

Call for papers

Uli Meyer, Simon Schaupp, David Seibt (eds.):

Digitalized industries: between domination and emancipation.

The digitalization of industries does not only bring about significant transformations in the organization of production, but raises critical issues of social justice in highly technologized societies at large. Therefore, this book explores the ambivalent relationships between digitalized industries and social emancipation. In order to critically examine their relations, we bring together different perspectives on the debate along four of its most prevalent topics: organization, work, design and the body.

The fact that technology has political effects has been well established in science and technology studies. However, there are ongoing controversies as to how their political qualities play out under different circumstances. In all four of our core topics, similar technologies have been linked to radically different effects on social emancipation.

With regards to *organization*, networked communication technologies, coupled with the ubiquity of private computers were seen as a material precondition for flat hierarchies (Sattelberger et al. 2015). On the other hand, the ubiquity of digital sensor technologies in production was interpreted as a revitalisation of classical Taylorism and a radicalization of surveillance (Zuboff 1988; 2015).

Concerning the topic of *work*, the hope emerged that industrial automation and digitalization would lead to a “postcapitalist” society (Mason 2015, Srnicek/Williams 2015). However, these were quickly rebutted as a fetishization of technology (Fuchs 2016, Thompson/Briken 2017).

With a view to product *design*, networked, digital fabrication technologies like 3D printing were hailed as democratizing, empowering grassroots level makerspaces and open source communities (Ferdinand et al 2016; Raymond 1999; von Hippel 2005). However, other accounts report on the instrumentalization of these movements by large firms (Dahlander/Magnusson 2005; Jensen/Krogh Petersen 2016) and criticize digital fabrication technologies as merely boosting efficiency.

Last but not least, in the realm of the *body*, advances in medical technology sparked hopes of body modification as enabling free development of the subjects beyond the restrictions of dominant body norms (Haraway 1991, Kember 2003). On the other hand, digitalized measurement of bodies was criticized as a standardization and economization of the private realm (Lupton 2014).

Against this backdrop, we welcome papers that situate industrial production in larger social contexts. From this starting point, analysis can address different connections between digitalized industries and social emancipation. Does the digitalization of industries have emancipatory potential for (a) industrial structures themselves or (b) non-industrial contexts? Or do (c) social transformations outside of industries open up possibilities for emancipation within them?

Along those lines of inquiry, we would like to investigate the political contingency of digital technologies in industries. This problem can be addressed along the following questions among others: If digital technology is produced in social contexts of domination, is this domination inscribed into them, or can they be used for emancipatory purposes as well? What does the increasing inclusion of computer-enabled organizational decentralization (e.g. Open Innovation) into capital accumulation mean for alternative forms of organizing? How do digitally enabled forms of mass customization affect body representation in the production of medical- and consumer goods? In addition, can such technologies be appropriated by user communities to upend the ways such goods are produced?

We base these questions on a broad understanding of emancipation as the elimination or reduction of domination on different levels, such as: gender, class, ethnicity or (dis)ability. Analysis at the intersection of these categories are especially welcome. Contributions should have an emphasis on analysis, avoiding pure description or rushed normative claims. We welcome empirical, historical, as well as theoretical analysis.

Please send abstracts for your papers to uli.meyer@tum.de s.schaupp@tum.de david.seibt@tum.de

Deadline for the abstracts is 10th of September 2017, maximum length is 500 words.

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