

## An informational education for social justice

*There is nothing of the lying poet in God.*  
(Platão, República, § 382d, 1949, p. 97)

*[...] Oh Glaucón, when you meet Homer's encomiasts, saying that this poet was the educator of Greece, and that he is worthy of taking as a model when it comes to management and human education, in order to learn from him to regulate our whole life, you must kiss them and salute them as the best people you can be, and agree with them that Homer is the greatest of poets [...]*

(Platão, República, § 606e – 607a, 1949, p. 472)<sup>1</sup>

Language diseases as the problem in the city – the crisis in the *polis* – have been the object of philosophical reflection since Greek Antiquity, precisely because they experience, in their condition, the problems of truth and education (or critical training against the production of lies). The question of how to educate the people to resist the devastation of informational epidemics represents one of the oldest arguments of Humanity(ies). This is found, amongst other work, in Plato's Republic – centrally in the detailed analysis of the problem of the "poet" (the one who educates through discourses) in the urban space. The well-known "Homeric question" is also an infodemic problem, namely, the crisis of the circulation of myth and education through myth in the midst of a place for truth in democracy.

Any political analysis that does not observe the power and risks of language in the illness – in social health – of the population reaches a dangerous partiality for the most different ways of constituting a democratic utopia. Any political analysis that does not problematize education for the truth is born sick and grows old sickly. The contemporaneity structured by private digital networks attests to the centrality of language in the *polis* and the role of "education for information", as well as revealing the illness of a society consumed by information.

New regimes of information require further critical analyzes of literacy for democratic resistance and for the development of structures of social justice. The conception of an ecology of sociocultural appropriation via plural knowledge based on diversity, against the colonial massacre, calls for a science focused on the dialectical study of such new regimes. The knowledge of different cultures constituted through a *praxis* of language becomes, thus, emergent and necessary for the diagnoses of the 2020s and the future of informational thinking itself.

The ecology of literacy diversity in the new regimes of information, a dossier edited by Arthur Coelho Bezerra (IBICT), Gustavo Silva Saldanha (IBICT - UNIRIO) and Miguel Ángel Pérez Álvarez (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), brings together research and reflections that arise on the front of new information systems based on theoretical and methodological analyzes and proposals for our time. The dossier is presented here for researchers interested in the contemporary crisis and illuminates the informational epidemic that devastates democracies. It also puts at risk the future of oppressed societies who are already vulnerable to the socioeconomic inequality prioritized by neoliberalism.

---

<sup>1</sup> PLATÃO. *A república*. 15. ed. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1949. Translated into English by the authors.

Among the main dilemmas of informational health of the people today are misinformation and post-truth. This is the proposal of the conceptual reflection that opens the analytical sphere of the dossier from the thinking of researcher Carlos Alberto Ávila Araújo, observing the definitions that bequeath us a minimum common multiple glossary of infodemia for the possible horizon of plural literacy.

The infodemic evidence as a consequence of the new information regimes can be attested to the inseparability between pandemic (health crisis) and infodemic (communication crisis) by the reflection of Talita Figueiredo and Ana Lúcia Alexandre Borges on digital inequality and citizenship. The same infodemic evidence calls us to a critical theory of information, presented in this dossier by Arthur Coelho Bezerra's research based on the mediation between Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and the Frankfurt School's critical theory, which underlie and guide the present emancipatory praxis in the studies of critical information literacy.

The critical paths of the relationship between decoloniality, misinformation, intersectionality, manipulation, mediation and praxis, all these sociological lenses applied in this dossier, lead the reader through distinct and equally critical paths of application of the aforementioned critical theory of information. This can be seen in the search for a decolonial education, present in the reflection on the informational territory of the archives in Pedro Vidal Diaz, as well as the intersectional reflection on gender and women in digitality, through the look at the use of the internet in the current world, according to the research by Gilda Olinto, Sonoe Sugahara Pinheiro and Nadia Bernuci dos Santos. Along the same path of use and context conditions, Miguel Ángel Pérez Álvarez presents us with the ethical implications of the use of learning machines as a sociotechnical mediation for the development of skills in the sensitive universe of children and young people. In the context of disinformation, within the same dilemma horizon of the contemporary crisis, Felipe C. O. de Mello and Marco Schneider explore the dialogue with the construction of education models against evil through critical information literacy. In the dynamics of the circulation of messages on the web, the investigation by Marie Santini, Débora Gomes Salles, Charbelly Estrella, Carlos Eduardo Barros and Daniela Orofino demonstrates the manipulative role of bots: devices programmed to act in social networks, in the context of digitality and in construction of the 21<sup>st</sup> century *polis*.

In the critique of information and critical information as ways of problematizing diversity in literacy and literacy for dialectical plurality, the theoretical reflection of ethics in mediation conceived in Henriette Ferreira Gomes' thought stands out. Arenas of *praxis* of the researcher's theorizing can be deepened in the empirical scope in research on information literacy in the social role of the distance tutor, by Jessica Gabriela Tamião de Souza and Luciane de Fátima Beckman Cavalcante, as well as in university extension and her exercise of praxis of appropriation of information and knowledge in the study by Alberto Calil Elias Junior, Nysia Oliveira de Sá and Marianna Zattar. Also in the educational field, based on a philosophical reflection on digital literacy through the concept of reading, Amanda Salomão and Gustavo Silva Saldanha build the debate on the appropriation of knowledge in new information systems, structured in the approaches of Paulo Freire and Nicolas Roubakine.

The intersection of the research gathered here on the front of the new regimes of information, presents us with diagnoses and methods, theories and models for the transformation of dynamics that lead to epistemicide and the consequent destruction of possibilities of struggle for and affirmation of social justice, mainly in marginalized territories. The role of education in and for information, through a new critical, plural and structural theory, conceived for current info dilemmas, receives a direct and urgent contribution here. The studies presented here demonstrate how we are facing new "Homeric questions", pointing out theoretical-methodological solutions for breaking with the myth that leads us, informationally, to the downfall of our already fragile citizenship.

*Arthur Coelho Bezerra, Gustavo Silva Saldanha, Miguel Ángel Pérez Álvarez*