

SIMON HADDINI, MARKO MIOČIĆ (UR.)

ILUZIJA

FILOZOFIJA SVOBODE, BOJA IN UPORA



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Iluzija: filozofija svobode, boja in upora

Odgovorna urednika: *Simon Hajdini in Marko Miočič*

Izvršni urednik: *Kozma Prelevič*

Uredniški odbor: *Marko Miočič, Kozma Prelevič, Zigi Omerzel, Sofija Ivandič*

Recenzenti: *Primož Krašovec, Aljoša Kravanja, Maja Malec, Gregor Moder, Vojko Strahovnik*

Študenti uredniki (prvi pregled): *Lan Letnar, Jakob Remškar, Jana Frank, Gal Šmajš, Manja Praček, Erik Klinc, Pino Hiti Ožinger, Bruno Šonc*

Prevajalca: *Kozma Prelevič, Jefimija Vukičević*

Lektura slovenskih besedil: *Marko Miočič*

Lektura angleških besedil: *Kozma Prelevič*

Slika na naslovnici: *Zigi Omerzel*

Oblikovanje in prelom: *Jure Preglau*

Založila: Založba Univerze v Ljubljani

Za založbo: Gregor Majdič, rektor Univerze v Ljubljani

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Uvodnik / Introduction

Kozma Prelević, Marko Miočić

The present volume of *Iluzija*, titled *Struggle, Freedom, and Resistance*, offers a collection of student works spanning ethics, political philosophy, cultural analysis, and logic. The volume is a collaboration between Slovenian philosophy students from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana, and Serbian students from the philosophy faculties in Niš, Novi Sad, and Belgrade. The issue came to be through several months of intensive collaborations between Ljubljana's Student Philosophical Society (Študentsko filozofsko društvo, ŠFD) and several student philosophy organizations from Serbia, most notably Belgrade's Noesis and Sizif from Novi Sad. Over the course of planning, publicizing, and editing the journal, the editorial board based in Ljubljana worked closely with Serbian authors and organizers, with ŠFD representatives organizing workshops and meetings with Serbian students.

This collaboration was prompted by the ongoing protests in Serbia. Since November 2024, our Serbian colleagues have been blockading their universities, demonstrating, occupying public spaces, and organizing protests. From the outset, the students have been clear in their demands: transparency regarding the 1 November 2024 canopy collapse in Novi Sad that killed fourteen people, and a call to State institutions to begin "doing their job" in accordance with the national constitution. Despite significant popular support, historic protest turnouts, and dedication to the cause, as of September 2025 the majority of student demands remain unfulfilled. Despite the usual rhetorical vacillations, symbolic firings,

and posturing, the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) appear to have closed ranks, seemingly confident in their ability to outlast, quash, or otherwise outlive the student movement. After nearly a year of struggle, Serbian universities have reached an uneasy compromise regarding enrollments, a truncated examination schedule, and hybrid last-minute tuitions, all of which resulted in the first substantial easing of total blockades since the movement's inception. The students themselves appear to retain their resolve in spite of mounting fatigue and uncertainty. Though the oldest and most crucial of their demands remain open, the student movement has catalyzed a remarkable degree of political mobilization among the general population, appearing to unite disparate groups in a univocal demand for accountability.

There was tension underlying the production of this volume of *Iluzija*—an ambivalent relationship to the student blockades in Serbia, which reached their height during the Spring and Summer of 2025. This ambivalence was first visible structurally: the blockades and the broader student movement were the primary motivation for establishing collaboration with Serbian colleagues, presenting the opportunity to gain an understanding of the kind of theories of politics and power that inform the student movement. The media valorization of the movement has heretofore focused on the movement's practical and strategic achievements, from time spent in blockades to mass protests, but little to no attention has been paid to the theoretical work of students, either individually or as a whole.

Nonetheless, it was these same blockades and movement that occupied many prospective authors and organizers to the point of occasionally frustrating the process of completing this volume. Translators became indisposed, authors got caught up in political struggles, and the political expediency of publishing such a volume was under perpetual scrutiny. The purpose of relating these facts is not to air grievances, nor is it to sulk petulantly about this relatively mild adversity. Rather, it is to illustrate a dual allegiance that the advent of the movement instilled in the students, a dissonance inherent to the subjective experience of such political events throughout history. To borrow a concept from the late Bassel al-Araj, the students find themselves in a situation which necessitates exiting from law and entering revolution, and this transition poses deep questions about what is to be retained and what is to be discarded.

This brings us to the second level of ambivalence, this time pertaining to the contents of this volume. We invited our Slovenian and Serbian colleagues to contribute philosophical works on the given topic without stipulating any requirements to engage with current events. This edition should therefore not be read

as a compendium on the student blockades in Serbia, however, nor should it be seen as a collection of texts completely unrelated to them. After all, ideas of freedom, struggle, and resistance cannot be seen as tied to a concrete geographical and historical moment, and yet, it is only in these concrete moments that they are made manifest. Even so, navigating between direct commentary and abstract speculation brought into the editorial process a tension which has haunted student movements since '68—the dialectic of theory and praxis.

Amidst all this actionism, there was nonetheless a conspicuous absence of solid critical reflection. Despite a massive amount of reporting on the subject, theoretical analyses of the student movement are few and far between. Moreover, when we exclude opinion pieces by political pundits and professors, material produced by those in the midst of the struggle is nearly impossible to come by. Despite being purposefully disruptive to the established order of knowledge production, the blockades of Serbian universities are neither ignorant nor anti-academic—a great deal of critique, literature, and art is and continues to be produced within the student bases. And yet, most of this production is internal and hence geared toward an audience of comrades, usually extending no farther than the walls of the institution occupied.

As philosophers, we maintain the necessity of critical theoretical reflection in not only correctly evaluating the character and tendencies of any social formation, but in disrupting it. With this edition of *Iluzija*, though certainly not representative of the movement in its totality, we have attempted to take insights, systemic reflections, and ideological critiques beyond the barricades and into university's ivory tower so as to affirm the strength of theory and, hopefully, demonstrate its capacity for triggering practical change.

Ljubljana, september 2025

Resistance, Disillusionment, Exiting: The Process of Individual Praxis of Resistance

Dimitrije Golubović

Povzetek

Prispevek oriše lok individualne prakse odpora od njenega vznika do končnih posledic. Poudarek je na posamezniku v njegovem odnosu do širšega družbenega konteksta. V prvem delu opredelimo koncept upora, ki ga nato analiziramo v filozofskih okvirih Nozickovega miselnega eksperimenta in njegove kritike pri Adamu Kolberju, pri čemer avtor uvede koncepta »razčaranja« in »izstopa«. Članek je zasnovan kot splošen oris individualnega delovanja znotraj upora.

Ključne besede: upor, individualno delovanje, Robert Nozick, Adam Kolber, izkustveni stroj

Summary

The paper traces the arc of an individual praxis of resistance from its inception to its final consequences. The focus is on the individual, as well as her relationship with the wider social context. In the first part, the concept of resistance is defined, followed by an analysis through the philosophical framework of Nozick's thought experiment and Adam Kolber's reformulation of it, wherein the terms "disillusionment" and "exiting" are introduced. The second part focuses on the collective aspect of "exiting", on its structure and the challenges which they present. The paper is conceived as a general outline of individual praxis within resistance.

Keywords: resistance, individual action, Robert Nozick, Adam Kolber, experience machine

hoće li sloboda umeti da peva
 kao što su sužnji pevali o njoj
 – Branko Miljković¹

Resistance and Individual Praxis

The role of the individual during broad social resistance carries with it a host of contradictions. Personal motivation, the means of support, as well as particular expectations regarding the outcome can vary greatly among those engaged within the same movement. The aim of this article is to propose one possible view of individual praxis through an analogy with Kolber's version of the thought experiment known as "the experience machine."

As *resistance* and *individual praxis* are concepts central to our exploration, it is necessary to first define them. As the paper does not focus on one particular type of resistance and is instead concerned with a broad spectrum of similar phenomena, we will utilize Jack Goldstone's definition of *revolution*. Although Goldstone insists that the three definitional criteria he highlights converge to *revolution*, we hold that the sheer scope of the definition more appropriately describes *resistance*. This alternative terminology is at once motivated by the claim that Goldstone's definition is over-compliant, as well as a practical consideration. *Revolution* is a concept fraught with possible misinterpretations that would only serve to muddy the waters in an article primarily concerned with the individual experiential components of general social resistance. Hence, *pace* Goldstone, the key points of *resistance* are:

- (a) Efforts to change the political regime that draw on a competing vision (or visions) of a just order, (b) a notable degree of informal or formal mass mobilization, and (c) efforts to force change through noninstitutionalized actions such as mass demonstrations, protests, strikes, or violence.²

Each of these points will be important for the further development of this article. The first point referring to competing visions of a just order will be crucial in speaking about the individual process of *exiting*, as well as its two-phase structure. The second point pertaining to mass mobilization will be relevant to the discussion of the relation between the individual and the collective praxis within

1 Branko Miljković, "Poeziju će svi pisati," in *Vatra i ništa*, p. 316; "will freedom itself sing / as slaves have sung of it" – trans. Aleksandra Milanović.

2 Jack A. Goldstone, "Toward a Fourth Generation of Revolutionary Theory," p. 142.

resistance. However, the points concerning solely individual praxis remain even in the case where there is no mass mobilization. The importance of the third point regarding non-institutionalized actions lies in its claim that resistance is not necessarily a violent practice. The struggle of the Serbian students is an excellent example of a movement which falls under *resistance* without being based on the violent overthrow of the regime. Moreover, the definition places emphasis on extra-institutional praxis, which, for the purposes of this article, will predominantly refer to an individual's experience of *their actions as extra-institutional*.

A concept of resistance is key for understanding the individual within it. Given the scope of the definition of resistance, as well as the sheer multiplicity of modes of possible praxis, this article will focus on a particular type of individual to whom the terms *disillusionment* and *exiting* apply. In short, *disillusionment* assumes a consciousness of one's participation in resistance, as well as an understanding of the significance of that resistance, while *exiting* signifies one's dedicated practice within a resistance at large. Accordingly, the article is concerned with the experience of individuals who risk their societal and material status by participating in resistance.

Using these terms, the following sections highlight connections to the philosophical framework of the article, subsequently unifying them to address the problem of the course of resistance on both the individual and collective levels.

The Philosophical Framework of the Problem: Nozick, and Kolber's Critique

The Experience Machine

In *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974), Robert Nozick formulated a thought experiment frequently referred to as *the experience machine*.³ The basic formulation has changed over time, and so for the purposes of this article I will use the following formulation provided in Nozick's *The Examined Life*: "Imagine a machine that could give you any experience (or sequence of experiences) you might desire. [...] You can live your fondest dreams 'from the inside'. Would you choose to do this for the rest of your life?"⁴

3 Lorenzo Buscicchi, "The Experience Machine."

4 Robert Nozick, *The Examined Life: Philosophical Meditations*, pp. 104–105. For the original formulation, cf. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 42–45.

The experience machine is most often employed as a critique of hedonism.⁵ Although the problem of hedonism is outside of the scope of this article, the thought experiment will still be of use to us, not least because of its structure. This structure confronts us with two alternatives: on the one hand, we have our current life, while on the other, we have a simulated life of our “fondest dreams,” a life more comfortable, happier, of higher quality, etc.

The setup of Nozick’s thought experiment is not without its flaws. Adam Kolber argues that the starting position of the thought experiment (our current life) is privileged by virtue of its being the *status quo*.⁶ In order to show the inherent bias in Nozick’s version of the experiment, Kolber suggested a reformulation which would highlight the unfairness of Nozick’s concept, calling it *the reverse experience machine* (REM).⁷

The REM and the Analogy to Individual Praxis

Kolber’s formulation is based on the following question: “Would you get off of an experience machine to which you are already connected?”⁸ The relation from Nozick’s question is reversed—simulated life is our *status quo*. It is precisely this simulated life that we actually live and which we have hitherto lived, the comforts of which are familiar to us, while the “real life” is alien to us. Departing from the current state exists in both formulations of the experiment, but in Kolber it comes at a cost to our quality of life, and its reward is exiting the simulation.

Kolber’s thought experiment can be connected with the problem of individual praxis of resistance through structural analogy. The simulated state in Kolber corresponds to inaction, while the non-simulated state of reality corresponds to praxis (of supporting the resistance). The first state can be compared with life whose comfort is derived, among other things, from a conscious or unconscious disengagement from the societal problems which are at the root of resistance, while the second state is akin to exiting from the first at the cost of risking one’s comfort, status, life, etc. A deeper awareness and consideration of societal problems, or an endangerment of one’s livelihood by the regime in the inactive

5 Buscicchi, “The Experience Machine.”

6 “The status quo bias is the phenomenon according to which subjects tend to irrationally prefer the status quo – that is, the way things currently are. In other words, when facing complex decision-making, subjects tend to follow the adage ‘when in doubt, do nothing’.” *Ibid*.

7 *Ibid*.

8 Adam J. Kolber, “Mental Statism and the Experience Machine”, p. 15.

(simulated) state may lead to one's participation in resistance (analogous to the non-simulated state).

The rationale for privileging Kolber's reformulation in building the analogy rests in the difference of the relations between the two states. While in Nozick departing from the (real) *status quo* immediately results in a simulation of "our fondest dreams," in Kolber this departure comes with risk and uncertainty. Similarly, the individual who supports resistance usually cannot know with certainty what the outcome of this resistance will be. On the other hand, the aim of resistance can be imagined in the context of Nozick's thought experiment as the immediate transition from the present state to a state which we aim to bring about through resistance.

Accordingly, on the individual level of resistance praxis we have a movement from the familiar toward the unfamiliar (per Kolber), as well as a movement from the familiar toward the desired (per Nozick). For the purposes of this article, we will mostly utilize the analogy to Kolbert and the REM, though it is important to bear in mind that in the context of resistance, behind the unfamiliar state of uncertainty there always lies an expectation of betterment, i.e., the realization of a desired state.

Disillusionment and Exiting

Differences in Comparison with REM

The key difference between the context of resistance and Kolber's thought experiment lies in the absence of a clear moment of exiting from the state of non-resistance. This difference arises from the very formulation of the thought experiment, where we are faced with a clear question: do we wish to exit or not? In the context of resistance, the situation is different—answering a question regarding our desired goals does not change the state of the world. We can imagine a person who supports resistance, i.e., answers affirmatively to the call to exit/resist, but does not wish to resist or support the resistance through praxis. Such a case would eschew the crucial component of risk from the analogy with Kolber's thought experiment. If there is no significant change in individual praxis, then there cannot be a transition from one state to the other. Due to the necessity to bring about the desired state of resistance through praxis, in the context of resistance there arises a collective aspect, which is not present in Kolber's thought experiment.

Disillusionment refers to one's support of the ideals of resistance as well as one's wish to resist. It signifies the will to risk one's position and comfort in support of resistance. In the context of the previous paragraph, it corresponds solely to answering the question—which, in terms of Kolber's thought experiment, is the only step that matters.

It is important to emphasize that disillusionment does not need to be factual. While the thought experiment clearly delineates simulation from reality, in the context of resistance we cannot say whether the ideals of resistance, or the problems which they address, are real. The question of disillusionment is one of personal experience and does not stand for an objective measure. Someone can risk their comfort in support of resistance based on false assumptions, imaginary events, intentionally false propaganda, etc. These conditions do not change the nature of the act—disillusionment takes place in these scenarios. The transition into the social context erases the clear line of demarcation between the “true” and the “false/simulated,” replacing it with a border between a lack of consciousness of societal problems and the risks of opposing them.

On the other hand, *exiting* is the process of praxis in the service of resistance, both on the level of the individual, and in the broader social context. While disillusionment represents providing an affirmative answer to the question of resistance, exiting designates praxis meant to bring about its desired state. As already emphasized, the exiting from the “simulated” state of non-resistance depends on many factors, with one of them being personal praxis. Therefore, a person who decides to take on the risk inherent in supporting the resistance is disillusioned, while her very practical support of it represents exiting. An individual act continues to grow into a collective process. The desired state of resistance cannot be brought about on a purely individual level. Here, it's important to emphasize the connection to Nozick's version of the thought experiment. Praxis within resistance tends toward the desired state, i.e., a state which is in accordance with the ideals of the resistance. To further clarify this term, we can imagine the following example: a person who works for a government agency decides to support the resistance (an act of disillusionment). Following this decision, she begins participating in demonstrations, providing financial support, taking on organizational work, etc. (the process of exiting).

Disillusionment and exiting do not need to be directly connected. We can imagine a person who operates under the auspices of resistance but does not adhere to its ideals (e.g., pursues personal monetary interest), as well as a person who supports the ideals of resistance but acts in opposition to it (e.g., because of coercion

or blackmail). This article focuses on those individuals who transition from disillusionment into exiting, thus acting on their desire to participate in resistance.

The Two Phases of Exiting

Since exiting designates a process, it is important to emphasize its beginning and its end, as well as its main phases. Considering that exiting is both an individual and a collective process, each of these points can be viewed from two perspectives. The beginning of exiting on the individual level differs from person to person. However, on the collective level, the beginning can be designated as either the first act of individual praxis or as a significant event that marked the start of resistance. In the case of the university blockades in Serbia, we could say that the blockade of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts was the inaugural act of collective exiting, preceded by individual praxis.⁹

When speaking of collective exiting, we mean the process of realizing the desired state of resistance. In this sense, exiting on the societal level is closer to Nozick's thought experiment as it lacks individual risk (which is an essential aspect of Kolber's version). On the individual level, the end of exiting represents the end of one's praxis of resistance. The duration of an individual's praxis can be an important factor in the risk to which that person exposes herself to. Accordingly, we can say that the individual has transitioned from one state into the other, but that the outcome of such a transition varies across individuals due to variance in extent of support given and associated risk involved. The termination of individual praxis need not correspond to a termination of resistance: it may come before as in the event of a violent ending, a resignation from resistance, the belief it is no longer warranted; or it may come after as in the cases of individuals believing that the struggle is not yet complete, the goals not yet realized, etc. Therefore, personal praxis depends on an individual sense of resistance and its possibilities, as well as on broader circumstances.

The difference between the individual, societal and intended aim of exiting is of crucial importance for the resistance itself. To illustrate this, let us once again take the example of the Serbian students and their struggle. The intended end lies with the meeting of the movement's stated demands. The conditions for a societal end are thus presently known to us, while the individual ending may come at any point. For instance, we can imagine a person who believes that the battle is doomed to defeat and has hence given up. Moreover, in the case of the

9 "Koji su sve fakulteti u blokadi?," *Danas*, 10 December 2024.

societal ending, there exists a danger that the anticipated end of the resistance may shift from the fulfillment of the student demands to the overthrowing of the current system, in which case the conditions for termination may be met at a different time.¹⁰

Concerning the problem of a premature ending, as well as the expectations of a resistance, it is vital to highlight the structure of exiting. In general, there are two main phases. The first phase is destructive and seen in the overturning of the existing social system or of the conditions which led to the problems which the resistance seeks to resolve. The second phase is creative and aims at creating a new system, one in line with the ideals and goals of resistance. It is precisely its two-phase character which poses one of the main challenges to the praxis of resistance—the threat of a premature ending.

Challenges

Although the two phases are deeply connected, it is common for one phase to be neglected in favor of the other. Since the horizon of each of the two is so broad, focusing on one often comes close to entirely eclipsing the other. Hence, during the first phase, where the aim is to overturn the present system, it is easy to think that this is the only or at least the most important goal, whereby the difficulty with which this goal is achieved serves to emphasize its importance. To use a banal sports analogy: to defeat the best team in a tournament semifinals does not guarantee the title, though the game itself may have been the greatest obstacle to victory. Moreover, the fact that the context of a resistance is a matter of broad social masses presents a significant challenge to conserving the *élan* of exiting during this transition from one phase into the other.

Although our initial definition of resistance explicitly emphasized the goals of the second phase (“a competing vision (or visions) of a just order”), we can very well imagine a social movement which identifies the key societal problems and urges for their resolution without providing concrete solutions. In the case of the Serbian student struggle, the student demands represent the aims of the second phase, while without them, and without anything else in their place, the struggle would be nonexistent. An excellent illustration of the second phase is to be found in the following description:

10 The significance of such a shift can also be glimpsed in the scenario which made the rounds before the big student protest in Belgrade. Cf. Mirjana Milenković, “Zašto Vučić jedini protura scenario da je subota, 15. mart, dan D za Srbiju?,” *Danas*, 11 March 2025.

Gradually, the labor movement achieved its stated goal: it was a purely political aim: election law reform. [...] *The workers had no specific wishes as to how exactly the parliament ought to be reformed*: what is important is that they no longer trusted what was then the “unreformed” parliament.¹¹

If the social struggle has definite aims for the second phase, or ideals from which these aims could be derived, its success will depend on whether it is able to sustain the overall societal *élan*, i.e., whether it can maintain the individual exitings. If a great number of individuals were to believe that resistance has ended with the completion of the first phase, which puts an end to their exiting, the chances of societal reform in line with the stated goals would diminish. On the other hand, an overdependence on the process of reform during the first phase can also lead to its failure, i.e., to a failure to subvert the current state of society.

If the overcoming of such challenges is important to the success of a resistance, the question arises: how can they be surmounted? On the individual level, the answer is to be found in the awareness of two separate, almost contradictory phases, which must be realized. From the outset, the overthrowing of the social order ought to be treated not as the end of the entire resistance, but as the completion of only one part of exiting. Moreover, when speaking of reform, we must be aware of the conditions necessary for its realization. Only in this way can we be sure to facilitate the necessary praxis of resistance. On the societal level, the answer to the question depends on a multitude of individuals. Therefore, a precise solution is a practical sociological problem of how to spread awareness of the significance of both phases of praxis of resistance as widely as possible. Considering that exiting is also a collective process, any solution to the challenges of the two-phase structure must be articulated on the collective level, while acknowledging that the praxis of the individual is an essential part of that collective. Though Kolber's thought experiment provides the basis and the terminology for analyzing the problem of individual praxis, it offers no clear solution for fully understanding the complexities of the collective aspect, as it only becomes present in the real-life context of resistance.

However, an answer to the question posed in the opening lines of this paper can be formulated: freedom will know to sing as the slave sang of it only if the slave manage to end the collective process of exiting. As such, every individual act of disillusionment must have as its aim the process in its entirety.

11 Slobodan Jovanović, *Primeri političke sociologije: Engleska, Francuska, Nemačka (1815–1914)*, p. 31. Emphasis my own.

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Jünger's Concept of Revolution: The Worker and Strategies of Societal Change

Igor Živković

Povzetek

Članek preučuje analizo družbenih sprememb, kot je podana v knjigi *Delavec* Ernsta Jüngerja, pri čemer se osredotoča na dialektiko med buržoazijo in delavskim razredom. Članek skozi kritično branje Jüngerjevega pojmovnega okvira raziskuje načine, kako meščanski red s sredstvi vrednot in institucij omejuje radikalno transformativno moč delavstva. Glavni poudarek članka je na mehanizmih, ki ohranjajo hegemonijo posebnega načina mišljenja, in na možnostih njegovega preseganja. Izhajajoč iz Jüngerjeve teze, da resnične spremembe terjajo radikalno zavrnitev obstoječih paradigem, nato analiziramo njegovo pojmovanje »postave« (*Gestalt*) kot ključne za razumevanje novega družbenega reda. Članek pokaže, da Jüngerjeva teorija, čeprav je nastala v specifičnem zgodovinskem kontekstu, ponuja relevanten okvir za razumevanje sodobnih oblik gospostva in možnosti njihove subverzije.

Ključne besede: Ernst Jünger, delavci, buržoazija, Gestalt, hegemonija, družbeni razredi

Summary

This article examines Ernst Jünger's analysis of societal change as presented in his work *The Worker*, with particular focus on the dialectic between the bourgeoisie and working class. Through a critical reading of Jünger's conceptual framework, we explore how the bourgeois order, through its values and institutions, constrains the radical transformative potential of the worker. The primary focus of the study is on the mechanisms that sustain the hegemony of a particular mode of thought and the possibilities for overcoming it.

Building on Jünger's thesis that genuine change requires a radical rejection of existing paradigms, we analyze his concept of "Gestalt" as a key notion for understanding a new social order. The article demonstrates how Jünger's theory, though developed in a specific historical context, provides a relevant framework for comprehending contemporary forms of domination and their potential subversion.

Keywords: Ernst Jünger, workers, bourgeoisie, Gestalt, hegemony, social classes

Introduction

In this article we aim to show where Ernst Jünger identifies the possibility of a new society and what is necessary to bring about real societal change. Our main goal is reconstructing Jünger's strategy for bringing about societal changes by focusing on the class dialectic as described in his most significant philosophical work, *The Worker* (*Der Arbeiter*).

Elliot Y. Neaman, one of the leading researchers on Jünger, notes that some post-war commentators saw this period in Jünger as Nietzschean, and therefore interpreted his early work as an expressionistic, juvenile rebellion against the moral hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie in the interwar period.¹ One can discern the influence of Nietzsche in Jünger's thought primarily through the motif of the revaluation of all values, an influence that will become more evident in the following chapter. Jünger made a significant contribution to the elucidation of the mechanisms of class domination, going well beyond the classical Marxist thesis. He shifted the focus from material domination, i.e., the exploitation of one class by another through control of capital and the means of production, to the underlying conceptual frameworks imposed by the dominant order. In *The Worker*, Jünger sees society as divided into two major classes, with a particular dialectic arising between them, where one debilitates the other, imposing its own categories upon it. Although Jünger never explicitly outlined his conception of dialectics, through a reconstruction of the processes described in the aforementioned work, we will attempt to shed light on what is at stake. In the context of the bourgeois order—where the prevailing classes are the bourgeoisie (*Bürger*) and the workers (*Arbeiter*)—the dominant features of society are the rule of reason and morality. These serve as filters through which much of what the worker *is* is mediated and redirected in ways that are unnatural to him. More specifically, the raw experience of the human being is directly steered in a direction that suits the interests of the

1 Elliot Y. Neaman, *A Dubious Past: Ernst Jünger and the Politics of Literature after Nazism*, p. 7.

bourgeois class, with the aim of preserving the existing order (an issue we will examine in greater detail later in this article).

Our thesis is that in *The Worker*, Jünger develops a distinctive dialectical conception of social transformation in which the oppressed class (as a new historical subject) can realize its revolutionary potential only through a radical rejection of all values and conceptual frameworks of the existing order. This includes not only its moral categories and economic structures, but, above all, the fundamental concepts through which it understands itself and the surrounding world. True transformation, for Jünger, requires not merely a change in political structures, but a fundamental reconfiguration of thought and affect. Like a military commander, Jünger seeks to enact this project through the affirmation of *Gestalt* as a form of organic totality that transcends the individualism and reductionism of the bourgeois epoch.

The relevance of Jünger's insight into this particular mechanism of change lies in the fact that it does not pertain solely to transformations occurring within the political sphere, or to the specific social classes mentioned here, but rather to the mechanism of social transformation in general. From his work, one discerns the suggestion that the ruling class tends toward the preservation of the existing order, and that this tendency is always present behind propaganda, imposed conceptual frameworks, and systems of morality. Imposed social standards, such as bourgeois morality and an unquestioning faith in reason, become chains that bind the oppressed class, preventing it from revolting and shaping a society that reflects its own interests. The imposition of behavioral norms, values, and modes of action, all with the aim of continued exploitation and the extension of unfreedom, remains evident in contemporary society, although in a somewhat different form. In one society, the dominant values may resemble those Jünger describes, while in another, they may appear entirely different. Yet what unites them all are the mechanisms of control that serve to secure the class position of the privileged.

Class Division in *The Worker*

Since we stated in the introduction that Jünger's theory differs from the Marxist one in that it relates class domination primarily to the imposition of conceptual frameworks, we will now focus on illuminating the social dynamic between the classes. One social class exploits another by peacefully integrating it into a system suited to its own interests and disabling its capacity for resistance, redirecting its

potential by all means available with the aim of preserving the existing class order. This occurs chiefly through the dominant class's establishment of morality and "reason". As David Pan observes, "the critique of reason is actually a critique of a specific culture's claim to universal value."² Although morality, the imposition of reason and related values originate in the subjective sphere, in this arrangement they lay claim to universality. One social class imposes upon another the patterns of behavior that serve to uphold and safeguard the existing order. For the bourgeois class, the supreme value, against which all others are measured, is its own security, while reason and morality constitute its two foundational principles. We maintain that these patterns can also be observed in many earlier forms of society, as well as in (contemporary) capitalism, where economic profit stands as the principal value. What is characteristic of such a social condition is that all other values are measured in relation to the foundational one.

For Jünger, the difference between a bourgeois and a worker does not amount only to a difference in social class. It is, first and foremost, an important difference in the way of being, and this is another point where Jünger shifts the classical Marxist paradigm. He comes close to treating different class figures as archetypes of different kinds of human beings who confront one another in class struggle. His use of concepts is almost strategic, which is unsurprising given that he was, above all, a soldier. Since he held that it was necessary to think outside imposed patterns, this form of essentialism is, in fact, a form of resistance. It stands in radical contrast to the reductionist tendencies of bourgeois reason, which he opposed, and the use of such a conceptual apparatus directly serves the purpose of social transformation. While he views the figure of the bourgeois (*Bürger*) as living under the illusion of security and individual autonomy—an illusion, since war or the collapse of the economic order may occur—the worker (*Arbeiter*) stands in direct relation to the "fundamental forces of history": "Namely, that the worker stands in a relation to elemental powers of whose bare presence the bourgeois never had an inkling."³ Consequently, Jünger holds that by the essence of his being, the worker is capable of freedom completely different from that of which the bourgeois is capable of, and that his claims, "which he holds in readiness,"⁴ greatly exceed those of a single class, and are "far more comprehensive, far more significant, far more redoubtable."⁵ Above all, Jünger sees the bourgeois as someone for whom the greatest value in life is personal security, therefore lacking any ideals exceeding

2 David Pan, "The Sovereignty of the Individual in Ernst Jünger's *The Worker*," p. 74.

3 Ernst Jünger, *The Worker: Dominion and Form*, p. 10.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

this kind of personal security, which entails both the security of his life and, more broadly, the security of his class, i.e., economic position.

Hence, the freedoms of which the two figures are capable of differ radically, for the bourgeois is incapable of overcoming his fetishization of security. Something similar can be observed in contemporary society, where many reject societal change out of fear for their own security. The bourgeois is blind to the paradox of his freedom being imposed from above because he treats freedom and security as synonyms. Furthermore, those in positions of power then promote 'peace and stability', often emphasizing an unfavorable geopolitical situation, fomenting intolerance against neighboring countries and claiming the existence of various 'external and internal enemies' as a means of affording themselves the status of some stabilizing factor without which the entire society would be under threat, with this logic culminating in the appeal to the highest ideal of the bourgeois, namely security. Those in power establish themselves as actual guarantors of freedom, and because for a bourgeois there is nothing more important than security (now synonymous with freedom), the ceding of territory, the demolishing of the economy, and many other things become acceptable due to this view of "stability".

According to Pan, Jünger finds problematic that "the bourgeois subject was always hemmed in and constrained by a complex set of rules and conventions that governed the subject's actions and thoughts in a way that made nineteenth-century bourgeois society highly conventionalized."⁶ He further observes that "this conventionality of bourgeois society becomes the object of critique for Jünger because he sees the bourgeois as alienated from an underlying reality of violence and elemental forces."⁷ When speaking of the figure of the bourgeois, Jünger remarks that for him, society is defined by reason and morality as its two highest principles,⁸ such that anything which does not conform to the prescribed patterns is automatically disqualified to the advantage of what is conventionally accepted and presented as universal. He notes that this leads to the repression of the "elemental" into the realm of what is deemed delusion, idle fantasy, or malice, and thus is relegated to the domain of meaninglessness.⁹

When speaking of the elemental, which is closely related to the natural dimension mentioned earlier, Jünger refers to the raw experience of the human being—raw in the sense of being unprocessed and unfiltered by what is deemed socially

6 Pan, "The Sovereignty of the Individual," p. 73.

7 *Ibid.*

8 Jünger, *The Worker*, p. 11.

9 *Ibid.*

‘rational’ and acceptable. His idea is that, through the imposition of what is considered socially acceptable, many aspects of our personality, our drives, and everything that makes us who we are is suppressed. More concretely, he holds that the elemental has a dual source: on the one hand, it stems from the dangers present in the world, “just as the dead calm sea can hide danger within itself,”¹⁰ and on the other, it arises from the human heart, “which yearns for play and adventures, for hate and love, for triumphs and crashes, which feels the need for danger just as much as for security, and to which a condition of fundamental security appears rightly incomplete.”¹¹ On the one side, then, we have the morality of the bourgeoisie, grounded in security as its fundamental value, while on the other, there is the actual human being with all of their “irrational” passions, drives, and desires—everything that escapes the rationally constructed discourse of the bourgeois class.

It is precisely here that we find the opposing poles of the dialectic Jünger invokes: the worker, with his raw human experience, stands on one side as thesis, while the bourgeois order, with its imposed conceptual framework, forms the antithesis. The worldview of one social class (the bourgeois order), in being imposed upon the other (the workers), severs a significant portion of the potential and power of that second class, casting out all elements that contradict the bourgeois worldview, thereby figuratively castrating the worker and rendering him incapable of freedom. It turns out that bourgeois morality functions as a social dogma, one that the class which upholds it does not recognize as such, but instead takes to be the absolute standard of what is deemed proper: “The bourgeois almost succeeded in convincing the adventurous heart that danger does not exist at all and that an economic law governs the world and its history.”¹² The worker thus finds himself imprisoned within imposed conceptual structures and behavioral patterns which must be suspended to make room for a reencounter with authentic, raw experience. Taking all this into account, we see that Jünger’s conception does not aim at reconciliation between opposing sides, but rather at annihilation on the conceptual plane, so that the worker may reach an authentic experience akin to Husserl’s pre-reflexive *Lebenswelt* from which a society proportionate to that authentic experience may be built.

In Jünger’s vision of historical transformation, the bourgeois appears as the saboteur of the worker’s historical mission, systematically shaping the worker’s worldview to prevent the awakening of his authentic potential. The worker, as the bearer

10 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

12 *Ibid.*

of the new order, does not exist in a pure form: he is always already cloaked in the attire of the bourgeois, which conceals his true nature. Jünger's key thesis is as follows:

This shows how important it is to distinguish between the worker as a nascent power on which the fate of the country is based, and the garbs in which the bourgeois disguised this power in order that it would serve him as a puppet in his artificial game. This is a distinction between rise and fall.¹³

This metaphor unveils a deep ontological struggle: while the worker incarnates historical energy, the bourgeois domesticates it, directing the worker's potential toward the maintenance of the existing social order, where the worker remains oppressed. The members of one class—the bourgeois citizenry—do not constrain the members of another class—the workers—with physical chains, but through a conceptual framework: imposing their own hierarchy of values as universal, wherein security, contractual justice and compromise become the standards against which all else is measured. Consequently, the bourgeois redirects the worker to pursue his demands through reforms, because revolution would threaten security and would be incompatible with the rational principles taken as unquestionable in the bourgeois world. Here, Jünger anticipates modern mechanisms of hegemony: the bourgeois does not rule by force, but by producing the illusion that no alternative exists.

Resistance and the Possibility of a New Society

In light of this, Jünger emphasizes that what is crucial for achieving change is precisely that the worker—as member of the oppressed class—must cease to think and act according to the patterns imposed by the ruling class, the bourgeoisie:

Only then will he reveal himself as the true mortal enemy of society, when he will refuse to think, to feel, and to be in its forms. This, however, happens when he realizes that he has so far been all too modest in his claims and that the bourgeois taught him to desire only what appears desirable to the bourgeois.¹⁴

This idea is particularly striking because society is structured in such a way that change aligned with what truly belongs to the worker is institutionally impossible. Bourgeois institutions are designed to integrate the worker into the system,

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

placing him where he has no rights or influence and cannot threaten the system, all while maintaining the illusion of freedom and the possibility of change through institutional appeal—with these institutions failing to fulfill their purported function. In a situation where institutions do not perform their duties, what becomes necessary is for the worker to take his freedom into his own hands and become the measure himself. That is not to say that “his existence requires interpretation”; for whenever this is the case, the worker is always interpreted through his or her *economic value*. Jünger targets the view of economic value as the worker’s highest virtue: “In everything thought and said on this matter so far, one detects the attempt of a calculating mind to transform fate into a quantity accessible to calculation.”¹⁵ He points out how the ideal of a world ruled by reason and virtue (in the previously mentioned bourgeois sense) coincides with the economic utopia of a world reduced entirely to the economy: “What is inescapable is the fact that, within this world of exploiters and exploited, no dimension is possible which is not decided by a supreme court of the economic.”¹⁶

In this vein, Jünger believes no movement can avoid sinking into the mire of self-interest, and that there is no position from which a breakthrough stands a chance of success, “Because the economy in itself, the economic interpretation of the world, forms the center of this cosmos, and it is the economy which acts as a gravitational force on each of its parts.”¹⁷ As Marcus Paul Bullock notes:

Jünger’s most radical proposal denies that there can be real freedom in work pursued as an economic motivation. He calls this insight the great secret his book has to reveal, for “in the first place, the economy is not a force that can grant freedom, and in the second, an economic purpose has no capacity to reach as far as the elements of freedom.”¹⁸

Accordingly, Jünger stresses that his idea does not imply ignoring the economy or abandoning the field of struggle, but rather intensifying the struggle to its utmost, though not in line with the rules dictated by the economy, but under a higher law of combat that takes precedence even over economic dictates.¹⁹ The precondition for such a struggle is precisely the aforementioned renunciation of behavior and value systems imposed by the other class, including the cessation of acting within them, so that the sphere of freedom might shift away from the

15 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Marcus P. Bullock, “Flight Forward: The World of Ernst Jünger’s Worker,” p. 465.

19 Jünger, *The Worker*, pp. 18–19.

domain of economics. Otherwise, every assault from within the bourgeois order "can, consequently, be only a superficial attack, leading to a sharpened expression of bourgeois values."²⁰

Since we have established that it is not enough simply to stop acting within imposed patterns, but that one must also cease *thinking* within them, we now turn to the *conceptual framework* Jünger develops in opposition to bourgeois reductionism.

The Conceptual Framework as a Form of Resistance

In *The Worker*, Jünger introduces the notion of *Gestalt* (configuration or form), a concept from which Heidegger later draws inspiration for his own idea of *Ge-stell*. As Wolfgang Kittler points out, there is a number of parallels in both the arguments and the language in *The Worker* and Heidegger's essay "Questioning after Technology."²¹ The concept of *Gestalt* derives from psychology, with Wolfgang Köhler being the most influential figure in its development (with his book *Psychologische Probleme*). When discussing the nature of Gestalt psychology, Köhler points out that it did the opposite of what was expected from such a young science. While the general rule would be to first consider the simplest facts,²² the Gestalt psychologists disregarded it, and rather tried to look for general rules of phenomena:

First, they said, we have to inspect perceptual scenes quite impartially, to try to find in these scenes such facts as strike us as remarkable, if possible to explain their nature, to compare it with the nature of other interesting facts, and to see whether, in this fashion, we can gradually discover general rules which hold for many phenomena.²³

Therefore, in Gestalt psychology we can see a manner similar to that of Jünger—emphasis on the structure which precedes the individual. Kittler points out that "although a gestalt always consists of a multiplicity of elements, it is a whole that is more than the sum of its parts."²⁴ Thus, Kittler concludes:

As such, gestalten are the primary givens of any perception of the world. This almost axiomatic statement implies that all those schools of psychology that try to split the functions of the psyche into primary elements are

20 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

21 Wolf Kittler, "From Gestalt to Ge-Stell: Martin Heidegger Reads Ernst Jünger," p. 79.

22 Wolfgang Köhler, *The Task of Gestalt Psychology*, p. 36.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 37.

24 Kittler, "From Gestalt to Ge-Stell," pp. 82–83.

bound to miss their target. By studying an artificial mosaic of disconnected atoms, they cannot grasp their object, which is, by definition, a field of already organized and structured wholes.²⁵

Both Heidegger, in his early analysis of *Dasein*, but also in his late philosophy, and Jünger, were heavily influenced by this. Julian Young points out that “Heidegger says that like Junger’s *Gestalt*, being is ‘transcendence’, that is, ‘the meta-physical’[...] It transcends beings, is ‘above’ the ‘physical’, in the way in which the visual field transcends ‘the appearance of objects’.”²⁶ For Jünger, *Gestalt* is key to understanding the new epoch: “From the moment when form shapes one’s experience, everything becomes ‘form’ [*Gestalt*]. Form is thus not a new dimension to be discovered in addition to those already known; rather to a new gaze the world appears as a theatre of forms and their interrelations.”²⁷ This is not an abstract thesis, but a revolutionary shift in perspective away from the mechanical view, characteristic of the bourgeois era, which sees society as a sum of individuals, toward an understanding of organic wholes with their own internal dynamism. When Jünger speaks of the figures of the *bourgeois* and the *worker*, he does not conceive of them merely as sociological categories but as *Gestalten*—forms that transcend the mere sum of their parts. Since he sees the abandonment of bourgeois patterns of thought as necessary for transformation, the forging of such a concept is already a step in the direction of a critique of 19th-century bourgeois reductionism. Thus, Jünger criticizes the bourgeois epoch for its tendency toward reductionism, where everything is reduced to the sum of its parts:

Admittedly, a part is just as far from being “form” as a sum of parts can result in a “form”. [...] A man is more than the sum of the atoms, limbs, organs and fluids of which he consists; a marriage is more than man and wife, a family more than man, woman and child. A friendship is more than two men, and a people is more than can be expressed by the results of a census or by any number of political polls.²⁸

This directly opposes liberal individualism, which views society as a simple aggregation of individuals. For Jünger, the bourgeois represents the paralysis of totality—a person who fails to recognize the larger whole and lives under the illusion of autonomy. In contrast, the worker is a figure acting within a *Gestalt*, embracing its technical-organizational character. For Jünger, however, the individual is not to be overlooked, nor does it “melt away” into the collective. On the

25 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

26 Julian Young, *Heidegger's Later Philosophy*, p. 11.

27 Jünger, *The Worker*, p. 21.

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 21–22.

contrary, he views bourgeois society as the site of such a "melting into" through imposed conventions, while on the other side there lies a more fundamental experience of the individual precisely in the relinquishing of these imposed conventions. As Pan notes: "The worker type does not result from a simple setting of constraints on the individual but from a focus on the individual as the sole source of sovereign authority."²⁹

When Jünger writes in *The Worker* that the individual has a "right to form" alongside "stones, plants, animals, and stars,"³⁰ he is pointing to a fundamental aspect of existence: nothing is merely the sum of its parts. In an era where bourgeois thought reduces man to a rational individual and society to a contractual marketplace of interests, Jünger discovers that the essence of life lies in the *organic whole* that surpasses its constituent elements. The individual is not a slave to his capabilities but the bearer of something greater—a *Gestalt* that situates him within a cosmic and historical order. Jünger's *Gestalt* is not merely a social concept, but a mode of being. Just as a stone has structure and a star its course, man exists only as an organized totality: "As form, the 'individual' encompasses more than the sum of his powers and capacities; he is deeper than what he can imagine it in his deepest thoughts, and more powerful than what he can express in his most powerful acts."³¹

Thus, through his conceptual use of *Gestalt*, Jünger tries to shift the bourgeoisie paradigm. While the bourgeoisie views man as an independent unit, Jünger shows that every individuality is always already embedded in a broader structure—be it the family, the people, war, or technological civilization. As Vincent Blok writes: "The gestalt is not of this world, rather presents itself only in the representation through the type. Jünger thus also speaks in *The Worker* of the type of the worker as representative of the gestalt of the worker."³² Moreover, the *Gestalt* cannot be seen as a being that reveals itself entirely in the world; rather, it discloses itself as something ontologically other.³³ Though in some sense immanent, *Gestalt* is also transcendent, never fully revealing itself, except through its typical representatives.

In other words, *Gestalt* is a figure that never fully discloses itself. It is not simply the sum of its parts, nor can it be understood by merely analyzing its components. Its individual elements are representative of the *Gestalt* as its variations. Such a

29 Pan, "The Sovereignty of the Individual," p. 67.

30 Jünger, *The Worker*, p. 23.

31 *Ibid.*

32 Vincent Blok, *Ernst Jünger's Philosophy of Technology*, p. 15.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

conception indeed points toward an underlying Platonism in Jünger's thought, where *Gestalt* resembles the Platonic *idea* which no analysis (*diaíresis*) can exhaust. Jünger's conceptual framework thus already constitutes a means of overcoming reductionism—and a tool for social transformation.

Conclusion

In this article we have analyzed Ernst Jünger's vision of social transformation through the lens of his key work, *The Worker*, focusing on the dialectic between the bourgeois class (*Bürger*) and the working class (*Arbeiter*). The core of Jünger's insight lies in the recognition that the bourgeois dominates not only through economic exploitation but also by imposing conceptual frameworks, universalizing his moral values, rationality, and security. The worker thus becomes a puppet of the system, incapable of recognizing his own power. However, Jünger points to the path of resistance: the worker must stop thinking and acting within the frameworks imposed by the bourgeois order, which entails rejecting the illusion that change can be achieved within existing institutions. Jünger's work ought to be read along these precise lines: the manner in which he thinks and employs concepts already constitutes a form of resistance and a paving of the way toward the kind of transformation he envisions.

Informed by his experience of World War I, Jünger realized that technological progress and its dominance cannot be stopped. Simply put, if one social group were to ignore technology, it would be destroyed by another that uses it—one cannot oppose a tank with a club. Thus, technological advancement cannot be halted, but it can be subordinated to a higher aim, so that it is not the ultimate measure. The same holds for the economy. Accordingly, Jünger insists that his idea does not call for the ignoring of economics or withdrawal from that field, but rather for the intensification of the struggle—not on terms dictated by the economy, but by a higher law of struggle that overrides it.³⁴ As Karel Nawratek observes, Jünger's conception allows us to envision alternative narratives outside the hegemonic, capitalist-reductive logic of “being-financial equivalent-other being” as the basis for all translation and transaction.³⁵ In view of that, Nawratek claims:

It is perfectly possible to build minor narratives rooted in religious or cultural spaces, in spaces of biological reproduction, spaces of love and memory, and so on... These alternative micro-stories (again—in an

34 Jünger, *The Worker*, p. 19.

35 Karel Nawratek, *Total Urban Mobilisation: Ernst Jünger and the Post-Capitalist City*, p. 34.

abundant multiplicity!) build new networks and create contra-hegemonic relationships.³⁶

Jünger's analysis is thus not merely a critique of bourgeois society in the 20th century, but rather a universal schema of mechanisms of domination, equally relevant to contemporary neoliberal capitalism. His thought indicates that true change does not emerge through reforms within the system, but through a radical overcoming of its foundations. In this sense, *The Worker* is not only a philosophical manifesto but a strategic guide for liberation from every form of conceptual and material hegemony.

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36 *Ibid.*

Razmerje oblasti in nasilja skozi prizmo vladavine Nikogar v delu *O nasilju* Hannah Arendt

Ela Kušar

Povzetek

Nasilje in oblast sta pojma, ki jima v političnem diskurzu pogosto pripisujemo določeno stopnjo sorodnosti ali pa ju celo enačimo. V tem članku poskušam prikazati, da ju lahko mislimo tudi kot diametralno nasprotna, in sicer skozi opredelitev nasilja in oblasti, kot sta pojmovana v delu *O nasilju* Hannah Arendt. Z oblastjo namreč Arendt razume določeno stopnjo soglasja, ki ljudem omogoča vzpostavitev politične skupnosti ter posledično skupno delovanje, medtem ko je nasilje uporabljeno kot kompenzacija odsotnosti oblasti. Tako se ob izpostavljanju razlik med pojmomoma najprej osredotočim na problematiko njunega medsebojnega razmerja, v nadaljevanju pa se posvetim avtoričini navezavi obeh na tako imenovano birokratizirano »vladavino Nikogar«, ki cveti v času hitrega razvoja tehnologije, in zagovarjam relevantnost dela Arendt za današnji čas.

Ključne besede: oblast, nasilje, birokracija, legitimnost, upravičenost, Hannah Arendt, tehnološki razvoj

Summary

In political discourse, the terms violence and power are usually thought to be closely related, if not identical. However, the two terms could also be thought of as opposing concepts. In this article, I aim to demystify their relation by exploring how they are understood in Hannah Arendt's *On Violence*. When writing about power, Arendt has a specific

concept in mind. Here, power is understood as a mutual agreement among the individuals of a political community. Power therefore allows the political community not only to exist but also to act toward a common goal. Violence, on the other hand, is seen by Arendt as compensating for the lack of power. By highlighting the differences between the two concepts, I first focus on the issue of their interrelationship to then proceed to discuss how these concepts relate to what Arendt calls the »rule of Nobody«, i.e., a form of rule that thrives in the era of technological advancements, arguing that her book remains highly relevant today.

Keywords: power, violence, bureaucracy, legitimacy, justification, Hannah Arendt, technological progress

Uvodoma: Hannah Arendt, *O nasilju*

Knjiga *O nasilju* Hannah Arendt je nastala leta 1970 »kot odziv na nekatere tokove v študentskem gibanju '68, predvsem na navduševanje takratne nove levice nad nasiljem kot sredstvom za 'ustvarjanje zgodovine'«. ¹ Kljub temu da torej globlje razumevanje njenih komentarjev takratnega duha časa od bralca zahteva razumevanje zelo specifičnega zgodovinskega političnega dogajanja, pa je ena osrednjih tem dela pravzaprav avtoričina opredelitev pojmov nasilje in oblast, ki sodobnemu bralcu ponudi povsem nov uvid v lasten čas. Čeprav marsikomu nasilje in oblast predstavljata sorodna, v določenih pogledih pa morebiti celo identična pojma, pa branje omenjenega dela jasno pokaže, kako zelo sta si v resnici različna. Kot zapiše Vlasta Jalušič: »Arendt v pričujoči knjigi ne pokaže samo, da oblast in nasilje nista isto oz. nista nujno tesno povezana, *temveč da sta nasprotji*. Sta *različnega izvora*, predstavljata *različna principa in modusa* človeške dejavnosti«. ²

Oblast in nasilje ter njuno medsebojno razmerje

Za začetek Arendt izpostavi dejstvo, da so v nasprotju z oblastjo, katere temelj obstoja je soglasje tvorcev politične skupnosti, za nasilje vedno potrebna orodja, pri čemer pod orodji razumemo sredstva, ki jih uporabimo za dosego nekega cilja, pa naj bodo to ljudje v obliki vojakov ali tajne policije, atomske bombe ali pa morebiti visokotehnološki droni. Lahko bi rekli, da pri uporabi nasilja pravzaprav kompenziramo dejstvo odsotnosti soglasja z uporabo orodij. Vsekakor je

1 Gorazd Kovačič, »Hannah Arendt: *O nasilju*«, str. 84–87.

2 Vlasta Jalušič, »Razumeti nasilje (in oblast)«, str. 104.

torej nasilju inherentna kategorija sredstvo/cilj.³ Vendar pa je treba že na začetku opozoriti, da z nasiljem Arendt ne misli nujno nečesa, kar je vedno nesprejemljivo ali iracionalno: »Nasilje ni niti dobro niti zlo samo po sebi, ravno tako kot ne-nasilje ni samo po sebi dobro.«⁴ Ker je nasilje po naravi instrumentalno, je namreč »racionalno do tiste mere, kolikor je učinkovito pri doseganju cilja, ki ga upravičuje«.⁵ Toda ključen problem nasilja kot nečesa instrumentalnega je, da lahko sredstva hitro zasenčijo cilj. Tako se na primer obramba pred napadalcem lahko kljub svoji uspešnosti prelevi v čisto nov, celo grozovitejši napad. Problem torej nastane, ko sredstva sama prevladajo nad cilji, ko se nasilje kot praksa uvede v politično telo, kar pa vodi v nič drugega kot zgolj nasilnejši svet.⁶ Ta nevarnost je še posebej verjetna v dobi nenehnega tehnološkega razvoja ter izpopolnjevanja sredstev uničevanja, saj bi lahko trdili, da smrtonosnejša orodja po naravi stvari v vojskovanje vnašajo vedno več nepredvidljivosti tako za subjekte, ki ta orodja uporabljajo, kot tudi za tiste, zoper katere so uperjena (pomislimo npr. na jedrsko vojno). Kot pravi Arendt: »Fortuna [...] nikjer drugje v človeških zadevah ne igra usodnejše vloge kot na bojnem polju.«⁷

Nasilje kot nekaj instrumentalnega torej vedno potrebuje upravičenost v namenu, ki ga zasleduje, in zato samo po sebi ni bistvo ničesar. V tem pa se popolnoma razlikuje od pojma oblasti, ki je vedno »sama sebi namen«.⁸ To ne pomeni, da ljudje, ki jim je oblast zaupana, te ne uporabijo za doseganje nekaterih političnih ciljev, toda ključno je, da oblastna struktura sama »predhodi vsem ciljem in jih presega«.⁹ Oblast je torej predpogoj, ki ljudem sploh omogoči kakršnokoli delovanje v smeri sredstvo/cilj ter tako ne potrebuje nikakršnega upravičevanja, saj je inherentna obstoju vsake politične skupnosti.¹⁰ V Sloveniji kot demokratični republiki ima na primer že po ustavi oblast ljudstvo, ki pa to oblast med drugim izvršuje tudi preko svojih predstavnikov.¹¹ Seveda pa so ti predstavniki pravi predstavniki (torej poosebitev oblasti ljudstva) samo, kolikor in dokler s strani ljudstva uživajo podporo. Svojo legitimnost torej oblast črpa že iz samega združevanja in ne delovanja

3 Hannah Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 8.

4 Jalušič, »Razumeti nasilje (in oblast)«, str. 112.

5 Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 65.

6 *Ibid.*, str. 66.

7 *Ibid.*, str. 8.

8 *Ibid.*, str. 44.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*

11 3. člen URS.

ljudi.¹² Ker se legitimnost sklicuje na preteklost, upravičenje pa na cilj, ki leži v prihodnosti, je nasilje »potemtakem mogoče upravičiti, a nikoli ne bo legitimno«. ¹³ Če se torej navežemo na prej omenjeni problem nepredvidljivosti uporabe orodij kot sredstev nasilja, bi lahko rekli, da je nasilje toliko bolj upravičljivo kolikor bližje na obzorju je njegov cilj.¹⁴ Pri silobranu je na primer ta cilj – odvrniti »od sebe ali koga drugega istočasen protipraven napad«¹⁵ – prisoten in jasen. Toda bolj kot se »cilj oddaljuje v prihodnost, manj verodostojno je njegovo upravičenje«. ¹⁶

Omenili smo, da je oblast nujna najmanj za vzpostavitev same politične skupnosti, kot jo razume Arendt. Toda kaj nam pojem oblast pove o samih medčloveških razmerjih? Ali gre pri oblasti za soglašanje ljudi z zakoni ali pa morebiti za razmerje ukaz/poslušnost? Po mnenju Arendt je govoriti o oblasti kot o poslušnosti ljudi ukazom posameznika, s katerimi ne soglašajo, popolnoma zgrešeno. Od soglasja je namreč odvisen ne samo nastanek politične skupnosti, ampak do neke mere tudi njen obstoj. Tako po njenem mnenju tudi politične institucije kot manifestacije oblasti propadejo, brž ko zgubijo podporo ljudi.¹⁷ Seveda pa bi bilo iluzorno umeščati pojem oblasti samo v oblike političnega sistema, kot je demokracija. Tudi v tiraniji mora vedno obstajati vsaj kanček oblasti, saj vladajoči konec koncev potrebuje pomočnike za izvajanje nasilja, s katerim kompenzira pomanjkanje oblasti.¹⁸ Arendt tako zaključi, da je veličina oblasti premo sorazmerna s številom podpornikov tistemu, ki jo nosi oziroma mu je zaupana, hkrati pa iz tega izpelje tudi sklep, da je v tiraniji največ nasilja in najmanj oblasti.¹⁹ Oblast namreč potrebuje številnost mnenj, za nasilje pa zadostujejo orodja. Morebiti se torej že iz tega vidika določeni posamezniki, katerih individualni pogledi ne morejo pridobiti podpore, za uveljavljanje lastne volje odločijo poslužiti se slednjega.

Kar zadeva razmerje med enim in drugim, lahko torej v okviru političnih skupnosti govorimo kvečjemu o nekakšnem konglomeratu nasilja in oblasti, nikoli pa o vladavini zgolj nasilja: »Nasilje lahko vedno uniči oblast, saj pride najučinkovitejši ukaz iz puškine cevi, ki rezultira v takojšnji in popolni poslušnosti. Kar ne more

12 Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 44.

13 *Ibid.*, str. 45.

14 Na tej točki puščamo ob strani problematiko same vsebine tega cilja, saj ta za argument, ki ga poskuša predstaviti Arendt, ni ključna.

15 22/II KZ-1.

16 Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 45.

17 *Ibid.*, str. 36.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*

nikoli priti iz puške cevi, je oblast».²⁰ Tako zmaga z uporabo nasilja ironično pomeni ceno, ki jo plača ne samo poraženi, temveč tudi zmagovalec, in sicer v obliki zmanjšanja njegove lastne oblasti.²¹ Ne gre samo za to, da lahko sama uporaba nasilja privede do nadaljnjega zmanjšanja oblasti, ampak lahko tudi samo zmanjšanje oblasti (iz katerihkoli drugih vzrokov) pripelje do potrebe po uporabi mamljive možnosti nasilja. Nemoč namreč, pravi Arendt, rodi nasilje.

Vladavina terorja

V skrajnem primeru nemoč vodi v tako imenovano vladavino terorja. Kot zgodovinski primer takšne vladavine Arendt navede Stalinov režim.²² Gre za stanje, ko nasilje uniči vso oblast, a namesto, da bi se potem razpustilo, »prevzame nadzor nad državnim aparatom».²³ Vladavina terorja je po Arendt v celoti odvisna od družbene atomizacije.²⁴ »Da bi se sila terorja popolnoma sprostila, mora izginiti vsakršna oblika družbenega nasprotovanja».²⁵ V tem primeru govorimo skorajda o distopiji popolnega nadzora, a ne s strani redkih pomočnikov tirana, temveč s strani slehernega pripadnika družbe. Tam, kjer namreč skorajda ni več medčloveških vezi in stikov, postane vsakdo ovaduh.²⁶ Totalitarna dominacija, »ki temelji v terorju«, se tako za razliko od tiranij in diktatur, utemeljenih v nasilju, ne obrne samo proti sovražnikom, temveč tudi prijateljem, država pa začne »žreti svoje lastne otroke».²⁷ Na tej točki lahko morebiti govorimo o koncu politične skupnosti oziroma medsebojnih političnih razmerij kot takih, saj vrhunec terorja po Arendt pripelje do tega, da »oblast v celoti izgine».²⁸

Birokratizirana vladavina Nikogar

Če pri vladavini terorja govorimo o medsebojnem nadzorovanju posameznikov družbe, pa se zdi, da na vrhu tega mehanizma nadzora vseeno stoji določena

20 *Ibid.*, str. 45.

21 *Ibid.*, str. 46.

22 *Ibid.*, str. 47.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

osrednja vodilna figura v obliki velikega vodje. Temu pa vsekakor ni tako v vladavini, ki jo Arendt opiše z besedami »vladavina Nikogar«, za katero bi lahko trdili, da je v neki meri prisotna že danes. Pri njej govorimo o vladavini birokracije oziroma zapletenega sistema uradov, v kateri ni povsem jasno, koga lahko resnično pokličemo na odgovornost. Kot pravi Arendt: »Če [...] identificiramo tiranijo kot državno formo, ki ji ni potrebno nikomur izstavljati računa, potem je vladavina Nikogar seveda najbolj tiranska od vseh, saj ni nikogar več, ki bi ga sploh lahko poklicali na odgovornost za to, kar se dogaja.«²⁹ Pravzaprav ni nikogar več, s katerim bi se lahko pogovarjali, ki bi ga lahko soočili s krivicami in nanj pritiskali.³⁰ In prav to stanje, v katerem odgovornosti ni mogoče lokalizirati, je po njenem mnenju tudi eden izmed ključnih razlogov za vsesplošne nemire,³¹ kajti »čim večja bo birokratizacija javnega življenja, privlačnejše bo nasilje.«³² Birokratizacija vladavine Nikogar namreč krči svobodo prebivalstva v smislu zmožnosti delovanja.³³ Prav ta sposobnost delovanja pa je tisto, kar je značilno za človeka kot politično bitje.³⁴ Kot pravi Arendt, torej to zaradi česar »propada oblast, ni toliko nasilje, kot načeloma anonimen upravljalški aparat.«³⁵ Nadalje bi lahko trdili, da je tako kot pri vladavini terorja tudi pri birokratizirani vladavini Nikogar eden ključnih razlogov, zaradi katerih se ta lahko ohranja prav atomizacija (ki pa jo sama birokratiziranost vzajemno še nadalje spodbuja). O tem v *Etiki pristnosti* med drugim razpravlja Charles Taylor, po katerem je eden od učinkov birokratizacije občutek nemoči tvorcev politične skupnosti.³⁶ Tako bi lahko rekli, da je tako v vladavini terorja kot tudi vladavini Nikogar prisotna atomizacija, s tem da vladavino terorja vzdržujejo predvsem prestrašeni prebivalci z »aktivnim sodelovanjem« v terorju velikega vodje, medtem ko so v vladavini Nikogar v ospredju birokratski procesi, za katere se zdi, da nanje posameznik nima vpliva. V resnici pa gre pri obeh vladavinah za hromitev oblasti tvorcev politične skupnosti.

V zvezi z izvorom birokratske forme vladavine Jalušič navede *Izvore totalitarizma*, kjer Arendt spregovori o spopadu med buržoazno družbo in nacionalno državo na prehodu iz 19. v 20. stoletje, ki je rezultiral v »instrumentalizaciji institucij nacionalne države za imperialistične potrebe buržoazije«, ki ji ne gre

29 *Ibid.*, str. 34.

30 *Ibid.*, str. 66.

31 *Ibid.*, str. 34.

32 Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 66.

33 *Ibid.*, str. 67.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*, str. 67, op.

36 Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, str. 119–120.

za ustanavljanje novih političnih teles, temveč za »ekspanzijo (oblasti) zaradi ekspanzije same«. ³⁷ Za glavno zunanjepolitično zanimanje buržoazije navede posle, izvoz kapitala in pa skrb za lastno varnost, pri čemer to troje postane nov okvir celotne nacionalne države. ³⁸

Nasilje kot nekaj racionalnega?

Kot rečeno, je nemoč v obliki nezmožnosti političnega delovanja, ki jo v tem primeru povzroči atomizacija ljudi in birokratizacija državnega aparata v vladavini Nikogar, zelo dobra iztočnica za pojav nasilja. Hkrati pa se vseeno spomnimo tudi dejstva, da za Arendt pojem nasilja ni nekaj *a priori* negativnega. Čeprav pri njem ne moremo zares govoriti o političnem delovanju, saj po Arendt nasilje vedno poskuša predstaviti enotnost mnenj in zatira pluralnost, pa lahko morebiti igra pomembno instrumentalno vlogo v vladavini Nikogar. Včasih lahko nasilje tako kot politično delovanje

preseka birokratsko logiko administracije in kontrole in prekine na videz neustavljive, »naturalizirane« procese družbene nuje, za katere se zdi, da jih lahko le nemočno spremljamo. Sposobno je »dramatizirati krivice« ali usmeriti pozornost javnosti na neko perečo problematiko, pokazati na položaj tistih, ki so popolnoma brez pravic in glasu v javnosti. ³⁹

Tako se prav v stanju, ko je v okviru državnih institucij možnost javnega političnega delovanja zelo omejena, »nasilje kaže kot nadomestilo za delovanje«. ⁴⁰ Arendt bi tako verjetno trdila, da je v takšnem stanju zatekanje k nasilju, za razliko od njegovega tlačenja in preusmerjanja, popolnoma »racionalen« odziv, ki odraža skupnost, v kateri manjka oblasti v obliki zdravo delujočega političnega telesa in v kateri mora čimprej priti do ukrepov, da se bo ta lahko ponovno vzpostavila in zaustavila zatekanje k nasilju.

Zaključek

Menim, da vladavina Nikogar preko birokratizacije ter atomizacije do neke mere predstavlja grožnjo za oblast tvorcev politične skupnosti. Ko je o zatonu političnega delovanja pisal Taylor, je kot ključni problem poleg atomiziranosti izpostavil tudi

³⁷ Jalušič, »Razumeti nasilje (in oblast)«, str. 99. Cf. tudi Hannah Arendt, *Izvori totalitarizma*.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ Jalušič, »Razumeti nasilje (in oblast)«, str. 105.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, str. 106.

preveliko ukvarjanje s samim seboj v smislu kulta samopomoči, namesto s skupnimi problemi.⁴¹ Po mnenju Arendt je problematičen tudi diskurz v znanosti, ki govori o agresiji in z njo povezanim nasiljem kot o nečem patološkem, o nečem, kar je potrebno zatreti in preusmeriti, namesto da bi proučevali njegove vzroke.⁴² Lahko bi trdili, da bo oblast zmožna hromiti tudi umetna inteligenca, ki jo uporabljamo tako v javnem kot zasebnem življenju, vedno bolj pa tudi v vojnih spopadih. Njena zmožnost, da se jo uporabi na marsikaterem področju človekovega življenja – konec koncev tudi kot sredstvo nasilja – lahko namreč, poleg sicer mnogih pozitivnih, pomeni tudi marsikatero negativno posledico. Prav tako bi lahko nanjo gledali kot na orodje, s katerim bo med drugim možno upravljati z ogromnim številom podatkov potrebnih za vzdrževanje velikih birokratiziranih državnih tvorb. Morda to vodi v situacijo, v kateri bo količina podatkov in birokratskih procesov povezanih z njimi tako neobvladljiva, da človek nad njimi enostavno ne bo več mogel imeti nadzora. V tem primeru se bo glede določenih vprašanj enostavno moral zanesti na odgovor stroja, pri čemer vseh odgovorov ne bo zmožen preveriti (to za marsikoga izmed nas do neke mere drži že danes). Kot pravi Arendt: »Napredek, kot ga razumemo danes, namreč pomeni rast, neusmiljen proces večanja in širjenja. Večja ko postane država v smislu populacije, predmetov in lastnine, večja bo potreba po administraciji in z njo anonimni oblasti administratorjev.«⁴³ Morebiti bi bilo v prihodnosti celo bolje reči »anonimni oblasti umetne inteligence«. Navsezadnje je torej ključno, da ostajamo aktivni tvorci politične skupnosti, saj je splošno nezaželeno, da bi naša pasivnost privedla do zatekanja k nasilju kot obupanem in obenem obupnem izhodu v sili, scenarija, ki se ga lahko bojimo predvsem v birokratizirani vladavini Nikogar, za katero je značilna odsotnost jasno določenega nosilca odgovornosti. Nasilje se namreč pojavi v stanju nemoči ter obupa, pri čemer poskusi prekiniti začarani krog. Seveda pa vprašanje na koncu ostaja enako: kdo si upa prevzeti odgovornost?

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41 Cf. Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*.

42 Arendt, *O nasilju*, str. 50, 52.

43 *Ibid.*, str. 68.

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Neither Beast Nor God: Marx, Sartre, and Aristotle on Freedom and Human Nature

Tamara Maksović

Povzetek

Kot inherentno družbeno bitje lahko človek spoznava skozi svobodo le znotraj meja človeške skupnosti. V tem članku je dilema človeške narave obravnavana skozi dve moderni perspektivi, po eni strani sledeč Marxu, ki človeka opisuje kot materialno-družbeno bitje, po drugi Sartru, ki človeka opisuje kot svobodno bitje. Članek se osredotoča na Marxove zgodnje filozofske spise, v katerih svobodo označuje kot družbeno lastnost, medtem ko Sartre govori o svobodi kot bistvu človeškega bitja. Za Aristotela svoboda predstavlja smiselno delovanje znotraj okvira družbene skupnosti. Cilj tega članka je poskusiti uskladiti Marxova in Sartrova stališča z uporabo Aristotelove filozofije, da bi pokazali, da je človek nujno družbeno bitje in da se svoboda kot taka lahko uresniči le znotraj skupnosti.

Ključne besede: svoboda, skupnost, Aristotel, Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre

Summary

As an inherently social being, man's knowing-through-freedom is possible only from within the confines of the human community. In this article, the dilemma of human nature is examined from two modern perspectives, following Marx, who describes man as a material-social being, and Sartre, who describes man as free existence. The article focuses on Marx's early philosophical writings, wherein he characterizes freedom as a social attribute, while Sartre speaks of freedom as the essence of the human being. For Aristotle, however, freedom represents meaningful action within the framework of the social community. The goal of this paper is an attempt to reconcile Marx's and Sartre's views by

utilizing Aristotle's philosophy to demonstrate that man is necessarily a social being, and that freedom as such can only be realized within the community.

Keywords: freedom, community, Aristotle, Karl Marx, Jean-Paul Sartre

He who is unable to live in society,
or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself,
must be either a beast or god.¹
– Aristotle

Terminological and Ontological Distinctions

Introduction

In this article, I aim to demonstrate how Aristotle's philosophy can offer an ontological middle ground for reconciling Marx's notion of objective essence with Sartre's concept of free subjectivity. The first part discusses conceptual and ontological distinctions, outlining the positions of the three thinkers. The second part focuses on the nature of the human being and is followed by a conclusion in which I argue that a reconciliation between Marxian objectivity and Sartrean subjectivity is made possible through Aristotle. I begin with Marx's philosophical system as interpreted here primarily through *On the Jewish Question* and other early philosophical writings.

Marx's Understanding of Freedom, Society, Struggle and Resistance

Marx's epistemology and anthropology highlight the social and historical conditionality of human nature, an evaluation of which will be significant to our further analysis of Marx's views. In asserting his epistemology, Marx applies materialism and certain aspects of Hegel's idealism, situating his theoretical framework somewhere between classical materialism and classical idealism. Marx's epistemological standpoint is the following: reality does not consist of mere objects extrinsic to man, but rather is formed by man's consciousness.² Marx holds there exists no natural substrate necessary for the functioning of human consciousness out in the world, nor does he limit human consciousness to cognitive operations, instead

1 Pol. 1253a25.

2 Shlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thoughts of Karl Marx*, p. 68.

maintaining that cognitive operations signify processes of the development and evolution of reality in its entirety.³ The interaction of man with the world, i.e., reality, is the main point of Marx's epistemology, for it is man who shapes reality. Marx tended to avoid idealistic, abstract explanations, focusing predominantly on materialism and action. Though man creates nature, the interaction with the world nonetheless affects, i.e., shapes, man and his relationships to others, resulting in a process of perpetual interaction of subject and object which shapes the world around us.⁴ Marx's subject is man as an active being who constructs the surrounding world through action, while objects denote things which man creates, be they material or immaterial (e.g., society). In his works, Marx insists upon the historical conditionality of human nature. History is a representation of man's development and man as a being is a product of history.⁵

The thesis concerning man's creation of the world is closely related to Marx's idea of human emancipation.⁶ Marx does not define freedom through individualism, but instead via reference to human community, holding that freedom and man's meaning can only be realized and achieved in a community. True freedom is achieved not in isolation, but only in interaction with others. Speaking about Jewish culture, Marx introduces a distinction between political and human emancipation. Despite Marx's prioritizing of human emancipation, it is important to note that these two forms of emancipation are not opposing forces but, in fact, mutually determined. Human emancipation cannot be realized without political emancipation, as every improvement emerges from prior, less favorable conditions. In political emancipation, the concept of justice is reduced to the safeguarding of individual security, which, according to Marx, serves to reinforce egoism:

Security is the highest social concept of civil society, the concept of the police—that the entire society exists only in order to guarantee each of its members the preservation of his person, his rights, and his property [...]. [S]ecurity is the assurance given to egoism. Accordingly, none of the so-called rights of man goes beyond the egoistic man.⁷

Marx is committed to human emancipation. Even if he doesn't tell us much about it in his works, it is important to note that Marx is not wholly opposed to political emancipation, which represents significant progress in society and is a step that

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 65.

7 Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," pp. 229–230.

must be overcome or corrected on the path to human emancipation. Marx writes that human emancipation begins when man recognizes his abilities and utilizes them as social as opposed to merely individual strengths.⁸ Accordingly, human emancipation is realized with man's synthesis with society, where true freedom is found and where man can actualize his meaning. Emancipation represents a social process within which each individual directs his or her strength and ability toward shared, communal goals.

Emancipation is a form of social influence upon the human being. Community shapes both the individual and his or her characteristics. In addition to social factors, there is also the historical conditioning of human nature, which I will turn to later in the text.

Marx undoubtedly prioritizes the community over the individual, but it is important to examine the distinction between the community as such and the individual person. A person's integration into the community and the necessity of living within it do not entail the loss of personal identity. On the contrary, Marx emphasizes the importance of balance between communal life and individuality. Society and the individual are not opposing concepts; rather, they mutually imply one another.⁹ Marx does not support collectivism, which sees the individual dissolve into an abstract whole, and strives to once again join together these two modes of human existence.¹⁰ We can observe that this is not a case of simple negation, but rather an intriguing methodological pattern in which two distinct—opposing even—concepts are brought into relation and integrated into a coherent whole without the exclusion of either. The introduction of collectivism does not negate individualism; instead, it renders them complementary. Collectivism is essential for the individual's self-realization—not a utopian collectivism, but one in which individual uniqueness is preserved. Marx's collectivism is not a denial of individualism for individual freedom becomes possible only within the community, which makes collectivism the condition for true individualism.

Alienation is another very important concept in Marx's philosophy. There are three interconnected aspects of alienation: alienation from nature, from one's self, and from society.¹¹ Criticizing capitalism, Marx speaks of alienation as something rather fatal for man and his life. An alienated man loses his meaning and his human nature, becoming a mere object. Alienation as such leads to fatal dehumanization.

8 Marx, "On the Jewish Question," p. 234.

9 Avineri, *The Social & Political Thoughts*, p. 87.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Struggle represents the way and means whereby alienation is resolved. Marx's very concept of struggle, as well as struggle itself, appear in the form of revolution, with the most common cause of revolution being class difference.

Sartre's Understanding of Freedom, Society, Struggle, and Resistance

Freedom is the central concept of Sartre's philosophy, representing the core of his ontology. Freedom is inherent to all human beings. As such, it stands for the essence of human existence, which implies that man is therefore responsible for all his actions. Sartre's understanding of freedom is very radical and controversial, carrying with it many difficulties that have spurred countless debates. There are no hidden or transcendental realities in Sartre's existentialism. Everything is transparent and apparent in the world which surrounds us. It is important to add that his philosophy emphasizes the primacy of existence: existence arises before any essence. Man first exists in a given world and only then builds himself up as a person with all his qualities.¹² There is no determinism in Sartre's existentialism; we come into the world free, and so our being is necessarily free.¹³ We determine ourselves through our actions, such that man *becomes what he does*.¹⁴ Accordingly, the responsibility to construct ourselves and our identity in accordance with our notion of ourselves lies with us.

However, our freedom and our choices affect both other individuals and society as a whole. Sartre frequently returns to the questions of human connectedness and mutual influence. Our freedom depends on the freedom of others and vice versa, the responsibility for ourselves is equal to that for others,¹⁵ while another's freedom ought to be as important to us as our own.¹⁶ Every human being contributes to the human community, which should be regarded as a coherent whole, where the presence of others affirms our own existence—and vice versa—while simultaneously excluding egoism. The affirmation of ourselves by others grants stability to our existence. Sartre's existential humanism stands apart in its centering of a human existence whose essence is freedom; a freedom that is so far-reaching that each is entirely responsible for the being of himself and others. Man's responsibility in Sartre's philosophical system is extremely significant because man

12 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, pp. 20–22.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

literally creates everything independently. There is no determinism nor a creator to give us meaning, just like there is no meaning inherent to us. According to Sartre, man will occasionally attempt to flee such a massive responsibility and will turn in those moments to “bad faith.”¹⁷ Infinite freedom carries with itself great responsibility, which evokes an uneasy feeling in the subject. Authenticity is a significant concept in Sartre, representing a person’s acknowledgement that what he is, as well as what all human life is, is in harmony with freedom.¹⁸ Struggle, or conflict, is considered by Sartre to be a necessary occurrence in dealing with others.¹⁹ Conflict is considered necessary because other people affect our freedom and can threaten us. However, in the same way in which conflict is necessary, so too is human interaction. The presence of the other confirms and affirms my own presence, my essence, and myself as a subject, which lends a firmer ground to our existence.²⁰

In comparing Marx and Sartre, we can note certain rough similarities between their philosophical ideas and systems. However, this article is mainly concerned with their ontological differences. Marx sees man as a socio-material being which is historically, economically, and socially conditioned, while his essence is to be found in labor and contribution to society, whereas Sartre sees man as a free existence which creates itself and determines its own being.

On Human Nature

Marx’s Understanding of Man

Marx’s interpretation of human nature is marked by social and historical conditioning. Viewing human nature through historical lenses accounts for the specificity of Marx’s philosophical system. There is no fixed, universal and extratemporal essence of human beings. Instead, human essence changes throughout history and societal developments. History holds a different meaning for Marx than it does for other philosophers: it represents a view of human progress, and as such, history produces human needs, which in turn can only be seen as historical.²¹ Needs are produced historically by developing in accordance with the circumstances of

17 Christine Daigle, *Jean-Paul Sartre*, p. 59.

18 Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, 50.

19 Daigle, *Jean-Paul Sartre*, p. 93.

20 *Ibid.*

21 Avineri, *The Social & Political Thoughts*, p. 79.

a given time. Human needs cannot be determined *a priori*, as they are historically and socially determined. Thus, Marx sees human needs, other than those which are primary and physiological, as structural positions which are determined by external factors, which are in turn themselves shaped and defined by social and historical conditions. Therefore, man himself is variable and the ways in which he changes hinge on historical events and social conditions. Historical and social conditioning exert distinct forms of influence upon the human being. Social conditioning pertains to one's embeddedness in community; the human beings are not independent entities but are shaped and formed by the social context in which they dwell. Historical conditioning, on the other hand, refers to the specific historical moment in which a person is raised. Each period in history has exerted different influences on individuals, shaping them in accordance with the circumstances of the time.

Labor is also a central concept in Marx's philosophy, as it shapes the human being and constitutes his essence. Labor represents a specificity unique to the human being, and as such—when cultivated—it becomes the means through which the individual both forms and transcends himself.²² The development of labor refers to the development of one's individual work, the tasks we perform; the progress of labor leads to the refinement of our skills and, by extension, of ourselves. We may thus conclude that, amid the variability of human nature shaped by historical and social circumstances, labor remains the one constant component of the human being and his essence. Although work is a fundamental aspect of human activity, Marx emphasizes that its form depends on the historical and social context. The ontological interpretations offered by Marx and Sartre differ in key respects: Marx sees the human being as a social entity attaining freedom through autonomous labor within society, whereas for Sartre, the human being is an absolutely free subject with no pre-given essence—freedom is the starting point of existence.²³ We see that in Marx, freedom is a possibility, whereas in Sartre, it is a necessity. Sartre holds that human essence is not predetermined but is something the subject must arrive at autonomously; for Marx, essence is constituted by a set of social and historical relations. At this point, we are justified in asking: does this mean that Marx attributes an innate essence to the human being? The answer, however, is negative. Even in Marx, the human being has no innate essence—but he does possess certain predispositions, such as the capacity for labor—while in Sartre, the human being emerges as nothingness, a being necessarily free.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

23 That is not to say that, for Marx, the (formal) freedom (of entering a labor contract) is not the starting point of the subject's (capitalist) existence. The point is, rather, to stress that labor (as man's species-being, *Gattungswesen*) becomes alienated labor, which then undermines man's species-being.

Sartre's Understanding of Man

Sartre sees man as a being without meaning, because freedom, as man's existence, precedes essence. Freedom itself is more important than man's essence and internal sense of life's meaning. In Sartre, there are two ways of being: "being in itself" and "being for itself."²⁴ *Being in itself* is beyond our phenomenological experience, and so we cannot say much about it besides that it exists, that it is timeless, complete, and unchanging. On the other hand, *being for itself* represents the way of being which man possesses.²⁵ It represents a single variable project which comes into the world completely empty and shapeless, and through his experience, man shapes all essences.²⁶ Transcendence is the constitutive unit of a *being for itself*.²⁷ Sartre rejects a dualist ontology; through this dual way of being he makes clear the coherence of the world as such. The relation between the two ways of being is, according to Sartre, intertwined and causally conditioned: in order for a *being for itself* to exist, there must be a *being in itself*.²⁸

The question that arises is whether existentialism can in fact be considered an ontological theory. I argue that it is—though not in the typical sense. When we speak of existentialism as an ontological position, we see that it concerns itself with the question of existence, human existence in particular. The central proposition of Sartrean existentialism that "existence precedes essence" is itself a classical ontological claim. Ontology concerns the study of the nature of being, existence, and reality; accordingly, existentialism, in its focus on the problem of human existence, is a form of ontology. Although existentialism does not offer a general theory of being or reality as such, it does investigate the nature of existence—and that alone places it within the domain of ontology. Sartre's ontological theory has often been characterized as dualistic. Dualistic theories rely on two fundamentally distinct substances to explain the existence of one world, one reality, or one being. However, Sartre does not speak of substances or fundamental principles, but rather of two modes of being that together constitute a single being.

Sartre's human being is defined as a necessarily free existence that autonomously constitutes itself and, as such, bears full responsibility for itself, its life, and its community. Existence precedes essence and all other attributes typically

24 Daigle, *Jean-Paul Sartre*, p. 32.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 32–34.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 35.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

associated with the human being. Marx, by contrast, historicizes human nature and anchors it within the socio-economic context—thus, the essence of human nature becomes variable, depending on historical and societal conditions. In Sartre, freedom precedes essence and is central to one's inner meaning, whereas Marx views freedom through the lens of the social context, defining it as the capacity of individuals to develop within the community. The divergence in their respective conceptions of freedom stems from their differing views on human nature—in other words, from distinct ontological postulates.

Zóon politikón

Aristotle sees man as a social being, hence neither as wholly given nor wholly constructed. Society itself is necessary and needed for the realization of telos, i.e., purpose. The individual within a society is not absolutely determined by the society to which he belongs, although an individual could not exist without society. The aim of a political society is harmony and life in accordance with the virtues. Resistance and struggle are constitutive elements of every society, and so too are they found in Aristotle's. Aristotle explicitly emphasizes that man is a social being with an inborn drive toward life in society. More specifically, Aristotle speaks of man as a political animal. Although the term 'political' can be interpreted in different ways depending on the context, here the term is meant in a biological sense. Similarly to Marx, Aristotle emphasizes that life in society does not tend toward complete unity and that individuality and smaller groupings ought to be preserved within society. Since everything tends toward the good, so too does society tend toward the good and harmony, and so its members live in accordance with the virtues. When we compare Sartre and Aristotle, we see that the essential difference is that in Aristotle there exist a predetermined purpose and order, while Sartre does not allow for any predetermination. Although Aristotle is an essentialist and Sartre an existentialist, both describe the human condition through certain lacks. For Sartre, reality represents a negation of what is, while Aristotle holds that it is what we lack that helps us see the broader image of that reality. Both authors arrive at their respective conclusions via lack. Marx and Aristotle see man as a necessarily social being with a determined purpose. The fundamental difference between Aristotle and Marx lies in the starting points of their respective philosophical systems: Aristotle's system is teleological, characterized by purpose-driven action that is predetermined in advance, whereas Marx's system is structural, interpreting the human being through concrete historical and social relations.

The first difference between the two concerns the notion of justice. Aristotle considers justice to be an important virtue, while Marx considers all appeals to justice trivial as there exist different perspectives of what justice means. For Marx, disagreements over the concept of justice at the individual level lead to discord, and the very notion of justice can be sustained within the community only through the abolition of human inequality, unlike Aristotle, who regarded slavery as natural, good and just. Action as movement is an important component with both philosophers.

As we can see, Aristotle makes it possible to reconcile Marx's historical and Sartre's existential conception of the human being as two sides of a shared social ontology. Aristotle's ontology, therefore, provides a framework through which these two positions can be brought into harmony: the human being is both free and necessarily social, requiring life in community, where action, through interaction with others, shapes the individual and serves as the means through which freedom is expressed. Through this synthesis, the human being can be understood as a necessarily free being that is inherently social, and as such, forms itself through community. In other words, the synthesis of these perspectives allows us to conceive of the human being as a potentiality—one that can shape itself through action in multiple ways.

An Ontological Middle Ground (Conclusion)

Based on everything put forth in this article, we can conclude that Aristotle's standpoint can be understood as an ontological middle ground between Marx's concept of objective essence and Sartre's concept of free subjectivity. This then provides us with a basis and a bridge between Marx's socio-materialistic viewpoint and Sartre's existentialism. In this register, the notions of freedom, struggle, and resistance can be reinterpreted as different forms of the realization of a common social nature. The differences between Sartre and Marx are not oppositions but rather complements, provided they are read through Aristotle's idea of man.

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Camus and Adorno: The Struggle for Rebellion and Theory

Mladen Matić

Povzetek

Avtor v članku pokaže, da je mogoče Adorna in Camusa brati skupaj. To ne pomeni, da se njuni teoriji zvedeta na iste predpostavke, niti da imata isti cilj, temveč da se prepletata. V tem oziru avtor izpostavi koncepte upora, revolucije, solidarnosti ter etike pri Camusu in pa prakse, teorije in aktivizem (akcionizma) pri Adornu. Avtor upor, ki ima za razliko od revolucije svoje meje, vzporeja s problemom, s katerim se je soočal Adorno v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja, namreč z zlomom teorije v novi revolucionarni misli. Praksa, ki zavrača ali odklanja teorijo, se ne more zavedati meja, saj se teorija izkaže za varuha svobode. Članek izpostavi ključno vlogo konceptov negativne dialektike in žargona, ki ju sooči s Camusovim pojmom etike solidarnosti. Pri slednjem je ključno razmerje z drugim. Članek postavi tudi sledeča vprašanja: Ali obstaja razmerje z drugim, če je teorija zasmehovana in zavržena v korist absolutne prakse? Ali obstaja solidarnost, ko je drugi zveden na sredstvo za doseg cilja? V kaj preraste absolutna praksa?

Ključne besede: Camus, Adorno, upor, teorija, praksa, solidarnost, aktivizem

Summary

This paper shows that Adorno and Camus can be read together. This does not imply that their theories can be reduced to the same premises, nor that they share the same goal, but rather that they intertwine. In this regard, the author focuses on the concepts of rebellion, revolution, solidarity, and ethics in Camus, and of praxis, theory, and activism (actionism) in Adorno. Understanding rebellion as something that, unlike revolution, has limits, the

author draws parallels with the problem Adorno faced in the 1960s, namely the collapse of theory into new revolutionary thought. In other words, praxis that rejects theory or lynches it knows no limits, because theory turns out to be the guardian of freedom. In this respect, the article also highlights the key roles played by negative dialectics and the concept of jargon in Adorno's project, while contrasting it with Camus' proposal of an ethics of solidarity. Here, the relationship with the other is of essential importance. The paper goes on to raise the following questions: Does the relation with the other persist if theory is mocked and neglected in favor of absolute praxis? Does solidarity exist when the other is reduced to a means to an end? What does absolute praxis turn into?

Keywords: Camus, Adorno, rebellion, theory, praxis, solidarity, activism

In any case, our era forces us to take an interest in it.
The writers of today know this. If they speak up,
they are criticized and attacked.
If they become modest and keep silent, they are vo-
ciferously blamed for their silence.¹

– Albert Camus

For Camus, rebellion is entirely differentiated from revolution. This insight demonstrates the essential importance of theory, even when action is what initially comes first. In short, the separation of praxis from theory is reflected in the separation of rebellion from revolution. Of course, Camus is not the only author who speaks of the importance of theory. Theodor W. Adorno explicitly places theory in the foreground. The importance of theory in relation to praxis, as well as the position of theory regarding liberation from the chains of authority, are some of the themes Adorno will touch upon. Despite the differences between Camus and Adorno, we aim to highlight their similar goals. Although one would likely criticize the other, it seems, at least in part, that they share a common goal in posing questions regarding limitless praxis and the revolution that knows no bounds: Who rebels? Why can rebellion be opposed to revolution? These are some of the key questions this article aims to uncover to demonstrate their enduring relevance.

We could speculate about the contextual differences found in Camus's thought in relation to Adorno's, or even in relation to our own time. When we speak of context, we mean the time, the epochs, in which these authors were active. However,

1 Albert Camus, *Create Dangerously*, p. 1.

contextuality – though it certainly has its place, which in essence is also its meaning—remains open.²

Thinking rebellion means accepting the other, affirming the other, and refusing to let them be cast aside. But thinking rebellion also implies slowing down action while not bringing it to an end.

Je me révolte, donc nous sommes: Camus's Approach to Rebellion

For Camus, being in a state of rebellion does not simply mean making a specific decision to defy someone or something. Being in a state of rebellion is part of human existence such that to be in rebellion is *to be*. In this sense, the given title is not a caricature of Cartesianism:

The unhappiness experienced by a single man becomes collective unhappiness. In our daily trials, rebellion plays the same role as does the “cogito” in the category of thought: it is the first clue. But this clue lures the individual from his solitude. Rebellion is the common ground on which every man bases his first values. *I rebel* – therefore we *exist*.³

Does this mean that people, prior to the “valorization of rebellion”, did not exist or were not truly human? No—one could just as well conclude the opposite. There has never been a time in which people did not rebel.⁴

Camus's concept of rebellion is truly unique. We have emphasized that it is different from that of revolution, but this difference is not based in a value judgment. The fact that rebellion differs from revolution does not mean that it is better or worse. Rather, we must recognize its true foundations: rebellion, above all, is *metaphysical rebellion*.

2 Derrida's notion of context directly anticipates his thesis that *there is nothing outside the text*. Context cannot be rigid and closed if we imply openness and do not lay claim to the author's intent within a given text. In other words, context is open. That does not mean that context is arbitrary, but rather that there is space for a “rupture” or “split” within language. Jacques Derrida, “Signature, Event, Context,” p. 310. Within the scope of this paper, this means that although certain concepts must be considered within the context in which Camus was writing, this does not mean that those same concepts cannot be *iterated* in different contexts and at different times, nor that their comparison and parallel interpretation is impossible.

3 Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 28.

4 The question arises: *Is it we, the people, who rebel? Or is the people something constituted by the rebellion of an “I”?* One could say both. Here we enter the field of dialectics. People are indeed constituted by rebellion, but they are constituted by rebellion precisely through the act of rebelling. In other words, rebellion founds the human being precisely insofar as they rebel. The point is to accept different forms of rebellion. We could even speculate that the affirmation of the absurd is, in a way, a form of rebellion.

The Metaphysical Nature of Rebellion

While it might seem intuitive to assume—especially after *The Myth of Sisyphus*—that metaphysical rebellion is directed against metaphysics, things are not quite that simple. It is indeed directed against metaphysics, but with distinct goals. If in *The Myth of Sisyphus* we witness a struggle and rebellion *against* metaphysics, here we are faced with a struggle and a rebellion *for* metaphysics.⁵ However, it seems that the initial step of rebelling *against* metaphysics was necessary in order to bring forth the second step of rebelling *for* metaphysics. What we witness here is a transition from a rebellion against metaphysics to a metaphysical rebellion. How does rebellion itself become and remain metaphysical? And what makes it metaphysical to begin with?

The idea of metaphysical rebellion seems counterintuitive. Rebellion, by its very nature, serves to oppose oppression and the shortcomings of a given system, but also to illuminate its limits. I rebel because something is wrong, something irritates or oppresses me. To rebel in a state of perfection is impossible.⁶ One might say that I can fantasize and then decide to rebel in accordance with that fantasy, but that still leaves room for the very possibility of rebellion.⁷ In other words, there is no ideal, perfect system that could guarantee absolute well-being.⁸ Metaphysics, viewed from this perspective, is the science of possibility. If rebellion is metaphysical, then there is no place in this world for stasis or invariability. To commit to rebellion means to accept imperfection. The idea of imperfection resonates with the idea of the other and the foreign. In other words, to accept imperfection—not of the self, but of the system—is to affirm the other as other; it is to acknowledge that the system is not necessarily perfect, and that the entire perspective is not exclusively mine. Others cannot be excluded from the picture. In this sense, metaphysical rebellion carries particular weight. It does not concern only *me*, but

5 Avi Sagi, *Albert Camus and the Philosophy of the Absurd*, p. 112.

6 Rebellion, or so it would seem, does not go hand in hand with metaphysics. If rebellion is indeed a we-apon directed against the system, it can hardly respond to the affirmative question of metaphysics: *What is reality?* Even if we admit that rebellion may be a step toward establishing some kind of “new,” “better” system, it is not intuitive to imagine a rebellion riding on the wings of metaphysics. It may certainly serve as a clearing of the path for *a new ontology*, but the question remains as to what extent does it persist once the system has been established.

7 If we’ve concluded that rebellion is not possible within perfection, fantasizing still leaves room for rebellion. In other words, the impetus for rebellion doesn’t have to be grounded in empirical reality—it can be entirely fictional. However, if we hold to the idea that one cannot rebel in perfection, then even fantasizing opens a space for rebellion, which in turn directly shifts the focus onto imperfectability.

8 Since there has never been a single moment in which man did not rebel, and since rebellion is not possible within a perfect system, it clearly follows that no perfect system exists.

us. In other words, rebellion presupposes a collective experience, a space in which I exist in relation to others:

In absurdist experience, suffering is individual. But from the moment when a movement of rebellion begins, suffering is seen as a collective experience. Therefore the first progressive step for a mind overwhelmed by the strangeness of things is to realize that this feeling of strangeness is shared with all men and that human reality, in its entirety, suffers from the distance which separates it from the rest of the universe.⁹

Therefore, rebellion is the first step the spirit takes when it enters an absurdist experience. If I choose to go on living instead of committing suicide, then I must rebel. But against what? Against the entire reality that has pulled the ground from beneath my feet, i.e., against a history of violence. In its most elemental form, rebellion is paradoxical. It serves to strike against a fragmented world because it seeks unity, and it is precisely because of its demand for unity that rebellion is paradoxical:¹⁰

Metaphysical rebellion is the movement by which man protests against his condition and against the whole of creation. It is metaphysical because it contests the ends of man and of creation. The slave protests against the condition in which he finds himself within his state of slavery; the metaphysical rebel protests against the condition in which he finds himself as a man. [...] [T]he metaphysical rebel declares that he is frustrated by the universe.¹¹

Metaphysical rebellion is not only an act, but also a decision. And not just any decision, but the decision to choose life over suicide, and then to make that life worth living. The only way to do that is through collectivity. Hence Camus's thesis: *I rebel, therefore we exist*. At the level of the slave's rebellion, this is relatively clear. The slave does not want to remain a slave; he wants to escape slavery. If he wants to exist as a free human being, he must rebel or else he does not truly exist. In the case of metaphysical rebellion, things are not that different—at least not formally. I rebel against the order that committed violence against me by imposing idols upon me, and then proceeded to abolish those very idols on which everything had once been built. I remain standing as a stranger in an absurd world no longer one with itself. I accept the absurd, and the absurd relation between myself and the world. But how do I move from myself to the others? This is where rebellion enters. I rebel against the established order not only for myself, but for

9 Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 22.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

the sake of others. This is the moment of solidarity on which Camus insists. It is not mere compassion, but a being-with, i.e., a relational stance in which the other and I stand together as a “we”.

Rebellion and the Ethics of Solidarity

“Metaphysical rebellion is a claim, motivated by the concept of a complete unity, against the suffering of life and death.”¹² To determine something as a demand whose essence lies in complete unity already implies speaking about metaphysics. It is therefore the concept of complete unity that concerns us here. To think complete unity means to rebel not only for the other(s) as specific individual(s), but on behalf of all of humanity. This moment of communication with all that is known and unknown (I do not know each individual, but I am aware that it is my duty to rebel for them and their rights) is a moment that does not assimilate, but rather affirms:

If a mass death sentence defines the human condition, then rebellion, in one sense, is its contemporary. At the same time that he rejects his mortality, the rebel refuses to recognize the power that compels him to live in this condition. The metaphysical rebel is therefore not definitely an atheist, as one might think him, but he is inevitably a blasphemer. Quite simply, he blasphemes primarily in the name of order, denouncing God as the father of death and as the supreme outrage.¹³

Blasphemy follows a slightly different path from atheism. Unlike atheism, blasphemy affirms God but opposes Him precisely as existing. This is not a choice; it is inscribed in rebellion itself. Camus illustrates this perfectly with the example of the slave. The slave who revolted against the master does not deny the master as a human being. In that relationship, the slave is not revolting against the mere existence of the master. Rather, the slave denies the master as master, i.e., as the one who claims the right to in turn deny the slave’s very being.¹⁴ Blasphemy means that God is no longer called upon to rule over man. Man accepts this at the cost of his own downfall.¹⁵ He must accept it because he sees the situation in which humanity finds itself. The moment of solidarity is precisely the moment of rebellion:

12 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

15 The possibility of downfall is ever present—not every rebellion is successful. However, the rebel is willing to take the risk at any cost. In fact, rebellion inherently involves that risk. Similarly, the blasphemer accepts his groundlessness.

Man's solidarity is founded upon rebellion, and rebellion, in its turn, can only find its justification in this solidarity. We have, then, the right to say that any rebellion which claims the right to deny or destroy this solidarity loses simultaneously its right to be called rebellion and becomes in reality an acquiescence in murder.¹⁶

The Fragility of Theory = The End of Praxis

Adorno's *Marginalia to Theory and Praxis* remains relevant today, despite having been written more than fifty years ago. The context of his study concerns various factors that affected our continent: student protests, the Cold War, the rise of extremist politics after World War II, among others. Where others see liberation, Adorno recognizes a particular kind of crisis. Where others see the realization of philosophy in action, Adorno sees its crisis.¹⁷ Has the world so far only been interpreted, and is now the time to finally change it? This is one of the key questions running throughout this text.

What is the problem with Marx's particular standpoint? The problem lies in the simple dissection and distancing of the concept of theory from the concept of praxis. If we accept absolute change in a context where theory is neglected, we are effectively submitting to dominant ideology, thus sabotaging the possibility for true change. In other words, to set theory aside or discard it completely while embracing praxis means engaging directly in a struggle *against* emancipation:

The error of the primacy of praxis as it is exercised today appears clearly in the privilege accorded to tactics over everything else. The means have become autonomous to the extreme. Serving the ends without reflection, they have alienated themselves from them. Thus everywhere discussion is called for, certainly initially out of an anti-authoritarian impulse. But discussion, which by the way, like the public sphere, is an entirely bourgeois category, has been completely ruined by tactics.¹⁸

It seems of vital importance to grasp that Adorno, as a representative of Critical Theory, is not an opponent of praxis as such. For Adorno wants nothing more than to show that an approach which sees theory as pure contemplation, and a form of

16 Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 22.

17 "The hostility to theory in the spirit of the times, the by no means coincidental withering away of theory, its banishment by an impatience that wants to change the world without having to interpret it while so far it has been chapter and verse that philosophers have *merely* interpreted—such hostility becomes praxis's weakness." Theodor W. Adorno, *Marginalia to Theory and Praxis*, p. 265.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 268–269.

thinking which treats praxis as something detached from theory, are equally dogmatic. Theoretical thought cannot simply be extracted from the entirety of practical reality, but that does not mean that it merges fully with praxis either:

The dogma of the unity of theory and praxis, contrary to the doctrine on which it is based, is undialectical: it underhandedly appropriates simple identity where contradiction alone has the chance of becoming productive. Whereas theory cannot be extracted from the entire societal process, it also maintains an independence within this process; it is not only a means of the totality but also a moment of it; otherwise it could not resist to any degree the captivating spell of that totality.¹⁹

Theory in the formal sense resembles something like Hartmann's *novum*.²⁰ It cannot be separated from the whole, while maintaining a certain degree of independence in relation to it. This independent stance, which critically reflects on the whole, is that of *negative dialectics*. It seems that the best representation of negative dialectics is the image of the prism, as Adorno presents it in his work of that name. Negative thinking is prismatic thinking. A phenomenon is captured like light dispersing through a prism: scattered in all directions, negating one-dimensionality.²¹ Accordingly, if our goal is to avoid one-dimensional thinking—or any kind of one-dimensionality—we can rely neither solely on praxis nor exclusively on theory as pure contemplation. In other words, one must not respond to violence with violence,²² as that creates a *circulus vitiosus*. The praxis to be strived for is one aimed at overcoming barbarism and putting an end to violence. Although violence seems inevitable today, overcoming it must become and remain the goal

19 *Ibid.*, p. 277.

20 Hartmann's idea of the *novum* represents a distinctive space within his ontology. However, the similarity we have observed lies precisely in the fact that the *novum*, as its very name suggests, always brings something new in relation to what came before. Moreover, although it is practically grounded in the layer beneath, it always contains a certain degree of autonomy. Cf. Nicolai Hartmann, *New Ways of Ontology*, pp. 73–83.

21 Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, p. 57.

22 The concept of violence is chosen for neither random nor stylistic reasons. It is used in relation to Adorno's reaction to Western thought. The reason for introducing the prism as a metaphor for the kind of thinking that ought to be lies precisely in the idea that non-prismatic thinking is the kind that enacts violence upon reality. In other words, alongside factual violence—which Adorno certainly addresses—there is also violence directed at thought itself. This means that every form of striving toward totality constitutes a kind of violence precisely because the drive toward totality evades the critical moment that makes so-called negative thinking possible. For Adorno, theory is more than contemplation—it is the very path that leads to freedom. Absolute praxis, then, *a priori* represents a direct path paved toward violence, as it evades that freedom. Theoretical thinking plays the role of breaking the chains of totalizing systems. Turning away from it means disabling oneself from responding to the previously mentioned violence, and thereby sinking deeper into it—becoming, as we shall see in the continuation of this work, both its victim and its instrument.

of such praxis. Nevertheless, we must not forget that many today believe that violent means can be used to fight against the totality of violence.²³

In this context, it becomes clear that the scale between theory and praxis must not lean entirely to one side. Praxis is important, but theory provides a kind of asylum of freedom: Adorno would say that unfounded action always tends toward oppression. What we need is a non-repressive praxis, which can only be achieved through theory. If theory is rejected, "then traits, such as a unilateral solidarity degenerating into terror, will become manifest."²⁴ To renounce theory is to renounce freedom and any form of critical engagement.

Adorno's Critique of Activism

Adorno sees the renunciation of theory in various currents that have swept through Europe. One such moment were the student protests of the 1960s. The key concept confronted by Adorno during these protests is that of activism. For Adorno, *Aktionismus* (activism or actionism) represents a clear example of neglecting the theoretical and embracing a totalitarian, anti-liberating practical approach:

The majority of actionists are humorless in a way that is no less alarming than are those who laugh along with everyone. The lack of self-reflection derives not only from their psychology. It is the mark of a praxis that, having become its own fetish, becomes a barricade to its own goal. The dialectic is hopeless: that through praxis alone is it possible to escape the captivating spell praxis imposes on people, but that meanwhile as praxis it compulsively contributes to reinforcing the spell, obtuse, narrow-minded, at the farthest remove from spirit.²⁵

Here we see the vicious circle already mentioned. Praxis fetishizes itself, and the result is the impossibility of choice, which amounts to a step backwards: I cannot choose not to act. Whatever value-laden or moralistic notions we might hold about those who are not inclined to act in times of crisis must now be bracketed. The condition for the possibility of that choice is threatened. The only way to exit praxis is through praxis itself.²⁶ The problem often does not lie in inaction itself, but rather in not acting in a specific, predetermined way, i.e., as way already

23 Adorno, *Marginalia to Theory and Praxis*, p. 268.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 274. Also: "Theory speaks for what is not narrow-minded. Despite all of its unfreedom, theory is the guarantor of freedom in the midst of unfreedom." *Ibid.*, p. 263.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

26 Praxis cannot be its own goal. It can only be a path; it must have its end: "The goal of real praxis would be its own abolition." *Ibid.*, p. 267.

established and imposed by a given position of power. The absence of theory becomes especially visible here. If I affirm the theoretical as something effective, I am put to shame precisely because I question the functioning of the established system, regardless of what that system claims to aim for. *Discussion*, as understood by Adorno, is one example of the collapse of absolute praxis:

Each of the hegemonic cliques has prepared in advance the results it desires. Discussion serves manipulation. Every argument, untroubled by the question of whether it is sound, is geared to a purpose. [...] The opponent in a discussion becomes a functional component of the current plan: reified by the reified consciousness malgré lui-même. [...] [P]seudo-activity can stay alive only through incessant self-advertisement. If the opponent does not concede, then he will be disqualified and accused of lacking the qualities presupposed by the discussion. The concept of discussion is cleverly twisted so that the opponent is supposed to let himself be convinced; this degrades the discussion into farce.²⁷

Activism that casually dismisses theory is no activism at all. For Adorno, this type of action amounts to pseudo-activity that continually, be it consciously or unconsciously, tends toward totalitarianism.

At the end of the day, the example of discussion reveals another dark side: *the eclipse of the Other*. Treating the Other as a mere object for the fulfillment of one's own goal or "greater good" is already a well-known path to ideology.²⁸ If we were to push this point to the extreme, we could say that we are witnessing the sacrifice of the Other for the sake of the Whole. Whether that Other is assimilated or, like the „participant“ in the discussion, completely marginalized and merely used as a tool for establishing a particular structure, the Other no longer exists.²⁹ If none of that works, the Other must be entirely cast aside. Death is certainly not the primary option, especially as far as student protests of the 1960s are concerned, but vandalism and public lynching are:

When a student's room was smashed because he preferred to work rather than join in actions, on the wall was scrawled: "Whoever occupies himself

27 *Ibid.*, p. 269.

28 Adorno equates ontology with ideology, unmasking, for instance, Heidegger's fundamental ontology as a latent ideology. Every ontology has, in one way or another, been an ontology of violence precisely because it has not treated philosophy prismatically. Cf. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, pp. 61–97.

29 It is important to highlight the distinction between the *other* and the *Other*. The *Other* with a capital "O" represents a concept or the idea of otherness itself. In short, otherness carries the notion of radical otherness—a position in which I do not assimilate others but maintain a permanent distance. Understood in this way, the *Other* operates at the level of concept. The *other*, on the other hand, refers to an individual, a concrete person whose *face* I can at. If one detects traces of Levinas's understanding here, one would not be mistaken.

with theory, without acting practically, is a traitor to socialism.” It is not only against him that praxis serves as an ideological pretext for exercising moral constraint. The thinking denigrated by actionists apparently demands of them too much undue effort: it requires too much work, is too practical. Whoever thinks, offers resistance; it is more comfortable to swim with the current, even when one declares oneself to be against the current.³⁰

In other words, the refusal to embrace theory already means affirming the dominant ideology with everything that it entails. There is nothing revolutionary about this.

Instead of a Conclusion: Absolute Activism Becomes an Example of the Mass

From the very beginning, actionism, or absolute action, is doomed to fail. Some of the reasons for this have already been mentioned. The problem of the lack of theory does not arise only in the rather obvious places pointed out thus far. A greater problem emerges within the Kafkaesque atmosphere of hidden chambers and hallways reminiscent of Nietzsche’s *ressentiment*. The issue, then, is not only that absolute praxis reveals itself as an inconsistent form of struggle, but, perhaps more importantly, that it wears the mask of actual struggle. A veil of jargon is spun around the concept of praxis or action, one that conceals itself from the world and thereby produces the phenomenon of *truthful untruth*. More precisely, the atmosphere created is one that presents itself as a real path of truth, behind which hides nothing—or nothing concrete. This does not mean that there is nothing along that path; the signs encountered along it are advertisements and billboards urging us to go deeper and further, exaggerating and ornamenting. What is important for us to understand, in addition to *negative dialectics*, is also the concept of *jargon*: “The jargon—objectively speaking, a system—uses disorganization as its principle of organization [...]”³¹ Thus, jargon not only supports the appearance of truth, but simultaneously undermines any critique of that appearance. If we return to the concept of discussion, we see it exhibiting this duality. In the discussion, the other no longer functions as the Other but serves as a systemically harnessed tool that helps me continually reproduce the system.

Though deploying the term *truth*, while Adorno uses the term *authenticity*, the latter communicates with the concept of truth. Authenticity can be articulated

30 Adorno, *Marginalia to Theory and Praxis*, p. 263.

31 Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, p. 7.

from the level of *meaning* all the way to the *truth* of being,³² but it is transformative and highly dynamic. It is precisely on account of its indeterminacy and adaptability that the term is so important to Adorno:

[O]nce authenticity can no longer be either the empirical condition of mortality nor the subjective relating to it, then it turns into grace. It turns, as it were, into a racial quality of inwardness, which man, either has or does not have—a quality about which nothing further can be stated than that, tautologically, there is mere participation in it.³³

The problem arises in the attempt to save the “old ontology”. What we mean here is the effort to preserve *Sein* at all costs, as well as the grounding of philosophy as a system—even when it presents itself as a struggle against that very system. Adorno suggests that we must apply to it a critical approach of *negative dialectics*. If we are not allowed to use that critical approach, then there is no talk of systemic change.

It seems that Camus found himself in a similar life situation. After the publication of *The Rebel*, he faced criticism from the French left. Because of foregrounding morality, he was accused of misunderstanding dialectics and of holding a completely passive stance toward politics. Neither Sartre³⁴ nor Jeanson³⁵ showed him any mercy, and they did not appreciate that Camus had criticized the USSR. However, Camus’s response focused precisely on his duty as a leftist to criticize any totalitarian system.³⁶ His answer did not satisfy the “critics,” and put an end to his friendship with Sartre.

This biographical detail regarding Camus’ relationship with the left is not random. From everything we have said about Camus, it appears that his emphasis on *rebellion* as opposed to *revolution* is crucial here. The thought Camus offers is precisely the idea that violence can never be the answer, nor can it ever be justified. In his correspondence with *Les Temps modernes*, we see that Camus consistently insists that the ends never justify the means.³⁷ It is essential to emphasize that Camus’ stance toward revolution is not *a priori* negative, but that the issue for him lies in the absence of boundaries—and this absence boundaries are often the gateway to violence. The connection between Camus and Adorno

32 In addition to referring to the range between Heidegger’s early and later thought, we also refer to the fact that “authentic” can mean anything from “meaningful” (or, better yet, “genuine”) to “true to oneself.”

33 Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, p. 132.

34 Mangesh Kulkarni, “Nouveau regard sur le débat Camus – Sartre,” pp. 40–41.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 39–40.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 45 and 47.

becomes visible at precisely this point. Rebellion requires deliberate action, the recognition of limits, whereas revolution does not, or does not necessarily. Even fascism was an excuse wrapped in the packaging of revolution,³⁸ and Stalinism did little to illuminate the totalitarian element of revolution. This by no means suggests that all revolutions are a priori bad, but it does imply that revolutions, in certain situations, overstep their bounds. For example, the moment we say that violence breeds violence becomes illustrative. It suggests that violence pursued at all costs loses the capacity to recognize a boundary beyond which there is no return.

To be rebellious in Camus's sense means to occupy a socially unenviable position. Such a worldview does not leave the right indifferent, but neither does it please the left. Given the fact that we lack any metaphysical foundations to rely on — and having already mentioned that there is no ontology that is not also ideology — we can, almost by analogy, anticipate social or political alienation. In other words, Camus updates his initial stance and states: "To the 'I rebel, therefore we exist,' he [Man] adds, with prodigious plans in mind which even include the death of rebellion: 'And we are alone.'"³⁹ That solitude directly prevents integration into the masses, into that toxic "we" which approaches the world as a form of single-mindedness. What remains for us as a task is the search for that "we" which is not the speech of one in the name of all others, but a "we" that implies not being assimilated into the mass, yet retaining a kind of individuality, and in the end, its solitude.

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Where Does Resistance Begin? The Politics of Solidarity

Tina Ivković

Povzetek

Članek ponudi alternativo monadičnemu sebstvu, temu trdoživemu potomcu moderne dobe, katerega glasovi še dandanes odzvanjajo v naših ušesih. Vprašanje, ki opazno umanjka konceptu ontološke zaprtosti jaza, je vprašanje skupnosti. Zato pokažemo na nujnost pojmovanja subjekta kot relacijskega in soodvisnega. Članek zagovarja tezo, da do organiziranega upora proti zatiralskim strukturam pride predvsem skozi ponovno rojstvo solidarnosti. Ko se spinozistični *conatus* obrne na glavo in postane epicenter nenasilnega upora, je mobilizirana politična sila za obnovo družbe. V zaključku pokažemo, kako javno in zasebno nista dve ločeni sferi ter analiziram, kaj je v aktualnem študentskem uporu v Srbiji avantgardnega in kaj reakcionarnega.

Keywords: subjekt, upor, solidarnost, ranljivost, *conatus*, Drugi, delitev javno/zasebno

Summary

This article offers an alternative to the monadic self, that resilient offspring of modernity whose voices still ring in our ears today. The question conspicuously absent from the concept of the ontological closedness of the self is the question of community. Therefore, we point to the necessity of grounding the subject as relational and interdependent. The article argues that organized resistance to oppressive structures arises primarily through a renaissance of solidarity. When the Spinozist *conatus* is turned upside down and becomes the epicenter of nonviolent rebellion, political force is mobilized for the renewal of society. In the final section, the article shows how the public and the private are not two separate

spheres and analyzes the avant-garde and the reactionary aspects of the current student uprising in Serbia.

Keywords: subject, resistance, solidarity, vulnerability, conatus, the Other, the private/public divide

Resignifying the Notion of Subject

The modern era has saddled us with an inheritance of atomised selfhood; self-sufficient, disconnected, shut in. Such an autogenic outgrowth is without relation (or rather, relation is entirely secondary to it). Descartes has reduced our “I” to empty, self-referential mental capers. He introduced an unsigned selfhood (without age, race, culture, gender, etc.) which remains as a merely formal act of knowing the certainty of its existence, and from this base derived all philosophically relevant ‘truths’. This is not merely a crude description, but a dangerous one to wit. Metaphysics has never been neutral or tame—it has always carried ethical and political implications. Their echo is heard in the isolated, self-interested Hobbesian subject, which steps into society only as a means of realizing its own narrow, private interests (while every human interaction is understood as inherently antagonistic). To this day this project of fragmentation has not been overcome: the competitive individualism of capitalist ideology goes hand in hand with the alienated rivals struggling to maximize market profits.

With what tools are we to subvert this pathologically splintering vision, which declares selfishness a self-evident and natural occurrence, while regarding the continuous struggle for upward mobility within the hierarchy as imperative? We firstly require a resignification of selfhood, ceasing to view the I as a singular and autonomous entity. We must accentuate its relationality and interdependence: interconnectedness precedes the very emergence of interiority. For Levinas, the presence of *the Other within the same*¹ is not a contingent or arbitrary possibility, but an inevitability. In place of the encapsulated subject stands the inseparability of *I–Thou*. Levinas suggests we understand the subject as sub-jectedness (from the Latin *sub-jectum*), where the word “I” originally means: *here I am, present, responsible for everyone and for everything*. Yet, does an ethics confined to the immediacy of face-to-face encounter—along the *I–Thou* axis—offer the conceptual resources to think solidarity or the struggle for a more just society? If I extend care only to the singular Other, the concrete individual, and never to a group, to

1 Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being: Or Beyond Essence*, p. 111.

an abstraction with which I have no one-to-one contact, the scope of my ethical action is drastically reduced—restricted to those with whom I coincide in space and time. Moreover, for Levinas, “judgment and justice are required from the moment the third party appears,”² and unconditional devotion to the Other entails acting as though the *I* and the *Thou* were utterly alone in the world. Therefore, the universality of justice places the Other in the accusative: the face becomes the object and instrument of an order, rather than occupying the vocative—the one addressed in the direct encounter, with infinite responsibility. Levinas thus privileges the relation of *I–Thou* over the one of *I–We*. Nevertheless, despite these limitations, Levinas’s insistence that one becomes a subject only through ethical practice—rather than taking subjectivity as a given starting point for philosophy (Descartes³)—offers a good starting point from which to dismantle the model of the self-coincident, autarkic atom. The next step, however, is to show that we are already and always within a network of relations. There is no autonomous decision to “enter” the community as though it were a pragmatic contract, undertaken because it ultimately benefits us most. This is a mechanical and instrumental conception. To articulate what our “I” is at all, we require ongoing interactions within a community. Caring for others, taking responsibility for them, is not an arbitrary choice, but the inescapable consequence of our rootedness in a world shared with others. Subjectivity emerges by opening toward the *we*, rather than remaining enclosed within the *I*.

Solidarity as a Disentanglement from the *Conatus*

What is the *conatus*? In Spinoza, the *conatus* designates the tendency of each individual thing to maintain its own being—an impulse toward self-preservation, toward sustaining.⁴ *Conatus* is affirmed through active affects (such as joy) that enhance life-power, and is diminished through passive affects (such as sadness). Therefore, for Spinoza, the task of ethics is to transform passive affects into active ones: to overcome inertia and resistance, and to increase one’s powers and capacities. Moral judgment does not occupy a primary position: we do not desire something because we judge it to be good; rather, we judge it to be good because we desire it. Accordingly, moral demands are not imposed upon *conatus*; on the contrary, it is the vital force itself that constitutes the moral criterion—similar to

2 Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre Nous: On Thinking-of-the-Other*, p. 202.

3 René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and Replies*, p. 18.

4 E3p7d.

Nietzsche's claim that "the good" is everything that enhances the feeling of power, the Will to Power, the power itself.⁵

However, does the *conatus* ever encounter a wall it cannot break through? What is the force opposing it? My thesis is that it is the cohesive power of solidarity. With it we say: *I am ready and able to help others*. To disentangle from the *conatus*, to invert it, means accentuating a bond with others before a bond to my own body. Is this not what happened at the student protests in Serbia in 2024/25? A recognition of the other in its vulnerability and a mobilization of solidarity as a political force? Nevertheless, for whom is it that we have solidarity, and why? Is it a question of identification with a particular social group, and hence a signaling that *an attack on one of us is an attack on all*? The mere recognition of one's self as belonging to some collective cannot be enough. It is of vital significance that I bracket myself, and commit to the common goal.⁶ To have solidarity is not the same as being a canny, calculating agent operating with a logic of exchange in the background ("a favor for a favor"). Caring for another is not equivalent to a reciprocal exchange of good will. Furthermore, a narrow reduction of solidarity to a belonging to a particular social group remains politically impotent—without the inclusion of a broader social front, it makes no sense to speak of serious changes. Thus, for example, student protests must evolve into broader, civic protests. A space is needed that is hospitable to difference, rather than merely remaining within an identity core. To demonstrate that we care even when what is at stake does not impact us directly is the true meaning of engagement.

Why Demonstrations?

The regime in Serbia aims to naturalize corruption, to turn politics into a reality show, declare knowledge elitist, while casting a party membership as the equivalent of a university diploma. To build, in the face of such a regime, a front of continuous resistance, erasing all leaders and establishing mutual protection and aid as priorities is material proof that *another way is possible*. To capture a public space is to show that democracy does not begin and end with the act of voting. It is the revitalization of an idea of collective action and an unconditional demand for justice. A protest gathering is not only an expression of civic dissatisfaction or a plea to those in positions of power to realize conditions for a more livable life. Participants, without the institutions (which are by now in a terminal

5 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, p. 42.

6 Andrea Sangiovanni and Juri Viehoff, "Solidarity in Social and Political Philosophy."

stage of hibernation), create an alternative world in the streets, one in which they resist injustice, stand alongside one another, and build non-oppressive modes of life together. The principal instrument of survival for the ruling party is coercion: private business owners who supported the movement had their shops shuttered; professors who stood with the students saw their salaries docked; public sector employees face dismissal should they speak out against the regime. In response to these mechanisms of enforced obedience, funds were established to collect financial donations, while lawyers offered free legal aid to those targeted by disciplinary proceedings and to arrested demonstrators. The practice of selfless sharing has become virtually emblematic of the 2024/25 uprising (for instance, during extensive marches across Serbia, local residents welcomed the marchers as liberators and heroes, offering them food, water, and shelter). Through the mobilization of solidarity, a world beyond the reach of fear is being built. That is the litmus test when it comes to the question of whether one ought to have faith in a movement: do its methods, actions, and internal organization embody the principles with the lack of which it charges the present regime? Does it present a rupture of the political imagination, pushing the boundaries of what is thinkable and possible, or is it merely an attempt to replace one oligarch with another?

Vulnerability and Resistance

To take part in the demonstrations means voluntarily intensifying one's vulnerability by exposing oneself to possible violence. As Judith Butler notes, *vulnerability and resistance occur simultaneously*.⁷ The protester at once feels endangered and struggles against this endangerment. I will note here that violence is not exhaustively accounted for by its dramatic physical manifestations (which were abundant in Serbia, spanning police brutality, beatings, all the way to people being run over by cars as a means of forcibly breaking up a road blockade).

Violence possesses a virtual dimension—as a threat, as the potential for its actualization. Graeber interprets the notion of “force” as a euphemistic way to refer to violence: “the ability to call up people dressed in uniforms, willing to hit others over the head with wooden sticks.”⁸ This endows power with efficacy even without its immediate exercise. In the context of confronting demonstrators, the arbitrariness of targets is what amplifies fear. There is no clear causal chain; it is enough simply to have been in the “wrong place at the wrong time.” By resisting injustice,

7 Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 141.

8 David Graeber, *The Utopia of Rules*, p. 56.

we ourselves become the targets of that injustice in the form of arrests, political prosecution, deportation, redundancy or the docking of pay. But to retreat from the resistance is the same as saying *yes* to the *status quo* and to the prolonging of an uncertain existence. When it comes to organizing against systemic repression, the border separating the *I* from the *We* becomes foggy. The agony of separation and pseudo-autarkic individuality is overcome. Butler offered a remarkable illustration: “there are certain photographs of the injury or destruction of bodies in war, for example, that we are often forbidden to see precisely because there is a fear that this body will feel something about what those other bodies underwent, or that this body, in its sensory comportment outside itself, will not remain enclosed, monadic, and individual.”⁹

Was it not precisely that visceral apprehension of injustice inflicted upon another’s body that ignited the wave of university blockades across Serbia? In its initial gesture, the catalyst was not so much resistance to a corrupt regime as it was an expression of solidarity with the students of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts who, during a peaceful commemorative gathering in honor of those killed in the collapse of the Novi Sad canopy, were assaulted by officials of the ruling party and hired thugs.¹⁰ Following their decision to initiate a blockade, students from other higher education institutions joined them in an act of support. To refuse silence in the face of violent crackdowns on demonstrators is to defend the very right to peaceful assembly. In such circumstances, suspending the educational process becomes a declaration that the values championed by the academic community are not merely professed, but enacted.

The Public-Private Continuum

If we graft the modern meaning of the word *idiot* (“ignorant, stupid person”) onto the ancient meaning of the word (gr. ἰδιώτης, “a private person, one who does not engage in politics”), we get a suggestive marker for dismantling the private/political difference, i.e., the public/private divide. Why is it important to demonstrate the vacuousness of the illusory disparity between these concepts? Let us consider the side-effects of Kant’s demarcation between the private and the public use of reason. In “What Is Enlightenment?” Kant writes that, within the confines of our duties, we ought to be obedient (privately), and that if we disagree with some order,

9 Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory*, p. 149.

10 Akademija za likovnu umetnost i dizajn, *Statement of the Plenum of the Faculty of Fine Arts*, p. 1.

we are free to write a text (publicly).¹¹ Let us translate this to the context of certain contemporary occasions: a policeman receives an order to invade a university space and break the student blockade. He is not allowed to opine openly whether this is right or not. The task is to be completed without further comments. Kant's suggestion, however, is that, having beaten both students and citizens with his nightstick and having vacated the workplace, it is that policeman's *civic duty* to take up a paper and pen and write a text about how all of this was wrong and how it is actually the role of the police to protect citizens. This illustration exposes the full extent of the absurdity into which one inevitably descends when following the logic of division into two autonomous regions. Perhaps even more importantly, it demonstrates how the insistence on a strict divide between the public and the private undermines the very possibility of resistance. As long as we merely reason as much as we like but remain obedient,¹² i.e., we are *just doing our jobs*, without direct ethical decision-making (except for the *post-festum act* of idle scribbling), the prospects for challenging systemic injustice are reduced to a minimum.

The decisive feature of the democratic process is, as Rancière notes, precisely its overcoming of the rift between the particular and the universal, the private and the public.¹³ What would this mean? We know how this distinction has served as a tool to systematically exclude women from politics—they were members of the family circle, the home, reserved for the kitchen and the raising of children, i.e., a source of ceaseless unpaid and unacknowledged labor, relegated to the “private” sphere and denied inclusion in the “universal” sphere of citizenry. Furthermore, this very separation presupposes that togetherness, touch, and entanglement with others is a surplus, an emergent state. But we find ourselves in inter-connect-edness even before we gain self-consciousness. The picture of an enclosed and apolitical, independent and private field which precedes all contact with society, ideology, or the public is unconvincing, to say the least. Let us recall a few scenes from the 2023 film *The Zone of Interest*. A married couple building their family idyll right next to Auschwitz: a neatly mowed lawn, a pool for the children and but a single thin wall covered in a rose bush, which separates this blessed exclave from war crimes. At first glance, they've successfully delineated the spheres of interest: the husband returns from his genocidal activities into the private space. However, scenes in which the family remains stubbornly indifferent to an infant's unceasing cries, or in which a younger brother is locked in the greenhouse while his siblings imitate the hiss of the gas chamber serve to suggest that perhaps the

11 Immanuel Kant, “An Answer to the Question: ‘What Is Enlightenment?’,” p. 55.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

13 Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, p. 62.

barrier of the wall is not so air tight. It creeps in and erodes the everyday banality, demonstrating the impossibility of insulating oneself from the political.

Toward a Conclusion—Are We the Avantgarde?

Rawles defined civil disobedience as the “public, non-violent, yet consciously political act against the law, which is usually carried out with the aim of bringing about change in the laws and policies of the government.”¹⁴ Can we say that the ongoing struggle in Serbia is a form of civil disobedience? No. What’s more, the demand is so elementary: for the existing laws to be carried out, for the guilty to answer for their crimes. Hence, it is a project of reanimating the constitution, not of reconfiguring it. Further, the students are not a univocal group, with certain quarters courting right-wing jargon, the ideology of blood and soil, nationalism, a return to the Kosovo myth (most clearly seen in the speeches delivered at the Vidovdan protest on 28 June 2025). The movement is also reactionary insofar as it is not immune to the effects of the prejudice (which the regime champions and proclaims loudly) that all members of the opposition are dirty and corrupt. Why are they unclean? Because contact with politics *per se* is stigmatized. If the students were to enter that arena, then they would no longer be truthful, honest or just—they would become contaminated. In this way, their hands are tied, and the movement reaches a stalemate.

But is there any subversion within the confines of this rebellion? Absolutely. First, the plenary processes,¹⁵ as well as the citizens’ assemblies, have become sites which demonstrate *that representational democracy is not a pleonasm but an oxymoron*.¹⁶ Where there is no shepherd, power diffuses. The method of collective decision-making and free discussion legitimizes the actions themselves: these are not the whims of an elite but rather the result of joined forces. Resistance against corrupt despots has become the basis for an awareness of the possibility for rethinking political spaces. This is the understanding that we are not inactive contemplators and impotent critics of the *status quo*, but rather those actively and purposefully participating in the construction of social reality. What is the most precious legacy of the student rebellion of 2024/25? The awakening of a political enthusiasm,

14 John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 320.

15 The plenary is a tool of direct democracy. It is an assembly in which students participate equally in discussion and decision-making. Horizontally structured and leaderless, the plenum is conceived as a practice of self-management. It enables localized engagement in the articulation of strategies for the continuation of the struggle.

16 Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, p. 53. Emphasis my own.

activism, an ethos of resistance, the desire to take our political destiny into our own hands, the blooming of a consciousness which sings: *Let the future in a few words lie, and let those words be: no master have I!*¹⁷ We do not know what the epilogue will bring, but even this intermezzo has seen a departure out of collective apathy, a recognition of vulnerability as an ontological givenness, one which we do not strive to overcome, but to render livable through solidarity and networks of mutual aid.

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17 "Sa dve reči budućnost se stvara, a te dve reči su: nemam gospodara." This verse, attributed to J. J. Zmaj, became one of the emblematic slogans of the student protests in Serbia in 2024/25. Trans. ed.

Svoboda med politično pravico in etično dolžnostjo: primer Antigone

Angela Bogdanovska

Povzetek

Članek obravnava Sofoklejevo Antigono kot figuro upora proti oblasti, ki deluje onkraj politične racionalnosti in utemeljuje svoje dejanje v notranji etični dolžnosti. Njena odločitev izhaja iz avtonomne moralne volje, ravnati v skladu s tem, kar dojema kot prav, ne glede na posledice ali politično korist. V osredju članka je vprašanje, ali je svoboda zgolj politična pravica ali tudi etična dolžnost. Skozi psihoanalizo, zgodovinsko interpretacijo in filozofsko analizo skušam pokazati, da Antigonin upor presega to, kar imenujem »tradicionalna« politična dejanja, ter s tem vzpostavlja paralelo z današnjimi družbeno-političnimi razmerami in rezistenco mladih proti represivnim režimom. Prispevek zagovarja interpretacijo Antigone kot paradigme posameznika, čigar upor je radikalno etičen in hkrati apolitičen – posameznika, ki verjame, da je to njegova notranja dolžnost do resnice, dostojanstva, ljudstva in samega sebe.

Ključne besede: Antigona, politična filozofija, svoboda, upor, psihoanaliza

Summary

The article discusses Sophocles' Antigone as a figure of resistance against authority, acting beyond political rationality and grounding her actions in an inner ethical duty. Her decision stems from an autonomous moral will to act according to what she perceives as right, regardless of consequences or political advantage. At the center of the analysis lies the question: Is freedom merely a political right, or also an existential duty? Through psychoanalysis, historical interpretation, and philosophical analysis, the article seeks to

demonstrate that Antigone's resistance transcends traditional political acts, thereby establishing a parallel with today's socio-political landscape and the growing resistance of youth against repressive regimes. The article defends an interpretation of Antigone as a paradigm of the individual whose resistance is radically ethical and simultaneously apolitical – of the individual who believes that such resistance is oriented by an inner duty to truth, dignity, the people, and oneself.

Keywords: Antigone, political philosophy, freedom, resistance, psychoanalysis

Uvod

Kadar se ulice polnijo z mladimi, lačnimi boljšega jutri, ki kot odziv na sistemsko represijo artikulirajo odločen »ne«, se z vse večjo intenzivnostjo in vso zgodovinsko težo odpira vprašanje etike upora. To vprašanje nas vodi k premisleku o naravi svobode – ne kot institucionalizirane državljske pravice, temveč kot dolžnosti, ki presega oblastne zapovedi in izhaja iz notranje vesti posameznika. V tem kontekstu upor ne deluje v službi določenega političnega programa (čeprav si režimski »vojaki« pogosto prizadevajo njegovo ozadje obtežiti s političnimi elementi), temveč izraža etično stališče: prizadevanje za doseg višjega smotra.

V to luč postavimo lik Antigone, ki ga je Sofoklej oblikoval v podobi brezčasnega človeškega upora, izhajajoč iz brezpogojne zvestobe osebni moralni resnici. Antigona ne zahteva spremembe zakonov ali politične nadvlade. Kot taka pooseblja etični subjekt, čigar dejanje predstavlja etično odgovornost, s katero varuje človeško dostojanstvo, ne glede na politične posledice. V tem primeru gre hkrati za dostojanstvo mrtvih kot žrtev nekega sistema in za dostojanstvo živih, ki pristajajo na nemoralno normo ter s svojim kvietizmom participirajo v krivičnem sistemu. Njena odločitev, da kljub eksplicitni prepovedi oblasti pokoplje svojega brata Polinejka, razkriva tragični prelom med zakonom države in individualno moralno dolžnostjo posameznika. Antigonina zvestoba lastnim načelom, ki jih dojema kot višje od državnega zakona, preseže okvir politične racionalnosti¹ in izpostavi mejo, kjer oblast izgubi svojo legitimnost.

Kdo je Antigona in zakaj jo označujemo kot simbol moralne katarze, ki izhaja iz zatirajočega reda? Antigona je hči kralja Teb, Ojdipa, ki je nehote izpolnil usodno prerokbo, da bo ubil svojega očeta in se poročil z lastno materjo Jokasto. Antigona,

1 Politčna racionalnost meri na način oblastnega odločanja, ki temelji na vzdrževanju družbenega reda, zakonitosti in učinkovitosti. V kontekstu *Antigone* jo lahko razumemo kot način razmišljanja, ki presoja dejanja glede na njihov pomen za ohranitev statusa quo, ne oziraje se na posameznikovo notranjo etično presojo. Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *Predavanja o Estetiki: dramska poezija*, str. 76 in 79–81.

njena sestra Ismena ter brata Eteoklej in Polinejk so potomci te tragične zveze, ki je porušila strukture družinskega, božanskega in političnega reda. Ojdipova usoda je razkrila temeljni zlom v etičnem in simbolnem redu,² ki se konča z njegovo kaznijo, vendar se kot dediščina prenese na njegove potomce. Ta zlom zaznamuje tudi Antigono odločitev, ki ne odraža zgolj osebne volje, temveč tudi tragično usodo. Slavoj Žižek opozarja, da Ojdip s svojim dejanjem v bistvu razbije jasne vloge očeta, sina in brata, kar po Žižku povzroči kratki stik v generacijski identiteti, ki razkrinka tisto, kar naj bi zagotavljal simbolni red: kontinuiteto, smisel in avtoriteto.³

Zahvaljujoč grškemu dramatik Sofokleju je oblikovana izrazita literarna podoba teh mitskih figur, ki predstavljajo odlično izhodišče za psihoanalitično ter socialnofilozofsko interpretacijo. Od tragedije *Kralj Ojdip* prek *Ojdipa v Kolonu* nas zgodba pripelje do *Antigone*, ki se odvija v Tebah kmalu po bratomorni vojni, v kateri oba brata, Eteoklej in Polinejk, izgubita svoje življenje zavoljo oblasti. Novi tebanski vladar Kreon, Jokastin brat in Antigonin stric, izda neusmiljen državni odlok: Eteoklej, ki je padel kot branilec mesta, bo pokopan z vsemi častmi, medtem ko bo Polinejk, ki je veljal za izdajalca in napadalca, ostal nepokopan, izpostavljen naravnemu razkroju in posmehu sveta. Antigona, sestra obeh padlih, se kljub javni prepovedi in grožnji smrtne kazni odloči ravnati v skladu z občutkom notranje dolžnosti in pokopati Polinejka. S tem zavrne konformizem in pokorščino družbenemu redu, ki ga uveljavlja Kreon, in utemelji svoje stališče v zvestobi družinskemu dolgu, saj ga razume kot božanski zakon, tj. kot višjega od ukazov smrtnikov. To se razkrije v trenutku, ko brez omahovanja prevzame odgovornost za svoje dejanje, rekoč: »Živim zato, da ljubim, ne da črtim.«⁴

Čeprav drama in njena osrednja vsebina izhajata iz mitološke pripovedi in družbenih okoliščin antične Grčije, ti presegata svojo zgodovinsko umeščenost. V zadnjem stoletju sta primerjalna književnost in psihoanaliza postali osrednji figuri poglobljenega preučevanja konflikta med posameznikom in oblastjo. V

2 Simbolni red označuje sistem različnih pomenov, zakonov, norm in razmerij, ki posamezniku omogočajo, da razume svojo vlogo v družbi ter deluje znotraj njenih struktur. V kontekstu *Antigone* ta red zajema družinske odnose, božanski zakon kot moralni temelj in zakonodajo. Zlom simbolnega reda pomeni razpad teh struktur in izgubo stabilnega okvirja. V tem smislu Ojdipova usoda ne predstavlja le osebne tragedije, temveč destrukcija reda, ki se kot dediščina prenese na naslednje generacije. Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *Oris filozofije pravice*, §§135–140.

3 Ojdip ne ubije svojega očeta, ampak osebo, ki jo prepozna kot tujca. To povzroči veliko praznino v simbolni funkciji Očeta – njegova avtoriteta ni povezana z biološko reprodukcijo, ampak z njegovo simbolno vlogo. Gre za t. i. implozijo simbolne generacijske logike, pri kateri se vloge očeta, sina in brata izbrišejo, simbolna struktura, ki jih definira, pa razpade (če nekega človeka ni mogoče prepoznati kot očeta, simbolni red popolnoma izgubi svojo notranjo koherenco: sin postane mož, oče pa brat). Slavoj Žižek, *Krščanski ateizem*, str. 134–141. Cf. tudi Žižkovo lastno verzijo *Antigone*.

4 Sofoklej, *Antigona*, vrstica 513.

nadaljevanju članka sledi analiza konceptov, prek katerih sta filozofija in psihoanaliza zlasti skozi Hegla, Lacana in njune sodobne interprete osvetlili razmerje med etiko, željo, zakonom in politično racionalnostjo (s »tradicionalnimi« političnimi dejanji oziroma institucionaliziranimi in načrtovanimi oblikami delovanja v okviru obstoječega političnega reda, kot so volitve, parlamentarna razprava, zakonodajni postopki, diplomacija ali javni protesti z jasnim političnim ciljem), tragedija *Antigona* pa služi kot konceptualna zasnova teh odnosov.

Moralno neskladje kot politični problem: Heglova analiza konflikta etičnih sil

Heglovo razumevanje tragedije predstavlja eno izmed najbolj vplivnih razlag tega literarnega žanra. Po njegovi teoriji izvirna oblika tragedije temelji na dejstvu, da sta nasprotujoči si etični sili v konfliktu enako upravičeni. Vsaka stran je v svojem namenu in značaju etično utemeljena, a svojo pozitivno resnico lahko uveljavi le tako, da krši pravico druge strani. Prav zato vsaka od njiju neizogibno zapade v krivdo, ki ni posledica osebne pokvarjenosti, temveč etičnega delovanja samega. Čeprav se zdi, da tragedija prinaša le uničenje, Hegel v njej vidi obliko etične zmage. Skozi propad enostranskih stališč posameznih likov se razkrije globlja potreba po združitvi nasprotih si polov. Subjekti ne propadejo zato, ker bi bili moralno napačni, temveč zato, ker njihova volja, čeprav čvrsta in legitimna, ostaja enostranska in brez celostnega pogleda.⁵ V tem smislu tragedija pokaže, da se etični red vzpostavi šele skozi dejanje, ki nasprotne etične vidike pripelje do njihovega skrajnega izraza.

Heglova analiza *Antigone* opredeljuje tragedijo kot etični konflikt dveh nasprotujočih si sil, pri čemer absolutizacija katerekoli izmed strani neizogibno vodi v propad obeh. Hegel tako ne idealizira nobenega izmed likov: ravnanje Antigone in Kreonta obravnava enakovredno in z distanco, pri čemer izpostavi njune tako pozitivne kot negativne poteze. Oba lika namreč utelešata specifični etični sili – naravno (družinsko) in duhovno (državno) –, katerih spopad razkrije, zakaj je do tragedije sploh prišlo.⁶

Na Antigono se Hegel pogosto sklicuje pri obravnavi temeljnih pojmov, kot so moč, ljubezen in *patos*.⁷ Pojem *patos* (πάθος) izhaja iz starogrške filozofske in reto-

5 Hegel, *Predavanja o estetiki: dramska poezija*, str. 57–68.

6 Fabio Tononi, »Sophocles' Antigone: Philosophy, Politics and Psychoanalysis«, str. 128; Miriam Leonard, »Antigone, the Political and the Ethics of Psychoanalysis«, str. 138.

7 Tononi, »Sophocles' Antigone«, str. 127.

rične tradicije ter v osnovnem pomenu označuje izkustvo, čustveno vzgibnost, trpljenje in usodno neizogibnost. Hegel poudarja, da patos ni zgolj čustvo oz. strast, temveč označuje globljo, notranjo gonilno silo – duševno ali etično moč, ki subjekt vodi k dejanju in nosi ontološko težo človeške eksistence.⁸ V tem smislu lik Antigone predstavlja paradigmatški primer patosa, saj pooseblja notranje utemeljeno racionalno moč, ki presega meje univerzalne etične resnice. Hegel pravi, da njena odločitev ne izhaja iz sentimenta ali naključnega čustva, temveč iz nujnosti, ki jo narekuje njena notranja moralna zavest.⁹

Hegelova interpretacija *Antigone* odpira še nadaljnje ključno pojmovanje naravne nravnosti (*natürliche Sittlichkeit*), ki jo razume kot spontano, neposredno obliko etične zavesti, utemeljeno v družbenih odnosih, krvnem sorodstvu in moralni intuiciji posameznika.¹⁰ V tragediji se to izraža skozi Antigonino zvestobo bratu in družinski dolžnosti, ki stoji v opreki z univerzalnim zakonom države.

Le v nravnosti, pravu in državi je prisotno nekaj trajnega in trdnega, kar ostaja in presega minljivost posameznega življenja.¹¹ Tukaj lahko prepoznamo bistvo nravnosti – pravičnost in racionalno svobodo, ki deluje v skladu z razumom in skupnim dobrim ter se ohranja v obliki pravnega reda kot njegova institucionalna oblika. Takšen red ne obstaja le v zunanjem svetu, temveč tudi sam v sebi, v svoji vsebini; ne temelji na osebnih željah, temveč je povsem neodvisen od posameznikov in njihovega značaja.¹²

V ospredju tega sistema je neposredna pravna (etična) struktura, ki vsebuje protislovja in razkriva absolutistično enostranskost, ki jo utelešata tako Antigona kot Kreon. Enoznačna zavezanost posameznemu nravnemu/etičnemu principu, ki v sebi skriva notranje protislovje, vodi k neizogibnemu tragičnemu izidu.¹³ Antigonina zvestoba božanskemu zakonu, zakoreninjenem v skrivnosti ljubezni in družinskih vezeh, nasprotuje Kreontovi zavezanosti človeškemu zakonu, ki uteleša javni red in avtoriteto mestne države.¹⁴ A ta dva zakona nista preprosto v nasprotju – gre za dve plati iste pravne substance, ki naj bi sobivali, a posameznik

8 G. F. W. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, zv. 1, str. 232.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*, str. 546, 555.

11 *Ibid.*, str. 459.

12 *Ibid.*, str. 182.

13 Eleonora Caramelli, »Antigone and the Phenomenology of Spirit. Between Literary Source (vv. 925–928) and Philosophical Reading«, str. 288; Tononi, »Sophocles' Antigone«, str. 128.

14 Hegel, *Aesthetics*, zv. 1, str. 221, 464.

zaradi subjektivne omejenosti vedno vidi le eno resnico.¹⁵ Tragični patos izhaja ravno iz te slepe pege, tj. iz zavedanja, da posameznik, ki sledi svojemu notranjemu prepričanju, hkrati prezre bistveno drugo stran celote. Zato Hegel tragičnosti ne vidi v zunanji sili usode, temveč v neizbežnem soočenju posamezne zavesti z učinkom njenega enostranskega dejanja, ki iz človeka naredi junaka ali žrtev.¹⁶ V tej luči se Antigona razkrije kot nepopustljivo utelešenje moči notranje nujnosti – ne kot pasivna žrtev, temveč kot dejavna figura etičnega odpora. In prav zaradi tega Heglova Antigona ostaja simbol sodobnih uporov: figura, ki razkriva meje avtoritetnih zakonov in s svojo notranjo legitimnostjo artikulira univerzalni poziv k pravičnosti, ki ga institucionalna oblast pogosto ne more (ali noče) slišati. Tako kot Antigona uteleša zvestobo notranjemu zakonu, Kreon uteleša nepopustljivost državne oblasti. Tu Hegel namreč razvije idejo, da vska stran v konfliktu tragedije predstavlja upravičeno, a enostransko etično pozicijo (pieteta oziroma državna oblast). Antigona kot kraljevska hči in zaročenka Haimona živi znotraj Kreontovega zakona, ki pa ga s svojim dejanjem zavrača, hkrati pa tudi Kreon kot oče in soprog ravna v nasprotju s pieteto, ki jo dolguje lastni družini.¹⁷ Zato oba tragično propadeta, ker vztrajata pri svoji poziciji brez priznanja in upoštevanja drugega načela: »Antigona umre, še preden se je mogla razveseliti poročnega rajanja, a tudi Kreon je bil kaznovan s smrtjo svojega sina in svoje soproge, ki sta se ubila, prvi zaradi Antigonine, druga zaradi Haimonove smrti.«¹⁸

Antigona kot figura čiste želje: Lacanova etika

V nasprotju s Heglovo dialektično interpretacijo, ki vidi v *Antigoni* spopad dveh enakovrednih etičnih sil, Lacan postavi Antigono v povsem drugačen kontekst – struktura tragedije je pri njem vezana na logiko želje, ne na konflikt zakonov. V svojem seminarju *Etika psihoanalize* (1959–60) se Lacan posebej posveti Antigoni in njenem pomenu ter tragičnosti: »Vsakdo se lahko ob vsakem sporu, ki nas razdvaja v našem razmerju do zakona, ki v imenu skupnosti nastopa kot pravičen, vselej skliče na Antigono.«¹⁹

Lacan vidi Antigono kot osrednjo točko tragedije predvsem zaradi afekta, ki ga povzroča v bralcu, saj oblikuje percepcijo, skozi katero se konstituira želja. Ni le

15 Caramelli, »Antigone and the Phenomenology of Spirit«, str. 289.

16 *Ibid.*, str. 289–290; Hegel, *Aesthetics*, zv. 1, str. 157–158.

17 Hegel, *Predavanja o estetiki: dramska poezija*, str. 80–82.

18 *Ibid.*, str. 81.

19 Jacques Lacan, *Etika psihoanalize*, str. 241.

oseba s svojim stališčem ali moralno zahtevo, temveč simbolna figura, ki nas fascinira na nezavedni ravni.²⁰ Lacana interpretacija Antigone premesti poudarek s političnega ali moralnega konflikta, z vprašanj družine in moralističnih argumentov na psihoanalitično vprašanje želje, pogleda in meje subjektivnosti. Antigona tako postane sredstvo našega soočenja z lastnim nezavednim, ki nas vznemirja, privlači in potiska čez meje osebnega udobja.²¹

Zakaj je po Lacanu Antigona utelešenje čiste želje? Antigonin pokop Polinejka predstavlja vodilno etično dejanje prav zato, ker je povsem ločeno od običajne moralne logike. Etika po Lacanu ne pomeni podrejanja zunanjim pravilom, temveč zvestobo tistemu notranjemu vzgibu, ki določa subjektovo željo – tudi za ceno samouničenja. To nepopustljivo vztrajanje pri lastni resnici pa uteleša Antigona. Ne deluje v imenu družine, zakona, narave ali religije, ampak zgolj v imenu svoje želje, ki nima racionalne osnove, a je absolutna.²²

Za Lacana Antigonina želja ni le močna, temveč je sublimna – tisto, kar človeka postavi na rob med življenjem in smrtjo. Ko Antigona izbere pokop Polinejka, to ni le dejanje spoštovanja, temveč gesta, ki vstopi v območje, kjer subjekt prekorači mejo oblastnega reda: »Od trenutka dalje, ko je prekoračeno to, kar pri njej uteleša vstop v, če smemo tako reči, simetričnost tega področja onstran, med življenjem in smrtjo, med fizično smrtjo in izbrisom biti, od tega trenutka Antigona, ne da bi bila že mrtva, ni več škoda k živim.«²³ Želja, s katero se je Antigona poistovetila in pri kateri bo vztrajala ne glede na posledice, postane njena usoda, kar pomeni, da nepovratno vstopi v prostor onkraj simbolnega, kjer njena notranja resnica dobi vidno, materialno obliko. Lacan to vidi kot utelešenje etične konsekvence – subjekt, ki ne le izreče resnico, temveč ji s telesom in življenjem sledi do konca.²⁴

Če Hegel vidi Antigonino etično stališče kot enostransko utelešenje načelne sile, ki pozabi na svojo drugo polovico, pa Lacan v njej vidi herojsko figuro brez zunanje reference, ki izpostavlja željo kot osrednjo gonilno etično silo. Antigonin lik kot utelešenje »čiste želje« in njeno bivanje »med dvema smrtma« kažeta, da je etika v Lacanovi perspektivi vztrajanje pri lastni želji – točki, ki strukturira subjekt kot tak.²⁵

20 *Ibid.*, str. 246.

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*, str. 280–283; Leonard, »Antigone, the Political«, str. 142–143.

23 Lacan, *Etika psihoanalize*, str. 280.

24 Leonard, »Antigone, the Political«, str. 143–144.

25 Lacan razlikuje med resnico, ki je vedno nepopolna, delno izrekljiva in diskurzivna, ter željo, ki je za subjekt »transcendentalna«. Zato etika v tem okviru ne pomeni iskanje resnice kot cilja, temveč nepopuščanje glede lastne želje. Cf. Lacan, *Etika psihoanalize*, str. 321–324.

Zaključek

Vprašanje, ali je svoboda zgolj politična pravica ali tudi etična dolžnost, v *Antigoni* dobi dramatično in univerzalno obliko. Antigonino dejanje ni akt klasičnega upora, temveč dejanje zvestobe, tiste brezpogojne zavezanosti etičnemu imperativu, ki posameznika zavezuje onkraj vsakršne družbene koristi. V tem prestopu iz simbolnega reda v zvestobo tistemu, kar se subjektu zdi etično nujno, Antigona ne zavrača družbe, temveč jo s svojim dejanjem opominja na tisti pozabljeni temelj svobode, ki ni zgolj politična pravica, temveč tudi dolžnost posameznika do lastne notranje resnice. Njen podvig razkrije, da je svoboda živa le toliko, kolikor si jo nekdo upa misliti kot dolžnost in je zanjo pripravljen tudi odgovarjati – ne pred zakonom, temveč pred samim seboj. Tovrstna gesta ni razširjena, temveč je redka, in vendar se vedno znova pojavlja tam, kjer se posamezniki odločijo za dejanje, ki nima politične koristi, a nosi moralno posledico, ki ne izhaja iz družbenega pritiska, temveč iz zvestobe lastni etični zavesti. Po Heglu gre tukaj za moralo (*Moralität*) kot obliko subjektivne volje, ki si prizadeva za dobro, a še ni v polnem soglasju z objektivnim redom (zunanje družbene in pravne norme).²⁶

Lacan te notranje volje in odgovornosti ne zavrne, temveč v njej prepozna etično gesto – vztrajanje pri želji, ki presega korist in veljavne simbolne zakonitosti. Antigonina gesta po njegovem ne vodi do katarze v aristotelskem pomenu očiščenja, temveč v konfrontacijo s tistim, kar je onkraj konteksta zakonitega in normativnega.²⁷ Ta interpretativna poteza pa ni v popolnem neskladju s Heglom. Prav nasprotno: Antigonin lik, kot ga interpretira Hegel, že nosi zasnovo tega, kar Lacan razvije kot etično nepopustljiv subjekt. Tako se Lacanova etika ne oddalji od Hegla, temveč ga retroaktivno še zaostri, ko pokaže, da tisto, kar Hegel imenuje *Moralität* (subjektivna, notranja dolžnost), v določenih okoliščinah ne ostaja le nepopolna raven, temveč se izkaže za samostojno in koherentno etično držo.

Antigonina zgodba tako še danes odzvanja v tišini tistih, ki v imenu pravice in svobode prestopajo meje – ne kot heroji, temveč kot nosilci vztrajne, notranje prepričanosti, da dostojanstvo ne potrebuje soglasja, temveč nepopustljivo zvestobo, ki ne popusti. Pri tem ne gre le za odgovornost in zvestobo, ki bi ju določale zunanje institucije, temveč za notranjo presojo etične meje, pri čemer je svoboda utemeljena v zavestnem razločevanju med načelom in manipulacijo ter ideološko legitimizacijo nasilja. V sodobnem političnem besednjaku se pogosto mobilizira jezik upora, in sicer tako, da si prisvaja pozicijo žrtve, da bi v imenu

26 Hegel, *Oris filozofije pravice*, §141.

27 Lacan, *Etika psihoanalize*, str. 241–243 in 253.

svobode legitimiziral mizoginijo, nasilje in degradacijo. Zato odgovornost ni zgolj individualna gesta, temveč sposobnost razločevanja med etičnim dejanjem in ideološko zlorabo.

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Jezik kot prostor boja: filozofija emancipacije žensk skozi jezikovne prakse

Nika Fabjan

Povzetek

Članek se opira na področje feministične filozofije jezika in obravnava jezik kot ontološki pogoj subjektivnosti ter kot prostor družbenega boja. Osredotoča se na razmerje med jezikom, bitjo in močjo ter analizira, kako specifične jezikovne prakse (med drugim tiste, ki ženske izključujejo ali utišajo) reproducirajo razmerja moči. Predstavi tudi emancipatorni potencial jezika, ki se uresničuje prek feminističnih intervencij v diskurz, ter nakaže možnosti za preoblikovanje subjektivnosti in skupnosti skozi transformacijo jezikovnih praks.

Ključne besede: feministična filozofija jezika, emancipacija žensk, patriarhalni diskurz, ontologija, subjektivnost, jezikovni upor

Summary

The article draws on feminist philosophy of language to explore language as an ontological condition of subjectivity and a space of social struggle. It focuses on the interplay between language, being, and power, examining how specific linguistic practices (including those that exclude or silence women) reproduce structures of domination. By highlighting the emancipatory potential of language as it unfolds through feminist interventions in discourse, it points to the transformative possibilities of subjectivity and community through reconfigured linguistic practices.

Keywords: feminist philosophy of language, women's emancipation, patriarchal discourse, ontology, subjectivity, linguistic resistance

Uvod

Jezik ni zgolj nevtrarno orodje komunikacije, temveč v sebi nosi družbene norme, vrednote in razmerja moči. V patriarhalnih družbah jezik pogosto odraža ter utrjuje moške norme in marginalizira ženske izkušnje ter identitete. To se kaže v različnih jezikovnih praksah, med katerimi so najopaznejše uporaba moškega spola kot nevtralnega, pomanjkanje ženskih izrazov za določene poklice ali lastnosti in stereotipne predstave o ženskah v jeziku. Po drugi strani pa lahko jezik predstavlja prostor boja za svobodo in emancipacijo žensk: jezik je lahko orodje upora proti patriarhalnim normam, feministične filozofije jezika pa razkrivajo in podvržejo kritiki prevladujoče jezikovne strukture.¹

Feministične jezikovne reforme si prizadevajo za spremembo teh struktur z uvažanjem spolno nevtralnih izrazov, preimenovanjem poklicev in družbenih funkcij ter zavedanjem o moči jezika pri oblikovanju družbenih percepcij. Primeri spolno nevtralnih besed in izrazov v slovenščini bi bili »oseba« ali »vsakdo«, podobno vrednost pa ima tudi raba neosebnihi glagolskih konstrukcij. V slovenskem jeziku na področju poklicev in družbenih funkcij opažamo uporabo dvojnih oblik (»učiteljice in učitelji« namesto »učitelji«), uporabo ženskih oblik poklicev, ki so bile prej izpuščene ali negativno zaznamovane (npr. »direktorica«, »ministrica«, »županja«²), in nasploh diskurz o jezikovni vidnosti žensk, ki poudarja enakovrednost moških in ženskih oblik poklicev (na primer enakovredna uporaba izrazov »zdravnik« in »zdravnica«).³ Vendar pa so te reforme pogosto deležne odpora, saj izzivajo globoko zakoreninjene norme in prepričanja o jeziku in spolu. V sodobnem kontekstu digitalnih medijev in družbenih omrežij se pojavljajo nove oblike jezikovnega izražanja, ki omogočajo ženskam, da ustvarjajo in delijo svoje zgodbe ter izkušnje zunaj tradicionalnih medijev. To odpira nove možnosti za uporabo proti patriarhalnim jezikovnim strukturam in za oblikovanje bolj vključujočega in raznolikega jezikovnega prostora.

Ko govorimo o jeziku kot prostoru *boja*, imamo v mislih prostor simbolnih, diskurzivnih in materialnih praks, v katerih se spopadajo nasprotujoče si sile: hegemonija

1 Rastko Močnik denimo v članku o jezikovnih politikah prezre ontološko razsežnost jezika kot pogoja subjektivnosti. Feministične jezikovne intervencije niso samo partikularistična gesta znotraj kapitalizma, ampak poskus preoblikovanja simbolnega reda, ki ženskam omogoča govoriti kot subjektom. Boj za jezik ni le političen, temveč tudi ontološki: gre za možnost biti. Cf. Rastko Močnik, »Identitetna politika na univerzi«.

2 Je mar naključje, da so bile negativno zaznamovane ženske oblike predvsem tistih poklicev, kjer ženska zaseda vodilno ali avtoritativno vlogo?

3 Helena Dobrovoljc in Marko Stabej, »Jezikovne izbire v slovenskih smernicah za spolno občutljivo rabo jezika«, str. 374–381.

in odpor, izključevanje in prisvajanje, molk in govor. *Boj* v tem kontekstu ne pomeni konflikta v klasičnem, fizičnem smislu, temveč pomeni nenehno napetost med strukturami moči, ki določajo, kaj se sme izreči, kdo ima pravico do govora in kateri pomeni so legitimni, ter tistimi, ki te strukture izzivajo, preoblikujejo ali presegajo. Jezik je tako eno ključnih prizorišč tega boja – ne le kot sredstvo izražanja, temveč kot sistem, ki določa meje mišljenja in izrekljivega. Znotraj feministične filozofije se boj za jezik kaže kot boj za prepoznavnost ženskih subjektivnosti, za možnost govora iz lastne izkušnje in za razbitje jezikovnih norm, ki reproducirajo podrejene družbene vloge. Gre za boj, ki se odvija v vsakdanjih izrazih, institucionalnih poimenovanjih, literarnih formah in akademskih diskurzih – povsod tam, kjer jezik oblikuje našo zaznavo realnosti in naš položaj v njej. Na primer, če se v javnem diskurzu o voditeljih vedno uporablja izraz »direktor«, si večina ljudi pod tem izrazom predstavlja moškega, kar vpliva na zaznavo žensk kot manj primernih za vodstvene položaje.⁴ Podobno v literaturi prevladujoče moške perspektive oblikujejo našo predstavo o univerzalnih izkušnjah, medtem ko se ženske pripovedi pogosto dojema kot posebne, čustvene ali postranske.⁵ Zato govoriti o jeziku kot prostoru boja pomeni tudi razmišljati o jeziku kot orodju osvoboditve in preobrazbe.

Jezik ni zgolj sredstvo izražanja, temveč nosilec simbolnega nasilja: tistega nevidnega, a učinkovitega mehanizma, preko katerega se utrjuje dominacija. Kot patriarhalni instrument tako ne le izključuje, temveč normativno določa, kaj je mogoče izreči in kdo ima pravico do izrekanja. Pisati kot ženska v jeziku patriarhata pomeni spopadati se z lastno izločitvijo – a prav v tem spopadu vznikne možnost, da se jezik na novo rojeva.

V tem kontekstu lahko uporabimo Deleuzov koncept *manjšinskosti*, kot ga razvije v eseju »Je zajecjal...« in delu o Kafki.⁶ Deleuze opozori, da manjšinskosti ne gre razumeti kot preprosto rabo marginalnih ali »manjšinskih« vsebin, temveč kot formalno gesto, s katero se večinski jezik notranje razrahlja. Veliki avtorji, pravi Deleuze, svoj materni jezik naredijo tuj, pripravijo ga do tega, da zajeclja, se zatika, zdrsne.⁷ Podobno lahko razumemo feministični govor kot manjšinsko gesto, ki zareže v simbolni red in ga destabilizira od znotraj – ne tako, da bi preprosto

4 Število konkordanc besede »direktorica« načeloma ne sovпада z dejanskim številom žensk na vodstvenih položajih, saj je ta raba odvisna tudi od družbenih norm (ki lahko zavirajo ali spodbujajo uporabo ženskih oblik). Gre pa za nekakšen obojestranski mehanizem, kajti raba besede »direktorica« odraža prisotnost žensk v vodstvu in s tem oblikuje družbeno zaznavo vloge. Nuša Ščuka, *Spolno občutljiva raba jezika v spontanem formalnem javnem diskurzu*, str. 25–30.

5 Dobrovoljc in Stabej, »Jezikovne izbire v slovenskih smernicah«, str. 378.

6 Cf. Gilles Deleuze, »Je zajecjal...«; ter Gilles Deleuze in Félix Guattari, *Kafka: za manjšinsko književnost*.

7 Simon Hajdini, »Znova nič novega: Adorno, Deleuze, Beckett«, str. 188–191.

prevzela mesto v jeziku, temveč tako, da pokaže, da to mesto ni naravno, ni dano, ampak strukturirano skozi izključitev. Moška pozicija v jeziku, ki je normirana in naddoločujoča, se tako zoperstavlja jecljajočemu govoru manjšine, ki nima kraja, a prav zato razpira možnost nove subjektivnosti.

Kritika jezikovnih praks v luči feministične filozofije jezika

Feministične filozofije jezika razkrivajo, kako jezik ni zgolj sredstvo komunikacije, temveč tudi mehanizem, ki lahko utrjuje družbene neenakosti, zlasti v kontekstu spola. Ena izmed ključnih kritik se nanaša na domnevno spolno nevtralno rabo besed, kar vključuje zaimke, kot so »tisti«, »vsak« ali »sam« (npr. »Vsak sam zase najboljše ve«), pa tudi glagolske oblike preteklega časa, pri katerih se nevtralnost pogosto izraža z moško obliko (npr. »je zamudil«, »je izbral«). Ti zaimki in zaimkom sorodne oblike niso zgolj slovnične izbire, temveč nosijo pomembno simbolno težo: reproducirajo moškost kot jezikovno privzeto in s tem družbeno normo. Njihova navidezna nevtralnost izključuje ali vsaj potiska žensko iz izrekanja, vidnosti in pripadnosti diskurzu. Poleg tega so v vsakdanjih institucionalnih in formalnih kontekstih pogoste formulacije, kot so »uporabnik«, »kandidat«, »delavec«, ki naj bi veljale za spolno nevtralne.

Ta uporaba moškega spola kot domnevno nevtralne oblike v jeziku je ena izmed osrednjih tematik, ki jih feministične teoretičarke jezika kritično obravnavajo. Čeprav naj bi zaimki, pridevniki in glagoli v moškem slovničnem spolu v določenih kontekstih zajemali vse ljudi, številne raziskave in feministične analize kažejo, da takšna raba ni resnično nevtralna, temveč utrjuje moškost kot normo in ženske potiska v ozadje.⁸ Oziroma, kot lahko povzamemo besede Simone de Beauvoir, utrjuje pojmovanje ženske kot drugega spola: ženska se v tradicionalnem jeziku pogosto konstituira zgolj kot »ne-moški« – kot odstopanje od norme, ki je implicitno moška. De Beauvoir piše: »Določena je glede na moškega in se razlikuje glede nanj, ne pa on glede nanjo; ona je nebistveno nasproti bistvenega. On je Subjekt, on je Absolutno: ona je Drug.«⁹ V tem smislu je ženskost definirana negativno, kot manko, kot odsotnost moškega atributa, kar utrjuje hierarhijo že na ravni poimenovanja.

Empirična študija¹⁰ je pokazala, da lahko že preprosta uporaba besed vpliva na to, kako si posamezniki zapomnijo in nato reproducirajo videne oblike.

8 Moja Šorli, »Spol in jezik na robu pameti: med slovnico in ideologijo«, str. 47–51.

9 Simone de Beauvoir, *Drugi spol I*, str. 15.

10 Leonard Carmichael, »An Experimental Study of the Effect of Language on the Reproduction of Visually Perceived Form«, str. 79–80.

Udeleženci študije so si ogledali enake, dvoumne vizualne oblike, ki so bile predhodno opisane z različnimi besedami (npr. »očala« ali »utež«). Rezultati so pokazali, da so udeleženci pod vplivom konkretnega poimenovanja figure to tudi vizualno prilagodili tako, da je njihova kasnejša reprodukcija bolj spominjala na pomen pripisane besede kot na dejansko obliko. V skupini, kjer so bile figure poimenovane, je približno 74 % reprodukcij vključevalo značilnosti, ki so ustrezale pomenom teh poimenovanj, medtem ko je bil ta delež v kontrolni skupini brez poimenovanj le 45 %. To jasno kaže, da jezik neposredno oblikuje kognitivne predstave.

Ta mehanizem je mogoče neposredno prenesti na rabo generičnih moških oblik v jeziku: če besede usmerjajo zaznavo že pri tako osnovnih vizualnih nalogah, je razumljivo, da generična raba moškega slovničnega spola (npr. »zdravnik«, »učitelj«, »direktor«) prav tako vpliva na predstave o tem, kdo zaseda te vloge. Posledično bralci in poslušalci ob takšnih izrazih pogosteje vizualizirajo moške kot nosilce teh družbenih vlog, medtem ko ženske v miselni predstavi ostajajo nevidne. Takšna jezikovna praksa ne le odraža obstoječe družbene neenakosti, temveč jih tudi ohranja in krepi.¹¹

Uporaba spolno zaznamovanih poimenovanj poklicev je bolj kot problem slovenščine problem drugih jezikov, meni najbližja sta francoščina in angleščina: »*femme directeur*«, »*female director*« (slovensko »ženski direktor«) in pa »*femme médecin*«, »*female doctor*« (slovensko »ženski zdravnik«) ni zgolj vprašanje jezikovne natančnosti, temveč ima globoke družbene in psihološke posledice. Takšna poimenovanja implicirajo, da so ženske v teh vlogah odstopanje od moške norme, kar utrjuje predstavo o moškosti kot standardu in ženske postavlja v podrejen položaj.

Raziskave so pokazale tudi, da uporaba ženskih oblik poklicev lahko vpliva na zaznavanje kompetentnosti in topline žensk v teh vlogah. Ena izmed študij je pokazala, da so moški udeleženci kandidatke z ženskimi slovničnimi oblikami poklicev dojemali kot manj tople in nekoliko manj kompetentne kot tiste z moškimi oblikami, kar je vodilo do manjše možnosti, da bi jih zaposlili.¹² To kaže, da lahko uporaba ženskih oblik poklicev sproži stereotipe, ki negativno vplivajo na oceno kandidatke, poleg tega lahko uporaba spolno zaznamovanih poimenovanj poklicev vpliva na občutek pripadnosti in privlačnosti delovnih mest za ženske. Ista študija je namreč pokazala, da je za ženske manj verjetno, da se bodo prijavile na delovna mesta, ki uporabljajo moško zaznamovano jezikovno obliko, saj se ne

11 *Ibid.*

12 Stericker, »Does This 'He' or 'She' Business«, str. 637–641.

čutijo vključene ali primerne za takšna delovna mesta, kar zmanjšuje možnosti za raznolikost in enakost spolov na delovnem mestu.¹³

Feministična filozofija jezika analizira tudi, kako določeni izrazi odražajo moško perspektivo in s tem marginalizirajo ženske izkušnje. Terminologija, povezana s spolnostjo, na primer pogosto izhaja iz moške izkušnje, kar lahko vodi v neustrezno razumevanje in vrednotenje ženskih izkušenj. Jezikovna reforma tako ostaja pomemben (ne pa edini) korak k odpravi spolnih stereotipov in spodbujanju enakosti spolov v družbi.

V odgovor na te izzive se pojavlja gibanje za uporabo spolno nevtralnih poimenovanj poklicev, kot so »vodja« namesto »direktor« ali »direktorica«. Cilj je ustvariti jezik, ki ne implicira spola ter s tem spodbuja enakost in vključevanje vseh spolov na delovnem mestu.¹⁴ Vendar pa je pomembno opozoriti, da so spremembe v jeziku pogosto deležne odpora, saj izzivajo globoko zakoreninjene norme in pričanja o jeziku in spolu.¹⁵

Feministične filozofije jezika torej razkrivajo, kako jezik lahko odraža in utrjuje družbene neenakosti, hkrati pa ponujajo poti za njegovo preoblikovanje v smeri večje enakopravnosti in vključevanja različnih izkušenj in perspektiv.

Emancipacija žensk skozi jezikovne prakse

Vprašanje jezika je za feministično misel vselej bilo tudi vprašanje možnosti govora – in s tem tudi vprašanje možnosti biti. Ko se ženske v jeziku ne morejo prepognati, ko se njihova telesa, izkušnje in želje kažejo le kot odkloni od moške norme, tedaj je jezik ne le orodje izražanja, temveč tudi sredstvo izključevanja in nadzora. A ravno tu se odpira tudi njegov potencial za spremembo: če je jezik prostor, kjer se oblikujejo pomenske strukture in razmerja moči, potem je lahko tudi prostor njihovega preoblikovanja, reinterpretacije in upora. Emancipacija žensk skozi jezikovne prakse tako pomeni več kot zgolj zahtevo po enakopravni zastopanosti

13 *Ibid.*, str. 641.

14 Čeprav raziskave kažejo, da ženske z izrazito ženskimi poklicnimi poimenovanji pogosto doživljajo nižjo oceno kompetentnosti, ni jasno, ali je vir težave sama raba ženskega izraza ali globlje zakoreninjene stereotipi o ženskosti v poklicnem svetu. Preskok k spolno nevtralnemu izrazu tako morda ne rešuje temeljnega problema neenake zaznave žensk v profesionalnem okolju, ampak le zakrije njegov simptom. S tem se postavi tudi vprašanje meje jezikovnih rešitev: sprememba poimenovanja ne zadostuje, če se ne spremeni percepcija tistih, ki poimenujejo.

15 Prakse, kot so uporaba spolno nevtrálnih izrazov, uporaba moškega spola kot generičnega, leksikalna asimetričnost in morfološke prakse, so povzete po Berenger Garnica, »Linguistic Sexism and Society: A Woman's Representation Through Language«.

v jeziku; pomeni proces preoblikovanja samih temeljev diskurza, ki določa, kdo, kako in v katerem jeziku sme govoriti. Gre za filozofski, politični in eksistencialni premik – od govorka, ki mora svoje izkušnje prevajati v tuj jezik, k subjektiviteti, ki soustvarja jezik kot izraz lastne telesnosti, identitete in zgodovine. V nadaljevanju obravnavane avtorice nas opozarjajo, da jezik ni nevtralna kulisa, temveč živa struktura moči in pomena – in da boja za emancipacijo žensk ni mogoče voditi brez boja za jezik.

Smeš meduze in écriture féminine

Knjižica Hélène Cixous *Smeš meduze* (*Le rire de la méduse*, 1975) velja za eno najvplivnejših feminističnih besedil 20. stoletja. V njem Cixous poziva ženske, naj se osvobodijo patriarhalnega jezika in začnejo pisati iz lastnega telesa, s čimer naj bi preoblikovale tako jezik kot svojo identiteto. Knjiga je hkrati teoretičen manifest in literarna praksa, ki uteleša tisto, kar poimenuje *écriture féminine* – žensko pisanje.

Cixous v tekstu trdi, da so ženske skozi zgodovino izključene iz pisanja in govora, ker je patriarhalni jezik zasnovan tako, da ženske potiska na rob, zato poziva ženske, naj začnejo pisati iz lastnega telesa, saj je telo vir moči in ustvarjalnosti. Poudarja, da jezik ni nevtralen, temveč nosi v sebi družbene norme in vrednote, ki pogosto marginalizirajo ženske. Pisanje naj bo tako izraz lastne izkušnje, ki presega logocentrične in falocentrične¹⁶ strukture jezika. Pri tem pa Cixous opozarja, da pisanje ni le miselni akt, temveč tudi telesni, saj je telo vir moči in ustvarjalnosti.

Prav tako v *Smešu meduze* Meduza ni le mitološko bitje, temveč simbol ženske moči in ustvarjalnosti. Filozofinja se ne sklicuje na tradicionalno predstavo Meduze kot grozljive ženske, katere pogled spremeni vse v kamen, ampak preoblikuje ta mit: Meduza se smeji, saj se zaveda svoje moči in sposobnosti ustvarjanja – smeh Meduze je torej akt osvoboditve in zatrditev lastne moči: »Zapiši samo sebe. Tvoje telo mora biti slišano.«¹⁷ Ob tem lahko vzpostavimo filozofski paralelizem s Hansom Blumenbergom, ki v delu *Tračankin smeh* interpretira Platonovo zgodbo o Tračanki, ki se smeji Talesu, ko ta s pogledom obrnjenim v nebo pade v vodnjak, in mu reče, da »medtem ko si morda strastno želi spoznati vse stvari v vesolju,

16 Logocentrizem pomeni privilegiranje razuma, logike in stabilnih pomenov kot temeljnih struktur mišljenja, medtem ko falocentrizem vzpostavlja moški princip kot izvor simbolnega reda in središče pomena. Pojem *logocentrizem* je sprva uvedel Ludwig Klages v začetku 20. stoletja, v filozofski in literarnoteoretski kontekst pa ga je uvedel Jacques Derrida, Cixousjin tesni sodelavec, čigar dekonstrukcija je prav kritika *logocentrizma*.

17 Hélène Cixous, *Smeš meduze in druga besedila*, str. 14.

stvari pred njegovim nosom in nogami zanj ostajajo nevidne». ¹⁸ Njen smeh je telesna gesta proti abstraktnemu mišljenju. Je obrambni premislek, protest telesnosti pred višinskim logosom, ki izgublja stik z realnostjo. Vendar pa smeh Meduze presega zgolj obrambni ton, saj namreč ni zgolj odziv, ampak ustvarjalna afirmacija mišljenja, ki izhaja iz telesne ženske izkušnje. Medtem ko Blumenbergovo Tračanko smeh ščiti pred izgubo stika z realnostjo, smeh Meduze ruši meje patriarhalnega diskurza in odpira prostor za *écriture féminine*, torej pisanje, ki telesno izkušnjo materializira v jezik.

Knjiga *Smeš meduze* je na ta način poziv k akciji: ženske naj začnejo pisati, prevzemati nadzor nad svojim jezikom, svojim telesom in svojo zgodovino. S tem naj preoblikujejo tako jezik kot družbo, v kateri živijo.

Spekulum druge ženske in parler-femme

Luce Irigaray v svojem delu *Spekulum druge ženske* (*Speculum de l'autre femme*, 1974) kritizira patriarhalne jezikovne sisteme, ki ženske izključujejo iz aktivne subjektivne pozicije. Izpeljuje, da jezik, oblikovan z moške perspektive, ženskam onemogoča, da se izrazijo kot subjekti z lastno identiteto in željami. V tem kontekstu ženska pogosto postane le odsev moškega subjekta, njen glas pa ostaja neizrečen ali napačno interpretiran. Na primer, ko ženska izrazi jezo ali odločnost, se to pogosto interpretira kot histerija ali čustvena nestabilnost, medtem ko bi bila enaka izražanja pri moškem razumljena kot odločnost ali samozavest. ¹⁹

Irigaray opozarja, da so filozofske in psihoanalitične teorije, ki so jih razvili moški misleci, pogosto neustrezne za razumevanje ženske izkušnje. Freudova teorija zavidanja penisa na primer ženske postavlja v vlogo pomanjkljivosti, saj naj bi si želele moški spolni organ kot simbol moči. Že Lacan problematizira to postavko in obrne perspektivo: zavidanje penisa ni ženski, temveč moški problem. ²⁰ A kot opozarja Leo Bersani v eseju »Ali je rektum gròb?«, to še ne pomeni, da je s tem problem za ženske rešen: vsak moški problem postane hkrati tudi ženski. ²¹ Irigaray pa meni, da takšne teorije ne upoštevajo ženske kot subjekta z lastnimi željami in identiteto. V svojem delu filozofinja predlaga koncept *parler-femme* – ženski govor, ki presega patriarhalne jezikovne norme. Ta govor naj bi omogočil ženskam, da se izrazijo kot subjekti z lastnimi željami in identiteto, ne da bi se morali prilagajati

18 Hans Blumenberg, *The Laughter of the Thracian Woman: A Protohistory of Theory*, str. 6.

19 Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, str. 140.

20 Jacques Lacan, »Pomen falosa«.

21 Leo Bersani, »Ali je rektum gròb?«.

moškim jezikovnim strukturam. *Parler-femme* pomeni govoriti kot ženska, ne pa govoriti o ženskah; tako predstavlja subverzijo *forme* govora, ne dodajanje ženskih *vsebin*, saj gre za ustvarjanje prostora za žensko subjektivnost znotraj jezika.

Avtorica izhaja iz dvoumnosti samega pojma *spekulum*, ki pomeni tako ogledalo kot tudi ginekološki instrument. Ta ambivalenca ni naključna, saj razpira simbolni in materialni razpon moškega pogleda nad ženskim telesom in subjektivnostjo. Kot ogledalo *spekulum* ponazarja način, kako se ženska v patriarhalni kulturi prepozna skozi oči moškega, kot pasivni način njegovega pogleda. Ženska tako ne vidi le sebe, ampak podobo, ki ji je bila vsiljena od zunaj. Irigaray opozori, da ženske potrebujejo drugačno ogledalo, ki ne bo več le površina moške projekcije, ampak prostor za prepoznavo lastne subjektivnosti in identitete. S *spekulantom* kot ginekološkim instrumentom pa je žensko telo na najintimnejši ravni podvrženo moškemu pogledu in nadzoru, s čimer Irigaray poudari, da potreba po spremembi ni le simbolna, ampak tudi materialna. V tem smislu Irigaray zapiše: »Ženska je prostor moške želje, a tudi njegovega strahu.«²²

Ta ambivalenca se razkrije tudi v freudovski ideji zavidanja penisa, ki tu prikriva nekaj drugega: moški ženski pripiše manko, a s tem v resnici izrazi lastni strah pred izgubo; ženska pa tako postane mesto projekcije kastracijske fantazme.²³ Spekulum kot podaljšek pogleda v tem kontekstu ni nevtralen instrument, temveč orodje simbolnega reda, ki žensko konstituira kot objekt. Irigaray zato poziva k razpadu te logike in k vzpostavitvi novega odseva, v katerem bi ženska lahko spregovorila iz izkušnje razlike, ne iz manka. Njeno delo je pomemben prispevek k feministični teoriji, saj razkriva, kako patriarhalni jezikovni in filozofski sistemi oblikujejo in omejujejo žensko subjektivnost. Irigaray spodbuja k razmisleku o tem, kako lahko ženske ustvarijo nove jezikovne in filozofske strukture, ki bodo omogočile njihovo polno izražanje in priznanje kot subjekti. S tem odpira prostor za razumevanje, da je jezik več kot le komunikacijsko orodje; je nosilec zgodovine, kulture in identitete, ki si zasluži spoštovanje in priznanje.

Teorija utišane skupine

Teorija utišane skupine (*Muted Group Theory*, MGT), ki jo je razvila ameriška jezikoslovka Cheri Kramarae, dokazuje, da jezik odraža in utrjuje interese dominantnih skupin v družbi – predvsem moških – kar vodi v marginalizacijo in izključitev ženskih izkušenj, misli in načinov izražanja. Avtorica pokaže, da je jezik,

22 Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, str. 191.

23 Lacan, »Pomen falosa«.

ki se uporablja v javnem življenju, oblikovan predvsem z moške perspektive, kar pomeni, da ženske pogosto nimajo ustreznih besednih sredstev za izražanje svojih izkušenj in občutij. Feministične teoretičarke v angleško govorečem prostoru na primer opozarjajo, da ženske pogosto nimajo izrazja za telesne ali spolne izkušnje brez konotacij sramu ali vulgarnosti. Tudi v slovenščini se razmerje med izrazi za moške in ženske spolne organe kaže kot izrazito asimetrično: besedi »vagina« in »vulva« sta zaznamovani kot medicinski in se redko uporabljata, medtem ko je »pizda« pogosta, a predvsem kot vulgarizem, žaljivka ali sinonim za ničvrednost. Nasprotno pa so izrazi za moške spolne organe, recimo »kurec«, sicer prav tako vulgarni, a pogosto nosijo komično, samozavestno ali celo krepčilno funkcijo: govorci jih uporabljajo, da izrazijo odločnost, neposrednost in avtonomijo (npr. »kurec, pa taka družba« ali »kurec me briga«).²⁴ Takšna semantična razlika razkriva, kako globoko je jezik prežet s spolno simboliko, ki moškost povezuje z močjo, ženskost pa s pomanjkanjem ali ponižanjem.

Tudi izrazi za vodstvene funkcije, kot je »šef«, se pogostejše povezujejo z moškimi predstavami avtoritete. Tak »moški jezik« ne odraža ženskih izkušenj in vrednot, kar ženske postavlja v podrejeni položaj. Teorija utišane skupine s tem ponuja pomemben vpogled v to, kako jezik ni zgolj nevtralen instrument komunikacije, temveč tudi orodje moči, ki lahko prispeva k ohranjanju družbenih neenakosti: »Jezik ni le sredstvo izražanja, temveč tudi sredstvo nadzora. Ko jezik odraža in utrjuje družbene norme, lahko deluje kot mehanizem za ohranjanje obstoječih razmerij moči.«²⁵

Kot opozori Kramarae, morajo ženske, da bi bile slišane in razumljene v družbenih in kulturnih kontekstih, kjer prevladuje moški jezik, pogosto prevajati svoje izkušnje v jezik, ki ni bil ustvarjen zanje. Na primer, ženska, ki želi izraziti svoje izkušnje z nadlegovanjem, se pogosto zateče k evfemizmom, kot so »počutila sem se neprijetno« namesto »bil je nasilen«, ker jezikovni in družbeni kontekst pogosto minimalizira resnost ženskih doživljanj. Ta proces prevajanja ni zgolj lingvističen, temveč tudi kulturni in psihološki, saj ženske pogosto spreminjajo in prilagajajo svoje izraze, da bi se uskladile z moškimi normami in pričakovanji. Kramarae trdi, da to »prevajanje« vodi v izkrivljeno komunikacijo, pri kateri ženske pogosto ne morejo v celoti izraziti svojih misli in občutij, saj so prisiljene uporabljati jezik, ki ne ustreza njihovim izkušnjam, kar pa še dodatno utrjuje njihovo marginalizacijo in podrejenost v družbi.

24 Glej gesli SSKJ2 »pizda« in »kurec«, pri čemer je prvo geslo označeno kot vulgarno in psovka, drugo pa je poleg tega označeno še kot izraz jeze ali močnega zanikanja.

25 Kramarae, *Language, Gender and Society*, str. 45.

Jezikoslovka v svoji teoriji ponuja tudi možnosti za spremembo tega stanja. Predlaga razvoj nove jezikovne oblike in prakse, ki bodo omogočile ženskam, da se izrazijo na način, ki odraža njihove lastne izkušnje in vrednote. To vključuje ustvarjanje novih besed, fraz in izrazov, ki bodo bolje ustrezali ženskemu doživljanju sveta. Primeri, s katerimi se srečujemo danes, vključujejo besede, kot sta »*man-splaining*« (moški pokroviteljski govor, ki izrecno naslavlja ženske) ali »*femicid*« (umor na podlagi ženskega spola). Ti primeri presegajo ustaljene slovnične norme in ustvarjajo nove prostore pomena.

Kramarae obenem poudarja pomen izobraževanja in ozaveščanja o tem, kako jezik oblikuje in utrjuje družbene strukture moči. S tem ko se ljudje ozavejo vpliva jezika na oblikovanje družbenih norm in vrednot, lahko prispevajo k spremembam, ki bodo omogočile bolj enakopravno in vključujočo komunikacijo.²⁶ Teorija utišane skupine je potemtakem pomemben prispevek k razumevanju povezave med jezikom, močjo in družbenimi neenakostmi, saj ponuja orodja za analizo in razumevanje, kako jezik lahko prispeva k marginalizaciji določenih skupin, ter predlaga poti za spremembo, ki bodo omogočile bolj enakopravno in vključujočo družbo.

Poudarki tega poglavja, ki izpostavljajo pomen artikulacije ženske izkušnje, težko sovpadajo s predlogi za uporabo spolno nevtralnih izrazov. Takšna nevtralizacija lahko sicer zmanjšuje stereotipne učinke, vendar hkrati izbriše razliko, ki je ključna za afirmacijo govorečega subjekta, in s tem ne omogoči izražanja ženske izkušnje, ker jo potisne v nevidnost. Če naj jezik resnično služi kot prostor emancipacije, mora omogočati natančno artikulacijo teh zaznamovanosti in razlik, ne pa jih prekrivati ali zabrisovati z oblikami jezikovne neopredeljenosti. Le tako lahko jezik postane orodje, ki spodbuja vidnost, prepoznavnost in priznanje različnih oblik subjektivnosti, s čimer aktivno prispeva k premikom v smer enakopravnosti in spoštovanja ženskih izkušenj.

Jezik kot pogoj subjektivnosti: kdo sme biti?

Heidegger v znanem izreku zatrdi, da je »jezik hiša biti«.²⁷ Ta misel odpira temeljno vprašanje: *Kdo biva v tej hiši? Čigava bit je lahko poimenovana, slišana, umeščena?* Če je jezik prostor, v katerem se bit pojavlja, potem ima izključenost iz jezika tudi ontološke posledice. Biti brez jezika – ali biti ujet v jezik, ki ni tvoj – pomeni

26 Povzeto po: Cheris Kramarae, Barrie Thorne in Nancy Henley, »Perspectives on Language and Communication«.

27 Martin Heidegger, *Pot k jeziku*, str. 13.

biti potisnjen na rob *biti kot take*. Ključno filozofsko vprašanje, ki se tukaj pojavi, zadeva razlikovanje med epistemološko in ontološko razsežnostjo jezika: ali jezik zgolj *epistemološko* določa meje našega mišljenja ali pa aktivno *ontološko* konstituira bit samo? Kritika patriarhalnega jezika ne odpira le vprašanja reprezentacije, temveč tudi in predvsem vprašanje ontologije – kdo (ali kaj) sme obstajati kot govoreče, čuteče in misleče bitje.

Fredric Jameson v delu *Ječa jezika* opozarja na to, da jezik ni le sredstvo za izražanje misli, temveč pogosto deluje kot utesnjujoč okvir, omejujoča struktura, ki misel ujame in določa njene meje. Jameson govori o jeziku kot o »ječi«, v kateri so naši pojmi in izkušnje ujeti, vpeti v sistem simbolov in struktur, ki jih ne moremo enostavno preseči. Ta *ječa jezika* ne omogoča svobodne artikulacije vseh možnih izkušenj, temveč predpostavlja in vzdržuje določene norme in hierarhije.²⁸ Na ta način jezik ne le odraža, temveč tudi ustvarja družbeni svet: posledično ne določa samo način, kako se o ženskah govori, temveč tudi vprašanje, ali jih je sploh mogoče misliti. Ženske tako v družbenem svetu niso le predstavljene – z jezikom so tudi *umeščene* v pojmovanje resničnosti kot take ali *izbrisane* iz njega.

V patriarhalnem diskurzu, kot opozarja Irigaray, je ženska pogosto predstavljena kot *drugi*, kot *odsev moškega*, ne kot samostojen ontološki subjekt. Jezik, ki strukturira svet, ne omogoča njenega samostojnega nastopa kot govorečega bitja, temveč jo vzpostavlja v odnosu do moškega kot normativnega subjekta. Ženska je bodisi molčeča bodisi govorjena – *govori se o njej, ne govori ona sama*. V tem smislu je ontološki status žensk v jeziku vprašljiv: ali lahko postanejo *subjekti*, če je jezik, ki jim je dan na voljo, že vnaprej strukturiran tako, da jih ne priznava kot takih?²⁹ Če jezik ne vsebuje ustreznih kategorij za njihovo izkušnjo, potem je njihova *bit* v jeziku prisotna le kot izkrivljena, prelomljena, utišana. Zato feministične teoretičarke – Cixous s svojo idejo *écriture féminine*, Irigaray s pojmom *parler-femme*, Kramarae s teorijo utišane skupine – razumejo jezik kot bojišče za *ontološko priznanje*. Pisati drugače, govoriti iz telesa, preoblikovati sintakso in metaforiko pomeni več kot politično dejanje – pomeni *biti*, vznikniti kot subjekt. To se sklada tudi s slavnim citatom Simone de Beauvoir, da se ženska »ne rodi, temveč postane«,³⁰ kar je mogoče razumeti tudi kot izjavo o jeziku: ženska mora postati govoreča, pridobiti svoj glas in ga artikulirati v jeziku, ki ga ni ustvarila in ki ji je pogosto tuj.

28 Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language*, str. 5–10.

29 Heidegger v *Poti k jeziku* na str. 13–15 poudarja, da je jezik ne le sredstvo izražanja, temveč tudi prostor, kjer se oblikuje razumevanje sveta: jezik oblikuje naše dožemanje biti in sveta, v katerem ta biva.

30 De Beauvoir, *Drugi spol I*, str. 15.

S tem je nujno povezana določena eksistencialna tujost, občutek, da je govorjenje vedno že tuje, prevajanje v sistem, ki ni njen. Apropriacija jezika, torej njegova prisvojitve kot sredstvo lastnega izraza, je ključna za možnost žensk, da postanejo govoreči subjekti. Brez dostopa do simbolnega reda, ki jih priznava kot tiste, ki lahko govorijo, ostajajo v položaju pasivnih objektov diskurza, ne pa aktivnih soustvarjalk pomena. Simbolni red v tem kontekstu pomeni sistem pomenov, norm in struktur, ki določa, kdo lahko govori, kdo je slišan in kdo šteje kot subjekt pomena. Patriarhalni simbolni red strukturira realnost tako, da moški govor prepozna kot nevtralen, univerzalen, medtem ko ženski govor deluje kot odmik, kot odklon. Delovati znotraj tega reda pomeni sprejemati njegove pogoje, delovati proti njemu pa pomeni tvegati nerazumljenost – toda tudi odpirati možnosti za nove oblike pomena.

Tako ženska subjektivnost v jeziku ni dana, temveč jo je treba *ustvariti*, pogosto z velikim naporom. Irigaray govori o tem, da ženske potrebujejo novo ogledalo – tisto, ki ne odraža le moškega pogleda, temveč omogoča samoprepoznanje. A ogledalo v jeziku ne obstaja kot nekaj samoumevnega; treba ga je oblikovati skozi pisanje, govor, umetnost. Pisati pomeni stopiti iz tišine v prostor *ontološke vidnosti*, a tudi tvegati nesporazum, zgrešenost, izbris. Feministično pisanje je zato pogosto prepleteno s fragmentarnostjo, prekinjanjem, nenavadnimi metaforami – to ni znak šibkosti, temveč poskus *govoriti od znotraj*, mimo struktur, ki so bile postavljene brez soglasja. Feministična filozofija jezika tako ni zgolj kritika komunikacije, temveč ontologije: ne gre samo za pomen, temveč za *prisotnost*.

V tej luči je ključno ponovno premisliti: kaj sploh pomeni *govoriti od znotraj*? Irigaray v *Spekulumu druge ženske* razkriva, da je celoten ustroj zahodne misli zasnovan na instrumentalizaciji ženskosti kot drugega. Njena uporaba figure spekulum (ne zrcala, temveč ginekološkega instrumenta) nakazuje, da gre v patriarhalni logiki za nasilen vpogled v žensko telo, za njegovo epistemološko kolonizacijo in za ontološko nevtralizacijo njegove drugosti. Spekulum v tem smislu ni orodje razumevanja, ampak instrument predrtja in osvetlitve notranjosti, ki je ženskam odvzeta kot lastna in prikazana kot »objekt raziskave« moške vednosti. Irigaray s tem ne zahteva boljše reprezentacije žensk znotraj obstoječega simbolnega reda, temveč izvede rez v samem epistemološkem temelju, ki že vnaprej predpostavlja enotno, koherentno, univerzalno subjektivnost, in s tem izloči tisto, kar je fluidno, afektivno ali telesno. Zato njeno pisanje ni mimetično, temveč mimetično-subverzivno: zrcali moški diskurz, da bi ga iznakazilo in da bi v njem povzročilo zlom, razpoke. *Parler-femme* na ta način ne nastopa kot alternativna vsebina, ampak kot perforacija jezika, ki ga destabilizira od znotraj. Je motnja, ki z artikulacijo tistega,

kar se upira simbolizaciji, v jeziku povzroča šum, ampak prav zato, ker se ne da ujeti v obstoječe logike pomena, odpira možnost za ontološko drugo, ki ni zgolj prezrta vsebina, vendar drugačen način bivanja v jeziku.

Na tej točki postane jasno, da feministično mišljenje vsaj v svoji bolj radikalni filozofski formi ne operira več znotraj okvirov kritike reprezentacije, ampak cilja na destrukcijo metafizičnih struktur, ki so pogojevale samo možnost reprezentacije. Cixousjina *écriture féminine* ni empirija, ki čaka na artikulacijo: nasprotno, je mesto nemega, ki povzroča zatikanje v mehanizmih smisla. Tu se feministični projekt približa dekonstrukciji *falogocentrizma*, kot jo je zasnoval Derrida: falos kot središče pomena, logos pa kot red govora in smisla, ki stoji na izključitvi telesa, afekta, seksualnosti in histerije.³¹ Feministični poseg tako ni le političen, ampak ontogenetski, ker ne gre za »dodajanje« žensk k že obstoječemu naboru subjektov, temveč za zastavljanje vprašanja, kaj subjekt *je* in ali je sploh *mogoč*, če ne izhajamo iz enosti, temveč iz mnoštvenosti, iz razlike brez centra, iz razpršene, fragmentarne, tudi neozdravljive subjektivnosti. Bit se tu ne kaže več kot prisotnost, ampak postane dogodek.

Lacanov pojem realnega postane bistven za razumevanje feministične ontološke geste: realno kot tisto, kar se izmika simbolizaciji, a hkrati strukturira simbolno kot njegov manko, je ravno tisto mesto, kjer govor ženskega telesa zares spregovori (seveda ne kot nova vsebina, ampak kot prekoračitev strukture). Ta govor ni takoj viden, ni reprezentativen ali univerzalno artikuliran, ravno to pa mu daje moč, da simbolni red prestavi, zasuka in destabilizira. Tukaj feministična ontologija ni več vprašanje *biti ženska*, saj postane ontologija *ekstimnosti* torej govor iz območja, ki je v simbolnem, a hkrati v fazi razkroja. To je prostor zunanjosti kot notranje tujo-sti, kjer pomen ne nastane z linearnim zapisom, ampak z zarezo, s preglasitvijo. *Parler-femme* in *écriture féminine* postaneta filozofsko dejanje *par excellence*: je več kot samo komunikacija, saj deluje kot performativna gesta, ki spreminja pogoje možnosti govora kot takega. Gre se za vpis telesa v logos, za raztezovanje mej jezika, da bi ustvarili prostor, kjer jezik še ni postal hiša biti, ampak se kaže kot rahlo šelestenje, dotik ali špranja, kjer bi se ženska vzpostavila kot tista, ki lahko sploh izreče svet. V tej razpoki, ki jo simbolni red zaznava kot šum, ne tiči zahteva po večji slišnosti, temveč se poraja vprašanje, ali so obstoječi jeziki sploh zmožni zaznati druge oblike subjektivnosti.

Feministična filozofija jezika torej presega vprašanja spola in se zažira v samo strukturo biti ter bivajočega z vprašanji, o kom se lahko govori, kdo sme govoriti

31 Cf. Jacques Derrida, *O gramatologiji*.

in kdo sme biti? Ne gre več za to, kdo vstopa v že zgrajeno hišo jezika, temveč za možnost, da se ta hiša od temeljev pretrese in pokaže, da bit, kot jo jezik omogoča, ni enotna, temveč porozna, večglasna in odprta za tisto, kar šele prihaja.

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The Consequence Argument: Examining the Conditions for a Counterexample to Rule β

Matija Bajić

Povzetek

Članek proučuje problem, ki se pojavi pri poskusu formulacije protiprimena pravilu sklepanja β . Po kratkem uvodu, v katerem so predstavljeni ključni koncepti in struktura modalnega argumenta, je pozornost usmerjena na protiprimer, ki ga predstavi Johnson in McKay, pa tudi na pogoje, ki naj jim zadosti veljaven protiprimer. Preko analize predloga Erica Carlsona članek raziše možnost šibkejše interpretacije teh pogojev. V zadnjem delu se članek osredotoči na interpretativno napetost med pogojema (C1) in (C2) ter s tem izpostavi širši kontekst razprave med kompatibilizmom in inkompatibilizmom. Sklep članka je, da je konstruktivna razprava zelo otežena, kolikor sta (C1) in (C2) interpretirana v močnem smislu.

Ključne besede: svobodna volja, determinizem, Peter van Inwagen, argument iz posledice, pravilo β , Eric Carlson

Summary

The article examines the problem that arises in the attempt to formulate a counterexample to inference rule β . Following a brief introduction to the key concepts and the structure of the modal argument, the focus shifts to the counterexample proposed by Johnson and McKay, as well as the conditions that a valid counterexample should satisfy. Through the analysis of Eric Carlson's proposal, the article explores the possibility of a weaker interpretation of these conditions. The final section highlights the interpretive tension between conditions (C1) and (C2), underscoring the broader context of the debate between

compatibilism and incompatibilism. The article concludes that a constructive debate is significantly hindered if (C1) and (C2) are interpreted in a strong sense.

Keywords: free will, determinism, Peter van Inwagen, the Consequence Argument, rule β , Eric Carlson

Introduction

It has been suggested that debates on the consequence argument may seem like a dead end.¹ Authors have exhausted the possibilities of logical argument analysis, thus making its strength rely on rhetorical tools. Although such a view can be justified, I believe that the logical structure of the argument deserves full attention, since inference rule β raises philosophically relevant questions. For this reason, the purpose of this paper is to identify the problems encountered in the debates on the modal version of the Consequence Argument. By presenting one of the possible lines of criticism, I point out the challenges that arise when formulating counterexamples to inference rule β .

After a brief introduction of the fundamental concepts and the structure of the modal argument, the focus shifts to the counterexample proposed by Johnson and McKay, as well as the conditions that a valid counterexample should satisfy. Through the analysis of Eric Carlson's proposal, the article explores the possibility of a weaker interpretation of these conditions. The final section highlights the interpretive tension between conditions (C1) and (C2), underscoring the broader context of the debate between compatibilism and incompatibilism. The article concludes that a constructive debate is significantly hindered if (C1) and (C2) are interpreted in a strong sense.

Determinism and Free Will

The problem with the relationship between determinism and free will mostly depends on the way these two concepts are defined. The classic definition of determinism can be formulated as follows: "From a complete description of the relevant properties of the elements of a closed system at the moment t_1 and an exhaustive listing of all the laws that apply to the elements of that system, logically follows an unambiguous and precise description of the state of that system at

1 Boran Berčić, *Filozofija*, vol. 1, p. 181.

any other moment in time, before or after t_1 .”² A similar definition was proposed by Peter van Inwagen:

We shall apply this term [determinism] to the conjunction of these two theses:

(a) For every instant of time, there is a proposition that expresses the state of the world at that instant.

(b) If A and B are propositions that express the state of the world at some instants, then conjunction of A with the laws of physics entails B .³

It should be noted that this definition does not favor one direction of time, which is consistent with the consequence of the classical definition, in which a precise description of the system follows before or after t_1 . Peter van Inwagen thoroughly explains the concepts he relies on when defining determinism.⁴ Here, it is relevant to point out that van Inwagen does not mean to say that the laws of nature in a broader sense are implied by the term “laws of physics.” Rational agents are part of nature, but psychological laws do not fall under the concept of laws of physics. In other words, psychological laws (laws of will) are not reducible to the laws of physics. Definitions of determinism that rely on a broader notion of the laws of nature leave room for compatibility with free will.⁵

The basis of the dissent between compatibilists and incompatibilists lies in their respective definitions of free will. Philosophers who believe that determinism and free will are compatible generally suggest that the absence of obstacles when acting is implicit in the concept of free will. On the other hand, incompatibilists (which include strong determinists and libertarians) define free will as the possibility to act otherwise. A philosopher of libertarian orientation will consider such an act possible, while a representative of a strong deterministic position will reject its possibility.

Van Inwagen provides a definition close to the intuitions that dictate that free will is determined by the power or ability of the subject to act differently. Therefore, we can speak of the abilities of the subject in sentences such as: “ S can make (could have made) p wrong,” where p stands for the name of proposition.⁶ Sentences about abilities in everyday speech can also be translated using this paraphrase.

2 Neven Sesardić, *Fizikalizam*, p. 118.

3 Peter van Inwagen, “The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism,” p. 186.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 185–188.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 187.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 189.

For example, the sentence “*S* could have written a book in three months,” can be translated as “*S* could have rendered the claim that *S* did not write a book in three months false.”

Arguments Against Compatibilism

Consequence Argument

The Consequence Argument is the central incompatibilist argument. In his “An Essay on Free Will,” van Inwagen puts it forth in its informal form:

If determinism is true, then our acts are the consequences of the laws of nature and events in the remote past. But it is not up to us what went on before we were born, and neither is it up to us what the laws of nature are. Therefore, the consequences of these things (including our present acts) are not up to us.⁷

This formulation of the argument entails the principle of the transfer of practical necessity.⁸ This is the principle on which the entire argument rests, and its examination in a formal form will be the main task of this article. In its informal form, the principle tells us that since *S* cannot influence the laws of nature and the facts of the past, it follows that *S* cannot influence any of the consequences of that conjunction. Since the subject’s actions also belong to the set of consequences of that conjunction, *S* has no influence over their own actions either. Van Inwagen formalizes the consequence argument in three ways, with the first two relying on first-order logic,⁹ while the third is based on the principles of modal logic.

Modal Argument

The modal argument represents the third argument of incompatibilism.¹⁰ Before presenting the argument, it is necessary to define operator *N*, as well as the α and β inference rules. Operator *N* is defined as follows: $Np =_{\text{def}}$ “*p* and no one has, or ever had a choice about *p*”. The key part of the argument is represented by two rules of inference:

7 Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will*, p. 16.

8 Berčić, *Filozofija*, vol. 1, pp. 174–177.

9 Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will*, pp. 68–93.

10 Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will*, pp. 93–105.

$$(\alpha) \quad \Box p \vdash Np$$

$$(\beta) \quad N(p \rightarrow q), Np \vdash Nq$$

Rule α implies that from “it is necessary that p ”, we conclude p , and no one has, or ever had, a choice about p . Rule β states that if $p \rightarrow q$ holds and no one has, or ever had, a choice about $p \rightarrow q$ and Np holds, it follows that we can conclude Nq . It is not difficult to construct an example in favor of this rule. Let’s say that no one has a choice about the fact that the state of the atmosphere at t_1 entails the soil being waterlogged at t_2 due to precipitation. Also, no one has a choice about the state of the atmosphere at t_1 . Therefore, we can conclude that the Earth is waterlogged and that no one has a choice about the waterlogging of the Earth at t_2 . It seems possible to object to and challenge this example. If a device that could absorb the entire amount of precipitation existed, the conclusion drawn would not be correct. Nevertheless, in counterexamples of this kind, the falsity of a premise is pointed out. The existence of a liquid-absorbing device indicates the falsity of the first premise, not of the reasoning principle itself. Similarly constructed examples do not present an obstacle to the acceptance of rule β . Therefore, an adequate counterexample must show that the premises of rule β ($N(p \rightarrow q)$, Np) are true, while the conclusion (Nq) is not.

Let P_0 denote the complete state of the world at the moment T_0 in a distant past. We mark the conjunction of natural laws with L , while P is the state of things at the moment T . The setting of the modal argument looks like this:

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| 1) | $\Box((P_0 \wedge L) \rightarrow P)$ | a consequence of determinism |
| 2) | $\Box(P_0 \rightarrow (L \rightarrow P))$ | from 1), by standard logic |
| 3) | $N(P_0 \rightarrow (L \rightarrow P))$ | from 2), by rule α |
| 4) | NP_0 | premise, fixity of past |
| 5) | $N(L \rightarrow P)$ | from 3) and 4), by β |
| 6) | NL | premise, fixity of laws |
| 7) | NP | from 5) and 6), by β |

The modal argument possesses an enviable degree of logical plausibility. It seems that by accepting the initial premises, the conclusion in the form of “ P , and nobody has, or ever had a choice about P ” inevitably follows. Consequently, compatibilists do not have much room for maneuver: the criticism can be divided into

two groups.¹¹ The first tries to point out the logical invalidity of the argument, and mainly relies on the construction of counterexamples to inference rule β . The second group tries to challenge the relevance of the argument itself in the context of the discussion about the relationship between determinism and free will. Considering the complexity of the debate and the essential role of rule β in the modal version of the argument, the remaining sections of the article will be devoted to the development of the first line of criticism through the analysis of relevant counterexamples.

The Problem of Inference Rule β

Counterexamples to Rule β

There are many counterexamples to rule β in the literature.¹² One of the examples cited by Berčić reads:¹³ I cannot influence the fact that I have had an elevated level of cholesterol in my blood over the past three years. I also cannot influence the fact that high cholesterol increases the risk of a heart attack. However, I can help reduce the risk of a heart attack by going on a diet, watching what I eat, and starting a healthy lifestyle routine.

An example that gets to the heart of the problem concerning rule β is given by Johnson and McKay.¹⁴ They note that one of the logical consequences of the conjunction of inference rules α and β is the principle of agglomeration:

$$(PA) \ Np, Nq \vdash N(p \wedge q)$$

The formulation of the counterexample is now different. Since the conjunction of two van Inwagen rules implies (PA), it is necessary to construct an example that will contradict this principle. From the premises Np and Nq , a valid counterexample will derive a conclusion of the form $\neg N(p \wedge q)$. Rule α is valid, therefore, the counterexample to the principle of agglomeration will show that rule β is not valid.

11 Berčić, *Filozofija*, vol. 1, p. 174. Here, I should also mention a third group of criticism, which relies on the issue of the necessity of the past. An example of this approach can be found in Joseph K. Campbell, "Free Will and the Necessity of the Past," pp. 105–111.

12 See David Widerker, "On an Argument for Incompatibilism," pp. 37–41; Eric Carlson, "Counterexamples to Principle Beta: A Response to Crisp and Warfield," p. 731; David Johnson and Thomas McKay, "A Reconsideration of an Argument against Compatibilism," pp. 115–116. Additional interesting constructions are provided by Berčić, *Filozofija*, vol. 1, pp. 175–176, and Sesardić, *Fizikalizam*, pp. 141–143.

13 Berčić, *Filozofija*, vol. 1, pp. 175–176.

14 Johnson and McKay, "A Reconsideration of an Argument," p. 115.

Johnson and McKay provide the following example.¹⁵ Suppose I did not flip a coin, but I could have. Let $p =_{\text{def.}}$ “the coin does not land on heads” and $q =_{\text{def.}}$ “the coin does not land on tails.” Therefore, both premises of agglomeration are true: no one can choose to make the coin land on heads (it can also land on tails), so Np , and similarly, no one can choose to make the coin land on tails, so Nq . However, $N(p \wedge q)$ does not follow from Np and Nq ! While it is true that no one has a choice about these statements taken individually, the truth of their conjunction is not necessarily beyond the subject’s control. By choosing to flip the coin, the agent would make the coin land either on heads or tails, thus making $N(p \wedge q)$ false. Therefore, the principle of agglomeration is not valid. It is a consequence of the conjunction of rules α and β , and since rule α is valid, rule β must be invalid.

Conditions for the Formulation of Counterexamples

Johnson and McKay provide a strong counterexample to the inference rule β . However, it seems that there are reasons that call their scenario into question. An adequate example should fulfill three relevant conditions found in the literature. The first condition was stated by van Inwagen:¹⁶

(C1) A counterexample to rule β must not assume the compatibility of determinism and free will.

The assumption of an indeterministic world is another inadequate way of arguing against rule β . The reason lies in the fact that incompatibilists can easily defend themselves against this type of counterexample. In this case, the incompatibilist can introduce a replacement for rule β in the form of rule δ :¹⁷

(δ) $D, N(p \rightarrow q), Np \vdash Nq$, where “D” stands for determinism.

Therefore, a second condition is necessary. It is implicitly present in Johnson and McKay and explicitly articulated by Crisp and Warfield:¹⁸

(C2) A valid counterexample to rule β must not assume the truth of indeterminism.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 115–116.

¹⁶ Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will*, p. 102.

¹⁷ Johnson and McKay, “A Reconsideration of an Argument,” p. 118.

¹⁸ Thomas M. Crisp and Ted A. Warfield, “The Irrelevance of Indeterministic Counterexamples to Principle Beta,” pp. 179–180.

A modification of rule β in the form of (β') is also present in the literature. This modification assumes the role of the third condition. Timothy O'Connor makes the following demand:¹⁹

(C3) (β') $N(p \rightarrow q), Np \vdash Nq$, for every p and q such that q is made true later than p .

The question arises: Do the previously presented examples meet these three conditions? Crisp and Warfield present Johnson and McKay with a dilemma.²⁰ Coin tossing takes place either within a deterministic world or within an indeterministic world. If tossing a coin is an act in an indeterministic world, then clearly (C2) is violated. Conversely, if the example is set in a deterministic world, the possibility of acting differently (i.e., flipping a coin) leads to the assumption of compatibilism and the violation of (C1).

We can similarly criticize Berčić's example. Does the possibility of my lifestyle change take place in a deterministic or nondeterministic world? If it is a deterministic world, then this example violates (C1). More precisely, either it assumes, through the possibility of taking different actions, that free will is compatible with determinism (which needs to be proven), or it assumes that psychological laws are subsumed under deterministic laws on which it bases the explanation for the possibility of an agent's actions within the deterministic world. The first disjunct does not fulfill (C1), while the second does not accept the initial definition of determinism from which psychological laws are excluded. On the other hand, if the example takes place in an indeterministic world, then (C2) is not fulfilled.

Is a Counterexample Possible?

It is clear that the set conditions significantly shape the construction of counterexamples. The task of formulating an example can also be set in a formal form:

(C1 $\wedge$ C2 $\wedge$ C3 $\wedge$ A) $\rightarrow \neg Nq$, where A denotes the premises of β , i.e., $Np, N(p \rightarrow q)$

While analyzing this task further, I will rely on Carlson's example.²¹ In his counterexample to rule β , Carlson constructs the following scenario. At t_0 , subject S may or may not press a button that is connected to a coin-tossing

19 Timothy O'Connor, "On the Transfer of Necessity," p. 209.

20 Crisp and Warfield, "The Irrelevance of Indeterministic Counterexamples," p. 180.

21 Carlson, "Counterexamples to Principle Beta," p. 731.

machine. If S presses the button, the machine flips the coin twice, at t_1 and at t_2 . If S does not press the button, the machine flips the coin only once, at t_1 . Suppose the subject presses the button and the coin lands on heads both times. Therefore, $p =_{\text{def.}}$ "A coin is tossed at t_1 and lands on heads" and $q =_{\text{def.}}$ "A coin is tossed at t_2 and lands on heads." Even if S had not pressed the button at t_0 , the machine would have tossed a coin at t_1 and the coin could have landed on heads; therefore, S has no influence in making p false. So, Np is true. On the other hand, if S had not pressed the button, the coin could have landed on tails at t_1 . If this were the case, the implication $p \rightarrow q$ would be true, since its antecedent would be false, therefore making $N(p \rightarrow q)$ true. However, Nq is not true. If S had not pressed the button, the coin would not have been tossed at t_2 , and q would not be true.

The essence of Carlson's example lies in providing a different interpretation of the conditions. We have seen Crisp and Warfield criticize the example presented by Johnson and McKay, facing them with a dilemma. Carlson argues that the dilemma is false. By implication, Carlson offers a weaker reading of the terms. He takes the first condition to mean that the example could take place in a world where compatibilism is false. Similarly, (C2) requires that the counterexample be formulated so that it could take place in a deterministic world, not that it does. The reason for this interpretation of the conditions is an attempt to formulate counterexamples in such a way that they do not presuppose a specific metaphysical position on the nature of the world. In this sense, the wording "could be" leaves room for neutrality concerning the question of the metaphysical properties of the world. Crisp and Warfield's mistake, Carlson believes, is their assumption that the example takes place in exactly one world which is either deterministic or indeterministic.²² As the example could occur in several possible worlds (either deterministic or indeterministic), there is no reason to assume that they are all deterministic or that they are all indeterministic.

Let us see how Carlson's example reacts to the set conditions. If it takes place in a deterministic world, then it satisfies (C2). However, it also fulfills (C1) since it could also occur in a world where compatibilism is false. On the other hand, if it takes place in an indeterministic world, then it fulfills (C1). As in the previous case, the second condition is also fulfilled because it could also occur in a deterministic world. The third condition is not a problem, since q is made true later than p .

22 *Ibid.*, p. 733.

Interpretive Tension of Conditions (C1) and (C2)

Carlson's argument points to a problem that arises when trying to formulate a counterexample to the inference rule β . I have already mentioned that Carlson implicitly raises the question of the interpretation of the set conditions. The initial requirement is that the example be restricted to one world, which is deterministic (as dictated by (C2)) and in which there is no assumption of compatibilism (C1). However, the problem with the interpretation of the first condition can already be seen in the dilemma that Crisp and Warfield present Johnson and McKay with. As a reminder, if the example of tossing a coin is part of a deterministic world, the subject's ability to do this is interpreted as a compatibilist assumption. Therefore, (C1) is not fulfilled.

Such an interpretation of the conditions does not leave much room for formulating counterexamples. Under the interpretation whereby the example takes place in exactly one world, it is permissible to assume determinism (C2) and incompatibilism (C1). However, under these assumptions, as Carlson correctly notes, rule β is trivial!²³ If one starts from determinism and incompatibilism, then subjects by definition do not have the possibility of alternative actions, and the outcome of rule β is no longer subject to proof but a direct consequence of the assumed framework.

I would add that the strongly interpreted conditions implicitly set tasks that go beyond the basic goals of the compatibilist position. It is about proving freedom from the assumption of determinism. Therefore, I believe that the discussion should take a step back and reconsider its goals. The compatibilist's task in the context of a broader discussion is to point to a possible world in which determinism and free will are true. In his first formal argument against compatibilism, van Inwagen, under the assumptions of determinism and freedom, points to their incompatibility. Using the same assumptions, a compatibilist should point out the compatibility of the two phenomena. Therefore, Carlson's reading of the conditions is a persuasive first step toward the possibility of further confronting the arguments.

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Arkologija: grajenje svobode

Pino Hiti Ožinger

Povzetek

V tem članku iz konceptualne arhitekture Paola Solerija, arkologije, izvlečem filozofijo svobode, nasprotujočo filozofiji svobode, ki jo imenujem atomistična. Ta temelji na goli posameznikovi pravici do izbire med različnimi alternativami in zanemarja družbeno dimenzijo. Arkologijo naposled zagovarjam kot orodje, ki nam lahko pomaga uveljaviti to alternativno, družbeno pojmovanje svobode.

Ključne besede: arhitektura, ekologija, svoboda, pravičnost, skladnost, miniaturizacija

Summary

In this article, I extract a philosophy of freedom from Paolo Soleri's conceptual architecture, the Arcology, opposing what I call an atomistic philosophy of freedom. The latter is based purely on the individual right to choose between different alternatives and ignores the social dimension. I then defend arcology as a tool that can help us promote this alternative social conception of freedom.

Keywords: architecture, ecology, freedom, equity, congruence, miniaturization

Družbeni značaj arhitekture

Tako kot vsaka žival je tudi človek do določene mere determiniran s svojim okoljem. Njegova posebnost pa je, da ga lahko v veliki meri preoblikuje. Med človekom in njegovim okoljem zato velja recipročno razmerje – človek zase ustvarja bivališča in tako preureja okolje, v katerem potem sam biva. Mesta so za sodobnega človeka bivališča prvotnega pomena. Arhitektura je zato bistveno materialna umetnost, saj ima moč oblikovanja človeškega okolja ter tako moč narekovanja pogojev družbenih sprememb – arhitektura oblikuje infrastrukturo družbe. To pomeni, da je vselej kvalitativno politična in pomenska. Lahko je zasnovana v skladu s principom svobode ali pa proti njemu.

Najbolj nazoren primer preoblikovanja mesta z namenom nadzorovanja družbenih sprememb v sodobni zgodovini je bilo Haussmanovo preoblikovanje Pariza, ki je postalo vpliven prototip za urbanizem mest zahodnega sveta in njegovih kolonij. Pariz je bil med letoma 1853 in 1870 prenovljen tako, da so bile v mesto vrezane široke in ravne povezane ulice, ki so stavbe ločevale v trikotne segmente. To je služilo dvema namenoma. Prvič: geometrijska struktura mesta je strogo ločevala prej zamegljeni sferi zasebnega in javnega življenja, med njima pa postavila čim večje število trgovskih objektov ter tako omogočila karseda prost pretok kapitala. Drugič: široke, ravne in sistematično povezane ulice so omogočale prost dostop policijskim in vojaškim enotam, kar je bil neposreden odgovor na revolucije s konca 18. ter začetka 19. stoletja.¹

V haussmanizaciji zato vidim poseg v človeško urbano okolje, ki je namensko determiniral družbeni razvoj – ta poseg je predstavljal sredstvo za ohranjanje obstoječih družbenih razmerij. Haussmanizacija mesta je zakrivala materialna protislovja, ki so rasla v mestu in delovala kot orodje oboroženega kapitalizma, saj je z odpiranjem poti policiji in vojski delovala nasproti revolucionarnim gibanjem. Od takrat naprej je logika prostega trga v veliki meri narekovala razvoj mest. Od druge polovice 20. stoletja naprej lahko opazujemo nastanek neukrotljivega raztezanja mest čez naravno pokrajino: *megalopolisi* združujejo prej ločena mesta, okoli njih pa nastajajo nizko-gostotna predmestja, *suburbije*.² Posledica tovrstnega *urbanega raztega* je uničevanje biodiverzitete³ izguba obdelovalne zemlje, poudarjanje avtomobilskega

1 Leonardo Benevolo, *Mesto v zgodovini Evrope*, str. 197–205.

2 Paolo Soleri namesto pojma *suburb*, ki pomeni predmestje, uporablja pojem *suburbia*, ki nima prave ustreznice v slovenščini, vsebuje pa slabšalni prizvok v angleščini. S tem ločuje svojo kritiko od predmestij v splošnem, ki lahko sledijo raznovrstnim urbanim načrtom, od tistih, ki ustvarjajo v nadaljevanju poudarjen negativni učinek nizkogostotnega *urbanega raztega*.

3 Annie Sneed, »The Grass Is Not Greener«, str. 16.

transporta in s tem onesnaževanje ter družbena atomizacija posameznika – torej izginjanje skupnosti in družbenopodpornih sistemov. Zagovorniki tovrstnega urbanističnega pristopa poudarjajo potrošnikovo svobodo odločitve in se sklicujejo na tržne pokazatelje, po katerih naj bi bila zaradi manjše regulacije pri mestnem planiranju končna gospodarska izračunica za mesto pozitivna.⁴ Namesto da se spustimo na raven debate o ekonomskih izračunih stroškov in koristi, želim napasti temeljno premiso o potrošnikovi svobodi izbire. Je svobodo možno misliti tudi drugače? Je možno graditi mesta, ki temeljijo na drugačnem razumevanju svobode, takšnem, ki bi bilo skladno z ohranjanjem naravnega okolja in družbenim značajem človeka?

Politične dimenzije arkologije

Arkologija (sestavljena iz besed arhitektura in ekologija) Paola Solerija je konceptualna arhitektura, ki poskuša najti prostor za skladnost z okoljem v gradnji sodobnega mesta. Njen osnovni cilj sicer ni udejanjanje svobode, a trdim, da vseeno vsebuje določeno filozofijo svobode. Arkologija je v veliki meri politični projekt. Za ta projekt sta pomembni dve določili: prvo je boj za pravičnost, ki pa ga dopolnjuje drugo, *skladnost*:

Težke razmere nepriviligiranih in revnih zahtevajo uvedbo pravičnosti. Prizadevanje za pravičnost je primarno in bistveno za človeka. Prizadevanje za skladnost pa je v bistvu prenos in preoblikovanje naravne skladnosti v skladnost, ki zajema človekovo stanje.⁵

Če je pravičnost specifična človeku, pa je skladnost lastnost žive narave (katere del je tudi človek). Je »konstantna koordinacija neskladnih stvari v skladne vzorce«. ⁶ Kar se tiče človeka, zanj po Soleriju skladnost brez pravičnosti pomeni goli naravni deterministični mehanizem, ki ne dopušča prostora za svobodo. Mislim, da lahko zato v političnem smislu družbeno skladnost brez pravičnosti razumemo tudi kot zasnovo za fašizem – v kolikor fašizem koordinira neskladne elemente v skladne vzorce, prekrije pa interna družbena protislovja, ki zadevajo pravičnost (npr. razredna, spolna in rasna neenakost). Po Soleriju je skladnost »ekološki faktor«, saj zadeva razmerje med posameznikom in njegovim okoljem, med delom in celoto. Zato je lahko to povsem racionalni faktor, ki mora biti uporabljen kot dopolnilo k pravičnosti. Če ta dva elementa delujeta skupaj, lahko v tem procesu vidimo recept za gradnjo okolja, ki ljudem omogoča svobodo.

4 Peter Gordon in Harry W. Richardson. »Prove It: The Costs and Benefits of Sprawl«, str. 23–25.

5 Paolo Soleri, *Arcology: The City in the Image of Man*, str. 5.

6 *Ibid.*, str. 5.

Uveljavljanje skladnosti se po avtorju imenuje planiranje. Živa narava planira v neskončnem času, z neskončnim potrpljenjem – nenehno ustvarja vzorce skozi evolucijski samorazvoj. Človek, ki je končen, planira tako, da potiska mejo lastne kompleksnosti v (domnevno) neskončnost. Po Soleriju je planiranje bistveno za življenje, alternativa temu pa je kaos oziroma entropija.⁷ V biologiji temu procesu upiranja življenja entropiji, ki po drugemu zakonu termodinamike označuje razprševanje energije, pravimo samoorganizacija. Evolucija je tako proces samokonstrukcije bitij vedno večje kompleksnosti, ki je hitrejši od (za življenje) razkrajajočega procesa entropije.⁸ Zato, ko Soleri piše o planiranju, misli na prenos naravne kvalitete v arhitekturo, ki je specifična za življenje. Zanj živo mesto pomeni tisto, ki se je zmožno boriti proti simboličnemu razkroju – razpršitvi njegove energije.

Vendar Solerijeve politične misli ne smemo razumeti v smislu naivnega vitalizma, redukcije idealne vizije družbe na naravni red, saj, kot je že bilo omenjeno, skladnost dopolnjuje s pravičnostjo, ki je specifična človeku. Dejali smo, da je skladnost brez pravičnosti fašizem. Ampak pravičnost brez skladnosti, tj. brez planiranja, je potemtakem kaos, saj kategorije pravičnosti ostanejo neartikulirane oziroma razpršene. Po avtorju je »akcija sterilna brez vizije, ki jo naredi resnično in zanimivo. Gorivo delovanja, ki ni resnično sočutno, je v nasprotju z življenjem, je nečloveško.«⁹

Soleri tu nastopi kot utopičen pisec. Predpostavlja nek čas v prihodnosti, ko bo zavladala pravičnost (ki je sočutna kvaliteta) kot način bivanja in z njo osvoboditev tako od potrebe kot od dela. Ta vizija pravičnosti daje kvalitativno vsebino golemu planiranju in tako akciji priskrbi »gorivo delovanja«. A četudi je potek misli utopičen, svoboda od potrebe in dela dejansko ni nedosegljiva. Avtor se sklicuje na kibernetiko, ki omogoča hitro odzivanje na raznolike situacije in učinkovito opravljanje mnogovrstnih del, ki so morala biti v preteklosti prepuščena človeškim rokam. V nasprotju s pozitivnimi povratnimi zankami, ki povečujejo intenzivnost izida (kot se npr. zgodi z zvokom, če približamo mikrofonski zvočniku, s katerim je povezan) pa kibernetika v obliki, na katero se sklicuje avtor, sloni na uravnavanju stabilnega stanja skozi negativne povratne zanke, ki intenzivnost prilagajajo stabilni ravni. Danes lahko med kibernetična orodja, ki nam olajšujejo življenje in ki temeljijo na principu negativne povratne zanke informacij štejemo vse od preprostega termostata, ki uravnava temperaturo, do protetičnih udov in tudi raznih robotov, ki avtomatizirajo številna tovarniška dela in tudi gospodinjstva, kot je sesanje. Zasnove so postavljene tudi

7 Ibid., str. 6–7.

8 Stuart A. Kauffman, *A World Beyond Physics: The Emergence and Evolution of Life*, str. 123–124.

9 Ibid., str. 22.

za uporabo kibernetских principov za urejanje družbenih organizacij, kot je npr. kibernetски menedžment Stafforda Beera.¹⁰

Pravilna implementacija kibernetских sistemov zato omogoča veliko razbremenitev od dela. V svetu, kjer je kibernetika uporabljena, da bi razbremenila delavca, in ne zgolj kot tehnika pospeševanja orodij kapitala, človek doživi vse večje kopičenje prostega časa. Nato je obsojen bodisi na dolgčas bodisi na ustvarjalno delo, s katerim bo transformiral svoje okolje po lastni podobi. Taka družba seveda ne sme biti kapitalistična družba, saj ta temelji na delitvi dela in reproduciranju vloge delavca kot ustvarjalca presežne vrednosti za kapitalista – na vsiljevanju določene oblike dela posamezniku. Zato zamisel o svobodi od tovrstne delitve dela odzvanja pri Marxu in Engelsu, ki koncipirata komunistično ureditev kot prosto kapitalistične delitve dela in kot prostor človekovega samoudejanjanja:

Brž ko namreč delo začenja biti razdeljeno, ima vsakdo določen izključen krog dejavnosti, ki mu je vsiljena, iz katere ven ne more; je lovec, ribič ali pastir – ali kritični kritik – in mora to ostati, če noče zgubiti sredstev za življenje – medtem ko v komunistični družbi, kjer ni, da bi vsakdo imel izključni krog dejavnosti, marveč se lahko izobrazi v vsaki poljubni panogi, uravnava družba občo produkcijo in mi ravno s tem omogoča, da danes delam to, jutri ono, da zjutraj lovim, popoldne ribarim, zvečer redim živino – in po jedi kritiziram –, kot mi pač prija, ne da bi kdaj postal lovec, ribič, pastir – ali kritik.¹¹

V arkologiji torej ni jasno, ali lahko planiranje nastopi šele v svetu »pravičnosti«, kjer je človek osvobojen »prisilnega dela« (Soleri) oziroma »delitve dela« (Marx in Engels), ali pa je planiranje bistveno, da sploh dosežemo stanje pravičnosti in ne zapademo v kaos. Soleri tu ostaja dvoumen. Mislim, da je treba stanje pravičnosti pojmovno pretvoriti v proces, namesto da nam velja za idealno končno stanje. Le tako lahko vzpostavimo soodvisen odnos pravičnosti in planiranja, kjer lahko kategorije pravičnosti artikuliramo le skozi uporabo tehnik planiranja, tehnike planiranja pa morajo biti usklajene s kategorijami pravičnosti.

Svoboda kot skupnostni pojem

Planiranje je naposled uveljavljanje racionalnosti in estetskega procesa za grajenje okolja v skladnosti z naravo nasproti kaosu. Kako lahko iz tega procesa zdaj izpeljemo svobodo? Svobode ne smemo misliti kot proste izbire med podanimi alternativami v skladu z našimi vselej spreminjajočimi se željami. Taki definiciji

10 Cf. Stafford Beer, *Brain of the Firm*.

11 Karl Marx in Friedrich Engels, »Nemška ideologija«, str. 40.

svobode sledijo zagovorniki *urbanega raztezanja*. Temu Soleri pravi *svobodno podjetništvo* (ang. *free enterprise*) in piše, da mora arkologija nastopiti proti njemu. To velja tako materialno, v smislu nebrzdanega kapitalizma in svobodne trgovine, kot tudi idejno. Svobodno podjetništvo temelji na atomizaciji posameznika, na njegovi ločenosti od skupnosti. Kot piše Soleri, človek »kot posameznik ni zmožen ustvariti sveta po lastni podobi«. ¹² Ločenost od skupnosti zato nastopa kot omejitvev, ne kot osvoboditev. Arkologija kot arhitekturna forma zato ni zapor, ampak je preslikava človekovega bistva v univerzalno.

Svobodo je zato treba misliti v skupnostnem smislu, tj. nasproti atomizaciji. Že Hegel se je pri svojem konceptu svobode izognil temu, da bi slednja slonela na logiki svobodnega podjetništva. V nasprotju s tem, Hegel razume svobodnega akterja kot nekoga, ki je »v svoji omejitvi, v tem drugem pri samem sebi«. ¹³ Svobodni akter se po Heglu namenoma omeji v odnosu do drugega in v tej omejitvi določa samega sebe. Hegel nadalje zapiše, da se nam v občutju ta konkretna oblika svobode kaže kot prijateljstvo ali ljubezen. ¹⁴ Svoboda tako nikakor ni izbira med danimi alternativami, ki so nam ponujene od zunaj, ampak je določena od znotraj, izhajajoč iz posameznikove racionalnosti, da bi segla izven posameznika k drugemu. Svoboda je racionalno samodoločanje, ki mora biti vedno v ljubečem odnosu do drugega ter torej segati v obče in v skupnost.

Soleriju je Hegel blizu tudi zaradi poudarka na sočutnosti. Po Soleriju se mora človek – potem ko arhitektura postane okoljska determinanta zanj – odločiti, ali bo ta opravljala le golo instrumentalno vlogo ali pa bo šla onkraj nje in opravljala tudi estetsko funkcijo. Estetsko pa po Soleriju »ni odsotnost funkcionalnega, ampak njegova obdanost s sočutjem človeka«. ¹⁵ Zakaj je estetsko nujno sočutno? Ne-sočutna forma je entropična – za cilj ima svojo razgradnjo. Forma, ki ni navdana s sočutjem, ima za svoj cilj »totalno robotizacijo vrste«, ¹⁶ kar pomeni, da zapade v goli naravni determinizem in povzroči popolno atomizacijo posameznika. Estetiko je po Soleriju bistvena človeška kategorija, ki vznikne onkraj golega naravnega determinizma. Rojeno je iz trpljenja, s katerim se čista znanost ali racionalnost ne more uspešno spopasti. ¹⁷ To trpljenje je nato zaobrnjeno v radost in spočne

12 Soleri, *Arcology*, str. 10.

13 G. W. F. Hegel, *Oris filozofije pravice*, str. 322.

14 *Ibid.*, str. 322.

15 Soleri, *Arcology*, str. 19.

16 *Ibid.*, str. 20.

17 Soleri tu poseže po neracionalnih kategorijah, da lahko razloži sočutni estetski proces, ki je zanj nujen pri uveljavljanju svobode. To je v nasprotju s Heglom, ki svobodo zvede na popolnoma racionalno samodoločanje. Pri obeh pa gre za premoščanja meje med posameznikom in občim skozi ljubeči odnos do drugega.

kreativni akt.¹⁸ Estetsko je zato nasprotno entropičnemu/determinističnemu in ustreza trpljenju/radosti kot formi sočutja. Zato je treba pri prenosu človeškega v okolje, tj. pri grajenju mesta po lastni podobi, graditi sočutno. Če je posameznik v mestu atomiziran, pravi Soleri, mesto *umre*. Če pa je v ljubečem odnosu do drugega, mesto postane lepo in zaživi. Mrtvo entropično mesto je sodobno mesto, ki je usmerjeno v golo funkcionalnost in zanemarljivo estetsko dimenzijo. Umiranje mesta tu razumem zgolj v smislu njegove odtujenosti od družbenega bistva človeka, ki ga gradi, ne pa tudi v smislu njegovega realnega razkroja – mrtva entropična mesta namreč še naprej rastejo in se raztezajo. Soleri sicer opisuje naravnost entropičnega mesta k smrti na ta način:

Družba še ni pridobila samoohranitvene vzdržljivosti, značilne za organizme. Konstantno jo je treba razumsko prepričevati ali siliti v to, da sprejme lasten obstoj in da ga vzame resneje, ko se sooča z željo po smrti. Družba je še vedno nerodna žival, ki trpi posledice nekakšnega »ploskega gigantizma«, ki jo pritrjuje na zemljino površje.¹⁹

Družbo, ki je zajeta v tem mestu, Soleri opisuje kot bolno žival, a se ne spusti podrobno v načine »siljenja« živali k nadaljnjemu obstoju. Gre seveda za kompleksne tržne mehanizme, ki jih avtor ne eksplicira. Tu ne gre torej za dejansko umiranje mesta, ampak je to metafora za mesto, ki ga vsekakor sistemski faktorji propagirajo, a mu v njegovi strukturi manjka skupnost in povezanost, torej *skladnost*. Za človeka je to pomembno, ker ga življenje v takem mestu izolira od drugih. Človek pa je svoboden le, če se samodoloča v odnosu do drugega. Ločen od skupnosti, posameznik postane nesvoboden in duhovno umira.

Da bi bolje razumeli, zakaj je temu tako, lahko atomistično logiko priženemo do njenih radikalnih logičnih konsekvenc. Kot primer atomistične logike vzemimo utilitaristično filozofijo. Utilitarizem družbeno dobro zvede na seštevek preferenc posameznikov. Družbene vezi, ki jih posameznik sklepa z drugimi, so v enačbi zanemarjene, saj niso relevantne za končni seštevek splošnega ugodja. Spomnimo na argument zagovornikov *urbanega raztezanja* in *suburbij* – končna gospodarska izračunava naj bi tu dokazovala koristnost tovrstnega urbanega planiranja. Osredinjenje na atomarnega posameznika v utilitaristični enačbi paradokсно vodi do izničenja posameznikove zmožnosti za samorealizacijo, saj ga odtuja od lastnih projektov. Če je družbeno dobro zgolj seštevek dobrega iz projektov ločenih posameznikov, potem se mora projekt slehernega posameznika ukloniti projektom

18 Paolo Soleri, *The Bridge Between Matter & Spirit Is Matter Becoming Spirit: The Arcology of Paolo Soleri*, str. 34.

19 Soleri, *Arcology*, str. 5.

drugih, za katere je utilitaristična kalkulacija določila, da so na koncu koristnejši.²⁰ Utilitaristična logika je zato logika prostega trga in svobodnega podjetništva. Temelji na atomiziranem posamezniku, ki brez ozira na skupnost sledi lastnim ciljem, gradi svoje projekte in tekmuje na trgu, ta pa nato po temeljiti kalkulaciji določi domnevno družbeno dobro. Vidimo lahko, zakaj tovrstna logika vodi v nesvobodno stanje: relacija posameznika in družbe je tu koncipirana zgolj kot relacija delov in njihovih abstrahiranih seštevcev. Atomistični družbi primanjkuje povezovalni skupnostni element. Posameznik, ki je reduciran na zgolj del abstraktne celote, naposled nima prostora za samorealizacijo, je odtujen in nesvoboden. Neatomistično družbo je zato treba razumeti na drugačen način.

Po Marxu se je »[p]redvsem [...] treba izogniti temu, da bi ‚družbo‘ spet fiksirali kot abstrakcijo nasproti individuu«,²¹ saj je

individuum *družbeno bitje*. Njegovo izkazovanje življenja [*Lebensäusserung*] – četudi naj se ne kaže v neposredni obliki *skupnostnega*, obenem z drugimi dopolnjenega izkazovanja življenja – je zatorej izkazovanje in potrjevanje *družbenega življenja*. Individualno in generično življenje človeka se ne razlikujeta, pa naj že bo – in to nujno – način bivanja individualnega življenja bolj *poseben* ali bolj *obči* način generičnega življenja, ali generično življenje bolj *posebno* ali bolj *obče* individualno življenje.²²

Tu torej ni prave distinkcije med družbenim življenjem in življenjem posameznika, saj je eno konkretizacija drugega in obratno. Posameznik je bistveno tvorec družbe skozi vezi, ki jih ustvarja v svoji skupnosti. Sicer pa po Marxu v trenutni kapitalistični družbenozgodovinski formaciji človek še ni realiziral svojega družbenega bistva, saj ni odpravil zasebne lastnine. Človek ostaja odtujen od svojega družbenega bistva, ki bi ga lahko uveljavljal v pravi skupnostni dejavnosti. Privatna lastnina določa obliko družbenosti, ki jo zaznamuje »čut posedovanja«, kar je »enostavna odtujitev vseh fizičnih in duhovnih čutov«, torej redukcija vseh stvari na njihovo golo funkcionalnost.²³

Odprava privatne lastnine je zatorej popolna *emancipacija* vseh človeških čutov in lastnosti; toda ta emancipacija je ravno po tem, da so ti čuti in lastnosti, tako objektivno kot subjektivno, postali *človeški*. Oko je postalo *človeško oko*, kot je njegov *predmet* postal družben, *človeški*, od človeka za človeka izvirajoč predmet [...].²⁴

20 J. J. C. Smart in Bernard Williams, *Utilitarianism: For and Against*, str. 115–116.

21 Karl Marx, »Kritika nacionalne ekonomije (Pariški rokopisi 1844)«, str. 335–336.

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*, str. 337.

24 *Ibid.*, str. 337–338.

Torej, če atomistična filozofija družbo abstrahira iz skupka posameznikov in tako zakriva skupnost, pa neatomistična filozofija družbo razume kot konkretizacijo človekovega bista in tako postavlja zahtevo po grajenju skupnosti kot uveljavljanju tega bista.

Ta logika ustreza arkološkemu mestu, ki poudarja sočutno gradnjo. Medtem pa atomistična, entropična logika ustreza bodisi Haussmannovemu mestu, ki podleže absolutizaciji trga in policije, bodisi *suburbiji* in *megalopolisu*, ki prav tako zanemarjata skupnost in skladnost, poudarjata individualiziran avtomobilski transport in se raztezata čez naravo kot uničujoč plašč. V Združenih državah Amerike je prav avtomobilska industrija odigrala ključno zgodovinsko vlogo pri udejanjanju tovrstnega atomističnega *raztega*. Lobisti so namreč v prvi polovici 20. stoletja vplivali na gradnjo avtocest, kar je doseglo vrhunec v Meddržavnem avtocestnem zakonu (ang. Federal-Aid Highway Act) iz leta 1956. Posledice so vključevale zanemarjanje reinvesticij v obstoječe urbane centre, namesto tega pa ogromen poseg v nizkogostotno poseljena območja in rast lastništva avtomobilov napram razvoju javnega transporta. Stvari so postale decentralizirane in oddaljene, kar je služilo predvsem zasebnim interesom prodajalcev osebnih prevoznih sredstev.²⁵

Miniaturizacija nasproti urbanemu raztegu

Nasproti *suburbiji*, ki se *razteza* in *razkraja*, zato arkologija poudarja *miniaturizacijo*, ki je njen osrednji pojem. Solerijeva knjiga o arkologiji se zato začne s stavkom: »Ta knjiga govori o miniaturizaciji.«²⁶ Pojem pomeni koncentracijo energije v manjši, a bolj kompleksen prostor. Človek, ki je po Soleriju omejen s časom in prostorom, v katerem biva, oziroma uklenjen v »časovno-prostorski prisilni jopič«, lahko to omejitev minimizira in povzroči eksplozijo življenjskega potenciala. Dejansko vsako življenje miniaturizira, saj deluje proti entropiji, ki je proces razprševanja skozi prostor. »Miniaturiziraj ali umri, to je bilo ključno pravilo za porajajoče se življenje.«²⁷ Miniaturizacija je torej prenos procesa porajanja vedno večje kompleksnosti v relativno majhnem telesu, ki ga opazimo pri človeški evoluciji, na sfero arhitekture – ustvarjanje mesta po lastni (človeški) podobi. Pri reševanju iz časovno-prostorskega prisilnega jopiča nam lahko, kar zadeva čas, pomaga kibernetika, ki bi lahko pod pravimi pogoji odpravila prisilno delo in človeku priskrbelo

25 Owen D. Gutfreund, *Twentieth-Century Sprawl: Highways and the Reshaping of the American Landscape*, str. 58–59.

26 Soleri, *Arcology*, epigraf pred predgovorom.

27 *Ibid.*, str. 2.

razbremenitev ter možnost svobodnega ustvarjanja. Kar zadeva prostor, pa rešitev iščemo v trodimenzionalni gradnji. Arkološko mesto je trodimenzionalno, ker je njegova vertikalnost razmeroma skladna z njegovo horizontalnostjo, kot denimo pri kocki, krogli, cilindru ali tetraedru. *Suburbija* je dvodimenzionalna in se razteza čez naravo, medtem ko je arkologija trodimenzionalna in tako ohranja v sebi učinkovitost, zaradi česar ne uničuje narave. Je *kompaktna*, zato ni samo *površina*, ampak je *trdno telo*.²⁸ Četudi se naša mesta danes raztezajo tudi v višino, njihova višina ni *skladna* z njihovimi drugimi dimenzijami, zato pa naša mesta niso varčne, ekološke gmote. Iz tega Soleri izpelje trditev, da je »življenje v (kvalificirani) gostoti stvari«.²⁹ Gostota prinaša življenjsko potencialnost nasproti entropični tankosti. Arkološko mesto je zato gosto, živo, trodimenzionalno in kompleksno.

Svoboda vznikne iz miniaturizacije zato, ker sta razpršenost in atomizacija za človeka uklenjajoči. Človek, ki se prepusti entropiji, je kvantificiran in razsekan na dele, ki so ujeti v predeterminirane tokove kapitala. Atomiziranemu človeku zato manjka potencial za samodeterminacijo. Deleuze piše, da je človek v sodobni družbi nadzora kvantificiran, nato pa naknadno združen v dinamične vzorce skozi abstrakcijo prej disperznih delov. To lahko družba nadzora stori zato, ker ljudje v njej sestojijo iz delov, ki so brezpomenski, razen v kontekstu njihovih vselej spreminjajočih se modulacij.³⁰ Tovrstna praksa nadzora ustreza atomistični logiki, ki prav tako zakriva družbeno bistvo človeka. Zato mislim, da nasproti temu svoboden človek potrebuje skupnost in nasploh okolje, ki mu dopušča realizacijo te skupnosti. Namesto entropičnosti zato iščemo koncentracijo energije, tako da v infrastrukturo družbe (skozi arhitekturo) vnesemo svobodo. Sočutna arhitektura, tj. arkologija, deluje po logiki, nasprotni svobodnemu podjetništvu. Prva opredelitev svobode, s katero operira, je negativna – svoboda od odtujenega dela. Druga je pozitivna: svobodo išče v omogočanju posameznikovega kreativnega dejanja, s katerim se samoudejanja. Pri tem pa posameznika ne loči od skupnosti, ampak ga obravnava kot konkretizacijo njegove obče družbene narave.

Prevladajoča zamisel svobode je še vedno ukalupljena v stare atomistične nazore. Leta 2023 je Donald Trump napovedal gradnjo t. i. *freedom cities* oz. *mest svobode*.³¹ Ime je seveda zavajajoče, saj ideja svobode v predlaganemu načrtu spet temelji na logiki svobodnega podjetništva, minimiziranja (predvsem ekoloških in tržnih)

28 *Ibid.*, str. 9.

29 *Ibid.*, str. 9.

30 Gilles Deleuze, »Pripis k družbam nadzora«, str. 82–83.

31 Eric Bradner, Kristen Holmes in Alicia Wallace, »Trump proposes building 10 'freedom cities' and flying cars«.

regulacij in nebrzdani privatizaciji državne zemlje, kar spominja na zasebne de-lavske kolonije iz 19. stoletja. To ni naključje, saj se uporabljena retorika sklicuje na »*frontier spirit*« iz časov ameriške ekspanzije proti zahodu. Rešitev za stano-vanjsko stisko »mesta svobode« namesto v miniaturizaciji vidijo v grajenju nizko-gostotnih novih domov za mlade družine. To je dvodimenzionalno razmišljanje, ki spodbuja gradnjo *suburbij*, kjer je posameznik atomiziran in nesvoboden. Prava osvobajajoča gradnja je zato tej idejno nasprotna, spodbuja javni prevoz, ekološke kmetijske prakse in dostopna stanovanja. A ne le to, aktivno nastopa proti razje-danju skupnosti in okolja – je trodimenzionalna in gosta. Je fizična vgraditev ideje svobode v infrastrukturo družbe.

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New age in potencial za upor

Martin Norčič

Povzetek

Gibanje *new age* je postalo eno izmed pomembnejših duhovnih gibanj sodobnega sveta, zaradi česar je pomembno analizirati njegove možne načine vplivanja na družbo. V tem članku bom zato najprej skozi analizo njegovih temeljnih prepričanj naznačil njegov pomen, zatem pa orisal iz njega izhajajoča politična prepričanja ter analiziral njihov potencial za spremembo družbe in trenutnega sistema.

Ključne besede: new age, okoljevarstvo, holizem, potrošništvo, individualizem

Summary

The *New Age* movement has become one of the more important spiritual movements of the modern world, making it important to analyze its possible effects on society. In this article, I first define its meaning by way of analyzing its fundamental beliefs. I then proceed with describing the political beliefs that follow from it so as to scrutinize the ability of these beliefs to effect social change.

Keywords: new age, environmentalism, holism, consumerism, individualism

Uvod

Tekom zgodovine človeštva so bila duhovna gibanja pogosto gonilo napredka in sprememb. V današnjem svetu postajajo nova duhovna gibanja vse bolj popularna, na kar kaže tudi dejstvo, da se v vsakdanjem govoru pogosto uporablja oznaka *new age*, ki družijo večino teh gibanj. Leta 2012 se je tako skoraj vsak peti prebivalec ZDA označil za duhovno, a ne religiozno osebo.¹ Pomemben del te skupine so prav pripadniki gibanja *new age*. Zaradi vse večje vplivnosti katerega se moramo vprašati, kako to vpliva na našo družbo, še zlasti ker njegovi pripadniki pričakujejo nastop nove dobe, ki gibanju daje njegovo ime. Zato si je potrebno ogledati temeljna prepričanja gibanja *new age* ter načine, kako ta vplivajo na vedenje tistih, ki jih sprejemajo, in se naposled še vprašati, kakšnih sprememb se lahko zaradi gibanja *new age* nadejamo.

Kaj je *new age*

Preden si ogledamo zmožnost gibanja *new age*, da temeljito spremeni družbo, je potrebno bolj konkretno opredeliti, kaj *new age* sploh je, kar je težavna naloga, saj je gibanje zelo raznoliko. Ena izmed najpomembnejših in najbolj razširjenih značilnosti *new agea* je prepričanje, da zapuščamo dobo, v kateri smo bivali do sedaj, in vstopamo v novo. To prepričanje temelji na astrologiji, po kateri dobi ribe, ki je doba krščanstva, sledi doba vodnarja, ki prinaša mir in harmoničen soobstoj vseh ljudi.² Ta s seboj prav tako prinaša spremembo mišljenja in reorganizacijo same zavesti. Novodobna zavest je namreč zavest kozmične enotnosti, ki vodi v opustitev vseh dualističnih ter razdiralnih svetovnonazorskih sistemov in v vzpostavitev novega, holističnega in monističnega pogleda na svet.³ Podporniki gibanja *new age* tako verjamejo, da je v svojih temeljih vse, kar obstaja, poenoteno; torej verjamejo v enotnost obstoječega.⁴ *New age* torej v sebi nujno vključuje željo po stvaritvi sveta, v katerem človeštvo, narava in duhovni svet skupaj delujejo tako, da drug drugemu koristijo in pomagajo.⁵

Holizem je potemtakem eno izmed temeljnih prepričanj gibanja *new age*, vpliva pa tudi na druga prepričanja njegovih privrženecv ter oblikuje njihov način življenja.

1 Pew Research Center, »Religion and the Unaffiliated«.

2 Pat Collins, »New Age Spirituality«, str. 91.

3 Jack Finnegan, »The New Age Movement: A New Religion«, str. 353.

4 Collins, »New Age Spirituality«, str. 92.

5 David Spangler in William Irwin Thompson, *Reimagination of the World: A Critique of the New Age, Science, and Popular Culture: The Chinook Summer Conferences*, str. 57.

K novim duhovnim gibanjem namreč spada tudi priseganje na holistično skrb za zdravje, kar v tem gibanju ni razumljeno le kot skrb za ohranjanje zdravega duha v zdravem telesu. *New age* takšno skrb za zdravje vidi kot ključen del poti, ki vodi k odrešitvi posameznika in večji skrbi za Zemljo ter vse njene prebivalce. Tako se razkriva še ena značilnost obravnavanega gibanja, ki izvira iz njegovega holističnega svetovnega nazora: skrb za planet.⁶ To nas ne sme presenetiti, saj *new age* priznava enotnost obstoja. Ker je v svojem temelju vse eno, se zdi smiselno večjo skrb nameniti celotni naravi, tako živi kot neživi. Ludje v svet nismo vključeni samo kot njegovi sestavni deli, temveč tudi kot del enosti, ki združuje vse, kar obstaja. Škoditi obstoječemu bi torej pomenilo škoditi tudi samemu sebi, zato k prepričanjem, v katere verjame *new age*, sodi tudi skrb za okolje. Duh gibanja *new age* odgovarja na izzive sedanjosti, s tem ko si na te izzive prizadeva odgovoriti na način, ki minimizira možnost našega uničenja.⁷

Rušenje meja med materialnim in duhovnim svetom v sodobnih spiritualnih gibanjih se kaže tudi skozi njegovo naravnost k panteizmu. Gibanja, ki spadajo v *new age*, namreč Boga razumejo kot energijo, ki preveva celoten svet. Bog tako ne more biti posebljen ali individualiziran in ni viden kot stvaritelj. Boga more vsak posameznik najti v samem sebi, in sicer tako, da premaga svojo lastno nevednost in se ozave lastnih božanskih atributov. S tem je posamezniku omogočeno, da premaga ločitev materije in duha oziroma duha in sebstva.⁸ To prepričanje je kaže, da je eden izmed temeljev gibanja *new age* ravno vera v svetost posameznika ali celo indentičnost posameznika z Bogom, zaradi česar gibanje sprejema tudi mnoge vrednote, za katere naj bi se zavzemal Zahod. Mednje lahko prištejemo svobodo, enakost in samoodločanje.⁹ Panteizem potemtakem samo zasidra skrb za okolje v prepričanja gibanja *new age*, saj bi škodovanje okolju pomenilo tudi škodovanje Bogu, v katerem je udeležen tudi vsak posameznik.

Naposled lahko omenimo, da je gibanje *new age* tudi eklektično, ker izbira med aspekti drugih svetovnonazorskih sistemov in vase vključi tiste, ki mu ustrezajo, zaradi česar je tudi sinkretistično, saj različna verovanja združuje v nove sisteme. Prav tako je navadno pelagijsko in gnostično, saj zavrača doktrino izvirnega greha in trdi, da je človeštvo v temelju dobro. To pomeni, da lahko svetost doseže brez zunanje pomoči in poudarja doseganje višjih, kvazimističnih oblik zavesti.

6 Finnegan, »The New Age Movement«, str. 354.

7 Spangler in Thompson, *Reimagination of the World*, str. 57.

8 Collins, »New Age Spirituality«, str. 93.

9 Hugh B. Urban, »The Cult of Ecstasy: Tantrism, the New Age, and the Spiritual Logic of Late Capitalism«, str. 277.

Iz raznolikosti gibanja *new age* izvira še njegovo nasprotovanje avtoritarizmu, saj za poglobljanje v notranjo resnico, ki biva v vsakem človeku, avtoriteta, ki bi ljudi vodila po tej poti, ni potrebna.¹⁰ Gibanje je proti avtoritarizmu naravnano tudi zaradi prepričanja, da se resnica posamezniku lahko razkrije na različne načine in preko različnih posrednikov. Raznovrstnost načinov razkrivanja resnice in epistemološki individualizem tako v srce *new agea* vsajata vzvišen status posameznika.¹¹ Pri razkrivanju resnice pa se *new age*, vsaj do določene mere, poskuša predstaviti nekoliko bolj znanstveno. Onkraj dosega znanosti si namreč njegovi pripadniki prizadevajo za to, da najdejo znanstvene podlage, s katerimi bi lahko pojasnili okultne pojave.¹² Čeprav lahko nanizamo nekaj značilnosti, ki načeloma združujejo različne veje gibanja, je treba priznati, da je v temelju še vedno nedoločljivo, kompleksno, fleksibilno in da ga je težko v celoti zaobjeti.¹³ To so aspekti gibanja, ki ga morda najbolj določajo, vendar nas to ne sme odvrniti od analize prepričanj *new agea* kot celote, saj so vse njegove veje del istega drevesa, njegovi sadeži pa krojijo našo sedanost – in zato terjajo kritičen pretres.

Politična prepričanja gibanja *new age*

Treba se je vprašati, kakšne politične ideologije se lahko razvijejo iz pravkar opisanih temeljev svetovnega nazora gibanja *new age* in kakšen potencial imajo te ideologije za vzpostavitev sistema, ki je boljši ali vsaj drugačen od sedanjega? Najprej je potrebno določiti, ali gibanje *new age* v svojih pripadnikih vzbuja individualistična ali kolektivistična prepričanja, saj ta razlika vpliva na ves nadaljnji razvoj njihovih političnih prepričanj. Zdi se, da bi morala biti posledica holističnega pogleda na svet (torej pogleda, ki združuje božanski, naravni in človeški svet) večja mera individualizma tistih, ki sprejemajo ta svetovni nazor.¹⁴ Ta namreč pripisuje velik pomen posamezniku in njegovemu lastnemu sebstvu. Posameznik je odgovoren za to, da preseže samega sebe in doseže razsvetljenje. Zato se zdi intuitivno, da *new age* v svojih privržencih vzbuja individualizem, kar ga razlikuje od religij, ki ne temeljijo na holističnem pogledu na svet, saj se naslanjajo na tradicijo, vrednote, kot je poslušnost, in poudarjajo vlogo skupnosti.¹⁵ Sicer bi holizem lahko

10 Collins, »New Age Spirituality«, str. 95.

11 Urban, »The Cult of Ecstasy«, str. 276.

12 Simon Hajdini, »Okultizem voha: od Fliessa in Freuda do Rilkeja in Süskinda«, str. 144.

13 Finnegan, »The New Age Movement«, str. 351.

14 Miguel Farias in Mansur Lalljee, »Holistic Individualism in the Age of Aquarius: Measuring Individualism/Collectivism in New Age, Catholic, and Atheist/Agnostic Groups«, str. 277.

15 *Ibid.*, str. 277–278.

new age vodil do tega, da bi gibanje sprejelo večjo mero kolektivistično naravnanih prepričanj, saj poenotenost vsega, kar obstaja, pomeni tudi poenotenost vseh ljudi. Zato je še toliko bolj zanimivo, da se gibanje osredotoča prav na *posameznika* in njegovo odgovornost, da doseže razsvetljenje.

Na slednje kažejo tudi empirične raziskave individualizma v gibanju *new age*, ki potrjujejo, da je to gibanje v primerjavi s tradicionalnimi religijami, kot je na primer katolištvo, bolj individualistično. Prav tako nam te raziskave pokažejo, da se individualizem gibanja *new age* razlikuje od individualizma tistih, ki se ne identificirajo z nobeno religijo ali duhovnim gibanjem.¹⁶ Glede na našo dosedanje analizo teorije, ki kroji gibanje *new age*, prva izmed teh trditev ni posebej presegnetljiva. Druga trditev pa je ključna za to, da lahko upravičimo ločeno obravnavo gibanja *new age* in njegove zmožnosti, da deluje kot gonilo družbenih sprememb. V primeru, da se to ne bi razlikovalo od sekularnih skupin, bi lahko govorili le o vplivu sekularizacije na zmožnost družbe za spremembo, brez potrebe po ločeni analizi gibanja *new age*. Za ločevanje sekularnih in sodobnih duhovnih skupin lahko torej rečemo, da individualizem, prisoten pri prvih, ni enak tistemu, ki je prisoten pri drugih. V gibanju *new age* posameznik sebe vidi kot del večje celote, s katero je posledično na globoki ravni tudi povezan. Narava te povezave je zelo osebna in abstraktna. Po drugi strani pa je individualizem sekularnih ljudi bolj družbeno in manj duhovno pogojen.¹⁷ Privrženci gibanja *new age* zato le poredko in mukoma tvorijo dolgotrajne skupnosti, medtem ko so religije in sekularne skupine na to nalogo bolj pripravljene.¹⁸ Zaradi netradicionalnosti in eklektičnosti gibanja namreč večina ljudi po vsej verjetnosti ne bo vzgojena tako, da bo sprejela *new age* prepričanja. Kljub temu lahko gibanje *new age* svoja prepričanja širi preko prodaje izdelkov. Dandanes je to gibanje dejansko postalo bolj podobno tržni znamki, saj se uporablja za prodajo širokega spektra izdelkov, med katerimi so tudi knjige in video vsebine.¹⁹ Te so seveda zmožne širiti ideje gibanja, a prodaja blaga je precej bolj majav temelj za gibanje kot tradicija ali religija.

Onkraj povezave med individualizmom in gibanjem *new age* se lahko posvetimo še konkretnim političnim prepričanjem njegovih privrženecv. Ta so prav tako eklektična in izvirajo iz mnogih, pogosto nasprotujočih si ideologij. Posledično je politične tokove gibanja *new age* kot celote težko dokončno opredeliti, kar med drugim pomeni, da se pri tej nalogi ne moremo zanašati na standardno razdelitev

16 *Ibid.*, str. 287.

17 *Ibid.*, str. 287–288.

18 *Ibid.*, str. 288.

19 Urban, »The Cult of Ecstasy«, str. 277–278.

politike na levi in desni pol, saj se *new age* takšnemu razlikovanju izmika.²⁰ Kljub temu lahko izpostavimo trende, ki so skupni različnim vejam gibanja *new age*, in pa miselne sisteme, ki so navdihnili gibanje kot celoto. Na prvi pogled se politične ideologije, ki izvirajo iz *new agea*, zdijo kontradiktorne, toda njihovi zagovorniki bi trdili, da je to res samo, če nanje gledamo iz zornega kota, ki celotno polje politike razdeli le na desni in levi pol.²¹ Do neke mere je ta trditev resnična, že zaradi velikosti gibanja in njegove raznolikosti, toda kljub temu se posamezna politična prepričanja pripadnikov gibanja ne upirajo delitvi na levo in desno stran političnega spektra.

Glede na eklektično naravo gibanja *new age* je zato morda najprimerneje, da si ogledamo ravno posamezna politična prepričanja tega gibanja in jih razvrstimo glede na bližino obema skrajnima poloma političnega spektra. Četudi bi se zagovorniki gibanja tej delitvi upirali, pa je ta še vedno tista, skozi katero najpogosteje osmišljamo politiko, zaradi česar je ta najbolj razumljiva največjemu številu ljudi in s tem tudi precej koristna. Tako lahko trdimo, da je tudi politična prepričanja gibanja *new age* do neke mere smiselno interpretirati prek delitve na levo- in desno-liberalna prepričanja, saj jih lahko tako približamo navadnemu političnemu diskurzu in poskrbimo za njihovo večjo razumljivost. Leva stran tega spektra se načeloma denimo zavzema za radikalno enakost spolov in odpravo patriarhata. To prepričanje ima še posebno močno veljavo v neopoganskih skupinah, v katerih imajo ženske pogosto nadrejen položaj napram moškim.²² Mnogi neopogani zato zavračajo krščanstvo in druge religije, saj so te za njih neodpravljivo patriarhalne narave. V ta namen obstaja v neopoganstvu dokaj močna tendenca, ki si prizadeva rekonstruirati predkrščansko in s tem tudi predpatriarhalno obliko duhovnosti.²³

Prav tako je ključen aspekt gibanja *new age* skrb za okolje in zavzemanje za zaščito narave.²⁴ Ekološka osveščenost izvira iz prej omenjenega prepričanja v povezanost vsega obstoječega. Skrb za naravo ima v gibanju *new age* torej poleg politične še duhovno raven. Poleg tega se sledilci *new age* političnih ideologij navadno zavzemajo za zakonodajo, ki omejuje rast prebivalstva, saj so prepričani, da ima Zemlja preveč prebivalcev.²⁵ Skrb za omejitev rasti prebivalstva lahko prav tako

20 Richard Kyle, »The Political Ideas of the New Age Movement«, str. 832.

21 *Ibid.*, str. 833.

22 *Ibid.*, str. 834.

23 Alleyn Diesel, »Womanspirit«, str. 71–72.

24 Kyle, »The Political Ideas«, str. 834.

25 *Ibid.*

povežemo s skrbjo za naravo, saj se ukrepi, ki se jih sprejema s tem namenom, pogosto opravičujejo s skrbjo za naravne vire in podobno. Tako lahko vidimo, da imajo ekološko obarvana opravičila za sprejemanje dokaj problematičnih ukrepov pomembno mesto v gibanju *new age*. Osredotočanje na povečevanje števila prebivalcev in poskus omejitve te rasti namreč navadno izvira iz predsodkov in le odteguje pozornost od ukrepov, ki bi učinkovito varovali okolje.

New age prav tako večinoma podpira neomejen dostop do splava, nasprotuje monogamiji in prevladi heteronormativnosti ter tradicionalnim spolnim vlogam. Poleg tega se privrženci tega gibanja zavzemajo za odpravo vseh »zakonov, ki ustvarjajo kriminalna dejanja brez žrtev«, s čimer mislijo zakonodajo, ki prepoveduje proizvodnjo in prodajo drog, in zakone, ki prepovedujejo prostitucijo.²⁶ Ta prepričanja lahko povežemo s prej omenjenim osredotočanjem na razkrivanje resnice, ki se nahaja v vsakem izmed nas, tako pa za njeno uvidenje ni potrebna nobena zunanja avtoriteta. Posameznik je potemtakem tisti, ki določa kako živi svoje življenje, ne pa zunanja avtoriteta. Če je namreč zmožen odkriti najgloblje resnice, mora biti sposoben tudi odkriti najboljši način, kako živeti svoje življenje.

Omenili smo že, da se *new age* v nekaterih pogledih zgleduje tudi po liberalni desnici, kar se kaže predvsem v njegovem nasprotovanju obširnemu državnemu aparatu in tem, kar dojema kot prekomerno birokratizacijo političnih ukrepov in sistemov. Privrženci gibanja *new age* se zavzemajo za večjo mero decentralizacije in lokalizacije političnega sistema. Poleg tega *new age* poudarja samozadostnost posameznikov in daje velik pomen osebni svobodi. Zato centralizirana država ni sprejemljiv način organiziranja, saj mora družba temeljiti na voluntarizmu, torej na posameznikih, ki se med seboj prostovoljno povezujejo, vendar niso združeni v entiteti, ki bi jo lahko imenovali država.²⁷ To dejstvo se sprva lahko zdi presemetljivo, saj je v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja gibanje *new age* energijo vnašalo predvsem v gibanja na levi strani političnega spektra. A danes tudi mnoge desničarske skupine, zlasti tiste skrajnejše, uporabljajo osamljenost, ki jo je med drugim ustvarila pandemija, da kujejo zaveznitva s skupinami iz gibanja *new age*.²⁸ Vsa ta prepričanja lahko povežemo z večjo mero individualizma, ki je bila predstavljena prej. Ta se očitno povezuje z osredotočanjem na samozadostnost posameznikov in na individualno svobodo, saj so ravno individualistična prepričanja tista, ki človeka vodijo v oddaljitev od drugih in v dajanje prednosti doseganju svojih lastnih ciljev, pred cilji skupine, ko se ti s prvimi ne skladajo. Za

26 *Ibid.*, str. 834–835.

27 *Ibid.*, str. 836.

28 Michael A. Peters, »New Age Spiritualism, Mysticism, and Far-right Conspiracy«.

primer takšnega vedenja lahko navedemo odpor, ki so ga med pandemijo mnogi, med njimi tudi pripadniki gibanja *new age*, čutili do nošenja mask in cepljenja, kljub vsem dokazom, ki so kazali, da bi ti ukrepi družbi koristili.

Ključen del političnega programa *new age* je tudi zavzemanje za globalno enotnost, s čimer mislimo poenotenje celotnega človeštva in stvaritev globalne družbe, čeprav med posamezniki znotraj gibanja prihaja do nestrinjanj glede tega, kako naj bi bil ta cilj dosežen.²⁹ Kot izvor tega prepričanja lahko zopet navedemo duhovno prepričanje v enotnost vsega, kar obstaja, kar pomeni, da bi bilo sledeč tem premisam edino smiselno prizadevati si za bolj poenoteno človeštvo. Toda prepričanje, ne samo da zmoremo razviti politični sistem, ki bi ustrezal celotnemu svetu, temveč tudi da si moramo za udejanjenje takšnega sistema prizadevati, lahko povežemo tudi s sekularnimi načini mišljenja. To prepričanje se namreč sklada s prepričanjem, da smo z liberalno demokracijo razvili najboljši možni sistem. Takšen svetovni nazor se seveda ne more upreti globalnemu kapitalističnemu sistemu, saj predpostavlja, da nas je ta sistem pripeljal do konca zgodovine. Zato lahko sklepamo, da se tudi *new age* temu sistemu ni zmožen konkretno upreti. Vendar ima sledenje globalni družbi tudi bolj praktičen aspekt. Zastopniki teh prepričanj tako izpostavljajo mnoge krize, s katerimi se človeštvo srečuje in ki vplivajo nanj kot celoto. Potemtakem si je smiselno prizadevati za večjo povezanost človeštva, saj se lahko tem krizam (na primer podnebni) zoperstavimo le združeni, v nasprotnem primeru bomo skupaj pogubljeni.³⁰ David Spangler zato vzpostavitve planetarne kulture označi za ključen aspekt gibanja, vendar s tem ne misli nujno vzpostavitev svetovne vlade, ki bi imela oblast nad celotno Zemljo.³¹

Vidimo lahko torej, da ima prizadevanje za globalno družbo tako duhoven kot praktičen aspekt, kar je po vsej verjetnosti prispevalo k veljavi, ki ga ima to prepričanje znotraj gibanja *new age*. Toda s tem o gibanje zaide v protislovje s trenutno politično sliko sveta, ki temelji na nacionalnih državah. Te so v kontekstu *new agea* razumljene kot zastarel koncept, ki se mora umakniti novemu svetovnemu red povezanost in enotnosti. Nacionalne države so v primerjavi z lokalnimi ali regionalnimi skupnostmi videne kot nenaravne.³² Na tej točki velja omeniti, da se lokalizem, ki ga izraža *new age*, v veliki meri sklada s prepričanji, ki jih izražajo skrajno desne ideologije, predvsem tiste, ki so obarvane bolj libertarno. Kar je specifično gibanju *new age* je, da na nacionalne države gleda kot na poganjek

29 Kyle, »The Political Ideas«, str. 840.

30 *Ibid.*, str. 841.

31 Spangler in Thompson, *Reimagination of the World*, str. 57.

32 Kyle, »The Political Ideas«, str. 842.

kartezijansko-newtonskega svetovnega nazora, ki je svet razdelil intelektualno, medtem ko je so nacionalne države to delitev prenesle v politično sfero.³³ Tako lahko opazimo tudi vpliv individualizma in skepse do zunanjih avtoritet na gibanje *new age*. Posameznik lahko svoje osebne cilje in razsvetljenje najbolj zasleduje v lokalnih skupnostih, kjer bo po vsej verjetnosti deležen večje mere svobode, saj je znotraj nacionalne države veliko bolj verjetno, da bodo njegovi cilji drugotnega pomena v primerjavi s cilji države ali nacije.

Gibanje *new age* v danes v znatni meri podleglo skrajno desničarskim prepričanjem. Po eni strani se povezuje z desničarskimi, libertarnimi skupinami, kar se kaže predvsem preko njegove podpore lokalizmu. Po drugi strani pa med mnogimi oblikami ekstremnega nacionalizma in *new agea* obstaja zavezništvo, ki se kaže v tem, da te skupine državo pojmujejo preko religioznih ali duhovnih idej in hkrati uporabljajo simbole sovražnosti.³⁴ Političnih idej, ki jih izraža *new age*, zato ne moremo opazovati samih po sebi, saj so tudi te ideje odvisne od časa, v katerem se pojavljajo, in se z njim spreminjajo.

Zmožnost gibanja *new age* za izboljšanje družbe

Verjetno je torej, da si bo gibanje *new age* prizadevalo družbo preobraziti in v podobo, ki se sklada z njegovimi ideali. Da bi ugotovili, kakšna ta družba je, si lahko najprej ogledamo, kakšen vpliv imajo ti ideali na obnašanje njihovih privržencev. Vprašajmo se torej, kako socialno angažirani so sledilci gibanja *new age* v primerjavi s preostalimi deli družbe, najsi bodo religiozni ali ne. Sledilci novih oblik duhovnosti izkazujejo manjšo raven socialne angažiranosti kakor privrženci tradicionalnih religij, pa čeprav je ta razlika – z izjemo vključevanja v prostovoljne dejavnosti – dokaj majhna. Kot socialno angažiranost razumemo prostovoljno delo, članstvo in prispevanje denarja dobrodelnim organizacijam. Glede na prej vzpostavljeno povezavo med gibanjem *new age* in individualizmom, ki ga ta v svojih privržencih vzbuja, so te ugotovitve pričakovane. *New age* ima zato v primerjavi s tradicionalnimi religijami manjšo organizacijsko sposobnost. Posledično lahko svoje privržence le s težavo spodbudi v dejavnosti, ki vplivajo na družbene spremembe. Čeprav *new age* prepričanja v svojih sledilcih ustvarjajo občutek povezanosti, se ta nanaša večinoma na svet nasploh. S tem občutkom je povezana tudi njihova naklonjenost dobrodelnosti, vendar občutek povezanosti s stvarstvom ni dovolj, da bi jih spodbudil k prostovoljnemu delu ali

33 *Ibid.*, str. 842.

34 Peters, »New Age Spiritualism«.

podobnim dejavnostim. Potrebno je omeniti tudi, da se kljub temu pripadniki gibanja *new age* v primerjavi s tradicionalno religioznimi skupinami in sekularnimi skupinami pogosteje vključujejo v organizacije, ki si prizadevajo za zaščito okolja, mir in pravice živali.³⁵ S to hipotezo se sklada tudi vključenost sledilcev idealov gibanja *new age* v dejavnosti, ki si prizadevajo za zaščito okolja in podobne cilje, saj je ta skrb povezana s temeljnimi prepričanji gibanja, ki oblikujejo njegov celotni svetovni nazor.

Naposled moramo *new age* primerjati še s sekularnimi skupinami. Glede socialne angažiranosti lahko rečemo, da privrženci gibanja *new age* izkazujejo manjšo mero socialne angažiranosti v primerjavi z religioznimi skupinami, medtem ko so si s sekularnimi skupinami v tem oziru dokaj podobni ali nekoliko bolj angažirani od njih. Poleg tega so okoljevarstvene organizacije in organizacije, ki se borijo za mir in živalske pravice iz tega zaključka izvzete, saj so v njih pripadniki gibanja *new age* bolj aktivni kot pripadniki tradicionalnih religij in sekularnih skupin ljudi.³⁶ Na prvi pogled se morda zdi, da ta zaključek namiguje na pozitivno povezavo med sprejemanjem *new age* prepričanj in zmožnostjo skupin, ki v ta prepričanja verjamejo, za doseganje pozitivnih družbenih sprememb. Čeprav *new age* morda nima iste zmožnosti tvorjenja organiziranih skupin kot tradicionalne religije, pa je vseeno sposoben spodbuditi svoje sledilce k dobronamernosti in k sodelovanju v nekaterih skupinah, ki se borijo za izboljšanje družbe. Zdi se torej, da je *new age* še daleč od tega, da bi bil zmožen doseči večje spremembe na družbeni ravni. Za to je namreč potrebno tvoriti dolgotrajne skupine, ki so odporne na zunanje pritiske, za kar *new age* prepričanja niso primerna. Ta v svojih sledilcih vzpodbujajo osredotočenost nase, saj lahko le tako posameznik doseže razsvetljenje. Šele ko bo vsak posameznik dosegel razsvetljenje sam zase, bo po *new age* prepričanjih tudi družba pripravljena na temeljite spremembe. Na tej točki lahko v gibanju *new age* zaznamo znatno mero notranje napetosti, saj promovira individualizem in osredotočanje na samega sebe, kot sredstvo za spremembo družbe. Toda individualizem kvečjemu ljudi od družbe odvrča, kar pomeni, da jih odvrča od poskusa spremembe družbe. Tudi če vsak posameznik svoje lastne sposobnosti razvije do njihovega zenita, to še ne pomeni, da bo družba boljša.

Za primerno in točno oceno zmožnosti gibanja *new age* za spodbujanje pozitivnih družbenih sprememb moramo omeniti tudi njegovo predajo interesom kapitala. Dandanes je namreč velik del tega gibanja na videz popolnoma drugačen kot je bil v šestdesetih letih 20. stoletja, ko so različne skupine, med njimi pripadniki

35 Joantine Berghuijs, Cok Bakker in Jos Pieper, »New Spirituality and Social Engagement«, str. 789.

36 *Ibid.*, str. 789–790.

gibanja *new age*, zavračale tako imenovani materializem, oziroma potrošništvo. V nasprotju s tem prepričanjem se je *new age* v današnjem času preusmeril v povečevanje materialne blaginje, modernosti in samega kapitalizma. Čeprav so tendence, ki so nakazovale ta premik, obstajale že prej, pa je *new age* največjo preobrazbo doživel v osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja. Takrat je cela vrsta miselnih voditeljev tega gibanja, kot so na primer Sondra Ray, Shirley MacLaine in Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, začela promovirati združitev duhovnosti in finančnega uspeha. Prav ta premik je celotno gibanje preobrazil v tržni fenomen, ki ga mnogi uporabljajo za prodajo širokega nabora tržnega blaga, od knjig, zdrave prehrane, prehranskih dodatkov, kristalov pa do amuletov in mnogo drugega.³⁷ V tem oziru usoda gibanja *new age* ni edinstvena, saj so se tudi njemu predhodna gibanja, izpostavimo lahko predvsem hipije šestdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja, spremenila v potrošniški trend in potonila na raven subkulture.³⁸

Potrošništvo se na prvi pogled zdi popolnoma nasprotno temeljnemu prepričanju gibanja *new age*. Vedno znova smo namreč poudarjali pomembno vlogo, ki jo v gibanju *new age* igra skrb za okolje, pri čemer je potrošništvo ravno pojav dobe, v kateri je obseg človekovega vpliva na okolje znan, ki je v veliki meri odgovoren za nezadovoljive rezultate na tem področju – ne samo znotraj gibanja *new age*, temveč na ravni celotne družbe. Potrošništvo seveda ni izoliran pojav, pač pa le eden od simptomov sedanjega kapitalističnega gospodarskega sistema. V tem oziru se tako dandanes ne moremo zanašati na gibanje *new age* in od njega ne moremo pričakovati korenitih sprememb sistema, saj njegovi voditelji danes učijo, da sta delovanje in uspeh znotraj sedanjega sistema upravičena. *New age* danes ne uči le, da z materialistično potrošnjo ni nič narobe, temveč svoje privržence tudi usmerja na poti do uspeha znotraj obstoječega sistema.³⁹ Zaradi tega ne preseneča, da velik del gibanja predstavljajo delavnice, v okviru katerih učitelji učence učijo, kako doseči materialno blaginjo in uspeh znotraj obstoječega političnega in gospodarskega sistema. A čeprav voditelji teh delavnic uporabljajo mnoge ideje, ki so ključne za *new age*, na teh delavnicah ni nič novega, saj njihovi voditelji le širijo že ustaljeno potrošniško kulturo.⁴⁰

Na tej točki se lahko vprašamo: kako bi se razvilo gibanje *new age*, če bi se bolj zgledovalo po svoji zgodovini – torej po gibanjih, iz katerih se je, vsaj v nekaterih ozirih, razvilo? V mislih imamo seveda teozofijo, ki je v veliki meri vplivala

37 Urban, »The Cult of Ecstasy«, str. 277–278.

38 Spangler in Thompson, *Reimagination of the World*, str. 101.

39 Urban, »The Cult of Ecstasy«, str. 278.

40 Spangler in Thompson, *Reimagination of the World*, str. 52.

na kasnejše gibanje *new age*. To se je zgodilo predvsem preko Alice Bailey, ki je gibanju zapustila pridih okultnega elitizma. Nekateri zastopniki gibanja *new age* tako verjamejo, da bodo ob nastopu nove dobe zaradi domnevno večje povezanosti s svojo lastno božanskostjo Zemlji zavladata duhovno napredna bitja.⁴¹ Elite so tako uvrščene na vrh hierarhije človeštva, kar pomeni, da je najbolj smiselno, da zvladajo planetu. Vendar pa za to, da je gibanje zavilo v to smer, ne moremo kriviti le Alice Bailey, saj se je teozofija kot taka razvila kot elitistični odgovor na popularno in bolj demokratično naravnano spiritualistično gibanje. Zgodnja teozofija je bila torej poskus reformiranja tega gibanja od zgoraj, s čimer so si njegovi voditelji prizadevali množice navadnih ljudi dvigniti iz tega, kar so sami dojemali kot duhovno vulgarnost.⁴² Tako lahko opazimo še en aspekt gibanja *new age*, ki mu onemogoča, da bi bil gonilo korenitih sprememb. Hierarhije, ki v svoj vrh uvrščajo le majhno število posameznikov, medtem ko so jim vsi drugi podrejeni, so namreč dokaj podobne hierarhijam, ki že tako ali tako vladajo v svetu, v katerem sta oblast in vpliv skoncentrirana v rokah maloštevilnih. Z nastopom nove dobe naj bi torej planetu zavladata elita naprednih duhovnih bitij, ki so blizu lastni božanskosti. V to skupino se uvrščajo tudi bitja in osebe, kakršna sta Lucifer ali Kristus. Benjamin Creme, eden od učencev Alice Bailey, je zato govoril o neizogibni vrnitvi Kristusa, ki naj bi svet rešil njegovih tegob.⁴³ Seveda prepričanje, da se bo Kristus vrnil na Zemljo ne pripada izključno gibanju *new age*. To ni niti izvor tega prepričanja, niti niso njegovi pripadniki najštevilčnejša skupina ljudi, ki Kristusovo vrnitev pričakujejo. Vendar je *new age* kljub temu to prepričanje preobrazil in prilagodil tako, da se sklada s prepričanjem o spiritualni eliti, ki bo v prihodnosti zavladata svetu. Edino smiselno pa je, da tej eliti pustimo vladati, saj naj bi bila ta zmožna ustvariti boljši svet. Ideja duhovnih elit zato daje voditeljem novega sveta, ki naj bi nastal pod vplivom gibanja *new age*, še veliko mero legitimnosti, saj svoj nadrejeni položaj lahko upravičijo s svojo bližino do lastne božanskosti. Seveda razglašanje lastne bližine določenemu božanstvu ali božanskemu principu lahko posamezniku ali skupini legitimacijo prinese samo med tistimi, ki priznavajo superiornost te božanske entitete. Takšno prepričanje tako ne samo ohranja hierarhije sedanjosti, temveč jih lahko potencialno samo še bolj utrdi, saj jim ponudi nov način legitimacije, vsaj v očeh že prepričanih, na katerega se do sedaj njihovi zagovorniki niso mogli zanašati.

41 Kyle, »The Political Ideas«, str. 839–840.

42 Stephen Prothero, »From Spiritualism to Theosophy: 'Uplifting' a Democratic Tradition«, 198.

43 Kyle, »The Political Ideas«, str. 839–840.

Zaključek

Vidimo lahko torej, da *new age*, že zaradi svojih temeljnih prepričanj ni zmožen družbe konkretno spremeniti. Ni namreč zmožen tvoriti dolgotrajnih in trdnih skupnosti, ki so za ta podvig potrebne. Ravno nasprotno, *new age* kvečjemu spodbuja le še večjo mero fragmentacije. Zaradi tega je gibanje hitro podleglo zahtevam kapitala, kar je posledica tudi tega, da *new age* sprejema mnogo predpostavk, ki tvorijo trenutno prevladujoče ideologije. Zato danes oznaka *new age* le redko predstavlja kaj več kot le oglaševalsko taktiko, ki jo širok nabor ljudi uporablja le za doseganje dobička, povečuje le še denar in posameznika. *New age* dandanes torej ni nič drugega kot veleblagovnica, katero njeni lastniki našemljajo v tempelj. Zato bi lahko sklepali, da se mora *new age* vrniti k svojim koreninam, da se lahko zoperstavi trenutnemu stanju sveta. Toda analiza prepričanj, ki oblikujejo *new age*, je pokazala, da to gibanje niti v svoji izvirni obliki ni najbolj prilagojeno spodbujanju družbenih sprememb. Zametki nagnjenosti gibanja *new age* k individualizmu in zasledovanju zaslužka namreč segajo že v njegove najzgodnejše dni. Zato je morda najprimerneje zaključiti, da bi moral *new age* preživeti dokaj konkretne spremembe, če bi želel *statusu quo* pokazati zobe.

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Aesthetic Resistance

Kristina Šević

Povzetek

Članek raziskuje razmerje med umetnostjo in politiko, pri čemer se osredotoča na načine, kako se lahko umetnost upre zatiralskim režimom in navdihuje boj za svobodo. Prične se z vprašanjem svobode ter upora, ki vznikne iz njene izgube, čemur sledi razprava o vlogi umetnosti v političnih spremembah – estetskih revolucijah. Te ideje so prikazane s primeri iz slovenske in srbske kulture. Na koncu avtorica argumentira, da je v kontekstu umetniške svobode forma nekega umetniškega dela pomembnejša od njegove vsebine.

Ključne besede: svoboda, estetske revolucije, upor, avtonomna umetnost, angažirana umetnost

Summary

This paper explores the relationship between art and politics, focusing on the ways in which art can resist repressive regimes and inspire the struggle for freedom. It begins with the question of freedom and the resistance that emerges from its loss, leading to a discussion on the role of art in political change—i.e., aesthetic revolutions. These ideas will be illustrated with examples from Slovenian and Serbian culture. Finally, the author argues that in the context of artistic freedom, the form of an artwork is more significant than its content.

Keywords: freedom, aesthetic revolutions, resistance, autonomous art, engaged art

Introduction: What Freedom Is and How Resistance and Struggle Come About

The relationship between art and politics has long been a subject of philosophical inquiry, raising questions about the capacity of art to resist oppression, inspire collective action, and shape political consciousness. This paper argues that, while art can exert political influence through both its content and its form, it is ultimately the form of an artwork that holds the greatest potential for lasting political impact. Artistic form enables works to subvert repressive systems, evade censorship, and alter perception in ways that direct political discourse often cannot.

To develop this argument, we will begin by examining philosophical conceptions of freedom and the ways in which its absence gives rise to resistance and struggle. We will then introduce the concept of the aesthetic revolution and trace historical and theoretical connections between art and political life. The final section grounds these theoretical reflections in examples from Serbian and Slovenian culture – including Marina Abramović, the IRWIN collective, Vladimir Veličković, Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid – which demonstrate how both content and form can operate as modes of political resistance.

What Is Freedom?

The question of freedom is one of the fundamental philosophical questions that permeates various philosophical disciplines, including political philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, and metaphysics. We will focus on the political and aesthetic dimensions of freedom, with special reference to how they are intertwined and how they influence each other; begging the question, how does art influence politics?

A good way to start contemplating freedom is Sartre's existentialist philosophy, as he starts from the premise that freedom is the ontological foundation of human existence, which serves as a starting point for further exploration of the concept of freedom. To Sartre, man is "condemned to be free" because, once he finds himself in the world, he is confronted with the necessity of choice and becomes responsible for what he makes of himself.¹ We *will* freedom for freedom's sake, and even when we engage in actual fights, such as revolutions, we do so driven by an abstract will to freedom, which is the foundation of all our goals and values.²

1 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, p. 29.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 48. The will to freedom is described as abstract because it arises prior to and independently of any specific goal or demand. It is a fundamental impulse (open-ended and universal) that gives rise to

Our freedom is realized in a world that resists us as we encounter obstacles, choices, and the freedom of others. It is precisely these limiting conditions that make true freedom possible, for we make choices in a world that often clashes with our desires, goals, and moral principles. With every choice we take responsibility not only for ourselves but for all humanity, because to will our own freedom obliges us to will the freedom of others.³ This responsibility emerges from the fact that our freedom is always exercised in relation to others and in every encounter, our choices shape a world in which their freedom, too, must be possible. Simone de Beauvoir expands on Sartre's existentialist thought with gender and other social dimensions. However, unlike Sartre's, the emphasis of her political philosophy is on marginalized groups, especially women who do not have the practical possibility of action. In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir argues that women are historically positioned as "the Other"—not as autonomous subjects, but as objects in relation to men. This social positioning deprives them of the conditions necessary for action, which for de Beauvoir is the existential realization of freedom. Action is, according to de Beauvoir, essential to freedom, as freedom is not just an internal capacity, but also a practical possibility for action. Without the ability to act, i.e., to make choices, to shape one's life, to participate fully in both public and private spheres, women's freedom remains abstract and unrealized.⁴

Furthermore, in considering political freedom, it's useful to rely on the distinction presented by Isaiah Berlin in his *Four Essays on Liberty*. He observes that authors use the term "freedom" in two different senses: as positive—that which "derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master," and as negative—when a person is "free to the degree to which no man or body of men interferes with [their] activity."⁵ Different thinkers have had different tendencies regarding which type of freedom they prioritize—for instance, Sartre understood freedom predominantly through its negative aspect, while de Beauvoir moved closer to the positive conception.

How Does Freedom Lead to Resistance and Struggle?

When we talk about the concept of freedom, we also talk about its opposite—unfreedom. Wherever there is unfreedom, individual or collective, there is also

our more concrete actions, including revolutions. Even when we act on clear political aims, we are often moved by something deeper: a general longing to be free, irreducible to any one outcome.

3 *Ibid.*; and Nikola Ačanski, *Smisao angažmana u Sartrovom egzistencijalizmu*, p. 39.

4 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, p. 27.

5 Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," pp. 178 and 169.

resistance and struggle; i.e., if social and cultural incentives arouse or sharpen the awareness of repression and create a feeling that change is possible or necessary. As Sartre puts it: “There can be a free for-itself only as engaged in a resisting world. Outside of this engagement, the notions of freedom, of determinism, of necessity lose all meaning.”⁶ This attitude leaves room for further interpretations, and later works such as *Existentialism Is a Humanism* show that Sartre did not speak only of existential engagement, but also one that includes a collective dimension—“types of engagement are different according to eras,”⁷ since personal meaning can only be developed in a community. However, that community may in some cases attempt to thwart personal meaning, and these antagonisms between individual freedom and the world that resists us need to be understood and changed through individual or collective engagement.⁸ Also, considering that for Sartre we are condemned to freedom, we are also condemned to engagement—we are unable not to choose, that is, abstention from making a choice is a choice in itself.⁹ For de Beauvoir, authentic existence does not only imply an individual decision to be free. Rather, it is achieved through constantly overcoming oneself in relation to other freedoms—women’s struggle is a political and ethical act of liberation.¹⁰

Hannah Arendt brings us a new view of freedom connected to struggle: freedom exists only through struggle, and it is realized only through political action: “Only where change occurs in the sense of a new beginning, where violence is used to constitute an altogether different form of government, [...] can we speak of a revolution.”¹¹ In this sense, not every rebellion or civil war is a revolution; the revolutionary is only that which leads to the creation of a new political body, which transforms liberation into freedom.

Common to all these authors is the rejection of the idea that freedom means “doing whatever we want.” Contrary to the popular understanding of freedom as arbitrariness, their thought shows that freedom is always connected to responsibility, normativity, public action, and a critical attitude towards given circumstances. Freedom is thus not a passive state, but a dynamic process that is realized through action, be it moral, political, or artistic. It is precisely in this dynamic between individual and collective freedom, between resistance and responsibility, that there

6 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, p. 483.

7 Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism*, p. 50.

8 Ačanski, *Smisao angažmana u Sartrovom egzistencijalizmu*, p. 45.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44.

10 Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, p. 27.

11 Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, p. 35; see also p. 255.

is a space for art as an authentic expression of a free subject, which then opens the possibility for further consideration of the aesthetic dimension of freedom.

Aesthetic Revolution

How Artistic Freedom Became Political Resistance

However—is art at all free, and is it capable of resisting a regime and thereby contributing to political life and struggle? In this regard, I will first consider the artistic phenomenon, the political aspects of which are considered by some authors to have led to historical consequences—that is, the phenomenon of the *aesthetic revolution*. The aesthetic revolution is realized by spontaneous collective action, utilizing movements that create “enthusiasm” that transforms individual cases into historically recognizable and interconnected events, realized by movements that today are displayed in material and discursive repositories of culture or are preserved as material cultural artifacts.¹² In the conclusion of the book *Aesthetic Revolutions*, Aleš Erjavec gives us overview examples of such revolutions: the avant-garde in Italy which briefly had political consequences, the Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK) movement which was crucial in the affirmation of the independent Republic of Slovenia, and alternative culture which contributed to essential changes in the way of life in the USA during the 1950s and ‘60s.¹³

I will attempt to show how the idea that art and political life are connected developed throughout the history of philosophy. Their intertwining can already be found in Plato’s *Republic*, in which he advocates the banishment of poets from the *polis* because their poems arouse and strengthen emotions, that is, they destroy reason and thus negatively affect social life.¹⁴ There, we see that Plato believes that art can influence political life, as well as anticipating the idea that political actors should censor art, as later history has demonstrated.

Unlike Plato, Kant took a turn because for him the judgment of taste is free and disinterested in every sense; therefore, art has nothing to do with political life.¹⁵ However, as Jacques Rancière clearly understood, Kant’s idea about the freedom of art paved the way for a stronger connection between politics and art from

12 Aleš Erjavec, “Conclusion: Avant-Gardes, Revolutions, and Aesthetics,” pp. 266–267.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 281.

14 Plato, *The Republic*, p. 328.

15 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, pp. 45–46, 53–54.

Friedrich Schiller onwards: “Schiller attempts to show that it is on the very basis of its autonomy, its not being tied to immediate ends, that art can fulfill a task that cannot be fulfilled in any other way: the furtherance of humanity.”¹⁶ Schiller considers art to be a direct path to political change precisely *because it has no direct political aim*. However, he argues that art can bring about even greater changes than a political revolution, since people have already been morally shaped (or rather, distorted) by the political system, whereas only art has the power to “re-establish the previous unity and put together humankind’s torn halves.”¹⁷ Not even philosophy can present the rigor of moral principles to the extent that art can. In contrast to Plato, who banished poets from the *polis* for singing about falsehoods, Schiller sees illusion as the key characteristic of art because it has an educational function that can be achieved only from a distance from reality, thereby facilitating self-knowledge.¹⁸

In contrast to the views on the role of art in politics discussed above, Rancière in his work *Aisthesis* offers a new perspective, seeing art as political—not in the classical sense of a struggle for power or governance, but in the sense that he understands politics as the “reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible” (the subjectification of politics), i.e., a shift in the way a community perceives, understands, and allocates roles, places, and forms of visibility. This is also related to his concept of the aesthetic regime of art. In this regard, Rancière’s view is in some ways a continuation of Schiller’s, as he too sees art as part of the process of “becoming truly human.” In this sense, art is political—not because it advocates a specific ideology or exerts direct political influence, but because it takes part in reshaping sensory experience and how we participate in a shared world.¹⁹ Moreover, Rancière connects art to democracy, seeing it as a means of making visible those who were previously excluded or silenced.²⁰

We posed that art is autonomous and disinterested, and then gradually came to recognize its connection with political life (in Schiller’s thought it remains autonomous, whereas, according to Rancière, art is fully political at the expense of its autonomy). The connection is most radical in what Sartre calls *engaged art*. As noted, Sartre maintains that we are condemned to be free and always engaged,

16 Erjavec, “Conclusion,” p. 282.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 271–272.

18 Dušan Milenković, “Odnos obrazovanja, politike, i humanističkih ideala u Šilerovim pismima o estetskom obrazovanju čoveka,” p. 371.

19 Erjavec, “Conclusion,” pp. 269–272.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 270–271.

even when we abstain from making a choice. In a similar vein, he argues that art is always engaged, for the artist is inevitably implicated, and their works always carry meaning, regardless of how hard one might try to isolate them from it.²¹ Sartre ascribes the nature of engagement in art to literature, precisely because it operates with meanings, whereas (according to Adorno) he considers the other arts from a formalist standpoint.²² In *What Is Literature?*, he explains the difference he sees between the poet and the prose writer: the writer “uses words to inspire action, he reveals things so as to change them, and by doing so, he puts a great burden of responsibility on himself, especially concerning those things he has chosen to remain silent about,”²³ while the poet, too, conveys emotions arising from social indignation and political hatred, but expresses them in a different way – such that the poet “ceases to recognize them; the words take hold of them, penetrate them, and metamorphose them; they do not signify them, even in his eyes.”²⁴ For this reason, in prose, “to speak is to act”²⁵—meaning that prose is always engaged, its essence lies in its signification, and words function as signifiers of objects. Poetry, by contrast, treats words as objects in themselves, valued for their beauty and sensuousness, making it more challenging for poetry to be engaged.²⁶ The most vital element of engaged literature is the act of reading, for books are merely a means to an end—a path towards the reader’s freedom to find within them whatever they seek.²⁷ It is thus evident that Sartre, unlike Schelling and Rancière, emphasizes the significance of the *content* of a work of art, as it calls for action, while their *form* is considered secondary.

Adorno, however, opposes Sartre’s approach. He argues that engaged art, when subordinated to political aims, tends to oversimplify political reality and thereby diminishes its own political impact.²⁸ The autonomy of the artwork is crucial, and he illustrates this point by referring to the famous assertion that it is barbaric to write lyric poetry after Auschwitz. “When even genocide becomes cultural property in committed literature, it becomes easier to continue complying with the culture that gave rise to the murder,” a culture that, as he observes, “shows us

21 Biljana Vlašković Ilić, “Engaged Literature as Art, Prerogative, and Obligation,” p. 254.

22 Theodor W. Adorno, “Commitment,” p. 77.

23 Vlašković Ilić, “Engaged Literature,” p. 255.

24 Jean-Paul Sartre, *What Is Literature?*, pp. 18–19.

25 *Ibid.*, 22.

26 *Ibid.*, 20.

27 Vlašković Ilić, “Engaged Literature,” p. 255.

28 Adorno, “Commitment,” p. 84. He cites Brecht as an example, arguing that his dogmatic play had no impact on human engagement—no more than *Guernica*, the effect of which Sartre also doubted.

humanity blossoming in so-called extreme situations.”²⁹ As an example, Adorno points to Arnold Schoenberg, whose atonal music provokes a sense of discomfort that, when translated into an image, appears as a wounded sense of shame before the victims. Autonomous works of art, he argues, are “negations of empirical reality; they destroy what destroys, what merely exists.”³⁰ However, though arising from that very reality—regardless of how transformed their form may be—these works resist it. This is best exemplified in the works of Beckett (about which Adorno remarks that while everyone finds them disturbing, no one can precisely articulate that they speak of what we already recognize and oppose) and Kafka (whom Adorno describes as such an author that, after having read him, one is no longer able to make peace with the world).

Here we can see that Adorno emphasizes the form of the artwork, as it is through its internal rupture that art breaks apart reality from within, whereas Sartre’s notion of engagement operates only from the outside. Hence, Adorno sees autonomous art as having a deeper and more lasting impact than art driven by direct political engagement. What Rancière, Sartre and Adorno have in common is their shared understanding of art as a space of freedom that awakens resistance within us and inspires change. Yet, each conceives this power of art differently—whether as autonomous or dependent upon politics, as a shift in perception, a path to self-knowledge, a matter of form, or one rooted in engaged content.

Form as an Essential Aspect of the Influence of Art on Political Life

The theories emphasizing the significance of artistic form in relation to the impact of art on politics provide a more adequate explanation of its actual political influence than those that highlight the primacy of its content. It is undeniable that throughout history, art has operated and achieved results through its content as well. However, I maintain that form is where the true power of art lies. While many other disciplines—such as philosophy, journalism, or the sciences—have the ability to grapple with content, art is unique in its formal capacity to create situations not encountered in everyday reality. As Adorno would argue: by working through art we can penetrate deeper into the inner life of human beings. This point can be further illustrated by an analogy between philosophy and science when it comes to content. Engaging with a specific scientific discipline allows us

29 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

to perceive the world in a certain way, but not in the comprehensive sense that emerges from philosophical inquiry, which can yield radically different perspectives on life as a whole and transform the way we understand the world. In this sense, art also possesses the means—i.e., its form—to reveal perspectives that can affect us in a manner akin to philosophy, reshaping the way we perceive ourselves and the world.

Examples of forms of art include metaphor, satire, irony, and sarcasm. These forms help artists express their thoughts and emotions even under repressive conditions without being censored—demonstrating that form often has a deeper political reach than content itself. Such works may outwardly appear naive, unserious (especially satire), or harmless to a given system, while in fact carrying a deep and layered message.

Contemporary Examples of Art of Resistance and Engagement in Serbian and Slovenian Culture

One of the most striking examples of the power of the form of art can be found in the work of Branislav Nušić, who became known for his satires in which he does not trivialize reality, but through irony and sarcasm causes authority to lose its power. For this, he was under surveillance, but his works were still accessible, meaning that through satire, he found a way to reach his readers. When it comes to metaphor as a form of artistic resistance, excellent examples can be found in the Slovenian art collective IRWIN (part of the Neue Slowenische Kunst movement) and in the paintings of Vladimir Veličković. The IRWIN group uses visual metaphor through the deliberate appropriation and reinterpretation of totalitarian symbols—their works, such as the famous Poster Scandal from 1987, reveal the similarities between different authoritarian regimes by “mirroring” their aesthetics and symbols. This form acts as a reflection of ideological emptiness and is appropriated to be emptied of its original content and returned to the viewer to provoke questions about these similarities. On the other hand, Veličković uses the metaphor of deformed bodies to express a deep, often inarticulate yet ever-present existential and political tension—his distorted, exposed bodies speak of violence that is systemic, elusive, and impossible to do away with. While IRWIN uses ironic recognition of symbols of power, Veličković depicts the internal consequences of that power, the bodily and psychological breakdown of the subject. Although their approaches differ, these examples show that art does not need to speak loudly to be political—often, it is enough to change the way of seeing. In that lies the true power of art: not to offer the truth, but to challenge perception, to create

discomfort, doubt, or empathy, and to awaken through form what repression has tried to suppress.

I will now present examples of approaches by artists from Serbian and Slovenian culture that illustrate the significance of art in political life. I will begin with Marina Abramović. Her performances serve as an excellent example of Rancière's theory, as they transform modes of action within the community—the audience, long accustomed to passivity, becomes active in her work. Through this shift, she may not contribute to any concrete form of political engagement, but she demonstrates that the world can operate differently from what we have been accustomed to. As she emphasizes in an interview with Cecilia Hansson, politically engaged artists are, in her view, the worst (a sharp rejection of Sartre's position), as politics is constantly changing, while the artist should be universal, possessing multiple levels and a complex practice to ensure the work's survival.³¹ For this reason, we can also connect her to Adorno, for whom the autonomy of art was central. At the same time, Abramović's performances completely transform form—in Adornian terms, it is a "negation of empirical reality"—by dismantling art from within and thereby affecting the human psyche in a deeper, more profound way.

An example of the relationship between art and politics in Sartre's theory can be found in the work of Marina Gržinić and Aina Šmid. In 1990, they created a video artwork titled *Bilocation*, which thematizes the resistance of the Albanian people against the repressive regime in Kosovo, after they were stripped of all political power. Here we see a pure example of engaged art—female artists recognize oppression and use artistic expression to document and criticize it, combining documentary footage with fictional elements. Precisely because of the political sensitivity of the content, the video was never shown in its entirety on RTV Slovenia, and was thus exposed to a form of censorship. However, it was shown at many international festivals.³²

It is thus evident that art reshapes political consciousness, and that even under the most repressive regimes, it is precisely art that retains enough freedom to provoke critical reflection—through its use of satire, metaphor, the reconfiguration of the sensible, or the negation of empirical reality—thereby fostering resistance that can ultimately lead to struggle. It is through the form of an artwork that completely new ways of perceiving the world arise.

31 Sesilija Hanson, *Beznadežno, ali ne sasvim*, p. 112.

32 Ivana Marjanović, "Bilokacija, istorija, politika i uslovi produkcije: intervju sa Marinom Gržinić," p. 128.

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