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TOWARDS TRUE SOCIETY: A DISCUSSION OF ASGER SØRENSEN'S CAPITALISM,  
ALIENATION AND CRITIQUE

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TOWARDS TRUE SOCIETY: A DISCUSSION OF ASGER  
SØRENSEN'S *CAPITALISM, ALIENATION AND CRITIQUE*

KA ISTINSKOM DRUŠTVU: RASPRAVA O KNJIZI  
*KAPITALIZAM OTUĐENJE I KRITIKA ASGERA SERENSENA*





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## EDITORS' NOTE

Marjan Ivković, Srđan Prodanović and Milan Urošević

### TOWARDS TRUE SOCIETY: A DISCUSSION OF ASGER SØRENSEN'S *CAPITALISM, ALIENATION AND CRITIQUE*

This issue presents four papers that discuss Asger Sørensen's *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, a work that is both a self-standing contribution to contemporary Critical Theory and part of a larger project – namely, *CAC* is Volume 1 of Sørensen's three-volume *Dialectics, Deontology and Democracy*, which formulates a comprehensive vision of a Critical Theory capable of addressing the fundamental challenges humanity faces today – economic, political, ecological, educational – and their intertwinement. Sørensen is a Danish critical theorist and philosopher of education based at Aarhus University, who firmly stands in the tradition of the “original”, “first-generation” Critical Theory from the early 1930s formulated at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. In *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, Sørensen undertakes the task of reconstructing the project of original Critical Theory and defending it against criticisms from what might be termed the “post-metaphysical camp”, i.e., perspectives which argue that first-generation Critical Theory is epistemologically authoritarian and normatively particularist.

Through an analysis of the Hegelian foundations of classical Critical Theory, as well as its commitment to democracy and to the political-economic critique of capitalism, Sørensen responds to the “post-metaphysicists” (including some contributors to the current issue) that they construct a straw-man in trying to reduce classical Critical Theory to simply one social-theoretical perspective among others. Critical Theory is, according to Sørensen, primarily a specific *epistemological* perspective that, due to its grounding in the concepts of dialectics and “determinate negation”, is intrinsically a critique of any standpoint that claims to possess the “whole truth” about society or a blueprint for realizing freedom and justice once and for all. Second, Sørensen argues that the very ideal of post-metaphysical thought is a form of capitalist ideology that should be discarded, as it constitutes a return to “traditional theory”, a false

universalism that contributes, through its claim of neutrality, to the reproduction of a decidedly particularist and unjust societal order.

The forum features four critical papers, which present elaborated versions of contributions to two seminar discussions on Sørensen's book, held at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory in Belgrade (Ivković, Prodanović and Urošević) on November 5th 2019 and at the East China Normal University in Shanghai on November 24th of the same year (David Rasmussen, Tong Shijun and Andrew Benjamin), followed by Sørensen's reply.

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Rasmussen, David (2021), "Arguing for Classical Critical Theory", *Philosophy and Society* 32 (1): 5–10.

David M. Rasmussen

## ARGUING FOR CLASSICAL CRITICAL THEORY

### ABSTRACT

In my view, making the case for a specific interpretation of Critical Theory is problematic.<sup>1</sup> Although the term has a prestigious origin stemming from Horkheimer's 1937 paper, *Traditional and Critical Theory*,<sup>2</sup> given during his term as Director of the Institute for Social Research at Frankfurt University and generating the enthusiasm of its members, the term and the movement associated would be defined and radically redefined not only by subsequent generations but by its very author. One of the merits of the book under discussion is that even before the first chapter an 'Interlude' is presented entitled *Arguing for Classical Critical Theory* signifying to the reader that Horkheimer got it right when he defined the subject and that it is possible to return to that particular definition after 83 years. This paper challenges Professor Sørensen's claims for the restoration of classical Critical Theory on three levels: the scientific, the historical and the political level.

### KEYWORDS

critical theory,  
Horkheimer, science,  
history, democracy

### A. The Case for Critical Theory as Science<sup>3</sup>

When Horkheimer defined Critical Theory in the 1937 article his intention was to avoid the pitfalls of a Marxian orthodoxy that had defined the Marxian heritage both within the newly founded Institute for Social Research and in other parts of the world. The idea was to argue for Critical Theory as a science. Of course, Marxism had been associated with science before this academic institute was founded but Horkheimer defined it from an epistemological point of view, allying it with the tradition of the theory of knowledge as it was carried down from the German enlightenment. As the article illustrates he attempts to dissociate his definition from empirical science by differentiating his understanding of science from the tradition inherited from Descartes. However, in attempting to free the Marxist heritage from a rank empiricism he included basic Marxian categories as the foundation of scientific understanding. This was problematic

1 See my essay in Rasmussen: 1996: 11–38.

2 Horkheimer 1972: 188–243.

3 See the section entitled, "Interlude: Arguing for Classical Critical Theory: Horkheimer, Marcuse et al." in Sørensen 2019: 24–83. My comments will be limited to this section of the book.

from two points of view. On the one hand it was not absolutely certain that Marx's thesis regarding the forces and relations of production could be justified as the foundational insight given to any definition of science. Beyond that, the self-evident character of basic Marxian categories had begun to dissolve in the course of contemporary events. As a consequence, Horkheimer's definition of Critical Theory was problematic from the very beginning. To be sure, anyone who has been inspired by the tradition of Critical Theory has been impressed by Horkheimer's attempt because it tried to put Critical Theory and the Marxian heritage that it represented on a firm foundation. Actually one could argue that it was this very attempt that gave life to Critical Theory as it manifested itself in its various stages of development, as is clear from those representatives of the second and third generations of Critical Theory who become part of the book's argument. This dynamic explains Horkheimer's departure from an emphasis on science in his turn towards instrumental reason under the influence of Max Weber and the writing of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* with his colleague Adorno under the influence of Nietzsche. Although I cannot go into a detailed analysis of this process at this point, clearly, they gave up on trying to ground Critical Theory in science. There are at least two reasons for this: first, the so-called scientific principles underlying a view of science informed by Marx were no longer self-evident and the very assurance that history would move us to a stage beyond Capitalism was less secure. However, that did not mean that Horkheimer, Adorno, and others within the Institute would give up on trying to find a foundation for Critical Theory.

Now, although I don't want to be unfair in my criticism of Professor Sørensen, it seems that his affirmation of Horkheimer's definition of Critical Theory as science, i.e., Marxist science is problematic when he states the following: "Horkheimer follows Marx in considering science as primarily societal "forces of production". As it is well known, such forces of production are always found within the totality of societal organization of production, i.e., what Marx calls the "relations of production" and the dynamics of history is due to the contradictions between these two elements" (Sørensen 2019: 30–31). I am aware that the original intention of this statement is that this definition of science should include society. However, to argue that Critical Theory should be based on what we now label as a form of economic determinism seems difficult to sustain. However, Sørensen's argument goes on to claim "Critical Theory in its most classical form basically poses as a theory of science, i.e. a normative program for multi- or cross-disciplinary social science about the modern society" (Sørensen 2019: 37). A claim that on the face of it seems quite benign until one reads further to discover the underlying dogmatic interpretation that is given to this claim. "Critical Theory is not a collection of particular critical theories, it is to be understood as *the* Critical Theory of society *per se*." (Sørensen 2019: 37) At this point I am not arguing that Horkheimer and by implication Sørensen is a rank positivist. Rather, given his Kantian background, he wrote his doctoral dissertation as well as his *Habilitationschrift* on Kant's teleological judgment, he was trying to ground Critical Theory on a firm, rational, almost

Kantian foundation. Certainly, Sørensen's argument is following in this venerable tradition. Also, I am not simply dismissing Marx's insights as positivist insights. However, from the perspective of the 21st century to make the claim that Critical Theory as science is *the* one singular theory of society, seems both naïve and difficult to sustain. Further, it became apparent shortly after the 1937 definition of Critical Theory that Marx's insights regarding both the forces and relations of production and their contradiction as force for historical change could not explain what was actually happening in society. Apparently, the conclusion they drew from this course of events was not to give up on Critical Theory but rather to give up on this definition of Critical Theory.<sup>4</sup>

## B. The Historical Dimension

I

Given the fact that the argument for the grounding of Critical Theory on science in the strict sense in which it was presented in the 1937 paper was abandoned so quickly, I was surprised and also disappointed to discover that Professor Sørensen would more or less discard the historical development of Critical Theory in order to return to its original definition as science. I realize there are some exceptions to this because he does affirm a part of Habermas's program and he does affirm the development of Critical Theory by Herbert Marcuse. However, on the basis of an argument for not getting committed to "idealist schemes of historical progression" and at the same time "open to the possibility of the realization of a just society" (Sørensen 2019: 49). Sørensen does "not think it unrealistic to leave Critical Theory where Horkheimer left it in 1937, i.e. before the outbreak of WWII and the discovery of Auschwitz et al. and only skipping the belief stemming from Marxist orthodoxy that justice can somehow be predicted or expected to be realized in some nearby future" (Sørensen 2019: 49). My first problem with this view is that it is based on an illusion in the sense that going back to the 1937 position on Critical Theory will not free one from a strong theory of historical progress. When Horkheimer affirmed Critical Theory as a scientific theory based on insights developed by Marx, those insights were in substance a theory of historical development and they were duly quoted and affirmed by Sørensen himself. History, that is the development of society, "real history" as Marx labeled it, is to be explained by the contradiction between the forces and relations of production.<sup>5</sup> I agree with the proposition that there are problems with a theory of progress, but the solution does not reside in going back to the 1937 paper. My solution is that, rather than going backwards, one should go forward to the democratization of Critical Theory, which I will discuss when I turn to the political dimension of Critical Theory.

4 To the extent that Critical Theory is regarded as political theory, to define it as *the* theory of society avoids pluralism.

5 This notion of "real history" is developed in Marx's *The German Ideology* taken from the introduction to the section labeled "I. History" (Marx 1978: 155).

My second problem has to do with the historical explanation of the development of Critical Theory. By abandoning the history of Critical Theory on the assumption that it is possible to simply go back to the beginning one fails to understand why, for example, Horkheimer and Adorno abandoned the original project for what can be categorized as internal reasons (Williams). I have already made reference to some of those reasons associated with the historical failure of the Marxian project and the rise of fascism. However, what is really interesting is the course that took from endorsing Critical Theory on the basis of rigorous science to looking at science through the lens of instrumental reason, from enthusiastically endorsing Critical Theory as an emancipatory project to looking at history from the perspective of the eternal return of the same, and, in Adorno's case, to redirecting that very project of emancipation to the aesthetic realm. Somehow the Critical Theory project managed to stay alive even beyond its founders, which suggests that there was something more to the movement than its first epistemological move.

## II

Before turning to the political dimension of my argument, allow me to consider the major figures of the second and third generations of Critical Theory, Jürgen Habermas and Axel Honneth. I agree with Sørensen's analysis of Habermas's first two phases, the critique of positivist science and knowledge and human interest, characterized as faithful to the epistemological foundation of Critical Theory laid down by Horkheimer.<sup>6</sup> However, I disagree regarding the dismissal of Habermas's endorsement of the communicative paradigm. Sørensen rejects the paradigm shift on the grounds that the result is that he and Habermas now face each other from "incommensurable positions, which by definition cannot be bridged by any argument" (Sørensen 2019: 65). He goes on to characterize Habermas as retaining certain "positivist premises that should have been left in the past" (Sørensen 2019: 65). By implication, this argument implies that Habermas, in turning to the communicative paradigm, simply abandoned the epistemological orientation of the earlier phases of his work. I believe this is essentially wrong because it can be shown through Habermas's own self-interpretation that his work in collaboration with Karl-Otto Apel focusing on the issue of foundations grounds a certain emancipatory orientation implicit in the early foundations of Critical Theory in language. From an historical perspective the great service Habermas rendered to Critical Theory was to update it, making it palpable for the twentieth and now 21st centuries. Hence to find the emancipatory, the transformational thrust of Marx's early analysis in a certain orientation to language has been a part, but only a part of Habermas's great contribution.

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6 I agree to the extent that Habermas was concerned with epistemology among other things and that he makes an epistemological argument in *Knowledge and Human Interest* when he distinguishes the three types of discourse in the appendix. I don't agree that epistemology provides the fundamental norm for the characterization of a valid Critical Theory.

### C. The Political Dimension: The Question of Democracy

I know that the book as a whole has a great deal to say about politics, however, very little is said about democracy in the argument for classical Critical Theory. Yet, if we are ever going to have a just society it will only be through democratic means. Unfortunately, this failure can be traced beyond the Frankfurt School to Marx himself. Habermas was aware of this lacuna in the Marxist tradition, a tradition that included Critical Theory when he published *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, a revision of his *Habilitationschrift*. The point of the book was that the transition was made from reliance on traditional forms of governance that were based on the authority of inherited traditions to the emergence of a new form of authority based on public opinion. If there was ever a transformational moment in the history of modern politics it was simultaneous with the emergence of a public sphere. Here, the problem with the argument is not what is said but what is unsaid. In other words, by making the argument that the force and significance of Critical Theory is to be associated with the 1937 position is to omit any consideration of democracy.

There is a second problem with the confining of Habermas to the two stages of development, namely, the critique of positivism and knowledge and human interest that is to overlook what may be regarded as the most important contribution to Critical Theory, *Between Facts and Norms*. To be sure, Sørensen does mention *Between Facts and Norms* in a somewhat positive light suggesting that it corrects an earlier problem with regard to “lumping together capitalist economy and the state under the heading ‘the system’ [...]” (Sørensen 2019: 67), an argument which in the context of the numerous critiques of Habermas’s distinction between system and lifeworld has merit. However, what is overlooked is the contribution regarding the development of law and democracy that the book makes to Critical Theory in general. Specifically, the thesis regarding the co-originality of private and public autonomy speaks to the critique of traditional theory implicit in Horkheimer’s 1937 essay by showing that private autonomy is only possible on the basis of public autonomy, or to put it in Horkheimer’s terms, traditional theory is only possible on the basis of critical theory.

Under Sørensen’s normative scrutiny Axel Honneth, compared to Habermas, fails completely because he committed the original sin of taking the first step in a program that involves the affirmation of the communicative paradigm. Further, when Honneth affirms a program of social philosophy he abandons the scientific standards established by Horkheimer in that early definition of Critical Theory. Frankly, I think the contribution of Honneth’s work to Critical Theory has been to re-introduce the Hegelian concepts of recognition and alienation. One wonders why they are not discussed in the book under consideration.

## Conclusion

Finally, we who have labored in the fields of Critical Theory have come to many different conclusions. Whereas Professor Sørensen has stated his desire to reconstruct the very beginnings of Critical Theory I have wanted to follow that tradition to its more current manifestations. To me that means that Critical Theory, a certain formation of which began in Frankfurt, continues to this day as a living tradition that can be affirmed through its various manifestations. One of the conclusions to be drawn from this statement is that although I have been critical of Professor Sørensen's presentation, I do regard it as legitimate. My own analysis has been limited by its confinement to only one argument in a book devoted to political economy, dialectics with a final chapter that celebrates the work of Herbert Marcuse. With Marcuse the argument is less about an emphasis on epistemology and more on the achievement of a reasonable society. In the end I share the hope for the latter.

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## Dejvid Rasmusen

### Argumentovanje u prilog klasičnoj kritičkoj teoriji

#### Apstrakt:

Prema mom shvatanju, zastupanje jedne specifične interpretacije kritičke teorije je problematično. Iako ime kritička teorija ima prestižno poreklo vezano za Horkhajmerov rad iz 1937 *Tradicionalna i kritička teorija*, ime koje je dato tokom njegovog mandata kao direktora Instituta za društvena istraživanja Univerziteta u Frankfurtu, i koje je bilo entuzijastično prihvaćeno od strane članova Instituta, samo ime i pokret vezan za njega će biti radikalno redefinisani, ne samo od strane narednih generacija već i samog autora. Jedna od prednosti knjige o kojoj se ovde diskutuje je da čak i pre prvog poglavlja postoji 'interludijum' sa naslovom *Argumentovanje u prilog klasičnoj kritičkoj teoriji* koje čitaocu sugerise da je Horkhajmer na ispravan način definisao kritičku teoriju i da je moguće vratiti se toj definiciji posle 83 godine. U ovom tekstu preispitujem Serensenove pokušaje restauracije klasične kritičke teorije an tri nivoa: nivou nauke, istorije i politike.

**Ključne reči:** kritička teorija, Horkhajmer, nauka, historija, demokratija



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Marjan Ivković, Srđan Prodanović and Milan Urošević

## THEORY CAUGHT UP IN DIALECTICS: SOME REFLECTIONS ON ASGER SØRENSEN'S CAPITALISM, ALIENATION AND CRITIQUE<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

This paper presents three interconnected examinations of Asger Sørensen's arguments in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, which thematize Sørensen's overarching understanding of the relationship between theory and practice: his general methodological perspective on critical theory, its distinctive epistemology and its anchoring in the empirical world. The paper authors each try to push Sørensen on these crucial points by considering how Sørensen's variant of critical theory actually operates, scrutinizing in more detail the particular relationship between the 'experience of injustice', which for Sørensen constitutes the empirical foothold for critical theory, and the theoretical diagnosis of social reality which the critical theorist should formulate against the backdrop of this experience.

### KEYWORDS

dialectics, determinate negation, Foucault, Degrowth, Bataille

## Introduction

This paper brings together three inter-imbricated examinations of some of Asger Sørensen's arguments in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* – Marjan Ivković's, Srđan Prodanović's and Milan Urošević's. The unifying thread of the three contributions is the thematizing of Sørensen's overarching understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, in other words his general methodological perspective on critical theory, its distinctive epistemology and its anchoring in the empirical world. Sørensen argues for the preservation of the original, first-generation critical theory which postulates the 'predominance

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of theory over practice’, meaning that critical theory should operate by negating, de-naturalizing not just the social reality as it appears to the everyday observer, but also the conventional, positivist epistemological approach of the social sciences to this reality. Instead, critical theory should rely on the Hegelian conception of the societal “totality” which presents a dynamic mediation of the universal and the particular in all social phenomena and the dialectical method of determinate negation which, according to Sørensen, is able to “grasp conceptually reality in motion” (Sørensen 2019: 141). Ivković, Prodanović and Urošević each try to push Sørensen a bit further on this crucial point by considering how this variant of critical theory actually operates, scrutinizing in more detail the particular relationship between the ‘experience of injustice’, which for Sørensen constitutes the empirical foothold for critical theory, and the theoretical diagnosis of social reality which the critical theorist should formulate against the backdrop of this experience.

The three contributors share a certain reservation for Sørensen’s notion of the ‘predominance’ of theory over practice as they all point toward the constitutive importance of the dynamics and contingency of empirical reality, not just as an initial impetus of social critique, but also as a necessary prism through which theory has to be refracted. In that respect, Ivković poses the question whether the dialectical method of critical theory, the determinate negation, is in fact the negation of our immediate experience of injustice which must preserve (‘sublate’) the element of this immediacy in its theoretical diagnosis if it is to inspire political action; Urošević turns the dialectical argument ‘against’ Sørensen, so to say, as he reflects on the constitutive dependence of critical theory’s central concepts, such as justice and alienation, on the very social totality that should be measured against them; and Prodanović asks whether Sørensen’s own pragmatist inclination to grant the realm of everyday collective problem-solving a key role as the impetus of theoretical dialectics does not compel him to re-examine the notion of the “predominance” of theory. Each of the contributors also link their general examinations of Sørensen’s perspective on critical theory to more concrete themes addressed by the book – Ivković is interested in Sørensen’s understanding of social democracy, Urošević ponders on Sørensen’s view of Foucault as a ‘nihilist’, while Prodanović draws attention to the importance of the work of George Bataille – a central figure for Sørensen – for the contemporary de-growth political movement.

## Fighting for Social Democracy through Determinate Negation?

Marjan Ivković

My tentative remarks concern the concept of determinate negation as the method of social critique in Sørensen’s perspective, as well as the contours of Sørensen’s political ideal of social democracy that take shape in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* and some possible lines of its elaboration. Sørensen gradually presents aspects of his own political ideal throughout the book, and

at one point he introduces the concept of social democracy in the chapter on dialectics from Plato to Hegel. Sørensen argues that social democracy can be elaborated within a critical-theoretic perspective, but this remains a remark in that chapter, and I would like to try to connect it more tightly to his discussions of totality, dialectics and *Bildung*, to see what Sørensen's conception of social democracy is in light of these fundamental theoretical premises, as my intuition is that this is not a conventional understanding of social democracy, as basically a set of restrictions on the logic of the market and commodification, a redistributive social order that tries to tame capitalism, reign it in to some extent and humanize it. It seems to me that Sørensen has a somewhat more ambitious understanding of social democracy which brings him closer to the political perspectives of John Dewey (as well as one of his primary targets in the book, Axel Honneth).

Let's start from the idea of totality, another very important concept that Sørensen introduces, which deserves slightly more elaboration. Sørensen bases his conception of totality on the German tradition of dialectical thought which does not conceive of totality as a static entity, as something oppressing social actors and stifling dynamics. On the contrary, Sørensen quotes Helga Gripp in emphasizing that totality is not just the sum of all parts, rather it is the continuous dialectical mediation between the universal and the particular, and this for me is a very important point (Sørensen 2017: 37). My first sub-question is: does Sørensen conceive of capitalism as this kind of dynamic totality, as the constant mediation between the universal and the particular, meaning that whenever we encounter a particular phenomenon, an instance of injustice or domination, we are in fact encountering the dialectical movements of universality and particularity within this phenomenon? This would mean that this instance of injustice can be traced to capitalism as a constantly expanding principle of exchange, the principle of commodification. What is the role of determinate negation when encountering this kind of dynamic totality?

Is the determinate negation an operation through which we negate the immediate particularity of the phenomenon we are criticizing? Let us take as example the *Belgrade Waterfront* project – a mega-project of urban renewal in Belgrade conducted jointly by the neoliberal-authoritarian government of Serbia and a consortium of foreign investors. We encounter some instance of injustice there which is easily empirically observable, the fact that the land has been leased to a foreign investor under shady circumstances, and people have been evicted from their homes. This would be the immediately given experience of injustice that we have. Does the determinate negation in this context mean that we do not stop there, that we distance ourselves from our immediate experience of injustice and try to understand the logic of the interplay between the universal and the particular in this phenomenon, and thus ultimately expand our experience of injustice and arrive at a more adequate understanding of how this particular instance of injustice fits into the broader picture? We would in that case start realizing how the societal totality of capitalism is instantiated in this particular experience of injustice.

Would this be the kind of critical operation that Sørensen has in mind when he argues for Hegelian dialectics as the diagnostic tool of critical theory? If yes, then it seems to me that a crucially important aspect of this dialectical movement is precisely the ‘sublation’ - the fact that we preserve an element of the immediate experience of injustice while we at the same time negate the ‘finality’ of this experience as we reach a higher level of abstraction in our diagnosis of the injustice involved in phenomena such as the *Belgrade Waterfront* project. Would Sørensen consider this preserved, sublated element of experience that provides the empirical ‘anchoring’ of critique an important factor in the capacity of critical theory to connect to the actual social struggles of today and provide orientation to them?

The second sub-question that follows from this also concerns this critical operation, which is very similar to what we are trying to define here at our Institute as *engagement*. For us, critique as engagement means precisely the distancing from an unreflective following of certain rules and norms of social action and problematization of these which can then lead to some kind of practical question or to further reflection and expansion of insight. In my opinion, we share this understanding of critique as dialectical movement, a distancing, a determinate negation. But the sub-question that follows from the previous example with the Belgrade Waterfront project is then: is a determinate negation enough, precisely because of the fact that we are confronted with something that is a totality? And that as such presses us, challenges us to come up with an alternative vision of totality, otherwise we easily fall pray to the apologists of capitalism who claim that we, the critics, are purely negative, that we are acting out of resentment, out of anachronistic understandings of what society should be like, a static Keynesian social-democratic perspective which is outdated. The system pressurizes us to come up with a ‘totalizing’ comprehensive vision of the good society.

However – and there lies another trap it seems to me – the standard critique of capitalism which tries to invoke a comprehensive vision of the good society then invokes an abstract and static vision of the good society, which cannot compete successfully with capitalism as a dynamic empirical totality, as the mediation of the universal and the particular. And there I think one can locate the relative impotence of contemporary criticisms of capitalism which rely on static comprehensive visions of the good society. What would an alternative way of challenging a societal totality politically be – an adequate alternative totality that we can employ once we have engaged in the sort of critique which Sørensen argues for in the book?

The final subquestion concerns the chapter on Bataille, which seems to give some indications of what Sørensen might actually mean by social democracy. Sørensen says on page 154/155, “Instead, inspired by Bataille’s dialectics one could understand the basic contradiction in and of human life as a conflict, a tension inherent in human and social being, and as such an ontological condition that is dealt with and solved practically every day. The point to discuss politically is therefore not whether we could resolve what the dialectical tradition called the contradictions of the existing solution and reach the truth of

the social being in question. The contradictions are always already solved practically, and the question is only how to make these practical solutions better” (Sørensen 2019: 154–155). There it seems to me like the author is pointing in the direction of a social order which is based on some form of democratic experimentalism and a kind of radical-democratic polity in which citizens are constantly engaged in a deliberative process of detecting and solving the contradictions that are already present in the existing order. This perspective is pretty close to neo-pragmatism and its own visions of what democracy should be, inspired by John Dewey, but which can also be found in one of Sørensen’s main targets in the book – Axel Honneth, who conceives of democracy as “reflexive cooperation” (see e.g. Honneth 2007, 2009).

Would this be the direction in which Sørensen is trying to argue when he says that social democracy can be a viable alternative, and what specifics would this include? In terms of economy of course, do we really have to stick with the idea of the market economy? And finally, would this social democracy really be a totality in the sense that capitalism would be, or would it allow greater room for particularity which is not mediated through universality? That is an important issue because Sørensen also relies on the idea of *sovereignty* in Bataille. This ideal is something that we as moderns cannot easily do away with, the conception of sovereignty, of autonomy not in a rigid, Kantian sense, but precisely of Sørensen’s sovereignty which has important Adornian implications – in Bataille’s conception of sovereignty this is freedom from instrumental reason, from the imperative of self-preservation, but also from the omnipresence of ‘systemic thought’, of the logic of social action directed toward collective self-preservation (Adorno 1981). This ideal of sovereignty, it seems to me, is not easily reconcilable with the idea of societal totality as Sørensen envisages it. So would a social democracy in this radical sense, in the sense of collective problem solving that is oriented toward the Bataillean/Adornian ideal of individual sovereignty, actually have to in a way overcome this interplay of universal and particular as it exists in capitalism, and would it even be theoretically possible to envisage? It seems to me that the most insurmountable challenge for critical theory – a dialectical one for that matter – lies in the fact that capitalism pressures us to come up with an alternative comprehensive vision of the good society which is a dynamic totality, on the one hand, while on the other hand true societal emancipation is only possible once society is no longer structured as any kind of totality.

## A Critical Theory which Transcends Societal Dialectics?

Milan Urošević

In this part of the paper we will deal with some problems concerning Sørensen’s ideas about dialectics and, in relation to it, some of his ideas about justice. These problems will be considered through comparing Sørensen’s ideas with some claims made by Marx and Foucault. We will claim that Sørensen tries

to hold on to some notions of “transcendent” norms of knowledge and justice and thereby limits the reach of his dialectics.

Sørensen’s idea of critical theory can be understood as having ‘scientific and political’ aspects as he calls them (Sørensen 2019: 26). The first aspect is epistemological and deals with developing a framework for understanding the nature of the social world, as he says it accesses the “limits of knowledge and science” (Sørensen 2019: 26). The second aspect is critical and deals with the aspiration of critical theory to contribute to a positive change in society, as Sørensen claims it “consciously opposes existing social injustice and alienation” (Sørensen 2019: 25). We will reconsider both of these aspects simultaneously and try to show the limits of Sørensen’s arguments. For Sørensen the main methodological tool used by critical theory is dialectics understood as a movement of thought through which it tries to capture the ‘true’ nature of historical change in society (Sørensen 2019: 43–44). As he claims, the truth of the social world is a ‘whole’ and dialectics develops concepts that try to capture the relation a certain phenomenon has to the social totality (Sørensen 2019: 40–42). For Sørensen dialectics is a process that progresses through ‘testing’ concepts theoretically or practically in reality and subsequently changing them if they don’t show to be adequate (Sørensen 2019: 44).

While analyzing Honneth’s ideas Sørensen criticizes him for relying on Nietzsche’s and Foucault’s nihilistic rejection of all transcendent standards of science and ethics (Sørensen 2019: 73–74). Namely, he claims that Honneth is wrong in saying that every idea of a phenomenon as ‘pathological’ implies a standard that can’t be justified (Sørensen 2019: 74). For Sørensen this implies that critical theory is for Honneth just one choice among others and that critical theory doesn’t have any other point of departure but nihilism (Sørensen 2019, 74). Sørensen’s critique of Honneth is a good point for considering his ideas of the normative aspect of critical theory and dialectics. He argues that the role of critical theory is to contribute to the realization of a just society without alienation and inequality (Sørensen 2019: 25). The problem with this claim is precisely the aforementioned ‘standard’ which he uses in trying to argue for such a society. The only way Sørensen tries to define the standard he uses for claiming that a certain social arrangement is unjust is intuition. He claims that we can say *prima facie* that inequality is unjust because those deprived of property over the means of production are exploited (Sørensen 2019: 238).

Here we can see that Sørensen tries to equate injustice with inequality, he also stresses that “the experience of injustice produces alienation” (Sørensen 2019: 80). Therefore we can conclude that inequality is Sørensen’s primary measurement of injustice while intuition and experience are the standard by which injustice is evaluated. This seems contradictory to some claims made by Marx but also to some of Sørensen’s ideas about dialectics. Namely, in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* Marx claims that the ideas of ‘justice’ and ‘equality’ formulated within the capitalist social system will inevitably mimic the logic of this system. More precisely, he claims that these ideas reproduce the ‘value form’ as a main principle of the capitalist mode of production through the

idea of a single standard of evaluation by which goods would be redistributed 'equally' (Marx 1989: 86–87). Sørensen seems to be making the same mistake, which can explain his reliance on Bataille's criticism of political economy rather than Marx's since Bataille criticizes capitalism from the perspective of distribution of value rather than from the perspective of its creation (Sørensen 2019: 109–110). Since Sørensen claims that dialectics works by trying to understand social phenomena as part of a larger whole that changes historically there doesn't seem to be a reason why a certain notion of justice couldn't be dialectically analyzed as well. We can note that Sørensen tries to limit his notion of dialectics in order to keep the transcendent notion of justice a part of his critical endeavor. Although Sørensen could be referring to a standard of justice that tries to transcend the logic of the capitalist system's totality he doesn't explicate this standard, and by critiquing inequality his standard of justice inevitably stays within this logic.

Similarly to his idea of justice, Sørensen also tries to ground the epistemological foundation of his dialectics in transcendent norms. We can see this in a contradiction between the two aspects of his understanding of critical theory. On the one side he claims that the epistemological use of dialectics depends on its correspondence to universal criteria of knowledge and that dialectics can be understood as ontology of being translated into thought like logic (Sørensen 2019: 168–169). On the other side he claims that critical theory must rely on some truths that depend on a "historical process yet not completed" and that even fundamental categories can be changed during that process (Sørensen 2019: 47). Here we can see a contradiction between scientific truths, that critical theory aims to reach through the method of dialectics, that are according to Sørensen supposed to be in accordance with the universal criteria of truth and his omission that all concepts used by critical theory are subject to change since they are not outside of the historical process.

A good example of this contradiction is Sørensen's discussion of Mao's notion of dialectics. Namely, Sørensen claims that Mao is wrong in understanding dialectics as a practical tool for guiding political practice and claims that dialectics should primarily be understood as a theoretical endeavor for understanding social and historical processes (Sørensen 2019: 47). For Sørensen theoretical criteria of validity take primacy over the practical application of truths formulated by the dialectical process while for Mao it is the opposite. A question can be posed, since Sørensen claims that all concepts used by critical theory are subject to the historical process, what exactly are the ultimate criteria of truth? Sørensen cites Hegel's idea that truth and knowledge are processes that develop through history and are never finished but constantly progressing, so we can never know how they will look like in the future (Sørensen 2019: 45–47). Sørensen also claims that the 'truth' of society hasn't yet been realized and that its truth is its unalienated and just form (Sørensen 2019: 82). Since Sørensen claims that the political ideal of critical theory is the development of this society we can conclude that a certain knowledge developed through dialectics is true if it contributes to the historical process that moves

society closer to that goal. But this conclusion tells us that for Sørensen the ultimate criterion is also a form of practical application just like it is for Mao. Therefore, for Sørensen the ultimate criterion of knowledge for the scientific aspect of critical theory is developed out of its political aspect even though he doesn't admit this outright and states that this criterion is actually formal logic (Sørensen 2019: 168). We can say that Sørensen understands critical theory as a reflection on modes of action that try to bring about an unalienated and just society in the future. But since he claims that the ultimate criterion for knowledge developed by critical theory is formal logic we can only conclude that for him critical theory should reflect on political action that tries to bring about a just society and point to where this action defies formal logic. This means that for Sørensen political action which is in accordance with formal logic will necessarily bring about a just and unalienated society. The problem with such an understanding of critical theory is that it tries to avoid viewing formal logic as a part of the social totality in which it originated and therefore it is seen as outside the historical/dialectical process. Therefore, Sørensen's idea of dialectics relies on an undialectical standard.

In his debate with the Maoists Foucault criticized their claim that the 'People's Army' could represent the third party in the people's conflict with the ruling class, being a conduit for the will of the people in that conflict. Foucault gives an example of the 'court' during the French Revolution and the way that it presented itself as a neutral third party giving just verdicts while actually it continued the repression from pre-revolutionary times (Foucault 1980: 7–8). His claim is that the idea of a neutral party in a class conflict is a form of "bourgeois" ideology reproduced through an idea of neutral and objective norms of justice. Our claim is that Sørensen limits his notions of critical theory and dialectics in the same way by trying to hold on to transcendent norms that provide epistemological and ethical certainty. Thus he seems to be struggling with the same problem that he mentioned Honneth does, but tries to avoid nihilistic conclusions which results in him setting up standards in such a way that they can't be justified.

## **Beyond Degrowth – From Bataille's General Economy to Dewey's Instrumentalism**

Srđan Prodanović

In his book *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, Asger Sørensen manages to walk the fine line between, on the one hand, a wide scope of addressed issues and, on the other, precise argumentation – which is a rare trait in modern social theory. The common thread which goes through the diverse and complicated theoretical themes of this book is Sørensen's articulation of social change which would be situated within the everyday experience of injustice and still fuelled by dialectics in "which theory predominates over practice" (Sørensen 2019: 170). One particularly important aspect of this goal is to provide a new,



broader view of economic activity, which will not entail the displacement of “economy in an ordinary sense” (97).

In that regard I found the chapter dedicated to Durkheimian and Bataille-an accounts of value and economy particularly instructive. The main idea of these chapters is to persuade us to move away from the (dangerously) widespread particularistic insights into economic activity which are usually fostered in positivist neoliberal econometrics and to try to base our understanding of value on more relational premises, as advocated by Durkheim and Mauss. This sets the stage for Sørensen’s more detailed analyses of Bataille’s work and introduces the idea of the *generalized economy* which emerges from the interplay between “unreduced desire and the flow of energy in nature” (Sørensen 2019: 128). Here we once again encounter a well-known problem raised by heterodox approaches to economics which is based on insights from thermodynamics. Namely, in nature a vast majority of systems are not in equilibrium, which means that they continuously dissipate energy and change states. This is of course not compatible with mainstream economics which holds that human interactions and transactions are part of a system which in fact tends to be in some sort of equilibrium (usually provided through the free market). Therefore, according to Bataille, this continuous flow of energy implies that a more general economy is not aimed at solving the problem of the scarcity of resources, but rather at the problem of managing excess, the surplus of energy that needs to be squandered (as is the case with consumerist societies). Moreover, this unavoidable surplus is reflected in our inner life through subjective desire which is not reducible to particularistic needs, and remains to a great degree undetermined and oriented towards those objects that are withering away as the given system inevitably moves on to the lower level of entropy.

However, Sørensen points out that Bataille never successfully synthesized subjective desire and the dissipation of energy which mutually guide our interaction with the environment. According to Sørensen, Bataille’s aporias are revealed in the following way: “on the ontological level he [Bataille] clearly oscillates between the universal economy of energy and the individual experience of desire, and [...] in his normative recommendations he oscillates between moral appeals to the individual and a wish for a world government to control the flow of energy on and in the earth as a whole” (Sørensen 2019: 127). In other words, complete fulfilment of human desire would exacerbate the dissipation of energy and ultimately lead to the absolute exhaustion of environmental resources. Thus, according to Sørensen, although Bataille was not successful in his attempt to reconcile subjective desire and the more general approach to the economy, he nonetheless articulated the urgency of constructing a more holistic understanding of political economy.

Now, there are a couple of issues that could be raised here regarding Sørensen’s account of Bataille. The first one pertains to the so-called degrowth movement. Namely, Bataille’s general economy is used as one of the theoretical frameworks which support the critique of growth-obsessed economics (D’Alisa, Demaria, and Kallis 2014). But what is often overlooked is that environmentalist

(degrowth) movements are still too much focused on scarcity, and Bataille's general economy – if taken as an epistemological basis of their account of social reality – could in fact provide a way to go beyond reformist proposals. Somewhat more importantly, one could ask if degrowth as an approach has the potential to resolve some of Bataille's aporias which Sørensen so insightfully observes. This especially pertains to the problem of reconciling the ontological extremes of individual desire and the universal flow of energy, since degrowth as a practical implementation of the general economy could serve as a basis for everyday reflection on the fact that our desires are incompatible with (over) production and (over)consumption and thus only understandable against the backdrop of the more abstract processes of entropy and the flow of energy?

This brings us to the second, more general, issue which refers to the relation between theory and practice that is advocated by Sørensen. Namely, the way to deal with practical problems according to Sørensen is to embrace the Hegelian determinate negation which entails “[...] that denying something implies affirming something else. A negation is thus determinate, since it negates something specific and leaves the rest of the totality as a basis for the negation in question” (Sørensen 2019: 171). However, if negation and dialectics are inherently generated within the realm of concrete problems and thus arguably articulated within everyday life, then it is not quite clear why – or more importantly how – theory should predominate over practice. If there is no movement in Hegelian logic without this practical impetus, then there is some autonomy of our concrete everyday common-sense articulation of social issues which makes predominance too strong a term to describe the relationship between theory and practice. Moreover, throughout the book Sørensen has a rather critical stance toward pragmatism even though it could be beneficial for his theoretical goals. For example, Dewey's instrumentalism which aims “to bridge the gap between reason and experience” (Brodsky 1969: 52) by using the liberating effect of abstraction in order to connect distant elements of our experience would at least to some degree be compatible with Sørensen's theoretical goal to maintain the “positive concept of dialectics” which takes into account “the importance of validity, formal logic and strong epistemological concepts of knowledge and truth” without imposing any kind of predominance over everyday practice (Sørensen 2019: 174).

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Marjan Ivković, Srđan Prodanović i Milan Urošević

**Teorija uhvaćena u dijalektiku: neke refleksije o Kapitalizmu, otuđenju i kritici Asgera Serensena**

**Apstrakt:**

Ovaj rad predstavlja tri povezana ispitivanja argumentacije Asgera Serensena u *Kapitalizmu, otuđenju i kritici*, koja tematizuju Serensenovo generalno razumevanje odnosa teorije i prakse, drugim rečima njegovu metodološku perspektivu u pogledu kritičke teorije, njene specifične epistemologije i njene ukorenjenosti u empirijskom svetu. Marjan Ivković, Srđan Prodanović i Milan Urošević nastoje da problematizuju Serensenovo stanovište razmatrajući način na koji Serensenova kritička teorija zapravo funkcioniše, analizirajući detaljnije odnos između ‚iskustva nepravde‘, koje za Serensena predstavlja empirijsko uporište kritičke teorije, i teorijske dijagnoze društvene stvarnosti koju kritički teoretičar formuliše na temelju tog iskustva.

**Ključne reči:** dijalektika, negacija neposredno datog, Fuko, od-rast, Bataj

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Andrew Benjamin

## SØRENSEN'S BATAILLE: NOTES ON THE 'APOLITICAL'

**ABSTRACT**

In *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, part of the development of Asger Sørensen's overall argument is a disagreement with Georges Bataille. The crux of the argument is that Bataille's thinking – especially his conception of subjectivity – is 'apolitical'. The aim of this paper is to investigate the force of this claim. What does it mean for a position – albeit a philosophical one – to be 'apolitical'?

**KEYWORDS**

Bataille, apolitical, Hegel, economy, subjectivity

1. In Asger Sørensen's overall philosophical project the writings of Georges Bataille have played and continue to play a major role. Tracing aspects of his critical engagement with Bataille is therefore a significant part of any engagement with that larger undertaking. In his *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* there is an important and sustained encounter with Bataille (Sørensen 2019). If there is a general summation of the position developed in the book then there is the claim that Bataille's analysis and evaluation of capitalism is inadequate were it to form the basis of a real critique which is accompanied by the related argument that Bataille advances a conception of the subject which has an affinity with the subject position that accompanies the neoliberal subject of self-care rather than a subject position not easily assimilable to the neoliberal project. Within Bataille's work there is not just an inadequate understanding of the economic, there is the incorporation of the economic into a more general theory of energetics. The problem at the heart of Bataille's approach to the economic, therefore, even in his attempt to develop a critique of capitalism, is that for Sørensen it remains mired in a sense of subjectivity that in the end becomes 'apolitical'. It is the movement to this position that at the outset needs to be traced. What is of interest is how Sørensen understands, not the political as such, but the term he uses to describe Bataille, namely the 'apolitical'. There is an affinity here with arguments developed elsewhere in terms of the so-called 'post-political'. The latter marks a type of foreclosure of the political. Rather than pursue the broader argument of what counts as the political,

the project here will continue to turn on an engagement with the possibility of the 'apolitical'. There is a type of urgency here. Not only has the question of what counts as the political acquired greater importance with the advent of the Anthropocene and the actualization of the climate crisis, for these reasons the possibility of different configurations of the political need to be entertained. In addition, there is the attendant problem of political expression. In other words, the additional problem that continues to occupy any conception of the political is not just its direct expression but the way that such positions can be represented. The question of either *who* or *what* represents political positions, becomes the more extended problem of what counts now as political actions.

The position from which a start may be made concerns Bataille's engagement with what he called *homo economicus*. At work within this position is an account of human being that is defined by the centrality of calculation and thus forms of completion. However, the value of Bataille's formulation is that it allows him to identify a constitutive division within human being. A tension that is already there, as Sørensen makes clear in terms of the distinction between 'need' and 'desire'. The reason, as noted, is the initial incorporation of human being into a logic in which there is a pre-existent economy that positions human being as constituted in relation to the endless attainment of goals. In Sørensen's argumentation there are direct consequences for Bataille of human 'economic activity'. In it, in Sørensen's reformulation of Bataille

we are searching for a good that in the end must escape us, because the complete satisfaction of the subjective desire, i.e. the sovereign and without any compromise unproductive pleasure, would result in a drainage of all accessible resources and therefore ultimately and quite literally in death. In a certain sense, we are very well aware that our desire for sovereignty is self-contradictory, and we can therefore be said subjectively as well as objectively to be separated from this good that we desire by the awareness produced by the anxiety of actually having this desire satisfied. (Sørensen 2019: 113)

The question of sovereignty needs to be located within the centrality of a dynamic conception of the energetic. There is a sense in which the expenditure of energy within the system can be, for the most part, absorbed by it. And yet, precisely because of the need for that absorption and regulation the creation of any excess appears as a problem for the system. Excess is linked to the critique of capitalism – and this is a point clearly argued by Sørensen – because profit cannot be absorbed by the system. While there are limitations in regard to the structure of the economic, ultimately what calls the system into question is sovereignty. Sørensen draws a precise conclusion from this positioning. Namely that

the general economy emphasizes – as science and ontology, philosophical anthropology and thus metaphysics – the real ontological necessity of subjective desire for the specifically human way of being. The subjective desire for individual sovereignty cannot be sublated, as puritan idealists have often hoped. Bataille maintains the contradiction between needs and desire, and the irreducible reality of both. (Sørensen 2019: 127)

The subject appears. The problem of the 'apolitical' concerns the problematic presence of this subject. On one level Sørensen is quite right to be suspicious of the identification of an affirmation of sovereignty that seems to be no more than the affirmation of the individual. As Sørensen has argued, sovereignty for Bataille "is the manifestation of desire as inner experience, and both are irreducibly subjective". If the argument were to be left at that point then there is little further to add. Bataille is interested in a conception of subjectivity that can be identified with the formulation of "inner experience". And yet, is the subject of inner experience the sovereign subject that reappears with the sovereign subject of self-care? Were there to be a response, then it would be to suggest that there is a misunderstanding at the centre of Sørensen's analysis of how "inner experience" is to be understood. This is the point that has to be pursued. Who is the subject of inner experience?

Bataille argues in relation to the subject that his position is pitted against the great philosopher of experience, namely Hegel. The need to argue contra Hegel for Bataille is clear. In Hegel, for Bataille, experience is present as completion and thus both as finality and closure. The response to Sørensen therefore necessitates a turn – albeit brief and schematic – to Bataille's engagement with Hegel, specifically in Bataille's *L'expérience intérieure*.

2. Bataille devotes a number of pages to Hegel in *L'expérience intérieure*. The pages on Hegel come after an engagement with Descartes and before the departure named *L'extase*. That departure is perfectly situated. Hegel figures. And yet, if it weren't in fact Hegel, if in fact Hegel were something other, such possibilities still create tensions. The question of what is living in Hegel refuses to die. A certain project is still open. Not stilled in the open but there continuing as open. Hegel is not a corpse whose continual reanimation – brought back to life by moments of almost pure invention – is a concern for Bataille. On the contrary, Hegel holds a fundamental place within what might be described as a particular configuration of *the logic of exhaustion*. The limit of closure and the possibility of self-enclosed finality, in other words that which figures within the already determined subject, is the subject as exhausted. Indeed, it is the place in which exhaustion and inexhaustibility combine within a creative and generative intrication that marks the possibility of Bataille's departure from Hegel and thus a move away from what will become the neo-liberal subject. That point of connection between exhaustion and inexhaustibility, the known and the unknown is mirrored in the opening lines of the section on Hegel in Bataille's *L'expérience intérieure*. Bataille writes:

*Connaitre veut dire: rapporter au connu, saisir qu'une chose inconnue est la même chose qu'une connue.* (To know means: to relate to the known, to grasp that an unknown thing is the same thing as known thing.) (Bataille 1973: 127)

In Bataille, the logic of exhaustion and thus the possible affirmation of inexhaustibility is there in the reiterated presence of a specific modality of negation that holds the inescapability of production: in sum, the presence of negation as

a productive negativity. The negation that resists its own sublation. What is being distanced from therefore is a thinking of negation which, despite their differences, runs at least from Aristotle to Hegel and in which forms of exclusion or culmination are constrained to figure. The distancing and the inscription of production is a possibility that is there in the opening line; though it is there only as a hint. There is a confluence, in the sense of grasping or seizing that the line suggested is itself postponed, such that rather than the 'known' circumventing what there is and thus becoming the limit condition, it yields an opening. An opening that occurs at the limit, at the limiting of the known as a structure that forecloses. At the limit, what continues to insist is the unknown. Philological attention is necessary. The relation between the '*connu*' (known) and the '*inconnu*' (unknown) is carried by the prefix '*in*' (un). The prefix need not be literally present. Note that when Bataille suggests, again in the opening of the section under consideration that: "*La chaîne sans fin des choses connues n'est pour la connaissance que l'achèvement de soi-même*" ("The chain without end of things known is for knowledge the achievement of itself") the satisfaction that this might introduce ends (Bataille 1973: 127). To cite Bataille "*le caractère insatisfaisant du savoir*" would take over (Bataille 1973: 127). (Note again the reiterated presence of 'in'; again a negation refusing its own negation. The language of negation as negation's own marks of resistance.) The sign of inexhaustibility. An overlap occurs. There is the now even tenser imbrication of *l'achèvement* and *l'inachèvement*. The tension that holds open, that resists an end becomes the subject.

These few pages of Bataille's *L'expérience intérieure* have their own sense of continuity. At the limit of knowledge, what appears is the possibility of 'absolute knowledge'. To engage the subject who claims, if only to be that subject for a moment, and thus to avoid the slide into a form of mastery, Bataille proposes a mimetic relation. He proposes the miming of absolute knowledge. If only to ask: what then? The answer is that the subject will have become God. It is important to add that this God sees the all as the all. It is the God therefore for whom there can be no night. Neither blindness nor fallibility could obtain. However, once the subject becomes equated with 'absolute knowledge', even in the process of miming, the subject then becomes 'unknowable'. Becoming God, the subject becomes undone. Bataille continues by suggesting that what cannot be excised from this subject is the presence of a question that occasions what he describes as "the deepest foray into darkness without return". This movement is the undoing of absolute knowledge that is inscribed into the project of absolute knowledge itself. The question for Bataille is the following: "*pourquoi faut-il qu'il y ait ce que je sais?*" ("Why must there be what I know?") This is the question posed to knowledge's own necessity, which, once posed as a question, for Bataille, shatters that necessity. It tears it. The question hides another truth. It tears open the completed and the finished. This is the subject of 'inner experience'. In Bataille's terms it hides "*une extrême déchirure*" ("an extreme rupture"). The use of the term *déchirure* is fundamental. Earlier in *L'expérience intérieure* Bataille writes of the Hegel who "*toucha l'extrême*" ("touched the extreme") (Bataille 1973: 56). And who then

recoiled from it. *Déchirement* is the French translation of the German *Zerrissenheit*. The latter is the term that figures in Hegel's presentation of the truth of subjectivity in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* – a truth that Bataille held as fundamental. Hegel wrote,

*Spirit only wins its truth when it finds itself within its absolute disruption. (Er gewinnt seine Wahrheit nur, indem er in der absoluten Zerrissenheit sich selbst findet).*<sup>1</sup>

Hegel's "*in der absoluten Zerrissenheit*" is of course a staging of what will reappear in Bataille as "*la voie extatique*" (the way of ecstasy). And yet Hegel, the Hegel who "touched (*toucha*) the extreme" – and it can be conjectured that the use of the past historic is important – becomes the Hegel of absolute knowledge (Bataille 1973: 56). Hence Hegel is positioned not just as God but as having to live with God's certainty. Moreover, he had to live it within the 'official world'. The world assured of its own certainty. The certainty of normativity understood as the naturalization of officialdom. Within this world that saddened Hegel, a world attended by the horror of becoming God, Hegel saw himself, and this is Bataille's conjecture, "*devenir mort*" ("becoming dead"). This aged Hegel had for Bataille the head of one 'exhausted' (*épuisé*). This fear is compounded by that which Hegel had touched. In this section Bataille writes of Hegel "*repugnant à la voie extatique*" ("recoiling from the way of ecstasy") (Bataille 1973: 129). The 'recoiling' is the same movement that has already been noted.

Bataille then moves from Hegel to the adoption of an almost autobiographical tone. And yet, though he writes "*mon existence*" ("my existence") what is at stake is selfhood and thus not a claim that is merely autobiographical (Bataille 1973: 129). If Hegel's position develops into a claim about the truth of subjectivity, and a truth that is discovered in the process of living, then Bataille, as a commentary on this position, can write "*mon existence*" with the same force. Bataille, too, can write the history of consciousness. Within that existence, knowledge – the known – is there integral to his being; however, and the addition is crucial, "*cette existence ne lui est pas réductible*" ("this existence is not reducible to it") (Bataille 1973: 129). There is a space and thus a founding irreducibility that is maintained at the outset. It is the spacing at the centre that, while allowing for knowledge, will always pre-empt the possibility of closure. The history of consciousness would not therefore be the movement towards identity and finality – the I=I of absolute self-consciousness – but of the necessity of undoing, thus exhaustion's impossibility, the continuity of the ecstatic. The question that has to be addressed is how does Bataille present that which is there as the necessity of a founding irreducibility. The answer to this question is addressed in the next few paragraphs of this section of the book.

1 In this regard see the detailed engagement of Bataille with Hegel and the discussion of this passage from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*; see his *Hegel, la mort et le sacrifice* in Bataille 1988.



3. The answer hinges on what Bataille locates in the understanding, namely “*une tache aveugle*” (a blind spot) (Bataille 1973: 130). It is not a contingent addition. On the contrary, it is a constitutive element. The understanding therefore contains that which makes both its unity and self-enclosure impossible. The original irreducibility is thought – at last at the outset – in terms of the language of optics and thus of blindness and insight. It is within this setting that references to ‘blindness’ have to be understood. The night beckons at the centre of the day and thus of the centre of light. The ‘blind spot’ demands attention precisely because it works within and against the understanding – one with the other. And yet, showing, knowing, that which refuses both sight and location, whose being therefore refuses and resists its absorption in taking on the quality of the unknown, becomes that which absorbs. The unknown draws in, its refusal to satisfy, its own insufficiency lingers on as the form as much of desire as anxiety. It fascinates the understanding without allowing for its own cancellation. In Bataille’s terms, “knowledge loses itself in it”. While there is a form of closure, that closure is closure’s own impossibility. Note Bataille:

*L'existence de cette façon ferme le cercle, mais elle ne l'a pu sans inclure la nuit d'où elle ne sort que pour y rentrer. Comme elle allait de l'inconnu au connu, il lui faut s'inverser au sommet et revenir à l'inconnu.* (This form of existence closes the circle, but it would not be able to do it without including the night from which it comes if only to return there. As it went from the unknown to the known it has to turn around at the summit and return to the unknown.) (Bataille 1973: 129)

Acting is linked to the known (*connu*) – understanding linked the known to the unknown. As Bataille writes, existence “in the end discloses the blind spot of the understanding and right away becomes absorbed by it”. There is continuity but not the continuity of that which is always regulated. The continuity of officialdom. Continuity is there as ‘agitation’. Here there is the moment in which exhaustion and the inexhaustible overlap. What therefore comes to the fore is the moment in which ‘ecstasy’ in refusing exhaustion – because it is a way rather than an end state – allows for beginnings. Bataille’s formulation is prescient here. He writes of this agitation that it “*ne s'épuise pas dans l'extase et recommence à partir d'elle*” (“does not exhaust itself in ecstasy and starts again from it”) (Bataille 1973: 130). This act of starting again is the moment in which inexhaustibility continues to be signalled. It is thus that for Bataille ‘poetry’ and ‘laughter’ cannot be absorbed into the logic of calculation. Hegel’s fatigue – thus his presence as exhausted – is linked to the blind spot. Bataille writes: “*L'achèvement du cercle était pour Hegel l'achèvement de l'homme*”. (The completion of the circle is the completion of man) (Bataille 1973: 130). A possibility that is undone by that which in refusing any satisfaction maintains *L'inachèvement*. *L'inachèvement* is always there. It continues to attend. What continues therefore is the continual opening beyond that always already regulated, the completed-by-its-having-been-regulated-in-advance. The project of human being resists project by the co-presence of the yet-to-be-completed.

The question is to which extent this conception of subjectivity is “part of the neo-liberal world order”?

On one level it is possible to argue that holding to the primacy of *l'inachèvement* may lead to a conception of desire that is linked to the project of commodification that both marks capitalism and positions subjects within the neo-liberal world order. And yet Bataille insists on the ineliminability of the incomplete. The *non-savoir* – and thus contrary to the ‘project’ of philosophy – does not allow itself to be negated. There is the continual opening sustained by what can be called the continuous presence of forms of productive negativity. What this opens up is not the ‘apolitical’ – though it could if *l'inachèvement* was just thought in relation to the commodity form – but the identification of a conception of life as a series of interrelated continuous processes, in which the opposition between need and desire was itself undone in the name of a set of needs that were orientated by the prolongation of life. That prolongation would then have the name of the political. In other words, while there is an ambivalence in the conception of subjectivity at work in Bataille – and it might be conjectured that it is there at the heart of subjectivity itself – that ambivalence is the locus of a decision. The decision is not between the apolitical and the political. Rather it is between the affirmation of capitalism as opposed to the affirmation of life.

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## Endrju Bendžamin

### Serensenov Bataj: Beleške o 'apolitičnom'

#### Apstrakt:

U *Kapitalizmu, otuđenju i kritici*, deo razvoja celokupne argumentacije Asgera Serensena predstavlja neslaganje sa Žoržom Batajem. Srž argumenta je da je Batajevo mišljenje – a naročito njegovo shvatanje subjektivnosti – 'apolitično'. Cilj ovog rada je da ispita snagu ovog argumenta. Šta znači kada kažemo da je neka pozicija – čak i filozofska – 'apolitična'?

Ključne reči: Bataj, apolitično, Hegel, ekonomija, subjektivnost

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Tong Shijun

## DIALECTICS AS IMMANENT CRITIQUE. OR, DIALECTICS AS BOTH ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY WITH A PRACTICAL INTENTION

**ABSTRACT**

This response to Asger Sørensen's paper *From Ontology to Epistemology: Tong, Mao and Hegel* is made on the basis of a reflection on the author's intellectual development with special reference to the idea of 'dialectics'. This development is mainly composed of three periods, in which the author formed his strong antipathy toward dialectics as a mere tool of power (in the 1970s), learnt to understand the importance of 'dialogical logic' in providing conceptual tools for human knowledge of a type of reality which is both objective and subjective – human practices (in the 1980s) – and attempted to understand the 'dialectics of rationalization' by integrating 'dialectics' in the Western tradition of Critical Theory with the Chinese tradition of 'dialectics' systematically interpreted by Feng Qi (1915-1995) since the 1990s.

**KEYWORDS**

dialectics, ontology, epistemology, Mao, Hegel, critical theory

At first I was both surprised and flattered to see my name placed alongside the names of Mao and Hegel in the title of Asger Sørensen's paper *From Ontology to Epistemology: Tong, Mao and Hegel*<sup>1</sup>, in which he criticized my conception of dialectics as a case of the conception of dialectics found in the tradition "from Dao to Mao", which is, in his view, not only different from but also inferior to the conception of dialectics he himself inherits from, among others, Hegel. And then, after reading the whole paper, I was both guilty and grateful. I am guilty for the fact that the author probably does not know sufficiently the relevant work done by professional Chinese philosophers, especially in the last decades, and for this fact I am at least partly to blame, since I have not done enough to inform the author who has been my great friend

1 Cf. Asger Sørensen, "From Ontology to Epistemology: Tong, Mao and Hegel", in Sørensen 2019: 157–178.

for many years since we met for the first time in May of 2007 in Prague. But I am also grateful to him for giving me the opportunity to know more about the contemporary relevance of an old philosophical concept like ‘dialectics’, and to make more reflections upon my understanding of the meaning of this concept and its broader implications.

## 1.

It is both true and false, or, to put it in a less ‘dialectical’ way, it is half right and half wrong when Asger Sørensen said that “Tong was formed intellectually during the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s, i.e. through the thoughts of Mao Zedong” (Sørensen 2019: 158).

On the one hand, I went through the whole process of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) first as a school pupil, and then as a state-owned farm worker. When I was a middle-school boy from 1970 to 1975 I was taught to criticize our teachers, and to criticize a teacher of mine, for example, for being ‘idealist’ (versus materialist) because he encouraged us to repeatedly read classical texts so that a ‘sudden enlightenment’ would finally come. At that time we were also asked to criticize our ancestors, to criticize Confucius, for example, for being ‘ill-minded’ in making the otherwise totally innocent remark that he was going to teach his pupils four subjects: letters, ethics, devotion of soul, and truthfulness. During the period in which I was a state-owned farm worker from 1975 to 1978, I spent four and a half months from late 1975 to early 1976 as a member of a ‘training class for workers, peasants and soldiers’ sponsored by the municipality authority of Shanghai, which was close to the so-called ‘Gang of Four’ headed by Mao’s wife. In this training class our task was to prepare and then deliver a course on Marxist philosophy over radio and TV under the guidance of a group of professional philosophers who were then not politically trusted enough to be allowed to teach the course themselves. And then came a fact that provides the strongest support for Sørensen’s view of my intellectual socialization – in early 1976, when I was 17 years old, I was giving a radio lecture and a television lecture on the same subject of “the law of the unity of opposites”, which is the first law of the dialectical materialism, with a quotation from Chairman Mao as the title: *The Philosophy of the Communist Party is the Philosophy of the Struggle*.

On the other hand, I started my formal study of philosophy after I entered East China Normal University (ECNU) in the spring of 1978, at the age of 19, as one of the first college students after the national college entrance examination was resumed as a result of the stopping of the so-called ‘Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution’ in October 1976, symbolized by Mao’s wife’s arrest less than one month after the death of Mao, who not only launched the ‘Cultural Revolution’ personally but also took it as one of his two major life achievements, the other one being the overthrowing of the Nationalist Party and the establishing of the People’s Republic of China. That is to say, although it is largely true that I “was formed intellectually during the Cultural Revolution in the

1970s, i.e. through the thoughts of Mao Zedong”, it is equally true that I was educated philosophically in the post-Cultural Revolution period first by the thoughts sharply critical of Mao, when I was an undergraduate and graduate student in China from 1978 to 1984, and then by the thoughts that had hardly anything to do with Mao, when I was a doctoral student and a visiting scholar in Europe and America as well as a university lecturer/professor whose major task is to teach courses on Western philosophy, including the tradition of the so-called Western Marxism, from 1985 on.

## 2.

At ECNU my major teacher was Feng Qi (1915-1995), one of the most important Chinese philosophers of the 20th century. Among his philosophical achievements, a book titled *Dialectics of Logical Thinking* and a three-volume book titled *The Logical Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy* are most relevant to the topic discussed here.

Feng went to Yan’an, the base area of the Chinese Communist Party where Mao stayed together with the headquarters of the Party in September 1937, after he was admitted to Tsinghua University, one of the top two universities in China then as well as now, in order to take part in the struggle against the Japanese invasion. He not only met Mao in Yan’an but also was deeply impressed and inspired by Mao’s speeches and writings of that period. In July 1939 Feng Qi left Yan’an for Kunming, where Tsinghua had been merged with Peking University and Nankai University into the legendary Southwest United University. In that war-time university Feng resumed his undergraduate education, which was then followed by his graduate education under the guidance of the three arguably best professional philosophers of China in the 20th century, Jin Yuelin (1895-1984), Feng Youlan (1895-1990) and Tang Yongtong (1893-1964). To make a long story short: Feng Qi was not only a well-trained professional philosopher with a solid knowledge of Mao’s thought, he was also a philosopher who managed to construct his own philosophical system after the Cultural Revolution on the basis of his deeply critical reflection on the intellectual and cultural roots of the ‘Revolution’, including the philosophical tradition of China “from Dao to Mao”, in Sørensen’s words.

According to Feng Qi, dialectics should be understood from a perspective integrating ontology, epistemology and logic. For this view he argued by referring to Lenin’s remarks in his *Philosophical Notebooks*, which was highly regarded by philosophers of Feng Qi’s times as an authoritative resource for developing or introducing interesting ideas that could not be found in the official textbooks of Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism that can be traced back to the version confirmed by Stalin in 1930s. It is true that Feng Qi, in a way that is typical for Chinese philosophers of his age, talked a lot of ‘objective dialectics’, referring to the objective world as a totality of dialectical developments of things of all kinds. But he, unlike other Chinese philosophers at that time, paid much more attention to epistemology (he called his

philosophical system one of “epistemology in the broader sense”), and regarded dialectics as a kind of logic that is developed on the basis of, rather than in opposition to, formal logic. And dialectical logic in this sense is also understood as the summing-up of the development of human thinking. His book *Dialectics of Logical Thinking* was not formally published until 1996 (Feng Qi 1996), as the second volume of his *Three Treatises on Wisdom*, one year after he passed away, but it was one of our major textbooks in mimeograph when I was an MA student from 1982 to 1984, and was widely circulated and frequently referred to among philosophers in and outside of Shanghai at that time. The book was composed of two parts, and we at that time compared its first part to Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, since it is about the dialectics of “the process of logical thinking”, and compared its second part to Hegel’s *Logic*, since it is about the dialectics of “the form of logical thinking”. Here is the English abstract that I wrote for the book when it was published in 1996 by the ECNU Press:

According to the author, dialectics is inherent in our logical thinking (including what he called ‘ordinary logical thinking’), and undergoes a process from a relatively spontaneous stage to a relatively self-conscious or self-reflexive one. The task he set for himself is to make reflections on the process and to inquire systematically into the forms of logical thinking which has reached the self-conscious stage (its categories and laws) and into its methods. (Feng Qi 1996: 5–6)

As a disciple of Jin Yuelin, who happens to be the founding father of the academic discipline of modern logic in China, Feng sharply criticized those who opposed dialectical logic to formal logic, and argued for the former’s consistency with, though superiority over, the latter. In my book *Dialectics of Modernization*, I presented Feng Qi’s view of dialectical logic in this way:

As a logic, dialectical logic is similar to formal logic in that its object of research are also forms of thought. The difference between these two kinds of logic consists in the fact that, unlike formal logic, dialectical logic discusses those forms of thought which are closely connected with the dialectical contents of thought [...]. The forms of thought which dialectical logic deals with are what Kant called ‘categories’, such as ‘quantity’, ‘quality’, ‘measure’, ‘causality’, ‘interaction’, ‘necessity’, ‘contingency’, ‘freedom’ and so on. These categories are forms of thought in the sense that they are used as the condition of thinking (or ‘the form’, in the terminology of Greek philosophy) to organize the cognitive materials such as sense-perceptions and unorganized statements (or ‘the matter’) into a statement or a system of statements. (Tong 2000: 123)

While Hegel regarded his system of dialectical logic as a systematic summing-up of the concepts or categories developed in the history of Western philosophy, Feng Qi tried to find a parallel between his study of dialectical logic and his study of the history of Chinese philosophy. We, Feng Qi’s students in the 1980s, therefore, compared his *Logical Development of Ancient Chinese Philosophy* to Hegel’s *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. I once presented Feng Qi’s view of the Chinese tradition of dialectical logic as follows:

According to Feng Qi, the categories studied by ancient Chinese philosophers include three groups: categories about 'class' (*lei*), categories about 'cause' (*gu*), and categories about 'principle' (*li*). [...] In the terminology of modern philosophy, the categories of the 'class' are 'identity-difference', 'quantity-quality', 'universal-particular' and so on; the categories of 'cause' are 'cause-effect', 'essence-phenomenon', 'form-content', 'substance-function', and so on; and the categories of 'principle' are 'reality-possibility-necessity', 'necessity-contingency-freedom', 'necessary law-prescriptive rule', and so on. These categories were all discussed by Chinese philosophers in a more or less explicit way as the conditions of dialectical thinking. Understood in terms of modern philosophy, these three groups of categories are connected with both the knowing activities and the known objects. In terms of the known objects, the first group is mainly related to the direct being of objects; the second to the grounds for them; and the third to the tendency and goal of the development of these objects. In terms of the knowing activities, the first group is mainly used in the stage of discrimination and description, the second in the stage of explanation and understanding, and the third in the stage of prediction and planning. Roughly speaking, these three groups of categories are parallel to three parts of Hegel's Logic: 'Being', 'Essence' and 'Idea'. In the history of Chinese philosophy, philosophers before the Qin dynasty contributed mainly to the study of the first group of categories, philosophers from the Qin and Han dynasties to the Sui and Tang dynasties contributed mainly to the study of the second group of categories, and philosophers from the Song and Ming dynasties on contributed mainly to the study of the third group of categories. (Tong 2000: 123–124)

Understanding dialectics as dialectical logic in the above sense, Feng Qi emphasized the philosophical importance of Mao's *On Protracted War* (1938) as well as Mao's *On Contradiction* and *On Practice* (1937), two books mentioned by Sørensen in his paper. In *On Protracted War*, according to Feng, Mao applied the law of the unity of opposites as the method of connecting analysis with synthesis, and he applied this method to criticize both those who yielded to "national subjugation" and those who expected "quick victory" – two opinions widely spreading in China when the War started – and to prove that the war, though a protracted one, must be won by the Chinese people. Here is what we may call Feng's 'rational reconstruction' of Mao's reasoning in that book, which includes the following three sections:

First, one should proceed from reality and objectivity, and comprehensively investigate the current situation and its history, in order to grasp the basis for further change and development. This basis is grasped as a result of investigating the original and fundamental relations of an object. The basis grasped in *On Protracted War*, for example, is determined by all fundamental elements that respectively belong to the Chinese side and to the Japanese side, and which contradict each other. Mao points out, in terms of military, economic, and political forces, that the enemy is stronger than us; in terms of the nature of the war, our war is a progressive and just one, while the enemy's is a backward and uncivilized one. In addition, compared with the enemy, we have greater territory, richer natural resources, a larger population, more soldiers, and stronger international support. Considering all these facts, the basis is formed for the prediction that the war will be a protracted one and the last victory will be won by China.

Second, one should point out various possibilities of development and disclose its necessary tendency through one's analysis of contradictions [...]. In *On Protracted War*, Mao discusses in detail how the contradictions between China and Japan will evolve, points out that there are two possibilities of the development of the war, national subjugation or liberation, of which the possibility of national liberation through a protracted war is a superior one. Mao remarks that war is a competition between the characteristics of the warring sides, and the contradictory movement of the war will proceed from the initial disequilibrium (the enemy is stronger than us) to equilibrium (both sides are locked in a stalemate) and in turn to a new disequilibrium (the enemy is weaker than us). The war, therefore, can accordingly be divided into three stages: on the part of China, the war will proceed from the stage of strategic defense through the stage of strategic stalemate to the stage of strategic counteroffensive. Mao concludes, 'This is the natural logic of war'.

Third, one should make it clear how the condition can be brought forth for the possibility favorable to the people to be realized and the revolutionary goal to be reached. The topic of the second half of *On Protracted War* is just 'how to do', namely, how the Chinese people should create conditions according to the law of war and how a plan should be made on the basis of this law, so as to win the last victory of the war and to reach the goal, namely, 'to drive out Japanese imperialism and build a new China with freedom and equality'. This requires that the people act on their conscious initiative, combined with natural logic, and a subjective endeavor to conduct political mobilization and make correct strategies and tactics in the war. Mao says, 'A possible change implied by the objective elements can be realized only if our politics are correct and our subjective attempts are made. At this moment, the subjective role is a decisive one'. (Feng Qi 1996: 657–658)

From the above presentation of Feng Qi's conception of dialectics and his interpretation of Mao's conception of dialectics, it should be clear that dialectics in Feng Qi's mind is important first of all because it is a method or a logic instead of an ontology, and it is different from formal logic not by ignoring the rules of formal logic, but by the fact that in dialectical logic 'forms of thought' are composed not of 'variables' but of 'categories'. Moreover, although the validity of dialectical logic in this sense depends on its status as a 'reflection' of the objective reality as well as the summing-up of the history of the human thinking, it should not be regarded as a passive reflection of the objective reality, not even a passive reflection of the dynamic development of the objective reality outside of human practices. On the contrary, the core of dialectical logic is to regard the objective reality as a totality of conflicting potentials or possibilities, whose meanings, directions and relations with each other are to be judged by relevant human beings with their practical interests and activities; and the value of the dialogical logic thus lies nowhere else but in providing conceptual tools for human knowledge of a type of reality which is both objective and subjective: human practices. Dialectics, in short, can be, and should be, both ontological and epistemological.



### 3.

After I finished my MA study with a thesis on ‘problem’ as an epistemological concept under the guidance of Feng Qi, I became a lecturer of philosophy at ECNU towards the end of 1984, teaching both Marxist philosophy and (non-Marxist) Western philosophy. In 1988 I was given a chance to spend one year at the University of Bergen, Norway, as a visiting scholar with Professor Gunnar Skirbekk. In the summer of 1989 I was accepted as a doctoral student there after I presented a paper titled *A Comparative Study of Popper’s and Habermas’ Conceptions of Rationality*, with Skirbekk as my major supervisor. In June 1994, I successfully defended my dissertation, on the basis of which the above mentioned book titled *Dialectics of Modernization: Habermas and the Chinese Discourse of Modernization* was published. In the introduction to this book I explained why I used the term dialectics in the title. In addition to using this term to express the classical meaning of argumentative dialogue, I used this term for the following two considerations:

On the one hand, modernization, like ‘Enlightenment’ in the minds of Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, is a process full of conflicts and contradictions. Habermas’s theory of modernity and modernization is a new reinterpretation of the ‘dialectic of modernization’, or, more generally, of the ‘dialectics of Enlightenment’. On the other hand, China has a rich tradition of dialectical thinking, and this tradition, as I will try to prove, can make positive contributions to a balanced and sound conception of modernization. (Tong 2000: 4)

At this stage, I venture to say, I attempted to integrate ‘dialectics’ in the tradition of Critical Theory in the West with ‘dialectics’ as interpreted by Feng Qi in China. Maybe this attempt did not succeed, as Sørensen’s paper seems to show, but my intention was to be engaged in a kind of ‘immanent critique’ with the help of the Chinese tradition of dialectical logic, with its most important legacies being the pair of concepts ‘*ti*’ and ‘*yong*’. Here are some relevant passages from a paper of mine summarizing the main arguments of *Dialectics of Modernization*:

Literally meaning ‘body’ and ‘use’, *ti* and *yong*, as philosophical categories, also mean ‘ground’ and ‘manifestation’. Closely related to these two categories are *Dao* and *Qi* literally meaning instrument. In traditional Chinese philosophy, corresponding to the understanding of *ti* and *yong* as ground and manifestation, there is a tradition regarding *dao* as *ti* and *qi* as *yong* or the tradition of *daoti qiyong*; corresponding to the understanding of *ti* and *yong* as body and use, there is a tradition of regarding *qi* as *ti* and *dao* as *yong* or the tradition of *qiti daoyong*. A major characteristic of traditional Chinese philosophy is a wide consensus among Chinese philosophers that *ti* or *dao* is inseparably connected with, even identical to, *yong* or *qi*.

These categories entered the Chinese discourse of modernity when a group of Qing officials, the so-called *yangwupai* (Westernizers) advocated the thesis of ‘Chinese learning as *ti* or substance and Western learning as *yong* or function’ in the second half of the 19th century. Within this thesis of ‘Chinese-*ti* with

Western-*yong*' the categories themselves underwent a fundamental change: the emphasis now is turned from 'the nature of things' to 'the nature of cultures'. *Ti* and *yong* were separate in objective embodiments and fused only in mind. And the relation between *ti* and *yong* was not only the relation between ground and manifestation and that between body and use. It was also the relation between what is regarded as a value in itself and what is regarded as an instrument in service of the value. (Tong 2001: 82)

I have to skip the complex discussions involved and go to the conclusion I derived from these discussions:

Though regarded as being decidedly refuted by reformist criticisms, the thesis of Chinese *ti* with Western-*yong*, especially the question it posed about the relation between value and instrument and that between tradition and modernity, greatly influenced the later development of the Chinese discourse of modernity. Because these two modern problems were posed in a pair of important categories in traditional Chinese philosophy, it became possible for the Chinese to think about these problems with the help of a philosophical tradition which is long, rich, and itself in the process of modernization in this century. The key point is to understand the relation between value and instrument and that between tradition and modernity in such a way that these relations are at the same time also the relation between ground and manifestation – their relations are thus not external, but internal. Different attempts to accomplish this made by thinkers from Liang Qichao and Liang Shuming to Mo Zongsan and Li Zehou have been a major part of the Chinese discourse of modernity in the last century. (Tong 2001: 83–84)

I would not claim that my efforts to bring the Chinese tradition of dialectical thinking in terms of categories like *ti* and *yong* to the 'discourse of modernity' in our times are perfectly fruitful, but I do think it's worthwhile to explore this kind of national tradition to advance the critical theoretical course of immanent critique of modern society at the international or cross-cultural level. One important lesson I have learned from the tradition of Critical Theory with which I started to identify self-consciously during my first trip to Norway or to any country outside of China, is that the core of dialectics is the idea of 'immanent critique'.

I agree with Sørensen in arguing for "the predominance of theory over practice" (Sørensen 2019: 170) with regard to dialectics; but I want to argue for a conception of dialectics as a theory or as something epistemologically and methodologically important "with a practical intention", in Habermas's words (Habermas 1973: 1). That is to say, when I need to use the term 'dialectics' I am willing to give the so-called 'objective dialectics' or the so-called 'dialectics as ontology' an even more marginal place than Feng Qi would be willing to give: when we apply dialectical logic in studying various possibilities in reality and their relationships with each other, it is our practical concerns with these possibilities and their relations with others, rather than these possibilities and relations alone, that are of crucial importance. It is to a large degree our practical concerns that are the sources of values and standards by which we make our judgments about those possibilities and relations; and these practical concerns or 'human interests' very often also function as the basis or courses for changes

in reality: in it some possibilities are realized, some are ruled out, and some are turned into other possibilities, and so on, as a result of human involvement in reality through human practices. In this sense, although I agree with my teacher in comparing Mao's *On Protracted War* to Marx's *Das Kapital* as successful cases of the application of dialectical logic, I would argue that Mao's book seems to be closer to the application of dialectics in the above sense than Marx's book, since in *Das Kapital* the development of capitalism is understood both as a dialectical process and a natural one, which is quite close to Engels's controversial idea of 'dialectics of nature'. Saying this, however, does not mean that I support the idea of dialectics as something purely epistemological versus something purely ontological, again in Sørensen's words. In our application of dialectics in knowing reality, in my view, we should take reality seriously in the first place. A major reason why dialectics could degenerate into sophistry is that one ignores the rigid constraints of reality when one is applying dialectics to reality. Typically, for example, if in a Chinese movie you see somebody speaking in a meeting room of the importance of seeing things 'dialectically', he or she is most probably the most important person in the meeting. Dialectics is supposed to be demanding one to think 'both ways', or to avoid either being 'too much this' or being 'too much that', so it somehow would sound strange for a person who is not in the highest position in the room to speak this way. A tacit consensus in those circles where 'dialectics' is frequently used seems to be that only those in higher positions can decide for those in lower positions at *what* point one is 'dialectical', hence 'correct', or beyond *what* point one is 'metaphysical' (meaning anti-dialectical), hence 'wrong'. This is, in my view, the worst side of the version of dialectics that I was familiar with during the period of my intellectual formation: dialectics as a mere tool of power. One of the most important achievements of learning from the period when I was formed intellectually is my strong antipathy towards dialectics of this type.

But we should not give up dialectics as such just because it can take a form that is actually against the true spirit of dialectics, about which we can learn from Marx when he says that dialectics "is in its essence critical and revolutionary" (Marx, Engels 2004: 20), and we can also learn from Adorno when he says that "Dialectic's very procedure is immanent critique" (Adorno 1983: 5). Dialectics understood as 'immanent critique', in my view, is one of the major ideas of the tradition of Critical Theory, if not *the* major idea of this tradition. Adorno explained the meaning of 'immanent critique' in his study on Husserl and phenomenology: "It does not so much oppose phenomenology with a position or 'model' external and alien to phenomenology, as it pushes the phenomenological model, with the latter's own force, to where the latter cannot afford to go. Dialectic exacts the truth from it through the confession of its own untruth" (Adorno 1983: 5). To support this conception of dialectics Adorno then quotes Hegel: "Genuine refutation must penetrate the power of the opponent and meet him on the ground of his strength; the case is not won by attacking him somewhere else and defeating him where he is not" (Adorno 1983: 5). Here Adorno, or Hegel for that matter, seems to understand 'immanent critique' only with

regard to one's debating opponent. By comparison, Marcuse's understanding of dialectics in his *One-Dimensional Man* seems to be closer to dialectics in my mind as a key idea in the tradition of Critical Theory from Marx to Habermas: "If dialectical logic understands contradiction as 'necessity' belonging to the very 'nature of thought' (*Natur der Denkbestimmungen*), it does so because contradiction belongs to the very nature of the object of thought, to reality, where Reason is still Unreason, and the irrational still the rational" (Marcuse 1991: 146).

What Marcuse said here seems to me to be close to what Marx said in 1843 in a letter to Arnold Ruge: "*Die Vernunft hat immer existiert, nur nicht immer in der vernünftigen Form*" (Marx, Engels 1981: 345). Interestingly enough, this German sentence can be translated into English in two forms. In one English translation, the German phrase "in der vernünftigen Form" is rendered as "in a reasonable form" (Marx, Engels 2010: 143). In another English translation, it is rendered as "in a rational form" (Marx 2000: 44). The whole enterprise of the tradition of Critical Theory, in my view, is based on the assumption that reason has always existed, but it has not always existed in a rational or reasonable way. Considering the later developments of the tradition of Critical Theory at the stage of Habermas, whose idea of 'communicative rationality' is closer to 'reasonableness' than to 'rationality' in John Rawls' discussion of 'reasonableness' versus 'rationality' (Rawls 1993: 50), we can find quite rich contents in the conception of dialectics as immanent critique of reason embodied in various forms in the social and historical reality.

One point that is very important but not mentioned above is that dialectics as dialectical logic must be dialectical in the classical sense – or in its modern form of critical and argumentative communication – if we want to distance ourselves from those movie figures who talk about dialectics that I mentioned above. And that is one of the major points that attracted me very much when my Norwegian professor introduced me to Jürgen Habermas's work. Although Habermas talked about the "dialectic of rationalization" in a way that would remind one of his Frankfurt School predecessors' notion of "dialectic of enlightenment" (Habermas 1984: 380), that is, as a critical description of the one-sided process of modernization as rationalization, his critical theory of communicative rationality as a whole, in my view, is based on the conception of dialectics not only as immanent critique or "transcendence from within" (Habermas 1995: 146), but also as a theory with human interests in "changing the world" by means of discursively "interpreting the world", to use two phrases in a famous remark by Karl Marx. That's at least my understanding of the title of an interview with Habermas right after he finished his *magnum opus*, which happens to be the same as the title of a paper by Habermas published as early as in 1954, that is: "dialectics of rationalization" (Honneth, Knödler-Bunte, Widmann 1981; Habermas 1954).

What Asger Sørensen presents to me is indeed a very important question, which I take gratefully as a generous, though antagonistic, gift from my great Danish friend (Sørensen 2019: 159). I know that this question deserves a reply based on a more careful reading of his new book as a whole, among others. But unfortunately, what is said above is all I can possibly say for the time being.

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## Tong Šidun

### Dijalektika kao imanentna kritika. Ili, dijalektika kao ontologija i epistemologija s praktičnom intencijom

#### Apstrakt:

Ovaj odgovor na poglavlje Asgera Sørensen'sa *Od ontologije do epistemologije: Tong, Mao i Hegel* je formulisan na temelju refleksije o autorovom intelektualnom razvoju sa posebnim osvrtom na ideju 'dijalektike'. Ovaj razvoj se sastoji iz tri perioda, u kojima je autor razvio jaku antipatiju prema dijalektici kao jednostavnoj alatki moći (u 1970-im), i razumeo značaj 'dijaloške logike' u pružanju pojmovnih oruđa za ljudsko spoznavanje one vrste realnosti koja je istovremeno objektivna i subjektivna – ljudskih praksi (u 1980-im) – i pokušao da razume 'dijalektiku racionalizacije' integrišući 'dijalektiku' iz zapadne tradicije kritičke teorije sa kineskom tradicijom 'dijalektike' sistematski interpretiranom u delima Feng Čija (1915-1995) u 1990-im.

Ključne reči: dijalektika, ontologija, epistemologija, Mao, Hegel, kritička teorija

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Asger Sørensen

## CLASSICAL CRITICAL THEORY, EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIALECTICS AND GENERAL ECONOMY. REPLY TO CRITICISM RAISED IN BELGRADE AND SHANGHAI

**ABSTRACT**

In my response, I initially defend my preference for classical Critical Theory, emphasizing its continued relevance in capitalist modernity, stressing that the epistemological approach does not imply dogmatism with regards to scientific theory or Historical Materialism, just as it does not imply closure with regards to political democracy. When it comes to the dialectics of the classics, I also defend an epistemological approach, arguing that the dialectics aiming for truth implies critique and negativity. However, confronted with the duality of transcendental ideas and historical relativity, I express my confidence in human intuition. Following Hegel, determinate negation must sublimate the intuitively conceived universality to a new conception that contains the result of the negation. Finally, I do not see how the conceptual aporias of general economy can be solved by the current political degrowth project. Still, politics is what we need more of, namely social democracy.

**KEYWORDS**

dialectics, capitalism, critical theory, epistemology, negation, general economy

It is a true privilege to have the possibility to think through one's arguments, express them in writing and have them published. Attempting to conceptualize intuitions about ideas and their realizations, it is an even greater privilege to have these arguments scrutinized by experts within one's own area of research. It is therefore with both gratitude and reverence that I take one more round with some of the main subjects that I discussed in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* (Sørensen 2019a). Even though academic arguments today seldom reach the public without having been reviewed and revised a number of times, and even though this is of course also the case with the book just mentioned, the critique that I received at the seminars in Belgrade and Shanghai, some of which we now have in writing, clearly tells me that there is still work to be done.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As I write these words in the middle of the 2020 pandemic, an era seems almost way past when we as philosophical intellectuals would meet regularly around the globe and

Presently, I will confront and try to answer some of the critical points in the comments above. They were originally raised at two seminars, that is, first by Marjan Ivković, Srđan Prodanović and Milan Urošević at the University of Belgrade at the institute that was established in the 1980s in former Yugoslavia for the legendary Praxis group, and later at the East China Normal University in Shanghai by Tong Shijun, David Rasmussen and Andrew Benjamin. To continue and improve on the line of thought that I have been pursuing in the book, in the following I will focus on some of the main issues raised. Of course, I cannot answer all the questions posed, even though they may be important, but I have tried to collect various comments under three headlines, namely Critical Theory, dialectics and political economy that are also the main pillars in the book presently discussed. The overall arguments therefore, to a large degree, reflect the fundamental line of thought in the book discussed, just as I will reuse references from the book. Nevertheless, I hope, thanks to the challenges posed by the good friends and colleagues just mentioned, to be able to think through a bit better some of my reasoning concerning the said issues.

Initially, I defend my preference for classical Critical Theory, emphasizing its continued relevance in capitalist modernity, stressing that the epistemological approach does not imply dogmatism with regards to scientific theory or Historical Materialism, just as it does not imply ignoring political democracy (A.). When it comes to the dialectics of the classics, I also defend an epistemological approach, arguing in particular that the dialectics aiming for truth implies critique, negativity and destruction, but that this may be interpreted ontologically to have positive implications for the realization of the full human being (B.). With such a position, apparently I get caught between transcendental ideas and historical relativity, thus recurring to a simple intuition when I criticize injustice and alienation – and this I admit, emphasizing my confidence in human intuition despite ideology (C.). Having stressed the negative character of dialectics, the question is of course where this negativity should be directed and, following Hegel, determinate negation must sublimate the intuitively conceived universality to a new conception that contains the result of the negation. Hence, determinate negation does not develop a critical theoretical analysis while preserving the original criticism (D.). Changing the scene, I do not see how the conceptual aporias of general economy can be solved by the current Degrowth project, which is political in the traditional sense in which the general economy is not (E.). Finally, I also defend my rather traditional idea

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discuss issues of common interest for the benefit of further inquiries. Allow me therefore to express my nostalgia for those days of scholarly enthusiasm and innocence and my gratitude to those good colleagues who contributed in this spirit to the said seminars in November 2019. In particular, I am grateful to those who afterwards formulated their concerns in writing, and whom I now hope to respond to in a satisfactory way. However, gratitude must also be extended to those close colleagues who initiated and organized these memorable events, thus instantiating this very old and venerable institution of inviting scholars to meet their critics in person for extended questioning, discussion and arguments about matters of common concern.

of politics against suggestions to reconceptualize the political, adding that precisely because of the present global challenges, traditional politics is what we need more of (F.). And this is where I come out of the closet as a social democrat, although maybe in a sense that may be difficult to recognize for those normally aligned with this agenda. I thus believe that to retain a viable idea of republican social democracy, we must retain both the principled critique of capitalism and the recognition of the sovereign desire for subjectivity (G.).

### **A. Classical Critical Theory is Relevant as Epistemology**

Capitalism can be criticized in many ways and for many reasons (Tormey 2013), and my point of departure is the combined experience of social injustice and alienation (Sørensen 2019a: 2). Defining the original position of Critical Theory, Max Horkheimer argued that, in a historical period as the present one, “the true theory must be critical rather than affirmative” (Horkheimer 1988b: 216; see also Sørensen 2019a: 11–12), and with this theoretical position, I can still concur. Furthermore, he famously placed himself in a double “front position” between the positivism and metaphysics of his era, and with this I also concur. Today, however, as I read my critics and as a practical addition, maybe I should rather position myself as confronting both Political Liberalism and Historical or Dialectical Materialism. In accordance with the former, I thus accept the challenge to spell out in greater detail the normative political project that the said criticism must presuppose and imply, but this project I would rather title social democracy than liberal democracy (Sørensen 2019a: 23). As to the latter, i.e. materialism, I also think that a comprehensive normative project must involve critical accounts of the real societal matter that prompts the project, and that the two main pillars of such accounts regarding method and content are, respectively, dialectics and economy.

What I pursue is both a normative grounding for social and political critique and a conceptual understanding of the dynamics and the logic of the political economy that bears responsibility for the societal pathologies thus criticized. The account that I am looking for is thus from the outset a critical account, it is a conceptual, structural and historical account rather than one of individual actions, and as I have been raised intellectually in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, such an account is best labeled a ‘critique of political economy’. This was the label chosen by Marx for his studies of the economy, and in most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such a critique was mostly conducted by various kinds of Marxists. Even though the Critical Theory of the 1930s did not focus much on economy, Marx’s critique of political economy was clearly presupposed in the critical social and political philosophy offered, and it is in this perspective that I consider myself a cultural Marxist (Sørensen 2019a: 4).

Now, as one of the grand old men of the contemporary Critical Theory community, Rasmussen has emphasized that in relation to traditional Marxism, classical Critical Theory represents an epistemological turn (Rasmussen 2004). This he reconfirmed at the Shanghai seminar (Rasmussen 2019: 5), just



as he recognizes my efforts in this direction. In the Kantian tradition, an epistemological turn implies taking seriously Humean skeptical arguments, but also attempting, through theory of knowledge (*Erkenntnistheorie*) or theory of science (*Wissenschaftstheorie*), to overcome such skepticism (Sørensen 2019: 24–26). Being thus committed to both social and epistemological critique, this implies that Critical Theory is committed to both justice and truth as criteria of validity, and that it recognizes a principled skepticism in relation to general claims about ideals and reality, when it comes to both politics and science, be that in theory or praxis.

This being the case, it is somehow puzzling that Rasmussen now finds it problematic to define Critical Theory at all in any “specific” sense. Consequently, this implies that even Horkheimer’s and Marcuse’s original definition of Critical Theory “was problematic from the very beginning”, and that, by implication, this is also the case with my endorsement of their conception as classical and thus worth taking seriously. Still, Rasmussen obviously himself presupposes a definition of Critical Theory, but rather than defining it in terms of epistemology, apparently it is conceived of in terms of sociology and cultural hermeneutics, namely as “we who have labored in” its “fields”, “a living tradition” that refer to some roots in Frankfurt am Main and “can be affirmed through its various manifestations”.

Within the epistemological framework, Horkheimer can be attributed the view that Critical Theory is “science” in the Hegelian sense, i.e. philosophy, but, as Rasmussen emphasizes, today, at least in the Anglo-sphere, the connotations of the word ‘science’ have changed radically. This displacement of meaning, however, seems to be forgotten, when he claims that Critical Theory is a “Marxist science”, and “as a science” it is grounded “in science”. Rasmussen thus seems to have succumbed to a categorical displacement from, at least, the epistemological ‘theory of science’ to a social ‘scientific theory’, which he then attributes to the founders of Critical Theory and criticizes as dogmatic and naive. An epistemological turn, however, does not mean that one has a specific scientific theory granting special access to truth; it is rather the exact opposite.

This displacement is also demonstrated with regards to the term ‘theory’. Interestingly, Rasmussen thus admits that he has for a long time been uneasy with the idea of ‘critical theory’ and even of ‘theory’ as such, finding them “too orthodox (...), too narrow”, preferring instead the alleged “openness” of “social criticism” (Rasmussen 2019: 5). Again, apparently he thus identifies the ‘theory’ of Critical Theory with an explanatory theory, as it can be encountered within normal social science. However, as I have argued at length referring to Kant, Carnap, Popper et al., theory of knowledge and theory of science are not explanatory theories of empirical causal processes; they are philosophical disciplines dedicated to understanding knowledge and truth in order to overcome abstract skepticism (Sørensen 2010). Hence, taking the notion of epistemology seriously, Critical Theory cannot be just another explanatory social scientific theory. It is precisely this traditional notion of scientific theory that Critical Theory explicitly criticizes.

When I claim that Critical Theory is “*the* singular theory of society”, it is in the same sense in which we have a theory of knowledge or theory of science, i.e. philosophical disciplines that delimit a certain part of philosophical issues. Theory in this sense does not attempt “to explain what [is] actually happening in society”, not even in terms of Marxian categories such as the forces and relations of production. At most, Critical Theory can be comprehensive and singular in the same sense that skepticism or realism are comprehensive and singular, namely as normative programs for how to relate to knowledge. When Rasmussen argues that Critical Theory should be “critique not theory” (Rasmussen 2019: 10), it is thus a false opposition.

Critical Theory is not a particular theory explaining, say, historical progress of society or the recurring economic crises of capitalism, or science as an institution, within the framework of Historical or Dialectical Materialism. Critical Theory is originally an epistemological critique concerning the possible truth of traditional theory fueled by the social and political critique expressed by the said materialisms. The “epistemological orientation” of Critical Theory does not mean that Horkheimer, or I, claim to possess “the one, true theory”; on the contrary, Critical Theory means being critical with regards to the truth claims of traditional theories that merely subsume and explain their objects under general theoretical concepts without considering critically and self-reflectively the societal aspect of scientific theorizing.

Furthermore, Critical Theory does not mean that theoretical and philosophical speculation should be abandoned, quite the opposite. Following Hegel, however, the full truth of a conceptual idea, say freedom or science, is only revealed in the realization of the concept, and this is why ideology critique is a hallmark of Critical Theory. The object of critique is the totality of capitalist society. In particular, when it comes to mainstream economics or classical political economy, their realization of economic freedom in the real societal totality of private property proves to be one of bondage, i.e. misery and unjust material living conditions. The realization of this material deficit, i.e. the resulting human suffering and harm, demonstrates that these theories of economy at best express a restricted truth of the matter in question, at worst that they are outright false, and this calls for a conceptual critique of the theories as ideology, such as it was conducted by Marx and Engels.<sup>2</sup>

Such a normative program for social science and social philosophy was what Horkheimer had in mind in the famous 1937 article. That is why he at first subsumed the research program of the legendary institute under the label ‘materialism’, but probably also why he abandoned it, thus creating a distance to the orthodox Marxist labels Historical and Dialectical Materialism. Regarding the former, classical Critical Theory represented an explicit break

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<sup>2</sup> Bearing in mind the seminal role Hegel attributed to skepticism and negation in his *Phenomenology* (Sørensen 2019a: 43–45, 186–189), it is a bit surprising that Rasmussen attributes to Habermas the claim that Hegel would have nothing to do with critique, and that Marx should have learned everything in this regard from Kant (Rasmussen 2019: 7).

with any kind of what Rasmussen calls “economic determinism” in relation to “historical progress”, emphasizing instead the openness of history as well as the political importance of subjective consciousness and theoretical knowledge. As Marcuse emphasizes, what makes historical progress necessary is reason, freedom and happiness, i.e. our idea of humanity, not any supra-individual mechanics or fate (Sørensen 2019a: 34–35).

As Rasmussen indicates, Critical Theory is indeed a contested category, and rather than an empty signifier applicable to various manifestations of a tradition, ultimately he also defines it in terms of a specific content, namely as “political theory”, and even as “a theory of democracy”, opposed to “social theory” (Rasmussen 2019: 7–8). In fact, Rasmussen chooses a rather confrontational stance, arguing that, in relation to the constitutive “pluralism” of modern societies, claiming Critical Theory to be the right theory would be “tyrannical” (Rasmussen 2019: 8). Moreover, as he argues, “it is impossible to justify Critical Theory on epistemological grounds if one wishes to justify it as political theory for democratic society” (Rasmussen 2019: 10), and ultimately, this makes him discard not only me and the classics of Critical Theory, but even Habermas and Honneth.

In contrast to Rasmussen, and given the possible displacements concerning ‘theory’, on this level I prefer to talk about ‘philosophy’. Consequently, in the volume presently under scrutiny, i.e. the first of the trilogy *Dialectics, Deontology and Democracy*, I primarily discuss Critical Theory within the horizon of social philosophy, which has been the designation of the chair at the Frankfurt University that was first created for Horkheimer and held until recently by Honneth. For Horkheimer, however, the notion of social philosophy includes discussions of state, law and economy (Sørensen 2019a: 78), i.e. issues today typically dealt with in political philosophy.

Regarding volume two on moral philosophy, when I discuss the discourse ethics developed by Habermas, I of course recognize the epistemological grounds of his skepticism concerning ethical values and moral norms, and those grounds are also fundamental to his discourse theory of democracy, which I discuss in the third volume on political philosophy. In that volume I try to develop and defend an idea of social democracy that is robust, but still open to principled criticism and scrutiny. Hence, as I announce quite clearly in the first volume (Sørensen 2019a: 19–23), I dedicate the final volume to a critical but still affirmative determination of democracy in a very wide sense, and for this purpose I have conducted critical studies of Habermas’ political philosophy and philosophy of law (Sørensen 2015a, 2020a).

Interestingly, despite declaring the epistemological approach of the most prominent figures from the tradition of Critical Theory to be futile for political theory, Rasmussen still praises Habermas’ work on democracy. This possible inconsistency put aside, rejecting the epistemological approach of the main classics of Critical Theory as *prima facie* undemocratic seems a rather narrow, exclusionary and possibly self-defeating strategy for the dear living tradition, and definitely misaligned with the fact of pluralism that Rasmussen

cherishes as constitutive for modernity. In contrast, I may claim to recognize a much broader, inclusive and liberal idea of the said theory, including not just various Frankfurt descendants, but also non-German hangarounds such as e.g. Rasmussen, Tong, Ivković and myself. Hence, in the volume questioned presently, I argue that the classical 20<sup>th</sup> century version retains its relevance with insights valuable also for 21<sup>st</sup> century Critical Theory (Sørensen 2019a: 24), which in the following two volumes I demonstrate by integrating them in discussions of contemporary ethics and political philosophy.

## B. The Dialectics of Critical Theory is Destructive

After this confrontation with theoretical aspects of Rasmussen's version of the Political Liberalism that has been so popular in the Prague community of critical theorists since Habermas worked on *Between Facts and Norms* (Sørensen 2017b), let me now turn to issues more predominant when Critical Theory confronts Dialectical and Historical Materialism. Whereas for Rasmussen, Hegel's ideas of science and dialectics are "no longer [to be] taken seriously" (Rasmussen 2019: 7), these subjects are precisely what interests Tong.

As with many other important issues, dialectics is subject to continued argumentation that emphasizes various distinctions. In *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* (Sørensen 2019a) I argue that the suspicions voiced by Tong with regard to dialectics should be directed to the particular ontological and practical conception of dialectics that he has inherited from Mao and Dao, including the interpretations of Hegel's logic and natural philosophy by, respectively, Lenin and Engels. Instead, I offer the idea of dialectics that I grew up with and still defend, namely an epistemological conception of dialectics focusing on the experiential progression of consciousness to reason, spirit and absolute knowledge, i.e. dialectics as it was most prominently displayed in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in which the concept of experience plays a crucial role (see, e.g., Vieweg, Welsch 2008). Still, in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, I discuss antinomies between different conceptions of dialectics, referring in particular to Wolfgang Röd (1974). However, this variation and plurality with regards to dialectics, and especially the opposition between, on the one side, experience, negation and education, and on the other, logic, system and ontology, may not be easily detected at first (see, e.g., Cirne-Lima 2019), and even in comprehensive works it goes rather unnoticed (see, e.g., Holz 2011).

As a dedicated dialectician, and with roots in both Dialectical Materialism and Critical Theory, Tong is however acutely aware of these antinomies. Following his teacher Feng Qi, he argues for integrating epistemological and ontological aspects of dialectics as well as theory and practice. Moreover, pairing elements of traditional Chinese metaphysics with discussions of modernity in 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese philosophy, he claims the continued fruitfulness of exploring such "national traditions" when pursuing "the critical theoretical course of immanent critique of modern society at the international or cross-cultural level". And to Tong, immanent critique is "the core of dialectics".

Within this ambitious and comprehensive philosophical program, Tong wants to defend his core concepts against my teasing critique in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*. Tong thus explains that for Feng dialectics is indeed a matter of logic rather than ontology and that dialectical logic rests on the basis of formal logic. Moreover, dialectical logic in this sense reconstructs the “forms of thought”, or what Kant would call “categories”. As for Lenin (see, e.g., Fogarasi 1972: 22–23), dialectical logic in this sense thus apparently covers much of the same ground as epistemology, focusing according to Tong on “both the knowing activities and the known objects”. For Feng the validity of logic is thus determined by its reflection of reality “as a totality of conflicting potentials or possibilities”, and therefore dialectical logic also has a value for the reality of human practice, being in this sense “both ontological and epistemological”.

This point of departure regarding the conception of dialectics is of course quite different from mine. Still, across thousands of miles and linguistic particularities, we share the experience of dialectics being used as a term to signal belonging to the kind of communism that was so powerful in the 1970s. Of course, in Denmark communists were not ruling the country, and “dialectics as a mere tool of power” was not as powerful as in China. Still, Marxism itself and various kinds of communists were very influential in the intellectual public sphere, and accusing an opponent in a discussion of being undialectical was a serious strike to his or – less often – her possibilities of continuing the argument (Sørensen 2019: 211–213). Nevertheless, both Tong and I want to retain dialectics as a core issue in serious philosophical discussions, and this is why I will continue to emphasize some points where we may still differ, both with regards to basic categories and philosophical temper.

As fellow critical theorists, we thus share today a lot of common ground. For Tong a basic reference is Marx who declared dialectics to be, in its essence, critical and revolutionary. However, when it comes to immanent critique, his main reference is Adorno, who emphasizes that this kind of opposition does not present something external, or transcendental to the position under scrutiny, but forces it to go by its “own force” to where it “cannot afford to go”. Meeting the opponent on his own ground, a successful refutation becomes much more devastating. Tong, however, wants to move beyond mere debate, and referring to Marcuse’s *One-Dimensional Man* he can claim that “contradiction belongs to the very nature of the object of thought, to reality”, that in reality “reason is still unreason”, and that reason must be brought to what Marx would call a reasonable form.

Again, we are on common ground. However, as rightly emphasized by César Ortega-Esquembre in his critical review of *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* (Ortega-Esquembre 2021: 223), the best place to consult Marcuse’s conception of dialectics is *Reason and Revolution*. In this masterpiece, dialectics is presented as a way to deal with the fact that reality is contradictory, i.e. the experience that “man and nature exist in conditions of alienation, exist as ‘other than they are’” (Marcuse 1969: ix). However, apparently, and maybe in the interest of harmonious integration, Tong does not pursue further the

implications of Marcuse's critical approach. Hence, as Marcuse reads Hegel, it is clear that dialectics and critique must imply negativity, i.e. that the first step towards realizing the true concept of reason is a negative one (Marcuse 2000: 123, Sørensen 2019a: 226–227), and in this aspect, I suspect that I go further than Tong. Since reality is possibly reason, the contradiction is precisely that it is not, i.e. that reality is not what it potentially could be, what it is supposed to be. As Marcuse puts it, “the facts do not correspond to the concepts imposed by common sense and scientific reason” (Marcuse 1969: vii). Reason is not reason, justice is not justice, democracy is not democracy.

This is the contradiction, or the “internal inadequacy” (Marcuse 1969: viii), to which Hegelian dialectics responds. This is why we criticize reality as it is, this is why negativity is appropriate to make reality reasonable, i.e. to realize reason as true reason. Moreover, as Marcuse stresses against “various obscurantists”, “Reason, and Reason alone, contains its own corrective”. This is also why dialectics primarily is a matter of epistemology. What we want is “knowledge” (Marcuse 1969: xiii). To comprehend reality is to comprehend what things really are, and that means rejecting “their mere factuality”. The factual reality is thus rejected as false in order to realize the truth of reality, and this is not only a process in “thought” but also in “action” (Marcuse 1969: ix). Consequently, for Marcuse as for Hegel, the “governing principle of dialectical thought” is not immanent critique; it is the famous “determinate negation”, which, for Marcuse at least, is ultimately a “political negation” (Marcuse 1969: xi–xii).

Dialectics is thus a “dialectics of negativity” (Marcuse 2000: 282), and rather than immanent critique, determinate negation is the core of dialectics. As Hegel quoted Spinoza, *omnis determinatio est negatio*, all determination is negation. This is what unites interpretation and change, or theory and practice, in dialectics. Endorsing such a “destructive” (Marcuse 1969: xii) conception of dialectics, however, also has implications for what it can mean to unite the epistemological and ontological aspects of dialectics. Thus ultimately Tong also concurs with an epistemological understanding of dialectics, setting aside “dialectics as ontology” and “objective dialectics”. Hence, referring to Habermas, dialectics is best understood as a theoretical activity with a “practical intention” or with “practical concerns”, changing the world by discursively “interpreting” it.

However, for Critical Theory this is too modest a conception of dialectics. As I see it, dialectics has more to contribute when it comes to realizing the true human reality. Keeping in mind Marcuse's Heideggerian formation and Hegel's notion of *Bewußt-sein*, i.e. conscious being, if ontology refers to human being, then the emphasis on negativity could be said to be about how to realize true self-conscious human being, i.e. how reason, knowledge and truth are to be realized through theoretical critique and practical contestation in a real society. This understanding of ontology would leave more room for maintaining in the idea of dialectics the dual aspects of epistemology and ontology as well as those of theory and practice. Dialectics could thus be trusted to provide not only an interpretation of the world, but also knowledge about the true reality of human being and how it can be realized.

### C. Dialectical Epistemology does not imply Relativism

Dialectics is also on the agenda of the Belgrade institute. Regarding Urošević, I can easily recognize the careful reconstruction of my line of thought, apart from the fact that the danger of nihilism and decisionism in Critical Theory I attribute to Honneth's misinterpretation of Nietzsche rather than to Nietzsche himself (Sørensen 2019a: 74). I therefore accept the challenge as posed, namely how I may justify my particular standards for a society without unnecessary alienation and inequality without recurring to "intuition", and how I can claim the fact of exploitation "*prima facie*".

The answer, however, will of course reveal some disagreements, also concerning some basic terms and fundamental ideas. Regarding the fact of exploitation, as I see it, the extraction of surplus-value from production and the resulting accumulation of capital is only possible due to the recognized and well-guarded property rights to the means of production. This is of course something emphasized theoretically by Marx and Engels in their critique of political economy, but today, this simple fact must be considered correct until proven otherwise, i.e. *prima facie*.

Regarding the value of intuition in normative matters, following especially Marcuse, I have a much greater confidence in the cognitive capacity of human beings than what Marx expresses in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*. As Marcuse argues, we may be under the "rule of false consciousness", which makes it "difficult to decide what is a fact and what is not", but "the layer of falsehood [...] can be broken". People can "learn to see and to think independently and to break the power of standardized information and indoctrination". To do so is an "intellectual task", and Marcuse therefore directs his hopes to the "campuses" (Marcuse 2001: 93). Human reason provides us with ideas that – enforced by idealist philosophy and critical social science – can function as critical instances in relation to the ideology of the real existing "capitalist social system". This is what makes ideology critique possible; hence, as Urošević suspects, I do recognize "transcendent norms", namely the universal ideas of, say, truth, justice and freedom.

Moreover, I also recognize the possible contradiction between recognizing that such transcendent notions are universal and that they rely on historical processes not yet completed. Again, my answer is that I tend to attribute a much greater role to the potentials of human cognition, individually as well as collectively than most Marxist materialists, be they Historical or Dialectical. As Hegel presents the logic of human consciousness, we are able to form the idea of something, which can subsequently become more precise and consistent through the experience gained from successive determinate negations (Hegel 1970: 73–74, Sørensen 2019a: 43–44, 186–188). We may thus have a vague idea of, say, justice, in this case typically due to injustices experienced. Similarly, we may have an idea of freedom due to experiences of a real lack of freedom, an idea of logic due to experiences of contradictions, or an idea of democracy from a rule of the people only halfway realized. In all cases, I

recognize *prima facie* the subjective validity of the experiences. To be a real human being means to have ideas of justice, freedom and logic, and, in many periods of history, also of democracy.

However, that does not mean that these ideas are objectively true with regards to their content. This is why negation is so important for dialectics. As reasonable conscious beings, such experiences of ours are always possible to contest and criticize with reference to transcendent standards. These standards, however, are themselves inherent in the said experiences. To recognize something as unjust, one must have an, at least implicit, intuitive and vague, concept of justice, and in that sense the critique is always immanent, claiming its truth with reference to both correspondence and coherence. Still, the core of dialectical critique is the determinate negation. At best, the negation of an idea prompts a cognitive process towards greater precision, more consistency and better justification of the idea in question. This process happens in time, possibly reaching historical completion and maybe even universal completion. This final hope is what many cynics and self-proclaimed realists denounce as unrealistic and utopian, but, being idealist in the same sense as Marcuse and Hegel, I prefer to retain the hope of possibly realizing transcendent ideal standards, thus making them immanent in real society and real history.

Hence, within this idea of dialectics, the truth of reality is not that it is inherently dialectical and thus subject to eternal change, admitting no transcendental standards, such as it is often conceived of in Dialectical Materialism. For me this expresses metaphysics in the most classical sense, namely a kind of vitalism, taking organic life as the model of reality *per se* (Sørensen 2019a: 176). The dialectics that I pursue, does ultimately also become metaphysical, but Hegel's initial steps in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* are epistemological, taking both skepticism and experience seriously. Ideally, dialectics thus makes us more knowledgeable with regards to reality, and, as I argue, for Marcuse it also enables liberation from one-dimensional thought (Sørensen 2019a: 225–230).

This idealism, however, does not imply neutrality with regards to struggling classes, as Urošević suggests – quite the contrary. When Foucault dismisses any transcendent norm of justice as unjustified and merely expressing “bourgeois” ideology, he is left with the problems of decisionism and relativity. Why should one class be right rather than the other? There must be an additional reason why we should support the proletariat and not the bourgeoisie. Moreover, endorsing both dialectics and transcendent standards is not a contradiction; on the contrary, they presuppose and mutually condition each other. Even though we cannot claim to know the truth of, say, justice in detail, we can still experience and thus know when a society is unjust and thus not true.

The final truth is that human consciousness cannot sustain the experience of unnecessary and unjustified human suffering. A societal system that generates and admits such experiences cannot be true. Witnessing the sufferings of others is unbearable to the human being. This is the final transcendental standard that has survived for generations despite all kinds of pain and brutality. This is the reason why the proletariat and subalterns in general should receive



preferential treatment. Fortunately, in many cases this intuitive standard is strong enough to negate and break through the bourgeois ideology and false consciousness, and to call human beings to do their duty to each other and to humanity at large. This is why affluent people do not want to confront poverty and misery, this is why they prefer gated communities and offshore hideouts, this is why they end up spending so much on charity. It is in this fundamental humanity, i.e. this moral anthropology, that we must place our hopes. This is the final transcendental justification when we criticize capitalism.

#### **D. Determinate Negation develops Universality, not Totality**

Scrutinizing further the dialectical method of classical Critical Theory, Ivković focuses on Hegel's determinate negation that he conceives of as a "method of social critique", "a critical operation" working as "a critical tool of critical theory". Interestingly, however, this time the challenges posed get an unexpected twist, some of the core concepts apparently being displaced, at least partly due to an ambiguous and potentially misleading quotation of mine.

Hence, when I both affirm Helga Gripp's statement that a totality is characterized by a continuous dialectical mediation of the universal and the particular, and mention that Critical Theory criticizes capitalism as a totality, Ivković of course concludes that this characterization also holds for capitalism. This conclusion determines his first sub-question, namely whether in the encounter of a particular instance of injustice, what we encounter is a "dialectical movement of universality and particularity". However, considering more closely my affirmative reference to Gripp regarding her characterization of dialectics, I must admit that I thereby contribute to the slide that I wish to avoid, namely from dialectics in the epistemological sense defended above towards dialectics as the meta-method of science regarding its empirical object field, often assuming the vitalist, and sometimes even mechanical, metaphysics of Dialectical Materialism.

Being somehow seduced by the elegant wording of Gripp, I failed to oppose in principle a factual totality as it was criticized by Marx et al. with the universality of ideals to be realized by Hegel. In the latter case, the particularity of any ideal realized in fact is the challenge to be overcome. Accordingly, and following the idealism of Hegel, I can conceive of a universal truth that is to be realized of, say, "the good society" and, as Hegel sees it, the truth of an idea, or a concept, depends on it being realized. However, the real realization of any idea always proves to be particular and thus not universal. The experience of a specific particular realization fuels what Hegel characterizes as a determinate negation, a particular recalcitrant fact – the black swan – thus negating the universal truth conceived of, which then produces a determinate result, namely the knowledge of what was not sufficient to hold as a universal ideal. Hence, today when so many people are forced to beg on the streets, or flee their native country, our society – globally speaking – cannot after all be that good a society. This is the experience that negates the ideal idea that

is supposed to legitimate our present social reality, the experience that both annihilates and retains, the famous German “*Aufheben*” that is often characterized as *sublation*. In Hegel’s epistemological idea of dialectics, this is the core operation that moves experience toward knowledge (Hegel 1970: 94, 106, Sørensen 2019a: 173).

To spell out the conceptual contrast between universality and totality in relation to the universal idea of the good society, i.e. our knowledge of the ideal society, the totality of capitalism is nothing more than a particular factual realization of the said idea, i.e. a particular historical totality negating the universality of the idea of freedom, a reason for skepticism with regards to the knowledge allegedly expressed in liberal thought. Being realized as flawed and thus false, it provides a reason for thinking through again the idea of the good society. The determinate negation, however, provides a result, namely experiential knowledge about what did not hold. Consequently, the determinate negation is not a Popperian falsification where we start from scratch again. We have – so to say – learned by experience (Sørensen 2019a: 173). Since the idea of the good society implies societal justice, since even the idea of society necessarily implies justice, a specific experience of injustice in a real society provides a determinate negation of the particular idea that has been realized.

Hegel’s determinate negation is not a negation to operate with in relation to “the immediate particularity of the phenomenon that we are criticizing”. It is a negation that questions the immediate universality of the particular idea, or ideal, that we believe in. It is not about developing and expanding our experience and empirical understanding of a “particular instance of injustice” to reach a full theoretical understanding of “how the societal totality of capitalism is instantiated in this particular experience of injustice”. Therefore, I do not consider Hegelian dialectics a diagnostic tool of Critical Theory. Furthermore, sublation does not mean that we preserve “an element of the immediate experience of injustice”, but that in the idea of justice to be developed, we preserve an element – an active ‘Moment’, as Hegel puts it (Hegel 1970: 77–78) – of the immediate universal idea of justice just negated, and in addition the experience of its fallibility. When Prodanović argues to acknowledge the “common-sense articulation of social issues”, questioning my insistence on the “predominance” of theory over practice, the point is thus that the universal idea and the immediate experience may be valid even though the particular articulation is not.

I understand and sympathize with Ivković’s argument that if “theoretical diagnosis [...] is to inspire political action”, it needs something like the preservation of the immediate experience of injustice. However, as a social and political philosopher of education, I am not interested in such a diagnosis in itself. I want an argument that is practical in the sense that it motivates sufficiently to take action in the service of justice and human flourishing, not just an inspired reaction to what is perceived momentarily as unjust, and the question of what motivates one normatively in this sense is an old philosophical problem. Hence, a classical challenge is the weakness of the will, i.e. the problem

of *akrasia* (Lemmon 1962). Also nowadays, *akrasia* plays a prominent role, for instance, in the famous claim of Slavoj Žižek, namely that we know what is wrong but we are doing it anyway.

For me, however, sheer ignorance is still the main challenge. The Enlightenment is still not completed, and in this perspective, a theoretical diagnosis is of course relevant; however, rather than merely rely on inspiration from an innate human sense of justice, I emphasize the need for continued enlightenment, education and formation. I do believe that human beings are not only conscious, but also moral and poetic beings, but the right character education makes you even more receptive to truth, justice and beauty. In such a project, a theoretical diagnosis may play a part, but it cannot stand alone, not even assuming the sense of justice. So, we agree that a diagnosis is not sufficient, and since it is a little uncertain precisely what theory and thus the qualification ‘theoretical’ means in this context, I am not even sure that such a diagnosis is necessary.

Hence, for me the determinate negation does not mean that we try to distance ourselves from the immediate experience of injustice and understand the “interplay between the universal and the particular in this phenomenon”. As Ivković argues, within a totality of dialectical “mediation between the universal and the particular”, “a particular phenomenon” of, say, injustice is an instance of something universal, within, say, capitalism, e.g. the principle of exchange or commodification. Any “given experience of injustice” as a phenomenon in the empirical world should therefore be fitted into a “broader picture”, demonstrating that the “societal totality of capitalism” is instantiated in particular experiences of injustice. And with such a theoretical reconstruction of the scientific process I can easily sympathize, but this is not the Hegelian dialectics of the determinate negation that Horkheimer and I defend (Horkheimer 1988a: 258–286, Sørensen 2019a: 43–45).

Consequently, the questions developed as a result of Ivković’s first sub-question are answered in the negative. Regarding the second sub-question, as I see it, I do not share the understanding of “critique as dialectical movement, a distancing, a determinate negation”. Moreover, we should be happy to take up the challenge to develop “an alternative vision” of the good society, letting the universal idea of social democratic justice confront the all too real capitalist totality. And we should be happy to become more knowledgeable with regards to this comprehensive ideal thanks to the experiences gained by determinate negations. Determinate negation is what gives us experiences as we try to grasp reality in change. Therefore, we should not accept that a comprehensive vision of social democracy can be characterized as “totalizing”, “abstract and static”.

It may very well be that the relative impotence of contemporary critique of capitalism is partly due to such convictions, which are widespread under headings such as positivism, phenomenism, constructivism, anti-essentialism, deconstructivism etc. However, such convictions should not be taken at face value. As I have argued elsewhere, anti- or post-metaphysical approaches to reality weaken social critique (Sørensen 2019b), and Marcuse would even

claim that empiricism mystifies the relation to reality (Sørensen 2019a: 222–224). Consequently, such positions must be shown to express ideology and false consciousness in the most classical Marxist sense. For instance, when capitalism is perceived positively as a concrete “dynamic totality” in contrast to an alleged static vision of the good society as social democracy, we should criticize the universal validity of the opposition static-dynamic as ideology, reminding ourselves that societal movement often reflects the fact that we run around blindly in the maze driven by desire and haunted by fear. Hence, as an idea of what we should strive for, social democracy is still the best candidate. This I will return to below.

### **E. General Economy is not just about Political Economy**

Being formed intellectually in a period in which Marxist social criticism played a huge role in the public sphere, I am still preoccupied with political economy, and especially the critique of it. In fact, as I also mention in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique*, I consider dialectics and the critique of political economy to be two essential pillars of the classical Critical Theory that I presently defend (Sørensen 2019a: 4). However, as it also becomes clear in the said book, my approach to the economy is influenced very much by French positivism and especially Georges Bataille (see also Sørensen 2012a). What I criticize is not just the injustice, alienation and reification implied by the unequal distribution of scarce resources reproduced by capitalist relations of production, but also the instrumental utilitarianism of the economic man typically assumed in contemporary economics. Bataille thus insists that when it comes to resources, rather than dealing rationally with scarcity, the real problem is how to handle the excess of energy that always confronts us.

However, as Prodanović recognizes in his presentation of my account of Bataille’s general economy, within such a combined perspective, Bataille ultimately faces some serious aporias, both in terms of ontology and when it comes to normative recommendations. Prodanović then asks if the recently developed idea of Degrowth has the potential to resolve those aporias, apparently suggesting that by applying the idea to everyday life, we could get to the point where our desires would become incompatible with overproduction and overconsumption, i.e. where desires equal needs – and that may very well be possible and advisable, especially taking on board Marcuse’s dialectical hopes regarding the potentials of human nature for peace and sensibility.

As Marcuse argues, nature, including human nature, is “a historical entity”, which is presently “bent to the requirements of capitalism”. The primary drives of human nature, aggression and sexuality, have been adapted socially and technically to commercial and military needs, and in general, “the violation of nature is inseparable from the economy of capitalism”. This historical character of however nature also means that it could be otherwise. As to nature in general, Marcuse is well aware of the problems of pollution and considers the ecology movement part of the political struggle. Regarding human nature,

and referring to the young Marx, Marcuse argues that it “would be different under socialism”, letting men and women “develop and fulfill their own needs and faculties in association with each other”. Most famous in this vision is the idea of a new “radical, nonconformist sensibility” that changes human nature “down into the instinctual and psychological level” (Marcuse 1972: 59–62). As Marx phrased it in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, the human being would appropriate nature as “species being”, unfolding through the “richness of man’s essential being” the richness of “subjective human sensibility (a musical ear, an eye for the beauty of form – in short, the *senses* capable of human gratification [...])” (Marx 1988: 108 Marcuse 1972: 64–65)).

For Bataille, however, human desires and human nature do not have the same kind of historical plasticity. Human being is basically and essentially a negation of nature, but it is only realized as a particular singular human subject, i.e. as a sovereign that negates the inner experience that is constitutive for the human being, although in a human way. Sovereignty is thus a negation of a negation, i.e. a negation of the result of the first negation, transgressing humanely the prohibitions that constitute humanity. Sovereignty is expressed through human squandering and consumption, disregarding instrumental production and servile accumulation, establishing instead a particular difference that makes a difference with regards to the universal human being. To be human means to experience being restricted by prohibitions regarding aggression and sexuality (Bataille 1987: 62–65, Sørensen 2019a: 153), to be sovereign means to be capable of transgressing them in a human way, for instance by letting the experience of momentary miraculous beauty trump the expected and planned productive utility (Bataille 1976a: 254–257), or by the murder that transgresses the most universal human prohibition (Bataille 1976a: 269). Sovereignty thus borders inhumanity, transgressing what is human without annihilating it. The desire to be sovereign is the desire to be free and unrestricted, to be a subject in itself, to experience and express oneself as a distinct singular subject in arts and transgressive acts.

Sovereignty in this emphatic sense is not easy to harmonize with Degrowth, at least not as it is conceived of in the *Vocabulary* of Giacomo D’Alisa, Federico Demaria and Giorgos Kallis (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015). Nevertheless, as Prodanović mentions, the *Vocabulary* recognizes the inspiration from Bataille’s general economy and in particular the notion of expenditure (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015: 313). The purpose of the Degrowth project is thus to “overcome the insane growth proposed by capitalism through social expenditure”. This expenditure should be economically unproductive and genuinely collective as in the case of “a collective festival, the decision to subsidize a class of spiritual people for philosophical reflection or leave a forest in peace”, withdrawing capital from circulation for unconditional consumption. Moreover, such consumption is neither for individual use, nor for the use of capital; it is “political”, offering the collective the possibility to define the good life beyond “individual illusions” (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015: 316). Degrowth is thus a political project, emphasizing democracy and often including the idea of unconditional basic

income, in general proposing to think anew “institutions for the socialization of unproductive expenditure” (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015: 318).

In contrast to many ecologists, the Degrowth project does not recommend utilitarian rationality with regards to scarce resources. In fact, the idea of scarcity is considered constitutive for capitalism as such. Scarcity makes it rational to be economical and accumulate capital for future productive use. In contrast, Degrowth considers itself part of the anti-utilitarian movement, recommending unproductive expenditure on arts, basic human needs and festivals to celebrate “the politics for a new epoch” (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015: 317–318). Ultimately, the ideal of Degrowth is “individual sobriety and social expenditure”, and this will imply a much greater “weight on democracy and deliberative institutions” (D’Alisa, Demaria, Kallis 2015: 320) than today.

As much as I sympathize with this project – and it may even serve as a point of departure for the final reflections on social democracy below – I do not think it offers anything to solve the said aporias. In the *Vocabulary*, the entry on “Expenditure” by Onofrio Romano gives a brief, precise and rather comprehensive account of Bataille’s general economy. Hence, when considered generally, due to solar radiation there is always an excess of energy that will either be stashed in earthly matter or dilapidated in the tepidness of the universe. Scarcity is only a problem from the particular point of view of a single entity, i.e. as considered within a restricted economy, and as Romano points out, considering ecology and climate, Degrowth protagonists risk generalizing even further the particularistic view on economy, demanding for humanity as a whole the rational use of scarce resources (Romano 2015: 139–140).

Obviously, however, this is not what the editors of the *Vocabulary* have in mind, making themselves spokesmen of social expenditure and individual sobriety. But this moral-political ambition does not solve the aporias of the general economy. The Degrowth project aims to transfer expenditure, and thus resources, from individual use to social use but, despite the entry just mentioned, apparently it does so without relating to the metaphysical ontology of Bataille, ignoring both the dialectics of human being and the reality of the universe as understood by the theories of relativity and thermodynamics. With the emphasis on morality, sociality and democracy, Degrowth is much more explicitly and consistently normative than the general economy, refining the political solutions within a restricted view of economy, and rather than solving the aporias, the project may be said to ignore them and, by doing so, may even escape them.

## F. Sovereignty makes General Economy Apolitical

This is probably where Benjamin would protest, namely because of my traditional and restricted idea of politics. And not just for theoretical reasons. Just as it is the case with the Degrowth movement, Benjamin is preoccupied with the “advent of the Anthropocene and the actualization of climate crisis”, but rather than simply calling for political action, for him it becomes an urgent

practical question, both “who or what represents political positions” and “what counts as political actions.” In the present situation, we should thus be open to re-conceptualize the political. And Benjamin is quite right to attribute to me a rather traditional idea of politics, and that it is this idea that makes me criticize the possible societal implications of Bataille’s general economy (Sørensen 2019a: 129–130, 177–178). As Benjamin stresses, the question of whether I can argue that Bataille’s general economy is apolitical is intimately tied to the question of subjectivity or sovereignty. Against my understanding of sovereignty, Benjamin thus suggests that I may have misunderstood the idea of the inner experience and its role in the general economy.

Benjamin explains how the irreducible subjectivity of Bataille’s inner experience must be understood in contrast to the finality and closure of Hegel’s idea of experiential knowledge. To know is thus “to relate to the known, to grasp that an unknown is the same thing as a known thing”, and the infinite “chain of things known is for knowledge the achievement of itself”. Even as achieved, however, there is something unsatisfactory for Bataille about this understanding of knowledge, and this makes him ask “why must there be what I know?” This question opens up for Bataille what he considers “the exhausting nature of metaphysical interrogation” (Lurson 2018: 313, Bataille 1973: 372). As Benjamin relates, at the limit of knowledge is the unknown, but also the possibility of absolute knowledge. To avoid mastery, i.e. to avoid assuming the position of God, Bataille’s sovereign subject only mimes absolute knowledge, but that does not prevent the subject becoming unknowable to itself. Even for Hegel, the truth of subjectivity only becomes accessible to the knowing subject in its dismemberment and “absolute disruption”, and this is why Bataille recognizes that Hegel touched the extreme before returning to officialdom, recoiling from the way to ecstasy. Exhausted upon return, Hegel was allegedly prone to sadness and fatigue, whereas Bataille signals ecstatic inexhaustibility, as it is expressed in poetry and laughter.

Now, Benjamin obviously wants to rescue Bataille’s general economy from accusations of having a conception of desire that leads to a “project of commodification” within neo-liberal capitalism, and with this I concur. Hence, sovereign is the desire to grasp the moment as valuable and meaningful in itself, enjoying the present expenditure without any second thoughts, i.e. without instrumentalization for the benefit of any kind of planned project. Sovereignty is “in human life the aspect opposed to the servile or subordinate aspect” (Bataille 1976a: 247). Bataille does indeed insist on the ineliminability of the incomplete, offering also expressions such as the blind spot, the accursed share etc. And, yes, non-knowledge does not allow itself to be negated and sublated in the productive Hegelian sense, where the resulting knowledge makes further experience, negation and thus knowledge possible (see, e.g., Derrida 1967: 43–44).

Still, the general economy is not all about the inner experience of the non-achieved; as Bataille stresses, human sovereignty is also about the “autonomy of decisions” (Bataille 1976b: 608). Sovereignty is expressed through intentional behavior, namely the action itself and its immediate purpose, e.g. demonstrating

autonomous subjectivity momentarily in the pleasure of, say, experiencing life, engaging in artistic activity or transgressing norms. Moreover, sovereignty is the expression of freedom refusing to accept the limits posed by “the fear of death” (Bataille 1976a: 269). As Benjamin puts it, however, there is a “continual opening sustained by [...] the continuous presence of forms of productive negativity”. Being thus conditioned by servile and instrumentally productive actions – in short: work – this continual opening “orientated by the prolonging of life” makes it possible to undo the opposition between need and desire. And that may very well be so, especially if we accept Marcuse’s ontology, but I do not see how Bataille can be of any help in this project. As Benjamin, Bataille would probably choose life instead of sovereignty, but still, I do not see how Bataille can undo conceptually his oppositions between need and desire, necessity and freedom, norm and transgression. For him, expressing sovereign subjectivity is fundamentally – i.e. ontologically – opposed to life, society and humanity, both in terms of consciousness and desire.

Prolonging life is of course a condition of politics, just as it should also be the result of the right kind of politics, and Bataille is indeed preoccupied with peace and the prohibition of violence. However, such issues are necessary for politics, but they are not sufficient. I cannot conceive of “the political” if it does not relate to justice with regards to rights and goods, i.e. law, forms of government and the social organization of wealth, and there must be an interest in these issues both in principle and as institutions. None of this, however, matters much to Bataille. As contemporary Marxists, he criticizes the suffering, alienation and in particular the reification experienced under capitalism, but the criticism is an intuitive negation of the totality experienced. It is not followed up with principled normative reflections on issues such as justice or government. In the general economy, it is the dynamics of energy that determine what can be done in society, and apart from global peace, welfare and freedom, Bataille does not have much to say about what should positively determine our decisions.

As Antonio Campillo emphasizes, sovereignty is by nature not political, but rather “anti-political or apolitical” (Campillo 2019: 17, Sørensen 2019a: 119–120). As I see it, Bataille is thus “apolitical” in the same sense as many Marxists and liberals, namely by disregarding the possible ways of organizing society deliberately and in detail for the common good. Hence, even if it is true that the basic decision is between affirming capitalism and the continued human life on planet Earth, I will still insist that “the prolongation of life” demands political acts and institutions in the most traditional sense. In other words: We need some kind of social democracy.

## G. Republican Social Democracy – what else?

That brings us back to practice, i.e. practical politics, which was left rather open in the theoretical discussions of dialectics in *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* and therefore generated comments from most of the discussants. As



Ivković clearly sees, the Bataillean idea of subjective sovereignty, opposing instrumental reason and the “imperative of self-preservation”, is “not easily reconcilable” with the political ideal of social democracy. So what do I have in mind? Being raised intellectually the way I am, I have of course been suspicious about established real-life systems of social and liberal democracy, and I still am. Still, as a minimum condition, yes, I do think that restrictions should be imposed on the market economy and commodification, and the sooner the better, but that is of course not sufficient. So, what would it mean to realize social democracy as “politics at its best” (Ferrara 2015: 27), to utilize a phrase favored by another prominent political liberal from the Prague community, Alessandro Ferrara. What would social democracy ideally mean?

As mentioned above, *Capitalism, Alienation and Critique* is only Volume I in the trilogy *Dialectics, Deontology and Democracy*, and, as indicated by the title, Volume III will be dedicated to the question of democracy. Still, let me explain in a few words why and how I came to affirm social democracy as the best title for my aspirations within political philosophy. The articles referred to are planned to become chapters in the final volume of the trilogy.

My original point of departure in the 1980s, entering the world of philosophy at the University of Copenhagen, was a set of intuitions that I soon recognized as left-wing anarchism. Central figures in this line of thought were especially 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian thinkers such as Mikhail Bakunin and Pyotr Kropotkin. However, as I see it today, despite being most critical towards almost all kinds of authorities, the anarchism of my youth did not stimulate systematic self-critical thinking or scholarly studies into conceptual matters. Instead, historical narratives were offered, both to add substance and legitimacy to our radical normative anti-authoritarianism and to add credibility to the prospects of realizing direct democracy and social equality. Most popular was the history of the Spanish revolution in the 1930s, but the stories from the Paris commune of 1870, the Russian revolution and 1968 were also relied upon (Sørensen 2012a: ch. 14).

Today, after four decades of studies in moral, social and political philosophy, I defend republican social democracy. Apparently, there is a long way from social anarchism to social democracy, but as I see it, the alternatives are even further away. This is, for instance, the case with political liberalism as conceived of by Rawls and others, which, as mentioned, has nevertheless become very popular among Prague critical theorists. With my point of departure, I of course have a lot of sympathy for the anti-authoritarian impulse of liberalism, but the problem is the principled antinomy between politics and liberalism. Classical British liberalism combines moral individualism, the right to private property and human rights with a belief in the providence of God’s invisible hand. This vision sets man free to pursue individual success, and the freedom is enhanced by the secularized version of neo-classical political economy, where the theory of general equilibrium liberates the economic man from moral inhibitions concerning this pursuit. Whether secularized or not, according to the liberal agenda, everybody has the right to freely pursue his or her own happiness, and

nobody has the right to interfere in this pursuit. The social production and distribution of wealth is therefore beyond collective decision-making, both when it comes to creating wealth and enjoying the fruits of it.

Liberal individualism thus goes hand in hand with a fundamental distrust or even hostility, towards politics, and therefore the idea of political liberalism is almost contradictory. Of course, Rawls manages to construct a sensible normative position, but this is only by limiting the scope of politics considerably, i.e. by ousting the so-called comprehensive doctrines from politics. As I argue, the basic tenets of liberalism thus make it difficult for it to endorse conceptually political ideals and institutional necessities such as the state, government, parliament, democracy and the like (Sørensen 2014). The popularity of political liberalism reflects Anglophone political philosophy in general, where the theories of justice and utilitarianism have been found much more interesting than democracy.

Moreover, as political liberalism is almost self-contradictory, so is, almost by implication, liberal democracy. This has been argued with remarkable clarity by the Spanish philosopher Rafael del Águila (Águila 1997), and, in general, I have found Spanish language philosophy much more fruitful with regards to normative discussions of democracy and republicanism, probably because many Spanish-speaking countries had experiences with authoritarian regimes only a few decades ago. In fact, suspecting that the well-established Anglophone liberal democracies simply take democracy for granted, I have made this experience a methodological principle, directing my attention towards philosophers in young democracies in non-Anglophone countries such as, for example, Habermas and Enrique Dussel (Sørensen 2013). This has also made me much more aware of the importance of, say, the difference between the republican autonomy and liberal freedom, or the one between political rights and human rights. Finally, in contrast to the liberal republican tradition in the UK and USA, I have also learned to appreciate the social republican tradition in France, e.g. Montesquieu, Rousseau and Durkheim, and it is all of this that I gather under the heading of social democracy, which was also, for a time at least, the ideal adhered to by Marx and Engels.

Writing around the previous turn of the century, Durkheim is also situated in a young republican democracy, arguing strongly for the legitimacy of the democratic republican state. Compared to monarchy and aristocracy, democracy means the rule of superior intelligence, since popular consultation before the final decisions are made means that more questions have been dealt with, and that cannot but increase the chance of reaching the right conclusions. Moreover, if the state is ruled in this way, one can say, in contrast to liberal commonplaces – the bigger the state, the more freedom for citizens. It is democracy and law, i.e. the state, that establishes real freedom in society, and welfare institutions and interventions add to this freedom (Durkheim 1997). Without health, education and social security there is no real freedom. And whereas liberal republicans mostly rely on natural sympathy or inborn moral sense, Durkheim offers a philosophy of education, educating teachers to secure the

democratic republic for the coming generations (Durkheim 2006). As I have argued elsewhere, for Durkheim philosophy of education, ethics and political philosophy are all in the service of the social democratic republic (Sørensen 2012b), and, as mentioned above, discussing Habermas' discourse theory of deliberative democracy is also beneficial to determine the balance between civic duties and human rights in such a society. And if things go well, we may even develop human nature in ways hoped for by Marx and Marcuse, e.g. becoming sensitive in a way that furthers peaceful encounters.

Hence, adding to my reluctance to adopt political liberalism is also Rawls' leniency towards the idea of just war and the rights to pre-emptive attacks and so-called humanitarian interventions, undermining the legitimacy of the United Nations (UN) at a time in history when war again began to proliferate after decades of relative peace. As already recognized, peace is indeed a condition for politics, and I have therefore also criticized Rawls on these issues (Sørensen 2015c), just as I have criticized Michael Walzer and Habermas for their alleged realism regarding the same issues. Habermas, however, does recognize that the continued historical institutionalization of peace, since WW II mainly through the UN, adds to the likelihood of achieving a perpetual peace, such as it was projected by Kant (Sørensen 2015b). Even though cosmopolitanism may be criticized for providing ideological support for opening up new territories for market economy, it is less certain whether this also hits Kant's republican project of world citizenship (Sørensen 2016). The idea of a world citizenship extends politics to the global level, whereas cosmopolitanism only refers to ethics and civil society, and Kant must be praised for being one of the very few modern philosophers who is unconditionally against war (Sørensen 2017a).

That much about social democracy for now. More will come in Volume III, *Justice, Peace and Formation*. Still, I hope this has indicated a little bit what I have in mind when I, from time to time, speak in favor of social democracy. As a final remark, I may add that I am very much aware of the alienation and discontent produced presently by the existing democracies in the western world. However, as is also argued by Ferrara, this should not make us give up democracy, but rather find ways in which the idea of democracy can once again become exemplary within the existing democratic horizon. As I see it, one element is to liberate democracy from capitalism and liberalism – hence the critique of political economy and the ideal of social democracy – while another element is to demonstrate that democracy is the only form of government that allows, and indeed invites, individual human flourishing, thus recognizing the desire for, and the recalcitrancy of, human sovereignty without fully succumbing to it. This latter point, i.e. domesticating sovereignty, is the one to which I presently dedicate my work within philosophy of education (Sørensen 2020b).

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Asger Serensen

## Klasična kritička teorija, epistemološka dijalektika i opšta ekonomija. Odgovor na kritike iz Beograda i Šangaja

### Apstrakt:

Na početku, branim svoju privrženost klasičnoj kritičkoj teoriji, naglašavajući njenu kontinuiranu relevantnost u kapitalističkoj modernosti, ističući da epistemološki pristup ne implicira dogmatizam u pogledu teorije saznanja ili istorijskog materijalizma, dovršenost u pogledu političke demokratije. Kada je u pitanju dijalektika u klasičnom smislu, takođe branim epistemološki pristup, argumentujući da dijalektika koja stremljenost istini implicira kritiku i negativnost. Međutim, suočen sa dualnošću transcendentnih ideja i istorijske relativnosti, izražavam svoje poverenje u ljudsku intuiciju. Sledeći Hegela, negacija neposredno datog mora da uključi intuitivno shvaćenu univerzalnost u novu koncepciju koja sadrži rezultat negacije. Takođe, ne vidim kako se pojmovne aporije opšte ekonomije mogu rešiti unutar savremene politike 'od-rasta' (*Degrowth*). Ipak, treba nam više a ne manje politike, i to one socijal-demokratske.

Ključne reči: dijalektika, kapitalizam, kritička teorija, epistemologija, negacija, opšta ekonomija

II

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STUDIES AND ARTICLES

STUDIJE I ČLANCI





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Marc Crépon

## ON MURDEROUS SILENCE

**ABSTRACT**

The paper focuses on violence, claiming that it is not action, but silence and inaction that become "murderous", given that we are forced into a permanent and impossible process of choosing between responsibility for the other and the possibility of responding to a call for help. Still, this position is not final and the author offers certain alternative strategies, such as rebellion, goodness, critique and shame.

**KEYWORDS**

violence, consent, responsibility, rebellion, goodness, critique, shame

*For Zona,  
with gratitude,*

### I Translation

There is nothing more political than to shift, (one would almost rather say to clear the way for) or rather to force, a book from one language into another. The pages that were written in the context of a language and that are consequently historically and culturally specific, find a place in a different space, one that is impacted differently. The pages then seek readers that they could neither have found nor have met without the help of translation and translators. One of the later, as it happens, is my friend Zona and I would like to start by paying my respects to her. Translators act as ferrymen who, with each translation, cross a river of absence and forgetting; a river that always precedes them. But things are rarely as simple as that. It often happens that a kind of 'somewhere else' inhabits and haunts one's thoughts in a more or less secretive or confessional kind of way. This is so even when these thoughts occur and are written in a specific language with all its uniqueness, most notably its particular historicity. Once we consider the question of violence, of our indifference, our resignation or, in more active terms, our encouragement of and participation in violent death, thought can no longer escape the noise of the world. This is all the truer when the said noise is sanguine. We cannot develop or form thought by closing our eyes and ears. We are constantly confronted from all

sides with images and emblematic talk of passivity, or rather of the activity of the murderous consent – which both are forms of. Neither can we remain ignorant of the testimonies that tell of the painful trace left on murdered bodies and consciousnesses.

All translations are important. All languages and cultures are able to offer their hospitality to a new book. But there are countries whose recent histories have been impacted more so than others by consents of this kind; there are peoples who carry the trace of them like a tumor in their memories. One would have to be exceedingly deaf and blind to manage to ignore the unique resonance that the thoughts we have introduced here take on within a political space that was divided and unthinkably devastated by a terrible war just a quarter of a century ago.

First off, and this is fundamental, no peoples, no communities, regardless of their nature, have the right to allege that the dimension of belonging to the world – because it is precisely a matter of belonging to the world – and which we endeavor here to describe as ‘murderous consent’, is foreign to their history and culture; to their literature and the ideologies they have adopted. Who could deny that such consent is at work when all throughout Europe and the United States, in Turkey and Brazil and many other countries, leaders are brought to power through democracy, by the will of their people; peoples who are fully aware and have full knowledge of the brutal measures these rulers advocate, the threats they proffer, the segregation they seek, and their prejudice against this or that part of the population? Moreover, who knows what history has in store when a people let itself be seduced by the fervor and the promises of vengeance of a ruler who can only keep their power by awakening negative affections? This is the first point that we can undoubtedly make here: today the spectrum of murderous consent haunts the world because there is no lesson that history gives us, no upbringing, not even an institution that can protect us from a tyranny that trivializes murder.

## II Murderous Consent

Before we continue, we should clarify a potential misunderstanding. What do we mean by the term ‘murderous consent’? Nothing less than the indispensable dimension of our belonging to the world. If we want to avoid contenting ourselves with political ruse and empty words of morality, then it is a matter of principle to know how to identify this belonging. Let us begin. We must allow straight off that a *responsible* relation with another, if such a relation exists, must be founded on attention, care and aid. This relation demands that everyone everywhere be seen as vulnerable and mortal. Any other position amounts to a cynical subscription to the arrangements made by a casuistic proponent (of a clan, family, ethnicity, religion, party, etc.) who feels they have the authority to decree that in a given society (or somewhere else) there exists a specific category of individuals whose suffering and death can be met with indifference. We can go one step further: we can maintain that this is a matter

of the first principal of a radical ethics, an absolute, uncompromising, perhaps excessive, hyperbolic ethics, in the Derridean sense. Better yet, in contrast to particular morals (morals catechisms), we can acknowledge that this ethics of responsibility cannot have any exception. It must apply to everyone and cannot be reserved for one part of humanity or would be just as quickly compromised and brought to ruin. And we should not forget that this ruin (which is also conscience's ruin) occurs every time morality gives way to a calculating politics, a politics concerned with defending its own interests even when at the expense of its own principles and convictions.

Moreover, does history not offer us numerous examples of this? People trying to validate or justify their individual morals, dogmas, religious catechisms, and confused confessions in the face of terrible violence, as if they had to pay their place in society with an agreed upon blood? These validations and justifications are precisely what goes against the evidence of evil and cruelty. Precisely because this is the case (we might ask ourselves why it is so) we must look again to the principals of a universal ethics, one that is free of the murderous compromising of morals and politics. Would we not be deceiving ourselves to try to avoid what seems so profoundly anchored in human nature? Specifically, that men find ways of justifying acts of violence when it suits them (or when it upholds the forces that they support), the very same acts of violence that they condemn when committed by others. Why not just as well admit that it is impossible to not take advantage of others' suffering and death in a way that suit us and in so doing, allow ethical ruin altogether? But we cannot do this, really for one reason only: if we were to accept this ruin as our fate then violence would have no limits. Nothing would be able to contain and retain it. Ethics are needed precisely because if we relinquish the desire for ethics we sanction the reign of force. This force would then have the final say and could organise and uphold a generalised reification of whoever it chooses, submitting them to its rule for as long as it lasts.

This is why we need the principle of responsibility that we mentioned earlier: the principle of attention, care and aid that calls for the vulnerability and mortality of everyone everywhere. But this is not a simple task. As soon as it is done, we must likewise acknowledge the most tragic part of our finitude: that in the ordinary course of life we continuously make compromises with the demands of ethics. There are a thousand forms of vulnerability, a thousand confrontations with mortality that we – whether due to indifference, lassitude, impotence or, worse still, complacency – more or less deliberately decide to close our eyes to. We do this when our behavior, political choices, opinions or ideologies imply a rise in the vulnerability of other people or an increase in risk to their mortality. In other words, in practice our responsibility never lives up to the radicality that ethics demands; a demand that is necessary if we do not want ethics to become an individual moral (or a pseudo-moral), or rather violence's accomplice. And there is no way that it can be. Our finitude takes the form of an aporia. An abyss separates the only principle of ethics that really holds (that is to say, that is neither hypocritical, nor partisan nor partial and

already compromised) – as contaminated as this principle is by politics – and the actual practice of our responsibility toward the vulnerability and the mortality of others. Why is the principle contaminated? Because when the violence of adherence, of cause, of engagement, of all individual calculations makes us compromise, this principle is always damaged, derailed, ruined.

To live at the heart of this abyss is exactly what it means to ‘belong to the world’, both from an ethical and political point of view. But it also means, more exactly, to lay claim to a community whether linguistic, cultural, historical, national, proletarian etc. All idolatry of belonging, all cults of identity, with their fantasies of purity, their historical speculations, their rewriting of the past, have a degree of this kind of compromise. They make up a risk factor: the risk of digging the whole of the abyss a bit deeper, to the point of obscuring, or rather, of suspending the responsibility that is our primary concern. There is no appeal to belonging that is not exclusionary and vindictive and so they always dig this hole. A collective identity that closes itself off, obsessed with its own fencing off and withdrawal, is a vindictive identity. Those who adhere to this identity seek to gather together, even to arm themselves, by creating negative affections that fracture society (fear, resentment, anger, hatred); they feel the cement of unity is threatened or believe they have lost it and hope for its restoral.

### III The Demands of Justice

‘Murderous consent’ applies to everyone. It is part of how everyone belongs to the world. As such it is universal. But there are historical events that have greatly exacerbated this irreparability, such as those that the Balkans knew twenty-five years ago. This is why our theory of murderous consent and its offspring does not try to distinguish the innocent from the guilty any more so than it does victims from executioners. It explains, rather, why it is necessary to find justice. But what justice do we mean? A consequence of the acknowledgement of the universal scope of murderous consent, this dimension of existence, is that its evolution is not a matter of building accusatory lists. It does not put together a tribunal nor does it open a trial. The theory is rather concerned with setting the premises of what we call an “a cosmopolitan ethics”. And we have now arrived at the heart of the problem. Indeed the demands of ‘justice’, a word that is used to mean many things and which we are here trying to understand, can be defined when a shared concern for the state of the world brings ethics and politics together.

Being in the world is surely to find oneself within an aporia whereby we are, by our very finitude, poverty of experience and weaknesses of faculty (sense, imagination, understanding), always guilty of not being responsible enough. But “being in the world” is also to hear that internal voice that incites us to look for an answer by means of the invention of new paths. Paths that allow us to avoid the snares of resignation. It is to be driven by desire, a utopic one perhaps but necessary nonetheless. It is to escape the cowardliness of the selfish accommodation of other’s unhappiness and to escape that insidious dehumanisation of

life that considers violence the simple fate of existence and history. As Camus was well aware, our tendency to proliferate the consent to murder is perhaps the most worrying sign of our times, and it makes up the very essence of nihilism. Its major threat can be summed up in the simple form ‘what good would it do?’ What good would it do to stand up against radical evil, its corporal control, a control that disciplines bodies while intoxicating them with cruelty? What good would it do to oppose the deaf grip of images and discourse on peoples’ consciences; a grip that misleads them while pretending to wake them up! We know this voice well. It is the voice of terror and oppression. It can only ever be put to the use of the dark blood thirst that lays dormant in all beings. And it is here that an appeal to justice becomes necessary: another breath, another obstinate ‘contre-parole’ that whispers in our ear telling us that although the dimensions of murderous consent are inescapable, this does not mean that there is nothing to say or to be done on the individual or collective level.

#### IV The Multiplication of Silence

Nothing to do and nothing to say! This is the product of one of the miracles of translation. These miracles are never insignificant and they make us believe now more than ever in the creative magic and creative force of the shift between languages. The translator of the Serbo-Croatian edition selected a translation to the original titled *Le consenement meurtrier*: “murderous consent” that becomes “mortal silence”. This light shift of meaning (really we should say evident warping of the original) was not lost on me and is a change I fully condone. But which silence is meant here? That of the acknowledgement of crimes, of forgiveness, of justice? Let’s go back to the global-level. If there is a reason to acknowledge the universal scope of ‘murderous consent’, it is because there has never been a people in the world, there has never been a state that has not had to painfully withstand this silence. Whether we talk of the memory of a dictator with their lot of torture, disappearances and executions, notably in Chile, Argentina and Brazil or of the colonial and civil wars, the occupied lands and the compromising of this people or that through terror exercised by the occupiers. Whether we talk of totalitarian regimes or genocides, they are all haunted by the weight of silence, by its tricks, evasions and denials. But this silence, that is indeed deadly, is not confined to the cruel scenes of the world theatre. And what the reinvented title lays clear more so than the original is just how this silence reaches all circles of existence, as so many news stories and human dramas remind us daily. ‘Murderous consent’ occupies these walls of silence that victims throw themselves against. Victims of educational and conjugal violence and peoples whose place of study and work are poisoned by repeated assaults of mental and/or sexual harassment. If we think of the terrible solitude of people who throw themselves against these walls without ever finding an ear willing to hear the complaints that they hardly dare to form, if we imagine the embarrassed silences, the cowardliness, the shifting eyes, the distracted ears of people who do not want to see or hear, do not want to be

required to speak, then we see there is a deadliness in the silence of these ‘witnesses’ who evade their testimony.

Is consenting and keeping quiet one and the same? Decidedly not. There are infinitely more active and directly participative forms of consent than a simple silence. There are different degrees of compromise. Actively taking part in collective murder, exercising terror, stealing, raping, killing is not the same as doing nothing against it, not having the words to denounce it.

One of the objections that might be made against the generality of consent is this: we do not consent to something just because we say nothing out of weakness or fear. Two answers immediately arise. The first is that the boundary between passivity and activity is porous. When considering the affects of violence, both cases produce the same result, namely that the attentiveness, care and help that the vulnerability and mortality of others requires slips away. Both cases imply the same suspension of ethics. It is this very inciting radicality that the notion of ‘murderous consent’ confronts us with. Let us focus on this eclipse. It prohibits our conscience from taking refuge in distinctions that might aid in exempting ourselves from responsibility. It incites us to maintain, in contrast to all accommodation of the suffering and death of others, that when we let a crime happen, we go against responsible ethics as much as we do if we were to actually commit the crime.

The second reply to this rebuttal regards the confusion or rather the concern intrinsic to the notion of consent. Where does this consent start? When exactly can we say, confess, acknowledge to ourselves that we have consented to violence? We have to keep in mind that no one has perfect lucidity; no one is aware of their own thoughts to the extent that they can be entirely clear on their motivations when they decide to keep quiet or let something go on. Because the ego is not transparent to itself and because identity is always confused, we are not able to keep to a casuistry of our motivations enough to decide what we can blame on a collective terror. This is true for all forms of violence, whether domestic, social, political, military, or genocidal.

This ‘mortal silence’ that the Serbo-Croatian language and the miracle of translation have imposed on ‘murderous consent’ should therefore be understood in several ways. This plurality becomes all the more meaningful when we realise that it invites the temporality of consent. That is, the time that precedes the murder, that goes alongside its execution and that succeeds in its wake. Indeed *mortal silence* designates first and foremost an absence of words: the very slumber of critique. Violence does not take hold of a society out of nowhere. Again, in order for a part of the population to be targeted, hate speech must have already endeavoured to poison the people’s conscience for a long time. This happens over the span of years, sometimes decades, however long it takes to produce what we have called elsewhere “the sedimentation of the unacceptable” (Crépon 2008). Once something is broken beyond repair as is the case in mass crime, genocidal violence and pogrom, we must always come back to this first silence, this initial lack of criticism which is in itself an eclipse of responsibility. How is it possible that something we never thought we would

be able to tolerate ends up becoming permitted, digested by society? How do we then explain that when there was still time no ‘contre-parole’ was strong enough, armed enough and disseminated enough to oppose this deaf, insidious depot of resentment, hatred, of desire for vengeance in peoples’ hearts, those feelings that clear the way at each step to the path of crime?

The time then comes when the worst occurs. Painfully silence changes course. It is no longer a simple disarming of critique but an accomplice to crime. It no longer matters whether it is active or passive. It is not really true – it has never been true – that people are ignorant of the crimes that are committed in their name, or that are at least claimed to be committed for their interest. Strange interests indeed, ones that turn the very people who these crimes are for into hostages of violence. Mortal silence accompanies the repeated massive, obsessive presence of violent death, and in the end the terrible habituation to it. It is hard to give a universal analysis of this presence as its trauma is so irreducible and singular. No one could ever know how to bear witness in someone’s place to how war has upturned their very existence. Again, to speak of ‘murderous consent’ is to address three dimensions: the universal because no one escapes it; the particular, because there are concrete historical-political situations that expose a given community to such suffering; and finally the singular, because in the end each individual is faced with this adversity at the irreducible crossroads of their unique history and particular identities, or rather traps, of belonging.

Silence has still a third sense to grasp and is by no means the least difficult. This is when the time has come to settle the scores of violence, but the healing process of past wounds, the worry of their marks is compromised by a falsification of history. What is withheld or rather confiscated in this ultimate silence is easy enough to guess: confessions to the crimes perpetrated; the symbolic reparation of the harm done to victims; and finally the condemnation of criminals that took an active part in the ordering, orchestration, condoning, or execution of these crimes. This silence is the eclipse of responsibility that turns a blind eye and manifests as the denial of the debt that suffering and mourning have created. The eclipse suspends the attention, care and help that the other’s vulnerability and mortality call for. In it are the actors’ refusals to admit to the part they played. When this happens the violence done is multiplied. Again, this phenomenon is not restricted to any particular culture or historical event. Rather its universality is striking to the imagination. Wherever we turn we find the same thing: the varying weight of this silence that haunts traumatic scenes throughout the world. Scenes that follow, like a tumour in our memory, the half-buried, masked, hidden, minimalized memories of a passed terror. A terror that a society either does not know how to, does not want to or cannot make the topic of common knowledge, of common consensus or at least a topic of dissemination and debate. The stakes are the same from Latin America to Australia, in the United States, China, Russia, Japan, Cambodia, Vietnam, Rwanda, South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia (without saying anything of Europe): we can encourage or refuse them, go with or against

the acts but individually or collectively those who commit acts of terror, their proponents and supporters always try to oppose these strategies of silent evasion, these work-around tricks, these techniques of distortion to the evidence of fact and in so doing impede, for their various reasons, the conjoined march of truth and justice.

How could we assume, even for an instance, that this ultimate silence isn't 'murderous'? How could we keep it going? It is undoubtedly murderous from the moment it disrupts what is vital to society: the very relation between the living and the dead. Herein lies the meaning of this denial: it refuses to let those condemned by violence to rest in peace. This murderous consent is reproduced each time a crime is denied, each time criminals are protected, each time the facts are watered-down, each time reasons are given *a posteriori* to justify the unjustifiable. Not only is the rendering of justice then put off but the very possibility of an effective, durable – dare we say sincere – peace is compromised. When a society (and such societies exist all around the world) is destroyed and forced into mourning by the events of an extreme violence that have left their mark on families in a neighborhood, city, etc., there can be no peace so long as the call of the dead still sounds. This call is not nothing. If our lives both individual and communal can be defined as 'living with' then we live as much with the dead as we do with the living. In order for life with others to be possible, it is vital to contain or rather to regulate the place taken by the dead. Indeed it is the essence of the dead to invade – this gives them an undeniable political power. Is there a ruler who, lacking in popularity and success, out of ideas, propositions or solutions, has not given way to the temptation of making the murderous talk? It has always been so, because he who is able to make himself the ventriloquist of the dead is bestowed a formidable power. Nothing gives rise to collective emotions more. Nothing provokes anger more, excites hatred and resentment more than the awaking of vengeance. A strange chiasmus: the more the society of the living keeps quiet, trying in vain to turn the page discretely, the more the dead talk or are made to talk.

## V Ethical Gestures

Nothing to say! Nothing to do! Let's come back to this. What the considerations of 'murderous consent' endeavor to evolve is not only a matter of the universal dimension that is constitutive of our belonging to the world (which is also the violation of a principal). It is just as much about ethical gestures that we can propose as certain tentative paths. That is, what we propose while still fully aware that we cannot entirely get away from murderous consent. That this is impossible is a result, as we saw, of our finitude. Empathy and compassion are limited to the power of our finite faculties. The radicality that ethics demands presupposes infinitely vast sensibility, imagination and understanding. Things that are simply not within our range. In other words, we can only put ourselves in the shoes of a limited amount of people in order to give them the attention, care and help they request. But these limitations that define our



condition are also an opportunity. They remind us that the object of violence is not a general set, an abstract category that defines some group (community, religion, nationality, language, etc.), but rather a discontinuous adding-on of individuality. Better yet, the first side-step we can take in to escape the fatalism of consent consists in expressing the irreducibly singular character of the subject of our responsibility: each individual's vulnerability and mortality. Individuals, not abstract concepts require attention, care and aid. Individuals whose vulnerability and mortality cannot be generalised or confused with a collective entity. This means that, even though murderous consent remains an inescapable dimension of our being in the world, we manage to escape it every time we are confronted, rather exposed to an instance of vulnerability; to another's mortality at risk. We recognize this individual as irreplaceable and unique and therefore we respond to their singularity. This is how we express what violence disregards, what it considers negligible; but what nonetheless resist violence's hold: Uniqueness, the very essence of what violence seeks to destroy and thereby erase.

What options do we have to answer? We can distinguish four: rebellion, goodness, critique and shame. This list is, of course, not exhaustive but the elements in it have a point in common: without being specifically manifested they do not exist. They presuppose gestures or signs that contradict, that go against the spoken and gestural logic of murderous consent. But what is this logic? As war always uses this logic, it is now time to say a few words about it. The needs of force impose consensus' menacing rules. In other words, this logic normalises what is said and done. Its common denominator is the acknowledgement of a certain legitimacy in violence or more so, it excludes the possibility that we can show reluctance when violence is used and that we can hear a different voice. In this way this aggressive normativity prohibits us from protesting against, for instance, confirmed violations of human rights. This normativity demands at best, that we close our eyes and plug our ears, at worst that we applaud or take part in active massacre. Regulate, exclude, ban! We see now that this consensus is the terror of consent. It is always ready to use any and all forms of coercion and blackmail. There is no way out for the people it is exercised on. Everyone whose opinions or sensibilities do not conform to this violence are accused straight off of treason. This has always been the case. Those whose convictions stop them from taking part in the bloody celebrations are 'traitors'. 'Traitors' again, those who are adamant on not understanding why so much hatred has erupted all of a sudden. 'Traitors' finally, all who refuse to acknowledge that the targeted people are enemies to be demolished; that it is a matter of principle that a targeted people should be deprived of attention, care and help, in one word, of their humanity.

We can deduce easily enough the nature and the meaning of the ethical gestures that can be raised against this logic. Their nature is also what makes them courageous. These gestures oppose the brutality and policies of the consensus imposed by violence. They oppose this way of seeing, of speaking, of doing that invalidate others. Is this insignificant? What can rebellion, goodness, critique

and shame do when confronted with the extreme violence on which our considerations pivot? We can already imagine the objections that could be made against the place we have given these gestures. We could say firstly that the moral scope of individual choices is not political enough and only concerns and commits the person who makes them. These choices only appease the guilt of the person who is not able to change the misery of the world, who is powerless against it. They do not change the misery itself. Does it then follow that murderous consent and its 'poor' offspring, are really the ultimate version of the unhappy conscious? Is only a process that is typically individual and far from political action susceptible to overturn an objective situation synonymous with violence? We would perhaps answer that these objections are made due to lack of imagination. What is forgotten in making these objections is the subversive power of these gestures, a power we cannot measure. It is all a matter of links and chains. Our political and ethical choices are articulated by considering what connects us, what holds us together; what we allow to bind us and what we have the strength to separate ourselves from. This is precisely what rebellion, goodness, critique, and shame all have in common: they undo certain ties in order to tie others. To connect and disconnect, in other words: to separate in order to unify differently. If mortal silence is the vector of an unfair complicity, we must acknowledge that only those who know how to break these chains have the strength to stop it.

Rebellion, goodness, critique and shame, they all have the power to spark such a rupture. Indeed what is rebellion if not the introduction of disorder to a system that is supposed to be unanimous? A system, the merciless mechanisms of a murderous administration. It remains protected so long as no one takes the risk of contesting its criminal abuses. Everyone then is an accomplice: everyone who conceives of and launches the infernal machine, everyone who keeps it working, everyone who lets themselves be carried by it, whether out of cowardliness, indifference or complacency. To rebel while there is still time either individually or collectively is to add a grain of sand against this unanimity and in so doing add the promise of disruption. Above all it is to assert the desire for things to be different. Think of all those forms of action in the four corners of the globe that spur from civil disobedience; the creative ways people have found to show their refusal. To disobey, this has always meant to separate oneself from a legal system, from decrees of unjust regimentation as well as from the instruments that see that they are respected. But this also means changing sides, to find oneself possibly on the side of the vanquished or the victims. That is, those for whom the sole existential meaning (and therefore political meaning) of a morally corrupt system is the exponential increase to their vulnerability and the danger of a violent death.

The scope of goodness is even more meaningful. Whoever experiences the violence of a juridical system, police officer, politician or military is exposed to a feeling of abandonment that is not the least of the cruelties that are then exercised. Suffice to say proof of this is found in the simple reminder of those practices that physically but more so psychologically and morally isolate a

person; practices that have always served to refine cruelty. Whoever is forced to go through these becomes a being excluded from society, a rejected, a pariah. An experience shared by everyone who sees themselves as victims throughout history: to be or to feel abandoned. This amounts to experiencing a painful absence of support – a lack of an elementary solidarity –; it amounts to suffering the melting pot of violence. But, in their way, gestures of simple goodness fill this absence. These gestures are the basic forms of attention, care and help that vulnerability requires: a look, a smile, a word of comfort, an extended hand, the appeasement of hunger or thirst.

We have already addressed the matter of critique. But let us now specify what makes it helpful! When murderous consent is calculated, orchestrated by authorities whether civil or military, there is always an apparatus put into place: discourse and images whose invasive presence on the walls of a city, on the radio and television or on social media is meant to provoke, not a feeling of abandonment but rather of powerlessness. There can be no doubt as to the effect such an invasion seeks: to turn the people that its hammering targets into hostages of a new language; to provoke a depressive paralysis in their hearts and minds. It is precisely this wide-spread impression of powerlessness and the resulting belittling that critique can correct. It breaks the ties of propaganda and verbal consensus that habituate us to murder. It reinstates an analysis free of ideological strangleholds. At the same time it restores, at least minimally, trust in language without which we have no final defense against the worst.

Let's finish with a few words on shame. Its ethical significance is considerable. We saw that within the gradation of silences there is one that comes from denying that a crime has been committed. This is when those who took part in a crime actively or passively distance themselves from it: either they didn't know or they were caught in the gears of a machine and couldn't have done otherwise. Neither in their soul nor conscience do they feel guilt or responsibility. It is not here necessary for us to be reminded of how such a reaction multiplies the affronts to the victims; a reaction we see all around the world; where scores are being settled, where the executioners of yesterday try to survive in a society just beginning to heal and reconstruct. Shame, however, describes the opposite movement. To experience and manifest shame is to accept the part one played in the violence done. This is why there is perhaps no feeling more directly joint to murderous consent – that is, there is no feeling that takes it into account more explicitly. Shame is the very impossibility of distancing ourselves from the violence that we did not see coming, that we did not know how to stop, or against which we will always never have protested enough.

Evanston, April 2019

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## Mark Krepon

### O smrtonosnom ćutanju

#### Apstrakt

Predavanje se fokusira na nasilje i tvrdi da nije delovanje već ćutnja i nečinjenje ono što postaje ‚smrtonosno‘, s obzirom na to da smo prisiljeni na trajni i nemogući proces odlučivanja između odgovornosti za drugoga i mogućnosti odgovaranja na bilo koji poziv u pomoć. Ipak, takva vrsta prihvatanja nije konačna i autor nudi određene alternativne strategije: pobunu, dobrotu, kritiku i sram.

Ključne reči: nasilje, pristanak, odgovornost, pobuna, dobrota, kritika, sram

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## POLITICAL LIBERALISM AND JUSTIFICATORY SECULARISM

### ABSTRACT

In this paper I analyze Cécile Laborde's conception of justificatory secularism. Laborde points out that in her formulation and defense of the conception of justificatory secularism, she follows Rawls' conception of political liberalism to a certain extent. For that reason, I first provide a sketch of Rawls' conception of political liberalism. Then I focus on justificatory secularism, trying to show to what extent it displays similarities with the conception of political liberalism, but also how it differs. I am interested in whether justificatory secularism represents a better alternative to the conception of political liberalism or whether these two conceptions should be considered complementary.

### KEYWORDS

political liberalism,  
justificatory secularism,  
religion, legitimacy,  
public reason

In this paper I will analyze Cécile Laborde's conception of justificatory secularism.<sup>1</sup> This conception does not defend full secularization of social and political life, however it holds that there have to be certain restraints to influence of religion on politics. The main feature of Laborde's standpoint is that justification of coercive laws must be made in terms of secular reasons. It asks in what way secular justification of political decisions can also be acceptable for citizens of faith and why it is important that justification should not be in terms of religious reasons. In that sense, Laborde's standpoint has similarities with the conception of political liberalism formulated by John Rawls. Moreover, Laborde points out that in her formulation and defense of the conception of justificatory secularism, she follows Rawls's conception of political liberalism to a certain extent (Laborde 2013a: 165). But she also claims that in some

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aspects justificatory secularism diverges from political liberalism, or at least some of its dominant interpretations.

For that reason, I will first provide a sketch of Rawls's conception of political liberalism. It should be pointed out that in doing so, I will focus on those points that are crucially important for understanding justificatory secularism. Then I will analyze justificatory secularism, trying to show to what extent it displays similarities with the conception of political liberalism, but also to what extent it differs from it. In the last part of the paper I turn to some criticisms of justificatory secularism. I will be interested in whether justificatory secularism represents a better alternative to the conception of political liberalism or whether these two conceptions should be considered complementary.

Rawls's conception of political liberalism for the purpose of this paper could be sketched in the following way:

1. The assumption of pluralism: Political liberalism applies to societies which are characterized by (reasonable) pluralism of comprehensive doctrines.
2. The condition of public justification: In pluralist societies, it is not acceptable to justify coercive laws with any (reasonable) comprehensive doctrine (whether religious or nonreligious).
3. The liberal principle of legitimacy: Hence within political liberalism, the liberal principle of legitimacy holds which requires that constitutional essentials should be acceptable to all citizens on reasonable grounds.
4. The public reason condition (a): When deciding about constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice, officials, but also citizens, should offer only public reasons (reasons which are acceptable to all reasonable citizens).
5. The public reason condition (b): The ideal of public reason requires that all officials, judges and citizens respect the constraints of public reason in their public deliberations.
6. The public reason condition (c): Exceptions from conditions 4 and 5 are possible in cases when "in due course proper political reasons – and not reasons given solely by comprehensive doctrines – are presented that are sufficient to support whatever the comprehensive doctrines introduced are said to support" (Rawls 1997: 784).

To explain: Rawls starts from the assumption that contemporary democratic societies are characterized by the fact of reasonable pluralism. Actually, they are characterized by a considerably broader pluralism regarding various dimensions. However, Rawls thinks that for applying the conception of political liberalism, the focus should be on reasonable pluralism. He considered reasonable comprehensive doctrines those doctrines that do not reject the basic tenets of the liberal-democratic society. The conception of political pluralism is not applied to any kind of pluralism, but primarily to pluralism of reasonable comprehensive doctrines.

Second, if we start from the assumption of pluralism, then it is not acceptable to provide public justification for coercive laws in terms of reasons specific for comprehensive doctrines. Given that the adherents of other comprehensive doctrines will not find such reasons acceptable, one has to look for some common ground of public justification. Someone might think that a comprehensive doctrine can be imposed on other members of society by force, simply because it is correct. For Rawls, this would contradict not only the assumption of pluralism, but also the entire conception of political liberalism. One of the basic aims of this conception is to find a common ground of public justification that would be acceptable to all citizens in societies which are characterized by the fact of reasonable pluralism. For that reason, political liberalism looks for an agreement that would be achieved on reasonable grounds.

Third, this sort of an agreement is specified by what Rawls terms the liberal principle of legitimacy. He formulates this principle by saying that the “exercise of political power is proper and hence justifiable only when it is exercised in accordance with a constitution the essentials of which all citizens may reasonably be expected to endorse in the light of principles and ideals acceptable to them as reasonable and rational” (Rawls 1996: 217). It is obvious that Rawls’s liberal principle of legitimacy is not focused on any kind of a coercive law, but on constitutional essentials which should be acceptable to all citizens on reasonable grounds. However, the question arises in what way it is possible to arrive at this type of an agreement and in that respect public reason is crucially important. The three remaining conditions can hence be considered the public reason conditions.

The first of these conditions, the public reason condition (a) requires that when deciding about constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice all those included in that process, that is, not only officials, but also citizens, should offer public reasons, that is, reasons that are based on political values independent of any comprehensive doctrine. The next condition (b) says that the ideal of public reason is achieved when all those participating in decision-making regarding constitutional essentials respect the limits of public reason, that is, do not offer reasons typical of a comprehensive doctrine. For Rawls, this pertains to public discussions, but also voting concerning constitutional essentials should not be based on comprehensive doctrines. It is noteworthy that the public reason condition (b) can be interpreted in two ways. The stronger interpretation of this condition entails that it is applied not only to public deliberation regarding constitutional essentials, but also to discussions regarding all other laws.<sup>2</sup> The weaker interpretation of this condition implies that it is applied only to constitutional essentials, but not to public deliberations on other laws (or at least not so strictly). It should be pointed out that for Rawls, this condition holds in institutional forms of public deliberation, and that it is not applied to debates in what he terms the background culture i.e. discussions within the more broadly conceived public sphere of civil society.

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2 For the stronger interpretation of this condition, see Cohen 2011: 261, 271.

Finally, Rawls thinks that there are certain exceptions to what I called public reason conditions (a) and (b) in cases when offering reasons from the perspective of a comprehensive doctrine could in due course advance the perspective of the public reason. He called this „the wide view of public reason”. In this context Rawls evokes the example of the abolitionists, who had offered reasons typical of a religious comprehensive doctrine in order to oppose the institution of slavery. He also points out that some statements of Martin Luther King Jr., that have a religious grounding advanced the public reason perspective. So, according to the wide view of public reason, offering reasons from the perspective of a comprehensive doctrine may be acceptable under what Rawls called “the proviso”: “reasonable comprehensive doctrines, religious or nonreligious, may be introduced in public political discussion at any time, provided that in due course proper political reasons – and not reasons given solely by comprehensive doctrines – are presented that are sufficient to support whatever the comprehensive doctrines introduced are said to support” (Rawls 1997: 783–784).

If we start from the assumption of pluralism and validity of the liberal principle of legitimacy, and if the conditions 2, 4, 5 and 6 are satisfied, we arrive at the conception of well-ordered democratic society. The conception of political liberalism thus not only offers a set of basic principles for a liberal-democratic society, but also conditions under which stability of the democratic society is possible. Nothing that has so far been said, except perhaps condition 6 is specific to the relationship towards religious comprehensive doctrines. However, all aforementioned conditions can be interpreted in a more specific way as determining the relationship towards religious comprehensive doctrines within political liberalism.

Therefore it is not surprising that an important question to which this conception should provide an answer was formulated by Rawls in the following way: “How is it possible for citizens of faith to be wholehearted members of a democratic society when they endorse an institutional structure satisfying a liberal political conception of justice with its own intrinsic political ideals and values, and when they are not simply going along with it in view of the balance of political and social forces?” (Rawls 1996: xxxviii). Rawls claims that the conception of political liberalism provides an answer to precisely this question. He says that political liberalism “does not aim to replace comprehensive doctrines, religious or nonreligious, but intends to be equally distinct from both and, it hopes, acceptable to both” (Rawls 1996: xxxviii). As I have already mentioned, the conception of justificatory secularism is in that respect very similar to political liberalism. Having considered Rawls’s view, I now turn to justificatory secularism.

Laborde thinks that justificatory secularism primarily pertains to the type of justification which is acceptable in public domain when enacting laws and policies. In this regard, the version of secularism which it espouses does not pertain to substantive issues regarding the content of laws and policies that should be enacted, but normatively adequate forms of their justification. Laborde



reiterates the claim that “the state must be secular so that ordinary citizens do not have to be secular” (Laborde 2013a: 169, 185). I will organize my presentation of justificatory secularism in such a way to understand, first, what Laborde means by saying that “the state must be secular,” and, second, what she means by saying that “ordinary citizens do not have to be secular”. In analyzing justificatory secularism, I will rely on my earlier sketch of political liberalism, in order to see the points on which there is agreement and the points where these two conceptions differ.

First, Laborde also starts from what I have termed the assumption of pluralism. She says that “in a society characterized by ethical pluralism, state-authorized coercion needs to be justified, and it needs to be justified to the people – to all of us, despite the differences that divide us” (Laborde 2013a: 165). According to Laborde, the problem regarding religious reasons is that they cannot provide that sort of justification. Instead of an agreement, in pluralist societies they are rather a source of divisions and disagreements. Regarding justification of laws on the basis of religious reasons, Laborde stresses that “at least in pluralistic Western societies with a history of religious conflict, it is controversial and divisive in a particular way” (Laborde 2013a: 167). Precisely because of that, she thinks that justification of coercive laws cannot be based on religious grounds. So political liberalism and justificatory secularism both start from the assumption of pluralism. Furthermore, both positions imply that if we start from the assumption of pluralism, it cannot be acceptable to justify coercive laws in the light of religious reasons. Considering that Rawls in that regard talks about comprehensive doctrines in general, which may or may not be religious, Laborde even more explicitly specifies secular reasons as normatively adequate grounds for justification of laws and policies.<sup>3</sup> She says that “when officials seek to justify laws and policies, they should exercise religious restraint, and appeal solely to secular grounds for their rulings and decisions” (Laborde 2013a: 167). I will return to this point shortly.

Second, justificatory secularism also accepts the condition of public justification. I have already considered this point, but it should be pointed out that Laborde provides additional elaboration by specifying what she terms the Non-Imposition Norm (NIN). Namely, she says that justificatory secularism is primarily oriented towards “justification of political power” and “justification of democratic coercive laws” (Laborde 2013a: 165, 166). We have seen earlier that justification of coercive laws is precisely to what condition 2 pertains. The version of this condition in the form of the Non-Imposition Norm holds that “there is something particularly wrong about the official imposition of religious views, *qua* religious, on citizens” (Laborde 2013a: 169). Laborde argues that this type of separation between church and state characteristic for the Non-Imposition Norm is actually based on four assumptions. These are the assumption that the state is incompetent regarding religious doctrines, that religion has often been a source of deep political conflicts, that religious disagreements are

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3 For Laborde’s view on secular reasons, see Laborde 2013b: 74–75.

very deep because they pertain to some fundamental issues and that religious features and practices often divide religious people into separate groups (Laborde 2013a: 168). We have seen earlier that Laborde primarily refers to officials. Now we can go back to this issue in the light of the Non-Imposition Norm. Laborde claims that the essential feature of justificatory secularism is that the Non-Imposition Norm is primarily applied to officials when they discuss and decide about coercive laws and policies. So religious restraint is strictly applied to officials when they provide public justification of political decisions.

It seems that up to this point there is full agreement between political liberalism and justificatory secularism. It is less clear whether justificatory secularism fully accepts the liberal principle of legitimacy, the way Rawls specified it. I think that within justificatory secularism some form of the liberal principle of legitimacy is assumed, if not explicitly, then at least implicitly. Namely, Laborde emphasizes that her understanding of justificatory secularism “is essential to liberal legitimacy and democratic deliberation” (Laborde 2013a: 166). Hence, there is no doubt that Laborde maintains that justificatory secularism contains a certain form of liberal legitimacy. However, when I say that a certain form of liberal principle of legitimacy is implicitly assumed, I primarily have in mind that the idea of reasonableness does not appear within the conception of justificatory secularism. For this reason, in my presentation of political liberalism, I have put the term “reasonable” in brackets in order to facilitate comparison with justificatory secularism. Despite the fact that Laborde accepts the assumption of pluralism and the liberal principle of legitimacy in a certain form, she does not do that the way Rawls does in terms of reasonableness. Is this difference crucial for divorcing justificatory secularism from political liberalism? I think that it is not and that the main differences lie elsewhere. Namely, one of the main features of reasonable citizens, in Rawls’s view, is that “they are prepared to offer one another fair terms of social cooperation (defined by principles and ideals) and they agree to act on those terms, even at the cost of their own interests in particular situations, provided that others also accept those terms” (Rawls 1996: xlii). Although not presented in those terms, justificatory secularism implicitly assumes that the mode of justification of coercive laws should be such that it is acceptable to all. Hence in that regard political liberalism and justificatory liberalism are quite similar. The difference between these two conceptions lies primarily in what I have termed the public reason conditions.

I have started the analysis of justificatory secularism with Laborde’s statement that “the state must be secular so that ordinary citizens do not have to be secular”. So far I discussed the first part of this statement. Now I turn to the second part of the statement which says that “ordinary citizens do not have to be secular”. To what extent justificatory secularism in that respect diverges from political liberalism. The public reason condition (a) emphasizes that at least when constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice are concerned, the strict obligation to offer public reasons does not only hold for officials, but also for citizens. Unlike such understanding of the public reason condition (a),

Laborde points out that under justificatory secularism, the Non-Imposition Norm does not pertain to citizens at all. How to understand this difference? First of all, one should take note that unlike Rawls, Laborde does not talk about constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice, but about justification of coercive laws. Her standpoint is that when justification of laws and policies is concerned, citizens do not have an obligation to follow the Non-Imposition Norm, that is, offering religious reasons can be justified. But the question is why wouldn't the obligation that citizens offer public reasons, as within political liberalism, hold?

The explanation offered by Laborde pertains to revision of what I have termed the public reason condition (b). According to this condition, officials and citizens participating in public deliberation on constitutional essentials and questions of basic justice are equally constrained by the limits of public reason. According to justificatory secularism, these constraints should not hold for public deliberation in which citizens take part. Laborde maintains that imposing any constraints on public deliberation would be detrimental to freedom of speech and freedom of conscience. It could be said that Laborde in that respects espouses moderate form of secularism, which leaves ample space for religious reasons in citizens' debates. The statement that "ordinary citizens do not have to be secular" means that religious restraint is not applied to public debates of citizens. Laborde points out that her standpoint differs in that respect from political liberalism, or at least its dominant interpretations:

It should be clear by now that justificatory secularism diverges from more demanding accounts of the role of public reason in political debate. Rawlsian philosophers, notably, argue that when citizens propose to use collective coercive power, they should put forward special kinds of reasons – reasons that are 'public' in the sense that they are not grounded in comprehensive, controversial conceptions of the good and draw, instead, on a shared political conception of justice. By contrast, justificatory secularism does not require that citizens only appeal to secular or public reasons, nor that they share a fixed, full conception of justice. Rather, it emphasizes the role of public deliberation in the identification of relevant principles of political justice. This is because general principles of public reason remain inconclusive and indeterminate unless and until they are interpreted, weighed and ranked in relation to the specific issues at stake. And such weighing and ranking will, naturally, be done against the background of the deep, diverse non-public views which people bring to their deliberations. While we should expect that, in a well-ordered liberal democracy, public decisions will be justified by appeal to secular reasons (as per NIN), free deliberation about deeper 'reasons for reasons' is necessary for the evaluation and selection of appropriate secular reasons. (Laborde 2013a: 170–171)

Laborde concludes that justificatory secularism "advocates less stringent limitations on legitimate democratic debate than Rawlsian theories of public reason" (Laborde 2013a: 172). However, there is certain ambivalence regarding Laborde's view on public deliberation. Namely, we have seen that the public reason condition (b) can be interpreted more strongly to mean that public reason

constraints apply not only to public deliberations regarding constitutional essentials, but also to public deliberations regarding other laws. The weaker interpretation says that public reason constraints apply only to public deliberations on constitutional essentials, but not on other laws. Finally, according to Rawls, these constraints are not applied to citizens' deliberations within civil society. It is certain that Laborde does not advocate the stronger interpretation of the public reason condition (b). However, it is not quite clear whether her statement that religious restraint does not apply to citizens should be understood as the weaker interpretation of this condition or that it is simply not applied within civil society. There is ample textual evidence that the latter is the case. But if so, then her standpoint, contrary to previous statements, does not at all differ from political liberalism, given that public reason constraints according to Rawls do not apply to discussions within civil society. On the other hand, Laborde says that justificatory secularism pertains to coercive laws. But then why would in public deliberation on coercive laws religious restraint apply to officials, but not to citizens debating the very same laws?

It is important to consider how Laborde interprets the public reason condition (c) in order to see her answer to that question. So far we have seen in what way Laborde explains why religious restraint is strictly applied to officials, but not to citizens. However, she claims that apart from officials and citizens, candidates for certain posts and leaders of parties that are not necessarily a part of legislative institutions also play an important role in the political domain. She calls this type of politician citizen-candidate (Laborde 2013a: 170). Namely, it is not clear whether religious restraint equally applies to them as to other officials. Laborde's solution to this problem can be understood according to Rawls's proviso. Laborde maintains that the Non-Imposition Norm applies to citizen-candidates, but not equally strictly. It means that they should try to provide public reasons for their proposals to the utmost possible measure, but considering that religious restraint is not applied to them equally strictly, they can in certain cases offer religious reasons as well. Rawls's proviso would be satisfied in case of their election to legislative functions, because in that case religious restraint would have to strictly apply to them. It seems that some form of Rawls's proviso is also behind the division of labor within justificatory secularism. Namely, citizens' debates within civil society, which allow offering religious reasons, can be understood so that they satisfy Rawls's proviso because in due course they are translated into secular reasons in debates of officials concerning coercive laws. Laborde thinks that without these debates, it would not be possible to know which of religious reasons can be translated into secular terms (Laborde 2013a: 171). This means that debates within civil society have an important role, because they reveal deeper reasons that stand behind secular reasons offered by officials in order to justify laws and policies.

Recall that according to justificatory secularism, officials have a strict duty of religious restraint, citizen-candidates have a limited duty of religious restraint and citizens do not have such a duty at all. However, we have seen that Laborde, unlike Rawls, does not mention constitutional essentials. We have

seen that for Rawls public reason constraints also apply to citizens participating in public deliberation on constitutional essentials.<sup>4</sup> This is because constitutional essentials should be acceptable to all citizens on reasonable grounds. The first objection to justificatory secularism is that, unlike political liberalism, its standpoint does not make clear whether religious restraint should apply to citizens participating in the debates on constitutional essentials.

The second problem concerns the weaker interpretation of the public reason condition (b) from the perspective of justificatory secularism. Namely, as I have already argued, there is certain ambivalence regarding public deliberation within justificatory secularism. It can be understood as a non-institutionalized public discussion within civil society. But it can also be understood as an institutionalized form of public discussion regarding coercive laws. Obviously, Laborde maintains that as regards the former, religious restraint does not hold for citizens.<sup>5</sup> However, it is not entirely clear what justificatory secularism proposes as regards the latter. On the one hand, given that religious restraint does not apply to citizens under justificatory secularism, it should not apply to citizens in the case of an institutionalized form of public deliberation. But on the other hand, given that it applies when justifying coercive laws, it should also apply in case of citizens offering justification for coercive laws in institutionalized forms of public deliberation.

The third problem concerns the revision of the public reason condition (c). Actually, two objections can be made here regarding implicit reliance on Rawls's proviso. We have seen that the behavior of citizen-candidates in the public domain can be understood so that it satisfies Rawls's proviso. However, if the same persons who from period  $t1$  to period  $t2$  had not had the strict obligation of religious restraint, from period  $t2$  have a strict obligation of religious restraint, it can lead to the problem of psychological inconsistency, and even pragmatic inconsistency. The second objection concerns another revision of Rawls's proviso. The citizens' debates within civil society, according to Laborde, reveal deeper reasons on which laws are based. Rawls's proviso is satisfied when these deeper reasons which can also be religious reasons are translated into secular reasons when laws are officially justified. However, the problem with this view is that, contrary to the basic intention of justificatory secularism, coercive laws can then be based on religious reasons.

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4 This was Rawls's standpoint in *Political Liberalism*. Later in his paper "The Idea of Public Reason Revisited", Rawls leaves out an explicit mention of citizens when discussing to whom the ideal of public reason should apply. Hence it could be said that justificatory secularism is much closer to Rawls's later standpoint. However, it should also be pointed out that there are other formulations in *The Idea of Public Reason Revisited* which show that Rawls had not fully given up on the original idea that the ideal of public reason should also apply to citizens' debates (Rawls 1997: 773).

5 Considering that Laborde divorces public deliberation from requirements of public reason, the pressing question for justificatory secularism is to determine an appropriate type of deliberative toleration. For the idea of deliberative toleration, see Bohman 2003.

There is no doubt that justificatory secularism has provided certain alternative solutions when compared to political liberalism.<sup>6</sup> We have seen, however, that political liberalism offers answers to certain issues which remain open within the conception of justificatory secularism. I have argued that for an analysis of justificatory secularism, it is of utmost importance to understand its connection with political liberalism. To conclude, political liberalism and justificatory secularism should be viewed as complementary conceptions which inform and complement each other in some important aspects. An utterly unexpected consequence of analyzing justificatory secularism is that this conception throws new light on public deliberation.

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### Politički liberalizam i sekularizam opravdanja

#### Apstrakt:

U ovom radu analiziraćemo stanovište sekularizma opravdanja koje je nedavno formulisala Sesil Labord. Labord jasno ističe da prilikom formulisanja i odbrane koncepcije sekularizma opravdanja u određenoj meri sledi Rolsovo shvatanje političkog liberalizma. Zbog toga ćemo u ovom radu najpre ponuditi skicu Rolsove koncepcije političkog liberalizma. Potom ćemo analizirati stanovište sekularizma opravdanja i nastojaćemo pritom da ukažemo u kojoj meri ono ima sličnosti sa koncepcijom političkog liberalizma, ali i u kojoj meri se od nje razlikuje. Tako da će nas prvenstveno interesovati da li koncepcija sekularizma opravdanja predstavlja bolju alternativu u odnosu na koncepciju političkog liberalizma ili na te dve koncepcije treba gledati kao na komplementarne.

Ključne reči: politički liberalizam, sekularizam opravdanja, religija, legitimnost, javni um

6 On this point, see also Schuppert 2017.

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## PERFECTIONISM AND ENDORSEMENT CONSTRAINT<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The article deals with Hurka's critique of Kymlicka and Arneson's critique of Dworkin on endorsement constraint thesis, according to which a person cannot have a valuable life if values are imposed on her – primarily by state action – overriding her preferences and convictions on the good life. This thesis has often been identified with neutral liberalism and counterposed to perfectionism. The text argues against Hurka's and Arneson's argument that mild coercion and paternalistic reduction of trivial, bad or worthless options can indeed bring about a more valuable life. Their argument does not acknowledge adequately the difference between coercion from a person's immediate social environment and state coercion, which are not equally legitimate. My critique, however, does not exclude the legitimacy of perfectionistic measures, as a person could accept as justified state intervention concerning the support of particular values or goods, while at the same time not endorsing those values and goods. Not all endorsed goods or activities should be treated equally, as more relevant and valuable ones can be legitimately supported by particular policy.

### KEYWORDS

liberalism, neutrality, perfectionism, endorsement constraint, Arneson, Dworkin, Hurka, Kymlicka

In contemporary liberal political theory the idea of state neutrality regarding so-called constitutional essentials is dominant: the basic principles of justice of a political community should be constructed in such a way that they not promote any conception of the good over others, and ought to leave it to individuals themselves to determine their own vision of the good life, happiness, lifestyle, ethical, aesthetic and other values. Disagreements are more conspicuous on a less general level of concrete state action, its justification, aims and outcomes. The state affirms policy which in multifarious ways, directly or indirectly, coercively or noncompulsorily, have an impact on people's lives, affecting their decisions and preferences. By regulating the content of the school

<sup>1</sup> This article was realised with the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, according to the Agreement on the realisation and financing of scientific research.

curriculum, and deciding which sort of programs are appropriate for state funded public media, the state's aim is to promote positive values, whereas by regulation and taxation of gambling, or the production and distribution of alcohol and tobacco the state is influencing the activities widely considered as negative. But these policies are not uncontroversial by any means. Periodically, the school curriculum is the object of debates, especially concerning teaching history and literature. There are many subjects of dispute on which programs should, and which ones should not be broadcast by public media. Also, there are controversies over the taxation of gambling, alcohol and tobacco as many perceive these measures as an attack on their small enjoyments which are admittedly inseparable from their overall happiness. Particular proponents of perfectionism, i.e. the standpoint that the state can and should contribute to human flourishing argue that state intervention which does not impair personal autonomy is not in collision with the equal treatment of the persons. The state can have an influence on the life of individuals, even on the particular objects which are constitutive for their happiness, although their fundamental projects and conceptions of good should be chosen independently.

In other words, limited state intervention intended to enhance human flourishing and to ameliorate personal choices and preferences can fulfill the condition of neutrality concerning different reasonable conceptions of the good, those which are complex and reflexive, autonomously chosen by individuals, as their suppression would have a negative impact on equal respect for all. But from the standpoint of liberal neutrality it can be objected that this enhancement is conducted by a particular vision of the good which is not approved by all members of society and on which some might have a reasonable objection that it imposes an unjustified burden on their beliefs regarding the good or on the way to lead their lives. According to the position of state neutrality in liberal political theory, instead of promoting particular comprehension of the valuable components of life and suppressing the bad and worthless ones, the exclusive function of the conception of justice is to define a framework of rules and institutions within which the people are free to choose their own ideas of the good life (Larmore 2015: 83). Policy directed towards enhancement of life imposed against someone's will and beliefs is self-defeating, because a person can lead a good life only if it is in accordance with values that the person themselves endorse. Endorsement constraint thesis implies that any state intervention intended to advance someone's life and which override their preferences, convictions and independent determination of valuable life is unjustifiable.<sup>2</sup>

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2 Kymlicka 1989: 900; Kymlicka 2002: 216; Dworkin 2000: 283–284. The Endorsement constraint concept does not suggest the validity of want-satisfaction conception as higher-order theory, according to which the satisfaction of a person's preferences should be integrated with a conception of justice, while justice has, to the greatest extent, to be impartial to the content of the preferences, in accordance with the utilitarian maxim that the wants of the one person are counted as equally worthy as the wants of the another's. Endorsement constraint can be accommodated to any conception of justice which proounds non-intervention of the state to the preferences, as it will



This thesis is advocated by neutral liberalism and it implies that the state should be neutral towards a person's conceptions of good and visions of a proper life, along with their chosen preferences, ends and values. This approach was nevertheless criticized broadly and my analysis is focused only on the critique of liberal neutrality concerning endorsement constraint. The central part of the analysis deals with Hurka's concept of mild coercion as legitimate action which may, contrary to Kymlicka and endorsement constraint thesis, enhance the good of individuals, and my critique of this justification of mild coercion is also related to Arneson's interpretation of Dworkin's endorsement constraint thesis. But firstly it is instructive to examine if neutrality implies that state influence is limited to a person's autonomously chosen ends exclusively, or the limitation is also related to any of their preferences, however ephemeral they are. This is connected with the question can the person legitimately demand that their particular endorsed activities have to be supported publicly and institutionally.

### **Autonomy and Endorsement**

Our well-being cannot be comprehended as detached from our beliefs of what good life is, so individual perspective is attached to the well-being of individuals, whereas coercion in order to achieve good life would be self-defeating.<sup>3</sup> How can it be ethically justifiable to force somebody to lead a life which, according to accepted objective merits, is evaluated as good and successful, but which the individual does not endorse as such? But an additional question can be posed as well: should all aspects of life, even those trivial and detached from a person's comprehension of her own identity, be equally protected from external influence? Endorsement constraint as a liberal principle could be related to the preferences which elements are not organized to ends towards which, deliberately or not, a person is inclined and on what grounds she forms her life prospects. However, liberals such as Rawls give merit to a greater extent to a persons' capability to articulate and pursue their own life plans and only this trait makes them rational and capable of forming, together with others, a society of mutual support and cooperation. Classic liberals such as Humboldt and Mill, as well as numerous other contemporary liberals, argued that organizing preferences to ends is enough for a person to demand respect and non-interference from the community and state apparatus.<sup>4</sup>

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inevitably lead to distortion of the values that person endorses if the state evaluates the preferences and ranks them unequally. On the relationship of want-satisfaction and political theory of justice as impartiality cf. Barry 1995: 133–138.

3 Cf. Couto 2014: 52: “[...] no engagement with the good can be said to contribute to well-being if it is not actually endorsed by the individual. This allows us to block the possibility of using coercion to promote well-being.”

4 This is the weak condition of simple autonomy, whereas those perfectionists, such as Hurka, who uphold Aristotelian ethics argue for the stronger condition of deliberative autonomy, according to which the autonomous choices stemming from articulated

However, the more complex question is, if respect and non-interference should be applied to any choice, even if an individual prefers the option without deliberations, on the basis of personal whim or idiosyncrasy. In the case of reflexive autonomous choice in which a person had applied her abilities of practical judgements, accommodated them to a wide system of values and integrated them with her life plans, it can be stated as a duty to respect this choice, or at least not giving due respect having to be justified, notwithstanding disagreement on the very value of the choice. Disrespect of endorsed trivial preferences, wants or desires does not carry the same weight as disrespect of fully autonomous choice. In the first case due respect is not given to preferences which are only loosely and contingently attached to her self-esteem and comprehension of herself as a rational and equally valuable being. The second case is denial of her rational capacities and her ability to form and pursue aims deliberately and autonomously.

Putting aside the nuances, it can be stated that perfectionism, as well as neutral liberalism, even when autonomy is considered as just one of the important values,<sup>5</sup> is giving crucial importance to the protection and cultivation of personal autonomy in a well arranged society, and that its sacrifice in favour of other values would demand good justification. This sacrifice would be considered as valid only in exceptional circumstances, as well as if suspension of autonomy is considerably limited. A different situation arises in the case of endorsement: while a neutral stance relies on endorsement constraint, so restriction of endorsed activities by the state is biasing a person's notion of good life unjustifiably, a perfectionist would claim that endorsement is related to comprehension of the self only contingently, and nothing should hinder the state having influence on endorsement in the same way the family, the local community, society and the media already have it. This influence is, admittedly, subjected to limitations, and also it goes without saying that the influence should be positive, the consequence of which is that a person begins to endorse more valuable activities and ceases to endorse insignificant and harmful ones.

The limitations of state intervention become apparent when endorsement of particular activities commence as a result of a person's autonomous choice. Let us suppose that there is a cultural or religious tradition which forbids or imposes considerable obstacles to girls— such as the cost of being unmarried, estrangement from the family or expulsion from the community – who decide to get higher education, or to choose their profession independently, and as a result they are compelled to become housewives or to be confined to degrading professions allegedly appropriate to women. It can be assumed that some

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knowledge are more valuable, whereby people are able to give justification for their aims, built upon the rules of reasoning, appropriate facts and justified values. Cf. Hurka 1993: ch. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Mason 1990. Some authors consider autonomy as a central or substantial liberal value, and in such a way liberalism is inseparable from the very idea of autonomy. Cf. Macedo 1990: 263. For a straightforward critique of this idea see Rawls 1985: 246.

of the girls will endorse such a practice even without physical coercion by their community, but despite this there will be no ethical hindrance for the state to attempt to expand the number of options which are available to the girls, to point out the positive sides of different ways of life, to expose that given tradition is flawed and to pressure this traditional community to modify itself substantially towards gender equality. The case is different when the girls or most of them accept their role autonomously, even in the situation where they are aware of the option of continuation of schooling and of choices from a wider range of professions. The state policy will to a great extent undermine the autonomy of those persons by establishing, for example, a system of punishment (or some other obstacles which will increase the cost of their preferences) for the girls who decided not to prolong their education more than it is demanded by constitutional law, or if they, after consideration, choose the profession which is countenanced by their local community. Such an approach in which the state dictates preferences, instead of allowing people to make decisions on their education and career by themselves, is illegitimate as it considerably affects people's ability to lead their lives in a way they consider worthy.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, it is permissible for the state to have an influence on endorsement, in a manner which excludes manipulation and deceit, in consequence of which people begin to endorse the activity which is more valuable than previously endorsed ones. In this way, influence which does not diminish the role of autonomy can be achieved, so a person can say "I used to endorse such an activity, but, in the light of new evidence, not anymore", while not denying that her former, as well as latter, choice was autonomous. It can be legitimate to support financially, to propagate or to promote certain activities which are not endorsed by the majority, but which at any rate do not threaten or diminish autonomy. It is, for example, justifiable when financing the purchase of specialist literature for public libraries, which will be most probably borrowed only occasionally, to give it priority over the purchase of pornographic literature, which will allegedly be attractive to more people. It can be recommendable – when the condition that autonomy is not impaired is fulfilled – to give advantage to a good activity with lack of endorsement over a widely endorsed but worthless one. State action directed to well-being can have legitimacy even when it does not bring about the acceptance of more valuable activity. One person prefers watching reality shows (usually, this sort of program epitomizes tacky entertainment), while the inclination of another person is directed towards recreational sports. Indirectly, those endorsed activities are treated and assessed differently by the council when providing running paths, free equipment for exercise in dedicated areas, or subventions for a swimming pool. The

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<sup>6</sup> It can be objected that this position leads to the statement that it is legitimate to push people from endorsing non-essential choices towards better ones, and at the same time it will be forbidden to restrict their autonomy. But this picture is oversimplified. In a similar vein the state will transgress the limits of its competence if the endorsement of worthless activity is "officially" declared as morally void and degrading.

person who prefers sitting on the sofa and watching television does not have reasonable grounds to complain about discrimination as a consequence of unequal treatment of her preference. Also, the council ignoring her preference does not mean disrespect for either her personality and ability to choose individually and autonomously, or her capability to conceive ends and life plans.

Perfectionist critique starts from the idea that a person has a right to develop her abilities and capacities, as well as to expect support from the social environment, but has no right to claim that the state and/or society should be neutral towards the character of goods and activities she endorses. This right to neutrality, as Hurka argues, is implied in endorsement constraint: anything that is chosen is worthy of preservation (and to be sustained, if neutrality is interpreted more generally as the equal chance to realisation of preferences), because, presumably, “humans left on their own will always choose what is best” (Hurka 1993: 160).

### **Hurka on Kymlicka’s Endorsement Constraint Thesis**

Kymlicka wrote: “No life goes better by being led from the outside according to values the person does not endorse. My life only goes better if I am leading it from the inside, according to my beliefs about value [...]. A perfectionist policy that violates this ‘endorsement constraint’ by trying to bypass or override people’s beliefs about values, is self-defeating” (Kymlicka 2002: 216). In order to be appreciated as a genuine good, a certain motive is necessary, which cannot be obtained externally, let alone by the state. As Hurka stated, this Kymlicka’s endorsement constraint argument leads to the conclusion that “state perfectionism cannot succeed because it cannot ensure that citizens endorse good activities” (Hurka 1995: 40).

Hurka distinguishes weak and strong variants of endorsement premise. According to the strong variant, if activity is not approved by the subject itself, then it is deprived of any value. The thesis “I endorse an activity when I engage in it ‘from the inside’, in accordance with my values and views” can be interpreted in a strong way, in accordance with if I do not believe that my activity is good, it loses all value, which is absurd (Hurka 1995: 42). There are many masterpieces which are not approved for public exposition by their authors (Kafka, Wittgenstein and the artist Francis Bacon, just to mention a few) because of personal discontent with their value, but which are by all criteria extraordinary. They are at any rate not worthless just because of lack of endorsement. The same can be stated with the reverse example in which, according to the premise of neutrality, works highly regarded by their authors are better than those which are not, even if the latter are, objectively, more valuable than the former. Hurka maintains that Kymlicka is propounding a weaker thesis which states that an action can have value even if it is not endorsed by the subject of the action, but its value is increased substantially if it is accompanied by the subject’s endorsement. However, Hurka continues, only a strong interpretation supports state neutrality. The weak variant of endorsement constraint thesis according to which the activity accompanied by an endorsement

is better than the same one without it leading to the assumption that activity without endorsement can still be valuable and it is possible that its value can overwhelm the endorsed one.

By refuting the strong thesis, perfectionism justifies the state which assists people to lead meaningful lives, albeit the modes of this support are various, from strong to mild coercion and further to non-coercive encouragement – giving incentives to people to choose worthy activities, expanding the list of valuable options, enabling people to create valuable alternatives by themselves etc. The majority of liberal perfectionists reject strong coercion, although some of them, including Hurka, accept mild coercion as a justified measure when it brings about the higher good to the person than it would if coercion were absent. In the following part of this chapter I will attempt to expound that such coercion as Hurka interprets it cannot be justified as a critique of neutrality, while I will at the same time try to defend non-coercive policies which can be considered as a legitimate influence on endorsed activities.

The reason why strong coercion is objectionable as a liberal policy is rather straightforward: coercion through repressive measures imposes values, goods and aims which are not approved by people who consider them as bad, therefore such measures, particularly those imposed by the state, deny the right of people to live independent lives in accordance with the beliefs and values they maintain, and consequently the state is expressing disrespect for their personality. The situation is different when coercion is milder, as it can justify particular measures such as limitation of smoking in public places (as passive smoking can endanger others' health) or the taxation and regulation of alcohol distribution (by which it can limit self-harm caused by drinking) – however, the reason for legal regulation of those activities is the harm caused, and consequently those measures are not specifically perfectionist, having in mind that, albeit for different reasons, they are endorsed by almost all variants of liberalism.

The educational system is an example of legitimate mild coercion, whereby mandatory education imposes on students those values and activities which young people do not endorse, but through such imposition will commence to appreciate being given values by virtue of an insight into an expanded range of valuable options, as well as by comprehending reasons why they are valuable. Children thereby are being acquainted with facts and values in a manner which they will most probably not be in their family circle. Also, parents, supposedly, do not have the skills necessary to explain in an adequate way to children the reasons why reading Shakespeare (to use Hurka's example) is praiseworthy.

*Pace* Hurka, those arguments are on behalf of liberal neutrality in the domain of public education, which assumes that a student's exposure to as much relevant content as possible will lead to the development of an individual's potential and consequently a student will be more able to find her niche or field of interest, in which she can develop skills and thereby contribute to personal and common good. On the other hand, the aim of education is to promote such contents and activities which are valuable, and through education children become acquainted with their meaning and values. This intervention,

therefore, should not be value-free or neutral: at its best, neutrality in education will imply the development of only those skills necessary for proficiency in the labour market.<sup>7</sup>

Does this mean that the aim of a students' mandatory study of Shakespeare's works is to obtain their endorsement and, therefore, mild coercion would be justifiable as it would lead to this end? Although this perfectionist measure can lead to the developing of endorsement, even if this outcome fails this measure can be justified. As adults, people still do not need to endorse reading Shakespeare and attending theatre performances of his plays, but, nevertheless, they can appreciate his works as important, they can regard the reading and watching of his plays as valuable, and studying Shakespeare in schools as manifoldly beneficial. Adults can acquire the capability to comprehend particular artistic and scientific achievements, while not endorsing them as relevant to their lives, and they do not consider it as subjectively relevant to devote their time and effort to occupying themselves with such achievements.

Hurka supports the thesis that not only by non-coercive means, such as persuading, advising teaching or instructing, but by mild coercion as well, a third party is permitted to drive me to a particular activity in order to, via habituation, give me the right motive to be occupied with it – or in order to amplify a motive which I already endorse, but the realisation of this action is restrained due to my weak will, or owing to less a valuable motive which supersedes the important one. Also, coercion can be right if it adds a proper motive to an imprudent one. To illustrate these cases, Hurka gives the example of a situation in which I am a professional philosopher and my wife is forcing me, or deceiving me in some other way, to read philosophy instead of watching TV, when I have a strong desire to watch it and I am subjugated by this desire by virtue of the weakness of my will, even when I realise that reading philosophy is the best activity (Hurka 1995: 45). I could then regard manipulation and coercion as advantageous for me, as they were properly focusing my motivation, adding my endorsement to a good activity and thereby increasing its value.

However, this example is not adequate: there is a significant difference between pressure from our immediate social environment and the state, in as much as it should be expected that state action should have legitimacy, which will cease to exist if the state is attempting to deceive and force us to act through a hidden agenda. This kind of nudge through enforcement can be permissible within the family, as well as in some other interactions in the immediate community (albeit immoral on numerous occasions when the aim is domination or keeping a person in a state of dependence), although it is highly problematic when it is used by the state apparatus. When my room-mate or my wife turn off my TV set in order to force me to read philosophy I might consider this action

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<sup>7</sup> Such an instrumental function of education has been criticized since Socrates. Teaching students in order to obtain skills beneficial in the market corresponds to a sophists' teaching how to win a debate and receive financial reward or praise, while the Socratic approach is first of all intended to reveal the truth content and to transfer the verified knowledge. On this compare Strauss 1959: 426.

as permissible, but I would not be satisfied if the police came to my apartment to turn it off, or if official censorship decide to scramble non-educational and trivial programs. Social manipulation, which is already a form of coercion, is a fact which cannot be eradicated completely but state manipulation should be monitored, prevented and restrained. The difference is not due to the fact that my wife knows what is good for me or what my genuine preferences are, which I would follow in so far as I do not have weak will, while the state cannot have this knowledge. The state can know that I have to be inoculated, since my wife can insist that vaccines are dangerous because she read it on obscure internet forums. The central question will be: what license I give (implicitly or explicitly) to the people who are close to me, and what licence I am willing to transfer to the state? The legitimacy of state coercion in order to enhance my motivation is morally dubious, although I can accept the permissibility of incentives which have the same purpose.

Hurka has instantiated another form of state intervention presumably illegitimate from the standpoint of neutrality, which is “the milder coercion of merely forbidding a single worst activity” (Hurka 1995: 44), to which a neutral position does not have an adequate answer and is conceded to allow the worst activity at any cost. Let us suppose that the activities can be ranked from one to ten, whereby the first one has the highest value, while activity number ten is the least valuable one. Coercion to prohibit the single worst activity does not force people to select the best one, but forbids them to opt for the worst one, at the same time leaving them to choose between the remaining nine. Hurka introduces a further premise that the activity which is forbidden is not less valuable in comparison to the value of the others, but intrinsically evil. Endorsement constraint thesis implies that even such an activity, if it is not superimposed officially, is good for a person although it has negative value. Assuming this is contradictory, coercion which will, on the scale of values, shift a person’s activity from evil towards a worthless activity will be justified.

The next step which Hurka should have taken is to instantiate the case which would corroborate this stance, but he introduced the perplexing example of homosexuality. Namely, according to Hurka, those who plead to ban homosexuality do not claim that it is just less valuable than heterosexual relationships. They consider homosexuality as an intrinsic evil, assuming that its ban will enhance to a great extent the lives of people with queer affinities, regardless of their endorsement, and therefore the prohibition of homosexuality will be morally legitimate. This is, however, the ethical stance of a particular group of people who by virtue of particular, often religious, reasons regard homosexuality as evil, but it is not a view accepted in general, and this opinion is not universally shared even by people who oppose equal rights for homosexuals with heterosexuals. Also, it cannot be stated as the objective reason in political argumentation – if we follow Rawls’ liberal theory, this argumentation should be independent from comprehensive ideological, religious, ethical and traditionalistic ideas, as well as from pseudo-scientific reasoning and subjective psychological attitudes – which would outlaw homosexuality due to its intrinsic evil nature.

Also, some heterosexual people perceive homosexuality as repulsive, but do not reckon that the life of homosexuals (or good in the world in general) will be enhanced objectively if, as a result of prohibition, they abandon their previous sexual orientation. Their attitude will be considered as less valuable or worthless, but not as such to which prohibition would be pertinent.

Therefore, the banning of homosexuality, in as much as it is demanded on behalf of a partial conception of good or a psychological attitude of repulsion, will not be congruent with basic principles of justice concerning equality, impartiality and the right of privacy. Also, this policy will not be accepted unanimously by those reasonable citizens who do not approve this sexual orientation. As can be seen, in Hurka's argumentation the instance of intrinsically evil activities, those which succumb to legal coercion, is missing, whereas, in accordance with the argumentation, liberal neutrality should consider the prohibition unjustified by virtue of an endorsement constraint. Kymlicka, as well as many other liberals, does not take into account the possibility of the choice outcome which is evil not because of his "sunnier picture of human options", when only good, less good and worthless option exists, but not intrinsically bad or evil ones (Hurka 1995: 47), but because intrinsic evil cannot be included as an available option which can be legitimately endorsed. Evil choice such as causing damage or suffering to others is not something which the state in any circumstance can consider as a subject in legal adjudication just because somebody endorses this choice and claims that its prohibition means reduction of her autonomy or impairment of her rights.

Further, Hurka is shifting his analysis from activities with negative value to zero-value activities (Hurka 1995: 48). If people are engaged in activities with zero-value, then no endorsement, even accompanied by the best motivation, can give additional value to it. His conclusion is that the legal prohibition of such activity cannot cause any damage: even if the ban does not produce improvement, or turn people towards a more valuable option, the prohibition will likewise not diminish the value of that activity. Well, it will produce discomfort and generate a reaction of resentment in the person who enjoyed the utterly trivial activity. Restriction of this simple pleasure will cause a certain psychological loss in those who pursue this activity, and it also poses the question if the pleasurable life can be considered as objectively valuable, or can the pleasurable experience be crossed off the list of human goods. If the latter is true, all achievements, life plans, excellences, relationships and knowledge would become cold and detached from human enjoyment.

After rejecting the idea of affecting people's endorsement coercively, or by prohibition of particular activities which are considered bad, worthless or trivial, there is still the option of traditional liberal actions, such as the state's encouragement of valuable activities by non-coercive means. Hurka quotes J. S. Mill, who claims that the state can have "good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him" (Mill 2003: 80). Also, the state can subsidise particular relevant activities when the possibility of their cultivation is diminished due to their unattractiveness for



the market, or when the number of people engaged in them is insignificant. The culture of economically weak minority groups is an example of this permissible subsidy, the aims of which are multifarious, such as diminishing the sense of marginalisation of the minority group, its better integration in the political community, as well as the overall expansion of the cultural sphere of the society. Finally, as has been instantiated frequently, state intervention is indispensable for the sustainment of less popular, but valuable institutions, goods or values (e. g. subsidizing opera), but also in order that people who are persistently excluded from cultural events, have an opportunity to take part in them (for example, through decreasing the price of opera tickets), and consequently to endorse these goods and values.

Moreover, as in the case of studying Shakespeare, although it is not necessary for people to begin to endorse given activities, goods and values, they can nonetheless consider perfectionist action as justified. By means of education or by obtaining information on the relevance of certain goods persons can approve subsidizing, promoting and, to a certain extent, favouring them, but those goods might not be on the list of their own preferences whatsoever. Thus, the conservation of buildings which are a cultural heritage may be justifiable even for someone who has no intention of visiting them on any occasion. Subsidizing and advertising do not mean that, through institutional action, visiting those objects is imposed as mandatory. People can maintain the pursuit of their trivial activities, prioritize them over officially promoted ones and at the same time not have objections concerning the legitimacy of this promotion. There is no contradiction if a person considers particular goods and activities valuable, despite the fact that she herself is not opting for them as a preference and claims that they do not contribute to her personal flourishing whatsoever.

To the objection that the selection of public support is partial and highly controversial one can reply that it is justified if there is an assessment that a particular object of endorsement is deserving of support, as well as agreement about this support which is achieved through deliberation and democratic procedures of decision-making. Therefore, an amateur sportsman could count on public support for his preferred activity, contrary to a numismatist who cannot expect that his hobby will be subsidized. In contrast to collecting old coins and notes, an activity such as jogging can be recognized publicly as deserving support, being not just an idiosyncratic endorsement, but an activity around which valuable aims, such as health and physical well-being, can be organized.

### **Arneson on Dworkin's Views**

Endorsement constraint means that, notwithstanding the considerable value of particular activity, coercion and manipulation directed at the individuals in order to accept the activity cannot make their life better. Manipulation and coercion will diminish the value of the activity and in the ethical sense the priority ought to be given to the activities that individuals endorse and prefer by their own will. The activity cannot be good for me if I do not accept it as

valuable, or, as Dworkin noticed, “my life cannot be better for me in virtue of some feature or component I think has no value” (Dworkin 2000: 268).

In the critique of this thesis Arneson argues that the endorsement constraint does not rule out a strong paternalism concerning the weak endorsement, when a person is giving value to a particular activity, but nevertheless does not consider it as an aim worthy to be accomplished. In this case of weak endorsement, it is allowed to compel the person to pursue a valuable activity. The strong paternalism restrains person’s freedom of choice evincing that the restraint is for her benefit in order to adopt those activities which are valuable objectively. If the persons commence to endorse those activities, and due to coercion begin to value them positively while abandoning previously endorsed activities as based on arbitrary and irrelevant desires and preferences, the condition of endorsement is still fulfilled despite the external intervention.<sup>8</sup>

However, it can be assumed that person have the reason to be persistent in demand that the coercion to abandon non-essential activities, which she at a given moment nevertheless considers interesting, is not justifiable, even when the coercion diverts person’s inclinations towards valuable ends. If somebody is practising a particular activity and considers it valuable, although not personally attached to it and if this person does not regard the activity as particularly constitutive for their life plan, nonetheless it can be claimed that there is a breach of the endorsement constraint if those activities are forbidden paternalistically and the different ones are imposed by others. Couch-sitting-beer-drinking lifestyle could hamper the person to accomplish valuable goals, however the fact that this person values the achievements which demand a considerable effort more than leisure does not imply that the person would approve a strong paternalistic intervention which will avert them from leisure. The relation to contingent preferences, desires and attitudes on one hand, and relation to steadfast life plans on the other, are different not because paternalism is permissible in the first, and unacceptable in the second case, that is, because the restriction of freedom is admissible when it leads to the accomplishment of substantial aims. Rather, those relations differ because a person cannot claim that state or society should provide support for their non-substantial, frivolous or whimsical activities (and, presumably, it will not be their intention as long as they do not consider those activities relevant). It will be inappropriate if a persons demands public acknowledgement or subsidization for their cheap thrills and insists that the refusal of the support is unjustified restriction imposed upon them.

A different situation arises in case of those particular activities which people can evaluate as valuable with justification or consider them as relevant for their life prospect. When such activities demand considerable assets as prerequisite,

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8 Arneson 2003: 201. Cf. also *ibid.*: 203: “It may even turn out that via coercive paternalism a person comes to be pushed towards a way of life that she comes to value and affirm as best for her, whereas without the paternalism she would have led her life drifting from one set of goals to another without really affirming and endorsing goals she seek.”

which people do not possess individually, they can claim for subsidizing activities or goods such as arts, culture or those sports which are more demanding than cross country running. This assumption, however, does not exclude that a person can be deluded or misguided concerning their choice of life plan, as well as that this plan can be worthless. Also, surely the investments necessary for those activities can exceed public budget, or funds can be diverted to those activities accepted as more relevant or necessary. However, the very existence of such cases does not diminish the legitimacy of institutional support for objective valuable activities or goods when financial assets are in disposition and when there is an assessment that particular goods or valuable activities are neglected or endangered more than others in free market conditions. Again, the support can be sustained as people can have the assessment that something is valuable even when they are not prone to consume it, as it is in the case of Shakespeare's plays or the historical buildings which are appreciated as the important part of cultural heritage beside the fact that many people would never attend theatre or visit the buildings.

Moreover, institutional support for some activities can be legitimate even if at a given time nobody is preferring or endorsing such an activity. In the case when there is no endorsement for recreational sports, such as jogging, committee for health or other institution can propose building running paths in order to create space for practicing this sport. The justification of this support is not possible from such a neutral standpoint which the existence of actual endorsement correlate with subject's conception of good life. But this case does not correspond to Arneson's justification of coercive paternalism as well. People come to appreciate the merit of the activity which they previously did not notice or prefer, even without a paternalistic restriction of non-essential preferences or without forced reduction of the number of those options which are undesirable or worthless.

It is one thing to assume the existence of standards constitutive of a good life which are objective and valid independently of a person's convictions and intention to integrate them into her life plan. The different thing is to allow that a third party, on the grounds of those objective standards, is licenced to restrict the person's choices, claiming that the restriction would improve the quality of her life. As Arneson maintain, liberals such as Dworkin reject the restriction of options in general, for the reason that the standards of rejection are controversial and, accordingly, their application to the preferences of the people who do not approve such standards wholeheartedly would incite discontent and disrupt their life plans. However, Dworkin argued that the reason why restrictions cannot be justified is not because the list of human goods is controversial, and in an ideal situation in which the list of goods is undisputable, or in a society of fully rational persons, restrictions would be self-evidently sustained. The very reason for refusing paternalism is that restrictions and the imposition of a particular model of good activities are in collision with personal autonomy, or as Dworkin expressed it, with the inseparability of values and choices, whereby it can not be assumed that ethically conducted life will

be more successful “when it has been narrowed, simplified and bowdlerized by others in advance”.<sup>9</sup> Dworkin, furthermore, recalled Aristotle’s idea that skillful performance as a rightly judged response to circumstances is an inseparable part of the good life (Dworkin 2000: 253). The coercion through ready-made solutions and narrowing opportunities for choice between different goods cannot make life ethically more valuable, as long as it makes skillful performances less relevant, if not entirely nullifying their pertinence.

As can be seen, Arneson regards paternalism justified if it leads to the transformation of a less meaningful towards a more valuable way of life, and when it can be presupposed that this transformation will not succeed spontaneously in the absence of coercion. However, the way of life as a characteristic lifestyle can be considered as a self-creation, similar to a unique or self-contained artwork which does not need instrumental function to attain external values, and, therefore, its restriction for ethical reasons is questionable unless the lifestyle is detrimental. It is not obvious if Arneson will admit that strong paternalism exercised by the state in the case of peculiar lifestyles is justified. Moreover, a person can highly regard drifting from one goal to another in one context or period of time, while in a different context she would appraise a life focused on particular achievements as more valuable – for example, the first context could be the period when she was unmarried, and the second when she started a family. Although she might be exhorted paternalistically by others to be more focused on career and family life in order to recognize them as the best for her, she does not need to consider her previous easy-going life as worthless or objectively insignificant, and therefore to be succumbed to paternalistic pressure.

## Concluding Remarks

If my critique is correct, it cannot be argued that coercion of a person’s endorsements is justifiable if the endorsed goods and activities are peripheral to her self-understanding, whereas it is unjustifiable when those goods and activities are chosen autonomously, as it has been assumed in Arneson’s attack on endorsement constraint thesis. Also, as has been pointed out, there are flaws in Hurka’s justification of mild coercive intervention through elimination of bad or harmful activities as an option. Kymlicka, as well as many other anti-perfectionist liberals, would object, quite correctly, that such activities are in fact not the legitimate options which a person could endorse unreservedly. Also, the right to mild coercion assigned to an individual or individuals from the subject’s immediate community, in order to push the subject to abandon trivial and less valuable activities and start to pursue the valuable ones, Hurka extends to the legitimacy of state intervention when it leads to the same

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<sup>9</sup> Dworkin 2000: 273. The imposition of particular goods is in evident tension with specific item from Arneson’s list of objective human goods, which is “living one’s life according to autonomously embraced values and norms” (Arneson 2003: 215).

positive outcome. People, however, would not approve official or political pressure for a virtuous and worthwhile life. Albeit resentfully, they might acquiesce to somebody close to them prohibiting or constraining their trivial entertainment of drinking beer while lying on the couch, but assuredly they would not approve such a constriction ordained by law.

However, the neutral approach is not adequate when it is applied to all particular endorsements indiscriminately, as well as when a distinction has not been drawn between activities which are endorsed without reason and deliberately chosen activities. The person cannot claim that her endorsement of enjoyments and desires which are not associated with any substantial, durable and pertinent end should be set as a demand to establishing a particular policy which will sustain them or contribute to their realisation. On the other hand, the more substantial aims which are associated with an individual's self-reflection as an autonomous person, which are acknowledged as valuable in a particular society and at the same time cannot be realized by individual endeavour, can be considered as worthwhile for social support. In so far as a particular policy can put obstacles in the way of a relevant activity, a person can, to a certain extent, rightfully demand alleviation or elimination of those obstacles, if the activities are considered as necessary for achieving valuable autonomously chosen ends.

The additional reason why the justification of state neutrality based on the equal treatment of endorsement is dubious is that while one particular activity can be publicly promoted rather than another, at the same time the other activity has not been downgraded through prohibitions, obstructions or coercions. In this sense, a person can endorse some activities while not considering them as praiseworthy, as well as she might not endorse some other activities, but she can nevertheless consider that the state should not be neutral and leave those goods and activities to the precariousness of market operations. At last, even liberals leaning to the neutrality of the state are mainly agreed that non-interference is wrong if it means indifference to whether valuable goods and activities will be available to an elite only, as well as to whether those goods and activities will survive or not.

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### Perfekcionizam o odobrenju kao ograničenju uticaja

#### Apstrakt:

Tekst se bavi Hurkinom kritikom Kimlike (*Kymlicka*), kao i Arnesonovom kritikom Dvorkina (*Dworkin*) povodom teze o odobrenju osobe kao ograničenju državne intervencije ili uticaja. Prema ovoj tezi koju zastupaju Kimlika i Dvorkin osoba ne može da ima vredan život ukoliko su joj vrednosti nametnute – pre svega kroz delovanje države – prenebregavajući njene preferencije i uverenja o dobrom životu. Ova teza je često poistovećivana sa neutralističkim liberalizmom, a suprotstavljena perfekcionizmu. U tekstu se tvrdi da argumentacije Hurke i Arnesona protiv teze o odobrenju, prema kojima umerena prinuda i paternalistička redukcija trivijalnih, loših i bezvrednih opcija može da dovede do vrednijeg života, nisu valjane. U njima se ne uviđa u dovoljnoj meri razlika između prinude od strane neposredne društvene okoline i državne prinude, koje nisu jednako legitimne. Moja kritika, ipak, ne isključuje legitimnost perfekcionistačkih mera, pošto osoba može državnu intervenciju da prihvati kao opravdanu kada se ona odnosi na podršku pojedinih vrednosti ili dobara, dok istovremeno osoba ne odobrava ove vrednosti ili dobra. Sva odobravana dobra ili aktivnosti ne treba da budu jednako tretirane i određena politika može na legitiman način da podržava one koje su u većoj meri relevantne ili vredne.

Ključne reči: liberalizam, neutralnost, perfekcionizam, ograničenje uticaja, Arneson, Dvorkin, Hurka, Kimlika

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## KANT ON JUST WAR AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER

### ABSTRACT

Kant's legal and political philosophy is essential for understanding and advancing international order. The article aims to posit arguments that confront the claims that Kant was just war theorist. Since that is the most opposed part of Kant's political philosophy, mostly due to the misleading interpretation of his argumentation, the author presents Kant's standpoint on the matters of just war and international order and discusses potential ambiguities between Kant's and his critics' theories. Furthermore, the consequences of opponents' arguments considering states of states, world republic and cosmopolitan democracy in contemporary political philosophy are debated. Finally, the possibility of consent between the three model solutions which are arising from the contemporary international order theory and Kant's position are compared and analysed.

### KEYWORDS

Kant, Just War Theory, International Order, Constitution, Federation of Free States, States of States, World Republic, Cosmopolitan Democracy

### 1. Introduction

The article<sup>1</sup> aims to show the relevance of Kant's theory in the field of legal and political philosophy and inquire about his position regarding just war theory and their interrelatedness within the contemporary international order theory. In the introductory part of the article, the author is describing Kant's perspective of the just war theory and examining his standpoint on the matters of war and international order. At the same time, the author tries to determine in which way current political philosophy, laid in the Kantian legacy, and especially his political theory insights, could be used as the resolution for the current theoretical ambiguities in what we call liberal democracies.

In philosophy, the just war theory as an essential component of international order theory has been repeatedly discussed. It is a doctrine studied by many philosophers throughout history. The main idea of doctrine is to support war as a morally justifiable act through a series of standards, all of which

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must be met for a war to be well-thought-out as just. Just war theorists divide rules of war into *Jus ad Bellum*, the set of rules that nations must follow in going to war, *Jus in Bello*, the set of rules that nations must follow during the war (Masek 2002: 143) and *Jus Post-Bellum* as the set of rules concerning justice after the war (Orend 2007: 571).

As is well known, Kant disapproves philosophies which are containing the arguments of just and regular war theory kind in their research and says:

It is surprising that the word *right* could still not be altogether banished as pedantic from the politics of war and that no state has yet been bold enough to declare itself publicly in favour of this view; for Hugo Grotius, Pufendorf, Vattel, and the like (only sorry comforters) – although their code, couched philosophically or diplomatically, has not the slightest *lawful* force and cannot even have such force (since states as such are not subject to a common external constraint) – are always duly cited *in justification* of an offensive war, though there is no instance of a state ever having been moved to desist from its plan by arguments armed with the testimony of such important men. (Kant 1996: 326)

In contrast, advocates of the re-revised modern just war theory developed their ideas in such an approach presenting Kant as consecutive just war theorist, not essentially different from his predecessors. In the recent period, the interest has been keen on founding arguments that highlight the Kant's just war position. Much of the contemporary philosophical enquiries have been constructed in that way. The enquiry which defends the juridical state of states or world republic perspective has been pursued by Byrd and Hruschka (2008) and Höffe (1998), for example. As well, Orend (1999) claims that Kant is a just war theorist and the critique of Kant's perspective and attempts of its reformulation (see, for instance, Habermas 2006) can be found in many recent papers written on the subject.

Unrelatedly of the theoretical position that one advocate, there is no doubt that Kant's practical thinking, presented in his various works, is a central argumentation for research in the contemporary political philosophy. Kant's influence is indispensable in current inquiries, regarding just war theories and international order. There are reasons for re-revising Kantian political philosophy, because only in his work, "we find a theory concerned with the problem of how to overcome the danger of war, in favour of a worldwide order of law and peace" (Höffe 1998: 51). Wars, humanitarian crisis and global immoral political behaviour are set as a standard of the world at present. Harbom and Wallensteen (2007: 624) provide the data on 122 conflicts identified in the period from 1989 until 2006<sup>2</sup>.

State law, a national system of *public legal justice*, is for Kant instrumental to morality (Riley 1979: 44). Legal and political input closely connected with his ethics are in the best way presented through second categorical imperative formulation. It demands that we must: "Act in such a way that *we* treat humanity,

<sup>2</sup> The civil wars in Syria (2011), Libya (2014) and Ukraine (2014) are not included in this list.



whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end” (Kant 2012: 38). Kant was an optimistic philosopher in search of all the threads that can link us to humanity, dignity and justice, and with his *peace theory* he “has an important contribution to make to the debate on just war thinking” (Williams 2012: 3).

The world of politics is the most responsible for the morality of humankind, and the acting of every government authority towards others should be like the one Kant (1996: 338) suggests in the appendix of his work *Towards Perpetual Peace*. The philosopher’s task is to determine the right moral way and he “clearly subordinates politics (and indeed everything else) to morality, but at the same time bases politics on the *right*, not on utility or happiness” (Riley 1979: 45). That is the only possible approach to Kant’s political philosophy and the topic of the just war legacy. Besides, it brings new theoretical perspectives regarding the argumentation that will arise from an analysis of Kant’s work.

The article is organised as follows. After the preliminary draft of the just war theory, an overview of the Kant’s argumentation has been presented in the debate to make an explanation of Kant’s standpoint on the just war theory and international order. These and correlated questions and arguments are discussed below in section 2 and 3. A particular line of thought runs through these sections and serves as a central thread in the discussion: just war theory and its role within the international order. In this part of the article, the author draws on the recent researches. In the part that follows, however, the focus is on matters of contemporary reformulations of Kant’s theory, especially the one presented by Habermas. In the final comments of the article, the author shows how the distortion of Kant’s standpoint may be misleading for the contemporary theory of justice and tries to define his position.

## 2. Kant’s Standpoint on Just War and International Order

The structure of *Towards Perpetual Peace* follows the characteristic form of peace treaties that were written earlier. Kant had an idea, different from his predecessors. Although he listed all the just war theory problems in the preliminary articles, later he perceives just war theory from an alternative perspective, aiming, above all, at a peaceful organisation of the nation-states. He expresses disapproval on those thinkers whose work justifies military aggression, although their diplomatic and philosophically formulated codes do not and cannot have any legal force, since the states as such, are not obliged to a common external constraint. As one sees from the title of his work, his intention is indeed not to write a new peace treaty or just war theory, but to give to the humanity a new theory solution for the issues of war.

His idea is peace, established very firmly as a notion in his political philosophy. Peace is in his work in the same corpus of ideas with the truth, justice and freedom. Peace is the firstly, ground philosophical term, and only later a juridico-political concept. He is fully aware that no philosophical knowledge, moral acting or aesthetic judgment, is possible in the state of war. There is no

legitimate solution for peace between people in the field of jurisprudence and politics only. Peace is, before anything else, a philosophical matter and *highest political good*.

Kant holds that a peace treaty is not valid in places where the settlement includes in itself the elements of a future war. Silence about actual causes of war and real pretensions of enemies are usually typical for such peace arrangements. Therefore, he suggests that this is not a step towards perpetual peace but only a temporary end of hostilities. For Kant, “peace is not merely the absence of open fighting, in the form of an ongoing cease-fire; it is a positive condition in which states accept that disputes will be resolved peacefully, that is on their merits” (Ripstein 2016: 190). Unfortunately, all the decisions about future war are in the hands of the mighty authority rulers who will always follow their interest in these matters and not the general will of their people. This kind of decision making would not lead us toward perpetual peace.

The state, for Kant, is not a property (*patrimonium*), a piece of land, which can be an object of trade, but a community of citizens independent of all external influences. The idea behind the statement is:

No independently existing state (whether small or large) shall be acquired by another state through inheritance, exchange, purchase or donation. (Kant 1996: 318)

Such state also means that renting of standing army to another against fighting the mutual or different enemy is not justified. In Kant’s (1996: 318) opinion, governments are using citizens as objects, and they can do with them whatever they like. Usage as this one is the reason why standing armies should disappear with time.

Furthermore, Kant emphasises that piling up material wealth as a reliable war tool is also disgraceful, and the state should not fall in external debt. It is above suspicion if the reason for credit is an improvement of roads, new settlements or formation of supplies against unfertile years. However, as an opposing mechanism in the antagonism of powers, a credit system, which grows beyond sight, constitutes an insecure money power because not all creditors require payment at one time.

Kant is more than clear about this matter:

The ingenious invention of commercial people in this century. Dangerous power of money, namely a treasury for carrying on a war that exceeds the treasuries of all other states taken together and that can only be exhausted by the deficit in taxes that is inevitable at some time (however, that is postponed for a long time because trade is stimulated by the reaction of such loans, on industry and earnings). (Kant 1996: 319)

An ability like this one, to wage war with money power, shared with the predisposition of those who are rulers of states is, therefore, a significant obstacle to perpetual peace and this should be banned in every preliminary article of some future international constitution.

The next step in developing arguments for preventing war is the idea that states should not intrude by force in the constitution and government of another state. No possible mean can justify it. Kant sees only one exception: if one state with internal disagreement would divide into two parts so that both parts can represent themselves as states. In this case, another state from aside can help the newly founded state. All other activities will lead to international *disorder*.

Kant highlights the fact that the only suitable way of avoiding warring is building the civil *constitution* in every individual state on a *republican* basis. It “is important not only because it is the only constitution that is fully in accordance with external right, but also because it is the only constitution that by its nature leads to peace” (Kleingeld 2006: 483).

The civil condition, regarded merely as a rightful condition, is a priori based on the following principles: the freedom of every member of the society as a human being, his equality with every other as a subject, the independence of every member of a commonwealth as a citizen. (Kant 1996: 305)

Then again, this formulation is, to some extent, differently mentioned in the first definitive article of *Towards Perpetual Peace*:

A *constitution* established, first on principles of the freedom of the members of society. Second, on principles of the dependence of all upon single common legislation. Third, on the law of their equality. The sole constitution that issues from the idea of the original social contract, on which all-rightful legislation of a people is based, is a republican constitution. (Kant 1996: 319)

Kant emphasises the same idea in various places. The crucial argumentation for development of the future international order is laying in a “possibility of a fully lawful state at the national level is therefore dependent on some sort of world order—an order which he commonly called the *foedus pacificum*”. (Riley 1979: 52) The state constituted as a *republican* society should afterwards join the federation of free states. To avoid republicanism to be confused with the democratic constitution, Kant describes forms of the state. He is dividing these forms in the following way: either by number or by way of governance. According to the number of persons who have supreme power, the state could be monarchy, aristocracy and democracy as a form of sovereignty. Conferring to the way, the superiors of the state govern people in the *despotic* or *republican* way, like a form of government.

The primary quality of the republican political system is the separation of the executive and legislative power. In contrast, despotism is autocratic managing of the state with laws superior has given to himself. Kant “focuses on the threat of despotism and on separating legislative and executive authority as a barrier to despotism” (Nardin 2017: 358). In this state, a regime is handling the public will as it is private. Of all three forms of sovereignty, that of democracy in the strict sense of the term is necessarily a despotism because it constitutes an executive power in which majority will always outvote the one who

disagrees. That is in contradiction with the general will itself and the principle of freedom, states Kant (1996: 324).

A non-representative form of government (*forma regiminis*) is not a system at all. The legislator cannot be in the same individual and at the same time, the executor of his will. People as citizens deserve to decide, among many other things, if they want to go to war or not. This waging war must be with their consent because they are paying for it with their own life. The situation is different under the constitutions in which the subjects are not citizens. The superior is not a member of the state but the owner, and he could raise war without any significant reason. Republican constitution is, therefore, the barrier for warring intentions of the superior.

The following stage of Kant's journey from the spheres of private and the public law took him to the areas of international order. "The problem of establishing a perfect civil constitution is dependent on the problem of a lawful external relation between states and cannot be solved without the latter" (Kant 2009: 16). Ensuing the same thought pattern, Kant sought to "derive the forms and practices of an ideal international law from the juridical postulates of practical reason" (Fine 2011: 147). Kant starts to build an argument of the necessity of the international order in part three of his work *On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice*, such as a response to the view that the human race will never make any moral progress. The international order is seen as a condition in "which alone the predispositions are belonging to humanity that makes our species worthy of love can be developed" (Kant 1996: 305).

Kant emphasises that nowhere human nature appears less attractive than in relations between the nations and that no state is safe from the other, neither its independence nor its property. The will for conquering has always existed. Nevertheless, Kant's philosophical position from *Towards Perpetual Peace*, states that the international order as "the right to go to war is, strictly speaking, unintelligible" (Kant 1996: 328). It should be based on *universal laws* and not on the brute force, and it must be designed on the federalism of the free states. The only possible solution for this is an international order, based on public laws accompanied by the power of the republican constitution. Federalism of *republican* states is building a peaceful alliance. Only *republican* states should constitute some future league of nations because they are peaceful by their nature. We observe the states with their people as free agents in their state of nature, independent from external coercive power. Then again, this presumes that all states of the alliance are having their *republican* governance, which guarantees all the fundamental human rights to every single man. This alliance should be, in Kant's view, a union of people, which does not have to be a multinational state blended in one single entity.

The concept of international order assumes that many neighbouring countries are existing independently. Although such condition means war *per se*, it is still, according to the ideas of our reason, better than the state of nature, "a condition that is not rightful, that is, a condition in which there is no distributive

justice” (Kant 1996: 451). Because, if the extent of such power is significant and more prominent, the effect and influence of the civil laws and rights start to weaken, and we will have mindless despotism leading toward complete anarchy in the end. Therefore, to conclude, the republican system of government is the necessary condition for the subsequent step in the prevention of war, which is for Kant, the federation of the free states.

Kant repeatedly compares external state relations to the interpersonal state of nature. He “draws different conclusions concerning how to overcome the state of war between persons and the state of war between the states” (Mikalsen 2013: 305). The crucial stage in setting up of warless condition is the federation of the free states’ solution. Analogically<sup>3</sup> to the social contract theory in which people live in a state of nature before the founding of the civil society, the states exist in a natural state before the federation of the free states. Just as individuals, who can be final referees of their decisions and behaviour, governments in a natural setting can decide about their way of interaction with the other regimes. Like individuals in the natural state, which end in war and struggle, governments in a natural state end in mutual hostility.

Governments in a natural state are in the situation we define as the *war of everyone against everyone* (Hobbes 1651: 80). The only outcome of such a state of affairs can be accumulated destruction, just as relations between individuals will end in wrongdoing and insecurity. However, interactive communications between governments are much more complicated than connections among individuals who live in a natural state. Therefore, individuals and nation-states existing under a natural state have both similarities and differences. Before their agreement with the federation of free states, nation-states deal with following types of interactions: the two-sided relationship between two states, the multilateral relationship between the states that are members of the federation, and the relationship of the people of one state with the government of another. Kant describes the states as moral agents, who have obligations towards the others. According to his moral philosophy, here lies the following model of reasoning: each state (like each moral agent) should universally treat another. Kant thinks that the same moral law, which drives agents from the state of nature to a juridical society, will drive nations toward federation, a form of worldwide republicanism.

Therefore, the states must arise from the state of nature (*Ius Naturale*). The creation of the federation of free states is a necessary measure, so that, within a setting of non-interference, national states would be able to provide general safety against external impact. The federation of free states must have no leader. This fact must be a part of the constitution of a future congress, where countries would be free to join as members or get out of congress. “Only by such a *congress* can the idea of a public right of nations be realised, one to be established for deciding their disputes in a civil way, as if by a lawsuit, rather than in a barbaric way (the way of savages), namely by war” (Kant 1996: 488).

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3 Analogy as a perfect similarity of two ratios of dissimilar things (Hirsh 2012: 483).

Nation-states make the association with the federation to leave behind their previous natural lawless state and conflict and to preserve their security and stability. Two significant duties in case of security are set: non-interference in the internal activities of the member states and unified front against aggression. If non-interference duty of member states is working right, we do not need the latter one. If governments subscribe to the conception of non-interference, idea of a cooperative defensive alliance is not an issue, regardless of the aggressor is a member of the federation or outsider.

A *world federation* is different from a peace treaty. A peace treaty may serve as a mean of ending of hostilities, but it will not change the circumstances, which in some way can lead to a new war. People and governments must hold the notion of rights and moral responsibility as a means of rejecting war. The reason, as the definitive source of ethical regulation, levels of absolute disapproval against war and, on the other hand, creates peace as a demanding obligation. Peace is not only the absence of war. For establishing peace, a mutual contract among the nations must exist, and Kant denotes such contract as a *foedus pacificum*.

Kant articulates the following:

There must be a league of a special kind, which can be called a pacific league (*foedus pacificum*), and what would distinguish it from a peace pact (*pactum pacis*) is that the latter seeks to end only one war whereas the former seeks to end all war forever. (Kant 1996: 327)

This league, which takes responsibility for justice and morality, seeks not to control a representative government, but only to preserve the freedom of all countries, including the freedom of the member states. Just as in a society based on law, in which individual liberties come into harmony, in the world federation regimes abandon the idea of interfering with another's the sphere of freedom and contribute to an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence.

The right of nations consists of four elements: the state of nature is a state of antagonism (war), the states are in the state of war in their external relations with each other, a federation of free states is based on some form of the social contract, and this federation may have no form of sovereign power. (Kant 1996: 482)

The consecutive essential principle of war prevention and constitution of perpetual peace is providing citizens with the cosmopolitan right. The right that allows people to travel and cooperate without being treated with aggression. Kant formulates it in the following lines:

Hospitality means the right of a foreigner not to be treated with hostility because he has arrived on the land of another. The other can turn him away if this can be done without destroying him, but as long as he behaves peaceably where he is, he cannot be treated with hostility. (Kant 1996: 482)

What one can privilege is not the right to be a guest, but the right to visit. With his concept of hospitality, Kant is developing the right to travel (*Ius Peregrinandi*).

Articulated like this the right to travel “is directed against all kinds of authority over a foreign country, i.e. against imperialism and colonialism” (Höffe 1998: 55). Kant was a historical witness of conflicts brought about by the process of colonisation, and he was aware of its consequences. However, such acts of exploitation and manipulation did not pose an obstacle to people for entering other societies and interrelating with their fellow humans. The people of one continent can visit the other continents and establish mutual relations. The governments, in this case, must “respect human rights not only of their own citizens, but also of foreigners” (Kleingeld 2006: 477).

In Kant’s philosophy, the notion of a *world federation* reflects the idea of the cosmopolitan whole. According to Kant’s view, nature reaches its goal only when mutual relations, in the context of civil society and human freedom, are not in a situation of war. Under such conditions, natural capacities will complete their maximum abilities. “Construction of a *cosmopolitan* world order in which the relations among nations provide a set of moral and political conditions that, instead of constantly offering a setting for war, open possibilities for securing lasting peace” (Rossi 2012: 219). Vital for the creation of such conditions is the establishment of a *Cosmopolis* as a defensive safety net against countries’ pretension threats to each other. The desire for wealth and greedy government leaders are an obstacle for founding a *Cosmopolis*. If this continues, war and destruction will ruin the chances for the cosmopolitan goal.

Finally, Kant summarises on the topic considering what is substantial to the purpose of perpetual peace and what nature does for this purpose:

Hence to the favouring of his moral purpose, and how it affords the guarantee that what man ought to do in accordance with laws of freedom but does not do, it is assured he will do, without prejudice to this freedom, even by a constraint of nature, and this in terms of all three relations of public right: the right of a state, the right of nations and cosmopolitan right. (Kant 1996: 334)

His teleologically formulated idea is that natural providence will lead to this end. As one can see, Kant, unlike the other cosmopolitan thinkers, does not share the opinion that the state is simply a political construction that does not contain any moral value. If this is true, then the state is merely a constructed institutional entity designed to coordinate the political relationships between people (Brown 2011: 56).

### **3. The Juridical State of States, World Republic and Cosmopolitan Democracy as a Possible Resolution for Kant’s International Order Theory**

Proponents of the state of states model and philosophers who want to impose that Kant was simply another just war theorist, are more than willing to modify Kant’s theory of the federation of the free states. They are trying to use “Kant against Kant to advocate the establishment of a world government” (Kleingeld 2004: 304). In the work of Sharon Byrd and Joachim Hruschka, we

can find such an interpretation of Kant's arguments. (Byrd, Hrushka 2008) Their thesis is that Kant changed his own opinion, or plan, as those authors state, from 'Towards Perpetual Peace' and that his ideas developed over time.

Kant was a mature thinker in that period, without any radical revolution in his life and work, and the presumption that he drastically changed his opinion on this matter is not entirely reliable. When it comes about the topic of the Kant's work, *Towards Perpetual Peace* takes up where *The Metaphysics of Morals* stops (Williams 2012). From the authors' point of view, the diverse interpretation of Kant's perpetual peace task is speculative. "Perpetual peace as a concrete regulative principle for the refashioning of just war theory" (Rossi 2012: 220) must be a guideline for relevant research on the topic.

Kant imagined legal relations among the nations as an analogy to those of individuals in the state of nature. For him, "the state of nature is deeply immoral — and indeed *every* state of nature, including that pertaining *between* states — so that the aim must always be to overcome this as well" (Joas, Knöbl 2013: 52). He attempted to overcome this state of natural position and find a solution for legal world order in the formula of a state of states as the consequence of international relations, a worldwide republic consisting of the nation-states instead of persons. However, Kant almost immediately realises that this solution bares uncertainties and that what is right *in hypothesi* does not work very well in practice. The single world state is not as the right theoretical answer as it may appear at the first look. Kant's argumentation is not entirely coherent in every part of his work, sometimes he offers negative surrogates instead of the final solutions, but he is always unequivocal when he argues about the things which are not acceptable in the future international order.

On the other hand, the line of thinking in Byrd and Hruschka's article claims that the international order arguments are laying in the first part of *The Metaphysics of Morals* called Doctrine of Right. They make an analogy between the position of individuals in the state of nature and the position of states in international relations, quite oppositely from Riley who claims that: "Kant did not believe that states were in quite the same position as men in a state of nature, that they were under the same obligation to leave that condition as *natural* men" (Riley 1979: 54). After a detailed analysis of the Doctrine of Right, Byrd and Hruschka concluded that Kant drastically changed his position since the first edition of the *Towards Perpetual Peace*. Their arguments related to Kant's explanation of exiting the state of nature and entering the juridical state with *republican* governance. They argue that Kant's final stand on world peace was that all nations of the world must join a juridical state of nation-states, much like the individual nation-states we inhabit today. This juridical state of nation-states would be equipped with a judiciary and coercive power to enforce the judgments it reaches.

Nevertheless, Kant points out:

This would be a league of nations, which, however, need not be a state of nations. That would be a contradiction. In as much as every state involves the



relation of a superior (legislating) to an inferior (obeying, namely the people). However, many nations within one state would constitute only one nation, and this contradicts the presupposition. (Kant 1996: 326)

Once it is implemented, republican governance of the state determines the individuality of its people. Kant has in mind the right of individual people in the universal relation and not people melted in one giant state with despotic governance. In the *Metaphysics of Morals*, he puts the same idea in another phrase:

By a congress is here understood only a voluntary coalition of different states which can be dissolved at any time, not a federation which is based on a constitution and can therefore not be dissolved. Only by such a congress can the idea of a public right of nations be realised, one to be established for deciding their disputes in a civil way, as if by a lawsuit, rather than in a barbaric<sup>4</sup> way, namely by war. (Kant 1996: 488)

Byrd and Hruschka's approach in their commentary on Kant's *Doctrine of Right* is analytical and very detailed. Word by word, their pedant analysis of the text sometimes distracts us from the general picture. They seem to agree that *Metaphysics of Morals* is a higher authority than *Towards Perpetual Peace* in defining Kant's attitude toward warfare. In their commentary, they adopt thinking that the statements Kant made on legal philosophy were unsatisfactory before the Doctrine of Right. Kant's lectures in 1784, in *On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice*, of 1793, in *Towards Perpetual Peace* of 1795, and in his short comments in many other works, are steps toward the system of legal philosophy that unfolds in the *Metaphysics of Morals (Doctrine of Right)* of 1797. They are steps towards his system, but they do not already contain the system itself (Williams 2012: 54). Their approach is described in the following:

The dramatic change in Kant's theory of the state and the ideal international arrangement for states can be traced to Kant's deeper development of the concept of a 'juridical state' (*rechtlicher Zustand*) in the Doctrine of Right. (Byrd, Hruschka 2008: 604)

Byrd and Hruschka suggest that it is plausible that Kant makes mistakes while he is trying to establish his theory. The system is, in their opinion, refined to perfection in the *Metaphysics of Morals*. They presume this as Kant's final position and that he should be perceived as a just war theorist. They appear to endorse the extremely subverting idea that Kant allows for wars to be waged to force other states into 'peaceful' federation of states or what they describe as a juridical state of states. By taking this view, they open the way for Kant's doctrine to be arranged by those enthusiastic proponents of the modern just

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4 *Barbarism* is a technical term for Kant; he defines it as force without freedom or law. The distinctive feature of barbarism is that one party is subject to the private choice of another, based entirely on the power of the stronger (Ripstein 2016: 180).

war theory “who wish to extend their economic and political system to new territories by force if necessary” (Howard 2012: 55). The lack of agreement is based on the idea that Kant’s loose, negative surrogate of the federation of free states is the correspondent to his arguments on the state of nature. Most of Byrd and Hruschka’s argumentation is trying to identify the state of nature with the state of states.

In contrast, an entitlement that Kant gives to human freedom lies in the way “the international order providing conditions for peace comes about as a voluntary federation of states. Unlike the coerced movement that brings individuals out of the *juridical* state of nature, movement out of the international state of nature is, in an important measure, uncoerced”. (Rossi, 2012: 229) On the other hand, Byrd and Hruschka reflect relations among states in analogy with those of individuals in the state of nature. As individuals must enter a legal condition to overcome the state of nature, nation–states as well must enter a legal condition like that of civil society, known in Kant’s writings as the federation of the free states. Byrd and Hruschka find further divergence in the following parts of Kant’s quotes:

However, what holds in accordance with a natural right for human beings in a lawless condition, cannot hold for states in accordance with the right of nations (since, like states, they already have a rightful constitution internally and hence have outgrown the constraint of others to bring them under a more extended law-governed constitution in accordance with their concepts of right). (Kant 1996: 327)

Moreover, in the *Metaphysics of Morals* Kant discusses the original right free states have to wage war against each other in the state of nature (in order, for example, to establish a state approaching the juridical state) (Byrd, Hruschka 2008: 624). Byrd and Hruschka suggest that Kant makes the U-turn in his thought neglecting the rest of the sentence.

After this sentence, Kant continues in the following way:

As regards the original right that free states in a state of nature have to go to war with one another (in order, perhaps, to establish a condition more closely approaching a rightful condition). The first question that arises is: What right has a state against its subjects to use them for war against other states? To expand their goods and even their lives in it, or to put them at risk, in such a way that, whether they shall go to war does not depend on their own judgment, but they may be sent into it by the supreme command of the sovereign? (Kant 1996: 483)

If one takes a straight look at these two pieces of Kant’s work, he will immediately see that in the *Metaphysics of Morals (Doctrine of Right)*, we could find only several<sup>5</sup> paragraphs dedicated to the problem of the just war. Even

5 Kant’s discussion of a number of matters that lie within the scope of classical just war theory is included under the more general heading of *The Right of Nations (Völkerrecht)*, a relatively brief section of nine pages in toto (AA 6: 343–351 [§§ 53–61]); this

there we can find that “practical reason pronounces in us its irresistible *veto*: *there is to be no war*, neither war between you and me in the state of nature nor war between us as states, which, although they are internally in a lawful condition, are still externally (in relation to one another) in a lawless condition; for war is not the way in which everyone should seek his rights” (Kant 1996: 491). Then again, *Towards Perpetual Peace* is fully dedicated to this problem. Although there are discrepancies between the *Doctrine of Right* and *Perpetual Peace* in the way they adopt the possible legitimacy of the just war, they are far from being entirely incompatible with one another (Williams 2012: 7).

In accordance with reason, there is only one-way the states in relation with one another can leave the lawless condition, which involves nothing but war. It is that, like individual human beings, they give up their lawless freedom, accommodate themselves to public coercive laws, and so form a state of nations that would finally encompass all the nations of the earth. (Kant 1996: 328)

Instead of the definite idea of the world republic, Kant suggests that negative substitute of a league that prevents war is the only institution that can stop the aggression, although it is fragile and can easily be broken. Does Kant have elements of just war theory in his philosophy? “Although Kant accepts the regular war account of what war *is*, he rejects its account of its justification” (Ripstein 2016: 190). Would he be familiar with the right to conduct the war counter to non-republican’s states? Kant quote clearly says: “No state shall forcibly interfere in the constitution and government of another state” (Kant 1996: 319). The goal of perpetual peace is happening only by the enlightened improvement of the establishments of all states until they reach the form of government in Kant’s political theory known as *republicanism*. This development could be achieved only in a peaceful manner. The *republican* nation cannot use force as a solution for peace. This case is in contradiction to the idea of right. Further argumentation goes to the direction of the problem of international legal order in the contemporary era seen through the existence of the League of Nations and the United Nations.

The significant thinker who will differently revive Kant’s ideas of international order in the contemporary era is Jürgen Habermas (1998: 165), the German social philosopher. His work *Kant’s Idea of Perpetual Peace: At Two Hundred Years Historical Remove* is a profound critic of the sketch with historical distance. He speaks about the importance of grasping Kant’s theory with all its historical background and without the state of nature concept because they are not anymore consonant with our historical experience. He describes Kant’s theory only by three main arguments: perpetual peace as a final goal, the federation of free states as a project, the idea of the cosmopolitan order as the solution of the proposed project. The critics like Kleingeld reacted that “the case for transforming the United Nations into a cosmopolitan democracy

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is followed by a section on *Cosmopolitan Right (Weltbürgerrecht)* (AA 6: 352–353 [§ 62]) and a “Conclusion” (AA6: 354–355) (Rossi 2012: 217).

with strengthened coercive powers is preceded by a lengthy argument showing that Kant's position in *Perpetual Peace* is riddled with contradictions and that Kant's own principles should have led him to argue for a federative state of states with coercive powers" (Kleingeld 2004: 304). At the same time, Habermas "is skeptical of grandiose plans for a world state or global federal republic" (Scheuerman 2008: 485).

Nevertheless, he is developing arguments in the following direction. First, Habermas thinks that the concept of the federation of free states and the right of the nations "need reformulation in the light of the contemporary global situation" (Habermas 1998: 165). Second, there is also a conceptual gap existing in the legal construction of the *constitutional* state says Habermas, which invites a naturalistic interpretation of the nation to fill in. "The scope and borders of republican states cannot be settled on normative grounds" (Habermas 1996: 131). Although perpetual peace is an essential characteristic of the cosmopolitan order, it is still only the indicator of the final consequence. The main problem is how to specify differences between the classical view of the international order as a right to have a just war, and the cosmopolitan law, which is yet to come. In other words, how to justify the constitutional gap and what is specific for the *ius cosmopolitanum*?

Kant, (1996) as we have already seen, is proposing a *League of Nations*, the *Federation of the Free States* or a *Congress of Sovereign States*. He also draws a correlation between the state of nature and the social contract and future forming of the federation. In the same way, as the social contract drives the state of nature between self-reliant individuals to an end, so the state of nature between aggressive states should end as well. From now on, the order described as cosmopolitan is supposed to be different from an internal legal constitution, since the states, unlike individual citizens, do not submit themselves to the public coercive laws of a superordinate power, but hold their independence. "Kant recognised, however, that the idea of a world republic could degenerate into something different from a supranational legal order" (Habermas 2006: 123). The predicted federation of free states that rejects war forever is supposed to maintain the sovereignty of its followers in their foreign relations. The perpetually-connected states hold their highest constitutional authority and do not incorporate into a world republic. Instead of the definite idea of a world republic, Kant is building the negative substitute of a *foedus pacificum* whose goal is to prevent conflict.

This federation is supposed to arise from sovereign agreements between the republican states, in accordance with the international order, which is now no longer in the state of nature. This association does not establish any coercive legal laws of the states against one another, but only unites them into a permanent voluntary alliance. Consequently, association into a *foedus pacificum* goes beyond the weak obligatory power of the right of nations merely in respect of its durability.

The contradiction here is glaring. Kant wants to preserve a *cosmopolitan* form of sovereignty among the federation of free states members. He keeps

them in a soft, voluntary alliance without any coercive power. On the other hand, the federation that establishes a perpetual peace is supposed to be different from the merely common condition. According to Habermas, members of the federation of free states must subordinate their sovereignty to the mutually stated goal of not resolving their disagreements by war, but by a process similar to a court of law. Habermas notes:

Without this element of obligation, the peace congress of nations cannot become permanent, nor can its voluntary association become enduring; instead, it remains hostage to an unstable constellation of interests and will inevitably fall apart, much as the League of Nations would years later. (Habermas 1998: 169)

Kant does not grasp the federation of the free states as a union with common institutions, and therefore this organisation does not have any coercive authority; this implies that the relationship between the states relies purely on moral grounds, but such trust even in his time, and especially today, is nothing but a philosopher's sweet dream. Nevertheless, in the historical sense, Kant's project of the federation of free states remains plausible.

Kant's suggestion for a cosmopolitan "international order is on the establishment of an adjudicatory order for the settlement of disputes that would otherwise lead to war" (Rossi 2012: 230). The new institutional design of the international order ranges from minimal intergovernmental models to proposals advocating a world government with full coercive authority. Proponents of the minimal intergovernmental prototype promote a league of states without coercive authority. On the other hand, the world republic advocates like Höffe sees its character as minimal statehood. Höffe suggests that the *Preamble to the General Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) "demands more than this and specifies three tasks for the United Nations: protection of human rights, encouragement of international cooperation and encouragement of social progress and better living conditions under greater freedom" (Höffe 1998: 59). Two different types of reasoning are present among those who invoke a world government. We have philosophers who are promoters of the state of states model, and those who are trying to establish a theory of cosmopolitan democracy.

Conversely, Jürgen Habermas is going in another direction with his cosmopolitan democracy (multi-level model) theory. His critic of the federation of free states does not imply that he is in favour of the idea of world republic or state of states. In the *Kantian Project and the Divided West*, he is pointing out the thesis about the process of "constitution of international law" (Habermas 2006: 115). Through analysis of Kant's arguments, he is trying to create space for implementation of his theory. This theory implies reformulation of new international legislature according to the idea of protection of fundamental human rights. These rights are the cornerstone of Kant's cosmopolitan law. This reformulation is for him a proper synthesis between the *world republic* on one side and free voluntary *league of nations* on the other. In a multi-level global system, Habermas says, "the classical function of the state as the guarantor of security, law, and freedom would be transferred to a supranational

world organisation specialised in securing peace and implementing human rights worldwide” (Habermas 2008: 445).

Kant, on the contrary, says in the second definitive article of perpetual peace that this constitution should be in the form of the league of nations and not a state of states and emphasises:

That would be a contradiction, in as much as every state involves the relation of a superior to an inferior; but a number of nations within one state would constitute only one nation, and this contradicts the presupposition (since here we have to consider the right of nations in relation to one another insofar as they comprise different states and are not to be fused into a single state). (Kant 1996: 325)

The contradiction comes from the fact that the price the citizens of a world republic would have to pay for the legal assurance of peace and civil liberties would be the “loss of the practical ethical freedom they enjoy as members of a national community organised as an independent nation-state” (Habermas 2006: 127). There is a fear that a world republic, in its federal structure, would unavoidably lead to social and cultural uniformity. In the second level rests the objection that a global state of nations would progress into a universal form of despotism. Kant seems to be worried that the alternative to the system of aggressive sovereign states would be the global control by a single world power. That idea will lead him to the option of the negative surrogate, the conception of a League of Nations. According to this view, “the interpenetration of the positive law and political power does not aim at the legal type of modern government as such, but at a democratically constituted rule of law” (Habermas 2006: 131).

The final point of the process of legislation of political power is the very idea of a constitution that a community of free and equal citizens gives itself. At this point, we must differentiate between a *state* and a *constitution*. A state is a composite of hierarchically ordered functions that can exercise political power or implement political programs; “a constitution, by contrast, defines a horizontal association of citizens by placing the fundamental rights that free and equal founders mutually grant each other” (Habermas 2006: 131).

The *republican* conversion of the state power is a necessary change toward a constitution of international order. Completion of the process of legislation of international order sets the seal on the problem of an initial situation in which law serves as an instrument of power. As a result, constitutional state means that all authority mechanisms originate from the autonomously formed will of the civil society. Legitimation requirements of a “democratically constituted world society without the world government could be satisfied assuming that nation-states and their population undergo specific learning process” (Habermas 2008: 445). Here we can notice that Habermas attempts are directed with the real-world picture and emancipatory consciousness.

In other words, the general rational will of individuals is creating the constitution. The international order is viewed as the logical continuation of the evolution from national to global state. What is missing is a supranational

power above the competing states that would provide the international community with the executive and sanctioning powers required to implement and enforce its rules and decisions. The classical international order is already a kind of constitution in the sense that it creates a legal community between parties with formally equal rights. “This international proto-constitution differs in essential respects from a republican constitution” (Habermas 2006: 133).

It is composed of collective participants rather than individual persons, and it shapes and coordinates powers rather than founding new governmental authorities. Compared with a constitution in the strict sense, the international community of sovereign states has no necessary force of standard legal requirements. Only voluntary restrictions on sovereignty, the rejection of its core element, and the right to go to war can transform parties to treaties into members of a politically constituted community. A league of nations and the prohibition of war are logical extensions of a development connected with the membership status of the subjects of international order. States must be supplemented at the supranational level by “legislative and adjudicative bodies” (Habermas 2006: 133). Besides, they need sanctioning powers if they want to become a community capable of taking political initiatives and executing joint decisions. In the development of a process of constitution of international law, a priority of horizontal relations between member states over centralised practical competences points to an opposite evolutionary direction, to that of the ancestors of the constitutional state. It proceeds from the non-hierarchical association of collective participants to the supranational and transnational organisations of international order.

The initial situation of the classical international law has left permanent traces in the Charter of the United Nations. Sovereign equality remains mutually recognised by the community of the states and peoples. Strictly speaking, when it comes to public security, and, meanwhile, the promotion of human rights, the world organisation has acquired the authority to intervene in the internal affairs of criminal regimes or failing states. In these two policy domains, the member states grant the UN Security Council the ability to protect the rights of citizens against their governments if necessary. Hence, it would be consistent to describe the world organisation as already a community of the states and citizens. In a similar spirit, “the Brussels Convention presented its draft of the European constitution in the name of the citizens and the States of Europe” (Habermas 2006: 135).

The reference to collective participants acknowledges the prominent position, which they will retain, as the driving subjects of the development in a peaceful global legal order. The reference to individuals, by contrast, draws attention to the actual bearers of the status of the world citizen. The multi-level system outlined by Habermas would realise the peace and human rights goals of the UN Charter at the supranational level and talk about the problems of global domestic politics through compromises among major domesticated powers at the transnational level. This sketch is merely an illustration of a conceptual alternative to a world republic.

Habermas's idea intends to show, for example, that the state of states is not the only institution, which the Kantian project could adopt as an alternative to the surrogate of a league of nations. The type of a constitutional state projected onto a global scale alone does not fulfil the requirements for a cosmopolitan condition, understood in suitably abstract terms. Likewise, to the republican type of constitution, which Kant had in mind, liberal types aim at a juridification of political power. However, in the latter cases, juridification means the power must be set in national relations.

Habermas's multi-level model is a plan that assigns different responsibilities to different institutional levels. He claims that:

Global Three-level model consists in discriminating the three elements of statehood, democratic constitution and civic solidarity that are closely linked in the historical form of the constitutional state. (Habermas 2008: 445)

“He also believes that the politics of global distribution and similar issues will have to be negotiated among transnational regimes, in contrast to human rights and questions of war and peace, which he assigns to the UN” (Verovšek, 2011: 374). On the supranational level, Habermas saw a reformed and strengthened UN that is to serve, among other things, as an executive authority responsible for securing peace and protecting human rights. Habermas “supports the restructuring of the Security Council and limiting the veto power of its permanent members in order to make the UN a more representative and effective organisation” (Mikalsen 2012: 308).

Habermas defends the formation of permanent international courts, where states, and individuals, have legal standing. In addition to settling conflicts between states and conflicts between the private actors and a state, the function of such courts is to prosecute individuals for criminal acts performed in service of the state. The author has to mention Habermas's proposition that, in addition to the consolidation of core institutions such as Security Council and the General Assembly, reforms should aim at separating these institutions from specialised UN organisations, such as UNESCO, WTO and the World Bank. This way, the world organisation would become an institution whose responsibilities are narrower compared to the present-day UN. But this model also proposes a “potentially confusing multiplicity of decision-making entities at the national, transnational, and supranational levels” (Scheuerman 2008: 488).

Unlike Kant's league, a reformed world organisation has more extensive powers. It is supposed to serve as a “supranational executive authority” (Habermas 2006: 158) providing the international community with adequate means to put into effect its rules and decisions, even if Habermas emphasises that the states are to remain in control of the means of coercion. His model also extends the scope of responsibilities. The league is established for the sole purpose of dealing with conflicts between the states, whereas the world organisation is additionally supposed to protect fundamental human rights globally.



Finally, the division of the General Assembly into two chambers would make the UN, in contrast to Kant's intergovernmental league, an organisation that recognises two types of actors as legal subjects by international law, namely the states and individuals. The feature that significantly distinguishes Habermas's (2006) proposal from both the league of states and the world republic is the institutional mid-levelling between the supranational and the national levels. Besides, the delegation of transnational topics to interregional negotiations is supposed to reduce the amount of work of the world organisation, thus enabling it to deal more efficiently with global peace and human rights enforcement. He seems to have two main reasons for rejecting the world republic, and these explain why he thinks there is a need for his multi-level system instead.

World republic would not have the necessary legitimacy. A political community that wants to recognise itself as a democracy must at least distinguish between the members and non-members. As we see, the argument of the world republic is not necessary for creating binding international law. Habermas develops this argument against the background of Kant's interpretation. Kant rejects the world republic because of the despotic governance possibility in favour of the negative surrogate of the *foedus pacificum*. Kant has come to this conclusion by observing the similarity between the state of nature among individuals and lawless international relations. Only one option is the legitimate one, and that is the world republic as a minimal state (Höffe 1998: 57). Conversely, according to Habermas (2006), if the only way of overcoming the individual state of nature is *republican* governance, then the solution for differences between sovereign states goes toward a world republic.

The states as warrantors of legally secured freedom among individuals should be considered seriously. First, one must not perceive national legislation in the same way as international legislation. Habermas (2006) suggests that we understand the establishment of a just system of international law as complementary, rather than as analogous to the establishment of just national legal systems. The second reason why to think of the international rule of law as integral, and not like the national rule of law, is that promoting the rule of law in the two spheres of influence involves challenges that are in a certain way opposite and therefore call for different solutions.

Deficiency of executive and sanctioning powers implies that what is necessary for forming a cosmopolitan legal order is, in the end, a world republic. However, the point of emphasising the priority of the horizontal associations among the states is conflicting. First, Habermas tries to show that a legal constitution can be separate from a hierarchical state construction not only conceptually, but also in practice. For this reason, Habermas speaks of the classical European order of states as a "proto-constitution that creates a legal community among parties with formally equal rights" (Mikalsen 2012: 312). Second, and more crucially, emphasising the imbalance between the national and the international cases is meant to show that the challenge of binding state power by law externally is substantially different from the difficulty of binding state power by law internally, and subsequently the recent calls for a different solution than the latter.

#### 4. Conclusion

Although Kant discusses the issues of *Jus ad Bellum*, *Jus in Bello* and *Jus Post-bellum* in his political philosophy, his consideration of the topic has the goal to constitute peace as a highest political good. Kant “can have a conception of right in war, against the background of his more general view that war is by its nature barbaric and to be repudiated entirely” (Ripstein 2016: 180). However, he cannot be proclaimed as a just war theorist like Orend (1999) suggests, only because he is discussing those issues. In the same manner, we can build the theoretical position that Descartes and Spinoza were medieval scholastics because they discussed the issue of substance, for example. Just because Kant was not a pacifist and postulates some self-defense arguments in the Doctrine of Rights, does not necessarily mean that he was a just war theorist. The missing element and the reason why we cannot claim Kant to be a just war theorist is the moral justification of the punitive warring between the nation-states. The author concludes that the arguments for supporting Kant’s ideas outweigh the arguments against doing so. Kant’s contribution to building an international order is immeasurable. He offers a robust and steady theory of international order if we follow his philosophical system.

Also, one could easily link Kant’s thought with the conception of sovereignty. “World organisation must be worked out in terms of sovereignty, in terms of a free federation of corporate bodies voluntarily obeying international law, and not a world law for individuals” (Riley 1979: 54). However, for Kant, sovereignty is more than a juridical principle of international order.

Furthermore, the relations of moral agents in the republican constitution are analogue to relations of sovereign states. Every other possibility would be to treat the others just as means and not as ends.

The next step of Kant’s theory, the federation of the Free states, is the one with the most objections. Kant’s *federation of the free states*, *congress of states*, and *league of nations* or *pacific league* is vulnerable to criticism. Besides, moral grounds of the federation of the free states, as the only argument for its justification, provide even more problems. Kant is aware that his regulation of international relations has some antinomian matters, and because of this, he builds the voluntary negative surrogate approach in his international order theory.

Peace is the final, and the ultimate goal of humanity and the only acceptable means for reaching that goal need to be peaceful. Worldwide peace has no less status for Kant than the highest political good (Höffe 1998: 51) and international order must establish the *cosmopolitan law*. From Kant’s universalistic perspective, every human life has equal moral value. In this way, Kant’s theory of international order offers an option for the establishment of the doctrine of universal human rights. This argument is a starting point of his inner debate, but also of an ongoing academic discussion. Proofs for such claim could derive from various attempts of reformulation, improving, ‘perfecting’ and reconsidering of this fragment of Kant’s theory.

From all the arguments presented above, the one called cosmopolitan democracy attracts most of the attention. Habermas continually tries to modify Kant's theory and solve the paradoxical Kant's arguments discussed above. The nation-states would have to give up their sovereignty to a certain extent and transfer it to the supra-national level, and that Habermas has in mind as a multi-level legal order. In this struggle with Kant's arguments, his own opinion has altered several times during the last 20 years. We have to keep in mind that Habermas attempts are always optimistic, honest and emancipatory. From the devoted supporter of the concept of the cosmopolitan democracy and international law with supranational and transnational coercive powers, his opinion slides into a not as much of extreme position with time. He realised that not every humanitarian intervention is necessarily compatible with the Kantian platform and advances toward a proper civil constitution. This point of view is also unfamiliar with Kant's analogy amongst moral citizen and the state. Implementation of international laws by force is alien to Kant's moral theory and international law theory. If we indeed have a moral responsibility toward others and if we are concerned about how their governments treat citizens of other states, we must find a peaceful solution instead of the punishment and just war.

There is a need for changes in the current situation in this fast-shifting world. Development of the conceptual international order based on the interdependence of the communities is necessary, and in consequence, we must consider some of the arguments Habermas offers. If we do not continue to elaborate those arguments in searching for better solutions and fail to find a resolution for Kantian standpoint, the possibility of ending up in some despotic world republic or juridical states of states remains plausible.

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Nenad Miličić

## Kant o pravednom ratu i međunarodnom poretku

### Apstrakt:

Kantova politička filozofija i filozofija prava od suštinskog su značaja za razumevanje i unapređenje međunarodnog poretka. Rad ima za cilj da izloži argumente koji se suprotstavljaju tvrdnjama da je Kant bio samo teoretičara rata. Budući da je to najkontroverzniji deo njegove političke filozofije, uglavnom zbog krivog tumačenja njegove argumentacije, autor iznosi Kantovo stanovište o pitanjima pravednog rada i međunarodnog poretka i razmatra potencijalna razilaženja između Kanta i teorija koje zastupaju njegovi kritičari. Nadalje, biće diskutovane posledice kontra argumenata vezanih za državu država, svetsku republiku i kosmopolitsku demokratiju unutar savremene političke filozofije. Na kraju, upoređuju se i analiziraju mogućnosti saglasnosti između tri modela rešenja koja proističu iz savremene teorije međunarodnog poretka.

**Ključne reči:** Kant, teorija pravednog rata, međunarodni poredak, ustav, federacija slobodnih država, država država, svetska republika, kosmopolitska demokratija

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Miroslav Milović (†)

## THE PANDEMIC AS HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

Dedicated to the memory of Mario Castelani

### ABSTRACT

The author finds the possibility of overcoming the current liberal-capitalist system in a different conception of time, which requires a different attitude towards both the past and the future. The paper begins with an analysis of the Benjamin's critique of Marx, followed by analysis of Derrida's critique of Benjamin and finally Derrida's critique of Marx. Benjamin points out the problem of teleological understanding of time, the understanding that the meaning of events comes only from the future, which is present in Marx, and which prevents us from escaping the "circle" of violence. Although he relies on Benjamin's conception of time, the author seeks to transcend the understanding of law as something separate from justice, and law as violence. Therefore, the paper turns to Derrida and his understanding of the law, eventually providing new possibilities for understanding and constituting the left, social theory, but also critical thinking today.

### KEYWORDS

history, time, violence, law, Benjamin, Marx, Derrida

I recently remembered Sartre's important visit to Brazil in 1960, as well as his visit, the same year, to my other homeland, then called Yugoslavia. Needless to say, both visits caused a lot of enthusiasm in both countries. What Sartre left us as a legacy was this sense of enthusiasm, needed so much today – here and now – in a dramatic time of a catastrophe of the right and resignation of the left.

At one point – in *The Problem of Method*, Sartre says that Marxism still remains the philosophy of our time because the circumstances that created it has not yet been overcome. Today, the only question is how to rethink Marxism but without replicating the ideology. The future still belongs to Marx, it seems.

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Aleksandra Zistakis.

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Miroslav Milović (†): Full Professor, Department of Law, University of Brasília; milovic.unb@gmail.com. This is the last text by Miroslav Milović, who passed away on February 11th 2021. He was born in Čačak in 1955, studied philosophy in Belgrade. He defended his doctorate in Frankfurt in 1987 and in 1990 at the Sorbonne. From 1988 until 1997 he was a docent for Ethics at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. He spent years working in Ankara, Granada, Tokyo, Brasilia. The last twenty years he worked as a full professor of philosophy at the University of Brasilia. He was a friend of the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory.

While French intellectuals became interested in Marxism after World War II, Sartre was moving nearer to existentialism. At the same time, while the vast majority of the intellectuals, after the experience of the Soviet Union, were distancing themselves from Marxism, Sartre was approaching it. Thus, after he made a visit to the “Soviet miracles” in 1954, Sartre will say that freedom there is a total one. Shortly after this utterance of his, the USSR will invade Hungary.

Bearing all these facts in mind, the question now is how to think about social theory today, or Marxism, or simply even our future? In order to answer this question, first, I will comment on Walter Benjamin’s critical readings of Marx; then I will offer a brief analysis of Derrida’s critique of Benjamin, and finally, in the third part, I will deal with Derrida’s critique of Marx. It will be, I hope, clearer what kind of critical thinking we need today. And what kind of the left; for that matter.

1. Benjamin returned from the Soviet Union in the 1920s with having had an utterly different experience from Sartre: He was overwhelmed with a sense of a great disappointment, and it is through this disenchantment that he will approach Marx. The USSR simply followed and got lost in the mistakes of Marxism itself. How should we understand it?

At the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> thesis, in *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, Benjamin says: “History is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by the presence of the now (*Jetztzeit*)” (Benjamin 1992: 166). He continues, at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> thesis, by saying: “A historical materialist cannot do without the notion of a present which is not a transition, but in which time stands still and has come to a stop” (Benjamin 1992: 167). The present is not transient and does not get its meaning from the future. In that sense, Marx remains within a teleological articulation of history, following Hegel’s optimism. Let us remember that according to Hegel, history acquires its full meaning only at its end. In other words, Marx did not overcome metaphysical teleology. No revolution has done that. Therefore, communism only renewed metaphysics and its static project.

Here, we arrive at the point of contention between Benjamin and Marx: History is not a scene of progress; time is not linear; we must return to the contingency of this “here and now”, to this discontinuity. Moreover, we must, in fact, go back to the past, because of the injustices committed. We must do it in the name of the victims. Marx deals with the things yet to come, and in doing so, he even defends or justifies violence. For, ] only through proletarian violence we can reach the future.

The conflict with Marxist teleology leads Benjamin to the notion of messianism. The messianic here is understood as an opening up of the past. For Benjamin, the messianic “is not its relationship to the future classless society, but is an opening up of memory” (Fritsch 2005: 37). This destruction of metaphysics, hinted at by Spinoza and Nietzsche, clashes with teleology. At this point, let us remind ourselves: Teleology is not a harmless thing, limited only to academic discussions. It determines Greek thought, and through Christianity,

all the way to Modernity, to Hegel and Marx, to us, determines our thought. The meaning of our life stems from the future. Also, Marx's promise of social justice remains within this teleology. Is it possible then, to think about justice without the teleology of the future? (Fritsch 2005: 24)

That is why, for Benjamin, justice is related to the messianic project, to the divine. Here, justice is opposed the constitution and preservation of the law itself. Therefore, for Benjamin, the law is tied to a mythical violence. Thus, the law, separated from justice, remains related to violence. Hence the question: Can the law still be a place/site of justice? Benjamin also relates divine justice with the proletarian revolution. But, the revolution easily can become a new form of violence. In other words, Benjamin is close to a conclusion that one form of violence can only be overcome by another violence. These dilemmas were the basic inspirations of Derrida's book *Force of Law*. It seems that we need to distance ourselves from Benjamin in order to think about justice as (with)in the law or as the conditions of a social integration.

Let me repeat once more, this is not, by all means, a question of academic discussion or a case of philosophical rhetoric. Today, it is necessary to confront Benjamin in this context, for the system itself is based on the law. The normativity of the law is a condition for the preservation of the system itself, or, better capitalism itself. We are not talking about the return to a legal conservatism, as suggested by Aristotle. As Aristotle himself says, the normative premises of the law, based on an unquestionable ethical project, are not a subject of discussion. The Greeks do not question their own metaphysics. The world is simply taken as it is. The Greeks, thus, seem to imply modern positivism. It is, by the way, a concept that points us to many doubts about modern law we seem to have. Positivism: Descartes implies it, battling with the Greek metaphysics; Hobbes affirms it within a social context. The system, integrated by the law, does not question its own assumptions. The system simply needs to function. The problem is, however, that – in addition to conservatism and positivism – something else emerges. Namely, the system needs law. It needs legal violence to sustain itself. The capitalist system, in other words, depends on legal violence. Or, as Fischer-Lescano would say: "The devil is in the legal order itself" (Fischer-Lescano 2017: 58). Conservatism, positivism, the devil's order. These may be the proper words used for the reconstruction of the history of law. So, the question recurs: Can the law be a place/site of justice? That is Derrida's question.

2. How to think social justice, then? This is the point of Derrida's dispute with Benjamin and, at the same time, the point where we need to rethink the Marxist promise of social justice. So, along with Benjamin and against Benjamin, Derrida wants to confront Marx. In the name of some other left, which today could be seen only as a matter of regaining our life in the demonic world of neoliberalism, in my homelands, here in Brazil, and in Serbia.

Already in his texts from the 1970s, such as in the book *Speech and Phenomena*, Derrida begins his critique of metaphysics that continues all the way



to his works on Benjamin and Marx. Metaphysics is based on the premise of Identity, it creates a culture of a strong identity, a cage so to speak.

However, language itself tells us that this does not have to be the case. Namely, language creates conditions for something to be memorized. It is at the place of absent things and thus creates conditions of/for meaning. This mediation by something else in relation to consciousness Derrida calls iterability. In this way otherness, iterability, language, become, in a sense, the quasi-transcendental conditions of thought. For, in order to think something, we need something else, i.e. language. This brings us to the possibility of a critique of metaphysics. The otherness, the difference, becomes a condition of identity. It is, obviously, a critique of metaphysics that does not create new identities. Here, Derrida thinks of Heidegger and his unfinished project of the critique of metaphysics. That is why Derrida does not imply the destruction of metaphysics, but, rather, its deconstruction. He implies an opening up to a difference, that also creates new possibilities of difference; an unstoppable opening towards the Other. Let us remind ourselves that St. Paul spoke about this opening as the meaning of Christianity. For Derrida, this opening leads to an inexhaustible critique of the identity today called capitalism.

That is another reason why Derrida does not agree with the pure divine justice, with its pure original principle, with the identity of justice as advocated by Benjamin. Derrida simply doubts that violence, the imposition of the same or the identical, will create new violence. In this context, the third element of his critique of Benjamin could be seen. Namely, Benjamin talks about the victims of metaphysics who were overcome by the teleological progress of history. Thus, the messianic, if we follow Benjamin's argument, returns to these victims and becomes a kind of revitalization of the past. According to Derrida, however, the question of language refers to an even more rudimentary form of violence, or, as he says, the arch-violence. In order to have an identity at all, we lose the singularity that the generality of language suffocates. In that sense, Derrida speaks of absolute sacrifices. His messianic project is related to them. The absolute sacrifice disappears due to the linguistic mediation of any identity. But, due to the necessity of this mediation, due to the necessity of mediation of the other, of the language, a kind of a responsibility appears in relation to that other. The mediation refers to the simple fact that "subjects must thank others for their own constitution" (Fritsch 2005: 185).

This also represents the beginning of Derrida's critique of Marx. At this point, he follows Benjamin. Specifically, Benjamin's belief that the metaphysical interpretation of history, which in Modernity led to the articulation of economic identity, influenced Marx to neglect the politics: History has defeated politics. So, Derrida's critique of Marx seeks to find a possible political inspiration.

3. It would be useful here to offer an understanding of Marx's critique of politics. After all, this is a point where Marx comes up with a kind of messianic project of his own. Criticizing Hegel's philosophy, Marx understands politics as a form of alienation. While Kant brings freedom closer to ethics, Hegel

brings freedom closer to politics. According to Hegel, politics realizes us, affirming a sort of a historical secret about the relationship between the individual and the general. The French Revolution, affirming individuals, each of us as a form of a general, in the Declaration of Human Rights, also hints at the end of history. Nothing new will happen in history. Isn't it true that many consider capitalism to be the end of history? Marx, however, believes that our freedom has yet to be realized. We can see that just by looking at the economy or at the poverty in the world. It is still before our eyes today and it only deepens in neoliberalism. The alienation is basically an economic one, Marx believes, so freedom is, therefore, possible only if it is related to economy, to a change within the economy, that is. In this sense, for Marx, politics is, a kind of, the last word of capitalism, pointing to a possibility of freedom where freedom is not possible at all. Just as democracy is not possible here, either. The modern age is a polarized world, i.e. a crisis of the relationship between the capital and labor. The border of politics and democracy is the capital itself. Capitalism is sustained in this crisis and it is only possible if it is based on the crisis; it can be preserved only as a society of spectacle, not as a possibility of real change.

In *On the Jewish Question*, referring to the boundaries of politics, Marx also proclaims his own messianic project (Marx 1978). Namely, Marx grasps modern development, and following Hegel's footsteps, he perceives it as the progress of the abstract. We separate ourselves from the concrete, from the utility, heading in the direction of market mediation and the exchange value. To that extent, says Marx in *On the Jewish Question*, we can speak of an emancipation only when a concrete, individual agent implies an abstract citizen. This is the only way to complete the project of human emancipation: when life affirms itself against the system, when we feel alive again. We are witnessing the timelessness of that project: we, the zombies of capitalism, as Alain Badiou would say.

Why, therefore, do we need to return to politics and democracy, when Marx is already pointing out to their borders? This is where Derrida's critique emerges: The critique of economics and commodity fetishism deepens and it is linked to the question of language, which has already been discussed. In a way, Marx's project of social justice remains unfinished. Our question is still the one that concerns social justice. The answer is not going to be necessarily a Marxist one, or at least not just Marxist. According to Jean-Luc Nancy, no revolution has stepped out from a metaphysical teleology. Communism has only, in a different way, renewed the metaphysical cage of identity. We can here recall the Berlin *Wall Museum*, that displays the evidence of the dramatic attempts to escape from such a world – the attempts to escape from the same.

For Derrida the question is what kind of a radical opening to justice is possible. Or, what is this radical opening to the possibility of the future? The answer is in the opening towards the Other, to which the language itself points out. Marx seems to have neglected such an opening. Instead, he remained enclosed within the economy, within a particular identity, that is. Therefore, the working class was identified as the subject/agent of change. But we don't see

the members of this class on the streets today. Not on the streets of Belgrade nowadays, anyway. To that extent, Derrida speaks of the democratic, not just of social and/or economic, promise of social justice. Needless to say, it is necessary to change the economic identity, as one of the consequences of the critique of metaphysical culture. Here, I can only suggest to the readers the works of Antonio Negri whose central question is how to overcome the identity of the economy itself.

In short, the world of the empire of capitalism is domination of the same. Benjamin connects hell with this repetition of the same (Benjamin 2001: 162). Michael Löwy understands this as the essence of Benjamin's opinion about hell (Löwy 2005: 90). In that sense, the word pandemic from the title of this essay is not just a historical contingency. It is, rather, a picture of history. The scene of the domination of the Identical. To that extent, the future is possible only as an opening to difference, to Other, that is. As a rupture. As a way out from the linear time that determines us, starting from the ancient Greeks all the way to neoliberalism.

At this point Derrida turns to the question of law, because the law is, so to speak, a condition for the Other to appear. "Without this right, he cannot even enter my house, the host's house, but only illegitimately, secretly, as a parasite, an intruder, exposed to expulsion or imprisonment." (Derrida, Dufourmantelle 2003: 55)

Thus, is law understood as a place/site of justice, and no longer as a place of violence. According to Fischer-Lescano, maybe this is the place/site where this often unexplained, mystical basis of the law also appears (Fischer-Lescano 2017). A right that we, the subjects, have created, but as the right that constitutes us, that appears as a guarantor of our political activity: The right to have rights.

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## Miroslav Milović (†)

### Pandemija kao istorija

#### Apstrakt:

Mogućnost prevazilaženja liberalno kapitalističkog Sistema današnjice autor nalazi u drugačijem promišljanju vremena, koje zahteva drugačiji odnos kako spram istorije, tako i budućnosti. Rad počinje analizom Benjaminove kritike Marksa, koju zatim slede analize Deridine kritike Benjamina i na kraju Deridine kritike Marksa. Benjamin će ukazati na problem teleološkog razumevanja vremena, shvatanje da smisao događaja dolazi tek iz budućnosti, koje je prisutno kod Marksa, a koje ne dopušta da se izađe iz „začaranog kruga“ nasilja. Premda se oslanja na Benjaminovo poimanje vremena, autor nastoji da prevaziđe razumevanje zakona kao nečega što je odvojeno od pravde, zakona kao nasilja. Stoga se rad okreće Deridi i njegovom shvatanju zakona, pružajući nam na kraju nove mogućnosti mišljenja i konstituisanja levice, socijalne teorije, ali i kritičkog mišljenja danas.

Ključne reči: istorija, vreme, nasilje, zakon, Benjamin, Marks, Derida.

III

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REVIEWS



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PHILIP G. ROEDER, *NATIONAL SECESSION: PERSUASION AND VIOLENCE IN INDEPENDENCE CAMPAIGNS*, CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS, ITHACA, 2018.

Jovica Pavlović

National secession can be defined and understood in several ways. Political theorists tend to justify it as a (remedial or inherent) moral right to territorial separation of political communities from existing states, while legal scholars view it as an (illegal or extralegal) act of creating new subjects of international law. Both approaches place emphasis on the moment of political divorce, which is why political scientists do justice to the given subject of inquiry by also trying to analyze and understand socio-political processes which create right circumstances for (and lead up to) successful and unsuccessful acts of territorial withdrawal.

Philip Roeder's book *National Secession: Persuasion and Violence in Independence Campaigns* can be placed within the latter of the three research categories. It is an important work in a series of attempts to grasp the variables and the logic behind secessionist movements. Yet, it provides a fresh and innovative approach to the old problem of explaining the motives and factors which cause a population (or a proto-nation) of a distinct territory to rebel against the state.

Roeder's starting hypothesis is a solid one. He claims that there are many

potential and existing independence movements, but only some succeed in becoming popular political projects, while an even smaller number of those projects actually manage to achieve their end goal; that of creating a new state. He sets to prove this hypothesis by analyzing the entire process of state creation; from its early beginnings that are to be found within the period when enthusiastic patriots romanticize the idea of national self-determination, across the initial phases in which capable social elites utilize the nationalist narrative in order to create a cause for mobilizing a proto-nation into a potent political group, to the phase in which violence is applied as an effective tool of showing strength and determination, and finally the period in which a window of opportunity opens for the seceding territory to gain international support (without which independence is virtually impossible) and become recognized as a full member of the community of sovereign states, or achieve *de facto* independence without securing a seat in the United Nations.

Roeder believes that nationalist leaders – if they are to completely achieve their goals – must be persistent and ready to endure the political and/

or military struggle against governing authorities while patiently waiting for this window of opportunity to emerge, at which point they must act swiftly in order to secure sufficient support of other states. For Croatia and Slovenia, that opportunity presented itself in the form of a collapsing Communist Bloc, which led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, while East Timor is an example of a plebiscite being organized at the right time. By providing a comprehensive overview of several secessionist movements and their activities (such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya and Transnistria, to name a few more), the author exemplifies why some have succeeded where others have failed.

However, Roeder does not only rely on illustrative examples in order to achieve the research aims that he sets forward. The author also sets up a comprehensive explanatory theoretical account, one which is tested against and supplemented by a series of qualitative studies. Concentrating on strategic moves and decisions made by independence movement leaders, Roeder shows that a crucial decisive indicator regarding whether or not a territory manages to gain freedom from central authorities is the success rate at which secessionist elites ensure the coordination and fulfillment of expectations of the *populus* in whose name they have proclaimed independence. The diversity of motivations that might stimulate each member of the nation to take up arms or to politically support the state-building cause must be sufficiently articulated through an overarching narrative. This narrative, expressed through a political campaign for independence, should manage to motivate those members of the nation

who really see the secessionist struggle as a worthy cause, but also those who are motivated by narrow self-interests (such as money and power), and those who seek a cause to rebel against the current state of things (regardless of what the political platform for rebellion is).

When it comes to the compositional structure of the elites that are supposed to convey and implement the secessionist political narrative successfully, Roeder is right to notice that the group must include those who are able to persuade, but also those who are able to conduct the “business end of things”, even if this includes violence as a potential resort of achieving results. Without pragmatism and expressed readiness to make sacrifices, an independence movement stands little to no chance of reaching its ultimate goal.

However, perhaps the most important contribution of Roeder’s analysis is that it points to aspects of secessionist struggles which other similar works overlook or take for granted. While many studies of this sort do analyze the inner-dynamics and local politics of groups which strive towards independence, this might be the first book that offers an in-depth comprehensive overlook of how the very structure of an independence campaign is to be set up and conducted if the campaign itself is to be successful and yield desired results. This is the key element which makes *National Secession: Persuasion and Violence in Independence Campaigns* – among other important findings and conclusions that it offers – a well-rounded work of political science, or (more precisely), one which provides new insights into the important subjects of nationalism and secession.



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ANDREW CULP, *DARK DELEUZE*, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS,  
MINNEAPOLIS, 2016.

Aleksandra Zlatković

Andrew Culp seizes on the in-depth critique of Gilles Deleuze in his earlier works, reminding us that we mustn't forget the line of flight Deleuze has taken upon the critique of Capitalism and its *jouissance*. Resistance is in the centre of this book, getting back to the forms in which it has a chance of being more productive and stronger in its materialistic effects. Lack of hope and lack of new ideas is a key to understanding where power of capitalism lies, when it wraps its mighty hands around us, surrounding us with nothing that we have to offer. Deleuze is providing a new shift in solving these problematic rhizomatic forms that are trained to control us and where we are bound to give up.

Culp investigates the darker, more negative aspects in Deleuze, considering it much more neglected and seeing it as a solid ground for new breaking discourse. *Dark Deleuze* brings back the old Deleuze, thinker of the negative. Without falling into academical traps of being too indecisive, Culp is playful in his representation of redefining old and producing new tools which could help us in reorganizing new policies

and letting subject become less isolated but more transformed and fluid in its forms.

While using Deleuze in avoiding the liberal traps of freedom, labour as form of capitalism, reproduction, Culp is referring to new biopolitics of control society where internet has become powerful tool in keeping those relations at a very high standard, producing dozen of Foucauldian 'panopticism' where we rush with desire to become police in this system. Escaping the trap we are caught in, Culp is offering an escape route, where we must try to escape these kinds of swamps of capitalistic sweet solutions that we are offered.

Mining the known, and discovering the unknown, Culp represents *Dark Deleuze* as an escape route in an academical sense, but it is surrounding it with flames of pessimism, which is allowing us to produce negative theoretical analysis and offer actions. One must not forget how easy it is to be sucked into black hole of emptiness and negative readings in which negation itself could become key inspiration of bringing old perspectives once again.

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DANILO N. BASTA, *CRNE SVESKE I HAJDEGEROV ANTISEMITIZAM*.  
HERMENEUTIČKO-KRITIČKI PREGLED, DOSIJE STUDIO – GUTENBERGOVA  
GALAKSIJA, BEOGRAD, 2020.

Časlav D. Koprivica

Knjiga profesora Baste *Crne sveske i Hajdegerov antisemitizam* pojavljuje se kao peti od četrnaest tomova izdanja njegovih *Sabranih spisa*, čije je objavljivanje u toku. Ona je u cjelosti posvećena međunarodnoj raspravi koja je raspaljena, zapravo obnovljena, s neuporedivim žarom i obuhvatom, objavljivanjem tomova tzv. *Crnih svesaka*, neke vrste Hajdegerovog „intimnog“ dnevnika – ali i više od toga. Ta diskusija, započeta 2014. godine, dobila je na snazi, postavši stvar od javnog značaja za gotovo čitav evropsko-„zapadnjački“ svijet, tako da se vrlo brzo iz naučnog okruženja prelila i u kanale šire, kulturalne javnosti, budeći strasti i kod šire publike. Pono-vo, kao i šezdesetih godina, kada je filozofija možda posljednji put prije ovog događaja pokazala sposobnost da tako snažno dopre do javnosti, ključna riječ bila je *angažovanje*, ali ovog puta nažalost ne da bi se procijenila životna djelotvornost i stvarna neophodnost filozofskih ideja, već da bi se u svjetlu njegovih novoobjavljenih spisa procijenila težina prestupā Martina Hajdegera, a za neke učesnike u debati i preduzela temeljna i konačna revizija prirode njegove misli i njenog mjesta u istoriji (savremene) filozofije.

S ovom knjigom, i srpskojezični čitaoci dobijaju priliku da se upoznaju s višegodišnjim, često burnim procesom, da tako kažemo, nekontrolisane, svakako nenamjeravane *povijesti djelovanja* Hajdegerovog svjetonazora (čini se ipak više nego njegovog filozofskog djela) na „potonji svijet“ (*Nachwelt*). Iz ove obimne, akademski skrupulozne i temeljite, s naglašenom hermeneutičkom budnošću pisane knjige i naš čitalac može dobiti pouzdano, pregledno obavještenje o tokovima, naglascima i ishodima ove rasprave. Na taj način, naša filozofska „periferija“ dobila je priliku da se maltene iz prve ruke obavijesti o nečemu što je godinama bilo u žiži filozofske i zainteresovanolaičke globalne javnosti.

Odmah treba naglasiti da ovdje nije riječ samo o angažovanju za nacional-socijalizam od strane mislioca iz južnonjemačke Badenske, već o njegovom „antisemitizmu“, kako je to uobičajeno reći, iako bi to možda bilo primjerenije nazvati antijevrejsvom, budući da je kod Hajdegera, makar u njegovim prvorazrednim teorijskim spisima, prisutan načelni, intencionalni otklon prema biologističkom rasizmu, bez obzira na to što su u njegovom svjetonazoru ipak bili prisutni etnički diferirajući elementi

povezivanja narodnosti, prostranstva, na jednoj strani, i opšteg nazora na život odgovarajuće homogene skupine, na drugoj.<sup>1</sup> Uzgred, ni sam Hajdeger, iz razloga koji će se još vidjeti, nije bio najoprezniji u uspostavljanju preciznih konceptualnih diferencija kada je riječ o Jevrejima. Primjera radi, on ne pravi ni taksonomijsku niti konceptualnu razliku između sekularnog *jevrejstva* i dosekularnog, odnosno nesekularnog *judaizma*. Iako u svojim razmatranjima mahom ima u vidu ono prvo, ponekad pravi nedozvoljene „prelaze“ i ka predsekularnom judaizmu, puštajući da naglasi višestruku i čini se vrlo značajnu razliku među njima. No bilo kako bilo, tema rasprava o kojima nas tako pozvano izvještava profesor Basta, ne propuštajući da, po potrebi, pridoda i sopstvena učena zapažanja i razmatranja, nije Hajdegerov odnos prema nacionalsocijalizmu, već prema jevrejstvu, budući, kako se ispostavilo, da je potonja tema šira, obuhvatnija i da datira dosta ranije u odnosu na pojavu nacizma.

Danilo Basta nije samo izvještavač o Velikoj debati već je i neko preispituje, kritikuje, čudi se, ironiše, postavlja nova pitanja – riječju, onaj ko joj se zapravo i priključuje, ne samo kada sâm daje sudove o Hajdegeru, nego i o nekim njegovim kritičarima, ali i pristalicama. Utoliko, njegovo izvještavanje nije samo to, dakle nije bestanovišno, već se stav prema stvari debate od samoga početka jasno zauzima i metodično slijedi. Za Bastu, nema nikakve sumnje

1 Martin Heidegger, „Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Staat“, seminarske vježbe iz zimskog polugoda 1933/34, *Heidegger-Jahrbuch 4 (Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus I)*, str. 53–88, ovdje 82: „Iz specifičnog znanja nekog naroda o prirodi svog prostora saznajemo tek po načinu na koji se u njemu ispoljava priroda. Nekom slovenskom narodu priroda našeg njemačkog prostora svakako bi se ispoljavala drugačije nego nama, a semitskim nomadima se možda uopšte nikada neće ispoljiti“.

u iskrenost i dosljednost Hajdegerovog antisemitizma, koji on sistemski razobličava i osuđuje, ostavljajući, ne samo putem saglašavanja s najoštrijim kritikama Hajdegera iz Velike debate, više nego otvoren prostor za prepoznavanje veza između Hajdegerovog svjetonazora, Hajdegerove ideologije, Hajdegerove osobe – i Hajdegerove filosofije.

Kada je riječ o pneumoskopiji Hajdegerovog personalnog ideološkog statusa – koji se u Velikoj debati gotovo isključivo, pa utoliko i jednostrano (što, naravno, nije Bastina krivica), procjenjuje s obzirom na njegov (nesumnjivi) antisemitizam (a ne, recimo, i antikomunizam, antiliberalizam, antihrišćanstvo...), Basta prihvata i primjenjuje standardnu opoziciju između *hermeneutike povjerenja* i *hermeneutike sumnje*. Možda bi se polje hermeneutike Hajdegera moglo unekoliko proširiti redefinisanjem ove opozicije onom između ideološke i neideološke hermeneutike. Primjera radi – a to su dvoje autora o kojima sam Basta opširno referiše i koje analizira, Donatela di Ćezare (*Donatella di Cesare*) i Rajner Marten (*Rainer Marten*) nedvosmisleno stoje, formalno posmatrano, na stanovištu hermeneutike sumnje, dakle apriornog nepovjerenja prema iskazima, iskrenosti, namjerama... „interpretandum“ – samoga Martina Hajdegera.

Međutim, stav Di Ćezareove razlikuje se od Martenovog utoliko što je ona – naš je utisak – već unaprijed došla do ideološki kratko spojenih „istina“ o prirodi njegovog političkog angažovanja i veze toga s njegovom filosofijom, dok Marten nalaze svojeg stava hermeneutičkog nepovjerenja nastoji da opravda onim što i kako tvrdi, dakle sadržinom i izvedbom svojih nalaza, koji, ma koliko katkad zvučali na prvi pogled neobično, „neortodoksno“, u najmanju ruku pozivaju na (dalje) promišljanje. Da razjasnimo. Marten odlučno naznačuje pretpostavku o postojanju organske veze između Hajdegerove filosofije i

Hajdegerovog ideološkog predstavljanja i praktičkog angažovanja, ali pritom to ne čini na ideološki, već misaono-filozofski način. Uzgred, možda je i Marten gajio odbojnost prema Hajdegeru kao osobi, što ga je, da sebi dopustimo još jednu pretpostavku, u datom slučaju možda i „iniciralo“ za hermeneutiku nepovjerenja. Inače, Marten je Hajdegera lično dobro poznao, budući da je godinama bio njegov saradnik u Frajburgu. Ipak, sve ovo jedva da se i nazire iz *načina* njegovog zaključivanja. Za razliku od (samo)ideologizovanih kritičara Hajdegera (a vrlo slično je i sa podjednako zagriženim, bezuslovnim hajdegerobranjocima, poput Fon Hermana [*Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann*]), on do istine o predmetnom „stanju stvari“ nastoji da dođe skrupuloznim izlaganjem (*Auslegung*) – tj. izlaganje je medij dolaženja/probijanja do istine. Zbog toga se katkad i izuzetno oštre ocjene, koje su u moralnom smislu možda teže od onih koje potiču od ideoloških raskrinkavača Hajdegerovog lika i angažovanja, ne čine kao iskazi *ad personam*, već kao nešto što bi moglo biti (makar) istinoliko, čak i ako ne osjećamo „obavezu“ da se njima saglasimo. To daje i odlučujuću razliku, jer umjesto, da tako kažemo, „filosofije jedne stvari“ – ne u Abelarovom smislu, vjerujemo da je i na primjeru jednoga „slučaja“ (Martina Hajdegera) plodnije baviti se *samom stvarju*. Međutim, oni koji već „znaju istinu“, u svojim razmatranjima je ne preispituju, ne ispostavljaju, ne obrazlažu (uprkos pojavnom prividu davanja argumentacije), već je, diskurzivnopragmatički posmatrano – pukom instrumentalnom, ne-izlažućom upotrebom jezika, naprosto saopštavaju, stavljaju (nam) do znanja, nerijetko s ambicijom da se ona, kao nekakav/vo ukaz(an)je, ima smatrati besprizivnom i opšteobavezujućom.

Kada je riječ o odnosu prema nasljeđu Trećeg rajha, Hajdeger je, makar u jednoj prilici, progovori o svojem stidu, ali u mnogim drugim izjašnjavanjima

izgleda kao da ni trenutka nije iskusio kajanje, a kamoli ličnu odgovornost, zbog svega onoga što je počinila njegova zemlja od 1933. do 1945. Ovo nije samo stvar nekakve lične „kontradiktornosti“, već će prije biti da i kada se verbalno „kaje“ Hajdeger to radi u neiskrenoj namjeri – nikada ne gubeći iz vida ono što bi se, u analogiji s Hegelovom teoremom o svjetskopovijesnoj ulozi određenih pojedinaca, moglo nazvati inscenacijom povijesnobičevnog značajem vlastite osobe. To govori o njegovoj moralnoj faličnosti, ali i o nikada izričito priznatoj samokonstrukciji sopstvene uloge u nečemu što po prirodi dotične konceptualizacije nije mogla biti samo njegova stvar – a to je *povijest bića*. To objašnjava zašto se, u neutemeljenoj konstrukciji stvarne povijesne djelotvornosti vlastitog misaonog projekta, Hajdeger usuđuje da žargon (uzet manirizovana jezička ljuštura) kojim je izlagao svoje spekulativne, ali na ovaj ili onaj način problematične koliko i podsticajne ideje povijesnobičevnog mišljenja (privremeno) „prenamijeni“ i za svoje angažovane istupe. Pritom nije riječ samo o tome da su oni ponekad moralno sporni – čak i preko granice bilo kakve podnošljivosti; još je važnije to da je njihova tematika daleka od filosofije i filozofskoga, ili još bolje: da je saopštena na način koji spada u domen ideološkog predstavljanja, a ne filozofskog mišljenja. Samo neko ko je zaboravio na granicu između mnijenja i znanja, naimе, onoga gdje su privid i varljivost neizbježni i, s druge strane, područja gdje je pristrasnost moguće izbjeći i doći do nečega što će važiti makar kao istinoliko – samo neko takav može pomisliti da je o svim stvarima i pitanjima pozvan, poput nekakvog sekularnog proroka, da obznanjuje samu Istinu.

Nadalje, neko ko ima (slabo) prikriveni kompleks sopstvene veličine može na područje dnevno-političkih realija pokušati da primijeni diskurs, uslovno kazano, „vječnih“, tj. u Hajdegerovom

slučaju – *eminentno povijesnih (meta) istina* o onome što je najdostojnije mišljenja. Ne tvrdimo time ništa da filozofsko mišljenje treba ostati vezano za područje vječno-nepromjenljivoga – kao što danas nije moguće, dok bi područje varljivosti tobože trebalo ostati trajno prepušteno nepopravljivo zabludnoj predstavnosti. Naprotiv – najveće je umijeće progovoriti o prolaznome na filozofski način i tako pokazati moć filozofskog mišljenja, ali i unijeti svjetlost „suštinskoga“ (ili „suštinolikoga“) u ono što je naizgled u beskrajnom krivudanju i utoliko lišeno učešća u istinitome.

Nije jedini problem to što je o nekim svjetskim (dnevno-političkim) stvarima Hajdeger imao ideologizovane predstave, već je to što su neki od tih stavova nadalje, to što se drznuo da „ofilosofljuje“ svoje puke predstave, svoja neučena mnijenja, ne uviđajući da time sebe može izvrći kritici, osudi, pa i podsmjehu, ali, što je još gore, izložiti opasnosti mjerenja istom mjerom svojih filozofskih kao i nefilozofskih priloga.

Zato se kod njega, više nego je to uobičajeno kod drugih velikih filozofa, prepliću filozofsko i nefilozofsko, tematsko-problemsko i lično, epohalno suštastveno, ako se o nečem takvom može govoriti s tla njegove misli povijesnosti, i ono što bi se u tradicionalnoj metafizičkoj nomenklaturi moglo nazvati „akcidentalnim“, to jest „pridolazeće“-prolaznim. Otuda i toliko, za njegovu teorijsku misao, neprijatnih paralela između onoga što izlaže kao teoretičar i kako stvari pokušava da konceptualizuje kao angažovani mislilac koji ne želi da napusti osmatračnicu svakodnevice. Nelagoda je u vezi s time što ukoliko je jasno da je on uveliko bio žrtva moralne zaslijepljenosti i sklonosti ka naprosto neodrživim ideološkim konstrukcijama u razumijevanju svakodnevnice povijesti svojeg (predratnog, ratnog i poslijeratnog) vremena, i ako tom prilikom koristi prepoznatljive pojmove, motive, izraze,

manir (iz) svoje teorije, tada sjenka ne samo moralne nedovršenosti njega kao osobe nego i puke ideološčnosti pada i na njegovu teoriju. Možda je baš i zato – a ne samo stoga što je najveći mislilac XX stoljeća – njegova osoba bila predmet povišene pažnje (teorijske, „teorijske“ i feljtonističko-publicističke). Ako bi bilo tako, tada bi odgovornost za teoretizovanja o njegovoj osobi – iz čega je izrastao čitav podžanr *personogene hajdegerologije* – dobrim dijelom ležala i na njemu samome.

Najposlije, ako se saglasimo da neki važni konceptualni topisi njegove filozofije ostaju nedovoljno ubjedljivi zato što naprosto nijesu bili dovoljno teorijski zasnovani, tada „izleti“ u angažovanu ideologizaciju to možda ponajprije demonstriraju, uvjerljivo pokazujući da je u istinskom satemelju Hajdegerove filozofije prebivalo i ponešto od Hajdegerove osobe, sa svim njenim manjkavostima, nedovršenostima, riječju – *idiosinkrazijama*, koje su se na teorijskoj ravni mogle ispoljiti kao neutemeljnosti. Zato je i nastalo toliko tekstova čiji je pretežni djelokrug Hajdeger kao osoba, a ne Hajdeger kao mislilac – iako se te dvije uloge, krivicom samoga filozofa iz Meskirha, (više) ne mogu strogo odvojiti.

Nije tu riječ o tome da, kjerkegorovski, mislilac zalaže svoj život da bi dokučio (egzistencijalne) istine – koje proističu iz života i važe za život. Hajdeger, naprotiv, primjenjuje suprotnu taktiku: krijumčari, p(r)otura svoje lične idiosinkrazije kao skriveni – ne vjerujemo i (uvijek) samoskriveni – sapodupirač sopstvenih teorijskih pokušaja. To ništa ne znači da bi se Hajdegerova filozofija smjela svoditi na njegove, uglavnom nimalo pohvalne personalije, kao što vjeruje ne tako malo angažovanih razobličitelja Hajdegera *in toto*, ali je svakako, s druge strane, jasno da je „stavlanje u zagrada“ Hajdegerove osobe pri razumijevanju njegove filozofije – što bi, inače, bilo načelno poželjno – u njegovom slučaju uveliko otežano.

Objavlivanjem *Crnih svesaka* to je na nedvosmislen način naznačeno.

„Kvadraturu kruga“ odnosa Hajdegerovog javnog života i Hajdegerovog djela Basta pokušava da rasplete na sljedeći način:

Nije mali broj filozofa, čak i onih najznatnijih, koji su bili antisemitski orijentisani, ali će u istoriji antisemitizma Hajdegerovo ime ostati posebno zapisano stoga što je antisemitizam izveo iz svoga razumevanja povesti bivstva i njome ga obrazložio (str. 111).

Hajdegerovo povesnobilivstveno mišljenje ne može se kao takvo podozrevati i označavati, optuživati i odbacivati kao antisemitsko. Ne može se čak reći ni da ima afiniteta prema antisemitizmu, tj. da ka ovome intencionalno naginje. [...] Međutim, to se ni u kom slučaju ne kosi sa tvrdnjom da je Hajdegerov antisemitizam po svojoj suštini povesnobilivstveni (str. 340).

I zaista, povijest bića ne zasniva se na antisemitizmu, niti bi se preko Hajdegerovog antisemitizma smjela dovesti u pitanje teza o povjesnosti bića – zato što je ona eminentno filozofska, a ne ideološka, kao što se, uostalom, ona naširoko dâ kritikovati upravo na filozofskom polju i filozofskim sredstvima, što je odavno i činjeno. S druge strane, nezaobilazno je pitanje da li je Hajdegerov antisemitizam povijesnobilivstveno zasnovan, ili je samo u tom žargonu (mistifikatorski) izložen, ne i obrazložen. Naime, antisemitizmom je bio uveliko i stoljećima već bio zasićen rašireni svjetonazor njegovog zavičaja, otadžbine, u manjoj ili većoj mjeri većine Evrope toga vremena, a Hajdeger na to „samo“ nije bio otporan, niti je to, po svoj prilici, želio biti. Nema nikakve sumnje da je Hajdeger bio antisemita i znatno prije nego je počeo da se uzdiže do filozofskog formata (najranije nedvosmisleno svjedočanstvo datira iz 1916) koji je kasnije postigao. Iz toga razloga valja

naglasiti da se njegov antisemitizam ne zasniva na hipotezi o povijesti bića, već je on, budući već odavno poznat, pa i banalan, dakle ni po čemu izuzetan – u Hajdegerovoj izvedbi retuširan *povijesnobilivstvenom retorikom*. Time je postignut, odavno je jasno prolazan i žalosan učinak *ukrašavanja prostote*.

To, nadalje, ima dvostruku posljedicu: 1) svojim običnim, nefilozofskim predrasudama daje kvazifilozofski aureol, što je čin prvorazredne samoinscenacije jednog personalno-socijalnog isfrustriranog malograđanina; 2) baca se sjenka – naročito za filozofski nevješte i/ili nedobronamjerne – na autentičnu filozofičnost, ali i epohalnu dramatiku nečuvene (u pozitivnom smislu) teze o povijesti bića, tačnije o povijesnosti bića.

Ipak, nakon svega ostaje pitanje zbog čega se samo pred Hajdegera postavljaju naročiti kriteriji „filozofske korektnosti“, iako je, primjera radi – da navedemo neke od zaista najvećih mislilaca – moguće pronaći jedan broj, makar danas, skandaloznih „nalaza“ kod Aristotela ili Kanta? Da li je to zbog narcisoidnog nametanja posebnih kriterija (ne samo teorijske) izuzetnosti za mislioce iz našeg vremena – koje, izgleda, na neki neobičan način, još nije prošlo, kada se i dalje „mjere“ Hajdegerova izjašnjavanja nastala prije više od jednoga stoljeća – ili je nekad bezmalo „endemsko“ neprijateljstvo prema jednom narodu nekako ustoličeno kao apsolutni etalon nečasnosti? Ne zaslužuje li stoga pažnju – u sklopu nekakve, čini se i dalje samo predstojeće, metakritike Velike debate – *dogadaj centralizacije Hajdegerovog antisemitizma?*

Bilo kako bilo, takav „usud“ Hajdegerovo djelo može dugovati što „duhu vremena“, što mislilačkoj megalomaniji Meskiršanina, koji je najprije, ne odolijevši iskušenju kojem su podlijegali mnogi drugi intelektualci, želio da u „nacističkoj revoluciji“ prepozna epohalni zaokret Evrope koji je on već bio priželjkivao, da bi, kada je shvatio

da je to bilo samo njegovo učitavanje, i da na Hitlerovom programu nije preokret „povijesti bića“ – nastavio da pasivno podržava, što zbog oportunitizma, što zbog nespremenosti da javno prizna grešku, a po svemu sudeći i zbog toga što ga nije bila napustila *nada* da kod nacišta nije sve tako crno, makar kada je riječ o preokretu evropskog svijeta života. Među filosofima od formata, Hajdeger

svakako nije bio jedini simpatizer nacišta, odnosno antisemita (tačnije judomrzac), ali je vjerovatno bio jedini koji je pretendovao na „svjetskopovijesno(bičevnu)“ ulogu. Zato se i četiri decenije poslije njegove smrti povelala velika debata, o kojoj nas je Danilo Basta ne samo uzorno i znalački obavijestio nego je i srpsku kulturu u nju uključio, na čemu bi trebalo da smo mu zahvalni.





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## PREGLED TRIBINA I KONFERENCIJA U INSTITUTU ZA FILOZOFIJU I DRUŠTVENU TEORIJU 2020.

Luka Petrović i Vera Mevorah

\* Događaji koji su bili planirani u periodu od 15. marta do kraja juna 2020. godine otkazani su zbog pandemije Covid-19.

### TRIBINE

#### Februar

Emma Brown Dewhurst, "Humanity Without Sex or Gender: The Theology of Maximus the Confessor as a Challenge to Gender Norms", utorak 4. februar

Romilo (Aleksandar) Knežević, „Bog i stvaranje iz nestvorene slobode: o pojmu haosa kod F. Ničea i Ungrunda kod N. Berdajeva“, sreda 5. februar

Aleksandar Ostojić, „Strukture i značenja: beskonačni putevi ka znanju“, sreda 12. februar

Milan Urošević, „Fukoova angažovana epistemologija – jedan pokušaj rešenja socioloških binarnosti“, petak 14. februar

Marko Grdešić, „Populizam kao interakcija masa i elita: Antibirokratska revolucija u Srbiji, 1988–1989“, utorak 18. februar

Marko Perić, „Konverzacioni kontekstualizam: mehanizmi promene epistemičkih standarda“, utorak 18. februar

Katarina Njegovan, „Senzibilisanje za moral kod Kanta“, sreda 26. februar  
Ivana Zagorac, „Empatija“, petak, 28. februar

#### Mart

Petar Žarković, „Kulturni disput bipolarnog sveta“, utorak 3. mart

Tamás Seregi, "Virtuality versus simulacrum: On participation and critical distance in contemporary art and culture", utorak 10. mart

#### Septembar

Ivica Mladenović, „Konstrukcija istraživačkog problema uz pomoć Burdijeove teorije polja“, ponedjeljak 28. septembar

Zona Zarić, "Caring Society", ponedjeljak 28. septembar

#### Oktober

Dejan Mačković, „Pravoslavna Crkva i gej zajednica“, petak 9. oktobar

Nada Banjanin Đuričić, „Kako predavati o Holokaustu?“, sreda 14. oktobar

Mašan Bogdanovski i Ivan Nišavić, „Uživanje i zadovoljstvo u epikurejskom hedonizmu“, utorak 20. oktobar

Luka Janeš, „Rubovi psiho-fenomenološkog prostora u doba ekrana i digitalnih medija“, sreda 21. oktobar

Aleksandra Ilić Rajković, „Slučaj reforme obrazovanja s margine – podsticaj za konstruisanje alternativne istorije“, ponedjeljak 26. oktobar

### Novembar

Vasko Kelić, „Dovoljna zadovoljenost ljudskih kapaciteta kao pristup problemu pravde“, ponedjeljak 2. novembar

Jelisaveta Petrović, „Veliki podaci i klimatske promene – sociološka analiza“, sreda 4. novembar

Yanis Varoufakis, „The Cunning of Freedom in times of a Twin Authoritarianism“, ciklus *Horizonti slobode*, petak 6. novembar

Marija Mitrović Dankulov, „Socio-fizika: kako fizičari proučavaju kolektivne fenomene u socijalnim sistemima“, ponedjeljak 9. novembar

Aleksandar Milanković, „Zajednička perspektiva – poezija, percepcija i kinestezija poziva: poezija Nenada Glišića i plesni performansi Nede Kovičić“, četvrtak 12. novembar

Miloš Jeremić, „Kako (ne) predavati kritičko mišljenje?“, ponedjeljak 16. novembar

Károly Tóth, „Defetishizing Reality: Lukácsian Aesthetics and the Chances of Realist Literature“, ponedjeljak 16. novembar

Eliezer Papo, „Borba, smijeh i preživljavanje: partizanska hagada – jedina jevrejsko-španska parodija na pashalnu hagadu nastala na jugoslovenskoj slobodnoj teritoriji u vrijeme Holokaušta“, ponedjeljak 23. novembar

Tahir Hasanović, „Društvena polarizacija i globalna budućnost“, ponedjeljak 30. novembar

### Decembar

Philip Golub, „Towards a multipolar world?“, četvrtak 3. decembar

Stefan Gužvica, „Komunistička partija Jugoslavije tokom Velike čistke (1936–1940)“, četvrtak 4. decembar

Paul Stubbs, „Socialist Yugoslavia, the Global South and the Non-Aligned Movement: the limits of Yugoslocentrism“, ponedjeljak 7. decembar

Zoran Kojčić, „Filoterapija i briga o sebi“, sreda 9. decembar

Laura Valentini, „Who Should Decide? Beyond the Democratic Boundary Problem“ (American University Paris)

Andreas Kaminski, „Trust as a Virtue“, petak 11. decembar

Sara Nikolić i Anja Vujović, „Draži zajedništva: senzorni pristup prostornim zajedničkim dobrima“, sreda 16. decembar

Luka Petrović, „Dvodimenzionalna koncepcija pravde“, četvrtak 24. decembar

## SEMINARI I KONFERENCIJE

### 31. januar

Promocija knjige „Kada su se voleli Srbi i Albanci“, Medija centar

Učesnici/ce: Jelica Minić, Aleksandra Tomanić, Aleksandar Pavlović, Fahri Musliu, Srđan Atanasovski

### 3–4. februar

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON SAINT MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR'S OPUSCULA THEOLOGICA ET POLEMICA

### Ponedjeljak, 3. februar

Parohijski dom Hrama Sv. Save

Alex Leonas and Vladimir Cvetković, *Opening address*

Miklós Vassányi, „The Discussion of Identity in St Maximus the Confessor's *Opusculum 14*“

Dionisios Skliris, „The Significance of the *Opusculum 5* for the Christology of St Maximus the Confessor“

### Utorak, 4. februar

Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju  
Aleksandar Đakovac, „Maximus' Relational Ontology: πρὸς τι and σχέσις“

Romilo (Aleksandar) Knežević, “Maximus’ Opuscula and the Concept of the Hypostatic Union”

Vukašin Milićević, “Trinitarian-Christological Analogies and the Distinction between the Uncreated and the Created: *Opusculum 13*”

Emma Brown Dewhurst, “The Absence of Sex and Gender in the Thought of Maximus the Confessor: A Seventh Century Challenge to Gender Norms”

## 26. februar

Okrugli sto „*Filozofija života Sv. Justina Popovića*“

Izlagачi: Vladimir Cvetković, Milenko Bodin, Slobodan Prodić i Aleksandar Fatić

## 21. maj

*CAS SEE Weekly Seminar with Guests* (CAS – SEE)

Adriana Cavarero, “Resurging Democracy”

## 28. maj

*CAS SEE Weekly Seminar with Guests* (CAS – SEE)

John Keane, “The New Despotism”

## 19. septembar

*Konferencija*

ISTORIJA IDEJA I DRUŠTVENA ISTORIJA VOJVODANSKIH MAĐARA (1945-1989) / A VAJDASÁGI MAGYAROK ESZME- ÉS TÁRSADALOMTÖRTÉNETE (1945-1989)

Megnyitó – Losoncz Márk

### I. Politika és értelmiség – életutak

Dévavári Zoltán, “Emigrációban – Nagy Iván és a délvidéki magyar nemzeti ellenállás a szabad világban (1946–1949)”

Bakos Petra, Rácz Krisztina, “Egy ‘szép és gazdag élet’ ára – Szabó Ida, az egyik első és utolsó jugoszláv partizán”

Kocsis Árpád, “A vajdasági magyar értelmiség Jugoszláviában: három esettanulmány (Sinkó Ervin, Várady Tibor és Végel László)”

### II. Eszmetörténeti perspektívák

Roginer Oszkár, “Irodalmi ízlés- és magyar irodalmi kánon-teremtés a korai jugoszláviai szocializmusban (1945–1959)”

Horváth György, “A vajdasági magyar tudományos szféra szerveződési próbálkozásai”

Losoncz Márk, “A vajdasági magyar filozófiai kultúra 1945 és 1980 között”

### III. Társadalomtörténet (oktatás, állambiztonság, migráció)

Beretka Katinka, “A magyar nyelvű felsőoktatás jogi és emberi vetületei, különös tekintettel a jogászképzésre (1970–1989)”

Vukman Péter, “Az állambiztonság célkeresztjében: vajdasági származású magyarok a bajai háromszögben (1948–1956)”

Zakinszky-Toma Viktóra, “A kivándorlást övező média diskurzus a Magyar Szóban 1963 és 1974 között”

## 21-25. szeptembar

LETNJA ŠKOLA DRUŠTVENE ANGAŽOVANOSTI I DEMOKRATIJE

### Ponedjeljak 21. szeptembar

Irena Fiket, „Demokratija i izazovi današnjice: vrednosti, principi i različiti modeli njihove primene“

Jelena Vasiljević, „Solidarnost i društveni pokreti“

Bojana Radovanović, „Filantropija i demokratija“

### Utorak 22. szeptembar

Igor Cvejić, „Osnovna pojmovna određenja društvenog angažmana“

Srđan Prodanović, „Angažman i javno dobro u kontekstu svakodnevnog delanja“

Luka Glušac, „Političke institucije i društvena angažovanost“

### Sreda 23. septembar

Bojana Radovanović, „Blagostanje pojedinca i razvoj društva“

Marko Konjović, „Jednakost i pravednost“  
Marko Konjović, „Rodna ravnopravnost“  
Adriana Zaharijević, „Rod – na raskršću između ideologije i ravnopravnosti“

Panel diskusija *Mogu li sindikati biti platforma angažovanja za socijalnu pravdu i participativnu demokratiju*

Učesnici: Mario Reljanović, Zoran Stojilković, Mihail Arandarenko i Marjan Ivković

Moderator: Srđan Prodanović

### Četvrtak 24. septembar

Aleksandar Pavlović, „Angažovana književnost – pojam i primeri“

Aleksandar Pavlović, „Film i društvena angažovanost“

Balša Delibašić, „Sport i društvena angažovanost“

### 25. septembar

Panel diskusija *Društveni pokreti – nova nada za region*, Dorćol Platz

Učesnici/ce: Danijela Dolenc, Bojan Baća, Dritan Abazović, Biljana Đorđević, Dobrica Veselinović

Moderatorica: Jelena Vasiljević

### 2–5. oktobar

*Druga međunarodna naučna konferencija*

ČEMU JOŠ OBRAZOVANJE?

EMANCIPACIJA I/ILI OBRAZOVANJE:

PUTEVI I RASPUĆA

### Petak 2. oktobar

Sesija 1: *What Does it Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking Education and Emancipation?*

Olga Nikolić, „Emancipatory and Ideological Functions of Education“

Ana Dimiškovska, „Critical Thinking as Educational Goal: Challenges and Justifications“

Nataša Lacković, „Relational Education, Not Education OR Emancipation“

Moderatorica: Vera Mevorah

Sesija 2: *Politics of Emancipatory Education*

Andrija Šoć, „Emancipation Through Deliberation: Toward a Comprehensive Model od Deliberative Education“

Paolo Scotton, „Towards a Theory of Emancipatory Education“

Robert Imre, „Peace Education and Global Cultures of Violence: A Research Agenda for Childhood Studies and Education Involving Nationalism“

Moderator: Aleksandar Pavlović

Sesija 3: *Emancipatorne alternative u nastavi*

Aleksandra Ilić Rajković, „Osnažiti alternative za promenu: Pedagoško učenje Vićentija Rakića“

Nevena Mitranić, „Pobeći kao pedagoški izazov: Emancipatorski potencijal igre u obrazovanju“

Mašan Bogdanovski, „Primena misaonih eksperimenata u nastavi i emancipatorska uloga obrazovanja“

Moderatorica: Milica Sekulović

Sesija 4: *Neoliberalism and it's Critics*

Mitja Sardoč, „The Language of Neoliberalism Education“

Lili Schwoerer, „Feminist Knowledge Production in England and the ‘Crisis Consensus’“

Aleksandar Ostojić, „Knowledge versus Production: Michel Serres and Idiosyncratic Roads of Education“

Moderatorica: Đurđa Trajković

### Subota 3. oktobar

Sesija 5: *The Means and Objectives of Emancipation*

Una Popović, „Learning from Arts: Dance as Emancipation of the Body“

Igor Cvejić, „Emotional Bases of Educational Processes: Beyond Care for Well-Being“

Tetiana Podolska, Oksana Skryl, "Subjectivity of Personality: The Essence and Ways of Implementing in Education"

Moderator: Aleksandar Ostojić

Sesija 6: *Emancipatorne alternative u nastavi*

Jelena Pavličić, „Slika i prilika: o proširenim nastavnim metodima čitanja slikovnog nasleđa proveravanjem kroz dve obrazovne radionice“

Aleksandar Milanković, „Interaktivna nastava kao komponenta društvene emancipacije

Marija Petrović, „Značaj seksualnog obrazovanja“

Moderator: Iva Subotić Krasojević

Sesija 7: *Digital Technologies: Emancipatory Vehicles or a New Slavery?*

Mikhail Bukhtoyarov, Anna Bukhtoyarova, "Educational Technology. From Educational Anarchism to Educational Totalitarianism"

Liudmila Baeva, Alexandr Grigorev, "Risks and Safety of Digitalization od Educational and Social Space"

Natalija Gojak, Jana Mišović, "Democratizing Knowledge on the Internet: From Utopia to Dystopia"

Moderator: Srđan Prodanović

Sesija 8 – panel disusija *On the Use of Science Fiction in Teaching Philosophy – A More Appealing Way of Presenting Philosophical Topics or a Degradation of Philosophy*

Diskutanti: Željko Šarić, Miroslav Galić, David Menčik

#### **Nedelja 4. oktobar**

Sesija 9: *Emancipation Through Tradition or From its Hegemony*

Sanja Petkovska, "Decolonization and Emancipatory Education"

Igor Stipić, "Who Speaks the Nation-State? Hegemonic Structures, Subaltern Pedagogies and Fractured Community in Bosnia and Chile"

Aleksandar Pavlović, "Neo National-Romanticism in Serbian Education: Comparing Romantic-National and Recent Serbian Literature and History Textbooks"

Moderator: Balša Delibašić

Sesija 10: *Slike u obrazovanju*

Iva Subotić Krasojević, „Ko se boji slika još? Pozicija, ciljevi, pristupi i izazovi umetnosti i vizuelni kulture u obrazovanju“

Sonja Jankov, „Edukativni karakter operativnog realizma – učenje o savremenim umetničkim praksama i učenje kroz njih“

Milica Božić Marojević, Dragan Bulačević, „O opštoj i posebnoj vrednosti slikovnog obrazovanja u savremenim koncepcijama aktivnog učenja. Slučaj tragova kologatije u genezi dva suprotstavljena pristupa – anglosaksonskog i mediteranskog“

Miloš Čipranić, „Obrazovanje kroz neverbalne akte“

Moderator: Marija Velinov

Sesija 11 – panel diskusija *Estetika i mediji: svet varijacije i simulacije ili posrednik u novim formama obrazovanja?*

Diskutanti: Vanja Novaković, Tanja Todorović, Luka Janeš

Sesija 12 – panel diskusija *Learning and Teaching Under Stress: Reinterpreting the Concept of Conflict in Education*

Diskutanti: Michael Schapira, Julie Reshe

#### **Ponedjeljak 5. oktobar**

Sesija 13: *Helenistička pouka*

Ivan Nišavić, „Prednost Epikurovog shvatanja obrazovanja“

Tamara Plečaš, „Da li je obrazovanje za koje su se zalagali Musonije Ruf i Epiktet po svom karakteru emancipatorsko?“

Aleksandar Dobrijević, „Izlazak iz stanja stultitia: Senekina pedagoško-tarapeutska strategija“

Marija Velinov, „Etika sopstva kao obrazovna praksa“

Moderator: Miloš Čipranić

Sesija 14: *Prosvetiteljsko nadahnuće*

Kristina Todorović, Hristina Banić, „Problem odnosa emancipacije i obrazovanja kod Rusoa“

Milica Smajević, „Tumačenje procesa obrazovanja iz perspektive Kantove filozofije istorije i pravnopolitičke teorije“

Katarina Njegovan, „Moralno obrazovanje kao uslov za praktikovanje slobode kod Kanta“

Milica Sekulović, Petar Nurkić, „Djujivo čitanje Rusoovog Emila: između pragmatizma i naturalizma“

Moderator: Olga Nikolić

Sesija 15: *Doktrina, indoktrinacija, dedoktrinacija*

Jelena Đurić, „Edukativna emancipacija ili oslobađajuće obrazovanje“

Miloš Kovačević, „Šta emancipacija nije? Određenje indoktrinacije u savremenoj analitičkoj filozofiji“

Živka Krnjaja, Dragana Purašević, „Oslobađanje od tržišta slobode: Promišljanje emancipatornog potencijala obrazovanja u eri neoliberalizma“

Moderator: Igor Cvejić

## 5. oktobar

Tribina 5. oktobar – 20 godina posle, Dorćol Platz

I razgovor

Učesnici: Boris Tadić, Milan St. Protić, Žarko Korać, Siniša Šikman, Gordana Suša i Aleksandra Tomanić

Moderatori: Gazela Pudar Draško i Milivoj Bešlin

II razgovor

Učesnici: Teodor Celakoski, Irena Sterijovska, Damir Arsenijević, Dušan Čavić, Biljana Đorđević

Moderatori: Vedran Džihić i Marko Kmezić

## 8. oktobar

Razgovor o knjizi Irene Fiket *Deliberativno građanstvo* (European Alternatives Belgrade, BEOPOLIS, Koncept 9: Platforma za teoriju i umetnost), Dom omladine

## 14. oktobar

Skup *Otvoreni razgovori – Kakve institucije želimo?*

Učesnici: Bojan Spaić, Dušan Vučićević, Luka Glušac, Marko Simendić, Miloš Jovanović, Nemanja Nenadić, Tara Tepavac

Moderator: Gazela Pudar Draško

## 23. oktobar

Panel diskusija *Izbori u SAD: političke alternative i novi društveni pokreti*, Dom omladine

učesnici: Ivan Vujačić, Nemanja Džuvević, Aleksej Kišjuhas, Đurđa Trajković

Moderator: Milivoj Bešlin

## 28. oktobar

Serijal “Horizonti slobode”: Razgovor sa Todorom Kuljićem

## 29. oktobar

Seminar sa Michaelom Walzerom o knjizi *On Political Action*, ciklus *Horizonti slobode*

Učesnici: Michael Walzer, Philip Golub, Srđan Prodanović, Marjan Ivković, Petar Bojanić, Astrid von Busekist

Moderator: Gazela Pudar Draško

## 5. novembar

Seminar o knjizi Filipa Ejdusa *Crisis and Ontological Insecurity Serbia's Anxiety over Kosovo's Secession*

Učesnici/ce: Jelena Subotić, Lea David, Jelena Cupać, Agon Maliqi, Gezim Krasniqi, Aleksandar Pavlović, Vladimir Cvetković i Filip Ejdus

Moderator: Gazela Pudar Draško



**12. novembar**

Serijal "Horizonti slobode": Razgovor sa Milenom Dragičević Šešić

**26. novembar**

Šesta konferencija Srpskog udruženja za pravnu i socijalnu filozofiju

**WORK IN PROGRESS**

Gazela Pudar Draško, pozdravna reč direktorke Instituta za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju

Miodrag Jovanović – Violeta Beširević, *"Thinking Outside the Politics Box: Framing a Judicial Role in Shaping Militant Democracy in European Union"*

Ana Zdravković

Miloš Hrnjaz, *"Temporalni domen primene međunarodnog humanitarnog prava: praksa sudova u Srbiji"*

Violeta Beširević

Ana Zdravković, *"The Affair "The State of Emergency" – Was 70 year of European Convention on Human Rights Enough to Prepare Member States For Covid-19 Crisis?"*

Valerija Grozdić

Miloš Zdravković, *"Svrha države kao njeno opravdanje: slučaj NDH"*

Nataša Jovanović Ajzenhamer

Adriana Zaharijević, *"Individua (država i društvo) u doba korone"*

Igor Cvejić

Željko Radinković, *"O projektu. Vrijeme kolektivne intencionalnosti"*

Bojan Spaić

Goran Dajović, *"Zakonska analogija"*

Jelena Lončar

Biljana Đorđević, *"From Citizens Activist to Representatives: Shifting Roles of Political Actors in Hybrid Regimes"*

**18. novembar**

Razgovor o knjizi „Između uverenja i interesa: ideologije i organizacija stranaka u Srbiji“

Autori: Dušan Spasojević i Zoran Stojilković

Moderator: Luka Petrović

**21. novembar**

*Građanska skupština o planu proširenja pešačke zone s Knez Mihailove ulice na širi centar grada, Beograd*

u okviru projekta „Aktivno građanstvo: promocija i unapređenje inovativnih demokratskih praksi na Zapadnom Balkanu“

**28. novembar**

*Građanska skupština na temu aerozagađenja, Valjevo*

u okviru projekta „Aktivno građanstvo: promocija i unapređenje inovativnih demokratskih praksi na Zapadnom Balkanu“

**30. novembar**

*Prezentacija sajta 'Srpsko-albansko prijateljstvo'*

Intervju sa Aleksandrom Pavlovićem, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa Stefanom Surlićem, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa Fahrijem Muslijuom, „Drejt politikave të miqësisë Serbo-Shqiptare“

Intervju sa Miodragom Milićevićem, „Srpsko-albanski odnosi na Kosovu“

Intervju sa Tatjanom Lazarević, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa Agronom Bajramijem, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa „Ismetom Hajdarijem, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa Agonom Malčićem, "Towards the politics of Serbian-Albanian friendship"

Intervju sa Rigelsom Halilijem, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju Jelenom Lončar, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

Intervju sa Belgizimom Kamberijem, „Drejt politikave të miqësisë Serbo-Shqiptare“

Intervju sa istoričarem Milivojem Bešlinom, „Ka politici srpsko-albanskog prijateljstva“

## 11. decembar

### DODELA NAGRADE ZA KRITIČKO-TEORIJSKI ANGAŽMAN MILADIN ŽIVOTIĆ

Étienne Balibar, Award Lecture: “What is engagement?”, ciklus *Horizons of Freedom*

Comments on Étienne Balibar’s Award Lecture: Stephen Sawyer, Petar Bojanić, Sanja Bojanić and Gazela Pudar Draško Chairpersons: Philip Golub and Zona Zarić

## 22 – 23. decembar

### MEĐUNARODNA KONFERENCIJA HORIZONS OF ENGAGEMENT: MEMORIZING BOURDIEU

#### Utorak, 22. decembar

Inauguralni deo konferencije Gazela Pudar Draško i Manuela Buara

Marc Crepon, “The importance of Pierre Bourdieu today”

Panel 1: *Burdijeovi teorijski koncepti i njihova primena*

Mark Lošonc, „Burdijeova teorizacija države“

Milica Resanović, „Burdijeova teorizacija društvenih polja“

Dušan Ristić, „Burdijeova teorizacija habitusa“

Predrag Cvetičanin, „Burdijeova teorizacija klasa i kapitala“

Mirko Petrić i Inga Tomić Koldurović, „Burdijeova teorizacija socijalnog kapitala“

Andrea Perunović, „Burdijeova teorizacija simboličkog“

Uvod i moderacija: Milan Urošević

Panel 2: *Burdijeizam i drugi sociološki pravci*

Ivica Mladenović i Boris Petrović, „Burdijeizam i marksizam“

Marjan Ivković, „Burdijeizam i kritička teorija“

Božidar Filipović, „Burdijeizam i funkcionalizam“

Suzana Ignjatović, „Burdijeizam i metodološki individualizam“

Miloš Jovanović, „Burdijeizam i socijalni konstruktivizam“

Uvod i moderacija: Zona Zarić

Panel 3: *Pjer Burdije i politika*

Žizel Sapiro

Frederik Lebaron

Filip Golub

Frank Pupo

Uvod i moderacija: Ivica Mladenović i Zona Zarić

## Sreda, 23. decembar

Panel 4: *Metodološki okvir Burdijeove sociologije*

Selena Radović, „Sociološki metod po Pjeru Burdijeu“

Leonora Dugonjić i Ivica Mladenović, „Geometrijska analiza podataka“

Zona Zarić i Andrej Cvetić, „Epistemološki temelji ’Distinkcije“

Jasmin Hasanović, „Epistemološki temelji ’Državnog plemstva“

Uvod i moderacija: Milan Urošević

Panel 5: *Pjer Burdije i drugi sociolozi i filozofi*

Zona Zarić, „Pjer Burdije i Mišel Fuko“

Milan Urošević, „Pjer Burdije i Luj Altiser“

Velizar Mirčov, „Pjer Burdije i Erik Olin Rajt“

Srđan Prodanović, „Pjer Burdije i Lik Boltanski“

Stefan Janković, „Pjer Burdije i Bruno Latur“

Uvod i moderacija: Ivica Mladenović

4. novembar  
Interni seminar o studijama angažmana

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## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All submissions to *Filozofija i društvo* must conform to the following rules, mostly regarding citations. The Referencing Guide is the modified Harvard in-text referencing style. In this system within the text, the author's name is given first followed by the publication date and the page number/s for the source. The list of references or bibliography at the end of the document contains the full details listed in alphabetical order for all the in-text citations.

### 1. LENGTH OF TEXT

Up to two double sheets (60.000 characters including spaces), abstracts, key words, without comments.

### 2. ABSTRACT

Between 100 and 250 words.

### 3. KEY WORDS

Up to 10.

### 4. AFFILIATION

Full affiliation of the author, department, faculty, university, institute, etc.

### 5. BOOKS

In the bibliography: last name, first name, year of publication in parentheses, book title, place of publication, publisher. In the text: last name in parentheses, year of publication, colon,

page number. In a comment: last name, year of publication, colon, page number. Books are cited in a shortened form only in comments.

#### *Example:*

In the bibliography: Moriarty, Michael (2003), *Early Modern French Thought. The Age of Suspicion*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

In the text: (Moriarty 2003: 33).

In a comment: Moriarty 2003: 33.

### 6. ARTICLES

In the bibliography: last name, first name, year of publication, title in quotation marks, name of publication in italic, year of issue, in parentheses the volume number within year if the pagination is not uniform, colon and page number. In the text: last name in parentheses, year of publication, colon, page number. In a comment: last name, year of publication, colon, page number. Do not put abbreviations such as 'p.', 'vol.', 'tome', 'no.' etc. Articles are cited in shortened form only in comments.

#### *Examples:*

In the bibliography: Miller, Johns Roger (1926), "The Ideas as Thoughts of God", *Classical Philology* 21: 317–326.

In the text: (Miller 1926: 320).

In a comment: Miller 1926: 320.

In the bibliography: Byrd, B. Sharon; Hruschka, Joachim (2008), "From the state of nature to the juridical state of states", *Law and Philosophy* 27 (6): 599–641.

In the text: (Byrd, Hruschka 2008: 603).

In a comment: Byrd, Hruschka 2008: 603.

## 7. EDITED BOOKS

In the bibliography: last and first name of editor, abbreviation 'ed.' in parentheses, year of publication in parentheses, title of collection in italic, place of publication, publisher and page number if needed. In the text: last name in parentheses, year of publication, colon, page number. In a comment: last name, year of publication, colon, page number. Collections are cited in shortened form only in comments.

*Examples:*

In the bibliography: Harris, John (ed.) (2001), *Bioethics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

In the text: (Harris 2001).

In a comment: Harris 2001.

In the bibliography: Vieweg, Klaus; Welsch, Wolfgang (eds.) (2008), *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes: Ein kooperativer Kommentar zu einem Schlüsselwerk der Moderne*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

In the text: (Vieweg, Welsch 2008).

In comment: Vieweg, Welsch 2008.

## 8. ARTICLES/CHAPTERS IN BOOK

In the bibliography: last name, first name, year of publication in parentheses, text title in quotation marks, the word 'in' (in collection), first and last name of editor, the abbreviation 'ed.' in parentheses, title of collection in italic, place of publication, publisher, colon, page number (if needed). In the text: Last name of author in parentheses, year of publication, colon, page number. In a comment: last name of author, year of publication,

colon, page number. The abbreviation 'p.' is allowed only in the bibliography.

*Examples:*

In the bibliography: Anscombe, Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret (1981), "You can have Sex without Children: Christianity and the New Offer", in *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G.E.M. Anscombe. Ethics, Religion and Politics*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. 82–96.

In the text: (Anscombe 1981: 82).

In a comment: Anscombe 1981: 82.

In the bibliography: Romano, Onofrio (2015), "Dépense", in Giacomo D'Alisa, Federico Demaria and Giorgos Kallis (eds.), *Decrecimiento. Un vocabulario para una nueva era*, Barcelona: Icaria editorial, pp. 138–142.

In the text: (Onofrio 2015: 139).

In a comment: Onofrio 2015: 139.

## 9. NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINES ARTICLE

In the bibliography: last name, first name, year in parentheses, title of article in quotation marks, name of newspaper in italic, date, page.

*Example:*

In the bibliography: Logar, Gordana (2009), „Zemlja bez fajronta“, *Danas*, 2 August, p. 12.

In the text: (Logar 2009: 12).

In a comment: Logar 2009: 12

## 10. WEB DOCUMENTS

When quoting an online text, apart from the web address of the site with the text and the text's title, cite the date of viewing the page, as well as further markings if available (year, chapter, etc.).

*Example:*

In the bibliography: Ross, Kelley R., „Ontological Undecidability“, (internet) available at: <http://www.friesian.com/undecd-1.htm> (viewed 2 April, 2009).

In the text: (Ross, internet).

In a comment: Ross, internet.

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## UPUTSTVO ZA AUTORE

Pri pisanju tekstova za *Filozofiju i društvo* autori su u obavezi da se drže sledećih pravila, uglavnom vezanih za citiranje. Standardizacija je propisana *Aktom o uređivanju naučnih časopisa* Ministarstva za prosvetu i nauku Republike Srbije iz 2009. U *Filozofiji i društvu* bibliografske jedinice citiraju se u skladu s uputstvom *Harvard Style Manual*. U ovom uputstvu naveden je način citiranja najčešćih bibliografskih jedinica; informacije o načinu citiranja ređih mogu se naći na internetu.

### 1. VELIČINA TEKSTA

Do dva autorska tabaka (60.000 karaktera) s apstraktom, ključnim rečima i literaturom; napomene se ne računaju.

### 2. APSTRAKT

Na srpskom (hrvatskom, bosanskom, crnogorskom...) i jednom stranom jeziku, između 100 i 250 reči.

### 3. KLJUČNE REČI

Do deset.

### 4. PODACI O TEKSTU

Relevantni podaci o tekstu, broj projekta na kojem je raden i slično, navode se u fusnoti broj 1 koja se stavlja na kraju prve rečenice teksta.

### 5. AFILIJACIJA

Puna afilijacija autora, odeljenje i fakultet, institut i slično.

### 6. INOSTRANA IMENA

*Sva* inostrana imena (osim u bibliografskim jedinicama) fonetski se transkribuju u skladu s pravilima pravopisa, a prilikom prvog javljanja u zagradi se navodi njihov izvorni oblik. Imena geografskih i sličnih odrednica takođe se fonetski transkribuju bez posebnog navođenja originala u zagradama, osim ukoliko autor smatra da je neophodno.

### 7. CRTA I CRTICA

Kada se navode stranice, od jedne do neke druge, ili kada se to čini za godine, između brojeva stoji crta, *ne crtica*.

*Primer:*

33–44, 1978–1988; ne: 33-44, 1978-1988.

### 8. KNJIGE

U spisku literature: prezime, ime, u zagradi godina izdanja, naslov knjige, mesto izdanja, izdavač. U tekstu: u zagradi prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomeni: prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomenama, knjiga se citira isključivo na skraćeni način.

#### Primer:

U literaturi: Haug, Wolfgang Fric (1981), *Kritika robne estetike*, Beograd: IIC SSO Srbije.

U tekstu: (Haug 1981: 33).

U napomeni: Haug 1981: 33.

#### 9. ČLANCI

U spisku literature: prezime, ime, u zagradi godina izdanja, naslov teksta pod navodnicima, naslov časopisa u italiku, godište časopisa, u zagradi broj sveske u godištu ukoliko paginacija nije jedinstvena za ceo tom, dvotačka i broj stranice. U tekstu: u zagradi prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomeni: prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. Ne stavljaju se skraćenice „str.“, „vol.“, „tom“, „br.“ i slične. U napomenama, članci se citiraju isključivo na skraćeni način.

#### Primeri:

U literaturi: Miller, Johns Roger (1926), „The Ideas as Thoughts of God“, *Classical Philology* 21: 317–326.

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

U tekstu: (Hartman 1980: 108).

U napomeni: Hartman 1980: 108

#### 10. ZBORNICI

U spisku literature: prezime i ime priređivača, u zagradi skraćenica „prir.“, u zagradi godina izdanja, naslov zbornika u italiku, mesto izdanja, izdavač i strana po potrebi. U tekstu: u zagradi prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomeni: prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomenama, zbornici se citiraju isključivo na skraćeni način.

#### Primer:

U literaturi: Espozito, Džon (prir.) (2002), *Oksfordska istorija islama*, Beograd: Clio.

U tekstu: (Espozito 2002).

U napomeni: Espozito 2002.

#### 11. TEKSTOVI IZ ZBORNIKA

U spisku literature: prezime, ime autora, u zagradi godina, naslov teksta pod navodnicima, slovo „u“ (u zborniku), ime i prezime priređivača zbornika, u zagradi „prir.“, naslov zbornika u italiku, mesto izdanja, izdavač, dvotačka i broj stranice (ako je potrebno). U tekstu: u zagradi prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. U napomeni: prezime autora, godina izdanja, dvotačka, stranica. Skraćenica „str.“ dopuštena je samo u spisku literature.

#### Primer:

U literaturi: Nizbet, Robert (1999), „Jedinične ideje sociologije“, u A. Mimica (prir.), *Tekst i kontekst*, Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, str. 31–48.

U tekstu: (Nizbet 1999: 33).

U napomeni: Nizbet 1999: 33.

#### 12. ČLANAK IZ NOVINA

U spisku literature: prezime, ime, u zagradi godina, naslov članka pod navodnicima, naslov novina u italiku, datum, stranica.

#### Primer:

U literaturi: Logar, Gordana (2009), „Zemlja bez fajronta“, *Danas*, 2. avgust, str. 12.

U tekstu: (Logar 2009: 12).

U napomeni: Logar 2009: 12.

#### 13. INTERNET

Prilikom citiranja tekstova s interneta, osim internet-adrese sajta na kojem se tekst nalazi i naslova samog teksta, navesti i datum posete toj stranici, kao i dodatna određenja ukoliko su dostupna (godina, poglavlje i sl.).

#### Primer:

U literaturi: Ross, Kelley R., „Ontological Undecidability“, (internet) dostupno na: <http://www.friesian.com/undecd-1.htm> (pristupljeno 2. aprila 2009).

U tekstu: (Ross, internet).

U napomeni: Ross, internet.



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