

Introduction

“When a model changes in the course of a lifetime, one is disturbed, because confidence in all models suffers. And when a whole series of models changes in the course of a single generation (as has happened during the last two centuries), the very basis of society shakes. But the climate of such an earthquake, of such a crisis of confidence, depends on the kind of model that changes. If the models of knowledge change (if what is happening is a “scientific crisis”), the event is experienced as “progress”. If the models of experience change (if what is happening is an “artistic crisis”), the event, although of primary importance, generally does not reach the level of consciousness. And if the models of behaviour change (if what is happening is a “social-political crisis”), the event is experienced as a catastrophe.”

Vilém Flusser, *The Post-Industrial Society*.

In his essay “A Sociedade Pós-Industrial” [The Post-Industrial Society], published on January 20, 1980, in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, Vilém Flusser synthesizes some of his main concerns and points out one of the many prognoses that converge in the observation of our reality. The models, thought of as cultural environments that govern life, behaviour, and social creations, are undergoing radical transformations that make us question how we experience our world and how we engage with it.

The epistemological, ethical, and aesthetic crises, thought of differently by him in his work, reveal the urgency of understanding such crises and how to act upon such understanding. In his lifetime, Flusser had already observed catastrophes resulting from these transformations, so that we, in reading his work, see how the sequential scientific, political, and experiential instabilities seen in the last years have come about, especially in the context of the global health emergency that we are going through.

How to elaborate new ways of knowing, acting and experiencing reality? Flusser searched for an answer to this question in the various paths, including Media, Arts, Design, Photography, Philosophy, Linguistics, among so many other areas. These serve as examples of the way in which he sought to problematize models.

In a set of ten texts, this issue highlights correlations among these fields, often inseparable due to the way Flusser approached them. By treating these phenomena as fundamental for the understanding of successive post-industrial transformations, he reveals them in a new light. He insists that the crisis of models reflects a deeper crisis, located in the way in which stored knowledge is culturally

transmitted, that is, he focuses his analysis on educational structures, both problematizing them and seeing in them the possible changes in the communicational fabric of societies.

In presenting his thoughts about education, he does not propose a theory or a pedagogical method, but rather precisely emphasizes the crisis of knowledge that runs through his communicology – the name he gave his theory as a whole. As he states in his autobiography, it was through his career as a teacher that he developed his main themes, and it was in the educational environment that he perceived the greatest challenges of the passage from historical to post-historical thought. The current state of education would represent, according to such idea, the attempt to transmit emptied models. By observing the directions that led to this emptying, he highlights the subsequent inversions that the industrial model sustained as practice and construction of knowledge. This model is what sustains, for the author, the training of the functionary and consists fundamentally in the way society has been and is being educated, both by educational institutions, but also, consequently, by the media.

This issue of Flusser Studies was conceived with the purpose of presenting and deepening Flusser's thoughts on education, as well as placing them in relation to other themes of his work. To elucidate the arguments that collaborated in its planning, the articles can be read based on four main axes.

The first one presents the readers with three versions – Portuguese, French, and German – of the text *Para uma Escola do Futuro* (Towards a School of the Future), written by Flusser in April 1982, as a result of his participation in the round table “Art and Technology”, at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Marseille. Made available by the Vilém Flusser São Paulo Archive, these essays invite us to think about knowledge, politics, and aesthetics in an integrated and complex manner, understanding school and education as daily practices, necessary for us to fully engage in reality.

The four texts that follow present reflections that focus especially on Flusser's texts dedicated to education. In *Communicology and Education. Possibilities for intersubjective experiences of knowledge* I try to contextualize these texts about education with Flusser's pedagogical experiences in Brazil, at the time when he wrote most of these essays. I further consider the ways these ideas connect to Communicology and the way he defended intersubjectivity in communication. Next, Andreas Ströhl presents *Flusser's Take on Media Pedagogy*, highlighting this pedagogy in relation to the media and to technical images. He questions the changes of perception that the technologies propose and defends a media pedagogy that is integrated with other educational methods. Ana Catarina Santilli and Norval Baitello Junior discuss the relationship between intersubjectivity and education in the text *Manipulating a dead world. Vilém Flusser and the clashes with (the concept of) “objectivity”*. In this essay, they attempt to highlight

Flusser's ecological outlook, which sought to overcome the objective vision of reality. This theme is explored by Norval Baitello, together with Roberta Dabdab and Lucia Leão, in the text *Communication and education for otherness: photographic expeditions as an exercise in the pedagogy of intersubjectivity*, which deepens the concept of intersubjectivity based on the way Flusser developed his ideas on alterity, fundamental for the educational experience, and on how this experience can be exercised today through photographic expeditions in the Heliópolis slum, in São Paulo.

Then, concentrated in two texts, the epistemological, political, and aesthetic models introduced earlier are reviewed and correlated with educational practice. Tiago da Mota e Silva, in his text *The (a)political dimension of the school: Vilém Flusser's project with no purpose for education*, invites us to think about political models in a broad way, relating them to educational bases and, through them, to Flusser's view of politics in the troubled Brazilian context of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. In *Poetisches Entwerfen. Vilém Flussers Bildungsbegriff?* (Poetic pro-jecting. Vilém Flusser's Concept of Education?), Florian Krückel delves into the concepts of *Poesis* and *Bildung* to present the importance that the concept of doubt had for Flusser and how this idea converged on thoughts about a daily practice in education.

Finally, with the intention of establishing dialogues between education and other texts by Flusser, Luis Mauro Sá Martino presents *How to teach in the media environment? A reading of a little-known Flusser text from 1972*. The essay investigates, by means of an article written for the *Revista Brasileira de Filosofia*, how education and philosophy can be thought of not only in the established space of the school, but mainly in the media environment. Also pursuing relationships to other themes, Gilson Schwartz allies Judaism, as thought by Flusser, to education. In the text *A Torá e a Caixa Preta de Flusser* (The Torah and Flusser's Black Box), he shows how parallels can be drawn with the dilemmas this religion presents to us in the present time.

May the contributions presented here make Vilém Flusser's thoughts on educational possibilities accessible, allowing new reflections on communication and education, so urgent for our times.

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