

MANAGEMENT, STATE OF EMERGENCY, AND A NEW TOTALITARIANISM

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ABSTRACT

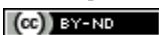
French thinker Baptiste Rappin presents a comprehensive and metaphysical view on managerial sciences, or what he calls the theology of organization, in his works. The merits of his work are that he presents the managerial sciences as a unity centered around one principle, and the modern and postmodern metaphysical framework within which those sciences belong and their common features. Both the sciences of management and postmodern metaphysics express a vision of the world dominated by an obsession with permanent exception/permanent state of emergency, crisis, and discontinuity. Whether in management, cybernetics, or politics, reality presents itself as a permanent crisis, as a series of continuous attacks of exception and difference, so that all human existence and activities – islands of an ever-precarious order – must be constantly rebuilt to adapt permanently to this assault, so that they become machines for preventing crisis and creating order out of crisis. At the heart of this project lies the cybernetic model of information-processing machines based on feedback loops and the creation of a new type of man, whose main feature is adaptability and the loss of all substantiality.

Keywords: management, totalitarianism, state of emergency, cybernetics, governance

INTRODUCTION

One of the most interesting thinkers today, the French philosopher and university senior lecturer Baptist Rappin from the I. A. Metz School of Management, University of Lorraine, provides in his works pertaining to the managerial sciences a comprehensive and detailed description of the metaphysical and ideological framework that encompasses what Jean-Francois Mattei dubbed the “new totalitarianism”, (Mattei apud Rappin 2014, 13) which revolves around the idea of crisis, and state of emergency. This new quiet managerial totalitarianism has its source and support in cybernetics and its dehumanizing conception, which reduces humans and living beings, as well

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as other structures, to information processing mechanisms based on feedback loops. He highlights the true stakes at work in the managerial sciences: anthropological, political, sociological, spiritual, and so on. The metaphysical framework, the vision that imbues these disciplines, is modern and postmodern, allied with a technocratic framework, furthering the idea of the human-machine fusion. It also leads to the conviction that society should fuse its members in a collective intelligence structure, which some consider to exist in certain natural forms, for example, in small groups or certain animals – ants or bees, swarm intelligence – but such types of collective intelligence are also exemplified by a jazz band or a soccer team (Noubel 2007, 3). At its core, this original collective intelligence manifests itself in human groups of 10–20 people, thereby amplifying original social skills such as collaboration and mutual aid. This original collective intelligence must be extended to increasingly broader levels in order to make human organizations as efficient as possible, because this is how the complexity of the unexpected – of the exception – can be perceived and handled accordingly.

The stakes of management encompass social, political, and anthropological aspects. The anthropological view promoted by the managerial sciences is that of a rootless person, dedicated to the tasks she has to perform according to the requirements of the organization she belongs to, with most efficiency possible, characterized by sets of skills that are transferable from one activity to another. Applying the model of managerial sciences to all areas of human activities has consequences for everyone involved. During this process, social and political structures are altered in a quiet and imperceptible way. The stakes encompass the whole world. The managerial sciences operate with a processual and, thus, fluid model of existence, which is applied to the entire world. Society and its environment will no longer be seen as static but in a flow that brings new challenges continuously. The fluidity of the world means that the organizations or institutions that comprise it must participate in this continuous flow, contributing to the optimization of the flow, so there is no room for building fixed structures and rest. Education and learning are redefined. Both are transformed into permanent and lifetime-lasting processes, because everything is in flux and changing. It is a matter of an unceasing process of training and retraining the individual, which, under the moniker of continuous education, has become a matter of law. A corollary of this process and concept of the individual is the concept of human capital – an expression used by Joseph Stalin as early as the 1930s (Rappin 2018, 229). This conception has helped to form the concept of the self-entrepreneur. Adaptability, skills transferability from one domain to another, and interpersonal skills build the core of the concept of the liquid self-entrepreneur. Being human capital means endless accumulation and development, so that development becomes continuous and self-education lasts a lifetime. In the traditional sense, having a profession meant being dedicated to a goal and striving for excellence and recognition from peers and colleagues. This is no longer the case. The development of skills, i.e., operational methods that can be successfully replicated from one organization to another, makes

it possible for employees to move from one organization to another. Dedication and loyalty to a workplace or a job are misplaced here. Employability does not mean acquiring new content or skills, learning to perform new activities, etc. It is defined by adaptive behavior whose traits of openness, adaptability, and mobility allow activities to be calibrated to different situations that arise – a permanent state of exception/emergency. One way to achieve this is through coaching techniques, in which the trainer/*coach* adopts the attitude of a mirror and, through a game of questions and answers, the person undergoing the process finds within themselves the resources necessary to solve the new problems they face. *Coaching* has multiple sources, such as New Age philosophy, the Palo Alto School, and cybernetics (Rappin 2018, 233). This practice is based on the concept that humans are relational beings, giving primacy to the theory of communication and information processing – that is, working on frames of reference. It is about seeking and promoting adaptability – reactive or proactive to the environment. This *coaching* practice creates the reflective practitioner – be it a *coach*, manager, or organization – who can shape their own actions as they unfold – that is, think about them as they are being carried out, rather than reflecting on them after the fact – so that they can be adjusted to be more adaptive and effective. It can also be found in what is called “organizational learning”, which refers to a cognitive organizational process shared by the members of an organization that makes collective action possible. Organizational learning means the action by which an organization changes its collective images (that underwrite their view on reality, what the organization has to do, what its task are, which means are the best for attaining the proposed goals, etc.), allowing it to combat the degradation of the organization – the entropy that affects it and that comes from disturbances produced by the external environment, in other words, the onslaught of exceptions.

THE STATE OF EMERGENCY/GENERALIZED EXCEPTION

The history of management and managerial sciences, despite their variations and diversity, are bound by a common thread, which is the category of exception or state of permanent exception/emergency (Rappin 2018, 237). This category confers unity and identity to the covers a set of diverse relationships and types of knowledge (Taylorism, human resources, etc.), but what defines it is the idea of governing of permanent exception. The concepts of change and exception are central to it. How is change conceived and confronted? Classically, change was conceived of as the transition from one form to another, such as water passing from a gaseous to a liquid state; however, this model of understanding change is no longer relevant. Change was reconceived. It must be considered as standing and ongoing, as a perpetual process that creates the image of a stability that does not exist. Since the concept of change is redefined, the same must happen to the notion of organization. An organization is

not a stable structure that evolves over time, but one that has to be imagined as a movement that is constantly renewing itself; it is just as much a process as a permanent change. It is a precarious structure from an ontological point of view, not an immutable essence (Rappin 2018, 246). It is instability incarnate. In this context, change management does not mean passive adaptation to an increasingly turbulent environment. Adaptation is an inner process, an activity initiated by the organization itself; it is not just a reaction. Novelty must be received and produced by an organization, whereby the old way of doing things is given up or erased by the new way of proceeding. Therefore, being an efficient organization – that is, a working one – implies erasing the past and creating a blank slate as a departure point for the new way of doing things. Such a point of view expresses a logic of radical innovation (Rappin 2018, 251).

Behind these developments, there is a cause. The managerial sciences express a revolutionary logic, inaugurated in the 11th century by the Gregorian papal revolution (Rappin 2018, 252). According to the imaginary underlying the managerial sciences, innovation and its valorization are an expression of the metaphysics of process and rupture, not activities exclusive to Research and Development departments. In this contemporary conception of management, what stands out is the process of organizing as opposed to organization as a structure, which contains rigid forms and standardized modes of operation. Organizing denotes precisely movement, ongoing transformation. This process involves reflexivity, creating a distance from oneself (person or organization) and integrating new practices into new forms, so that the established images and representations that directed the activity (both personal or collective) up to that point in time are dislocated and changed/replaced. This activity is known as “organizational apprenticeship”, and its kinship with the feedback loop as defined in cybernetics is evident. Innovation is not something exclusive to the individual. It can become a feature of the collective if proper methodologies are applied in sessions and conferences: brain-storming, not criticizing, accepting unusual ideas, etc. Outside critical objections lose their power. Even critical attitudes stemming from the arts and humanities are integrated. If classical modes of management could have been rightly accused of alienating man, modern day organizations fare otherwise. They appeal to all the values of autonomy, adaptability, innovation, responsibility, emancipation or creativity, all of which are pertaining to the feedback loops and to the necessity of changing the organizational behavior to adapt to the environment. Values considered artistic are integrated into the managerial approach, and counterculture becomes cyberculture (Rappin 2018, 258).

The extension of the managerial organization of the world is prompted by another factor. Present-day society can be described as a risk or catastrophe society, as the German sociologist Ulrich Beck calls it, quoted in Rappin (2018, 261). It has become so. The “new society of organizations”, as Peter F. Drucker calls it, is a society that opens itself to new unprecedented levels of risk. Everything is placed in a position of risk that manifests itself at different levels: organizational, social, and technical. New risks arise in the technical society, the term “new risks” denoting a new kind of

state of emergency affecting humanity, unintended and unforeseen by-products of the technical progress. The new risks (nuclear accidents, for example) are another consequence of metaphysics or modern industrial religion (Günther Anders), which expresses itself in the form of the managerial sciences, too. This is the world of what Heidegger called the *Gestell* in which anything can become raw material and an object of possible use – the justification of existence through possible use. The world is not a cosmos or God's creation, but a mine to be exploited, a huge fund of objects to be used. Therefore, due to constant change and new risks that arise steadily, management necessarily expands its scope of action thanks to the changes and new developments introduced by human action in the world. Unpredictable risks, more predictable risks, but also some completely unforeseen consequences, such as those produced by the invention of the mechanical clock in the 13–14th centuries, are plaguing the world. A complexly non-intended, and unforeseeable change has been introduced in the world by it. The device for measuring time, intended for monastic life and establishing a more precise schedule for Benedictine and Cistercian monks, had unexpected effects that encompassed the whole of society, making possible industrialization, standardization of production, the liberation of man from natural rhythms, regular working hours, standardized products (Postman 1993, 14–15), and perhaps even the numerical classification of human existence. It changed the way man understood himself and the world. It might be seen as a “catastrophe” and an example of how unintended change permeates and modifies human existence. No managerial sciences would be possible without the clock, either. The development of mankind, its imperative of total exploitation of the world, which is an essential part of modernity and the technical approach to reality, necessitates the management of innovation and risk, as it multiplies the possibility of its occurrence at any moment, since every new exception can give a new impetus for adaptation and transformation of the organization. In this context, innovation becomes something commonplace and permanent (Rappin, 2018, p. 261). In fact, this attitude creates permanent destabilization, and risk and innovation management are the solution addressing this issue. The technological and managerial-driven society fuels itself in its operation of transforming the world into “an organization of organizations” by the new and unpredictable changes and risks (disorders) born by its activity. There are consequences coming out of these processes. The transformation of human societies and the rise of risk management, the attempt to establish an environment of certainty in a state of permanent exception, deinstitutionalization of institutions and institutionalization of organizations, lead to the destruction and undermining of institutions that, through stability, provided landmarks for communal life. The role of the state is transformed. What is solid, melts away, becoming liquid. The liquid logic undergirding present-day society leads to the reformulation of what certainty is in terms of risk management, with the state losing its privileged place in the world order and becoming a partner of organizations. The law is no longer what ensures the life of societies at the local or national level, being replaced by techniques of management and control, which replace

the nation-state as a regulatory body. Correlated to the expansion of management and administration in all areas of life is information and communication technology, without which the managerial system of organizing things wouldn't work. Risk management, like any other type of managerial science, boils down to adaptability, and as such, it fits perfectly into the matrix provided by cybernetics (Rappin 2018, 266).

The managerial scientist, the modern and post-modern man represents a new type of human being, the uprooted man, so the generalization of this type of human being, as well as other things related to it – the organization as a system for achieving efficiency (i.e., a structure that unites a multiplicity of factors in order to achieve something as efficiently as possible) – leads to changes in society and in the way knowledge is conceived. This gives rise to the discipline of *Knowledge Management*, which redefines what knowledge is. Knowledge becomes operational and reducible to bits of information. It becomes information, something easily accessible that no longer requires reflection and apprenticeship. It is no longer the internal possession of a master thinker or sage, but a collection of data distributed on a server, and the act of learning is reduced to acquiring methods of accessing and processing information (Rappin 2018, 269). Knowledge dissolves into quantities of information and becomes more efficient as it is digitized. It has value only as knowledge in action. In other words, there is a utilitarian-pragmatic reduction of knowledge at work, which equates it to a belief that has practical effects. Knowledge is already action. This is by no means something new in the postmodern frame we live in, according to Rappin. Knowledge is reduced to action and information, and information, according to another thinker related to the Cybernetics Group and the Macy Conferences, Gregory Bateson, consists of differences that make a difference, not only in the sense of unique features that distinguish one thing from another, but also in the sense of advantage. Although Bateson uses the term information, he means knowledge in a pragmatic sense (Rappin 2018, 274). Knowledge/information appears as the difference between differences and as the “difference” par excellence, a process of constant contrast. Knowledge/information is defined in terms of deviation, differentials, potentials for action, and process. Information/knowledge is an asset. It must be put to work at both the personal and organizational level. Knowledge that might exist only in a tacit form or as a personal possession has to be converted into explicit, systematic knowledge in a common knowledge pool. Whether tacit or not, the form of knowledge involved must be transformed into a personal and communicable *savoir-faire* that can be shared and acquired by others and the organization. Socialization, combination, and internalization describe the process of integration of knowledge, people, and organization into a unitary cognitive framework. This framework is sometimes dubbed collective intelligence. It enables an organization to function in a unified and adaptive manner in the face of the constant inner and outside pressure. The ambiguity of information (which can also be defined as that which the organism exchanges with the environment) must be reduced, but the information must also be sufficiently rich and relevant to lead to a change in the way an organization understands itself and its tasks. Another important

factor is the internal variety, without which no organization will be able to successfully address a complex situation, especially one whose complexity exceeds its own. Variety and information must be imported so that the organism's homeostasis is not destabilized and it does not fall prey to entropy. If the received information introduces greater complexity, exceeding the degree the organization can handle, it can lead to an event that causes the disappearance of the usual frames of reference guiding that organization. The organization might break down if nothing is done to reduce the surplus of complexity. An organization is a body characterized by procedural rationality that changes and processes information from the environment. Both of them can be considered as movement and permanent construction. An organization is not a fixed structure, but a process: *organizing*, *structuring*, *knowing*, etc. It is an effort and process of improvisation, without a final and formal cause (Rappin 2018, 279), but which creates meaning – *sensemaking* (Karl Weick). However, the frame of reference that ensures its functioning is construed in pragmatic terms. The action must succeed, not that the framework through which the organism deciphers the world is true. Truth is reduced to utility, and the organization, in a sense, to a mental map. The mental map does not provide landmarks, but correlations that take precedence over what is related. It is, in fact, a kind of endless combinatorial process, putting reality at the service of the organization by discovering operational relationships, not deep structures. Knowledge is reduced to action (Rappin 2018, 281), and, since a map is never complete and always subject to change, so is the organization. The managerial sciences and their activities are dependent on information and information flow, on being structured by a common frame of reference or mental space – a collective intelligence that enables common action. This knowledge/information must be made available to everyone. In a sense, this shared mental space entails what an organization is and what it is supposed to do.

The mental map, the framework that defines the organization, establishes a common mental plan or a form of collective intelligence that enables the aggregation of multiplicity into a goal-oriented structure. The mental map – the framework or 'holotopic' space (Noubel 2004) – leads to the aggregation of various factors – material and human – into a unity, including the tasks to be performed, the modes of coordination, the vision of the world and the goal to be achieved, the interactions between them and what results from them in terms of the goals and objectives produced, as well as the representation of the whole that is the organization/organism, etc. – which constitute a cognitive base that enables the functioning of the organization. When a shock occurs that exceeds the capacity to process variation, a "cosmological" event can occur – that is, one that disrupts this collective cognitive space that makes joint action possible, sometimes calling everything into question: goals and objectives, the means to achieve them, the way each member of the organization organizes their activity, etc. The local space of certainty or security is disrupted, but without it, there can be no confrontation with the permanent state of exception, and the structure of this organism is information and its distribution. Thus, it must be reconstructed.

Information technology and cyberspace are becoming the technical infrastructure of human communities, according to philosopher Pierre Levi, as described by B. Rappin (2018, 283), individuals will merge with technology (Noubel 2004, 65).

In a world of a permanent state of emergency, information and communication technologies play a leading role, changing our relationship with space and time and altering our relationship with reality. Intelligence is redefined as the ability to adapt/readapt in real time, the ability to interact immediately, and to embrace the acceleration of time. It is action, reaction, pro-action, the opposite of intelligence as classically understood, which included contemplation and rest. In the form of IT infrastructure, there is a permanent, real-time reorganization of socio-technical arrangements, expressed in keywords such as flexibility, tense flow, zero delays, and zero stock. This structure of collective intelligence is fractal-like. It is a process of distributive cognition, which repeats itself at different levels of reality: snowflakes, the bloodstream, maritime networks (Rappin 2018, 284), etc. This is a construct that leads to a monistic view on reality and can be applied to both individuals and organizations. It is similar to the cybernetic reduction of an organism to a communicative structure, which main feature is exchanging information with the environment to which it adapts its behavior through feedback loops; this is also a fractal-like, meaning the structure or mechanism works in the same way regardless of the reality to which it belongs: human, computer, animal, plant, and organization. This monistic view enables a process of dehumanization – man, biological organism, or organizations reduced to the status of information-processing structures. On a social and political level, the foundation is being laid for a technocracy/technopoly rooted in cybernetics. This is one of the achievements of the model of understanding the world produced by cybernetics: the reproduction of the same operating scheme in different realities. In terms of collective intelligence, it is present at all levels of human activity, whether individual, group, organizational, etc. The managerial man, the cybernetic man, or the man of collective intelligence is the expression of the utopia of the numerical man.

GOVERNANCE AND CYBERNETICS

The philosophy of management and management sciences offer us a tacit political philosophy, a theory of global governance, and even an organizational theology and religion. There is a redefinition of sovereignty and what governance means, especially due to the way cybernetics construes reality and life. Cybernetics inspires this contemporary managerial organizational vision of the world, transforming fundamental concepts that have guided the way societies think about politics. However, there is an older connection between cybernetics and governance, which can be read out from the very name of cybernetics – the art of leadership, of steering, *kybernetes* (Rappin 2018, 308–309) meaning helmsman in ancient Greek, the pilot of a ship. Cybernetics and governance are, in fact, synonymous, the concept of cybernetics having

been introduced in France in the 19th century with the meaning of general art of governing (Rappin 2018, 310). According to some opinions, even the concept of the state is a matter of technique, that the state, even in its constitutional form, is an organization, the site of a titanic engineering project, interested in and focused on the idea of efficiency (Barault 2007, 8). It is the product of a millennial technique of human organization, the work of a total art that encompasses all dimensions of human existence. It is the product of a millennial technique of human organization, the work of a total art that encompasses all dimensions of human existence. Not so easy to discern are the religious and mystical – even eschatological – aspects presented by the state. It endows the state with a certain aesthetic and presence. Those dimensions confer meaning to history and legitimacy to the state, thus distinguishing it from other forms of organizations, from a mafia. This is true even if the religion, iconography, and aesthetics the state displays are counterfeit, given the fact that the state is, among other things, a huge propaganda machine. The modern constitutional state is the product of an organizational technique, inasmuch as its political institutions are. Both are conceived according to the model of the machine, of engineering, with modern constitutions being perfectly summarizable in plans and diagrams (Barault 2007, 10). Political institutions are the product of a would-be scientific thought, in the form of technical precision – constitutional law. The claim to technicality and rationality exists in the modern state and its institutions, coupled with a certain mysticism. The claim to technicality exists, as does rationality; they are present in the modern state and its institutions, being coupled with mysticism. Like cybernetics and management, the state is situated between technology and theology/mysticism, being a form of technical routine extended to the entire planet (Barault 2007, 14). Just as part of the spiritual and religious drama unfolds in history, politics is affected or shaped by religious values/visions, even when these are disguised. From the beginning, the state is linked to the vision of piloting, of steering. This fits with its technical framework. For the Western political tradition, a society exists if it is governed. The theory of the state presents society something that needs to be governed or piloted, good governance/ government being a condition *sine qua non* for attaining and promoting people's happiness. In ancient Greece, this was the realm of politics, of public affairs, of the public good, which must be kept separate from the private sphere. However, this distinction between the private and public spheres is beginning to fade in the modern state, where politics has become increasingly reduced to its juridical aspect, although there is an area of politics that is hostile to the law or even outside its purview. Starting with the Greek experience of the polis, Western political thought has concluded that there is a technique for governing the human community, a technique for good governance. *Politeia* is a rational political organization, regulated by law (*nomos*), based on the equality of citizens and the equal distribution of power, with the concept of citizen being the opposite of subject. The concept of the modern state presupposes that of governance, the absence of which is anarchy, governance coming from the Latin *gubernare*, meaning to hold and steer the helm of a ship. To govern means to steer, society being not only a ship, but also a body,

which is governed/ steered by the head and soul. Cybernetics is the art of steering, of governing.

The current mode of governing society is replacing the classic regime of sovereignty with a new one based on the circulation of information and feedback loops, habituation to permanent exception. According to N. Wiener's views, cybernetics is concerned with steering, control, and communication mechanisms in both the animal and machine realms, firmly linking it to the feedback mechanism that concerns anything that seeks to achieve a goal. Importing these views into managerial science and politics has consequences. It has altered the way politics is done. The classical way of governing people will gradually have been diluted under the influence of the efficiency provided by feedback, communication, and control mechanisms. Those become paramount since institutions have been transformed to work according to this paradigm. Without control through negative or positive feedback of information, no organization can survive. Cybernetic governance is defined as a process of piloting and control, inseparable from risk minimization, which commits all means to achieve the necessary ends. A society under cybernetic managerial guidance is one of generalized control, where control becomes self-control through internalization, without using a formalized control device. Management control is not exercised through commands from outside, but through the initiatives of managers and impulses arising from the informal aspects of the organizational environment. This means internalizing the management program, not freely exercising one's own reason (Rappin 2018, 314). It is unreflective behavior, mechanical, automatic, and unconscious application. That is why contemporary organizations prioritize organizational culture, corporate values, and the use of various methods of internalizing norms, *coaching* being one of those. In this way, individuals acquire external norms that are foreign to them. Within an organizational framework, this yields in collective control and guidance. When such a procedure is applied on a global scale, an imperceptible indoctrination is carried out.

This paradigm was introduced in the field of political science and philosophy, by Karl Deutsch (Rappin 2018, 316). This conceptual revolution reimagines society as something akin to a nervous system. The main categories of political thought become the concepts of communication and information. The idea of governance takes on a new meaning, which is steering goal-oriented behaviors. This is conceptual upheaval became possible by subsuming all types of collective activity under the category of organization (Rappin 2018, 316–317). A serious conceptual transformation takes place. Sovereignty is replaced by governmentality; in other words, the individual or society no longer self-legislates, and autonomy designates the acceptance and internalization of information, the ability of a system to change its objectives based on memory and interactions with the environment. In such a context, the terms commonly used to denote notions such as sovereignty, autonomy, or freedom change their meaning.

The piloting of a nation as a cybernetic entity was attempted in Chile under Salvador Allende in 1971, an experience that, for so-called revolutionary thinkers, serves as an example of overcoming capitalism through true acceleration (Rappin 2018, 318).

The annihilation of political sovereignty and freedom, as it is or was, takes place through a process of ontological conversion and a technical mutation of institutions that have massively introduced management methods and practices into their operations. In this process, they altered their form and purpose, becoming organizations that seek to achieve objectives and apprenticeships through feedback loops. Management cannot be viewed solely from the perspective of instrumental rationality, but from a metaphysical point of view, as a movement to transform the world into an organization, everything being conceived and expressed in terms of steering and communication (Rappin 2018, 319–320). The organizational form towards which the world is pushed requires the total digitalization/digitization of the world, based on algorithmic governance (Rappin 2018, 322) and possibly the imposition of a perfectly univocal cybernetic language, communication being reduced to a set of such perfectly univocal signals that allow the approach and treatment of a large amount of information through which the system – the world unified in an organization of organizations – regulates its behavior. Data governance, the process that makes this cybernetic-managerial meta-approach possible, requires a logical overhaul of the language that paves the way for computerized governance of signs, but also the application of all techniques based on the cybernetic categories of organization, open systems, feedback, and apprenticeship to society. This approach is based on the collection, combination, and automated analysis of massive amounts of data in order to model, anticipate, and influence possible behaviors in advance. It is a type of governance that is updated in real time because any data ingested is linked to that already existing in the database, bringing to light new, mobile, and plastic correlations that can be modified at any time. Such approaches to reality are based on an internal norm governing the process itself, without reference to any external criterion, without reference to any causes of the correlations it makes between data, eliminating every possible deviation, instantly integrated every combination into the algorithm. The algorithmic norm practically exhausts the totality of reality, each possible having to be actualized. This process does not refer to any cause or context of correlations, creating models unrelated to reality, seeking to structure the possible (Rappin 2018, 327).

ORDER AND DISORDER. ENTROPY AND INFORMATION

The main opposition structuring the managerial approach is the one between order and entropy. Order means organization/information, and it is opposed, in Wiener's words, by the entropy that reigns everywhere. It is an understanding of reality that abandons individualism and freedom in favor of cooperation and control. All behavior is understood as being driven by a system's need to survive its environment, and human, mechanical, and other behaviors are considered to be entirely programmable and reprogrammable (Rappin 2018, 329). The conviction that today's world is under the emprise of capitalism and liberalism is false. Technocratic governance has quietly

replaced politics as a specific activity, and the logic of fluidity (of the process) has taken the place of that of capital accumulation (Rappin 2018, 328).

As already mentioned, the concept of organization is central to this new world order. This concept comes from biology and has been linked to cybernetics in terms of order, balance, and feedback loops. Cybernetics is a way of thinking about balance, but also about crisis/state of emergency. Organization – the organism that must maintain its homeostasis but also evolve – has to maintain its inner balance in the face of the intruding forces of crisis. The reflections that gave rise to cybernetics, the Macy Conferences (between 1946 and 1953), took place in the context of the Second World War and the destruction it caused, so the emphasis on piloting, control, and balance is understandable to a certain extent. A way must be found to extract order from chaos, order from disorder, certainty from uncertainty, so that the crisis becomes an opportunity to establish or perhaps re-establish the means of enhancing order (Rappin 2018, 330). Seen in this light, the state of emergency is the privileged instrument of the art of governance, and, consequently, the promotion of such states will be used to reinforce order, to establish even more intense piloting and control. The crisis, the state of emergency, is an opportunity to relaunch the process of self-regulation and remodeling of the entire cognitive-behavioral, value-based, framework of society. Terror, chaos, and disorder are facts of evolution, and so is manufacturing them. According to Wiener's vision, organization/order is an enclave, an island in a sea of aggressive disorder. Organization is an exception, something that temporarily escapes the second law of thermodynamics, being a statistical exception, an ontological exception. The proliferation of organized structures – natural and artificial – shows that entropy does not increase on our scale. Organization is what moderns have at their disposal to replace the old idea of the cosmos, through which they try to give meaning to reality, replacing the older conceptions pertaining to the order of the world (Rappin 2018, 343). Even if organization is understood as a form of order, it is neither in the sense of the ancient Greek cosmos nor God's creation (even if distorted by sin). Paradoxically, organization, in its modern and scientific sense, is an exception in the order of the world and of things, and the role of managers is to perpetuate this ontological exception (Rappin 2018, 315) in the huge ocean of entropy that engulfs almost everything. Entropy is not just a moment of passing crisis; it can be used to increase the degree of organization, which is always something gained, not a definitively accomplished work (Rappin 2018, 378). Information is the opposite of entropy and crisis. At the same time, information/order can be strengthened if it triggers a crisis. Order and disorder enter a symbiotic relationship, with the state of exception/emergency becoming an organized disorder, triggered to set in motion a process of reorganization. The organization appears as this "organized disorganization" in which destabilization and the need for permanent adaptation are perpetual (Rappin 2018, 330). B. Rappin further emphasizes the similarity between the shock therapy ideology, studied by American author N. Klein, and other attempts to control/govern the mind (MK Ultra) and the state of emergency situations. Shock treatment represents the state of exception/emergency that leads to

the deprogramming and reprogramming of the individual/society. The managerial and cybernetic conception of reality has become a geopolitical weapon (Rappin 2018, 335) that can be used to steer a given society in a particular direction by subjecting it to increased shocks and subsequent reorganization.

As already stated, the scientific concept of organization is a key concept for understanding how contemporary humans relate to the world and themselves. It constitutes a fundamental way of viewing and understanding things, as Ludwig von Bertalanffy states in *General Systems Theory*, as quoted by B. Rappin. However, this concept should not be confused with the everyday concept of organization/organizing (Rappin 2018, 353). The new concept of organization, which began to emerge at the end of the 17th century, is no longer pyramidal but closer to the horizontality implied by the notion of a network. It is a new image of the world, embodied by Western techno-science. The first sketches of the modern and scientific concept of organization can be found in I. Kant's *Critique of Judgment* regarding the way in which life is structured, as an internal structure that is its own goal, a structure that organizes and interacts with its component parts. It is a transition from a visible structure to an invisible and structuring one. In biology, organization denotes the structuring and structured totality that makes the living body possible (Rappin 2018, 356). In a way, this view represents the transposition of the Newtonian vision into the realm of biology, whereby the communication of forces is no longer done in the form of the wave, but as excitation, and the interstice becomes the point of application thereof. Life becomes a relationship between the components of a body, a special role being fulfilled by the fluids that move within it, mediating between the different parts and the source of excitation. Organization/organizing now becomes the landmark that distinguishes the living from the non-living (Rappin 2018, 357). In this context, physiology appears as a particular case of organization, and life is constituted around a circular causality. Organization and circular causality are interdependent phenomena. Biology will export such concepts, with the term organization being applied in the socio-political-economic field by Claude Henri de Saint-Simon, who intended to build his industrial religion on it. In his doctrine, Saint-Simon speaks of raw/solid bodies and those in a liquid/fluid state, and that life starts from their circulation. Structure and organization are thus connected to the idea of a network. Society is a structure that consists of social classes (organs) and flows: money, knowledge, and respect/consideration. This system must be regulated. Regulation does not come from stability and rest, but from a series of self-sustaining actions and reactions, a dynamic process of adaptation to flow (Rappin 2018, 360). Even the history of its development can be described in terms of organization, as a transition from what he calls the feudal and military system to the industrial scientific one. According to Saint-Simon, the organization must function as a system, based on non-contradictory principles. The source of the principles for building such a system is to be found in physics. Social activity and society will have to change in order to function as a system. This vision anticipates that of Frederick Taylor, who argued that while in the past man came first, in the future the system would take precedence (Rappin 2018, 361–362).

Cybernetics has succeeded in explicitly linking the concept of organization with that of information (Rappin 2018, 367), which, like the concept of organization, takes on a new, scientifically defined meaning, arising from the intersection of several disciplines: physics, statistics, and telecommunications. Physics provides the contrast between information and entropy, while statistics supplies the idea of reducing a mass of data to an intelligible quantity that is given/constructed a qualitative representation, although a number of data must remain faithful to the initial data. In telecommunications, where the problem was posed in economic terms regarding the cheapest conditions that would allow users to recognize a word, there is a clear distinction between everyday information that anyone can interpret and scientific information that can be interpreted based on a scientific code, becoming a matter of combining and selecting elements. Information will become a dematerialized matter, which, in the techno-scientific approach, will ignore semantic issues, i.e., issues of meaning. This leads to a mathematical theory of communication and its organization into bits. Its meaning will come from this binary structure, from the transmission of patterns. This leads to the reconceptualization of life as a structured message that perpetuates itself over time until old age intervenes (Rappin 2018, 370). This affects energy, not the message. Therefore, personal identity has little to do with physical constitution, according to Wiener (Rappin 2018, 370). The redefinition of life and the organism go in the direction already indicated: the exchange of information with the environment, whereby homeostasis no longer means maintaining internal balance but rather the processing of internal and external information, or even getting an advantage over the environment. Everything becomes information in this perspective, reducible to 0 and 1, and to live means to live with adequate information. Thus, the organization/organization, whatever its nature, becomes an apparatus for processing information. For cybernetics information is something goal-directed, the value of an action or behavior being given by its effectiveness in attaining that goal. Cybernetics is the science of the effectiveness of goal-oriented actions, exerting its influence upon the entire realm of human activities through the models proposed by management sciences, which have also become sciences of efficiency. Effective and purposeful action is not only the prerogative of humans or a voluntary act that hides subjectivity behind it – it belongs to any organization, whether artificial or not. It is a physiological fact. It designates a behavior whose main feature is the feedback loop (Rappin 2018, 373). The feedback loop defines the essence of the organization, i.e., adaptability, agility, etc., and is based on processing information that shows the difference between the result of an action and the proposed objective. There are two types of such feedback loops: one that produces the same predefined goal and one that leads to behavioral change, to something new. The governance of the state of exception, whether by managerial means or algorithms, would not be possible without the creation and establishment of control systems that capture, store, and process an infinite amount of information, leading to the orientation/steering of behaviors in a certain direction (Rappin 2018, 375). This view represents just a more sophisticated kind of behaviorism.

CONCLUSION. BEHAVIORISM AND COLLECTIVISM

Despite considering purposeful action, cybernetic, and, therefore, whatever it inspires, constitutes a new type of sophisticated behaviorism enriched with the notion of a feedback loop. Its core obsession is entropy (Rappin 2018, 376). The amount of information in a system is the amount of order, and entropy is the degree of disorganization, degradation, and transition into indifference and uniformity. The more information is in a system, the more capable it becomes of fulfilling its tasks. A cybernetic system, an organization, maintains its complex unity of opposites through a self-regulating system that restores balance and neutralizes elements. Positive feedback is to a cybernetic organism what disorganization is to a living organism: a crisis. Organization also appears as an exception in a world dominated by entropy, although for humans, it is a very distant prospect. Therefore, humans can wage war against it, with scientists/cyberneticists at the forefront; cybernetics cannot be reduced to a merely scientific approach toward existence. It has existential import by partaking in the fight between Good and Evil (entropy), thus expressing a tragic aspect of human existence (Rappin 2018, 382). Victory is temporary and must be constantly renewed, as the course of the universe is moving towards the annihilation of difference and multiplicity. Entropy is the archenemy of existence. Entropy and disorganization are evil with a capital E. Since this concerns human existence as a whole, a general policy of exception must be adopted: entropy must be opposed by organization, the general law by the particular or the singular, Identity by Otherness, etc. (Rappin 2018, 379). Cybernetics is part of the modern and post-modern metaphysical and technocratic framework defining the present-day world. Life must therefore be organized, endowed with an organizational structure that integrates and uses antagonisms (dialectics), renews, and energizes itself by rooting itself in the environment – it must therefore be an open system. It must reproduce itself in such a way that this rate of reproduction exceeds that of disorganization, and it must be capable of self-organization and self-defense. The organization needs energy and information from outside itself, which must also circulate within it.

There is no organization unless it is efficient/effective. For this to happen, there must be an imbalance that allows the flow of energy and information – a universe in which thermal equilibrium reigns is one of victorious entropy, where there is no flow of energy, of anything. Deviation, difference, makes flow and transmission possible (Rappin 2018, 381). Therefore, maintaining order involves rupture, creating a difference, and opening the way for the circulation of information. As B. Rappin shows, the cybernetic concept of organization/organization is the basis of techniques of governance through chaos, crisis, and control, which are inseparable: without crisis, information cannot circulate, and without control, it becomes a corrosive force and leads the organization to destruction (Rappin 2018, 381). In a political context, those who promise order are those who make security and crisis a governing principle, setting themselves up as supporters of the Good, thereby embodying a religious

attitude in which evil and good are complementary and opposed. Evil/disorder is a condition for greater order; therefore, manufacturing crises and engaging in evil acts are seen as a necessary condition for the enhancement of the Good.

The cybernetic concept of order and organization is conceived as an invariant, repeating itself in different realities and scales, exemplifying moral imperialism (expanding in all areas of existence), and is considered a supreme form of good. The new type of world governance derived from this mindset means the installation on a global scale of the logic of organizational regulation to avoid a perceived excess of entropy. Thus, we need to see the emergence of non-governmental organizations, anti-hunger organizations, and anti-war organizations as the expansion of the organizational logic to all areas of life. Another way to describe this process, using terms from information theory, is to produce order from noise. The presence of disturbance calls for the presence of redundancy as a factor that is necessary for increasing the reliability of information transmission, thus making it possible to make sense. Increasing redundancy means increasing the means to produce order in the face of entropy. The expansion of organizational logic and the transformation of all areas of life into organizations is equivalent to increasing the redundancy of information in a message. Noise and disturbance can be associated with both entropy and the fight against it, which can also be interpreted as a reduction of the noise disturbing communication. From a communication point of view, digital machines are superior to analog ones in terms of the noise inherent in the transmission of information, making univocity possible and eliminating analogy from discourse, perfectly in line with the metaphysics of the univocity of being inaugurated by Duns Scotus. The univocity of being can also be expressed in other ways, such as informational monism, where the world and life are seen as organisms that process information and fight against a permanent state of exception.

In this context of cybernetics and communicational sciences, noise is no longer a nuisance but, similar to entropy, becomes a factor of order or intelligibility. Noise and turbulence are linked to the capacity for self-organization, for real-time adaptation to the movements of an adversary – the matador and the bull – and include an opportunity to master the trigger of disorder. In any crisis, there is an opportunity; noise is an opportunity to learn (Rappin 2018, 390), that is, to become the origin of a new response, a reinforcement, or perhaps an extension of order. Noise introduces variety, which brings novelty to the system. It is an unavoidable fact that leads to the evolution of organizations and requires a set of solutions, not a single response, from which the regulatory system will choose what is appropriate for the contingency situation. Noise, disturbance, and chance are, according to B. Rappin, the only form of event that exists in a society under the sign of organization and cybernetics. These give the organization the status of exception, because it is not a fixed structure, an institution, but a series of disorganizations that have been overtaken and surpassed (*rattrapes*) (Rappin 2018, 392). Disruption, noise, difference, etc. acquire a quasi-religious ontological status, which some authors, such as Michel Serres assimilate to the chaos of ancient cosmologies,

praising its virtues (Rappin 2018, 393). In this context and metaphysical frame, order, stability, meaning, rationality, rules, etc., appear to be miracles, while adaptive behavior is usurping most of the other social norms, whereby openness becomes a supreme moral norm. From a political point of view, this post-modern, so-called multiculturalist, identitarian attitude leads to a technocratic utopia that seeks to totally regulate the spheres of human activity and imposes a logic of cooperation and collectivism.

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