

PREFACE

We would like to pay a special tribute to Aldo de Albuquerque Barreto, researcher and co-leader of the IBICT group Philosophy and Information Policy, the group that publishes LOGEION, which passed away in February of this year, and express our gratitude as teacher and source of inspiration to him.

The current transversality of informational questions opens possibilities for contributions from several areas. In this issue, the LOGEION journal brings out some approaches to the Philosophy of Information in Latin America.

The first question that makes us on thinking about Philosophy of Information in Latin America is what we are talking about: land or blood, region or linguistic cultural origins? Does Latin American Philosophy is about its researchers and institutions production? Or are we talking on a type of thinking marked by certain attributes? What is the pretension of validity of an Information Philosophy in Latin America? Does it want to be recognized in the universal thought? Does it want to be an intellectual effort of resistance in a globalized Information Society? Does it want to be a think constructed from Latin American demands, and even of urgencies in the informational scope? Does it want to join, to change or to be part of the philosophical thought of information?

These issues are particularly relevant at a time when emancipatory political initiatives in Latin America face profound criticism. The radical experiences of Castrism and Bolivarianism undergo revisions. Political developments such as the indigenous multinationalism of Evo Morales are still ongoing. Progressive governments in Uruguay and Chile show other regional possibilities.

Brazil, the largest country in the region, after five presidential terms with levels of welfare and poverty reduction, faces the setback produced by a coup government. It is not an abstract question. The political paths of Latin America are not dissociated from the possibilities and the role of a Latin American philosophical thought of information.

A second question concerns what we are talking about when we say Information Philosophy. A narrow and misleading answer limits the Philosophy of Information to the Epistemology of Information Science. It is important don't forget the relevant discussion of practical philosophy: Ethics and Politics. Likewise, the Logic, the Ontology, and the Aesthetics of information are



relevant. The development degree on the different areas of study and research of Information Philosophy is uneven. This is especially serious in Latin America where humanities lack institutional strength and investment. We hope LOGEION may be a space for the informational discussion into the broad Philosophy of Information scope, bringing new interests to the informational philosophical examination.

A third question concerns the objectives and the way of constructing a Latin American information thought. Our collective challenge is to construct a thought that goes beyond methodical correction and instrumental application, which are certainly indispensable. We must work on a thought construction based on human dignity, and this has enormous theoretical and practical implications.

Recovering Helga Nowotny's considerations, González de Gómez (2003) points out, addressing the role of civil society in relations with researchers and the State, that knowledge must go beyond scientific (reliable) correction, it must be socially robust in its socio-cultural anchorages, partnerships, problematizations, and accountability.

In this issue the articles are not presented as a parameter pretension on what is done in our continent. The issue only wants to contribute as one more step in the already initiated Latin American information reflections. The contributions share reflections on explicit and implicit domination processes that shaped Latin America and permeate the informational. They also have in common the alert for the valorization: of philosophical foundations, theoretical, and practical means of the information "for" Latin America and "of" Latin America, certainly in an international interlocution, but where Latin America "is".

In "*Spheres of intersubjective recognition: Latin American thinking from a world-system open to interculturality*," **Jovino Pizzi** proposes a triangular pedagogy to contemporary rationality, noting that West geography has placed Atlantic as a circulatory centrality in Americas, Africa and Europe relations: a world-system. This geography, historically designed with domination and slavery, imposed both a monoculture and a scorn, invalidating any value to the differences. In a post-dictatorship context, retaining its memory and debates, the Latin American "today" deserves attention, once it is animated by hopes and promises, but is still faced with this world-system of domination, and local configurations where ex-dictatorships actors still occupy political and decision-making posts.

Starting from Alex Honnet's critique of Habermas communicative theory by, when he questions the need for recognition faced with disparagement forms that hamper these actions, Pizzi advances on Latin American philosophical thought, divided between the maintenance of European tradition and manifestations which, different, deserve inclusion, but it depends we

consider a wider horizon for the thoughts. Pizzi wants to find the points of hindrance to the recognition - the scorn - to a Latin American philosophy. The way to go runs through a multi-dimensional grammar that opens the Reason to different philosophical reasons. Only with this plural recognition can a Latin American "philosophical" thought be accepted and hence interconnect Ibero-Afro-Indian Latin American traditions. Recapturing the term "anabasis recovery" of Quesada, Pizzi proposes a project based in Habermas communicative action, but that must consider the obstacles of the scorn and the unavoidable conflict existing in the multiplicity involved.

Jovino Pizzi's proposals make us think about Latin American information thinking possibilities. The affirmation and international recognition of Latin American theories and conceptions in the Communication field encourages these possibilities. But following Pizzi's clue, we have to locate the possible disdain for these thoughts. Although the areas dedicated to informational study exist in an international community interlocution, our specificities, linked to historical and cultural contexts, can bring different concepts and perspectives. The thoughts of our researchers should dialogue in international spaces without depending on references and foreign citations that authorize them. Such dependence is still indicative of a kind of scorn to be overcome, the self-scorn.

It is in the sense of identifying the existence of Ibero-American informational ideas that **Carlos Alberto Ávila** asks: "*An Ibero-American information thinking exists?*" At first the absence of Latin American works in international mapping of the Information Science field can be discouraging. The almost international invisibility of its significant, and in many cases innovative, production is partly explained by Anglo-Saxon hegemony and inequality, which goes from language to resources. But it's clear its existence. And it is clear the existence of regional interlocution efforts in Information Science. Systematic events, since the 1990s, have favored both partnerships and the search for common points as well as have given some visibility of thought differentials.

Ávila points out epistemological studies in Mexico, Cuba, Spain, Colombia, Portugal, and Brazil and the researches in Organization of Knowledge that have covered contemporary aspects of gender, domain analysis and declassification. In the context of science-based research, there is a considerable production of metric studies, on open access, and on the implications of the changes brought about by digital technologies. In relation to these technologies we have studies on information architecture, modeling, ontologies and data mining.

In libraries studies the school library is highlight, inserted in contexts of contradictions, poverty, and exclusion, its emancipatory and decolonizing role. The concern with vocational training and the diffusion of technologies highlights issues and strategies for informational competence and inclusion. To users studies Avila identified in Uruguay a research line related to people in unfavorable conditions or vulnerability. In Argentina other that discusses the exclusion caused by the information society. Also noteworthy are criteria, policies and transparency studies in archivist research, and identity, heritage and culture in museology.

Faced with his field mapping in Ibero-America, Ávila poses its deepening challenge in order to compare Ibero-American thoughts with broad epistemological mappings and proposals to the field. Only then these contributions to Information Science can become clearer.

The historical context of emergency and the specificity of Cuban Information Science are presented by **Radames Linares Columbié** in "*Historical-epistemological reflections on Information Science, and the singularity of its construction in Cuba.*" According to his analysis, the direction and research choices in Cuban Information Science cannot be dissociated from its historical context: a colonized Latin American country; from the moment of emergency of Information Science: cold war; from the choice for communism: approach to the Soviet Union; and from its neighborhood: the United States.

In the American context Vannevar Bush (Roosevelt's adviser), pointing scientific and technological information as strategic for the State, became an important protagonist in the change of "information" status in the West, which until the Second War was only a marginal concept, without scientific interest (ROSZAK, 1988, p.17). According to Linares Columbié, the confrontation of the Cold War between the United States and Russia would create favorable conditions for the demands of agile and efficient means of organizing and recovering scientific and technological information.

The information, then understood as strategic but amplified by German research files transfer, would give rise to the term "information explosion", putting in the forefront the need to develop access and control means to scientific and technological information, opening the route to American Information Science emergency, institutionalized in 1962.

In the Soviet sphere the work with scientific and technological information had begun in 1952 with VINITI creation, whose work led to the founding in 1967 the Informátika's research field. Linares Columbié emphasizes that the field definition was very similar to American, underlining its interest in this particular type of information, and its examination within the scientific activity. The cyclical character of information in science and technology in Informátika's view, a differential of the American Information Science, is to some extent

resembled Otlet's documentary cycle. The centrality of VINYTY proposed to dealing with information, as a catalyzing and radiating center, was, why not to say, similar to Otletian conception of Mudaneum's role.

If Cuban alignment with the Soviet Union had its influence on the early years of Information Sciences in the country, Linares Columbié points out that the reflection of its theorists, from *Informátika* and the Georgia Institute of Technology (USA) proposals, would open the way to a new drawing. The so-called Information Sciences in Cuba cover the differentials of concepts, supports and means of handling archival, library and museological information, which come together from common aspects.

It is interesting to point out that although Cuban singularity, the implementation of Information Science in Latin America from a point of view of hegemonic countries in the post-war period, and its problematic of strategic (scientific and technological) information management, demands today an historical-epistemological reflexive bend to question the Latin American informational interests until now not contemplated by Information Science due to this strength of this initial mark. It also demands to think, in a conversation with Ávila, whether other reasons for the invisibility of Latin American research should be added, especially those studies based on local realities and demands.

In "*Approaches to a political philosophy of information*", **Ariel Morán Reyes** considers the need for information as a legitimate basic need for adaptation, transformation and to feel part of the world, enjoying ones autonomy, therefore, a right. But in the networked society, the symbolic force in circulatory information system dynamics has a structuring character that tends to equalize the culture, and to value certain manifestations in view of cultural products sale.

Morán does not leave aside the digital media, almost always co-opted by market logics and political interests that are alien to local interests, but which also allowed alternative and critical social networks organizations, appearing as a new space in the contemporary redefinition of public space. Within the scope of culture, older than digital media, the library plays a role of resignification, opposed to cultural industry interests. Agents of legitimation and circulation of information, but alternative to the market, libraries also interconnect general public and the spheres of intellectual and artistic production. As instances of conservation and institutions of memory, allow readings against the cultural market canonical discourse since their documentary valuation processes are more autonomous.

Morán asks the University as an organism of citizens' empowerment. He notes universities work in general in view of their internal functioning, away from the demands and the questions

to be healed in their surroundings. Universities should be urged on their leader role to play in public interest matters and cultural re-signification.

Using the library as a questioning and re-signification model against market information in the mass media, and in a large part of the digital media, Morán's article enters into a dialogue with aspects that stand out in the articles already presented, especially when we return to Latin America. The structuring character of the networked society interconnects imposing a monoculture, obstructing the recognition of intellectual and cultural values discussed by Pizzi. The look at areas knowledge questions articulated with trajectories solutions of international interest cannot suffer from a short view. Research from Latin American realities can, and should take, place in international academic knowledge contributions.

In "*Some considerations about the method in information science*", **Pablo Melongo** and **Ignacio Saraiva** deal with the legitimation of Information Science. They highlight the demands for a unified method in opposition to the plurality of approaches and methods observed. This diversity, still today experienced in Information Science, brings for many the sensation that the area will not reach a scientific status. Their question is: what is the philosophical foundation of this attachment to the method, since the field assumes to have abandoned positivist conceptions?

Is in the weakness of the epistemological foundations that Melongo and Saraiva will find this occult positivist demand, which goes back to the science of the 17th and 18th centuries and the demand for scientific legitimacy that marked social sciences in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As well as the substitution of positivist conceptions for contributions such as phenomenology, hermeneutics or ethnography, this did not diminish the idea of the necessary methodological unification.

Despite this foundational idea of the method, the knowledge areas, even those that present a unified method, only came to this from scientific practice, which always preceded the choice of a method. In their terms, the choice of methods in the sciences in general is not based on philosophical arguments, but rather on the selection of those who are particularly effective in solving proposed problems, delimiting the disciplinary identity.

Melongo and Saraiva invite the Information Science researchers to reduce their energy commitments in methodological disputes and channel them to the development of knowledge to solve the informational problems that defy us today. And why not complement the reflections of Melongo and Saraiva, especially the informational challenges in Latin American context.

In "*Unpacking the physical paradigm of Information Science*", **Geni Chaves Fernandes**, takes up two different approaches that inaugurated Information Science in the United States and

Soviet Union in the postwar to point out their differentials and partnerships, which remain to a certain extent concealed by the term "physical paradigm", in Rafael Capurro's field organization. According to Fernandes, Information Science was constituted with two research interests, both in the USA and in the USSR. One directed to the control for the management of science and technology knowledge production, the Mathematical Approach, aiming index construction by quantitative mappings of scientific activity, therefore: information about science. Another, Documentalist Approach, associated with the first one, aimed to provide fast and automated information media to science and technology development, therefore: information for science. These two approaches corresponded to labor relations to provide information to the State before the second war. Relations among actors of science, engineering, specialized librarianship and documentation, strengthened during the second war. In postwar years they responded together to the scientists' complaints dated from post-first war, Documentalist Approach, and the demands for science and technology management by the state in the cold war, Mathematical Approach.

The same interests regarding information in science and technology are observed in the emergence of the Soviet Informátika, despite their theoretical and understanding differentials that the value of information is attributed and arising from the practices of its production and uses in science and technology.

The Fernandes' historical rescue and epistemological reflections, as Linares Columbié, open the way to question if United States and the Soviet Union information interests and the foundations which based these approaches to information came over Latin America. The question arises: what are the Latin American information interests still not covered by Information Science caused by the force of this initial mark?

Good Reading!

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