## Rule of Law, New Technologies and Cyberpopulism<sup>1</sup>

# Estado de Direito, Novas Tecnologias e Ciberpopulismo

Jose Luis Bolzan de Morais<sup>2</sup> Edilene Lobo<sup>3</sup>

#### Abstract

The Rule of Law has relied on important institutes of this new time, such as the political representation, the mechanisms for controlling legislative production, the political parties and the liberalism as the ideology of the market, proposing the breaking of arbitrariness and the promotion of equality - even if initially only formal - and freedom - above all individual. This paper is about common issues of the rule of law, as the salvationist populism and retoric as an alternative to permanent fear and characteristics of fascism and its practical adoption by populism.

Keywords: Rule of Law. New Technologies. Cyberpopulism.

#### Resumo

O Estado de Direito contou com importantes institutos desse novo tempo, como a representação política, os mecanismos de controle da produção legislativa, os partidos políticos e o liberalismo como ideologia do mercado, propondo a quebra da arbitrariedade e a promoção da igualdade. - mesmo que inicialmente apenas formal - e liberdade - acima de tudo individual. Este artigo trata de questões comuns do Estado de Direito, do populismo e da retórica salvacionistas como uma alternativa ao medo permanente e às características do fascismo e sua adoção prática pelo populismo.

Palavras-chave: Estado de Direito. Novas Tecnologias. Cyberpopulismo.

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<sup>2</sup> Professor of PPGD FDV, Vitória, Espirito Santo, and ESDHC, Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais. Productivity Researcher, Level I-D CNPQ. State Attorney of Rio Grande do Sul with the Superior Courts. E-mail: bolzan@hotmail.com.

<sup>3</sup> Professor of PPGD UIT, Itaúna, Minas Gerais. Laywer. E-mail: mestre003@uit.edu.br.

#### Introduction

Offered as a new civilizing stage coined in the struggle against monarchical absolutism, the Rule of Law has relied on important institutes of this new time, such as the political representation, the mechanisms for controlling legislative production, the political parties and the liberalism as the ideology of the market, proposing the breaking of arbitrariness and the promotion of equality - even if initially only formal - and freedom - above all individual.

Alongside these promises was the rise of capitalism with the absurd concentration of wealth of the few, with the deepening of social inequality reaching many at a diametrically opposite pace between one social extreme and another, realizing that freedom and equality were shown to be only formal principles.

Alfonso de Julios-Campuzano<sup>4</sup> asserts, however, that the project of modernity was not totally unsuccessful since from it emerged the legal phenomenon as a manifestation of sovereign political will materialized through democratic procedures, the rationalization of law by the principles of publicity, legal certainty, normative hierarchy and the rule of law against arbitrariness.

The great achievement of modernity, for the same Author<sup>5</sup>, lies in the factual limitation of material inequality and the protection of freedom, locating human rights as an ethical reference of a democratic society, committed to the values of the individual, their autonomy and dignity. However, he acknowledges that globalization, the increasing complexity of social and political processes associated with scientific advances, the cyber revolution and the very inadequacy of the state structure in view of the irreversible integration that announced itself (in Europe), contributed to the crisis environment around the modernity project and its legal system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> JULIOS-CAMPUZANO, Alfonso de. Nuevos horizontes de los derechos humanos: la crisis de la modernidad jurídica en la sociedad tecnológica. Revista de Direitos e Garantias Fundamentais, v. 19, n. 3, p. 11-46. Set./Dez. 2018. p. 19.

JULIOS-CAMPUZANO, Alfonso de. Nuevos horizontes de los derechos humanos: la crisis de la modernidad jurídica en la sociedad tecnológica. p. 20.

According to Julios-Campuzano<sup>6</sup>, the crisis is favored by the emergence of new technologies, which eventually revealed other sources of legal production with the multiplication of actors in the above and infra-mentioned scenario, the decision-making polycentrism, the tendency of deregulation, the delegation, in short, a new structure of legal normativity in a network, with the regression of the principles of unity, rationality and statehood.

For this author, the transformation of ordering, particularly in the structure of normative production, and as a consequence in the human rights system, causes political theory to lose its explanatory capacity in the face of the pressure of this vast set of phenomena that limit the State's scope of action as the main actor of the legal-political order. As noted, it is the advent of postmodern law characterized by the decline of practical reason as an element of human knowledge and doing.

One of the causes of this transformation is the growing level of insecurity that affect the development of scientific knowledge, causing the growing sense of risk in the management of the technical means that scientific advances provide - generating the impression of unprotection in the face of possible technological disasters. Another is the explosion of ignorance as the horizons of knowledge widen, because there is a feeling that the more one knows the more one becomes aware that much remains to be known. In this wake comes the other cause, the resizing of the traditional knowledge-power relationship, throwing the legal categories of modernity into obsolescence.

The protection of human rights in this risky society, of course, is going through a particularly critical period in the redefinition of the social sciences, with the intensification of economic change through new technologies, the frantic expansion of capitalism and the creation of inaccessible transnational macro economic powers, inaccessible to the democratic control by citizens. We speak about another phase in the development of capitalism.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> JULIOS-CAMPUZANO, Alfonso de. **Nuevos horizontes de los derechos humanos**: la crisis de la modernidad jurídica en la sociedad tecnológica. p. 20.

Eric Sadin<sup>7</sup> records that it is the age of digital industries, technoliberalism, that reveals purely the commodification of life, with sensors placed across the surface of existence to monetize behavioral knowledge and make it profitable. The functionality of this technological environment is the algorithmic or automated organization of increasingly large sectors of society, denying it spontaneity, creativity and self-determination capacity.

Shoshana Zuboff<sup>8</sup> calls it watchful capitalism, "a new kind of economy that reinvents us through the prism of its own power and its means of behavioral change."

José Maria Lassale<sup>9</sup> refers to the data tsunami, warning about the dangers of uncontrolled technological development in the face of biometric algorithms that can interpret emotions and replace human decision-making, revealing the challenge for western democracy. As he notes, the digital revolution leads to the dystopian risks associated with the technocratic elite that dominates it and has a vision of reformulation of the idea of man by transhumanism<sup>10</sup>. It is a technical vision stripped of any kind of reflection or humanistic content, focused on pushing boundaries, breaking the foundations of civilization.

The problem for Lassale<sup>11</sup> is the evolution to the cognitive model based on the depletion of political power, the neutralization of democracy, and an unprecedented process of concentration of wealth and monopolistic power, widening inequality. It is a political revolution that crushes the idea of citizenship by adulthood, proposing an assisted freedom that replaces the law with algorithms.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> See, from the author, among others: SADIN, Éric. La Vie Algorithmique. Critique de la raison numérique. Paris: Échappée, 2015. SADIN, Éric. L'Intelligence artificielle ou l'enjeu du siècle. Anatomie d'un antihumanisme radical. Paris: Échappé, 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> ZUBOFF, Shoshana. **Tua escova de dentes te espiona**: Um capitalismo de vigilância. Le Monde Diplomatique, 2019. Available at: https://diplomatique.org.br/um-capitalismo-de-vigilancia/. Accessed: oct. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> LASSALE, José Maria. **Ciberleviatan:** el colapso de la democracia liberal frente a la revolución digital. Barcelona: Arpa, 2019. p. 51.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> To Laurent Alexandre, in this perspective, there are five goals: make ourselves imortals, increase human capabilities, colonize the cosmos, create artificial life and develop artificial inteligence. See: ALEXANDRE, Laurent et COPÉ, Jean-François. **L'IA va-t-elle aussi tuer la démocratie?** Paris: J-C Lattès, 2019. p. 30.

LASSALE, José Maria. **Ciberleviatan**: el colapso de la democracia liberal frente a la revolución digital. p. 71.

Julian Assange<sup>12</sup> states that one is "striding toward a new transnational dystopia." In his opinion "the internet is a threat to human civilization" because instead of presenting itself as a "tool of emancipation, it is being transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism", enabling the transfer of power to intelligence agencies such as the NSA, and "your transnational corporate allies who will not be held accountable for their actions".

In other words, unlike the Rule of Law - with all its deficits - in which equilibrium is exercised through its own powers (checks and balances), with the revolution 4.0 there is no accountability within the known formal structures, which prevents any kind of control.

Byung-Chul Han<sup>13</sup> demonstrates the new colonization of the psyche by the intelligent power of algorithms. He is friendly, does not act directly against the will of the subject submitted to him. Its tactic is to "produce positive emotions and exploit them" by inviting "to share unceasingly", encouraging "opinions, communicating needs, desires and preferences" to enable the appropriation and psychological manipulation that flows into politics.

Just in that invisible softness that colonizes thought, "the intelligent power is more effective than anyone who orders, threatens, and prescribes." Like the fever of a globalized society, "enjoying is your sign" <sup>14</sup>.

Bruno Patino<sup>15</sup> exemplifies with the goldfish metaphor, which only has attention span for eight seconds, after which its mental universe resets itself. This species was supposed to live in shoals, last between twenty and thirty years, and grow to the size of eight inches, but the aquarium atrophied it.

According to this author, Google has estimated that the capacity to concentrate of humans, in millennial generation, outnumbers the goldfish in just one second. Over the lapse of nine seconds the human brain needs a new stimulus. This is how humans become the goldfish subject to the carousel of addictive alerts and instant messages.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> ASSANGE, Julian; APPELBAUM, Jacob; MÜLLER-MAGUHN, Andy; ZIMMERMANN,

Jérémie. **Cypherpunks**: liberdade e o futuro da internet. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2013. 

13 HAN, Byung-Chul. **Psicopolítica**. O neoliberalismo e as novas técnicas de poder. Belo Horizonte: Âyiné, 2018. p. 27.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> HAN, Byung-Chul. **Psicopolítica**. O neoliberalismo e as novas técnicas de poder. p. 27. <sup>15</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. La civiliation du poissson rouge. Paris: Grasset, 2019. p. 13, 14, 15.

This attention economy destroys relations with the public space, knowledge, truth, information, and democracy<sup>16</sup>. This attention economy destroys relations with the public space, knowledge, truth, information, and democracy. Humans are mesmerized by the big screen that the network has transformed into, which plays with their emotions, placing them in a kind of aguarium, manipulated and pressed by the "likes" and instant visibility devices. With such techniques, the sociability of the subjects is completely altered.

With each like, just as Bruno Patino's goldfish, the citizen is imprisoned by the network, which also diffuses the feeling that there are no limits and that instantaneity is the only way to put himself in the scene, even as an object, turned into what the virtual market means is the way or the paradigm.

José Luís Bolzan de Morais<sup>17</sup> comments on the destabilization that this process of "numerization/quantification of life" presents, "since the power ends up being 'dispersed' in an extremely flexible and constantly changing network".

What can be understood in this state of the art is that the organization of society provided by the 18th Century Liberal Rule of Law, which surpassed the twentieth-century totalitarian movements and reinvented itself as a post-war Democratic Rule of Law, is completely impacted by the dizzying technological revolution that calls for institutions compatible with the present.

It is the civilizing crossroads that challenges the legitimacy of the liberal model institutions, giving way to a (neo) authoritarianism, losing the democratic sense. Along with this comes a strong ethical crisis, with the appropriation of public goods by large business groups, in exacerbated radicalization of predatory individualism.

At this rate, populism resurfaces as the salvationist rhetoric of the people, seeking to gain the sympathy of the most vulnerable, pointing out "what is there" as an enemy, contrasting "us to them", very close to what, for Jason Stanley<sup>18</sup>, is how fascism works.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. **La civiliation du poissson rouge**. p. 17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> BOLZAN DE MORAIS, José Luís. O Estado de Direito "confrontado" pela "revolução da internet"!. Revista Eletrônica do Curso de Direito da UFSM, v. 13, n. 3, p. 876-903. 2018. p.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro:** come funziona il fascismo. Milano: Media Group Spa, 2018.

Populism relies on the privatization of politics by a charismatic, mythical leader who rules based or stimulated by the conflict between social groups: the corrupt political class and the people, the old and the new politics, left and right, among many other expressions that, emptied of content, maintains a permanent alert state to capture attention and ensure power.

In this format, populism reaches world politics as a wave of gigantic proportions, also with globalized discourse of extremist content directed against minorities, adapting little and nothing to the realities of each region, reverberating from the USA, Italy, Hungary, through Poland, Colombia, France and flowing into Brazil on a tortuous route through Latin America<sup>19</sup>.

Michael Löwy<sup>20</sup> highlights the main variables that mark the adopted models, grouping them into nationalism, antiglobalism, xenophobia, explicit racism, anti-immigrant rhetoric, islamophobia, belligerence and intolerance. Added to the list are the disruptions of capitalism, the anti-systemic character, the aversion to communism and the previous selection of the enemy, as suggested by Vera Alves Cepêda.<sup>21</sup>.

This discourse is exponentially amplified by the new communication technologies, emphasizing what was already a nuclear characteristic: the search for direct connection with the voter without intermediaries or critical mass formation, pulverizing the organizations of society.

The atomization of relations and extremist discourse, often with a religious and sexist background, have used hatred as a policy, putting democracy on the brink of the abyss, supported by disintermediation as a tactic to empty the Rule of Law.

The impetus for new technologies has given greater visibility to populism in its extreme right wing, whose particularity is the attack on the State

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> RIVERO, Ángel; ZARZALEJOS; Javier; PALACIO, Jorge (Coordinators). **Geografia del** populismo: Um viaje por el universo del populismo desde sus orígenes hasta Trump. Madrid: Tecnos, 2017.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> LÖWY, Michael. Conservadorismo e extrema-direita na Europa e no Brasil. **Revista Serviço** Social e & Sociedade, São Paulo, n. 124, p. 652-664. Oct./dec. 2015.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> CEPÊDA, Vera Alves. A nova direita no Brasil: contexto e matrizes conceituais. **Mediações –** Revista de Ciências Sociais, Londrina, v. 23, n. 2, p. 75-122. May/aug. 2018.

as a guarantor of civil and human rights, far beyond the neoliberalism that only aims to dismantle the welfare State by expanding competition<sup>22</sup>.

Populism is the pursuit of absolute power, as Enrique Krauze<sup>23</sup> points out, not unlike the fascism of the 1930s, using the digital arena as an important disseminator, as described by Alessandro Dal Lago<sup>24</sup>.

Addressing the problem in Europe, Michael Löwy<sup>25</sup> notes:

The current European far right is very diverse, ranging from openly neo-Nazi parties such as the Golden Dawn in Greece to bourgeois forces perfectly integrated into the institutional political game like the Swiss UDIC. What they have in common is their chauvinistic nationalism - and thus opposition to "cosmopolitan globalization" (...).

Marc Angenot<sup>26</sup> does not agree with the equation of fascism with populism to portray current movements, warning, however, that "the granting of a legal qualification allows, in turn, the application of the corresponding legal regime, that is, the set of rules of law applicable to a person, an organization, an action ". In that way, for him<sup>27</sup>:

> The perpetuation of antifascism after the disappearance of the Nazi and Mussolinist regimes led to the emergence of a dual use, at the same time complementary and conflicting, that allowed all the slips and all the confusion.

There is no doubt that even adopting a different nomenclature, the phenomenon is current and has characteristics very similar to the past, winning hordes of followers through social networks, in a kind of direct pseudodemocracy, the "cyberpopulism"28. The false direct democracy of social

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> DARDOT, Pierre; LAVAL, Christian. Neoliberalismo e subjetividade capitalista. **Revista O** 

**Olho Da História**, n. 22, p. 1-15. April 2016. <sup>23</sup> KRAUZE, Enrique. **El Pueblo soy yo**. Barcelona/Ciudad de México: Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, 2018.

DAL LAGO, Alessandro. Populismo digital: la crisi, la rete e la nuova destra. Milano: Rafaello Cortina Editore, 2017. p. 24, 97, 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> LÖWY, Michael. **Conservadorismo e extrema-direita na Europa e no Brasil**. p. 653.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> ANGËNOT, Marc. Fascismo, populismo: as utilizações contemporâneas de duas categorias políticas nas mídias. EID&A - Revista Eletrônica de Estudos Integrados em Discurso e

Argumentação, Ilhéus, n. 16, p. 244-273. Sep. 2018. p. 245.

27 ANGËNOT, Marc. Fascismo, populismo: as utilizações contemporâneas de duas categorias políticas nas mídias. p. 247. <sup>28</sup> BALDI, Vânia. A construção viral da realidade: ciberpopulismo e polarização dos públicos

em rede. Observatório (OBS\*) Special Issue, p. 04-020. 2018.

networks without reflection, without filters or without mediators, in short, is illiberal.

The sense of overcoming the intermediaries, the boundaries of time and space to serve the voter in one click, makes one think of overcoming the representative democratic model, taking its place a new power structured in memes and phrases of effect, as Heimans and Timms<sup>29</sup> suggest.

In this way, the populist discourse addresses the emptying of State and society institutions, revealing that democracy in one-click or like is pure demagogy, but stands at the center of the cyber revolution that altered the morphology and aesthetics of society resultant from that, not being possible to ignore it anymore.

For this very reason, supported by the literature revealing the importance of the subject for the debate of the State crisis, this work goes through the populist salvationist rhetoric as an alternative to permanent fear, unfolding in demagogy directed to the enjoyment of absolute power, passing through the characteristics that bring together and often confuse populism and fascism, as an *alter ego* of the other.

In the quadrant of electoral law, it seeks to reflect the extent to which there are possibilities for transformation of this reality.

### 1. Salvationist Populism and Rhetoric as an Alternative to Permanent Fear

Considering the discourse that the populists use, the characteristics are variable, but, in general, converge to the appeal to the people seeking the obtaining or maintenance of power and the creation of simple solutions to any crisis, which often leads to attacks to human rights. For example: the immigration crisis is solved with walls, crime is being fought by arming the people, poverty is being ended by the extermination of social programs that feed it, among others spread here and there.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> TIMMS, Henry; HEIMANS, Jeremy. **O Novo Poder**. Como Disseminar Ideias, Engajar Pessoas e Estar Sempre um Passo à Frente em um Mundo Hiperconectado. 1. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Intrínseca, 2018. p. 39.

The word, in good or bad lexicon, is the working tool, reduced to stereotypes. From the alleged inclusion of minorities to radicalization against imaginary enemies, populist discourse generally takes advantage of the economic crises that generate wars, wars that generate hordes of refugees, hordes of refugees that roam the world underscored, accentuating the discourse of sovereignty and patriotism, the latter always returning to the leader, who can save everyone from the permanent state of fear of war. It is liquid fear<sup>30</sup> that feeds the system, disguising the appropriation of democracy for manipulation in favor of global economic groups.

First said to be unique to Latin America in the 1940s and 1950s, but originally from the USA, with passages in eastern Europe, populism as it stands today does not seem to be very different from the past, although it is known that Juan Domingo Perón, former Argentine President, does not match Donald Trump, current President of the United States of America, or Getúlio Vargas, the Brazilian warlord, Matteo Salvini, the former Interior Minister of Italy or even Vikton Órban, the Hungarian Prime Minister<sup>31</sup>. The difference is in the mindblowing speed with which speech circulates on the Internet, viralizing and mobilizing followers in a kind of swarm, which Byung-Chul Han<sup>32</sup> speaks of.

Interestingly classified, and already warning that it is a reshaped ideology to meet the interests of dominant political groups, in 1995 Umberto Eco aligned the characteristics to what he called eternal fascism, which as a disease, according to Michela Murgia, "can withstand for decades in the marrow of democracy making it believe that it has disappeared, to spring more combative than ever at the first sign of weakness of the immune system"<sup>33</sup>.

As will be shown, the characteristics drawn by Umberto Eco<sup>34</sup>, Jason Stanley<sup>35</sup> and Michela Murgia<sup>36</sup> are strikingly current, referring to the question about the juxtaposition between populism and fascism, in opposition to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> BAUMAN, Zygmunt. **Medo Liquido**. Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editora, 2008.

<sup>31</sup> RIVERO, Ángel; ZARZALEJOS; Javier; PALACIO, Jorge (Coordinators). Geografia del populismo: Um viaje por el universo del populismo desde sus orígenes hasta Trump.

HAN, Byung-Chul. No enxame: perspectivas do digital. Petrópolis: Editora Vozes, 2019.

MURGIA, Michela. Instrucciones para convertirse em fascista. Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 2019. p. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> MURGIA, Michela. **Instrucciones para convertirse em fascista**.

conclusions of Angenot, for whom there would be no such movement in the current world.

Michela Murgia<sup>37</sup>, in fine irony, even coined a sort of glossary of 65 entries, which she called a "fascistometer", noting that, in fact, without criticalreflexive memory, we turn to the past "because memory is perishable; if it is not conserved, it is lost ".

### 2. Characteristics of fascism and its practical adoption by populism<sup>38</sup>

In the well-known speech given at the Congress of the Department of Italian and French Philosophy at Columbia University in the United States in 1995, Umberto Eco, when he aligned the thirteen characteristics<sup>39</sup> of fascism, urged humanity to fight it, warning that it is present and can return, even if innocently, rejuvenated or technologized. To bear in mind this warning, it is worth examining whether these characteristics are reflected today, and to what extent they reinforce the Rule of Law weakness.

The **first characteristic** of fascism, for Umberto Eco<sup>40</sup>, **is tradition**. The cult of tradition seeks to prevent the advance of knowledge, because in this conception the whole truth has already been announced.

The cult of tradition, in turn, imposes a refusal to modernity that leads to irrationalism as a second characteristic, although the use of technologies, as noted, is not intended to guide the people. Reason and illustration are understood as deformations. This irrationalism reaches the extreme of posttruth<sup>41</sup>, which in its turn derives from the cult of action, games, and does not allow reflection because thinking is about committing to the observation of reality, however painful and limiting.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> MURGIA, Michela. **Instrucciones para convertirse em fascista**. p. 111.

Neste tópico utilizaremos, como referência, do autor: ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. Barcelona: Lumen, 2018, passim.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> Many authors refered in this paper disserted about the characteristics of facism, as Jason Stabley, Michela Murgia, Alessandro Dal Lago and Piero Calamandrei. However, Umberto Ecco features a broader cast, which explains why it is often mentioned. <sup>40</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 34-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> See the clash between terraplanists and globalists, for example, as the BBC reported in the article by ALVIM, Mariana. Who Are and What Brazilians who believe that the earth is flat Think. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-41261724. Accessed: oct. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

The cult of action is the third characteristic of fascism because thinking is cultural and culture is suspicious, identified with critical attitudes. Umberto Eco<sup>42</sup> refers to the Nazi Minister of the III Reich, Goebbels, who boasted of forcibly rejecting culture. Hence the use of repeated expressions today that the universities are nests of communists and lend themselves to turmoil.

Jason Stanley<sup>43</sup> stress that systematic attacks on universities make perfect sense to the fascist, because the illustrated and critical discourse and the manifestations that freedom of speech affords in this environment strike its exaggeration and invention. Therefore, universities do not serve the post-truth, unreality game, and must be fought and dismantled.

Thus, suspicion of the intellectual world has always been a symptom of fascism, whose officers were often bent on fighting modern culture and the liberal intelligence of abandoning traditional values. Jason Stanley describes this trait as "anti-intellectualism"44, based on belief.

The refusal of critical thinking that comes from anti-intellectualism is the fourth characteristic. Since fascism is syncretistic, it cannot accept criticism. The critical spirit allows the formation of acute judgment, a sign of modernity that its traditionalist conception does not tolerate. The ability to make distinctions comes from the exercise of criticism, which must be erased.

In modern culture the scientific community understands disagreement as progress, but for fascism reveals only betrayal and compromise with globalism.

Fascism feeds and reinforces itself by exploiting uncertainties and pessimism, the fear of difference, hence the fifth characteristic of fighting disagreement as a sign of diversity.

Thus, the appeal against intruders, exploited in xenophobic discourse, results in the rejection of the hordes of refugees mentioned earlier. Fascism is racist, usually white supremacist, believing in a racial purity that leads it to fight

<sup>43</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 67.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 34-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 47.

against "others," even though they themselves come from mixed and multicultural communities.

Pessimism, coupled with victimism and fear of the different, explain why fascism seeks to appeal to frustrated middle classes, devalued by some economic crisis, political humiliation or even natural uncertainty in life. This formula feeds on the autophagy of the model.

Populism, like fascism, supported by conservatism, rejects the difference, the modern identity agenda, seeking a return to the past, conveying obtuse discourses, mostly hateful, based on an aesthetic built from social networks. The figure of the outsider, as seen in recent elections, for example, is carefully polished by marketing to and from the Internet, exploiting this sixth **feature**, individual frustration as the engine of the movement.

Probably the most widespread feature of fascism is nationalism or the appeal to patriotism, as quoted by the authors consulted on the subject, noting that this feature also turns to others that guide it, such as the obsession with plots and conspiracy theories, making the crowd feel besieged and exposed, back to the nationalist circle.

Against the breaking of borders to allow free passage to rights, regardless of the human or economic condition of their addressees, the fascist proposal is to segregate and alienate the different, foreigners, immigrants. In this seventh feature, nationalist discourse stands as an essential note of fascism's communicational strategy.

Envy of the enemy's wealth and strength, as Ecco says<sup>45</sup>, or victimism, as Stanley<sup>46</sup> refers, is the **eighth characteristic** of fascism.

Fans of fascism must be exposed to humiliation for the ability and strength of the selected enemy, urged to fight it, and convinced that they can defeat it.

This manipulation addresses the idea that enemies are strong but can be mastered, sometimes revealing the incongruity and inability to make objective assessments of reality.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 46.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 101.

The apology for war, the ninth fascist trait, underscores the warmongering spirit, always ready for action because life is destined for struggle.

In this line, the pacifist is weak and unprepared. This feature in current populist discourse calls for the possession and use of weapons, for example, for the immediate extermination of the imaginary enemy. The contradiction lies in the offer of fascism to make the nation great again in eternal peace. In other words, in its incongruities, it does not maintain the logicality that sustains it.

Bearing in mind, as Piero Calamandrei<sup>47</sup> records, fascism is the regime of lies, ambiguity and falsehood, shaped by promises of bond to the people who support it, notably deceived by the demagogic and unreachable proposals offered.

Jason Stanley<sup>48</sup> emphasizes in this feature the constant propaganda to affirm the mythical and warlike past of the leader.

Umberto Eco<sup>49</sup>, dealing with the **tenth characteristic**, says that this reactionary ideology is oligarch, aristocratic, elitist, although it predicts a popular elitism, implying contempt for the weaker.

It is mass elitism, currently supported by the meritocracy and extermination of the poor, often aimed at the elimination of certain social groups, such as black people.

Fascism needs to revitalize the idol belief and cultivation, which eventually merges with death and the act of force. Therefore, in this eleventh trait, followers are educated to become heroes, exceptional beings of extreme action.

Jason Stanley<sup>50</sup> explains that at the heart of this cult of myth is the patriarchal family as an ideal to be repeated throughout society. Patriarchy represents the strength of the nation's traditions, diminished by the advent of liberalism and cosmopolitanism, which can only be revived by the virile male.

CALAMANDREI, Piero. El fasciscmo: o regímen de la mentira. Valência: Tirant Humanidades, 2019. p. 41.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 35.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 19.

Returning to its ground of exclusion of minorities, persecution of the weak and the different, fascism is chauvinistic.

In this **twelfth feature** there is the projection of power to sexual issues, which would explain the misogyny and condemnation of sexual orientation different from what is considered to be "normal."

However, as "sex is also a difficult game to play"<sup>51</sup>, in this trait that idolizes patriarchy, fascism explains its war games by imposing its religious and customs agenda as values to be defended at all costs.

Jason Stanley<sup>52</sup> calls it propaganda-amplified sexual obsession, because as the basis of fascist politics is the traditional patriarchal family, any deviation from this core breeds panic. This is also why intolerance towards homosexuals and transgender people, which must be cured.

Referring to the representation of the people by a certain group, which makes them disregard the individuals considered in their specificities, the voice of the people in fascism comes from a part of society. Individuals, per se, have no rights because people are a "monolithic entity" in which only part of society, identified with the ideals of the leader, will express the common will.

Pointing to the tendency that this thirteenth characteristic reveals in the present time - which for Stanley<sup>54</sup> is a tactic that should not be softened or reduced, confusing fascism with populism - Eco55 asserted the design of a "qualitative television or internet populism", with the answer of a selected group of citizens presented as the voice of the people.

At this point we turn to the inflection of new communication technologies that have, in fact, led to the election of people without political expression or visibility, the so-called outsiders, who suddenly appear as the voice of the people gathered in the virtual agora of social networks.

Michela Murgia<sup>56</sup> notes that such social media "are pulpits from which one can speak directly to citizens without passing through the mediators".

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 53.

<sup>52</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 55.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> STANLEY, Jason. **Noi contro loro**: come funziona il fascismo. p. 44.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p. 55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> MURGIA, Michela. **Instrucciones para convertirse em fascista**. p. 35.

With this "the boss will give the impression of hearing all the petitions, but in reality, he will be the one who will elect who to answer to". The advantage of these communicative stratagems "is that they are much more efficient when you want to convey short, clear and easily memorable messages," allowing you to share and repeat endlessly. In other words, "even better if they become a hashtag" because they facilitate the communication work that was carried out by official bodies and traditional media. It is now carried out by citizens "who believe that they are the source of the message and not its recipients"<sup>57</sup>.

Bruno Patino<sup>58</sup>, by the way of this technique, mentions what he calls the "factory of the real", in which the platforms customization algorithms select the information that appears to the user, linking his search to the history of his research, to build recommendations and propose links to users or similar thoughts.

The proposal of close content imprisons the user into an information bubble of their own worldview. Platforms, thus, are not limited to the use of information, but little by little change the user's context, eventually building their relationship with reality<sup>59</sup>. Reality is an experience<sup>60</sup> in which the subject is a mere guinea pig of predictions.

Norberto Bobbio<sup>61</sup>, in criticism of berlusconism in Italy, pointed to this appropriation of new technologies for the accumulation of power, at that time referring to TV (but which is well transported to the present day social networks, which exponentializes such aspects, other then introducing others that are their own<sup>62</sup>). Without any connection with history to reflect on the past and without any future project that inhibits political upheaval, these arrangements tend to authoritarian trivializations. It is a kind of new despotism.

In the last feature, Umberto Eco<sup>63</sup> states that fascism speaks the "newspeak", in reference to George Orwell, ensuring that it uses poor lexicon

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> MURGIA, Michela. **Instrucciones para convertirse em fascista**. p. 35 a 38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. **La civiliation du poissson rouge**. p.95.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. **La civiliation du poissson rouge**. p. 96.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. **La civiliation du poissson rouge**. p. 97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>61</sup> BOBBIO, Norberto. **Contra os novos despostismos:** escritos sobre o berlusconismo. 1. ed. São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>62</sup> PATTINO, Bruno. La civiliation du poissson rouge. p. 95-97.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>63</sup> ECO, Umberto. **Contra el fascismo**. p

and elementary syntax, limiting the ability to carry out more elaborate, critical reasoning at last. He exemplified, connecting to present times, about these other forms of language that mesmerize and dim to favor domination, drawing attention to what has become the current tonic, the talk shows. In fact, some of the current populists came from such entertainment as Donald Trump in the US and Beppe Grillo in Italy, for example.

Examining the characteristics presented we can identify a strong correlation with populist discourse, which makes it possible to understand that under another varnish or name, the practices are similar. The difference today, as already said, is the use of social networks for vertiginous and immediate public communication, whether by candidates or even by rulers.

In this new format, the identification of groups prone to populist discourse, with the collection of data that allows the directing of electoral propaganda as a strategy generated by the algorithms, is a adopted practice that was made public with the Cambridge Analytica scandal in the Brexit referendum and the Donald Trump election.

The direction of propaganda as the logic of the populist model, in practice of these subjects when elected, in a kind of government of tweets, in unilateral communication traffic, which is reported in the US<sup>64</sup> and Brazil<sup>65</sup>.

How to deal with that?

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<sup>64</sup> Although in a recent ruling against President Donald Trump, US justice found the blocking of critics on the platform unconstitutional, even if they insulted it. Ratifying a ruling by the Federal District Court of the Southern District of New York, Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald of the Second Circuit Court of Appeal in Manhattan, noted that blocking followers for their differing political views is a form of unconstitutional discrimination. *In:* LABORDE, Antônia. **Trump não pode mais bloquear críticos no Twitter**. Available at: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2019/07/09/internacional/1562690926\_394299.html. Accessed: jul. 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

In Brazil, two lawyers have filed a lawsuit to have the court order the unblocking of all the people President Bolsonaro has already blocked on his social networks, while he is in office. They claim that "Bolsonaro uses his social networks to announce government measures and public policy. Therefore, he cannot prevent access to them, as it would restrict access to information, a right guaranteed by the Constitution", as reported by the Electronic Maganize CONSULTOR JURÍDICO - CONJUR. **Ação pede que Bolsonaro desbloqueie pessoas no Twitter**. Available at: https://www.conjur.com.br/2019-set-08/acao-bolsonaro-desbloqueie-pessoas-twitter. Accessed: sep. 9<sup>th</sup> 2019.

#### Conclusion

Well-simplified populism is the manipulative demagogy of the people with promises most often unrealizable, aiming for power. The diffusion of demagogy via social networks generates exponentially wide repercussions, with the feeling of freedom and direct contact with the leader, the myth, but only presents itself as capable of fulminating democracy.

The tactic of ceaseless submission of society connected to data and information (or misinformation), as well as the spread of appalling news and facts, generates numbness and, at most, reaction. There is no action, except that one controlled by the leader. In this scenario, any opposition is annihilated by the impossibility of reacting in a field of incessant news. This prevents from contesting or contrasting the leader and keeps him firmly linked to the group that sustains him, the one that reveals the voice of the streets, which allows the falsification of the "golden rule" of liberal democracy: the majority rule 66, which does not dismiss the political freedom

Often in this environment, new technologies are used by sectarian people and even criminals, the ones who first learn their possibilities. The advantage of these groups, which are often the most authoritarian and consider themselves excluded, is the dedication of much of their life to new techniques and technologies to combat others, the enemy<sup>67</sup>. There is talk of digital militias, a new category of agents outside the law.

Democracy, just like the State, is undergoing transformation due to the advent of technology, as Bolzan de Morais<sup>68</sup> points out. It is the disruptive era with a complete change in social, political, economic and environmental conditions.

Before - in the "age" of cyberutopia - the sensation was of a free, uncensored world, with each individual transformed into a communicator in direct transmission with anyone and everyone, author and recipient at the same time. It was and is the world without borders, in a sense of total freedom, but

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> BOBBIO, Norberto. **O futuro da democracia**. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2000. p. 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> BARTLETT, Jamie. **The People vs. Tech**. How the internet is killing democracy (and how we save it). New York: Penguin Randon House Group, 2018. p. 98.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> BOLZAN DE MORAIS, José Luís. O Estado de Direito "confrontado" pela "revolução da internet"!.

which, as seen, presents itself as mere guarded freedom to attend to the interests of the new phase of capitalism of "freedom built" by the dominance of big data, in the current "era" of cyberdistopia.

It is a fact that one no longer lives without the applications, which in turn feed the internet platforms, which, from the promise of a large library open to the public, have become a closed microcosm that works with information aimed at "winning discussions or to confirm a conviction you already have" 69. We move from freedom to a sense of absolute control, mental and emotional exhaustion with permanent submission to the endless stream of data and information. It is the macrodata society that "renders thought superfluous because if everything is quantifiable, everything is the same"70.

In this environment, the different is abject, something to be expelled, wiped out. It is the age of narcissism, of anti-politics. But the problem is that without the other, there is no self-esteem, as Chul-Han<sup>71</sup> says.

The new technological world brings numerous eases and comforts, but also problems, such as the impact of new technology on the communicative universe of political life today.

One of such problems is the diffusion of illusion and lying as a disinformative tactic to dominate and alter the public environment. The distribution of mounted stories, scattered individuals, organizations or armies of bots (digital militias) through social media like Facebook and Twitter and apps like WhatsApp, clearly violates political freedom.

The control of these stories, for the purpose of positive or negative electoral propaganda, slips into freedom of expression, representing the problem of the data tsunami: large data, ungovernability and difficult regulation.

However, the real problem lies in capturing data from users who frequent social media or apps to direct them to cheer the leader, the myth. The most recent scandal involving the Cambridge Annalytica, which has participated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> NICHOLS, T. **A morte da competência**. Lisboa: Quental, 2018. p. 162.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> Em entrevista a Carlos Geli, do EL PAÍS, desde Barcelona, em 23 ago. 2019. GELI, Gali. Byung-Chul Han: "Hoje o indivíduo se explora e acredita que isso é realização". Available at: https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2018/02/07/cultura/1517989873\_086219.html. Accessed: sep.

<sup>2&</sup>lt;sup>nd</sup>, 2019.

71 Em entrevista a Carlos Geli, do EL PAÍS, desde Barcelona, em 23 ago. 2019. GELI, Gali.

in elections / referendums around the world, has placed the activity in the sunlight, as said before.

To regulate the use of this data, mainly for economic, political and social purposes, in Brazil there is the General Data Protection Act, No. 13.709 - LGPD, following the path of the European Regulation of Personal Data Protection - GDPR.

The LGPD classifies as sensitive personal data that related to the political opinion (art. 5), imposing to its treatment the good faith, conditioned to legitimate purposes, specific and informed to the holder, without possibility of later deviation or incompatible with such purposes (art. 6, I).

As a requirement for treatment, among other hypotheses, requires that it can only be performed with the consent of the owner or guardian, specifically and prominently (art. 11, I).

Will it work in time and manner to inhibit the manipulation of connected citizen data that ultimately favors the political upheaval that the new populists generate?

The answer is quite difficult when dealing with the data storage problem where each mobile device is a repository, which makes removal, correction and control difficult. The other problem is WhatsApp's closed communication circuit.

In this direction, the Superior Electoral Court (TSE) launched the 2020 Election-Focused Disinformation Facing Program, which has joined various institutions from political parties to various entities, with the promise of membership of Google, Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, as reported recently<sup>72</sup>.

For the TSE these platforms would act on the thematic axes that guide the program, such as "Media and Information Literacy" aiming at enabling users to identify and check information, "Containment of Disinformation", which seeks measures to discourage the proliferation of false news, "Misinformation

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> Conforme notícias disponibilizadas no seu portal eletrônico, TRIBUNAL SUPERIOR ELEITORAL – TSE. **Google, Facebook, Twitter e WhatsApp vão aderir ao Programa de Enfrentamento à Desinformação do TSE.** Available at: http://www.tse.jus.br/imprensa/noticias-tse/2019/Outubro/google-facebook-twitter-e-whatsapp-vao-aderir-ao-programa-de-enfrentamento-a-desinformacao-do-tse. Accessed: oct. 17th, 2019.

Identification and Check", targeting fallacy content dissemination practices, etc. 73.

The fact is that the format of democracy has been changing, leading to the transformation of popular participation, generating the belief that the leader is within reach and control of a like, to the detriment of the institution of popular vote, electoral and party systems, voters' freedom of communication, basically, the civilization minimum of free participation that the Rule of Law promised.

This dystopia highlights the collapse of the representative model and imposes a new action in the face of the new kind of capitalist ideology that separates power and politics, denaturing what had been a democratic organizational model<sup>74</sup>.

Will the end of the State and its power distribution and control mechanisms in today's society be leveraged by populist tactics?

José Luis Bolzan de Morais<sup>75</sup> offers crucial reflection:

Thinking about constitutionalism today requires thinking of the crises of the nation State as a Democratic (liberal) State of Law, since it is its elements that still identify the constitutional formulas present in constitutional texts since the origins of modern constitutionalism, imposing an *aggiornamento* that consider these factors and with this, it is opportune to comply with the formula Rule of Law and its constitutive principles aimed at human dignity.

In any case, it should be borne in mind that the project of the (Liberal) Democratic State of Law is supported by the principle of equality, even as indicated by an equality conditioned by the very limits of a Liberal State, with an economic order, still confronted with the new conditions posed by neoliberal globalization and the impacts of a new industrial revolution that undermines its foundations.

Therefore, "it is important that there is sufficient scope for State agencies to effectively secure interests of the common good, also insofar as this requires measures to correct the considerable asymmetries of power that

According to news available on its electronic portal, Available at: TRIBUNAL SUPERIOR ELEITORAL – TSE. Google, Facebook, Twitter e WhatsApp vão aderir ao Programa de Enfrentamento à Desinformação do TSE.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> BOLZAN DE MORAIS, José Luís. **O Estado de Direito "confrontado" pela "revolução da internet"!**.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> BOLZAN DE MORAIS, José Luís. **O Estado de Direito "confrontado" pela "revolução da internet"!**.

exist"<sup>76</sup>. Given the disappearance of traditional borders and the impossibility of containing these asymmetries in the limited space of the nation-State, transnational internet governance must be sought, with the reshuffling of the global protection of civil and political rights in the new digital age.

While this oversight of digital rights is still lacking with the democratic reconstruction of technologies, it is essential to curb abuses and offer new alternatives. A good move in this direction is forcing candidates, parties and companies to report hiring and spending on social networks, notably through WhatsApp triggers and boosting content and internet search engines, with the presentation of content for public knowledge, since § 3 of art. 57.5 C of Law 9.504/1997 only admits such expense to "promote or benefit candidates and their associations". Also important is the duty to communicate the preparation and / or use of algorithms for processing sensitive data of voters, the information mining services available on the network, also for public information and clarifying users and voters. Still, the time-saving in the media, under the supervision of the Electoral Justice, to inform about fact-checking agencies and organizations, denounce misinformation campaigns and the performance of digital militias in the elections, giving visibility to this new category of organized crime and thus interpreting it.

Another measure to bind the candidate to feasible and enforceable proposals is to revisit the legal sense for the requirement of item IX of § 1 of art. 11 of Law 9,504/1997. This provision foresees that the proposals defended by candidates for the Executive must instruct the application for registration of candidates, but it does not bring any other possibility of incentive to its programmatic dimension, as the obligation to be presented in the debates, that should occur in public spaces among **all candidates** at least once each turn of the elections. Propaganda, therefore, will have to open specific space for presentation and debate on government plans as a mandatory stage of the electoral race, in order to shed light on the ideas circulating in the environment and allow some control by the citizen. From there, government plans will be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> HOFFFMANN-RIEM, Wolfgang. Autorregulação, autorregulamentação e autorregulamentação regulamentada no contexto digital. **Revista da AJURIS – Porto Alegre**, v. 46, n. 146, p. 529-553. June 2019. p. 553.

presented by the candidates in order to highlight the economic, social, cultural, environmental, sanitary, international, etc. policies that they will execute, to avoid permanent fear and disinformation as tools of manipulation, as well as to stimulate popular control.

At least that, for starters.

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