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BOOK REVIEWS

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, PLATFORM WORK AND GENDER EQUALITY
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Digital (r)evolution and rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, such as machine learning and deep learning, have an inevitable effect on our lives. It is important to pinpoint a radical transformation of the world of work, regarding gender (in)equality in the labour market, and the distribution of unpaid work. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) published a report *Artificial intelligence, platform work and gender equality* in order to "fill knowledge gaps between the labour market, AI, platform work and gender equality" (p. 11). The EIGE's report reflects on transformation of labour market affected by use of AI but also on how the COVID-19 pandemic initiated a discussion on the use of monitoring and surveillance tools in order to track workers' activity, showing how "algorithmic monitoring is highly invasive and potentially discriminatory to the workers" (p. 12). The report is a result of an EIGE's mandate to monitor progress on achieving the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) in the EU (Area F, "Women and the economy") and consists of five chapters.

In Chapter 1, it is discussed how AI is changing the quality and quantity of jobs across sectors and working conditions and how "non-standard forms of employment is changing conventional norms about where and when work is performed and the overall structure of work as we know it" Petrongolo & Ronchi, 2020, as cited in EIGE (2021, p. 28). In addition, authors problematize gender bias and discrimination in the algorithmic technologies regarding managing workers, and how this might amplify gender inequalities and perpetuate discriminatory practices. The change of an environmental scenery to digital surroundings leaves women in a position at a slightly higher risk of job loss due to automation. Brynjolfsson in his article "The Turing trap: The promise and peril of human-like artificial intelligence" points out the alternative to using AI to automate human intelligence and labour: using AI to complement workers by enabling them to do new things. Complementarity implies that "people remain indispensable for value creation and retain bargaining power in labour market and in political decision making. In contrast, when AI replicates and automates existing human capabilities, machines become better substitutes for human labour and workers lose economic and political bargaining power" (Brynjolfsson, 2022). In this sense, an overview of the research data on the impact of AI on the labour market, and resulting changes in working conditions from a gender perspective in this report, shows the possibility that AI can be used to fight gender stereotypes rather than only focus on how the application of AI-based technology reproduces discrimination, sexism and gender stereotypes and enables new forms of gender-based violence (p. 18).

Research on working conditions and work patterns in Chapter 2 shows how the income, work flexibility and family roles (as factors of motivating platform work) are influenced by gender norms. The presented data are a result of an online panel survey of platform workers in 10 countries (Denmark, Spain, France, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland) that EIGE carried out in 2020. The findings of the survey show that in recent years, the share of women platform workers has been increasing, partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the related acceleration of digital forms of work (p.

34). Both women and men platform workers in the survey were relatively young, with the majority being highly educated. The survey finds that "the high shares of regular platform workers in younger (25–34) and prime (35–54) working-age groups point to the importance of platform jobs in both early and more advanced career pathways. The average age of regular platform workers was 30 years for women and 32 years for men. The majority of women (43%) belonged to the 25–34 age group" (p. 36). According to the results of the survey, women platform workers are more likely than men to mention "poor access to social security as a drawback of platform work" (p. 50) and among platform workers there are only 6% of women and 4% of men platform workers who are students. Contrary to the research, which suggests that specific aspects of flexibility of platform work (time and space) are an advantage and an important motivator for working on platforms, the results of the EIGE's survey highlight the negative aspects of flexibility – unpredictability of working hours and income. According to the findings of the survey, "platform work is often performed outside the regular working day, by both women and men. As many as 36% of women and 40% of men who regularly work via platforms often or always work nights and/or weekends. Women's overall working time and schedules on online platforms are more affected by family factors. Men's working time and schedules are more affected by personal and professional factors. Childcare and household work influence the work schedules of women in couples with children. On average, women spend about 2.5 hours more per week than men in household work, and 3.5 hours more per week than men on childcare. The gaps are even greater in couples with children" (p. 55). There is an evident discrepancy in terms of income between women and men, especially for single women. The findings are highlighted in the following statements: "Women's total income falls into lower income brackets more often than men's total income. Single women are the most likely to be in the lowest income quartile, followed by lone mothers. For most women in couples with children, their income falls into the lowest income quartile in their country. By contrast, most men in couples with children belong to the highest income quartile" (p. 47). Chapter 3 focuses on the employment status of platform workers and access to social protection in reference to the fact that "platform work blurs the line between employment and self-employment" (Behrendt & Nguyen, 2018, as cited in EIGE, 2021). Authors suggest that social partners have a powerful role to play in regulating and shaping platform work. There are several problems with working conditions of the platform workers: "Fragmentation of tasks and long working hours have an effect on work–life balance. In addition, the fragmentation of tasks performed via platforms (micro-tasks) and large amounts of unpaid time spent searching for tasks lead to platform workers working excessively long days without rest periods or paid leave. Although this may conflict with existing working time regulations, these rules cannot be extended to platform workers classified as self-employed" (p. 15). Generally, platform workers are unprotected under national laws, and many women platform workers work under student contracts that offer limited social protection. There are no specific measures adopted in the EU to ensure equal treatment of and prevent discrimination against platform workers, except for Spain. Chapters 4 and 5 present conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from the research findings. The authors offer a potential remedy to challenge existing gender inequalities, which can be achieved only through: "(1) gender-responsive regulation, institutions and policies; (2) combating gender stereotypes, such as those relating to

women's participation in STEM; (3) policy measures that favour more equal division of paid and unpaid care work; and (4) equal representation of women in decision-making" (p. 77). In order to pursue and maintain a career in AI it is essential for women to combat gender stereotypes and the gender divide in digital skills (from an early age), strongly male-dominated work environments, the gender pay gap and the lack of work–life balance. Policy research tends to avoid adopting a gender perspective, which results in gender-blind regulations and therefore women's work in the platform economy remains largely invisible or is seen as a continuation of their traditional roles in (unpaid) domestic and care work (p. 78). The European Commission (EC) Artificial Intelligence Act represents a "promising step towards minimising the risk of erroneous, biased and discriminatory AI-assisted decision-making at EU and national levels" along with the gender mainstreaming and use of gender monitoring and evaluation "with a view to promoting gender equality and tackling discrimination in the AI ecosystem" (p. 81).

According to the EC, over 28 million people in the EU, work through digital labour platforms and their number is expected to reach 43 million people in 2025. Many of the potential uses of AI are yet to be seen, and it is important to control those in control of the technology, because AI-based technology can perpetuate gender stereotypes to achieve better marketing outcomes. Gender sensitive policies that address and manage technological changes are central to strengthening inclusiveness. The EIGE's Gender Impact Assessment Toolkit could be particularly useful during the development of legislation and various policies. This Toolkit has been defined as an ex-ante evaluation, analysis or assessment of a law, policy or programme that might have negative consequences on equality between women and men. The great challenges of the forthcoming era face us with the need to understand how technological progress should go in favour of equality and how it is distributed so as to ensure the balanced allocation of goods, services, and income. The EIGE's report is a very valuable contribution and a turning point for understanding gender equality in artificial intelligence and platform work for various stakeholders, though primarily for policy makers.

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THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DIGITAL MONOPOLIES: CONTRADICTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES TO DATA COMMODIFICATION
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"Data has been hailed as the new oil. The largest datasets are currently locked inside technological forms and business models within commodity chains. While there is a justified fear of governments' uses of citizens' data, it is currently poorly regulated and deployed

solely as the means to private wealth through surplus value extraction." (p. 173) is claimed by Bilić, Prug and Žitko in the conclusion of their recently published *The Political Economy of Digital Monopolies: Contradictions and Alternatives to Data Commodification*. Their book presents an attempt at mapping the economic power structure of the contemporary tech giants, subsumed under the acronym GAFAM (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and Microsoft). This is done in order to provide a systemic analysis of the seemingly immanent monopolistic nature of the very economic model under scrutiny. Furthermore, the authors formulate a Marxism-based critique of some of its basic structural traits, as well as critique of the wider social externalities of such economic model, while advocating for the democratic opening of the technological and economic field.

It is a truly admirable collaborative effort for several reasons. Foremost, because it grapples with a macro-theoretical explanation of rather recent, and rather complex phenomena – the rise to power of the so-called *digital platforms*, and enormous proliferation of such business model(s). Secondly, due to an impressive array of other theories presented that have so far dealt with digital economy issues, both from Marxian and non-Marxian perspectives. But also, due to extensive and sometimes very meticulous epistemological debates with other theoretical positions that this book engages with, over different aspects of the new (or rather not so new, as the authors would argue) digital economy. Lastly, because it presents *a breath of fresh air* in the field of studying digital economy, primarily in regard to how it approaches its object(s) of study – not by taking them for granted, by reifying them, or perhaps even worse – feeling a sense of admiration for them. Quite on the contrary – this book presents an uncompromising analytical position that does not stand in awe of the new technology, the organizational and power structure of contemporary tech giants, or the complexity of social ramifications of the models studied. Instead, equipped with a sharp Marxian analytical apparatus, and sociological imagination that is both plentiful and lucid, it meets the onslaught of the tech-driven capitalism on society head-on. In any case, certain aspects of this study present an insightful read for anyone interested in either contemporary debates within Marxian critique of political economy, or for scholars interested in the concrete empirical insights into the issues of production and circulation of commodities, but also issues regarding the possibilities of regulating the commodity chains in the context of digital platforms. All in all, it is a densely written study, both in terms of problems and ideas presented. So, what does it present to a reader, and how?

First of all, the authors provide arguments for their choice of the main analytical framework – the Marxian critique of political economy, with the addition of the Critical Theory, and the so-called *New Reading of Marx*'s corpus of literature, with a strong emphasis on Marx's theory of *social forms*, subsumed under the umbrella term *value-form*. So, their idea was to stay open to both new readings of some of the "traditional" concepts within this theoretical tradition, while at the same retaining enough methodological flexibility when it comes to pressing issues under analytical scrutiny. They argue that much of the existing research on digital economy falls into a trap of devising new concepts, when there is no real necessity for those. As they further argue, such concepts then either reduce the original explanatory power of the conceptual models they build on, or become quickly outdated when either new social forms of technology in use, or new products and services emerge and take over the market.

The authors start from a pretty obvious issue at hand, formulating it into a basic research question: "Given the nominally competitive character of developed economies, why is there a single company for socially and economically important functions such as web searching, social networking, and online retailing?" (p. 2). This leads them to deeper analysis of a seeming paradox of the monopolistic nature of the contemporary digital market. As their approach is fundamentally both historical and empirical, one precious aspect of the book is certainly the analytical work the authors undertook in order to unravel the historical forces at work, that is, the description of how the corporate tech giants of nowadays ever became so economically giant and socially powerful. Secondly, they also strive to explain something rather mundane from a Critical Theory perspective – how "unnatural" and how deeply constructed in social terms is the experiential realm of everyday technological users in their constant engagement with datasets and algorithms (covertly), or recommendations and advertisements (overtly). More importantly, the authors want to unravel the economic processes taking part beneath the everyday users' experience of digital technology. To do so, they refer to the concept of technological "commodity fetishism", going all the way back to the Frankfurt School critique of the irrationalities of modern fetishist objectification of economically and technologically mediated social relations between humans.

But the authors go against the grain here. They are critical of the Frankfurt school's abandonment of their Marxist roots in the process of doing so – Adorno and Horkheimer's severing the ties of their culture industry model and its embedded ideology with the overarching capitalist organizational structure of the media production, distribution and consumption. To put it short, the authors claim that they endorse a "reversed" logic of the Frankfurt School – meaning that they try to simultaneously understand both the underlying structural workings of digital economy, and the impacts that this has upon the purely experiential dimensions of any user that daily engages with the new digital economy in its present cultural appearance. Such stance makes their approach closer to the *New Reading of Marx* School rather than Adorno and Horkheimer's original critique of the cultural industry model.

And while such an understanding of dialectical interrelation between the material and cultural realm is not particularly new in terms of theory, it is certainly "radical" in the sense of going back to the roots – all the way to Marx's *German Ideology*, and the famous notion of the ruling ideas of an epoch as the ideas of the ruling class. With the exception of Althusser, curiously enough, the authors did not refer to many other influential Marxian theoreticians of culture, such as R. Williams, T. Eagleton, or F. Jameson, all of whom espoused some form of cultural materialism in their explanations of the phenomenological dimensions of living conditions within (post)modern capitalist societies. Not to mention the complete absence of contemporary post-Marxist theoreticians of culture (Laclau & Mouffe, Žižek, etc.). Yet, it seems to be a reflection of the predominantly materialist and structuralist ground the authors choose to stand on.

Another curiosity of their predominantly historical materialist theoretical framework is the inclusion of the Weberian critique of the *instrumental rationality*, albeit heavily reworked via Marcuse's critical revision of the original Weber's notion of technology and the role it occupies within modern society. In short, the overall argument could be boiled down to the following thesis: "The mode of production, which produces technological

forms, shapes the range of experiential possibilities of the technological form." (p. 46). So, while a certainly important aspect of the book is users' experience of new digital technology, and the way they engage with digital platforms, it all goes back to the mode of production. The capitalist mode of production is a fundamentally overarching model of economic organization that enables the very functioning of the existing commodity chain. It is a chain of commodities in which users find themselves either as producers (providing data as raw material to be further commodified), or consumers of both advertising content (seen as "intermediary commodities"), and of final commodities (i.e., the produced material commodities in the traditional Marxist sense). All of this is taking place, the argument goes, with users' active participation, while an ongoing logic of commodity production and circulation might not be that obvious to them (e.g., Google web searching or Facebook social networking that are often understood as services provided free of charge).

However, the authors argue, this is far from the truth. The new digital and platformized economy seems to be just an expression (technological form) of the currently predominant mode of (certainly, capitalist) production that ultimately serves the goal of corporate surplus value extraction by means of commodified labour. So, we are presented with a model of production and circulation of what the authors distinguish as essentially three main types of commodities: *pre-commodities*, *intermediary commodities*, and *final commodities*. The former two types of commodities are rather peculiar as they refer to both digital platforms and the services they offer (the *pre-commodities* that came about as the result of previous capital inputs and a wage-labour system), and the user-produced raw data that are being sold to interested third parties, i.e., advertisers (the *intermediate* commodities), in order to encourage sales of the *final* commodities. So, producers and consumers are all caught up within this commodity chain of data-based and technology-mediated production and circulation.

This brings us to another important theoretical aspect of the book – the idea of *legal forms* that both enable and legitimize the existence of digital monopolies. Starting from the critique of a "perfect competition" ideal type of market, which is popular within mainstream economics, the authors argue that instead of an aberration, or a stage in the development of capitalist market relations, the monopolies (or rather oligopolies) are an intrinsic part, and a regularly occurring phenomena in the process of capital accumulation and its continuous expansion. The legal forms, or to be more specific, the advent of the intellectual property rights only facilitated the private enclosure and subsequent commercialization of knowledge and data. And while the technological forms of both Google and Facebook once relied on publicly funded science and research, as well as Free Software inputs, the existing legal forms that came about since the advent and the subsequent privatization of the Internet ensured the protection of their oligopoly on immaterial wealth, such as scientific discoveries, technology and the accumulated data sets.

As the authors argue, all of the aforementioned models central to the book's thesis – the threefold chain of commodity production-circulation, and the interplay between the data sets, technological and legal forms are further caught up in the core-periphery global model of surplus value extraction from the peripheral countries, thus enhancing the existing global inequalities, while promoting cultural imperialism of the core

countries operating through their leading technological companies. Such asymmetrical distribution resulting from the concentration of knowledge, technologies and capital in the hands of a few U.S.-based digital platform owners, and its protection via legal forms, while at the same time radiating outwards and reaping profits worldwide, leaves nation-states and transnational entities like the European Union without a possibility to demand democratic, fair and transparent control over data.

So, ultimately, for the authors, the underlying economic logic of the production model in question – of private profits and public externalities is not so new, albeit it is being increasingly mediated through digital platforms. Digital platforms are in such a view only a current, historically contingent technological extension (social form) of the specifically capitalist mode of production that, for the sake of surplus value extraction, undermines public sphere and weakens democracy.

The possible routes to alternative development are being largely discussed in the final section of the book. Corporate taxation is one such possibility – a common EU taxation policy in order to ensure the contribution to the public finances by transnational companies of the GAFAM type is something the authors are advocating for. However, future taxation policies should, in the best case, only alleviate the current damage to the public interests that are being most harmed by the existing digital business models – ranging from the issues of deregulated, underpaid or unpaid labour, to the issues of the violated media sphere, all of which are infringements on basic human and labour rights, and ultimately contributing, each in their own way, to the overall weakening of democracy. Nevertheless, the authors argue that tax regulation should only be seen as a first step in the long struggle to democratize societies and empower their capacities for the creation and sustainment of inclusive and egalitarian institutions for the digital age. The creation and advocacy of such public policies should be able to balance out the existing, technologically mediated and legally protected asymmetries of economic and social power. Human and social development should cease to be a by-product of the profit-driven model of production. The democratic (re)opening of the privately enclosed sets of big data, a model legitimized through legally ensured monopolies, and the reimagining and redesigning of the currently existing surplus value-extracting digital platforms might be – as the authors hope in their closing remarks – the first important step towards an alternative social development based on public wealth.

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Thomas Poell, David B. Nieborg and Brooke Erin Duffy
PLATFORMS AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

The history of cultural production, especially since the dawn of digitization, has been written in terms of change. Going further, the first readings of these changes – caused by the ubiquitous presence of the Internet and the World Wide Web, smartphones

and social media – interpreted them as authentic revolutions in relation to their emancipatory potential for cultural production. Nevertheless, the definitive settlement of giant transnational companies offering goods and services over the Internet and the transformation of cultural industries in the last two decades, reminded us of the essentially socio-economic nature of digital environments. In other words, changes in cultural industries have tended to obscure deep continuities. As Vincent Mosco (2015) pointed out in a reference to Dan Schiller, "new media" might lead us to speak of "digital capitalism", but if it is still capitalism, there is no doubt which term is more important of the two.

It is within the objective of making sense of changes while being mindful of the continuities with earlier forms of production, that the authors of *Platforms and Cultural Production* analyze the reconfiguration of cultural production caused by digital platforms. Thus, the approach is based on the premise that continuities are entangled with changes and hence maybe we should rather talk about patterns of change (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). The reconfiguration that services such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram or WeChat have meant for cultural industries is remarkable in all phases of the cultural production process, including creation, distribution, marketing, and monetization practices.

The in-depth analysis offered by Thomas Poell, David B. Nieborg and Brooke Erin Duffy has two distinct parts. The first half of the book focuses on institutional changes, including patterns of change in markets, infrastructure and governance, whereas the second part discusses changes in cultural practices, including labor and the relation between platforms, creativity and democracy. The study draws on knowledge from software studies, critical political economy of culture and communication and business studies, offering an analysis that departs from the notion of platforms and the so-called process of "platformization", previously developed by some of the authors (Nieborg & Poell, 2018).

Definitions matter when we talk about platforms. The broadness of the concept has often constituted an intentional discursive process in political and entrepreneurial terms (Gillespie, 2010); "platform imaginaries" have encouraged a perception of platforms as elevated surfaces above the ground, designed to facilitate a platform-neutral activity. To understand the changes brought by platform companies to cultural production, they are first defined by the authors not as neutral actors, but as complex data infrastructures that facilitate, aggregate, monetize and govern interactions between end-users, and content and service providers (the later also referred to as "complementors", along with platform intermediaries and advertisers). Additionally, platformization is understood as the process of penetration of platforms' economic, infrastructural, and governmental extensions into cultural industries; a process that becomes especially relevant in the case of so-called "platform-dependent" cultural producers who heavily rely on platforms. From this starting point, the book analyzes the two mentioned dimensions of change, illustrating its explanations with examples from very concrete industry segments and companies: specifically, the segments of social media, videogames and the news industry, and platform companies like Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, ByteDance, Spotify and Tencent.

Within its first part, the book starts focusing on patterns of change in markets. Chapter 2 illustrates how, while the platform economy has important continuities with previous industries, it has also generated new business models that reorganize institutional relationships. On the one hand, market continuities are clear when we think about how

transnational platform companies benefit from establishing conglomerates seeking to leverage economies of scope and scale, attract and retain high-quality personnel, produce services and products that become hits and create valuable brands. Nothing new under the cultural industries' sun. On the other hand, among the new business models and business strategies of platform companies, it is noted that, as multi-sided or bilateral markets, platforms are marked by network effects and have to make distinctive pricing decisions. Furthermore, authors note that platforms tend to have specific evolutions, ultimately constituting digital ecosystems. Paradoxically, platformization involves centralizations and decentralizations of economic power, since the process opens new economic opportunities for producers, while leading to a concentration of power when network effects materialize.

Chapter 3 continues assessing institutional changes, this time connected to the infrastructure of platforms, understood as databases and networks, as well as gateways, interfaces, tools and associated documentation to access these systems. This includes not solely so-called "cloud platforms", such as Amazon Web Services and the like (Srnicek, 2018), but also gateways that enable platform interactions. These gateways are, for instance, boundary resources like platforms' application programming interfaces (APIs) and software development kits (SDKs). This comprehensive understanding of platform infrastructure opens the way to important and rather underexplored lines of research connected to platform boundary resources.

The first part of the book about institutional changes ends with Chapter 4, dedicated to governance of platform markets and infrastructures. These services constitute digital content gatekeepers that block and filter in line with their terms of service agreements or with state policy and regulation regarding data protection, copyright enforcement and surveillance (Mansell, 2015, p. 21). Thus, the issues of how public institutions set limits on the activities of platforms as well as how platforms limit their own activities come into play. The chapter presents three sets of governance strategies: regulation, curation and moderation. Not only do these three strategies overlap, but governance "for" and governance "by" platforms can sometimes clash. In order to combat this, platforms, which are usually owned by transnational companies, need to update their internal rules in national markets accordingly.

Chapter 5 opens the second section of the book, dedicated to shifts in cultural practices, starting with changes in cultural labor. Cultural work, before platforms, used to be characterized as being insecure, irregular and unequal (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). The authors argue that digital platforms have accentuated certain ways of precarity, caused by new forms of invisible platform work, a heightened individuality of platform-dependent cultural creators, new notions of insecurity and a continuation of inequality patterns.

The general platformization of society turns platforms into instruments that convey new strategies of labor exploitation, which go beyond the sphere of cultural production. As Eudald Espluga suggests, many people cannot consider functioning without platforms because their precarious finances depend on them, in response to which the metaphor of platform addiction discusses digital consumption habits more abstractly (Espluga, 2021, p. 140), that is without considering the material conditions causing such dependance. The richness of the chapter lies in pointing to these new forms of precariousness in cultural production without romanticizing a pre-platform past nor offering an apocalyptic view,

focusing on collective malaise, and giving rise to lines of research that consider platform-specific precarity.

Following the analysis of platform labor, Chapter 6 discusses the tension between commerce and creativity in cultural industries. In the context of platformization, this has tended to take shape in the form of so-called vernacular creativity, understood as everyday practices of cultural production carried out by ordinary people. It could be argued that these readings have contributed to lowering our guard on platforms as a socio-economic structure. In other words, platforms are not experienced from a critical distance, but as extensions of life itself (Carrera, 2017, p. 39). Among new layers of tension between creativity and commerce, the book highlights nichification, metrification, the increasing presence of branded content and ideas about pursuing authenticity.

The analysis finishes with a chapter dedicated to the relation between platforms and democracy, namely the notions of access, diversity, protection, and trust. The two first concepts are highly connected, as complex interpretations of cultural diversity, beyond content itself, should include who has the chance to create and who has the means to access such creation. On the basis of Napoli's (1999) three-pronged approach, Albornoz and García Leiva (2019) point out, as the third basic factor for diversity in the audiovisual industry, that citizens must be able to access and choose from a wide range of content, as well as to create and disseminate it. Literature about the topic linked to platforms has been inclined to be built around the theory of the long tail, which sometimes conceals the fact that online production and distribution of cultural content requires the set-up of filters that determine the prominence of cultural works, some of which did not exist in the pre-Internet era, like search engines or platforms' recommendation systems (Ranaivoson, 2016).

In conclusion, the book studies the above points in terms of platform-driven change. The strongest point of the analysis is the fact that it demonstrates that the process of platformization and the way it has changed cultural production can be systematized. Nevertheless, as the authors themselves point out, systematization cannot be used to generalize, since we find possible variations in those changes around different axes. In this sense, some of the examples that illustrate the patterns of change throughout the book (mainly from video games, social networks, and the news industry) might fall into this trap. On the whole, Poell, Nieborg and Duffy carry out a commendable task of ordering changes and problems associated with the platformization of cultural production without neglecting old continuities. As it is not a uniform nor unilateral process, the book opens the way to more specific case studies that assess variations in geographic areas, industry segments and specific parts of the cultural production process. In addition, the reflections on these patterns of change are also particularly relevant when applied to media or entertainment companies that do not necessarily fall within the strictest definition of a platform, mainly because they are not economically and infrastructurally accessible to third parties; for instance, online services that give access to end-users to a curated selection of content. Not in vain, today we can observe the effects of platformization described throughout the book not only in the cultural industries, but in a society permeated by platforms.

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