

Urgency and emergency in communicational capitalism or rethinking the importance of recognition

Urgência e emergência no capitalismo comunicacional ou repensando a importância do reconhecimento

JOSÉ LUIZ AIDAR PRADO^a

Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. São Paulo – SP, Brazil

ABSTRACT

In the world of neoliberal hyperactivity of communicational capitalism, network mediatization brings the semiotizing imperative of productivity that demands that social impact and attention be capitalized. Modernity has deficits and excesses. Habermas tried to address this crisis based on system/lifeworld dualism and universal pragmatics. Honneth criticized Habermas based on the theory of recognition. Recognition movements followed the capital/labor struggles, focusing on a political struggle based on constructing identities. Fraser proposes the tension between recognition and distribution. Safatle shows the deficit of negativity in Honneth's criticism. The task nowadays involves rethinking recognition in conjunction with the event, so as not to naturalize cooperation, but thinking negativity to create new worlds, as in Safatle and Badiou.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, communicational capitalism, circuit of affections, recognition, event

RESUMO

No mundo da hiperatividade neoliberal do capitalismo comunicacional, a midiatização em rede traz o imperativo semiotizador de produtividade que pede impacto social e atenção a capitalizar. Em relação à modernidade há déficits e excessos. Habermas tentou tratar essa crise a partir do dualismo sistema/mundo da vida e da pragmática universal. Honneth fez a crítica de Habermas a partir da teoria do reconhecimento. Os movimentos de reconhecimento sucederam as lutas capital/trabalho, centrando-se na luta política a partir da construção de identidades. Fraser propõe tensão entre reconhecimento e distribuição. Safatle mostra o déficit de negatividade na crítica de Honneth. A questão hoje é repensar o reconhecimento em cruzamento com o acontecimento, de modo a não

^aIs psychoanalyst and professor of the Postgraduate Studies Program in Communication and Semiotics at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP). Holds a Ph.D degree from PUC-SP, master's from University of São Paulo (USP) and bachelor's in Philosophy from USP. Was vice-president of Compós and member of the CNPq evaluation committee. Is author of *Habermas com Lacan e Convocações biopolíticas nos dispositivos comunicacionais*. Co-author of *Comunicação em rede na década do ódio e de Sintoma e fantasia no capitalismo comunicacional*, and organizer of two hypermedias: *A invenção do Mesmo e do Outro na mídia semanal* and *Regimes de visibilidade em revistas*. Consulting editor for the magazine *Galáxia*. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9540-7115>. E-mail: aidarprado@gmail.com.

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naturalizar a cooperação, mas pensando a negatividade para criação de novos mundos, como em Safatle e Badiou.

Palavras-chave: Neoliberalismo, capitalismo comunicacional, circuito dos afetos, reconhecimento, acontecimento

INTRODUCTION

THE CURRENT METHOD of production is based on immaterial semiotic overproduction, which invests texts in movement, articulating various language matrices: sound, visual and written. It is about creating an artificial environment in which culture is the new nature and in which bodily experience is summoned by the devices from all the senses. In terms of the consumer, it is a question of summoning them to *jouissance*. If *jouissance* moves from one end of the *jouissant* surface to the other, producing pain, the system offers specific substances and treatments based on diagnoses of disorders that can be placed by health technologists.

There are countless entrepreneurial figures on the networks: influencers explain how a device works or how to do, and the know how to do a procedure; other times, celebrity is built through humor, through unity in suffering, in a specific challenge, around a belief, a journey, humor or hatred. The speakers summon us all the time to hear their news, their good recipes, what we need to become “more” people.

The process of modernity was vertical (from one to all) and sought to schedule its audiences. With the internet, it has given way to a high-circulation mediatization¹ of texts, with multidirectional movements, causing the speakers to multiply. Today, we can speak of multidirectional hypermedia networked devices. Leticia Cesarino (2022, p. 105) says: “linear visions of modernist progress are thus displaced by non-linear time horizons: messianic, millennialist, apocalyptic, regressive”. Media development, the creation of a consumer public by the advertising and marketing system (Fontenelle, 2017), the development of transport, financialization and the transformation of money into something immaterial, etc., have all contributed to this. As a result, “the space-time of the new media goes in the opposite direction to the sociotechnical infrastructure that supported liberal democracy and the modern expert system” (Fontenelle, 2017).

The transformations in the context of capitalism, in its phases or spirits (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2009), have also affected the constitution of subjects who, if they remain the same, become invisible and discredited (garbage). In order not to stop creating attention, to continue capitalizing as an apparent agent of the system, the subject must innovate- continue creating attention, producing more sign-value. According to Cesarino, when “the temporality of crisis causes habit

¹ On capitalizing mediatization in the network era, see Prado (2020, 2022).

to degenerate into addiction, an involutive dynamic similar to that of the wider economic system sets in: the subject must always be updating themselves *just to be able to continue in the same place*” (Cesarino, 2022, p. 106). If the subject does not improve, they fall backwards, their profile wanes, because they always need to create novelty, attention, information. What’s more, they never emerge alone, but always within groups, the networked audiences. Each person is called to hyper-individualize themselves, but always within a hyper-relationalism, hyper-connection, and hyperactivity: “what seems paradoxical from the point of view of the pre-digital model of the subject is functional in terms of the fractal chronotope of the current cybernetic infrastructure” (Cesarino, 2022, p. 107).

Networks today are the empire of the hyper connectivity device. The device is a Foucauldian formation that includes rituals, practices that appeal to the actions of individuals within an imaginary world. Updating Althusser: ideas are inserted into these imaginations through practices ruled by material rituals defined by the devices that circulate competing discourses. In the mediated world of consumption, the emptiness of language is broken and the discourse points to the possibility of full enjoyment, metaphorized in the realization of agents in total consumption. Consumers are urged to endlessly seek objects of satisfaction. In order to exist, the narcissistic agent needs a series of varied objects and treatments, exalted in a social relationship of consumption, in which values are disseminated by means of sign and in different fields of speech (health, sport, work, including journalists, self-help psychologists, drug scientists, physiotherapists with pumped-up bodies, doctors, etc.)

For Althusser, speech invokes concrete speakers, recruiting and interpellating them in the middle of the world to become its apostles: be my follower to become the successful subject at the top of life’s *reality show*. This ideological functioning *recruits* agents from among individuals through *interpellation*. The example he gives to explain interpellation is: the police officer shouts “Hey, you!” When the person questioned turns to answer the police officer, when it turns its body 180 degrees, becomes the *object* of this discourse. Laclau talks about subject positions, created by speeches. The subject is the one who recognizes that the call was addressed to him. Althusser says (1974, p. 100): “The existence of ideology and the calling or interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing”.

Communication in this neoliberal capitalism goes beyond ordinary language, appearing technically shaped in systemic means, aimed at the self-regulation of capitalist subsystems, acting mainly through the technicality of codes: the code marks the contingent and chaotic reality of the systems, creating differences that organize the elements. *Difference* is fundamental in this system. As Gabriel Cohn (2001, p. 42) says,

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the economic form of the information society is capitalist. But the way in which it is produced and reproduced is *overdetermined* by the increasingly full exercise of the most peculiar and intrinsic capacity of information, which, as the term already announces, is precisely that of *imprinting form*.

This goes “far beyond the ability to shape individual perceptions and representations” (Cohn, 2001, p. 42) and was introduced with computerization/digitization technologies. The algorithm has enhanced this imprinting.

Transnational, informational or communicational capitalism deals with complexity, transforming the demands of the world of life into partial questions, read as carrying claims for localized reforms, under the action of digital reengineering, claims that can be met according to rationalized orders of priority and according to the risks and/or dangers they bring to the systemic order. For the system, the world of life has become the environment of modern societies. In this sense, mediatization acts as a set of interconnected subsystems that exposes these risks and acts as an organizer and debater of agendas, calling subject positions in the face of disputed speeches, in search of hegemony in specific tribes and eventually building equivalence chains that operate on differences. Today, what used to be called *agenda setting* is no longer built only within the newsrooms of the media, but within the offices of celebrities, interest groups, NGOs, agencies and other groups that produce attention on the networks. The old news media still exist, but they are one of the places where speeches are produced and circulated, among others, and they need to be aware of the multidirectional communication flows that produce difference, adherence and attention.

The speculator, producer, creator (in advertising, art, cinema, television), political and financial subsystems cannot survive in this highly complex capitalist society without the contributions of “symbolic analysts” (we could say systemic analysts) in a world that has become “communicational”. Symbolic analysts, in the sense of Robert Reich (1994), are technicians in circulation networks (markets, stock exchanges, etc.). They are speech technologists, in Fairclough’s sense, who operate in knowledge markets, as Lacan (2008) says.

THE THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND UNIVERSAL PRAGMATICS

The hermeneutic tradition sought to confront what Habermas called the power of self-directed systems in their language colonization of the lifeworld. In the 1980s, perhaps in a final effort to sustain modern rationality, it tried to operate with the structure × action tension of speakers from the system/

lifeworld discussion (*Lebenswelt*), by postulating *the Theory of Communicative Action* (2012). Habermas reoriented the Marxist paradigm towards that of communicative action, in which the condition for social progress is not established by work, but by social interaction. Habermas develops a pragmatics of language that has to clarify what are the normative conditions that constitute the potential of the rationality of communicative action. The power of self-directed systems has become a threat to the communicative powers of the world of life. Systemic language colonizes culture and reduces the power of everyday communication. The disintegrating force of money, influence and bureaucratic power enters everyday culture, disintegrating the potential for communicative understanding.

Society as a system aims for non-normative control of decisions, i.e. the systemic integration of society. From this point of view, the problems of preserving the economic and political subsystems are tackled. Society as a lifeworld faces the problems of social integration, i.e. the symbolic or normative structures of society, which reproduces itself at both levels: system and lifeworld. When reproducing itself as a system, rational actions with regard to ends predominate (searching for strategic targets, comparing alternatives, building automatic systems capable of responding, etc.); as a lifeworld, society reproduces itself as a culture/normative institutions/personality of the agents, in other words, from a symbolic, participant point of view. Here, the rational approach is that of communicative action, in which the agents do not seek strategic ends, but understanding, even if only partial, of problematic situations in the actors daily lives.

In this book, however, Habermas fails to explain how these two 'parts' of society, system and lifeworld, are connected. In a later book, *Facticity and Validity* (2021), he changes the relationship model between system and lifeworld, proposing the metaphor of locks. The processes of communication and decision-making in constitutional systems are established along a center-periphery axis and are structured by a kind of system of locks, involving two modes of problem-solving.

In modern times, there was an expectation that coalition decisions, in order to be legitimized, should be driven by communication flows that start at the periphery and pass through the barriers of constitutional and democratic procedures located at the entrance to the parliamentary complex or the courts. But judging by our reality in recent years, it cannot be disregarded that many decisions are due to the power, which has become independent, of the administrative complex or even parliamentary power, driven by the *lobbies* of the market and financial elites, and even by the power of reactionary and mafia groups, all circulating on the networks.

This idealized European binary model places the socialized agents belonging to the organizations and institutions of civil society on one side and

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the socio-economic and political subsystems on the other, with a flow between both. The conflicts that arise in the world of life are not always absorbed and properly addressed by the system. With the emergence of the internet, the locks have been minimized by network devices, so that the demands of the everyday world cross paths with systemic operations all the time. Algorithms, for example, are constantly sensing the demands coming from the everyday world in order to process them in real time and respond to them as consumer demands.

A SOCIETY OF CONTEMPT

Honneth (2011) criticized Habermas based on his theory of recognition. The recognition movements succeeded the capital/labor struggles, which began to coexist with the former, focusing on the political struggle based on the construction of identities. His critique of Habermas' theory of communicative action is based on a return to the deficits of the authors' critical theory of the first and second generations of the so-called "Frankfurt School". The theory must reflect both on its emergence in a pre-scientific experience, within concrete lifeworld, and on its use in future practice. The emancipatory interest embedded in social reality itself, linked to the people, must appear here.

The second generation of the Frankfurt School, whose leading figure is Habermas, represents a movement of openness towards the previous negativism, bringing new access to an emancipatory sphere of action. Habermas spoke of a colonization of the lifeworld by the system, which brought negativism back into critical theory, but indicated where human potential was in danger. Honneth's problem is: what experiences in Habermas' theory play the role of bearing daily witness to critique, before any scientific theory? For Honneth, this point opens up an abyss in the theory of communicative action. Habermas deduces, through universal pragmatics, which normative justifications the process of social interaction contains. According to this pragmatics, the linguistic rules that serve as the basis for communicative action establish an understanding free of power.

The question is: what concrete moral experiences does this criticism correspond to in social reality? For Honneth, the subjects involved perceive their moral point of view not as a restriction of linguistic rules, but as an injury to identity claims acquired during socialization. The motivation for social protest behavior is not based on positively formulated moral principles, but on the experience of the violation of ideas of justice given intuitively in the various social groups, precisely those whose demands only reach those in power when they gain visibility on the networks or reach congressmen in some way, because lobbies only serve those who have the systemic means of communication, that

is, power, influence or money. Honneth's proposal is to consider the acquisition of social recognition as the normative condition of all communicative action: subjects find themselves on the horizon of mutual expectations, as moral people seeking recognition. As a result, events in everyday life can be considered moral injustice whenever the people affected suffer from a lack of recognition. For Honneth, moral experiences of this kind are of the order of social contempt. Thus, the communication paradigm of critical theory no longer focuses on linguistic theory, but on the theory of recognition. Feelings of injustice follow structural forms of contempt.

To build this path, Honneth considers three forms of recognition that are communicative conditions for the successful formation of identity: emotional affection in intimate social relationships such as love and friendship (which generates self-confidence), legal recognition as a member responsible for their actions (which generates self-respect) and solidarity, or social appreciation of individual capacities (which generates self-esteem).

REDISTRIBUTION OR RECOGNITION?

Could it be feasible, however, to reduce every social deficit to one of recognition? Nancy Fraser (Fraser & Honneth, 2006) countered this by proposing a tension between recognition and distribution. For her, the demands for social justice are divided into those for redistribution, which advocate a fairer distribution of resources and wealth, and those for recognition, which support greater acceptance of differences and better integration of minorities. That leaves the disjunction: redistribution or recognition? Social democracy or multiculturalism? Redistribution comes from the liberal tradition, with John Rawls and Donald Dworkin. Recognition comes from Hegelian philosophy, designating an ideal reciprocal relationship between subjects. Recognition implies a thesis critical of liberal individualism: social relations are prior to individuals and intersubjectivity is prior to subjectivity. Neo-Hegelians consider redistribution to be individualistic and consumerist, while agents consider recognition to carry an unacceptable communitarian burden. Post-structuralism criticize recognition as carrying normalizing assumptions focused on subjectivity, which prevent a radical critique (we will see Safatle's critique later on).

Fraser starts from the idea of redistribution and recognition as popular paradigms spearheaded by concrete social movements, seeking solutions to injustices. In general, the politics of redistribution is associated with class politics, while the politics of recognition is associated with identity politics (gender, sexuality and ethnicity struggles). Fraser will not go along with this. Several

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progressive authors have criticized identity-based politics, including Butler, Haider and Safatle. Fraser considers both paths as perspectives on social justice.

Fraser's thesis is that all lines of subordination should be considered hybrid, i.e. they bear problems of distribution and recognition. *Repairing injustices in these cases requires both redistribution and recognition*. Fraser develops a two-dimensional conception of justice, integrating redistribution and recognition, based on the notion of *parity of participation*. For parity to be possible, the distribution of material resources must guarantee the independence and voice of all participants (objective condition of parity). On the other hand, institutionalized standards of cultural value must guarantee equal opportunities for all participants in order to achieve social respect (intersubjective condition).

Fraser proposes a *dualism of perspectives*. Here, redistribution and recognition do not correspond to economics and culture, but are two analytical perspectives that can be applied to any field. This allows us to assess the justice of any social practice by asking: does the practice in question serve to guarantee both the objective and subjective conditions of participatory parity? Or does it weaken them? What norms and reforms can improve status and class injustices at the same time? (Fraser & Honneth, 2006, p. 71) What political strategy can satisfactorily integrate redistribution and recognition, while also mitigating the mutual interferences that can arise when trying to achieve both objectives together? How can we eliminate what stands in the way of participatory parity?

Fraser proposes to distinguish two general strategies for repairing injustice that transcend the division between redistribution and recognition: *affirmation* and *transformation*. Affirmative strategies to repair injustices try to correct the unequal results of social agreements without affecting the underlying social structures that generate them. Transformative strategies seek to correct unjust outcomes by restructuring the underlying generative framework. While affirmation focuses on *results*, transformation addresses the *ultimate causes*.

SAFATLE'S CRITICISM

So far, we have dealt with the hermeneutic and critical tradition. However, there is another way, the post-structuralism way, of approaching these issues, with an impact on the way communication is examined. Safatle criticizes both Fraser and Honneth. He also works with the theory of recognition, but beyond the dichotomy between redistribution and recognition. First, let us look at the criticism of Fraser. For him, this discussion of the relationship between redistribution and recognition reduces the reflection

on the nature of social relations into two fields: culture and economics. However, we must add politics as an autonomous field, because we may never be able to separate culture and the production of defensive identities (as Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler hope, each in their own way), but we must evaluate the possibility of affirming that politics is born through the actualization of something we could call the ‘power of depersonalization’ that rises to the scene of common life, leading subjects to no longer speak as if they were bearers of particular identities and interests.” (Safatle, 2015, p. 353)

So how do we deal with the notion of identity? Safatle (2015, p. 355) speaks of a strategic use of it, to the extent that

awareness of vulnerability (of historically deprived groups) is a necessary stage in repositioning society in a situation where indifference to cultural differences is not made impossible by the burden of violence perpetuated against specific groups. In these cases, we can speak of a ‘strategically provisional’ use of the notion of identity.

This introduction to the political discussion is important and is reminiscent of Laclau’s concept (2013) of the people, when he talks about the constitution of the people based on chains of equivalences that reduce the differential load of positions in the discursive field, building an opposition to the power group. Safatle (2015, p. 357) says:

there is politics when the ‘people’ are not a race or a population, the ‘poor’ are not the disadvantaged part of the population, the ‘proletarians’ are not the group of industrial workers, but subjects who do not allow themselves to be inscribed as part of society, who do not allow themselves to be censored by a managerial logic of social life.

In relation to Honneth, Safatle (2015, p. 285) shows the negativity deficit of recognition theory, starting from the “inseparable link between politics and the production of collective identities”. He locates the problems of hegemonic theories of recognition with “their naturalized assumptions of cooperation”. The aim is to reformulate the concept of recognition which, having been recovered in the philosophical context of the 1930s in France by Kojève and later developed by Lacan, Hyppolite, Bataille, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre, was only systematically developed in the 1990s by Honneth (third generation of the Frankfurt School) and Charles Taylor. However, says Safatle, there is a lack of consideration of the previous French reading by these authors of the 1990s. This has the problematic

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consequence of naturalizing cooperation in the theory of recognition. This is why Safatle proposes to recover the French reading of recognition, thinking together with Honneth and Lacan.

In general, processes of recognition are thought of as “movements towards the affirmation of a conquered autonomy and individuality”, which is shown in the “massive contributions to psychoanalytic anthropology by Donald Winnicott, Hans Loewald and other theorists of the theory of object relations” (Safatle, 2015, p. 288). Bringing Lacan into this discussion means rethinking the process of recognition “outside the cultural processes of identity production” (p. 289). Thus, “one of the most innovative clinical contributions of psychoanalysis consists in arguing that the experience of the pathological is the instaurator of the human condition and the privileged way of getting to know our formative processes as well as the traces of our behavioral structures” (Safatle, 2015, p. 291). It is not a question of focusing on the normal personality and its mechanisms for coping with the symptom, but of considering that symptoms are “fundamental expressions of the human condition” (Safatle, 2015, p. 292).

This appears in Lacan’s work at various times and is modified in order to deepen the way in which he conceives the relationship between the imaginary, symbolic and real registers. In the transition from his structuralism phase to the one in which he develops the register of the real, the critique of the “I” and the thought of the end of analysis is increasingly put forward. Later in his work, the symptom is not eliminated at the end of analysis, there are symptomatic remains, and the theme of the analyzed person’s modes of *jouissance* comes to the fore. Analysis is not about dissolving symptoms, but about “dissolving the subject’s attachment to the identity produced by the illness” (Safatle, 2015, p. 294). Not treating pathologies as deviations from a pattern, but as “processes that establish individualities” opens up the perspective of considering that humans are not naturally cooperative and need to “place themselves outside the normality that defines a distended field of cooperation in order to produce something fundamental in relation to their experiences of desire, action and the use of language” (Safatle, 2015, p. 294). Analysis is not an adaptive operation or an attempt to normalize the “I”, but rather to create unique ways out of each person’s symptom. This is not possible within a development of consciousness through coach therapy, centered on a vision of a cooperative and communicative human being.

You have to cross the “I think, therefore I am” of the Cartesian *cogito* in order to be affected by the “I am not” of the unconscious (Lacan, 2023), which means you have to open yourself up to indeterminacy and dispossession. This is the same direction as Butler’s thinking (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013). In order to

think about politics today, it is important not to consider recognition as linked to the attributes of the individual, as prescribed by neoliberalism (Dardot & Laval, 2016). In other words, it is possible to think of recognition “beyond the institutionalized form of the person” (Safatle, 2015, p. 296), in which we seek to bring back negativity as a power for political transformation: “it is a question of knowing how to recognize the malaise related to the person as a way of organizing subjectivity” (Safatle, 2015, p. 313)². From there, Safatle proposes an antipredicative recognition, which does not depend on the individual predicates of the enterprising subject, affirming the need for something of the subject not to pass through its predicates, but to continue as an indeterminate potency.

²For Safatle, another of Honneth's problems is his inability to think about drive theory.

URGENCY AND EMERGENCY

The question today is to rethink recognition at the interface with distribution, but from the political theory of the event, via Badiou and Deleuze³. Badiou (2018) considers that we live under the domination of a doctrine of finitude in the West, linked to cultural relativism, individualism and neoliberalism. Hence, the need to resort to the infinite, beyond this limited culture of democratic materialism, which is another name for globalized capitalism. We need to reabsorb the finite into the infinite. For Badiou (2008), democratic materialism invests in the body and language; the philosopher proposes that beyond this, in which the company is the model of subjectivity, we need to invest in the eventual processes of producing truths, to get out of the dimension of finitude, breaking with the crystallized status quo of institutionalized spaces that suppress the dimensions of politics, art, science and love. Deleuze will also destroy the concept of the subject as a guarantor of universality, as Pelbart (2019, p. 150) says, and as a support for individuation. The subject becomes

³On the theory of the event, see Badiou (2008, 2018) and Prado (2017a, 2017c, 2023).

no longer a function of universalization, but of singularization; no longer a function of individuation based on the self, but anchored in the event. Finally, both indexed to an agency. Suddenly, everything changes and we enter another dimension, no longer made up of subjects, but of singularities, events and agencies.

Safatle (2019) also addresses the finite-infinite dialectic by studying Deleuze's reading of Hegelian dialectics. Deleuze reads Hegelian dialectics as organizing conflicts in the form of contradiction, resulting in a false movement. Hegel's mediations between contradictories would lead to a thought of identity; there would be a unity that would split into two opposites and negativity would work to restore this unity on successive levels. According to Deleuze, in Hegelian thought

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it would only be possible to think of difference as oppositional difference, and it would not be possible to think of “the productivity of difference” (Safatle, 2019, p. 226). What is not thinkable in the form of representation can only be considered a contradiction. In both Deleuze and Hegel, Safatle says, it is a question of thinking about the actuality of the infinite. In Hegel, the identity of the concept is not the identity of representation. The dialectical operation begins with a critique of finitude “which has been consolidated in the present situation. Negativity in dialectics is not a lack, but a “form of productive indeterminacy” (Safatle, 2019, p. 226). This is what emergence promotes, by awakening, in a given world, a *real*, in the Lacanian sense—in other words, the *impossible* of this situation—, and causing the event that operates an indeterminacy that produces new worlds to emerge with high intensity.

For Safatle (2019, p. 241), the dialectical movement is not mere change, but “the destruction of the initially established identity”. To speak of dialectics is to consider the possibility of changing the current situation through the emergence of something unpredictable in it. This is Badiou’s very definition of event. Safatle, on the other hand, understands Adorno’s negative dialectic as emergent, in which an impossible emerges from a given situation, not as impotence, but as an act, capable of creating new subjects of this event, experienced as an event with a strong intensity of affection⁴.

⁴It is possible to approximate event and act. Lacan develops the concept of act in Lacan (2024).

AGENCY

The structure/event opposition must be rethought in order to deal with transformation and the creation of new worlds. In this direction, today it is important to rethink in what terms it still makes sense to talk about *events* as change, since events are what are most produced in the media network. The question is: which event? Something persists from the iron cage that Weber spoke of: institutions are still blocks full of locked and formalized workings that hinder transformative actions. There are also the judicial processes, the difficulty of being a poor student living in universities, the productivism that has suffocated universities, the near impossibility of carrying out agrarian reform or installing agroecology and other processes in order to confront the destructive side of the Anthropocene. On the other hand, the search for transformative action is not the project of most people; there are right-wing extremists, the greedy, the scoundrels, the militia, etc.

The malaise of communicational capitalism (Prado, 2013, 2017b) is shown in the sufferings of determination and indetermination in terms of interaction modes: what sufferings do current face-to-face and networked interactions

cause? Pelbart points to two types of desubjectivation: capitalistic and nomadic. The former undoes identities and territories and the latter allows us to escape from imposed models. Nevertheless, everything “can be inverted depending on the configuration: in France, the war forced the interns to work and thus gave them a previously non-existent movement and freedom” (Pelbart, 2019, p. 158). There are two types of subjectivation: the subjected and the heretical. The first is produced by capitalism, by pharmacopower; the second comes from a singular and plural creation. Pelbart’s question (2019, p. 159) is: how can we forge situations in which nomadic desubjectivization “triggers a process of heretical desubjectivization?”. In Butler’s (2021) terms, how does one bring about agency that breaks with the subordination of a subject to a particular discourse?

Rather than talking about processes of subjectivation, we could talk more about new types of event. It is as if the processes of subjectivation were secondary to the new types of event to which they give rise. (Pelbart, 2019, p. 159)

The real urgency today is to promote a break with the disastrous consequences of the media functioning of networks and the resulting forms of user identification, as well as with politics in the context of neoliberal identity, so that the emergence of events is possible, understood in this Deleuzian/Badiouan sense, which Safatle approximates to a Lacanian Hegel. One of the names of this urgency is the fight to protect planet Earth, understood as an integrated system that involves physical, chemical and biological cycles and energy flows that sustain life, and includes the populations that live on it (Angus, 2023; Prates, 2020), in addition to the identities of specific gender groups, ethnicities and others. Says Pelbart (2019, p. 149):

When political, social, environmental and subjective destruction . . . takes on such alarming proportions as it has in recent years, and the urgency to stop it grows in proportion to the danger, perhaps it is worth taking up the issue again from this starting point, the subject and the conceptual network it carries, in order to trace the shifts that have occurred, and from them, to probe the room for maneuver in this clash between biopolitics and thanatopolitics, cosmopolitics and necropolitics. ■

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