

Television: the emergence of a bureaucratic aristocracy – more control: State against Nation

*Who controls the past, controls the future. Who controls
the present, controls the past.*

George Orwell (1984)

This kind of mental low cost has one of its origins in television. With it, the system of cathode tubes sweeping substituted ocular saccadic movement, which is essential for the perception of form. Thus, television screen became a kind of sensorial prosthesis, passing to be responsible for a function that was before exerted by the eyes. We became free for other senses and, hypnotized, we

dived through television paths.

Information on the screen is *cool*, requiring a permanent action of our imagination to fill the *empty points*. Contrarily to what happens with literature, what we *fill* when we watch television screen is on its surface. They are not emptiness of ideas, but yes emptiness on a plane two-dimensional screen.

Because of that, television is a superficial medium par excellence. Comparatively to the book, for example, few is memorized with television. Thus, television produced a superficial generation oriented to continuous entertainment.

What we fill with our memories of the emptiness of television screen is pure surface.

With the book, imagination must fill the emptiness of ideas, of contents. On the television screen, emptiness is on the image's surface.

For David Lyon, surveillance and control systems are easily accepted by people because all kinds of voyeurism has become commonplace, encouraged by movie and television.

In fact, film and television played an important role in the emergence of a society of control – but not because people are going to the theater and watch the screen, or look at the television screen, as indicated by Lyon.

The impact on the structure of a new mentality is due primarily to the *process* of the media, like the telephone, radio or Internet, in terms of perception and cognition. In other words, how these media rearticulates complex neuronal and synaptic maps as sensory processes.

A survey made in Switzerland in 2005 showed that 80% of people considered television as the best entertainment, closed followed by radio with around 70% of the preferences. Only about 18% of people considered reading as the best way of entertainment.

In 2004, the average time spent every day by each person in front of a television was around three hours in Switzerland and around four and half hours in the United States! This means more than two months every year uninterruptedly watching television screens, twenty-four hours a day!

Another survey made in 2005 by the University of Indiana showed that, in the United States, a person passed an average of nine hours per day in front of the television, using Internet or speaking at the phone.

In China, an article published in August 2009 informed that a boy had been beaten to death in a camp for Internet addicts. It was known then that the Chinese government created “recovery clinics for addicts on the Internet”, where even electroshock therapy was used – only banned in July 2009.

The news, from the Associated Press, realized

that «the National People’s Congress of China estimates that 10% of Internet users under the age of eighteen are addicted. Chinese psychologists say that the symptoms of the disease include staying online for more than six hours a day and irritation, when they cannot connect to the network».

Curiously, the revolution of personal computers emerged with the figure of a virtual bureaucratic complex, revealing itself as a tool of distribution of information in a superficial world, disqualified, dedifferentiated, oriented to entertainment.

Bureaucracy inaugurated yet a new kind of political aristocracy – where its actors are legally protected, many times untouchable, free even to any possibility to be judged for acts of incompetence, malversation of public money or even for robbery.

In the majority of the countries at the beginning of the twenty-first, democratic systems

were formalized on the representative principle and not on direct democracy. Once elected, politicians became free to adopt a vast set of measures, even if contrary to their promises or people’s interests – after all, they had been elected.

In many cases, electors not even voted directly for their representatives, but yes for a political party – which, later, should designate those who effectively would assume public functions, according to bureaucratic and power rules. From groups of political identity, the large majority of the political parties was transformed into bureaucratic organizations with aristocratic character, and profoundly sectarian.

Then, surely, the only country in the world with a government closer to the ideals of the direct democracy was Switzerland. Authoritarian and dictatorial bureaucratic aristocracies dominated all other ones. The most curious is that, apparently, such fact was not well perceived by people, who calmly accepted all kinds of laws and regulations

seeming to believe that who controlled the country were best prepared for the task.

The new bureaucratic aristocracy – constituted by large quantity of small dictators, each one with low power – requested a permanent increase of costs from the State, which generally passed to be justified by the most diverse modalities of social benefits and security, many times with the argument to protect even the physical integrity of the common citizen.

In April 20, 2008, the *New York Times* revealed how, between 2002 and that year, the Pentagon infiltrated agents in the main television channels of the country, with the declared objective of influencing and driving information favorable to the administration of George W. Bush, constituting a kind of censorship.

Thus, as defined by Noreena Hertz, author of the bestseller *The Silent Takeover* «the political state has become the corporate state».

From security beyond urban criminality, like what happened with the war against terrorism, to a kind of security in the prevention of errors in the construction of buildings according to Urban Master Plans, or even to security at work – everything passed to be assured by a countless number of bureaucratic exigencies with a preventive and police character.

This police character passed to design military international interventions – making that the United States, which until then had assumed the formal position of planetary defender of the *State of Law* after the Second World War had left that mission in name of preventive attacks, like what happened with the second War in Iraq in the beginning of the 21st century.

And *preventive* was the expression used by Aldolf Hitler to design the attacks against London, in the beginning of the Second World War.

In another scale, that same principle passed to guide the attention of each one regarding to his own health, bringing people to the consumption of great quantity of medical exams, vitamins and all kinds of treatment, because *prevention* implicates *security* – and the body passed to be submitted to a condition of constant danger.

Then, hospitals became true shopping and leisure centers, like airports, railway stations, museums and so on.

Gradually, the State became a police entity, supervising everything and everyone, making even less chocking to the public opinion the approximation of Western politicians to old dictatorial systems like China, where until the beginning of the 21st century simply there is no freedom of thought or of expression.

Such huge grow of the State, its new strongly police character and the inequality in fiscal terms – practically freeing of taxes the largest companies

In Brazil, Jose Alencar Gomes da Silva, vice president with Lula da Silva, also was the owner of one of the most important corporations in the country, controlling an empire in the textile field with *Coteminas* as his most important company.

In George W. Bush administration, Dick Cheney joined from the oil services megacompany *Halliburton*; Karl Rove, chief political strategist, had been chief political strategist for *Philip Morris* from 1991 to 1996; Mitchel Daniels, head of the White House Office of Management and Budget, was vice president of the chemical empire *Eli Lilly*; the Secretary of Treasury, Paul O'Neill, came from the giant aluminum *Alcoa*; and Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State, came from *Chevron* – before *Standard Oil of California*, also known as *Esso Standard*.

In his book *Supercapitalism*, Robert Reich said that «nowadays, great part of citizens believe that politics only serves to the interests of few large groups that are interested only in themselves».

At least potentially, social inequalities were compensated in the old medium class framework by the aspiration on long-term employment, on the structuring of stable families and on the development of a single and well-succeeded profession in life.

In low power society, in many aspects designed by the virtual world and by low cost products and services, unpredictability increased exponentially, families tended to disappear, as well as safe long-term employment, and the State passed to assume, at least figuratively and in the political discourse, the responsibility in the fight against inequality.

But inequality was no longer the same as it was in a world of rich and poor. With low power society great part of salaries was no longer enough to support the acquisition of a home or, in many cases, even for the acquisition of a car. Then, financial systems passed to provide a quick and

inexpensive credit – assured by the State – turning the acquisition of a property into a kind of low cost act and making the buyer, many times, in debit for the rest of his life.

So, population plunged into a spectrum of continuous consumption and became, in general, eternally in debt with credit institutions, revealing a new and disguised kind of slavery.

It is estimated that in the year of 2003 there were about one and half million French families super indebted, representing around 10% of the population in the country. More than five hundred thousand families were subject to legal actions in courts for non-payment of their debits.

In the United States, between 1993 and 2004, the debit of consumers – including credit cards, loans in banks, mortgages and all kinds of financing – was multiplied by two thousand and five hundred, arriving to represent around 3% of the world economy!

In the ancient world, slavery represented, for the lords, a smart resource of energetic concentration, generating societies of luxury and pleasure.

In low power society, everyone became simultaneously slave and consumer of luxury and pleasure.

But, even worse, according to Loretta Napoleoni, «almost every product we consume has a hidden dark history, from slave labor to piracy, from counterfeit to fraud, from theft to money laundering». According to the United Nations it was estimated, in the first decade of the 21st century, that more than twenty seven million real slaves were present in the world – including Europe and the United States.

The ideals of freedom, which were defended by the old medium class, were substituted by the aspiration for continuous consumption, which

is narcissistic and numbing. Old ideas related to freedom were gradually disintegrated.

In the beginning of the 21st century, in low power societies, all people, with no exception, already born in debit with the most different natures of taxes, from the obligatory birth registration to direct consumption taxes. Debts initially responsibility of the parents, later automatically and compulsorily transferred to offspring. Thus, there was no possibility for a person to exist without taxes – a new phenomenon in function of its total involvement.

In this way, freedom in fiscal terms ended: obligatorily, everybody started his or her lives already in debit to the State.

But, individual freedom knew other transformations.

Based on the obsessive aspiration to *security* – collective, individual, about the own body, goods

or even knowledge – all kinds of prohibition passed to be imposed, not finding any relevant reaction from the people.

It became what the genial Georg Simmel said about the emergence of a “society of strangers”.

The term *security* appeared from the fusion of the Latin words *se* and *cura*, meaning *without care, without attention, abandoned*. It would be only in 1582, in English, after more than one century of intensification of the use of vision and literature that – in an apparent inversion – the word passed to indicate the idea of *something out of danger*. Thus, it passed to mean something that does not need attention or care, because it is already protected, safe, in *security*.

Gradually, with the approximation of the 20th century, *security* passed to mean *permanent control*. In this way, in the beginning of the 21st century, something *secure, safe*, indicated the idea of something permanently under surveillance,

constantly controlled and, therefore, always potentially in danger.

For safety to exist, danger became indispensable.

In name of *security*, people passed to be prohibited to start a business or to exert any commercial activity without a preventive and permanent control by the State through multiple declarations, documents, taxes or the unpleasant visits of fiscals.

It started to be prohibited the publishing of a newspaper or magazine free from the surveillance and responsibility of a journalist that, by its turn, was controlled by a class entity.

Prohibitions were extended in the most diverse directions, like the interdiction to exert advocacy without express permission of the State and class entities; interdiction to exert medicine without a preventive and permanent bureaucratic

control and so on.

The idea that each person should be free and responsible for his own fate passed to be looked as an aberration sometimes related to the old totalitarian ideologies!

Even health exams passed to be conditioned by the authorization of a doctor. People left to be free even to know their own bodies.

Self-medication – which was a common habit along thousands of years – passed to be strongly condemned. The acquisition of various medicines became forbidden without an express authorization and control of a doctor, recognizing with those measures total incompetence of users.

But, paradoxically, through Internet, great part of people passed to have access to scientific information which was restricted to the medical class just few years before, turning many in true paramedical specialists looking more for a health

orientation than for a dictatorial order from a doctor.

People passed to be prohibited to freely build their own housing. Even if they were disposed to sign a declaration of responsibility, governmental authorities simply did not recognized any possibility of capability and autonomy of the common citizen and imposed to everybody, indiscriminately, a great quantity of regulations and punishments.

Urban Master Plans passed not only to regulate indexes of occupation, but also setbacks, dimensions, openings, volumetric elements and even the colors that should be applied on the building, condemning *a priori* any construction to a strongly mediocre standard.

All human activities passed to be regulated and controlled by bureaucratic systems that eliminated the old differences, establishing an average criterion for everything.

Even artists passed to be prohibited to freely travel abroad bringing their own works out the area controlled by the State – because their works passed to represent a source of income through exportation taxes and internal revenue!

Industrial or handicraft products passed to be submitted to a huge set of rules and norms, whose very first objective was to exert control on everything.

So, a little everywhere, a great quantity of *companies of technical certification* passed to emerge, with the only function to fill hundreds of formularies as to receive the necessary governmental authorizations.

The old division of society in clear and visual *classes* was quickly substituted by a gigantic mass of consumers with no defined profile and without ideology.

Not only, in an extremely volatile society, the

aspiration to total control by the State appeared as a kind of reaction of equilibrium in a dissipative environment. Thus, many times counting with arguments based on the war against terror, the State passed to voraciously invade all spheres of privacy, freely intercepting phone calls, opening letters and deviating electronic messages among other resources, not counting with any strong opposition by the population, which seemed to be permanently allayed by consumption.

In 2008, conservative projections estimated more than forty thousand *cyberpolices* continually acting in China, permanently checking private communication in Internet.

That year, the Chinese government started requiring all computer manufacturers to preinstall a program of censorship, which automatically blocks access to determined sites. The application was named – in free translation – the *Green Barrier, Escort of Youth*. In August 2009, under some pressure from the United States and the

World Trade Organization, China withdrew this demand, but only for private use of computers and at a time when several manufacturers have already incorporated that program.

The complex Chinese system of censorship, known as the *Great Ciberwall* or the *Great Wall of Fire*, allowed to block access to various sites, identify mail, discussions, forums and blogs using words or phrases that could indicate topics banned by the authorities.

Several companies, like *Google*, *Yahoo* and *Microsoft* among others, have incorporated systems of censorship as a condition imposed by the Beijing government to operate in China.

Also in 2008, the sinologist Jean-Luc Domenach, in an interview with Nicolas Arpegian, alleged that Chinese government has teams dedicated to the wiretapping, particularly foreigners who live on the blocks of embassies that have certain phone numbers.

Many people forgot when, few years before, to open a third part's letter was established as crime by Law!

In November 2009, Chinese authorities censored the speech of President Barack Obama, in his first day visiting China, because he spoke about the importance of freedom! The Chinese government rigorously selected even those who attended to Obama's lecture.

Two days before Christmas, in 2009, the Brazilian government published the text of the *Third National Plan for Human Development*, which determined the social control on media, establishing official censorship. The reactions were great and President Lula da Silva was forced to revise the document. But then, the newspaper *O Estado de Sao Paulo*, one of the world's largest, was already under censure after several months.

In the last days of November 2009, the

European Parliament authorized the suspension of Internet access without requiring a court order.

Surely, the best example of this new condition of total surveillance and control is the *Echelon Project*.

Created by the *NSA National Security Agency* of the United States and operating in partnership with the *GCHQ Government Communications Head Quarters* of the United Kingdom, the *CSE Communications Security Establishment* of Canada, the *DSD Defense Security Directorate* of Australia and the *GCSB General Communications Security Bureau* of the New Zealand – articulated under a secret agreement established between the United States and the United Kingdom in 1948, whose terms remained secret until the beginning of the 21st century – *Echelon* is a powerful system of global espionage capable to capture and analyze in high velocity all telephonic connections, telefax and electronic messages in any part of the planet.

That system of espionage, forming a sweeping network of satellites, terrestrial posts and ships, intercepts practically all communications via satellite, through microwaves, cellular telephones or transmitted through optical cables. All this huge communication set is processed in the super computers center at the *National Security Agency*.

Information processing by *NSA* included even advanced voice recognition and optical characters recognition systems.

The Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, ratified in 1791, says that «the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated...». The question is to know what is “reasonable” in a universe where reasons are multiple and, sometimes, contradictory.

One of the constant criticisms made against

the use of *Echelon* – beyond the flagrant offence to the old privacy rights – is that apparently it has been used not only for identification of terrorist groups but also as an instrument for industrial and commercial espionage – benefiting large conglomerates of companies in prejudice of small and new groups.

In 1985, under the propaganda of being a free borders principle, a system similar to *Echelon* was created by European countries: *Schengen*, which bears the name of the town in Luxembourg where the project was launched.

Initially, *Schengen* was announced as an agreement to release borders, with the aim of mutual recognition of visas and the strengthening of multilateral relations.

But in 1999 the *Schengen Treaty* became a system for recording and surveillance of large population stocks, incorporating Norway and Iceland, extending in this way, from the Arctic pole

to Mediterranean.

In principle, unlike the operational way that designs the Echelon, which continuously intercepts virtually every kind of electronic communication; *Schengen* archives, treats and classifies a large set of personal data.

In this way, the tendency of the enlargement of big groups of companies and a gigantic mass of low cost consumers – permanently under surveillance – was more and more reinforced.

In April 2009, *BBC* announced that «communications firms are being asked to record all internet contacts between people as part of a modernisation in UK police surveillance tactics. The new system would track all e-mails, phone calls and internet use, including visits to social network sites».

On the other hand, the obsession for control and surveillance reached the production and

dissemination of computer virus, generating even the expression *Government Trojan* to indicate spy virus created by governmental authorities as to control citizens' fiscal life.

China government was considered a world leader in the production of such kind of virus, according to reports of 2008. But, it was generally accepted that many other countries, also in Europe, did the same.

According to the security company *Sophos*, in studies of 2007, around 55% of the Chinese sites were true sources of digital viruses.

Nils Magnus, writing for the *Linux Magazine* in January 2008 described the terrible situation: «With the unkind thought that 'the ends justify the invasion', the governments of some countries have considered the idea to install spy software in citizens' personal computers with the objective to control data for the supposed benefit of national security».

In the early 2000s the American government created the spy virus *Carnivore* – which had the announced objective to protect citizens controlling them! The software was intensely criticized and officially discontinued.

But, in 2007, Germany announced its firm determination to legalize online investigation, infecting citizen’s personal computers with *Trojan Horses*. Beyond the evident aggression against civil liberties and rights, another important question emerges: how a determined government can know who is or is not its citizen in the cyberspace? The implementation of spy software implicates the disrespect for the old conventions related to Nations’ autonomy and self-determination.

To surpass such difficulty to control their citizens, some countries started even to consider the establishment of legal demand for the implementation of spy components in all personal computers.

In 2008, *Symantec*, company dedicated to the production of anti-virus software, announced in its *Internet Security Threat Report* related to the second semester of 2007, that there already were more than one million of different virus infecting computers all over the world.

Such huge quantity of different virus created a complex network of companies oriented to the production of anti-virus software. Then, not a single product was able to cover all types of virus.

The situation was so serious that the renowned scientific magazine *Science* has devoted part of his edition of 2009 to an analysis on the impact of viruses' contamination on mobile phones. If contamination occurred via *Bluetooth* it would have a configuration similar to what happens with the flu, but if it happened via *MMS*, *Multimedia Messaging Service*, it would be almost instantaneous.

Interestingly, the same issue of *Science* published an article on counterfeit products for scientific use made in China, another one about an epidemic of plagiarism of scientific articles on the Internet and, finally, an interesting article about the increasing difficulty in establishing demographic data on accuracy due to highly mobile population.

It was as if, in a context of structural change, a true civilizational mutation, a *cyberwar* without barracks, a kind of civil war, this time virtual, was happening.

Parallel to the quick emergence of a state of war without bodies – together with an increase in physical violence in planetary terms – a fast strengthening of mechanisms for control and surveillance happened, taking all people as potential criminals.

In the beginning of the twenty-first century, many countries – including Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Luxembourg among

many others – it was forbidden to leave home and walk the streets without carrying an identity document. The most bizarre is that the vast majority of people considered this as something normal.

In July 2008, the Portuguese government approved – with the contrary votes of all opposition parties and in vacation period – a law obliging the use in all cars in the country of a GPS chip that permits real time control of movements of the citizens.

According to the Portuguese newspaper *Público*, «the chip or license plate electronic device aims to make easier the work of security forces, which will have access to information about periodic inspection and the obligatory insurance of the vehicle. The chip will also permit the identification of crashed or abandoned cars, but it can be used in integrated strategy for tolls and other taxes. Expenses of acquisition and installation will be driver’s responsibility».

With that chip, enforced by law, displacements of Portuguese citizens will be controlled in real time! When the bizarre and authoritarian governmental decision was announced, there were no public protests in the streets. People were numbed.

And the same happened, again in Portugal, with the introduction of the called Citizen's Card – in fact, an identity card that join in an incorporated chip a large quantity of information that can be controlled by authorities. Contrarily to what happened with the old identity cards, the owner compulsorily pays for the Citizen's Card, it will be the only valid identity document and lasts only five years, revealing itself a new source of incomes for the State.

It was feared that in short time to that chip, renewed every five years, a GPS locator will be incorporated, turning possible the control and surveillance of every citizen in real time.

There were no protests to its implementation,

neither questionings about its constitutionality!

In Brazil, the identity cart was only regulated in 1969, under the military dictatorship. In 2009, forty years later, the country imposed the *RIC – Single Register of Civil Identification*, indeed a smart identity card with a chip, bringing together diverse information about its owner, for permanent control and surveillance, mandatory, without any right for the person to refuse it.

The same requirement, among many other countries in the early twenty-first century, was made by Sweden, where the entire system to identify and control was centralized at the *Skatteverket*, which is the tax department of the State. Everyone controlled by money.

The refusal to use these cards immediately place the person in a situation of illegality and therefore subject to prison!

In 1952, British government tried to turn

permanent the requirement of identity cards created as a tool against espionage in the Second World War. There was a strong popular reaction and the cards were destroyed in huge bonfires across the country. One of the judges who presented the most compelling evidence against its use has argued that identity cards automatically turned citizens into suspects and the absent-minded into law-breakers.

Only fifty years later, not counting with high resistance, governments around the world – including the British or American – sometimes under the guise of treating the issue of other documents like driving licenses, established a definite requirement for identity cards, turning everyone into suspect and potential criminal.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, it was striking to note the absence of reaction of many people before coercive deployment of permanent control and surveillance systems, such as the identity cards. For most people, it was

about something normal, a sign of the times and a benefit against criminals and terrorists. They were unaware of the terrible danger they put themselves and all: that democracy and isonomy, the principle according to which all are equal before the law, the principle that everyone is innocent until proven guilty, are not eternal. When a totalitarian regime is installed, the institutionalized control and surveillance may mean the establishment of an impregnable fortress.

Marcus Tullius Cicero asked, in his Philippics – celebrated speeches where he questioned Marc Anthony – if «wouldn't be better to die one thousand times if one can not live in his city without the escort of armed men?».

In the beginning of the 21st century, as war justification, the United States, which until then was the world representative of the old ideals of democracy, of the isonomy and the medium class' values, created the *Patriotic Act*, eliminating from its legislation the *habeas corpus*, essential element

in defense of the principle according to which everybody is innocent until proof in contrary.

Then, under the determination of that Act, any person could be imprisoned in the United States, without right to contact any other person, without right to defense and even not knowing the reasons that led him to detention.

The *Patriotic Act* authorized the FBI to freely intercept any communication between citizens of any country without the need of a judicial authorization. The measure also authorized the United States to intercept communications even from other countries, even when through Internet and forbade Internet servers to reveal the extension of such measures of control and surveillance made by them for the authorities.

Even the requests of the American Congress for more information about these measures were simply denied by the government.

Not only, under the terms established by the Patriotic Act anyone in the world could be subject to persecution by the American authorities when computers inside or outside the United States are attacked.

This condition opens up a frightening precedent by challenging the *Treaty of Westphalia*, created in 1648, according to which the sovereignty of a State is determined by its territorial integrity, inviolability of its borders and the supremacy of the State.

Considering that even governments such as Germany or China, officiated use hackers to establish an active espionage in cyberspace, indeed the Patriot Act would inevitably lead to conflicts with those countries, among many others.

In 2002, through the United Nations, but of course with full agreement of all governments, the measures established by the Patriotic Act were immediately adopted in practically all over the

world.

Thierry Meysan, author of the disturbing book *11 septembre 2001, L'effroyable imposture*, published in the beginning of 2002, wrote: «In Great Britain, the antiterrorist law authorizes the prison of foreign suspects without any instruction, violating the European Convention of Human Rights. In Canada, the antiterrorist law obliged the journalists to denounce their sources of information, after a judicial request, under the risk of immediate prison. In Germany, to the Intelligence services were attributed powers of judicial police, transforming them in political police. In Italy, secret services are authorized to commit all kinds of crime inside the national territory, if in the interest of National Defense, without need to adjust counts with Justice...».

That same year, the American administration tried to open the so-called *Operation TIPS-Terrorism Information and Prevention System*, which aimed to transform thousands of civil servants and

millions of people in permanent informers of the State. Even the American government announced the controversial program saying that *TIPS* «will be a nationwide program giving millions of American truckers, letters carriers, train conductors, ship captains, utility employees, and others a formal way to report suspicious terrorist activity».

After a lot of complaints initiated by the *Washington Post*, comparing the methods of *TIPS* with East Germany's secret police *Stasi*, the American government was forced to cancel the program.

In 2003, it was announced that Russia was to recreate a network of spies among people nearby – resource widely used by the KGB during the Soviet period.

The new figure of a swollen State, super powerful and with small or no credibility at all, not only unveiled itself as a kind of barrier to old aspirations of the each day more reduced medium

class, but also made to emerge the bizarre condition of the *State against the Nation*.

The same was happening with companies. In Europe, it was established the electronic invoicing and the *EDI Electronic Data Interchange*, in the search for more revenue and total control of companies. Brazil has also quickly established the electronic invoice, allowing the government the opportunity to control in real-time the management of the companies!

In Brazil, in December 2009, the government announced that companies considered as systematic tax owed would pass to have the daily presence of a government auditor inside its building, as a *prevention* tool against tax evasion. A week earlier, the Brazilian tax authorities announced a series of “evil” acts, according to the official definition, against tax evaders.

The State against nation makes to emerge, of course, what we know as censorship.

It is a phenomenon that is not restricted to the active intervention of the Pentagon in American media between the years 2002 and 2008 by manipulating information.

In Portugal, during the first decade of the twenty-first century, were several signs of state intervention in the media. The same phenomenon was the subject of heated debate in Brazil. Hugo Chavez, in Venezuela, became famous for his interventions together the media – which came to represent the closure of all television and radio stations against the government – to the inexplicable and unacceptable complacency of most journalists the world!

Veiled threats, all over the world, often in the form of warnings by tax authorities, have become a part of a disguised censorship.

Countries such as China or Iran, however, did not need subterfuges to cover up acts of

censorship. On Tuesday, June 2, 2009, a day before the twentieth anniversary of the massacre perpetrated by the Chinese in Tiananmen, the Chinese government has blocked *Twitter*, *Flickr*, blogs providers and even the *Hotmail*. The censorship had begun weeks before, with the blockade of *Blogspot*, *Wordpress* and even of the *Youtube*. More than six thousand university sites were also blocked, preventing any discussion of what had happened twenty years before.

The end of 2005, given an order of censure by the Chinese government, *Microsoft* has deleted the blog of activist and journalist Zhao Jing, also known as Michael Anti. But, the blog of the young journalist, born in 1975, was not in China but on servers in the United States! Thus, *Microsoft* obeyed the orders of the Chinese government imposing a censorship on American soil!

In June 2009, Iran had established a strong censure across the country, to control the wave of protests against electoral fraud that supported

the then Prime Minister Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to power. With the media fully controlled by government forces, an anonymous virtual community was born, against which, paradoxically, only the paralysis of the State itself could represent a treat.

Two months earlier, Mohammad Hossein Safar, Minister of Culture of Iran, made an unprecedented statement: «This is what we ask publishers and writers, ‘You are aware of the vetting code, so censor pages which are likely to create a dispute’» - forcing a self-censorship.

In June 18 2009, most major newspapers in Britain reported its first pages with large black bars in protest against government pressure and are classified as genuine acts of censorship against freedom of information.

In July 31 2009, the Brazilian newspaper *O Estado de Sao Paulo* – one of the major newspapers around the world – was subject to censure for

denouncing thousands of acts of corruption possibly made by Senator and former President of Republic José Sarney. Nothing happened to the old politician who had the unconditional support of President Lula da Silva, and the newspaper continued under censure!

The reality of the Low Power Society in the beginning of the twenty-first century, submerged in a narcotic process of continuous consumption, emerged in sharp contrast with the ideas of the mechanical and literary society in the nineteenth century. John Stuart Mill, in defense of freedom, emphasized in his famous paper of 1859 that «the appropriate region of human liberty comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological. (...) Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of

doing as we like, subject to such consequences as may follow; without impediment from our fellow-creatures, so long as what we do does not harm them even though they should think our conduct foolish, perverse, or wrong. Thirdly, from this liberty of each individual, follows the liberty, within the same limits, of combination among individuals (...) No society in which these liberties are not, on the whole, respected, is free, whatever may be its form of government; and none is completely free in which they do not exist absolute and unqualified».

But how can we talk on *inward domain of consciousness* if it no longer has a literary nature, it is no longer associated to paper and was transformed into light, acquiring an ephemeral and volatile nature? How to talk about freedom of tastes and interests in a culture of mass production at low prices and apparently high quality?

Gradually, the picture of the State was becoming into an aristocratic and dictatorial entity

– without a specific dictator, a Prince, but with hundreds and even thousands of little princes and little dictators.

Of course, around this new bureaucratic elite joined what Karl Marx called the *lumpenproletariat*, first described in his *The German Ideology*, in 1845, and then in the brilliant *18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*.

In 1950 there were less than one hundred companies with main offices in Washington DC. In the 1990s, that number jumped to more than five hundred companies, with more than sixty-one thousand lobbyists. In 2005, there were more than ten thousand lobbyists working in Brussels.

In parallel with this dramatic increase of lobbyists around the world – that is, an increase of people able to penetrate and manipulate State secrets in order to take personal or corporate benefits from that information – everything passed to be secretive in its most varied ways.

Everything in the State becoming, in some way, secret meant that it became an authority strange to the individual, which lose his ancient condition of citizenship.

Always genial and often prophetic, H. G. Wells would be telling in his science fiction story, written in 1907 and published the following year, titled *The War in the Air*, about a world war and air strikes against New York City: «One of the most striking facts historically about this war, and one that makes complete the separation between the methods of warfare and democracy, was the effectual secrecy of Washington».

The secrecy of State, taking all individuals as potential enemies, is reinforced by the strategies of fiscal terrorism and default by the public administrations.

Several times, in many countries, perhaps in the majority of them, cases of breach of contract by

the State against the citizen increased dramatically. In case of judgments against itself, practically all States passed to determine the obligatory resource to last juridical instances, *a priori* condemning the poorest citizens and, principally, the medium class – more frequently subject to those legal actions – by their lack of capacity to resist to bureaucracy costs for long periods of time. In many occasions, in diverse countries, like Portugal, even the right of defense of the citizen face to the State passed to implicate the anticipate payment of a contested debit.

Yet in Portugal, as it also happened in other countries, the right to claim against the State became conditioned by a compulsory authorization giving to the authorities power to effective a total official inquiry on the citizen's fiscal life – for what a reciprocate, of course, never could be possible – dramatically reducing, in practical terms, that right.

Not only, in several countries in Southern

Europe, the States took many months, in various cases years, to pay their debits, condemning thousands of companies to bankruptcy. In 2008, for example, governments of Portugal and Spain were accused to not pay in time their debits to companies of civil construction, generating a devastating degeneration in the sector.

In many countries, the only solution to receive a payment from the State passed to be corruption.

The ancient principle of reciprocity between State and Nation practically finished. If a common citizen did not pay the taxes imposed to him, he surely would be sent to prison. But, nothing would happen if the State did not pay its debits, as it started to be each day more frequent after the last years of the 20th century. Even if in some States courts assured the right of defense face to authorities, the citizen's losses in time, among other ones, would never be paid. Many times losses that hardly affected the results of an entire

life of work. At the same way, in general, nothing happened to corrupted politicians or important public servants involved in illicit acts.

According to the principles that characterized the middle class universe, money accumulated after the payment of taxes was a strict individual question, with a rigorously private nature. But, for a low power society no question can be *rigorously private* and accumulation was substituted by continuous consumption and credit. In this way, the States passed to disrespect bank secrecy, simply not recognizing its judicial validity, making free the access to bank information of any one, transforming the question into a mere bureaucratic act.

The United States and France are two exemplary countries in this phenomenon, fact that put them frontally against Switzerland, one of the only survivals all over the world in the respect to secrecy, privacy and individual rights. One can argue that secrecy benefits criminals – but one of

the pillars of the Western world is the principle according to which *everyone is innocent until proven guilty*, which was born from the Roman maxim *ei incumbit probatio qui dicit, non qui negat*, the burden of proof rests on who asserts, not on who denies.

Even in Switzerland, when the evidences of a crime appear, bank secrecy is immediately suspended by a judicial authorization.

With the end of bank secrecy without judicial authorization, following only to bureaucratic and political criteria, in various countries, the States gradually incited delation among citizens – like what was common in the Middle Ages – as a way of control amplification.

In the first years of the 21st century, Switzerland passed to suffer all kinds of attacks, many of them with the only objective to discredit that which surely was the only democracy in the world, in a ferocious campaign looking to end

its bank system and establish the international aristocratic bureaucracy standard.

But, such increasing conflict between States against Nations also presented flagrant contradictions. If, in fact, the police State for which fiscal terrorism became vulgar tool for new incomes – from car transit fines to persecution against the survivals from the medium class, generally classified as *rich* – it is also true the appearance of a powerful symbiotic involvement, sometimes promiscuous between big companies and the State, arriving to situations where it were flagrant the domination of the first and the submission of the latter.

As Galbraith affirmed, already in 1979, «the State is an important client. It is the State that buys for the airports, highroads, television channels, telephone networks, army, as well as with the financial help without which those objects could not be produced or sold. It from the State, yet, that emanates a more and more closed network

of regulations and restrictions that affect the selling and the use of products. Thus, the industry of transformation must have intimate relations of dependency, of symbiosis and sometimes of corruption with the modern State».

In the thirty next years many things happened, like the generalized privatization movement of highways, television channels, utilities of energy production and telephone networks. But, those changes seem to have been a superficial fact, giving to the States, each day bigger, the possibility of a quick and generous but extremely fragile and provisory income of capital.

If, by one side, big companies continued to have integrated as workers employees or ex-employees of their respective States, politicians of all kinds – evidencing a new type of promiscuity, even deeper and free from the old concerns – on the other hand, the continuous amplification of bureaucracy requested an accelerated increase of incomes through taxes.

But, the principle of *democracy* demands the centers of the economic power be independent from the political authority, as is defended by Robert Reich. For him, gradually, the world dived in an era of what he called *supercapitalism*, after the 1970s, with a dramatic degeneration of the old values of democracy.

Three essential elements designed the classical comprehension of the economic systems in the 19th century: consumer's spontaneous sovereignty, elector's supreme sovereignty, and the submission of the companies to the laws of market.

With low cost society, individual consumer simply has no longer importance. What started to be valid were great numbers, statistical data. On the other hand, a great diversity of products and services led the consumer to be quickly adapted to the fast changes of fashions, moving from sector to sector between different suppliers. Consumer's

sovereignty died with the end of the right to claim, and the end of the protest, which makes no longer any sense.

Even what Galbraith called the *inverted order* stopped to make any sense. Galbraith made reference to a curious phenomenon: if, in the industrial era, companies tried to attend to people's needs, and compete in such aim; in the called *affluent societies* the order was *inverted*, taking as its aim no more to attend social functions but yes to create new needs. However, in low power society it is no more about *needs* and yes about consumption while leisure and pleasure – condition that clearly illustrates the disintegration of the citizenship.

Thomas Humphrey Marshall, British sociologist who lived between 1893 and 1981, argued that the modern sense of citizenship was based on the development of civil, political and social rights, respectively in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Only with

those three rights attended we would have full citizenship.

However the prices of aerial tickets became very inexpensive in the beginning of the 21st century, Europe, the United States, Australia, Canada or Japan among other countries did not issue the necessary authorization even for a touristy visit to poor people. The right of free migration was virtually eliminated, and with it also one of the pillars of the civil rights: the right to freedom of movement.

In 1999, Dutch government adopted a bill called *Law on the Undocumented* or *Wet Ongedocumenteerden*, which allowed the immediate arrest and deportation of any person without passport seeking for political asylum. A person who is fleeing from his country rarely has access to the documentation supplied by that same country - what is, strictly speaking, to eliminate even the right of political asylum.

In fact, laws and endless bureaucratic procedures had already eliminated, in most countries in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the right of migration to hundreds of millions of people, contrary to the Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which says: «Everyone has the right to freely move and choose his residence within a State».

Other fundamental civil right, the right to privacy, practically ended.

If, by one side, the democratic systems – probably having Switzerland as the only exception – were dominated by a new aristocratic class, controlled by large companies and bureaucratic parties, formed a reality where the effectiveness of the vote was practically eliminated; on the other side, a strongly globalized planet also did not permit the effective right of vote. The United States exerted a tremendous influence in many other countries, but to foreign people it was not allowed the right to vote – the same can be said

about France, England, China, Brazil and so on – eliminating the political right.

Finally, with the transference of control of health care and schools from the State to private companies, the social rights to education and health pass to be exclusive to who can pay for it – disintegrating the social right.

With the end of those three rights – civil, political and social – we also have the end of modern sense of citizenship. People passed to be individuals without citizenship!

But they did not become, in reason of that, more free. Everyone passed to be subjected to permanent control and surveillance.

It is a world in which the figure of Ret Marut would be literally impossible. Marut – who has been compared to Henry David Thoreau – was born in the nineteenth century, but who he really was or even his real name were insoluble enigma. Among

his various identities are B. Traven, Hal Crover, Traven Torsvan, Artum, Fred Mareth, Albert Otto Max, Otto Feige and Anton Räderscheidt among many others. He was a writer, actor, photographer, literary agent, explorer and farmer among other professions. Speculations suggested that he was, in fact, Jack London, a millionaire American, a former black slave, a leper, Mexico's President Adolfo López Mateos, his sister, Mexico's President Elias Calles, the director of a book German publishing company and Arthur Breisky among others.

In one of his texts, Marut said: «Now I know that my country is classified in files, I saw it under a kind of employees skilled to erase in me the last traces of patriotism. Where, then, is my homeland? My home is always where I am, where nobody bothers me, where nobody asks me who I am, where I come from or what I do».

John Houston filmed one of his most famous books, *The Treasure of Sierra Madre*, in 1948.

B. Traven or Ret Marut could not had happened at the beginning of the twenty-first century, where everything passed to be tightly controlled by a tentacle micro bureaucracy.

In one of his manifestos, dated 1919, Ret Marut wrote: «I can not belong to any political party, because I see this as a limitation on my personal freedom, because to be conformed with a program of the party would prevent the possibility of developing what I consider the highest and noblest purpose on Earth, to have the right to be a human being».

Low Power Society virtually eliminates, in fact, political parties, turning them into mindless departments bureaucratic rotation. On the other hand, it provides an element common to all, as a huge single party: continuous consumption.

Capitalism generates large averages – what worked well for the production of the most diverse artifacts. But, health, education, culture and art

do not work by “averages”. When an average reaches culture, we have *mediocrity* and art simply disappears.

Since the end of the 20th century, many people passed to identify the end of citizenship with the called *neoliberalism* – especially in Europe – as to refer to a new liberalism or, in other words, to the ideas presented by Adam Smith and David Ricardo now took as universal values.

But, in fact, what started happening in the beginning of the 21st century was something completely new: almost disintegrated States, completely controlled by big corporations; those large conglomerates spread out through the planet, now without clear reference to specific culture or country; the figure of the State against Nation; the end of citizenship; the end of the middle class; super control and super surveillance among a countless number of new elements that passed to constitute a new society.

Until then, everything what characterized the aspirations of practically all societies in the world, in all times, was forged by necessity, by the lack of resources. As Galbraith argued, it is the necessity what makes us to have clear ideas.

In the last years of the 20th century the expansion of the world wealthy was an overwhelming phenomenon. And, even if that formidable expansion had established small nucleus of extreme concentration, exponentially increasing social asymmetry, it happened a distribution of wealthy in low intensity and in a planetary scale through all kinds of artifacts – designing the low power society.

Hyperconsumption in a *hyperurban* planet eliminated the clearness of aspirations that before had designed the old medium class.

In political terms, the new society of pleasure and consumption, of the non-protest, of the non-claim, designed by the domination of States by

big companies, which also dominated the political class, the relevance of who was to be elected ended, save some notable exceptions.

The called representatives of people passed to be something like interfaces between market fluctuations and zones of big economic interests, practically meaning nothing to the common citizen, strange to people's reality.

Everything passed to be designed by masses of statistical data with low impact in personal lives.

Thus, the design of national politics passed to be dictated by market tendencies with the objective to keep unemployment and inflation at acceptable levels.

Groups of politicians passed to dispute televisions' backstage, newspapers and magazines plunging into a continuous debate without ideas, only as entertainment, alternating themselves in

the golden places of a new aristocracy.

Curiously, still bringing ahead the symbolic figure of the *worker*, much of the discourse of left-wing politicians passed to be characterized by the defense of the right to progress and individual sovereignty – which were the values of the old medium class, the called *bourgeoisie*, before classified as right-wing!

In last analysis, it is about a social metamorphosis – everything tending to great low cost expansions, in a low power society where direct democracy seems to have become more and more a distant utopia.

Populations in countries like China and India became avid consumers, but practically without any political function – what established a standard of identity with gigantic masses of consumers in other countries and passed to be illustrated by mass tourism.

It is estimated that in 2020 about 20% of the world population would be of tourists in some part of the year!

Only in the United States there will be around seven hundred and fifty million passengers in about seven million and five hundred thousand flights every year.

In France, in the year of 2005, more than two hundred and fifty amusement parks attracted around seventy million people per year, the equivalent to a country larger than France itself! In that same year, only *Euro Disney* passed to count with more than twelve million visitants per year, equivalent to a country like Greece!

Several groups of ecologists passed to defend the transformation of a *low power society* that, however in a distributive character, implicated an increasing energetic consumption, into a *low energy society*, even more controlled, more regulated, designed by instruments of punishment to oblige

people to decrease energetic consumption levels.

Of course, the great and increasing energetic consumption generated by low power society did not happen in absolute terms of concentration, that is, in terms of high voltages.

Alexander Volta invented the first modern batteries in 1800. Great part of the increasing of the energetic use in the beginning of the 21st century was in the use of low electric tension batteries. Such use appointed to an annual increase of more than 6% in 2006.

In that context of crescent raising of energetic consumption and simultaneously *miniaturization* of its distribution, several times it has been referred low cost companies that knew a great success after the year 2000, like *Skype, Ikea, Zara, Google, Ryanair, easyJet* or *Wal-Mart* among others, forgetting some pioneers like *Microsoft, Apple Macintosh* and *IBM*, which were responsible for the emergence of the personal computer; the

chain of restaurants *McDonald's* with their low cost food, responsible for the concept of *fast-food*; *Coca-Cola* with its fast-drink; or *BIC* with their popular low cost *sphere-graphic* pens that knew a planetary success after the 1960s.

In the same way that cars redesigned the *family*, turning possible its geographical expansion, human relations were not immune to the appearance of new information technologies.

New interactive low cost telecommunication media in real time, like *Skype*, *Messenger* or simply *MSN* among others, made many groups of teenagers started to pass various hours, every day, closed in their rooms but connected with other teenagers, as if they were in group, forming a strong gregarious behavior at distance, virtual.

Still, the huge avalanche of *compact discs*, quickly almost extinct by music compressed in *MP3*, recorded movies on *DVDs*, the fabulous Internet universe with *YouTube*, *Hi5*, *MySpace*,

FaceBook, Second Life, EverQuest, flickr, 43 Things, Technorati, del.icio.us, blogs and MSN, beyond countless sites with music, photography, movies, texts, books and games, absorbed a great quantity of time that before was dedicated to family to friends in a direct physical contact.

A new kind of virtual space game would appear in the passage of the third millennium, the *MMORPG – massively multiplayer online role-playing games*: dynamic games involving people from all over the world, happening in virtual spaces.

According to Edward Castronova, the average of users of that kind of games in 2005 regularly used them for about thirty hours every week, with tendency to increase. In France, 2008, law determined a maximum of thirty-five hours of labor work per week, practically the same time of that used in immersion games!

In the end of 2006, only *MySpace* already

counted with more than one hundred million users, adding more than one million new users every week!

In that year there already were personal blogs receiving more than five hundred thousand visitants per day, surpassing many old media with hundreds of workers, like important newspapers and magazines.

In 1991, Linus Torvalds, then a student at the University of Helsinki, in Finland, started working on a computer platform that should be free to everyone. Developed on a collaborative basis, his platform called *Linux* became worldwide famous and accused to be against the old principles of capitalism. Linus Torvalds replied saying that «we are not based on locked systems, not on financial capital, not on public subsidies, neither on distribution systems and other private companies' advantages. It is not about socialism, in contrary it is free market».

Not only in terms of computer programs, the use of new equipment of interaction in real time passed to constitute a revolutionary universe permanently present.

As Roy Ascott says, «what both the art and technologies of cyberculture are able to show is that there is a radical shift in our perceived relationship with reality, where the emphasis has moved from appearance to apparition; that is, from the outward and visible look of things to the inward and emergent processes of becoming. In this culture, neither the precise state of art nor its cultural status can be fixed or defined; it is in a constant state of transformation».

According to Rich Ling, sociologist in Oslo, only around 3% of the children in Norway with age inferior to thirteen years old had a cellular phone in 1997. In November of 1999 that percentage was of 50% and surpassed the 80% in 2001.

In 2007, almost 90% of the American

teenagers declared to regularly use the Internet.

Reports of the *International Telecommunication Union* show that in 2004 more than 50% of the Italian children between nine and ten years old already had a cellular phone.

In that same year, another research, also made by the *International Telecommunication Union*, this time in the United Kingdom, showed that the lost of a cellular phone was felt like the death of a kind person by half of the teenagers, leading to a feeling of mourning. Beyond this, the report showed that «many are afraid to leave home without it, and feel uncomfortable when others peruse their mobile menus or messages». That same report indicated, yet, that great part of teenagers had the habit to bring the cellular phone with them, together the body, all time, anywhere they could be, and many times they carefully kept the equipment even under the pillow, at bed, or immediately aside, when they slept.

In Portugal, an European country that in the first years of the 21st century was still considered underdeveloped, was stage of several serious conflicts in public schools in 2008, some implicating even physical aggression between students and teachers, because the refusal of the first to turn off their phones during the classes.

Of course, it is not about to establish any judgment of value. If, by one side the gradual disintegration of family seems to be an unquestionable statistical fact, on the other hand, the hours dived inside the virtual universe seem to unveil two great paths – that of continuous entertainment that fills good part of that spectrum, and the cultural high repertoire references. One and another reinforce positive spirals in their respective spectra.

In 2001, in France, each person watched, in average, around two hours of movies every week in the theatres and almost one hour per day, in average, of television movies.

Who dive inside virtual world various hours per day – for pure entertainment, as it happens so many times, to deal with logic games or even to access high repertoire data – will self-structure his mind in a totally different way than who passes the whole day reading books or playing with friends, as it was common until the end of the 20th century.

In low power society the individual is, simultaneously, more isolated and more gregarious. At home, great part of urban children and teenager passed to stay various hours, every day, closed in their rooms in virtual contact with other children or teenagers, commonly located in diverse parts of the world.

The psychiatrist Cort Pedersen, of the North Caroline University at Chapel Hill, suggested in his paper *Biological Aspects of Social Bonding and the Roots of Human Violence*, dated of 2004, that much of the human violence could be understood by neural biochemical factors, which would be

intensified by the isolation between parents and children.

According to him, violence would be produced not only by lack of identity, but also by specific neural biochemical factors generated by isolation.

As the journalist and specialist on the history of China Orville Schell argued in 2001, during a debate at the California University, the appearance of *fast food* changed the old habits of family, practically eliminating, in many cases, the traditional meal at home.

The old meals and parties in family, which joined dozens of people until the 1960s, were gradually eliminated.

To have an idea about the dynamics of those transformations, only in Australia around 14% of the families in 2003 already were single-parent; and 31% of the children born in 2001 had non-

married mothers.

In the United Kingdom in 2005 there were more than two million single-parent families, with more than three million children, representing around 25% of the young English families.

In 2003, in Sweden, a research showed that people who had grown up in single-parent families had three times more tendencies to suicide than people born in families which had the presence of father and mother.

In the United States, in 2007, approximately 26% of people younger than twenty-one years old had grown up in single-parent families. Around 84% of the responsible for those families were women.

This phenomenon indicates a possible transition to a society with a more marked matriarchal character – women passed to be more time closer to the children and, consequently,

becoming more responsible for their education.

In general terms, man seems to essentially be more abstract and woman more intuitive, he formalizing a social logic of concentration and she more oriented to dispersion. However, even women who suffered the restrictions of a high concentration culture along centuries, see their lives radically changed in the sense of dispersion – free work, free thought, and free sex.

Biologically, it looks like the apparent contradictions of *zero* and *non-zero sum* games: men, designed by a logic of concentration in abstraction, must spread out his actions; women, designed by a logic of intuition and dispersion, have the powerful nature of gestation.

The entire conception of sexual behavior changes. As I referred in *The World of Perplexity*, of 2006, contrarily to the erotic, pornography and obscene begun with literature as a condition of fragmentation and specialization – the figure

detached from the ground. But, in the virtual universe this is no longer possible. The word *pornography* literally means *writing about prostitution* and appeared as cultured term only in the 18th century. The word *obscene*, by its turn, appeared around two centuries before, etymologically meaning *bad presage* and indicating, in its origin, an offence to the habits that only them became standard.

With the virtual world, in a society whose very first logic passed to be designed by distribution, pornography and obscene gradually left to have a place of importance and taboo they had before.

In Internet, between 2002 and 2007, the quantity of pornographic sites grew in an order of 1800% all over the world. In 2007, from the sixty-eight million requests made in search engines, all over the world, more than 25% looked for pornographic sites. It was then estimated that more than 10% of the Internet traffic were directly related to pornography.

Between 1983 and 2003, in only twenty years, the volume of pornography market increased, in world terms, more than seven times.

According to a research made by the *Institute Forrester*, in 2004 half of the American people had consulted pornographic sites, with an average of permanence of one to ten hours weekly.

In Europe, in 2007, *Phone Erotica* – telephonic service with pornographic recordings – registered more than seventy-five million calls per week.

In 2004 more than eleven thousand pornographic films were distributed all over the world, against only around three thousand and five hundred conventional movies.

In Thailand, in 2002, the newspaper *The Nation* revealed that around 71% of the people between twelve and twenty-five years old regularly frequented pornographic sites in Internet.

What begun to exist were ordinary environments each time more erotic – from advertisements in the streets to movies or visual messages in mobile phones – gradually incorporating what before was obscene and pornographic.

Even pornographic movies that before were commercialized with great difficulty in exclusive black markets, forbidden and of high cost, passed to be easily sold with low prices, a little everywhere, definitively absorbed by free market.

Totally integrated in the low cost and low power spirit, sex passed to integrate common markets and stock markets all over the world, with thousands of products of all kinds directly or indirectly supported on images and ideas before forbidden.

On the other hand, a low power society – immersed in the huge quantity of low price products inside a context of continuous consumption

– integrates what the old medium class society considered as social minorities, so many times repudiated and repressed. Now, all them became consumers.

Rex Wockner, homosexual activist in San Francisco said, in an article published by *Wired* magazine in a 1998 edition that «in the old days, Activist A had to call Reporter B at Paper C and hope that the editor was interested. That strategy used to take two weeks to get anything out and only reached the readers of gay newspapers. The net changed all that. Now it takes 10 minutes to reach millions».

But, as if we are attending to a dissipation process, typical of fluids and viscosity, groups of religious fundamentalists and ghettos of all kinds seem to have become more and more intensified.

Ghettos passed to be present even in cities like Lausanne, in Switzerland, where such phenomenon was practically unknown. In Lisbon,

there are points in the city where “police does not enter” – what was very common to large metropolis like Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Johannesburg or Moscow, later amplified to almost everywhere.

Manuel Aalbers, urban planner and sociologist at Columbia University, starts his text *The neglected evidence of housing market discrimination in the Netherlands*, dated of 2002, saying that in the «last seven years the Netherlands has had a large number of reports on ethnic and housing segregation». Between 1971 and 1997, the number of immigrants in the Netherlands rose from 1.6% to 9.4% of the population, and «true concentrations of ethnic minorities have cleared increased». It is a concern also considered by other researchers.

In the first years of the 21st century, one of the problems that alerted responsible people for the educational system in the Netherlands, a traditionally multicultural country, was the appearance of a great quantity of schools exclusively

oriented to closed groups, with clear excluding philosophy – like educational establishments only for white, European or Muslims, for example.

It is a phenomenon not exclusive to the Netherlands. In countries so different like Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, France, the United States or Portugal – in a process that has been more and more intensified – there is a clear division between schools for rich and schools for poor.