

Scientific Journal of Applied Social and Clinical Science

“YOU KNOW THE TRUTH” ON FANTASY ISLAND

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<https://lattes.cnpq.br/9882316000309135>

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Abstract: This article is prepared through bibliographies of contemporary thinkers such as: Ferguson, Foer, Ab'Sáber, Arendt, D'ancona, Dunker and Hadot. The central objective is to identify that the choices of our representatives are closely and intrinsically related to historical, social, economic, cultural, gender, ethnic, educational factors, in addition to factors such as how these representatives present themselves to the public, making numerous advertisements and exhibitions that lack of rational use and bringing only emotional appeal. With the advent of the internet, digital media and mass communication, the post-truth era has come to put our democracy in check. Poor serpent that gave man – society – forbidden fruit (reason and conscience) and today we do not use such fruit with due care. Digital and social media are responsible for pretending to “give space” for people to express their frustrations, opinions and ideas so that they feel empowered within unrestricted freedom of expression, giving the State great contempt for regulations and controls as well as taxes. and rules. This new political actor enters this board of media war and the means of communication as a tool of alienation through mere complacency and human conformism. Entering the era of views and likes, a certain cognitive limitation and an ego inflamed by participating in a group prevents us from seeking the truth on the technological “island of fantasy”, what Plato would call a cave. We are at a time when we will have to harm one of the revolutions to save the other. If Jesus or Muhammad were born in modern times, would they be treated as religious visionaries or forced to take psychotropic medications? Diversity is, and will continue to be, a given, even with the new cohort of nativists claiming otherwise. In a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, the goal can never be absolute uniformity. The challenge is to

identify a common denominator of social, intellectual and practical exchange on which everyone agrees or that acts as a consensus within cultural norms, legal duties and social responsibility to which all individuals must adhere regardless of their particular opinions. Teaching society to navigate digital platforms with discernment and responsibility is a more urgent mission in our time.

Keywords: Digital Platforms. Society. Internet.

INTRODUCTION

Many were unable to choose their most delusional and stupid leaders, suffering through countless repressions, tortures, floggings, mutilations and deaths. As was the case in Egypt under the Greek Cleopatra, Macedonia under Alexander (a great narcissist), the bloodthirsty Hungarian Elizabeth Bathory, during the dictatorship in Uganda under Idi Amin, the seizure of power in Russia by Stalin, the rise of Hitler in Germany, reaching the ‘democratic’ elections of Trump with his Q-anon and Bolsonaro with his “Deutschland uber alles” (ops, I mean Brazil above all). The choice of its representatives is closely and intrinsically linked to social, economic, cultural, gender, ethnic, educational and psycho-affective factors. But beyond that, it is also associated with how this representative presents himself to the public, making countless advertisements that lack rational use and only bringing emotional affect. Before passions completely contaminate the human being in the choice of leaders, followers and representatives, one must use and abuse the rational, analytical, critical side and what is most scientific in the human being, the brain.

In 1968, the great revolution of personal freedom and the desire for the social began. In 1989 he will be remembered for the collapse of totalitarianism. And, more recently and which we will talk about later, in 2016 (with the Arab

Spring and the demonstrations in Ukraine) we were definitively bombarded with the post-truth era. We have entered a new phase of political and intellectual combat, in which orthodoxies and democratic institutions are being shaken to their foundations by a wave of threatening populism. Rationality is threatened by emotion, diversity by nativism, freedom by a movement towards autocracy. But more than ever, the practice of politics is perceived as a zero-sum game, rather than a contest between ideas.

Both Arendt (2020) and Foer (2018) agree that both the intimate and the social are subjective forms of human existence. The modern individual, his endless conflicts, his constantly changing state of mind and the radical subjectivism of his emotional life were born from this rebellion of the heart. The rebellious reaction against the leveling demands of society against what today we would call the conformism inherent in every society.

Arendt (2020) further reports that no human life, not even the life of a hermit amidst wild nature, is possible without a world that, directly or indirectly, witnesses the presence of other human beings. This special relationship between action and being together seems to fully justify the old translation: “man is, by nature, political, that is, social”. It is only with the development of a society of human species that the term “social” begins to acquire the general meaning of the fundamental human condition. Of all the other necessary activities present in human communities, only two are considered political and constitute what Aristotle calls *bios politikos*: action (praxis) and speech (lexis), from which the domain of human affairs arises. The emphasis shifted from action to speech, and to speech as a means of persuasion and not as a specifically human way of responding, responding and living up to what happened or what was done.

Being a politician, living in a *polis*, means that everything is decided through words and persuasion, arguments and counter arguments.

Dikotter (2022) says that societies have evolved, developed legal codes, defined that kings and queens are not above them and established bureaucratic controls to prevent power from being centralized by any insane personality. Some may argue that we live in a more reasonable time, in which the rule of law is inviolable and rulers have moved towards pragmatic democracies fueled by rational debate and enshrined human rights. Contrary to the common myth that we live in the worst historical period with the proliferation of violence and the disintegration of society, that human beings lived in a utopian, egalitarian and primitive past, the violence of pre-modern societies seems to have been omnipresent.

Bauman (1998) says that the notion of truth belongs to the rhetoric of power. It has no meaning except in the context of opposition and when it is important to demonstrate or insinuate that the “adversaries” on the other side are the ones who are wrong. The theory of truth tries to establish systematic, constant and safe superiority of certain types of beliefs, under the pretext that they were arrived at thanks to a certain reliable procedure or that they are assured by a leadership that can be trusted and followed.

Anthropologists point out the importance of deception in primitive societies, especially, but not exclusively, when dealing with outsiders. Plato attributes to Socrates the notion of the “noble lie”: a myth that inspires social harmony and civic devotion. Just as Machiavelli treats a ruler as a “great pretender and dissembler”. Today, with the advancement of new technologies and digital media, social identity is no longer constructed within a living space and politics is no longer the manager of the common good and has become

the management of the needs of individuals. The State is used to satisfy the need of pressure groups and the government to regulate and better manage this technological space. We live in an era of institutional fragility. Institutions act as buffers. They are bodies that embody its values and continuities. When the supposed guarantors of honesty falter, so does the truth. If the institutional collapse eroded the primacy of truth, the disinformation, false propaganda and false science industry also contributed to this. As institutions acting as social arbiters have been increasingly discredited, well-funded pressure groups encourage the public to question the existence of exclusively reliable truth. Perhaps our society will come to its senses and end up imposing sensible policies and rules of regulation by the State to protect culture, society, democracy and individuals against the corrosiveness of political totalitarianism and new media technologies.

THE MAGIC WORLD OF LIKES AND VIEWS

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THE INTERNET WITH NO LIMITS TO HUMAN BESTIALITY

The emotional connection that threatens to collapse our global intelligence, emotion is regaining its primacy and truth is in retreat. The resurgence of emotional narrative in recent decades is the essential corollary. We live in an era of institutional weaknesses. Such institutions are the bulkheads. They are the bodies that embody its values and continuities. They shed light on failures, their decadence and their absolute collapse. If institutional failure has eroded the primacy of truth, the multibillion-dollar industry of disinformation, false propaganda and false science has also contributed to this.

Poor serpent who gave as a gift to man

– society – what the divine prohibited, conscience and reason. After that, today we see the biggest sin we commit, economic use of the brain. Hadot (2006) describes that in opposition to this physics (use of reason) which, using different techniques, artificially modifies the perception of things, there is room for a physics attached to perception, one could say naive, which in order to understand the Nature uses only reasoning, imagination, speech or artistic activity. Arendt (2020) says that in the conditions of a common world, reality is not guaranteed primarily by the “common nature” of all the men who constitute it, but rather by the fact that, despite differences in positions and the resulting variety of perspectives, everyone is always interested in the same object. Hadot (2006) says that we could speak of two forms of physics: “physics of contemplation”, which would be a disinterested investigation, as opposed to “physics of use” which wants, through technical processes, to wrest its secrets from nature for utilitarian purposes.

Hadot (2006) states that this way, we forge illusions that correspond to our perspectives as living beings. These representations engendered by the needs of life, these vital errors, are opposed to the original Truth, that is, the vision or knowledge of the world “as it is”, a knowledge that wants to be free from all anthropomorphism, an inhuman knowledge. Because deep down, reality is a blind, gratuitous and eternal game of destruction and creation. Wanting the truth at all costs, wanting knowledge for its own sake, renouncing vital illusions, would be to risk destroying humanity, like someone looking at a jellyfish, who would soon petrify because they would know the truth as it is in its absolute and pure state. He cannot do without the vital illusion, the whole world of values and myths without which he cannot live without.

Hadot (2006) said that the Promethean attitude, which consists of using technical procedures in order to extract from Nature its “secrets” in order to dominate and explore it, had a gigantic influence. It engendered our modern civilization and the worldwide expansion of science and industry. In the course of antiquity, there was real technical progress from the first Greek philosophers, through the Pythagoreans, to reach a culminating point in the Hellenistic and Roman era.

“EDUCATION ABOVE ALL, CRITICAL SENSE ABOVE ALL”

D’Ancona (2018) portrays that in 1968 the great revolution of individual freedom and the desire for social progress began, in 1989 it will be remembered for the collapse of totalitarianism and in 2016 it was the year that launched the “post-truth” era of defined form. We have entered a phase of political and intellectual combat, in which orthodoxies and democratic institutions are being shaken to their foundations by a wave of threatening populism. Rationality is threatened by emotion; diversity, through nativism; freedom, by a movement towards autocracy. More than ever, the practice of politics is perceived as a zero-sum game rather than a contest between ideas.

The rise of this insidious industry coincided with the massive metamorphosis of the media landscape with the digital revolution. He promised to democratize spaces on an unprecedented scale. However, like all innovations, the web is a mirror of social and human societies. Along with this merit, it allowed and accentuated the rise of the worst species of the human race, creating a base for terrorists and a refuge for stupid cheaters.

Without the constraints of the State, the internet would realize its potential as a tool for global commerce and mass communication.

Most digital media are similar to any other big business, they want distance from regulators and tax collectors, they want to protect their businesses and take advantage when there is a possibility of big profits.

How did the ideal of truthfulness become so weakened that it competed so poorly with the emotional? It will be enough to encourage the new generations to develop a “critical spirit” or teach them to “decipher information” and stupidity will have already transformed into something similar to the “critical spirit” and will no longer be deprived of proposing “solutions” to problems. what the same cause? Can authorities play a role in this fight by proposing transparency in data, clearer communication, assiduous “verification of facts and truths” and dissuasive and binding laws against peddlers of manipulative and malicious stupidities?

Ferguson (2022) tells us that sometimes, all it takes is one mad hatter to change the course of history as societies are from time to time devastated by invaders or struck down by droughts, famines, plagues and pandemics that they are unable to control. But occasionally there are moments when destiny teeters on the edge between victory and ruin. If Jesus of Nazareth or Muhammad were born into modern society, would they be treated as religious visionaries or, instead, forced to take psychotropic medications? The right or wrong person at a given period in history can have a considerable influence on the course of events.

POST-TRUTH AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON AND PERMEATING AGENT OF TODAY’S WORLD

D’Ancona (2018) reports that it is the emotional connection that threatens to eclipse our inherited insistence on truth as the main criterion in political disputes.

Arendt (2020) reports that of all the

necessary activities present in human communities, only two were considered political: action (praxis) and speech (lexis), from which the domain of human affairs arises. More fundamentally, the act of finding the right words at the right time, regardless of the information or communication they convey, constitutes an action. The emphasis shifted from action to speech as a means of persuasion and not as the specifically human way of responding, responding and living up to what happened or what was done. It means that everything can be decided through words and persuasion, arguments and counter-arguments. As action acts on beings who are capable of carrying out their own actions and reactions, in addition to being a response, it is always a new action that follows its own course and affects others.

The fashionable disparagement of the digital revolution ignores the astonishing benefits it has brought to humanity in a matter of years. It is now impossible to imagine a world without smartphones, Google, Facebook or YouTube. Or consider hospitals, schools, universities, humanitarian aid agencies stripped of these tools. The connective tissue of the web is one of the greatest feats in the history of human innovation. We save countless hours of traveling to scattered libraries and archives, searching for thick books that will answer our questions. The implicit bargain that we all need to make explicit is that we use some of the time we save on acquiring information without worrying about carrying out due checks and verification of such information.

Foer (2018) reports that technology companies are monopolies with unlimited ambitions. Technology giants are destroying the principles that represent individuality to shape humanity as they please. If these monopolies have won, there is no way to reverse the knowledge, habits and intellectuality that are being shuffled by these hegemonic

companies that monitor even what we think and what we publish on social networks. Social media pretends to “give space” for people to express their opinions, frustrations and ideas so that they sit inside their freedom of expression. Everything about us is being stored and, as a result, we end up merged with these digital media, thus creating a kind of *Frankenstein* that does not think outside or without the help of such technological tools of digital media.

For many people, conformity is the default position. Inertia is the safest and most comfortable option until it is no longer, we often regret our passivity when it is too late. If people want the end of the post-truth era, they must want it for themselves when faced with its unpleasant consequences. At the very least, we must confirm the truth in a commanding way, instead of repeating (like parrots) the lie. We fool ourselves by caring more about convenience and efficiency than about things that last. Compared to the ongoing nourishment of a contemplative life and deep commitment to the text. What we read and buy, how we devote ourselves to leisure and self-improvement, how we resist empty temptation, our preservation of quiet spaces, and our intentional efforts to master our domain. D’Ancona (2018) clarifies that in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, the objective can never be absolute uniformity. The aim is to identify the core cultural norms, legal duties and social responsibilities to which all citizens must adhere regardless of their particular opinions. Diversity is, and will continue to be, a basic given, even with the new cohort of nativists claiming otherwise. The challenge is to identify the common denominator of social, intellectual and practical exchange that everyone agrees on.

CONCLUSION

If the truth still matters to us as a civilization, it will not be a mission we can shy away from. The rise of truth as a cohesive force in human, scientific, political, legal and commercial activity was a gradual feat and achieved at great cost. Those who blithely assume that its threatening collapse in the political world will have no ramifications or consequences for society as we know it can prepare for the worst. Information overload means that we must all become editors: filtering, checking and evaluating what we read. In the same way that children are taught how to understand printed texts, their critical faculties must be trained to meet the very different challenges of a digital feed. As books themselves migrate to the cloud, those of us who still enjoy physical texts as artifacts of the mind will be considered lovers of antiquity. It must be a basic task of first-rate education, teaching children to sort through the digital torrent and discriminate

between them. Teaching how to navigate the web with discernment is the most urgent cultural mission of our time.

Such contemporary thinkers (Bauman, Arendt, Foer, D'Ancona, Marmion and Orwell) deal with an increasingly technological world, excluding us from the private world and making us mere ideological commodities, with their tools to facilitate human doing and thinking, attention and care for what will be posted, read, written or spoken must be the priority of harmonious and peaceful coexistence to preserve society as we know it. With the facilitation and complacency that these tools cause in human conformity, where it is now impossible to see ourselves without Facebook, YouTube and Google. The constant threat of media authoritarianism under the rules and impositions of digital technologies without State regulation, in addition to feeling like owners of absolute reason, could lead to the decline and extinction of *homo sapiens*.

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