

Antonio Campillo, *Tierra de nadie – cómo pensar (en) la sociedad global*, Herder editorial, Barcelona, 2015.

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It can be legitimately said that the concept of *nobody's land*, including the variations of its content through time, reflects many of the neuralgic points of the identity of our European civilization. Today, when the existence of a global society and institutions has long since become reality, one of the possible uses and messages of this concept, recently affirmed, could be appropriate to indicate a just path that should be taken in order to afford a sustainable and dignified future of humanity in general. Thus, with regard to the main idea of Campillo Meseguer's book, the link between its title and subtitle appears to be very reasonably established. The phenomenon of the globalized world presents itself here at the same time as the subject of philosopher's reflection and the circumstance or horizon in which he is reflecting on it. From this specific and, somehow, inevitable global point of view, the negative sides of the process of globalization can precisely be repaired and blocked by the legitimate reaffirmation of this term in public space and its further institutional implementation.

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As Antonio Campillo Meseguer points out, the idea of *nobody's land* contains a very rich historical genesis. Its origin or the first use can be traced back to the tradition of Roman Law – namely in the work *Institutes* by the jurist Gaius – where it was deduced from the concept of *res nullius*. In the epoch of Ancient Rome it signified a land without owner or the legally recognized one, which, therefore, could be occupied, especially if it belonged to the hostile peoples. Later on the continuous usage of concept *terra nullius* was appropriated by the early modern European colonial empires and, in accordance with the effects of the opposition “savage”/“civilized”, this *ficción jurídica* served as justification for occupation of overseas territories and their consequent expansions. As we read in the book, it was ultimately abandoned in international law in 1975 at the request of Morocco in the case of Western Sahara. The opinion of the ICJ was that prior to the Spanish colonization this region was already inhabited by tribes and population with their own social and political organization.

With the formation of sovereign nation states, one of the given meanings to this polysemic term was that it designated borderline disputed territory, generating conflicts and war through its status. Meseguer rightly stresses that today in the world there are many ongoing territorial disputes between neighbouring countries over legal delimitation of their common borders. However, the case

of former Yugoslavia is not directly mentioned in the book. The breakup of Yugoslavia, which started in 1991, when its formerly constituent republics declared independence, has produced many still unresolved border disputes and issues of territorial control. For example, the status of the Gulf of Piran between Slovenia and Croatia, or the islands on the Danube between Croatia and Serbia. It is worth noting that, as a good step forward, on the basis of mutual agreement between the representatives of two states, from 2006 the beaches of the Island of Vukovar have been opened during the summer season to visitors of both countries without passport requirement or transit control.

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The process of building a global society through neoliberal technoeconomic offensive has resulted in growing economic, social and cultural inequality. On the other hand, but correlated with the first contradictory process, as communicability and mobility increase, there is also an increase in legal and political difficulty to move freely from one place to another, from one country to another, with the building of more physical and invisible walls. In a word, the philosopher from Murcia effectively calls this paradoxical situation *la globalización amurallada*. From the middle of the 20th century, the term *nobody's land* has been used to designate border space in the form of walls dividing two states, intentionally built by one of the sides to avoid free transit of persons. Such walled frontiers can also be found inside a country, even within cities (for example, Baghdad or Belfast). Meseguer informs us that in the world today already exist 47 such borderline walls in total length which exceeds 20,000km.

After the constitution of UNESCO and the efforts of this supranational agency, the concept of *terra nullius* has been transformed into the concept of World Heritage of Humanity and has obtained a more affirmative role, surpassing the older one which was generally seen as the *anomalía transitoria*. In an epoch in which economic, political and cultural interdependence between states and regions is becoming stronger and the world more globalized, the intense cooperation between political entities is undoubtedly required more than ever in order to protect public goods, natural and cultural, material and immaterial, in a permanent way. The Castellón Declaration from

1999 finally proposed that care and protection of recognized World Heritage Sites (terrestrial, supraterrrestrial and marine) should be managed under the jurisdiction of the international community. The whole Earth – Meseguer argues – has thus in an implicit manner been given a status of *Tierra de nadie*, a space that should be responsibly protected by everyone as such.

The geometaphor of nobody's land appears to be truly adequate as the starting point for reflection on the transformational status and purpose of philosophy today. Following the new affirmative determination of the concept in question, Meseguer strongly claims that philosophy, as a real *tierra de nadie*, is by its essence a public and common space which cannot be exclusively appropriated by anybody and which, therefore, can be freely accessed by everyone. In 1995, UNESCO's Paris *Declaration for Philosophy* was published and the aim of this strategy has been to proclaim that practicing this discipline should be guaranteed by all democratic states.

But in contrast to, for example, an architectural object recognized as an integral part of World Heritage, philosophy is a reality in constant change, whose past, in addition, has not at all been completely pacifist in nature. In the era of globalized society, the philosophical discipline has to try to mediate between different and often heterogeneous and conflicting idioms, accepting the richness and profundity of philosophical thinking from the East to the West and all other directions of the world and of all historico-philosophical epochs. Using again the terminology of spatial metaphors, its task in the 21st century is to move between different spaces and territories and to maintain and its *cosmo-political-ethical* vocation.

Personally, I was reading *Tierra de nadie* while attending a summer school conference at the University of Rijeka, entitled *Rethinking Politics of Diversity*. There was a certain overlap between topics of the book and the seminars and lectures – a reflection on the actual phenomenon of FRONTEX, “fortified Europe” and its consequences. All the political and historical occurrences to have affected the world we live in, have since resolutely confirmed the growing importance of Meseguer's analysis and diagnosis.