Chapter 7

The Risk, the Real, and the Impossibility of Life: Examining the Matrix

Maximiliano Emanuel Korstanje
University of Palermo, Argentina

ABSTRACT

The discourse of the Matrix not only wakes up philosophy from the slumber they are, but reflects the rise of fears which are proper of a culture, that manipulates anxieties to fix policies otherwise would be rejected. Basically, Neo is subject to an ethical dilemma which means that we are free to make the decision to live in a fake without suffering or in “the real of the dessert” as Morpheus put it. At this extent, if technology is used to protect humankind, Matrix evinces under some circumstances, it can oppress human beings when they renounce to their “free-will”. This chapter not only explored the limitations of the society of risks within liberal thought but taking into consideration the role of authenticity serves ideologically to legitimate suffering. Indeed, accepting to live as Neo did, may lead to oppression or liberation.

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INTRODUCTION

The film Matrix, a saga starred by Keanu Reeves, Carrie Anne Moss and Lawrence Fishburne, represented the philosophical dilemma between reality and fiction. The plot is as follows, Trinity who is a beauty hacker convinces Neo, jointly to Morpheus, the life he is living is a simple fake, produced by the matrix. To break with this Neo should take a pill and abandon the pseudo-reality where he was embedded with. Henceforth, Neo Trinity and Morpheus together other rebels start a rebellion against the oppression of matrix, a machine who subject humankind to live in a state of simulation where suffering and pain does not exist. Though philosophically speaking the Matrix did not add nothing new after the Cavern of Plato, it woke up much debate among philosophers and epistemologists, many of them gathered in the book *The Matrix and Philosophy* edited by Senior lecturer William Irwin. In this chapter we will discuss the ebbs and flows of this book, concentrating efforts in one of Morpheus’s phrases “welcome to the desert of the real” as well as the betrayal of Cypher, who opts for returning to Matrix to avoid the reality. The arrival of modernity not only altered the promise of well-farian state, but also proved to be a world where survival is not granted. If the world of our grand-parents was stable for them, postmodern cosmologies inscribes in an atmosphere of conflict and pain, where the basic resources for surviving are not ensured by state.

The Law within Liberal Tradition

One of the questions that concerned philosophers and social scientists was how society is united. Thomas Hobbes (1651) envisaged the social bond as based on two powerful but contrasting tendencies: the appetite for the property of others, and the needs of personal safety. Hobbes goes on to say that one might fight to gain further wealth competing with others, but sooner or later, the concept of protection prevails. To avoid the war of all against all, people do confer to a third party, Leviathan (state) the monopoly of force. Therefore, in Hobbesian theory, human beings are prone to develop a lasting peace. In contrast, Jean Jacques Rousseau (1762) argued that human beings corrupt themselves when they abandon the state of nature as given by God. The societal order gives to person an illusory view of reality. The division of labour, accompanied with all ideological mechanism of indoctrination leads the individual savage mind to the covenant. Certainly, the conflict we in our societies observe today, results from the frustration and not vice-versa. The Rousseau legacy gave an all-encompassing idea of how a group is formed, and it paves the ways for the contributions of other French scholar, Emile Durkheim. The fact is that Durkheim (1893, 1895, 1912) turned to Rousseau’s concept of the volonté générale for a conception of social solidarity that did not depend on the atomistic
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