

Publication

Toward an Analytical Understanding of Domination and Emancipation in Digitalizing Industries

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In this introduction, the editors position the volume in the resurgent debate around the relationship between digitalization in industry and emancipation/domination. They argue that much of that debate suffers from three problems. First, it subscribes to a techno-deterministic logic of a string of technological revolutions and direct social consequences. Second, many of the most notable accounts operate on a binary logic which depicts the current wave of digitalization as either the technical realization of emancipation or as the final victory of domination. Third, critical social scientific analysis is hampered by the vague and indiscriminate use of central terms such as emancipation/domination, industry, and digitalization. The authors begin from tackling the latter issue by exploring these concepts and suggesting frameworks for reclaiming them as analytical categories. Finally, they introduce the contributions to the volume and sketch out, how these collectively address the remaining two problems by intervening into debates around digitalization in the workplace, the promises of digital fabrication, and the producing, configuring, and infrastructuring of users.

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