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TECHNIK – POLITIK – GESELLSCHAFT

TEHNIKA – POLITIKA – DRUŠTVO

TECHNIKFOLGENABSCHÄTZUNG IM GESELLSCHAFTLICHEN UND KULTURELLEN KONTEXT (VORWORT)

Technik und Technikentwicklung stehen schon immer in einem unauflösbaren Zusammenhang zu gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Prozessen. Der Zusammenhang scheint durchaus zirkulär zu sein, da man von einer strukturellen Bedingtheit der Technik durch Gesellschaft und Kultur und umgekehrt der Gesellschaft und Kultur durch Technik sprechen kann. Die technischen Mittel sind einerseits in das kulturelle Milieu eingebettet und bedingt durch kulturelle Symbolisierungsprozesse. In Anlehnung an Theodor W. Danzel sprach Ernst Cassirer von dem „technischen Wollen“ der „Kulturvölker“, dem er das „magische Wollen“ der „Naturvölker“ gegenüberstellte. In einer Wirkungsgeschichte der unzähligen Übergänge entfaltete sich der Prozess, der die Menschheit von den in magischen Praktiken agierenden *homo divinus* zum technisch verfahrenen *homo faber* führte. Kulturelle Symbolisierungsprozesse entfernen den Menschen von einer Welt der Unmittelbarkeit, in der bereits Formen fraglos vorausgesetzt sind, zu einer Welt der Vermittlung, in der Formen *gefunden* werden müssen. (Cassirer 53 ff.) Andererseits wird von der Apriorität des Mitteleinsatzes als einem kulturbedingenden und -schaffenden Moment ausgegangen, das u. a. sowohl in der anthropologischen Bestimmung des Menschen als Mängelwesen (Herder, Arnold Gehlen) als auch in der Organprojektionsthese (Ernst Kapp) gegründet zu sein scheint.

Angesichts dieser strukturellen Voraussetzungen stellen sich auch Fragen der Technikfolgenabschätzung als Fragen der Reflexion zur Normativität der Gesellschaft bzw. der Technik. So bemerkt Armin Grunwald, dass die Reflexion über Technik und Technikgestaltung unter Einbezug von gesellschaftstheoretischen und empirischen Einsichten zum aktuellen Stand der jeweiligen Gesellschaft zu erfolgen habe (Grunwald 2000: 19 ff.). Es gilt, die technischen Entwicklungen im Zusammenhang ihrer Entstehungskontexte zu betrachten, um somit die Gestaltbarkeit des Technischen jenseits der radikalen Alternativen des sozio-technischen Konstruktivismus und des technologischen Determinismus zu bestimmen. Darüber hinaus, so Grunwald, ist im Hinblick auf die Frage der Gestaltbarkeit auch die Unterscheidung der Teilnehmer- und Beobachterperspektive von Bedeutung. Denn die Teilnehmer der technischen Gestaltung (etwa die Ingenieure), die nach vorgegebenen Zwecken handeln, tendieren dazu, die Gestaltbarkeit der Technik zu betonen. Aus der Beobachterperspektive erscheint Technik aber eher als Mittel, das nicht nach den darin enthaltenen, beabsichtigten und gewollten, sondern nach tatsächlichen Folgen zu befragen gilt. (Grunwald 2000: 21 ff.)

Die Frage nach der strukturellen kontextuellen Einbettung der technischen Gestaltung zeigt auch eine wesentliche diachrone Dimension. Dies gilt insbesondere für den inhärenten Zukunftsbezug des technischen Handelns. Die technische Gestaltung erweist sich primär als Gestaltung der zukünftigen (technischen) Welten. Technikfolgenabschätzung erfolgt unter Einbezug der antizipierenden, planenden und prognostischen Zugänge zum technischen Handeln. In dem im vorliegenden Themenblock vorhandenen Text nennt Grunwald die Antizipation, neben der Inklusion und dem Komplexitätsmanagement, als eine der drei konzeptuellen Dimensionen der Erhöhung des Niveaus der Reflexion über die technische Gestaltbarkeit. Andernorts bemüht er diesbezüglich die hermeneutischen Zugangsweisen zu diesem Problemfeld. Mit Hilfe einer Hermeneutik der Technik bzw. der Entwürfe der Zukunftstechnologien soll man diesen drei Dimensionen und den damit einhergehenden Anforderungen gerecht werden. Die „hermeneutische Orientierung“ bei der Reflexion der technologischen Zukünfte basiert auf der klassischen Opposition des verstehenden und erklärenden bzw. berechnenden Denkens. Die verstehende Zugangsweise soll die technische Zukunft nicht in kalkulierenden Extrapolation der Gegenwart aufgehen lassen, sondern eine Reinterpretation der technischen Zukunftsvisionen im Hinblick auf die gegenwärtige Situation der technischen Gestaltung ermöglichen. (Grunwald 2014) Aus der verstehend-antizipierenden Perspektive ergibt sich dann auch die Möglichkeit, die Rolle der Technikfolgenabschätzung im Hinblick auf die Verschränkung der Teilnehmer- und Beobachterperspektive im Sinne der Einbeziehung unterschiedlicher gesellschaftlicher Akteure und Sichten in die Entscheidungsfindung bezüglich der Gestaltung der neuen technologischen Welt zu überprüfen.

Die Perspektive auf technische Zukünfte und die Zukunft des technischen wird komplexer auch durch die Verschiebung, die sich durch neue Technologien bzw. durch sie erzeugte sozusagen wirkliche Virtualität anbahnt. Die Zuschreibungsschwierigkeit im Rahmen der sog. ‚transklassischen Technik‘, die auf dem zunehmenden Verschwinden der sichtbaren Schnittstelle zwischen dem Menschen und dem nun weitgehend anonym agierenden technischen System (Ubiquitous Computing, Gentechnologie) beruht, stellt die Technikfolgenabschätzung vor neue Herausforderungen. In welcher Weise die Möglichkeit des kritischen Ansatzes unter diesen Bedingungen zu bewahren ist, zeigt der Text von Klaus Wiegerling, in dem am Beispiel der Servicerobotik die kulturelle Dimension ihrer Nutzung und Entwicklung thematisiert wird. Die Dienstrobotik wird unter dem Aspekt der Einbettung sofistizierter und sich zunehmend verselbstständigender technischer Systeme in die traditionell vermittelten und sedimentierten Handlungsmuster behandelt. In kritischer Absicht hebt Wiegerling die Nichtreduzierbarkeit der Lebenswelt auf wie auch immer fortgeschrittene und kontextsensitive Techniken hervor. Exemplarisch wird dabei auch auf Lücken und Leerstellen in der Mensch-Maschine-Interaktion hingewiesen, die nur zu schließen wären unter der Bedingung, dass die Systeme mit uns tatsächlich leben würden, also auch eigene Intentionen

verfolgt zu schließen bzw. zu füllen wären. Solche Systeme würden aber der Idee der Dienstrobotik widersprechen.

Željko Radinković

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Armin Grunwald

ROLE CONCEPTS OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT BETWEEN POSTULATES OF NEUTRALITY AND THE DEMAND FOR CREATING IMPACT

ABSTRACT

Technology assessment (TA) has been evolving as a research-based and anticipatory field of scientific policy-advice for more than fifty years. Its position at the interface between science and policy-making has caused several debates on its adequate roles. Proposals reach from the position of a neutral and distant observer of ongoing developments up to taking an active role in transformation processes fueled by the technological advance, e.g. in favor of sustainable development. In this paper, several role concepts of TA will be discussed against the background of a new framework concept on technology assessment. It will be shown, that TA usually has to take the role of an *Honest Broker* in assessing new technologies as an umbrella role concept. The specific manifestations of this umbrella role, however, can vary from context to context. The role concept of the *Honest Broker* serves as an orientation to determine the more specific roles in the tension between assumed neutrality and the obligation to create impact.

KEYWORDS

technology assessment, neutrality, impact, honest broker, issue advocate, transformation

1. Introduction: Technology Assessment in Practice and Theory

Since the 1960s adverse effects of scientific and technical innovations became more obvious. Some of them even showed dramatic proportions: threats to the natural environment (e.g., air and water pollution, ozone hole, climate change, loss of biodiversity), negative health effects as in the asbestos case, heavy accidents in technical facilities (Chernobyl, Bhopal), social and cultural side effects (e.g., labour market problems due to automation) and the intentional abuse of technology (e.g. by terrorists). The experience with unintended, unexpected and often serious impacts of technology calling for new orientation has been at the core of TA's motivation (Grunwald 2019a). New motivations entered the field of TA over the past decades: the experience of technology conflicts motivated TA to think about a more socially compatible technology (Renn et al. 1995); the imperative of sustainable development inspired TA to engage in shaping technologies in favour of this imperative (Weaver et al. 2000); the

emergence of techno-visionary sciences and technologies challenged established TA concepts and methods and motivated developing and applying new approaches (Grunwald 2013).

Technology assessment now constitutes an interdisciplinary field of research and advice. It aims at providing knowledge and orientation for better-informed and well-reflected decisions concerning development, use and disposal of new technologies. Three focal branches of TA practices can be distinguished which address different targets and different actors in the overall technology governance (Grunwald 2019a):

- (1) TA has initially been conceptualised as *policy advice* (Bimber 1996). Still many TA activities are located in this field (Michalek et al. 2014). The objective is to support policymakers in addressing the above-mentioned challenges by implementing political measures such as adequate regulation, sensible research funding and strategies towards sustainable development and responsible innovation. In this mode of operation TA does not *directly* address technology but considers the *boundary conditions* of technology development and use.
- (2) During the past decades citizens, consumers and users, actors of civil society, stakeholders, the media and the public increasingly postulate to be engaged in technology governance, e.g. for siting processes of waste disposal facilities, for shaping energy infrastructures, and for prioritizing the public research agenda. Participatory TA developed approaches to involve these groups in different roles at different stages in technology governance (e.g. Joss/Bellucci 2002, Abels/Bora 2016).
- (3) A third branch of TA is related directly to technology development and engineering. Departing from analyses of the genesis of technology made in the framework of social constructivism (Bijker et al. 1987) the idea of *shaping technology* due to social expectations and values motivated the development of approaches such as Constructive TA (CTA, Schot 1992) aiming at facilitating “better technology in a better society” (Rip et al. 1995). The latter approach is among the roots of the current RRI movement (Owen et al. 2013, van den Hoven et al 2014).

This categorization shows a broad variety of obviously heterogeneous TA practices covering different actor constellations, involving different role concepts for TA, and responding to different expectations by applying different concepts and methods. In order to identify a common TA framework for subsuming the many and various TA activities the crucial step is determining the overall *cognitive interest* of technology assessment. Based on a broad consideration of the fields of TA practice the cognitive interest of TA was shown to consist of:

supporting, strengthening and enhancing reflexivity in all epistemic and social fields of reasoning and decision-making on shaping the scientific and technological advance, on the usage of its outcomes and on dealing with the consequences to present and future society (Grunwald 2019a: 88).

Regarding TA practices (Michalek et al. 2014, Scherz et al. 2015) and looking into the motivations and activities applied (Grunwald 2019a, Chap. 3) there is no doubt that technology assessment in all of its practical manifestations is about enhancing reflexivity on scientific and technological progress and the use of its outcomes. However, the notion of enhancing reflexivity is rather abstract. It means, briefly speaking, considering possible consequences of technology in a broader spectrum, thinking more carefully about alternative options at hand or to be developed, to involve values and perspectives also beyond those of decision-makers and experts, and to take care of any decision on relevance to be made, e.g. by determining boundaries of the system under consideration. In order to make the notion of ‘enhancing reflexivity’ more tangible, three conceptual dimensions of enhancing reflexivity have been identified (Grunwald 2019a):

- *anticipation* (e.g. Guston 2014) addresses the dimension of time for enhancing reflexivity *over time* (Bechthold et al. 2017)
- *inclusion* addresses the dimension of different perspectives to be involved for enhancing reflexivity *across perspectives* (e.g. Renn et al. 1995, Joss/Bellucci 2002, Abels/Bora 2016)
- *complexity management* addresses the dimension of judgments on relevance *for enhancing reflexivity over relevance*

These dimensions open up a wide field for developing and practicing concepts and methods in different disciplines and fields of research to contribute to the overall cognitive interest of TA. The Fig. 1 provides an overall picture of TA (cp. Grunwald 2019a for a more detailed explanation and foundation). At the top the societal needs and demands for orientation are mentioned. Technology assessment, working in the dotted box according to the framework described, produces outcomes as responses to those needs and demands (at the bottom). These shall have an impact in the real world and may change the initial situation). In this way, TA is regarded as research-based part of societal learning processes (Wynne 1995) how to deal with the technological advance and its outcomes in a reflexive manner. The background of these directions of enhancing reflexivity consists of the experiences with the ambivalence of technology and the occurrence of unintended effects mentioned above. In this sense, TA fits well into the framework of a reflexive modernization (Beck et al. 1994) and of an alternative modernity (Feenberg 1995).

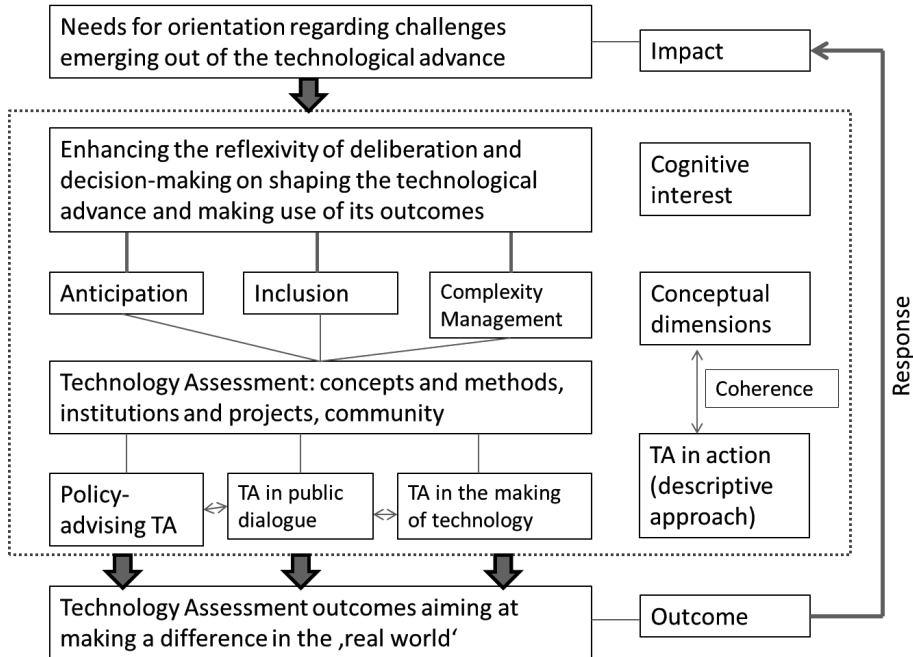


Fig. 1 Framework of TA (source: Grunwald 2019a: 89).

2. The Tension between Being Neutral and Creating Impact

According to its normative ground in pragmatist and deliberative views on democracy (Grunwald 2019ab, Saretzki, 2015) TA can give advice to decision-makers (including society) but must not decide itself. The distinction between TA as an advisor and its advisees (policy-makers, societal groups, engineers, managers, etc.) as well as the separation of advice and action is crucial. This observation is common to all of the fields of TA's practice in its trinity (see above). Looking to TA's history, however, demonstrates a certain tension between two expectations:

(1) On the one hand, the demand for neutrality has been part of the history of TA since its origin in the foundation of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) at the United States' Congress. TA shall restrict itself to the role of an advisor and remain distant and neutral:

When legislators established OTA many inside and outside Congress hoped that the new agency would provide the kind of objective advice that is a common mission of new expert organizations ... OTA was designed to emphasize both the appearance and reality of non-partisan, neutral competence (Bimber 1996: 50).

Policy-advising TA must be *neutral* and *independent*, according to its institutional setting, and therefore has to be demarcated from partisan forms of

policy advice, particularly from advice to individual political parties or groups. In the semantic field of neutrality and independence, there are terms among which there is more or less overlap of meaning, such as openness with respect to results, value-neutrality, rationality, objectivity, impartiality, or equity. Three main concepts are openness, independence and equity (Grunwald 2019a):

Openness of the results is an essential property of policy-advising TA. The results of a TA study must not be determined in advance. If the result of a TA study were already clear from the outset, the study would obviously be a courtesy expertise for the retroactive procurement of legitimacy, or for supporting partisan political positions. The openness of scientific research as well as of discursive deliberation and assessment, however, imply that the result will be elaborated only during the process..

Independence: Independence from external interests is obviously to be expected from the respective TA institute and project team, following the conceptual framework presented above. TA must not become the accomplice of interest groups: political parties, ministries, public administrations, other representatives of the executive, or societal groups and those representing their interests such as unions, or employers, federations and non-governmental organizations. This prescription – which follows directly from the conceptual dimension of inclusion introduced above – also concerns science and research institutions, which are naturally representatives of their own interests. Securing the autonomy of TA institutions by means of institutional precautions is of decisive importance (cp. Bimber 1996 on the OTA; Grunwald 2006 on Germany's Office of Technology Assessment TAB).

Equity: The demand for equity means that in TA studies or institutions, no preference must be given to certain value standpoints. Value positions represented in society which are relevant for the respective topic should be taken into consideration equally. Partisanship in fields of societal conflict has to be avoided. Equity applies to all of the steps in TA projects in which, implicitly or explicitly, evaluations are made, e.g. for determining topics and the research design but also for the participation of societal groups in participatory TA.

This position corresponds to the classical view of STS which has been characterised as follows (Grunwald 2013a):

The sociology of science is often accused of sitting on an epistemological fence (...). Although fence-sitting is still an honourable epistemic tradition, many in the field today enjoy camping out, not on fences, but on "boundaries" (Webster 2007: 458)

This view values 'fence-sitting' as an 'honourable tradition' because the scientific observation of social issues in research often requires a detached and not involved observer. However, as we will see later on, this position seems to be necessary but not sufficient.

(2) On the other hand, TA is confronted with the expectations to create impact, to respond to external expectations (see above), and to exert transformative

power. TA by necessity aims at *creating impact* and *making a difference*. This impact may be a contribution to transformation towards sustainable development, a piece of policy advice orientating a political debate or raising public awareness, amongst other dimensions of impact (Decker/Ladikas 2004).

This expectation corresponds nicely to an ambivalence of the ideal of ‘fence-sitting’ STS diagnosed by Webster (2007, see above). The epistemological position of ‘fence-sitting’, despite being necessary, may not be sufficient to satisfy many current expectations. Therefore, Webster states that STS should go beyond and show more practical engagement:

The STS analyst can (and does) play an enabling role in such initiatives [projects that are designed to develop new forms of public inclusivity, A.G.]. My argument is that the three entry points [the characterization and anticipation of emerging technoscience fields; the exploitation of (future) technoscience; the context in which technoscience applications are used, A.G.] bring our focus down from the meta-level to more meso and tractable forms of engagement and critique *within the policy room itself*. (Webster 2007: 472)

TA has arrived at a clear conclusion concerning its own position in this debate in accordance with the conceptual framework introduced above: TA is to have impact and must therefore make a difference – and that means that TA admits to taking responsibility for intervening in ongoing processes of opinion-forming and decision-making (Decker/Ladikas 2004). Otherwise, TA wouldn’t be needed at all. Combining being inclusive and neutral, on the one hand, and making a difference in practical issues, on the other, however, sounds contradictory in itself. Anyway, it needs creativity with respect to purposive role concepts allowing for resolving the tension.

The main task of this paper is to analyze the tension between the obligation to neutrality, on the one hand, and the expectation to create impact, on the other, more in-depth. The understanding what TA is and does at the interface between science, technology, and society shall be deepened at the occasion of role concepts taken by TA. In the remainder of the paper, role concepts of TA will be explored and discussed which shall enable a constructive way for dealing with this tension.

3. Role Concepts of Technology Assessment

In daily practice working for parliaments, ministries, civic society organizations, or in engineering, feasible ways have to be determined how to deal with the tension mentioned above while observing the general requirements of the theoretical TA framework. The focus in this section is to address this item at two levels: (1) the level of roles to be taken by TA in performing particular tasks, and (2) the level of generalizing role *concepts* as bridges between practice and theory. The following consideration, therefore, address the level of practice (3.1) and theory (3.2) as well.

3.1 Role Concept in TA's Fields Of Practice

In each TA exercise the respective roles of TA, of the TA practitioners involved, and of TA institutions in the respective setting must be clearly determined in order to prepare for a transparent assessment process. The diversity of TA practice fields (see above) and the heterogeneity of different contexts and settings TA implies that a broad variety of role concepts have to be applied, tailor-made to the respective challenge and context. They all demarcate different ways to position TA at the interface between policy-making and scientific research, between more being more observatory and neutral and intervention, between close neighborhood and clear distance to its advisees.

So far, only little effort was spent to clarify role concepts and to create a map of different roles to be taken by TA according to different contextual circumstances and requirements. The focus of the conceptual TA debates was more on the *overall role of TA* at the interface between science and society while its more specific roles were rarely an issue. Petermann (1992) proposed an illustrative comparison by comparing technology governance to a soccer or football match, following the arena-model of social science. In an arena, two parties, e.g. proponents and opponents of a new technology, conduct a match in order to determine the winner. The parties form teams, which conduct the match following not football rules but rules of technology governance. These rules could include powerplay issues, regulatory regimes, elements of deliberative democracy, or others. The match is observed by an audience (e.g. civic society) sitting around, the parties have been coached by trainers, they have to observe the rules, and there must be a referee taking care of keeping the rules. If we apply this model for debates around new technology, TA could take very different roles, without claiming completeness (Grunwald 2019a) and

- observe and analyze the match afterwards and give advice to the coach for the next match
- give advice to the coach before or during the match, based upon the analysis of the preceding stages of the match
- act as a sports journalist commenting on the match over broadcast or TV channels to the broader public,
- sit in the fan-clubs and motivate the players on the field,
- be an active member of one of the teams and struggle for its victory,
- take the role of a coach for one of the competing teams (or even for both),
- act as referee taking care that the rules are observed by all parties
- be member of a committee or jury developing further the rules of the game
-

This is, however, only a nice illustration, which may fit to some TA configurations but by far not to all of them. Referring more closely to possible TA positions in fulfilling its mission at the interface between science and society,

its relation with the sociology of science and the STS field (science and technology studies) could be worth to be considered more in-depth. A broad variety of role concepts between the extremes and antipodes of mere observation, on the one hand, and explicit intervention, on the other, should be explored.

The preliminary following list may be regarded as a first step and as an invitation for improvement (building on and extending Grunwald 2019a). This list briefly describes role models widely used or conceptually proposed for TA between these poles. The description is orientated to the *functions* the specific role models shall fulfill and to the *intentions* followed. Hence, the descriptions mirror the self-understanding either of the respective TA actors or of conceptual assignments, which are not strictly separated but may overlap in daily practice.

(1) *TA as scientific observer and analyst*: In this role, TA understands itself - similarly to the self-understanding of large parts of the STS community (see above) - as a more distant observer of the field. TA in this role would be about researching the actor and power constellation, ongoing discourses, communication issues, and so forth, with the aim of creating better understanding of social processes involving new technology, or ideas and visions of new technology. This is the traditional position of social science trying to avoid any intervention.

(2) *TA as irritation*: In sociological systems theory (Luhmann 1990) the societal subsystems are characterized by their own language codes. These hinder simply transferring knowledge from one to another subsystem, e.g. from science to politics. According to this theory, transgressing systems boundaries would only be possible by *irritating* the target subsystem. There only could some hope for the emergence of some intended resonance there. In this role concept, TA could irritate engineering processes by pointing to their blind spots, or irritate parliamentary bodies by opening up unexpected alternatives.

(3) *TA as Cassandra*: Regarding the significance of non-intended effects and the ambivalence of technology (see above), TA frequently was expected to take the role of an early warning mechanism against possible risks possibly related to new technology (Paschen/Petermann 1991, cp. also the watchdog issue mentioned in Smits/van Leyten 1991).

(4) *TA as tracker*: In this role concept (Smits/van Leyten 1991) TA is expected to act as the twin of Cassandra in the opposite direction. TA shall be a scout searching for opportunities related to new technology, think about feasible innovation paths at early stages of development already, and support innovation strategies by foresight processes and strategic intelligence.

(5) *TA as an agenda-setter*: TA can assume a role for bringing new issues onto the political and engineering agenda. It also can contribute to the public agenda by extending the scope of expert-oriented technology debates to broader audiences and to creating social awareness with respect to possible future developments.

(6) *TA as a coordinator with technology governance*: In this role, TA regards itself as a process manager, as designer and conductor of processes regarding the governance of technology. The processes to be coordinated may be deliberative and communicative processes around technology as well as processes

of shaping technology by engineering. The role of a coordinator could, in a strong understanding, even be understood as taking responsibility over the entire process of designing technology and aiming at dominion in this respect. In particular, it could aim at influencing the engineering process in order to achieve the ‘right impacts’ to be determined in public debate and political decision-making processes (von Schomberg 2013).

(7) *TA as an activist*: TA here understands itself, simply speaking, as a movement struggling e.g. for sustainable development, or more general, for “better technology in a better society” (Rip et al. 1995). Under this doctrine, interventions into ongoing processes in public debate or political decision-making shall not be avoided but are, in the contrary, part of TA’s mission, according to this role concept. Here TA assumes an explicit transformative function far away from traditional self-understanding of science.

(8) *TA as referee*: In order to achieve the ‘right impacts’ or ‘better technology in better society’ TA could go beyond a moderator’s and coordinator’s role by itself determining what is a ‘right impact’ and ‘better technology’. As a result, TA could come up with substantial recommendations and postulates concerning measures to be taken. Thereby, TA would apply the ‘science knows best’ approach of traditional academic policy advice to its own mission. This variant of technocracy could be named ‘TA knows best’, society: please follow!’

According to the heterogeneity and variety of contexts TA operates in, there is no opportunity to determine one or some of these role models as better *per se* than others. The reason simply is that the criteria of ‘better’ will be case- and context-dependent. However, taking over these roles in specific exercises must strictly observe TA’s cognitive interest of enhancing reflexivity (see above). This requirement results in the call for an umbrella role concept of TA. It should orientate the processes of determining the context- and case-depending roles and their exertion in a reflexive and transparent manner.

3.2 The Honest Broker as an Umbrella Concept

Pielke (2007) considered the field of scientific policy advice according to different role concepts of scientific advisors in relation to different types of knowledge to be transferred. He proposed differentiating between the following concepts (Pielke 2010, 2):

The Pure Scientist – seeks to focus only on facts and has no interaction with the decision-maker ...

The Science Arbiter – answers specific factual questions posed by the decision maker ...

The Issue Advocate – seeks to reduce the scope of choice available to the decision maker ...

The Honest Broker of Policy Options – seeks to expand, or at least clarify, the scope of choice available to the decision-maker

These role concepts also reflect different scientific self-understandings. Many scientists would see themselves as pure scientists working in and for the subsystem science (Luhmann 1984) without claiming to be policy-relevant or to give advice to decision-makers. Science arbiters bundle scientific knowledge and give advice, often in commissioned projects responding to specific questions raised by knowledge-seeking decision-makers. Issue advocates close down the field of alternative options under consideration in favor of clear recommendations what should be done, e.g. for transforming the energy system or to prepare for integrating robots into the care system. Honest brokers, in the contrary, elaborate more the set of alternative options and aim at creating better knowledge on their implications, or they even open up more options (Stirling 2008). Often, there is lack of transparency in taking these roles. Sometimes, the claimed objectivity and value-neutrality of the pure scientist collides with interests and stakes: “The notion that scientific advisors can or do limit themselves to addressing purely scientific issues, in particular, seems fundamentally misconceived” (Jasanoff 1990). In the same direction: “There is a tendency for advocates to present an agenda grounded in advocacy in the cloth of science, either as a Science Arbitrator or even as a Pure Scientist, above the fray” (Pielke 2010: 8).

TA obviously cannot be pure science according to its history and motivation (Bimber 1996; Grunwald 2019). Also obviously, TA must not advocate its own issues of which technologies should be introduced, or of how society should develop while adopting particular new technology. Also, TA cannot work towards creating acceptance for particular technologies, e.g. care robotics or GMO products, or towards creating rejection of particular new technologies. Acting as an issue advocate pro or con particular technologies would be in conflict with main elements of its cognitive interest (see above), in particular with the dimension of inclusion which prevents taking a biased or even partisan position.

The role of the science arbiter, however, can play a certain role, e.g. if expert knowledge about facts was required in a decision-making process and a TA study was commissioned to provide that knowledge. However, usually this role will only take a small share of TA’s work. Because its cognitive comprises regarding technology as embedded in society and reflecting values and normative criteria in an inclusive manner. There, TA’s work will include reflective parts of the advice in by far the most cases far beyond only feeding facts and expert knowledge into the process.

Reflection and inclusion of different and possible contradictory positions and diverging values leads TA to the approach of thinking in alternatives (Dobroc 2018, Grunwald 2019) which clearly corresponds to the role of the honest broker. Due to its cognitive interest in the conceptual dimensions involved and with its fundament in democracy (Grunwald 2019b) technology assessment is obliged to take the role of the honest broker (Sarewitz 1996). Its thinking in alternatives, the commitment to democracy and the rejection of technocracy, the issues of inclusion and enhancing reflexivity prevent TA from taking other roles (Grunwald 2019a).

Recently, a model of scientific policy advice was proposed which fits well to this position of TA and can serve as an illustration (Edenhofer/Kowarsch 2015). It is grounded in the Political Philosophy of John Dewey, which was adapted to the specific field of climate policy with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as assessment and advisory body. The authors regard scientific advisors as mapmakers while policymakers shall use the presented map as information and orientation in order to deliberate different pathways to the future and to finally determine, where the travel shall go:

... researchers, along with stakeholders, act as the “cartographers” of different, viable policy pathways and their practical consequences by acting as the “mapmakers” of the political solution space. They provide a guidebook with alternative options for policymakers (i.e. the “navigators” and the public). Such maps cannot replace travelling i.e., decision-making nor can they resolve all environmental policy conflicts, yet they can provide an important orientation in otherwise uncharted territory (Edenhofer/Kowarsch 2015: 63).

Analogously, TA practitioners develop ‘maps’ of introducing new technologies into society together with stakeholders, citizens, or other actors. These maps include alternative pathways and roads into the future and information about their anticipated properties and implications but also uncertainties and pitfalls. They provide several alternative pathways with different properties, which can be used as orientation by society and decision-makers. In this way, the reflexivity will be increased on where to travel in the scientific and technological advance and the use of its outcomes as well as public dialogue and democratic deliberation on new technologies and their meaning for the future of society will be enriched.

Explicit or implicit expressions of the role of the honest broker can be found in many examples from TA fields of practice. For example, the Office of Technology Assessment of the German *Bundestag* (TAB) does not deliver recommendations to the parliament but alternative options. More generally speaking: because TA as policy advice has to realize political neutrality, and because in TA in public dialogue must ensure legitimacy and include different values and interests (Section 3.1), the umbrella role of the Honest Broker must be taken for determining the more specific roles and positions for particular TA exercises. This role concept serves as a kind of orientation and guidance how to design and organize TA studies and projects.

4. Creating Impacts as an Honest Broker?

At this point of the analysis it is time to recall the tension mentioned in Section 2 above. TA is to have impact and shall make a difference in real-world issues. Making a difference means intervening in ongoing debates and decision-making processes (Decker/Ladikas 2004). The role model of the Honest Broker, however, seems to be incompatible with making a difference and

having impact in the ‘real world’. Interventions into the ‘real world’ should be left to the advisees and not be done by TA as the advisor:

One way for science advisors to closely engage with the needs of policymakers but avoid recreating themselves as special interest groups is to work to clarify and, if possible, expand the scope of choice available in decision making. ... the Honest Broker of Policy Options seeks to explicitly integrate scientific knowledge with stakeholder concerns in the form of alternative possible courses of action (Pielke 2010: 17)

How can any claim of technology assessment to make a difference in order to “achieve a better technology in a better society” (Rip et al. 1995) or to contribute to sustainable development be compatible with thinking in alternatives as an Honest Broker? How can TA be simultaneously neutral and transformative? In the remainder of this Section, three arguments will be given how to resolve this tension: (1) agenda-setting as an intervention, (2) developing alternative options as an intervention, and (3) developing arguments as intervention.

(1) *Agenda-setting as an intervention*: The determination of items and themes for TA exercises can act as an intervention and may create impact without urging actors into a particular direction like an Issue Advocate would act. Putting new themes on the agenda of parliamentary TA offices, for example, often raises public attention and can contribute to public awareness. This holds in particular for issues, which had not been discussed intensely so far. In Germany, the possibility of a large-scale blackout of electricity supply was not an issue in public debate until Germany’s Office of Technology Assessment (TAB) was commissioned to conduct a study on the possible consequences (Petermann et al. 2011). Public attention and great perception in mass media accompanied this project during its runtime and contributed to societal awareness. This clearly was an intervention into ongoing debates on the current status and the futures of society without having stakes with respect to better technology or other measures how to respond. The agenda-setting *as such* created impact. Agenda-setting was already reported in the TAMI project (Technology Assessment: Method and Impact, cp. Decker/Ladikas 2004) as an important means for creating impact by technology assessment bodies or institutes.

(2) *Developing alternative options as an intervention*: Developing alternative options only provides the *potential* for making a difference. Whether and how this opportunity really will be taken, depends on many contextual factors and the engagement of actors, in particular on the advisees, and on the course of deliberation and decision-making processes – in accordance with the role concept of the Honest Broker (Pielke 2007). Nevertheless, developing options *as such* also can have an intervening force. As soon as the alternative options are on the table of societal and political debate, they can unfold their transformative potential and power. The mere existence of alternative options can motivate and fuel the transformation of real-world issues because the previous options on the table will look differently in the presence of new options (Grunwald 2019a). New comparisons become possible between the established

and the new options. The alternative options provided by TA can be catalysts of opinion-forming and decision-making as soon as they will be taken up by societal actors, by stakeholders and citizens, by politicians and policy-makers in order to draw conclusions for transformative action. The case of the German blackout study (Petermann et al. 2011) serves a good illustration. The study showed in a merely analytical manner that the consequences of a prolonged and widespread power outage could amount to a particularly serious hazardous situation with the risk of a collapse of all of society (Petermann et al. 2011). This analysis was done by TAB in the role of the honest broker without advocating own issues. As soon as these analytical results were published, they immediately made a difference and led to a review and reformation of the civil protection system in Germany in order to become better prepared.

(3) *Developing arguments as an intervention:* TA not only develops alternative options but also investigates and examines these options with regard to possible, plausible, or probable consequences and implications in its assessment process (Grunwald 2019, Chap. 4.3). By doing this arguments, have to be critically reconstructed with respect to the technologies under consideration but also on already existing technologies in order to make comparisons possible. The assessment itself includes evaluative steps considering the implications and consequences facing normative criteria, e.g. of sustainable development or responsible innovation. As a result of the assessment – which has to observe particular criteria such as inclusiveness and fairness in accordance with TA's conceptual framework (Section 1 at the top of this paper) – arguments will be provided allowing for informed and well-reflected comparison of the options on the table. The third argument is, that these arguments, which have to be developed in accordance with the role concept of the *Honest Broker* can have transformative power. If the new options developed by TA would receive argumentative legitimacy in the assessment process and would be convincing to actors, stakeholders, and advisees, they can lead to a difference and create impact. This impact would then not be the consequence of lobbying actions of an Issue Advocate but be due to argumentative rationality and normative reflexivity, which have to be ensured in TA's assessment process. Developing options (see point 2 above) and carefully scrutinizing arguments pro and con, obviously, belong closely together. Providing society and advisees with options is more than only delivering options: it includes giving differentiated arguments which can unfold transformative power and make a difference.

The separation of TA as an advisor from its advisees making decisions allows combining taking the role of the honest broker in the assessment process and simultaneously exerting transformative power through its results. In particular, it gives substance to the postulate that assessments shall be policy-relevant without being policy-prescriptive (Edenhofer/Kowarsch 2015, 56). Alternative options put on the table together with carefully scrutinized arguments makes the results of the assessment process policy-relevant but does not prescribe the specific decisions to be made. This is the characteristic mode of operation of TA as an honest broker simultaneously enabling transformative power (Grunwald 2019a).

5. Concluding Remarks

In this paper, the issue of role concepts of technology assessment was addressed, focussing on the tension between the requirements that TA shall create impacts but simultaneously be neutral and distant. It was demonstrated how this tension can be resolved referring to a theory-based TA framework. It became clear that making a difference and creating impact on this track heavily depend on the quality of the particular TA assessment process, which has to be reflexive in anticipatory, inclusive, and relevance issues.

Coming back to TA's practice (Section 3) the next step of a deepened understanding of TA should consist of going through all the role concepts mentioned. They have to be reflected against the background of the *Honest Broker* model understood as presented above. E.g. the role concepts of TA as Cassandra, TA as tracker or TA as activist have to be considered and scrutinized with respect to their compatibility with the Honest Broker model as an umbrella concept. Such investigation should be accompanied and informed by an empirical consideration of specific TA exercises and institutions. In this way, good and best practices of determining adequate role concepts for TA practitioners in particular contexts could be established. These would support the further development of TA in practice but also in theory.

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Armin Gunvald

Koncepti uloge procene tehnologije između postulata neutralnosti i zahteva za stvaranje uticaja

Apstrakt

Procena tehnologije (TA) razvija se u poslednjih pedeset godina sa osnovom u istraživanjima i polju predviđanja naučnih javnih politika. Ta pozicija na razmeđu između nauke i javnih politika je prouzrokovala nekoliko debata o njenim adekvatnim alatima. Predlozi polaze od pozicije neutralnog i udaljenog posmatrača tekućeg razvika do zauzimanja aktivne uloge u procesima transformacije potpomognutim tehnološkim napretcima, na primer, u korist održivog razvoja. U ovom radu, nekoliko koncepata uloge iz procene tehnologije će se diskutovati u okviru novog rama koncepta procene tehnologije. Pokazaću da PT često mora da zauzme ulogu *Honest Broker* u proceni tehnologije kao krovni koncept. Specifična pojavnost ove krovne uloge varira od konteksta do konteksta. Koncept *Honest Broker* služi kao orijentacija da se odredi specifičnija uloga u tenziji između takozvane neutralnosti i obaveze da se stvori uticaj.

Ključne reči: procena tehnologije, neutralnost, uticaj, *Honest Broker*, branilac slučaja, transformacija

Klaus Wiegerling

ZUR KULTURELLEN DISPOSITION DER SERVICE-ROBOTIK

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Beitrag beschäftigt sich mit Fragen, die die kulturellen Grundlagen der Servicerobotik betreffen. Die Diskussion und Beantwortung dieser Fragen werden im Diskurs über Service-Robotik noch immer vernachlässigt. Zunächst wird erörtert, wie unabhängig Service-Robotik von kulturellen Vorgaben sein kann. Kulturelle Dispositionen haben Auswirkungen auf die angestrebte Adaptivität und Autonomie der Systeme, konkret auch auf deren Sensorik und Aktorik. Service-Robotik muss als kulturell eingebettete Technologie konzipiert werden. Nur in einer physischen und symbolischen Nähe zum konkreten Menschen kann sie zu einem adaptiven und kooperativen System werden. Es werden z.B. nicht nur Organe unterstützt, sondern auch organische Präferenzen, nicht nur Organe überboten, sondern auch kulturelle Vorgaben auf eine höhere Stufe gehoben. Letzteres führt zu einer besonderen Dynamik der Kultur, die sich in neuen Wünschen und Werten artikuliert, die bisher als unerreichbar galten, nun aber eine technische Realisierung erfahren können. Die mit der technischen Aufstufung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens einhergehende Mittelbarkeit der Lebensformen entbindet uns von vielen lebensnotwendigen Verrichtungen, setzt aber zugleich neue kulturelle oder soziale Zwänge. Dienstrobotik trägt dazu bei, die Basis unseres Zusammenlebens neu zu vermessen und nötigt uns diese Basis zu gestalten und reflexiv zu begleiten.

STICHWORTE

Adaptivität,
Dekontextualisierung,
technische Autonomie,
Mensch-System-
Interaktion, humanoide
Systeme

Einführung: Warum wird die Frage nach der kulturellen Disposition der Service-Robotik vernachlässigt?

Dass die Rolle der kulturellen Dimension der Robotik im allgemeinen und der Service-Robotik im Besonderen oft übersehen und deren Erforschung nicht selten vernachlässigt wird, hat unterschiedliche – sowohl ‚ideologische‘ wie pragmatische - Gründe. Zunächst liegt es auf der Hand, dass in pragmatischen Kontexten das Vertraute, Nahe und Selbstverständliche, die eigene Lebenswelt also, als das Normale angesehen wird und als ‚die‘ Einsatz- und Einbettungssphäre technischer Entwicklungen gilt. Robotische Systeme sollen Menschen dienen, die sich auf einer bestimmten Kulturhöhe - die durch technische Fertigkeiten und Artefakte sowie deren vorgängige technische Disposition charakterisiert ist - befinden und dieser Kulturhöhe entsprechende Entlastungen

bewirken (Janich 2006). Service-Robotik wird weder für Buschmänner, noch für Beduinen geschaffen. Deren Lebensformen erfordern freilich auch Techniken – Blasrohre für die Jagd auf Kleintiere und Vögel etwa – aber nicht unbedingt robotische Systeme. In dem Augenblick, in dem Entlastungswünsche solche Systeme fordern, verschwindet ihre Lebensform und damit ihre Kultur. Dass fortgeschrittene technische Entwicklungen eine bestimmte Kulturhöhe, also eine bereits entwickelte technische Infrastruktur, eine soziotechnische Vorprägung, eine bestimmte Abstraktheit und Mittelbarkeit des Lebens und eine von früh an erlernte Bedienungsfähigkeit erfordern, ist evident. Evident ist auch, dass Technik selbst ein zentraler Ausdruck von Kultur ist und es schlichtweg keine technikfreien Kulturen gibt. Ruft man sich in Erinnerung, dass der griechische Begriff *τέχνη* sowohl für künstlerisches wie für handwerkliches Tun steht und das Verb *τέχνομαι* von früh an nicht nur für das Weben von schützender Kleidung, sondern auch metaphorisch für das ‚Weben‘ von Sozialbeziehungen in politischen Gemeinwesen und nicht zuletzt für das ‚Weben‘ von Texten steht, die dem griechischen Verständnis nach wesentlich psychohygienischen bzw. therapeutischen Zwecken dienen, wird deutlich, dass Kultur und Technik, wenn nicht identisch, so doch untrennbar miteinander verwoben sind (Hubig 2002).

Es sind aber nicht nur die Reflexionsdefizite des alltäglichen Lebens, die für die Vernachlässigung der kulturellen Dimension verantwortlich sind. Gründe liegen auch in populären Voraussetzungen des gegenwärtig dominierenden Wissenschaftsdiskurses, der erstens auf Monolingualität geeicht zunehmend den Sinn für sprachliche Differenz verliert; der zweitens das Pars-pro-toto-Prinzip als Leitidee pflegt und den Teil mit dem Ganzen verwechselt, und der drittens ängstlich darauf achtet, seine vermeintliche Rationalität nicht einem Partikularismus zu opfern, der mit den universalen Ansprüchen der Wissenschaft unvereinbar ist.

Technische Entwicklungen, die zu robotischen Systemen führen, die für uns Dienste verrichten sollen, stehen in einer Tradition von Rationalisierungsformen, die nicht von jeder Kultur geteilt werden. Dabei hat kulturelle Differenz aber keineswegs nur eine ethnologische Dimension, vielmehr wird diese Differenz schon in nahverwandten Kulturen und sogar innerhalb der eigenen Kultur sichtbar.

Service-Robotik verstärkt die Bedeutung der kulturellen Disposition noch insofern, als es sich um eine Technologie handelt, die in besonderer Weise an spezielle menschliche Handlungs- und Verhaltensweisen adaptiert sein muss, soll sie ihre Dienste erfolgreich verrichten können. Dies artikuliert sich in einer besonderen Zentrierung auf den Menschen, der zwar in erster Linie als Rollenträger in den Blick kommt, durchaus aber auch in seiner individuellen Differenz zur Rollenfunktion wahrgenommen werden soll.

Wir können sagen, dass sich die besondere kulturelle Disposition in mehrerer Hinsicht äußert: a) in der Weise der Assistenz bei speziellen Handlungs- und Verhaltensweisen, die auf kulturellen Gewohnheiten und Standards beruhen; b) in der Weise einer humanoiden Ausstattung des robotischen Systems, das in seiner äußeren Gestalt bei der Assistenz von Menschen menschenähnlich

beschaffen und möglichst auch zu natürlichsprachlicher Interaktion fähig sein soll, da man sich hiervon Vorteile bei der Interaktion verspricht; c) in der Weise einer ‚körperlichen Nähe‘, die quasi einen gemeinsamen ‚leiblichen‘ Raum im Sinne von Merleau-Pontys Idee der Zwischenleiblichkeit (Merleau-Ponty 1966: 297ff.) aufspannt, in dem es zu intuitiven Verständigungen kommen kann; d) in der Weise der Adaptivität des Systems in Bezug auf den jeweiligen menschlichen Handlungspartner, aber auch in Bezug auf die jeweilige Handlungssituation und deren kulturelle Rahmung; e) in der Weise einer Einbettung in die geteilte Lebenswelt mit all ihren Selbstverständlichkeiten inklusive des dort herrschenden Ethos. Die geteilte Lebenswelt ist nicht zuletzt Ausdruck einer vorausgesetzten gemeinsamen Lebensform von Systementwickler, Vermarkter und potentiellm Nutzer. In dieser gemeinsamen Lebensform ist ein Ethos enthalten, das nicht notwendigerweise auf ethischer Reflexion basiert, aber auf tradierten und verinnerlichten Begegnungsnormen und Interaktionserwartungen. So können auch Handlungsempfehlungen im Umgang mit Servicerobotik nicht unabhängig von Sitten und Gewohnheiten gegeben werden, selbst wenn diese kritisch bewertet werden.

Mit der besonderen kulturellen Disposition der Service-Robotik artikulieren sich zugleich die Grenzen der Adaptivität des robotischen Systems. Sie liegen da, wo kulturelle Dispositionen, die dem robotischen System implementiert wurden, und die individuellen Präferenzen der zu unterstützenden Person so weit auseinanderliegen, dass es zu Fehlaktionen bzw. Fehleinschätzungen des Systems bzw. zu Interaktionsstörungen kommt. Die immer wieder zu Typologischem führende *differentia specifica* endet da, wo die eigentliche Individualität anfängt. Ein System agiert einem Schema entsprechend und erfasst eine Situation nicht in ihrer historischen Besonderung, sondern durch eine Dekontextualisierung, also durch eine Reduzierung auf typische Bestände und Handlungsabläufe. Entsprechend können Nutzerbedürfnisse auch nur typologisch erfasst werden.

Unterschiedliche kulturelle Dispositionen äußern sich in verfestigten Gewohnheiten und Typologien, die konkrete Auswirkungen im Alltagsleben haben. So gilt etwa die linke Hand in vielen Kulturen als unrein, entsprechend werden Lebensmittel der rechten Hand angereicht. Blickabläufe vollziehen sich oft entsprechend der Schriftrichtung, was Auswirkungen auf Symbolanordnungen auf Armaturen hat. Begrüßungs- bzw. Distanzierungsformen fallen oft unterschiedlich aus. Dies hat Auswirkungen auf die Ausstattung robotischer Unterstützungssysteme, die nicht nur präzise Lokationen vornehmen müssen, sondern auch Erwartbares, konkret Handlungsabfolgen, Standortveränderungen, Delegationsnotwendigkeiten etc. antizipieren muss. Konkret bedeutet das, dass ein in der Nähe von Menschen agierender Roboter vermeiden muss, im Wege zu stehen bzw. Handlungsabläufe zu stören.

Nun ist nicht zuletzt die Servicerobotik Ausdruck einer von technisch komplexen Artefakten disponierten und durch ein hohes Grad an Mittelbarkeit charakterisierten Lebensform. Der demographische Wandel, der ja nicht nur in Mitteleuropa virulent ist, sondern auch in den hochtechnisierten Gesellschaften Ostasiens, hat der Pflege- und Assistenzrobotik und damit der Servicerobotik

einen enormen Schub geben, wobei ganz unterschiedliche Akzeptanzlagen zu verzeichnen sind. In Japan wird der Unterschied zwischen Technik und Natur weniger scharf gefasst. Die japanische Kultur kennt keinen vergleichbaren Schöpfungsmythos wie die unsrige und die Gestaltung der Natur gilt eher als Ausdruck einer ästhetischen Steigerung und einer ‚Humanisierung‘ der Natur. Dementsprechend gibt es weniger Berührungsängste, was die Nutzung von Dienstrobotern anbetrifft. Der Umgang mit humanoid gestalteten robotischen Systemen wird nicht zuletzt dadurch erleichtert, dass Mimik und Gestik im öffentlichen Raum traditionellerweise reduziert sind. Das japanische Lächeln ist im öffentlichen Raum eigentlich ein gefrorenes Lächeln im Sinne einer respektvollen Distanzform. Eine wichtige Rolle bei der Akzeptanz von Pflegerobotern spielt auch der hohe Rang der Scham in der japanischen Gesellschaft. Man akzeptiert die Unterstützung von robotischen Systemen bei intimen hygienischen Verrichtungen bereitwilliger als die von Menschen, da die eigene Schwäche nicht im personalen Verkehr sichtbar werden soll.

Halten wir fest, dass die Vernachlässigung der Thematisierung der kulturellen Disposition der Servicerobotik außerwissenschaftliche und wissenschaftliche Ursachen hat. Nichtsdestotrotz ist die bewusste oder unbewusste Erfassung dieser Disposition von fundamentaler Bedeutung für das Gelingen von Unterstützungsleistungen. Letztere erfolgen in konkreten Lebenswelten, die in unterschiedlicher Weise technisch basiert sind und unterschiedliche Handlungsfolgen und Wertpräferenzen aufweisen. In der Regel werden die eigenen lebensweltlichen Präferenzen von den Entwicklern und Vertreibern vorausgesetzt und mit denen der potentiellen Nutzer identifiziert. Universal einsetzbar ist Servicerobotik nur unter der Voraussetzung, dass die eigenen kulturellen Präferenzen als universal angesehen werden. Im Anspruch der Universalität artikuliert sich aber schlichtweg auch das kolonialistische Modell der Markthomogenisierung als Kehrseite der Globalisierung. Man glaubt mit technischer Hilfe die Lebensbedingungen technisch unterentwickelter Kulturen verbessern zu können. Das mag ein hehres Ziel sein, und tatsächlich gibt es auch Zusammenhänge zwischen dem technischen Entwicklungsstand und dem Wohlstand einer Gesellschaft. Es muss aber bedacht werden, dass die Rede von einem ‚technischen Entwicklungsstand‘ unterschiedliches bedeuten kann. In Bezug auf die Kleintierjagd im brasilianischen Regenwald ist die Blasrohrtechnik zweifellos hoch entwickelt und effizient. Das gleiche gilt für die Iglubautechnik der Inuit in arktischen Klimazonen. In vielen wohlgemeinten Technologietransfers werden am Ende nicht notwendigerweise die Lebensbedingungen eines Volkes verbessert, sondern schlichtweg abgeschafft und damit kulturelle Differenz beseitigt - ganz so, wie es derzeit mit vielen Sprachen geschieht, die, als Ausdruck von Lebensformen, unter die Walze dominierender und expandierender Kulturen geraten. Technik ist weder kulturneutral, noch ethisch neutral, sondern ein Ausdruck von Wertpräferenzen¹.

1 Vgl. Dessauer 1956; mit besonderem Bezug auf Informationstechnologien vgl. Froehlich 1995.

Was heißt Kultur?

Versuchen wir eine knappe Verständigungsgrundlage bezüglich des Kulturbegriffs zu geben. So soll ‚Kultur‘ das bezeichnen, was die historische Disposition des gegenwärtigen Lebens einer konkreten Lebensgemeinschaft ausmacht. Eine konkrete Lebensgemeinschaft teilt die Sprache, Lebensformen, die geographischen bzw. klimatische Verhältnisse und kollektive Erfahrungen aufgrund von Kriegen, Bedrohungen, sozialen Nöten und Naturkatastrophen. Die historische Disposition artikuliert sich einerseits in materiellen Grundlagen einer solchen Gemeinschaft, etwa in einer technischen Infrastruktur, in vertrauten Artefakten bzw. Werkzeugen, aber auch in typischen Wahrnehmungs-, Kommunikations-, Verhaltens- und Handlungsweisen; nicht zuletzt auch in bestimmten Tradierungsformen, die von oralen, über schriftliche bis hin zur gegenwärtigen, medial bedingten Mischungen von unterschiedlichen visuellen, auditiven und symbolisch-zeichenhaften Tradierungsformen reichen. Kulturen sind freilich auch von Bewegungsstilen, mimischen und gestischen Verständigungsformen und sinnlichen Präferenzen gekennzeichnet. Tradierungsformen artikulieren sich nicht nur in besonderen medialen Gegebenheiten, sondern auch in sozialen Organisationsweisen und Präferenzen, die sich nicht zuletzt in spezifischen Verzögerungsweisen äußern: Jede Kultur ist durch ein besonderes Beharrungsvermögen gekennzeichnet, d.h. sie beharrt in bestimmten Bereichen, während sie sich in anderen Bereichen wandelt. Auch wenn sich Kulturen in einer medial hoch erschlossenen und in einem ständigen Austausch stehenden Welt nicht mehr strikt abgrenzen lassen und die Rede von Inter- und Transkulturalität gerade auch im medientheoretischen Diskurs weit verbreitet ist, so lassen sich noch immer starke Gravitationszentren ausmachen, die sich nicht nur Nivellierungen widersetzen, sondern zuweilen eine eigene Ausstrahlungskraft und damit in Bezug auf andere Kulturen starke Nivellierungskraft ausüben. Ein Paradebeispiel für eine Integration von starken Beharrungsmomenten und ebenso starker Wandlungsfähigkeit ist die US-amerikanische Kultur: auf der einen Seite ist sie extrem konservativ, ja geradezu archaisch ausgerichtet, wenn man an das Strafsystem oder religiösen Fundamentalismus denkt, auf der anderen Seite muss man, was Lebensstile und deren äußerliche, quasi phänotypische Äußerungen betrifft, eine extreme Wandelbarkeit und Diversität konstatieren. Generell gilt, dass sich in jeder stabilen Kultur Beharrungsvermögen bzw. Widerständigkeit und Wandelbarkeit, Variabilität und Integrationsfähigkeit nicht ausschließen (Wiegerling 2008: 303-323). Integrationskraft kann sich nur da entfalten, wo Widerständigkeit nicht zu Erstarrung führt und es für Varietät und Variabilität erkennbare Rahmungen gibt. Stabile Kulturen verfügen über Widerständigkeit und Beharrungsvermögen, aber auch über Erneuerungskräfte, die sich nicht zuletzt in der Fähigkeit artikulieren, Renaissance herstellen und legitimieren zu können (Cassirer 1994: 103-127).

Wenn wir in der Reflexion der Voraussetzungen der Servicerobotik von ‚Kultur‘ sprechen, reden wir von Typologien in der materiellen wie in der herstellenden Kultur, in den Erkenntnisweisen, den Verhaltens- und Handlungsabläufen

als auch in den Wertpräferenzen. Kulturen sind wesentlich Ausdruck und Ergebnis von Techniken der Lebensbewältigung. Sie zeichnen sich dadurch aus, dass sie entsprechend ihrer Zwecksetzungen im Individuum verkörperte oder eingeübte Techniken, aber auch materiell verkörperte Techniken - von Werkzeugen über Kleidung und Behausung bis hin zu Maschinen und nicht aktiv gesteuerten Robotern - ausbilden. Zwecke entstehen nicht in einem neutralen, sondern in einem historischen Raum, weswegen sie Vermittlungsprodukte sind. Ändern sich die Zwecke ändern sich in der Regel auch die Technologien, mit denen sie realisiert werden. Müßig ist die Frage nach vermeintlichen Ursprüngen der Zwecksetzungen, da sich diese in einem Wechselspiel von Lebensnotwendigkeiten, Wünschen und Hoffnungen einerseits sowie materiellen und technischen Ressourcen andererseits ergeben. Zwecksetzungen sind aber wie die Techniken, die zu ihrer Realisierung führen, historische Vermittlungsprodukte.

Kultur und Ethos müssen wie Kunst und Technik vom Ursprung her zusammen gedacht werden, denn Kultur äußert sich nicht nur in materiellen Objektivationen, sondern auch in Wertpräferenzen sowie in daraus entstehenden, entlastenden Gewohnheiten und Haltungen. Die Tatsache, dass der Begriff der Kultur, entsprechend seiner Etymologie (lat. cultura) sich in einer Pflege, Verbesserung und Verfeinerung artikuliert, verweist auf Werthierarchien und Präferenzen, die eine Kultur charakterisieren. Mit der Kultivierung bestimmter Lebensbereiche und materiellen Ressourcen findet auch eine Bewertung statt. Wie Erich Rothacker in seinem ‚Satz der Bedeutsamkeit‘ ausgeführt hat, artikuliert jede Kultur bestimmte Bereiche, während sie andere desartikuliert (Rothacker 1988: 112-122). Verfeinerungen betreffen also nicht alle materiellen Objektivationen und nicht alle Lebensbereiche.

Servicerobotik ist Ausdruck und Teil bestimmter kultureller Fügungen, in denen sich Widerständigkeit bzw. Beharrungsvermögen und Variabilität bzw. Varietät sowie Wertpräferenzen artikulieren. Sie ist nicht jenseits dieser Fügungen zu denken.

Wie unabhängig ist Servicerobotik von kulturellen Vorgaben?

Dienstrobotik wird da eingesetzt, wo ein Bedarf nach ihr besteht. Lebenswelten, in denen Einsatzsphären liegen, sind bereits technisch disponiert und haben einen Nutzertyp, der mit den Entwicklern und Vertreibern der Systeme zumindest ähnliche kulturelle Prägungen teilt. Nun ist die Frage, worin diese Ähnlichkeit liegt und wie lange wir von Ähnlichkeit reden wollen.

Der Komponist Helmut Lachenmann stellte in einem Vortrag über seine Kompositionsweise Variationen des Kinderliedes ‚Hänschen Klein‘ vor, die allesamt noch eine gewisse Ähnlichkeit mit der recht einfachen ursprünglichen Melodie und ihrem Rhythmus hatten, bis er schließlich seine eigene Variation vorspielte, die zumindest für ein musikalisch durchschnittlich geschultes Ohr keine Ähnlichkeit mehr erkennen ließ. Es stellt sich die Frage, wann und wie lange wir überhaupt von einer Ähnlichkeit sprechen können. Besteht eine Ähnlichkeit zwischen zwei Musikstücken, nur weil ein gemeinsamer Takt besteht?

Und wenn das nicht der Fall ist, nur weil eine kurze Notenfolge übereinstimmt? Und wenn das nicht der Fall ist, nur weil ein paar Pausenwerte oder die Tonart übereinstimmen? Wann und wie lange können wir also von Ähnlichkeit sprechen? Man sieht, dass die Frage nach der Ähnlichkeit alles andere als einfach zu beantworten ist. Was Ähnlichkeit auszeichnet, ist allerdings nicht nur ein Katalog logischer Kriterien, die bestimmte Elemente und ihre Relationen umfassen, sondern auch historisch-kulturelle Komponenten, die nicht die Stabilität logischer Relationen haben. Es gibt Kulturen, in denen Ähnlichkeiten zwischen Naturabläufen und Abläufen menschlicher Sozialbeziehungen gesehen werden, die in anderen Kulturen nicht gesehen werden; oder Ähnlichkeiten zwischen Tieren, die wir nicht zu erkennen vermögen. Es gibt Fische, die in bestimmten Kulturen die Konnotation von Ratten haben, also als krankheitsübertragende und schmutzige Tiere gelten. Ähnlichkeit ist also eine vage und offenbar perspektivische Zuschreibung, die allerdings von einem robotischen System als Typus erkannt werden muss, wenn es zu einer sinnvollen und erfolgreichen Unterstützungsleistung kommen soll. Das System muss Schemata und Typologien erkennen, um angemessen agieren zu können, und zwar sowohl typische Gegenstände als auch typische Handlungs- bzw. Verhaltensabläufe. Diese sind typisch aber nur innerhalb bestimmter Rahmungen. Man denke etwa an Ready-mades in der Sphäre der Kunst wie Joseph Beuys berühmte Kinderbadewanne, die natürlich im Kunstmuseum eine andere Funktion und ‚Gebrauchsart‘ hat. Ein robotisches System müsste also diese unterschiedlichen Funktionen und ‚Gebrauchsarten‘ im Museum und im Supermarkt erkennen, wenn es nicht zu Fehlleistungen kommen soll. Dies geschieht dadurch, dass Nutzungssphären begrenzt werden bzw. eine Vielzahl von Merkmalen erst zusammenkommen müssen, ehe es zu einer Veranlassung für eine bestimmte Aktion kommt. Ähnlichkeiten als perspektivische Zuschreibungen sind kulturrelativ; und diese Kulturrelativität wird auf den Templates eines robotischen Systems explizit gemacht. Was aber explizit gemacht wird, ist selbst Ausdruck einer kulturellen Perspektive. Das robotische System ist insofern in seiner informatischen Konfiguration und seiner aktorischen und sensorischen Ausstattung selbst Teil einer kulturellen Fügung.

Wie auch immer wir es wenden, kein robotisches System, das unmittelbar am Menschen seinen Dienst verrichten soll, ist als Universalmaschine zu begreifen, selbst dann, wenn man davon ausgeht, dass es in unterschiedlicher Weise programmiert und - was seine Sensorik und Aktorik anbetrifft - justiert werden kann oder gar ‚adaptiv‘ ist. Auch ein fortgeschrittenes, lernfähiges System ist auf eine spezielle Handlungsumgebung geeicht und passt sich immer genauer an spezifische kulturelle Erwartungen an; denn lernfähig ist es in Bezug auf spezielle Anforderungen und Lebensformen. Servicerobotik kann also, insofern sie unmittelbar auf die Unterstützung von konkreten Menschen gerichtet ist, nicht als universale Maschine konzipiert sein, da es keine kulturfreien konkreten Menschen gibt. Dies ist nicht zuletzt auch deshalb der Fall, weil Hardwarekomponenten entsprechend der kulturellen Anforderungen unterschiedlich gestaltet werden müssen.

Handlungsunterstützung heißt Unterstützung konkreter Handlungen von konkreten Menschen. Eine konkrete Handlung wird durch einen bestimmten Handlungsverlauf, durch eine bestimmte Rahmung und historische Disposition sowie durch eine bestimmte Intention charakterisiert. Die Handlungsintention wird in der Regel durch eine bestimmte Zuordnung zu anderen Handlungen erkennbar und entsprechend auch unterstützbar. Das schließt nicht aus, dass Handlungsintentionen verschleiert werden können, was aber kein spezifisches Problem der Nutzung von Dienstrobotik ist.

Wie unterschiedlich Rahmungen, historische Dispositionen und Intentionen sein können, zeigt der Vergleich einer Einkaufssituation im Orient und in Europa. Im Orient ist Einkaufen auch ein sozialer Akt, sozusagen ein kommunikatives Spiel, das nicht unter Zeitdruck erfolgen kann. Bestimmte Rituale sind zu beachten und effiziente Erledigungen des Bedarfs können unter Umständen zu sozialen Irritationen und Verletzungen führen. Einkaufen ist also kein mehr oder weniger technischer Vorgang, der aus Preisvergleich und effizienter Erledigung besteht, und hat auch wenig mit dem zu tun, was man auf neudeutsch ‚shoppen‘ nennt. Es geht auch darum, zum Verkäufer eine soziale Beziehung aufzubauen oder zu stabilisieren.

Die Erfassung der Rahmung oder Einbettung einer Handlung und die sich daraus ergebende Intention des zu Unterstützenden ist die *conditio sine qua non* für den Einsatz von assistiven Systemen. Rahmungen und Einbettungen sind Kennzeichen der jeweiligen Kultur bzw. der Lebenswelt, in der die Unterstützungsleistungen erbracht werden sollen. Sie zeichnen sich weniger durch anthropologische Konstanten aus, als durch spezifische Präferenzen und Relationen. Für die robotische Unterstützungsleistung sind dabei auch Details von Bedeutung, etwa die Taktungen, die in der jeweiligen Lebenswelt im Allgemeinen und in einer spezifischen Handlungssphäre im Besonderen vorherrschen. Sicherheitsbedürfnisse, Effizienz- und Präzisionserwartungen, Bewegungsgewohnheiten wie Wertpräferenzen spielen ebenso wie auditive, visuelle, haptische und olfaktorische Präferenzen eine erhebliche Rolle für den Einsatz robotischer Dienstleistungen am Menschen oder im menschlichen Umfeld. Dies betrifft sowohl die Sinneshierarchie, als auch die Hierarchie innerhalb eines Sinnesbereiches (Wiegerling 2011). Es gibt kulturtypische Hintergrundwahrnehmungen, die für das Unterstützungssystem von Bedeutung sein können. Ja, die Funktionsweise des robotischen Systems muss an kulturelle Sinnesgewohnheiten und Sinnespräferenzen angepasst sein, soll es Akzeptanz finden und seine Unterstützungsfunktion optimal ausführen können. Ein geräuschloses Agieren kann in bestimmten Kontexten bedrohlich wirken, Druckbewegungen bei bestimmten Unterstützungs- bzw. Pflegesituationen aufdringlich und unangemessen sein.

Rahmungen und Einbettungen sind historisch vermittelt und von zentraler Bedeutung für die Unterstützungsleistung und Akzeptanz der Unterstützung. Wie oben ausgeführt wird im Gegensatz zu Japan die Pflegerobotik in Zentraleuropa in vielen Bereichen immer noch als Problem angesehen, da deren Einsatz, nach Auffassung vieler, zu einer größeren Isolation von Alten und Pflegebedürftigen führen kann.

Kulturtypische Rhythmisierungen des Lebens hängen zunächst von biologischen Prozessen und klimatischen Bedingungen ab. Biologische Prozesse erfahren aber von früh an auch kulturelle Prägungen bzw. Steuerungen. Ruhezeiten und Zeiten der Nahrungsaufnahme differieren erheblich. Man denke in diesem Zusammenhang an die ‚Siestakultur‘ zur Nachmittagszeit in Südeuropa. Schon Tomasi di Lampedusa wies in seinem Roman ‚Der Leopard‘ auf die besondere Rhythmisierung des Tagesablaufs in seiner sizilianischen Heimat hin und darauf, dass jeder, der glaubt diese Rhythmik verändern zu können, scheitern wird. Man denke an den Schritt von Tiroler Bauern, die im Gebirge zwar langsam, aber dafür stetig und ohne Pausen gehen. Arbeitsrhythmen wurden auch musikalisch getaktet; man denke an die Fieldhowlers, die die Arbeit der baumwollpflückenden Sklaven in den amerikanischen Südstaaten oder Trommler, die Heere in die Schlacht begleiteten. Rhythmen werden in hochtechnisierten Kulturen auch von maschinellen Fertigungsprozessen vorgegeben, denen sich der Fließbandarbeiter anzupassen hat. Charlie Chaplin hat das in seinem Film ‚Moderne Zeiten‘ dargestellt. (Bücher 1899) Taktungen spielen überall in der Produktion und Distribution eine Rolle. Produktionsverlagerungen in andere Kulturkreise können zu erheblichen Problemen führen. Auch für die Servicerobotik sind kulturelle Rhythmen eine Herausforderung. Man denke an die Pflegerobotik, die nicht nur auf biologische Rhythmen eingestellt werden muss, sondern auch auf arbeitsorganisatorische Abläufe in Pflegeeinrichtungen. Letztere können vom pflegerisch Sinnvollen erheblich abweichen. In unterschiedlichen Anwendungssphären herrschen in der Regel auch unterschiedliche Präferenzen, die oft zu unterschiedlichen Handlungsabläufen und Rhythmisierungen führen. So können Unterstützungsfunktionen in ihrer Rhythmisierung erheblich variieren, sich beschleunigen bzw. verlangsamen, je nachdem in welcher Sphäre, zu welcher Zeit und unter welchen Umständen sie stattfinden sollen.

Eine Unabhängigkeit von kulturellen Vorgaben gibt es für die Servicerobotik also nicht, u. z. weder in Bezug auf ihre eigene Gestaltung und Entwicklung, noch in Bezug auf ihre konkrete Unterstützungsfunktion.

Wie adaptiv und autonom kann ein robotisches System sein?

Die Adaptivität eines Systems wird ab einer bestimmten Stufe mit dessen Lernfähigkeit verknüpft. Was aber heißt Lernfähigkeit im Kontext von Servicerobotik, und wie weit kann diese gehen? Lässt sich die Lernfähigkeit eines robotischen Systems überhaupt mit der des Menschen vergleichen?

Eng mit der Lernfähigkeit verbunden ist die Idee der Autonomie eines technischen Systems, denn durch Lernen können wir Abhängigkeit bzw. Fremdbestimmung abbauen und mit Widerständigkeiten umgehen, um unseren Willen durchzusetzen. Lernen hat in elementarer Weise etwas mit der Erfahrung von Widerständen gegen unseren Gestaltungswillen zu tun. Wir lernen, weil wir so den Widerstand einer Sache oder widerständige Verhältnisse brechen bzw. beherrschen können. Gerade in Lernprozessen spielen Widerstandserfahrungen

eine zentrale Rolle. Das Überwinden von Widerständen ist der Lernerfolg. Widerstandserfahrungen in Lernprozessen müssen freilich dosiert sein, da zu große Widerstände zu Frustrationen führen können. Erfolgreiche Lernprozesse bestehen aus gut dosierten Widerstandserfahrungen, die wiederum in elementarer Weise mit kulturellen Besonderheiten zusammenhängen. Wir verstehen häufig Gesten fremder Völker nicht, nicht ihre Werthierarchien, verstehen nicht, warum bestimmte Sphären Tabubezirke sind. Wir verstehen aber auch nicht, warum sich ihr Umgang mit der materiellen Welt von der unsrigen unterscheidet, warum bestimmte Werkzeuge benutzt werden, andere dagegen nicht. Dies hat nicht immer sachliche Gründe, sondern oft mythologische oder religiöse. Lernprozesse sind in einer zumindest zweifachen Weise kulturell disponiert. Zum einen durch die objektiv vorgegebenen stofflichen Widerstände, zum anderen aber auch durch die als selbstverständlich und damit nichtausdrücklich erfahrenen kulturellen eigenen Dispositionen. Beides spielt auch für die Entwicklung der Dienstrobotik eine Rolle, der sachlich-objektive Widerstand ‚und‘ der kulturelle Widerstand im Umgang mit einer Sache.

Wenn nun eine gewisse Autonomie der robotischen Systeme angestrebt wird, ist zu fragen, um welche Art von Autonomie es sich dabei handeln kann bzw. ob die Rede von Autonomie hier überhaupt sinnvoll ist.

Auch im Falle von lernfähigen Systemen, die ihre Unterstützungsmaßnahmen eigenständig Daten anpassen, die ihnen über die Sensorik zufließen, spielen Rahmungen und Einbettungen eine zentrale Rolle. Was lernt nun ein selbstlernendes System, das in Japan zum Einsatz kommt, und was eines, das in Deutschland zum Einsatz kommt? Wie artikuliert sich eine typische Unterstützungsaktion in Japan, wie in Deutschland? Schon bei der Einrichtung von Fahrassistenzsystemen zeigen sich Unterschiede, die etwas mit Sehgewohnheiten und -abläufen zu tun haben und entsprechend der Schrift andere Orientierungsrichtungen aufweisen oder sich in der Bild- und Schriftzuweisung erheblich unterscheiden können. Bei Pflegeverrichtungen muss das Bewegungstempo gedrosselt werden und Bewegungen generell der Behinderung, der Körpergröße, dem Geschlecht und kulturellen Gewohnheiten angepasst sein. In ostasiatischen Kulturen spielen Distanzformen, die die körperliche Nähe regulieren, eine besondere Rolle. Viele häusliche Lebensformen sind traditionell bodennäher. Man isst und schläft oft näher am Boden, was u.a. etwas damit zu tun hat, dass man in traditionellen Wohneinheiten meistens nur die Bodenheizung kennt. Ein selbstlernendes Pflegesystem würde also in Japan schon nach kurzer Zeit völlig anders agieren als eines in Europa.

Lernprozesse bei Menschen und robotischen Systemen laufen in wichtigen Punkten unterschiedlich ab. Der Mensch lernt, weil er Widerstände gegen seinen Gestaltungswillen erfährt und seinen Wünschen Widerstände entgegengesetzt werden. Menschliches Lernen setzt eigene oder gesellschaftliche Intentionen voraus, die ein System, solange es unser Werkzeug ist, nicht hat und nicht haben darf. Hätte es eigene Intentionen, würde es auch bestimmte Unterstützungsbegehren, die mit den eigenen Interessen konfliktieren, verweigern. Des Weiteren verbleibt die Lernfähigkeit eines robotischen Systems im Rahmen der

eigenen Funktionslogik. Das berühmte Neun-Punkte-Problem, bei dem neun in drei Reihen quadratisch angeordnete Punkte durch vier Linien verbunden werden sollen, die in einer einzigen Bewegung erzeugt werden sollen, kann nur gelöst werden, wenn die Linien über das Quadrat hinausgehen, wenn also eine Lösung des Problems durch eine Transzendierung des Vorgegebenen erreicht wird. Diese Transzendierung stellt für ein intelligentes System eine Herausforderung dar, die nur gemeistert werden kann, wenn dem System andere in einem Template explizit gemachte Aktionsschemata zur Verfügung stehen.

Ein Transzendierungsschema, also ein höherstufiges Schema, das regelt, wann implementierte Schemata außer Kraft zu setzen sind, stellt ein unlösbares Problem dar, weil es explizit machen müsste, was eigentlich nicht explizit zu machen ist. Der Mensch hat die Möglichkeit ein vorgegebenes Schema zu ignorieren bzw. zu verlassen, weil er sich ihm gegenüber positioniert, das kalkulierende System nicht. Dabei wird das alte Schema beim Menschen keineswegs über Bord geworfen, sondern nur eingeklammert. Der Mensch reduziert eine Situation nicht nur auf seine wesentlichen Bestände, wie das robotische System, sondern erkennt gleichzeitig eine Besonderung, die eine Neubeurteilung der Situation bewirkt.

Ein robotisches System agiert nach Regeln, die es als lernendes System innerhalb einer bestimmten Rahmung selbständig erweitern oder variieren kann. Die Rahmung ist vorgegeben durch die Spezifika der Anwendungssphäre, durch die Möglichkeiten der sensorischen und aktorischen Ausstattung sowie durch explizite Voreinstellungen, die etwa allgemeine Grundgesetze des robotischen Agierens betreffen: Agiere nie in menschlicher Nähe schneller als x , achte in menschlicher Nähe auf einen Mindestabstand von y , halte von deine Dienste gefährdenden Quellen wie magnetischen Feldern Abstand.

Es gibt aber immer auch Selbstverständlichkeiten, die der Entwickler mit dem Systemnutzer teilt. Gerade diese Selbstverständlichkeiten sind aber konstitutiv für die kulturelle Disposition. Es geht dabei um das, was eine Kultur zu Zwecken der Entlastung vorschreibt und was ein geregeltes Miteinander ermöglicht – etwa ein Repertoire an Gesten, Bewegungsabläufen und Auffassungsprioritäten, aber auch von Wertpräferenzen, die als gesellschaftliche Gewohnheiten und Konventionen zu verstehen sind, und denen man sich nie, ohne Nachteile in Kauf zu nehmen, entziehen kann. Natürlich kann ich auf der falschen Straßenseite fahren, auch wenn dies meine Lebenserwartung nicht erhöht, natürlich kann ich Höflichkeitsformen verweigern, auch wenn dies meiner Wertschätzung abträglich ist.

Bedeutsam ist nun, dass ein nach Regeln agierendes robotisches System keine Entscheidungen trifft, weil es keine eigenen Interessen hat und deshalb gegenüber möglichen Aktionen neutral ist, also in kein existentielles, verantwortliches Verhältnis tritt. Alles, was das System tut, jede Aktionsalternative ist im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes gleich gültig. Jede menschliche Entscheidung geht mit der Möglichkeit eines Fehlens und einer Verantwortung für das Gewählte einher. Genau diese Verantwortlichkeit kennt das System nicht. Das technische System als Werkzeug ist sozusagen wesenhaft unschuldig.

Kultur ist selbst ein Ausdruck von Lernzusammenhängen. Der Mensch lernt um erfahrene Widerstände aushalten, umgehen oder meistern zu können. Kultur bietet zum einen Möglichkeiten der lebensnotwendigen Entlastung, wozu Technik einen zentralen Beitrag leistet. Kultur ermöglicht – um es mit Gehlen zu sagen – Hintergrunderfüllungen. Sie stellt ein Repertoire an verfügbaren Mitteln und Gütern zur Verfügung, auf die wir jederzeit als vertraute Basis zurückkommen und von der aus wir weitere Kultivierungen vornehmen können. Kultur artikuliert sich in einer bestimmten Kulturhöhe, also in einem Basisbestand, den wir als gegeben voraussetzen können und um den wir uns selbst nicht kümmern müssen, da die Gesellschaft die Aufgaben der Bereitstellung arbeitsteilig organisiert hat. Wir können sparsamere, sicherere und bequemere Autos bauen, weil eine ermöglichende Infrastruktur (Straßen, Verkehrsregelungssysteme etc.) bereits gegeben ist. Jede Verfeinerung ist aber mit Lernschritten verbunden. Wir meistern feine, aber hartnäckige Widerstände, weil wir grobe Widerstände bereits gemeistert haben. Wir meistern Widerstände aber immer in bestimmten Hinsichten: wir bringen den Berg nicht zum Verschwinden, wenn wir einen Autotunnel bauen. Der Berg bleibt als Hindernis für Bergsteiger bestehen. Als Bergsteiger nutze ich wiederum andere Techniken und technische Erzeugnisse wie Steigeisen oder Karabinerhaken, um ihn als Hindernis in anderer Hinsicht meistern zu können. Lernen verfolgt also eine bestimmte Intention, die entweder individuell gewählt oder gesellschaftlich vorgegeben ist, um in einer Kultur bestehen zu können, was man auch als Kulturtechnik bezeichnet. Wir werden zwar in eine Kultur hineingeboren, dennoch müssen wir die Vorgaben der Kultur in Teilen erlernen. Die Sprache des Kleinkindes passt sich langsam den Konventionen an. Das Kleinkind lernt nicht nur zu gehen, sondern passt sich auch einem spezifischen Gehstil an, es lernt bestimmte Bewegungs- und Haltungsstile und darauf aufgestuft, wie Janich sagen würde, kinetische Handlungen wie Schreiben.

Die vermeintliche Autonomie eines robotischen Systems kann wie alle technische Autonomie immer nur in einem analogen und schwachen Sinne verstanden werden. Das System setzt nicht ‚aus freien Stücken‘ Regeln, an die es sich dann hält. Es folgt aber Regeln, die ihm in Programmen vorgegeben wurden und möglicherweise auch Regeln, die es selbst generiert hat, allerdings aus bereits formulierten Regeln. Selbstlernende Systeme sind imstande in gewissem Rahmen Regeln zu generieren: so können über sensorische Daten typische, sich wiederholende Abläufe erfasst und quasi in ein Schema ‚gegossen‘ werden. Dies hat aber nichts mit der kantischen Idee einer Autonomie zu tun, die selber aus freien Stücken Regeln hervorbringt, denn die Rede von ‚aus freien Stücken‘ wäre nur haltbar, wenn die Werkzeughaftigkeit überwunden und eigene Interessen artikuliert werden, wenn also eigene Neigungen um eines höheren oder anderen Zweckes willen überwunden werden können. Ein robotisches System als Werkzeug hat aber keine Neigungen.

Nicht selten wird Autonomie und Autarkie identifiziert. Autonomie heißt sich selbst Gesetze geben und sich freiwillig denselben fügen zu können, Autarkie dagegen heißt unabhängig von fremden Ressourcen und fremder

Unterstützung zu sein. Wer autark ist, ist noch lange nicht autonom und vice versa. Gewiss kann Autarkie Autonomie befördern, dies muss aber nicht sein. Ich kann völlig autark auf einer einsamen Insel leben und dennoch gefangen in meinen Trieben und Ressentiments sein. Die Verwechslung artikuliert sich zunächst darin, dass man als Systemnutzer glaubt, dass man mit Hilfe von Servicerobotern autark, also von Mitmenschen und Gesellschaft unabhängig werden kann. Dies geht bis hin zur Entwicklung von humanoiden Sexrobotern, die ohne Widerworte und Verzögerung sexuelle Wünsche unmittelbar befriedigen sollen (Rötzer 2011). In solchen Autarkievorstellungen paaren sich kulturelle Entlastungsangebote mit individuellen Wunschphantasien. Eine gewisse Autarkie wird aber auch dem robotischen System selbst unterstellt, insofern es ohne ausdrückliche Bedienung in bestimmten Feldern agieren, sein Aktionsrepertoire durch Lerneffekte erweitern und möglicherweise seine eigene Funktionalität gewährleisten kann, indem es sich selbst mit Energie versorgt und mögliche Störungen selbst beheben bzw. beheben lassen kann, ohne dass äußere Steuerungseffekte notwendig sind. Die Rede von Autarkie ist aber in beiderlei Hinsicht unzutreffend. Wir werden durch unterstützende Systeme zwar unabhängiger von unmittelbaren Unterstützungsleistungen anderer Menschen, mittelbar aber abhängig von technischen Dispositionen und Wartungsleistungen; dies gilt auch für robotische Systeme. Die vermeintliche Autarkie ist also durch eine verstärkte Mittelbarkeit des Lebens erkaufte. Ein Anwachsen von Mittelbarkeit ist aber auch ein Charakteristikum für fortgeschrittene, komplexe Kulturen, deren technischer Ausdruck nicht zuletzt auch die Servicerobotik ist.

Was lernt nun ein selbstlernendes System? Es lernt, was in ein vorgegebenes Schema passt und was durch das über Sensoren vermittelte Datenmaterial eine empirische Bestätigung findet. Das heißt, es lernt nicht ‚aus freien Stücken‘, nicht, weil sein Formwille einen Widerstand erfährt – der nach Dilthey Wirklichkeit ja erst verbürgt (Dilthey 1961) –, sondern allein um ein Aktionsfeld entsprechend der vorgegebenen Rahmungen optimal bestellen zu können.

Ein Serviceroboter ist keine Universalmaschine, sondern bereits in seiner informatischen und physischen Ausstattung Ausdruck einer bestimmten kulturellen Fügung. Dies betrifft keineswegs nur die Justierung der Systeme. Nicht nur die informatischen Dispositionen, auch Sensoren und Aktoren können bei der Nutzung ein Problem darstellen. Auch wenn es weltweite Tendenzen zur kulturellen Angleichung gibt und kulturelle Nivellierung im Sinne der Markthomogenisierung ein wesentlicher Effekt der Globalisierung ist, so kann eine völlige Angleichung – sofern es überhaupt noch kulturelle Vielfalt gibt – ausgeschlossen werden. Traditionen, Sprachen, klimatische Bedingungen, religiöse Dispositionen usw. schaffen nun einmal unterschiedliche Präferenzen.

Auch wenn wir im Falle der Servicerobotik das adaptive Verhalten dem System zuschreiben, gibt es in der Mensch-System-Interaktion das Phänomen einer umgekehrten Adaption, nämlich dass sich der Nutzer den technischen Notwendigkeiten unterwirft. Wir stellen uns nicht zuletzt auch aus kulturellen Gründen in den Dienst der Maschine. Es gibt nicht nur soziale Zwänge im

Sinne einer Notwendigkeit des Sicheinlassens auf Technik um seinen Beruf ausüben zu können oder um gesellschaftlich nicht isoliert zu sein, wie es bei der Nutzung moderner IuK-Technologien der Fall ist, sondern auch einen kulturellen Zwang, der darin besteht, dass sich technische Dispositionen in das verbindliche normative Gerüst der Gesellschaft eingeschrieben haben: Wir erwarten und verlangen, dass die Notfallmedizin schnell vor Ort ist und entsprechende Kommunikations- und Mobilitätsmittel nutzt, wir erwarten bei Naturkatastrophen technische Unterstützung - und die Nichtnutzung technischer Möglichkeiten wird durchaus als ein moralisches Vergehen gewertet.

Grenzen der Adaptivität liegen für ein robotisches System auch da, wo gleichzeitig an Identität und Differenz eines Sachverhaltes festgehalten wird (Volpert 1988: 61). Genau das aber zeichnet kulturelle Fügungen aus. Kulturen engen unseren Blick nicht nur ein, sie eröffnen gleichzeitig auch Spielräume. Dies ergibt sich nicht zuletzt aus Rothackers Satz der Bedeutsamkeit, nach dem jede Kultur sich durch eine Artikulation und Desartikulation auszeichnet, in der bestimmte Felder eine besondere Relevanz erlangen, andere dagegen als vernachlässigbar oder irrelevant angesehen werden (Rothacker 1988). So haben Sprachen ganz unterschiedliche Differenzierungskraft, je nach Lebensbedeutsamkeit von Differenzen. Die kleinste Differenz in der Beschaffenheit eines Dinges oder in der Relation zwischen Dingen kann enorme Auswirkungen auf das Leben haben. Andere Sphären dagegen, die in keinem oder nur geringem Bezug zur eigenen Lebensweise stehen, werden desartikuliert. Dies kann für Farbdifferenzen ebenso gelten wie für Differenzen in der Bezeichnung der Schneeart, die im alpinen Bereich etwa enorm hoch ist. Entscheidend ist, dass es zwischen sprachlicher Differenzierungsfähigkeit und Lebensform einen Zusammenhang gibt.

Halten wir fest: Die Adaptivität eines robotischen Systems endet da, wo vom Typologische auf das unerreichbare Individuelle fortgeschritten werden soll. Der Leitsatz ‚De singularibus non est scientia‘ gilt selbstverständlich auch für technische Systeme. Es gibt kein System, das Einzelnes als Einzelnes erfassen kann, denn alles, was ein System zu erfassen vermag, muss es explizit und typologisch erfassen. Technische Konfigurationen erfassen das Besondere als Typisches, sie transzendieren das Typische aber nicht auf das Singuläre hin. Adaptive Systeme müssen immer dem zu unterstützenden Einzelnen, der kulturellen Fügung, der er angehört und der sie selbst entspringen, gerecht werden. Robotische Systeme, die Dienste für uns verrichten sollen, haben nichthistorische synchrone Vermittlungsleistungen zu erbringen, dies allerdings auf der Basis einer gemeinsamen historischen Disposition von Entwickler, System und Nutzer.

Die Autonomie des Systems erstreckt sich auf das Befolgen von Gesetzen, die entweder dem System implementiert wurden oder die es selbst aufgrund solcher Implementierungen variiert bzw. erweitert hat. Dabei bleiben spezielle Anwendungsbereiche im Fokus, solange es ein Werkzeug bleibt. Wie auch immer wir von technischer Autonomie reden, wir reden nicht von der Fähigkeit Gesetze zu setzen. Das System als Werkzeug nimmt keinerlei Setzungen vor

und wirft keine neuen Perspektiven auf die Dinge, wie wir es aus der Kunst, aber auch aus Paradigmenwechseln in der Wissenschaft kennen. Es hat also keinen Sinn, in einem starken Sinne von Autonomie zu sprechen.

Wie kulturunabhängig können Sensorik und Aktorik sein?

Man kann unterscheiden zwischen dem robotischen Artefakt, das in seiner hyletischen Ausstattung, den Aktoren und Sensoren, vermeintlich kulturunabhängig sei und den jeweiligen informatischen Systemkonfigurationen bzw. -justierungen, die zur Adaption des Systems an kulturelle Disposition beitragen sollen. Das System wird quasi in eine konkrete kulturelle Situation ‚geworfen‘, an die es sich zu adaptieren hat, indem es entsprechend der kulturellen Dispositionen, die diese Situation kennzeichnen, eingestellt wird bzw. ‚sich‘ einstellt. Dabei wird zweierlei ausgeblendet: Zum einen, dass jede technische Hervorbringung Ergebnis einer besonderen kulturellen Vermittlung ist. Keine Technologie entsteht in einem kulturfreien Raum und die Intentionen, die mit ihr verfolgt werden, die jeweils angestrebte Entlastung, die verwendeten Mittel und Ressourcen, die angestrebte Prozessverbesserung zur Realisierung der Intention, sind kulturell disponiert bzw. historisch vermittelt. Dies gilt auch für individuelle Wünsche, die mit einer Technik realisiert werden sollen. Auch sie artikulieren sich nicht kulturunabhängig, sondern sind bis in die intimsten Regungen kulturell disponiert, was nicht heißt, dass sie allein auf kulturelle und gesellschaftliche Bestände reduziert werden können. In technischen Gestaltungs- und Unterstützungsprozessen, aber auch in Nutzungsweisen äußern sich Wertpräferenzen. So ist mit digitalen Schlüsseltechnologien auch ein kultureller Glaube verbunden, nämlich, dass sich alle Verhältnisse so fassen lassen, dass sie präzise berechnet und gestaltet werden können. Techniken sind mit Lebensformen verknüpft, ja sind selbst deren Ausdruck. Dies gilt für die Servicerobotik wie für Blasrohre. Auch die Tatsache, dass Technologien in andere Kultursphären übertragen werden können, kann die Herkunft und kulturelle Disposition einer Technologie nicht verschleiern. Mit jeder Übernahme einer in fremden Kulturkreisen entstandenen Technik finden auch Wertübertragungen und kulturelle Transformationen statt.

So erweist sich die Unterscheidung von kulturunabhängiger hyletischer und kulturabhängiger informatischer Ausstattung aber als falsch. Kulturell disponiert ist auch die materielle Ausstattung des Systems, die Aktorik und Sensorik oder die humanoide Form des Roboters. Die Erfassungstiefe und Erfassungspräferenzen sind schon in der Hardware angelegt. Es geht nicht nur um die informatische Verarbeitung von Daten, vielmehr entscheidet die Hardware schon, was Gegenstand der Verarbeitung wird. Jeder Artikulation eines Datums entspricht die Desartikulation anderer Daten. Welche Daten von Relevanz sind, wird nicht nur informatisch festgelegt, nicht nur aufgrund von Verarbeitungsalgorithmen ‚hergestellt‘, sondern zeigt sich schon in der materiellen Ausstattung der Erfassungsgeräte. Kulturelle Präferenzen zeigen sich bereits in der materiellen Ausstattung der Sensorik, die für bestimmte Erfassungen geeignet,

für andere dagegen ungeeignet ist. Denken wir an Richtmikrophone, die zwar tief und erfassungsgenau in den akustischen Raum dringen können, dies aber nur, indem sie Nebengeräusche oder Hintergrundgeräusche ausblenden. Kulturelle Präferenzen haben auch damit etwas zu tun, dass es innerhalb einer Kultur Sphären gibt, die unterschiedliche Genauigkeiten der Datenerfassung erfordern und je nach Handlungsintention das Akustische filtern. Auditive Erfassungen können ganz unterschiedlich ausfallen. In bestimmten Kontexten sind Hintergrundgeräusche wichtig, in anderen bedeutungslos. Im visuellen Bereich kann die Erfassung des Nahen, aber auch die des Fernen bedeutend sein. Die Grade der Erfassungsgenauigkeit hängen nicht zuletzt auch von synästhetischen Faktoren ab, also vom Zusammenspiel der Sinne. So gibt es visuelle, auditive, olfaktorische und haptische Kulturen, in denen die sinnlichen Präferenzen unterschiedlich sind, was nicht zuletzt von lebenspraktischen Erfordernissen abhängt.

Auch im Falle der Aktorik ist es offenkundig, dass kulturelle Standards eine zentrale Rolle spielen. Es gibt typische Körpergrößen. Ein durchschnittlicher Niederländer ist größer als ein durchschnittlicher Koreaner, was Auswirkungen auf die Größe eines Roboters und auf dessen Greifarme haben kann. Es gibt kulturtypische Bewegungspräferenzen, Greifrichtungen, Anreichrichtungen, Verrichtungsgeschwindigkeiten, feinmotorische Bewegungen und damit auch Erwartungen an die Servicerobotik. All das hat Auswirkungen auf die Anordnung, die Achsenlokalisierung, die Länge und die Feinmotorik von Greifarmen.

Es stellt sich hier freilich auch die Frage nach der Menschenähnlichkeit des Unterstützungssystems. Die Frage wie humanoid ein robotisches System ausgestattet sein soll, ist keineswegs eindeutig zu beantworten. Es gibt Sphären, in denen eine humanoide Ausstattung hilfreich ist und die Akzeptanz des Unterstützungssystems steigern mag. Es gibt aber auch Sphären, in denen diese Ausstattung möglicherweise sogar Angst erzeugt. Auch wenn die Körperanalogie in der aktorischen Ausstattung von robotischen Systemen wie generell bei technischen Artefakten eine wichtige Rolle spielt – worauf bereits Ernst Kapp hingewiesen hat² – so sind die Erwartungen an die Ausstattung des Unterstützungssystems je nach Anwendungsbereich doch sehr verschieden. Auch wenn eine spinnenähnliche Fortbewegung für viele robotische Anwendungen hilfreich sein mag, so wären bestimmte Dienste in Menschnähe aus psychologischen Gründen problematisch. Die humanoide äußere Gestaltung eines Dienstroboters ist jedenfalls kein informatisches Problem, sondern eine Sache äußerlicher Analogien, in denen Unterschiedliches betont werden kann. Was betont wird, ist nicht nur eine Sache der Anwendungssphäre des Systems, sondern auch kultureller Gewohnheiten und Moden.

2 Vgl. Kapp 2015 (Original 1877); vgl. auch die interessante neuere Auseinandersetzung mit Körperanalogien: Lyotard 1988.

Welcher Zusammenhang besteht zwischen Kultur, adaptiven und kooperativen robotischen Systemen und Ethik?

Versuchen wir zunächst einige Grundprobleme für einen ethischen Diskurs über robotische Systeme zu beschreiben.

Freiheit hat für den Entwickler eines robotischen Systems keinen konstitutiven Sinn, sehr wohl aber für die Idee eines Verantwortungssubjekts. Es gibt für die Entwickler von vermeintlich autonomen robotischen Systemen drei Möglichkeiten: a) den Begriff der Freiheit bis zur Unkenntlichkeit umzudeuten, b) ihn komplett zu eliminieren oder ihn c) als Grenzbegriff aktueller Berechenbarkeit zu bestimmen - in diesem Falle wird ein Feld bestimmt, das sich zumindest gegenwärtig noch einer Berechenbarkeit entzieht, es wäre also eine operationale Metapher im Sinne Blumenbergs, die prinzipiell einmal in Wissen überführt werden kann (Blumenberg 2007). Deterministen eliminieren den Begriff nicht nur auf Seiten maschineller oder systemischer Konfigurationen, sondern auch auf der Seite des Menschen, womit sie freilich auch die Möglichkeit von Verantwortung und damit von Moralität ausschließen. Alle Versuche von Deterministen Verantwortlichkeit in welcher Form auch immer zu retten, können getrost als Argumentationsakrobatik abgetan werden.

Die Rede vom Roboter als moralischer Agent hat eine große Verbreitung gefunden (Floridi/Sanders 2004: 349-397; Sullins 2006: 23-30), ohne dass der Begriff wirklich eine überzeugende Begründung erfahren hätte. Aber was soll ein moralischer Agent eigentlich sein? Ein System, das moralische Regeln beachtet? Ist damit ein ausführendes Organ gemeint, das einer Regel gemäß agiert, so trifft das in dem Sinne zu, dass ein Werkzeug sozusagen eine als moralisch bestimmte Handlung ermöglicht bzw. ausführt bzw. eine als amoralisch bestimmte Handlung unterlässt. Man könnte sich ein robotisches System vorstellen, das bei schwerem Seegang noch als ‚Rettungsschwimmer‘ agieren kann, was für jeden auch noch so geübten menschlichen Akteur unmöglich wäre. In diesem Falle könnte man sagen, ein auf Seerettung programmierter Roboter wäre ein moralischer Agent, insofern er eine lebensrettende Hilfsmaßnahme ausüben kann, die einem Menschen nicht mehr zuzumuten wäre. Wir können also von einem moralischen Agenten reden, wenn wir davon ausgehen, dass ein Mensch ein bestimmtes Hilfsvermögen nicht besitzt, das durch einen Dienstoroter aber erbracht werden kann. Im Falle des erwähnten Beispiels würde das heißen, dass man als Nichtschwimmer einem Ertrinkenden auch dann helfen kann, wenn man über einen entsprechenden Dienstoroter verfügt. Der Roboter wäre dann tatsächlich Agent im Sinne eines ausführenden Organs meines Willens. Wir können so unseren Hilfswillen realisieren, obwohl uns selbst die Möglichkeit zur Realisierung fehlt. In diesem Sinne wäre aber jedes Werkzeug ein Agent meines Willens, Pfeil und Bogen ebenso wie ein Auto, also alles, was meine Vermögen verstärkt bzw. mich zu einem möglichen Akteur erst werden lässt. Das robotische System wäre in diesem Sinne eine ‚extension of man‘, also eine Erweiterung menschlicher Fähigkeiten, was freilich eine recht banale und unspezifische Aussage ist.

In einem engeren Sinne lässt sich von einem moralischen Agenten aber erst dann sprechen, wenn das robotische System einen Missbrauch seiner Dienste zu verhindern vermag, wenn es also auch gegen meinen Willen agiert. Man denke etwa an Fahrzeuge, die sich nicht starten lassen, wenn der potentielle Fahrer betrunken ist oder unter Drogen steht. Ein System als moralischer Agent müsste also auch gegen den Willen seines Nutzers stehen, wenn er das System in einem unmoralischen Sinn gebrauchen will. Man hat solche Fragen im Zusammenhang der Ausstattung von Kampfrobotern diskutiert. Der Kampfroboter soll dann etwa zwischen zivilen und nichtzivilen Zielen unterscheiden, soll Handlungsweisen, die nach der Genfer Konvention verboten sind, unterlassen und möglichst unterbinden können, also etwa Angriffe auf Kinder, Einrichtungen des Roten Kreuzes etc. Prinzipiell gilt aber, dass ein robotisches System nur dann ein moralischer Agent sein kann, wenn es Missbräuche seiner Dienste ausschließen kann. Dies ist gewiss in der konkreten Ausgestaltung mit erheblichen Problemen verbunden. Ein solches Artefakt wäre aber damit noch immer kein moralisches Wesen, das über Autonomie, eigene Intentionen und Verantwortlichkeit verfügt, sondern ein programmiertes kalkulierendes System, das entsprechend seiner moralischen Rahmungen agiert, indem es Daten verarbeitet und rechnend zu Lösungen gelangt. Aber das System entscheidet nicht, sondern rechnet. Es kommt auch nicht in moralische Konflikte, weil es keine eigenen Intentionen hat, sich selbst entsprechend auch nicht nötigen kann, etwas zu tun oder zu lassen. Es kann in einem moralischen Sinne auch nicht fehlen und für seine Entscheidungen gerade stehen. Wie sollte man Vergehen eines Roboters auch ahnden? Sollte man ihm zur Strafe Akteure entfernen oder wie einst dem Superrechner HAL aus Kubricks ‚2001: A Space Odyssey‘ (1968) den Saft abdrehen?

Schauen wir auf Relationen, die zwischen Kultur, adaptivem und kooperativem robotischen System und Ethik bestehen. Kultur artikuliert sich auch in Werthierarchien, in Forderungen, Tabus usw., also auch als Ausdruck gelebter Sitte. Dies hat noch nichts mit Ethik als normenbegründender Disziplin zu tun, aber es zeigt, dass Kultur schon ein moralischer Ausdruck ist, insofern Verhaltensregeln, Verbote und Gebote zu ihrem Kernbestand zählen. Eine unmoralische Kultur gibt es nicht, auch wenn wir den tatsächlichen moralischen Status einer Kultur ablehnen. Jedes robotische System ist Ausdruck der Kultur, in der es entstanden ist. Es ist – wie alle Technik – kein neutrales Gebilde. Selbstverständlichkeiten der Kultur fließen sowohl in seine äußere hyletische, wie in seine informatische Ausstattung. Insofern Servicerobotik als adaptive und kooperative Technologie entwickelt wird, ist sie in enger Weise an den bestehenden sozialen Regeln und Sitten orientiert. Kooperation setzt immer ein gewisses Einverständnis in Bezug auf Verhaltensregeln voraus.

Nun gehen wir als Angehörige der hochtechnisierten ersten Welt davon aus, dass unsere ‚aufgeklärte‘ Kultur einen hohen Universalisierungsgrad erreicht hat und damit in gewisser Weise auch universale Werte in ihren Hervorbringungen eine Verkörperung erfahren. Tatsächlich setzen universalistische Einstellungen einen hohen Grad an Abstraktheit der eigenen Lebensform voraus.

Nun erweisen sich Techniken zuweilen als unübertragbar auf andere Kulturen. Man denke an die zunehmende Angleichung der Waffentechnik in der Zeit der Kreuzzüge. Schwere Rüstungen, die in Europa einen besonderen Schutz gewährten, wurden im heißen Palästina zu einer selbstgefährdenden Zurüstung. Viele technische Entwicklungen hängen von Umweltbedingungen und bereits bestehenden technischen Voraussetzungen ab und können nur innerhalb bestimmter Rahmungen sinnvoll eingesetzt werden. Nichtübertragbarkeit gründet aber nicht nur in der Nichtvorhandenheit einer bestimmten Infrastruktur oder in klimatischen Besonderheiten, sondern auch in kulturellen Gewohnheiten und Tabus. Es ist schwer vorstellbar, dass in einem technikaffinen Land wie Japan bei einer Teezeremonie technische Geräte zum Einsatz kommen. Nichtübertragbarkeit hat etwas damit zu tun, dass Technik nicht zu einer Lebensform passt. Kultur lässt sich nicht vollkommen explizit machen, schon deshalb nicht, weil sie sich in einem permanenten Wandlungsprozess befindet. Sie erhält sich durch Erneuerung und Variation, sie ist weder statisch noch flüchtig, sondern Ausdruck einer Verzögerung. Als Entlastungsinstanz weist sie Redundanzen auf. Zugleich muss sie auch eine gewisse Resilienz aufweisen, ohne die sie keine Neuerungen hervorbringen, keine Selbsterneuerung und keine Integrationsleistungen erbringen kann.

Das kulturell Unartikulierte kann für ein robotisches System ein Problem darstellen. Wenn es Kontexte für das eigene Agieren bzw. die eigenen Aktionspräferenzen dekontextualisiert, also auf die als wesentlich angenommenen Bestände reduziert und explizit macht, dann werden diese Dekontextualisierungen aufgrund bestimmter kultureller Vorgaben vorgenommen. Ein System, das uns in Mitteleuropa bei einer Einkaufsaktion unterstützen soll, muss völlig anders ausgestattet sein als ein System, das im Orient zum Einsatz kommt. Sowohl das in eine Situation hineingetragene Handlungsschema als auch die Handlungsintention unterscheiden sich erheblich. Selbst in nahverwandten Kulturen und innerhalb eines Kulturkreises können Dekontextualisierungen unterschiedlich ausfallen. Ess- und Kleidungsgewohnheiten können differieren. Situative Kontexte werden auch innerhalb ein- und derselben Kultur nicht gleich interpretiert. Es gibt mentalitätsgeschichtliche Unterschiede und Verschiebungen, aber auch Verschiebungen durch soziale Dispositionen und individuelle Erfahrungen. Ein verstehendes robotisches System sollte um der Berechenbarkeit willen aufgrund von Eindeutigkeiten agieren. Bestimmte Umgangsweisen leben aber gerade von Uneindeutigkeiten, von uneigentlichem Sprechen, von Ironie. Vollkommen adaptiert wäre ein verstehendes System erst dann, wenn es auch kulturspezifische Ironie und Metaphorik verstehen würde. Diese sind aber prinzipiell wandelbar und entziehen sich der Schematisierung, auf die das System angewiesen ist. Kalkulierende robotische Systeme können innerhalb bestimmter Rahmungen nur kalkulierend agieren. Ironische Brechung entzieht sich aber einer Kalkulation, ‚lebt‘ wesentlich vom Unvorhergesehenen, Ereignishaften, von Abweichung und Distanz. Was eine Abweichung ist, ist wiederum nicht intrinsisch durch das System bestimmbar, sondern artikuliert sich in einer Wechselwirkung zwischen System und einer sich permanent wandelnden

Umwelt. In einem strengen Sinne ist natürlich auch ein lernfähiges System nicht stabil. Dennoch lassen sich, wie auch bei der sich wandelnden Umwelt, in der Veränderlichkeit auch typische Wandlungsprozesse erkennen, die sich auf einer höheren Erfassungsebene wiederum berechnen lassen. Es gibt aber immer die Grenze des Ereignishaften, die sich einer Berechenbarkeit entzieht.

Alltägliche Dienstverrichtungen finden in sozialen Räumen statt. Selbst wenn in ihnen andere nicht anwesend sind, sind diese in symbolischer Weise präsent. Um angemessen Dienste im öffentlichen Raum verrichten zu können, genügt nicht nur die Erfassung physikalischer Daten, auch symbolische Daten – die sich aus besonderen Zusammengehörigkeiten, aus historischen Dispositionen und Wertpräferenzen ergeben – müssen erfasst werden. In Japan etwa spielen Blickkontakte eine herausragende soziale Rolle. Es ist unhöflich in bestimmten Situationen unbekanntem Menschen in die Augen zu blicken. Das sprichwörtliche japanische Lächeln ist eine Höflichkeitsform und signalisiert eher Neutralität als Zugewandtheit. Um eine Situation zu erkennen und einschätzen zu können, muss das kontextverstehende System also mehr als den physikalischen Bestand einer Situation erkennen. Eine Kuh im Alpenvorland bedeutet etwas anderes als eine Kuh in Indien. (Wiegerling 2011: 77-104)

Dienstleistungen werden in konkreten Lebenswelten erbracht, die in einem expliziten Sinne historische Gebilde und als solche immer ausdifferenziert sind. Lebenswelten als selbstverständliche und unbefragte Welten können nicht ohne weiteres technischen Erfordernissen angepasst werden, was bereits in der normalen Produktionsrobotik zu unterschiedlichen Justierungen und Taktungen der Systeme führt. Andererseits sind Lebenswelten aber keine untechnischen Welten, sondern als Kulturwelten selbst immer schon technisch disponiert (Wiegerling 2015). Dennoch sind Kultur und Technik nicht identisch. So gibt es Lebenswelten, die bestimmte technische Entwicklungen und Nutzungen zulassen und befördern, und solche die dies nicht tun, oder technische Zugriffe auf bestimmte Lebenssphären ganz oder partiell verbieten. Klassisch wäre hier das weitgehende Verbot von Nutzungen technischer Geräte am Schabbat bei orthodoxen Juden.

Wenn Lebenswelten nicht ohne weiteres technischen Erfordernissen angepasst werden können, so ist damit in erster Linie die Übertragung von Techniken und technischen Artefakten auf andere Kulturen gemeint. Der Bumerang kann in unseren Breiten nicht zum Alltagswerkzeug, sehr wohl aber als Sportgerät genutzt werden; ebenso gilt, dass Kühlschränke bei Eskimos, die ihre traditionelle Lebensweise pflegen, kaum auf ein Nutzungsinteresse stoßen werden. Bei Übertragungen kommt es auch immer wieder zu Nutzungsverschiebungen oder alternativen Nutzungen. Das muss nicht heißen, dass ein Laptop als Briefbeschwerer oder ein Smartphone als Wurfgerät benutzt werden muss, aber dass es zu Nutzungsweisen kommt, die von den Entwicklern nicht vorgesehen waren.

Der Zusammenhang zwischen Kultur einerseits und adaptiven und kooperativen robotischen Systemen andererseits besteht darin, dass sie sich nicht gegenüber stehen, sondern wechselseitig durchdringen; und zwar in dem Sinne, dass Servicerobotik selbst Ausdruck einer kulturellen Fügung ist, die eine

bestimmte Kulturhöhe erreicht und bestimmte Wertpräferenzen hat, zu denen eben auch technische Präferenzen gehören. Gleichzeitig artikuliert sich Kultur auch in seinen technischen Hervorbringungen und dementsprechend in den Vorstellungen einer adaptiven und kooperativen Dienstrobotik.

Wenn Ethik die Reflexion und Begründung von gelebter Sitte und Norm ist, dann bedeutet das, dass Dienstrobotik als Ausdruck einer Kultur in den Blick kommt, die ihre Wurzeln wesentlich in der Aufklärung und damit in einer universalistischen Weltanschauung hat und die sich selbst jenseits kultureller Prägungen ansiedelt. Angesichts vieler aktueller Konflikte, insbesondere – wenn auch nicht ausschließlich – der Konflikte mit einem voraufklärerischen, archaischen Islam, zeigt es sich, dass bestimmte Formen des Universalismus eine Ausprägung einer bestimmten europäischen Kulturprägung sind, was Husserl dazu veranlasste, die Idee einer universalistischen Wissenschaft eben ausdrücklich als europäische zu begreifen (Husserl 1954).

Damit ist noch lange keinem Relativismus das Wort gesprochen, sondern nur verdeutlicht, dass selbst nichtrelativistische Ansprüche, wie sie in der modernen Wissenschaft formuliert sind, Ausdruck einer kulturellen Prägung sind, deren Wahrheit und Wert allein damit noch keineswegs infrage stehen.

Fazit

Es zeigt sich, dass Servicerobotik immer auch eine kulturelle Dimension hat, die selten explizit, häufig aber implizit von den Entwicklern thematisiert ist. Es gibt keine Technik jenseits der kulturellen Basis, auf der sie hervorgebracht wird. Dies gilt auch für technische Artefakte, die in konkreten Lebenswelten zum Einsatz kommen sollen und damit in besonderer Weise als eingebettete Technologien zu begreifen sind. Eingebettet sind sie nicht nur in einem symbolischen Sinne, sondern auch in einem physisch-materiellen Sinn in gewohnte Umgebungen und gewohnte Handlungsmuster. Nur in dieser physischen und symbolischen Nähe zum konkreten Menschen kann Dienstrobotik zum adaptiven und kooperativen System werden, das Gegenstand der Entwicklung von Dienstrobotik ist.

Gehlens Unterscheidung von Werkzeugtypen in organunterstützende, organsubstituierende und organüberbietende erhält in der Idee einer selbständig agierenden Dienstrobotik eine explizit kulturelle Dimension. Es werden schließlich nicht nur Organe unterstützt, sondern auch organische Präferenzen, nicht nur Organe substituiert, sondern auch beschwerliche Verrichtungen, nicht nur Organe überboten, sondern auch kulturelle Vorgaben auf eine höhere Stufe gehoben. Letzteres führt zu einer besonderen Dynamik der Kultur, die sich nicht nur in einer Ausweitung der Merk- und Wirkfähigkeit artikuliert, sondern auch in neuen Wünschen und Werten, die bisher als unerreichbar galten, nun aber eine technische Realisierung erfahren können. Die mit der technischen Aufstufung des gesellschaftlichen Lebens einhergehende zunehmende Mittelbarkeit der Lebensformen entbindet uns weitgehend vom Verrichten des Lebensnotwendigen, also von naturalen Zwängen, setzt aber

zugleich neue kulturelle oder soziale Zwänge, wie sie sich heute etwa in Verfügbarkeiten durch moderne Kommunikationsmittel äußern. Dienstrobotik gehört in den Bereich fortgeschrittener Technologien, die die Basis unseres Zusammenlebens neu vermessen und uns damit in besonderer Weise zur Gestaltung und reflexiven Begleitung nötigen.

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Klaus Vigerling

O kulturnim dispozicijama uslužne robotike

Apstrakt

Članak se bavi pitanjima koja se tiču kulturnih osnova uslužne robotike. Rasprava i odgovaranje na ta pitanja i dalje je zanemarena u diskursu o uslužnoj robotizaciji. Pre svega, razmotrićemo kako uslužna robotika može biti nezavisna od kulturnih smernica. Kulturne dispozicije utiču na željenu adaptivnost i autonomiju sistema, posebno na njihove senzore i pokretače. Servisna robotika mora biti dizajnirana kao kulturno situirana tehnologija. Samo u fizičkoj i simboličkoj blizini konkretnog ljudskog bića ona može postati adaptivni i kooperativni sistem. Ne podržava samo npr. organe, nego i organske preference. Ne samo da se organi nadmašuju, nego se i kulturni predlošci podižu na viši nivo. Ovo potonje vodi posebnoj dinamici kulture, artikulišući se u nove želje i vrednosti koje su se ranije smatrale nedostižnim, ali se sada mogu tehnički realizovati. Mogućnost posredovanja oblikā života koja prati tehničku nadogradnju društvenog života oslobađa nas od mnogih vitalnih aktivnosti, ali istovremeno postavlja nova kulturna ili društvena ograničenja. Uslužna robotika pomaže u preispitivanju osnova našeg suživota i primorava nas da oblikujemo i refleksivno pratimo tu bazu.

Ključne reči: adaptivnost, dekontekstualizacija, tehnička autonomija, interakcija čovek-sistem, humanoidni sistemi

On Cultural Dispositions of Service Robotics

Abstract

This article focuses on questions concerning cultural bases of service robotics. Discussions on and responding to such questions remain underaddressed in discourses on service robotics. First, we will consider the ways in which service robotics can be independent from cultural markers. Cultural dispositions influence the desired adaptability and autonomy of the system, especially its sensorials and movers. Service robotics must be designed as culturally situated technology. Only in physical and symbolic closeness to concrete human being can it become adaptable and cooperative system. It does not support only organs but also organic preferences. Not only it moves beyond organs but cultural markers are raised to a higher level. The latter leads to a special dynamics of culture, articulating new desires and values previously unattained but now technically realizable. The possibility of mediation of forms of life that follows the technological upgrade of social life liberates us from many vital activities but at the same time poses new cultural and social limits. Service robotics helps us in questioning the bases of our cohabitation and forces us to model and reflect such a basis.

Key words: adaptability, decontextualization, technical autonomy, interaction, man/system, humanoid systems

II

STUDIES AND ARTICLES

STUDIJE I ČLANCI

Bojan Vranić

TOWARD IDEATIONAL COLLECTIVE ACTION: THE NOTIONS OF COMMON GOOD AND OF THE STATE IN LATE 19TH CENTURY SOCIAL LIBERALISM

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyze notions of common good and of the state in late 19th century British social liberalism and their relation to collective action of the citizens. The author shows that British social liberals argued for a type of state that uses top down strategy to encourage collective action in order to transform individuals into a socially responsible groups, i.e. good citizens. The paper focuses on philosophical works of F. H. Bradley, ethics of T. H. Green and political philosophy of B. Bosanquet, analyzing their efforts to reconceptualize ideas of classical liberalism and utilitarian doctrine of the individual, society and the state in light of emerging influence of leftist social movements. The author argues that the works of British social liberals are a foundation of the state and society which will dominate liberalism in the second half of 20th century, i.e. the idea of the welfare state.

KEYWORDS

collective action,
coercion, social
liberalism, liberty

Introduction

What is the relation between collective action and the state? Are their natures autonomous, intertwined or is there a ground to assert a single, coherent nature? These questions seem as important today as they ever were in the ages of social and political turmoil. Today's challenges of global security, economic stability, and quality of democracy in the context of a competition between neoliberal minimal and nation states on one hand and civic movements on the other are perpetually being discussed in academic circles, failing to provide a viable solution. If history of political ideas teaches us anything, that is when faced with the situation of intellectual conundrums, with no solution to be found anywhere, one should return to the classical writings to find at least an inspiration to remain on the problem-solving path. I'm not arguing that a solution for today's problems of society and the state can be found in classical writing, albeit that one can trace the source of current intellectual crisis and start from there.

One of the forgotten corridors of the history of ideas that had a sheer impact on the early and mid 20th century analytical political thinkers is late 19th

century British social liberalism. This period, also referred to as British idealism period (Botcher and Vincent 2000), starts around 1870 and becomes key intellectual discourse in sociology and political philosophy, right up to late 1920. It is a period of intellectual attempts to combine and reconcile idealism and empiricism in philosophy, facts and norms in sociology and liberty and obligation in political philosophy in times when liberalism was heavily contested by socialism, whilst nationalism, racism and imperialism were starting to emerge as a menace for the future of mankind. The answer of British social liberalism to these threats was rather unique to some extent: they offered an account of human perfection by using potentials of institutional configurations of the state, trying to walk a thin line between liberty and authoritarianism. The uniqueness of social liberal accounts of the time lies in their basic postulates that (a) a society is composed of leveled realities, some being higher than others, implying that (b) the goal of the state is to provide institutional settings for reaching “the highest reality”, steering a course for (c) self-perfection of an individual to evolve into an active citizen that strives to become the part of such reality, as the moral imperative of a civilized society.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the postulates of British social liberalism in order to describe the theoretical nature of the state in the late 19th century British social liberalism texts. I argue that British social liberalism set the foundations of what is later termed as welfare state, by giving justification of the state in a philosophical form that promotes the idea of liberty by creating social conditions for human self-perfection. What makes this justification political in its nature is that the promotion of this idea is done institutionally by the state; put differently, social policies that promote the common good such as free and equal education, medical care, social welfare for the poor etc., are political in their nature because a sovereign body imposes them as an obligation, represented by the law and coerced by the force. Since my approach is conceptual and analytical, and not historical, I do not follow the chronological development of the ideas of British social liberalism. Rather, I start from the philosophical account of leveled realities (F. H. Bradley), connecting this account with the idea of moral self-perfection of man as an obligation (T. H. Green), melding these accounts into a theory of state that uses its institutional agencies to promote common good as the highest form of social reality and the true motivation for collective action (B. Bosanquet).

Intellectual Order of Realities

British philosophical and social thought after the French revolution was dominated by utilitarianism and empiricism, which merged into what is sometimes referred to as “philosophic radicalism” (Freeden and Stears 2013: 993). In a nutshell, the radicals argued that all ideas of a man and his position and ends in a society have their origin in his experiences and feelings while the mind has only a secondary role in classifying and calculating ideas. Two types of feelings are crucial in determining and explaining human action: ones of pleasure

and pain. Therefore, human beings are acting rational and being happy when they pursue pleasures and avoid pains. When it comes to a society, one can say that one lives in a good society, when all actions are taken into consideration, there is more pleasure than pain. Such society treasures liberty above all other values, since only a free man can choose actions that can ultimately bring him joy and not sorrow.

This (simplified) description of utilitarianism came under revision once Hegel's works were translated into English, in mid 19th century. Combined with J. S. Mill's liberalism and buttressed from the need for liberalism to find a *modus vivendi* with socialism, sprang British social liberalism. From this new liberalism's point of view, classification of ideas cannot be the only role that the mind has. If that were the case, it would imply that ideas are determined by experience and cannot have a development of their own. Put differently, utilitarianism reduced ideas to psychological states, making them contingent and not universal (Hylton 1990: 59 – 61). The peak of utilitarianism's psychologization of ideas came in Mill's (2011: 813 – 823) works on logic and epistemology. For those reasons, the critique of the philosophical radicals from social liberalism perspective had to start from reconfiguring the relation between experience and ideas. However, their aim was not simply epistemological in its nature, that is, British idealists didn't want only to answer the question about the origins of our knowledge. They were aiming at the level of ontology: what constitute the reality around us and therefore, what kind of objects exist in the world.

The philosophical and ontological revision of empiricism reached its peak in works of F. H. Bradley. To some extent forgotten today, Bradley's works on the nature of our knowledge and of the reality were widely appraised, inasmuch that decades after his major publications, no one seriously took into a task to revise the speculation about the mind that he postulated. The starting point of Bradley's revision of empiricism is in the reduced role of mind to the classification of acts. He argues (Bradley 1908: 330) that the confusion in empiricism regarding what mind can and cannot do derives from the fact that mind indeed cannot create a perceptible world of its own. He acknowledges the facts that what we can feel with our senses are undeniable truths, albeit, from that it doesn't follow that mind has no ontological role in constituting the world around us. Put differently, empiricism creates a gap between our mind and the reality, the one that Bradley was trying to close (Ellis 2005: 104). His argument is metaphysical in its nature, since it's arguing for the mind and reality to be parts of a totality or the whole that we refer to as the truth. The role of the mind consists of giving meaning to the facts that we acquire from the "outside" world. Bradley concludes that facts are subjected to interpretations, which can change their meaning to the very core, making "foundation in truth (...) provisional merely" (Bradley 1909: 335). Put differently, mind cannot alter the existence of the facts, albeit it can change the meanings what does facts mean for human agents and thus asserting relativism instead of crude determinism.

The question that lies in the foundation of Bradley's revision is the one about the nature of the truth. The truth is a matter of coherence, and coherence is

achieved through what Bradley (1909: 330) refers to as “the test of the system”. The test consists of ascribing a meaning to the facts by the mind, i.e. “the same act that transforms psychological images into logical ideas or meanings” (Allard 2005: 56). In doing so, the mind places a given fact into a preexisting intellectual “world-order” of the subject (Bradley 1909: 336). The outcome of such test is to verify whether new or old facts have an action related impact on the subject. If the fact cannot fit into a preexisting intellectual order, whether it is a new or old fact, it must be expelled from the mind. The fact doesn’t cease to exist, albeit it becomes of lesser importance for the truth regarding the world. From there, Bradley developed the idea of lower and higher form of realities, higher being the ones that are closer to the truth and whose interpretation of facts are more action-driving.

As Boucher and Vincent (2000: 69) conclude, “Bradley’s ontology was particularistic, communitarian and Hegelian”. The ontological account of multi-leveled realities served as a foundation for ethics and political philosophy of British social liberalism. Although the nature of liberalism was already significantly changed in the works of T.H. Green, it was Bradley who gave them formal and philosophical shape. The central theme of social liberalism’s ethics and political philosophy is summarized in the idea of self-realization, the one that can be only realized with state’s intervention. In his *Ethical Studies*, Bradley (1951: 99) connects the idea of multi-leveled reality with moral self-realization in a flowing way:

“We have self-realization left as the end, the self so far being defined as neither a collection of particular feelings nor an abstract universal. The self is to be realized as something not simply one or the other; it is to be realized further as will, will not being merely the natural will, or the will as it happens to exist and finds itself here or there, but the will as the good will, i.e., the will that realizes an end which is above this or that man, superior to them, and capable of confronting them in the shape of a law or an ought.”

There are at least three ethical notions that are key to understanding the role of state in British social liberalism account: self-realization as *the end*, the idea of good will, and the idea of the common good ((given both in its normative (ought) and positive (law) form)). The idea of self-realization is *prima facie* moral foundation of liberalism. Both classical and utilitarian liberal doctrines argued for liberty as the key means and an end to achieving the best in a subject so that he or she may become a good citizen. Bradley accept the liberal tradition but refuses to reduce self-realization acts to collection of feelings, that of sense of pain or pleasure. Instead, self-realization is a part of human agency, and the key of self-realization is in acting and not in binary calculus of hurts and joys. For Bradley (1951: 13), both experiences are equally important for self-realization of a man, since the self is always and necessary “the whole self”. One achieves self only when one reaches the limits of its self-realization as the highest form of one’s social reality.

The criteria for validating that the self-realization process is completed by acquiring the quality of good will. Whilst the self-realization process is

consisted out of acting, the good will is a universal principle that is knowable only by the means of the mind. What makes this notion an ethical one is that it exceeds the particular need of a subject, treating its desires and ends as only secondary, and argues for higher reality. It is in the higher order of reality where a subject realizes that a morally founded intersubjective relation is of higher importance for the development of the society as whole than his or her individual interests. Not every subject can realize this ethical end, since people are limited by their natural intellectual abilities; therefore, a political principle of obligation needs to be added into the social account of liberalism.

The argument of self-realization as the subject's end is buttressed by the theory of human imperfection. The theory is common in liberal doctrine, but the solution of human imperfection provided by British social liberalism is unique. Rules and regulations are necessary to protect human beings from doing harm to each other. The negative perception of the law implies the negative acceptance of political obligation: I'm not obliged to give legitimacy to any law that is interfering in my actions, if those actions are not causing damage to property of the others. Social liberalism accepts that human moral imperfection requires the existence of laws, albeit it redefines its negative dimension toward positive form of political obligation. For them, political obligation is a sort of moral engineering process, that *pari passu* protects from harm and develops human agents to reach their full potential.

In Bradley's account of ethics, one can only find some pieces of the puzzle how political obligation leads to moral perfection. I already quoted Bradley's idea of the good will being materialized in acts of (normative) customs and laws. He makes no distinctive difference between these forms, only states that they are a part of what he refers to as "the social organism" (Bradley 1951: 104). The organicistic nature of society and of a subject is seen through their intertwining: "Personal morality and political and social institutions cannot exist apart, and (in general) the better the one the better the other. The community is moral because it realizes personal morality; personal morality is moral because and in so far as it realizes the moral whole" (Bradley 1951: 104). Therefore, only by accepting the duties that are prescribed by the state through the law, one can become the best version of oneself; and vice versa, only by nurturing the good citizens, state coercive actions acquire its legitimacy: "Within the moment of the 'social organism', there is quite definitely a different ontology at work, which could hardly be called crude sociological determinism. Basically, the self-realising individual is not asked to personally invent a moral content, conversely, the content comes to the individual in a pre-existing form of life" (Boucher and Vincent 2000: 73). The idea of social organism is buttressed by Hegelian idea of the objective mind (Boucher and Vincent 2000: 74), i.e. that what defines society and the state is the effort to promote the ideas of humanism, and not the bare idea of monopoly of power. For that reason, the notion of political obligation is treated as an antithesis of liberty, making a dialectical twist toward a synthesis that leads to ethical notion of the society as the main end of social liberals.

Political Obligation, Moral Epistemology and Human Perfection

Bradley's conceptualization of reality is characterized by a mind-object dualism. In order for this kind of epistemology to work properly, ontology needs to consist of a coherence between the ideas of the mind and the properties of an object that is a subject of knowledge. The question that remained open in Bradley's philosophy is what are social and political consequences of such ontology? It seems clear that in constructing a world from the perspective of British idealism, one needs to take into account a coherence between universality and particularity. How to fill this general notion with political content in order to correct liberal political philosophy and its views on state and society, making liberalism more humanistic?

From a history of political ideologies perspective, the question was perceived as a crucial one in the period of the late 19th century. Although 19th century is considered in most textbooks to be a century of liberalism, it is safe to say that in Great Britain as its cradle, liberalism was going through a severe crisis in the last three decades of 19th century (Freeden and Stears 2013). Liberal policies were heavily contested from both left and right side of ideological specter. Benjamin Disraeli's paternalism demonstrated that liberalism cannot ignore the fact of modernization that modern nation state is developing in an opposite direction from the idea of the minimal state. And from the left side of the ideological specter, socialist movements showed that growing influence of worker unions and their demands for social rights is a consequence of *laissez faire* politics of the free market. The pressure from the left and the right pushed liberalism toward center of ideological specter, making it more conservative in defending its core ideas, and changed the face of its devotion for progress. It is well known that liberal intellectual elite of that period were concentrated around Fabian society of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, a British version of social democrats who believed in a vision of evolutive socialistic revolution by using liberal institution and thus avoiding the violence and major political disasters. The new liberal formula was that if every living being is entitled by natural rights, the first end of a society is to make conditions for everyone to practice their God given rights. And who can better insure these conditions than the state, as the highest power in a society. Put in a more conceptual terms, the goal of social liberals was to provide a legitimacy account for practicing coercion as a means to interfere into person's life in order to enable him or her to become the best version of themselves, i.e. to achieve the end of self-perfection.

The change in ideological core of liberalism led to the need of redefinition of the concept of liberty, i.e. the substantial differentiation from the one that was used in classical and utilitarian liberalism. It is often argued that this task was taken by T. H. Green, resulting in the concept of positive liberty, i.e. the one that reconciles coercion with individual freedom. In his account made in *The Principle of Political Obligation*, the starting position is a classical liberal one that only lawful actions may constrain one's free action in order to allow

him or her to make no harm to others or himself (Green 1999: 5). Green is exploring where are the limits of legitimacy of constraint. Put formally: to which extent is it justifiable to condition that one must do X in order to achieve $p, q... n$ that leads to his or her self-perfection; and in which context such justification make sense? For Green (1999: 6), justification can be deduced only if the object of intention has moral qualities, i.e. if coercing a person to act in a particular way X to obtain the qualities $p, q... n$ of an object O ($p, q... n$ are necessarily described by the society as good), then the final result of agent's adoption of qualities of O is his or her self-perfection.

However, goodness of O is necessary but not sufficient condition for self-perfection. The human (cognitive) imperfection may significantly limit the ability of a person to recognize goodness in O (Green 1999: 7). Again, this is a critique of a classical liberalism and its endorsement of empiricism. If my interests are related to the object O, and not its qualities, it becomes quite difficult to explain the value of O both for the agent and the community, respectfully. Put differently "it would be fallacious to draw conclusions about the agent's own good from claims about the goods she pursues. This seems to conflate the content and ownership of desires. Moreover, it makes an agent's interest in others dependent on her contingent desires; it does not explain why an agent who does not have such desires is making a mistake or why one who does have these desires should retain them" (Brink 2007: 42). To make goodness of O explicit for all members of the community, a political engineering needs to be put in motion.

Bradley's and Green's theory merge here. The coherence of knowledge of social reality is achieved when the abstract universalistic element is replaced with *natural rights* and particularistic one with that of *positive law*. In that respect, Green's inquiry is to define what makes a positive law good. Comparatively, in a utilitarian account, a law is good when it makes no harm to subjects of law, i.e. when it is in no clash with natural rights. However, as above-mentioned, this account explains only one feature of law, its intension: the role of a law is reduced to preserving the sense of natural rights. In that respect, the utilitarian theory of law is descriptive in its nature. What Green (1999: 14) is asserting is that a theory of law needs to include a justification criteria of obligation, that is, extension that is purely moral or prescriptive: "in what ways and how far do the main obligations enforced and rights maintained by law in all civilised societies contribute to the moral end described—to establish those conditions of life in which a true, i.e., a disinterested or unselfish, morality shall be possible?" In order to constitute such a theory of political obligation, Green needs to construct a sort of moral epistemology as a standpoint from which he can verify its premises.

The key question behind Green's moral epistemology is on the matter of both knowing the qualities of an object and interpreting a moral sense of them. Green argues that perception of the qualities of an object are possible due to its accumulation of meanings across the time. Every socially conceivable object has its own history and accumulated meanings, implying that perception allows us to describe the qualitative features of it. This part of Green's epistemology

is in line with empiricism; what goes under the part of interpretation can be summarized in the question of what makes qualities of an object moral? Note here that “meaning” is taken in plural, following the possibility of multitude of interpretations of the same object. Methodologically speaking, how we can verify that the accumulated meanings of the object of our enquiry are moral in their nature? If we take that verification in British idealism is tied to coherence, the answer to the question needs to include an overlap of experience and the mind. There must be some general notion of goodness that is always triggered by the senses, and that notion verifies whether the accumulated meanings have moral values for agents or not. When the coherence of universal goodness and particular good of an object is set, it can be inferred that actions of the one who is using the object are also good. It is clear that these types of actions go beyond the descriptive feelings of pleasure or pain – they are prescriptive in their nature, concentrating on issues of right and wrong. Finally, the focus of Green’s (1999: 8) moral epistemology is on actions and their consequences for the human progress: “They arise as the individual’s conception of the society on the well-being of which his own depends, and of the constituents of that well-being, becomes wider and fuller; and they are embodied in the laws, institutions, and social expectation, which make conventional morality. This growth of conventional morality forms the ‘moral progress of mankind.’ But it must be remembered that a merely conventional morality is not a true morality; that it becomes so only in so far as upon habits disciplined by conformity to conventional morality there supervenes an intelligent interest in some of the objects contributory to human perfection, which that conventional morality subserves and in so far as that interest becomes the dominant interest of the character.”

As can be seen from the cited section, Green argues that acting in the name of progress is more than doing self-perfection acts, it ultimately leads to well-being of all members of a society. Such activism is the one that constitutes the core meaning of the concept of “good citizen”, the one willing to dedicate to political participation and spreading political liberties. Therefore, being a citizen is a higher form of social reality than of being an individual. Again, coherence principle requires that citizen’s actions are in a relation with particular type of social object. Green terms it as the common good, ascribing it social and political meaning that is applicable only in the frames of a community, differentiating it from the idea of a morally good.

If all moral actions are in the end valued through social acts (to use Green’s term, external acting), then Green’s moral epistemology is relativistic in its nature, rejecting crude determinism (Brink 2007: 110). The key redefinition of classical liberalism here is in refuting the idea of universal natural rights: they are always relative to the society in which they are practiced. As Dimova-Cookson (2001: 132) points out, Green’s notion of rights is based on a social recognition act: “Green argues against the idea of natural rights as he does not believe that we can speak about the individual in a meaningful way without taking into account her social environment. He claims that rights exist to the extent

that they are recognised by society.“ Green is not arguing that freedom or life are not universal rights of human beings, albeit that there are social realities in which these rights are only secondary to other social goods, such as property, nation, or God’s will. As stated before, social realities can be improved or constructed, where a dialectical dynamic of coherence takes place in explication: by determining that some natural rights have a greater value than others, and using the tools of the mind to establish the intellectual order of importance, active citizen can cancel the exiting social order of goods and create a new social reality. Active citizens, therefore, are a vital component for a good community: “The citizen, for Green, was not simply the passive recipient of rights, but rather an active self-realising being. Green viewed all political concepts from this standpoint. Rights, obligations, property or freedom were devices to allow individuals to realise their powers and abilities” (Boucher and Vincent 2000: 29).

Returning to rights, in Green’s (1999: 87) political philosophy, they have a meaning only when they are in a coherence with obligations. That is why a coercive mechanism, i.e. institutions of the state, need to be introduced to protect the rights by forcing obligations. Not only in Green’s political philosophy, albeit in every British social liberalism text that deals with the state, the main question is always related to making a balance between voluntary moral behavior and behavior conditioned from the fear of the punishment. For Green (1999: 88), fear is never sufficient to make a person accept obligations defined by the law, he or she necessarily have to have a sense for moral duty to act as a responsible citizen. Such a sense is derived from the notion of social good, that is the knowledge of one’s own rights: “Thus the state, or the sovereign as a characteristic institution of the state, does not create rights, but gives fuller reality to rights already existing. It secures and extends the exercise of powers, which men, influenced in dealing with each other by an idea of common good, had recognised in each other as being capable of direction to that common good, and had already in a certain measure secured to each other in consequence of that recognition. It is not a state unless it does so.” (Green 1999: 99)

The state needs to have an end in order to be defined and recognized as a sovereign one. Such an end is relative to the society in which coercion is being practiced albeit, what is equal for all societies is that the “fuller reality” is measured by success of the state of imposing obligations defined by laws. The final concern raised here is then connected with the end and the method achieving it. It is clear that in terms of a method, legitimate state actions are reducible to lawful ones, i.e. the state acts by enacting and conducting the laws. The end is, however, determined by the notion of a common good, which is a universal value since each society has one, yet relative to the particular society’s culture and tradition. Put differently, laws are endogenous to a society, derived from the notion of natural rights that are in coherence with the society’s moral culture. The justification criteria for every law is purely moral in its nature, whereas means to conducting them are political.

Political legitimacy in Green’s political philosophy has little to do with the form of enacting laws, rather with lawmaker’s (moral) intention. By imposing

obligations via law, the state is shaping the behavior of subjects of law to do good, i.e. conducting their actions in such a way to make contribution to common good of the society (Green 1999: 87). In practical terms, the state's duty is to impose such obligations in its social policies that lead to self-improvement of its citizens, such as general literacy, health care, free voting, free press, workers' rights, but also imposing certain versions of national history, patriotism, security measures etc. If treated as the means to the common good, coercion in Green's conception of liberty is legitimate, as long as it makes individuals realize that their own conception of reality and good life can be raised to a higher level, making them coherent with "fuller reality", one that living in a civilized society entails.

The Political State of Freedom

Although Green provides a justification criterion for political obligation from the moral point of view, it is still unclear why should I accept to be coerced to certain actions and necessarily give up parts of my freedom. Classical liberalism tried to solve this problem by reducing the role of the state to minimal actions, while Green introduced an external moral condition (the common/social good). Which of these solutions are better for the state actions is a matter of ideological standpoint that dominates the society; both, however, fail to answer the question regarding individuals and their relation to the political – why should any of us accept any kind of coercion? It is this question that lies in the core of Bernard Bosanquet's philosophical theory of state, the one in which social liberalism's notion of the state reached its peak.

Bosanquet's theory of the state is philosophical for the reason of focusing on the questions of ontology, i.e. social reality. By the time Bosanquet's book *The Philosophical Theory of State* was published, moral and philosophical epistemological framework was firmly established for over a decade by Green and Bradley, respectfully. Purely political issues in their multi-level philosophy of reality were, however, left unanswered, which lead to unsolved paradox of political obligation. For Bosanquet (2001: 49), this paradox is best demonstrated in liberal idea of self-government. In utilitarianism, the idea has twofold meaning: individual and collective. Bosanquet argues that both levels determine the type of obligation paradox which haunts liberalism, respectfully: on the individual level, it is an ethical paradox of obligation; and on the collective it is a political one. Both of these are perhaps most visible in J. S. Mill's works.

In *On Liberty*, Mill (1975) puts forward his famous argument on individual self-government (i.e. autonomy), which is based on negative notion of freedom. Mill defends the idea of free society as the one in which every man is free to act in his best interest as long as he or she do no harm to the others. Mill defends this notion by setting a core of basic (not natural) rights that each society should accept as a necessary condition of progress. However, this optimistic view that each man shall always do what is best for him and (at least) not interfere with others is in a collision with the idea of collective self-government. As

Simendić (2011: 245) judiciously notes, to constitute the best form of government, Mill introduces a two-step procedure: a psychological theory of human desires for happiness and a specific view of collective progress. Seminal image of liberal society as an aggregation of individual interests to increase overall happiness implies that political forms of government need to be in coherence with notions of autonomy at the individual level. For that reason, in *Considerations on Representative Government* Mill (1975) passionately defends representation as a political form of self-government in which an individual, by act of voting, willingly transfers his political rights to a representative, who in turn becomes a political person, autonomous in his actions, and with an end to make progress in a society. A collection of these representatives makes a sovereign body that enacts laws, necessarily conducting and coercing behavior of individuals in order to achieve the end, i.e. the progress of a society. The paradox becomes quite clear: in order to achieve greater political freedoms, one must give up his own active and passive political right for a certain period of time (until next elections). The utilitarian justification for this is that representation and laws are a necessary evil, albeit the minimal one (Bosanquet 2001: 50). Social liberals don't settle with this kind of argument and seek further justification for political obligation. In Bosanquet work in particular, the aim is to reconcile collective and individual liberties by not minimalizing the powers and authority of the state on one hand, and actively encourage political participation of the citizens on the other.

When questioning the nature of obligation and its relation to sovereign political body, Bosanquet argues that the key ontological criteria for establishing a higher social reality is not reducible to epistemological coherence between individual and collective autonomy, i.e. between practices and the reason, or at least it is not a sufficient condition. For him, the act of constituting a sovereign body is not so much in transferring our political rights, albeit in transferring our rights to act. Being natural, our rights are always in our property and cannot be transferred – one cannot transfer its right to be free or alive. However, our actions, being necessarily social, are not necessarily in our property. For Bosanquet, actions can be willingly subjected to a higher will that directs them toward achieving greater social good. Put differently, in order to solve the paradox of political obligation, Bosanquet introduces a notion of will. His argument consists of detailed analysis of Rousseau's idea of general will and reconceptualizing it from moral to an ontological concept. What makes will an ontological criterion is that by transferring multiple individual wills to the sovereign body, a collective will is being established: "Our purpose, therefore, is to explain what is meant by saying that 'a will' can be embodied in the State, in society, in law and institutions; and how it is possible for the individual, as we know him, to be in an identity with this will, such as continually to vary, but never wholly to disappear. How can a man's real self lie in a great degree outside his normal self, and be something which he only now and then gets hold of distinctly, and never completely?" (Bosanquet 2001: 106).

Bosanquet's aim surpasses classical liberal and utilitarian image of the state and society as an aggregation of individual interests; he seeks "an identity" between the state and an individual. This identity is achieved once individual solves his or her internal ethical paradox of obligation, i.e. when they realize that their happiness is limited by their own natural talents for acquiring it. Bosanquet argues that his standpoint sheds a new light on the need for liberty to be put in certain limits, not because individuals are a danger for each other, albeit because of our own individual biological and psychological limitations. Each man achieves happiness when realizes what are his or her "fundamental logic of will" (Bosanquet 2001: 123), i.e. intellectual and social capacities for acting for happiness. What Bosanquet is pointing out are individual's limits to realize its own desires and wants in light of their own development: "For Bosanquet, the way humans organise elements in their own minds is analogous to the way social groups are organised. The associated crowd is often unaware of the ideas which motivate it. The organisation, however, is aware of the dominant operative ideas. Society is considered by Bosanquet as a vast conglomerate of such systems of ideas, some more conscious than others. Each group, trade or profession has its own dominant themes" (Boucher and Vincent 2000: 107).

In defining the capacities of the human development, classical and social liberalism are sharply divided: while the former argues for almost unlimited potential for individual progress, the latter takes a more moderate approach admitting that progress is limited by the need of those who are acting in the name of it. This is, however, only at the level of individual action. In the theory of social liberalism, from the collective action level seen, potential for human development is practically unlimited. As Allard (2005: 144) shows, this has to do with a fact that "knowledge grows over time as it progressively revises and enlarges itself" creating an analogy between development and "the ideal for of the organic system". This is why Bosanquet (2001: 121-122) sets twofold role of the state in his political philosophy account that overarches the classical minimal role (protection): one task is to create conditions for happiness of all people; the other is to show individuals what are their limits and therefore, what is their place in a society. Coercion is not the only way to realize these ends, they can also be done by "automatism and suggestion". In these three ways, the state gives social meaning to our action, making them intentional.

The will of the state in Bosanquet's account is determined by the notion of common good, the same idea that was delineated by Green before. The difference is the way how we can identify the common good. For Green, we find it in laws, i.e. the ones that endured the test of time and accumulated the moral meaning. For Bosanquet (2001: 125), the common good is a matter of collective actions. Laws only conduct acting in certain ways, making actions socially acceptable. They are not the embodiment of the common good, albeit representation of it. Therefore, Bosanquet (2001: 131) defines political obligation as a principle "according to which laws and institutions represented a real self or general will, recognised by individuals as implied in the common good which was imperative upon them." The imperative actions defined by common good

and the laws have a function to “liberate recourses of the character” (Bosanquet 2001: 127). The common good is not found, it is created by putting people in certain routines which make them good citizens. These kind of state actions Bosanquet (2001: 129; 131) terms “hindrance of hindrances”: “Thus we may say that every law and institution, every external fact maintained by the public power, must be judged by the degree in which it sets at liberty a growth of mind and spirit. It is a problem partly of removing obstacles to growth, and partly of the division of labour between consciousness and automatism.”

Bosanquet (2001: 128) argues for a “determined growth.” It is a type of collective action which leads to progress, both on individual (increasing intellectual capacities) and collective level (creating common good). What is specific for Bosanquet and social liberals is that a strategy for achieving a determinate growth is a top down one. It is the state that should motivate individuals to become the best version of themselves. Taken in historical context of the turn of the century, this is not an unreasonable request. The state should use its institutional resources to motivate individuals to take active participation in social life by raising general literacy, life and work conditions, etc. Free education, free health care, social programs for unemployed workers, regulations of the free market, regulations in the field of political competition, correction facilities as resocialization institutions and not those of punishment are just some of the institutional means that state can put into motion. This kind of state is the one that has a positive influence on liberties, it actively encourages individuals to expand them (Bosanquet 2001: 131). As Bosanquet (2001: 132) puts, it is still on the individuals themselves to define their actions in the way that transforms them into active citizen, while the purpose of the state is purely moral: “The end of the State is a moral purpose, imperative on its members. But its distinctive action is restricted to removing hindrances to the end, that is, to lending its force to overcome —both in mind and in externals essential to mind— obstacles which otherwise would obstruct the realisation of the end.”

Concluding Remarks

British social liberalism was a pioneer and a unique attempt to reconcile the growing power of the state and emerging social movements in the second half of the 19th century. There are at least three standpoints from which we can define this type of social liberalism. From a philosophical standpoint, British social liberalism is an attempt to understand and reconcile new emerging social realities that go beyond the interests of individuals. From a political perspective, these realities clash in their interest to gain control over the state, as the highest coercive power in the society. Finally, social liberalism recognizes the importance of grass-root movements, i.e. the new emerging collective actions of the citizens. Both the state and civic movements are creating a dialectic of conflict, which social liberalism is trying to solve from ethical and political view.

The second standpoint is, therefore, a merge of ethics and politics. Social liberalism believes that all collective actions can be beneficial for a society, if they are directed toward constituting the common good. As seen in Green's arguments, for social liberals, this is only possible if social actions are conducted according to the law. Finally, a political standpoint provides arguments for accepting the political obligation derived from the law. Again, in a dialectical manner, the thesis, i.e. the state, is changed by the demands of the anti-thesis (social movements), becoming responsible for the legitimacy of all social actions, not just the ones concerning protection. The dialectic is shifting the role of state from negative to positive one, which in turn has an impact to one's perception of what freedom is. The general will and goodness of collective action is achieved only if the state involves itself in the lives of its citizens, showing them positive examples how to become the best versions of themselves, thus making a society of higher reality.

What remains outside of British social liberalism conceptualization of the relation between the state and its citizens is the case of unwilling actions. What every social liberal is arguing for is a positive conditional that explicates that if the state acts good, the citizens will follow. The negative conditional is left unanswered however: if the state doesn't act good, albeit it forces its citizens to make unwilling actions by using or threatening them with physical force, or suggesting them to behave in certain ways that are not in the best interest of the society by using (e.g.) media and education, is the coercion legitimate? The answer here is clearly negative and undefendable from a liberal point of view, i.e. there is no true liberal perspective that could provide an answer that can justify state's action that forces individuals to behave in ways that are contrary to their interests and rights. Put differently, British social liberalism sees only a potential for goodness in the actions of the state, and not the dangers of its interventions into private life of the individuals. What social liberals somehow fail to notice is that social movements and citizens dissatisfaction and protests emerged for a reason. They saw them only as a potential social cleavage that needed to be bridged, and the state is the one that can construct that bridge. This overconfidence in the state's good intention only led liberalism to embrace more conservative stand, forgetting its progressive roots and becoming more tolerant to authoritarian options that allegedly defend freedom of collective entities. The idea of merging liberalism and socialism failed with the rise of the state as the solution for growing social tensions. For this reason, social liberalism failed to have more influence after the first generation of authors stopped publishing their works, and theoretically was revived only in the second half of the 20th century by redefining the positive influence of the state as the welfare state.

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Bojan Vranić

Prema ideacionom kolektivnom delanju: ideje opšteg dobra i države u socijalnom liberalizmu kasnog 19. Veka

Apstrakt

Cilj ovog rada je analiza ideja opšteg dobra i države u britanskom socijalnom liberalizmu kasnog 19. veka i njihovog odnosa prema građanskom kolektivnom delanju. Autor pokazuje da su britanski socijalni liberali iznosili argumente u prilog državi koja koristi strategiju odozgo na dole da bi podstakla delanje koje transformiše pojedince u društveno odgovorne grupe, tj. dobre građane. Rad se fokusira na filozofske spise F. H. Bredlija, etiku T. H. Grina i političku filozofiju B. Bosanke, analizirajući njihove pokušaje da rekonceptualizuju ideje klasičnog liberalizma i doktrine utilitarizma o pojedincu, društvu i državi a u svetlu rastućeg uticaja levih društvenih pokreta. Autor pokazuje da su dela Britanskih socijalnih liberala temelj države i društva koje će dominirati liberalizmom u drugoj polovini 20. veka, tj. ideji o državi blagostanja.

Ključne reči: kolektivno delanje, prisila, socijalni liberalizam, sloboda

Žarko Cvejić

BLASTING THE PAST: A REREADING OF WALTER BENJAMIN'S *THESES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY*

ABSTRACT

The text offers a reappraisal of Walter Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (*Über den Begriff der Geschichte*; 'On the Concept of History') from the perspective of global politics today and its similarities with the socio-economic and political situation in Europe and the Americas during the 1920s and 30s; more specifically, the impact of crises on the erosion of trust in liberal representative democracy and the concomitant rise of mostly rightwing populist movements and their strongmen leaders, aided to a significant degree by the media, 'old' and 'new' alike. The purpose of the text is to draw lessons from Benjamin's vision of materialist historiography for our current political predicament.

KEYWORDS

Walter Benjamin, history, historical materialism, historicism, progress, Karl Marx, allegory, narrativity, continuum of history, Fascism

In April this year (2019), the Faculty of Media and Communication (*Fakultet za medije i komunikacije, FMK*) in Belgrade hosted a one-day scholarly academic conference, titled *The (Post)Digital Age: Media, Business, Technology, Trust*. The conference featured a selection of keynote speakers from the United Kingdom and the United States, including Andrew McStay of Bangor University (UK), Mara Einstein of the City University of New York, Christopher Hackley of Royal Holloway London, and Des Freedman of Goldsmiths, London, as well as Lazar Džamić from the Faculty of Media and Communication. The keynotes were accompanied by a panel discussion between the audience and several prominent figures from Serbia's academic and business community in the field of media, including Aleksandar Fatić from the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory (*Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju*); Goran Tomka from the Faculty of Sport and Tourism (*Fakultet za sport i turizam*) at the University of Novi Sad; Branimir Brkljač, story-maker and founder of Mokrin House; and Uroš Krčadinac from the Faculty of Media and Communication. The panel was moderated by Danica Čigoja Piper (FMK). The main topics addressed in the keynotes and panel discussion included the digital as the first meta-medium and indispensable infrastructural paradigm of our lives in the 21st century, including not only media, but also education, politics, business,

retail, and marketing, and much more concerning our everyday lives; the notion of revolution in the digital revolution; the work of paratexts in digital communication; the ethics of Internet marketing; issues in empathic technology, and much more.¹

Following the conference, I was asked to do a brief interview with Des Freedman, one of the keynote speakers. Provoked by some of the issues he raised in his talk as well as a number of recent and not so recent developments in European and international politics, I asked him whether and, if yes, to what extent he would draw parallels between the situation in global economics and politics during the 1920s and 30s, especially in Europe and North America, and our present socio-economic and political predicament. Specifically, some of the parallels that came to my mind included the economic and other crises of the 1930s and our own time;² the erosion of trust in and decline of liberal representative democracy throughout 1930s Europe (with a few noble exceptions) and even more widely today;³ the concomitant rise of typically rightwing populist movements⁴ personalised by their more or less charismatic leaders, such as Mussolini in 1920s Italy and, to a lesser extent, Hitler in Germany, as well as, today, Donald Trump in the US, Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Matteo Salvini in Italy, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, and many others,⁵ offering seemingly easy

1 More information about the conference may be found at FMK, internet.

2 ‘As we find ourselves entering the adolescent years of the twenty-first century, it appears that we are well and truly living in the age of crisis – the Global Financial Crisis, the Eurozone crisis, environmental crisis, various humanitarian crises – the list goes on. More broadly, it is alleged that we are undergoing a crisis of faith in democracy’, wrote Benjamin Moffitt in 2016 (Moffitt 2016: 118). For more on crisis, real or perceived, as a major if not the main catalyst of populism, see also Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 100, 106 and Anselmi 2018: 37. Moffitt still ventures the farthest in concentrating on crisis as the main factor in the rise of populism, when he writes, for instance, that ‘if we do not have the performance of crisis, we do not have populism’ and that ‘the performance of crisis should be seen as internal to populism – not just as an external cause or catalyst for populism, but also as a central feature of the phenomenon itself’ (Moffitt 2018: 123).

3 For more on the current erosion of trust in liberal democracy, see, for instance, Birgit Sauer’s diagnosis of ‘a wider and deeper liberal-democratic crisis’ in the western world (Sauer et al. 2018: 159). For a detailed discussion of liberal democracy as the main target of populism, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017. For discussions of populism’s threat to liberal democracy, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 79–91; Anselmi 2018: 41, 89; and Moffitt 2016: 148–152.

4 ‘These are good times for populism’, Moffitt writes in his book, titled *The Global Rise of Populism* (Moffitt 2016: 162). Similarly, Manuel Anselmi notes ‘a global populist rise’ (Anselmi 2018: 108), while Toril Aalberg describes populism as ‘an increasingly pervasive phenomenon in European politics’ (Aalberg et al. 2017: 3). For more on the global rise of populism, see also Mazzoleni 2014: 44, Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 21–40, and Lochocki 2018.

5 ‘Most populist movements are initiated by charismatic figures that tend to become absolutist leaders and authority figures’, writes Gianpietro Mazzoleni (Mazzoleni 2014: 45). In the view of Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, ‘populism implies the emergence of a strong and charismatic figure, who concentrates power and maintains a direct

and ‘common sense’ solutions (e.g. ‘Build that wall!’) to the crises and various social grievances of their day, whether real or imagined;⁶ their ‘solutions’, usually predicated on pitting an ostensibly inclusive but really exclusionary notion of ‘the people’, honest and hardworking, against corrupt elites⁷ and various Others in Manichean, ‘us vs. them’ dualist incendiary rhetoric, whether targeting ‘international Jewry’, Free Masons, Bolsheviks, and others, as in the 1930s, or refugees, immigrants, and other minorities today, and aimed at minority rights, checks and balances, and other mainstays of liberal democracy;⁸ and, last but not least, the complicity, often knowing, of both ‘old’ (traditional, legacy) elite, mainstream and commercialised tabloid media, seeking to improve their bottom lines, and ‘new’ media – wireless telegraphy, radio, and sound film in the 1920s and 30s and the Internet, that is, various media (web portals, social networks, applications, and the like) supported by the Internet, whose massive reach and, in our time, interactivity, virality, and lack of regulation and ‘gate-keeping’ (i.e. censorship) have massively benefited the spread of extremist rightwing populist political messaging.⁹

Of course, many of these parallels have already been drawn by a number of scholars in political science, media and communication studies, and other fields. For instance, populist elements in Nazism and especially Italian fascism have been discussed by Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 33) as well as Gianpietro Mazzoleni, who identifies some of Europe’s 1920s and 30s populist movements with fascism when

connection with the masses’ (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 4). According to Moffitt, the populist leader is ‘the key performer of contemporary populism’ (Moffitt 2016: 16). For more detailed discussions on the centrality of leaders to most populist movements, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017 and Moffitt 2016: 16.

6 See more detailed discussions in Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 68 and Moffitt 2016: 52, 131–132.

7 For more on the populist construction of ‘the people’ and ‘the elites’, as well as its Manichean anti-elitist discourse, see Aalberg et al. 2017: 14–15 (‘the communicative construction of “the people” [...] constitutes the undisputed core of populist communication’); Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 5–12, 104–105; Anselmi 2018: 8 (‘A discursive, argumentative communication style that is always Manichean’); and Moffitt 2016: 107 (‘“the people” is not a pre-existing social group [...] Rather, “the people” only come to be “rendered-present” through mediated representation, which in populism is usually linked with the image of the leader’).

8 On nativism and the exclusion of all Others in the construction of ‘the people’ in contemporary populism as well as *das Volk* in its 1930s version, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017; Lochocki 2018: 8–25; Moffitt 2016: 52, 149; and Herf 2013, 91.

9 Moffitt’s assertion that ‘the media are never just neutral “loudspeakers” for populist performances but are actually active participants, often presenting themselves as proxies for “the people” and answering claims on their behalf’ is a compelling and succinct summary of this complicity (Moffitt 2016: 102). For more detailed discussions, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 103–114, Anselmi 2018: 81–86, Moffitt 2016, Reinemann et al. 2019: 6, Mazzoleni 2018: xv–xvi, and Wodak 2018, xvii–xx. For more on the Nazis’ use of what were then new media, see Etlin 2002: xviii; Tworek 2019: 99, 118; Hilmes 2013: 201–202.

he writes that some of them ‘ultimately developed into the Fascist parties that came to power in Italy, Spain, Germany and Portugal’ (Mazzoleni 2014: 44). Ernesto Laclau, one of the most prominent theorists who analysed populism, drew another parallel when he wrote that ‘[w]ithout the slump of the 1930s, Hitler would have remained a vociferous fringe ringleader’ (Laclau 2005: 177), just like today’s populists arguably owe their success to the crisis of 2008 and ensuing upheavals. Moffitt likewise notes that ‘there are historical precedents [to today’s populism] in totalitarianism, in which the leader functions as the embodiment of a unified society’ (Moffitt 2016: 63–64); ‘In both [totalitarianism and populism], the leader is the figure that represents “the people”, bringing together and uniting them against enemies’ (Moffitt 2016: 72).¹⁰ Regarding the advent of wireless telegraphy and radio in the 1920s and today’s new media, Heidi Tworek provides some interesting parallels: ‘Wireless was the first technology to reach vehicles on the move, the first to become instantaneous point-to-many technology, the first where physical connections were not necessary to reach each receiver’ (Tworek 2019: 13). Further interesting parallels could still be made between the opportunistic love-hate relationships that 1930s populists and their modern successors have cultivated with mainstream media, which they decried then as *Lügenpresse* and *Systempresse* (‘lying media’, ‘system media’) much as they decry it now as ‘fake news’ and ‘enemies of the people’, unhesitant to use it to further their own agendas (Tworek 2019: 170; Moffitt 2016: 87) as well as the calculated mixing of entertainment and propaganda on German radio under Goebbels and in today’s ‘infotainment’, etc. (Anselmi 2018: 81).

Responding to my question, then – to what extent would you draw parallels between the political and socio-economic situation in Europe and beyond during the 1920s and 30s and today – Des Freedman gave the following response:

Any question that encourages us to think historically, making links, tracing continuities and discontinuities between different historical periods is likely to generate a more profound, a more complex account of the world in which we live. So, without wanting to say that these two periods [...] are the same, I think it’s important to reflect on some of the similarities. And also, I think, by doing that, it helps us to think there is something that is both new, about our current era, but also something that we have faced before.

So, in terms of that, quite clearly the rise of a form of right-wing populism, forms of propaganda and disinformation that were not invented in the digital era, but certainly were intensified in the 1930s in very powerful and disastrous ways, we should be learning from those periods and not just locating everything as if it started in 2001 or even this decade. In terms of the rise of racism,

¹⁰ For more on populist leaders’ self-positing as both ‘ordinary men’ and extraordinary figures in terms of ‘embodying the people’ and directly channelling their general will, see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017: 43–64; Anselmi 2018: 8, 20; and Moffitt 2016: 60–74.

anti-Semitism, a distrust of strangers, of foreigners and so on, there are important continuities between the two periods and we should be learning, I think, some lessons particularly about the media, of how we should not let claims about the dangers of immigration go unchallenged. [...] you can see some of that coverage in the 1930s in the newspapers in a way in which we see much of that in 2019 in new digital forms.

So it seems to be very useful to learn the lessons of the 1930s and to act decisively against those political forces [...].¹¹

Motivated by Freedman's response, I decided to use this paper not only as an opportunity to draw our attention to the disturbing parallels between the 1930s and our own time, which I attempted to do above, as succinctly as possible, but also, in what follows, to offer a discussion of a short but famous philosophical fragment from that era, bequeathed to us by one of its most tragic philosophical figures: Walter Benjamin's *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (*Über den Begriff der Geschichte*, 'On the Concept of History'), because in my mind, some 80 years later, Benjamin's political re-conceptualisation of history still offers us a chance to learn from his tragic time, to learn useful lessons from the 1930s, as Freedman put it, and equip us with potent conceptual and philosophical weapons 'to act decisively against those political forces', 'something that we have faced before'. In his *Companion to the Works of Walter Benjamin*, Rolf Goebel asks: 'Is our time – late capitalist postmodernity in the age of globalizing politics and digital media – particularly destined to actualize Walter Benjamin?' (Goebel 2009: 1). While I am not sure if our time is particularly destined for anything, Benjamin's continued relevance today does strike me as evident. Writing in the same volume, Marc de Wilde described Benjamin's thought in the *Theses* as 'still valuable and relevant for us today', as 'a critique of totalitarian ideologies that, to this date, has remained unsurpassed in philosophical depth and rigor' (De Wilde 2009: 177). In what follows, I hope to show why, with regard to some of our most pressing political concerns today.

For reasons that I will presently make apparent, I begin with a quick biographic reminder. Walter Benjamin wrote his *Theses* during the final months of his Parisian exile, probably in the Spring of 1940 and only weeks before the collapse of France, followed by Benjamin's own death by suicide in late September of the same year, in a failed attempt to reach the relative safety of Spain and from there emigrate to the United States. Published posthumously in 1942 by Theodor Adorno and Hannah Arendt, even though Benjamin himself had never intended them for publication, the *Theses* are typically cited as Benjamin's last finished work. As Uwe Steiner notes, they 'are emphatically thought to be Benjamin's legacy not only on the basis of their place in the context of his writings, but more even in view of the historical circumstances under which they were written' (Steiner 2004: 173).

11 An integral version of Freedman's response is available at Freedman, internet.

And those circumstances were truly terrible. While Benjamin was at no point in his life blessed with a tranquil existence – his ‘life was, by choice and circumstance, predicated on the perennial experience of dislocation, exile, and ruination’ (Goebel 2009: 7) – his circumstances, financial and otherwise, were steadily deteriorating throughout the 1930s, until the catastrophe of September 1940. As a German-Jewish intellectual seeking refuge in Paris from the Nazis’ persecution of Jews in Central Europe, Benjamin lived there in a sort of double exile, often in abject poverty as well. Always a fierce critic of fascism, which for him meant both German National Socialism and its Italian counterpart, Benjamin watched fascism’s peace and wartime gains with horror and alarm, which are all too audible in the *Theses*. However, the year 1940 also saw the signing of the infamous German-Soviet Nonaggression Treaty, which in Benjamin’s eyes irredeemably compromised not only the version of state communism practised in Stalin’s Soviet Union, already damaged by the purges and show trials of the 1930s, but also the European communist movement as a whole. ‘It was his disappointment with Communism that led Benjamin to write the theses. His main motive was to understand why Communism had betrayed its cause by siding with Fascism instead of opposing it’, De Wilde writes (De Wilde 2009: 179), although one would probably want to qualify his ‘Communism’ as ‘Soviet state communism’ or ‘European party communism of the 1930s’, since Benjamin, as I attempt to show below, remained a communist, albeit perhaps in a utopian sense, to the end of the *Theses* and his life.

In my mind, familiarity with this historical context is vital to understanding the notoriously cryptic prose of the *Theses*. On an objective level, the prose is cryptic because the *Theses* were only a sketch, not intended for publication, but, as Esther Leslie nicely put it, ‘intended to say so much with few words’; their ‘cryptic, poetic references derive a language for thinking when language has failed’ (Leslie 2000: 175). And in 1940s Europe, language may have failed indeed. However, as I seek to show below, the *Theses* grow perhaps a bit less cryptic when read through the lens of Benjamin’s concrete and urgent concern with Europe’s predicament at the time, that is, the seemingly unstoppable march of fascism (including Nazism) and the abject and complicit defeatism and acquiescence of its conservative and social-democratic, even communist enablers. As I try to show below, this shaped Benjamin’s perception of what he refers to in the *Theses* as ‘historical materialism’, which substantially diverges from its orthodox or ‘vulgar’ Marxist conception, embodying Benjamin’s implicitly ambivalent stance on the Marxist conception of history.

Thesis I is a good place to start, not only because it happens to be Benjamin’s opening thesis, but also because it incorporates the ambivalence noted above; it is also a famous instance of Benjamin’s ‘cryptic, poetic references’. Benjamin here tells the story of the famed chess automaton: a chess-playing puppet dressed in ‘Turkish’ garb, for which (almost) nobody is a match. In fact, there is a dwarf inside the cupboard underneath the puppet, proficient in chess and hidden behind an intricate system of mirrors. ‘One can imagine a philosophical counterpart to this device’, Benjamin writes, positing the story as an

allegory of (his version of) ‘historical materialism’: ‘The puppet called “historical materialism” is to win all the time. It can easily be a match for anyone if it enlists the services of theology, which today, as we know, is wizened and has to keep out of sight’ (Benjamin 1968: 255). Over the past 80 years, much ink has been spilled trying to decipher this allegory, from Gershom Scholem’s early readings, in which he interpreted the allegory as Benjamin’s break with historical materialism and, by extension Marxism, and return to theology and metaphysics, arguably in line with Scholem’s own interests and ideological positions, to the present paper and some of the works cited in it; indeed, 80 years on, Benjamin’s allegory continues to fascinate. Is it, to the contrary, an acknowledgement of the conceptual supremacy of (Benjamin’s) ‘historical materialism’ over other conceptions of history? Or is it, perhaps, a thinly veiled irony, or suspicion, perhaps? For there is something not unequivocally positive in locating historical materialism in the *puppet*, an inanimate automaton operated by a hidden impostor, a ‘wizened dwarf’.¹² And crucially, what did Benjamin mean by ‘theology’ in this and the remaining Theses, which ‘has to keep out of sight’? Out of whose sight? Presumably out of its opponent’s sight, sitting across the chessboard; but who might be this opponent?

I will address that final question first, as an avenue to tackling the other two. If, according to Benjamin’s allegory, ‘historical materialism’ is to be situated in the puppet, its opponent, in the *Theses* and the allegory itself, must be ‘historicism’. ‘Historicism is the enemy’, Esther Leslie notes (Leslie 2000: 195). Benjamin explicitly names and subjects it to a severe critique throughout the text, most notably in Theses VI, VII, XIV, XVI, and XVII. As Thesis VI makes it clear, what Benjamin means by historicism is the ruling German, that is, Prussian 19th-century conception of history, epitomised by Leopold von Ranke’s famous dictum that history ought to be told ‘the way it really was’ (Benjamin 1968: 257), by objectively *uncovering* causal historical narratives in the past, mostly by studying written historical sources. Benjamin resolutely rejects this ‘antiquarian interest in history’ (Steiner 2004: 170) and ‘the archival complacency of nineteenth-century historicism’ (Goebel 2009: 12), on two counts. First, because, as De Wilde correctly notes, following Ranke’s prescription means ‘in fact serving the ruling classes’, because ‘the image of the past, as it is constructed and read in the present, is always implicated in a certain configuration of power’ (De Wilde 2009: 186). Second, and perhaps more importantly for our purposes here, Benjamin also rejects historicism on account of its particular conception of historical time. In this long intellectual tradition, time is conceptualised as ‘empty’ and ‘homogeneous’, an empty linear continuum, through which the history of humankind, rationalised as irreversible progress toward the mystical endpoint of history as its *telos*, irresistibly unfolds. While Uwe Steiner is right that Ranke, for whom all epochs were ‘equally close to God’ (Steiner 2004: 172), did not subscribe to this idea of progress through history, it was taken for granted by subsequent generations of mostly nationalist,

12 In more recent translations, the dwarf is described as ‘small and ugly’.

conservative Prussian and German historians of the historicist school, led by Johann Gustav Droysen. Its philosophical underpinning can be found already in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, for instance, where history is conceptualised as the unstoppable progress of human consciousness toward (a strictly circumscribed) freedom, which the subject, led by God's hand, leans to accept as his 'second nature' (Hegel 1900: 18–19). A more materialistic version of the same metaphysical position may be seen in Adam Smith's concept of the 'invisible hand', which allegedly guides humans in fulfilling their own selfish needs, whereby they also contribute to the general progress of humanity without necessarily realising it (Smith 1920: 220–222).

While it might be objected that this metaphysical conception of history entails a blind leap of faith, Benjamin was more concerned about its disturbing political implications. He addresses those implications already in Thesis VI, but nowhere as clearly and compellingly as in Theses VII, IX, and X. They concern historicism's aestheticisation of history as a progress narrative, which inevitably imposes the present on us – however terrible that present might be – as a natural, inevitable, and therefore unobjectionable stage in its unfolding, if not its final outcome. The historicist idealises this traumatic past and present by always and only empathising with the victors, Benjamin writes in Thesis VII, thus perpetuating the suffering of the oppressed, who are left out, erased from this narrative in which not even the dead are spared. In Leslie's apt summary, historicism presents 'a mass of facts to fill up empty and homogeneous time where history passes by without human input, a tale of great men, like us but not quite like us little people'. Its central strand is 'the conception of a continual progressive course of history as a pile-up of event after event. [...] Historicism deals in empathy with the version of the historical past present by the ruling class. This past is closed to re-evaluation from the perspective of the oppressed' (Leslie 2000: 195). In Thesis IX, his famous and extremely powerful reading of Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*, Benjamin posits history precisely not as a progress narrative, but as a 'single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage into a pile of debris' that 'rises skywards', from which the angel of history seeks to avert his eyes but to no avail (Benjamin 1968: 259–260).

When one remembers only the horrors of humanity's alleged progress that Benjamin witnessed in his relatively brief lifetime – industrialised mass killing of millions of people in two world wars, aggravated by ruthless persecution of entire ethnic groups simply on account of their ethnicity – it is hardly surprising that Benjamin rejected a progressivist conception of history that implicitly stabilised such horrors as logical, natural, and inevitable. He saw fascism 'grounded in a dogmatic form of "historicism", which represented the existing power relations as the only possible outcome of history, as its "fate" and "destiny"' (De Wilde 2009: 179). In Steiner's eloquent summary: 'The catastrophe of Fascism which faith in progress had considered impossible, comes as no surprise to those for whom the course of history until now had meant not progress but continuous suppression' (Steiner 2004: 171). Likewise today, 80 years on, when history 'keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage' in the shape of

more wars and genocide, albeit more localised, and human suffering in general, which is already being exacerbated by the climate crisis, itself another product of humanity's historical and technological 'progress' that arguably threatens its very survival, with our populist leaders doing nothing to alleviate it, Benjamin's rejection of this spurious notion of progress still rings true. Benjamin 'wants to suggest that the rulers who have ruled need not always rule', to borrow Esther Leslie's conclusion; 'It need not go on like this. It must not go on like this, for this is hell. Progress, the continuation of business as usual, is catastrophic' (Leslie 2000: 168).

This is where Benjamin's 'historicism' and 'historical materialism' part ways – in the latter's rejection of the former's view of historical past as unbroken progress through the empty continuum of time. In one of his central Theses, Thesis VII, Benjamin writes: 'There is no better way of characterizing the method with which historical materialism has broken' (Benjamin 1968: 258). That method, Benjamin continues, is the progressivist historiography of historicism, which has never ceased to empathise with the victors and marginalise the vanquished, upon whose oppression and suffering the dominance of the victorious has been predicated. Consequently, a large part of Benjamin's own work in historiography, most notably in the *Arcades Project*, is concerned with the material lives and lived experiences of the downtrodden, the bohemians of 19th-century Paris. But as Steiner correctly notes, Benjamin's historical materialism cannot 'be identified with its actual historical emanations', that is, with orthodox or 'vulgar' Marxist historical materialism (Steiner 2004: 169). This is because one of the axioms of so-called vulgar historical materialism is that history comprises a steady, unbroken, and irreversible expansion, or progress, of the forces of production, to which the relations of production necessarily, *structurally*, conform. This conforming is accomplished through revolutions, periodical upheavals that overthrow old relations of production and impose new ones. As soon as the productive forces have outgrown the existing relations of production, the latter *must* yield to their configuration and a revolution *must* occur. Perhaps the most explicit outline of this determinist and progressivist view of history is found in *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Marx 1970: 21–22).

To that, one might object that revolutions do perforate the Marxian continuum of time; but Marx, in fact, posits them rather as mere stages in the *progress* of the forces of production. The only real stopping point will be the final revolution, the destruction of capitalism at the hands of the proletariat. But that will also be the final revolution and, strictly speaking, the only genuine revolution, which will finally liberate the real potentials of humanity, currently enfeathered by the alienation of waged labour, itself predicated on the imposition of private property. In Marx's view, capitalism is a special case, because it not only expands the productive forces beyond a level it can structurally accommodate, but also because it begets its own archenemy, the revolutionary class consciousness of the proletariat. In this view, then, capitalism itself necessarily harbours the seeds of its own destruction; its *structural* aporiae will

eventually spell its doom. This is what qualifies ‘vulgar’ historical materialism as a steady progress narrative, just like Benjamin’s understanding of historicism, albeit with a clear *telos* in sight.

Given the historical juncture that Benjamin occupied, it is hardly surprising if for him that *telos* was no more believable than it is for us today. The dangerous implication of ‘vulgar’ historical materialism, which it shared with Benjamin’s notion of ‘historicism’, was its implicit naturalisation of fascism, if not as the *telos* of history, then as a historically necessary and inevitable stage in the progress of productive forces, regardless of its sheer inhumane horror. In Benjamin’s words, the danger lurked in the historicist imposition of fascism as a ‘historical norm’. While, admittedly, the *Theses* do not feature an explicit critique of the progressivist determinism of the orthodox Marxist conception of history, instead juxtaposing Benjamin’s notion of historicism with that of historical materialism – which is perhaps one of the most confusing aspects of Benjamin’s last work – the discrepancies between Benjamin’s ‘historical materialism’ and that of Marx’s classical writings are too glaring to overlook.¹³ That is why Benjamin asserts in Thesis VIII: ‘One reason why Fascism has a chance is that in the name of progress its opponents treat it as a historical norm’ (Benjamin 1968: 259) – not merely due to Stalin’s betrayal of the antifascist struggle with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, but more profoundly, on account of ‘vulgar’ Marxism and historical materialism’s normalisation of fascism as a necessary stage in its own progressivist view of history. That is why the *Theses* are, in Esther Leslie’s summary, ‘a late attempt to write a dialectical philosophy of history that denounces the content of inherited ideologies of progress’ – historicism and ‘vulgar’ Marxism or historical materialism alike (Leslie 2000: 205). They voice ‘a bitter critique of political doctrines – vulgar Marxism and reformist social democracy included – whose theories of history and political praxis are united by forms of inevitabilism or secular forms of fatalism. The implication is that from their theories of history the victory of fascism was unforeseeable, and their political practice was inadequate’ (Leslie 2000: 169).

Instead of the historicist and ‘vulgar’ Marxist view of history as progress through an empty continuum of time, Benjamin offers his vision or ‘redemption of historical materialism’ (Leslie 2000: 200) based on the concept of *Jetztzeit*, the now-time. He introduces this neologism partly to draw a clear distinction between it and the present, *Gegenwart*, which are therefore strictly not synonymous. While there is an inkling of now-time already in Theses V and VI, to which I will presently return, Benjamin withholds a fuller explanation of the term until the final five Theses. Here, now-time approximates a singular cultural-historical object, for instance, the mourning play of the German Baroque, which is regarded not merely as a transitory episode in the progress narrative of history, as it would be in historicism or vulgar Marxism, but as a *monad*, an autonomous cultural-historical object addressed in its own right. ‘History is the

13 For instance, see Marx 1992: xxvii–xxviii, Marx 1971: 120–122, and Marx & Engels 1966: 68–73.

subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now', Benjamin writes in Thesis XIV (Benjamin 1968: 263). He then elaborates on the contrasting conceptions of time in historicism and his vision of 'historical materialism' in Thesis XVI: 'Historicism gives the "eternal" image to the past; historical materialism supplies a unique experience with the past' (Benjamin 1968: 264). This is partly how Theses V and VI may be understood, where Benjamin posits the historical past not as a narrative, as a story, but as a picture that 'flits by', as a fleeting image that 'flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again' (Benjamin 1968: 257). Narrativity is so deeply ingrained in our conception of history, that a non-narrative history may be difficult to imagine. Indeed, in most European languages, Romance, Germanic, and Slavic, narrativity is etymologically inscribed in the word 'history', where it typically equals or approximates the word 'story'. History must make sense as a story, as a narrative, even if that means cutting out, suppressing whatever does not fit – the vanquished and the oppressed – and thus perpetuating their suffering even in death. It is precisely this compulsion of narrativity that the (Benjaminian) materialist historian must resist, as Benjamin explains in Thesis VII. Instead, 'the materialist historian must blast specific moments of the past, moments that are in danger of being forgotten or marginalized by the course of history, out of the continuum of the [...] "homogeneous, empty time" [...] of universal history' (Goebel 2009: 12).

For Michael P. Steinberg, this privileging of the moment, the *Monad*, image, flash, over the flux of narrative, is an index of Benjamin's 'moral homage to the past in its actuality' (Steinberg 1996: 3). But more importantly, it reflects his interest in the past not just for its own sake (as in historicism), but as a weapon of political intervention in the present; 'redeeming knowledge of the past, in order to act in the present' (Leslie 2000: 168). In my mind, herein lies the gist of the final Theses, especially Thesis XVII, where he anchors 'materialist historiography' in 'a constructive principle'. This constructive principle involves setting up provisional 'constellations', in Benjamin's words, of specific now-times and using them as politically motivated allegories of the present. Allegories, not symbols, because an allegory does not arrest the flow of meaning between the *monads* that constitute it, does not freeze or rob them of their semantic of historical specificity. 'Any person, any object, any relationship can mean absolutely anything else', Benjamin wrote in his *Trauerspiel* project (Benjamin 1977: 175). Accordingly, Steinberg thus discusses Benjamin's engagement with the German Baroque mourning play, as a staged mourning (and therefore final repudiation) of total sovereignty and political totality that were shattered in the Thirty Years' War and an allegory of similar developments in German politics in the Weimar Republic (Steinberg 1996: 15–18). Perhaps we might then similarly remember the 1930s in Europe and use that period for a provisional constellation comprising that time and our own, as a politically motivated allegory of our present. It would perhaps remind us that some of what we are seeing in national, European, and global politics today – the seemingly irresistible rise of exclusionary rightwing populist politics on the wings of new media – is not

new, but must be recognised and fought and resisted, rather than normalised for the sake of a misguided belief in history as progress.

The task of the Benjaminian materialist historian is therefore to wrest the cultural-historical object from the (false) continuum of (historicist or ‘vulgar’ Marxist) history and use it as a politically pointed allegory of the present. If the historian is successful in this regard, s/he will have exploded, in Benjamin’s words, the continuum of history, which for him would be nothing short of revolution. This is because, as Goebel put it, ‘the presence of the past deconstructs the totalizing master-narrative of linear, teleological progress’ (Goebel 2009: 9). But this notion of revolution has little in common with the final revolution that Marx envisaged, described above, which will break the *materially real* continuum of history only once and for all, after which history will have reached its endpoint, unable to resume. Rather, the revolutionary interruption (‘explosion’) that Benjamin sought is of a conceptual kind: not the interruption of the continuum of time but of the historicist construction of the continuum of time, a political intervention that must be continually applied and reapplied with no guarantee of success. That is arguably why the ‘past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the moment when it can be recognized and is never seen again’ – unless a *Monad* is recognised as an allegory of the present, a now-time, it recedes back into the dark recesses of the past.

Therefore, the possibility of failure is fundamentally inscribed in Benjamin’s project of materialist historiography. In the opening Theses, Benjamin even goes so far as to posit history as a series of failures, missed opportunities that must be ‘redeemed’. That is the task of the Benjaminian materialist historian, endowed, like the rest of us, with *weak* Messianic power, the power to reclaim the missed opportunities of the past for the sake of building a less horrific present and future. I would link this *weak* Messianic power back to the wizened dwarf of Thesis I, the hidden theology whose services historical materialism must enlist in order to win every time. Perhaps this is the theology that must keep out of sight, hide from the pseudo-objective rigour of historicism and the blind belief in progress of ‘vulgar’ historical materialism. The puzzling invocation of theology in the *Theses* has caused some interpreters, starting with Gershom Scholem, to take it more or less literally; thus, for instance, De Wilde interprets it as ‘a theologically understood responsibility toward the past’, ‘a *theological* responsibility to save the past from the forces of forgetting’, the ‘theological origins’ of historical materialism (De Wilde 2009: 179, 181, 189).

However, I would side with those readers who resist such literal interpretations of Benjamin’s theology. In my mind, Steiner is right when he asserts that Benjamin’s theology is not ‘to be taken *à la lettre*’, that the ‘theological concept of redemption’ is given ‘a profane interpretation’ in the *Theses*, as ‘the immanently historical, topically political redemption of the unsettled claims of the past, of the victims and of the defeats suffered by past generations’, turning it therefore into an ‘anthropological-materialist’ and ‘political’ concept (Steiner 2004: 169–179). I would likewise agree with Esther Leslie when she asserts that Benjamin was ‘not concerned with developing or interpreting religious

doctrine in any sense' (Leslie 2000: 173). For, Benjamin's theology strikes me as strictly a politically motivated notion, seeking to redeem suppressed moments from the past in order to motivate and enable concrete political action in the present and future. After all, the Messianic power of the Benjaminian materialist historian is *weak*: it must be constantly negotiated and marshalled anew against the constructed but not for that reason any less totalitarian continuum of history, even though its success is by no means guaranteed. Benjamin's theological historical materialism or materialist historiography is thus a strictly constructivist political project, aware of and candid about its contingency on an anti-fascist political agenda.

In concluding, I would briefly return to another point made by Marc de Wilde. While I do not entirely agree with his literalist understanding of Benjamin's theology, I do find compelling his reading of Benjamin's *Theses* as 'a politics of remembrance' (although not necessarily 'originating from an theologically understood responsibility toward the past'). His notion that Benjamin conceived of his politics 'as an antidote to National Socialism and Communism, in which he recognized the forces of a mythical forgetting' (De Wilde 2009: 179) does strike me as worth remembering, especially if we seek to learn the lessons of our past, as I think we must, avoid committing the same errors, and stand up to the forces of a mythical forgetting of our own time, 'act decisively against' them, as Freedman put it in his response quoted above. Benjamin acted in his own time, and, tragically, failed, but the sheer relevance of his thought today suggests that his failure was not in vain.

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Žarko Cvejić

Miniranje prošlosti: ponovno čitanje teza *O shvatanju istorije* Valtera Benjamina

Apstrakt

Predmet teksta jeste preispitivanje teza *O shvatanju istorije* (*Über den Begriff der Geschichte*) Valtera Benjamina iz ugla globalne politike danas i sličnosti sa društveno-ekonomskim i političkim stanjem u Evropi i Americi 20-ih i 30-ih godina 20. veka; preciznije, u članku se raspravlja o uplivu kriza i gubitka poverenja u liberalnu predstavničku demokratiju, kao i pratećeg uspona uglavnom desničarskih populističkih političkih pokreta i njihovih autoritarnih vođa, uz znatnu pomoć medija, i „starih“ i „novih“. Cilj teksta je da ponudi određene pouke iz Benjaminove vizije materijalističke historiografije radi uspešnijeg nošenja s našim trenutnim političkim (ne)prilikama.

Ključne reči: Valter Benjamin, istorija, istorijski materijalizam, istorizam, napredak, Karl Marks, alegorija, narativnost, istorijski kontinuum, fašizam

Jelena Čeriman

THE LIMITS OF INDIVIDUALIZING PARENTHOOD IN SERBIA: STUDY OF GENDER SOCIALIZATION OF CHILDREN

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the limits of individualizing parenthood in Serbia, gleaned from the example of gender socialization of children. The main thesis is that the noted limits to individualization of parenthood in contemporary society have a particular Serbian manifestation due to the country's familism. The study traces the ideology of familism through normative aspects of gender structures within contemporary Serbian society, that is, by analyzing the presence and forms of expression of the patriarchal matrix in upbringing practices of parents, the most significant element of which is the ethics of good parenthood. The analysis shows that individualization of parenthood and more egalitarian patterns of gender socialization occur above all due to the dynamic within the marital relationship, one which abandons the concept of sacrificial parenthood. The analysis presented here is based on data collected in empirical research of upbringing practices in contemporary Serbia.

KEYWORDS

familism,
individualization,
parenthood, upbringing
practices, gender
socialization

1. Introduction

The risks occurring in late modernity due to the weakening of the welfare state, the strengthening of the market economy, the changes in values and to political demands of a democratic society have all led to a greater symmetry between men and women in the public sphere, and have thus required a re-examination of familial life (the roles and relationships between partners, as well as those between parents and children) (Beck 1997; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002).¹ Cultural patterns change quickly in contemporary society, forcing individuals, prepared or not, to continuously assess their circumstances, adopt a reflective attitude toward themselves, their position, toward other people, and to act accordingly. Relationships within the contemporary family are subject to constant negotiation, meaning that even in this sphere there are no predefined

1 This article draws on portions of the author's doctoral dissertation "Gender Socialization of Boys in Contemporary Families in Serbia. Exploring Parental Attitudes and Upbringing Practices," full text in Serbian available at: <https://uvidok.rcub.bg.ac.rs/handle/123456789/3319>

outcomes or roles (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In spite of the critiques of the thesis of individualization, the elements of the modern family are undoubtedly deconstructed in modern societies (Tomanović 2017: 169). Indeed, the concept of the family as a community of members with voluntary obligations to one another has lost its significance; rather, other possible familial forms, above all those based in freedom of choice and current affinities of individuals, are explored (Beck 2002). The changes in relations among family members is grounded in negotiation processes, distancing the family ever further from traditional patterns: there is a destandardization of relations and a democratization of the family (Beck 1997), which includes honoring the principles of respect, autonomy, communication and equality. Changes are also occurring in cross-generational relations, between parent and child, as can be seen in a kind of “liberalization of parenthood.” Less significance is placed on conformist behavior in children. Instead, a central place is occupied by autonomy, that is, the development of the particularity of the child and its potential, independent from gender. The sacrificing model of parenthood is abandoned, yielding to equality of needs and responsibilities of all family members and mutual empathy (Tomanović 2010a). The main characteristics of the process of individualizing parenthood comprise honoring “principles of autonomy, equality, respect and communication” (Tomanović 2017: 167) within familial relations, freedom from traditionally imposed patterns and gender roles within relationships. Being subject to negotiation, they are also subject to change. Such a model requires the participation of both parents in the process of socialization, “for maximum interchangeability in conducting activities with children” (ibid: 2017: 172). Children are approached as individuals with particular characteristics and potentials to be supported and developed, all the while respecting the stated principles, and without previously established gender-based criteria. Going under the name *undoing gender* (Risman, 2009), the process “creates a specific field of neutrality that assumes no gendered predispositions of actors, nor is seen by relevant others as doing so” (Stanojević 2015: 252). It assumes opening space for a deconstruction of gender-determined parenting attitudes (rather than specifically maternal or paternal roles). It also allows the deconstruction of the notions *good boy* and *good girl*, for a development of a child personality without gender prefixes. This is the de-traditionalization of parenting, expressed in the functional weakening of traditional roles of mother and father, and presenting the parents with new daily challenges. Partner relations and parenthood are liberated from the binds of tradition, that is, the blind application of norms and practices of previous generations (primarily families of origin), becoming ever more ordered by interpersonal negotiation and respect, as well as open communication leading to consensual decisions (Tomanović 2017). Long-term, a high level of adaptability to new circumstances leads to the formation of new familial practices, new parenting practices, and thus new narratives and ideas about the given practices among mothers and fathers.

Serbia is among the countries undergoing what theoretical literature refers to as a second demographic transition (Bobić 2013). Second demographic

transition designates changes in experiencing family, children and marriage that occur in circumstances of increased material wellbeing, level of education (primarily for women), as well as the influence of urbanization and secularization. These changes include a reduced significance ascribed to marriage, increase of persons in alternative forms of partnerships (such as cohabitations), delay or refusal to have children, and greater gender symmetry within the family. They also imply certain values underpinning practices, such as self-actualization, choice and individual freedoms (ibid). Even though Serbia is seeing demographic changes that in developed countries are indicators of second demographic transition, they nevertheless do not testify to significant modernizing changes (above all of in value orientations) among the population. The content of these changes in Serbia does not mean that values and practices of individualism and gender equality have taken hold within the system (Bobić 2006). On the contrary: on the level of values, the preponderance of patriarchal values within the population is still among the highest in Europe (Pešić 2010). Parenting in Serbia is thus taking place in a specific context: inherited patterns of child upbringing and parent relationships are slowly losing their hold, yet a gendered segregation of roles, including within parenting, is still in place, which is not the case in countries of western, central and northern Europe. Family practices in Serbia take place within a specific local framework, which according to Sylvia Walby's theory, can be best described as state-sponsored public patriarchy (Walby 1991), common in former socialist countries, that is, countries characterized by a south European model of familist (family) solidarity (Tomanović 2017). In this model, the emancipation of women was initiated through an ideological promotion of gender equality, above all through a normative state framework. Thus, supporting women's transfer from the home into the sphere of employment was also supposed to change aspects of family life (within the home). However, these countries lack institutional support for parenthood, leaving parents to draw on the support of families of origin, which can take the form of living in an extended family unit or helping (women) to "care" for the children while the parents are at work, etc. Drawing on the support of families of origin, however, slows down the process of distancing from traditional, established models of behavior, that is, taking an active position in changing the inherited models of parenthood. In the course of social reproduction, generational continuity – the inclusion of new generations of individuals with specific characteristics into society – also ensures social continuity (Tomanović 1993). The process takes place through transmission and adoption of a specific cultural codex. Change in the context can take place if there is a tendency and interest of persons to examine the normatives and take actions directed at transforming these structures. Since in Serbia the socialization of children occurs in a specific context, the premise of this paper is that parents' normative beliefs and practices are a reflection of the socio-cultural and historical context in which the process of gender socialization takes place. This is visible in normative gender structures of parenting, that is, the ideology of familism expressed through the patriarchal matrix in the parents' narratives,

i.e., the presence of a gender-segregated model of *good parent*. The model of *good parent* is expected to be reproduced in upbringing practices through a gender-segregated norm of *good child*. It is also expected that individualization of parenthood and more egalitarian patterns of gender socialization will occur due to the egalitarian dynamic of within the marital relationship.

The following paper section deals with contextualization of the given research premises. The methodological framework is presented in the third section, while the fourth section presents the limits of individualization of parenthood in Serbia observed through the findings of research conducted in 2012/13. The concluding part presents the discussion of barriers to de-traditionalization of parenthood within the familist context in Serbia.

2. Normative Aspects of Gender Structures in Contemporary Serbia

The findings regarding upbringing practices of parents presented in this article are interpreted in accordance with the changes Serbian society underwent over the course of the period of the study, but also in accordance with the country's heritage. The contextual characteristics relevant for the normative structure of *good parent* include the modernizing effects of the socialist period and the re-traditionalization in the post-socialist transformation. It is important to immediately highlight the incontrovertibly positive effects of the socialist period's modernization process for female emancipation in Serbia. However, the particularity of the ensuing post-socialist process, along with the formation of a new elite based precisely on a break with the socialist welfare heritage have combined to support patriarchal power relations and patterns of unequal work share in the home (Pešić 2010: 169–185). The collectivist system of values, authoritarian government and patriarchal social framework were propped up in the period of post-socialism by civil wars and nationalist ideologies (Lazić 2011). The transformation of values in this period is marked by a national homogenization and de-secularization, in the course of which collective and authoritarian values came to dominate individual values. The period saw the withdrawal of women from the public sphere into the private, where they have since taken up a key role in creating and conducting strategies of sustaining the home: the so-called, "self-sacrificing micro-matriarchy" (Blagojević 2002). This notion is presented in the literature as the counterparty to public patriarchy (ibid). Only after 2000, in large part due to processes of harmonization of Serbia's normative framework with that of the European Union, does the male-female relation appear as a question of gender equality. Still, the characteristics of the post-socialist transformation in Serbia have ensured the survival of patriarchal values in the domain of the home even after 2000 (Pešić 2010), which has confirmed that changes introduced on the legal and institutional level are not necessarily followed by changes in values and habits of men and women (ibid). Serbia continues to have a high degree of patriarchy, manifested in the division of labor and decision-making within the family, as well as a

conspicuous dichotomy of the private-public (Pešić 2006). Study shows that patriarchal values are held more often by men (rather than women), persons of lower levels of education, residing in rural (rather than urban) areas (ibid: 183). Serbia's 2001 participation in the World Values Survey showed high esteem for the family, family authority and sacrifice for children. Moreover, it displayed a pattern of family attitudes and values based in an unreflective relationship to parent authority, an emphasis on diligence and responsibility as the most important personal characteristics, as well as a mild (in)acceptance of a different role for women (Pavlović 2007). A study of value systems within contemporary families in Serbia (Milić 2010) has showed that acceptance of modern attitudes is moderate, and that both men and women endeavor to maintain their traditional rights. The study findings indicate that individuals with low levels of education tend to hold traditional attitudes, compared to only a very small number of individuals with high levels of education. Research has shown that despite some signs of a second demographic transition, Serbia still holds exceptionally high traditional values, and that they are maintained on the normative level: e.g. "a woman is only fulfilled as a mother," or "family unity ought to stand above the individual" (Bobić 2010: 144).

When it comes to family practices in contemporary Serbia, they too reflect the particularity of their context. Contemporary parenthood in Serbia includes the combining of norms regarding child development as an individual, that is, as an autonomous person, with the need to protect the child from risks posed by contemporary society (Tomanović 2010b). Although certain elements of individualization of parenthood are more conspicuous in upper and upper middle layers (ibid), making them financially entirely independent from their families of origin, an important characteristic of parenthood in Serbia is the gender asymmetry in sharing home responsibilities (including child care) and the distribution of authority and power (ibid). The bulk of the work within the home is done by women (Ćeriman et al. 2018). Women comprise the most common familial network of support, and data shows that women perform nearly all the home duties regardless whether or not they are employed (Babović 2009). The degree of involvement of women in the work performed in the home is irrespective of her level of education, socio-economic status or place of residence (Tomanović, Ignjatović 2004). Still, studies show that neither mothers nor fathers display dissatisfaction with such a division of duties, power and responsibility. The explanation given for this is the internalization of normatives of mother and father roles, seen as functionally complementary, although the mother is the "primary parent" and the father the "secondary" (Tomanović 2010a, 2010b). On the other hand, if women do show dissatisfaction with such a division of duties and power in the home, it most often results in conflict among partners (Fiket 2018: 25–44). Also noticeable, and accepted by most mothers and fathers, is the preponderance of a model of "self-sacrificing" parenthood (Tomanović 2010a: 182).

To emphasize, the normative framework of parenthood in Serbia is based on the familism construct, which manifests in the inviolable value of the family

as such (Milić 2004; Tomanović 2004a, 2004b), as well as a high esteem of marriage (Tomanović, Stanojević 2015). This means that alternative family formations are normatively less accepted (ibid). Familism also manifests in the strict definition of the roles and relationships for men and women, and the proceeding division of authority and power in the family. In turn, this determines the content and significations of parenting practices (Tomanović, Stanojević 2015). As mentioned, the normatives of *good mother* and *good father* are mutually complementary, such that the first is grounded in care for children, while the latter in the role of provider and protector (ibid). Such an ethics of good parenthood is widespread in Serbia, “embedded in a modernist framework of complementary but segregated gender roles (...) incorporated in a patriarchal matrix” (Tomanović 2017: 166). What follows from this are also the norms regarding the *good child* who will one day succeed the previous generation. Thus, the *good boy* model means socialization for social and economic life outside the household, expressions of independence, leadership, action, etc. (Babović et al. 2016). The *good girl* model, on the other hand, means socialization for care of the home and family, and characteristics of loyalty, attentiveness to others, sensibility and acquiescence (ibid).

As the most elementary form of social reproduction, gender socialization is conducted through a series of routinized interactions in daily family life (Giddens 1979). This text bases its analysis of upbringing practices – the acts and attitudes in course of the gender socialization of children – on two dimensions: care and control. Above all, the choice reflects the fact that the most important characteristic to be acquired in the process of socialization for boys is control. “Control over oneself, one’s emotions, social relations and control over others. (...) Control over others, power and submissiveness indicate that the male world assumes an authoritarian type of personality that will help boys to develop skills for a world of economic and political structures and hierarchies” (Stanojević 2018: 56). On the other hand, care is the most important element in the gender socialization of girls on their way to becoming women. Care (for another) is the ethical calling and normative placed before a woman (conspicuous in the demand for [primary] care of a child). It is also the main characteristic of a woman, determining her within the family sphere as well as in other social relations (Zajović, Kovačević 2012). Control encompasses information regarding disciplining (punishment and reward) and independence of children. Care encompasses common activities of parents and children, parents’ recognition of their child, their communication and expression of emotion towards the child.

3. Methodological Framework

The experiential evidence of the analysis presented in this paper draws on data obtained in 48 semi-structured in-depth interviews with parent couples (mothers and fathers) in six locations across Serbia. The sample comprises married

couples with both a daughter and a son aged between two and twelve and was determined as such in order to differentiate between preadolescent upbringing practices for boys and girls. Following the theoretical framework for the sample, 13 chosen families were from urban, while 11 were from rural municipalities, of varying professions and education levels. The interviews were conducted in the spring and summer of 2012. In the course of each visit to a household, separate interviews were held with the father and mother, with matching genders for the interviewers. The sample was homogenous with regards to average monthly household income in the period when the interviews were conducted. Using the pre-prepared questions on income, employment and household provisions, in the course of the sample construction, the study excluded families whose social standing was above or below the national average range. As the focus was on gender in parenting, the parents were not diversified according to age, since they fell within a narrow range and had children of comparable age. Eight of the couples live with their children in extended families, while the rest are in the form of nuclear families.

The analytical framework used the method of grounded theory (Corbin, Strauss 1990). The analysis of data went through three-step coding: open, axial and selective. The initial coding assumed the discrimination of basic categories and subcategories from the material collected, while further analysis provided connections among these. The connections obtained in this (axial) form of coding were tested by new data. The hypothetical connections among the categories and subcategories were verified or rejected during a continuous process of comparison with new data from interviews performed simultaneously to this portion of the analysis. Selective coding (the third step) served to connect the categories selected in the second phase with one or more of the core categories (*ibid*). Mutually comparing categories and noting connections among them allowed for further conclusions to be drawn. The text presents the findings obtained in this way, that is, “emerging” from the data.

The present analysis was executed across three levels. The first level of analysis refers to the normative gender structures of parenting, that is, the ideology of familism expressed through the patriarchal matrix in the parents’ narratives. The reproduction of the patriarchal matrix was followed by a gender-segregated model of *good parent*, which is to say, *good mother* and *good father*, since these patterns were supported by the socio-cultural and historical context of Serbian family life. The second level of analysis includes a subjective aspect of parenthood: parents’ upbringing practices in the process of gender socialization of children. This level of analysis included the interpretations of the *good boy* and *good girl* models in the upbringing practices of parents (fathers and mothers), that is, their actions and attitudes in the course of socializing children, as well as their coherence with the previously selected and interpreted *good mother* and *good father* normatives. The third (familial) level of analysis looks at data regarding the parents’ relations to each other and to their families of origin in the process of gender socialization of children.

4. Analysis

4.1 Normative Models of Parenthood

Since all models are upheld by a socio-cultural and historical context, the reproduction of the patriarchal matrix in Serbian family life is observed here through the gender segregated normative of *good parent*, that is, *good mother* and *good father*. The analysis has shown that attitudes of almost all fathers and mothers in the sample contain the reproduction of the patriarchal matrix, expressed through the gender segregated normative of the *good parent*.

Constant comparative analysis of the sampled parents' narratives has established two categories used by almost all fathers and mothers to define the model of *good mother*. The first emphasizes heteronormativity, while the other refers to a dichotomous division of private/public. Both categories can be subsumed under the familism construct (Tomanović 2017), given that the family is perceived within it as community of marital partners whose roles are complementary. Further, their roles as mother and father are highly valued in the course of gender socialization of children due to the intergenerational transfer of heteronormative values and clearly gender segregated spheres for women (private sphere) and men (public sphere). Being complementary, the given constructs have a prominent role in socializing children into a gender-colored world. Indeed, the figure of the father is the son's model of identification, in particular in the approach to social life through "separation" of boys from the figure of the mother and the *private*, that is, domestic sphere. This view is supported by almost all mothers and fathers in this research. The main attributes of such constructs are heteronormativity and familism, and are of course significant in the introduction of daughters into the role of women that follows the normative model of *good mother*. The mothers' and fathers' narratives in transmitting heteronormative values to daughters feature "morality" as the main category; on the other hand, the main category in transmitting heteronormative values to sons is "separation." Separation is conducted through symbolic communication and symbolic power, such that fathers symbolically conduct the transfer of boys from the sphere of *nature* (female sphere) into the sphere of *culture* (the male sphere) (Papić 1997). This transition is conducted by jointly "doing manly things" and having "manly talks" – representing discussions about male-female relations, growing up and adolescence – in accordance with the heteronormative order of the world and patriarchal hierarchies "that mothers cannot reach." These rituals enact on a normative level tabooed behavior and a clear gender segregation, even when the topic is something for which mothers are in fact competent (Tuzin 2004). Gender segregated conversations are more likely to be held by fathers and mothers of lower education living in rural areas. Parents who have good communication with their partners and whose relation is characterized by mutual trust are more likely not to have strict divisions for communication with children, although they do emphasize that children confide in their mothers more, since this is the "woman's primary role" in the family.

Almost all individuals point out that the home sphere is the foremost responsibility of the woman, and that her main tasks are child care and upbringing. The segregation of roles delegates women to the position of primary care-giver, meaning that her function in gender socialization is above all expressive. That is to say, her role is to give emotional support, which is buttressed by the belief of “natural connection of mother and child” (Papić 1997). Differences in attitudes between fathers and mothers are noticeable in the degree to which they thought the mother should also participate in the labor force. Individuals of a lower education level (elementary or high school degree) were more likely to advocate for the woman’s complete exclusion from the labor market. However, all individuals believe that daughters and sons can confide in their mother equally, as well as receive equal encouragement and acceptance so valuable in their development as person, which is in accordance with the majority position of individuals regarding the naturalness of the maternal role. On the other hand, the mother’s role in transmitting heteronormative values, and with them certain gender roles, is clearly differentiated in the normatives of a majority of individuals, depending on the gender and age of the children (a more rigorous socialization for a specific gender role is more prevalent among older children). This attitude is independent of levels of education, profession or place of residence (urban/rural). Only two mothers from the sample had critical reflections on their own position in the household, as well as on the different roles that a woman in the family might have. They took an active attitude towards changing the gender stereotypical settings of family relations. Both mothers are employed and live in an urban environment, and their partnerships are characterized by high mutual respect.

When it comes to defining of the model *good father*, heteronormativity is also the predominant model among the sampled parents. Complementary to the model *good mother*, it reduces the father to the role and transmission of values necessary to complete the role of *good mother*. Given that the primary sphere of activity for men is public, all individuals stated that the main function of the father is instrumental in nature: to provide material and physical security for the children and the family. While fathers serve as gender identifiers to sons in the process of gender socialization, their role to daughters is providing a sense of protection and safety, since fathers are “more gentle” with daughters than with sons. Most fathers in this study see the father as the person who doles out punishment for inappropriate behavior. Most fathers induct the boys more strictly into their gender role, endeavoring to prepare them for a functional transfer of generations, that is, taking over the role of agent of reproduction of inherited hierarchies in which women and girls are the “gentler sex.” These attitudes are more prominent among fathers with completed elementary or high school and whose wives are unemployed. However, comparative analysis with fathers who can be categorized as atypical, being unemployed while their wives work, has shown the same attitude, leading to the conclusion that the role of the father as family provider is a strongly established position on a normative level among the men in the study sample. Although not required, all

the mothers answered this question in the interview by comparing the roles of father and mother in the family, leading to the conclusion that the concept of *good father* characterizes the complementary determination of the characteristics of women and men as parents. Such designation corresponds to a complementary asymmetric family model (Parsons 2009), which rests on gender segregation of spheres (private/public, i.e. women/men).

4.2 Normative Model of *Good Child* in the Parents' Upbringing Practices

This portion of the text interprets the models of *good boy* and *good girl* in the upbringing practices of parents, as well as their coherence with the models of *good mother* and *good father* as previously presented.

What emerges using the constant comparative method of analysis of answers given by fathers and mothers across two of the most significant dimensions of upbringing practices in this study – care and control – is that the models *good boy* and *good girl* are correlated with the models of *good mother* and *good father* as presented in the previous section of the text. The study has shown that there is a consistency between gender segregated models of *good parent* and *good child* in the narratives of individuals with lower educational levels (elementary and high school degree), employed in blue collar jobs or unemployed, and who are more likely to live in rural areas and in extended families. On the other hand, among the highly educated parents from urban area, the gender segregated model of *good child* is questioned and has begun to be deconstructed. Further, upbringing practices are also shaped by their relation to perceived changes in society. In families resistant to change, there is hardly any questioning of the gender segregated normative *good child*, while in families responding to perceived changes, the given normative undergoes de-traditionalization. If parents (fathers and mothers) see society as chaotic and with numerous risks, they will relate to their children with a greater degree of protection and control, meaning that their upbringing practices will include a stricter system of reward and punishment, lest the children transgress the clearly delineated borders. Families in which fathers and mothers are in agreement with this, the family gender ethos will move in the direction of construction of masculinity and femininity that correspond to learned and prescriptive models. Conversely, in one family that perceives social changes not as dangerous but merely challenging, the father and mother will strive to adapt their responses. Such families undergo de-traditionalization of the desired models of gender, also visible in the mutual relation of partners.

The main differentiation between the models *good boy* and *good girl* takes place along the active/passive axis. Namely, the two most prevalent categories significant for the construction of the model *good boy* are 1) the dichotomy of private/public and the related dichotomies of active/passive and strong/weak, and 2) heteronormativity. Both categories correspond to the model of *good father* whose primary sphere of activity is outside the home, focused on the instrumental role of family provider. The most prevalent categories significant

for the construction of the model *good girl* are 1) the dichotomy of private/public and the related dichotomies, and 2) heteronormativity. Both categories correspond to the model of *good mother*, whose domain is the home and has the expressive role of care. The given categories are significant for both models and can be subsumed under the construct of familism.

The most prevalent model of *good boy* in this study includes the development of a strong personality and a physically agile person. Strength, characterizing masculine authority, must be proven and confirmed through confrontation with imagined or real competitors in society (Jordan, Cowan 2009). A major characteristic of this desired masculinity is heteronormativity, expressed above all through a “desirable, healthy, normal” sexuality.

The greatest gender segregation between the models of *good boy* and *good girl* was found in the significance of sexuality that parents ascribed to prevalent normatives of the masculine and feminine. Where morality, that is, decency is the most important signifier ascribed to the sexuality of *good girl*, the sexuality of *good boys* implicitly carries confirmation and “male respect”. Hence, these two spheres are segregated, in the fathers’ and mothers’ narratives, each placed within its own “male or female story.” Models of *good child* different to the mentioned were expressed by only one married couple (urban residents, holding specialist jobs). These parents nurture above all an open expression of emotions in their own relationship and relations with children, as well as with their families of origin and with friends, highly prizing emotional intelligence, considering it an important element in interpersonal relationships. This position corresponds best to the construct of individualization of parenthood, since this couple think that a “healthy person” is one capable of navigating the contemporary world, possessing the ability to adapt (“to find solutions, to seek help”), that is, one capable of transforming existing models and responding to novel situations.

The dimension of care was expressed by most fathers and mothers in differing activities for sons and daughters, in accordance with gender segregated roles and spheres of parents (private/women, public/men). As the children grow, there is an increasing need for them to be consistently introduced to clearly differentiated gender roles. This position is coherent with perceived divisions of gender spheres in parents’ narratives, requiring children of greater age to provide a more adequate transfer of generations. Comparative analysis of fathers’ narratives has shown that their upbringing practices in the process of gender socialization mostly correspond to the concept of the *absent father* (Tomanović-Mihajlović 1997). This concept describes the role of the father who does not have enough time for a relationship with children, given that he is the family provider who conducts his work outside the home. Being absent, such a father has a more difficult time reconstructing his children’s quotidian and understanding their needs (for both sons and daughters). And he expresses emotion towards them with more difficulty. Fathers whose upbringing practices fit within the concept of the *absent father* most often spend time with their sons in activities outside the home, while separate activities with daughters

are almost entirely absent. On the other hand, common activities of mothers and sons most often involve a passive intake of content (such as watching TV). The most common activities of fathers with sons are in the domain of sport or activities of mechanics, such as fixing cars or building things, which on rare occasion is potentially dangerous to the child's health (such as taking a two-year old for a ride on a motorcycle). This narrative is in stark contrast with activities mothers can have with children, the most important element in this case being the security of the children. Most often, activities of mothers with daughters have as their goal the child's introduction into a clearly defined gender role, corresponding to the model of *good mother* whose primary sphere is the home.

Constant comparative analysis of parents' narratives has shown that male primogeniture is a significant aspect in family practices. Namely, certain mothers state that first-born sons are included in the activities of care for younger children. Mothers from these households also testify that their families include more agreement about division of house chores among marital partners, although this was not noted in the interviews with the fathers of these families. The assumption is that the fathers provide a positive example to their sons, who then more easily accept the household chores. In the process of gender socialization of children, mothers emphasize their expressive role, that is, present the role of the mother as a locus of support and expression of emotional comfort. They justify this attitude with the belief of *natural connection* between mother and child, based in physiological predispositions of women to bear children and a comparatively greater capacity of women for emotional expression. The majority of sampled mothers place the needs of their children above their own, meaning that their upbringing practices correspond to the concept of "self-sacrificing motherhood."

Upbringing practices different to the mentioned were expressed by only one married couple (urban residents, holding specialist jobs), who broke with the traditionally inherited models of parenting and "sacrifice" for children. Changes are mostly initiated by the overcoming of the concept of good (sacrificing) parenthood, manifested above all in a greater participation of men in performing household duties. Such conduct deconstructs on a practical level the crude normative division of the models of *good mother* and *good father*, itself grounded in the dichotomy private-public. Changes in the home occur due to the critical reflection of partners and their taking an active position in the direction of projecting a desirable future. In such families, changes are above all the consequence of the high quality of the partner relationship, developed over a long period and characterized by closeness and adapting to changes in the environment through agreement and negotiation.

When it comes to the dimension of control, the main factor influencing upbringing practices of parents is their relationship to perceived changes in society. Namely, if parents see society as chaotic, with numerous challenges, they will relate to their children with a greater degree of protection and control. In turn, their upbringing practices will include more strict rewards and punishments in order to keep the children within given boundaries. Most fathers from

the sample punish their sons more strictly than their daughters, but also reward them better for successfully fulfilling their role. Such practice corresponds to their attitude towards women as the “gentler sex.” Sons acquire independence by respecting the demands and criteria set by their fathers, whence they climb the rungs of gender hierarchy. Mothers more often expect daughters to be more autonomous than sons in everyday life, primarily because most mothers expect daughters to be ready for their role as woman. These specific individuals present their upbringing practices as being in accordance with gender stereotypical positions about the “maturity” of girls and boys (who “mature later”). In contrast to these parents, in one family in which social changes were perceived not as dangerous but only challenging, the father and mother sought to adapt their responses, abandoning the model of “sacrificing parenthood” for one with less control over children. This family supported children in acquiring skills that enable an independent life and making decisions/choices that craft their own future. In addition, the upbringing practices were supported by the quality of the intramarital relation (more on which further on). An example of this model in this research is the family living in an urban environment, employed as specialists.

4.3 Family Relations

Another relevant dimension in upbringing practices, also derived from constant comparative analysis, is whether the family is nuclear or extended. Among the categories tied to life in the extended family are hierarchies and nostalgia for tradition, both of which are elements in the patriarchal matrix. This indicates reproduction of inherited models of parenthood in the parents’ upbringing practices. Among the categories tied to nuclear families, combined with high education of parents, employed in specialist or administrative positions and living in an urban setting, is an active attitude towards changes. Parents who match this description strive to transform inherited models of parenting and adapt them to contemporary processes.

Intergenerational dynamics within extended families turn out to be an important element in the evaluation of one’s own experiences (as both parent and partner), given that there is continuous comparison with upbringing practices of the family of origin as well as the participation of other family members in the gender socialization of children. Parents from extended families are not able to develop consistent upbringing practices due to the involvement of other family members. This can be seen in narratives of parents who previously lived in extended family households. Only with residential independence, that is, organizing into a different family unit, was there the possibility of break with previous family practices. On the other hand, parents who live in extended families, although they have disagreements with members of the household, strive to apply learned patterns of parenting from the previous generation. Their narratives often include nostalgia for tradition and “past times” in which upbringing of children had a significantly different character from contemporary

family practices they encounter in their environment. Familism, resistance to change, collectivism and the attempt to preserve tradition comprise the main narrative elements of these parents. In addition to parents in extended families, nostalgia for tradition and the demand for reproduction of learned models of behavior is present among parents with only elementary or high school degree, the unemployed, as well as those holding blue-collar jobs and who live in rural areas. These families express clearly gender segregated roles for men and women within the family, while age segregation is the top criterion of decision-making and organizing of family life. Women and the youngest have the least power, and if there is dissatisfaction with the given order, it is almost never articulated to other members of the household. The least articulation of dissatisfaction with living conditions in extended families comes from women with elementary education who live in rural areas.

Determining factors for independence from the family of origin are personal resources: education level and personal income. The possibility for de-traditionalization in such families is based on good partner relations, developed trust and closeness – leading to a consistent family ethos towards gender egalitarianism. Parents in such families adjust their upbringing goals to the current moment and the potentials of the individual child. Intramarital relations and the structure of their activities – which is to say division of duties, responsibilities and power in the home – are determined by family dynamics (negotiation and acts across different stages of consolidation of the family). Analysis shows that these new models of family practices will emerge only if the partners recognize their interest in them and adapt to novel situations. Mutual expressions of closeness and flexibility in the relationship are significant contributing elements to engaging in new practices.

Constant comparative analysis of parent narratives on this level of analysis has shown that the intramarital dynamic determines the mutual coherence of upbringing aims among parents, as well as their individual upbringing practices in the process of gender socialization of children. If there is an asymmetry in the power and authority of the partners (with only rare expressions of closeness or resistance to change), the upbringing practices will be marked by inconsistency and gender typical attitudes and gestures in the socialization process. On the other hand, if the intramarital relationship is more equal (with frequent expressions of closeness and readiness to adapt to novel circumstances), in particular at crucial moments (such as the birth of a child), their attitudes and upbringing practices in gender socialization will be much more egalitarian. Asymmetry between partners is more noticeable among parents with lower levels of education. The question in this study that crucially establishes (a)symmetry is the household spending of money, since the role of the family provider remains as the most significant characteristic of the “good father” norm, which is also confirmed by other studies (Tomanović 2017; Stanojević, 2018). Asymmetry between partners manifested primarily through a conspicuous asymmetry in decisions regarding finances, which tended to take place in patrilinear families. Sons are favored over daughters in these families since

they are inheritors of material goods and bearers of the family tradition. This situation is most common among less educated parents (elementary and high school graduates), who are blue-collar workers and most often live in extended households in rural areas. Symmetry in decision-making between parents, in the household as well as all other areas of family life, is a characteristic among families in which parents are employed in specialist or administrative positions and live in nuclear families in urban areas. The particularity of parents singled out in this study as such is that the relation of mutual respect and faith in “common strength” was developed through various conflictual situation and specific life experiences. Reflexivity towards one’s own position, marriage, family and upbringing practices, as well as adaptation to novel situations comprise the basis for personal, marital and familial growth. Expressions of closeness and emotion within the partner relation turn out to be an important element for open communication, lacking among asymmetrical couples. If the parents blindly follow social norms and given models of parenthood, they are less likely to adapt to novel situations due to decreased flexibility in different phases of family consolidation.

Conclusion

Individualization of parenthood in Serbia is conducted in a particular social context. As opposed to Scandinavian countries, it is neither incentivized nor supported at either the normative-discursive, or the practical-political level (Tomanović 2017). Poor socio-economic positions of parents, inadequate institutional support, a chaotic labor market, but also the normative gender regime, all present significant limitations to individualization of parenthood in Serbia. The reason for this can be found above all in the particularity of context in which family life unfolds. This is the dominant model of south European familist (familial) solidarity, which is not supported either as a cultural normative or as practice in this region, and thus offers no new models to which to turn in the attempt to speed up the process of de-traditionalization of parenthood (ibid).

The ideology of familism in this text has been followed via the normative content of gender structures within contemporary Serbian society, that is, through an analysis of the patriarchal matrix and forms of its expression in upbringing practices of parents. The most significant element in these practices is the ethics of good parenting. The analysis has shown that the upbringing practices of most sampled fathers and mothers reproduce a patriarchal matrix, manifested as the gender segregated normative of *good parent*, and supported through the socio-cultural and historical context of Serbian society. All individuals see the family as a marital unit containing complementary roles. Those roles are simultaneously highly rated in the process of gender socialization of children, due to the intergenerational transfer of heteronormative values and clearly segregated gendered spheres for women and men. Being complementary, the given constructs socialize children into a gendered

world. Thus, the figure of the father is presented as an identification model for boys and their entrance into social life through “separation” from the figure of the mother, that is, from the *private* sphere of the home. Heteronormativity and familism represent the main characteristics of these constructs, and are thus also significant for the introduction of daughters into the gendered role of woman that follows the model of *good mother*. What emerges through a constant comparative method of analysis of fathers’ and mothers’ responses along the two most significant axes of upbringing practices in this research – care and control – is that the models of *good child* stand in correlation with the models of *good parent*. This research has shown that there is a consistency between gender segregated models of *good parent* and *good child* in the narratives of individuals with lower levels of education (elementary and high school degree), blue-collar workers or unemployed, and those more likely to live in rural areas and extended families. On the other hand, the gender segregated model of *good child* is questioned and begun to be deconstructed among those highly educated, employed parents from urban area who live in nuclear family. Indeed, parent upbringing practices are shaped by their relationship to perceived changes in society. In families resistant to change there is no questioning of the gender segregated model of *good child*; whereas, in families that develop new responses to perceived changes, the given model is indeed de-traditionalized. Changes are mostly initiated by the overcoming of the concept of good (sacrificing) parenthood, manifested above all in a greater participation of men in performing household duties. Such conduct even deconstructs on a practical level the crude normative division of the models of *good father* and *good mother*, as well as the normative division of the models *good boy* and *good girl*, since in these families the first-born sons are included in the activities of care for younger children. Changes in the home occur due to the critical reflection of partners and their taking an active position in the direction of projecting a desirable future.

Like some previous studies (Tomanović 2017; Stanojević 2018), this research has shown that new parenting practices can be developed with the implicit consensus of the couple on egalitarian values. This confirms the expectation of transformation of upbringing practices towards egalitarianism of those parents who are more flexible and express closeness in their relationship. A greater degree of closeness and flexibility, as well as better communication between the partners lead to more egalitarian models of gender socialization of children.

These insights also reveal the specificity of individualization of parenthood in Serbia, a country with a problematic heritage. Individualized parenthood is a relational phenomenon whose necessary basis is the consensus of the couple regarding gender equality. Nevertheless, as the bearer of the process of individualization, in Serbia such a couple (living in urban area, fully employed) would be forced to develop independently, without reference to some previous model and without institutional support.

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Jelena Čeriman

Ograničenja individualizacije roditeljstva u Srbiji: studija o rodnoj socijalizaciji dece

Apstrakt

Fokus ovog rada je na ispitivanju ograničenja individualizacije roditeljstva u Srbiji na primeru procesa rodne socijalizacije dece. Osnovna teza je da specifičnosti familističkog konteksta u kom se odvija porodični život u Srbiji, ograničavaju individualizaciju roditeljstva. Ideologija familizma u ovom radu se prati preko normativnih sadržaja rodnih poredaka u kontekstu savremenog društva Srbije, odnosno kroz analizu prisutnosti i načina ispoljavanja patrijarhalne matrice u vaspitnim praksama roditelja, pri čemu najvažniji element čini etika dobrog roditeljstva. Analiza pokazuje da individualizacija roditeljstva i egalitarniji obrasci rodne socijalizacije nastaju pre svega pod uticajem dinamike partnerskih odnosa u kojoj se transformiše koncept žrtvujućeg roditeljstva. Analiza u ovom radu je zasnovana na podacima prikupljenim u empirijskom istraživanju o vaspitnim praksama roditelja u savremenoj Srbiji.

Ključne reči: familizam, individualizacija, roditeljstvo, vaspitne prakse, rodna socijalizacija.

Marko-Luka Zubčić

COMPARATIVE STANDARD IN INSTITUTIONAL EPISTEMOLOGY

ABSTRACT

Which epistemic value is the standard according to which we ought to compare, assess and design institutional arrangements in terms of their epistemic properties? Two main options are agent development (in terms of individual epistemic virtues or capabilities) and attainment of truth. The options are presented through two authoritative contemporary accounts-agent development by Robert Talisse's understanding in *Democracy and Moral Conflict* (2009) and attainment of truth by David Estlund's treatment, most prominently in *Democratic Authority: A Philosophical Framework* (2008). Both options are shown to be unsatisfactory because they are subject to problematic risk of suboptimal epistemic state lock-in. The ability of the social epistemic system to revise suboptimal epistemic states is argued to be the best option for a comparative standard in institutional epistemology.

KEYWORDS

Keywords
institutional design,
division of cognitive
labour, pragmatism,
knowledge
governance, epistemic
performance, social
epistemic systems

1. Introduction

Institutional epistemology is the study of the epistemic performance of *social epistemic systems*, institutional arrangements governing over large and complex populations of epistemic agents¹. One of the foundational concerns of institutional epistemology is according to which property of the social epistemic system must we judge its epistemic performance – the question, then, of comparative standard. The present text argues the ability of the social epistemic system to revise suboptimal epistemic states should be regarded as a comparative standard in institutional epistemology.

The difference between the comparative standard, a methodological device for achieving the task of being more likely to attain knowledge, and the task of attaining knowledge must be clearly delineated. I will argue that the system which is designed to be able to revise suboptimal epistemic states, as opposed

1 The population is comprised of individual agents, and presumably, of communities of agents which may be understood as a single agent (Page 2008. For authoritative work on social ontology, see List and Pettit 2011; Tuomela 2013; Gilbert 2014). For the purposes of this text, I will however use the terms “agent” for individuals and “community” for groups.

to the one designed to nurture agent development or attain the truth, is *more likely* to succeed in search for knowledge. Both agent development and attainment of truth as comparative standards *decrease the likelihood* that the social epistemic system will reach a less suboptimal or the optimal epistemic state – a justified social normative commitment (Brandom 2001) to a true belief.

The present discussion differs from the one on “procedure-independent standard of correct decision”, a concept of frequent attention in literature on epistemic democracy (Peter 2016), inasmuch as the question of concern is not whether the decision made through the democratic procedure should be judged according to some such standard or it is epistemically and politically justified by the procedure itself. The interest here lies in a broader inquiry in social epistemology – according to which standard should we design and assess the epistemic output of any large and normatively complex population governed by a any institutional arrangement? While epistemic democrats will feature prominently in this area of social epistemology, the new methodological concept was needed to distance us from the particular debates in epistemic democracy, and to allow us a viewpoint from which we will be able to judge the total epistemic merit of any social epistemic system.

The plan of the text is the following. First, the two most relevant candidates for the comparative standard of social epistemic systems, agent development and attainment of truth, will be presented and it will be shown how they fail to escape the threat of suboptimal epistemic lock-in. While agent development will be supported by the work of Robert Talisse, namely his epistemic capability perfectionism, attainment of truth will be discussed in relation to the work of David Estlund and his political and epistemological treatment of the claim that those who are more likely to attain truth should exercise political authority over others. Secondly, the ability of the system to revise suboptimal epistemic states will be derived from the objections to both agent development and attainment of truth as the third candidate for the comparative standard in institutional epistemology. By focusing primarily on the threat the first two are unable to systematically stave off, the third candidate effectively tracks how conducive the social epistemic system is to learning. It will also be shown that the ability of the system to revise suboptimal epistemic states as a comparative standard can be recognized as supported by work in pragmatism and political economy, as well as in line with recent developments of “negative approach” to institutional design as argued for by Miranda Fricker.

2. The Assessment of Comparative Standards: Agent Development and Attainment of Truth

2.1. Agent Development as the Comparative Standard

The design of a social epistemic system based on agent development as comparative standard would posit that the superior social epistemic system is the

one which allows for the best epistemic development of its *individual* agents. This may include, for instance, development of individual epistemic virtues or capabilities. I will present the case for agent development as a comparative standard through a specific argument for epistemic capabilities perfectionism featured in Talisse's *Democracy and Moral Conflict*. Two objections from the division of epistemic labour to agent development as the comparative standard will be presented – first, that there can be a combination of “good” and “bad” individual epistemic traits and behaviours which combined give a collectively better epistemic output than exclusively a combination of “good” individual epistemic traits and behaviours; and second, that there can be epistemic traits which contribute to the development of the agent but are unknown at the point of assessment, and which therefore cannot be accounted for by the assessment. Both objections point to the central threat of a suboptimal epistemic state lock-in which social epistemic system designed with agent development as a comparative standard cannot avert. While I will focus on a specific account for illustration and clarity, the objections presented can be used to argue against any design of the social epistemic system based on this particular comparative standard.

2. 1. 1. *Epistemic Capabilities*

I will first explicate Talisse's account of epistemic perfectionism. While his primary argument in *Democracy and Moral Conflict* is itself highly relevant, sound and elegant, particularly with regards to the discussions in the fundamental discursive nature of epistemic agents, the focus here is on the argument for epistemic perfectionism with which Talisse is concerned in the second part of the book (Talisse 2009: 156–192).

Talisse's primary argument in *Democracy and Moral Conflict* is that in order for individuals to develop *any* kind of epistemic life they must be able to exercise their capacities for reason-exchange – epistemic agents are *defined* by being able to engage in reason-exchange. This is a sound pragmatist claim. Talisse, furthermore, argues that democracy is the basic institutional arrangement which allows the agents to do so (Talisse 2009: 79–154). Once faced with the Agent Ignorance Objection which challenges the thesis that inclusive deliberation in democracy is epistemically valuable by presenting evidence of individuals in the contingent historical circumstances of particular democratic regime (namely, citizens of USA in the beginning of 21st Century) seemingly ignorant of a multitude of political and scientific facts, Talisse endorses a form of epistemic perfectionism aimed at fuller development of agents' epistemic capabilities (Talisse 2009: 156–185).

The first thing to notice is Talisse's quick concession to the argument based on the contingent historical ignorance of agents. Despite his initial argument not hinging on agents' being knowledgeable (his argument posits that without being able to engage in reason-exchange agents cannot be referred to as epistemic *at all*), Talisse does, in the second part of the book, grow concerned about agents' lack of knowledge on the subjects they are engaged in reason-exchange

on. Let me, before going into Talisse's defense against Agent Ignorance Objection, first point out that from the standpoint of institutional epistemology the objection of agents' ignorance need be conceded as relevant. Epistemic agents should be taken to be "constitutionally" (Hayek 1978: 5) and "irremediably" (Hayek 1982: 12) epistemically suboptimal. They would be *more ignorant* if they did not engaged in reason-exchange. They are less ignorant if they have a chance to engage in the social epistemic system. They, however, remain ignorant either way. As Talisse himself recognizes, this is why there is a need for the *social* epistemic system in the first place². Individual epistemic agents have severely limited epistemic capacities, including the ability to recognize relevant evidence, make use of relevant data and concepts, and develop good inferential practices. Social epistemic system, where populations of agents engage in epistemic activity, as opposed to particular individual agents, is less so.

Talisse's reply to Agent Ignorance Objection is as follows. Given Sunstein's valuable epistemological insights on inferior epistemic output of isolated normative communities (Sunstein 2009), Talisse first diagnoses the epistemic life of agents in question as lacking in trans-normative interaction. Their exposure to reasons and evidence beside those their communities provide is too low. Normative pluralism is the feature of a superior epistemic system because it reduces agent ignorance. This is a sound design understanding and a sufficient answer to the objection. Talisse, however, proceeds to argue for epistemic perfectionism aimed at agent development, and posits a list of capabilities (Talisse 2009: 173–177) the "state" should foster in the agents.

The argument in the next section is *whatever* the capabilities, the list of individually virtuous epistemic features is a flawed attempt at designing a superior social epistemic system. I will not argue against Talisse's capabilities themselves. Their content is beside the point here – the focus on individual epistemic development itself runs the problematic risk of suboptimal epistemic lock-in.

2. 1. 2. Two Objections from the Division of Epistemic Labour

Two objections from the division of epistemic labour to *any* list of individual epistemic virtues or capabilities which arises from understanding agent development as the standard according to which we should design and assess a social epistemic system are:

1. There can be a set of practices or traits which cannot be understood as "good" epistemic practices or traits at the level of the individual, but which contribute to the superior epistemic output of the social epistemic system.

² Talisse himself claims: "Our epistemic dependence is unavoidable because each individual has limited cognitive resources. Individually, we simply cannot inquire into every matter that is relevant to our beliefs; we must at some point rely on the epistemic capabilities of others, we must *defer*." (Talisse 2009: 141) He, furthermore, rightly points out that "(...) each of us epistemically depends on an entire *social epistemic system*." (Talisse 2009: 142) He proceeds to argue for the epistemic perfectionism nevertheless.

2. There can be a set of practices or traits unknown to any agent (including the assessor) at t_1 which contribute to the superior output of the social epistemic system at t_2 .

The first objection may be illustrated by Zollman's work in agent-based simulations in social epistemology. In "The Epistemic Benefit of Transient Diversity", Zollman (2010) shows how the population in which information is shared among agents with extreme priors (and thus who conserve strategies or theories despite having evidence to the contrary available) is significantly epistemically superior to the one in which the agents lack such (non-virtuous) individual epistemic traits.

The second objection is more general, and requires only the concession that at any time of assessment there is a possibility of unknown individual traits which could contribute to better epistemic output. Therefore, a population with the set of traits T and an additional trait n , unknown at the time of assessment (which represents *any* time of assessment), may epistemically outperform a population with the set of traits T . Yet, our conceptual apparatus allows only for the assessment of the population with the set of traits T to be recognized as a superior social epistemic system, while in the same time the population with the set of traits T is suboptimal in relation to the population with the $T+n$ set of traits.

What both of these objections present are cases of suboptimal epistemic state lock-in, and they could be understood as a twofold form of a single central objection, namely the objection that *agent development as a comparative standard runs the problematic risk of suboptimal epistemic state lock-in*. As Mayo-Wilson, Zollman and Danks (2011) observe, the divergence of prescriptions for superior individual and group epistemic performance, seminally argued by Kitcher (1990), is among the founding insights of social epistemology. There can be a configuration of individual epistemic practices which cannot be described as "good" from agent-level perspective which produces better epistemic output than does the configuration of exclusively "good" epistemic practices. Furthermore, there can be agent-level traits beneficial to the epistemic development of the population which are unknown at the time of design or assessment – and, as both Elinor Ostrom (Ostrom, Hess 2007: 68) and Friedrich Hayek (1960: 414) have noted, judging the presently best state of knowledge as the standard risks suppressing the optimal development.

2. 2 Attainment of Truth as the Comparative Standard

The other comparative standard featured prominently in the social epistemological debate is the attainment of truth. Epistemic democrats in particular have a tendency to describe features of their favoured social epistemic system as "truth-conducive" or "truth-tracking" (Gaus 2011: 273). Two objections to attainment of truth as comparative standard are: a) it is either conceptually empty without additional specification of the comparative standard according to which we ought to find the truth or knowledge tracked, which in turn

is the controversy presently under investigation; b) or the requirement following from attainment of truth as the comparative standard is that we delegate epistemic labour to those agents who are most likely to attain the truth. I will focus on the second objection, and provide a discussion on David Estlund's work related to the question of authority of those who are more likely to attain the truth. I will argue that his arguments against epistocracy are not satisfactory, and that a stronger epistemological argument against expert governance, and thus against attainment of truth as the comparative standard is required and possible.

The objection from division of labour to delegation of epistemic labour to experts is that it, again, exposes the social epistemic system to risk of suboptimal epistemic lock-in. The pluralism required for superior epistemic performance of a large and complex population must be *redundant*, and thus there *are* agents who are more likely to attain the truth. By delegating the totality of epistemic tasks to experts, the social epistemic system is lacking means of contesting the epistemic state the experts have attained. While they are *more likely* to attain the truth, the experts will not *necessarily* attain the truth. They are, moreover, *still epistemically suboptimal*. Therefore, the epistemic state the experts attained may as well be suboptimal. The agents less likely to attain truth are denied any possibility at contesting the epistemic state due to being denied access to any epistemic labour, and thus their different and disagreeing normative strategies cannot offer any contribution to breaking the consensus. The system build on attainment of truth as comparative standard has no means of *contesting its optimality*³.

2. 2. 1. Strong Political and Weak Epistemological Objection to Epistocracy

The authoritative argument in institutional epistemology against the delegation of epistemic labour to those agents who are more likely to attain truth is Estlund's objection to epistocracy not being "generally acceptable in the way

3 Truth is a controversial concept (particularly, of course, within epistemology). So controversial, in fact, that it appears ill-advised to use it for the robust design of a social epistemic system. Another objection to attainment of truth as comparative standard, therefore, could be that it would lead towards too much controversy as to the nature of this particular concept, and therefore the assessment could not even begin. However, it could be argued that the design of the social epistemic system need not proceed according to any particular controversial theory of truth, but, following Estlund's "minimal" conception of truth (Estlund 2008: 25), merely posit that the best social epistemic system is the one which produces the claim "X is f" when X is f. The systematic approach to institutional epistemology, thus, need not deal with truth in the manner the first objection implies. It may merely posit truth-conduciveness (very roughly, the ability to produce "X is f" when X is f) as a formal feature of a certain procedure. I will concede this point. Attainment of truth as the comparative standard need not be defined substantially as to settle the discussions with regards to theories of truth. The problem I will focus on is that the attainment of truth as comparative standard leads to defining the substantial agent trait of being more likely to attain truth as the definitive reason to delegate the totality of epistemic tasks to those agents that feature this trait.

that political legitimacy requires.” (Estlund 2008: 7; Estlund 2003: 58) I will not presently engage with the majority of the particularities of his complex and sophisticated work, but will solely focus on the aspects relevant for this inquiry.

Estlund’s account is focused on endorsing what he calls the Truth Tenet, claiming that “there are true (at least in the minimal sense) procedure-independent normative standards by which political decisions ought to be judged” (Estlund 2008: 30), and Knowledge Tenet, claiming that “some (relatively few) people know those normative standards better than others” (Estlund 2008: 30), while rejecting what he calls Authority Tenet, a claim that “(t)he normative political knowledge of those who know better is a warrant for their having political authority over others” (Estlund 2008: 30). Estlund rejects the Authority Tenet on political grounds, and argues democracy is epistemologically justified because it is “better than random and is epistemically the best among those that are generally acceptable in the way that political legitimacy requires.” (Estlund 2008: 7) Democracy is the best social epistemic system because it is most likely *to attain the truth* among those social epistemic systems which can have political legitimacy.

Estlund is concerned exclusively with political and moral epistemic materials – whereas I am concerned with epistemic materials in general. More importantly, Estlund’s argument is concerned primarily with political authority, and only secondarily with epistemological value. He proceeds to argue against the Authority Tenet on political grounds – Authority Tenet cannot hold, because the authority of “those who know better” cannot be held politically legitimate.

Estlund’s larger understanding of attainment of truth as the institutional epistemic comparative standard allows for expertism to reign supreme in institutional epistemic labour for epistemological reasons albeit forbidding it for political. In “Why Not Epistocracy?”, for instance, Estlund appreciates “Millian” scholocracy epistemologically but finds it politically problematic, and effectively concedes general epistemological labour to experts and retains the political-epistemological labour as a domain of the democratic. From this, it follows there is an ought *simpliciter* (Case 2016) which is known to few and should be followed in the design of a social epistemic system which lacks *political* decision-making.

Estlund does make a particular epistemological objection to Authority Tenet-Demographic Objection (Estlund 2008: 215 – 219) – which states that contingent groups of experts may “carry” epistemic vices or suboptimal traits which override their relative epistemic superiority to other agents in the population. This is the case – however, not for any contingent reason of suboptimal individual epistemic traits, but for the necessity of a less likely revision of suboptimal epistemic state in cases of normative centralization. Estlund’s objection is too weak and, moreover, cannot withstand the *philosophical* definition of experts as those who are more likely to attain the truth, and thus remain relatively epistemically superior despite any suboptimalities they may “carry”. From the standpoint of the division of epistemic labour both of these claims can be accounted for. It is the nature of knowledge that it is conditioned on

redundant normative pluralism – experts themselves can attain the truth if and only if operating under the conditions of a redundant normative pluralism.

The Authority Tenet may then be rejected on epistemological grounds. There may be an ought *simpliciter* and it may be known to the few, but they cannot *know* it without epistemic input from the redundant diversity of inquirers. Thus comparing the social epistemic systems according to the likelihood of knowing ought *simpliciter* is at best uninformative in design due to its trivial claim of there being an ought *simpliciter* and some agents being more likely to know it, and at worst epistemically distortive if improperly interpreted to have no epistemic reasons why not to delegate epistemic labour exclusively to experts. I will now present this objection to attainment of truth as a comparative standard in some detail.

2. 2. 2. *Epistemological Objection to Attainment of Truth as Comparative Standard*

Attainment of truth, or tracking of truth, is obviously an epistemic task of primary importance. Knowledge is at least a justified normative commitment to a true belief. However, this claim does not necessarily translate into the attainment of truth being the proper comparative standard of social epistemic systems – it would leave us with an uninformative or confusing standard. The inquiry on “Which of these two systems are closer to truth?” would merely return us to the original question of “How do you compare which is closer to the truth?” We are concerned with the *epistemological* comparative standard, and thus the standard according to which access to the commitment to a justified *true* belief may be more available to the population. As I will argue, it will be more available to the population which is more likely to revise a suboptimal epistemic state.

The other available answers to the question “Which of these two systems are closer to truth?” could be “Which system has more agents who are more likely to know the truth?” or “Which system is run by those who are more likely to know the truth?” Thus, expert-governed social epistemic system may result from the comparative standard of attainment of truth, if we were not to understand it trivially.

There is a wealth of empirical evidence (Hastie, Dawes 2001; Kahneman 2011; Gaus 2008) that experts can and do tend towards suboptimal epistemic state lock-ins. However, the case here involves experts understood much more stringently as those agents who are more likely to attain the truth at the assessment point t_1 . Therefore, the claim is not that experts tend to get stuck at suboptimal epistemic states, but that the social epistemic system which delegates the epistemic labour to experts has no institutional mechanism to prevent them from arriving at and retaining indefinitely the suboptimal epistemic state.

The epistemological problem with delegation of epistemic labour to those more likely to attain the truth is as follows. Note that “being *more likely* to attain truth at assessment point t_1 ” does not translate into “*necessarily* attaining the truth at t_1 ”. Therefore, the experts will not necessarily attain the optimal epistemic state – they might attain and indefinitely conserve a suboptimal

epistemic state. Having delegated the totality of epistemic labour to experts, however, the social epistemic system has no means of contesting *whatever* epistemic state the experts have attained.

Experts could be understood more or less as one really smart person, both in its skillful excellence *and* in its cognitive limitations – namely, the lack of conceptual and computational resources *if* working with the same normative strategy (Page 2008). Adding agents to the expert community may improve the speed of computation and introduce some cognitive diversity (as exists within any given population of agents [Landemore 2012]), but will not prevent it from getting stuck at the local optimum – save adding *normatively different* and thus *non-expert* agents. Normative pluralism is a condition of the discovery of the ought *simpliciter*.

If the social epistemic system delegates the epistemic task to those epistemic agents who are more likely to attain the truth, it denies itself any *systematic* ability to recognize (and revise) suboptimal epistemic state, and thus denies itself the *hedging* mechanism against such a state – if “hedging” is understood as minimization of risk of a bad epistemic “bet” on a particular strategy for overcoming the suboptimal epistemic state.

The superior social epistemic system, of course, still needs and should welcome experts – just as it needs and should welcome really smart people. They bring *individually and relatively* superior (but *system-level suboptimal*) epistemic material into the epistemic pool. The division of epistemic labour in the superior social epistemic system *does not deny expertize nor does it deny the possibility of hierarchical relations within which experts hold higher social and epistemic “positions”* – it merely does not fully reduce the epistemic labour necessary for the superior social system to epistemic labour done exclusively by experts.

The central objection to the attainment of truth as comparative standard is thus the same as the one to agent development – it runs the problematic risk of suboptimal epistemic state lock-in.

3. Revision of a Suboptimal Epistemic State as the Comparative Standard

In the analysis so far the suboptimal epistemic lock-in, the inability of populations of epistemic agents to revise suboptimal epistemic states, has been shown to be the primary threat the social epistemic system faces. Thus, the ability of the system to revise suboptimal epistemic states appears to be the quintessential epistemically superior feature. The system which exhibits this feature is more likely to succeed in the search for knowledge. This ability of the social epistemic system to revise the suboptimal epistemic state should therefore be regarded as the comparative standard of social epistemic systems. I will call it Modest Epistemic Comparative Standard, MECS for short.

MECS is a *regulative* standard which tracks the ability of the social epistemic system to *learn* and allows for the development of minimal conditions

for satisfaction of the justification criteria of knowledge. It is regulative as opposed to *positive* comparative standards of agent development and attainment of truth because it does not posit or depend on a substantial epistemic doctrine of agent traits (either in order to develop them or to identify those agents most likely to attain the truth) but designs the system able to withstand their *worst* suboptimalities. It doesn't ask how excellent are its agents – it asks whether the system can escape the deepest ignorance of its best agents. Doing so, it advances primarily a social epistemic system which is capable, in the most robust manner, of *moving away from epistemic ills*, of *upgrading its epistemic state*, and thus a system which is capable of *learning*.

MECS cannot favour any group of agents – 1) experts and agents with recognized epistemic virtues are less likely to revise the attained suboptimal epistemic state because they can be expected to form a consensus on a particular betting strategy, and subsequently a particular epistemic state, without means of evaluating and contesting that particular strategy and state, and 2) other agents are less likely by default. Therefore, they are both less likely to revise a suboptimal epistemic state apart than they are together. Instead of favoring agents with certain properties, MECS favours *redundant normative pluralism* and disagreement as epistemically beneficial (and instrumental) developments within a population. Furthermore, redundant normative pluralism presents *minimal conditions for satisfaction of the justification criteria of knowledge* – social epistemic system featuring redundant normative pluralism opens the Epistemic Contributions of its members to *contest*, and thus makes it possible for them to be justified. As J. S. Mill observed with clarity, the ability to revise suboptimal epistemic states, “to be set right when it is wrong” (Mill 2003: 103) is the fundamental epistemic feature of epistemically suboptimal agents. For this ability to develop, and the deepest desperate epistemic state to be overcome, mere experience is insufficient and discussion is required (Mill 2003: 102).

The history of institutional epistemological thought thoroughly supports MECS. It is sound, as already shown, from the perspective of the division of epistemic labour – redundant normative pluralism is fully justified by the maintenance of the ability of the social epistemic system to revise suboptimal epistemic states. Friedrich Hayek posits the task of competition to be to show “which plans are false” (Hayek 1982: 117), to reveal bad epistemic “bets” agents make in the search for knowledge under conditions of irremediable and constitutional ignorance. The economists working with dynamic complex normative systems in polycentric governance studies and New Institutional Economics have long considered the ability of the system to learn and adapt to be of central importance for its epistemic performance (Ostrom 20015; North 1990; for the overview of the subject of institutional change, see Kingston and Caballero 2009). Pragmatism's key innovations in epistemology⁴ are positing the testing and contesting of normative commitments as baseline epistemic

4 For a more comprehensive understanding of the connections between Hayek and pragmatists, see Aligica 2014.

practices, *the experience of error as central to epistemic development* (Brandom 2001) and learning as the key feature of the superior institutional order. Finally, MECS is in line with Miranda Fricker's negative approach in epistemic institutional design (Fricker 2015). Elaborating the ideal epistemic institutional arrangement requires focusing on threats to the social epistemic systems, the diagnosis of and solution to the points of *failure* the population is *prone to*. "The ideal social organism will have a well-functioning immune system, and you cannot design one of those without a proper understanding of its susceptibility to disease." (Fricker 2015: 74)

The objection to MECS surely cannot rest on any argument against revision of the suboptimal epistemic states as a key feature of knowledge-acquisition. MECS however may be accused of being *too* modest. Revision of a suboptimal epistemic state does not imply reaching an optimal epistemic state – a suboptimal epistemic state may be revised into second suboptimal epistemic state. The response to this objection is two-fold: 1) given the agents are epistemically suboptimal, the attainment of the optimal state is never guaranteed, and there cannot be a social epistemic system which guarantees it, but 2) the revision of the *second* suboptimal epistemic state is possible only in the social epistemic system designed to be able to revise suboptimal epistemic states. If the objection would lead towards the design of the social epistemic system such that it would be compared according to its ability to reach an *optimal* state, it would merely lead towards attainment of truth as the comparative standard, and is therefore subject to the same objection.

We should judge the social epistemic systems according to their ability to revise suboptimal epistemic states, the ability to get "unstuck" from worst ignorance. The epistemically best performing population needn't have the smartest members nor is led by the wisest ones. It must, however, be most likely to recognize when it is wrong.

4. Conclusion

Social epistemic system designed or assessed according to the comparative standard of agent development or attainment of truth give rise to the problematic risk suboptimal epistemic state lock-in. Lowering this risk should be regarded as the comparative standard of the institutional arrangement governing over a large and normatively complex population in its search for knowledge. The superior social epistemic system is the one which learns best.

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Marko-Luka Zubčić

Komparativni standard u institucionalnoj epistemologiji

Apstakt

Koja epistemološka vrednost je standard prema kome se trebaju upoređivati, procenjivati i dizajnirati institucionalna uređenja s obzirom na njihova epistemološka svojstva? Dve klasične opcije su razvoj agenata (u smislu individualnih epistemoloških vrlina ili sposobnosti) i dostizanje istine. Opcije su predstavljene kroz dva autoritativna savremena iskaza – razvoj agenata kroz rad Roberta Telisija u *Democracy and Moral Conflict* (2009), te dostizanje istine kroz rad Dejvida Istlunda, najistaknutije u *Democratic Authority: A Philosophical Framework* (2008). Ovaj članak pokazuje da su obe opcije nezadovoljavajuće jer su podložne problematičnom riziku "zaglavlivanja" u suboptimalnom epistemološkom stanju. Članak argumentuje da je sposobnost sistema da revidira suboptimalna epistemološka stanja najbolja opcija za komparativni standard u institucionalnoj epistemologiji.

Ključne reči: institucionalni dizajn, podela kognitivnog rada, pragmatizam, upravljanje znanjem, epistemološke performance, socijalni epistemološki sistemi

III

REVIEW ESSAY

KRITIČKI OSVRT

Lyal S. Sunga

NOAM CHOMSKY, *YUGOSLAVIA: PEACE, WAR AND DISSOLUTION*, DAVOR DŽALTO (ED.), PM PRESS, OAKLAND, 2018.

ABSTRACT

In this essay, the author reviews and critically assesses the book *Yugoslavia: Peace, War, and Dissolution*, authored by Noam Chomsky and edited by Davor Džalto. The author also points to the importance and value of the book for the field of political theory, international relations and Yugoslav studies, examining at the same time particular concepts (such as "genocide") within the broader context of legal theory and international law.

KEYWORDS

Yugoslavia, war, breakup, Chomsky, genocide

Part I: Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia's historical transitions through peace, war and dissolution register both some of humanity's greatest dreams and worst nightmares. During the Cold War, Yugoslavia's experiments with self-determination, socialist self-management and strategic non-alignment, stirred hearts and dreams far beyond the Balkans for the revolutionary empowerment of the masses. Tito's death in 1980 released his iron grip over the multi-ethnic Yugoslav federation, and it was not long before extremist ethnic nationalism and genocidal massacre tragically filled the power vacuum, shredding Yugoslavian sovereignty along the way. Revisiting tumultuous modern Yugoslavian history through Chomsky's critical eyes adds valuable perspective to current crises in ethnic identity, nationalism, self-determination, human rights, and the proper role of the constitutional State in their new guises in the Balkans and beyond.

Yugoslavia: Peace, War, and Dissolution brings together Noam Chomsky's reflections in letters, newspaper editorials, interviews and commentaries published over four decades. This book will captivate not only students of the Yugoslav socialist experiment, but also anyone concerned with superpower swagger, the *fata morgana* of Non-Alignment, the truth or falsity of political and military narratives on the Yugoslav conflict, and whether anarchism offers us anything constructive today. To understand today's governance challenges in the face of resurgent nationalism, racism and xenophobia, corrupt oligarchic rule, obscene concentration of wealth at the top percentile, the spread of extreme poverty

even in rich countries, and widespread loss of faith in democracy around the globe, it is worth exploring Chomsky's unremittingly searing criticism of the foreign policy of the United States – currently the world's only superpower.

The book is introduced and edited by Professor Davor Džalto. Andrej Grubačić's preface provides a heartfelt "glimpse of the interior life of former Yugoslavia from the perspective of a Yugoslav, of a Yugoslav exile" (p. viii). Grubačić relates his grandfather's role as last secretary of the Communist Youth movement, an Ambassador to the Non-Aligned Movement, President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Bosnia and other key roles as well as his grandmother's influence, and conflicted loyalties within the family towards Bolshevism, independent Yugoslav socialism and anarchism, and the prospects for a new trans-ethnic Yugoslav federation of the future. He concludes that "Socialist Yugoslavia may have been consigned to a museum, but the memory of the Yugoslav political project endures, as do our memories of the antifascist struggle, the heroism of Gavrilo Princip and Young Bosnians, and the tradition of multi-ethnic coexistence. Another Yugoslavia, in some different, and hopefully more developed form, is inevitable. I am sure of it." (p. xvi). Bosnian Serb Princip, one should recall, is widely reviled outside Serbian circles for having assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and the Archduke's beloved wife Sophie, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, an event that led to the outbreak of the First World War, anywhere between 15 and 19 million deaths, and an estimated 23 million military wounded. Grubačić's heroism comment alerts the reader straightaway to expect to encounter alternatives to predominant narratives, and to be challenged to revisit settled truths.

Davor Džalto's introductions both to the whole book and to each of the three main parts of the book, make indispensable reading. They set the historical, political and social context for understanding better the contemporaneous import of Chomsky's intellectual interventions on Yugoslavia as well as their wider ideological implications. Džalto's clear, precise and detailed appreciation of Yugoslav dynamics through peace, war and dissolution, helps readers connect Chomsky's keen insights of years ago to current debates. In "Yugoslavia: Dreams and Realities," Džalto reminds us of the formation of the "first" Yugoslavia from the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians following World War I and the independent kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro at the demise of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and the complexities surrounding the formation of the "second" Yugoslavia, rooted in World War II. He recalls Hitler's invasion of 6 April 1941 and the rival Četnik anti-fascist movement led by Colonel Dragoljub Mihailović, and Tito's communist partisans, including the distribution of Serb national power across the nascent Yugoslav republics (p. 7). Džalto then relates the formation of the Yugoslav constitution on 31 January 1946 from these portentous beginnings to the Yugoslav interpretation of the right to self-determination to apply to "constitutive nations" of the Yugoslav federation, to be distinguished from the rights of "national minorities" whose origins lay beyond the territorial frontiers of Yugoslavia, such as Albanians, Bulgarians, Hungarians and Romanians. Džalto paints the background panorama

of Tito's increasing authoritarianism, his punitive rejection of Milovan Djilas' social democratic critique of Yugoslav apparatchik bourgeoisification, Tito's split with Stalin in 1948, Tito's "anti-revolutionary" purges, Tito's oppression of dissidents that reached deep into Yugoslav intelligentsia and universities, and how Tito used Non-Alignment to bolster his personal prestige domestically and Yugoslavia's abroad.

Most edifying is Džalto's treatment of the Milovan Djilas and Edvard Kardelj notion of "self-managing socialism" that proposed transformation of the inefficient, and manifestly politically repressive Soviet planned economy model, including forced agricultural collectivization policy in Yugoslavia, with an enlightened socioeconomic configuration based on the free association of direct producers. These producers would be entrusted with the power to make decisions regarding production and distribution, breaking the stifling production monopoly of party and bureaucracy. Workers' councils would be abolished in favour of the free association of producers as Karl Marx envisioned in *Das Kapital* and in one master stroke, could, argued Djilas, inaugurate the "beginnings of democracy, something that socialism had not yet achieved; further, it could be plainly seen by the world and the international workers' movement as a radical departure from Stalinism" (Džalto, quoting Djilas at p. 24). The new model, which Tito embraced and formalized in the Workers' Self-Management Act, adopted by the Yugoslavian National Assembly on 26 June 1950, helped Yugoslavia chart a "Third Way" independent of the Soviet Union whose behemoth socialist State contrasted starkly with Marx's vision of the eventual withering away of the State and a classless society. Not surprisingly, this new Third Way model elicited hostile reaction from Stalin who ruled the USSR with secret police terror and purges to quash any and all form of political dissent. What would Russia, and the world, have looked like today if Lenin's Vanguardism had not emerged supreme over Socialist Revolutionaries, Socialist Internationalists or other radical left splinter groups active in 1917?

The book's chapter on "Conscience of Yugoslavia" (p. 35) is Chomsky's letter to the editors of the New York Review of Books, dated 7 January 1971. It draws attention to the plight of a philosophy student at Belgrade University, sentenced to 22 months in prison for having organized demonstrations and having protested against the US invasion of Cambodia and whom Chomsky calls the "conscience of Yugoslavia." A few years later, Chomsky and Robert S. Cohen co-wrote another letter to the editor of the same journal, opposing repression at Belgrade University. What is interesting about these letters is that not only did Chomsky speak out against this kind of repression, but that he carefully traced the chronological developments of student thought and activism as a function of the emerging social and economic conditions of the time. He then related these debates to the politically sensitive governance paradigms of "self-management," and more significantly, even to the internecine struggles within the Yugoslav Communist Party itself.

Why should Chomsky and Cohen have bothered themselves with what could be considered an isolated University regulatory dispute in a faraway

land? The answer goes to the heart of Chomsky's relevance as thinker and activist. Chomsky recognized, as few seem to have appreciated as fully as he did at the time, the importance of academic freedom in the University, of freedom of thought in society in general, and its intimate connection with participatory democracy free from authoritarian domination. Quite remarkably, Chomsky delves into the details of university norms and regulations which were the actual determinants of the degree of academic freedom of thought at Belgrade University. Chomsky's approach helped mobilize international opinion, for example, in Scandinavian countries, which applied "friendly pressure" on the Government not to continue its repressive measures against the Faculty of Philosophy, and in particular, to refrain from imposing requirements in June 1973 upon university professors to accept Marxism. Chomsky and Cohen saw that: "The degree of pressure will depend on whether the whole thing will pass in silence as a little episode in one of the world's many universities, or whether it will be understood for what it is: one of the last battles for survival of free, critical, progressive thought in the present-day socialist world ..." We need only recall bullying tactics, repressive measures, and threats against professorial tenure and promotion in some prestigious American universities that surrendered to the barrage of post-9/11 US Government national security and counter-terrorism rhetoric to see the direct relevance of repression at Belgrade University in the 1970's, to academic conformism today, or further back in time, McCarthyist pressure on American professors to disown Marxist sympathies. Chomsky joined with other prominent intellectuals in an open letter to Marshall Tito objecting to a new law in Serbia instituting further repressive measures, and these intellectuals then formed a standing International Committee of Concern for Academic Freedom in Yugoslavia.

Part II: Yugoslav Wars

Professor Džalto prefaces Part II entitled "Yugoslav Wars" (p. 50) by recalling how armed conflict shattered confidence in the myth of the inevitability and invincibility of western liberal thought and practice as exemplified in Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*. In concrete terms, Džalto identifies the influx of arms into Yugoslavia, Yugoslavia's internal security structure, and bleak economic conditions, as exacerbating factors for the onset of armed hostilities and the breakup of Yugoslavia. Džalto takes issue with the qualification of the Srebrenica massacre as "genocide" and sides with Chomsky's contention that the "massacre whatever its scale, can hardly be used as justification for NATO intervention." The obvious question here is "why not?" Even if we grant that humanitarian intervention, that is, the unilateral or joint use of armed force in the territory of a State to protect the territorial State's residents, has been misused often for self-interest, can we really hold that massacres, *whatever their scale*, cannot justify military intervention to halt them and prevent further atrocities? Of course, military action in principle should be used only on strictly lawful grounds, and preferably through the UN or regional collective

security frameworks, but these don't always work, or may be blocked by veto in the case of the Security Council, or general lack of political will. Do we really want to ignore atrocities - *whatever their scale* - if humanitarian intervention could put a stop to it? That sounds like a recipe for doing nothing at all – a recipe which has been tried already for Palestine, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and many other places, with quite tragic results.

In Džalto's interview of Chomsky, Chomsky says that a contributing factor of Yugoslav dissolution was the impact of neoliberal policies pushed by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and US Treasury Department, which pitted international capital through the international financial institutions and major banks, against the power of labour and socialist welfare States. The degree to which this factor played a role in Yugoslavia's dissolution is hard to determine, but Chomsky's wide-angle perspective certainly places the issue very forcefully into the context of broader international economic relations. Chomsky also raises the issue of Germany's swift recognition of Croatian sovereignty, which was quickly followed by US recognition of the Bosniaks, as impetus for the demise of Yugoslavia. Germany's premature recognition of Croatia without protection for the Serb minority almost guaranteed war, says Chomsky, and he links this precipitous action to German insistence on austerity measures during the Grexit Crisis as a form of Teutonic economic aggression over southern Europe - an interesting extrapolation that however sounds factually unsupportable.

Chomsky's discussion on Srebrenica (p. 74) over the course of several interviews tries to counter accusations from certain journalists and others that he never properly recognized the Srebrenica massacre as an act of genocide. Chomsky's Srebrenica arguments on genocide seem seriously flawed and they cry out for comment. Chomsky says:

I don't use the word 'genocide' much, and I don't think it's used properly. The way it's used strikes me as a kind of Holocaust denial. I mean, to use the term 'genocide' when you kill a bunch of people you don't like, that demeans the victims of the Holocaust. If you kill, say, a couple of thousand men in a village, after you have allowed the women and children to escape – you have in fact trucked them out – that does not count as genocide. It's a horror story but it is not genocide. ... In the case of Srebrenica, the figures are debated. The highest figures that are given are around eight thousand. However, when enemies carry out an atrocity there is a huge effort that goes into finding every piece of bone, into the DNA analysis, into trying to get the biggest number you can. When we carry out a comparable atrocity nobody even investigates it. I think we ought to tell the truth about it, and the truth is that it was an atrocity, but nothing like what was claimed in, say, the British press.

True, the term "genocide" must not be used lightly. True, not every atrocity counts as genocide. True, determining mass casualty figures is both an art and a science and almost always involves a certain level of imprecision. These questions aside, on what basis does Chomsky conclude (sounding rather definitive) that the Srebrenica massacre was *not* genocide?

The most authoritative definition of “genocide” comes from the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and its partial reproduction in Article 6 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which defines “genocide” as:

any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The difference between “killing people you don’t like,” and “genocide” as legally defined is a big one, and it should not have escaped Chomsky’s critical eye. The key element in the international law definition of “genocide,” which is what Chomsky should have used to understand the Srebrenica massacre if he wanted to pronounce so definitively on it, has less to do with numbers of victims than with the intent of the perpetrator. The ICC Statute (and UN Genocide Convention adopted 50 years earlier) clearly establishes that the requisite mental element on the part of the perpetrator “to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such,” together with one or more of the proscribed acts of genocide, are what qualifies an act as one of genocide. The legal definition of “genocide” represents objective consensus on the part of States about exactly what constitutes this crime and it should not be muddled up with less precise notions.

By all credible accounts, the Srebrenica massacre involved the premeditated and systematic killing of around 8000 Bosniak men and boys by Bosnian Serb forces between 11 and 22 July 1995. What made the Srebrenica massacre an act of genocide is that Mladic, Krstić and others, killed *all* males between 14 and 72 years of age *indiscriminately*, not during battle, not even as revenge, but instead as an attempt to wipe out the Muslim minority in a particularly historically symbolic and strategic territory. The crime of genocide simply does not require the perpetrators to kill or attempt to kill every single civilian, so Chomsky’s argument sounds very odd indeed, and his “killing people you don’t like” comment comes off as rather flippant.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia proved genocidal intent beyond a reasonable doubt with respect to the Srebrenica massacre in several very important cases. In the first ever conviction for genocide in Europe, Radislav Krstić, Bosnian Serb commander, subsequently Chief of Staff in the Republika Srpska Army, was given 35 years imprisonment for his role in the Srebrenica massacre. The ICTY Trial and Appeal Chambers found that genocidal intent was clearly shown by the Army of Republika Srpska’s

singling out of Bosnian Muslims - a distinct national group. The reasoning of the Trial Chamber was that:

The size of the Bosnian Muslim population in Srebrenica prior to its capture by the VRS [Army of Republika Srpska] forces in 1995 amounted to approximately forty thousand people. Although this population constituted only a small percentage of the overall Muslim population of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the time, the importance of the Muslim community of Srebrenica is not captured solely by its size. As the Trial Chamber explained, Srebrenica (and the surrounding Central Podrinje region) were of immense strategic importance to the Bosnian Serb leadership. Without Srebrenica, the ethnically Serb state of Republika Srpska they sought to create would remain divided into two disconnected parts, and its access to Serbia proper would be disrupted. The capture and ethnic purification of Srebrenica would therefore severely undermine the military efforts of the Bosnian Muslim state to ensure its viability, a consequence the Muslim leadership fully realized and strove to prevent. (See “Appeals Chamber Judgement in the Case The Prosecutor v. Radislav Krstić: The Appeals Chamber unanimously finds that Genocide was committed in Srebrenica in 1995,” available at http://www.icty.org/x/cases/krstic/acjug/en/040419_Krsti_summary_en.pdf).

In terms of evidence, the ICTY concluded genocidal intent from the fact that VRS forces intended to eliminate all Bosnian Muslims of all men of military age from Srebrenica. Krstić’s actions betrayed a clear intention to wipe out part of this group and that fact implicated him as commander directly in the genocide. Anyone can immerse themselves in the minutiae of the ICTY’s Srebrenica genocide or of the many other crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia, and the ICTY’s evidentiary findings, judgements and sentences simply by accessing the ICTY’s official website.

But here’s the point: the Krstić Appeal Judgement was rendered in 2004. That was almost a decade before Chomsky commented at the British Library in London on 19 March 2013 that the Srebrenica massacre *did not constitute genocide*. That makes Chomsky’s opinion seem not just poorly supported, but flat out wrong. Anyone doubting the unanimous judicial decision in Krstić could do just as well to read the ICTY’s trials and convictions of Ljubiša Beara, Bosnian Serb colonel for his role at Srebrenica (and also Žepa), former commander of Bratunac Brigade Vidoje Blagojević, former Bosnian Serb police official Ljubomir Borovčanin, soldier Dražen Erdemović, Bosnian Serb military assistant Milan Gvero, Dragan Jokić, Radivoje Miletić, Bosnian Serb army officer Drago Nikolić, Momir Nikolić, VRS lieutenant colonel Dragan Obrenović, VRS general Vinko Pandurević, and VRS army lieutenant Vujadin Popović. Although Chomsky is right to complain that when “we carry out a comparable atrocity nobody even investigates it,” it does not follow that no crimes of genocide should be prosecuted. It rather suggests that international criminal justice law should become more universal and more effective so that the rule of law can be administered as equally and fairly as possible and that all perpetrators should be prosecuted for crimes under international law regardless of nationality or ethnic or religious background.

Like any justice institution, the ICTY suffered from imperfections including some serious ones, but the ICTY did detail exhaustively the particular crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the former Yugoslavia and it did succeed in convicting Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Albanians, Macedonians and Montenegrins. This achievement might make future would-be war criminals think twice before committing such crimes. Unless one wants to adopt an extreme position that the ICTY comprising Prosecutors, Judges and staff from countries around the globe and established by the UN Security Council, was completely biased or that it was the manifestation of some dark international conspiracy, or worse, that no one should anywhere be prosecuted for crimes under international law, Chomsky's approach appears quite puzzling and perhaps morally untenable.

Part III: Kosovo Crisis

Professor Džalto helpfully details the demography of Kosovo and its pivotal political position within the former Yugoslavia (p. 78). As Džalto points out, humanitarian intervention was used to justify the bombing which commenced on 24 March on the rationale of armed hostilities that had escalated already in 1998 and Serb and Yugoslav rejection of the Contact Group's February 1999 Rambouillet and March 1999 Paris ultimata. NATO's "humanitarian" and "responsibility to protect" reasons for its attack were little more than pretexts, according to Džalto. Moreover, he contends, the bombing of Kosovo strengthened Milošević's hand by solidifying his support in response to an external threat, and this in turn dramatically escalated the violence, including Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) enforced disappearances, torture, incommunicado detention, and organ trafficking. Džalto's points invite readers to call into question dominant narratives around NATO's bombing campaign, and they also make one wonder why the ICTY did not prosecute anyone associated with it.

In his May 1999 piece for *Z magazine*, Chomsky laments the fact that Ibrahim Rugova's non-violent initiatives to secure the rights of Albanian Kosovars were side-lined and neglected by way of the US-led NATO bombing campaign. Chomsky offers alternatives to the mainstream narrative about the purported need of the bombing campaign to counter Serb atrocities in Kosovo (at p. 87). His challenge opens up space for critical revisitation of the facts - in itself very important. It must be said however that his argument jumps from the claim that Serbian police violations were really a response to earlier KLA provocations, which may be true, to reasoning by analogy from American responses to Saddam Hussein's gassing of the Kurds and Madeleine Albright's cynical attitude towards President Suharto of Indonesia, but these examples don't necessarily shed light on the legality and legitimacy of NATO's Kosovo bombing itself. Chomsky is surely correct however to point out that humanitarian intervention has been misused repeatedly to cover the use of unauthorized military intervention for naked self-interest, and that proponents of humanitarian intervention seem to wallow in the swamps of double standards:

Consider, for example, Iranian offers to intervene in Bosnia to prevent massacres at a time when the West would not do so. These were dismissed with ridicule (in fact, generally ignored); if there was a reason beyond subordination to power, it was because Iranian good faith could not be assumed. A rational person then asks obvious questions: Is the Iranian record of intervention and terror worse than that of the U.S.? And other questions, for example: How should we assess the ‘good faith’ of the only country to have vetoed a Security Council resolution calling on all states to obey international law? What about its historical record? (p. 91).

Chomsky then goes on to recall condemnable US actions in Colombia, Turkey, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam (p. 92), which add up to good rhetoric, but it does not help us assess the Kosovo bombing itself because these other examples of certainly reprehensible US action, were not necessarily reprehensible in the same way as the NATO bombing of Kosovo or for the same reasons.

That being said, Chomsky’s arguments successfully expose the incoherence of US foreign policy over decades; even if the arguments themselves lack precision or refinement, they do get to the core of the issue: US humanitarian policy is and always has been driven by economic and geo-strategic self-interest, as we have seen over and over again in countless instances around the globe. While there are many more technically precise and analytically more erudite works of other authors who analyze US imperialism and indeed imperialism generally, few come close to reaching the audience Chomsky has for decades with clear, simple, cogent language. Among Chomsky’s pieces on Kosovo, perhaps the clearest and most articulate version of his anti-intervention argument is titled “Lessons from Kosovo” (p. 126) and it is worth reading carefully. In it, he rails at the double standards the US so often has used to support “worthy” victims, while ignoring people in similar circumstances who should be equally morally deserving, such as Palestinian victims of Israeli occupation (p. 133). In “A Review of NATO’s War Over Kosovo,” Chomsky sets out interesting ways in which the crisis in Kosovo could have been handled other than NATO’s aerial bombing campaign (pp. 148–149).

Post 9/11 intellectual political discourse has come under renewed threat from national security rhetoric which the US has promoted around the globe, and the space for critical thinking has been further weakened by professorial and media self-censorship. The toxic mix of US exceptionalism, xenophobic paranoia, and deeply entrenched racism and intolerance persists alongside the US’s enduring predilection for military unilateralism and regime change against other countries. Chomsky’s relentless criticism of American economic predation at home and abroad and his provocative denunciations of official narratives that permeate American society as “Leader of the Free World” shows didactic genius. *Yugoslavia: Peace, War, and Dissolution* is well worth reading as much for its insights on Yugoslavia as for its spirit of defending independent thought and free speech against the dominant discourse in today’s world.

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Lajal S. Sanga

Apstrakt

U ovom prilogu autor daje prikaz i kritički osvrt na knjigu *Yugoslavia: Peace, War, and Dissolution* Noama Čomskog, koju je priredio Davor Džalto. Autor takođe ističe značaj knjige za sfere političke teorije, međunarodnih odnosa i jugoslovenskih studija, pri čemu kritički ispituje pojedinačne koncepte (poput „genocida“) u sklopu šireg okvira pravne teorije i međunarodnog prava.

Ključne reči: Jugoslavija, rat, raspad, Čomski, genocid

IV

REVIEWS

PRIKAZI

JEREMY BELL AND MICHAEL NASS (EDS.), *PLATO'S ANIMALS*,
INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, BLOOMINGTON, 2015.

Aleksandar Kandić

So many books and studies on Plato's philosophy have been published that it is almost impossible to come up with some original, fresh topic, or unique interpretative position. Yet, somehow, *Plato's Animals* is a volume which manages to accomplish this. Compared to other philosophy books, the cover design is also rather unique: it is entirely filled with dozens of animal silhouettes, some of which appear in Plato's dialogues, and some – such as giraffe, kangaroo, or rhino – being obviously included for visual effect. One should not expect *Plato's Giraffes* to be published anytime soon. At the end of the volume, an index of animals is conveniently given and it numbers around 42 species. It is interesting, however, that there is only a handful of articles published on Plato's use of animal metaphors. Such metaphors are very prominent in Plato, and they are usually interpreted and mentioned within other more popular, broader topics: ethical, political, mythological, and so on. But the editors of *Plato's Animals* are right to say that the use of animal analogies by the great Athenian philosopher is largely underestimated – it is so important and central to the issues discussed in the dialogues that it demands a separate, very

well founded study. This original collection of essays, therefore, successfully fills this gap in Platonic studies.

According to the authors, there are seven aspects of the animal in Plato's dialogues. The seven corresponding sections of the book contain two essays each, and the total number is fourteen. In the first section, the role of the animals in Plato's myths and fables is examined. In her essay "Making Music with Aesop's Fables in the *Phaedo*", which opens up the volume, Heidi Northwood explains why Plato recalls poetry and Aesop's fables at the beginning of the *Phaedo*. Why are animal metaphors important for the proof of immortality? Northwood suggests that in Plato's view Socrates' and Aesop's lives were similar, as well as that Aesop's fables and Plato's thought intersect in many ways. The second essay in this section is David Farrell Krell's "Talk to the Animals: On the Myth of Cronos in the *Statesman*". Krell deals with the enigmatic description of a mythological "golden age" during which humans lived with animals in peace, and possibly even conversed with them. This is only a beginning point, as Krell moves on to other dialogues, such as *Menexenus* and the *Timaeus*. Furthermore, both

in the *Statesman* and the *Timaeus*, universe itself is called *zoion* – a living animal. The next two sections, which contain four essays, share similar topic: the animal metaphors used to portray Socrates. Michael Naas in “American Gadfly: Plato and the Problem of Metaphor” considers the image of Socrates as “gadfly”, which is a rough English translation of the Greek word *muops*. Naas argues that this translation is both appropriate, and potentially misleading, since the metaphorical meaning of “gadfly” in American English has mostly political aspects, and not the philosophical, which would be more suitable to Plato’s thought. Next, Thomas Thorp in “Till Human Voices Wake Us and We Drown: The Aporia-fish in the *Meno*” examines another very important image of Socrates: the stingray, or torpedo ray. Thorp suggests that torpedo ray is a better metaphor of Socrates, because unlike stingray which literally stings its prey, torpedo ray “electrifies” its surroundings, just like Socrates “narcotizes” his interlocutors. In “We the Bird-Catchers: Receiving the Truth in the *Phaedo* and the *Apology*” S. Montgomery Ewegen recalls the comparison between Socrates and the “prophetic swan” in the *Phaedo* by which the relationship between *logos*, interpretation and truth is explained. The image of prophetic swan is supposedly used to signify a conception of philosophical *logos* which precedes all reason. The final essay devoted to Socrates is “The Dog on the Fly” by H. Peter Stevens. Stevens returns to the “gadfly” metaphor and compares it to the popular depiction of Diogenes of Sinope as a “dog”. Why did Plato glorify Socrates, and vilified Diogenes despite their obvious similarities? Stevens believes that, in this regard, Plato was inconsistent with his own philosophical standards.

The fourth section of the volume looks into the animal images Plato employed to develop his political

philosophy. Jeremy Bell in “Taming Horses and Desires: Plato’s Politics of Care” argues that the example of horse training is central not only to Plato’s political thought, but also to his philosophy in general. According to Bell, the horse metaphor is appropriate for human condition as it expresses the duality between wilderness and tameness, thus emphasizing the need for care by which the good is brought up and nurtured. Bell also recalls the famous image from the *Phaedrus* in which the soul is compared to a chariot and a charioteer drawn by two horses. In “Who Let the Dogs Out? Tracking the Philosophical Life among the Wolves and Dogs of the Republic” Christopher P. Long examines the opposition between well-trained dogs and wild wolves by which the distinction between the guardians and tyrants is clarified in the *Republic*. Long points out the “dual nature” of wolves which are both savage beasts and cooperative pack animals. Only the gentle, well-trained dogs can represent a model for Plato’s guardians. The following section deals with the gender issues in Plato. Marina McCoy in her essay “The City of Sows and Sexual Differentiation in the *Republic*” deals with Glaucon’s rejection of the non-luxurious city as “a city of sows”. McCoy argues that this Glaucon’s characterization conceals a more general rejection of female *eros* in favor of masculine forms of desire on the basis that the Greek term for “sows” was used as slang for female genitalia. Sara Brill in “Animality and Sexual Difference in the *Timaeus*” offers a detailed reading of the cosmogony in the *Timaeus*. Brill believes that the distinction between mind and mindlessness is understood through the concept of animality. Therefore, for Plato, cosmogony has to be zoogony. This opens up the question of sexual differentiation not only among humans and animals, but also at the level of the cosmos which contains all these different species.

The next two essays belong to the section which considers Plato's philosophical methodology. Holly Moore's essay entitled "Animal Sacrifice in Plato's Later Methodology" examines Plato's conception of *diairesis*. When Socrates claims in the *Phaedrus* that ideas or categories must be divided along their "natural joints", he - according to Moore - implicitly compares dialectician to a butcher, as well as the conceptual world to a living animal. Therefore, an inherent anthropocentrism exists not only in Plato's understanding of collection and division, but also at the fundamental level of his ontology. Drew A. Hyland reads Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* in "The Animals That Therefore We Were? Aristophanes' Double-Creatures and the Question of Origins". Hyland argues that Plato draws the line between humans and animals not, as is commonly understood, by the distinction between reason and desire, but by the distinction between specific human form of *eros* and animal-like desires. In fact, Socrates claims that humans participate in a uniquely rational form of *eros*. The final section of the volume is devoted to the animal imagery in Plato's conception of death and afterlife. In "Animals and Angels: The Myth of Life as a Whole in Republic 10", Claudia Baracchi suggests that Plato's myth of death and regeneration tells us that non-human animality always underlies and marks human life. This interpretation is based

on Plato's claim that the traces of previous lives, both human and non-human, are retained within any living soul. The closing essay is Francisco J. Gonzalez' "Of Beasts and Heroes: The Promiscuity of Humans and Animals in the Myth of Er". Gonzalez compares Plato's conception of reincarnation in the tenth book of the *Republic* to the one from the *Phaedo* in the light of the Neoplatonist view that the account of reincarnation in the *Republic* actually undermines any meaningful distinction between human and animal souls.

In general, this volume demonstrates that even if Plato places animals within the lowest ranks of cosmic hierarchy, they still constitute an important, irreplaceable part of the world. Almost every dialogue contains at least some animal imagery! What makes us human is not complete separation from the animal, but rather the subtle, gradual articulation of our innate animal characteristics, achieved through philosophical education, proper reasoning and moral practice. Once again Plato delights us with his "out-of-the-box" thinking: instead of drawing a sharp line between human and animal, as one might expect on the basis of Plato's metaphysical, epistemological and ethical considerations, he manages to create a conception of the world in which the two opposing natures appear to be developing out of each other. This is particularly emphasized by Plato's theory of reincarnation.

KATALIN FÁBIÁN AND ELŻBIETA KOROLCZUK (EDS.), *REBELLIOUS PARENTS: PARENTAL MOVEMENTS IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE AND RUSSIA*, INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, BLOOMINGTON, 2017.

Jelena Ćeriman

The book of essays *Rebellious Parents: Parental Movements in Central-Eastern Europe and Russia* brings together researchers from various disciplines to undertake a systematic and meticulous insight into the parental movements in this part of Europe and Russia over the past two decades. It aims to propose new conceptualization of civil society and civic activism and to fill existing gaps in the Civil Society Studies. Since this is the first book exploring parental movements in Central-Eastern Europe and Russia, it opens with a discussion on conceptual and theoretical limitations of existing models of civil society. The reader will be able to discover that the absence of studies on parental movements in the post-communist European region thus far is caused, in great part, by the application of the Western-centric idealized model of civil society onto the completely different, post-communist experience of social activism.

Although they are embedded in the context of local civil societies, all examined parental movements are actually transnational phenomenon since they link national ideological rhetoric with an illiberal transnational ideological standpoint. As such, conceptualization

of parental movements and activism given in this book, may be applied in other geographical contexts and serve as a model for examining specific types of societal actions that do not fit the liberal (Western) vision of civil society. In addition, the contribution to the Civil Society Studies is also seen in the examination of the set of ambiguities concerning the activists' relationship toward the State, the West, and Gender Equality, which highlights the heterogeneity of activism as it is. Although most of the surveyed parents distance themselves from the state, criticizing the control and authority of legal institutions or health care professionals, as well as gender experts (in matters such as mandatory vaccination of children, natural childbirth or the rights of the fathers' groups), some of the activists (such as parents with children with disabilities in the Baltic states) try to collaborate with the State in order to ensure the success of their actions. Essays in this volume also examine how parental movements respond, as well as influence modern socio-historical and policy changes, while emphasizing the influence of long-lasting legacy of communist systems on examined issues. Despite the anti-Western

stance and arguments of some parental movements in the region, there are visible connections between them and other parental activists from Western Europe. Actually, some of the movements from Eastern Europe and Russia rely on material, cultural and human resources from Western Europe and other regions (for example, anti-vaccination parental movement in the Czech Republic has a world-wide support). The authors point out that the common place of the examined parental movements is conservative response to the changes that come from the modern understanding of family and parenting, especially their gender aspects, and it is based “on the rejection of what the activists see as “rampant individualism” of modern world” (p. 4). However, some of the examined parental movements, such as home-birth movement in Hungary, have based their arguments on the combination of both rising conservatism (manifested mostly in the visual self-representation of the movement) and the influence of feminism (argued as the right of woman to choose place and method of giving birth).

Given that the volume is widely comprehensive in its content in order to comment on all the texts in this format, I would like to point out three main themes, that is, the three segments of the book resulting from it, as another valuable contribution. Parental mobilization explored here focuses on three important issues: 1) conservative nationalist trends, 2) changes concerning the status and social perception of fatherhood and gender equality, and 3) health-related issues and policies. Conservative mobilizations are examined and interpreted in texts by: Tova Höjdestrand (on grassroots mobilization in defense of “family values” in Russia), Olena Strelnyk (on conservative parents’ mobilization in Ukraine) and Ina Dimitrova (on constructing parenthood and nation in Bulgaria through

new reproductive technologies). The activism of fathers’ groups is the topic of texts by: Elżbieta Korolczuk and Renata E. Hryciuk (on fathers’ activism in contemporary Poland), Pelle Åberg and Johnny Rodin (on fatherhood in Russia examined through “daddy-schools” in Saint Petersburg), Iman Karzabi (on fathers’ activism in Ukraine) and Steven Saxonberg (on fathers’ activism in the Czech Republic examined through the main Czech discussion forum for fathers). Health-related concerns are the topic of the texts by: Jaroslava Hasmanová Marhánková (on mandatory vaccination in the Czech Republic), Egle Sumskiene (on advocacy for children with intellectual disabilities in the Baltic states), Ema Hrešanová (on the natural childbirth movement in the Czech Republic) and Katalin Fábíán (on Hungarian home-birth movement). Introduction and concluding section of the book are signed by the editors Katalin Fábíán and Elżbieta Korolczuk. The first thematic part of the book gives analysis of parental movements as locally enrooted phenomenon that are part of a broader trends of conservative mobilization. This thematic block emphasizes the first specificity of parental movements in Eastern Europe and Russia i. e. intertwining of gendered nationalism and anti-Western arguments when it comes to the parenthood and children’s welfare issues in the post-communist context. The second section gives contribution, in the first place, to the studies on masculinities that are represented in this book through studies of fathers’ activism so rarely explored in this part of Europe and Russia. Texts on mothers’ activism reveal the gender problematic of parental movements, since mothers will rather refer to themselves as ‘parents’ rather than ‘mothers’ (which is not the case with activists fathers), which actually camouflages the empirical reality and leaves the question on how much different family issues are really

supported by men in post-communist societies. The third section of the book explores how changes in parental attitudes towards their own health and health of their children, as well as how the development of medical sciences, influence and are influenced by parental movements. The texts in this section of the book highlight the concept of responsible parenting that is independent of the authority and control of the State.

To conclude, rooted in everyday local context but having broader agendas and support, the conceptualization of

parental movements in this book include formal, as well as informal networks and online initiatives that mobilize parents in their goal to achieve socio-political changes in wide-range of parental issues, mostly from the anti-individualistic ideological standpoint. Therefore, this conceptualization without any doubt questions and redefines what civil society and civic engagement mean in the post-communist context. This book is useful both for professionals interested in parenting and researchers in the field of Civil Society Studies.

OLIVIA CUSTER, PENELOPE DEUTSCHER AND SAMIR HADDAD (EDS.),
*FOUCAULT/DERRIDA FIFTY YEARS LATER: THE FUTURES OF GENEALOGY,
DECONSTRUCTION, AND POLITICS*, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS,
NEW YORK, 2016.

Marija Velinov

Foucault/Derrida Fifty Years Later consists of texts dealing with the debate between Foucault and Derrida described in different ways – as the relation between the transcendental and the empirical, immanence and transcendence, or deconstruction versus genealogy. It offers different options for understanding the problems arising from the debate.

The debate began by Derrida's critique of Foucault's attempt to *write a history of madness itself*, madness before it becomes subject to/of reason. It would, as Naas suggests, require carrying out an archaeology of the silence, that is, writing a history without speaking of madness. (Naas, p. 53) Derrida argues that the revolution against reason could be made only within it and that an archaeology against reason could not be written. Although, as Huffer reveals, that statement could not be found in Foucault's work. (Huffer, p. 25) Further, the question was the status of madness in the texts used by Foucault and in his own writing. Briefly put, it is concerned with Foucault interpretation of the supposed exclusion of madness in Descartes' first meditation. In the second half of "Cogito and the

History of Madness", Derrida questions Foucault's interpretation of Descartes' *Meditations*, and offer his own instead.

The debate was never available for the public, there was no specific date, there were no images or transcripts. It unfolded in (at least three) texts: Foucault's *History of Madness*, Derrida's "Cogito and the History of Madness" (first as a lecture which Foucault attended), and Foucault's text "My Body, This Paper, This Fire" (an explicit response to Derrida). We may add Derrida's "To Do Justice to Freud", which can be described as a belated addition to the old debate, but we should also bear in mind that there were difficulties in determining the relevant texts and their sequence. For instance, a decade passed between Derrida's challenge in 1963 and Foucault's response in 1972; we should also have in mind modifications, editions and translations of the publications. By simplifying this exchange we limit it and exclude many other texts which we consider today part of the debate, including posthumous publications of their seminars which show us that the debate continued afterwards.

Some essays in the volume show the connection between Derrida's late seminars and the debate, since they are interpreted as a continuation of the dialogue, while others reveal the mutations of Foucault's work as its aftermath. Given the new material, the debate between Foucault and Derrida is now, about fifty years later, becoming a new subject of study for scholars of today.

The book contains twelve articles by different authors, divided into five parts: Openings; Surviving the Philosophical Problem: History Crosses Transcendental Analysis; After-Effects; Life Death, Power: New Death Penalties; Foucault's and Derrida's Last Seminars. Although the essays can be read out of order. They access key texts and central problems of the debate, while suggesting different ways of understanding their impact on future research. Some contributors take sides in the debate, while others offer examples of how to combine their suggestions.

Macherey acknowledges that both Derrida and Foucault uncover reason as defend against, and protected from, madness, but he situates the gap between them, and shows how Derrida turns Foucault's argument against him. Huffer rediscover the impact of *The History of Madness*, which she argues still remains to be read. Her argument relies on the fact that the original French passages critiqued by Derrida are missing from the English translation, for which Foucault himself was responsible (he excised all the key passages and pages criticized by Derrida), making the book paradoxically famous and unknown at the same time. Samir Haddad shows how Foucault's accusation that Derrida's method is a "petty pedagogy," a philosophy that teaches that "there is nothing outside the text" can lead to insights about the relation between philosophy and teaching. Contrary to this, as Colin Koopman argues, Foucault believed that "philosophy can confront its limits

only by going outside of itself, for instance into the work of history." (Koopman, p. 73) Robert Trumbull includes "To Do Justice to Freud" in the debate, by showing how Derrida's earlier "Cogito" argument is adjusted and reaffirmed in the article. The central problem of the volume, differently approached in the texts, are Foucault's and Derrida's transcendental methods. For example, some essays give detailed descriptions of the ways they revise the classical mode of transcendental analysis. Khurana argues that there is more in common in their revisions of the transcendental than is generally perceived, while Amy Allen insist on the divergence between the two methods. She deals with Habermas' and Derrida's interpretation of Foucault and concludes that they are unable to tolerate Foucault's distinction between reason and forms of rationality, which helps him describe contingency as a possibility of transformation and freedom. Colin Koopman and Huffer make cases for the practice of genealogy, as Koopman argues that one must choose between genealogy and deconstruction, and also that the exchange between the two thinkers is in fact about the status, nature, future, and history of philosophy. Michael Naas and Geoffrey Bennington express concerns about Foucault's methodology, and both show that methodological questions are at the same time political. Revel show us the effect of Derrida's critique in Foucault's work, while Custer does the opposite by thematizing Foucault's influence on Derrida work. Trumbull and Penelope Deutscher both suggest new methodologies arising from the combination of Derrida's and Foucault's analyses. In this respect, Trumbull speaks of the possibility of *deconstructive genealogy*. The contributors all together show commitment to understand the specificities of both authors in order to analyse how and why they produce tensions and incompatibilities.

MAX BERGHOLZ, *NASILJE KAO GENERATIVNA SILA: IDENTITET, NACIONALIZAM I SJEĆANJE U JEDNOJ BALKANSKOJ ZAJEDNICI*, PREV. SENADA KRESO, BUYBOOK, SARAJEVO, 2018.

Milivoj Bešlin

Polazeći od premise da istorija Balkana ni po čemu nije izuzetna da bi se u njoj odvijali procesi koji već nisu videni u dugoj i raznolikoj istoriji Evrope, istoričar Maks Berholc (Max Bergholz) u svojoj prvoj monografiji, pouzdano i naučno utemeljeno, pokazuje i da istorija nasilja na zapadnom Balkanu nije različita od nasilja u drugim delovima sveta. Ipak, svojom brutalnošću, nasilje na zapadnom Balkanu može da doprinese teorijskom i praktičnom razumevanju nasilja kao globalnog fenomena. Knjiga Maksa Berholca, *Nasilje kao generativna sila. Identitet, nacionalizam i sjećanje u jednoj balkanskoj zajednici*, prvi put je objavljena na engleskom jeziku u izdanju Cornell University Press, 2016. godine. Dve godine kasnije, sarajevski izdavač Buybook je objavio bosansko izdanje u odličnom prevodu Senade Kreso.

Maks Berholc (Pitsburg, Pensilvanija, 1973) je vanredni profesor na Odeljenju za istoriju na Univerzitetu Konkordija u Montrealu (Kanada), gde predaje istoriju nacionalizma, nasilja i Balkana. Stručnjak je za istoriju Balkana i Istočne Evrope, a njegova istraživačka interesovanja uključuju mikrodinamiku nacionalizma, masovno nasilje i istorijsko

pamćenje. Knjiga, *Nasilje kao generativna sila*, donela mu je globalni prestiž i neke od vodećih svetskih nagrada u oblasti historiografije, između ostalih i Kanadske asocijacije slavista (2017), Kolumbija Univerziteta u Njujorku (2017), Univerziteta Nort Dam (2019), a proglašena je i za najbolju knjigu o evropskoj istoriji za 2018. godinu. U jednom od obrazloženja piše da će knjiga Maksa Berholca, *Nasilje kao generativna sila*, stajati uz radove „Jana Grosa i drugih vodećih svetskih istraživača u razumevanju nasilja u društvu u lokalnim, multietničkim kontekstima“.

U uvodu knjige autor započinje pričom o kontigenciji u nauci, kada je u nezavedenim dokumentima u Arhivu BiH u Sarajevu, tražeći građu o sasvim drugoj temi, pronašao plave fascikle sa poverljivim dokumentima iz 80-ih godina prošlog veka o pokolju čak 2.000 civila, najviše žena i dece, u gradiću Kulen Vakufu (BiH) u septembru 1941. godine. U izveštajima je bilo nejasno ko je odgovoran za ovaj zločin o kome se u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji ćutalo. Pominju se neidentifikovani „ustanici“, koji su bili komšije onih koje su tako srovo ubili, a oni sami su pre toga bili žrtve brutalnih zločina lokalnih ustaša. Ipak,

2.000 kulenfakufskih civila, označenih kao „muslimani“, nisu zavredeli status civilnih žrtava rata posle 1945. godine, nisu proglašeni ni žrtvama fašističkog terora, već su predstavljali „politički problem“, zbog čega se o njima ćutalo. Svi ovi navodi u nekategorisanom izveštaju, o iznenadnom potonuću jedne male multietničke zajednice u uzajamno ekstremno nasilje, izazvali su nepodeljeno interesovanje profesionalnog istoričara. Traganje je dalje vodilo Berholca do skrivenih meandara istorije, do hiljada neotvorenih stranica dokumenata u nacionalnim i lokalnim arhivima u tri postjugoslovenske države: Bosni i Hercegovini, Srbiji i Hrvatskoj. Otišao je u Kulen Vakuf, upoznao istoriju i geografiju čitavog kraja, razgovarao sa stotinama ljudi, obišao sva sela u okolini, došao u posed privatnih arhiva aktera ili sve-doka događaja iz 1941. godine.

Polazeći od života „običnog“ čoveka u lokalnoj zajednici, istraživanjem mikroistorije kao primarnog metoda, Maks Berholc je postavio tezu nasuprot svemu što se do sada znalo o Drugom svetskom ratu i u njemu počinjenim zločinima između jugoslovenskih naroda. Za njega, ekstremno nasilje i surovo ubijanje suseda nije bilo rezultat „višedecenijskog lokalnog nacionalizma i antagonističkih etničkih podjela“. Autor uverljivo pokazuje da je nasilje u značajno manjoj meri posledica petrifikovanih etničkih identiteta, a u mnogo većoj meri je katalizator i okidač etničke identifikacije. Suprotno svim dosadašnjim tvrdnjama, etnički identiteti su, smatra Berholc, mnogo fluidniji i izloženi značajno većem stepenu istorijske kontigencije i podložni lokalnim odnosima i ličnom izboru. Prema njegovim tumačenjima, reč je o jedinstvenom spletu događaja koji su osnažili grupe čiji su članovi smatrali da im se pružila prilika da izmire stare račune i lokalne sukobe pokretanjem nasilja na „etničkoj osnovi“. Originalna interpretacija podrazumevala je i novi pristup kao i kritiku postojećih historiografskih

praksi u regionu. Pišući o literaturi na južnoslovenskim jezicima, Berholc konstatuje da je njena najupečatljivija karakteristika da „opis zločina u velikoj mjeri zamjenjuje njihovo objašnjenje“. Zbog toga pristup profesora Berholca negira praksu balkanskih istoričara, za koju je najbolju kritiku dao poznati britanski istoričar Mark Tompson: „Nasilje na Balkanu je previše opisano, a premalo objašnjeno“. Znajući pragmatičko-ideološku funkciju historiografija u regionu, jasni su motivi navedene anomalije. Određujući pristup u južnoslovenskim historiografijama kao „krvavu zemlju“, autor smatra da takav metod ima zadatak da čitaoce šokira strahotama nasilja sa ciljem da se ne postave pitanja o „uzrocima, dinamici i efektima nasilja“. Kao važnu karakteristiku ovdašnjih historiografija on vidi i „zapanjujući nivo etnicizirane selektivnosti“. Imajući sve to u vidu, *Nasilje kao generativna sila* Maksa Berholca je uspjelo da prevaziđe navedene pristrasnosti, neobjektivnosti i druge metodološke propuste, namerne i nenamerne, južnoslovenskih historiografija. Zamka u koju Berholc ne pada je da čitave etničke grupe esencijalizuje, da ih posmatra kao nepromenljive i integralne istorijske aktere, kao isključive počiniocce zločina ili kao žrtve, jer bi iz toga proizlazilo da je nasilje predestinirano dugoročnim istorijskim faktorima, a zadatak istoričara bi bio, kako kaže Berholc, „samo da pruži sliku užasa ubijanja“. Nasilje na Balkanu iz te perspektive čini se kao nepromenljiva i sudbinska kategorija. Ali da bi se primenio drugačiji metod moralo se duboko zaroniti u mikroistorijska istraživanja i poći od individualnih motiva i angažmana ljudi u lokalnim i ruralnim sredinama.

Knjiga Maksa Berholca je struktuirana u tri glavne celine. Prvi deo: *Istorija*, odnosi se na istoriju kulenvakufskog kraja do početka Drugog svetskog rata. U njemu autor propituje teme etniciteta, nacionalizma i antagonizma od

osnivanja grada, sa posebnim fokusom na 19. i 20. vek do početka Drugog svetskog rata. On na osnovu makroistorijskih uvida konstatuje da antagonistički jezik etniciteta nije bio dominirajući model komunikacije u lokalnoj sredini. Naprotiv, njegova istraživanja sugerišu da su unutaretnički sukobi bili frekventniji ili makar vidljiviji od međuetničkih. Čak su lične istorije uglednih stanovnika Kulen Vakufa u tridesetim godinama, pred početak rata, podržavale saradnju, a ne etničke sukobe. „Dokazi“, napisao je Berholc, „ne sugeriraju da su posljednje godine međuratnog perioda bile vrijeme kada je većina u lokalnim vlastima ili stanovništvu imala mnogo poticaja da podrži antagonistički oblik etnicizirane politike.“ Rečju, ništa što se desilo, nije bilo neizbežno, postojala je mogućnost izbora. Prodorom ideologije nacionalizma na lokalni nivo, postojao je potencijal za sukobe, ali je „jednako tako postojao i potencijal za mir i kontrolu napetosti“, piše Maks Berholc uz napomenu da istoričar nikada ne sme da zaboravi da nijedan smer zbivanja nije bio predodređen i da projektovanje unazad nije dobar način historiografskih tumačenja.

Središni, drugi, deo knjige: *1941.* analizira prvih nekoliko meseci rata, od aprila i zaključno sa masakrom u Kulen Vakufu u septembru prve ratne godine. Čitavo područje oko ovog bosanskog gradića bilo je poprište neuporedivog nasilja koje su vršili ljudi iz tog kraja jedni nad drugima. Berholc pokušava da razume kako je došlo do ove izenadne transformacije koristeći se arhivskom građom na makro (državnom), mezo (regionalnom) i mikro (lokalnom) nivou. Tamo gde su arhivi bili nedovoljni, koristio je štampu kao istorijski izvor, ali i memoare, lične arhive protagonista i svedočenja preživelih ili njihovih potomaka. Da bi što bolje razumeo i objasnio uzroke, unutrašnju dinamiku i konsekvence naglog potonuća nekada mirne zajednice u ekstremno nasilje, autor se

poslužio brojnom i znalački odabranom najrelevantnijom svetskom literaturom o nasilju, nacionalizmu, identitetima.

U centralnom delu knjige, Maks Berholc najpre prati promenu politike centralnih vlasti i lokalne prakse pljačkanja imovine „nehrvata“ od strane ustaških formacija. Svaka etnička drugost, a to su bili pretpostavljeni pripadnici srpske nacije, pravoslavno stanovništvo, bila je izložena pogromu i stavljena u poziciju žrtve. Međutim, kada su opljačkali neprijateljsku, prešli su na svoju, pretpostavljenu, etničku grupu i pljačkanje onih koje su videli kao Hrvate. Pljačku i želju da se brzo napusti položaj društvene, političke i ekonomske margine, autor vidi kao važan motiv za delovanje pripadnika ustaških bandi prvih meseci rata na lokalnom nivou. Situacija se menja od jula 1941. kada počinju pokolji najpre selektivni, pa sve masovniji, onih koji su bili percipirani kao „nehrvati“, a pre svega pravoslavno stanovništvo kulenvakufskog kraja. Kao rezultat straha, ugroženo stanovništvo beži u šume, priprema ustanak, koji dalje generiše strah kvislinške NDH, koja zbog toga pojačava represiju i zločine, koji prerastaju u masovne pokolje. Berholc znalački i dubinski razlaže spiralu nasilja, podstaknutu međusobnim strahovima na lokalnom nivou i daje detaljnu rekonstrukciju zločina i njihove motivacije.

Za istoriografiju je posebno značajna njegova analiza i sasvim originalna interpretacija o tome kako je tako naglo i masovno ubijanje uticalo na odnose među zajednicama na lokalnom nivou i (samo)percepcije kolektivnih identiteta. Iznenadno i po bestijalnosti nezapamćeni zločini ustaša nad pravoslavnim stanovništvom, imali su „duboko polarizirajući efekat na odnose među zajednicama, što je dovelo do brze transformacije komšija u kolektivne kategorije neprijatelja i poziva za odmazdom na toj osnovi“, piše Berholc. Priroda nasilja, smatra autor, promenila je način na koji su preživeli percipirali sebe, ali i

svoje susede. Iskustvo tako ekstremnog nasilja pokrenulo je „brzu kristalizaciju osjećaja lokalne zajednice, koja je sada bila podijeljena u etnički definirane, antagonističke kolektive“. Kolektivna kategorizacija drugosti, dojučerašnjih komšija sa mekim granicama etničkih identiteta, rekordno brzo je transformisana, smatra autor, u čvrstu, „ubilačku“ liniju podele. Iz toga Maks Berholc izvlači suštinu svoje interpretacije – akti nasilja su konstituisali „antagonističku percepciju identiteta“, umesto svih dosadašnjih tumačenja koji su već gotove antagonističke identitete smatrali uzrokom nasilja. Nasilje je preko noći prekinulo lokalne međuljudske veze i odnose koji su postojali decenijama i duže.

Mesec dana od početka masovnih ustaških ubijanja u kulenfakufskom kraju, buknuo je ustanak ugroženog pravoslavnog stanovništva. Ustaniци napadaju muslimanska i katolička sela, čineći brojna ubistva iz osvete. Zbog toga će se članovi Komunističke partije Jugoslavije, koja pokušava da se stavi na čelu ustanka, suočiti sa ozbiljnim izazovom obuzdavanja i kontrole nad osvetničkim porivima ustanika. Za mnoge od njih ustaška zverstva su dovela do „iznenadne promjene percepcije komšija muslimana i katolika“, konstatuje Berholc. Za mnoge ustaničke borce, seljake sve je teža bila diferencijacija između odgovornih za ubijanja od ostatka nersrskog življa kulenfakufskog kraja. Za značajan broj njih kategorija „ustaše“ se poklopila sa kategorijom „katolika“ i „muslimana“, a brana masovnim i kolektivnim odmazdama su bili komandanti bliski ili članovi KPJ koji su predstavljali struju obuzdavanja u ustaničkom pokretu. Ipak, osveta je bila očekivan i konkretan metod „oslobađanja od dubokog osjećaja bespomoćnosti koji je izazvao prethodni talas ustaškog ubijanja“, kako piše Berholc. Ustaška zverstva izvršena nad porodicama, rođacima i komšijama ustanika pokrenula su proces „antagonističke kolektivne kategorizacije“,

kako je naziva, odnosno do masovnih odmazdi nad onim koje su ustaniци videli kao nersrbe. Poseban akcenat autor stavlja na konceptijska i suštinska razilaženja ustaničkih vođa u odnosu prema katoličkom i muslimanskom civilnom stanovništvu. Maks Berholc posebno detaljno i na konkretnim primerima navodi unutarustaničke sukobe zagovornika obuzdavanja (spašavanja civilnog stanovništva) i zagovornika eskalacije (masovnog ubijanja usled identifikacije svih katolika i muslimana sa ustašama). Ipak, dinamika nasilja, metodi koji su se sve manje razlikovali, od surovih ubistava do spaljivanja čitavih „neprijateljskih“ sela do temelja, duboko su uticali na percepcije etniciteta. „Ubijanje na etničkoj osnovi“, smatra Berholc, „učinilo je da preživjeli postanu svjesni vlastite *etničke pripadnosti* na nove, užasavajuće načine.“

Najzad, vrhunac ovog poglavlja je četrdeset i osam sati (6. do 8. septembra) nakon ustaničkog zauzimanja Kulen Vakufa tokom kojih je na najsurovije načine ubijeno 2.000 civila, većinom žena i dece. Maks Berholc daje detaljnu rekonstrukciju događaja koji je za južnoslovenske historiografije bio obavljen velom tajne. Ulazeći u najdelikatnije procese mikrokomparativnog istraživanja, sklapajući segmente iz mnoštva različitih izvora i perspektiva, za profesora Berholca, ključno pitanje nije bilo zbog čega je došlo do tako masovnog pokolja, već zbog čega su „zagovornici eskalacije“ među ustanicima uspeli da nadvladaju „zagovornike obuzdavanja“ nakon zauzimanja Kulen Vakufa. Navedenim pristupom autor je izbegao masovne karakterizacije i esencijalizacije etničkih grupa, odnosno, redukovanje istorije na simplifikovani sukob između čitavih nacionalnih zajednica. Zbog toga je za njega ključno pitanje koje su okolnosti i motivi doprineli da, oni među vođama ustanka koji su nastojali da prošire nasilje i naude civilima smatrajući ih kolektivno krivima zbog

pretpostavljene pripadnosti drugoj etničkoj grupi, nadvladaju nad onim delom ustaničkih vođa koji su bili protiv masovnih ubijanja. On posebno naglašava da želja za osvetom nije bila dovoljna da dođe do masovnih ubijanja. Neophodan uslov je bio da, nakon unutrašnjeg sukoba među ustanicima, zagovornici obuzdavanja moraju biti marginalizovani, odsutni ili ubijeni u borbama, da bi se masovni pokolj desio. Autor posebno potresno rekonstruiše kako su velike grupe muslimanskih civila razdvajane, odvođene na različita mesta u Kulen Vakufu i okolini i na brutalne načine i pod krajnje neizvesnim okolnosti ubijane, nakon što su prethodno bili eliminisani zagovornici obuzdavanja među ustaničkim komandantima. Ostaje veoma značajna analiza kreiranja psihoze osvete koja je nastala kada je jedan od ustaničkih vođa, sklon strategiji eskalacije, naredio da se odmah ekshumira masovna grobnica sa žrtvama ustaških zločina. Bila je to psihološka prekretnica koja je direktno vodila u masakr nad zarobljenim civilima u Kulen Vakufu. Kao posebno važno, autor ističe da talasi masovnog ubijanja mogu veoma brzo kreirati „antagonističku kolektivnu kategorizaciju na etničkoj osnovi“, ali jednako tako mogu izroditi i njihovu suprotnost – snažne težnje međuetničkog spašavanja i stav da je individualno čovekovo ponašanje, a ne etnicitet, ključno u razlikovanju prijatelja od neprijatelja. Zbog toga Berholc razmernu pažnju pridaje brojnim primerima međuetničke solidarnosti i pokušajima spašavanja civila čak i po cenu rizika po vlastiti život.

Ipak, Maks Berholc konstatuje da je priroda lokalnog nasilja značila da je život čoveka često zavisio od toga „kako je percipirana njegova etnička pripadnost“. U tom kontekstu, „nasilje je moćno upisivalo etničke oblike identifikacije i samoidentifikacije, čak i bez nečije saglasnosti i to na načine koji su bili dalekosežni“. To nije značilo odsustvo etničke identifikacije u periodu pre 1941.

ali je značilo da je ekstremno nasilje i masovno ubijanje tome dalo „do tada nevideni značaj“. Berholc taj proces karakteriše kao „transformativnu snagu nasilja počinjenog u ratu“, koje može duboko „oblikovati i preoblikovati identitete“. Sledeći njegove interpretacije, nasilje ne predstavlja kulminaciju „duboko usadenih etničkih antagonizama“, ono je pre „okidač koji može pokrenuti brzu etnizaciju društvenih identiteta i odnosa“. Njegova formula je sledeća: „počinioci upisuju etnicitet svojim žrtvama; žrtve, zauzvrat, mogu i prihvatiti tu izvanu nametnutu etničku kategorizaciju te, osvetničkim aktima oni mogu upisati etnicitet prvobitnim počinioćima.“

Najzad, treći deo: *Nakon nasilja među zajednicama*, objašnjava pojam „naprasne nacionalnosti“, različite oblike sećanja na učinjeno nasilje, kao i kako su ti procesi uticali na lokalne forme identiteta i nacionalizma u narednim decenijama. U ovom delu knjige autor prati dinamiku intersubjektivnosti u nacionalno-pluralnoj zajednici, koja se vrlo često prelama kroz etničku optiku. Berholc problematizuje koncept „naprasne nacionalnosti“, koja se iznenadno javlja prilikom naglih promena i incidenata na lokalnom nivou. Ovu pojavu je obeležavao, kako piše autor, brzi prelaz sa „neeticiziranog na veoma etnicizirani način gledanja na svijet“ i predstavlja iracionalni, emocionalni odgovor na iznenadna zbivanja i probleme u međuljudskoj komunikaciji. Sumirajući mnoštvo lokalnih, neočekivanih sukoba na postratnom terenu, na kome živi traumatsko sećanje na učinjene pokolje, autor objašnjava kako u tim slučajevima nacionalnost može „naprasno izbiti na površinu“, uprkos strategiji stalnog obuzdavanja koju je vladajuća partija (KPJ/SKJ) primenjivala u skladu sa ideologijom *bratstva i jedinstva* i principom nacionalne ravnopravnosti. Neizvesni i neočekivani događaji, konstatuje autor, „imaju moć da radikalno i naglo preobrazu društvene odnose“, tako

da nacionalnost može iznenada postati središna prizma kroz koju ljudi na lokalnu tumače svet i zbivanja oko sebe. Na taj način nasilje konstituiše novu mikrodinamiku nacionalizma, smatra Berholc, koja može trajati dugo nakon prestanka ubijanja.

Knjiga koja je rezultat decenijskog istraživačkog rada Maksa Berholca nije samo ishodište misaonih i prekretnih interpretacija, već zbog načina dolaska do njih može poslužiti svim, a posebno lokalnim (južnoslovenskim i balkanskim) historiografijama kao metodološki model – kako se piše i iznad svega razume istorija. Osim što je negirala selektivnu i manihejsku sliku prošlosti, duboko etniciziranu i posmatranu kroz crno-bele stereotipe, karakteristične za nacionalistički pogled na svet, knjiga *Nasilje kao generativna sila* je uzor i po tome kako je najtragičnije procese u prošlosti moguće izložiti mirnim tonom, humano i racionalno, bez intencije da se historiografija stavlja u funkciju ideoloških matrica politike identiteta. Berholcova monografija zbog toga jeste i *sui generis* obrazac rada naučnog, historiografskog metoda, koji prošlost posmatra složeno i multiperspektivno, ali ona je i najbolja paradigma rafiniranog stila pisanja koji ne apstrahuje činjenicu da je istorija i narativna nauka. Uz interdisciplinarni

pristup, Berholc je u knjizi primenio i komparativno-istorijske metode, praveći paralele balkanske studije slučaja Kulen Vakufa sa nasiljem u različitim delovima sveta od Evrope, do Azije i Afrike.

Maks Berholc je svoju monografiju *Nasilje kao generativna sila* pisao sa idejom da se odupre stalnoj tendenciji istoričara da projektuje vlastite percepcije etniciteta, identiteta, nacionalizma na savremenike čiju istoriju istražuje. Umesto toga za njega je imperativ bio da se, koristeći mikroistorijske metode, osloni na veliki broj primarnih i do sada nekorisćenih izvora, vršeći njihovu kritičku analizu u najboljem duhu naučne (re)konstrukcije. Iz zavidne količine primarne dokumentarne građe, širokog terenskog istraživanja, izvrsnog poznavanja naučnih dostignuća društvene teorije, proizašla je monografija bez čijih se pouzdanih rezultata i originalnih interpretacija više neće moći razumeti i pisati o uzrocima, dinamicima i posledicama nasilja i nacionalizma ne samo na Balkanu nego i u globalnim okvirima. U tom kontekstu, njegov središnji zaključak da je nasilje „generativna sila u oblikovanju etničke identifikacije i društvenih odnosa“, sa snažnom transformativnom moći, ostaje trajan transdisciplinarni doprinos ne samo historiografiji, već i drugim društveno-humanističkim disciplinama.

TODOR KULJIĆ, *PROGNANI POJMOVI: NEOLIBERALNA POJMOVNA REVIZIJA MISLI O DRUŠTVU*, CLIO, BEOGRAD, 2018.

Milan Urošević

Kao i u svim dosadašnjim delima profesor Todor Kuljić u knjizi *Prognani pojmovi* pravi hrabar korak u teorijsko i istraživačko polje kojim se u domaćoj sociologiji do sada malo ko bavio. Ovim delom on obogaćuje domaću sociološku misao i osvetljava put budućim sociološkim poduhvatima koji nameravaju da razumeju savremeni društveni svet. Kao naučno delo *Prognani pojmovi* su elegantan spoj teorijskih inovacija koje sintetišu naizgled nespojive autore sa oštrom društvenom kritikom. Tim putem ovo delo čini značajan doprinos kako naučnoj zajednici tako i široj zainteresovanoj javnosti koja ima želju da na kritički način sagleda širi istorijski kontekst u kome se nalazi savremeno društvo.

Ako sagledamo opus profesora Kuljića uočićemo da se *Prognani pojmovi* potpuno uklapaju u interesovanja koja njihovog autora prate tokom karijere. Isto je na promociji ovog dela uočio i profesor Čedomir Čupić tvrdeći da se *Prognani pojmovi* mogu videti kao treći deo u teorijskoj trilogiji čija prva dva dela čine *Prevladavanje prošlosti* i *Kultura sećanja*. Kao i u ovim delima, u *Prognanim pojmovima* Kuljić se bavi uticajem sloma SSSR i Pada berlinskog zida 1989., različitim oblicima upotrebe

istorije i promenama u sferi ideologije i legitimacije dominantnog društveno-ekonomskog sistema. Teorijski pristup u ovom delu je takođe prepoznatljiv, profesor Kuljić i dalje ostaje na polju kritičkog marksizma, koji u delu naziva „topla struja marksizma“, on ostaje veran svojim teorijskim i vrednosnim nazorima i *Prognane pojmove* uklapa u marksističku tradiciju kritike ideologije. I pored toga delo u pitanju je prožeto teorijskim inovacijama kao i istraživačkim poduhvatima koji u Kuljićevom opusu čine novost. Ovo se pre svega odnosi na istraživačku i teorijsku tradiciju pojmovne istorije koja čini okosnicu ovog dela. Ovu disciplinu profesor Kuljić ugrađuje u svoj teorijski okvir i naoružan tim analitičkim aparatom upušta se u analizu širokog skupa pojmova, diskursa kao i njihovih društveno-političkih zaleđa. Kada je u pitanju novost na polju istraživačkog interesovanja možemo reći da se u *Prognanim pojmovima* profesor Kuljić više nego u dosadašnjim delima upušta u analizu savremenosti iako i dalje čvrsto vezan za dosadašnje istorijsko usmerenje. U skladu sa tim on svakom analiziranom pojmu pristupa kroz njegov istorijat i genezu ali prevashodno zarad razumevanja njegove uloge u sadašnjosti. Upravo ova

sadašnjost predstavlja metu Kuljićeve kritike i analize stoga *Prognane pojmove* možemo videti kao delo usmereno ka razumevanju ideološke utemeljenosti neoliberalnog kapitalizma kojoj se pristupa kroz analizu njegovih ključnih pojmova. To usmerenje se najbolje može uočiti u podnaslovu dela: „Neoliberalna pojmovna revizija misli o društvu“

Knjiga je podeljena na uvod, devet poglavlja i zaključak. U uvodu Kuljić obrazlaže svoje interesovanje za istraživanje pojmovne istorije kao i svoju teorijsku poziciju koju čini misao Karla Marksa. U prvom poglavlju Kuljić nam pruža kratku istoriju discipline pojmovne istorije sa posebnim osvrtom na Rajnharta Kozeleka. Kozelek je predstavljen kao dominantni predstavnik te discipline i njegov istoristički pristup se obrazlaže i kritikuje ne bi li se prilagodio istraživačkom postupku i marksističkom teorijskom okviru. U drugom poglavlju autor prelazi na bliže obrazloženje svog metodološkog pristupa u kom kombinuje pojmovnu istoriju sa pristupom kritičke analize diskursa prevashodno u delu Normana Ferklafla. Takođe, on ovde bliže obrazlaže istorijsku ulogu pojmova koja nije isključivo u razumevanju stvarnosti već i u usmeravanju delanja aktera. Treće poglavlje se može videti kao kontekstualni okvir autorovog istraživanja. Naime, u ovom poglavlju Kuljić opisuje društveni, ekonomski i ideološki kontekst savremenog neoliberalnog kapitalizma. On analizira i kritikuje različite oblike njegove legitimacije. Istovremeno se osvrće na optimiste koji u kapitalizmu vide progresivnu snagu tehnološke inovacije ali i na one koji se posle pada socijalizma okreću religioznim i nacionalističkim pravdanjima postojećeg poretka. Na kraju ovog poglavlja Kuljić se osvrće na situaciju savremene levice koju vidi kao kao melodramatičnu usled okretanja levice moralističkim kritikama kapitalizma čime njene političke mogućnosti bivaju zatvorene. Koren ovakve situacije Kuljić vidi u nedostatku konkretne vizije

alternativnog poretka. Sledeća dva poglavlja se mogu videti kao jedna celina i prema autorovim rečima čine centralni deo ove knjige. U četvrtom poglavlju autor se bavi pojmom „materijalnog prirodnog prava“ i istražuje njegovu genezu kao i njegova određenja kod različitih autora kao što su Maks Veber, Ernst Bloh i Leo Štraus. U ovom poglavlju Kuljić teži da pokaže mogućnosti pojma materijalnog prirodnog prava, shvaćenog kao pravo na prisvajanje plodova sopstvenog rada, u kritici postojećeg kapitalističkog uređenja. Ostatak ovog poglavlja se bavi potiskivanjem tog pojma od strane pozitivistički i proceduralistički shvaćenog prava. Peto poglavlje se bavi ulogom pojma materijalnog prirodnog prava u delu filozofa Ljubomira Tadića. Ovde autor teži da istraži razloge napuštanja tog pojma u Tadićevom delu posle 1990. Kuljić dolazi do zaključka da se Tadić ne može videti kao jednostavni konvertit te da su razlozi za promenu fokusa u njegovom radu kompleksni i povezani sa širim društvenim okolnostima. U šestom poglavlju autor istražuje dihotomiju pojmova filantropije i humanizma. Oba pojma prema Kuljiću predstavljaju verzije altruizma. Da bi ocrtao razliku između njih on suprotstavlja Endrua Karnegija kao predstavnika filantropije i Karla Marksa kao predstavnika humanizma. Na ovaj način Kuljić prikazuje filantropiju kao verziju altruizma koja služi pravdanju i korekciji kapitalizma, a humanizam kao usmerenje koje teži da ukine systemske uzroke nepravde i siromaštva. U sedmom poglavlju autor istražuje pojam socijalne revolucije. On ovde teži da ukaže na različite promene u njegovom shvatanju kao i razloge njegovog potiskivanja od strane dominantne ideologije. Uzroke tome Kuljić nalazi u nametanju pojma tranzicije kao mirnog prelaza između različitih društvenih uređenja kao i u stigmatizaciji ideje nasilja. Osmo i deveto poglavlje su takođe usko povezani. U prvom autor istražuje pojam socijalne pravde, njegovu genezu

i različita shvatanja ali prevashodno njegovo potiskivanje u savremenom neoliberalnom kapitalizmu. Kuljić prikazuje različite oblike potiskivanja tog pojma ali i njegovu zamenu pojmom socijalne isključenosti za koji tvrdi da neutralizuje subverzivnost pojma socijalne pravde. U devetom poglavlju autor se osvrće na različite oblike pravdanja nejednakosti u neoliberalizmu što objašnjava relativizacijom i sužavanjem pojma socijalne pravde.

Možemo zaključiti da su *Progna-ni pojmovi* maestralno delo interdisciplinarnog usmerenja koje sintetiše širok spoj disciplina u plodonosnu celinu koja osvetljava izuzetno značajan aspekt društvene stvarnosti. Taj aspekt čine dominantni pojmovi i njihova uloga

u legitimaciji vladajućeg neoliberalnog kapitalizma. Ovakav naučni doprinos Kuljić kombinuje sa oštrom društvenom kritikom kako savremenih društvenih naučnika tako i savremene levice. Svojim delom on šalje poziv društvenim naučnicima da preispitaju zdravorazumski shvaćene pojmove kojim operišu i kritički sagledaju sopstvenu društvenu ulogu, dok savremenu levicu poziva na napuštanje identitetskih politika i usmeravanje delanja ka temeljnim društvenim antagonizmima. Oštra kritika koja provejava kroz stranice ovog dela *Progna-ne pojmove* usmerava van granica akademske zajednice i može se videti kao Kuljićev doprinos buđenju progresivnih političkih snaga i izgradnji boljeg i humanijeg sveta.

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Hartman, Nikolaj (1980) „O metodi istorije filozofije“, *Gledišta* 21 (6): 101–120.

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