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# Alternative Platforms in the Cloud Computing Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities

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## Abstract

Cloud computing technologies enable us to collaborate, mobilize knowledge and skills in unprecedented ways, and automate and optimize a growing number of tasks and processes, leading to the progressive digitization of all types of work. Hyperscalers as Microsoft, Google and Amazon are playing an increasingly central role, in both the private and public sectors, to such an extent that these technologies can be regarded as critical infrastructures. This growing dependence on proprietary providers necessitates an analysis of the political economy of cloud computing and the identification of pathways out of the dual logic of surveillance and extractivism.

In the first part of our contribution, we will examine the characteristics of this market and the ways in which these technologies impact work productivity reconfiguring the capital/labor relation. The second section will highlight the dynamics that explain the concentration of economic and infrastructural power among the three dominant companies. In particular, we will focus on: a) their omnipresence throughout the industry's value chain; b) the way in which they benefit from significant competitive advantages; and c) the creation of a synergy between these technologies and the rise of AI. After discussing these practices and the industry's environmental limits, the third section will explore future scenarios in order to assess the potential for alternative players – such as cooperative platforms and digital commons – to emerge, and to envision the construction of forms of digital autonomy. To conclude, we will present a case study of a computing commons created by various organizations seeking to regain their digital sovereignty.

Drawing from the description of cloud computing landscape, the objective of this contribution is to argue for the necessity of workers reclaiming digital tools and infrastructures essential to their activities. To achieve this, our methodology will be based on a review of the literature, including economic reports on the cloud computing sector as well as scientific articles on the topic. Additionally, we will conduct interviews with members of the computing commons presented in the final section. This analysis could provide insights into the strategies workers can adopt to effectively counter the power of hyperscalers while gaining digital independence collectively through mutualization. Addressing the cloud computing sector also allows us to apprehend these technologies as transversal to every kind of work, thereby broadening the scope of digital labor studies.

**Keywords:** Cloud Computing, Platform Cooperativism, Digital Commons, Capital/Labour Relation, Worker's Self, Organisation

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