

God and the devil in the land of Technology...

As usual, *Interface* brings its reader a specific theme: in particular as regards the essays, but not exclusively so, technology is the chosen subject, including discussions of technique and science in contemporaneity. Imbedded in the heart of our times, in its approximation it is possible to discuss very nearly all aspects of current life, in the same way as one may proceed to proposals concerning technology from a wide assortment of points of view. Moreover, even as a neutral and precise instance of life, technology gives rise to heated debate and opposed feelings.

What is being presented in this issue of *Interface* is merely a sample of this diversity. However, at the same time, it represents the reiteration of technology: in Education, in Health, in Communication... Sometimes, it is seen as a favorable medical resource and, at one and the same time, as the objectification of the subject. Alternatively, it is regarded as a source of information and knowledge, but also of alienation. Or, furthermore, it can be seen as a creative possibility and the individualization of human production, which nevertheless calls for the realignment of the role of the State and a reassessment of Rights. All of these themes are present here, with an equal diversity of register: in the form of analytical texts, or as critiques, debates, images... both in favor of and against technology, a technology that informs, that teaches, that entertains, that enslaves, that deceives...

In reading the essays and texts that follow, we will find technology's redeeming facet: in the treatments and the cures it has rendered viable, in the clarifications it has provided, in the consumption it has enabled. There it stands, a magnificent achievement of Mankind, and one of which we are very proud: the development of technique, of science and of their products!

However, much has been said already about the narcissistic character of current society, and, in this "excess" of admiration for our own creative power, we yield to art and to its work. Whether due to its frightening fascination, or whether the result of its astonishing practical effectiveness, technology, today, shows its face as Lord and Master: hopelessly dependent on it, men and women regard technology as an end per se. Resorting to this figure of "excess" (an excess of assets, of mobility, of information, of knowledge, of activities... excess of self-admiration) which also marks our times, I repeat the assertion that is present in so many of the texts published here: like a spiral movement, each technology we create unfolds itself into a number of other ones, not only as a result of the former's sub-products, but largely because it spurs new creative drives and further production.

But what powers the spiral? What accelerates technology itself? Here is a reflection process that I invite the reader to embrace in his meandering through this issue of *Interface*. Its questioning core obviously lies in a dissatisfaction that remains unsolved, in an ever-present need that continues nagging despite the very many answers and creations that technology has already provided us with. What is curious, nevertheless, is not the permanent uncertainty or anguish surrounding answers not found, but forever sought after. That Humankind has employed different resources to deal with questions for which, perhaps, there are no answers, is a fact that Philosophy and the History of our Sciences clearly illustrate. In connection with this issue, the fascination lies in that, in its process of becoming utterly present, technology has transformed itself into the eternal promise of a solution. It is therefore fitting that we examine something of the imaginative power that technology brings, a power that blurs the frontiers between fact and virtuality. Although it is not yet health, the promise of healthcare becomes a cure, through the mere possession of a prescription or of the treatment to be followed; although it is not yet an explanation, the promise of understanding or of clarification, the mere possession of information is transmuted into knowledge; although it is simply consumption, access to a health care plan or possession of clinical exams is converted into healthcare or treatment...

If imaginative force is the nourishment of all creation, then the loss of its final product, its output – and its ultimate purpose as a formulation for action – is here seen to be confused, through admiration, with reverie itself, almost infinitely fostered and expanded by technology... Enchanted with this flow of imagination, with its potential for creation, we forget the activity of creation itself. Our fascination with technology as "the Work" displaces it from the condition of being the means to an end, and lends it other purposes. On one hand, we are aware of this, of the emancipatory impediment that it represents, restricting, as the lord and master of our acts, the development of the autonomy of the subject. On the other hand, we become entangled in its web of virtualities and transformed into absolute masters ... of our imagination. And this is no small feat, given the control of said imagination that has resulted from the presence of technology in Culture.

Apparently, technology itself will be transformed, to the extent that it reflects its limits and obstacles in its own spiral. But is this possible? Could such a radical self-transformation take place, without raising a primordial condition of its modern existence that, as is always the case where modernity is concerned, occurred in partnership with the market form of social life? Let the issues remain open, to spur the present reading... Nonetheless, between astonishment and damnation, thanks to the introduction of this space open to creation, an invitation to a new human being is permitted, with so many other achievements, offering a new perspective to Reason... and may technology join the discussion!

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