

CENTRO DE AVALIAÇÃO DE SUFICIÊNCIA EM LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS
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TEXTO:

Essay: The New Colonialism: Power, Data, and the Transformation of Human Experience

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When you woke up this morning, you likely checked your phone before doing anything else. This simple gesture – this daily genuflection to our digital devices – reveals more about our current moment than we might imagine. Just as medieval Christians oriented their lives around the church tower's bells, we now orient ourselves around notification pings and social media updates. But unlike those church bells, which called communities together in physical space, our digital rituals often pull us into vast territories of data extraction where our very experiences become commodities. To understand the scale of this transformation, consider that Facebook's user base now exceeds the population of any single country in human history. Google processes over 3.5 billion searches every. These aren't just impressive statistics; they represent unprecedented control over human attention and interaction. The tech giants that control these digital territories present themselves as neutral facilitators of human connection – simply providing digital versions of familiar public spaces like town squares or community centers. But this comforting narrative masks a more troubling reality that we must understand if we hope to reclaim our digital future.

The Myth of Digital Public Spaces: Understanding What We've Lost

Let me take you back to a moment in history that illuminates our present situation. In its early days, the internet was envisioned as something radically different from what it has become. It emerged from a unique fusion of military pragmatism and countercultural idealism – a publicly funded network imagined as a tool for human freedom and cognitive enhancement. Those early pioneers dreamed of a decentralized space where information could flow freely, uncontrolled by any single authority.

But over three decades, we've witnessed what scholars call a "triple revolution": the commercialization of the internet, the rise of mobile devices that keep us constantly connected, and the emergence of social media platforms that mediate our relationships. This transformation has fundamentally altered the nature of digital space in ways that undermine genuine human connection.

This creates what scholars call "asymmetrical data relations" – a dynamic that would be immediately obvious as dystopian in physical space. Imagine sitting on a barstool where one entity could see everything everyone does, knows what they're thinking, predicts what they'll do next, but reveals nothing about itself. This is exactly how digital platforms operate, creating what ethicists have termed "surveillance asymmetry" – they see everything we do, while we see only what they choose to show us.

But the transformation goes deeper than surveillance. Unlike physical spaces where we naturally gravitate toward friends and interests, digital platforms actively curate our social experiences through algorithms. These unseen systems decide whose posts we see, which news we encounter, even which friends appear in our

feeds. It's as if an invisible hand constantly rearranges the furniture and guests at a dinner party based on what will keep people talking – and generating data - the longest.

The New Colonial Class: Silicon Valley's Digital Aristocracy

To understand who benefits from this new colonial system, we need to examine how power accumulates in the digital age. Consider the level of control: A nineteenth-century British colonial officer could never know what every person in their territory was thinking, saying, or doing. But today's platforms track, analyze, and influence billions of human interactions every second. When Mark Zuckerberg makes a decision about Facebook's algorithm, it immediately affects how hundreds of millions of people connect with their friends and family. When Google adjusts its search rankings, it shapes how billions of people understand their world. This isn't just market power – it's a form of governance without accountability. This new colonial class shares striking similarities with its historical predecessors. Just as colonial enterprises concentrated power in the hands of a small, predominantly white, male elite, today's tech industry shows similar patterns of exclusion.

But perhaps the most telling parallel lies in how this new colonial class views its own power. In 1899, Rudyard Kipling wrote of the "white man's burden" – the supposed moral duty of colonizers to "civilize" the colonized. Today, we hear echoes of this same patronizing ideology when tech leaders speak of "connecting the world" or "making the world more open and transparent." The language has changed, but the underlying assumption remains that a small, privileged class has the right – even the duty – to reshape how billions of humans live and connect.

The result is a new form of sovereignty that operates beyond traditional democratic controls. These digital aristocrats can influence elections, shape public discourse, and modify human behavior without any meaningful oversight or accountability. Their power extends beyond national borders, creating what scholars call "platform empires" that operate according to their own rules and serve their own interests.

Resistance and Reimagination: Reclaiming Our Digital Commons

To understand how we might resist digital colonialism, we must first remember that the internet wasn't always a colonized space. Those early pioneers, many steeped in the revolutionary spirit of 1960s California, envisioned something radically different from what we have today: a decentralized space where information could flow freely, uncontrolled by any single authority.

This origin story matters because it reminds us that our current reality – of corporate platforms controlling and monetizing human connection – wasn't inevitable. It resulted from deliberate choices made over three decades, the combination of the commercialization of the internet, the rise of mobile devices that keep us constantly connected, and the emergence of social media platforms that mediate our relationships. Understanding this history helps us imagine different possibilities for our digital future.

The transformation from public commons to corporate territory happened gradually, much like the historical enclosure of physical commons. Just as medieval peasants once had shared spaces for grazing animals and gathering, the early internet provided shared spaces for communication and collaboration. But just as those physical commons were eventually fenced off by private interests, our digital commons has been steadily enclosed by corporate platforms, transforming what was once free and open into controlled, revenue-generating territories.

Resistance to digital colonialism is already emerging, often in unexpected places. In Barcelona, citizens have created a "digital sovereignty" initiative, building public platforms for civic engagement that aren't controlled by corporate interests. In India, farmers have developed their own communication networks to organize and share

agricultural knowledge, bypassing corporate platforms. Indigenous communities worldwide are creating their own data governance systems, ensuring their cultural knowledge isn't exploited by colonial algorithms.

These aren't just isolated projects – they're seeds of digital resistance movements. Just as historical anti-colonial movements developed new forms of solidarity and resistance, these initiatives are creating new models for digital autonomy and community control. They show us that another kind of digital world is possible, one that serves human flourishing rather than corporate profit.

The path forward requires us to reimagine not just our technology, but our relationship with it. This means developing what I call "digital wisdom practices":

First, we must reclaim our attention through regular rituals of disconnection. Just as traditional communities maintained sacred spaces free from commerce, we need to create digital sanctuaries where human connection isn't mediated by algorithms or monitored for profit.

Second, we need to build local digital commons – platforms and networks owned and governed by communities rather than corporations. This isn't about rejecting technology, but about ensuring it serves the needs of human communities rather than distant shareholders.

Third, we must develop new forms of digital literacy that go beyond just teaching people how to use technology. We need to understand how digital systems shape our perception, influence our behavior, and affect our relationships. This means teaching our children to be not just "digital natives" but "digital citizens" capable of critically engaging with and shaping their digital environment.

Source: <https://processthis.substack.com/p/the-new-colonialism-power-data-and-468>

QUESTÃO 01 (1,0)

O que o parágrafo um sugere sobre a relação atual das pessoas com a tecnologia digital?

- (A) As tecnologias digitais são ferramentas neutras que apenas replicam espaços públicos tradicionais.
- (B) As notificações digitais servem para unir comunidades da mesma forma que os sinos das igrejas medievais.
- (C) As interações digitais frequentemente envolvem extração de dados e controle da atenção humana.
- (D) O uso de dispositivos digitais pela manhã é apenas um hábito sem maiores implicações sociais.

QUESTÃO 02 (1,0)

No parágrafo que inicia "Let me take you back..." qual é a melhor tradução em **português padrão** da frase "a tool for human freedom and cognitive enhancement"?

- (A) Uma ferramenta que aperfeiçoa o ser humano e seu pensamento.
- (B) Uma ferramenta para liberdade humana e aprimoramento cognitivo.
- (C) Uma ferramenta para liberdade e uma cognição aperfeiçoada.
- (D) Uma ferramenta que leva ao melhoramento humano com liberdade.

QUESTÃO 03 (1,0)

O que caracteriza a trílice revolução mencionada no texto?

- (A) A liberdade da internet, o uso de dispositivos móveis e a conexão humana no espaço digital.
- (B) A comercialização da internet, a liberdade humana e os algoritmos das redes sociais.
- (C) A liberdade que a internet fornece, os dispositivos móveis e o surgimento do espaço descentralizado.
- (D) A comercialização da internet, o surgimento de dispositivos móveis e a ascensão das redes sociais.

QUESTÃO 04 (1,0)

Por que a dinâmica do espaço digital é distópica? Escolha a alternativa **INCORRETA**.

- (A) As decisões no espaço digital existem numa dinâmica simétrica de múltiplas escolhas.
- (B) As relações humanas no espaço digital dependem dos algoritmos das plataformas.
- (C) As decisões digitais são guiadas por uma mão invisível que fornece as possíveis escolhas.
- (D) As relações humanas no espaço digital existem na forma de assimetria de vigilância.

QUESTÃO 05 (1,0)

O que texto afirma sobre a elite que controla o espaço digital? Escolha a alternativa **CORRETA**.

- (A) Ela é diversa e representa múltiplas vozes sociais.
- (B) Ela opera com total transparência e responsabilidade pública.
- (C) Ela é democrática nas suas decisões feitas no mundo digital.
- (D) Ela concentra o poder em um grupo homogêneo de homens brancos.

QUESTÃO 06 (1,0)

Qual o paralelo traçado entre os discursos coloniais do passado e os discursos da elite tecnológico do presente? Escolha a alternativa **CORRETA**.

- (A) Ambos promovem a ideia de igualdade entre todos os povos do mundo.
- (B) Ambos rejeitam a intervenção sobre como as pessoas vivem e se conectam.
- (C) Ambos compartilham de uma ideologia paternalista de "melhorar" a vida dos outros.
- (D) Ambos defendem que o progresso deve ser liderado por decisões coletivas e democráticas.

QUESTÃO 07 (1,0)

Como opera a nova forma de soberania? Escolha a alternativa **INCORRETA**.

- (A) Os aristocratas digitais podem influenciar eleições e moldar o discurso público.
- (B) Os aristocratas digitais operam de acordo com regras nacionais e democráticas.
- (C) A nova soberania modifica o comportamento humano por meio das plataformas digitais.
- (D) O poder dessa nova soberania se estende além de fronteiras nacionais.

QUESTÃO 08 (1,0)

Por quais razões o texto afirma que a história de origem da internet é importante? Escolha a alternativa **INCORRETA**.

- (A) Porque nos lembra que a nossa realidade foi inevitável ao considerarmos a proposta inicial.
- (B) Porque entender a história nos ajuda a vislumbrar diferentes possibilidades para o nosso futuro digital.
- (C) Porque os pioneiros imaginaram um espaço descentralizado onde a informação fluiria livremente.
- (D) Porque nos lembra que a nossa realidade resultou de decisões feitas ao longo de três décadas.

QUESTÃO 09 (1,0)

Quais são as características da resistência ao colonialismo digital? Escolha a alternativa **INCORRETA**, conforme o texto.

- (A) Desenvolvimento de plataformas públicas para engajamento cívico livres do controle corporativo.
- (B) Criação de redes de comunicação próprias por comunidades agrícolas para compartilhar saberes.
- (C) Ampliação de plataformas corporativas para facilitar o acesso à informação e à conectividade digital.
- (D) Implementação de sistemas de governança de dados para proteger o conhecimento cultural indígena.

QUESTÃO 10 (1,0)

Quais são as práticas da sabedoria digital? Escolha a alternativa **INCORRETA**.

- (A) Criar bens comuns digitais, plataformas e redes pertencentes e governadas por comunidades e não por corporações.
- (B) Exigir das corporações já existentes e atuantes a construção de mais plataformas comunitárias digitais para ampliar o acesso.
- (C) Desenvolver formas de letramento digital que permitam criar não somente nativos digitais, mas cidadãos digitais.
- (D) Estabelecer rituais regulares de desconexão para recuperar a atenção e preservar a qualidade das interações humanas.

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