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THE POLITICS OF TRUST: RECOGNITION, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

POLITIKE POVERENJA: PRIZNANJE, INSTITUCIJE I DRUŠTVENA PROMENA

INTRODUCTION

Marjan Ivković, Adriana Zaharijević
and Nuria Sánchez Madrid

THE POLITICS OF TRUST: RECOGNITION, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL CHANGE

This special section is the result of continued cooperation between philosophers and social theorists from the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade (CriticLab), and the Research Group GINEDIS based at the Department of Philosophy and Society of the Complutense University of Madrid. Focusing on a wide range of topics – vulnerability and exclusion, violence and community, recognition, institutions and democracy – we have since 2017 aimed to articulate a peculiarly Southern European perspective on a variety of complex issues. Our fruitful exchanges were never merely descriptive or comparative, but always sought to look for social-theoretical resources which can help provide a societal diagnosis and a normative background for a transformative politics. The issue of trust, especially in relation to institutions and democracy, emerged at the moment when many in the world did not ask – do we trust? – but – how can we trust (in) institutions? The Covid 19 Pandemic urged us to *socially distance* and, even more importantly, to reflect on sociality and on what helps us regain trust. The pandemic, as it turned out, was only an episode, if a significant one, which, however, made us reflect on the broader and deeper constellations of (dis)trust in our societies.

When it comes to the broader picture, there is little disagreement that the current comprehensive crisis of 'really existing democracy' is structurally caused by the convulsions of the socio-economic order that underpins it – the global financialized capitalism. The structural contradictions of this order are the causes of phenomena such as the explosion of socioeconomic inequalities, climate change and the sliding of representative democracy toward electoral oligarchy. Many of us would also agree that, at the political level, the societal crisis manifests itself primarily as a general crisis of trust – the vertical trust of citizens in the democratic institutional system as well

as horizontal trust between persons, social groups and collective political actors. This in turn leads to the ever-greater political polarization that we are witnessing and the rise of new forms of right-wing authoritarianism. There has, however, been far less agreement regarding the key challenge that we are facing in light of these processes: how to think about, and foster, transformative political action within what is essentially a paradoxical context. The political paradox that we are facing is that the structural crisis of capitalism requires far-reaching transformative action, but at the same time severely undermines the preconditions of such action – interpersonal and inter-group trust as the basis for creating broad political alliances ('counterhegemonic blocs') and new collective actors.

This special section is a modest contribution to the task of overcoming the 'trust paradox'. It brings together eight diverse contributions from Spanish and Serbian philosophers and sociologists, which nevertheless exhibit a clear unifying thread: they all approach, from different angles, the nexus between the institutional order of democracy, trust (and recognition as its medium) and social change. All of us share the premise that there are certain latent 'potentials of trust' within social reality that have been somewhat neglected so far in the debate on transformative political action, and that social science can shed light on this potential. In this section we make a preliminary move in this direction in three steps – we present social-theoretical arguments regarding the nature and dynamics of social trust, and we draw some implications of these arguments for transformative action; we formulate diagnostic arguments about the contemporary capitalist social order and its key ideological traits, with special attention to trust as both a resource for political contestation and an element of ideological narratives; and we formulate normative-theoretical arguments that suggest some possible ways out of the trust paradox.

The section opens with three papers which present social-theoretical resources for transformative politics, starting with Clara Ramas' analysis of Robert Brandom's pragmatist reconstruction of Hegel's social philosophy. Ramas shows that Brandom's reading of Hegel foregrounds the role of interpersonal relations in the construction of social norms and institutional reality, above all relations of interpersonal *recognition*. Relations of recognition should be understood as people's mutual ascription of moral authority and responsibility – more precisely, their mutual ascription of 'authority to attribute authority'. Ramas reconstructs Brandom's argument that, for Hegel, societal emancipation – the transition from 'modernity' to the 'postmodern' society – means that people come to acknowledge that their relations of recognition (creation of normative statuses through interpersonal normative attitudes) are also relations of *recollection* (dependence of normative attitudes on already historically sedimented normative statuses that regulate how we recognize each other). Once this stage is achieved, society has become a 'community of social trust'.

Srđan Prodanović complements Ramas' analysis through an insightful consideration of the relationship between trust and *intuitions*. Prodanović argues that interpersonal trust cannot be reduced to either purely cognitive or purely

affective attitudes, but is a hybrid phenomenon which intertwines cognition and affect. He argues that personal intuitions are phenomena of a similar hybrid nature, distinguishing between 'inferential' and 'holistic' intuitions, and shows that the latter are able to 'interconnect far elements of experience in a radically new manner'. In times of severe social crises, Prodanović argues, we rely on holistic intuitions to coordinate our collective actions even though the existing normative order no longer provides stable procedures of coordination – in other words, holistic intuitions can provide a basis of social trust in conditions of severe anomie.

Following the same theoretical intuitions, Igor Cvejić presents an innovative argument about the role of trust in the formulation of new norms in conditions of societal uncertainty. Cvejić builds on Bennett Helm's argument about the constitution of plural agents through mutual 'calls of trust' to argue that, in a situation of pronounced societal uncertainty, even though people cannot rely on existing norms that regulate calls of trust, they still issue such mutual calls in the form of recognizing each other as 'responsible' agents, agents who understand the 'import' (significance) of the societal crisis in light of their shared circumstances of mutual dependency. Cvejić complements this argument about 'trust without norms' with the concept of *being moved*, a complex emotion, which, in his view, provides a stimulus to the mentioned 'trustee' in a situation of crisis to 'reorganize her hierarchy of priorities and values'.

The middle part of the section brings together contributions which use the concept of trust as a tool of societal diagnosis and critique of ideology. Marjan Ivković analyzes the nature of cultural hegemony in post-Fordist capitalism and the prospects for transformative action that are created within it. Building on the work of Nancy Fraser and Wendy Brown, Ivković reconstructs the post-Fordist historic bloc as a contradictory unity of several axes of articulation that gives rise to a 'paradox of engagement/disengagement' and a certain 'promise of political agency' created within this historic bloc that remains unfulfilled. He relies on his joint work with Srđan Prodanović and Igor Cvejić to elaborate Axel Honneth's concept of interpersonal 'respect' as a form of trust, and argues that interpersonal respect in the context of democracy should be understood as the recognition of actors' 'moral responsibility' in the face of pressing societal problems. He suggests that the political left must formulate a 'politics of respect' that could actualize the 'promise of political agency' created within the post-Fordist historic bloc.

Andrea Perunović continues the line of hegemony analysis by focusing on the economistic reduction of the phenomena of credit, debt and money within market-liberal discourses, and he formulates a critique of ideology in the form of an expanded, cultural-institutionalist understanding of these phenomena. Relying on Marcel Hénaff's distinction between 'constitutive debt', 'event-debt' and 'cosmic debt', and Michel Aglietta's and André Orléan's heterodox conception of money as not just a medium of exchange but a 'regulative agent of social belonging', Perunović argues that Aglietta's and Orléan's three stages of trust in money, 'methodic', 'hierarchical' and 'ethical' trust can be mapped

onto Hénaff's three types of debt. He thereby draws a complex picture of how social reality is constructed in a monetary economy through the establishment of generalized relations of trust, the 'generalized credit' as he puts it.

Finally, Clara Navarro presents a diagnosis of the effects of financialized capitalism on democratic nation-states, which shows that the ideal of democratic popular sovereignty is progressively undermined by the processes of 'transnationalization' and 'diffusion' of sovereignty that characterize economic globalization. The globally spreading pragmatic ideal of 'governance' as an open-ended process of tackling societal problems relies on the assumption of generalized trust in human reason and ethical capacities, neglecting the existing asymmetries of power that obstruct egalitarian rational debate this is what makes the ideal attractive and gives it prima facie legitimacy. Any attempt to transform financialized capitalism, Navarro argues, will have to start from the fact of transnationalization rather than a 'return to the nation-state', and formulate innovative and persuasive alternatives to the seductive ideal of governance.

The last two contributors make tentative steps in this direction by questioning ossified binaries that plague our thinking about social change. Nuria Sánchez Madrid reconstructs Kant's cosmopolitan right as a non-ideal normative conception that holds some potential for informing politics today. Sánchez Madrid argues that, even though Kant's cosmopolitan right is not a theory of a 'cosmopolitan lawgiver', it relies on a conception of 'cosmopolitan mobility' that should be regulated through the informal norm of the 'common possession of the earth'. European colonization and the development of global commerce create, as Kant sees it, a situation of global 'productive interdependence', in the light of which the existing asymmetries of power are morally unjustifiable. Sánchez Madrid contends that with this argument Kant is 'decidedly enlarging our notion of human community and the forms of organizing common life'.

The final contribution by Lydia de Tienda Palop and Jacobo Huerta Vega formulates a nuanced critique of Tzvetan Todorov's perspective on global security in the aftermath of the Iraq War. While Todorov treats the goals of international security and democratic freedom as largely antithetical, de Tienda Palop and Huerta Vega rely on Amartya Sen's capabilities approach to argue that freedom and security – which they understand as multidimensional phenomena – do not have to be seen as mutually antithetical if we endorse the premise that, in a longer-term perspective, there is a dialectical relationship between the two in which each is the precondition of the other. Freedom, understood as 'the factual possibility of a dignified life' can only be achieved in a setting of security, while, on the other hand, security can only exist in a world in which all subjects are able to lead a dignified life.

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Clara Ramas San Miguel

A SYSTEM OF TRUST? ROBERT BRANDOM AND HEGEL'S *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*[1]

ABSTRACT
In this paper, we discuss Robert B. Brandom's reading of G. W. F. Hegel, especially his later work, *A Spirit of Trust: A Reading of Hegel's* Phenomenology, in order to tackle the question of "trust" as the structure of recognition. First, we reconstruct Brandom's reading of Hegel's philosophy as a form of "social recognitive pragmatics" with a "historical recollective account of conceptual content", by which he aims at a re-definition of practical normativity based upon trust. Then, we examine his notion of trust as the ground for a future, post-modern society. Finally, we point at some difficulties concerning Brandom's notion of post-modern age and examine the concept of trust as key to the modern understanding of social bonds.

KEYWORDS
Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trust, modernity, postmodern age.

1. Brandom's Reading of *The Phenomenology of Spirit*: A Social-Pragmatist Perspective

In 2019, Robert B. Brandom published what could be his definitive philosophical contribution, the impressive study A Spirit of Trust: A Reading of Hegel*'s* Phenomenology, on which he had worked for almost thirty years (Brandom 2019). With almost 900 pages, it delivers an interpretation of the main themes in Hegel's *The Phenomenology of Spirit* from a pragmatist semantic

1 This work is elaborated in the framework of the following research projects: *The Cultural Politics of Trust. Recognition, Institutions, Democracy* (AEOC9/21); *Precariedad laboral, cuerpo y vida dañada. Una investigación de filosofía social* (PID2019-105803GB-I0); *Por una historia conceptual de la contemporaneidad* (PID2020-113413RB-C31); *POSTORY: Historiadores, Mnemohistoria y artesanos del pasado en la era posturística* (AGREEMENT NUMBER: 2013 - 1572 / 001 - 001 CU7 MULT7), CE. EACEA. Culture. Multianual Cooperation Projects. 2007-2013); and *Seminario Hegel Complutense 2023-2024. Lectura de "Líneas fundamentales de la filosofía del derecho"* (UCM Innova-Docencia 2023-2024, nº 196).

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perspective, in the tradition of Rorty and Sellars. In his words, the aim of the book is to highlight "[...] the emergence in it [the *Phenomenology*] of Hegel's social recognitive normative pragmatics, the distinctive holistic semantics he elaborates in terms of that pragmatics, and his original historical recollective account of the representational dimension of conceptual content" (Brandom 2019: 19). It is thus a contribution to the line of Hegelian studies carried out by other post-analytical philosophers such as Robert P. Pippin or Terry Pinkard, who have developed an intersubjective theory of rationality and meaning in relation to Hegel's *Phenomenology*.[2]

Brandom reads *The Phenomenology of Spirit* to investigate what Hegel has to teach us about the topics of semantics and pragmatics, that is, about meaning and use as displayed in both the knowing and the acting subject, as well as in conceptual contents, their forms of use and normativity (Brandom 2019: 4). Starting from the idea of the objective world as always already conceptual, that is, thinkable, intelligible, Brandom notes that Hegel adopts a pragmatist approach to this semantic understanding of content, i.e., that the conceptual role of acts, attitudes and linguistic expressions is conferred by the role they play in the practices of the subjects. This conceptual content also bears a normative character. To "understand something" means to grant authority to that representative content as a standard for assessment and correctness, so that our understanding of the objective ontological structure of the world directly refers to what we *do* in order to count as *taking* the world to have that structure, even if the world could have that structure in absence of our epistemic activity (Brandom 2019: 670).

This normative content certainly extends to practical norms. Brandom claims that norms are not just something we find already constituted, but rather are "instituted" by our attitudes and practices. This reflects a special kind of authority of normative content, in which we take ourselves to be bound by such content. Brandom aims to outline the transcendental conditions of the possibility of such conceptual norms (Brandom 2019: 532). The question could be posed as follows: how can we be bound by the norms that we ourselves institute? Norms are indeed instituted by social processes, in which we acknowledge someone's ability to respond to a particular claim. Practical norms therefore involve reciprocal acknowledgment between those making the claim and those held accountable for guaranteeing those claims. Thus, we must distinguish between norms, on the one hand, and normative attitudes on the other hand. Importantly, normative attitudes can in turn be considered as either "recognizing" or "being recognized". In Hegel's view, this process is articulated regarding oneself and one's reciprocal relation to others. Communities arise from recognitive relations among particulars who adopt recognitive practical attitudes towards one another and thus become recognized and self-conscious individual normative subjects (Brandom 2019: 14).

2 Although there are some differences. For a reconstruction of Brandom's neo-pragmatist Hegelianism in this context, see Renault 2012.

It is important to note that this recognition occurs within a historical process – the construction of normative contents occurs by mediation with previous historical contents. This also implies that we can reconstruct the concrete history of how and which normative status result from specific practical attitudes of acting and judging subjects. Brandom proposes the notions of "recognition" and "recollection" as nuclear concepts to understand these dual social and temporal-historical dimensions of discursive normativity. "Recognition" enables us to understand the social character of normativity, while the notion of "recollection" points to the historical character of both institutions and the individual self-conscious subjects and their practices.

This process requires attitudes of "forgiveness" and "confession" towards the history of the perpetually unfinished construction of objective norms, by which we assume past failures, contributions or attempts to build up our collective world of normative contents. Specifically, in Brandom's view, Hegel exercises a "recollective rationality" which retrospectively selects the applications of a concept that gradually make it more concrete and determinate (Brandom 2019: 17). Thus emerges a progressive experience by which the concept's implicit normativity, both regarding its conceptual content and the agent's intention, is revealed as explicit[3].

Starting from this framework, Brandom offers a reinterpretation, or rather, one could even say, a re-writing of the *Phenomenology*, a work that originally aimed to provide, (according to its subtitle), an "Experience of Consciousness". According to Hegel's intention, the reading of the *Phenomenology* should elevate natural consciousness to a new point of view, namely that of "science" or Absolute knowledge. In the same way, the reading of Brandom's *Spirit of Trust* should also provide the reader with a new point of view. The result, ideally, would be a new form of theoretical consciousness enabling a new form of practical normativity, in which "[...] norm-instituting recognitive practices and practical attitudes take the form of norm-acknowledging recollective practices and practical attitudes. When recognition takes the magnanimous form of recollection, it is forgiveness, the attitude that institutes normativity as fully self-conscious trust" (Brandom 2019: 19). Upon reading Brandom's book, then, we ought to acquire this new recollective rationality which enables trust as a practical attitude. This idea of recollection, according to Brandom, is the "keystone" of the whole Hegelian edifice (Brandom 2019: 637), with "a fully self-conscious trust" constituting the outcome of the process.

2. Trust as Recognitive Structure, Modernity and the Post-Podern Age

Why is trust, the concept chosen by Brandom as the cornerstone of a possible new form of community with a symmetrical recognitive structure, so crucial? To help explain this position, Brandom provides an interpretation of Modernity as well as an outline of a future "post-modern age".

3 This is the theme of his *Making It Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment* (Brandom 1998). See also Brandom 2019: 267 ff., 762 ff.

In contrast with premodern societies, in which norms appear as "given" in the world or in the nature of human beings, Modernity bears the mark of "alienation" – a cleavage between self-consciousness and the normative force of norms. Brandom identifies Hegel's statement on the rights of the individual as the core of Modernity[4], and further develops this view referencing two concepts. The first, *Niederträchtigkeit*, can be understood as a small-souled, selfish approach to life, and lack of commitment to the common norms and welfare of others – the famous *Kammerdiener*, also quoted in Goethe's *Elective Affinities*[5]. The second is *Edelmütigkeit* – a higher, moral form of recognitive attitude and commitment to norms and practices (Brandom 2019: 578). Brandom reads the "Spirit" as Hegel's description of a new age which will overcome the one-sidedness which both modern and traditional forms of *Geist*, as mirror images of one another, share in their account of normativity (Brandom 2019: 646).

Brandom posits that these aforementioned future societies will finally be able to strike a balance between individual attitudes and norms. In this ideal society, "together these reciprocal practical attitudes [of confession and forgiveness] produce a community with a symmetrical, *edelmütig* [noble] recognitive structure" (Brandom 2019: 621). Hegel himself does not offer a name for this higher, unalienated *Sittlichkeit*. Brandom, following Hegel's use in a related context, proposes the term "trust" [*Vertrauen*], as "[...] recognition conceived and practiced according to the categories of *Vernunft*."[6] For Brandom, trust enables the structure of reciprocal recognition introduced in the "Self-Consciousness" section: by trusting others we acknowledge the authority of those trusted to forgive, what's more, we invoke their responsibility to do so.[7] The mere structure of cognition and action, and the presupposition of discursivity both theoretical and practical, Brandom argues, drives us towards the achievement of such social bonds exhibiting the practical recognitive normative structure of recollection: forgiveness, confession, and trust (Brandom 2019: 31). In this phase, the preeminent, fundamental role of the subjective principle in Modernity, and its identification with normative contents, can finally be reconciled. As a result, modern alienation is overcome by these new forms of practical self-consciousness, and heroic and tragic agency can be achieved.

4 Hegel states: "The right of the subject's particularity to find satisfaction, or – to put it differently – the right of *subjective freedom*, is the pivotal and focal point in the difference between *antiquity* and the *modern* age" (Hegel 1991, §124, comm., p. 151. References are to section numbers and page of this edition).

5 About *Niederträchtigkeit* in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, see Brandom 2019: 550–554.

6 Brandom 2019: 738. So Hegel: "The *certainty of self* whom I trust, is, to me, *my own certainty of itself*. I cognize my being-for-myself in that certainty of itself, I know that my being-for-myself bestows recognition on it, and I know it is purpose and essence" (Hegel 2018, §549, p. 319. References are to section numbers and pages of this edition).

7 Brandom 2019: 621. He illustrates this transit to the intersubjective ideal of reason [*Vernunft*] with the motive of the "breaking of the hard heart of the judge" by which the judge, hearing a confession of the criminal, acknowledges and forgives: a "forgiving recollection" (Brandom 2019: 608 ff.).

This age is denominated the "post-modern" age, and represents the final stage of self-consciousness (Brandom 2019: 720 ff.).

3. The System: A Problematic Absence

Brandom delivers interesting perspectives on the notion of trust for a social philosophical approach. However, as a reading of Hegel, his work presents a series of problematic elements, which can be grouped into two categories.

The first issue is methodological. Brandom chooses to base his interpretation of Hegel solely on *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, leaving out the mature works of the Hegelian system. He does not, for example, analyze the problematic relation of the *Phenomenology* to the Logic, which, Hegel states, "[...] makes up metaphysics proper or pure speculative philosophy [...]" (Hegel 2010: 9), or to the complete Logic-Nature-Spirit system as set out in the 1817 *Encyclopedia*. Brandom only broaches these questions as minor examples in a discussion on intention and deed – and, furthermore, in doing so makes an error when referencing the title of the work – [8]. This lack of discussion of *Phenomenology's* relation to Hegel's system as such is remarkable, considering that the role and meaning of the *Phenomenology* has been widely discussed among both European and Anglo-American specialists[9]. By 1805-06, following the *Jenaer Systemenentwürfe*, which corresponds to the three university courses from 1803 to 1806, and the *System der Sittlichkeit* manuscript from 1802-03, Hegel believes he has drafted the basic outlines of his system. He writes *The Phenomenology of Spirit* as an introduction to the system, or, as it finally appears in 1807, as its first part: *System of Science. First part, the Phenomenology of Spirit*. As a result of confusion stemming from the first subtitle "Science of the Experience of Consciousness", which Hegel himself later instructed to remove, as well as the fact that Hegel deleted the "First Part" from the title in his corrections for a second edition in 1831, the role of the *Phenomenology* within the Hegelian system as a whole remains unclear[10]. In any case, it is generally agreed that the work's relevance within the mature system of the *Encyclopedia* is very much reduced. Introduction, first part or a whole alternative system?

Brandom, however, does not enter this discussion. For him, the "systematic" approach consists in applying a "metaconceptual reading" which organizes

8 Brandom 2019: 412 ff. See cited Pinkard's "Introduction" to *The Phenomenology of Spirit* for the title problem.

9 A wide discussion of the *Phenomenology* started in mid-XXth century in France and Germany, with contributions such as the first commentary of the work by Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, from 1946, and the works of Kojève and Labarriere; or Fulda, Siep, Pöggeler Heinrich on the German side – Fulda, Heinrich 1973 –; in the Anglo-American sphere, works as the ones by Pinkard and Pippin, or Brandom himself, pursue Hegel's discussion from pragmatist or postanalytical traditions; Stewart (1998) is a reference volume.

10 See Nicolin 1967; Labarriere 1968; Jaeschke 2016.

Hegel's ideas around the notion of normative and conceptual contents[11]. Although he mentions it repeatedly, Brandom never explicitly discusses the meaning of Hegel's "system" as such, only hinting at it briefly when claiming to present the *Phenomenology* under the principle of "forgiving recollection", as Hegel did with his predecessors (Brandom 2019: 633). In my view, this discussion is lacking – for, as Stephan Houlgate states, it cannot be assumed that Hegel's *Phenomenology* presents Hegel's definitive ideas on being, truth, consciousness or action[12]. While we cannot fully reconstruct the discussion regarding the role of *Phenomenology* within Hegel's overall body of work here, it seems hardly debatable that Hegel, at least after finishing the work, attributed a certain preliminary character to it. The "coming-to-be of science itself", "this ether [...] the very ground and soil of science", "the exposition of knowing as it appears" or "the preparation for science", as he presents the work in the "Preface", "Introduction" and "Announcement"[13], can hardly be equated with "science", "knowledge" or the system *per se*. Later on, however, this introductory or preliminary character of the work became problematic for him, and thus the difficulty to integrate it within the mature system[14]. Brandom could have provided a more solid ground for his reading had he tackled this question. As Pippin's account shows, in an approach very akin to Brandom's, the analysis of internal transitions – especially to the C unnamed section – and their relation to the whole system is relevant and can shed light on Hegel's account of the *Geist*, or, as he puts it, of "a mutually recognizing and so mutually reassured social subjectivity" (Pippin 1993: 52–85). Interestingly, Brandom refuses to acknowledge the vast majority of the critical reception of *Phenomenology* and only names Pippin and Pinkard as commentators. In any case, perhaps we needn't choose between either focusing solely on the *Phenomenology* or disregarding it as an unsystematic sketch from Hegel's youth – a proper account should accurately consider the Phenomenology not in isolation, but rather within the context of Hegel's body of work.

11 See for instance Brandom 2019: 16, 78.

12 In his opinion, it is, as Hegel wrote, a "ladder", the discipline that renders spirit 'competent' to examine truth as exposed in the Logic and the philosophy of Spirit. "This, however, is clearly not how Brandom understands Hegel's *Phenomenology*. For him, that text does not merely provide a sceptical 'ladder' *to* Hegel›s philosophy (PS §26), but it *contains* Hegel's most significant philosophical ideas. It presents Hegel's *theory* of conceptual content in cognition and action", Stephen Houlgate 2020.

13 See Hegel 2018: 16–17, 52.

14 Gómez Ramos 2010: 7–44. Fulda insists that this question can and should be addressed: "The way in which Hegel has assimilated the basic concepts of the *Phenomenology* into his *Encyclopedia* doctrine of Subjective Spirit has by now been studied in detail. Even the possibility of connecting the later more complex content of the *Phenomenology* with the systematic philosophy of Objective and Absolute Spirit now appears much more plausible". Fulda insists that this text is "a preface to the planned "system of science" in which the *Phenomenology* would be the first, introductory part" (Fulda 2008: 22, 26).

A second and perhaps even more substantial problematic aspect of Brandom's reading is that Brandom's views are not fully compatible with Hegel's on some crucial matters, especially Brandom's teleological claim of a post-modern age based on trust. Brandom proposes that we practice "semantics with an edifying intent", as the theoretical understanding should educate and motivate us who live "in the post-modern form of trust" (Brandom 2019: 32, 720 ff.). Hegel, however, warned about philosophy's temptation to be "edifying" – her task is, rather, to look back to the Real and "paint gray on gray", to grasp one's times in concepts, not to decree a future state of affairs. In Hegel's words: "The impossibility of directly borrowing from the future is grounded in the very fact of retroactivity which makes the future *a priori* unpredictable: we cannot climb onto our own shoulders and see ourselves 'objectively', in terms of the way we fit into the texture of history, because this texture is again and again retroactively rearranged. [...] We are free only against the background of this non□transparency" (Žižek 2012: 221, 223).

In addition, it is surprising that a pragmatist study of trust and the forms of practical, normative and social action does not examine the differentiated developments in the philosophy of objective spirit – which can be seen both in *Encyclopedia* and the *Philosophy of Right*, as well as in the lessons on universal history. The concept of "civil society", for instance, and its dialectical relation to the State, is completely absent from Brandom's account. Starting from the plausible hypothesis that our societies suffer an erosion of trust, we should seek to explain if, and how, a potentially universal bond can arise given the modern, thoroughly individualistic formation of the subject, while also examining the ways in which the great change of modern economic rationality did not abolish, but rather redefine the logic and structure of society. The question of how the State can accomplish its aim of universal justice and equality under the conditions of market economy should also be addressed. This should be done, however, avoiding a danger that haunts some of the Anglo-American readings of Hegel, even the most rigorous ones – such as Pippin's, who aims to revindicate the dignity of the old label of idealism and reconsider the value of Hegel's solutions to technical philosophical problems – : "[...] the slippage of the non-philosophical (or 'sociological') chapters into the impressionistic flabbiness of a generalizing 'culture critique'", as Jameson rightfully warned[15]. This task, in fact, is one of the core aims in Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit. The subtle genius of Max Weber, who rejected the strict delineation between pre- and modern societies of classical sociology, reassumed this task, by "[...] paying attention to tensions and links between a particularistic trust of 'communal relationships' and the universal trust of 'associative relationships' (social relationships whose 'orientation of social action within it rests on a rationally motivated adjustment of interest')" (Misztal 1992: 8).

15 Jameson 2010: 11. Adorno's *Hegel: Three Studies* is an attempt to avoid this danger by considering society not as a mere, given fact, but as *Geist*: "Society is essentially concept, just as spirit is" (Adorno 1993: 20).

4. Conclusions

Trust is by no means an exclusively Hegelian topic. Ever since Simmel's classic statement, "Without the general trust that people have in each other, society itself would disintegrate", the concept of trust has held an important position in practical philosophy in general[16]. The founding fathers of sociology, too, inherited this focus from philosophy when trying to account for the differences between traditional societies, primarily based on mutual dependence and communitarian systems, and the modern, individualistic societies governed by instrumental reason (Coleman 1997). At stake was the possibility of social existence as such: how is a social bond possible under the conditions of modern individualism? Many recent contributions point to the erosion of mutual trust as one of the key factors in the institutional, cultural and political crises of our contemporary societies[17]. The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a revival of the view of civil society as the "synthesis of public and private needs" (Seligman 1992: 5), in which the bonds of trust play a fundamental role. The concept of trust, one could say, is thus tightly bound to the idea of bond in modern societies.

Brandom's work can be seen as a philosophical contribution to these wide-ranging discussions of trust, and his reflections on the "ages of Spirit" regarding the characteristics of Modernity, the history of the subject, the nature of our present, and the form of its practical, collective agency, surely constitute relevant questions. In summary, Brandom's endeavor is relevant for a philosophical questioning of action, meaning and normativity from a pragmatist semantic approach, but could have built upon stronger foundations in order to constitute a more systematic contribution to the study of Hegel.

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Klara Ramas San Migel

Sistem poverenja? Beleška o čitanju *Hegelove Fenomenologije duha* Roberta B. Brendoma

Sažetak

U ovom tekstu diskutujemo Brendomovo čitanje Hegela, posebno njegovo novije delo, *A Spirit of Trust: A Reading of Hegel's Phenomenology*, da bismo razmotrili pitanje „poverenja" kao strukture priznanja. Na početku rekonstruišemo Brendomovo čitanje Hegelove filozofije kao oblika „pragmatike društvenog priznanja" uz „objašnjenje pojmovnog sadržaja zasnovanog na istorijskom pamćenju", kojim on nastoji da ponudi redefiniciju praktične normativnosti utemeljene na poverenju. Potom razmatramo njegovo shvatanje poverenja kao temelja budućeg, postmodernog društva. Na kraju skrećemo pažnju na izvesne poteškoće u vezi s Brendomovim pojmom postmodernog doba i razmatramo pojam poverenja kao ključa za moderno razumevanje društvenih veza.

Ključne reči: Hegel, *Fenomenologija duha*, poverenje, modernost, postmoderno doba

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Srđan Prodanović

INTUITIONS, TRUST, AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN TIMES OF CRISIS[1]

ABSTRACT
In this paper, I will investigate the complex relationship between intuition, trustworthiness, and trust. I will first examine some of the more prevalent accounts of trust which either (over)emphasize the cognitive aspect of generating trustworthiness, or indeed acknowledge the importance of affects and emotions, but only as part of a neatly organized dual structure – which is in essence complementary with the cognitive understanding of how we start trusting each other. I will argue that intuitions provide a more detailed insight into trustworthiness because they are simultaneously cognitive and affective in nature. I will also consider how inferential and holistic intuitions might influence our understanding of trustworthiness, especially in times of crisis.

KEYWORDS
intuition, trust, trustworthiness, crises, social change

Introduction: In-between "Gut and Brain"

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 there seemed to be another contamination on the loose: the social virus of mistrust which is nowadays becoming ever more blatantly exposed within and between various social groups and social systems. Driven by modern forms of communication, the plague of social polarization (Adams et al. 2023; Arora et al. 2022; Beaufort 2021) seems less like a short-term aberration than a permanent "feature" of our social interaction that is continually pushing us into more precarious mode of life. A somewhat knee-jerk remedy to this predicament is to try to reestablish the importance of facts in the public sphere. According to this view, only facts and fact-based knowledge can generate "sustainable" forms of social trust. However, if recent

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events have taught us anything it is that this strategy is far from efficient (Amazeen 2020; Dunaway 2021: 42–44). And this should not come as such a surprise, since upon closer inspection it does seem somewhat problematic that trusting as a deeply subjective interpersonal feeling should be dependent on and generated by something so external to us, such as facts.

The second issue we encounter when contemplating the notion of trust is the fact that it always refers to the future. Trustworthy individuals, groups and institutions are expected to behave in a certain manner for the foreseeable future and this belief is usually, but not always, premised on previous patterns of behavior. However, trust is also an embedded phenomenon; once earned, trust has some sort of inertia, as if relations generated through trust have intrinsic value, even if there is some breach in the trustworthiness of actors. Essentially, we trust someone because she or he is trustworthy – and this tautological belief cannot be verified (exclusively) as a factual insight into other people's behavior. The same argument applies to larger social groups or institutions. Therefore, it seems that theoretical consideration of trust must involve both an account of our "gut feelings" and cognitively informed factual knowledge that pertains to the way in which other people, groups and institutions might or ought to act in the foreseeable future. Moreover, it is difficult to distinguish these different aspects of trust because they are bundled together, especially in times of crises when events are sporadic, and it seems like anything could happen. Since intuitions usually refer to very similar types of bundled cognitive and emotional insight, in this paper we will aim to investigate to which extent intuitions could prove to be useful in providing a more detailed account of trust and trustworthiness.

In the first part of the text, I will offer an overview of cognitive-oriented approaches to trust. Although these approaches provide an important insight into the way in which trustworthiness is generated, I will aim to show that authors who subscribe to this account fail to explain how and why people trust in times of extreme contingency. In the next section, authors who focus more on the affective side of trustworthiness will be analyzed in order to see to what extent cognitive and affective understanding can be seen as neatly differentiated and compatible. I will then try to theoretically situate intuitions within the framework of the so-called dual process theory as well as within other insights into intuition which see it as an inherently hybrid mode of thinking that bundles rational insights with emotions. In that regard, two different kinds of intuitions – inferential and holistic – prove to be important in managing both minor contingencies and severe social crises. In the last section of the paper, I will try to see how intuitions can inform our understanding of trust in those situations where the outcome of social interactions is less certain, or even when there are ruptures in the general knowledge that is taken for granted by most actors.

When Push Comes to Shove, In Cognition We Trust

Trust has been extensively studied from many perspectives. One famous framing (Hardin 2006) suggests that trust is essentially based on self-interest. To put the point somewhat simply: I trust you because I believe that in the future it would be in your interest that I put my trust in you since, for example, you wish to maintain previously established cooperation with me. Hardin here notices that when a relation of trust is established between agents A and B their interests might not overlap or even concur because, in fact, they previously become *encapsulated* within each other: "Trusted counts my interests as partly his or her own interests just because they are my interests" (Hardin 2006: 19). Hardin's understanding of trust focuses on concrete interactions (with the subsequent critique regarding the scaling of this model) that are reiterated over time and in which the trustworthiness of actors A and B is constantly updated by the following of rules for defaulting and cooperating that are laid out by game theory. Namely, if your interest encapsulates mine and the concrete trust game between us is reiterated over time, then the cumulative gain from our interaction provides an incentive towards trust and cooperation (even though a single act of deflection (distrust) might have substantially bigger payoff) (Hardin 2006: 22–23). This effectively makes (concrete) trustworthiness a social norm.

In a somewhat similar vein, Bicchieri, Duffy and Tolle (2004) think that game theory is a good framework for understanding issues pertaining to trust; however, they maintain that trustworthiness is the kind of social norm that can emerge without self-interest (or, for that matter, embedded trust). Their argumentation is based upon Axelrod's pioneering work (1986) on the evolution of cooperative strategies in game theory. Bicchieri, Duffy and Tolle maintain that there is no single strategy through which the general impersonal norm of trust emerges, rather this outcome is dependent on multiple conditional strategies (in which defaulting is variably sanctioned by different actors who play the "trust game", but also in which more chances are variably provided to defaulters).

Coleman also sees trust as a rational phenomenon, but this time the constitutive rules are premised on probability. Namely, according to Coleman (1990), when A trusts B this boils down to the fact that A knows the gain (G) obtained by trust, potential losses (L), and the probability (p) that B will prove to be trustworthy. Trusting someone, according to Coleman, is thus analogous to making a very subjective and individualistic bet, where formal conditions for this "trust bet" could be defined as follows: $pG > (1\text{-}p)L$. This of course raises the question of how reliable information regarding G, L and p is to be obtained and in turn updated. Coleman here once again relies on rationality, but this time set up as a more general utilitarian principle, because "the search for new pieces of information should continue as long as the cost of an additional increment of information is less than the benefit it is expected to bring" (Coleman 1990: 104).

Although this cognitive approach to trust is very widespread and elegant in argumentation, it certainly has some drawbacks that tend to become more

apparent as the level of contingency rises. Namely, what all approaches to trust that focus on rationality have in common is the fact that the process of generating trust is iterative in nature. Iteration and feedback are a necessary condition for an evolution process to occur which will in turn enable the emergence of trustworthiness. Evolution, however, takes time – and this is an especially scarce resource in acute states of crisis when decisions need to be made at the moment's notice. If evolution is seen as the best "optimization" of different strategies that actors may have in their mutual interactions, then general trust cannot emerge timely (and thus effectively) whenever the level of contingency is relatively high.

Another problem with this perspective is its failure to account for the fact that trust is also generated in times of social change when a new norm can form rapidly. Luhmann famously insisted that trust is of pivotal importance regarding the "seamless" reproduction and even slight modification of the social system, while confidence is closer to the colloquial understanding of trust where most of the social actors should have more certainty about the outcome of daily interactions.

> The distinction between confidence and trust thus depends on perception and attribution. If you do not consider alternatives ... you are in a situation of confidence. If you choose one action in preference to others in spite of the possibility of being disappointed by the action of others, you define the situation as one of trust. In the case of confidence you will react to disappointment by external attribution. In the case of trust you will have to consider an internal attribution and eventually regret your trusting choice. (Luhmann 1988: 98)

In other words, it is precisely in those times when some sort of perturbation occurs within the social system that we have the most pressing urge for social trust.[2] In fact, liberalism as a political system according to Luhmann is more centered around trust than on confidence because the former is compatible with the principle of free action that produces constant gradual change.[3] However, the scale of social change that we potentially face is extremely variable. When severe crises and system meltdowns occur, we might lack basic semantic resources needed for both (self)understanding and communicating whether my attribution of trust was successful. And yet, even in those types of situations trust can emerge. Think of the "diehard antivaxxers" who (upon losing their confidence in the health system) trusted their Facebook communities, regardless of the fact that they might have lost close family members due to complications caused by COVID-19 that could have been avoided if they had been vaccinated. It does not seem plausible to say that they should

2 Rus (2005) also makes the point that trust is closely related to situations of uncertainty. However, his account is closer to Coleman and Hardin because he maintains that particularistic personal interaction is the source of information about the trustee's trustworthiness, while for Luhman trust is a property of the social system (Jalava 2003).

3 Although it should be highlighted that the relation between trust and confidence is not a zero-sum game.

only attribute internally their disappointment for misplacing trust, since at least some of them went into one of Facebook's many moneymaking rabbit holes due to their quite reasonable skepticism towards the commitment of big pharmaceutical companies to the common good. Moreover, it is precisely in these circumstances of vagueness and contingency that we hear about the polarization of society which is, among other things, characterized by blind partisan trust which remains indifferent to efforts to communicate facts within the whole public sphere. Ultimately, a rational/cognitive approach to trust cannot explain this phenomenon of rapidly spreading insufficiently calculated trust, which is not only lacking any embedded self-interest, but can quite often bring about (self)harm.

The Affectivity of Trust

A possible solution would be to try to pay closer attention to the emotional aspects of giving trust to some individual, group or institution. After all, trust is an important element in forming emotional ties such as friendship or romantic relationships, which is why it is very plausible to maintain that besides cognitive there is also an affective component of trust and trustworthiness. If one subscribes to this idea that these two aspects are not mutually irreducible, then the central question is not only what trust is, but also how do its affective and cognitive aspects fit together.

Weigert and Lewis (1985) claim that our everyday reasoning is complex in nature and that it contains both rational and emotional components. According to these authors, cognition is used to select those institutions, groups and individuals that are trustworthy. Moreover, rationality is of key importance in formulating good reasons for generating trust (Lewis and Weigert 1985: 970). However, as Luhmann already noticed, our knowledge of sufficient reasons for trusting someone or something is always limited due to the general uncertainty of social interaction and the inherent instability regarding the reproduction of the social system. This is why every instance of trust always implies going beyond the trustor's knowledge and ultimately making him or her vulnerable to contingency which is inherent in the trustee's future actions.[4] According to Weigert and Lewis, this push beyond the given rational basis for trusting is generated through emotions and emotional dispositions. However, the "proportion" of cognitive and emotional components of trust is not determined primarily by psychological factors, but rather by the complexity of concrete situations in which actors interact with each other, as well as with various properties of

4 Moreover, it can be argued that trust in itself can be understood as a form of action. As Dumouchel points out: "when I trust I increase my vulnerability to another agent through an action of my own, and that action is precisely what trust is. If I had not acted I would not be vulnerable, or at least not as vulnerable to the other agent" (Dumouchel 2005: 425). For the political implications of this insight, see also: Hamm, Smidt, and Mayer 2019.

the social structure (i.e., institutions). This is why, for example, the emotional component of trust is more prominent in primary social groups, as opposed to secondary (Lewis, Weigert 1985: 973).

In a similar vein, Karen Jones stressed the fact that, besides rational deliberation about trustworthiness, trust also entails the attitude of "optimism about the other person's goodwill" (1996: 6). In other words, in order to establish a relation of trust, A must have optimism about B's goodwill (as well as his or her general competence) to perform action X. One might argue that if trust is framed in this manner, then it remains rather limited to those people with whom we have a close relationship, or at least with those with whom there is some sort of previous social interaction and emotional rapport. However, Jones makes the argument that B's competence about taking action is closely connected with her general ethical standards of taking the well-being of others into consideration, regardless of the fact how much other actors may count on B to do X (1996: 10). She thus maintains that this aspect of general understanding of what competence means would allow trust to "scale up", since actor A would be justified in having the attitude of optimism towards B's goodwill (as the crucial condition for generating trust), even though A would not have to see B as trustworthy (because they are strangers who lack previous interaction).

Some social psychologists have tried to see how different types of emotions impact social trust. For example, Dunn and Schweitzer (2005) conducted several experiments and found that emotions with positive valence (like happiness) increase the level of trust, while on the other hand negative emotions (such as anger) tend to reduce it. They also claim that the level of familiarness with the trustee to some extent reduces the importance of emotions in generating social trust, because, for example, incidental emotions (i.e., anger) among more familiar actors do not influence the level of trust between them (Dunn, Schweitzer 2005: 745). More recently, Dunning, Fetchenhauer and Schlösser (2019) have made an argument that the emotional component of trust is of pivotal importance. Trust, according to their empirical study (*ibid.*) for the most part pertains to feelings of obligation towards others thar are usually normatively premised on goodwill and mutual respect between trustor and trustee. Potential defaulting on trust relationship is therefore often perceived as something negative and thus is associated with feelings of anxiety or blame (Dunning et al. 2019: 4).

Although this is just a snippet of the literature that tries to put emotions and affective attitudes into the focus of the general theoretical and empirical research of social trust, it is still indicative that most of the aforementioned accounts – as is the case with those authors who think that cognition is constitutive for generating trust – seem to claim that the relationship between emotional and cognitive element of generating trust is a) somehow neatly ordered, thus b) at least to some extent complementary. Both assumptions seem to be unwarranted. Firstly, emotion and cognition are not separate entities that are triggered at different levels of complexity of social interaction or in specific social situations. It does not seem likely that we are necessarily more "emotionally engaged" when we trust someone that we know very well, while

general trustworthiness, directed toward strangers, is more cognitive in nature. Let me illustrate this point: imagine that we are members of a group that has assembled to protest some social injustice. We might *feel* that we *know* how all members of this newly formed group will behave in the forthcoming time even though the actual unfolding of collective action remains highly contingent in this case.[5] In other words, at least in some situations it is possible to think about trust as a phenomenon where cognition and affect are merged in such a manner that it is difficult to delineate one from another. Therefore, trying to precisely pinpoint whether the emotional or cognitive component of trust is more "active" is not viable for the simple reason that both aspects of trust are simultaneously active at least in some situations.

Varieties of Intuitions

One way to think about trust is to understand it as a specific form of *social intuition*. But before we elaborate this claim in more detail, we first must take a closer look at intuitions. At the highest level of abstraction, one could argue that intuitions are a type of knowledge that lacks a proper "methodology". This is why in literature it is often defined as a mental capability thanks to which we know something without knowing exactly how we know it. For example, some authors stress the fact that intuitions are created in situations where there is an unavoidable lack of adequate input; accordingly, they are seen as an outcome of "[...] the process of reaching a conclusion on the basis of little information which is normally reached on the basis of significantly more information" (Westcott 1961: 267). Intuitions are thus inherently related to situations where there is "scarcity of facts" relevant for the formation of "fully fledged" rational knowledge.

This brings us to another important aspect of our ability to know stuff intuitively, which pertains to the question whether intuitions are a fully conscious mode of knowledge. Obviously, if some insight is generated without the proper understanding of steps involved in gaining it, then it is rather difficult to maintain that the whole process is conscious – at least in the conventional meaning of the word. However, even if we agree that intuitions are (at some level) unconscious, this does not mean that they are inherently irrational. In other words, acknowledging the unconsciousness of intuitions does not entail that they are ingrained and unmalleable, like some sort of epistemological instincts. In that regard, this unconsciousness that we regularly observe as a property of intuitive insights falls close to habit-based modes of reasoning and therefore depends upon prior experience, which is at least partly changeable through reflection. In other words, we are capable of "active intuition" (Williams 2018).

The fact that there are habitually formed unconscious aspects of intuitions also implies that this mode of knowledge is much quicker than those modes

5 As Tanis and Postmes have argued in situations where there is little information about the trustee, trustors tend to infer reciprocity from in-groupers (2005: 415).

that have "proper methodology". For this reason, intuitions are often featured in the so called dual-process theory of reasoning (Evans 2010). According to some of the pioneers in the field (Evans and Over 1996; Stanovich 1999), human thinking and decision-making involve two discrete reasoning systems: System 1, which is fast, automatic, and intuitive, and System 2, which is slow, deliberate, and more reflective. According to this theory, System 1 is responsible for quick and effortless responses to environmental inputs, while System 2 is involved in more complex and demanding mental processes (see also: Kahneman 2013).

Dual process perspective unfortunately fails to properly take into account situational factors, especially in relation to collective behavior (Price 2020). This has been addressed in recent insights from the sociology of protest and social engagement. For example, van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013) investigate the role of System 1 and System 2 thinking in social movements and collective action. They argue that instances of social engagement require social actors to deploy both intuitive and deliberative cognitive processes. The authors in turn suggest that System 1 thinking can play an important role in mobilizing individuals to participate in collective action, while System 2 thinking can help individuals make strategic decisions about whether to participate and how to achieve their goals. Price (2020), on the other hand, has argued that if we follow insights from symbolic interactionism – according to which the idiosyncrasy of individual actors' interpretation of the given situation produces emergent and unpredictable social outcomes – then the rigid distinction between the two systems of reasoning will prove to be even more problematic. More importantly, neat separation of System 1 and 2 cannot, according to Price, explain the so-called non-deliberative innovation.[6] His argument is that if we take into consideration the micro-level of social interaction and the constitutive role of situations in regards to the way we reason, then it can be argued that: "[...] the neat model cannot explain why some individuals may rely on automatic processing in cognitively demanding social situations or why they might rely on deliberate processing during routine activities" (Price 2020: 12).

Moreover, to return to our previous example: if a group is formed through acts of social engagement, members of the group do not necessarily initially mobilize on purely automatic affectual grounds, nor do they integrate and act and consolidate their collective action purely by forming time-consuming rational and deliberative arguments. This is especially true in times of crises when idiosyncrasy of interaction is increased and where one intuitive and fast interpretation of some sudden contingent event causes action which is based both on System 1 and System 2 thinking, simply because within the confines of a crisis situation there must be an exchange of affective and rational interpretations

6 In this regard, Price mentions Leschziner' study (2015) of cooks and their cooking styles where she explains that in some situations avant-garde cooks that work in fine dining restaurants rely on deliberate processes in routine situations, while chiefs who work in traditional restaurants can generate new dishes by following an automatic mode of reasoning.

of social behavior. Think of the following theoretical example: there is an unpredicted event E which demands urgent action; actor A manages to formulate a rational evaluation of the overall situation S (now that E has occurred), which causes an intuitive consideration of agent B and – through social interaction and communication – ultimately helps A to further develop a deliberate evaluation of S'. Can one easily delineate whether S' primarily falls under System 1 or System 2 mode of reasoning? I am afraid that the effort to make such a distinction will be futile, and, as we shall see, even counterproductive.

When thinking about intuition, it is perhaps better to try to see what its specific inputs and outputs are and then try to explain it down these lines. This is a strategy adopted by Betsch who defines intuitions in the following manner:

> Intuition is a process of thinking. The input to this process is mostly provided by knowledge stored in long term memory that has been primarily acquired via associative learning. The input is processed automatically and without conscious awareness. The output of the process is a feeling that can serve as a basis for judgments and decisions. (Betsch 2008: 4)

There are several important points that are highlighted by Betsch's definition. Firstly, (rational) knowledge is seen as the input of the associative process which pulls closer previously distanced elements of the long-term memory. So, intuitions are, at least at the input level, closely related to rationality – even though they might be produced instantly or automatically. Secondly, this association outputs emotion, the "feeling of knowing something", that can be communicated as judgements and in turn used by social actors to form decisions. However, it would be wrong to infer that those decisions which are guided by intuitions are irredeemably irrational – and consequently incompatible with rational deliberation – simply because intuitions have this kind of "emotionally saturated" output.

For the argument that I am trying to make, it would be very important to have in mind that intuitions themselves are not a homogeneous mode of thinking. As Sinclair (2011) has argued, there are two ways of intuiting which process information rather differently (although both of them could be seen as part of System 1 mode of reasoning). Inferential intuitions reasoning "relies on automated responses based on a quick recognition of memory patterns accumulated through experience" (Sinclair 2011: 5). This kind of intuition is closely related to what we call expert knowledge. Think for example of an experienced emergency room surgeon who is summoned to see a patient whose life is threatened because all the other less-experienced residents cannot conclusively establish a diagnosis. The life of the patient is hanging by the thread and there is no time to run more diagnostics. The experienced emergency doctor is able to put the situation in another perspective by suggesting that he feels that seemingly unrelated symptoms might in fact be related and, together with the input from other surgeons, they resolve the issue in time. Notice that in this easily imaginable example, the expert doctor is in essence sharing a "feeling about knowledge" that can advance a debate about evidence based on rational knowledge.

In other words, inferential intuitions pertain to those situations which "[...] connect information in a new but predictable manner that builds on the existing domain knowledge, which opens the possibility that it could be mediated by the deliberative system" (Sinclair 2011: 6).[7] On the other hand, a holistic intuition connects relatively far elements of experience in a radically new manner. This way of processing information is characterized by the fact that it can synthesize "unconnected memory fragments into a new information structure" (Mintzberg et al. 1998: 164, quoted in: Sinclair 2011: 5–6). This type of intuition can be seen as an eureka! moment where one has a truly innovative insight into some aspect of the (social) environment. It is important to understand that if someone has a holistic intuition, the output does not necessarily need to be compatible with the current normative framing of the deliberative process (although this does not mean that knowledge produced by holistic intuitions is inherently unfalsifiable). Think for example of radically new ideas in the history of science where quite often scientists had an unexplainable epiphany that almost instantly integrated previously unconnected knowledge into an insight that was quite unexpected, or to put it somewhat ironically, counterintuitive. The idea of time-space, the structure of the DNA molecule and the theory of evolution all had this feature (Grinnell 2011; Pétervári, Osman, and Bhattacharya 2016). Therefore, holistic intuitions might be at odds with current procedures of deliberation (state of methodology which validates intuitively generated hypotheses), but this is only a temporary state of affairs since if the said intuition is truly heuristically fruitful new procedures of verification will be developed over time.

Intuitions as Mental Grounds for Trust in Times of Crises

Now, how does this account of intuition help us to better understand the phenomenon of trust? We can easily see that inferential and holistic intuitions might play different roles in situations depending on the *level of contingency* that is involved. One could argue that inferential intuitions, together with the more cognitively premised emergence of trustworthiness, are of key importance in preserving the given social order once the confidence in its seamless reproduction is lost. Trustworthiness is a norm that has both normative and empirical expectations (Bicchieri 2005).[8] We have tried to argue that generating

7 For an exploration of the boundary conditions that delineate between proper professional intuitions and potential bias "insights" see: Kahneman, Klein (2009).

8 According to Bicchieri (2005, 2016) normative expectations refer to what individuals believe they should do, or what they believe others expect them to do, based on current social norms or values. For example, an individual may have a normative expectation that they should recycle, because they believe it is the right thing to do for the environment. Empirical expectations, on the other hand, refer to what individuals believe others are actually doing or are likely to do, based on their observations of behavior. For example, an individual may have an empirical expectation that others in their community do not recycle, because they have observed that few people put out recycling bins on garbage day.

this norm, especially in times of crises, involves a hybrid type of insight provided by intuitions, as well as that scope of trustworthiness towards strangers and impersonal relations depends upon the type of intuition that is involved in the process. Inferential intuitions fuel empirical expectations when we have a previous rapport between trustor and trustee, while holistic intuitions play an important role in generating novel normative and empirical expectations between persons who have not necessarily previously interacted with each other.

For example, inferential intuitions could help generate trustworthiness towards the stock market although inflation might be considerably on the rise. Holistic intuitions, on the other hand, create that type of trustworthiness which highlights agency and the inherent vulnerability involved in the act of trusting a fellow human being. This normative grounding can occur once the system enters a period of severe instability. When this happens, we as trustors are more focused on the problematic situations and potential innovation in the normative realm than on traits or behavior of trustees. In other words, the level of contingency fundamentally influences our *mental capabilities* that help us to (re)frame the given (crises) situation. Think of the trust that emerges between strangers if they went through wars, severe poverty, life-threating illness or psychological trauma: they are capable to rapidly form close bonds in spite of their substantial mutual personal differences, as well as to formulate bold intuitive judgments that do not necessarily concur with the dominant way of understanding social issues in the given society (Ratcliffe, Ruddell, and Smith 2014). In that regard, the distance between the elements of our experience that are, depending on the level of contingency, synthesized into novel knowledge structures, and communicated as inferential or holistic intuitions are of key importance for generating trustworthiness once this norm ceases to be taken for granted by social actors.

However, intuitions are not only important in times of crises. As we already indicated, to find a person or institution trustworthy means that you foster some expectation regarding their future behavior. We also established that trust is different from confidence in that trust entails a "leap of faith" since there is no way to avoid the possibility of failure in predicting the future behavior of the trustee. When we speak of trustworthiness from the perspective of trustor there is always at least some lack of information at the input level which, depending on the level of contingency, might require some creative recombining of different – most often rationally generated – types of knowledge about situations in which the trustor and trustee interacted. Because this recombination does not always follow a fully reflexive method, the trustor forms a judgment which is affective in various degrees. The "leap of faith" that constitutes the complex output of the hybrid rational and emotional evaluation of the given social situation is in fact, at least partly, premised on the intuitive justification of trustworthiness. It therefore seems more important to investigate to which extent trust is guided by holistic or inferential intuitions than it is to try to conclusively show that it is inherently more rational or emotional.

Trust, on the other hand, could be seen as a social process that involves a concrete implementation of trustworthiness through the action of two or more actors. Namely, when we look at the problem from the perspective of the social system, trust as a process does not highlight the fact that actors face various contingencies in their daily life, but rather their mutual dependence (Dumouchel 2005: 427). Therefore, from this level of abstraction, Luhmannian confidence is for the most part premised on what we have called System 1 or automatic mode of thinking. When a small perturbation in the reproduction of the social system does indeed occur, inferential intuition is used to restore the process by reestablishing trustworthiness. The stability of the given system is at least partly proportional to the level of repair that can be delivered through the use of inferential intuitions. In other words, if experts can use their inferential intuitions to resolve contingency, nobody would claim that there is a crisis of social trust. However, in situations where there are crises of institutions – or even disruptions of semantic security (Boltanski 2011) – there are two relatively compatible reactions. First, crises might cause social actors to use System 2 mode of thinking and take time to reflect upon why trust as a social process is failing. This outcome does not involve the use of intuition but is relatively rare simply because time in this kind of situation is scarce (moreover, System 2 mode of thinking can also be biased). Secondly, this lack of certainty might cause a series of holistic intuitions (that are again premised on the speedy System 1 mode of thinking) about the *meaning of trustworthiness* that might generate radically novel modes of interaction.

Also, if we take a closer look, framing trustworthiness as a norm that is constituted through intuitions that are simultaneously cognitive and affective also allows us to see how trust as a social process supports or hinders agency. Namely, if agent A's desire to do x entails that A trusts B to do y, then A should consider whether action x can be intuitively inferred from y (given the current state of mutual understanding that the normative order encodes into the given situation). There are several important implications of this position. If x is habitual, or based on relatively undisruptive types of knowledge, then trust (as a system-wide social process) will be more or less automatic and supportive of A's agency. If, on the other hand doing x by A also implies a total novelty in how we understand the normativity of trust, then trust as a social process necessarily presents a hindrance of A's agency (the only way around it would be to develop a normative modification of trustworthiness through holistic intuitions).

From here, we can hopefully understand more clearly why trust is so important in every aspect of social life. It is the bedrock of stability of the social system, but also the vehicle of change through which genuinely new forms of interaction emerge. It has both a static and dynamic property and, as a process, generates the fabric of society. If this is the case, then we as social scientists and theorists need to develop more precise conceptual tools that could investigate the hybrid nature of trustworthiness which is both emotionally and cognitively fueled by our ability to form intuitions.

Conclusion

In this paper I tried to show that trust is a very complex phenomenon that cannot be reduced either to its cognitive or affective/emotional component. This approach in turn enables us to see how trust perseveres and changes in those situations where there is crisis in the reproduction of the social system. In that regard, inferential intuitions play an important role in mending relatively small unpredicted situations that we face in our daily life or professional career. On the other hand, holistic intuitions have the potential to alter what constitutes trustworthiness and consequently to substantially change the way in which social order – premised upon the process of social trust – functions.

Another important implication (which demands more research) pertains to those situations where trust becomes a scarce social resource. Namely, if trustworthiness is somehow broken by social crises, insisting on the importance of proper, factually based, information will not in itself resolve this issue, because their processing demands time-consuming reflexivity, which is not at disposal to social actors. In this kind of situation, it seems prudent not to dismiss these judgments simply because they were constructed in an instance and without proper methodology, but rather to see which parts of the experience are getting interconnected through intuitive reasoning and why. This would ensure that a potential critique of wrong intuitions about trustworthiness in times of crisis is not set into the neat narratives of inherently rational and irredeemably irrational approaches to said crises. Moreover, this understanding of holistic intuitions could open the possibility for new unpredicted forms of trust relations, ones that are both radically more inclusive and intuitively understandable.

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Srđan Prodanović

Intuicije, poverenje i društvena promena u vremenima krize

Apstrakt

U ovom radu ću istražiti složen odnos između intuicije, pouzdanosti i poverenja. Prvo ću ispitati neka od preovlađujućih tumačenja poverenja koja ili (pre)naglašavaju kognitivni aspekt generisanja poverenja, ili pak priznaju važnost afekta i emocija, ali samo kao deo uredno organizovane dualne strukture – što je u suštini komplementarno sa kognitivnim razumevanjem toga kako uspostavljamo međusobno poverenje. Tvrdiću da intuicije pružaju detaljniji uvid u pouzdanost jer su istovremeno kognitivne i afektivne prirode. Takođe ćemo razmotriti kako inferencijalne i holističke intuicije mogu uticati na naše razumevanje pouzdanosti, posebno u vremenima kriza.

Ključne reči: intuicija, poverenje, pouzdanost, krize, društvene promene

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Igor Cvejić

TRUST AND "BEING MOVED" AS FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT IN SITUATIONS OF UNCERTAINTY[1]

ABSTRACT
The main aim of this paper is to put emphasis on the role of trust and the emotion of being moved in a situation of crisis. I do not intend to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in a crisis situation. My focus is rather on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. I rely on Bennet Helm's argument on how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. In the second part, I adopt Cova's and Deonna's argument about the function of the emotion of being moved. I suggest that in such a situation "being moved" expresses the readiness to reorganize one's hierarchy of values in the light of new circumstances of mutual dependency. Taken together, trust and being moved portray the outline of mutual engagement between the actors in a crisis situation which aims to establish new communal norms and values.

KEYWORDS
engagement, trust, being moved, uncertainty, emotion

Trust is an attitude in relation to other(s) which we usually associate with some form of certainty. In other words, it seems that the nature of trust involves confidence that one will and can do something, or otherwise confidence in one's moral and political decisions. This is what we express when we say: "I trust that he will do it" or "I trust him completely". However, trust also involves some reference to at least the possibility of contingency – trust is a relevant

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attitude only when there is a possibility that an agent could let someone down or fail. Trust is a forward-looking attitude which concerns something that has not taken place yet. My aim is to explore the role of trust, as a forward-looking emotion toward other(s), in situations of uncertainty such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Contrary to the common understanding of trust as being justified inside institutional reality, I will argue for the emergence of trust in a situation of uncertainty. I do not have an intention to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in situations of crisis. My focus is rather on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. This is of particular importance in situations of uncertainty and mutual interdependency. In such a situation, trust could be understood as an invitation to introduce new norms or change the existing ones, given the new circumstances. As a forward-looking positive attitude, trust, even therapeutic one (cf. McGeer 2008), exposes the addressee to pressure to respond adequately. Namely, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. In the recent pandemic, this kind of trust has been paradigmatically expressed with the phrase: "Be responsible".

There is another emotion which I want to address in this paper, namely, the emotion of being moved. "Being moved" has recently gained the attention of researchers. Notably, Cova and Deonna have claimed its status as a distinct type of emotion (Cova, Deonna 2014). As argued by these authors, being moved is a distinct emotion which has an important function in "the reorganization of one's hierarchy of values and priorities" (Cova, Deonna 2014). In this paper, I will focus on the social function of this emotion. My aim is to show how being moved could represent a significant response to the social engagement of others. Moreover, expressions of this emotion could also reinforce links that tie a community together (Cova, Deonna 2014). In this regard, these (very) manifestations (themselves) can count as engaged acts. Finally, I will examine how trust and being moved taken together can be an incentive to reorganize communal norms and values.

The Problem of Communality in the Situations of Uncertainty from the Philosophical Point of View

The philosophical arguments about shared experiences, collective entities, groups and 'being together' usually aim to provide their formal conditions. Generally speaking, it is about the formal conditions of collective intentionality – the capability of minds to be jointly directed at objects, goals, states of affairs, values, etc. There are certainly several different accounts of collective intentionality (Bratman 1993, Searle 1990, Tuomela 2007, Gilbert 1992), but all of them presuppose some kind of common knowledge between the actors.

Values which a community shares or norms of a community are what they are only insofar as there is a common knowledge about them, i.e. I know that you know that I know that you know that X. Under those circumstances of common knowledge, X counts as a value or as an object of our joint attention. Not only does common knowledge provide the foundation of collective intentionality and communal norms, but it also regulates our cooperation – in the sense that I know what part of our job I should undertake, and I also know and trust that others will do their part in the completion of the job.

By the notion of the situation of uncertainty I want to refer to such situations in which the security of existing communal norms or their relevance to the new circumstances become undermined. Either the existing norms become insecure and lose their foundation in common knowledge, or they cannot appropriately respond to the new circumstances, with the practical implication that they are not relevant for the new situation. Moreover, the dictionaries we use, semantics, our communication, particularly about the event and communal norms, become less secure (cf. Boltanski 2011; Cvejić, Ivković, Prodanović 2023).

The philosophical challenge is to explain how, in such situations, collective intentionality could be (re)established. The conditions which make the issue challenging are (1) that there is no security nor common knowledge that we are jointly attending to the situation in the same way and (2) there is no security nor common knowledge about what the relevant communal norms regarding the event which we are jointly accepting are. My main presupposition is that social engagement between the actors plays a crucial role in establishing collective intentionality.[2] This thesis draws on more interaction-oriented and plural phenomenological accounts of collective entities, such as those defended by Zahavi and Loidolt (Zahavi 2015, 2021; Loidolt 2018). Plural subject, accordingly, has to be understood as a subject in relation – constituted of relations between its members. What is needed are experienced engaged relations between participants through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural, i.e. "mutual engagement where we immediately affect each other" (Zahavi 2015). It is crucial that we adopt a stance with the other, which might be called second-person engagement[3]:

> Second-person engagement is a subject–subject (you-me) relation where I am not only aware of and directed at the other and, at the same time, implicitly aware of myself in the accusative, as attended to or addressed by the other, but where the attitudes of mutual address establish a form of 'communicative connectedness', (Zahavi 2021: 16)

2 There have been several different contributions in the tradition of continental philosophy that explore the formation of collectives in situations where prior common knowledge is absent. For instance, Hannah Arendt's analysis of plurality (refer to Loidolt 2018) and Badiou's analysis of the becoming of a political subject (Badiou 2003) offer valuable insights in this regard. I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewer for bringing this to my attention.

3 Cf. Schilbach et al. 2013.

Further, I will investigate the possibility that emotional engagements with others (such as trust) may be crucial in the situations of uncertainty, because the knowledge about the event and relevant norms are unstable.

Trust as an Invitation to Introduce New Norms or Change the Existing Ones

In his book *Communities of Respect* (2017), Bennet W. Helm explores the normative grounding and the role of reactive attitudes in human societies. It is based on his earlier considerations of plural agents, which I cannot address here (Helm 2001, 2009; see also Cvejić 2016). He understands reactive attitudes as emotions which manifest themselves as forms of praise and blame. Their foundation lies in the norms which constitute our society. Thus, when making a call of reactive attitudes, I put myself in a position of authority and, at the same time, I am holding the addressee as well as witnesses responsible for reacting. I assume my authority to react because I am actually expressing my commitment to the norms and values we share. In other words, I am calling upon the norms that constitute our society. For example, when I express dissatisfaction with the corruption in Serbian institutions, I am actually expressing my commitment to the norms which (should) constitute our society. In such a situation, my calling upon the norms and values that bind us at the same time presses the relevant *import* (significance) of both the circumstances and the norms on fellow members, thus inviting them to react correspondingly (Helm 2017: 84). And it is important to note that the function of these calls is not only to make the recipient take the message, but also a normative one:

> to understand what I have termed the "call" of reactive attitudes in terms of communication – the function of getting the recipient to take up one's message – is to miss the idea that they are forms of praise or blame and so are ways of holding someone responsible or, in the case of self reactive attitudes, of taking responsibility. (Helm 2017: 62)

Elaborating the issue further, Helm focuses on the concept of trust, understanding trust as a form of reactive attitude and forward-looking emotion. Moreover, Helm provides us with a possibility that trust, as a reactive attitude, can sometimes be an invitation to introduce new norms or change the existing ones:

> As forward-looking, the call of trust can be an invitation to a delineation of how it is proper for us to show respect in the face of particular circumstances of dependency, even when this is not simply a part of our normative expectations in advance. In such a case, trust presents a view of the import of these circumstances of dependency that purports to be our view, and it calls on the trustee as well as witnesses to take up this invitation and respond accordingly – it presses this import on them. (Helm 2017: 108)

This, of course, requires further elaboration. What is important to notice is that it is not solely to the *content* of a normative recommendation to which the

"trustees" are invited to respond. As a positive forward-looking reactive attitude, trust (even therapeutic) would immediately give an *entitlement* to a trustee. A trustee is, above all, invited to feel as a respected fellow member. At the same time, the call pushes the significance of the event on the trustee. Moreover, it also discloses the circumstances of *mutual dependency*, circumstances in which it is at the same time important that each one of us reacts individually, and that "we" react as a collective. Accordingly, the importance of the event taken together with the presupposed inability of the system to respond to the situation makes the necessity of social engagement intelligible. However, this does not mean that the new communal norms are predetermined in the invitation. Trust, in such cases, is above all an invitation to delineate the norms:

> We may not antecedently have a norm for how it is proper to respond with respect to this kind of dependency, and my trust invites us to see how this might go, in much the same way that your kind offer of help does. Of course, this call of trust, this delineation of our view of what we expect of each other in such circumstances of dependency, is subject to review by the 'appeals court' of others' reactive responses to my trust [...] and it may be rejected by them. (ibid.)

There could be no better example of such a scenario than the widely spread call for trust in its primal form in the recent pandemic: "*#beresponsible*". This call, although it could hardly be connected to any determinate cognitive content, immediately entitles everyone to feel as "one of us" (who are responsible). But it also pushes the import of the circumstances of mutual dependency on everyone, circumstances in which every one of us should recognize that we should *collectively* react to the situation.[4]

Being Moved

In the previous paragraph I discussed how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. Trust presses the import of the situation of mutual dependency upon the trustee. Furthermore, as

4 My intention in this paper is not to assert that "we-formation" and calls for engagement in such situations are necessarily positive, progressive, or emancipatory. On the contrary, societies in such circumstances are highly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation (see Losoncz, Losoncz 2020). This article focuses solely on the possibility of "we-formations" that remain fragile and do not necessarily entail progressiveness. In other words, the question of which communal norms are desirable for us is a separate yet significant question, one that may not have a definitive answer but deserves to be posed in advance. For a deeper understanding of how complex domination can suppress emerging "we-formations" see Cvejić, Ivković, and Prodanović (2023). I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for highlighting this aspect of the issue.

a positive forward-looking emotion toward other(s), trust can play a significant role in the trustee's rational motivation. However, trust in this case is, at least initially, an asymmetrical engaged act. The ground of this trust is questionable, and it could even be unwarranted or merely therapeutical, providing that the norms are yet to be established (Helm 2017). Thus, it can easily be rejected. On the other hand, the trustee is exposed to the pressure of responsibility without prior acceptance. What fails in this picture is the readiness of the trustee to engage in the reorganization of values in the new circumstances of mutual dependency. To address this issue, I suggest introducing the emotion of being moved into the wider picture. I will argue that being moved prepares individuals to act in the reorganization of values in response to a situation.

The emotion of "being moved" has only recently gained the attention of researchers. Being moved is a complex emotional experience characterized by a sense of deep emotional resonance or a feeling of being affected in a profound way. It can arise in response to a variety of stimuli, such as witnessing acts of kindness, hearing powerful stories, or experiencing acts of beauty or excellence. The emotion of being moved is often associated with experiencing art, such as music, literature or film (Konečni 2005). It can often lead to tears when we are touched by positive values. However, being moved is not limited to art experiences.

Florian Cova and Julien Deonna have claimed its status as a distinct type of emotion. According to them, it has a unique formal object, phenomenology, relation to action tendencies and personal as well as social functions (Cova, Deonna 2014). The formal object of an emotion defines the type of emotion it is. It could be understood as the logical limitation of the types of object emotions can have (Kenny 2003: 132) or as the evaluative property that we ascribe to the object of emotion (e.g., the object of fear is dangerous). Common situations that elicit the emotion of being moved can be associated with a strong presence of something positive in a generally negative framework, such as reconciliation between two estranged old friends, the sacrifice of a soldier or unexpected kind gestures, etc. However, it is the presence of the positive in the negative, or emergence of the positive which elicits our emotional reaction. Moreover, we are also and often moved by the presence of positive values without there being any background of negative values at all, e.g. the birth of a child. Cova and Deonna argue that situations that evoke the emotion of being moved are "instances in which positive values are brought to the fore and manifest themselves in a particularly salient way" (Cova, Deonna 2014: 453). Accordingly, the formal object of being moved can be described as "a certain positive value standing out" (ibid.: 454).

The emotion of being moved can be particularly evident during major societal crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. There are several examples of such elicitors. Healthcare workers are risking their lives to care for patients with COVID-19, often working long hours and sacrificing time with their families. Many people have been moved by the bravery and selflessness of these individuals. Another example are communities who came together to support

one another during lockdowns and other restrictions. For example, people have organized food drives for those in need, or have volunteered to deliver groceries and other supplies to those who were unable to leave their homes. We witnessed numerous acts of kindness and generosity, such as people leaving care packages for healthcare workers, or offering to walk dogs for those unable to do so themselves. In the time of crisis, we are especially prone to being moved by instances in which positive values are brought to the fore.

According to Cova and Deonna, "being moved operates first as a powerful reminder of the values that we hold most dear and take ourselves to be governed by" (Cova, Deonna 2014: 458). When being moved, we respond to the values we did not expect to see, or which have not been realized for some reason. These values might be "suspended" or "forgotten" during the course of our hectic and anxious lives. Thus, Cova and Deonna conclude that the general function of being moved "consists in the reorganization of one's hierarchy of values and priorities" (ibid.). Furthermore, they suggest a social function of this emotion. Firstly, the emotion of being moved is often related to the values that promote cooperation, such as solidarity or benevolence (in spite of the unfavorable circumstances) and, by expressing this emotion, one signals that they are a good cooperator: "the experience of being moved could lead individuals to reorganize their priorities in a way that reinforces attachment to values such as generosity or friendship and thus encourage the organism to continue to cooperate" (Cova, Deonna: 459). Secondly, the emotion of being moved represents our commitment to the values we share and one's readiness to act on behalf of them, i.e. it has the "power to reinforce the links that tie a community together by signaling to its members the importance that a given individual attaches to the most fundamental values sustaining that community" (ibid.).

This social function is of particular importance in times of crisis. From an empirical standpoint, the focus on cooperative values, such as generosity and friendship, could be crucial. However, I want to emphasize the role of readiness to reorganize the hierarchy of values. When one is being moved by some act during a crisis (e.g. the sacrifice of health workers or volunteers), one practically accepts the invitation or appeal to adopt a specific stance in the new circumstances, one is being engaged. It is important to note that the values to which we are reacting commonly refer to the values relevant to the crisis, values which we now find more important than ever, but which might be less relevant in a normal situation. This is because the crisis requires the reorganization of the hierarchy of values. In other words, one expresses the recognition of the new circumstances of mutual dependency and the *readiness*[5] to reorganize the hierarchy of values and act on behalf of it. This expression can also encourage others to cooperate, as Cova and Deonna have argued. In that sense, the expression of this emotion can count as an engaged act.

5 For the difference between action readiness and action tendencies see Frijda 2007: 39.

Readiness to Reorganize the Hierarchy of Values

In this paper, my aim was to discuss the specific roles of trust and the emotion of being moved in a major societal crisis. I did not have an intention to address the general role, or all roles, these emotions might have in situations of crisis. My focus was on the role of these emotions in we-formation, presupposing that mutual engagement between the actors is the crucial constituent through which first-person singular shifts to first-person plural. To be more specific, I discussed the readiness to reorganize or change communal norms and values in the new circumstances of mutual dependency.

I addressed Helm's argument on how trust can function as an invitation to delineate communal norms in the new circumstances of uncertainty. Accordingly, by being trusted by other(s), the addressee is entitled to the expected responsibility for a situation: (1) the addressee is entitled as a member of a group (of us who are responsible in the situation); (2) the addressee is exposed to pressure to respond to a situation with responsibility. However, the relation between trust-giver and the trustee remains asymmetrical. Further, I adopted Cova's and Deonna's argument about the function of the emotion of being moved. They argue that its main function is the reorganization of one's values and priorities. Moreover, it has the power to reinforce the links that tie communities together. This emotion is particularly salient in situations of major crisis. In the previous paragraph, I suggested that in such a situation being moved expresses the readiness to reorganize the hierarchy of values in the light of new circumstances of mutual dependency. Thus, being moved might fill the gap of asymmetrical relation between trust-giver and trustee. Taken together, trust and being moved portray the outline of mutual engagement between the actors in a crisis situation to establish new communal norms and values.

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Igor Cvejić

Poverenje i ganutost kao forme angažmana u situacijama neizvesnosti

Sažetak

Glavna namera ovog teksta je da naglasi ulogu poverenja i ganutosti u kriznim situacijama. Neću se baviti opštom ulogom, ili svim ulogama ovih emocija u krizi. Fokus će pre biti usmeren na ulogu ovih emocija u formiranju „mi", pretpostavljajući da je uzajamni angažman između aktera suštinski faktor putem koga prvo lice jednine prelazi u prvo lice množine. Oslanjaću se na argument Beneta Helma o tome kako poverenje figurira kao poziv da se iscrtaju komunalne norme u novim okolnostima neizvesnosti. Prema ovom argumentu, kada mu drugi veruju, primalac poverenja je oslovljen za relevantnu odgovornost u datoj situaciji: (1) primalac poverenja je oslovljen kao član grupe (nas koji smo odgovorni); (2) primalac poverenja je izložen pritisku da odgovori na datu situaciju sa odgovornošću. U drugom delu članku prilagodiću argument koji su izneli Kova i Deona o funkciji ganutosti. Sugerisaću da u kriznim situacijama ganutost izražava spremnost da reorganizujemo hijerarhiju vrednosti u svetlu novih okolnosti međusobne zavisnosti. Uzete zajedno, emocije poverenja i ganutosti ocrtavaju skicu uzajamnog angažmana između aktera u situacijama krize, kako bi se ustanovile nove komunalne norme i vrednosti.

Ključne reči: angažman, poverenje, ganutost, neizvesnost, emocija

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Marjan Ivković

RECOGNITION AS A COUNTERHEGEMONIC STRATEGY[1]

ABSTRACT
Building on the analyses of cultural hegemony in the works of Nancy Fraser and Wendy Brown, I argue in the paper that the historic bloc (order of cultural hegemony) of post-Fordist capitalism is characterized by a particular dynamic between several 'axes' of hegemony that gives rise to the 'paradox of engagement/disengagement'. The 'progressive-expertocratic' axis of hegemony creates a subject-position of the 'engaged self', a figure embodying a certain promise of political agency that is simultaneously obstructed by other, depoliticizing axes of hegemony. This dynamic is conducive to the rise of contemporary right-wing authoritarianism, which purports to fulfill this promise of political agency through a series of displacements – the counterhegemonic left, I argue, has so far not formulated an effective alternative to this strategy. In the second part, I explore the potential of Axel Honneth's theory of recognition, in particular his concept of 'interpersonal respect', for grounding a left strategy of connecting (mutually articulating) the hegemonic figure of the 'engaged self' with a progressive politics of social transformation. To that end, I elaborate Honneth's perspective by means of an argument about the role of trust in the context of societal crises that Igor Cvejić, Srđan Prodanović and I have recently formulated.

KEYWORDS
hegemony, post-Fordism, engagement, recognition, respect, trust

In this paper I start from a question that has defined the project of critical theory since its outset, in the 1930s no less than today: why has the counterhegemonic left in contemporary capitalism been less politically successful than the authoritarian right (the fascist one back then and the populist one of today)? This is the question that propelled the creation of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research and the multidisciplinary project of the original critical theory – likewise, the contemporary version of the question informs much of

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the current debate in critical theory. An example might be the recent insightful exchange between Nancy Fraser and Rahel Jaeggi, *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory* (Fraser, Jaeggi 2018) and, in this modest attempt to contribute to the debate, I will rely on some of Fraser's arguments, both recent ones and some made a while ago. In formulating a preliminary answer to the above question (and a corresponding 'remedy' for the left's lack of success), I will complement Fraser's perspective with that of Axel Honneth, more precisely, with some key aspects of his theory of recognition.

Ever since the debate between Fraser and Honneth *Redistribution or Recognition?* it has been widely assumed that Honneth's perspective is incompatible with the Marxian paradigm of conceptualizing and contesting capitalism (Fraser, Honneth 2003; Geuss 2008; McNay 2008; Van den Brink, Owen 2007). This is chiefly due to the social-theoretical disagreement between Fraser and Honneth about whether capitalism is built on two logics of action-integration (systemic and social) or only one (social). In this paper I argue, in contrast, that Honneth's concept of recognition can be fruitful for theorizing the political strategies of a counterhegemonic struggle in conditions of present-day, post-Fordist capitalism, since Honneth's recognition pertains not only to structural (in)justice but also to human subject-formation. In the first part, I build primarily on Nancy Fraser's perspective to outline the main aspects of the historical bloc (order of cultural hegemony) in post-Fordism, and I focus on one of them in particular – what I term the 'paradox of engagement/disengagement', which means that some 'axes' of articulation of the post-Fordist historical bloc create the subject-position of an 'engaged self' while other ones simultaneously obstruct the realization of the agency potential inherent in this position.

This mechanism, I argue, simultaneously fosters and disappoints people's expectations of having a certain form of political agency, thereby pushing them toward right-wing authoritarianism which promises the realization of such agency in the form of membership in a homogenized collective agent which has the power to symbolically 'reconstruct' the existing social reality. The carriers of counterhegemonic struggles (the democratic-socialist left in post-Fordism), on the other hand, have so far not articulated an effective progressive alternative to this strategy, as their normative claims have been overly focused on what might be termed the 'prerequisites' of political agency (political and social rights) rather than motivating factors of agency. I argue that Honneth's perspective can provide some conceptual tools for redressing this, in particular his concept of 'respect' as a mode of recognition, which stresses people's needs to be recognized as 'morally responsible' actors. A successful counterhegemonic struggle has to respond to the post-Fordist promise of political agency by translating the hegemonic figure of the 'engaged self' into that of the 'engaged citizen' – here I try to elaborate Honneth's arguments by drawing on some recent work done in collaboration with Igor Cvejić and Srđan Prodanović (Cvejić, Ivković, Prodanović 2022).

I Neoliberalism, Expertocracy and Protection: The Contours of Post-Fordist Hegemony

In the perspective of Antonio Gramsci, cultural hegemony is produced through the assembling of the *historic bloc*, a particular configuration of diverse societal entities which belong to both the 'base' and 'superstructure' of classical Marxism, such as the forces and relations of production, social groups and discursive formations. For Gramsci, there are two-way causal relations between these entities, not simple determination of the superstructure by the base. Hegemony can be understood as the 'cement' that holds the historic bloc together, a grammar of social life that enables the mutual translatability of various elements of the bloc, a "[r]egulator (*ordinatore*) of the ideology which provides civil society and thus the State with its most intimate cement" (Gramsci 1995: 474).

A great variety of contemporary theorists within the neo-Marxian paradigm broadly speaking have elaborated the Gramscian concept of hegemony (see Althusser 2014; Joseph 2017, 2002; Hall 1986; Laclau, Mouffe 1985; Williams 2005). Nancy Fraser, whose perspective I find fruitful for the purposes of this paper, defines hegemony as the construction of a 'political common sense' in the public sphere of capitalist society, a particular grammar of political claims-making. Political claims that are formulated within this grammar are treated as legitimate and meaningful, whereas those that are not are rejected as illegitimate or nonsensical. While Gramsci still gave a certain causal primacy to the 'base', more precisely to the relations of production in capitalism, Fraser renounces such vestiges of economism and argues that historic blocs *are* essentially configurations of publics, "[c]oncatenations of different publics that together construct the 'common sense' of the day" (Fraser 1989: 167). The boundaries of this common sense at a given moment coincide with the scope of phenomena that are widely accepted as *political* in the discursive sense of the term – as contested across a broad range of publics – as opposed to what is 'economic' or 'private' (domestic) on the other. Counterhegemonic struggles, concomitantly, are not simply struggles to include this or that political claim that is 'outside' of the hegemonic grammar into it, but are struggles to transform the grammar itself, and thereby also reassemble a different one. For something to qualify as a counterhegemonic struggle, therefore, it is necessary that a number of distinct political actors with particular agendas coalesce into a unified force that challenges the prevailing political common sense.

Fraser identifies four historical stages of capitalism, to which four historic blocs correspond: the mercantile, liberal, state-managed (Fordist) and neoliberal (post-Fordist) – the latter two being the primary objects of her analysis (see Fraser 2022, 2017; Fraser, Jaeggi 2018). In theorizing hegemony in Fordism and post-Fordism, Fraser relies to a great extent on the perspective of the influential Hungarian neo-Marxist Karl Polanyi. Polanyi's key argument in his seminal work *The Great Transformation* is that the capitalist market economy is intrinsically beset by a paradox. It naturally strives to fully commodify the

entire social reality, including what Polanyi considers to be the fundaments of society: land, labour (people) and money. However, the forces of marketization cannot do so completely because, if they succeeded in fully commodifying land, labour and money, they would have completely destroyed all three of them, ravaging the natural environment, disintegrating communities and destroying livelihoods through the wild fluctuation of prices. This paradox gives rise to a unique historical dynamic in capitalism: a capitalist society is, according to Polanyi, constantly torn apart by the push and pull of two opposite forces, the *movement* of capital trying to commodify everything, and the *countermovement* of the rest of society trying to protect itself from full commodification – meaning destruction – and thus giving rise to various forms of social *protection* (Polanyi 2001).

What Polanyi erases from view, Fraser argues, is a key third dimension of political conflict in capitalism – struggles for the *emancipation* of social groups, other than the conventional 'working class', who are oppressed both culturally and economically, including women, peasants, serfs, slaves, inhabitants of shanty-towns and racialized peoples, "for whom a wage promised liberation from slavery, feudal subjection, racial subordination, social exclusion, and imperial domination, as well as from sexism and patriarchy" (Fraser 2014: 9). These groups have historically fought against regressive forms of social 'protection', but they did not endorse the free-market ideology either – they constitute what Fraser considers to be the 'third pole' of a three-dimensional capitalist conflict dynamic, not a double movement but a *triple* one of commodification-protection-emancipation (Fraser 2017). Each pole of the triple movement gets its concrete political shape in a given socio-historical context not only from its internal telos but also from its relations with the two other poles. Marketization can, *contra* Polanyi and in line with Marx, bring not only destruction and disintegration but also liberation from status-based forms of domination; in shielding communities from marketization, the forces of social protection may also shield forms of domination inherent in these communities; finally, in struggling against status-based forms of domination, agents of emancipation can also dissolve the basic solidarities that bind communities together, thus helping (often inadvertently) set the stage for marketization.

In Fraser's interpretation, emancipatory movements have, since the end of World War II, been internally splintered between factions which fought against culturally based forms of domination (the protection pole) without much consideration for the marketization pole (or even endorsing marketization) – these are the liberal factions of emancipatory movements such as feminism and anti-racism – and factions which simultaneously fought both oppressive forms of protection *and* marketization, which in effect meant they were fighting for transforming the ethical substance of protection – here we recognize the socialist and social-democratic currents of these same movements. The historic bloc of Fordist (state-managed) capitalism consisted in the mutual articulation of the poles of *marketization* and *protection* within the triple-movement model in opposition to the third pole of *emancipation* – this is what Fraser terms a

'two-against-one alliance' within the triple movement. The post-Fordist stage, in contrast, is marked by a different two-against-one alliance: the assemblage of what Fraser terms a 'progressive neoliberal' historic bloc, one in which the poles of *marketization* and *emancipation* become mutually articulated, through the combination of 'progressive' (liberal) politics of cultural recognition and 'regressive' (neoliberal) redistribution, at the expense of *protection*. This has occurred through a process of gradual convergence, over the past several decades, of the liberal currents of feminist, anti-racist and LGBTQ-rights movements and the more progressive elements of the economic elite in financialized capitalism – what Fraser sees as a 'dangerous liaison' in which the "emancipatory critique of oppressive protection has converged with the neoliberal critique of protection per se" (Fraser 2017: 39).

Fraser's analytical model helps explain the ascent of right-wing authoritarianism over the past decade. The 'dangerous liaison' of dominant currents of emancipation with forces of marketization prepared the ground for the key discursive strategy of right-wing authoritarians: the discursive fusion of principled leftists and (progressive) neoliberals in the figure of the 'cultural totalitarians' bent on destroying traditional lifeworlds through the policing of language and thought. The 'subversive' appeal of right-wing authoritarians stems from the following premise: if marketization is wreaking havoc on the entire social reality, and if emancipation has 'teamed up' with marketization, anyone who rejects marketization must naturally turn to (traditional, oppressive) forces of protection. As Fraser puts it in conversation with Rahel Jaeggi,

> So, yes, it is both recognition and distribution – or, better yet, a specific way in which those two aspects of justice got interlinked in the era of financialized capitalism. Right-wing populist movements are rejecting the whole package. And, in so doing, they are simultaneously targeting two real, consequential components of a single historic bloc whose hegemony diminished their chances – and those of their children – to live good lives. (Fraser, Jaeggi 2018: 205)

This thesis is appealing, but it does not provide a clear enough explanation of why the radical-emancipatory movements in post-Fordism have fared considerably worse than forces of oppressive protectionism, given their strong and sustained critique of marketization. To try to understand this, we should consider a dimension of post-Fordist hegemony which Fraser's triple movement model neglects to an extent: that of expertocracy, the discursive logic of translating political (normative-contested) issues into depoliticized matters of expert analysis and administration. Discourses of expertocracy have been an important element of both the post-Fordist historic bloc (see e.g. Boltanski 2011) and the Fordist one, and Fraser had actually thematized their role in some of her early works that conceptualize the 'struggle over needs' in capitalism, which deal with the politics of need interpretation in the 'late capitalism' of the 1980s United States (Fraser 1989).

The struggle over needs is a symbolic struggle within a discursive arena that Fraser terms *the social*, by which she means the space which is 'a site of

discourse about people's needs', in particular those needs that have 'broken out' of the domestic and official economic spheres (Fraser 1989: 156). Within the sphere of the social in late capitalism, three principal discourses of need interpretation clash – *expert discourses* which transform the political process of need interpretation into depoliticized need administration, discourses of *oppositional movements* which aim to politicize hitherto nonpolitical needs confined to the domestic and official economic spheres, and *reprivatization* discourses which aim to depoliticize newly politicized needs by re-embedding them into their original spheres. Instead of the triple-movement model of marketization-protection-emancipation, here we encounter the triad of expertocracy-reprivatization-emancipation.

There are some social-theoretical differences between these two conceptual schemes, the 'mature' and 'early' one: the triple-movement scheme should encompass both the systems-theoretic level of structural dynamics in capitalism (such as commodification and redistribution) and the action-theoretic level of hegemony construction, while the 'struggle over needs' scheme is largely action-theoretic. However, the basic premise of the theory of hegemony, as we remember, is that there are two-way causal links between the 'base' and 'superstructure', i.e. the structural and action-theoretic planes. The early Fraser recognizes this as she argues, in the context of redistributive welfare programs, that the discursive is constitutive of the structural: "By the discursive or ideological dimension, I do not mean anything distinct from, or epiphenomenal to, welfare practices; I mean, rather, the tacit norms and implicit assumptions that are constitutive of those practices" (Fraser 1989: 146). I would therefore argue that the two analytical schemes can be fruitfully combined to develop a more complex model of hegemony construction in post-Fordist capitalism.

If we map the struggle over needs scheme onto the triple movement one, we may observe that the discourses of 'reprivatization' from the struggle over needs scheme correspond to both 'marketization' and 'protection' poles of the triple movement one – and the same goes for expert discourses. First, we have what might be termed 'regressive marketization' discourses, for example ones which defend 'prerogatives of private ownership' and thereby depoliticize issues (e.g. questions of workplace democracy) by defining them as matters of private (capitalist) property. Second, there are also 'regressive protection' discourses which aim to depoliticize issues (e.g. family violence) by defining them as matters pertaining to the 'domestic' sphere. Third, there are 'regressive expertocratic' discourses which aim to depoliticize issues (e.g. a corporate merger or a question of redistributing surplus value) through defining them as non-political matters of scientific management or impersonal market mechanisms. Fourth, we have 'progressive neoliberal' discourses – as the mature Fraser reminds us, there are liberal currents of emancipatory discourses that have proven compatible with reprivatizing and expert marketization, if not with reprivatizing protection (the radical and socialist currents of emancipatory discourses are counterhegemonic and therefore outside of the historic bloc). Finally, the fifth

element of the historic bloc is what we might term 'progressive expertocratic' discourses, and these require some attention for the purposes of our argument.

The French sociologist Luc Boltanski zooms in on the technocratic dimension of post-Fordist hegemony as he conceptualizes 'complex domination' in post-Fordism as a form of what I have termed progressive expertocracy (Boltanski 2011). Although Boltanski sees expertocracy as a largely top-down phenomenon, he suggests that complex domination comes into being in a manner similar to Fraser's progressive neoliberalism – through the fusion of *liberal-emancipatory* and *expertocratic* discourses. Rather than the figure of the 'ruling expert' (the axis of regressive expertocracy), progressive expertocracy discursively shapes an ideal of synergy between experts and citizenry, both dedicated to solving pressing societal problems. If the progressive-neoliberal axis fashions the subject-position of the 'entrepreneurial self', the progressive-technocratic one, we might argue, produces the 'engaged self', the actor who is called upon to interiorize elements of expert discourses broadly diffused in the public sphere (e.g. climate science) and act in a politically responsible way. The icon of progressive expertocracy has for some time been the 'ecologically conscious' individual, more recently joined by the 'responsible citizen' in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The subject-position of the 'engaged self' therefore instills a certain 'promise of agency' in social actors that goes beyond the classical liberal-democractic conception of civic life. This is a promise of *political agency* along the lines of participatory democracy in which citizens and experts cooperate to solve problems – albeit one in which the experts are tasked with defining the problems and respective remedies. The promise of agency is systematically obstructed, however, by the hegemonic axes of progressive neoliberalism and regressive (top-down) expertocracy. The first one depoliticizes (economizes) key aspects of social reality that would have to become political (normatively contested) if we wanted to truly solve problems such as climate change –for example, the key issue of the investment of societal surplus, which, as Marxists remind us, is currently decided by the capitalist class through markets for capital goods (see Fraser 2022). In addition to depoliticizing key areas of social life, progressive neoliberalism also perpetuates distributive and status injustices that obstruct the realization of the 'engaged self' by denying people the necessary material and symbolic resources for getting engaged. Finally, the axis of regressive expertocracy operates in such a way as to exclude ordinary, non-expert citizens from taking part in the solution of complex societal problems, while constructing them discursively as both uninformed and *irresponsible*. The result of this dynamic is that post-Fordism does not just create a situation of 'broken promises' in terms of social justice and personal self-realization, it also creates a sense of unfulfilled promises of political agency.

I would argue that this less explored dimension of social disappointment in post-Fordism is important for grasping two things: first, the relative political success of the forces of right-wing authoritarianism (the hegemonic axis

of regressive protection)[2] and failure of radical-emancipatory discourses (the counterhegemonic left); and second, the political strategies that the counterhegemonic left needs to employ to reverse this trend. With respect to the first point, I would argue that the unfulfillment (systemic obstruction) of the promise of political agency in post-Fordism is an important factor contributing to the success of right-wing authoritarianism, a factor that synergizes with the unfulfilled promise of social justice but also plays a distinct role within this dynamic that helps clarify the appeal of these political actors. As I remarked earlier with respect to Fraser, the broken promise of social justice would, on its own, have a roughly equal chance of directing people disillusioned with post-Fordism toward the counterhegemonic left (for example, Bernie Sanders or Jean-Luc Mélenchon) as to the authoritarian right (Donald Trump or Marine Le Pen). It is the broken promise of political agency that the authoritarian right has so far capitalized on politically more successfully than the left. The process of 'appropriating' the promise of agency inherent in the 'engaged self' figure requires, I would argue, a double political displacement on the part of the right: first, the right translates the participatory-democratic ideal of the engaged self into the regressive-participatory ideal of membership in a homogenized collective which acts decisively to solve pressing societal problems; second, it displaces the process of solving these problems from a structural to a discursive plain, as it essentially defines the task of fixing society in constructivist terms, as a process of discursively reconstructing the social reality that has been shaped by the totalitarian 'alienated elites' of progressive neoliberalism. It is the combined effect of this double displacement that creates the sense of empowerment in social actors that Wendy Brown, as I interpret her, tries to pin down with the concept of *authoritarian freedom*.

Brown has explored the mutual articulation of neoliberal and neoconservative discourses in her account of the paradoxical phenomenon of 'authoritarian freedom' as neoliberalism's 'Frankenstein' – a concept that sheds light on the political logic of right-wing authoritarianism (Brown 2018). Brown conceptualizes the amalgam of authoritarian freedom as the product of 'twin logics of privatization' that can be identified in the ongoing neoliberal revolution, the neoliberal economic one and the neoconservative cultural ('familial') one:

2 Right-wing authoritarianism or populism is sometimes viewed as being outside of the current historic bloc – Fraser also inclines toward treating it as non-hegemonic (if not counterhegemonic) in the sense of challenging 'progressive neoliberal' hegemony from the right (Fraser 2022; Fraser, Jaeggi 2018). I am closer to authors such as Wendy Brown who treat this political movement as part of the historic bloc, for a number of reasons – the two most important ones being: 1) it does not challenge the core aspect of the hegemonic political grammar – that the structural transformation of the market economy is both impossible and undesirable; and 2) it plays a crucial function in defusing and displacing the normative claims of ordinary social actors for such structural transformation, which puts it into a relation of a dynamic (agonistic) equilibrium with other axes of the post-Fordist historic bloc, rather than outside it.

> At this point, it is easy to see how sometimes viciously sexist, transphobic, xenophobic, and racist speech and conduct have erupted as expressions of freedom, challenging the dictates of "political correctness". When the protected, personal sphere is extended, when opposition to restriction and regulation becomes a foundational and universal principle, when the social is demeaned and the political is demonized, individual animus and the historical powers of white male dominance are both unleashed and legitimated [...] Meanwhile, left opposition to supremacist sentiment is cast as tyrannical policing rooted in the totalitarian mythos of the social and drawing on the coercive powers of the political. (Brown 2018: 67)

Through an analytical lens that combines Fraser and Brown, we could argue that the forces of counterhegemony have been less successful in politically mobilizing the disappointment generated by post-Fordism because they have so far focused almost exclusively on the unfulfilled promise of social justice at the expense of that of political agency. An important aspect of the figure of 'engaged self', we remember, is that she is discursively shaped as a 'responsible' actor, someone who is prepared to invest time and energy in grappling with societal problems. It is this element of nominal 'respect', I would argue, that constitutes the moment of (unrealized) empowerment in the engaged self. Insofar as the left has articulated ideals of participatory and deliberative democracy to complement those of economic redistribution and cultural recognition (for example, the Occupy movement), these have for the most part been treated as prerequisites of agency – fair procedures that guarantee equal participation – rather than contexts in which people are trusted as responsible actors. A counterhegemonic struggle requires a more effective progressive alternative to the authoritarian right's strategy of promising agency as membership in a homogenized collective 'reconstructing' society. And it is with respect to this task, I would argue, that Axel Honneth's theory of recognition has some important resources to offer.

II Recognition as Respect: Combining Political Theory with Moral Psychology

Axel Honneth's theory of recognition has evolved over the past decades into a comprehensive perspective within 'third-generation' critical theory that purports to explain the social structure, dynamics and processes of subject formation (Anderson 2000, 2011; Deranty 2009). In contrast to Jürgen Habermas' two-dimensional conceptualization of 'reason' within social reality (communicative and functional), Honneth articulates a new 'foundational' concept which fuses explanatory and normative purposes – intersubjective *recognition*, understood as the universal precondition of human self-formation. Honneth's key social-theoretical premise, which resonates considerably with Pierre Bourdieu's theory of symbolic domination, is that social reality is a field of 'symbolic struggles' and temporary compromises between social groups which allow for a particular institutional order to take shape on the grounds of a fragile normative 'consensus' (Honneth 2011: 410-411).

In developing his theoretical system, Honneth has relied on an interpretation of the early Hegel's account of the 'struggle for recognition' (*Kampf um Anerkennung*) as a historical mechanism for expanding the contents of human 'ethical life' (*Sittlichkeit*). In order to formulate a theory of the subject which complements the Hegelian social ontology, Honneth draws on American pragmatist social psychology, particularly George Herbert Mead and John Dewey, and on the psychoanalytic theory of 'object relations', primarily Donald D. Winnicot's and Jessica Benjamin. Honneth argues, in contrast to Habermas, that social actors engaged in symbolic interaction do not merely strive towards an understanding free of coercion, but that, more fundamentally, they expect a certain positive attitude from their interactive partners that Honneth terms recognition (Honneth 1996). Expectations of recognition are framed by a historical normative order of interaction (an institutional system), which itself presents a temporary resolution of conflicts between social groups over the institutionalization of evaluative patterns (patterns of recognition). Honneth argues that "[w]e should understand recognition as a reaction with which we respond rationally to evaluative qualities we have learned to perceive in human subjects to the degree that we have been integrated into the second nature of our life-world" (Honneth, 2002: 510).

Social actors' experiences of the *violation* of their moral expectations can be understood through the prism of the early Hegel's social philosophy as particular expressions of *universal moral-practical claims*. In Honneth's view, the fulfillment of these claims is a precondition for the establishment of an 'undistorted' individual self-relation: "It is individuals' claim to the intersubjective recognition of their identity", Honneth argues, "that is built into social life from the very beginning as a moral tension, transcends the level of social progress institutionalized thus far, and so gradually leads via the negative path of recurring stages of conflict to a state of communicatively lived freedom" (Honneth 1996: 5).

There are, according to Honneth, three basic human needs for recognition that correspond to the early Hegel's concepts of love, legal equality and 'honour', and thus three basic types of normative claims. The first among them is the claim to the *affection and care* of the relevant concrete others. However, as one starts participating in the wider realm of social interaction, one needs to acquire a more stable anchoring of one's sense of self, in a *general* acknowledgement that one is an accountable and responsible person. As Honneth argues, the early Hegel's concept of the universal human need for reciprocal, symmetrical recognition can be interpreted, by means of George Herbert Mead's social psychology, as the need for *respect* of one's moral autonomy, and its fulfillment enables an individual to develop a basic sense of *self-respect*. The third fundamental moral-practical need corredspnds to the early Hegel's concept of 'honour' – while the claim to moral respect in Hegel corresponds to the need for personal autonomy in Mead, the quest for 'honour' in Honneth's view resonates with Mead's concept of the fundamental human need for 'self-realization' through the obtainment of *cultural esteem* of one's personality. Here I would like to briefly focus on the second dimension of Honneth's theory of

recognition for the purposes of my argument – the basic human need for respect from others.

Joel Anderson gives a succinct interpretation of Honneth's concept of recognition as respect:

> As Honneth understands it, self-respect has less to do with whether or not one has a good opinion of oneself than with one's sense of possessing of the universal dignity of persons. There is a strong Kantian element here: what we owe to every person is the recognition of and respect for his or her status as an agent capable of acting on the basis of reasons, as the autonomous author of the political and moral laws to which he or she is subject. To have self-respect, then, is to have a sense of oneself as a person, that is, as a 'morally responsible' agent or, more precisely, as someone capable of participating in the sort of public deliberation that Habermas terms 'discursive will-formation'. (Anderson 1996: xiv–xv)

The intersubjective, social preconditions for developing self-respect in this sense are legally guaranteed *rights*, which Honneth defines as institutionalized patterns of interpersonal recognition: "What gives rights the power to enable the development of self-respect is the public character that rights possess in virtue of their empowering the bearer to engage in action that can be perceived by interaction partners" (Honneth 1996: 120). In Honneth's perspective, a crucial dimension of historical progress is to be found in the struggle for expanding the scope of legally guaranteed rights, i.e. the scope of what it means to be respected as a morally responsible agent: "The cumulative expansion of individual rights-claims [...] can be understood as a process in which the scope of the general features of a morally responsible person has gradually increased, because, under pressure from struggles for recognition, ever new prerequisites for participation in rational will formation will have to be taken into consideration" (ibid.: 114–115). The historical expansion of the scope of rights through a series of struggles for recognition can roughly be divided into the stages of basic human rights (the emergence of modern positive law), political rights (the advent of liberal democracy) and social rights (the creation of the welfare state).

So what is the difference between Honneth's concept of respect as a dimension of interpersonal recognition and the more conventional political-theoretic norms of human, civic and social rights? Honneth's respect is not solely a political-theoretic but a *moral-psychological* concept as well (Deranty 2009; Fraser, Honneth 2003), as it plays a prominent role in his theory of human subject-formation. This, on the one hand, renders his perspective normatively 'thick' (substantive) and difficult to defend on purely proceduralist, deontological grounds, but it also makes it fruitful for thinking about political strategy in times of post-Fordist hegemony. For Honneth, people don't just need respect as a socially provided *precondition* of agency (as in participatory and deliberative democracy), they need respect as a *motivating factor* of agency – or what I earlier termed 'a sense of empowerment'. Respect is what enables people to develop a 'healthy moral-practical self-relation' in the dimension of political participation, and therefore to feel empowered to exercise their agency.

This is why there is an element to Honnethian respect – we might call it the *trust* element – which cannot be reduced to the legalistic language of 'rights'. People are fully respected only when they both have institutionally guaranteed rights and are trusted as morally responsible agents. It is perfectly conceivable that people in a given political community have the full spectrum of human, political and social rights 'on paper' but are still not trusted in the above sense of 'being capable of participating in discursive will-formation'. A case in point could be the current crisis in France around the issue of the increase of the retirement age from 62 to 64 years through an executive presidential decision. The increase of the retirement age is justified by the French President Emmanuel Macron as the necessary response to a pressing societal problem – growing pension deficits caused by demographic changes (rising life expectancy and the consequent ageing of the population). The citizens of France were arguably not treated with respect in the Honnethian sense in this case – they were not treated as morally responsible agents who can be trusted to comprehend the severity of the crisis and debate about a rational solution to this problem (whether in the form of raising the retirement age or substantively restructuring the French economy, for example). Instead, the executive decision is a manifestation of what I termed 'regressive expertocracy', an assumption that citizens would act irresponsibly if they were consulted on complex societal issues (for example by means of a referendum), in the form of a knee-jerk rejection of any change to the status quo. Therefore, although France is one of the most developed western welfare states with a wide spectrum of political and social rights, its citizenry does not enjoy respect in the full sense of Honneth's term.

The open-ended nature of the historical evolution of interpersonal respect means there is no reason to assume that the normative contents of respect cannot (and will not) evolve further. One possible line of further development was suggested by Honneth himself in some of the works written after *The Struggle for Recognition*, in which he has engaged in expanding his theory along the lines of a participatory-democratic political model which combines Deweyan pragmatism with the theory of recognition. In 'Democracy as Reflexive Cooperation', Honneth interprets John Dewey's theory of democracy as arguing in favour of a social order of 'cooperative self-realization'. In contrast to Hannah Arendt, Honneth argues, Dewey's critique of the classical liberal perspective rests on a fundamental pragmatist conviction that 'communicative freedom' is not embodied in linguistic interaction as such but in the "communal (*gemeinschaftlich*) employment of individual forces to cope with given problems" (Honneth 2007: 222). Honneth distinguishes between Dewey's early conception of democracy which hardly differs from the insights of the young Marx, and his mature political theory in which Dewey grants autonomy to the realm of the *public debate*. The latter is conceived within Dewey's perspective as a "medium through which society attempts to process and solve its problems" (ibid.: 234).

Of the three basic dimensions of recognition – love, respect and esteem – Honneth's Deweyan political ideal clearly depends to a great extent on the existence of egalitarian and solidary relations of interpersonal *esteem*, recognition

of one's capability to contribute to the common good. Honneth stresses that democracy as reflexive cooperation requires not only a just and 'cooperative' division of labour, but a whole range of associations in which individuals can put their skills into the service of the wider community. But Honneth perhaps slightly neglects the extent to which relations of interpersonal *respect* are also crucial within his political ideal. Democracy as the 'communal employment of individual forces to cope with given problems' requires, of course, that we esteem each other as persons who possess valuable and mutually complementary skills with which we can contribute to the resolution of those problems. But it also requires that we *trust* each other as morally responsible persons who understand the gravity of these problems and are willing to engage in the cooperative process of their solving.

III From Engaged Selves to Engaged Citizens

This is by no means a self-understandable requirement that is already encompassed by the existing norms of interpersonal respect in liberal democracy, especially in light of the fact that the 'given problems' we are supposed to resolve are often completely new to us and we first have to understand what it is that we are facing (for example, the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change or the demographic crisis in France). In other words, we first have to be willing to direct an amount of *sustained attention* to these novel problems and try to reach some kind of intersubjective, communal understanding of what they are and what will be required to overcome them. In such situations, expert discourses are important but clearly insufficient for understanding the political implications of the crisis – including the legal and political-theoretic terms we normally rely on in the public sphere. In such situations of low 'semantic security' (Boltanski 2011), the key factor is people's *mutual awareness* that they are morally responsible agents who will do their best to reach an understanding of the crisis and resolve it – in other words, the key factor is interpersonal trust. As Cvejić, Prodanović and I have argued, a 'call of trust' (expression of interpersonal trust in the context of a major societal crisis) is a positive forward-looking attitude that plays not just a normative, but a motivational role: "What is important to notice is that it is not solely to the *content* of a normative recommendation that the 'trustees' are invited to respond. A trustee is, above all, invited to feel as a respected fellow member through a call, but at the same time, a call 'pushes' the *significance* of the event on the trustee"[3] (Cvejić, Ivković, Prodanović 2022: 7). In contrast to the subject-position of the 'engaged self' of progressive expertocracy which presumes a high level of semantic security, as she relies on existing expert discourses, the 'trustees' from the above quote have to engage in the very definition of the situation – to 'author' the rules of engaging with the problem at hand – and we might therefore call them 'engaged citizens'.

3 See also Igor Cvejić's and Srđan Prodanović's contributions in this special section.

The figure of the engaged citizen, I would argue, is crucial for Honneth's political ideal of democracy as reflexive cooperation, and it adds an additional normative layer to the norm of interpersonal respect – namely the imperative that we recognize each other as morally responsible agents in the sense that we trust each other to be attentive to the significance of the newly emerging societal problems and open to reaching an uncoerced understanding about them even in conditions of radical uncertainty. To return to the above example of the pension crisis in France, it is precisely this dimension of respect – trusting people to be engaged citizens rather than post-Fordist engaged selves – that was lacking in the government's approach to the crisis.

This finally brings us back to the question of counterhegemonic strategy in post-Fordism, more precisely the question of how to progressively exploit the paradox of engagement/disengagement that is created through the combined effects of progressive expertocracy, on the one hand, and progressive neoliberalism and technocracy on the other. I am now in a position to make more precise the earlier suggestion that the left requires a 'politics of respect' by means of the Honnethian concepts I have outlined. The democratic-socialist left has been developing the ideal of postcapitalism primarily in terms of what I have called the 'rights' dimension of Honnethian respect – in particular the dimension of social (welfare) rights as prerequisites of agency, and the norm of participatory democracy as a set of fair procedures establishing equal rights to exercise political agency. But the left has paid insufficient attention to what I termed the 'trust' dimension of respect – recognizing people as engaged citizens who are morally responsible in the sense of being attentive to pressing societal problems, especially the *newly emerging* problems which have yet to be fully understood and collectively interpreted. It is such politics of respect that could actualize (and radicalize) what I earlier called the sense of empowerment inherent in the hegemonic figure of the engaged self that stems from the progressive-expertocratic discursive construction of this figure as a responsible' agent.

In terms of counterhegemonic strategy, respecting people as engaged citizens therefore means mutually articulating the promise of political agency created by progressive expertocracy with radical-emancipatory discourses such as democratic socialism. What is specific about respecting people as engaged citizens, compared to conventional notions of participatory democracy, is the premise that people can be trusted to act responsibly even in situations where democratic deliberation is difficult due to the fact that there is little 'shared semantics' in the form of already sedimented interpretations of a given (new) societal problem (Cvejić, Ivković, Prodanović 2022). Strategically speaking, respecting people as engaged citizens can present a politically effective alternative to the hegemonic agents of 'authoritarian freedom' – right-wing authoritarians – as it presents a direct, rather than displaced, realization of the unfulfilled promise of political agency in post-Fordism.

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Marjan Ivković

Priznanje kao kontrahegemona strategija

Sažetak

Gradeći na temeljima analize kulturne hegemonije u delima Nensi Frejzer i Vendi Braun, u ovom radu argumentujem da se istorijski blok (poredak hegemonije) postfordističkog kapitalizma karakteriše specifičnom interakcijom nekoliko 'osa' hegemonije koja proizvodi 'paradoks angažmana/dezangažmana'. Osa hegemonije koju nazivam 'progresivno-ekspertokratskom' konstituiše subjektnu poziciju 'angažovanog sopstva', figuru koja otelovljuje određeno obećanje moći političkog delanja koje je istovremeno opstruirano drugim, depolitizujućim osama hegemonije. Ova dinamika pogoduje rastu savremenog desnog autoritarizma, koji pretenduje da ispuni ovo obećanje moći političkog delanja kroz seriju određenih izmeštanja – kontrahegemona levica, sa druge strane, nije do sada formulisala efektivnu alternativu ovoj strategiji. U drugom delu rada, istražujem potancijal teorije priznanja Aksela Honeta, prevashodno njegove koncepcije 'interpersonalnog poštovanja', kao teorijskog temelja leve strategije povezivanja (međusobne artikulacije) hegemone figure 'angažovanog sopstva' sa progresivnom politikom društvene transformacije. U tu svrhu, elaboriram donekle Honetovu perspektivu pomoću argumenata o ulozi poverenja u kontekstu društvenih kriza koje sam nedavno formulisao sa Igorom Cvejićem i Srđanom Prodanovićem.

Ključne reči: hegemonija, postfordizam, angažman, priznanje, poštovanje, poverenje

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Andrea Perunović

CREDIT, DEBT AND MONEY AS SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OF TRUST[1]

ABSTRACT
While the notions of credit, debt and money are today almost exclusively associated with economic discourse, their semantic fields prove to be significantly wider and more complex. This article seeks to restore the repressed meanings of these three notions. Its aim consists of a deconstruction of the dominant economic narratives on credit, debt, money and trust, that would show that these concepts should be primarily considered as social, rather than solely economic institutions. Therefore, in the introduction we will look at the etymology of the word credit and disclose its semantic proximity with magic as a social practice. Furthermore, the first section will examine the intrinsic relation between debt and credit, departing from Marcel Hénaff's three types of symbolic debt and exposing how these shape the financial credit in neoliberal capitalism and install the creditor-debtor relation (such as Maurizio Lazzarato describes it) as predominant at all levels of society. The second section shows how relations of credit and debt crystallize in the notion of money: firstly by exposing some major historical and anthropological insights about money; moreover, by considering money from an onto-axiological point of view as the knot in which all social relations of trust culminate; and finally, by relating the three different types of trust in money, proposed by French heterodox economists Michel Aglietta and André Orléan, to the three forms of symbolic debt, thus showing how credit, debt and money are fundamentally anchored in social relations.

KEYWORDS
credit, debt, money, trust, society, capitalism

Introduction: Credit as a Social Institution

When we speak about credit today, expectedly, most often we do that in terms of economy and finance. In this sense, we speak about many types of credit: bank credit, trade credit, public credit, consumer credit, investment credit, and so on. Furthermore, legal loans, credit ratings, interest rates or creditworthiness,

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are just some of the economic and/or financial terms that saturate the contemporary discursive field of the notion of credit. When observed exclusively from this perspective, it could appear as if the term credit didn't exist before the modern banking systems and the capitalist economy. Credit appears thus as a term which reflects only rationally explainable facts, a term whose enactments could all be objectively explained and calculable, making it reminiscent of natural or mathematical phenomena. Yet, what we will demonstrate in the following pages is that, behind the veil of the economic discourse, credit – and furthermore debt and money – aren't phenomena that the economy has self-generated (as if the economy could generate whatsoever independently from the society in the first place). What we will tend to show is that credit, debt and money are above all *social institutions*, that regulate, in a very peculiar way, all relations of trust in a given society. In order to approach the presumed social aspects of credit, we shall seek an entry point in language.

In Émile Benveniste's famous *Dictionary of Indo-European Concepts and Society*, the chapter entitled "Credence and Belief" offers a fascinating etymological study of the term 'credit' – or more precisely, of the lexical group to which this word belongs. Benveniste begins his argumentation by exposing the striking dialect distribution of the notion credit, stretching between the very extremities of the Indo-European domain. They contain

> [...] on the one hand Latin *crēdo* and Irl. *cretim*, and at the far end of the Indo-European territory Skt. *sraddhêi*, a verb and a feminine noun, with the parallel Avestan *zrazdêi-*, a verbal stem and also a noun. In Indo-Iranian, the sense is likewise "believe" with the same construction as in Latin, i.e. governing the dative. (Benveniste 2016: 134)

Thus, on the one side we find the thoroughly secular latin term *crēdo*, which designates 'credence', the action of entrusting "something with the certainty of recovering it" (Benveniste 2016: 133). From the very first textual appearances, the notion of *credo* is "extended to include the notion 'belief'" (Benveniste 2016: 133). On the other side we find the term from Sanskrit, *sraddha-*, whose meaning Benveniste retrieves from the Rig Veda, to resume its signification in a following way: *sraddha-* is an "act of confidence (in a god), implying restitution (in the form of a divine favor accorded to the faithful)" (Benveniste 2016: 133). These two terms, *crēdo* and *sraddha-*, and the exact formal correspondence that they show, enable Benveniste to map an abstract Indo-European root **kred*. Yet, he states that a clear and distinct definition of **kred* remains impossible, proposing instead (in the conclusion of the chapter), a semantic conjecture that could explain this etymologically completely isolated word:

> **kred* may be some kind of "pledge", of "stake", something material but which also involves personal feeling, a notion invested with a *magic power* which all men possess and which may be placed in a superior being. There is no hope of giving a better definition of this term, but we can at least restore the context which gave rise to this relationship that was first established between men and the gods, and later came to be established between men. (Benveniste 2016: 139, my emphasis)

The given semantic conjecture of **kred* seems to open various perspectives from which the contemporary notion of credit could be reconsidered as a social institution of trust. Besides the thought-provoking assumption that **kred* stands for a pledge/stake that combines the material and the affective – which is doubtlessly important – it seems that the strange hypothesis expressing that **kred* is a notion 'invested with magic power' is of primary interest for seeing credit as a social institution, and that we should take it quite literally. So, why does this adjective 'magical' unveil the social aspects of credit? Is this 'magic power' intrinsically present in credit, or does it require 'magicians', agents indispensable for its actualization? Moreover, besides magicians, isn't a superior instance, or being, that would counter-sign their power as magical, necessary in the first place? In his *General Theory of Magic*, Marcel Mauss suggests that magic involves "officers, acts and representations":

> [...] we call a person who accomplishes magical actions a *magician*, even if he is not a professional*; magical representations* are those ideas and beliefs which correspond to magical actions; as for these actions, with regard to which we have defined the other elements of magic, we shall call them *magical rites*. (Mauss 2001: 23)

If this definition of magic is to be transposed onto the notion of credit, or onto the 'magical power' of **kred*, then creditors, as well as debtors, should be considered as magicians of a sort. These 'magicians' realise the **kred* between them by effectuating transfers and exchange of both material and affective pledges (that crystallize all in money as we will see later). Yet, we shall not forget that this **kred* had to be previously placed in a 'superior being'. To the latter correspond what Mauss calls magical representations, which in the context of credit could stand for a myriad of diverse things: central banks and monetary systems, moral norms of a given society, market economy, institutions and state apparatuses, or else the State itself. Moreover, the vocabulary employed in the context of magic rites can also be transposed onto the discourse surrounding credit. Likewise, the "transfer of properties and influences" (Mauss 2001: 145) that we find in magic rites, could be taken as a correlative to the economic term of 'circulation' that matters in credit. The same goes for the "sympathetic connections" (Mauss 2001) that happen in magic rites, which is easily comparable to the notion of exchange which is primordial to economics. Finally, Mauss notes that:

> In the first place, magic and magical rites, as a whole, are traditional facts. Actions which are never repeated cannot be called magical. If the whole community does not *believe* in the efficacy of a group of actions, they cannot be magical. (Mauss, 2001: 23, my emphasis)

Like magic, credit inevitably depends on the belief of the community, and is as such anchored in tradition. In its most fundamental structure, credit is, just like magic according to Mauss, conditioned by repetition. As we have already reported, Benveniste explains that **kred*, the magic power of credit, is

a "relationship that was first established between men and the gods, and later came to be established between men" – which shows how credit is basically always already a result of repetition.

All these counter-intuitive, yet etymologically clearly justified analogies between credit and magic offer us several insights about credit that will serve us as presupposition for our further argumentation. Firstly, just as magic (or else, religion), credit "is an institution – it is an institution in the sense that it is an artefact – pure human invention, something nature cannot produce on its own" (Bojanić 2022: 13). But while "[m]agic is an institution only in the most weak sense; it is a kind of totality of actions and beliefs, poorly defined, poorly organized even as far as those who practise it and believe in it are concerned" (Mauss 2001: 13), credit is an institution both in the weak and the strong sense. This ambiguity lies in the fact that credit is both a moral and an economic, both a material and an affective phenomenon, as we have already learned from Benveniste. Secondly, we shouldn't forget (because this is what capitalist ideology exactly tends to make us do), that credit is first and foremost a social, and not just an economic, institution. In the third place, credit is not just any social institution. It is unlike art, but instead, has many affinities with religion. Thus, we could say it is a social institution based on belief and trust that takes the community both as its condition and its result.

It is important to stress, before we continue our examination, that on a more basic ontological level, credit is not always-already a social institution – fundamentally, it can be considered as a perfect example of what Maurizio Ferraris calls the social object. For Ferraris (2009), social objects imply social relations and are based on social acts, but moreover, they depend on material inscriptions (even if those inscriptions are taken in their very minimal form – as memories in the heads of social actors). In this sense, record contents, or documents, "are the ontological ground of social objects" (Ferraris, Torrengo 2014: 16). Credit as a social object is always a matter of inscription, of a trace that has social significance in building relations of trust and confidence. The same goes for debt, which, just as credit, comes into existence by being 'written down' (just as in the saying, to 'write off a debt' for example; for credit and debt, writing, or the production of a trace, is not just a formal procedure, it is their fundamental ontogenetic condition). In the following pages, as our argument progresses, we will be able to see how credit and debt evolve from social objects to social institutions that attain their final form in the institution of money as the sublime and fully institutionalized social object of trust.

Credit vs Debt

No elaborate theoretical explanation is needed to see that credit and debt are obviously two sides of the same conceptual coin. Credit institutes itself through debt, and *vice versa*. In the following lines, we will approach three different appearances of the symbolic (and thus social) debt, that all seem to crystalize in financial credit, marking the uprootedness of the economic concept of

credit (and debt as its constitutive other) in society. In order to approach the phenomenon of debt – and again, by consequence, the one of credit as well – it seems useful to recall some parts of the rich history of diverse utilizations that these notions have known, and thus shake the solidity of the predominant economic discourse on debt and credit. Since making a thorough list of these examples can't take place in this text, we will choose to consider one existing systemic distinction concerning the history of the notion of debt. We find the mentioned distinction in Marcel Hénaff's book *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money and Philosophy*, where he dedicates an entire chapter to the notion of debt and distinguishes, historically and conceptually, between three possible models of it: the *constitutive debt* (the one that we find in Veda), the *event-debt* (of the Christian tradition) and the *cosmic debt* (a conception that finds its origin in Anaximander's philosophy). Before exposing the main traits of these three models of debt, it is necessary to point out that, if they seem to persist nowadays, none of them had kept its conceptual totality and independence intact. Rather, we find them in the overall form of debt which intertwines certain of their aspects, while neglecting others. This hybrid form of debt is indeed engendered in its formal opposite, in *credit*, such as it appears in late capitalism. Still, let's have an overview of Hénaff's three types of symbolic debt before mapping their global capitalist transformation.

The concept *constitutive debt* finds its roots in Ancient India. It is a form of symbolic debt that remains mostly enigmatic for the reasoning based on a Eurocentric worldview, due to an inherent absence of the notion of guilt in it which, as we shall see in detail later on, is a central element of the Christian conception of debt. Also, it can appear enigmatic because it is not a derived debt, but rather, a constitutive one. Hénaff explains its character, its ontological role, in a following manner:

> This debt does not stem from anything; it is a founding element. This is probably why it implies no guilt; it is not the loss of an earlier state of perfection or an evil that follows an original state of innocence. It does not arise as in the biblical narrative (in the Christian reading) as a consequence of the first man's sin; therefore, it does not belong to the realm of events but to the realm of being. There is no world before debt or resulting from debt. To be born is to be indebted. This is not fault or accident. It is the order of things. Since no one has been offended, no one has to forgive or to be forgiven. (Hénaff 2010: 212–213)

Yet, this constitutive debt is always followed by a feeling of dependence and incompleteness, which explains the necessity of sacrifice. Likewise, in the Vedic culture, the role of the ultimate Creditor is attributed to the god of death, Yama.[2] But this doesn't simply imply that with the upcoming death the debt will be paid back. Rather, it is about dying ritually and achieving thus a process of the elaboration of the world; after spending one's life studying holy scriptures

2 Hénaff makes a reference here to Charles Malamoud (1989), *Cuire le monde: rite et pensée dans l'Inde ancienne*, Paris: Éditions la Découverte.

and following the rule of living that they impose; after having procreated in order to transfer the burden of debt from father to son. To 'pay back' the constitutive debt means 'to make a world for oneself': "to *institute* an order, set a process of becoming, and know the relationships between things" (Hénaff 2010: 213, my emphasis). The credit that englobes such debt is a *general credit*, a *life credit* and a *credit for life*. Or maybe most precisely, a *life as credit*. In those circumstances, there is no need for a representational credit, because out of the constitutive debt, before or after it – there is nothing. All the quantifiable, measurable, monetizable credits, seen as particularities in the context of life, draw their agency from this general, *constitutive credit*.

The second type of debt proposed by Hénaff, originating in Christian tradition and formed by the readings of biblical texts,[3] is the *debt-event*, in which the event is considered "as a fall, a fault due to human pride. This calls for the logic of redemption [...]" (Hénaff 2010: 228). We can remark that this type of debt is preceded by the state of economic and moral purity, where an *absolute credit* reigns that God accorded to humans. A credit that, if taken in a narrow sense, reveals itself as independent of God himself, who plays more a role of judge than that of creditor. This absolute credit doesn't call for redemption properly speaking, but for an obligation to 'live' under the threat of debt. As far as no fault is committed by the first humans, they do not *owe* anything to God. While the rules set by the 'judge' and 'potential Creditor' are respected (a conduct that doesn't imitate the debt repayment but constitutes the recognition of absolute credit as the source of law), humans remain just 'potential debtors', and not debtors properly speaking. Before the original sin, God isn't entirely God yet. Neither are humans entirely humans. So, soon enough, by chance or by the God's will, the fault will be committed in the biblical narrative by Adam and Eve. The original sin will thus reduce the epoch of economic and moral purity of absolute credit (which is without debt), to a metafictional, preliminary stage, similar to Rousseau's state of nature that precedes the social contract (Rousseau 1993). It is only after the original sin that the true rules of the game are being introduced between God and humans as creditors and debtors. God becomes the ultimate Creditor and the whole humanity becomes thus condemned to debt and humans downgraded to the status of 'eternal debtors'. From there follows the logic of redemption which defines the debt-event. The 'means of payment' of that redemption correspond to the fact of enduring the punishment, of suffering, and being able to repent represents the aptitude to pay back the debt to God. Guilty, the debtor sinks under the

3 In *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, David Graeber offers some examples that put into question a purely Christian tradition of the debt-event. Without denying the decisive influence of the Christian heritage on the debt-event, he indicates: "In ancient Crete, according to Plutarch, it was the custom for those taking loans to pretend to snatch the money from the lender's purse. Why, he wondered? Probably "so that, if they default, they could be charged with violence and punished all the more". This is why in so many periods of history insolvent debtors could be jailed, or even – as in early Republican Rome – executed" (Graeber 2011: 282).

weight of their debt, which now represent a 'criminal' felony. By becoming the Creditor, God doesn't abandon the function of Judge, he keeps playing both roles simultaneously.

Let's put aside the theological context for an instant, in order to look at this topic of guilty debt through the lens of language. Echoing Nietzsche's reasoning from the *Genealogy of Morals* (Nietzsche 1989: 62–63), Hénaff mentions the example of the German word *Shuld* designating debt, which expresses directly the link between debt and fault:

> The coherence of the debt-duty-fault-guilt sequence underlined by Nietzsche is clear to his German readers: *Schuld* means both "debt" and "fault", and *schuldig* means both "to be guilty" and "to owe". The verb *sollen* (to be obligated) derives from the common root *skal* (found in the English verb shall). (Hénaff 2010: 205)

Another Germanophone thinker, namely Walter Benjamin, remarks this 'demoniac ambiguity' of the concept of *Shuld* that the German language implies. The latter resides in three 'religious' characteristics of capitalism, enumerated in the short, yet very dense essay entitled "Capitalism as Religion". The first can be encapsulated in the formulation that claims that capitalism constitutes a pure religious cult (without dogma or theology); the second is that the duration of this cult is permanent (*sans (t)rêve et sans merci*); and the third, which is probably the most important for us here, is that the capitalist cult is a cult that engenders guilt. Anyhow, in contrast to Christianity, capitalism as religion doesn't represent a cult of repentance. Benjamin gives a detailed structure and evokes consequences of this particularity in the following manner:

> A vast sense of guilt that is unable to find relief seizes on the cult, not to atone for this guilt but to make it universal, to hammer it into the conscious mind, so as once and for all to include God in the system of guilt and thereby awaken in Him an interest in the process of atonement. This atonement cannot then be expected from the cult itself, or from the reformation of this religion (which would need to be able to have recourse to some stable element in it), or even from the complete renouncement of this religion. The nature of the religious movement which is capitalism entails endurance right to the end, to the point where God, too, finally takes on the entire burden of guilt, to the point where the universe has been taken over by that despair which is actually its secret *hope*. (Benjamin 2004: 289)

In fact, if we compare the two points of view of Nietzsche and Benjamin, it seems that between Christianity and capitalism there is only one step. This step consists in an annihilation of atonement, the final acceptance of debt as a primordial social link and guilt as a universal condition that determines humanity. But this final victory of guilt that occurs in the reality of the capitalist situation, happens to be discursively inadmissible. Therefore, capitalist ideology turns the situation around in such a way that credit and hope take the place of debt and despair. Thus, if the debt/despair couple is understood then as the reverse side of the capitalist situation, what appears on its front as its

main characteristic is the couple credit/hope. Differently put, the secret hope in despair that debt brings is engendered in credit – in its positive opposite.

The third and last model proposed by Marcel Hénaff is *cosmic debt*. Departing from the thought of Anaximander and one of his central figures, the idea of *apeiron*, the limitless, the author explains how the cosmic debt engenders a 'gap' in the equilibrium, a disbalance between elements which permits them to be temporally situated. For Anaximander, each thing stems from the *apeiron*, in the same way that each living being stems from a seed. The cosmic debt which realizes itself departing from the idea of *apeiron* is constituted by several structural rules. The first of those consists in the order of time (*tou khronou taxis*), which represents the change to which the limitless itself is exposed, a linear transformation that happens in four successive phases: genesis, growth, destruction and regeneration. Conceived in this manner, this order of time becomes the highest law:

> This is the order of time (*tou khronou taxis*), with its laws and prescriptions. All living beings must recognize these laws; otherwise, they will disrupt not only the spatial order of the arrangement of things but, more gravely, their temporal order of succession. (Hénaff 2010: 229)

This law turns out to be of crucial importance in the frame of generalized exchange:

> In restricted exchange (A gives to B, B returns a gift to A) time plays a minimal part. In generalized exchange, however (A gives to B who gives to C who gives to D, who returns a gift to A), a large number of partners are involved and therefore a more developed and open network of bonds. (Hénaff 2010: 230)

The law of temporality implies thus an interdiction that can be seen more clearly if we recall the example of the interdiction of incest. In order to expose the constitutive elements of the cosmic debt, Hénaff makes a reference to the reading of the myth of Oedipus proposed by Jean-Pierre Vernant (Vernant, Vidal-Naquet 1990). If we summarize, the main point of this reading would be that Oedipus, by returning to his mother's womb, this time as a husband, radically deregulates the temporary order, which constitutes the principal reason of the punishment that he will need to endure. By doing this act, Oedipus disturbs the cosmic equilibrium, which is sustained by yet another rule that constitutes the structure of the cosmic debt: the rule of alternating response. Oedipus has skipped his turn and hasn't repaid the debt (of filiation), crushing therefore the supreme form of social reproduction which consists in the succession of generations. Hénaff concludes by saying that the cosmic debt doesn't represent "a debt associated with guilt but debt of reply, agonistic debt generated by the failure to fulfill the obligation of reciprocity" (Hénaff 2010: 231). So, the main trait that the contemporary capitalist form of credit takes over from the model of cosmic debt is its temporal order in which it inscribes itself, and that, as a consequence, it prescribes to its subjects.

Henaff's three models of debt that were presented above and connected to the elaboration of the contemporary form of capitalist credit, are seemingly semantically vaster than the 'simple financial debt'. But isn't that only the illusion that appears after the capitalist, economically determined discourse on debt is completely internalized by its subjects? Don't we testify today to an incorporation of the three models of symbolic debt in the financial debt? It seems that we see this clearly in Maurizio Lazzarato's book *The Making of the Indebted Man*, where he claims that debt has become the basis of our social life, and the creditor-debtor relation has taken over every level of the social tissue:

> [...] the creditor-debtor relation does more than "directly influence social relations", since it is itself a power relation, one of the most important and universal of modern-day capitalism. Credit or debt and their creditor-debtor relationship constitute specific relations of power that entail specific forms of production and control of subjectivity – a particular form of *homo economicus*, the 'indebted man.' The creditor-debtor relationship encompasses capital/labor, Welfare-State services/users, and business/consumer relations, just as it cuts through them, instituting users, workers, and consumers as 'debtors'. (Lazzarato 2012: 30)

And indeed, in the process of the 'making of the indebted man' the way Lazzarato describes it, we find some specific aspects of Hénaff's three models of symbolic debt: 1) the morality of guilt, the one of *promise* and *fault* that we have encountered in the Christian debt-event, is in Lazzarato's consideration of the financial debt complementary with, or superimposed onto, the morality of labor (engendered in the effort-reward couple). 2) The god Yama from the constitutive-debt model, is in neoliberal financial debt substituted by the god 'Capital', as the

> 'Indebted man' is subject to a creditor-debtor power relation accompanying him throughout his life, from birth to death. If in times past we were indebted to the community, to the gods, to our ancestors, we are henceforth indebted to the 'god' Capital. (Lazzarato 2012: 32)

3) Finally, the cosmic-debt understood as the gap and disbalance between elements which permits them to be temporally situated, is to be found anew in the power asymmetry instituted by the financial, neoliberal debt in an exchange that "functions according to a logic not of equality but rather of a power imbalance, a power differential" (Lazzarato 2012: 33). Thus, Lazzarato will conclude, together with Deleuze and Guattari (and Nietzsche), that credit or debt are the archetype of social relations. He will add to this (by referring to Marx), that, to understand the creditor-debtor relation we need to understand money, which "is first of all debt-money, created *ex nihilo*, which has no material equivalent other than its power to destroy/create social relations and, in particular, modes of subjectivation" (Lazzarato 2012: 35). Therefore, we will now pass to an examination of money in its relation to credit and debt (without reducing them to strictly financial phenomena and putting the accent on

credit, rather than debt, as it is the case in Lazzarato), to an examination of money as the sublime (social) object of credit, or moreover, as the fundamental institution of trust.

From Credit and Debt to Money (and Back)

To speak about money is essentially to speak about debt and credit, despite what the economy handbooks (published in all epochs and throughout the world) teach us. The essence of the dominant economic theories, formulated throughout the history of political economy, is based on what the anthropologist David Graeber names the *myth of barter*. This myth supposes that money takes an intermediary position in the process of market exchange and is destined to 'simplify' it. But this myth, this fiction that we find propagated through the epochs by many different economists (from Smith to Stiglitz), is defied by historians and anthropologists (and only recently by some economists, with the representative example of the work of André Orléan and Michel Aglietta[4]). They all indicate that the barter, as long as it is considered as a practice independent from all systems of credit and still belonging to market economy, never really existed. From the first historical premises of writing, in civilizations such as Mesopotamia or Ancient Egypt, we encounter documents that testify to the existence of different credit systems. The fact that credit is found at the center of the economic functioning of ancient civilizations constitutes a determining proof that those systems precede metallic money (coins) by thousands of years. Thus, contrary to the fictions dear to economists, the historical succession of practices through which humans realized the market exchange followed an inverse order: first the credit systems, then the metallic and paper money, and finally the barter (as a simple adjacent effect of the first two phenomena).

According to this conception, it becomes impossible to consider money as a simple tool of exchange. We should then rather consider it as an expression and a measure of debt. This stands of course for fiduciary money (credit-money for which the given hypothesis is obvious), but also for the money based on bullion which finds its value-substance in precious metals such as gold and silver. The latter type of money draws its credit or trustworthiness

4 In *La monnaie: entre dettes et souveraineté*, Michel Aglietta notes that: "Money isn't a human invention destined to resolve the problems of barter. It is not a simple intermediary tool of exchange aiming to surpass the problem of double coincidence of needs. Money precedes the market. Money is by the logic of things anterior to market relations, it is a social bond which is more fundamental than the market. The word 'barter' [*troc*] is usually affected by an immense semantic confusion. The first current use of the word had nothing to do with the market exchange. We employed it to speak about mutual help, that is to say reciprocal exchange of goods and services between people who know each other, linked by the familiar, friendly or neighboring relations. It is a sort of informal gift – counter-gift phenomenon that doesn't relate in any sense to market economy" (Aglietta 2016: 91).

from a general consensual value of precious metals, which as such have no instrumental use: the sole instrumental value of bullion is that it constitutes the substance of credit. The supposition that others accept to translate their debt, or to believe in this kind of support, enable bullion to become this peculiar vehicle of value. Metallic money becomes thus non-substantial, a measure that doesn't express the exact value of its standard (the value of a golden coin not being equal to the value of the quantity of gold used to produce it). In the vein of this argument, David Graeber refers to Alfred Mitchell-Iness, a theorist of credit money from the 19th century, for whom money isn't a commodity,[5] but a tool of measure (destined obviously to measure nothing else but debt). And he goes further affirming that money doesn't even constitute a 'thing' (other than the social object as Ferraris defines it). A bill or a coin represent simply a promise of payment, determined by the gold standard. In the same manner, in our contemporary system of credit, we are facing a very similar situation: a paper bill is simply a promise of payment, relative to the exchange rate of a particular currency, defined by the nominal anchor fixed by central banks – a promise that represents the *measure of social trust*. A fact that a simple piece of paper takes the place of metallic coins makes this mode of functioning even more obvious, stressing thus that "the value of a unit of currency is not the measure of the value of an object, but the measure of one's trust in other human beings" (Graeber 2011: 109).

Graeber demonstrates, in a quite convincing historical overview, how in the past five thousand years, credit and bullion money systems have substituted one another and distinguished clearly defined epochs and historical, geographical, political and cultural contexts in which that used to happen. The aim of those long passages is exposed in the following manner:

> The moment we begin to map the history of money across the last five thousand years of Eurasian history, startling patterns begin to emerge [...] what we see is a broad alternation between periods dominated by credit money and periods in which gold and silver come to dominate [...] while credit systems tend to dominate in periods of relative social peace, or across networks of trust (whether created by states or, in most periods, transnational institutions like merchant guilds or communities of faith), in periods characterized by widespread war and plunder, they tend to be replaced by precious metal. What's more, while predatory lending goes on in every period of human history, the resulting debt crises appear to have the most damaging effects at times when money is most easily convertible into cash. (Graeber 2011: 497–500)

Graeber indicates equally that throughout history, in times of war, precious metals were chosen as means of payment – because of the simple fact that they could have been stolen, unlike credit money (plane expression of pure debt) which had value only in the *networks of trust*. Likewise, in times of war, the

5 We find similar observations in Karl Polanyi's book *The Great Transformation*, where he categorizes money as a "fictitious commodity", alongside land and work (Polanyi 2001).

general trust in a certain society is shaken, and so is the trust in credit money. A possible solution in this situation is thus to invest trust in a value that seems the most 'objective', seemingly 'unchangeable', namely, the precious metals. From this point of view, metallic money acquires confidence in a more perfidious manner than credit money, a point that will nevertheless be reversed by recent economic and financial theories.

Rather than continue the analysis of those historical fluctuations that Graeber has already described, we shall map the last important switch in the way we consider money, that marks the beginning of our present epoch – when in 1971 Richard Nixon decides "to unpeg the dollar from precious metals entirely, eliminate the international gold standard, and introduce the system of floating currency regimes that has dominated the world economy ever since. This meant in effect that all national currencies were henceforth, as neoclassical economists like to put it, 'fiat money' backed only by the public trust" (Graeber 2011: 125). How should we understand money that is completely anchored in social trust? From an onto-axiological point of view, this type of money could be seen as a knot in which all values of society are interwoven. We can provocatively assume, in a Lacanian fashion maybe, that *a knot is nothing*, a shape without content. *Knot* as a fastening of relations *is*, it *exists*, but we could say that this knot is also nothing; the object knot is nothing. But the knot is also a product of *knotting* – the action of making knots. Following this word play which is not devoid of sense, we can propose that money is a *quasi-object-quasi-subject* pertaining to the realm between *being* and *nothingness*. The nothing of the knot is thus a lack, an ontological gap which emerges as some kind of a black hole – sucking in all social trust. So, if we say that money is a *quasi-object-quasi-subject*, yet another French thinker comes to mind – namely Sartre – who looked at *value* as a *being-in-itself-for-itself* (Sartre 1976: 131–132), the impossible synthesis for which the unhappy consciousness (*la conscience malhereuse*) inextricably longs – so if we translate that: we humans, as evaluators, are all in some kind of a rat race for money, that point in which all those unreachable values meet each other, no matter if we want it or not. Therefore, without credit, without social trust that the phenomenon of money provides, practically in all political and socio-economic systems through human history, and especially in capitalism, individuals, societies, and cultures would cease to exist.

Thus, money turns out to be a complex phenomenon, yet quite different from how the predominant economic theories describe it. They reduce money to three functions: account unit, exchange intermediary and value reserve. But for the heterodox economists that are opposing the idea of 'pure economy', such as Michel Aglietta and André Orléan (whose works examine economic phenomena and money in particular, often in collaboration with anthropologists, psychoanalysts or historians, in order to abandon what they call the dogmatic cathedral called pure economy), money represents significantly more. The introduction of *La monnaie souveraine*, a collective volume directed by Aglietta and Orléan, begins by suggesting that money "expresses and sustains global values of society" (Aglietta, Orléan 1998: 10, my translation). A bit further,

authors will also note that "modern money is an expression of society as totality; it conserves its status of the regulating agent of social belonging" (ibid .). We could add to this that money, besides being the expression of society as a totality, constitutes the very agent of social bond, the basis of society as a whole.

So, money produces and organizes trust in society, but only if the individuals of this given society trust in that same money, if they accord their credit to it. Likewise, trust responds to trust, engendering thus what we could call the general credit. The reason for which trust in money shows up to be indispensable reveals what Aglietta names the 'ambivalence of money'. Even if money constitutes a public good, it can, by contradiction, be subjected to a private appropriation. Money, the social medium *par excellence* of market societies, objectivized by liquidity ('cash'), represents everyone's object of desire (Aglietta, 2016: 67). In this situation, trust arrives to intervene and solve its inherent problems:

> Trust in money is a collective attitude, and thus an implicit *institution*, that conjures the corrosive forces of ambivalence. To have confidence in money means to recognize the advantages of duration that the efficiency of rules of the system of payments brings to each participant in the economy regulated by the monetary order. It means to recognize money as a public good, and, by consequence, respect the battering of private appropriation of liquidity. To have confidence in money means then to take the monetary order as legitimate. Since the monetary order considered as a whole is a public good, it is by nature political. We deal then with a trust in the collective. Fundamentally, it is an ethical norm that recognizes the legitimacy of the emitting and regulative institution of ultimate liquidity. (Aglietta 2016: 68, my translation, my emphasis)

With these insights in mind, we shall come back to the previously mentioned introduction of the collective volume *La monnaie souveraine*, where Aglietta and Orléan distinguish three types of trust in money and expose their hierarchical order. These three types of trust correspond again to the three types of symbolic debt analyzed earlier, which doesn't come as a surprise, since investing confidence in money represents fundamentally nothing else but an effort to repay the Debt.

The first and hierarchically the lowest type of trust in money is named by the authors the 'methodic trust' (*confiance méthodique*):

> Methodic trust operates on the security of relations between each and every member of community, on the security of payments in the monetary order. It proceeds on a basis of repetition of acts of the same nature, which drive the exchange to a successful end. The routine is thus the source of this type of trust [...]. The simple regularity of payments permits the emergence of landmarks for the future action. (Aglietta, Orléan 1998: 25, my translation)

In a somewhat restrained sense, methodic trust responds to the pseudo-necessity of paying back the cosmic debt. As the cosmic debt represents a gap in the equilibrium, methodic trust in money, which operates by exerting repetitions

which guarantee that the exchange will be successful, restores each and every time anew the equilibrium. Respecting the temporal order, those repetitions make their own 'laws of filiation' and proceed by successive replications. At the heart of the functioning of methodic trust we find an interdiction similar to the interdiction of incest: namely, it is the interdiction of counterfeiting money that is in question, because the latter would disturb the monetary temporal order. The destruction of liquidity is also nowadays still penalized in many countries for the same reason. Methodic trust is likewise projecting values in time, providing them with security necessary for their development.

The second type of trust in money is the 'hierarchical trust', which has the task of transforming the other into a *big Other*, attributing thus a sovereign authority to it:

> In these conditions, the relation with otherness is transformed into a social bond, which is hierarchically constructed and capable of testifying of a sovereign guarantor, to whom everyone is subordinated. In the monetary order, hierarchical trust is expressed in the form of *institution* which enounces the rules of use of money and emits the ultimate means of payment. This *institution* is an authority that guarantees the quality of monetary relations in their totality, that is to say their conformity to the prescribed norms. (Aglietta, Orléan 1998: 24–25, my translation, my emphasis)

This conception of hierarchical trust corresponds to constitutive debt, and thus essentially to the debt of life. By placing hierarchical trust in money and in the institutions of the monetary order, the subject of a given society renounces her own sovereignty, it 'sacrifices it ritually', and subordinates herself to an authority supposed to guarantee the stability of the social bond. This sacrifice shouldn't be understood as something that happens suddenly in any given moment, but rather as a preliminary constitutive fact. Already from our birth (and maybe even already in our mother's womb), we become individual members of society, and therefore subjects indebted *for life* and *by the life* itself. To justify the given credit, we trust an indefectible authority, which by the same token becomes interiorized, interpersonal.

Finally, the highest form of trust, still according to Aglietta and Orléan, is 'ethical trust':

> For our individually inclined societies, the ethical position obtains a superior status in comparison to social or interpersonal statuses recognized in hierarchical trust, because it supposes the superiority of the value of the human person above all other social elements [...]. There is a close link between the preponderance of ethical trust and the autonomy acquired by market economy in the course of the development of capitalism. The human person is projected there in its becoming, in a permanent pursuit of happiness that is ceaselessly postponed. (Aglietta, Orléan 1998: 26–27, my translation).

Ethical trust in money can be recognized as a response to the debt-event; and it is important to stress that when we speak about debt-event, we inscribe

it, in difference to Hénaff and following Benjamin's and Lazzarato's lesson, not in the Christian tradition, but rather in the tradition of (neoliberal) capitalism. As we observe with Benjamin, capitalism is a religion of guilt without a possibility of redemption. Thus, by analogy, the illusory individualist autonomy, just like its ethical trust, represent expressions of guilt – guilt which shows up to be the central element of the capitalist ideology. Furthermore, capital, which is nothing else but an accumulation of debt, itself engenders this guilt. Therefore, if the capitalist debt-event is considered as a launched call to which ethical trust responds, we are facing an obvious redundance, an echo without source, the guilt to which the guilt itself replies. The void created by this redundance thus sucks in, in its hermetic totality, all phenomena arising from social relations, except credit – the only solution that makes possible and acceptable the capitalist pursuit of ceaselessly postponed happiness.

Conclusion

The concepts of 'hierarchical' and 'ethical' trust in money give rise to questions that largely surpass the purely economic framework, requiring from us to turn ourselves to society in order to find possible answers. Why do we obey almost without exception that instance of sovereign authority that we have ourselves promoted as the big Other, and that condemns us to infinitely deferred life and happiness? And moreover, from where does this big Other draw its legitimacy? Why, and of what, are we *afraid*, to the point in which we renounce opposition to this tyranny of credit/debt relations that culminates in money, and why don't we find any other option except blindly believing in them? And *in extremis*, are we capable of seeing, blinded by trust in credit, debt and money, that we are subjected to an abject surplus of tyranny? Most of these questions will still be looking for an answer, but one thing is certain – until the moment we stop seeing credit, debt and money as purely economic phenomena, we will rest stuck with obedience that we will, as Spinoza already taught us, happily accept as our only salvation.

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Andrea Perunović

Kredit, dug i novac kao društvene institucije poverenja

Apstrakt

Dok se danas pojmovi kredit, dug i novac skoro isključivo vezuju za ekonomski diskurs, njihova semantička polja svedoče o njihovoj značajno većoj širini i kompleksnosti. Ovaj članak stremi da ponovo uspostavi potisnuta značenja ova tri pojma. Njegov cilj leži u dekonstrukciji dominantnih ekonomskih narativa o kreditu, dugu, novcu i poverenju, koja bi pokazala da ovi koncepti predstavljaju pre svega društvene, a ne i isključivo ekonomske institucije. Stoga, u uvodu će fokus biti na etimologiji reči kredit i na otkrivanju njegove semantičke bliskosti sa magijom kao društvenom praksom. Nadalje, prvi deo će biti posvećen ispitivanju intristične veze između kredita i duga, polazeći od tri modela simboličkog duga koje predlaže Marsel Enaf (Marcel Hénaff) i pokazujući kako potonji oblikuju finansijski kredit u neoliberalnom kapitalizmu, ali i uspostavljaju odnos između kreditora i dužnika (onako kako ga Mauricio Lazarato (Maurizio Lazzarato) opisuje), kao dominantan na svim društvenim nivoima. Druga sekcija članka pokazuje kako se odnosi između kredita i duga kristalizuju u pojmu novca: isprva izlažući najznačajnije istorijske i antropološke uvide o novcu; potom, razmatrajući novac sa onto-aksiološke tačke gledišta kao čvorište u kom kulminiraju svi društveni odnosi poverenja; i konačno, povezujući tri modela simboličkog duga sa tri različita tipa poverenja u novac koje predlažu francuski heterodoksni ekonomisti Mišel Aljeta (Michel Aglietta) i Andre Orlean (André Orléan), a tako pokazujući na koji način su kredit, dug i novac fundamentalno utemeljeni u društvenim odnosima.

Ključne reči: kredit, dug, novac, poverenje, društvo, kapitalizam.

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Clara Navarro Ruiz

WHICH KING, WHOSE SOVEREIGNTY? NOTES ON THE NATION-STATE IN TIMES OF GLOBALIZATION[1]

ABSTRACT
One of the most prominent issues in contemporary social philosophy is the democratic institutionalization of social change. In the following paper, we analyze how such an objective must not overlook the changes wrought by globalization. To this end, we first present some of the critical responses to globalization presented by contemporary thinkers (Federici, Tomba, Srnicek). Next, we tackle the notions of the "diffuse regime of transnational power", "*lex mercatoria*" and "governance", and point out how these concepts are indispensable for a complete understanding of the present of capitalism in the areas of trade and economy.

KEYWORDS
globalization, transnational capitalism, lex mercatoria, governance

1. Introduction

It has become common within social theory to remark upon the profound changes stemming from the 2007-8 financial crash. While this analysis is surely pertinent, it is also true that we have not yet recovered from the effects of the crash. We still don't fully realize what we lost and as a society, still tend to hope that more prosperous times are yet to come. This optimism can also be seen in the hopefulness regarding new technological developments that will supposedly liberate us from the burden of work and solve our ecological crises. It is

1 This paper has benefitted from the research granted by the Research Projects "Precariedad laboral, cuerpo y vida dañada. Una investigación de filosofía social" (*Labour Precarity, Body and Damaged Life*)-PRECARITYLAB, (PID2019-105803GB-I0), as well as AEOC9/21 *The Cultural Politics of Trust. Recognition, Institutions, Democracy*, and the Project for Teaching Innovation UCM 2023 n.° 52 "Precariedad, exclusión social y diversidad funcional (discapacidad): lógicas y efectos subjetivos del sufrimiento social contemporáneo (V)". I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their remarks, which helped me outline the final version of this paper.

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this same ecology, however, that lays bare the futility of our expectations and the myopia of our faith in technology. The more nature shows us that capitalism is simply unfeasible, the more anxious we feel about the future. We common citizens are willing to change our habits, yet deeply suspicious that our governments will be able to implement the necessary measures soon enough to avoid the most dramatic consequences of climate change. At the same time, many of us fear – some secretly, some openly – what these changes would entail, and desire the lifestyle we left behind. Behind, precisely, back in 2007.

One of the elements which has helped civilization resolve such monumental problems in the past is the venerable old Nation-State, a concept which has changed immensely in comparison with its traditional understanding. In Europe, the structure of the nation state is constituted according to EU legislation. Even outside of the EU, however, nearly every sovereign state must abide by the norms, treaties and rules of different international organisms (IMF, WTO, OCDE...) that limit and shape its scope of action. Not surprisingly, this context has favored the rise of populisms that promise simple solutions to an increasingly complex political situation.

In the following pages, we will examine some of the causes of the profound changes undergone by the Nation-State. As we will see, the pervasive feeling of national disempowerment is due to, among other factors, the changes resulting from the transition to a globalized economy.

Certainly, the arguments displayed in these pages are not novel. Our reflections follow those presented by authors like Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010) on issues such as a) the new characteristics of the neoliberal state, b) changes to the status of the subject resulting from this new political background (Vázquez García 2021), c) the notion of government, including the transition from the welfare to the workfare State (Dean, 2009; Peck 2003) and d) the political principles of citizenship (Brown 2017). We also consider perspectives that e) analyze the changes in the State from a more traditional Marxist perspective (Kurz 2010) as well as those who have tried to f) revise its analysis taking into account its transformation (Jessop 2007). In order to connect our reflections with contemporary critical social philosophy, the first section of this paper explains some of the critical approaches developed by contemporary thinkers regarding the declining capitalist regime of power. Next, we will focus on the changes caused by the internationalization of the state, and clarify the notions of "diffuse regime of transnational power" and "*lex mercatoria*". Using these concepts, we will reflect on the changes in power relations and the implications of these transformations for national, sovereign rule. Lastly, we will briefly explain the notion of "governance", in hopes of shedding some light on the metamorphosis of the dynamics of power and their legitimacy.

2. Theory in Turbulent Times

Our main thesis in these lines is that the perceptible decline of the state is nothing but the empirical manifestation of the decadence of the capitalist system.

Following Streeck (2014), we understand that our present is fruitfully analyzed through the lens of *collapse*, that is, we assume that capitalism (as a general form of civilization) is falling apart. Whether we are around to witness its ultimate demise or not – historical changes are processes of *longue dureè* – we accept this axiom theoretically. Analyzed through this lens, capitalism is seen as a social dynamic requiring the stable pillars of work, territory, democracy and productivity to grow safely – pillars whose strength has recently been called into question. The words of Streeck express the core of this thought nicely:

> The image I have of the end of capitalism – an end that I believe is already under way – is one of a social system in chronic disrepair, for reasons of its own and regardless of the absence of a viable alternative. While we cannot know when and how exactly capitalism will disappear and what will succeed it, what matters is that no force is on hand that could be expected to reverse the three downward trends in economic growth, social equality and financial stability and end their mutual reinforcement. (Streeck 2014: 47)

Although one can argue that the definitive end of capitalism described by the German sociologist is still far away, his indication that at present there is no known system capable of offering robust economic stability is less up for debate[2]. Precisely for this reason, the concern of a declining capitalist system is one shared by many social philosophers, even if they have not yet developed this concern into an explicit perspective. The belief that capitalism is no longer a viable system can also be seen in the increasing interest in alternative forms of property, such as the concept of the *commons* – a central issue in the thought of Silvia Federici (2019). In Federici's view, the recognition of the commons as a viable form of property distribution can be understood as "the recognition that life in a Hobbesian world, where one competes against all and prosperity is gained at the expense of others, is not worth living and is a sure recipe for defeat" (2019: 1). Furthermore, states Federici, the focus on the commons is a sign that more and more people are now aware that the transformation of our "everyday practices into a terrain of collective struggle is the only way to survive (economically and psychologically) in a society that systematically devaluates the life of an increasing number of people" (2019: 184). In this manner, the concept of the commons is useful to reflect upon the tension and unease that inhabits our reproductive processes, communal relationships, and, in general, our mere being. This range of problems has also been analyzed through the lens of Feminism and Feminist Economics (Bhattacharya 2017; Pérez Orozco 2014) and, of course, in writings on "precarity" and "interdependence" (Butler 2009; Lorey 2014).

2 A signal of change can be seen in the recent decision of the G-20 to set a 15% tax on transnational corporations' profits, a small step which may lead to improved social justice. V. OCDE (08/10/2021). International community strikes a ground-breaking tax deal for the digital age. https://www.oecd.org/tax/international-community-strikes-a-ground-breaking-tax-deal-for-the-digital-age.htm

Furthermore, the exploration of alternatives to capitalism has also flourished as a result of the shift towards a critical historical consideration of the past. Reflections on the political importance of history have long been the terrain of post-colonial and decolonial thinkers. One of the most prominent critiques expounded by these authors is the examination of the notion of "progress", specifically in its linear understanding. As is well known, the traditional conception of progress situates colonized populations at the beginning of the "timeline" of progress, thus assuming they are "undeveloped" or "primitive" in comparison with Western populations (Grosfoguel 2008; Chakrabarty 2000). Unpacking the assumptions that lie behind those affirmations, these thinkers show how "progress" and "the forward movement of history" are concepts which, in a very Hegelian manner, are inextricably linked with the expansion of colonial capitalism and the process of expropriation of land and lives that have accompanied it since the 14th century (Dussel 1994). Further critical analysis of the meaning of these often unquestioned concepts is essential for reforming the philosophical tradition and allowing for a reinterpretation of the modern canon.

Even while assuming the close relationship between capitalism and colonialism, it is possible to discover historical examples of alternatives to capitalism even within the heart of the Empire –Europe. In his *Insurgent Universality* (2019), Massimiliano Tomba explores this past to bring to light examples of alternatives to the theoretical *koiné* of capitalist property (a property which is private, exclusive, and individual). In his book, Tomba explores examples such as the revolutions of 1793 in France, the Communards of Paris, the Zapatistas, or the famous episode of the Russian Commune[3]. Returning to historical alternatives to capitalism is more than a mere memory exercise (Tomba 2019: 226 ff.) Tomba claims that it also functions to denaturalize capitalism, enabling us to consider the individual and territory simultaneously. This conceptual move can help forge a more respectful relationship between humans and our environment by challenging the traditional Western conception of nature as a mere repository of raw material.

Finally, we must also mention the ways that social emancipatory theory has looked to the future for references, especially regarding technological development. The most famous theorists in this field are Srnicek and Williams, whose perspective on accelerationism (Srnicek, Williams 2015) furnishes an optimistic approach to the future in which a centralized, democratic-led control of technology may dissolve the capitalist relations of domination and exploitation and help disrupt the endless repetition of the valorization of value. Their analysis of platform capitalism (Srnicek 2017) further cements the profundity of their contributions, although some critics have posited that they seem to lack consideration for the environmental implications of technological development highlighted by numerous other authors (Fornillos 2018).

3 The Russian Commune led Vera Zassulich to write a letter to Marx that would be suspiciously overlooked by the Russian official theorists.

All these reflections constitute important points of departure to help imagine and develop a more sustainable, equitable, fair and desirable system. Of course, social philosophy tends to operate at a highly abstract level of thinking, hindering the possible institutionalization of these approaches –while its proposals are appealing on paper, we lack the concrete knowledge of how to make them real. We believe that this situation is due, in part, to the insufficient reflection on the concrete aspects of our political and social reality. We claim that a deeper comprehension of the concrete mechanisms of our institutional reality could help us conceive better, more feasible, alternatives, even if we must accept that this may entail less imaginative reflections. Furthermore, the critical reflection exercised by social philosophy may help other disciplines uncover those aspects of their reasonings which had previously escaped this analysis.

This kind of concrete, down-to-earth examination is precisely our task in the following section. In what follows, we argue that a return to the traditional conception of the Nation-State is not a viable alternative to capitalism. The COVID-19 pandemic provides a relevant example, in which many countries closed their borders in an effort to protect themselves[4] by asserting the national, sovereign space – a tactic that ultimately proved futile, as it did not stop the virus' global expansion. If anything, the pandemic showed us that in a globalized economy, commodities, viruses and people move around the world (some more fluidly than others), making it more and more difficult to determine their origin. It is evident that the state, while still maintaining its hold on important aspects of power, has undergone a process of disempowerment, directly aligned to the rise of an economy that distributes its production and distribution internationally. We dissect this process in the following pages.

3. Globalized Sovereignty: The Diffuse Regime of Power of the Transnational Sovereign.

To tackle the transformation of the state, we must first address the recent transformation of the economy, as both are closely related. The most striking transformation of the economy in the past and present century has been the globalization of production. The rise of globalization, in turn, is correlated with the introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's), which have significantly reduced costs of production and distribution. These new communications technologies have both fragmented the fabrication process and spread it around the globe. In doing so, they have created Global Value Chains (GVC's), which can be defined as the bonds between diverse economic actors that constitute a process of production "where the different stages of the production process are located across different countries" (OCDE 2021).

4 A quite complete listing of travel restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found here: Aljazeera (03/06/2020). Coronavirus: Travel restrictions, border shutdowns by country. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/6/3/coronavirus-travel-restrictions-border-shutdowns-by-country

Furthermore, GVC's involve two processes that directly impact the place of production: *offshoring* – that is, the total relocation of factories– and *outsourcing* – externalizing secondary and auxiliary activities of the main company, such as the fabrication of components. This gives rise to our current situation, in which the manufacture of a single product is often carried out by many different companies in diverse countries: for instance, the famous company *Apple* claims to have more than 200 suppliers in more than 30 different countries[5]. It is important to note that this international distribution of the supply chain is effected in the service of "optimization" or, put more simply, the reduction of costs. The extremely competitive nature of contemporary capitalism and the threat of overproduction means that companies must develop different tactics to avoid losing out in the process of valorization (Kurz 2005: 81 ff.).

This new organization of the economy has global effects on both labor and geography. Today, we can speak of a global workforce that competes internationally in all sectors of the economy –both productive and reproductive– (Ferguson, MacNally 2015). Globalization has also affected the stability of the Fordist paradigm, which anchored labor to a specific geographic location and thus made the Nation-State the locus of the economy (Barcellona 2021: 265 ff.). It is here that the notions of "transnational sovereign" and "diffuse regime of power", deeply bound up with the structure of the state, start to become relevant.

The notions of a "transnational sovereign" and "diffuse regime of power" were first explicitly developed by Juan Ramón Capella in his *Fruta Prohibida* (Capella 1997), although similar applications can be found in the concept of "Washington's Consensus" (Bidaurratzaga 2012). These ideas express shifting power relations as a consequence of the new mode of production, while also examining the set of policies required for its correct functioning. In a world where production takes place across several countries, there is little space for traditionally national aspects of production such as customs duties or monopolies over certain products. In their place, both public and private actors have begun lobbying for the interests of transnational corporations, producing regulations and norms that would otherwise be the result of the deliberation of national parliaments – and in turn, of the people they are elected to represent. The main objective of government thus becomes setting logistical and regulatory frame necessary for the functioning of transnational companies (Capella 1997: 309).

This objective requires fostering the smooth movement of commodities and capital between countries, as well as the harmonization of labor, environmental and sanitary regulations (Capella 1997: 310 ff.; Zelikovich 2016), which are increasingly subject to bilateral economic partnerships through Free Trade Agreements (FTA's) (Manero Salvador 2018). This alliance, more concretely, takes place between the following actors: i) transnational corporations and financial conglomerates, ii) international multilateral organizations founded after the Second World War, such as the WB, IMF, WTO and the OECD; iii)

5 https://www.apple.com/supplier-responsibility/

interstate organisms such as the G7 and G20, and iv) the military power of the USA, which maintains a great deal of influence through NATO. The international character of the partnership constitutes thus an "transnational sovereign" able to influence the policies of the Nation-States in fiscal, economic, and ecological matters (Capella 1997: 311). The difficulties in locating and identifying the concrete measures and actors of this new economic system (often concealed by the discourse of "efficacy", "optimization" and "resilience"), justifies the globalized economy's description as a diffuse regime of power.

The consequences of this new configuration are especially important in the legal sector, where *deregulation* and the propagation of *lex mercatoria* constitute the two most dominant features of the contemporary affairs in international economic justice. Let's explain these in more depth.

The jurisdictional frame of the 19th and 20th centuries (Capella 1997: 318–320) was based on the imperative character of the Nation-State, and firmly anchored to geography – the system of sources of law, as well as judges (and their competencies) were determined by the State. The State, as the legitimate owner of the monopoly of violence, was the only actor able to enforce coercive action against those who had violated the rule of law. This all changes as a result of globalization. In a globalized economy, sources of law, jurisdiction, and enforcement are divided between the plurality of actors that comprise the transnational sovereign. Nation-states have transferred legislative, executive and judicial power to transnational organisms, signaling an important symbolic transformation in their sovereignty, as they no longer retain decisive power over certain matters, particularly those related to trade and commerce (Estévez Araújo 2006: 47). In a system of this kind (Capella 2005: 21), representative democracy takes place within narrower limits that, to a certain extent, inhibit its correct functioning –the *demos* cannot rule against the diffuse transnational sovereign. For this reason:

> that *demos* of globalization is not called to exercise its will about issues that have been decided by that superordinate will [referred to the diffuse sovereign], but only, at the most, to formalize their acquiescence to that authority, that is superior to it. Not everything can be decided democratically, not if that goes against the political will of the diffuse sovereign. That is why the *demos* must spontaneously abstain itself from interfering. (Capella 2005: 21).

Thus, even though the Nation-State still retains some of its coercive capacity, it must share it with international organisms such as the EU, multilateral institutions like the WB and IMF, and – most importantly – transnational companies, whose interests are reflected in the conventional law of *lex mercatoria*. Let's examine this last concept more thoroughly.

We can simply define *lex mercatoria* (Santos 1998: 110 ff.) as a form of transnational commercial law. This form of law, traditionally more susceptible than others to outside influence, frequently uses harmonisation (the creation of common legal standards) and convention to resolve conflicts. Its origins, which have been traced to the Middle Ages, first take their modern form in the 1930's

(Estévez Araujo 2021). Nevertheless, its expansion and present configuration is closely related to the rise of transnational corporations, which bent regulations in their own interest by infiltrating the system of courts of arbitration. The historical context of imperialism and colonialism proved an especially propitious environment for the burgeoning influence of *lex mercatoria.* Dezalay and Garth (1996: 65 ff.) have shown that the rise of *lex mercatoria* as a functional, parallel system of justice has much to do with the conflicts that emerged in in oil-producing countries during the 1970's. Many of these countries' political systems were still suffering the consequences of their former colonization and remained far from complete democracy. Given these circumstances, foreign investors sought to guarantee their expenditures by appealing to courts, as a way of ensuring that these unstable countries could be trusted enough to warrant the assumption of the risk. The need to arbitrate solutions between companies and states gradually came to constitute a parallel system of justice which, with the increasing power of corporations, ultimately tilted the whole judicial system in their favor.

Today, we can say that this new *lex mercatoria* "formalizes the power of transnational corporations availing themselves of the international customs and usages; of the norms of the Nation-State and the complex of trade contracts; of multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements, treaties and rules, of the decisions of courts of arbitration, and of the dispute settlement system of the WTO" (Hernández Zubizarreta 2012: 135). The deep interrelation of the Nation-State with the transnational sovereign has turned the former into to a "globalizing agent" (Bonet Pérez 2021) which is forced to contribute to the transition to a global market. The consequence has been a factual privatization of international commerce law (Estévez Araújo 2021). This is reflected both in the free determination of the law applicable to each contract – outside of any national regulations – as well as the extremely broad understanding of the notion of "expropriation", meaning that any measure implemented by a Nation-State perceived as harmful to the interests of a transnational company can be denounced in the court of arbitration as a form of expropriation. This becomes even more alarming when taking into account the fact that these countries cannot appeal to those same courts of arbitration. The result, in practice, is that corporations can choose between two parallel systems of justice (national and arbitral), whereas nation-states are limited to their own structures. The asymmetry of power is evident, and – foreseeably – the mechanisms of arbitration have become highly attractive to foreign investors (Melero Alonso 2021).

On the other hand, deregulation, more broadly, refers to the general process of the privatization of the justice system. The last decades of the past century have seen a remarkable proliferation of different instruments of *soft law* to regulate diverse sectors. In contraposition to the national mechanisms of *hard law,* the notion of *soft law* refers to all those "guidelines, political declaratives or codes of conduct" (Bonet Pérez 2021) that, while setting a particular standard of behavior in one sector, are not legally binding. International commerce law is rife with this kind of legislation, which normally emerges as a consequence of

practice and the specific decisions of the organisms at stake (Bonet Pérez 2021). A prominent example of soft law is the discourse of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which has sparked increasing interest in the last decades. This, "generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives", is – as stated by their own delegates – nothing but a "management concept" (UNIDO 2021). More specifically (Hernández, González, Ramiro 2019: 46 ff.), CSR was born in the 90's as an answer to the growing criticism of transnational corporations because of their harmful practices regarding human rights. It was a marketing operation that, at the same time, sought to avoid regulatory punishment through hard law mechanisms, that is, legally binding norms. Thanks to CSR, transnational corporations established a non-exigible, voluntary, self-regulated relationship with society. If we reflect on the nature of such a relationship, we can easily conclude that "self-regulation" and "non-exigibility" may be acceptable characteristics of a friendship, yet become much more questionable in the context of a company/society relationship. This becomes especially evident considering that the basis of this relationship is the unilateral aim of increasing company profits, which means the corporation (in the legitimate pursuit of its own interest) will likely value its profits above all ethical, environmental, and social consideration.

The expansion of this new legal framework is dangerous not only because of its clear bias in favor of the corporate interests; moreover, this fragmentation of the justice system conceals the diverse interrelations between different sectors (i.e. environmental and social law) and thus deprives the different actors relevant to the regulation in question from other perspectives that could be useful and beneficial (Bonet Pérez 2021).

Precisely as a response to the intricacy of different regulations and, more generally, to the increasing complexity of society, recent years have seen the introduction of mechanisms of *governance*. This elusive notion, increasingly present in the field of politics and economics, has thus become crucial to understanding the actual mechanisms of government and policy. In the following section, we will attempt a fuller understanding of this notion of *governance*, avoiding *a priori* judgements, and bearing in mind the different meanings of the concept.

4. Offers You Cannot Refuse: Governance and Legitimacy

As mentioned, the notion of *governance* has become increasingly relevant to diverse disciplines in recent years, often appearing in tandem with discussions of contemporary issues of multilevel responsibility in areas such as health services or the welfare state (Keohane, Victor 2010; Todt, González 2006). The expansion of the usage of the term is reflected in the fact that Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden (2004: 144–151) identify nine different meanings of *"governance",* depending on whether it is used in the context of international relations, the public sector, or the private sector.

If we understand this term as an alternative to the concept of "government" (Nickel 2014: 185), we must understand *governance* as a form of rule which includes actors (or, "stakeholders"), from distinct sectors (economic, private, third sector) who have a legitimate interest in an industry subject to regulation through public policy. Its origins can be tracked back to the mechanisms of *soft law* mentioned earlier.

In this manner, *governance* is a hybrid, multi-jurisdictional, multilevel, pluricentric, often transnational form of rule that functions primarily through networks as opposed to hierarchies or exclusive leadership (Van Kersbergen, Van Waarden 2004: 151 ff.; Bevir 2012; Todt, González 2006: 214). Combining features from free market economics and well-established administrative instruments, this form of rule emphasizes processes and functions over structures. This focus on processes and functions, in turn, lends governance its characteristic openness, thus subjecting the relations between stakeholders to risks and contingency. According to some theorists (Keohane, Victor 2010), this openness makes governance especially appropriate for tackling international, multilateral issues such as global warming – whose vast complexity and myriad competing interests make it very difficult to agree upon a single solution, while, moreover, no country holds sufficient hegemony to impose their will on others.

The development of this new regime of *governance* must be understood within the frame of a present in which individuals and groups outside of government are becoming more active in the process of shaping our society (Bevir 2012). This is related to the expansion of actors in the third sector, but also to the rise of the economic power of multinational corporations and the explosion of advocacy groups that accompany this process. As can be imagined, this new structure implies a reduction of the political power of the State, as well as a juridification of social relations (Estévez Araújo 2018a: 173; Van Kersbergen, Van Waarden 2004: 153). The *locus* of negotiations shifts from parliaments to state agencies, prioritizing instruments such as contracts and covenants over public law. To a certain extent, we can qualify the emergence of *governance* as a consequence of a world in which the power of the Nation-State is greatly reduced, both inside and outside of its territories. On the one hand, the Nation-State is threatened from within by the increasing influence of organizations of civil society and the private sector. At the same time, the Nation-State's power is diminished outside its borders as well, due to its inclusion in diverse transnational settings, the pressures of economic power, and the emergence of new global problems, such as terrorism or public health crises. (Bevir 2012). Given this state of affairs, the State's role is reduced to the coordination of diverse actors, rather than directing operations on its own (Maintz 2006: 115). While, as previously stated, *governance* is already quite common among leading nations, Nation-States must still fulfill some institutional conditions in order to carry out its main functions (Maintz 2001: 3). Among these institutional conditions, we find i) functional dispersion of power – that is, there must be a balanced and differentiated relation between powers –, ii) the strong – but not authoritarian – presence of authorities within a given state, iii) the presence

of a well-organized civil society, as well as iv) sufficiently-financed public institutions devoted to the interest of public service.

As one of the leaders in neoliberal policymaking (Fernández Ortiz de Zárate 2018), it is within the structures of the European Union where the notion of "governance" has been tested with most enthusiasm, and where instruments of soft law such as the Open Method of Coordination are now common tools in the quotidian legislative process[6]. The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) was created by the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) to coordinate the different social politics of the members of the Union. Its appearance was an answer to the inherent problems with the constitution of the EU, born as a common market with insufficient political integration – something that continues to generate the majority of conflicts between members. In this context and according to the terms of the EU, the OMC was constituted as a common framework for cooperation monitored by the European Commission that seeks to identify, for a given matter: a) common objectives, b) the establishment of appropriate instruments for measuring compliance, and c) the comparison of the different EU countries' performance on these measures (Nickel 2014: 187–188; EUR-Lex 2021). Although promising on paper, the results of the OMC have been questioned by some authors. For instance, a recent study denounced the OMC's lack of effectiveness in one of its main objectives – reducing the level of poverty in the EU (Estévez Araujo, Toledano 2017). This failure could be seen as the result of the insufficient coercive power of the OMC, as well as the general paucity of a plural and diverse range of stakeholders able to effectively participate in the OMC.

Another important notion in this field is the concept of "metagovernance", which "draws attention to the many different ways in which government agencies seek to influence interactive governance processes without reverting too much to classical forms of hierarchical command and control" (Sørensen, Turping 2018: 4). This form of governing, with roots in the New Institutionalism

6 Of course, a more intense activity in terms of legislation and parliamentary regulation does not equal a decrease in transnational corporative power. Although this issue excedes the scope of these lines, the notion of "Transnational Capitalist Class" (TCC), as presented in Robinson (2004), is useful to understand that the subject of transnational capitalism is neither exclusively political, nor economical, but inherently diverse. As the author states: "The new global ruling bloc consists of various economic and political forces led by the TCC whose politics and policies are conditioned by the new global structure of accumulation and production. It is the logic of global accumulation, rather than national accumulation that guides the political and economic behavior of this ruling bloc. At the center of the globalist bloc is the TCC, comprised of the owners and managers of the transnational corporations and other capitalists around the world who manage transnational capital. The bloc also includes the elites and bureaucratic staff of the supranational agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. The historic bloc also brings together major forces in the dominant political parties, media conglomerates, and technocratic elites and state managers in both North and South, along with select organic intellectuals and charismatic figures who provide ideological legitimacy and technical solutions" (Robinson 2004: 75–76).

of the 80's (Estévez Araújo 2018: 184) claims to make public policy-making more effective and democratic by influencing and coordinating the actions of different self-governing actors, instead of controlling them directly through a top-down hierarchy (Sørensen 2006: 102) According to Renate Mayntz (2001: 5 ff.), to implement this tool successfully, all actors, public and private, must retain a certain amount of power. Furthermore, the problem at stake must be of such a nature that neither public nor private actors are able to solve it on their own, and are thus forced to find a collective solution. In this sense, it is not surprising that these concepts can be connected to so-called "democratic experimentalism" (Estévez Araújo, Toledano 2018: 52), a method influenced by the philosophy of pragmatism.

Up to this point, we have stated the concrete features of this new form of governing in a merely descriptive way, without addressing the legitimacy these mechanisms of governance. However, as can easily be imagined, there are many criticisms regarding these new forms of governance.

Structurally speaking (Nickel 2014: 186–187), the diversification and fragmentation of regulatory regimes, combined with newer forms of cooperation – still lacking legally established public authorities, whose functions and powers are regulated by the law – is highly likely to favor decisions which may be less democratic than would be desirable. The growth of "experts" as "neutral", "apolitical" policymakers is another reflection of this situation (which also leads to the more fundamental questions: who can be considered an "expert"? Who decides what is "politically neutral" and what isn't?). In this context, governance claims to draw its legitimacy from the inherent rationality of the process of discussion (Estévez Araújo, Toledano 2017: 349). Both are criteria which we can define as *internal* to the very act of negotiation, reflective of governance's focus on process over structure.

Nevertheless, there are some conditions of governance which unavoidably demand the intervention of an *external* power in order to be guaranteed. One of these is the power balance of the actors at stake: without measures of equanimity, those participants with less financial and communicative resources are highly likely to be left unheard. Another important drawback lies in the predisposition of the participants. Social sciences have *de facto* assumed that, in the absence of institutions and/or regulations, actors tend to act by the rules of rational choice, a dynamic materialized in the figure of *homo economicus*. This model, as is widely known, presents humans as inherent seekers of their own benefit above all else, a character trait that makes altruist problem solving an unlikely outcome. In this situation, some authors (Maintz 2001, 2006) have spoken of "antagonistic cooperation" to define negotiations between competing interests, stressing that these relationships are more likely to be obstructed and produce less ambitious, weaker solutions, which ultimately do not resolve the conflict at hand. Both outcomes are challenges to modern governance that have already generated some proposed solutions, such as the establishment of *a priori* conditions to allow the implementation of governance processes to a given problem.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, we must also consider that many approaches to governance are influenced by Neoinstitutionalism, a theory that emphasizes the ethical abilities of the human species (Estévez Araújo 2018: 184 ff.) and their capacity to bend themselves to norms that regulate the common good. When considering this optimistic anthropology (which, we must emphasize, stands in stark contrast to the anthropological model of rational choice), we must bear in mind that i) the processes of governance are limited to the resolution of singular, particular problems, without the overarching goal of the common good; and that ii) despite governance negotiation strategies such as *peer reviews,* there is not yet a formalized protocol to foster a cooperative disposition among negotiators. The consequences of self-regulation in the recent past (for example, the role of banks and rating agencies in the 2007-8 crisis) are indicative of the limits of this approach and indicate that it should be avoided when possible.

As we have briefly discussed, the notion of *governance* offers a new perspective for social sciences that could foster more participative and horizontal modes of government. However, in absence of critical reflection, both its features of horizontality and participation – that seem so promising on paper – may end up working in favor of the powerful. This would factually legitimate the imposition of a renewed form of *iusnaturalism*, or the rule of the strongest. In this sense, the contribution of social philosophy is crucial to help unfold the ethical and political implications of this approach.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, we have analyzed some of the theories, notions and approaches surrounding the emergence of a globalized economy. Facing a world in a seemingly permanent state of crisis, we first showed some of the possible answers posited by social philosophy and its search for alternatives to the *status quo* in the past, present, and future of our society. Next, we focused on the decreasing power of the Nation-State, reflected by its dissolution into the "diffuse sovereign", the *lex mercatoria*, and the new processes of *governance*. Here we demonstrated that every approach to the political constitution and the possibility of its transformation must consider transnational relations and those modes of governing that connect all countries. We also discussed how the new regime of international law is highly likely to conceal inequality and power imbalances between different actors. Moreover, in the absence of instruments ensuring that negotiations work towards the common good, the implementation of horizontal processes of policymaking may well end up serving the interests of the powerful. Overall, we hope to have made it clear that critical reflection is essential to highlight the possible democratic deficiencies of these new phenomena in politics, law, and social sciences. This makes the interdisciplinary thinking of social philosophy essential to any analysis of the present, ultimately – and most importantly – helping foster a more democratic society.

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Klara Navaro Ruiz

Koji kralj, čija suverenost? Beleške o nacionalnoj državi u doba globalizacije

Sažetak

Jedno od najistaknutijih pitanja savremene socijalne filozofije odnosi se na demokratsku institucionalizaciju društvene promene. U tekstu se pokazuje zbog čega ovakav cilj ne sme da previdi promene koje je sa sobom donela globalizacija. U tu svrhu, prvo predstavljamo neke kritičke odgovore savremenih mislilaca na globalizaciju (Federiči, Tomba, Srniček). Potom analiziramo pojmove „difuznog režima transnacionalne moći", „lex mercatoria" i „uprava", i ukazujemo na to u kolikoj su meri ovi pojmovi neizostavni za puno razumevanje kapitalističke sadašnjosti u oblasti trgovine i ekonomije.

Ključne reči: globalizacija, transnacionalni kapitalizam, lex mercatoria, uprava

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Nuria Sánchez Madrid

KANT'S TRUST IN THE POLITICAL VALUE OF LABOUR AND GLOBAL MOBILITY. A NON-IDEAL ACCOUNT OF COSMOPOLITAN NORMATIVITY[1]

ABSTRACT
This account first endorses the normative strength of Kant's cosmopolitan right, even if it is not lacking in non-ideal traits, and then takes issue with Flikschuh's well-known interpretation of what she labels Kant's "dilemma of sovereignty". Second, I tease out some of the non-ideal features underpinning Kant's cosmopolitanism with the help of the Kantian theory of labour, which in turn helps reveal the material conditions behind the qualifications of the subject who in Kant's view is able to move through the world. Finally, I draw some conclusions about the advantages of a non-ideal approach for upgrading the normative value of global mobility in Kant's juridical philosophy.

KEYWORDS
Kant, cosmopolitanism, labour, citizenship, non-ideal approach.

My paper will first claim that the lack of *enforceability* in Kant's cosmopolitan right should not be understood as a normative flaw, but rather as a key feature for orientating contemporary discussions about the human right to live on earth and be respectfully treated on a global scale. My account will thus endorse the normative strength of Kant's cosmopolitan right, even if it is not lacking in non-ideal traits, and will take issue with Flikschuh's well-known interpretation of what she labelled as Kant's "dilemma of sovereignty" (Flikschuh

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2010). In my discussion of Flikschuh, I engage in a dialogue with interpreters such as Pinheiro Walla (2016), Huber (2019) and Davies (2020), who in recent papers have highlighted the role that the legal features of community play in Kant's political philosophy. Second, I will tease out some of the non-ideal features underpinning Kant's cosmopolitanism with the help of the Kantian theory of labour, which will help to reveal the material conditions behind the qualifications of the subject who in Kant's view is able to move through the world. In this second section I will take into account recent papers by Pascoe (2022), Davies (2021) and Vrousalis (2022), who deem Kant's appraisal of work helpful for outlining the epistemic and economic dependence structures that challenge the universality of the republican claim to civil independence. I will also touch on Huseynzadegan (2022), who in a recent paper addresses Kant's cosmopolitan mobility from a non-ideal standpoint, taking inspiration from Charles Mills' *black radical Kantianism* as a "plot twist" in the contemporary interpretation of Kant. Finally, I will draw some conclusions about the advantages of a non-ideal approach for upgrading the normative value of global mobility in Kant's juridical philosophy.

The Normative Scope of Kant's Cosmopolitan Right

My argumentation will be based on a widely known excerpt from the DR, in which Kant claims that cosmopolitan right belongs to the corpus of legal normativity for reasons of systematicity and thus openly refuses to reduce it to a well-intentioned philanthropy.[2] An example might be the following:

> Since the earth's surface is not limited but closed, the concepts of the right of a state and of a right of nations lead inevitably to the idea of a *right for all nations (ius gentium)* or *cosmopolitan right (ius cosmopoliticum)*. So if the principle of outer freedom limited by law is lacking in any of these three possible forms of rightful condition, the framework of all the others is unavoidably undermined and must finally collapse. (RL § 43, 6: 311)

This text encourages a full development of all the layers of the rightful condition for the normative cohesion of right. In this vein, Flikschuh's stance on cosmopolitan duties stresses their systematic function and legal authority. Yet, in my view, her argument overstates the fact that these duties are not enforceable by laws ensuing from the right of the state, as they respond to a supranational juridical sphere, and claims that this lack of coercion would consequently diminish their power. My account opposes this as I consider that the character of cosmopolitan right does not entail any weakness with regard to international relations among states. Moreover, cosmopolitan values do not assume that only a national lawgiver and executive power can provide a creditable

2 This claim also appears in the presentation of the third definitive article of perpetual peace. See PP (8: 357): "As in the foregoing articles, we are here concerned not with philanthropy, but with right".

embodiment of rightful authority. On the contrary, interpreters such as Pinheiro Walla (2016), Huber (2019) and Davies (2020) note the positive effects that Kant's cosmopolitan principles imply for humanity, even if they cannot count on the support of an earth-encompassing lawgiver for their fulfilment. In my view, Flikschuh's systematic approach overstresses the alleged superiority of statist sovereignty, watering down the value of the factual interaction that subjects have shown around the world and throughout history, even if – as I will discuss later – this exchange is burdened by strong gender and racial biases. She therefore wrongly limits the role that cosmopolitan sovereignty plays in Kant's writings by neglecting the value of issuing legal norms for regulating global mobility and for rightfully ruling on the acceptance or refusal of foreigners at ports and coasts around the world.[3] In contrast to a partially Hobbesian outline of the lawgiver's authority in Kant's political philosophy, I agree with Huber (2019) when he suggests that *hope* is a key value in Kant's cosmopolitan guidelines. Indeed, the section of the *Doctrine of Right* that focuses on cosmopolitan right denounces the violence and abuses historically committed by "citizens of the world" (RL § 62, 6: 353) as they attempted to engage in *commercium* with distant peoples and "to visit all the regions of the earth" (ibid.). Yet it also affirms that these damages "cannot annul" (ibid.) the normative force of cosmopolitan right. In contrast with the entangled origins of all public authority, Kant chooses a straightforward argument for claiming the potential rightfulness of human global interaction. In fact, the interaction that comes with global mobility occurs in the public eye, where the authority of cosmopolitan bonds is unconcealed. Thus, the *communio possessionis originaria*, i.e. the proof of the postulate of practical reason, which enables the entitlements of non-physical possession in the sphere of private right, is an *a priori* condition displayed by the finitude of the earth, and not the effect of a coercion adopted for ending the violence that prevails in the state of nature. The authority of the *communio possessionis originaria* thus fulfils a key role in the private right. In a well-known text pertaining to private right in DR (§ 13) Kant inserts an interesting preliminary remark to his theory of property:

> all human beings are originally (i.e. prior to any act of choice that establishes a right) in a possession of land that is in conformity with right, that is, they have a right to be wherever nature or chance (apart from their will) has placed them. (RL § 13, 6: 262)

In other similar texts Kant deals also with the common possession of the earth as an openly empirical fact ensuing from the embodied and finite condition of human beings, whose contact with others forces them to adopt a

3 An opposite and in my view inspiring interpretation of this somewhat concealed source of legal normativity in Kant appears in Pinheiro Walla (2016: 175–176), when she addresses the legal authority of the *lex iusti* in Kant's DR (6: 251) and in Davies (2020: 333–334), who highlights the gap between "juridical duties" and "general duties of right" as the *honeste vive* principle.

rightful condition.[4] There is thus no mystery in this enlarged possession, since Kant recognizes the ambiguity embedded in the word *community* [*Gemeinschaft*] and thus affirms in the first *Critique* that different substances sharing the same space should be considered as an instance of *commercium*, and thus "as a dynamical community, without which even the local community *(communio spatii)* could never be empirically cognized" (KrV, A213/B 260). Taraborrelli (2019: 19) has recently added a helpful conceptual nuance for further examining how this dynamic community of earth dwellers develops. As she highlights, Kant points out in Refl. N. 1170 that a "citizen of the earth" [*Erdbürger*] can be either a "son of the earth" [*Erdensohn*] or a "citizen of the world" [*Weltbürger*] (Refl. n. 1170, 15: 517),[5] and as such drawn to differing interests and conducts. Taraborrelli suggests that Kant's cosmopolitan claims must meet both conditions. I agree with the fact that earth dwellers usually move around the world (traders, settlers, travellers) without a sound background of cosmopolitan values. Yet in my view cosmopolitan right seems to do its job by using them as unwitting go-betweens. Put slightly differently, Kant is aware of the fact that throughout history global mobility has never been a peaceful path. Moreover, he also highlights that the violence triggered by global mobility "provide[d] the occasion for troubles and acts of violence in one place of our globe to be felt all over it" (RL § 62, 6: 353). This claim fully overlaps with the celebrated statement in PP in which Kant praises the natural interconnection among the peoples of the earth, insofar as "the violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*" (PP 8: 360), thereby making cosmopolitan right a key component of what he calls "the unwritten code of political and international right" (ibid.). In a nutshell, the conceptual shifts between *Erdbürger*, *Erdsohn* and *Weltbürger* should not make us reluctant to address cosmopolitan right as a right for all earth dwellers, who behave principally as key actors for empirically proving the legal authority that this type of right aims to exercise. Naturally, these earth dwellers achieve only a partial, epistemic view of the cosmopolitan community. Yet the experience of their misdeeds and failures becomes extremely valuable for raising, in the section of RL on cosmopolitan right, an argument for the legal regulation of global human interactions:

> all nations stand *originally* in a community of land, though not of *rightful* community of possession *(communio)* and so of use of it, or of property in it; instead they stand in a community of possible physical *interaction (commercium)*, that

4 See Cicatello (2017) on the key role this distinction plays for grasping Kant's cosmopolitan program.

5 See Taraborrelli (2019: 20): "[T]he son of the earth and the earth dweller are on the earth and move on the earth as if they did not know that it is a bounded sphere; this means that they can become aware of the sphericity and boundedness of the earth and of the commonality with others only through actual experience of reciprocal limitations ('*Schranken*'). In contrast, the citizen of the world is aware of being on a bounded spherical earth in common with others: not only does he consider himself as a part of a whole (humankind), but he is also able to bear in mind this whole when he judges and acts as if the others were simultaneously present in his mind".

> is, in a thoroughgoing relation of each to all the others of *offering to engage in commerce* with any other, and each has a right to make this attempt without the other being authorized to behave toward it as an enemy because it has made this attempt. (RL § 62, 6: 352)

While *communio* draws upon some type of common possession, *commercium* opens an ongoing process of reciprocal acquaintanceship. I will address some examples of the interaction that Kant examines in his foundation of cosmopolitan right, insofar as they help to shed light on the kind of normative order he presents in section III of RL and in the Third Definitive Article of PP. As Stilz (2014: 201–202) rightly summarizes, cosmopolitan hospitality rules the contact with people living on different continents and firmly prohibits the plundering of their natural resources, the blurring of the boundaries between trade and military occupation, the forcing of one tribe to adopt another way of life on their own territory or the settling in a foreign land used by nomadic people without a honest contract whose conditions are clear to both parties. This list of cosmopolitan duties helps to make clear the normative infringement these unfair practices entail, and also reduces the scope of the postulate of public right which Kant formulates in RL § 42. In fact, the global framework of mobility makes it feasible to "avoid living *side by side* with all others [my emphasis]", a circumstance that urges the subject to abandon "the state of nature" of society and enter into a "rightful condition" for administering "distributive justice" (RL, 6: 307).[6] In other words, global interaction does not entail any permanent cohabitation nor the integration of foreigners as refugees in host countries. Yet it rules an ephemeral coexistence which nevertheless gives shape to our feeling of belonging to a common world. As Flikschuh (2017) and Stilz (2014) have rightly hinted in this vein, cosmopolitan mobility acquaints European citizens with ways of living that do not raise any property claims over the land, decidedly enlarging our notion of human community and the forms of organizing common life. As § 62 of RL adamantly points out, settlers may occupy the territories of non-state people only in the case that these nomadic people submit to them through an honest contract, as each human group on the earth has equal claim over the land from which they live.

In my view it can be disappointing to assume the curtailment of basic rights that ensues from the fact that cosmopolitan right cannot enforce Europeans in the guise of traders or would-be settlers to respect the juridical rights of people who have not raised any property claims or rights (see RL § 62). Nonetheless, cosmopolitan right is expected in Kant's view to spread like wildfire the *moral* blame of European subjects who do not abide with the global rules of hospitality, thus explaining what Ripstein called "Kant's juridical theory of colonialism" (2014). Obviously, the colonialist powers did not immediately stop plundering and treating as subordinate entire human groups around the world by dint of appealing to cosmopolitan values in the philosophical agenda. Yet

6 See an analogous text in PP (8: 349): "all men who can at all influence one another must adhere to some kind of civil constitution".

Kant views cosmopolitan tenets as a pedagogical counterpart in the ideological arguments to which colonialist powers often resort. As is well known, Kant openly disavows all fraudulent colonialist reasoning in his RL, affirming that "the good intentions [of priests, settlers and other sort of exploiters] cannot wash away the stain of injustice" (RL § 62, 6: 353). Nor does Kant's reframing of global interaction guarantee juridical protection to human beings in danger, for instance, when this danger erupts within national states, which Reinhardt (2019: 306–307) prudentially pointed out as limiting any contemporary use of Kant's limited cosmopolitan right. More specifically, global mobility instead sparks *hope*, a key value for historical progress according to Kant, as I mentioned above with regard to the interpretation of Huber, insofar as such an interaction shows how individuals can progressively foster the "expanding federation"[7] of states and thus lay the foundations of an earthly *Weltrepublik* that transcends the traditional features of classical statist sovereignty. Huber's account of the cosmopolitan source of sovereignty in Kant would do well to check its resemblances to the notion contained in the DV of beneficence as a duty of equity. Indeed, Kant views beneficence as a universal duty "because [human beings] are to be considered fellowmen, this is, rational beings with needs, united by nature in one dwelling place so that they can help one another" (TL § 30, 6: 453), which has close ties with the cosmopolitan account of humanity as a whole. As Kant encourages the subject to grapple with the "injustice of the government" in the name of equity, he addresses the individual subject, not the state. This seems also to be the case of cosmopolitan right, which relies on the moral authority of general juridical tenets.[8] In the *Anthropology,* Kant describes the "free agreement of *individuals*" in terms of "a progressive organization of citizens of the earth toward the species as a system that is cosmopolitically united" (ApH 7: 333) and promotes the fulfilment of human capacities. Yet does Kant-inspired cosmopolitan mobility rely on any material conditions for its fulfilment? In my view, the issue of labour might be a helpful issue for exploring the non-ideal features that hinder the staging of a horizontal cosmopolitan exchange from the Kantian standpoint.

7 PP 8: 357: "Just like individual men, they must renounce their savage and lawless freedom, adapt themselves to public coercive laws, and thus form an *international state (civitas gentium)*, which would necessarily continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the earth. But since this is not the will of the nations, according to their present conception of international right (so that they reject *in hypothesi* what is true *in thesi*), the positive idea of a *world republic* [*Weltrepublik*] cannot be realized. If all is not to be lost, this can at best find a negative substitute in the shape of an enduring and gradually expanding *federation* likely to prevent war".

8 Davies (2020: 11) consecrated a helpful paper to rightly parse this set of principles underpinning Kant's political philosophy: "General duties of right are also an important class of duty. They are distinctively political duties for which no external enforcement is permissible. That Kant is able to accommodate such duties is a strength of his view; one that has not been sufficiently appreciated in Kantian literature. Accepting the existence of unenforceable duties of right indicates that Kant's political philosophy has a much wider scope than is often believed".

What Kant's Theory of Labour Tells Us about the Right to Global Mobility: the Indian Blacksmith and the Household Servants

It is a matter of fact that Kant addresses the right to global mobility by focusing on European subjects under the influence of an ingrained racism, which his anthropological, historical and geographical remarks confirm (Huseynzadegan 2022: 6). Interpreters such as Gani (2017) have noted that the subjects who engage in contact with other people in Kant's writings are mostly white European citizens, which involves at the least an unconscious epistemic and moral injustice towards the inhabitants of other continents. Kant's *Lectures on Anthropology* present a large and detailed encyclopaedia of the laziness and other physical and cognitive disabilities attributed to non-white peoples. It is worth noting in this context that when Kant refers – in KU, § 2, entitled "The satisfaction that determines the judgment of taste is without any interest" – to the Iroquois Sachem, who visited Paris in the 18th century, he likens him to a kind of fairground attraction. Indeed, Sachem's judgments appear quite childish in Kant's view, as the Iroquois affirms for instance "that nothing in Paris pleased him better than the cook-shops [*Garküchen*]" (KU 5: 204–205), thus suggesting that his sense of taste did not meet the requirements of an authentic taste, disenfranchised from any empirical influence. Even though Kant openly criticizes colonialism in his *Doctrine of Right*, his doctrine of right still helps to legitimate a colonially embedded mobility, insofar as he seems merely to assign this right, at least as a voluntary deed, to the denizens of Europe. In this same vein, Valdez (2022) affirms that Kant's racialized anthropology extols the commercial skills of Mediterranean countries, overrating the contribution of Northern Europe to modern capitalism, and revealing the shortcomings of his account of global trade.

Employment contracts are intended to guarantee legal equality between employers and employees in the capitalist market, which Kant – as before him the Abbé Sieyés in revolutionary France – was wont to see as a key shift for boosting meritocratic social promotion.[9] Naturally, inequalities would have many ways of perpetuating their social impact. Moreover, as Jordan Pascoe (2015, 2022), Hasan (2017) and Moran (2021) pointed out in ground-breaking papers on this matter, the kind of work that the subject performs determines his access to either passive or active citizenship (Davies 2021). In Kant's view, all labour relations pertain to acquired right. Thus, no employment contract can tolerate that someone allows another to be his owner (*sui dominus*) (RL 6: 270), thus alienating himself as the property of someone else. It is also well known that active citizenship draws on the conditions of freedom, civil equality and civil independence or civil self-sufficiency [*bürgerliche Selbständigkeit*].[10] This last condition implies that the "existence and preservation" of the subject do

9 See Byrd (2004: 126n).

10 I follow the translation of this German expression recently suggested by Kant scholarship. See Vrousalis (2022: 457, footnote 6).

not depend on someone else's choice (RL 6: 314), and so "his civil personality" (ibid.) does not need to be represented by other.[11] Thus, immaturity in civil matters, which Kant attributes to all women due to their biological features (ApH, 7: 209), is an obstacle to their being recognized as a sort of "stakeholder" of the commonwealth, an idea that – as sundry interpreters have highlighted (Maliks 2014, Moran 2021) – the Abbé Sieyés used to break down the various contributions that subjects provide to the state. According to the *Doctrine of Right*, there are three kinds of onerous contracts of letting and hiring (RL 6: 285; cfr. Fey 27: 1361–1363): a) to let an object or property to another for his use, usually including the payment of an interest (*locatio rei*); b) to grant another the use of one's own forces for an agreed price (*locatio operae*); and c) to empower someone as a managerial agent for managing a business or a shop (*mandatum*). As previously stated, the structures of dependence in work have a strong impact on the political status of the subject and in my view also on his access to cosmopolitan right; for instance, in the case that the worker does not own any property, has no access to raw materials and relies only on his own forces to keep himself alive. The following passage of TP is quite telling with regard to the social map Kant creates of how work determines social relationships:

> The domestic servant, the shop assistant, the labourer, or even the barber, are merely labourers (*operarii*), not artists (*artifices*, in the wider sense) or members of the state, and are thus unqualified to be citizens. And although the man to whom I give my firewood to chop and the tailor to whom I give material to make into clothes both appear to have a similar relationship towards me, the former differs from the latter in the same way as the barber from the wigmaker (to whom I may in fact have given the requisite hair) or the labourer from the artist or tradesman, who does a piece of work which belongs to him until he is paid for it. For the latter, in pursuing his trade, exchanges his property with someone else (*opus*), while the former allows someone else to make use of him (*operam*). But I do admit that it is somewhat difficult to define the qualifications which entitle anyone to claim the status of being his own master. (TP 8: 295n)

Even if at the end of this passage Kant acknowledges that defining civil self-mastery is in fact a ticklish issue, he clearly breaks down the labour framework of the hairdresser, the woodcutter and the Indian blacksmith as being separate from that of the wigmaker, the tailor and the European blacksmith.[12] While the first are deemed dependent, the second are viewed as independent, as they trade their products, and not merely their services for a wage or an assignment to temporarily manage someone else's business (Davies 2021: 7–9). Kant focuses in particular on how these workers obtain their raw materials and the means of production, which in the case of the Indian blacksmith involves roaming through different regions – and perhaps countries – to ensure

11 I fully agree with the reading that Moran (2021: 116–117) suggests of this RL passage, based on William Richardson's translation of Kant's essay rather than on the usual translation by Mary Gregor.

12 See Vrousalis (2022: 454).

his survival or to increase his income (Hasan 2017: 921). A key aspect of Kant's analysis is the fact that even if the Indian blacksmith becomes a wealthy man as he "works [his] way up" (RL 6: 315), he will still never enter into active citizenship, as he would not own property and thus would not be charged with the payment of taxes.[13] Moreover, the errant life of most of those individuals that Kant refers to as the "underlings of the commonwealth" disavows their consideration as being ready to engage in politically active membership:

> The woodcutter I hire to work in my yard; the blacksmith in India, who goes into people's houses to work on iron with his hammer, anvil and bellows, as compared with the European carpenter or blacksmith who can put the products of his work up as goods for sale to the public; the private tutor, as compared with the school teacher; the tenant farmer as compared with the leasehold farmer, and so forth; these are mere underlings of the commonwealth because they have to be under the direction or protection of other individuals, and so do not possess civil independence. (RL 6: 314–315)

As Moran (2021: 108) has observed, Kant probably became acquainted with the lifestyle of the Indian blacksmith through Pierre Sonnerat's essay, *Reise Nach Ostindien und China*, in which this labourer was said to travel with an apprentice and to obtain a high income. As in the other examples Kant gives, it is telling that all labourers considered as not fitting into the category of eligible to vote do not produce a product (*opus*) to be sold in a market, but rather offer their services and skills temporarily to others. Kant even holds doubts – in his essay *On the Turning Out of Books* (VUB, AA 08: 80) – that a book might be considered to be alienated from its author, as it could also be understood to result from the use of human faculties granted to the public, and is never completely alienated from its creator. This point would impose some restraints on editors in republishing the previously released texts of an author without his/her permission. What determines Kant's view of the type of labour that does not eventually produce a marketable product is the fact that the letting and hiring contract (*locatio conductio*) grants to others the use of someone's effort and skills for an agreed price, making the worker merely hired help (*mercennarius*) (RL 6: 285) and not an independent labourer.

As I hinted above, it is quite paradoxical that most dependent workers are not usually settled in one place, but instead travel through different regions,

13 See Davies (2021: 6–7), who takes into account different interpretations of the economic bonds underpinning Kant's distinction between passive and active citizenship and considers the approach to this matter by Pinzani/Sánchez Madrid (2016) as a "revised economic dependence reading", which would be "unable to account for the difference between a domestic servant and a civil servant. Even if neither has access to the means of production, the civil servant still counts as an active citizen". Cfr. Vrousalis (2022: 444), who stresses the scope that community comes to have in Kant as a "productive interdependence", where the material capacity to contribute with goods and commodities to the commonwealth summons the main traits of the Aristotelian model of citizenship.

which might indeed make them perfect candidates for being classed as cosmopolitan travellers. Yet this nomadic way of life jeopardizes their meeting the minimum requirements for contributing as co-legislators of the commonwealth.[14] Compared to the flexible bonds of dependent workers, contracts ruling domestic labour rely on what Kant calls "the right to a person akin to the right to a thing" (RL 6: 276). This kind of labour contract regards household servants, whom the contract binds to "do whatever is permissible for the welfare of the household", as outsourced workers hired by affluent men to perform the tasks that would normally fall to their wives due to their gender. Kant offers the following account of the legal bind between the head of a household and his domestic servants:

> [T]he servant agrees to do whatever is permissible for the welfare of the household, instead of being commissioned for a specifically determined job, whereas someone who is hired for a specific job (an artisan or day laborer) does not give himself up as part of the other's belongings and so is not a member of the household. – Since he is not in the rightful possession of another who puts him under obligation to perform certain services, even if he lives in the other's house (*inquilinus*), the head of the house cannot take possession of him as a thing (*via facti*); he must instead insist upon the laborer's doing what he promised in terms of a right against a person, as something he can command by rightful proceedings (*via iuris*). (RL 6: 360)

I agree with Pascoe when she stresses Kant's indirect awareness that reproductive labour is embedded as a concealed pillar of republican freedom, as the claim of rightful servitude confirms, insofar as no active citizen can dispense with having guaranteed this dimension of life.[15] This aspect of Kant's juridical philosophy invites intersectional approaches to his political philosophy,

14 Moran (2021: 121–122) gives a convincing account of the tasks linked to active citizenship according to Kant: "The person who produces an opus can, so to speak, leave her shop and goods in the hands of another person while she attends to public business. Her opus can, in other words, support her even while she is attending to other matters. This interpretation is especially informative if we think of Kant's notion of public participation as requiring more than a simple vote once every few months or years, but instead requiring sustained information-gathering, debate, and discussion –along the lines of the way we might think of jury duty today". Cfr. Davies (2021: 17–18).

15 See Pascoe (2022: 23–25): "Kant's reliance on dependent labour to structure the distinction between active and passive citizenship ensures that while it may be the case that *anyone* can work his way up, it is not possible for *everyone* their way up, since *someone* will have to do dependent labour. [...] These patterns are central to Kant's account of civil independence, although they remain invisible when we ignore the *material conditions* of this independence. [...] Kant's 'right to a person akin to the right to a thing' provides a crucial dimension missing in Marx's analyses of labour, identifying the economic role of household labour at a critical historical moment, as the bourgeois household coalesces as a necessary site of unwaged labour to support the reproduction of the burgeoning global capitalist market". Pascoe (2022: 61) also claims that "the patterns of outsourcing domestic labour force us to consider how intersecting forms of oppression organize [the] right to 'work one's way up'".

revealing the hidden gendered and racialized face of the republican claim of civil independence. This hidden face displays a material interdependence that Kant considers well-off people may rightfully outsource to alien forces. Yet such social structures of dependence leave a deep imprint on the access of dependent workers to the cosmopolitan space. In the case that domestic servants accompany their employer – the head of the household – in his travels through other countries or continents, their labour merely assures the welfare of the only traveller who counts, i.e. the home owner, which makes the inequality of their positions evident. Even if Kant adamantly condemns any form of colonialism and thus of slavery, especially from from the 1790s onwards, he seems to favour the right to leisure of the white bourgeois male, whose cognitive activities are more highly valued than the coarser skills of non-European peoples, who are therefore better suited to working as the servants of others.[16]

Conclusions

I draw from the above remarks that cosmopolitan goals raise a normative scope in Kant's system of right. Yet the structure of Kant's cosmopolitan mobility is as highly racialized as it is gender-biased, impelling some subjects (dependent workers, women and household servants) to abandon their places of employment and emigrate to other countries. Moreover, although the household servants of a wealthy family might travel through non-European continents, it is only as members of a "private commonwealth", whose welfare they are committed to steadily foster, even when it sojourns in a foreign country. Naturally, these servants might be rescued after being shipwrecked in the manner of Robinson Crusoe, but as human beings needing urgent assistance due to an unwitting accident, not as part of a voluntary movement. One would be inclined to think that only people serving the commonwealth by working for the state (TP 8: 295), i.e. officers with a wide range of positions or the commissioned traders of European companies, might be considered to meet global mobility requirements. Yet the traders that Kant mentions as he outlines the dynamics of international commerce in his time seem to be the individuals in charge or else commissioned to carry out another's business in their absence (RL 6: 285–286). Therefore, the *locatio conductio* of these merchants places them in a relationship of dependence to the business owner's authority, but nevertheless disqualifies them from cosmopolitan itinerancy.[17] This seeming paradox deserves to be further explored. My aim in this paper has been to show how Kant's theory of labour may shed light on some non-ideal features of his normative cosmopolitan theory, insofar as it makes visible the impact that labour bonds between employers and employees have on the political standing of the subject.

16 See Pascoe (2022: 41).

17 This textual evidence challenges Davies' approach to the different civil standing of officers and workers. See Davies (2021: 134).

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All Kant's citations refer to volume and page numbers of the Prussian Academy Editions of Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften*. I employ the abbreviations of Kant's writings established by the *Kant-Forschungsstelle* of the University of Mainz and I used translations from the Cambridge Edition of Kant's works, published by Cambridge University Press.

Abbreviations

Ant *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*
RL & TL *Metaphysics of Morals*
PP *Toward Perpetual Peace*
TP *On the Common Saying: This May Be Correct in Theory, but it is of No Use in Practice*

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Kantovo poverenje u političku vrednost rada i globalne mobilnosti. Ne-idealno objašnjenje kosmopolitske normativnosti

Sažetak

Tekst započinje razmatranjem normativne snage Kantovog kosmopolitskog prava, bez obzira na to što ono poseduje i ne-idealne odlike, i raspravom sa uticajnom interpretacijom Katrin Flikšu Kantove „dileme suverenosti". Zatim, rekonstruišem neke ne-idealne odlike na kojima počiva Kantov kosmopolitizam uz pomoć kantovske teorije rada, što omogućava da se prepoznaju materijalni uslovi iza kvalifikacija subjekta koji je, iz Kantove perspektive, u stanju da se kreće kroz svet. Najzad, izvodim neke zaključke o prednostima ne-idealnog pristupa za poboljšanje normativne vrednosti globalne mobilnosti u Kantovoj filozofiji prava.

Ključne reči: Kant, kosmopolitizam, rad, građanstvo, ne-idealni pristup

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SECURITY AND FREEDOM: A COMPLEX ALLIANCE[1]

ABSTRACT
The concepts of security and freedom have long had an antagonistic relationship in the political sphere. Since Plato wrote his *Republic*, authors such as Machiavelli, Hobbes and subsequent contractarians have understood that some limitations on individual freedom were necessary for the sake of collective security. This paradigm has since been inherited by different thinkers and is key in most political theory proposals. Following this path, Todorov has analyzed the current geostrategic situation as a result of the milestone of the Iraq War of 2003, in order to shed light on strategies that should be pursued to achieve international security of the contemporary new world order. However, his approach follows the conceptual framework of previous authors, which therefore prevents him from integrating the freedom required by contemporary Western democracies with international security. In this article, we intend to provide an alternative perspective, addressing the problem from a multidimensional conceptualization of security and freedom.

KEYWORDS
security, liberty, freedom, development, war, Iraq, influence, geopolitics

1. The Security and Liberty Paradox

Traditionally, the concepts of *security* and *freedom* have had an antagonistic relationship in the political sphere. Since Plato wrote his *Republic*, authors such as Machiavelli, Hobbes and subsequent contractarians have understood that some limitations on individual freedom were necessary to guarantee a kind of collective security.

This conceptual paradigm, based on the belief that freedom and security in the political sphere comprise a binomial and are often at odds with one another, has been inherited by different thinkers, and is key in most political

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theory proposals. Following this line of thought, Todorov (2003), in *The New World Disorder: Reflections of a European*, examined the current geostrategic situation as a result of the milestone of the Iraq War of 2003, proposing an analysis able to shed light on strategies that could be pursued in attaining the international security of the contemporary new world order. However, his approach follows the conceptual framework of previous authors and, thus, in our opinion, is unable to integrate the freedom required by contemporary Western democracies with the concept of international security he advances. In this article, we propose an alternative perspective, addressing this problem from a multidimensional conceptualization of security and freedom, and argue that the articulation of both is not only possible but necessary to guarantee a peaceful world order.

It is true that the war in Iraq may seem like an event long in the past, especially in light of the emergence of new conflicts such as the war between Russia and Ukraine, which call into question the foundations of a certain concept of European security. That said, Todorov's analysis of this 2003 conflict reveals certain premises still in force today which, in our opinion, are necessary for developing new political strategies able to shape a world order that allows for the survival of humanity while preserving quality of life. In this sense, Todorov's conceptual scheme is not obsolete, but rather increasingly relevant, not only because it continues to be used in theoretical interpretations of current conflicts, but also because it constitutes a productive theoretical foundation for understanding contemporary security and, therefore, a way of conceiving war.

For this reason, in this article, we will carry out an analysis of three basic interpretative premises – also maintained by Todorov – of the narratives underlying the discourses used to justify initiating war. Working from these premises, we will then proceed to elaborate an alternative theoretical proposal of freedom and security that can overcome the difficult conciliation of both concepts.

1.1. Material Goals as the Engine of War

It is a widely held thesis in the field of polemology that wars are always ultimately started for economic reasons (Kennedy 2010). This idea, which is rooted in a materialist conception of history, holds that economic relations and the modes of production determining the social framework are the causes of war. This conceptual scheme implies an understanding that the cause of war is always based in an economic interest of the warring factions or at least of that which initiates the aggression. Thus, from the theoretical framework of historical materialism, all social change, violent or not, is ultimately attributed to the economy and the tensions that it generates in the distribution of wealth (Bukharin 2013). From this perspective, the relationships between human beings and societies obey, at their core, material motivations. Therefore, although superficially a conflict may appear framed in ideological, religious, identity, or other contexts, a seasoned historian or sociologist following the explanatory thread of history and searching for economic imbalances between

the warring factions should be able to reduce any past, present and future conflicts to their material causes.

Todorov, however, offers a relevant argument pointing to the specific case of the Iraq war which challenges the main premise that all conflict can be reduced to economic causes. This example is pertinent for deepening our understanding of the problem we are addressing: the articulation of a model able to coherently integrate security and freedom. When analyzing the reasons for the 2003 war, Todorov denies that it was initiated for solely economic purposes (Todorov 2003: 12–20). Regardless of the correctness of his interpretation, we would like to underline his refusal to reduce all causes of conflict to economic relations, which supposes a highly restricted materialist colonization of spiritual life. The historical materialist interpretation by which all politics can be reduced to economics, while conceptually seductive, denies, in practice, empirical observations that contradict it. In fact, we often find examples of disastrous economic management precisely because of submission to ideological dogma. The spiritual has weight in practical life because the spiritual guides praxis: the economy is the result of practical activity, not a cause of it.

In fact, Horkheimer himself points out the same thing in his article "History and Psychology" (1932), in which – without denying the existence of this relationship – he rejects an economistic approach to psychology, which seeks to simply attribute psychological behavior to the economic basis of society without studying in detail how economics condition the psyche. In his remarkable study "Authority and Family" (1936) Horkheimer goes further, arguing that if the cultural processes of a society are ultimately determined by the laws that govern its economic apparatus, the behavior of its members cannot be explained by virtue of economic phenomena alone, but rather all cultural factors have formed the character of the members of said society. Finally, in his fundamental article "Traditional and Critical Theory" from 1937, Horkheimer contrasted these two types of theory and indicated that changes in social relations do not leave critical theory untouched, but rather influence it even in its structure. He illustrated this emphasizing that, even in his own time, there had been a massive change in social relations that necessarily had to affect all of culture: a transition from a time when owners controlled companies to another in which – without changing the legal concept of property – business owners became defenseless against the management and manpower of corporations. With this, the concept of the dependence of the cultural on the economic is transformed:

> Now, with the annihilation of the typical individual, this dependency must be understood in a somewhat vulgar materialistic way. Explanations of social phenomena become simpler and more complicated. Simpler, because the economic determines human beings in a more immediate and conscious way, and because the relative strength of opposition and the substantiality of the cultural spheres disappear. And more complicated, because the unbridled economic dynamics, in the midst of which the majority of individuals have become, produces new figures and fatalities at a rapid pace. ("Traditionelle und Kritische Theorie", in Kritische Theorie, 1968; T. II: 185)

It is undeniable that in the Frankfurt School's interpretation of Marx's theses, there is a certain intent to develop a more comprehensive interpretation of history than that very reductionist concept of historical materialism which would ultimately become a simplification of Marx' work resulting from the International and the political exploitation of Marxism.

1.2. A Terrible Enemy as a Threat to International Security

Every war needs a legitimizing discourse in order to begin. The construction of narratives in order to convince public opinion is essential in securing the material support and human resources necessary for war (Esch 2010). The reason *par excellence*, strong enough to motivate armed mobilization, is that which argues that the enemy is a threat to the survival of the nation. Moving the population to rise up in arms requires constructing a ruthless, monstruous enemy in the collective imagination. An empirical example of this thesis can be found in the Iraq war: the primary justification for the declaration of war being that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction – that is, nuclear, chemical or biological weapons – that it could make available to terrorist groups.

Todorov, however (Todorov 2003) dismantles these arguments, as well as the argument that the US-led Western bloc intended to seize oil reserves. He even sees it as improbable that at the base of the motivations for the Iraq war there was an ideological interest in imposing a Christian paradigm. In reviewing the literature written since, arguments and counter-arguments such as those offered by Todorov can be found not only in specialized academic literature, but also in essays and news articles.

In fact, it was demonstrated that in order to justify the invasion of Iraq, senior officials of the Bush administration pressured the intelligence apparatus to ignore the data that contradicted the existence of weapons of mass destruction, while embracing those who fueled the suspicion despite their biases and lack of rigor (Pfiffner 2018). Thus, it became clear that a justification for war was manufactured, deceiving the American people as well as the rest of the world (Woodward 2004, 2006, 2008).

The elaboration of these narratives showcases two levels of action that must be distinguished in order to understand the argument of the devastating enemy. The first regards finding legitimizing principles of an ethical nature to justify initiating war. These arguments may well range from intervention to avoid the suffering or persecution of a threatened group, to, as in the case of the Iraq war, the guarantee of international security. In this sense, the importance of building an enemy so terrible that it poses a threat to one's own survival generates the fear in the population necessary to convince them that a preventive war is essential. But configuring a strong enemy also has another equally important function: the strengthening of national identity. This idea, profusely developed by Carl Schmitt (2015), understands that the essence of the political is found precisely in the friend-enemy dialectic. Taking this concept to the international sphere, the construction of a cruel and formidable enemy

entails the configuration of a well-defined bloc by strengthening cohesion between powers sharing a common interest in destroying the enemy that threatens security. The creation of polarized blocs occurs through the configuration of narratives that attribute characteristics to the antagonist, with the polarization becoming more pronounced the more extreme the traits. Therefore, in any war, the use of propaganda as a method for spreading an image of the enemy as cruel and formidable not only responds to an interest in generating fear in the population, but also in configuring a sufficiently firm national identity, able to be sufficiently ruthless in its decisions. Fear alone can be a paralyzing emotion, however, when combined with conviction and self-confidence, it is often able to mobilize a population unwaveringly for a cause.

The second level of action necessary for the construction of an *ad hoc* narrative unsupported by empirical evidence is to satisfy the underlying interest that moves the party initiating a war. The true reason for a war and the need to find a legitimizing foundation for it are two very different things.

In this sense, once again, the reasons for the deliberate construction of narratives can also be attributed to economic interests. Curiously, however, in the case of the Iraq war, these stray far from the common geostrategic analysis models that seek explanations for international conflict in the asymmetry of the distribution of wealth between nations, particularly natural resources. In fact, in the years that followed the invasion, it became clear that the objective was never Iraqi oil, but rather a justification for the United States to enter into a high-intensity war that would exponentially increase its budget for military spending, generating billions of dollars for certain industrial groups in the defense sector (Terry 2006; Dunne 2014).

This thesis apparently clashes with Todorov's, but also brings to light another argument contained within the author's thought. Understanding the subtlety of the argument requires making a preliminary assessment of human and social micro-analysis in the study of conflict, which goes beyond the perspective of the supposed interests of the nations involved in conflict as if these were completely homogeneous blocs. Seen in this light, it does not seem plausible that the American people would have willingly agreed to start a war in which more than 100,000 civilians and as many as 40,000 US soldiers died for the sole purpose of increasing the business of the defense industry lobby. Conjuring public support required creating a legitimizing narrative that would convince public opinion.

1.3. Internal Security Dependent on External Security

In commenting on the importance of basing the initiation of war on legitimizing principles of an ethical nature – a constant throughout the history of Humanity – we have pointed out two factors that seek to justify these legitimizing principles: 1) relief of suffering and 2) the guarantee of security and, therefore, one's own survival.

These elements, of a moral nature, that intervene in the configuration of the narratives themselves as incontestable legitimizing principles for the West's

initiation of war, and influence public opinion, have some common features which we can also trace in Todorov's theses on war. Specifically, the thinker finds that, in arguments seeking to justify war, there are two central issues which can be found in the justification speech of then President Bush as well as in the legitimizing discourse of countless other conflicts. Following the first level of narrative function noted above, the justification for the United States declaring war was twofold (Todorov 2003: 27):

a) On the one hand, spreading freedom and freeing people from the yoke of oppression.

b) On the other, guaranteeing the security of the United States itself.

Taken together, both premises together reveal the difficult dialectical relationship of the antagonistic link between security and freedom in the field of international relations and international politics. The thesis underlying the articulation of this categorical pair that emerges from these legitimizing arguments is that guaranteeing the internal security of a country requires imposing a civilizational paradigm on the enemy similar to one's own. This, however, has the surprising implication that both dimensions in the field of foreign policy are in an inversely proportional dialectical relationship.

This idea assumes a total redefinition of the concept of internal security, as, in order to guarantee the security of a sovereign State, internal security would have to be conceived not as that concept which guarantees that, within the system, member agents behave in accordance with laws, therefore reducing crime, but rather the concept of internal security able to guarantee the stability, strength and survival of a system and way of life against possible external attacks, which can also justify the exercise of actions of influence in other sovereign countries.

In turn, exporting freedom to a country would consist in the imposition of a system that would guarantee the freedom of expression of members of that sovereign community. However, what emerges is that this promotion of political freedom in a country without a democratic tradition can be counterproductive in achieving the security of the country promoting these freedoms. It is precisely at this extreme that Bush's arguments become paradoxical: the greater the freedom in a sovereign State – that is, diversity, a plurality of forms of expression and ideals – the fewer the security guarantees for other countries, which may be attacked for their different forms of understanding.

Although Todorov recognizes that, in principle, security and freedom need not be incompatible, in practice they are very difficult to reconcile. The thinker attributes this to the difference in the means used to achieve both objectives. While the guarantee of security usually requires the use of force, the expansion of freedom is normally achieved through the establishment of a liberal democracy. Here, Todorov is directly alluding to political liberalism (Todorov 2003: 30 f.), which is precisely where the indicated contradiction is observed: political liberalism is premised on pluralism and the peaceful coexistence (*consensus*)

of different comprehensive doctrines of good that presuppose a principle of extended tolerance. However – the author claims – when this system is imposed, there is already an internal contradiction between "tolerance and respect for diversity", leading to the dogma of "liberal imperialism" that Kagan points out. Robert Kagan, in his essay "Power and Weakness: Europe and the United States in the New World Order" (2002) observes that to the extent that Americans believe in power, they believe that it should serve to spread the principles of a liberal civilization and a liberal world order.

From this consideration, a satisfactory solution can hardly be found – hence the author's logical conclusion of the impossibility of a peaceful and free world order. Rather, the most that the Planet could aspire to is a kind of "world disorder", given his consideration that the objectives of freedom and security do not go hand in hand. Moreover, the assumption that the national interest is that which should prevail, and that internal security must be defended, underpins the argument that the establishment of liberal regimes in other places can only be justified if it benefits internal security.

The contractualist Todorov defends these theses, unequivocally affirming the need to guide all political development of society through a single objective that is none other than maximizing security. Todorov's pessimism implies that for the author, maintaining relative peace in certain regions of the world necessarily requires its imposition by totalitarian regimes, thus also limiting the freedom and possibility of development of the societies upon which it is imposed. It is a choice of the lesser evil, following Hobbes' thesis in his *Leviathan* (2012).

Although throughout this text we intend to dispute Todorov's arguments, we must also recognize that global reality unfortunately tends to ratify his pessimistic ideas about human nature. Thus, moving from the Iraq war to other catastrophic confrontations occurring in the two decades since, we can find examples such as the so called *Arab Spring*. These social uprisings were largely encouraged by Europe and the US, as the elites of these countries understood that they could contribute to the spread of Western ideals of freedom (Dadush, Dunne 2011). It is well established that these social movements were mainly autochthonous, and as such were rather independent from direct political actions of the Western states. Moreover, it must be clearly stated that encouragement should be clearly differentiated from causation, though encouragement is at the base of influence and influence leads, at least partially, to causation.

Their result, however, has been chaos, the loss of human life, and the genesis of still unresolved crises (Santini, Hassan 2012). Among the many nations on the southern shore of the Mediterranean that can be cited as an example (Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, etc.) the uprisings of Syria and Libya should be highlighted.

In Syria, the attempts to overthrow the Al-Assad regime have produced a hellish civil war, especially brutal due to the indiscriminate and deliberate attacks on civilians and the horror wrought by the use of chemical weapons (Droz-Vincent 2014). The Syrian civil war has become an increasingly regional problem as a result of the flow of emigration and refugees it has generated,

which has considerably destabilized not only neighboring countries such as Turkey and Lebanon but even the European Union itself, which has been forced to urgently develop policies and procedures to deal with a human problem of never-before-seen proportions in the Mediterranean (Fargues, Fandrich 2012). In addition to all this human suffering, the power vacuum created by the attempts to destabilize the Syrian regime was not filled with ideals of political liberalism, but rather the Islamic State, which came to control important territories of the country by imposing social terror through the application of radical Islamic law (Kaválek 2015).

Meanwhile, in a Libya wracked by the chaos of the Arab Spring, NATO carried out a punitive operation seeking to eliminate the brutal repression of the Gaddafi dictatorship. Gaddafi and his regime fell, but to this day, social and political chaos continues to prevail in Libya, and the country could be considered another failed state (Varivelli 2014; Colombo, Varivelli 2020). In addition to this, another (perhaps worse) consequence materialized when numerous armed groups operating in the country and protected by Gaddafi were forced to move south, destabilizing the entire Sahel area, particularly Mali, generating another problem with untold consequences for the security of Europe (Larémont 2013). Having in mind the proven involvement of bot the Gaddafi and Al-Assad regimes in different terrorist actions across Europe, as well as in military operations in neighboring countries, it is not easy to evaluate the contribution that the interventions in Syria and Libya have provided to the final security outcome, as this effort involves balancing the human costs of these interventions against those that would be projected should the interventions had not have taken place. Nevertheless, keeping our analysis to what actually occurred, is undeniable that the destabilization of these regions created a massive flow of migrants across the Mediterranean. As a consequence of this thread, both NATO and European Union have been forced to launch several military and civilian efforts, such as the support and enhancement of the air defense capabilities of Turkey, the expansion of the EU border control agency (FRONTEX), or the different operations in Sahel such as EUTM-MALI, BARKHANE, SERVAL and G-5 SAHEL, among others.

The alternative to the chaotic and risky implementation of Western democratic values in these countries were those states in which such a social experiment was not allowed. A paradigmatic example is Morocco, an authoritarian and brutal country in terms of its political repression of dissent (Cavatorta 2016), but one which Europe and the US refer to as a crucial partner for maintaining security in the region (Boukhars 2019). This constitutes another clear example of a choice of the lesser evil in pursuit of a minimum guarantee of stability and security.

It does not appear then that Todorov's argument lacks empirical foundation beyond the Iraq War, in light of the recent history of global conflict. However, there are also paradigms with a solid conceptual base that discuss the antagonistic relationship between the categories of freedom and security. From these positions, both concepts would in fact have a directly proportional link,

the advancement of individual liberties in a society constituting the main tool for promoting its security. Next, we will delineate these notions that constitute the intellectual armament with which we intend to refute Todorov's theses.

2. The Articulation of Freedom-Security for a World Order. From Todorov to Sen

2.1 Security as a Development of Freedom

In our view, it is possible to reconcile the concepts of security and freedom in the international sphere if we use a different theoretical perspective that allows for a peaceful world order. This idea would presuppose, on the one hand, the promotion of interculturality in the sphere of international relations and, on the other, a multidimensional approach to the objectives of security.

In relation to the creation of intercultural strategies, Todorov himself considers the European identity and the European model as frameworks to be to aspired to. One of Europe's key objectives is the development of a model of external influence – thus, a truly European external action directed at regional neighbors, especially Africa and the Middle East, should contemplate long-term strategies that are based on a deep understanding of those societies and cultures (Galtung 1996). Only cooperation policies that promote the conditions of possibility respectful of diversity allow the development of dignified life for those human beings that make up those cultures, thus providing regional stabilization so vital for security both inside and outside the European Union. In order to be truly successful, this interaction should be bidirectional – in fact, all comprehension triggers a hermeneutic process that modifies the comprehending agent in some way.

In turn, this notion of security linked to the possible development of the population overcomes the opposition of the security-freedom binomial by proposing a mechanism in which freedom itself leads to social peace, stability and eventually security. The central element of this approach is that these mechanisms of influence cannot ultimately be considered short-term strategies, as they imply cultural changes which may require generations to materialize effectively. The failures witnessed over the past decade, such as the ISAF operation in Afghanistan or the Arab Spring, would in reality be the consequences of short-term strategies and a lack of determined commitment to tackle these enormous challenges (Zinni, M Augier, Barrett 2022). In Afghanistan, in addition to the 110,000 soldiers who made up the coalition, an equivalent number of doctors, professors, agricultural engineers and a host of professionals would have been necessary to truly change the sociological and economic substratum of the country. In addition to these human and material resources, Western countries should have made an explicit commitment to maintaining a force that would ensure security indefinitely until the situation in the country made it no longer necessary. In the absence of such a force, the

Taliban only had to sit back and wait for the reappearance of the power vacuum they were so eager to fill.

It is possible to speak in similar terms of the conflict in Iraq, the object of Todorov's analysis and the basis for his thesis on what he calls "world disorder". In both the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, all of the tactical and operational objectives had been achieved after just a few weeks of operation; the military forces did their job quickly and effectively (Schadlow 2017). The strategic and political objectives however, if there were any, turned out to be poorly defined (Brooks 2022).

Similar conclusions can also be drawn from the failure of the Arab Spring, making it clear that social or cultural influence is not achieved merely through a communication strategy based on opinion leaders, social networks, or social media. True influence is obtained by establishing the conditions of possibility for the development of a dignified life that, together with the clear message about the urgency of social change, give people the opportunity to produce changes in their lives and their environment, that is, to achieve the necessary conditions to live with dignity and in peace.

These considerations, based on verifiable empirical evidence, are linked to the thesis of the capabilities approach, developed by authors such as Amartya Sen (1993, 1999, 2011) and Martha Nussbaum (1993, 2000, 2011). In this regard, since 1990 the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) uses a new notion of human development, inaugurated by the revolution that the theory of the capabilities approach brought about (Sen 1999), which no longer focuses exclusively on quantitative criteria such as economic growth or GDP. This new paradigm of human development theories has expanded its information bases and the perspective from which it analyzes human reality and the conditions of the quality of life according to the objectives and ultimate goals of a moral nature (Nussbaum 2011). This has crystallized in the conceptualization of public human development policies that are aimed at improving human living conditions from a multidimensional perspective (access to health, education, decent housing, political freedoms, social rights, economic security or access to an unpolluted environment, etc.).

Although *capabilities approach* is the global theoretical framework that operates in the field of human development, and is followed by the United Nations Development Program (UNPD), surprisingly, it is hardly taken into account in geopolitical analyses of armed conflicts and international security.

For this reason, our hypothesis argues that a first level of conceptualization of a certain idea of multidimensional security is closely linked to the aforementioned notion of human development. This new concept, which UNDP currently uses for its reports and human development indicators (HDI and HPI), is closely connected to the qualitative factors of what, in Amartya Sen's terms, makes up a dignified life and, therefore, is strongly linked to the existence of structural and material living conditions that enable the effective realization of people's life projects.

Likewise, the idea of multidimensional security bound to the contemporary notion of human development would be integrated by different dimensions

and factors of a political, social, psychological, economic or environmental nature. The development or poverty of a country would be measured according to heterogeneous indices such as children mortality, literacy, access to a health system or political freedom and, following this line of global action, crisis management models and their methodologies must be developed following this notion of multidimensional security.

2.2 The New Use of the Armed Forces in a Peaceful World Order

Alongside these ideas, a novel use of the armed forces should also be considered part of a much broader and more ambitious strategy of foreign action for influence over regions of interest to Europe. This resolutely active strategy of a Europe that, for decades, has opted for passivity in international relations, must overcome some paradigms anchored in the European social memory derived from its colonialist past. That said, Europe is in a position to assume the role of power or agent of influence as an exporter of a political, sociological and anthropological model that has been shown to enable the highest levels of freedom, security and economic and social development. Todorov's relativist positions, such as his famous work on the conquest of America, delves into these concepts which can be framed in ethical or moral relativism (Todorov 1999).

On the other hand, we are currently witnessing a political shift in Europe and the US, characterized by a populace that seems to be increasingly seduced by isolationist political approaches such as those defended in political speeches by Donald Trump in the US, Marine Le Pen in France, Giorgia Meloni in Italy, Boris Johnson in the United Kingdom, or Santiago Abascal in Spain (Gaffikin 2023; Pratt 2023). The central message of these speeches is that nations should close themselves off to the outside world and build walls and barriers that isolate people from a supposed external threat, mainly in the form of immigration. This message is forcefully permeating Western societies, precisely at a historical moment in which it is perhaps most necessary to understand that, in a global world, it is impossible to isolate oneself from the outside.

These isolationist theses connect with Todorov's vision of the globe as an amalgamation of atomized and separate sovereignties pursuing their own interests. This idea, based on a Marxist interpretation of international relations attributing geopolitical phenomena to relations of domination and dependency between states (which we have previously criticized for its materialistic determinism), is also objectionable for its analytical reductionism. This reductionism, from a classical perspective of international relations based on the unitary concept of the nation-state, simplifies the actors involved in the conflict, leaving inherently human phenomena that are at the base of security threats out of said analysis, and thus leaving both the question and its answer incomplete.

In our view, however, the current geopolitical reality has, due to various factors – among them technology – changed in such a way that interactions, connections and links that transcend borders and sovereignties have evolved

significantly, with direct consequences for the concept of security, which can no longer be understood only as "inside" a sovereign country.

Regardless of the number of cross-border interactions, there are other elements that challenge this conception. The proliferation of International Organizations, for example, requires rethinking the concept of international security from a broader perspective than simple national security. The UN as the great international political body, or other confederations of supranational importance, particularly the EU, reflect a certain political will that transcends national sovereignties. Although these confederations once existed only in the mind of a visionary Kant (1939) as a postulate of Reason for a lasting but unattainable peace, today they are a material reality, regardless of their more or less imperfect character. In addition, powerful international organizations dedicated to specific issues, but of global transversal importance, such as OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF, OECD, World Bank, and so on, have arisen and receive direct support from these confederations – both material resources as well as human capital or a legitimizing foundation. These organizations entail not only the projection of the foreign policy of member countries, but also necessarily represent their political will.

Having said this, Todorov's thesis about the primacy of a country's internal security, which implies the support for and establishment of liberal regimes only if they are favorable to Western States, must be analyzed in detail, because the atomism of sovereignties is not an accurate reflection of the current international geopolitical scenario. The concept of "benefit" for a given country can hardly be separated from its interconnections. The withdrawal of a country from an organization or treaty can effectively result in harm for the other participating countries, but also in grave repercussions for the withdrawing country (regardless of its power in the international sphere). Measures ranging from the imposition of economic sanctions, diplomatic exclusion or the boycott of the products of civil society itself, to give a few examples, are excellent tools for applying international political pressure.

The other point that we would like to highlight is related to the observable difference between the means of achieving security and those aimed at achieving freedom.

The contemporary understanding of armed conflict is very different from the concept of traditional war. The idea of war as the conflict between two or several contenders to invade and impose a system or take over the territory or natural resources of other countries has given way to various new forms of armed conflict, thus inaugurating a whole new lexicon of concepts such as hybrid warfare, guerrilla warfare or complex emergency (Väyrynen 2023).

What emerges from these new forms of armed conflict is that war is a human phenomenon, which in turn leads us to consider any natural conflict that is "humanitarian" by definition. The famous distinctions by type of operation (Peacekeeping, peacebuilding, peacemaking) are based on operational criteria to establish action procedures and, above all, define the appropriate capacities for the specific problem with respect to which action is being taken (Zaman,

Biswas 2022). Ultimately, though, any conflict must be analyzed from a strategic point of view, and action must be taken considering its humanitarian nature, that is, humanistic or social. A related but different issue is the capabilities (military or otherwise) used for managing the conflict. Armies are one of many instruments of political action – but they are neither the only, nor even the primary instrument, even in war.

In the new doctrinal conceptions of modern military operations, the concept of the spectrum of conflict or the so-called *gray area* gains strength. This implies the existence of a continuum between full collaboration and open confrontation, in which tension escalates, manifesting itself in strategies and tactics that, using all the instruments of power including, but not limited to, the military, increase the state of confrontation (NATO 2021).

In this context, the need to first understand and then intervene in social and human phenomena, well become apparent before the threshold of the conflict. This understanding and execution of mechanisms of social influence has a preventive nature and can be carried out with military or other means. In any case, it is based on the systematic study of social dynamics long before violence appears. In line with the above, the doctrinal developments of Western militaries tend to consider military force as an actor of influence. Thus, for example, the first NATO doctrinal principle for any type of operation is the so-called "Behavior-centric approach", meaning that any operation, whatever its type, must be conceived as an effort to induce behavioral changes in certain human groups (NATO 2022).

In our opinion, all these arguments justify that any crisis must be addressed with humanist and sociological criteria, that is, people must be placed at the center of the approach to the problem. Paradoxically, this notion has become firmly established within the military, even though it remains controversial for the political establishment, civil society and certain intellectual currents.

3. Conclusion

The management of the majority of conflicts ravaging a large part of the world (not only the migratory drama in the Mediterranean, but also the mass exodus of Venezuelan refugees or the violation of human rights in Nicaragua, to give a few examples) presents a need to manage types of crises different from those referenced by Todorov – the use of force and bombardments. These other conflicts are quite different, and require multidimensional crisis management in which both force – that is, the military resources of different governments – as well as other specialized organizations intervene. Faced with this situation, which is clearly and viscerally reflected in massive migratory flows and other complex conflicts, one cannot conceive of security as something internal to a nation, but rather as an international and even multidimensional issue.

It is true that Todorov refers to the specific case of the Iraq war and the US intervention in the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime as a preventive war – an attack war but for legitimate defense –, today, however, the humanitarian crises and the question of security are something else.

Political institutions are ultimately comprised of people, and we believe that to presume that all those who make up these institutions are moved by purely strategic and economic interests is simply fallacious. These subjects have multiple motivations, among them ethical and moral values, and political will responds to this amalgamation of motivations and values. This argument holds even in the case of the Russia-Ukraine war, turning it into a human phenomenon and not simply an economic one (Eltchaninoff 2018). If we assume this idea, then the public policies that are executed, and even the objectives of military interventions must respond to this political will which is also guided by moral values.

Todorov's theses consider conflict as between regimes, and therefore, the claim of supremacy of one over the other would find its justification in a certain sort of moral superiority. This, however, ignores the humanitarian crises to which one cannot remain indifferent, neither from a moral nor strategic perspective.

For this reason, we maintain that the management of a peaceful world inevitably requires the realization of security and freedom, both understood as multidimensional. This idea conceives freedom as the factual possibility of a dignified life, which can only be achieved in a setting of peace. It also, however, highlights freedom as an internal requirement for a secure world order, since only in a system in which people can develop their life projects in dignified conditions can a certain stability be achieved. This articulation of security and freedom as a necessary binomial requires that security be understood as multidimensional.

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Lidija de Tjenda Palop i Hakobo Huerta Vega

Bezbednost i sloboda: složen savez

Sažetak

Pojmovi bezbednosti i slobode odavno stoje u antagonističkom odnosu u političkoj sferi. Otkako je Platon osmislio *Državu*, autori poput Makijavelija, Hobsa i kasnijih kontraktarijanaca razumeli su da su neka ograničenja individualne slobode nužna zarad kolektivne bezbednosti. Ovu su paradigmu usvojili različiti mislioci i ključna je za većinu političko-teorijskih stanovišta. Na tom tragu, Todorov analizira aktuelnu geostratešku situaciju kao rezultat prekretnice koju je predstavljao rat u Iraku 2003. godine, da bi osvetlio strategije koje su neophodne za međunarodnu bezbednost u savremenom novom svetskom poretku. Međutim, njegov pristup sledi pojmovni okvir ranijih autora, što mu onemogućava da integriše međunarodnu bezbednost i slobodu kakvu podrazumevaju savremene zapadne demokratije. U ovom članku nameravamo da ponudimo alternativnu perspektivu, pristupajući ovom problemu kroz multidimenzionalnu konceptualizaciju bezbednosi i slobode.

Ključne reči: bezbednost, sloboda, razvoj, rat, Irak, uticaj, geopolitika.

II

STUDIES AND ARTICLES

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Nikolina Smiljanić

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERDEPENDENCE AND RESPONSIBLE EPISTEMIC BEHAVIOR IN CRISES

ABSTRACT
Recently, we found ourselves in an unexpected and specific situation facing the COVID-19 pandemic which we wanted to understand. It was a situation that no one predicted, and we all wanted to know more about it using various epistemic practices. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our lives and has emphasized the importance of behaving in a mutually interdependent manner, as we are directly responsible for the lives and health of others in these circumstances. This paper emphasizes the importance of interdependence and epistemic responsibility of individuals within society and policymakers who bear a particularly heavy epistemic responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic and possible future crises.

KEYWORDS
interdependence, responsible epistemic behavior, epistemic duties, epistemic responsibility, beliefs.

Introduction

When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out in early 2020, citizens were constantly warned through the media about the public health recommendations and measures that were essential to save lives and prevent the spread of the virus. These recommendations were followed by the government, policies were put in place, and experts took center stage and addressed people through the media. It was a unique situation, the likes of which we have never experienced before, and although the recommendations and actions were sometimes contradictory, they had a great impact on our lives. This paper challenges the epistemic duty and responsibility of individuals and policymakers and emphasizes the importance of interdependence.

Philosophical Implications of the Topic

The importance of social epistemology in understanding what is happening is crucial. For individuals to understand what is expected of them, they must

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understand what is going on and why. However, we found ourselves in a particular situation where, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge about the effects of the virus was still unclear and people could only follow the recommendations of those who determine public policy and certain behaviors in times of the crisis. In this case, the question is: what are the responsibilities of policymakers whose decisions shape responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and how do policymakers fulfill their epistemic duty responsibly, i.e., how do they acquire knowledge in times of uncertainty and disagreement among experts? The other question is how individuals fulfill their epistemic duty responsibly, and why some people do not trust that the epistemic duty of policymakers is good enough. It is argued here that in times of crises, we must rely on each other and our interdependence when there is even a small chance that we can hurt each other by being aware of the potential threat of the pandemic and acting in our best interest to protect our health.

What I will focus on in this paper are our expectations in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and our responsibilities in this regard. The crisis may entail changes in institutions, individual and group behaviors, or interpersonal relationships, and in many cases, it entails changes in all these areas. I assume that interdependence and collaboration at all levels of society are crucial to managing a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

I argue strongly that we should act in our best interest to protect our health and the health of others – in times of crisis, everyone should be expected to maintain the highest level of interdependence.

To support the importance of interdependence that depends on expectations, I will use the framework presented in Cristina Bicchieri's work[1] and accept her definition:

> Expectations are beliefs about what is going to happen or what should happen; both presuppose a continuity between past and present or future. (Bicchieri 2017: 11)

There is a distinction between empirical expectations that influence our decisions and social expectations that are normative.

"We may have observed how people behave or some trusted source may have told us that people behave in such and such a way. If we have reason to believe that they will continue to act as in the past, we will have formed empirical expectations about their future behavior" (Bicchieri 2017: 12). This could be important for policymakers while creating recommendations for the future behavior of citizens. If they had time to think about empirical expectations about people's behavior, the recommendations during COVID-19 would be more consistent and trustworthy.

Normative social expectations, on the other hand, "express our belief that other people believe (and will continue to believe) that certain behaviors are praiseworthy and should be carried out while others should be avoided"

1 Bicchieri 2017.

(Bicchieri 2017: 12). Normative expectations are connected to individuals and are based on our beliefs and epistemic responsibility in creating those beliefs.

Bicchieri also claims that to change our beliefs, we must accept the possibility that we may be wrong. When we accept that possibility, we become curious and start searching for information – we become epistemically responsible. In the first part of this paper, I will address the importance of epistemic duty. The interdependence between experts and policymakers and their epistemic responsibility is also presented further in this paper.

Epistemic Responsibility in Times Covid-19 Pandemic

First, to define what epistemic responsibility is. "Epistemic responsibility is a set of habits or practices of the mind that people develop through the cultivation of some basic epistemic virtues, such as open-mindedness, epistemic humility, and diligence that help knowers engage in seeking information about themselves, others, and the world that they inhabit (Medina 2013)" (McHguh, Davidson 2020: 174–190).

An individual constructs a particular situation and decides how to act. Once she understands the situation, she forms beliefs and expectations. To understand the situation, an individual becomes curious and begins to search for information. When an individual tries to understand and inform herself, she is being epistemically responsible. Epistemic responsibility is the belief that responsibility may be applied to beliefs.

An epistemically responsible agent desires to have true beliefs…his actions are guided by these desires (Kornblith 1983: 34). Thus, those desires should lead to specialized individuals who have certain expertise. An expert is generally a person with extensive knowledge or skills based on research, experience, or profession and related to a specific field. In the COVID-19 example, a virologist has more knowledge about the virus than an average person. It is important to recognize the experts, but of course, experts may disagree. Let me emphasize that this paper is not about the conflict between experts on COVID-19, but policymakers (the Minister of Health, the Civil Guard, the Prime Minister, etc.) who may not be experts on certain topics but shape the response to the crisis and the mutual trust on this issue by relying on the opinions of (certain) experts. Policymakers bear a particularly heavy epistemic responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic and possible future crises. The epistemic duty and responsibility of experts are to conduct research, test, consult literature and other experts, and share their best knowledge with policymakers who should take appropriate measures to protect life by enacting laws to protect us and taking action to protect us in certain circumstances when they believe our lives may be in danger. Therefore, the design and implementation of public policy should only be based on objective expectations that are important to most people, and that is certainly the protection of health and life. Article 2 of the Human Rights Act also protects the right to life. "This means that nobody, including the government, can try to end your life. However, it also means that

the government should take appropriate measures to safeguard life by making laws to protect us and, in some circumstances, by taking steps to protect you if your life is at risk".[2] Although this may be a controversial claim, I will accept it and take the standpoint that government has positive duties, duties to act, to do something, especially when we talk about times of crises and the COVID-19 pandemic in particular. I argue that we are all directly responsible for the lives and health of others in these circumstances, and interdependence is defined as the dependence of two or more people on each other within the society and government and to act.

To support that, I accept the following claim:

> The greater our sphere of influence, determined by the number of people who are affected by our decisions, the degree to which they are affected, and their vulnerability, the weightier our epistemic responsibilities. It follows from these principles that decision-makers have especially weighty epistemic responsibilities as we confront the COVID-19 pandemic. (Levy, Savulescu 2020: 3)

But how is it possible that some people lose interdependence and trust in the protection provided by policymakers and act irresponsibly? According to Levy and Savulescu:

> There is an epistemic condition to action, for only when we understand the nature of our actions and the kind of effects, they are likely to have been we able to exercise control over our behavior. The epistemic condition entails epistemic duties. (Levi, Savulescu 2020: 2)

Individuals thus bear considerable epistemic responsibility for their health and well-being and (perhaps even more so) for the health and well-being of others. The larger our sphere of influence, determined by the number of people affected by our decisions, the greater our epistemic responsibility. Nevertheless, the reasons for the lack of trust in the protection, decisions, and recommendations of policymakers are epistemic. Seeking information through digital media and directing curiosity to experts who do not agree with policymakers but still have a significant space to share their opinions, which is guaranteed by freedom of expression, can also endanger some groups at risk from the COVID-19 virus and destabilize society in a way that individuals suddenly have different expectations and actions. To summarize, in times when there is even the slightest chance of endangering the health of others, this behavior is not epistemically responsible.

(Responsible) Epistemic Duty in Times of Crises

Don Fallis, a Professor of Philosophy and Computer Science at Northeastern University studies how people can acquire knowledge in the social world and is interested in both the positive and negative effects of digital technology on

2 (Article 2: Right to Life | Equality and Human Rights Commission)

our ability to acquire knowledge. Prof. Fallis emphasizes that access to online databases, social media, communication, and collaboration with large numbers of people across large distances can fulfill an epistemic duty. Fallis in his module emphasizes that: "Internet access and digital technologies can also diminish the influence of traditional information gatekeepers, promote belief polarization, and facilitate online deception".[3]

In this context, we must consider that when we talk about interdependence and the creation of beliefs and expectations:

> Three types of targets in epistemological research must be distinguished; individuals and individual beliefs; groups and group beliefs; and general social practices, social institutions, and systems [...] while individual epistemology primarily deals with the epistemic properties of individual beliefs, social epistemology is concerned with the epistemic properties of social entities and practices. (Prijić Samaržija 2018: 37)

We can conclude that epistemic duty must be performed both at the level of the individual and at the level of the social unit, e.g., policymakers. However, while the epistemic duty of policymakers is fulfilled by protecting objective expectations that are important to most people and by obtaining information from acknowledged experts, mutual agreement, and risk assessment for society, individuals may obtain information from other sources and create beliefs that are inconsistent with the general social policy on the subject. Moreover, by being able to use social media, communicate, and collaborate with a variety of people across great distances, individuals can become part of a group that shares their beliefs. In this case, this group will not follow the recommendations of policymakers, such as the government, which can be dangerous in the context of health and lead to destabilization in society. But in times of uncertainty, when even science is not unanimous, individuals may not have trust in public policies. Even when public health is at stake, some groups consider their beliefs and freedoms superior and seek information that justifies their beliefs while ignoring those that do not. It can be concluded that epistemic duty is questioned here because it is fulfilled with the sole purpose of justifying beliefs, which is unjustifiable behavior in the context of epistemic duty. In the literature, this effect is referred to as confirmation bias. According to Nickerson:

Confirmation bias is the term typically used in psychological literature, connotes the seeking or interpreting of evidence in ways that are partial to existing beliefs, expectations, or a hypothesis in hand. (Nickerson 1998: 175)

It is the most common bias that leads to ignoring information that does not confirm certain beliefs. Furthermore, ignoring information and relying on confirmation of their beliefs can lead people to overestimate themselves and

3 ("The Social Epistemology of Coronavirus.", n.d.)
This module at Northwestern University focuses on how the pandemic is affecting our ability to acquire knowledge through digital technology and how digital technology is affecting our ability to acquire knowledge about the pandemic.

make "erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but their incompetence (in topic) robs them of the metacognitive ability to realize it" (Kruger, Dunning 1999: 1121).

And at the same time, they attach great importance to their expectations and behavior. Although they may not be aware of that, this is irresponsible fulfillment of epistemic duty.

"The risk of being swayed by untrustworthy information and advice is particularly prominent in the contemporary, hypermediated environment, marked by the growing dominance of digital media. This environment eased the diffusion of expert knowledge and enabled greater public engagement with science, but also brought new challenges in the form of misinformation and public controversies that can undermine trust in expertise (Davies, Hara 2017; Van Dijck, Alinejad 2020). These challenges have a negative effect not only on public trust in experts as such but also on people's ability to identify trustworthy expert information" (Mihelj, Kondor, Štětka 2022: 293).

We can also recall here Bicchieri and claim that expectations are beliefs about what will happen or what should happen. Some people simply do not believe that they can be infected with the virus or even that the virus does not exist, so they do not expect anything to happen to them, and act accordingly. More than that, they do not accept that the government is ascribed the goal or status function of managing the state, making it difficult for it to fulfill its epistemic obligations. Although this paper assumes that we should be interdependent in the crisis, some do not work in their best interest to protect their health and that of others because they do not adjust their expectations by seeking information from experts and key policymakers, making it harder for everyone to manage the crisis. "For people to be willing to take responsibility to develop the habits necessary for managing a pandemic, they need to trust their government" (Nihlén Fahlquist 2021: 675), but during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was sometimes hard to find consistency in policies which led to the loss of trust in government.

Freedom vs. Health

If we assume that health is a value that every individual holds in high esteem and that as members of society, we expect first and foremost the protection of our lives, the reasons for acting in times of the pandemic for health protection can be accepted as a justification for a particular public policy. We can conclude that it is not possible to justify exceptions to regulations that claim the right of some to make exceptions that endanger the health of individuals. If we put this in a modern context, and the recommendation of the World Health Organization that wearing a medical mask protects the health[4] we can take an

4 *Masks are a key measure to reduce transmission and save lives. Depending on the type, masks can be used for either protection of healthy persons or to prevent onward transmission or both.* (Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19): Masks. , n.d.)

example in which one person values her health highly, while another values the freedom not to wear a medical mask in a public (or closed) space because it makes her uncomfortable (and challenges her ideal of freedom). One person expects the other to behave in a mutually interdependent manner that contributes to the preservation of her health, and the other expects understanding in the pursuit of her freedom. From the point of view of consequences, endangering health may have more serious consequences for the well-being of the individual than endangering the right to free choice, i.e., in this case, not wearing a medical mask, and therefore the right to free choice, which consequently may endanger public health, is not justified. The right to life or health is above the right to choose, I claim if someone wants to say that it is the individual's choice whether to put his health at risk. Yes, that can be true if you look at it from a subjective standpoint, but I am arguing here for the standpoint of interdependence, that is, for the implementation of a public policy that cannot be based on anything other than objective expectations that are important to most people, and that is certainly the protection of health and life. On the one hand, the decisions of the individuals who do not want to wear medical masks will affect the number of people who might die from the virus.

> The greater our sphere of influence, determined by the number of people who are affected by our decisions, the degree to which they are affected, and their vulnerability, the weightier our epistemic responsibilities. It follows from these principles that decision-makers have especially weighty epistemic responsibilities as we confront the COVID-19 pandemic. Their decisions will affect the number of people who die from the virus. (Levy, Savulescu 2020: 3)

However, the COVID-19 policy seeks to use the coercive power of government to impose or legitimize one set of fundamental values or norms over a competing set (or sets) of values or norms, and of course, the question of the morality of such a policy arises. To answer that question, we need to raise another one: what is a government's primary responsibility?

> The primary responsibility of governments is to create a balance between individual values and rights, on one hand, and the health of the population, on the other. The responsibility of governments is connected to individual responsibility through the values of trust and solidarity. (Nihlén Fahlquist 2021: 675)

But there is also a question of the vulnerable people we protect. Who exactly is vulnerable if we acknowledge the fact that some people were hurt (a significant number of examinations and diagnostic procedures were canceled or postponed) while protecting others? Instead of arguing these questions, I will introduce research titled "Moralizing the COVID-19 Pandemic: Self-Interest Predicts Moral Condemnation of Other's Compliance, Distancing, and Vaccination" (Bor, Jørgensen, Lindholt, Petersen 2023: 257–279) that has been conducted through online surveys from eight countries (Denmark, Sweden, Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The

study concludes that large majorities believe it is justified to condemn those who do not keep their distance from others in public and that about half of the respondents blame ordinary citizens for the severity of the pandemic. The most important predictors of condemnation are behavioral change and personal concern, while institutional trust and social distrust also play important but less consistent roles. Research shows that both moralizing, and condemnation of vaccination and general compliance are best predicted by self-interested considerations. We can conclude that the basis of interdependence is – and this is kind of ironic – self-interested considerations. One must believe that it is in his best interest to act interdependent.

Consequences of Ignoring the Interdependence

The paper repeatedly emphasized interdependence at all levels, and one can get the impression that the interdependence and responsibility of policymakers and public services were not sufficient. Mutual trust was emphasized, as well as the assumption that we expect the government to protect our lives first and foremost in times of COVID-19 pandemic, also from the point of view of interdependence, that is, for the implementation of a public policy that cannot be based on anything other than objective expectations that are important to most people, and that is certainly the protection of health and life. Since we are directly responsible for the lives and health of others in these circumstances, interdependence is defined here as a dependence of two or more people (and the system as a whole) within society. Since the pandemic began, more than six million people have died from the COVID-19 virus. As much as many of us wish we could put the pandemic behind us, at the end of August this year we reached the devastating milestone of one million deaths in 2022 alone.[5] Not wearing a medical mask nowadays still means that we probably deal with people every day who have the COVID-19 virus and do not prevent them from spreading the disease. Even if one has respiratory symptoms like coughing or sneezing, it makes sense to wear a mask: you could have an undiagnosed COVID-19 virus, and by wearing a mask you are protecting people around you from the virus. Let us remember that the World Health Organization advises that medical masks can be a key measure for reducing transmission and saving lives. Even if you have a bad cold or flu, it's worth protecting those around you – for people with weak immune systems, these illnesses can still take a toll. What happens when interdependence fails is illustrated by the recent case in Croatia. In August 2002, Croatian journalist Vladimir Matijanić died of pulmonary edema secondary to myocarditis and bilateral pneumonia. The main cause of death was the COVID-19 virus. It is impossible to say with certainty how Matijanić became infected with the COVID-19 virus, but it cannot be ruled out that it happened due to not wearing a medical mask (others, himself) and his weak immune system was compromised. What we do know,

5 (Five Reasons to Wear a Mask Even If You Don't Have to. , n.d.)

however, is that Matijanić sought help from doctors in Split from Tuesday to Friday. During those four days, not only was he not hospitalized, but he was also not even properly medically examined. Although Matijanić and his partner called an ambulance a dozen times asking to take him to the hospital, this never happened. Had Matijanić been properly examined and hospitalized at an early stage of the disease based on the findings and diagnosis, as he should have been, he would have had a chance to survive. Moreover, two days before his death, Matijanić was told that there was a lack of medication in Croatia to prevent the more serious consequences of the COVID-19 virus, which is administered to patients like him. This case was all over the media and there is a frightening possibility that this case from Croatia is not the only one in which individuals and systems have failed in their epistemic responsibility and interdependent behavior.

Conclusion

The importance of interdependence and epistemic responsibility of individuals within a society and the epistemic responsibility of policymakers were emphasized in this paper. Epistemic responsibility is every attempt of a person to understand and inform herself to create certain beliefs. This is pointed out in this text because we found ourselves in an unexpected and specific situation facing the COVID-19 pandemic which we wanted to understand. It was a situation that no one predicted, and we all wanted to know more about it. In this case, we relied on acknowledged experts and policymakers. The epistemic duty and responsibility of experts are to conduct research, test, consult literature and other experts, and share their best knowledge with policymakers should take appropriate measures to protect life by enacting laws to protect us and taking action to protect us in certain circumstances when they believe our lives may be in danger. Policymakers bear a particularly heavy epistemic responsibility during the COVID-19 pandemic and possible future crises. The standpoint that government has positive duties, duties to act, especially in times of crises and the COVID-19 pandemic has been presented and accepted which led to the conclusion that the epistemic duty of policymakers is fulfilled by protecting objective expectations that are important to most people and by obtaining information from acknowledged experts, mutual agreement, and risk assessment for society. The primary responsibility of governments is to create a balance between individual values and rights, on the one hand, and the health of the population, on the other. The basis of interdependence is based on self-interested considerations which means that one must believe that it is in his best interest to act interdependent. Since we are all directly responsible for the lives and health of others in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises that may happen to us, in times of crisis, everyone should be expected to maintain the highest level of interdependence.

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Nikolina Smiljanić

Važnost međuzavisnosti i odgovornog epistemičkog ponašanja tokom kriza

Sažetak

Nedavno smo se našli u neočekivanoj i specifičnoj situaciji suočavajući se s pandemijom COVID-19 koju smo hteli razumeti. Bila je to situacija koju niko nije predvidio, a svi smo hteli znati više o tome. Pandemija COVID-19 značajno je uticala na naše živote i naglasila važnost ponašanja na način koji je međusobno zavisan, jer smo izravno odgovorni za živote i zdravlje drugih u ovakvim okolnostima. Ovaj rad naglašava važnost međuzavisnosti i epistemičke odgovornosti pojedinaca unutar društva i kreatora politika koji snose posebno tešku epistemičku odgovornost tokom pandemije COVID-19 i mogućih budućih kriza.

Ključne reči: međuzavisnost, odgovorno epistemičko ponašanje, epistemičke dužnosti, epistemička odgovornost, verovanja

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PHRASEOLOGY "WITHOUT MEANING": POLITICS OF EMPTINESS[1]

ABSTRACT
We have heard many times expressions such as: "empty words", "empty talk", "hot air", but is there really an empty "phraseology", one that does not mean anything, i.e., that does not have a clear referent (the idea it refers to)? Showing the possibilities of such phraseology without meaning, the paper examines its use in politics, focusing on bureaucratic language that shapes our political reality, and can be found in many constitutional documents of the EU, US, or even UN. Namely, we will try to show that between general and particular meaning, there is a huge gap, an *emptiness*, which is used by a certain type of speech, in order to absorb every other language and its performative powers. Our criticism will move in two directions: the first has the task of showing the meaning(less) character of political bureaucratic phraseology as such, and its passivizing or non-affirmative effects. The other one comes down to examining the ideological background of Eurocentrism, detecting the hegemonic character of the idea of Europe (and Western civilizations) embedded in its political language. Starting from Ernesto Laclau's understanding of the "empty signifier" and the necessary function it has in the foundation of the system (especially a hegemonic one), through the history of the discourse of the idea of Europe, we will show the possibility and use of "emptiness" in meaning, especially when it comes to core values that are set for the foundation of one's politics.

KEYWORDS
phraseology, politics, empty signifier, Laclau, Europe, bureaucracy

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Introduction

Some of the many definitions of phraseology tell us that it is a branch of linguistics that observes the tendency of frequent repetition of words and their combinations in different contexts or ways of speaking and examines the meanings of these repetitions. Phraseology can also be defined as the study of "the structure, meaning and use of combinations of words (that form *phrases*)" (Cowie 1994). But, beyond the neutral linguistic determinant as the science of phrases, there is also a value-laden meaning of "phraseology" that testifies to the *absence* of meaning. The synonyms given for the use of the verb "phrase" in the Serbian language are, in addition to "verbalize", also "talk in vain (isprazno govoriti), empty talk (praznosloviti)", Talking bullshit (proseravati se)" (Ćosić 2008: 652). Such speaking is possible (and present) in all fields, whatever is the subject of speech, but the language of politics seems to be its trademark.

In his works *Emancipation(s)* and *On Populist Reason*, Ernesto Laclau introduced and elaborated the concept of the "empty signifier" in order to analyze its use in politics, that is, in political discourse. In question is no longer the possibility of a signifier missing the signified, or the impossibility of the term to fully express the object it refers to, nor of the subordination of the meaning to the structure rather than to the individual word, which the pioneers of structuralism, Lévi-Strauss or Saussure talked about. This is about a specific gesture of speech, a discourse within which the meaning is blurred, in which the phrases used do not refer to anything concrete, but at the same time, due to their "flexibility", they can include a large number of differences, which are thus totalized within the existing system (Laclau 1996: 69).

There are, therefore, those who use empty words because they cannot do better, but also those who use it willfully, to achieve their goal through the effect the words have on those they address. The second type of "phraseology" is the subject of this paper. In order to show this specific type of political phraseology we will refer to many diverse, and different political projects, text, and ideas, showing that, is spite of undeniable differences between them, they share same common characteristic of empty political phraseology.

1. From Lingual to Political

The rise of structuralism, which significantly changed the approach to social sciences by posing the question of language as the most important one, not only subordinated the meanings of individual expressions to the system as a whole, i.e., the structure. Thanks to Saussure's distinction between the signifier and the signified (Saussure 2011), structuralism abstracted language from the content that was provided by empiricism or, to put it more simply, from reality. Understood in this way, language becomes *a system* in itself, and at the same time the exclusive way of *representing* reality. The structuralist linguistic paradigm highlighted the already observed problem, that words always miss something about the things they refer to, leaving a certain amount of "conceptual

surplus" unexpressed (Adorno 1979: 26). On the other hand, since language is now understood to function as a system for itself, it is seen as capable not only of expressing but also of "producing" external circumstances.

Bakhtin and Voloshinov[2] were among the first to connect contemporary considerations of language with social and political circumstances, emphasizing the social role of language expressions. The usual relationship between language and social reality becomes reversed: all the effects that the sign causes (reactions, actions, new signs...) take place within the external experience. This means that the sign is no longer just a reflection, but also a part of material reality (Volosinov 1996: 11), as a result of which, the study of ideology becomes primarily a consideration of language: "the field of ideology coincides with the field of signs", and the word becomes "an ideological phenomenon par *excellence*" (ibid. 12). Here, however, we are only interested in a small part of the relationship between language and ideology, the one that brings us back to the central question of this paper: how is language that uses empty signifiers possible, and how it is used, or how could it be used for the purpose of promoting political ideology?

The language of politics, in order to be of use to any form of political activity, needs to be performative. Admittedly, if we follow the views of Bakhtin or the French structuralists and poststructuralists, language is always active, because even declarative sentences influence the formation of consciousness, or statements about "what I think I am", "how I understand the world" and "how I decide to act based on that". Moreover, the question about the active nature of language can only be the question of the scale or intensity of that action. In analytical philosophy and the philosophy of language, the term "performativity" denotes immediate activity, that is, a speech act (such as, "I promise to... I declare this fair open [...]. I name this square Saint Stephen's Square"). John Austin is credited with the invention of language performativity. For us, the more interesting and certainly the more controversial part of Austin's contribution refers to the division of types of speech acts into locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary. Locutionary refers to everything that is said, illocutionary to the intensity of intention contained within the locutionary speech act, and perlocutionary to the resulting effect (Austin 1962: 83–146).

It is plausible to assume that political speech produces illocutionary and perlocutionary acts: it relies on persuasion and aims to persuade. Performative speech acts, since they primarily denote an action, are not subject to the true/false distinction. A promise is an act, and the signifier "promise" certainly wants to convey a common understanding of the promise to those aimed at, regardless of whether or not the speaker planned to fulfill the promise. Even when it comes to constatative, or referential sentences that precede persuasion,

2 Till today it is unknown who wrote the book *Marxism and The Philosophy of Language*, who was originally ascribed to Voloshinov. (For the whole story, and the reason why some publications name Voloshinov as author, while others sign Bakhtin see "Translator preface" in Voloshinov N. V. (1996), *Marxism and The Philosophy of Language*, Harvard University Press. p. vii)

such as: "we must not vote for person A, because he is a thief!" or "Privatization of state-owned enterprises produces the best economic results in the long run, so I urge that we support it". Even if those sentences are false, the words used in them still represent clear images, ideas, as is the case with the word "thief" or "privatization". This is because even in constative form, words have performative power.

But what if there are no such clear images, even less "excess of meaning" – but the words are there, (because somebody speaks). In other words, what is the structure of a well-known sentence that has itself become a phrase: "talks a lot, but says little"? Let us start with the simplest examples of the use of empty, vain, and depraved language for the purpose of affirming "social cohesion".

Inside his famous *six functions of language* Roman Jakobson includes *phatic* function, which he takes over from Malinowski: phatic function "profuse exchange of ritualized formulas, by entire dialogues with the mere purpose of prolonging communication" (Jakobson 1960: 355). Therefore, it is about communication that does not aim at any information transfer, but exclusively at establishing or maintaining social contact, as is the case with phrases such as: "How are you? Fine, how are you?", "Well, here we are, aren't we?", etc. The meaning of the phrase is to attract the listener's attention, not to communicate specific information. Meeting someone accidentally in the street and asking them how they are, does not imply a genuine interest in someone's well-being. We could even say that if someone starts to reply in full length it would be considered rude.

Of course, *the phatic* function of language can occur even outside of the context specified by Jakobson, it can be meaningfully used with other and different intentions. In his text *Politics and the English language*, George Orwell states the English language is "decadent", bad, as he makes an analysis of this "bad language", highlighting several features through which the "quality" of language can be seen, among which are: "*Dying metaphors*, *operators or verbal false limbs, pretentious diction, meaningless words*" (Orwell: 1946: 3–6). Let us focus on the last two. While foreign expressions can be used to "dress up" simple statements, or to dignify the sordid process of international politics, glorify war or be used to give an air of certain level of culture and elegance, Orwell's analysis of meaningless words reveal many more problems[3]. Meaningless words are general terms that are used with the intention of not referring to any specific or discoverable object, and readers rarely expect them to do so, or even notice it. Such (mis)use of language, Orwell points out, in addition to literary criticism (and to, we freely add, scientific productions, such as this one), is most common in politics, where words like fascism, democracy, socialism, solidarity, freedom, justice, totalitarianism, equality, progressiveness, progress are used rather to denote something "desirable" or "undesirable" while the concrete meaning of the term remains vague or completely absent. Although it is possible that the speaker, from the belief that the certain values and attitudes

3 Even more typical example is a British form "How do you do?".

are affirmative and desirable, and from the desire to present them as such, uses these terms without even being able to explain them, "these words are more often misused, i.e., used in a dishonest way. "The person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different" (Orwell 1946: 6). The fact that the concepts of, say, solidarity or freedom do not refer to any concrete form of their manifestation, enables them to be accepted by the majority who can understand them in different ways, without losing their affirmative character.[4] For such and similar expressions in recent times, the phrase "essentially disputed concepts" has been established (Gallie: 2017). Those terms are signs for something, therefore signifiers, but they are so undetermined – or determinable in countless ways – that they could be called "empty". That "void" or "emptiness", however, can then be taken over and filled, by a certain political lexicon, in order to support, promote and disseminate the beliefs it favors or challenge and denigrate those it does not ("enemies of freedom"). That operation is mediated by the very connection between language and ideology that Volosinov spoke about.

2. "Empty Signifier" as a Constitutive Element of the System

The above-mentioned characteristics of language and their use for political purposes are easy to connect with populism, and even earlier in history, with rhetoric. Even Plato in *Gorgias* pointed out that rhetoric is a vein art in which everything is subordinated to the way in which something is spoken about, without knowledge of what is being spoken about (Plato 1979).

Ernesto Laclau will show that "empty signifiers" – words whose referent remains undetectable, are far more than tools of manipulation in the hands of a skilled rhetorician. Namely, considering the nature of populism and the phenomenon *of the empty signifier*, Laclau starts from two statements that, according to his belief, represent a pejorative understanding of populism: "1) that populism is vague and indeterminate in the audience to which it addresses itself, in its discourse, and its political postulates; and 2) that populism is mere rhetoric", which would mean that mentioned vagueness is rhetorically used for promotion of political program, values, ideas – that does not necessarily includes ideology (Laclau 2005: 67).

These claims are actually formulated based on Kenneth Minogue's text, *Populism as a Political Movement*. Minogue, in the manner of political elitism, whose paradigmatic example he represents, establishes a normative gradation of ideology and rhetoric, where ideology represents the deeper basis of the (political) movement itself, while rhetoric is only the surface articulation of demands according to current needs of the movement. On the basis of this distinction, Minogue traces the path for accepting the position that, unlike

4 In his landmark 1958 essay "Two Concepts of Liberty", Isaiah Berlin notes that "his protean word (has) more than two hundred senses of it recorded by historians of ideas" (Berlin 2002: 168).

established European ideologies, populism as a movement that belongs primarily to those from "the poor periphery of an industrial system" (Minogue 1969: 208) precisely lacks ideology, in order to prevent values to dissolve in vagueness and reduce to mere rhetoric (cf. Laclau 2005: 10–11).

Laclau deconstructs this distinction, as well as the mentioned two assumptions, through their reversal. He contrasts them with fundamentally different ideas that place "vagueness" and "rhetoric" in the very ontological coupling of language and in the act of constructing social reality: "(1) that vagueness and indeterminacy are not shortcomings of a discourse about social reality, but, in some circumstances, inscribed in social reality as such; (2) that rhetoric is not epiphenomenal vis-a-vis a self-contained conceptual structure, for no conceptual structure finds its internal cohesion without appealing to rhetorical devices" (2005: 67).

Laclau relies on the structuralist approach of the Prague and Copenhagen schools, which elaborate Saussure's claim that there are no positive determinations in language, but only *differences*. This is because objects, i.e., meanings, do not exist before *relations*, but are constituted through *relations*, and the constitution of meaning is possible only through *a difference* to something *else*. However, Laclau does not continue through the logic of identity, but resorts to Deleuze's approach, asking about the origin of *difference itself* (Deleuze 1994). Transferred directly into the socio-political space, the problem is the following: each system must include within itself different elements, elements that would not exist without the existence of the difference itself, which precisely make *signification* possible. The system is itself *a signifier*, because it must be able to include different elements, to totalize them within itself, by unifying them, and canceling them at a same time on a universal level, without being reduced to one of them. However, such a gesture is insufficient to determine *a whole* that includes different identities – the conceptual capture of the totality requires the capture of its *borders* – and this means talking about the very limits of signification. (Laclau 1996: 36–37). In order to establish this limit, the totality must determine something that is *outside*, that does not belong, that is *other* in relation to itself. That other is nothing but another difference, but this time *a different* difference, one that cannot be integrated. However, notes Laclau, *a different difference* is not just something that happens to be outside the system that establishes itself by encompassing differences – its impossibility of integration must be produced by the system itself precisely for the sake of its (self)establishment as such.

> the only possibility of having a true outside would be that the outside is not simply one more, neutral element but an excluded one, something that the totality expels from itself in order to constitute itself (to give a political example: it is through the demonization of a section of the population that a society reaches a sense of its own cohesion). (Laclau 2005: 70)

The aversion to the *different* that is banished provides the much-needed equivalence, because now the different elements within the system are unified

by the act of mutual rejection of the given difference. In this way, totality finds within itself the tension between difference and identity, the tension on which it rests. That makes this tension insoluble, and therefore conceptually incomprehensible – and that is why we are dealing with an empty signifier (which, what is particularly interesting, is the condition for the existence of a system, since without it there is no identity).

One should ask, if Laclau is right that the "empty signifier", as a constitutive element of the system, is necessary for its existence, so the indeterminacy it brings with it is an inevitable integral part of social reality, then what about claims of political "wrong" use of language?

We can look for the answer in the act of representation – because the political articulation of an "empty signifier" is nothing else than the act of shaping social reality through representation – through which the indeterminacy contained in the concept is "smuggled". Thus, suddenly, an individual difference begins to represent the whole totality, which politically aspires to be absolute certainty (and thus have an unquestionable self-legitimacy). However, it is precisely the absence of complete determination that makes the legitimation of the political system unfounded. Laclau calls this process *hegemonic*, since such a universal object, which is imposed on everything particular, (both on ontological and linguistic level) is impossible. Instead of leading to legitimization (as it is presented) the use of an empty signifier for that purpose leads to the (illegitimate) establishment of hegemony. Hegemonic identity becomes something of the order of an empty signifier, its own particularity embodying an unachievable fullness (Laclau 2005: 71). The most far-reaching practical consequence of such behavior is reflected in the character of the alleged self-legitimacy, which establishes a hegemonic position precisely on the deception.

To show how this model works in experience, we will turn to the example of political promotion of the idea of a Europe and acceptance of European values.

3. Political Catachresis: On the Other Side of Europe

The discourse of the universal system, of hegemony, which seeks to totalize, subjugate particularities to itself or banish them as an undesirable otherness against which it will re-form or strengthen its identity, is, as a rule, conquistador and is deeply connected to the origin of the idea of Europe. Although after the Second World War, for many intellectuals, the idea of Europe as "spiritual" or "philosophical Europe" – bearer of the universal of which Husserl already spoke as dead, Europe still aspires to remain the original bearer of the "universal". As noted by Jean-Marc Ferry: "marked by the seal of instrumental reason, disenchantment of the world and possessive individualism [...] from the outset, in a sense, the malaise of modernity is European" (Ferry 2015: 152). For Hannah Arendt, the establishment of a system or a universal idea that is imposed *on another* is nothing more than a manifestation of power, and the 'dematerialized mechanism' of reflexive power accumulation is a *structural* or *systemic* mechanism (Arendt 1991: 646). It is one of the sources of totalitarianism, which

was invented for the first time in history within the imperial rule of Europe over the rest of the world.

The beginnings of the structural power of Europe, which, pretending to be universal, simultaneously included and excluded others from that "universality", can justifiably be placed, at least when it comes to the legal history of Europe, in June 7, 1494, when the *Treaty of Tordesillas*, between Sapin and Portugal was signed. Armistices will very soon divide world into one that enjoys the general values and rights of the *Ius Publicum Europaeum*, and the other, which is excluded from that system of values, and which will become not only the potential private property of European Princes, but also of European, and later of the American *constitutional and democratic* regime (Burkhorst 2012: 218). From 1494 until 1945, this division had been grounded in international law. "General" and "inalienable" values were established during that time, precisely on the basis of otherness that the hegemony of global imperialism produced. This produced otherness was then expelled so that hegemony could, through binary opposition, constitute itself. In the center of this hegemony was the idea of Eurocentrism, in which concepts of culture, art and reason were form, that is, they derived their meaning exclusively from the idea of Eurocentrism. During that time, Europe produced significantly more advocates ("sorry comforters") than the critics of this, without doubt, ideology. Thus, Derrida, starting from Kant's understanding of European Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, rightly points to the specificity of its universality (Derrida 1994). At the same time, there is no doubt that Kant's idea of an international organization which, mediated by culture, art and reason should ensure peace and sociability between states (Kant 1784), represented an early preamble for the existence of a world organization such as the UN.

If we return to Orwell and Laclau, we will notice that the pretension to meaning within these terms is the fruit of rhetorical displacement. In classical rhetoric, when we have a figural term which cannot be substituted by a literal one, we call this figure *catachresis*. How does the official preamble of the UN Charter begin? "We, the people of the United Nations [...]" Such a beginning is in a complete consistency with the US Constitution, which begins: "We, the people of the United States [...]" In both cases, the paper speaks – the values establish themselves through the text. What we have is prosopopoeia, but in this case, prosopopoeia is simultaneously catachresis and synecdoche: the inanimate receives the voice of the living, and the particular, a part, emerges and presents itself as a whole (Milić 2020: 244). This is not a coincidence, because the structure of representation is identical to the one on which the idea of Europe rests, as well as every hegemonic system. How come that one (other) place is constitutive (or at least presents itself as such) for our identity (and who are we)? A difference presents itself as something else, as a whole, in order to establish itself as a foundation – this is the initial act of signification which in all the above cases implies the use of "empty signifiers". "If the empty signifier arises from the need to name an object which is both impossible and necessary, from that zero point of signification which is nevertheless

the precondition for any signifying process, the hegemonic operation will be catachrestical through and through" (Laclau 2005: 72). The political construction of the "people" is always essentially synecdochic and catachrestical. This is also the case with the notions of reason, culture and art. However, this does not necessarily imply that construction process is hegemonic, because the hegemonic system must include synecdoche and catachresis, but the use of these figures does not need to imply a hegemonic signifying process. But in the given case discourse is hegemonic for at least two reasons. First, because outside of these rights and values, even outside of the notorious "people" or "peoples", there are Indians, Native Indians, slaves, Africans, but also Americans and Europeans, who continue to be absent, even today, along with all of those who go "the other heading" (Derrida 1992). Second, the main problem of phraseology in the service of a hegemonic signifier chain is the iterability that such a chain requires. Referring to Benjamin, Derrida draws that this founding violence "is constantly represented in a conservative violence that always repeats the tradition of its origin and that ultimately keeps nothing, but a foundation destined from the start to be repeated, conserved, reinstituted" (Derrida 1992b: 55)

The question is to what extent western culture including the idea of Europe, managed to escape from the identity on which they ware founded and from the system of language and politics through which they ware founded. Phraseology that aspires to universality must contain a great *emptiness* within itself, a void that we can understand as a split between the individual and the whole, which that individuality tries to cover up. That emptiness absorbs both the meanings and the potential performativity that language carries with it, but it also represents a useful tool for assimilating the Other. When Orwell says that words like democracy, solidarity, equality, totalitarianism, etc. are meaningless, because the speaker has private definition, which is not expressed by the concept, and the concept itself, again, does not refer to anything concrete, but carries all the meanings that the listeners believe belong to it – Orwell is referring to the *emptiness* we are talking about, the void between particular and general, in which, as if in an abyss, all those active powers of language that are not in accordance with the dominant system, are lost. We might object Orwell, that this is also case with every abstraction we can think of – love, happiness, even abyss. But the problem appears when this emptiness is used in manipulative way, for political purposes.

The most important document of the French Revolution, the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen", adopted by the Constituent (France's National) Assembly on August 26, 1789, proved to be a true reservoir of contradictions of the universally human and the specifically-national. "As the supreme authority, addressor (and the meta-normative), man should have signed the Preamble of the Declaration. Such is not the case: "The representatives of the French people, organized in the National Assembly, [...] have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, inalienable and sacred rights of man [...]". The signatory, the *z* who declares the norm that is to be imposed on the norms, is a community representative of a community, an assembly

representing a people, who is named by a proper name: the French" (Lyotard 1988: 145). The sender of the Declaration is divided into French and a human being, and in the absence of a "man" as a signatory, guarantor is invoked in the form of the Supreme Being, who rivals the national authority: "The National Assembly recognizes and declares in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being [...]". This Being of reason has no reason to authorize a particular nation. By soliciting its presence and by imploring its recommendation, the Assembly authorizes itself not only as French, but also as human" (Lyotard 1988: 146).

> The members of the Constituent Assembly would have been prey to a "transcendental appearance and even perhaps to *dementia.*" concludes Lyotard mercilessly. "They hallucinated humanity within the nation [...]. The nation, as much as it is a community, owes the essence of its consistency and authority to the traditions of names and narratives. These traditions are exclusivist. They imply borders and border conflicts. The legitimacy of a nation owes nothing to the idea of humanity and everything to the perpetuation of narratives of origin by means of repeated narrations. Rightists never cease to make the most of this. Leftists give credence to a counter-narrative, a history of the whole of humanity. the narrative of its emancipation, cosmopolitan, of international import... There is no Supreme Being to reconcile these two authorizations. (Lyotard 1988: 147).

Because even the introduction of a Supreme Being in the Declaration did not settle the insurmountable dispute about sovereignty and authority, but only camouflaged it. Due to the impossible transition from the philosophical to the historical-political universe inside the law of one political revolution which contains both, in the end it remains unknown "whether the law thereby declared is French or human, whether the war conducted in the name of rights is one of conquest or one of liberation, whether the violence exerted under the title of freedom is repressive or pedagogical (progressive), whether those nations which are not French ought to become French or become human [...]" (Lyotard 1988: 147).

What is the language of the new Europe, guided by the slogan "united in diversity" and can the slogan offer something different, that is, can the slogan be more than a phrase?

4. Use with(out) Meaning

Already in the second paragraph of "Consolidated version of the treaty on European Union" we found that the drawing inspiration of EU contract is "cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the *universal values* of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law"[5] (italics added). Just one

5 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2-f140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF Accessed on 04. 05. 2023.

page lower, in the *Article 2* of *Common provisions*, these "founding" universal values named above, (which also include human dignity) are complemented with values "common to the Member States societies": solidarity, pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice.

On the next 33 pages of treaty of EU, and the following 344 pages of "Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union",[6] the word tolerance is to be found exactly zero times, pluralism is mentioned once, while democracy and equality are a bit more present as they can be found 9 times each, mainly when the provisions of the Union's external actions are defined. In most of these appearances, those notions are only mentioned, and it is impossible to relate them to some "clear image" or "discoverable object" that they pretend to promote. Among the listed values, the concept that can most obviously refer to the problem we are presenting is the concept of solidarity. Namely, solidarity can be found as many as twenty-four times in these two texts, however, the only time when a clear idea of what solidarity should be, is in chapter 222, on the "solidarity clause". The very use of the term "clause" leaves enough space for interpretational ambiguity, but to leave that aside, it is said that "The Union and its Member States shall act jointly in a spirit of solidarity if a Member State is the object of a (a) terrorist attack or the victim of a (b) natural or man-made disaster", and in both (a) and (b), it is more or less exactly defined what the act of solidarity should be compound of. Contrary to that, in the other twenty-three places, there is no indication of what exactly solidarity means, nor what kind of act it refers to in practice. This sounds even more problematic when we know that solidarity is given a main place in the canon of values of the European Union and it goes back to the early days of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC, 1951), accompanying the integration process ever since. As Sangiovanni reminds us, the preamble of the Treaty establishing the ECSC has already affirmed that "Europe can be built only through real practical achievements which will first of all create real solidarity" (Sangiovanni 2013: 1–2).

The concept of solidarity, taken here as an example, shows the general functioning of global political practice. Andreas Grimmel excellently pointed out the weakness and vagueness of the EU's value concepts (primarily the concept of solidarity), and the absence of any *common sense* when it comes to "what it actually means to act in a way that reflects solidarity in practice of the EU", which is especially manifested during the migrant and economic crisis of the Eurozone (Grimmel 2017: 162). Although Grimmel also claims that it is about the use of "empty signifiers", he distances himself from Laclau's interpretation of the *cancellation of differences*, and focuses on Wittgenstein's idea, that the meaning does not exist on its own (there is no natural relation of words and objects), but only within practice that would define applying of certain concept – that is only through mutual consent for the term use. (Wittgenstein

6 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12012E/TXT:en:PDF Accessed on 04.05.2023.

1953: 34, 233–234.) The less defined the joint action that would be implied by the use of the term, the smaller the space for numerous embeddings of meaning, which brings us back to the possibility of a discourse that absorbs meanings into itself, without bearing any responsibility to them.

The problem we see here is that such language is active in a way that passivizes the active power of concepts and the interpretation of those concepts. We said, referring to Volosinov, that it is an ideological phenomenon because meanings are manifested – have visible consequences in outside world, so ideology is not so much in our heads, as it is around us and between us. As Pêcheux notes, "ideological power" is not derived exclusively from the meaning, but from the subjects' "adhesion" to it. In this sense, the incorporation of different "accents" of meanings into the "ideological content" is not bad in itself, the problem is that they are abolished in a bureaucratically based *emptiness* – "the spirit of the law evaporates before the logorrhea of its letter" (Pêcheux 1975: 111). We must acknowledge that this is not same as populistic emptiness that Laclau spoke of. But this manipulative character of bureaucratic emptiness can be related to a certain type of ideology. Still, If term ideology most often means a set of beliefs oriented towards action, then this type of "Euro-phraseology" could not be called by that name. However, did not Marx in *German Ideology* precisely criticize its impracticality and distance from the real world and its social problems (Marx, Engels 1975: 37–55)? Doesn't a "passive ideology", or better: an ideology of inactivity, contribute to the preservation of the existing state? If, however, we insist that conservation should not be equated with activism, let us wonder for example, what environmentalists would say. For Eagleton, the main task of studying ideological discourse means "the study of the way in which meaning is put to the service of maintaining relations of dominance" (Eagleton 1991: 5). Truth be told, Marx's concept of ideology concerns above all the "false consciousness" of idealism, so Marx also attacks philosophy because it does not ask enough about her own conditions.

On the one hand, there is the ingenuity of the idea, and on the other, the ingenuity of the language. Therefore, to suspect phraseology as a mere hidden ideology would be an unjustified simplification of the problem, since it is a huge domain of discourse that is scattered in time and space.[7] The ideological

7 So much more, because the problem of phraseology is not only the ideological assimilation of the Other, but the absurdity and futility of it even when it comes to the manifestation of so-called effects: on the website of the Ministry of European Integration of the Republic of Serbia section: "Guide through negotiations of Serbia and EU", "Introduction", "What have we learned?" we can read the following: "In negotiations, it is recommended to respect the dress code, pay attention to body language and diction, use formal language and established forms of communication with the EU, pay special attention to the opening address". Not only that these are only a mere rhetoric advice without any real content, but there are followed with a sub-section "useful phrases" where we find: "accordingly, as a result, consequently, alternatively, in view of, hence, however , due to, on account of, for this reason, balanced against, for the same reason, as I have noted, on the other hand [...]" https://www.mei.gov.rs/srl/obuka/e-obuke /

character of phraseology should not come down to be just a "phrase", as if there was no certain common denominator of numerous manifestations. To the extent, the sin of the European political-bureaucratic discourse is not that it is ideological or that it is widely accepted in such way, but that it is *empty*, which means: default, arbitrary, unthought-out and therefore – violent. These seemingly difficult words require additional caution, which is maintained if we focus on the adjective "bureaucratic". Truly, there are few projects that are theorized as much as the EU, which was so critically thought through, and in which careful and cautious investments were made. However, the political-bureaucratic phrasing of the language managed to keep little from the critical edge of "Europe to come" or the Other Europe, which has always been there, as an exterior to itself.

Conclusion

Our critique of the political phraseology and its empty bureaucratic language was focused on two aspects. First came down to examining the ideological background of Europe and detecting the hegemonic character of the idea of Eurocentrism embedded in its political language. The second task was aimed at unveiling meaning(less) character of political phraseology as such, and its passivizing or non-affirmative effects. Starting from Laclau and his understanding of the "empty signifier" and the necessary function it has in the foundation of the system, especially the hegemonic one, visible in the history of the discourse of the idea of Europe, all the way to the "emptiness" in the meaning of the values that are set for foundation, and which can be seen not only in the official documents of the EU, but also in those that have fundamentally contributed to the formation of European politics.

Regardless of Grimmel's position, that it is about two different ideas of the "empty signifier", the one of Laclau's and the other that he relates to Wittgentsain, their combination allows one to see the way of changing the political phraseology of Europe. We have said that every hegemonic system requires the use of catachresis and synecdoche that follow the establishment of the individual for the general through the "empty signifier". But not every use of these figures is hegemonic: it can appear as an articulation of the "demands" of the people, those who are oppressed and who neglect their differences by uniting around a value they recognize as lacking in the existing social system. Such articulation of requirements in relation to those of the system, certainly has its advantages, because regardless of different interpretations and "accentuations" of meaning, it opens up instrumental use of notions that enables action, and do

guide-through-negotiations-of-serbia-and-evropske-unije/introduction/ More then a half of these expressions can also be found in Orwell text *Politics and English language*, as a form of bad language, named "operators or verbal false limbs". Their use is to "save the trouble of picking out appropriate verbs and nouns, and at the same time pad each sentence with extra syllables which give it an appearance of symmetry" (Orwell 1946: 4).

not neglect necessary answers (Grimmel 2017). It is true that such a conclusion would follow one of the intentions of this paper, that by criticizing the operational policy of the European Union with regard to its goal of integration, it would open a "new space" for thinking about language and its effectiveness. But such a conclusion seems insufficient and even wrong. There is no doubt that philosophical criticism must apply to every policy[8], especially one that ascribes to itself the right of universal prescription and therefore chronically suffers from an autoimmune tendency to turn into enlightened violence, legitimized by its own philosophical inconsistency (Derrida 1994)[9]. But the answer is not only in the upheaval, i.e., in the saving potential of the active power of the oppressed – the answer that would be on the same line with promotion of Arendt's notion of *communicative power* of the people, as developed in *Human Condition* (Arendt 1958). This is because such "active" language is also subject to the creation of phraseological gaps, the moment it is put to unambiguous political use with the intention of gathering "like-minded people". To such an extent, that even the phrase "truly critical thinking" or "critical philosophy" becomes a phrase, especially at that moment when it unquestionably sets itself that way, that is, when it becomes unthought, or uncritical to itself.

Perhaps we can say that all political speech is doomed to phraseology, and therefore must be accompanied by constant philosophical criticism – a task that would set stage to potential future lists, inventions, or studies of all the ways of "empty speech" and its goals.

As for the idea of Europe and the language this idea uses, the conclusion is somewhat easier (because it is repeated by many). The Europe to come, the one that is "wanted" must realize that it is the same Europe that has always been there, as its own constitutive exterior, constitutive other, but also, it must make the language of its politics stop assimilating this produced "exterior" – sucking it into a void where all differences disappear.

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8 It sounds easier than it really is: it is not uncommon for philosophers themselves, in the name of techno-economic-military positivism, to try to reduce the area of philosophical research using different methods (isn't that exactly the framework of this scientific-research project?).

9 https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/surfaces/1994-v4-surfaces04902/1064973ar.pdf, accessed 07.05. in 2023

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Aleksandar Ostojić i Aleksandar Čučković

Frazeologija “bez značenja”: politke praznine

Sažetak

Više puta smo čuli za izraze poput „prazne reči“, „prazna priča“, „mlati praznu slamu“, ali da li zaista postoji prazna frazeologija, koja ništa ne znači, koja nema jasnog referenta (ideju na koju upućuje)? Prikazujući mogućnost takve frazeologije bez značenja, rad ispituje njenu upotrebu u politici, fokusirajući se na birokratski jezik koji utiče na oblikovanje političke stvarnosti, a nalazi se u mnogim ustavnim ili vrednosno utemeljujućim dokumentima, EU, Amerike, pa čak i UN-a. Pokušaćemo da pokažemo da između opšteg i pojedinačnog značenja postoji ogromna *praznina*, praznina koju određena vrsta govora koristi kako bi apsorbovala svaki drugi jezik sa svim njegovim performativnim moćima. Kritika takve frazeologije kretaće se u dva pravca: prvi ima zadatak da pokaže (bez)značenjski karakter političke birokratske frazeologije, te njene pasivizirajuće ili neafirmativne efekte. Drugi se svodi na ispitivanje ideološke pozadine evro-centrizma, otkrivanje hegemonističkog karaktera ideje Evrope (ali i Zapadne civilizacije) ugrađene u njen politički jezik. Polazeći od Ernesta Lakloa, njegovog shvatanja „praznog označitelja“ te neophodne funkcije koju taj pojam ima u temeljima svakog sistema (pogotovo hegemonskog), kroz istoriju diskursa ideje Evrope, pokazaćemo mogućnosti i upotrebu „praznine“ u značenju, naročito kada je reč o osnovnim vrednostima koje su ugrađene u temelje jedne politike.

Ključne reči: frazeologija, politika, prazan označitelj, Laklo, Evropa, birokratija

III

REVIEWS

PRIKAZI

NADÈGE RAGARU, *AND SO THE BULGARIAN JEWS WERE SAVED... RESEARCHING, RETELLING, AND REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST IN BULGARIA*, PARIS: PRESSES DE SCIENCES PO, 2020.

Zona Zarić and Ivica Mladenović

The history of the Jewish communities in the Balkans during the Second World War remains poorly addressed in the historiography – as compared to that of Jews in western and central Europe, as well as in the former USSR. Since the end of socialism, anti-Jewish persecutions in Croatia and Serbia have been documented through a series of major pieces of work. In the cases of the Republic of North Macedonia and Greece, however, the destruction of the Jews has long remained in the shadows. In Greece, the close temporal and historical links between World War Two and the civil war (1946-1949), and the controversies associated with the elucidation of these sensitive events were among the factors that account for the limited number of works dedicated to the predicament of Jewish communities until the 1990s – aside from key testimonies and writings by Holocaust survivors, especially in the immediate aftermath of the world conflict.

Since the 1990s, scholarship on the wartime occupation of Greece has significantly expanded, although a majority of the works have focused on German occupation zone, and, to a much lesser extent, on the Italian occupation zone. Several important monographs have addressed the fate of Jews in occupied Greece.[1] Yet most of them have focused on the major sephardic metropolis of Salonica, Athens and Greek islands.[2] By contrast, researches

1 Giorgos Antoniou and A. Dirk Moses (eds.), *The Holocaust in Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Odette Vasson Vassard, *Des Sépharades aux Juifs grecs. Histoire, mémoire et identité* (Paris: Ed. Le Manuscrit, 2019); Steven B. Bowman, *The Agony of Greek Jews, 1940–1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Rena Molho et al., *Der Holocaust der griechischen Juden: Studien zur Geschichte und Erinnerung* (Bonn: Dietz, 2016); Rika Benveniste (ed.), *The Greek Jewry during the Occupation* (Thessaloniki: Vanias, 1998) (in Greek).

2 Marc Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430–1950* (London: HarpersCollins, 2004); Steven Bowman, *The Holocaust in Salonika: Eyewitness Accounts* (New York: Sephardic House & Bloch Publishing Co, 2002); Daniel Carpi, "A New approach for Some Episodes in the History of Jews In Salonika during the Holocaust: Memory, Myth and Documentation," in: Minna Rozen, ed., *The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond: The Jews in Turkey and in the Balkans, 1808-1945* (Tel Aviv: TAU Press, 2002), 259-289; Leon Saltiel, "Dehumanizing the Dead: The Destruction of Thessaloniki's

dedicated to the Bulgarian occupation zone are sparse.[3] In the case of the North Republic of Macedonia, the sheer extent of the destruction of Jews (about 98% of the community) has left few witnesses who might have recounted the predicament they experienced.[4] Overall, the limited body of literature on the territories of Yugoslavia (Vardar Macedonia and Pirot) and Greece (Western Thrace and Eastern Macedonia) may have contributed to the resilience of a dominant representation of Bulgaria's policies towards Jews during World War Two – that of a country which acted as 'a savior of the Jews', as Hannah Arendt's eulogistic remarks in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963) attest.

For years, scholars and average citizens alike have not succeeded in reconstructing a history of the Jewish community of the Balkans that takes into account all the parties involved. Against this background, the recent of publication by Prof. Dr. Nadège Ragaru, a historian and political scientist at Sciences Po Paris (France), who specializes in the history and historiography of the Holocaust, as well as the historical sociology of socialism in Southeast Europe, of a book titled *"And So the Bulgarian Jews were saved...". Researching, Retelling, and Remembering the Holocaust in Bulgaria*, appears timely. This work represents a major contribution to our understanding of the social production of knowledge about the Holocaust in Bulgaria, both domestically and internationally.

One of the main contributions of Nadège Ragaru's research lies in the fact that it completes what has until now remained a fragmented "puzzle", and made it impossible to offer a transnational and comparative analysis of the study, transmission and remembrance of the Holocaust in Southeast Europe. This observation applies to other historical configurations: in the case of the destruction of Yugoslavia, for example, research has focused so much on the Croatian and Serbian elites that it has considerably simplified the discussion. However, there are phenomena – including the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina – that would have been better understood if the role of the elites in Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo had been reincorporated into the analysis. This would have allowed the wider public to enter these subjects in a less problematic way, and read the history of this recent and polarizing period from a more enriching and less agonizing angle in these countries.

The Bulgarian story can be summarized as follows: albeit allied with the Third Reich during World War Two, Bulgaria refused to deport about 48, 000 Bulgarian Jews, the near totality of its Jewish community. By contrast, in the Yugoslav and Greek territories under Bulgarian occupation between 1941 and 1944, an estimated 11, 343 Jews were rounded up, interned in assembly camps, and deported to Nazi-occupied Poland. In the collective imagination, however, the country's name remains associated with the image of the "rescue of the Bulgarian Jews" only. Engaging in a vast

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Jewish Cemetery in the Light of New Sources," *Yad Vashem Studies* 42 (2014): 1–36; Andrew Apostolou, "'The Exception of Salonika': Bystanders and Collaborators in Northern Greece," *Holocaust Genocide Studies* 14 (2000): 165–196 ; Rena Molho, "The Close Ties between Nationalism and Antisemitism: The Hellenization of Salonika, 1917–1918," *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforshung* 24 (2015): 217–228.

3 Vasilis Ritzaleos, "The Fate of the Real Estate of Jews in Kavala before Deportation to Poland in March 1943," in: Nik. V. Roudometof (ed.), *Kavala and the Balkans. Kavala and Thrace* (Kavala: Tomos, 2012), 751–770 (in Greek).

4 Key exceptions include Aleksandar Matkovski, *Tragedijata na Evreite od Makedonija,* Skopje: Kultura, 1962 ; Zhamila Kolonomos et Vera Veskovic -Vangeli (eds.), *Evreite vo Makedonija vo Vtorata svetska vojna (1941-1945). Zbornik na dokumenti*, Skopje, MANU, 1986.

documentary investigation, Ragaru purports to trace the origins of this historical narrative, its circulations in time and space, and the ways it has been perpetuated up until today. She explains why only one facet of a complex and contradictory past was given priority for transmission; how the deportations, without being obliterated, became secondary in public discourse, museums, history books and the arts; how the writing of the persecutions against the Jews in Bulgaria became hostage to the Cold War and then to the political and commemorative struggles of the post-communist period in the Balkans and beyond.

The book is structured in an introduction, a conclusion, appendices and five constitutive chapters that unravel congruently: 1. The judicial production of a narrative of anti-Jewish persecutions in the final months of the war; 2. The negotiation of an Eastern European way of remembering these events in the late 1950s, at the time of the making of a Bulgarian-East German feature film, Sterne/Zvezdi, dedicated to the deportations of the Jews from northern Greece; 3. The mysterious travels of a 1943 visual deportation archive from 1944 up until the end of the Cold War; 4. The memorial controversies of the post-1989 period; 5. And, finally, transnational mobilizations and the institutionalization of a space of dissensus. Profoundly original in its conception as in its writing, this historical investigation is an exemplary reflection on the silences of the past.

The facts are, as always, both simple and complicated. The official Bulgarian discourse has always been to say that Bulgaria was the only country where society stood up against the deportations. This statement, which is not entirely untrue, does present some difficulties. First of all, there were indeed protests from several segments of society against the deportation of the Bulgarian Jews (members of the political elite, prominent figures, the leadership of the Orthodox Church). However, these initiatives cannot be attributed to the Bulgarian society as a whole. In addition, these protests in 1943 were not the only factor, which led the Bulgarian authorities to cancel deportation orders for the Bulgarian Jews and postpone their arrests. Of notable importance were the military losses of the Reich on the eastern front. The battle of Stalingrad, in particular, suggested that the military balance in the world conflict was gradually shifting. Later attempts by the Bulgarian Commissariat for Jewish Affairs to deport the Bulgarian Jews failed to gain support from the Bulgarian government and the king.

Moreover, as Ragaru points out, the word "rescue" poses a real problem, because the role of the Jews in their own survival has been eluded. As an example, in the accounts given in Bulgaria, great prominence is given to the March 1943 petition signed by 43 parliamentarians of the National Assembly, upon an initiative by vice-president of the Assembly, Dimitar Peshev. This presentation of factuality omits the diversity of Jews who frantically searched for connections in Parliament, government, and the entourage of the king, and prompted their Bulgarian friends and relatives into action. If we read Nadège Ragaru's book, we will learn of the complexity of what was attempted in that period, that is to say, to have the crimes judged after the world conflict, and at the same time, because a Stalinist regime had been installed, to use the vocabulary that was put in place; and this vocabulary of "rescue" omits the fact that there were not passive victims floating around, but that there were initiatives of real people trying to stay alive.

That is the difficulty this book tackles, the problematic heritage of the discourse around the words 'rescue' and 'saviors'. The other difficulty is that the official Bulgarian discourse says that

there were deportations from Yugoslavia and Greece, but this was said so elusively, that is to say, not very much at all, and always in a narrative which insisted that everything that could have been done was indeed done, reverting immediately to the emphasis on the 48,000 Jews with Bulgarian citizenship, that were saved, and that it was necessary to agree to arrest, transport to Poland and exterminate 11,343 Jews from Vardar Macedonia, northern Greece and the Serbian region of Pirot. And gradually, as the years went by, the place of these 11,343 became smaller and smaller. Moreover, even if the official discourse often uses the notion of exchange and the infamous "we had no choice" when we look at the archives consulted by Nadège Ragaru, we can also observe that the reality was far more intricate, because there were individualities in the Bulgarian government who favored deportation and supported the Nazis with enthusiasm, in particular the minister of the Interior, Petar Gabrovski. And so, what the author of this book is trying to do is to reveal this complexity and balance, to talk about those who survived and those who died, and show how a public discourse of self-valorization was produced.

It is crucial at this point to emphasize that this book is primarily a book *about our common knowledge of the* Holocaust, not *about* the Holocaust in Bulgaria. From the first to the last page, we clearly see the intention of the author in not wanting to judge the facts she unveils. She describes them a little bit in each chapter, so we learn about the historical facts incrementally; and especially at the end, when we read the conclusion, we have a clear idea about what happened. It is certain that the French public, but not only, would be lost without this conclusion, which portrays the author's interpretation of the events and not just its representation. That is why we suggest to the reader – who is not familiar with the history of the Holocaust in Bulgaria – to read perhaps first the introduction and the conclusion, and then the following chapters of the book. The author's entire aim is to encourage the reader to conduct an investigation alongside her by showing them the evidence she has at her disposal, but without claiming to impose her reading of the facts. Moreover, it seems to us that the approach of Ragaru was to try to encourage the reader to understand the subject by themself and for themself and possibly afterwards, to arrive at a synthesis which could be different from her own.

The author, who sees herself as the narrator, is not the all-knowing, but learns with the others – this is exactly the epistemic thread of Nadège Ragaru. Indeed, the research is established as if it were an investigation, since each chapter, except the chapter on the trial, is constructed as an investigation. And each time, we find something novel and important for the better understanding of the subject and to advance an investigation. To do this, the author had to spend a lot of time and energy on forms of description that help visualize, and transpose oneself into the research place, suddenly seeing and reading differently when she talks about a film, or about visual archives. A lot of time is spent describing how one goes from words to representations in order to talk about the facts, and Ragaru tries to make the protagonists heard (when she reproduces, for example, a very long parliamentary debate, which could bore some readers, but which, in fact, is fascinating because after a while, we hear them, since something of the order of the rhythm of their speech ends up intersecting).

The main hypothesis of the author was that one never knows the reality only by words and in any case, if one knows it only by words, one deprives oneself a little of the senses. So, to bring

back the senses in the words, Nadège Ragaru finds a way to incorporate seeing and listening *a minima*. Nevertheless, an important part of the introduction of the book is quite difficult to read, because it is a hard social science that requires an interpretative framework, but afterwards, when one advances in the reading, one realizes that these are also individual human stories, that appear little by little throughout the chapters, often difficult and full of contradictions. We also see the great rigor of the author in respecting each subject of the analysis. For example, she evokes communists who really believed in their ideals and who nonetheless did not act accordingly. Basically, Nadège Ragaru makes sure that each individual who appears in the book has a place, that she does not judge.

Finally, as this is a region dominated by right-wing nationalists since the fall of real socialism, it is not unusual to worry about the difficulties of a simplistic reception throughout the Balkans that would reduce the complexity of the book's argument. Knowing what is stated in the book, it is highly likely that the author would be considered by the mainstream political discourse in Bulgaria as a traitor to the Bulgarian homeland in the national discourse. In Macedonia the book would be received rather favorably, due to the fact that the author highlights the fact that there were deportations in the Bulgarian occupied areas; but at the same time, she would not be considered sufficiently pro-Macedonian, in their dominant nationalist version, since she also raises the question of the responses of the Macedonian populations to the Bulgarian policy. The dominant Macedonian discourse is to say that Macedonia was occupied and that nothing could be done. But Nadège Ragaru demonstrates the practice where the Jews were deported while there was little support by the elite and the Macedonian population and when there was spoliation of property and sale, people nevertheless bought. So, nobody is all good or all bad.

The answer in Serbia would be more positive in the sense that the book represents a curiosity about a point of view that had not really been seen, including even a part of the readers with more nationalistic inclinations finding proof in the book that all Bulgarians are nationalists, which is not at all the intention of the author. Because, Nadège Ragaru does not talk about Bulgarian nationalists, but about a complex and particular context. In Greece, the book could be seen as an important contribution that finally mentions the fate of the Greek Jews deported from the Bulgarian occupation zone. On the other hand, there is a chapter that speaks about it in an indirect way. So, it should be seen as rather positive, with the risk that one could potentially find oneself saying that finally, the Bulgarians were all bad, which is the Greek nationalist discourse, but this is very far from the author's depiction.

Bulgaria retains the image of "national exceptionalism" that it projected during the Second World War: although allied with the Nazis, as opposed to its neighbors, the Bulgarian state saved the lives of its Jewish communities. Based on a thorough historical, documentary and archival study, Nadège Ragaru reconstructs the origin of this image and analyzes how a complex and controversial past, often marked by deportations and persecutions, became the vector of reductive representations in the official Bulgarian memory, during the Cold War and also after the fall of real socialism. In other words, she has written a book that is neither against nor with anyone, and its main ambition, which we believe is very successful, is to try to understand from the existing sources the commemorative issues, even what happened and how it was written about in relation to the Shoah in Bulgaria.

To complete this subject even further, it seems to us that it would be useful to have another book that focuses essentially and more deeply on the question of facts, so that a reader who does not know exactly what happened can better understand the representations so meticulously analyzed in this book.

CHANTAL MOUFFE, *TOWARDS A GREEN DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION: LEFT POPULISM AND THE POWER OF AFFECTS*, LONDON, NEW YORK: VERSO, 2022.

Nemanja Anđelković

Chantal Mouffe's new book represents the logical extension of her previous work such as "For a Left Populism" and "Hegemony and Socialist Strategy" where she points out the importance and potential of left populism to deal with the state of post-politics and post-democracy. In the first Chapter of the book, the author paints the picture of post-politics in the lights of neoliberal and austerity policies, the rise of right-wing populism and the effects of the pandemic on establishing digital capitalist governance through solutionism that aims at finally dethroning politics and the idea of political. Precisely because of this, Chantal Mouffe stresses the urgency of rearticulating the position of the populist Left, what is meant by the "people" and the democratic project by incorporating affects as an important element of creating identification. She argues that such a re-emergence of leftist populism in the form of the Green Democratic Revolution is the only adequate response to the crisis of global society where severe attacks on equality and popular sovereignty by the neo-liberal oligarchic elites are in motion for quite some time.

For that to happen, Chantal Mouffe argues, the Left needs to do a few things. One is re-articulating the "people" in a non-essentialist way by creating the "chain of equivalence" and focusing on domination, exploitation and discrimination. The author points out how the right-wing populists succeeded in framing the "people" in exclusionist and ethno-nationalistic ways, using emotions to their advantage and mobilizing citizens. Now Left has to do the same, only in an inclusive and emancipatory form. As she puts it, by paraphrasing Spinoza, the only way to displace an affect is by producing a stronger one.

The second thing is articulated in Chapters 2 and 3 where the author discusses the problem of identification of the citizens with the democratic project. The reason for that is the long-standing rejection of the role of emotions and their value for the identification and mobilization of the citizens. She presents the history of valuing and insisting exclusively on rationality that stretches from the early philosophers of the Enlightenment, through the theorists of deliberative democracy such as Habermas and Rawls to the contemporary Left, which resulted in tying the democratic and epistemological projects, the connection Chantal Mouffe wants to break throughout this

book. She criticizes their overestimation and exclusive role reserved for rationality and naivety regarding the associative view on society through the elimination of conflict, both of which are incorporated into the democratic project. In her book, Chantal Mouffe argues for the recognition of the vital role of passions, which she defines as "common affects that are at stake in the political domain in the formation of we/they forms of identification", but also for recognizing the partisan characteristic of politics where conflicts are inherent. According to her, identification with the democratic project cannot happen by relying solely on abstract ideas, some common affects/passions need to play a vital role in creating an emancipatory form of democratic identification.

The importance of common affects and the recognition of inherent partisan characteristics of the political are embedded in the concept that Chantal Mouffe outlines in the fourth Chapter of this book, the concept of the Green Democratic Revolution. She articulates this concept on the track of the Green New Deal, where she makes an important claim that this form of radical reformism must tackle both labour exploitation and the urgency of global warming, it needs to embrace ecological bifurcation. Green Democratic Revolution is supposed to serve as a myth in the sense of George Sorell's theory which is articulated through common affects and political articulation of "We" at the political frontier.

This book is important for several reasons, it represents Chantal Mouffe's extension and further articulation of the strategy for the populist left but also adds to the growing research focus on the politics of emotions and their potential for social mobilization. Finally, besides articulating the approach by the Left, the author throughout the book gives an insightful analysis of the current context and how we suffer in the age of austerity and global crisis.

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