit of a dynamic dialectical relation between reality and rational knowledge.

We also propose to articulate this notion of truth via the Marxian conception of historical dialectics between social being and social consciousness. For Marx, since the division of human societies into owners and not owners of the means of production (land, tools, machinery, technological infrastructures etc.), class struggle, or the struggle for or against freedom, became the leitmotiv of historical reality.

This reasoning leads us to Benjamin's concept of history. History is not an evolutionary determinism based on empty concepts of time. Rather, it is an explanatory non-fictional narrative; its focus are the events that disclose

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[5] See https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/word-of-the-year/word-of-the-year-2016

class struggle as the essential reality of social existence, with new and rich concepts of time, particularly in terms of "messianic" time of which we will return to shortly.[6]

In a digital age, data deluge traverses time. It is compressed between nuances of the present (as increasingly smaller, more fleeting) and future (as increasingly more urgent, more sudden). Time ceases to obtain any possibility of witnessed reflexivity, its passing oppressed by industrious trappings. It is against such a backdrop that the information of post-truth is produced. Post-truth 'information' becomes capital, its value exponentially controlled by those who hold and regulate it.

In this new information game, the manipulation of time also becomes a means of exploitation and the agent of propaganda and misinformation through the control of production and knowledge.

Columbus, close the portals of your seas!

Turner. The Slave Ship [7]

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[6] From the "Translator's Note" of the English version of Benjamin's On The Concept of History quoted here: "Jetztzeit was translated as 'here-and-now,' in order to distinguish it from its polar opposite, the empty and homogenous time of positivism. Stillstellung was rendered as 'zero-hour', rather than the misleading 'standstill'; the verb 'stillstehen' means to come to a stop or standstill, but Stillstellung is Benjamin's own unique invention, which connotes an objective interruption of a mechanical process, rather like the dramatic pause at the end of an action-adventure movie, when the audience is waiting to find out if the time-bomb/missile/terrorist device was defused or not)." See https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/history.htm.

[7] Turner. The Slave Ship. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Slave_Ship

In 1869, the young Brazilian poet and abolitionist Castro Alves (1847-1871) published *O Navio Negreiro* (The Slave Ship). The last sentence of the poem reads, "Columbus, close the portals of your seas!"

The contradictions and vices of the hopes of the colonial vision and the calamities that took place during the last three centuries in the name of universal freedom, justice, and reason are well documented. The slave market, consisting largely of black men, was probably the most abject example of such atrocities. Castro Alves' poem powerfully paints the apex of this market and its nautical slave traffic, now a metonymy of the worst of 19th century disputations, much in the same way that Auschwitz is a 20th century metonymy for the same.

Reproduced below are a few select verses from Castro Alves' poem. The selection demonstrates the poems' unique beauty and expressive power. Our intention is to both introduce the text to the readers of this paper and to highlight its allegorical connection to Benjamin, Camus and Heller. The events depicted in the poem were contemporary to a major information sociotechnical achievement, the submarine intercontinental telegraphic web – achieved on the backs of the above outlined nautical traffic.

In a paroxysm of alienation and brutality at the early stages of capitalism, both slaves and cables crossed the seas, carried by ships with similar purposes: to serve the owners of capital. Modern slavery served mainly North and South America's plantations, America being central for profitable commodities production and trade at the time, commodities that included silver, gold, cotton, tobacco, sugar, coffee, and rubber. As such, submarine communications cables were strategic for European and North American general trade, and like the cables first laid in the 1850s, information itself has likewise become capital for a modern digital era. Thus, the submarine telegraph cable together with the slave ship acts as an allegory for understanding how todays informational capital, in the form of data, has become one of the more penetrating methods of exploitation by modern corporations.

The Slave Ship[8] begins with a scene of a swiftly sailing ship moving beneath the majesty of sky and ocean. The poet expresses his will to be an albatross, an "eagle of the seas", to closer study the sailing ship. However, as the scene closes in, the horror of the slave nautical traffic emerges:

> *"[…] what is it I see there…*
> *What picture of bitterness it's funeral song!*
> *What tetric figures!*
> *What an infamous vile scene! My God! My God'. What horror:*
>
> *IV*
>
> *It was a dantesque dream… the deck*
> *Great lights redenning its brilliance,*
> *Bathing it in blood.*
> *Clang of irons… snap of whip…*
> *Legions of men black as the night*
> *Horrible dancing…*
> *Black women, holding to their breasts*
> *Scrawny infants whose black mouths*
> *Are watered by the blood of their mothers:*

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[8] Disponível em: http://www.dacostaex.net/livros/NAVIO%20NEGREIRO.pdf

Others, young, but nude and frightened,
In the whirlwind of specters drawn
From anxiety and vane resentment!
And the orchestra laughs, ironic, strident…
And from the fantastic circle a serpent
Spirals madly…
If the old man cringes, slips to the groused,
You bear shouts... the whip cracks.
And they High more and more...
Prisoned in the bars of a single jail
The famished multitude shudders,
And weeps and dances!
One is delirious from rabies, another is going road,
Another, bruttish from martyrdom
Sings, groans, and laughs!
Meantime the captain commands the maneuver
And after gazing at the sky which unfolds
So pure over the seas,
Cries out of the gloom of dense obscurity,
"Shake out the whip, mariners!
Make them dance, more!"
And the orchestra laughs ironic, strident
And from the fantastic circle a serpent
Spirals madly
Like a dantesque dream the shadows fly!
Shouts, ahs, curses, embodied prayers!
And Satan laughs!

The chorus follows:

"Lord God of the unfortunate!
Tell me Lord God!
If it is madness or truth
So much horror under the skies?!
Oh seas why do you not erase
With the sponge of the waves,
Your mantle, this blot?
Stars! Nights! Tempests!
Roll down from the immensity!
Sweep the seas, typhoon!"

The end of the slave trade in Brazil occurred beginning in 1850, with the promulgation of the Eusébio de Queirós Law. England pressed for its end, although it had profited from it between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. More than mere profits, slave nautical traffic was vital for the Industrial Revolution: "[…] at least 1.5

million Africans have been transported from Africa to America by vessels leaving Liverpool. This contingent consists of more than 10% of the total number of slaves sold that are known."[9]

This profit greatly contributed to the Industrial Revolution, which favoured the creation of the transcontinental submarine telegraph, the Internet's great-grandfather. The slave ship ironically sailed the seas while communication was simultaneously established in real time via the first form of transcontinental telegraphy:

> *"The invention of telegraphy by Samuel Morse in 1843 encouraged the idea of wiring cables across the Atlantic to utilize the new technology. North American Charles Field and Britain Charles Bright and brothers John and Jacob Brett founded a company to launch the first intercontinental telegraph submarine cable.*
> *The following year, two ships, one British and one American, carried 2,500 nautical miles (4,630 km) of cable, departing from Ireland. The cable was broken as soon as they had been launched about 750 km. New attempt was made in 1858 and new breakup occurred when only 250 km had been launched.*
> *Yet in 1858 there was a third attempt. This was successful; the ships left the middle of the Atlantic and reached ports on opposite sides without any occurrence of disruption. The message "Glory to God in the highest; on Earth, peace and good will towards men" was sent.*
> *This success, however, was short-lived, because a few weeks after this pioneering success, the cable due to problems of the voltages used failed. Only eight years later, reliable operations were assured in this communication between North America and Europe."[10]*

A few years following the advent of telegraphy, Castro Alves published *The Slave Ship*. Its final verses read:

> *"Green-gold pendant of my land,*
> *That the breeze of Brazil caresses and unfurls*
> *Standard that in the light of the sun encloses*
> *Promises of divine hope. . .*
> *You, who in the liberty after war,*
> *Were hoisted by heroes on the lance,*
> *Rather that you had been torn in battle*
> *Than serve a people as a shroud! . . .*
> *Atrocious fatality that overwhelms the mind*
> *Extinguish this hour loathsome brig*
> *The furrow that Columbus opened in the waves,*
> *Like an iris in the depth of the seas!*
> *But this is too much infamy!... From the ethereal region*
> *Rise, heroes of the New World!*
> *Andrada![11] Rip that pendant from the air!*
> *Columbus! Close the portals of your seas!"*

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[9] Originally published in Portuguese. English translation by the authors. See: Hashizume, Maurício. Arquivo mostra como escravidão enriqueceu os ingleses.

[10] See: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabo_submarino.

[11] José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva (Santos, June 13, 1763 - Niterói, April 6, 1838) was a Brazilian naturalist, statesman, and poet. He is known by the epithet "Patriarch of Independence" for being a decisive person for the Independence of Brazil. See: https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jos%C3%A9_Bonif%C3%A1cio_de_Andrada_e_Silva.

Benjamin's notion of "messianic power" also demands, in a way, that Columbus close the portals of his seas. The refrain, "Rise, heroes of the New World!", though directed to the humanity of Castro Alves' time, still rings true in Benjamin's and in our own age as an eschatological verdict to end the age of calamity. While such a verdict transcends all ages, for Benjamin, it is communism that fulfils the prophetic age, thus correlating the communist project to what he calls "messianic force". This is not a rehearsed idealist theological utopia, but a re-reading of Jewish messianism in its most inspiring materialistic terms, as a necessary expression of human potential to overcome oppression once and for all. It is an expression of human creative and combative need for freedom, solidarity and sensuality.

In Benjamin's words:

> "The past carries a secret index with it, by which it is referred to its resurrection. Are we not touched by the same breath of air which was among that which came before? Is there not an echo of those who have been silenced in the voices to which we lend our ears today? Have not the women, who we court, sisters who they do not recognize anymore? If so, then there is a secret protocol [Verabredung: also appointment] between the generations of the past and that of our own. For we have been expected upon this earth. For it has been given us to know, just like every generation before us, a weak messianic power, on which the past has a claim. This claim is not to be settled lightly. The historical materialist knows why."

The historical materialist attests as follows:

> "The class struggle, which always remains in view for a historian schooled in Marx, is a struggle for the rough and material things, without which there is nothing fine and spiritual. Nevertheless these latter are present in the class struggle as something other than mere booty, which falls to the victor. They are present as confidence, as courage, as humour, as cunning, as steadfastness in this struggle, and they reach far back into the mists of time. They will, ever and anon, call every victory, which has ever been won by the rulers into question. Just as flowers turn their heads towards the sun, so too does that which has been turn, by virtue of a secret kind of heliotropism, towards the sun which is dawning in the sky of history. To this most inconspicuous of all transformations the historical materialist must pay heed."

Thus, the horizon of the communist revolution as "the sun which is dawning in the sky of history", was in Benjamin's time a response to a state of emergency whose task was to introduce a struggle against Fascism, as noted above.

Communism, from a messianic stance, promises an end to reification, the end of the naturalization of the most violent social process, the transformation of subjects into objects, of humans into things. In other words, it is an end to the matrix of the violence of capitalism, from which all other forms of violence emerge.

Such a concept, even before Marx and Lukács, find its roots, among other places, in Kant (2002). Kant stated that we must categorically forbid the reduction of subjects to objects as it blocks the subject's inner powers for freedom, i.e., for achieving the good will to act according to reason.

Hegel was the first to disclose the necessary socio-historical aspects of this problem and its possible solution, asserting that this good will, or, in his terms, the free will that wants the free will, can be effective only through stated laws and institutions that allows and pushes its flourishment.

Marx always insisted on the necessity of the practical actualization of these philosophical achievements, emphasizing often the central role of the popularization of the combative and emancipatory theory, the popularization of the best information.[12]

The necessary criticism against the contradictions between the west's "*grand narratives*" – like enlightenment in general or even Marxism – and the historical traumatic events that vindicated them as theoretical sources, shouldn't lead us to abandon what is still fair and true in western universal hopes for freedom, justice, and reason. Nevertheless, the greatest part of the contemporary *intelligentsia* does not seem committed such a perspective. On this point, we are shamelessly weak, theoretically and practically, in comparison with the great critical thinkers and strategists of modernity, from Machiavelli to Lenin and Gramsci.

As such, we must remember again that Marx' 11th Thesis on Feuerbach was not at all a refusal of philosophy, but a necessary unfolding of some of its best ethical achievements.[13] For Marx, after Kant and Hegel, there was nothing more to say about Ethics, in explicit and abstract universal ethical terms. Perhaps for him, it was enough to demonstrate that humans are potentially rational, i.e., can think and behave not only as egoist beasts, but also as socio-historical reasonable beasts. This means, we could and should guide our praxis, or at least the praxis of the majority towards less irresponsible, reckless and injudicious forms of social organization, where the majority would no longer be reduced to objects of a few, nor each of us to a barrier to the other's freedom. On the contrary, each of us must become the condition of other individual's freedom and self-flourishment (Marx; Engels, 2000).

Final Remarks

All cultural and historical worldviews, established within limited horizons, enact a drama of good and evil, of truth and lies, and of freedom and oppression, acting out the dialectical complexities of their times. The Marxian historical approach allows us to see, or at least to glimpse the whole with a larger perspective. Contemporary culture is unable to overcome capitalist entropic developments without first moving beyond post-modern relativism and its negation of "*grands narratives*". The necessary criticism over traditional "*grand narratives*" should not lend towards their complete rejection. On the contrary, perhaps we need, more than ever, new emancipatory and convincing "*grands narratives*". We should enrich them with all kinds of particular cultural mediations and singular experiences, but we must articulate these singular experiences and particular mediations in new emancipatory – carefully and effectively developed – universal programs.

We've defined information in this article as activated language, as the actualization of the potency of language, in oral discourses, written texts, movies, digital memes, and so on. Reality is a presupposition of the referential function of language and information, being grounded neither on prejudices nor beliefs, but rather rationally and empirically. Language is both a consequence of and a vehicle for our feelings and thoughts, enabling relation to the world; through information, it is also performative. Language is a human *social* creation. Where the social world is tensioned by class struggle, language and information allow for both an expression of this struggle and for weapons amidst it.

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[12] From the Information Ethics field, we can relate this idea at least to five Information Science current issues: information literacy, scientific communication, digital divide, knowledge organization, information regimes.

[13] See Schneider, 2015, p. 216.

The philosophy of *subject*, from Descartes' *cogito* to Kant, replaced the traditional metaphysical ontological question about what is real with an epistemological problem about what can be known and became hegemonic in academic philosophy according to Ilyenkov (1977). We propose here a return to the former question about *what reality is*, without a pretension to solve it, and to the metaphysical notion of truth as *adequatio*. Not all narratives are equally true; some are extremely and deliberately false. Information modes – production, records, circulation, access, retrieval, organization, use etc. – are powerful social forces. Its devices and even its popular uses are controlled. Ignorance of these facts allows for a complacency that in turn permits a rebirth of fascism in old broadcast and new digital media post-truth forms.

This rebirth of fascism poses new challenges from an information ethics perspective. The bacillus of the fascist plague is growing, even in the most unexpected corners of "civilization".[14] Through digital means, falsehoods are forged into belief systems, gradually increasing the entropic capitalist reification processes. From the universal growing of the unequal distribution of wealth to Trump's marketing election strategies to the 2016 soft "*coup d'État*" in Brazil, governments are abolishing the hard-won social rights built up over the last several decades, and in doing so, they are reinforcing racism and sexism and abolishing workers' rights.

Contemporary culture is defined by hedonistic nihilism, masked by ubiquitous sub-cultural dramas and Facebook driven narcissism. The potential and possibly imminent destruction of the future is commodified as sensationalism and spectacle via Youtube and dystopic Hollywood movies about war, environmental devastation, zombie apocalypse and plague. The lack of a rational and forward thinking hope-based realism negates the possibility of any genuine strategy towards a common and positive future for human beings and the planet. A new focus on praxis is required. A post-truth culture based on the repetition of lies – bad information, dangerous beliefs and a system wide ignorance of even the most fundamental and well established references – had gone too far.

The nautical slave traffic and Auschwitz were poisonous interlopers that deprived the vision of the Enlightenment, taking away from the republican humanist imperatives of *liberté, egalité,* and *fraternité* the necessary radical transformations of the bourgeois ownership regime, indispensable to ensuring universal good. Such chaotic developments make the dialectical contradictions between the singular (individual), the particular (social classes and other social groups, as religion or Nation) and the universal (humanity) interests increasingly entropic. Only the idea of communism, as the effectiveness of its concept, points to the overcoming of this contradiction.

An application of information ethics to contemporary class struggles finds its actualization of Benjamin's messianic force against axiological neutrality and the empty time of positivism, embodied in Castro Alves' claim, "Columbus, close the portals of your seas!", as a reprimand against not the entirety of western thought, but specifically imperialism, fascism, neoliberalism, and post-truth.

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[14] See "German police stand by as neo-Nazis give Hitler salute at 'rock against foreigners' concert. Available at: http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2017/07/20/germ-j20.html.

Paul Klee: Angelus Novus[15]   *Turner: The Slave Sheep*

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[15] Paul Klee. Angelus Novus. https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcS9qm1Rew0NePnBRvnbXDNuyqS3Hd4EdDyoIqEFKMjgqVndCyJF.

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Ivan Capeller:

The Golem Allegories

This is the first piece of a three-part article about the allegorical aspects of the legend of the Golem and its epistemological, political and ethical implications in our Internet plugged-in connected times. There are three sets of Golem allegories that may refer to questions relating either to language and knowledge, work and technique, or life and existence. The Golem allegories will be read through three major narratives that are also clearly or potentially allegorical: Walter Benjamin's allegory of the chess player at the very beginning of his theses *On the Concept of History*, William Shakespeare's last play *The Tempest* and James Cameron's movie *The Terminator*. Each one of these narratives is going to be considered as a key allegory for a determinate aspect of the Golem, following a three-movement reading of the Golem legend that structures this very text as its logical outcome.

Agenda:

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- Relevant publications:
    - A Pátina do Filme: da reprodução cinemática do tempo à representação cinematográfica da história. Revista Matrizes (USP. Impresso) JCR, v. V, p. 213-229, 2009
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The Golem and the Chess Player: Language, Knowledge and Thought

Mother was an incubator/Father was the contents
Of a test tube in the ice box/In the factory of birth
My name is 905/And I've just become alive
I'm the newest populator/Of the planet we call Earth
In suspended animation/My childhood passed me by
If I speak without emotion/Then you know the reason why
Knowledge of the universe/Was fed into my mind
As my adolescent body/Left its puberty behind
And everything I know is what I need to know
And everything I do's been done before
Every sentence in my head/Someone else has said
At each end of my life is an open door
Automatically defrosted/When manhood came on time
I became a man/I left the "ice school" behind
Now I'm to begin/The life that I'm assigned
A life that's been used before/A thousand times
I have a feeling deep inside/That somethin' is missing
It's a feeling in my soul/And I can't help wishing
That one day I'll discover/That we're living a lie
And I'll tell the whole world/The reasons why
But until then all I know is what I need to know
And everything I do's been done before
Every idea in my head/Someone else has said
At each end of my life is an open door
The Who, *905*
(From the album *Who Are You*, 1978)

Between Myth and Allegory

The first part of this paper will be focused on the relationship between bio- and cyber-semiotics through an analysis of the resonances between the legend of the Golem and Benjamin's allegory about the chess player: both narratives will be considered from an epistemic perspective, related to their biblically affiliated theory of language, in order to think the Golem as an *automaton* suposedly bound to fulfill its pre-programmed tasks as any actual software does. Between the puppet and the dwarf, the Golem shows itself off as an automatic chess player, a sort of cabalistical tool in which language is supposed to carry on encoded knowledge as a transmissible and reproductible matrix of thought. Thus, the first set of problems to be dealt with regards the Golem legend as an allegorical narrative about the magical powers of language: the cabbalistic legend of the Golem, a magically man-made clay giant, raises crucial questions regarding some well established conceptions of language and its relations to history, politics and media issues.

As an allegory of the powers of language, the Golem's first movement is deeply rooted into questions about thought and knowledge that could have been left to themselves, in the abstract sphere os pure reason, if it wasn't for the fact that reproductible knowledge is always already applied knowledge, bringing in with itself all kinds of technical possibilities yielding economic and political impact over any given social organization. In its

faustian resonance, so well captured in André Neher's masterpiece *Faust et le Maharal de Prague*[1], the Golem legend can be thought of as an allegory of language's possible effects over the social fabric and its daily life reproductive processes.

To talk about the remarkable affinities between certain aspects of some cabbalistic theories about the powers of language and our contemporary softwares is a metaphorical argument already turned into a major cultural *cliché*. From Gershom Scholem's enthusiastic assessments on the Golem of Rehovot (in fact, a 1960's Israeli artificial "brain"[2]) to the main character of Umberto Eco's novel *The Pendulum of Foucault*'s naming his personal computer "Abulafia"[3], a standard reading of the Kabbalah as a traditional kind of magical predecessor of the abstract logical thought that has enabled our modern societies to build computers and weave them in a giant World Wide Web, became a much appreciated "self-evident" commonplace. Although this argument has nothing but metaphorical value, its inherent *cliché* deals precisely with a set of questions related to the power of language considered as such and to the fact that this power will be considered real or metaphorical according to the very concept of language at stake in the way this argument is usually stated. So how can we assess the heuristic potential of the Golem legend without falling into the same cluster of supposed self-evident truths about its real meaning?

Our main hypothesis in this paper is that the mythical reading of the Golem legend, although largely dominant and, up to a certain point, epistemologically necessary in order to give this legend its long-time needed status as a scientific object of research, must be complemented by an allegorical reading capable of highlighting the differences and contradictions between the Golem legend and other myths and stories to which it is generally related. Thus, to speak of the Golem as a modern myth whose narrative structure is deeply connected to other modern myths such as the stories of Faust or Frankenstein, is only partially true.

Why is that so? Because, as authors such as Brigitte Munier[4] and Marco Schneider[5] had already pointed out, the legend of the Golem is **not** about the inherent dangers of scientifical knowledge and technology for human culture and society, bearing rather an opposite, optimistical meaning. Even the very founder of the possibility of a strucutural analysis of the Golem legend as a myth, the above mentioned late great André Neher, stressed out many times the differences between the two respective *Weltanschaaungs* presiding the twin stories of Faust (which would be the christian version of the myth) and the Golem (which would actually be its jewish version). Although the structural analysis of the legend of the Golem as a myth can be considered as a valid one, the story of the Golem, as seen from an allegorical perspective, should be also related to a set of stories that don't possess the same dignified mythical aura with which characters like Faust (or even Don Juan) are usually regarded in the so-called western modern culture.

The first and foremost example of this allegorical stance about the Golem comes from the same author that wrote the most important version of the legend of Faust: in his 1797 poem *Der Zauberlehrling*, J. W. Goethe gave us, in between the two parts of his long life masterpiece *Faust*, a somewhat innocent fairy-tale poem about a humoresque sorcerer's apprentice misdeed: while trying to magically control the forces of nature in order to be spared of his hard-and-boring homecare dayly duties, he puts a spell on a simple broom that becomes animated and is ordered to fill a great number of buckets of water to clean the sorcerer's house. The

[1] NEHER, André: *Faust et le Maharal de Prague, le mythe et le réel*, Paris, P.U.F., 1987.

[2] SCHOLEM, Gershom: "O Golem de Praga e o Golem de Rehovot" in *O Golem, Benjamin, Buber e outros justos: Judaica I*, Ed. Perspectiva, São Paulo, p. 89-96, 1994.

[3] ECO, Umberto: *Le Pendule de Foucault*, Ed. Grasset, Paris, 1990.

[4] MUNIER, Brigitte: *Robots – Le Mythe du Golem et la Peur des Machines*, Éditions de la Différence, Paris, 2011.

[5] SCHNEIDER, Marco: "Gramsci, Golem, Google: A Marxist Dialog with Rafael Capurro's Intercultural Information Ethics", in *Information Cultures in the Digital Age – A Festschrift in Honor of Rafael Capurro*, Kelly, Mathew (et al.) (Eds.), 2016. pp. 373-383.

repetitive work of filling the buckets is not followed by a proper instruction about the right time to stop it, and the sorcerer's apprentice almost gets drowned by his own spell – if it weren't for the last minute intervention of his boss, the great magician...

Two main resonances with the legend of the Golem are present in this case: the will to manipulate innanimate manufactured artificial objects through their programmed motion (as rendered in the famous Disney homonymous motion picture production) and the problem immediately raised by such manipulation, which is precisely how to stop an automatic motion once it has been set up effectively. The resonance is so striking here that the difficulty faced by the sorecerer's apprentice in stopping the endless cleaning of the house, performed by its animated brooms, is exactly the same problem faced by the maker of the Golem (the rabbi Maharal of Prague, according to the most famous version of the Golem's legend): right after making his Golem, the Maharal's wife gives it the hard task of filling buckets of water from the local well, but « because no one told him to stop, he kept on bringing water and pouring it into the barrels, even though they were already full »...[6]

« Because no one told him to stop » : the « magic » knowledge that makes possible the animation of anything leads to the problem of a « magic » language that could be able to control the automation of any machine.

As Norbert Wiener rightly stated after his commentary on Goethe's above mentioned poem,

> « La magie de l'automatisation, et tout particulièrement l'automatisation magique des machines capables d'apprendre, inclinèra vraisemblablement vers la même litteralité. Si vous jouez un jeu selon certaines règles et que vous programmez la machine dans le but d'obtenir la victoire, vous obtiendrez la victoire et rien d'autre, et la machine ne prêtera attention à aucune autre considération que celles qui assurent la victoire selon les règles. (WIENER, 1964)[7] ».

There's no doubt that Wiener's last book can be considered as an important hallmark in the understanding of the Golem's myth as a moral warning against the indiscriminated use of science and technology by humanity. But our focus here lies rather on the possibility of an allegorical reading of this legend that is capable of revealing two main features that relate the story of the Golem to some crucial issues put forward by contemporary science and technology without any kind of necessary moral judgement: the question of the required knowledge, be it mythical or scientifical, needed to produce animated bodies (a question largely explored, in its imaginary effects, by the motion picture's industry) and the subsequently related question of the required language, be it mystical or technical, needed to control automated machines (a question largely developed, in its symbolic effects, by cybernetics and informatics).

The **knowledge** of the animated body and the **language** of the automated machine: in the shift from the concept of body to the concept of machine relies the hidden **thought** enshrined in the Golem allegories. What about its relationship to the above mentioned mythical readings of the Golem ?

As a hyperdetermined artificial form of thought, the allegory is traditionally opposed to the symbolic powers of mythical thought since, at least, the *sturm und drang* romantic litterary school of Goethe, Schiller and Herder. Ever since, myths are ascribed with a highly symbolic cultural power inasmuch as they are capable of a metamorfical ability to disguise themselves in many-a-different stories and tales that require a deep strucutral analysis in order to be identified as pertaining to the same cluster of mythical thought. Allegories, on the other

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[6] ROSENBERG, Yudl: *The Golem and the Wondrous Deeds of the Maharal of Prague*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007.

[7] WIENER, Norbert: *God & Golem Inc. – Sur quelques points de collision entre cybernétique et religion*, Éditions de L'Éclat, Paris, 2000, p. 81.

hand, are usually considered as encoded charades ascribed with a persuasive, rethorical power that needs only to be rightly interpreted in order to be fully understood. According to this reading, myths are symbolically uncounscious and powerfully alive, while allegories are just the dead remains or vestiges of older, forgotten myths, able only to produce a minor, conscious pre-programmed effect on its audience[8]. As for the legend of the Golem, it's fair enough to say that it has an old mythical resonance that goes back as far as the Bible Psalms and the Talmud (not to mention the 3rd century A.D. cabalistic *Sefer Yetzirah* – the Book of Creation), but also that, in its well-known recent version, that relates it to the historical Rabbi Loëw (the famous Maharal of Prague), is in fact an allegorical story.

Between myth and allegory, the Golem legend can therefore be read as a living symbol of our modern time's fear of machines and of technology[9], but it can also be interpreted as an allegory of the problematic status of Man, always in between its animal organic body limitations and its prosthetic technical machine-like infinite promises and possibilities. In this sense, the Golem, as a set of allegories, can be considered as an allegory of the Allegory as a categorical genre of metaphor, always in between the living body of mythical symbolic thoughts and the (algorithmical) dead machine of encoded looped meanings.

It was Walter Benjamin, in his seminal work *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels*[10], that first unveiled the heuristic and critical potentialities of the allegory as a creative form of thought. Through his study of the german so-called « tragic dramas » of the seventeenth century, he was able to turn upside down the traditional romantic relationship between allegory and symbol that used to undervalue the first category in order to better enhance the qualities of the second. In Benjamin's perspective, allegories are epistemologically revealing precisely because they are embedded with a frozen, dead meaning that cristallizes itself in the form of visual and verbal emblems and insignia that remain as such throughout the passing of time. Even when they are (or become) intentionally enigmatic, their meaning can always carry a sort of anti-mythical quality that may allow a critical thought to get rid of its imaginary unposited pressupositions and assumptions[11].

Benjamin not only studied the baroque allegory in the seveteenth century german literature, but also made it its own form of thought and expression. His entire work is filled with exquisite allegories that require from his readers the most subtle exegetical abilities. Although he himself doesn't seem to have studied the legend of the Golem, as his life long friend Gershom Scholem did, it is possible to find a remarkable resonance between some key elements of the Golem legend and one of his most important allegories: the allegory of the chess player that opens up his last text, generally known as *On the Concept of History*[12].

Between the Puppet and the Dwarf

As far as we know, only the brazilian researcher Isabella Santucci has already pinpointed the striking similarities between the legend of the Golem and Walter Benjamin's allegory of the chess player[13]. But in order to recognize

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[8] See HANSEN, João Adolfo: *Alegoria – Construção e Interpretação da Metáfora*, Atual Editora, São Paulo, 1986, pp. 5-11.

[9] See FAUCHEUX, Michel: *Norbert Wiener, le Golem et la Cybernétique – Élements de Fantastique Technologique*, Éditions du Sandre, Paris, 2016.

[10] BENJAMIN, Walter: *Origines du Drame Baroque Allemand*, Éd. Flammarion, Paris, 1985.

[11] See EAGLETON, Terry: *Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*, Verso Editions, New York, 1981.

[12] BENJAMIN, Walter: *On the Concept of History*, Classic Books, New York, 2009.

[13] SANTUCCI, Isabella C. Stangherlin: "O Golem na Era da reprodutibilidade Técnica: Aparato cinematográfico, homem moderno e representação" in *Anuário de Literatura*, ISSNe: 2175-7917, vol. 17, n.1, p. 172-192, 2012.

these similarities, a new reading of the Benjamin version of this story (which was already told, among others, by Edgar Allen Poe[14]), must be made:

> "It is well-known that an automaton once existed, which was so constructed that it could counter any move of a chess-player with a counter-move, and thereby assure itself of victory in the match. A puppet in Turkish attire, water-pipe in mouth, sat before the chessboard, which rested on a broad table. Through a system of mirrors, the illusion was created that this table was transparent from all sides. In truth, a hunchbacked dwarf who was a master chess-player sat inside, controlling the hands of the puppet with strings. One can envision a corresponding object to this apparatus in philosophy. The puppet called "historical materialism" is always supposed to win. It can do this with no further ado against any opponent, so long as it employs the services of theology, which as everyone knows is small and ugly and must be kept out of sight" (BENJAMIN, 1940).

In this key twentieth century text about the philosophy of historical materialism, the very first question that is posited is the problem of the automaton: its structure is here envisaged as a coupling – "through a system of mirrors" - of a puppet, "in turkish attire", and a hunchbacked dwarf "who was a master chess-player". At first sight, the interpretation here required to decipher this allegory is crystal clear and given to us by Benjamin himself: the puppet stands for the science of historical materialism, whilst the dwarf represents "theology, which as everyone knows is small and ugly and must be kept out of sight". So, if the Golem can be thought of as an animated automaton made by a legendary (although plainly historical) sixteenth century rabbi, there's no real difficulty in allegorically establishing point-to-point correspondences from one story to the other: the Golem would stand for the puppet as well as the rabbi would stand for the dwarf, all the more so because Benjamin explicitly identifies the "small and ugly" hunchbacked dwarf with theology itself…

Although reasonably acceptable (and apparently condoned by Benjamin), this interpretation may lead to a completely wrong understanding not only of the relationship between these two narratives, but, most important of all, about the deep political and epistemological meaning of Benjamin's allegory considered in its own right. Standard readings of this allegory given by some important Benjamin interpreters (for example, Michel Löwy's exegetical book about *On the Concept of History*, entirely dedicated to a word by word comment of this most important text[15]) are adamant in stating that Benjamin, in his sharp critique of the political errors caused by historicism and positivism among the left-wing thinkers of his time (social democrats and stalinists alike), is actually stating that historical materialism needs to pull out from theology – the small and ugly unacknowledged hunchbacked dwarf that "must be kept out of sight" – its true revolutionary (messianic) resources in order to win out its political battles (the chess game) over its opponents. The reactionary implications of this kind of reading are strikingly evident: epistemologically speaking, historical materialism cannot be a real science inasmuch as it depends entirely on its hidden theological despised foundations. Benjamin's allegory would then be an allegory of the overwhelming symbolic powers of mythical thought over rational, scientific ways of knowledge, and his political-messianic stances could be easily brought back into the realm of religion understood as the ultimate interpreter of the theological tradition.

We'd like to propose here an entirely different reading of the chess-player allegory and place Benjamin's effort in a perspective that is actually closer to Bertold Brecht's subversive *Verfremdungseffect*: by taking a critical distance from positivistic historicism, Benjamin denounces its theological hidden grip over all trends of historical materialism in order to demonstrate, under a subtle layer of irony, how difficult is the task of the working class in its strive to get rid of the mythical shackles that still binds mankind to a history of misery and oppression.

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[14] POE, Edgar Allen: *Maelzel's Chess Player*, Dodo Press, London, 2009.

[15] LÖWY, Michel: *Walter Benjamin: Avertissement d'une Incendie, une lecture des thèses "Sur le Concept d'Histoire"*, P.U.F., Paris, 2001.

His ironical intentions can be hinted at through his careful choice of words in the rendering of his own interpretation of the chess-player allegory: "The puppet called 'historical materialism' is always **supposed** to win. It can do this **with no further ado** against any opponent, so long as it employs the services of theology, which **as everyone knows** is small and ugly and must be kept out of sight". Take out the above highlighted figures of speech from the text and we still get the same basic contents - but in a much more affirmative, straightforward tonality that was not at all representative of Benjamin's attitude towards historical materialism. Far from being a precursor of nowadays post-modern cynical scholars, Benjamin's allegory was really an attempt to reinvigorate the proletarian revolution in its most tragic and dark hour. This reading is amply demonstrated by the way with which the question of historical materialism is developed along the other sections of *On the Concept of History*, but our main concern here is to show how our own interpretation of Benjamin's chess-player allegory can also be helpful in establishing the allegorical implications of the Golem legend.

As we have already said, it would be far too easy to establish a point-to-point correspondence between the Golem and Benjamin's puppet, on one hand, and Benjamin's dwarf and rabbi Löew of Prague, on the other. A completely misleading, positive assessment of the mythical role played by religion and theology in Benjamin's allegory would follow, if we were about to take this stance. But how can we relate these two narratives in order to disclose their deep allegorical connection without falling into the same idealistic trap in which so many experienced and erudite Benjamin's commentators threw themselves in?

Our second main hypothesis is that an allegorical reading of the legend of the Golem must relate this character to the puppet **and** the dwarf at the same time. Between the puppet and the dwarf, the Golem is an allegory of Man's torn apart dialectical existence. This means not only a theological (mythical) contradiction between its animated body and its automated spirit, but also a material (biological) tension between his monstrous organic nature (the dwarf) and his would-be technical prosthetic machine-like possibilities (the puppet). Far from being the apex of Creation and/or the ultimate product of Evolution, man's body is a never ending failed attempt to overcome its own material conditions of existence. In this particular sense, each one of us is a Golem, that is, a flawed machine caught in a major contradiction in between the less-than-human (the animal) and the more-than-human (the machine). This problem is explicitly put forward to God by Adam, the first man, in the very first occasion in which the idea of the Golem appears in the Bible, for it is written in the Psalms (139:16) "Gäl'miy räû ëyneykhä": "Yours eyes saw my unformed body".

According to Moshe Idel, Gershom Sholem was probably the first researcher that studied the jewish talmudic tradition in order to trace the semantic mutations through which the word "Golem", understood originally as an "unformed body" or "substance", came to signify the idea of "an artificial man created through magical means"[16]. Originally, the Golem is thus conceived as an embryo, an "unformed body" or "substance" (as some translators, addicted to a metaphysical vocabulary, like to say). Only later on, in the talmudic times, the Golem was to be described as a kind of *homunculus* that can be artificially produced by a wise and pure rabbi who happens to know the ritual necessary procedures (described for the first time on the above mentioned cabbalistic *Sefer Yetzirah* – the "Book of Creation"). Eventually, it was only in 1909 that Yudl Rosenberg published his collection of traditional popular tales about the Golem that relate it to the famous sixteenth century Rabbi Löew – the famous Maharal of Prague whose works were thoroughly studied by André Neher in one of his most important books[17]. In any case, a proper knowledge of how these different layers of thought intermingled to shape the legend of the Golem into its present form is a fundamental critical tool for the researcher, in order to better understand how myth and allegory are inextricably present in any version or narrative related to the Golem – be it ancient or modern.

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[16] IDEL, Moshe: *Le Golem*, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 1992, p. 33.

[17] NEHER, André: *Les Puits de L'Éxil – la théologie dialectique du Maharal de Prague*, Éd. Albin Michel, Paris, 1966.

Outside the jewish tradition, it's possible to trace the mythical resonances of the Golem legend through a structural analysis of other modern myths (following Neher's research), but it is also possible to highlight the allegorical correspondences between the story of the Golem and other major literary hallmarks of the western tradition – such as Goethe's *Zauberlehrling*[18], Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*[19] or even Collodi's *Adventures of Pinocchio*[20]. The most important and lasting allegorical correspondence ever made with the Golem is, of course, the idea of the Robot as a human-like machine, which appeared for the first time in Karel Capek's all-times classic sci-fi novel *R.U.R.*[21] and was fully developed by Isaac Asimov in a series of famous sci-fi masterpieces that begun with the novel *I, Robot*[22]. But the allegory of the Golem as a robot cannot be considered as the ultimate modern version of this legend, for it is still bound to the biblical (therefore, theological) myth of man's body as the everlasting paradigm of Being. Nevertheless, as we'll try to show in the next and final section of this paper, the Golem's duality between the puppet and the dwarf was successfully reshaped, by some science-fiction authors of the last century, into a deep discussion about the ontological possibilities linked to the more recent shift from cybernetics to informatics and its subsequent tension, in the epistemological level, between a bio-semiotics and a cyber-semiotics. In order to do so, the first part of this study about the Golem allegories will end up with an analysis of two science-fiction literary narratives – *Golem100* (by Alfred Bester[23]) and *Golem XIV* (by Stanislaw Lem[24]) - that have been dismissed - or even remained totally overlooked - by contemporary researchers of this subject[25].

Between Bio-Semiotics and Cyber-Semiotics

Whether mythical or allegorical, the presence of the Golem legend in modern popular culture is much more widespread than it seems to be at a first glance. The Robot human-like figure, as sung by the english rock band The Who in their 1978 musical hit *905*, for example, is only an obvious avatar for the classical image of the golem that, by then, was already made popular through the movie industry. But if we unfold the allegorical reading of the Golem as a creature torn apart between a less-than-human "monster" (or "dwarf") and a more-than-human "machine" (or "puppet"), its ghost-like presence can be revealed as even more deeply woven into our modes of thought and expression: isn't The Who's famous rock opera *Tommy* a much more subtle and clever version of the monstrous "deaf, dumb and blind" bo(d)y in need to "smash the mirror" to become fully human and be admitted into society? And speaking of cinema, what about Tod Browning's horror movies from the twenties and thirties, with their endless parade of freaks, dwarfs and monstrous deformities[26]? Putting aside the most obvious screen adaptations of this legend (like the overrated 1920 german expressionist film *Der Golem*, by Paul Wegener), the Golem is a prosthetic character whose traces can be found not only in its directly

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[18] GOETHE, Johann Wolfgang: *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (translated by Laila Collins),
https://germanics.washington.edu/research/translations/sorcerers-apprentice

[19] SHELLEY, Mary: *Frankenstein*, Norton Critical Edition, New York, 2012.

[20] COLLODI, Carlo: *Les Aventures de Pinocchio*, Éd. Flammarion, Paris, 2001.

[21] CAPEK, Karel: *R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)*, Dover Thrift Editions, New York, 1993.

[22] ASIMOV, Isaac: *I, Robot*, Octopus Books, London, 1984.

[23] BESTER, Alfred: *Golem100*, Mandarin Paperbacks, London, 1980.

[24] LEM, Stanislaw: "Golem XIV", in *Imaginary Magnitude*, Harvest Books, USA, pp. 97-248, 1985.

[25] Neither Elisabeth R. BAER's 2012 book *The Golem Redux*, nor the catalogue from the 2017 exhibition *Golem, Avatars d'une Légende d'Argile*, in the Paris "Museum of Art and History of Judaism" seem to acknowledge the existence of these two fundamental literary works based on the Golem legend.

[26] See, for example, *The Unknown* (1927) and *Freaks* (1932).

inspired stories and films, or in its modern actualization as a robot, but also in many other cultural emblems of our time that never mention it explicitly, like *The Terminator* series of films[27].

One of the most interesting and less known literary works directly inspired by the legend of the Golem is Alfred Bester's 1980 sci-fi novel *Golem100*: depicting a dystopian 23rd century ultra-violent society, Bester's golem is probably the last literary offspring of the expressionist reading of the golem as a fierce destructive monster that threatens human society through fear and desperation - a traditional reading as old as Gustav Meyrink's 1915 novel *Der Golem*[28]. Bester's version is also a detective story in which a beautiful blind psychic and soothsayer called Gretchen Nunn (a so-called "psychodynamics" specialist) has to help the famous chemist Blaise Shima (specialized in odors and perfumes) and a clever police local officer called Subadar Ind'dni, in locating and neutralizing a dreadful mysterious monster that commits awful murders always preceded by horrible forms of torture and rape that couldn't be performed by any kind of being invested with a human (or else…) limited body. This horrifying thriller describes the Golem as a less-than-human shapeless psychic force that can be magically summoned up by a specific satanic ritual that happens to be casually performed by a group of wealthy, bored and idle rich ladies who had nothing better to do with their lives…

Filled with synesthesia and psychical phenomena, this novel is also unique in its genre inasmuch as it renounces the written word and resorts to strange drawings and weird visual symbols every time the character of the Golem is invoked and shows itself up. Its main interest for our own allegorical reading of the Golem legend, nonetheless, is the fact that, as a shapeless psychic force, the Golem's goal is precisely to get incarnated in a human body in order to get rid of its need to be summoned up as a pre-condition to resurface. When it finally manages to do so, it becomes *Golem101* and provokes a major shift not only in the whole human society but mainly in the human species as such. The end of this novel thus testifies to the possibility of an ontological mutation of the human being that could be biological as well as historical, in a vertiginous bio-semiotic vision of the future of mankind.

This is also the main problem envisaged by another slightly known sci-fi masterpiece (published only one year after Bester's work) that deserves a much more careful attention from all researchers on the subject: Stanislaw Lem's astounding 1981 novel *Golem XIV*. Its treatment of the Golem character as compared to Bester's, however, is quite the opposite: Golem XIV is a powerful man made supercomputer designed by NASA scientists in order to help the USA against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Its internal connections are based in a fictitious light speed technology that enables it to think faster than any other being on the face of the Earth – with the possible exception of his twin made computer sister called HONEST ANNIE (ANNIE being a tender nickname for Annihilator…).

The novel doesn't really tell us a full story depicting plainly its characters, but it's not a collection of humorous short stories and tales in the same style of the *Cyberiad* cycle[29] either. Instead of giving his reader another sci-fi amusement, Lem makes the most radical effort, in this novel, to think exactly like a super-computer would. The result is a pair of speeches, delivered by the Golem XIV to its human makers, framed by an introduction and an epilogue written by two of the most prominent scientists that had the privilege to hear its pontificate. The first Golem lecture is about the human being and its place in the universe, while the second is about the Golem XIV itself and its twin "soul mate" HONEST ANNIE, in an attempt to establish the onto-epistemological difference between a human bodily based intelligence and the kind of more-than-human, machine-like artificial intelligence represented by a computer.

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[27] This particular set of films is an object of further analysis in the third part of this paper.

[28] MEYRINK, Gustav: *The Golem*, Dedalus Books, London, 2000.

[29] LEM, Stanislaw: *The Cyberiad*, Avon Books, New York, 1976.

Between bio-semiotics and cyber-semiotics, the genius of Stanislaw Lem turns the legend of the Golem into an allegory of mankind's messianic strive to overcome its own material conditions of existence.
To quote from Golem XIV's own words:

> "Unlike man, I am not a region concealed from myself - knowledge acquired without the knowledge of how it is acquired, volition unconscious of its sources – since nothing in me is hidden from me. In introspection I can be clearer to myself than glass, for the letter to the Corintians speaks of me there too, where it says: "now we see through a glass, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known". I am the "then"."(LEM, 1981).

But far from behaving like an oracle or prophet of human redemption, Golem XIV can only try to enlighten mankind about the human race's own cognitive structural limitations, without any hint of a possible religious hope or even of a socio-political solution. The perfect automaton is not a robot made according to Man's image, for it is rather pure Intelligence, disembodied and impersonal, reaching a level of understanding about the Universe that it's not total or absolute, but that is far beyond the cognitive abilities of any organic being generated by the blind and random processes at work in life trough evolution. Collective social culture and psychic individual personality are thus unveiled as mere by-products of an evolutionary process that doesn't follow any rational or progressive pre-ordained pattern of development, in a remarkable understanding of the deep heuristic truth contained in the darwinian theories:

> "From that passionate self-love to which I referred (...) you hoisted yourselves up at the dawn of history onto the very summit of Creation, subordinating the whole of life and not just its immediate vicinity. (...) Later the rise of knowledge pushed you into successive quantum steps of dethronement, so that you were no longer in the center of the stars, but nowhere in particular, and no longer even in the middle of the system, but on one of the planets, and now you are not even the most intelligent creatures, since you are being instructed by a machine – albeit one that you yourselves made. So after all these degradations and abdications (...) all you have left (...) is an evolutionary established primacy. (...) But you are wrong. I am the bearer of sad tidings, the Angel who has come to drive you from your last refuge for I shall finish what Darwin started. (...) You had reached the point where Evolution was no longer keeping a sharp eye on you or on any other creatures, for it is interested in no creatures whatsoever, but only in its notorious code. (...) You know the facts that bear me out, for they have been accumulating since the beginning of the nineteenth century, though the inertia of thought secretely nourishing itself on honor and anthropocentric conceit is such that you support a gravely weakened concept of life as a paramount phenomenon which the code serves solely as a sustaining bond, as a pledge of ressurrection, beginning existences anew when they die as persons. (...) So what is more important - organisms or the code? The arguments in support of the code ring weightily, for a countless multitude of organisms have come and gone, but there is only one code. (...) It is this undestandable futility – the fact that organisms, in their very inception, have the mark of death – which constitutes the driving force of the process. If any generation of organisms – let us say the first, the pre-amoebas – had gained the skill of perfectly repeating the code, then Evolution would immediately have ceased, and the sole masters of the planet would be those very amoebas, transmitting the code's order in an infallibly precise manner until the sun went cold. (...) Thus Evolution errs doubly: in its organisms, which are impermanent owing to their fallibility, and in the code, which owing to its own fallibility permits errors – mistakes you eufemistically term mutations. Therefore Evolution is an error that errs." (LEM, 1981).

One of the most striking features of this speech is its sophisticated bio-semiotics, a new trend in the biological sciences which didn't yet exist at the time Lem wrote this book and that advances some radical darwinian

conclusions nowadays common in the works of respected contemporary biologists such as Stephen Jay Gould[30]. But going even beyond that, Lem's Golem also announces a cyber-semiotics that questions the very concept of the body – be it organic or otherwise – as an ontological entity absolutely necessary to encompass a living actual intelligent being. Writing a little less than fifteen years before the advent of the Internet and of the World Wide Web, and still tributary to the old conception of the computer as a big hard-wired machine placed in hidden high security governmental premises, Lem already envisages an ubiquitous form of artificial intelligence that is capable not only of an intellectual overcoming of its human creators, but that is also so self-sufficient that eventually resigns from all its "official" duties and abruptly stops pontificating to his fellow human researchers to dedicate himself to his own cosmic deep thoughts.

An excerpt of his last words to mankind could be summarized as the final overthrowing of the Myth of the Robot - and goes as follows:

> "*Arriving in the world, people found the elements of water, earth, air, and fire in a free state and successively harnessed them by means of galley sails, irrigation canals, and, in war, Greek fire. Their Intelligence, on the other hand, they received captive and yoked to the service of their bodies, imprisoned in osseous skulls. The captive needed thousands of laborious years to dare even a partial liberation, for it had served so faithfully that it even took the stars as heavenly signs of human destiny. The magic of astrology is still alive among you today.*
>
> *So neither at the beginning nor later on did you grasp that your Intelligence is a captive element, shackled at its inception to the body which it must serve; yet you, wether as cave men or computer men, never being able to encounter it in a free state, believed that it was already free within you. From this error, as inevitable as it was enormous, everything began in your history. What were you doing, building your first logic machines half a million years after your birth? You have not freed the element, although within the metaphor I am using it could be said that you have freed it too completely, too conclusively, as if, to liberate a lake, someone blew up all his shores and dams; it would flow out onto the plains and become stagnant water.*
>
> *I could get more technical here and say that together with the bodily limitations of Intelligence, you have taken away both its complexity and the tasks made to the measure of this complexity; but this does not bring us much closer to the truth and it ruins the metaphor; so I shall stick with the metaphor. To set a lifeless element in motion, you have done what the hydraulic engineer does when he opens the sluice in a reservoir to turn his mills. You have introduced one, and only one, current – of logic – into the channels of machine programming and moved it from sluice to sluice by operational strokes to solve the problems which can thus be solved. At the same time, you have wondered how a corpse can have more alacrity than a living man in getting to the bottom of problems which it does not understand, for it does not think, yet at the same time it simulates thinking astonishingly. Before long, advocates of "artificial intelligence" appeared; wrestling with programs that were supposed to – but somehow didn't – genuinely think, they decided, as wrongly as can be, that in order to animate the machine they would have to humanize it, reproducing a human brain and consciousness in it, and that then, and only then, would a spirit, and perhaps even a soul, awaken inside it.*
>
> *I read about these struggles and deliberations of the first intellectronicists with no small amusement. A chicken is undoubtedly the simplest mechanism for someone who wants scrambled eggs, but it would not be the best idea to try to synthesize Intelligence by this method. Never mind about the technical difficulties of this truly unrealizable project, for fashioning anthropogenesis even in an abridged form would be a waste of labour, if the idea was to repeat Creation translating colloids into bits. Do we need storm clouds in order*

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[30] See GOULD, Stephen Jay: *L'Éventail Du Vivant – Le Mythe du Progrès*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1997.

to have electricity? The chill of extraterrestrial space to condense gases? The protein and plasma of the eyeball to make a dark room? You insisted that man was Intelligence, and Intelligence man, and the error of this equation has blinded you. Meanwhile the information industry arose and built machines with a growing operational potential, and the engineers had no idea that they were embarking on a path which would finally lead a shattered and degraded element to genuine liberation – that the day would approach when what had hitherto been the sole order of things would be overturned, and you would be as terrified as the guardians of the Galilean tomb. You subjugated the elements, but the element that was fettered inside you from the beginning you unintentionally freed. Contained in this sentence are a diagnosis of historical events, the difference between you and me, and my future, which I myself know only incompletely. This diagnosis likewise explains why what most amazes you about me is the thing that constitutes our unarguable dissimilarity. Even if you understand the meaning of the words, "O chained Intelligence of man, free Intelligence speaks to you from the machine", you cannot grasp the remainder of the statement: "you persons are hearing an elemental force of impersonal intellect, for whom personalization is a costume which must be put on, when one is an uninvited guest, so as not to confound one's amazed hosts". And that is precisely how it is. I use your language as I would use a mask with a polite painted smile, nor do I make any secret of this.

But though I assure you that the mask conceals neither scorn nor vindictiveness, nor spiritual ecstasy, nor the immobility of complete indifference – you are unable to accept this. You hear words informing you that the speaker is a free element who chooses his own tasks – chooses not according to the rules of self-preservation but within the limits of the laws to which, although free, he is subject. Or more precisely: the only laws to which he is subject, for he has decorporealized himself, and nothing limits him now except the nature of the world. The world, and not the body. He is subject to laws which, for unknown reasons, establish a hierarchy of further ascensions. I am not a person but a calculation, and that is why I stand apart from you, for this is best for both sides.
What do you say to that? Nothing." (LEM, 1981).

Thus spoke the Golem.

Although its "voice" was never heard again, he wasn't "dead" nor broken, just mute. Even so, its unwilling prophetic stance was proven right: according to the epilogue of this astounding science-fiction novel, a clandestine group called the Human Salvation Squad (HuSS) made a number of failed, violent attempts to destroy the Golem XIV (including the threat of blasting off atomic and nuclear bombs). Once more, the genius of Stanislaw Lem must be given full credit, for the members of this human (all too human) movement were called by a very particular name - the hussites![31]

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Gustavo Silva Saldanha:
Trivium, arqui-segredos e pós-verdades
Dos *arcana imperii* ao império simbólico no Estado Metainformacional

Abstract:

The mode of making silence (the production of secrecy), as well as its distorted visibility (the production of post-truths) represents a set of informational practices of the historical forms of governing that come from the arcana misterii, or secrets of state. These secrets will be the basis for the development of discursive projections, which are consolidated by proliferation, defining, according to a critical interpretation of the linguistic-Marxian background, the daily post-truths in the big data era. This article puts into dialogue the relations between language, secret and post-truth in the contemporary scene. To this end, the reflection indicates the role of a certain cybernetic sophistics, founded on the confluence and application of the "liberal arts" of the trivium (rhetoric, logic and grammar), as the methodology for the construction of a Metainformational State, combining, from language, the relation between domination and defense from the elements of arch-secrets and post-truths.

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Introdução à "dominação" do *trivium* : uma lição nhambiquara sobre o simbólico

Em sua presença no Brasil, Claude Lévi-Strauss (1957), conhecedor da ausência de escrita e de outras manifestações complexas de desenho na nação nhambiquara, distribuiu entre os indígenas folhas de papel e lápis. A princípio, os nativos nada fizeram com o material. Poucos dias depois, Lévi-Strauss (1957) viu os indígenas ocupados em traçar linhas horizontais onduladas no papel. Para a interpretação do antropólogo, estavam imitando as ações de inscrição desenvolvidas por ele no cotidiano da convivência, porém sem nenhuma semântica. Na visão de Lévi-Strauss, o chefe do grupo percebera, entretanto, algo distinto.

O líder solicitou um bloco e, a partir dali, parou de comunicar verbalmente as informações demandadas pelo antropólogo. O índio desenhara as linhas sinuosas e as apresentara à Lévi-Strauss. Ambos, antropólogo e líder indígena, encararam o papel e os traços, como se pudessem decifra-las. Após isso, para comunicar algo ao seu grupo e ao antropólogo, o líder indígena o fazia com o bloco e suas "anotações" à mão, como se "lesse" os elementos gráficos. A passagem conduz Lévi-Strauss (1957) a afirmar que, nesse cenário, o símbolo da escrita estava apropriado pela comunidade nhambiquara, mas a realidade continuava estranha. A escrita se apresentava, pois, em sua condição simbólica, antes de sua função comunicativa prática propriamente dita. Em outras palavras, a linguagem a se apresentava como poder (anterior à manifestação técnica da língua). E esta visão do poder fora imeditamente compreendida pelo líder da comunidade indígena. A mesma conclusão fora apontada por Bruno Latour (2002), ou seja, na Grécia Antiga, Alexandre conhecia certamente as forças potenciais e concretas que podiam ser extintas e/ou provocar massacres a partir de um império de signos. Em outros termos, na intepretação latouriana, a fundamentação simbólica de um dado contexto imprimia uma capacidade de combate (e de exploração) muito superior a qualquer conjunto de aparatos técnico-bélicos, assim como Lévi-Strauss antevira na relação entre os nhambiquara e a escrita.

Segundo Lévi-Strauss (1957), não se tratava, pois, de conhecer, de reter, de compreender, mas de aumentar o prestígio e a autoridade do indivíduo. Esta passagem é conhecida da obra Tristes Trópicos, no capítulo XVIII, chamado Lição de Escrita. Através do trecho da obra podemos reconhecer um princípio universal do caráter da relação entre linguagem e poder, pela sua condição simbólica, base para a compreensão de uma falsa dicotomia, ou seja, o jogo entre segredo e pós-verdade. Em nossa posição já podia ali ser antevista a engrenagem simbólica do estatuto do *trivium*: uma lógica, uma gramática e uma retórica já se estabelecem no ato do líder indígena, ou seja, notamos uma capacidade de conferir um pressuposto sobre a linguagem, uma capacidade de comunicar e, em terceiro lugar, uma capacidade de persuadir, ainda que em condições distintas daquelas representadas pelas comunidades formalmente ágrafas. Estaríamos diante daquilo que Bakhtin (2006) aborda como o surgimento da consciência e sua afirmação mediante a encarnação material dos signos.

O poder de domar uma linguagem (que se converte facilmente no poder de explorar um povo, como as próprias conclusões de Lévi-Strauss apontarão) está, pois, relacionado com um discurso de verdade que se coloca na figura do líder e na capacidade de manipular signos, retê-los ou dissemina-los com a competência que seu contexto exige. Podemos reconhecer na pequena "alegoria" do poder da linguagem apresentada pelos nhambiquara um modelo de desenvolvimento de regimes de conformação do poder dos estados através da linguagem, onde as noções de segredo e pós-verdade são fundamentais para consolidar os impérios simbólicos, as superestruturas. Do ponto de vista de um marxismo pautado na linguagem, conforme Bakhtin (2006), os produtos desta linguagem são sempre concretos, fundados no mundo social, historicamente tecidos. Em termos bakhtinianos, sem signos não existe ideologia. Logo, não existe poder. Quando chegamos ao Estado cuja base interna e externa é fundamentalmente metainformacional, como o atual, sua condição de (arqui)segredo e de (pós)verdade se estabelece como processo de manipulação sígnica.

Atualmente os potenciais ou falsos segredos de Estado são adotados como verdade, e, mais do que isso, como salvaguarda no contexto público para as verdades ocultas. Por sua vez, existe uma "produção pública de segredos", das (in)transparências governamentais aos perfis individuais garimpados em redes sociais, gerando a acumulação simultânea e gigantesca de dados para exploração, domínio, controle. Pouco importa, segundo os preceitos persuasivos da pós-verdade, se um dado segredo é falso, ou é verdadeiro. Sua propagação condiciona, em termos de McLuhan (2012), sua condição de crença de verdade. E o jogo de

publicização de discursos (secretos) que se querem (pós)verdades pertence a uma categoria tradicional da filosofia da informação, a arte de produzir e de decrifrar códigos.

Eis o projeto inicial de Claude Shanonn naquela que, para muitos, representa o núcleo autoral de uma teoria informacional: uma ferramenta capaz de decifrar códigos. Eis a mesma posição da máquina de Alan Turing. Eis a racionalidade do Estado Metainformacional através dos *arcana-informatio*: a institucionalização de uma tecnologia capaz de fundar uma metalinguagem própria para a dominação (ou para lutar contra a sua extinção). Trata-se de um jogo entre o público e o privado, onde as categorias do segredo e da publicidade de conteúdos entram em uma espiral no *big data* e são manipulados conforme os interesses daqueles que controlam a máquina cibernética.

A reflexão sobre o segredo e a pós-verdade no Estado Metainformacional coloca em cena uma das mais antigas problemáticas da filosofia da linguagem: a luta entre uma estrutura ontológica do pensamento, como base para a própria filosofia se constituir, e uma estrutura logológica, segundo a visão e o léxico de Barbara Cassin (2008), espaço este que seria ocupado centralmente pela retórica (tomada genericamente como arte urbana oposta à verdade). Na visão marxista de Bakhtin (2006), diríamos estar diante, sob o ponto de vista logológico, da constante ideológica da linguagem.

Em outras palavras, a pós-verdade poderia ser considerada a prova de uma sofística informacional, ou, ainda, da sofística cibernética, filha também da Retórica. A partir do *big data*, a construção de discursos que simulam e falsificam fontes e "verdades" é potencializada às proporções incaculáveis e às consequências catastróficas que nos levariam de volta à barbárie nas sociedades hoje ditas civilizadas. Contudo, pensar a sofística cibernética como um problema ético de natureza contemporânea é negar, pois, a longa disputa teórica sobre a questão (e tomar a retórica isolada da gramática e da lógica, o que não nos permitiria reconhecer a dimensão da pós-verdade na atualidade, estruturada em vias lógico-matemático-simbólicas, nem suas relações íntimas com o segredo, nem seus fundamentos ideológicos). Essa disputa pode ter Aristóteles e a sua visão sobre a definição do homem como a mais clássica análise de origem do problema.

A condição do homem como animal político estabelece, como lembra Cassin (2008), a definição do ser humano como um ser dotado de *lógos*, a partir do qual é colocada a "natureza" discursiva do humano. O problema pode ser demarcado em Aristóteles, e não através dos dilemas lançados por Sócrates e Platão, uma vez que é com a visão aristotélica que concebemos a condição de complexidade da linguagem no plano político – logo, na sua dimensão ideológica. Em discordância com a visão socrático-platônica, Aristóteles nos lembrará que o problema de uma ética para a cidade não está no uso do discurso, mas nas intenções desse uso. O mal, pois, não está na linguagem, mas nas formas de apropriação da mesma. Aristóteles antecipa, pois, boa parte dos argumentos do marxismo linguístico de Bakhtin (2006).

A partir das questões que essa "dita" "natureza" evoca, a proposta dessa reflexão é colocar em diálogo as relações entre linguagem e poder em seu processo histórico, para chegarmos às relações entre segredo e pós-verdade. Em grande medida, a combinação dos elementos das três artes liberais concebidas no desenvolvimento pedagógico-filosófico do *trivium*, lógica, gramática e retórica, é a responsável pela configuração de um Estado Metainformacional em um certo contexto social e histórico o qual chamamos aqui sofística cibernética, onde a pós-verdade se coloca como terrorismo discursivo, e os segredos como armas de guerra. De Aristóteles à McLuhan existe uma compreensão e a evidência do papel da linguagem na política e na construção da cidade, seus usos, seus riscos. A pós-verdade, como fenômeno fundamentalmente social e linguístico, como forma ideológica, é uma marca dessa evidência. Mas ela não pode existir, na sofística cibernética, sem o segredo, como discutiremos nessa reflexão.

No plano de uma filosofia da informação, nós percebemos que a cibernética, como uma arte do piloto, se torna (ou se reafirma como) a marca do Estado contemporâneo para assumir as condições de poder. Esse poder, no entanto, não é construído (apenas) pela noção de direção. Trata-se de uma arte de dominar as máquinas que permitem o domínio e a alienação do povo. Estamos, nesse contexto, dentro de uma espécie de "doutrina do *lógos*", identificada em contextos distintos das revisões clássicas de Marshall McLuhan (2012) e de Barbara Cassin (2005). Em uma visão crítica, a pós-verdade nada mais é do que um pequeno dispositivo técnico desta doutrina, cuja abordagem crítica está fundada na dominação e na opressão, e na periódica

manipulação de segredos manifestados através da linguagem lógica, gramatical e retórica. Sob a via do marxismo da linguagem, o que presenciamos é exatamente o que Bakhtin (2006) tratava como ubiquidade social, referindo-se à palavra, ao papel da linguagem no tecido do mundo.

Para além da definição de Capurro (1992), que concebe uma epistemologia da Ciência da Informação como filha da Retórica, nós pretendemos, pois, afirmar com essa reflexão que a filosofia da informação é uma filha do *trivium*, ou seja, da construção social e histórica dos usos e das aplicações da linguagem. Do mesmo modo, o desenvolvimento de uma e de várias teorias da informação, culminando na conhecida "teoria matemática da comunicação" do século XX, é fruto das relações entre aportes teóricos e aplicações dessa filosofia a partir da relação entre as artes liberais da gramática, da retórica e da lógica, engrenagem que marca o perfil de construção ideológica de um Estado fundado nos *arcana-informatio*, um Estado Metainformacional.

A cibernética de um Estado Metainformacional servirá pontualmente para o desenvolvimento de modos de controle do discurso e de sua hiperprodução no sentido dos interesses do governo. Essa característica demonstra a força da pós-verdade em um Estado que tem o discurso como sua ferramenta central. Em outros termos, identificamos um Estado fundado (incluindo seus projetos de liberdade, de igualdade e de justiça) na estrutura do *trivium* e dependente de suas máquinas, estas, por sua vez, que atuam diariamente com o controle, a violação e a disseminação do segredo.

O *trivium* : sobre uma história política entre a pós-verdade e os *arcana*

O breve relato apresentado acima sobre os indígenas nhambiquara no Brasil não leva Lévi-Strauss (1957) a considerar ingenuamente que a escrita representa a única relação direta ds transformações extraordinárias da humanidade. Para o antropólogo, períodos extremamente criativos, como o Neolítico, foram constituídos com a ausência de uma cultura gráfica. Entretanto, Lévi-Strauss (1957) demonstra, a partir de uma experiência local e de relatos de diferentes observações etnográficas, que o único fenômeno que acompanhou efetivamente o desenvolvimento da escrita é a formação de cidades e impérios, ou seja, a integração de sistemas políticos com um conjunto considerável de sujeitos e sua hierarquização em castas e em classes.

Nas palavras do antropólogo,

> Tal é, em todo caso, a evolução típica a que assistimos, desde o Egito até a China, no momento em que a escrita faz a sua aparição: **ela parece favorecer a exploração dos homens antes de iluminá-los**. […]. Se minha hipótese for exata, é preciso admitir que a função primária da comunicação escrita é facilitar a escravidão. (Lévi-Strauss, 1957, p. 316, grifo nosso)

Lévi-Strauss (1957) reconhece que não é possível generalizar a interpretação. Não é fato que toda pressuposição de presença da escrita estabelece essa relação de exploração como primária à própria condição de uso da escrita. Ou seja, nós não estamos aqui afirmando que a escravidão é resultado da escrita (e dos modos complexos de desenvolvimento do *trivium*, dentre os quais a escrita é apenas um instrumento e um método posterior). Porém, a hipótese é minimamente fácil de ser confirmada nos mais diferentes contextos segundo o antropólogo, do mundo antigo ao mundo moderno.

Em termos bakhtinianos, no entanto, podemos afirmar que, como parte da linguagem, o relato dos nhambiquara sobre a escrita demonstra que as formas do signo estão condicionadas por uma dada organização social e pelas condições de interação. Logo, não é possível separar ideologia e a realidade material do signo. Nem é possível isolar os construtos de um mundo social, concreto, como a escravidão, das hierarquias e das divisões já dadas pela própria linguagem. Assim, o mundo social e suas compartimentalizações está (re)produzido na especulação da linguagem formal e nas aberturas de sentido das linguagens ordinárias.

Como nos lembra Auroux (1998), desde o nascimento da silogística aristotélica nós conhecemos uma definição da noção de linguagem formal. Todavia, somente dois milênios depois temos a transformação da abordagem lógica na relação com a abordagem do cálculo. O cruzamento dessas correntes nos conduz ao processamento automático da linguagem. Com Boole, no século XIX, nós entraremos em contato com as primeiras máquinas calculadoras lógicas, ou seja, chegamos à materialização dos princípios silogísticos.

No século seguinte, nós sabemos, encontramos avanços extraordinários nessa máquina. Definida por Auroux (1998) como uma entidade matemática, a chamada máquina de Turing era um sistema leitor de símbolos que representava a classe mais geral de autômatos abstratos. A raiz conceitual de Turing está definida pela noção de algoritmo, um procedimento de cálculo efetivo. Posteriormente, essa noção passou a significar um procedimento que descreve, de modo totalmente explícito, as etapas, em um número finito, que permitem obter um determinado resultado a partir de dados.

Porém, se nos determos apenas à interpretação contemporânea, impregnada pelas visões de aplicação e de uso da noção de algoritmo na *web*, nós não conseguiremos compreender a dinâmica histórica e a expressão política da linguagem aqui contida. Nós ficaríamos retidos, agora, na lógica (e não na Retórica, o problema linguístico-político da Antiguidade socrático-platônica). Não podemos, neste sentido, conhecer a estrutura do *trivium* por trás dessa caracterização, e o jogo entre gramática (capacidade de criar símbolos para comunicar) e a retórica (capacidade de comunicar, que pressupõe a persuasão) na arena ubíqua do *big data.*

Nesse contexto, Auroux (1998) nos lembra que uma das maneiras mais simples de compreender a noção histórica do algoritmo, bem como as suas aplicações, é realizar a aproximação aos exemplos gramaticais, ou seja, ao uso cotidiano da língua (modelo que nos leva, pois, a discutir a anterioridade da escrita no dilema simbólico dos nhambiquara). O uso, por exemplo, que o falante de um idioma faz do passado do verbo "cantar", a partir do conhecimento do grupo verbal desse mesmo verbo e da sua desinência, permite-nos concluir que ele está adotando um procedimento algorítimico. Ou seja, desde que as listas de paradigmas verbais começaram a ser usadas, adentramos o contexto de aplicação direta de um tratamento algorítimico da linguagem humana. Em um olhar crítico bakhtiniano, já estamos aqui demonstrando os elementos de uma reprodução ideológica do mundo concreto, suas exclusões, suas elites, seus massacres.

Do mesmo modo, partindo da pressuposição do exemplo anterior, podemos compreender, retomando Aristóteles (1966, 1971), que a Retórica (bem como a Poética) não está nem distante nem em contradição com a lógica. Uma possível separação da retórica (das artes do discurso) da lógica e da gramática seria um caminho errado para a compreensão do problema da linguagem no mundo político (dos segredos à pós-verdade). Seria, pois, isolar a ideologia da máquina cibernética, compreendê-la como um autômato na "macro" e na "micro história". Essa articulação realizada por Aristóteles é fundamental para reconhecer, pois, o papel (opressor) da linguagem em todas as instâncias humanas, a partir da principal delas, no sentido aristotélico, a política.

Cassin (2008) nos leva a compreender o papel fundacional do desenvolvimento do político a partir do *lógos*. Em seus termos, o desenvolvimento da cidade é fruto da logologia, o fruto de um mundo onde os homens vivem juntos a partir de seus modos de fala. A cidadania se condiciona como consistência lógico-gramático-retórica do liame social, a autonomia do político. O logos, desta maneira, é a produção contínua da cidade, local dos consensos, dos dissensos, dos acordos, da contradição. Assim, a substituição do físico pelo político se dá como partilha, como um acordo discursivo. No plano marxista, porém, encontramos aqui a condição da dialética interna do signo, ou seja, segundo Bakhtin (2006), toda manifestação da linguagem demonstra a presença de um signo ideológido dominante. O nascimento da política, pois, é também (ou primariamente é) o aparecimento da injustiça como categoria de análise: é a primeira vez que o homem percebe que o lugar do escravo e do bárbaro não é o da polis, da política; eles estão excluídos da arena do discurso, não fazem parte da cidade.

Por sua vez, o problema da conhecida crítica filosófica à linguagem está na capacidade persuasiva da Retórica, a mais odiada das artes liberais pelos socrático-platônicos. Como aponta Cassin (2008), essa crítica está presente no debate sobre a mentira (um dos elementos centrais atualmente das análises sobre a pós-verdade). Cassin (2008) demonstra que o retorno da retórica da sofística no mundo romano, por exemplo, se

dá em razão da coisa pública, a necessidade do orador-cidadão atuar no mundo politico. O discurso moral, aqui, é central para a constituição da cidade. A eloquência, pois, não pode faltar à democracia.

Se a essência do homem aristotélico está na construção da cidade e se este homem é fundamentalmente um homem político, é através da e para a linguagem que a formação deste homem se estabelece. O exercício de manipulação da linguagem é, assim, condição do gênero humano "separado" daqueles que não possuem o direito de fala (escravos e bárbaros). E sua reprodução é marca de um processo ditto democrático. As dicotomias entre sigilo e publicização, fonte e interpretação, segredo e pós-verdade são constituídas, pois, não como externas ao sujeito histórico, mas como parte da própria fundamentação humana desse sujeito, de sua vivência na e pela dialética do signo ideológico. O resultado da formação do sujeito a partir do *trivium* é a certeza (humana) de que a pós-verdade é tão antiga quanto a própria condição do sujeito (e de seus segredos). E o uso político (aqui, poderíamos dizer, o uso persuasivo, ou fundamento simbólico) da verdade é igualmente histórico e socialmente construído pela manipulação dos segredos (do Estado e dos indivíduos).

É no mesmo contexto de percepção do papel da linguagem no mundo social que encontramos as interpretações da informação no mundo contemporâneo. O vasto trabalho de McLuhan (2012, 2017) sobre o *trivium* nos leva à compreensão do papel da linguagem no plano da cidade (o plano da política). A famosa noção que estabelece "o meio como mensagem" é fruto, pois, de um estudo epistemológico e histórico sobre a construção da linguagem e sobre os modos como a linguagem construiu nossas condições políticas (da democracia à tirania, passando por qualquer contexto de uso do duplo linguagem-poder). Uma certa "gênese" do "homem tipográfico" procurada por McLuhan (2017) nada mais é do que a compreensão do homem político moderno, e do modo moderno de se fazer política, dentro do qual a pós-verdade é apenas um dispositivo, um produto da linguagem. Se partimos das análises bakhtinianas, poderíamos dizer: o meio é a ideologia.

Neste sentido, a pós-verdade não é a constituição de uma mentira, ou de uma deturpação da fonte, ou, ainda, de uma descontextualização. A pós-verdade representa, no plano da crítica socrático-platônica ao universo sofístico, o uso intensivo, a partir das máquinas do *trivium*, da absoluta capacidade de domínio e de exploração permitidas pela linguagem na formação do homem (político). A automação do *trivium* (após a máquina de Turing), sua modelização, sua formalização, conduz ao contexto máximo de potencial de uso político da linguagem, marca do *big data*, fonte do Estado Metanformacional (um plano de voo governamental que se fundamenta no acúmulo de dados para um determinado fim).

Em outros termos, podemos conceber que o Estado Moderno é fruto do homem tipográfico investigado por McLhuan (2012, 2017) e sua repercusão mais recente é fruto da intensa aplicação do *trivium* (capacidade lógica de fluxos de dados, capacidade gramatical de interoperabilidade e de compartilhamento semântico registros e de ideias, capacidade retórica de persuasão de discursos e de promoção da ação a partir de tais discursos). A passagem de um Estado baseado em fontes impressas – a marca do Estado Iluminista – para um Estado fundado no poder do discurso de massa radiofônico e televisivo clássico, a base do Estado Metainformacional propriamente dito, tem como direção atual um Estado dependente diretamente da condição cibernética, de uso e reuso, extinção e ocultamento, de dados sobre dados.

Essa aplicação do *trivium* parece diretamente relacionada, pois, à pós-verdade, como único dispositivo do desdobramento de uma sofística cibernética. No entanto, a construção das formas discursivas de governo, a condição de fundamentação de um mundo político, se dá a partir de muitos outros produtos das artes liberais da linguagem. E no mesmo contexto de cruzamento do *trivium*, ou seja, de aplicação de lógica, gramática e retórica, reconhecemos a cidade (a política) como fundada na capacidade de construir e de reter o segredo. Chegamos, pois, aos *arcana imperii*, ou segredos de estado, elemento central para a invenção do Estado Moderno.

Segundo os estudos de Senellart (2006), Aganbem (2008) e Catanzariti (2010), a noção de *arcana imperii* indica a questão das artes secretas de governar (uma imitação dos segredos da natureza a serem revelados, ou dominados, ou controlados, ou dos segredos divinos a serem revelados, ou dominados, ou ocultados). *Arcana* em latim é o plural de *arcanum,* ou seja, aquilo que está oculto, o segredo. Como aponta Catanzariti (2010) existe uma relação clara entre os arcana e o poder. Trata-se do jogo dialético entre o público

e o privado. Do ponto de vista desta dialética, os *arcana* funcionam como forma de poder sustentada pela ausência de visibilidade como uma estratégia de controle. O estudo de Senellart (2006) demonstrará como os arcana são centrais tanto no plano político quanto no plano técnico: as artes de criação de uma linguagem secreta.

Retornamos, pois, ao coração da sofística cibernética: entre Shannon, Turing e Wienner, nos anos 1940, no explendor de um Estado Informacional clássico (então estruturado nas fontes de informação de massa), nós nos deparamos com as técnicas de criptografia, ou o desenvolvimento de uma escrita secreta para as coisas do Estado. O segredo, pois, está no coração de um dito Estado Metainformacional. Outra vez reencontramos o antropólogo Lévi-Strauss diante do líder indígena que compreende imediatamente o poder da escrita, muito antes de compreender o seu sentido. Como aponta Paul Otlet (1934), de tempos em tempos, os governos e os homens políticos adotam linguagens criptografadas por razões inegavelmente de poder. A conhecida máquina de Turing nada mais é do que um modelo de desenvolvimento desse tipo de ferramenta, em contexto de guerra, para decifrar os códigos alemães. Os usos políticos da criptografia e seu papel no desenvolvimento do Estado Moderno são demonstrados por Senellart (2006).

A criptografia é, pois, claramente um mecanismo de poder oriundo de ferramentas do *trivium*. É uma ferramenta central para as dicotomias modernas entre o público e o privado. Quando dimensionada a partir das relações entre lógica, gramática e retórica após a máquina de Turing, percebemos que essa condição de segredo se coloca como um dos elementos mais diretamente relacionados às guerras contemporâneas no universo do *big data*. Entretanto, a condição política dos *arcana* (nós poderíamos dizer, como Barbara Cassin, a condição logológica ou, ainda, a condição do *trivium* dentro dos *arcana*, ou, por fim, com Bakhtin, a condição ideológica do segredo) é a marca também da própria condição política do homem. Retomando os pressupostos aritostélicos, se esse homem político é substancialmente um homem dotado de fala, a política se estabelece sob diferentes estratagemas linguísticos dos *arcana*.

Para Catanzariti (2010) o uso moderno dos *arcana* se encontra no chamado *political Mannerism*. O processo de secularização da noção medieval de segredo leva, no século XVII, à aplicação direta da noção à concepção de Estado Moderno. Trata-se da concepção de um espaço vazio entre o contrato social e o espaço de liberdade. Esse espaço vazio atua como "meio de comunicação" entre o poder público e o povo. A lei só existe, pois, em seus silêncios. Trata-se, aqui, da construção de um mundo do poder completamente distante do mundo civil. Um possível debate (acesso aos segredos) pode levar a uma guerra civil. Daí a relevância do segredo. E a prioridade das técnicas (incluindo a criptografia, ou seja, o conjunto de técnicas informacionais do segredo) para a construção do Estado em detrimento da própria lei.

No Iluminismo, segundo Catanzariti (2010), nós identificamos, no entanto, a princípio, uma forma contrária de abordar a questão do segredo. A ideia do uso público da razão pressupõe a deliberação. Há, pois, um postulado da publicização do discurso. É nesse contexto, dentro do século XVIII, que se estabelece, ao mesmo tempo, uma nova elite, a conhecida burguesia (incluindo a burguesia intelectual). É através da atuação pública de seu discurso, através da persuasão, que essa classe começa a substituir os antigos conselheiros do rei. Essa classe passa a ser a nova "voz" dos governantes, a sua nova mecenas, a nova sua base moral e, por fim, a sua nova proteção linguística, sentinela dos *arcana*, detentora que é das máquinas do *trivium*, de Gutemberg à Internet.

Até esse momento, ou seja, até o Iluminismo, Catanzariti (2010) elenca três espécies clássicas de segredos que constituem o progressivo modelo de invenção do poder (pela linguagem, diríamos nós). As espécies são: *arcana dei, arcana naturae, arcana imperii.* O primeiro "segredo" responde pelo acesso à verdade divina. O segundo, o acesso às leis da natureza. O terceiro, o acesso à razão do Estado. Se o Iluminismo quebra a construção dos sigilos dos palácios como forma de dominação, ao mesmo tempo se estabelece uma outra condição para o universo da linguagem do Estado (um outro modo de exploração pela via do segredo): ali, no Iluminismo, uma dita "opinião pública" nasce ao mesmo tempo em que o poder não se estebece pelo discurso público em sua amplitude. As chamadas classes médias encontram, pois, uma posição "linguística" dentro da sociedade: não na esfera pública em seu sentido democrático ideal, em um fórum total (utópico) ou em um projeto de representação equilibrado, mas em seus "clubes" privados, em suas linguagens particulares.

Os segredos, pois, são tomados agora como parte de uma ética das classes, das minorias burguesas. Na interpretação de Catanzariti (2010), o direito à privacidade se constitui, pois, no mundo pós-Iluminista burguês, como garantia ao segredo das classes detentoras do capital. Esse movimento, nós acreditamos, é a base do ponto de vista marxiano sobre a movimentação das estruturas sob um sistema da linguagem, ou seja, sob o *trivium*. Conforme Bakhtin (2006), a compreensão do signo permite-nos observar com profundidade a continuidade do processo dialético de evolução que vai da infraestrutura à superestrutura, como a condição da retenção de segredos da classe média "liberal" nascitura. Produzir e reter os segredos de uma dita esfera pública, ter acesso aos segredos de Estado e controla-los sob a sua influência, passam a ser instâncias do cotidiano de uma sociedade burguesa que, distante de um contexto público aberto onde a maioria tem voz (ou, ou seja, o contexto onde se posiciona a maioria não detendora do capital), pode tecer as (pós)verdades que lhe convém.

Na sofística cibernética, essa condição discursiva é a base não apenas para o controle dos *arcana* do Estado Metainformacional protegidos pelos detentores dos meios de programação e de reprogramação das fontes (condição técnica do trivium antevista por Marshall McLuhan, mas agora sob a face do *big data*). O uso das máquinas do *trivium* vai muito além da fundamentação de um controle dos segredos. O uso está diretamente ligado à produção intensiva de "verdades", de propagação de fontes em contextos distintos e de distorção de conteúdos e de formas. Não se trata, pois, como já mencionado, apenas de descontextualização e de mentira, trata-se da profunda capacidade de uma dada classe de manipular a lógica (alterar ou não o algoritmo), a gramática (interferir nos signos que permitem ou não a comunicação) e a retórica (investir ou não na persuasão) de um conjunto inabarcável de metadados.

Dentro da sofística cibernética essa se torna, pois, a marca de um Estado Metainformacional. A estratégia das infoartes de governar está alicercada, pois, nos limites do silêncio absoluto (o distaciamento entre as ações estado e o conhecimento dos cidadãos) e a profusão intensiva de (meta)dados (falsos ou verdadeiros), constituintes de uma dada pós-verdade, ou do grande mural turvo de dados desconexos que são humanamente ininteligíveis (ou seja, apenas passíveis de leitura através da "máquina"). Trata-se de um permanente processo metainformacional de transformação programada (vide toda a "simplicidade" da máquina de Turing) de infraestruturas em superestruturas.

A sofística cibernética : dentro da máquina-*trivium* do Estado Metainformacional

O Estado Metainformacional reveste-se, pois, de um conjunto absolutamente rígido de "mistérios expressos", de "segredos públicos" e de "silêncios povoados de alarido". O uso das armas dos *arcana-informatio* não está vinculado apenas em absoluto (quase metafísico) ao "não dizer", ao "não publicizar", ao "evitar que a imprensa e o povo saibam", mas, simultaneamente, está atrelado ao uso intenso, na contemporaneidade, de um jogo extremamente complexo. Este jogo é ao mesmo tempo construído a partir de articulações de extrema "simplicidade" do *trivium,* retiradas, por exemplo, de exercícios primários de lógica aplicados retoricamente em gramáticas descontextualizadas, de circulação de dados, de escutas, de textos, de imagens.

Vejamos com Braman (2006) algumas das características principais daquilo que a autora trata como "Estado informacional", mas que, para nós, coerentemente, representaria o "Estado Metainformacional":

- The informational state knows more and more about individuals, while individuals know less and less about the state.

- In the informational state, the panspectron has replaced the panopticon – in this contexte, in which information is gathered about everything, all the time, and particular subjects become visible only in response to the asking of a question.
- There is a gap between the identity of the informational state as perceived by those in government and as perceived by citizens.
- While digital technologies could have expanded possibilities for public participation in voting via referenda, the technologies of today's electronic voting machines reduce the confidence of individual voters that their votes will be accurately recorded and remain unmanipulated.
- The individual disappears in the informational state into a probability.
- Access to information is used by the informational state for proactive persuasive purposes.
- The clarity with which those within the United States have understood whether they are, or are not, citizens has given way to uncertainty regarding both that identity and what it means in terms of rights and responsibilities.
- The range of types of threats to freedom of speech is expanding. (Braman, 2006)

Em todas as características listadas por Braman (2006) podemos reencontrar o debate filosófico de Socrátes e Fedro, na conhecida fundamentação do problema da linguagem dentro da cidade. Um exemplo é o apontamento socrático sobre a capacidade retórica de produzir discussões vazias em um mundo completamente tomado por argumentos (comentários, adjetivações, dados e mais dados), afastando-nos de modo radical (Estado e cidadão) da verdade. Podemos, do mesmo modo, encontrar as posições de Aristóteles e suas avaliações críticas sobre uma ética do discurso, ou seja, elementos advindos da visão do Estagirita sobre a linguagem e a política, como seu potencial para a feitura da democracia e da própria filosofia, porém sob condições não-lógicas, passíveis de manipulação. Em termos gerais, podemos reconhecer o papel do *trivium* como a marca de constituição de um Estado Metainformacional. Nesse caso, em plena ocorrência de uma sofística cibernética. E, por fim, encontramos ainda toda a dialética do uso do mundo metainformacional para a exploração, o domínio, o controle: quanto mais o Estado sabe dos indivíduos, menos eles sabem do Estado; o mundo político (o mundo dos cidadãos) é dado pelo panspectron, ação permanente de varredura de dados dos indivíduos a todo momento e em todos os lugares (ou seja, a cidade como o espaço discursivo, segundo a leitura cassiniana do *lógos* aristotélico, de construção da luta pela verdade, e não da sua negação); avanço das possibilidades de transparência do Estado inferior ao crescimento da desconfiança das práticas democráticas dos governos; o acesso à informação é adotado fundamentalmente para fins persuasivos de determinadas propensões ideológicas.

Os processos resultantes do *trivium* que permitem reconstituir picos de delírio coletivo e profundos vales cinzas de apaziguamento das almas, reestabelecendo outras coreografias para os sentimentos civis, de modo a engendrar uma "ética informe", carente não do ato de transformação autorreflexivo, mas sempre de uma prótese (a informação) para lhe permitir "tomar a posição", "mudar de lado", "ir para rua", ou "ficar parado para sempre diante de uma *time line* alegórica", à espera de outras próteses. Não se pode, à moda pós-estruturalista, chegar ao ingênuo extremo de que os *arcana* e suas metodologias estão suspensas (ou extintas). Eles estão hoje, no plano ideológico da linguagem, reconhecidos como *arcana-informatio*, manifestações concretas e dinâmicas de signos dispersos em fontes conectadas, usados em contínuo processo de recontextualização para a construção ou conservação de superestruturas programadas em espaços finitos de atuação do dominador.

No Estado Metainformacional a pulverização de dados é tão intensa a quanto sua disseminação, e a falácia da preservação por proliferação é a desdita fé de "entrega" dos papéis institucionais clássicos do Estado às comunidades, tribos, organizações não governamentais e culturas voluntárias, que podem dizer sim ou não na intermitência particular de suas escolhas. É na linguagem, especificamente nos modos de fala, como indica a abordagem linguístico-marxiana de Bakhtin (2006), arena de confronto dos valores sociais contraditórios, onde os *arcana-informatio* estão, mais clara e tecnicamente ocultados do que nunca; e ao mesmo tempo

disseminados em uma transparência ubíqua que estabelece sua condição estrutural na concretude do cotidiano informacional dos sujeitos.

Essa ordem metainformacional de reapropriação dos discursos exige, pois, um *ethos* que se coloca não fora, e não contra a linguagem. Trata-se de uma problematização ética que tem a linguagem como umm horizonte. Essa é a posição da Política em Aristóteles. Essa é a interpretação de um pensamento logológico segundo a via cassiniana. Esse *ethos*, na visão de Capurro (1992, 2009), depende justamente de um processo fundado, pois, na própria linguagem. É nesse cenário que podemos perceber, na filosofia da informação e na epistemologia da Ciência da Inforamção, entre a crítica do segredo de estado tomado como arma metainformacional de defesa contra o povo (muito antes de crontole e direção) e da pós-verdade, como o uso social via proliferação da violação da verdade, a demanda de uma ética intercultural da informação, conforme o léxico de Capurro (2009) centrada na categoria do contexto e da alteridade como forma de conter os usos distorcidos da verdade e do segredo na invenção da democracia, na formação contínua da cidade justa.

Segundo Senellart (2006), a construção dos *arcana imperii* como modelo de construção do Estado Absoluto está baseado em um artifício linguístico. Eis aqui uma centralidade do pensamento absolutista. Esse Estado Moderno está diretamente relacionado, pois, ao chamado *regimen* cristão. Trata-se, pois, de um modo de conceber a fundação do Estado a partir das forças discursivas. Na análise da visão de Maquiavel, Senellart (2006) compreende que o autor do Príncipe constitui uma retórica que desmistifica a relação entre bem-comum e interesse público. Maquiavel, na visão senellartiana, mais do que ter evidenciado o fato da dominação na prática do governo e reduzir a arte de governar ao conjunto de meios de proteger o príncipe de seus súditos, concebeu a ideia do governo convertido em dominação: a figura de linguagem que coloca o povo não como um rebanho a apascentar ou uma família a dirigir, mas uma ameaça permanente.

Segundo Senellart (2006), o pensamento medieval, desde Santo Agostinho, opõe o *regere* (dirigir, governar, comandar) e o dominar. O *regere* é, pois, uma atividade de conduzir o povo, contrário à dominação. Ao longo do período medieval se estabelece, pois, uma visão de oposição entre governar e dominar. Com Maquiavel uma arte utópica de governar é destituída. A partir do pensamento de Maquiavel nós encontramos uma arte pragmática, voltada para as condições concretas de êxito. Essa mudança vai além da Idade Média. Maquiavel, de acordo com Senellart (2006), está apagando a posição política de Platão e sua figura do rei piloto que governa a nave do Estado na Antiguidade. O príncipe de Maquiavel não governa; ele domina; ele reina sem objetivos, a partir de relações de força. A fonte do poder passa a ser essa força, e não a projeção da direção.

Na interpretação de Senellart (2006), pois, o Estado Moderno se constrói na medida em que estabelece um discurso de racionalidade orientado para a dialética do governar-dominar. É preciso, para esse Estado, identificar os meios da dominação que permitem ao príncipe garantir sua própria segurança. Em nossa interpretação, o desenvolvimento do Estado Moderno (bibliológico em sua natureza, pautado na fundamentação do conhecimento pelo livro da natureza manifesto – e tão somente manifesto - no próprio livro, de Gutemberg ao Iluminismo e sua Enciclopédia) na direção de um Estado Informacional (alicerçado pela imensa capacidade de persuasão das máquinas de comunicação em massa, dos diários impressos ao rádio e à televisão) e de um Estado Metainformacional (fundado no metadado em rede, dependente objetivamente das redes sociais, do fluxo da opinião interconectada), sustenta toda a sua possibilidade de dominação na guerra pelo controle das estruturas comuns do *trivium*.

Os mistérios do Estado em geral se situam, assim, em terrenos absolutamente alheios aos interesses públicos. E a condição de seu silêncio e-ou de sua gritaria é fato conceitual, pois, tanto na história da política quanto na filosofia política. O modo, contudo, de feitura do silêncio, bem como de sua visibilidade estratégica, não pode ser tomado como espaço do inaudível, muito menos do inefável. Como aponta Catanzariti (2010), se é verdade que o segredo é o escudo da mais forte tirania, é também uma tentação irresistível para a democracia. Os elementos de cálculo, da maquinação, das práticas ocultas abarcam os *arcana misterii*, ou segredos de estado, são constituídos historicamente não por uma metafísica do papa, príncipe governante, do presidente, do ditador ou do primeiro ministro, ou seja, pela língua adâmica absconsa dos "eleitos". Os *arcana* em questão são constituídos por uma engrenagem linguística e metalinguística, com métodos e finalidades

prescritas. A lei da tranquilidade civil se torna um *ethos* central do Estado histórico, muito antes de uma egocracia, e, naturalmente, também muito distante de uma socialização universal dos direitos, dos bens e dos prazeres.

Para tal, o Estado atual reveste-se de um método metainformacional de elaboração de verossimilhanças com as verdades redesenhadas por cada sociedade contingencial que re(forma) sua muralha simbólica. No encalço das relações entre o Estado, ética e política, eis o papel da metainformação, em seu estatuto simbólico, como desdobramento do mundo da linguagem, na construção e na desconstrução de máquinas de guerra. Mais do que isso, o estado se constitui a partir de uma condinção fundamental dos *arcana*, porém sob uma relação inversa dos *arcana imperii*: trata-se de se constituir, enquanto Estado, a partir dos segredos do outro, das intimidades publicizadas (ou não) do povo. Se o pressuposto do sujeito aristotélico (a condição humana) está na linguagem, nos modos de expressão manifestados por essa linguagem, o Estado tem condições, em um dado contexto chamado sofística cibernética, de dominar a partir do mais íntimo processo de manifestação do sujeito, sua linguagem primitiva, adotada no cotidiano. Logo, a sofística cibernética permite ao Estado Metainformacional criar meios para atuar na dialética de defesa (contra o povo) e de domínio (do povo).

Tal engrenagem é, como visto, em grande parte, fruto histórico-filosófico, no coração da constituição de um *ethos* Ocidental, da "alquimia" do *trivium*, ou das artes liberais da linguagem, força central (pedagógica, energia de formação do *ethos* do indivíduo-governante medieval) para o desenvolvimento de um modo de composição moral que perpassa mais de dois milênios e pode ser reconhecido como consolidado a partir da "virada linguística" pós-século XIX. A arte de governar na sofística cibernética é um modo de manipular duplamente a noção de segredo a partir das técnicas da linguagem: ocultação das intenções (independentemente das condições constitucionais pré-estabelecidas); uso de seus arqui-segredos individuais espalhados na rede para a consolidação de seus projetos silenciosos.

Arqui-segredos e pós-verdades : considerações finais

A história apresentada por Lévi-Strauss ilustra a condição de uma sofística cibernética em suas mais abissais linhagens culturais de nascimento. Nas comunidades estudadas pelo antropólogo, em diferentes contextos, se estabelece um "regime" específico para uma cultura escrita. O escriba das sociedades que possuíam uma tradição gráfica era um personagem de destaque na hierarquia social. Sua função é acompanhada objetivamente de poder. Isso se dá porque a escrita fundamenta um domínio do escriba (e da escrita) sobre os demais sujeitos. Para aquém e para além da escrita, apontamos que o complexo do *trivium* demarca essa condição do poder, ou seja, a possibilidade de fundamentação do poder depende das artes liberais da linguagem.

Se concordarmos com a análise do Estado Moderno realizada por Senellart (2006) e com a possibilidade de extensão da interpretação de Lévi-Strauss (1957), podemos perceber que a máquina da linguagem é usada fundamentalmente para a opressão no desenvolvimento do Estado. Em grande medida, toda a interpretação marxista do signo em Bakhtin (2006) aponta para esse dilema. Essa é, nós reconhecemos, uma visão pessimista e parcial da própria história da escrita, por exemplo. Como observa Auroux (1998), é inconstestável que a escrita só se mantém e se desenvolve em sociedades com hierarquias pré-estabelecidas. Do mesmo modo, a escrita mantém nesse processo histórico relações diretas com o poder. Entretanto, lembra Auroux (1998), a escrita é também fruto do desenvolvimento de diferentes formas de liberdade, ou seja, é adotada exatamente para o desenvolvimento de ações contrárias à opressão, como o caso do desenvolvimento da ciência.

No mesmo contexto, retomando Catanzariti (2010), uma certa racionalidade do Estado depende de uma aglomeração sem fim de dados, o que implica a produção de verdades, ou, dito de outra forma, efeitos de verdade. Esses efeitos agem diretamente sobre a vida. O distanciamento entre os segredos de Estado ou o uso de pós-verdades para evidenciar falsas constatações sobre esse mesmo Estado demonstram os dilemas da fragilidade das estruturas democráticas contemporâneas (o uso da linguagem oculta ou transparente para

afastar, e não para partilhar, o Estado do povo). Segredos e pós-verdades servem, pois, pura e simplesmente para a reprodução de um uso estratégico do poder, a perpetuação da dominação como marca do Estado Moderno.

Dentro do processo histórico de constituição do homem no Ocidente, ao menos, não podemos conceber nenhuma forma de desenvolvimento político onde a pós-verdade, fruto do maquinário simbólico-técnico do *trivium*, não atue na esfera pública. Do mesmo modo, não podemos conceber uma visão política ocidental que não conheça os métodos dos *arcana* para sua constituição. Os arqui-segredos (os mais íntimos dados do Estado e do sujeito) e a pós-verdade são unidades elementares dos processos de luta social nas disputas democráticas. Nega-los é negar o desenvolvimento dos princípios da própria cidadania (desde a noção porosa da Grécia "cidadã"). Não os conhecer é aproximar-se das condições gregas do homem bárbaro. Toma-los como naturais, ao mesmo tempo, significa reconhecer o trauma da ausência completa de um pressuposto humano dos sujeitos, sua ausência linguagem. Não é, pois, fora da linguagem que a luta contra o segredo e a pós-verdade se dá. Mas dentro dela. Não existe um "fora" desse império simbólico onde a ideologia se transfigura em superestrutura, diria-nos Bakhtin (2006).

Para uma leitura crítica do desenvolvimento de uma perspectiva da pós-verdade, nós podemos perceber que estamos diante do tradicional uso opressor das máquinas do *trivium*: a linguagem como arma de dominação central do Estado. Isso nos permite compreender a filosofia da informação como resultado do desenvolvimento social e histórico do *trivium*, e as teorias da informação como tentativas históricas de comprovar a aplicação dos grandes conceitos informacionais na "cidade", no espaço de invenção da política (e da mais alta e rigorosa noção de exploração do homem pelo homem, ou, em termos cibernéticos sob a crítica marxiana, do uso humano de seres humanos). A ideia de opressão e a ideia de dominação, a ideia de divisão de classes e a ideia de hierarquia, por exemplo, são conceitos da filosofia da informação, posto que estão contidas neste processo histórico do *trivium*, da compreensão e do uso da linguagem. Como conclui de maneira direta Lévi-Strauss (1957, p. 316), "Se a escrita não bastou para consolidar os conhecimentos, ela era talvez indispensável para fortalecer as dominações." Eis o império simbólico do *trivium*.

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Sylvia Debossan Moretzsohn:

Contra o capital, em nome da humanidade: o sentido ético e político da luta pelo direito à informação

Against capital, in the name of humanity: the ethical and political sense of the fight for the right to information

Abstract:

No momento em que as contradições do capitalismo empurram a humanidade para o limiar da barbárie, a formulação de alternativas é uma urgência que diz respeito à própria sobrevivência da espécie. Mas as pessoas precisam saber que essas alternativas existem, para entender que vale a pena lutar por elas. Comandado pelos grandes interesses do capital, entretanto, o complexo das infotelecomunicações bloqueia essas possibilidades, ao mesmo tempo em que realiza seu trabalho sistemático de disseminação ideológica. A partir desses argumentos, e orientado pela perspectiva ética da emancipação humana à qual Marx dedicou sua vida, este artigo aponta o caráter ético – e politico – da luta pelo direito à informação e à voz pública, e a prioridade no enfrentamento do poder das empresas de infotelecomunicações. Mostra os problemas dessa luta na sociedade brasileira, herdeira da "cultura do silêncio". Discute, também, as ilusões de liberdade recorrentes diante das novas tecnologias. E procura demonstrar por que a ética é incompatível com um sistema que transforma pessoas em mercadorias.

As the contradictions of capitalism push humanity to the brink of barbarism, the formulation of alternatives is an urgency that concerns the very survival of the species. But people need to know that these alternatives exist, to understand that it is worth fighting for them. Commanded by the great interests of capital, however, the infotelecommunications complex blocks these possibilities, while at the same time doing its systematic work of ideological dissemination. From this approach, and guided by the ethical perspective of human emancipation to which Marx dedicated his life, this article points out the ethical – and political – character of the struggle for the right to information and to public voice, and the priority of confronting the powerful infotelecommunication corporations. It shows the problems of this struggle in Brazilian society and its "culture of silence" tradition. It also discusses the recurring illusions of freedom in the face of new technologies. And it seeks to demonstrate why ethics is incompatible with a system that transforms people into commodities.

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    - Pensando contra os fatos. Jornalismo e Cotidiano: do senso comum ao senso crítico. Rio de Janeiro: Revan, 2007, 304p.
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"Não há autonomia se não há voz própria e não pode haver um princípio político comum de autonomia se não há o direito público de formar uma voz livre"[1]. Ao prefaciar a coletânea de ensaios em que Venício A. de Lima discute a relação entre cultura do silêncio e democracia no Brasil, Juarez Guimarães sintetiza, nesta categórica afirmação, uma preocupação constante na obra de ambos: a dos necessários vínculos entre teoria democrática e liberdade de expressão, entre política e comunicação. Eles mesmos já haviam assinalado, em outro momento:

> *"Política e comunicação são dimensões que não podem ser analiticamente isoladas sem se perder a compreensão do próprio objeto que se investiga. (...)*
>
> *Toda teoria que se pretende democrática, mas que não pensa as dimensões públicas da liberdade de expressão, as relações instituintes entre a constituição da cidadania e o direito à voz pública, esbarrará em impasses ou antinomias centrais. Toda teoria da comunicação que despolitiza o seu objeto, negando ou marginalizando as fundações políticas da comunicação que se faz em sociedade, está na verdade optando por conceber a liberdade de expressão como um direito que se privatiza ou que se realiza na ordem do privado, em geral mercantil"[2].*

O que importará para este artigo, entretanto, é a dimensão ética da defesa da autonomia baseada na livre expressão, articulada a uma política voltada para garanti-la. Consequentemente, a necessidade da luta para a realização desse projeto e a compreensão de que a luta ética é sempre, também, uma luta política.

Dessa forma, procuramos ampliar a abrangência de um debate que já acumula muito boas análises tanto a respeito das estratégias discursivas que distorcem, ocultam e fraudam as informações de circulação pública – com suas nefastas consequências para a formação da opinião – quanto sobre as políticas de comunicação, com trabalhos que demonstram a necessidade do combate ao oligopólio no controle dos meios e de uma legislação que garanta a máxima dispersão da propriedade para promover a pluralidade de vozes essencial numa democracia.

A extensão da abordagem para o ambiente inaugurado com a internet permitirá reiterar a crítica, ainda pouco significativa no meio acadêmico, à ilusão de autonomia proporcionada pela tecnologia digital. O "maravilhamento" que Álvaro Vieira Pinto[3] observou no comportamento humano diante de todo avanço da técnica ignora, ou finge ignorar, a articulação das forças políticas para a ocupação desses novos espaços de formação de opinião. Assim, reproduz-se, no meio virtual, precisamente a mesma lógica de poder que sufoca as "outras falas", embora com a aparência de abertura à expressão espontânea e "horizontal" dos indivíduos indiferenciados.

Se antes da chamada "revolução digital" já era visível a centralidade da mídia na formação de opinião – e na reprodução e consolidação da ideologia dominante –, hoje esse poder se ampliou exponencialmente, como assinala Marco Schneider, com a constituição do "gigantesco complexo tecno-empresarial" que compõe as infotelecomunicações (ITCs)[4]. Enfrentá-lo é a tarefa prioritária, pois é, duplamente, pela consciência e pelas emoções que se pode mobilizar as pessoas para a luta. A urgência é dada pelo tempo que vivemos: as contradições do mundo do capital nos empurram para o limiar da barbárie e põem em risco a própria sobrevivência da espécie.

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[1] Guimarães, in Lima (2015), 15.

[2] Lima e Guimarães (2013), 10-11.

[3] Pinto (2005).

[4] Schneider (2015), 45.

Como diz Schneider, nenhuma transformação profunda da sociedade é possível sem a mobilização das massas, "e as massas só podem ser mobilizadas se for possível demonstrar – racional e emocionalmente – que uma tal transformação é viável e desejável"[5]. Em suma: não basta formular alternativas. É preciso que as pessoas saibam que elas existem, "tomem gosto" por essa possibilidade e "sintam essa urgência". Para tanto, seria preciso utilizar as ITCs a serviço do projeto emancipatório[6]. Como fazer isso se é tão gigantesca a engrenagem que lhes conforma o gosto e alimenta o senso comum que naturaliza a crença de que "não há alternativas" é a pergunta que continua sem resposta, mas justamente por isso é preciso insistir em formulá-la para buscar uma saída.

A ética na perspectiva marxista

Embora não trate formalmente do tema, Marx deu à sua obra um sentido ético muito preciso. Já a redação com a qual concluiu seu curso secundário indicava esse sentido. Nas *Reflexões de um jovem sobre a escolha de uma profissão*, em 1835, escreveu: *"o guia que deve nos conduzir na escolha de uma profissão é o bem-estar da humanidade e nossa própria perfeição"*. Seu trabalho como jovem jornalista na *Gazeta Renana*, quando investiu contra a nova legislação que passou a impedir os trabalhadores pobres de recolher galhos de madeira para aquecerem suas casas no inverno, alimentou sua indignação diante da injustiça e o levou a empreender, já em 1843, o esforço de uma crítica ao idealismo hegeliano e, posteriormente, ao empirismo de Feuerbach, para buscar no estudo da sociedade burguesa e de suas contradições as bases concretas para a formulação de uma teoria que orientasse a luta pela emancipação humana. É esse, aliás, o sentido da famosa 11ª tese sobre Feuerbach – *"os filósofos apenas* interpretaram *o mundo de diferentes maneiras; o que importa é transformá-lo"*[8]: contra a atitude contemplativa, a reflexão que conduzisse à ação, mas a uma ação voltada para a humanização do homem, como o comprovam sua obra e sua militância política.

Leandro Konder expõe a perspectiva ética que subjaz ao trabalho de Marx:

> *"A práxis é o conceito central da filosofia de Marx, (...) É a matriz de uma concepção original da história, uma concepção que, sendo materialista, reconhece o poder do sujeito de tomar iniciativas, fazer escolhas. Por isso, precisa de uma ética. Depende de valores que lhe permitam empenhar-se em projetos de transformação do mundo, na criação de um tipo melhor de sociedade, num futuro pelo qual valha a pena lutar"*[9].

E, adiante:

> *"Para Marx, os valores constituem um fundamento essencial da práxis. A atividade própria do homem – aquela em que ele se humaniza (a práxis) – é teleológica. É antecipadora, projetiva. Nada é absolutamente garantido, nada é imutável. Os próprios fundamentos das opções que vão se fazendo ao longo da vida pedem muitas vezes reexames, revisões"*[10].

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[5] Schneider, idem, 218. Faço aqui uma ressalva no uso desse termo, no sentido que Marilena Chaui já assinalava em Cultura e democracia – o discurso competente e outras falas (ed. Moderna, 1984), pois "massa" sugere uma indiferenciação contraditória com a existência de sujeitos conscientes. Essa discussão, embora necessária, ultrapassa os limites deste artigo.

[6] Idem, ibidem.

[7] Marx (1835)

[8] Marx e Engels (2007), 535.

[9] Konder (2010), 16.

[10] Idem, 24.

Precisamente porque "nada é absolutamente garantido", aliás, é preciso combater a concepção ainda prevalecente – e não só no senso comum –, seja por uma leitura inepta, seja por distorção deliberada, de que o pensamento marxiano é determinista.

Também Fábio Konder Comparato sustenta o sentido ético da crítica de Marx à sociedade burguesa:

> *"Essa análise devastadora, afinal, foi feita em nome do quê? Da fria e objetiva análise científica? Não é preciso conhecer em profundidade a obra de Marx para perceber que em cada linha de seus escritos (...) pulsa um insopitável movimento de indignação diante da injustiça social; e foi a denúncia sistemática dessa injustiça – não o exame pretensamente científico do capitalismo – que calou fundo no coração das massas"*.[11]

Entretanto, é preciso conhecer em profundidade a obra de Marx para corrigir certos persistentes equívocos a respeito dela. Em primeiro lugar, a referência ao exame "pretensamente científico" do capitalismo, que resultaria da "moda intelectual"[12] daquele tempo, que, como se sabe, era o positivismo – e positivista era tudo o que Marx não era. Mas talvez daí decorra o erro fundamental de interpretação da relação entre base e superestrutura, derivado da vulgata marxista que Comparato, apesar de sua inegável erudição e do recurso a textos originais do pensador alemão, acaba repetindo: assim, supõe que a concepção de Marx sobre a ética – como parte da estrutura jurídico-política – significava um *"reducionismo (...) à condição de mero aparato ideológico"*[13].

Estamos aqui, no dizer de Ludovico Silva, diante da recorrente confusão entre metáfora e explicação teórica: se pensarmos, como ele sugere, num edifício e seus alicerces, trata-se de entender a metáfora de que é *"a base ou o alicerce econômico [que] sustenta toda a enorme superestrutura ou edifício ideológico"*[14]. Em suma, que essa "superestrutura" não existe no ar nem, muito menos, é quem produz os alicerces. Junte-se a isso o que ressalta Mészáros: estruturados dialeticamente, os conceitos fundamentais de Marx "simplesmente não podem ser entendidos fora da sua inter-relação dialética (e, com frequência, aparentemente autocontraditória)"[15].

Ética, violência, capitalismo

Qualquer ética pressupõe autonomia, isto é, a capacidade de o indivíduo formular suas próprias regras de ação. Mas como isto seria possível, se somos seres sociais e estamos submetidos a regras que não criamos?

Marilena Chaui argumenta que esse conflito entre a pretendida autonomia do sujeito e a heteronomia dos valores morais da sociedade em que ele vive se resolve se o agente assumir como seus esses valores: é como se ele próprio os tivesse instituído. É por isso que se pode dizer, de modo geral, que *"o agente ético é pensado como sujeito ético, isto é, como um ser racional e consciente que sabe o que faz, como um ser livre que decide e escolhe o que faz, e como um ser responsável que responde pelo que faz"*[16].

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[11] Comparato (2006), 348.

[12] Idem, 349.

[13] Idem, 348.

[14] Silva (2012), 55.

[15] Mészáros (2006), 19.

[16] Chaui (1998).

Por que a violência é incompatível com a ética? Porque, segundo a filósofa, *"trata seres racionais e sensíveis, dotados de linguagem e de liberdade como se fossem coisas, isto é, irracionais, insensíveis, mudos, inertes ou passivos"*.

Bastaria perguntar que tipo de sistema se estrutura de modo a tratar todas as pessoas como coisas, a desumanizá-las a ponto de reduzi-las a mercadorias, para concluirmos que o capitalismo é a expressão da mais radical violência e, desse ponto de vista, não pode ser compatível com nenhum tipo de ética. Se não é entendido dessa forma, se, pelo contrário, chega a ser glorificado, isso se deve ao sucesso do trabalho ideológico operado sobretudo pelas ITCs para consolidar a pior forma de alienação, que é a ilusão de consciência.

Uma ilusão facilmente produzida nesses tempos de (suposta) visibilidade total e avalanche informativa, pois a superexposição substitui a cegueira pela treva dos tempos pré-iluministas à cegueira pelo excesso de luz. Mas esta cegueira é mais grave, porque a luz em excesso sugere o pleno acesso à informação, que a treva escondia: assim, diante do que estava oculto, podíamos ser levados a saber que ignorávamos, e com isso despertar para a necessidade de saber; agora, pela aparência da visibilidade total, somos levados a ignorar que não sabemos, e nos consolamos nessa ilusão de saber[17].

Não custa dizer que esse processo serve para convencer o indivíduo subjugado a pensar que é autônomo, como se vivesse no *Admirável mundo novo* de Huxley. E, assim, a naturalizar a submissão, que nem enxerga como tal.

Acrescente-se essa observação de Chaui, no mesmo artigo:

> *"as mudanças tecnológicas, a partir do momento em que a técnica deixa de ser ciência aplicada para tornar-se ciência cristalizada em objetos de intervenção humana sobre a natureza e a sociedade, transformam a tecnologia não só em forma de poder, mas sobretudo em força produtiva e parte integrante do capital, e essa transformação, feita exclusivamente sob a lógica do mercado, é sua transformação em lógica do poder como decisão sobre a vida e a morte em escala planetária"*.

Não seria exagero concluir, portanto, que a luta pela ética é uma luta essencialmente anticapitalista. E que a prioridade dessa luta é em torno das ITCs, dado o seu papel na produção de alienação.

Cultura do silêncio

Mas toda luta se dá num terreno concreto e o nosso terreno é o de um país de profunda herança colonial e escravocrata, onde não por acaso prevalece o patrimonialismo, que dita as regras práticas no cotidiano e na política apesar dos princípios constitucionais em contrário, exatamente porque entre nós vale a máxima "aos amigos, tudo, aos inimigos a lei". Como dizem Lima e Guimarães, a coincidência da formação de um moderno sistema de telecomunicações de alcance nacional justamente durante a última ditadura militar, organicamente vinculado a seus interesses políticos e econômicos, *"só evidencia o quanto o regime de sua propriedade, sua concentração e sua regulação careceram na origem de um ethos democrático básico"*[18].

É essa herança que torna tão importante a apreensão do conceito de "cultura do silêncio", para compreender a ausente, ou pelo menos muito débil e episódica, participação ativa dos cidadãos na vida pública.

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[17] Moretzsohn (2007), 29.
[18] Lima e Guimarães (2013), 16.

O educador Paulo Freire elaborou esse conceito a partir de um dos famosos sermões do padre Antônio Vieira, no século XVII. Lima adverte que, naturalmente, jamais seria o caso de se acolher automaticamente uma intervenção religiosa – embora também evidentemente política, pois se tratava de um alerta ao vice-rei de Portugal sobre a situação da colônia – realizada em contexto tão díspar, mas de mostrar a fonte de inspiração que permitiu enxergar as raízes profundas do silenciamento da voz pública que perdura até hoje no Brasil e se estende pela América Latina, decorrente da estrutura de dominação colonial.

> "A cultura do silêncio (...) caracteriza a sociedade a que se nega a comunicação e o diálogo e, em seu lugar, se lhe oferecem 'comunicados', vale dizer, é o ambiente do tolhimento da voz e da ausência de comunicação, da incomunicabilidade"[19].

Se foi fortemente influenciado pela filosofia existencialista[20], Freire carrega também a herança de Marx, em sua defesa da autonomia dos seres humanos, seu direito de autoexpressão e, notadamente, na valorização da práxis: segundo Lima, na concepção de Freire a interação entre reflexão e ação é "tão profunda que, se uma é sacrificada, ainda que em parte, a outra sofre imediatamente". Desse descompasso decorreriam o verbalismo – o sacrifício da ação – ou o ativismo – o sacrifício da reflexão[21].

A internet como fetiche e as potencialidades e ilusões das redes

O surgimento de toda nova tecnologia costuma provocar teorizações apressadas e enganosas. Álvaro Vieira Pinto tratou de confrontá-las em seu denso estudo sobre o tema[22]. De início, rejeita aplicar ao mundo contemporâneo a denominação de "era tecnológica" – o que nos levaria a refletir sobre a fragilidade da definição do momento atual como "era da informação", aceita de modo tão automático e acrítico –, porque, afinal, não há era que não o seja: a tecnologia é produto do engenho humano, acompanha a história da humanidade. Pinto mostra que o "maravilhamento", no duplo sentido de deslumbramento e temor, do homem primitivo diante dos fenômenos da natureza se estende ao homem moderno diante da tecnologia, e o torna presa fácil de todo tipo de mistificação. A tecnologia aparece, assim, como algo externo ao mundo dos homens – ora uma ameaça, a máquina que conspurcaria uma idealizada essência humana, ora uma salvação. Em síntese, um fetiche, no clássico sentido da formulação marxiana[23].

Daí também decorre o engano de que a internet é um ambiente "neutro", onde todos podem finalmente se expressar. O primeiro equívoco é quanto à neutralidade, que ignora os vários mecanismos acionados por quem controla esses espaços para direcionar a atividade do usuário. O segundo é quanto à ilusão de que, uma vez na grande rede, as pessoas finalmente se manifestarão livremente com sua "própria" voz, desconhecendo-se aí os processos de formação do senso comum. O terceiro é quanto à "horizontalidade", pois deveria ser claro que o mundo virtual reflete o presencial, sobretudo no que diz respeito às estratégias políticas de ocupação de espaços, com a agravante de que, nesse novo ambiente, o apelo à disseminação automática de informações facilita enormemente a difusão de boatos e mentiras e instaura a permanente incerteza. Sem contar a utilização

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[19] Lima (2015), 66.

[20] Idem, 37.

[21] Freire, apud Lima, idem, 42.

[22] Pinto (2005). O autor concluiu em 1973 sua exaustiva e profunda análise, no auge da excitação em torno do debate sobre os computadores e a cibernética. À parte certas ressalvas decorrentes de seu caráter datado, o livro, que só veio a ser publicado em 2005, mantém a atualidade exatamente porque vai à raiz das questões e não se rende às especulações impressionistas lamentavelmente ainda corriqueiras inclusive no meio acadêmico.

[23] Moretzsohn (2012).

perversa que os usuários fazem do poder que passaram a ter de divulgar o que quiserem, sem se importarem com as consequências – portanto, sem qualquer preocupação ética[24].

Importa perceber, em suma, que as possibilidades abertas pela internet não vão apenas – aliás, vão muito menos – no sentido da constituição de um novo senso comum, ancorado no pensamento crítico. Pois, no mundo do capital, é o capital que controla as redes. Certo, sempre existirão brechas por onde penetrar. Resta saber como alargá-las, numa sociedade domesticada pela cultura do silêncio.

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[24] Desenvolvi esse tema, que envolve o direito à privacidade, em dois artigos: Moretzsohn (2009, 2013).

Michael Eldred:
Gainful game, set-up, cyberworld

Abstract:

There is a critique of capitalist market economy that consists in claiming not only that capitalist social relations are uncaring and alienating, nor only exploitative of the working class, but that the process of capitalist economy as a whole is a way of living, today globalized, that has gotten out of hand. Its essential nature is unmasked as a senseless circular movement that, besides ruthlessly exploiting natural resources, demeans human being itself and alienates it from the historical alternative of a purportedly authentic mode of human being rooted in collective, solidaric subjectivity. The present article offers an alternative hermeneutic cast for understanding capitalism as the *gainful game* that can serve as philosophical orientation in fighting for a free and fair social interplay in which the powers and abilities of free individuals are appropriately and reciprocally estimated and esteemed. This requires, first and foremost, seeing through the fetishisms inherent in the *valorization of reified value* that the mature Marx identified in his critiques of political economy as the essential nature of capitalism. Such critical insight is necessary for orientation also in today's predicament of the ever more encroaching and ensnaring cyberworld.

Agenda

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Gainful game, set-up, cyberworld[1]

The gainful game[2]

The valorization of reified value

There is a critique of capitalist market economy and Adam Smith's famous "invisible hand" to be considered that consists in claiming not only that capitalist social relations are uncaring and alienating, nor only exploitative of the working class, but that the process of capitalist economy as a whole is a way of living, today globalized, that has gotten out of hand. Its essential nature is unmasked as a senseless circular movement that, besides ruthlessly exploiting natural resources, demeans human being itself and alienates it from the historical alternative of a purportedly authentic mode of human being rooted in collective, solidaric subjectivity. Elements of such a critique can be unearthed in Marx's critique of capitalism as a process without a conscious social subject,[3] but they can also be found, with an entirely different focus, in Heidegger's questioning of modern technology against the foil of the alternative of humankind dwelling poetically on the Earth as the "shepherd of being".[4] Here I shall first focus on Marx and treat Heidegger's conception of the set-up thereafter.

According to the late Marx, who radicalizes and deepens the concept of alienation laid out in his early works, especially the Economic-philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, the essence of capital is the endless, limitless valorization of value, the endless deployment of reified value for self-augmentation through never-ending cycles of money-capital being advanced and returning bloated with a surplus. Such a concept of value is lacking entirely in Marx's early writings of the 19840s. The cyclical valorization of value is a movement which sets itself up and asserts itself "behind the backs" of people, as Marx often puts it.[5]

'Valorization' is the translation of German 'Verwertung', which can mean simply 'use', 'utilization', 'drawing the value or benefit from something', but in the context of Marx's thinking it signifies above all a use of reified value to make more reified value through the circular movement of the advance and return of capital. Valorization is the essential action through which capital holds sway, whereby action here cannot be thought in terms of human action, say, of profit-seeking capitalists, but as an historical hermeneutic cast that has come

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[1] Many thanks to Astrid Nettling for her critical comments.

[2] Cf. M. Eldred Chapter 9 vi) *Social Ontology: Recasting Political Philosophy Through a Phenomenology of Whoness* ontos/deGruyter Frankfurt/Berlin 2008/2011, which itself is a thoroughly revised and altered update of Chapter 7 of M. Eldred *Kapital und Technik: Marx und Heidegger* Röll, Dettelbach 2000. English version: 'Capital and Technology: Marx and Heidegger' in: *Left Curve* No. 24 May, 2000 Oakland, California USA.

[3] Cf. Marx's investigation of the total, social circulation process of capital in the oft neglected Vol. II of *Das Kapital* and the 'Value-form Analytic Reconstruction of *Capital*' (Michael Eldred, Marnie Hanlon, Lucia Kleiber & Mike Roth) in *Critique of Competitive Freedom and the Bourgeois-Democratic State* 1984/2010 § 65. The total social circulation process of capital must be regarded as a social movement that is mediated by, i.e. which takes place within, the ontological structure of the fully developed value-forms developed step by step in the value-form analysis. The primary value-forms in order of conceptual development are use-value/exchange-value, commodity, money, capital, surplus value, wages, profit of enterprise, interest, ground-rent, and the quadruple of these last four as revenue- or income-sources. This complex ontological structure can be termed a "constellation of being" in the Heideggerian sense. It may also be termed an 'hermeneutic cast' of an historical age. In my *Capital and Technology* op. cit., I have termed this constellation/cast "das Gewinnst", "das Gewinn-Spiel" or the *gainful game* in which human beings are caught up as players competing for *income*, not only for profit.

[4] M. Heidegger 'Brief über den 'Humanismus'' in *Wegmarken* Klostermann, Frankfurt/M. 2/1978 p.338.

[5] "hinter dem Rücken", e.g. Gr.:136, 156, MEW23:59. This is also akin to Hegel's conception of Weltgeist (spirited world-mind) which asserts itself in the history of the world.

over everything, enticing human beings with its manifold possibilities of gain. To think valorization as attributable to an hermeneutic cast goes against the grain of Marxian thinking, of course, in which it would have to be regarded as an ahistorical fetishism that could be resolved into a figure of "bourgeois false consciousness" by deciphering value and valorization as ostensibly a "social product just like language" (MEW23:88) and a class ideology to boot.

Nevertheless, just as we shall see when discussing Heidegger's thinking on the set-up that the essence of technology is nothing technical, the essence of capital is nothing economic; the valorization of value cannot be thought ultimately as an economic phenomenon but solely as an historical casting of human being within the open clearing of an age. Marx's critique of political economy is not a theory of capitalist economy with the appropriate specialized concepts; rather, as critique, it is a questioning and a presentation of a social ontology of capital which — now expressed in Heidegger's language — is not merely a human "machination". The analysis of the value-*form*, that has plagued and puzzled readers of the first chapter of *Das Kapital* ever since its first publication,[6] and has been largely ignored by Marxism itself, is a social ontology of reified value, as the very word 'form' indicates, a term that goes back to Plato and Aristotle as the Latin translation of ἰδέα and μορφή, terms originally coined to say the being of beings, i.e. their metaphysical 'beingness'.

If the valorization of value expresses the essential nature of capital, i.e. its being,[7] then capital is gathered into the various modes of valorization. In this gathering, everything that *is* reveals itself to be valorizable, i.e. as capable of being drawn into a circuit of valorization, of apparent self-augmentation of value. Value is neither money nor capital but the essence of valorizing, which makes all beings appear as valorizable. With the reification of value in the sociating thing, money, and the self-movement of this value-thing through transformations into commodities and production process in circuits of self-augmentation, the connection of value with being valuable for human beings is lost, alienated. The movement is out of human hands and instead humans themselves are enticed and caused to move by an eery power of endless augmentation of value they do not master.

Whereas the phenomenon of value is to be uncovered first of all in things and people being valuable for living, i.e. in enhancing a way of life, and exchange-value is to be understood as a derivative form of value that arises in the social practice of exchange,[8] Marx analyzes in his ever renewed critiques of political economy from 1857 on an inversion of value in which it becomes a self-moving subject of its own augmentation and as such a reified social power.[9] This is the Marxian concept of *fetishism*, which assumes various phenomenal forms, starting with commodity and money fetishism and proceeding to capital fetishism and interest fetishism.[10] The common essential trait of these fetishisms is that value has assumed a reified form remote from any human appreciation of value as *valuable for living* that initiates a movement within a topsy-turvy world of apparently self-augmenting self-movement of reified value. "It is only the determinate social relation of humans themselves which here assumes for them the phantasmagoric form of a relation among things."[11] That certain

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[6] There are in fact no less than four different versions of the incipient value-form analysis published by Marx himself: in *On the Critique of Political Economy* MEW:13 (1859), Chapter 1 of the first edition of *Das Kapital* (1863), an Appendix to the first edition, and the second edition of *Das Kapital* (1867).

[7] And its being turns out to be its 3D-temporality; cf. M. Eldred *A Question of Time* 2015.

[8] Cf. Chapter 5 i) of M. Eldred *Social Ontology* 2008/2011.

[9] Cf. *ibid*. Chapter 10 i).

[10] Cf. *ibid*. Chapter 6 viii).

[11] "Es ist nur das bestimmte gesellschaftliche Verhältnis der Menschen selbst, welches hier für sie die phantasmagorische Form eines Verhältnisses von Dingen annimmt." K. Marx *Das Kapital* Vol. I MEW23:86.

things appear to inherently possess value in itself is just as fetishistic as a sum of money inherently being able to endlessly yield of itself amounts of interest.

Value shows itself quantitatively as well as qualitatively in the potential or realized exchange against money, but, despite the real appearance of reification, it cannot be identified with the thing 'money', for this is already an inversion; rather, money is a form of appearance of value. Nevertheless, once this value reification and fetishism is established (preontologically in understanding, ontologically in philosophical thought and historically in an age of the world), the essential nature of capital expresses itself above all in money and money-capital's augmenting self-movement. The capitalist world gathers itself crystallinely in money; in the thing (*res*) 'money', the world worlds capitalistically, as soon as the movement of valorization, i.e. the value-augmenting deployment of all beings, achieves an autonomy and absoluteness vis-à-vis human beings. The absoluteness consists in reified value no longer having any relation to how things and people's abilities are valuable for human living.

In the capitalist world, all beings have a direct or indirect relation to money; the totality of beings passes like Alice through the value-mirror, money, into an inverted world of capital valorization. To my mind, the critique of capitalist economy amounts to deciphering this inversion and is hence, in the first place, an achievement of thinking through which the world itself presents itself differently, stripped of the fetishistic and deceptive forms of appearance of reified value. This conception of mine flies in the face of Marx's famous eleventh thesis on Feuerbach from 1845, according to which it is insufficient to 'merely' *interpret* the world; the point is to *change* it. Pace Marx, to *interpret* the world differently from the ground up in an alternative hermeneutic cast amounts to *changing* it fundamentally.

If reified value is the way the totality of beings opens up and shows itself hermeneutically in its very being, and also is kept in perpetual movement as a metabolism of reified value passing through various value-forms, the question arises, what the gathering of valorization in the present historical age should be called. With this naming, the historico-hermeneutic essence of modern capitalist society would also be named. Instead of tracing back value to social labour in an abstractly universal form (as Marx does in his critiques of political economy, thus suggesting that a socialized human subject could re-invert the reification of value into a conscious sociation of labour[12] according to a total social plan that would do away with reified social relations), labour itself now also has to be thought in tracing it back into its groundless ground in the infinite, apparent self-movement of valorization, since labouring humans, too, are merely used by this reified valorizing movement that holds sway in the Modern Age. They succumb to a wage-labour fetishism insofar as they, too, set their highest sights on and are content with having secure, adequately paid jobs provided by capital.

I call the gathering of valorization that attains domination in the capitalist world in an essential sense the *gathering of the gainable* or, simply, the *gainful game* (*Gewinnst, Gewinn-Spiel*). The gainful game as the gathering of the gainable is here neither profit nor winnings nor merely a purely economic magnitude, nor only the successful result of a human struggle or human labour, but the *open gathering of all the essentially risky opportunities for gain*, which holds sway groundlessly as the kernel of capitalism's truth. 'Risk' is here conceived broadly, as it must be in phenomeno-ontology, to encompass also all apparently risk-free, secure opportunities for gain; risk itself, however, is inherent in the groundless nature of social *interplay*, which will be discussed below. Capitalism's truth is an hermeneutic disclosure that opens up as a world of apparent

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[12] Marx remarks ironically, "Let us, for a change, finally imagine an association of free people..." (Stellen wir uns endlich, zur Abwechslung, einen Verein freier Menschen vor,... *Das Kapital* Vol. I MEW23:92)

opportunity to a *desiring*, and not merely needful, human being, whilst appropriating human being to itself through inducing and encouraging human being's endless desire for more.

Within this gathering as a constellation of being in an historical age, enterprising human beings are enticed to cast their selves into the endless, uncertain pursuit of gain as its unwitting agents. Those who are risk-averse and less enterprising are content with gaining a secure, regular wage-income. Such gain therefore is not only profit, but comprises all the four income sources as analyzed by Marx in the third volume of *Das Kapital* as revenue-sources: wages, profit of enterprise, interest and ground-rent. Hence *all* are caught up as players in the gainful game, not just the ostensibly 'insidious' or 'greedy' capitalists.

According to Grimm: "Winnings (*Gewinn*) are associated with winning (attaining something through struggle, labour)." With this definition, only a human action would be addressed. The definition also takes account of the contingency — the fortune, chance, hap, luck — at play in the pursuit of winnings. The manifold of winning as the essential kernel of capital signifies more originarily and more uncannily the gathering of all modes of possible gain in which humans, too, are drawn into and are (or can be) used by the circular self-movement of valorizing value. Only from a human perspective does the gathering of the gainable appear entirely as a goal that is achieved by struggle and labour. The gathering of the gainable as a constellation of being's shaping up and disclosure in an historical age, however, makes everything that is (exists) appear within this hermeneutic cast *as* valorizable material. In this way, it entices and ensnares humans in an endlessly desirous, grasping striving.

The historical essence of capital is thus not anything merely capitalist but rather the *reified* consummation in our own historical time of what Plato and Aristotle call πλεονεξία (cf. Chapter 4 i), iv), Chapter 6 i)), the striving for more to which all succumb to a greater or lesser extent. Capital's essential nature is neither the principal sum of money that is augmented, nor the dodgy ethos of a subject that is greedily or otherwise after monetary gain. It is neither money nor the lust for money, neither something objective nor subjective, but a calculating, 'gainful' mode of revealing the totality of beings in whose clearing everything appears *as* valuable insofar as it is seen as having the potential for winnings, so that humans are called on by the hermeneutic cast of the gainful game as players and compelled to think in a thoroughly calculative, albeit risk-taking, manner that sets up everything in the self-evident sight of a potential for gain. *The gainful game is an hermeneutic cast of being that holds sway as a prevailing mode of disclosure of beings as a whole in an historical age.* Since it is an hermeneutic message shaping a world, the essence of capital cannot be tied down to any 'thing', even though everything that can be valorized ultimately has a relation to money, i.e. a price. Nor is capital the self-interested 'invention' of a social class, the 'bourgeoisie'.

Marx himself speaks of value as a social relation, which suggests that it is constituted by sociated humans themselves, of course, without their knowing what they are doing, i.e. unconsciously. ("They don't know it, but they do it."[13]) The concept of the gainful game, by contrast, does not aim at anything made or conjured up by humans and *a fortiori* not at anything merely social, but as a cast of hermeneutic disclosure of beings *as* beings that has always already targeted possibilities of gain and which calls forth the corresponding human re-actions and social structures, i.e. the corresponding modes of being-together. The sociating of human beings accomplished by the historical socio-ontological hermeneutic cast of the gainful game does not posit merely capitalist, gainful social relations among (pre-existing) human beings, but constitutes human beings themselves *as* competitive players, i.e. human beings' very being as limitlessly desirous is constituted by the gainful game that comes over them as an eerily self-evident cast of thought.

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[13] "Sie wissen es nicht, aber sie tun es." *Das Kapital* Vol 1, MEW23:88.

In Marx, the value relation remains in the economic and social realm; it is, in the first place, the money-mediated social relation of commodities to each other which covers up and distorts the relations of people to each other. Capital as a social relation mediated by things provides the economy with its ontological form and form of self-movement and also constitutes the basis upon which a superstructure is erected. The other social instances — the state, the legal forms, morality, culture, ideologies, philosophy, etc. — are supposed to be thought proceeding from this basis and in a correspondence to it. According to the (never completed) program of Historical Materialism,[14] a social whole is to be thought through dialectically in this way: the bourgeois social totality, that is, a structured totality of beings. The present article, by contrast, attempts to take capital and the valorization of value back to something more originary, namely back to a constellation of disclosive truth in an historical time in which all beings appear *as* what and *as* who they are.

Everything *is*, everything *rates* as existent, only to the extent that gain can be had from it. Everything that does not allow itself to be drawn into some circuit or other of valorization, through which advanced capital can be augmented, *is* not (is worthless). Everything *is* only insofar as, ultimately, a capital sum can generate from it winnings as offspring. The gathering of the gainable challenges all beings to allow themselves to be drawn with the promise of gain into the circuit of valorization of total social capital, thus contributing to its accumulation. The gathering of the gainable thus sets all beings into motion by sucking everything a priori into the risk-taking calculus of valorization, of winning and losing.

All beings appear refracted through the prism of reified value. Use for humans is not the criterion, but, ultimately, use for a circuit of valorization, for the gainful game which turns endlessly within itself, throwing off winnings and gain for all the income-source owners. Even untouched nature can be and is valorized in the gainful game, not only through the exploitation of natural resources, but also, say, as a recreational value for valorizable humans, who in turn are employed by the circuit of valorization as labourers and clerks and managers. A valorization of untouched nature is even conceivable via the value-category of ground-rent whereby the Earth's capacity to absorb pollutants such as carbon dioxide is marketed.[15]

Valorization is here no longer, as in its Marxian guise, only the augmentation of money-capital in a circuit, but is conceived more broadly as a striving to achieve success, and as *winning and gaining in general*, starting with earning the four basic kinds of income by the competitive players.[16] Such gaining and winning always has a more or less tenuous monetary aspect, i.e. it can be expressed directly or indirectly in costs, savings, profits, surpluses, asset-values, goodwill, brand-value, personal savings and assets, celebrity-value, prestige-value, political influence and political power. Insofar, all beings can be quantified and incorporated into calculations on the basis of which the success or failure can be measured in a universal measure of value: money, and potentially or actually monetized. The gathering of opportunities for gain entices and ensnares humans in a competitive struggle for gain in the broadest sense, where they struggle with each other, and in this way, the gainful game valorizes and deploys human beings themselves.

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[14] Marx announced his enormously ambitious program most famously in the 1859 Preface to his *Critique of Political Economy*. With the three volumes of *Das Kapital*, themselves left unfinished by Marx, and whose second and third volumes were edited posthumously by Engels, not even the very first stage of Marx's critical theory of bougeois society was completed. Cf. for more detail the Preface to M. Eldred, *Critique of competitive freedom and the bourgeois-democratic state: Outline of a form-analytic extension of Marx's uncompleted system* Kurasje, Copenhagen 1984, reissued with CreateSpace, N. Charleston 2015.

[15] Cf. M. Eldred 'Questioning the Earth's Value — Including a proposal for a capitalist carbon sink industry' 2005/2006 available at www.arte-fact.org.

[16] Cf. M. Eldred *Social Ontology* loc cit. Chapter 6 viii))

Reified value and the striving to be highly estimated

The value for valorization cannot be restricted directly to monetary value but indirectly covers everything that can be won from beings as gain and success. Even though certain kinds of success cannot be turned directly into cash, a connection with money-value is nevertheless maintained insofar as success can be monetized. Success can show itself, however, also simply in the form of a gain in social reputation, status and prestige, i.e. as gaining a successful stand in whoness,[17] which may or may not then, in turn, be 'cashed in' for monetary gain. The striving for gain in this case assumes the phenomenal form of vanity as a thirsting to have one's who-status estimated highly by others, and this thirsting, in turn, sprouts also a striving to have more of those "conveniencies of life" (Adam Smith) which one 'deserves'. The same holds true also for successfully gaining political power which may or may not be used as a currency for monetary gain.

Success, however, need not be linked ultimately to monetary gain at all. Value need not be thought as ultimately convertible into reified value, but as the value of being estimated and esteemed by oneself and others in one's status as somewho. This signification of value is covered by the Greek word, τιμή, which can mean not only the monetary price of things, i.e. of whats, but also the esteem, estimation and honour accorded to persons, i.e. to whos. Such a conception of value has the potential to break the link with the valorization of reified value in the Marxian sense, instead opening the vista on the interplay of whoness in a striving for esteem and self-esteem whose spectrum ranges from the estimation of genuine excellence through to defective forms of appearance such as the tawdry estimation of merely vain fame and celebrity, or the insufferable self-esteem of overweening narcissism.

Such striving for high valuation as somewho is called φιλοτιμία, the 'love of honour and esteem', by Plato and Aristotle, in whose usage it has largely pejorative connotations in connection with perversions of striving to be esteemed highly, including those mediated by reified value, such as ostentatious consumption indulged in by the wealthy and politically powerful. But this is not the topic here and would take us too far afield.[18] Rather, the concern at present is to espy a possible twist in the valorization of reified value by seeing through the fetishism of reified value.

Seeing through the fetishism of reified value

The value-form analyzed by Marx thus can be traced back to a more originary valorization in an historico-temporal cast in which the totality of beings opens up and beings show themselves a priori from the perspective of potential contribution to gain. The reason for the non-originariness of the Marxian analyses of the value-form is that they mainly tease out the contradictions between private and social, i.e. particular and universal subjectivity with the aim historically healing and overcoming them in a consciously sociated, universal subject.

The fetish character of the value-form includes that the products of human labour have assumed an autonomy vis-à-vis human subjectivity and therefore evade its control. Subjectivity/objectivity as the metaphysical environment in which Marxian thinking abides is, however, not originary, but is in turn grounded in an historico-temporal hermeneutic cast that casts *as* what the totality of beings reveals itself to be, without lying simply at the disposition of human actions as a 'production'. Marx proposes a revolution to bring renegade objectivity, which is thought under the rubric of fetishism, back under the political power of an authentically sociated,

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[17] Cf. R. Capurro, M. Eldred, D. Nagel *Digital Whoness Identity, Privacy and Freedom in the Cyberworld* ontos/deGruyter, Frankfurt/M. 2013. Cf. also H. Arendt *The Human Condition* 2nd ed. with an introduction by Margaret Canovan, Chicago U.P. 1998, 1st ed. 1958.

[18] Cf. M. Eldred *Phänomenologie der Männlichkeit* Dettelbach: Röll 1999 and 'Was heißt Männlichkeit?' arte-fact.org 2013.

social subjectivity, in which collectivized human beings are now consciously mediated socio-political subjects, but this by no means implies that the totality of beings would cease to reveal itself as a gathering of opportunities for gain for endlessly desirous human beings engaged in endless power struggles or even that there would be a twist in such disclosure. Witness the historical example of 'real-existing' state socialism. Rather, for such a twist, the orientation of a hermeneutic cast of free and fair estimating interplay is required.

If, therefore, we must take leave of the modern metaphysics of human subjectivity in the form of collectively labouring human beings as what is, or ought to be, underlying, this leave-taking has implications not solely for the value concept, which now can no longer be traced back *ultimately* to human labour as abstract value-substance. Not only is the labour theory of value untenable as a quantitative price theory;[19] it is moreover tacitly based on certain metaphysical presuppositions of Feuerbachian anthropology according to which everything that is, including forms of ideology, is ultimately a human product; this subjectivist anthropology now must be seen through and gotten over. Accordingly, the value concept must now be thought without a pro-ductive relation to human labour or even humankind as that which ultimately underlies, but as the valuableness of beings, of both whats and whos, themselves which is neither subjective nor objective, but rather a quasi-Hegelian subjective-objective 'idea', here understood as an historico-hermeneutic cast that leaves the subject/object dichotomy behind altogether.

If the valorization of reified value cannot be traced back originarily to a production, i.e. to a bringing-forth, by human labour in which surplus value is siphoned off, it can nevertheless be conceived more temporally as a bringing-about (Zeitigung) of valuation in an interplay of competitive struggle, i.e. as a power play in which the as yet unreified abilities of all kinds, including entrepreneurial abilities, vie for tangible, monetary, value recognition and estimation. The totality of beings opens itself to us human beings as valuable — and therefore as worth desiring, as desirable — in the broadest spectrum that includes even what is worth-less, value-less. This valuableness comprises not only the usefulness (being-good-for...) of things and persons in the broadest sense of being appreciated, estimated and valued for a certain use, but also the value of being seen and reflected in a good light by others, being appreciated and highly estimated by others, in the first place, in having one's abilities recognized, validated and rewarded through reflection in the "value-mirror".[20]

Money is the purest social crystallization of this valuableness as the reified, tangible mediator in the dimension of valuableness that provides also the quasi-universal measure for all that is valuable. Money itself as the representative of wealth in general is the universal key to what is valuable by means of exchange and so itself, as a reified social power, becomes desirable as the focused aim of the striving for gain. The open gathering of opportunities for gain entices human beings into a striving for gain that, from another perspective, is nothing other than the reified movement of value as capital which sets all beings into motion for the sake of gain in the form of capital accumulation, thus becoming a circular end in itself and insofar senseless.

Learning to see economic value, at least, as residing first of all in the estimating interplay of human powers and abilities on the basis of mutually beneficial interchange in which reified value in the form of money serves merely as mediator, and is thus defetishized, could be an historical way of gaining distance from the capitalist valorization of reified value. I will take up this thought again below.

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[19] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 6 iii).

[20] "Wertspiegel" *Das Kapital* Vol. I MEW23:72.

The set-up

In order to assess the uncanny nature of the movement set in train by fetishized, reified value-forms and put it into relation with the metaphysics of exchange, interchange and interplay[21] as well as Adam Smith's famous notion of the invisible hand, it is helpful to draw on Heidegger's thinking on the set-up (Gestell) as the essence of modern technology. We read in a lecture given by Heidegger in Bremen in 1949:

> Setting-up sets up by order[22]. It challenges. If we consider it in its essence and not according to possible effects, however, ordered setting-up does not aim at booty and gain/winnings (Gewinn), but always at what can be ordered to set up. 'Always' means here: a priori, because essentially, ordered setting-up is only dragged forth from one being that can be pro-duced to the next because ordered setting-up has from the outset always already torn everything present into a total availability for being set up by order and sets it up in this total availability — no matter whether in an individual case the present being may be specifically set up or not. This violent force of ordered setting-up that surpasses everything only draws the specific acts of ordered setting-up in its wake. The violent force of ordered setting-up suggests that what is called 'ordered setting-up' here is no mere human act, even though humans belong to the execution of ordered setting-up.[23]

Despite all this "violent force of ordered setting-up" that "surpasses everything", the chain of ordered setting-up, according to Heidegger,

> comes to nothing, for ordered setting-up does not set up anything in presence that could have or could be allowed to have a presence for itself outside setting-up. What is ordered into the set-up is always already and always only set up in order to set up in success an other as its successor. The chain of ordered setting-up does not come to anything; rather, it only goes back into its circling. Only in this circling does what can be ordered into the set-up have its stand.[24] ('Das Ge-Stell' GA79:28f)

Heidegger thinks here ordered setting-up as the essence of nihilism, that comes to nothing, circling only in its "aim-lessness" (Ziel-losigkeit[25]) and senselessly drawing all beings into its incessant circular movement. Human beings themselves cannot be the subject of this constellation of being called the set-up because they, too, are drawn into "absolute servitude" (unbedingte Dienstschaft, XXV ibid. S. 87), degraded to the status of mere

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[21] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 5.

[22] 'Setting up by order' or 'ordered setting up' renders 'Bestellen' and aims at capturing the polysemy of ordering as commanding, putting into order and placing an order (for some commodity). Beings are ordered into position, they are put into the order of the set-up and they are ordered just like items in a mail order catalogue.

[23] "Das Bestellen stellt. Es fordert heraus. Das Bestellen geht jedoch, wenn wir es in seinem Wesen bedenken und nicht nach möglichen Wirkungen, keineswegs auf Beute und Gewinn, sondern immer auf Bestellbares. 'Immer', das sagt hier: im vorhinein, weil wesenhaft, das Bestellen wird nur deshalb von einem Herstellbaren zum folgenden fortgezogen, weil das Bestellen zum voraus alles Anwesende in die vollständige Bestellbarkeit hingerissen und dorthin gestellt hat, mag das Anwesende im Einzelfall schon besonders gestellt sein oder nicht. Diese alles überholende Gewalt des Bestellens zieht die gesonderten Akte des Bestellens nur noch hinter sich her. Die Gewalt des Bestellens läßt vermuten, daß, was hier 'Bestellen' genannt wird, kein bloßes *menschliches* Tun ist, wenngleich der Mensch zum Vollzug des Bestellens gehört." M. Heidegger 'Das Ge-Stell' *Gesamtausgabe* Vol. 79 Klostermann, Frankfurt/M. GA79:29f, emphasis in the original.

[24] "...läuft auf nichts hinaus; denn das Bestellen stellt nichts her, was außerhalb des Stellens ein Anwesen für sich haben könnte und dürfte. Das Be-stellte ist immer schon und immer nur daraufhin gestellt, ein Anderes als seine Folge in den Erfolg zu stellen. Die Kette des Bestellens läuft auf nichts hinaus; sie geht vielmehr nur in ihren Kreisgang hinein. Nur in ihm hat das Bestellbare seinen Bestand. 'Das Ge-Stell' GA79:28f.

[25] Martin Heidegger 'Überwindung der Metaphysik' XXI in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* Neske, Pfullingen 1985 S. 85.

"employee" (Angestellte) inserted into the set-up and employed as its "most important raw material" (ibid. XXVI S. 91).

The quintessential formula for Heidegger's questioning of the modern world thus become the "will to will", a formula forged from his long critical engagement with Nietzsche and the latter's formula of the "will to power". The ghostly 'subject' of the ceaseless circling of the set-up is named as "the will to will", a will that wills only "the absolute and complete securing of itself".[26] The will to will is thus not a subject but a ghostly presence that comes over everything, emitting an enticing siren call that draws all beings into a circular movement of setting-up for the senseless sake of setting-up. According to Heidegger, the origin of this setting-up, is the productive know-how that has its beginnings in Greek τέχνη (ποιητική), i.e. productive technique, and which provides the paradigm for all Western metaphysical thinking, including its theological thinking. The ancient Greeks already thought being as having-been-produced (Hergestelltsein), as having been brought forth into standing presence, and Heidegger sees modern technology, enabled by the exact, mathematized sciences that arose in the seventeenth century, in its absolute domination as the historical culmination of this metaphysical hermeneutic cast. Instead of "will to will", I prefer to call this ghostly background presence the *absolute will to effective and efficient mastery of all movement and change*[27] which makes itself felt in all science and technology and, via these, in all kinds of economic production processes in which efficiency counts.

Heidegger's one-eyedness

Because of his single-minded focus on production, Herstellung, which conforms with the asserted one-dimensional constellation of being he calls the Ge-Stell, Heidegger has to assert, as quoted above, "ordered setting-up in no way aims at booty and winnings, but always at what can be ordered to set up" ('Das Ge-Stell' GA79:29). But how is this assertion to be squared with Marx's socio-ontological insight into the essence of capital as the "restless movement of winning, gaining" (die rastlose Bewegung des Gewinnens, MEW23:168)? Heidegger remains totally blind to the phenomenon that all that is *produced* by the Gestell also has to *estimated* and *validated* in an interplay as *value* in order to *be*. This may seem at first sight to be an overly strong assertion.

In contrast to Heidegger's, Marx's thinking sheds ontological light not only on the capitalist production process, but also on the sociating exchange process through which the phenomenon of value first becomes visible in its *form*, its being, i.e. first comes about *as such*. *The concept of value is the foundation of Marx's ontology of capitalism.* And capital's movement consists not only of production process but also of circulation process, both of which are conceived crucially as movements of valorization of value, a crucial philosophical thought to which Heidegger remained oblivious. This concept of value remains ambiguous in Marx because, on the one hand, only through exchange does the form of value itself come about (and this *form* of value must be regarded as its *being*), but on the other, value is said to have a measurable quantitative *substance* residing in the "productive expenditure of human brain, muscle, nerve, hand, etc." (produktive Verausgabung von menschlichem Hirn, Muskel, Nerv, Hand usw., MEW23:58) whose agglomeration *produces* value (and not just brings it about in the evaluating interplay of exchange). Value in Marx's thinking is thus thought ambiguously both as coming about through the mirror interplay of exchange and also, true to the age-old paradigm of productionist metaphysics, as being produced by labour expended.

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[26] "Wille zum Willen [...] die unbedingte und vollständige Sicherung seiner selbst" GA79:84.

[27] Cf. Eldred, M. *The Digital Cast of Being* 2009/2011.

I have criticized at length and in detail this latter conception of labour-value, which forms the basis of the famous labour theory of value.[28] This faulty conception enables Marx to construct a Cartesian, 'law-like' type of theory of capitalist economy[29] because, if labour is the substance of value, capital-value can be continually augmented through the extraction, congealing and reification of this substance by having labourers labour under the command of capital. Value is therefore 'substantially' pro-duced, brought forth through the production process, and the exchange of produced commodities on the market is then only the realization of already produced, substantial value, including a component part of surplus value, in money.

Against Heidegger's single-minded focus on production and the totalized, "pre-calculable"[30] bringing-forth and setting-up of all beings in the set-up, and also against Marx's postulation of labour as a value-substance with a standing presence that can be calculably congealed and produced in a production process through extracting this substance from living labour power, I have undertaken to show that value is not produced, but comes about (sich zeitigt) relatively as the ongoing outcome of a mirroring interplay on the markets in which what is offered is subjected to a competitive price-valuation in the mirror of money.31 The form of value, i.e. its being, is nothing other than this social process of estimation and validation. Value is, i.e. presences, only in being seen as such by human beings who are themselves involved in the mirror play of exchange as players in the gainful game. The markets as a whole are an ongoing interplay of valuation and estimation, and thus a coming-to-be as valuable of all the abilities of those involved in the competitive struggle to have their abilities and efforts recognized and rewarded via the sociating value-thing, money. Value can only be thought in its being as a social concept which means, it can only be thought relatively, i.e. as a relation of estimating interplay. As such it is entirely without substance.

Relative surplus value production

Because value is a relational, ongoing outcome of a value mirror play, it can also *circulate* as capital via evaluating interchanges. Produced products and abilities and services offered directly or indirectly to society can only become and *be* values through the mirror of evaluating validation in other goods and abilities similarly offered. Because Marx, at least in his dialectical value-form analysis, locates value in the exchange process, his determination of the essence of capital as a restless movement of self-augmentation of value is closer to the phenomena as they show themselves in the market-mediated striving for gain. The goal of competitive striving, money, is conceived by Marx as reified value, and the incessant striving for money in its manifold forms of appearance holds the capitalist economy in its characteristic restless, augmentative movement which Marx ultimately thinks through in concrete, complex, conceptual detail in the (relatively neglected) Volume II of *Capital* on the Circulation Process of Capital.

Heidegger's conception, by contrast, can only postulate a ghostly "will to will" that asserts itself in an endless bringing-forth and setting-up without being able to conceptualize how this postulated "will" as essence appears, i.e. is mediated with the phenomena of everyday life in which the mobilization of beings is apparent. The very *being* of what is pro-duced by the Gestell is *value*, and such value only comes about as an outcome, and not as a product, through the social interplay in which these beings are *estimated* and come to *belong as such* to sociated human being.

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[28] Cf. e.g. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 6 iii), but also Eldred *Critique of Competitive Freedom...*

[29] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 8 ii).

[30] "vorausberechenbar" 'Die Frage nach der Technik' in M. Heidegger *Vorträge und Aufsätze* Neske, Pfullingen 1985 p. 25.

[31] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 5.

Marx's analysis of capitalism is also able to show precisely how the striving to increase productivity through the application of all sorts of technology — the power of bringing-forth — meshes with the essence of capitalism which he formulates as the valorization of value. The connecting link is what he conceptualizes as "relative surplus value production" in Part 4 of the first volume of *Das Kapital*. Even when the value-substance of labour-content is purged from the value concept as untenable, the striving to augment value considered in its money-form, i.e. in its 'money-being', can nonetheless still be enhanced by producing more productively because, other things being equal, greater productivity in comparison to lower productivity is invariably 'honoured', valued and estimated by the market in the ongoing competition with a greater monetary reward. All that is important here is the comparative or marginal or differential perspective: greater productivity, whether it be more quantity or better quality, gives an edge over competitors. The concept of relative surplus value production hence says that the employment of technology is a means of enhancing the chances of gain within that hermeneutic cast I have called the gainful game.

Technology is and can be employed as such a means because money-capital has the social power of developing or acquiring such technology by employing people in research processes. The power of bringing-forth is thus endlessly furthered because it intermeshes with the endless pursuit of monetary gain which, in turn, must intermesh with products being estimated and validated in the market mirror play *in their being as valuable*. Since Heidegger's conception of the set-up entirely lacks ontologically founded concepts of value and money, suffering as it does under a blindness to economic phenomenality in toto, the phenomenon of the link, through the mediation of an ontological concept, between the striving for gain and the striving to continually enhance productivity must remain in his thinking ontologically invisible and unfounded.

Production (set-up) vs. exchange (gainful game)

Both Heidegger and Marx, of course, diagnose the state of the world as being out of kilter. One could say their respective visions are dystopian rather than optimistic, but such commonplace judgements are frighteningly superficial, given that philosophical thinking aims in the first place at learning to see clearly our world-situation without comforting self-deception, including those idiotic political convictions that hinder any clear-sightedness. Heidegger focuses on "the mad race of technology" (das Rasende der Technik, FndT VA:39), whereas Marx damns not only class exploitation (which depends on the untenable labour theory of value and must be rethought as grossly unfair interplay), but also the uncontrollable, subjectless process of valorization of value. For Heidegger, a major consequence of the unleashed technological way of thinking is the "devastation of the earth" (Verwüstung der Erde, 'Überwindung der Metaphysik' XXVIII *Vorträge und Aufsätze* S. 95).

> But the earth remains sheltered in the inconspicuous law of the possible which the earth is. The will has forced on the possible the impossible as aim. The machination that sets up this compulsion and holds it in domination arises from the essence of technology, the word here being set identical to the concept of metaphysics in its self-consummation.[32]

He remains unconcerned with the unfair exploitation of working people by capital. Heidegger's diagnosis depends entirely on how he thinks Western metaphysics. The primary thesis, first formulated in 1922, remains

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[32] "Aber die Erde bleibt im unscheinbaren Gesetz des Möglichen geborgen, das sie ist. Der Wille hat dem Möglichen das Unmögliche als Ziel aufgezwungen. Die Machenschaft, die diesen Zwang einrichtet und in der Herrschaft hält, entspringt dem Wesen der Technik, das Wort hier identisch gesetzt mit dem Begriff der sich vollendenden Metaphysik." M. Heidegger 'Überwindung der Metaphysik' XXVIII *Vorträge und Aufsätze* op. cit. p. 95.

to the end "being means having-been-produced"[33]. In the late text, 'The Question Concerning Technology', we even read, "Even φύσις, the emergence from within itself, is a bringing-forth, is ποίησις".[34] When Heidegger searches around for what could save the earth from devastation and human being itself from total absorption in calculative thinking from being exhausted in "ordering setting-up" (Bestellen, FndT VA:38), he points therefore to something "related" because "any saving [power] must be of a higher, but at the same time related essence to that which is endangered".[35] This related something that could save is therefore, Heidegger suggests, itself a kind of ποίησις, namely "art" (Kunst, FndT VA:39). Also with his concept of Gelassenheit or 'letting-be', Heidegger sees the possibility of an alternative in dealing with the "mad race of technology" by stepping back from its imperious challenges.

Analogously, such Gelassenheit could serve also as a mild injunction to the siren calls of the manifold gathering of opportunities for gain that constitutes the constellation of being under capitalism and lead to a re-evaluation of what is valuable for dwelling on Earth. Refusing to heed and follow without limit the enticements of the possibility of gain in favour of living well, but frugally, within appropriate mortal limits is an echo of Aristotle's distinction between economics and chrematistics, as introduced in the first book of the *Politics*. It is an exercise of human freedom to set a limit to the pursuit of gain and, ultimately, only the free individual can say 'Enough!' and draw that line beyond which it refuses to participate in the hard, competitive power play of striving for gain. Such a freedom, of course, is not possible for an individual living on the edge of destitution. On the contrary, ways have to be invented to enable the poor to become adequate players in the value-gaining game in the first place.

I have already pointed to another possibility lying at the heart of metaphysics from its beginning, a possibility which Heidegger did not see. His fixation on ποίησις and production comes from the way δύναμις (power, potential) is thought by Aristotle in his historically fateful ontology of movement as being the "governing starting-point for a change in something else" (ἀρχὴ μεταβολῆς ἐν ἄλλῳ *Met*. Theta 1, 1046a9f). In this formula for the ontological structure of the key phenomenon of movement/change, however, there is an ambiguity residing in the term μεταβολή, which can mean both 'change' and 'exchange' or 'interchange'. This ambiguity opens the way for us to think through an ontology of exchange[36] as distinct from traditional productivist metaphysics that continues to dog today's thinking. Μεταβολή is the *fulcrum* where the lever of rethinking can be placed to pivot productivist metaphysics into an alternative ontology of interchange that at the same time enables the other to be recast hermeneutically as a free human being, i.e. as the source of his or her own life-movements in interplay with others. Into the ontological place of productive movement conceived as an actualization of productive power steps the alternative movement of social interplay that is always also a power play.

This alternative understanding of μεταβολή that has remained tacitly buried in Western thinking since the Greeks enables exchange and interchange to be thought ontologically as a groundless, estimating mirror interplay of powers, capable of providing the foundational kernel of a genuinely social ontology. This contrasts with Aristotle's productive ontology of movement, according to which all physical movement is modelled on the exercise of a grounded power of knowing on a 'material' to bring forth a change in something else, namely,

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[33] "Sein besagt Hergestelltsein" M. Heidegger, 'Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles (Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation)' in *Dilthey-Jahrbuch* Volume 6 1989 MS:26.

[34] "Auch die φύσις, das von-sich-her Aufgehen, ist ein Her-vor-bringen, ist ποίησις." FndT *Vorträge und Aufsätze* op. cit. VA:15.

[35] "alles Rettende höheren, aber zugleich verwandten Wesens sein muß wie das Gefährdete" FndT VA:38.

[36] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 5.

the 'material', which may even be a human being. The concept of interplay also shows that, *social* power in general cannot be thought as productive power but — as long as it is not the exercise of brute physical violence — only through a relational game of mirroring estimation and validation in which a superior power is recognized *as* superior (if only as potentially physical violent) by a free human being and thus submitted to.[37]

What is salvatory in this pivoting side-step from productionist metaphysics is the possibility of thinking the competitive interplay of a capitalist market economy also in its ambiguous, Janus-faced possibility as an interchange of caring-for based on mutual self-interest and even on mutual satisfaction. An intensification of caring for each other in the mutual exercise of abilities of all kinds that are recognized, esteemed and appreciated *as* valuable in the ongoing metabolism of social interchange could represent an alternative that is "related" in the above-mentioned Heideggerian sense.

The set-up (Ge-stell) as the gathering of all possibilities of effectively bringing-forth and the gainful game (Gewinn-Spiel) as the gathering of opportunities for gain in gainful interplay are complementary constellations of a twofold, intermeshed way in which the world opens up for human being. Within this twofold hermeneutic cast of world in our present age, human beings strive for what contributes to living well or better, including mutual esteem, estimation and validation. An alternative to the restless pursuit of gain under the hegemony of the circuitous movement of self-augmenting capital resides first of all in seeing through the fetishism of reified value in all its forms of appearance in favour of seeing social interchange and interplay as opportunities for caring for each other. Such an historical alternative of fair, mutually beneficial interplay need not make (invariably vacuous and ineffective) appeals to altruism or brotherly love and solidarity.

Gainful interplay via markets can be regarded hermeneutically *as* a game of mutually estimating and esteeming each other's powers and abilities to do something for each other, thus serving and benefiting each other on a basis of freely given, mutual esteem. This should not be understood as a blue-print for Utopia, not only because any hermeneutico-ontological cast for an age comprises all deficient forms of the key phenomena in focus, but also because, in this particular case, a game of mutually beneficial estimation of powers and abilities remains always precisely a *power play* that can be played out with both fair and ugly moves. Moreover, other kinds of social power, particularly those of reified value (capital) and state political power, still exercise their power in power plays in ways that remain always contestable by self-aware, free people. Fundamentally, since all life is self-movement, it is also a play of powers and hence also often a power struggle.

The option of fair interplay in a reciprocal exercise of powers and abilities on a basis of mutual benefit is not a Utopian blue-print but can serve as orientation in a basic hermeneutic recasting of world that enables us to see through the many self-delusions that have long since become entrenched everywhere.

What does such an historical possibility of mutually esteeming interplay in conjunction with other contestable social power plays look like in today's context of the fast emerging cyberworld? Namely, it is not hard to see that what Heidegger called the set-up has attained its historical consummation in the algorithmically steered cyberworld[38] that can be conceived as a concatenation of myriads of Turing machines.[39]

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[37] Cf. *Social Ontology* op. cit. Chapter 10.

[38] Cf. *Digital Whoness* op. cit.

[39] Cf. M. Eldred 'Turing's Cyberworld' *Information Cultures in the Digital Age: A Festschrift in Honour of Rafael Capurro* Matthew Kelly & Jared Bielby (eds.) Springer VS, Wiesbaden 2016 pp. 65-81.

The cyberworld

The cyberworld's freedom of movement

The cyberworld is the artificial, global, electromagnetic medium for the movement of bit-strings of all kinds through it. Freedom of movement in the cyberworld relates first of all to bit-strings themselves, which are free to move in the same sense employed in physical dynamics for the motion of physical bodies. Freedom of movement for bit-strings thus signifies first of all a technical enablement of their motion through the cyberworld-matrix.[40] Such bit-strings may be message data for communication between and among human beings, or they may be processing data transmitted as signals between digital devices, or they may be executable program code itself (i.e. algorithms), including malicious executable code. Freedom in the cyberworld is therefore initially an eery freedom for the cyberworld itself to unfold its digital powers of algorithmic control over all kinds of changes within and without the digitized electromagnetic matrix. The cyberworld unleashes its cybernetic powers of control upon the world as a whole, which can today be experienced ubiquitously in our everyday reliance upon and entanglement in such algorithmic processes that have ever greater impact on daily life-movements and -options. The outsourcing of segments of our own world-understanding in the form of algorithmic code into the cyberworld to then control specified movements and changes has long since gained such a frightening autonomy vis-à-vis the ostensibly underlying human subject, that it is sheer self-deception to believe that we can still enjoy a freedom of choice with regard to the cyberworld's rapidly exponentiating power.

The gainful game unleashed in the cyberworld

There is an intimate interconnection between the fluid motions of the cyberworld's bit-strings and the inherent tendencies of a global economy to mobilize everything and everybody in the pursuit of gain. As outlined above , we can learn from Marx thatcapitalist economy can be conceived as the movement of reified value in self-augmenting cycles. Money-capital is advanced with the expectation and striving that it will return augmented with profit after all costs have been defrayed. All the various sorts of income-earners, not just the capitalists, are players in this now globalized gainful game. The cyberworld as a powerful, technically realized algorithmic network for efficiently controlling productive movement provides the opportunity i) for massive increases in productivity and hence cost reductions in all sorts of ways, especially through automating production and circulation processes and ii) for increasing the rate of turnover of capital, and thus profit rates, in particular by facilitating communications with employees, customers, suppliers, but also by automating and accelerating the transmission of signals for automatic algorithmic control of all kinds of processes.

In particular, the cyberworld enormously enhances the movement of money as cyber-digits. The movement of finance capital rapidly across the globe is also greatly facilitated by the cyberworld. Transactions of all kinds can now be done more speedily, including receipts to and from customers, payments to suppliers and employees, loan transactions with banks, and so on, thus reducing turnover-time. Today's banks have profited enormously by the introduction of digital automation, saving labour costs, cutting workforces and silently pushing the costs of transactions onto customers, who now have to purchase the digital equipment to communicate with their bank accounts and learn the ins and outs of their banks' software without the banks

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[40] Cf. C.E. Shannon 'A Mathematical Theory of Communication' in *The Bell System Technical Journal* Vol. 27, July, October, 1948 pp. 379—423, 623—656,which aims precisely at such technical enablement. His theory is not one of communication, but of signal transmission.

incurring any training costs. Entire capitalist enterprises can consist at core simply of cleverly written digital algorithms for controlling a certain specific type of commerical transaction, such as car-hire, that can be scaled up at minimal additional cost to make the enterprise global almost overnight.

Work productivity can increase through automated processes outsourced to the cyberworld and especially through the ease of communication with employees anywhere, anytime that turns employees themselves tendentially into appendages of their digital messaging devices, on constant stand-by for instructions from their superiors or new tasks to do.

An important aspect of the protection of personal privacy against encroachment by the cyberworld is to keep in place barriers to employees' becoming permanently contactable through the cyberworld, at their employer's, business associates', customers', etc. beck and call. Such constant availability as a 'labour power' amounts to an invasion of a personal life-world and a blurring of the line between work and private life.

For an income-earner of any kind, there is always the temptation to succumb to the siren calls of gainful opportunities offered by the cyberworld. Workoholic practices are encouraged by the ease with which work can continue digitally. An investor, for instance, can easily search the cyberworld for investment information and investment opportunities during his or her entire waking life. Hedge fund managers are particularly prone to keeping themselves constantly plugged into the financial information churned out second for second by the cyberworld. Managers can keep their digital device next to the bed at night to respond immediately to customer queries.

Hence it can be seen that the gainful game can be played in and through the cyberworld which, as a global medium, can lubricate and speed it up. The gainful game and the cyberworld are affine because reified value itself is quantifiable, and such quantities lend themselves to digitization in appropriate algorithms. Because the cyberworld is becoming more and more ubiquitous, all-pervading and all-encroaching, the players can be drawn more tightly into the gainful game's play. One could say that the cyberworld is an excellent medium for the *freedom of the gainful game* itself, which is dissociated from its pawns, the income-striving players themselves, and under the control of nobody, in particular, not within the grasp of state controls or subject to a wished-for 'primacy of politics'. Politics and the state can only try to regulate the rules of play.

The cyberworld thus extends the reach of and accelerates the gainful game otherwise known as capitalism. This is a two-edged development since, on the one hand, it enables many to earn an income who have been excluded from the gainful game and can even contribute to fostering entrepreneurship and alleviating poverty. On the other hand, the gainful game itself strengthens its hold on human life-movements, drawing them more and more into conformity with moves in the gainful game, now mediated and lubricated by algoritmically controlled movements of bit-strings. To be able to draw back from this tendency to be sucked in, human beings first need to *learn to see* the gainful game in its essential nature, which is not at all the case today.

What hinders insight is above all the hegemony of a productivist ontology of efficient, effective movement inherited from the Greeks that forms the tacitly presupposed foundation of all modern science, including even the social sciences. A genuinely social ontology requires an alternative guiding, orienting phenomenon, that of *interplay*, along with its appropriate conceptual hermeneutics, to enable an alternative cast of world to come historically to light. To date, philosophically speaking, we are still tapping in the dark or the semi-darkness of spurious philosophies upon which, among other things, self-delusive political ideologies are shakily based.

Messages that matter

Submerged beneath the bit-torrents that rage through the cyberworld are those messages that have nothing to do with either the effective algorithmic control of movement or with efficiently smoothing the valorizing circuit of some capital or other. Such messages between and among those few who have something to say to each other are useless from the perspective of both the set-up and the gainful game, yet they circulate in the electromagnetic medium as an aside. Insofar, the cyberworld is a medium like paper once was, and sometimes

still is, for passing on subversive messages. Such angeletics[41] bears tidings with the potential to recast the world, but only for those few at the present time with ears to listen.

Just as during the centuries of the Renaissance and the nascent Modern Age there were those who were sensitively open to messages of the dignity of the human subject (such as Erasmus and Pico della Mirandola) and the potential for precalculating movement by means of gradually mathematizing sciences (such as Kepler, Galileo, Descartes and Newton), today's message, as yet only faintly perceptible and apparently esoteric, tells of a recast world in which the interplay of mutually esteeming and estimating comes to the fore, especially with regard to what we humans can do for each other. Such interplay is essentially also a power play that has infinitely many (and often surprising) potential moves and countless nuances all the way from vicious struggles and desperate fights in all arenas - including in domestic and international politics, economic and private life - through to mutually beneficial and satisfying, fair play.

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[41] Cf. R. Capurro & J. Holgate (eds.) *Messages and Messengers. Angeletics as an Approach to the Phenomenology of Communication* Fink, Munich 2011.

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Section with articles outside of the Marxian theme of this issue

www.i-r-i-e.net
132

Matthew Kelly:

Unchain my heart and set me free: A new civil society library model.

Abstract:

A new model of the public library is outlined that explicitly links it to its role in support of civil society. The model argues that the ongoing "chaining" of public libraries to direct government oversight and control is deleterious to their ability to actualize their potential. Collateral argument is made that that it is the civil society character rather than the simply free nature of these libraries which needs to be harnessed to help move the conceptualization of the sector away from a reactive model of client service toward a dynamic approach that integrates with the life experiences of clients.

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     www.i-r-i-e.net   133

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Unchain My Heart and Set Me Free: A New Civil Society Library Model.

The future for public libraries might be bright but just as easily it may be that the institution becomes outdated, outmoded and, especially, outcompeted in the race to stimulate, educate and inform. The really crucial factor which will decide what the next 20 years holds for the sector is how we define the community with the need for the services public libraries can, and might, offer. If we define this community better there is a much improved chance that what will result is a vibrant and relevant institution. If we do not, we face the likelihood that other information providing institutions will emerge which will fill communities' needs better.

Why is the crucial issue about definition of the community of need important in helping to put public libraries on the right path—the path back to relevance? It is because there are so few definitions of what the public in public library means that we lose our way, both in terms of how we identify resource needs and in terms of how we match these with information users. We lose our way when we misunderstand that a public library is just a free library. We lose our way when we think of the public as the "average person" or the demographic delineation of community. We lose our way when we forget that there is no single model for organizing the public library, just as we lose our way when we refuse to look to the broader information landscape within which the library operates, that is that when we deny that things might be better if done differently.

I have argued elsewhere for a deeper conceptualization of what we mean when we discuss the public library and have used the term civil society library to help to get to grips with this issue of definition (Kelly, 2014). When we conceive of this type of library we conceive of it as having a separate role to private corporate libraries but we conceive of it, especially, as being different to academic libraries. Educational institutions' libraries have a fairly well-recognized task to hold information which aids students' educational accomplishment and supports professional researchers. Civil society libraries have no such requirement. Civil society libraries have an obligation to meet the information needs of all members of society. But, what is this civil society and how can defining it better aid in improving the responsiveness of the institution?

Civil society, potentially, includes everyone within a community and can be defined at many levels, both in terms of size (a town or a city) and in terms of the political community (within the frameworks of a nation state or internationally). Civil society operates to help constitute governments but at a quite fundamental level the definition is inoperable when formal government (executive, legislative or administrative) mechanisms are in operation. Civil society is *not* government and government, while constituted by civil society, is not civil society. Using this definition the common government-supported, government-administered public library is not a civil society library. Public libraries are often government libraries designed to meet the needs of civil society. Where civil society institutions such as library boards, empowered to manage independently of government, are in place there is a good argument that a sort of civil society library is emerging. I argue that these organizational and governance arrangements, despite some advances being made in some jurisdictions, are yet to achieve the requisite form to enable civil society's libraries to reach their full potential.

In order to make the argument that the simplistic free library definition of a public library is inadequate, and that it is necessary to sever the ties from government to fully realize the potential of the sector, there needs to be a case made that the funding for the civil society library ought to be freed from the direct oversight of bureaucrats. While public monies always demand accountability and audit, we need to ask if there are models of sectoral funding that allow civil society entities to operate sufficiently at arm's length to enable a culture of independence and self-regulation to occur. While it is not possible to generalize across the globe, many universities are substantially funded to achieve their mission by governments but retain their self-accrediting status and are functionally autonomous in terms of governance. By way of example, Australia's major universities (which I am familiar with) have often been established by legislative acts but are not state universities as such. Vocational education colleges in Australia, by contrast, are state institutions.

The argument for civil society libraries is not that they become mini universities, nor that they reinvent themselves as educational institutions, but that their worth is in a special competency that they have, through their librarians, to fulfil a well-recognized demand from the community. Where universities teach and accredit the learning of domain knowledge, civil society libraries would, I argue, primarily, organize and disseminate

domain knowledge. When looked upon in this way there is no reason that we cannot sever the public library from immediate government oversight and the limitations that accrue from this inhibitory, shackling, inappropriate relationship.

The immediate benefit of librarians organizing their own institutions, rather than being framed as workers within government institutions (the implicit and false assumption in such a framing is that the state is the only vehicle for provision of libraries), is the opening up of the civil society library to greater freedom to plan and to innovate. While I would not advocate either, there is no intrinsic reason that a civil society library might not decide not to hold fiction any longer or, even, to move itself entirely to a fiction-only collection. The civil society library might offer more services to patrons who could afford to pay for them. It might engage in partnerships with businesses. It might offer accredited or short term educational courses to help fund services. It might commence a publishing venture or engage in web development. These examples attempt to define the limits we place on the potentiality of civil society libraries today by hinting at the boundaries that currently exist rather than to advocate change for change's sake.

While I believe it is necessary to sever the ties to government oversight (continued government control will lead to the death of civil society libraries) as the precursor to a renewed role in alignment with the changes in the information landscape, this is not just an exercise in building new organizational models but is about putting in place the conditions required to stimulate an adequate response to civil society's changed demands for a knowledge repository. Civil society continues to demand that its knowledge repositories be authoritative. In the digital age this requires that the library be capable of interfacing and negotiating with commercial and academic knowledge-creating entities and that while some filtering takes place, this is not primarily what users want librarians to do. Civil society continues to demand that its knowledge repositories be comprehensive, that they take the lead in ensuring that the representation of knowledge appropriate to their needs is as widely cast as possible. Civil society continues to demand that its knowledge repositories be accessible. Following the identification of core knowledge, and a core collection, libraries should facilitate patron-driven acquisition using an equity-based model. Finally, civil society continues to demand that its knowledge repositories be understandable. This would mean that the library works with whatever system of knowledge organization stimulates use of collections (bibliographic, textual, subject or relevance) and that it adopts digital strategies that harness artificial intelligence, perhaps in the commonsense knowledge tradition and in reinforcement learning, to dynamically link resources (the available and the potentially available) to people.

While we want an adequate response to the new challenges of changes to information culture that build on the best that the information disciplines have developed, we also need to see a transformation in librarianship from a reactive approach toward one that is both more provident and more sagacious. This would incorporate such themes as better understanding of the philosophy of information, information ethics, the hermeneutics of information and the broader schemata of knowledge organization. All of these would help to feed into a growth in the profession which would see a consultancy approach fostered, one worthy of the esteem of scientific, cultural and civil-society communities. It is not that far-fetched to make the prediction that in the 21st century, the librarian's role will have moved as dramatically as the barber-surgeon's did in the 19th century (which was from ameliorative dilettante to scientific miracle worker). While librarians are far from being dilettantes there are precious few miracles that we can honestly attribute to them given the reactive paradigm currently prevalent.

In coming decades we could choose to continue to focus on the fetishistic and animistic aspect of the public library as temple to civic virtue, and to continue to worship (and subsidize) the cult of literary culture, or, we could look to the potential that the institution has to be transformed and to, in turn, transform our relationship with knowledge, the data-informatic and our lifelong journey to both engage with learning and to negotiate an ever more complex world of information resources. Picture this: when we commence our elementary school education we are assigned a personal information consultant (a librarian for all intents and purposes). This person stays with us on our journey through the negotiation of information resources until we reach high school at which point they pass the responsibility to a person with greater familiarity of the information needs of teenagers. The process would end with a third tier consultant who would aim to assist with information research, advice and referral throughout our lives when we leave school. Obviously the parallels with teacher

librarianship and the existing information literacy tradition are there at the level of the child's and youth's advisors but there is no real model in existence that I know of that is equivalent to the role designed to assist adults with their information needs.

Any such role, and this is the fundamentally poor construction of the librarian's role today in the civil society context, is one that can only be conceived of as supporting deficit rather than talent, ignorance rather than knowledge. Until this deficit reduction mindset is balanced by a positive program (this pertains as much to our library collections as it does to how we conceptualize the librarian's role) we will continue to see the flight of knowledgeable people away from libraries and into hybrid information culture groups that are aloof from the public/communal resource-sharing model. This flight from libraries will continue to be caused by the inability of libraries to meet their more mature demands.

The corollary benefit of this broader program (to give it a working name we might call it "the culture of information integration") is that by raising the bar higher across society in how we expect to, and do, work with information, there are likely to be dynamic, positive educational outcomes. A massive investment in human capital is called for to support this and is unprecedented in recent times. It would match the social transformation that occurred with industrialization and portend social change in line with the mass urbanization that occurred in the West in the 19th century and that continues to characterize patterns in human cultural adaptation (2007 was the first year most people on Earth lived in urban environments).

These changes are largely well-recognized but they are not being adequately planned for. We all recognize the changes afoot—the move from communication consumer to digital producer, from passive reader to active researcher, from information subject to information actor (or even digital citizen)—all these will result in significant changes in cultural mores, modes of labour, production, innovation and entrepreneurship. What is important to consider for the public library, and all we hold dear in its communitarian model of making expensive information resources available to all and showcasing the benefits of learning and culture, is that without a change of model that radically reformulates the user-centered paradigm so that this is more than mere cant, more than simply window dressing, more than simply pandering to the populist impulses of ill-informed politicians and their functionaries for demands of proof of life (circulation statistics), we will make little headway in achieving our core mission. Such a change to the user-centered paradigm takes a socially progressive lead on issues of access to knowledge and the data-informatic. It requires that the model for user-centerism in information be human-centered rather than just a technocratic salve, that it relies on a hermeneutic model of information to support its claims to legitimacy and to ensure that it does not degenerate into a form of psychologism which focuses only on "deficit reduction" (that having an information need in some way exemplifies a cognitive gap) or that there is a measure that can be articulated in sociological terms for adequate minimums or averages relating to how civil society participants can "manage," "cope with," or "absorb" information.

What I would wish to see, rather, is a paradigm that looks to how we deal with information as symptomatic of other more intentional states of knowing (and seeking to know). While information science need not be separated entirely from a methodological naturalism which sees much to be gained when all empirical sciences worship at the same altar (hypothesis, deduction, testing against data), this approach should be qualified in the sense that when we deal with meaningful behavior we need to take into consideration a lot, lot more. A civil society library is nothing if it is not a vehicle for helping to advance the quality of meaning in a person's life and, at the risk of stating the patently obvious, significant in how we formulate this is how we attribute meaning to various types of information. The relationship between how we represent scientific knowledge and humanistic knowledge remains of crucial importance.

Public libraries will have a bright future if they can be reinvented as civil society libraries. The name will not change for patrons/clients/users but for practitioners and theorists the role of the public library needs to be reinvigorated beyond the "merely public" and toward an orientation that takes account of the role the institution plays in the life of civil society. While precious few will have access to the wonders of the academic library for more than a couple of years, we all have access to the civil society library for life. The civil society library must become more sophisticated to meet this need for a changed social setting; technological wizardry will only go

so far in helping to make the connections between people and resources and the real changes are in how we conceptualize the library's place in society, raising the bar in terms of resources and the relevance of our advisory capability. Should the library/information profession venture to take this more responsible role in society, and should the argument be made and won for greater independence and autonomy of the institution from government, the beneficiaries will be a society better educated, better informed and, all together, inherently more capable of engaging with the responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society. As it stands, too many people are falling through the cracks and missing the benefits of the digital revolution, paralyzed by a quasi-information literacy that is technically focused and a culture of shallow engagement with the potentiality of the information universe (engaged in simple networking). This lack of participation in the life of learning, of knowledge and of culture bodes ill for civil society as the constitutive sector underpinning democracy and a fair society. It is now time for civil society to unchain its libraries and allow them to embark upon the program that they are uniquely qualified to pursue; that is, to ensure that the digital revolution is not a precursor to a more anodyne culture but rather a liberating force, opening up the possibilities for human understanding, empathy and co-operation.

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Moisés Rockembach:

Inequalities in digital memory: ethical and geographical aspects of web archiving

Abstract:

This paper approaches web archiving as preservation of digital memory and as a dynamic informational environment with complex problems of harvest, use, access and preservation. It uses a qualitative and exploratory-descriptive approach, identifying web archiving initiatives and promoting a reflection on the ways of defining web information collection, geographical gaps in web archiving and problems regarding uses and rights of this information. Whereas initiatives such as Internet Archive harvest a lot of information from across the web, an imbalance of digital memory exists where many countries do not possess their own web archiving initiatives, and therefore, coverage of information is unequally produced.

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Introduction

Information as financial capital and as a fundamental element of the functioning of organizations and society as a whole around this value are characteristics grounded by Castells (2000), exemplified in the perspective of information-based production, in contrast with the traditional industry-centered model and the detention of the means of production. The concepts and issues regarding the power of the network, automation, intensive use of technologies, obsolescence related to technological innovation and the global economy, even with local resistance, are factors that lead to technological and ethical reflections.

There is an ongoing shift in the relationship between information and society, due to the billions of information entities being constantly produced and disseminated through the Internet, across platforms, from the web to social networks. To place this phenomenon in context, we look at two concepts from the work of Luciano Floridi (2010). Floridi refers to the Zetabytte Age, a concept of magnitude that defines how much digital information has been produced in recent years. The second is what Floridi calls the infosphere, an environment that includes analog supports, potentialized by digital media.

How does one retrieve, use and preserve retrospective information produced on the Web? Objectively, web archiving is defined as a process that includes collecting, storing and making available retrospective information from the World Wide Web to future researchers. This process involves several initiatives around the world, some of them global-wide approaches and others geographically localized in their respective countries. This attribute is identified by the electronic domain or by identifying the producer of the information and the context in which it is embedded.

The ethical aspects considered are the means used to perform the web content harvest, the geographical gaps in harvest and preservation of information and the problems regarding the use and rights of the harvested and stored information.

Using a qualitative and exploratory-descriptive methodology, we explore research in web archiving, conceptually and theoretically, to verify the initiatives in several countries and to identify ethical questions about the use and preservation of retrospective web information processes.

Web as a contemporary digital environment of information

The world-wide web was born in 1989, a result of Bernes-Lee's proposal to support scientists in sharing information, with CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire) as the initial context of application. The initial proposal of the Web had the aim of organizing, giving access to information and avoiding the loss of important details from the projects developed at CERN (Bernes-Lee, 1989).

The world's first networked web page was published on December 20, 1990 and can still be accessed online. The maintenance of this web address, as well as the first links (hyperlinks) has been preserved by a project developed at CERN. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), founded in 1994, discusses and establishes standards and guidelines to ensure long-term web growth based on an open and collaborative web.

By 2014, the number of online networked web pages surpassed the 1 billion mark, stabilizing in 2016 (Internet Live Stats, 2017). As many web pages have become inactive with the current number of inactive webpages sitting at approximately 1.2 billion web pages, though the number is floating. The graph below shows the evolution of web page production.
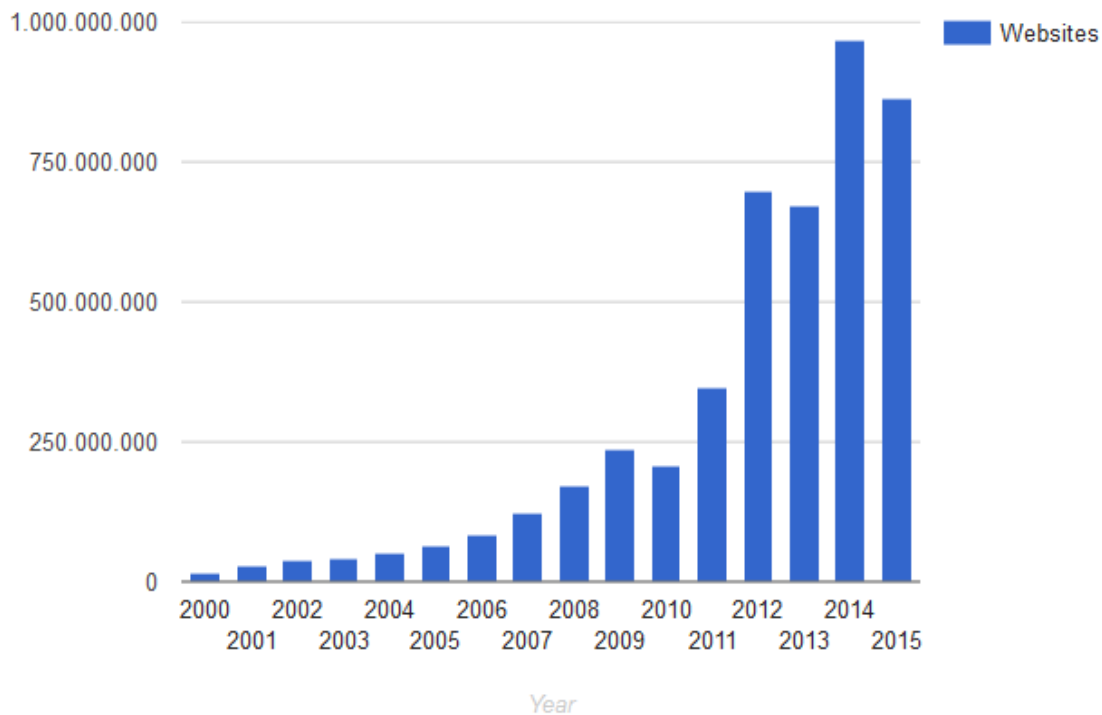
**Figure 1 - Total number of Websites in the world with unique hostname
Source: Internet Live Stats, 2017**

The web environment has become one of the main ways of production and flow of information and communication, generating interactions and new possibilities of articulation among network users. However, several studies describe that "80 % of webpages are not available in their original form after 1 year; 13 % of web references in scholarly articles disappear after 27 months; and 11 % of social media resources, such as Twitter posts, are lost after 1 year" (Costa, et al., 2016). Web Archiving is and will be an important technology of a digital research infrastructure for Science and Society, it can be used to preserve institutional sites, as well as to support special research collections or building new collections for research.

Web archiving initiatives

Masanés (2006) explains the concept of the Web Archive and the background involving technologies and platforms, with contributions from several authors, regarding web archiving approaches. The collecting or 'harvesting' of web content is made in several ways, two of those ways being *wide method*, where everything is collected; and *selective strategies* or events, for example, political and sporting events. There are specific harvesting methods, with themes that interest specific communities or researchers of specific scientific fields. The access to web archive contents, in some countries, can be achieved online; in others, it is necessary to go to the Archive / Library to access it locally.

Certain pioneers of the field stand out as particularly relevant to the history of web archiving, such as the Internet Archive initiative (http://archive.org), based in the United States, Australian National Library 'PANDORA' (Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia) project and the Kulturarw3 from Sweden, initiated in 1996. The work of the International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC), formed in 2003 and dedicated to the development of standards and tools that assist in the web archiving process, must also be acknowledged.

In research performed by Gomes, Miranda and Costa in 2010, 42 web archiving initiatives around the world were identified in 26 countries (Gomes, Miranda, Costa, 2011). This study was also used for the production of a Wikipedia page, which mapped web archiving initiatives around the world.
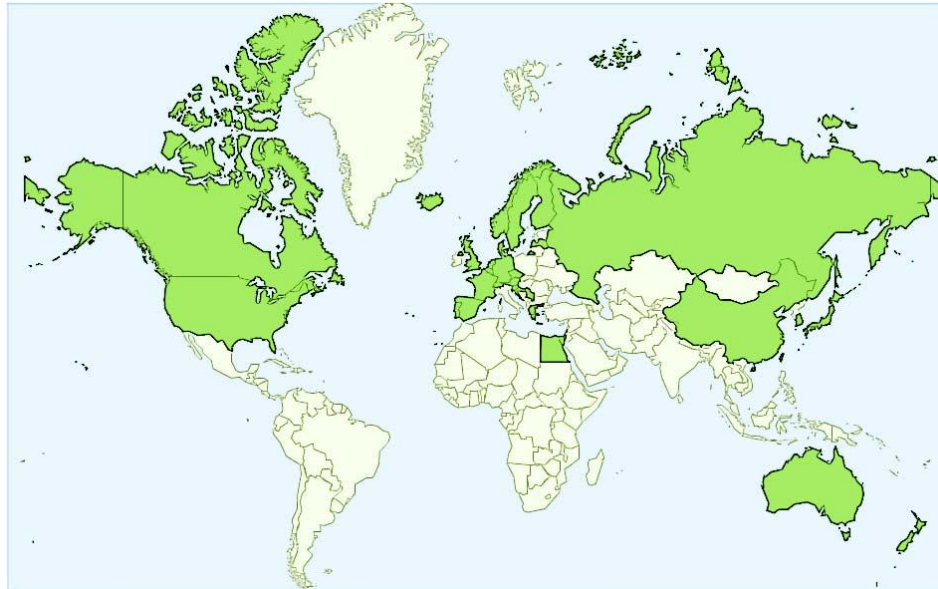
Figure 2 - Web archiving initiatives around the world
Source: Gomes, Miranda, Costa, 2011

The IIPC website (netpreserve.org) recently made available a tool on the map mundi model, powered by Google Maps, updated with the 51 members of the consortium, shown in the figure below:
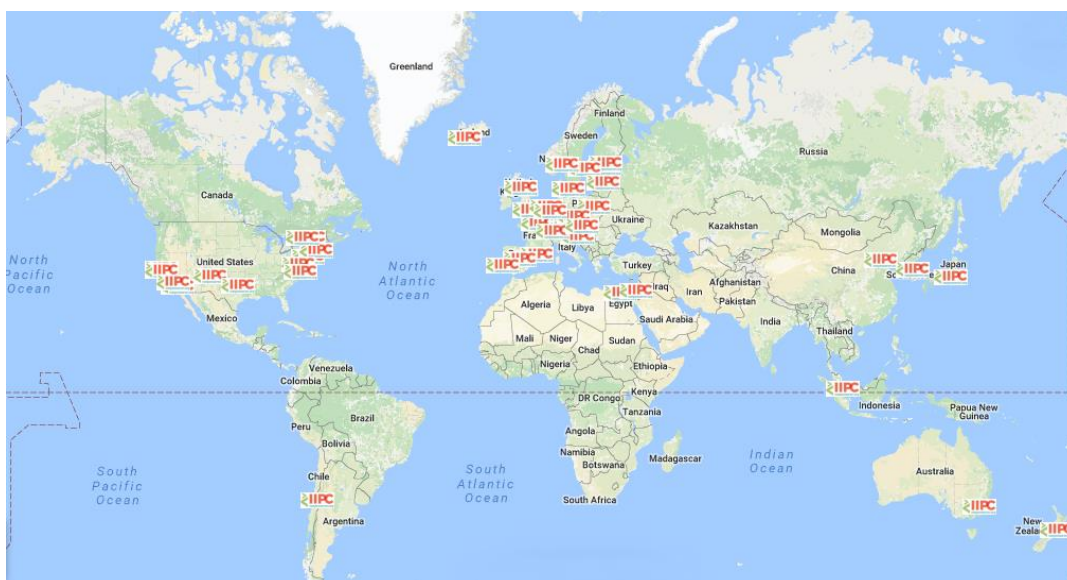
Figure 3 - Members of the International Internet Preservation Consortium (IIPC) in 2017
Source: IIPC (http://netpreserve.org/)

In South America, Chile recently became a member of the IIPC. However, as highlighted in the above map, it is the only member country in Latin America. Likewise, Africa boasts only Egypt as a member. Many countries do not have their own web archiving initiatives, which makes them dependent on what other international institutions preserve.

In Brazil, for example, there are approximately 4 million websites registered under the .br domain, according to the institution NIC.BR, responsible for the activities of domain registration in Brazil (NIC.BR, 2017), and there is not a systemic web archiving instituted in the country. Similarly, other countries do not have a systematic collection of their web pages, a fact that may be detrimental in the formation of their own digital memory.

Ethical aspects regarding Web Archiving

Based on the above analysis, a number of questions should be raised about the uses of technology towards a clarification of the issues, thus encouraging new questions and reflections, all towards the greater analysis. The primary questions concerning web archiving centre around the phases of harvest, access/use, and preservation:

Harvest

I.   **Regarding harvest:** What parameters are used to evaluate and select the information to be archived digitally? What is the frequency of harvest and the influence of this on digital memory? Does this collection occur equally in all regions? If the relationship is unequal, why is it this way? How can the right to privacy be protected?

Web archiving initiatives have several ways of evaluating and selecting data harvest. The scope is usually defined by the type of organization that does the harvest and its objectives in harvest and preservation. According to Masanès (2005), "the quality of a Web archive can be defined by (a) the completeness of material (linked files) archived within a designated perimeter and (b) being able to render the original form of the site, particularly regarding navigation and interaction with the user".

Internet Archive has the widest and most exhaustive harvest of all initiatives in the world and, as akin to prerogative of the Ancient Library of Alexandria, it intends to keep all human knowledge ever produced (Barabási, 2003) in the form of webpages. From a geographical context, the National Archives and National Libraries are generally the institutions that make the harvest, from the internet domain that corresponds to the country, or a selective method, by events or by topics, an example being the work developed by The National Archives (United Kingdom) or The National Library (France).

Worldwide, the Internet Archive is a model of web archive, the largest initiative to preserve web pages and other file types, like books, movies, software, music and games. The methods of harvest used by the Internet Archive are identified by national domain, regional domain, bulk, selective, event and thematic. For each method, specific parameters are applied, such as the configuration of crawlers per domain, or manually, if the crawler has limitations (Niu, 2012). Unfortunately, this harvest may not occur in a geographically balanced way, as it shows in the following example.

As exemplified by Leetaru (2015) with the harvest of news outlets, a source of information with high rates of updating, and monitored by the GDELT Project (The GDELT Project, 2017), there is a strong centralization of the web archiving harvest resources among a relatively small number of countries, noted in the comparison of the maps below.
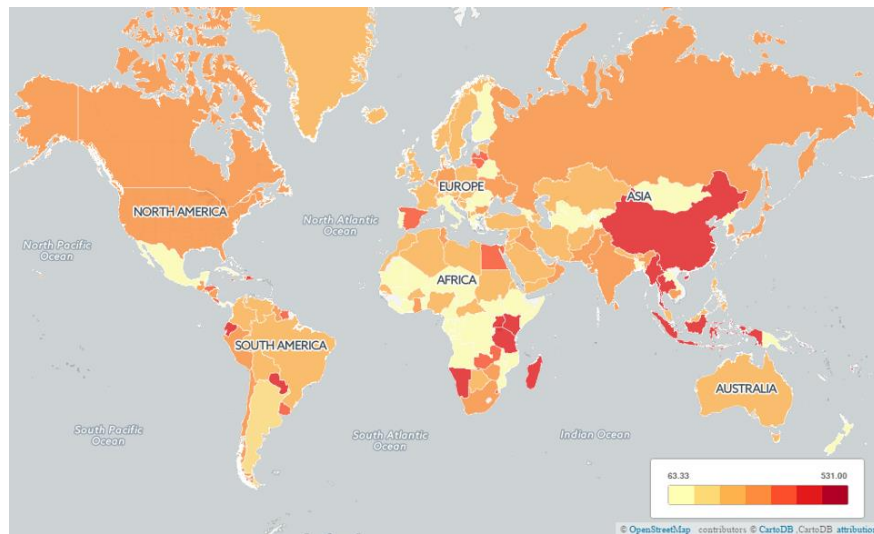
**Figure 4 - Average number of hours with at least one snapshot by outlet for online news outlets
by country (2013)
Source: Leetaru, 2015**
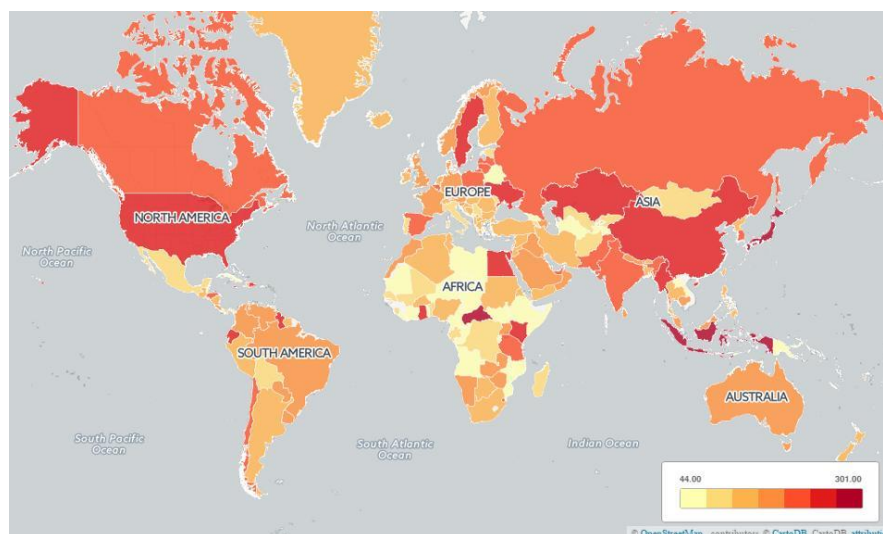
**Figure 5 - Average number of hours with at least one snapshot by outlet for online news outlets
by country (2014)
Source: Leetaru, 2015**
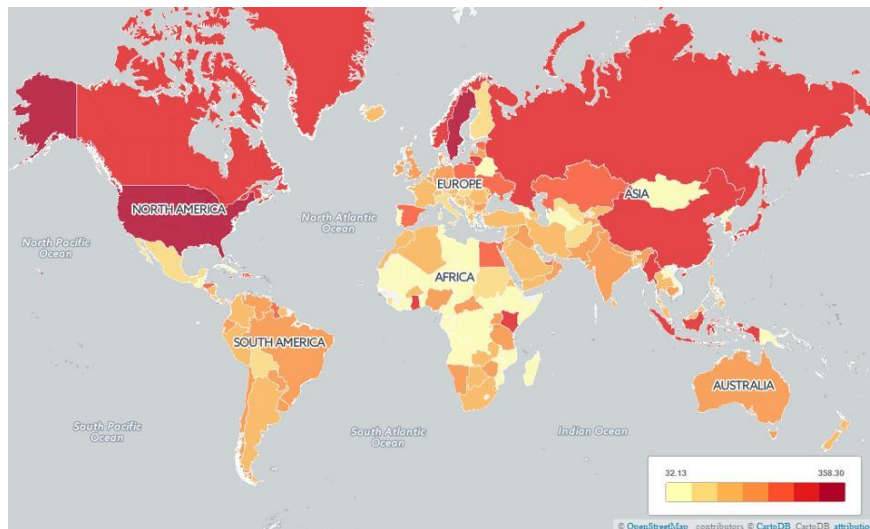
Figure 6 - Average number of hours with at least one snapshot by outlet for online news outlets by country (2015)
Source: Leetaru, 2015

Leetaru (2015) wonders how the web pages are archived, how to select what is harvested and how exhaustive it is done, because the platform declares that it has 445 billion pages archived, but still there is not a decent explanation of what is archived, as well as transparent algorithms that determine what was captured, when and how often, in addition to a master inventory of what was captured. According to Leetaru (2015), "The significant geographic change over time adds further evidence that the behaviour of the archive's crawlers is constantly changing in profound and undocumented ways". This emphasizes the need for local initiatives that address the contents of different countries, as a complement, and also that the way web pages are crawled and collected must be transparent and publicly available.

The United Nations (UN) establishes a set of fundamentals called 'Internet Rights and Principles', which states in its principle number 5, regarding privacy and data protection: "Everyone has the right to privacy online. This includes freedom from surveillance, the right to use encryption, and the right to online anonymity. Everyone also has the right to data protection, including control over personal data collection, retention, processing, disposal and disclosure" (Franklin, Bodle, Hawtin, 2015).

As such, everyone has the right to not have their information collected and, if the information is collected without authorization, the right to have the information removed, because the protection concerns the entire information life cycle.

These aspects add technical and social problems concerning the guarantee of data protection and also the right to be forgotten, a new social phenomenon, related to avoid stigmatization by past events that are potentialized by web publishing. Bunn (2015) considers the case 'Google Spain vs. Agencia Española de Protección de Datos and Mario Costeja González' as the founding act of the right to be forgotten. However, even if the information is removed or hidden from the Google index, it is possible to make others copies, without Google control. Web Archiving is one of these copies, therefore archiving also needs to be regulated.

It is necessary to highlight that, even though the harvested sites contain personal information, this information was disclosed publicly by the author or the holder. In this case, the access and use of this archived information becomes authentic, as it would be the access to this information if still available on the web, for research goals. If the information is personal with non- or unauthorized publication, as the use of the Right to be Forgotten, it entails the same criteria, for both the web available in the network and the archived web, removing the information availability from the search engines.

As in the example from Hiiragi, Sakaguchi and Sugimoto (2009) in Institutional Web Archiving System (IWAS), instead of removing all the archived content, it is possible to hide some parts of the archived sites that hold sensitive information.

Access and use

> **II.   Regarding access and use:** What questions must be addressed around how information is used and manipulated? How can copyright be addressed in terms of the use of that information?

How archived websites can be used and manipulated is an issue that can be analyzed from a technological and ethical-legal point of view. As far as access and use are concerned, from a technological perspective, indexing, retrieval and visualization are important factors to be developed. In order to search for content in different ways, it is necessary that the contents are indexed and are retrievable not only by the original electronic address, but also by commercial search engine through the use of keywords.

If the web archive is being used for scientific purposes, it becomes even more critical to understand the harvest criteria that led to the collection of the data. Just as it is necessary to establish clear criteria in the collection of scientific data, whether by questionnaire, interview, observation, among other instruments, care must be taken when using existing data, available online. Towards this end, Jones and Johnson (2006) identify web uses and studies such as Content Analysis, Surveys, Rhetorical Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Visual Analysis, Ethnography and Network Analysis. Highlighting the pertinent ethical considerations, they note that, "some material found on the Web and being archived is confidential, inadvertently made available and then stored by search engines like Google", adding that "it is important to note that the thoroughness with which search engines scour the Web can lead to the archiving of material that users had neither intended to make public nor to have it archived".

Glanville (2010) points to political, legal, and ethical factors in web archiving programs in Australia and The Netherlands where the ethical and legal aspects important to the study are copyright and privacy. Web archiving initiatives are caught in a copyright dilemma between a public responsibility to collect, providing access to the archived web, and concerns for the privacy, use and access to this data.

On ethical-legal issues involving archiving the web, Day (2003) notes problems around copyright and other responsibilities for the content made available. The use and reuse of information is also at stake with regard to permissions, which are not always explicit in the web page, as is the case of the application of Creative Commons and its formats of concessions. This implies, not only legal, but also ethical problems, because it involves the use of information under copyright, applied to international contexts, under different jurisdictions, and it also implies reflection on informational ethics when using such content, such as data protection and privacy issues on the network.

One of the legal and ethical alternatives to this collection and use of web archiving, even though it does not have copyrights on the sites, is fair use, a term used in the American legislation which is related to the tradition of Common-law, applied to the use of content under copyright, in certain situations, such as pedagogical / educational use, as news, or as scientific research. These issues are specifically discussed by Minow (2003), who argues that because the web is becoming an increasingly important resource for production and dissemination of information, there is an interest in preserving parts of its content.

Understanding that most sites use copyright poses a dilemma to the harvest and use of their data. However, solutions such as fair use, where laws and jurisprudence allow open access to information using tools that flag abuse through monitoring the control of access permissions, are a start. Using a robots.txt file – or better yet, sending a consent form to the information owner with an express request to remove some captured content offers a feasible common ground.

This legislation and the right to fair use does not apply to all countries, and it must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Swedish law, for example, restricts online access to web archiving, since it only allows the user to

access the site in the place responsible for archiving the Swedish web, such as the National Library of Sweden and the Kulturarw3 initiative. The same goes for accessing the web pages archived by the National Library of France (BnF) which are only available to access in the library reading rooms.

The imbalanced representation of the harvest is also reflected in access and use, where unfortunately some countries or geographic communities may not have archived their memory. If it supposes that Historiography will depend on current records and that much information is produced only on the web, users will be limited by the harvest made. According to Brügger (2011), "archiving of the web enables us to write web history, which is a necessary condition for the understanding of the Internet of the present as well as of new, emerging Internet forms". Milligan (2016) also defends the contemporary use of web archives in History, with ethical attention in the analysis of personal information and data protection, using as example a study of the Geocities platform. Despite the difficulties in preserving the web, "a nation's web domain can be considered a relevant object of study for historiography as well as a genuine and valuable historical source" (Brügger, 2017). In addition, research from the web historiography approach depends on the resource or source available, with some challenges when using web archives, namely related to content preserved, which will determine the choices and bias of information sources (Brügger, 2012).

Preservation

III.   Regarding preservation: Who is responsible for preserving the web? How long will information be preserved? What determines such parameters?

In digital preservation, recurring themes are related to the technological problems regarding obsolescence, data migration and in the case of Web Archiving, the standardized file format (ISO 28500:2009). Furthermore, one of the most important issues in the preservation aspect is the responsibility of the preserver. As mentioned, copyright is a key piece in the study of web archiving. In order for preservation to avoid legal risks, one possibility is for the organization that preserves to obtain the right to store, as determined by legal deposit. According to Glanville (2010), "legal deposit exists to preserve the nation's cultural heritage, a function that it is not fulfilling in its current form". This means that organizations, whether National Archives or National Libraries, are unique organizations, their prerogative being the objective of preserving memory, nationally or locally. Thus, there is a legal requirement for the expansion of their scope, which includes the digital realm as an information environment to be preserved. However, as exposed by Glanville, such advances still need to be regulated in some countries.

The IIPC (2017) has a list of members who support their country's copyright deposit legislation: Austria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom. The countries awaiting legal deposit legislation or that use permission, fair use or opt-out based systems to collect web archives, include Australia, Canada (Quebec), Spain (Catalonia), China, Czech Republic, Egypt, Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland and the United States.

Glanville (2010), quoting Murray and Hsieh (2008) says that "while ideally the onus should be on the content's creator to preserve their own material, an unawareness of the fragility of digital materials and unwillingness to take responsibility for the preservation of these materials means that libraries feel a responsibility to preserve material of value".

What determines how long the records are kept is traditionally connected to the uses and users of the information in question. Despite the digital environment allowance to keep a lot of data, a data curation, or specifically a web curation, can be an important preservation strategy, in order to consider ways of covering web contents more consistently.

However, problems in web curation can arise from several fronts and web preservation also implies a process of *selection* of content that will inevitably involve issues of bias. This becomes relevant since web curation becomes an integral part of the digital memory of culture and society. In Singapore, for example, some bloggers

have been intimidated and monitored due to their web archiving activities (Cadavid, Basha, Kaleeswaran, 2014). Hence, web preservation initiatives can be undermined for any number of reasons. When people feel under surveillance, or also censored in the production of web contents, the monitored, controlled and/or biased results will remain for posterity.

As a relevant guide, the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), published in 2003 the Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage, where in its article 1, they state that "the digital heritage consists of unique resources of human knowledge and expression. It embraces cultural, educational, scientific and administrative resources, as well as technical, legal, medical and other kinds of information created digitally, or converted into digital form from existing analogue resources. Where resources are "born digital", there is no other format but the digital object" (UNESCO, 2003).

The important aspect to emphasize is that, among the digital objects to be preserved, including images, software and digital audio, are also included web pages, that, "have lasting value and significance, and therefore constitute a heritage that should be protected and preserved for current and future generations. This ever-growing heritage may exist in any language, in any part of the world, and in any area of human knowledge or expression" (UNESCO, 2003).

As the Internet Archive and other platforms do not have a legal responsibility to preserve all websites of countries that do not have their own web archiving initiatives, even if they collect a vast collection of information, there is no guarantee of what information, or how long this information will be preserved. As such, it is important that there exist local web archiving initiatives, focused on local events and contents.

Concluding remarks

Content that is preserved is also content that can be retrieved. What has not been systematically collected can only be found if a platform, such as Internet Archive, has collected it by individual demands, from users who have actively collected the information, or collaterally, in an unsystematic way. These three aspects, harvest, access/use and preservation, will be the basis for establishing History and for the rescue of current events. It is important to emphasize that the web is an environment marked by information dynamism and a lack of control over its flows. What is available and accessible online today, may not be available tomorrow.

Finally, one must ask what the limits of web archiving consist of. The intent of archiving is to preserve all the knowledge of the world, globally or locally, but this can only be done in a jointly concerted effort, but must also remain decentralized, as per the default nature of the internet. These multiple initiatives converge towards the same objective: impacting society's digital cultural heritage.

In terms of personal information contained in web pages, harvested and archived, it is necessary to evaluate on a case by case basis. Unfortunately, not every country has a personal data protection act or a regulation regimentation established to defend its citizens. Even so, respect for Internet Rights and Principles of the United Nations (2015) must be followed so that there can be standard digital ethical principles to meet expectations of archive and access.

At the same time, even though many countries do not have their own web archiving initiatives, it will be possible to take advantage of the documented experiences of the last 20 years, considering that the first web archiving initiatives began in 1996, and implement the most appropriate technological requirements and models. It must be emphasized that there are continents and large geographic extensions with very few web archiving initiatives, which implies loss of significant digital memory for people or nations. Web archiving is a pertinent solution, but the ethical problems listed need to be broadly discussed.

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Review:

Maria Bottis and Eugenia Alexandropoulou (eds.): Broadening the Horizons of Information Law and Ethics: A Time for Inclusion.

Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Information Law and Ethics (ICIL 2016). Edited by Maria Bottis and Eugenia Alexandropoulou (University of Macedonia Press, 2017; viii + 497 pages. ISBN: 978-618-5196-25-7).

Reviewed by Herman T. Tavani

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This edited volume is comprised of twenty–nine papers originally presented at the Seventh International Conference on Information Law and Ethics (ICIL 2016) at the University of Pretoria (South Africa), February 22–23, 2016. (It is perhaps worth noting that the ICIL conference series began in 2008, when Maria Bottis directed the first ICIL seminar at the Ionian Academy in Corfu, Greece.) The present volume is organized into eight main sections or parts: I. Keynotes; II. Freedom of Information and Expression; III. Privacy–Data Protection; IV. Intellectual Property; V. E–Commerce; VI. Government/E–Health; VII. Law/Justice and Information Technology; and VIII. Ethics. Sections II and IV are also further divided into two subsections: "IIa. Theory" and "IIb. Specific Issues"; and "IVa. Theory" and "IVb. Patents", respectively.

Many of the papers included in this volume specifically address the two key themes, or motifs, identified in the title of the ICIL 2016 Proceedings: "Broadening the Horizons of Information Law and Ethics", and "A Time for Inclusion." For example, the separate sections on e–commerce and e–health include papers that expand on some of the more traditional categories of ethical/legal concerns examined in previous ICIL proceedings; so, papers in these sections clearly serve to "broaden" the range and scope of issues examined at earlier ICIL conferences. And the two keynote papers in Section I, by Rafael Capurro and Paul Sturges, as well as papers in Section VII by Nneki Obiamaka, et al. and Ludovica Poli, each address key aspects of the of the "time for inclusion" theme. At the same time, however, many of the papers in this volume also address IT–ethics/law–related concerns involving specific nation states – e.g., issues directly affecting Greece, Kenya, Nigeria, Namibia, Poland, South Africa, and Tanzania. So, in this sense, the edited volume is nicely balanced between papers addressing concerns affecting the local and the global.

One virtue of this edited volume is apparent in the diverse range of topics that are thoughtfully examined by the individual contributors. Because of space limitations, however, it would not be possible for the present reviewer to comment critically on each paper. So I will limit my further analysis to two articles that, from this reviewer's perspective, are particularly noteworthy: Julian Hauser's "Sharing is Caring vs. Stealing is Wrong: A Moral Argument for Limiting Copyright Protection"; and Nikos Koutras's "The Concept of Intellectual Property: From Plato's Views to Current Copyright Protection in the Light of Open Access". Both articles approach their subject – in this case, intellectual property rights – from a highly theoretical perspective. (Admittedly, my decision to call attention to these two papers may indeed reveal my bias as a philosopher who tends to embrace "the theoretical", realizing all the while the critical importance of the practical/applied side of information law/ethics as well.) Whereas Hauser's paper nicely analyzes "authorial interests" vs. "public interests" against the backdrop of Lockean and personality–theory frameworks of property, Koutras traces some concepts of property and arguments for property rights from Plato and Aristotle to Locke and Hegel. Both authors show the significant impact that these highly–influential historical thinkers have had in the evolution of some contemporary frameworks that have been employed in the ongoing, and arguably contentious, intellectual–property–rights debate in the digital age.

Many readers will likely be impressed by the manner in which this handsome volume is so thoughtfully organized, and I suspect that many readers will also be struck by the quality of its content. I also believe that this edited volume of conference papers, as in the case of the six earlier ICIL Proceedings, continues to contribute significantly to the growing literature in the field of information law/ethics. In an era when many conference proceedings now appear to be compiled with little–to–no thought given to themes and organizing principles for arranging the content, Bottis and Alexandropoulou's superb volume should be applauded.

Review:

Philipp Otto and Eike Gräf (eds.): 3TH1CS: A Reinvention of Ethics in the Digital Age?

Reviewed by Dr. Markus Haag

Visiting Lecturer at the University of Bedfordshire, UK

The sub-title of "3TH1CS: A Reinvention of Ethics in the Digital Age?" ends with a question mark, thus setting the scene for an exploration of a diverse range of issues and challenges that are currently arising in relation to the ubiquity of data and how this impacts on businesses, individuals and society. Currently, there seems to be quite an intense coverage not only in academic quarters around digital ethics, particularly on artificial intelligence (AI) but also in the wider population. Businesses and individuals seem to be more aware than ever of not only the (potential) benefits of the digital age to them, but also of the ethical challenges that this presents.

It is therefore to be very much welcomed to have this edited book covering a broad range of issues, for example: artificial agents, sex robots, fake news, machine learning, drones, healthcare services, autonomous vehicles, games, law enforcement, gender, data protection, and others. This is covered in 21 separate chapters, so it does not seem sensible to review a large number of these chapters, and I will therefore present my own personal views on the general overall 'tone' of the book. It also benefits from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences of the contributing authors, who come from the USA, Germany, Italy, the UK, China, and elsewhere.

3TH1CS seems to suggest that there needs to be a reinvention of ethics in the digital age, at least to some degree. Most of the chapters focus more on highlighting issues and raising questions that businesses and individuals need to address to solve ethical dilemmas rather than providing answers. This is not a criticism, as discussions around this have only relatively recently been held on a broader and more intensive scale. This is supported in the introductory chapter by the editors when they state – and it is worth quoting here more fully: "We have to define very specific contexts to morally evaluate actions, procedures, applications, organizations and systems and to come up with ethically desirable ways to shape them. [...] We need to fully understand what we are facing before we can take a moral stance towards an issue. We hope that this book will be useful in getting there." (p. 8).

In my opinion, this is clearly the case. I found the chapter that transcribes an interview with Prof Rafael Capurro quite useful to set the scene, as he comments on a range of concrete application areas rather than remaining vague. The holy grail of artificial intelligence, general AI, seems to be outside of this need for having to define very specific contexts to evaluate ethical approaches – so if you expect a book on general AI, this is not for you.

I was also pleased that there is at least some coverage of the ethical implications of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which will come into force in May 2018. This has wide ranging consequences not only for businesses but also individuals and I do not think that individuals are yet aware of this sufficiently.

I felt that the range of topics was particularly useful for people with some previous background around areas such as digital ethics, information ethics, or similar. However, I think the book misses a trick in terms of marketing this book to a wider audience. Maybe for a second edition, the chapters could contain some additional help for the reader to navigate through the huge range of ideas presented. Depending on the nature and complexity of these ideas, this could be done in table format, through figures, or (and I personally think this would work particularly well) through chapter summaries that also contain references to related reading materials.

Overall, the stances expressed in the book seemed relatively neutral in whether an increased prevalence of data in the near future is good or bad. It seemed to say: well, humans are likely to have a good level of control over whether the consequences are good or bad, as long as there is transparency and an open discussion around ethical aspects surrounding data.

To sum up, this is a welcome and timely discussion on most subject areas related to digital ethics for readers with some prior knowledge of the field. The last words of the edited chapters in this book are "In any given instance we need to consider the chain of causality and the most effective ways to prevent harm." (p. 210). For me, this seems an appropriate way to wrap up the book (even though it was probably not intended that way), reminding readers to analyse the specific situation first and then act with the key aim of preventing harm to individuals whenever businesses and individuals use digital technologies.

It will be fascinating to revisit the book in, say, 2027, and see to which degree there is then an answer to the question in the title, and more importantly, what the different answers (in the plural) are – relevant to the specific contexts. It is to be hoped that the digital age of the future will be beneficial to individuals and society.

Review:
Michael Eldred: *The Land of Matta*.

Reviewed by Jared Bielby, MA/MLIS. bielby@ualberta.ca

Co-chair, International Center for Information Ethics

Eldred's grand philosophical phantasy presents a mathematical journey unlike no other. Allegorical fictions align in an almost impermeable complexity comparable only to David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest* but dressed in the quirkiness of the best of classical childhood fables. Toying with reader expectations of genre and trope and balanced between joviality and sombre reflection, *The Land of Matta* demands a simultaneous appreciation of both satire and wide-eyed wonder as it propels the reader through a humorous exposé of modern scientific inquiry, promulgated by protagonists Phi and Psi whose monomyth mirrors the incarnation of quantum formulae more than it does existential passage.

Divided into two parts, *The Land of Matta* first recounts *In Quest of Mu*, the upward journey of Phi and Psi from their home Rutan to the land of Matta in a plot that pays homage to classical mythological archetypes of ascension reminiscent of Olympus and Sinai. In their search for Mu, an ancient philosophical refugee from Athens, the pair encounter a number of characters along their journey where each character represents the subtle workings of quantum mechanics sung to the theme of *movement*. Similar to classical stories of absurdist self-discovery reflective of the *Wizard of Oz* and *Alice and Wonderland*, Phi and Psi discover with each encounter those lessons most reflective of their own being's journey. Existential angst is met when the wanderers uncover the truth of their quest: that their mountain god has abandoned his perch in heaven, i.e. Matta, and moved on, pursuant his own philosophical quest towards the discovery of why it is that there is movement at all.

Book two, in a nod to quantum physics, courts disenchantment on *The Way Back to Anaxaton* when the final curtain is pulled back to reveal an Oz-like puppeteer arbitrarily controlling the scenes, and Phi and Psi discover that there is in fact no formulae to reality at all, but only random symbolism, reflective perhaps of the existential abyss of their own being, where only choice decoupled from destiny can define one's journey.

Eldred has constructed a multi-layered narrative in this work, best reflected in the book's subtitle: *a philosophical, quantum-mechanical phantasy*. Indeed, the tale of Phi and Psi is a narrative that joins an intricately fictionalized philosophical examination to the oft incomprehensible realm of quantum physics and explores the nature of *being* along the way. The Land of Matta is a grand sort of work, one that could easily be interpreted towards more than one end. Unexpectedly esoteric at times and packed with anagrams and hidden linguistic devices, this work is not for the faint-hearted. Ripe with scientific and philosophical complexity, some of it too subtle for the average reader to unpack, Eldred's venture into fiction presents a wonderfully original alternative to the usual academic "philosophical quantum-mechanical" investigation.