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PLOTTING PROFITS, IMAGINING POWER

Cold War, Managerialism and Multimedia

Abstract

Contemporary culture resembles a drama staged in decorations, which had been designed during the Cold War. Cold War is over, but contemporary plots are played out in old decorations. Cold War – in spite of bellicose rhetoric – has served as a metaphysical setting of political and social management. In politics and economics, it reinforced the **bureaucratic organization** as the dominant form of coordinating increasingly complex processes and **social movement** as its major alternative. **Managerialism** became a tacit ideology of professionals controlling those, who pursued the American dream of profit and upward mobility. Alternative, social protest movement became a tacit organizing principle of those excluded, exploited and exterminated. In societies, professional managerialism reinforced the tendencies towards ideological fundamentalism as an ersatz-community. In states, managerialism triggered **commercialization** of processes, which had previously been controlled by public authorities and elected officials. In cultural production, managerialism resulted in growing class inequalities of knowledge professionals and growing indifference of general public towards avant-garde art. Social sciences and avant-garde art became instruments in ideological struggles, as testified by the **Kuhnian** purges of the academic communities and by the dictatorship of the commercial art displays. Gradual turn towards **image** at the expense of plot in visual arts and literature accelerated these processes. Warlike rhetoric, including the ideology of war on terror, is an attempt to recycle Cold War fears in a post-Cold War world. Is the ideological question “Who Are We?” a sufficient alibi for this re-engineered political drama staged in a virtual multimedia space? Are alternative narratives born in “microstorias” and pirate utopias of Cyberia?

Motto

“The Eurocentric vision had already been drafted for a more and more discredited use in the Cold War...We must begin to rid ourselves, consciously and resolutely, of the whole complex of attitudes associated not just with Eurocentrism but with identity itself, which can no longer be tolerated in humanism as easily as it was before and during the Cold War.”(Said, 2004, 45,55)

“This turn away from a disinterested, unitary positivism in favor of a view of scientific knowledge as discovered/constructed in the pursuit of a *weltanschaulich* preconception, or in the elaboration of a preconceived program of knowledge production, has been ascribed to Thomas Kuhn *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*”(Forman, 2002, 120)

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