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Editorial Introduction

Rada Iveković, Aleksandar Pavlović and Sanja Bojanić

REVISITING THE POLITICS OF TRANSLATION: TRANSLATION, NATION AND GENDER

ABSTRACT
This thematic issue, *Revisiting the Politics of Translation: Translation, Nation and Gender*, explores translation as both practice and political concept. Translation is not a neutral transfer of meaning, but a field where power relations—between languages, nations, genders, and identities—are continuously negotiated. The contributions examine translation's ambivalent role in reinforcing or challenging violence, nationalism, and coloniality, as well as its transformative potential in feminist, decolonial, and global South contexts. Articles address topics such as meaning-change and "woke" discourse, counter-translation and hegemony, the regime of modern translation, feminist struggles, policy and decolonial perspectives, psychoanalysis in the South, translation as counter-violence, and cultural appropriation. Collectively, these essays underline translation's capacity to destabilize binaries, open spaces of reciprocity, and act as a form of counter-politics. By situating translation within contemporary conflicts, crises, and social movements, the issue rethinks its role as a practice of negotiation at the intersection of language, politics, and culture.

KEYWORDS
Keywords: politics of translation, counter-translation, language, culture, nation, gender

Far from being a straightforward process, translation as a practice and method invites a complex analysis of gender, class, race, or national and other hierarchies' relations and intersection. It is the opportunity for transformation, for becoming other (*devenir autre*, Deleuze and Guattari [1980]), although the political quality of that *devenir* is never guaranteed.

While the relation of translation to language and literature has been formative for translation studies as a discipline since the late 1950s, the last decades saw its expansion to the issues of culture, post-colonialism, politics, gender etc. For example, in the field of politics, the perspective of translation has increasingly been used to also question the national boundaries and conventional understandings of war and belonging and the role language plays in conceptualising politics (e.g. Shindo 2019, De Jong 2022, Footitt 2012, Footitt and Kelly 2018; Baker 2006).

Moreover, some influential contemporary works question the common assumptions about language, nation, race and gender, and provide valuable insights into the relationship between language and (West/Euro-centric) politics.[1] Christina Schäffner in her "Politics and Translation", from the influential 2007 *A Companion to Translation,* claims that "all translations are ideological" (Schäffner 2005: 149) arguing with Neubert that they 'form a complex bond bracketing the political reality and its symbolic representation'. But, they are "ideological" only in the sense in which any "text" can be seen as ideological. In Iveković's 2019 *Politiques de la traduction* - more grounded in (French) theory - this politics of translation is articulated also as a way of opening Europe to her necessary decolonisation in principle possible in her language(s), and of accepting the diversity which is needed for her preservation and future. And it does not apply only to Europe, but to any political entity or culture. Emily Apter, on her part, uses Benjamin's concept of untranslatability to argue that the very concept of World literature was somewhat Anglocentric and homogenized (Apter 2013).

The triangle "language-translation-nation-politics" and "Europe" (geopolitical location),or, for that matter, potentially any has been on many an author's mind in these times of the world's painful and violent political reconfiguration in the 21st century. As Etienne Balibar writes on the topic:

> We can suspect that the definition of the conflict of hegemonies - as, more explicitly, in Gramsci, the idea of "national-popular will" - presupposes a *given* historical, territorial and cultural framework, therefore both predetermined and destined to remain unchanged in the analysis and for the political strategy, which includes in particular a *common language* for discursive "formations" and "identities". [...] For [Régis Debray, for example], the absence of *a common European language* is an insurmountable obstacle to the development of a European democracy (which is not an "ethnicist" argument since the common language is first and foremost the instrument of popular communication, not limited to more or less polyglot elites). For her part, Judith Butler [...] spoke of a *referential background* which must be historically "sedimented". The question is, therefore, whether such a framework is extensible, and under what conditions? [...] Has the construction of Europe produced a material interdependence of peoples that is sufficiently irreversible [...]? Can we, *by analogy* with a space and a national formation, assume that the hegemonic conflict *takes place* within a largely virtual "postnational" (or supranational) space between antithetical policies? We can clearly see that these questions in reality only shift the problem, because from Laclau's point of view, rightly, the conflict is about the functioning, the use and the very definition of *real institutions* and "power" that they materialize. (Balibar 2022: 60-61)

1 Apter (2006 and 2013); Bermann and Wood's (2005) edited collection *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*; Sherry Simon's seminal *Gender in Translation* (1996); a number of works produced by Tymoczko (2014); Castro and Ergun (2017) *Feminist Translation Studies*; and most recently *The Routledge Handbook on Translation, Feminism, and Gender* (Von Flotow and Hala 2020); Translation/Transnation series also provided valuable works etc. and there are journals such as *Encounters in Translation* and *Philosophy of Translation*.

Balibar's past "complementary" but steady work on translation-and-language as a political operator and stake has informed the chapters of some of our authors.

Meanwhile, as a praxis of theory or political activism, translation may have to deal with violence when aiming at changes in society or the state. However, as Rada Iveković writes, while "translation… understood in the political sense of the politics of translation, can help in deactivating violence" (Iveković 2019: 175), she also warns that "language and translations can be instruments of peace but also carriers of violence". The examples of the Balkans in the 1990s and Ukraine or Gaza today – some of which are being scrutinized in this issue – amply illustrate this point. What appears as material for translation politics today is the permanence of ubiquitous wars.

Violence and war can thus also be seen as forms of translation, as translation remains undefined in itself. As far as Europe is concerned (but the same pattern appears elsewhere, too), the field of a most striking crisis in translation has recently been not only the current war in Ukraine and between Israel and the Palestinians (or supposedly, only on Hamas, and not the whole population according to Israeli assertion, Israel having crossed the line) but, above all, the previous systemic rejection of refugees and migrants (except for Ukrainians, so far). Marie-Claire Caloz -Tschopp writes: "[T]he so-called 'refugee crisis' calls for re-founding the 'civilisational' bases of Europe's general and constituent policy on other foundations than the defence of former colonial territories in a new imperial division and a succession of 'emergencies'" (Caloz-Tschopp 2019). Verónica Gago shows how the political space of struggles has spilt across borders and political issues through the green tide of feminist activism in Argentina prior to Javier Milei, and elsewhere, starting from the struggle for the right to abortion rendered political by the mass movement: "The reticence (and incapacity) of many people to discuss abortion in political terms [...] demonstrates the political centrality of abortion. [...] Whenever abortion is spoken about, it is also labour that is being spoken about." (Gago 2020b) The demand translated women's concerns into universal questions, but also by enlarging them, old labour concepts (such as 'strike') thanks to a feminist approach. The recent feminist tide in Latin America and its theorization have been impressive, but so has the general backlash.

Linking gender and nation as well as any kind of identitarianism in fragmented societies is, thereby, another necessary feature of translation studies. The vocabulary of nation and nationality is directly derived from obstetrics and the capacity of birth-giving of some human, further contributing to gender stereotypes. All language of inequality is embedded in accepted basic gender discrimination, as the oldest and most consensual dogma of patriarchy and coloniality. Naoki Sakai has been critically analysing the building of the modern colonial Japanese nation, which relies on cultural, gender, and ethnic politics to inculcate *foundational* national and gender inequality through a politics of transnational relations as cultural translational transactions. Our conceptual apparatus ordaining knowledge is isomorphic with our social organisation and

hierarchies. The double front of gender is apparent. The universalisation of a nationalist paradigm is only its narcissistic over-inflation and provincialisation. Everything else is rendered illegitimate and erased from a mainstream consensus. It then becomes "useless history". Social and state inertia tend to include women as subordinate and to exclude or marginalize categories of "outsiders". There is an infinite variety of such patterns and the capacity of coloniality-patriarchy-capitalism, as a complex (Federici 2004), to adapt and keep going, also with the help of nationalism, ethnicism, religion etc. Basically, translation appears as the possibility of negotiating a fine balance beyond dichotomies and binary logics, of which gender is a "primary pattern".

The first reducing and deceptive binary that appears with translation is that of the "source language" and the "target language". The politics of translation needs to overcome this mirror-image in which there is no depth, because through translation we accept contexts and cultures through "texts" and imaginaries, and this importing or this appropriation of elements of the other language or culture are but the inevitable functioning of the latter. There is no language deprived of (an)other language(s) or translation, no culture without other cultures, they necessarily permeate each other and are reciprocally incomplete (Boaventura de Sousa Santos [2014, 2018]). As Iveković has it: "Translation - on its own or by itself – does not ensure anything. First and foremost, to judge the quality of a translation, what is needed is a purpose in assessing it (what do we mean to obtain through translation), which means that a politics of translation and a cultural politics is at work".

About this issue

By bringing together 11 articles written by 12 authors from North and South America, Europe and Asia – eight of which are included in this volume and three others appearing subsequently in this journal, the thematic issue "Revisiting the Politics of Translation: Translation, Nation and Gender" examines the universal language and politics of translation outlined above from globally plural perspectives. Its contributors explore the imaginary of translation as the only "universal" language, yet keeping in mind, at the same time, the multiplicity and inequality of languages, the possible tricks played by an a priori adoption of hegemony or any unquestioned concept of the universal on the representation we may have of translation and, above all, recognising the inherent link between translation and its underlying geographical, national and ideological roots. Paradoxically, whatever we may theorise about translation – comes *a posteriori*.

Sanja Bojanić's "Meaning-changing as a Form of Translation: a 'Woke' Case" examines translation as a dynamic process that reshapes meaning and negotiates power, positioning it as a politically active practice that challenges or reinforces societal narratives. Aligning with scholars like Rada Iveković and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, she explores translation's capacity to sustain or subvert dominant power structures, emphasizing its transformative potential

within cultural and social frameworks. Meaning-changing operations in the case of "woke", initially tied to social justice, evolve as this notion is co-opted and reinterpreted across ideological spectrums. She argues that such shifts reflect a change in linguistic meaning and broader power negotiations, where language acts as both a reflection of and a battleground for social values.

In her article "Post-hegemonic Conservative Counter-translation" Rada Iveković argues that negotiated state sovereignty and hegemony seem to partly dissolve within a now accomplished globalisation. In political movements of a larger and international scope, hegemony may still be attempted among states and languages, although this may now turn to war through sheer force. Locally, state hegemony is not tolerated anymore (but hegemony of the market continues), as the Ukrainian war seems to indicate. But hegemony, hierarchy and divisions are operative within any state and in split societies. The latter have the tendency to (re)constitute binaries, keeping wars latent. There is, of course, immediately the counterpart: re-establishing a former hegemony with domination among states fails and becomes just hard domination (and destruction) when there is no other option left. All of this requires much political translation, some of which, concerning the preceding unwritten translation contract, Iveković calls counter-translation. It strives to change codes. In language, it boils down to the hegemonic language, which is also the national language, and to language wars. The national language claims to be the mother tongue. But language and language (de)nomination needs to break free from the obstetric vocabulary of the nation.

Naoki Sakai's contribution "The International World: the Modern Regime of Translation" focuses on the individuality of language. How can language be individuated, grasped as an indivisible unity, and compared with other languages that are also assumed to be individual unities? The author attempts a historical investigation concerning the individuality of language on the one hand and the formation of the modern individual world in which individuated languages are juxtaposed to one another. The translation is the instance in which languages are originally figured out as individuals; hence, he investigates how a new way of managing translation, the modern regime of translation, was introduced.

Valeria Graziano and Françoise Vergès focus primarily on the relation between translation, understood in the wide sense, with feminism and activism. Graziano's "Deciphering Harm: Naming the Issue in Italian Healthcare Struggles During the '60 and '70" presents how struggles for healthcare within the workers' movements in Italy in the '60s and '70s generated a range of radical imaginaries in which struggles for wellbeing, environmental concerns, critiques of automation and anti-work politics intertwined. To make their tacit knowledge explicit and find a common language to discuss health in all its complexity, workers, activists, trade unionists, and medical professionals develop a number of strategies for converting lived somatic experiences into collective political narratives. She outlines three examples of Italian struggles that offer us an array of organizing and storytelling techniques that are still relevant for

the contemporary context. In conclusion, she considers some of the profound differences that nonetheless demarcate the period in question from the present, speculating on the traction of "political translation" for contemporary anti-work and ecofeminist struggles.

Vergès' "Finding the Right Translation for 'Peace' in a Land of War" takes feminism further in order to present "an antiracist decolonial feminist politics of protection". In other words, she argues how discourses about war and peace, and their implementations, have been deployed to justify a protection that rests on criminalization, incarceration, military interventions, creation of armed militia, legitimation of police violence, militarization of public space, and surveillance.

The decolonial drive also informs Noemi Lendvai-Bainton's and Paul Stubbs' "Revisiting Making Policy Move: Towards a Decolonial Politics of Translation". The authors here refer to the co-authored book *Making Policy Move* (Clarke, Bainton, Lendvai and Stubbs 2015) as an attempt to apply insights from theories of translation and assemblage to the field of policy studies. The mantra "when policy moves it is always translated" was based as much as, if not more, on postcolonial and decolonial theories as it was on the 'interpretive turn' in policy studies and on the idiosyncrasies of Actor Network Theory, as well as the work of Deleuze and Guattari. By revisiting the book in this paper, the authors suggest that the conceptual, empirical, moral-ethical and political implications of taking colonialism and racism seriously were underdeveloped, and go further to outline some of the ways this could be remedied in future work. In particular, they emphasize the importance of a politics of translation for understanding coalescing crises, the rise of authoritarian neoliberalism, and the collapse of democracy and associated rise of techno-politics; accordingly, they situate reconstituted racialised hierarchies, patriarchal and heteronormative ideologies, and forms of class oppression within policy assemblages co-constituted through colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Nivedita Menon's article "Translation as a Mode of Self-making: Psychoanalysis from the Global South" explores translation as a mode of self-making across the multiple contexts in which we live. As she argues, focusing on location in the global South introduces the dimension of power and universalistic, hegemonic conceptions of the self that collide with other notions. In particular, she looks at psychoanalysis located in the global South as having challenged such conceptions from the lifetime of Freud onwards.

Saša Hrnjez's contribution "Translation's Counter-violence" deals with the relationship between translation and violence by taking up the concept of *de-violence* as found in Rada Iveković's work. The basis of the argument is the thesis that violence is not simply opposed to non-violence, since both are interdependent. To discuss this, he returns to Walter Benjamin in a joint reading of his reflections on translatability and violence. The guiding question reads as follows: do we need a critique of violence to produce an appropriate (political) concept of translation? If translation is not simply a non-violent communication, shall we then conceive it as a sort of counter-violence against a

monolingual closure of meaning? By addressing these problems, he attempts to outline the concept of "de-translation" as a form of systematic violence that obstructs or annihilates openness to the foreign. The task of translators today would thus be to engage in the politics of translation that counteracts the violence of systemic de-translation.

Two other articles – to appear subsequently in the following issues of this journal – are also written from the perspective of the Global South and explicitly or implicitly relate translation and language to colonialism. Boaventura de Sousa Santos' "Learned Ignorance: The Gold Method of Intercultural Translation" also conceives intercultural translation from the perspective of the epistemologies of the south as an alternative to the Western-centric cultural universe. From this perspective, intercultural translation (which, in this book, Iveković and some others refer to as political translation) is an artisanship of practices guided by two key ideas: learned ignorance and the ecology of knowledge. The former, inspired by the fifteenth-century philosopher Nicholas of Cusa, is an epistemic and ethical stance or disposition to assume ignorance, namely, to cultivate the consciousness of not knowing. The latter concept views every language as a memory bank of knowledge, information, and experiences of the community that created it, containing the best and most detailed knowledge of the ecology and language environment of the area where it was produced.

Manuel Rebón, on the other hand, in "Translation and Community. The Essay as a Community of Meaning" deals primarily with the essay as a non-homogenizing genre. Faced with the idea of the essay as a self in recognition with the *we*, the search for a *community of meaning and a sense of community*, essay writing opposed its heuristic power where cultural meaning vanished, not where the homogenizing power of community values is affirmed. This dilemma was addressed in the Argentine case through various questions that shaped a period of intense reading and investigation. It produced a generation of writings that considered the question of community and the way it could be founded through the thinking exercise *between* explanatory rationality and the opacities that everyday experiences evoked through diverse readings, sometimes convergent but undoubtedly singular in their enunciative positions. In the criticism of the sustained specialization of discourse, of the fetishization of the specific conversion of theoretical languages into codes and spectacularizing the hermeneutic function of the task of writing, the vindication of the essay form was located as a discursive mode and reflection procedure constitutive of intellectual practice that refers to understanding the possibilities of the questioning word of a type of writing perceived as empty of semantic density and historical reminiscences.

Last, but not the least, Nadežda Čačinovič in her "Found in Translation. The Problem of Cultural Appropriation" proposes using insights from "a politics of translation" to deal with the current problem of cultural appropriation. Should we condemn cultural appropriation? Hybridity is used as an argument against essentialism and fixed identity, so she asks where the step is too far, and what remains inadmissible? This question must remain open not only with

the author, but also in principle when dealing with translation: there are no a priori rules, or we would be in totalitarianism.

Thus, taken altogether, the articles in this thematic issue in a way form a full circle, opening with Bojanić's and Iveković's discussion on translation and language and its relation to violence, hegemony, colonialism and the West, then travel globally through issues of feminism, global South and decolonialism, to return to questions of violence and the possibility of translation and language to act as counter-violence. In addition, most contributions take a global and transdisciplinary perspective, as authors come from different parts of the world and the issues are discussed beyond the confines of limited disciplines. Thereby, their essays address precisely the tension between universality (beyond the nation-state centred worldview) and particularity (nationhood), and how the idea of translation, as well as translation practices more broadly, are rooted in specific geographical locations, national imaginaries, and specific nation-centred ideologies.

Nonetheless, the specific localisation or currency of some contributions should not lead us to overlook the integral component of this issue that engages more with the philosophical tradition on translation. For instance, Rebón brings together the heterogeneity of philosophical, aesthetic and political motives, sometimes inherent and sometimes tangential to what is generically called "the problem of the community" as a key to read the present. The lack of a reflective space that considers how political language inhabits the community and perceives its dissociation from political practice and its own history as a practice, plots the construction of a common sense empathetic to the new forms of postmodern subjectivity, and therefore accentuates the idea of giving this deeply political question an aesthetic cut, since it implicates sensibility, the self, and the "myth of individuality". De Sousa Santos exploits the concept of "learned ignorance" as an alternative to the Epistemologies of the South (his own longstanding topic, and the title of one of his books) as an alternative to Western domination. In his view, intercultural translation is a methodology for defusing northern/western domination and its epistemology. In discussing the relation between translation and violence, Hrnjez engages at length with Walter Benjamin's work. In effect, most chapters engage with exemplary theoretical notions, conceptual developments and philosophical discourse, drawing on geographically and intellectually diverse thinking traditions, including non-Western and non-hegemonic ones.

The multidisciplinary character of this thematic issue is exemplified by the range of topics, including translation and politics, feminism and gender, nationalism, activism, intercultural translation, and cultural appropriation, as well as translation and activism. Essentially, experts from the global East and West, North and South have abandoned here the presupposition of any *definitive* knowledge. While the mother tongue/national language supported by the academy and the state would never be seen as a dialect by the latter (although kin languages are, in the mainstream), contributors to this publication seek *translational,* transitory solutions within plural and diverse knowledge,

offering merely temporary and therefore illuminating proposals. This is also suggested in the concept of reciprocally incomplete knowledge (Boaventura de Sousa Santos), which becomes eye-opening here for appreciating consecutive understandings. Languages, too, are reciprocally incomplete and complementary (Iveković).

Between a language and a neighbouring one, there can be infinite nuances, some named, others not. But national academies and states regularly construct their variant of a language as the source and model (thus limiting both language and knowledge), of which other versions are despicably called dialects and often repressed. Linguistically speaking, there is no difference between a language and a dialect. So, translation can infuse and defuse violence, and this is why its politics is politically essential. Taken altogether, contributions in this issue provide timely discussions on the burning ideological, political and theoretical questions: the delineation of languages, borders and identity formation in the current political conflicts, crises and wars; the possibility of translation in providing a vision of a truly transnational world, push translation into transforming the language(s) of decolonialization, use translation to explore the power relations seen from the perspective of the global South, expose the misuse of translation as a mode of violence in politics or in violent conflicts.

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Rada Iveković, Aleksandar Pavlović and Sanja Bojanić

Ponovno promišljanje politike prevođenja: Prevođenje, nacija i rod

Apstrakt

Tematski broj *Ponovno promišljanje politike prevođenja: Prevođenje, nacija i rod* istražuje prevođenje kao praksu i politički koncept. Prevođenje nije neutralan prenos značenja, već polje u kojem se stalno pregovaraju odnosi moći između jezika, nacija, rodova i identiteta. Prilozi analiziraju ambivalentnu ulogu prevođenja u učvršćivanju ili osporavanju nasilja, nacionalizma i kolonijalnosti, kao i njegov transformativni potencijal u feminističkim, dekolonijalnim i kontekstima globalnog Juga. Tekstovi obrađuju teme kao što su promena značenja i diskurs "woke", kontraprevođenje i hegemonija, režim modernog prevođenja, feminističke borbe, politike i dekolonijalne perspektive, psihoanaliza na Jugu, prevođenje kao kontranasilje i kulturna aproprijacija. Zajedno, ovi radovi naglašavaju sposobnost prevođenja da destabilizuje binarne opozicije, otvara prostore reciprociteta i deluje kao oblik kontrapolitike. Smeštajući prevođenje u savremene sukobe, krize i društvene pokrete, broj preispituje njegovu ulogu kao prakse pregovaranja na raskršću jezika, politike i kulture.

Ključne reči: politika prevođenja, kontraprevođenje, jezik, kultura, nacija, rod

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Sanja Bojanić

MEANING-CHANGING AS A FORM OF TRANSLATION: A 'WOKE' CASE

ABSTRACT
This article examines the issue of the reasons and mechanisms involved when words change meaning. The questions that the author raises include: can we consider this a form of translation? How does the meaning of a word change, and what factors influence this transformation? Are these changes predictable and can they be controlled? Aiming to identify the moments or catalysts that prompt these shifts, the author engages in particular with Antoine Maillet's seminal *Comment les Mots Changent le Sens*, published in 1904-05 and 1921 respectively, and Charles Taylor's "The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity" in 2016, inspired by Hamann, Herder, and Humboldt and their views on language development. The encounter with these texts brings together theories of translation, general linguistics and sociolinguistics, and the complexities of the philosophy of language around the issue of how words change their meanings, particularly in terms of power dynamics. In conclusion, the article suggests that this meaning-making is a form of translation as this shift in meaning is not just a neutral linguistic evolution but a reflection of who controls language and, by extension, shapes the narratives around social issues.

KEYWORDS
Woke, Meaning-making, Translation, Language, Antoine Maillet, Charles Taylor

"Translation is political because it is a relation, a context of negotiating power," asserts Rada Iveković at the incipit of the rationale for the conference on "The Politics of Translation."[1] This sentence alone provokes myriad interpretations, creating a complex interplay between highly charged concepts: 'relation,' 'context,' 'negotiation,' and 'power,' all integral to the practice of translation. Each term is not merely definitional but interwoven, forming a matrix of influence

1 Rada Iveković, as a special guest of the conference, held in a hybrid format on September 1–2, 2022, at the University of Rijeka's Moise Palace on the island of Cres, wrote its rationale and, with her characteristic energy and generosity, alongside Aleksandar Pavlović and Sanja Bojanić, inspired colleagues and friends to respond to the invitation.

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and authority that underscores the political dimensions of translation. Situated within contested spaces of meaning-changing, translation acts as a site for negotiating societal power dynamics, challenging the very notion of the neutrality of language. It becomes a potent tool for upholding and subverting dominant narratives, thereby shaping discourse and social change.

This paper explores the reasons and mechanisms involved when words change meaning. Through a series of questions, it is important to determine and specify what this type of change entails. Can we consider this a form of translation? How does the meaning of a word change, and what factors influence this transformation? Are these changes predictable and can they be controlled? Or do they simply confirm that a change in context leads to a change in meaning? While primarily linguistic, their consequences extend beyond language, impacting and drawing from nearly every aspect of life. What occurs during this transformation or translation? The paper tackles how and why specific keywords in ideological battles, such as 'feminism',[2] 'gay', 'queer,' 'woke,' or the binary 'nature/culture,' undergo significant shifts in meaning and connotation. My interest is not in the words themselves—linguistically, culturally, or sociologically—nor in their influence on future segments of their lives and solidified meanings. Rather, I aim to identify the moments or catalysts that prompt these shifts, subsequently directing their further development. My focus lies exclusively on the unpredictable dynamics of their usage, without detailing any specific term, but using 'woke' as a case. What kind of value exchange leads to the exhaustion of one concept's argumentative power gained in the first usage and its adoption by opposing ideological/political forces?

What are the tools at our disposal to conduct this analysis? Let us assume we have noticed the change in meaning and identified some elements that influenced this change. Can we negotiate with the new meaning, or do we stubbornly continue to widen the meaning gap between 'before' and 'after' on behalf of the entity we knew before the change occurred? Are we moving beyond random linguistic changes to detect complex sociocultural drives where there is always the possibility of meaning entropy? Why are some words forgotten while others reappear after long periods of non-use? These questions, which once belonged exclusively to specialized and expert linguistic circles, can now be answered with technical precision thanks to modern computer processing and advanced linguistic analyses. Today, we are better equipped to understand the dynamic and evolving nature of language. Shifts in meaning, or semantic change, occur for various reasons. One is the influence of frequency and co-occurrence patterns in large text corpora as words frequently and gradually appear in new contexts alongside different sets of words. Metrics and computational

2 The earliest form of 'féminisme' originally referred to being feminine or effeminate, particularly in men. However, this meaning did not last long. By the late nineteenth century, the term had taken on its modern significance, associated with advocating for women's rights and gender equality. Hubertine Auclert popularized the term in this new context, particularly regarding suffrage and the rights of women in France in the 1880s.

mainstreaming provide a graphically presentable and convincing answer, reflecting how language adapts to social, cultural, and technological realities. However, the uncertainty begins with interpretation, which—for this paper—involves the interplay of context and the negotiating power of translation, a highly political process.

What happened when 'woke' changed its semantic field? Did we gain the ability to negotiate power grounded in language? What does understanding that context offer us? How does a significant meaning-shift in emerging emancipatory strategies get adopted by different sides of the political spectrum? Does the volatile nature of language drive these changes, renewing itself by incorporating vernacular forms that continue their formal or normative linguistic lives? What kind of translation are we talking about here, and for the sake of clarity, are we dealing with synchronic or diachronic language issues when discussing word change? The transformation of the terms 'feminism' or 'queer' from derogatory invectives to established fields of study can be attributed to various factors, including changes in societal attitudes, advancements in academic thought, and the efforts of social and political movements. Phenomenologically, this shift may be connected to evolving perceptions and experiences of gender and sexuality, while epistemologically, it reflects a reevaluation of knowledge production and its relationship to power structures. Culturally, the transition signifies a broader recognition and acceptance of diverse perspectives and identities within academic, social, and political spheres.

Conversely, how does a term like 'woke,' originally rooted in emancipation, come to be used in a strongly negative sense on the opposite spectrum of emancipation? I am interested in the reasons and mechanisms that initiate these changes in meaning rather than the ontic or ontological status of the concepts themselves. This exploration delves into the dynamics of meaning changes and the inherently political translation processes that enable such significant shifts in inference and usage. Can we discover and articulate justifiable answers to these questions?

One could embark on any number of paths to investigate these fundamental elements. I begin by reflecting on my experience of translating Antoine Meillet's "Comment les Mots Changent de Sens"—a comparative linguistic study from the beginning of the twentieth century—into Serbian (2009). Formative in a certain way, this translation taught me to consult and read dictionaries and grammar manuals (nor only them) in search of idioms and syntagms that, in addition to the literalness of the translation, follow basic translation guidelines and bridge meaning from one language to another. A translator's intrinsically rich general knowledge must be complemented with more technical expertise to ensure a deep understanding and the capability to construct effective translation strategies. The next step involves immersing oneself in the singularities of the language, adhering to Jakobson's principles of intra-translation techniques and extending beyond them in search for fully embraced sociolinguistics. Before we engage in problematizing issues of legacy and assuming a cultural burden—invariably weighty—it is good to confront our own stereotypes

and refine our *episteme*, which is possible with Charles Taylor's *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (2016). According to Taylor, besides its utilitarian function as a tool for communication, language is fundamental to human experience, shaping how we reason and think, interact, and understand the world. "Language doesn't just develop inside individuals, to be then communication to others. It evolves always in the interspace of joint attention, or communion" (Taylor 2016: 59). My contention is that these two elements—Meillet's linguistic (syntactical) volatile capacity for change and Taylor's humanist (semantic) grounding of language beyond singular word—function together but not necessarily harmoniously in situating translation as a political thing *par excellence*. The banal question of how words change their meaning thus becomes a pool in which it is almost impossible to determine clear coordinates and crystallize the future development of any social construct.

The Meillet premise

A student of Michel Bréal, Antoine Meillet attended Saussure's lectures at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE) in 1885-1886, which influenced his scholarly trajectory. Meillet became known for his mentorship of a generation of linguists and philologists who became pivotal in French linguistics, including Émile Benveniste, Georges Dumézil, Aurélien Sauvageot, Lucien Tesnière, Charles Haguenauer, Joseph Vendryes, and André Martinet. His work explored how words change meanings over time due to social, cultural, and contextual influences, thereby laying the foundation for sociolinguistics and applying comparative and historical methods to the study of the Armenian language, establishing its grammar, extending his research to various Southeast European languages, including Greek, Albanian, and South Slavic languages. While examining their development and place within the Indo-European language family, Meillet coined the term 'grammaticalization' to describe the process by which autonomous words evolve into 'grammatical agents' (Bisang 2017: 3). This concept has become central in the field of historical linguistics. Updated references relative to comparative linguistics can be found in a recently published, exhaustive presentation of his work, *The Limits of Structuralism: Forgotten Sources in the History of Modern Linguistics* (McElvenny 2023). The chapter "Grammaticalization and the Sentimental Evolution of Antoine Meillet," written by John E. Joseph, also traces some elements intended with my analysis.

Originally prepared as a working paper for the *Année Sociologique* of *1905-1906*,[3] "How Words Change the Meaning" shares a similar title with Emile Littré's posthumously published, "Verbal pathology or Lesions of Certain Words in the Course of Use," (fr. "Pathologie verbale ou Lésions de certains mots dans le cours de l'usage," Bréal 1886; Littré died in 1880). Meillet's text can still be read today, primarily because of the changes and revisions which the author

3 *L'Année sociologique* is a biannual peer-reviewed academic journal of sociology established in 1898 by Émile Durkheim, who also served as its first editor-in-chief.

included in a 1921 compilation of theoretical and programmatic texts entitled *Historical Linguistics and General Linguistics* (1982). As for Littré, using medical metaphors was quite popular at the end of the nineteenth century. Foucault epitomized it in "Society Must be Defended" while announcing what is coming after the *anatomo-politics* and the tendency of normalization with "three elements of disciplinary power: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment and examination" (2003: 3). Accordingly, Littré, a lexicographer, arbitrarily selected some 98 words that had radically changed their meanings over centuries and presented them in narrative form, often portraying these changes as abnormal, unfitting, and inadequate. He personified each word as the hero of a story marked by discontinuity. This linear cataloguing of words demonstrated that in certain instances, when the actual item referred to by a word became outdated, the word evolved to signify the item's abstract function instead—as in the case of *alternative*, which shifted from denoting a succession of options to a simplistic notion of "choice," or *réaliser*, which moved from "to make real" to "to become aware." In other situations, he coined new terms or assigned new definitions to existing words by merely linking ideas or actions: *prétendre*, for instance, transitioned from "to claim a right" to "to assert or believe;" *opinion* took on moral or juridical overtones beyond its original scope. Similarly, *événement* lost its specificity and began to refer to trivial facts, while *finalement* was frequently misused to mean "in short." Littré also critiqued structural issues, such as the redundancy in *tant soit peu* or the grammatical distortion in *sans que... ne*. Through these examples, he demonstrated how words, once anchored in precise historical usage, were reappropriated to meet shifting cultural and communicative needs.

Encouraged by Bréal, Meillet critically assessed Littré's approach and pointed out its lack of methodical explanation despite recognizing the value of the analysis. It appears that Littré significantly overlooked the theoretical component necessary to demonstrate how changes in meaning can impact the language as a whole. In contrast, Meillet's text described the change process through Durkheim's sociological and methodological framework. It provided a more systematic and comprehensive explanation by viewing language as a 'social fact.'[4] Meillet emphasized that language must be studied within its social context rather than being reduced to psychological or individual factors, thus formally providing a critical perspective on the dynamic relationship between

4 "A social fact is any way of acting, whether fixed or not, capable of exerting over the individual an external constraint; or: which is general over the whole of a given society, whilst having an existence of its own, independent of its individual manifestations" (Durkheim 1982: 59). It should be noted that the 'external constraint' Durkheim mentions is not merely an abstract concept but rather encompasses all collective practices that either negatively or positively limit the capacity or the power of individual action. Relative to 'negotiating power' through translation, it would be possible to state that the basic idea behind the reference to coercion seems to cover all undefined social statuses, prestige, class, race, gender or social affiliations, and other invisible social ties that must be interpreted in relation to the physical or natural environment.

language/society and illustrating how linguistic changes mirror broader macro and micro social transformations. In his dialogue with his predecessors (and not only Littré), his linguistics experienced a turn from a more rigid, narrow view of language to dynamic, evolving, and deeply intertwined with society.

Meillet's ability to blend linguistic accuracy with socio-cultural insights, especially in the revisited edition from 1921, set a benchmark for the field, demonstrating how detailed knowledge of both linguistic mechanics and social context is essential for good translation and analysis. Which elements overcome narrow linguistic techniques, encompass psychological individualities and explain the historical continuities and ruptures in society? Viewing language as a 'social fact' made it possible to bridge the gap from mere hierarchical observation and normalization reach for processes behind these phenomena. Meillet identified three linguistic factors that influence semantic change: the discontinuous nature of linguistic learning, the likelihood of meaning change being reduced when a word closely corresponds to its referent, and how changes in word form or pronunciation can integrate it into new semantic networks (this analysis belongs to the second part of the book). He also discusses both internal linguistic dynamics and external factors like social group structures and technological advancements as drivers of semantic change. The third, most extensive part of the text examined the impact of social group divisions on language with consideration that the individual's affiliations with overlapping social groups create zones of tension around meaning assignment. Consequently, Meillet introduced the concept of 'borrowing' (somehow forgetting the other important linguistic tool, 'reappropriation'), where words shift in meaning as they move between different social groups, becoming more generic when moving to broader groups or more specific within narrower ones. His focus was on factors like foreign contacts and the organization of scholarly or social groups which play roles in how words are exchanged among various clusters of people. According to the author, we need general semantic studies with a three-stage approach: starting with linguistic facts (focusing on phonetic and grammatical isolation), then historical relationships between words and their referents, and finally, examining the complex patterns of 'word borrowing' among different languages and social groups.

In his work, Antoine Meillet paid attention mostly to academic matters and the organization of word change in linguistics, emphasizing the grammatical aspects of the change. However, while the sociolinguistics' focus shifts to contemporary issues dealing with society, "historical linguistics"—as Gregory R. Guy writes in the chapter "Language, Social Class, and Status" in the *Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*—"has been more concerned with a broad overview of linguistic evolution over the centuries rather than with studying the social spread of specific innovations" (2011: 179). Following the questioning of systemic knowledge about the word change, it is beneficial to revisit the role of language in shaping social identity. Furthermore, there is a need to explore a different line of interpretation, focusing on how changes in language can undermine the social identity of a group or entity, particularly when words

are employed in a derogatory or disapproving manner, which could provide an understanding of the translation as 'negotiating power' in either affirming or negating social belonging.

The Taylor premise

In 2016, at the dawn of the Trump era,[5] Charles Taylor published his book *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity*. The preface states that the task of the book is to include "capacities for meaning creation which go far beyond that of encoding and communicating information, which is too often taken as its central form" (2016: 3). The author aims "to refute the remaining fragments of the legacy of the HLC [Hobbes, Locke, Condillac] by developing insights out of the [Johann Georg] Hamann, [Johann Gottfried] Herder, and [Wilhelm von] Humboldt" (HHH) and their views on language development in the context of various formats of society" (*ibid*.). Clearly, language is not developed in isolation by individuals (as the HLC tradition would have it); rather, it evolves through social interactions and shared focus within a community (see Taylor's quote in the introductory paragraphs of this paper). The HHH tradition, as he calls it, critiques the Enlightenment's overly reductive approach to language, failing to capture its full significance. Language cannot be reduced merely to its communicative and individualistic function. On the contrary, Taylor asserts that "the fundamental point that emerges from the ontogenesis of language is that it can only be imparted from within relations of shared emotional bonding, what we might call 'communion'" (Taylor 2016: 69). Therefore, sharing language shapes our very ability to think, understand, and interpret the world. Sharing language also translates into negotiating the languages' relations of power. Deeply embedded in cultural and historical contexts, linguistic diversity reflects how different cultures experience and grasp reality (Taylor's take on 'multiculturalism'), starkly contrasting the universalistic and mechanistic perspectives on language function proposed by the Enlightenment. To encompass rich, multifaceted, and deeply embedded aspects of human experience that are constituted and channeled through language, Taylor uses the concept of 'meanings', central to his argument that language is not just a tool for describing the world but is integral to how we engage with reality. 'Meanings' are not pre-existing entities that language merely labels or describes; language plays a constitutive role in proactively creating 'meanings' and thus generates structure and coherence to our experiences through linguistic practices. A collaborative process inherently tied to our social interactions, 'meaning-making' translates how we position ourselves in the world, resonating

5 Used here as a 'technical' description, the 'Trump era' includes the period of decomposition of meaning, erosion of trust in institutions, contestation of truth, and challenge to rational discourse, leading to a more fragmented and polarized society. Still, the paper is not focused on analyzing it as such but on circumscribing word changes influenced, among other factors, by these social phenomena.

with the questions at the origin of this text. And just as the main difference between HLC legacy and HHH is in the role of language, this 'meaning' is not grounded in singular words but evolves and arises in sets of expressions and sentences. Word-changing, and therefore 'meaning-making', actively constructs and reinforces power and status differentials embedded in linguistic practices, shaping how terms and concepts evolve. This is particularly relevant in ideological battles, where meaning modifications can signify underlying shifts in power and influence as certain words (most importantly in sentences and expressions) are adopted, contested, or redefined within a society. Language is not neutral; it is a site of struggle where different groups compete to define and control the meanings of words. This nuanced understanding is essential when considering whether the volatile nature of language, constantly renewing itself by incorporating vernacular forms, drives these changes or whether these shifts reflect deeper, underlying social transformations.

A 'woke' case

Initially, in the late 1920s and during the 1930s, 'woke' was explicitly linked to staying vigilant against racial injustice in the American justice system, exemplified by Marcus Garvey's "Wake up Ethiopia! Wake up Africa!" and Lead Belly's song "Scottsboro Boys." Throughout the twentieth century the term continued to be used within Black consciousness-raising efforts in the arts, particularly music and literature, with figures like bell hooks, Maya Angelou, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and a constellation of African-American engaged creatives who emphasized the importance of being attuned to social injustice, especially against the Black community. In her *Vox* article "A history of 'wokeness.' Stay woke: How a Black activist watchword got co-opted in the culture war" (2020), Aja Romano writes: "In 2014, following the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, "stay woke" suddenly became the cautionary watchword of Black Lives Matter activists on the streets, used in a chilling and specific context: keeping watch for police brutality and unjust police tactics" (ibid.). Over time, from a term of awareness in Black communities, 'woke' started to change its meaning, becoming synonymous with a broader symbol of leftist political ideology. Increasingly reappropriated in various directions, 'woke' has been commodified in the last decade, on top of which, political opponents have weaponized it and overused it, mainstreaming it precisely due to its vulnerability. For authors focused more on the dynamics of meaning change, such as Nicholas D.C. Allen (2023), the misappropriation and the shift in meaning were driven by a combination of social media dynamics, cultural and political appropriation, and the broader power struggles over who controls the narrative around social justice issues. Throughout the changes in meaning, the semantic potency of 'woke' remained, since this strong metonymy still performed the basic action of awaking. That is, the word still had a meaning close to a large field of theological concepts, such as illumination, enlightenment, divine inspiration, and sacred understanding – all forms of spiritual

awakening or insight which one receives through divine grace, wisdom, or the inner light of God. Finally, it is deeply set in transcendence, guidance or revelation for the sake of clarity, transformation, and growth. Yes, it still preserves this emancipatory zeal. According to many, shifting a Black Lives Matter slogan away from its original (or initial) meaning is arguably the least woke thing ever. The acceleration of its expansion, caricature and obfuscation is evident on social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook, which create environments where diverse audiences with different cultural backgrounds and understandings interpret language in a flattened, context-free manner. This context collapse allows not only the distortion of the initial meaning but also linguistic oblivion of the fact that words always change meaning and that, as social facts, they provide grounds for various semantic and syntactic constructions. The central element which Allen (2023) states in his paper argues that the misappropriation of 'woke' constitutes a form of 'contributory injustice,' where the hermeneutical resources of the Black community—essentially the tools and terms used to articulate their experiences and struggles—are diluted or distorted by dominant groups. This injustice occurs because the original, nuanced meaning of 'woke' is overshadowed by its co-opted usage, which often serves to mock or undermine the issues the term was meant to highlight.

The intention from the incipit of this paper and the beehive of questions aim at understanding how words change their meanings, particularly in terms of power dynamics. It also suggests that this meaning-making is a form of translation as this shift in meaning is not just a neutral linguistic evolution but a reflection of who controls language and, by extension, shapes the narratives around social issues.

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Sanja Bojanić

Promena značenja kao oblik prevođenja: slučaj „woke"

Apstrakt

Članak razmatra razloge i mehanizme promene značenja reči. Autorka postavlja pitanja: da li se takva promena može smatrati oblikom prevođenja? Na koji način se značenje reči menja i koji faktori uslovljavaju tu transformaciju? Da li su ove promene predvidive i u kojoj meri se mogu kontrolisati? U nastojanju da identifikuje momente ili katalizatore koji podstiču ove pomake, autorka se oslanja pre svega na kapitalno delo Antoana Maljea *Comment les Mots Changent le Sens*, objavljeno 1904–05. i 1921. godine, kao i na studiju Čarlsa Tejlora „The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity" iz 2016., inspirisanu Hamanom, Herderom i Humboltom i njihovim shvatanjem razvoja jezika. Ovi tekstovi omogućavaju povezivanje teorija prevođenja, opšte lingvistike i sociolingvistike sa složenostima filozofije jezika u razmatranju pitanja promene značenja reči, naročito u kontekstu dinamike moći. U zaključku se sugeriše da je promena značenja oblik prevođenja, budući da ona ne predstavlja neutralnu lingvističku evoluciju, već odražava odnose kontrole nad jezikom i time oblikovanje narativa o društvenim pitanjima.

Ključne reči: woke, stvaranje značenja, prevođenje, jezik, Antoan Malje, Čarls Tejlor

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POST-HEGEMONIC DESTRUCTIVE COUNTER-TRANSLATION

For the people of Gaza

ABSTRACT

We have been through a destructive post-hegemonic reactionary revolution. We witnessed post-hegemonic globalisation (not global) and post-socialist new wars, nearest to (post-)colonial wars. Subalternist Indian researchers talked about *domination without hegemony*, where the direct violence of domination is deadlier. In larger international political movements, attempted hegemony turns to war. In some cases, post-hegemonic patterns prevail. The EU seems to accept USA hegemony. Locally (from the Ukrainian perspective) hegemony is not tolerated any more. The counterpart: Putin's Russia, pretending to re-establish the former hegemony with domination, ends up opting for sheer domination with no hegemony. General silence about the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, after the destruction of Gaza. This requires much political translation. According to the preceding tacit translation contract, I would call this *counter-translation*.

If ideally translation is a relation with the other in a process, *counter-translation* strives to *change translation codes* and the value of words. Switching codes, it attempts to give reality another political garb. Hegemony wanes away if neither side accepts it, ushers in dominance, violence and war, trying to morph into a lower level less stable hegemony. If it cannot – we may have civil wars. It boils down to the *hegemonic language*, which is also the *national language*. A negotiation for hegemony is attempted between available languages. But hegemony is not working, and sheer violence is employed in separating the once common language into two, like in Ukraine, or into four or more, as in the Yugoslav space. Self-*renaming* of the dissident language becomes mandatory at a narrower level, and works as a war declaration.

A comparison between gender and rival languages negotiations is attempted in the paper.

KEYWORDS

regression, domination-without-hegemony, post-hegemonic counter-translation, national language, gendered language, identitarianism, counter-revolution, desemantisation, translation codes

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Hegemony and language. An ultraconservative and far-right regression

From general premises, I will try to conclude with the issues of nation, language and gender, showing some similarities or parallelism in the way gender and language are framed by the nation, and why we must denationalise both. I will also draw on the experience of the Women's International tribunal on Yugoslavia and post-Yugoslav countries held in Sarajevo in 2015.

With the new turn of globalisation, since 1989 (or since the "end" of the historic Cold War, but actually since a process that had started a few decades earlier) we have been through a more than conservative revolution[1], which might in this case be called the *post-hegemonic turn,* or a *backlash counter-revolution*. We have also witnessed a series of *post-hegemonic or globalisation wars* of a new kind (not global world wars like WWI or WWII), not in the name of political ideologies, but with merely the nation, sometimes with religion, as "ideology": this is where nationalism/ethnicism/identitarianism, religion and far-right temptations merge with extreme violence and group or state terrorism, where apartheid is imposed (Israel/Palestine) and not recognised, where massacres are tolerated, genocide[2] is perpetrated, all variants that accept economic neoliberalism and ideological-political unaccountability, and encourage political disorientation. I have also called some of these post-socialist wars, but there have been other patterns too, and old as well as belated post-colonial wars have included legitimate land conflicts resulting from land grabbing and from the end of empires intersecting with the rise of national states. This is where identitarianisms replace politics in the traditional sense; see the partition of Yugoslavia or today's *hindutvā* India. The easy transition from the older post-Westphalian formation to today's deadly identitarianisms displays a general embracing of mechanisms of bipolarity, regardless of the contents and implications. In her paper "The Anarchist Path is the only one that Still Remains Open" (Malabou 2022), searching for a solution to the political dead-end, Catherine Malabou invokes "*the now hegemonic language of anarcho-capitalism*." Argentinian president Javier Milei and others personalise it today. According to Malabou, such anarcho-capitalism is now a fact, the state has already withered away while different oligarchies share the world among themselves and the social world is condemned to a horizontality of abandonment and entropy, which ended up being anarchic. And it would be a homeopathic or isomorphic sort of anarchism – supposedly *other* than capitalist? – that

1 A term that we have been using at least from the eighties on, but that I must reconsider for two reasons now. This is why: first, the phenomenon is not any kind of revolution in the progressive sense of this polysemic term, it is a counter-revolution. Second, it is worse than conservative, whereby "conservative" appears constructive and "caring" compared to the far-right turn the world has taken.

2 I consider this term as well as "terrorism", "identity" and some others which we use today as unstable and unreliable, I use them conditionally and they will have to be regularly revised.

would be the only remaining path. The *hegemony of capitalism* and the market or "free trade", as said by her, are still operative.

But in the cases we see today, hegemony *of the state* in relation to society and its population is not wanted by the concerned or not possible any more, when attempted, as by Putin in Ukraine, although it may be tolerated, as it is with regard to Gaza today, by both much of public opinion and states. There is no time for the construction of hegemony any more, because hegemony needs *longue durée*. When such supremacy does not work, we immediately get an extreme social and political polarisation. And, within globalisation, these features are contagious (or "*inherently transnational*": Lim 2022). As Andrew Zimmerman writes, "the global, the imperial, and other transregional factors are neither static contexts of, nor all determining forces on, the local but rather 'emergent dimensions' of specific localities," implying that "[t]ransnational approaches [...] help overcome the danger [...] that theory imposes [through] Eurocentric categories on any local history to which it is applied... Theory [...] becomes 'an emergent dimension' of multi-sited historiography, not some master schema standing over history." (Zimmerman 2013) For example, the current Russian war on Ukraine, which can also be seen as a new imperial and colonial war, immensely repolarises post-Yugoslav societies that had remained divided since the civil wars in the nineties, reinforcing lasting possibilities of new local wars around unsolved issues in the Balkans. Not to forget possible different points of view, narratives or *cosmovisions*: "However fastidious they may be about facts, historians are engaged in storytelling, not in science." (Menand 2022) New proxy wars are possible any time in the region. European public opinions are equally split on the issue, following the pattern of the war(s) in question. "While there may be necessary wars, there are no good wars", says sociologist Vesna Pusić in an interview (Pusić 2022)[3]. Timothy Snyder writes: "The claim that a nation does not exist is the rhetorical preparation for destroying it. [...] Putin took a pronounced colonial turn when returning to the Presidency a decade ago. In 2012, he described Russia as a 'state-civilization' [...]. (Snyder 2022)" The building of a "Russian World", a "Serbian World", a "Hindu India" or a Chinese state-civilisation follow the same imperial pattern of "We" first.

Subalternist Indian researchers theorised *domination without hegemony*, where the violence of domination is direct and much deadlier than when in combination with hegemony, whether the latter be imposed by negotiation or inflicted by force. *Sovereign state* hegemony seems to partly dissolve within accomplished globalisation, although this does not happen everywhere at the same time or place. As Bertrand Badie says, "we still act politically as if we were in the era of geopolitics managed by states, but nowadays and in the future it

3 One may wonder what "necessary wars" mean? While Pusić is certainly not a nationalist, in the Croatian mainstream national(ist) narrative the war of the 1990-decade was defensive: the nation and the state were supposed to be defended and built, which made them necessary to a patriotic view.

is to be expected that social movements will influence immobilised state actors that cannot even think how to stop the wars, let alone stop them"[4]. The globalisation victory may not have been a victory at all, as the conflict south-north slowly but surely replaces the cold war conflict socialism-capitalism.

And contemporary is not synonymous with simultaneous any more. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos writes, "All states remain formally independent, but only a few are sovereign." (De Sousa Santos 2022) In political movements of a larger and international scope, hegemony may still be attempted, although this may turn to war through sheer force without consideration for historic depth. Locally, post-hegemonic patterns may prevail, but hegemony is more and more contested by the concerned. By "post-hegemonic" I mean that *neither negotiations (dialogue) nor surrender are tolerated* any more, which implies protracted wars. In his paper "A US Future for Europe?" Boaventura de Sousa Santos rightly critiques the EU's forbearance for USA hegemony. USA's hegemony may also seem to be declining, so why such a lack of political imagination of the EU that she should still want to follow them? There is of course immediately the counterpart: Putin's Russia, pretending to re-establish the former hegemony with domination, chooses sheer domination (and destruction) in the end. No hegemony is negotiated or possible here or in Palestine. All of this requires much political translation, some of which, with regard to the *preceding* unwritten and tacit translation contract in hegemonic times, I would now call *counter-translation*.

There is a long degradation, desemantisation and confusionism in political language, which took years or decades preparing. It became visible since 1989 (end of the then "Cold War"), in particular in the case of the Yugoslav sevenfold partition. When Yugoslavia split, I found many similarities in the warring nationalisms, competing language disagreements over shared languages and their separate names (Markovina 2022), and in the limiting horizon of communalisms and contempt for the others: "Language is the name. It is about the *name* that the power of language goes mad" (Rebón 2014: 88).

The nation despises "ethnic minorities" just as the national language despises its other variants and neighbouring idioms, calling them "dialects". The promotion of vernacular languages or de-standardised (and differently standardised) variants of a language through nationalist dissidence may be fed with anticolonial nationalisms, minority ethnicisms, but can also come from anticolonial, decentralising nationalisms as well as from colonial nationalism.

Language ideologies and new nationalisms

Nishat Zaidi uses the concept of *language ideologies* (which correspond to what we have called nationalisms in Europe when dealing with language) and gauges interestingly *vernaculars* thereby: "in the thoroughly multilingual literary and public spheres of South Asia, a recalibration of the notion of vernacularity

4 Public debate "Moments Palestine", University of Paris-8 on May 13, 2024.

vis-à-vis language ideologies in the context of the on-going rise of literary Anglophonia in South Asia and post-liberalization India – seems relevant." (Zaidi 2022)[5]

Retroactively, I also understood that this is what happened in the Indian or the Korean partition too, but it is probably a process, although at lesser speed (outside a direct conflict) in any *longue durée*. It is easiest seen through changes in language and significantly – in the *naming* of languages, such as Hindi and Urdu, Serbian and Croatian or Russian and Ukrainian etc. People still understand each other over neighbourly fences and borders, but the political *intentionality* of the (mainstream) language changes. Different standardisations of the same languages are introduced through state institutions, and they are pretty coercive. But "languages are not external to one another", writes Saša Hrnjez. This can be said in spite of the difficulty of languages to correspond to each other. And "untranslatability" is itself a constituent of translatability, which is a basic feature of a language (Hrnjez 2021: 31 & 34). My afterword to the Croatian translation of my French book *Politiques de la traduction. Exercices de partage* (*The Politics of Translation. Exercises in Partage*) talks about that.

That our languages have generally been desemantised for decades has in particular become evident in 1989, with the apparent collapse of the binary "socialism-capitalism", "east-west" (Lim 2022) or "black and white" pattern. I felt lost at that time, with no available language, or with languages that bore different implications and meanings than were available in my vocabulary or imaginary. And it was not just the vocabulary, it was much more complex. At that time I only knew of one great author, Radomir Konstantinović, who had dealt with the *appropriation of language*, although his efforts addressed problems in the aftermath of WWII (or, really, modernity in Yugoslavia and Serbia) and from the sixties on, preceding the collapse. I moved to France in 1991 "without a language", and met French and other colleagues and friends *without an operative language,* whether *different or shared*. Derrida wrote "je n'ai qu'une langue, et elle n'est pas la mienne"[6] (Derrida 1996-2016: 13). But languages don't belong. Talking and working were approximations, search, improvisations and possible negotiation. What I left behind in a partitioned country was more violent, it was parallel conservative *counter-translations* attempting a sort of retrospective *un-translating,* or prohibition of translation – which boils down to *translation as violence*. I don't want to idealise, the way we usually do, translation as a process and as relating to others. There is that, yes. But there is also, quite beyond this formula, *translation as failure* (beyond linguistic failure, political failure too), and the much more disturbing case of *counter-translation,* as if you could untranslate what has been translated and therefore thought and lived. It means prohibiting the other's memory. But

5 Zaidi. 2022: In a call for papers (https://networks.h-net.org/node/5293/discussions/6590285/cfp-language-ideologies-and-vernacular-south-asian-colonial-and, accessed on July 11, 2025), a zoom conference she gave to the SARI association of scholars on February 4, 2022, and on other occasions. Also Zaidi 2015.

6 "I have only one language, and it is not mine."

counter-translating is also a possibility of translation as liberation, much akin to counter-writing (*contre-écrire,* Diagne 2022: Kindle ed.: 81, speaking about Virago Diop). Through translation, language is ennobled, says Souleymane Bachir Diagne (Diagne 2022: 157).

Translation strives to *change codes*, the value of words, stylistically and politically, without necessarily saying so. It attempts to give reality another political garb. As a result, you may have a dialogue of the deaf such as between Putin who qualifies Ukrainians as Nazis, and Zelensky who calls Russians fascists[7], operating like a leap in time. There may be partial truth in both assertions, but it is not the whole truth, it is rather crushing and levelling history. Both have changed the once common translation codes. In more fanatic language standardisations, you would announce changes of codes and meanings and, as happened in post-Yugoslav countries, you might produce differential dictionaries of Serbian and Croatian and impose obligatory translations of documents by a registered translator, regardless of the minimal differences (In Serbia, Ćirilov 1989; in Croatia, Brodnjak 1991)[8] and thus, *create* differences. The aim is to achieve greater differences and to standardise them, instead of encouraging the *co-presence of languages* and developing intermediary forms appropriate for polycentric idioms (Diagne 2022: 82).

Serbian and Croatian language politics (and new "translation" codes) operationally differ, but share the intention of *separating the language variants into distinct languages by renaming them* and introducing compulsory differences, while appropriating the language by a rising *narrower nation* after partition

7 On the "new meaning" of global Nazism and fascism today see, as an attempt towards translation, the panel at the "Summit of the End of the World", 12-5-2022 between Srećko Horvat, Franco Berardi Bifo and Ece Temelkuran, claiming reimagining life: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eW4ehBh1Btg (accessed on July 11, 2025).

8 The first differential dictionary was published in 1940 (during the WWII Ustasha Quisling regime) in Zagreb, Guberina & Krstić. 1940. *Razlike između Hrvatskoga i Srpskoga književnog jezika*, Zagreb, Matica Hrvatska.

N.B.: Petar Guberina was the celebrated linguist, friend of Aimé Césaire, Léopold Sédar Senghor and the Négritude movement, professor at Zagreb University after WWII and founder of the Phonetics School (SUVAG), of methodologies for learning foreign languages and especially of a "verbo-tonal method" of rehabilitating the auditively impaired and correcting pronunciation disorders, a method that spread worldwide, rejecting the sign language of the deaf (which is an altogether different school). He was member the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb since 1963 (created under that name in 1861 by bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer), but in the Croatian *Wikipedia*, https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petar_Guberina (accessed on July 11, 2025) and elsewhere, it is said that he had been member of the *Croatian* Academy of Sciences and Arts. The latter, however, did not exist in 1963 (the Academy was Yugoslav then), but was renamed from the former after partition, in a year that is nowhere to be found on the internet. History is being "corrected" ex post. Namely, the word "Yugoslavia" has tacitly been banned since the partition of the country, and the street names, signs and institution plates were changed during an unknown night after Croatia's "liberation from communism and Serbia/Yugoslavia". Guberina developed his Méthode audiovisuelle structuro-globale (SGAV) with the Ffrnch specialist Paul Rivenc in Paris.

– in the interest of new nationalist elites. In Yugoslavia, this amounts to publishers of a now very small readership, to a tragic process of multiple historic appropriations and tearing to pieces a once shared idiom and literature, impeding the outreach to a wider reading public or to the common history of literature. Needless to say that, combined with "national educations", it also has fatal effects on learning over the four new states that once shared a language as federal republics, and especially in the area of history: the common history has now been erased, but excellent trans-Yugoslav historians are restoring it. Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina had no other option but to follow and rename their national languages too, after the war that also meant the violent divorce between Serbian and Croatian languages[9], earlier understood as one. Croatian state and national linguists insist on building a separate vocabulary, proscribing once synonymous words. To achieve this, they have several stratagems. As a consequence, all history that doesn't directly lead to today's state of affairs or state of the language ("sovereign" post-Yugoslav states with now distinct languages) has become "useless history" (Šnajder 2019: 132) or, De Sousa Santos might say, "'non-existent' history", with "absent subjects", promoted by erased or non-national and enemy, non-existent subjects, beyond the "abyssal line" (De Sousa Santos 2018: 2).

The stratagems include the early differential dictionary of 1991 (at the very beginning of the war) and building differences into the structure of words (especially compound ones) resorting to nominal and verbal "roots" (or imaginary roots), the declension and conjugation, prefixes and suffixes, syntax, as well as resorting to "radical" Croatian words, often all the way to the Ustasha[10] form of the language as an imaginary "ur-language". Separatist language laws were passed. The past is thus "colonised" producing an imaginary national and stately history, mined for archaisms (which can also be invented), as in other times exoticism or orientalism may have been exploited to that effect. The "feeling" for the language that has thus been forced has much changed in thirty years, and the new standardisations work and have been accepted by now. The pronunciation, accent and diction gap has grown considerably between the two main variants since, in particular because there is no common measure to refer to in shared TV or radio programmes any more.

9 All have since intervened in the once shared language, introducing specific differences and claiming (and inventing) seniority for them. Montenegrian, for example, has added new letters to the local Cyrillic script. During Yugoslavia, the Cyrillic and Roman scripts were interchangeable everywhere in the Serbo-Croatian speaking area (in addition to Macedonia, now Northern Macedonia, where Cyrillic is the only script), although Cyrillic would be more used in Serbia than in Croatia. Official post-Yugoslav linguists have dropped one of the scripts. Serbia and Montenegro officially opt for only Cyrillic (although this holds poorly in practice), and Croatia for only the Roman script.

10 Ustashas were extremists of the Croatian nationalist quisling movement and state in WWII (1941-1945) under the tutelage of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. An equivalent in Serbia, with a different history, would be the militant nationalist chetniks. Both groups fought against the partisans by the side of Nazi and fascist occupation forces.

The language politics in Serbia have followed a somewhat different path, with similarly preposterous, linguistically absurd and aesthetically dubious results: Serbian has been claiming an ever-closer lineage from Russian, a different language, from old Slavonic, and an Orthodox religious vocabulary. Like in Croatian, the language cultivates "authentic" or pseudo-archaic and antiquated forms, sometimes invented out of linguistic ignorance. In the race for an "older" idiom, Serbian political and national linguists have developed a "theory" by which, yes, all the forms of the once common language do exist, but all are actually dialectal and degraded *political* offshoots of the pure *primary* and (merely) linguistic language – Serbian. It does not occur to them that others could think so of theirs, and that *any language can be seen as a translation of all the others*. The former shared language has been erased with the former common country, whose name is now unsayable without a vilifying attribute, of which the most violent one is "communist", and the minimum – "former". *Political forgetting, erasures* and *loss* are *organised*, so as to further build up from a *tabula rasa* instead of sharing a common heritage, because there is no common project. Language debates under these conditions nurture political conflicts.

A new "Declaration about the limits of the Serbian language" by the Serbian Academy and educational institutions posits the superior status of the Serbian language in comparison with the other variants, in a hierarchic relationship. Serbian would be a "linguistic" ("natural") first language, while other pretenders to the status of a language (Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrian) would only be "political" ("unnatural", or "artificial") languages of a lower status. This presentation of the language is linked to the "Law on the protection of the Cyrillic script" (2021) passed in the context of the homogenising political project of a "Declaration about the survival of the Serbian nation" (Vučinić 2022: 8). In such a context, the nation always sees itself as threatened, *but never as threatening*. The identification of the language and the nation works in favour of nationalist homogenisation, where local cultural elements are subsumed under the dominant "higher" instance (Serbian or Croatian as the *Ursprache*). None of the nationalists are able to imagine a common country whether in the past or in the future anymore, and political complexity has been reduced to an impoverished ahistorical binarism without historic depth or nuances. (And binarisms *deny* differences.) Likewise on the other, Croatian, side. *Hindutvā* (the "Global Hindu World"), the so-called "Serbian World", the "Russian World", China's Belt-and-Road Initiative etc. ("civilisational discourses" (Ong 2022: 7)) and any ethno-nationally limited world of any ethnic denomination, is a *closure* in itself, in an imaginary glorious supremacist past, and in the province of one's own limited mind unshared with others. The recent "Declaration about the limits of the Serbian language" explicitly advocates radical self-limitation and closure. It is no better on the other side. The Serbian parliament also passed a law introducing "Gender-sensitive language" (2021). That law, together with the one on the script, provoked endless polemics and the fury of all national institutions in addition to the patriarch of the Serbian

Orthodox Church, who condemned it in his Easter 2023 address (Savić 2020-22; Mandić 2023; Zidarević 2023).

Translation, which is also synonymous with thinking, is there to undo hegemony and de-nationalise the language in the best of cases. It also means dis-appropriating it and decentring oneself in doing so by overcoming the binarism induced through nationalism. Translation is the "mother of languages", says S.B. Diagne quoting Ngugi Wa Thiong (Diagne 2022: 159). Translation, as a possibility of all languages, precedes them.

National language and the mother tongue as hegemonic. Language and everything else

When a tired hegemony becomes untenable, *exclusionary polarisations* occur. This is one of the results of the collapse of the Cold War political binary, which had been hegemonic in maintaining a sort of equivalence between the parts. It is also the attempt to create alternative realities with alternative languages outside that hegemony-and-domination setting, possibly by establishing another hegemony at a lower level. Hegemony fades away if it is not accepted by both sides, though differently, any more. It ushers-in dominance, violence and war, and tries to mutate into a weaker and less stable hegemony. If it cannot – we may have civil wars. This leaves devastation behind, as in post-colonialism and post-socialism. Linguistic nationalism may appear, especially if the languages, now renamed, are close. The *hegemonic language*, which is either the colonial or, now, the *national language*, is favoured by the state or the nation-building separatisms and rebellions. The national language is established and determined by or in view of the national state, its institutions, academies and education system, and begins by being *renamed*, at the expense of all others. Even a *lingua franca* may not be accepted any more, such as a colonial language or a local deterritorialised language, which will be seen as violence. Diagne gives the example of Wolof, a deterritorialised language spoken in Senegal, Gambia and Mauritania: "The silent violence that a language like Wolof, by its very nature as a deterritorialised *lingua franca*, can exert against an idiom that the small number of its speakers makes vulnerable is not a counter-argument to the ethics of connecting languages through translation. On the contrary, the work of translation is one of the responses to the consequences of linguistic domination. [...] Nor is it a matter of ignoring the fact that translation can be malicious and sometimes presents itself as a veritable declaration of war." (Diagne 2022: 162) The colonial language, the once majoritarian idiom, imposed, or even just the practical lingua franca, is felt as injury and insult, leaving a linguistic wasteland and inadequacy as Cécile Canut has shown (Canut 2021)[11]. "Those that we know as standardised national languages are nothing else but a historico-social product, a system of norms

11 See Canut on this and related issues about French as the colonial language in Africa, and on the colonial politics of language and translation.

and conventions that hegemonise the dialectical, vernacular and idiomatic plurality", says Saša Hrnjez (Hrnjez 2021: 89).

In such conditions, within the hegemony by the state or the nation, the *mother tongue* is one of the possible options of identification with the national language, imposed, romanticised, instrumentalised as supreme, forcefully proposed as comfortingly "homely", and narrowly monitored. However, "Por el corazón maternal de la lengua materna todas las lenguas son cercanas y parientes.[12]" (Rebón 2014: 58 and further). But the first language, the supposed language of our dwelling, does not necessarily itself have a whereabouts. It demands a name (aspiring in principle to *untranslatability* yet to *exhaustiveness* too), but it need not be territorialised. The national language and the mother tongue are not the same, but with linguistic nationalism there is a violent effort of the nation (and/or the state) to *identify them* and to strive for an *absolute* language or translation – which is impossible. It is also where some of us, as in France, are taught that we can never properly learn a foreign language, *as part of the nationalist linguistic project*. As Jacques Derrida or Naoki Sakai have shown, the mother tongue turns toxic when instrumental to the recognition of a nation(alist) but not liberatory cause. This is the case with Croatian or Serbian linguistic nationalism, and many others.

Language as such is a chance, yes, but not so necessarily the mother tongue: any language is, though diversely. The sacralisation of the mother tongue makes a promise that is best not believed, because it works as its nationalist appropriation. There is no motherhood in the mother tongue. What the mother transmits is not her language, but the language of power, from patriarchy to the state to the nation. Therefore, Souleymane Bachir Diagne calls for a *translation that works against domination* and in favour of decentring oneself and the language, although it can also impose domination[13]. In (unqualified) language lies its core - translation, as its best possibility, but totally unwarranted. In that language, *which is not "ours"* because it is colonial or appropriated by the nation, Derrida nevertheless wrote his work translated into other languages. Translation has indeed one of its obvious modern origins in colonialism. The violent *slave trade* from Africa was also a translation/displacement/transfer of people. At the end of the day, no idiom is ours, not only because some are the father's, the state's, colonial or repressive, languages of power, but also because even the language that we consider our own (or, worse, our *right*), and therefore "good" – escapes us, since *we cannot say everything* in it. And why cannot we say everything in it? Because *language is part of that "everything"*. Our first language is a mother tongue only for other languages it harbours and that we can learn thanks to it, because it welcomes and transmits them with "motherly" care, shares them and translates them. In front of us, however, that

12 "Through the maternal heart of the mother tongue, all languages are close and related." NB: If not stated otherwise, all translations are by me., sometimes with the help of DeepL Translate.

13 Diagne, "Introduction. La traduction contre la domination" in *De langue à langue*, op. cit. and in particular page 16.

"first language" *recedes* like a phantasm. It is wrongly called"mother's" – but it is a *language imposed by power*. It is experienced as unitary, unifying and enforced. In any case, it is *insufficient*, as any language is, as well as overinflated. So that we remain foreigners, even in "our" language.

But that is good, as it is what gives it expressive and sometimes literary power, although without a guarantee, since *translation is necessarily indeterminate*. Diagne suggests that our categories of thinking are determined by the categories of our language and not the opposite (Diagne 2022: 44), which also gives our language the power of resistance. Putting oneself in a position of foreignness, strangeness (*étrangeté*), even in one's first language, is the only reliable method of linguistic and political autonomy, freedom and independence. This foreignness or displacement allows us to avoid the mutilations of an imposed, maddened and distorted language, called mother's. "[...] [M]ultiplicity lays the foundations for a universality which is in contrast with that form of universality that historically gave birth to the sovereignty of the nation-state. The language of this universality would be translation itself." (Hrnjez 2021: 100)

The mother tongue is a risky and often disparaging phantasm. Not so language as such, but the illusion of a mother's "protective" cocoon that radically separates us from externality and otherness. Even more than the "mother tongue", it is the *national language* that does it, referring to linguistic "purity", and assuming natural possession of the language. Like the mother tongue, the national idiom is a *spectre* in the sense in which the *palanka* (parochialism's aspiration) is one in Konstantinović (2021), or in which it is a *ghost* or *spectre* or *phantasm* in Derrida, i.e. something longed for but unattainable. Political "theorists of language" always burden the national language not only with a purist command, but also with the "*recognition* of an original sin in language" that is demanded of the "illegitimate" speaker[14]. The latter, the "illegitimate" speaker, is determined by the language police themselves, for example the French Academy, a school or proofreading services in their divine judgment. However, this "primordial mistake or original sin" is not located in the accused speaker, but in the imposed *truncated monolanguage* – the *monolangue*. Counter-intuitively, monolingualism often leads to *diglossia* or bilingualism where one language is subordinate to another. *It is the dominated who have two or more languages, not the dominant*. But a colonial situation of languages can also carry *linguistic insemination* and the impregnation/enrichment of languages by one-another, where the colonial language too (French, English, Japanese etc.) can be fertilised (Diagne 2022: 78 and 82; Mbembe 2016), and not only the subdued language. The latter, considered incomplete by the colonial language, is actually never incomplete *because no language is ever incomplete*[15]. Or all are equally incomplete. *Languages are actually all complementary in their*

14 I pride myself to be an illegitimate speaker by definition, having lost my primary language (Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian) and writing in foreign languages that are no less mine.

15 According to Diagne,2024: 123, referring to Benveniste, languages are *complementary*, while De Sousa Santos says of knowledges what could be said of cultures and

reciprocal incompleteness, as each is out of focus and "displaced" towards the other, but each is being built with/through other languages too. Thus, a monolingual human being speaks a spectral language that is denied to her/him and that has no original edition (for which he/she is wrongly sentenced), so s/he is thrown *over* and *beyond* the language itself directly, into a supposedly absolute translation from that *missing linguistic origin*. And absolute translation is, of course, totalitarianism, the very totalitarianism (which does not stop at the linguistic dimension but can go further) that was offered and imposed by *denying it as a language without a given model*[16].

There is no nation without nationalism, as Etienne Balibar reminds us. But a "cosmopolitics of cultural hybridity" in *active internationalism* should invite hospitality to foreigners (as well as to "foreign" languages) and diversity in the sense of a "politics of the human species"[17]. Meanwhile, nationalism operates through promoting a national language distinct from the parent languages.

Denying the word communism any descriptive capacity today for example, Etienne Balibar now calls "communism" a movement rather than an account – translation or the metamorphosis we undergo (Balibar 2022b). This is the case as well since the "conservative" revolution, or the reactionary historic turn in the 21st century, that our knowledge system has undergone. As a praxis of theory or as a political activism, when aiming at changes in society or in the state, *translation* may have to contain violence, which makes it violent too. The presupposition is that within plural and diverse knowledges, there is no definitive knowledge, but only temporary proposals of consecutive understandings. This is also what I always thought when working on deconstructing binaries and in particular the western one between theory and praxis, or gender. The concept of *reciprocally incomplete cultures* (but one could also say, of *complementary* knowledges and languages) can be deduced from all the historic failures of hegemonic knowledge, language or translation regimes – and can therefore be a premise to start from. Thus, for E. Balibar, and since translation or metamorphosis concerns humans too, translation implies – *becoming (an)other* (*devenir autre*), which now stands for being a communist, as "being in transformation". Because there is no such thing as a communist society (and the utopia has been dismissed by many), communism must be a movement, a *transition* to a new type of humanity. We could call it a *communist transition*.

The national language abhors the sister-languages it splits away from, and artificially nurtures its differences in vocabulary, style, references etc. Writers,

languages too - languages are also only "*reciprocally* incomplete". (De Sousa Santos. 2014 & 2018; Mbembe 2016).

16 This and the preceding paragraph, as well as a few other thoughts, come from my afterword "About Language out of its Mind" (*O jeziku izvan sebe*) to the Croatian edition of my book on translation politics (Iveković. 2022. *Politike prevođenja* 2022), as well as from some of my other recent papers.

17 One could wonder about this anthropocentric restriction to the "human species" instead of life or the living (which would require, however, more engagement in issues of ecology, climate change and other forms of life. See Balibar 2022a).

literatures, references, histories and historic figures rise and fall with national languages, they are elevated or erased from the "national canon". In doing so, the *male line* is always favoured, whether in falling or in rising. National languages have ruined us, have ruined our languages. They exist through self-promotion, distortion and a constant mockery of the other language, through closure and self-limitation (Rebón 2014), construction of barbed fences and borders, and the constant appeal to "culture". The latter is naturalised and essentialised, of course. The impossibility of any cultural self-sufficiency goes unnoticed. Certain names, concepts, ideals and words are prohibited, especially in wartime, but not only then. Hegemonic languages and mind-sets self-pauperise themselves by refusing any "influences" (real or imaginary) of the language they are seceding from. Such a complex is especially present with recently established "sovereign languages", but can subsist with well-established older languages like French. Post-Yugoslav nationalists will be proud to know English, but unwilling to speak or recognise the neighbouring language they speak better and the alternative script once all indifferently used. Some of us have refused the new names of the once shared language (formerly Serbo-Croatian in English), and have called it simply the "common language"[18]. Such an endeavour requires systematically deconstructing language as property (Rebón 2014: 88), refusing and deconstructing its appropriation, rejecting its sanctification as the national language or mother tongue, which amounts to language necropolitics. *A language does not belong and does not need territory*. It circulates among its speakers who may also be foreigners, and who do not exhaust it as a community. A language cannot be reduced to a national community or even to a community of speakers. In its historicity, it encompasses and transcends them.

The need to deterritorialise language and let it go as property

These are epistemological questions. By losing a language and its name, we lose an epistemological framework and a system of cultural references. We have been in this shaky epistemological limbo for more than thirty years now (it is an episodic and periodical historical condition) – not to mention the comparable epistemological conundrums of minorities, indigenous populations or

18 The language once had two names, depending on the perspective: Serbo-Croatian, or Croato-Serbian (ignoring two of the republics where it was also spoken). Two more appellations were added to the same after partition: Montenegrian and Bosnian. Many of us from the four Yugoslav republics using the language (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia & Croatia), as well as others, signed the "Declaration about the common language" (*Deklaracija o zajedničkom jeziku*) in 2017, which said: "the fact that a common polycentric language exists does not question the individual right to express belonging to different nations, regions or states". It called against any type of language segregation and said that *one* language was spoken in those countries, designated as "a common standard *polycentric* language spoken by several nations in several states with recognisable variants". https://www.krokodil.rs/eng/text-of-the-declaration-on-common-language-in-english/ (accessed on July 11, 2025).

(post-)colonial realities. This is the *epistemological kinship between the post-colonial and the post-socialist situations*, now all dumped into one, simultaneous without ever having been contemporary. In addition, in post-hegemonic conditions, although there is a permanent push for binarisms, there is also the parallel tendency to break at least sexual binarism (gender). Hence the increasingly frequent occurrence of claiming trans-identities (Verónica Gago). In so doing, especially Latin American transnational feminism these days operates a South-centric feminist epistemology through a critique of North-centric feminism[19]. Other binarisms (east-west) are also shaky or being reconstructed otherwise (Lim 2022).

Silvia Federici has shown all of this admirably in her own way, and through a new perspective for many – that of women and the feminised. It is interesting to see how, in these post-hegemonic times, the female element steps in some parts of the world leading to broader social movements (Iran, Latin America etc.; #MeToo, #NiUnaMas and other similar engagements) through contesting the *patriarchal unquestionable hegemony* and the current backlash (Federici 2004). Has it come to an end? I do not think so, but it is now shaky in some parts of the world. The parallel backlash against the equality and humanity of women appears in the repatriarchalising of the state and society through the restoration of capitalism (Burcar 2020) in post-socialist countries. *Patriarchy is violently striking back with new forms of capitalism as a reaction*. The whole array: femicide, mass rape in war but tolerated rape in peace too, hunting, trafficking of women and girls, enslavement, with political, legal and societal acceptance of violence against women. As part of the conservative counter-revolution, the *post-hegemonic* and *post-socialist* wars share one important purpose (often central – see Afghanistan) – that of re-imposing hard patriarchal domination when not hegemony, as well as militarising, masculinising and primitivising society. But largely, extreme violence against women, such as femicide (killing women *because* they are women)[20], appears with yet greater intensity in conditions of a generally heightened level of violence in society, such as war, civil war, massacres and genocide (Mander 2022; Iveković 2024a; Iveković 2024b)[21].

The destiny of women, badly struck today, naturally encounters that of other rejected or inferiorised groups, such as the undocumented and migrants, where alliances are possible and are made. Among the latter, there are many

19 "South" and "north" in these expressions are epistemological concepts rather than geographical.

20 One can see the kinship between *genocide* and *femicide*, which has also been called *gynocide* (Dworkin 1976; Jardine 1985).

21 Although I find the term problematic because of its frequent appropriation and instrumentalisation in politics to self-denote only one group, here is a minimal description of genocide: mass killings of a particular group, ethnicity or nationality *because* of belonging to that group. Genocides are usually announced or made plausible ahead of the events, as in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, India, Palestine etc. An inherent link between genocide and femicide can be observed.

women who migrate for the same reasons as everyone else, but also because of gendered violence. "Women experience sexist and macho violence that pushes them to leave their country, to cross borders. During their migratory journey, they will also experience gendered violence, and then when they reach European countries, it is not the end of the violence. Structures and institutions are not all suited to listening and hearing what they have experienced. *And part of this violence is due to the fact that there is no legal route to get to Europe*[22]. 'Human traffickers, in particular, take advantage of this!', continues [a witness]. '[...] I travelled from Iran to Europe, alone. It was really tough. I often feared for my life. I experienced extreme violence, especially in Greece, where I was secretly detained, tied up and beaten by border police. I was rejected 6 times trying to find protection in Europe. At the EU border, no one wanted to know who I was or hear about my asylum applications. They wanted us to be silent. They wanted us to disappear.' "[23]

It is difficult to pretend nowadays that these new wars may not aim at reinstating patriarchy. In intersectionality, they need to be studied as the permanently violent *gendering* that wars, but societies too, have always been. The national language battle participates in this too.

The women's issue as translation in Korea and elsewhere, and the problem of the national language

The feminist struggle for gender justice, equality and democracy necessitates a *translation battle for denationalising the national language,* separating society from the nation, and the nation from an obstetric language. It is *strategically* necessary to temporarily and critically separate the ethnic or national question (which are problems in themselves) from the issue of the condition of women, although they are part of the same process and are intertwined. *The ethnic or national approaches exploit the women's issue as a fixed, essentialised and irrevocable gender binary, and proceed through appropriative interventions in language to fix identities as definitive*. For example, in the Korean "comfort women"[24] case during the Japanese imperial occupation of Korea, which was internationally disclosed only in 1991, South Korean state and nationalist public opinion vampirised the "comfort women's" issue in the interest of the national question. It is a kind of masculinist state *translation* of the industrial exploitation of those women's conditions, also metaphorical of the *general* condition of women, which, however, was *not recognised* by the same state as such. The question it raises is – does the state care for *all* women, or just for

22 Or to other countries of desired immigration [my comment.]
23 CADTM. 2022. "La campagne Feminist Asylum", emphasis added.: http://www.cadtm.org/La-campagne-Feminist-Asylum-Changer-ce-systeme-d-asile-qui-oblige-les-femmes-a (accessed on July 11, 2025).
24 Korean and other women and feminists engaged in this issue rightly resent and reject this term, given to them by the Japanese colonial military: therefore the quotes here, as well as my apologies for not finding better.

"comfort women" (facing Japan in a national issue of a "higher", nationalist, interest than the women's)? Today we know that *a feminist translation of that history* is possible and necessary, and that it is put into practice through interventions in language and a different grid of non-national(ist) translation. *Nobody is outside translation*, free from translation, and in particular not the hegemon. Although it happens, ethnocentric translation is inadmissible. Souleymane Bachir Diagne pleads for a "horizontal" translation *de langue à langue* instead of the "vertical" one which transmits god's (or the hegemon's) language (Diagne 2022: 147). Different from the state's version, the feminist narrative about "comfort women" expresses a strangeness, an *alterity* invisible to the nation or the state, but which is suddenly possible now, and becomes obvious once a new feminist translating code is proposed. The whole past event which is being narrated and retranslated becomes approachable under a new translation regime and with a new "participative co-subject" at its origin, which opens a new vision of the event which is also a new *cosmovisión*. At such crossroads or intersections of reading and translation, new (literary) genres may happen too, and new senses of life and new meanings to words can powerfully usher with them. In the *deconstruction of language as property*, we need to be able to strategically and permanently *separate language from the nation*. Much as feminists need to strategically separate the women's issue from the nation in their activism, for example in the history of Korean "comfort women", or in the case of women being raped at war generally (and in peacetime regularly too), as in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina/Yugoslavia (Iveković 2024a and 2024b), Rwanda, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Palestine[25], Israel etc., gender and nation cannot be separated. Methodological distinction between the two is necessary in spite of the two being structurally intertwined, interdependent and coexistent. The *strategic separation* needs to be performed, lest the women's issue, or the linguistic issues, be drowned and invisibilised by the "higher office" of the "nation"[26].

The "Jeju uprising" (on April 3, 1948 in Jeju Island, Korea) was immediately followed by extreme repression, a tragic event in which many men were killed, while many women remained widows. It had been "framed as an incident incited by communist rioters. Thus, the *holeomeongs* [widowed victims of the massacre] refrained from speaking out of fear that the deaths of their husbands would serve only to implicate their sons; the women locked away all accounts within their bodies for years in order to conceal that their families had been implicated with those who died in the Massacre", writes Kim Eun-Shil (Kim

25 As I write about conflicts and wars starting from my own experience of a bloody partition, and while I have no "preference" for some victims rather than others, I cannot but think of *civilian* Palestinians, later Lebanese and then Iranians, killed indiscriminately (by the thousands in the case of Gaza) in a war by the Israeli military that they did not provoke.

26 See the conversation in the wake of the 2022 commemoration of the Korean "comfort women" exploited by the Japanese military in WWII: "Women's Solidarity in Our Troubled Times of Gendered Violence and War", Interview Rada Iveković by Young-Gyung Paik in 2022, Korea, https://kyeol.kr/en/node/467 (accessed on July 11, 2025).

2018: 3). Or, as Jie-Hyun Lim writes: "South Korea [...] suffered from the anti-communist political genocide and brutal suppression of the memory of victims." (Lim 2022: 52) It is only in recent years, as language and political space became available and their scope enlarged, that elder women started to talk about it. Likewise, the "comfort women" scandal of the Japanese occupation and WWII became available in words uttered by the once victims, become witnesses and finally the subject only in 1991. Those women survivors had broken the chain of stigma and shame, and re-appropriated their own history by making it public. But it then became a *national* cause and was again taken away from them, this time by the state and the nation. Younger Korean feminist researchers have been working on the *feminist political translation* of the tragic events (these and others) that formerly could not be discussed. One observes the same situation of the second or third generation of feminist scholars having worked, since 1998, on the Indo-Pakistani partition and the destiny of not only language, but women too, being treated as property of the masculine nation (Butalia 1998; Menon & Bhasin 1998; *Transeuropéennes* 19/20, 2001; Iveković and Glasson Deschaumes (eds.) 2003; Shree, *Tomb of Sand* 2003) which had made those events un-representable to those who suffered them. Eun-Shil Kim writes: "The public discourse of the Jeju April Third [1948] became both masculine and institutional" (Kim 2018: 15), which made mourning impossible. But when *language is rescued from the state and the nation*, women can also access it and be released. The proscribed Jeju rebellion was renamed a state massacre, and that history was in need of being rewritten. The years-long silence had been like a prolonged state of exception, extending all the way into normalcy (Kim 2018: 24). Kim concludes further: "[...] [T]he widows experience instability of their identities and confusion over the boundaries of life and death. I see this as the effect of power and a trauma in which the sovereignty of necropolitics makes illegal those who have died and at the same time assigns social death to the living." (Kim 2018: 36)

As Kim Eun-Shil says elsewhere, from the epistemological point of view, introduced starting from the 1970s and then massively in the 1990, "Called upon to function as critical discourse and a new world-view to criticize and deconstruct patriarchal traits and male-centrism in Korean society, women's studies is caught in a trap between nationalism and modernization" (Kim 2009: 9); and further "women's studies was under constant pressure to answer questions on the particularity of Korea. The underlying social ethos of the 1970s and the 1980s in Korea was characterized by a defiant nationalism, accompanied by the democratization movement against the military dictatorship." (Kim 2009: 11-12) And finally, Kim writes, "[...] there is a great risk that without any critical reflection on the epistemology of the nation state to frame the problematic of such research, women will be treated as signifiers of political and economic inequality between state boundaries. In this way, the women's issue in Korea will be avoided [...]." (Kim 2009: 29)

Still talking about the "comfort women" issue in Korea, Young-Gyung Paik says: "In Korea, the official language used by the patriarchal state and society

in the past was incapable of grasping wartime sexual violence as a crime, as in the 'comfort women' issue. Over the years, the situation in Korea has been changing, so that the suffering of women can be discussed less as a matter of shame and dishonor for women than as a violation of their civil rights.

Even so, the problem is that the state still tends to be seen as a savior of women and an ultimate guarantor of women's rights. As you know too well, the bodies of female citizens are still being treated as the territory of their state or ethnic group." (Paik, Young-Gyung in conversation with R. Iveković, 2022, https://kyeol.kr/en/node/467)

In his recent rethinking of translation and communism (as a movement, *communist transition*), Etienne Balibar has come to explicitly recognise the feminist analysis of reproduction and the expropriation of women's reproductive capacities – as irrefutable (Balibar 2022b). It seems to me that *one prior step would actually be needed* here in addition – *rejecting*, as in feminist analyses by Silvia Federici, Judith Butler, Alisa Del Re, Verónica Gago and many others, of the classical separation of production and reproduction which had been framed as *normative* in early Marxism but also generally in capitalism, and has been maintained: in this separation of the two, we first have a firm *postulation* of the binary as definitive, after which the latter is taken for granted as a unique historic scenario, and becomes normative. The description of biased capitalism is then taken as the only possible option for gendered/racialised relations. In her critique of the latter, Verónica Gago, among others, has developed the idea of the *homogeneity of labour* that efficiently deconstructs the theoretical separation of production and reproduction, which is also the framework of women's enslavement. As a political aim, this is elaborated in the reshuffled concept of the *feminist strike* (Gago 2020).

The uneasy relation between *production* and *reproduction*, built as a *natural* configuration of an unproblematic hegemonic gender-arrangement, was one of the missing links and unaddressed problem in Yugoslav attempts at building self-management (workers' control) too. Both the Yugoslav and the Algerian projects (to take these two) were failures, of course, but failures we can learn from. Thinking ahead mentally from *within* the system, production and reproduction were made into *separate* areas where the inclusion of women into *citoyenneté* (citizenship) and the political sphere appeared as nearly impossible (although this was never said), because the decisive pattern was not *the hypothetically possible*, but *the existing* as if it had been a given, and unquestionable. A similar reasoning was worked out by Mohammed Harbi in the introduction to his book *L'Autogestion en Algérie*. In it, he analyses the failure of attempts to *self-management in agriculture* in the socialist sector of Algeria (mentioning also Yugoslavia, China and Cuba), because it seems difficult to convert the farmer to socialism and to the *intérêt généra*l (general interest) (Harbi 2022). There is a parallelism between how these two issues – gender (women) and agriculture (farmers) (Wang 2011; 2014; 2016) – are made *unthinkable* in the available theories of self-management and the construction of socialism. It is not that women (or farmers) cannot be integrated *in principle*, but rather that

the socio-political construct, *as it was*, prevented them from participating as equals. This is also an epistemic conundrum, a question of the *knowledge regime*, but which Balibar or Harbi may have escaped on these two issues. It is "the status of socio-economic formation that determines the condition of humans with a reproductive capacity, and not the opposite"[27], not the fact that they are women, to paraphrase Balibar.

Knowing that democratic translation cannot be guaranteed, that it is likely to be nationalist, colonial and patriarchal, and that it discriminates, forbids and chastises "minor" languages[28], but that this can also be extended to non-hegemonic political narratives and theories with *alternative cosmovisiones* (such as feminism, the migrants' saga, those from the global or local south, marginalised classes, etc.) – we must be concerned. *No existing translation regime* has ever been universal. It has been usurpation. We must then imagine how to practice cognitive fairness and justice under the specific conditions of the constitutive *inequality* of languages, which implies practicing corrections at every step. This indeterminateness makes language and translation *political*.

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27 "Nous sommes alors amenés à pousser jusqu'au bout l'idée que *c'est le statut des frontières qui détermine la condition d'étrangers,* le sens que comporte le fait d''être un étranger', et non l'inverse." (Balibar, 2022a: 249)

28 Balibar rightly says: "[...] *translation* [...] is *not* an egalitarian praxis, on the contrary: relations of *domination* and *nationalist political ruling* (*règlements*) have *forbidden* certain *languages*, or have *discriminated* against them, calling them '*inferior*'". Balibar 2022: 251 (emphasis added.).

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Rada Iveković

Posthegemonijski destruktivni kontra-prevod

Apstrakt

Prošli smo kroz destruktivnu posthegemonijsku reakcionarnu revoluciju. Svedočili smo posthegemonijskoj globalizaciji (ne globalnoj) i postsocijalističkim novim ratovima, najbližim (post)kolonijalnim ratovima. Subalterni indijski istraživači govorili su o dominaciji bez hegemonije, gde je direktno nasilje dominacije pogubnije. U većim međunarodnim političkim pokretima, pokušaj hegemonije prelazi u rat. U nekim slučajevima preovlađuju posthegemonijski obrasci. Deluje da EU prihvata hegemoniju SAD. Lokalno (iz ukrajinske perspektive) hegemonija se više ne toleriše. Suprotno tome: Putinova Rusija, koja se pretvara da ponovo uspostavlja nekadašnju hegemoniju dominacijom, završava tako što se opredeljuje za čistu dominaciju bez hegemonije. Opšta tišina o etničkom čišćenju Palestinaca, nakon razaranja Gaze. Ovo zahteva mnogo političkog prevođenja. Prema prethodnom prećutnom prevodilačkom ugovoru, to bih nazvala kontraprevodom. Ako je idealno prevođenje odnos sa drugim u procesu, kontraprevod nastoji da promeni prevodilačke kodove i vrednost reči. Menjajući kodove, pokušava da stvarnosti da drugo političko ruho. Hegemonija iščezava ako je nijedna strana ne prihvata i dovodi do dominacije, nasilja i rata, pokušavajući da se preobrazi u niži nivo nestabilne hegemonije. Ako to ne uspe – možemo imati građanske ratove. Sve se svodi na hegemonijski jezik, koji je ujedno i nacionalni jezik. Pokušaj pregovora o hegemoniji vodi se među dostupnim jezicima. Ali hegemonija ne funkcioniše, i čisto nasilje se koristi u razdvajanju nekada zajedničkog jezika na dva, kao u Ukrajini, ili na četiri ili više, kao u jugoslovenskom prostoru. Samopreimenovanje disidentskog jezika postaje obavezno na užem nivou, i funkcioniše kao objava rata. Rad pokušava da poredi pregovore o rodu i pregovore o rivalskim jezicima.

Ključne reči: regresija, dominacija-bez-hegemonije, posthegemonijski kontra-prevod, nacionalni jezik, rodno obeležen jezik, identitarizam, kontra-revolucija, desemanitizacija, prevodilački kodovi

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Naoki Sakai

THE MODERN INTERNATIONAL WORLD: MODERN REGIMES OF TRANSLATION

ABSTRACT
This article focuses on the individuality of language. How can language be individuated, grasped as an indivisible unity, and compared to other languages that are also assumed to be individual unities? I will attempt a historical investigation concerning the individuality of language on the one hand, and the formation of the modern international world in which individuated languages are supposed to be juxtaposed to one another. The translation is the instance in which languages are originally figured out as individuals; I will investigate how a new way of managing translation, the modern regime of translation, was introduced.

KEYWORDS
the individuality of language, the representation of translation, the modern regime of translation, monolingual address, the schematism of co-figuration, homolingual addres, the subject in transit

Introduction

Just as in modernity, the world is imagined to consist of nations and conceived of as an international assemblage, so does the modern world project the Babelic vision of a single humanity fragmented into many individual languages. This vision of the international juxtaposition of languages cannot be appreciated without reference to the historicity of the modern international world. The modern regime of translation represents the event of translation in terms of two separate figures or schemata, just like two distinct territories of state sovereignties in the international world, as sanctioned by the system of international law (*Jus Publicum Europaeum*). However, we must not forget that the vision of the so-called international world is historically specific; it came into existence for the first time in Western Europe in the seventeenth century.

A new disciplinary formation generally referred to as 'area studies' was invented a half century after the collapse of the old system of international law which manifested itself in the event of the First World War. Since then, many attempts were made to resurrect the international order of the modern world until the global hegemony of *Pax Americana* prevailed in the late twentieth

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century. The disciplinary formation of knowledge generally referred to as 'area studies' was established at universities in the United States of America after the Second World War, and served to reconfirm rather than dispense with the colonial-imperial order of the modern world. The discipline of 'area studies' was initially proposed by the policy makers of the United States as a response to two demands: a) to establish the order of the international world in which the West, not Europe, is the central index of universal reference, and b) to disqualify the old colonial rules while appropriating their legacies into a new global reign of *Pax Americana* at the same time. Consequently, area studies as a disciplinary formation retained an ambiguous relationships with the colonial studies of the pre-WWII era.

The old conventional bifurcation of the modern world into two contrasting positionalities, the West and the Rest, where the West represents the subject of knowing while the Rest is regarded exclusively as the object of knowing, had not been critically interrogated before the notion of postcoloniality was problematised. Even today the disciplines of area studies are still believed to be constructed on the basis of the *anthropological difference* between the West and the Rest, between Western humanity and the Rest of humanity, thereby preserving the colonial bifurcation of the modern world.

In this chapter, the discussion will focus on the individuality of language. How can language be individuated, grasped as an indivisible unity, and compared with other languages that are also assumed to be individual unities? I will attempt a historical investigation concerning the individuality of language on the one hand, and the formation of the modern international world in which individuated languages are supposed to be juxtaposed to one another on the other. Translation is the instance in which languages are originally represented or figured out as individuals; I will investigate how a new way of managing translation, the modern regime of translation, was introduced in the modern world.

What may be summarily called 'translation' has been practiced in many parts of the world and among many groups of people for millennia. The rendering of the Buddhist texts in literary Chinese and the Latinization of the Bible in the first millennium A. D. are two instances of celebrated achievements in the long histories of 'translation'. There are innumerable cases of translation known to have played decisive roles in the development of literary cultures, pedagogical institutions, ecclesiastic reformations, and the global spread of the nation-state and capitalism particularly since the Renaissance and the Age of Discovery.

Today an increasing number of scholars are aware of the conceptual complexity as well as the politico-ethical significance of translation. At the same time, they have come to the realization that translation must be problematized not only in the fields of artistic literary works and religious canons, but also in the spheres of commercial advertisement, popular entertainment, public administration, international diplomacy, scientific research and publication, judiciary procedure, immigration, education, and family livelihood. This article will discuss the practice of translation in reference to the fact that translation

is always complicit in the building, transforming or disrupting of power relations. In other words, translation is a historical act *par excellence*. Translation involves moral imperatives on the part of both the addresser and the addressee, since it is an incident marking the social aspect of human existence, and can always be viewed as a political manoeuvre of social antagonism. Moreover, I will investigate how the *representation* of translation brings about socio-political effects and serves as a *technê* or technology by which the individual imagines his or her relation to the national or ethnicized community. And, finally, I will touch upon the relationship between the issues of translation and modernity by showing how the particular mode of representing translation is conditioned by the 'modern schematism of co-figuration' through which we comprehend the unity of ethnic or national language as an ethno-linguistic unity. Thanks to 'the modern regime of translation,' languages are individuated and regarded as enclosed unities that are spatially external to one another. In other words, we will probe how our commonsensical notion of translation is delimited by the schematism of the world (i.e., our operation of representing the world according to the schema of co-figuration), and inversely how the modern image of the world as the 'inter-national' world (i.e., the world consisting of the basic units of nations/state sovereignties) is prescribed by our representation of translation as a communicative and international transfer of a message between a pair of ethno-linguistic unities.

The Representation of Translation and its Complexity

An inquiry into translation invokes a seemingly endless series of questions as soon as some formulaic response to it is postulated.

In retracing the network of affinity in translational equivalence, we may well find a sense of transferring, of conveying or moving from one place to another, of linking one word, phrase, or text to another, all common among the words connoting 'translation' in modern languages. In a comparison of the lexicographical and etymological explications of the word 'to translate' or its cognates in many languages, we may feel vindicated to offer the following definition: translation is a transfer of a message from one language to another. Even before specifying what sort of transfer it can be, one would realize it is hard to refrain from initially asking such questions about the message. Is what is referred to as the message in this definition not a product or consequence of transfer called translation, rather than something whose being precedes the action of transfer, or something that remains invariant in the process of the alteration called translation? Is the message supposedly transferred in this process determinable in and of itself without first being operated on or affected by something? And then about language. What is the status of language from which or into which what is called message is transferred? How can we assume that the source language in which the source text originally makes sense is different and distinct from the target language in which the translated text is made to convey the original sense or its closest approximation? How can we

presume that the source language is spatially external to the target language? What justifies the assumption that a language either of the source or the target is an enclosure so that the language between which translation takes place do not overlap or intrude into each other? Are these languages countable in the sense that you may isolate and juxtapose them as individual units like apples or oranges not like water? By what measures can you distinguish one from another, and endow each of them with its unity or body? Do we not have to suppose the organic unity of language rather than a random assemblage of words, phrases, and utterances, in order to talk about translation in this way? In short, how can we presuppose that language is an individual?

Accordingly, the message that is transferred in translation is, above all else, a supposition of the transmitted invariant that is confirmed, retroactively, after the fact of translation. So, what kind of definition is this, that includes the term that ought to be explained by what the very definition aims at determining? Does it not constitute a typical circular definition? Likewise, the unities of languages are also suppositions without which the above-mentioned definition would hardly make sense. Then, are we not required to examine what translation could be when languages are not countable or when one language cannot be so easily distinguished from another?

Here, we are already concerned with a range of problems difficult to evade when we attempt to comprehend the terms 'meaning' and 'language'. At the very least we can now say that, logically, translation is not derivative or secondary to meaning or language; it is as fundamental or even foundational in our attempts to elucidate the concepts of meaning and language. To the extent that translation suggests our contact and encounter with the incomprehensible, unknowable or unfamiliar, that is, with the foreign, we must insist that nothing starts until we come across the foreign.

If the foreign is unambiguously incomprehensible, unknowable and unfamiliar, it is impossible to talk about translation because translation simply cannot be done. If, instead, the foreign is comprehensible, knowable and familiar, it is supposedly unnecessary to call for translation. Thus, the status of the foreign must always be ambiguous in translation. The foreign is at the same time incomprehensible and comprehensible, unknowable and knowable, and unfamiliar and familiar, and this foundational ambiguity of translation derives from the ambiguity of the positionality generally indexed by the peculiar presence of the translator. For the translator is summoned only when two kinds of audiences are differentially postulated with regard to the source text, one for whom the text is comprehensible at least to some degree, and another for whom it is incomprehensible. The translator's work consists in dealing with the difference between the two kinds of audience. It goes without saying that the translator must encroach on both and stand in the midst of this difference. This situation may be rephrased as follows: for the first kind of audience, the source 'language' is comprehensible while for the second it is incomprehensible. Yet, it is important to note that the 'language' in this instance is figurative in the sense that it need not refer to any 'natural' language,

or *langue* in French, of an ethnic or national community such as German or Tagalog. Since it is equally possible to have two kinds of audiences when the source text is a heavily technical document or an avant-garde art piece. Here 'language' may well refer to a set of vocabulary and expressions associated with such professional field or discipline as 'legal language'; it may imply the style of graphic inscription or an unusual perceptual setting in which an artwork is displayed. The figurative and loose use of the term 'language' would invariably render the task of determining 'meaning' in the definition of translation extremely difficult.

This brief inquiry adequately discloses the instability of the conventional representation of translation. The source language and the target language are both relatively ambiguous, so that it is very difficult to evade a circular argument. The certainty of this representation is in fact dependent upon the certainty of the investment in this image or this co-figurative schema of translation. For the individuality of either language, source language or target language, is possible only at the level of representation. The individuality of language is figurative in the sense that it must first be figured out, that is, *represented* by a figure, image or schema.

A famous taxonomy of translation proposed by Roman Jakobson is an attempt to restrict the instability inherent in the figurative use of the word 'language.' Jakobson classified translation into three classes: "1) Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. 2) Interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language. 3) Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems" (Jakobson 1971: 261). Jakobson's taxonomy neither elucidates nor responds to our query about the supposition concerning the countability and organic unity of either a source or target language. It does not empirically validate the routinized supposition; rather, it merely repeats and reconfirms it. Nevertheless, it discloses that the propriety of 'translation proper' is dependent upon the supposed discernibility of the interlingual from the intralingual translation, of translation between separate languages from rewording within the same language unity. Thereby it prescribes and demarcates the locus of difference between two presumably ethnicised or nationalised communities of speakers by virtue of the fact that Jakobson presupposes that "translation proper" can and should only take place between two unequivocally circumscribed linguistic communities. In this respect, what Jakobson indicates by the type of interlingual translation is, firstly, an act of bordering or a conduct of inscribing a border thereby instituting two separate spheres. And, secondly, this differentiation is re-inscribed as a border between two unities or individual entities. By presuming the border not as a marker of distinction or differentiation but instead as a separation of one enclosed sphere from another, it re-defines a border thus inscribed as a distance between two entities, two enclosed communities. It thereby expunges the various loci of differences within such a linguistic community and locates the foreign exclusively outside

the putative unity of a language, consequently homogenizing the ethnic or national community of language at the level of representation.

As goes without saying, Jakobson's taxonomy of translation is nothing but a schematization of the globally-shared vision about the international world, consisting of basic units of nations and segmented by national borders into territories, rather than his idiosyncratic formula. In this schematization, the propriety of 'translation proper' does not only claim to be a description or depiction of what happens in the process of translation, but it also prescribes and commands how to *represent* and apprehend what one does in translation, or more specifically, what one is supposed to do in it.

In this respect, the propriety of 'translation proper' is a discursive construct: it is part and parcel of the discursive regime of translation—an institutionalized assemblage of protocols, rules of conduct, canons of accuracy, and manners of viewing. In other words, the discursive regime of translation is regulative, poietic, or productive in bringing out what speech act theorists call the 'perlocutionary' effect, repeatedly discerning the various features of language co-figuratively—that is, one unity being figured out in contrast to another—as if the two unities were already present in actuality.

As long as one is captive to this regime of translation, one can only construe the ambiguity inherent in the positionality of the translator as a duality that a translator occupies between a native language and a foreign one. One either speaks one's own mother tongue or a foreigner's. The task of the translator would then be to figure out a difference as discernible between the two languages, a difference reducible to the *species difference*. In each language one's positionality is discernibly determined, so that the difference one deals with in translation is figured out always as being between two linguistic communities, between two *species* in the *genus* of languages in general. Despite innumerable loci of potential difference within one linguistic community, this regime of translation obliges one to speak in such a manner as to address oneself according to the binary opposition of speaking to an interlocuter who is belonging to either the same language or the other. In this mythology of the mother tongue, it is often postulated that an individual human belongs to one language and that translation takes place between one belonging to one language and another belonging to another. Of course, there may well be some cases in which one individual belongs to plural languages, but such cases are somewhat exceptional or expected to be even abnormal.

Let me call this regime operating in translation globally today 'the modern regime of translation' since it outlines the international co-presence or juxtaposition of nations in the modern international world. And I call this attitude of address the 'monolingual address,' an attitude of relating to others in enunciation whereby the addresser adopts the position representative of a putatively homogeneous language community and relates to general addressees who are also representative of an equally homogeneous language community. I hasten to offer a disclaimer that by monolingual address I do not imply the social condition of conversation, generally referred to as homolingualism, in

which both the addresser and the addressee supposedly belong to the same language; they believe themselves to belong to different languages yet can still address themselves monolingually.

Translator: The Subject in Transit

However, the ambiguity inherent in the positionality of the translator is far from being exhaustively explicated. Let me draw attention to how the translator addresses herself or himself, in order to illustrate different ways of understanding the act of translation outside 'monolingual address'.

Being engaged in the task of translation, can one perform such speech acts as promising? Can the translator be responsible for what she says while translating? Reflecting the ambiguity of the positionality that the translator cannot evade, the answer must be equally ambiguous. Here the problem of the invariant message in our discussion of the definition of translation comes back to this question of 'meaning,' of what the translator 'means' to say or what she says to 'mean.'

In relation to the source text, the translator seems to occupy the positionality of the addressee to whom the source text addresses itself. She listens to or reads what the original addresser enunciates. But one cannot overlook the very situation in which a person is assigned to the role of a translator, namely, the stage setting in which the translator is a particular character to whom the addresser speaks or to whom the addressee listens. This may appear rather confusing! Let us remind ourselves that the translator is an exceptional social role who is formally neither the addresser nor the address at the scene of an illocutionary enunciation. The translator is a rather exceptional person to whom, formally at least, the addresser does not speak; neither is she a character to whom the addressee listens: the translator is a sort of third-person presence who is deliberately excluded from the relationship of illocution, of 'I' and 'you,' so that she is not permitted to behave either as a first person singular or a second person singular. The addressee for the enunciation by the addresser must not be located at the site where the translator is present, so that, in translation, the translator is always located elsewhere than the position of the addressee.

Here we come to the ambiguity inherent in the translator's positionality: undoubtedly the translator speaks, but she is not fully an addresser; she is both an addresser and not addresser at the same time; similarly she is both an addressee and not an addressee at the same time. This is to say that, even though the translator is spoken or written to, she cannot be the 'you' as addressed by the addresser. A similar disjunction can be observed in the translational enunciation of the target text. In relation to the audience of the target text, the translator seems to occupy the position of the addresser who addresses herself to the audience of the target text. The translator speaks or writes to the audience, so in this respect she is undoubtedly an addresser. Yet, it is not the translator who is supposed to be speaking or writing in translation for the addressee. Even though the translator is the one who speaks, the "I" uttered by

the translator does not designate the translator herself but rather the original addresser as the subject of the original enunciation. And if by "I" the translator indicates the subject of the secondary and translational enunciation, she will then have to designate the original addresser by 'she' or 'he,' by using a pronoun of the third person.

Let me reformulate this pronominal disjunction. In the enunciation of translation, the subject of the enunciation (the agent who enunciates) and the subject of the enunciated (the person who is signified by the "I" or some other syntactical arrangement within the utterance)—or between the speaking I and the I that is signified—are not expected to coincide with one another. The translator's desire must at least be displaced, if not entirely dissipated, in the translational enunciation, since the archetype of desire is to be found in the desire for what is signified by "I" in my utterance to coincide with the supposedly concrete and unique—but imagined—existence of 'me' (desire in "I want to be myself."). This is why the translator cannot be designated either as "I" or as "you" straightforwardly: the translator disrupts the attempt to appropriate the relation of the addresser and the addressee into the *personal* relation of first person vis-à-vis second person. To follow the determination of a 'person' as espoused by Émile Benveniste (i.e., only those directly addressing and addressed can be called persons, and that those who are referred to or talked about in the capacity of "he," "she," or "they" cannot be "persons" (Benveniste 1971: 224), the addresser, the translator, and the addressee cannot be persons simultaneously; the translator cannot be either the first or second, or even third 'person' undisruptively. In respect to personal relationality as well as to the addresser/addressee structure, the translator must be internally split and multiple, and devoid of stable positionality. At best, she can be a subject in transit. First, this is because the translator cannot be an "individual" in the sense of *individuum* in order to perform translation, and second, because she is a singularity that marks an elusive point of discontinuity in the social, while translation is the practice of creating continuity at that singular point of discontinuity. Thus, the point in social space that she occupies is an intensive rather than extensive one. Precisely for this reason, translation is an instance of continuity in discontinuity. It is a *poietic* social practice which institutes a relation at the site of incommensurability. This is why the aspect of discontinuity inherent in translation would be completely repressed if we determined translation as a form of communication. This is what I have referred to above as the ambiguity inherent in the positionality of the translator.

Thus, considering the positionality of the translator, we are introduced into the problematic of subjectivity in an illuminating manner. The internal split within the translator, which reflects in a certain way the split between the addresser and the translator or the addressee and the translator—as well as the split within the addresser or the addressee—demonstrates the way in which the subject constitutes itself. In a sense, this internal split within the translator is homologous to what is referred to as the fractured I, the temporality of "I speak," which necessarily introduces an irreparable distance between the

speaking I and the I that is signified, between the subject of the enunciation and the subject of the enunciated/statement. Yet, in the case of translation, ambiguity in the personality of the translator marks the instability of the 'we' as the subject rather than the 'I'; this suggests a different attitude of address which I elsewhere called "heterolingual address" (Sakai 1997: 1–17) and in which one addresses oneself as one foreigner to another foreigner. Captured in the modern regime of translation, however, the translator is supposed to assume the role of the arbitrator, not only between the addresser and the addressee but also between the linguistic communities of the addresser and the addressee. And, in the attitude of monolingual address, translation as repetition is often exhaustibly replaced by the representation of translation.

The Schema of Co-Figuration and the Modern International World

Let me elaborate on the process in which translation is represented through the modern regime of translation and construed as a communication between the co-figurative pair of the original and the target languages in the representation of translation. What is of significance in this process of representation is that language thus represented as a figure is neither a substance nor a thing in or of itself. At the level of *re*presentation, language is an image, figure, or schema: a replacement for what empirically exists in itself. However, the figure of language thus represented does not belong to the empirical domain of constitution; a language thus *re*presented does not exist in experience. Rather, it exists in the domain of regulative rules; it is no more than what Immanuel Kant calls 'a regulative schema.' (Kant 1929: 180–187, 549–552; Sakai 1997: 1–17).

Through the translator's labour, the incommensurability as difference—incommensurability can never be reduced to difference between species—which calls for the service of the translator in the first place is negotiated and worked on. In other words, the work of translation is a practice by which the initial discontinuity between the addresser and the addressee is made continuous and recognizable. In this respect translation is just like other social practices that render the singular points of discontinuity in social formation continuous. Regulated by means of the modern regime of translation, it is a historically specific form of practice that renders unrepresentable difference representable and reduces difference as the incommensurate into a specific difference. Hence, only retrospectively and after translation, can we recognize the initial incommensurability as a gap, wall or border between fully constituted entities, spheres or domains. But such a recognition is rendered possible only at the level of *representation*. When difference is represented as a gap, crevice, wall or border, it is no longer incommensurate. It is already mapped onto the striated space that can be segmented by national borders and other apparatuses of national and racial identification. Thus, the social event of translation becomes appropriable into the map of the international world.

Incommensurability as difference is more like 'feeling' that is prior to the explanation of how it is given rise to, and cannot be determined as a represented

difference (or specific difference in the arborescent schemata of individual, species and genus) between two subjects or entities. What makes it possible to represent the initial difference as an already determined difference between one language unity and another is the work of translation itself. This is why we must always remember that the untranslatable or what appears not appropriable by the economy of translational communication cannot exist prior to the enunciation of translation. It is translation that retroactively gives birth to the untranslatable.

To erase the temporality of translation with which the ambiguity of the positionality of translator manifests itself as disjunctive, we displace translation with the *re*presentation of translation. By virtue of the fact that the disruptive and dynamic processes of translation are all levelled out, the representation of translation according to the modern regime of translation enables the representation of ethnic or national positionalities. In spite of the presence of the translator who is always ambiguous and disjunctive, translation, no longer as difference or incommensurability but instead as representation, is made to discriminatorily posit one language unity against another (and one 'cultural' unity against another). In this sense, the representation of translation transforms difference in repetition into specific difference between two particularities, and it helps constitute the putative unities of national languages, thereby reinscribing the initial difference and incommensurability as a specific—i.e., commensurate and conceptual—difference between two particular languages, two *species* within the *genus*/generality of languages. As a result of this displacement, translation is represented as a form of communication between two fully circumscribed, different but comparable, language communities where social antagonism and various loci of difference are expunged.

The particular representation of translation in which it is understood to be communication between two particular languages is, no doubt, a historical construct. When considering the politico-social significance of translation, it is no accident that historically the modern regime of translation became widely accepted in many regions in the world at the time when the pre-modern orders of the passive vassal subject gave way to the disciplinary order of the active citizen subject in the modern formation of the nation-state. The modern regime of translation thus serves to reify national sovereignty in the most illustrating manner. As Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have argued, it makes "the relation of sovereignty into a thing (often by naturalizing it) and thus weed out every residue of social antagonism. The nation is a kind of ideological shortcut that attempts to free the concepts of sovereignty and modernity from the antagonism and crisis that define them" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 95).

Following Kant's concept of schematism, I have called a *poietic* technology embedded in the modern regime of translation which renders translation representable 'the schema of co-figuration.' Since the practice of translation remains radically heterogeneous to the representation of translation, translation need not always be represented as a communication between two clearly delineated linguistic media. There should be many different ways to apprehend

it in which the subjectivity of a community does not necessarily constitute itself in terms of language unity or the homogeneous sphere of ethnic or national culture. What must be emphasized here is that the unity of a language or the homogeneous sphere of ethnic or national culture as a whole comes into being in the imagination. Accordingly, it is this particular representation of translation that gave rise to the possibility of figuring out the unity of ethnic or national language together with another language unity. That is to say that the schema of co-figuration is a *technê* or technology by means of which a national community represents itself to itself, thereby constituting itself as a subject.

This auto-constitution of the national subject does not proceed unitarily; on the contrary, it constitutes itself only by making visible the figure of the other, with whom it engages in a translational relationship. It is important to note that, through the representation of translation, the two unities are represented as two equivalents resembling one another. Precisely because they are represented in equivalence and resemblance, however, it is possible to determine them as conceptually different and their difference is construed as species difference or a specific difference (*diaphora*) between two specific identities.

Modernity and the Schema of Co-figuration

In talking about modernity as understood in many parts of the world today, it is historically necessary to first anchor it in the original uses of this notion in the history of Western Europe. This is neither because the most authentic forms of modernity can be found in Western Europe, nor because modernity emanated from the centre, somewhat associated with Western Europe, to the periphery of the Rest. It implies that the notion of the 'modern' has been accepted and used primarily as a translation from its European originals for more than a century in many places, including Asia and Africa. One can talk about 'modern' as if there were a globally common understanding of it precisely because, all over the world, people assume it to be impossible to grasp without referring back to its European equivalents from which their local translations are believed to have derived. In the globally-accepted conception of modernity the schema of co-figuration between the West and the Rest is already working powerfully. Despite linguistic and social diversities among the different sites of the world, therefore, the notion of 'modern' is supposedly retraceable to the singular history of Western Europe, thanks to the Eurocentric structure incorporated in the very notion itself. In this respect, the schema of co-figuration is the form most appropriate to the representation of the Eurocentric world, and it is also a form in which the legacies of European colonialisms are preserved. As far as the local terms used for modernity are concerned, however, the situation was drastically different in 'pre-modern' periods preceding the translation of 'modern' into local equivalents.

The introduction of the 'modern' qualitatively changed the manner in which people customarily organized their historical experience. With the arrival of the 'modern', people in many places in the world began to map geopolitical

directives centring around colonial powers in Western Europe onto their pasts and futures, and to order their destinies and desires in terms of cartographic relativity. 'Modern' now implied much more than chronological closeness to the present moment in which periods are classified. Consequently, they sought a coherence in the transition from the experience of their past into the anxiety of their future by projecting a path from a *topos* outside the modern into a *topos* within. The progression of time from the past to the future was thus associated with a movement, on the cartographically imagined surface of the globe, from a geographic location outside the 'modern' civilization to another within it. As a matter of fact, this explains how the mythic construct called the West was constituted, and why it is structurally indissociable from the modern.

In the context of our discussion of translation, the 'modern' is marked by the introduction of the schema of co-figuration of the-West-and-the-Rest, without which it is difficult to imagine a nation or ethnicity as a homogeneous sphere.

It is important to keep in mind that, regardless of whether or not readers are resident in North America, Northeast Asia or countries of the European Community, today they inhabit social and discursive formations that are marked by modernity; they live in the international world. To the extent that they take the modern regimes of reading, writing, reciting, translating, and so on for granted, they tend to assume the regularities sustained by these regimes to be universally valid; they become incapable of imagining the possibilities of regimes beyond that of monolingual address.

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Naoki Sakai

Savremeni međunarodni svet: moderni režimi prevođenja

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak se fokusira na individualnost jezika. Kako se jezik može individualizovati, shvatiti kao nedeljiva celina i uporediti sa drugim jezicima koji se takođe pretpostavljaju kao individualne celine? Pokušaću da sprovedem istorijsko istraživanje o individualnosti jezika, s jedne strane, i o formiranju savremenog međunarodnog sveta u kojem se individualizovani jezici pretpostavljaju kao postavljeni jedni naspram drugih, s druge strane. Prevođenje je instanca u kojoj se jezici prvobitno zamišljaju kao individualni; istražiću kako je uveden novi način upravljanja prevođenjem, odnosno moderni režim prevođenja.

Ključne reči: individualnost jezika, reprezentacija prevođenja, savremeni režim prevođenja, jednojezično obraćanje, shematizam ko-figuracije, jednojezični adresat, subjekat u tranzitu

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Valeria Graziano

DECIPHERING HARM. NAMING THE ISSUE IN ITALIAN HEALTHCARE STRUGGLES DURING THE '60S AND '70S

Speaking is a difficult undertaking.
— Laura Conti, *Preface to the school edition* (1982), *A Hare with a Child's Face*

Finding the code of the non-voice is very difficult.
— Franco Basaglia, *Brazilian Lectures*

ABSTRACT
During the 1960s and 1970s, Italian workers' movements brought together concerns for wellbeing, environmental justice, critiques of automation, and the refusal of work into a radical vision for healthcare. This chapter examines three significant case studies that highlight how workers, activists, and trade unionists developed strategies to transform lived experiences into collective narratives. The first case explores Ivar Oddone's use of the "doppelgänger method," first developed with FIAT workers, a technique that facilitated the transformation of personal, somatic experiences into a collective diagnostic tool for collective political action. The second example focuses on how activists in the healthcare movement politicized the concept of toxicity. By developing a vocabulary around "noxiousness," they highlighted the inseparability of workplace health issues from broader capitalist structures. Whereas toxicity often refers to chemical exposure or measurable contaminants, *nocività* named a wider field of embodied, collective, and systemic harms, connecting factory fumes to domestic labour, community health, and environmental degradation and framing capitalism itself as an adverse factor to health. Finally, the article considers the resistance of the "Leboline" workers to the new Methods-Time Measurement (MTM) chainwork management at the Lebole textile factory in Arezzo. The all-female workforce opposed these new rhythms, which introduced an unsustainable work pace causing severe mental exhaustion and adverse health repercussions. These examples highlight the Italian movements' diverse practices of translation and naming as a means to expose and contest the multifaceted nature of exploitation, and their commitment to a proliferation of commitments as the articulation of an emancipatory politics of health. These Italian struggles also illuminate the broader questions of how health can be politicized today amid planetary crises, where the practice of naming harms determines not only what counts as a problem but also what kinds of political responses can be pursued.

KEYWORDS
Political translation, Healthcare struggles, Workerism, Anti-work politics, Ivar Oddone, Lebole workers, Toxicity

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The institution of proliferating commitments

How to name what produces harm? This is the question that runs through the healthcare struggles of 1960s and 1970s Italy, where workers, feminists, medical students and care workers rejected the idea of health as a neutral or self-evident category. From the post-war era until the end of the 1970s, struggles for healthcare occupied an increasingly significant segment of the workers' movements in Italy, generating a range of radical imaginaries in which health, gender, environmental and anti-work politics were explicitly intertwined for the first time. In order to make their embodied and often unarticulated forms of knowledge explicit, that is, the kinds of situated understandings of fatigue, risk, and harm that rarely register in official expertise, and to find a common language to speak about health in all its complexity, activists, workers and medical professionals had to develop strategies for converting lived somatic experiences into political narratives. Their efforts offer an array of collective techniques of articulation and translation that are still relevant for the contemporary context, as the capacity of creating living languages to name both issues and their remediations remains a key dimension of political organizing around care issues in the present.

The emergence of public health as a subject of political struggle unfolded within a context of rapid and extensive industrialization, which had tangible consequences for the workers themselves. In 1960s Italy, the national average witnessed one workplace fatality per hour and one accident every 6 minutes (in comparison, present-day figures indicate an average of 3 deaths per day and 800,000 annual accidents). These statistics solely account for direct deaths occurring at work, without considering the indirect impacts of environmental degradation and the onset of chronic conditions during that time. The number of worker fatalities was so staggering that it was aptly characterized as a veritable class war, as summarised in a slogan of the era: "Going to work must not be like going to war" (Comitato di base di Medicina 1970).

The following pages outline three episodes from the Italian healthcare struggles of the 1960s and 1970s that are particularly indicative instances of their commitment to finding new modes of articulation for the question of health and care: Ivar Oddone's method of co-inquiry, staged through the performative exercise of the "instructions to the doppelgänger"; the Porto Marghera workers' insistence on the need to struggle against the harm caused by work *itself*, rather than campaigning against the toxicity of particular jobs; and the Lebole women's use of contrafacta singing and songwriting, through which they voiced the psycho-somatic toll of the new MTM tempos and reclaimed the rhythms of a liberated time. Each case introduces a distinct modality of naming harm: bodily fatigue, generalized noxiousness, and the erosion of subjectivity under the factory's temporal discipline. Read together, these practices show how struggles did not converge on a single definition of health, but instead proliferated commitments across different terrains. It is in this refusal of closure, in this constant search for new registers of articulation, that we

can recognize how political translation (Iveković 2019) was enacted in practice and how health, rather than a discrete object, emerges as a by-product of wider struggles to reorganize life.

Instructions to the Doppleganger

The first example centres on the process that led to a trade union pamphlet titled *L'Ambiente di lavoro* (*The Work Environment*). This document was first published in 1967 by the Editrice Sindacale Italiana and reissued in 1971 by the newly formed metalworkers' federation. It was the outcome of a multi-year inquiry conducted by the medical commission of the Camera del Lavoro of Turin, directed by Ivar Oddone, a physician, former partisan, and communist militant, together with a group of worker-activists from the 5th FIOM section of the Mirafiori plant. The pamphlet was not marginal: over 130,000 copies circulated, and it was even adapted into a slide show and a comic-strip version, diffusing what became known as the "workers' model" of health analysis across unionized factories.

The pamphlet marked one of the union's first attempts to develop a coherent political stance regarding health and safety hazards at the workplace. It coined the slogan *"La salute non si vende"* ("health is not for sale") to challenge the widespread approach among workers to bargaining for higher wage compensation in exchange for dangerous and toxic jobs, rather than collectively seeking to eliminate the hazards at their source. In addition to naming the "work

environment" as a field of struggle in its own right, the pamphlet introduced the principle of "non-delegation" when it came to matters of health and safety. This principle implied that all workers affected by harmful conditions should have a direct say in shaping union demands and strategies, rather than leaving such decisions to technical experts or external authorities.

Within this framework, *L'Ambiente di lavoro* became a practical knowledge tool for both union organizers and shop-floor collectives. Its central conceptual innovation was the idea of *nocività* (noxiousness), broken down into four analytical factors: environmental conditions such as noise, temperature, light, ventilation, and humidity; exposure to toxic substances, including gases, dusts, fumes, and chemicals; physical factors, such as exertion, fatigue, and excessive rhythms of work; and finally, what was termed "mental load." While this last category will be discussed in more detail later, it is important to note here that it already signalled an expanded understanding of workplace harm beyond the purely material sphere.

The "four factors of noxiousness" were widely used to structure inquiries into health conditions at the workplace and became tools of facilitation in negotiations between workers, experts, and union organizers. They were easily understood without diluting medical knowledge, precisely because the categories had been generated through the lived experiences of workers themselves. *L'Ambiente di lavoro* emerged from a collective experiment in naming and taking stock of what undermined well-being, translating contextual conditions into a grammar of experience that could be shared across constituencies.

The methodology behind this process was developed by Oddone and his collaborators. Since external observers were barred from entering the factory, they initially tried to gather information outside the gates of FIAT and in off-work encounters. But these early interviews produced little that could be translated into effective demands. As Oddone later reflected, the main difficulty was a gap in language: the lived knowledge of workers could not be captured by the categories available to experts, and new forms of expression had to be forged to bridge this divide. Gianni Marchetto, one of the FIAT workers initially contacted by Oddone's crew, described the situation in an interview:

> *He was not able to make himself understood, and in turn, he wouldn't understand us workers much either* (...) *He didn't know anything about the production process, the names of the tools, and the operations. Likewise, we had no clue about the technical language used by him as a doctor, even if he had good intentions* (...) (Marchetto 2021)

In response, Oddone proposed to a group of fifteen FIAT workers to experiment with a methodology of collective storytelling that became known as the technique of "the instructions to the doppelganger." Over the course of regular meetings which lasted several months[1], he asked each of them to "give me all

1 These meetings were held within the framework of the "150 ore per il diritto allo studio" workers' education program, introduced in 1973 through the national

the information that would allow me to replace you without anyone noticing". Taking turns, workers thus narrated their personal habits, patters and everyday hacks at a granular level as instructions to an imagined sosia that would need to pass as them without raising suspicions. This approach encouraged the narrators to delve into the minutiae of their daily lives: how does their day start? What do they have for breakfast? Do they have breakfast at all? How do they commute to work? Are they usually punctual or late? And what happens next? The "instructions to doppelgänger" technique represented a novel methodology in union organizing processes, shifting the emphasis from the adoption of shared conceptual vocabularies to the production of collective embodied narration as the element of political subjectivation.

During the dialogues, storytellers were encouraged to map four key relationships in their everyday lives: their relationship with machines, tools, and tasks specific to their job description; with managers and bosses; with colleagues and peers; and with political organizations, such as the party or the union. The very ordinariness of these questions highlighted the epistemic asymmetry between medical experts and workers: knowledge of fatigue, nutrition, housing conditions or the length of commute was not a trivial factor, but a politically charged determinant of health. Within the "instructions to the doppelgänger" exercise, whenever the storytelling would deviate from the descriptive and turn towards commentary, adding for instance, Marxist jargon or personal critical judgements, the narrators would be interrupted and asked to go back to giving instructions more simply, "as one would when teaching another how to drive". This insistence on description over interpretation foregrounded the importance of using language to interweave a shared sense of working conditions: only by staying with the workers' own vocabulary of lived experience could a new diagnostic language emerge that was not transposed from elsewhere or imposed from above. Most importantly, the practice of taking turns in narrating, listening to each other and asking questions and clarification allowed for the group of workers to notice commonalities and patterns: whenever specific diseases or other ailments were found to occur with critical frequency, they would become the focus of further medical research and of targeted demands within factories.

Not too dissimilar from the consciousness-raising techniques experimented with by feminist movements during the same period, this approach encouraged participants to create a novel type of space for collective storytelling, where it became possible to foreground their first-hand knowledge on how to mitigate

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metalworkers' agreement. Oddone's seminars with FIAT worker-delegates were conducted under this scheme in the mid-1970s, although his earlier work (*Ambiente di lavoro*, 1971) predated its implementation. The "150 ore" granted industrial workers 150 paid hours over three years to pursue study and collective education, often organized through unions and extending well beyond vocational training into broader political and cultural formation (see Bianchini, Paolo, and Francesco Pongiluppi, "Struggle and Health. Sociability and Literacy in the "150 hours" Courses in Turin." *Rivista di Storia dell'Educazione* 11.1 [2024]: 97-109).

harms or to cheat fatigue. For example, in the stories later published in the volume *Esperienza operaia, coscienza di classe e psicologia del lavoro* (Oddone et al. 1977), these included collective slowdowns of the chainwork to carve out secret breaks as well as veritable hacking of tools by adding makeshift extra plastic protections to improve their safety. For this reason, the "instructions to doppelgänger" were often proposed to groups of workers belonging to the same work unit or team. This setting allowed the group to confirm, disagree with, or discuss specific problems and formed the foundation for a political translation that fuelled struggles and demands.

From the issues at work to the issue of work

One of the most important conceptual contributions from this season of struggle was the redefinition of what counted as the opposite of health. As the pamphlet *L'Ambiente di lavoro* made clear, the central analytical lens was *nocività* (noxiousness), broken down into what it called the "fattori di nocività", factors of noxiousness that included environmental conditions, exposure to toxic substances, physical strain, and mental load. These categories gave workers and union organizers a grammar for translating everyday harms into a political vocabulary: not abstract "illness" (a temporary and individual condition), not "fitness" (measured by optimal work performance), but noxiousness as the lived, systemic entanglement of fatigue, humiliation, pollution, and chemical exposure across the workplace, household, and community.

While it may seem close to "toxicity", the analytic and political traction of *nocività* is wider: while the first typically denotes a measurable property of substances or environments, the second captures the systemic and collective dimensions of harm: the ways that fatigue, humiliation, pollution, and chemical exposure intersect across workplace, household, and community.

Nocività encompassed the property of causing harm to living processes and inducing pathologies in both individual organisms and entire ecosystems. Processes or substances deemed *nocive* could have temporary or permanent effects, act swiftly or unfold as chronic conditions, lead to death or diminish the capacity of living beings to reproduce and thrive. By introducing this notion, the healthcare movements strategically broadened the scope of the health problem. They forged connections between the well-being of workers exposed to toxic materials in their workplaces and the living conditions in their impoverished and polluted neighbourhoods. They also considered the conditions of domestic labour, often marked by isolation and devaluation, and the broader impact of capitalist production on the natural environment. While *nocività* carried enormous resonance in the 1970s, it never became fully institutionalized in Italian public health or legal discourse. Today it persists more in activist vocabulary and historical memory than in policy frameworks, which have largely reverted to biomedical notions of "toxicity" or "risk." This partial disappearance is itself telling: *nocività* named a systemic horizon of harm that neoliberal institutions have found difficult to domesticate.

It was in this conceptual field that the Porto Marghera workers intervened with their 1971 pamphlet *Contro la Nocività — Against Noxiousness*. This communiqué was written by the group *Comitato Politico degli Operai di Porto Marghera*, a collective where renowned autonomist Marxist and feminist thinkers, including Maria Rosa Dalla Costa and Antonio Negri, first began their activism in the context of a petrochemical plant site near Venice (Feltrin and Devi 2021). *Against Noxiousness* documents a further moment of radicalization of working-class struggles for health, by asserting that healthy conditions could never be achieved as concessions within the inherently toxic and unjust relations of capitalist production. The document begins with the following statement:

> *It is necessary to immediately distinguish between a form of noxiousness as it is traditionally understood, linked to the working environment (toxic substances, fumes, dust, noise, etc.), and the one more widely linked to the capitalist organization of work.*

To then continue with the following analysis and demands:

> *To correctly pose the theme of noxiousness today [...] ultimately means to pose the question of power in its articulation. The only non-rhetorical way of posing and solving this problem is to place it on the organizational ground. In fact, we say that noxiousness must be opposed as it is noxiousness "of work": and therefore [we demand] a reduction in working hours for everyone and not just for "toxic" departments, an increase in wages, regulatory equality, free transport...* (Comitato Politico degli Operai di Porto Marghera 1971, my translation)

In this document, we witness the pivot from the problem of noxiousness *at* work to the noxiousness *of* work under capitalism. This conceptual reattribution carries implications that go beyond rhetoric, allowing the collective to articulate a position that politicizes health not only as a concern related to employment conditions. Here, the right to lead a healthy existence is no longer framed in terms of hazard reduction, but in outright opposition to the technologies, governance strategies, and forms of discipline mobilized to keep capitalism's harms tolerable. According to their perspective, work under capitalism is destined to remain inherently toxic, not only for the constituencies of workers labouring in its factories, but also for the consumers of its products, the users of its technologies, and the inhabitants of the territories impacted by its pollutants, wastes, and externalities.

From this vantage point, it is easy to understand why the Porto Marghera collective was also wary of the trade unions and the Communist Party's efforts to promote the "workers' model" of health analysis. They feared its pragmatic orientation could foreclose the emergence of more ambitious political imaginaries around health. In particular, their analysis of noxiousness as an inherent by-product of capitalist relations of production — in which someone, somewhere, always has to be made sacrificial for the accumulation of capital to continue — opened a productive tension with Oddone's efforts to give workers

tools to directly organize their health and safety demands, even while the critique of the expert as an apolitical agent remained common to both.

Factory workers already carried the crushing weight of survival, and to be tasked with devising remedies for the harm they endured at work risked placing on their shoulders an ultimately impossible responsibility. Rather than transforming health into a horizon for radical demands, such approaches threatened to be too easily co-opted into the diluted reformism of incremental improvements.

What matters here, however, is not only the rejection of reformist containment, but the recognition of the political opening created by naming noxiousness as the lived reality of the work itself. This insight did not remain confined to Porto Marghera. It soon found resonance among other actors, and in particular among those who were then studying medicine, who sought to produce a different imaginary and vocabulary around their future profession. Across Italy, a lively debate was taking place in faculties of medicine, where students insisted that questions of health could not be reduced to technical matters but had to be recast as political problems. In this sense, their critique shared many continuities and overlaps with the trajectory of *Medicina Democratica,* a national movement for health born in the early 1970s from the convergence of medical professionals, workers, and activists, which framed health as a collective right inseparable from struggles against capitalist exploitation.

The students' interventions gave form to a nationwide ferment that reoriented the discussion of health away from the mitigation of hazards and toward an indictment of work itself. A striking example comes from the *Quaderni del Movimento Studentesco Medicina*, published by the Milan-based collective, where we read:

> *"The ruin of workers' health is nothing but one aspect of exploitation; it is determined by the capitalist mode of production and becomes one with unemployment, impoverishment, ignorance, anti-worker violence, and everything that capitalism generates in order to perpetuate itself. In substance: in the fact that the worker must sell in exchange for a wage their intelligent force to the capitalist, in the fact that the capitalist, by paying a wage, can dispose of a functioning and intelligent organism to do with as he wants, in this lies the root of the constant, predictable destruction, legalized and unpunished, of workers' health. To the long-standing evils of unsafe machines, of substances and of noxious environmental conditions, there is added the economic crisis of capitalism and the will to unload it onto the workers through the intensification of exploitation. From all this, it follows that noxiousness derives from the mode of working and not from the material environment in which one works; the noxiousness of the work environment is nothing but a consequence and an effect of the capitalist organization of labour. In fact the way and the intensity with which a toxic substance (dusts, fumes, gases) or a physical factor of noxiousness (temperature, noise etc.) strike at the health of the worker by what is it determined if not by the way and the intensity with which the worker is forced to work, that is for example by the rhythms, the production times, the overtime, the shortages of staff etc., and therefore by the very same capitalist organization of labour?"* (Movimento Studentesco Medicina, *Quaderni*, n. 4, Milan, 1975, my translation)

Here is the diagnosis of noxiousness crystallizing into a direct attack on the capitalist organization of life itself. What the medical students articulated was that health is not the prerogative of doctors, nor the burden of workers alone, but inseparable from liberation from work itself — and that addressing it demands a political commitment stretching across professions, workplaces, and society at large.

The mental load

Noxiousness gave the movements a common vocabulary (as other commentators have noted, Feltrin and Sacchetto 2019), and it was crucial in practice, since it allowed actions and demands to link environmental hazards with the organization of labour through the language of health politics. Yet alongside it ran another current, less codified but no less present: an attentiveness to the ways work was damaging minds as well as bodies, harm that carried political consequences as much as somatic ones. Just as important was the dawning recognition that work itself was generating new forms of mental distress, an awareness that blurred the line between body and psyche and that opened up political questions every bit as pressing as toxic chemicals or unsafe machines.

This recognition found a vivid expression in the 1971 edition of *L'Ambiente di lavoro*, where an illustration in the section titled "The Work Environment Today" depicts a stylized worker shielding his face from four coloured balloons. Each balloon stands for a factor of noxiousness, but the fourth, the blue one marked "mental factors", is drawn twice the size of the others. This category of the analysis was discussed in the booklet as "mental load" and it offered a strikingly sharp language for reflection for the time. It identified not only boredom and monotony as forms of intellectual under-stimulation, but also the opposite extremes of stress, anxiety, and excessive responsibility, anticipating concerns about work-related distress that are common today. It also named humiliation in the workplace as a determinant of well-being, drawing attention to the affective and relational dimensions of harm.

The analysis of *The Work Environment* highlighted that while the first three factors of harm (exposure to toxins, physical strain, and environmental conditions) could in principle be reduced through pressures internal to capitalist competition (for example, through technological innovation, regulatory compliance, or firms' attempts to minimize compensation costs), the fourth factor pertaining to the mental well-being of workers was projected to worsen in the years to come. In retrospect, this forecast anticipated what today is often described as 'burnout' or the psychopolitics of work: the rise of anxiety, depression, and exhaustion as endemic features of contemporary labour regimes (Han 2015; Berardi 2009). This same forecast was also articulated in *Against Noxiousness*, as evident in statements such as: "In the new factory, coupled with a modest reduction in toxicities and thus in occupational diseases traditionally understood, there will be a strong increase in mental health disorders".

What Italian health activists realised was that chemical risks could always be shifted or regulated away in some places, but the mental noxiousness of work was built to expand, as capital increasingly colonised subjectivity itself. In hindsight, of course, it is possible to see that the toxins and the fatigue never went away, but they were simply displaced to the global South through deregulation, dumping, and offshoring. Yet their intuition was right: capital's cutting edge turned out to be its ability to mobilise our very cognitive and affective capacities. And they also understood something that only seems obvious now: that psychic strain, ecological damage, and the labours of social reproduction are not separate domains, but interlocking effects of the same machinery.

Against The Capitalist Tempo

If the warnings of Oddone and Porto Marghera pointed to the psychic corrosion baked into capitalist production, it was at Lebole that this prognosis found flesh. The women workers of this textile factory organised the first collective challenge to the new techniques of scientific management, turn their fury not only against toxins or fatigue, but against the capitalist tempo itself that stretched nerves and bodies beyond their limits.

When MTM arrived at Lebole in the early 1960s, brought in by Bedaux Consultants, the Italian offshoot of the French-British consulting network founded by Charles E. Bedaux, it marked a radical reorganization of the shop floor. In the eyes of workers, the new "American Department" at Lebole - nicknamed as such not because the consultants were U.S. based (they were reportedly Swiss), but because it felt unmistakably modern and synonymous with ruthless efficiency.

MTM built on the "time-and-motion" science pioneered by Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, who broke human effort into micromovements—*therbligs*—to be filmed, catalogued, and optimized for maximum efficiency (Gregg 2018). The

Gilbreths' vision presented productivity as both science and spectacle, borrowing the languages of cinema and sport to frame labour as a kind of athletic performance. But unlike athletes, who enjoy short careers buffered by teams of physiologists, nutritionists, and doctors, as Gianni Marchetto reminded me in interview, factory workers were expected to endure an endless season, without any comparable care or recognition.

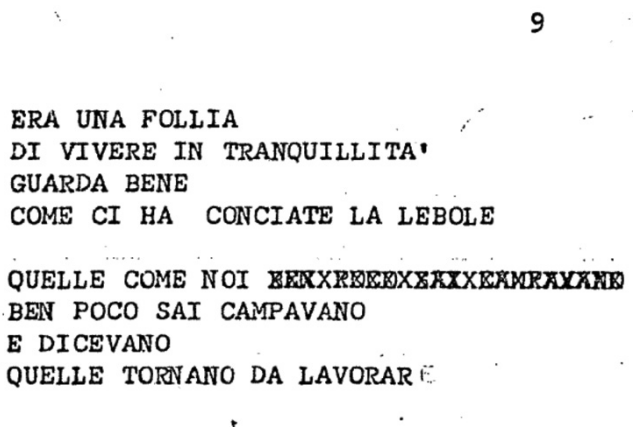
The Lebole women were the first large workforce in Italy to feel the full force of this choreography of efficiency. In the so-called "American Department," the new MTM tempos produced frequent collective fainting spells, insomnia, and nightmares of movements that never stopped. As the system spread across the factory, every gesture was scripted, every pause eliminated, as if the shop floor had become the stage for a brutal choreography, echoing not only the Gilbreths' micrometric vision but also contemporaneous experiments in Britain, where Warren Lamb, a student of Rudolf Laban, had collaborated with Laban and F. C. Lawrence to adapt movement notation originally developed for dance into industrial analysis to increase efficiency.

Yet at Lebole, efficiency turned into suffocation. The system demanded that every microgesture follow a silent script. Workers fainted in groups, and many endured insomnia or nightmares where their bodies could not stop moving. They recalled being sent by the factory doctor to receive "reconstituent injections" ("*punture ricostituenti*") though the workers I spoke to could not say with certainty what the injections actually contained.

The Lebole case gained national attention when one of the workers, during a short break, ended her life by stepping in front of a train, a tragic act that crystallized the unbearable pressures of the new regime. Over the next decade, the women of Lebole became an unmistakable presence within Italy's workers' movement. They did not limit themselves to contesting MTM's brutal tempos or the noxious presence of formaldehyde on the shop floor. Just as urgent were the invisible barriers that structured their lives outside the factory gates. The Leboline was organized around the hours wasted on inadequate public transport, which stretched the working day into an endurance test, and around the absence of public kindergartens, which kept childcare as an unpaid obligation borne by women alone. In naming these issues as part of the same struggle, they refused to separate health from the wider circuits of exhaustion and care. Each demand translated into another, proliferating commitments, weaving together a politics of health that insisted the body could not be divided into workplace and home, production and reproduction.

What makes their trajectory extraordinary is that most of these women had entered the factory from rural, patriarchal, and politically uninitiated backgrounds. Their rapid politicization, and the radical clarity with which they articulated it, was nothing less than a collective invention. It was, in effect, an ongoing practice of political translation: turning embodied distress into a grammar of struggle that others could join. One of the most striking techniques to emerge from this process was their idiosyncratic use of the *contrafactum* technique.

Contrafactum is a compositional technique that likely dates back as far as the origins of songs themselves, and it has been well-documented since medieval times. It involves creating new lyrics based on an existing melody to convey a different message, often with an ironic or satirical tone. While this practice was already common among various workers' movements, who would sing politically charged songs during strikes and mass demonstrations, the Lebole workers (nicknamed the "Leboline") took it further by adapting the lyrics of popular contemporary ballads from events like the Sanremo festival, rather than relying solely on traditional folk songs. These songs were not only sung during demonstrations but also during work, serving as a means of keeping each other informed about negotiation updates and boosting morale.



9

ERA UNA FOLLIA
DI VIVERE IN TRANQUILLITA'
GUARDA BENE
COME CI HA CONCIATE LA LEBOLE

QUELLE COME NOI [illegible]
BEN POCO SAI CAMPAVANO
E DICEVANO
QUELLE TORNANO DA LAVORAR

The translation at play here, then, is not simply one that traces the adaptation of complex political struggles to simpler lyrics that can be more easily put into metrics and sung to a tune. But it was, more crucially, one that was interested in producing an affective politics to accompany said informational content. The politicization of affect through their *contrafacta* is for the Lebole workers a de facto strategy of resistance against the brutal tempo of the factory that is literally consuming their bodies, ageing them prematurely and palpably under the relentless fatigue of factory work and social reproduction labour at home. At the same time, *contrafactum* also intervened in pop culture by weaponizing it against the misery of the factory. While pop music was all about celebrating escapism, romance and consumption, the use of its melodies to speak about a tempo that was killing them in the production of fashionable men's suits was a powerful inversion. This strategy enabled them to confront these challenges head-on, fostering a collective sense of resilience and determination, rooted in stolen moments of recreation and collective writing/sense-making.

We know about the Leboline's contrafacta thanks above all to the work of Antonio "Tonino" Firrao, the ethnomusicologist who followed the case closely and preserved much of the material in his archive. Firrao was part of a wider

milieu of communist and leftist researchers into music who, in those years, were collecting peasant songs and studying how popular repertoires carried memory, dissent, and tools for collective timing. Many of the groups he worked alongside the *Nuovo Canzoniere Italiano,* recording the chants and work-songs of agricultural labourers, where rhythm itself had long been wielded as a political resource, setting the pace of toil and sometimes resisting it. It was precisely this sensitivity to tempo as both discipline and insurgency that made the Leboline's practice of reworking pop melodies into shop-floor testimonies so compelling to Firrao. In their *contrafacta* he saw something new: not only the survival of a tradition, but its radical transformation inside the factory, where song became a weapon against MTM's brutal choreography, a way in which the women made sense of their lives, reclaimed stolen joy, and translated the grinding tempo of MTM into a temporality of liberation.

Political Translation, Grammar, and Health as a By-Product

The implications of workers' autonomy and the refusal of work that were central to the Italian political laboratory of these decades, offer a valuable framework for conceptualizing instituent processes and public/common infrastructures of wellness as something beyond mere state machinery. Italy became the second country in Western Europe, following the United Kingdom in 1948, to establish a public universal healthcare system in 1978. This system, known as *sistema sanitario nazionale* (SSN), was designed as a free-of-charge service accessible to all, regardless of employment status, and funded through general taxation (Giorgi and Pavan 2019). The political laboratory of the preceding decades leading up to the establishment of the SSN proved to be dynamic and influential, extending its impact beyond Italy's borders. It even served as an inspiration for working-class mobilization efforts in healthcare in South America, among other regions.

During this time, a range of innovative institutions were invented and (with varying longevity) established as part of the provision of welfare, not only addressing various health and care issues simultaneously, but also recognizing their interconnectedness. One notable example is the ideation of Territorial Healthcare Units, known as USL, during the creation of the public healthcare system in 1978. These units originally combined a public health mandate with a duty of care for the environment, and they were effective organizations in identifying factories and their pollution as a major factor of risk for both.

Another instance of the instituent effervescence of these struggles (Negri 1992) can be observed in the network of reproductive health centres, known as *consultori*, which were independently funded by feminist movements and later adopted by the national healthcare system. These centres provided educational resources on female anatomy and sexuality, contraception services, and psychological counselling for women in abusive relationships. Additionally, another revolutionary struggle known as the deinstitutionalization movement played a significant role in transforming mental healthcare. While commonly

remembered as a collaboration between psychiatrists and patients to abolish asylums (resulting in a law passed in 1980, making Italy the first country to do so), this movement simultaneously fought for the establishment of a radically new approach to psychiatric care that gave rise to social cooperatives and social enterprises, accompanied by a new legal framework that supported with public resources further experimentation in establishing autonomous therapeutic communities. These communities not only served as sources of independent livelihood for service users, but also acted as a benchmark for transforming work and care relationships on a broader societal scale. These healthcare institutions operated transversally and porously between populations, creating zones of contact and shared analysis between diverse issues, areas of expertise and levels of commitment. They were conceived and organized to act as membranes between different social, political, mental and environmental forms of injustice, actively fostering explicit political goals to sustain these connections and uncover hidden underlying causes. At times, the creation of such connections would be a matter of uncovering hidden common causes of health problems; other times, it would be a matter of committing to the possibilities of political translation over time: creating new epistemologies out of concrete modes of intervention that refused to simplify the multiplicity and complexity of political reality into mere binaries of "for" or "against" (Iveković 2009: 189).

The three stories presented here are just fragments of the more composite and polyphonic process that led to the epistemological and concrete institution of health as a public good in Italy. The achievements of this season of struggle were inscribed in the newly founded national health system, yet from the very beginning they were systematically subjected to reactionary countermeasures and waves of reform that sought to dilute their radical potential. This ongoing rollback has left Italian healthcare in a difficult and contradictory situation today, though exploring this trajectory lies beyond the scope of the present article. Nonetheless, recalling these struggles remains crucial, as they continue to illuminate alternative models of care and collective provision that have lost none of their urgency. They demonstrate the different registers of political translation, understood not as a literal transfer between languages, but as the work of creating a grammar that enables heterogeneous experiences to resonate across constituencies.

As Paolo Virno (2004) put it, grammar is the shared structure that enables a multitude of utterances: not the reduction of voices to a single "people", but the condition that makes many forms of expression mutually intelligible. Political translation, then, can be seen as the effort to carry situated knowledge and embodied practices into such a shared grammar, multiplying their capacity to mobilize without erasing their specificity.

The first of these commitments speaks to approaches such as conricerca, workers' inquiry and participatory action research, which centre on lived experiences within the complex web of power relations and systemic injustices as a valid source of knowledge. Here, translation encompasses the process of

transforming different expert knowledge, demands, and ideas into a language that resonates with different constituencies and mobilized collective action. In a second sense, political translation became a technique to sustain a radicalization of demands, in a quantum leap from articulating situated problems to unmasking the more systemic nature of exploitation of life in all its forms under the work regime. And finally, improvised language practices such as contrafactum became the site for collective care and solidarity that called attention to how struggles are always simultaneously material, somatic, and affective.

One distinctive aspect that emerged from the workers' healthcare movements that propelled these new institutions into existence was their adept use of language as a powerful tool for political subjectivation across diverse groups. Instead of trying to mobilize around "health," they side-stepped the problem of arriving at a distilled and univocal definition of what might constitute it, and focused instead on giving names (and causes) to its opposites. Yet noxiousness was only one modality of naming. Other registers emerged too: the mental load already identified by the doppelgänger groups, or the psycho-somatic exhaustion voiced in the Lebole women's contrafacta against the relentless tempos of MTM. Each case opened a different grammar of harm, refusing closure and broadening the political vocabulary through which health could be contested. The naming of harms must therefore be understood as a crucial moment of these experimentations in collective health-care: how problems are analysed, who participates in this analysis, and which conceptual frameworks are articulated all shape the political responses that can follow. To frame this through Virno: political translation provided the grammar that allowed different utterances of fatigue, noxiousness, or psycho-somatic time to be mutually intelligible without being reduced to a single idiom. This is also what allows us to theorize health as a by-product: never given in advance, never the result of a single policy or institution, but emerging indirectly from wider struggles to reorganize work, reproduction, and ecological life.

The insistence on naming and translating harms in order to keep "health" open yet politically graspable was not only a feature of the collective practices examined here, but also marked the work of many protagonists of that season of health activism. Giulio Maccacaro, physician and epidemiologist, edited the series *Medicina e Potere* (Medicine and Power), one of the first platforms for critical debates on medicine in Italy, and co-founded the already mentioned *Medicina Democratica* network. As he put it, *"The collective struggle for collective health challenges the entire mode of production and contests precisely that which it cherishes most: its false - or deviant – rationality"* (Maccacaro 1976). Franco Basaglia, who together with Franca Ongaro spearheaded the anti-asylum movement, showed that mental health could never be reduced to individual pathology but had to be understood as the expression of social relations. As Ongaro Basaglia asserted, their work followed "*two seemingly distinct yet deeply intertwined threads: the body… and the coercions imposed upon it (institutions, ideologies, science, social organization)*" (Ongaro Basaglia 1982: VIII). She warned that "*any new institution, no matter how technically innovative,*

inevitably reproduces the same political function as the old one" if the broader social context remains unchanged (Ongaro Basaglia 1982: X). She emphasized the need to "*expose in practice the tight interconnections between specialized domains and the wider socio-economic order they serve to protect,*" and to uncover "*the processes by which any innovative intervention is neutralized… through the ideologization of reality*" (Ongaro Basaglia 1982: XI–XII). Laura Conti, physician, feminist, and early ecological thinker, wove ecological critique into Marxist politics, illuminating how industrial disasters and environmental degradation exposed the porous boundaries between human and more-than-human bodies. Her writing on the Seveso disaster of 1976 (one of Europe's worst chemical accidents, comparable in scale to Bhopal a decade later) helped situate health within planetary entanglements of toxicity and inequality. Reflecting on that experience, she wrote: *"I began to realize that 'environment' is not only water, air, land; that one cannot consider humans in their relationship with nature without also considering them in their relations with other humans, with the objects they produce, or the plants they cultivate"* (Conti 1977: 85).

While all were clinical practitioners, they wrote and spoke insistently in search of new modes of articulation within public discourse, pushing medicine beyond the clinic and into the field of politics. These well-known figures, however, were only the most visible faces of much broader movements that treated healthcare not as a sectoral demand but as inseparable from wider struggles to reorganize life otherwise. Seen from today, a moment marked by the erosion of welfare protections and the depoliticization of health into medicalized, positivist framings, their common thread comes into sharper relief. Across different institutions, knowledge, and practices, they treated health as a regime of by-productions: something generated indirectly, in the interstices of struggles against exploitation and for the reorganization of life. To think of health as a by-product, then, is to carry forward this lesson, contrasting it with contemporary approaches that seek to isolate health as a technical object of policy or as a product, rather than a field of collective invention.

This legacy remains urgent today, not only in Italy but globally. In the wake of Covid-19, amidst the erosion of welfare protections and the hollowing-out of public systems, the grammar of health has been overtaken by two booming industries: fitness and wellness. The fitness industry promises optimization of the quantified self, sculpting bodies for endurance and performance in line with the demands of productivity. The wellness industry commodifies fragments of non-Western practices, stripped of their histories and sold back as natural or ancestral remedies calibrated to gendered anxieties and consumer niches. On the surface they appear distinct, yet they converge: neither confront the material and political determinants of harm, the nocività, nor they claim to counteract. Both displace health into a privatized domain of individual optimization and consumption, erasing the collective and instituent experiments that once made health a terrain of political struggle. Against this backdrop, the inheritance of the Italian movements does not provide stable solutions, but a different obligation: the commitment to proliferating commitments, to never

reducing health to a single object, but to tracing its emergence as a by-product of many struggles, so that naming harms may become a collective grammar, a practice of expression that refuses the reduction of our capacities to the grind of work, or worse, to the status of the superfluous and the sacrificial. To resist reducing health to one essence, one commodity, or one policy, and instead to treat it as the emergent by-product of struggles that cut across work, reproduction, and ecology.

It is in this sense that Franco Basaglia's words remain resonant: "Noi, nella nostra debolezza, in questa minoranza che siamo, non possiamo vincere, perché è il potere che vince sempre. Noi possiamo al massimo convincere. Nel momento in cui convinciamo, noi vinciamo." – "We, in our weakness, as this minority that we are, cannot win, because it is power that always wins. At most, we can persuade. And in the moment that we persuade, we win." In Italian, vincere means to win, and convincere means to persuade, literally, "to win with." In Basaglia's phrasing, victory shifts register: not the triumph of power, but the unfinished work of conviction, persuasion as the only kind of winning worth having. In this sense, persuasion itself becomes a mode of political translation, a grammar of health as collective conviction rather than imposed consensus.

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Valerija Gracijano

Razotkrivanje štete: imenovanje problema u borbama italijanskog zdravstva tokom šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina

Apstrakt

Tokom šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina radnički pokreti u Italiji povezali su pitanja blagostanja, ekološke pravde, kritike automatizacije i odbijanja rada u radikalnu viziju zdravstva. Ovo poglavlje razmatra tri značajne studije slučaja koje pokazuju kako su radnici, aktivisti i sindikalisti razvijali strategije da lična iskustva pretoče u kolektivne narative.

Prvi slučaj odnosi se na Ivara Odonea i njegovu upotrebu „metode dvojnika", prvobitno razvijene sa radnicima FIAT-a, tehnike koja je omogućavala da se lična, somatska iskustva transformišu u kolektivni dijagnostički alat za kolektivno političko delovanje.

Drugi primer fokusira se na to kako su aktivisti zdravstvenog pokreta politizovali pojam toksičnosti. Razvijanjem vokabulara oko pojma „štetnosti", naglašavali su nerazdvojivost pitanja zdravstvene zaštite na radnom mestu od šireg kapitalističkog okvira. Dok se toksičnost obično odnosi na izloženost hemikalijama ili merljivim zagađivačima, *nocività* je obuhvatala šire polje utelovljenih, kolektivnih i sistemskih šteta, povezujući fabrike i njihove isparenja sa kućnim radom, zdravljem zajednice i degradacijom životne sredine, pri čemu je sam kapitalizam bio uokviren kao nepovoljan faktor po zdravlje.

Na kraju, tekst se bavi otporom radnica „Leboline" prema novom sistemu MTM (Methods-Time Measurement) u tekstilnoj fabrici Lebole u Arecu. Ova isključivo ženska radna snaga usprotivila se novim radnim ritmovima koji su nametali neodrživ tempo, izazivajući ozbiljnu mentalnu iscrpljenost i negativne zdravstvene posledice.

Ovi primeri pokazuju raznovrsne prakse prevođenja i imenovanja u italijanskim pokretima kao sredstva za razotkrivanje i osporavanje višeslojne eksploatacije, kao i njihovu posvećenost umnožavanju angažmana u artikulaciji emancipatorske politike zdravlja. Italijanske borbe osvetljavaju i šira pitanja o tome kako se zdravlje danas može politizovati u uslovima planetarne krize, gde sama praksa imenovanja šteta određuje ne samo šta se prepoznaje kao problem, već i kakve političke odgovore možemo slediti.

Ključne reči: politički prevod, zdravstvene borbe, radnički pokret, politika odbijanja rada, Ivar Odone, radnice Lebole, toksičnost

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Francoise Vergès

FINDING THE RIGHT TRANSLATION FOR "PEACE" IN A LAND OF WAR

ABSTRACT
This article explores the capture of the notion of "protection" by the State and its institutions – police, army, and the law – and its weaponization by carceral feminism. It means first studying how the terms "war" and "peace" have been weaponized by imperialism and the State, then addressing antiracist, anti-patriarchal, anti-imperialist and feminist decolonial politics of protection. In other words, how discourses about war and peace, and their implementations, have been deployed to justify a protection that rests on the criminalization and incarceration of those who dissent, on military interventions, creation of armed militia, legitimation of police violence, militarization of public space, and surveillance.

KEYWORDS
feminism, state, surveillance, decolonialism

To address the topic "The Politics of Translation: Translation, Nation, Gender," I will make remarks about the notion of "protection," its capture by the State and its institutions of the police, army, and the law, as well as its weaponization by carceral feminism.[1] This means exploring how the terms "war" and "peace" have been weaponized by imperialism and the State, before addressing antiracist, anti-patriarchal, anti-imperialist and feminist decolonial politics of protection. In other words, how discourses about war and peace, and their implementations, have been deployed to justify a protection that rests on criminalization, incarceration, military interventions, creation of armed militia, legitimation of police violence, militarization of public space, and surveillance. Who is protected by the State and who is not? How does the law protect the State and its institutions from being challenged about systemic racial and sexist violence? What kind of protection do the oppressed, the subalterns,

1 On carceral feminism, used as a critical term targeting such feminism that preaches increased prison sentences for gender violence as a solution, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carceral_feminism (editor's note).

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the black, indigenous and brown communities, migrants, refugees imagine and practice against systemic racial and sexist violence? Rethinking protection is made urgent by, on the one hand, the increasing gap between the multiplication of laws and measures taken by the State and international institutions to protect children, women, "nature," and the capitalist economy of extraction and exhaustion that is fabricating, literally, an irrespirable and uninhabitable planet for the many, and, on the other, the role of carceral feminism in the multiplication of criminalizing laws in the name of protecting the vulnerable.

What could explain the growing gap between technological and scientific progress, or the state of feminism's instrumentalization of protection? Was it a question of translation? Of words misused? Or, the capture by racial capitalism of what challenges its regime of extraction, exploitation and dispossession? I do not think it is a question of translation, nor of the polysemy of words but rather, as many have shown, that depending on the position we take, we mean different things even though the same words are used. I am not saying anything new, what interests me here is how do deploy a constant pedagogy on vocabulary, why we need to engage in a repetitive pedagogy of clarification because the meaning of words is either distorted or commodified. The process through which capitalism appropriates and commodifies words of struggle has accelerated, and I have noticed—I am speaking here from my experience as an activist especially in the last decade—confusion, a sense of powerlessness, and a repeated demand for a new vocabulary. Though I understood that demand, I wonder why we thought that *that* new vocabulary would escape the avidity of neoliberal capitalism which, to survive, needs to colonize everything: words, images, sounds, and human and non-human experiences. Translation would then be clarification and practice, whose content must be specified in relation to the context.

In what sense am I using the term protection? There is the State protection of the interests of private property, patriarchy, corporations, and racial capitalism. There are the protections won by the struggles of social and political movements and unions to hinder brute exploitation, theft, censorship, and repression, the rights that corporations and States either seek to slow down or strike down. There is community protection, the practices developed by communities (indigenous, black, brown, BIPOC[2] women, poor) to protect their land, their memories, their knowledge, from being stolen, expropriated, erased. There is the protection that a newborn needs to survive, the protection offered to the elderly, the non-valid, the wounded. There is the armed protection to defend the land, the forest, the rivers, from being stolen, contaminated, exploited, destroyed. Here, I will be speaking of protection as understood by the State and capitalism, and by carceral feminism, before presenting an antiracist decolonial feminist politics of protection. I will not discuss these questions from an academic point of view, from philosophy or psychology of protection – although I consider them important, indeed, they nourish my thinking – but

2 BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (editor's note).

from the discussions I have had as an activist. When I was discussing my book *A Feminist Theory of Violence. A Decolonial Perspective* (Vergès 2022), the idea that the term "protection" could be saved from its contamination by patriarchy, racism, and imperialism was seen as impossible. I argued that there was no reason to leave the notion of "protection" in the hands of carceral feminism and imperialism.

There is a long history of organizing protection from enslavement, racism, sexism, exploitation, and dispossession, with the deployment of a great diversity of weapons: escape, marooning,[3] armed defense, using liberal laws against those who voted for them, going underground, building refuges and sanctuaries, strikes, writing, and publishing. But as I said above, the multiple assaults on the conditions of living on the planet have made the question of protection and of its translation into a vocabulary of refusal, struggle, and confrontation with power more urgent.

Protection as a state of permanent war

In the state of permanent war in which we live, a state that has never been the exception for the peoples in the Global South, protection is not a universal right. Despite being framed as such by international agreements, protection must be fought for. By saying "we," I mean all those who have been targeted by racism, extraction, violence, and dispossession. The modern world did not invent war but made it inseparable from its conception of peace, commerce, and profit. The slave trade was war being waged against Africans, colonization was war against indigenous peoples, exploitation is war, extraction is war. War is understood here as the ways in which extraction, exploitation, and Western national economic growth and political domination are ensured. War is not just bombing and shooting but economic, commercial, industrial war, ecocide, police violence, the politics that legitimate murder and premature death. I take war as a central question, we need to look at what causes war, what historical and historical-economic conditions give rise to it, what is called "peace" in that world order and hence who, in that world, deserves to be protected from harm. In that context, a better translation for peace should be "ceasefire." Peace is the short interlude between two wars, or the indication that war here is being displaced over there. Peace is another word for rules of domination.

In Europe, a continent where peace, we are told, not only was inseparable from its making but also had naturally prevailed for decades, two events fully brought back a problem of translation. The first one was in 2021 when thousands of refugees were caught in a "no-human" land on the Belarus-Poland border by the armies of both countries. Women and men of all ages and stages of validity, children and babies were doused in ice water by the Polish army, beaten

3 *Marooning* is the word used to describe the act of fleeing the slave plantation. It is now used in the Caribbean and the islands of the Indian Ocean to describe the construction of autonomy and withdrawing from the coloniality of power.

by Belarus police, left without food, water, and housing, chased and hounded into the forests, all in sub-zero temperatures. Their presence was weaponized by both governments, they were transformed into a mass of bodies, without identities, emotions, needs and desires. Many lost their lives, their corpses left to animals when they were not found and buried by Poles who had organized solidarity. Solidarity was criminalized, as it had already been elsewhere. The Polish government accused Belarus of practicing "hybrid warfare" by pushing migrants towards the European bloc's borders in an attempt to "destabilize" it. The European Community took up the expression, expressed its support for the far-right Polish government and financed the construction of a 186 km wall between both countries (Euronews, 2022).[4] Though reports in February 2023 continued to denounce pushbacks of refugees at that border, the invasion of Ukraine by Russian armies erased the brutal abandonment and killing of brown and black refugees.

When Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February 2022, peace, we were told, which had long reigned in Europe, was shattered. That idea, deeply anchored in Western Europe, erased already in Europe the military dictatorship in Greece (1967-1974), facilitated by British imperialism, the fascist dictatorship in Portugal (1933-1974), and the fascist Francoist dictatorship in Spain (1939-1978), and the war in Yugoslavia (1991-1999). But importantly, it rested on the negation of the fact that the price of European "peace" had been bought through constant, incessant, and interminable wars, either waged by European armies, by proxy armies, or provoked and encouraged by Western imperialism in the Global South. When, in 2012, the European Union was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, it was said to be a "*fitting endorsement of the extent to which Europeans have turned their backs on violence and conflict in their relations with each other. In the world, they have turned their backs on centuries of colonialism and wars of conquest*" (SciencesPo, 2022). Wars were then being openly waged in Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, and politics of State repression and murder were launched by Israel in Palestine, in Pakistan, Lebanon, Burundi, and many other parts of the planet. In Europe, though anti-migrant and anti-refugee politics were by that time regularly denounced, European institutions lamented that the "*escalating migration crisis is testing the European Union's commitment to human rights and open borders* (OECD, 2014; Park, 2015).

Despite systemic war, Europe remains the name for peace, as the argument for a series of conferences in 2023 at the Collège de France (Paris) made explicit:

> It is common to consider the political idea of Europe as inseparable from that of peace. This age-old project of pursuing a peaceful European (and then world) order, notably through law, should interest us at a time when the discourse of Europe as a power is asserting itself in a context of rebalancing of powers in the world and when questions of security and defense are regularly invited into European debates, notably in France.

4 See also: HumanRightsWatch, 2022; Valcárcel, 2022; ECRE, 2022.

> Through their history, we will unroll a 'red thread' that links the ideals of the Enlightenment to those of the European Union, through the European Concert of the 19th century and the League of Nations, despite the wars that have regularly upset the continent. We will see how the idea of peace (as a goal and value) shaped the idea of a politically unified Europe, long before the construction of Europe and even before the era of nation-states. (Ghervas, 2023)

The fact that a sentence such as "*The idea of peace (as a goal and value) shaped the idea of a politically unified Europe, long before the construction of Europe and even before the era of nation-states*" could be uttered in 2023 says a lot. It goes further. Peace is not simply ceasefire and war a permanent state, but both are racialized, as we observed in the differential treatment of refugees at the Poland/Ukraine border.[5] Reports showed that European States and societies mobilized very quickly to house Ukrainian refugees, offering housing, jobs, education, social services while black, brown and Roma refugees were stopped at the border with Poland, denied rights, and profiled. "*If you give a lift to a refugee at the Ukrainian border you are a hero. If you do it at the Belarus border you are a smuggler and could end up in jail for eight years*," said Natalia Gebert, founder and CEO of Dom Otwarty, a Polish NGO that helped refugees in 2022 (Euronews, 2022). While Ukrainians enjoyed more lenient entry requirements, easier travel within the EU, and free public transportation and phone services, could enter Slovakia and Poland without papers, non-white refuges encountered hostility and racism. Hungarian leader Viktor Orbán, who described migration as a "poison" in 2016 targeting Syrian refugees, declared that Ukrainian would be welcomed as "friends" (Esposito, 2022).

Revolutionary feminists, leftist organizations, anti-colonialists, and anti-imperialist Marxists have written on war as colonial aggression and as the protection of the interests of the weapons industry, extractivism, dispossession, imperialism, and exploitation. As Rosa Luxemburg has written, war is "a competitive struggle amongst fully mature capitalisms for world domination, for the exploitation of the remaining zones of the world not yet capitalistic" (Luxemburg, 1915). The last ten years the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, the armed order and chaos in Myanmar, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Horn of Africa, Sudan, the Sahel region, Lebanon, Yemen, the Israeli colonial occupation of Palestine with its daily violation of human rights, showed how much the idea of peace has been weaponized and emptied of any kind of meaning related to peaceable, bloodless social organization.

In a 1911 text written by Rosa Luxemburg, I happened to stumble upon her notion of "armed peace" which I found illuminating for clarifying the distinction between peace as war by other means and peace as living in peacefulness (Luxemburg, 1911). In "Peace Utopias," Luxemburg discusses the difference between peace as "partial limitation of armaments" and peace as the end of capitalism which means the end of "militarism in both its forms – as war and as

5 See: AIDA, 2023; Ratecka, 2022; Lacy & van Houtum, 2022; Limbong, 2022.

armed peace" since militarism "is a legitimate child, a logical result of capitalism, which can only be overcome with the destruction of capitalism" (Luxemburg, 1911). She adds, "A little order and peace" is, therefore, just as impossible, just as much a petty-bourgeois Utopia, with regard to the capitalist world market as to world politics, and with regard to the limitation of crises as to the limitation of armaments" (Luxemburg, 1911). Following her remark, I propose that the state of permanent war has two forms: war with the sound and use of bombs, chemical weapons, rape, torture, tanks, and contamination of land, rivers and humans and nonhuman species by the afterlives of war, censorship, dispossession, destruction, and armed peace with drones, surveillance, criminalization of dissent, chemical pollution, dispossession, exploitation, extraction. Under armed peace, there is a form of order, the regime can claim to guarantee harmony and propriety. Today, it is even possible to hide the physical presence of the police thanks to other forms of surveillance and absorption of rules of discipline by the population. In some states, hiding violence has been perfected. In the United Arab Emirates, the motto of the State "order and harmony" conceals censorship and violence. There and elsewhere, surveillance capitalism has perfected through new technologies, the accumulation of personal data, and predictive algorithms have made the politics of armed race even more powerful but weapons still kill. For decades now, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has been monitoring the ceaseless increase of arms production and of their sophistication, an industry that the war in Ukraine has boosted.

Protection and Carceral Feminism

All over the world, women are disproportionately affected by systemic, gender-based and sexual violence, by the lack of access to land, by discrimination and exploitation in the labor market. Every day in the world, on average, at least 137 women are killed by a man known to them, over a third by a current or ex-husband or partner. The analysis of gender-based and sexual violence cannot be dissociated from an analysis of the profound transformations that have produced the world we live in today: acute inequality, wealth concentrated in the hands of the very few, the ever-faster destruction of living conditions, and politics of murder and devastation. Separating the situation of women from a global context of the naturalization of violence perpetuates a divide that benefits patriarchy and capitalism, the question becoming that of identifying and punishing "violent men," and naturalizing the violence of the few without dismantling the structures that generate abominable violence.

Based on notions of dangerousness and security, carceral feminism is an ideology that calls for courts to judge more severely and to hand down longer prison sentences, or for an increase in measures of surveillance and control. Feminist protection from systemic violence adopts a binary female victim/male perpetrator approach, in which the role of protector is entrusted to the male, rapist State, femicides being "the ultimate expression of a continuum of power which begins with the pervasiveness of social and economic inequalities,

sexual harassment, sexual violence, and the sexist representations that structure the social imagination and public space" (Dorlin, 2019). This politics of protection has become an enormous, militarized business where experts boast their products' performance and their surveillance tools' ability to detect "abnormal or suspect" behavior: a person who stumbles, a pickpocket who can be tracked from one camera to another in a shop or town. Ignoring the impact of these technologies of surveillance and control, which are mainly dominated by white heteronormative males, simply perpetuates the chronic violence that goes with these measures. Combatting violence against women without taking into account the militarization of protection, the construction of dangerous classes and races, legitimizing recourse to evermore surveillance and control by private companies subcontracted by the State, or by the State itself, is to be complicit in the prevalence of violence as protection. Carceral feminism is asking for widespread armed peace where non-white, working class men are automatically suspicious, where racially and class-based segregated public space is advocated in the name of the protection of women and girls. Appealing to the criminal justice system, and thus encouraging detention, is to perpetuate "the idea that prisons are necessary to democracy and that they are a major part of the solution to social problems" (Davis, 2005: 65).

Peace as living in peacefulness on the planet

In December 2018, in Mantes la Jolie, a working-class neighborhood near Paris, where many families of migrant origins live, the French police forced young Arab and Black schoolboys to kneel in rows in silence for hours, their hands behind their heads or backs, eyes down, their bookbags on their backs. Their mothers immediately organized as the "151 Mothers and Women of Mantes-la-Jolie and Mantois" declaring: "We, mothers of the projects, mothers of the neighborhoods, mothers of the kneeling children of Mantes-la-Jolie, we no longer accept this state of permanent injustice. We want only one thing: Peace." Peace is peacefulness, seeking to resolve conflicts away from turning to the police and the prison. It means bringing disorder to an order that brings destructive chaos.

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Fransoaz Veržes

Pronalaženje pravog prevoda za „mir“ u zemlji rata

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak istražuje prisvajanje pojma „zaštite“ od strane države i njenih institucija – policije, vojske i zakona – i njegovo oružavanje kroz karceralni feminizam. To znači da je najpre potrebno proučiti kako su pojmovi „rat“ i „mir“ bili oružani od strane imperijalizma i države, a zatim se osvrnuti na antirasističke, antipatrijarhalne, antiimperijalističke i feminističke dekolonijalne politike zaštite. Drugim rečima, kako su diskursi o ratu i miru i njihova sprovođenja korišćeni da bi se opravdala zaštita koja se zasniva na kriminalizaciji i zatvaranju onih koji se protive, na vojnim intervencijama, stvaranju naoružanih milicija, legitimizaciji policijskog nasilja, militarizaciji javnog prostora i nadzoru.

Ključne reči: feminizam, država, nadzor, dekolonijalizam

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Noémi Lendvai-Bainton, Paul Stubbs

REVISITING *MAKING POLICY MOVE*: TOWARDS A DECOLONIAL POLITICS OF TRANSLATION

ABSTRACT
The co-authored book *Making Policy Move* (Clarke, Bainton, Lendvai and Stubbs 2015) was an attempt to apply insights from theories of translation and assemblage to the field of policy studies. The mantra "when policy moves it is always translated" was based, as much if not more, on postcolonial and decolonial theories as it was on the 'interpretive turn' in policy studies and on the idiosyncrasies of Actor Network Theory and the work of Deleuze and Guattari. In this paper, revisiting the book, we suggest that the conceptual, empirical, moral-ethical and political implications of taking colonialism and racism seriously were underdeveloped and we outline, in broad brush stroke terms, some of the ways this could be remedied in future work. We emphasize, in particular, the importance of a politics of translation for understanding coalescing crises, the rise of authoritarian neoliberalism, and the collapse of democracy and the associated rise of techno-politics. We seek to situate reconstituted racialised hierarchies, patriarchal and heteronormative ideologies, and forms of class oppression within policy assemblages co-constituted through colonialism and neo-colonialism.

KEYWORDS
Translation, Assemblage, Policy, Politics, Decoloniality

Introduction

The co-authored book *Making Policy Move* (Clarke, Bainton, Lendvai and Stubbs 2015) was an attempt to apply insights from theories of translation and assemblage to the field of policy studies. The mantra "when policy moves it is always translated" made some reference to postcolonial and decolonial approaches, but these were not central to many of the arguments presented. In this chapter revisiting the book, we suggest that the conceptual, empirical, moral-ethical and political implications of taking colonialism and racism seriously were underdeveloped in this work and we outline, in broad brush stroke terms, some of the ways this could be remedied. We emphasize, in particular,

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the importance of a politics of translation for understanding coalescing crises and the rise of authoritarianism, situating reconstituted racialised hierarchies, patriarchal and heteronormative ideologies, and forms of class oppression within policy assemblages co-constituted through colonialism and neo-colonialism.

This text is, deliberately, speculative in nature, seeking to use our work on policy translation, up to and beyond *Making Policy Move*, to think about elements needed for a politics of policy translation. The first section seeks to move beyond Actor Network Theory and interpretive approaches to policy as "meaning-making". The second section focuses more directly on the importance of coloniality in policy translation. The third section outlines, briefly, some of the elements necessary for a politics of policy translation in the context of our current and future work. Throughout, we seek to point to those writers whose work has inspired us in the hope of stimulating dialogue and debate whilst bringing critical policy studies closer to work that may well not address policy centrally or even at all.

The Power of Meaning and the Meaning of Power

Our own "journey to translation", at least in terms of published work, began with two texts "Policies as Translation: Situating Transnational Social Policies" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2007) and "Assemblages, Translation and Intermediaries in South East Europe" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009a), first presented as a conference paper in 2006. Re-reading these texts today for the purpose of this text, almost as if they were written by other people, we were struck by a number of things. Firstly, the puzzles we were trying to resolve, or at least shed light on, through our "turn to translation", are clearly set out. Our focus was, almost exclusively, on turbulent and rapidly changing social policies in the Eastern European or South East European space - specifically, in one text, Hungary and Croatia and, in the other, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo - and on the interactions, if not the blurring of the very distinction, between 'domestic' and 'international' actors in the development and denouement of these policies. Secondly, our frustration with what we considered orthodox approaches to both 'social policy' and 'policy transfer' was palpable, felt as much as thought, with us describing these approaches, at times no doubt caricaturing them, as simplistic, linear, objectivist, rationalist, and institutionalist mono-worlds. As if to knock them off their pedestal, we threw an eclectic, at times chaotic and confusing, mix of concepts borrowed from a very wide range of theoretical traditions. We demonstrated little or no interest in pleasing those more firmly placed within one or another of these traditions, and little or no regard for the incompatibility of these approaches when used together.

Two of these approaches, in particular, were used rather more uncritically than we would now. The first is the work of Bruno Latour and Michel Callon generally considered as foundational to Actor-Network Theory (ANT). In the "Assemblages" text, it is this work that underpins the approach to translation,

seen as going "way beyond linguistics" and emphasising "the fluid and dynamic nature of the social world, where meanings are constantly transformed, translated, distorted and modified" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009a: 676). Central to our use of ANT was the idea that human actors and non-human "actants", enrolled in actor networks, shape and transform "claims, artefacts, discourses and interpretations according to their different projects" (ibid.). The "Policies as Translation" text repeats these arguments and juxtaposes the study of "knowledge networks, actor networks, agency, social relations, and processes" with "Institutions" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2007: 180).

Seduced by ANT's playfulness and its methodological potential "as a way to investigate the messy thickness of social and political life" (Baiocchi, Graizbord and Rodríguez-Muñiz 2013: 324), we failed to critique ANT as a totalizing system critical of totalities nor did we confront head on ANT as a cult whose members not only claim that it can be used to explain everything, but that there is a fundamental imperative that it has to be so used. Nevertheless, our approach is close to Baiocchi et al insofar as we treat ANT as "a set of sensibilities", as part of "a deeper, wider, more robust ethnographic imagination" (ibid.: 335). *Making Policy Move* does have its, thankfully brief, Latourian moment, in terms of the importance of "association" (and assemblage) and the suggestion that "it is the relationships of association that give meaning and weight to such things as policies" (Clarke et al. 2015: 38). Tentatively, however, we suggest that where we "might disagree with Latour" concerns "what exists before a specific act of network assembling takes place", doubting the claim that that which is prior is "empty of pre-existing forces, arrangements and dispositions" (ibid.: 37). We are in desperate need of conceptual, theoretical and methodological frameworks that are able to disrupt conventional 'policy teleology' and 'policy biography'. Policy ecology, elaborated beautifully by Tess Lea (2020) in *Wild Policy*, showcases a new approach which affords the anthropology of policy a possibility to trace messy associations and "the chaos of policy-related effects within overdetermined fields" (Lea 2020: 157).

The second set of approaches, which we critiqued more thoroughly in *Making Policy Move*, derives from the interpretivist school of policy research. Although the approach is less present in the "Assemblages" text, "Policies as Translation" uses the idea of "policy as meaning-making" and, indeed, "claims-making" as absolutely central to the argument, following Yanow, that policy is "fundamentally an interpretive process" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2007: 175; Yanow 1996) in the realm of social construction. Ironically, perhaps, this serves to reproduce a rather linear and rather flat, non-hierarchical distinction between policies as communicated and policies as read. Richard Freeman, who remains a key influence, similarly concedes too much ground to interpretivism in his early formulation that "policy ... is produced in the act of looking" (Freeman 2004, reproduced in Freeman 2008: 377). In *Making Policy Move* we link the interpretive turn with the argumentative, linguistic, discursive and even cultural turns as all concerned, albeit in different ways, with "the production, circulation and consequences of meaning" (Clarke et al. 2015: 17) but state clearly

that, "by itself, a concern with meaning is not enough" (ibid.: 19), worrying about the tendency in some of this work to render meanings "safe". In other words, meanings "circulate, rather politely, in arguments and deliberative processes" or are seen as having been "installed within institutions" such that they "rarely appear as troublesome, turbulent or disruptive" (ibid.: 19). We suggest that meanings matter because "they are a point of contestation … inextricably linked with forms and relations of power and authority" (ibid.: 20). For us, the study of policy "as a setting and a genre" takes us to sites where "meanings are made, contested, installed, naturalised and normalised, and in which power is organised, challenged and rendered normal or even invisible" (ibid.). In our rather antagonistic and contested contemporary socio-political landscape, understanding meaning-making with a renewed attention to power and authority seems ever more important.

This, inevitably, leads us to revisit how our early texts addressed power and power relations. We are struck by the attempt to hold together both a sense of power as fluid and power as cumulative and determinant. Although we state, clearly, that "translation is … the very working of power", our re-assertion that "individuals transform the knowledge, truths and effects of power each time they encounter them" (Herbert-Cheshire 2003: 46 quoted in Lendvai and Stubbs 2009: 676) and that social structure is a verb, not a noun (Law 1992 cited in Lendvai and Stubbs 2007: 181), appears to concede far too much ground to an idealistic understanding of the improvisational, liminal and contingent nature of power relations. Of course, our concern has always been to account for and trace asymmetries of power in specific conjunctures, or specific sets of relations, and to avoid deterministic formulations of the working of power in general. At times, however, this seems to have led to a relative lack of attention to historical power structures even though the idea of translation as "deeply and inevitably political" (Lendvai-Bainton 2018: 157) is present throughout, not least in terms of the capacity of policy, as translated, to produce "voice" for some and "silence" for others, as well as in the idea of translation as, always in variegated ways, being "structured in dominance" (Clarke et al. 2015: 191).

The erasure of power from our own disciplinary debates and conversations in the field of social policy has many roots, but most notably results in theoretical determinism and presentism. *Making Policy Move* was a direct challenge to both. Stuart Hall's conjunctural analysis, taking insights from Gramsci, allowed us to problematise the ways in which dominant theoretical approaches had closed, rather than opened, discussion and, indeed, in some senses, had thrown away the keys (Hall 2021). Theoretical determinism triumphantly reproduced deeply Eurocentric and western-centric assumptions and practices, and promoted a one-way diffusionism (Hobson 2007) of *both* western knowledge and western learning. The directionality, and the institutional power, of this one-way diffusionalism was an incredibly powerful force throughout the 1990s and 2000s at a time when the entire Eastern block of 'Europe' had been thrown into the waiting room of the 'European Union' and treated as lacking something by other powerful actors. The same theoretical determinism also

contributed to classificatory foreclosures and closed the door on approaches such as neo-colonialism, necropolitics and others at the same time.

Presentism has not only dispatched rigorous historical studies to the margins, but also reduced and bracketed off the past to the present, both in terms of its understanding as well as its relevance. The best one could hope for in presentist policy studies was the assertion, rather than the empirical demonstration, of "path dependency" and "legacy effects". The neglect of time, temporality, history and hauntology (Lea 2020) served not only to silence 'different histories', and alternative worldmakings (Lendvai-Bainton and Stubbs 2022), but also to erase the violent histories of Western European welfare states (Williams 2021) and the divorce of democracy from the plantation (Mbembe 2019); in shorthand terms the indelible relationship between welfare "at home" and colonial violence and extractivism "abroad". Presentism has contributed, too, to a crude labelling of diverse Eastern European welfare assemblages as a particular 'emerging', 'developing', 'transitioning', and 'Europeanising' 'welfare regime' riding roughshod over spatio-temporal complexities and variegations and dismissing their politics as 'backwards' against a mythical western norm.

Making Policy Move also tried to reconfigure a discussion around the role of language and its power in the politics of translation. Spivak's (1988, 2013, 2022) work has been very influential for us both in terms of framing our queries in and of translation, displacement, dislocation, and silencing. Socialised and disciplined in the worlds of policy studies, social policy, welfare regimes and modernist fictions in which state interventions produce 'better outcomes', Spivak's theory of translation, where politics, power, inequality and agency are omnipresent, offered a way to think about bringing politics back in. For Spivak, translation is always a complex political act, a trace of the other, the trace of history and a complicated space inbetween languages and worlds. Spivak also sees translation as a way "out of our own academic and first-world enclosure" (Spivak 2022: 120).

Similarly to Spivak, Arundhati Roy 's (2022:12) reminder that the 'knowing' and the 'not knowing' of English play a great part in 'allocating light and darkness' remains prescient in the age of 'homolingual address' (Sakai 1996, 1997). The hegemony of Englishes, and the work of political, technical, cultural, ideological, social, and personal reinscription has been an ongoing theme of our writing, thinking and being, separately and together. Gadamer (2013: 407) highlights how "the linguisticality of understanding is the concretion of historically effected consciousness", and as such translation can never be ahistorical. The silencing of non-English sources, the neglect of the role of the untranslatable, non-knowledge, and the sociology of silences has tended to greatly reduce the scope of translation, "as an encounter that affects all parts of the conversation" (Freeman 2009: 436). Quite ironically, one could argue that translation is erased in the 'homolingual address' of global *lingua franca* with all its associated assumptions of universality, singularity and presentism at the time when the need for translation (contingency, boundary work, conjunctural work, conversational work, non-hierarchical encounters)

has expanded. To paraphrase Stuart Hall, who stated that 'without contingency there is no politics' (Hall 2021), without translation there is no politics, and as such in a world of homolingual address, we may be being forced to live in a world without politics.

Tangled Decoloniality and Decolonial Tangles

The "Policies as Translation" text refers, albeit in passing, to "postcolonial theory" in terms of recognition that one meaning of translate is to "conquer" (Kibberd 1995: 624, cited in Lendvai and Stubbs 2007: 177) drawing our attention to the "re-ordering of worlds" (Loomba 1998). The idea of "contact zones", derived from the work of postcolonial literary scholar Marie-Louise Pratt, referring to "the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures and whose trajectories now intersect" (Pratt 1992: 6), has also been a key concept in our work. Nevertheless, the danger here is that, as indeed Pratt intended, the concept "foregrounds the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters" (ibid.: 6-7) rather more than their historicity and savagery. Our use of "postcolonial theory", beginning with a 2007 conference paper later published as a chapter in a German language publication (Lendvai and Stubbs 2009b), has developed over time, not least as we attempted to understand Europe, Europeanity, and the European Union as colonial formations (Stubbs and Lendvai 2016) and in our broader critique of "global social policy" studies as trapped in a kind of historical "presentism" and failing to question the use of Northern and Western, largely Eurocentric, concepts to make universal knowledge claims (Lendvai-Bainton and Stubbs 2022).

Making Policy Move is strongly influenced by strands of postcolonial thought in a number of ways. One of the key conceptual framings is that of "post-colonial translation" as "representation, violence and power" (Clarke et al. 2015: 38-42). Despite reference to "colonial rule", in which translation works to render the colonised legible, this remains rather general given that the book does not focus on colonial relations specifically and, indeed, cautions against the presumption that "the only significant formations and relationships are colonial" (Clarke et al. 2015: 39). In retrospect, the failure to address directly colonial relations actually diminishes the study of "domination, subordination and exploitation" that we suggest are "richer", not the best choice of word, than being reducible to coloniality. Translation is described as "a double process" in terms of the capacity "to produce, reproduce and re-inscribe domination and also its potential to create the conditions and spaces of possibility for thinking and speaking 'otherwise'" (ibid.).

The idea of policy "otherwise", derived from the postcolonial approaches of Rojas (2007), Spivak (2012), and Escobar (2012, 2013), amongst others, frames the final chapter of *Making Policy Move*. "Otherwise" has become central to our commitment to a decolonial agenda in policy studies, "allowing for alternative ways of knowing" (Lendvai and Stubbs 2022). A policy otherwise

rests on a critique of policy as a practice of "global modernity" inextricably linking "master narratives", "abstract universals" and "imperial desires" (Mignolo 2013: 2). "Otherwise" is a shorthand for the struggle for an alternative vocabulary as the basis for an alternative praxis, in which even terms such as "transition", "transformation" and "crisis" seem to us too tame and barely able to scratch the surface of the realities of violent reorderings and systemic exclusions. Policy otherwise speaks to de Sousa Santos' pleas for a sociology of emergences, of the "not-yet", which "expresses what exists as mere tendency, a movement that is latent in the very process of manifesting itself" (de Sousa Santos 2004: 24). We advocate, in fact, a "double movement" of recognition of plans and projects together with being attentive to "interruptions, disjunctures and complexities" (Clarke et al. 2015: 195). However, these are not equivalents with equal chances of materialising – the power of policy modernity is such as to seek to crush alternatives, rarely succeeding completely to do so, of course. In pleading for relationality but not relativism, we have also found the work of Gibson-Graham inspiring in terms of striving for "empirical encounters and creative expressions of the new, the unthought, the unexpected" (Gibson-Graham 2006: 60).

Making Policy Move is about thinking conjuncturally; as Jeff Maskovsky has suggested: "conjunctural analysis enables a nuanced understanding of the emergent political forms of the present, and it ought to be embraced not out of any sort of clannish politico-theoretical fealty to Antonio Gramsci, Stuart Hall, or John (Clarke) himself, but rather because of its explanatory power; for it can advance the urgent task of explaining the dismaying political developments that we are enduring, contesting, and implicated in ways that other approaches cannot" (Maskovsky 2019). Using Cindy Katz's work on "minor theory" (Katz 1996, 2017), he goes on to suggest that "conjunctural thinking is about the local and the particular as important sites for theorizing". Minor theory, he argues, is "theory that, because it is grounded, fluid and relational and because it speaks to the problematics of our time with a commitment to the local and the particular, is the antidote to the masculinist, grand-narratives posturing of major theory" (ibid.). At the same time, perhaps not even fully recognised in *Making Policy Move*, there is a sense that the various particulars discussed in the four individually authored chapters of the book, be they Ladakh in India, Hungary in relation to the EU, the UK, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, speak to each other and are illustrative of broader processes at the same time. Translation, then, captures something of "the immense mobility of the policy process" (Lendvai and Bainton 2013: 117) with choices about what and how to compare being deeply political and, yet, far too often in danger of taking epistemic modernity for granted. In other words, whilst there can be no "theory in general", much less "iron laws" of anything, a lexicon of critical policy translation does have some, albeit provisional, anchor points.

As Rada Iveković has argued in the introduction to a series of conversations inspired by her book (Iveković 2022, 2019): "Translation is political because it is a relation, a context of negotiating power" that "invites a complex

analysis of gender, class, race, or national and other hierarchies' relations and their intersection". In short, there can be no general theory of the intersections of class, gender, race and nation, but they must be present in each and every conjunctural analysis of the work of policy, not in a fruitless search for "definitive knowledge" since all knowledges are, as de Sousa Santos suggests, "reciprocally incomplete". For us, as for Iveković, policy translation is inseparable from patterns of coloniality-patriarchy-racism-capitalism. In the following section, we return to our own work to explore some aspects of the work policy performs within this assemblage.

Manifesting Urgency: an Urgent Manifesto - Elements for a Politics of Policy Translation

Perhaps because of its orientation more towards providing a new epistemology for policy studies, *Making Policy Move* seems to us, now, to lack a sense of urgency in terms of addressing the interlocking crises of "democracy, capitalism, globalisation, environment, nature and climate, empire, history and memory" (Lendvai-Bainton 2022: 22). These coalesce, in Wendy Brown's terms, in a "state of siege" in which "reactionary populism, nativism, racism, and xenophobia" rage (Brown et al. 2018:1). Tracing the production of insecurities and the expansion of violence as central to contemporary governance challenges the explicit, or implicit, techno-legal understandings of policy and its study. Instead, a focus on the translation of violence, the co-production of what Mbembe terms "necro-politics", "blurring the relationship between violence, murder, and the law, faith, commandment and obedience, the norm and the exception, and even freedom, tracking and security" (Mbembe 2019: 6-7), is needed. How to understand policy translation in terms of an assemblage of three orders – the plantation, the colony, and democracy – never able to be fully separated but combining and recombining in variegated ways, seems to us to be a major challenge.

There is a need, then, to foreground the study of enclosures, of "hierarchies, insecurities, dispossessions and dehumanisation" (Lendvai-Bainton 2022: 31), rather than crude "west is best" comparative slope imaginaries such as "democratic backsliding" and "illiberal democracies" much loved within a particular strand of Europeanisation scholarship. The use of racist tropes to discuss Europe reaches its apotheosis in Marlene Wind's *The Tribalization of Europe* (2020), defining tribalization as 'tribalist tendencies as a kind of Balkanization'. Scholars of 'Europe' have, it seems to us, an obligation to use language reflexively and to reflect on their use of language. As we noted above, when concepts such as "backsliding" are used in relation to countries in Eastern Europe but rarely, if ever, to Western European countries, an explicitly culturalized and implicitly racialized hierarchy of "civilisation" and "modernity" is being produced and reproduced. Mbembe reminds us of the importance of challenging the radicalisation and brutalisation of everyday language. Necro-politics, in many ways, signals the normalisation of demeaning, brutal, and violent language

whether it be in everyday, political, academic, or other registers. The brutalisation of language represents a significant shift for the politics of translation, not only because it changes the conversation, but also because it affects what is possible and what is speakable, thinkable and actable.

As Piro Rexhepi suggests, "understanding how modernity, capitalism and coloniality have structured power relations across different regions around the world ... requires different methods and vocabularies" (Rexhepi 2023: 19). Critical policy translation, in a sense, offers a heightened sensitivity to, and understanding of, how orthodox policy analysis neutralises and tames these understandings, through an obsession with "nationalism" or "ethnicity", as in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, for example. Importantly, some strands of Marxism, themselves products of a Eurocentric modernity-coloniality nexus, often do the same or similar, as in the denial of the role of racialised labour and the displacement of racialised communities or, more generally, how "the integration of post-socialist people and spaces into the Euro-Atlantic alliance has served as a strategic spatial bordering of racial difference" (ibid.: 20-1). A critical policy translation, then, is suspicious of clear distinctions between the "inside" and the "outside" of policy analysis, too often constrained by methodological nationalism. Rexhepi helps to develop a new lexicon for policy translation in terms of the ways in which spaces and places are "enmeshed in borderland projects of race, religion and modernity" (ibid.: 24) or what one of us has termed "the importance of studying the local and global logics of race, class and place together" (Lendvai-Bainton 2022: 28).

A similar shift, from a focus on policy analysis concerned with "women's rights" to "a decolonial feminism" can be found in Françoise Vergès' inspirational work, critical of a broad "civilizational feminism" that is able to bracket slavery, colonialism and imperialism as if "outside" or "at a distance" (Vergès 2021: 34). Her book can also be read as a toolkit for building a genuinely transversal and intersectional analysis, as a kind of relearning taking into account "the *totality* of social relationships" (ibid.: 47, emphasis in original). The struggle for epistemic justice, "a struggle that ... contests the order of knowledge imposed by the West" (ibid.: 39), is not abstract but rather starts from one element to begin "to uncover a political, economic, cultural, and social ecosystem" drawing a large number of threads together "to highlight the concrete and subjective networks of oppression that weave the web of exploitation and discrimination" (ibid.: 49). In many ways, this is close to Dorothy E. Smith's call for "institutional ethnography" as a means of rendering visible the ways that agents "are connected into the extended social relations of ruling and economy and their intersections" (Smith 2005).

A decolonial turn in policy translation analysis, then, does not merely add decoloniality on to more conventional approaches but, rather, as Taylor-Garcia suggests, "works to redefine the very conditions in which knowledge is produced and legitimated, situating ethical relationships as central, and recognizing that what is put forward is the basis for thinking through another world" (Taylor-Garcia 2012: 5). Studying 'colonial assemblages' forces us to confront

"a confluence of colonialisms" (ibid.: 12) since "the delineated boundaries of influence by colonial empires were not ... fixed" (ibid) either spatially or temporally. Although we might question her (self-styled) caricature that "policy's first-order job is aiding and abetting the interests of extractive capital, pushing profit upward in the name of economic development, financial debt, and corporate web" (Lea 2020: 19), Tess Lea's use of Patrick Wolfe to see coloniality as "a structure and not an event" (Wolfe 2007) and Ghassan Hage (2016) in terms of the ways in which contained histories and geographies 'leak out' seem to us to be suggestive of how to build a decolonial understanding into policy translation, providing the embeddedness of coloniality in policy is addressed in all its variegated forms and not assumed to be, or treated as, prior. Her plea for work that shows the "wild workings" of policy "beyond narrative conventions and out of the confines of epochal policy chronologies" (Lea 2020: 25) requires reflexive translation at all times.

Our work continues to engage with what Čarna Brković has termed 'the awkward' position of Southeast Europe, and we would add, Eastern Europe, in terms of "conversations on decolonization" and the need to "unearth subaltern (...) forms of knowledge and being that have been ignored and silenced both by capitalist modernity and socialist modernity" (Brković 2023: 28). Her brilliant historiography of attempts to promote a Non-Aligned perspective on peace within the international Red Cross Movement in the 1970s precisely shows how policy translations rarely, if ever, conform fully to the frame of the modernity-coloniality nexus whilst, also, rarely if ever, able to completely escape such a container. This suggests, perhaps, that a politics of policy translation should be one that connects histories and ethnographies of the circulation of transnational imaginaries and circuits of decolonial affinity sensitive, above all, to their ambivalent and contradictory elements.

Conclusions

The moral-ethical project of translation requires, then, "counter-lexicons", "new vocabularies", a "perceptual re-alphabetization" (Tichindeleanu 2023: 40) as well as moving away from unquestioned Eurocentrism. Racism, along with varieties of re-patriarchalization and heteronormative familialism, must be seen as internal to the European (policy) project: colonial, racialized and gendered hierarchies are important for understanding the ways in which social inequalities, destitution, indebtedness and multiple forms of disenfranchisement have been key features of a new authoritarianism, not just in supposedly "outlier" EU Member States, but across the continent as a whole. Understanding Eurocentrism remains on the very margins of academic disciplines in fields such as policy studies, social policy, and even global social policy and correspondingly decolonial approaches to both research, policy and teaching are slow to emerge. Yet, a counter-lexicon is a necessary but not sufficient condition for struggles for radical equality and reflexivity, able to initiate new conversations with new voices around the table. As Mbembe argues: "we will

effectively require a language that constantly bores, perforates, and digs like a gimlet, that knows how to become a projectile, a sort of full absolute, of will that ceaselessly gnaws at the real. Its function will not only be to force the locks, but also to save life from the disaster lying in wait" (Mbembe 2019: 189). 'Europe' needs new narratives and new conversations to begin to address the multiple and overlapping crises and translation, with or without politics, which will be a companion on this journey.

Politics of translation also requires us to think more about peopling policy worlds. The multiple and overlapping crises of racialisation, re-patriarchalisation and dehumanisation have profound impact on translators, be they policy-makers, brokers, activists, social workers or other professionals and intermediaries. Professional practices, agencies and ethics are rapidly changing. Giroux (2016:79) in his book *Dangerous Thinking in the Age of the New Authoritarianism* argues that the "new mode of authoritarianism mimics a form of terrorism because it abstracts economics from ethics and social costs, makes a mockery of democracy, works to dismantle the welfare state, thrives on violence, undermines any public sphere not governed by market values, and transforms people into commodities". For Giroux privatisation, atomisation and commodification represent the three key axes of new authoritarianism. The transformation of public spaces and public spheres is also critical in the practice of "*the state as a disimagination machine"*, which refers to the ongoing production of "images, institutions, discourses and other modes of representations that undermines the capacity of individuals to bear witness to a different and critical sense of remembering, agency, ethics and collective action" (ibid.: 74). Translators will need new counter-agencies to be able to work towards decolonizing practices and possibilities and new imaginings in the continuing struggle for an ethical politics of translation.

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Noemi Lendvaj-Bejnton i Pol Stabs

Preispitivanje knjige Making Policy Move: Ka dekolonijalnoj politici prevođenja

Apstrakt

Zajednički napisana knjiga *Making Policy Move* (Clarke, Bainton, Lendvai i Stubbs 2015) bila je pokušaj primene uvida iz teorija prevođenja i asembliranja u oblast proučavanja javnih politika. Mantra „kada politika putuje, ona se uvek prevodi" zasnivala se, jednako ako ne i više, na postkolonijalnim i dekolonijalnim teorijama, koliko i na „interpretativnom zaokretu" u studijama politike i na osobenostima teorije aktera-mreže i radova Deleza i Gatarija. U ovom radu, preispitujući knjigu, sugerišemo da su konceptualne, empirijske, moralno-etičke i političke implikacije ozbiljnog shvatanja kolonijalizma i rasizma bile nedovoljno razrađene i u grubim potezima ocrtavamo neke načine na koje se to može ispraviti u budućem radu. Posebno naglašavamo značaj politike prevođenja za razumevanje ukrštanja kriza, uspona autoritarnog neoliberalizma i urušavanja demokratije, kao i sa tim povezanim usponom tehnopolitike. Nastojimo da smestimo rekonstituisane rasijalizovane hijerarhije, patrijarhalne i heteronormativne ideologije i oblike klasne opresije unutar asemblira politika koji su ko-konstituisani kolonijalizmom i neokolonijalizmom.

Ključne reči: prevođenje, asembliranje, politika, politika, dekolonijalnost

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TRANSLATION AS A MODE OF SELF-MAKING: PSYCHOANALYSIS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

ABSTRACT
This article explores translation as a mode of self-making across multiple contexts in which we live. Tracking the modern secular discipline of psychoanalysis in the Global South, we see how its conceptual universe is translated and reshaped here from the lifetime of Freud onwards. We find that, in comparison to all the other forms of modern post-Enlightenment knowledge that entered the Global South, psychoanalysis was one in which the practitioners were most committed to drawing on specific locations in the project of understanding the self. In doing so, psychoanalysis across the Global South offered fundamental challenges to Freud even in his own lifetime, rejecting any idea of a decontextualised human, and often transforming the practice beyond recognition from its incarnation in the land of its birth.

KEYWORDS
Psychoanalysis in Global South, Oedipus complex

An important task we must engage in when thinking from the Global South is to identify the concepts *internal* to other knowledge traditions through which intellectual conversations take place. What kinds of debates have taken place, and what have been the key issues of debate? Equally importantly, we must not treat the non-West as a homogeneous space. We must make visible internal voices of dissent and debate within non-Western knowledge formations. In what terms is criticism conducted, and dissent expressed?

The issues of heterogeneity, power and dissent within the non-West/Global South is not generally addressed by postcolonial or decolonial thinking, whose objects of critique remain empire/coloniality. However, we take seriously the heterogeneity and power relations internal to the South, by way of looking at debates and contentions within.

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In other words, we must listen in on conversations *internal* to cultures as well as *between* the West and non-West. These tasks once again centrally foreground the question of language and translation that we have indicated earlier.

Translation is thus critical to the enterprise of thinking *from* the Global South. Here I use an important distinction made by Anup Dhar in the context of psychoanalysis – between doing psychoanalysis *in* India and doing psychoanalysis *from* India. In my understanding, the first indicates specificity, the second, location. Specificity is important to demarcate, but it must not remain at the level of marking difference from the norm. *From* a location, on the other hand, we can theorize in more general terms, recognizing specificity, but making comparability key, finding resonances across contexts. Perhaps this is why Naoki Sakai sees translation as having to assume a "heterolingual" mode of address, which assumes a "non-aggregate community of foreigners". That is, translation must assume mutual 'foreignness' between two language communities. Rather, what translation tends to assume is a "homolingual"' address that assumes the normalcy of reciprocal and transparent communication in a homogeneous medium. In a heterolingual mode of address, the addressee could respond with varying degrees of comprehension, including missing the signification completely. So, from Sakai's perspective, the heterolingual address thus assumes that every utterance can fail to communicate, because heterogeneity is inherent in every medium, and therefore, translation is endless.

This understanding involves accepting degrees of incommensurability, but the idea is not to abandon translation, but to recognize the complexity and diversity of speaking positions with which we engage. In Latin America, the term *transloca* has been coined by Sonia Alvarez to indicate both the processes of translation ("trans") and the material effects of location ("loca") – As Alvarez puts it, "the transloca highlights multiple dimensions that shape conditions of difference" (Alvarez 2014: 4).

Psychoanalysis in the Global South

Of all the forms of secular modern knowledge that have entered societies of the Global South, psychoanalysis appears to have been the one most confidently owned by practitioners, who translated and located it into their own contexts, from where they successfully drew on non-secular and spiritual resources to address malaises of the self. Of course, a parallel process also carries on, the one more familiar to the rest of the social sciences and humanities, of seeking to translate indigenous notions of self/other into terms legible to psychoanalytic theory as it emanates from Europe. It is not my intention to survey the rich body of literature in this field, but only to address psychoanalysis from the point of view of the frame of this volume that is translation as politics.

Psychoanalysis came to our societies in the early twentieth century as other modern European forms of knowledge did, as a secular science. What is interesting for the outsider to the field however, looking at scholarship on how psychoanalysis entered and was received across many societies of the Global

South from the early twentieth century onwards, is how practitioners and theorists immediately draw its two key ideas – the roles of the unconscious and of myth in self-making – into the dense *jiti* of their own locations. Here I use Mizoguchi Yuzo's term *jiti*, referring to the specific pasts of different societies, the "base entity" that will condition their present. I draw on this idea through Kuan Hsing-Chen's rendering of the intense debates around the lecture Asia as Method (2010). The idea of *jiti* (base entity or originating basis) suggests that every moment and space in the contemporary is a knot of intersecting histories and fragments, rooted at different depths, impossible to untangle in the present – they can only be understood within and as a tangle. The "originating basis" is already variegated and complex, so the invocation of *jiti* cannot be a reference to any pure and homogeneous past. Rather, these terms alert us to the view that engaging with the contemporary requires us to accept different elements as having varying resonances and meanings even in the same context, depending on which part of the past's undergrowth we connect to the present. This is why every communication, every reception of a new idea is an act of translation.

This secular, modern science of the self with its claims to universality, in practice is transformed by traversing these landscapes, as practising psychoanalysts and psychotherapists in India, Egypt, Morocco, Japan, China and other parts of the Global South, translate, read and practice psychoanalysis through different languages, traditions, myths and spiritual practices.

The two key reasons for this difference are: a) the process of secularisation that had disenchanted the public domain in Europe, banishing religion to the "private", had barely begun in these parts of the globe in the early twentieth century, and even today, is contested at every stage; b) the emergence of the heterosexual nuclear family as the only legitimate kind of family in the North was a process that colonial regimes gradually inaugurated in the South over the twentieth century, where new regimes of sexual governance were established by force of law. But again, this has not been a fully successful venture anywhere in the South (or even among people of colour in the North).

Both these features meant that practising psychoanalysts in the South encountered very different modes of self-formation than outlined by classical psychoanalysis in Europe.

In each context though, it appears psychoanalysis is adopted and adapted by the more dominant, hegemonizing tradition. Thus, the heterogeneity of the *jiti* that psychoanalysis enters is often lost to it, but today in the twenty-first century, that internal heterogeneity of the Global South is also speaking up from the heart of psychoanalysis itself.

Thus, there are three significant processes at every location – translation of psychoanalysis into location-specific contexts; translation of the local self into Western psychoanalysis; and internal clashes between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic traditions – encountering each other in several ways, which we will attempt to map in this chapter.

Global South as analyst, not analysand

A significant development in the field appears to be the claim that the South is not merely different, with its own spatio-temporal and cultural coordinates. Rather, the claim is that what is considered the specificity of the South may be universalizable globally, that something presented as a counter to Western notions of the self, is not peculiar to that particular culture alone, but has more universal valence. Consider the example of the Japanese concept of *amae*, first written about by Japanese psychiatrist Takeo Doi, whose 1971 book was translated into English in 1973 as *The Anatomy of Dependence*. *Amae* roughly corresponds to dependency need, or "basking in another's indulgence" (Yamaguchi and Ariizumi 2006: 164). In Japan, Doi noted, babies and young children seek "a sense of oneness" with their mothers through *amaeamae* behaviours, such as acting helpless in a playful way to encourage holding and cuddling. *Amae* also colours adult relationships, such as when a woman or man playfully acts childlike with a romantic partner to invite intimacy (Bower 2004). The interesting trend here is that Japanese scholars have been for some time arguing that *amae* is not to be conflated with attachment or dependence, and that "*amae* episodes are universal rather than unique to Japanese culture" (Yamaguchi and Ariizumi 2006: 171; Behrens 2004, cited by Bower 2004). This claim to universality of a particular feature or process from a non-Western location is noteworthy. From India, Anup Dhar reads Girindrasekhar Boses's contribution and his correspondence with Freud as more than an argument for cultural relativism. According to him this correspondence attest to the fact that Indian and European patients are different in psychic disposition. Rather, as Dhar puts it:

> "...in the 'Indian' outline of psychoanalysis, the phallus is not considered the fundamental object or signifier of sexed subjectivity. Here 'India' is not an analysand who offers different case experiences to phallocentric psychoanalysis. Instead, India is an analyst of the European obsession with the phallus (and the Oedipal) as the structuring principle of psychic constitution" (Dhar 2018: 195).

Dhar argues that it is time to move to understanding *how* psychoanalysis is done *from* India rather than seeing it as doing Freudian or post-Freudian psychoanalysis *in* India. Dhar is part of a collective institutional project begun in 2009 at Ambedkar University, Delhi, in which psychoanalysis is not about "psychological interiority and the confessional attitude" of classical Freudian psychoanalysis, but about groups and community.

As Dhar and Siddiqui put it – "What if the 'individual' does not come alone to the clinic? What if the individual comes as an entangled mass of communal memory traces?" (Dhar and Siddiqui 2013: 510). Such a relationship is not just transferential (which is dyadic) but is understood in terms of transversality, a transformational relationship of both self and the social (Dhar 2018: 198). Honey Oberoi Vahali, a key founder of the initiative at Ambedkar University, Delhi, calls it "psychosocial clinical studies" (Vahali 2019: 130), attempting to bridge worlds generally seen as divorced from one another – "those focusing

on subjective and unconscious processes and those emphasising the study of structural politics and mega discourses of power and injustice" (ibid.: 132). The human subject in this understanding is one in which "dense connections of psyche-body-soma create complex pathways and in whom thinking, memory, feelings and perceptions cohere to create a moment of lively responsiveness". In this "intricate terrain" inner forces interact with those of the social (ibid.: 138) while the psychotherapist becomes a "co-sufferer participant" or a "co-vulnerable expert" (ibid.: 142).

Psychoanalysis *from* the Global South, seeks to speak to such experiences located elsewhere (than the South) too, which do not fit into mainstream western psychoanalytic conceptual frameworks.

Oedipus

Freud famously said of Oedipus, "It is the fate of all of us, perhaps, to direct our first sexual impulse towards our mother and our first hatred and our first murderous wish against our father" (Freud 1965: 296). One wonders about the applicability of that confident 'all of us' with our assumed parricidal desire. In this part of the world, the living myths, involving gods who are still worshipped, are very different. For instance, take Yayati's son Puru and Shantanu's son Devavrata, both of whom attained to full masculine subjectivity through *sacrificing* their youth and sexual desire for their fathers. Puru took on the untimely old age that was cursed upon his father, and in turn ascended the throne, though he was the youngest son. It was his lineage that produced the dynasty of the Pandavas and Kauravas, protagonists of the *Mahabharata*.

Devavrata took an oath of life-long celibacy so that his father's desire for the beautiful Satyavati could be fulfilled, for she would not marry him unless he promised that *her* son would be king after him. Devavrata thus not only gave up the right to the throne himself, he promised there would never be progeny of his who would seek kingship. This vow of lifelong celibacy made the gods shower flowers on Devavrata, proclaiming him Bhishma, he of the terrible oath, and his father granted him the boon of *Svechha Mrityu* (control over his own death). Bhishma went on to become the revered patriarch of the *Mahabharata*.

Interestingly the absence of Oedipus tales and therefore of an Oedipus complex can also be seen as a lack, preventing the emergence of Indians into full maturity and modernity, as Ramanujan points out. And so, he embarks on the project of finding "Oedipus-like patterns" in Indian myth and folklore, keeping Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* as the model (Ramanujan 1995: 236).

It is interesting to see how the universality of Freud's reading of the Oedipus complex is assumed to such an extent that all myths and ancient rhymes that refer to incest are read through that template. Incest, both its possibility and its interdiction accompany human society from its inception. Every myth about incest seems to have simultaneously built into it the theme of its rejection and punishment – for example, the Rig Veda, 3500 years old, has Dyaus the sky god who has sex with or rapes his daughter Ushas, and is cast out as

punishment. The Greek myth of Oedipus from which Freud draws in the nineteenth century, his own version of a universal human conflict, is dated to about a thousand years after the Rig Veda.

But Michael Carroll reminds us that Freud himself did not identify the Oedipus story as a myth, but rather, read Oedipus through the story as told specifically in a literary text, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*. Carroll holds it to be problematic that distinctions between literary texts, myths, dreams, folktales and clinical narratives are routinely blurred by modern commentators who discuss psychoanalytic study of myth (Carroll 2009: 163). In Carroll's reading, Freud, from *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) to *Totem and Taboo* (1913) developed his theory of the two unconscious wishes of the child. In the former, through literary texts, he outlined the young child's sexual desire for the mother and the resulting hostility towards the father. In the latter he posited his belief that the incest taboo arose from the guilt experienced by the primal band of brothers who killed their father to have sexual access to their mothers and sisters, the unconscious memory of which was passed from generation to generation and shaped religious ritual and belief (ibid.: 164).

The universality of this primal parricide and guilt is assumed to such an extent that Oedipus can be sought (and found) everywhere. Consider a volume embarking upon a search for Oedipus in global folklore, which indeed finds "Oedipus" everywhere in the early to late twentieth century (Edmunds and Dundes 1995). A lullaby among Albanian tribes in which the child is addressed as "my son, brother of my husband" (Hasluck 1995: 5) is one instance. Another is a Romani version from Hungary in which a woman dreams she married her son, so to avoid this, abandons him at birth, but they meet, become lovers, discover who each is, and the man goes away, locking himself into a room from which he is led out after many years by priests. He forgives his mother and is made Pope, the first Pope after St Peter (Karpati 1995: 23–24). From Papua, the tale in this volume is of a father sodomising his thin sickly son to make him grow through the power of his semen; after his transformation the son and his mother become lovers because she desires him, and it is the father who kills the son. This story is titled "Oedipus in Papuan folklore" although it is not an Oedipus type story at all (Williams 1995).

Ramanujan finds eight "variants" in India. One, a folk tale in North Karnataka, in which a woman born with a curse on her head that she would marry her own son, retreats to a forest and eats only fruit, forswearing male company. But she eats a fruit from a tree under which a passing king has urinated, the mango impregnates her, she abandons the son, but they meet when he is grown up, and they bear a child together. When she discovers the truth, she hangs herself after singing to her son a lullaby: "Sleep, oh son, oh grandson, oh brother to my husband…", which is almost exactly the lullaby sung in Albania. In none of the variants Ramanujan finds does the woman get pregnant through sexual intercourse. Many of the tales of incest are told as illustrations of the sinfulness of all worldly relations, or as conundrums or guessing games,

"not as deeply tragic tales". In all the variants, the protagonist is the woman – "the men are pawns in the story of women's fate" (Ramanujan 1995: 241).

In many of the stories that this volume tells, the father is entirely absent, or already dead, or the father kills the son, and thus parricide is not a theme at all. *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles is merely one version of this preoccupation of human societies with incest, in which one could see other themes being figured. For instance, the key theme of gradual delegitimization of matrilineal societies and replacement by patriliny (such replacement would not have been without violence). Also, the emergence of the incest taboo almost from the moment that incest is confronted as such, the taboo coming into being for reasons of wider alliances and avoidance of familial conflict.

But when read through the Freudian Oedipus template, all these complex narratives about incest that suggest historical changes and shifts, are understood simply as reversals, or as different versions of the "original" Sophocles telling, although many, being oral, may in fact be older.

Ramanujan's essay recounts and participates in the oedipal interpretation by scholars such as Goldman, of conflicts between Brahmin sages and Kshatriya rulers in the epics and in temple legends. The Brahmin is read as the father and the Kshatriya as the son in such interpretations, with the son losing these battles for supremacy (Ramanujan 1995: 246). But to impute a transhistorical, primal, familial frame to a historical process in which one social group is establishing control over others through violence, alliance building and hegemonizing narratives, is the equivalent of understanding capitalist transformation in England in terms of oedipal conflict between the aristocracy and the emerging bourgeoisie. Even though Ramanujan asks the question as to whether the Oedipus complex is universal, he struggles to accommodate all difference in the Indian context in terms of Oedipus – "negative" Oedipus; "reverse" Oedipus; the absence of parricide stories indicating an even greater repression, and so on (Ramanujan 1995: 254).

In this context, Sudhir Kakar (1997) offers an interesting re-reading of a familiar story of Skanda (Subramanian) and Ganesha, sons of Parvati and Shiva, competing to win a fruit offered by their mother as a gift to whichever of them raced around the universe first. When Skanda triumphantly returns after circumnavigating the universe, he finds Ganesha ensconced at his mother's feet, eating the fruit – he had circumambulated his mother, worshipped her, and declared, "You are my universe."

Furious, Skanda rushes away to an inaccessible mountain top, to which an annual pilgrimage is conducted to this day. Kakar's point is that Skanda's punishment is exile from the mother's

bountiful presence, and the reward is the promise of functioning as an autonomous adult man. Ganesha remains an infant, and his reward is to never know the pangs of separation from his mother – and the fact that Ganesha's lot is considered superior to Skanda's is "perhaps an indication of the Indian man's cultural preference in the dilemma of separation-individuation".

Thus, even while remaining within the framework of Freudian psychoanalysis, with its implied oedipality, Kakar enables a deconstruction of the universality assumed by psychoanalysis for itself.

Balaji Mundkur, in a response to an essay trying to complicate psychoanalytic reading of myths, challenges the author Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi's continued reliance on ideas such as water as a predominantly female symbol, the serpent's male association and the snake bite as suggestive of the perils of sex. Mundkur draws on "labyrinthine Hindu iconography" as well as on the mythology and iconography of Shuswap Indians of British Columbia, Shinto beliefs, the Semitic deity Ishtar, and Egyptian images to demonstrate that symbols (in this case of sexuality and male/female identity) are ambivalent even within one culture, and are not universally translatable across cultures and time, nor amenable to systematic explanation and generalisation. This casts doubt therefore, in his understanding, on "the usefulness of conjectures about symbolism that are beholden to the psychoanalytic precepts of the Freudian, Jungian, Adlerian, or similar schools" (Mundkur 1980: 60).

I would read Mundkur not as dismissing psychoanalysis but as offering the possibility of "caprice" (ibid.: 60), in the psychoanalytic interaction. By adding the idea of letting history into myth to the cultural dimension, I hope to suggest a continuing dynamism and heterogeneity in the way different sections of society access different myths, folk stories and other cultural resources, depending on the histories of domination, resistance and identity formation in their societies and their own positionality within these.

Tracking the journey of psychoanalysis across China, Japan and the Buddhist traditions, Islamic and Arabic scholarship, India and contested notions of Hinduism and Islam, and Mexico and Africa, we can see that the practice of psychoanalysis in the Global South reveals three tendencies. One, the more conventional mode of translating the self into terms recognisable to established psychoanalytic frameworks. Two, the reverse translation of psychoanalysis into location-specific contexts; and three, the internal tensions between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic traditions in the Global South. In this brief paper I have not been able to discuss all of these, but hope to have hinted at the direction in which explorations might go.[1]

1 These ideas have been explored at length in my new book *Secularism as Misdirection. Critical Thought from the Global South* Duke University Press 2024, Chapter 4.

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Nivedita Menon

Prevođenje kao način samostvaranja: Psihoanaliza sa globalnog Juga

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak istražuje prevođenje kao način samostvaranja u različitim kontekstima u kojima živimo. Prateći modernu sekularnu disciplinu psihoanalize na globalnom Jugu, vidimo kako se njen pojmovni univerzum prevodi i preoblikuje ovde, počevši još od života Frojda. Uočavamo da je, u poređenju sa svim drugim oblicima modernog postprosvetiteljskog znanja koji su ušli na globalni Jug, psihoanaliza bila disciplina u kojoj su praktičari najviše insistirali na oslanjanju na specifične lokalne kontekste u projektu razumevanja sopstva. Na taj način, psihoanaliza na globalnom Jugu pružila je temeljne izazove Frojdu čak i za vreme njegovog života, odbacujući svaku ideju o dekontekstualizovanom čoveku i često transformišući praksu do neprepoznatljivosti u odnosu na njeno prvobitno oblikovanje u zemlji njenog nastanka.

Ključne reči: psihoanaliza na globalnom Jugu, Edipov kompleks

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Saša Hrnjez

TRANSLATION'S COUNTER-VIOLENCE

ABSTRACT
My contribution deals with the relation between translation and violence taking up the concept of *de-violence* as found in Rada Iveković's work. The basis of the argument is the thesis that violence is not simply opposed to non-violence since both are interdependent. In order to discuss this, I will return to Walter Benjamin in a joint reading of his reflections on translatability and violence. The guiding questions will be the following: Do we need a critique of violence in order to produce an appropriate (political) concept of translation? If translation is not simply a non-violent communication, shall we then conceive it as a sort of counter-violence against a monolingual closure of meaning? By addressing these problems, I will try to outline the idea of "de-translation" as a true systematic violence that obstructs or annihilates the openness to the foreign. The task of translators today would be thus to be engaged in that politics of translation which counteracts the violence of systemic de-translation.

KEYWORDS
violence, de-translation, politics of translation, communication

What does translation have to do with violence?

The juxtaposition of translation and violence may seem contrary to our immediate expectations and may even provoke indignation. What could be less violent than the peaceful bridging of linguistic and cultural differences that we call "translation"? How can the activity of making the foreign understandable be associated with something violent? In these questions, however, a certain representation of translation is operative. The basis of my analysis is that it is precisely such a representation of translation that generates the apparent separation of translation from violence and which results in an impression of their irreconcilability. This means that every representation of translation contains its own notion of violence. Furthermore, it implies that any representation of translation cannot be free of its ideological conditioning. My aim is to tackle such a self-representation of translation as "non-violent", in order to show not only that violence cannot be excluded from any translational practice, but that it in some sense invites us to rethink it.

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In a certain sense, every translation is violent because it forces a separation between the signifier and the signified in order to find a new signifier for words that belong to another linguistic system. It is a violence of separation, detachment and disruption, but also the violence of a new connection, of a new incarnation in a different language. As Lawrence Venuti puts it: "Translation is the forcible replacement of the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text with a text that is intelligible to the translating-language reader" (Venuti 2008: 14). The intelligibility of a translation is the result of a violent modification of the original. Venuti defines this activity a "domesticating translation", and it involves nothing less than the "ethnocentric violence of domestication"[1]. For Venuti, this 'strategy' of translation, which corresponds to our common-sense notion, not only exerts violence on the foreignness and the unique properties of the original text, but enacts violence also by concealing this domestication, by creating the illusion of transparency and fluency in order to appear as if the translated text were written in the translating language. This 'second level' violence of concealing the true nature of the translational activity is an eminently ideological operation because what is masked is not only the foreignness of the text, but also its historical, social and political conditioning. In sum, we have here two levels of violence: the violence of the very act and the violence of presenting this act as 'natural' and transparent, as a simple act of communication.

An opposite translational strategy, however, might attempt to successfully recognize otherness and its specificity, such that there would not be any space for violence. This strategy – termed by Venuti as "foreignizing" – cannot however either be simply portrayed as "non-violent". Rather, in order to faithfully express the foreign, the foreignizing translation also enacts a violence on the translating language, which is forced to find a signifier and a new body for the foreign element. The foreignizing translation, therefore, in order to reduce and counteract the ethnocentric violence of domestication takes recourse to another violence, seeking to present the text and its language in its irreducible foreignness. The victim here is the receiving language and its cultural codes. As Venuti explains: "translation practice must do wrong at home, deviating enough from native norms to stage an alien reading experience" (Venuti 2008: 16). Even though this kind of translation practice does not conceal its violent nature, it does not mean that it is free of any ideological function (in *The Translator's Invisibility* Venuti shows in fact how foreignizing translation served to produce a national canon in literature and culture). However, this way of approaching the violence of translation may seem to be reducible to a quite banal claim: translation must either distort the source text or the translating language

1 Venuti describes this ethnocentric translation as inscription, taking inspiration from Derrida: "Translating between the two sets of contexts is violent in its impact on the source text and ethnocentric in its privileging of the receiving culture. The ethnocentric violence, far from arbitrary, coincides with an interpretive act that involves what Jacques Derrida calls an 'inscription'" (Venuti (2012: 496-97)).

(or both), and the translator, put in a sort of Schleiermacherian dilemma, must decide or negotiate the direction and intensity of this violence. Nevertheless, the question of the violence of translation contains much more that needs to be discussed. If the discourse on domesticating and foreignizing translation shows us that violence in translation practice is unavoidable, then it is exactly this necessity that must be tackled: What does it mean that translation must enact some kind of violence? And finally, what do we learn about violence itself by unmasking translational practice in its deviating effects?

Translation and the critique of violence (Benjamin)

The true intrinsic connection between translation and violence can be reconstructed through Walter Benjamin's work. In his essay from 1916 *On Language as Such,* Benjamin already affirms that the concept of translation must be grounded in the deepest level of language theory, because "it is much too far reaching (*weittragend*) and powerful (*gewaltig*) to be treated in any way as an afterthought (*nachträglich*) as has happened occasionally" (Benjamin 1979: 117). The very concept of translation is *gewaltig*, because it possesses a certain force and imposes itself in *any* philosophical discourse on language. In his essay from 1921, *The Translator's Task*, we find further reflections on what is *gewaltig* with and in translation. In the same year when Benjamin starts to work on the Preface to his translations of Baudelaire (even though this text appears two years after in 1923 under the title *The Translator's Task*) Benjamin finished writing another text, *Toward the Critique of Violence* (Zur Kritik der Gewalt). Although these two texts do not refer to each other there are some resonances, as if one text is echoing the other[2]. What we will try to do here is a joint reading of these two texts, passing from one to the another. We will start with the text on violence with a passage where the problem of language is raised directly:

> What is expressed in this situation is the existence of a sphere of human accord that is nonviolent [*gewaltlose*] to such a degree that it is wholly inaccessible to violence: the proper sphere of 'coming- to- an- understanding', language [*die eigentliche Sphäre der 'Verständigung', die Sprache*]. (Benjamin 2021: 50)

This sentence incites a series of further questions: How is language completely inaccessible to violence? What kind of violence is being referring to here? Benjamin immediately adds that legal violence (*Rechtsgewalt*) has nonetheless penetrated the sphere of language by penalizing fraud. Benjamin's intention here is to elucidate the relationship between the violence of the law and the non-violence of the intersubjective coming-to-agreement as a historical relationship. But if we read this paragraph together with his essay on

2 The 'translational' aspect of Benjamin's critique of violence is underlined by Peter Fenves in his Introduction to the new English edition of Benjamin's text, cf. Fenves 2021. We could say that it is the very translation of the German term *Gewalt* which is the internal motion that constitutes the critique of violence.

the translator's task, we get caught in a contradictory conclusion: language as the proper sphere of understanding radically excludes any violence and, on the other hand, translation is a linguistic operation that somehow entails violence. The only way to resolve this knot is to assume that Benjamin does not operate with the same concept of language in both claims: when he deals with translation he does not consider language (only) as the sphere of agreement and understanding.

In the *The Translator's Task* we find a few characterizations of translation as violent (*gewaltig*)[3]. In the first one Benjamin explains the relation between the translating language and its content. By evoking the image of the royal mantle, Benjamin highlights the unnatural, inadequate character of the language of translation which is forced to express something that is alien to it. The language of translation cannot adequately embrace the alien content because the operation of translation opens language to something "higher" and "superior", something that is at the origin of the history of language and its development [*Sprachbewegung*]: "For translation indicates a higher language than its own and thereby remains inadequate, violent [*gewaltig*], and alien with respect to its content" (Benjamin 2012: 79).

The attribute "violent" here accompanies two others, namely alien (*fremd*) and inadequate (*unangemessen*), and is actually conferred to the language of translation (*Sprache der* Übersetzung). But what seems violent or forced here is not only the fact that translation must express an original text with a certain tone of artificiality, but that its language indicates another, higher language. Translation is a violent transplantation, uprooting the text with all its 'natura' connections, its transposition not only to another soil, but to something that is without soil, without territory and roots, i.e., the realm of pure language, "more definitive linguistic domain"[4]. Translation, thus, does not only open the source text toward another language, nor does it simply expose the translating language to an alien element that needs to be rearticulated. It indicates rather a more radical openness that lies at the origin of every language and in a way constitutes the ground of linguisticality itself. It is at the site of this openness that we need to seek the character of being *gewaltig*. Acting violently means here to stir up a process of de-naturalization in the layers of language that tends towards an organic form (like a fruit and its peel, to use Benjamin's metaphor). It is an immanent resistance of language as such, which manifests itself in its 'purest' form in translation, or rather in certain translations – a resistance against the monolingual naturalization of languages. "In certain translations", because this aspect of language comes to the fore only when translation, according to

3 This characterization might come from Pannwitz, quoted in Benjamin's text, who claimed that language in translation must be put violently or powerfully in movement by the foreign language. See Benjamin (2012: 82).

4 "Thus translation transplants the original into an – ironically – more definitive linguistic domain, since it can no longer be removed from it by any transmission, but only re-elevated into it as well as to other entities". (Benjamin (2012: 79))

Benjamin, liberates the text from the pressure of transmittance of its meaning, when Übersetzung is free from the task of Übertragung.

In an important part of his essay, Benjamin addresses the violent ability of detaching or unbinding (*entbinden*) the language from meaning, because it is in this detachment that pure language presents itself, and it is in this capacity that language exhibits its essence.

> Translation alone possesses the mighty capacity to unbind it [pure language] from meaning, to turn the symbolizing element into the symbolized itself, to recuperate pure language shaped by linguistic development. (Benjamin 2012: 82)[5]

The English translator opted here for the term "mighty", but the original word is *gewaltig*: the power involved in this detachment from meaning is *violent*. The very appearance of pure language, in the form of the symbolized and no longer as symbolizing, is violent as well. This should not be understood as a mere violence toward the source text, but rather – as Benjamin himself writes – as a *Vermögen* (ability) that constitutes the movement of languages (*Sprachbewegung*), their transformations, described in other passages of Benjamin's text as one of the most violent and fruitful historical processes (*ein der gewaltigsten und fruchtbarsten historischen Prozesse*)[6]. When exhibited in translation, this ability realizes the condition of possibility of language, the pure linguistic essence which is free of any content. It is an exhibition of the pure linguistic relation, the signification of the act of signifying. This paragraph, which for Antoine Berman contains everything Benjamin is saying in his text (Berman 2018: 205), requires more detailed analysis which is not possible to carry out here. However, what is clear is that violence concerns the origin of language, and this origin appears, even though only in a fragmentary form according to Benjamin, in translation.

Nonviolence (Butler)

In "The Ethics and Politics of Nonviolence", the third chapter of *The Force of Nonviolence*, Judith Butler deals with the ethical and political problem of (non) violence, following Benjamin in his *Critique of Violence,* in which language, as the sphere of understanding[7], is associated with non-violence. Butler points out the link between Benjamin's essay on violence and his essay on translation, and raises an important question as to how the divine word is related to divine violence since both are conceived as 'nonviolent'. Butler writes: "Translation

5 Chantal Wright's translation is slightly different: "Detaching it from this meaning, making the symbolised from the symbolising, rediscovering structured pure language in the movement of languages, such is the unique and violent power of translation". (Berman (2018: 205))

6 See Benjamin (1972: 13)

7 For a more detailed analysis of Benjamin's theory of violence in Butler, see Butler 2012.

seeks to overcome the situation of 'non-communicability' imposed by distinct natural or sensuous languages" (Butler 2020: 126-7), so the task of translation is "furthering an understanding where there was once impasse or even conflict" (Butler 2020: 127). As we saw in the passages above, Benjamin's position is quite different, if not contrary: for Benjamin, translation rather overcomes the situation of communicability or rather translation exhibits the non-communicable kernel of language. This does not mean that translation should not communicate anything – translation as a form of linguistic expression clearly does communicate something; it rather means that there is a non-communicative kernel at the level of pure language that does not express or intend anything and underlies the very structure of any language, revealed only in a certain translational practice. And it is actually in this essential non-communicability which underlies and even furthers languages (as a condition of their history) that we need to seek the site of violence. Judith Butler sees language *exclusively* as the space of communicability and agreement, and presents translation as something that 'helps' or 'reactivates' communicability when foreign languages are put in contact and there is an 'natural' interlinguistic impasse.

Benjamin in his essay on translation – and this is his truly radical point – understands language on the basis of translation, and not vice versa. Translation is not understood as secondary in relation to language. Language only appears as a realm of communication if it conceals its origin in the very condition of translatability[8]. Moreover, language as the proper sphere of agreement, understanding and non-violent communication is *already* a product of imposition and violence (in the same sense as there is a law-instituting violence in Benjamin, we can say by adopting his terminology that there is also a language-instituting violence[9]). Translation does not therefore represent a technique of conflict resolution, an "extra-juridical domain of non-violence" (Butler 2020: 127), but rather a practice that reveals the violent face of what was represented as non-violent.

Butler is however right when she says, interpreting Benjamin's text, that legal violence renames its own violent character as coercion or legitimate force; it justifies its own violence as a necessary force within a certain framework. The same can perhaps be said for the domain of linguistic communication which presents itself as nonviolent but requires translation insofar as this activity is justified as 'interlinguistic dialogue' or 'diplomatic negotiation', a coercion necessary for the reestablishment of communication. This analogy between law and language will be discussed further, since the legal order is actually posited in order to guarantee an uninterrupted flow of social communication.

8 On translatability as the essence of language and history, in a lucid interpretation of Benjamin, see Hamacher 2001.

9 In an analysis of the constitution of the modern French language, Derrida offers some interesting insights concerning the interrelatedness between the constitution of the legal (and philosophical) subject and the imposition of a state language. For Derrida there is no doubt that it is a process of a constitutive violence, the territorialization of linguistic sovereignty through abolishment of provincial dialects. Cf. Derrida 2004.

Benjamin's point lies precisely in seeing the establishment of the legal order as an act of violence. If we follow the same reasoning when speaking about language, then the conclusion is that communication also functions as a 'justificatory framework' that filters linguistic and social interactions, legitimizing some while excluding others as violent. On this point, Butler's interpretation is shown to be limited: in order to preserve the perspective of non-violence she misses the point which connects language and law precisely through the issue of violence.

De-violence (Iveković)

In her works, Rada Iveković outlines the notion of *déviolence* in an attempt to think beyond the dichotomy of violence and non-violence. In this way, the concept of translation is also conceived beyond such a dichotomy, since, as Iveković claims, translation helps to deactivate violence but is not able to provide nonviolence (Iveković 2019: 356, Iveković 2022: 281). The impossibility of guaranteeing non-violence is exactly the reason why we need a politics of translation. The role of the politics of translation is to determine the framework that defines the criteria of both violence and non-violence. However, translation is associated with de-violence, i.e. the de-activation of violence, which cannot itself immediately be considered non-violent. Violence is not opposed to non-violence[10]. Their formal and logical opposition neglects their structural inter-relatedness. Or rather, this formal opposition is a consequence of a certain framework that conceals its inter-relatedness. The very dichotomy between violence and non-violence is actually determined by the legal system of violence acting as a filter, making certain acts acceptable as non-violent while rendering other aspects of violence invisible. This mechanism is very similar to the one explained above where a domesticating translational strategy operates by hiding its modifying nature and presenting itself as transparent. The notion of *déviolence* actually serves to reassess the double face of translational practice (violent and nonviolent) against such a mechanism of concealment and assimilation.

But what account of *déviolence* can we give here? In Iveković's view *déviolence* is understood as detachment, non-adhesion or suspension. It is a sort of non-participation in the violence of sovereignty, a (political) decision to restrain ourselves (by following ancient Indian philosophies, Iveković develops politically some ethical concepts such as *anupadalbdha*). This stance presupposes the ambiguity of violence: violence is constitutive for life but is also its enemy, at the same time generating and destroying life (Iveković 2019: 248, 285; Iveković 2022: 198, 224). Life – in its Benjaminian characterization – stands

10 We can say that the same reasoning is valid for the notion of the (un)translatable: the untranslatable is not simply a logical exclusion of the translatable, it is its negative that conditions translation. Angelica Nuzzo therefore envisages the untranslatable as an act, rather than as an un-translated thing. Nuzzo 2020.

for an attribute of history, because the sphere of life and what is living is defined on the basis of history and not nature (Cf. Benjamin 2012: 76). Violence is a constitutive part of the historical existence of languages and cultures. And maybe on a more fundamental level, violence belongs to that openness to otherness that is constitutive for both language and history. If everything comes from elsewhere, from the other, if one is produced through the other such that it contains it indelibly in oneself – the problem discussed in Iveković's book via Nancy's figure of the intruder – then this intrusion of otherness is never without conflict, force or violence. The idea of the intruder, and of us as intruders, entails an intrinsic violence, rupture, discontinuity. We are irremediably opened and exposed, and therefore invited to translate and be translated. This means a continuous process of transformations, i.e., discontinuities and ruptures, a process of becoming-other, of self-othering that accompanies the encounter with otherness. In other words, a constant discovery of our origin in otherness. The question thus becomes: Is the painful recognition of one's own origin in the other ("*reconnaissance douloureuse de l'origine propre dans l'autre*")[11] possible without violence? If violence is an act that is inseparable from the historical origin in otherness, from the situation of openness and exposure, what are the remedies for those forms of violence that become cruelty and aggression? If it is true that violence, as well as non-violence, are ambivalent and require a determination of the framework of their constituting conditions, it is this ambivalence that we have to tackle and to question politically[12]. The same ambivalence is found in de-violence.

However, *déviolence* also shows its ambiguity when it is associated with translation. It is true that translation is fundamentally a detachment, uprooting, de-identification, but it is also a process of a constant, and a constantly unsuccessful, attachment to other languages. It is also an attempt to 'take roots' in that aerial domain without soil that Benjamin names 'pure language'. In other words, translation does not overlap totally with *déviolence*, but the latter expresses one of its aspects. For this reason, we need another concept that takes into consideration the aspect of resistance to linguistic identification, resistance to transplantation and total semantization within another linguistic framework. But this resistance is perceivable only when there is an attempt at identification and re-semantization, that is, when there is a desire to translate that in this way encounters limitations and generates the untranslatable. This clash of translation with its own limits, the encounter with the materiality of language is what we can term translation's counter-violence. If de-violence 'civilizes' violence[13], by overcoming the dichotomy between violence

11 Iveković (2019: 243; 2022: 191).

12 This ambivalence is also expressed in Iveković's notion of *partage de la raison*, which plays with a double meaning of *partage*: sharing and dividing up. The splitting and dividing of the reason is entangled with its sharing, with the possibility of community.

13 See Balibar 2015. However, Balibar rather speaks about anti-violence, understood as politics of civility, in order to overcome the dichotomy of violence-counterviolence.

and non-violence, as Iveković claims (Iveković 2019: 285; Iveković 2022: 224), counter-violence fights for a new framework, a new relation between force and consent, violence and communication, which is nothing less than hegemony in Gramscian sense.

Divine violence through language[14]

What is divine violence, according to Benjamin? It is identified as revolutionary violence and exemplified in a Sorelian general proletarian strike. Benjamin describes it as pure immediate violence (*reine unmittelbare Gewalt*) as opposed to mythical violence, which is *rechtsetzend* (law-positing), and which institutes the laws and juridical order. Once established, this requires another type of violence, i.e., *rechterhaltende*, law-preserving violence. Divine violence destroys the law-positing mythical violence (Cf. Benjamin 2021:57). Moreover, such annihilation is precisely the task (*Aufgabe*) of pure divine violence. Thus, if mythical violence is identified with the violence of law, divine violence represents a certain type of counter-violence: it does violence to legal violence and opens a space for different social relations. It is not only annihilating and destructive (*rechtsvernichtend*), it reveals the violent origin of every law. In this sense, divine violence is always revealing in Benjamin: it anticipates a new epoch, it is the seed or latent condition of a future and harbours the possibility of its opening. This could be taken as the first connection between divine violence and pure language. The perspective of divine violence is that of *Entsetzung des Rechts*, the de-posing of the law and its elimination, while the perspective of pure language is the reconciliation and integration of many languages in one language of truth, which is not simply a historical language. While divine violence establishes a new historical epoch (*ein neues geschichtliches Zeitalter*), pure language expresses the supra-historical kinship of languages (Cf. Benjamin 1972: 13), their historical end. In both cases they announce the future that is somehow already present in a hidden way. But if divine violence counter-acts the violence of law, dismantling legal order and opening up a possibility of historical transformation, can we then say for pure language as well that it is a form of counter-violence that neutralizes another source of violence, for example the violence contained in the establishment of a normative linguistic order and its borders? Is the translational practice that elicits pure language a violent act which not only reveals the violence at the origin of the constitution of historical languages, but also transgresses the borders of national languages and shows a different history of languages to be possible?

Benjamin affirms that the establishment of boundaries (*Grenzsetzung*) is the fundamental phenomenon of law-positing violence as such (Benjamin 2021: 56). The function of the boundary is ambiguous: boundaries separate and divide, but they also put in contact and make possible the passage from

14 Some parts of this chapter were already treated in Hrnjez 2024, although in another context.

one delimited zone to another. Out of this ambiguity, other functions of the boundary emerge: to control, to block, to filter, to omit and to pass through, to transform and to *translate*. In Benjaminian terms, the delimitation and establishment of boundaries, as a manifestation of mythical violence, is supposed to guarantee the power. The boundary is an ambiguous location of power.

If the modern political and historical order with plurality of nationally defined languages has been based upon the practice of bordering and partitioning individual languages into enclosed and clearly distinguished unities[15], then it can be said that the establishment of such a linguistico-political order was realized through violence (similar to mythical violence in Benjamin's terms). If we follow Naoki Sakai's considerations, then we should conclude that this practice of bordering already involves translation – or better to say, a certain regime of translation – as its essential element. In other words, the Benjaminian *Akt der Grenzsetzung,* as an operation of mythical violence, already functions as a translation. But what would be the counter-act of divine violence here? We tried to connect it with the element of 'pure language', as that ungraspable kernel of each language that appears in translation[16]. Divine violence annihilates boundaries, Benjamin claims, but pure language as well can be considered as *grenzenlos*. As we have seen in the essay on translation, pure language is recuperated in a violent unbinding of the translated text from its meaning, and of its language from the purpose to communicate something. In this sense, the coming to light of pure language is a result of a violent relation to language. But since pure language is a condition of possibility of every linguistic relation, it is also the condition of possibility of this very violence. As often happens in Benjamin, a sort of *circulus vitious* is formed: the result of translation appears as its ontological condition; pure language is the condition of translation but can only be realized through it.

The divine violence of pure language actually exposes each language to another dimension that cannot be reduced to the communicative function of language. What Benjamin in his essay on violence regards as "wholly inaccessible to violence", i.e., language, is actually the result of a certain violent establishment of the communicative order in languages. Contrary to Butler, who interprets such a linguistic order as the sphere of non-violence, we discern its violent constitution. The divine violence of pure language exhibited in translation reveals the violent, incommunicable kernel of communication. The communicative order of language with its demand for transparency and

15 This order is what Naoki Sakai names "homolingual address" that results in the schematism of the international world. See Sakai 1997.

16 It is interesting to note that it is Benjamin himself who in one fragment ("Fragments on World and Time") affirms that divine violence must ultimately be searched for in sacred language: "In this world, divine violence is higher than divine nonviolence; in the coming world, divine nonviolence is higher than divine violence.) Manifestation of this kind is not to be sought in the sphere of the social but rather in revelatory perception and ultimately and above all in language, first of all, in sacred language". (Benjamin (2021: 84)).

fluency requires a certain normative framework of imposed rules which, while concealing its own violence, names as violent anything that endangers its foundation. From the point of view of communication, the incomprehensibility of the foreign and alien appears as violent – translation is thus demanded in order to neutralize this transformative power of the foreign. We can call this particular function of translation, which preserves the homolingual communicative normative order, a law-preserving translation. On the other hand, the translation that Benjamin focusses on, i.e., translation that opens up toward pure language, appears as a counter-violence that destroys the communicative functioning of language and puts language "powerfully" in movement, transforming it by means of another language. In this sense, from a radically Benjaminian stance, to understand translation as an attempt to re-establish non-violent communication would be mistaken in a double way: it misunderstands Benjamin's conception of violence and also his understanding of language and translation. It is translation that reveals communication itself to be violent. Acting as a counter-violence translation opens up languages toward new meanings and a new historical horizon.

De-translation

When we asserted that mythical violence has its own regime of translation – one that operates as *Grenzsetzung,* the establishment of a defined linguistic community that represents itself as clearly distinguished from other equally circumscribed linguistic communities – we had a certain process of de-translation in mind. In the same way that violence and non-violence should not be conceived as opposite terms de-translation is not simply an absence of translation; it is not non-translation, understood as a total exclusion of every translational practice. There is no zero point of translation, as there is no zero point of violence. De-translation is rather a suspension of translation *within* translation, a constant endeavour to de-activate translation, a production of semantic transparency and equivalence against the subversive potential of untranslatability. What does this process of deactivation, or rather, self-deactivation of translation consist in? It consists in a reduction of meaning to a homolingual message, in a semantic closure and exclusion of the foreign that obstructs the generation of sense. In the world of capitalist modes of production de-translation takes the form of reducing diversity to a homogeneous measure of value and entails a quantitative unification of semiotic richness. In other words, insofar as it is one form of translation, de-translation has its own dynamics of violence. In the contemporary capitalist social relations de-translation cannot but serve the mechanism of capitalist violence. However, it would be erroneous to consider de-translation as a process which belongs uniquely to capitalist commodification and the generation of social alienation. We could propose that de-translation is an aspect intrinsic to the very historization of the process of translation. It accompanies translation in all its historical forms and therefore calls for a sort of resistance within the same historical process of translating.

This resistance, which topples the established system of equivalences and offers alternative translations that produce new meanings, appears as a counter-violence. It is at this point that translation can be used as an opener of the shared-partible sense (*ouvreur de sens partagé*), as Iveković puts it (Iveković 2019: 356; Iveković 2022: 281). And it is only then that translation becomes the mechanism in the construction of a common language. Unlike Steiner's figure of the translator as the antitheos that "does violence to the divinely sanctioned division between languages" (Steiner 1998: 349), in a hubristic act of seizing the right to translate against the divine will (something that can be recognized as Benjaminian mythical violence), the truly "rebellious negation" of translators is their divine counter-violence that re-affirms the essentially historical character of languages and its transformational potential.

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Saša Hrnjez

Kontra-nasilje prevođenja

Apstrakt

Moj prilog bavi se odnosom između prevođenja i nasilja, polazeći od pojma raz-nasilja razvijenog u radu Rade Iveković. Polazna teza je da nasilje nije naprosto suprotstavljeno nenasilju, već da su oba međuzavisna. Kako bih ovo razmotrio, vraćam se Valteru Benjaminu kroz zajedničko čitanje njegovih razmišljanja o prevodivosti i nasilju. Vodeća pitanja biće sledeća: Da li nam je potrebna kritika nasilja da bismo oblikovali adekvatan (politički) pojam prevođenja? Ako prevođenje nije jednostavno nenasilna komunikacija, treba li ga onda razumeti kao neku vrstu kontra-nasilja spram jednostrano jezičkog zatvaranja značenja? Baveći se ovim problemima, pokušaću da naznačim ideju „raz-prevođenja" kao istinskog sistemskog nasilja koje ometa ili poništava otvorenost prema stranom. Zadatak prevodilaca danas bio bi, dakle, da se uključe u onu politiku prevođenja koja se suprotstavlja nasilju sistemskog raz-prevođenja.

Ključne reči: nasilje, raz-prevođenje, politika prevođenja, komunikacija

II

STUDIES AND ARTICLES

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Vladimer Jalagonia

JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU: LITERATURE, POLITICS AND THE ECONOMY OF THE LIE

ABSTRACT
The following paper seeks to develop – or rather discern – what could be called the politics of literature in Rousseau's work, by attempting to situate the contradictory nature of the faculty of the imagination in relation to the possibility of lying. While the *Rêveries* frame literary fiction as a harmless lie, even a redemptive deployment of the imagination, the *Deuxième Discours* inscribes the imagination into the very logic of historical (as) violence. From this tension, the paper argues that Rousseau opens the possibility for a politics of literature: a critical praxis of a fiction that contests the re/production of the ideological foundations of law, property, and inequality, which fiction itself enabled. It will appear then, as I will argue, that Rousseau's description of a natural, pre-historic condition without (the possibility of) fiction is itself inscribed in this battle of fiction against fiction: the politics of literature.

KEYWORDS
Rousseau, Derrida, fiction, lie, politics, literature, inequality, history, imagination.

Introduction

To answer the question of whether an innocent lie is possible, in *Les Rêveries du Promeneur Solitaire*, Rousseau develops an answer that is, in a sense, a repetition of the traditional elaboration of the problem. Indeed, it is the intention behind a lie – to harm and deceive another – that determines the moral status of an act of lying (*la mauvaise foi*). An innocent lie, therefore, would be possible in the absence of the intention to lie. Literature, which produces nothing but the simple play of the imagination, escapes the problem of justice, and so, for Rousseau, fiction amounts to an innocent lie. However, the innocence of this play of the imagination – which, in a way, invents a new (imaginary) world with its alternative history – would appear irreconcilable and wholly incompatible with Rousseau's anthropology, in which the play of language, the imagination, absence, image, etc., is considered perversion and absolute corruption. History, as a process of denaturalization (as a lie), was, in Rousseau's view, in

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fact initiated in the virginity of the natural state by the free play of the imagination: even if it is property that institutes the social order, this institution itself, as I will argue, is impossible without the possibility of a certain political fiction that in turn is enabled by the faculty of the imagination. There is the pre-social origin of the social, and the work of fiction has already begun there.

In the following essay, I will attempt to reconcile this apparent contradiction between naturalness and artificiality, the primitive state and the play of the imagination (innocent fiction), by placing the concept of the innocent lie and the imagination alongside Rousseau's philosophy of history and, more specifically, his anthropology of the natural state and his description of history as the becoming of the original lie – the establishment of private property. The politicization of literature will be the general horizon of this effort of reconciliation. The first section of the essay will deal with the classification of the lie and will attempt to highlight the imagination as a possibility of the lie itself: even if, for Rousseau, literature, fiction, and deception are not interchangeable terms, the imagination is their common possibility, because of which the clear-cut distribution between being-innocent and being-guilty will be open to uncontrollable confusions. Thus, the reading of *Rêveries* not only enables a description or placement of the faculty of the imagination and its relation to literature, but also, by underlining the contradictory nature of this description when compared to that found in the *Deuxième Discours*, opens up the possibility of the question of the politicization of literature. The second section, thus, will analyze Rousseau's anthropology, focusing mainly on his description of man and his capacity for the imagination in the natural state. Finally, in the third and fourth parts, I will deal with the structure of the establishment of the original lie and sketch out the possibility of resistance as a historically situated strategy – one in which the politicization of literature will be conceived as, to use a Derridaean term, an economic function of this strategy: it is within this strategy that the very description of the natural state must be inscribed.

Lie, intentionality and imagination

> *"Lecteurs, je puis me tromper moi-même, mais non pas vous tromper volontairement." (Rousseau 2003: 188-189)*[1]

After finding the book (sent to him by a friend) with the annotation *vitam vero imedenti* in his papers, Rousseau suspects that it was an ironic remark and relates it, on the one hand, to his life motto[2] and, on the other, to the memory of

1 My translation: "Dear readers, I may deceive myself, but I cannot deceive you deliberately."

2 Rousseau (2003: 188–189): "*Vitam imprendere vero* : voilà la devise que j'ai choisie, et dont je me sens digne."

a childhood lie[3] that Rousseau had never stopped thinking about. And this is how we immerse ourselves in the discourse that Rousseau unfolds around the definition of truth/lies and the right to lie in general. Two questions emerge instantaneously and define the style of questioning:

> There are two questions to be looked at here, both of them equally important. Firstly, when and how should one tell the truth to others, since one is not always obliged to tell it? Secondly, are there cases when one can deceive people blamelessly? Of course everyone knows how to answer the second question – negatively in books, where the most austere morals cost the author nothing; affirmatively in life, where the morals of books are seen as idle and impracticable chatter. So, disregarding these conflicting authorities, let me seek by my own principles to find my answers to these questions. (Rousseau 2004 : 63)

Thus, with these two decisive questions, Rousseau excludes at once two possibilities for answering the problem of the definition of a lie: on the one hand, it is the dogmatism of formalism that imposes an abstract obligation, thereby disregarding both the singularity and the specificity of a human situation. Nevertheless, on the other hand, Rousseau does not go so far as to suggest a certain relativism, which would dissolve the boundary between truth and falsehood, since what is here strictly at issue is precisely "a reliable rule" (Rousseau 2004: 66) that would enable one to discern the value of the obligation to speak the truth in each instance. Therefore, although at the beginning of his speech Rousseau has already set aside two possible avenues of response, his attempt negates neither the generality of the rule nor the singularity and relativity of the situation. Quite on the contrary: he seeks to develop a path between these two possibilities – a path where they may, at last, be reconciled.

At the same time, however, where the right to lie and the value of the obligation to tell the truth have emerged, Rousseau introduces a differentiation between three types of truth, and clearly, he is primarily interested in the third. As the first type of truth—abstract truth, mainly covering scientific knowledge – belongs indispensably to the essence of human life, its concealment, dissimulation, or suppression is strictly forbidden: "In its general and abstract sense truth is the most precious of our possessions. Without it man is blind; it is the eye of reason" (Rousseau 2014: 63). The a priori rule here defines and establishes that everyone is entitled to abstract truth, and to deny it is absolutely prohibited. But indifferent and sterile truth (Rousseau 2004: 64) – for example, the color of the sand at the bottom of the sea – will be treated quite differently: since it neither influences nor concerns existence, and so does not affect anyone, it remains outside Rousseau's attention. Hence, it is the third type of truth (or the duty to tell the truth), whose concealment has an existential effect on others, and here the obligation of truth-telling must be thoroughly intertwined with the possibility of justice:

3 On the stolen ribbon and the Marion accusation against Rousseau, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Les confessions*, II livres (2009: 79–129).

> Something that is good for nothing cannot be owed to anybody; for something to be owed to somebody, it must be actually or potentially useful. Thus, the truth which we owe to one another is that which concerns justice, and it is a profanation of the holy name of truth to apply it to trivial things of which the existence is a matter of general indifference and the knowledge totally useless. Truth without any possible usefulness can therefore never be something we owe to one another; it follows therefore that anyone who conceals or disguises it is not telling a lie. (Rousseau 2004: 64)

However, establishing the relationship between truth and justice, or between the lie and its singular effect, does not answer the questions that opened the meditation, because it is intrinsically difficult to fix and calculate the effect of the lie/truth; in other words, this effect does not always manifest in the subject's immediacy, since there is a structural limitation of appearance irreducible to the empirical limitation of a subject. And Rousseau confirms it: "Apart from the fact that these effects are not always clear or easily ascertained, they are as infinitely varied as the circumstances in which the words are spoken" (Rousseau 2004: 66). Still, this does not produce a perplexity for Rousseau. The safe point will thus be displaced and relocated from this exteriority – between discourse or pronunciation and its effect on the other – toward the subject's interiority. In this way, Rousseau has replaced the space of problematization and introduced it into the immanence of the subject.

As the previous quotation indicated, Rousseau provides the definition of a lie in relation to signification and discourse, insofar as the latter first places the imaginary in the place of reality (in the subject) and, after that, externalizing it in signification (writing, spoken words). It is, therefore, the correspondence between discourse and reality, between signification[4] and factuality that defines truth. If the exteriority between the subject of discourse, on the one hand, and the other – or the effect on the other – on the other hand, demobilized the possibility of finding a solution to the problem of the intentionality of discourse, here it is the will hidden behind the discourse that decides the moral status of any discourse, and thus also the innocence of the lie:

> But their degree of goodness or malice can only be gauged and determined by the intention that produced them. Untruthful talk is only falsehood when deception is intended, and even the intent to deceive, far from being invariably linked to the desire to injure, is often produced by exactly the opposite motive. (Rousseau 2004: 66)

According to this definition, the forbidden lie cannot be equated with a break or an accidental discrepancy between discourse and reality, but rather it is only the motivation – or rather, the will – to lie that is scorned by Rousseau.

4 To thematize the relationship between truth, lies and language is typical of the spirit of Rousseau's century, and this presupposes not only the privilege given to the question of language in relation to truth and lies, but also the theme of the innocent lie. On this point, see Starobinski (2012: 166–186). Also Lisse (2016: 75–105).

Questioning lies in relation to justice, therefore, concerns only a certain kind of lie, or, more precisely, a certain intention to lie. "The truthful man" (Rousseau 2004: 69) completely identifies truth and justice with one another, but he does not rule out all lies – or more precisely, the possibility of lying without the intention of wanting to lie: "He will therefore feel no qualms in telling occasional lies about things of no importance, nor will he regard these as lies, but he will never tell lies to the advantage or disadvantage of himself or others." (Rousseau 2004: 70). Consequently (and this is the main result of the passage from the exteriority to the interiority of intentionality), if the desire to affect the other negatively spoils the speech and corrupts the lie, then the absence of this desire will, of course, purify them and generate a becoming-innocent of the lie:

> To lie to one's own advantage is an imposture, to lie to the advantage of others is a fraud, and to lie to the detriment of others is a slander – this is the worst kind of lie. To lie without advantage or disadvantage to oneself or others is not to lie; it is not falsehood but fiction. (Rousseau 2004: 66)

Rousseau's motto of "devoting one's life to the truth" must be translated as a vocation to watch over one's intentions and to prevent them from having a destructive effect on others. Admittedly, there would still be a disagreement between discourse and reality, between meaning and truth. But since such discourse would involve only the free play of the imagination, it would not intentionally or voluntarily affect others. At the very moment when the other is suspended in the discourse, when the exteriority *between* myself and the other is maintained, the lie – as a dissimulation of the real thing – would become totally innocent; it would be beyond the question of lying. In interiority, the play of the imagination does not concern justice, which, consequently, focuses precisely on the relationship between myself and others. But if Rousseau remains wary of the dangers that could be generated by fiction/literature, it is because the latter could falsify the "moral truth" (Rousseau 2004: 68), which exclusively concerns the relationship between the self and the other. Fiction is the lie that does not possess the will to lie; it falsifies, substitutes, and produces the simulacrum – but this process of substitution is marked and indicated as such; it signals itself as such and presents itself in the light of day. The lie of fiction says that it is a lie – that is to say, fiction does not lie insofar as its lying status is never lost sight of: since these fictions are "lies which would go against justice and the truth we owe to others," and since Rousseau insists that we "keep to fictions which are a matter of equal indifference to myself and everyone else" (Rousseau 2004: 71), the play of the imagination "does not affect justice in any way." (Rousseau 2004: 68). Given these differentiations and the exclusivity attached to the will to harm, the unforgettable lie of his childhood no longer appears to Rousseau as an immoral lie: "Never has a *premeditated* lie approached my mind, never have I lied to my own advantage; but I have often lied out of shame." (Rousseau 2004: 71. Emphasis added)

The premeditation *prior* to the expression and realization of the discourse that deceives presupposes, of course, a possibility of temporalization and an exteriority between the self and the other – and therefore, a heterogeneity between two temporalizations. The *pre*meditation and production of the lie in interiority, which would currently define the notion of will, must presuppose temporality and the capacity for the de-presentation of the past and the anticipation of the future (Husserl 2013: 31–41). In other words, nothing could be substituted or falsified without the faculty of transgression beyond the limitation of appearance in *hic et nunc* toward possible and imaginary appearance. The lie appears in the world as an externalization of premeditated falsification, but not as a simple imitation or interpretation of the thing in the world; it distorts, reconfigures, *re*-elaborates moments of reality, the temporal order, etc., of the world. By reshuffling the sequence of the process, interrupting it with an unfaithful interpretation, and introducing an inverted image of the reality of things, the lie proposes an alternative scenario. If Rousseau defined the lie as the problem of non-correspondence between two orders (discourse and reality), it is because he assigned to man the anthropological capacity to imagine several possibilities, thus introducing into the order of things fiction as the falsification of order. The lie, therefore, is the result of the *bricolage* of the imagination.

So there are two forms of lie: the lie that lies and thus would evoke the eye of justice, on the one hand, and the lie that exists without the will to want to lie to the other, on the other; they both reconnect in the same condition of their possibility, and this is why the answers to the two questions on which the discussion was opened appear here, in a way, to be both certain and confused at the same time. On the one hand, the right to lie would be acceptable in a singular situation, if it were possible to have absolute certainty that this lie would preserve the other from a devastating effect. Rousseau provides us with two examples of this type of lie from his personal life (which saved people from moral, economic, and physical harm) (Rousseau 2004: 72–88). But given that the distance between me and the other is infinite, and since the effect is never available in its entire certainty, the responsibility taken on by telling a lie is nevertheless incommensurable. On the other hand, the problem with literature, with fiction, is that it does not fit into the legal differentiation between punishable and innocent lying, because the dazzling aura of fiction has the inevitable possibility of seducing the subject (and Rousseau himself), either without obtaining the subject's acquiescence or with deliberate affirmation. The textual dispensability from the original intentionality, its aesthetic potency, and the possibility of its substitutive power demobilizes the differentiations that Rousseau proposed in order to stabilize the difference between the lie that concerns justice and the lie that is innocent. And Rousseau himself confirms this malicious and seductive incitation of literature. After indicating at the beginning of the *Promenade*:

> However, on going over my life more carefully, I was very surprised by the number of things of my own invention which I remembered presenting as true at the

> very time when my heart was proud of my love of truth and I was sacrificing my security, my best interests and my own person to this love of truth with a disinterestedness for which I know no parallel among men. (Rousseau 2004: 62)

And he concludes the chapter thus:

> when the pleasure of writing led me to embellish reality with ornaments of my own invention, I acted even more wrongly, because to decorate truth with fables is in fact to disfigure it. (Rousseau 2004: 77).

The fact that the innocent and guilty lies here do not seem to be separated by a clear-cut demarcating line points back to their common origin: the imagination. The mere amusement of the imagination and its deployment for the substitution of reality to affect the other negatively are structurally open and available for each other. The pleasures of literature are thus always already open to its own opposite: *literature cannot be exclusively neither guilty nor innocent*.

But, furthermore, literary fiction – *even* in the case of innocent fiction, which is, in a certain sense, virulent in the imagination without limits and therefore absolute substitution – appears to be irreconcilable with Rousseau's anthropological description of primitive man and the prehistoric natural condition. On the one hand, if fiction possesses the power to seduce the subject, the certainty and presence of intentionality (as demonstrated in the last quotation), and if the becoming-guilty of the innocent lie is evoked when it touches or intervenes in the realm of historical truth, justice, etc., then why does Rousseau present fiction as an innocent lie? On the other hand, the absence of the will to lie – or pure fiction, if such a thing exists – would not protect it from participating in what he called the destruction, perversion, catastrophe of history as alienation and the corruption of the natural condition through the movement of substitution. Is literature not going to take part in – and even accelerate or aggravate – this catastrophic development of/as history?

Even if the distinction between falsehoods that hurt people and those that do not were to stand – and presupposing that one could control or reliably calculate a possible effect of an innocent lie – there is always the same possibility at work in both of them, which means that the communication and unnoticed interplay between them has always already started (not, or notonly, in their effects, but) in their common origin. The contamination between them is always already an open possibility, and this possibility is a structural necessity. Thus, if the association between the criminal lie and the innocent lie, in IV *Promenade*, appears in the capacity of the imagination (as their condition of possibility), the place and function of the imagination itself in *Deuxième discours* will be even more malicious and ambivalent: it has at the same time founded and stolen the natural state; it corrupts history and provides the means against the historical violence of imposture. When this discrepancy between the two types of description is considered, it is clear that imagination has a paradoxical function in Rousseau's *oeuvre*; but this paradoxicality also enables the politicization of the function of literature in the struggle against the naturalization

of a fundamental lie, using the means provided by the history initiated by the catastrophe in the first place. This deployment of violence against itself is what I will be developing in the coming chapters, following Jacques Derrida's infamous reading: the economy of imposture and of the violence of (as) history. [5]

Natural state, compassion and imagination

"...the book of nature which never lies.
All that comes from her will be true..."
(Rousseau 2002: 89)

Man's natural state, in its first approximations, has generally been described by Rousseau in a negative way: as the total absence of the historical and social condition. But, strictly speaking, what defines the natural state in the final analysis is not only the absence of history, but foremost the impossibility of appearance as such – that is, a present presence without memory and anticipation of the future, without the condition for the possibility of history and temporalization. The exclusion of absence, whether in the form of the past or the future, constitutes a life without the experience or the appearance of that life, and therefore without a relation to death as absolute absence:

> he fears no evils but pain, and hunger; I say pain, and not death; for no animal, merely as such, will ever know what it is to die, and the knowledge of death, and of its terrors, is one of the first acquisitions made by man, in consequence of his deviating from the animal state. (Rousseau 2002: 97)

By excluding temporalization, and therefore the becoming-finitude of life, absolute presence neither allows nor demands substitution in order to preserve itself from the terror of death. The image, which necessarily presupposes the capacity for representation and thus an internal lack within presence, would disturb and surpass this absolute tranquility.

In his way, immediate existence in nature knows no lack and, especially, no lack in desire. There would therefore be no need to compensate for or make up any lack. After the destruction of the primitive condition, historicity enters – within which desire intersects with the imagination, which then never ceases to reproduce the new object of desire; thus establishing an immeasurable distance between the power to satisfy desire and the object of desire. Desire would itself become inventive and creative. Man's misfortune in history lies, paradoxically but also logically, in the infinite capacity of the imagination, which will always exceed the capacity to fill this lack and realize an image. In other words, primitive man's desire is more a physical instinct than desire *per se*; the emergence of physical needs and their satisfaction happen at the same

5 On the notion of the economy of violence, see Derrida 2014: 172–180.

time, and so desire, deploying a capacity to invent or multiply the desired object, does not disturb primitive man's immediacy:

> his heart asks nothing from him. His moderate wants are so easily supplied with what he everywhere finds ready to his hand, and he stands at such a distance from the degree of knowledge requisite to covet more, that he can neither have foresight nor curiosity... His soul, which nothing disturbs, gives itself up entirely to the consciousness of its present existence, without any thought of even the nearest futurity; and his projects, equally confined with his views, scarce extend to the end of the day... (Rousseau 2002: 97–98).

The imagination, which can give rise to absence and therefore posit an object always in the distance and beyond immediate perception, disturbs the immediacy between desire and its object. It is distinct from primitive existence: the simple instinct, as the absence of exteriority between memory/future and desire, is in fact desire without imagination. Rousseau's description of natural conditions is principally understood and defined as the absence of imagination and representation as such. Therefore, without any lack, natural man does not know the image as representation – which would re-present what does not exist in the immediacy of presence – and thus remains outside any artificiality of substitution that appeared, after the catastrophe, with the becoming of history. We are, of course, a long way from literature, and hence *from the free play of the imagination that produces the innocent lie*: that which creates a world different from the real and, without a fixed edge, transgresses and transforms current events – and sometimes, without taking actual history as a starting point, invents an autochthonous history and an alternative scenario. But the fable or literature that evokes and produces desire, at this point, appears as a perversion and an absolute evil, and hence we can see here the discrepancy we were signaling all along in full force between *Promenade* and *Deuxième discours*.

In his *Deuxième Discours*, Rousseau, as is well known, takes aim at Hobbesian anthropology (as well as that of Locke and Pufendorf, see: Goldschmidt 1974: 495–509), which, in his view, manifests a radical and dangerous prejudice. According to this critique, when Hobbes tried to describe the condition and psychology of primordial man, his attempt was not sufficiently radical and, consequently, in describing primitive man, he imposed on him characteristics that were already historical (rationality, the ability to calculate, etc.), which enabled him, on the other hand, to justify an ideological lie of the existing historical condition (Althusser 2006: 303). Rousseau, in contrast to the concept represented by *Homo homini lupus est*, introduced the notion of pity as man's second fundamental and natural instinct, which, to some extent, moderated and regulated the first natural instinct – self-preservation and self-love. Pity, which expresses itself principally in compassion and solidarity toward others, prevents or hinders the outbreak of hostility among human beings and hence the state of war. The state of war, as Hobbes described it, belongs, according to Rousseau, to history, which arises only with the image that disrupts the

simplicity of instinct and the immediacy of givenness. Rationality awakens, and the voice of pity is buried. In contrast to the historical world, the possibility of a balance between pity and self-love is another definition of the natural state.

But it is precisely at this point – when Rousseau is, in fact, trying to describe the natural condition – that he delivers a description of the condition for the possibility of denaturalization as the beginning of substitution in place of absence, lack, and representation.

Pity does not need the intervention of reflection; indeed, it is not the result of a certain intentionality or will, but, on the contrary, it functions instinctively and instantaneously as "the cry of nature" (Rousseau 2002: 101). But how will pity for the other be possible without a minimum distance between myself and the other – a distance that is not just an empirical space, but also a phenomenological one? A certain identification *between* the two must be established, which presupposes a phenomenological separation, allowing pity to appear. Identification with the misery of the other, therefore, requires the subject to possess the capacity to re-present, hypothetically, the situation of the other, with whom identification *then* takes place. The image thus appears in the subject's interiority and enables a representative joining with the other: in this way, the image, representation, temporality, and absence settle into the immediacy of the natural state and, of course, disturb and contaminate it. Rousseau himself asserted the necessity of the imagination for the functioning of pity in the famous Chapter IX of his *Essay on the Origin of Language:*

> Les affections sociales ne se développent en nous qu'avec nos lumières. La pitié, bien que naturelle au cœur de l'homme, resterait éternellement inactive sans l'imagination qui la met en jeu. Comment nous laissons-nous émouvoir à la pitié ? En nous transportant hors de nous-mêmes ; en nous identifiant avec l'être soufrant. Nous ne souffrons qu'autant que nous jugeons qu'il souffre ; ce n'est pas dans nous, c'est dans lui que nous souffrons… Celui qui n'imagine rien ne se sent que lui-même ; il est seul au milieu du genre humain. (Rousseau 2015: 124)[6]

Thus, paradoxically, the naturality of the human is activated by the faculty that is unthinkable without the possibility of absence and substitution. If the savage eventually unfolds and develops its difference from the animal, it is because it possesses the internal condition for denaturalization, which does not appear by chance or come from the outside, but, on the contrary, is inscribed "au cœur de l'homme" in his natural state. If the natural catastrophe does not produce the denaturalization of the animal as such, but rather humanization as the denaturalization of man, it is because the possibility of linguistic substitution and the temporalization of the becoming of history as the concealment

6 My translation: "Social affections develop in us only by our own light. Pity, though natural to the human heart, would remain eternally inactive without the imagination that brings it into play. How do we allow ourselves to be moved to pity? By transporting us out of ourselves; by identifying with the suffering being. We suffer only insofar as we judge that he suffers; it is not in us, but in him that we suffer... He who imagines nothing feels only himself; he is alone in the midst of humans."

of nature has always already been installed in him. Thus, whereas the desire of the savage never went beyond the actuality of presence, the capacity of the imagination would destroy the tranquility of this desire: "Comme la raison a peu de forces, l'intérêt seul n'en a pas tant qu'on croit. L'imagination seule est active et l'on n'excite les passions que par l'imagination." (Rousseau 2019, 851)[7] If the imagination was defined in the forms of literary fiction as an innocent form of play, here it appears as the condition of denaturalization and catastrophe, and hence the distance between the two textual descriptions is immense.

The "faculty of improvement" (*faculté de se perfectionner*) (Rousseau 2002: 96) and speech – two characteristics that distinguish man from animals – are not, of course, external to the imagination. Covetousness, aimed at acquiring the desired object, and desire, which continually invents and multiplies its objects, are at the root of the development of man's intellectual, physical, social, etc., capacities. And given that Rousseau envisaged the function of language as a sensitive, depictive function of a directly present object, the image implies a representational capacity that had accordingly always already operated as a language. But it is now, when the imagination and the ability for perfectibility intertwine in the dialectical movement of development, that language and the use of "the inflections of the voice" (Rousseau 2002: 101) become inevitable and appear as necessary – because "the moment the imagination stops, the mind can continue to function only with the aid of discourse" (Rousseau 2002: 103). Language is already inscribed in the image, but the imagination is sustained only through language. The appearance of the image, on the one hand, has the effect of upsetting, deceiving, and hiding the purity of the original condition. It is with the image, with the possibility of discourse and, therefore, with the disruption of absolute immediacy, that the problem of the correspondence between representation and the real world is born. The difference between truth and lie was established as soon as primordial naturalness was destroyed, and this is why, according to Rousseau, substitution – as imposture, dissimulation, and deterioration – is total. The concept of history as the lie and hence as an unstoppable propagation of images or distantiations would not be critically thinkable without the presupposition of a certain naturalness, which, for Rousseau, despite the devastating process, has been maintained throughout history – but always disfigured and deformed in self-love. There is a process of progressive substitution and deformation of primordial naturalness, which nevertheless, in a way, moderates the devastating effect of this lie. And the possibility of fiction is, in fact, inscribed in this inevitable process of substitution. But, on the other hand, the simplicity of the antithesis between pity and self-love becomes even more complicated as soon as we consider the first imposture in history as a certain fixation of the movement that had already begun with imagination. Thus, man's anthropological capacity

7 My translation: "As reason has little power, interest alone does not possess as much as we esteem. The imagination alone is active, and passions are only aroused by the imagination."

for imagination[8] both constitutes the naturalness of pity and opens the door to substitution, denaturalization, and, in effect, aims at the institutionalization of the lie (property, law, state, etc.). Imagination is the battleground between these two – indispensable to each other – extremes, and the political function of fiction is installed in this paradoxical placement of imagination: fiction is, simultaneously, the destructive potency and the possibility of resistance to the effects of that destruction. This is the function that the following chapters will explore, respectively.

Fiction, original lie and the establishment of law

"What therefore is precisely the subject of this discourse? It is to point out, in the progress of things, that moment, when, Right taking place of violence, nature became subject to law." (Rousseau 2002: 87).

Reflection and rationality, as the ability to find a suitable means of achieving the desired object, are caught up in the game. The balance established between pity and self-love is upset: "It is reason that engenders self-love, and reflection that strengthens it; it is reason that makes man shrink into himself" (Rousseau 2002: 107). The emergence of reason and the rupture between the subject and the world (of the other) lead to an impasse, bringing closer the act of appropriation as the origin of fundamental imposture and the foundation of a history that is nothing but the evolution of this imposture. Thus, unlike the first part of the *Deuxième Discours*, which was devoted to describing the natural condition, the second aims to present the history of humanity as the adventure of a lie: private property (as "les objets interposés" (Starobinski 1973: 38)). Rousseau opens this second part with the following paragraph:

8 Derrida (1967: 264) : "Échappant à toute influence réelle et extérieure, faculté des signes et des apparences, l›imagination se pervertit elle-même. Elle est le sujet de la perversion. Elle éveille la faculté virtuelle mais elle la transgresse aussitôt. Elle met au jour la puissance qui se réservait mais, en lui montrant son au-delà, en la « devançant », elle lui signifie son impuissance. Elle anime la faculté de jouir mais elle inscrit une différence entre le désir et la puissance. Si nous désirons au-delà de notre pouvoir de satisfaction, l›origine de ce surplus et de cette différence se nomme imagination. Cela nous permet de déterminer une fonction du concept de nature ou de primitivité : c›est l›équilibre entre la réserve et le désir. Equilibre impossible puisque le désir ne peut s›éveiller et sortir de sa réserve que par l›imagination qui rompt aussi l›équilibre. Cet impossible – autre nom de la nature – reste donc une limite." My translation: "Escaping all real and external influence, the faculty of signs and appearances, the imagination perverts itself. It is the subject of perversion. It awakens the virtual faculty but immediately transgresses it. It brings to light the power that was reserved for itself but, by showing it its beyond, by 'pre-empting' it, it signifies its powerlessness. It animates the faculty of enjoyment, but it inscribes a difference between desire and power. If we desire beyond our power to satisfy, the origin of this surplus and this difference is called the imagination. This enables us to determine a function of the concept of nature or primitiveness: it is the balance between reserve and desire. This balance is impossible because desire can only be awakened and come out of its reserve by the imagination, which also breaks the balance. This impossible balance – another name for nature – therefore remains a limit."

> The first man, who after enclosing a piece of ground, took it into his head to say, *this is mine*, and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. How many crimes, how many wars, how many murders, how many misfortunes and horrors, would that man have saved the human species, who pulling up the stakes or filling up the ditches should have cried to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are lost, if you forget that the fruits of the earth belong equally to us all, and the earth itself to nobody! But it is highly probable that things had by then already come to such a pass, that they could not continue much longer as they were. (Rousseau 2002 : 113)

If, in the final chapter, we tried to describe the movement that began with the awakening of the faculty of imagination – in which the establishment of imposture appears as inescapable ("But it is highly probable that things had by then already come to such a pass, that they could not continue much longer as they were.") – from now on we encounter directly the moment, structure, and architecture of this "first source of inequality" (Rousseau 2002: 82). As the very first sentence of the quote shows, there are, at the very least, four constitutive moments, each indispensable to the others, that establish the condition of possibility for the institutionalization of the lie: 1) the subject of the announcement ("The first man ...") 2) the locution or act of language ("*this is mine*"), 3) the object or referent of this locution ("... people simple enough ...") and, finally, 4) the belief ("to believe")[9]:

1. "The first man ...": The primacy of the subject does not concern the empirical nature of the announcement – the first actor who announces his intention for the first time to appropriate – but the legal installation of the locution. Consequently, it is the first to succeed, to establish, to set up both the right and the law of appropriation. It is not only the author of the fiction who expresses a desire for substitution, but also someone who actually naturalizes the non-natural and hence establishes the lie itself; in other words, the first person who mobilized the necessary conditions for the staging in which the affirmation of the new law would have taken place. Literature, authorship, theatricality, and politics appear in the same opening. The establishment of the lie – and therefore the establishment of the authority of the law – requires no external justification, because the lie is in itself its own proof and its own foundation. History as a lie, by repeating this self-foundation of imposture, will falsify the artificiality of the first law. The catastrophe of history as a lie is thus (also) the naturalization of this artificiality, and so the relationship between nature and artificiality will be reversed. With this self-foundation of imposture, we come to locution and the act of language.

9 The numbering used here could not, of course, mean a chronological succession; there is no chronology in the constitution of the imposture, but, on the contrary, a certain simultaneity and an indissociable correlation. Without the presupposition of language and that of 'people', the person who founded society would not appear. But without the presupposition of the first legislator, it would not be possible to 'find' people, accumulate them and unify them through a law.

2. "*this is mine*": phrase, as a founding locution, does not merely describe what it actually is; it not only indicates the new reality of the thing, but invents it performatively. It is not the empirical mark (barrier, frontier, etc.) that constitutes property, but the performativity that announces this mark as a mark in the first place. Based on the double function of the verb "to be," the locution here pronounces both the right and the law of possession: *this is mine*, on the one hand, and *this must be/remain mine*, on the other. These appear simultaneously, and in this way, the act of language produces the context for any subsequent performativity. The descriptive function and the performative function essentially combine and finalize the act of substitution.[10] The peculiar form of fiction and its performative role is also at work here.
3. "... people simple enough ...": Legislation, and the announcement of legislation through vocal significations, would be ineffective without the people who hear and accept it. The legitimacy of the archaic lie requires a certain general affirmation, and so the people who accept the lie are not only the object of the enunciation, but also appear, at the same time, as subjects of the affirmation and, thus, of the establishment of the lie. This affirmation therefore goes beyond mere passive acceptance and becomes productive, inventive, and active. The original lie, thus, has multiple accomplices and authors.
4. "to believe": If the facticity of the border does not constitute the legal function of the border itself, and if the legislator needs people who have also participated in the constitution of the imposture, it is because there is a necessary link between the discourse and the facticity of the border. Belief accomplishes this donation and establishes the symbolic function of the border. Henceforth, the simple and banal gesture takes on a constitutive, performative role in the new order of reality. In effect, it signifies the establishment of the fiction of appropriation, and each time it is repeated, the new order will ensure, in one way or another, that the gesture of original meaning is reenacted. Belief, which is the necessary outcome of the process, retroactively and performatively generates the necessary alliance between the legislator, the people, the border, and the law. Belief adds a constitutive supplement to the fiction that has been produced by multiple actors – even as these actors are themselves produced by this fiction.

So, it has been quite correctly noticed by Margel, that the accomplice deeply involved in these four constituent moments of the original imposture is

> représenté un écueil, un récif, voire un mirage nécessaire, constitutif, structurant. Et ce, non seulement pour fonder la société civile et ses diverses institutions de l'inégalité, de la famille à l'école, de la prison à l'hôpital, mais encore

10 J. L. Austin 1962: 1–12.

> et surtout pour voiler, effacer ou maintenir inaccessible, voire irreprésentable, toute la stratégie frauduleuse qui constitue ce fondement des sociétés. (Margel 2007 : 17–18)[11]

The original imposture does not only entail the realization of a certain fiction – which in itself, even without realization, would already be disastrous – but also the establishment of a new principle of truth or reality, one that imposes its own framework of possible interpretations and provides the conditions for defining or deciding what can be called a lie.[12] The deception of this imposture lies in the rewriting of its own structure and the concealment of what it is: fiction, imposture, artificiality. Because the artificiality of the law conceals itself and presents itself as natural facticity, the difference between a lie and a truth is established in relation to the naturalization of artificiality and, consequently, of inequality between men. This difference thus participates ideologically in the reproduction of the hegemonic institution. At this precise moment, the process of denaturalization that began with the power of imagination is radicalized and finalized: absolute denaturalization is the naturalization of what is not natural at all. The question that must now be asked concerns the resistance potential of fiction – without which, as we have just seen, the primordial catastrophic institution would not have been possible.

The economy of the lie and of violence

If the beginning of history, writing, language, society, and political organization was considered an absolute aberration, Rousseau nevertheless never proposed, as a solution to this injustice and inequality – the inevitable effects of the archaic imposture – the abandonment of organization or of history as such. As indicated on several occasions, historicity, as well as its vices, are indispensable and ontologically ineffaceable: nothing can completely fill the crack between appearance and an object appearing, and thus, nothing can efface the

11 My translation: "represented a stumbling block, a reef, even a necessary, constitutive, structuring mirage. And not only to found civil society and its various institutions of inequality, from the family to the school, from the prison to the hospital, but also and above all to veil, erase or keep inaccessible, even unrepresentable, the whole fraudulent strategy that constitutes this foundation of societies."

12 On the subject of this complicity between the legislator and theatricality/fiction, see Margel (2007:18): "D'un côté, c'est le législateur, qui valide l'autorité, justifie le pouvoir et rend légitime un droit de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, en séparant le corps propre du corps collectif. De l'autre, c'est le lecteur, qui impose les normes du sens, les critères d'interprétation et les conditions de toute lisibilité, en divisant l'homme de l'intérieur de toute lisibilité, en divisant l'homme de l'intérieur entre son corps propre et son nom propre." (My translation: "On the one hand, it is the legislator, who validates authority, justifies power and legitimises a right of inequality among men, by separating the proper body from the collective body. On the other, it is the reader, who imposes the norms of meaning, the criteria of interpretation and the conditions of all legibility, by dividing man from within all legibility, by dividing man from within between his own body and his own name.")

force or the possibility of fiction. At the very moment when absence or lack was introduced by imagination, depraving the virginity of the natural condition, the dissolution of temporalization and the multiplication of appearances became impossible. Since violence, as the essence of history, is now inescapable, Rousseau proposes a political strategy against the violence of history – namely, to economize and minimize this violence. Pity, "the simple impulses of nature" (Rousseau 2002: 97), which moderate the relationship between men in the natural state, will, of course, be inflated and concealed by the movements of rationality and self-love. But at each historical moment, the task of social organization must be (re)established in such a way as to correspond, as far as possible, to pity – by which it would moderate, through a certain violence, the violence of self-love: violence against violence. The law, which was the absolute imposture, is now used in the becoming of history against the violence of history. The simple givenness of feeling must be replaced by the duty of laws – although this replacement must remain correlated to what it replaces. And here, writing, language, society, and political organization are inscribed within a new reality, while still retaining their characteristics of concealment and violence.

The progress of knowledge has brought with it new forms of domination, and so real progress will consist in developing new ways of countering it. As we quoted above: "It is to point out, in the progress of things, that moment, when, right taking place of violence, nature became subject to law." If the play of dissimulation is absolute, the solution for Rousseau would not be to simplify the organization of society as much as possible and come closest to nature, but rather to conduct, locally and historically, a strategy to establish a new relationship between the instance of interruption of dissimulation, pity, and knowledge as reflexivity/rationality. If the forms taken by different rationalities in history are constructed as products of substitutive movements – and, moreover, if original tranquility is inevitably intertwined with rationality and reflexivity – then this same knowledge can only be used against itself in order to minimize the damage of history as a lie. Nothing would be untouchable for the movement of the economy of violence; nothing should escape the eventual decision of revolution and restructuration of the given – *especially not*, in our reading, *the concept of private property*. Civil society and the law must reconcile themselves with the natural instance and attempt to bring the law into play in order to moderate malice and economize it. The law must therefore supplement and regulate the damage done by history: history against history is the movement that finds its source in pity, which, as we have seen, is instituted by imagination and thus is never free from a form of fictionality. To conclude about this strategy, we can quote the paragraph from *De la Grammatologie*:

> Mais le concept de supplément, considéré, comme nous l'avons déjà fait, en tant que concept économique, doit nous permettre de dire en même temps le contraire sans contradiction. La logique du supplément – qui n'est pas la logique de l'identité – fait que, simultanément, l'accélération du mal trouve sa compensation et son garde-fou historiques. L'histoire précipite l'histoire, la

> société corrompt la société, mais le mal qui les abîme l'une et l'autre a aussi son supplément naturel : l'histoire et la société produisent leur propre résistance à l'abîme. (Derrida 1967 : 264)[13]

The response to the injustice of the effects, disfigurements, and delusions of the original imposture depends on the possibility of an alliance between imagination, reflection, and rationality. The task of finding a certain balance between the antitheses of history and the natural feeling of pity would mean developing and inventing new forms of *garde-fou* against its dissemination – a *garde-fou* that would never itself be entirely distinct from the original lie. The political and critical function of literature must be determined here, as Rousseau himself suggests in *Promenade IV*: there is an enormous difference between, on the one hand, literature that addresses the question of historical truth and morality, and, on the other hand, literature that is idle, "quite empty kinds of fiction" (*purement oiseuse*) (Rousseau 2011: 67), which serves no useful purpose. Literature with political potential is deployed with a view to this task and, in one way or another, provides a (possibility for) critical discourse on the political, economic, and social situation – relying on fiction as the necessary means for initiating this critical distance and, ultimately, to "défaire les nœuds" (Todesco 2019: 37) of the complex structures of dissimulation.

Conclusion

The interweaving of reality and fiction is, in fact, announced right from the beginning of the first chapter of the *Deuxième Discours*: in the section between the preface and the first part, but which belongs neither to the preface nor to the text proper. The political implications of literature could be extrapolated even from there. At the beginning of the penultimate paragraph, Rousseau explains:

> Let us begin, therefore, by laying aside facts, for they do not affect the question. The researches, in which we may engage on this occasion, are not to be taken for historical truths, but merely as *hypothetical and conditional reasonings*, fitter to illustrate the nature of things, than to show their true origin... (Rousseau 2002: 88. Emphasis added)

After that in the last paragraph he concluded this:

> O man, of whatever country you are, whatever your opinions may be, attend to my words; here is your history such as *I think I have read it, not in books composed by your fellowmen, for they are liars, but in the book of nature which never*

13 My translation: "But the concept of supplement, considered, as we have already done, as an economic concept, should allow us to say the opposite at the same time, without contradiction. The logic of the supplement – -which is not the logic of identity – means that, at the same time, the acceleration of evil finds its historical compensation and safeguard. History precipitates history, society corrupts society, but the evil that damages them both also has its natural supplement: history and society produce their own resistance to the abyss." See also McDonald (1974: 90–92); Imbert (2000: 289–294).

> *lies*. All that comes from her will be true, nor will there be anything false, but *where I may happen*, *without intending it*, *to introduce something of my own*. The times I am going to speak of are very remote. How much are you changed from what you once were! It is in a manner the life of your species that I am going to write, from the qualities which you have received, and which your education and your habits have succeeded in depraving, but could not destroy. There is, I feel, an age at which every individual would choose to stop; and you will look for the age at which, had you your wish, your species had stopped. Discontented with your present condition for reasons which threaten your unhappy posterity with still greater vexations, you will perhaps wish it were in your power to go back; and this sentiment ought to be considered a panegyric of your first ancestors, a criticism of your contemporaries, and a source of terror to those who may have the misfortune of coming after you. (Rousseau 2002 : 88–89. Emphasis added)

This internal interweaving between fiction, "hypothetical and conditional reasonings," and "the book of nature," which "never lies," does not mean that there are no differences between the actual and the imaginary, the real and the fictitious, truth and lies, but that the change in history re-establishes the relation between the two sides. Since any artifice conceals, hides its origin, and thus dissimulates its own contingency, it is this naturalization of the artificial that must be tackled by critical scrutiny. Revealing, disguising, and dismantling this artificiality of the historical lie – of this falsification that is presented as natural, stable, constant, firm truth – requires us to establish a certain affiliation between fiction, imagination, and reality, for which the idea of a fiction-less condition appears as nothing more than a literary invention serving critical political purposes. In other words, it is "fiction nécessaire" (Stiegler 1994: 119) that enables interpretative intervention. This is why the natural state, "*if* ever it did [exist], does not now, and in all probability never will exist, and of which, notwithstanding, it is *absolutely necessary* to have just notions to judge of our present state" (Rousseau 2002: 82. Emphasis added), remains in the undecidability between reality and fiction, and carries in itself a certain impossibility. This impossibility and the undecidability between fiction and reality represent, in fact, the condition of possibility for critical discourse to establish a new truth of history – one that would overcome the violence of the given stage of history. In other words, in this movement, literary fiction and the power of imagination become part of the economic direction and no longer appear as a devastating lie: this is why Rousseau can consider it, at one point, an aberration, and in another, an innocent lie. Accordingly, it is precisely for this reason that we must monitor the deployment of fiction and decide, within the singular context of history, whether it is complicit with the principal lie. The critical force of literature would thus also be directed against itself – but only by measuring itself against the ideological lie that establishes inequalities, subjugations, or dominations. In other words, and to sum up, the political dimension of fiction/literature consists in unveiling, posing, dismantling, and exposing the enslaving or limiting fictions of politics: the politics of fiction as literary praxis against the fictions of politics.

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Vladimer Žalagonija

Žan-Žak Ruso: Književnost, politika i ekonomija laži

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad nastoji da razvije – ili, preciznije, da prepozna – ono što bi se moglo nazvati politikom književnosti u Rusoovom delu, nastojeći da situira protivurečnu prirodu moći imaginacije u odnosu na mogućnost laganja. Dok *Sanjarenja* predstavljaju književnu fikciju kao bezopasnu laž, pa čak i kao iskupljujuću upotrebu imaginacije, *Drugi diskurs* upisuje imaginaciju u samu logiku istorijskog (kao) nasilja. Iz ovog napetog odnosa rad izvodi argument da Ruso otvara mogućnost politike književnosti: kritičke prakse fikcije koja osporava re/produkciju ideoloških temelja zakona, svojine i nejednakosti, koje je i sama fikcija omogućila. Pokazaće se, kako ću tvrditi, da je Rusoov opis prirodnog, praistorijskog stanja bez (mogućnosti) fikcije sam upisan u ovu borbu fikcije protiv fikcije: politiku književnosti.

Ključne reči: Ruso, Derida, fikcija, laž, politika, književnost, nejednakost, istorija, imaginacija

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Ekaterina S. Cherepanova, Maria A. Yantsen

DESIGNING THE MOTHER-PEACEMAKER IN THE USSR OF THE 1980S: FROM STAGNATION TO PERESTROIKA[1]

ABSTRACT
This article examines the representations of the mother fighting for peace in Soviet culture of the 1980s. There is substantial research literature on the struggle for peace in the Soviet Union, which was a key aspect of the country's foreign policy after the Great Patriotic War. This article aims to explore the results of this activity from the perspective of post-conflict culture, which is understood as an evolving set of norms and meaning-making processes that emerge in a society after a conflict, as it reflects on the experience of war. The revision of the military conflicts' outcomes and its moral lessons is reflected in efforts to engineer "a new human" and construct a new vision of his future. This study examines the image of the mother-peacemaker as part of the Soviet post-conflict project that began after the end of the Second World War, in order to reveal the principles and norms that shaped the re-evaluation of later military conflicts and the creation of symbolic visions of a peaceful future. The analysis draws on publications and illustrations from the Soviet women's magazine *Rabotnitsa*, which had a circulation of millions in the 1980s.

KEYWORDS
Soviet post-conflict culture, project for engineering a new human, war, motherhood, struggle for peace, women's magazines of the 1980s

Recent events have reignited interest in post-conflict societies and the cultural shifts they undergo. War leaves a lasting mark on culture, shaping how societies interpret past conflicts and assess new ones. Moral judgments about military actions and their outcomes are constantly revisited as people seek to make sense of later wars. This article examines the phenomenon of post-conflict culture that emerged after World War II—specifically, in the case of the USSR, after the Great Patriotic War. We start from the premise that post-conflict culture took shape after the Second World War in countries involved in the global conflict. It was reflected in efforts to build political, legal, educational, and cultural institutions that addressed the immediate needs of the postwar

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period and aimed to prevent future large-scale wars. In this sense, the legacy of the war continued to influence societies for decades, lasting practically until the late 1990s, when its long-term consequences, such as the Cold War and the socialist system in Eastern Europe, came to an end. From this perspective, it is possible to view the late Soviet period as a time in which elements of post-conflict culture remained active. One such element was the ideological construction of the mother as peacemaker.

As Cristina Demaria observes, there are two dominant processes in post-conflict situations. First, cultural systems reinforce and consolidate themselves by integrating the conflict into dominant practices. Second, meanings undergo transformation or even redefinition, forming the foundation of any culture (Demaria 2019: 12). The cessation of military action does not mean that a conflict is instantly resolved. Its consequences become embedded in documents, policies, and institutions, while society enters a new phase in which participants, reflecting on the outcomes of war, begin to reshape social relations and develop policies and practices that reinterpret wartime experience. This process contributes to building a vision of the future and lays the foundation for post-conflict engagement.

One key aspect of these transformations is the efforts to engineer a "new human," as new human models are proposed by ideology and represented in anthropological theories (philosophical, pedagogical, etc.), artistic culture, and memory practices. Soviet culture in the second half of the 20th century remained deeply connected to the experience of the Great Patriotic War, making it a unique subject for analyzing post-conflict development. Rooted in a Marxist vision of history, which was oriented toward the future, Soviet culture offers insights into both the ideological project of engineering an ideal man and the discrepancies between its intended goals and actual outcomes. Recent studies show that "post-conflict societies expect mothers to perform the role of everyday mediators between the past and the future, as well as the role of everyday peacemakers in the present" (Omori 2024). Therefore, examining the concept of the mother as a fighter for peace can provide a deeper understanding of post-conflict transformations in Soviet culture and the human ideals it sought to promote.

Our hypothesis is that post-conflict culture should not be limited to the period of immediate recovery. Its temporal boundaries may not coincide with those of the post-conflict situation, and for that reason, it cannot be defined solely as "postwar." We understand post-conflict culture as one that, through various forms of symbolic representation, assimilates the experience of war.

In Soviet culture of the later period, including the 1980s, values and meanings rooted in wartime memory continued to function and evolve. This was evident both in the cultural memory of the Great Patriotic War and in ideological projects to engineer the "new human" of late socialism.

This paper analyzes the engineering of a "new human" through four dimensions: cognitive, moral, aesthetic, and bodily. We adopt a broad understanding of *proyektirovanie*, which can be translated as "projecting" or "engineering", as both a concept and an action by drawing on Georg Simmel's concept of spatial

projection, Henri Bergson's idea of conception, and Jacques Derrida's analysis of the object (Bojanic and Cherepanova 2021). Projecting involves a forward-looking orientation that is defined not only by time but also by space—a kind of social space that exists in a future that has not yet arrived. As such, projects may carry spatial and timeless value characteristics.

At the cognitive level, the concept of projecting/engineering offers a conceptual framework for understanding a military conflict: its causes and triggers, the factors that shaped its course and outcome, and its political consequences. It provides a coherent interpretation of the war, one that goes beyond personal experience. This model of understanding can then be applied to other conflicts. In our case, we explore how the representation of the Great Patriotic War's tragic legacy was reinterpreted in a popular women's magazine throughout the 1980s.

At the moral level, projecting/engineering involves defining the normative foundations for evaluating the conflict. This process establishes the expected moral stance individuals should take, addressing questions of responsibility for the outcome, the justice of violence, the cost of victory, and the role of sacrifice. The actions of those involved in the war are evaluated using terms such as heroism, courage, betrayal, and so on. These moral frameworks can then be extended to other conflicts.

The aesthetic level involves the symbolic representation of a person as a whole, emotionally and sensorially engaging with the memory of war, or with the experience of those who lived through it. In our study, visual materials, such as magazine illustrations and photographs, reveal how artistic techniques were used to construct the image of the woman as peacemaker. The bodily level refers to physical practices shaped by the memory of war such as rituals, parades, military-sport competitions, and so forth. Regarding our topic, particular attention should be paid to the transformation of the visual image of women, especially in the context of their ideologically defined peacekeeping mission.

Our primary source is *Rabotnitsa*, the most widely read Soviet women's magazine, with a circulation of 15-16 million copies. It not only conveyed the official position on motherhood but also showed how that vision was put into practice, including the ideological framing of women's and mothers' roles in connection with military conflict. By analyzing *Rabotnitsa,* we seek to reconstruct the figure of the woman-mother as a peacemaker, as represented in Soviet culture of the 1980s.

We do not address personal reflections or subjective experiences of women regarding this peacekeeping mission. Instead, we focus on the ideologically constructed, top-down image of the mother. By the 1980s, the dissonance between officially declared values and the reality of everyday life had become an accepted part of Soviet existence. At the same time, consumer values and individualism were beginning to assert their influence (Kon 1994: 5–6). Journalists working for mass women's magazines sought to use various artistic tools to humanize the image of the peacemaker mother. Still, year after year, clichés and visual templates were repeated. This repetition, however, allows us to reconstruct the woman-mother figure and her peacekeeping role as a distinct ideological project.

Projects for Engineering a "New Human" and Motherhood in Contemporary Research

Projects for engineering a "new human" are typically discussed in the context of Soviet culture of the 1920s and 1930s. In the collected volume *The Soviet Man: For and Against*, one such example is the chapter "Forming the "Soviet Man": The Evolution of Theoretical Approaches by Bolshevik Leadership (1900-1930s)," written by O. S. Porshneva. She argues that in their man-making efforts, the Bolsheviks pursued a more distant, strategic goal—the ideal communist of the future—and the specific tactical tasks necessary to transform the actual people into those capable of creating conditions for the emergence of this ideal (Porshneva 2021). Similarly, in the collected essays, *The Era of Socialist Reconstruction: Ideas, Myths, and Programs of Social Transformation*, edited by L.N. Mazur, the contributors analyze the Soviet man as a subject of engineering in relation to the study of the technologies and mechanisms of socialist transformation in political, cultural, and economic spheres (Mazur 2017).

In his article "Moral Culture: Public Morality and Private Responsibility," Igor Kon analyzes how value orientations were formed in Soviet society. He identifies four levels: official morality, philosophical-ethical discourse, everyday moral culture, and individual moral consciousness. These levels, he argues, did not form a cohesive system. Instead, contradictions between them exposed a deep crisis of moral legitimacy. People could publicly conform to official moral norms while privately disregarding them or internally opposing them (Kon 1994).

The ideological struggle for peace in the USSR is explored by Vladimir Dobrenko in his dissertation "Conspiracy of Peace". He shows how the "struggle for peace" was disseminated through mass events, posters, films, and cartoons, gradually forming a stable cultural code. According to Dobrenko, the Soviet image of peace was constructed around emotionally resonant symbols: the suffering mother, the soldier-liberator, and the war victim. These images were particularly powerful in the first postwar decades, due to the traumatic legacy of the war (Dobrenko 2018).

In her article "The Soviet Peace Committee and 'Détente from Below' in the 1980s", Irina Gordeeva examines the activities of the Soviet Peace Committee (SPC), a state-controlled organization, alongside the grassroots peace movement of the 1980s, which offered an alternative, horizontal model of anti-nuclear solidarity. She argues that the SPC operated as a tool of foreign policy propaganda, portraying the USSR as a champion of peace while suppressing independent initiatives. Yet from 1982 onward, informal groups began to appear in the USSR, promoting non-ideological dialogue and fostering solidarity with citizens of Western countries (Gordeeva 2020).

Motherhood has been studied from various theoretical perspectives. E. R. Fakhrudinova and V. V. Suvorov critique consumer society from the standpoint of motherhood's spiritual and moral significance (Fakhrudinova and Suvorov 2021). E. A. Zdravomyslova and A. A. Tyomkina examine how institutional

mechanisms in the USSR reinforced gender role distribution, noting that in the Brezhnev era, motherhood held a distinct place in political discourse (Zdravomyslova and Tyomkina 2003). N. Mitsyuk explores perceptions of motherhood in early 20th-century Russian society by comparing official documents for mothers with ego-documents (Mitsyuk 2015). She argues that the mythologization of motherhood, including the image of the "ideal mother," began in the mid-19th century as a response to the rise of women's emancipation. According to Mitsyuk, framing motherhood as a woman's most essential role served to uphold the patriarchal family structure.

The phenomenon of post-conflict culture is explored by the authors of *Post-conflict Cultures: A Reader*, edited by Cristina Demaria, through an analysis of the aftermath of various military conflicts, including Vietnam, Rwanda, Yugoslavia, and the fall of regimes in South America. In the introduction, Demaria observes that the theoretical foundations for studying post-conflict culture are still in their early stages of development. The challenge, as the author rightfully points out, is that the end of a military conflict does not necessarily mean the end of hostilities. The conflict can persist in a latent form, and as a result, post-conflict culture often reflects this ongoing transformation. Demaria argues that "conflicts lay bare the normative mechanisms of a cultural system," while "individual, collective, ethnic, national and transnational identities, and the memories on which they are founded, are constantly constructed and de-constructed, recognized or mis-recognized, transformed and used not only to define the present, but also to project future possible scenarios, their re-mediation and premediation" (Demaria 2019: 12).

From socio-theoretical and socio-psychological perspectives, researchers examine memory practices in post-conflict culture and the effects of traumatic war experiences on women and children. Several studies (Hasić et al. 2021; Boesten 2019; Takseva 2018; Wale et al. 2020) highlight how war memories are preserved through cultural initiatives and public actions, helping women come to terms with the aftermath of conflict. Hasić et al. explore these dynamics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, emphasizing the role of memory culture and efforts to promote genocide remembrance (Hasić et al. 2021). They analyze the contrast between public memory practices led by mothers and the official narrative of the conflict. In post-conflict Bougainville, George examines women's roles as peacebuilders, revealing the ambivalence of their efforts—while peacebuilding initiatives bring positive change, they often obscure ongoing local challenges (George 2016). Khelghat-Doost et al. in the chapter "The Psychopolitics of Motherhood in Post-conflict Public Policies: The Cases of the PKK and ISIS," investigate the influence of mothers both within the family and in the socio-political sphere, using examples from extremist movements in the Middle East and Africa (Khelghat-Doost et al. 2023).

One of the contributors to the *Women and War* reader, Sara Ruddick outlines three types of representations of women in war: mater dolorosa, outsider, and peacemaker (Ruddick 1998). Mater dolorosa, or the suffering mother, represented by the image of mothers weeping over their fallen sons. Such an

image becomes a symbol of the nation's suffering. After the conflict ends, it is reproduced in the context of demands for justice and efforts to halt and prevent aggression. Outsider, the second type, is the woman who fundamentally distances herself from acts of cruelty and violence during war. The third type or peacemaker "counters violence nonviolently:" through peaceful demonstrations, hunger strikes, and similar actions.

In the chapter "Motherhood and Reconstruction of the Social Order in the Peace Process" of her monograph, «Everyday Life Peacebuilding and Family. Palgrave Studies in Compromise after Conflict», Yumi Omori considers the moral expectations placed on mothers as peacemakers, both within the family and at the national level (Omori 2024). Omori explores how women respond to these demands, specifically, among other things, the author describes the daily actions mothers take to mitigate the impact of conflict on their children, thus playing "taken-for-granted, unacknowledged and unnoticed roles" of everyday peacemakers in the family (ibid.). She also warns against the risk of romanticizing the mother's role in peacebuilding efforts.

In her article "'Postwar' and 'After the War': The Value-Propositional Structure of Soviet Culture from 1945 to the Late 1960s (Through the Arts)," Tatyana Kruglova argues that Soviet culture did not seek to overcome war memory, but rather to institutionalize it as part of a long-term ideological and cultural project (Kruglova 2021). In contrast to Western models of trauma processing, the Great Patriotic War in the USSR continued to shape visions of the future and ideas of social normality. Kruglova highlights how mass art, especially cinema and visual art, contributed to constructing the image of the woman-mother. In official discourse, motherhood was not treated as a personal experience, but rather as an ideological resource. The mother was portrayed as heroic and self-sacrificing, as a symbol of continuity between generations, reinforcing a mobilizational discourse. "It was through the image of the mother that Soviet culture ensured continuity between war and peace, framing everyday life as a continuation of the wartime mobilization effort" (ibid: 6). This image left no room for female vulnerability or emotion that did not fit into the victory myth. In Soviet culture, the postwar period was not the overcoming of war, but rather its ideological continuation, pursued in part through the symbolic use of motherhood and sacrifice woven into portrayals of "normal" everyday life.

A separate group of studies present analyses of representations of women and motherhood in Soviet culture of the 1980s. For example, E. Stiazhkina examines Soviet gender aspects of everyday life in the 1960s and 1980s and concludes that women create their own spaces of interaction, distinct from those of men (Stiazhkina 2012). M. Davidenko explores the bodily representation of women drawing on mass women's periodicals (Davidenko 2016). T. A. Rassadina and A. A. Ageeva also focus on the study of female archetypes (working woman, modern woman, wife, etc.) in magazines, more specifically, they analyze changes in the image of the "modern Russian woman" in the magazine *Liza*, tracing the dynamics of "needs, values, and expectations of Russian public opinion" (Rassadina and Ageeva 2012). M. S. Petrov examines

everyday life and the system of values in connection with the changing image of the working woman (Petrov 2010). He concludes that transformations in women's social positions lead to changes in the representations featured in magazines. G. Orlova examines contemporary recollections from online communities about participation in Soviet peace campaigns, including those involving women and children in the 1970s and 1980s (Orlova 2007). She shows how Soviet cultural practices often used peace slogans that appealed to maternal and parental emotions.

Overall, researchers studying the late socialist period tend to focus on gender analysis, while the impact of the memory of the Great Patriotic on the portrayal of the woman-mother remains largely unexplored.

Mothers in the Struggle for Peace at the End of the Stagnation Era

Theoretically, conceptions of what a woman in the era of developed socialism should be did not change much compared to the 1970s. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party (CPSU) reaffirmed the previous course of social development — "the steady improvement of the material and cultural standard of living of the people, the creation of better conditions for the comprehensive development of the individual through the further enhancement of the efficiency of all social production, increased labor productivity, and the growth of social and labor activity among Soviet citizens" (Materials 1982: 136). Similar perspectives on humanity were formulated in the late 1970s, when the prevailing belief was that communist education required "the shaping of any profession as a person, as a socially active and fully developed individual" (Kosolapov 1979: 31).

Women were primarily discussed in connection with the ongoing elimination of class and other social distinctions in living and working conditions. This question was raised in the context of disparities in living standards across different regions of the country, including the Soviet republics. "The mass involvement of women in social production, coupled with their equal opportunities with men in terms of professional qualifications and wages, has strengthened the economic foundation of gender equality," emphasized prominent Soviet sociologist A. G. Kharchev (1979: 154). It was assumed that the ability to work alongside men and perform any job, even those previously considered exclusively male, contributed to gender equality and the emergence of new family and marital relations. "For Marxists, the involvement of women in active labor life is an important indicator of their progress toward social equality; even under capitalism, this process is progressive and inevitable. As a result, the patriarchal family type and patriarchal monogamous marriage, designed to uphold private property relations in society, are dismantled, giving rise to new forms of gender relations" (Andreeva 1980: 143).

The moral character of the Soviet person was not examined from a gender perspective. The goals of shaping the ideal individual under-developed socialism emphasized instilling key traits of the socialist way of life—above all, collectivism, camaraderie, mutual assistance, civic responsibility, humanism,

integrity, modesty, and simplicity. These qualities were to be transformed into societal norms through exemplary behavior (XXVI: 19). After the death of General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, his successor, Yury Andropov, fully endorsed the Congress's resolutions, emphasizing that socialist society was defined by a collectivist spirit, mutual assistance, moral integrity, and social optimism (Andropov 1983: 13–14). After Andropov's passing, Konstantin Chernenko echoed the same ideas, underscoring that "building a new world means tirelessly shaping the people of this new world, fostering their ideological and moral growth" (Rech: 10).

The March 1982 issue of *Rabotnitsa*, the edition celebrating annual International Women's Day, included an article with a detailed description of the moral qualities of the Soviet mother. She was depicted as both a diligent worker and an active citizen, serving as a moral compass for her children and loved ones: "'Mother'—the one who gave life, nurtured and raised a child, forming the foundation of their civic and moral development" (Rabotnitsa 1982: 2).

The issue highlighted the shared experiences of Soviet women across diverse professions—bridge engineers, actresses, orphanage caretakers, shoemakers, and ethnographers: "Despite their different occupations, their lives and worldviews have much in common" (ibid.).

"They are united not only by their passion for their work or their drive for professional excellence but also by their public engagement, confidence in the future, and optimism" (ibid.).

"The Soviet woman is free from constant fear for her child's future… Alongside the entire nation, she stands in defense of that bright future. Together with the Soviet people, she fights for peace across the planet" (ibid.).

By the early 1980s, the portrayal of the mother as a fighter for peace followed patterns established in the 1970s. Motherhood was framed as a special status that granted women the right to address world leaders and international organizations. The discourse of peace advocacy in the 1980s remained unchanged, centering on the struggle for peaceful coexistence and the "deepening of détente in international tensions… to ensure the external conditions necessary for the Soviet people to fulfill their creative tasks" (Materials 1982: 4–5). Such rhetoric was consistently aligned with the Congress resolutions of the Communist Party: "The primary goal now is to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. The Peace Program for the 1980s, adopted at the XXVI Congress of the Communist Party, is fully supported by all Soviet people" (Rabotnitsa 1982: 4).

Key formulations from the Congress's resolutions on peace efforts were reflected in directives sent to regional branches of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace. These branches organized peace campaigns in workplaces, schools, and universities. One common practice was the publication of open letters, including those addressed to the U.S. President. "Open appeals to Reagan in 1982–1984 were not only common but also took the form of organized campaigns" (Orlova 2007).

A longstanding tradition was also the call for mothers in other countries to unite in a struggle for peace. Such appeals appeared in Soviet publications,

including the Committee of Soviet Women's Address to the Women of the World:

"Women—mothers, keepers of the home, workers in cities and villages! We must not allow our children to perish in a nuclear inferno! Mobilize mass demonstrations to demand a ban on the production and deployment of nuclear, neutron, chemical, or any other weapons of mass destruction in your countries! We must stop the spread of nuclear weapons across our planet!" (Rabotnitsa 1982: 4).

As in the previous decade, *Rabotnitsa* in the early 1980s presented Valentina Tereshkova, the first female cosmonaut, as the official symbolic figure of a mother fighting for peace. In the fifth issue of 1980, she addressed readers with the following words: "For 35 years now, Soviet people and the peoples of Europe have lived without war. A lasting peace has become a reality. At its foundation lies Lenin's peaceful foreign policy, consistently pursued by the Communist Party, the Central Committee, and the Politburo, led by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev" (Rabotnitsa 1980(5): 1).

The engineering of a "new human" in post-conflict culture requires a reinterpretation of military conflict, which in this particular case was intertwined with reflections about the hardships of the Great Patriotic War. Memory practices in the 1980s, much like in the 1970s, were diverse. However, unlike the early postwar decades, they placed particular emphasis on honoring veterans and those who had worked on the home front. Commemorative events extended beyond marking key battles to recognizing the losses and suffering endured by the residents of besieged Leningrad.

By the 1980s, a new generation of mothers had grown up—born at the end of the Thaw or the beginning of the Brezhnev era. Their understanding of military conflicts was shaped entirely by the stories of older relatives and media portrayals of the Great Patriotic War. The press featured recollections from war veterans, widows and mothers of soldiers, child combatants, and those who had worked on the home front alongside adults. Through these personal stories, the war was presented from the perspectives of people of different ages, genders, and social backgrounds. The goal was to reinforce the belief that military conflict profoundly disrupts every individual's life, no matter where the front line is drawn.

"There is no task more important today than defending and strengthening peace on Earth. The struggle for peace has become the most widespread movement of our time. Its active participants are Soviet women" (Rabotnitsa 1982: 4). "Soviet women perceive this ominous threat with extraordinary urgency. They bore particularly heavy hardships and immeasurable suffering during the war…" (ibid.).

Unlike the previous decade, the magazine no longer featured photographs of victims of specific military conflicts, and descriptions of ongoing wars were quite sparse. Although the war in Afghanistan began in 1979, it was not reflected

in women's magazines. Officially, it was described as the deployment of a limited contingent of Soviet troops to fulfill an international duty to the Afghan people. For the most part, few knew what was actually happening. For example, medical professionals were often initially unaware that they would be treating actual combat injuries, when they were deployed to Afghanistan: "We were told, '*You are Komsomol members—who can help the friendly Afghan people preserve the achievements of the revolution better than you? Assist the local population in fighting infectious diseases!*' (emphasis in the original). But no one said a word about our boys being shot at and dying there every day… And yet, even this left a mark on many medics of my generation: there was a desire to help others in some way. I didn't think twice—I had to help, so I went" (Cherepanova 2023: 120).

The visuals in magazines included not only photographs of contemporary women but also artistic illustrations, which were often reproduced in posters. Clearly, these images varied significantly across different periods of Soviet history. To compare, let us look at a publication in the February 1952 issue of *Rabotnitsa* featuring the painting *I.V. Stalin with His Mother* by A. Kazantsev (Rabotnitsa 1952: 18). Stalin is depicted leading a very elderly woman by the arm; she wears a long, beautiful dress with her head covered by a scarf. The illustration is accompanied by quotes from Maxim Gorky: "Let us glorify the woman—Mother—the one force in the world before which even Death bows in submission!" "The Mother creates and protects; to speak of destruction in her presence is to speak against her..." "A Mother is always against death; the hand that brings death into people's homes is hateful and hostile to Mothers…" "...Mothers detest weapons of aggression, acknowledging only those used for the defense of life." Mothers of the 1950s were either direct participants in the Great Patriotic War, workers on the home front, or girls who had survived the war. They had stern faces, steady and open gazes. Often, they were adorned with medals and orders.

During the Thaw, the image of the mother became "younger;" depictions tended to favor young women rather than older ones. The third issue of *Rabotnitsa* in 1957 featured, across an entire page, Fyodor Reshetnikov's painting *Doves of Peace* (Rabotnitsa 1957: 9). The image shows an official parade, likely for May Day, moving through a city street. White doves and colorful balloons float above the crowd. People carry banners calling for peace. Leading the procession are children—some around ten years old, some even younger. There are even infants being pushed in strollers by other children. The children are smiling, their eyes wide open, looking ahead. They quite literally lead the people toward a bright and peaceful future. This same issue includes a poster advertising the upcoming World Festival of Youth and Students. The image features a young man and woman lifting a "bouquet" of flags representing various countries toward the sky, accompanied by the caption "For Peace and Friendship."

In the 1980s, the image of the peace-loving mother was visually represented in several ways. First, there were images of mothers from the Great Patriotic War, either saving their young children or seeing off their adult sons to

the battlefield. Second, there were photographs of activists and members of women's committees. Third, there were images of mothers from other countries, victims of conflicts initiated by capitalist nations. Additionally, readers often saw drawings of motherly women set against blue skies, rainbows, and flying doves. For example, in the February 1980 issue, a poster by artist V. Feklyayev depicted the silhouette of a young mother holding her child, their faces turned toward one another as the mother reaches out to kiss the child. The sky in the background is dark and covered with clouds, but the silhouettes are bright, and a rainbow passes through them—almost like a promise of a peaceful future (Rabotnitsa 1980(2)).

During Perestroika, the visual representation of peace remained fundamentally unchanged. For example, in the September 1986 issue, the article "Into the 21st Century—without Nuclear Weapons!" featured an illustration of children raising their arms in a victory gesture, with a white dove flying above them, and a slogan reading "Friendship—Peace—Friendship" in the background. In the adjacent drawing, an image of a bomb is crossed out with the slogan "Peace to the World."

Thus, the conceptualization of the peace-fighting mother in the last years of the stagnation period can be summarized as follows. Modern military conflicts were conceptualized through the experience of the Great Patriotic War. However, the military actions in Afghanistan were not discussed or were interpreted outside a military discourse, framed as assistance in the Afghan people's revolutionary struggle. The peace-fighting woman was expected to remember the severe suffering caused by the Great Patriotic War and, therefore, to firmly oppose the arms race and the production of nuclear weapons.

At the moral level of the project, motherhood was understood as a special status that gave women the right to condemn politicians from imperialist countries who unleashed wars or expanded nuclear armament. A mother was expected to express her condemnation openly, joining forces with other women. Aesthetically, the image of a mother fighting for peace was meant to support the established project and portray the contemporary Soviet woman as an active participant in the struggle for peace in public organizations at various levels. Drawings and posters depicted the mother and child as symbols of peace, akin to a dove and rainbow in a blue sky.

Glasnost and the Human Factor: Updating the Mother-Peacemaker Project

The 27th Congress of the CPSU in 1986 and the CPSU Central Committee Plenum in 1987 introduced new concepts into theorizing about the individual: acceleration, the human factor, democratization, perestroika, and glasnost. A decision was made to strengthen the "social orientation of economic development, directing it towards creating better conditions for the harmonious development of the individual" (Materials 1986: 272). Scientific studies emphasized

the role of social sciences in the project for making a "new human" and the need to update research approaches: "The project-practical orientation of social science calls for rejecting the 'one-size-fits-all' bureaucratic approach and viewing each person through the lens of their individuality, with a thorough study of their social activities in relation to the broader goals of acceleration and rebuilding" (Yanovskii 1987: 10). The enhancement of human capital was declared key to the success of the perestroika project, emphasizing greater worker involvement in management, openness in discussing challenges, and the activation of "labor and social activity" (Materials 1987: 2).

This required a significant transformation of the established practice of presenting materials in mass media, a rejection of formalism, and the dismantling of existing clichés. Since perestroika had now become the key concept describing the necessary changes, "at the plenary session of the Committee of Soviet Women, each candidate for the People's Deputies expressed her program for perestroika regarding women—if not always clearly, then always passionately and confidently. Our intentions are good. As long as we don't stop..." (Rabotnitsa 1989: 5).

The most significant change was the rejection of the long-standing image of women carrying the same workload as men despite their maternal responsibilities. The requirement to be a model worker (*peredovik*) (as in the 1930s) or a technologically and scientifically educated specialist (as in the 1970s) was no longer taken for granted. Numerous articles—sometimes multiple in a single issue—examined the real challenges women faced in balancing work and family life.

In the third issue of 1989, dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the journal, the editor-in-chief, Z. Krylova, raised the question of when the women's rights movement had "stalled" or even regressed: "Yes, we, women, have changed over the years: we all have an education, many have good professions... we can work as well as men... A wide network of nurseries and kindergartens, as well as the impossibility of living on a single husband's salary, have eliminated housewives as a class. But have there been fundamental changes in public attitudes toward women themselves, in respect for their femininity, their womanhood, their maternal concerns?" (ibid.).

"The topic of a separate, extensive discussion is how we, as women, gradually lost the heights we had won. Society has yet to realize that without a moral revolution in attitudes toward women, further social development is impossible" (ibid.).

The author cites excerpts from letters in which women speak about domestic violence—written about both in 1929 and in 1989. They provide examples of unfair wages: "Our loaders earn more than we do... this is the humiliation of a woman-mother!" (ibid.).

The women writing letters to the editor of *Rabotnitsa* also expressed their outrage that the burden of raising children was placed on them, while they were simultaneously expected to be active in the workforce, which resulted in an inevitable conflict in time allocation. Women were forced to choose their

work obligations: "We are tired of 'humiliating ourselves with motherhood.' We want to be proud of it, not condemn our children to a life without care" (ibid.).

"...women should be provided with an opportunity to truly, not just in dreams, choose where they see the best application of their efforts and where they can blossom: if at work—to help, to free them from standing in lines, from hours of washing and cooking; if at home, with children—to ensure the minimum living standards" (ibid.).

Despite ongoing changes, the image of the mother-peacemaker remained largely unchanged. Official sources continued to frame the struggle for peace much as they had in the early 1980s: the arms race was attributed to global imperialism, while socialism was portrayed as the direct path to peace. In this narrative, the fight for peace was synonymous with opposing the arms race, particularly the expansion of nuclear capabilities: "A peace built on intimidation through nuclear weapons is a fragile peace. It cannot be strengthened through an arms buildup—whether terrestrial or space-based" (Launom 1985). In the article *Bridges to Peace* in the January 1988 issue of *Rabotnitsa*, the author V. Anichkina emphasizes that "...the nuclear threat is understood by all. It forces us to overcome our individualism for the sake of common interests and awakens a desire to contribute personally to eliminating this threat." The author interprets peace as a complete rejection of violence: "Our common desire is to walk together on the path to peace, where kindness and mutual trust will prevail, and where there will be no place for violence."

The mother-woman is still encouraged to take an active life stance, but the efforts are now directed more towards solving important issues within the country, at her workplace, in her local community. Environmental problems are frequently mentioned: the disposal of hazardous waste, homes located near harmful production sites. The magazine portrays mothers as fighters for a safe living environment.

As before, the magazine contains articles dedicated to the Great Patriotic War, which are becoming increasingly informal. The magazine published reminiscences and stories highlighting women's struggles to keep their children alive, focusing on wounds, hunger, fear, and the self-sacrifice of the mother. In a major article in the May 1986 issue, "Five Stories of the War," A. Pozdnyayev collected the accounts of five women about "the most memorable episodes of their frontline biographies" (Rabotnitsa 1986: 32). The dramatic nature of the described events and the sincerity of the emotions described in the article aim to give a new meaning to the clichéd slogans.

In the fifth issue of 1988, the magazine publishes reminiscences of veterans. The text shows that the understanding of today's conflicts should, as before, take into account the context of the difficult experience of the Great Patriotic War:

"We, the veterans, know the value of peace. That is why we revere the steps being taken by the Communist Party and the Soviet government to eliminate the nuclear threat. Let our glorious, loving women, devoted to the Motherland, never have to carry wounded or maimed men from the battlefield" (Rabotnitsa 1988: 13).

In discussing a monument to female veterans: "No matter how much we write in the magazine about the heroism of Soviet women during the war, we will never be able to speak about all those who deserve our gratitude and memory. Therefore, the editorial staff of Rabotnitsa supports the proposal to erect a monument to the women who fought, waited for their husbands and fiancés from the front, worked tirelessly in the rear, and kept the home fire burning... And let this monument be 'another call, a weighty, deep, human argument against a new war!'" (ibid.).

In the late 1980s, the May issues of *Rabotnitsa* featured an increasingly small number of full articles dedicated solely to the events of the Great Patriotic War. From May 1988, when Soviet troops began withdrawing from Afghanistan, the portrayal of women-mothers fighting for peace started to shift. The connection between the military conflict and the memory of the Great Patriotic War was now represented by the mother in her special status—that of a soldier's mother.

The fifth issue featured a large article titled *And the Mothers Wait for Their Sons*, covering the first meeting in Moscow of mothers whose sons served in the Moscow military district. The photograph shows women with neat hairstyles in elegant dresses, some giving speeches while others receive flowers from young officers. The meeting, held for Victory Day, was described the following way: "Victory Day is approaching. Traditionally, this is the day when those who defended and preserved our lives come together. But today's soldiers will also come. They are entrusted with the honor of guarding the Motherland. Soldiers of two generations will meet. And their mothers will meet. The current ones—young, cheerful, proudly walking alongside their grown-up sons. And the elderly mothers of war soldiers. Looking at them, you realize how inseparable the concepts of mother and Motherland are" (Rabotnitsa 1988: 7).

This article also mentions the Afghan conflict: "Now, Alexander is a radio installer. For fulfilling his international duty in Afghanistan, he was awarded two medals for bravery. The service of a son in Afghanistan is a heavy burden on a mother's shoulders. The soldier's mother knows—it's not a training ground there. Her son is being shot at by the enemy. And so, the mother's heart knows no peace until her son returns. Oh, if only all would return... To you, the mothers of internationalist soldiers, our deepest respect" (ibid.).

In the third issue of 1989, in the article *We Will Do Everything Possible*, the author A. Yurskaya conveys "a message from the women of Novosibirsk and Nikolaev" to the UN Secretary-General: "These petitions carry hundreds of signatures from mothers, wives, and sisters of Soviet internationalist soldiers. They express concern about Pakistan and other countries violating The Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan'; "An authoritative international organization will take all measures to search for and free 312 Soviet soldiers who are in captivity" (Rabotnitsa 1989: 28). The reason for the soldiers' captivity is not specified: "In our country, a Coordinating Committee of Soviet society has been created; official negotiations with the involved parties are led by representatives of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense.

The government assists the families of those killed or missing in Afghanistan. Yet, the pain of mothers never eases. How they long for comfort, mere human compassion!" (ibid.).

It can be seen that the former practice of peace advocacy—open letters and appeals to high-level politicians—is now applied in a new context. Now, the peace-making mother is primarily the mother of a soldier or a prisoner of war. It is mothers, not fathers, who speak out about the need to address the problem of bullying and violence (both emotional and physical) in the military. The magazines feature articles on issues in the army, the need for reforms in conscription, and the organization of military service, which makes a stark contrast with the complete absence of such topics in the previous decade. In this case, the mother is not a peacekeeper, but a fighter for justice in her own country.

In the late 1980s, the depiction of women becomes more varied as new themes emerge: Orthodox holidays, with illustrations reminiscent of vintage postcards; the challenge of balancing work and family, depicted through caricatures; and efforts to promote a slim figure, shown in photos of models and drawings mocking overweight women who have let themselves go.

The symbolism of illustrations dedicated to the struggle for peace remains virtually unchanged, featuring the same familiar imagery from propaganda posters: doves, the sky, and children. In the September issue, an illustration accompanying the article "Into the 21st Century without Nuclear Weapons!" (surrounded by photographs) depicts children raising their hands in a victorious gesture, with a white dove flying above them and the slogan "Friendship—Peace—Friendship" in the background. In the adjacent drawing, an image of a bomb is crossed out with the slogan "Peace to the World." The photographs highlight women's modernity and competence, whether as participants in military conflicts or as members of public organizations. The fourth issue of 1987 contains a report on the Central Hospital of the Afghan Armed Forces in Kabul, built in 1975 with the support of the Soviet Union (Rabotnitsa 1987(4): 22). The photographs depict neatly groomed women—doctors and nurses—leaning over a patient or examining X-rays. In the following issue of May 1987, readers are introduced to the chairwoman of the Mongolian Women's Committee—a woman with a tidy hairstyle, dressed in a business suit, and smiling (Rabotnitsa 1987(5): 5). The May 1988 issue features photographs from a gathering of soldiers' mothers, showing older women who are elegantly dressed, well-groomed, with neat hairstyles, makeup, and jewelry (Rabotnitsa 1988: 5).

The conclusion to be drawn is that during the Perestroika, on a cognitive level, the trends in the construction of the image of the mother as a peacemaker were similar to those of the early 1980s. The interpretation of the military conflict in Afghanistan was framed within the experiential horizon of the Great Patriotic War, but in a new way. Specifically, the woman now took center stage in a different role, the role of a soldier's mother. From this perspective, both current and potential military conflicts were evaluated. On a moral level, it was assumed that the ultimate value was life itself. As a result, mothers were expected to actively fight for peace while also engaging in struggles for

environmental protection and a just world order. The visual representation of women emphasized a maternal status that implied an active civic stance and competent participation in the country's political events.

The project of the mother as a fighter for peace, which emerged in the post-war culture of the USSR after the Great Patriotic War, came to an end in the 1990s because the state that had initiated and supported it ceased to exist. Although the project ended, ways of understanding and evaluating military conflicts, along with the corresponding values and behavioral norms, persist.

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Jekaterina S. Čerepanova i Marija A. Jancen

Oblikovanje majke – mirotvorke u SSSR-u 1980-ih: od stagnacije do perestrojke

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak razmatra reprezentacije majke koja se bori za mir u sovjetskoj kulturi osamdesetih godina. Postoji obimna istraživačka literatura o borbi za mir u Sovjetskom Savezu, koja je predstavljala ključni aspekt spoljne politike zemlje nakon Velikog otadžbinskog rata. Cilj ovog članka je da istraži rezultate te aktivnosti iz perspektive postkonfliktne kulture, shvaćene kao skup evoluirajućih normi i procesa stvaranja značenja koji nastaju u društvu nakon konflikta, dok ono reflektuje iskustvo rata. Revizija ishoda vojnih sukoba i njihovih moralnih pouka ogleda se u naporima da se „projektuje novi čovek" i oblikuje nova vizija njegove budućnosti. Ovo istraživanje analizira sliku majke – mirotvorke kao deo sovjetskog postkonfliktnog projekta koji je započeo nakon završetka Drugog svetskog rata, kako bi se otkrili principi i norme koji su oblikovali preispitivanje kasnijih vojnih sukoba i stvaranje simboličkih vizija mirne budućnosti. Analiza se zasniva na publikacijama i ilustracijama iz sovjetskog ženskog časopisa Rabotnica, koji je u osamdesetim godinama imao tiraž od nekoliko miliona primeraka.

Ključne reči: sovjetska postkonfliktna kultura, projekat oblikovanja novog čoveka, rat, materinstvo, borba za mir, ženski časopisi osamdesetih

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THE GREAT INVIGILATOR: IS INTERFERENCE OVER POLITIES EVER JUSTIFIED?[1]

ABSTRACT
This article assesses if interference over polities is unjust due to its possibility to structurally undermine the freedom of polities. The thesis of this article is that the global processes' interference over polities is unjust unless it does not violate the principles of self-government. The article makes this claim by introducing the concept of structural invigilation. The article claims that globalization's interference is unjust even when there is polity consent because globalization's mere existence is causing the invigilation of polities to occur. However, things can be reversed in the case of a dominating polity, in which case globalization's domination can actually lead towards the non-domination of citizens. In the last part of the paper, a threshold for judging the justness of interference will be articulated in the form of three conditions based on the principles of self-government, individual and communal autonomy and deliberation.

KEYWORDS
non-domination, neo-roman republicanism, invigilation, globalization, deliberative democracy, autonomy, self-government.

We will coup whoever we want! Deal with it.
Elon Musk on X, 25th July, 2020.

Introduction

This article will explore if and under which conditions globalization's interference with a polity on any level is ever just. This paper will critically assess the argument that globalization is unjust because it "structurally undermines the freedom of states" (or any other polity) (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 279). Even

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though Cécile Laborde and Miriam Ronzoni focus on states, our paper does not, but rather, the focus is on polities on any level of governance, although, acknowledging the importance and current centrality of state as a form and level of governance. Here, under the term polity, we understand any level of governance that is "the institutional structure...in which politics takes place, leading to policies" (Größler 2010: 3). Thus, in this regard this paper looks more from the perspective of republicanism of multiple polities as articulated later in the paper by Meine (2022), but also considers the perspectives of global republican position and republican cosmopolitanism in various instances trying to give a full picture of the given issue this paper deals with.

We are examining the question of global process interference because globalization brings many changes to polities and assessing its normative implications is important for us in order to know how to position ourselves in relation to it. We will point out potential issues in the neo-roman republican argument and set the criteria for assessing if and when that structural undermining of freedom of polities is (un)just. In this regard, we acknowledge the perspective of a global republican position. This is considered to be neither weak nor strong cosmopolitanism (Laborde 2010: 61). Our thesis is that structural interference of globalization over non-dominating polities is unjust, even when there is polity consent because its mere existence is causing what we claim to be the structural invigilation of polities to occur. In addition, in this paper, we will also rely on the notions coming from republican cosmopolitanism and plural polities republicanism with a focus on individual autonomy and deliberation as an assessment of the justifiability of the interference relationship over the dominating polity (Meine 2022, Bohman 2004). In this article we will argue that character of interference of any actor (global agent or state) is assessed based on how it affects the level of citizen self-government manifested through 3 specific conditions that protect the space for deliberation and communal and individual autonomy. This way we escape the binary generalization in terms of good (polities) and bad actors (globalization) and make the citizen self-government the prime tool for assessing the quality and level of interference.

We will start by defining domination and showing how polities are being dominated by globalization. This will serve to make further distinction between just and unjust (domination) interference. Then, we will go through the problem of the dominating polity. After that, we will assess the argument that the domination of a polity by globalization is always unjust. Afterwards, we will explore how due to structural invigilation this domination cannot be justified with the idea that the polity's consent to globalization. Finally, we will explore how deliberation and an introduction of individual autonomy and communal self-government can help us build a theoretical threshold for assessing whether global structural interference can be justified and distinct from domination.

How Globalization Dominates States and Polities

Ronzoni and Laborde view the structural undermining of the freedom of states as the domination of states (2016). While Ronzoni and Laborde's argument is focused on the domination over the state, our claim is that all polities could be dominated. In order to show how states are dominated by globalization, we must first define domination. It is important to note that being dominated is equal to being unfree in the republican perception of liberty, meaning that being free is equal to non-domination (Carter 2018). Being dominated is understood as being subjected to the will of another agent, even if that agent does not interfere with the subject's action (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 280). This is also known as arbitrary power since an agent can limit one's freedom if he so chooses, even if he ultimately does not (Lovett 2018). For example, we can be unfree if someone who so wishes can prevent us from buying our food if they want to, even if they do not do that. Our life choices will certainly be different if we are aware of that, making us unfree. That, however, does not mean that interference is necessarily domination. If we want to be subjected to interference, for example, be driven to work by an uncle who offered help, that interference is a non-dominating interference (Pettit 2010: 75). It did not depend solely on someone else's will, but it was rather us who had to allow for the action to happen (Pettit 2010: 75). This, in turn, makes such an interference nondominating.

That is precisely why an ideal republican state ruled by deliberative democracy is not a dominating one, despite interference (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 280). People choose which rules they abide by through intense deliberation, making those rules non-dominating, like the uncle's help from the previous example (Ibid: 280). This is also known as self-government since people choose how they will be governed by themselves (Besson and Marti 2009: 12). Since they have created those rules, they are not dominated by them. However, it is important to note that a single actor is not necessary for domination to occur. A plurality of actors can dominate an individual (Ingham and Lovett 2019: 780–785). As Laborde has shown in her earlier work, slaves are being dominated not just by their own masters, but also by the culture of slavery (2010: 57). The culture of slavery is, however, caused by the structure, not by a single actor. Structural domination is a type of dominations that "systematically empowers some while systematically depowering others" (Gadeke 2020). This means that structure can dominate people as well (Laborde 2010: 56–57). Therefore, we can consider domination to be the position of an actor who is subjected to the arbitrary power of another agent or structure. Now is the time to see how states are being dominated by globalization.

Ronzoni and Laborde show that states are being dominated as a result of market globalization (2016). Throughout history states have been dominated by other states, common examples are conquests (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 281). Today, we have market globalization, which leads to greater economic interdependence between states and the creation of new dominating structures

that can undermine their freedom (Gadeke 2020: 204–205) International organizations that are meant to manage globalization often amplify domination between states (Ibid: 282). For example, many transnational private actors, notably multinational corporations, are known to be dominating agents. These companies often change states' policies for their own interest (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 283). For example, competition for investment will prompt the state to ease labour regulations, which states would not do without it (Ibid: 280). However, it is sometimes hard to tell who the agent of domination is. Companies sometimes pressure national governments in order to influence international organizations to adopt policies that are beneficial to those companies (Cox 1983). This means that there are multiple agents of domination within the network of power (Forst 2007: 247). That is also known as multiple domination (Forst 2007: 247). Although Ronzoni and Laborde do not elaborate on this in-depth, they agree that both structure and agents can dominate (2016: 287). Further, those within the structure are not even required to have the intent to dominate for domination to occur (Allen 2015: 127). For example, if someone buys cheap clothes, those clothes were probably produced in sweatshops that dominate their employees. However, impoverished polities will also be dominated by such a relationship. Therefore, that person is reproducing domination despite not having intentions to do so, while sweatshop employees are being dominated. This is the result of a structure that empowers some, while disempowering others (Gadeke 2020). However, polities themselves can be dominated as a result of this process. Think of a very disadvantaged self-government system. Despite potential deliberation, options to such a polity would be very limited and it would be prompted to reproduce the extractive economic system and thus dominated.

While market globalization could indeed dominate both individuals and polities, that is not necessarily the case. In many instances structural interference is sought, and even pursued by some polities. In this article, our initial focus is on the dominating aspects of market globalization, the latter part will explore the justifiable interference. Because our goal is normative, we will not further challenge the empirical notion that the market globalization dominates polities and will presume that the statement is correct. So why is this unjust? Intuition tells us that it is people who have intrinsic moral values, not polities.

Is Domination over States and Polities Unjust?

Ronzoni and Laborde claim that domination over the state by globalization is unjust but, in our opinion, they do not address this issue as much as they should. For this reason, we will try to present not only what they are explicitly saying, but also things that are implicit in such an argument. While globalization can dominate individuals directly, we will not focus on that (Allen 2015: 127). Instead, we will be assessing the soundness of the argument that domination over the state is unjust. It is important to note that states have great value in neo-roman thought not because of some intrinsic reasons, but because they are the

best possible instrument for upholding the non-domination (Ivison 2010: 35). This means that domination of the state is not intrinsically unjust. However, domination over people that domination of a state leads to is unjust. As such, neo-roman republicanism argues for a free, non-dominated state (Meine 2022: 277–280). This is in accordance with both normative individualism and our intuition, and probably most people would agree with the fact that individuals being dominated is unjust (Pettit 2015: 52–53). It is now time to see how the domination of a state leads to domination over individuals in it.

When states are dominated, they are unable to secure republican freedom within themselves (Laborde and Ronzoni 2016: 289). Simply, their capabilities of upholding non-domination are limited. A self-governing republic cannot properly function if the potential choices of people are limited by an agent or structure. Choices that a republic can make are then limited by domination. For example, a state in neo-colonial relations is subjected to the arbitrary power of developed nations. Being in that situation, it cannot implement some development policies without the agreement of dominating agents which is dependent on their will (Bennoune 1977). This makes those people subjected to arbitrary interference and thus dominated since they are unable to choose to develop their communities. This shows that the republican freedom of individuals is undermined in a dominated state. Ronzoni and Laborde (2016) show that domination over the state leads to domination over its people because they can be free only in a republican state. However, it is important to remember that the interference over a state that dominates its people could be justifiable as it could lead to no domination of individuals within it. Here we are referring to ideal republican states. Although there are not many truly republican states, if any at all, it is important to remember that this is a normative theory, which means that authors are assuming that states are republican when making an argument that domination over them is unjust. As Skinner claims, people can be free only in a non-dominating state, and that state can function properly only if it is not being dominated (2010: 99). This argument is certainly valid. If the non-dominated republican state is the only possible way to protect freedom, then dominated republican state makes individuals unfree. Now, we will explore if this argument is sound.

The previous argument may not be sound because of the things that it presumes. If the republican state is the only way to preserve non-domination, then it being dominated would automatically lead to domination over individuals. This also seems intuitively correct, since most people would agree that domination over people is unjust. However, this argument presumes that a republican state is the only way to preserve republican freedom. One can imagine that a person could remain non-dominated despite the state being dominated. Many authors within neo-roman thought have shown that a republican state is the best way to protect freedom because of the self-government that it offers. Perhaps making parallel self-governing sub-structures functioning in accordance with republican ideals within a state would be just. This is nothing new to republican thought, as some authors have suggested the creation of sub-state

self-government structures as well (Young 2007: 58–69). That way, people would still have self-government in non-dominated polities. They would be protected from domination since they themselves would be able to decide the rules that they want to be subjected to within society. The state would still be dominated, but since individuals and their products of self-government are not dominated, this should make the domination of a state morally insignificant, even under the republican conception of justice. This means that globalization undermining the state would not be unjust. Ronzoni and Laborde have not prepared a potential counterargument to this. However, other neo-roman republican theories can provide a response to this objection, as we will now show.

According to Pettit, domination over the state is necessarily unjust (Pettit 2015). The Republican state is an organization of self-government, as previously said. This means that it is a product of the people (Pettit 2015: 47). People have collectively decided that they want to create a state in order to act together in the first place (Pettit 2015: 53). That means that domination of the state is also the domination of their collective project, constructed by their self-government (Ibid: 53). If their collective project is being dominated, people are being dominated, since their self-government is subjected to domination (Ibid: 53). Therefore, Pettit says that the domination of the state is on its own the domination of its people (Ibid: 53). This then makes the domination of a state unjust, even from the perspective of normative individualism (Ibid: 52–53). Furthermore, if people are being dominated, then our intuition is telling us that their dominated position is unjust, as previously said. This makes it also intuitively unjust. Since globalization is dominating the republican state, globalization is necessarily dominating its people.[2] This means that the domination of the republican state by globalization is always unjust. Ronzoni and Laborde have not shown this in their work so that seems to be an issue in their argument. However, they have focused more on exploring potential frameworks in which republican global justice can function properly despite globalization. Still, not exploring potential counterarguments to their argument was an issue in our opinion. However, we do believe that they would implicitly agree with our claim here. In her earlier work, Laborde has also shown that the state is a product of people (2010: 51). Although she did not explore the normative issue of a dominated state as Pettit did, we still think that her work would agree with this. We believe that because both she and Pettit show that the republican state is a product of self-government. Since that is the case, domination over that product automatically means domination over people, regardless of the existence of self-governing sub-structures.

It is important to note that this argument can be sound only if one assumes a deliberative republican state which is a product of the people. If it were not the case, and we dealt with the dominating state, then the domination over such state could be justified, should it increase the republican freedom of sub-state polities. In this section, we have shown that domination over the state

2 Here, we are again referring to ideal republican state.

which is a product of its citizens due to market globalization is unjust because it always leads to the domination of the people themselves. Now we will see if the domination of the state, or any polity for that matter, can be justified using the state's consent.

The Great Invigilator: Why Domination Cannot Be Justified by the Polity's Consent

We will now try to offer a justification for globalization's effects on the polity. This might be possible using a republican theoretical framework. If the state has consented to globalization and the arbitrary power that comes with it, would that be just? According to Pettit, if A agrees to B's intervention then domination does not occur (2010: 75). It is important to note that Pettit is focused on the relation between actors, not structures. However, since structures can be dominating as well, it is safe to assume that A is not being dominated by it if they consent to it. Recall the example with the uncle. We have accepted our uncle's ride and therefore agreed to his interference. If we have agreed to be subjected to arbitrary power, then that would mean that it was our own choice. It seems that this type of interference is not actually domination, just consent to interference. However, things change if we agree to be dominated. If we have agreed to that, we will be dominated, but since we have agreed to the action, the act leading to domination would not be dominating, but rather an act of self-government. The same could be said about the polity. If it has agreed to be affected by globalization, then it has made its own free choice. That choice does lead to domination because it was an act of self-governance. That would mean that it was ultimately the polity's choice to accept globalization. This makes domination by globalization a product of self-governance. There is also some empirical support for such a stance, since states and polities in general are the ones that ultimately choose to open themselves to the global market and other aspects of globalization (Wolf 2002: 182–184). It seems that domination over the state by globalization is justified now since it is the result of self-governance. That is, however, not true, as we will now show.

Even if the polity has consented to be dominated it would still be unjust, because it was dominated even before it could make the decision. This can be shown by using Pettit's earlier work (2008), specifically something that Pettit calls invigilation (Ibid: 72). According to this concept, A will interfere with B's choice only if that choice does not please A (Ibid: 70). B is obviously dominated as a result of that since it has to consider the potential reaction of A before making a choice. However, A does not even need to have any intention to act in order to dominate B (Ibid: 70). In that case, the presence of A on its own is enough to dominate B (Ibid: 70). B will be dominated because it will have to consider the preferences of A that is there, simply out of fear of potential action. This can easily be applied to globalization. While globalization is not an actor but a structure, as previously established, this framework can work in this case as well. We call this structural invigilation. Globalization is a powerful structure

present when polities had to make choices. Globalization as a structure had a great potential impact on the future of various states and polities. Therefore, they had to be careful when making a decision not to be harmed by globalization. Fearing the harm of not globalizing, numerous polities had to globalize. This has a lot of empirical confirmation as well, since polities and states that refuse to globalize, such as Venezuela, often become sanctioned (Sohan et al. 2004). While these negative repercussions are often committed by the great powers, the entire structure leads to this response. Multinational corporations and even individuals seeking their interests all have influence over the structure leading to the ultimate action. Much like a person buying clothes dominates another individual, a person buying oil or batteries can through the structure of domination lead to the invigilation of the polity. The average Western person seeking to buy batteries will, through the structure of market, lead to the increased demand of raw lithium. If a polity were to consider entering market globalization or a trade of lithium, the structure as a whole would have an invigilating effect on the polity, as the adverse effects of avoiding the market globalization would be known to deliberators. This means that the polities were dominated before being able to make a choice by the invigilation. Since they were dominated before making the choice, their choice to be dominated was not free. It was a choice made while the state was already being dominated. This means that the polity choice to be dominated was not just, but unjust, since it was already dominated. It is now easy to see that domination over the polity by globalization is unjust even if it accepts that domination, due to the structural invigilation.

We would argue that structural invigilation and domination by actors are not necessarily mutually excluding but often reinforcing and simultaneous. As said before, A does not have to act but merely be present to impose changes on B's behavior. One of the most effective ways to do that is through shaping discourse and meaning. As Hillary Putnam points out "[a] formal language has, after all, an inventor, and like any human being, he can give commands. Among the commands he can issue are ones to the effect that 'If you want to speak my language, then do thus and so" (1975: 55). Since "word meanings derive from the complex social and linguistic process" (Abend 2008: 193), it is no wonder that it has been shaped by the dominant elites or structures. Word meanings such as globalization, liberal market, privatization, etc., can be shaped and presented in such a way as to represent desired and fairly positive social outcomes and processes, discrediting any political or social actor (again, for example a state) who goes against any of the mentioned outcomes and processes. Those actors are labelled or presumed to be retrograde, radical, or sources of instability. Globalized structures thus limit the scope of legitimate political actors and legitimate options.

A good example of what we are discussing can be found in the idea of neoliberal state-building which rests on the notion of the universal liberal state, supported by the free market, Western-like state, and individual liberties (MacGinty 2011). Many post-socialist states went through this process, especially

ones that went through violent dissolutions, such as the case of Yugoslavia (Džuverović and Milošević 2020). One of the main instigators of the neoliberal state-building in those cases was the European Union, a supranational globalizing political actor, which insisted on the process of deregulation of the market and privatization of resources and means of production, along with the democratization and strengthening of the institutions of representative democracy. Even though this process was supported by the national political elites, it did not resonate with citizens, as they felt left out and without any sort of impact on public policies (Ibid.). This shows us that a line of demarcation can be drawn between structure and dominating actors on one side, and citizens (local actors) on the other. Going back to Pettit's form of domination, the EU in this case would not intervene directly if relevant political actors in the Balkans chose to halt the process of liberal reforms or even turn back the clock. Some of the possible consequences could be freezing the integration process, blocking various funds and diplomatic isolation, but also issuing a statement that would resonate with pro-EU NGOs and citizens.[3] Knowing the high cost of such choices, states would change their behavior to be more aligned with the preferences of dominating actors and globalizing structures, despite the fact that actors and structures may not even choose to dominate states willingly. This is precisely an example of domination through invigilation. But what if the state itself is dominating?

The Problem of Dominating State

By discussing the domination of the process of globalization over the states, in the last two sections, we referred to the ideal type of the state, but fully aware of the possibility that a state itself can cause domination over its citizens. That is why the state can be "characterized by its capacity to restrict, in more or less significant proportions, the field of critique or (which in practice comes down to the same thing) deprive it of any purchase on reality" (Boltanski 2011: 117). In such cases, citizens are having restrictions on their actions (right to critique or public participation) making their ability for self-determination and self-government significantly diminished. The forms of state domination can sometimes be subtle and not easy to spot and point out, for example in hybrid regimes or states characterized by competitive authoritarianism. Such regimes can nowadays be observed in some parts of Africa, Asia, or post-communist Europe where "formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising political authority. Incumbents violate those rules so often and to such an extent, however, that the regime fails to meet conventional minimum standards for democracy" (Levitsky and Way 2002: 52). Citizens are deprived of open political competition and participation,

3 The last option serves as a great example of shaping the discourse and the meaning by labelling some actions anti-EU or anti-liberal, thus making those options out of the consideration by the controlled actor.

but it does not end there. Since media and free speech are restricted as well, the space for deliberation and exchange of information is shrinking, affecting not just the ability for informed decision-making, but also for realizing that one is under the domination of the state. As Boltanski warns, people will find it difficult to realize that they are being dominated and that they share common problems, especially in a state of oppression (Boltanski 2011). While the state can dominate individuals overtly, it can also do it in a subtler manner.

Structural domination by the state is also possible. It is important to note that state domination is not isolated from the context in which it happens: often some forms of domination are supported and justified by the dominant norms that are historically rooted and therefore, subtler, making the domination take the form of structural violence, rather than open and direct (Galtung 1969). For example, a state can reside in patriarchy and can thus limit the impact of women through the "glass ceiling," a set of very subtle and widely spread social norms that prevent women from more meaningful participation in public space (Singh 2007). As a result, women (or any other oppressed social group for that matter) can form adaptive preferences. Such preferences are "formed in unconscious response to oppression" (Walsh 2015: 829). Emancipation and self-government then come in the form of *sour grapes*.[4] Since emancipation looks out of reach, oppressed individuals value it less. Members of marginalized social groups learn to love the oppression in order to cope with it and adapt their goals accordingly, thus keeping the structural violence within a state alive and well. When that is the case, the process of globalization can sometimes act in such a way that it leads to the empowerment of marginalized groups and expands the space for self-determination and self-governance.[5] As such, under those special conditions, globalization can be a motor of non-domination.

For Whom the Bell of Non-Domination Tolls

However, no matter how elaborate and compelling the arguments that authors of the neo-roman republican laid out, many authors have criticized the orientation towards the state. Authors of republican cosmopolitanism such as James Bohman argued for Democracy across borders focused on reflective citizens, thus disputing the strong link that should exist between statehood and citizenship (2007). Bohman "sketches a polyarchic political order of plural trans- and supranational publics and political institutions which is meant to allow citizens to reflexively democratise this order…" (Meine 2022: 281). The author posits the importance of the various forms of citizenship that are not bounded or exclusionary but are grounded in political status that is enabling for initiating

4 "*sour grapes* is a purely causal process of adaptation, taking place 'behind the back' of the person concerned" (Elster 1983: 117).

5 We are not implying here that the state should be forced to implement mandatory citizen participation, but that it should facilitate an inclusive space for potential participation.

deliberation and reflective democracy as a way to non-domination (Bohman 2007). Aware of the sources of domination within states, but also coming from the interdependency created by the process of globalization, he argues for a new form of membership and citizenship located within "a decentralized system of potentially numerous, reflexively interlocking publics, a polyarchic system of political institutions and plural citizenships. Plural citizenships in publics and institutions enable individuals to engage with an institutional order from various perspectives, to discover jurisdictions' and boundaries' blind spots and to contest domination even across borders" (Meine 2022:281).

For us, Bohman is also important because of his elaboration of centrality of democracy, specifically, deliberative democracy, in the dynamics of inter-relations between polities that should aim at creating a more complex ideal of democracy, i.e., transnational democracy (Bohman 2010). He articulates democracy as a set of institutions that should empower citizens "to form and change the terms of their common life together, including democracy itself", thus articulating democracy as an ideal of self-rule, which is crucial in this paper (Bohman 2010: 2). We base our conditions for assessing the quality of interference in regards to how it affects the principles of self-rule (governance), viewed primarily through space for deliberation and participation.

Even though we believe this approach addresses the domination coming both from the state and globalized international environment, further intensified by the multiple relations of codependence, it is crucial, as we have explored, that we do not underestimate the power and importance boundaries have in contemporary politics (especially state ones). This is why we turn to Meine and her Republicanism of plural polities in order to set a theoretical background in assessing if and when the domination over the state is justified. She states that the "new forms of interconnectedness and inter-, trans- or supranational decision-making, in turn, open avenues for new post-Westphalian forms of governance beyond the state" (Meine 2022: 275, Scheuerman 2018). This means that we should focus on various levels of governance, i.e., democratic arenas where policies can be articulated and implemented. This is a perspective that we share in this paper as well.

Much like neo roman republicanism, republicanism of plural polities recognizes the importance of belonging to a bounded polity such as the state. On the other hand, it posits the importance of both individual and communal autonomy (Meine 2022, Bellamy 2008, Celikates 2014).

Meine asserts that "democratic decision-making presupposes a bounded demos," but later adds that "...while citizenship is thus bound to particular polities, jurisdictions and *demoi*, insisting on citizenship's boundedness must neither be equated with supporting communitarian or statist positions nor with understanding citizenship as necessarily exclusive. While the interpersonal and individual-institutional relations citizenship encompasses are bounded and particular, they are, from a conceptual vantage point, neither bound to specific communities nor to state institutions. The argument originates in individuals acting together and shaping their relationships – and not

in some pre-conceived conception of a political collective or community" (Meine 2022: 285). This point is important since the state remains an inevitable contemporary boundary or level of expressing autonomy through decision-making. That being said, the state is not a sacred cow that no one should interfere with since individual autonomy and non-domination are not inherently bound to any specific polity. This brings a question of various forms of identifications and citizenship coming from plural polities that exist in parallel with the state. While the state remains the dominant polity, citizens are not exclusively bound by it but can have other citizenship identification related to other polities. This means that citizens have a right to choose their primary identifications and participate in other forms of polities than a state, for example, such polities can be embodied through the EU principle of subsidiarity and interregional cooperation where the state is not a primary entity in certain policy areas, thus showing that multilevel governance as a product of globalization does not necessary involves domination.

This section was important for our attempt at creating an interference assessment stand-point since both republican cosmopolitanism and republicanism of plural polities show the importance of other polities and their role in creating the relations of non-domination, but also the necessity of focusing on individual autonomy and non-domination manifested through an opportunity for participation and deliberation. We have outlined above the issues of both the domination over the state and the dominating state. Thus, in order to assess whether interference of the state represents injustice, one must look into the decision-making practices of the respective state, but also at the consequences of domination coming from other polities. Therefore, we suggest a theoretical threshold for assessing the nature of interference and its justifiability.

Justifiable Interference

We can conclude that not all forms of interference over the polity are unjust, but in order to be able to judge when one relation of interference between the polity and a globalized structure is just or not, we have to set a threshold that could direct us toward the right answer. In this section, we will outline and articulate three conditions for interference over a polity to be justifiable. In conceptualizing conditions for just, non-dominating interference, we will base it on conditions for which we believe to protect the ideals of democracy as self-rule and based in neo-roman republican tradition, thus establishing a theoretical threshold for assessing the quality of interference.

Our starting point, coming from the republican tradition, is that freedom is "a social and political condition and linked to citizenship" (Meine 2022: 284). This means, that freedom is articulated through the lenses of autonomy between and within the polities, i.e., in relation to other individuals but also to a polity, thus shedding light on democratic citizenship on a polity (political community) and individual level that encompasses "interlinked elements of individual rights and duties, belonging, participation and status" (Meine 2022:

284). Because of that, Meine sees polity as an "ensemble of a bounded demos or citizenry and political and legal institutions that hold authority over a jurisdiction" (Meine 2022: 286). The last two quotes point to the interlinked importance of autonomy on both the levels of polity and individuals, which is why some republicans argue for "plural citizenship that provide possible and justified alternatives for guaranteeing individual freedom and self-determination as well as preserving the legitimacy of the distinct polities and of the overarching political order in its entirety" (Meine 2022: 286). In an ideal polity, based on the idea of democratic minimum, citizens should be able to "initiate deliberation, not only on issues of policy but also on constitutional questions – and thus on the framework of democracy itself" (Meine 2022: 281, Bohmans 2007). This means that citizens should be able to be the rule-makers of their polities and should be able not just to decide on decision and government mechanisms, but also boundaries of polities to which they belong. Finally, not less importantly, any polity should be capable of being responsive to citizens and able of carrying through the will of its citizens (Laborde and Ronzoni 2015). Therefore, the following conditions should embody and protect the values of autonomy and self-government on various levels of governance in order to represent the viable theoretical threshold for assessing the quality of interference in terms of domination over a certain polity.

The first condition is that interference with a polity have as a consequence the expansion of the space for individual and/or communal autonomy and participation. That means that interference can be non-dominating if it brings a certain polity closer to the ideal of democratic citizenship and self-government. For example, deliberation as a decision-making process has been seen by many as a mechanism for achieving self-government within a polity, therefore, interference that improves conditions and scope of deliberation, in terms of number of participating citizens, but also, the scope of issues open for deliberation, can be deemed to be justifiable and just (Bohmans 2007, 2010; Pettit 2001, 2012).

The second condition demands that interference is not targeting a policy or decision that was reached through the process of citizen participation or deliberation. This condition is connected to the notion that a polity should be responsive to its citizens and not to external actors (Laborde and Ronzoni 2015). For example, that would mean that decisions reached through mechanisms of participation, deliberation or any other mechanisms that embodies the principles of self-government, cannot be overran by an external agent or other polity. This of course, also means that if citizens of a polity opt for representative or delegate mechanisms, decisions made through those mechanisms should not be interfered with, unless they violate the principles of autonomy, self-governance and freedom. That would be the case, for example, if citizen power to change the mechanism were hindered.

The last condition that urges that interference should not meddle with the autonomy of the polity created by its constituents unless the respective polity itself is violating the above-mentioned principles. A prime example of this could be the concept of a dominating state (as described earlier in this paper)

that violates the principles of individual autonomy and self-governance, acting as big invigilator towards its citizens. Violation of the principles of self-governance can occur when decision-making process excludes some citizens of the polity, or creates imbalance of power or when voted decisions and policies inhibit deliberation and participation space and mechanisms. One way to look at the violation of these principles would be to look if interference has a negative effect on two most constant variables of democracies (polyarchies), namely inclusivity and public contestation (Coppedge et al. 2008). That relates to Dahl's conception of polyarchy in which all citizens should participate in public contestation, that is, they should "have unimpaired opportunities ... to formulate their preferences; ... to signify their preferences to their fellow citizens and the government by individual and collective action; ...to have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of the government..." (Dahl 1971: 2). Interference that trumps those ideals should be regarded as unjust domination. On the other hand, interference that opens up or defends space for citizen participation and public deliberation within a polity,[6] can be deemed as just.

Still, there some caveats and limitations that we must address, as these, rather abstract, conditions cannot fully or exhaust all situations due to the complexity of social reality. First, it should be noted that participation and deliberation is not mandatory, nor lower level of participation problematic if it is the authentic and autonomous decision of citizens to refrain from participation. Secondly, even though the focus was on mechanisms of participatory and deliberative democracy, other democratic mechanisms such as representative, electoral or delegate democracy are not excluded, but are necessary as well. The same can be said for an independent judiciary and the rule of law. Citizens can delegate some functions or roles as long as they can retract it in any time; nothing should be set in stone in that regard. Thirdly, citizens are allowed to "make mistakes and arrange their own affairs in ways that deviate from optimal non-domination (within limits...)" (Laborde and Ronzoni 2015: 289). Since no one can make optimal and informed decisions all the time and is bound to make some mistakes, our conditions do not try to meddle and fix every decision that has negative effect on basic principles of self-governance; freedom precisely means to make mistakes. However, should those mistake have significant negative effect on democratic citizenship, level of public contestation or deliberation, interference can be a possible option to mend the damage.

Fourth, during the articulation of the conditions for just interference, we referred to the two most constant variables that are used to assess the quality of democracy, inclusiveness and public contestation, but, as Bohman points out, mere contestation is not enough, but we also have to point out the importance of "the capability of citizens to transform communicative freedom into communicative power" (Bohman 2010: 4). In other words, public contestation of citizens should have an effect on policies and decisions within a polity. Fifth, as Meine points out, citizens will belong to various polities at once,

6 In terms of inclusivity and contestation.

those polities will interact and since they can have various interests they could clash at some point regarding a given issue or common good (2022). There would be numerous models for resolving this clash, one could be introducing the principle of subsidiarity where the lowest capable level (vertically) should be delegated to govern the common or deal with an issue. Other possible option would be a delegated sortition or representative body of involved polities that would go about resolving the issues. Finally, it should be noted that these conditions are theoretical and rather abstract, meaning they require operationalization and fine graining in order to avoid manipulation and ambiguity, but also to further adapt in order to cover more nuances that we overlooked and that will certainly come up due to the social complexity of reality.

All in all, by articulating these conditions for interference assessment, we tried to follow the neo-republican tradition and make sure that our conditions pay enough attention to all relevant aspects of self-governance and freedom, including its individualist foundations (for example citizenship); jurisdictional structures and *demoi* (in our case free polities); and inter-jurisdictional relationships (such as international relations and globalization) (Meine 2022).

Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed how can we assess when globalization's interference with polities is unjust from the republican perspective. We have pointed out that the domination of the free polities as a result of globalization is unjust. By introducing the notion of structural invigilation, we have explained that this domination is unjust even when there is consent from the polity. For this reason globalization dominates the polities even in cases of polity consent. But as not all interference is domination, we tried to come up with conditions that would derive from neo-roman republican tradition, thus embodying the values of democratic self-governance and freedom, but would also help us create a theoretical threshold for assessing the justifiability and justness of any given interference with a polity. Namely, those conditions assert that interference with a polity as a consequence has the expansion of the space for individual and/or communal autonomy and participation; that interference is not targeting a policy or decision that was reached through the process of citizen participation or deliberation; and that interference should not meddle with the autonomy of the polity created by its constituents unless the respective polity itself is violating the principles of democratic self-government and freedom. Being theoretical and abstract, these conditions come with some caveats that future deliberation can help to resolve and focus further on these issues, but our goal for now was to try to articulate a possible threshold for assessing the character of interference with a polity in terms of domination as described within the neo-roman republican tradition.

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Milan Varda
Nemanja Anđelković

Veliki nadzornik: da li je mešanje u države ikada opravdano?

Apstrakt

Ovaj članak razmatra da li je dominacija globalizacije nad državama nepravedna zbog toga što strukturalno podriva slobodu država. Teza ovog članka je da je strukturalna dominacija globalizacije nad nedominirajućim državama uvek nepravedna. Članak iznosi ovu tvrdnju kroz uvođenje koncepta strukturalne invigilacije. U članku se tvrdi da je dominacija globalizacije nepravedna čak i kada postoji saglasnost države sa dominacijom, jer samo postojanje globalizacije izaziva invigilaciju nad državama. Međutim, odnosi pravednosti se mogu preokrenuti u slučaju dominirajuće države, u kom slučaju dominacija od starne globalizacije nad državom zapravo može dovesti do nedominacije građana. U drugom delu rada će biti dizajniran prag za prosuđivanje pravednosti dominacije u vidu tri uslova zasnovana na principima samouprave, individualne i komunalne autonomije i deliberacije.

Ključne reči: nedominacija, neoromanski republikanizam, invigilacija, globalizacija, deliberativna demokratija, autonomija, samoupravljanje.

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Miloš Bogdanović

METAPHYSICAL STUCTURES AND HOLISM: REPLY TO SCHAFFER

ABSTRACT
This paper deals with Schaffer's distinction between metaphysical structures, as well as his appeal for the revival of neo-Aristotelian approaches that imply ordered structure, based on the criticism of Quine's method that, in his view, implies flat metaphysical structure. However, although I believe that Schaffer's distinction between metaphysical structures is an interesting and, basically, acceptable view, I will try to show that Schaffer's arguments are not convincing enough to persuade us to abandon Quine's method and adopt the Aristotelian metaphysical model. Moreover, when mistakes that Schaffer makes are corrected and Quine's method is given due attention, we will see that this can enable us to have a more tenable interpretation of the concepts that Schaffer speaks of (metaphysical structures), but also – as in his case – to draw certain conclusions that go beyond the objectives of classification as such.

KEYWORDS
flat, sorted, ordered metaphysical (ontological) structure, Quine, Schaffer, Carnap, intuitions, ontology, metaphysics

1. Introduction

In recent philosophical literature we come across a certain trend towards confronting Quine's and Aristotle's metaphysical standpoints. But while for some scholars this confrontation is more declarative and could be described as mere differentiation, or even as arguing in Quine's favour (See: Varzi 2014), in others, however, it gets more radical by pointing out how Quine's view is an uninteresting and trivial metaphysical view that should be overcome for this reason.

For example, in the paper "On What Grounds What", Jonathan Schaffer argues for, as he says, abandonment of the dominant Quinean stream in metaphysics, and the revival of a more traditional, Aristotelian one. Schaffer justifies it by pointing out that the above standpoints imply completely different views of metaphysical structure, as evidenced by the fact that Quine and his supporters can only say what exists, or which entities enter the domain of variables over which we quantify, but they cannot, like Aristotle, say which of them are fundamental.

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Although I believe that Schaffer's distinction between metaphysical structures, which will be discussed in more detail below, is an interesting and, basically, acceptable view, the attention here will be drawn to the fact that the arguments offered by Schaffer for abandoning Quine's and reviving Aristotelian metaphysics are unsatisfactory, and that the primary reason for this should be sought in his inadequate or *uncritical* reading of Quine. In this regard, I will try to put Schaffer's distinction between metaphysical structures in the context of a closer examination of Quine's approach, its background and final results, in the hope that this could lead to more tenable views when it comes to concepts that Schaffer discusses in his text.

2. Schaffer's critique of Quine's method: Metaphysical structures

In his book *The Aim and Structure of Physical Theory*, the great French philosopher Pierre Duhem argues that the interpretation of any experimental physical laws ultimately depends on a metaphysical theory adopted by a theorist. In a more definite form, in order for the interpretation of physical laws to be possible at all, Duhem believes that we must adopt one of the following views: Aristotle's, according to which all objects are based on matter and form, Descartes', according to which these are mind and matter, Newton's, where the concepts of mass, its interactions, and forms are fundamental, or now dominant atomism, according to which everything is made up of tiny particles that cannot be observed directly and their processes. In a word, Duhem argues for the thesis that for a physicist "it would be irrational to work towards the progress of physical theory if that theory were not the more and more clear, and more and more precise reflection of a metaphysics" (Duhem 1990: 187).

Whether we agree or disagree with Duhem on this issue, if we observe the history of philosophy and science in general, we will no doubt come across a number of views that, as a common feature, give priority to some entities over others.[1] On the other hand, the situation today is that this way of thinking has mostly been abandoned, and the reasons should be sought primarily in the influence exerted by the work of one man, Willard Van Orman Quine.

Namely, unlike Aristotle and neo-Aristotelians, Quine is thought to have developed a view that we can only say which entities exist, but not which of them are fundamental. Inspired by this fact, Schaffer advanced a thesis about two basic types of metaphysical structure: "What emerges is that Quine and Aristotle offer different views of metaphysical structure. That is, the Quinean and Aristotelian tasks involve structurally distinct conceptions of the target of metaphysical inquiry. For the Quinean, the target is flat (...). For the neo-Aristotelian, the target is *ordered*" (Schaffer 2009: 354). However, in addition to this, Schaffer also argued for abandonment of the flat, and revival of a traditional,

1 Of course, this list does not exhaust all of these views. However, I believe that the listed ones that Duhem has compiled are certainly the most influential, which is why the illustration of ordered metaphysical structures can be limited to them.

ordered metaphysics: "On now dominant Quinean view, metaphysics is about what there is. Metaphysics so conceived is concerned with such questions as whether properties exist, whether meanings exist, and whether numbers exist. I will argue for the revival of a more traditional Aristotelian view, on which metaphysics is about what grounds what. Metaphysics so revived does not bother asking whether properties, meanings and numbers exist (...). The question is whether or not they are *fundamental*" (Ibid.: 347).

To be quite precise, Schaffer's project of abandoning Quine's and reviving traditional metaphysics is based on the idea of neo-Aristotelian conception of metaphysical task 'as the best'. This is an idea that he will try to defend primarily by referring to the so-called 'puzzle about ontology', which consists of the following: namely, "how could it be that metaphysics seems to ask deep and difficult questions when existence questions seem shallow and trivial?", and Schaffer's solution is that this puzzle is "*only on the Quinean assumption that metaphysics is asking existence questions*. The deep questions about numbers, properties, and parts (*inter alia*) are not whether there are such things, but *how*" (Ibid.: 361-362).

In other words, the problem with contemporary, Quinean metaphysics, in Schaffer's view, is that it identifies its questions with "existence questions" that are "trivial, while Aristotelian fundamental questions are interesting" (Ibid.: 356). However, not only can Quine's method, as we shall see, answer a question such as '*how* do entities exist?' (although *not necessarily* in Schaffer's way), but it seems that in distinguishing ontological (trivial) from metaphysical (deep) questions, Schaffer forgets that Quine uses the same method to, *inter alia*, *flatten metaphysical structures that Schaffer claims to be ordered (deep)*. With this in mind, apart from the opinion regarding the depth of metaphysical questions, it seems that Schaffer would have to provide more convincing arguments for its abandonment, which he will ultimately try to do by presenting Quine's approach as one that, so to speak, lives parasitically on Aristotle's.

Namely, in order to show that Quine's metaphysics is subordinate to Aristotle's, Schaffer will divide the method used by Quine into five phases, emphasizing that each of them "requires presuppositions about ordering structure". Thus, the first phase of this method would consist of "identifying the best theory", and since for Quine it is physics, Schaffer will identify his presuppositions in this phase with presuppositions of Aristotle's approach in the same phase: "(...) it seems that the question of what makes a theory best is interwoven with the question of what is basic", which would be equal to "Aristotelian presuppositions at stage 1: the best theory is a theory of the fundamental (...). Aristotelian metaphysics is thus built into Quinean method from the first stage", because "part of what makes a theory best (even by Quine's own lights) is that it is a theory of what is fundamental ('ultimate structure of reality')" (Ibid.: 366-367).[2]

2 For more detailed information on other phases of Quine's method that are not directly important to us, see Schaffer 2009: 366-373.

Therefore, in favour of abandoning current, Quinean metaphysics, in addition to the triviality of the questions it raises, Schaffer also points out that its method is "inextricably interwoven with questions of grounding", which is why Quine's metaphysical structure is not only 'strictly weaker', but also 'subsumed by Aristotelian'. However, if it has to contain presuppositions about fundamentality, the question is how can the metaphysical structure that Quine argues for be flat, and Schaffer's answer is that, referring to (modern) physics, Quine's method would ultimately have to be eliminative with regard to all entities that are not part of its ontology.

Although this should speak in favour of Schaffer's assessment of the type of metaphysical structure we come across in Quine's work, in what follows I will try to show that eliminativism cannot ultimately be attributed to Quine, which is why Quine's metaphysics, although flat – or rather, unordered – is not and cannot be the way Schaffer sees it. However, in order to do that, it is necessary to introduce another, third type of metaphysical structure that Schaffer identifies.

Namely, in addition to flat and ordered, Schaffer identifies one more type of metaphysical structure that he claims to be sorted: "Perhaps also worth mentioning is a third view of metaphysical structure, on which the target is *sorted*. The task is to solve for the number of categories *n*, and solve for the sets *E1* - *En* of entities in each category" (Ibid.: 355). However, the problem is that, apart from identifying it, he does not give any detailed account of this type of metaphysical structure, or an example of it that the history of philosophy would teach us. The only thing that Schaffer claims is that sorted metaphysical structures would imply classification of entities into categories, and that they are, just like flat ones, subsumed under ordered structures: "Flat structure is strictly weaker than sorted structure, which in turn is strictly weaker than ordered structure" (Ibid.).

In a word, unlike the flat and ordered metaphysical structure, Schaffer does not give any instructions that would be helpful when it comes to the sorted metaphysical structure. However, I believe that this is favourable in a way, because while he sees Quine's metaphysics as a flat one, I will attempt a more cautious approach to his method and argue for the view that it is, in fact, a sorted one. On the other hand, one should not think that the reason for this is that Quine did differentiate categories after all – since this is exactly an uninteresting and trivial view – but it is precisely *his method that could give us a nontrivial categorization*, which could enable us, in my view, to have a different and more acceptable interpretation of what a flat metaphysical (*ontological*) structure would require, and what a *sustainable* ordered one, at least from today's perspective.

3. Background of Quine's (meta)theoretical position

Therefore, Schaffer puts forward a thesis about two basic types of metaphysical structure, with an additional one of no special importance to him, but of great importance to us. On the other hand, believing that the way to go is to criticize

Quine's method, he also argued for, as we have seen, abandonment of the flat metaphysical structure, and revival of a traditional, ordered one. However, although in general Schaffer clearly identified the position that he criticized, he failed to mention that Quine significantly modified his views over time.

Namely, as those well acquainted with Quine's philosophy know, the problem of the basic presuppositions of his method for resolving ontological disputes primarily concerns the question which of the two doctrines he gives priority to, empiricism or naturalism.[3] Thus the period associated with Quine's empirical postulates is a period in which he was strongly influenced by Carnap's (ontological) conventionalism, according to which "to accept the thing world means nothing more than to accept a certain form of language, in other words, to accept rules for forming statements and for testing, accepting or rejecting them" (Carnap 1983: 243-244).

As is well known, Carnap's approach is usually considered to present a challenge to traditional metaphysicians, primarily because it implies that certain claims, being independent of any conceptual framework or 'form of language', cannot be valid. Since Carnap classified most of the theses that traditional metaphysicians put forward in this group, he claimed that the questions they seek to answer are pseudo-questions, and their position in general is 'external to the adopted belief system' within which it is only legitimate to make any claims about the world, and therefore, to talk about what there is. On the other hand, although Quine did not accept the distinction between internal (theoretical) and external (pragmatic) questions,[4] in his empiricist phase not only did he argue for a view close to Carnap's, but, as Schaffer says, he shared his 'anti-metaphysical sympathies'.

Namely, in the period when he was influenced by Carnap, Quine promoted a holistic view according to which our knowledge consists of a complex, intertwined system of statements with the so-called observation sentences on its periphery, and highly theoretical at its centre: "The totality of our so-called knowledge or beliefs, from the most casual matters of geography and history to the profoundest laws of atomic physics or even of pure mathematics and logic, is a man made fabric which impinges on experience only along the edges (...). A conflict with experience at the periphery occasions readjustments in the interior of the field" (Quine 1951: 39). However, perhaps more important than this is that Quine treats the mentioned 'fabrics' as 'fictions' that we use in the systematization of experience, and objects postulated by them as 'convenient intermediaries' in the process, or "irreducible posits comparable, epistemologically, to the gods of Homer" (Ibid.: 41).

In other words, in addition to the holistic view, in his empiricist phase Quine also distinctly advocates instrumentalism (anti-realism), according to

3 For more detailed information on this, see Roger F. Gibson, *Enlightened Empiricism: an Examination of W. V. Quine's Theory of Knowledge*.

4 For more information, see Quine's papers "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", and "Ontological Relativity".

which theories are primarily "a device for working a manageable structure into the flux of experience", and since different theories can serve this purpose, his view also implies the existence of a multitude of (comprehensive) theories about the world: "If all observable events can be accounted for in one comprehensive scientific theory (...) then we can expect that they can all be accounted for equally in another, conflicting system of the world" (Quine 2008: 228). However, it is important to keep in mind that this pluralism is not so much a difficulty for Quine's view as a symptom of the fact that theories are not, nor can they be, unambiguously determined by data.

Namely, one of the novelties introduced by Quine was that he integrated the objection regarding plurality that could be raised to Carnap's and metaphysical approaches (especially by supporters of these approaches to one another) into his own research program, where it ceases to be a problem in general, and becomes a phenomenon of underdetermination of theories by empirical evidence. This will enable Quine, when speaking of objects, to speak less in terms of experience, and more in terms of language in which statements about them are formulated. However, it should be kept in mind that what Quine is aiming at when referring to language is not "in order to know what there is, but in order to know what a given remark or doctrine, ours or someone else's, says there is?" (Quine 1948: 35).

4. Basics of Quine's ontological method

Therefore, although Quine shared Carnap's conviction that "when we adopt a particular theory/conceptual framework/language, we must also accept corresponding ontological commitments, i.e. we have to assume a domain of objects to which our statements will refer" (Lazović 2007: 30), unlike Carnap, he believed that "there is no absolute sense in speaking of the ontology of a theory", but "how one theory of objects is interpretable or reinterpretable in another" (Quine 1968: 201). When it comes to resolving ontological disputes, this will result in an approach – which is of importance to us – that implies two fundamentally different cases: the first, when we move within the same background theory or language, and the second when this is not the case, which is why we can speak about objects of the theory which we interpret only quite provisionally, from the perspective of presuppositions about objects of our (background) theory.

The first case is the one that Quine illustrates, *inter alia*, as follows:

"Take some theory formulation and select the two of its terms, say 'electron' and 'molecule' (...). Now let us transform our theory formulation merely by switching these two terms throughout. The new theory formulation will be logically incompatible with the old: it will affirm things about so-called electrons that the other denies. Yet their only difference, the man on the street would say, is terminological; the one theory formulation uses the technical terms 'molecule' and 'electron' to name what the other formulation calls 'electron' and 'molecule'. The two formulations express, he would say, the same theory.

Someone else might urge, however perversely, that they express very different theories: both of them treat molecules in same sense but disagree sharply regarding the behavior of molecules, and correspondingly for electrons. Clearly, in any event, the two theory formulations are empirically equivalent – that is, they imply the same observation conditionals" (Quine 2008: 234).

This is the case we have when theories we interpret are subordinate to the same conceptual framework or background theory, which Quine, like Carnap, primarily identifies with language. However, the second case is a situation where reinterpretations that Quine speaks of are possible only if the ontological presuppositions of one theory are read into another. This is a situation in which we would find ourselves whenever determining *what a particular doctrine claims to exist* would require something that Quine calls radical translation. Then, however, we would no longer be dealing with subordinate, but so-called background theories or languages, and what is specific about these cases is that the ontological point of view implied by them would remain inscrutable.[5]

To demonstrate this, Quine examines the procedures we would apply when translating sentences of a completely unknown language into our mother tongue, and he observes that in such a situation – this would presumably imply contact with indigenous people – we would have to rely solely on behavioural evidence, because we would not have any other method at our disposal but the one that involves connecting our informants' utterances with directly observable circumstances in which they were stated. However, although it would be possible to obtain an acceptable translation in this way – at least by pragmatic standards – Quine concludes that it would also be possible to obtain a number of other variants and, based on the available evidence, we could not give priority to any of them over the others. Quine finds justification for this conclusion in the fact that, relying on evidence that we could have in this situation, i.e. behavioural evidence, we can never know with certainty what the utterances of our informants really refer to. On the other hand, since it is assumed that we are members of a culture in which speaking about (individuated) physical objects is deeply rooted, it is natural to expect that we would translate an expression that regularly accompanies the appearance of a particular object as the name of a correlated object in our language. However, although this has practical value, it is quite arbitrary in Quine's view,[6] and testifies to the fact that,

5 It should be said here that for Quine the thesis about the inscrutability of reference concerns not only the cases that require radical translation, but also those in which we move within the same background theory (language). However, since it is then already implied by the assumption that it is not possible to determine in an absolute sense what the objects of a theory are, it gains its full meaning in the case of confronting two, presumably, completely different conceptual frameworks or background theories.

6 Thus, for example, we can never know whether to translate the native expression that regularly accompanies the appearance of a certain object as the name of that object, one of its undetached parts, or its one second stage. The famous example used by Quine is a fictitious term 'gavagai', which is supposed to be uttered in the presence of a rabbit, but – based on all the available evidence – we cannot know whether to translate

after establishing other correlations, we would actually make a translation or a dictionary that is most in line with our ontological point of view, while the native one would constantly elude us and remain inscrutable: "English general and singular terms, identity, quantification, and the whole bag of ontological tricks may be correlated with elements of the native language in any of various mutually incompatible ways, each compatible with all possible linguistic data, and none preferable to another save as favored by a rationalization of the native language that is simple and natural to us" (Quine 1957: 7).

5. Ontological relativity and atomistic realism

Therefore, if we accept that theories are underdetermined by empirical evidence, it is reasonable to assume empirically equivalent theories that would imply different descriptions and objects, and therefore, truth conditions of their claims; the only difference is that the theories we would have in the second case, compared to the first, would require us to read into them our ontological point of view. However, it is important to keep in mind that this opacity or inaccessibility of foreign global theories is in no way something that affects Quine's position of ontological relativism or his view on the character of entities in general – that is, *as posits or convenient intermediaries in the process of systematization of experienc*e. Moreover, it seems that apart from this, it supports the thesis that there are no grounds for giving priority to any of the theories, if for no other reason then because – due to the fact of indeterminacy of translation, or 'impossibility of reconciling them by a reconstrual of predicates' – in most cases we cannot know what the alternatives would be.

With all this in mind, despite the differences between Quine's and Carnap's approach that are most often attributed to the fact that Quine did not accept the distinction between internal and external questions,[7] when it comes to his contribution to ontological debate – and, in general, his attitude towards metaphysical doctrines that follow – it seems that in his empiricist phase he still largely followed Carnap. However, it is also a fact that Quine very quickly abandoned the methodology inspired by Carnap's approach, as evidenced by the fact that, instead of acknowledging a multitude of theories that are equally

the term as 'rabbit', 'undetached rabbit-part', or 'one second rabbit-stage'. For more detailed information on this, see Quine's papers "Speaking of Objects' and "Ontological Relativity".

7 To illustrate, Quine's rejection of this distinction will have as one of the consequences that (metaphysical) statements which Carnap claimed to be exempt from the usual verification could still be approached theoretically. Thus, for example, while the justification of statements about the world of things would depend on the adopted linguistic framework, in Carnap's view, the thesis about the reality of that world "cannot be among these statements, because it cannot be formulated in the thing language or, it seems, in any other theoretical language" (Carnap 1983: 244). However, emphasizing the holistic character of our knowledge, Quine believes that the answer to a question such as 'about the reality of the world' will depend on what place, if any, such a presupposition would occupy within the system.

successful in coping with the available evidence, he later claimed something that is in principle contrary to any conventionalism – that only one of these theories could be true.

This is, of course, physics, and it is generally believed that the reasons for this turn should be sought in Quine's increasingly explicit belief that it is the only one that can tell us what is true: "According to Quine's naturalism, there is no source for facts beyond what the best science has to offer, and physics is the best science has to offer" (Thompson 2008: 122). However, I will argue that there are some less obvious reasons that led to this transition, which are in Quine's case *practically* completely binding; on the other hand, although Schaffer shares the same belief, I will try to show that most of the content of Quine's naturalistic position – which is the sole target of his criticism – is not motivated by these reasons, which is precisely the source of its susceptibility to criticism such as Schaffer's, but also of certain weakness when it comes to this criticism.

In other words, although there is no doubt that in developing his new position Quine put forward different views, even those that imply referring to the best theory we have, the focus here is primarily on its foundations. In this regard, if we go back to the examples from the previous section, we will notice that in the case of radical translation there remains a group of entities that are not affected by Quine's theses on underdetermination of theories by empirical evidence, indeterminacy of translation, and inscrutability of reference; these are the entities from the first example, i.e. the entities of physics such as molecule, electron, etc. However, although these entities would most likely not be read into foreign global theory, and an assumption about them is not necessary at all to describe all the events available to our observation, it seems, however, that the fact that they are independent of translation would make Quine face a choice: whether to claim that their existence is dependent on a particular parochial perspective such as ours, which would mean, more consistently with the spirit of Carnap's conventionalism, that it is *in general* conditioned by the adoption of *some* conceptual framework, or to assume, more consistently with our modern intuitions, that these entities exist independently of any conceptual framework.

As is well known, Quine opted for the latter option; on the other hand, Schaffer obviously thought, although he did not formulate it in this way, that after this Quine could no longer observe the entities *per se* in the way he had done until then, i.e. as 'irreducible posits comparable to the gods of Homer', but that he would have to differentiate between two types of entities: the ones that, as *transtheoretical*, would also be *existing*, and all the others that would be fictitious (posits), and as such, finally eliminated.

In a word, Schaffer has based the view that Quine's metaphysical structure is ultimately flat, as we have seen, on the assumption of the eliminative character of Quine's method. However, since any eliminativism necessarily entails a kind of fundamentalism, Schaffer makes the mistake of attributing to Quine, in addition to the thesis *on reality*, the thesis *on fundamentality of the*

entities of physics. On the other hand, what mitigates Schaffer's position, or even justifies this manoeuvre is that Quine himself openly argued for this view from time to time. However, it is important to keep in mind that this does not change the fact that there is a distinction (or, in any case, that it would be desirable to make a distinction) between what we claim, and what results from the position we have taken.

6. Quine's modified naturalism and metaphysics

Therefore, in order to criticize Schaffer's position successfully, it seems that I have to modify Quine's theoretical position as well. Although the image of naturalism I arrive at in this way significantly differs from the one that Quine eventually offers, what makes these modifications possible, and ultimately necessary, is that unlike the arbitrariness behind attitudes such as about the fundamentality of the entities of physics, there is a strong motivation and a rigorous method behind the thesis on their reality. However, it is important to note that the grounds on which I express distrust of certain Quine's views, and on which, after all, I modify his naturalism, are in fact the same ones on which we can express distrust of the programs that Schaffer wants to revive, and thus of his criticism in general.

In other words, since the type of motivation I believe exist in Quine's case does not in any way characterize the approaches that Schaffer has in mind, one of the lessons of my interpretation is that, before making any judgment on a particular (meta)theoretical view, the motives that guide its adoption should be examined. Thus, while the adoption of neo-Aristotelian programs or the assumptions on which they are based is motivated solely by pragmatic reasons such as explanatory power, empirical adequacy, parsimony, etc., it seems that this is not the case when it comes to the view that postulates the reality of a particular class of entities. In short, by distinguishing the entities that concern (radical) translation from those that are independent of it, it seems that we are unequivocally bound to adopt it.

In general, this should support the distinction I am trying to make between the doctrines that Schaffer argues for – and for the sake of illustration, I can list the ones that Duhem compiled – and Quine's naturalism as it manifests itself when freed from everything that is not guaranteed by Quine's empiricism, in short, its metaphysical baggage. However, although there should be no misunderstanding when it comes to reasons behind adopting the views whose revival Schaffer argues for, my thesis about the strong motivation of Quine's program versus neo-Aristotelian or metaphysical programs may seem uncertain.

Namely, even if Quine's naturalism, now limited to a purely ontological thesis on reality of certain entities is not arbitrary as I claim, it certainly seems to be based on his empiricism, hence it follows that the way to criticize Quine's view as neutral and thus superior would be to show that Quine's empiricist view is arbitrary in a similar way that is usually thought metaphysical views are. Since the distinction between theoretical and transtheoretical as a consequence of

my modification of Quine's naturalism calls for Carnap's model of justification (so-called methodological dualism), this could be done by drawing attention to the fact that such a program, just like Carnap's, does not imply or represent the result of some final criticism of traditional metaphysics, but at best an alternative approach to metaphysical ones.[8]

In other words, just as metaphysical claims are unfounded or 'external' from Carnap's perspective, it can also be shown that, from the perspective of traditional metaphysicians, the criteria set by Carnap or, in their case, the constraints he tried to impose on them are insufficiently justified.[9] Applied in Quine's field, this would mean that even after my interventions, I do not really have any decisive argument why we should put in place of metaphysical theses any of Quine's empiricist ones, such as that it is not possible to determine in an absolute sense what the objects of a theory are, underdetermination of theories by empirical evidence, inscrutability of reference, etc. However, although this interpretation is correct in the broadest, philosophical sense of the word, the problem is that it results in missing the opportunity to finally base our strong intuitions about the reality of a certain class of entities on solid grounds. On the other hand, the problem with identifying Quine's and Carnap's views results from a similar reason.

Namely, although in Carnap's case there is a rigorous method that consistently arises from his position – which is the criterion of validity that I am trying to establish by distinguishing Quine's approach from metaphysical ones – the problem is that it is assumed that to recognize the reality of entities such as electrons, atoms, and molecules is a matter of adopting a certain conceptual framework, which is arguably in open conflict with our intuitions.[10] On the

8 Moreover, both of these programs can in fact be seen as a consequence of the failure of such a project, although not equally directly. It is, of course, the positivist project of the rational reconstruction of knowledge, which had as one of its presuppositions the inadequacy of traditional metaphysical approaches, and its successful implementation should thus have led to their eventual abandonment. However, this project proved to be unsuccessful, as it is well known, which forced Carnap to take refuge in conventionalism that Quine himself advocated in one period, although with some modifications.

9 Without having to go deeper into this debate, it can be said with great certainty that the key objection to Carnap concerns drawing attention to the fact that the way he tried "to undermine or eliminate the metaphysical dimension of our thinking is self-defeating, because the very attempt necessarily constitutes a piece of metaphysical thinking itself" (Lowe 2002: 4). In the context of our discussion, this would mean that Carnap's approach is also arbitrary, just like the metaphysical one, which will be shown in more detail below.

10 As is well known, Carnap will make a concession when it comes to the entities of atomistic ontology, attributing to them the character of mathematical ones (See Carnap 1975). However, it can be said that this adoption of a neutral position concerning a particular class of entities, regardless of its specificity, does not seem particularly enlightening, at least from the current perspective, and in this particular case it seems more like avoidance than tackling the problem it poses. With this in mind, I will assume that the same conditions that Carnap has set in general apply to recognizing the reality of entities such as molecules or electrons, and below I will show that such an interpretation is acceptable.

other hand, even if no one questioned this necessity that we suspect to characterize atomistic ontology, it would in no way diminish the *necessity of its theoretical grounding*, and the methods available to traditional metaphysicians prove to be inferior in this respect to the method derived from Quine's position, as shall be seen in more detail below. With all this in mind, it seems that the only way to fulfil intuitions in this regard, or to *place them on appropriate theoretical grounds*, would be to follow Quine's position, i.e., Quine's naturalism as I interpret it. However, since it turns out in the end that intuitions are those that carry a considerable weight in my argument, there is a danger here again that the position I argue for in my interpretation of Quine's approach proves to be close to metaphysical ones, and thus devoid of grounds on which to give it priority.

7. The role of intuitions in metatheoretical discussions

Therefore, what puts Quine's position on a par with metaphysical ones, so to speak, and thus allows Schaffer his criticism, are Quine's theses on the fundamentality of the entities of physics and on physics as the best science we have. On the other hand, by distinguishing views that consistently arise from a particular theoretical position from those that do not, I have *freed this position from these theses* and reached the conclusion that, when it comes to Quine's naturalism, one can consistently speak only of the (ontological) view that attributes reality to a particular class of entities. However, since taking *certain* intuitions into account is, in addition to the rigorous method, even more responsible for the assumed *motivation* of Quine's approach,[11] one could object here to taking any intuition into account at all, as I noted above.

Namely, although it is almost generally accepted today that there is much more behind recognizing reality of atomistic ontology than mere intuitions – or, as Varzi would melancholically put it, referring to its content, "desert is real. It's out there and it's what it is regardless of how we feel" (Varzi 2014: 24) – there is no doubt that we can claim that molecules, atoms, and electrons are things in themselves only if we adopt the same method I criticize and try to free Quine's view from. In a word, it may be objected that intuitions I do not allow in metaphysical methods are now allowed in Quine's method, and referring to their strength will not be of great help since it seems that (neo-Aristotelian) intuitions about the world as an ordered structure are, if nothing else, at least as strong as those I have in mind in interpretation of Quine's method.[12] However, the problem is that it turns out that apart from intuition, we actually

11 Generally speaking, I believe that taking these intuitions into account in Quine's case is so crucial that I see no other reason why he would abandon his empiricist view and adopt a naturalistic one. In a word, it seems that Quine has increasingly seen the inadequacy or counterintuitiveness of Carnapian (conventionalist) position I drew attention to, which is why he decided to abandon it.

12 Moreover, Schaffer believes that this idea, or the traditional metaphysics that implies it, is "so tightly interwoven into the fabric of philosophy that it cannot be torn out

have no reason to believe that the world is *really* organized according to this model, and even if we had it, it is not clear how we could take a step that would logically have to precede the establishment of any hierarchy between classes, or as Schaffer puts it, categories of entities that would constitute it.

In other words, before we put forward a specific thesis that would support the Aristotelian model, we would have to find *a sufficiently convincing way of speaking both about the categories of entities that would constitute it and about their reality*, and this is again something that metaphysical views can provide only on insufficiently justified, pragmatic grounds. On the other hand, that this can be done *on theoretical grounds* using Quine's approach, although the aim is not to affirm this model, is evidenced by the fact that this approach does not have any specific preferences when it comes to our intuitions, but it is in line with only one of them – intuition about the reality of the entities of atomistic ontology.

Therefore, what distinguishes Quine's view from metaphysical ones is that by following Quine, we are not really obliged to *assume* any special intuitions; namely, Quine's approach *is not*, so to speak, *prescriptive in any sense*, which allows him to avoid the difficulties that traditional metaphysicians face and that are revealed in their views through quite a rudimentary critical activity.[13] However, it may seem that the neutrality I attribute to Quine's approach, and give preference to it over metaphysical approaches based on it is even more marked in the case of Carnap's conventionalism, so that of those offered, Carnap's method would actually be the one able to neutralize completely the influence that our preconceptions or intuitions could have in this type of research.

In other words, if we assume that intuitions are insufficiently grounded preconceptions that corrupt metaphysical programs, given that Quine's method, although it does not imply them, *ultimately entails them*, it seems that in the end we would have to seek refuge in Carnap's conventionalism. However, the difficulty here is that it is assumed that we adopt conceptual frameworks motivated not by theoretical, but by pragmatic reasons.

Namely, seeing theories as different linguistic frameworks we use to speak about objects, "as more or less convenient ways of speaking about these objects",

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without the whole tapestry unravelling" (Schaffer 2009: 373), which he will justify, *inter alia*, by arguing that even an approach such as Quine's requires referring to it.

13 Although in the end Quine justifies a particular propositional attitude such as belief in the reality of a particular class of entities, given that this was not initially his position, as we have seen, or the position that he would *necessarily* argue for when the conditions are met, it is not obvious how any of the usual objections to metaphysical views, such as, primarily, uncritical adoption of the assumption that we have direct access to the objects of our knowledge would also affect his view. In other words, it seems that the only way to criticize that view, as I have noted above, would be to *criticize the postulates on which it is based*, that is, Quine's empiricism. However, although this would be possible in the broadest (philosophical) sense, this fact would in no way lead to the reaffirmation of neo-Aristotelian approaches, while Quine's approach would maintain the comparative advantage of allowing us to place at least one strong belief or intuition we have *on theoretical grounds*.

Carnap believes that they are "not subject to theoretical, but only pragmatic assessment" (Lazović 2007: 20), which is why we are not guided by theoretical, but pragmatic reasons when adopting them. However, since it is difficult to imagine a sufficiently pragmatic reason that we would stick to on that occasion and which would be in conflict with our intuitions, it follows that, even in an approach such as Carnap's, it is still necessary to refer to some intuitions.

In fact, when we speak about the neutrality of Carnap's (meta)theoretical position, this neutrality seems to be inversely proportional to the degree of intuition involved in the decision to adopt a *particular* conceptual framework, or that by adopting a framework that conflicts with our intuitions, it will increase, and when it is in line with them, it will decline. However, if we assume that adopting a framework is *always in line with certain intuitions* – and it seems that we have to, if we already accepted the thesis that it is motivated by *pragmatic reasons* – we should note that this fact greatly undermines the supposedly *strong theoretical aspect* of Carnap's method, and in fact makes it, if not neo-Aristotelian, then certainly very close to metaphysical programs.[14]

8. Sorted (ontological) structure and eliminativism

Therefore, what gives Quine's approach priority over neo-Aristotelian approaches is that in Quine's case, we are not obliged to assume any intuitions in advance, but only to acknowledge them later. On the other hand, although Carnap's method has the same feature, the problem is that once we do that (acknowledge our intuitions), this fact will devalue the assumed strong grounding or neutrality of the position from which we have done that. Taking all this into account, and aside from the recognition that in debates of this kind some appeal to intuitions is ultimately unavoidable, we may conclude that, among the available options, Quine's method is the one to which we must finally adhere. However, we should have in mind that, in addition to atomistic ontology, this adherence would result in the establishment of another ontology, and to show this, it would be good to return to Schaffer's interpretation of Quine's approach.

As I have noted several times, Schaffer argues that Quine's metaphysical structure is ultimately flat, justifying this thesis by the assumption of the eliminative character of Quine's method. On the other hand, I argue that, as we have seen above, eliminativism can be attributed to Quine only if we adopt the theses from which I freed Quine's naturalism. However, since at this point of my discussion, the entities of physics are still the only ones that are able to

14 Since I said in the previous section that Carnap's approach is counterintuitive, and now that it is always in line with intuitions, there may seem to be some inconsistency or even contradiction in my interpretation. However, I believe that it is not my interpretation, but Carnap's approach *itself* that is contradictory, primarily because the question arises as to how we can demand a special criterion such as the one that Carnap demanded of metaphysicians or, better yet, what would constitute its distinctive content if we are *de facto* guided by the same reasons as they are in adopting conceptual frameworks or theories, *viz.* pragmatic reasons.

move from the realm of posits to the realm of reality, despite all my efforts, it seems that if nothing else, at least Schaffer's judgment on the type of metaphysical (ontological) structure that we come across in Quine's work is correct.

In other words, although Schaffer's arguments may not be convincing enough to persuade us to abandon Quine's program and return to neo-Aristotelian (metaphysical) programs, since the only thing we can claim by adopting it is the existence of a particular *class* of entities, given the specificity of this class, it seems that eliminativism necessarily follows from Quine's method, with or without metaphysical preconceptions. However, it is precisely the strong eliminativist tendency or characteristic of the one we have established that convinces me of the necessity of formulating another ontology.

It is, of course, ontology of common sense or the level that concerns translation in Quine's work, and whose entities would thus be eliminated in favour of the entities of physics. Yet the fact that they nonetheless form a distinct class is evident from the consideration that, according to the view we follow—and which, as we have argued, is the best available—such entities may vary from one conceptual framework to another. This means that in recognizing the atomic level, we are also compelled to acknowledge the common-sense level as real. In a word, although affected by Quine's theses on underdetermination of theories, indeterminacy of translation, and inscrutability of reference, we are obliged by the eliminativist character of the ontology we have established to treat common sense entities, or more precisely, *the class they constitute* as transtheoretical and therefore *as real*, which would ultimately make ontological structure that follows from Quine's method *sorted*, in my view, instead of strictly flat one.

9. Consequences of Quine's approach: Concluding remarks

Therefore, although by adopting Quine's method we cannot assume that entities such as people, houses, chairs, and tables exist in the same way that atoms, electrons, and molecules exist – i.e. *independently of any conceptual framework or theory* – once we establish the latter, it seems that the former will also *form a class* characterized by a transtheoretical character, and therefore, by *reality*. On the other hand, it is important to note that in this case, as in the previous one, we did not have to assume this class in advance, or to argue in its favour *in order to put forward some kind of ontological thesis*, but only to follow through the consequences of the method we have previously adopted on what I hope to be convincing grounds.[15]

15 It is important to note that, with the exception of Quine's contribution, establishment of this class would also be either poorly grounded theoretically or, as in Carnap's case, this establishment would be in conflict with our even stronger intuitions, which is certain when it comes to it. In this regard, even if I was wrong about Carnap's approach when I attributed to him the view concerning the entities of atomistic ontology that he did not advocate in reality, I can justify it now by referring to the way I established common sense ones, which does not presuppose the adoption of any conceptual framework or theory – just as our intuitions dictate.

In other words, adopting Quine's method, provided that we have made appropriate modifications to it such as introducing certain constraints that are in our opinion justified, enables us not only to establish on solid ground two different categories of entities, but it seems that the image we would get in this way would, at least in rough outline, correspond to today's prevailing (ontological) intuitions. However, even more important in the context of the current discussion is that this would necessarily result in a significantly different and, in my view, more tenable interpretation of the concepts that Schaffer speaks about, as well as a whole new set of consequences that it would entail.

Namely, while Schaffer believes that flat and sorted structures are weaker than ordered ones, as I have shown above, I argue that the strongest of them is actually the sorted one. This means that, contrary to Schaffer's view, both the flat one I now attribute to Carnap, and the ordered structure that metaphysicians stick to would actually depend on the sorted structure I attribute to Quine, primarily because, regardless of whether we intend to order them, it would be justified to expect forming or differentiation of classes of entities that only Quine's method allows *in a non-trivial manner*. On the other hand, such interpretation would have, in addition to the formal level, equally important consequences in terms of content, because if we decided to take this step, the only order that would *also be valid* would imply ordering primarily those categories that Quine's method enabled us to establish. However, since this would require a revival of the metaphysical way of thinking, which no longer has a place in this constellation, it seems that to establish any order against the backdrop of Quine's (metatheoretical) position would be impossible, and sorted ontological structure that would imply the two above categories of entities is the best we can hope for at this point. However, I believe that certain important lessons could be learned from this manoeuvre, which is why we will allow it, contingently speaking, to the metaphysician.

First of all, it should be noted that the process of ordering of the above categories would imply referring to *a kind of* essentialism, which would in one case mean *to Platonism* that gives priority to common sense with its assumption of eternal and unchangeable forms (*universals*), and in the other *to scientific essentialism* that should do so with entities at the atomic level. However, although from today's perspective scientific essentialism seems to be a more plausible option, the problem is that, *against the backdrop of Quine's method*, this essentialism is possible *only if a view that would neutralize indeterminacy at the level of common sense is possible*. Without intending to use it as a basis for favouring Platonism, this is evidence, in my view, that *if we were to search for some ontological priority*, we could find it only at the level of common sense, and that our prospects in this respect do not have to be quite so grim. This could be evidenced by the following line of argument.

Namely, we have seen that, from the perspective of Quine's method as I interpret it, the level of common sense does not really concern entities, but primarily *a particular class of entities*, which means that, even before indeterminacy, it is also characterized by unstructuredness, or inordinacy, so to

speak. In this regard, if we were to succeed in putting forward a thesis aimed at neutralizing this inordinacy, it seems that we would thus neutralize indeterminacy too, after which entities at the atomic level could only be treated as *paraphrases* of entities at the common sense level, and not *vice versa*. However, for such a thesis to have value in this context, it would have to be *transtheoretical*, that is, it would have to be an *idea* of an *a priori structure* of thought, and so the question is to what extent, if at all, it would be tenable. However, the fact that would be in its favour is that, strictly speaking, it would not be a metaphysical, but the epistemological thesis, thus avoiding the problems that metaphysicians face in this constellation, while entities at the common sense level – in addition to the epistemic priority that already belongs to them, and thanks to which the thesis could only refer to them – would also be provided with a certain ontological priority over the entities at the atomic level.

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Miloš Bogdanović

Metafizičke strukture i holizam: Odgovor Šeferu

Apstrakt

Ovaj rad bavi se Šeferovom razlikom između metafizičkih struktura, kao i njegovim pozivom na oživljavanje neoaristotelovskih pristupa koji podrazumevaju uređenu strukturu, zasnovanih na kritici Kvajnove metode koja, po njegovom mišljenju, implicira ravnu metafizičku strukturu. Ipak, iako smatram da je Šeferova razlika između metafizičkih struktura zanimljivo i, u osnovi, prihvatljivo stanovište, pokušaću da pokažem da Šeferovi argumenti nisu dovoljno uverljivi da bi nas naveli da napustimo Kvajnovu metodu i prihvatimo aristotelovski metafizički model. Štaviše, kada se isprave greške koje Šefer pravi i Kvajnova metoda dobije pažnju koju zaslužuje, videćemo da to može omogućiti potpunije tumačenje pojmova o kojima Šefer govori (metafizičkih struktura), ali i – kao u njegovom slučaju – izvođenje određenih zaključaka koji prevazilaze same ciljeve klasifikacije.

Ključne reči: ravna, razvrstana, uređena metafizička (ontološka) struktura, Kvajn, Šefer, Karnap, intuicije, ontologija, metafizika

III

REVIEWS

PRIKAZI

DANIEL TUTT, *HOW TO READ LIKE A PARASITE: WHY THE LEFT GOT HIGH ON NIETZSCHE*, LONDON: REPEATER BOOKS, 2024.

Milan Urošević

The intellectual output of leftist thinkers after the 2008 financial crisis has been marked not only by a revival of Marxism but also by a critical reckoning with post-structuralist authors. Thinkers such as Deleuze and Foucault have for years been subject to scrutiny and reevaluation of their legacies and their influence on critiques of capitalist society and visions of emancipation. More recently, another figure has come under the spotlight of leftist scholars in the humanities and social sciences: Friedrich Nietzsche. This renewed attention stems, in part, from Nietzsche's significant influence on post-structuralist thought. The book in question draws inspiration from previous critical readings of Nietzsche by thinkers like Domenico Losurdo and Jan Rehmann.

Tutt approaches Nietzsche from a critical and historical standpoint, primarily aiming to demonstrate his fundamental incompatibility with leftist thought and emancipatory politics. He sets out to demystify what he calls the "hermeneutics of innocence" in Nietzsche studies – approaches that intentionally overlook the more troubling aspects of Nietzsche's thought in order to portray him as an apolitical thinker. For Tutt, Nietzsche must be read historically, not as a timeless sage, but as a product of his era, an author engaged with the socio-political issues of his time.

Tutt argues that Nietzsche should be understood first and foremost as an enemy of socialism. He positions Nietzsche's philosophy as a reaction to the rise of the working class and socialist politics in the 19th century. According to Tutt, Nietzsche's thought is infused with a radical anti-egalitarianism and an aristocratic ideology that champions the intensification of social hierarchies and opposes movements aimed at their dissolution. Central to Tutt's reading is the idea that Nietzsche must be reckoned with as a formidable adversary to leftist and Marxist thought – an intellectual opponent who must be understood and confronted in order to build a truly progressive political project.

Yet the book is more than a philosophical critique. In the introduction, Tutt shares his personal journey of discovering Nietzsche in his youth. He describes how Nietzsche sparked his interest in philosophy and draws a parallel between his own youthful infatuation with Nietzsche and the broader allure Nietzsche has held for the left. The metaphor of "getting high" is deliberate: in

his early twenties, Tutt was captivated by Nietzsche's thought and adopted it uncritically. He compares this to the way leftist intellectuals embraced post-structuralism and Nietzsche, before many turned toward Marxism in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. Now, Tutt returns to Nietzsche to reassess him from a Marxist standpoint and asks what Nietzsche means to us today.

Chapters two through four form a sustained analysis of Nietzsche's political project. Tutt argues that the core of Nietzsche's philosophy lies not in his moral, metaphysical, or aesthetic writings, but in his political intentions. Through concepts like the "pathos of distance", "perspectivism", and *otium*, Tutt presents Nietzsche as a thinker fundamentally opposed to the egalitarian aims of socialist movements. Nietzsche's political project, according to Tutt, sought to establish a new form of radical aristocracy, where the suffering, austerity, and mediocrity of the masses would create the conditions for a minority of "free spirits" to flourish. For Tutt, this vision represents a precursor to "accelerationism" – an ideology, found in both left and right variants, that advocates pushing capitalist dynamics to their extremes, including deepening social inequalities.

In chapter five, Tutt examines how leftist thinkers have appropriated Nietzsche in their theoretical and political work. He seeks to show the fundamental incompatibility between Nietzsche's and Marx's worldviews, warning of the risks involved in relying on Nietzschean thought for leftist theory. He illustrates this with the example of American writer and socialist activist Jack London, who attempted to reinterpret Nietzsche by casting workers as the "noble rulers" Nietzsche envisioned. Tutt contends that this appropriation ultimately led London to blur class and race distinctions, adopt social Darwinist views of class struggle, and develop racist attitudes.

Chapters six and seven examine Nietzschean concepts, which Tutt considers ideological tools for legitimizing capitalist society. In chapter six, he focuses on the concept of "eternal recurrence", contrasting it with Marx's thought. Tutt argues that eternal recurrence can be interpreted as a philosophical justification for capitalist domination and as a rejection of revolution, which Nietzsche viewed as an attempt to erase social differences. Nietzsche, according to Tutt, offered a perspective that legitimized cruelty and domination by elites in order to suppress the "moral tarantula" of egalitarianism that was spreading across Europe in his time.

Chapter seven centers on Nietzsche's concept of "ressentiment". This chapter is notable because Tutt argues that this concept should be rejected entirely. He believes that adopting this term leads to an ontologization of ressentiment, effectively dismissing entire social groups as irredeemably trapped in this mindset. For Tutt, this hinders the formation of solidarity and the building of emancipatory movements. While bold, this chapter makes some conceptual leaps: Tutt overlooks the potential usefulness of the concept of ressentiment as a tool for ideological critique. It can be used to analyze the discursive mechanisms through which individuals justify their social positions by appealing to moral narratives. Tutt does not sufficiently explore why using the term must necessarily essentialize ressentiment and prevent us from seeing it as something that can be overcome.

In the final chapter, Tutt calls for a "parasitic" reading of Nietzsche. He acknowledges that Nietzsche is an unavoidable opponent for the left but also a revealing symptom. Nietzsche's epistemology and ideological stance are, in Tutt's view, fundamentally incompatible with leftist politics, and his appeal among the left is a symptom that can teach us something about the left's

condition since the mid-20th century. By reading Nietzsche parasitically, we can develop new intellectual tools to revitalize leftist theory. Tutt does not advocate discarding Nietzsche altogether; rather, he calls for learning from him. As he remarked in an interview, Nietzsche should be "moved from the driver's seat to the passenger's seat" in the vehicle of leftist thought – still present, but no longer steering.

Ultimately, *How to Read Like a Parasite* is not written for a narrowly academic audience. It is aimed at a broader public and stands as a notable example of an engaged social theory. Through a deft combination of personal reflection and historically grounded critique, Tutt guides readers deep into Nietzsche's philosophy, enacting a Nietzschean "philosophizing with a hammer" that shatters the idealized myths surrounding the thinker. The book is marked by Tutt's deep ambivalence toward Nietzsche: a mix of fascination with his ideas and awareness of the deeply reactionary core of his political vision. Tutt resolves this ambivalence by treating Nietzsche as an adversary – a figure who must be reckoned with if we are to advance our own thought. For all its Marxist grounding, *How to Read Like a Parasite* is, above all, a Nietzschean analysis of Nietzsche.

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