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„THE SMART CITY PROJECT" - A METAPHOR TO BE DEFENDED

Case Study

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Cognitive metaphor

Abstract

The paradigm of network society emphasizes a distinct pattern comparing to the previous information society, as a "result of ongoing innovations embedding social networks". The question of how technological improvements (intelligent design, the use of intelligent devices, and a larger distribution of knowledge among diverse layers and dimensions of social networks) have transformed mental softs, cultural practices, and socio-economic and political organizations, through the development of the network form,- networked individuals, communities, stakeholders, cities, regions, states, "interconnected life"- gives different responses depending on the positioning of the researcher inside/outside a specific field of studies, or knowledge network, and on the attitude adopted towards technology as a "civilization shifter". The conceptualization of the „smart city project" extends dilemmas and controversy and requires new understandings of how critical-reflexive and programmed regimes of knowledge, intermingle the knowledge creation and the distribution inside/outside the city. The current paper draws a line of flight between human, institutional and technological dimensions of the smart city.

INTRODUCTION

The current paper explores the smart development of the city from a socio-cybernetic perspective. According to Paetau (2013, p. 76): "Opting for a cybernetic approach in research means accepting a number of fundamental principles that are not always unambiguously defined in literature but can be best described as a particular mode of thought as a paradigm, or as Goodin Pask put it –as an art, philosophy or also a way of life". The socio-cybernetic approach sets out sustainability of a social system by principles of processuality, information and self -organization, adaptability, self-regulation and self referentiality. The modern society is described by Luhmann as a result of historical change and as "a transformation from a stratificatory to a functional differentiation of society"(Luhmann, 1977, p.29). Instead of this logic, the technological change that has imprinted the network society during last decades, led to a distinct pattern comparing to the previous information society. According to Castells (2008), the network society is the "result of ongoing innovations embedding social networks".

In recent years the idea that technology is not so neutral as said, and can be affected by political, industrial and cultural arguments is supported by many. A series of cyberattacks, leaks and manipulations of public communication, culminating with Brexit and the rise of the neopopulist discourse in Europe, or during the presidential campaigns in USA "almost ruined the culture of internet" (Time, aug. 2016). Due to these evolutions, the issue of smart or intelligent development, and its relevance for individuals and societies, make critical the role of knowledge, the knowledge creation and of the social distribution (circularities) of knowledge, as well as, the knowledge capitalization (through learning and exchanges), or variation in density within social networks that has to be seen both as a form of agency (strategic) and as "autopoiesis of meaning", related to the circulation, the value and the convertibility of diverse structures of knowledge and competences (knowledge platforms and markets), among *levels of complexity* (vertical, or transversal cognitive semiosis), and *among stakeholders* (horizontal associative /creative semiosis of networks).

 Knowledge is both structure and agency.. The smart city is also a decomposition, or re-assemblage of the city as a centric oriented strategy and dynamics, and intelligent designs of urban development. It also requires a more lucid approach of differences, or variations, between critical- reflexive regimes and programmed regimes of knowledge, the organization of the spaces of knowledge creation and their specific(specialized, complex but shared) normative core, are related to a metaphysics of knowledge(*ba* spaces,Nonaka, Kono,1998). But knowledge is also a form of capital, circulation and instrumentalities within the multiple dimensions of the network city has to be designed .

The knowledge based reconstruction of society – as knowledge society and knowledge economy – is an issue consistently covered in many disciplinary fields- the critical-reflexive sociologies of risk, the management and organization studies (MOS), the eco-cultural models of education and the programmed learning subsystem of the intelligent development. The socio-cybernetic perspective allows us a flight line among diverse series of impulses, either as normative cores, reorganizations of theoretical bodies, either in the form of prolonged controversies and criticism

The current methodological approach traces a line of flight among these mappings, at least at two fields (levels) of research: the socio cybernetic approach and the network theories, the latter is a very complex landscape from neo-Marxist theories to organization studies. It aims to provide a larger picture and a more flexible device for the understanding of changes at diverse levels, from power systems to organizational realities, and from the crisis of political communications systems, or risk issues, to the influence or impacts of the network form on institutional performances, including the chaotic dynamics of markets.

The first category of impulses refers to discussions on issues of control, self- organization, selfregulation and the "autopoietic closure", - a limit that separate the system of the context or environment- . This closure is a condition, according to Luhmann (1986), for the constitution, maintenance and transformation of social systems.

The second category put emphasis on intelligent devices, mobility, entrepreneurship, and the *open source* development of a collaborative economy and micro politics, or community structure of the Internet.

A different choice is legitimated by the current exploration. It assembles some conceptual bodies that attempt to better map the *how*(s) and *if*(s) the intelligent development of the city, as a scientific case, can be constructed/converted as a multidimensional object (topology) reassembling diverse bodies of knowledge and frameworks. It was assigned also "a bootstrapped research tradition" (Rheingold, 1993, p.110) – assembling the functional –systemic(sociocybernetic) theory, the philosophy of rhizome (Deleuze, Guattari, 1987), the theory of network society (Castells, 1996, 2008), the "Actor Network Theory and After" literature, including social and technical elements or human and nonhuman dialogism, the network entelechy, its criticism, and MOS method

of analysis" (Latour, 2005; Law and Hassard,1999, Alcadipani, Hassard, 2010) an approach of the stakeholder theory is added.

THE METAPHYSICS OF KNOWLEDGE AND ITS MATERIAL-SEMIOTIC OUTCOMES

Since the 90s, a metaphysics of knowledge has marked both the organization of corporation and the technological beliefs animating the antielitist movement, a movement joined by a large number of groups, especially in USA, where they have influenced the state, the economy and the foreign politics, but in distinctive ways. With the focus on the promise of unlimited access to knowledge resources, technology was seen not only in terms of military purposes, competitiveness, optimized infrastructures and network instrumentalities, but as a solution to knowledge discrimination, connecting individuals, and communities to learning, research, innovation and creation of knowledge. Fukuyama (2006) argues that "technological development is not entirely a result of markets and deregulation, or of conservative revolution initiated by Thatcher and Reagan in the 80s, that has dismantled the welfare state", a democratic form developed by western countries. Technology evolved together with mobilizations around projects and crisis getting to the recognition by nation state of communication protocols with its citizens and societies, in global contexts contradictory marked by discourses, policies and programmes that have emphasized the personal autonomy of individuals towards state and citizenship, have reduced loyalty to the state in the context of multiple citizenship, as a flexible citizenship (Ong, 1999).

On the other hand, the development of intelligent technologies in the form of multilevel intelligence (Messik,S.,1992), and as a *multilevel business intelligence,* a response to "unleashed waves of reorganized capitalist competition" (Fukuyama, 2006) by continuously upgrading a system of advanced tools to support the growth of markets.

TOWARDS A SOCIO CYBERNETIC APPROACH OF *SMARTNESS*

Paradoxically, a meta- theory of smart city remains under construction after two decades, and has to accommodate the variations of a high- tech development of the city, with a plurality of understandings, expectations and interests, including social, economic, cultural complexity and generational gaps, historical and cultural benchmarks, trauma of social memory, various events and even disasters.

Luhman points out that the social cannot be reduced to interaction and connection, depends on the meaning dynamics, *make- sense* processes and circularity. The socio-cybernetics perspective treats society as a type of open system. Even a loss of empiric content currently affects the classical (systemic) theory of public spheres, as a normative theory of democracy, but independent of circumstances, the transparency of public institutions and the quality of information flows are still a condition of democratic governance.

The intense spectacularization and fictionalization of realities reflect profound inequities and societal crisis, and, not least, a chaotic dynamics of markets and capitals. The industrialization of culture, the hyper mediation of politics, and the reversed directivity of the public communication due to decentred media and overhearing, have altered the systems of political communication (Dahlgrene, 2005), and destabilized the national public spheres, causing confusion during the daily "conversations of society with itself" (Dayan, 2013).

The metaphor of the public conversation illuminates our understanding of changes, regardless of how familiar we are with the paradigm of public communication, or if the "delights of the democracy garden"(Braud, 1999) continue to make-sense as a system, or rather as a metaphor. However this metaphor made possible to *express* the engineering intervention on (the development of) intelligence in terms of values – such as innovation, e-democracy, social entrepreneurship, cyber culture and selfdevelopment, etc., while the new competitive dynamic has absorbed, fragmented and transformed the social structure into globalized or transnational network forms -networked individuals, network state, network city, etc. The metaphor of the "conversation of a society with itself" conveys the idea of "togetherness" and even refers to society awakens a *collective intelligence* of networks. The ambiguity governs the conceptual system of the public communication and the encoding/decoding processes that reveals a delay in reforming /upgrading of specialized communication.

Cognitive metaphors are more than vehicles, enhancers, and organizers of knowledge. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) "human thought processes are largely metaphorical"(p.6). Knowledge and understanding are interdependent but cannot be reduced to each other., or to their roles whithin the communication process. The essence of conceptual metaphors is *understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another* (Lakoff, Johnson,1980, p.5). This thesis is valid at divers levels of knowledge organization and life. As mentioned before the systems of conceptual metaphors are rooted in the daily experiences and culture, in which a different or complex content can

be converted, and understood. Habermas (1997) points that the performative regimes of the language-adding the deliberative ones- are realized through the communicative dimension- inter subjectivity, community, solidarity.

For instance, Luhman has substituted disturbance within the *stability - disturbance* descriptors of the states of a social system - as theorized by von Foerster - with irritation, pointing out the difference among social systems and biological and technological systems.

The supplement to the public sphere theory maps- since the 90s -disturbances by taking into account "the dominant form of network", the chaotic dynamics of micro flows ("subsystems") and destabilized public spheres (Habermas,1997, Dahlgrene, 2005, Dayan 2013). Virilio (2007) has assessed among impacts of technology, the speed, adding that a „development by accident" emerges from the simultaneous access to multiple layers and structures of information and knowledge. The fracturing of lines of theoretization is obvious and shows that relationships between information, knowledge, reorganization, and sustainability are complex, versatile, ambivalent and contradictory.

Ulrich Beck (2003) highlighted an urgent task to adapt methodology to cosmopolitan change, asking more creativity in sociological research he said, to avoid distortions and the methodological risk. His argument of the "Europe of citizens and the second category of Europeans, the immigrants" have received numerous practical confirmations. Recently (8 aug 2017) the Spanish PM Mariano Rajoi asked to "stop the anti-tourist groups in Barcelona and Majorca" that "welcomed tourists with footstrokes" (Express, 8 aug.2017). He warned on a serious *lack of understanding* that may affect prosperity and jobs provided by tourism industry to several millions of Spaniards. Multiple biases in the transformation of the "states of affairs" into "states of passions" (Greimas, 1993) occur in rapid succession, and the degrading of social climates make critical the relationship among our conceptual systems, their logic and pragmatic consistency, and the co-realization of desires, expectations and interests as a society, during events and experiences, linking real and virtual contexts, and individual and social experiences publicly disclosed as aspects of the *real* city, a layer of the development and sustainability. All dimension of the city are interconnected by metaphoric processes, while the centric oriented smart strategy of innovation and knowledge creation, has to build a communication system among diverse levels of complexity, normativity, constraints, and specialization. On the other hand the interconnected life, the horizontal activity of social networks, and the multiplication of inter subjective reflexions of ideas, information and facts (Esposito, 2011), due to the increasing connectivity of the social networks, intensify creativity but also the "disinformocracy" (Rheingold, 1993) of the network democracy.

Smartness or intelligence refers to artificial intelligence, intelligent algorithms, advanced knowledge, and organization of knowledge, innovation, and specialized platforms of creation of knowledge (Nonaka and Kono, 1998).

Artificial intelligence - it or "she" (..) - shapes and reorganizes not only the internal structure of the corporation, but sets integrative interfaces of city to facilitate the triple helix of universities, companies, and governs (Leyersdorf & by Deakin, 2011). It programs, combines, extends , enhances organization, control and operatively, while the triple helix, will be a huge circularity, that, as it is provided, by design, will transform, interchange and transform their roles. A complex change will emerge in all dimensions of the city and a virtual game has begun. At the semantic level it develops through a series of metaphors such as "smart territories", "entrepreneurial ecosystems", "entrepreneurial city" etc. But past "experience structures" equally participate to the metaphorical play and during the process of imaginary reinvention of the city. So, it is expected that intelligent and social creativity and the entrepreneurship to develop new topological nodes, and to extend co-realization of discourses and conversations, through decision –games, learning and simulations, which will relate the metaphorical and virtual exchanges, to real life experiences.

A better balance among imagination, creativity and play and "the materiality of practices", currently marked by vulnerabilities, constraints, situational bottlenecks, polarization, and frustration is needed.

Referring to the knowledge phenomenology, Nonaka and Kono (1998) drew attention to both values and vulnerabilities that may occur when advanced knowledge flows *outside* spaces of creation of knowledge, the knowledge turning into information. For the construction of the communication system of the smart city it is a very point of clarifications.

The information may transform understandings but may also become a subject of interpretation, reframing, distortion, or even splippages and misunderstanding, A larger circularity of knowledge draws attention to limitations and biasis among a centric oriented creation of (advanced) knowledge (devices, theories, methodologies, intelligent algorithms, programs) and the creation of content which requires the new class of influencers , to manage the communication systems of the city, and the (anthropological) issues of risk and culture.

HOW WE COULD UNDERSTAND VALUE-CREATED ACTIVITY *DIFFERENTLY*?

Intelligent technologies and devices (platforms, languages, algorithms, other technological objects, etc) host, embbed, integrate, new forms of "collective intelligence" (Levy, 1999) and "cyborg evolution" (Rheingold, 2012) which evolve through the continuous interactions of "human and nonhuman actors" (Latour, 2005), a dialogue through which the sense of reality, community, and the quality of life, intermingles with the optimization of tools, services, devices and objects. The concept of „smart city" reflects and expands ambiguity and even controversy but also provide openings and interconnections. Looking for a definition of the smart city, Carvahlo (2017) observes that during the two last decades of developments generated by more than 130 smart cities across the world, "not an universal definition is accepted". This evaluation met - at a distance of a decade- the "lack of definitional precision" assessed by Hollands (2008). One of the most cited definition by Caragliu et all (2011) points that "the smart city becomes the urban centre for the future". Many definitions warn not to focus the smart development solely on technology, but, recognizing its importance, put emphasis on services and convergence among companies and authorities, and on the increasing participation of citizens as multiple stakeholders of the municipality.

Technology is enunciated as a subsystem of the conceptual meaning of smartness, but not as a normative core of the smart development, classification, and labelling.

In this respect, Letaifa (in Carvalho, 2015, p.1415) carry on the conceptualization saying that a city is labelled smart when" if it integrates and synchronizes formal leadership and endogenous democratic participation in the ICT based urban ecosystems and smart cities are both creative and intelligent".

The European Parliament assigns *the smart level* to "a city seeking to address public issues via ICT - based solutions on the basis of a multi stakeholder municipally based partnership", while the European Commission defines the smart city "a place or where traditional networks and services are made more efficient with the use of digital and telecommunication technologies for the benefit of its inhabitants and business"

So, as mentioned before, to the centrality of the ICT and to the intelligent interfaces, the smart level adds a reorganization of the city in the form of networks of stakeholders, linking business ecosystems and human actors: *citizens, communities, traditional networks, municipally based public –private partnerships, entrepreneurs, and others.*

In the retrospective view of the evolution of the discussions, Kummitha and Krutzen (2016) cite the three dimension model of Pardo and Nam (2015), respectively the technological dimension, the human dimension and the institutional dimension of smart cities.

THE STAKE HOLDER THEORY AND THE "POLITICS OF THE REORGANIZING THE CITY"

As mention below, meaning is a differentiating operator among social systems and natural and technological systems. In order to point the difference between the autopoiesis of meaning and the autopoiesis in cognitive biology (Maturana, Varella, 1980), or in the works of the 2nd order cybernetics group –to whom, according to van Foerster, ethical issues are not necessarily relevant – the socio-cybernetics approach highlights the role of communication.

In the 80s, Freeman (1983) has reconceptualised the corporation, but also other complex units. The stake holder theory was one of the two axis of the European integration, along networks of institutions, regions, cities, and people, with a high valuation of cooperation and democratic experimentalism (Munteanu, Ehlinger, Golumbeanu, Tofan, 2013, p.685).

The stakeholder theory proposes a revolution in the organization of the corporation, by substituting the stockholder oriented management, and through extending the corporate value in terms of "network of stakeholders", or a system of companies, suppliers, customers, authorities, local communities, etc. A wide-scenario in which each individual and local group is or could be a stakeholder of the city remains utopic but not without political relevance. However Freeman (1983) has formulated a requirement that seemed ironical in the 80s contexts, but today is considered entirely reasonable, asking what would happen if natural environment would be considered a stakeholder of the corporation system? The response has marked in many ways "the entrepreneurial city" but one of the most significant aspect is science itself, that part which broke out from the establishment and have initiated a complex revolution of the economy, culture and society.

Freeman highlights communication as a potentiality of evolution, a process that makes selection, choice and new possibilities affordable:

"Communication always results in an open situation of either acceptance or rejection. It reproduces situations with a specified and enforced choice. Such situations are not possible without communication; they do not occur as natural happenings. Only communication itself is able to

reach a point which bifurcates further possibilities. The bifurcation itself is a reduction of complexity and, by this very fact, an enforcement of selection. Automatically, the selection of further communication is either an acceptance or rejection of previous communication or a visible avoidance or adjournment of the issue. Whatever its content and whatever its intention, communication reacts within the framework of enforced choice" (Freeman, 1983, p. 6-7).

This emphasis on choice and responsibility has to be highlighted as a recognoscible element, or feature emerging from a more balanced approach of the city as a multiplicity of actors and interests, and as a social system related to meaning , selfregulation and consistency. Knowledge, either as an engine, either as a web of exchanges, creativity and either as a metaphor evolves towards an integral theory of communication, and global semiosis, being relevant, coverging and converting diverse systems and stakeholders of the corporate, intelligent and culturally rich system of the city.

For these reasons the metaphor of the "entrepreneurial" city *makes-sense* as a metaphor to be defended.

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