Volume 21 Issue 65
Originally issued as A14



Global Journal of human-social science: A
Arts & Humanities - Psychology
Volume 21 Issue 14 Version 1.0 Year 2021
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

What Gesture of Future will be Built by the Memories that the Present Creates?

By Helena Lebre
University of Évora

Abstract- Through the phenomenological analysis of gestures, specifically the gesture of writing and the gesture of photographing, it is possible to find new patterns of behavior, new values guiding human attitudes that, in their entirety, denounce a new vision of the World and announce the emergence of a new Paradigm. In effect, the New Paradigm proposes onto-epistemic and existential changes completely different from the previous one: from the historical process, based on graphic presuppositions (the gesture of writing) we move on to post-history, defined by the production of technical images (the gesture of photographing).

The real shows itself as the result of technology, a category that needs to be questioned. The problematic inherent to a reality that presents itself as technological and virtual gives origin to various perspectives on the World, which will lead to the configuration of a new criterion of truth, as well as new ways of representing it, eventually, proposing another rational organization, the emergence of a new consciousness and new ways of manifesting existence.

Keywords: *gesture; gesture of writing; gesture of photographing; technology; history; post-history.*

GJHSS-A Classification: *FOR Code: 130205p*



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2021. Helena Lebre. This research/review article is distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). You must give appropriate credit to authors and reference this article if parts of the article are reproduced in any manner. Applicable licensing terms are at https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/.

What Gesture of Future will be Built by the Memories that the Present Creates?

Helena Lebre

Abstract- Through the phenomenological analysis of gestures, specifically the gesture of writing and the gesture of photographing, it is possible to find new patterns of behavior, new values guiding human attitudes that, in their entirety, denounce a new vision of the World and announce the emergence of a new Paradigm. In effect, the New Paradigm proposes onto-epistemic and existential changes completely different from the previous one: from the historical process, based on graphic presuppositions (the gesture of writing) we move on to post-history, defined by the production of technical images (the gesture of photographing).

The real shows itself as the result of technology, a category that needs to be questioned. The problematic inherent to a reality that presents itself as technological and virtual gives origin to various perspectives on the World, which will lead to the configuration of a new criterion of truth, as well as new ways of representing it, eventually, proposing another rational organization , the emergence of a new consciousness and new ways of manifesting existence. If we intend to understand the Culture in which we live, it is necessary to perceive the webs of signification of a networked World and find a meaning for it.

Keywords: gesture; gesture of writing; gesture of photographing; technology; history; post-history.

I. Preliminary Point

If we look closely at History in general and the History of Philosophy in particular we realize that philosophers have always pondered the surrounding reality, seeking explanatory grounds for present events. To do so, they often recurred to Tradition, selecting data, facts or phenomena that pointed to perspectives of intelligibility either for the Present, or those that projected the yet-to-be, the future. Some did so by developing social-political theories, dreaming up utopias (Plato, Hobbes, Marx, ...), others, in a more minimalist way, by approaching a few events whose effects, consequences or results would allow us to infer sufficiently elucidative configurations in relation to the events they were witnessing, a possible root of the future.

Philosophy is, first of all, a step backwards, which provides the necessary distance for the intended reflectiveness and makes the World perceptible, because it is ordered according to categories of human rationality.

The purpose of this article is, in dialogue with Vilém Flusser, to analyse gestures as forms of manifestation of Being, which uncover reality and Man's way of existing in face of it. Simultaneously, and derived from the above, to understand the emergence of a new consciousness, through the appearance of gestures never before observed, allowing us to perceive that the world is in transformation, as are the categories of thought which we use to penetrate it. By "surprising the phenomena", we become aware of the "existential crisis" through which we pass: new gestures and old gestures provide differentiated descriptions about the reality in which we are inserted and are part of.

The choice of the gestures to be examined fell upon those that I consider most significant in order to clarify the purpose of this short analysis: the gesture of writing, corresponding to a linear, procedural and historical vision of the world, a traditional gesture; the gesture of photographing, typical of imagery creation, a product of the subject-apparatus complex, of post-history, a new gesture.

II. A Gesture

Any gesture, must be understood as: *A movement [that] is experienced as (...) free (...) gestures being these free movements by definition* (...) (FLUSSER, 1999, p.192).

The gesture is a movement of the body or the movement of something attached to it, but experienced as an intentional phenomenon, which can be interpreted (communicated and read), in a context inherent to the conventional framework of codification The gesture is, then, a code, expresses an intention, and is bodily movement that indicates, shows something. It is within a dimension of intentionality that it should be pondered, from where it is inferred that any causal explanation will not clarify it.

In fact, reflecting on gesticulation will not be posed in terms of the traditional problem of determinism *versus* free will, but highlights another question, the focus of which is completely different: what matters here is to know that this movement is experienced as deliberate and free, experienced and lived as such, therefore, as gesture, regardless of whether or not there are conditionings or determinants in relation to it.

The gesture, *in* and *of* itself, does not evoke an axiology, nor is it important to link it to any particular subject. To say the gesture is to describe it *in* and *of* itself, not imposing any transitivity or subjugation to a specific result, even if it aims at it or may aim at it. It

Author: Ph.D. in Philosophy, Researcher in Phenomenology and Culture Group – Praxis: Centre of Philosophy, Politics and Culture/ University of Évora, Évora – Portugal. e-mail: helenaclebre@gmail.com

© 2021 Global Journals

should be added that a gesture, any gesture is information, and in this sense it is a code of intelligibility.

The gesture, by belonging to the world of codes, tells us of its full insertion in a communicative instance. Like the (written) word and image, the gesture is equally manifestation of being: both of them can be seen as differentiated and constitutive layers of reality. Depending on the angle to be examined, each of them is properly epochally framed: the written word belongs to history (linear process) the synthetic image belongs to post-history (events in eternal return). The gesture of each of the previous dimensions (or other), gives them emphasis: the gesture of writing, the gesture of photographing (technical image), the gesture of seeking, the gesture of making love. The gesture, thus, has a peculiar and specific status: it seems to be not only something *in* and *of* itself, but also the embryonic form *of* and *for* the other phenomena. What is, however, symptomatic and revealing is the fact that no properly articulated thought can exist except through a gesture, without one thing preceding the other. The gesture is the realization of thought: in some way, thinking is the gesture of thinking, it is the exercise of thinking. Gestures are omnipresent: the gesture of writing is an omnipresent gesture in history, the gesture of creating images is omnipresent in post-history. The same is to affirm the presence of gestures in a time/space of «Now and Here». Knowing this we have the possibility that, through the analysis of the common gestures we make, their meaning may be unveiled, by *removing the fog* (FLUSSER, 1979, p.128) that the utilitarian praxis of everyday life imposes. It should be remarked that the phenomenological process for the undertaking in question comes from, and seems to be the adequate one, since this analysis presupposes the lived, the experiential and the concrete. Let us say that it will be necessary to make a *phenomenological epoché*, with the aim of becoming aware of the essential meaning that the daily and mechanized gestures of everyday life seem to have. As in everything, to analyse the gesture is to ask for its meaning and, as such, to remove the obstacles of the routine obvious, which present themselves as "noise" for the proposed examination, in the same way as it allows us to penetrate, understand and interpret the «climate», the environment of the time we now live in. It is about showing, letting appear the *eidos* of the gesture: that is, its meaning, or the senses that from this first one will open: *Most of our gestures became invisible by mistake of the everyday and, when we rediscover them, they surprise us by the regained novelty* (...). (FLUSSER, 1999, p.123).

Taken together, writing, image and gesture are complementary communicative and expressive forms, that is, they are artificial ways of being, as is all communication and culture; they are codified phenomena: *Human communication is an artificial process. It is based on artifices, discoveries, tools and instruments, namely on symbols organized into codes.* (FLUSSER, 2008, p. 89)

And all the gestures we perform are builders of Culture, of Civilization.

III. The Gesture of Writing

The importance of writing appears referenced throughout Flusser's work; however, it is systematized in a chapter of *Les Gestes,* and in Die *Schrift*, one of the author's last books.

In the later one, the effort to understand the future of writing is visible, this artefact, this instrument that has marked the history of western culture and that has made possible, I believe, a necessary opening to the understanding of the abstract and immaterial world of technology in which we live. Let us say that only the continued exercise of a mentality that settles in the abstract, an activity propitiated by writing, allows access to a programmed universe, to the transmutation of human thought to *zero dimensionality*, to non-objects, to synthetic images/techno-images, categories inherent to a digitalized, virtual real. In a way, it is the *one dimensionality (unidimensionality)* of the trace and of the line, the substance of writing that will allow the organized set of points that, in turn, are the constitutive elements of the technical image. Explicitly: writing has the power to say images, saying them linearly, "unrolling" them and making them lines. These are sets of dots, just like the technical/synthetic images. They arise from what was already written, the pre-written, the pre-inscribed (they are a 3rd degree representation: traditional image/pre-history, writing/history, synthetic image/post-history). If we question the essence of the techno-image we find ourselves faced with a paradox: being a code different from writing, can it still be a new way of performing the gesture of writing? Even if we consider the gesture of writing in extinction, considering it an unrepeatable past, in fact, it is through writing/ reading that we affirm it. For now, we are trapped in a paradoxical logic.

The way to overcome (or not) the problem is to take writing as a phenomenon to be analysed, perceiving what is essential in it and what the gesture of writing means: this is, above all, *a penetrating gesture* (FLUSSER, 1999 p.17) and it is so from a double perspective. Firstly, in the concrete (material): it is linked to engraving (gr.*graphein*) or scratching (lat.*scribere*) with a stylus on a surface, a fact that emerges if we intend to dialogue with tradition and go back to its origin in Mesopotamia; secondly, in the abstract (immaterial), if we pay attention to its relation with thought. To align graphic characters is to organize thinking: the first are signs of thought and these are objectified graphically (word and concept are logically equivalent). Writing is an orientation of thinking, making it more comprehensive; the co-implication of the written word with the read word

© 2021 Global Journals

is equally evident. To write is to address the other, to find the other. The gesture of reading is twinned with the gesture of writing.

While articulating thoughts, writing is a reflexive gesture, which turns towards the writer; while reading is expressive and communicative, it externalizes itself, it sends itself to the other (organizing thought). In this way, the gesture of writing is intentional, gaining meaning, also because it meets the other, the reader. Thus, it is a political gesture: written memory is the support of a culture, of Western Civilization. The "graphic consciousness", private and public, is "historical consciousness". Note that what is meant is that the foundation of historical consciousness comes from writing and, therefore, from graphic consciousness, and not the reverse. The question of the sequentially of writing that it presents becomes the figuration of the real and of temporal perception. The idea of progress, of process, of thinking from the written in line form, produces knowledge, science, philosophy, ways of communicating and culture: the historical dynamism is, therefore, defined. The occurrence (what is lived intuitively without perception of temporality beyond the contingent) becomes event (something marked and limited in space and time). *The invention of writing presided over the invention of history. It's a function of writing and of consciousness that expresses itself in writing*. (FLUSSER, 2010, p. 22).

Let us then analyse the writing phenomenon and what propitiates it. At present it is a habitual gesture that corresponds to an operative capacity whose genetic origin is in the human brain. Writing is a human aptitude, just as there are other abilities proper to the rest of animals, which "compulsively" fulfil them because they come from a genetic memory. Although the comparison is apparently legitimate, in fact, in writing we speak of a gesture, which goes beyond the physical-biological dimension, inserted in a cultural context, free and voluntary. Phenomenologically examined, the gesture of writing involves a variety of factors that contribute to it and make it complex: in a first layer, which allows the materialization of writing, one needs to use a surface, on which something will be written by means of a suitable utensil. In the next layer, it is necessary to incorporate a cognitive dimension into this gesture: knowing the signs and the system of signification, grammar and spelling, the conventional code and message, semantics and syntax. This fulfilled gesture, fruit of a decision and choice, is the realization of a virtuality, through the articulation and balance between the various orders, through the game that takes place, by the observance of all the rules of the areas we refer to. The text appears expressed and objectified as the result of a dialectic between the word and what the subject intends to mean with it. More than that, it also contains a pragmatic aspect: who writes and who receives what is written, modifies the gesture of writing through its reading and interpretation.

In short, writing is a way of thinking. *There is no thought that is not articulated by a gesture* (FLUSSER, 1999, p. 24). To identify gesture with thinking is to provide it universality, to specify one gesture as the gesture of writing is to give it singularity.

The field of reference in which we move concerns the written word proper of Western Civilization whose logical-syntactic structure is: "subject - verb - attribute".

Once again, we focus on a linear configuration: the writing gesture starts from the upper left corner to the upper right corner, which is repeated, jumping from one line to another, constituting itself as text.

The gesture of writing arises by shattering traditional images, that is, it positions itself facing the representations of objects, given by prehistoric images, in the same way that the latter confronted objects directly. This situation arises from the fact that the human being is a being that denies, that is, a being that autonomises itself from the world by facing it, refusing its condition of being cast into it.

The gesture of writing is thus fundamentally a gesture that denies, [this] *is iconoclastic. For this reason, any writing is terrible, by nature: it strips us of representations by images prior to writing, it tears us away from the universe of images that, in our consciousness prior to writing, gave meaning to the world and to us.* (FLUSSER, 2010, p.24)

Through writing, man translates images into a one-dimensional code, in an attempt to explain them, to clarify them, that is, transforms them into concepts. Traditional images are, thus, torn by writing, whose essential linearization is supported and centered on the «in-forming», on the «re-forming»: in *Die Schrift,* Flusser tells us that the gesture of writing performs a trans-codification: the passage from the condensed to the line, from scenes to processes, which corresponds to a translation between modes, visions and representations of the world, according to distinct, paradigmatic and model codes.

This accidental, occasional or conventional tracing marks a gesticulation proper of the West, a gesticulation that expresses a historical consciousness.

History, all history, is memory and all memory is the place of words: to prove it is simply to appeal to the situations that any human being experiences, and to the recognition that each one of us has a historical-cultural memory as our heritage. This begins, strictly speaking, with writing, that is, Western Culture owes its constitution to thinking, which is the gesture of writing. Persevering the historical memory has been and is the systematic work of Western Culture, which is nothing more than the storing of perennial information and increasingly larger quantities, [memory] *is the granary of information*

© 2021 Global Journals

(FLUSSER, 1998, p.24): this is its development, this is its idea of progress. In fact, it has been this memory architecture that has propitiated the continuity of the species and that, on a subjective-existential level, has been proposed as the fight against death.

What is new here is the fact of identifying the History of a Graphic Gesticulation with the History of Western Civilization: the gesture of writing shows the historical process, with all the consequences that arise from/come from it. Other civilizations will bequeath an inheritance that will certainly consist of other types of memories, in accordance with the spelling they use, with the language they have and in which they exist, i.e., depending on the reality in which they are inserted.

IV. The Gesture of Photographing

The change of communicative parameters generates new cultural models, new social-political contours, influencing an entire existential environment, which will end up defining a new way of looking at rationality, and therefore at the human condition itself. With the emergence of technical/digital images, whose prototype is photography, we are witnessing a change in gesticulation: from gesture and historical consciousness to gesture and post-historical consciousness.

The gesture of photographing, examined phenomenologically, proposes us some perplexity. In effect, what is peculiar about this gesture of producing photographic images is that the attitude that presides over its realization is that of jumping outside the culture from which it emerges. For this to occur, it is presupposed that there is necessarily an acknowledgement of the failure of the culture to which one belongs, to attest that the standards, the traditional values have failed, that they no longer respond to the interpellations that reality, or the vision of it, demands. For Flusser, this moment of rupture is centered on World War II, with all its consequences, which definitively altered man's position in the world, his expectations, his life, whether in the individual or the collective dimension. Let us say that the bridge to the future must be found in order to restore meaning to existence: this will be achieved by the awareness that a new type of gesture is emerging, replacing the previous one, based on the Paradigm of technology, of the apparatus, of the digital. We speak of a synthetic image that overlaps upon writing and inaugurates post-history. This is, thus, characterized by the advent of an imagistic universe that invades all aspects of reality: to analyse the techno-image (the representation of writing that conceptualized the traditional image, which presented itself as a direct representation of the world) is to question the role, function and status of technology, legitimately, to ponder the relativity of all points of view, and the consequent fragmentation of the criteria of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong, and thus to redefine the relationship between subject and object. It is really an inversion of everything we have taken for granted, which will lead to the creation of new mental categories that allow us to penetrate this new world: we speak of an onto-epistemic and existential revolution. In terms of the History of Western Philosophy we are facing a situation as remarkable as the "Copernican Revolution", based on Kantian Critical Philosophy. *In photographic phenomenology, Kant is unavoidable* (FLUSSER,1998, p.50), in the sense that just like Kant thought of the efficiency of the epistemic subject to know the phenomena as a sum between its *apriori forms* and experience, also the subject of the photography gesture is a sum, the photographer and his apparatus. The object will be thought of as a set of unlimited possibilities (everything that can constitute an image), creating a new object category: the *non-object (inobject)*. This does not have, or does not need materiality, it is *zero dimensional.* Reality is, in this sense, virtual. The meaning of this confrontation with a completely new reality is made explicit by the process of image production: it is the characteristics and the programme of the camera that are the condition for the possibility of producing an image, a photographable phenomenon, an object of knowledge. And, as already mentioned, the subject is prosthetic (man and his apparatus), and the apprehension of the object is plural, according to the field and angle of vision that shows it, that is, according to the point of view that will allow the construction of the image, since the apprehension potentialities of the apparatus are finite in the face of a world that may be considered infinite. All perspectives, duly articulated, constitute the cultural mosaic, condition for the existence and appearance of the phenomenon. The capture of the latter, according to a specific perspective, is an option of the photographer, who, faced with the programmatic alternatives of the apparatus, determines, according to his deliberation, the modes upon which the phenomenon manifests itself. Even submitted to the programmatic principles of the apparatus, the subject chooses the points of view, manifesting his free will and intentionality, within the programmatic presuppositions. The apparatus with its program, seems to exhibit characteristics that before were strictly human competences: the construction of images, sign of the creativity of imagination, are now the result of a technical/technological gesture. It will be possible to speak of an imagination that builds synthesis, synthetic images, from its own technical schemes, that is a technical imagination or a techno-imagination. The gesture of photographing is a technical gesture, it produces an image through the synthesis of concepts taken from writing, its past, transforming processes into scenes, conceptual and imagistic products. Flusser tells us: [the photographer] *by resorting to aesthetic, political, epistemological criteria, his intention will be to produce images that are beautiful,*

© 2021 Global Journals

or politically committed, or that bring knowledge. (...), such criteria are, themselves, programmed into the apparatus. (...) to photograph, the photographer needs, (...), to conceive his aesthetic, political intention and so on (...). The manipulation of the apparatus is a technical gesture, i.e., a gesture that articulates concepts. The apparatus forces the photographer to transcode his intention into concepts, before he can transcode them into images. (FLUSSER, 1998, p.52).

One of the problems that arise as a result of what has been said, refers to the re-examination of the criteria of truth. On the one hand, all the answers that were either empiricist or rationalist are overcome: since the invention of photography, it is clear that ideas work both on the side of reason and on the side of experience. The photographic image, unlike painting, is a technical invention and, as such, immediately overcomes the conflict, for what it is. Henceforth, the question of truth, in the face of the proliferation of perspectives, indicates an epistemic equivalence between them, which would inevitably lead to the relativity of truth itself. In some way, what matters, since the possibilities are infinite, is to rescue the infinite points of view, insofar as it verifies the unavoidability of everything being able to be photographed and, therefore, equally accessible. If this position can be contested, even if it is a constative description, according to the author, it has the advantage and the benefit of placing the problem of objectivity, which has always been annexed to the problem of truth, and of answering it within the scope of the photographic code. The image is reality, it functions as the real, it is not signified but signifier: the real is the photograph, the product, it is neither the apparatus nor what occurs in the world. *And this inversion of the vector of signification characterizes the post-industrial world and all its workings.* (FLUSSER, 1998, p.53).

The synthetic image is an artefact, a tool from which scientific theories are objectified. It is objective reality, however virtual, making evident that the vision of the world given to us by this state of things is the technological one, a paradigm we inhabit and about which it is urgent to meditate, (because*) The oppressive domination that the utensil exerts over our thinking is exerted at many levels, some of which are less evident than others.* (FLUSSER, 1999, p.84).

It is convenient, however, not to forget that the photographic gesture is a technical and post-historical gesture, but it is also a human gesture, through which we recognize ourselves, the other, the world. The value of the preceding statement refers to the notion that photography (prototype of the synthetic image in general) is the privileged mode of post-history reflexivity. In effect, we can think from and with the image, and with the gesture that is included in it, and not only with words. The gesture of photographing seems to be typically philosophical in its essence. It is a new gesture, but it fulfils the rootedness that gives it solidity: the dialogue with tradition, its reappraisal, finding in it the support to justify the present time.

There is nothing new that has not been previously forgotten, there is no originality that does not correspond to a reinterpretation, to seeing in another way in relation to something that has already occurred. Proof of this is the argument from which the philosophical vocation of photography is sustained: *The reason is that the photographic gesture is a gesture of vision (contemplation), that which the Ancients called theoria, from which results an image that the Ancients called eideia. (...) Photography is the result of a look at the world, but also a transformation of the world: a new thing.* (FLUSSER, 1999, p.88). Thus, no death certificate is given to the philosophical thought. Philosophy in the epoch of technique, of technology, is realized from this new gesture, the gesture of production of synthetic images, and consequent reflection on them.

V. Conclusion

The phenomenological examination of the gestures in question had the sole aim of understanding the change of a paradigm that has been taking place, as well as understanding the consequences that this change has brought about. It should also be added that the modification of the model that guides the vision of the World is based on the type of codes that each one of the gestures harbors and that determines the human existence.

For the above reasons, from the analysis of the gestures, namely the one linked to writing and the one installed in the production of synthetic images, another category emerges that should be mentioned, "Temporality". The gesture of writing is part of a vision of the World, a historical one that has already disappeared; the gesture of photographing marks our present and eventually the future and highlights a post-historical, post-industrial World, a virtual reality.

If one makes an examination, though not a very thorough one, it is worth mentioning here the notion of "time" (what is temporally present), which is the context of all gesticulation: from the way it is felt one may better understand the design, the outline of the perceived reality. To better explain the concerns of those who try to understand their surroundings, I turn to Byung Chul Han, Korean-German philosopher, who has dedicated much of his research to these contemporary problems. In his 2009 book *Duft der Zeit: Ein Philosophischer Essay zur Kunst des Verweilleins*, he points to a crisis of temporality that we are experiencing and that has become an explanatory principle for a better understanding of this new millennium. He tells us that "time" is now characterized by a delay, an essential slowing down, dispersed and fragmented, against the evidence of speed and acceleration that common sense

© 2021 Global Journals

seems to emphasize and make us feel. This idea of temporal slowness bewilders the meaning of human existence, where any instant seems to be equal to the preceding and subsequent ones, installing a monotonous routine full of instability. *The present temporal crisis is not acceleration (...). What we experience as acceleration is only one of the symptoms of temporal dispersion (...) We identify ourselves (...) with fugacity and the ephemeral*. (BYUNG-CHUL HAN, 2009, p. 9). Everything is experienced as ephemeral, everything becomes dispensable and irrelevant: death itself becomes incomprehensible, absurd and meaningless. It is a moment, an instant and nothing more. We are in the empire of the instantaneous, and this dimension is the result of a technological-digital world, where everything is disposable.

Returning to Flusser who, prior to the Korean philosopher, already shows us a society based on technique, the consequences of which if not taken care of, will change the face of Man. The fact of thinking in the synthetic image as the product of an apparatus makes one become aware of its true role in the existence of man through the gestures he carries out and which lead to the automation of (re)production, the propagation and consumption of information, with the respective effects on social, political and economic organization, that the trivialization of these practices imposes. As can be inferred, the discussion on the photographic image matters, above all, as a discussion on technology, insofar as information is produced from it, which shapes the way we see the world and the reality we inhabit. It is, exactly, the debate about photography, in the proposed context, that allows us to search from philosophy, as a problematizing and radical knowledge, the meaning of a society centralized in technology and in the consumption of information. The concern is the one that presides over the intelligibility of contemporaneity which will be deciphered from concepts imported from cybernetics, for which digital photography will be the first support point: *But behind the intention of the photographic apparatus there are intentions of other apparatuses. The photographic apparatus is the product of the apparatus of the photographic industry, which is the product of the apparatus of the industrial park, which is the product of the socio-economic apparatus and so on.* (FLUSSER, 1998, p. 62).

Likewise, S. Sontag in *On Photography* will examine photography from the role it plays in society. The category that supports this evaluation of photography is that of "power", which constitutes it and confers it. The author's path starts from the evidence that there are photographs (photograms) around us, that flood reality, and that have the impacting virtuality of altering, determining and conditioning our view of the world, *In teaching us a new visual code, photographs alter and enlarge our notion of what is worth looking at and what we have right to observe* (SONTAG, 1997, p.3). Photography informs and shapes our look, *Photographs furnish evidence. (…) A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is like what's in the picture.* (SONTAG, 1997, p.5) It is the technical images, product of the apparatus, which constitute a source of alienation, for the masses, and as forms of surveillance for those who govern. Photographing everything serves the logic of consumption and provides the satisfaction of feeling full: satisfaction never complete, we always need more and more images. The effect is, however, perverse: what we end up consuming is reality and ourselves, and we do it through the gestures we perform daily and unconsciously. In the Czech author's terminology we will speak of "images as screens" of reality; of the "omnipresence of photographs"; of the human being immersed and manipulated by the "programmes of the apparatus"; and of the inauguration of a new human model: "the employee" (the man who lives according to the apparatus).

Interestingly, in *Müdigkeitsgesellschaft* 2010, Byung-Chul Han tells us of a society characterized by the syndrome of tiredness, professional weariness, in which man exploits himself. The excess of information provided by digital communication, which inhibits self-examination, takes us into a new era, that of *digital psychopolitics*, a subject developed in 2014, *Psychopolitik. Neoliberalismus und die neuen Machtteechniken,*: all power controls man efficiently from unconscious psychological processes, idea conveyed by the analysis of digitalization, contained in *Im Shwarm, Ansichten des Digitalen* of 2013, (...) *we get drunk on digital technology, while we are unable to fully assess the consequences of our drunkenness. It is this blindness and accompanying simultaneous obfuscation that define the current crisis.* (BYUNG-CHUL HAN, 2013 p. 11). The digital is not, as it seems, a space for the exercise of freedom, but rather a huge prison on a planetary scale. In the name of transparency (everything is subject to social dissemination, via digital media), individuals voluntarily submit to this power, accommodate themselves to a constant surveillance, to being looked at without restrictions, insofar as they think they act in the same way. There is no difference between public and private space: (...) *we should say that we have no private sphere today, because there is no sphere in which I am not an image, in which there is no camera. «Google Glass» turns the human eye into a camera. (...) a private sphere is no longer possible. The dominant iconic-pornographic coercion eliminates it altogether.* (BYUNG-CHUL HAN, 2013 p.14). The crisis of these times is, in fact, a crisis of respect and freedom: we are in the hell of the repetitive (a notion derived from temporality as an instant), of the always the same, in the realm of solitude through the expulsion of the other, of

© 2021 Global Journals

the different: *The atomization of life supposes an atomization of identity. Each passes to having only himself, his little self. In a sense, we suffer a radical loss of space, time, of being-with (Mitsein)* (BYUNG-CHUL HAN, 2009, p. 9-10). The recognition of otherness is only placed in terms of consumption (my fellow human being is, insofar as he is a consumer like me) and favours the disproportionate circulation of capital, merchandise and, above all, information. For the Korean author, in 2012 *Transparenzgesellschaft,* it is not alienation or repression that makes our society pathological, but hyper-information (which does not inform) and hyper-consumption (unnecessary and superfluous). Ostracism in relation to the truly other - the friend, the lover, the different, the enigma to be unraveled -, the appetite for the same, for the copy of oneself, result and simultaneously produce phenomena such as fear in general, various fundamentalisms, all kinds of discrimination, nationalist movements, terrorism.

Curiously, the flusserian analysis of gestures, particularly writing and photography, gauging the effects and consequences of this same analysis is, in significant part, the logical antecedent of Byung-Chul Han's thought, treated here very superficially.

This is how utopias are destroyed.

This is how dystopias are built.

What gesture will weave the future of these now emerging memories?

Bibliography

1. FLUSSER V., 1979, *Natural:mente. Vários Acessos ao Significado de Natureza,* S.Paulo, Livraria Duas Cidades.
2. FLUSSER V. 1983/84, *Für eine Philosophie der Fotografie,* Göttingen European Photographie [consulted editions: vs br., *Filosofia da Caixa Preta Ensaios para uma futura filosofia da fotografia*, Rio de Janeiro, Relume Dumará, 2002 & vs pt, *Ensaio sobre a Fotografia, Para uma Filosofia da Técnica*, 1998, 96 p.]
3. 1987, *Die Schrift,* Göttingen, Imatrix Publications [consulted edition: trad pt J. Murilo de Costa, *A escrita Há Futuro para a escrita?* S.Paulo, Annablume, 2010.]
4. FLUSSER V., 1991*, Gesten:* Versuch einer Phänomrnologie [trad. fr. M. Partouche *Les Gestes,* Cergy – Paris, HC-D'ARTS, 1999].
5. SONTAG S. 2002, *On Photography*, London, Penguin Books.
6. HAN BYUNG-CHUL, 2009 *Duft der Zeit: Ein Philosophischer Essay zur Kunst des Verweilleins* [consulted edition: *O Aroma do Tempo – Um ensaio Filosófico sobre a Arte da Demora*, 2016].
7. HAN BYUNG-CHUL, 2010, *Müdigkeitsgesellschaft***,** [consulted edition: trd. G.Lopes Encarnação*, A Sociedade do Cansaço*, 2014].
8. HAN BYUNG-CHUL, 2012, *Transparenzgesellschaf*t [consulted edition: trd. M.S. Pereira, *A Sociedade da Transparência*, Lisboa, Relógio D'Água, 2014].
9. HAN BYUNG-CHUL, 2013, *Im Shwarm, Ansichten des Digitalen* [consulted edition: trd. M.S. Pereira, *No Enxame Reflexões sobre o Digital*, Lisboa, Relógio D'Água, 2016].
10. HAN BYUNG-CHUL, 2014, *Psychopolitik. Neoliberalismus und die neuen Machtteechniken*, [consulted edition: trd. M.S. Pereira, *Psicopolítica*, Lisboa, Relógio D'Água, 2015].

© 2021 Global Journals