

# Information-Economic Design and Its Humane Reformatting

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**Received:** 12 November 2021; **Accepted:** 29 December 2022; **Published:** 5 January 2022

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## Abstract:

The notion of informatization and mathematization in European history marks a problem and a specific chance in man's mode of live and style of being. Its consequences affect all design, all the domains of human existence, starting with the body and its physiology. Because inner and outer design, self and world design, development, growth, dissemination, transmission, are all done through design and media (image, sound, language, tools, numbers, etc.). But design and all human art must also be thought of in terms of information technology (information, in the sense of its origin from the Latin *informare*, i.e. "build", "form" or "giving shape"), and information technology must also be thought in ecological, economic and political terms. This paper aims to draw attention to the mathematization of human beings in the current economic and information regime, which enables today's generation to choose different and different media and designs. It is necessary to rethink the appropriate use of resources whose origins, development and history have meanings other than what the actual spread of the media and design pandemic suggests today. The possibilities of art and design, the range of perception, even of ideas and thoughts that they transpose in images, sounds, words and things, are suffocated and paralyzed by medial conditioning. Above all, they must be freed from these dispositions. Then the old contaminated media could perhaps fulfill new, decontaminated, domineering functions that are no longer against itself because they are today confiscated by the imperatives. Modern European history turns out to be a mixture of ideas, practices and conscious goals with unconscious instructions for action and unexpected social and ecological consequences. It cannot therefore be represented as a logical coherent system. The paper brings the new digital informatical, clearly emerging historical tendencies to the fore. It follows the historical-social and modern developments of the design and art phenomena in order to connect them at the same time with their origin. The point of convergence can only be indicated retrospectively, proceeding from the common effect produced by these phenomena upon today's networked, digitized, designed and computerized life.

## Keywords:

Mathematical Concept, Central Perspective, Geometry, Concrete and Abstract Space, Information Design, Knowledge Design, Information Economy, Affect Economy, Mediality, Liberalism, Authoritarianism, Toxic and Healing Design

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## 1. Introduction: Methodology

The paper seeks to promote not only pictures as argument and picture sequences as the process of reasoning, but also to promote mathematics, art, design and music as media and tools in their entire oikonomia. These media lend themselves to several readings; therefore no abstract interpretative text should interfere in this media structure – with the exception of a few key terms relating to the imperative beginning of the media. In the sense of its origin from the Latin *informare*, i. e. “build”, “form” or “giving shape”, the concept of information refers to a creative principle which, especially in its most recent design (information, digital), points back to an originally archical, mythical and theological principle of creation: “God created heaven and earth.” And he did this through a commandment, through an imperative. The creative principle is then both, a work of the head and a work of the hand: “As man is ruled by the work of his own head in religion, so in capitalist production he is ruled by the work of his own hand” [1] And today: from the work of its artificial intelligence. But head and hand, or the extended arm of its artificial intelligence, are both creative media (*organa*, instrumental, technical-mediating and immediate, physical-bodily) that incessantly bring products into the world in order to consume them at the same time. The creative means (and tools) and their products are not pure in their initial simplicity and later complexity, rather they are also contaminated in their use and therefore require decontamination.

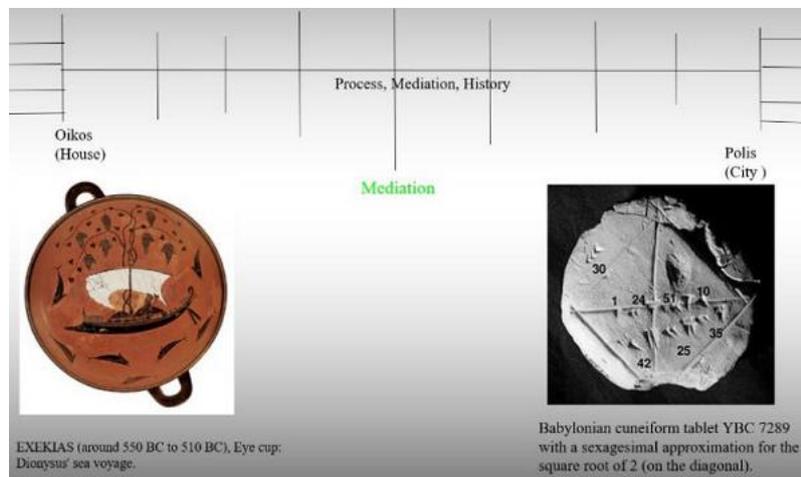
The motto of today’s post-industrial society, on the other hand, is well known: the world has become very complex – with which it tries to hide the simplicity of its own principle and paradigm. The complexity is namely just its own normality. In this respect, the constitutional lawyer Carl Schmitt is right when he says: “The normal proves nothing, the exception proves everything”. [2] But the “exception” must be not one authoritarian-state-political of a “Führer” (leader). Because it can also provide the rule itself: the “exception as the rule of history” [3], as Walter Benjamin later diagnosed in his *History Theses*. In this way, the complexity of the new, liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian, economic and informational design hides its own normality: the reterritorialization or re-rooting (settling) of global social structures into the one monarchical principle of liberal-democratic capitalism – and the irrational reaction to it, authoritarian-reactionary, nationalist or religious, which of course result from the “exception” of defined by this “normality”. In this respect, constitutional lawyer Carl Schmitt is right. But an exception to the principle and rule (today the rule of post-industrial, liberal-democratic and authoritarian-illiberal rule), can be also associated with an emphatic art and design. One that not only has to give up the primary place of power staging (the ceremonial aspect of economic-information power and nation-state power). Rather than one that is embedded in the political space and can also mean and organize the deactivation of the ruling paradigm (artistic, economic or political) – as Goethe puts it from the fully integrated structure that it establishes a new genre and closes off an old one, or, as Barnett Newmann later said: “The Sublime Is Now”. If this “exception” doesn’t materialize, “normality” becomes

the cruel religion of the mere medium (as money, information, communication, technology, science, technology, artificial intelligence, consumption or thinking) that obscures the purpose – namely a decent life – to devour man after all. Something is really topical and urgent today when it is completely obsolete as a mere means (that is being absolutized today), when its toxic effectiveness is rendered ineffective.

This paper presents “Art and Design” from this perspective of “exception”. A contaminated overall economy of mediadesign (as a medium and concept that gives shape) that has to be decontaminated in order to enable a new, anarchic design and a new use of the media.

## 2. Prehistory and History of Mediumship

The predominance of the mathematical arises historical when geometry (land surveying of the Egyptians), arithmetic (arithmetic art of oriental merchants) and astronomy (astronomy of the Egyptians) with Pythagoras are removed from their practical contexts and increased as the first metaphysical form to the pure perception of theory. The second step is based on the formula to take ancient Greek poetry (especially Homer, Sappho and Pindar) seriously not only as literature, but also as medial immediacy and the original unity of the media (image, sound, word, body). In connection with the theoretically developed basic code of mathematics as the mathematics of abstract numbers (rationality, profit-rational economy, instrument, Apollonian principle), this also means the Dionysian increase to ecstatic intoxication-economy and music. It is the middle of the media (as image, sound, word etc.), in which the earthly computing rooms of mathematics and computer science can be synchronized with the image and sound spaces of the celestial spheres and at the same time recorded across media. (Figure 1)



**Figure 1.** *The mediating Between rationality and Dionysian intoxication, ecstasy.*

Correspondingly, in the new metaphysics of computerization (artificial intelligence), poets are important for the computerization of the world, since mathematics, poetry and music are no longer separated in digital code (that information economy and intoxication economy know equally), which was also the case before with Pythagoras. Pythagoras' name for mathematics was accordingly also philosophy, myth and theology, where the whole field of knowledge was spanned and all kinds of media came together. What once belonged to the origin language of metaphysics is in the modern age being transferred to computerization, which transfers all categories that once shaped the human world (sociality, development, practice, thinking, creativity,

communication or reflexivity, etc.) into computer-based regimes and transfers them as “networks”, “KI”, “operativity”, “connection”, “transmission” and “reference” to revive them. But the beginning of the mathematics (as a direct medium and mediating tool-number) is not a mere start which then in modern society disappears in what follows; on the contrary, the origin (mathematics, geometry, art, design, poiesis, praxis) never ceases beginning, i.e. never ceases to govern and command what it has initiated. The origin (as a direct medium and mediating tool) also here means: beginning/origin and command/order. The Greek verb *Archo* means to begin, to be the first, to do something, but also to command, to be the chief (*Archos*) from beginning, development, growing, circulation, transmission, idea, science, practice or poiesis. So, in this kind, *Arche* (of creation, logos, praxis, poiesis) in the sense of origin and *Arche* in the sense of commandment here coincide. And this close connection between beginning, practice, creation and commands defines the conception of the entire history of art and design.

For example, the geometry of the era of geometrisation was exploited through single algebraic terms, that is to say it was reduced to static principles and to the quantitative ratios of numbers or to visual signals. In its application, the modern age increasingly abstracts such structures from the spiritual and cosmological dimensions of other traditions. Algebraic geometry schematizes and becomes applicable as schema. But this abstract mathematical economy of numbers as application also contains a mythical, theological, aesthetical and poetical economy.

The first approaches of mathematization und informatization are a clear and evident demonstration of a historical confrontation: that of mechanical diagrams with richness of life which was becoming increasingly subjugated, on the level of nature both in man and around him. While the original objective was to search for precise understanding of a confusingly complex universe, the efforts of mathematization and informatization meanwhile culminate in the problems of ecology, climate and resources; we must even add the ecology of humans and animals.

### **3. Mythical And Mathematical Prehistory**

The simplest geometric forms are the straight line, circle, rectangle, square and triangle. For the civilizations of the earliest ages, the world probably presented itself as a jungle of indistinguishable, multiform manifestations. In this situation, mathematical, logical and geometrical figures take on in praxis, work and activity an essential and existential importance also principal orientation – like today, on the higher historical ladder, the market, the information economy as a source of identity and orientation. The closer cultures are to nature, the more important are the functions of the simplest geometric models for understanding and imagination, called primitive or savage in the philosophy of Enlightenment. Maybe, the earliest artefacts we know, were the spheroids found in the caves of the Ile de France: a sort of globe, signifying earth and heaven as one sphere. There, the most abstract form embodies the most concrete situation; world is something all around. This double movement of abstraction and concretion, or linguistically expressed, of semantic dissemination and semantic unification, is substantial for design and predominates over all types of products – containers, fabrics, buildings-the Precolumbian Mayan, the Ancient Greek or Germanic as well as other cultures.

The Egyptian priests of the earliest ages danced in a circle to invoke the sun and to assist it in accomplishing its journey with regularity. This can be interpreted as a stage

where the conceptions of the principal order are developed in a civilization to guarantee the continuation of the life of the world. Dwelling was conceived and realized as a reproduction of cosmological evidence through the historical society, as the founding rites of “Roma aeterna” tell us of the remains of the fortress of Trelleborg, both corresponding essentially to the 4 main orientations of heaven. A quadripartite world was later reduced to the four cardinal “points”. But what commands in the middle of the circle and in the 4 main directions is the invisible imperative: Be!

The break of paradigm in the history is in most of the fields never immediately manifest although it is somehow evident. Artistic, design, social and phenomenological continuity and changes of meaning and importance go so well together that very often there are arguments for both at the same time. The ancient Greek authors referred to Hippodamos as the inventor of town planning and as the architect of Miletus. We know he wasn't. Nevertheless, something happened at that period which, retrospectively, can be regarded as one major step from geometry and mathematic to informatization. Hippodamus established correspondances between mathematical, political, urban and cosmic space.

The informatisation of the human body itself, a relatively belated event, can be considered as a type of reprojction. What in Nature seemed to work as guarantee for continuity and good order is transferred onto man's own nature. Mathematic may have those magic connotations that endow its forms with well defined qualities of expression and invocation. For example, the circle is considered to be an image of Perfection, by reason of the equal distance from each point of the circle to its centre, or the square by reason on the equality of its sides and angles. But the circle as geometrical figure and image is also the mathematical space as a sound space. Thus the correspondence emerges between human body and cosmos in which the body of man can be interpreted as a replica on the microcosmic level.

Already at the beginning of Renaissance geometric forms were again applied to the human body following this tradition and in this spirit. The drawing of Leonardo da Vinci, taking up again the representations of the human body by the Roman architect Vitruvius, demonstrated the perfection and idealism of the human body. Leon-Battista Alberti conceived the plan of a church as a circle in which the centre occupied by the altar created a perfect communal place in which each was a close as the others to the sacrec ceremony. But, both Alberti and da Vinci already created perfect ambiguity. The absolute dignity which they granted geometric figures and proportions unconsciously prepared strategies to subordinate the human body to a certain function. Because the idea here is that the creation is a continuous creation, that there is an intimate connection between creation and commantment, that doesn't appear as such in artistic practice. Thanks to the exploitation of Nature, humanity felt greatly assured and became sufficiently cognizant of itself to pose questions about this Nature, but it suffered from a lack of orientation for a reasonable social order. The knowledge, math think and mastery of Nature war reduced to the level of an instrumental-poetic intelligence that is unaware of its history of practice and its imperative origin. The means developed to affin human existence faced with the dangers of Nature were also used to submit subject to a mere practice and imperative order. (Figure 2 and Figure 3)

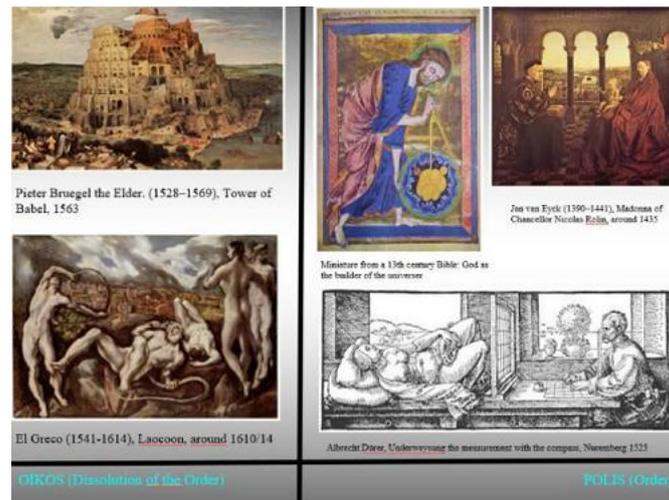


Figure 2. Oikos and Polis: mythical-theological and modern, enlightening design (art, poiesis).

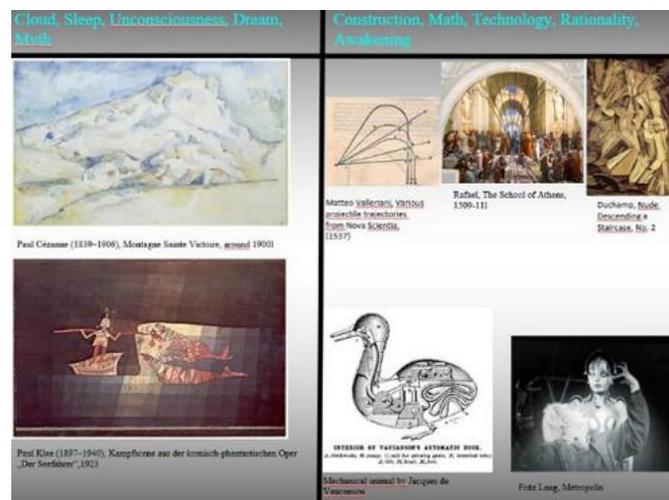


Figure 3. Dream, Awakening and human feasibility mania.

#### 4. Modern Age and Hypermodern Information Economy

Since the 16th century, the model of the mathematisazion and informatisazion of the human body became a historical strategy of a specific importance. It was thus constituted by a complicated blend of scientific, technical and economic instruments and the immediate body, even an amalgamation, of ideas and conscious objectives with unconscious acts and expected consequences.

The order and continuity in the manifestations of Nature and culture have been revealed, since the first millennia, with greater certainty, thanks, for example, to the knowledge of the cycle of seasons and its cosmic conditions, to the production of new metals, and to the establishment of the size of territories according to mathematical-technical-scientific “laws”. Human labour was aided and replaced by that of animals, then multiplied in effect and executed by machines such as windmills or watermills. The power of man to destroy was amplified or replaced by powder and guns. The historical development of the domination of nature (inner and outer nature) by man is characterized by the fact that the relationships always more are reversed. The means which first aided human civiliations in the face of an apparently chaotic nature have been transformed in the meantime into instruments for humanity to manipulate nature (including their own nature) and can control.

One of these means was the projection of mathematical figures onto things. What had been an incantatory projection of the circle onto the celestial spheres, by the priest (in turn an instrument of God or the gods) became a reconstruction of the motion of the heavenly bodies by the scientists. The submission of nature to pre-established mathematical forms also extended to the practice, for example, of the canalization of water current or the division of the arable banks of the Nile into mathematically calculated surfaces. In this sense, mathematization is a process which comes from the exterior and determines the functions and movements of the reconstructed or manipulated phenomenon. The human body may be the most alarming example for us but it is by no means alone.

It is true that at a certain point in time man discovered the abstract form of the line and the circle; the circle was familiar in mythical times, as was the line in the logos of the Greek Enlightenment. But what has happened in Europe since the end of the Renaissance is an advancement of the scientific, technical and economic idea. The order of the outside world becomes increasingly schematic in the central perspective: and with it the four cardinal points. The world is divided into north and south, east and west based on the coordinates at the origin "O" and intersections at right angles. Certainly this scheme was transferred back to the human body in the sixteenth century; the four directions – front, back, left and right – no longer have any more mythical and theological peculiarities, but instead gain the power of absolute value in the immanence of the earthly – something that Marx later called the "general equivalent", the highest value of God or the Gods in the work and praxis of man. So in military and dance exercises – stylizations of all public appearances of people – certain movements of the immanent body such as lifting or kicking an outstretched leg are repeated equally to the front, right and back. In this respect, the secularization of movement is a form of repression that allows the archic forces to continue to have an effect and is only limited to their displacement from one place (heavenly) to another (earthly). The medium is not limited biblically to the "tree of knowledge" (logos), but also means the "tree of practice", of doing, of being able to, of creativity and of doing (the practical, poetic medium) in its action. The human secularization of theological activity does nothing more than transfer divine creation (the transcendence of God as sovereign power) and the heavenly monarchy to earth without affecting their power as such.

Such an activity and such a mode of perception brings about a self and an environment according to this scheme. Thus plans of cities and facades of buildings put us by their authority into a position on inferiority, a position that imposes the feeling of insignificance and powerlessness. The O-point of such a system is only a construction principle of a centrality without a centre, and each point of departure is only the consequence of this mathematical network. In preceding centuries, these points of departure converged toward a social and political symbol: the monarch representing the centralizing power, a travesty of the Archimedean Point in social, economical and political power. But this political monarchy is actually a economical-theological monarchy, which as such is not visible in the work of man – something that the liberal economist Adam Smith later interpreted as the „invisible hand“ of economics.

What once was the means of God became the tool and means of man and his instrumental-poetic intelligence; divine principles of order became all too human principles of order. The conditioning through scientific, mathematical, technical and economic schemes means that all other forms and relationships either in the

manifestations of life or in our perception of the world, as we encounter it, are no longer perceived or qualified as deficient. Mathematics, always entangled in social affairs, finally passes into informational rationality, into information economy and affect economy. A universal financial, information, design and media regime that acts as a kind of transnational, monarchical government power and is framed as a polyarchic version by the emaciated social nation-states. In this design, information and affect economy of digital capitalism, the world is ultimately perceived only according to the principles of mere human practice, work and activity.

## 5. Seeing: the Ballistic Mode of Perception and Affects

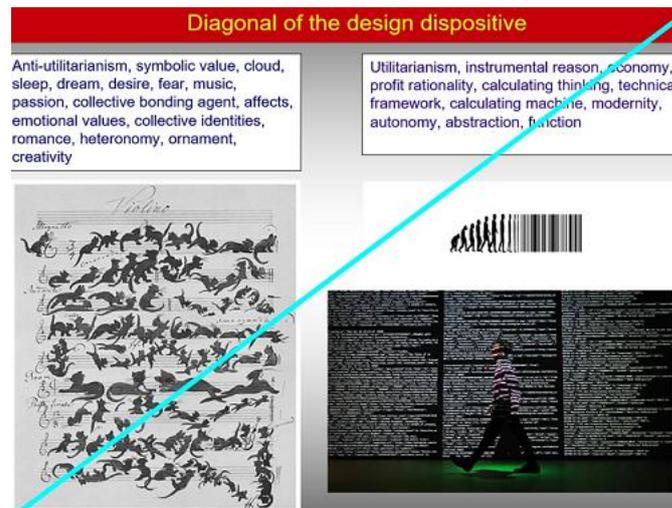
Mathematics and computerization is not only a visual, but also an communicative, aesthetic-musical phenomenon. However, visual evidence plays an extremely important role in mathematical thinking. And mathematical figures are perceived visually in the same way as they are created and applied visually and informatically.

The close connection between matematization and sight is an even more systematic fact of the modern anthropological evolution. Already the homo erectus was privileged with a good possibility of orientation in space through sight. Perception became essentially distanced in comparison with earlier periods when touch and smell prevailed. But since the beginning of the „mental age“ in humanity the distanced sense of sight became more distanced and abstract again, with mathematical figures allowing for orientation as schematic recognition. The disadvantages have increased at the same time. The senses fulfill the functions of registration and control, thus being reduced to instruments to check “facts”. Trial and error replace the difference between a living being and another reality.

In his Treatise on Man in 1632, René Descartes explicitly conceived each sense organ to be a closed mechanism. The illustrations of the 1662 first edition by Florentius Schuyll show this clearly without completely separating the representation of the eye from the whole body. It is, however, exclusively connected to the brain (also an organon, means), conceived to be the centre of perceptions and command. Every relationship is thought to be performed in the brain; for example, the one between seeing and touching. As in the convention of one system measurement tactile perceptions, or the like. Each perception is reconstructed mathematically to determine its congruence with or divergence from reality.

In one of the sections of Diderot’s “Encyclopedie”, two illustrations, schematic and expressionless, demonstrate the the conception of the eye as an isolated mechanism has become the norm. We are accustomed to seeing with “the eye” according to the model of vision through a telescope, almost as through this were the normal case. At the same time, the model of the political economy from Mandeville to Smith emerges, where the human organs (organa; media) not only mean rationality, but are also charged with passions (especially negative ones here). With Mandeville [4] it is those passions and egoisms (self-love) that he regards as a necessary evil and vital impulse for social coexistence and progress. Accordingly, seeing is reconstructed in optics according to the same principles by which ballistics calculates the trajectory of projectiles and which should hit the target directly: looks leave the eyes as cannonballs leave cannons. Seeing falls upon a determined section of the world in front of it just as cannons control a determined section. In both cases the point of departure is considered to be archically fixed and includes instrumental reason, calculating

thinking and utilitarianism, as well as creativity, affects and anti-utilitarian “emotional values” (M. Mauss). (Figure 4)



**Figure 4.** *The diagonal of the creative-aesthetic and instrumental information economy.*

The other anarchical “look” anarchic view, which doesn't dissolve the objects into a mere human-divine practice, consciously changing in the interplay with the surrounding world, is abandoned more and more: The attentive look that perceives impressions, the exchange of looks in which a mutual understanding is progressively developed, the look without the framework of objective vanishes from the modern civilization. Our body is reduced to being a mere bearer for the eye as a medium of ballistics and the cohesion of the eye with the body and its modes of life as well as with one non-ballistic “look” are no longer taken into consideration. A development that has come to a temporary end in the “ballistic character of fast communication” [5] (digital platforms), but also through the liberal-democratic communication design (“consensus democracy” [6], “government by consensus”; Habermas). The only difference here is that in consensus democracy the ballistic communication is obscured by the liberal discourse (argument, knowledge, freedom, democracy or tolerance) that lies behind this discourse. In this respect, the lengthy, cumbersome, reasoning and logical communication design of liberal-democratic capitalism only represents the other illiberal-authoritarian (Carl Schmitt) side of communication design; they are nothing other than the two sides of the same archaic communication design dispositive: the immediate-direct (information, quick communication, Google, Facebook, Twitter) and the mediated-indirect (discourse, knowledge, logic, justification, test procedure) communication design dispositive.

Ballistic communication (which neoliberal capitalism have produced in order to end up in the fascist, hurtful forms of rapid communication without the cumbersome connection to logics of justification and justification) and “reflected public opinion” (Habermas) form only one communication designdispositive; a “reflected public opinion” that is actually the apolitical, doxological aspect of power. Slow communication (“consensus democracy”) and fast communication (the ballistic character of communication) are both models and methods of military enemy detection: as knowledge (indirectly-conveyed) and information (direct-immediate). Slow communication (“consensus democracy”) and fast communication (the ballistic character of communication) are both models and designs of military enemy detection [7]: as knowledge (indirectly conveyed) or as information (direct-immediate). Because of this, the economists, technicians, informatists, scientists and discursivists

can not explain why the western democracies don't work. Enemies are not only opponents, as Chantal Mouffe [8] believes, but form the other polemical counter-principle. That is why the right don't represent the narrative for a different political design, but only the other, illiberal-authoritarian imperative: "Be a pure people, a pure nation or a pure culture!"

## **6. Political Absolutism and the Absolutism of Information in the Liberal-Democratic and Illiberal-Authoritarian Design Dispositive**

Ensembles are always represented in the 17th and 18th centuries as if they were commanded from a certain determined point. On principle, the observer is placed where he dominates the scene of the action, at the central axis, if possible. Also the centralising network of a garden's geometric lines in the Age of Absolutism is perceived in an exemplary fashion, from above, from the middle of the avant corps on the first storey of the palace. This elements of the theatre stage, conceived in central perspective, have to be seen from the monarch's seat slightly above the elevated stalls and thus match with the design of the stage floor. But this doesn't only mean the social hierarchy in absolutism and bourgeoisie, but also the archic principle, which is located in the invisible vanishing point, like the immobile mover of Aristotle. He lies beyond the events and social structures of the court, battle or workshop. Because reality is what those imperatives permeate in the context of this explicit design.

At the time of absolutism the construction of new cities, castles and gardens is completely subordinated, as far as they extend to such right-angled networks, at times including circles and acute angles. Renaissance gardens displayed a series of geometric figures, but they were created only next to the residences of sovereigns and they were considered exceptional. In the 17th century, nature is submitted to the principles of geometry and mathematic, in a diameter as extended as possible in the environs of the sovereign Absolutist courts. At the same time radial system of axes with the palace as its centre was superposed on the grid. In spite of the church still occupying the center of the grid the Escorial was a first example. Versailles, Potsdam, St. Petersburg, Karlsruhe, and so many others realized with more and more evidence the principle of construction out of the purity of formal ideas. Although opposed to Absolutism as a model of social order the bourgeois conceived his identity by imitation of this representative conception of space and construction. But order and commitment is not limited to the central perspective of absolutism and to the abstract forms (of space and construction) of bourgeoisie; rather, it asserts itself in the secularized forms of modernity, archaic-monarchic or polyarchic-mythic. Also the garden doesn't just mean the rationality of straight lines, but also the tree as an image of the world, or better: the root as an image of the world of trees. A multi-root structure (rhizome; Deleuze) that breaks with the linear unity of construction (and also with the cyclical unity of eternal recurrence; Nietzsche). Because every point within this strict geometry is laid out as a root and thus rhizomatically connected to the other. The lines of construction of linear rationality and the mythical circle thus contain the rampant rhizome that, economically and politically, points to the passions, to the affect economy of a Mandeville.

In the meantime, in the age of digital capitalism [9], the information economy has merged with the affect economy. In such a way that they form a self-contained liberal-democratic and illiberal-authoritarian media dispositive. Because the data monopolies

such as Google, Amazon, Twitter or Facebook – once only thought of as economically autonomous and autopoietic – have risen to the respective reviewers under the pressure of the liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian Synchronization; they include their own spaces of identity and emotions in terms of information technology and exclude other spaces of identity and emotions. Their filters include a liberal-democratic-totalitarian public totality and at the same time exclude another public as a difference; all difference is only tolerated here within one's own liberal-democratic system (one's own filter bubble). The much-vaunted network rhizome is the new information dispositive instrument for the synchronization of interactive, subjectively occupied junctions in globalized data traffic, which is legally framed by the nation states. It forms the infrastructure of an IT network culture that captures the progressive energies of interactive tele-rhizomatics and turns them against them in the liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian system. The privatized information goods are not simply linked back to capital economically – as was previously the accusation of the apparently autopoietic data monopolies, which should then be appropriately politically and democratically regulated – but is also subject to the strict censorship of the respective political sphere of the nation states, which are either liberal - democratically-progressively or authoritarian-illiberal-regressively legitimize.

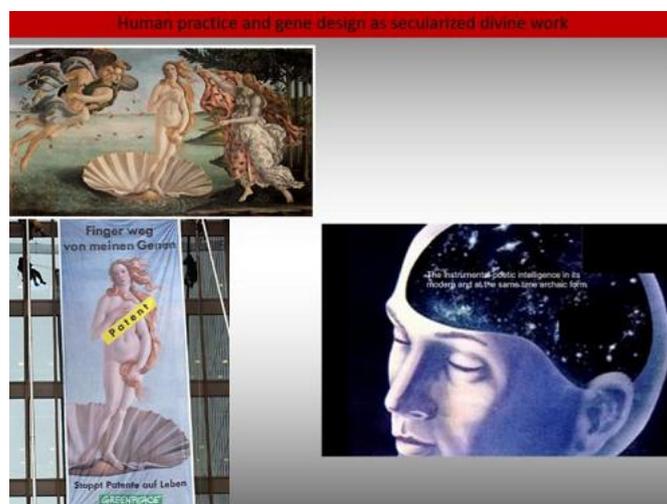
For the liberal-democratic information sellers (for their part essentially hate sellers, which they of course hide argumentatively, modern, culturally and civilizationally) and their authoritarian-illiberal hate sellers, both the old classic media (newspaper, radio, television) and the new social media are become indispensable; In both the untimely (liberal-democratic-progressive) and the contemporary (authoritarian-illiberal-regressive) agitation pack (liberal-covert or authoritarian-open) come together, of which Elias Canetti once wrote in mass and power. Here, media do not become social (the social bond of living connection), rather they have been confiscated by the respective imperative powers (liberal-democratic-progressive or illiberal-authoritarian-regressive) as media of the technically-mediated relation and physical-immediate relationship and go into a hostile position. This means that the tribalization of the media spheres, of which there is so much talk today, only takes place within the respective media sphere (liberal or illiberal), so that both totalitarianisms appear in their respective “ballistic, hostile character”; one with its progressive, indirectly hurtful forms (arguments, knowledge, reasons), the other with its regressive, directly hurtful forms. May the populists use and love the direct route of social media in their unfiltered posts – and so may the fascists once again with their media “radio” and “film” – and thus avoid traditional media; Media are always toxic [10] on both sides. Precisely because the liberal-democratic-progressive formalization of the media in its pseudo-intellectual exchange of reasons remains abstract, formal, idealistic and indifferent to suffering.

## **7. Amalgamation of Design and Being Categories and a Second Ontology**

Physical movements and all human movements are guided by imperatives and made dependent on an external command. As far as the modern body, soul and spirit is subordinate to the archical imperatives, it reacts to the “commands of a super-brain” which the human, instrumental-poetic intelligence (meanwhile also as artificial intelligence) has installed. While slaves were by definition mere tools in Greek society, in the information society, in digital capitalism, the human being as a whole has become a tool of the new imperatives. In this respect, transhumanism does not

mean the Overman (“Übermensch”; Nietzsche) or that which comes after the human being, but something all too human, the body, the psyche and the spirit of the human being. A singular pluralism, the particular general, the connection of I and We in the network of the one secularized capital design (monarchy) as well as in the network of the many secularized national designs (polyarchy). A seemingly non-centered, non-hierarchical, non-significant, post-industrial network design and a rhizome-like branched global collective without a general, while in reality the general and the generals remains hidden in this particular piece of work. Something that is apparently required for the purposes of the archical imperatives in modern, postmodern, and hypermodern orders. Because the life of bodies, souls and brains is not simply there as a construction and form, but has its history and its origins in archaic contexts, which have been reactivated as economical and political-legal forces.

For Kant, it was clear that the “transcendental” abstractions were only to satisfy the “critique of reason” and could not be mistaken as a prejudice against the reality of life otherwise multiform and organically complex. His subjective imperative “one must be able to want to” (“Man muss wollen können” [11]) should in reality mean the priority of the object and not be only modern, but also of archaic origin. In historical reality, his “pure reason” with its subjective imperatives was applied equally on the many levels of economic, technical, scientific and everyday life. Karl Marx takes up this concept of reason in a materialistic way in his analysis of goods and lets people be absorbed in their mere production. But with that he does nothing else than secularize the previously divine work. When being is understood as mere practice, then this means the conversion of God by man, whose essence then consists in nothing other than a practice through which he incessantly generates himself. (Figure 5)



*Figure 5. Thinking as a tool, means and organ (medium) of domination.*

In the ecosystem of digital capitalism, all social relationships are ultimately embedded globally, while the nation-state (precisely as one that has been undermined by digital capitalism) legally frames the economic-theological machine through all crises. Not abstraction, mathematics, calculating thinking, instrumental reason and utilitarianism here, and affects, drives and anti-utilitarian “emotional values” [12] there. Rather, mediating abstraction and immediate concretion form only the one universal, ontical-ontological design of digital capitalism and its neo-mythical, nation-state framework, or the other, illiberal-authoritarian, polemical counter-principle. The normality of the liberal-democratic and illiberal-authoritarian design is conjured up something pure (of the market, of freedom, of democracy or of one's own people or

one's own nation). The normality of liberal-democratic and illiberal-authoritarian design is invoked as something pure (of the market, freedom, democracy or the purity of one's own people or nation), which by the true exception – namely the dissolution of the archaic design – is threatened. The old ideological distortions (base/superstructure) are thus outdone today by the economic-theological information dispositive, which not only knows the profit-rational number, but also the image, the sound, the attention economy and the Dionysian intoxication economy: “So it is no longer just about the production of social phenomena through the form of goods, through the manufacture, sale and consumption of commercial goods. Rather, it is about the production of the real itself: capitalism is ontologically rooted and is preparing to shape the structure of elementary relationships of being.” [13]

However, we are not just dealing with a simple ontology (the emergence of digital capitalism as being), but also with a second ontology, which from the beginning has made the world magical, mythical, theological, logical, poetic, conceptual, technical, economically, scientifically, practically or theoretically mastered: *Be!, Work!, Speak!, Produce!, Think!, Create!* This close connection between command, property and obedience constitutes the archaic, imperative divine principle, which is then continued in human practice: contingency as necessity, freedom as servitude. By this, Heidegger, Derrida and Deleuze, with their ontology (of technology and computational thinking), kryptoontology (*rhizom*) cryptotheology (deconstruction), do not only mean the computational recording of the world as an image that has been expanded today by the digital code of the social actor. Rather, in the hypermodern, networked, creative interactions of the overall social actor (as activity and being) with the information and affect economy, the old imperative ontology is always given: *Be networked!, Know! (logos), Mine! (doxa), Interpret!, Deconstruct! Forms rhizomes!'* [14], *Form Relations!, Consume!, Produce!* (Figure 6)

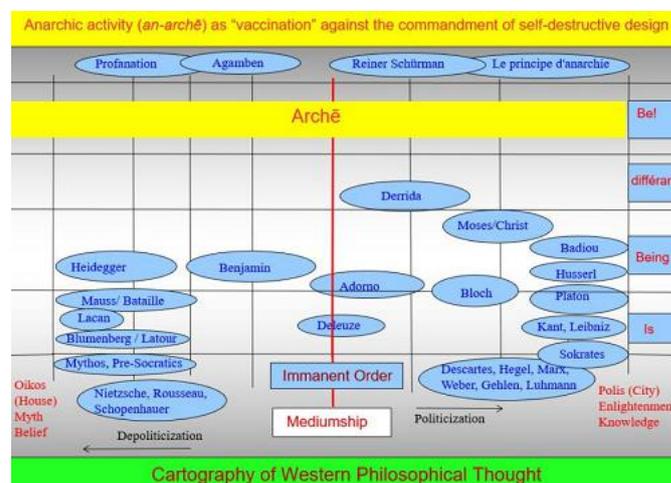


Figure 5. Thinking as a tool, means and organ (medium) of domination.

## 8. Conclusions

Today we navigate beyond the arguments, narratives, opinions and even the agonal, combative principle (once staged within the Roman system as gladiator fights) and have now reached enemy territory (far beyond the tribal areas). We no longer exchange arguments, opinions, stories, codes or information, but throw moral-metaphysical grenades at each other. How do we get out of this situation in order to create another, not hostile world?

In a recent interview, Jean-Luc Nancy [15] replied to the moderator's question whether he had any idea of a society other than the liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian society: "I have no idea of the future, but I have an absolute certainty: there will be a spiritual revolution. For just as capitalism was once a spiritual revolution – because it did nothing other than replace the formerly highest value of life, namely God, with the "general equivalent" (Marx) – so the new spiritual revolution will also be one that devalues and reformats the old, meanwhile rotten value.

Of course, the general equivalent in digital capitalism should no longer just give up economic exchange value ("Tauschwert" as the opposite of use value; "Gebrauchswert"). Rather, the informational economy, the immanent information and affect economy as the at the same time absolute, monarchical, human-divine capital value (market value, information value, intoxication value), which is framed by the polyarchic national value. Information and affect economy, informational-mediated rationality design and physical-immediate being mean the monarchical or polyarchic *singular pluralism* of digital capitalism. Because the one god (theological) and the many gods (mythical) only live metaphorically elsewhere in the singular, they are always related to the here and now of the concrete, digital capital god; as previously theological design with later human design – in this respect, transhumanism does not mean the "Overman", but, conversely, the all-too-human life. An absolute value in its liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian version that must be deactivated and put out of action in order to make a new use of the means. The term use and application here has a therapeutic connotation; the pharmakon (middle) is used here in his specific antitoxic effect. Only in this way is it converted into a new, antitoxic, unapproachable, "inviolable value" in order to allow all practice (which today is concerned with the mastery of external and internal nature and thus with one's own annihilation) to become an economic-anarchic gift without return to the giver. In this respect, the absolute value of design is ambiguous: it means on the one hand the dispute, the conflict and the war within human design and on the other hand the paradigm for the reconciliation of what it has contaminated and poisoned from the beginning (*archē*). That is why we need an "vaccination" against the rule of self-destructive design, a way to inhabit the world in a truly humane way. The actual design practice and the actual thinking are therefore asylum seekers in the concrete place of the local and in the abstract space of the polis that have become worldwide. They describe the proportion of humanity without a proportion in the liberal-democratic or illiberal-authoritarian design economy, their non-belonging, non-belonging, non-identity to market identity or national and religious identity. A toxic identity of information design that needs to be made ineffective. An anti-toxic use of the truly resistant, creative, humane and affective design, which detoxifies the ontic-ontological, human-divine toxic design in order to make a new, healing use of it.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

## Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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