BRIEF CONSIDERATIONS OVER THE PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY AND COMPUTING SOCIETY – THE COMPLENTARITY BETWEEN HABERMAS AND SCHAFF

BREVES CONSIDERAÇÕES SOBRE O DISCURSO FILOSÓFICO DA MODERNIDADE E A SOCIEDADE DA INFORMÁTICA – A COMPLEMENTARIEDADE ENTRE HABERMAS E SCHAFF

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ABSTRACT: Would the modernity defended by Habermas still be in progress as he supports it or would it have its cycle concluded? Has the proposal made by Schaff about Computing Society been fulfilled according to his assumptions? Or even in a third rout would both theories complement each other in subsequent points in their paths? This paper doesn't intend to affirm if one or the other proposal is correct, but to assert the possibility of complementarity.
Key Words: Philosophy. Modernity. Computing Society. Data Society. Evolution of Society.

RESUMO: A modernidade defendida por Habermas estaria ainda em andamento como ele defende ou já teve seu ciclo encerrado? A proposta de Schaff sobre a Sociedade Informática se cumpriu conforme suas suposições? Ou em uma terceira via as teorias de ambos se complementariam em pontos sequenciais em seus caminhos? O presente artigo não pretende afirmar se uma ou outra proposta é a correta, mas sim a possibilidade de complementariedade.
Palavras Chave: Filosofia. Modernidade. Sociedade Informática. Sociedade de dados. Evolução da Sociedade.

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Introduction

The present article uses as inspiration the viewpoint of two current philosophers, the German Jurgen Habermas, from the School of Frankfurt and advocate of the Modernity Philosophic discourse and on the other side there's Adam Schaff, the Polish who wrote about Computing Society for the renowned Club of Rome.

Both, within their respective philosophical convictions, have founded arguments built beyond factual and historical bases to defend their positions. It's up to the reader the final analysis and convincing of which proposal would be of higher persuasion, or even the possibility of complementarity of the proposal; as we well know in philosophical terms more important than the conclusion itself is the way we follow up to the conclusion, being that of the author or the one extracted by the reader.

In order to locate ourselves about Schaff's and Habermas's positioning, we need to primarily know a bit about each of them. Jurgen Habermas (Dusseldorf, June 18 1929) is a pupil from the Frankfurt School funded in Germany, a pupil of T. Adorno. The School of Frankfurt is considered the birthplace critical theory studies, its foundation was in1924 on Félix Weil's initiative, it was initially called "Institute for Social Research", the School of Frankfurt was originally intended to fill the space of the German Universities which were indifferent regarding labor movement studies inspired by socialists, Habermas was a critic of determined conception of modernityas a philosopher and sociologist.

On the other hand Adam Schaff (Lviv, March 19 1913 – Warsaw, November 12 2006) was a member of the Polish Academy Of Sciences and the Club of Rome, the latter created in 1966, composed by scientists, industrial and politicians with the purpose of discussing and analyzing the economical growth limit taking in consideration the increasing usage of natural resources. Funded by Italian industrial Aurelio Peccei and by the Scottish scientist Alexander King, the Club of Rome became very well known since 1972, publication year of a report entitled *The Growth Limits* elaborated by a team from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), hired by the Club of Rome and headed by Dana Meadows. Through mathematical models, MIT arrived to the conclusion that Planet Earth wouldn't support it's population growth due to the

pressure created upon the natural and energetic resources and the growth of pollution, even considering the technological advancement.

I. HABERMAS'S MODERNITY

According to Habermas, modernity began in the middle of the XV century and it follows until the modern days. Different from the historic-anthropologic classifications, which divide the existence of humanity in periods (Prehistory, Ancient Age, Middle Age, Modern, Contemporary) as of the natural, geological, biological or social changes or even changes in relevant political facts, modernity receives this denominations to configure and stand for a modification in the way of comprehension of the world since the middle of the XV century and it develops until today. The peculiarities of this way of comprehension, could be said, is the way of modern comprehension brings in itself the valorization of the subjective element and the reason for excellence of definition social, political, cultural and cognitive parameters, comprehending the processes of transformation of society as the collective learning processes.

Until the age of Enlightenment society was supported by dogmas which marked it's development in every sense, especially those introduced by the church that imposed legislative and society control rules, modernity refers itself to the social formations of our time, of the present times. Habermas affirms that the begging of modernity is anchored to three worldwide historic events that happened in Europe: The Protestant Reformation, The Age of Enlightenment and The French Revolution, facts and situations which made men change the approach they have towards the world. With an increase in social transformations happening in the following centuries in the West, we can consider its birthplace Europe. Its posteriors effects reach the north hemisphere specially the North Atlantic.

To Habermas the evolutions or transitions between social points of structure, where change of ideas happen, they are always preceded before a crisis, also called points of inflexion, the social crises and/or the philosophical thoughts happened before the events shown as a key point or a point of inflexion, (The Protestant Reformation, The Age of Enlightenment and The French Revolution) bringing the concept of modernization as described:

> The concept of modernization refers itself to a conjunction of cumulative processes and mutual reinforcements: to the formation of

capital and mobilization of resources; to the development of productive forces and to the increase of work productivity; to the establishment of centralized political power and to the formation of national identities; to the expiation of political participation, urban forms of living and formal educational training; to the secularization of values and norms etc (HABERMAS, 2000. p. 5)[4].

We notice the characteristics mentioned which are alterations in the perception of society are deeply connected to the events quoted before the inflexion point, to the perception and to the base of application of Habermas's discourse of modernity.

Considering that one of the goals of modernity according to the author would be to release yourself from the earlier models in the pursuit of self-certification, in other words, to base yourself in you and new facts to certify new actions and convictions, consequently the critical Project about Kant can be thought as pioneer of philosophical modernity. Habermas, states that "modernity can't and doesn't want to assume models and its criteria and orientations, from another age it has to extract from itself its normativity" (HABERMAS, 2000. P. 29)[5]. The answer Habermas gave to Kant goes in the direction that experience cant be compared with transcendental conscience defended by Kant, but the subject should interact with the world objectivity isn't condition enough for the truth.

> Kant expresses the world in a building of thoughts. In fact this only means that in Kantians philosophy essential traces of the age reflect as in a mirror, without Kant conceptualizing modernity as such. Only through a retrospective view Hegel can understand Kant's philosophy as a decisive self-interpretation from modernity. Hegel also aims to know what was left unthought-of in this expression reflected at the time: Kant did not consider as divisions the differentiations in the inside reason, neither the formal divisions inside of culture, nor in general the dissociation of these spheres, Kant ignores the necessity that manifests with the separations imposed by the principles of subjectivity.(HABERMAS, 2000. P. 29-30)[6] (tradução nossa).

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[4] O conceito de modernização refere-se a um conjunto de processos cumulativos e de reforços mutuo: à formação de capital e mobilização de recursos; ao desenvolvimento das forças produtivas e ao aumento da produtividade do trabalho; ao estabelecimento do poder político centralizados e à formação de identidade nacionais; à expansão dos direitos de participação politica, das formas urbanas de vida e da formação escolar formal; à secularização de valores e normas e etc.

[5] a modernidade não pode e não quer tomar dos modelos de outra época os seus critérios de orientação, ela tem de extrair de si mesma a sua normatividade. (tradução nossa)

[6] Kant expressa o mundo em um edifício de pensamentos. De fato isso significa apenas que na filosofia kantianos traços essenciais da época se refletem como em um espelho, sem que Kant tivesse conceituado a modernidade enquanto tal. Só mediante uma visão retrospectiva Hegel pode entender a filosofia de Kant como auto-interpretação decisiva da modernidade. Hegel visa conhecer também o que restou de impensado nessa expressão mais refletida da época: Kant não considera como cisões as diferenciações no interior da razão, nem as divisões formais no interior da cultura, nem em geral a

Habermas suggests that the Kantian concept for formal reasoning is in itself distinctive and finds the delimitation of the modernity theory, if characterized by its relevant aspects about substantial rationality waiver, about metaphysic-religious tradition in favor of formal reasoning, in counterpoint to Kant who defended that.

> Our age is the age of criticism, which everything has to submit. Religion, because of its sanctity and legislation, by Its Majesty, want to equally subtract themselves from want it. However they elicit against them justified suspicions and can't aspire to the sincere respect, which reason can only concede to those who can support their free public exam. (KANT, 1989, p. 3-6)[7] (tradução nossa).

After defining some of the proposed questions by Habermas regarding the concept of modernity we've got an idea of that the author intended with his philosophical discourse, that is the rationalization of human thinking and his reflections about society in the sense of independence of the influence of the church's power, creation of laws that were based in the moral human experience, ethical and justice without religious-metaphysical traditions. Searching for evolution of human thoughts and reflexes on society enabling the evolution of means of production, from the capital and from the influence of the government over the governed, as the State's instrument of social control which from this point wouldn't be bigger or smaller but different.

2. SCHAFF'S COMPUTING SOCIETY

To Habermas "accomplishments" of the State and society, the ones influenced by change of thought introduced by the phenomenon of modernity persists until today, when men continues to score himself not by old models but for his actual current experience, therefore a process which renews and updates each day, says the author.

Said evolution makes sense when the evolution of the States to the formation known today is explained. Along with the formation of the States, as well as the explanation of the industrial revolution, the modification of the means of production that started to standardize the products and in turn had large scale production establishing the downfall of the final frontier, at least for the international commerce,

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dissociação dessas esferas, Kant ignora a necessidade que se manifesta com as separações impostas pelo principio da subjetividade.
[7] A nossa época é a época da crítica, à qual tudo tem que submeter-se. A religião, pela sua santidade e a legislação, pela sua majestade, querem igualmente subtrair-se a ela. Mas então suscitam contra elas justificadas suspeitas e não podem aspirar ao sincero respeito, que a razão só concede a quem pode sustentar o seu livre e público exame.

because it would be necessary to search new markets in regards to the quantity of output at the time.

However we should make a new cut at this point in order to analyze the sequence of change; after the cited industrial revolution happened between the centuries XVIII and XIX characterized mostly by the implementation of steam machine in the industries substituting in production men's physical force by the energy of the machines.

To the Polish philosopher Adam Schaff, in his work *A Sociedade Informática* mentions and cites the second technical-industrial revolution, which brought great alterations to the way society, is interpreted. The second technical-industrial revolution addresses robotics and mechanization of roles once performed by men, and concerning the this development three areas are of supreme importance: microelectronics evolution, biologic and energy source, the ones treated in the following part. Schaff's reference point is modernity, understood as an ensemble of effective practices that will in the future affect everyone.

> The concept of ideology adopted is the one of entirety of ideas (*common sense*), attitudes and types of human behaviors that, established in in a system of accepted believes, determines the focuses of someone's actions, which are instructed to transform an ideal form of society in reality.(SECO, 2005, p.191)[8] (tradução nossa).

The microelectronic and technological-industrial revolution refers to the huge technological development occurred in the means of production that in analogy with the first industrial revolution substituted men's force for machine's energy facilitating men's lives including in different fashions including quantitative advancements, now it intends only the eliminations of human labor to increment robotics that consequently performs much more efficiently the same job for a infinite lower cost, for example we verify the new automotive industry, where a good part of the labor was substituted by machines. Said evolution is included in Schaff's words "on one side for freedom of men from the divine damnation of the Old Testament, according to which he should earn the daily bread with the sweat from his face" (SCHAFF, 2007, p. 22)[9] (tradução nossa). However such evolution entails another series of social problems that will have as

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[8] O conceito de ideologia que adota é o da totalidade das ideias (common sense), atitudes e tipos de comportamentos humanos que, fundando-se num sistema de valores aceitos, determina os objetivos dos atos da pessoa, que são orientados a transformar uma forma ideal de sociedade em realidade.

[9] Por um lado pela libertação do homem da maldição divina do Velho Testamento, segundo a qual ele deveria ganhar o pão de cada dia com o suor do seu rosto.

consequence people losing their source of income with the industrialization of their job functions, not only in the industry since nowadays there's more industrialization being implanted in the service sector. That's a very complex matter, that in our viewpoint deserves a specific study regarding its specificity and social reflexes that won't be treated in this paper.

The second relevant point to the second technological-industrial revolution proposed by Schaff and the technological-scientific revolution that we observed in the microbiological (biotechnology) revolution and its resulting component genetic engineering, with its advancements allowed men to unravel the living beings genetic codes, followed by its decoding, the entitled genetic engineering allowed men to control the genetic code of plants and animals enabling the creation on new codes, until then nonexistent. Because of its advancements, the XXI century is commonly characterized as the period which human activities will be widely influenced by biology. Such case allows a range of situations that we will fight against the congenital diseases or yet allow a new production of plants and animals more resistant to plagues and illnesses even unfavorable environmental situations for combating world hunger. On the other hand the same genetic engineering can be used to less commendable endings like biological warfare, those situations couldn't be pushed aside regarding its importance and possible outcomes to society.

Finally, the third item mentioned by Schaff was how essential the second technological-industrial revolution mentions the energetic source or the energetic revolution. In order for us to continue with the acquired progress, especially in the last century it is indispensible that our energetic source is substituted, once the used source is insufficient and it is rapidly running out this substitution should occur by a more powerful source which pollutes less and that are endless, opposite to oil and coal.

Contemplating that, we could gather more energetic resources with the development of researches about renewable sources like solar energy, geothermic, wind, water currents and mostly nuclear, such forms of energy no shadow of a doubt would help a lot so the revolution occurs specially in a sustainable way, however if used with undesirable intentions, for example, for military ends, irreversible damages could be caused to our society and most importantly to our planet. According to what we monitored at the end of the last century a huge advancement in some described

categories especially solar energy, geothermic and wind energy, as examples of clean and renewable energy sources, have seen its growth each day. Although, nuclear energy produced through controlled fusion of atoms, still is the first of the researches and usage, but there are risks of accidents and threats of military use.

Human evolution will never be negative, however if the application happens in the wrong way there can be enormous damage to us all as Schaff's words describe:

> This revolutionary triad – microelectronic, microbiology and nuclear energy – marks wide ways of our knowledge in regard to the world and also the development of humanity. As seen, the possibilities for growth are enormous, just as the inherent risks to it, especially to the social sphere. (SCHAFF, 2007, P.25)[10] (tradução nossa).

According to the author, these revolutionary transformations alongside the consequential modifications in production and in services also cause changes in social relations – alterations in political formations, social, economical and cultural of society.

3. A NEW INFLEXION POINT

According to Habermas understanding we still live under the aegis of his definition of modernity and its effects persists until today. Considering that modern men continue to mark him not for late models but for current experiences, that this process is renewed and modernized each day.

On the other hand, Adam Schaff disagrees with such affirmation when it glimpses a second technological-industrial revolution with the evolution of biotechnology, energy sources and automation of means of production, according to his verification in "*Sociedade Informática*".

Since the observation made by Schaff the technological evolution developed almost exponentially. Communication is already an accomplished fact and naturally necessary for the development of a society, certainly reflecting in all population. The technological revolution of the XIX century by means of north American military system dissemination ARPAnet, which was later used in the academic environment with information Exchange purposes after the creation of the Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) that later came to be known as the INTERNET

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[10] Essa tríade revolucionária – microeletrônica, microbiologia e energia nuclear – assinala os amplos caminhos do nosso conhecimento a respeito do mundo e também do desenvolvimento da humanidade. Como vimos, as possibilidades de desenvolvimento são enormes, como também são enormes os perigos inerentes a elas, especialmente na esfera social.

we know today, altered structures that existed until then in society, especially in the area of communication with the main characteristic being the possibility of the wide access to information, justifying the denomination society of information.

However we clarified that society of information isn't limited only to the use of Internet alone, it extends to all and every means of communication, live or not.

The instruments of communication characterized by informatics and by telecommunications contributed to the modification of the social structure, especially in the labor areas, leisure, economics and mostly in face of interpersonal relations, building a global society, in other words, a society that transcends our local relationships and starts to have worldwide and globalized reach.

The definition given by Marques and Martins is very coherent to the sense of Society of Information "the optimum use of new Technologies of information and of communication, in respect of democratic principles, of equality and solidarity, aiming the reinforcement of the economy and provision of labor and, nevertheless, the improvement in every citizen's quality of life" (MARQUES; MARTINS, 2000, p. 43)[11] (tradução nossa).

Other authors bring different denominations to the society we live in, for example the professor and lecturer from Catholic Pontifical University of São (PUC/SP) Márcio Pugliesi.

> Once the information produced is compiled by the collectivity it is denominated "data", it conceptualizes modern society as "data society" or "society of control" because not only it discusses about the existence of a huge production of data today but also the important aspect that is the control of this data. (PUGLIESI, 2015, p. 198)[12] (tradução nossa)

The use of the internet became essential as means to the basic daily activities, like consuming things, banks transactions, researches, marketing, health, government activities, even relationships through social networks, altering individual behavior as well as corporative and professional.

Allied to technological development and convergence, the digital era brought a new framework to society, with millions of new possibilities, but also new challenges

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[11] O uso óptimo das novas tecnologias da informação e da comunicação, em respeito pelos princípios democráticos, da igualdade e da solidariedade, visando o reforço da economia e da prestação de serviços públicos e, a final, a melhoria da qualidade de vida de todos os cidadãos.

[12] uma vez que o conjunto de informações produzidas pela coletividade é denominada como "dados", conceitua a sociedade atual como uma "sociedade de dados" ou "sociedade de controle" pois não apenas discute sobre a existência e grande produção de dados na atualidade mas um aspecto importantíssimo que é o controle destes dados

to be understood and surpassed, in other words, we arrived in a new era of transition or in a new inflection point.

Every day new Technologies are implemented in our routine, all of them based on production of data, the new Technologies also cause different phenomenon in society, bringing closer who is far but at the same time pushing away who is close by, an example of that in the indiscriminate and exaggerated use of *smartphones.* Every technological interaction today, being through smartphones or computers or any other electronic device for the matter is exposed to the creation of data/information.

Arising then the importance of the study of Social and Power relations resulting from a new phenomenon, the society of dada or the society of control, an ensemble of immeasurable information in exponential daily progress, stored in information centers or datacenters, interconnected to a network of global telecommunication, which provides the data that are in a "cloud" to supercomputers, and the main hubs, like Google for example.

Naturally, said content volume isn't amenable of direct administration and assimilation by a human being. That said, math and logic together came up with algorithms, softwares, hardwares and built what we call "artificial intelligence".

This technology is intrinsically connected to decision making, being for the capital, to know more about the clientto increase the earnings and the expenditure or, data analysis for the most diverse types of utilizations (as cite PUGLIESI and BRANDÃO, 2015)

> We live in a society where information is one of the most valuable rights, allowing the practice of a control with no exact or clear measures (especially on the internet). The technology of big data, in the scenery, are developed with ambition to allow the faster and more efficient surfing in the ocean of daily produced data (which only tends to grow) – granting new modulations of control.(PUGLIESI; BRANDÃO, 2015, pp. 453 – 482)[13] (tradução nossa).

Today the human being doesn't comprehend that we are without a doubt giving up our freedom in exchange for a comfort situation or "status quo" maintenance, or even a name in the pseudo safety the State provides or should provide.

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[13] Vive-se em uma sociedade onde a informação é um dos bens mais valiosos, possibilitando o exercício de um controle ainda sem medidas exatas ou claras (ainda mais na internet). As tecnologias de big data, nesse cenário, são desenvolvidas com a ambição de possibilitar uma navegação mais rápida e eficiente no oceano de dados produzidos diariamente (e que só tende a crescer) – possibilitando ainda novas modulações de controle.

By means of control and possibility of information analysis granted graciously to those who produce the "System" without wanting to nominate if the economic power or the State get to control the ways of society to the direction in which desired, being for persons gain and profit, the power resulted by the manipulation of information and control of society is infinite times bigger today than it was in any other time. That way, we notice that in our currentness a new inflexion point or a rupture with structures priorly proposed like Habermas modernity discourse.

CONCLUSION

When analyzing Habermas proposal in his Philosophical Discourse of Modernity we arrived in the brief conclusion that only in the last four centuries, after important historic events, men conquered the self-government, emerging the unseen necessity of governing through reason. There is no influence from myths and religion as tools for social control. The bourgeoisie evolution, holders of the means of productions, would be impossible in the late regimes. There are inquiries if the self-government is an achievement or a consequence of the Capital. At this point and study Habermas suggests justifying the protection of Democracy (Capital) as the best choice. It's very comprehensible the current crises in our system, these are phenomenon (consequences) of the precociousness of our time (Democracy), or even a necessity to rupture what is placed (again) a need of Capital to create new "bases" for its development.

Since then we found Schaff's proposal that would be the natural evolution to Habermas modernity, with the systematic implementation in the sense of diverse system implementation that entangle us and compel the rendition of our information (data) in exchange of the impression of freedom (reality of control) of data. The predictions Schaff made in his work back in 1985 could seem apocalyptic to a certain degree, however it represents the individual as a social being with a collective existence inside a social structure, within a social division in work, in their productive activity and in their social life considering the individual social and biological, in other words, referring to the social individual and to the biological conditioned and socially bound and equally unique to an distinct existence. The contradiction society of control or data is in the fact that in reinforcing the alienation men, but on the other allowing it

to be surpassed, being for personal accomplishment or religion now without so much influent as the pre-modern period described by Habermas.

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