

Introduction

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RETHINKING Humanities was a set of events of a strong epistemological nature envisaging the interdisciplinary exploration between several areas of the humanities, taking into account, in particular, the digital context.

It comprised the organization of two milestone events. The first in 2015, focused on a more exploratory content that tried to identify the contribution from various perspectives: Sociology of Communication and Media Studies, Philosophy, Design and Aesthetics. Simultaneously, there were incursions of a more practical type expressed in direct applications of the Humanities crossings around the curatorship of Art, book publishing and agricultural and food practices. The limits of the Human were taken beyond its traditional questioning to focus on the anthropological concept of culture itself.

This disciplinary plurality brings into play different conceptual matrixes. These movements, coming from different approaches, bring together theoretical and practical perspectives that are instrumental to rethinking the Humanities today.

Alastair Fuad-Luke presented a communication that includes agriculture, art, digital media, design and philosophy, developing an innovative framework of Alternative Food Networks (AFNs), and rethinking new opportunities to approach the Humanities. His work focuses on the paradigmatic changes in the way we produce, conceptualize and perceive food, changes developed over the last 20 years, particularly in sustainable and organic agriculture. Looking at alternative food networks, the author identifies new practices of producer-consumer relations that neutralize hegemonic tendencies in neoliberal and global capitalism. In this sense, the Humanities are thought through cultural practices, through the conception of modern and postmodern design in agriculture. These transformations are the example of a reality that is thought in the light of the new forms of mediation and mediatization that imply new ways of projecting of the relation between the transforming agent of the environment and the (agri) cultural practices. Alastair Fuad-Luke analyzes how the relations between production and consumption have changed, questioning the re-socialization practices carried out through new forms of proximity that oppose sustainable and

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non-hierarchized agriculture to the practices of agricultural capitalism that emerged in modern times. His work appears, in this perspective, as an attempt to project future ecosophies that sanction a new relationship between things and systems.

The second text, by Anna Calvera, discusses the aesthetics associated with the commodification of the everyday world as a fundamental characteristic for understanding capitalism in the third millennium. To admit that consumption is one of the practices among others in which the project intervenes, considering its point of view, the aesthetics translated into the generalization of visual culture, is not necessarily negative, as is commonly regarded. It can even express itself through an ethical and careful way of dealing with objects while preserving their original values. In this sense, Calvera proposes to recover the daily and humble dimension of the aesthetic behavior that is reflected by Design, a feature that makes the world more livable, providing well-being and a higher quality of life in organized human communities. Applying aesthetic-philosophical thinking to the practice and culture of design in a process that implies the development of an interconnection with the arts is at the heart of Calvera's work. The author rethinks the aesthetic dimension in a strict sense, concentrating on daily life, on the world at our disposal, outside the artistic universe, understood merely as Fine or Decorative Arts, while at the same time leading to the modification of both instances.

André Barata discloses the internal link between the crisis of the human being and the crisis of the humanities. This crisis passes through the erosion or the contingency imposed to the limits of what was considered human, translated in our modernity by the elimination of ambivalences and the trivialization of the senses. The narratives derived from sci-fi are understood by the author as one of the possibilities of establishing, from the post-human, a network of resistance to the erosion of the human. Thus, humanity implies a permanent transcendence of its limits, which is constantly questioned by the reference to post-humanity: since the handling of artifacts by primates in the first minutes of 2001: Space Odyssey until the use of language, passing by the constant reference to alienation, the inquiry into the Humanities implies finding in post-humanity the inescapable dimension of humanity itself, which begs the question if it is possible to think about humanity without technique.

The text identifies in the very existence of humanity a disillusioning dialectic in which the technological rationality of modernity was translated into distant projects. This narrative gains its evidence in the dystopian futures that led to the Soviet and Nazi experiences.

In a unique way, but consistent with the conceptual background of the conference, Arianna Ciula reflects on the interrelation between Humanities and New Humanities in an academic perspective. The digital humanities are described as a challenge of hybridization of the academic practices in the field of the humanities that results from the insertion of new technologies. The discussion is related to the concept of digital memory and presents the concept of humanities as an academic area committed to the practices of meaning production that relate the past and the present. The idea, however, is not to subsume the study of the humanities in a sort of empiricist and positivist agenda, but instead to maintain the recognition of its interpretative and critical dimension. In this sense, it is important that the articulation between the digital and the humanities be made under the aegis of a humanistically informed framework. Hence the learning and use of technology never loses the perspective of a project that implies the establishment of brid-

ges between cultural scientific practices and distinct and generally separated epistemic traditions. Using modeling as a process of meaning and reasoning, suggests its practice within a semiotic framework, so as to consider it as a strategy to make sense through practical thinking (model creation and manipulation).

Peter Dahlgren, in turn, establishes the relationship between media studies and the Web by summoning the humanities as allies of this relational process. The author attempts to call for a greater commitment of the humanities to this interpellation of the Web. Refusing a deterministic view of the media, the author concludes that digital media have much to do with how we play, how we socialize and achieve goals, in short with the way we experience the world and, simultaneously, give our account of the experience of the world. Therefore, the media cannot dissociate from the people and their subjectivities, their culture and their values. One of the essential elements is the establishment of the relationship between the humanities and critical spirit, according to a perspective that goes back to the Enlightenment. The author praises the moment when a critical adjective has been associated with art, science and the quest for knowledge. Another element that comes to the fore in his reflection and which he considers essential for communication is the refusal of a static vision of the Humanities, rather considering a constant critical dialogue on the circumstances of the human world that aims to interpret, understand and transform. Finally, Dahlgren carries from the media studies the concept of mediatization, as a transdisciplinary element that calls with particular emphasis on humanistic perspectives. Thus the dilemmas of online life, as they are called, are reflected in practical-normative, cognitive, subjectivity and civic commitment, areas in which the recurrence of humanistic themes remains.

The last text of the first part of this thematic issue, from João Carlos Correia, maintains that in spite of a recent positivist turn directed to the collection of empirical data receiving some appeal among young researchers, Communication Sciences have always maintained the existence of critical points of view deeply related with the phenomenon of meaning and relationship, which are in fact the core of its epistemological meaning. In this text, Communication confronts two proposals: one would be a minimalist version of communication, limited to the selection of the most effective means for the control of receivers, thus identifying only the clarity of the message, the correction of the code and the avoiding of any entropy. In the end, it would be just as a mathematical theory of communication applied to the specific field of cultural phenomena that would completely forget its cultural dimension. On the opposite side of the spectrum, a set of theories can be found, that despite their importance for acknowledging the link between culture, communication and society, lead to a culturalist reduction of communication. We are more or less familiar with the emergence of the interpretive paradigm in the social sciences. This paradigm implies the substitution of an inductive and analytical method, applicable to natural sciences, by a method involving an understanding of meaningful phenomena practiced by human subjects.

The reduction of Communication Sciences to their mere informational nature does not favour the understanding of its social nature. Thus, the author sustains the need of adopting a posture in which cultural phenomena must be understood from a predominantly, but not exclusively, communicational point of view; and communicative action would be understood from a predominantly, but not exclusively, cultural point of view. The specificity of communicative and

cultural phenomena always implies both a time to instrumentality and finality. One can thus speak of communication and culture as two discursive formations that embrace the same phenomena.

The second Meeting took place in 2016 postulating a more specific reference to the issue of Visibility and Transparency. Adriano Duarte Rodrigues advanced the thesis that the media are a field that ensures the visibility of other social fields, considering the field of the media as the field of visibility *par excellence* of the other social fields. Rodrigues accounts the problematic nature of the permanent negotiation that the field of communication exchanges with other social fields, to preserve its own autonomy, and criticized the identification between media and the business organizations, public or private, that control newspapers, such as radios, televisions, and more recently social networks. The obsession from communication scholars for the industrial sector neglects the specificity of the technical nature of the media and implies the adoption of anachronistic perspectives. The media emerge mainly as technical devices that ensure interaction between people, regardless of where and when it occurs, devices that depend on the application and survival of our species. This approach produces anachronistic effects because it prevents us from seeing the media emergence as something available not only today but as old as the history of the species. This confusion between media and journalism, television and more recently with social networks has, nevertheless, an even more important result, forgetting that the first medium is language, the invent that allowed man to constitute the world as a humanly possible environment in which people meet and interact. The text recalls us to the fact that if we stop to think, we see that we only remember what happened after we started talking, and only in the environment created by language can we access consciousness and can, therefore, consider visibility humanly possible of the world. One of the consequences of this oblivion that the first and fundamental medium is language, it's the inversion of the relation between language and the other media. One is led to think that it is the technical media devices that produce a language when in fact, it is precisely the opposite: it is the other media that perform technically or exteriorize different components of language.

Maria Eugenia Barrichello departs from the point of view according to which information, communication technologies and their social uses change the possibilities of seeing and being seen, of interacting at a distance, of representing and identifying the real, phenomena that have repercussions on the processes of institutionalization and of obtaining legitimacy to social practices. Her essay tries to overcome the dichotomy between human versus technology, using the understanding of technology as a cultural artifact and therefore as a product of human experience and social relations. Eugénia Barrichello underlines how the appropriation and use of technology and the cultural and communicational actions are connected in the real society. The media emerge as a cultural artifact that currently permeates society in such a way that it is not possible to consider it separate from institutions and organizations. They can no longer be understood as mere institutions, organizations and organizations for the achievement of some ends. Media have become part of the production of society and also an independent institution in the process that affects institutions, organizations and organizations in their relationships and interactions.

In a sceptical regime of understanding organic and inorganic interfaces, Rui Matoso denies the supposed phenomenological invisibility of mental images, demonstrating a possibility of extractive technology that transduces the electrical impulses formed in the neural networks of the visual cortex, in pixels. On this new level, Matoso maintains that we are immersed in the global

techno-aesthetic device, we are mobilized by the technical structure of the premeditation, toward a potential future of real virtually. Hence, the author does not avoid to refer the new configurations of power and asserts that the neocybernetic automation and invisibility of domination is not the result of the transcendental power of a supreme artificer, but rather of a new regime of governability and control of subjectivities brought about by treatment accumulated information (algorithmic governance). In a rigorous understanding of perception, the author considers that it is not possible to hermetically separate the sphere from the immediate date of the perception of its historical, social and psychological surroundings crystallized in the regimes of visibility and cognition, where the invisible is exercised as a discursive exploration of images.

Thus, it analyzes the regimes of contemporary visibility, where the screen has gained enormous cultural relevance and one can see the fading of the monocular tradition from the visual perspective, without the focal point of view, in favor of multiple perspectives provided by the plurality of the producers of images and contents.

Samuel Mateus considers that the concept of visibility becomes problematic in the new hypervisibility regimes which generate new forms of opacity that are not formed by the secret but by and omnivorous pan-visibility. This paper suggests three lines of theoretical and empirical research on the topic of "visibility": a sociological (symbolic) axis; a collective axis (publicity) and a technological axis in mediation processes. This implies a promising distinction which, once again, is not alien to the intertextuality with previous issues: the visibility, using its own terms, as a field whose symbolic determination results in the constitution of different regimes; a visibility as publicity since it is the publicity that changes a proto-visibility into an accomplished visibility; and finally, the transmutations and dangers arising from the media production of visibility.