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STUDIES AND ARTICLES
STUDIJE I ČLANCI

REVIEW ESSAYS
PREGLEDNI ČLANCI

REVIEWS
PRIKAZI

I

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Srđan T. Korać

IS DRONE BECOMING THE NEW "APPARATUS OF DOMINATION"?: BATTLEFIELD SURVEILLANCE IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY WARFARE[1]

ABSTRACT
The paper looks at the military use of burgeoning technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in designing the visual regime of the drone as a tool for control of combat efficiency in twenty-first-century warfare. The author posits his analysis in critical theory and critical war/military studies with focus on the operationally relevant use of technical properties of the visual regime of drone observed through a wealth of video material uploaded to YouTube and related to the ongoing war in Ukraine. While many analyses delve into the combined practices of intelligence gathering, targeting, and killing aimed at the enemy, the author investigates how recent combat practices unveil the potential for an emerging role of drone surveillance: the scrutinization of combat performance of one's own soldiers. In the age of a highly professionalized and industrialized warfare, inherent to the politics of military interventionism aimed at maintaining liberal peace across the globe, the shift towards a pervasive control over the combat "assembly line" reconstitutes technological character of the drone so that it becomes an apparatus of domination. The author concludes that the drone as mobile platform for surveillance displays hidden potentials to reinforce the existing relations of domination and cautions that the advent of nano-drones could socially constitute far more intrusive and intimate control of ground troops.

KEYWORDS
drone surveillance, panopticism, domination, soldiering, military technology, critical war studies, war in Ukraine

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Post-heroic War as Industrial Process and Commodification of Death

The Clausewitzian juncture between state, army, and society – mirrored in the general military service as an institutionalised ritual of public confirmation of loyalty to the nation-state – has been in part corroded in the post-Cold War era (Owens 2007: 48). Not only was the model of general conscription gradually abandoned in many postindustrial democracies in the early 21st century, but the recruitment crisis (Ross 2011) marked the transition to the age of post-heroic warfare, in which most citizens relinquished soldiering as a fundamental civic obligation. In his thesis on "the post-heroic age", Luttwak (1995: 122) underlined another side of the new ontology of present-day warfare: the hesitation of military and political leaders to expose their own soldiers to suffering due to an increasing public aversion to casualties. Post-heroic warfare became "riskless warfare" (see Coker 2002; Kahn 2002; Kober 2015; Sparrow 2021). At the turn of the century, most postindustrial democracies, led by the United States within the framework of NATO, reshaped their militaries to fit the model of the Western way of war – rational, surgically precise, orderly, controlled, fully professionalised, and highly specialised (Buley 2008; Black 2010). The complexity of modern armies has grown in terms of organisation, specialisation, education, battlefield mobility, hardware, and technological sophistication through the internalisation of the concept of a Revolution in Military Affairs in conventional doctrines (see Collins and Futter 2015; Martyanov 2019: 69–91). The military profession had not only been commodified (Coker 2001: 92–96), but it also borrowed from the corporate managerial methodology effectiveness, efficiency, and results-oriented performance as key organisational principles (see Weber, Eliasson 2008: 50–55). In his account of the First Gulf War, Baudrillard (1995) argued that war was transformed into a set of operational procedures inherent to the administrative model of regulation of social processes rather than to the classical ontology of war as an antagonistic exchange between subjectivities of different political units. Drawing on the utilitarian logic of late capitalism, military planners transformed the combat operation into an industrial process (Nordin, Öberg 2015: 402–403). War, thus, became a modelled, easily repeatable "production cycle" whose results and outcomes are subject to constant evaluation based on quantitative performance standards (see Kapstein 2012).

Recurring debates about the most effective way of waging war have been centred around what component is decisive in winning war: military technology and hardware or human resources, i.e., how military means as well as knowledge and skills are used in the context of a particular armed conflict. The exciting possibilities inherent in advanced technology have oftentimes been praised as a decisive prerequisite for defeating the enemy (Jordan et al. 2016: 442–447). Yet, as Bellamy (1990: 13) contends, military history suggests that technology alone has never been the decisive factor in winning war: the victory has rather been an outcome of a proper understanding of how the will

to fight relates to the quantity and quality of available military resources, as well as the application of strategy and tactics. As the ultimate objective of war in the 21st century remains the same as it has ever been – to sustain one's own will to fight until breaking the enemy's will to fight – highly disciplined ranks and files are still essential. As obedience to orders is necessary to achieve military objectives, the discipline lays on individual integrity as much as it is enforced by sanctions for failure to follow regulations and instructions (Beede 2010: 746–747). Historically, the politics of army discipline have summed up a series of gestures and techniques directed at shaping man into an endurance and finely tuned "killing machine", drawing on the inculcation of warrior attributes into an individual's value system (Jindy Pettman 1996: 66; Goldstein 2004: 410–411). What still makes war wagable today is placing men in the subordinated, marginalised, and vulnerable role of soldiers through mechanisms of domination intrinsic to the political economy of late capitalism (Nunes 2020), further intensified by the internalised pressure of social expectations related to performing the ideals of militarised masculinity (Myrttinen et al. 2017).

The logic of waging war as an industrial process constitutes the commodification of death as a new mechanism of subordination and oppression. Death now has an exact market price that includes monthly income, the amount of future social security, and compensation for a possible permanent disability or the payment of compensation to soldier's family if she/he dies on the battlefield. Strand and Berndtsson (2015) pointed out that the process of recruiting "the enterprising soldier", as they name it, has been sugar-coated not only in market-driven arguments and values but in the promise of the army profession as a necessary component in self-fulfilment and personal development (2015: 245). Attempts by neoliberal governments to overshadow the political nature of the act of enlisting in the military by advertising it as a genuinely personal project (Strand, Berndtsson 2015: 245) seem to fade in the face of the ongoing, prolonged global recession. The traditional Clausewitzian nexus between the state, the military, and society has been further unravelled by deepening economic inequalities. Monetisation of body and life became notably relevant in the circumstances when the income gap between rich and poor, initially caused by neoliberal policies implemented since the 1980s, continued to widen in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008 due to austerity policies (Field 2018: 89–90). Cowen (2007) showed that voluntary military service actually exposed the fact that the largest number of recruits came from socially and/or spatially marginalised strata. In the last two decades, a typical young person who considers joining the US Army originates from Black and Hispanic communities and is motivated by ensured income, the potential to set aside savings, and retirement benefits (US DoD 2022: 4, 13). The youth from marginalised populations opt for the commodification of body and life as it seems to be the only way up the social ladder and towards securing their personal future. These acts of despair support Nunes' (2020: 253) claim that "dominated groups are vulnerable to decisions and outcomes with a high impact upon their lives, and which they cannot control or even predict".

The utilitarian logic of late capitalism and the concomitant policy of US-led military interventionism across the global periphery view soldiers as vulnerable employees prone to inefficient combat performance due to stress and trauma. The human body, or wetware in contemporary military terminology, is the weakest element of the triad comprising hardware, embodied in the wide array of high technology, and software, embodied in information and communication technologies (Lucas 2010: 290–291). An additional common problem is the tendency of military personnel to "perform a minimal amount of work at a marginally acceptable level" (Beede 2010: 748). The command-and-control system, fundamental to the effective performance of troops on the battlefield, has grown in size and complexity so much so that the increasing volumes of information available in the decision-making loop have made land forces increasingly hard to control in the fog of war (Jordan et al. 2016: 89–90). As human aggression is not genetically determined, soldiers rarely act as enduring, finely tuned, and morally insensitive "killing machines"; instead, they largely avoid killing their enemy counterparts in close combat (Grossman 1996).

One avenue of the military utilisation of burgeoning technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution goes towards the gradual reduction of the human fighting force on the battlefield by semi-autonomous unmanned systems and, in perspective, its complete replacement by lethal robots as fully autonomous systems (Korać 2018). In the last two decades, the design and utilisation of semi-autonomous unmanned systems have gone the furthest in the air force.[2] Unmanned aircraft systems, commonly known as drones, can have fixed wings or multirotors and serve a variety of purposes: reconnaissance, surveillance, patrolling, intelligence gathering, tracking, and lethal missions. While there has been increasing research in various disciplines that delves into the political, legal, military, social, and ethical aspects of drone operations of intelligence gathering, tracking, and targeted killings aimed at the enemy (Gregory 2011; Holmqvist 2013; Strawser et al. 2014; Chamayou 2015; Allison 2015; Shaw 2016a; Gusterson 2016; Grayson 2017; Hazelton 2017; Enemark 2017; Meisels 2018), there is a lack of emphasis on how drones are utilised as a tool of the command-and-control system aimed at the performance of one's own fighting human force on the battlefield. For instance, Shaw (2016b) and Chamayou (2015) have tackled the technology of dronopticon, but only in regard to its civil utilisation in the policing of urban areas or aimed at specific segments of populations.

In the last decade, scholars have examined the sense of proximity to ground troops inculcated by the video feeds from drones (Gregory 2011), a practice of lethal surveillance that merges mechanisms of surveillance and knowledge

2 There are two main types of unmanned aircraft systems: 1) Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA), which is remotely controlled from a ground control station, from where they are guided by a pilot with accompanying crew connected to the command centre; and 2) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), which follows a predetermined programme of combat action.

production with decisions on life and death (Kindervater 2016), how the perception of military gaze has changed along with revolutionary advances in technology (Bousquet 2018), and the importance of the scopic regimes of drones for the production of the political in international relations (Grayson and Mawdsley 2019). I argue that recent combat practices have exposed the potential of the visual regime of the drone for permanent surveillance of one's own soldiers as to scrutinise their performance of assigned combat missions. The fusion of drone technology and the latest enhancements in video technology gives the command possibilities to render the battlefield visible and impose flexible and mobile control over its own troops. By viewing the battlefield from a God-eye-like perspective, the command hopes to impose order upon the chaos of a combat zone so as to achieve desired operational objectives in an efficient way. My thesis is empirically based on the operationally relevant utilisation of technical properties of the visual regime of the drone observed through a wealth of video material on the ongoing war in Ukraine available on YouTube. The war in Ukraine is selected because it has so far been the best documented armed conflict via combat video footage accessible to the general public. I am interested in uncovering the potential for surveillance that drones have as mobile platforms with a view to reproducing the relations of dominance within the interaction between the drone as agent of seeing and the soldier as object of seeing. In addition, I will attempt to highlight plausible professional implications of the global availability of such top-down objectivity in combat performance via online video material.

Machines have long been used as instruments of tracking human actions in war, but their role has become inevitable recently, so much so that the body of present-day *homo militaris* is "eaten up, invaded, and controlled by technology" (Virilio 2001: 43). In his seminal analysis of how a regime of globalised remote lethal surveillance enables sophisticated procedures of tracking and nullifying human force and military hardware, Bousquet (2018) associates visibility with fatal vulnerability. Building on Bousquet's thesis, I aim to investigate how drones as agents of seeing make soldiers as agents of fighting increasingly vulnerable on the present-day battlefield. In 21st century warfare, extended vulnerability caused by the god-eye seeing capacity of the drone makes soldiers additionally susceptible to the reproduction of domination through a sort of "dronoptical" oppressive practices. I will posit my analysis in critical theory and critical war/military studies by referring to two theoretical stances: 1) the weapon is politically and socially constituted by the fashion in which military leaders and planners utilise its technical features in military strategy, rules and procedures, and combat operations; 2) the understanding of war has to include the perspective of soldiers implicated in combat experiences through mechanisms of domination. In the central part of the analysis, I will discuss the ways in which the interaction between the combatant and the weapon, now heavily affected by the latest technical innovations, may have new implications for soldiering in future wars.

Why is Modern Technology Intrinsically Dominating?

The advances of the Fourth Industrial Revolution have reinvigorated debate on the interconnected nature of knowledge/technology and power, as well as the role they play in preserving the existing mechanisms of domination in the system of sovereign states and the globalised economy. The tension between the Enlightenment project of human liberation and prosperity and ever- emerging and evolving modes of domination was one of the major issues theorised in the works of the Frankfurt School. While Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) investigated how technical rationality is embedded into the culture of the technocratic society and how it is instrumentalised through modern technology for manipulative political purposes, Marcuse elaborated how the scientific method provides conceptual ground for evaluating modern technology as a form of social control utilised for the ruling class's interests (Marcuse 1986: 157–158). Marcuse, thus, claimed that "[t]echnocracy, no matter how 'pure', sustains and streamlines the continuum of domination" (1969: 56) because "[n]ot only the application of technology but technology itself is domination (of nature and men) – methodical, scientific, calculated, calculating control" (Marcuse [1968] 2009: 168). Marcuse cautioned that "[s]pecific purposes and interests of domination [...] enter the very construction of the technical apparatus" (Marcuse [1968] 2009: 168). Marcuse differentiated technology from technics: "technics" are instruments (or devices) that are used to transform nature in the service of human beings; "technology" is the organised totality of instruments intertwined with the ways of its usage that are embedded in social relations (Marcuse [1941] 1998: 41–42; [1961] 2001: 45–46; [1964] 2002: XVI). In Marcuse's view, a technical device is always constituted within a web of human relations and meanings related to its social usage, and it is, at the same time, defined by a mission given within the matrix of the capitalist performance principle (Marcuse [1960] 2011: 136–137). An "all-embracing apparatus of domination" puts together technology and technological rationality, which "functions according to the standards of efficiency and precision", and employs them as the contemporary tools of perpetuating and extending the capacity for large-scale and efficient exploitation and domination (Marcuse 1998: 77). Further developing Marcuse's stance against the neutrality of modern technology, a critical theorist of the new generation Feenberg (2002: 7), demonstrated that technology reconstitutes the whole of the social world as an object of control. Being conceptualised as a framework for ways of life that embody values, technology has an overwhelming social impact due to its diverse design options, which are "socially and ethically significant and so cannot be discounted" (Beira, Feenberg 2018: 63). Feenberg viewed technological rationality as a "mould" for shaping technical systems so as to fit the specific demands of a system of domination (Beira, Feenberg 2018: 76). By having employed the notion of the social code of technology (or the technical code of capitalism), Feenberg defined a device "in strictly technical terms in accordance with the social meaning it has acquired" (1999: 87–88). This social meaning

is biased due to the different, or even opposite, interests and viewpoints that social groups, especially those in power, always attempt to build into the design of technical devices (Feenberg 2017: 32).

Critical War Studies transcends the instrumentality of war as the object of the research and attempts to uncover "wars' cumulative, unasked-for and frequently unforeseen product" (Brighton 2019: 134–135). Being an outcome of war as a generative force in human affairs, the reproduction of domination starts on the battlefield but extends far beyond. Drawing upon Foucault's accounts of war and "capillary" mechanisms of exercising modern power (Foucault 2003: 23–60, 242–254; [1978] 1995: 195–228), it is safe to claim that war, as a mode of control over "men-as-living-beings", has always been directed as much against the Other itself, that is, an enemy political unit, as against its own society. War politically embeds itself into the matrix of social relations – constituted within the liberal democratic state – so that its own soldiers become subject to the microcosmic practices of disciplinary power aimed at transforming "docile bodies" into killing machines. Along with the rise of advanced video and communication technologies, surveillance is becoming a key component of effective disciplining mechanisms in the military. Foucault considered Bentham's Panopticon a universal model of power and a figure of political technology for the control of large group behaviour (Foucault [1978] 1995: 200–205) because it technically creates the conditions in which the intervention over the subordinated is easy to perform at any time, "spontaneously and without noise", and yet "it acts directly on individuals", overwhelming them by the state of permanent pressure, exercising "power of mind over mind" (Foucault [1978] 1995: 206). In exercising power through surveillance, Panopticon, in Foucault's words, "can constitute a mechanism in which relations of power may be precisely adjusted, in the smallest detail, to the processes that are to be supervised" (Foucault [1978] 1995: 206).

In line with Marxists' assumption that the design of industrial technology reflects the requirements of direct supervision over capitalist production (see MacKenzie 1984) and Foucault's account of the disciplinary technology of labour, Feenberg considered the assembly line as a technical and organisational response of the management aimed at enforcing labour discipline to increase productivity (Feenberg 1999: 87). Ramey considered neoliberalism "a way of marking, counting, surveying, and controlling subjectivity in conformity with demands for efficiency, productivity, flexibility, and the complete exploitation of so-called human capital" (Ramey 2016: 53). I suggest that Feenberg's rendering of the assembly line, combined with Ramey's insights, corresponds to the context of conducting combat operations on the twenty-first century battlefield, in which combat discipline has to be imposed decisively against contingencies of the "fog of war" – if the command intends to achieve operational goals in an effective way. As the war machine is still substantially hierarchical, the efficient surveillance of the combat "assembly line" emerges as one of the vital prerequisites for the successful performance of soldiers entangled in the chaos of fighting.

The Utilisation of Drone Technology in the War in Ukraine: Drone as New Panoptic Tool?

The weapon is politically and socially constituted by the fashion in which military leaders and planners utilise its technical features in the context of military strategy, rules and procedures, and combat operations. An object is transformed into a weapon through the process of combining its physical features with the social context of its utilisation; only taken together, they create the potential for domination through the threat of or production of death and corporeal destructive force projected at the enemy (Bousquet et al. 2017). For Benjamin Meiches (2017), the material dimension of weapons, their design, and their construction features are inseparable from the relationship between people and objects. Meiches holds that the weapon is no longer just an object, a tool mastered by the human ability to decide at will: it also becomes a sort of agent with the formative power of shaping certain types of human behaviour (Meiches 2017: 15–16). There must always be intentionality behind technical details as the prime cause of the use of any type of weaponry. Unlike human beings, weapon's structural features do not have "original intentionality" or inherent intentionality, but an intentionality derived from the interpretation of their design characteristics by the constructor and the end user (military planners and commanders). Military leaders and planners imagine and interpret the desired technical features of a weapon and define their specific needs in the form of a set of requirements for designers and constructors.

In the last two decades, the use of drone technology in US-led military interventions across the global periphery has been largely associated with the practice of lethal surveillance as a necessary step towards targeted killing of the enemy. Contemporary warfare is, thus, centred around the production of aerial still photographs and video imagery (Virilio 2001: 38), so it is not surprising that the visual regime of the drone and its effects of hypervisibility have been at the heart of recent critical scholarship in war/military studies. One of the most common themes has been how the surveillance component of drone technology comes into play in relation to domination and control through the production of specific knowledge on the enemy, which is mediated and filtered via video imagery of the ground below that is visible on the screen in front of the drone operator (Hall Kindervater 2017: 29–33). The original (or primary) role of the drone as a device of surveillance can also be interpreted in terms of constructing knowledge within the logic of projecting police power, but is now utilised for the politics of (neo)liberal military interventionism (Neocleous 2014: 153–162). In this paper, I am rather interested in exploring the ways in which drones are employed in combat zones as cutting-edge panoptic devices as much as in identifying the universal implications regarding what can be done with the knowledge produced by the view from above.

In his notion of the logistics of perception, Virilio emphasises that an effective performance of combat tasks requires the uninterrupted flow of accurate

intelligence, especially visual information, headed for the assigned military units (Virilio 2001: 171). The drone technology delivers an absolute and perpetual presence in the air for a continuous reproduction of command's domination over its troops deployed in the combat zone. Unlike satellite monitoring from Earth orbit, drones bring the advantage of a 24-hour capability of video surveillance of the battlefield (uninterrupted by the clouds) and, in particular, close and focused observation of behavioural patterns of targeted ground troops (Gusterson 2016: 21–23, 60–64). In addition to the persistent watch, Chamayou (2015: 38–45) argued that the innovations referred to as "a revolution in sighting" enabled the totalization of perspectives (an extended field of vision compounded of a number of aggregated images into a single overall view), the post-festum analysis of recorded video imagery enriched by the fusion of massive data collected by various sensors, as well as the "cartography of lives", that is, identification of the unusual behaviour patterns and anomalies on the battlefield.

Over the past year, there have been three types of drones utilised by Russian and Ukrainian militaries in surveillance, reconnaissance, and combat missions: 1) unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs); 2) self-destructing ("suicide") drones; and 3) low-cost commercial drones or other remote-controlled flying devices (González 2023). Although all three types of drones are equipped with high-resolution and thermal-imaging cameras that are capable of gathering aerial photography, video, and other intelligence data in real-time, for the purpose of this analysis, only the utilisation of drones of types 1 and 3 is relevant, as they are mostly deployed for visual control over the battleground. Yet the largest portion of video imagery available online has been recorded by commercial drones or other low-priced remote-controlled flying devices due to the latest enhancements in video technology. Unlike a decade ago, when the low-quality of surveillance imagery oftentimes undermined reliable detection of enemy human targets, such as combatants/terrorists (Woods 2015: 267), the analysed video imagery produced in the course of the war in Ukraine shows that the standard omnidirectional binocular vision system combined with full high-definition resolution of videos (4K FHD) now enables the drone operator to evaluate the combat dynamics by zooming in up to 56 times.

Dozens of drone combat videos are uploaded on YouTube every day: oftentimes unsettling official military footage subsequently shared by so-called military bloggers and, eventually, recast by mainstream and alternative media. I have limited my investigation to the video material on YouTube, as it is the second most popular social media according to the number of monthly active users (DataReportal 2023: 182). My analysis of the drone viewing of combat scenes is based on a synthesised description of the most common elements of those scenes as observed in combat video footage uploaded on YouTube, in the period from 1 March 2022 to 1 April 2023. The videos are selected via the YouTube search engine by the following combinations of key words in English, Russian, and Ukrainian, respectively: "drone footage war in Ukraine",

"дрон видео война в Украйне", "дрон відео війна в Україні".[3] Only videos associated with the Ukrainian and Russian militaries, as well as videos broadcasted by mainstream media, are included in the empirical material. When it comes to the measure of popularity of combat videos among users, the analysis shows that videos uploaded in the early months of the war in Ukraine have so far reached between several hundred thousand and over twenty million views.

The observed video material suggests that the operational utilisation of the visual regime of drones can be organised by three levels of aerial viewing of the battlefield. The panoramic angle of viewing, or wide-area field of view, captures the battleground in large size, providing the gaze over a large-scale manoeuvre of various types of ground combat vehicles (tanks, armoured personnel carriers, infantry fighting vehicles, etc.). The panoramic video imagery typically allows a God's eye view of the vivid dynamics of projecting firepower during the course of a battle: combat or transport vehicles being hit with rockets or shells; soldiers jumping off to escape a blaze, running away to the safety of nearby bushes or woods (see e.g. The Sun 2022c; Война в Украине 2022a). Another group of panoramic combat videos absorbs the viewer into the dynamics of street fighting in urban areas with a God's eye view over the infantry manoeuvres: soldiers exposed to enemy crossfire moving delicately from house to house and, eventually, trapped by a house collapsing under mortar attack (see e.g. Ukrinform TV 2023). Some panoramic videos show airstrikes or ambushes of enemy convoys moving along the road or across the bridge: explosions, vehicles burning, bodies flying through the air from blasts, or falling off the speeding vehicles trying to escape the fire zone (see e.g. Kanal 13 2023a; The Sun 2022b). The depth of gazing into the fierce nature of battle is somewhat limited to the insight into destruction of military hardware or civilian objects. Yet even from the panoramic angle, the death of combatants is visible to some extent, but it is still not intimate: the viewer can see only remote silhouettes of anonymous corpses.

The next level of aerial viewing has been brought about by video footage shot from lower altitudes or with the help of digital zoom, which magnifies the observed part of the terrain. This group of combat videos available on YouTube typically offers a close and focused observation of targeted ground troops in the trenches or in the forest. Here the visual regime of the drone infiltrates the tactical stratum of combat operations revealing a more detailed image of the behavioural patterns of soldiers (daily routine, unit discipline, combat moral), as well as what exactly is the condition of their supplies (food, outfit, armament, ammunition, and equipment). At this level of aerial viewing, drone video imagery immerses the viewer deeper into the true horrors of close combat as fighting is visible in more detailed fashion: soldiers are seen firing and dropping bombs at enemy counterparts, getting hit, crawling wounded, or lying down motionless (see e.g. RuPon 2022). A fairly popular "subgenre" includes video

3 On the Filters menu within the search engine, I opted for "Video" to limit the type of desired results.

imagery of drones dropping hand grenades on unsuspected enemy soldiers in a wide range of situations and locations – sitting in or on the tank (or any other sort of combat vehicle); hidden under the trees; taking a break in gardens (in urban areas), fields, trenches, and foxholes (see e.g. Война в Украине 2022b). The viewer can watch how a hand grenade is dropped down by the drone on the unsuspected enemy soldiers, the moment of hitting the human target, and the aftermath of the explosion, that is, the reaction of the stricken soldiers: some of them are stunned, while others are visibly injured (e.g. they are seen limping or crawling or are being taken care of by their comrades). Another group of videos is related to trench assaults and presents the utter brutality of close combat: the viewer is watching the cat-and-mouse game with a tragic ending for the overpowered combatants (see e.g. The Telegraph 2022; Kanal 13 2023c).

The level of aerial viewing closest to the ground, in the form of close-ups, gives an intimate and most detailed insight into the dynamic of battlefield activities. Recent generations of drones deployed in Ukraine have a vision system that enables 4K FHD videos, and are equipped with powerful digital zoom, with which it is now possible to watch not only what exactly combatants are doing in the fire position but even their emotional state. This "subgenre" of videos shows close-ups of enemy soldiers being chased by drones hovering just above their fighting position, running away through the system of trenches, helplessly hiding from mortar or tank attacks, or being hit by dropped hand grenades (see e.g. The Sun 2022d). The main difference in the drone visual regime at this level compared to the previous level of aerial viewing lies in the most intimate possible look at bloodshed and human suffering – without getting oneself involved in war. The savagery of combat operations is now available to the viewer untamed and in its totality: the pain that the injured or maimed soldiers are experiencing is completely visible on their faces, either in the movements of their bodies or in their absence (see e.g. Kanal 13 2023b). Elsewhere, the intrusive all-seeing eye of drone combat videos reveals the agony of soldiers facing forthcoming death as they are waiting for a developing enemy assault on their fox hole/trench (see e.g. Combat Group K-2 54th brigade 2022; The Sun 2022a). Drone surveillance in the form of close-ups lifts the veil off the horrific reality of the battlefield, so much so that barely anything is left concealed.

All-seeing Eye is Hovering Over the Combat "Assembly Line": Some Implications for Future Warfare

Marcuse's idea of the continuum of domination, Feenberg's view of the transformative power of technology in remodelling our social world as an object of control, and Foucault's thesis on the supporting role of the panopticon on the apparatus of power inspire, as to paraphrase Clausewitz's famous saying, the continuation of domination by other means. The examination of observed drone video imagery from the war in Ukraine suggests the panoptic potentials of drone surveillance as an effective and cheap high-tech disciplining instrument

for the early twenty-first century militaries.[4] The insight into the work of the visual regime of the drone for extensive remote surveillance in this war uncovers the potential of the drone as an agent of seeing to oppress the soldier as an object of seeing. Reflecting on Bousquet's (2018) pairing of visibility with fatal vulnerability, I argue that the technically advanced mode of tracking human force exposes soldiers to diverse vulnerabilities.

Hovering steadily over the battleground and being integrated with the technical feature of digital zoom, which enables even identification of facial expressions, the all-seeing eye of the drone signifies a revolutionary turn in the command-and-control system. It is a step forward to the construction of Bentham's Panopticon and to the embodiment of an intrinsic neoliberal desire, driven by profit maximisation, to establish exhaustive control over production (i.e., combat operation). Borrowing from Feenberg's conceptualisation of the assembly line as a technical and organisational response aimed at enforcing labour discipline (Beira, Feenberg 2018: 78), I propose that the concept of the assembly line corresponds elegantly to the context of conducting combat operations on the present-day battlefield, in which the combat discipline of professionalised armed forces has to be imposed decisively against contingencies of the "fog of war" – if the command is to achieve operational goals in a cost-effective way.

Drone surveillance replaces traditional ways of interaction between the command and the subordinate units deployed in combat operations. Instead of oral or written modes of exchange of information about the course of operation, drones enable direct optical and in-real-time oversight of the combat performance of subordinate units (and their commanders as well). The commander of the operation is now sitting behind the screen, monitoring promptly how the battle is developing in terms of every single manoeuvre and the unit's firing efficiency. Every mistake made on the battleground is now visible, that is, it can hardly be concealed from or justified to the higher level of command. The command-and-control system has obtained a "shortcut" in the process of decision-making as a subordinate unit is supervised directly. The drone camera gathers intelligence about the unit's performance through its sensors, unlike in the past when the higher level of command had to rely heavily on indirect and periodic reporting from the lower level. In this way, taken from the utilitarian logic of cost-benefit evaluation of military actions, drone surveillance brought

4 One might argue here that combat motivation, in general, varies in terms of whether soldiers fight a just war (or at least, one that is perceived as just) or are dispatched as expeditionary forces in some distant region to support vague foreign policy interests of their country in its struggle for global power. It is true that the motivation of most Ukrainian soldiers undoubtedly emanates from their allegiance to patriotic/civic duty to defend the nation under the existential threat brought about by foreign military invasion. While it seems that in the case of the war in Ukraine an oppressive dimension of drone surveillance is largely minimised or absent, the panoptic design of the visual regime of the drone, as it is employed now, may in the future contribute to oppressive mechanisms inherent to the political economy of late capitalism and the utilitarian logic of professional military service in the case of liberal interventionism.

a greater possibility of achieving higher efficiency in combat. Yet the room for discretion in decision-making at the lower level of the command chain has been tightened, with probability of diminishing due to the limitation imposed on the range of possible actions open to lower level commanders. The trend of dealing with the combat zone as an assembly line can, in the long run, affect the creativity of low-level commanders when it comes to deliberation of the optimal way leading to the achievement of operational objectives.

The corporeal dimension of military discipline seems to have become obsolete and redundant; yet the subordinated human force is objectified by sudden, continual, highly mobile, and intimate drone surveillance. Mechanisms of domination are now sophisticated in terms of accuracy and precision in adjusting the supervised combat activities. Drones are now agents of seeing, while soldiers are constituted as objects of seeing. Hi-tech sensors integrated in the visual regime of the drone bring into reality an old technocratic dream of an "ever-present watcher" (Singer, Brooking 2018: 58). Marcuse ([1941] 1998: 144) reminded us that "human behavior is outfitted with the rationality of the machine process", which implies that the adjustment of a soldier's action to the technical features of drone surveillance does not leave much room for autonomy. The negation of commanders' and combatants' capacity to make uncoerced decisions on the course of action corresponds to Agamben's observation that the apparatuses in late capitalism are immersed in the processes of desubjectification (Agamben 2009: 20–22). In the long run, desubjectification of soldiers raises the problem of erosion of mutual trust between combatants and their immediate (unit) commander (and higher levels of command as well), which, in turn, demands even more extensive control. From a psychological perspective, Lloyd Strickland (1958) demonstrated empirically that management cannot determine whether highly surveilled employees can be trustworthy because they have never had the opportunity to act outside the restrictive conditions. Strickland (1958) also argued that permanent surveillance undermines as much trust in management as it impairs intrinsic motivation.

Practising the model of assembly line to enforce labour discipline on the present-day battlefield through drone surveillance is likely to instill fear in many of the troops in combat zone, which is inconsistent with contemporary military practice of relying mainly on self-discipline and social pressure (Kellett 1982: 143–148). However, it is hard to improve combat motivation in such way; constantly watched soldiers will feel deeply distrusted by their command and, thus, will fight with resignation rather than with eagerness. Combat motivation, which is integral to personal courage, and mutual trust between the commander and his soldiers, as well as between soldiers as comrades in arms, are corner stones of the military profession (see Kellett 1982). Highly surveilled combatants, thus, are likely to find themselves additionally distressed in combat operations if they develop a feeling of doubt or uncertainty about whether their fellow fighters or the commander will stand with them and help or safeguard them in the chaos of battle (Robinson 2006: 176–180). Maintaining social cohesion within a combat unit might be difficult under the pressure of being

watched from above while operating on the "assembly line" in an attempt to achieve military effectiveness. It is no wonder that, according to recent findings of the Ukrainian Institute of Mental Health, the surveyed Ukrainian soldiers exposed to drone surveillance for extended periods of time reported feelings of anxiety, fear, and paranoia, while some of them complained about the climate of mistrust and suspicion (Frąckiewicz 2023).

The observed combat videos from the war in Ukraine also imply the potential of drone surveillance to transform soldiers from agents of fighting into sheer objects of seeing. The focus of the command might shift from the subordinate unit's combat efficiency towards the perception of how it is fighting. The drone as an agent of seeing reproduces the relations of domination over the soldier as an object of seeing in an enhanced manner. Being an unconstrained, unjust imbalance of power that enables the control of agents (in our case, soldiers) or the conditions of their actions, domination involves asymmetries in power, and it is often arbitrary or discretionary (McCammon 2018). These asymmetries are clearly visible in the fact that the surveillance practices of the drone eventually constitute an out-of-sight mode of control, taken from the perspective of those surveilled. There is an obvious imbalance in the command-soldiers relation constituted by the panoptic potential brought by the visual regime of the drone. It is not easily visible from the fighting position, as soldiers cannot be sure what or who exactly the drone is tracking as it hovers above their heads. It always remains a dilemma: Is it an adverse or friendly drone circling around in the sky, and is it going to strike or is it only gathering intelligence? The constant fear among ground troops of approaching and possible death is actually triggered by the specific hum of drone propellers. The situation in which one can hear but cannot see drones deepens the already intensive day-to-day stress innate to fighting in armed conflict.

Another example of pairing greater visibility of combat actions with the fatal vulnerability of tracked combatants comes from a new phenomenon: the prompt, massive, and widespread availability of drone combat footage on social media. Every human action in the present day can be digitally recorded via an image or a video: the record of the event will be uploaded on social media sooner or later. The panoptic practices of drone surveillance may increase domination and oppression through the possibility of control via combat drone footage uploaded on social platforms by the enemy. Tens of thousands of combat videos from the ongoing war in Ukraine already shared online provide a valuable insight into the battlefield performance of many units from both warring sides. The opposite warring side may use the enemy video footage contrary to its original propaganda purpose: as an indirect source in assessing the performance of its own units. In that way, soldiers are under additional pressure because their costly mistakes are now transparent and visible not only to their own commanders but also through online video material provided by the enemy. Drone combat videos also expose combatants and commanders responsible for failed actions to public humiliation. Some videos have insulting captions such as "Drone captures adventure of 'Ivan the Stupid' seeking to

flee from it – he couldn't find a hideout" (Kanal 13 2023b); others mock enemy soldiers as incompetent or useless: for instance, the videos in which soldiers fell off the tank before it ran into a tree (see e.g. TheNavih 2022). The panoptic potential for efficient surveillance of the combat "assembly line" emerges not only as one of the major preconditions for successful combat performance but also seems to set up a sort of double-check mechanism for the behaviour of soldiers on the frontline.

Conclusion

The war in Ukraine has been characterised as "the first war everyone can follow from the god's-eye perspective of a flying, zoom-lens-equipped camera hovering hundreds of feet over the bloodshed" (Greenwood 2023). Analysing the combat video footage from the ongoing war in Ukraine, I have drawn on critical theory to make sense of the ways in which bourgeoning technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, in particular those utilised in designing the visual regime of the drone, affect or may affect the ontological status of combatants. In so doing, I have desired to identify the potentials and the complex of plausible and generalizable implications of drone surveillance for future warfare, especially instrumentalised within the politics of military interventionism based on modelling the war as an industrial process, including the perspective of the human experience of being entangled in the chaos of the battleground.

This account of the utilisation of drone design and the latest enhancements in video technology, as it has been displayed in the current war in Ukraine, demonstrates that the visual regime of the drone upholds and sophisticates further mechanisms of domination by giving the command an optimal tool for permanent oversight of the combat performance of its own troops. Clausewitz's ([1832] 2007: 1) claim that "[w]ar is an act of force to compel the enemy to do our will" seems to be equally valid when it comes to enforcing the interests of domination on citizens in the role of combatants. Ambivalent utilisation of the material-functional properties of the drone has emerged: recent combat practices exposed that the drone can be socially constituted as an apparatus of domination – the antithesis of its original purpose of "apparatus of protection". The pressing operational objective of imposing order upon the chaos of a combat zone in order to achieve desired operational objectives in an efficient way eventually created the God's-eye visual reality, in which the subordinated/dominated are surveilled on a dystopian scale. As the visual regime of the drone is transforming foot soldiers into easily disciplined factory/bureaucrat-like workers – now assigned to the segmented tasks that are being performed along the combat "assembly line" – the soldier as an agent of fighting has somewhat been downgraded into an object of seeing. Leaning on Meiches' findings on the materiality as a constitutive element of weapon, I suggest that the formative power of the drone as weapon to shape certain types of human behaviour helps reproduction of the mechanisms of domination in the military as well as in 21st warfare. Although they do not have inherent intentionality, it

seems that structural features of the visual regime of the drone "induced" its oppressive "intentionality" by "aiding" military planners and commanders to interpret specific needs of the command-and-control system so as to enhance obedience and combat efficiency on the battleground.

The interaction between the drone as an agent of seeing and the soldier as an object of seeing unveils the obvious vulnerability of human force on the present-day battlefield – fragility of human resources inherent to practices of the Western way of war. In highlighting plausible professional implications of the operationally relevant utilisation of technical properties of the visual regime of the drone that reinforce domination over soldiers, I propose that the extensive and intrusive hour-to-hour drone surveillance has intensified the oppression of soldiers on the battlefield in two main interweaving avenues. First, combatants live in constant fear not only of sudden death, injury, or any sort of suffering but now also of being permanently watched by drones (either hostile or their own), hovering almost invisibly above their heads, in the search for potential targets. Second, the domination over soldiers deployed in combat zones has been extended and intensified because of the intimate scale of recent drone surveillance performed within their own command-and-control system. Either avenue indicates that emerging technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution have the potential to increase domination and oppression of today's soldiers, as their lives on the battleground are now completely and continuously exposed not only to the enemy but to their own superiors as well. In line with the requirements of direct supervision over capitalist production, the political economy of late capitalism makes war wagable by maintaining the vulnerable social role of soldiers, originated from marginalised low-income populations, through subtle mechanisms of domination constituted around demands for efficient utilisation of human capital – the capital they were urged to sell to the military. The analysed practice of drone surveillance shows that domination does not necessarily imply the exercise of power. It is not decisive what commanders actually do with drones but what they are in a position to do – given the fashion in which military leaders and planners utilise their technical features in military strategy, rules, and procedures – or have the capacity to do (given the design, the construction features, and the material dimension of drones). It is fair to assume that combatants on the battlefield will be vulnerable, even if they are not actually victimised, not so much in terms of obeying or refusing to obey orders as in the sense of being subject to the social context constructed by those in power, where they will have to act as the less powerful or the powerless.

Drone surveillance, as a military practice stemmed from recent advances in the design of the visual regime of the drone, reinforces the utilitarian logic of late capitalism in remodelling the traditional role of warrior-citizen-soldier into "assembly line worker" entangled in web of "labour" discipline enforced to increase combat "productivity". While soldering used to be civic duty and matter of loyalty to nation-state, the present-day military profession is just one of many career options common for corporate world, a path towards

self-fulfilment and personal prosperity. Still, there might be even slightest seed of an emancipatory prospect in an side-effect of the revolution in designing the visual regime of drone as a tool for the control of combat efficiency. The contingent and random essence of acts of injury, maiming, and death is visualised in disturbing details thanks to HD video technology and powerful digital zoom and freely shared across social platforms. The hyperreal presentation of ferocity and bloodshed of the battlefield, in which every foot soldier is immersed, might have detrimental effects on the recruitment for future liberal wars. Traditional romanticised ideal of warrior, purified from calamity of the bloodstained truth of close combat, is now shattered by the sheer fact of high probability of imminent death, or suffering of those wounded and maimed. By becoming viral, the acts of dying and suffering have ceased to be unpleasant but well-kept secrets of the military profession.

In future wars, dangers for human force may come from the military utilisation of the further development of capabilities of face recognition and object recognition along with nano drones, which are to be the size of an insect or small bird. Battlefield surveillance by nano drones would become more intrusive and intimate, making it far harder to avoid its detrimental effects and long-term implications. This is why the anticipated trends in emerging military technologies call for the deepening of efforts in Critical War/Military Studies in examining new possible mechanisms of domination in combat operations, including the combatant's perspective of battlefield experience.

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Da li dron postaje novi „aparat dominacije“?: nadzor bojišta u ratovanju dvadeset prvog veka

Apstrakt

Rad pruža uvid u upotrebu naprednih tehnologija Četvrte industrijske revolucije u vojne svrhe na planu osmišljavanja i konstruisanja vizuelnog režima drona kao oruđa za kontrolu efikasnosti borbenog dejstva. Autor smešta analizu u okvire kritičke teorije i kritičkih studija rata, sa težištem na operativno relevantnim načinima upotrebe tehničkih karakteristika vizuelnog režima drona, a zasnovanu na obilju video materijala dostupnog na YouTube-u vezanog za tekući rat u Ukrajini. Za razliku od brojnih analiza posvećenih kombinovanim praksama prikupljanja obaveštajnih podataka, ciljanja i ubijanja usmerenih na neprijatelja, autor istražuje kako nove borbene prakse otkrivaju potencijale za novu ulogu nadzora dronovima: temeljna provera borbenog učinka sopstvenih vojnika. U doba visoko profesionalizovanog i industrijalizovanog ratovanja, svojstvenog politici vojnog intervencionizma usmerenom na održavanje liberalnog mira širom planete, preusmeravanje ka sveobuhvatnoj kontroli nad borbenom „pokretnom trakom“ rekonstituiše tehnološki karakter drona tako da on postaje aparat dominacije. Autor zaključuje da dron kao mobilna platforma za nadzor ima skrivene potencijale da ojača postojeće odnose dominacije i upozorava da bi uvođenje nano dronova u redovnu vojnu upotrebu moglo da predstavlja sveprožimajuću kontrolu kopnenih trupa na daleko intimnijem nivou.

Ključne reči: nadzor dronom, panopticizam, dominacija, vojnička praksa, vojna tehnologija, kritičke studije rata, rat u Ukrajini.

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TOWARDS A THEORY OF THEORETICAL FORMATIONS: FROM ALTHUSSER TO LENIN

ABSTRACT
In his theoretical efforts, Lenin made two excursions into philosophy – first in the book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and then in *Philosophical Notebooks*. There are obvious differences between these two works, which are reflected in the attitude towards Hegel (first rejection and then enthusiasm and acceptance of Hegel's dialectical method), but also significant similarities. The paper points out that what links Lenin's two books is the concept of theoretical formation. We derive the term theoretical formation from Lenin's concept of socio-economic formation: in every society, a large number of modes of production coexist, which are overdetermined by one mode as dominant. Society is thus not a complete and rounded form, but a contradictory overdeterimned formation. The main thesis of the paper is that Lenin applies the concept of overdetermined formation to the reading of philosophy. Philosophical discourse is never whole but is split between two irreconcilable tendencies – materialism and idealism. Philosophical work is nothing but a struggle for the theoretical dominance of one tendency over another. This struggle between philosophical tendencies is, as Louis Althusser points out, an extension of the class struggle in theory and takes place both in the entire history of philosophy and within each individual philosophical text. The philosophical text is thus a contradictory formation of unequal and combined development.

KEYWORDS
Lenin, Althusser, Hegel, dialectical materialism, socio-economic formation, theoretical formation, unequal and combined development, contradiction

From the Concept of Social to the Concept of Theoretical Formation

The unity of Marxist science – historical materialism and Marxist philosophy – dialectical materialism is the guiding idea of the entire theoretical work of the French philosopher Louis Althusser. Historical materialism is the science of history, that is, of historically specific modes of production. By the mode of production, Marx meant the combination of production forces and relations of production in which relations of production are in dominant position.

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Production forces concern the degree of technological development in the interaction of man and nature, i.e. transformation of nature through labor; the concept of relations of production implies the modalities of appropriating surplus labor, and as such it does not concern the relationship between people and nature but the relationship between people, i.e. different social groups, that is, classes. Marx hinted at the possibility of the existence of many modes of production in human history, and in different types of human societies – he mentioned modes from primitive communism, through Asian, slave-owning, feudal, to capitalist and developed communist modes of production, but he elaborated exclusively the theory of the capitalist mode of production. In any case, according to Althusser, historical materialism, as a scientific theory of different modes of production, imposes itself as a theory of history, that is, as a theory of a certain type of totality, which we otherwise call the social formation. Society is a totality in the sense that each social formation consists of a combination of many relatively autonomous instances or levels such as the economic base, the political-legal superstructure, and the ideological superstructure (Althusser 1990: 6). Theory of history, i.e. historical materialism is the science of the specific nature of this totality, i.e. the science of how certain relatively autonomous instances are bound and determined in the last instance by the dominant mode of production.

Another aspect of Marxist theory is Marxist philosophy, that is, dialectical materialism. Dialectical materialism is not identical with historical materialism since they do not share the same theoretical object: historical materialism is the theory of modes of production, dialectical materialism is the theory of knowledge (Althusser 1990: 8). This is a problem that is traditionally also dealt with by non-Marxist philosophy. However, Althusser claims, while traditional philosophy approaches knowledge from an atemporal and formal angle, i.e. as a theory of the *cogito* (Descartes, Husserl), as a theory of *a prirori* forms of the human mind (Kant) or as a theory of absolute knowledge (Hegel), from Marx's point of view, philosophy can only be a theory of the history of knowledge, i.e. a theory of conditions (either external, i.e. material and social, or internal, i.e. conditions specific to philosophical or scientific practice as such) on which the knowledge production process rests. Marxist philosophy thus deals with the demarcation between scientific knowledge and ideological practice. Like any other science, Marxist philosophy also consists, according to Althusser, of theory and method. The theory of Marxist philosophy is materialism (a doctrine that rests on theses about the distinction between the real object and knowledge, and the primacy of the real object over knowledge, the primacy of being, i.e. phenomena in relation to thinking), the method of this philosophy is dialectic (dialectic concerns the relationship between theory and object where this is not a relationship between two separate entities, but a relationship of mutual transformation and thus a relationship of production). Both materialism and dialectic are the ancient heritage of philosophy, but what separates dialectical materialism from traditional philosophy is that its materialism is dialectical, and that its dialectic is materialistic (9).

Precisely in his attempt to build the unity of historical and dialectical materialism, Althusser kept returning to the work of Lenin. Namely, Lenin was the only one in his generation of Marxist authors (i.e. authors from the era of the Second International) (Anderson 1985) to make an excursion into philosophy – first in his early book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and then in his own notes, unpublished during his lifetime, which were published after his death under the title *Philosophical Notebooks*. The main concept that Althusser takes from Lenin is that of social formation. The place where Lenin originally, even before his two philosophical books, articulated his thesis on social formations is his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* (Lenin 1977, vol. 3). It is originally a historical materialistic, scientific and not philosophical work. Nevertheless, in spite of that, Althusser also sees in it the elements of a philosophical theory: in Lenin's concept of social formation there is already a philosophy in its still rudimentary state, a philosophy that has not yet appeared in the form of a philosophical system, but in the form of a philosophical practice. Lenin's *The Development* thus stands in continuity with his explicit excursions into philosophy, which he realized in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and *Philosophical Notebooks*. If we start from the assumption that dialectical materialism is a theory of knowledge, two elements of this dialectical materialism can be recognized in Lenin's book, according to Althusser: the first is the thesis about the dominance of the abstract over the concrete in philosophical and scientific knowledge; the second is the thesis about unequal and combined development of philosophical and scientific knowledge.

Let's start from the difference between Marx's *Capital* and *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, from Althusser's perspective: while the subject of Marx's book is the mode of production, the subject of Lenin's book is a certain social formation. Althusser's approach to Lenin constantly emphasizes that distinction – while *Capital* belongs to the abstract-formal level of analysis, *The Development* belongs to the real-concrete level. With that distinction, Lenin already emphasizes a fundamentally philosophical thesis concerning dialectical materialism (fully developed not in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* but in *Philosophical Notebooks*): in Marxist theory, the abstract-formal plane always prevails over the real-concrete.[1] The primacy of the abstract over the concrete leads to the conclusion that only theoretical discourse provides knowledge about the empirical object. This is the basic distinction that separates dialectical materialism from other systems of knowledge – empiricism as a form of vulgar materialism starts from an object, a phenomenon, where

1 As we will show later, Althusser treats the dominance of the abstract over the concrete as the basis of dialectical materialism, but at the same time he considers this to be a feature of all scientific knowledge. The inability of scientists to base their scientific practice on the principles of this relationship indicates the penetration of ideology into the given scientific practice (for example, penetration of empiricist ideology). This is precisely why the intervention of dialectical materialism in scientific practice ensures the scientific basis of this practice. Althusser marks this intervention as an epistemological break that marks the separation of science from ideology.

knowledge, that is, consciousness functions as an 'image' of the real object; on the other hand, idealism denies the possibility of a final insight into the real object (Kant's thing-in-itself), i.e. a real object is a product of consciousness. Dialectical materialism does not deny the existence of phenomena, nor does it deny the decisive importance of consciousness, but it believes that consciousness, i.e. concept, i.e. theory are necessary in order to gain insight into the real object: knowledge is always knowledge about a concrete object, but this knowledge is always the result of the process of knowledge production (Althusser 1990: 47). Lenin's book thus works, like every work of historical materialism, with two elements of knowledge: a theoretical concept, on the one hand, and an empirical concept, on the other. The theoretical concept is the already mentioned abstract-formal determination of the object, while the empirical concept is the singularity of the concrete object. These are exactly the two levels of analysis that Lenin works with in his analysis of Russia at the end of 19th century: the mode of production is a theoretical concept developed by Marx in *Capital*, while the social formation is a complex, space- and time-specific combination of different modes of production that are only overdetermined by the capitalist mode as the dominant mode of production.[2] In that way, social formation is an empirical concept. Neither the theoretical nor the empirical concept are simply given *a priori*, as empiricism thinks – the empirical concept (the social formation of Russia) was produced by the intervention of the theoretical concept (Marx's mode of production) (48). The relationship between theoretical and empirical concepts is not a relationship of exteriority, deduction or substitution, quite the opposite – knowledge is a synthesis of theoretical and empirical concept.[3] The combination of these two is a unique feature of Marxism. Abstract-formal discourse is a theory in the strong sense of the word, and its importance lies in the fact that it enables a real-concrete object to be visible. This actually means that, even in real-concrete works of Marxist analysis such as Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, the general principles are actually always theoretical (abstract). Theoretical labor is necessary to understand concrete objects, i.e. theoretical

2 For example, in a capitalistic social formation, the capitalist form of production supersedes other forms of production such as, for example, small-scale artisanal or small-scale agricultural production, i.e. small commodity production. Lenin showed this on the example of Russia in the 19th century: in the complex social formation that Russia was at that time, feudal production, petty peasant (i.e. small commodity) production, and capitalist industrial production existed in parallel, but these modes of production were superordinated by the capitalist mode as dominant mode of production.

3 It should be emphasized that the relationship between theoretical and empirical in this case is not a relationship of simple deduction. Rather, it could be said that the relationship between the theoretical and the empirical is a dialectical relationship, which actually means that the two planes are interconnected, that there is a constant transition from one plane to another, and that knowledge represents a dialectical unity of opposites - a concept and a real object. We elaborate on this in the last section of this essay, where we discuss Lenin's reading of Hegel's *Logic*.

labor, i.e. the production of theory is a condition for translating Kant's 'thing-in-itself' into a 'thing-for-us', i.e. a condition for our knowledge of the world.

On the other hand, even when the work of dialectical materialism enables insight into the ways in which knowledge about the world is constituted, this does not mean that this knowledge about the world, and about concrete empirical objects that make up this world, is guaranteed in advance. What we always see in front of us are mostly real-concrete objects and not formal-abstract objects. The theoretical object (i.e. theoretic concept) can thus very easily be reduced and destroyed by the penetration of common sense 'obvious facts', i.e. by the penetration of spontaneous everyday ideology or more precisely – empiricist ideology. Ideology, in the form of empiricism, humanism or in the form of some other idealistic and spontaneous doctrine, constantly threatens to destroy the theoretical object. Precisely because of this, the task of dialectical materialism is to continuously fight against the influence of ideology in scientific knowledge and, through theoretical labor, to highlight the specific materialistic aspects of Marx's system and eliminate the idealistic aspects that are foreign to his system. This is precisely the method that Marx himself implemented: he started from various idealistic, philosophical ideologies such as the one about the authentic essence of man and his nature, and the alienation of this essence; as Alrhusser points out, by conducting a self-criticism of his own theoretical system, Marx realized a kind of epistemological break in his youthful system in which idealism still dominated over materialism, and thus he succeeded, by inventing the concept of the mode of production, to build the materialistic element as a dominant, hegemonic element in his system. This actually shows that no philosophical or scientific system is an absolutely pure system: in every system there are both materialistic and idealistic elements. The essence of knowledge production is the struggle against idealism in order to establish the materialistic element as the dominant element within the theoretical system. That, among other things, is the essence of the thesis about unequal and combined development that Lenin elaborates in his *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*: in a certain social formation there are multiple modes of production that are overdetermined by one mode as dominant, just as there are multiple ideologies where one dominates as hegemon. The revolution is only the initial, necessary step in order to transform a given social formation. The revolution must be followed by a long struggle in the sphere of politics and ideology in order to establish and consolidate a new society. In that way, a new ideology (communist) would become hegemonic in a new type of social formation while elements of the old order continue to exist and operate. These elements constantly threaten to overthrow the revolution and implement a counter-revolutionary restoration. It is similar in the domain of theory: after Marx established a theoretical revolution, a long and persistent theoretical work is necessary, i.e. the fight against idealism that still exists even in Marxist theoretical discourse is needed, in order for materialism to maintain a permanently dominant position within theory. Theoretical labor is a struggle (Kant's *Kampfplatz*) between different theoretical tendencies

that strive to establish a hegemonic position within theory. This points to the fact that theory is never a neutral field, nor is it a harmonious, rounded and complete *form*; on the contrary, theory is a contradictory *formation* in which the struggle for hegemony is constantly taking place. In other words, a theory, just like Lenin's social formation, is actually a formation of unequal and combined development.

Specifics of Philosophical Theoretical Formation

In this way, the central contribution of Lenin in constituting dialectical materialism as a Marxist philosophy, i.e. theory of knowledge, more precisely the theory of conditions, both exogenous (material, social) and endogenous, for the constitution of knowledge, is that he showed that knowledge is never complete, rounded, but that this knowledge, like any social formation, is imbued with internal contradictions. That means that knowledge is not a *form* but a *formation*. However, it should be determined what the difference is between two types of theoretical formations – philosophy (i.e. philosophical theoretical formation), on the one hand, and science (i.e. scientific theoretical formation), on the other. In mapping this difference, we particularly relie on Lenin's early excursion into philosophy, which he made in his book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* (Althusser 1971: 23–70). According to Lenin, the characteristic of philosophy is that, unlike science, it has neither object nor history; philosophy is the theoretical practice of drawing the dividing line, the difference between the two traditions that constitute philosophy as a formation since its inception – idealism and materialism.

Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* is a polemical book, conceived as a critique of idealistic revisions within Marxist philosophy, which came at the beginning of the 20th century mainly under the influence of the Austrian physicist and philosopher Ernst Mach (Lenin 1977, vol. 14). The central argument of the book is directed above all against Alexander Bogdanov, at that time an important protagonist of the Bolshevik party who, under the influence of Mach, published in 1904-06 his central work *Empiriomonism*. Lenin's intervention thus concerns the criticism of deviations within Marxist theory – his key argument is that Machists, that is, empirio-critics, under the influence of neo-Kantianism, destroy the materialist core of Marx's thought. Lenin singles out Kant's concept of 'thing-in-itself' as a key concept in his argument: empirio-critics basically accuse materialists of believing in a thing-in-itself, that is, in the possibility of discussing matter outside of human experience. Precisely at the point of the question about the thing-in-itself, Lenin points out that the entire philosophy can be divided into two camps: materialism is a tradition whose advocates claim that phenomena (the thing-in-itself) exist outside of human thought, consciousness and experience, and that despite this, phenomena, through the scientific process, can be known (objects exist outside the mind, ideas are a reflection of objects). Idealism is a philosophical tradition that believes that 'pure' phenomena can never be reached, and that there

is a fundamental split between things-in-themselves and our representations, that is, our awareness of things; therefore, what science works with are not things-in-themselves, phenomena as such, but constructions of our consciousness. For idealists, what we refer to as 'things' are entities that are structured in our experience through sets of ideas and, therefore, one cannot talk about the absolute existence of things independently of someone perceiving them (objects do not exist outside the mind). Lenin speaks in the name of defending materialism and addresses empirio-critics as disguised Kantian idealists with two significant remarks concerning the status of knowledge: firstly, idealism is a form of solipsism and, secondly, idealism is a form of skepticism. Namely, if my consciousness, as the empirio-critics claim, is the absolute source for knowing the world, then there can be nothing else but I/Myself (42–43). Since the whole world is my representation, one cannot come to the existence of other people but oneself; if in our feelings and sensations we perceive the constructions of our consciousness, therefore we cannot feel anything other than our feelings – the world consists only of my feelings and sensations. This is the solipsistic trap of empirio-criticism. The ultimate consequence of this is doubt about the possibility of knowledge: materialism is a true theory of knowledge since materialists start from the thesis that external sensations turn into facts of consciousness; through this, materialists come to know about the phenomenon that is the cause of sensation. Contrary to this, for idealists, sensations are not a connection with the world, but a kind of partition, a wall from the world (49). If consciousness is not a connection with the world but a kind of barrier, if there are no phenomena but only our constructions about phenomena, how is it possible to gain knowledge about the world?[4] Idealism is thus nothing more than a form of scientific skepticism. Lenin's philosophical intervention thus consists in demarcating materialism and idealism as decisively as possible by emphasizing the theoretical superiority of materialism. In other words, Marxism must rid itself of all remnants of idealistic, neo-Kantian solipsistic doctrine and fully build a materialistic worldview.

Lenin, therefore, conceives Marxist philosophy, that is, dialectical materialism as a philosophical practice based on drawing the line of demarcation between materialism and all forms of idealism. Althusser will draw far-reaching theoretical consequences from this thesis. The first is the claim that philosophy is not a science. The basic difference between philosophy and science lies in the fact that philosophy does not have an object, that is, it does not rest

4 As an idealist who accepted the possibility of science and scientific progress, Kant was aware of this contradiction, that is, of the skeptical danger behind idealistic philosophical systems. In order to resolve this contradiction, Kant introduced the concept of transcendental subjectivity in his *Critique of Pure Mind*, which he used to denote access to knowledge that goes beyond pure sensory experience. This is precisely why Lenin marks Kant as an agnostic regarding real objects – Kant does not deny the possibility of the existence of a material object, but doubts the possibility of 'pure' knowledge regarding the existence of this object. We will return to this issue in the final section of this essay.

on the aforementioned synthesis between theoretical and empirical concept. Unlike science, philosophy is the practice of constructing concepts without their empirical object, which can also be labeled as philosophical theses or propositions. A philosophical thesis, that is, a proposition cannot be true or false, it can only be correct or incorrect; as such, it cannot be demonstrated in a strictly scientific way or proven in a scientific way (Althusser 1990: 74). This is precisely why philosophy does not have a scientific object, but only 'objects' that are inherent to philosophy as such: we are talking about philosophical objects. Philosophy constructs these philosophical objects because it consists of words that are organized into the already mentioned philosophical theses; these theses are interconnected in larger and organized systems. It is precisely in this sense that philosophy is practice – the category of truth is attached to an empirical object and as such it belongs to the order of science; the category of correctness is linked to philosophical objects and as such belongs to the order of (philosophical) practice. Philosophical theses or propositions have always had the potential to cause various 'critical' distinctions within philosophy as a system: their function is to separate ideas (theses, propositions and even entire philosophical systems) from one another. In this sense, the practice of philosophy consists in that philosophy divides and traces the lines of division and makes these lines of division visible (75).

From the fact that philosophy does not have its object in the way that science has it, it follows that philosophy does not have a history either, at least not the kind that science has. Since science has an object, it can progressively move forward with regard to the knowledge of that object – for example, it can develop new methodologies, new experimental procedures (techniques) that lead to new knowledge about the object, etc. This progressive movement in relation to the object gives science its history. Contrary to this, since philosophy is only a set of propositions without object which are organized into a system, its only practice can be an intervention in the theoretical domain of philosophy itself. It actually means only the struggle of one set of propositions, that is, a philosophical system against another philosophical system, that is, the struggle of one philosophical tendency against another. And two, not dominant, but the only philosophical tendencies are idealism and materialism. Lenin thus in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism,*

> jettisons all the theoretical nuances, distinctions, ingenuities and subtleties with which philosophy tries to think its 'object': they are nothing but sophistries, hair-splitting, professorial quibbles, accommodations and compromises whose only aim is to mask what is really at stake in the dispute to which all philosophy is committed: the basic struggle between the tendencies of materialism and idealism. There is no third way, no half-measure, no bastard position, any more than there is in politics. Basically, there are only idealists and materialists. (Althusser 1971: 56)

In other words, materialism and idealism are the only real oppositions in the field of philosophy that are mutually exclusive. As we will see later, Lenin

somewhat corrects this attitude in his *Philosophical Notebooks* and analyzes the relationship between materialism and idealism in a much more sophisticated way – the relationship between materialism and idealism is the only true relationship in the history of philosophy, but it is far from being a relationship of absolute exclusivity; no philosophical discourse occurs in a pure form, every philosophical system has both materialistic and idealistic elements, but one of them is always dominant – this is because every philosophical system is not a form but a formation of unequal development. But regardless of this later deviation from the rigidity of *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, Lenin's basic thesis remains unchanged: philosophy essentially has no history, or if it does – nothing happens in it, except for the drawing of lines of demarcation, distinction and division (61). Or the same, only in other words – according to Althusser, there is a history *in* philosophy, but not a history *of* philosophy.[5] This history in philosophy is a constant repetition of one and the same struggle, a conflict between two tendencies that takes place within the system of philosophy as a kind of Kant's *Kampfplatz*.

However, all this does not mean that philosophical discussions, wars and mutual confrontations between philosophers take place in some kind of vacuum, a philosophical ivory tower – on the contrary, since ideas do not float in an empty, non-existent space, philosophical discussions have concrete social implications. This is because philosophy, as a relatively autonomous theoretical formation, is nevertheless only one part of a wider, more complex totality that we can label as a socio-economic formation. As we have already seen, a social formation is a complex and contradictory set of instances or levels that are ultimately overdetermined, in a given historical conjuncture, by the ruling mode of production. In this sense, according to Althusser, the three dominant levels of every social formation are the economic level, the political-legal level and the ideological level. These three instances form the structural totality of a given social formation. The ideological and political level as forms of 'superstructure' not only passively reflect the economic level, i.e. 'base', but

5 As we already said, philosophy has no history since, according to Althusser, philosophy has no object, that is, philosophy is not a science. From this comes another difference between science and philosophy – in science there is a possibility of cumulative progress in the knowledge of its object. Since there is no object in philosophy, it is not possible to talk about cumulative progress regarding this object. Therefore, unlike scientific knowledge, philosophical knowledge *does not become obsolete*. Classical humanities also knew this – a certain philosophical school of thought can be temporarily treated as 'overcomed', so that in a certain context, i.e. at a certain historical 'conjuncture' it reappeared with new force (just think of Plato's philosophy and its various reincarnations, from Christianity to various Neoplatonisms). Since the history of philosophy can be reduced to the conflict of materialism and idealism, it follows that the history of philosophy is a continuous struggle for the hegemony of one tendency over the other – therefore, there is a history of philosophical trends, schools, doctrines, but not a history of philosophy in the strong sense of the word, at least not in the way to which there is a history of a certain science. In other words, the history of philosophy is cyclical while the history of science is linear-cumulative.

together with 'base' actively participate in the process of social reproduction of the given formation. Ideology participates in social reproduction, and in the reproduction of the dominant mode of production by functioning as a system of representations, a system that actually prevents true knowledge about the political and economic structures of a given society. In this sense, ideology is a representation of the world that people start adopting as soon as they are born, it permeates all human activities and as a kind of cement ensures social cohesion by concealing antagonisms that are ultimately generated at the economic level. Ideology is inseparable from people's 'lived' experience and that is why these people do not see it – individuals are in ideology like fish in water, they live in it but do not perceive it as ideology. From Althusser's determination of ideology as a system of representations of the world that prevents subjects from recognizing the objective conditions of their own existence, two significant theses can be drawn.

A.

Ideology is a system of representations that can appear in diffuse, unsystematic and compact, systematized form – systematized ideology has the potential to structure scattered, diffuse ideological representations.

Namely, ideology consists of representations, images, signs, etc. Although different forms of representations function as relatively autonomous systems (religious, moral, ethical, artistic, family and other representations), they do not exist in isolation from each other. What makes an ideology an ideology is the systemic connection of these different forms of representation, i.e. ideology is a way of arranging and combining ideological representations that gives them meaning (Althusser 1990: 26). In this way, ideology is also an overdeterimned structure – in ideology there are autonomous areas of that ideology, where one area dominates over others. For example, as it was in the Middle Ages, Althusser claims, religion can dominate other ideological representations and structure them in a certain way. Precisely because ideology is a structure or formation with a dominant element, different areas of ideology can appear in different forms: ideology can function extremely diffusely, but it can also appear in an ordered, systematized form, for example in a theoretical form. What's more, systematized ideology, ideology in its theoretical form can structure, as a kind of dominant element, the entire ideological field, that is, it can structure ideological representations that appear in an unsystematized, diffuse form. The most typical example would be the relationship between theology and religion: theology as an organized system of concepts directs religious practices in a given society which can appear in the most diverse forms of representation – in the form of images, rituals, ceremonies, habits, texts, etc. The theoretical ideological form thereby structures the ideological field and achieves real ideological effects. The same applies to moral, political and aesthetic ideologies: these ideologies can function as a set of unsystematized beliefs, customs,

tastes, trends, etc. but this unsystematized set of representations can also take on an orderly, structured form in the form of ethical theory, political theory, aesthetic theory, etc. Or to be more precise: ideology can function both in its diffuse and in its systematized form, *but* in order for a certain ideology to be ruling ideology, it must *in the last instance* be organized in a systematic, theoretical form (otherwise there would be no coherent ideology in the aforementioned sense of 'systematic connection' of scattered ideological elements). The highest form of this theorization of ideology occurs in philosophy: precisely because of this, Althusser claims, philosophy is a laboratory for the theoretical abstraction of ideology (27).

B.

In a given social formation, there is a large number of ideologies, but only one is ruling.

In other words, just as in a certain social formation there exists in parallel a large number of different modes of production that are overdeterimated by one mode of production as a hegemonic mode, so in a given formation there is also a large number of ideologies that are overdetermined by a single ideology as a hegemon.[6] The ruling ideology is always the ideology of the ruling class, while beyond it there are scattered elements of the ideologies of the oppressed classes. We say 'elements', because oppressed ideologies often exist only in a diffuse, unsystematized form and are therefore structured by the ruling ideology (for this reason, workers' political movements have often in their history adopted ideological concepts and political principles from the ruling bourgeois ideology). A social formation is a set of ideological tendencies that represent different class interests. If philosophy is a systematized and ordered ideology, i.e. ideology in a theoretical form, divisions and splits within philosophy become clear. Divisions, splits, separations between philosophical tendencies are nothing more than the division and separation of different ideologies, one of which is always hegemonic in relation to the others. If we say that different ideologies represent different class interests, we will get a clear answer to the question of what philosophy is – philosophy is an extension of the class struggle in theory. The philosophical tendency (materialism) that draws a line of separation in relation to the dominant philosophical tendency (idealism) has

6 At this point we must be precise: the claim that "a large number of ideologies that are overdetermined by a single ideology as a hegemon" *does not* mean the same thing as "a large number of unsystematized elements of one ideology that are systematized by the theoretical form of that ideology". Namely, each individual ideology is systematized in a similar way as the entire ideological field – for example, religion in the Middle Ages overdetermined other ideologies, but at the same time it was internally differentiated into systematized, theoretically elaborated theology and into different, diffuse, unsystematized elements of religious practice. This gives us a kind of fractal picture of how ideology works.

the ability to theoretically articulate, systematize, and structure the scattered elements of the oppressed ideology.

This is the essence of Lenin's argument in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*: the errors of the Machists are not just intellectual errors that take place in the domain of pure thought, they are errors that prevent, block the possibility of separating proletarian ideology from bourgeois ideology as a hegemonic ideology. The mistakes of empirio-criticism prevent the diffuse and unsystematized elements of the proletarian ideology from being abstracted, condensed, systematized and thereby given a theoretical form, that is, from the proletarian movement making a decisive and final break in relation to the ruling bourgeois ideology. The 'deviations' of empirio-critics are not only philosophical but also political deviations that have the potential to direct the course of the class struggle – in the direction of bourgeois reformism instead of a true proletarian revolution. Therefore, for Lenin, the question of all questions is how to intervene in the field of philosophy and draw a line of demarcation in that field, i.e. separate Marxist materialism from neo-Kantian idealism.

Philosophy as an Overdeterminated Theoretical Formation

As we have already pointed out, Lenin made two significant excursions into the field of philosophy – one in the book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* from 1909, and the other a few years later in notes that were not published during his lifetime, nor written as a book, which are available to us today under the title *Philosophical Notebooks* (Lenin 1977, vol. 38). While the first book is still written in the spirit of the general positions of the Second International, *Philosophical Notebooks* are marked by its deep crisis, which was caused by the outbreak of the First World War and the abandonment of the policy of proletarian internationalism by most left parties in Europe. Lenin wrote his notes in exile in Bern in 1914-15 and what fundamentally distinguishes them from *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* is Lenin's attitude towards Hegel. In this sense, *Notebooks* are Lenin's long transcripts and commentaries on Hegel's *Science of Logic*. Unlike his early works, in which Lenin expressed an openly anti-Hegelian attitude, in *Notebooks*, Lenin seems to be fascinated by Hegel's dialectic, and in that context he makes the famous claim that it is impossible to understand Marx without first understanding Hegel and especially his *Science of Logic*. The historical significance of Lenin's philosophical notes is recognized today – he is apparently the first significant author of Marxist orientation who devoted himself to the systematic study and commentary of Hegel's philosophical system. Authors from the time of the Second International did not have any special interest in Hegel or in philosophy in general; instead, they sought the basis of Marxist theory in the critique of political economy. Even when they made references to Hegel, like Georgi Plekhanov, those references were marked by an empiricist and scientific approach, without significant study of Hegel's *Logic*. Lenin's excursion into Hegel's *Science of Logic* thus, in retrospect, places him practically as the 'founder' of the Hegelian tradition

within Marxism. Only after Lenin, thanks to György Lukács, Hegel will become the central author for the so-called Western Marxism (at the time when Lenin wrote his *Notebooks*, Lukács had not yet discovered Marx – that would happen only after 1917). Nevertheless, perhaps precisely because of the fragmentary way of presentation that was intended for self-education and not for publication, the theoretical significance and meaning of these notes remained without a final consensus of later interpreters. Is there a split and a theoretical turn in *Philosophical Notebooks* in relation to *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*? Do *Notebooks* offer fundamentally new insights into the conception of philosophy offered by the early Lenin, which rests on the thesis of the conflict between idealism and materialism as the only relevant conflict within the field of philosophy, which further causes the thesis that philosophy has neither an object nor a history? In the answer to these questions, we will refer to two opposing readings of *Philosophical Notebooks*, which were offered, on the one hand, from Hegelian positions, by the central authority on this question, Kevin Anderson, and on the other, from anti-Hegelian positions, by Louis Althusser.

Unlike Althusser, who, as we have seen in our discussion so far, drew far-reaching theoretical conclusions from *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, Anderson rejects the theoretical relevance of Lenin's first excursion into philosophy (Anderson 1995: 17–23). According to him, *Materialism* is not a very original book, and as such it takes over the basic Marxist theses from the time of the Second International, especially the ideas of Georgi Plekhanov and Friedrich Engels, which are based on the scientization and thus the vulgarization of Marx's thought. Lenin's attack on the Machists is based on empiricism, according to which theory is only a reflection of objectively given material reality – consciousness is the image of the world, everything else is mystification. According to Anderson, this is a positivist and vulgarly materialistic attitude, later further deepened by the Stalinist elevation of *Materialism* to the level of standard, mandatory Marxist reading. In that context, Lenin rejects any possibility of reconciling or combining idealism and materialism: there are only two tendencies – the first starts from nature and matter and treats consciousness as epiphenomenal, the second tendency goes the opposite way. Reconciling materialism with idealism only leads to a fall back into idealism. For Anderson, *Philosophical Notebooks* are an example of Lenin's break with the early Marxist, positivist and empiricist orthodoxy. With the discovery of Hegel, Lenin intuitively returns to the positions of early Marx, and especially to Marx's interpretation of Hegel, which he gave in an unfinished text in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts from 1844* under the title "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic and Philosophy as a Whole" (Marx 1989: 141–170) (Lenin's return to this essay is intuitive since Marx's early works were not known to the authors of the Second International). In this essay, Marx gives an ambivalent assessment of Hegel's system. What stands out as particularly significant in Hegel is the negation of the negation – Hegel's dialectic is not an evolution that leads to the final reconciliation of contradictions, but a system of interruptions, breaks that progressively moves forward through the always open and never

completed model of inner negation. This is a positive contribution of Hegel's thought; what needs to be criticized in Hegel, according to Marx, is Hegel's naive belief that this process takes place in the domain of pure thought. Hegel's mistake lies in the fact that he believes that the alienation of man can be overcome in the domain of thought. Anderson believes that in this essay Marx does not propose any scientifically based materialism, but that, by reading Hegel, Marx proposes a kind of synthesis of materialist and idealist systems:

> Despite this seeming dismissal of Hegel's idealism, however, Marx writes a bit further in the same paragraph of the positive features of this same idealism. Marx here stresses the unity of idealism and materialism rather than the positivist scientific materialism found in the writings of so many of his followers. He writes of 'a thorough-going Naturalism or Humanism' that 'distinguishes itself both from idealism and materialism, and is, at the same time, the truth uniting both'. Such a notion of the unity of idealism and materialism contrasts sharply with the scientific materialsm of orthodox Marxism. (Anderson 1995: 9)

Anderson believes that the essence of Lenin's return to Hegel lies precisely in this synthesis of idealism and materialism, and in overcoming narrowly understood, positivist materialism from *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*.

Let us dwell only on Anderson's reading of Lenin's reading of Hegel's chapters on being and existence from the first book of his *Logic*, and the chapters on appearance and essence from the second book (Hegel 1969). In Lenin's readings, Anderson recognizes the criticism of formal logic and especially the natural sciences: while empirically based natural sciences start from the assumption of the separation of the world and thought, reality and the image of reality, and being and its appearance, Lenin, discovering Hegel, rejects this kind of split between objective and subjective, and between essence and appearance. Appearance and essence are separate but interwoven entities – what connects them is being, becoming. In other words, there is nothing in the world that is not mediatized in some way. This is particularly evident in the passage in which Hegel talks about the relationship between being and nothing:

> *Pure being* and *pure nothing* are, therefore, the same. What is the truth is neither being nor nothing, but that being-does not pass over but has passed over-into nothing, and nothing into being. But it is equally true that they are not undistinguished from each other, that, on the contrary, they are not the same, that they are absolutely distinct, and yet that they are unseparated and inseparable and that each immediately *vanishes in its opposite*. Their truth is, therefore, this movement of the immediate vanishing of the one in the other: *becoming*, a movement in which both are distinguished, but by a difference which has equally immediately resolved itself. (Hegel 1969: 82–83)

This passage actually hides Hegel's remark about the relationship between the world of matter and the world of thought, which Lenin now understands no longer as the duality of matter and thought, but as a complex unity of opposites. This is a position that is in sharp contrast with vulgar materialism

and Lenin's positions in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*: the ideal and the real are not absolute opposites. Within Hegel's system, ideality is continuously transformed into reality and thereby they appear as one. Therefore, Lenin ends his reading of the first volume of Hegel's *Logic* with a radical attitude:

> The thought of the ideal passing into the real is *profound*: very important for history. But also in the personal life of man it is clear that this contains much truth. Against vulgar materialism. NB. The difference of the ideal from the material is also not unconditional, not überschwenglich. (Lenin 1977, Vol. 38: 114)

Lenin applies this line of thinking to the reading of the second volume of *Logic*. One of the main ideas that Lenin takes from Hegel is that of the dialectical intertwining of form and essence, from which it follows that the dichotomy between things-in-themselves and appearances should be rejected. Among other things, Hegel asserts that the apparent world and the essential world are independent entities of existence – one should only be a reflected existence and the other an immediate existence. And yet, despite this look, each of these worlds is continuously extended into the other, so "it is therefore in itself the identity of both these moments". First of all, both worlds are independent, but in the same time each world contains a moment of the other world. From this, therefore, it follows that it is not possible to talk about differentiation into appearance and content as believed by the natural sciences and formal logic: every concrete thing, every concrete something stands in different and often contradictory relations to everything else (136). Lenin writes:

> that of the universal, all-sided, vital connection of everything with everything and the reflection of this connection – materialistisch auf den Kopf gestellter Hegel (Hegel materialistically turned upside down) – in human concepts, which must likewise be hewn, treated, flexibile, mobile, relative, mutually connected, united in opposites, in order to embrace the world. (146)

How, then, to understand Lenin's formulation about Hegel materialistically 'turned upside down'? As we have seen, Anderson believes that this is Lenin's attempt to synthesize a materialist and idealist system, i.e. to create a synthesis of Marx and Hegel. Althusser, however, gives a different reading of this remark: Hegel 'turned upside down' is not the result of synthesis but of theoretical extraction. This actually means that Lenin made a kind of revision of his earlier views in the following sense: while in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* he saw philosophy as an irreconcilable frontal conflict between two philosophical systems, materialism and idealism, in *Notebooks* he seemed to realize that no philosophical system appears in its pure form, that every philosophical discourse appears as a discourse of unequal development and that it contains both materialistic and idealistic elements, therefore that it appears as a philosophical *formation*. Since each formation is simultaneously a formation with a dominant element, it follows that in each philosophical system, in its combined structure, one element (usually Element 2 – idealism)

dominates over another (Element 1 – materialism). It is precisely because of this that it is possible to find a materialist core even in Hegel's idealist system – from Hegel's idealism, the materialist dialectic, hidden behind what is nine-tenths of it "chaff, rubbish" (154), should be peeled off.

This is exactly the problem with Anderson's otherwise extremely sophisticated readings of *Philosophical Notebooks*: Anderson offers a detailed exegesis of Lenin's transcripts and comments that is unparalleled in the literature, *yet* he offers an extremely simplified, i.e. non-dialectical view of philosophy. For him, philosophy is always a whole and complete system, a kind of totality. That totality appears either as idealism or as (vulgar) materialism. The revolutionary nature of Marx lies in the fact that already in his early works he drew a sketch for the synthesis of the two systems – Marx set this system in a rounded form already in his early works, which readers from the time of the Second International, with the exception of Lenin, failed to take into account. In his system, idealism and materialism stand in a symmetrical, non-antagonistic relationship of mutual synergy. Althusser, contrary to Anderson, however, shows that materialism and idealism cannot coexist peacefully in any philosophical system, moreover, in any philosophical text – they are always in a relationship of mutual struggle for hegemony, where this hegemony depends on the class position. In this sense, the thesis of philosophy as an extension of the class struggle in theory, which manifests itself through the clash of materialism and idealism, is still present with the difference that this struggle is no longer only frontal, external to the philosophical text, but also internal – the philosophical text is a contradictory, non-whole structure. Lenin thus reverses Hegel not only by placing matter in the place of ideas but also by taking a certain class position (Althusser 1971: 114). This is the only way Lenin can 'uncover' Hegel.

In his *Essays in Self-Criticism*, Althusser pointed out in the most direct way this Leninist thesis about philosophy, but also every single philosophical text as a contradictory formation, and thus every philosophical discourse as a field of class struggle, i.e. the struggle for the hegemony of one Element over another (say, as in Lenin's reading of Hegel, as a field of struggle for the hegemony of materialism – Element 1, over idealism – Element 2). Philosophy, according to Althusser, is not a whole of mutually agreeable parts subject to the exclusive duality of truth and error. Rather, it is a system of propositions through which philosophy takes a position in the theoretical class struggle, whereby this position is directed against theoretical opponents (Althusser 1976: 143–144). But in that struggle, the opponent is not unique either: philosophy, therefore, is not a reproduction, in the form of opposing systems, of a simple rationalistic difference between truth and error. There is no single field of the good, on the one hand, and the field of the bad, on the other, writes Althusser. Opposing viewpoints are intertwined with each other. Both opposing sides have within their system elements that originally belong to the opposite system: even in the most idealistic philosophies an element of materialism can be found, just as in materialistic philosophies one can recognize a grain of idealism that threatens to destroy the entire materialistic construction from within. Therefore,

it is about tendencies and not absolutely separate trench positions. Among these tendencies one is always the main and the other one is secondary, one is dominant, overdetermining, the other is subordinated, i.e. overdetermined. In other words, idealistic and materialistic tendencies are never realized in a pure form in one philosophy:

> That is why both in order to talk about and in order to judge a philosophy it is correct to start out from Mao's categories on contradiction. Now Mao talks above all about politics, even in his philosophical texts – and in this he is correct, more so than might be imagined – and he gives reasons for believing what Engels and Lenin suggested, which is the theoretical foundation of the Leninist 'materialist reading' not only of Hegel, the absolute idealist, but of *all* philosophers without exception (including Engels, Lenin and Mao themselves): that in every philosophy, in every philosophical position, you must consider *the tendency in its contradiction*, and within this contradiction the *principal* tendency and the *secondary* tendency of the contradiction, and within each tendency the principal aspect, the secondary aspect, and so on. But it is not a question of an infinite and formal Platonic division. What must be understood is how this division is fixed in a series of *meeting-points*, in which the political-theoretical conjuncture defines the *central meeting-point* ('the decisive link') and the secondary meeting-points; or, to change the metaphor: the principal 'front' and the secondary 'fronts', the main point of attack and defence, the secondary points of attack and defence. (145)

Philosophizing is not (only) a frontal conflict of two tendencies, as the early Lenin thinks, nor a peaceful coexistence, a synthesis of these tendencies as Anderson thinks, but, as the mature Lenin shows, a theoretical practice of extraction and thus the real transformation of one system (idealistic) into the new system (materialistic). That is precisely what Lenin does with Hegel in his *Philosophical Notebooks*: he finds the materialist core of Hegel's thought and, through the process of elaboration, transformation and theoretical production, builds a new materialist philosophical system. That shows that in every philosophical system there is also what that system does not say directly and that something should be reached through the process of separation, i.e. derivation. Precisely because of this, what already exists in a practical form in the given, old system should be converted into a new system. That does not mean just giving an appropriate form to the already existing content – on the contrary, it is a real transformation, a completely new theoretical elaboration. New elaboration does not begin by introducing into the old system the settings of a system that is external to the previous one; the philosopher must start from the existing theoretical universe in order to reverse it, i.e. he must apply the process of application of the more advanced, hidden elements of that system to the visible, manifest, and more backward elements of that same system. Specifically, such operation consists of applying more elaborated concepts of a certain philosophical system to its less elaborated concepts. That leads to the correction and complete transformation of the given system (Althusser 1990: 60–61). In other words, in the process of transforming a system, the subordinated

tendency within that system (materialism) should be extracted and applied to the dominant tendency of that same system (idealism) and thus the given system 'turned upside down': through the process of elaboration, transformation and production, the subordinated tendency of the old system becomes the ruling tendency, which changes the entire given philosophical field.

The question remains: where does Lenin find this materialist core of Hegel's philosophy that he then applies against that same Hegel? The answer is: in the last, third book of his *Science of Logic*.

Lenin's Transformation of Hegel

Lenin begins his reading of the third book of *Logic* precisely with the thesis about the theoretical transformation of a philosophical system which, like any theoretical system, is a non-whole, non-totalizing system, and as such contains within itself both opposing, mutually negating philosophical tendencies – materialism which is, in Hegel's case, in the embryo, and thus the overdetermined tendency and idealism, which is the hegemonic, ruling and overdetermining tendency. To carry out a critique of Hegel's idealism does not mean to refute his philosophical system, to reject it, but to develop it further, it does not mean "replacing it by another, one-sided opposed system, but incorporating it into something more advanced" (Lenin 1977, vol. 38: 167–168). The construction of this more advanced system begins by distinguishing those segments of Hegel's system that can be used as a critique of classical philosophical idealism. These segments are, as Althusser perfectly notes: A. confirmation of the material existence of the object and thus of scientific knowledge, B. negation of the idealistic category of the (transcendental) Subject (Althusser 1971: 107–126). Both segments are related to Hegel's criticism of Kant, which Lenin takes up wholeheartedly.

A.

Lenin systematically and tendentially singles out precisely those parts of the third book of *Logic* in which Hegel criticizes Kant. It is possible that for Lenin himself there was a surprising similarity between Hegel's and his early criticism of Kant, which the latter elaborated in his *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*. Namely, one of the central arguments of the early Lenin against the Machists and their continuity with Kantianism, as we have seen, was the accusation that Kant's philosophy ends in skepticism. This seems to be Hegel's central argument – namely, by singling out categories as essentially unattainable to the human mind, Kant separates feeling and perception, on the one hand, and reason, on the other. Kant thereby degrades the importance of thinking by denying it the ability to arrive at the complete truth: Kant's concept is completely separated from reality, it is a purely mental, i.e. rational category. With this, Kant enters into a kind of contradiction – he starts with a discussion about truth and defines truth as the matching of knowledge with the object, and then, in

a completely skeptical spirit, claims that mental knowledge is not capable of understanding things-in-themselves, and that the categories of the mind actually produce untrue representations of phenomena. Hegel's system comes from exactly the opposite positions – there is a unity of concept and reality, that is, a unity of phenomenon and reason. Therefore, according to Hegel, exactly contrary to the entire tradition of idealism, there is no division into abstract thinking and sensory material. Hegel's system, which Lenin tries to systematize, tends precisely to overcome the skeptical contradiction that Kant fails to resolve. In this approach, Hegel refers to logic in the sense that he posits logic as a kind of theory of knowledge.

Thus, there is certainly a continuity between Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and *Philosophical Notebooks* – this continuity is reflected in the criticism of Kantianism as idealistic skepticism. What separates the two works is the way in which Lenin criticizes this skepticism. *Materialism* is dominated by the theory of reflection of reality, which Lenin now, discovering Hegel, labels as vulgar materialism ("Plekhanov criticizes Kantianism [and agnosticism in general] more from a vulgar-materialistic standpoint than from a dialectical-materialistic standpoint [...]") (179). Following the structure of Hegel's argumentation in the third volume, Lenin carries out a critique of vulgar materialism by distinguishing the categories of subjectivity and objectivity and considers their mutual connection. The essence of this discussion is to show how Hegel explores the movements of the objective world in the movement of subjective concepts, where Hegel's main thesis is that the subjective and the objective are in a relationship with each other, that there is a continuous transition from one to the other, and that the subjective and the objective form a kind of the identity of opposites. Lenin thereby continuously emphasizes that Hegel investigates the movement of the objective world in the movement of concepts – the creation of (abstract) concepts already includes conviction, awareness about objective connections within the world. The creation of concepts alone already means a deeper human knowledge about the world. Marx showed this perfectly in his *Capital* – surplus value is not immediately visible, it is not a phenomenon in itself separated from thinking, on the contrary, it is a mental abstraction that reveals the objective contradictions of the capitalist mode of production by its very construction. In other words, with Marx, the empirical concept was produced by the intervention of the theoretical concept, that is, in Hegel's language, the objective was reached by the intervention of the subjective, which makes the objective and the subjective a unity of opposites. Hegel thus shows that logical forms, subjective concepts are not an empty shell separated from reality, i.e. objective world. Objective reality (nature) develops into a logical idea – idea is only idea through being mediated by Nature (182). This indicates an unbreakable connection between the world of nature and the world of ideas – the subjective/notion and the objective/nature are simultaneously the same and not the same (185). This actually means that the subjective (opinion) and the objective (object) are not strict opposites, but that their relationship is dialectical. Unlike Kant, for Hegel it

is not essential whether the principles are subjective or objective – external conditions (laws of nature) exist as such, but only man gives them purpose. This is precisely the decisive link between Hegel's and Marx's dialectic: the purposes of man are caused by the objective world and this purpose is realised through union with objectivity. With this, Hegel studies the matching of the idea with the object, which is reached through the practical, purposeful activity of man. This is the crucial materialist core of Hegel's system – link between subjective purpose and objective truth is reached through practice, i.e. through the purposeful activity of man. This thought was already present in hints on the margins of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, while now, with Lenin's reading of Hegel, it becomes central: human knowledge is an active intervention in the world, the transformation of phenomena in themselves into phenomena for us. The practice of man is verification, the criterion of objectivity of knowledge (211).

The relationship between knowledge and the world is not a relationship of reflection, but a relationship of production, i.e. practice. Dialectic thus, unlike Kantianism, is not a closed structure of pure thinking separated from the world, but an active knowledge of the world through practice while both thinking and the world are transformed. In that way, Lenin found precisely in Hegel a mechanism for the theoretical elimination of the idealistic concept of thing-in-itself and its replacement by the dialectical identity of essence and appearance. In other words, Lenin used Hegel to criticize Kant from the aspect of science. He thus found in Hegel categories apparently completely foreign to Hegel's initial idealistic project – the category of scientific objectivity, on the one hand, and the category of the material existence of the object, on the other (Althusser 1971: 119). Lenin's Hegel is, therefore, as we have already stated, Hegel materialistically 'turned upside down'.

B.

Lenin seems to find another segment of the materialist core of Hegel's system in his critique of Kant's concept of transcendental subjectivity. The thesis about the transcendental Subject arises spontaneously from Kant's above-mentioned idea about the separation of phenomenon and thought, objective and subjective, that is, essence and appearance. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant makes a distinction between the empirical and the transcendental plane. Kant introduces this division precisely because he believes that consciousness is an insurmountable obstacle and that this consciousness can never reach objectively given phenomena, at least not in an unmediated way. Knowledge refers to objects – unmediated knowledge Kant designates as perception. However, this perception exists only insofar as the object is given to us "but this in turn, is possible only if it affects the mind in a certain way" (Kant 1998: 155). Therefore, objects are given to us through sensibility, and this sensibility is the only one that gives us perceptions, and with the help of reason, objects are synthesized and concepts arise from it. The point is, however, that without concepts

we cannot understand perception. Precisely because of this, the thesis about the transcendental Subject necessarily follows from Kant's assumptions – this thesis is actually a response to empirical theoretical formulas according to which the self is reduced to a network of perceptions. Since phenomena are separated from thinking, that is, our perception is mediated by concepts, there must necessarily be a unifying principle through which the subject achieves a relatively coherent picture of the world. The transcendental Subject belongs to the transcendental plane, which refers to the claim that the human experience of the world exists above and beyond sensory experience, and that it is necessary to know the internal laws of the mind in order to discuss sensory evidence at all. Kant shows this on the example of the problem of space and time (chapter "Transcedental Aesthetic" in his *Critique*) – according to him, space and time are pure forms of human intuition. Space and time do not exist 'outside of us' but are subjective forms of our sensibility. According to Kant, space and time are real in the empirical sense, but ideal in the transcendental sense. The transcendental Subject is thus Kant's kind of theoretical *deus ex machina* for the problem of skepticism regarding the existence of a material object that Kant himself intuited – transcendental subjectivity is necessary because otherwise no knowledge would be possible. This is the external, unifying element of knowledge that ensures wholeness and coherence, the totality of our experience of the world, which ensures the synthesis of the empirical and transcendental plane. This is the central point of Kant's idealism, which connects it with the entire tradition of idealistic thinking – Kant's novelty is only that at the place of God, the Platonic soul, etc. he places the transcendental Subject that arises at the moment when philosophy is no longer able to appeal to traditional theological arguments regarding the nature of the existence of the world. In a historical sense, Kant's theory is therefore a response to David Hume's empiricism and his 'naive realism', i.e. materialism.

However, if we accept Lenin's reading of Hegel, according to which in his philosophy there is no longer a division between empirical and transcendental plane, i.e. that there is a dialectical connection between the two planes, that there is a constant transition from one plane to another, and that our relationship to the world implies a dialectical unity of the opposites that make up these two planes, the disintegration of every category of transcendental subjectivity follows. There is no external element that ensures the synthesis, coherence and certainty of knowledge – knowledge is immanent and not transcendent. Knowledge, that is, an idea exists only as a unity of concept and objectivity, whereby this agreement of concepts with things is not subjective as Kant believes. On the contrary, knowledge is a process of sinking into inorganic nature in order to dalecticly connect it with the power of the mind. This matching of thought with object is a process. It actually means that this match is never certain, it is not completed and forever. Since there is no external, transcendental guarantor of this correspondence, the relationship between thought and object is in perpetual contradiction. In the words of Lenin,

> Cognition is the eternal, endless approximation of thought to the object. The *reflection* of nature in man's thought must be understood not 'lifelessly', not 'abstractly', *not devoid of movement, not without contradictions,* but in the eternal *process* movement, the arising of contradictions and their solution. (Lenin 1977, Vol. 38: 195)

The movement of thought is contradictory because there is no external guarantor of thought, no transcendental Subject. This is exactly why Hegel writes in the last paragraph of his *Science of Logic* that the form of determination of an idea is completely free – that it exists for itself without subjectivity (Hegel 1969: 843). Knowledge without (external, transcendent) subjectivity is another confirmation of the materialist core of Hegel's philosophy.

It seems that this is precisely the reason for Lenin's pronounced interest in the chapters of *Logic* that deal with the category of idea, and especially in the last chapter of Hegel's work entitled "The Absolute Idea". What Lenin seems to be attracted to is Hegel's immanent and thus materialistic (albeit covertly) foundation of the idea, which replaces Kant's transcendent and thus idealistic approach. In that chapter, Lenin finds Hegel's explanation of the dialectical method, which is nothing more than a method of knowing objective, therefore material reality, which does not behave as "external reflection; it draws the determinate element directly from its object itself", as quoted by Lenin (220). Precisely because of that, knowledge, that is, an idea, is not an external reflection (Kant's transcendental Subject), but rather some kind of general concept that determines itself from itself, i.e. through the process of inner separation. Precisely because of this, concepts are by their very nature, instead of being immobile, in fact in eternal transition – the formation of concepts arises through an always open process of internal negation. Knowledge, instead of being the achievement of some kind of non-antagonistic synthesis as in Kant, is actually a never-completed model of inner negation. Hegel's negation is a key moment of connection and development and not a form of skeptical negation. At the same time, negation (the second) is not the elimination of the positive assumption that precedes it (the first), i.e. it is not the negation of the first position and its replacement by the second, but the inclusion of the first, the integration of the previous position into a higher form of knowledge. Thus, within the dialectical method of knowledge, the unity of the negative with the positive is achieved (227). However, this unity, integration is never final, never a rounded synthesis – the unity of the first and second statement can only be conditional, temporary, transitory and relative. The initial negation is immediately replaced by the negation of the negation. The negation of the negation thus becomes the third member of the dialectical method. Even this third, this result of the negation of the negation, is not a static or final third, but only a new premise that becomes the source of further analysis. Knowledge is thus an infinite progress in proving and deriving. Each subsequent level of negation contains transformed previous contents, it enriches and thickens them, and thus the original method grows into a system, science. Science thus begins

with a vague, unclear beginning (for example, a general assertion that there is a material object), then through the process of internal negation it enriches its knowledge, builds a system, and when it builds it, it has an enriched insight into its initial premises. Science is thus "a rearward approach" to that beginning, that is, "the regressive confirmation of the beginning and its progressive further determination" (232). Science, i.e. knowledge (Hegel's idea) thus, since it rests on an always open process of negation of negation, has an immanent (materialistic) and not a transcendent (idealistic) foundation, i.e. knowledge has an inherent, materially based method of its own foundation and cannot be referred to external, transcendental (religious, spiritualistic, idealistic) categories. In other words, knowledge is always knowledge about a concrete object, but it is necessarily the result of the knowledge production process. Lenin thus ends his reading of Hegel's *Science of Logic* with the statement that this work does not contain any specific idealism but an explication of the dialectical method. Therefore, in this most idealistic work of Hegel, there is the least idealism and the most materialism: "'Contradictory', but a fact!" (234), concludes Lenin.

Conclusion

Lenin developed the concept of social formation for practical reasons, in order to use it to analyze the complex social situation of Imperial Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. He developed his concept on the basis of Marx's concept of the mode of production, emphasizing at the same time the similarity and difference in relation to Marx's thesis. Namely, Marx's *Capital* is not a description of a concrete structure of social relations, but rather a theoretical tool for the analysis of this structure. This is the basis of Marx's method – social facts, ie. social empirical 'reality' is not presented to the theory in order for it to confirm or reject its general concepts through the observation of these empirical data; on the contrary, very general concepts, theoretical abstraction enable the analysis of concrete empirical facts. Theoretical abstraction such as the concept of mode of production allows social facts to 'speak', to become theoretically visible – theory moves from the abstract to the concrete and not the other way around. Therefore, Marx, placing his text on the level of theoretical abstraction, describes the capitalist mode of production in its pure form. In social 'reality', this mode never appears in its pure form, every social 'reality' is composed of a number of modes of production, where one stands out and imposes itself as dominant mode. In 'reality', therefore, we never encounter exclusively with the mode of production, but with social formation, but in order to understand the concreteness of a certain social formation, it is necessary to start from the abstraction of *Capital*. This is precisely the difference between books such as Marx's *Capital*, on the one hand, and Lenin's *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, on the other. Both books are examples of historical materialist analysis, but while Marx's book deals with one mode of production (capitalist), the other deals with a specific social formation (pre-revolutionary Russia) in which there are different and mutually

competitive modes of production (feudal, small-scale artisanal, small-scale agricultural, capitalist) which are only dominated by one mode of production (capitalist) as the dominant mode.

In this essay, relying on Althusser's readings of Lenin, we tried to expand the concept of social formation to the analysis of philosophical thinking and knowledge in general and to develop the concept of tehoretical formation. We tried to find the elements of the mentioned concept in Lenin's works dealing with philosophy, and to look at the philosophical text not as a rounded, complete form, but as a contradictory formation, i.e. theoretical formation of unequal and combined development. Among other things, we have shown that (1) philosophy is not science – while science rests on the concept of truth, philosophy rests on the concept of correctness, and as such it is the practice of producing concepts without an external referent (the so-called empirical object). Precisely because philosophy is the production of concepts, i.e. philosophical propositions, that same philosophy (2) has a specific relationship to ideology – it represents the practice of systematizing otherwise diffuse ideological elements, i.e. philosophy is a systematized ideology, i.e. ideology in its theoretical guise. Since different schools of philosophy actually represent different ideologies in a systematized form, and ideologies are representations of different class interests, it follows (4) that philosophy is nothing more than an extension of the class struggle in theory. The most significant conflict (5) in philosophy is that between idealism and materialism, and this is therefore a reflection of class conflicts specific to a given social formation. As Lenin (6) shows in *Materialism and Emprio-criticism*, this conflict takes place throughout the entire history of philosophy, but, as he shows in *Philosophical Notebooks* also within an individual theoretical system, even an individual philosophical text – a philosophical text never appears as absolutely completed, whole and pure philosophical discourse, on the contrary: even the most idealistic systems contain elements of materialism (and vice versa). From this comes conclusion (7) about the nature of class struggle in theory as an extension of class struggle in general – class struggle in theory means taking over the subordinated elements of a certain theoretical system (the materialistic ones) and using them against the ruling (idealistic) elements of that same system. Class struggle in theory actually means the intervention of dialectical materialism in the philosophical discourse and the complete transformation of that discourse. Lenin implemented this most precisely on the example of Hegel. Lenin's transformation of Hegel actually points to the fact that there is no 'neutral' or rounded knowledge – knowledge is a battlefield, a struggle, and theory is a formation of unequal and combined development within which different theoretical elements stand in a mutually conflicting relationship. Dialectical materialism is thus a theoretical weapon in struggle for ideological triumph, the hegemony of materialism over idealism.

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Nikola Dedić

Ka teoriji teorijskih formacija: od Altisera ka Lenjinu

Apstrakt:

U svom teorijskom radu Lenjin je napravio dva izleta u filozofiju – prvo u knjizi *Materijalizam i empiriokriticizam*, a zatim u *Filozofskim sveskama*. Između ova dva dela postoje očigledne razlike koje se ogledaju u odnosu prema Hegelu (prvo odbacivanje, a zatim oduševljenje i prihvatanje Hegelovog dijalektičkog metoda) ali i značajne sličnosti. U radu se ističe da je ono što povezuje Lenjinove dve knjige koncept teorijske formacije. Termin teorijska formacija izvodimo iz Lenjinovog koncepta društveno-ekonomske formacije: u svakom društvu koegzistira veći broj oblika proizvodnje ali su ovi nadodređeni jednim oblikom kao dominantnim. Društvo, dakle, nije celovita i zaokružena forma, već je kontradiktorna nadodređena formacija. Glavna teza rada je da Lenjin primenjuje koncept naodređene formacije na čitanje filozofije. Filozofski diskurs nikada nije ceo, već je podeljen između dve nepomirljive tendencije – materijalizma i idealizma. Filozofski rad nije ništa drugo do borba za teorijsku prevlast jedne tendencije nad drugom. Ova borba između filozofskih tendencija je, kako ističe Luj Altiser, produžetak klasne borbe u teoriji i odvija se kako u celokupnoj istoriji filozofije tako i unutar svakog pojedinačnog filozofskog teksta. Filozofski tekst je dakle kontradiktorna formacija nejednakog i kombinovanog razvoja.

Ključne reči: Lenjin, Altiser, Hegel, dijalektički materijalizam, društveno-ekonomska formacija, teorijska formacija, nejednaki i kombinovani razvoj, protivrečnost.

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Aleksandar Fatić

MODAL LOGIC IN INTEGRATIVE PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICE[1]

ABSTRACT
The paper discusses the differences between a practical emphasis on binary logic on the one hand, and modal logic, on the other, specifically in the fields of philosophical practice and psychotherapy. Although studies of practical applications of modal logic in the helping professions are recent, the discussion largely revolves around the controversial application of modality in psychotherapy by C.G. Jung and Lacan's psychoanalysis. The present argument touches on some of the conceptual dilemmas associated with the relationship between logical modality, intuition and scientificity in psychotherapy, all of which are a part of the philosophical foundation of psychotherapy.

KEYWORDS
Psychoanalysis, philosophical practice, Jung, Lacan, "spirit of the depth", dream psychology, trust

Modality versus Fixed Logical Values

One of the key characteristics of integrative thinking in general, and in philosophical practice as a social and theoretic application, primarily in the form of philosophical counseling as a practice close to traditional psychotherapy, is the use of modal logical-focused thinking as opposed to conventional binary logic. The latter is predicated upon certain very naive, and very deceitful, assumptions about reality, about our relationship to it, and about our ability to influence, cause events, or, speaking in terms of Galtung's modal rhetoric, "call them into reality".

Modality is a pervasive context of our existence and our relationships. The fundamental principle of modality is that almost any current state of affairs, "what is actually the case", is just one possible "world", which coexists, almost at the same level of reality, with all the other possible worlds, or potential

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states of affairs. The latter could often be realized, or "called into reality", by very minute changes in our thinking and decision-making.

In this context, a fixation on the present state of affairs as "the real" in the hard, ontologically strong sense, is both "unrealistic" and unproductive: the flux of states of affairs is facilitated by the way we reason about events, especially if we don't consider only the actual as the only real. Galtung's idea that "the irreal" that is possible is not so far from "the real" in the sense the "real" is the actual state of affairs, and the "irreal" is a state of affairs that could, sometimes very easily, become actual, or replace the actual state of affairs, is key to modal thinking. We live in a variety of modal or possible worlds, where each possible world is just one possible state of affairs. (I use the term *modal world* instead, because it is more precise and less arbitrary, for "possible world" can be interpreted in all kinds of ways characteristic of folk psychology.)

Modal logic is based on the assumption that various possible states of affairs coexist at the same time, and that as little as a change of focus or perspective on one or more of them can bring them into reality, or alter the current "reality", in fact merely actuality. Whether somebody will pay attention to us or not is an example of a situation where we have two possible states of affairs, two modal worlds, one of which is actual, or "real". The fact that somebody, let's say, does not pay attention to me in a particular situation is, indeed, perhaps "real" as opposed to the possibility that they do pay attention to me being "not real", however the difference is slight, because both states of affairs are possible. If I raise my voice, do something unexpected or start to walk away from the conversation, the person will likely immediately pay attention to me. However, if I take it as a cemented fact that this person is not interested in me and in what I have to say, my ego may cause me to simply give up trying to get their attention. Actualities are indeed somewhat more "real" than potentialities, but this difference, in modal logic, is far less significant than in ordinary binary logical thinking, based on "is" and "is not" as the ultimate measures of the truth.

Jacque Lacan's idea that "structure" as relationship defines all of the psychic processes that manifest in a person's way of thinking about the world and significant others seems fundamentally constitutive of the modal logic-based view of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in general. Perhaps the most explicit formulation of this idea is his argument about structure (the relationship) being the prerequisite "of any subject whatever" by virtue of structure representing "the inmixing of otherness" into the very core of what is to become individual identity (Lacan 1970).

Changes in relationships occur for a variety of reasons, at least one of which is ontological: modal worlds as logical categories are not stable independently of the way in which we think of them. They are subject to flow and may become more fixed or more changeable depending on the way in which we perceive them. This again is obvious in the described example. My perception of the modal world whereby somebody ignores me becomes part of that modal world, namely it is a part of my relationship with the person who ignores me.

Thus, my waiting it out until the current modal world changes and the person reaches out for me is the immediate result of my thinking about the relative significance of the current modal world, and at the same time it becomes a part of the actual state of affairs: the other person's attitude to me is met by my attitude to the modal world whereby she ignores me, and my perception, and corresponding behavior, become part of the very actual modal world. This world is less sustainable in the longer term than a world where I would try to capture the attention of the other person by taking various actions which would provide gratification to that person, while at the same time discouraging her from taking any initiative herself. Our perceptions of social relationships feed those relationships with various content, and this content helps determine the fate of the actual modal world. There is thus a meta-perspective on relationships which is logical and may influence their deep structure more profoundly than a binary logic-based, action-oriented approach that is so common.

We alter our relationships primarily by the way we conceptualize and reconceptualize them. A particular view of a relationship might lead to certain states of affairs, and a changed view might entirely change the nature of the same relationship, leading to completely different modal worlds occurring within the relationship. Our patterns of understanding and perceiving our structural realities, our relationships with others, are inextricable parts of those very relationships, and they not only lead to corresponding behaviors within the relationships, which can change the relationship; the perceptions and conceptualizations of the relationship are elements of the relationship itself, and their change automatically changes the relationship.

In the psychoanalytic tradition, the modalities of thinking about "structure', or relationships, are particularly significant when they manifest in dreaming, dreamlike or semi-conscious states, where the subconscious processing of the modalities of viewing the relationship are perhaps the most obvious. Freud has written extensively about dreams and how they compensate our repressed ideation and desires (Freud 2010, e.g. 153 and in numerous other places). Jung described dreams in more ambitious ways, as manifestations of the collective subconscious, where dreams were able to capture aspects of reality that would otherwise be inaccessible to us. He writes about a dream he had in July 1914, which he interpreted as a message from the subconscious warning him that a war in the Pacific was about to erupt (Jung 2009: 201–202). Richard Schusterman, the author of "somaesthetics", believes, with William James and others, that all our feelings are ultimately bodily sensations, and that dreams, as well as phantasies and emotional projections of desires built into daydreaming and proper dreaming, are in fact cognitive tools on a par with our senses and rational faculties (Mayers 1969; Shusterman 2008).

There is only a step from the above arguments to the quantum-physics-informed philosophy of psychology where dreams, emotions and thoughts do not only help us understand the various modal realities, but which, more proactively, can help us to shift from one modal world to another, or even create new modal worlds, which can then be brought into actuality, into our present

here-and-now. Lou Marinoff writes about this illustratively describing it as the phenomenon of synchronicity (Marinoff 2002).

Synchronicity

The concept of synchronicity refers to situations where certain material events occur in conjunction with thoughts or dreams, without a clear material causality. The example described by Marinoff (Marinoff 2002) is the appearance of a snake (a python) on the book shelf of a psychotherapist working with a client who had been obsessed with snakes.

Jung's experiments with "switching off consciousness" by deliberately entering a state of phantasy and then engaging with it as within a dream, or by using dreams to access the subconscious, illustrate how modal worlds operate: depending on our state of consciousness, the fact that we are a part of the modal world we are engaged with, the modal world itself will change. Thus, accessing a subconscious dynamic will change the actual dynamics of the modal world which represent our actual state of affairs, our current condition. This condition will respond to what we experience, consciously or subconsciously. The quality of our modal world that is our actuality will change. When writing about his subconscious experiences, or simply when noting ideas for working with the subconscious, Jung thought of this as *writing letters to his Anima*, to his archaetypal soul. He believed that through accessing the subconscious, he was able to return to his soul which he had partly abandoned by choosing to pursue the science of medicine (Sonu Shamdasani's introduction to the *Red Book* – Jung 2009: 200).

In fact, one of Jung's own transformative statements among the opening passages of his *Red Book*, reads:

> The spirit of the depths has subjugated all pride and arrogance to the power of judgment. He took away my belief in science, he robbed me of the joy of explaining and ordering things, and he let devotion to the ideals of this time die out in me. He forced me down to the last and simplest things. (Jung 2009: 229)

This idea of simplicity and intuition, based on looking for knowledge in the already assembled, already available in the individual and collective subconscious, through collective experience, takes one away from binary logic and brings us closer to fully appreciating the role of modal logic in dealing with everyday decision-making. In more than one way, synchronicity is a phenomenon that, experientially, does not conform to the binary logic of truth values, of things "being the case" or "not being the case".

Jung himself explains his own ability to access knowledge about events which, as it turned out, were to happen soon after he had dreamt of them, as irrational, something that robbed him of his freedom and, in a sense, cancelled out the scientist in him, calling him to more primal and fundamental, intuitive forms of knowledge. He describes his transformation from a conventional psychiatrist into a therapist focused on introspection and symbolic interpretation

as a brutal influence of "the spirit of the depth". This spirit does not leave him any liberty to choose to be a scientist, a rational psychoanalyst and psychiatrist: it draws him into the murky depths of his own and collective unconscious, forces him to focus on his dreams and visions, causes him to doubt his own sanity, only to reassure him when worldly events conform to his dreams. The synchronicities caused him to doubt himself countless times, yet they are now accepted as a well-known phenomenon for which there is no rational explanation, but it is so evident and so widely present that it is simply taken as a fact.

A modal logic perspective on feeling as a precursor to synchronicity involves a difference between two existential qualifiers, namely the qualifier of necessity and that of possibility. A modal logical principle that the statement "A is necessarily the case" immediately translates into the statement "A is the case", while "A is possibly the case" does not translate into "A is the case" is associated with the difference between a rational and an intuitive perspective on events and states of affairs. Namely, "A is necessarily the case" is associated with the rational understanding that A must be the case in the sense that it would be rationally inconceivable for A not to be the case. For example, me being identical to myself, or the a priori mathematical truths, such as equations, are considered necessarily true, because they rest on logical principles which are the very foundations of our rational reasoning and, if they were not automatically true, our entire logical structure of thought would be shaken. However, the statements which are possibly true, and states of affairs that they describe which, cosequently, are possibly the case, or may be the case, are subject to other types of considerations. A serpent showing up on my bookshelf (the example Marinoff uses for synchonicity) is, of course, not a necessary state of affairs, nor even a likely one, but nevertheless it is possible, and it has, as we have seen from Marinoff, actually happened to his fellow therapist.

Modal logic, while not immediately militating against the binary deductive logic, makes us more aware of softer perspectives on causation and logic in general, if we become sufficiently accustomed to thinking about psychic life, and again, about life in general (for psychotherapy is about life issues in general, not just about psychic phenomena), in terms of the categories of modal logic.

Synchronicity is the occurence in the actual state of affairs of something that preoccupies us in our thoughts, without a clear causation between those events and our external actions. The idea that there is no lear causation does not, of course, eliminate the general, theoretical possibility that our thought might have a causal effects on events in the physical world – a theme that is often associated with quantum physics and is the subject of lengthy debates acrosss a range of disciplines. For my purposes here, while I contend that is unclear to what extent the causal actions of our thoughts and mental states are generally involved in all synchronicities, the concept of synchornicity as it has been accepted in clinical practice assumes that there is no obvious connection, namely that concurrences beteween thoughts and physical events arise without a rationally viable explanation, without making a stronger assumption that there is no causation of any kind (Jung 1960).

Ideas as Modal Worlds

Perhaps the surest way to alter the actuality by calling another modal world into it is the clear and vivid formulation and experience of an idea. This is a phenomenon which is connected with synchronicities, although it does not exhaust itself in the very concept of synchronicity. Namely, the occurrence of a particularly clear and elaborate idea about a situation, problem or desire (the way to bring the desire to actuality) is a first step to the actual change of modal worlds. Often the stalemate we find ourselves in with regard to particular life situations is first and foremost characterized by the absence of an articulate idea about how to approach the problem. Thus the thought process is clearly pivotal in changing modal worlds in situations where we experience the absence of ideas, and this stifles any potential action to resolve the issue at hand.

From the point of view of modal logic, ideas are modal worlds. The closer they are to us, namely the more clearly and elaborately we are able to adopt them and develop them, own them as our own and be prepared to act on them, the more fully the modal world is called into reality and factually becomes our actuality. Numeours people throughout history have lived and died for an idea: sometimes these ideas were brought into actuality by those same people, but in most cases they were either actualized by someone else, after many of their protagonists had perished, or they never actualized in the form and to the extent that those laying their lives for the idea had hoped for or had been convinced the ideas would unfold. Some ideas had even been perverted in their actualization and had resulted in states of affairs that the protagonists of the idea would have abhorred, and would certainly have disowned. Consider political ideologies, such as communism, various forms of nationalism, etc. However, does the fact that in many situations the ideas one had faught for have failed or backfired in actuality change the fact that these ideas had changed the modal worlds or lives of those individuals, that they had shaped their lives in ways which, without them adopting the idea, would likely have been very different?

The emergence of an idea is the self-presentation of a modal world which, from that moment on, coexists on a level of possibility with a number of other modal worlds, including the actual state of affairs. The emergence of an idea thus increases the number of modal worlds which might be called into reality. Thus, ideation is a form of action, and the ability to theoretically conceptualize solutions and potential strategies to address seemingly frozen life issues is the same as the creation of new practical possibilities. The difference between theory and practice, between ideation and action, is in fact very slight; it is nowhere near as major or important as we are conventionally taught to think and believe.

The inspiration for new ideas with regard to problems which had hitherto seemed rationally difficult to solve appears to arise from deep structures which Jung describes as “spirit of the deep”. More importantly, the appearance and consequences of acquiescing in the teachings and messages of the spirit of the deep force us to cast out our pride, our dignity, and to embrace what Jung

describes as a melting of the reasonable and the paradoxical (Jung 2009: 229). He describes the emergence of an idea in this way as a sacrifice of our Persona as a rational person, and our inevitable agreeing to be drawn into irrational discourse, where paradox is the foundation of what he calls "supreme meaning". The connection between supreme meaning, namely the intuitive interpretation which brings together various seemingly paradoxical (contradictory in terms of binary logic) elements and insights, on the one hand, and God on the other hand, is experienced as an image. This image is an archetype, and it is fundamentally an image of God (Jung, loc. cit.). It is the image which is capable of elucidating the future, even forecasting it, at least in a sense: it is not the experience or image of God yet, but the anticipation of the image of God to come, where God is the truth and at the same time an image: the architypeal image of the truth is the knowledge which God offers, however this knowledge is partly mysterious and can neither be accessed, nor fully interpreted, by rational means only (Jung loc. cit.).

The reason Jung is so important in our understanding of the root and well of ideas which appear irrational and emerge from the depth of our subconscious, is perhaps contained in a single sentence in his *Red Book*: "Hence I had to speak to my soul as to something far off and unknown, which did not exist through me, but through whom I existed" (Jung 2009: 232).

Jung's idea about "returning to his soul", which he had abandoned through his rational pursuit of medicine, the acquisition of worldly reputation, power and wealth, and the practice of psychiatry, draws on the assumption of a generalized collective unconscious which underlies all our conscious efforts and articulations. It is this realm of the unconscious that is primal and that nurtures our original soul (in Jung's terms, *Anima*) that is also the root of most of the ideas which arise seemingly without connection to our rational arguments or the information about the states of affairs in which we find ourselves, which we are explicitly aware of.

The very idea of the unconscious, as a vast ocean underneath the seemingly solid ground of the conscious that we stand on and that we consider the foundation of our reasoning, challenges the binary logical modality and draws us into the more subtle and more ambiguous realms of thinking based on modal logic. If we understand an idea not as a construction springing straight from the explicit facts that we are consciously aware of concerning a particular situation, or modal world, but as the emergence of a deeper wisdom from the unconscious, which is awakened by our powerlessness to deal with the problem "above ground", then the concept of idea becomes more intricate and potentially much more powerful. The context of the unconscious, especially in Jung's interpretation, portrays an idea as a spark, or a structure which arises from the interplay of the rational and the irrational, from the conscious and the unconscious, from the above ground and the psychic underground about which we can only speculate.

Given this general picture of the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, an idea – that is, the very concept of an idea – is a sort *of*

announcement of the unconscious in a way acceptable to the conscious; it is something in between the two extremes of solely rational interpretation, on the one hand, and the freer and more radical esoteric understanding of the unconscious, on the other. To fully illustrate this "middle of the ground" nature of the idea, which in a sense mediates between the conscious and the unconscious, it is perhaps useful to briefly discuss the other extreme, namely the psychological reception of the esoteric interpretation of the unconscious, again primarily with reference to Jung, who was by far the most explicit of all psychoanalysts with regard to this particular interpretation.

The Esoteric Receptions of the Collective Unconscious in Jung

In Jung's interpretation of man's relationship to the desirability and beauty of the world and worldly experiences, what we see in the so-called reality is a *projection of our soul, or the exteriorization of our desire*. The psychoanalytic concept of desire as driver (later taken on by Lacan in a different application of the unconscious) is fundamental to questions about identity, and Jung is true to this tradition. He argues that our desire speaks about our soul, and consequently, the person who "possesses" his desire can "lay a hand" on his soul, because "his desire is the image and expression of his soul" (Jung 2009: 232).

Lacan takes over this idea to develop the concept of "*jouissance*", namely the idea of satisfaction which is the affective indicator of personality that is key in psychodiagnostics: looking at where one's *jouissance* lies allows the diagnostician to locate the personality (Braunstein 2006). Jung insists that our perception of the world, and the quality of our experience of it, depends on the image we have of the world, thus his repeated statement that "he who possesses the image of the world, possesses half the world [...]" (Jung 2009: 232). This is a key point which he also elaborates elsewhere, in his *Symbols and transformations*, etc. (Jung 1956). The psychoanalytic interpretation that he develops is that our libido, our desire for life, projects the positive attributes of life, such as beauty and desirability, to objects and people, and thus the more our libido is active and the stronger it is, the more beauty and desirability we will see in the world, in our everyday experience. One realm in which the dynamic potential of the libido is perhaps most strongly exhibited is the dream world, and more generally in the dreamlike experiences that Jung repeatedly refers to in a way that he describes as evading a strictly rational conceptualization.

Many of Jung's seemingly "esoteric" interpretations have been incorporated in what are now considered very standard and conservative methods of psychological assessment, psychodiagnostics and therapeutic interventions. For example, the projective techniques in psychological assessments and diagnostics are based on a standardized interpretation of images, some of which, even graphically, resemble Jung's drawings and paintings of archetypical content from his visions recorded in *The Red Book*. In fact, the whole first half of *The Red Book* consists of pictures of images that he had recorded during his research of his own unconscious.

When Jung writes that "dreams are the guiding words of the soul", he says the same as Freud, however in more directly introspective terms, because he connects the dreams with the knowledge of the unconscious, and makes it explicit that he considers the inklings and suggestions of the unconscious as more valuable and more practical knowledge than the rational and restrictive norms of knowledge imposed by the "spirit of this world" (Jung 2009: 233). He goes as far as to say that "(t)he spirit of the deep even taught me to consider my action and my decision as dependent on dreams" (Jung, loc. cit.). This clearly suggest Jung's *practical application* of the borderline cognitive experiences such as dreams as inroads into gaining knowledge of the unconscious, where the pictorial, the visual and by extension, the bodily content plays a key role. The associated idea that we learn most effectively through vivid experience that contains emotional reactions means that the dominant form of learning is determined by the body (Shusterman 2012: 91–111). For Jung, one of the most important visual images in dreams and in pictorial representations that carry psychoanalytic meaning is that of a child. In his 1940 paper "On the psychology of the child archetype", Jung describes the symbol of the child as that which opens up a vision of self-development; he argues that the typical events that can befall a child symbolize the events of one's self-improvement (Jung 1953, volume 9, 1). In paragraph 278, Jung specifically mentions that *the essential feature of the symbol of the child is the future*, a call of the future, of the move to another modal world. His interpretation of visuality and the image of the child as a guiding visual symbol of hope brings him close to Christianity both in his rhetoric and in the actual methodology he uses for the interpretation of dreams and pictorial content. He thus exclaims: "Scholarliness alone is not enough; there is a knowledge of the heart that gives deeper insight" (Jung 2009: 233).

In his *Answer to Job*, Jung connects what he calls "the call of the deep", "the spirit of the deep", with the Holy Spirit, and mentions that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit makes us more like Christ (Jung 1953, vol. 11, paragraph 758). For Jung, the Holy Spirit is the most mystical of the three faces of God; it appears that he experienced his own spiritual callings as the religious experiences of a Christian.

Jung's is perhaps the most remarkable example of the use of seemingly "esoteric" practices and thinking as a form of essentialist philosophical conceptualization of experience. Esoteric practices and thought are a form of well-recognized essentialism in philosophy, namely the view that we truly know things not through their superficial appearances, but through seeking to penetrate into what makes them specifically the things that they are. When writing about essentialism, Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz writes that the very modern meaning of ontology has been shaped by phenomenologists, who believe that the essence of "what is", namely the current modal world, the actual "reality" is grasped only through the *intuition of essences* (Ajdukiewicz 1973: 76). He describes how Edmund Husserl sees the intuition of essences based on a Platonic vision of ideas which represent the ideal forms of things, the ideal

sets of attributes that the pure concept of a certain event or experience ought to possess, and how he proceeds to discuss the application of these ideal attributes to our understanding of phenomena (Ajdukiewicz 1973: 42–43). There are both similarities and differences between the phenomenological understanding of essences and intuition that Ajdukiewicz describes and Jung's (and my) view of esoteric knowledge here.

The similarities lie in the phenomenologists' understanding that what makes some experience what it essentially is does not actually exist in space in time, which means that it is not part of an actual state of affairs. Only by delving into that ideal, which exists on a level different from the existence of the specific circumstances in which we find ourselves, can we grasp the "essence" of the experience. This almost conforms to the very notion of esoteric. However, on the other hand, the phenomenological, and particularly Husserl's, concept of "idea" is very Platonic and does not adequately correspond to my notions of idea here, where an idea is a project, a strategy, an inroad into solving a difficult situation, or a way to shift between modal worlds, a way to call into actual existence another, possible world or state of affairs. Ideas for Husserl are merely concepts, whereas ideas in the sense relevant to a modal logic-informed way of therapy and decision-making alike are more active – they are endowed with intention and a drive – Lacan would say with *jouissance*, to succeed, to contract the reality and produce a different form and content of it.

The experiment with the unconscious that so profoundly characterizes psychoanalysis, and especially Jungian psychoanalysis, which strongly relies on introspection and self-analysis, is an example of the esoteric use of modal logic. The individual subconscious and the collective unconscious are sets of modal worlds ready to be called into actuality (or reality) by being drawn into the conscious moment, by becoming our conscious "reality". This may be as simple as choosing to make a decision based on intuition or on a dream, which Jung considered more reliable as a guide for action than waking arguments and reasons. Such a decision will lead to both a different experience of the action and likely a different outcome, which will, both on the procedural and value-level in making a decision, and on the level of the resulting state of affairs, actualize a modal world that would otherwise not be "real".

It would appear, on this reading of esotericism, that many a worthwhile idea might be seen as a vector stemming from the present, actual modal world, and pointing towards a different modal world which can be brought into actuality, is initially esoteric, as the inspiration for it usually comes "from the deep", rather than from our rational reasoning. It is true that some of the scientific ideas have arisen from research previously intended to produce quite different results, and this is described at length in Kuhn's infamous *Structure of the scientific revolutions* (Kuhn 1962). However, the truly innovative ideas, born from a suffering in seemingly insoluble life situations, for Jung, almost always appear as coming from nowhere, or are reached exactly through these strange sources: dreams, daydreaming, as sudden bursts of inspiration amid seemingly unrelated activities, or as visions that he describes so poignantly in *The Red Book*.

A key moment to complete this somewhat unusual discussion of modal logic, without equations and formal definitions, is to mention the fear of modal thinking. Jung describes his own fearful disposition towards the truth. He is fearful that the unconscious truth that he pursues is subject to different laws of modality, where anything is possible, not just on an abstract level, but in a very real, immediate sense: he seems to sense that another existential modality can be called into existence if an attitude is changed and decisions are made that had hitherto been considered inconceivable by the same person. To him, fear is a part of the awareness of the modality of our decision-making: the same person that makes a predictable, safe decision at one moment may, suddenly and seemingly without reason, make the most irrational, yet deeply satisfying decision leading to a direction of self-realization which may be shocking both to the person, the agent, and to the other people who are impacted by the agent's decisions. A modern practical understanding of modal logic might be seen as what Van Benthem describes as an "open mind" which he sees as a precondition for the practical application of modal logic (Van Benthem 2010).

The drive to change, the longing for "the missing object", is an example of what Jung describes as a "desire from the deep", a message from the depths of the unconscious which threatens a destruction of the person's Persona, or public face. The logical situation here corresponds to the subconscious desire, which is the actual driver of the agony of the person's situation, on the one hand, as one modal world, and to the conscious reasons *not to* depart from the present circumstances, which appear safe and sufficiently satisfying to offset the risk for something the benefits of which are not even rationally comprehensible. One of the two worlds, the actual circumstances, are more real in the sense that they are the actual state of affairs, however the possibility that everything might change into a completely different actuality is so strong that just one decision, one temporary mood, one desire that the person indulges in, might completely dismiss the actual modal world into potentiality and call a completely different modal world. into actuality (Williamson 2013).

The feasibility of what Johan Galtung describes as a "jump" from one possible world, from one modal arrangement of states of affairs or simply sets of circumstances, is primarily due to an individual appreciation of the difference, and even more so the distance, between the "real" and the "irreal", as opposed to "the impossible" in Galtung's wording. The understanding of the irreal, or, in some cases, "almost real", as one of a set of clustered up possible modal worlds that surround every particular Glatung's "real", or actual state of affairs, brings the practicalities of decision-making to the very borderline of the common and strictly speaking rational (Galtung 2009). Galtung applies the same structure of the dialectic of modal logic through his models of structural conflict within a variety of relationships, including political conflicts (Galtung 1996).

Jung explains the above idea by comparing his vision of his soul to a desert, barren and desolate, asking himself how he has allowed his soul to become so forgotten: "Have I lived too much outside of myself in men and events? Why did I avoid myself? Was I not dear to myself?" (Jung 2009: 235–236). These

are the questions that philosophical practice, especially philosophical counseling, see as preliminary ones to a process of re-examining the modality of our assertions, convictions and value attitudes, as well as the customary manners of orienting ourselves in the world. Asking these questions that reflect a fundamental philosophical wonder about ourselves and the way we have arrived to where we are is a potential inroad into logical modality as a practical way of thinking.

Conclusion

The modal logical aspect of the philosophy of psychology and psychotherapy, mainly with regard to the psychoanalytic tradition, is practical. Propositional logic, standard deductive arguments and the inductive conclusion of empirical science are all just a type, or types, of modal logic, in much the same way as Newtonian physics is one of the possible physics. There is no principled theoretical conflict between propositional and modal logic, however there is immense difference in their practical applications, that is betrayed in Van Benthem's illuminating book that connects the use of modal logic with "open minds" (Van Benthem 2010). The philosophical argument for an emphasis on modal logic in integrative thinking in the philosophy of psychiatry, psychology and psychotherapy is based on the idea that the actual, or "real" in psychic life is often not far removed from what is not actual, or what remains "irreal", as Galtung calls it (Galtung 2009). One of the consequences of an emphasis on modality facilitates the generation of an organic community, which may be exemplified in a range of structures, or relationships, stretching from the family to a therapeutic or philosophical counseling relationship to a tightly knit social community. In many cases the mechanisms of creation of such a community, which philosophical practitioners primarily see in the counseling relationship, and social theorists in the particular type of healing and mutually empowering social bonds within an organic community, including, as one of the crucial ones, the mechanism of trust, require an "open mind" as the sort of worldview that relies primarily on modal logic (Seligman 1997). It appears that, when applied to philosophical practice and psychotherapy, rather than being an arcane field cloaked in mathematical formality, modal logic suggests a return of organic thinking and concepts such as the organic community, self-change through a focus on collective identities and the cognitive and decision-making strategies that enhance organic social capital, such as trust, all of which have been recognized as key elements of both moral and psychic wellbeing. A large part of Jung's work that appears to question the surface rationality of the medical model of psychotherapy thus reveals a consistency with a focus on logical modality rather than the linear deductive inference or inductive generalization. While on a theoretical level this difference of emphasis on binary logical thinking, on the one hand, and on the use and practical significance of using modal logic operators in a reflective way, does not bring particular novelty to the understanding of the relationship between binary and modal logic, on a

practical level it generates major differences in approach and understanding of wellbeing, personal and collective identity and the structures of decision-making and identity change.

While theoretically the logic of truth conditions is consistently incorporated into modal logic, where the modal operators such as possibility, necessity, probability etc. add nuance and contextual determinants to the truth conditions, the practical, therapeutic emphasis on modal logic as opposed to the traditional exclusive reliance on propositional logic manifests in dramatic practical differences that are encapsulated in philosophically informed psychotherapy. While philosophical practice is generally integrative, focused on the generic concepts as they apply to therapeutic situations and the therapeutic process, an emphasis on modality in the philosophically informed psychotherapeutic methodology offers entirely new avenues of intervention that both integrate the current state of the art in the psychotherapeutic field and invite innovations specifically associated with the transformative potential of modal thinking.

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Aleksandar Fatić

Modalna logika u integrativnoj filozofskoj praksi

Apstrakt

U tekstu se raspravlja o razlikama izmedju praktičnog naglaska na binarnoj logici, s jedne strane, i na modalnoj logici, s druge strane, u oblastima filozofske prakse i psihoterapije. Studije praktične primene modalne logike u pomagačkim profesijama su skorašnjeg datuma i njihov sadržaj se u velikoj meri zasniva na kontroverzama u primeni modalnog mišljenja u psihoanalizi C.G. Junga i u lakanovskoj psihoanalizi. Argumentacija teksta dodiruje neke od pojmovnih dilema koje se tiču veze između logičke modalnosti, intuicije i naučnosti u psihoterapiji i filozofskoj praksi. Svi ovi aspekti savetodavnog procesa spadaju u same filozofske osnove psihoterapije.

Ključne reči: psihoanaliza, filozofska praksa, Jung, Lakan, „duh dubine", psihologija sna, poverenje.

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ZENO'S PARADOXES AND THE QUANTUM MICROWORLD: WHAT THE APORIAS CONVEY[1]

ABSTRACT
The article considers new approaches to four of Zeno's paradoxes: the Arrow, Achilles and the Tortoise, the Dichotomy, and the Stadium. The paradoxes are analyzed in the light of current research in the field of elementary particle physics and some promising directions in the development of the quantum gravity. Physical theories, provided with the necessary philosophical interpretation, are used in order to clarify Zeno's paradoxes and to search for answers to them. The text shows that using modern approaches to solve the paradoxes is not effective, because the paradoxes become irrelevant when analyzed in the context of microworld physics, at very small scales.

The main part of the paper is devoted to demonstrating this circumstance – that the questions posed by the paradoxes are impossible to answer (at least in their classical interpretation). As a possible explanation, the article puts forward that in the formulation of the paradoxes, the properties of the macroworld and the microworld are mixed (which is historically justified, given the intuitive homogeneity of the large and the small, and the fact that non-classical physics – quantum mechanics – did not emerge until the twentieth century); that is, from the observation of large physical objects, a transition is made to the infinitely small in terms of discreteness and continuity. However, the principles of organization of space at very small scales are beginning to be clarified in general terms only now, and, perhaps, these principles may turn out to be quite far from the classical ideas about fundamental physical reality.

KEYWORDS
Zeno's paradoxes, philosophy of science, macroworld, microworld, duality, space, time, motion, continuity

Introduction

Zeno's paradoxes have been discussed in the philosophical and scientific literature for centuries, but even now, more than two millennia after their formulation, there are still discussions about their meaning. Some believe that

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the paradoxes have been resolved and do not pose a serious problem for science and philosophy, while others, on the contrary, insist that a solution has yet to be found.

An interesting and important (though, of course, not complete) overview of the problem is given by Alexandre Koyré in his work *Remarks on Zeno's Paradoxes* (Koyré 1985). He conducts a detailed analysis of each aporia, criticizing the existing approaches and interpreting them in different aspects, and draws conclusions about the reasons why it is so difficult to solve them. Indeed, the choice of the directions for possible solutions may depend on the interpretation of what, in fact, these aporias convey. Also noteworthy is the monograph by V. Ya. Komarova (1988), entirely devoted to Zeno's arguments, their textual, historical-philosophical, and mathematical analysis. A more modern attempt at logical and mathematical understanding of the paradoxes was proposed by A. M. Anisov in his work (Anisov 2000), where their relevance in the context of modern science is once again emphasized. At the same time, another opinion deserves attention – that interpretation of the paradoxes exclusively in the context of modern science does not reveal their authentic content, and that they should be interpreted in the logic of Parmenides, which reveals the inseparability of human beings in their existence (Calenda 2013). Therefore, in order to avoid ambiguities, we stipulate that we are talking about an interpretation which became possible only due to the development of science in the 20th century, and which, quite obviously, the Eleatics and doxographers could not be aware of.

Koyré's approach much coincides with the modern interpretation trend, since he was familiar with general relativity and quantum mechanics, as well as cutting-edge mathematical tools. Koyré contributes a lot to the advanced research in physics and mathematics of the XX century. Thus, we will proceed primarily from the understanding proposed by Koyré, which is within the framework of the traditional discussion (and is based on the formulations of the paradoxes given by Aristotle in books IV (chapters 2, 3), VI (chapters 2, 9) and VIII (chapter 8) of his *Physics* (Aristotle 1976)), but where necessary, we will refer to more recent studies. The analysis will touch upon the Achilles and the Tortoise, the Dichotomy, the Arrow, and the Stadium paradoxes.

The paradoxes suggest the impossibility of motion from two points of view – continuity and discreteness of space and time; regardless of whether space is continuous or discrete, the conclusion is the same: motion is impossible.

It seems to us that the paradoxes should be interpreted as a contradiction between classical logic[2] and classical physics (and also, as will be shown, non-classical physics – quantum theory). In other words, the paradoxes actually do not deny motion; they point to the above-mentioned contradiction between physics and logic: obviously, motion exists, it is an observable fact,

2 It appears that classical logic, which dates back to antiquity, serves as the representation of classical intellectual intuition, which differs from today's many-valued logic, intuitionistic and paraconsistent systems.

but when analyzing motion in space-time, we come to the conclusion that it is impossible from the viewpoint of classical logic. In other words, traditional concepts of time and space, as well as their general interpretation come as controversial: we make observations, notice some action, but when we start contemplating on it, it turns out that it does not exist. Thus, the problem is not that there really is no motion, but that there is a contradiction between the observed reality and the way we think about it.

Why does this contradiction arise? The present study is mainly an attempt to answer this question. It will be shown here that the paradoxes touch upon questions that can hardly be resolved in principle within the framework of classical intellectual intuition and the corresponding physical theories, since they involve an unjustified transition from the macro level of everyday observations (human capabilities formed in the course of evolution) to the micro level, where the key role is played by quantum processes, and even further – to the level where there is no satisfactory theoretical description for those categories that are considered to be fundamental. The idea that the paradoxes cannot be solved is not new, but we will try to explain *why* they cannot be solved. The hypothesis is that the problem as it is currently formulated may not make sense.

I presume, the issue is that fundamental reality lacks an accurate description, thus, there is no clear idea of what space, time and action together with other basic physical principles are. Still, when they are going to be finally realized, it will prompt the apparent contradiction in aporia to vanish.

The Paradoxes and Some Traditional Objections

The Dichotomy and the Achilles paradoxes proceed from the hypothesis of continuous space and time (infinitary hypothesis).

(1) The Dichotomy consists in the fact that if we assume space to be continuous, i.e., divisible to infinity, then motion can never begin, since in order to overcome any negligible distance, it is necessary to overcome part of this distance, and so on ad infinitum, and thus, to even start moving, you need to overcome infinity.

There have been various attempts to solve this; one of them relies on the assumption that motion itself should be considered as a single indivisible process from the moment when it begins and to the moment when it ends. Indeed, if motion is represented as indivisible, then, at first glance, the problem seems to be eliminated. Indivisible motion is smooth, non-quantized motion that simply goes through all the points without stopping anywhere. This seems convincing, indeed, because a moving body "[...] at no moment exists at any point of its motion: the matter is limited only to the fact that it passes through all these points" (Koyré 1985: 37) and "the moving body moves in each point of its trajectory" (Ibid.: 32). But at the same time, it turns out, paradoxically, that at each fixed, indivisible point, there is no motion, and neither is there at the beginning or the end of the motion, and then it is not clear when there is any motion at all.

(2) The Achilles paradox, arguing that Achilles will never catch up with the tortoise, is essentially about the same thing – about infinite divisibility because of which the tortoise will always be ahead (during the time that takes Achilles to reach the point where the tortoise used to be, it will crawl forward a little, so Achilles will now have to reach *that* point, but the tortoise will have crawled forward a little more, and so on ad infinitum). Thereby, it looks as if they fail to even start moving.

A well-known objection is the mathematical argument about the convergence of series: the sum of an infinite number of time intervals converges and equals to 1, as a result of which Achilles will catch up with the tortoise. However, Hilbert and Bernays rightly note that this reasoning absolutely does not take into account one essentially paradoxical moment, namely the paradox which consists in the fact that an infinite sequence of successive events, a sequence the completion of which we cannot even imagine, in fact, still has to be completed (Hilbert, Bernays 1979: 40).

It is possible to establish a one-to-one correspondence: to match a point of the tortoise's motion to each point of Achilles's path, and vice versa; thus, they will go the same way, and he will overtake the tortoise. However, this is not the case; their paths are equivalent but not equal. It is possible to establish a one-to-one correspondence between a set of natural numbers and a set of even numbers, but this does not mean that they are equal. But this solution seems instantly not plausible, since the tortoise has a head start, so even if the same number of points implies equal distance, Achilles would still be behind the tortoise.

One solution to the Achilles paradox, like in the case of the Arrow, is to consider motion itself to be indivisible, in which case it simply passes the points without measuring them at some particular moments. This solution itself is difficult to understand: in this case, we cannot say "the moving object is at point *A*, and it is 12.00 now", because that would mean it is not moving at point *A*.[3] But we can say "the moving object passed point *A* at 12:00," i.e., only in retrospect.

From this point of view, the paradoxes speak not so much about the impossibility of motion as about the impossibility of immobility. Attention has already been drawn to this in (Bathfield 2018: 649–679), and this approach is close to quantum mechanics – elementary particles are never at rest, as it is fluctuations that are typical of microcosm constituents.

The main problem in both paradoxes is the continuity of space: why do we consider it possible to divide it into segments? In that case, it is no longer a continuity, since there are division points (restricting limits) – we no longer assume these points to be divisible (if we assume that a point is an elementary object that has no dimensions); we divide the segments between them. A point is isolated; moreover, there can be no motion at these points, because

3 In the microworld of quantum mechanics, however, this is exactly what happens – we cannot say that some object is in some particular place; this is indicated by the de Broglie wave and the uncertainty relation.

otherwise they would be extended. But there can be no motion outside of the points if we assume that the continuity is composed of them. But then it is not a continuity at all. If we can divide the points (the boundaries of a segment of the continuity), then there are no boundaries as such, they move apart to infinity, and there can be no motion either.

The second group of paradoxes, the Arrow and the Stadium, consider space-time as having limits of division, i.e., as discrete (finitary hypothesis).

(3) The essence of the Arrow is as follows. If there are limits to the division of space and time, i.e., spatial and temporal intervals which are no further divisible, then the arrow will not be able to move, because if it moves, it measures these intervals, and therefore they become divisible. In other words, at every indivisible moment of time at every point in space it is at rest since it cannot move therein. One can only assume that the arrow teleports from point to point (which is physically possible in the microcosm but not observed in the macrocosm), see one of the latest experiments (Ren et al. 2017)).

The Arrow is probably one of the most popular paradoxes in modern physics and mathematics.[4] Patrick Reeder suggests using nilpotent infinitesimal time intervals to solve the paradox (Reeder 2015). This solution does not suit us, because the infinitesimal is actually one of the causes of paradoxes – the gap between the observed and the way of thinking. And this is not so much a solution to the paradox as a confirmation of the main idea of this paper. Moreover, the gap between the observable and the conceivable is apparent. The way of thinking, the thinking process and the conceivable are different things, which are closely intertwined: our contemplation is largely determined by what our way of thinking is. In the end, speculations can reach far beyond than direct observation – which is proved by quantum mechanics and mathematics. We prefer the approach formulated by Leonard Angel (2002): he proposes a new version of the Arrow paradox, which turns out to be a non-classical (quantum mechanical) extension of Newtonian mechanics, and proposes properties such as appearance of a particle in many places at the same time.

(4) The Stadium paradox is based on the same finitary hypothesis. There may be different interpretations; let us consider one of them. Let there be three rows, each consisting of four objects – row *A*, consisting of objects *A1*, *A2*, *A3*, and *A4*; row *B*, consisting of objects *B1*, *B2*, *B3*, and *B4*, and row *C*, consisting of objects *C1*, *C2*, *C3*, and *C4* (we can consider these rows as straight lines, thus regarding them from the point of view of the infinitary hypothesis). Let the first row (*A*) be motionless, and the rows *B* and *C* move at one indivisible moment of time by one indivisible interval of space in different directions (for example, *B* moves to the left, and *C* moves to the right.) What happens is that while rows *B* and *C* are displaced relative to row *A* by one interval of space in one interval of time, they are displaced relative to each other by two intervals. Therefore, according to Zeno, half is equal to the whole. In fact, the problem

4 This paradox gave its name to the quantum Zeno effect (deceleration of changes in a quantum system with frequent measurements) (Bar 2000).

is that there can be no motion within one interval of space (otherwise it would be measured and become divisible), only within at least two; that is, not one interval of space but two must correspond to one interval of time.

This paradox is the subject of the article by Barbara Sattler (2015), who notes that it is underestimated in the history of philosophy and science, and is considered as naive, or misinterpreted as another atomistic paradox. This is true, and we agree that this aporia actually touches upon the deep connection between space, time, and motion. The research reveals that the principal assumption that leads to Zeno paradox is the one that claims time and space to be interdependent with respect to a certain action. This assumption is apparently adequate when we consider the case of a body moving at a constant speed past a succession of stationary objects arranged in a row. Nevertheless, the correct assumption, appears quite close to the latter assumption though allows to avoid the paradox. It emphasizes the time and space relation with reference to such action. In fact, they are so closely interrelated that all other action parameters remain unchanged, we can treat them as interdependent. It is for this reason that Zeno's Route – to make time subordinate to space – may seem effortless. Still, time and space are independent units although they are parts of one fundamental whole. The latter is obvious if altering at least one parameter, when, for instance, the segment to be covered changes its position itself, or, when one row in action overtakes another one (for the historical background and major interpretations of the Stadium see also (Davey 2007)).

Considering all the four paradoxes, Koyré (1985: 29–30) comes to the conclusion that from whatever position we approach each of them – that of the continuity of space and time or that of their discreteness – they are equally insoluble (for example, from the standpoint of the finitary hypothesis, it is possible to apply the objections from the Stadium to the Achilles and the Dichotomy).

Two Viewpoints: Smooth and Quantized Space-Time

In the analysis of the paradoxes, we will proceed from two different viewpoints: the general theory of relativity and quantum field theory (as well as from the viewpoint of the consequences resulting from an attempt to combine them). In the first case (Einstein's theory of gravity) we are dealing with smooth space-time. It means that it is not quantized and is continuous.

The continuity of space-time technically refers us to the first two paradoxes. Here we have the classical interpretation of the paradoxes and the debate about how motion should be understood.

General Theory of Relativity

In modern physics, motion is defined as follows: motion is a change in the spatial position of a body or its parts relative to other bodies over time (Newtonian mechanics regards action in relation to absolute space. Nevertheless, modern physics tends to dispute the concept of absolute space). Indeed, motion

occurs in time (recall the Aristotelian "time is a measure of motion" (Aristotle 1976: 97–98) but it can also be put vice versa: motion is a measure of time).[5]

In the theory of relativity, the properties of space and time are not absolute but relative. This, in particular, means that for different observers (different frames of reference) time flows differently; in other words, there are no simultaneous events (relativity of simultaneity). It is possible to transform the theory of relativity so that when similar phenomena take place, objects – in relation to space – will seem different in size to different observers.[6] In the theory of relativity, there is a limit to the speed of motion in space – it is the speed of light (moreover, it is constant; even if the tortoise tries to catch up with light at a speed lower than the speed of light by 1 km/s, light will move away from it not at a speed of 1 km/s but at its maximum speed). When an object moves at the speed of light, time slows down to the extreme – for those observers who observe the object moving at such a speed; for the object itself, time goes on as before; this is a consequence of relativity of time.

In their classical interpretation, Zeno's paradoxes describe what we would call today Newtonian or non-relativistic situations. Newton's space and time are absolute, space is not curved, time flows in the same way everywhere, and gravity spreads instantly. The differences between the theory of relativity and the Newtonian mechanics begin to play a role only in extreme conditions (at very large masses/energies and high speeds). However, the paradoxes in their usual formulations describe purely Newtonian situations and do not take the effects of the theory of relativity into consideration.

In order to try and take those effects into consideration, we can do the following: assume that the tortoise and Achilles are particles capable of developing ultra-high speeds. In this case, the situation is as follows. Achilles is known to be faster than the tortoise. But there is a speed limit – the speed of light. Thus, Achilles's maximum speed is the speed of light. Therefore, the tortoise moves more slowly. Let us assume that Achilles moves at the speed of light. This means that no matter how fast the tortoise runs, Achilles will move relative to it at the speed of light, and from the tortoise's point of view, he will move in space almost without spending any time (and not grow old – which in our case does not matter). Achilles still will not catch up with the tortoise, so long as we single out points in the continuity.

However, in the case of the Stadium, the situation may change. The fact is that in the theory of relativity, not only speed and direction play a role, but also the distance between the moving objects. If the three rows are far enough apart in space (in fact, very far apart in the universe), then this circumstance will play a role – there will be no simultaneous motion of rows *B* and *C* in opposite directions due to the relativity of simultaneity. What appears to be simultaneous to one observer is not to other observers, and either row *C* or row *B* starts motion later. But these are exotic situations that hardly need to

5 For an overview of some relevant studies on time, see (Karpenko 2016).
6 See (Gomes, Koslowski 2012)

be considered here since we are analyzing the classical version of paradoxes, where there is a unity of place, time, and action.

Quantum Theory

Quantum mechanics states that space is quantized. It is assumed that there are elementary, further indivisible particles. In the Standard Model of elementary particle physics, these are quarks, leptons, and gauge bosons. The problem, however, is that from the mathematical point of view, particles in the Standard Model can be infinitely small.

The limit at which quantum field theory works is the Planck length – about 10-35 meters; then the energies and interactions become so large (infinitely large) that particles interact with a probability greater than 1, which does not make sense. One of the main principles of quantum mechanics is that the smaller the distance we want to explore, the more energy is required for this – and more energy means more mass due to the equivalence of mass and energy. This means that at infinitesimal distances (which allows continuity) gravity will become infinitely strong (due to the inverse square law and the relationship between gravity and mass), and such a mass, given small volume and huge density, collapses into a black hole. This is one of the reasons why quantum mechanics and general relativity cannot be combined – the smaller the scale, the higher the energies, masses, and quantum fluctuations, and theories cease to work under these conditions.

Quantization, in contrast to the smooth space of the general relativity, implies discreteness of space (cellularity) and discrete portions of energy (elements can be considered as energy, also due to the equivalence of mass and energy). As already noted, the problem is that in the standard model of elementary particle physics there is no restriction on the minimum size of these particles and cells. Thus, they can be, as it were, infinitely small and continuous – it is not forbidden, although the theory ceases to work in conditions of infinite values. It looks like continuity with all its nuances which is hidden in discreteness.

In this case, it makes sense to consider Zeno's paradoxes from the point of view of how particles move through space. If space is continuous, then, it seems at first glance, the same thing is repeated – particles have to move through infinity, and thus motion is impossible.

However, at the micro level, the effect of tunneling is common.[7] Tunneling is impossible in classical physics, it is of purely quantum mechanical nature. This means that the tortoise can overtake Achilles (if they are elementary particles), and Achilles can overtake the tortoise and appear in front of it without even running past. In principle, there is a possibility of tunneling for macroscopic objects, too (and a real tortoise can, having overcome the energy barrier, get

7 Tunneling is the statistical ability of particles to overcome the energy barrier, the value of which exceeds the energy of those particles. A detailed description of the process is given in (Razavy 2003).

ahead of Achilles), but since macro-objects are very complex (and decohered), one would have to wait for that event for much longer than the universe has existed. But the important point is that it is possible. And it does not matter whether space is continuous or consists of discrete further indivisible cells of Planck length, the situation is the same in either case. Speaking of the Arrow paradox, we can say that the arrow teleports from cell to cell (the same applies to the Stadium), but in this case motion itself is divisible. Can we call it motion sense? We have already introduced the definition of action, which may seem applicable in case of teleportation (there is a change in positioning objects in relation to other ones, while processes are fixed in time).

Traditional physics assumes there are certain parameters of objects, thus, we can know their exact speed and action pattern. This, however, does not apply to quantum mechanics, at the micro level (and it is this level that we are dealing with when we infinitely divide the continuous and even separate the discrete, singling out points in it). It does not work because a particle, until it is localized in the experiment, is characterized by a wavefunction, the time evolution of which is given by the Schrödinger equation. This means that so long as we do not observe the particle, it is located at all possible places at once (which is described as a superposition of all possible positions). Returning to the example with the particle-Achilles and the particle-tortoise, this means the following: it is not that we do not know where they are relative to each other; on the contrary, we know for sure that they are in all possible positions relative to each other (in the Copenhagen interpretation, this is true until an act of measurement; at the moment of measurement, the wavefunction collapses, and the particle is localized in one of its probable places, most often in the most probable one; in the many-worlds interpretation, all outcomes are realized, but in parallel worlds). If we manage to localize with great accuracy the position of the particle-Achilles and the particle-tortoise, then we, in accordance with the Heisenberg uncertainty principle (see (Vilesov 2002) on this issue), know nothing about their speed (velocity and direction of motion), and the speculation about whether one of them will catch up with the other turns meaningless.

Time and Motion

It is hardly possible to consider time as something discrete. To single out indivisible atoms of time means to find intervals of timelessness between them, and it is not clear how, in this case, there can be motion in time. The connection between motion and time seems to be quite obvious. In a mental experiment which involves a complete stop of time, it becomes clear that all motion will also stop – because if something continues to move, you can set the time coordinates of the motion, and, therefore, it occurs in time. In this interpretation, time, in principle, cannot stop because quantum fluctuations (which can again be considered as motion) occur all the time. Thus, time is closely connected with motion, and there can be no absolute stops – no state of absolute rest (immobility and timelessness).

Returning to discreteness – assumption of discreteness implies just such absolute stops of time. Therefore, it is more correct to consider time as continuous (as it is considered in classical physics). But then the same difficulties arise as with space – how is it possible to single out points or segments in a continuity? After all, a continuity cannot have either a beginning or an end, otherwise in some place, the continuity becomes discontinuous. At an arbitrary fixed moment *A*, there is no motion, and there is no motion at any other moment, but motion passes through all these moments. In this respect, a moment is a stop of both time and motion. It remains to assume all these points and segments to be conditional, to consider them as a convenient mathematical technique, an approximation. Basically, it looks like a trick – to talk about the continuous in terms of discreteness.

Version with Restrictions

Let's consider one more version, in which discreteness, nevertheless, arises, and which appeared as an attempt to combine the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics – the theory of superstrings. The prefix "super" refers to the requirement of supersymmetry, which must be broken in a certain way in order to correspond to the particles and interactions observed in our world (additional spatial dimensions are also required for the theory to give adequate predictions). With the energies available in experiments today, it is not possible to confirm or reject string theory; nevertheless, its mathematical apparatus turned out to be effective in solving a number of problems.

The key idea of the theory is that there are tiny particles – strings – that have a fixed size. They cannot be less than the Planck length. This, as already noted, makes it possible to avoid infinite energies on the microscopic scale. Different string modes (vibration types) correspond to different types of particles. In addition to strings, there are also branes (higher-dimensional objects) that can be both extremely small and infinitely large.

The idea is that there is no need to talk about infinitesimal scales, since there is a limit to division – the Planck length. However, this does not mean classical discreteness like the ancient division into atoms and emptiness – there is no emptiness; the emptiest thing there can be is vacuum, a low-energy state, which means that it has ordinary particles, virtual particles, energy, and weight. One can interpret this in the sense that the minimum possible distance between particles has the scale of the Planck length, which, however, is not empty itself.

In this scenario, an important factor is that there is a minimum size, this scenario presupposes that there is a minimum, which is the least possible option. less than which is not worth considering. This situation can be interpreted as discreteness. How does a particle move under these conditions?

There are two versions of superstring theory. There are two types of strings – closed and open ones. Closed strings are attached at their ends to the surface of the branes on which they are located (they can also be attached to other branes), and can only move in the space of those branes, while open strings

are held by branes, and are able to move in multidimensional space (graviton, for example).

The manner of motion is affected by the dimensionality of space, as each new dimension opens up a new possible path. In the microworld of superstring theory, additional dimensions open up and particles can move in these dimensions. In other words, there are many paths from point *A* to point *B*, and the shortest one is not necessarily a straight line between them. This raises the question of what motion is in extra dimensions. From the point of view of the classical approach (the ontology of the macroworld), the problem remains the same, but there is an interesting mathematical trick in the theory that makes it possible to look at the problem in a new way.

What is meant here is duality used in the mathematics of strings. It shows that theories with different numbers of space dimensions can be equivalent to each other and have the same description (and the same consequences).

T-duality (Sathiapalan 1987) postulates that one large dimension can be replaced by another small one (curled up into a circle). This means that two different, at first glance, theories (one with a large dimension, the other with a small one) describe the same physical reality. But the most surprising thing is that if the large dimension of one theory is infinitely large, then the small dimension of the theory dual to it will be equal to zero. Thus, theories with different numbers of spatial dimensions can describe the same universe. It is quite difficult to accept this from the classical point of view, and questions arise regarding the definition of the concept "dimension" and, more broadly, "space".

Another interesting result was obtained by Juan Maldacena in (Maldacena 1998) – the most cited work in high-energy physics to date. He showed that the four-dimensional quantum field theory is dual to the ten-dimensional theory of gravity (in which five of the ten dimensions are curled up, and the remaining five form an anti-de Sitter space). Duality here, again, means that these theories describe the same reality.[8]

Let us point out another interesting model, the so-called matrix theory. The theory studies *D* 0-branes (point-like branes) in ten-dimensional space. This is a very interesting theory for various reasons. It does not have gravity, but *D* 0-branes behave similarly to gravitons, thus making this theory very similar to the theory of supergravity in eleven-dimensional space (apparently it is dual to that theory, which is probably an M-theory (Banks et al. 1997)).

The most interesting property of the theory in the context of this work is that it is impossible to determine the position of *D* 0-branes when they are too close to each other. From the mathematical point of view, this means that the question about the position of a *D* 0-brane in space does not make sense

8 An example of identical consequences is that an object that moves in the fifth dimension looks like an object that grows or shrinks in the dual four-dimensional theory. Achilles and the tortoise that run in the fifth dimension will increase in size (or vice versa) in the four-dimensional reality. Both are forms of motion. Seminal works on the application of duality are (Gubser et al. 1998) and (Witten 1998).

– it cannot be asked in a configuration space. In other words, this means that spatial dimensions disappear when branes get too close together.

The approaches above appearing accurate, this may prove that the concept of space in its traditional understanding can hardly be called a fundamental structure while there is something really crucial underlying what we call space. In this case, the term "space" represents the structure that remains obscure. It is an attempt to interpret something that has no exact scientific description.

In other words, Zeno's paradoxes under these conditions cannot have a satisfactory solution (in their traditional formulations), since they discuss the results of observing the behavior of macro-objects that do not reflect the fundamental nature of this behavior and the objects themselves – and the problem arises in them precisely because, starting to interpret them in terms of discreteness and continuity, we turn to those very fundamentals of which we do not have a satisfactory theory.

Conclusion

Regardless of whether we consider space and time to be continuous or discrete, the problem persists. Zeno is absolutely right – but he is right precisely in that there is an obvious contradiction between the observed macroscopic motion and the intellectual intuition, which arises at the moment when we turn to the micro level in reasoning, that is, when we begin to single out points in the continuity.

If we try to get around this problem and consider, for example, Achilles and the tortoise as elementary particles, the situation as a whole does not change, except that quantum mechanical effects are included, which present the aporia as meaningless, because the microworld behaves essentially differently than the macroworld.

At the micro level, motion is characterized by an uncertainty relation – we do not know where the particle-Achilles and the particle-tortoise are, and if we manage to localize them more or less, then it is not clear where they are moving to, and at what speeds. Knowing one parameter for sure, we do not know anything about the second one (although even one parameter cannot be known for sure), and are forced (taking into account the tunneling effect as well) to say that Achilles will eventually overtake the tortoise in some scenarios since the probability of such an outcome is not equal to zero.

However, it can be objected to all this that Achilles and the tortoise are not particles but decohered macro-objects, for which the indicated principles of quantum mechanics do not directly work. But Achilles and the Tortoise, as well as the Arrow, and the Stadium, are just convenient constructs (obviously, Zeno and his first interpreters could not assume that the behavior of the microworld is fundamentally different from the behavior of the macroworld), and the real crux of the problem is the problem of motion.

At ultra-small scales (matrix theory), the classical concepts of distance and motion cease to work, and Zeno's paradoxes start raising questions about

something that is not there. Moreover, the aporias describe motion in a three-dimensional world, but it may turn out to be a special case of a multidimensional reality, in which case they are not talking about motion at all.

The problem remains in any case and, apparently, it lies in the fact that there is no complete clarity about what motion, space, time, and a point are.

The considered examples with duality in superstring theory suggest that space is not fundamental (the same can be true for time and motion) and there is another basic physical reality, for which these categories are approximate descriptions of its properties. That is why the paradoxes are insoluble – they propose making a transition from the macroscopic, where the usual ideas about space, time, and motion work, to the microscopic, where the rules of the game are different. As Koyré wrote: "It should be said that all refutations relating only to the problem of motion are fundamentally wrong" (Koyré 1985: 27).

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Ivan A. Karpenko

Zenonovi paradoksi i kvantni mikrosvet: šta govore aporije

Apstrakt

U članku se razmatraju novi pristupi pitanju četiri Zenonova paradoksa: strela, Ahil i kornjača, Dihotomija i Stadion. Paradoksi su analizirani u svetlu aktuelnih istraživanja u oblasti fizike elementarnih čestica i nekih obećavajućih pravaca u razvoju kvantne gravitacije. Fizičke teorije, opremljene neophodnim filozofskim tumačenjem, koriste se kako bi se razjasnili Zenonovi paradoksi i tražili odgovori na njih. Tekst pokazuje da korišćenje savremenih pristupa za rešavanje paradoksa nije efikasno, jer paradoksi postaju irelevantni kada se analiziraju u kontekstu fizike mikrosveta, na veoma malim razmerama.

Glavni deo rada posvećen je demonstraciji ove okolnosti – da je na pitanja koja postavljaju paradoksi nemoguće odgovoriti (barem u njihovoj klasičnoj interpretaciji). Kao moguće objašnjenje, u članku se navodi da se u formulisanju paradoksa mešaju svojstva makrosveta i mikrosveta (što je istorijski opravdano, s obzirom na intuitivnu homogenost velikog i malog i činjenicu da neklasična fizika – kvantna mehanika – pojavila se tek u dvadesetom veku); odnosno od posmatranja velikih fizičkih objekata prelazi se na beskonačno male u smislu diskretnosti i kontinuiteta. Međutim, principi organizacije prostora u veoma malim razmerama počinju da se uopšteno razjašnjavaju tek sada i, možda, ovi principi se mogu ispostaviti kao prilično strani klasičnim idejama o fundamentalnoj fizičkoj stvarnosti.

Ključne reči: Zenonovi paradoksi, filozofija nauke, makrosvet, mikrosvet, dualnost, prostor, vreme, kretanje, kontinuitet

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Marko Pišev

NATURE AS THE SOURCE OF *MYSTERIUM TREMENDUM*: AN ESSAY ON THE POETIC WORKS OF BLACKWOOD, SMITH AND CAMPBELL

ABSTRACT
This paper is an attempt to analyze three horror classics – Algernon Blackwood's "The Willows" (1907), Clark Ashton Smith's "Genius Loci" (1936) and Ramsey Campbell's "The Voice of the Beach" (1977) – in which the landscape is envisioned as the abode of supernatural power. The common thread between these stories is the concept of natural scenery which merges and blends the real and unreal, the mind, flesh and the phenomenal world. As landscape is a major component of the plot, rather than mere background to the stories, the authors use it to formulate certain metaphysical ideas about existence and the nature of reality itself. My objective is to historically and epistemologically contextualize these ideas, clarify them and relate them to particular recent developments in philosophy and social theory. My second aim is to examine the semantics of space particular to each narrative, the association and partition of its structural elements, and the latent level of meaning arising from the organization of the stories' *mise-en-scène*.

KEYWORDS
landscape, semiotics, nature, horror, Enlightenment, Romanticism, Algernon Blackwood, Clark Ashton Smith, Ramsey Campbell

There is a strong reason to suspect that humans have always feared nature – all over the world, archaeological evidence, ethnographic and folklore material show us that for millennia people have used cultural means to physically or symbolically delimit their abode from the surrounding wilderness and its cultivated and uncultivated, visible and invisible, real and imagined, domestic and demonic threats (for a relevant comparative study, see: Tuan 1970; for the case of Serbian traditional culture, see: Detelić 1992: 128–130). In a number of modern literary texts belonging to the horror genre, this fear – along with many others, "old" and "new" – is thematized in various forms: nature may be employed in a horror tale as an aspect of an ill-omened scenery which, for its part, has a function to create a certain mood within the narrative, or to

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heighten the tension of the story. Such atmospheric settings may be imagined and described as relatively close to human settlements (yet, widely avoided by locals – as in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*) or set apart from them in some isolated area of wilderness (as in Edgar Mittelholzer's *My Bones and My Flute*). Very rarely does nature play a substantive role in the plot – one can think, in this regard, of stories such as Arthur Machen's "N", or H.G. Wells' "The Door in the Wall", where the remarkable beauty of a particular landscape leads to the protagonist's growing obsession and highly ambivalent ending, or Michel Bernanos' *The Other Side of the Mountain*, where the stark and barren solitude of the natural environment has fantastic effects on the leading character's mind and body.

In this paper, I will analyze natural sceneries featuring as manifestations of metaphysical evil in three supernatural horror tales written by Algernon Blackwood, Clark Ashton Smith and Ramsey Campbell. What sets these stories apart from a rather modest number of comparable tales in which landscapes are more significant than people or objects and take active part in the plot is the seeming ordinariness of the stories' locations. Instead of adhering to grandiose landscapes typically imagined as spaces of encounter with the "natural sublime" – mountains, oceans, deserts, volcanoes, waterfalls, polar caps, etc. (Duffy 2013; Des Pres 1983; Poland 1992) – the authors have placed their characters in ostensibly unremarkable settings: a river delta, a beach, a lonely countryside meadow – these are the main sites whereupon paranormal and horrific occurrences in the stories unravel.

The main hypothesis of this paper is that the authors of three selected tales have considerably altered the Romanticist notions of sublime, despite the fact that they have adopted the counter-Enlightenment view of nature – as not merely a resource to be dominated and utilized, but a domain possibly concealing a consciousness of a higher order. The core of this alteration, as I wish to propose, is their rejection of the Romanticist idea that an encounter with the "natural sublime" can be experienced principally on the "classic ground", that is, in spaces whose cultural values are already inscribed with a rich layer of historical and cultural associations, and therefore highly determined (such as the Alps, Mt. Vesuvius, vast desert sands or some other composites of landscape and apparent cultural significance) (Duffy 2013: 9). I do not wish to claim that the authors had any philosophical intent to challenge the dominant perspectives of sublime as an aesthetic category. It is, nevertheless plausible that they've devised this conceptual strategy for the practical reason of the stories' effect: to make the familiar look strange and the natural appear as otherworldly, in order to enhance the uncanny tone of the narratives.

As "the literature of horror in its pure state belongs to the uncanny" (Todorov 1973: 47), and as the notion of strange and frightening overtones in the ordinary setting (and vice versa), can generate an uncanny effect (Freud [1919] 2003: 124–132), familiar, generally recognizable environments, such as real or fictional towns, villages, houses, "quiet and safe" suburban areas are often the main places of action in horror fiction. This is, of course, not a general rule.

However, in many works of horror literature there first needs to be a textual reality similar to ours in order for it to be transgressed by the fantastic; in other words, in a horror story, the supernatural element is usually not integrated in the natural law of the textual reality, but rather proves itself to be a disruption of this, realistic environment (Garcia 2015: 16). To use Freud's terminology, *Unheimlich* ('uncanny', 'scary') and *Heimlich* ('domestic', 'familiar') can be viewed as two sides of the same coin: the more we, as readers, can relate to *Heimlich,* the more frightening the uncanny will become.

This is, perhaps, why the authors whose works I analyze here have chosen to place their stories in relatively unexceptional environments, rather than on the "classic ground" of the "natural sublime". At an overt level of meaning, these ordinary settings signify certain places within nature as intrinsically bad, or as samples of sacred ground where humans are not, incidentally, meant to be. Typically, horror concepts are concerned with concrete forms of (human or inhuman) Otherness (Ognjanović 2014: 42–43); and even if this Otherness can be very subtle, ambiguous and elusive, it is very rarely projected onto spaces that are both unexceptional and completely intact by humans. The main problem I wish to solve in this paper is what makes the seemingly common natural scenery alien and forbidding in the context of the supernatural horror tale; and how this particular effect of the uncanny is produced. In resolving this problem I also wish to analyze cultural and existential meanings of these stories' main settings (the meadow, the beach, the river delta) acting as signifiers of the radical Outside.

Theoretical Background

Numerous categories in the taxonomy of horror literature signify particular aesthetic dimensions of the genre in addition to certain preoccupation with space and place. Indeed, from its very outset in the last part of the 18th century, gothic was strongly influenced by the new attitude towards Nature that sprang up in the English Romantic poetry (Berlin 2012: 17), and by new styles of visual art, inspired by authors like Salvator Rosa, whose supreme gift was in "painting savage and desolate scenery" (Davenport-Hines 1998: 19). As the godfathers of the pictoresque[1] in 18th century England (Praz 1951: 18), artists like Rosa and Claude Lorrain stimulated a burgeoning interest in landscape, which was "invented" by English gardeners (such as Vanbrugh[2] and William Kent[3]) imitating foreign painters who were evoking classical authors (Trott 1999: 81).

1 *Picturesque*, a word naturalized in English language by 1767 from its French or Italian roots, has been applied to nature, as a term designating 'that peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture', signifying a particular way of looking at landscape by criteria drawn from painting. The picturesque, on the one hand required the application of artistic rules, and appealed, on the other, to the (heavily contested) ground of 'nature', whose appearances it claimed both to imitate, and to correct (Trott 1999: 80).
2 John Vanbrugh, architect, 1720–1726.
3 William Kent, gardener, 1730–1748.

Even if it is hardly safe to date the discovery and "invention" of landscape from the eighteenth century (Praz 1951: 18–19), it is nonetheless historically sound to assert that among writers and poets of the era the descriptions of landscape went far beyond the prosaic portrayals of the environment. Instead, landscape became the "mirror of the interior world", open for articulating and transmitting personal emotions. Reflective of moods, sentiments, moral and mystical inclinations of its author, literary landscape, similar to its counterpart in the figurative arts, became an efficient instrument for exploring states of mind in order to make the nature understandable, to make its "ineffability" accessible to intuition or to express the "inexpressible" (Scaramellini 1996: 51).

It is hardly surprising, then, that the descriptions of literary landscapes in Romantic as well as gothic texts[4] employed an evocative and suggestive vocabulary, more in tune with the observer's sensations than with the intrinsic attributes of the object observed (Scaramellini 1996: 51). Placing heart over reason, or feelings, moods and mental associations over clear and realist depictions of the external world (more conventional in the Rationalist literature of the previous epoch), Romanticism expressed a pronounced inconsistency, and even a considerable polarity of meanings, which Isaiah Berlin, following thinkers like Lovejoy and Boas, underlined as immanent to the movement:

> [Romanticism] is the strange, the exotic, the grotesque, the mysterious, the supernatural, ruins, moonlight, enchanted castles, hunting horns, elves, giants, griffins, falling water, the old mill on the Floss, darkness and the powers of darkness, phantoms, vampires, nameless terror, the irrational, the unutterable. Also it is the familiar, the sense of one's unique tradition, joy in the smiling aspect of everyday nature, and the accustomed sights and sounds of contented, simple, rural folk – the sane and happy wisdom of rosy-cheeked sons of the soil. (Berlin 2012: 31–32)

These shifting, and in many aspects self-contradictory currents of literary Romanticism make it exceptionally resistant to comprehensive definition, let alone generalization. For the purpose of this analysis, it is, nevertheless, reasonably safe to argue that gothic and horror literature borrowed a great deal

4 From mid-18th century and the publication of the first gothic novel (*The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole in the year 1746) to present times, literary Gothic has evolved its dominant tropes from motifs such as imperilled heroines, dastardly villains, ineffectual heroes, supernatural events, dilapidated buildings and atmospheric weather, to its more recent emphasis on the returning past, its dual interest in transgression and decay, its commitment to exploring the aesthetics of fear, and its cross-contamination of reality and fantasy (Spooner, McEvoy 2007: 1). By the last decades of the 20th century, Gothic has dispersed through contemporary non-literary media (music, fashion, visual arts, video-games, etc. See, in this regard Davenport-Hines 1998: 366–385), and has become a more inclusive and widely popular cultural category than horror. Since horror is still largely understood as a literary and film genre, and not as a clothing style, or a trend in the music industry, there can be drawn a subtle distinction between the two categories, whereby the former is more hybridized and inclusive, and the latter is more "full-blooded" and exclusive.

from the gloomier strands of Romanticist writing; and that nature in these texts is usually portrayed by blending images and moods, uncertain outlines and ominous suggestions, with darker shades of the Romantic pallet. This alone, however, is not enough to adequately address the problem of metaphysics of landscape and potential *otherworldliness* of nature in supernatural horror fiction that is central to this paper. To interpret this problem in its proper context, it is – in my opinion – necessary to introduce a pair of distinct, albeit in many ways related theoretical notions relevant to the subject: Edmund Burke's[5] conception of the sublime and Rudolf Otto's[6] idea of the numinous. I will immediately clarify why – and how – these pair of notions provide us with the conceptual framework needed for the accurate interpretation of the stories I wish to present and analyze in this paper.

The notion of sublime was first introduced in philosophy by Pseudo-Longinus in the 1st century A.D. For this late antique author, sublime was primarily an attempt to measure his distance from the Homeric world, where "there had still been intercourse between gods and men" (Deguy 1993: 7–8). Defined as a power that creates great thoughts and inspires passion for all that is more divine than ourselves, sublime was in Pseudo-Longinus' considerations a poetic ideal – one that includes the remarkable aspects of nature (great rivers, seas, the distant stars), as well as its unconstrained forces in its imagery (Euron 2019: 22). Nature great and unbound will in fact become one of the central points in the debates on the notion, which went into a millennia-long hiatus with Pseudo-Longinus' death; and returned as a topic of intellectual inquiry only with Burke's and Kant's writings on the subject in the 18th century.

For modern poetics, Kantian notion of the sublime has been vital. Kant, however, derived certain moral conclusions from his understanding of the concept; and precisely these conclusions were called into question by writers such as Blackwood, Smith and Campbell. In simple terms, Kant wrote that raw nature demonstrates the sublime as far as it contains greatness; only nature in its raw appearance, independent of any human manipulation, provides, as he wrote, the specific feeling of the sublime – on the condition, however, that the spectator is not being endangered, but in relative safety from its raging powers (Escoubas 1993: 61, 70). The sublime show of nature (displayed in phenomena such as storms, volcanoes, or spectacular sunsets) conveys, through intuition – in Kant's view – the idea of their infinity; as such, it makes us more profoundly aware of the infinite aspects of our own being: that is, our own rational faculties and moral qualities. In the presence of raw nature, in other words, we feel that, despite our physical weakness and material nothingness, we are bigger than nature by virtue of our moral purpose (Euron 2019: 70). Kant's depiction of a man's moral overpowering of nature is the core issue of the stories I wish to examine: they offer a drastically different view on human significance in

5 British philosopher and statesman from the 18th century, born 1729, died 1797.
6 German Lutheran theologian and philosopher (b. 1868, d. 1937), one of the most influential scholars of religion in the early 20th century.

the grand scheme of the world; one that is – admittedly, more in tone than in content – closer to Burke's and Otto's considerations. But to demonstrate this point, I would first like to focus briefly on the main ideas of the two authors.

Sublime in Burke's doctrine, namely, corresponds to Romanticist notions of grandiosity and awesomeness of nature's glory felt at its highest aesthetic level, one that exceeds the feeling of pleasure, and terrifies and astonishes the viewer (Burke 1764: 58–59). The sublime should be vast, obscure and astounding in order to achieve its twofold effect, as terror and awe are its necessary conditions. To illustrate the notion more clearly, and in contrast to Kant's more overtly anthropocentric perspective, we can imagine an individual standing on a cliff above the raging sea and observing the arrival of a tremendous storm. The beholder is terrified by the crushing forces of nature below him, yet the dread soon gives way to apprehension of transcendence: by observing the roaring abyss from the safe distance, the spectator is lifted above his mere self, and becomes one with the surrounding forces of destruction. Sublime is, against this background, "the drama or *agon* played out between the mind and that which terrifies us" (Des Pres 1983: 142).

The concept of numinous is, by contrast, more abstract. While Burke's debate on the sublime is formulated in the idiom of classic British empiricism (Quinton 1961: 71), the numinous, in Otto's terms, is not a natural phenomenon and cannot be gained empirically (Lopez 1979: 467), but refers, instead, to the intuitive level of religious experience. Otto claimed that the numinous is the basic factor underlying all religious ideas and feelings, and thus universal; yet, he did not comment on any non-Christian monotheistic tradition in his study probably because he was unfamiliar with Jewish and Islamic theology (Schlamm 1991: 394). However, one of the most iconic examples of the numinous encounter, as Rudolf Otto saw it, can be found precisely in the religious history of the Muslim faith. It relates to the event of Muhammad's first call to prophecy, on a hill outside of Mecca, called Hira, where the 40 years old soon-to-be Prophet of Islam was often found secluded in meditation. On one of such occasions, while contemplating on creation and spiritual truths, he suddenly heard a voice commanding: "Recite thou in the name of thy Lord". Deeply alarmed, Muhammad rushed home and asked his wife to put some covers on him, whereupon the second command "descended" on him from heavens: "O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle! Arise and warn!" (Hitti 1970: 112–113). This was the starting point of Islamic religion – the night of Muhammad's immediate revelation, which came to be known, in Islamic belief, as *Laylat al-qadr* ("The Night of Power").

By Otto's own standards, the numinous provides the setting for raw religious experience, corresponding to the description of *Laylat al-qadr*. It includes categories of *mysterium*, *tremendum* and *fascinas* as ultimate responses to the numinous feeling. *Mysterium*, within this frame of meaning, denotes "that which is hidden and esoteric" (i.e. angel Gabriel's voice that took Muhammad by surprise in the cave and, later on, below the blankets), while *tremendum* evokes a "peculiar dread" of this intrinsically obscure and absolutely unapproachable

mystery, that goes beyond conception, causing the flesh to creep (Lopez 1979: 468). Muhammad fled in great distress from mount Hira and, once arriving home, asked his wife to hide him. His encounter with *mysterium* – the numinous object – resulted in bewilderment and terror. Only on rational reflection did he assign the specific meaning to his experience: he gradually *understood* that he was approached by an angel, who called him to prophetic office. He opted for a solution of the mystery that infused it with the semantics of the holy and thus liberated himself from the tension of *tremendum* and *fascinas*. By adopting a new role, Muhammad discarded his liminal status and emerged from the unreal as the messenger of God.

My hypothesis is that the three horror stories put under scrutiny here present similar mystical encounters with reality beyond human comprehension, but that the character of these encounters does not allow immediate or subsequent ascription of any rational meaning to the experience. Evading the faculty of reason, the surplus of meaning thus generated gives rise to the faculties of imagination and understanding instead; these, on their part, grow in terror alone. The further the mind imagines and understands the plethora of meanings referring to an object of the senses that, paradoxically, "doesn't really exist at all" (Poland 1992: 188), the more terrified it becomes, until it reaches the breaking point, or passes over it into decomposition. Smith's, Blackwood's and Campbell's tales each in its own way portray this process, using nature as a metaphor for this "nothing" that is in fact a surplus of meanings – for the absolute agency that nullifies reason.

Stories Synopses

On the level of the narrative structure, "Genius Loci", "The Willows" and "The Voice of the Beach" have at least three elements in common to begin with: 1) landscape as the main source of fear; 2) supernatural presence; and 3) the companionship of a friend. Their synopses may be summarized as such: a pair of companions are secluded at a distant location. One of them – either the narrator or the narrator's friend – soon begins noticing unusual details in their surroundings. Due to the increasingly upsetting perception of the landscape, the behavior of either of two (or both) of the stories characters starts deteriorating, along with their sanity. Gradually, as the landscape develops into an elaborate sensory trap, the friends grow more distant from each other, compelled to obsessive scrutiny and exploration of the unnerving details of the scenery. Finally, one or both of them meets his doom, or narrowly escapes it, leaving the story's narrator permanently affected by the vision of reality hidden behind the appearance of the phenomenal world.

At the conceptual plan, all three texts advance the vision of the radical Otherness[7] – or rather, the radical Outside to the textual reality – as impenetrable,

7 Radical Otherness is a term widely used in contemporary horror and gothic studies (see, for instance, its various embodiments in Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock's (ed.) "The

obscure and horrifying. The idea of elusiveness of *mysterium tremendum* within the stories is in perfect harmony with the anti-Enlightenment cult of obscurity (reflected in Burke's ideas of the sublime) which favours suggestion over definition and limitless over lucid (Burke 1764: 252–285). The Romantic tradition of cultivating the "mysterious tantalising vagueness of outline" (Berlin 2012: 33) is very palpable in all three tales: they quite literary epitomize Burke's notion of dark, uncertain, confused and terrible images being "sublime to the last degree" (Berlin 2012: 50–51). The inhuman agency they introduce cannot be fully grasped, either by perception or by reason. Contrary to usual experience, its presence is more evident in the night time than during the day which is, again, concomitant to the Burke's notion of darkness being more productive of sublime ideas than light (see also: Trott 1999: 87–89). This brings us to the fourth element common to the stories: 4) the qualitative change of landscape in full dark.

Here one can see a rather interesting philosophical concept that may be articulated along these lines: reality is fragmented; the division of reality is as profound and as deeply acknowledged by the stories' protagonists as that between the sacred and the profane; in its sublime form, nature belongs to the sacred domain of reality; on a purely ideational level, this domain is alien and hostile to human life; it is the "wholly other" and in this regard, fundamentally unknowable.

Up to this point, the described metaphysics is relatively conventional, as it follows, however loosely, the Romanticist notions of the sublime. Yet, the stories' authors do not stop at this point, but continue to develop the concept in the following manner: the concealed reality embodies itself in the form of a structure characteristic of its domain; this structure, on its part, generates schemes, patterns and practices conforming, evidentially, with its radical Otherness that is antagonistic to human biological and cognitive framework; if exposed to it accidentally, the human mind and body may lose its composition: the revealed domain of reality becomes a property which appropriates its beholder reducing him to an (in)significant part of itself – to a structure, a pattern, a scheme signifying some inconceivable level of existence.

Accordingly, there is yet another common element in the stories, one that is central to their metaphysical vision: 5) the theme of bodily transformation. Indeed, in Smith's, Campbell's and Blackwood's works, a certain form of radical alteration of human figure is either on the brink of happening, or actually takes place near to the story's conclusion. In the texts, the disfiguration of the human body – or its fusion with the landscape – *mentally* corresponds to complete dissolution of the protagonists' apparently stable and rational perception

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Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters"). It refers to any manifestation of a threat to the natural order, or a violation of socio-culturally established conceptual categories which pose to the individual – or to the whole of the society – the epistemological threat of confronting that which should not be (for a wider discussion on the subject, see Pišev 2016: 327–349).

of the world. On the *physical* level, it is the result of nature blurring the boundaries between the domains of human and inhuman space and progressively drawing the individual into the spiritual realm, concealed behind its mask of remote impassiveness.

As indicated, these stories not only perpetuate, but also elevate the earlier Romanticist poetic and literary attempts to depict "the shapeless shape" (Trott 1999: 87) to the highest degree. Their authors part from the Romanticist traditions, however, in their portraying of this shape as both invading and unapproachable to human inquiry. While posing a threat to dissolve, absorb or completely annihilate the human individuality, it causes mixed feelings of fascination and terror. Contrary to Otto's assumptions, the numinous shape – as these stories demonstrate – is not necessarily holy, at least not in the Christian sense of the word: it is fundamentally linked with the more ambivalent concept of the sacred. Differently put, we should not fear it for the same reason we fear God or, incidentally, nature. Rather, we should fear it precisely because God (*or* nature) has nothing to do with it – the mystery sheds its light on utter insignificance of human existence against the backdrop of the universe.

In the next sequence of chapters, I will direct my attention to the close reading of the texts, so as to thoroughly examine the "shapeless shape" that is crucial to their depiction of the radical Outside. As it embodies itself in the landscape and by degrees unfolds its content, it generates the unity of meaning which, on its part, obliterates all meaning and presents itself as alien to human comprehension. I will try to come to an answer what is this unrepresentable agency structured of, and what role do landscapes play in its gradual unveiling.

The Possessed Landscape – Clark Ashton Smith's "Genius Loci"

Smith's tale opens with a description of the central location in the story: the lonely meadow hidden from the road by trees, placed in the little blind valley somewhere in the American countryside. Supernatural aspects of the place in "Genius Loci" are perhaps not as subtly incorporated in the story's narrative as in Blackwood's and Campbell's texts, but they perfectly match the requirements outlined in the introductory chapter of this paper: natural scenery is the exclusive cause of fear in the tale, and a key element to its plot; the landscape consists solely of the elemental parts of nature, such as land, plants and water; it conspicuously lacks any sign of human-built artifact, in or around it; finally, it keeps within itself an emerging structure of a "wholly other" reality that completely exceeds human ontological concepts and worldly experience. This numinous feature of the landscape, as I will demonstrate, emerges in the fictional world of the story from a synthesis of its adverse elements, such as stagnant and running water, plant and mist, or growing and decaying trees; a number of binary oppositions ('dead' : 'living', 'animate' : 'inanimate', 'anthropomorphic' : 'zoomorphic', etc.) that characterize the scenery, amalgamated together, develop an image of a concealed, impure and captivating environment that effectively cloaks the radical Outside.

The story's narrator, Murray, is a novelist and a newcomer to the fictional hamlet called Bowman, where he has a house which serves him as a recluse for writing. He receives a visit by a close friend, Francis Amberville, the painter, who takes advantage of the local environs to gain inspiration for his art. While Amberville, "armed with sketching-materials" explores the surroundings for "the pictorial potentialities of landscape" (Smith 2011: 223), Murray writes. Over the course of two weeks, during which the main events of the story take place, the narrator helplessly observes his friend's decline from a vibrant and cheerful companion to a man overwhelmed by "some form of mental alienation" (Smith 2011: 230) which gradually leads him to his (and his fiancé's) macabre death.

The reason for the ominous change in the artist's character is his intuitive discovery of the lonely meadow not far from Murray's house. Once he observes its disquieting scenic charm on the artist's sketches, Murray admits that he must have missed it in his previous country walks. His friend, the painter Amberville is immediately obsessed with it:

> Several days passed [...] and I put off my proposed visit to the meadow discovered by Amberville. My friend, on his part, was evidently engrossed by his new theme. He sallied forth each morning with his easel and oil-colours, and returned later each day, forgetful of the luncheon-hour that had formerly brought him back from such expeditions On the third day, he did not reappear till sunset. (Smith 2011: 225)

Amberville's monomania soon takes alarming proportions, as the painter makes compulsive revisits to the site, sinking ever deeper into his morbid mood and peculiar hostility toward his host. Frightened by the signs of his companion's deteriorating mental condition, Murray writes a letter to Amberville's fiancé, miss Avis Olcott, inviting her as a fellow-guest of the artist during the rest of his visit at Bowman. The arrival of miss Olcott near the story's finale does not, unfortunately, achieve a favorable outcome: the girl proves to be subservient to her lover (Smith 2011: 230) and restricted in her powers to keep him away from the inimitable darkness that consumes him. Instead of bringing him back to his old and cheerful self, she follows Amberville to his daily excursions at the site and falls prey to the same peril that has already decided her fiancé's fate. The pair finally meets their demise at the "accursed meadow" – the narrator finds them drowned in the stagnant lake covered by the greenish scum.

Murray visits the site only twice – in the middle, and at the end of the story, whereupon he discovers the two bodies. He is repelled by the meadow: it depresses and frightens him with its "sick alders" that seem to beckon him, its sluggish water and boggy terrain that appears to "drag him down in some intangible way" (Smith 2011: 227). There is an undeniable feeling of aberration to the place: it lies somehow separate from the "autumn world around it" (Smith 2011: 226); it is unnaturally quiet and simultaneously aware and watchful: as Amberville notes, and the narrator empirically affirms, "I feel that the meadow itself – or the force embodied in the meadow – is scrutinizing me all the time" (Smith 2011: 226). Once he first observes it in the painter's drawings,

Murray is instantly reminded of old Chapman, an owner of a nearby ranch, who was found dead a little while back at that very field, supposedly of heart failure. Even if there were "legends about old Chapman's insanity" circulating in Bowman– tales spread by visitors to his household, who "used to find him in that lower meadow, standing idly about and staring vacantly at the trees and water", there were no rumors that the meadow itself might be the cause of his insanity. After old Chapman's death, his family moved away, abandoning the ranch to its fate, and leaving the meadow to its previous equilibrium – "It's a lonely spot", Murray observes, "and I don't imagine that anyone ever goes there now" (Smith 2011: 224).

Chapman or some spectral aspect of him is, however, still there – Amberville repeatedly notices him at the site, while working on his painting. At first he feels his presence, or sees him only with a corner of his eye, but as the time passes, the old man's presence becomes both more evident and, paradoxically, more fragmented:

> Sometimes, when I am studying the dead willow very intently, I see his scowling filthy-bearded face as a part of the hole. Then, again, it will float among the leafless twigs, as if it had been caught there. Sometimes a knotty hand, a tattered coat-sleeve, will emerge through the mantling in the pool, as if a drowned body were rising to the surface. Then, a moment later – or simultaneously – there will be something of him among the alders or the cat-tails. These apparitions are always brief, and when I try to scrutinize them closely, they melt like films of vapor into the surrounding scene. But the old scoundrel, whoever or whatever he may be, is a sort of fixture. He is no less vile than everything else about the place, though I feel that he isn't the main element of the vileness. (Smith 2011: 226)

The main element of "the vileness" is the landscape itself – the particular configuration of natural scenery that reflects and emits some other, more vague and impersonal influence to its spectator. The painter, Amberville, refers to this other influence as a quality perceived by feeling, instead of senses – a presence that is benign or wholly indifferent to human welfare, "perhaps oblivious of human existence" (Smith 2011: 225). Instead of resting on the condition that the spectator's position is secure (Des Pres 1983: 141), the sublime in "Genius Loci" emerges as an intrusive power: the spectator himself is examined, and *acted upon;* his mind and body are directly exposed to the obliterating dynamics of "the shapeless shape" arising from the landscape he is attracted to. Arranged like a decoy – "a deadfall of malignity and despair" (Smith 2011: 227) – the natural scenery succeeds in disintegrating and absorbing his image in a manner comparable to breaking up and reassembling an object on a cubist painting:

> [The landscape] seemed to curdle and thicken gradually in places, with some unholy, terrifying activity. Out of these curdlings, as if disgorged by the ambient exhalation, I saw the emergence of three human faces that partook of the same nebulous matter, neither mist nor plasma. One of these faces seemed to detach itself from the bole of the ghostly willow; the second and third swirled upwards

> from the seething of the phantom pool, with their bodies trailing formlessly among the tenuous boughs. The faces were those of old Chapman, of Francis Amberville, and Avis Olcott [...] The three human faces, through a further agitation of the curdling mass, began to approach each other. Slowly, inexpressibly, they merged in one, becoming an androgynous face, neither young nor old, that melted finally into the lengthening phantom boughs of the willow – the hands of the arboreal death, that were reaching out to enfold me. (Smith 2011: 231)

The transcendence lurking on the scene in "Genius Loci" is clearly numinous in its character: it is the "wholly other", an unrepresentable but independent force, "a thing that doesn't really exist at all", until it is brought into view, schematized by other feelings (Poland 1992: 188). As I already pointed out, the feelings that schematize it are not absolutely and intensely positive, however – they cannot be subsequently pinioned by rational and self-assertive concepts. They are depressing, alarming, nightmarish, "tainted with insidious horror" (Smith 2011: 228), "too awful to be described" (Smith 2011: 228). What directs them to pessimistic ground is the failure of human mind to ascribe any self-affirmative meaning to the phenomenon it encounters: instead of overcoming the "unattainable" by grasping for some effective metaphor – such as God, or Higher Consciousness, or Purpose – it reaches and finds nothing except the vision of the world, "even life itself, as essentially unknowable, chaotic and terrifying" (Packer, Stoneman 2018: 35).

The Radical Enmity of Landscape: Algernon Blackwood's "The Willows"

The location of Blackwood's story is the "wilderness of sand-banks and swamp land" (Blackwood 1917: 129) on Danube river; or, more precisely, on a very restricted region of it, not far from Bratislava, the capitol of today's Slovak republic. A pair of companions, the narrator and his friend, depart from Vienna, *en route* to Budapest, on a joyful, unhurried journey down the Europe's second-longest river. The pair travels alone on a Canadian canoe. The story's opening sentence places the reader directly into the landscape, and sets out the framework within which the specific semantics of space would develop: "After leaving Vienna, and long before you come to Buda-Pesth, the Danube enters a region of singular loneliness and desolation, where its waters spread away on all sides regardless of a main channel, and the country becomes a swamp for miles upon miles, covered by a vast sea of low willow-bushes" (Blackwood 1917: 127).

The Danube's loneliness on this particular part of its watercourse, the spreading of the water into miles of swamp surrounded by shifting sand, and of course the broad-sweeping presence of the willows represent the constitutive elements of the landscape's picturesque quality. The combined effect of the strong wind and the swirling flood soon makes the travelers exhausted and they start searching their surroundings for a suitable camping-ground. They succeed in landing their canoe on a sandy bank, no larger than an acre in extent, and "too thickly grown with willows to make the walking pleasant" (Blackwood 1917: 135). The

protagonist explores the island, nevertheless, and immediately notices how the willows, observed from a certain distance, seem like a herd of monstrous creatures crowding down to drink (Blackwood 1917: 136). The attribution of animal and human characteristics to different aspects of landscape features prominently in Blackwood's text, attempting to suggest that the scenery is alive or brimming with consciousness alien to human life: "[The willows'] serried ranks, growing everywhere darker about me as the shadows deepened, moving furiously yet softly in the wind, woke in me the curious and unwelcome suggestion that we had trespassed here upon the borders of an alien world, a world where we were intruders, a world where we were not wanted or invited to remain..." (Blackwood 1917: 139). At another page, the narrator reflects:

> The psychology of places, for some imaginations at least, is very vivid; for the wanderer, especially, camps have their 'note' either of welcome or rejection. At first it may not always be apparent, because the busy preparations of tent and cooking prevent, but with the first pause – after supper usually – it comes and announces itself. And the note of this willow camp now became unmistakably plain to me: we were interlopers, trespassers; we were not welcomed. (Blackwood 1917: 147)

The "psychology of the place" in Blackwood's "The Willows", as the reader soon notices, cannot be reduced to some residuum of previous human activities, no matter how vague or compulsory (as in Smith's "Genius Loci"); it bears no relations to humanity whatsoever. It is "a spot held by dwellers in some outer space, a peep hole whence they could spy upon the earth, themselves unseen, a point where the veil between had worn a little thin" (Blackwood 1917: 181–82). The experience of such a place provokes an individual reaction that reaches beyond ordinary ghostly fear. It is, as Blackwood's protagonist reveals, "infinitely greater, stranger, and seems to arise from some ancestral sense of terror more profoundly disturbing than anything I have ever known or dreamed of" (Blackwood 1917: 181). Its disturbing effect is due to the radically negative moment of the sublime which springs out of it, refuting any possibility of meaning – there are too many signifiers for the mind to render meaningful, and it becomes gradually lost in a succession of signs that "seem to go on endlessly" (see Poland 1992: 181).

To draw concrete parallels between Otto's use of the term *numinous* and Blackwood's novella, I will focus briefly on the subject of ineffability. In Otto's argumentation, the numinous is "preconceptual", in the sense that it is prior to and independent of the language used to disclose and to represent it (Poland 1992: 188). In "The Willows" the leading character briefly encounters the numinous object during the first night of his stay on the river island. What he observes at that particular moment are "shapes of some indeterminate sort among the willows", "immense, bronze colored, moving, and wholly independent of the swaying of the branches" (Blackwood 1917: 152). These "nude, fluid shapes, passing up the bushes [...] rising up in a living column into the heavens" initially provoke disbelief, then the feeling of awe and wonder in

the narrator. As he notes: "I felt that I must fall down and worship – absolutely worship" (Blackwood 1917: 154).

This episode is followed by a more sinister encounter near the end of the story. The narrator and his companion wander into the dark to collect wood for their campfire. They are already overwrought by what they half grasped around them, and feel deeply unnerved as a result of their conversation on the subject. Suddenly, while picking branches, his companion draws his attention to something moving in front of the campfire. The narrator discerns the thing as a tangled mass of animals, slowly progressing toward them. To the companion, the spectacle gives an impression of a clump of willow bushes, rounded at the top, coiling upon itself like smoke (Blackwood 1917: 193–194). The sight paralyses the two men with fear; certain that he is going to die, the narrator loses his senses, but his friend catches him in falling and accidentally inflicts pain to his body. It is this pain that saves him, concealing his mind from "the shapeless shape" at the moment of its unfolding.

The notion of ineffability is quite obvious here. It is not only that the protagonist and his friend cannot find the words for what they perceive, it is also that their perception of the same spectacle is different, and only partial at that. The majority of phenomena they witness is half hidden, concealed from their eyes, since it cannot be comprehended in its entirety: the mind is too limited and feeble to incorporate it, let alone to process it without falling to pieces. The otherworldly presence in "The Willows" hence reveals itself as superimposed on the landscape, or else, manifests itself in the form of metonymy: the approaching of the supernatural is felt through enormous weight of the atmosphere, through fourth dimensional sounds, reminiscent of booming of the gong, through deep, spiral shaped funnels in the sand, and of course, through willows, which are, in fact, masks – or symbols of the forces that are radically against the two men (Blackwood 1917: 189).

Chanting Without Mouth: Ramsey Campbell's "The Voice of the Beach"

The idea of inexpressibility of a truly mystical, numinous experience, or a contact with a presence so fundamentally different from any human conception of the real that it must uncover itself only through an "acceptable metaphor" (Campbell [1977] 2005: 217) is further elaborated in Ramsey Campbell's story "The Voice of the Beach". With a proficient use of evocative, formulaic language, Campbell unfolds a narrative whose place of action is the anonymous beach (the exact location of it is left unknown) and the small, unremarkable rental house, a bungalow, situated on its coastal sands. Two men occupy the bungalow: the narrator (also left anonymous) and his companion, Neal. Neal is in a sensitive state of mind – not only that he has recently reached his friend's summer retreat, he is freshly divorced as well, and seems slightly unstable and lost. In an arrangement similar to Smith's "Genius Loci", the narrator, Neil's

host and companion, is a writer who has rented the house, and settled in it earlier on, in order to write without being distracted by city life. However, he finds himself distracted by the beach, "compelled to scribble notes about it, trying to define the images it suggested" (Campbell 2005: 198). The majority of the story's events happen in the course of three days, beginning with Neal's arrival. Once the two friends acclimatize to each other's presence after a long hiatus, Neil proposes a bit of walk to view the beach. The reader is immediately immersed in the story's landscape: we are informed that the beach looks artificial, unconvincing, to the narrator's eye. He observes the sands as a herd of faceless dunes, and the beach as a complex of patterns. The haze and the dazzle of waves distort his view, making him ill at ease and apprehensive. This is, however, nothing new: he has seen it and felt it before – an implied fact hinting at narrator's tendency for derealization. The pivotal moment in the story is Neil's abrupt decision to pick up a seashell from the sand. "It's too small to hear anything", comments the narrator, but his companion puts it to his ear nevertheless. Thus, the voice of the beach speaks out, transfixing its emancipator, "as though the shell is holding him, rather than reverse" (Campbell 2005: 203).

Neal's second initiative, important to the story's fable, is a visit to the abandoned village of Lewis. The settlement is located not far from the bungalow – we never learn how far exactly – and from a certain distance, the abandoned village seems like "a few uprights of rock", encrusted with sand, and "glowing sullenly as copper through the haze" (Campbell 2005: 199). When the narrator and his friend approach it, it becomes visible that what appeared to be a pattern of standing stones is really the remains of the village, jagged slate walls with gaps for windows and doorways. The village shows "the skull beneath the skin" of the landscape (Armitt 2018: 291): the grey walls are "cavitied as skulls" forming "a maze whose center is desertion", the gaping windows display "an absence of rooms" (Campbell 2005: 200). Taken from a closer perspective, the village reveals itself to be an enigma, "a puzzle whose solution would clarify a pattern, a larger mystery" (Campbell 2005: 200). In the deserted settlement, Neal – the narrator's friend – uncovers an old notebook scribbled in unsteady handwriting. The unidentified owner of the notebook recounts that the beach is "not so bad" during daytime, but that it becomes worse at night, steadily growing and flashing patterns in the glowing dark – the beach is alive, he states, but it's only "the image being put together" (Campbell 2005: 202): something worse is hiding behind that image, something alien that was, perhaps, kept small by the stones which the founders of Lewis unwisely moved as they built the village.

The discovery of the notebook has a profound effect on Neil: he is becoming obsessed by its contents as well as by the mystery it refers to. After a time of research and keen reflection, he approaches the narrator with a question: "Don't you feel there are places that are closer to another sort of reality, another plane or dimension or whatever", he asks. He elaborates further: "Suppose this other reality was once all there was? Then ours came into being and

occupied some of its space. We didn't destroy it – it can't be destroyed. Maybe it withdrew a little, to bide its time. But it left a kind of imprint of itself, a kind of coded message of itself in our reality. And yet that image is itself an embryo [...] Things become part of its image, and that's how it grows" (Campbell 2005: 211).

Once the voice of the beach finally takes over his organs of speech, Neil makes his way out of the house and vanishes in the coastal sands in a series of elaborate movements which resemble dancing. The narrator follows him into the glowing dark, cold with terror. On the beach, he notices Neal's footprints, spiraling back on themselves in intricate patterns, which refuse to fade from his mind. He has a sudden depersonalization episode in which he observes himself, "a figure tiny and trivial as an insect", making an effort to join in the dance of the beach (Campbell 2005: 216). He only manages to break through suffocating panic by tearing his lip with his teeth, and similarly to Blackwood's protagonist, who is saved by the sudden spasm of physical pain, he succeeds in escaping the grip of the unreal. However, his escape is only temporary. Possessed by a sickening temptation to learn the truth of what his friend has become, and what he is becoming, he finds out that he cannot leave the bungalow. He tries to write, hoping that the act would liberate him, but "of course, the more one thinks of the beach, the stronger its hold becomes" (Campbell 2005: 218). He anticipates that he will soon become what Neil is, a part of the dream of the beach, a living pattern which serves the growth of the beach but is too insubstantial to satisfy its hunger.

Active Landscapes: Semiotic and Structural Analysis (and Conclusion)

The physical environment is the holder and the catalyst of the supernatural in the analyzed texts: it is set around the fantastic element and holds it in place, eventually causing it to emerge and act. But the question remaining is how. To answer it, we can start by noting that in all three stories, the landscapes are fully active: they are portrayed as teeming with movement, endlessly shifting, more or less subtly modifying their internal and external boundaries. The motions of the *mise en scène*, caused by elemental forces, are significantly emphasized in the texts, perhaps even amplified to a degree. Therefore, we can note that the authors of the stories use hyperbolization as a literary device, to foster the impression that the landscape is alive.

In "Genius Loci", the meadow emanates a faint vapor, neither light nor mist, that flows and wavers about; it becomes worse at night, rising and coiling in a pallid, luminous film that "seems to curdle and thicken gradually in places, with some unholy, terrifying activity". In "The Willows", the river is rising, the wind rips through the trees. The river island is continually affected by erosion: chunks of it are driven apart and claimed by the boisterous Danube. To the protagonist, the camp site appears to have changed in size over night: it seems smaller, and the willows closer, than they should be. Only gradually the

uncanny aspects of movement seem to take over the nature: the willow branches move without the aid of wind; the atmosphere gains crushing weight; the canoe, safely pulled up the shore, becomes unexplainably damaged; and on closely examining one of the paddles, the narrator observes that the blade is "scraped all over, beautifully scraped, as though someone had sand-papered it with care, making it so thin that the first vigorous stroke must have snapped it off at the elbow" (Blackwood 1917: 166).

In "The Voice of the Beach", the constant shifting of the elements is even more conspicuous – the sea waves are washing the sandy shore, changing it restlessly by their unstoppable power. Archipelagos of clouds flow low above the sea; the effect of the haze creates magnificent shadows, running in quick motion – too fast, indeed, to be properly observed; the sunlight spills over the beach, which suddenly "leaps into clarity"; and when it grows dark, there are things apparently moving on the beach, "stiff as scarecrows jerking into various contorted poses". Here, also, the fantastic transgresses the realistic scenery in sequential movements, becoming more horrible with every repetition (see Stewart 1982: 36): the combined force of breeze and quicksand shifts, creating living patterns on the ground. Thick sea foams form symbols, which look like they're made of flesh. The dunes recede creating an illusion of the vastness of the beach; the looming sky observes, indifferent as outer space, threatening to crush the narrator to nothing.

Studies in the anthropology of cultural classification have provided many useful insights to theoreticians of horror genre, who have adopted the concept of liminality to discuss themes like monstrous bodies and genre-specific spatial settings. Categories between nature and culture, between human and animal, human and machine, have all been addressed and explored at length by thinkers like Noel Carroll (1990: 42–52) and Eugene Thacker (2010: 104–159). In the three stories under discussion here, the liminal character of the landscape makes itself distinct in many ambiguous spheres between categories of the natural: the swamp and the beach are part water, part land; Smith's meadow is located at the outermost edge of the old Chapman's ranch; it is part grassland, part orchard, part stagnant pool. Blackwood's willows are portrayed as bushes which have not reached "the dignity of the trees"; Campbell's seashells are, as it happens, former inhabitants of the sea which the waves have poured out on the sand. And, of course, the idea that the stories' place of action rests on the border of two worlds – or two planes of dimension – pushes the notion of liminality to its extreme.

This notion, in fact, can be best described as a structural device, rather than merely as a motif, as it is embedded not only into the structure of the setting, but more significantly, into the characters' observations of it. The way that they distinguish details in their environment continually oscillates between perception and illusion: "When I glanced back, *it looked as though* something enormous was imitating my walk" (Campbell 2005: 141, italic is mine); "At that instant *I seemed to discern* a faint, unholy aura, neither light nor mist, that flowed and wavered about the meadow, preserving the outlines of the willow,

the alders, the weeds, the pool" (Smith 2011: 231, italic is mine; see also Todorov 1973: 52). This uncertainty of perception increases tension in the text and, at the same time, emphasizes the story's ambiguity which derives its power from the very boundary between the real and the fictive, where the "didn't really happen" of the fiction is transformed into a fear which is "real", yet which has no actual referent (Stewart 1982: 35). Thus, liminality, in the function of a structural device, generates suspense and instability of the sensual experience which, at first, leads to blurring and then, to fusing of the threshold between the exterior world of nature and the interior world of the character's personhood, culminating in the character's transformation, or rather, his absorption into the landscape.

The unreliability of the various conceptual categories involved in interpreting the exterior world, or the inconsistency of "distribution of patterns of perceptual experience" (Packer, Stoneman 2018: 35) is further stressed by different levels of projection, identifiable in different degrees in all three texts. Inferred to as ideal-type models serving to clarify the means by which nature figures as the holder and the catalyst of the supernatural, these levels of projection can be described as threefold. They rest on attribution of (a) *intelligence* to natural surroundings, as in the following from Smith's "Genius Loci"*:* "The place has an entity of its own – an indwelling personality. It's there, like the soul in a human body, but I can't pin it down or touch it. [...] This thing [...] is hatefully aware and watchful. [...] The place has the air of a thirsty vampire, waiting to drink me in somehow, if it can" (Smith 2011: 226). The following passage from Blackwood's story is also quite illustrative in this respect:

> When common objects [...] become charged with the suggestion of horror, they stimulate the imagination far more than things of unusual appearance; and these bushes, crowding huddled about us, assumed for me in the darkness a bizarre grotesquerie of appearance that lent to them somehow the aspect of purposeful and living creatures. Their very ordinariness, I felt, masked what was malignant and hostile to us. (Blackwood 1917: 173)

Acting as a carefully arranged *mise-en-scène* against which the supernatural element displays its contours, the landscape is imagined to convey a specific sensation of space where the cloth gets ragged and reality is thin (King 2008: 132). At this point, the "ordinariness" of the setting is transgressed by an impossible element, creating a problematic coexistence of two excluding orders (the realistic and the supernatural) (see Garcia 2015: 135–136). The tension arising from the contradiction between the two worlds, that of the real, and that of the fantastic, allows the supernatural phenomena to emerge – without this tension, the frightening effect of the story would be considerably limited. This tension is further achieved through attribution of (b) *human and/or animal characteristics (*anthropomorphism, zoomorphism) to the natural scenery. There are many examples of such ascription in the stories, but the most important one, common to all three, is implied in the idea that the landscape serves as a camouflage for the numinous object. The notion of some vast, otherworldly

force hiding behind the disguise of the external world "calls into question the adequacy of rational thought to organize and structure the sensible world of appearance" (Packer, Stoneman 2018: 36), thus suggesting "the reality of something that we have until now considered imaginary" (Freud 2003: 150). Consider these lines from Campbell's tale: "I felt that the beach was somehow separated from its surroundings: introverted, I remember thinking" (Campbell 2005: 194); "Closer to the sea I felt slightly less oppressed – but the *whispering* of sand, the light *murmur* of waves, the *bumbling* of the wind, all *chanted together* insistently. Everywhere on the beach were patterns, *demanding to be read*" (Campbell 2005: 203, italic is mine). In a like manner, the "accursed meadow" in Smith's "Genius Loci" acts as a spider web, luring the victim to participate in its delicate – and ultimately fatal – enigma: "The place haunted me like a phantasm, horrible but seductive. I felt an impelling morbid curiosity, an unwholesome desire to visit it again" (Smith 2011: 230). "The boughs of the sick alders beckoned. The pool, over which the bony willow presided like an arboreal death, was wooing me foully with its stagnant waters" (Smith 2011: 227).

At the outset, the otherworldly presence in all three stories is camouflaged, *de facto* imperfectly, by the seeming commonplaceness of the landscape – either immediately or gradually, the narrator feels that there is something wrong with it, entering, thus the domain of the uncanny. He is never quite sure what it is, or what he is seeing – not until the story's end, at least, when the spectacle finally reaches its striking transformation. The possibility of it being an elaborate camouflage is exactly what makes it so captivating – and so dangerous: it poses an epistemological puzzle to the spectator, although not one that is meant to frighten, but to teach him, in the spirit of the true rite of passage, the proper shape of things (Turner, cited in Stewart 1982: 40).

Lastly, the act of opening of the setting to fantastic transgression is achieved by ascription of the (c) *cosmic dimension* to the landscape. As I have noted before, the subtle othering of the landscape in the stories reflects the idea that there are higher forms of reality, completely unrelated to ours, and indifferent to human life. Common to all three tales is the impression of some shapeless aberration – much greater than shown in text – that does not suddenly or inexplicably intrude into our world "but rather reveals it to be, in a sense, monstrous or wrong" (Packer, Stoneman 2018: 32–33). Even when it makes itself present, the sublime and terrifying dimension of landscape remains largely obscure, and can only be hinted at through accumulation of details. Simultaneously, without considerably altering its outward appearance, the affirmed order of reality gradually cracks open, allowing some other, concealed reality, to slip into the familiar world, changing it, again bit by bit, into something alien and frightening. The mind is overwhelmed by what it perceives; and even more by the extreme magnitude of what is left concealed. Lost in the profusion of signifiers which refer to some profound but impenetrable sign, the reason cannot regain its power by coming up with a relevant symbolic substitute. There is no indication of God, Law, Harmony, Value or Higher Purpose. If human existence has any significance, it is futile to devise any firm conception of what it might be.

As the "monster" resides in some sort of reality independent of man's consciousness, it cannot be abolished; it is revealed as "a far-reaching (if not universal) constant" – and the humankind as an exception (Ognjanović 2021: 249). Once it imposes itself as an integral part of one's consciousness, the assumed laws of reason cannot be restored, given that the half obscure transcendence lurking "behind the veil" cannot be represented either as corporeality or as a meaningful symbol. The numinous feeling it generates can, perhaps, be described as the "emotion of a creature, submerged and overwhelmed by its own nothingness" (Lopez 1979: 468); however, we might ask ourselves – is there a contrast to this nothingness? Otto would reply that there indeed is; and that one's own insignificance is most profoundly recognized in the face of the absolute, "that which is above all creatures" (Otto 1924: 19–20). Against the background of Otto's theological argument, the feeling of one's own insignificance is, in fact, considered a virtue: it furnishes life with meaning by affirming the reality of the Supreme.

The existential message coming from our trio of authors evidently defies this view. It portrays transcendental reality as physically detrimental, metaphysically unapproachable and cognitively inscrutable. Moreover, it dethrones the human from his assumed privileged role in the world and negates the possibility of any transcendent natural subjects. The ontology it proposes is completely "flat"– all things, including trees, rivers, seashells, beach sands, bungalows, orchards and humans – share the same ontological status and are immersed in a vast network of shifting relations (Scott 2014: 864).

In a non-philosophical sense, or rather in a manner differing from conventional philosophical argument, Smith's, Blackwood's and Campbell's horror tales undermine the Enlightenment project that has placed subject over object and culture over nature. Interestingly – but, perhaps, coincidentally – a number of contemporary social thinkers (Morton 2010; Latour 2004; Latour 2014; Harman 2018) and philosophers tend to break down these deeply-ingrained dichotomies in the fairly similar fashion but with a different intent: they aim to identify the effects of the Cartesian style dualism in the Western thought as paralysing on environmental issues – and perilous for all life forms in the (not so) long run. By stating this, I am not claiming that horror fiction has succeeded in significantly influencing today's philosophy or that it may have worked as an inspiring background of recent academic attempts to "think about the world-without-us philosophically" (see Thacker 2010: 9). However, it predates and announces these discussions inasmuch as showing us the thin line between perceiving the nature as a vessel containing some nameless, timeless and sense-devaluing force, and viewing our own self-affirming values – especially those founded on the duality of human and non-human domains – as tragically mistaken and ruinous.

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Marko Pišev

Priroda kao *mysterium tremendum*: esej o poetici Blekvuda, Smita i Kembela

Apstrakt

U ovom radu nastojaću da analiziram tri klasika horror književnosti – "The Willows" (1907) Aldžernona Blekvuda, "Genius Loci" Klarka Eštona Smita (1936) i "The Voice of the Beach" Remzija Kembela (1977) – u kojima je pejzaž zamišljen kao prebivalište natprirodnog. Zajednička nit ovih priča je koncept prirode koja spaja i stapa stvarnost i nestvarno, um, telo i spoljni svet. Budući da je pejzaž glavna komponenta radnje, a ne puka pozadina događaja u pričama, autori ga koriste da formulišu izvesne metafizičke ideje o ljudskoj egzistenciji i prirodi stvarnosti. Moj osnovni cilj je da te ideje istorijski i epistemološki kontekstualizujem, razjasnim ih i povežem sa određenim recentnim tokovima u filozofiji i društvenoj teoriji. Moj drugi cilj je da ispitam semantiku prostora u svakom od narativa ponaosob, analiziram spajanja i razdvajanja njihovih strukturnih elemenata, i proučim latentni nivo značenja koji proizilazi iz organizacije mizanscena priča.

Ključne reči: pejzaž, semiotika, priroda, horor, prosvetiteljstvo, romantizam, Aldžernon Blekvud, Klark Ešton Smit, Remzi Kembel.

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Želimir Vukašinović

POST-PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY AND THE AUTHORITY OF DIALOGUE – ON FREE FAITH, ATHEISM AND THE MEANING OF LANGUAGE –

ABSTRACT
The paper is an attempt at understanding the historic nature of the transition to postmodernity, metaphysically reflected in Nietzsche's words "God is dead", as it is, in its various aspects, manifested through the form of post-patriarchal society. Post-patriarchal society is interpreted here as an order of values anchored in the empty place previously held by original and ultimate authority. Within the context of the (un)certain end of metaphysics, it is, implicitly, necessary to explore the presuppositions on which religion and the meaning of language are based today. Thus, Nietzsche's experience of the epoch will be considered in relation to Žižek's perception of "a genealogical desert between man and God", which provides a theoretical framework for the reinterpretation of our understanding of the relation between religion, atheism and modernity.

KEYWORDS
faith, atheism, authority, thinking, post-patriarchal society, dialogue

Historical transition to post-modernity[1] manifests itself as the form of a post-patriarchal society anticipated by Nietzsche's words "God is dead".[2] A post-patriarchal society is understood here as an order of displaced values which, after

1 *Post-modernity* is, in the context of this interpretation, primarily related to a condition caused by the completion of traditional metaphysics and, equally, to an experience of a disintegration of the logocentric perception of Being itself. This condition, recognised as a state of mind, conceives an epoch of transition as it is, in its initial force, a state of nihilism which, necessarily, requires understanding and, by the creative power of philosophy and art, needs to be overcomed. Thus, as much as nihilism has a negative meaning ("passive nihilism"), it can be recognised as a possibility as such ("active nihilism"). Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche's statement "God is dead" would certainly be of central importance in a possible, more detailed, analysis of this theme (see Heidegger 1977: 53–71).

2 "Haven't you heard of that madman who in the bright morning lit a lantern and ran around the marketplace crying incessantly, 'I am looking for God! I am looking for God!'

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the "death of God", gravitates toward an empty place of the original and ultimate authority. This also implicates that the existential possibilities of humanity cannot be restored on the basis of traditional metaphysics. Within the context of the (un)certain completion of metaphysics, it is, implicitly, necessary to explore the presuppositions on which religion and the meaning of language are based today. By the nature and manner of such questioning, Nietzsche's initial experience of the epoch could be re-considered through Žižek's interpretation of the relation between religion, atheism and modernity. In principle, our discussion will be shaped by the framework of this interpretation.

The restoration of humanity through the activity of spirit or through the dialogical power of dialectics, is a historical fact that legitimizes the true, self-reflexive knowledge, whether it appears in the form of science, religion or art. In the seventh book of *The Republic*, Plato indicates that dialectics is a method (μέθοδος, *methodos*) which leads us to the clearness of being by which Beginning itself is conceived:

> The dialectical method is the only one which in its determination to make itself secure proceeds by this route – doing away with its assumptions until it reaches the first principle itself. Dialectic finds the eye of the soul firmly buried in a kind of morass of philistinism. Gently it pulls it free and leads it upwards, using the disciplines we have described as its allies and assistants in the process of conversion. We have generally followed convention in calling these disciplines branches of knowledge, but they really need some other name. Something clearer then opinion, but more obscure than knowledge. We may have used the term 'thinking' at some point earlier on. (Plato 2000: 533d; 242)

Evidently, dialectics is a pathway, a method which is not hypothetically conceived. In fact, it directs us toward Beginning as It is which, through the being itself, we desire to understand, and, by which, the soul ascends or liberates itself from a primitive, primal, instinctive, consequently, violent life. This

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Since many of those who did not believe in God were standing around together just then, he caused great laughter. [...] The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. 'Where is God?' he cried; 'I'll tell you! *We have killed him* – you and I. We are his murderers. But how did we do this? [...] What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Where is it moving to now? Where are we moving to? Away from all suns? Are we not continually falling? And backwards, sidewards, forwards, in all directions? Is there still an up or a down? Aren't we straying as though through an infinite nothing? Isn't empty space breathing at us? Hasn't it got colder? Isn't night and more night coming again and again? Don't lanterns have to be lit in the morning? Do we still hear nothing of the noise of the grave-diggers who are burying God? Do we still smell nothing of the divine decomposition? – Gods, too, decompose! God is dead! God remains dead! [...] The holiest and the mightiest thing the world has ever possessed has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood from us? With what water could we clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what holy games will we have to invent for ourselves? Is the magnitude of this deed not too great for us? [...] This tremendous event is still on its way, wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men [...]'" (Nietzsche 2001: 119–120).

liberation of the soul, as it is a revelation of the being itself, is enabled by a cathartic force of dialectics: it cleanses the soul of "morass of philistinism", implicitly, of common belief. In this context, dialectics, as a method, is the pathway to beauty itself, to true life, to goodness, and, as it is indicated by Plato, all the sciences are its assistant skills. Finally, as I already elaborated this in the paper "Spirituality, Community and Life – An Essay on the Cultural Industry and the Limits of Contemporary Science" (see Vukašinović 2017: 103), dialectics (διαλεκτική) is a skill that Plato perceived as *thinking* (see Plato 1993: 242).

Education, therefore, should be understood as a *methodos*, as a pathway *through* and *by* which soul learns the art of catharsis. This also means that reasonability should be understood as a pathway of conceiving the meaning of human existence, reflectively, through the experience of the truth of existential upheaval witnessed by the history of philosophy. As it is not explicitly objective, the truth of being is not an event that can be detected or archived by historical or social science, but it is, as an event initiated by Socrates' maieutics,[3] a heritage of philosophical practice. Thus, if (post)modernity implicates a transition to post-patriarchal society, then the revaluation of the dominant, but evidently discarded historical values of Western culture, can only be initiated within the openness which is founded by absence of the original and final authority. However, principles of revaluation are firstly introduced by Socrates who, insisting on the statement that *he knows that he knows nothing*,[4] already vacated the place of the unquestionable authority. Implicitly, an ironic force of Socrates' maieutic method liberates thinking from an authoritative charge of presumptuous knowledge or conviction. Contextualised by the social order of his time, Socrates is a heretic who corrupted beliefs of the youth by introducing a false god (a new deity, *daimonion*). Namely, from the perspective of common belief, Socrates' *daimonion* is either a false god or god is not (t)here where, by a common belief, he is presupposed or placed to be. In this context, the daimonion, the inner voice that Socrates clearly recognises and follows,[5]

3 The noun *maieutics* derives from *maia* (mother, midwife) and the related verbs *maieusis* and *maieonuai* mean "giving birth" and "easing childbirth".

4 In *Theages*, Plato shapes a dialogue that clarifies the nature of dialectical education in contrast to any form of sophistry: "Socrates: Moreover, if Theages here refuses to associate with the politicians and seeks some other men, who claim to be able to educate young people, there are a number of such men here: Prodicus of Ceos, and Gorgias of Leontini, and Polus of Acragas, and many others, who are so wise that they go from city to city and persuade the most aristocratic and wealthiest of the young men – who can associate with any of the citizens they want without charge – these men persuade them to desert the others and associate only with them instead, to pay a great deal of money up front, and, on top of that, to be grateful! It would be reasonable for your son and you to choose one of these men, but it wouldn't be reasonable to choose me. I know none of these magnificent and splendid subjects. I wish I did! I am always saying, indeed, that I know virtually nothing, except a certain small subject – love, although on this subject, I'm thought to be amazing, better than anyone else, past or present." (Plato 1997: 128a, b; 635)

5 The daimonion or "the inner voice" by which the life of the soul is established, discloses itself in negativity: it responds, in a double sense (it revokes the action and

could be understood as dictate of the being itself. According to Kant's terminology, the categorical imperative is the basis of Socrates' autonomy and the starting point of dialogue. Dialogue is, prior and after all, a cathartic pathway of the soul, a skill of self-clearance of the being. As it clarifies the inner voice, dialogue is a pathway of logos, an active force of unifying power of thinking and language. Implicitly, dialogue is a relation itself through which *methodos*, as the pathway of truth, is revealed. Thus, the activity of the spirit is recognised as an immanent capacity of existence which persists on its humanity. In that immediate activity, history of the truth of being takes place in the world, in the history in which renunciation, not acquisition, is decisive. After all, that renunciation is a renunciation of presupposed values, that is, of values which are postulated by everyday thinking. The history of spirituality is a testimony of overcoming *doxa*, as well as it is, from a perspective of everyday thinking, an impractical leap into the void, into nothingness, into the abyss, a leap by which an existence is risked, exposed to the danger of openness as such. That leap, a leap into the emptiness and uncertainty, is a necessity of questioning, as it is an act of philosophical faith, a dedication to the credibility of experience witnessed by the history of spirit which preserves the meaning and origin of asceticism:[6] an overcoming from a primitive, affective life, platonically, from the world of shadows. Implicitly, from Socrates, through the Old Testament, to Nietzsche, the history of spirituality can be seen as a history of continuous betrayal of authority, so to say, as a history of heresy. But, if we take a closer look at that heresy, we can recognise a life force that establishes an autonomous existential faith. This life force is, through history, constantly radiated by personalities who witness, as Jaspers nominates it, philosophical faith, the faith of a thinking man. In this context, the practice of philosophising means that *I do not accept anything simply, unexamined, as it is imposed on me* (see Jaspers 2000: 10, 11).

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responds to the dictate of being), and thus constantly returns to the dialogue, namely in an inquiry that corresponds to the very thing that is being asked... "Socrates: There's a certain spiritual thing which, by divine dispensation, has been with me from childhood. It's a voice that, when it comes, always signals me to turn away from what I'm about to do, but never prescribes anything. And if some one of my friends consults with me and the voice comes, it's the same: it prohibits him and won't allow him to act)." (Plato 1997: 128d; 635, 636). On the basis of an understanding of the nature and purpose of a negativity of the "inner voice", in the climax of Western culture, as it is a consequence of the fundamental concern of Kant's *critique*, Hegel's idealism reflects the decisive value and power of the activity of spirit by which fundamental principles of humanity are restored, by which the ideal of life is restituted: namely and concretely, the freedom which is philosophy itself.

6 In his writing on late antiquity and early Christianity in *Technologies of the Self*, Foucault states that Plato's teaching can be basically understood as a request for the soul *to turn to itself in order to know its true nature*, and then, through Plutarch's and Seneca's interpretation of this (over)turn *to* and *by* the self, three essential points of asceticism are, according to Foucault, recognised as foundational for the process of revealing of the truth itself: 1. The importance of listening. 2. The importance of writing. 3. The importance of regular self-reflection (see Foucault 1988: 30–34).

Unconditional faith, therefore, unexamined conviction abstracted from doubt, just like any faith separated from its atheistic foundation, potentially turns into an act of repression, and, most drastically, into terror. Contemporary science is, by presupposition, positivistic as much as it eradicates its dialectical foundation. As such, it is equally an expression of unquestionable, unexamined faith... Technicism, for example, mandates an idea of education without philosophy and, thus, it destructs a spiritual foundation of humanity. Therefore, even it sounds heretically, instead of judging the betrayal of authority, the ultimate spiritual challenge of our time is to affirm this betrayal as the starting point of any research that, through the maieutic power of dialogue, reveals the way of learning the truth of reversal. Thus, Nietzsche's ultimate overturn of the sacred points of platonism should be understood in the light of thinking which is generated by an ironic force of the active nihilism, without which, in the era of post-humanism, a rebirth of the (over)man cannot be initiated.

For this reason, Nietzsche's religious atheism can be understood as an example of challenging search for God, in the era defined by the negative will to power. In other words, materialism and pragmatism already mastered contemporary Western culture, as they are, basically, forms of nihilism whose psychological consequence is pessimism. Implicitly, it could be said that Nietzsche was the last man for whom the death of God seemed disturbing. In a post-patriarchal society, while religious practices and social activism flourish, nihilism is not detected nor recognised as a disturbing experience. Even more, it is re-presented to be enjoyed. In the 329th paragraph of *The Gay Science*, titled "Leisure and Idleness", Nietzsche, in his specific manner, writes:

> There is something [...] of the savagery [...] in the way the Americans strive for gold; and their breathless haste in working – the true vice of the new world – is already starting to spread to old Europe, making it savage and covering it with a most odd mindlessness. Already one is ashamed of keeping still; long reflection almost gives people a bad conscience. [...] 'Rather do anything than nothing'- even this principle is a cord to strangle all culture and all higher taste. Just as all forms are visibly being destroyed by the haste of the workers, so, too, is the feeling for form itself, the ear and eye for the melody of movements. [...] For life in a hunt for profit constantly forces people to expend their spirit to the point of exhaustion in continual pretence or out-smarting or forestalling others. [...] If sociability and the arts still offer any delight, it is the kind of delight that overworked slaves make for themselves. [...] Well, formerly it was the other way around: work was afflicted with a bad conscience. A person of good family *concealed* the fact that he worked if need compelled him to work. The slave worked under the pressure of feeling that he was doing something contemptible: 'doing' was itself contemptible. (Nietzsche 2001: 183–184)

The state of nihilism, taking the form of vulgar materialism, exposes the fact that Western culture has abandoned its metaphysical foundation. Žižek's well-known phrase "don't act, just think!" addresses the post-metaphysical reality of the West. On the one hand – religious fatalism, namely faith separated from any doubt, and, on the other hand, hyper activism alienated from

ideas, create a schizophrenic culture. In the spirit of liberal capitalism, symbolic order re-presents materialistic perception of humanity which is conditioned by dominancy of the logic of capital. Liberalism, implicitly, deviates from its foundational, idealistic, presuppositions and so it becomes an expression of the negative will to power, it creates a framework for exploitation of basic human needs and, consequently, it transforms itself into a rational force of repression. It becomes clear that paganism of the post-patriarchal society is rooted in the absence of dialectical education, in convictions produced by an interest of the free market, by faith which is separated from the free will. Such reality is ideological in a sense that, after "death of God", it tends to be a re-invented as the Absolute itself. Ideological reality, thus, relies on a primitive, naive perception of faith. Consequently, the possible liberation of faith through an authentic atheism necessarily leads to existentialism as an enlightened humanism, just as the liberation of faith, through religion, overcomes the desert between God and man only if a relationship itself is established. Always specific, unique relation between God and man cannot be generalised, it actualizes the world on the basis of ideas (universality) which, in a form of knowledge, generates and preserves a factual possibility of love and peace as it is the meaning and final purpose of human existence. Beyond any concept, God, even as an idea, dis-places itself to an openness by which relationship itself needs to be conceived. This concivement revitalizes substantiality, it is an eternal re-discovery of that what is sacred[7] and takes place in the language

7 a. The *sacred* is understood here as something that is valuable, as something we treat with an attention, care, consideration, concern... Derrida's interpretation of religion etymologically reflects its omitted essence: "For example, in pretending to know what is the 'proper meaning', as Benveniste says, of words such as repetition, resumption, renewal, reflection, reelection, recollection – in short, religion, 'scruple', response and responsibility" (Derrida 2001: 74). This interpretation, in its further elaboration, insists on a reference to Benveniste: "In sum, *religio* is a hesitation that holds back, a scruple that prevents, and not a sentiment that guides an action or that incites one to practice a cult. It seems to us that this meaning: demonstrated by ancient usage beyond the slightest ambiguity, imposes a single interpretation for *religio*: that which Cicero gives in attaching *religio* to *legere*" (Derrida 2001: 68). Caring attitude toward that what is valuable for us is, basically, shown as a characteristic of human development through dialectical education, which also includes literacy and the constant refinement of sensitivity through reading. This is why Heidegger is also resolute here: in order to avoid ambiguity, thinking *about the matter itself* necessarily needs to ask language. In other words, it is necessary, for thinking, to follow the path of language. Finally, through the practice of thinking, the essence of language is realised as dialogue.

b. The words of Nietzsche's "madman", stated in the 125th paragraph of *The Gay Science*, are evidence of that what is obvious but deliberately overlooked in contemporary Western culture: there is nothing sacred among people anymore. Values are devalued. Namely, by the persistent denial of values, the existential potential to produce, to create new values is exhausted. The desecration of the sacred is a symptom of irreversible nihilism before which Nietzsche collapsed: a destruction of beauty and joy upon which everyday grumpiness, envy of mediocrity and the spirit of decadence fell. Such a condition grows into pessimism, a denial of life itself; it, finally, branches into the destructive force of passive nihilism. Therefore, it is both sad and frightening that the

as much as it is, in its essence, dialogue itself. Thus, dialog is revealed as the form of love, immanently, as the will and power to beauty, implicitly, as the pathway toward a desired, necessarily good life.[8] This, forgotten, fundamental meaning of language (as dialogue), reflects

> [...] the age-old dispute between Socrates and the sophists (rhetors), which is primarily witnessed by Plato's dialogues Gorgias and Phaedrus... According to these dialogues, it would seem that one side is the representative of truth, and the other is an illusion, or that one is the defender of philosophy and the other representative of anti-philosophy. Nevertheless, this division, no matter how accurate and correct it may be at first glance (even terminologically), is not without objections and is not acceptable without a serious and relatively extensive discussion; actually, a careful conceptual clarification is needed, since the dispute had far-reaching consequences that last until our time. (Tadić 1995: 69, transl. Ž. V.)

It is certain, however, that it is decisive for a person, at any time, to understand that the meaning of language is established as dialogue itself. Looking at the historical reality, ruled by the absence of such understanding, equally by an absence of the true knowledge by which love and peace can be postulated as the fundamental principles of life itself, humanity is exposed to its tragic existence in order to reach beauty. On the basis of this experience, we are initiated to retroactively understand authoritative and, in its ironic vitality crucial for the beginning of dialectical education, Socrates' statement that *he knows so to speak nothing*, except a certain small subject of knowledge: what pertains of erotic love. As it is examined in the earlier part of the work, Socrates was, considering this subject of knowledge, *better than anyone else, past or present*. Eros, as desire for the Ideal itself (immanency of beauty, truth and goodness), is the guide of the soul that determines the purpose of the dialogue (see Tadić 1995: 89). The separation of Socrates' method from rhetoric and polemic discourse is, starting with Plato's dialogues and then the Academy itself, an initial and historically decisive movement toward a discussion which is dictated and cherished by the openness of love. It is a resolute separation from sophistry as such and, in its ultimate form of life, a separation from an everyday perspective of the world. On this basis, Plato's academic activity is initiated, and later established, the way of being which tends to overcome habitual, taken for granted form of life. Plato's overturn is, therefore, directed and legitimised by Socrates' life and death. The nature of this overturn keeps us within the framework of the heretical theme discussed here and, thus, it returns us to a more thorough understanding of the relationship between doubt and faith. The concluding part of Žižek's book *Islam, Atheism and Modernity: Some Blasphemous*

civilized world of the West, in its historical maturity, did not overcome the paradoxes of modern paganism and belief in the power of the occult... This is, in conclusion, the downfall of the sacred.

8 Peace is a substantial value of the good life; it is produced and preserved by true knowledge which is understood as the highest manifestation of love itself.

Thinking provokes this re-turn. "Doubt", writes Žižek, "is immanent in authentic religion: not an abstract intellectual doubt about the existence of God, but a doubt about our practical engagement that makes God himself exist" (Žižek 2015: 111, trans. Ž. V.). In other words, doubt itself prevents a transformation of faith into an ideological projection of the existential experience of being, it separates us from reckless pragmatism and fatalism. Evidently, the origin of evil in history, by which a desired goodness of Beginning is deviated, requires an investigation of human nature which, immanently and consequently, destructs a prevailing ignorance of what is being done in time on the basis of an ignorant, unquestioned (self-presupposed) knowledge. After all, believers are not the only ones who doubt God, but God also finds himself in doubt... In an unbearable pain as the most challenging moment of existence, Christ's words are heard: "Father, why have you forsaken me?" Reflecting on this moment of doubt, Žižek justifies a difficulty of thinking such moment: things that are dark and terrible should not be easily judged or formally discussed. Even more, *in that terrible story of the Passion there is a clear emotional suggestion that the Creator of all things (in some unimaginable way) has passed, not only through agony, but also through doubt itself* (see Žižek 2015: 112).

In the light of Žižek's remark, a concluding twist becomes clear: *even God doubts and fears that the connection between reflection and human engagement, that makes him exist, will be diminished and that there will not be true atheism that goes through that experience* (see Žižek 2015: 112). Resuming, a possible understanding of this twist can prevent us from detaching ourselves from dialogue as an essential meaning of language and, implicitly, within a framework of the post-metaphysical reality of contemporary culture, to a resolute rejection of an existentially authentic, free faith on behalf of religion itself.

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Želimir Vukašinović

Post-patrijarhalno društvo i autoritet dijaloga – o slobodnoj veri, ateizmu i smislu jezika –

Apstrakt

Rad polazi od nastojanja da se razume priroda istorijskog prelaza u savremenost kojeg metafizički evidentiraju Ničeove reči „Bog je mrtav“, a koji se, u različitim svojim svojstvima, ispoljava u obliku postpatrijarhalnog društva. Postpatrijarhalno društvo se ovde interpretira kao poredak razmeštenih vrednosti koji ima svoje težište u praznom mestu izvornog i krajnjeg autoriteta. To će značiti i da istina preporođenja čovekovog nije na mestu na kome je tražimo ili očekujemo, pa je nužno za raspraviti šta je i na čemu se, u (ne)izvesnosti kraja metafizike, vera i smisao jezika danas zasnivaju. Ničeovo iskustvo epohe će se, iz navedenog konteksta, razmatrati kroz Žižekovo poimanje „genealoške pustinje između čoveka i Boga“, jednako kroz reinterpretaciju odnosa između religije, ateizma i modernosti.

Ključne reči: vera, ateizam, autoritet, mišljenje, postpatrijarhalno društvo, dijalog.

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Mark Losoncz

WHITEHEAD ON PERISHING[1]

ABSTRACT
This article deals with the problem of cessation in Whitehead's philosophy. By focusing on his *Process and Reality*, but also on his other works, different temporal, mereological and other aspects of perishing are analyzed, with special attention to the annihilation of subjective directness. The article also focuses on the complementary character of creation and cessation, by taking into consideration the various (subjective, objective, superjective or divine) layers of cessation. By relying upon the critical reception of Whitehead, the article formulates certain dilemmas with regard to the status of ceased events or entities, and also in relation to the general possibility and the discreet character of perishing.

KEYWORDS
Whitehead, metaphysics, annihilation, perishing, becoming, time, mereology, actual being

Alfred North Whitehead's metaphysics is a novelty in the conceptual history of cessation in many ways. While during the history of Western metaphysics cessation mostly appeared only in the shadow of cessation, in Whitehead's philosophy perishing receives special attention, and its conceptualization is relatively autonomous with regard to other analyses. Even when perishing becomes the center of focus together with becoming of something, perishing keeps its *sui generis* processuality. We are convinced that this is a result of very conscious decision, namely, that Whitehead wants to present perishing as a constitutive part of our image about reality. Many years after the publication of his metaphysical magnum opus, *Process and Reality*, Whitehead described his work in the following way:

> The notion of the prehension of the past means that the past is an element which perishes and thereby remains an element in the state beyond, and thus is objectified. [...] If you get a general notion of what is meant by perishing, you will

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> have accomplished an apprehension of what you mean by memory and causality, what you mean when you feel that what we are is of infinite importance, because as we perish we are immortal. That is the one key thought around which the whole development of *Process and Reality* is woven. (Whitehead 1947: 89)

Thus, the concept of perishing is decisive from a problem-centered perspective, but we think that its historical aspects are also of great importance. Even though he mentions some other historical predecessors in the context of the concept of perishing, we are sure that he also keeps in mind the classical Aristotelian investigations about the topic (including his most relevant work *On Generation and Corruption*). The debate with Aristotle's theory of substance runs through *Process and Reality*, during which Whitehead tries to get rid of the conceptual frames imposed by primary substance (while he seems to keep the concept of secondary substance), first and foremost because he thinks that it refers to a static being that is enduring in undifferentiated way as a mere receptive entity – and it is obvious that perishing can only have a very reduced role in such a context. His objection also has to do with the insight that substance is an isolated, purely self-identical entity, deprived of connections (which makes it impossible to grasp the microphysical layer of reality). However, Whitehead, even though *mutatis mutandis*, tries to keep some important aspects of Aristotle's doctrine about corruption (see Losoncz 2020): he does not want to define cessation as becoming nothingness, and it is also important for him that becoming and perishing are two sides of the same coin (that is to say, the cessation of an entity implies the creation of something else). Still, this does not change the fact that the conceptual framework itself changes radically in comparison to that of Aristotle's: Whitehead is unwilling to interpret perishing as the perishing of primary substance, and neither does he want to oppose cessation (and creation) to movement and its various variants (alteration, growth/diminution, spatial change). In Aristotle's philosophy "generation and destruction are the two sides of a single transformation of substance into substance" (Ross 2005: 102), but Whitehead refuses the very concept of (primary) substance. What perishes according to Whitehead then, and what comes into being, what is created in parallel to that process?

The insight quoted by Whitehead already contains the most essential aspects of his doctrine about perishing: there is perishing, however, there is also a persisting, objectified element that can be considered immortal. What is this about? According to Whitehead, a given entity loses its subjectivity at a certain moment, but it is available for further future subjects as an object – this is what he calls objective immortality. It is certainly not eternity, but everlastingness, or, to put it differently, persistence that is integrated to the multiplicities of processes. At first glance, it might seem that what perishes is in fact the actual being (as opposed to eternal objects) – the actual being that is not an unchanged subject, but an entity exposed to variable experiences, a complex and atomistic "final fact", that is both a subject and an object (superject). There is nothing "behind" actual beings, they are all in the same plane, and

by being associated with other beings they make nexuses and concrescences. The following formulation might be somewhat surprising: "actual entities perish, but do not change; they are what they are" (Whitehead 1978: 35). How is perishing possible, if it does not involve change? How could an actual being remain self-identical while at the very same moment it ceases to exist? This is the moment where Whitehead's doctrine about perishing demonstrates its subtility the most. First of all, let us make certain that change is related to a more abstract layer that presupposes difference and comparison between various events. With regard to our interpretation of perishing, the following insight might be of help: "actual entities perpetually perish subjectively, but are immortal objectively. Actuality in perishing acquires objectivity, while it loses subjective immediacy. It loses the final causation which is its internal principle of unrest, and it acquires efficient causation whereby it is a ground of obligation characterizing the creativity" (Whitehead 1978: 29). Here, subjectivity refers to the directness of becoming, to a creative transformation, to becoming definite – thus, by suggesting that subjectivity might perish, Whitehead in fact states that with perishing it is becoming itself that perishes. Once again, the thesis according to which cessation and creation are sides of the same coin is conceptually strengthened. We find accurate the analogy with fire: "time is the fire in which we burn", as Daniel Schwartz put it, meaning that "fire provides energy (heat) for becoming but also consumes (perishing)" (Bluedorn 2002: 32). We can notice a similar asimmetry with regard to subjectivity and objectivity: what was subjective, loses its intensity through perishing, it becomes objective, but it is available as form and as *datum* for future subjectivities, that is to say, for becoming – as memory and as causality. In this context, subject and object are not opposed to each other as robust entities, but they are aspects, phases of the very same process (see Rescher 1996: 59). Taken altogether, we can say that it is becoming that can cease to exist, not being itself. "All dynamism, all flux, all creativity" (Ford 1984: 194) disappears, subjectivity as an entity for itself realizes itself, reaches its goal – what remains is the already realized, finished subject. It is more precise to say that actual being perishes, not actual being. We have to understand this in a double way: both becoming and actuality as activity disappears – only a mediated, derived activity remains available. By relying upon Proust and Deleuze, we might say that an entity functioning like this "is real, though not actual" (see Deleuze 1968: 269) – it is virtual. It can have an effect on actuality, but it still withdraws itself from the control of actuality. In a hyperbolizing paragraph, Whitehead reminds us of Plato's *Timaeus* with respect to the role of actual beings within the streaming world: "but that which is conceived by opinion with the help of sensation and without reason, is always in a process of becoming and perishing and never really is" (Whitehead 1978: 82). Thus, as if being and becoming/perishing belonged to different spheres – just as the becoming or processual directness appears, in its momentariness it already sacrifices itself and its validity, "its birth is its end" (Whitehead 1978: 80). With this it becomes obvious that cessation is not

an exceptional, extraordinary event that "leaves deep wounds behind itself", but a self-evident, usual occasion that is incessantly going on.

Even though in a changed form, actual being is still available for future events as a past actuality, that is to say, with a potentiality having value beyond itself (the special, timeless persistence and immortality of value is emphasized in Whitehead's late work about immortality (Whitehead 1951)). Absolute past exists for future and other entities, it is publicly available and thus, it remains relevant in an everlasting way. It is justified to speak of "the immanence of immortal past in every new occasion" (Nobo 1986: 145). Every ceased entity A remains operative as a ghost (this is Whitehead's expression) in a later subjectivity B, with the help of causality, understood as pragmatic memory – A still has effects through B and participates in it, while B "remembers" A, that is to say, prehends and feels it (and what is definitely annihilated, is in fact prehended negatively). The heritage and afterlife of the past thus always appears within a specified perspective (and, as a matter of fact, every prehension can refer only to past events). Things are immortal in their consequentiality, but they are mortal with regard to their vitality. B prehends A, but the contrary is not true: A does not prehend B. This explains the irreversibility of time: if A ceased to exist in its creativity, B cannot bring it back, and a further C distantiates itself from the original state even more. The successive states necessarily differ from the previous ones, they transcend each other, the newer causes and effects are being accumulated – and this cannot be changed. Whitehead emphasizes that the canalization of succession is a mere abstraction in comparison to this originary and always concrete irreversibility. One might ask whether this could be in a different way. A more venturous metaphysical approach might suggest that "it is clearly, but contingently, true that in our world some things are unambiguously in the past of others" (Christian 1963: 96). Thus, according to this thought experiment, we can imagine worlds in which the irreversibility of time is not prevalent. At a certain point, Whitehead seems to take into consideration the possibility of having novelty without any loss (Whitehead 1978: 340), but still, without any doubt, he sketches the image of our world by keeping in mind the fact of cessation.

The concepts of becoming and perishing presuppose a certain concept of multiplicity – and Whitehead's pluralism fulfills this condition. As we stated, he refuses to conceive cessation as mere annihilation – cessation is for him much more a transformation within multiplicity. "There are always entities beyond entities, because nonentity is no boundary" (Whitehead 1978: 66). Things do not swim into the world, they emanate from an immanent creativity. On the other hand, we can also claim that when things are being transformed from their directness into the non-being of their directness, that is to say, when they perish, "that does not mean that they are nothing. They remain 'stubborn fact'" (Dunham 2010: 140) – as Jeremy Dunham puts it ("stubborn facts" is the expression of Whitehead himself). Things do no emanate from nothingness, neither they fall back into a kind of nothingness. It is worth comparing the Whiteheadian critique of nothingness with the Bergsonian critique of the same notion (see

for instance Romano 2006). It seems that they both think that this is a derived, abstract concept that dissipates insofar as we focus on the pleroma of becoming. The continuity of the past in the presence can be extrapolated to the future without further ado: "thus perishing is the initiation of becoming. How the past perishes is how the future becomes" (Whitehead 1967a: 238), and we can say the same about nexus, namely, that "it enjoys an objective immortality in the future beyond itself" (Whitehead 1978: 230). What is really important is not the present immortality of the past, but the fact that it is a guarantee for the virtual openness of the future – the fact that past persists *as* past, makes possible the heterogenous future that can be different from it. This is not the transcendental past "that has never happened", which motive has been variated a lot in French philosophy, from Lévinas to Deleuze and Richir, but a very precise and concrete past that is the past of something that really happened, and that lives on organically as a vector.

Beside Plato, it is Locke who is often referred to by Whitehead, as far as cessation is considered, namely, the formulation which links cessation to time. "There is great merit in Newton's immovable receptacles. But for Newton they are eternal. Locke's notion of time hits the mark better: time is 'perpetually perishing'. In the organic philosophy an actual entity has 'perished' when it is complete. The pragmatic use of the actual entity, constituting its static life, lies in the future. The creature perishes and is immortal" (Whitehead 1978: 81–82). He also writes that "the ancient doctrine that 'no one crosses the same river twice' is extended. No thinker thinks twice; and, to put the matter more generally, no subject experiences twice. This is what Locke ought to have meant by his doctrine of time as a 'perpetual perishing'" (Whitehead 1978: 29) Here, we are once again facing the fact that becoming and perishing complement each other. We know it very well that Whitehedian philosophy aims to emphasize the durational character of time, its event-based and self-organizing nature, its continuity without any coordinates given in advance – the form of time cannot exist without the content of time. According to this, cessation is a singular, irreversible occasion that is inevitable already by the nature of time itself. It is not only actual becoming that perishes, but time as well as its very medium and as an experiental dimension. However, as we will see, on a higher level, cessation can be eliminated with the help of timelessness.

It is obvious that the concept of objective immortality is somehow related to that of God. It seems that a cosmic divine memory reserves the ceased creatures (and God himself cannot perish, neither can eternal objects). Things are immortal, at least with regard to their consequences – the divinological dimension of reality is the guarantee for this, the dimension that cannot disappear in any sense. However, a more careful interpretation should make distinctions at this point, by separating lines of facts that do not necessarily belong to each other. One might say that "a past occasion is immortal by the way in which it is objectified in the present occasion. No appeal to God here is necessary" (Ford 1984: 195). Immortality as causality is thus not the same as cessation surpassed by God. Lewis L. Ford suggests that in fact, we have to do

with two layers of immortality: one is of causal-temporal character, and it has to counter-balance the cessation of subjectivity, while the other happens with the result of divine intervention, and it is a counterpoint of cessation related to superjective being. Therefore, there is a difference between past persisting as mere past, and past as felt by divine nature, remaining as the past of memory. We could state that God is interested only in maintaning realized beings – these reach their adequate intensity in him. Ford also suggests that Whitehead's terminology is confusing, and he should better speak only of "superjective immortality" and "everlastingness". The difference is very simple: while creatures that are persisting within the frames of a temporality loaded with subjectivity fade away gradually, and they are being objectified on a more and more derived level and more and more in a fragmental way (a certain kind of elimination is inevitable), immortality understood in a proper way is timeless. God's nature "is that of a tender care that nothing be lost. [...] [He] uses what in the temporal world is mere wreckage" (Whithead 1978: 346). Thus, God is saving the world, he receives creatures into his directness, and in this respect "there is no loss". Therefore, this is a consequential nature of a higher order. "The problems of the fluency of God and of the everlastingness of passing experience are solved by the same factor in the universe. This factor is the temporal world" – as we can read it in *Process and Reality* (Whitehead 1978: 347). Thus, the doctrine about immortality reaches its peak in the coincidence of opposites, in a certain kind of supreme harmony. Just as there is immortality understood in a proper way, there is also realization understood in a proper way – everlastingness and temporality merge in a final unity, by reconciling permanentism and transientism in a magnificent synthesis.

We can say that objective immortality has little to do to with what religions commonly refer to as immortality – because it lacks precisely the aspect of personal directness and subjectivity. However, it seems that – according to Whitehead – at a higher level even subjectivity can be saved with the help of a special retention without any loss (without any negativity) that maintains directness as directness. This is a special kind of realization "implants timelessness on what in its essence is passing. The perfect moment is fadeless in the lapse of time. Time has then lost its character of 'perpetual perishing'; it becomes the 'moving image of eternity'" (Whitehead 1978: 338) – as Whitehead claims by referring to the well-known Platonic formula. Still, in spite of the Platonic reference, it is clear that Whitehead's motivation is entirely different than Plato's: he wants to avoid the division between eternity and perishing, or, more precisely, he tries to convince us that what is always already an everlastingness can integrate actual being into itself (see Dunham 2010: 139). What is more, in the last sentence of *Process and Reality*, he writes about "the ever-present, unfading importance of our immediate actions, which perish and yet live for evermore" (Whitehead 1978: 351). According to this perspective, God appears as being immanent to the world, and vice versa, and thus, subjective directness can be saved.

As we emphasized, with regard to the common temporal coordinates, Whitehead does not believe in "subjective immortality". In this respect, he is inclined

to extend his skepticism, or even pessimism to the entire cosmos. He states in *The Function of Reason* that in nature "static survival seems to be the general rule, accompanied by a slow decay" (Whitehead 1968: 29). In *Process and Reality* this kind of constant perishing is described with even darker tones: "the ultimate evil in the temporal world is deeper than any specific evil. It lies in the fact that the past fades, that time is a 'perpetual perishing.' Objectification involves elimination" (Whitehead 1978: 340). One might wonder if Whitehead expresses himself imprecisely, given that, according to his philosophy, only the directness of presence ceases to exist, but the past cannot perish – it is objectively immortal. Only one perspective is lost, not the actual being in its entirety. The "ultimate evil" is probably not supposed to be a moral category, Whitehead only wants to demonstrate that there is an irreducible experience of loss. The past is present only as an abstraction, in a partially extended way, that is to say, these elements "impose upon vivid immediacy the obligation that it fade into night. 'He giveth his beloved-sleep'" (Whitehead 1978: 341). We can find this type of tragic expression at many points in the Whiteheadian opus, sometimes with regard to the existential-human dimension or to the fall of civilizations or cosmic epochs, but in certain cases even as extended to the entire reality. Thus, for instance, "human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments lighting up a mass of pain and misery, a bagatelle of transient experience" (Whitehead 1967b: 192) – as we can read in *Science and the Modern World*. However, besides the dark tones, threre is always a consolatory voice: "The world is at once a passing shadow and a final fact. The shadow is passing into the fact, so as to be constitutive of it; and yet the fact is prior to the shadow. There is a kingdom of heaven prior to the actual passage of actual things, and there is the same kingdom finding its completion through the accomplishment of this passage" (Whitehead 1996: 85). At this point it is suggested what we can see again in 20th century French philosophy: the transcendental, virtual past is preexistent in relation to presence and its disintegration, and, what is more, it is the absolute precondition of what we have at the moment. The perishing of presence even strengthens the timeless robustness of the "kingdom of heaven". If there is something that ceases to exist, it is even easier to separate what still persists.

Many questions could be formulated with regard to the Whiteheadian doctrine on perishing. First of all, the most essential problem is that it seems that although Whitehead pays much attention to cessation, the reality conceptualized by him saves everything from being annihilated, either trough objective immortality, or on the level of divine everlastingness, that is to say, ultimately everything persists, with regard to subjective directness or to the subject as being. Is there anything that can really cease to exist? There is another question with respect to the temporal aspect of the philosophy of cessation: how can we think of the continuous perishing of actual becomings if Whitehead in fact suggests that nothing can change, only from one moment to the other – that is to say, how is the continuity of perishing possible, if the single events of perishing are thought of in a discrete-discontinuous way? Furthermore, one

might ask the elementary question that if Whitehead – in spite of everything stated above – holds that what exists can also perish within the processes of reality, what is the exact status of the perished entity? "Where" and "when" can we find it, and is it a static entity or it can change somehow?

Well, it seems that the becoming of the Whiteheadian actual being is never concretized and "satisfied" enough (that is to say, it is never undetermined enough) so that it could endure any kind of change – it can only perish at once (see Harman 2014: 239). This explains the discreet character of perishing, which is not necessarily in contradiction with the fact that the event of perishing happens inexorably, continuously. Even though it sounds weird, according to this philosophy, "discontinuous unbecoming" and "discreet processes" are possible. As if Whitehead suggested that these actual becomings are momentary, namely, they are not extensive, atomistic entities that could be further divided (in this way, Whitehead distantiates himself a little bit from the one-sidedly mereological debates on cessation). These aspects involve all those difficulties that have to do with Whiteheadian conclusions about becoming, but we will not discuss them in details, because it was already done by others (see for instance Chappell 1963). As for the general possibility of cessation, it is worth comparatively examining Whitehead's philosophy. For instance, we can compare him with his contemporary, namely, F. H. Bradley, in order to see how does it look like when a philosophy really excludes perishing, when it suggests that in the universe as a monistic Whole becoming or perishing are not possible ("for Bradley, there is no becoming and perishing", see Leemon 1992: 57). If we counter-balance Whiteheadian philosophy with such a theory, we can realize that the philosophy of organization still gives spaces to perishing, even if in a limited way. It admits that cessation happens at least at a certain level of reality, in a certain perspective. Even though he introduces a Whole that might relativize perishing, Whiteheadian philosophy is a "monism as pluralism", that is to say, it does not deny perishing in general, as a *sui generis* process that deserves its place. Still, if we keep in mind the perspectival character of every single perishing, we also have to come to the conclusion that the objectively immortal creatures "are at the mercy of new occasions, which will take them into account, but will be free to determine how they will do so" (Stengers 2014: 209). To put if differently, the objective immortality of A is different when it is prehended by B or when it is prehended by C. With the help of these perspectives, different pasts are constituted, and every one of them is selected and eliminated in its own way. Past can be differently creative and affective from the viewpoint of presence and future, and in principle this means, that it is being differentiated from the inside, that it is "reflectively reproduced" and self-repeated. "The process is itself the actuality and requires no antecedent static cabinet. Also, the processes of the past, in their perishing, are themselves energizing as the complex origin of each novel occasion" – as Whitehead puts it (as cited by Williams, internet). However, Whitehead's complex metaphysics makes possible other interpretations as well. If we remind ourselves of the question regarding the whereness of ceased creatures, we can

offer a different answer by keeping in mind Whitehead's partial eternalism: "for Whitehead, the 'where' should be understood four-dimensionally, and the answer is that past occasions are in the past portion of the extensive continuum, just where they occurred. This means that Whitehead is a full-fledged realist with respect to the past" (Cobb Jr. 2008: 71). To put it simply, the event of becoming is still there, it is "eternally present" (as Sprigge suggests it related to Whitehead: Sprigge 1972: 228) where it always is.[2] Here, immortality is ultimately identified with temporal stasis, namely, a perdurantist-eternalist approach qualifies every event (including every past event, and perhaps every future event) as real by its own right. However, one might ask what status can be attributed to perishing within such an approach. Regardless of our perspective, these interpretations "leave us with a mystery on our hands – namely, the mystery of how something past can still be effective in the present. We may say that this is simply part of a general mystery of time" (Christian 1963: 99). Whitehead's philosophy is to complex to be satisfied with a problem taken out of its context, or with a one-sided answer to it. We always have to take into consideration the whole system, the entire philosophy of organism, by keeping in mind as many perspectives as possible. If we look at is this way, perishing can get the place it deserves.

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2 Thus, we can interpret Deleuze (who emphasizes loss and destruction) and Whitehead (fom whom "nothing perishes") as opposed to each other (Robinson 2014: 223).

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Mark Lošonc

Vajthed o nestajanju

Apstrakt

Članak se bavi pojmom nestajanja u Vajthetodovoj filozofiji. Fokusirajući se na njegovo delo *Proces i stvarnost*, ali i na neke druge radove, analiziraćemo različite temporalne, mereološke i druge aspekte prestanka, sa posebnim osvrtom na anihilaciju subjektivne usmerenosti. Takođe, posvećujemo posebnu pažnju komplementarnom karakteru stvaranja i nestajanja, uzimajući u obzir različite (subjektivne, objektivne, superjektivne ili božanske) slojeve prestanka. Oslanjujući se na kritičku recepciju Vajtheda, pokušaćemo da formulišemo neke dileme u pogledu statusa prekinutih događaja ili entiteta, sa osvrtom na opštu nužnost i diskretni karakter nestajanja.

Ključne reči: Vajthed, nestajanje, nastajanje, vreme, mereologija, aktualno biće.

II

REVIEW ESSAYS
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Vukan Marković

AWAITING THE DEMISE OF THE LIBERAL ORDER: HISTORICISING THE CRISIS OF LIBERALISM[1]

ABSTRACT
This review article analyses the merits and shortcomings of three recent works by Matthew Rose, Peter Turchin, and Krishnan Nayar about the crisis in Western liberal democracies and liberalism. By exploring the intellectual and economic causes of the crisis, these authors are trying to establish a historical model that would explain the current crisis through a comprehensive account of the development of Western societies. In doing so, they identify the detrimental role of the elites and the growing inequalities as the major factor that historically contributes to the demise of liberal values, endangering democratic rule of law. Therefore, the three books are a warning that the demise of the liberal order will bring about the resurgence of right-wing authoritarianism. However, all three authors avoid discussing the nature of liberalism as the dominant ideology in the West. This article presents a criticism of such models, arguing that any discussion of the crisis of liberalism which avoids considerations about liberalism itself and liberal ideologies, necessarily fails to encapsulate the actual experience of the crisis. In addition, these models limit history's usefulness in interpreting the causes of the crisis and preventing its consequences.

KEYWORDS
crisis of liberal democracies, capitalism, elites, inequality, right-wing authoritarianism, Turchin, Rose, Nayar

In recent years, challenges and concerns facing liberal democratic societies, and liberalism itself, as the dominant ideology in many Western countries, has started to coalesce around the title of "crisis of liberalism". Although a complicated term, liberalism is usually understood to denote ideology that emphasises, among other things, individual rights, the rule of law, representative democracy, and limited economic interventionism by the government. Various

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challenges to these core values constitute the crisis of liberal order. Far from a uniform phenomenon, this crisis presents a complex set of issues, ranging from increasing inequalities under neoliberal economics, the rise of populism and authoritarianism, through cultural and identity concerns, to the insecurities caused by globalisation.

These and other challenges undermining the stability and effectiveness of Western liberal democracies are increasingly attracting scholarly attention. Over the previous years, extensive literature appeared focusing on various political, economic, and cultural implications of the purported crisis.[2] Within this vast literature, a specific thread gains prominence – the dynamics between the crisis of liberalism and political instability, in particular, the rise of right-wing authoritarianism. This review article analyses three recent, and very different, books that explore this thread: *A World After Liberalism: Five Thinkers who Inspired the Radical Right* by Matthew Rose (2021), *Liberal Capitalist Democracy: A God that Failed* by Krishnan Nayar (2023), and *End Times: Elites, Counter-Elites, and the Path of Political Disintegration* by Peter Turchin (2023).[3]

This article focuses on the central assumption shared by these books. Namely, the three authors emphasise that to understand the possible demise of the liberal order, as well as to avert the adverse consequences (the chief of them being the ascent of authoritarian tendencies), we need to uncover historical origins behind the decline of liberalism. They believe that through a comprehensive model of historical development in Western societies, they will find a key for interpreting the current crisis-ridden reality. With limited success, Matthew Rose dissects the intellectual sources of today's anti-liberal narratives, in an attempt to connect the current radical right with critics of liberalism throughout the 20th century. Krishnan Nayar, on the other hand, seeks to uncover the link between the faltering of contemporary liberal democracies and the adverse effects of capitalist modernisation. Meanwhile, Peter Turchin attempts to deliver a systematic historical model, to provide us with empirical "regularities" in history that should reveal the connection between the crisis of liberalism and current macroeconomic factors. Central for the latter two are the roles played by the elites in perpetuating the crisis. While the insights provided by these three authors are undeniably through-provoking, they also share important limitations, warranting careful analysis. Thus, this review article aims

2 Among numerous examples, scholarly work on the topic ranges from substantial insights into the nature of the crisis of liberal order such as Piketty 2019, Rodrik 2011, Müller 2017, Mounk 2018, Rupnik 2018, Fukuyama 2015, including the more recent Fukuyama 2022, and Daneen 2018, to popular literature such as Applebaum 2021, Snyder 2017, Harari 2019, Mishra 2018 and Lilla 2017.

3 NB Given their very recent publication, Nayar's and Turchin's books were only accessible through the UK's Electronic Legal Deposit (Cambridge University Library). Therefore, all references to this book in this article will not entail pagination, since this type of format is not accessible in the electronic legal deposit, as they do not always correspond to the published editions. Rather, specific quotations and notes in this article will refer to chapters and subsections of their original text.

to examine the merits and constraints of their approach, with a particular focus on the purported burgeoning encroachment of authoritarianism.

Matthew Rose's *A World after Liberalism* explores the enduring impact of five critics of liberalism: Oswald Spengler, Julius Evola, Francis Parker Yockey, Alain de Benoist, and Samuel Francis. At the same time, the book is a warning against the potential consequences of a rightist paradigm replacing liberal democracy. Rose's aim is clear: if liberalism collapses, the West enters uncharted waters. He highlights that pre-liberal world was marked by oppression, ignorance, violence, and superstition. In his outlook, liberalism taught us to build societies on the values of freedom and equality. The book underscores the peril of even contemplating a post-liberal world, suggesting this would challenge our long-held beliefs about history's direction (Rose 2021: 1–2). In Rose's narrative, liberal values are portrayed as the champions of history, and safeguarding them is our paramount duty, especially in the face of radical right influences depicted as the true "other" of Western culture (Rose 2021: 16).

Responding to the same crisis as Rose, Krishnan Nayar offers a divergent viewpoint in his *Liberal Capitalist Democracy: A God that Failed*. Instead of depicting it as the core value of the West, Nayar contends that liberalism has primarily functioned as an ideological tool to reconcile democracy and capitalism, asserting that it justified the notion that capitalist progress was a prerequisite for democratisation in Western nations. By examining the historical evolution of six modernity pioneers (the United States, Britain, France, Russia, Germany, and Japan), Nayar challenges the "big liberal myth" that capitalism inevitably leads to democracy. He shifts focus away from intellectual debates for or against liberalism and instead examines the interplay between elites and liberal narratives. Capitalism is more often than not detrimental to democratic development. Therefore, Nayar's book belongs to the body of literature that treats the crisis of liberalism as a sub-crisis within much larger problems in the nature of capitalist development.[4]

Peter Turchin's book, *End Times: Elites, Counter-Elites, and the Path of Political Disintegration* delves deeper into the connection between the current economic situation and liberalism, specifically exploring the ramifications of income and wealth disparities for the liberal agenda. Turchin's work is a continuation of his extensive project, spanning two decades, aimed at explaining political instabilities, revolutions, collapses, and societal awakenings using quantitative evidence. This project has given rise to a distinctive historical methodology called *cliodynamics*, which seeks to bring scientific reasoning into history by combining theoretical and quantitative approaches to apply a dynamical systems perspective to the study of the past (Turchin, Nefedov 2009; Turchin 2007; Turchin 2008). *End Times* directly addresses the purported crisis discussed here by employing quantitative methods to analyse metahistorical processes. This analysis revealed the crucial role elites play in "managing" the current crisis. Although

4 Within this literature, similar argument to Nayar's can be seen in Zuboff 2019, Klein 2008, and MacLean 2017.

Turchin's method is the centre point of his entire opus, this essay will not focus on providing criticism for the school of thought that suggests major historical processes can be analysed through scientific (or proto-scientific) means.

But before discussing these works in further detail, it is crucial to point out a stark omission in all three books. Liberalism, and especially liberal democracy is the central concept of their stories. Yet, quite remarkably, none of the three authors dedicate much attention on the nature of liberalism itself. Whereas it is rather common and sometimes justifiable to take the common-sensical meaning of such prevalent term for the sake of clarity and in order to avoid unnecessary conceptual discussion, such an approach is blatantly insufficient once the historical perspective is the focal point of entire argumentation. While all three authors insist on historical account of the current crisis, they fail to acknowledge the complexities of the concept they are trying to describe. This omission will prove to be the central deficiency in these works.

Liberalism is a remarkably diverse and complicated concept. Judith Shklar aptly summarised its ambiguous nature: "[I]n the course of so many years of ideological conflict [liberalism] seems to have lost its identity completely. Overuse and overextension have rendered it so amorphous that it can now serve as an all-purpose word, whether of abuse or praise" (Shklar 1998: 3). Shklar tried to find the least common denominator of all types of liberalism, arguing that liberalism can be defined as a political doctrine with "only one overriding aim: to secure the political condition that are necessary for the exercise of personal freedom" (Shklar 1998: 3–5). Others have found different common denominators. Jeremy Waldron argued that commitment to freedom is "too vague and abstract" and suggests liberalism entails those commitments that make acceptable all aspects of the social to every last individual (Waldron 1987: 127–131, 140). Ronald Dworkin concluded that certain conception of equality is "the nerve of liberalism" (Dworkin 1985: 183).

As with the authors discussed here, it is quite common for interpretations of liberalism to draw from historical accounts, legitimising one or the other statement about liberalism's core concepts, ranging from liberty, and authority, to autonomy, and equality (Bell 2014: 686). However, as John Rawls astutely observed, all invocations of history in any account of liberalism usually present "schematic version of speculative history" (Rawls 2007: 11). Every account that seeks to propose a unified and coherent historically-based account of either in favour or against liberalism will always "fail to encompass the deep divisions between professed variants of liberalism" (Bell 2014: 687). In his seminal article, Duncan Bell describes liberalism as a metacategory of Western political discourse – a contradictory term, often meaning at the same time a vanguard project constitutive of modernity itself, a fine-grained normative political philosophy, and a hegemonic mode of governmentality or a justificatory ideology of unrestrained capitalism: "Self-declared liberals have supported extensive welfare states and their abolition; the imperial civilising mission and its denunciation; massive global redistribution of wealth and the radical inequalities of the existing order" (Bell 2014: 683).

This sensitivity towards the nuances in the definition of liberalism, as well as inconsistencies among those who consider themselves liberals is exactly what is missing in Rose's, Nayar's, and Turchin's accounts. Retrojecting their, more or less, monolithic, albeit diverse, accounts of liberalism onto their historical accounts is even more problematic. Conversely, Bell's article thoroughly demonstrates the transformation not only of term 'liberalism' but of the very concept and ideas that inform it throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, showing that there cannot be a plausible claim that liberalism constitutes a definitive body of thought. Importantly for our story in this article, Bell demonstrates that the idea of 'liberal democracy', i.e. the marriage of liberalism to the democratic rule of law, as opposed to various forms of authoritarianism and state incursion into various rights, emerged rather slowly in the interwar period, becoming an all-encompassing narrative only much later, after World War Two. It took almost two centuries of academic debates and occasional retroactive reconceptualization of intellectual origins for liberalism to become a politico-intellectual tradition centred on individual freedom in the context of constitutional government. Furthermore, adding toleration and the autonomy of the individual (or, introjection of the concept of natural law onto the idea of human rights) to the core values of liberalism took a couple more decades. Thus, only in mid-Cold War liberalism and liberal democracy gained its broader account, observable in almost all current literature about the crisis of liberalism – that of the "culmination" of Western history and a synonym of modern Western democracies (Bell 2014: 699–701).[5] Sensitivity towards this decade if not century-long conceptual development would be necessary in any account trying to place the current crisis of liberal democracies into a historical perspective. As this article shows, this is main shortcoming of accounts offered by Rose, Nayar, and Turchin.

Despite Rose's insensitivity to the nuances of the central concept he is investigating, his *A World after Liberalism* has a lot to offer. In analysing five thinkers who, as he claims, inspired the contemporary radical rightists, Rose analyses their attacks on liberalism's core values. One significant contribution is Rose's exploration of the relationship between Christianity and far-right ideology. Had he delved deeper into this, the book could have been more innovative. Rose divorces the radical right from Christianity, highlighting their suspicion of it as the origin of liberal values (Rose 2021: 14). While this somewhat obscures the more relevant rightist criticism of Enlightenment as the source of liberalism, Rose still shows that liberalism is criticized as a secular manifestation of Christianity's sacredness of the individual. Christianity is faulted for fostering individual freedoms, undermining inequalities, being rationalistic, open, and apolitical–making it the source of the liberal values it is often blamed for obstructing or rejecting (Rose 2021: 141–142).

5 For example, Rawls's crucial contribution to the redefinition of liberalism in the Cold War is best seen in Katrina Forrester's *In the Shadow of Justice: Postwar Liberalism and the Remaking of Political Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

The second major contribution of *A World after Liberalism* lies in Rose's specific perspective on the crisis of liberalism. He interprets radical right's ideology as the response to the particular aspect of this crisis – crisis of belonging, which requires him to engage in discussions on the human nature (Rose 2021: 10). The five thinkers investigated by Rose criticise liberalism for attempting to structure society around an idealised vision of humans disconnected from all attachments, whose primary needs are prosperity, peace, and pleasure. Human beings, in this outlook, are rights-bearing individuals who pursue their own understanding of the good life. The five thinkers present an alternative vision: humans are not defined through acts of individual choice and self-expression alone; they are rather social creatures who find meaning through relationships they have not chosen and responsibilities they cannot relinquish. Identity is thus embedded in kinship and descent, inheriting certain cultural and social patrimony (Rose 2021: 154). Furthermore, the crisis of belonging caused by liberalism means that politics had been deprived of meaning, since liberal appeals to justice and equality could not summon real human loyalties or inspire greatness (Rose 2021: 7). The rightist thinkers analysed here consider human endeavour as a pursuit of greatness, and criticise liberalism for restricting this. Such perspective allows Rose to interpret anxieties about identity politics as the central feature of the crisis of liberalism, uniting identity issues and perceived lack of any possibility of greatness. This and the previously mentioned take on Christianity are the two most important aspects of this book.

That being said, Rose never fully discloses the criteria for selecting these particular authors. As mentioned earlier, the absence of any discussion on liberalism itself means that these authors attack very different kinds of liberalism. Furthermore, Rose never fully demonstrates the connection between his authors and the current radical right (with the sole exception of Samuel Francis). It is not quite clear how Oswald Spengler or Julius Evola, being very prominent among anti-liberal intellectuals, influence the current alt-right movements, who are, according to Rose, remarkably anti-intellectual. Additionally, there seems to be no obvious link among the five authors themselves. Francis Parker Yockey seems to be a charlatan compared to Spengler, while Samuel Francis is an amateur compared to de Benoist. The relevance, importance, and influence of all five authors are so different that placing them within a same narrative seems to be an overstretch.

Yet, Rose still tries to fit them into his overall argument that the five thinkers contributed to the crisis of liberalism by influencing the radical right's anxieties about identity politics, among other things. To do this, Rose investigates the ideologies of the five authors through their cultural outlooks. He believes that culture is a launching point of radical right influences (Rose 2021: 5). Hence, Rose investigates those works that criticise the cultural condition of the West, as part of their wider criticism of liberalism. For example, Rose places central focus on Spengler's argument in *Hour of Darkness* that Western culture is the product of unique ambition to challenge human finitude. Therefore, it enforces

an ethic that encourages the loftiest human personalities. It is a culture that is based on giants and geniuses, a "Faustian ethic" that strives for greatness, a heroic culture in other words. The most important point Rose takes from Spengler is that "liberalism detests every kind of greatness, everything that towers, rules, [that] is superior" (Spengler 1934: 35). The appeal to these semi-Nietzschean aristocratic virtues allows Rose to analyse Italian far-right ideologue Julius Evola alongside Spengler. Evola argued for a 'world of Tradition' in which the 'man of tradition' would always be aware of a superior dimension of existence, which would therefore be fundamentally different to the world of liberalism. Within such a tradition, all social and political life were to be elevated into something ritualistic, "becoming activities whose very repetitiveness offered a glimpse of an unchanging eternal realm." Evola argued for a way of thinking that exemplified hierarchical and aristocratic values during a time of liberal decadence (Rose 2021: 40, 48).

So, it can be said that both Spengler and Evola attack the perceived decadence and weakness in Western culture, which is a direct product of liberalism. And while it can be said that both were relevant in various intellectual debates throughout the 20th century, Rose offers only very limited evidence for how any of them inspired the current far right. Even less can be said about Francis Parker Yockey's role as the source of radical right though. In many ways a bizarre and contradictory character, Yockey wrote *Imperium*, a historical revisionist book claiming that the Western allies came off weaker after their victory in World War Two because they retreated from the Third World and lost their cultural dominance (Rose 2021: 69). The only link between Yockey, on one hand side, and Spengler and Evola, on the other, is Yockey's understanding that the Western retreat from world dominance is the result of liberalism's espousal of weakness.

Alain de Benoist's position is somewhat different. Responding to the turmoil in Paris in May 1968, de Benoist argues that the proper foundation of rightist thinking is nominalism – a metaphysical doctrine that denied the real existence of universals. Nominalism would maintain that only particular beings or objects exist, and that universals are merely conventional names invented by the mind. It denies reason's ability to know universal truths or natures, which he takes to be the main assumption of the liberal order. In Benoist's reading, only a worldview based on nominalism can defend the traditional way of life and more importantly, defend excellence, heroism, and honour (Rose 2021: 91). Additionally, Benoist subscribes to the idea that humans desire recognition of their equal dignity, and that human identity will be profoundly wounded by the absence or distortion of this recognition. However, he rejects the notion that tymotics operate on the individual level. Instead, he claims tymotic progression applies to entire cultures, a collectivity rather than the individual that becomes recognised. Oddly enough, such a system can simultaneously celebrate both diversity and hierarchical order with its exclusion. An open society is possible within a closed society. This led Benoist to claim that the atrocities of 20th century as well as European colonialism were a product of erasing group differences, rather than maintaining them (Rose 2021: 101–102).

Spengler, Evola, and de Benoist not only have a very different understanding of what is wrong with liberalism, but they also belong to very different periods and intellectual cultures. Spengler's interwar Germany, Evola's post-war Italy, and de Benoist's late-20th century France are very different cultures, and Rose never explores in any detail the connection between the radical rightist ideologies in those three contexts. Needless to say, the types of liberalism attacked are profoundly different, and although various directions of contemporary alt-right roughly correspond to them, we never see how they interact together. Therefore, it seems that the book is a case study of five different thinkers, rather than a comprehensive analysis of how their thoughts affected the current alt-right. The only exception to this impression is Rose's in-depth analysis of Samuel Francis. The chapter on Francis is the sole part of Rose's narrative that perfectly fits the title of the book: we can clearly see how Francis's peculiar thought directly influenced the current alt-right in the United States, ranging from various nativists, to racists and Trumpists. Rose's account of Rose also parallels important claims made by Nayar and Turchin.

Francis, a forceful anti-liberal, dedicated most of his career to the criticism of the Republican Party for their inability to face what he saw the imminent collapse of conservative politics in the United States. Unusual for a radical rightist, Francis argued that the ideological basis of the Republican Party has altered beyond recognition. Rather than free-market orthodoxy, small vs. big government controversy, or traditionalism in social outlooks, Francis believed nationalism and populism need to become the centre points of the Republican message. Basically, he was among the first to pay closer attention to a particular type of working-class, lower to middle income whites in the US, who are not average conservatives, as they do not support neoliberal orthodoxies, such as free globalised market or limited government, but are instead fiercely nationalistic. Comprising 25% of the electorate, they vote consistently for either Democrats or Republicans, but their worldview does not correspond to any of the parties. They defend entitlements and unions, and hate big corporations and free trade. Yet, they oppose welfare and school busing, and were very conservative regarding social issues, especially racial questions. Francis claimed that this unexplored group are the "remaining core of the fractured American nation" (Rose 2021: 112, 124–125).

Basically, they elected Donald Trump, and it turned out that Francis's essays offer a compelling explanation of how the former unionised working class of Michigan or Wisconsin could have voted for a billionaire populist from 5th Avenue. What used to be either Democratic voters or far fringes of the Republican Party have, since 2016, become the mainstream of American nativism and nationalism. Francis's main argument, which influenced the movement around Trump is that liberalism has become part of the mainstream Republican Party, through the adoption of neoliberalism. He was among the first to argue that the Republicans have betrayed their base, leaving them disenfranchised, and the first to claim that the Republicans need to adopt an anti-establishment narrative in order to impose their "true" political agenda, an anti-neoliberal

one. Basically, neglecting its natural political base in middle-class whites, was according to Francis a true disaster, and an extension of the liberal ideology onto the American "core" (Rose 2021: 128).

Samuel Francis's magnum opus *Leviathan and its Enemies*, although a badly written pseudo-philosophy, takes the liberal governmentality of late 20th and early 21st century United States as the crucial reason for the collapse of rightist perspectives. He interprets the conflict between liberalism and conservatism as antagonism between rival elites and their supporters. This is based on the premise that new elites are trying to displace those that preceded them. In his system, the old elites are the liberal bourgeoisie, defined not in terms of habits or lifestyle, but by the social basis of their power. So, their power currently lies in private firms and institutions, inherited property, Protestantism and kinship networks. Although they dominated America since the Civil War, their power was gradually uprooted by the emerging mass society. The problem is that the conservative elites have become ideologically integrated into the structures of the liberal elites, which is why they are failing to represent their natural supporters. Francis believed the greatest mistake of the conservative elites was that they started ignoring the relationship between their own ideology and its disintegrating social basis. Their emphasis on individual liberty, free markets, and moral traditionalism, has undermined the class interests of the conservative base. In this sense, Francis's criticism of liberalism has less to do with liberalism itself, and more with the fact that liberalism happens to be a ruling ideology. He understood liberalism as an ideology which does what every ideology does, i.e. provides a justification for the rule of an elite minority (Rose 2021: 117–122).

This position is crucial to understand the link between anti-liberal critics and the radical right. By focusing attention to the deficiencies of non-liberal movements, Francis, and many alt-right supporters today equate criticism of liberalism with the criticism of the establishment. Liberalism is taken to be the expression of the establishment, the elites, or mainstream politics, and participation in this arrangement is what prevents any opposing ideologies to take hold. The current crisis has more to do with the fact that forces that should have opposed liberalism failed to do so, rather than with particular liberal values. Thus, Rose's chapter on Francis clarifies this relationship between crisis of liberalism and increasing disbelief in the system itself. As it turns out, this is the most relevant connection between an anti-liberal thinker and radical right in Rose's book.

The position of the elites towards the crisis of liberalism is the central feature of both Peter Turchin's and Krishnan Nayar's books. Unlike Rose, they are not searching for intellectual sources of the current crisis, but they are trying to provide a comprehensive historical account for its emergence. Nayar's *Liberal Capitalist Democracy: A God that Failed* provides a criticism of liberalism from the left and argues that the crisis of liberalism is, first and foremost, a crisis of capitalism. By exploring the relationship between liberalism, capitalism, and democracy, Nayar primarily attacks the position that capitalist

development is the precursor of democratisation. In this triad, liberalism is not the chief point of criticism – in fact, Nayar, more or less, agrees with core liberal values.[6] Instead, liberalism is understood as the ideological tool, a "liberal myth", through which the narrative that capitalism brings democratisation is sustained (Nayar 2023: "Why this Book was written"). Central for this narrative is his argument that the role of elites in transitional economies determines the relationship between democracy and capitalism. In fact, the liberal myth actually obstructs the fact that rampant capitalist elites more often lead to rightist autocratic regimes, rather than liberal democracies.

In analysing long and more than complicated period between Oliver Cromwell and Donald Trump, Nayar argues that the pre-World War Two capitalism, what he calls Darwinian capitalism (defined as pre-consumerist, pre-welfare state capitalism of severe economic instability) does not contribute to democratisation of societies. Naturally, it is very difficult to present such a sweeping account of 400-year-long development with six case studies without succumbing to generalisations. Nayar is no exception to this. In essence, the entire historical analysis in this book can be reduced to the following claim: capitalism was not the precursor to the democratisation of the society, because capitalism was, in most situations except Britain and somewhat the United States, an attempt of aristocracy to protect its interests and, through democratisation, to adjust to the capital flows in order to preserve the elite status they enjoyed. Preserving the elites and working together with capitalism, in Nayar's analysis, more often than not brings about rightist form of government.

The only two cases that avoided right-wing response to capitalist development were Britain and the United States. This is mostly linked to the gradual political evolution that took place in the English political culture since the Glorious Revolution. Nayar emphasises two reasons for the success of English and American revolutions. In the English case, the supremacy of parliament and gradual retreat of feudalism led to a form of political culture that was inherently liberal, i.e. a political system that prevented the aristocracy to abuse new forms of capitalism to their advantage. Similarly, in the case of United States, the concept of popular sovereignty contributed to a more even capitalist development (Nayar 2023: "The English and American Revolutions led to Democracy"). One major problem with this account is that it avoids historical contingencies. For example, Nayar argues that the fact that industrialisation first happened in England is a mere coincidence and has nothing to do with the political or economic order (Nayar 2023: ibid.). In fact, Nayar claims that Russia, Germany, or Japan were much better placed to enforce industrialisation,

6 To avoid dealing with ideological and conceptual framework later on, Nayar defines liberalism at the very beginning as "a rejection of autocracy as a form of government even if not necessarily backing universal suffrage, requiring freedom of speech, religion, and equality under law, assuming a mainly market-based economy" significantly generalising the issue he speaks about throughout the book in Nayar 2023: "A Note on Nomenclature".

because they had been able to quell unrest more effectively and enforce major reforms faster compared to Britain. Thus, Britain is a unique model of development which cannot be replicated, since democratisation began in Britain before industrialisation, thus preventing major influences by the aristocratic elites. Nayar's major point in discussing Britain (and the US, to an extent) is that liberal revolutions are only successful when they crush the elites.

This is precisely why capitalism did not lead to democracy in his other examples– Russia, Japan, Germany, and France. Liberal revolutions in these countries were either unsuccessful or failed to quell the power of aristocracy. Hence, ruling elites, this time through liberal ideology, continued their grip over the economy. Nayar's argument is that the elites, confronted with reformist figures, chose to support the authoritarian regimes, rather than risk their property. France is a 'transitional' case, so to say. The revolution secured the economic transition needed – it did not fully destroy the aristocracy, but it reduced their control over the economy in favour of new elites, the capitalists (Nayar 2023: "But what about the French Revolution? Was it necessary for democracy?"). These new elites, dependent on expanding capitalism, were not conducive to democratisation of France, and their order was later on reduced to semi-autocracy under Louis Napoleon (Nayar 2023: "Louis Napoleon, Scorned by Marx, Becomes a Successful Modernising Autocrat"). When it comes to Russia, Germany, and Japan, Nayar argues that capitalists "lost" the modernisation process. Because the aristocracy had been preserved, no democratisation could have taken place. Nayar attempts to create a story in which a top-down modernisation was imposed by the autocrats simply because they had to do this in order to survive. Once these elites adjusted to the new economic reality, they kept their powers much longer than in France, not to mention Britain (Nayar 2023: "Liberal Democratic Ideology Failed: The Efficacy of Modernizing Aristocratic Autocracy in Germany").

The leitmotif of the historical account in *Liberal Capitalist Democracy* is that authoritarian modernisation, rather than democracy, was the natural, favoured trend of capitalism, and that liberalism served to justify this. Nayar is at pains to show that it is far more likely for capitalism to fuel right-wing extremism than usually imagined. This brings him to modern times, which despite comprising a shorter part of the book seems to be Nayar's central focus. In accordance with the overall argument of the book, Nayar tries to argue that apparent connection between capitalist development and democratisation in Western world after World War Two is merely an extension of the "liberal myth." Moreover, the transition to neoliberalism is presented as the return to the natural state of capitalism (Nayar 2023: "Communism Saved Capitalist Democracy from Fascism and Helped Reform Capitalism").

"Liberal myth" obscured the real reason capitalism fared so well in the postwar period. Nayar argues there was no structural reason for capitalism to succeed in democratising Western societies. Instead, capitalism underpinned democracy exclusively because of the Cold War, i.e. democratic governments in capitalist economies were developed mostly because of the challenges posed

by the Russian and Chinese revolutions. In other words, communist threat rescued democracy in the West (Nayar 2023: ibid.) Namely, as long as the communist/socialist mode of development presented a clear threat to western market-driven modernisaiton, liberal democracies were entangled in a sort of check-and-balance dichotomy with the communist East. Failure of this arrangement was, in Nayar's reading, the reason neoliberal practices, i.e. the reduction of state regulatory powers, became the standard form of capitalism in the West. In other words, the "total dismissal of communism [in late 1970s and 1980] accompanied a fierce resurgence of free-market" economic dogmatism (Nayar 2023: "New Capitalism Consolidates").

There is merit in Nayar's argument that the decay of the Eastern bloc ended the threat of communism, thus ruining the balance and allowing rampant capitalism to re-emerge. However, this is also the point in which limitations resulting from the lack of conceptual clarity are easily seen. As mentioned earlier, Duncan Bell persuasively shows that it can be said that the very concept of liberal democracy emerged in the context of a global conflict over the proper meaning of democracy. The moniker 'liberal' came to denote a specific type of parliamentary democracies, opposed to both communism and fascism in the interwar period (Bell 2014: 703–704). Contrary to Nayar's argument, it can easily be said that this particular version of liberalism, i.e. liberal democracy became the flagpole for the discourse in which the West is in a struggle to defend democracy against totalitarianism. Although Nayar's argument against the interconnectedness of democracy and capitalism seems relatively sound, the same cannot be said for his overall take on liberal democracy. The relationship between capitalism and liberal democracy, albeit very significant, is not the sufficient discursive tool to offer a comprehensive analysis Nayar proposes. Simply, he never elaborates enough on all the differences and contradictions the concept of liberal democracy entails – capitalism being only one of them.

Ultimately, the most important message Nayar wants to pass is that the most successful period of capitalist development – between 1945 and the advent of neoliberalism – was an anomaly. Neoliberalism, in his view, is a restoration of the original shape of capitalism, the Darwinian capitalism of 19th and early 20th centuries. His historical account serves to prove that this type of capitalism will necessarily open the possibility for authoritarian regimes in the West. Although this book is written in a remarkably witty style, there is nothing particularly novel about the argument itself. Nayar heavily relies on Barrington Moore's work on the authoritarian origins of modernisation projects, as well as on the role of elites for the process of democratisation (Moore 1993). He bases his conclusion that the current failings of neoliberal capitalism are the direct cause of the rise of the right in the West from Mark Blyth's and Clara Mattei's work on outcomes of austerity and its relationship with fascism (Blyth 2013; Mattei 2022).[7] Overall, it is very important to acknowledge the role of capitalism in the current crisis of liberalism. What is problematic is the pursuit of

7 Another major influence was Acemoglu, Robinson 2006.

comprehensive historical account in Nayar's argumentation. By reducing his vision to a particular type of liberal democracy, his historical argumentation becomes reductive. Needless to say, Soviet experience and the threat of communism were a major reason to reform or restrain capitalism, but the experience of World War Two, decolonisation, dramatic demographic transitions, technological revolutions, among other things, were so as well. Whereas no one would blame Nayar for not accounting for all these factors, it is worth noticing that acknowledging diverse causes would have enriched his narrative.

Furthermore, Nayar neglects internal processes and developments occurring in Western states after the war that contributed to restraining capitalism and democratising societies. For example, New Deal policies in the US, and their aftermath since 1945, have a very long history of progressive ideologies which predate the communist threat. Exemplary work by Donald Sassoon shows how domestic socialist forces in Western Europe tended to enter a symbiosis with capitalism. Rather than the result of communist threat from the East, Sassoon shows socialists and other leftists discovered that achieving some of their basic demands is compatible with the features of the capitalist nation-states. By becoming active participants in political procedures after 1945, they accepted the state apparatus, which eventually meant that they reconciled with capitalism (Sassoon 1996: xxii, 126). It was *within* the state that the socialist parties pushed for the regulated version of capitalism. So, in exchange for their acceptance of capitalist state and politics, they managed to create the welfare state (Sassoon 1996: 117). Nayar's forceful criticism of neoliberalism is very relevant, but his central point that capitalism was more or less preordained to enter the neoliberal stage, causing further instability and alienation, would require significantly greater analysis, and cannot be extrapolated from his historical evidence. For instance, a more nuanced work by Jürgen Kocka, also critical of neoliberalism, but historically better substantiated, demonstrates that it can hardly be said that there is one direction of capitalist development. Quite the contrary. Capitalism, even in its most unpopular stage, is a remarkably resilient system, capable of adjusting to its shortcomings (Koka 2016: 121–124).

The claim that crisis of liberalism largely overlaps with crisis of democracy and crisis of capitalism is, through different means, explored by both Rose and Nayar. Their ultimate warning is that all these crises will necessarily bring about a rightist resurgence. In that sense, their position is the same – by realising the causes of the crisis, we should contribute to the prevention of gradual deterioration into authoritarianism. While Rose seeks to find the intellectual sources of this deterioration, with limited success, and Nayar tries to shift the attention to neoliberal capitalism, both of them discuss the responsibility of political, intellectual, and economic elites in the perpetuation of the crisis. The question of elites is more or less overshadowed by their attempt to ground their argument in historical narratives. Peter Turchin's *End Times: Elites, Counter-Elites, and the Path of Political Disintegration* takes the position of elites as the central factor in explaining all the challenges of liberalism today.

Similar to Rose and Nayar, Turchin tries to establish a comprehensive historical account, ranging from War of Roses, to developments in Imperial China, to the 19th-century United States, in order to justify his claims (Turchin 2023: "Elites, Elite Overproduction, and the Road to Crisis" and "Stepping Back: Lessons from History"). As with the other two books, *End Times* does not fare well with such a wide-sweeping account, and is instead much more useful as the analysis of the current crisis, especially when it comes to the situation in the United States (in this sense, it is quite similar to the overall impression one gets from Rose's book). As previously stated, this article will not discuss in further detail Turchin's cliodynamics, i.e. his attempt to use economic and scientific data to establish historical regularities, and then to use this historical knowledge to predict future.

End Times is an attempt to prove that the political crises, exemplified in the current one in liberal democracies, are the outcome of a complicated interplay between different elites and increasing inequality (Turchin 2023: "State Breakdown"). Turchin's book is an exemplary and masterfully well-researched study into the patterns of inequality. His model is particularly useful for its neat definition of growing inequality. Namely, the best indicator for increasing inequality is when the median income becomes smaller than the average income, while the differences between median income and the top 10% earners increase dramatically. Furthermore, elites tend to be "overproduced", as ever greater number of people compete over corrupt sources of wealth and power. However, once used in his historical analysis, this model necessarily reduces the question of inequality to a rather simple formula, disregarding wider political and social developments, contrary to other authors dealing with similar topics, such as Piketty (Milanović, internet).

Turchin argues that the average income versus median income ratio matters the most in determining the rate of inequality in any given society, deliberately downgrading the importance of other factors (social classes, for example) and implicitly divorcing the question of inequality from political, social, and ideological conditions. His claim is that this formula for ascertaining the rate of inequality is a natural property of the system, extrapolated from formidable empirical data. This allows Turchin to apply this model to almost all Western societies in the previous 200 years (even Qing China). He demonstrates this by arguing that the current median income in the United States directly corresponds to relative earnings of semi-qualified workers in 19th-century Britain, or even small landowners in 1830s France or 1850s Russia (Turchin 2023: "Revolutionary Troops", "The Peasants are Revolting"). These and similar wide-sweeping claims necessarily obfuscate other factors. For example, it can be equally argued that increasing inequality in 1830s France was related to political revisionism after the Restoration, or that 1850s Russian economy was mostly reacting to the consequences of losing the Crimean War, not to mention the fact that Russia was still a feudal society. These factors are at least similarly important as the statistical increase in inequality, and the formation

of a new, proto-capitalist elite, and have equally contributed to the subsequent destabilisation of Russia or France.

Once inequality increases according to this formula, it is accompanied by the competition between contesting elites – the aspiring and counter-elites who emerge from the new discrepancies in earnings and who want their share of power, and the established elites that gradually lose their economic base. Turchin's model suggests that these two conditions – expanding inequalities and embattled elites – lead to a pre-revolutionary stage, a political disintegration. Very similar to both Nayar and Rose, Turchin applies his historical reasoning to the current crisis. As with Nayar's book, *End Times* could be read as a justification that the current crisis has a basis in the way in which Western societies have developed. The most valuable part in *End Times* are his thoughts about the current state of Western liberal democracies, especially the United States.[8] In a way, his argument corresponds to Rose's discussion on Francis. Turchin interprets the current inequality in the United States through its direct victims – the dissatisfied and disillusioned American lower and lower-middle class, who no longer have genuine political representation. He links their predicament to the gradual demise of liberal politics, and the rise of figures such as Donald Trump. It is not only the traditional rightists or conservatives who had ceased to represent their electorate (as Samuel Francis argued). Thomas Piketty and others argued that in all western democracies, leftist and social-democratic parties have become parties of educated elites, whereas the working class and middle class have lost not only their influence, but even a chance to be represented in regular politics (Getting, Martinez-Toledano, Piketty 2022: 40–48). As for Turchin, although he avoids using social classes in his explanations, he is more than successful in depicting the current elites as the main culprits for the social antagonism arising as the result of increasing inequalities. American elites, comprising from CEOs, major investors, corporate lawyers, mainstream media, majority of elected officials, and of course, capitalist magnates, have reduced the American constitutional framework to a plutocracy, using the façade of electoral democracy to preserve and legitimise their power (Turchin 2023: "Why is America a Plutocracy?"). His argument is, thus, similar to Nayar's, although more substantiated.

The crisis in the United States is, therefore, a conflict between the established, mainstream elites who are defending the primate they had since the 1980s, and the aspiring, perspective ones, i.e. Trumpist Republicans, who are trying to take over their party on ideological grounds. Without much reference to their ideologies, Turchin is trying to say that with this confrontation among the elites and with the increasing inequalities, all the conditions for a pre-revolutionary stage are observable in current American political reality: dysfunctional political system, major intraparty divisions, and the lack of political representations, to say the least. He is, of course, aware that political systems are

8 Others have suggested a somewhat similar model for other major countries, like China. See Yang, Novokmet, Milanović, internet.

very resilient and is not trying to argue that America is about to descend into a revolution. Nevertheless, *End Times* have a doomsday-like overtone in its main message – the liberal order is so broken, that if we are to consult history, there is little we could do to avert a major uproar. Except if the elites were to realise their responsibility in perpetuating the crisis. To this end, Turchin wants to nudge the elites into behaving themselves.

The most glaring gap in Turchin's account is his insensitivity to ideological factors. In essence, he is discussing the crisis of a liberal democratic paradigm in the West, without major reflection on the nature of the system that is undergoing this crisis. Despite having a very sophisticated model for interpreting history, and despite saying that the goal of cliodynamics was to integrate all forces of history, Turchin avoids to discuss the interplay between economy, inequality, social elites, on one hand side, and ideology backing it, on the other.[9] As stated in the beginning, the lack of any compelling discussion on the nature of the system in crisis is shared by all three authors discussed here. They all clearly react to major challenges, either economic or intellectual to liberal democracies, and are acutely aware that the crisis will have a detrimental effect on democratic outlooks in Western societies, thus causing the resurgence of adverse rightist forces. Yet, their narratives never engage with the liberal democracy itself. Instead, they converge on some interesting points, in particular on the role of elites in the expected demise of liberal order. But, they never engage in the broader cultural or ideological appeal these elites have in their interpretation of the current crisis. Perhaps the only exception to this is Rose's discussion on the crisis of belonging, seen in the works of Spengler and Evola. But, as stated earlier, the connection between their thoughts and the current radical right is rather dubious, although it is clear that the crisis of belonging and identity issues are important part of anti-liberal arsenal. Therefore, if we were to ask what is "wrong" with liberalism itself, by reading these authors we would either have no answer or we would arrive to the conclusion that nothing is wrong with the ideology itself. The arguments they present seem to be *external* to the worldview they propose to be in crisis.

Rather than the outcome of a relatively dubious connection to past rightist thinkers, or the result of meticulous formula that juxtaposes different types of elites, or even the consequence of rampant neoliberalism, the current crisis, and even more the experience of current crisis is based on historical contingencies relevant in our times. Therefore, the lack of any discussion on the nature of liberalism, in particular the eclectic that informs is, necessarily diminishes the ability of history to inform our present condition.

9 This omission is visible in other recent works, for example, Thompson 2022 which traces the interconnectedness between the ownership and accessibility to energy sources and the political and economic system over the previous 100 years, while downgrading the importance of ideology, politics, or wider society.

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Vukan Marković

U iščekivanju propasti liberalnog poretka: istorizacija krize liberalizma

Apstrakt

Ovaj pregledni članak analizira prednosti i nedostatke nedavno objavljenih dela Metju Rouza, Petera Turčina i Krišnana Najara o krizi zapadnih liberalnih demokratija i liberalizma. Ispitujući intelektualne i ekonomske uzroke krize, ovi autori pokušavaju da ustanove istorijski model koji bi objasnio trenutnu krizu kroz sveobuhvatno shvatanje razvoja zapadnih društava. Kroz to, oni identifikuju negativnu ulogu elita i rastućih nejednakosti kao glavnih faktora koji kroz istoriju doprinose padu liberalnih vrednosti i ugrožavanju demokratske vladavine prava. Stoga, ove tri knjige predstavljaju upozorenje da će propast liberalnog poretka dovesti do vraćanja desnog autoritarizma. Međutim, sva tri autora izbegavaju raspravu o prirodi liberalizma kao dominantne ideologije Zapada. Ovaj članak kritikuje takave modele, tvrdeći da svaka diskusija o krizi liberalizma koja izbegava rasprave o samom liberalizmu, kao i o liberalnim ideologijama nužno ne uspeva da predoči samo iskustvo te krize. Takođe, ovi modeli ograničavaju korisnost istorije za razumevanje uzroka krize i sprečavanje njenih posledica.

Ključne reči: kriza liberalnih demokratija, kapitalizam, elite, nejednakost, desničarski autoritarizam, Turčin, Rouz, Najar.

III

REVIEWS

PRIKAZI

VIOLENCE IS SOCIAL

SINIŠA MALEŠEVIĆ, *WHY HUMANS FIGHT: THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF CLOSE-RANGE VIOLENCE*, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, 2022.

Aleksej Kišjuhas

Siniša Malešević, born in Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and a Full Professor and Chair of Sociology at the University College in Dublin (Ireland), is one of the world's most prominent sociologists of ethnic violence and war. He is also one the key figures and the most relevant scholars of ethnicity and nationalism in contemporary sociology and social science in general. For Malešević, the ultimate causes of organised and/or collective violence largely lie in the sociohistorical or macro phenomena, such as the rise of the state and the bureaucratisation of coercion, along with the accompanying social ideologies such as nationalism (e.g., in his seminal books *The Sociology of War and Violence*, 2010, *The Rise of Organised Brutality*, 2017, and others).

However, in his new book *Why Humans Fight: The Social Dynamics of Close-Range Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2022), Malešević shifted his "sociological eye" to the micro phenomena and the human emotions regarding close-range fighting. How and why exactly do people engage in direct violence? "War, huh, what is it good for?" and "What's so funny about peace, love, and understanding?" after all? Indeed, why do humans fight face-to-face? And how does it feel? Arguing that fighting is not an individual (or an "anti-social"), but a truly social phenomenon, the answers to these and other age-old questions can be found in this groundbreaking and remarkable treatise by professor Malešević. Furthermore, he also poses and provides answers to fundamental questions regarding human nature and human societies.

The theoretical part of the book consists of six chapters, while the second, more empirically-oriented, part consists of five chapters. The empirical data was based on interviews with former members or veterans of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS), as well as other historical and contemporary sources. In this book, Malešević explores in detail "why and under which social conditions human beings are likely to fight, injure, or kill other human beings in combat situations". Combining Durkheim with historical sociology, he also thoroughly analyses "the role of biology, economic

motivations, ideological commitments, coercive pressure, and the emotional bonds of micro-solidarity".

Viewing many of the dominant paradigms and popular explanations of violence as overly simplistic and reductionist, Malešević calls for a genuinely *sociological* analysis "of the combat zone, and of the role organisational power plays in the development of group cohesion". He also explores "the role that emotions play in people's willingness to fight and especially how shared emotional dynamics shape the experience of killing in violent conflicts", arguing that human emotions are not private or passive states (one's "passions"), but active and social phenomena as well. In that sense, Malešević's deliberately essentialist question, "why humans fight?" provides important non-essentialist answers and causal explanations in the fields of historical sociology, sociology of emotions, and theoretical sociology in general.

Malešević's book also exposes many myths concerning human close-range fighting in religion, history, media, and popular culture. Countless depictions of such violence throughout history were pure fiction, and the means of propaganda by one's rulers and/or faith. Humans are predominantly fearful creatures that avoid direct violence, which is also indicated in the morphology of our bodies. Humans lack sharp teeth, claws and the like, implying the comparative absence of direct violence in human natural history or evolution. Similarly, the so-called martial arts must be learned and perfected over many years (i.e. they do not come "naturally" to humans). In his microsociology, Randall Collins (*Violence*, 2008) also argues that human close-range violence is, in fact, "ugly" and "incompetent".

On the other hand, close-range violence between individuals surely exists – in wartime killings and genocides, mafia hits, pub brawls, cases of domestic violence, school shootings, etc. As such, close-range violence represents a major sociological conundrum, which has largely not been addressed by mainstream sociology. So far, violence was analysed in a mostly reductionist manner in sociobiological theories, rational choice theories, theories of psychological motivation or personalities, etc. However, social fights are a primary ("formal") sociological phenomenon, which was articulated even by Simmel in the 1900s and Coser in the 1950s. For Malešević as well, "fighting as a form of violent conflict involves deep social interaction" and "the individuals involved in a fight develop emotional and cognitive reactions, and as such establish interaction with their opponents. Thus, fighting entails active sociation".

In this sense, Siniša Malešević introduces the concept of *social pugnacity* into theoretical sociology (of violence) in order to capture "the relational, changeable, and collective character of close-range fighting". For him, social pugnacity is "not an individual attribute, it is not a product of one's biology or psychology, but a phenomenon generated by the contextual interplay between structure and agency". His book can then also be read as seminal in overcoming the dichotomy between structure and action (agency) in sociology, which is an issue that sociologists from Weber, to Parsons and Goffman, and up to Alexander, Giddens, Coleman, Scheff, Archer etc. have problematised. By exploring close-range violence in detail, Malešević brilliantly showed the pathways for overcoming this conceptual (and also real-world) problem.

Thus, Malešević simultaneously points to possibilities for resolving several epistemological and methodological dilemmas which have burdened sociology in the 20th century. Although his focus is on the microsociology of violence, he integrates macro and micro levels of analysis with a certain ease.

Furthermore, his genre of sociology pays close attention to emotional and cognitive aspects of face-to-face conflicts, but also places these conflicts within the wider macro-historical processes and contexts – and this is probably its greatest scientific value. Finally, the epistemological issue of sociology's uneasy relation towards life sciences is skilfully addressed. The research and theory of Malešević include carefully selected discoveries from evolutionary biology, neuroscience, and psychology, but with a critical distance from (their) reductionism or triviality. Malešević bravely demonstrates how human violence *lacks* a biological, psychological, or economic essence, being socio-culturally and socio-historically variable instead.

In relation to this, the widely popular yet theoretically and empirically problematic book by Steven Pinker on the decline of violence in human history (*The Better Angels of Our Nature*, 2011), finally gets its sociological critique, although this was not Malešević's primary intention. While Pinker and like-minded scholars (e.g. Jared Diamond, Napoleon Chagnon, Lawrence Keeley) claimed that the state, due to its monopoly in the use of force, has led to a reduction of violence among humans, Malešević demonstrated how social pugnacity actually *increases* with the rise of the state's organisational capacities. This is yet another counterintuitive and debunking message of his book.

In a similar contrast to Arendt's notion of the "banality of evil", chapter 10 of Malešević's book deals with the very act of killing in war. Perpetrating murder or close-range violence (chapter 9) is never "banal", nor hygienically clean, with human emotions playing a crucial role in the process. This was also argued in *The Geometry of Genocide* by the sociologist Bradley Campbell (2015). As Malešević highlights, human emotions in close-range fighting are far from uniform or instinctive, including fear and boredom in warfare, but also anger, pride, shame and regret (and the Goffmanian "face-work" in social interaction). Thus, individual emotions regarding violence are (inter)active, historically variable, and culturally flexible, which is an exceptional finding by Malešević.

For Malešević in *Grounded Nationalisms* (2019), nationalism is not an epiphenomenon, an evolutionary vestige of primordial tribalism, nor the Einsteinian "infantile disease" ("measles of mankind"). It is a social fact *par excellence* and the most potent operational ideological discourse in the modern era. Contemporary globalisation and nationalism thus go hand by hand. However, his research of the IRA and the VRS veterans indicates that they were not motivated by nationalism to engage in combat. Rather, micro-solidarity played a significant role, although the macro-ideology of nationalism was a crucial factor in legitimising one's violence. Humans engage in close-range violence by fighting "for others", and not for themselves. They fight for their (imagined) tribe, kinship, or pseudo-kinship, which can be arguably explained by human evolution and by the legitimising ideologies. But also, they fight for their real-world "brothers in arms", which can be explained by microsociology and social emotions.

Malešević's book also represents a bold defence of sociology as a scientific discipline. It stands as an exemplar of Émile Durkheim's maxim from *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), which asserts that social facts must be explained by other social facts. Durkheim articulated this "rule" in order to establish an entirely new academic discipline by "discovering" the unexplored realm of "social facts". With Malešević, we discover why Durkheim was ultimately right – the social fact of interpersonal violence can (and must) be

adequately explained by various macro and micro social facts. Simmel also requested a distinct epistemological niche for sociology, and identified it in the forms of sociality. Social conflict is one of these forms, which then requires qualitatively different explanations, or explanations from a distinct science (of sociology). It is a non-obvious fact that conflict is actually a *social*, and not an "anti-social" act, as portrayed by the media and perceived in the popular imagination.

The arguments in this book do not imply that human evolution, cognition, or one's rational choice, are irrelevant. Still, it reminds us of the striking fact that "no other vertebrate animal is capable of killing 75 million members of its own species in six years". Thus, it is required to "turn the neo-Darwinian argument on its head" and show that human violence is a "distinctly unique evolutionary development". Even close-range violence is fundamentally a social, and not an individual act, which is the core tenet of Malešević's work. It is primarily a *sociology* of violence, and not sociology of *violence* (*per se*).

With *Why Humans Fight*, we finally come to understand that social fighting is a *sui generis* phenomenon that cannot be reduced to human biology (aggression, personality) or individual (cognitive, rational, economic) motivations, which are isolated from a broader sociohistorical context. Evolutionary explanations, concerning the territoriality or aggressiveness of human animals in terms of survival (e.g., by Konrad Lorenz or Edward O. Wilson) are exposed as relatively simplistic and trivial. Since, "unlike wolves or tigers that have to face their prey and kill to eat, humans rely on coercive organisations, technological superiority, and normative justification to inflict violence".

The viewpoints about violence in personality psychology ("violent personality", "antisocial personality" etc.) are exposed as equally superficial and circular arguments. Contrary to the famous, but dubious experiments by Milgram or Zimbardo, Malešević argues that violence primarily operates under structural coercion (imposed by the states, religions and education), and not at the individual level in terms of the innate human aggressiveness or one's personality traits. Although "human beings are material creatures defined by their bodies and minds", social organisations that actually fight wars and commit genocides, such as states, "do not possess brains". While the best recruits for close-range violence in warfare are not impulsively aggressive, but "self-disciplined and obedient individuals". Thus, "human relations are not defined by fixed biological, psychological, or other characteristics, but are created through the interactions of specific social organisations, ideological frames, and micro-interactional processes", as Malešević carefully proclaims and explains.

Alongside the many inspiring insights drawn from empirical evidence, this book also serves as a bold defence of theoretical sociology and its cumulative knowledge. This should not come as a surprise, since Malešević is an expert in sociological theory, and an (co) author of two recent books on classical and contemporary sociological theories published by SAGE (2021). On the other hand, *Why Humans Fight* can be read as a "microsociological turn" by this scholar, who (now) argues that neither social structure, culture, ideology nor history can fully explain social pugnacity. With regard to human violence, we must also turn to human emotions, human minds, and mundane encounters in everyday life as well.

In a personal conversation with Siniša in Novi Sad, I have asked him about the academic challenges regarding his mode of sociological research and inquiry. Especially about his wide-ranging

("grand") theorising, standing in stark contrast to the prevailing extreme specialisation and empty empiricism. With a characteristic smile, he responded: "As a sociologist, I only desire to understand certain broad phenomena, and to explain these to myself. As such, the title of my next book will be simply: why humans fight?". He noted the same interest in its Acknowledgements section: "On a more personal level, this book is also an attempt to understand how and why"; specifically, how and why many individuals participated in the bloodshed in former Yugoslavia – or refused to do so. Sociological theory and research lack more of this spirit of curiosity, and posing fundamental philosophical and societal questions.

Some biosocially oriented sociologists such as Jonathan H. Turner have long proclaimed that "Sociology is now big, disorganized, incoherent, and increasingly boring" ("The disintegration of American sociology", 1989). And, Randall Collins rightfully claimed that "Being a sociologist means never having to be bored" ("The sociological eye and its blinders", 1998). This theoretical "crisis", "incoherence", or "chaos" has gradually led to the marginalisation and creeping irrelevance of sociology, at least compared to psychology, economics, and even political science. In this book, Malešević reinvigorates the excitement in sociology by formulating sensible, sound and interesting theoretical principles which explain general phenomena regarding human existence.

In the end, as a particularly poignant moment, the author dedicated his book named "Why Humans Fight?", and released by a distinguished international publisher, to "family members and friends who were displaced by the 1990s wars of Yugoslav succession and are now scattered all over the world". We owe gratitude to Siniša Malešević for this important and remarkable book as a global community of sociologists. But also as individuals who were regionally and personally affected by the mentioned wars and violence, and their aftermath in our post-Yugoslav societies.

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

In the text: (Miller 1926: 320).

In a comment: Miller 1926: 320.

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

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In the text: (Harris 2001).

In a comment: Harris 2001.

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

In the text: (Vieweg, Welsch 2008).

In comment: Vieweg, Welsch 2008.

8. ARTICLES/CHAPTERS IN BOOK

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

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

In the text: (Anscombe 1981: 82).

In a comment: Anscombe 1981: 82.

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

In the text: (Onofrio 2015: 139).

In a comment: Onofrio 2015: 139.

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

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

U tekstu: (Hartman 1980: 108).

U napomeni: Hartman 1980: 108

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