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QUESTIONING THE QUALITY OF LIFE WITHIN THE MATRIX AND THE RETURN TO THE REALITY OF LOSS OF IDENTITY

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Abstract: The virtual universe and its peculiarities are already part of the social routine. What was once considered a futuristic projection, portrayed by the seventh art, for the enjoyment of future generations, today is a frightening reality. Virtual human interaction is such that it is not certain who was the author of the initial influence. The interference is evident that inherent components of the real today begin to develop and to exist in the plane of artificialities. It is not uncommon for coins to be created and a world totally open to the possibilities of doing business, contracting marriages or simply existing in a revamped version of oneself without the mistakes made along the journey. It is then questioned how harmful this symbiosis of the real with the virtual can cause the human being to the point of even living immersed in a context other than his own in which there is an appreciation of having in suppression of being. The invitation to uncomfortable reflections is made in the present work in which two themes are faced, namely, the dilemma of realities and the Matrix perception in contrast to the no longer so human reality.

Keywords: Realities 1. Identity 2. Needs 3. Social dilemma 4.

INTRODUCTION

The speed with which the innovator becomes obsolete is frightening. The most optimistic ones made predictions for decades of advances in technologies capable of enhancing and facilitating everyone's lives. Conservatives were skeptical of possible interactions with the artificial universe, where the collectivity would participate in realities, never experienced, and only seen in cinematographic productions.

It is common to repeat that the imaginary and the real imitate each other, without knowing exactly who was the protagonist of a certain idea copied by the other. The central issue is that such symbiosis has generated existential doubts to the point of calling into question individuality, in short, what makes the human being unique in its species within the evolutionary chain.

In a fraction of a second, in the blink of an eye, the virtual age has taken over the consumer market. It is not enough to acquire avant-garde goods and be aligned with market trends to feel belonging to the current social context. More needs to be done. It is also building a life, a career, a business, a behavior, a personality, in short, an identity also in the digital reality.

Faced with this, to be oblivious and aloof from this sign would be almost a sin. However, talking about the advantages of this universe, technological trends, virtual life itself to the detriment of real life could sound more of the same. In this sense, in a spirit of rebelliousness, this paper will question the great interest in the digital sphere, the hidden and not yet perceived by the average population.

The boldness of the present work is revealed in the construction of the theoretical support through relevant scientific publications and considerations about the production: *The Matrix* to give credibility to the reflections. A journey materialized in investigation, with a quality bias, to the structural foundation of the challenging questions in order to weave another look at what seems to be a great achievement (Marconi and Lakatos, 2007; Alyrio, 2009).

To this end, the methodology used is divided into the delivery of perceptions on two themes, namely, the dilemma of realities and the Matrix perception in contrast to the reality that is no longer so human. In the first topic, there is the instigation about the real and the virtual universe. In the second, there is the idea of *Matrix*, in allusion to the film, and the alleged loss of real identity for the construction of a virtual personality.

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DEVELOPMENT

THE DILEMMA OF REALITIES

Thinking about a parallel and virtual universe was something not considered before, an imagination only portrayed in science fiction films. Not infrequently, when observing such cinematographic productions, the feeling that remained was that this whole scenario of digital and artificial life would only occur in future centuries, in other generations.

The virtual scenario that integrates daily human activities was already foreseen by Rosa et al (2016, p. 263) in clear allusion "to our memory, to the events, feelings and sensations that exist, but that are impalpable, incommensurable and that coexist with reality on the plane of virtuality, giving meaning to what we perceive".

The present mentality, of an immediacy nature, did not reach the means of shortening this temporal journey into a true utopian saga. Augmented realities, artificial integration, robotic humanization and human automation are topics that are now part of the simplest communication circles.

> Our being in the world is mediated by signs. In our mental world, we only have thoughts that take the form of representations. The real, the objects of the world cannot physically be part of the mind. Everything that is real is thought of in the form of signs, which can be images, signs, words, dreams, fears, desires and aspirations, etc., which capture and adjust themselves in different ways and to different degrees to aspects of the real. But reality affects and constrains these signs, pointing out mistakes, leading to refining the thought so that the mind adequately captures the properties of meaning of everything that surrounds it. (Jungk, 2018, p. 50)

Discussion about migration to a parallel life has become common. A version programmed and created to live within the context of interactive programs with other participants.

Businesses, marriages, purchases, acquisition of properties, in short, every real focus would exist, in the same intensity, in the virtual parallel universe. Is it then a plausible reality or a glimpse of an apocalyptic age?

Technological barriers made room for the creation of a place where personalities were developed, information disseminated at maximum speed, which leads to the questioning of the value burden of being only human. "we live in the society of the internet, spectacle and hyperconsumption, which put our subjectivity and our individuality at risk".

Jungk (2018) and Rosa et al (2016) assure that the existence of these parallel universalities would be part of the same context of reality projected by the human mind. Impossible to separate them. It is the union of secular material aspects in a virtual social environment capable of new behavioral discoveries. A temporary relief, perhaps a distraction, to oxygenate ideas as a means to stop the exhaustion experienced by the collectivity.

> A search for the meaning of life, of the same life we live, demarcated by work, leisure, solitude, by the countless times we feel lost, dissatisfied, because the meanings that present us to live seem not to be enough, they suffocate -US. Troubled by the control that institutions, social machines, and constituted powers exercise over us and over each one, as another one from which we cannot totally free ourselves, they force us in the direction of what we do not want or, at most, when it seems to be what we desire, we are surprised by something that is at the basis of our own desires: the material with which they are made seems to be supplied by someone, with certain intentions. Whenever we try, they summon us to their reality. (Silva, 2007, p. 1551).

And the reflection that remains is: would we be running away from the unpleasantness of reality to compensate for possible flaws or deficiencies, including inter and intra personal,

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in an environment of alleged perfection? What has attracted so many adepts and renowned companies to expressly invest in this segment? What is the opportunity and trigger not yet perceived by most of the social stratum?

The motivation would be gravitating in circles of feelings not mentioned before and that are now in evidence. Masterfully, there is the emphasis made by Jungk (2018, p. 53) that "phenomena such as alienation, fear, loneliness, fear of deep feelings, lack of active occupation and lack of joy, among others, constitute the current society, assuming a central role".

Frankl (1987) would question the justification of these arguments of an eventual escape from reality to face the purpose in suffering and pain, only then to find meaning and meaning in life. A clear criticism of the system of facilities and of minimal impact to the normal pains of the challenges experienced today for the acceptance of responsibilities and their respective consequences.

Furthermore, would one be participating in empirical social experiments to find out how much satisfaction one has with reality? How many, in fact, would be open, if this were a plausible and viable option, to change their perspective on life – clothes, identity, modeling new body curves, career – where they would enjoy more lasting moments of fulfillment and personal fulfillment in an environment parallel?

These questions have no clear and conclusive answers. On the verge of the novelty of resetting facts and moments, in a fresh start in a virtual adventure, it would be more attractive than facing the inconveniences that prevent you from winning in the present world. It is as if a pill were taken as a passport to enter this universality.

> There is a sense of virtuality considered impalpable and non-existent in fact. From this perspective, the dichotomy between real and virtual ends up recreating itself in the relationship between objective and subjective. Faced with the existence of something that is not palpable, we realize that this supposed dichotomy is conditioned, therefore, to the relationship between what is conceived as objective (what is palpable, evident) and subjective (which is often associated with the impalpable, the immaterial). These definitions extol the existence of a supposed boundary between reality and virtuality, which ends up delimiting the field of the virtual to what is conceived as false, illusory or imaginary. The imaginary, in this sense, was also confused with illusion. (Rosa et al, 2016, p. 264)

Jungk's reflective thinking (2018, p. 59) reveals "how little we have developed as beings, how much our mind is still carried away by the context without wanting to establish its destiny by itself. This explains the reluctance and difficulty of the majority to accept the disturbing reality".

MATRIX PERCEPTION IN CONTRAST TO THE NO LONGER SO HUMAN REALITY

In a context that clearly alludes to the divergence of universes, the productions of the seventh art are magnificent in fostering reflections, choices made and results supported, whether predictable or not within the field of individual perspective. There are alternatives of virtual success as an escape valve in an environment permeated by pressures and goals of a secular human life, where the variable failure exists.

In view of this, wouldn't we be integrating a camouflaged network of manipulation, where the search for immediate pleasure would foster the consumer market? There would then be a loss of identity in favor of the acquisition of goods so that having overlaps with the being element. What kind of loneliness would this be so unbearable as to discard people and recycle objects of finite life? (Pimentel, 2019).

The unvalidated needs would be the

driving force to find happiness in modern technological devices in a subtle and perennial sense of completeness. It reinforces the argument Pimentel (2019, p. 52) for whom "it would be a perfect world if these people did not suffer in solitude, if they were not stripped of their own desire in front of themselves". And to tie more meaning to the above speech, it would only lack the time invested.

Time, a valuable currency, in this pyramidal context, would represent the immersion made before the attractions of the virtual environment, which would lead to a disconnection from the singular presential time. For Kallas (2016, p.56) it would represent "being in an altered state of consciousness similar to a trance, embodying, or rather, experiencing another persona different from your Self, feeling a fine line that separates a virtual reality from a real one".

> To carry out the search that allows us to arrive at this understanding presupposes certain choices. Choices are offered to us through certain possibilities and these are embedded in given circumstances. Therefore, when we ask ourselves about the formation process that involves us, we want to know how choices are made and under what circumstances we can ask ourselves such a question. (Silva, 2007, p. 1546).

This concern was portrayed in *The Matrix*, led by producers Larry and Andy Wachowski, a trilogy that recently gained, after almost a decade, a fourth chapter in the saga. And the idea is to lead the spectator to a futuristic plane, whose central questioning lies in the possibility of a harmonious connection between what is considered natural and what is artificial (Silva, 2007).

> Let's start our journey. It begins in our everyday life in the most common of our social places; where we are so comfortable that we do not know, nor need to know, why we are there. In everyday life we act like sleepwalkers; we don't know for sure whether we're asleep or awake, and sometimes it

doesn't seem to make much difference. Our everyday "sleep" stretches from our beds to the streets, from the streets to work, from work to people are the same every day until we wake up when someone calls us by name. Name us among many, in the midst of the crowd, we are called to wake up. (Silva, 2007, p. 1549)

According to Silva (2007), the millionaire production portrays the double journey of the main character. The normal person, Mr. Thomas Anderson, with the routine of an average worker: activities to be developed as a programmer in a company, working hours with a point to be fulfilled, obedience to hierarchical norms, in addition to the classic vision and feeling of not feeling belonging to this universe so common to most of society.

On the other hand, continuing Silva (2007), there is the virtual version of man, Neo, chosen to break rules and standards, in a universe of the impossible being just a matter of opinion not yet tested in practical terms. An impression that behind every apparent machine there would be a dose of humanity and emotions in its system of decisions and behavioral manifestation.

> The Matrix raises numerous questions about the nature of reality and how we are embedded in it. What is real is restricted to what the senses can capture? Nothing but electrical signals interpreted by the brain? Are the uncertainties of life and the choices we are led to make only based on what is presented or what is presented to us as reality? Is there any way to escape submission to such a control system? (Jungk, 2018, p. 47)

The fact is that, in the considerations of Silva (2007, p. 1550) "both are rejected by the society of the other, both are in search of someone to tell them the meaning of life. Therefore, both seek someone who also performs a search. The conclusion could not be more opportune than a search for the suppression of a need for the consolidation of

an identity framework.

Marco is damaged by the human mental confusion itself, lost in its essence of being alive and stimulating connections through relationships with the other. A dissatisfaction and loss of self that sees in virtual alternatives the potential gain of building new personality routes and alternatives for fixing mistakes once made (Pimentel, 2019).

A dilemma between who one actually is and what one would like to be through the means provided at the moment to achieve this plan. A pursuit tied, according to Silva (2007, p. 1550) between "what we want to be, in a feeling of estrangement from ourselves for what we are and do in comparison with what we would like to be, but which stubbornly hides behind those that allow us to be".

> To be real, it has to be virtual? How to be happy without the other's gaze? Nowadays, it is not enough to expose their own image. Subjects are compelled to reveal their deepest feelings as if they were in a confessional and to also show themselves to the people around them: they have to reveal their ills and their joys. But not only. It is necessary to expose the partner, parents, friends and children, without asking permission. Everyone has access to what is supposed to be their pieces. What really matters is reaching the other's gaze, whether with admiration or envy, and having the greatest possible visibility: this is the feedback that the other will give with their emojis. In this speech that is expressed on the networks, there is no beyond itself, but only the image itself reflected in its 'mirror page' in a scene created for the society of the spectacle that can give notoriety and create celebrities. (Pimentel, 2019, p.53)

The barriers between the maximum sphere of private protection and its disclosure have collapsed. The limit to which it can be exposed for the satisfaction of the curious eyes of an idle survival has been lost, because perhaps it does not give its existence a definite purpose. A relevant reason to make the vision of parallel universality attractive, where artificiality reveals the loss or recycling of what would be human identity.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The stimulus to critical and analytical thinking gravitates to the concerns of a modern, complex and virtual world. It is not to belittle technological advances and how much benefits are extracted from them daily. On the contrary. It is to recognize its relevance in facilitating activities that used to be painful and that allow for some moment of rest, well-being and integrality within a social perspective.

It is understanding that the universes, the real and the virtual, cannot be separated by the notorious and frightening codependency between them. It is not about giving a degree of importance to one over the other, but understanding the negative interference in behaviors that were once considered human and today are reflections of segments of artificiality. It is questioning and recognizing how much one is influenced by apparent trends and technology milestones.

It is to see the limit in which the identity as human beings is maintained, the mark that differentiates from other existing species, even when interacting in virtual environments. It is above all, waking up from the sleep of virtual innocence and realizing that, although subtle, one is putting aside the real connections, the challenges of a life with its inherent pains to perhaps plunge into a fantasy world, where anything would be possible, including changing yourself.

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