

SOCIAL ACCELERATION IN LATE MODERNITY: THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE OF ALIENATION ACCORDING TO HARTMUT ROSA'S SOCIOLOGICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION

ACELERAÇÃO SOCIAL NA MODERNIDADE TARDIA: A ESTRUTURA PSICOPATOLÓGICA DA ALIENAÇÃO SEGUNDO A REFLEXÃO SOCIOLÓGICO-FILOSÓFICA DE HARTMUT ROSA

ACELERACIÓN SOCIAL EN LA MODERNIDAD TARDÍA: LA ESTRUCTURA PSICOPATOLÓGICA DE LA ALIENACIÓN SEGÚN LA REFLEXIÓN SOCIOLÓGICA-FILOSÓFICA DE HARTMUT ROSA

Jonas Ferreira de CASTRO NETO¹

ABSTRACT: Based on the intellectual works of the German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, this paper seeks to expose the general problem of social acceleration along with its links to modernity, as well as to identify the diagnoses of the experience of time in late modernity and the “pathologies of acceleration”. The purpose of this article is to analyze the characteristics social consequences of highly technological societies, the transformations on the modes of existence, which lead to the question of the distress generated by the subjective scarcity of temporal resources, by the vertiginously accelerated pace of social and technological processes and by the imperative of acceleration in the current time, focusing on the psychopathological structure of alienation according to Rosa's sociological-philosophical reflection.

KEYWORDS: Social acceleration. Alienation. Modernity. Hartmut Rosa.

RESUMO: *A partir dos trabalhos intelectuais do sociólogo alemão Hartmut Rosa, o presente artigo busca expor o problema geral da aceleração social junto aos seus nexos com a modernidade, bem como identificar os diagnósticos da experiência do tempo na modernidade tardia e as “patologias da aceleração”. O presente artigo tem a finalidade de analisar as consequências sociais características das sociedades altamente tecnológicas, as transformações sobre os modos de existência, que remontam à questão do mal-estar gerado pela escassez subjetiva de recursos temporais, pelo ritmo vertiginosamente acelerado dos processos sociais e tecnológicos e pelo imperativo da aceleração no tempo presente, dando centralidade à estrutura psicopatológica da alienação segundo a reflexão sociológico-filosófica de Rosa.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Aceleração social. Alienação. Modernidade. Hartmut Rosa.*

RESUMEN: *A partir de los trabajos intelectuales del sociólogo alemán Hartmut Rosa, el presente artículo pretende exponer el problema general de la aceleración social junto con su*

¹ São Paulo State University (UNESP), Araraquara – SP – Brazil. Undergraduate in Social Sciences. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0712-1318>. E-mail: j.castro@unesp.br

nexo con la modernidad, así como identificar los diagnósticos de la experiencia del tiempo en la modernidad tardía y las “patologías de la aceleración”. Este artículo pretende analizar las consecuencias sociales propias de las sociedades altamente tecnológicas, las transformaciones sobre los modos de existencia, que se remontan a la cuestión del malestar generado por la escasez subjetiva de recursos temporales, por el ritmo vertiginosamente acelerado de los procesos sociales y tecnológicos y por el imperativo de la aceleración en el tiempo presente, dando centralidad a la estructura psicopatológica de la alienación según la reflexión sociológica-filosófica de Rosa.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Aceleración social. Alienación. Modernidad. Hartmut Rosa.*

Introduction

Hartmut Rosa was born in Lörrach, Germany, in 1965. He teaches sociology at the University of Jena and is one of the greatest critical social theorists of our time, combining his background and knowledge of philosophy with studies in the sociological field. The German sociologist has gained international prominence with his analyses of modernity, developing original theories on the constitution of modernity and the new social consequences embedded in the realm of social and private life. His research interests are wide and diverse. One can consider the theory of social acceleration and temporal structures in modernity², the investigation of the forms of alienation present in today's society³, and the analysis of the way we relate to the world in the context of modernity today⁴ as significant studies that reveal, to a large extent, the substance of Rosa's intellectual and scientific work.

To understand the sociological significance of the theory of social acceleration we must first grasp the German sociologist's innovative proposal regarding the conceptual redefinition of the meaning of modernity and its connections with acceleration, speed, growth and innovation: "the history of modernity is characterized by a broad acceleration of all kinds, of processes and paths, in the technological, economic, social and cultural spheres" (ROSA, 2003, p. 3, our translation). Identifying the constitution of modernity in its entirety is only possible if the temporal dimension, the social acceleration, is included and understood sociologically. According to Rosa (ROSA, 2003, p. 4), social acceleration is the temporal regime that underlies the processes, phenomena and concepts embedded in modernity, since the analysis of the classical thinkers of sociology: such as the process of rationalization analyzed by Max Weber, the dynamics of differentiation understood by Émile Durkheim, the

² For more information: Rosa (2019a).

³ For more information: Rosa (2016).

⁴ For more information: Rosa (2019b).

phenomenon of individualization investigated by Georg Simmel and the problem of instrumental domestication in Karl Marx. The temporal dimension goes through the historical materiality of modernity and the cultural, political, economic, and individual dimensions.

Given this introduction on social acceleration as a constitutive element of modernity, we would arrive at the problem of individual complaints about the scarcity of temporal resources in contemporaneity. This is a unique problem of late modernity, that is, of modernity today, dating from the historical period of globalization that began in the late twentieth century, and which serves as critical and theoretical inspiration for the writings of Hartmut Rosa.

Initially, social anthropologist Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2001, p. 85) states that speed becomes not only contagious, but also addictive, embedded in the logic of contemporary capitalist society. Today's complaints about time are alarmingly instigating at first, they are also paradoxical in that we live in a highly technological society⁵. That is, there is a kind of accentuated complaint about the scarcity of temporal resources and the consequent need to increase the pace of life, being it, therefore, increasingly hectic, frenetic and unstable (ROSA, 2019a, p. 32).

One can assume that this kind of frenetically accelerated life generates pathologies that become characteristic of late-modern societies, where over-stimulation and task overload reign. Leveraging, therefore, a proliferation of new social pathologies and social malaise as a result of the problems of de-temporalization of life, desynchronization of surrounding social systems, and frenetic social acceleration, especially in contemporary Western societies: indeed, clinical depression and the personal sensations of "rushing" time and of life passing "flying" by in a tormenting manner are felt and perceived by an ever larger set of people (ROSA, 2019a, p. 32, our translation). Soon, the dynamics of accelerated modernity engenders pathological manifestations. Occurring, in this way, on a global level, the amplification of alienating modes of existence, associated with a greater weakness and exhaustion of individuals and, therefore, the diffusion of psychopathological states, resulting from technological and social acceleration.

Rosa's critical social theory proposes the scientific articulation between studies in the sociological field, in the broad sense of the term, and the philosophical field, seeking to identify the meaning of the modes of existence and the various forms of alienation within

⁵ "The more time we save (because of sophisticated technological innovations that save us time), the less we have," says the thought-provoking folk wisdom in Michael Ende's *Momo*" (ROSA, 2019, p. 34).

contemporary capitalist society. The analysis on alienations and psychopathological states arising from the propulsion of social acceleration represents the delineation of a sociological-philosophical reflection led by Rosa because he sociologically takes up concerns and problems that are part of philosophical paradigms, such as the failure of contemporary individuals in relation to achieving the ideal of the good life, bringing sociology closer to subjective and existential issues of the present time (ROSA, 2019b, p. 17).

The object of study of the present article -the psychopathological structure of alienation according to Rosa's sociological-philosophical reflection- is intrinsically linked to the structural and cultural plane of late modernity (ROSA *apud* MONTERO, 2020, p. 291). That is, it results from the dizzyingly accelerated pace of social and technological processes, the imperative of acceleration and the consequent absence of temporal capacities and resources among individuals: at the heart of the problem are located and constituted the "pathologies of acceleration" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 626, our translation). These pathologies emerge from the very logic of social acceleration: it is denoted that the formation of the psychopathological structure of alienation is related to issues involving contemporary subjectivity in the context of accelerated modernity.

The phenomenology of social acceleration and the social problems characteristic of accelerated modernity

For German sociologist Rosa, consolidation as a modern society, or being part of modernity, means socially establishing oneself from the phenomenon of "dynamic stabilization", in which it is oriented as the founding modus of modern social formation (ROSA, 2019a, p. 10, our translation). So that a society is consolidated as modern only when it manages to dynamically stabilize itself, when it is systematically disposed to growth, to the densification of innovations, and to acceleration, as a means of maintaining and reproducing its structure (ROSA, 2019a, p. 11).

It is certain that the development of modernity follows the course of the revolutions in the engines and energies created by the productive forces that promoted the overwhelming process of social acceleration. The latter, besides the dynamic link corresponding to speed, is also characterized by the compulsion to grow. With this, social acceleration is understood as a phenomenon that aims at the logic of escalation and growth. Capitalist economies are structurally directed not only to the uninterrupted continuation of the process of capital

circulation, but rather to the acceleration and driving of the material spiral of growth (ROSA, 2019a, p. 16-17).

In light of Rosa's theoretical systematization, we distinguish social acceleration, as a concept, from three categories. Three independent analytical dimensions, but which reveal an empirical interconnection. These being forms of social acceleration: technological acceleration, acceleration of social change, and acceleration of the pace of life (ROSA, 2019a, p. 141).

What determines the era of contingency or the ever-increasing number of activities to be done, in fact, does not concern solely the escalation of production. But to the fact that the number of activities to be done, the growth, outstrips the ascendancy of technological acceleration. This results from the relationship between quantitative growth and acceleration, its effect translating as an acceleration, at all levels, of exponential quantitative growth. It is because of this factor that the acceleration of the pace of life, for example, always grows. For if productive capacity remained constant, just like quantitative growth, the pace of life would slow down as a result of technological acceleration, since technology itself renews the phenomenon of "free time" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 132, our translation).

Conceptually, technological acceleration is a goal- or purpose-oriented acceleration that reappears in contemporary society, gradually and more intensely, as a seductive cultural, political and structural strategic response to the serious problem of the scarcity of temporal resources. The technical development of transportation, production, data and communication, as well as the high dynamization of goods and services, are important examples of the quantitative progression of technical acceleration.

The new forms of acceleration of information technology, in the passage from the twentieth to the twenty-first century, erupted the process of building the web: endowed with an unlimited socio-virtual reach and with a high potential for transforming social relations and forms of existence. In temporal terms, the construction of the web irrogated to late-modern societies the milestone of instantaneity: information transmissions operated in real time, instantaneously. For sociologist Rosa (2019a, p. 430), causing the impression that contemporary individuals are witnesses to a new and qualitative revolution of speed, therefore, producing a violent acceleratory impact on almost all fields of everyday life. Today's communications revolution marks a qualitative transformation in the constitution of contemporary social relations. It has brought every person into a communicative connection with every other person around the world at all times.

While technological acceleration is consolidated as a process that occurs within society, the acceleration of social change, on the other hand, is presented as a process of society itself and manifests itself as a direct, inevitable, and unintended consequence of technological innovations. In late-modern societies, rates of social change occur through markedly accelerated rates. Rosa investigates the acceleration of social change in conjunction with the concept "contraction of the present": with the past and the future having to be rewritten in various areas of society at ever shorter intervals. In this way, the acceleration of social change can be defined as an increase in the expiration rates of experiences and expectations guiding action and as a shortening of the time intervals that, for each functional, value, and action sphere, can be determined as present (ROSA, 2019a, p. 152, our translation).

In practice, given the "contraction of the present," such a decay of long-term periods, unrelated to the longevity of temporal intervals expressed by the past and the future, contracts politics, occupations, aesthetics, technology, the cognitive dimension, culture, and social structures (ROSA, 2003, p. 7, our translation). It is noticeable that the acceleration of social changes is present in the most classical social institutions, such as the family. For example, in the "classical modernity", after the bourgeois revolutions of the 18th century, the marriage cycle would tend to last for an entire generation. In today's modernity, marriage is condemned to last considerably less than the life cycle of individuals due to the increasing divorce rate (ROSA, 2003, p. 7). Therefore, the vertiginously high pace of acceleration of social changes in contemporary society means that they no longer occur at an intergenerational pace (when social changes took place between generations). However, they now occur at an intra-generational pace: social changes occur within the passage of generations at an ever-increasing pace.

The last category of social acceleration to be presented, the acceleration of the pace of life, represents the paradox of technological acceleration corresponding to the "lack of time" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 155, our translation). So that the increased pace of life in the face of decreasing temporal resources is a direct consequence of the acceleration of social change (ROSA, 2019a, p. 312). Such acceleration concerns the acceleration of individuals themselves, in fact. The individual temporal experience is fraught with paradoxical issues. Even, it is precisely in the industrialized city and in the spaces that have been most contemplated by the procedural phenomenon of technological acceleration that the pace of life tends to increase. The acceleration of the pace of life occurs as an attempt to escape from the harm of the scarcity of temporal resources. So, in summary, people speed up in order to

cope with all the activities they must perform. In another historical time, the German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel had already noted that it is in the industrialized metropolitan city where the pace of life tends to be higher. His famous argument is summarized in this passage

The psychological foundation on which the type of individualities of the big city rises is the intensification of nervous life, which results from the rapid and uninterrupted change of inner and outer impressions [...Insofar as the big city creates precisely these psychological conditions - at every outing into the street, with the speed and varieties of economic, professional, and social life - it provides, already in the sensible foundations of soul life, in the quantum of consciousness it demands of us by virtue of our organization as beings who operate distinctions, a profound opposition with respect to the small town and country life, with its slower and more habitual rhythm, which runs more evenly from its sensible-spiritual image of life (SIMMEL, 2005, p. 578, our translation).

To complement the German thinker's analysis, Simmel's suggestion to measure and define the rhythm of life is translated through the following formula, namely by the product of the sum and productivity of the transformations of the contents represented in consciousness per unit of time and, furthermore, supposing that this rhythm was correlated with the amount of money available and its speed of circulation (ROSA, 2019a, p. 236). Being that, comparatively, in large cities the elements of dynamic circulation were considerably faster than the elements characteristic of agrarian societies. For example, comparing the minute circulation capacity of land and soil with the powerful mobility capacity of money. Therefore, money would be treated as a crucial point in economic movements and that acts on the acceleration of the rhythm of lives, especially in modernized and significantly populated metropolises.

Objectively, when reflecting on the acceleration of the pace of life, it is understood that the rate of episodes of action increases, while the temporal resources for rest decrease. Consolidating, thus, the phenomenon described as "densification of action episodes", as well as the elimination of intervals and pauses between human activities (ROSA, 2019a, p. 156, our translation). The natural result of this problem manifests itself through the phenomenon of "multitasking": which corresponds to the execution of many tasks at the same time.

It is important to note that to the extent that individuals accelerate the corresponding activities as a result of the temporal densification of these tasks, including personal needs, an effect that corresponds to temporal fragmentation also predominates. That is, when there is a marked dissipation of the boundaries between the forms, places, and times of activities,

eliminating the temporal coordination of tasks (ROSA, 2019a, p. 258). This observation is often seen in the activities related to the world of work, where flexible work reigns: in temporal terms, making it so that work can be performed, for example, virtually at home along with domestic activities. In this way, the spatio-temporal boundaries of the social spheres of work, family, and free time blend together until they dissipate to the point of becoming indistinguishable, operating simultaneously.

As the defining formula of the acceleration of the pace of life, along these lines, becomes a scientific reflection that can be understood objectively, such a quantitative increase also tends to transform the subjective temporal experience. In terms of the analysis on subjective parameters, the acceleration of the pace of life manifests itself as a consequence of the agonizing feeling of time scarcity. With this, it is necessary that there is a relative individual compulsion to accelerate the pace of life to be able to account for all personal activities and, for this reason, there is also a marked feeling that time is passing faster and faster (ROSA, 2019a, p. 157).

One of the main theses raised by Rosa is expressed through the equation corresponding to time pressure and its motives⁶. Since there is, increasingly, less and less time available to perform a task and the increase in the pace of life manifests itself as a reaction to the scarcity of temporal resources. It should be noted that the impetus for accelerating the pace of life allows individuals to seek to overcome the burden of slowing down. That is to say, accelerating the pace of life is also a reaction to the fear of missing opportunities and, in turn, is the result of a cultural program developed in modernity concerning the idea of "playing fast and loose with the options of the world" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 268, our translation). Therefore, the pace of life tends to accelerate in light of the onerous cost that slowing down can bring, forming individuals who believe in the cultural promise of acceleration as linked to the idea of the good life (ROSA, 2019a, p. 268).

This generates an upsurge of the psychosocial aspect related to the compulsion to adapt. This is a consequence of the cultural imperatives and the dynamics of social acceleration: "the *slipping-slope* syndrome". That is, the existential feeling of being on "slippery slopes" rises as a result of the accelerated transformation of the material structures of the environment, of models of relationships and associative structures, of forms of practice and orientation of action (ROSA, 2019a, p. 268).

⁶ "Two obvious motives for perceived time pressure are, first, the fear of missing opportunities and the compulsion to adapt, which have quite different roots" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 268, our translation).

The "faster passage of time," which is to be understood subjectively, manifests itself in the feeling of "temporal deprivation and stress," as well as in the feeling of "not having time" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 262, our translation). The transformation of temporal and social structures, therefore, begin to generate a growing personal sense of stress, saturation, and exhaustion.

The technological acceleration and the digital revolution of the late 20th century: the effects on ways of existence in the present time

Technological acceleration irrupts a sense of movement characterized by the quantitative propulsion of production levels: of accelerated production of transportation, data, communication, goods, services and capital. The last, being the element of greatest relevance for the expansion of investment necessary to maintain accelerated production at all levels. About the importance of capital in the present time, says the American philosopher Wendy Brown: it seems to ascend into a form of sovereignty without the sovereign, that is, without an anthropomorphized God at its heart (BROWN, 2010, p. 65).

The economic policies of the era of neoliberal globalization and the free market include: the just-in-time mode of production, the economic revolution of flexible accumulation, the deregulation of industries and capital flows, the radical reduction of provisions and protections of the welfare state, the end of the economic policy of redistribution of wealth, the hypertrophy of financialization and the growing dominance of financial capital over productive capital in the dynamics of the economy and everyday life (BROWN, 2015, p. 28). This new political-economic power framework enabled the political opening of the Eastern European states, economic globalization, and the consolidation of the internet as a form of mobility revolution, therefore engendering new forms of acceleration (of the economy and information technology) and consolidation of "turbo capitalism" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 429, our translation). Thus, the principles that characterize the economic policy of the era of neoliberalism serve as the springboard for the current acceleration of economic and technological production and, in effect, the general transformation of modes of existence.

It is certain that technological acceleration objectively transforms the way in which the individual is inserted in the world and also alters social values and, therefore, forms of existence. The digital revolutions that began at the end of the 20th century, accompanied by the construction of the Web and the diffusion of new technologies crystallized in daily life, qualitatively transform the ways of existence on a global level, changing the constitution of social relations and of human beings themselves. The technological revolution of

transmission, in the historical period of transition from the twentieth to the twenty-first century, has made the (virtual) world available to human beings in increasingly shorter episodes of action (ROSA, 2019a, p. 198), just as smartphones, tablets, and gadgets operate: this phenomenon consolidates the human compulsion to (virtual) action, executed at all times regardless of the user's geographical location.

With this, the dissolution of time progressively neutralizes its linearity, thus changing the forms and perception of social time. The concept that characterizes such a phenomenon: the "contemporaneity of the non-contemporary" (ROSA, 2019a, p. 199, our translation). In practice, it occurs through the following factors: the kaleidoscopic arrangement of data on the internet in the form of spatio-temporal fragments, without pre-established orientations; secondly, from the detemporalization of communication connections, that is, when individuals begin to organize the complex sequences of messages and information received, at an increasingly accelerated pace; finally, through situationality, that is, elements eclectically juxtaposed and connected in various ways as principles that dominate for some time (*op.cit.*). It is understood that the whole equation suggests, as an effect, an example of the dissolution of time: the loss of the functional orientation of time and the elimination of logical sequences, engendering in social life a temporal process of discontinuity, randomness and casualness (ROSA, 2019a, p. 200). It is added that the transformation of the relation of the social being to the social world and to the things around him has progressed, through the overwhelming changes in temporal and material structures in late modernity, toward the processes of liquefaction, transience, rapid change, and contingency.

The individual is therefore always in a hurry to catch up with the dizzying acceleration of the social world. In the age of contingency, the temporal cleavage between the time of the social world and the time of social being is ever sharper. The harm to the individual, that is, to the limited time of social being, consequently becomes agonizing for him. This generates a form of deinstitutionalization of the regime of life, as a temporalized project of life, neutralizing the guiding force of normalized biography and intensifying the loss of logical temporal orientation (ROSA, 2019a, p. 470).

The era of digital revolutions and the compulsion to act also renews the aspect corresponding to the general decrease in the period of time during which secure expectations prevail. This leads to various forms of professional and family instability. These are damages characteristic of the age of uncertainty and contingency. The high social dynamism in which modern societies find themselves transforms the patterns of identity, of subjective self-

relation or the form of being (ROSA, 2019a, p. 293). Therefore, identity patterns are turned to the present, they become situational and intra-generational. The pace of life increases due to the sequencing and dynamization of the forms of existence: the acceleration does not occur only in what individuals do and experience, but also in what they are, as social forms of identity.

Indeed, the contemporary capitalist society, due to the momentum related to hyperactivity and performance, generates excessive fatigue and exhaustion (HAN, 2015, p. 70). In the pathological structure of the performance society analyzed by Byung-Chul Han (2015), the neural problems that characterize the general positivization of the "fatigue society" are identified, such as depression and burnout syndrome. That is to say, in a society in which the future is shortened into a prolonged actuality, as the author of the work *Tiredness Society* identifies, the excess of positivity also manifests itself as excess of stimuli, information, and impulses (HAN, 2015, p. 31). The imperative of acceleration that rules over the contemporary social being, linked to excessive pressure for work, performance and innovation and, therefore, to the consolidation of the destructive process of self-exploitation of the individual, tends to neutralize the potential of the contemporary subject, weakening him through his own exhaustion. In short, we identify marked signs of stiffening and exhaustion in the accelerated society, as unintended effects of technological and social acceleration processes.

The psychopathological structure of alienation in the light of Hartmut Rosa's sociological-philosophical reflection

In another historical time, the concept of alienation was used by modern theorist Karl Marx when he noted that the capitalist mode of production caused, to the detriment of the worker, alienation from actions (work), from products (things), from nature, from other beings (social world) and, finally, from himself (ROSA, 2016, p. 146). It was an investigation into alienation as a deformation of the worker's form of existence due to the functioning of labor in the capitalist mode of production. The Frankfurtian critical theory, in another way, also presents us the concept of alienation depending on its authors, although it has not been developed over the decades (ROSA, 2016, p. 11).

This concept is revived by Rosa in the historical period of late modernity, placing it at the center of his scientific reflection. Tracing, in turn, new parameters for a critical theory of social acceleration in the present time. The systematization of a social theory that aims to investigate alienation corresponds to the evidence of the malaise generated by acceleration.

For Rosa, initially, social acceleration is a problem to be analyzed under the prism of "totalitarianism". The "totalitarianism of social acceleration" is a fact: it exerts pressure on the will and actions of the subject; it is inevitable, that is, everyone is affected by it; it is omnipresent, it is found in all spheres of life; it is difficult or almost impossible to criticize it and fight against it (ROSA, 2016, p. 105, our translation).

The "totalitarianism of social acceleration" engenders forms of estrangement and erosion of individual character in relation to things, actions, time, experiences, spaces, the natural world, others, and oneself (ROSA, 2016, p. 147, our translation). Therefore, the experience of alienation, as a product of the desynchronization or vertiginous acceleration of surrounding social systems, symbolizes the transformation of the relation of the world to itself (world selfrelation), indicating a profound structural distortion of the relations between the self and the world, that is, impacting on how the subject is placed or located in the world (ROSA, 2016, p. 148). In light of Rosa's critical social theory construct, the psychopathological structure of alienation is configured from five approaches: alienation from space, from things, from actions, from time, and from self or others.

From Rosa's theoretical classification, it is apprehended that the critical theory of social acceleration enables the diagnosis about the *alienation of space*. Reflecting on space is important because human beings are necessarily bodily embodied subjects, they inevitably experience the world as spatially extended and themselves as spatially located (ROSA, 2016, p. 148). In the age of digitalization, physical and social proximities become increasingly separated: those who are socially close to us no longer need to be physically close through the expansion of the virtual world. Thus, the designs of social acceleration generate greater mobility and detachment from physical space, but they also reinforce the alienation of space: the weakening of human bonds to the physical and material environments of the world. Rosa's point of departure is based on the thesis of "non-places," formulated by French anthropologist Marc Augé: spaces that do not tell stories, do not carry memories, and do not engender perennial relationships and forms of identity (*op.cit.*).

The systemic social designs and the cultural imperative prevailing in late-modern societies, under the regime of social acceleration, concur to the thesis of *the alienation of things*. The changing capitalist economic state, linked to the dynamics of the accelerated society, mark a need for the spiraling increase in the acceleration of production and consumption. Under these circumstances, the impactful acceleration of production has made possible what the economic imperative of the capitalist order demands: the acceleration of

society's entire material processing system and, with it, the speed of capital realization (ROSA, 2019a, p. 205). The acceleration of production, inexorably, is a fundamental precondition for the constant exchanges of material elements. Exchanges that are characteristic of today's consumer society: the objects that surround us and all material elements tend to become replaceable and transitory, always running the risk of becoming obsolete before the imminence of new objects to be produced and acquired. Therefore, the imperative force of the capitalist mentality is consolidated: do not create solid and distant bonds with things, that is, exchange objects, at an accelerated pace, instead of repairing or maintaining them (ROSA, 2016, p. 151).

The cultural and operational orientation that guides the lives of contemporary individuals engenders forms of *alienation from actions*. According to Rosa (2016, p. 155): alienation in these situations arises from the fact that people never have the temporal resources to really inform themselves about what they are doing. In this sense, the feeling of estrangement of the individual who integrates the era of contingency and intense technological admission is notorious. Indeed, the individual's energies and knowledge tend to weaken before the imminence, at an accelerated pace, of new impulses, stimuli, and objects. Reflecting on a psychopathological diagnosis of *alienation from actions*, the contemporary individual lives with the distressing existential feeling of being on "slippery slopes": he/she is not able to completely assimilate all the fast innovations, changes, and information coming from the era of digital revolutions and accelerated modernity.

The question of the *alienation of time*, in turn, consists of social problems related to the individual's own experience. In light of the writings of historian Reinhart Koselleck, Rosa centers his analysis on the changing structure of subjective (temporal) experience, such transformation occurring due to the disintegration of the space of experience and the horizon of expectation and, consequently, the accelerated and non-cumulative succession of episodes of experience (ROSA, 2019a, p. 291). The ideal type that represents the *alienation of time*, for Rosa (2019a, p. 293), is the experience, mediated by the constant rupture and succession of diverse experiences, of the "contemporary player": generating problems concerning the timelessness of life and fragmentation of the progressive and historical accumulation of experiences.

The core of Rosa's sociological-philosophical reflection on the forms of alienation focuses on the phenomenon of *alienation from oneself and from others*. Alienation has a selfreflexive dimension: as an effect of the "totalitarianism of social acceleration", in its most

extreme point, the *alienation of self and others* generates the estrangement of the individual in relation to others and the estrangement of the individual in relation to himself: it is paradigmatically represented by the burnout syndrome or by clinical pictures of depression and is linked to the psychopathological problem of the "exhaustion of the self" (ROSA, 2016, p. 173, our translation).

Final considerations

In the course of Rosa's sociological analyses, the recent study on the experience of alienation is developed in the light of the theoretical refinement of the "sociology of our relationship with the world⁷": according to the sociologist, the sense of alienation is represented as a pathological state of relation of absence of relation, that is, in which the world cannot be adaptively transformed and in which the axes of resonance between the individual and the world remain mute and deaf (ROSA, 2019b, p. 184, our translation). Being that the experience of alienation indicates a weak, weakened, uprooted, and atomized mode of existence, to the extent that the contemporary individual becomes disconnected from the world of which he or she is part.

The evolution of accelerated modernity, characterized by "dynamic stabilization", enables sociological reflection on the threshold of human capacity, that is, technological acceleration raises the limits of human capacity because the human body cannot keep pace with the high speed of technological progress (ROSA, 2019b, p. 98, our translation). Consequently, certain alienatory manifestations are formed which, for the sociologist Rosa, are social products of accelerated modernity and, furthermore, can be considered consequences of the very acceleration of the use and enjoyment of digitalization and new technologies, such as smartphones, laptops, and gadgets. The world of digitalization, product of technological acceleration, allows the incidence of the personal sensation of "being in another world": an experience that cools, distances the relationship between the human being and the natural and social world, indicating certain levels of rupture between the human body and the world (*op.cit.*).

The psychopathological structure of alienation, in Rosa's critical social theory, is connected to the social fabric of late modernity: technological and social processes that dynamize systemically, at an accelerated pace, lead to the senses of alienation felt by an

⁷ For more information: Rosa (2019b).

everincreasing number of individuals. In this way, the pathologies characteristic of the contemporary world, analyzed by Rosa, are described, firstly, as "pathologies of acceleration": linked to the vertiginous acceleration of surrounding social systems, especially technological ones, and, consequently, to alienation. Therefore, alienations manifest themselves as products of technological and social acceleration, result from the accelerating social dynamic itself and from the cultural imperatives that govern contemporary society, structuring various forms of social and psychic pathologies characteristic of late modernity.

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Translated by: Alexander Vinicius Leite da Silva - ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4672-8799>.