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INTRODUCTION: PRAGMATISM, SUBALTERN KNOWLEDGES, AND CRITIQUE

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In the last decades there has been a rising awareness of the political limits of traditional epistemology. Feminist, race-theorists, and postcolonial approaches have pointed that a male-centered and Eurocentric understanding of knowledge has contributed to invalidate many forms of valuable knowledge, contributing to global epistemicide (Sousa Santos 2014) and oppression. They have also aimed at developing alternative epistemologies – i.e., alternative understandings of valuable knowledge and of the practices leading to it – that can be put at the service of the struggles of the oppressed. The role of pragmatism in the pursue of alternative epistemologies has been only partially explored. Certainly, there exists a large literature on pragmatist feminist epistemologies.[1] Apart from putting in dialogue feminist and pragmatist developments, pragmatist feminists also revindicate the value of figures like Jane Addams or Mary Parker Follet, pointing to another genealogy of pragmatism that relates more directly to struggles of the oppressed. Regarding postcolonial epistemologies, and more concretely, the Epistemologies of the South, the connections between those projects and pragmatism haven been less well-studied, though they are not less obvious.[2]

The aim of this special issue is to continue establishing connections, continuities, but also to identify tensions between pragmatism, feminism, and non-Eurocentric Epistemologies. Hence, none of the three represent monolithic epistemological traditions but are internally diverse. To this extent, the issue also contributes to exploring the potential of different versions of epistemological pragmatism for projects of social emancipation.

We have divided the present special issue in two parts. In the first part, we include papers inquiring about how a pragmatist epistemology can contribute to and enter in dialogue with the literature on the epistemologies of the oppressed. Emmanuel Renaults text aims at showing the potential of Dewey's approach to inquiry to account for the epistemic activities of oppressed groups. He argues that we can offer a Deweyan view on the epistemic empowerment of the oppressed, by which they reach better knowledge that what they already have. In his paper, João Arriscado Nunes provides a general discussion about the convergence between the literature on the Epistemologies of the South and the so-called "insurrectional turn" in Pragmatism. He argues that this convergence can be tracked through the reception of Paulo Freire's work, particularly his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Nuria Sara Miras Boronat departs from the traditional male-dominated genealogy of pragmatism and draws on the figure of Jane Addams. She explores how Addams' experience at the Hull House was epistemically productive, giving rise to new practices and methods of knowledge production that are particularly interesting for the project of a pragmatist epistemology of the oppressed. Finally, Filipe Campelo makes a contribution to the debate about the epistemologies of the oppressed, focusing the question about what it means for critical theorists to share the experiences of injustice of the oppressed. He argues, in a move that comes close to pragmatism, that affects need to play a stronger role in the relation between the narratives of the oppressed and the theories of critical thinkers.

The texts of the second part of this issue are less focused on the epistemologies of the oppressed but provide original views on pragmatism, exploring the potentials to decentralize its Western origin. In his paper, Alexander Kremer dwells into the defense of Shusterman's project of somaesthetics. He argues that pragmatism in general, and somaesthetics in particular, can contribute to a better understanding of human emancipation that has meliorism at its core. Finally, Sťahel explores Juraj Kučírek's and Ivan Dubnička's work on environmental pragmatism. Sťahel shows how the authors have provided valuable contributions to environmentalist debates focusing on a critique of the principle of biocentric egalitarianism and the emphasis on demo-

[1] See, for example Seigfried 1996, Whipps 2019, Sullivan 2001, McKenna 2001, and Fischer 2021.

[2] One exception is João Arriscado Nunes. Boaventura da Sousa Santos and Paulo Freire have also pointed to pragmatism as an inspiration for their own epistemological projects (see Arriscado Nunes' contribution in this issue).

cratic and human rights aspects of environmental devastation.

We are also happy to include one text by Aleš Prázný on Dewey's theory of education in dialogue with Hannah Arendt and Richard Rorty, as well as two reviews, one on Tullio Viola's recent book on *Pierce and the Uses of History* by professor Vincent Colapietro, and one on Krisina Renzi's *An Ethic of Innocence: Pragmatism, Modernity, and Women's Choice not to Know* by Justo Serrano Zamora.

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PRAGMATISM AND ALTERNATIVE EPISTEMOLOGIES

EPISTEMOLOGY OF SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND THE KNOWLEDGE EXPERIENCE: A DEWEYAN ACCOUNT

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ABSTRACT: In the current literature on alternative epistemologies, one can question two problematic assumptions: firstly, oppressed groups generally have at disposal the knowledge that is needed for their practices of social critique; and secondly, the epistemic problems they need to confront are not properly cognitional, they concern rather the task of making sense of their own problematic experience. Now, for many struggles, the epistemic challenge is to produce better knowledge about the nature and causes of problematic situations as well as the means to resolve them. In this paper, I argue that a Deweyan account of knowledge can contribute to a better understanding of this challenge. Firstly, I explore Dewey's approach to the "knowledge experience" and analyze the various roles it can play in social critique. Secondly, I argue that oppressed groups sometimes need better knowledge than what they already have, and this requires specific type of epistemic empowerment.

Keywords: Alternative epistemologies, John Dewey, social critique, knowledge experience, epistemic empowerment.

Feminist theories and critical race studies, as well as other strands of what can be termed "alternative epistemologies" (for instance postcolonial and decolonial theories), have provided groundbreaking insights on the cognitive conditions and effects of domination and injustice, as well as on the cognitive conditions and effects of the struggles against structural domination and injustice. In the methodological framework of a social epistemology, M. Fricker (2007) and J. Medina (2013), among others, have tried to systematize the epistemological implications, as well as the implication for the theory of justice and democracy of these epistemologies. The motivation of these theoretical projects is clearly to politicize epistemology from the point of view of social critique. But social critique as such has not yet been subjected to a systematic scrutiny. What are the cognitive activities at play in social critique and what are their specific epistemic functions? The purpose of this article is to address these issues from a Deweyan perspective.

Since Dewey has indeed not intended to elaborate an epistemology of social critique, a preliminary clarifycation is required about what I mean here by Deweyan perspective. I assume that this perspective is specified by its processual orientation, its analysis of epistemological issues in terms of activities, its instrumentalism, and its focus on issues related to the experience of knowledge. The first assumption is not controversial at all since Dewey, as well as Pierce, is usually considered as a process philosopher (Debrock, 2003). According to his account of "social reform" in the *Lectures in China*, for instance, social critique is motivated by experiences of injustices or domination, and the dynamics of social criticism that derive from them must be analyzed in sequential terms (Dewey, 1973, 72-81). One trademark of the Deweyan approach to social movements is probably to highlight that social movements provide illustration of the "creativity of action" (Joas, 1996) and of the "practical and cognitive productivity" of problematic social experience (Renault, 2018). Such creativity or productivity is clearly processual. The second assumption is not more controversial. The fact that Dewey's epistemology focuses on what is now termed "cognitive activities", and hence anticipates some versions of the contemporary "practice turn" in epistemology (Chang, 2014), is hardly disputable. Dewey defines "thought" as inquiry, and he conceives of logical theory as an analysis of the various activities involved in the process leading from a problematic situation to a warranted assertion. Another distinctive characteristic of his epistemology is indeed its instrumentalism. All this has implication for his account of social critique for the concept of "public", in the *Public and its Problems*, and the concept of "social inquiry", in *Logic. A Theory of Inquiry*, provide processual accounts of the series of cognitive activities involved social critique conceived as an instrument for solving social problems. The last assumption refers to another distinctive trait of Dewey's epistemology that has been less often analyzed (Renault, 2015): it concerns the theory of the "knowledge experience". Instead of conceiving knowledge simply as the activity of pooling information (as in cognitive sciences and some strands of social epistemology[1]), or as the

[1] "Our concept of knowledge is captured in the concept of the good informant, because (as the State of Nature story shows) essentially what it is to be a knower is to participate in the shar-

distinctive propriety of representations or beliefs that are true and justified (as in contemporary analytical epistemology and in some strands of feminist epistemology[2]), Dewey analyses knowledge as a particular type of experience produced by a doubt that results in a process termed inquiry. In other words, he gives an experiential and processual meaning to the concept of knowledge.

Such a Deweyan epistemology of social critique can overcome two of the main shortcomings of the contemporary approaches to social critique. Contemporary political philosophy implicitly reduces the cognitive activities at play in social critique either to descriptive activities (when social critique is thought of as "disclosing critique") (Honneth, 2000 ; Kompridis, 2006) , or to interpretative activities (when social critique is conceived of as "hermeneutic critique" or "reconstructive critique") (Walzer, 1993; Honneth, 2018), or to justificatory activities (in constructivist and deliberative model of social critique) (Forst, 2011). Dewey's philosophy provides a corrective since the very idea of inquiry encompass and interconnects a wider range of cognitive activities. Since I have dealt with this issue elsewhere (Renault, 2021), I will focus on a second shortcoming that relates to a too restricted view of the epistemic problems that can be met in the process of social critique, and of the epistemic functions of the cognitive activities that are intended to find solution to these problems. In alternative epistemologies, there is a tendency to consider that oppressed groups shouldn't consider their knowledge as problematic, although it is socially disqualified. As a result, the need to produce a better knowledge is not seriously taken into account in their accounts of the process of social critique. These epistemologies focus mainly on the attempts made by the oppressed in order to find appropriate ways of making sense of what is wrong in the problematic experience they are enduring, as well as on their attempts to struggle against the delegitimization of their knowledge and claims. To find solution to these problems, what would be at stake for the oppressed would not be to produce better knowledge but to struggle against the delegitimization of their own knowledge, as well as to produce models of interpretation of the specific wrongs of their problematic experience, and new models of articulation and justification of their claim (Medina, 2013; Serrano Zamora, 2019). Indeed, the significance of these problems and of the attempts to overcome them is not disputable, but it is simply a fact that in many social movements, the knowledge available is experienced as a problem, and that attempts are made in order to produce less problematic knowledge. In other words, the "knowledge experience" sometimes plays a crucial role in the practices of social critique.

To put it provocatively, from a Deweyan point of view, it seems that in their account of social critique, alternative epistemologies haven't taken seriously enough the epistemological problem *par excellence*, namely the problem of knowledge. In order to suggest that there is a distinctive Deweyan way of taking it seriously, I will first describe Dewey's approach to the knowledge experience and analyze the various roles it can play in social critique. In a second step, I will criticize the assumptions that lead alternative epistemologies and contemporary epistemologies inspired by them to understate the significance of this experience.

Knowledge experience and epistemic empowerment

According to Dewey, the notion of knowledge denotes in the first place a specific experience: the experience of a doubt produced by a problematic situation that results in an inquiry about the nature of the problematic situation, about its causes and the best means at disposal to solve the problem. When the inquiry is successful, that is when the best solution is put in practice in such a way that our experience ceases to be problematic, the doubt is settled and something is known. The knowledge experience has come to its end.

ing of information" (Fricker, 2007, p. 145). The concept of "State of Nature" refers here to Craig (1990).

[2] See for instance Haslanger (1999) who analyses the implication of feminist epistemology for this type of definition of truth and who suggest that this discussion concerns more broadly the implication of other alternative epistemologies.

This theory of the knowledge experience is elaborated in the *Studies in Logical Theory* and deepened in a series of articles publish in the years 1905-1906[3], where Dewey distinguishes three types of experiences: the non-cognitive experience, the cognitive experience, and the cognitional experience. In most of our ordinary interactions with the environment, our experience remains pre-cognitive. Interactions are regulated by habits, that is by embodied know-hows that operate at the level of tacit knowledge, beyond the threshold of conscious experience. When our habits are no longer able to regulate these interactions, that is when experience becomes problematic, it crosses this threshold: sensations emerge in our field of consciousness that indicate that a problem must be solved. Experience becomes "cognitive" because a difficulty occurs that can no longer be solved by our tacit knowledge, but only by a conscious scrutiny of the problem. The solution can be found directly: a simple attention to the problem is often enough to understand the nature of the practical obstacle indicated by a sensation, and to find a solution. No inquiry into the nature of the problematic situation, the causes of the problem and the means at disposal is then required. The experience has become "cognitive" without having also become "cognitional". In other cases, attention to the problematic situation results in a doubt that cannot be settled but by such an inquiry. The "cognitive" experience becomes "cognitional"; it takes the form of a "knowledge experience".

A clarifying illustration of such a transformation of the non-cognitive experience into a cognitive experience that does not result in a cognitional experience is provided in chapter four of *Reconstruction in Philosophy*. Analyzing the experience of writing with a pencil, Dewey points out that it usually doesn't cross the threshold of conscious experience: "The person who is taking notes has no sensations of the pressure of his pencil on the paper or on his hand as long as it functions properly […]. If the pencil-point gets broken or too blunt and the habit of writing does not operate smoothly, there is a conscious shock: the felling of something the matter, something gone wrong. The emotional change operates as a stimulus to a needed change in operation" (MW 12: 130-131). Then, the solution is immediately found; no inquiry is required: "One looks at his pencil, sharpens it or take another pencil form his pocket" (MW 12: 131). The experience has become cognitive, but the cognitive experience hasn't led to a knowledge experience and it soon takes again its non-cognitive form.

Indeed, other cognitive experiences lead to inquiries, that is to cognitional experiences, or knowledge experiences, and therefore it is tempting to think of the main elements of the cognitive experiences, namely sensations, as the true elements and the true basis of knowledge, as in the sensualist school. But such a conception is wrong because sensation and knowledge belong to two different phases: "Sensations are no parts of *any* knowledge, good or bad, superior or inferior, imperfect or complete. They are rather provocations, incitements, challenges to an act of inquiry with is to terminate in knowledge. They […] are no way of knowing at all. […] Sensation is thus, as the sensationalist claimed, the beginning of knowledge, but only in the sense that the experienced shock of change is the necessary stimulus to the investigation and comparing which eventually produce knowledge" (MW 12: 131).

Dewey's approach of knowledge is both experiential, processual, instrumental and fallibilist. It is experiential since it claims that the notion of knowledge should be used only to denote the situation when knowledge becomes a problem to solve, that is, when we experience that we do not know what is going on so that we must become inquirers in order to produce the knowledge of what is going on. It notably means that it is as just illegitimate to speak of "knowledge" at the pre-cognitive level (for instance when one speaks of "tacit knowledge" or of

[3] "The Experimental Theory of Knowledge" (MW 3: 107-127), "The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism" (MW 3: 158-167), "Immediate Empiricism" (MW 3: 168-170), "The Knowledge Experience and its Relationships" (MW 3: 171-177), "The Knowledge Experience Again" (MW 3: 178-183). For an analysis of these articles and of their contribution to Dewey's theory of the knowledge experience, see Renault (2015).

"know-how"[4]), as to speak of the components of the cognitive but not cognitional experience (for instance sensations) as sensuous knowledge. Dewey's conception of knowledge is also processual since the very notion of knowledge doesn't denote anything more than the process of inquiry, or the experience of *knowing*, and its possible successful result, namely the experience that something is *known* (or "cognized"). Hence, the criticism of the traditional conception of knowledge as a representation, or a belief, or a proposition, having its truth in itself, independently of the inquiries that have produced the belief in their truth. As Dewey point out in *Logic. A Theory of Inquiry*: "That which satisfactorily terminates inquiry is, by definition, knowledge; it is knowledge because it *is* the appropriate close of inquiry". The oppositive view is wrong, according to which knowledge is "supposed to have a meaning of its own apart from connection with and reference to inquiry" (LW 12: 15-16). Dewey's conception of knowledge is also instrumental since what counts at knowledge, when the process of knowing "satisfactorily terminates", is a means for practical solution to a problematic situation. Finally, the notion of knowledge doesn't denote any permanent value of some beliefs, but only the fact that particular beliefs have been successfully fixed in particular inquiry processes. Now, further problematic experiences and further inquiries can cast doubts of these beliefs, depriving them of the distinctive characteristic of knowledge in its Deweyan sense, namely the fact that they have settled a doubt.

Such a Deweyan conception of knowledge has a twofold interest for an epistemology of social critique. The first one is that it provides a convincing argument to support the claim that the concept of knowledge can denote something else than the claim to epistemic authority that is associate with sentences such as "I know", or than the power relations that create a hierarchy between the epistemic value of the body of the beliefs of the privileged groups (beliefs socially recognized as knowledge) by contrast with the beliefs to the oppressed groups. It is simply a fact that the social relations of domination result in inequalities in the distribution of epistemic authority and epistemic value, or in "epistemic injustice". It is hardly disputable that such inequalities must be subjected to social critique, and that what is at stake for the oppressed groups is notably to be recognized, inside as well as outside of group, as knowers having epistemic authority and whose beliefs are knowledges. These dimensions of the epistemology of social critique can notably be articulated by Foucault's concepts of "power-knowledge" and of "insurrection of subjugated knowledges" as for instance in Mc Worther's analysis of racism and sexual oppression (2009). But practices of social criticism are confronted to other types of epistemic problems, such as the "cognitional" problems that lead to "knowledge experiences".

The second interest of Dewey's epistemology is precisely that it offers appropriate means to analyze the effects produced by these cognitional problems on the practices of social criticism, as well as to study the role that the cognitive activities intended to solve these problems can play in such practices. This epistemology makes it possible to draw attention to various types of experiences where knowledge becomes a problem to solve within the process of social critique. It is noteworthy that three types of cognitional problems can make obstacle to the cognitive dynamics that can lead from problematic social experience to articulation of social critique. I will now distinguish them and provide illustrations with reference to the cognitional difficulties that had to be overcome before that the criticism of suffering at work had become a workable form of social critique (Renault, 2017a; 2020a). Firstly, the problematic experi-

[4] The chapter 7 of *Logic. A theory of inquiry* contends that there is no other knowledge than propositional knowledge, and in *Human Nature and Conduct*, Dewey points out that the practical skills embodied in habits shouldn't be denoted has "know-hows" because they are not knowledge at all: "We may, indeed, be said to know how by means of our habits. And a sensible intimation of the practical function of knowledge has led men to identify all acquired practical skill, or even the instinct of animals, with knowledge. We walk and read aloud, we get off and on street cars, we dress and undress, and do a thousand useful acts without thinking of them. We know something, namely, how to do them. […] But after all, this practical work done by habit and instinct in securing prompt and exact adjustment to the environment is not knowledge, except by courtesy" (MW 14: 124).

ence can appear too particular and not universal enough, or not significant enough, to belong to the realm of social critique. For instance, suffering at work had to be proved widespread enough, and serious enough, to become a subject matter of social critique. Secondly, the nature of the causes of the problematic situation can be so unclear that it is impossible to decide whether this problematic situation has social causes that could be transformed. Now, the social critique of a problematic situation loses its function if it is not grounded on a belief in the possibility of a transformation of the causes of this problematic situation. For instance, suffering at work cannot become a subject matter of social critique has long has it seems that its causes are psychological rather than social, or that this suffering is a side-effect of the best economical organization, it social causes having thus some kind of necessity. Thirdly, even if the doubt concerning such transformation is settled, the social critique of this situation will also lose its function if it remains doubtful that some means at disposal are able to modify the social factors of the problematic situation in such a way that it could become less problematic and more satisfactory. For instance, the critique of suffering at work will seem pointless if it the levers for the transformation of the work conditions are lacking, so that the only option is adaptation to this suffering.

The first cognitional problem concerns the nature of the problematic situation, the second its causes, and the third the means at disposal. They correspond to each of the three types of problematic situations that can lead to an inquiry according to chapter devoted to "The Analysis of a Complete Act of Thought" in *How we think?* (MW 6: 234-236). Each of these problems can lead to specific inquiries, which can be successful or not. Now, they need to be somehow successful for a problematic social experience to result in social critique. An indeed, individuals and groups experiencing problematic social experiences and confronted to these cognitional problems are not necessarily able to find appropriate solution. In other words, the cognitional problems can become cognitional obstacle to social critique. Such cognitional obstacles play a crucial role in *The Public and its Problems* when Dewey analyses the "eclipse of the public" (Gautier, 2015). He points out that a public necessarily remains inchoative if it is constituted only by the collection of those who experience a social situation as problematic. He underlines that a public has to identify the nature and causes of the problem it experiences in order to "identify itself". Now, the structure of the "great society" makes it difficult to get a knowledge of the generality of the problems experienced and of their causes: in such a society, there is no direct experience of the causes of the structural problems and no direct communication between all those who are affected by these problems. Unable to elaborate by themselves fruitful inquiries about the nature and the causes of the problematic situation they experience, the individuals and groups concerned are not able to unite into a "public", that is into a collective subject of social critique. In the context of the great society, the only solution would be provided by the social sciences, just as critical psychology and sociology of work has helped workers to become aware of the widespread nature of suffering at work, of its seriousness, and of the possibility of a transformation of its social factors. This is the reason why Dewey also explains that the disorientation of the contemporary publics is due to a lack of development and popularization of the social sciences. He doesn't suggest indeed that oppressed groups always depend on social sciences for their emancipation. He only takes seriously the empirical evidence that individuals and groups are not always skilled enough to find by themselves solutions to the cognitional problems they are confronted to in their practical and cognitive efforts to make the world better. When they are not cognitively skilled enough, social sciences can provide useful intellectual tools. The purpose of Dewey's social philosophy is precisely to supplement social sciences in the production of such intellectual tools (Renault, 2017b).

These arguments elaborated in *The Public and its Problems* imply notably that it is necessary to distinguish between two types of knowledge experience: in the first one, the cognitional problem can be solved because in-

quirers have the required cognitive tools at their disposal; in the second case, what is required is the appropriation of new cognitive tools: the process of knowing becomes a process of epistemic empowerment.

Do oppressed groups need better knowledge?

Dewey's terminology is too idiosyncratic to be of immediate use in social epistemological contemporary debates. In these debates, the notion of knowledge often denotes the beliefs that are available in order describe, analyze and explain internal and external phenomena. It is in sense that different types of bodies of knowledge can be attributed to various social groups, and that hierarchies of epistemic value can be described that are rooted in social relations of domination between these groups. As already noted, it is in this sense that Foucault coined the term "power-knowledge" that relates to the concept of knowledge in the descriptive sense of bodies of beliefs having social validity rather than in the normative sense of body of true and justified knowledges[5]. Since these sets of beliefs can operate at the precognitive level (as embodied in habits), or at the cognitive level (when it suffices to focus on a problem to find a solution), Dewey would refuse to denote them by the term "knowledge", even if most of them result from a fixation of belief that occurred at the cognitional level in past inquiries. But Dewey's point is a substantial and not simply terminological, and since he himself pointed out that "no one has the right to issue an ukase" about the legitimate use of the term "knowledge" (MW 14: 124), it makes sense to try and articulate his substantial point in the less idiosyncratic terminology that enables to speak of the bodies of beliefs having social validity as "knowledge". In this less idiosyncratic terminology, Dewey's point can be stated as follows: the knowledge experience is an experience of the need for better knowledge of the nature and causes of a problematic situation, and of the means available for transforming this situation into a more satisfactory one. I have already mentioned that Dewey seemed to consider that the knowledge experience plays a decisive role in some practices of social critique, and with the example of the controversies concerning suffering at work, I provided contemporary illustration of this role. But in contemporary social epistemological discussions about epistemic injustice and epistemic resistance, such an experience is usually not considered. Is it because it never plays a role in the practices of social critique of the oppressed (Dewey would be wrong or this point)? Or is the knowledge experience rather a blind spot of these discussions (and Dewey would help shedding light on it)?

Contemporary alternative epistemologies, as well as social epistemologies drawing on them, seem to share the two following assumptions: firstly, oppressed groups always have at disposal the knowledge that is needed for their practices of social critique; secondly, the epistemic problems they are confronted with are not of a cognitional type but rather relate to the necessity of finding better ways of "making sense" of their negative social experience, and of struggling against the lack of legitimacy of their knowledge and claims. The Deweyan epistemology of social critique that have been sketched in the previous section suggests that there might be something problematic in these two assumptions. In order to decide whether it is the case or not, a critical examination of both of these assumptions is required.

The first one has both empirical et critical justification. The empirical reason why it seems legitimate to considered that oppressed groups don't experience the need for a better knowledge in their practices of social critique is that it seems that they have a better knowledge of the domination and injustice they experience than any other social group. The superiority of this knowledge results from the fact that their past experiences of domination and injustice have led them to enquiries that have produced a stock of knowledge of

[5] These clarifications are required notably because in English, the notion of knowledge is more ambiguous than in French an other Latin languages, where a distinction is made between "knowledge" as "savoir" (or as set of beliefs having social validity) and "connaissance" (that corresponds to knowledge in the normative sense). Foucault speaks of "savoir-pouvoir" and not of "connaissance-pouvoir"

the specificities of the domination and injustice they suffer. What is at stake is to become confident in this knowledge, and to share it among the group and the participants in practices of social critique, rather than to produce better knowledge. Conversely, those who are benefiting from injustice and domination, and whose knowledge is socially recognized as more legitimate, are actually suffering from a type of ignorance resulting from a belief in the universality of their condition and a denial of the damaging consequences of their privileges; hence the "white ignorance", as well as some kind of "ruling class ignorance" and "masculine ignorance" (Mills, 1997; Sullivan, 2006; Bernasconi, 2007; Medina, 2013, 103-109). Therefore, what is at stake is to help the oppressed becoming aware that their socially delegitimized knowledge is a better knowledge than the legitimate knowledge of the privileged group, as in Foucault's project of an "insurrection of the subjugated knowledge". Hence the critical justification of the refusal to focus on the cognitive limitation of the oppressed. To highlight this point would run the risk to giving confirmation to the prejudice that their knowledge is suffering from epistemological deficits by comparison with more legitimate bodies of knowledge. Hence Medina's critique of Fricker's conception of epistemic injustices as undermining the cognitive capacities of the oppressed. Drawing on Du Bois's concept of "double consciousness", he claims that: "the subjects who become most epistemically harmed and hermeneutically disadvantaged in their ability to make sense of their social experiences of racialization were in fact those who benefit the most from hermeneutical obstacles" (2013, 104). Hence, the critical task is to highlight the epistemological deficits of the legitimate bodies of knowledge and to highlight the specific legitimacy of the knowledge of the oppressed. As noted by Santos (2008, L; 2016, 196), in order to work toward these goals, a pragmatist contextualist argument can be used: the validity of knowledge is always dependent on the context where it help finding solutions to problematic experiences, and it is mere ideological illusion when the ruling class, or other socially privileged groups, claim that their knowledge apply to type of the social experiences that organize the life of the oppressed groups.

There is nothing problematic with these arguments, but there are not enough to conclude that the oppressed cannot experience the need for a better knowledge in their practices of social critique, or that the knowledge experience can play a too crucial role in these practices to be simply ignored. The knowledge experience, as conceived of by Dewey, is a very common and ordinary experience. Any members of any social groups often experience that the knowledge available is not enough to solve the problems she is confronted to. Hence the use of sources of supplementary information: books, maps, internet search, discussions with others, etc. It goes without saying that such experiences are also prevalent among oppressed groups, and it is hardly disputable that in the social practices associated with social critique – practices that are less structured by social regularities and therefore less regulated by habits than other social practices – such experience will be all the more demanding.

It is probably true that in some cases, the knowledge of the oppressed is enough to cope with the daily experience of injustice and domination, as well as with the other practical problems that structure their ordinary social experience, including their ordinary practices of social critique of injustice and domination. There is no doubt that in some ordinary practices of social critique, such as the practices denotes by the concept of "hidden transcript" coined by Scott (1990), the oppressed are confronted to cognitional problems they are perfectly able to solve. When these cognitional problems occur, the knowledge experience only implies readjustment, instead of deep transformations of the knowledge already available. The process of knowing that is then going on is not accompanied by the feeling that the knowledge available is not enough. This knowledge experience implies no objection, but rather a confirmation of the assumption according to which oppressed groups possess the knowledge that is needed for their practices of social critique.

But there is no reason to think that the knowledge available is always enough when the practice of social critique are less routinized and when what is at stake is to find the best means to struggle against injustice and domination, or when political adversaries argue that it is wrong to claim that a social problem is caused by a set of non-necessary social factors, so that a social transformation is possible that would lead to a more satisfactory situation rather to worsen difficulties. On the contrary, the history of the development of the worker movement or of feminism provides numerous examples where overcoming cognitional obstacle is experienced as a challenge hard to tackle. Hence the need for theory and critical social science that has been a distinctive feature of the historical development of these two movements. Another illustration of such cognitional challenges is provided by the fact that social movements often call critical social sciences for help, in order to produce counter-expertise and make their claim more legitimate in deliberative arena where legitimate knowledge is used as a weapon against them. In these various cases, the cognitional problems cannot be solved solely by the body of knowledge already at disposal in the oppressed group. What is required is a contextual and instrumental appropriation of other types of cognitive tools in order to adjust the cognitive skills to the cognitional problem to be solved. The experience of knowledge is not only that of an adaptation of the body of knowledge already at disposal to the problematic situation, but that of an epistemic empowerment.

It is also the case that some oppressed groups, such as the those who suffer from great poverty in situation of social marginalization, do not always have at their disposal the body of knowledges that enable them to cope efficiently with the arduousness of their daily social life. They have indeed a knowledge of the situations of extreme poverty, and the epistemic value of their knowledge is generally not recognized as it should, while it is often more relevant than the administrative knowledge that is used by social workers and institutions to rule their lives. It remains that the members of these groups also experience their own incapacity to find long term solutions to the social problems they are stuck in, as well as their incapacity to find satisfactorily solutions to their conflictual interactions with social workers and institutions. They sometime experience these incapacities as lack of knowledge of the causes of their problems and of the means to make things better. The knowledge experience then takes the form of a need for knowledge, and they are often convinced that they can't satisfy this need by themselves because of their poor educational background and long-term exposition to denial of recognition of their capacities as knowers. When not repressed, this need takes then the form of a need for epistemic empowerment, namely, for some kind of contextual and instrumental appropriation, that is also translation (Santos, 2014: 212-235), of empirical information and theoretical tools that could provide answer to the question that emerge from their problematic social experience but that they fail to answer by themselves. These points have been made notably in the book published by the Fourth World-University Research Group (2007): *The Merging of Knowledge*.

These remarks suffice to cast doubt on the second assumption: the types of epistemic problems to which the oppressed are confronted relate mainly to the necessity of finding better ways of "making sense" of their negative social experience, and of struggling against the lack of legitimacy of their knowledge and of their claims. These two types of problems correspond to what M. Fricker termed "hermeneutical injustice" and "testimonial injustices". Interestingly, J. Medina has criticized her concept of "testimonial injustice" for reducing the issue of the lack of credibility of "*producers* of knowledge", or inquirers, to that of "*givers* of knowledge", or "informants":

> According to Fricker, a speaker is epistemically objectified when she is undermined in "her capacity as *givers* of knowledge" (p. 133; my emphasis). But a speaker can also be undermined in her capacity as *producer* of knowledge, that is, not as informant who report to an inquirer, but as an *inquirer* herself, as an investigating subject who asks questions and issues interpretations and evaluations of knowledge and opinions. Assuming that all silencing and all objectifying will be avoided when speakers are treated by in-

> formants is wrong, for their voices can still be constrained and minimized and their capacities as knowers can still be undermined. The epistemic agency of an informant qua informant is limited and subordinated to that of the inquirers (Medina, 2013, 92).

While Fricker is claiming that "the core of the concept of knowledge" is the "co-operative practice of pooling knowledge" (2006, 154), Medina points out that knowledge should rather be defined in Deweyan terms, as inquiry. He convincingly adds that the lack of credibility from which the member of oppressed groups suffer should be considered as an epistemic injustice because it delegitimizes and undermines not so much their capacity as providers of information than rather their capacity as inquirers. But the definition of inquiry he assumes puts again the knowledge experience into bracket. When he defines inquiry as a process in which one "asks questions and issues interpretations and evaluations of knowledge and opinions", the cognitional problems concerning the nature and causes of the problematic situation, and the best practical means at disposal, are far from coming to the fore. It could indeed be argued that when J. Medina highlights the role of the "struggles to make sense" (2013, 92) in the epistemic resistances of the oppressed, he refers to inquiries that consist precisely in attempts to produce better knowledge of the situation. As a matter of fact, the idea of "making sense" is loose enough to be specified in various sense. In the context of the epistemic resistances of the oppressed, to "struggle to make sense" can mean either trying to issue better interpretation of what is wrong in problematic social experiences, or trying to articulate better description of what is wrong in these experience, or trying to elaborate better analysis and explanation of these experiences. In contemporary alternative epistemologies and social epistemologies, the first two meaning come to the fore.

Fricker's "hermeneutical injustice" concern the fact that oppressed groups can experience difficulties in making sense of the injustice and domination they suffer, and that these difficulties can hinder their capacity to subject domination and injustice to social critique. She also points out that these groups can successfully struggle to make sense of their problematic social experience, as shown by the collective elaboration of the notion of "sexual harassment" within feminist groups (2006, 147-152). This example is telling because it makes a big difference, from a normative point of view, and the related possibilities of social critique, to denote an interaction as a form of flirting or as a "sexual harassment". But in this case, the new category only provides an answer to the question: how the problematic dimensions of this interaction should be denoted in order to appear as incompatible with shared normative expectations. The problem is neither to find the best way to describe these problematic dimensions, nor to settle a doubt concerning the nature of this interaction or its causes. The problem is simply to find the best ways to denounce the interaction, given that the very notion of "flirt" is somehow legitimizing it. In other words, the function of the interpretation is normative and not cognitional. Here, making sense doesn't mean producing better knowledge but better normative evaluation.

In other cases, indeed, making sense means producing better descriptions of the problematic dimension of a social situation. What is at stake is then to elaborate accurate description of some problematic dimensions of the social experience that remain socially invisible or that seem difficult to capture in the framework of the bodies of knowledge at disposal. Hence the use of novels, and other means of expression, in order to produce "self-description" of the experience of the oppressed, as highlighted by P. Hill Collins (1999: 97-122). Hence also the elaboration of concepts such as "class domination" "patriarchy" or "white supremacy" that are intended to provide a better description of the problematic situations experience by the working class, by women and by racialized people, as noted notably by C. Mills (2005). When the oppressed struggle to make sense in these ways, that is in searching for better descriptions of the problematic dimensions of their social experience, they are not mainly motivated by a doubt concerning the nature of the situation or by a will to produce a better knowledge of the nature of the situation. They are rather

motivated by the will to share their experience and to find appropriate ways to articulate what is at stake in these experiences, so that they could be subjected to social critique.

But in other cases, the struggles to make sense are indeed consisting in attempts to produce better knowledge of the nature and the cause of the problematic situation. When the worker movement elaborated the concept of exploitation, what was at stake was not only to produce a better description of what was going wrong in the capitalist wage system. The concept of exploitation was also intended to disclose the structural causes of the dominations and injustices suffered by the proletariat, and to orient its political struggles toward the relevant targets. The elaboration of the concept of exploitation was the result of a desperate struggle of the emerging proletariat to make sense of the new working conditions, with the help of some Saint-Simonian intellectuals. It provided a better knowledge of the nature and the causes of the working-class condition, it helped analyze more precisely the nature of the problem, the social transformation required, and it led to renewed reflection about the means at disposal in order to struggle against the social domination and injustices suffered by the proletariat (Bourdeau, 2018). It participated in a process of epistemic emancipation that played a decisive role in the history of social critique.

I have tried to show that the production of knowledge is one the main forms of the epistemic empowerment that can be achieved when the oppressed try to make sense of the dominations and injustices they suffer. Such epistemic empowerment shouldn't be reduced to their attempts at elaborating new (self-)descriptions and at issuing new normative interpretations. It also concern the production of better knowledge of the nature and causes of the problematic situations, as well as of the means at disposal to make the world better. According to P. Hill Collins, one of the tasks of alternative epistemologies is "to enrich our understanding of how subordinate groups create knowledge that fosters both their empowerment and social justice" (1999, 269). I have tried to suggest that Dewey's theory of the knowledge experience offers interesting tools to work toward this goal. It offers a means for focusing on the specificities of the cognitional problems that can be met in ordinary interactions and in practices of social critique, as well as on the activities intended to solve these problems. It offers a means for investigating into some epistemological dimensions of the practice of social critique that other epistemological paradigms fail to analyze convincingly. Dewey's methodological framework provides a useful corrective for the lack of reflection[6], in contemporary political philosophy and social epistemology, on the need for knowledge that is associated with social critique (a need that expresses itself notably in the pathological form of conspiration theories) as well as on the critical effects of knowledge.

There is indeed a temptation to get rid of the very concept of knowledge because the claim to know and the social recognition of a belief as a knowledge are always embedded in social relations of domination. But to get rid of the notion of knowledge, or to reduce it to its descriptive sense, would be politically dangerous. Just as the notion of objectivity, the normative sense of the notion of knowledge expresses the political necessity "to think about the gap should exist between how any individual or group wants the world be and how in fact it" (Harding, 1992, 461). What is required is then to complement the notion of knowledge as power-knowledge with an another notion of knowledge that could capture the critical and emancipatory effects of some knowing processes. Dewey's conception of the knowledge experience can help working toward this goal.

[6] I criticized this lack elsewhere (Renault, 2020b)

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EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE SOUTH MEET THE INSURRECTIONIST TURN IN PRAGMATISM: STEPS TOWARDS A DIALOGUE[1]

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ABSTRACT: Recent debates within pragmatist philosophy are creating new openings for encounters and dialogues with alternative epistemologies and approaches to themes at the core of classical pragmatism. This article addresses some of the questions raised by what has been described as the "insurrectionist" challenge to pragmatism, exploring their convergence with the research program of Epistemologies of the South which grew out of the work of the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Santos's proposal of a postabyssal philosophy draws, among other sources and influences, on an appropriation of contributions of pragmatist philosophy for a radical critique of Eurocentric conceptions of epistemology. This paper offers a discussion of selected topics of import to an ongoing exploration of the affinities, resonances and differences between the postabyssal conception of knowledges born out of struggle that underpins the project of Epistemologies of the South, on the one hand, and emerging "insurrectionist" versions or pragmatism, which extend and radicalize classical pragmatism, on the other, as well as possible paths to future dialogues.

Keywords: Epistemologies of the South; insurgent pragmatism; postabyssal thinking; Paulo Freire

Introduction

Recent debates within pragmatism are creating new openings for encounters and dialogues with alternative epistemologies and approaches to themes at the core of classical pragmatism. The field broadly and commonly described as postcolonial studies offers a fertile ground for the exploration of those themes, including experience, knowledge and ignorance, community, democracy or justice. The actual and potential contributions of philosophical pragmatism to these debates, however, are often ignored, trivialized, or even assigned a pejorative trait associated with a reading of pragmatism as a peculiarly (North) American brand of instrumentalism or opportunism, or as part of a broader, post-analytic constellation of positions. This article proposes a different approach, which addresses some of the questions raised by what has been described as the "insurrectionist" challenge to pragmatism, exploring their convergence with the research program of Epistemologies of the South which grew out of the work of the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Santos's proposal of a *postabyssal* philosophy – an "alternative thinking of alternatives" (Santos, 2007a) - draws, among other sources and influences, on an appropriation of contributions of pragmatist philosophy for a radical critique of Eurocentric conceptions of epistemology (Santos, 2007a, 2014; Nunes, 2009). It would be an impossible task to address the broad range of questions of relevance to that dialogue within the limits of this article. The aim is, more modestly, to provide a discussion of selected topics of import to an ongoing exploration of the affinities, resonances and differences between the postabyssal conception of *knowledges born out of struggle* that underpins the project of Epistemologies of the South, on the one hand, and emerging "insurrectionist" versions or pragmatism, which extend and radicalize classical pragmatism, on the other. This means that some topics will have to be briefly addressed, and left for further discussion in future publications.[2]

The first section of the paper offers a brief presentation of Epistemologies of the South, how it emerged as a research program and what its core propositions are. The second section discusses the explicit influences of pragmatism on the emergence and shaping of Epistemologies of the South, as well as the affinities and convergences between its concerns and approaches and

[1] This paper grew out of reflections that matured over nearly three decades of work at the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra. I am grateful in particular to Boaventura de Sousa Santos and to the colleagues of the Coordination of the Research Program in Epistemologies of the South for creating and sustaining an unique and challenging intellectual environment and an ongoing connection to the experiences of struggle and of knolwedges born out of struggle. Special thanks are due to Patrícia Ferreira, who read and commented on a previous draft of this paper. I am solely responsible, though, for the arguments advanced in the paper, as well as for any remaining shortcomings of flaws.

[2] These topics include, among others, the epistemologies of ignorance (Sullivan and Tuana, 2007), the debates over justice/injustice and democracy (Dieleman, Rondel and Voparil, 2017), and broader explorations of the relations of pragmatism with other philosophical currents and traditions, along the paths opened by Gregory Pappas (for the Americas), Scott R. Stroud (for India), Richard Shusterman (for China and Japan), Jessica Ching-Sze Wang and Sor-Hoo Tan (for China) and others.

those of recent engagements within pragmatist philosophy with Alain Locke's critical pragmatism and with the "insurrectionist challenge" to classical pragmatism. José Medina's recent work provides a focus on how these concerns have been answered through the move from classical to pragmatic pluralism and subsequently to an insurrectionist approach. The third section discusses in more detail the insurrectionist challenge to pragmatism, drawing on the work of Leonard Harris, and the convergences as well as the differences between knowledges born out of struggle and philosophy born out of struggle. The fourth and final section draws on the work of Paulo Freire – an author influenced by Deweyan pragmatism and a major reference of Epistemologies of the South - for a general commentary on how to open up the pathways to further dialogues between pragmatism and ES.

Epistemologies of the South: a guided tour

Epistemologies of the South (ES) is currently the name of a research program that took shape through a diversity of projects and interventions in different regions of the world by a broad and diverse network of researchers, researcher-activists, activists and popular educators.[3] The program is hosted by the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, in Portugal. It builds on the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos and on several collective and collaborative international projects he directed, of which two stand out: *Reinventing Social Emancipation* and *ALICE: Strange Mirrors, Unsuspected Lessons.*[4] Both projects gathered international research teams, including researchers and activists, who generated a substantial and innovative series of collections of case studies and other initiatives covering experiences of resistance, struggle and creation of alternatives to diverse forms of domination and oppression, tracing their links to the broader historical dynamics of imperial domination. These projects included experiences from Latin America, India, Africa, East Timor and Europe, covering themes such as the diversity of forms of knowledge, experiences in democracy and demodiversity, conceptions of, and struggles for, human dignity, law, justice and the state, alternative forms of economic activity, new forms of labor internationalism, the diversity of conceptions, idioms and practices related to health, suffering, healing and care, arts and aesthetic practices and the production of history and memory.[5]

According to Santos, "[t]he epistemologies of the South concern the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experiences of resistance of all social groups that have systematically suffered injustice, oppression and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy" (2018a, 19). The South stands as a metaphor of the vast and diversified set of these experiences that, in different contexts and regions of the world, both in the geographic South and North, emerge from struggles and actions of resistance against imperial domination. In another formulation, the same author describes the South as the name of the unjust and unnecessary suffering that exists in the world, and the resistance and struggles against such suffering, in their multiple forms (Santos, 2014, 2018; Santos and Meneses, 2010, 2019).

The disqualification, invisibilization, silencing or suppression of the possibility of peoples, communities or collectives making and producing accounts of their own histories, based on their experiences and knowledges, places epistemological justice at the core of the resistance and struggle for dignity and recognition. The South can thus be redescribed as an epistemological South. The terms used to name this epistemological

[3] For further information on the program see alice/ces.uc.pt.

[4] *Reinventing Social Emancipation - EMANCIPA* (1999-2001) was funded by the MacArthur and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundations. *ALICE: Strange Mirrors, Unsuspected Lessons. Leading Europe to a new way of sharing the world experiences* (2011-2016) was funded by the European Research Council. Both projects were hosted by the Center for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra.

[5] The work coming out of the first project was published in several languages (Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and English). See Santos, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2010. The contributions to the ALICE project are in the process of publication, with three volumes available in Portuguese, Spanish and English at the time of writing. See Santos and Meneses, 2019; Santos and Mendes, 2020; Santos and Martins, 2021.

South and its protagonists are diverse, and often originate in the self-designation of those who suffer oppression and domination, but also in descriptions and conceptualizations by intellectuals committed to their struggles: "the wretched of the Earth" (Frantz Fanon), "the oppressed" (Paulo Freire), "the subaltern" (Antonio Gramsci, Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Spivak), "the poor" (Paul Farmer)... The nexus between self-designation and conceptualization may vary depending on the epistemological and theoretical orientations and propositions and the relations established between the production of knowledge and the experiences and struggles of peoples, communities, social movements and marginalized and persecuted groups.

The Epistemologies of the South are built on a critique of modern Western thinking as *abyssal thinking*:

> It consists of a system of visible and invisible distinctions, the invisible ones being the foundation of the visible ones. The invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two realms, the realm of "this side of the line" and the realm of "the other side of the line". The division is such that "the other side of the line" vanishes as reality, becomes non-existent, and is indeed produced as non-existent. Non-existing means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as non-existent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considers to be its other. What most fundamentally characterizes abyssal thinking is thus the impossibility of the co-presence of the two sides of the line. To the extent that it prevails, this side of the line only prevails by exhausting the field of relevant reality. Beyond it, there is only non-existence, invisibility, non-dialectical absence (Santos, 2007a, 45–46).

The century-long history of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy established a durable and persisting divide between "this side", the "civilized" zones of metropolitan sociability, and "the other side", the "wild" zones of colonial sociability. Exclusion appears in different forms in these two zones. *Non-abyssal exclusions* are associated with inequalities in zones of metropolitan sociability, ruled by the tension between regulation and emancipation, whereas *abyssal exclusions* occur in the zones of colonial sociability, where violence and appropriation/dispossession rule (Santos, 2007a, 2014). The first kind of exclusion – *non-abyssal exclusion* - does not deny the rights associated with citizenship that allow those affected by injustices associated with inequality and, eventually, exclusion from access to standards and living conditions regarded as minimal, to claim their rights and be recognized as citizens. The second kind of exclusion, *abyssal exclusion*, is based on the denial of the full humanity of those who are excluded. Slavery, racism, colonialism, sexism and different forms of violence against women and LGBTQI people or against people with disabilities are just some of the ways this denial of humanity takes shape. Struggles emerging within the "wild" zone thus claim the recognition of the full humanity of those who are abyssally excluded, as a condition to fight for citizenship rights. The concept of the abyssal divide/abyssal line stands as a key and distinguishing feature of ES.

ES approach experiences of violence in its various forms – from direct, physical violence inflicted on bodies to structural, slow, symbolic and cognitive/epistemic violence -, suffering, dispossession and injustice through the resistances and struggles that emerge in responding to them. Different forms of domination, oppression and exclusion tend to be mutually reinforced, generating and perpetuating zones of non-being and predation, of destruction of ecologies and modes of existence, and of radical exclusion of a growing part of the world population. *Cognitive justice* – the recognition of the right of peoples, communities and social groups – to produce their own history and accounts of their experiences, memories, resistance and struggles and to create, validate and share the knowledges born out of these experiences – is a condition of social, historical and ecological justice. Achieving cognitive justice demands, on the one hand, access to the knowledge, resources and practices of modern Western science and technology that contribute to the alleviation or suppression of unjust suffering; on the other hand, it requires the recognition of the diversity and richness of knowledge practices that exist in the world. Decolonizing the hegemonic forms of knowledge associated with modern science and its epis-

temological premises is a key aspect of the struggle for cognitive justice.

One of the themes at the core of ES is the diversity of forms of understanding human dignity beyond Western-centric definitions of human rights. The notion of *pluriversity* allows the claims of universality of the human rights approach to dignity to be put to the test through the opening of dialogues with other conceptions of dignity and tracing the ways these are shaped by and in turn shape struggles against oppression and unjust and unnecessary suffering ensuing from it, in its multiple forms. Human dignity may thus be declined in different idioms, including that of human rights. Idioms and practices aimed at affirming, protecting and fostering human dignity should be considered in their relation to ontologies and forms of life. All conceptions of dignity are partial and incomplete. Western human rights have at their core the autonomous individual as the subject of rights. Other conceptions put collective obligations and entitlements at the core of the conditions that define dignity. Indigenous peoples and communities conceive of dignity as including humans as part of a broader, encompassing cosmos, along with non-human entities such as animals, plants, rivers, forests, mountains, ancestors and spirits. Struggling for dignity means standing for the integrity and sustainability of the ecologies that sustain life and social relations.

Struggles for dignity start from resistance and response to suffering as always inscribed in the bodies and souls of living persons as interdependent and as relying on their belonging to communities, territories and spatial webs.[6] Interdependency is a source of protection and assistance in distress, but also a source of exposure to violence and oppression. The incompleteness and partiality of these diverse conceptions does not mean that they will be incommensurable or stand in permanent conflict. Dialogues are possible, and they rely on forms of intercultural translation, which have been documented and discussed by work within ES (Santos, 2014b; Santos and Martins, 2021). Experiences of resistance and struggle against violence inflicted on persons, communities, groups and territories and the unjust suffering that it causes allow connections to be traced and made explicit between the situated experiences of suffering and the broader processes of capitalist, colonialist and patriarchal domination, often mediated by forms of discrimination and exclusion performed in the idioms of religion, race, ethnicity or nationality, among others. Santos's (2014b) discussion of Western-Christian inspired, Islamic and Hindu conceptions of human dignity and their relations with particular political-theological configurations has set the stage for exploring actual possible experiences of counter-hegemonic, intercultural approaches to human dignity.[7]

According to Santos (2018b, chapter 11), "the epistemologies of the South are like an 'occupation' of the conventional reflection on epistemology" that includes institutions and pedagogies, but they "are far from being limited to actions of occupation. Whereas academic and pedagogical institutions treat knowledge practices as distinct from other social practices, the epistemologies of the South, while acknowledging such practices (…), include other knowledges and other practices of creating and transmitting the knowledge that results from social practices of resistance and struggle against domination.

[6] The core idea of suffering as always referred to an embodied process, how different idioms of suffering account for it and whether and how the experience of suffering can be shared in order to promote solidaristic and collective responses to it and to its causes suggests an interesting path to dialogue between ES, phenomenological-existentialist and feminist-pragmatist approaches and recent developments in the life sciences inspired by feminist and postcolonial critique, such as that proposed by Sullivan (2015). See, for contributions along that path, Martins, 2021, and Nunes, 2021.

[7] For a detailed presentation and discussion of how the concept of the abyssal line is at the core of counter-hegemonic approaches to human rights and more generally of conceptions and struggles for dignity, see Santos and Martins, 2021. The contributions to this volume cover a broad range of experiences ranging from Europe to Africa, Asia, the Mediterranean area and the Americas. The chapters by Nunes and Martins (respectively on the genealogy and current practice of humanitarianism and on the experience of the survivors of the Bhopal disaster in India) engage the centrality of suffering in debates over the definitions of humanity and of the differences among humans, and of struggles for alleviating, healing and caring for human suffering. They propose ways of tracing back these experiences of suffering and struggle to the modern dynamics of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy.

In such cases, we have before us research-as-action and pedagogy-as-action in a particularly strong sense". The concept of *ecologies of knowledges* designates the articulation of "scientific and artisanal knowledges (…), whenever knowledges are mobilized in social practices, the distinction between the creation and the transmission of knowledge, between research and pedagogy, ends up being problematic". Combining institutional and extra-institutional practices is a key aspect of this particular configuration of knowledges and practices, of inquiry and/as learning.

ES propose a particular version of political epistemology, as "ways of knowing and validating knowledge that aim to contribute to the refoundation of insurgent politics capable of efficiently confronting the current, insidious, and techno-savage articulations between capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy (…). The centrality of social struggles in the epistemologies of the South, together with how broadly these struggles are conceived of (…), point to practices of criticism and possibility, nonconformity and resistance, denunciation and counterproposal, which may be more or less consolidated, more or less formalized, and of longer or shorter duration", avoiding polarizations or segmentations between dichotomies such as revolution/reform or rupture/continuity, conceiving of struggles as existing in many forms that are not captured by these categories.

ES are influenced by, and engage in dialogues with a range of critical approaches in the humanities, the natural sciences and the social sciences, driven by a concern with identifying those versions which are more open to the recognition of the external pluralism of knowledge and the forms of dissent that emerge within established disciplines or areas of knowledge. These range from feminism and queer theory to anti-colonial, decolonial, post-colonial and Liberation philosophy, as well as critical approaches to capitalism. Indigenous, African and Caribbean philosophies have been central to the ongoing enrichment and growth of ES.

These dialogues take place within a commitment to the decolonization of modern scientific knowledge and of the forms of abyssal thinking its authority rests on. This does not imply a radical cut with modern science nor its rejection. Instead, it seeks to identify and promote conditions allowing the mutual recognition and dialogue between knowledges and practices, including those of modern science, without disqualifications or suppressions, with special attention to the knowledges and practices that emerge from the experiences and struggles for dignity and for life against oppression and exclusion. As these rely on a constitutive relation between life and knowledge, they are often described as "artisanal", to distinguish them from those forms of knowledge that are produced through the creation of the specialized and autonomous domain associated with science. The encounters between different knowledges open the path for ecologies of knowledges. They start from the recognition that all forms of knowledge are incomplete, and that every knowledge is entangled with a particular form of ignorance. We find here a key postulate which is largely indebted to the influence of Paulo Freire's conception of knowing and learning (on which more later).[8]

The decolonization of hegemonic knowledge proceeds through two moments; both are connected to distinctive and yet interconnected aspects. The first moment is called "sociology of absences"; the second, "sociology of emergences" (Santos, 2014, 2018a, b). The sociology of absences seeks to identify the silences, the suppressions, invisibilizations and disqualifications that deny the existence of other knowledges or convert them into forms of ignorance, opposed to the allegedly true and rigorous knowledge of science. Hegemonic knowledge thus operates through the active creation of ignorance and non-existence.[9]

The sociology of emergences, in turn, seeks to identify the experiences, knowledges, and practices born out

[8] Ignorance and the epistemology of ignorance have been a major topic of recent discussions within pragmatist philosophy and feminist work influenced by pragmatism, especially in relation to discussions of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and exclusion. For an excellent introduction to these approaches, see the contributions to Sullivan and Tuana, 2007, and Medina, 2013.

[9] For a powerful example, from a pragmatist perspective, of how this active production of ignorance works, see Sullivan, 2007.

of the struggles and resistances against diverse forms of oppression and domination. The term *struggle* refers to any affirmation of freedom that, under certain circumstances, may turn into collective action for liberation. The practices of daily survival of groups, communities and peoples abyssally excluded are part of these forms of struggle, as well as the social movements and forms of collective action that often reclaim, recreate or reinvent experiences and stories of past struggles and resistances (Santos, 2018a, b).

The knowledge accredited by science and recognized as such by institutions or accredited authorities (academic or professional knowledge, for example, or knowledge sanctioned by religious authorities as theology) tends to become a *monoculture*. It privileges particular definitions of what counts as knowledge, what the relevant scale and temporality are for the understanding of the phenomena under scrutiny, exclusionary criteria for recognition and classification and for establishing the value and productivity of practices. It stands on the separation between subject and object. Decolonizing hegemonic knowledge rests on what Santos (2018a, b, chapter 6) calls "decolonizing hermeneutics." This depends on three conditions.

The first condition is the attention to a bias affecting all knowledge: all forms of knowledge have as their reverse corresponding forms of ignorance; to dismiss this condition amounts to dismissing what a certain form of knowledge is not capable to recognize, relegating what is unknown to a condition of non-existence or to being an obstacle to the progress of true knowledge.

The second condition is the recognition of the abyssal nature of partiality: "… modern science turned into […] the main producer of absences, actively creating invisible, irrelevant, forgotten and inexistent realities" (Santos, 2018a, 232). The destruction, declaration of inexistence or predatory appropriation of other knowledges is inextricably linked to this active production of the abyssal line that separates metropolitan sociability from colonial sociability.

The third condition is the tension between autonomy and trust. The assertion of the autonomy and objectivity of scientific knowledge may turn into a justification for the suppression of other knowledges and experiences, claiming an authority that demands unconditional trust in scientific knowledge and in its surrogates, yet equally allowing developments and appropriations of this knowledge by projects of domination and oppression.

The sociology of absences does not stop at the identification of these conditions, which allow the continued existence and affirmation of a given form of knowledge as a monoculture. It "operates through the replacement of monocultures by ecologies", defined by Santos (2014, 175) as

> sustainable diversity based on complex relationality. It is therefore a normative concept based on the following ideas. First, the value of diversity, complexity, and relationality must be recognized: nothing exists by itself; something or someone exists because something else or someone else exists. Second, complex and relational diversity means that the criteria that define diversity are themselves diverse. Third, the choice among them is a political one, and in order to respect diversity, it must be based on radical and intercultural democratic processes. Fourth, the robustness of the relations depends on nurturing diversity and exerting vigilance against monocultural temptations that come from both within and without, even if the distinction between what is within and what is without is intrinsically problematic.

In this perspective, the term "ecology" designates both a way of thinking/organizing the world and a description of certain kind of intervention in the world. It is characterized by the emphasis on relation, interdependddence and sustainability, but always attentive to heterogeneity, diversity and uncertainty. The concept of ecology is attached to forms of ontological politics –actions that contribute to create versions of the world – different from those based on non-ecological views, as, for example, explanations of disease, of poverty, of environmental degradation based on linear versions of causality or on reductionist approaches. These ignore, or push to the background, the relational and procedural complexity of these phenomena. The experience of suffering associated with violence, deprivation, dispossession, illness or disorder and the understanding of the processes that

generate them thus tends to reassert the segmentations and divisions of the world associated with the disciplinary organization of scientific knowledge, of its biases and of the abyssal nature of such biases. Even when hegemonic science recognizes the relevance of processes outside its bounded field of knowledge, existing disciplines and specialties tend to treat the, as external factors, which at most may condition or influence processes that are described and explained in terms of the core assumptions and procedures of established disciplines or configurations of disciplinary knowledges.

This should not prevent the recognition of differences between versions of scientific knowledge that emerge from the internal dynamics of the sciences, from the debates and experiences that involve its practitioners. But recognition should extend to those versions of science forged in the engagement with the knowledges and practices that are born out of the experiences and struggles against forms of domination and oppression that become manifest in suffering, illness, violence in its different forms and in the precariousness of existence, but also in forms of resistance through knowledges and practices of solidarity, care and healing. Therefore, it is important to give special attention to the conditions in which versions of internal plurality emerge that are open to dialogue with other experiences and knowledges (Nunes, 2009; Santos, Nunes, Meneses, 2007).[10]

The decolonization of knowledge advocated by ES mobilizes epistemological imagination in order to recognize the existence and diversity of other forms of knowledge, but also to take account of changing conceptions of epistemic sovereignty (Nunes, 2009; Rouse, 1996) that have sustained the hegemony of modern Western science and academic and expert knowledge, disqualifing or suppressing other forms of knowledge.

Santos offers some provocative thoughts on how to advance towards an ongoing collaborative, participatory and non-extractivist recreation of the epistemological and political imagination:

1. To compare or contrast scientific and artisanal knowledge in order to imagine the different concerns each of them conveys and the different interests each of them serves or may serve (…).
2. To imagine surprising perspectives (…).
3. To imagine, open to further verification, the different ways through which different kinds of knowledge may contribute, whether positively or negatively, to a given social struggle as seen from the point of view of the different parts involved (…).
4. To imagine, on the basis of seemingly unrelated historical data, differences and even contradictions between positions conventionally deemed to be on the same side of a given social struggle (…).
5. To imagine forms of learning combined with forms of unlearning (…).
6. To imagine subjects where the epistemologies of the North only see objects (…).
7. To imagine new cartographies of the abyssal line, to identify new invisible divisions between metropolitan sociability and colonial sociability (…).
8. To imagine the consequences of not separating life from research (…).
9. To imagine civilizational questions circulating underground, remaining unanswered and never surfacing in the debates on technical issues and options within the limits of modern science (…).
10. To imagine the quest for ecological stances against monopolistic ones beyond the ecologies of knowledges (…).
11. To imagine the absences that cannot be captured by the sociology of absences, the emergences that never go beyond potentiality, or never stop being anticipated ruins" (Santos, 2018b: chapter 6; italics in original).

[10] This section draws on material previously included in Nunes and Louvison, 2020.

These challenges to the epistemological imagination take shape in a set of methodological orientations, which can be summarily described as follows:

> sensitivity – methodologies should be sensitive to context, situation and the composition of the research collaborative; engage all senses, in order to counter the hegemony of sight and hearing; procedures draw on aesthetic/artistic as well as on practical/instrumental resources, on reason and on affect , as they are brought together in terms such as *sentipensar* and *corazonar*;
>
> collaboration – researching *with*, not *on*: inquiry is enacted through collaborative practices throughout the whole process, even if specific assignments are delegated on some participants; collaboration includes the identification and definition of problems and objectives, the methodological design, the carrying out of the inquiry, the sharing of results and the evaluation of the process and its outcomes;
>
> non-extractivism – inquiry should not be appropriated for purposes other than those that are defined and decided by the community or group and for their benefit. Academic uses of the research should not imply any form of dispossession of the knowledge produced by those who have been part of it.

This approach relies, on the one hand, on the counter-hegemonic appropriation of methodologies developed within hegemonic forms of knowledge, including the social sciences, the humanities, the natural sciences and the range of multi- or interdisciplinary areas that have emerged in fields such as health or environment. But they also draw on a range of procedures which are inspired by the contributions to participatory research, action-research and popular education of Paulo Freire or Orlando Fals-Borda, among others, and on the ongoing development of innovative, collaborative and non-extractivist methodologies.[11]

Pragmatism and Epistemologies of the South: convergences and common concerns

The relations between pragmatist philosophy and Epistemologies of the South encompass not just explicit, acknowleged influences of pragmatism on ES, but also affinities and convergences between the concerns and approaches of ES and those of the critical pragmatism of Alain Locke (Harris, 1989), as well as recent engagements with and developments of his work (Harris, 1999).

In a paper which may be described as the first systematic statement of Epistemologies of the South as a program, Santos (2007a) includes a specific reference to a pragmatic approach to knowledges as an alternative to the hierarchical validation of claims to knowledge by the hegemonic conception of epistemology. Direct references to pragmatism have been present in Santos's work since the late 1980s, with explicit drawing on William James and John Dewey and, in an earlier period, Richard Rorty and Richard Bernstein, ranging from the need to start from consequences in validating knowledge/practice configurations to Dewey's critique of mind-body dualism, among others (Santos, 1995, 2018a, b). Most of these references concern epistemology and how pragmatism provides a form of bringing closeness to where hegemonic science and knowledge create distance between science and life experiences. The approach of ES to how to evaluate/validate knowledges and their hierarchies in a situated way is explicitly described as pragmatic and based on the need to start from consequences, (with an explicit reference to James's "last things"):

> The ecology of knowledges does not conceive of knowledges in abstraction; it conceives of them as knowledge practices and the interventions they enable or impede in the real world. An epistemological pragmatics is above all justified because the life-experiences of the oppressed are primarily made intelligible to them through an epistemology of consequences. In their life-world, consequences are first. Causes are second (Santos, 2007a, 72).[12]

[11] These include conversations of the world, voices of the world, the Popular University of Popular Movements and a range of practices arising from popular experiences and struggles. For a detailed discussion of these methodologies, see Santos, 2018 b, chapters 6–9.

[12] In *The End of the Cognitive Empire* (Santos, 2018a, b), Dewey is mentioned again in relation to his critique of the mind-soul dualism and a reference to Deweyan pragmatism as it was used by the Indian sociologist K. Shridharani (1939) to introduce

In an extended comment on Santos's paper, Nunes (2009) explored the relationship of pragmatism and ES and proposed a tentative approach to their convergences, as well as their differences. In the concluding remarks to the essay, these convergences and differences were stated as follows:

> The pragmatism advocated by Santos (…), despite its apparent kinship with the philosophical current of the same name, is in fact a radical reconstruction that results from the encounter between the experiences of subaltern populations, groups and collectives, particularly in the global South, and the act of putting the proposals of pragmatist philosophers such as William James and John Dewey "to work" for the critique of conventional epistemologies. It is in the explicit reference to the world and experiences of the oppressed as a place of departure and arrival for another conception of what counts as knowledge that the epistemology of the South confronts pragmatism with its limits. Those limits are the limits of the critique of epistemology within the framework of abyssal thinking (Nunes, 2009, 117).

In the remainder of this section, I shall focus on recent developments within pragmatism which open up new pathways to dialogue. José Medina's work appears as a privileged point of entry, being exemplary of a trajectory that starts from a clearly argued discussion of core commitments of classical pragmatism – especially of Dewey's work – and how they provide ways of addressing issues of diversity and democracy to a concern with what a pragmatist approach should look like in dealing with injustice and oppression, leading to an insurrectionist version of pragmatism.[13] This trajectory is strikingly similar to the approach described in ES as sociology of absences, and opens the way to a convergence with the sociology of emergences, by extending and radicalizing some of the tenets of pragmatism. I shall consider the affinities and convergences, but also some of the differences between the insurrectionist approach proposed by Medina and ES.

Medina (2004, 112) reminds us that one of the core ideas of pragmatism is that philosophical reflection should be continuous with everyday life, and that, according to Dewey, it should follow what he described as an "empirical method". Medina goes on to elaborate on Dewey's idea and how to fulfill it in the very practice of philosophy:

> According to Dewey, by focusing on ordinary life experiences philosophy does not simply become the voice of common sense, for philosophical reflection is essentially *critical* and *transformative*. On this view, the relation of philosophy and everyday life experiences is a two-way street: philosophical reflection must start from experience, but it must also return to it and enrich it. For Dewey, the "primary concern" of philosophy should be to "clarify, liberate and extend the goods which inhere in the naturally generated functions of experience" (…). What motivates philosophical reflection is "the interest of a more intense and just appreciation of the meanings present in experience" (…). Accordingly, Dewey proposes as a practical test for philosophical reflection that we ask whether or not such reflection results in the clarification and "enrichment" of experience (Medina, 2004: 113).

Dewey proposes as a "first-rate test of the value of any philosophy" the question of whether it ends "in conclusions which, when they are referred back to ordinary life experiences and their predicaments, render them more significant, more luminous to us, and make our dealings with them more fruitful" (Dewey, 1997: 9-10, cited by Medina, 2004: 113, note 2).

Medina's rendering of Dewey's position resonates with the approach taken by ES in respect of how to approach the relation between experience and the production of knowledge, and how to validate reflection and knowledge claims through its contribution to clarifying and enriching experience.

But one question arises, which is not considered in Dewey's formulation: what kind of life experiences, and of whom, are we dealing with when we move towards this empirically grounded reflection? Dewey's position is

Gandhian thought into the struggles for civil rights in the USA. Recent contributions by Scott R. Stroud (2018) on Dewey's influence in India, namely through R. Ambedkar (who was a student of Dewey), signal the relevance of appropriations of Dewey's work by Dalit movements and intellectuals.

[13] Medina's *The Epistemology of Resistance* (2013) is a landmark contribution to further questions which are of central concern to ES, but will have to be pursued in a separate discussion. These would include topics such as epistemic virtue and epistemic vice, epistemic responsibility or epistemologies of ignorance, among others, and the complexities arising from the recognition of abyssal exclusion (but see his comment on Fanon's depiction of two kinds of blindness to difference, pp. 150–51).

clearly related to the meliorist strand that runs across his philosophy, which tends to downplay the questions of inequality, violence and power relations as they affect life experiences. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's memorable phrase, if we look back at the long and continuing history of myriad experiences of oppression and exclusion, we are reminded that for much of the population of the world living in a "state of emergency is not the exception but the rule" (Benjamin, 1979). How, then, to refashion Dewey's empirical turn in the face of those experiences for which "ordinary" means being vulnerable or subject to different forms of violence and oppression? How to address these experiences in such a way that the reflection and knowledge that emerge from them contribute to the clarification and enrichment of experience, or to its reconstructtion? And how does it affect the relation of intellectuals (including philosophers, scientists, professionals and activists) to experience?

Taking up this challenge involves more than dealing with difference, inequality and injustice. A reminder of a core proposition of ES is called for at this point: the abyssal divide as a defining feature of modernity and of the contemporary world, and abyssal thinking as its epistemological corollary. One consequence of this is that a distinction has to be made between two spaces or zones characterized by different forms of sociability. The first is the metropolitan zone, a space of relations and sociability which is framed by the tension between regulation and emancipation, and where inequalities and exclusions do not imply the dehumanization and radical exclusion of those who are regarded as dangerous or inassimilable "others". The other is the colonial zone, where appropriation and violence dominate. The two forms of sociability may emerge within any of the two zones if we consider them as territorial inscriptions, but they may also appear as inscribed in bodies and singular/personal experiences and trajectories.

Medina's work on how the dual commitment of pragmatism to critique and reconstruction addresses questions of pluralism and multiculturalism offers an important entry point into both the virtues and the limits of an approach whose focus is on metropolitan sociability. Drawing on Locke, Medina defines the task of a critical pragmatism as "how to recognize and respect cultural differences without exoticism or commercialization, that is, without contributing to their marginalization or subjecting them to the homogenizing forces of a global market" (Medina, 2011: 200). But there is a third possibility beyond exoticizing or commercializing difference: denying the full humanity of those who incarnate difference. This possibility, as we shall see, has been present historically and under contemporary conditions through forms of discrimination, persecution, oppression and suppression of human difference exemplified by colonialism, slavery, racism, sexism, homophobia, apartheid, displacement of populations by war, disasters, environmental degradation or economic conditions and exploitation, or the abyssal exclusion of undocumented migrants and refugees. This third possibility raises well-founded doubts on the outcomes of practices of inclusion or of multicultural remaking of societies where dehumanizing practices are rhetorically disavowed and often defined as unlawful, but nonetheless persist as longstanding marks of a history where the noblest principles coexist with those dehumanizing practices. Anticolonial movements were aware of the resistance that would be met even within societies claiming to be built on the solid foundations of human rights, equality and democracy. The case of the United States provides one of the strongest examples of how even at the core of the modern West violations of cherished principles of constitutional order are persistent, and are even sanctioned by laws drafted through due legislative process.

Medina rightly endorses the need for groups commonly defined – and often self-described – in ethnic and/or racial terms to make their own voices heard and to exercise critical control over the outcomes and products of their own agency, so as to enjoy the freedom and have access to the resources necessary for self-expression and cultural self-affirmation. Acknowledging that these groups are subject to forms of discrimination or deprivation does not prevent them from being able to

stand and fight for their rights as citizens, even when the odds are against their being successful in achieving the rights they claim. ES describes these forms of inequality and of exclusion within zones of metropolitan sociability as configuring non-abyssal exclusions, that is, forms of inequality and marginalization which do not exclude, by denying their status as humans, those who claim their rights. The struggle for emancipation stands in tension with the regulatory workings of metropolitan sociability, but it does not rest upon the systematic use of violence and dispossession. Is this what happens in the situations that Medina is describing? What if much of what prevents these groups to achieve full citizenship while having their cultural difference recognized as a condition for democratic citizenship in pluralistic society is invisible to approaches that fail to recognize the existence of another form of sociability, colonial sociability, and forms of exclusion which rest upon dehumanizing conceptions and practices aimed at keeping differences regarded as non-assimilable or threatening to the unity of a nation conceived as being founded on a "normal" associated with white, heterossexual and epistemically dominant?

These two forms of sociability are divided by a series of visible and invisible lines, sometimes inscribed in territorial partitions and segregations, but also through trajectories and situations that place persons, communities and social groups under the threat of dehumanizing violence and dispossession, even within the spatial boundaries of "civilized", metropolitan zones. This is a persistent possibility for all those who, because of their ethnic or racialized status, their gender, sexual orientation, class, religion, age, disability or health condition are subject to violence in various forms, including those that are life-threatening. These forms of violence are linked to a form of representative heuristics, of identifying the person with the alleged attributes of a social, ethnic, racialized or religious group, for instance. The obstacles in the way of recognition cannot be reduced to inequalities that could be addressed through redistributive policies within metropolitan sociability. Their identification requires procedures that allow those who have been marginalized, invisibilized, disqualified or radically excluded to be made visible.

This raises considerable challenges to identifying the conditions allowing a "critical reconstruction of collective experience [that] can lead to the empowerment of racial and ethnic groups [and, one could add, other, radically excluded groups] and (…) how it can promote and facilitate the open dialogue and mutual understanding between cultures and races. The empowerment of the diverse racial and ethnic groups that compose a multicultural society and the genuine and continuing dialogue between them are the preconditions for justice and equality and for the flourishing of all the members of such a society " (Medina, 2011: 200).

Medina goes on to carefully identify the double-sided feature of this dialog, which involves "an *intracultural dialogue* of all voices within the group in question; and an *intercultural dialogue* between groups in which they articulate their identities vis-à-vis each other" (Medina, 2011: 200). Medina offers here a signal contribution to how to proceed *under conditions of metropolitan sociability*.

But the difficulties on the way to this pragmatic pluralist approach to the problem of "unity in diversity", as Locke aptly formulated it, are compounded by the distinction between diversity within metropolitan sociability and radical – or abyssal – exclusion. Are dialogues possible across the abyssal line? Does the claim to the recognition of full humanity of those who are abyssally excluded provide a ground for intercultural dialogue as is proposed by Medina? And are there exclusions wirhin groups that prevent intracultural dialogue to be achieved?

Medina's recent engagement with epistemologies of resistance and with the insurrectionist challenge to pragmatism are significant steps towards concerns that converge with those animating ES. Due to limits of space and for the sake of clarity I shall focus here on Medina's discussion of the insurrectionist challenge (Medina, 2017). A crucial aspect of Medina's position is his questioning of classical pragmatism's focus on the epistemic requirement of predictability and controllability as a condition for the

capacity to work from an indefinite-turned-problematic situation into a definite situation through inquiry and intelligent action, as postulated by Dewey. But what happens if this condition is not met? Medina's position is that "the epistemic requirement of predictability and controllability must be given up in situations of radical exclusion and oppression that call for insurrectionary actions and practices". He rightly notes that the requirement of predictability and controllability "functions as an epistemic mechanism of complicity with the institutions, practices, and social designs that perpetuate injustices". (Medina, 2017: 206). Medina goes on to lay out the conditions for insurrectionary practices to be recognized, accepted and supported by pragmatists. These do not depend just on "merely removing obstacles from the pragmatist framework", but also on "providing reasons for insurrectionary action within that framework", or what he describes as motivational reasons and/or challenges for insurrection. These make themselves present at two levels, the *subjective and personal* and the *collective and institutional*. Medina connects the two levels through *epistemic insurrection*. Insurrectionist pragmatism thus requires an engagement in resistance - individual and collective -, "even when the outcome of such disruption leaves us in the dark" (207). We shall go back to this point in the next section. But Medina also provides a detailed discussion of how "pragmatism's commitment to embodied, lived experience as the bedrock of philosophical theory and practice is an important point of contact with the insurrectionist tradition". The egalitarian strand that pervades this commitment calls on the duty to "discontinue our complacency with and participation in practices, structures, and institutions that create obstacles to – or simply block – the human flourishing of some" (207).

Medina identifies a "normative ground within pragmatism that is the source of strong normative demands: it demands that people take responsibility for facilitating each other's flourishing and that they respond to injustices that constrain such flourishing – and the more radical the injustice in question, the more radical the response needed". He goes on to discuss one dimension of injustice in relation to race, namely the epistemic dimension, based on "a pragmatic understanding of *epistemic oppression* and *epistemic insurrection*" (207).

A normative stance close to the one discussed by Medina is taken by ES. But the difference here is that the latter is not based on the identification of and response to injustice on the basis of a commitment to human flourishing, but from the very acts of resistance and struggle against injustice as the grounds on which other experiences and knowledges flourished. In ES, this is described as sociology of emergences.

The sociology of emergences postulates the identification of experiences, knowledges, and practices born out of the struggles and resistances against diverse forms of oppression and domination. A struggle is an affirmation of acts of freedom that, under given circumstances, may turn into collective action for liberation. The practices of daily survival of groups, communities and peoples abyssally excluded are part of these forms of struggle, as well as the social movements and forms of collective action that often reclaim, recreate or reinvent experiences and stories of past struggles and resistances (Santos, 2018a, b, chapter 4).

Again, Medina offers a starting point for a reassessment of Locke's approach to what he described as unity in diversity, referring to the necessary and productive tension between the recognition of diverse ethnic traditions and collectives within a given national space, and how they may coexist, communicate and participate in common endeavors that cut across their differences, while preserving their capacity to tell their own histories and to reconstruct their identities, drawing on their past experiences and their present involvements.

Drawing on Maria Stewart's work and in dialogue with Leonard Harris, Medina builds his version of insurrectionist pragmatism on the recognition of a plurality of communities of resistance – heterogenous communities of resistance - that would allow for links to be made of "individual acts of resistance in our personal life and collective actions of resistance in our public life" (209).

The resonance with Santos's definition of struggle is striking. But a further condition for resistance is intergroup solidarity. The case advanced by Medina is that of intergroup racial solidarity, but his argument is relevant for a broader range of instances of intergroup solidarity. How is this to be enacted, considering that it cannot be taken for granted that groups or collectives not directly affected by the oppression that generates resistance will be willing to engage in insurrectionist acts in support of those who are not part of their "immediate sphere of concern" (210)? This is a particularly "pressing" concern "for communities whose struggles have been blocked, marginalized, or rendered invisible" (210). Medina refers specifically to the case of US society, but he has a broader point, that, again, brings his version of pragmatism close to ES. How to support and promote the creation of those forms of intergroup solidarity? In the concluding section of his paper, Medina asserts that "[b]oth in its epistemic and its political dimension, the radical pluralism I have developed from pragmatist conceptions of community and public life suggests insurrectionary possibilities for resisting racial oppression and for achieving greater degrees of respect and justice for marginalized social groups". Explicitly restating the grounding of his position on a pluralization and contextualization on Dewey's conceptions of community and public, he calls for further steps to provide "an account of epistemic resistance that incorporates forms of insurrectionary communication and activism in order to address issues of social apathy, complicit, and social invisibility, which are the epistemic side of racial [and, one could add, other forms] of injustice". There is thus a lot of common ground between his approach to insurrectionist pragmatism and ES. But some differences persist.

ES start form the recognition of the existing diversity of experiences and forms of knowledge, and how they relate to different forms of oppression. Cognitive or epistemic injustice is one of the key dimensions of these oppressions. It can be briefly described as the denial of the capacity of peoples, communities and social groups to tell their own stories in their own terms and to have the knowledges born out of their experiences and struggles to be recognized as forms of knowledge with their own practices of production, validation, sharing and transmission. This entails a specific form of cognitive resistance, aimed at the hegemony of what in shorthand may be described as epistemologies of the North and the related forms of knowledge they legitimize and validate. Epistemic resistance, in many cases, takes the form of resistance against disqualification, invisibilization, marginalization, appropriation according to hegemonic criteria, or suppression of these knowledges. *Epistemicide* – the suppression of knowledge - is a key dimension of all forms of oppression. Thus a major challenge to building forms of intergroup solidarity is how to achieve solidarity between groups while at the same time recognizing and respecting their diverse experiences and knowledges. This point is of particular relevance when the groups in co-presence differ in their ontologies, as is often the case when seeking alliances, for instance, between environmental organizations and indigenous peoples to protect the latter's territories. In order to deal with this difficulty, ES propose to work through *intercultural translation*, relating and converging on the basis of the recognition of similarities and the momentary suspension of differences that seem irreducible, thus crafting a common ground for situated action. Intercultural translation is always partial, it does not aim at suppressing or dissolving cultural differences, but at finding the partial, situated understandings that make common action possible, even if these open up durable and broader forms of engagement beyond the specific situation.

Finally, this discussion calls for a clarification of the position and role of the philosopher/scientist/intellectual in insurrectionist pragmatism and in ES. ES sustains that the role of the intellectual should be that of a *rearguard* actor, not of a path-showing member of vanguard equipped with the intellectual resources that are lacking in social groups or movements. Her role is rather to be able to record, provide testimonial material, contribute to amplify the claims and voices of those who resist and

struggle and bring in, as requested, their specific skills and knowledge. How does the Deweyan intellectual as insurrectionist pragmatist philosopher describe her position and her engagement in struggles for social and epistemic justice? Here we find some important ground to cover in future dialogues.

The "insurrectionist" challenge

The convergences between ES and the "insurrectionist" challenge to pragmatism invite further discussion of the concepts of the abyssal line, of metropolitan versus colonial sociability and of zones of non-being, and how they resonate with Leonard Harris's work, and with the central place he assigns to struggle.

Although they were developed independently, Leonard Harris's philosophy born out of struggle and the recent engagements of pragmatism with this approach - largely mediated through a return to the critical pragmatism of Alain Locke - open up interesting convergences with the conception of postabyssal thinking held by ES. The discussion of concepts like struggle, suffering or dignity, proposals such as Harris's actuarial approach and the sociology of absences, the sociology of emergences and the modes of displaying injustice and denial of humanity, abyssal exclusion and the use of testimonial expressions, representative heuristics and the triad of modes of oppression in ES, all these signal interesting spaces of dialogue anchored in actual experiences of resistance and struggle.

A key aspect of Harris's challenge lies in his question of whether pragmatists *qua* pragmatists commit themselves to insurrectionist action on behalf of strangers to their own moral community, as is the case of those – intellectuals, professionals, activists, advocates – who support or actively participate in struggles against oppression and de-humanizing conditions? In other words, Harris's "query is whether there exist features of pragmatism that require, as necessary conditions to be a pragmatist, support for participation in insurrection" (Harris, 2020a, 181).

Harris finds in Alain Locke's version of pragmatism an instance of "a viable philosophy" providing "resources and reasoning methods that make the management of abjection and existential crisis viable, given impossible odds of relief". He thus calls for Locke to be added to the list of classical pragmatists, contributing "resources for the abused, subjugated, and humiliated facing existential crisis and impossible odds of relief", all with "reasoning methods, terms, words, depiction, explanations, queries, dispositions, spirit, and conceptual categories as resources" (Harris, 2020b: 189). Locke made a landmark contribution to the study of race and later of ethnic diversity and of the question of values and their diversity.

Harris points out that a "tension between the reality of relativism and the need in some situations for certainty and moral imperatives is encoded in how Locke views 'philosophy'" (Harris, 2020b, 193). We find here another theme that is central to ES: how to recognize diversity and the value of difference and diversity without embracing relativism and legitimizing difference as inequality (on which more in a moment). Harris concludes that "Locke, arguably, was not an insurrectionist. I draw from the issues that distinguish him from other pragmatists to help picture my account: it is his critical stance that helps me intimate an insurrectionist disposition, attitude, spirit – for example, critique of 'uniformitarian universalism' and cultural uniformity – stereotypes, proprietary culture and promotion of advocacy aesthetics, group self-expression, anti-colonialism, self-fidelity, and self-confidence". But he "leave[s] open the question of whether Locke's meliorism lends weight to a radical, if not critical, pragmatism in the sense that there may be no reason in principle to restrict possible ways to improve life through human effort or limits to modes of valuable forms of cognition and reasoning methods" (Harris, 2020b, 196).

In ES, the questions raised by insurrectionist approaches are closely tied to the theme of experience: what is different about the lived experience of those who suffer or are oppressed and the living experience of those who join their struggle by option? How does knowledge relate to these different forms of experi-

ence? What does it mean to struggle out of necessity, as the sole alternative to yielding and resignation to suffering and oppression? And under what circumstances can the living experience of joining and participating in their struggles be recognized as authentic? (Santos, 2018a,b, chapter 4)? The question as well as the answer are not very different from the ones provided by Harris: putting oneself at risk for the sake of solidarity is the key criterion for assessing the authenticity of engagement, even when the limit for one's actions is physical violence against persons – except in situations of self-defense. But the two kinds of experience are different, and the possibility of sharing them is a lively topic of debate.[14] In other words, certain conditions are not ones you can simply step in, but they are the outcome of a process which occurs under certain conditions beyond your control. Paulo Freire's liberation pedagogy requires as well a willingness to expose oneself to different forms of discrimination, repression, violence and even risk of severe harm or death, but these are entangled in particular experiences and their conditions and situations. Teachers and educators of different kinds are among those likely, under conditions of repression or authoritarian rule, to be the target of repression, violence or persecution. Under current conditions, and in contexts of strong inequality and exclusion, teaching may become a high-risk activity, subject to censorship, restrictions, retaliations and even physical harm.

As will be discussed in the next section, Harris meets Paulo Freire – a major influence on ES, and himself influenced by Dewey - on several points, though they start from different, even if converging experiences. The question of defining the responsibility of the intellectual, the scientist, the philosopher, the activist or the advocate in not just denouncing injustice and oppression but acting to confront it, even at risk of one's safety and, at times, one's life, brings to the fore not only the limits of classical pragmatism, as Harris has discussed, but also the problems that pervade radical thinking in its relation to action. Harris and Freire converge on their support for insurgent action and on the importance of indignation as a moving force in any form of struggle against injustice and oppression. They are also clear on the need for struggle even when the probabilities of success of lasting victory are bleak, or defeat is certain. Both call for the need to believe in the justice of one's cause, regardless of whether they are likely to be defeated, and of the role of moral or religious persuasions as a condition of possibility of these struggles. But they differ otherwise in their conceptions of the importance of religion, faith and hope, for instance. We shall have a closer look at Freire's contribution to ES in the next section.

Buillding on Locke, Harris advances a

> view of adversarial traditions [that] does not require essentializing the least well-off, as if they were invested with some special truths. Rather, it requires believing that traditions emanating from adversary voices are likely to perceive community as a becoming that includes the least well-off as subjects. If the imagined community that is the home of one's loyalty is the community of the downtrodden, wretched, degraded, raped, victims of cruelty, the object of viciousness, they are subjects integral to the conceptualized community that is to become. Present traditions may be considered corrupttions of a previously existing pristine state of affairs or demeaning practices of a chronically racist society; in either case, if the least well-off are considered agents in the moral community, the future is a becoming in a way that counts the immiserated – any future consensus takes their voices as meaningful in defining what counts as consensus (Harris, 2020c, 267).

And he adds:

> Resistance traditions are distinguished by a concern with radical social change for the purpose of universal human liberation (…). That concern is often expressed by arguments for justified methods of social action to create change, accounts of why humanity should change, evaluations of conditions of misery, and depictions of unnecessary unjust conditions and explanations as to why they exist (Harris, 2020d, 275).

[14] On this matter, see the exchange between two Dalit intellectuals, Gopal Guru and Sundar Sarukkai (2012, 2019), and the commentary by Santos (2019a, b, chapter 4) on how they raise broader questions on the understanding of experience starting from their different views of being Dalit intellectuals in India, a country with a caste system. This debate provides interesting contributions to the defense of the continuing centrality of experience in pragmatism (Pappas, 2014).

Harris adds a crucial point which is of particular interest in discussions within a broadly understood domain of postcolonial approaches, and whose salience in current struggles for memory and recognition of historical and ongoing collective suffering associated with colonialism has amplified its public visibility: archives and landmarks of colonial memories and narratives, such as statues and other artifacts. Here is how Harris states his case:

> We need a trace. It is a compelling need. It describes the agency of our ancestors. There is a need to know that our ancestors were agents, whether successful insurrectionists, captured slaves, entrepreneurs, or basket weavers. It is a condition of our being. It is what makes our lives existentially meaningful to us. We record the meaning, not the universe. An image of the future gives the sacrifices of the present a meaning and purpose. One feature of Locke's philosophy provides a way to see why traces, embedded in the records of archives, have an import far beyond the sheer fact of records as memories and why they have that import in a way that has nothing to do with contributing to a linear history in a moral universe (…). [O]ne import of the sheer existence of archives as repositories is that they are at least in some cases simultaneous local tradition sustainers and crafters, thereby making possible an accord of dignity and honor to the peoples who authored the collection. That is their trace. (…) Even if citizens are caused to become agents of resistance, their resistance is nonetheless in tandem with the terrain that is not pre-given – their trace is the consequence of their agency (Harris, 2020d, 281–282).[15]

A further and significant question raised by insurrectionist approaches is that of *representative heuristics* and its effects, and in particular how it relates to the positive defense of differences across groups or collectives against destruction, ethnocide or harm. As stated by Harris, "there are no revolutions or insurrections without representative heuristics, that is, without women who see themselves as representing 'women' as an objective category, without persons who see themselves as representing the interests of the poor, without workers who see themselves as the embodiment of meritorious traits, and without environmentalists who see themselves as pressing for the best interest of all sentient beings by pressing for the interests of environmentalists" (Harris, 2020a, 182). This requires a conception of groups that does not reify them, but also recognizes their existence as historically constituted collectives - Black people, Dalits, Roma, indigenous and First Peoples, and any group, community or population calling for recognition of their collective existence.

The Freirean connection

The relevance of Paulo Freire's work for our discussion does not just lie in his acknowledged debt to Deweyan pragmatism, but also in the central place he holds as a major inspiration for ES and the way he managed to work through the tension between struggle and dialogue, insurgency and democracy.[16]

Freire's lifework is pervaded by the tension between struggle and dialogue, the denouncing of oppression in all its forms and the announcing and enactment of a vision of democracy that bears a strong mark of Deweyan conceptions. The centrality of education and learning, and his recurrent use of the term *pedagogy* to describe his engagements with oppression and injustice as well as his commitment to democracy should not be allowed to conceal his broader influence in matters ranging from epistemology to politics, ethics and communication, among others. This pervasive influence is felt in the conspicuous presence of Freire-inspired approaches in popular education and in participatory, collaborative and non-extractivist forms of research. Many of these draw explicitly on ES, which in turn draws on readings of Freire (Santos, 2018a, b, chapter 11). My own experience as a researcher committed to the kind of collaborative, non-

[15] This signals another topic for a productive debate, the question of archives and their importance for both imperial/hegemonic projects and for the task of demonumentalizing hegemonic forms of knowledge. See the discussion in Santos, 2018a, b, chapter 9.

[16] A series of collections of previously unreleased writings and assembling public interventions during the later years of Freire's life have been published after his death in 1997. They provide important clues and materials that help in clarifying the development of his thinking and action over time and across the different contexts he was involved with, including responses to critiques to the limits of his earlier positions (Freire, 2000, 2001, 2005a).

extractivist research advocated by ES - in engagements with struggles and initiatives related to health, environment and popular education in Brazil – has been deeply influenced and inspired by Freire's work.

Freire's upbringing in a Christian-catholic environment in Northeastern Brazil was a major influence in his outlook and commitment, and its mark is visible Freire's particular blend of thinking and intervening which included Christian-inspired progressivism, a proximity to radical political action inspired by marxism and liberation struggles throughout the world and an approach to education with a lasting imprint of Dewey's work.

Dewey's imprint is apparent in Freire's early contributions to education policies in Brazil in the late 1950s and early 60s, and in particular his pioneering and renowned work on adult literacy and education. Dewey's influence on Freire has often been credited to Freire's proximity to the work of Anísio Teixeira, a leading figure in the debates and experiences on the reform of education in Brazil. Beyond direct references to Dewey, Freire revealed, throughout his life and work, an affinity with Dewey's ideas on education which has been largely commented on. His commitment to education during what came to be known the Populist Era in Brazil was influenced by Dewey, but mostly through the work of Brazilian reformers who were in turn inspired by Dewey, such as Anísio Teixeira or Lourenço Filho (Munaro, 2021, 211). There is a tendency across comments on Dewey and Freire to treat their relation as one of affinity or converging views. Munaro summarizes thus a widely shared account of Dewey's influence on Freire: "… Deweyan thought echoed directly and indirectly in Freire's work as an announced research field that was scarcely explored in the attempt to understanding how Deweyan thought contributed to the conceptual weaving of democracy and education" (Munaro, 2012, 211).

Dewey's influence is particularly visible in Freire's work on adult literacy in the late 1950s and early 60s. Beisigel (2008), in what remains the best account of Freire's early work and its political and social context, offers a comment that goes in the same direction, referring to the direct and indirect influence of Dewey on the popular education initiatives in Northeastern Brazil during the Populist Era. Freire's work on rural extension while in exile in Chile and his later work on education reform and politics after his return to Brazil bear the same mark, even if not explicitly acknowledged. Munaro (2012) proposed a comparative analysis of Dewey's and Freire's work as a way of addressing their commonalities and differences and of assessing possible Deweyan influences on Freire's oeuvre. He signals the explicit reference to Dewey in Freire's 1959 dissertation, along with reference to a number of authors who were influenced by Dewey (see as well Feinberg and Torres, 2001).

Munaro calls for a comprehensive engagement with Freire's work powered by two questions: which Deweyan conceptions are to be found in Freire's work? And to what new uses does Freire appropriate Dewey's work?

Freire's approach to adult education and literacy was pervaded by a sense of learning as a practice based on active and participatory, collective approaches, and building on the discovery of generative words and definition of generative themes based on the vocabulary of subjects and worked through with them. *Conscientization* as the name of the process of becoming a subject of one's life, of reading the word and the world, was the explicit aim of the process, in what can easily be compared to Dewey's call for intelligent action. This occurred in a context where the idea of development and the role of literacy and education in it converged with attempts at broadening the franchise in order to create the conditions for development to find room and energy. The process, however, was interrupted by the 1964 military coup and the establishment of a military-civil dictatorship which ruled over Brazil for the next two decades.

In the late 1960s, and after having been forced into exile, Freire's approach to education took a radical turn, influenced by an increasing proximity to poverty stricken, immiserated and exclude populations in the Third World, and with the rising tide of insurrectionist and revolutionary resistance and upheaval, especially in Latin America. The most powerful, lasting and influential

statement of this period is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005b), a work which still bears a recognizable mark of Deweyan contributions to conceptions of learning. But it also shows how the experience of oppression and dispossession may breed knowledge. In one crucial aspect, Freire departs from the Deweyan progressive-meliorist approach: the centrality of insurgency and struggle as a condition for conscientization. This brought to the fore a key problem for progressive approaches to democracy and education: the divide between metropolitan populations and societies and the massive exclusion of what at the time was called the Third World, or, in Freire's terms, the oppressed. This came to be a major influence on the notion of abyssal divide and abyssal exclusion which is a central and differentiating feature of ES. The figure of the oppressed, broadening the range of those under the sway of capitalism and colonialism beyond the traditional Marxian working class (and hinting at Gramsci's subaltern or Fanon's wretched of the Earth), signaled a move towards a conception of education which was to be promoted well beyond institutionalized education and schools. Over the following years, Freire incorporated into his view the insights and the experiences of dealing with colonialism, racism, sexism and patriarchy and all forms of oppression and violence. Freire's approach to education, to the role of experience, to participatory research and to a broadening of what counts as knowledge opens up a promising dialogue with radical and insurrectionist approaches within pragmatism, including Locke's critical pragmatism and Harris's philosophy born out of struggle and all of the insurrectionist tradition the latter claims. Recent collections of interventions, letters, interviews or public presentations, posthumously organized and published, highlight themes that were recurrent in Freire's life and work, but seemed to acquire new salience in the later years of his life, expressed in his singular idiom, bringing together the force of indignation, the hope for possible futures as dreams and instances of unprecedented but viable worlds or situations (*inédito viável*), the shaky path of tolerance or the horizon of liberation. All this in a play without guarantees between autonomy and duress, appeals to dialogical engagement and calls for struggle. These are, I shall argue, key topics for rethinking Freire's resonance with the concerns of pragmatism in a Deweyan key, but also with the critical and insurrectional challenges to classical pragmatism.

One significant theme that is recurrent and pervades all of Freire's work is his concern with the aesthetic and affective dimension of learning, knowing and acting. His conception of knowledge arising from the inextricable relation of reason and affect is central to the notions of *sentipensar* - literally, feeling-thinking, borrowed from another major influence, the Colombian sociologist and pioneer of participatory action-research Orlando Fals Borda - or *corazonar*, a concept arising from indigenous peoples of the Andean region (Guerrero, 2016; Santos, 2018a, b, chapter 5). These, in turn, underpin the advocacy, by ES, of its conception of researching *with* – rather than *on* – communities, groups and social movements, involving all senses in the acts of learning and knowing through listening, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, reason and affect. One is reminded, here, of the importance of faith and religion as sustaining the motivational force behind struggle and insurrection. Carter (2003: 61-62), in a comment on Harris, notices how the calls to insurrection mentioned by Harris in his discussion of Black traditions of resistance in the context of the United States (but one finds the same trend in other contexts as well) are associated, for the most part, with movements of a religious nature or background. This calls for an acknowledgment of the limits of reasoning as a way of turning the recognition of injustice into calls to action, even if the odds are against their success. Faith and a kind of hope that acknowledges these odds appear as well as crucial resources in Freire's calls for struggle, and their role in different experiences of insurgency in different countries, regions and continents is well-documented.

Culture circles as venues for learning and knowing, deep listening, the relation between knowledge and ignorance and the incompleteness of all forms of knowledge, the relation between the word and the world,

reason and affect, the importance of the aesthetic in social life, the recognition of the diversity of forms of democratic and community life are part of the lasting legacy of Freire's lifework and founding influences in ES, and they come close to topics dear to Deweyan and Lockean versions of pragmatism.

This Deweyan mood, though, was tempered by, and stood in tension with, a radical commitment to those he named the oppressed, which is most visible in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (PO), one of the most influential texts of all times in the fields of education and human an social sciences. PO bears a strong imprint of the time of his writing, amidst the upheavals in Latin America following the Cuban revolution and insurrections in several countries where what Eduardo Galeano aptly named the opening veins of Latin America were associated with US imperialism and dictatorships and authoritarian rule, and more widely with Third World struggles against colonialism and for national liberation.

The radical edge of PO has proved to be remarkably relevant until the present, at a time of the normalization of a state of exception for most of the world population. But it raises the question of whether Freire's commitment to conceptions of education and democracy inspired by Dewey fit comfortably with that radical move. In how far did it pull him away from Dewey's reformist and meliorist approach, and from pragmatism as a philosophical current? A different question, however, could be asked: are there versions of pragmatism that resonate with those features of the Freirean approach that seem to move away from Deweyan conceptions?

The answer is yes, but with qualifications. Again, we face here the question of affinity, resonance and convergence, rather than direct or indirect influence. If we take this path, we get to recognize some familiar features of Freire's later work in Alain Locke's critical pragmatism and in Leonard Harris's philosophy born out of struggle. Over time, the category of the oppressed seemed to morph into categories subject to representtative heuristics, with its broadening and diversification, encompassing a range of forms of violence, suffering, injustice and discrimination, from race and gender to nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and others.

Freire's affinity with Dewey's approach to knowledge persists, to be sure, in his conception of the continuity of experience-based knowledge and critical knowledge, characterized by what Freire calls overcoming (*superação*), rather than rupture. But In fact, that passage is a possible outcome of encounters between forms of scientific/critical knowledge and common sense knowledge. The starting point, though, always comes from the experience of subjects and their capacity to "read the world". Both kinds of knowledge are characterized as configurations of knowledge and ignorance, whereby each kind displays knowledge and ignorance of different things Freire, 2000, 106). The process of conscientization provides a description of how these forms of knowledge mutually engage. The distinction between banking education and dialogical-problematizing education at the core of Freire's pedagogy and epistemology resonates strongly with Dewey's conception of active learning and intelligent action as a counterpoint to the conformist and instrumental conception of learning and knowledge that underpins hegemonic forms of education. Culture circles, generative words, generative themes were the main tools of this approach.

A partial convergence of Dewey and Freire which also displays a key difference is the notion of situation as the setting of intelligent action (for Dewey) and insurgent-liberatory action (for Freire). For Dewey, the identification of an indefinite situation and its definition as problematic situation lies at the core of how to produce knowledge aimed at responding to the situation while learning in the process. The capacity to think that brings up original ways of dealing with a situation, as stated by Dewey, does not consider how these new or original thoughts and the actions that they lead to may sustain or reinforce relations of domination, oppression, discrimination or exploitation, or how they can foster or support the struggle against oppression. For Freire, limit situations, such as those that have become permanent features of the life of the oppressed, when the possibility of a decent living and free-

dom seem unreachable, challenge conformism and associate knowledge and learning with struggle. A statement of Freire's valuing of experience-based knowledge is his description of the knowledge of slum-dwellers, a setting where "one learns soon enough that only through sheer stubbornness is it possible to weave a life where it is nearly absent or denied – with deprivation, with threat, with despair, with offense and pain" (Freire, 2000, 77).

A consequence of Freire's work with the oppressed is a permanent feature of his lifelong commitment to the cause who those who suffer and struggle, run through by a tension between the creation of forms of solidarity that allow the oppressed to emerge as subjects of their own histories, working through their differences and conceptions of community, and his strong endorsement of and participation in forms of struggle whose prime mover is the denouncing of injustice, suffering and violence in its diverse forms and the struggle to defeat them, even when the odds seem to be against them. Hope thus figures prominently in the vocabulary of liberation proposed by Freire, in ways and with connections to struggles which join Leonard Harris's conception of struggle. But a difference that would deserve further scrutiny is the claim by Freire of the possibility, through struggle, to bring about what he calls *inédito viável*. In several passages of a work that extends over decades, Santos echoed the Freirean call through his notion of utopias that are utopias only as long as they have yet to be made real.

Looking forward…

Recent debates within pragmatism have inspired a move towards radical conceptions of pragmatist philosophy. They have revisited the classics, but have also explored the relations between other radical approaches and struggles and their convergence with pragmatism, in particular the insurrectionist traditions. These are likely to remain important interlocutors for an ongoing dialogue with Epistemologies of the South and to help shape ongoing work on a diversity of topics defined by both their importance and their urgency. The current situation of a convergence and synergy of crises commonly described through the shorthand "Covid-19 pandemic" has brought to the fore with unprecedented visibility a range of issues that have been ongoing concerns of both pragmatism and ES. A provisional and necessarily incomplete list would include topics like justice and injustice, epistemologies and ontologies, knowledges and experiences, ecologies of knowledges and practices, exclusion, violence and suffering, experiences of resistance and struggle, conceptions of dignity, forms of democracy and citizenship, aesthetics, the question of hope and its relation to struggle, among other topics. The convergences and differences explored in this paper may thus be read as an invitation to further discussions and joint engagements with the challenges that are before us.

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EPISTEMOLOGIES OF THE OPPRESSED: PRAGMATIST AND FEMINIST APPROACHES TO CLASS, GENDER, AND RACE

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ABSTRACT: In the last decades, several scholars have reviewed the official genealogy of pragmatism and have challenged the orthodox narrative of its origins. The paper vindicates the legacy of Jane Addams, Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Anna Julia Cooper, who were active in the foundations of both movements, feminism and pragmatism, but their contributions remain, until now, barely acknowledged. Following Charlene Haddock Seigfreid's suggestion in *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (1996), that pragmatist feminism during the progressive era lacked a theory of oppression, a critical examination of their social philosophies is offered in order to prove that they did have original thoughts on oppression. An epistemology of the oppressed is presented in three senses. First, it looks at Jane Addams's and Hull-House residents social experimentalism as a form of producing almost simultaneously social knowledge and concrete social interventions. Second, it takes Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" as an example of the use of political imagination to denounce the gender bias of our androcentric culture, which might be an effective means to prevent human costs derived from male domination. Third, it recovers Anna Julia Cooper's pointing at the ontological negation that affects groups suffering multiple forms of oppression, as Black women of the South, as an inherent danger of the implicit, unconscious dynamics of exclusion within activism. To conclude, the paper proposes paths for further research in the direction of a radical feminist and pragmatist approach to social philosophy based upon the perspective of the epistemology of the oppressed.

Keywords: pragmatist feminism, oppression, class, gender, race

1. Feminism and Pragmatism: The Missing Epistemologies of the Oppressed

Pragmatism, as many other philosophical traditions, is experiencing a silent but nevertheless profound revolution. More attention is currently being paid to philosophical and political figures that were considered "marginal" or "secondary" in the conventional historical accounts of the foundations of the movement. Therefore, it is becoming more and more usual to find papers, chapters and even volumes that vindicate the role played by Jane Addams, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Anna Julia Coper, W.E.B. du Bois, Mary Parker Follett, among others, in the foundation of the pragmatist philosophy[1]. These theorists were often neglected or played down by the orthodox genealogy of the Classical Pragmatists. Their recovery runs parallel to the addressing of race, class, gender, and or/sexual orientation by pragmatist social and political philosophers (Collins & Blige 2016; Fischer 2020; Hamington 2009; Seifreid 1991, 1996; Sullivan 2015, 2020; West 1989; Whipps & Lake 2016). Particularly, feminist pragmatists have insisted upon the fact that women pragmatists of the progressive era were not only contributing to the same extent to the foundation and consolidation of pragmatism as the white men in the areas of Boston or Chicago: they were original thinkers in their own right (Fischer 2019; Fischer 2020; Deegan 1990; García Dauder & Pérez Sedeño 2015; Seigfreid 1991, 1996). Thus, an inclusive and exhaustive genealogy of pragmatism should include them, but not as mere appendixes of the men enrolled in academic institutions (Chicago, Harvard, Columbia, etc), but rather as part of a complex network built upon extensive conversations, casual affinities, and reciprocal influences.

The constitution of a pragmatist feminism is due to the work of many women pragmatists who were working on both pragmatism and feminism, and who were looking for an integrative framework that could synthetize the pragmatist background and methodology with the feminist agenda. In this context, the book *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (1996) by Charlene Haddock Seigfried has been considered a seminal work. The book raised central and intriguing questions. For example, I take the following as fundamental for the future of pragmatism: why have the women of the progressive era been ignored not only by the pragmatist orthodoxy, but also by the feminist mainstream theories?[2] The main accounts of feminism follow a sort of chronological schema and/or a systematization

[1] The volume *American Philosophy. From Wounded Knee to the Present* edited by Erin McKenna and Scott L. Pratt (2015) is a good example of this. It includes chapters on Indian Philosophy, on Feminist Philosophers (Margaret Fuller, Anna Julia Cooper, Jane Addams, Charlotte Perkins Gilman) and it addresses the question of race through philosophers and activists from the past and present (W.E.B. du Bois, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Audre Lorde, among others).

[2] I called this the "pragmatist-feminist" enigma and I have further developed this question upon Seigfreid's first conceptualization of the problem in Miras Boronat (2020a).

in feminist schools or trends[3]. The chronological schema uses a temporal serialization in "waves". Considering that most of the women of the progressive era were suffragists and that they were writing about topics that are central for the feminists past and present, it is striking that their contributions are barely acknowledged in the history of feminism.

One of the causes of the oblivion of the women of the progressive era has surely to do with the way in which pragmatists have built the narrative of its own origins. Concerning feminism, however, the question is more difficult to answer. Siegfried posed an interesting hypothesis to which I would like return because I think it has been insufficiently discussed within feminist and pragmatist scholarship. Seigfried writes:

> It seems that the women working most closely with the male pragmatists were more interested in disproving notions about the inferiority of women and improving women's actual situation than with designating the situation as oppressive or theorizing about the causes of women's problems in the culture and practice of misogyny. The male pragmatists cannot be blamed for not incorporating a theory of women's oppression into their writings if the women pragmatists who did incorporate women's issues into their analysis did not themselves develop a specifically feminist theory of oppression (1996, 105)

I partially agree and disagree with Siegfried's hypothesis, although I think she has a point. We know that there existed some exchanges between women and people of color writing on oppression, power, domination, and other related phenomena during the first decades of the 20th century, but they were barely documented. They have attempted not only to denounce and criticize the political subordination of women and other collectives, but were also figuring out ways of empowering them as well. But did they all have a theory of oppression that could explain its causes and devise strategies for resistance to the same extent?

Indeed, it is doubtful whether a single systematic theory of oppression within pragmatism can be found. If we are to agree with Iris Marion Young, as she posed the question in 1990, the term oppression was incorporated into our political vocabulary in the 1960s and 1970s by the most prominent civil rights movements – women, Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans and other Spanish-speaking Americans, American Indians, Jews, lesbians, gay men, Arabs, Asians, old people, working class people, and the mentally and physically disabled. They shared the assumption that the varieties of their social sufferings were not apt to be expressed through the liberal political language. For this reason, they abandoned the term "injustice" and preferred the word "oppression" to refer to discriminations that were structural and that not only to explain the malfunctions of the legal system, but also of the habits, beliefs, and attitudes of the dominant groups, even of the oppressed themselves (Young 1990, 39-41).

A complementary account of the conceptual history of oppression is to be found in Ann Cudd's *Analyzthe ing Oppression* (2006). Cudd's hypothesis is that the actual term "oppression" is the result of the crossing and addition of different political genealogies. She finds only one important use of the term in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, where he described the state of nature as oppressive. The only way to escape oppression is to "seek aid by society: for there is no other way by which a man can secure his life and liberty" (Hobbes 1998, 67). After Hobbes, each political genealogy has coined the term "oppression" to refer to different things. Fathers of the American Revolution like Thomas Jefferson, or famous interpreters of it, understood oppression as the result of the tyranny of a corrupt government. For the feminists of the 18th and 19th century, oppression is equated with the social inferiority

[3] *Feminismo para principiantes* (2019) by Núria Varela, the most popular history of feminism in Spanish speaking countries, presents a typical wave-serialization in the first half of the book. The Handbook *Feminist Thought. A More Comprehensive Introduction* by Rosemarie Tong, which has been edited and reedited at least five times, is a good example that combines systematization with chronology. The fifth edition released in 2017, in which Tina Fernandes Botts is added as co-editor, includes chapters on: liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist and socialist feminists, women-of-color-feminims(s) in the United States, women-of-color-feminism(s) on the World Stage, psychoanalytic feminism, care-focused feminism, ecofeminism; existential, poststructural and postmodern feminisms; third-wave and queer feminisms. There are no specific sections on pragmatist feminism. The *Blackwell Guide to Feminist Philosophy* (2007), edited by Linda Martín Alcoff and Eva Feder Kittay, is one of the few examples to contain a chapter entitled "Pragmatism", this time written by Shannon Sullivan.

of the women and explained through habits and conventions. Mary Wollstonecraft used it in a similar way in her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). Socialists and communists related oppression to economic exploitation (Cudd 2006, 5–9).

Following Cudd's argumentation, in her conceptual account of oppression there is again no mention of pragmatist political philosophers from past or present. This should not be surprising: if most pragmatist political philosophers barely know the works of those who would have something to say about oppression within their own tradition, it is not surprising that political philosophers not working within a pragmatist framework have little idea of how pragmatism can contribute to a systematic theory of oppression. In this paper, I will defend the viability of the pragmatist epistemologies of the oppressed, assuming that the ones who were marginalized by the pragmatist official genealogy do indeed have relevant and fruitful thoughts on political oppression starting from the perspective of their own experience. The expression "epistemology of the oppressed" will be explored in the following senses. First, I will pay attention to the form of social experimentalism of Jane Addams and the Hull-House resident as a methodology that aims at the production of social knowledge that leads to concrete social interventions. Second, I will introduce the writings of Charlotte Perkins Gilman as a critique to our androcentric culture. And third, I will reconstruct the implicit ontological critique of racism in Anna Julia Cooper's writings. While these three examples taken together may not yet constitute a systematic pragmatist and feminist theory of oppression, but they represent, in my view, important steps towards it.

2. Jane Addams and the Hull-House Residents: Social Experimentalism and the Production of Social Knowledge

Among the women of the progressive era, Jane Addams (1860–1935) is surely the most well-known, probably because she has been the only philosopher to be awarded a Peace Nobel Prize in 1931 and because she was involved in a variety of social causes: enfranchisement, inclusion of women and immigrants in the government, abolition of child labor, fight against juvenile crime, support of unions, internationalism, pacificism, etc. She did all this as founder and resident of the Hull-House, the *social settlement* that she opened together with her college friend Ellen Gates Starr in 1890.

It is difficult to find a single definition to explain, to the contemporary reader, what a social settlement intended to be. The social settlement movement started in England and Addams became the inspiration for Hull-House during her second travel to Europe. She visited Toynbee Hall, the settlement opened in 1884 by Samuel and Henrietta Barnett in East End, London. Social settlements were charitable institutions ruled according to the principles of Christian charity. The Barnetts were members of the Anglican Church, for instance. Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, however, distanced themselves of the Christian background and focused on the cooperative and democratic character of the settlement. In the correspondence between the two friends months before the opening, they agreed upon the basic ethical mission of the settlement. They were to work mainly with immigrants teaching, following an ethics of cooperation and nonresistance to establish egalitarian social relations between all classes (Knight 2005, 183–184).

Addams and Starr moved in September 1889 to Halsted Street in the 19th Ward of Chicago. It is difficult to imagine how it would have been to "settle" in this particularly depressed metropolitan area. The city experienced a dizzying rate of growth: from 4000 inhabitants in 1837 to one million in 1890 (Fischer 2019, 24). About 855 000 people were born abroad, 18 nationalities were registered in the district (V.V.A.A. 1989, 7). As the social settlement was established there, the district directory listed nine churches and 250 saloons (Menand 2001, 308). The two young women would let nothing discourage them and, shortly thereafter, others would join them for short or long stays. Hull-House had eminent visitors like Emma Goldman, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Peter Kropotkin, Beatrice and Sydney Webb, among others. Alice Hamilton,

Florence Kelley, Julia Lathrop and Mary McDowell, for example, were coordinating social projects as long-term residents and became instrumental in many reforms[4]. In 1925, at least twenty out of 60 residents had spent twenty years or more at Hull-House (V.V.A.A. 1989, 12). The mission of Hull-House was stated in its charter as follows: "To provide a center for higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises, and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago" (Addams 1998, 105). Hull-House was ruled according to these principles until 2012, as it was reconverted into the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum[5].

The settlement as a social project was very successful and grew much more than what its original residents could have envisioned[6]. They had a playground, art exhibitions, a nursery, a kindergarten, and a school for children. In addition, Hull-House hosted clubs, arts, music classes, and reading groups led by Hull-House residents but also in cooperation with the neighbors. Hull-House was therefore much more than a philanthropic institution. Maurice Hamington calls it "a pragmatist feminist think tank" (2009, 25). Louis Menand refers to it as a "sociology laboratory" (2001, 206). For Patricia Shields, Hull-House was a "living example of a community of inquiry ruled by Jane Addams, the caring-leader mediator" (2003, 526). I adhere to her description of what defines a pragmatist community of inquiry:

> Common to all communities of inquiry is a focus on a problematic situation. The problematic situation is a catalyst that helps or causes the community to form and provides a reason to undertake inquiry. Most problematic situations require further investigation and action (i.e. inquiry). Second, members of the community of inquiry having a scientific attitude to the problematic situation. The scientific or experimental attitude is a willingness to tackle the problem using work hypothesis that guide the collection and interpretation of data or facts. Both theory and method are viewed as tools to address the problematic situation. In addition, the community is linked through participatory democracy. The parameters of the problematic situation and approaches to resolution are shaped by the interaction of the community and the facts. The democratic community also takes into account values/ideals such as freedom, equality and efficiency as it considers goals and objects. The three key ideas – problematic situation, scientific attitude, and participatory democracy – reinforce each other. (Shields 2003, 511)

In the following pages, I would like to introduce one of the most significant projects of the Hull-House: *The Hull-House Maps and Papers* (1895), coordinated by Jane Addams and Florence Kelley, as a result of the activity of Hull-House's community of inquiry. The problematic situation that acted as a catalyst for the formation of the community are "the problems growing out of social conditions" as the complete title of the published project announced. In the general comments to the maps by Agnes Sinclair Holbrook[7], the observations and collected data by the residents made apparent that people of the neighborhood are "noticeably undersized and unhealthy as well to the average observer as to the trained eye of the physician" (V.V.A.A. 2013, 6). The residents started to collect their data inspired by the precedent established by Charles Booth (1840 – 1916) in London entitled "Inquiry into the Life and Labour of the People in London" (1886 – 1903), whose most known product is "The Poverty Maps"[8]. The social survey that led to the Hull-House pro-

[4] The almost complete list of residents and visitors is to find in the Jane Addams Papers Project: https://janeaddams.ramapo.edu/about-jane-addams/hull-house-residents/ (last accessed 07/06/2021).
[5] Webpage of the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum: https://www.hullhousemuseum.org/about-the-museum (last accessed 06/07/2021).
[6] Already in the first years, Hull-House welcomed about 2000 visitors each week (V.V.A.A., 2013: 229).
[7] It is difficult to find concrete information about Agnes Sinclair Holbrook (Iowa, 1867 – California, 1896). Thanks to the blog of the statistics expert Sharon Lohr, I discovered that Holbrook had studied at Wellesley College and attended classes in mathematics, chemistry, physics, zoology, and psychology along with literature, rhetoric, religion and history. She received her bachelor's in science in 1892, and shortly thereafter moved to Hull-House. She was the person who designed and constructed the maps and took all the graphic decisions. She lived in Chicago almost until her death, few days before turning 29. See: https://www.sharonlohr.com/blog/2020/6/11/hull-house-maps-agnes-holbrook (last accessed 07/06/2021).
[8] To learn more about Booth's project and the poverty maps see the webpage on Charles Booth at the London School of Economics: https://booth.lse.ac.uk/learn-more/what-were-the-poverty-maps (last accessed 07/06/2021).

ject was called "A Special Investigation of the Slums of Great Cities" and was conducted during the spring of 1893. According to the radical geographer Núria Font-Casasseca (2016), the social survey was one of the most interesting cartographic experiences of the age[9].

The residents collected data related to the housing conditions, nationalities, and incomes. The quantitative results of the data are represented in two maps who show the relative distributions in the tenements: the map of wages and the map of nationalities[10]. That the residents were interested in the intersection of these two factors – nationality and income – is intriguing. The residents must have had some intuition about how these factors were congenial in the adaptation of immigrants in the metropolitan area of Chicago. That they were producing genuine social science becomes clear from this remark by Holbrook:

> It is […] hoped that the setting forth of some of the conditions shown in the maps and papers may be of value, not only to the people of Chicago who desire to correct and accurate information concerning the foreign and populous parts of the town, but to the constantly increasing body of sociological students more widely scattered. (V.V.A.A. 2013, 11)

In examining the facts produced by the survey, some implicit assumptions concerning family life were challenged. For instance, the theory that "every man supports his own family" (V.V.A.A. 2013, 21). That was not always the case: women and children had to work, too. They discovered that in the tenements families from different nationalities were obliged to share the kitchen and live crammed into tiny apartments. And there was also a significant "floating population", i.e. people that had to move from time to time because of the irregularity of employment. For this reason, in the visual representation of incomes and nationalities they have different approaches: in the nationalities map, the individual is the unit; whereas in the wage map the unit is formed by those who share household costs (V.V.A.A. 2013, 20). Residents also identified brothels and "doubtful dressmakers" with white rectangles in the wages map. The crossing of the two maps allowed them to come to some preliminary conclusions: most of the girls who lived there came from central-eastern states, very few were girls born in Chicago. Interestingly for this time, residents were hesitating to include prostitution as a regular economic occupation, but its inclusion in the map shows that they were considering its economic impact, which was still under any estimation.

The maps and papers helped the residents understand the peculiarities of the district. The chapters of the *Maps and Papers* examine the Sweating System, children's work, ghettos and colonies, charities, arts and labor movement. But the knowledge acquired by the residents in the different studies and campaigns through the years also oriented practical reforms. For instance, Alice Hamilton conducted a bacteriological study that connected the system of plumbing with typhoid cases (Addams 1998, 248–249). Residents protested druggists selling cocaine to minors, they were also active in abolishing child labour and fostered the organization of workers. Indeed, one of the most successful initiatives of Hull-House was the organization of the Working-People's Social Club. The club met weekly and gave audience to speakers that represented "every possible shade of social and economic view" (V.V.A.A. 2013, 216-2018). John Dewey, J.H. Tufts, Charles Zeublin and other professors at the University of Chicago were regular visitors there. The club was the link between the locals and the university.

Núria Font is right when she connects urban planning with social justice (2016, 15). The way in which Addams, Kelly and other residents interacted with the neighborhood speaks also for the participatory and democratic goals that Shield uses as a criterion for a pragmatic community of inquiry. The community of inquiry is inclusive in the sense that the neighbors who

[9] I thank my friend and colleague from the Geography Department at the University of Barcelona, Núria Font-Casasseca, for directing my attention towards the conceptual innovations implied in the *Hull-House Maps and Papers.* My reflections are, to a large extent, based upon our fruitful conversations on Addams, Kelley and the Hull-House residents.

[10] The maps are available here: https://florencekelley.northwestern.edu/documents/fk_01643285/ (last accessed 07/06/2021).

were the "object of study" in the first place, are supposed to become fully empowered social agents for themselves at the end of the process. According to Carmen Verde, Hull-House applied a model of hospitality to immigrants that was ahead of the time (2013, 26-27). Hull-House offered spaces for gathering but also resources to help immigrants to organize themselves and to recreate their cultures in their new country. The Hull-House model was neither naïve nor paternalistic. It was supposed to nurture citizenship by instantiating a democratic and participatory form of life.

My thesis is that the type of social research conducted in the maps and papers should not be considered a relic of the past precisely because it still provides useful tools for social intervention today. Indeed, Holbrook, whose gifted spatial imagination made possible the design of the maps, was already aware of the limitations due to 2-dimensional representation. Imagine what we could do if we could develop a technology that would be able to add two further dimensions – volume and time – and have access to even more complex and elaborated datasets. Surely we would be able to obtain valuable information about the degrees of vulnerability of our cities and shape public policy accordingly.

3. Getting to Know What is Hidden by Androcentrism: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the Political Imagination

Hull-House provided a model for women (and men) interested in reconsidering the relation between the sexes and the traditional roles associated with masculinity and femininity. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860 – 1935) was among the scholars and writers to receive the influence of the residents. Gilman spent some time at Hull-House after becoming friends with Addams (Gilman, 1991: 174). In fact, it is possible to relate the feminist utopian community imagined by Gilman in *Herland* (1915) to the feminist and pragmatist community of Hull-House (Deegan, 1997).

In this section, the literary work of Gilman is being examined as an expressive resource in which Gilman provides both a critique of the androcentric bias of our culture and an exercise of our political imagination in order to devise gynecocentric alternatives. The use of the term "gynecocentric" refers to the distinction coined by the sociologist Lester Ward (1841 – 1913). Ward combined evolution theory with sociological insights of the era in his *Pure Sociology* (1893)[11]. In my reading, most of what Gilman produced between 1892 and 1916 belongs to a single philosophical project irrespective of the literary genre she adopted (poetry, essay, short fiction, novels, etc)[12]. Gilman was a prolific author and had to survive to severe personal attacks. She was involved in a huge scandal when she divorced from her first husband, Charles Stetson. The journal *Examiner* published a journalist report on the topic "Should Literary Women Marry" (Gilman, 1991, 142-143). It became quite clear for Gilman that in writing as a woman she was perceived as someone who defies the "natural order of things".

Her first short tale was already very polemic. "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892). The tale was autobiographical

[11] Ward introduces the term in the chapter XIV of his sociological treatise. The gynecocentric, the reverse of the androcentric theory is presented as "the view that the female sex is primary and the male secondary in the organic scheme, that originally and normally all things center, as it were, about the female, and that the male, though not necessary in carrying out the scheme, was developed under the operation of the principle of advantage to secure organic progress through the crossing of strains. The theory further claims that the apparent male superiority in the human race and in certain of the higher animals and birds is the specialization in extra-normal directions due to adventitious causes which have nothing to do with the general scheme, but which can be explained on biological and psychological principles; that it only applies to certain characters, and to a relatively small number of genera and families." (Ward 1903, 296). Gilman borrowed the distinction from Ward but she shifted its use to the criticism of male domination in the cultural, economic and political spheres of our society, particularly in *The Man-Made World; or Our Androcentric Culture* (1911). On the friendship between Gilman and Ward, see Allen (2014) and Deegan (1997).

[12] Gilman edited and published her works in the autorun journal *The Forerunner* between 1909 and 1916 (Gilman, 1991: 305). The self-edition would have been an important form to write about feminist issues escaping censorship. Actually, we have important examples of other periodical publications edited by women and oriented towards women here in Catalonia like *Feminal*, whose director was Carme Karr (2020). I have published a former version of this section in Miras Boronat (2020b). The analysis of the non-fictional work by Gilman, which is not included in this paper, is to be published a as chapter in a volume entitled *Women in Pragmatism: Past, Present, and Future* (Springer, 2022), edited by Michela Bella and myself.

and is based upon Gilman's post-partum depression after she gave birth to her first child, Katherine, in 1885. She was diagnosed with "nervous prostration" (Gilman 1991, 90). Several doctors visited her, but no physical explanation was found to explain her condition. In the first lines of the tale, the readers can identify the traces of Gilman's anxiety as her capacity to take her own decisions was rapidly usurped by others:

> If a physician of high standing, and one's own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression – a slight hysterical tendency – what is one to do?
> My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing.
> So I take phosphate or phosphites – whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise, and am absolutely forbidden to "work" until I am well again.
> Personally, I disagree with their ideas.
> Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good. (Gilman 2019, 179–180)

Gilman was sent to see Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell, who had written a very famous book entitled *Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System, Especially in Women* in 1881. As Mitchell received Gilman at his hospital in Philadelphia, he told Gilman scornfully that he had already had two women "of her blood", meaning probably Catharine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Gilman's diagnosis said "hysteria" and the cure of Mitchell consisted of "live as domestic life as possible" (Gilman 1991, 96). The Beecher women were not the only ones to be prescribed the "rest cure": the doctor gave the same treatment to other prominent patients like Edith Wharton, Alice James or Jane Addams. Louis W. Knight described the cure that Addams received from Mitchell: "The best treatment […] was for to six weeks of seclusion, rest, full feeding, massage, and electric shocks" (2005, 120)[13].

Addams left the hospital after three weeks as she refused to undergo the complete therapy. But Gilman was not that lucky: not only did the cure not help her recover, it even aggravated her condition. "The Yellow Wallpaper" depicts what was probably a psychotic break. The protagonist of the tale, who is clearly the alter ego of Gilman, is confined in her room. She has a scheduled prescription for each hour in the day. In the room there is nothing she can use for writing or drawing. Visits from friends are forbidden. She is not allowed to take care of her little baby. The only thing she can do is look through the window or stare at the yellow wallpaper. Weeks go by doing the same thing – nothing – as she notices that something is wrong with the paper. There is a fainted figure behind the pattern and the young protagonist thinks that it is a woman that has been made prisoner somehow and lives *in* the wall.

Curiously, John, the husband, and Jennie, the nurse, are convinced after a while that the protagonist is getting better. But the truth is that she is not sleeping that much, she stays awake all nights only to check if the woman behind the yellow wallpaper is moving[14]. She is in a state of continuous excitement that her environment mistakingly takes for an improvement. She gets obsessed with the paper and spends the day observing it: "There are always new shoots on the fungus, and new shades of yellow all over it. I cannot keep count of the, though I have tried conscientiously" (Gilman, 2019: 191). Some days after, she discovers that the women behind the paper "crawls around fast, and her crawling shakes [the paper] all over" and "she is all the time trying to climb through" (Gilman 2019, 192). The protagonist discovers the woman creeping up and down in the long-shaded lane of the garden, under the trees and gets more and more absorbed in the silent observation of the yellow wallpaper. She also notices that John's attitude is changing, she does not like to look in his eyes and she hears him asking Jennie a lot of professional questions (Gilman 2019, 193). The tale ends dramatically – spoiler alert – when the protagonist decides to lock herself in the room and peel off all the paper to free the woman from whom she thinks is living behind it. As John gets an

[13] See also Traikill (2002).

[14] The alteration of sleep routines could be a symptom of bipolar disorder but I could not find conclusive information about this respect.

axe he faints as he sees the paper teared off and his wife creeping on the floor. The protagonist is surprised of his reaction: "Now why should that man have fainted? But he did, and right across my path by the wall, so that I had to creep over him every time!".

Writing "The Yellow Wallpaper" was probably part of the therapy that Gilman prescribed to herself, ignoring the one imposed by Weir Mitchell. The tale made quite an impression and Gilman's belief in her talent as an author was put into test. She first sent the text to Horace Scudder, editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*. He refused to publish it and gave Gilman this answer: "I could not forgive myself if I made others as miserable as I have made myself" (Gilman 1991, 119). She got the story published two years later in *The New England Magazine*. Shortly after the publication of the tale, a protest against Gilman was sent to the *Transcript* with the following lines:

> The story can hardly, it would seem, give pleasure to any reader, and to many whose lives have been through the dearest ties by this dread disease, it must bring the keenest pain. To others, whose lives have become a struggle against an heredity of mental derangement, such literature contains deadly peril. Should such stories be allowed to pass without severest censure? (Gilman, 1991, 120).

But the story was relevant and is now considered a masterpiece of American Gothic Literature. In 1920, William D. Howells included it in his anthology *The Great Modern American Stories.* The tale has been adapted for television, theatre, animation and is being rediscovered again and again. *The Feminist Press* declared the tale to be their "all-time bestseller"[15]. The fact is that the "rest cure" was abandoned by the medical community. This was the original goal of the tale: to reach Weir Mitchell so that he would get to know the negative consequences of the "rest cure". Whether he read the tale, Gilman could not find out for sure. Many years later she got to know one of Mitchell's closest friends, according to whom the doctor had changed his treatment of nervous prostration since reading the tale. Upon hearing this, Gilman added: "If that is a fact, I have not lived in vain" (Gilman 1991, 121).

"The Yellow Wallpaper" has been not only one of the first documents on post-partum depression, but also an important step forward in demonstrating how gender bias in mental health care can lead to catastrophic results. For Eulalia Pérez Sedeño and Dau García Dauder, what Gilman describes is one of many cases in which the behaviors of women that would not conform to Victorian standards would be classified as "pathological" (2017, 152 – 157). In this context, it is worth noting that Mitchell "opposed woman's suffrage and had grave doubts about women's colleges. He expressed his strong opinions about women of independent spirit in his novels by presenting them either as repellent characters or as women who became submissive to their husbands once married" (Lefkowitz Horowitz 2010, 128). If we look at the names of prominent women who were prescribed the cure, it is apparent that all of them were writers, artists and suffragists, some of them were lesbians and lived publicly in "Boston marriages"[16]. In the tale by Gilman, she identified quite at the beginning that that might had been part of the problem. John, who is the husband and also doctors, the protagonist says, "that with my imaginative power and habit of story making, a nervous weakness like mine is sure to lead to all manner of excited fancies, and that I ought to use my will and good sense to check the tendency" (Gilman 2019, 183).

What I defend here is that Gilman delivered an interesting model using short fiction to criticize our androcentric culture: one that takes males' assumptions on women's "normal behavior" and projects upon them the idea that any display of women's independence is pathological. In doing this, the androcentric culture oppresses women through the production of ignorance about women's inner longings and desires (Pérez Sedeño & García

[15] https://www.feministpress.org/books-n-z/the-yellow-wall-paper (last accessed 07/07/2021).

[16] "Boston marriages" was an expression coined by Henry James to name the cohabitation of women as if they were married. That seem to have been a quite common and socially accepted practice. Some of these marriages were instrumental, some of them were between women romantically involved (Eaklor 2008; Simmons 2009).

Dauder, 2017: 11). Gilman thus revealed how science, which is claims to be neutral and objective, can be biased. On a second front, Gilman not only saved a lot of lives with her short tale, but I also believe that she helped to naturalize mental health issues. People dealing with mental health must often fight against stigma. Gilman raised her voice for millions of women who had to suffer silently from infantilization or neglect, thereby valuing and giving priority to their experiences and perspectives.

4. Anna Julia Cooper and *The Voice from the South* (1893)

The case of Anna Julia Cooper (1858–1964) is similar to what Gilman reported about gender, but she adds another axis of oppression: what W.E.B. du Bois once called "the colour-line" (2017, 3). It is not that the problem of women of colour could be simply understood as the addition of one problem to another. Rather, in this case, one plus one is not equal to two, but to zero. Cooper is held to be, together with Sojourner Truth, one of the conceptual mothers of the concept of intersectionality (Collins & Blige 2016; hooks 1981). One of the distinctive features of intersections is that they are points, they have no extension. The paradox of intersections is this: they represent the crossing point of two different dimensions, but precisely the point in which they cross with each other has no physical extension[17]. I hope the visual metaphor is suggestive enough to characterize the kind of ontological negation which is implied in some paragraphs of Cooper's main work *A Voice from the South* (1893).

[17] By using this metaphor, I do not pretend to alter the original meaning of the term "intersectionality", whose main use is described by Patricia Hill Collins as follows: "Intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions, for example, intersections of race and gender, or of sexuality and nation. Intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice." (Collins, 1990: 6). The metaphor intends to illustrate the ontological effects for the perspective of people suffering multiple oppressions of implicit dynamics of exclusion within activists' groups. The symbolic reinforcement of oppressions, as studied by Davis (1983), hooks (2015) and Lorde (1993), would not be properly represented by the metaphor of intersections as non-extensional points.

Cooper is probably one of the less known Classical pragmatists and, for this reason, it may be necessary to give some facts that can attest to her impressive life and career. She was born and raised in North Carolina. A brilliant student, she attended Oberlin College before moving to Washington, where she taught modern and ancient languages, literature, mathematics, and sciences (Cooper 1998, 5). She was a renowned public speaker and was active in many causes. Having become a widow of the reverend Gorge Cooper at the age of 20 years, she pursued a life devoted to scholarship and education. She was awarded a PhD from the Sorbonne in 1925 at the age of sixty-six with a doctoral thesis on slavery. And, as a single mother, she raised seven foster children, five of them the grandchildren of her brother, who were adopted when she was already 57 years old.

Cooper published *A Voice from the South* (1892) when she was 34 years old. According to Mary Ellen Washington, we can speculate that professional and economic uncertainty prevented Cooper from writing (1988: xxxix). As we have seen, Cooper had to cope with family responsibilities on her own. Other causes that might have stood in the way of a proper reception are also pointed out. She was active during a wave of conservativism in the black community. A good example of this is when Frederick Douglass was asked by the historian M.A. Majors to propose some black women writers to be included in a book he was preparing and Douglass responded that he would know no book of importance written by a black woman, despite the fact that *A Voice from the South* had been published the same year. Another example cited by Washington is the foundation of The American Negro Academy in 1897. The founders were W.E.B. du Bois, Alexander Crummell, and Francis Grimké. The goal of the Academy was "the promotion of Literature, Science, and Art", but its membership was restricted to "men of African Descent" (Washington 1988, xl).

A Voice from the South (1892) is composed of ten essays, whose main topic is the situation of black women at the beginning of the progressive era. Even if Cooper

uses a direct language and her writing style is elegant, a bit of context is needed to understand their philosophical and political relevance. The context refers to the previous decades in which the suffragists and the abolitionists started to organize themselves and cooperated with each other. For Angela Davis, the cooperation between both causes was quite "natural" for conceptual and practical reasons. Conceptually, they noted the resemblances between their situations:

> The turbulent 1803 were years of intense resistance. Nat Turner's revolt, toward the beginning of the decade, unequivocally announced that Black men and women were profoundly dissatisfied with their lot as slaves and very determined, more than ever, to resist. […]
> Around the same time, more prosperous white women began to fight for the right to education and for access to careers outside their homes. White women in the north – the middle-class housewife as well the young "mill girl" – frequently invoked the metaphor of slavery as they sought to articulate their respective oppressions. (Davis 1983, 37–38)

White women in the north had been attracted to the anti-slavery movement thanks to Harriet's Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). Their involvement was not limited to the reading of books and writing of letters, she attended anti-slavery conventions and tried to be political influential. This was the case of Lucretia Mott, the Grimké sisters Sarah and Angelina, Elizabeth Cady Staton and Susan B. Anthony, who were also the promoters of the first convention on women's rights in the United States, that took place in Seneca Falls in 1852. According to Davis, these women, with very little political experience "joined the abolitionist movement and literally received their baptism of fire" (1983, 43). Those activisms, however, revealed quite soon their own dynamics of exclusion. Very few women were invited to anti-slavery conventions and theywere expected to participate as listeners and observers, rather than as speakers. Not a single Black woman attended the meeting in Seneca Falls, for example (Davis, 1983: 62). Black women of the South had no place in the suffragist and abolitionist movements. As bell hooks noted, as white feminists used the analogy between "women" and "black" people, they really meant "white women" and "black men", never taking into account the perspectives of black women (2015, 22). Anti-slavery and abolitionist organizations lead mainly by black men were neither free of sexism

> What had begun as a movement to free all black people from racist oppression became a movement with its primary goal the establishment of black male patriarchy. It is not surprising that a movement so concerned with promoting the interests of black men should fail to draw any attention to the dual impact of sexist and racist oppression […] That the black woman was victimized by sexist and racist oppression was insignificant, for women's suffering however great could not take precedence over male pain. (hooks 2015, 19–20)

Cooper's essay "The Status of Woman in America", after examining the historical processes that brought the United States to the progressive era, describes with accuracy and rhetorical effect how the place of women of colour is precisely a no-place

> The colored woman of to-day occupies, one may say, a unique position in this country. In a period of itself transitional and unsettled, her status seems one of the least ascertainable and definitive of all the forces which make our civilization. She is confronted by both a woman question and a race problem, and is as yet an unknown or an unacknowledged factor in both. (Cooper 1998, 112)

In my reading of Cooper, this short paragraph contains the ontological implications of the implicit exclusion dynamics within activism. It is striking that even when groups are organized to fight oppression and coordinate with other groups, they can produce blind spots themselves. This shows two important things. First, that oppression is a relational phenomenon, and that it depends on a given and conjunctural power balance[18]. Second, and this is inspired by Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider* (1993), activist groups should incorporate a practice of collective self-reflection about their internal dynamics to avoid succumbing to unelaborated horizontal hostilities from within.

In her writings, Anna Julia Cooper demonstrates her adhesion to the main issues of the progressive agenda:

[18] I find that the point is very interestingly addressed concerning racial oppression and privilege in Sullivan (2020).

universal education, political agency, economic growth, especially for women[19], etc. In "Womanhood: A Vital Element in the Regeneration of a Race" (1886), we find an original mixture of Christian and progressive motives, for Cooper's notion of progress is inseparable from the spiritual regeneration of the nation. For Cooper, the emancipation from slavery had been a step forward, but remained the question of the "womanhood of the race" (1998, 62). And this requires acknowledging that black women have still to be situated in the collective effort towards social progress:

> Only the BLACK WOMAN can say "when and where I enter, in the quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then there the whole *Negro race enters with me.*" It is not evident than that as individual workers for this race we must address ourselves with no half-hearted zeal to this feature of our mission. The need is felt and must be recognized by all. (Cooper 1998, 63).

This fragment is considered one of the first written documents on intersectionality. The term intersectionality as a method of analysis and as a method of giving form to the experiences of those who are caught between different axes of oppression is vivid. The potential applications of it are infinite and current scholarship is vibrant and "in the making". I would like to refer to something that Cooper introduces just before this paragraph and it is the suggestion that we should take the position of women, more particularly, of Black women as indicators of progress. Cooper adopts and extends the criterion suggested by the historian Thomas Babbington Macauly's, viz. that it is possible to "judge a nation's rank in the scale of civilization from the way they treat their woman" (Cooper 1998, 55). If Black women are the most vulnerable people in society, they were the true indicators of social progress. If we want to add complexity to our social analysis, a proper contemporary reinterpretation of this criterion is that the scale of civilization of one nation is to be measured by the level of wellbeing of the most vulnerable among us, whose lives might be put in danger because of continuing oppression on the basis of race, gender, class, ability, sexuality, or ethnicity.

This criterion would find important similarity to the concept of "lateral progress", which, according to Maurice Hamington, is one of Addam's contributions to the radicalization of pragmatism. For Hamington, the radicalization of pragmatism is the result of "applying a stronger egalitarian approach to social issues, one that was keenly tuned to the impact of class, race, and gender" (2009, 43). The concept of lateral progress, is proposed in Addams's essay "A Modern Lear (1912)"

> The man who insists upon consent, who moves with the people, is bound to consult the feasible right as well as the absolute right. He is often obliged to attain only Mr. Lincoln's "best possible," and often have [*sic*] the sickening sense of compromising with his best convictions. He has to move along with those whom he rules toward a goal that neither he nor they see very clearly till they come to it. He has to discover what people really want, and then "provide the channels in which the growing moral force of their lives shall flow." What the does attain, however, is not the result of his individual striving, as a solitary mountain climber beyond the sight of the valley multitude, but it is underpinned and upheld by sentiments and aspirations of many others. Progress has been slower perpendicularly, but incomparably greater because lateral. (quoted in Hamington 2009, 44)

Four points characterize Addams's notion of lateral progress in Hamington's interpretation (2009, 44–45). First, social progress is preferred to individual progress. Second, Addams would have assumed that the circumstances draw the line between the haves and have-nots, not previously fixed moral status. Third, the connection of what human beings have in common can lead to broader understandings. Fourth, the coordination of different institutions is the force that leads to widespread improvement. I think Hamington is right in regaining lateral progress as a key concept of radical pragmatist social philosophy. I would like to add 'feminist' to the expression. Radical feminist and pragmatist social philosophy, i.e. a social philosophy which takes the perspective of the oppressed and puts social vulnerability as its core concept in the centre is, in my opinion, the

[19] See the essay "The Higher Education of Women" (1890–1891) in Cooper (1998).

most promising way in which real social growth is collectively produced.

5. Concluding Remarks: The Epistemology of the Oppressed as A Radical Feminist and Pragmatist Approach to Social Philosophy

The contributions presented here to a radical feminist and pragmatist approach to social philosophy do not yet form yet a comprehensive form of knowledge. There are many other elements in Addams's, Gilman's and Cooper's philosophy that should be added and further developed and included in a more comprehensive account of what I here labelled as "the epistemology of the oppressed". For instance, Addams's works on pacifism and on women's memory; Gilman's utopian literature, essays on political economy and the androcentric culture; Cooper's insights on women's literature, history, and education. Similarly, I would also include Mary Parker's Follet reconceptualization of power, Du Bois' addressing of the race problem, and the advancements of many other pragmatists from past to present that might have been overlooked by the the scholarly orthodoxy.

I hope to have shown how relevant and exciting this approach to social philosophy would be, and not merely for its intrinsic historical interest. Using Addams's and Hull-House's residents experimentalism would serve to produce social knowledge that would lead to concrete social intervention. In the process, all social agents would be equally involved thus allowing the recipients of social intervention to regain their political agency. Gilman's use of political imagination in literary forms should show two things. First, that gender bias occurs when androcentric prejudices are not examined and suspended. We would be very naïve if we would think that several millennia of patriarchal domination would have not left any trace in our culture. Indeed, the failure to challenge and make such bias explicit has caused a lot of suffering. Second, that the literary genre in which social criticism is expressed is not as important as its practical effect in consciousness-raising. Finally, Cooper found the words to articulate that which seemed impossible to articulate: the ontological negation that results from the implicit dynamics of exclusion within emancipatory groups. Using Addams's and Cooper's criteria based upon vulnerability and lateral progress would confer a radical feminist and pragmatist approach to social philosophy not only a descriptive method of analysis, but also its necessary normative dimension.

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First- and second-order justice: Making Room for Affects in Social Critique

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Abstract: Over the last decades, different approaches linked to decolonial tradition have shifted the pendulum of critique from claims of universality towards individual accounts and experiences. However, in what we can call "narrative turn", the moral justifications for first-person perspectives are not always evident. In this paper, I explore the boundaries of epistemic relevance regarding the role that subjective accounts and experiences play in the critique of injustice. For that, I start by inverting the question of objectivity in the critique considering the particularity of different experiences. The issue, in this case, is the position from where philosophers speak in their attempts to describe experiences of suffering. With regards to first-person standpoint, the question that is at stake is whether philosophers are capable of describing others' experiences. In these terms, how can we share experiences of injustice after all? Next, I argue that there ought to be, in the debate, a distinction between two dimensions of justice. According to usual distinctions of "first- and second-order" approaches, I insist that theoretical claims related to the narrative turn refer to demands of first-order justice: it is about moral recognition of individuals' epistemic claims, opening to the possibility to confront defective notions of universality and blind spots in theories of justice. However, these claims do not have justification criteria themselves, requiring, thus, normative dependencies which are external to experiences – these are situated in second-order justice. I argue, then, that this model has the advantage of incorporating the insights of decolonial theories without neglecting the potential for the critique of injustice.

Keywords: affects; narratives; epistemic injustice; suffering; decoloniality

> *"But how could I help feeling sorry? What affects a person most if the ugly nature of suffering itself, not the quality of the sufferer." (…)*
> *"This life is full if hidden pathways. If you know, sir, you know; if you don't know, you won't understand me (…)"*
> *"The most important and nicest thing in the world is this: that people aren't always the same, they are not all of a piece (…)."*
> (Guimarães Rosa, *The Devil to Pay in the Backlands)*

When it comes to the different approaches associated to the liberal tradition, it is possible to see that they share an attempt to find criteria of justice that would not obstruct the plurality of world perspectives, but rather make it possible to reconcile them. In view of the tensions amid particular preferences, liberal theorists chose to abstain from criticizing them, arguing that it would not be their role to determine the contents of individual preferences. A behavior explained by a self-preservation logic: if critique were oriented by moral imperatives related to notions such as authenticity or a good life, it would end up putting at risk a supposed objectivity and impartiality claimed by liberal justice criteria. Political theories turned their attention to the universality of demands of justice, shaping, one way or another, criteria that transcend the partiality and contingency of particular world perspectives. Adam Smith's impartial spectator, David Hume's judicious spectator or John Rawls's veil of ignorance are theoretical solutions that try to prevent theories from any particularity which would, so to speak, hinder finding impartial criteria for justice. By drawing a line between public reason and private sphere, subjective experiences as self-description and singular narratives must be restricted to this last one, not being a matter of justice anymore.

More recently, however, feminist and decolonial theories have moved their attention to the role of particular narratives in the social critique. Calling into question the strict separation between public and private, we find a renewal role that singular accounts and narratives could have in the elaboration of a theory of justice. Due to their particularity, experiences would be heterogeneous pieces which cannot fit into a homogeneous puzzle of a "supposed universality". The notion of reason – which is subjacent to this ideal of universalization – has been attacked as restrict or exclusionary: instead of a plurality of worldviews, it assumes rather a hegemonic standpoint which results in different forms of epistemic violence.

In light of these circumstances, the issue I would like to discuss in this paper is: what is exactly the epistemic relevance of subjective accounts and experiences in the critique of justice? Before addressing this question, however, I would like to invert the problem of objectivity in the critique given the particularity of experiences. The issue, in this case, would be: which is

the place from where the philosopher speaks in their intention to describe suffering experiences from other individuals? Here we move into an epistemic realm, that is, to what extent can we talk about experiences that are not our own? In other words, to what extent can we share subjective experiences – namely "second-person standpoint" – or, in a closer sense than I am discussing, can we move from a first-person to a third-person perspective – as in social critique? If we always speak in first person and if there is any cognitive or epistemic limit of experiences, from where would the capacity of criticizing desires and choices of experiences that are not our own come from? How can we share experiences of injustice after all?

Where do we speak from? Sharing experiences of injustice

Firstly, in order to address this issue, it could be useful to remember the distinction Peter Strawson (2008) proposed between resentment and moral indignation: whereas resentment is taken as a reaction to an offense or indifference directed to oneself, moral indignation is an unpersonal and uninterested attitude. Unlike resentment, indignation attitudes would be "reactions to the quality of others' wills, not towards ourselves" (Strawson, 2008, p. 256). Strawson, then, distinguishes personal reactive attitudes from what he calls *vicarious attitudes*: those of putting yourself on someone else's shoes, although the offense is not directed to yourself. In other words, you can be dominated by a feeling of indignation in face of an experience of injustice, regardless of the fact it is directed to you. In his words:

> What we have here is, as it were, resentment on behalf of another, where one's own interest and dignity are not involved; and it is this impersonal or vicarious character of the attitude, added to its others, which entitle it to the qualification 'moral' (Strawson, 2008, p.258).

It is not clear, however, which criteria make it possible to entitle a vicarious (or indirect) attitude as being *moral*. Although Strawson contributes to distinguish between, on the one hand, resentment as a direct reactive attitude and, on the other hand, indignation as a feeling of whom observes and perceives an experience of injustice, this should not lead us to assume that every feeling of indignation is morally legitimate *per se*. I can feel indignation for an attitude directed to someone close to me or with whom I have some emotional tie, without this feeling laying down the moral justification of the action. Additionally, in these cases, affects are majorly ambivalent: taking sides may be highly motivated by emotional ties, which, in turn, can act on the impartiality of a moral judgement. Such difficulty can be partly explained by the fact that Strawson's argument has already the intention to bring the role of affects into the analytical debate – more specifically regarding the problem of moral determinism (as he recognizes, "it is pity that talk of the moral sentiments has fallen out of favour" (Strawson, 2008, p.268). Despite the oddness of this disuse, I would like to detain myself on the issue concerning the first-person perspective. What is exactly the difference between the experiences I feel in first person and the ones I feel in second person? More precisely: *is experience a condition for the critique of injustice?*

Let us see a story told by Joaquim Nabuco, a prominent Brazilian abolitionist. Born in the Massangana sugar mill, near Recife, in a wealthy white family of the rural aristocracy of the Brazilian state of Pernambuco, Nabuco tells his childhood memories living in a sugar mill. One of the most remarkable recollections of this period is the rupture from when slavery stops being something familiar, felt through an acritical emotional tie, and starts to be questioned:

> I was sitting one afternoon on the landing outside the house, when I see rushing up to me an unknown young black man, about eighteen years old, who threw himself at my feet begging me, for the love of God, to have him bought by my godmother to serve me. He came from the neighborhoods, looking for a new master, because his, he told me, punished him, and he had fled, risking his life...This was the unexpected trait that made me discover the nature of the institution with which I coexisted familiarly so far, without suspecting the pain it concealed.

> Nothing shows better than slavery itself the power of the first vibrations of the feeling. […] Thus, I fought slavery with all my strength, repelled it with all my consciousness." (Nabuco, 2012, p. 190)

The epistemic issue of Nabuco's perception of injustice, which is clearly not the same as the experience of the slave who encounters him, is a standpoint shift from first to second person. What is the difference between both experiences? What allows Nabuco sharing this narrative as injustice?

A first answer to this question is what we can call *epistemic privilege of experience*, as it has been the tendency in most of the recent literature associated to the narrative turn. Nabuco, obviously, does not (and he cannot) feel the same experience of the slave. His critical and reactive position is crossed by the feeling originated by a moral felling (a vicarious one, as in Strawson's vocabulary): when facing the young black man in the condition of slave begging to be bought, Nabuco says he feels – and, in a way, shares – the pain that afflicted that man. *Feeling*, in this case, did not mean experiencing in first person (as in the concept of *lived experience)*, but *realizing*, that is, being able to share, in second person, experiences which can intersubjectively be perceived as unfair.

Nevertheless, the epistemic issues we see in this narrative are not only inherent to lived experiences as a condition for the critique of injustice - what we can call *epistemic privilege of experience*, as it has been the tendency in the recent literature associated to the narrative turn. Indeed, the privileged position of Nabuco, from which he narrates his perception of the injustice intrinsic to the condition of slavery, not only reveals his narrative as an example of the problem from a second-person perspective, but makes his account relevant *as an account*. Even though the role of black intellectuals, such as Luiz Gama, or of important characters in the Maroon resistance, such as Tereza de Benguela, was relevant to the abolitionist movement, Nabuco's account is the one heard and which resists time. From the perspective of epistemic injustice, the issue of injustice does not only refer to the reflexive capacity of injustice. Beyond the second-person standpoint (that is, the perception from someone who does not suffer the experience of injustice directly), what is unfair here is the fact that the first-person standpoint does not gain social or political relevance[1]. It is not merely a circumstantial detail that we rarely hear first-person accounts from slaves. The fact that the account by Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua's, a former slave who ran away to the United States, had been the only autobiography of enslaved people in Brazil corroborates the discrepancy of how these stories circulate and of the epistemic relevance they historically assumed in the perception of injustice[2]. The narrative of lived experience in first-person acquires different weights in the scope of injustice when it is socially set beforehand which of them matters. The absence of first-person accounts and, especially, its effacement are *problems of justice*. Whereas some are heard, others are silenced; some are remembered; others, forgotten.

When Frantz Fanon wrote *Black skin, white masks*, he alerts us to what is behind the claims of epistemic universality – closely related, in this case, to the colonial discourse. There, Fanon articulates an intrinsic connection between his experience as a psychiatrist and his practice in a context of cultural dissonance that takes place in Argelia under the French colonial domination.

[1] In *Epistemic Injustice*, a pioneer work on this discussion, Miranda Fricker (2008) calls this problem *testimonial injustice* – when accounts are not heard in their epistemic potential. This concept differs from what Fricker calls *hermeneutic injustice*: unlike testimonial injustice, which refers to the prejudice in light of the content of the account and depending on the author of the narrative, *hermeneutic injustice* embraces relations of injustice rooted in social practices which restrain individuals to perceive them as unfair.

[2] Certainly, the importance given to first-person accounts only refers to the epistemic dimension of injustice, but it is not enough to overcome political dimensions of injustice. It suffices to recall that Frederick Douglass, who would become one of the main characters of the abolitionist movement in the United States, left his memories in three autobiographies – the first one, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* – which would become a best-selling success. The moral meaning of epistemic acknowledgment does not replace the meaning of the social and legal dimensions that constitute the normative horizon of the vocabulary of justice. It is also for this reason that I dissent from the reflections about justice which reduce it to the epistemic dimension of lived experience, which I interpret as one of the pre-conditions so that the vocabulary available for the *disputes* about justice can be put in a more symmetric and, consequently, fairer way.

Under the perspective of psychiatric practice, claims of universality become even more latent since they assume a totalizing model of the subject category and its symptoms. This kind of resistance unfolds questions like: who can speak on behalf of the universal? Which universalism? For whom? In sum, which voices have universal value, whereas others only have particular value?

These were issues that, one way or another, mobilized different sides of the decolonial thought. Fanon argues that behind what we call "universal" there are disputes between narratives that exclude perspectives which are prevented from being recognized in their epistemic claim. When bringing light into this issue, what is valid and consolidated as the center of the canonic speech contrasts with what Fanon calls "the lived experience of the black man", which names one of the chapters of his book. Narrating in first person, he describes the experience of not recognizing himself in the supposed universality of knowledge in the French colonizer in Argelia: a kind of racial and colonial scope which provokes a vertiginous strangeness – a type of *epistemological de-identification.* Fanon's choice for the first-person narrative brings an epistemic force into a struggle for the acknowledgement of a subjectivity forbidden to the universal category. Since it is directed to the theory, the critique is neither particular nor wants to affirm its perspective as "other universal", but revindicates that his *lived experience* is not included in that colonizer discourse that, as such, wants to be worth as universal. He is saying: "I do not recognize myself in this theory".

What we see here is the case of the "man" category, mostly connected to its *desires* – an issue that Fanon elaborates from his professional experience as a psychiatrist. "What does the man want? What does the black man want?" – he asks, transferring the emphasis of the universality of the "man" category to an identity which does not recognize itself in this universal category. The black man's desire is questioned as a volitive sphere that does not fit in the category "man's desires", since the "universal" pattern of recognition of the Martinican black man – Fanon argues – is the French white man. Then, the particular becomes refractory to its encapsulation in categories which is strange to it. It is the universal, not the particular, which is alienated from itself, being reduced to a self-referential and, therefore, excluding reason. Fanon's conclusion is emphatic: "The black is not a man" (Fanon, 2008, p. 1).

The same is valid for language: while asking himself about the construction of the black man's identity, Fanon brings the example of the use of "*petit-nègre*" as an incorporation of the colonial language: once being a simplified version of French language, the speaker of *petit-nègre* self-subdues himself due to the colonialist discourse, so that "answering in *petit-nègre* is immuring the black person with extremely toxic strange bodies" (Fanon, 2008, p. 48). This means, first and foremost, that colonial subjection is also psychic subjection. For Fanon, what is exposed is the fact that colonial and racialized ways of life are specific ways of suffering, which, as such, must be faced under reactive models of political action.

An analogous sense of language strangeness is narrated by Kwame Appiah in his work entitled *In my father's house*. In what he calls "the invention of Africa", Appiah mentions the subterfuges of semantic violence in the speech of Alexander Cummel, an American Episcopal priest who defended that due to the colonization, despite slavery, the "divine providence" had inherited the ownership of the Anglo-Saxon language, "superior in its euphony, its conceptual resources, and its capacity to express the 'supernal truths' of Christianity" (Appiah, 1992, p. 19). The epistemic violence that Appiah accounts is a result of an excluding sense of universal that can only deal with difference by eliminating it. In this scope between universal and particular, the issue remains being which speeches are taken as universal and, mostly, who can speak on behalf of universal.

Appiah concludes, in an ironic tone:

> Now, over a century later, more than half of the population of black Africa lives in countries where English is an official language, and the same providence has decreed that almost all the rest of Africa should be governed in French or Arabic or Portuguese (Appiah, 1992, p. 19).

Whose reason? Between particular and universal

When confronting the supposed "reason's standpoint", decolonial critiques paved the way for a shift in the pedulum, moving it from universal to particular and confronting what was taken as defective notions of universal reason. However, whereas these critiques were originally directed to an epistemic widening and inclusion of discourses initially excluded of this universal, they started to play a role of self-validation, in which it was no longer clear to what extent their claims could go beyond their particular dimension. The result was that, from the centrality of the struggle for recognition of different narratives, these approaches changed their focus from what would be an epistemic critique to a kind of normative self-validation based on experience. First-person narratives which could have a potential for critique started to be self-referenced, that is, instead of affecting and contributing to theoretical claims reassessment, they remained mattering as particular accounts.

The epistemic relevance of the widen potential of the narratives rests precisely when it is able to transcend the particular character of first-person accounts. In other words, the problem of lack of epistemic acknowledgement occurs when, even though accounts were heard, they were not taken in their potential of epistemic contribution to overcome the status of a mere private story. In *Plantation memories*, Grada Kilomba complains about being criticized for her excess of emotivism and about being discredited. The categorization of her analysis as full of sentimentalism, little objective or little scientific ("you overinterpret") meant to discredit her speech or to silence her – the "endless control over the voice of the *black subject* and the desire to govern and rule how we approach and interpret reality" (Kilomba, 2010, p. 34).

> As a scholar, for instance, I am commonly told that my work on everyday racism is very interesting, but not really scientific, a remark that illustrates the colonial order in which Black scholars reside: "You have a very *subjective* perspective;" "very *personal*;" "very *emotional*", "very *specific*;" "Are these *objective* facts?" Such comments function like a mask, that silences our voices as soon as we speak. They allow the white subject to place our discourses back at the margins, as deviating knowledge, while their discourses remain at the centre, as the norm. When they speak it is scientific, when we speak it is unscientific;
>
> universal / subjective;"
> objective / subjective;"
> rational / emotional;"
> impartial / partial;"
> they have facts, we have opinions"
> they have knowledge, we have experiences
>
> These are not simple semantic categorizations; they possess a dimension of power that maintains hierarchical positions and upholds *white* supremacy. We are not dealing here with a "peaceful coexistence of words", as Jacques Derrida (1981: 41) emphasizes, but rather a violent hierarchy that defines who can speak." (Kilomba, 2010, p. 51–52)[3].

Kilomba's claim is that her speech must not be acknowledged as merely a particular one, but rather be understood in its potential of objectivity which precisely *transcend the subjectively meaning of their singular experiences.* When she reclaims the acknowledgment of people and identity groups whose speeches are systematically made invisible, this is not restricted to the sphere of particular experiences, but it ultimately encompasses a matter of justice: the epistemic reasons for exclusion or invisibilization of these discourses are unfair. This type of revindications refer, therefore, not only to a claim of particularity (characteristic of plural ways of life), but to a *universalism* that embraces justice demands. They bring, in sum, the moral potential of the struggle for the *equality of epistemic recognition.*

Grada Kilomba's revindication is for having their speeches acknowledged as more than their own experiences, *i. e.* , whose claims of validity transcend mere

[3] Also in this sense of the relation between narrative and power, Chimamanda writes: "It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali. How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power" (The danger of a single story, p. 37)

particularity. The scope of epistemic validation – what makes some speeches worth as particular, others as universal; some as central, other as peripheral – is in itself a problem of justice. Nevertheless, the theoretical outreach of these narratives must precisely be able to overcome its relevance as restrictive to their particular character: if they do not bring the epistemic claim of transcending particularity, first-person accounts will continue to be just accounts.

The normative potential of accounts centered on identity is not immune to these same ambiguities. On the example mentioned by Appiah, he argues that what makes Alexander Crummel feel entitled to make an assertion about the semantic superiority of the English language is his condition of Afro-American. He does not speak – so he believes – from the perspective of a white colonizer, but as a black man – an identity scope that, for Appiah, can also bring distortions in his claims of speech legitimacy. This same option for an analysis focused on subjective experience – but which intends to be, at the same time, shared in terms of identity – leads Fanon to reduce, at times, the complexity of a culture to an almost archetypic construction of the post-colonial man. When Fanon claims for an identity position in his speech, is he speaking on behalf of all black subjects? Black men born in Martinique can speak on behalf of black female students in Paris[4]? What is shared and what is not between dark-skinned black people from the suburbs of Paris of Senegalese ascendance who have just immigrated, and light-skinned black people of diasporic origin in Rio de Janeiro? In sum: who can speak on behalf of the "blackness"?

The question proposed by Fanon in the beginning of his book – what does the black man want? – is, then, delimited by a kind of constitution of desire that neither fits the speech "what does the man want?" (which ends up meaning what does the white man want), nor necessarily delimits a valid constitution for all black men. Although Fanon's speech is in first person, speaking from the *lived experience* of the black man, it brings the potential of rupture and tensioning; it cannot be dissociated from *his* experience – which can assume shared traits with other lived experiences –, but cannot easily transcend the pendulum between particular experience and universal category. In other words, any speech with claims of shared identities can reveal itself paradoxical.

Furthermore, the potential of experiences in the constitution of individuals not only means a static standpoint, but also a critical position on this place from where one speaks. It is precisely this critical awareness as a learning horizon that makes possible living other experiences. More than that, experiences unclose a multitude of possibilities: as subjects, we are not only located in the threshold of lived experiences; we are at the outset of what we can still live: experiences that can still be lived, other desires that can still be desired.

Therefore, moving the critique's pendulum from universality to singular experiences does not easily solve the problems initially faced by the narrative turn. The tension between universal and particular as the horizon of constitution of the subject from a logic focused on affects as a property persists in a paradoxical manner: particular takes the place of universal, relying in the subject's experience what could be found before in the horizon of the social vocabulary that precedes it.

However, Fanon's reflection brings an important contribution by questioning the colonization of the speech supposedly based on a universal rationality, whose claim of universality validates itself only excluding. Even though the epistemic contribution of the lived experience does not automatically concede the moral criteria that transcend its phenomenological immanence, it can pressure flawed notions of injustice. In these cases, first person's narratives are relevant, because they reveal that the supposed impersonality of universal reason is, in fact, equally concrete and particular, with the difference that it imposes itself more coercively than the other.

Neither every translation of different narratives means speaking on behalf of the other as a denial of difference nor every representation must take the form

[4] This is a concern which is present in Fanon's documentary.

of replacement. Representations can mean, as Spivak proposed in relation to its meaning in the German vocabulary, not only the replacement of another (*Vertretung*), but an exhibition, presentation (*Darstellung*) – the other who speaks for herself, mitigating ways of epistemic violence[5]. The dialog between the Shaman Yanomami Davi Kopenawa and the French anthropologist Bruce Albert, whose intense conversations resulted in the monumental work *The Falling Sky,* is an example of these translation efforts in which the theoretical disposition goes from *speaking on the behalf of* to *listening to the other*. Without denying the risk of a reductionist confrontation of perspectives, inherent to language itself, Albert spent four decades interacting with Davi Kopenawa, in a position of a mediator who creates a bond of mutual trust. Only after this commitment, it became possible to respond to new conceptual tools and to world perspective(s) (or "worlds of perspectives", to use an expression by Viveiros de Castro) based on radically different ontologies. An encounter that somehow echoes the potential mode of translation assumed by the shamanic entity itself[6]."I like to explain these things to whites, so that they may know" [7]. The verbs Kopenawa uses in this statement have their own force: *explaining* and *knowing* bring an unsettling and conscious pretension of truth, which, for that matter, arrogates an epistemic superiority. Kopenawa has the consciousness of whom he is talking to, the sentence is less arrogant and more ironic. The tone is disconcerting, provocative. And Kopenawa knows that.

Accounts such as Kilomba's, Fanon's, Appiah's and Kopenawa's revindicate, in different ways, a process of struggle for epistemic recognition, not only as representativity –by making themselves seen and heard – but by revealing how the way the "universal" construction of epistemic categories is constituted excludes other invisibilized accounts in this process. Its pressure is fundamentally "metacritic", since these claims are not disputing the content of the critique *per se*, but the acknowledgement that their critical potential should be equally heard. When these claims pressure the canon, they do not do it only from a condition of particularity – a lived experience in particular –, but from a process of rectification of epistemic injustice. By saying "I do not recognize myself in your universal", particular experiences are neither reduced to their particularity nor they impose themselves as a new universal; instead, they press theories towards correction and widening. As Spivak says:

> It is not about a description of "how things really were" or about privileging the narrative of history as imperialism as the best version of the story. It is, on the contrary, to offer an account of how an explanation and a narrative of reality were established as normative (Spivak, 1988, p. 48).

Epistemic recognition and moral justification: Distinguishing first- and second-order injustice

If, on the one hand, the inclusion of these perspectives enables to create a theoretical vocabulary which is already disposed in the demands for justice in an immanent way, their justification criteria depend, on the other hand, on a constant tension between particular experiences and social norms. None of them brings justification criteria *a priori*, but express a majorly negative function of criticism and correction, putting in question the supposed normative neutrality of the "narrative of reality". Insofar as these narratives are directed to descrip-

[5] "They must observe how the pretense of the world in representation – its scene of writing, its *Darstellung* – dissimulates the choice and the need of 'heroes', paternal proxies and agents of power – *Vertretung*. In my opinion, the practice must be attentive to the double sense of the term representation, instead of trying to reinsert the individual subject through totalizer concepts of power and desire" (Spivak, 1988, p. 43).

[6] "In anthropology, the image of the shaman is known as a diplomat or a cosmic translator; the one who travels around different worlds and deals with subjects who are different, but equally human. To go back and tell what he saw, the saman cannot confuse the perspectives, otherwise he runs the risk of being captured by others' point of view, definitively turning into somebody else. In the theory of shamanic translation, a same referent, object or word can mean another thing entirely, depending on the perspective. There is not an Adamic, absolute language, responsible for equaling the differences between world and languages" (Arthur Imbassahy, *The art of holding the sky through the difference*, Suplemento Pernambuco, p. 12. n. 162, August 2019).

[7] Turner & Kopenawa, 1991, p. 63. Davi Kopenawa's interview to Terence Turner, a representative of the American Anthropological Association's special committee, formed in 1991 to investigate the situation of the Yanomami tribe in Brazil. Quoted in *The Falling Sky*, p. 63.

tive claims, the epistemic issue consists of ethnographic or cultural translation works; in other words, of the limits and efforts in approaching a culture which is different than the one of the researcher[8]. Without losing sight of this set of critiques around this issue of ethnocentrism, the problem which particularly interests me is, however, the impact they have in the scope of normative theories. Offering criteria for issues of injustice is certainly not in the same plain of narrating anthropological perspectives and, in the case of normative theories, such criteria refer, as I have insisted, to the potential that particular accounts based on experiences offer to these theories.

In light of what we have seen so far, I would like to suggest that the normative force of singular accounts is mostly connected to two different issues. The first one refers to *epistemic injustices.* Theories which are hermetically enclosed in their own speech, only hearing their own voice, fail to take their assumptions of universal rationality as incorrigible. For the sake of the concept of reason they claim to assume, some discourses validate themselves as universal, whereas others are treated as peripherical for supposedly not taking the reason's standpoint. These theories sometimes in a subtle, other times in a more explicitly violent manner, assume the other person cannot speak for him/herself. In these cases, we are facing relations of injustice which are not derived from disputes for rational criteria around justice, but of *whom is recognized as speaking on behalf of reason, whose reasons deserve to be heard*. In this change of perspective from *what* is announced to *whom* announces, the critique stops being delimited by the force of arguments – and in its potential of universalization – and starts having higher or lower relevance depending on who speaks. The epistemic problem does not refer, in sum, to the privileged access to a set of experiences, but to the fact that such demands have not been historically addressed in a more equitably fair manner.

I call this problem first-order justice[9]. In these cases, we are not dealing with normative dispute of moral justification, but, in a previous step, assuring that the people affected can be acknowledged in their epistemic claims on a speech free of coercion[10]. Besides bringing problems of epistemic injustice into attention, accounts have the potential to expose the flaws of normative theories by bringing to light the universality claims. This other normative dimension of the accounts, which one can call *legitimacy claims*, consists of the pressures against the supposed universal knowledge, showing how defective it is, in other words, that the vocabulary we use to delimit notions as universality and rationality is flawed. Experiences and narratives then have critical relevance not only because they tell other stories, but also because these stories offer us new concepts and images, opening the subject to the expansion of their vocabulary, being able to see what had no "reason" to be seen before.

The fact that some narratives have been called "great" result from bets and claims of universalization. However, along the history, other narratives also offered the potential to be "great". Such degree of relevance depended not only on its potential of universalization –

[8] For some time, works in the scope of anthropology raised the question about the tendencies of epistemological construction as a false universalism which ended up fetishizing what did not belong to the center of the construction of knowledge. He? pointed to a change of perspective that, instead of showing itself as a supposedly neutral description, meant an "invention" (*e.g.,* Mudimbe, *The invention of Africa*, Edward Said, *Orientalism. The Orient as an Invention of the Occident).* Nothing more dystopic than imagining Kant, in Könisberg, thoroughly describing the different world cultures. Behind this supposed – and even arrogant – cosmopolitism of philosophy, hides itself a position which gets to be surprising in its presumption: a provincialism with colonialist pretensions.

[9] I have in mind here the distinction between first and second-order volition made familiar by Harry Frankfurt (1971). More recently, this distinction was proposed by Alessandro Pinzani regarding different experiences of suffering, more closely to the difference that Miranda Fricker proposed between testimonial and hermeneutical injustice (see Pinzani, *First and second-order suffering*, manuscript). In this paper, I draw my attention to these distinctions, but aiming at clarifying what I see as some confusions between epistemic and moral dimensions of recognition.

[10] Although they start from different premises, aspects of first-order justice are found, from procedural theories to decolonial theories. Because, one way or another, what is at stake is the possibility of including in the speech who was out of it. However, what these different approaches share does not prevent that the own premises of rationality and universality taken as procedural theories end up limiting the inclusion of other narratives, contradicting what they intend to defend.

if they can explain better structural phenomena, ideologies, etc. (which from the theoretical point of view can be justifiable) –, but on criteria other than its semantic power, as in the previously mentioned cases of first-order injustice. These criteria which are beyond a theory, let us say, morally neutral, define who is in and who is out, which narrative counts as universal and which counts as peripheral. And it is not by chance that this universal vs. particular scope coincides with theories that were historically located in the center and in the periphery of the geopolitical spectrum. Besides, we cannot just "jump" past narratives since they structurally constitute our current horizon of world perspectives. Even though it is possible to retroactively criticize the reasons that made them be accredited as canonic, its performative effect constitutes the vocabulary from which we think and act in the present.

It is precisely due to this false symmetry that theories of justice must be sensitive to accounts that historically could find little space in the constitution of the canonic models of comprehension of justice, constantly opening themselves to the *corrigibility* and the revision of their principles. Whereas the theoretical work is situated in a constant tension between different claims of legitimacy of particular world(s) perspectives, particular narratives and experiences continue to confront claims of universality which start to be constantly rectified[11].

The latent critiques then serve as thermometers and as forms of pressure between particular and universal. Depending on the assumptions – and, in a last analysis, on the senses of reason assumed – such critiques indicate that claims of universality are flawed as they cannot incorporate other narratives. This is what Judith Shklar, an author situated in the liberal tradition, affirms when it comes to what is called "normal justice":

> […] normal justice is a set of rules and basic principles that rule the distribution of benefits and responsibilities inside a community, and this demands the establishment of effective and impartial institutions to assure the application of the rules and basic principles. This general and rule-based approach is necessary for justice to be institutionalized as organizational laws and practices. But as a result, "normal justice" frequently has blind spots, gaps and non-intentional consequences. (Shklar, 1998, p. 17)[12]

It is due to these blind spots of the justice system that Shklar proposes that political philosophy should seriously consider the perspective of victims of injustice. She defends that the victims' "sentiment of injustice", as a perspective of the directly affected, can contribute to correct theories and institutions, allowing philosophers to equally rethink their theoretical positions. In order to show the flaws and interferences in the perception of injustice, Shklar describes how relations that were historically described as mere *misfortunes* started to be regarded and described as unfair. As she describes it, much of this widening of the perception of injustice was due to the contributions brought by the narratives and accounts of suffering from victims of injustice.

In short: first-order injustice refers to unequal practices of epistemic recognition. This regards how narratives and experiences can play a role of widening the

[11] One of the issues that naturally arises here is if it is worth maintaining or abandoning theoretical claims characterized as "universal" or "great" narratives. Concepts, such as "pluriversalism" or "Amerindian perspectivism" have been proposed as means of resistance to theoretical approaches with claims of universal comprehensiveness (see Viveiros de Castro, 2016). In my point of view, we can widen our vocabulary about matters of justice without having to abandon the belief that issues such as slavery can be criticized as *universally* fair. For this reason, I understand that, in order to open ourselves to the critique, we must not forego the potential of reasons which continue to offer the own possibility of critique to injustices which transcend the particular character of experiences. However, these are the same claims that must assume the coverage which is constant to its correction by including other narratives in a more sensitive way. One of the biggest mistakes of the ones who are refractory when criticized is the arrogance of not allowing themselves to review their beliefs, always regarding them as truths instead of more modest attempts of hits that may occasionally fail. A little more of humbleness would enable to see that those who continue to speak on behalf of the universal do so because other perspectives were historically excluded from this universal. These are dwarfs in the shoulders of giants, but for reasons that are contrary to what the expression originally wanted to indicate.

[12] "Body of rules and basic principles governing the distribution of benefits and burdens within a community, and it demands the establishment of effective and impartial institutions to guarantee the enforcement of these basic rules and principles" (p. 17). This rule-bound, generalized approach is necessary for justice to be institutionalized as laws and organizational practices. But as a result, normal justice frequently has blind spots, gaps and unintended consequences.

epistemic outreach of normative theories, but it is still not clear how lived experiences can provide the criteria of injustice. Indeed, even though we recognize the normative potential of the speeches in what concerns first-order injustice – i. e, that all speeches *can* be normatively justified – it does not mean they *must* be justified.

It is in relation to these disputes about moral justification criteria of the speeches that we find what I call for *second-order injustice*. The way how we refer to our own experiences, mostly in its affective dimension, are ambiguous: there is not an immediate translation between what we feel and what are reasons to justify these experiences since, in the midst of a wide range of ambivalences where our affects are located, especially when we refer to experiences of suffering, not always we have reasons to find justification criteria in them. Since the theoretical contributions of psychoanalysis, not only the control and reflection of the subject about what they feel and desire were put under suspicion, but also the contingency and vulnerability which constitute the process of subjectivation started to be analyzed as a way of suffering that goes beyond the scope of normative theories of society. Such sense of suffering intends to indicate that, regardless of the socially conquered arrangements, there will always be fissures inherent to the constitution of subjectivity [13]. Unlike this kind of suffering – which we can understand as more radically contingent and idiosyncratic –, the tasks of normative theories must be directed to what we call *social suffering*, in other words, the social and institutional practices that could offer a therapeutic meaning in light of the *social* causes of suffering.

I would like to suggest that sufferings can be social not only in the stricter sense of how they can be confronted in the scope of a theory of institutions, but also in two senses, more immanent to social normativity: on the one hand, in relation to the norms that constitute the subjects' imperatives of accomplishment; and, on the other hand, in the limits given by the social grammar, preventing that the ways of life available to the subject can be widened. Differently than sufferings resulting from contingencies of subjectivation, this socially shared horizon can be a target of the social critique. In this sense, bringing narratives to the scope of critique does not mean to criticize them in an isolate manner, as individual choices, but to insert them in a shared semantic horizon.

However, when the critique takes affects as individual properties, it loses sight of the normative patterns that precede the horizon in which the phenomenology of subjective experiences is inscribed. Thus, it stops offering a critical potential to the vocabulary that precedes the way how subjective experiences are articulated. More than that: if experiences and accounts are intangible individual properties, they stop being a problem of justice. From this unilateral perspective of the accounts, singular experiences of suffering can no longer be faced in what could be their social causes. If I said: "what I feel is my exclusive property", these sentiments would no longer have any relevance from the social critique point of view. The result would be a set of "epistemic scubas": monads which could no longer communicate, blocking the conflict inherent to democratic pluralism itself about the degree of normative relevance of affects to matters of justice.

In the public perspective of accommodating the plurality of worldviews, particular accounts will always find divergences and will eventually conflict with other narratives, which might or *might not* be legitimate from the point of view of its moral value. In the perspective of procedural theories or theories which are closer to moral constructivism, it is up to the speech among the most affected people, and not to the moral philosopher, to

[13] **In** the scope of psychoanalytical theories, the role of the clinic refers to this kind of singularly contingent suffering. Bringing light to this complementarity of a work division between psychoanalysis and social theory means, as a I defended somewhere else, make way to what psychoanalysis has of best to offer: even though we imagined politics in its therapeutic potential, there will always be some kind of suffering which is inherent to subjectivation and that, as such, escapes a normative theory of society. It is due to the fact that an intersubjective relation does not depend on a previously determined content that a social theory cannot satisfy all the criteria of a subjectivity which is completely immune to suffering and symptom. For discussion, see Campello, 2017.

find the validity of their demands. Behind assumptions of rationality and universality, one can find worldviews which, due to the criteria established beforehand as rationally valid, end up excluding the epistemic relevance of other narratives. The theory impoverishes itself, being reduced to a ventriloquist that only repeats itself. In order to escape from this self-referential entanglement, the theory needs to be continuously open to the revision of what it takes as comprehensive criteria. If we reduce the critique to the epistemic potential of the accounts, we become intertwined with difficulties of legitimation, since such singular perspectives integrate a plural framework of world perspectives.

The semantic content of experiences refers, in sum, to the experiences themselves; accounts remain only as accounts if the epistemic potential to transcend its narrative horizon is not acknowledged. Whereas it speaks from their own particular experience, it does not concern to the subject the epistemic authority to distinguish between the horizon of justifications of their preferences so as to put them as a moral rule extended to society. In these cases, the revindication for justice does not derive only from a privileged set of exclusively particular experiences, but it is shared by other subjects. The list of our experiences, the more particular as they might be, are inscribed in a vocabulary which transcends our singularity. Abdicating from this would make us fall into a kind of *epistemic scuba*: particular accounts and experiences nobody can have access to. Normative theories, therefore, cannot claim the right to concede the epistemic authority of critique to subject accounts, by arguing they have authority over their own world perspectives. Just as claims of universality are permanently rectified, we make little progress if we assume that normative theories only refer to the particular.

We do not always have the necessary vocabulary to justify our choices at our disposal. When we do not have the space of reasons, to use the term by Willfried Sellars, to justify to ourselves, we do not have the semantic distance to criticize the singular horizon of what we feel at our disposal. We can call this notion the impartiality effort of *theory perspective*. It consists of the continuous translation into normative criteria of a plural and often conflicting framework of singular narratives. Normative theories and the own epistemic sense attributed to philosophy – in what is left as an attempt of critique – cannot be reduced to biographies. If accounts were enough, we would not need more than literature.

However, neither philosophy nor literature are restricted to biographic accounts. The epistemic force of new vocabulary constitutes itself as heteronomous as it intends to account another self. If we follow autobiographic accounts closely and more attentively, we will see that they can rarely be enclosed in strict identities; they are as darkrooms of identity, inverting images.

When theories reduce themselves to experiences, they take over the assumption of self-referentiality of the accounts which, enclosed in themselves, end up obstructing the perception of other forms of injustice. Inversely, it is the decentering of the particular perspective that enables to widen its capacity of listening and continuously incorporating other accounts. There is, then, a change of perspective from where the philosopher speaks: instead of using their own theory as a guide, it takes the position of listener, that is, someone who not only speaks, but also listens to narratives and perceptions of injustice. It means to assume that the perspective of the researcher is embedded in a certain context. Acknowledging this stand of the theory puts us in a position of listening: being sensible to narratives that were not given reasons to be heard before; listening as a speech what used to be heard as a noise. This pendulum of reciprocal cooperation shows itself in a simpler scheme as this one, as follows:

Theory ⟷ Narratives

However, beyond this pendulum between narrative and theory, what makes us search for criteria of critique beyond the narratives is that perspectives related to the narrative turn are reduced to a semantic horizon of vocabularies that are *apparently* our properties. It is about, here, asking which affects are *possible*, what *can*

we feel? This is why, more than keep insisting in the tension between first-person standpoint and theory, we must ask ourselves how affects are lived and narrated, not only singularly, but specially in the horizon of a socially shared grammar.

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OTHER KNOWLEDGES, OTHER PRAGMATISMS

WHY DO I ADVOCATE SOMAESTHETICS?

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, I will defend somaesthetics since I agree with most of its theses. What is more, I am in the lucky position that I can allude to my earlier article in the ESPES journal regarding the most general features of Shusterman's somaesthetics.[1] These two papers form one. In this way, I do not have to deal with the development and basic features of pragmatism or Shusterman's somaesthetics.
That is why, in my present essay, I will focus firstly (I) on the emancipatory dimension of pragmatism in general. Secondly (II), I will show a unique value and motivation, meliorism, central in pragmatism and missing in many European philosophies. Finally (III), I will remember a more personal side of Shusterman's philosophy, showing how philosophical problems emerge and are solved in his hands.

Keywords: pragmatism, Shusterman, somaesthetics, emancipation, meliorism, continental philosophy

As the founder and leader of the *Hungarian Forum of Somaesthetics* (2018), I have a soft place in my heart for this aesthetics and philosophy. Beyond my personal, emotional motivations, my standpoint also has a rational explanation. On the one hand, I am convinced that pragmatism not accidentally has its renaissance from the last third of the 20th century. Our more and more practical world needs a practice-oriented, experience-based, naturalist philosophy. On the other hand, pragmatism can play this role since it has never become a canonized philosophical movement. Thus, it has never demanded from its members believing in a unique, official credo, giving up their other interests and aims. Pragmatism always existed as a loose group of erudite intellectuals who had diverse interests and followed some principles (practice-oriented naturalism, radical empiricism, meliorism, pan-relationism, and democratism).

There are also other reasons why this framework-type pragmatism is viable and valuable. As the inverse of an official credo, pragmatism can spontaneously assure the proper moving space for the participant's individual development. At the same time, if we are lucky enough, pragmatism can establish or support more and more democratic social circumstances (Dewey: "Democracy is a way of life.") and satisfy human's natural need for happiness (Aristotle).

I want to emphasize here, in my essay, three unique characteristics of pragmatism and somaesthetics, which are already proven, but many people do not accept them. These characteristics are the emancipatory dimension of pragmatism and somaesthetics, their meliorism, and philosophy as a way of life.

Emancipatory dimension of American Pragmatism

As a Pragmatist, I hold it as evidence that human life is practice. However, many people still see recognition and pure knowledge as the essence of humans. If we look at a surgeon or a theoretical physician, it is evident that their life is also practice since they have to satisfy their everyday life needs. On the other hand, their profession is also practice, even if it needs high-level knowledge. Human life is a problem-solving practice from a pragmatist perspective, where everything (even a scientific or a philosophical theory) is a tool.

The practice-oriented and naturalist thinking of the American thinkers was emancipatory for many European philosophers. (Emerson influenced Nietzsche, James influenced Bergson; Pragmatism influenced Heidegger, etc.) The living body was not only put aside but many times despised in continental philosophy (e. g. Plato, Scholasticism, etc.) The only exception is perhaps the Aristotelian tradition, where the philosophical problems and the ideas for their solution were taken in many cases from experience. Nevertheless, it is beyond question that the final aim is also the god-like Form of Forms in Aristotle.

To be honest, it is emancipatory to see from outside the European aesthetics that is determined mainly by Hegel (together with Baumgarten and Kant). Moreover, it is emancipatory to use such a perspective that is not saturated with the arrogance of strict rationalism but is governed by emancipation and meliorism.

[1] Alexander Kremer: "Pragmatists on the Everyday Aesthetic Experience," ESPES Vol 9, No 2 (2020) pp. 66–74. Vol 9, No 2 (2020) (unipo.sk)

As to 'emancipation,' we can say that its general meaning is to liberate somebody from some unequal situation. It follows from this that emancipation always means some equality. That is why emancipation is a particular case of meliorism. Nevertheless, as democracy means human freedom and social justice, I am persuaded that emancipation, understood as equality, also belongs to the broader topic of democracy.

What do we know about emancipation? From a historical point of view, we can speak about three different stages in the development of equality, that is emancipation. Historically the first form of equality means equality in front of the (Christian) God; other gods were not gods of all humankind, but only that of some tribe or group of people, or they did not promise equality in god's love. It was the first type of general equality at the beginning of the Common Era. Its second type is the legal and political equality of the citizens, which was created by the bourgeois revolutions, especially in the French Revolution of 1789. The third type, economic equality, is still a dream since it does not exist in the real world of any society; we can speak even today only about the pursuit of equal opportunities.

There are, however, at least three main threats to emancipation: cultural, economic, and political-military threats. Of course, these are intertwined with each other in most cases. Let us look at first the cultural dimension. It is evident that the effects of globalization destroy the cultural diversity of nations, especially the cultural heritage of the smaller countries like Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, etc. It is beyond question that the government and the civil institutions might slow down the procedure, but they cannot change the effect.

The economic threat is more dangerous since it represents a more significant power. It is well-known that multinational companies have much greater financial and economic power than smaller or even middle-sized countries. Plus, it is also clear (for example, from the last crisis of the world economy, which started in 2008) that the economic competition, or rather the economic battle and fight of the leading economic and financial powers (USA, EU, Far-East, BRIC countries) is getting stronger and sharper, because the concentration of capital reaches new and new heights. (Look at the case of Hungary, which is a symbolic example. The IMF saved our country from financial collapse. Still, its financial rules and regulations created good positions first and foremost for the multinational companies and not for Hungary, in terms of promising economic development in the future.)

The enormous threat is, of course, the political, military, and terrorist threat of emancipation. Look at the Russian invasion of Ukraine's eastern part, Al Qaeda, the Islamic State, and the other terrorist attacks (see Paris, Charlie Hebdo shooting, Jan 7, 2015; Copenhagen shooting, Feb 16, 2015) terrorist groups and networks. Our world changes not only faster than earlier, but its instability also became much more prominent. All of these consequences threaten emancipation very much, and the only hope is democracy.

Pragmatism (both old and new) here can help a lot! Just because of the meliorism principle, according to which we have to improve both our individual and community life with the help of our practice in every moment. Not only the representatives of the traditional pragmatism (especially James and Dewey) but also the new pragmatists (especially Rorty and Shusterman) were and are ardent defenders and supporters of emancipation and democracy. I am also persuaded that it is much easier to get functioned the competitive than the deliberative theory of democracy. The first interpretation focuses, namely much more on the institutions, which we can change faster, and it can also help build later a deliberative democracy.[2] We do need neither the Islamic State nor Al Qaeda; neither Putin's nor Erdogan's dictatorship, the most important thing is building and strengthening democracy!

[2] Cf. A. Kremer:"Rorty on Democracy," *Pragmatism, Religion, Democracy*. (Alexander Kremer, editor) *Pragmatism Today*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, Winter 2013. (http://www.pragmatismtoday.eu/index.php?id=2013winter2)

Meliorism

Although etymologically speaking, we know only that the British novelist George Eliot believed that he coined the words 'meliorist' and 'meliorism,'[3] it is assured that first, the American Pragmatists have chosen it as one of their basic philosophical principles. Meliorism can be interpreted both in a religious and secular sense. I am convinced that William James and Richard Shusterman are excellent examples here. Let's take the last lecture ("Pragmatism and Religion") of James' "Pragmatism: A new name for some old ways of thinking" lecture series. We can see that James introduced the melioristic approach as an alternative to both tender-minded rationalism and tough-minded empiricism:

> Midway between the two, there stands what may be called the doctrine of meliorism, tho it has hitherto figured less as a doctrine than an attitude in human affairs. […] meliorism treats salvation as neither inevitable nor impossible. It treats it as a possibility, which becomes more and more of a probability the more numerous the actual conditions of salvation become. It is clear that pragmatism must incline towards meliorism. (James 1907, 285–6)[4]

James, being a religious pragmatist, expressed his opinion in religious terms. Contrary to James, Shusterman expresses himself in secular terms, but his commitment to this pragmatist principle is as positive as Dewey's and Rorty's case. It is proved by the fact that he listed meliorism among his basic pragmatist principles in his paper, "What Pragmatism Means to Me":

> 8. Meliorism. The meliorist goal of making things better is a key and distinctive pragmatist orientation. Its activist meliorist orientation aligns it in some respects with the Marxian idea that philosophy's interpreting the world is not enough since it is more important to change the world for the better. Through conceptual reform and new ideas, philosophy can make a difference by deconstructing or circumventing various obstacles and opening thought and life to new and more promising options. (Shusterman 2010, p. 64)

It is clear and very important from Shusterman's point of view that the world is malleable and that humans are essentially active since it encourages a more positive, melioristic attitude (cf. Shusterman 2010, p. 64.). He knows well that many philosophers of Europe still insist on the view that "a mature philosophy concerns itself with unchanging realities" (Shusterman 2010, p. 64). Nevertheless, it cannot be an obstacle for him to go beyond this obsolete philosophical approach:

> If action is essential and the world is partly determined by our action, then it is more sensible to orient that action toward improving experience and more useful to believe that our action can in some way be effective. Positive meliorist thinking (which should be distinguished from naïve, utopian optimism) can help stimulate positive results. (Shusterman 2010, p. 64)

Shusterman's project and philosophical problems

After showing the emancipatory and melioristic dimension of pragmatism and somaesthetics, I will characterize some of his somaesthetics' differences regarding other thinkers of embodiment. In the end, I will summarize some of his essential, personal motivations for creating somaesthetics.

If we glance at Shusterman's philosophical relations, we can enumerate plenty of thinkers and philosophical movements. He knows well many thinkers from the earlier mentioned Presocratic Greek philosophers, Confucius, and Dewey, through Plato, Aristotle, and many other philosophers, to Heidegger, Gadamer, Adorno, and he is well trained in the professional dimension of the 21st century, as well. (See my above-mentioned ESPES

[3] "In 1877, British novelist George Eliot believed she had coined meliorist when she wrote, "I don't know that I ever heard anybody use the word 'meliorist' except myself." Her contemporaries credited her with coining both meliorist and meliorism, and one of her letters contains the first documented use of meliorism, but there is evidence that meliorist had been around for 40 years or so before she started using it. Whoever coined it did so by drawing on the Latin melior, meaning "better." It is likely that the English coinages were also influenced by another melior descendant, meliorate, a synonym of ameliorate ("to make better") that was introduced to English in the mid-1500s." (Meliorism | Definition of Meliorism by Merriam-Webster – June 16, 2021)

[4] For a deeper analysis, read Mats Bergman's article: "Minimal Meliorism: Finding a Balance between Conservative and Progressive Pragmatism" In Ulf Zackariasson (Ed.) (2015). Action, Belief, and Inquiry—Pragmatist Perspectives on Science, Society, and Religion (pp. 2–28). *Nordic Studies in Pragmatism* 3. Helsinki: Nordic Pragmatism Network.

article.) Of course, the most important figures he emphasizes are Montaigne, James, Foucault, Merleau-Ponty, Simon de Beauvoir, Wittgenstein, Rorty, Danto, and Bourdieu. Shusterman has evidently his opinion also about many other contemporary thinkers (Deleuze, Bataille, Habermas, Cavell, etc.). Still, he did not want to work out his views regarding every person mentioned above.

Nevertheless, we can find some detailed reflections. Speaking about Shusterman's reflections on other philosophers, we must rely on his original intention:

> If somaesthetics is radical, it is only in the sense of reviving some of the deep roots of aesthetics and philosophy. Yet, new names like "somaesthetics" can have a special efficacy for reorganizing and thus reanimating old insights, as William James shrewdly recognized in defining pragmatism as "a new name for some old ways of thinking," a definition that aptly fits my sense of somaesthetics. (PA 263)

"Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal," which was published as the last chapter of the second edition of *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (2000), describes more precisely what was Shusterman's original intention in establishing the field of somaesthetics:

> There is already an abundance of discourse on the body in contemporary theory. But such body talk tends to lack two important features. First, it needs a structuring overview or architectonic to integrate its very different, seemingly incommensurable, discourses into a more productively systematic field. It would be useful to have a comprehensive framework that could connect the discourse of biopolitics with the therapies of Bioenergetics and might even link analytic philosophy's ontological doctrines of psychosomatic supervenience to bodybuilding's principles of supersets. The second thing lacking in most current philosophical body talk is a clear, pragmatic orientation – something that the individual can directly translate into a discipline of improved somatic practice. Both of these deficiencies can be remedied by the proposed field of somaesthetics, a discipline of theory and practice." (PA 271)

Thus, it is evident that Shusterman's ambition was not to put forth an absolutely original topic or philosophical approach. He only wanted to give a unified theoretical framework for all research dealing with the living human body. It is the analytic somaesthetics beside the pragmatic and practical parts of somaesthetics. Nevertheless, even if he wanted only to give a framework for those activities dealing with the soma, unifying the different theoretical standpoints (Montaigne, Dewey, Foucault, Merleau-Ponty, etc.) Shusterman had to solve several contradictions and form his own unified theoretical view.

As to Foucault, for example, he wrote first about their differences in the last chapter of *Pragmatist Aesthetics*. Later, he analyzed the relationship between Foucault's philosophy and his life ("Profiles of the Philosophical Life. Dewey, Wittgenstein, Foucault," in *Practicing Philosophy*, pp. 17–64),[5] and devoted a whole chapter to the differences between his and Foucault's views in *Body Consciousness* (pp. 15–48, "Somaesthetics and Care of the Self: The Case of Foucault"). I think Shusterman clearly summarized his opinion in *Body Consciousness* (2008):

> Among the many reasons that made Michel Foucault a remarkable philosopher was a doubly bold initiative: to renew the ancient idea of philosophy as a special way of life and to insist on its distinctly somatic and aesthetic expression." He then "examines Foucault as an exemplary but problematic pioneer in a field [Shusterman calls] somaesthetics" because we find its "three fundamental branches, all powerfully present in Foucault" (BC, p. 15 and 23).

What can then be Foucault's problematic side? Shusterman has already summarized it in the 10th chapter of *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (2nd edition, 2000):

> Foucault's avid pursuit of somaesthetics in all its three major branches is no less remarkable than Dewey's, though radically different. The analytic genealogist, who showed how "docile bodies" were systematically shaped by seemingly innocent body disciplines in order to advance certain socio-political agendas, also emerges as the pragmatic methodologist proposing alternative body practices to overcome the repressive ideologies entrenched in our docile bodies. Foremost among these alternatives were practices of consensual, gay sadomasochism, whose experiences, he argued, challenged not only the hierarchy of the head but the privileging of genital sexuality, which, in turn, privileged heterosexuality.

[5] These two descriptions of Foucault's philosophy could have happened almost simultaneously since the somaesthetic chapter was published only in the 2nd edition of *Pragmatist Aesthetics* (2000), and Shusterman published *Practicing Philosophy* in 1997.

> Foucault also repeatedly advocated strong "drugs which can produce very intense pleasures," insisting that they "must become a part of our culture." Bravely practicing the somaesthetics he preached, Foucault tested his favored methodologies by experimenting on his own flesh and with other live bodies. In *Practicing Philosophy*, I probe the limits of Foucault's choices while affirming somaesthetic alternatives that he neglects and I prefer to practice. (PA 281)

Shusterman applied a similar method when he interpreted Dewey's and Merleau-Ponty's philosophy which are closer to his somaesthetics. However, Shusterman is not only a historian of philosophy, but he is, first of all, a philosopher.

Due to the solid metaphysical traditions, the philosopher's traditional picture is still dominant in Europe. The philosopher is the wise man who creates abstract ideas, which are incomprehensible for everyday-life people, and anchors his theory in some transcendental structure or transcendent absolute, and – of course – he knows the Final Truth. Plenty of European intellectuals do not even recognize that they are prisoners of this prejudice. They cannot even imagine that the philosopher can also take after secular scholars of the secular world, not only after the priest. A philosopher can take after an engineer or doctor who claims to know no Final Truth, saying that we can prove only particular truths with the help of our evidence-based experiential and experimental procedures.

Our life becomes more and more practical, practice and theory are getting closer and closer to each other. In such a situation, pragmatism can help us more and more. As it is well-known, aesthetics and philosophy became extremely abstract in Hegel's "Absolute Idealism." He believed e. g. that aesthetics should only deal with fine arts since the significant artworks are the world spirit's significant objectifications. Our task is to understand the world spirit as the substantial mover of the world. Nowadays, most intellectuals do not believe in this sort of Hegelian theory, and we would like to improve not only our rare moments of revelation but also our everyday life. Here, naturalist pragmatism and somaesthetics, which are radically empiricist, can help us a lot. (Accepting the existence of everyday life aesthetic experience, somaesthetics has worked out, for example, several dimensions of everyday aesthetics (somaesthetics of food and eating, that of architecture and creating photos, ars erotica, etc.))[6]

Somaesthetics is a framework-type theory, and Shusterman collects everything that he needs. However, what is it that he needs? Where are his most essential motivations and questions from? I am convinced that Shusterman, as a genuine pragmatist, takes these mostly from his own life. That is, he takes them from his own practice and experience. These are the decisive inspirations when he raises or solves a question. I think that he relies dominantly on his own personal experiences when he forges his most important questions, ideas, and the core of his answers. He then looks for or creates the proper theoretical forms of expression and argumentation if they cannot be found already in other thinkers. This is the main reason why his aesthetics and philosophy are never impractical nor unfeasible.

Mentioning a few examples of his thought-provoking life experiences will be enough. First, you should remember, when he fled to Israel at the age of 16, and he started there a new life. That new life included three years of military service as an officer (1973-1976). Secondly, it is worth mentioning his Zen Buddhist meditation training in 2003. Shusterman's work as a performative artist, described in his book of 2016, *The Adventures of the Man in Gold*, which is both a memoir and work of fiction, illustrated with images of him performing improvisations in a golden, skintight lycra unitard.

Although these are only examples, I am convinced that Shusterman's whole life involves the practice of looking for new paths, experiences, and solutions. I think this is the reason why he can merge the experience of his Jewish origin not only with several elements of Dewey's pragmatism but also with distinctive features of Ancient Greek philosophy's art of living, hip-hop culture,

[6] Cf. R. Shusterman, *Thinking through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Confucianism, Buddhist mindfulness, and modern somatic therapies like the Feldenkrais Method. There are, of course, other elements in his enormous experiential treasury that inspire and shape his writing, some too personal to express in public texts.

Shusterman, as a good pragmatist, tries to learn from his adventures and experiences. However, he not only learns from them but also shapes them to his own needs. In this way, he makes richer, more and more multidimensional, his personality and his philosophical and aesthetic perspectives. After understanding the essential effects, he distinguishes the advantageous and disadvantageous elements, features, processes in a thoroughgoing discursive interpretation. This procedure that depends dominantly on his life experiences rather than on the books he read (though these also play a part) is the main reason for his living, developing somaesthetics, and somatic philosophy. That is why his somaesthetics and philosophy are, and always will be, full of life.

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THE ROOTS OF SLOVAK CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTALISM[1]

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ABSTRACT: This study focuses on the foundations of Slovak critical environmentalism laid by work of Juraj Kučírek, who is also the author of the first ever monograph focused on the philosophical reflection of the causes and possible consequences of the global environmental crisis in Slovakia. Kučírek pointed out the need to combine reflection on subsequent solution of the global environmental crisis with the problems of social inequality and oppression. This unconventional approach in the context of the Slovak public and academic discourse of the 1990s he termed as environmental anthropocentrism. Thus, he had a critical approach to biocentric concepts, which gained a dominant position in the Slovak environmental discourse. His work was followed by Ivan Dubnička, who extended Kučírek´s position to include cultural, political, and religious aspects of the causes of environmental devastation. His research was focused on the relationships of sociobiological and sociocultural determinants that shape human behaviour as a result of biological and cultural evolution. Based on evolutionism and anthropocentrism, he developed the concept of environmental pragmatism. Concepts of both are characterized by the critique of biocentric egalitarianism principle and the emphasis on democratic and human rights aspects of environmental devastation, as well as social and political causes of these phenomena.

Keywords: Slovak critical environmentalism, environmental anthropocentrism, environmental pragmatism, environmental crisis, evolutionism, political philosophy, environmental philosophy

Introduction

The foundations of Slovak critical environmentalism were laid by the work of Juraj Kučírek (1955 – 2000) who is also the author of the first monograph focused on philosophical reflection of the causes and possible effects of the global environmental crisis in Slovakia (*Ekofilozofia včera, dnes a zajtra* [Ecophilosophy yesterday, today and tomorrow], 1st ed. 1995). Kučírek pointed out the need to combine reflection on subsequent solution of the global environmental crisis with the problems of social inequality and oppression. He himself described his unconventional approach as environmental anthropocentrism by which he adopted critical stance to biocentric concepts which gained dominant position in Slovak environmental discourse. His work was followed by Ivan Dubnička (1961 – 2014) who extended Kučírek's position to include cultural, political and religious aspects. They both worked at the Faculty of Arts of the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, where J. Kučírek founded the Department of Political Science and until his death he worked there as the head of the department. I. Dubnička led the department from 2007 until his death in 2014. The work of both was left unfinished. This is also the reason why their – at least in Slovak context – literally groundbreaking concepts have not yet been noticed neither in Slovak nor in international environmental discourse.

Kučírek's environmental anthropocentrism

Juraj Kučírek was in the early 1990s actively involved in discussions regarding ecophilosophy which were a part of the first wave of philosophical reflection of devastation of the environment and its consequences[2] in the new economic and political environment[3]. This began with the first reforms adopted in the early 1990s, and from today's perspective it is clear that this new economic and political environment, which in the early 90s of the last century was not in the Slovak (and Czech) public discourse customary to call capitalism, was not and it is not much more environmentally friendly or considerate than it was before 1989. Kučírek quickly identified these development trends so his approach to reflection of the relationship of the human society to the environment was considerably different to then predominant biocentrism, which was almost exclusively interpreted by the works of international, mainly western authors. Moreover, Kučírek's approach was interdisciplinary and he was one of the few who dared to point out that the solution of the environmental crisis needs

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[2] More on history of philosophical reflection on the environmental problem in Czech and Slovak thinking after 1989 see (Jemelka – Lesňák – Rozemberg 2010) and also (Jemelka 2016).
[3] See e.g. (Kučírek 1992; 1993).

a change of economic and political system, so not only a change in approach and values of individuals as was preferred and to some extent still is by the biocentric environmental thinking. Kučírek's assertion that the causes of the global environmental crisis have social character was in Slovak environmental thinking of the 1990s pioneering[4] as well as provocative because it challenged then uncritically accepted concepts of society and processes of dismantling the welfare state already in progress. In his environmental thinking, Kučírek wasn't afraid to point out the deepening discrepancy between concepts favouring the ethical transformation of the individual and the wave of consumerism massively supported by new domestic elites, mass media and heralds of the necessity of reforms in the spirit of neoliberal ideology in its historical triumph, who came from the same "West" as biocentric concepts.

He introduced his concept in a comprehensive form in the above mentioned monograph *Ekofilozofia včera, dnes a zajtra*. There Kučírek critically analyses not only philosophical roots of the modern industrial civilization but also environmental thinking itself. He points out that "ecophilosophy shortly after its formation split up into two directions: biocentric and anthropocentric" (Kučírek 2008, 55). However, these two directions diverge only seemingly. Both see the cause of the environmental crisis in extreme anthropocentrism which puts man and nature against each other. Both directions also point to necessary change of the value system and way of thinking, and thirdly, according to Kučírek, even biocentrism hasn't really been able to abandon the anthropocentric position, because it, despite its proclaimed biotic equality of all living, attributes to man a unique position among all living creatures. This follows from the requirement that a person or mankind should take responsibility for preserving life on the planet. And it is this discrepancy – discrepancy of the principle of biocentric egalitarianism and the principle of responsibility in environmental ethics or in the concepts of moral ecology – that J. Kučírek criticised. At the same time, he also pointed out the need to turn "from irresponsibility to responsibility of the human race for the environment" (Kučírek 1993, 160). The responsibility cannot lie with a person degraded to the level of an animal species, but only with a person with an exceptional position in the community of all life. This exceptional position stems from the fact that "man is the cause of the current environmental crisis and only he can and must solve it and avert it. An exceptional place also means a high degree of responsibility. The ideal of the modern industrial society – freedom of the individual – must be limited by the recognized need to save life of Earth" (Kučírek 1993, 166).

J. Kučírek responded to the criticism of the authors of the concept of moral ecology looking for the causes of the global environmental crisis in anthropocentrism by claiming that "current ecological problems do not and cannot have their origin in anthropocentrism as such, but only in its too narrow technocratic and vulgarized understanding" (Kučírek 2008, 56). He considers the biocentric romanticism looking for the "culprit" of the global environmental crisis in anthropocentrism and offering a solution of this crisis in elimination of it to be a stage in the development of the environmental thinking which did focus the attention to ecological aspects of all human activities but owing to its own internal discrepancy cannot be a source of necessary changes (Kučírek 1993, 161–166).

Kučírek's position is therefore intentionally and programmatically anthropocentric, but it is an environmental anthropocentrism. And it is, according to him, "based in the polycentrism of nature and exceptionality of man on Earth" (Kučírek 2008, 84). According to Kučírek "anthropocentrism as a philosophical reflection of human existence expresses his self-awareness, which is a prerequisite for the inner noetic revival and self-transformation of man, his thinking and action, his system of values in favour of the philosophy of survival and sustaining life in the broad-

[4] In his investigation of the causes of the global environmental crisis, J. Kučírek thus came to almost the same conclusion as the founder of social ecology, Murray Bookchin, came to in the 1960s. However, an examination of the roots of Kučírek's thinking so far has not shown that he is familiar with M. Bookchin's concept of social ecology. Kučírek's concept can therefore be considered the result of his own efforts to philosophically reflect the key development tendencies of modern society.

est sense" (Kučírek 1992, 118) and therefore the philosophical reflection "as such cannot be anything else then *anthropocentric and environmental at the same time*" (Kučírek 1993, 165). From this viewpoint he also interprets the concept of the reverence for life of Albert Schweitzer, which is according to Kučírek necessary to interpret in the context of the whole Schweitzer's work. From this point of view, he sees Schweitzer's work as an anthropocentric reflection of not only the "will to live", but also of the "senseless cruelty of nature" and also of the "humility before life", and only man is capable of this as well as of the reflection of these phenomena. In that regard, it may also be noted that Schweitzer, as a doctor who has always and everywhere sought to save human lives, may have had difficulty in taking the biocentric attitude which is often attributed to him. Schweitzer's reflections then can be understood as an inspirational source of environmental anthropocentrism. Kučírek wrote that "Schweitzer's ethics rejects the technocratic anthropocentrism of Cartesian philosophy and at the same time in time and content advance overcomes the ecosophistic biocentric inconsistency of environmental anthropocentrism" (Kučírek 2008, 74).

According to Kučírek, the current state of the relationship between man, society, and the environment therefore leads to the need to conceive environmental anthropocentrism, which "consists in recognizing that the normal life of the human individual depends on the society to which he belongs and the ecosystem in which he lives" (Kučírek 1992, 118), which means that "environmental limits determining human activities are introduced into the philosophical system" (Ibid.). Therefore, thinking about environmental problems and threats is inextricably linked with thinking about social problems and threats, even that the key to tackling the environmental crisis lies in the social sphere. "The social problem of man seen on an environmental level becomes a central problem enabling to proceed to the solution of global problems" (Kučírek 2008, 58).

According to Kučírek, the lack of attention to the social dimension of the causes of the environmental crisis is another aspect of biocentric concepts. He therefore also criticized biocentrism that "... it prioritises the responsebility of the individual and takes the social environment into account only marginally. By individualizing the approach to solving the environmental crisis and not seeing or underestimating the social level as content-creating, it reaches a dead end. The appeal to change man, without changing society, is at best a set mirror of our evil conscience and in most cases only an emotional cry without a real resonance of humanity" (Kučírek 2008, 69).

According to Kučírek, "the primary threat to contemporary humanity does not result so much from its negative impact on the ecological balance of the Earth and the catastrophic devastation of the environment, but from its inability to solve and manage its own social events" (Kučírek 2008, 85). The acute environmental crisis is thus a consequence of the social crisis (Ibid.). The main risk is therefore the deepening of the social inequality, because "humanity is not facing an impending ecological catastrophe "united" and operational precisely for social reasons ... The vast majority of people live in such conditions that it is completely irrelevant to them what will be, figuratively speaking, tomorrow. These people have trouble surviving today and no prospects for a better tomorrow, literally living in genetically determined hopelessness and misery" (Kučírek 1998, 4). And it is this misery in the utmost form of lack of water and food that is the main source of a growing number of conflicts, mainly in developing countries. Therefore, Kučírek states, "More than the threat of nuclear war the world and human society today is threatened by "the ticking of a social bomb". The detonator is poverty, which is the fruit of deepening inequalities within and between states. Poverty and hunger are hidden behind numerous civil wars, which outwardly appear as ethnic or religious wars" (Kučírek 2008, 88). Kučírek thus autochthonously came to almost the same conclusions as Ulrich Beck pointed out with his concept of a global risk society. The events of the last decade confirm that social inequalities become the cause or detonator of conflicts when they are exacerbated by acute water, land and

food shortages, whether due to prolonged drought and climate change, population growth, or, most often, their combinations. It is these factors that deepen religious, ethnic and social conflicts that may have long been overcome or latent. The response to the existential threat that water and food insecurity undoubtedly is often takes the form of fundamentalism, a return to the "roots" of ethnicity or religiosity, allowing for a closer grip and thus a more effective struggle of the endangered community for resources. It seems that the generosity and tolerance of an open society allows only a sufficient resources or surplus of them.

In the early 1990s, Kučírek pointed out that it is necessary to "make a critical analysis of the philosophical foundations of western civilization in terms of environmental limits and try to change the common and on the whole world imposed hierarchy of values in these intentions" (Kučírek 1992, 118). At the same time, it was supposed to be a truly fundamental change, even in philosophy itself, in which it is a "shift from the philosophy of world change to the philosophy of its preservation" (Kučírek 1993, 165). He saw in this the essence of his concept of environmental anthropocentrism. At the turn of the millennium, however, he stated that due to the continuing devastation of the environment, "environmentalism must gradually move from finding and defining a new value system of humanity to choosing a real way to solve the problem" (Kučírek 1998, 2). Environmentalism "must be able to solve the problem of responsibility of man and society for the condition of the environment on both interconnected levels – environmental and social" (Kučírek 1998, 3).

In the mid-1990s, when the processes of dismantling the welfare state and desocializing the economy, along with the curtailment of social rights, were just beginning, but at the level of public discourse it was virtually impossible to thematize these themes or even criticize them without risking stigmatizing their author as a posthumous child of the former regime, or so-called "old structure", he was able as one of the few Slovak thinkers reflecting on the deepening environmental crisis, to point out not only its globality, but above all its inseparability from the social crisis, emphasizing their complexity and interdependence, which allowed him to interpret them as a crisis of humanism. In this context, he states that we have reached "a borderline where the crisis of humanity, manifested as the inability or unwillingness to solve centuries-old social problems, blocks the possibility of solving catastrophically accumulating environmental problems" (Kučírek 2008, 78).

He pointed to the need to change society, but not towards the deepening of social inequalities, which was the development of Slovak and global society as a result of neoliberal reforms of the 1990s. Kučírek persistently emphasized that it is social inequalities and their deepening that play a significant role in the devastation of the environment at the planetary level. He rejected the uncritical adoption of the ideas and approaches of the founders of ecophilosophical and ecosophical thinking, which often took place in the Slovak environment in the 1990s. He termed his concept environmental anthropocentrism, thus introducing into environmentalism on the one hand a critique of extreme biocentrism and on the other hand a critique of social inequalities, both the causes of their emergence and their accelerating deepening. At the same time, however, he understood anthropocentric environmentalism as an "practical wisdom" or philosophy of Aristotle, that is, not only as a theoretical reflection without the ambition to influence the environmental as well as the social situation of mankind. According to him, "If the environmental level is not connected with the social level, there is no solution in real practice. Mankind's inability to solve basic social issues escalates environmental problems. Environmental and social is mutually conditioned in time and content in the given process" (Kučírek 2008, 78). That is why he was looking for ways to reflect the knowledge from the reflection on the causes and nature of the environmental crisis in environmental education, in citizenship education or in, thanks to him, the Slovak political science which he helped to build. Ivan Dubnička significantly enhanced the starting points sketched by Kučírek.

Dubnička's environmental pragmatism

Ivan Dubnička was one of the most important representatives of Slovak environmentalism. His concept is based on a comprehensive analysis of the causes and manifestations of the global environmental crisis, in which he sought to combine cultural, political and philosophical approaches to the issue. His research was focused on the relationships of sociobiological and sociocultural determinants that shape human behaviour as a result of biological and cultural evolution. He held the position of environmental pragmatism, evolutionism and anthropocentrism.

He defines his attitude as anthropocentric[5], because according to him, man, with all his evolutionary physical and mental equipment, is "destined to think anthropocentric" (Dubnička 2003, 246). Moreover, if he did not think so, he could not even think ethically, not yet to be held accountable for his actions. From this point of view, therefore, he considers biocentrism in environmental thinking to be internally contradictory, and therefore theoretically and practically unsustainable. In particular, the principle of biocentric egalitarianism and the principle of responsibility in environmental ethics, or concepts of moral ecology are in contradiction. Biocentric egalitarianism, as one of the main principles of moral or deep ecology, presupposes the equality of human and non-human, at least animal life. However, this attitude practically excludes the possibility of taking responsibility for non-human life or even for the preconditions of life on the planet in general. "Being just one of many species and being responsible for them is philosophically inappropriate. Responsibility for something, in this case for the world, for nature, for animals, is a confirmation of superiority, a confirmation of sovereignty and ownership, even if enlightened" (Dubnička 2011c, 41 – 42). Concepts working with the principle of biocentric egalitarianism thus unwittingly fall into positions that are subject to concentrated criticism, because they consider them to be at least one source of the global environmental crisis. According to Dubnička, the authors of moral ecology "make the main mistake in confusing anthropocentric thinking with biocentric and, being held by this mistake, try to solve the crisis in society and in the environment. The crisis caused by the species *Homo sapiens* wants to be solved by the same species *Homo sapiens*, but with a changed identity. They think very little about our nature, about our evolutionary conditions" (Dubnička 2011c, 43). That is why Dubnička pays great attention to evolution – biological and cultural and, last but not least, anthropology. In this context, he literally writes, "An analysis of the global environmental crisis is not possible only from the positions of philosophy or ethics, but also an anthropological view is needed. Only at the roots of human nature can one look for a solution (if there is any) to the current state both in nature and in society" (Dubnička 2011c, 43).

Moreover, according to I. Dubnička, man is human also thanks to culture, and it is always anthropocentric – created by man, in his image and for his needs. I. Dubnička understood culture as an adaptive means of the species *Homo sapiens*, as its evolutionary strategy in the struggle of man as an animal species for survival (Dubnička 2011b, 51). Adaptation to the external environment is material culture, adaptation to the internal environment is spiritual culture (Dubnička 2011b, 52). However, man and his culture are at the same time a part of nature, man, and thus also his culture, is therefore existentially dependent on nature, for example only by the sheer necessity to eat regularly. According to I. Dubnička, this fact shows that the way of subsistence determines culture, i.e. also mythology, cult, magic and morality, and finally its theoretical reflection, ethics. Therefore, we can talk about the culture of hunters, fishermen, shepherds or farmers (Dubnička 2011b, 56). Moral rules are always part of this culture, including relationships with animals or nature in general.

Dubnička examines the ability to think ethically and to act morally from the point of view of evolutionary anthropology, because, as he emphasizes, man is not

[5] In this context, he openly refers to the ideas of J. Kučírek.

only subject to biological but also to cultural evolution. He therefore considers the relationship of man to animals and to the whole of nature to be an important aspect of cultural evolution, through which it is possible to examine the ethical relationship between man and animal and through it the broader relationship between man and nature. However, Dubnička's examination of this relationship as an essential aspect of the global environmental crisis is not limited to the industrial era of human development, as is the case with many authors examining this issue, or seeking reasons and a possible way to overcome the global environmental crisis in the field of ethics and morality, but also takes into account the previous stages of development of human societies – he examines the ethical attitudes of hunters and gatherers as well as shepherds and farmers.

I. Dubnička analyses the metamorphoses of the human-animal relationship (and through it the human-nature relationship) through the prism of how animals are depicted and what importance is attached to them in totemism, mythology, various religions[6], but also in heraldry, modern state symbolism, ideologies and finally in current marketing. In all these cultural forms of man's relation to animals and nature, he shows that the predominant ethical attitude of man to animal species and nature as a whole is pragmatism and often even cynicism[7]. This is what allows Dubnička to point out the problems of environmental ethics, especially that which refers to the allegedly harmonious, non-conflicting relationship of pre-industrial societies with the environment. At the same time, he challenges all theoretical concepts looking for the causes of the global environmental crisis in the field of morality or failing ethical theories. According to Dubnička, humanity has been systematically increasing the selection pressure on the environment for a long time, since the dawn of its history. At the same time, humanity can always find a moral justification for such actions. Dubnička points out that the moral principles of hunters-gatherers no longer prevented the hunting or extinction of many animal species, not even the sacred or totem species, i.e. those species from which individual tribes derived their origin or identity. The extinction of animal species, as one of the most serious phenomena of the current global environmental crisis, is not only a consequence of the way of production in industrial society, but apparently occurred 20 – 40 thousand years ago, when mankind was still innumerable and subsisted only on hunting and gathering. Despite the technology of the Stone Age, mankind, through hunting[8] and landscaping[9], significantly contributed to the extinction of many animal species, millennia before the Neolithic, long before the industrial revolution. Even the ethical and religious ideas of hunters and gatherers, who from today's point of view were much closer to nature than modern man, by considering themselves as an integral part of all living things, "appear as a means to adapt to their own subjective world" (Dubnička

[6] For example, the rise of Christianity, but also of other monotheistic religions is associated with pastoralism. According to Dubnička, they could have originated only in pastoral cultures and are therefore to a large extent their expression, i.e. the expression of the way of obtaining food and the adapted way of life. Not only do they use metaphors associated with pastoralism, but also the value system, the system of organization of society and family (patriarchy) are fully subordinate to nomadic pastoralism and the associated life experience.

[7] He points to a repeating cycle, in which a species was first systematically exterminated and only then, when it actually disappeared from a region or was completely extinct, was it promoted to a heraldic symbol or in modern times declared a legally protected animal or used in marketing in the form of a company name or brand or product name.

[8] Hunting was aimed either directly at obtaining food (meat) and other raw materials (skin, tendons, bones, horns, tusks or antlers of hunted game) needed to sustain human life, or was (and still is) a way of physically disposing of specific animals or even whole animal species that endanger or compete with humans. In this connection, I. Dubnička points out, referring to the amount of archaeological evidence, that prehistoric hunters often used hunting techniques in which whole herds perished (e.g. were driven to a high reef) and hunters could not use the amount of game caught in any way, which does not indicate harmonious, gentle, or balanced relationship to nature, which is often assumed about Stone Age hunters. After the domestication of the first animals and the emergence of agriculture, man-farmers not only changed the country, where there was less and less space for native, non-domesticated species of animals and plants, but also systematically wiped out species that either hunt economically interesting game for humans (domesticated and non-domesticated) or graze on pastures on which humans graze economically interesting species. This process actually continues to the present day – every time a wolf or bear attacks a reared sheep or a after "raid" of wild boars in the fields, the affected farmers always demand the shooting of these "pests".

[9] E.g. by burning forests.

2007b, 73), and thus were not primarily a way or instrument of nature protection.[10] In the relationship between man and animals, moral rules and taboos thus prove to be secondary, even in hunter-gatherer communities, and this mode persists in peasant and industrial societies. According to I. Dubnička, in all periods of the development of human cultures, what protects human property is considered ethical, or even more precisely, what protects the property of the members of society who possess property. Thus, ethics is determined by the predominant way of subsistence and the dominant form of ownership.[11] In other words, the content of morality is determined by the way of life, or way of reproducing society, not the other way around.[12]

Dubnička's attitude to the possibilities of environmental ethics to reverse the destruction of the environment is therefore sceptical. Relying on ethics as a means of overcoming the global environmental crisis means there's a lack of understanding of its real causes. Moreover, as I. Dubnička emphasizes, "moral imperatives do not capture the crowd" (Dubnička 2007a, 399), especially if they are in conflict with the way of earning a living, or rather contradict the basic life strategy, which has been reflected in the economic-political imperative of growth. This imperative of growth can be identified in most institutions of contemporary global industrial civilization. According to I. Dubnička, "this means that agreements, regulations, laws, i.e. systemic measures will be more effective" (Dubnička 2007a, 399) than any well-founded environmental ethics.[13] According to him, ways to overcome the environmental crisis should therefore be sought in the area of political, economic and cultural norms rather than moral norms. Thus, in his view, the global environmental crisis is not a crisis of morality or ethical theory, but a crisis of culture as an evolutionary strategy of human self-preservation (Dubnička 2007b, 193).

He considers the primary evolutionary strategy of the species *Homo sapiens* to be the production and accumulation of overproduction (Dubnička 2007a, 20), which originally allowed overcoming periods of scarcity and population growth in periods of abundance, but now causes such devastation of the planetary environment that the very preconditions for maintaining human cultures and global civilization are threatened. The main cause of the global environmental crisis is not anthropocentric morality, but "the production of overproduction, its accumulation and consumption" (Dubnička 2007a, 20), i.e. the evolutionary strategy of humanity (Dubnička 2009, 90), applied since the dawn of human history with increasing intensity according to possibilities, provided to humanity by in those times available technology. The application of this evolutionary strategy currently encounters the finiteness of natural resources and the ability of nature to absorb the pollution caused by the production and consumption of overproduction. This strategy "is independent of time and space and also of the stage of cultural development, as well as its consumption" (Dubnička 2009, 86), which, according to I. Dubnička, also document various forms of destruction of property, i.e., overproduction, recorded in North American indigenous cultures, which have often not reached a

[10] Although many myths of indigenous tribes also contain an environmental-ethical message (to catch or collect only as much as can be used), as I. Dubnička shows, in reality the effort to extract as much as possible from natural resources often prevailed. The rituals were then to ensure the apprehension of spirits (forests, animals, seas, etc.), or to put the blame on someone else for violating such prohibitions, e.g. on an enemy tribe.

[11] According to I. Dubnička, this helps to explain not only the ethical apology of racism, social inequality, but also war killings and genocide. Already J.-J. Rousseau pointed out the hypocrisy of the morality of a "civilized society" that not only accepts but also protects abysmal social inequality and the unequal distribution of basic resources, "so that some die of malnutrition and others of surfeit" (Rousseau 2010, 110).

[12] I. Dubnička for example draws attention to the fact that the cult of wilderness, unspoiled nature or wild animals arises only where none of this already exists and thus does not hinder the "civilized" way of life of human society.

[13] In this context, he also argues with Christian environmentalism and its central idea of a reasonable steward (Dubnička 2011b, 209). He criticizes Christian environmentalism for its internal contradiction resulting from the effort to maintain the basic premises of Christianity, postulating the superiority of man or more precisely a Christian over nature and all living things, which is a consequence of the biblical concept of man and the world (man as the only creature which has the soul and the promise of salvation and the concept of all living as created, or at least made available to man as the crown of creation) which is a clear anthropocentrism, and at the same time proclaiming the need for biocentrism in the approach to the environment (Dubnička 2007b, 194 – 211).

higher level of economy than hunting and harvesting. Whenever it was possible, "man gathered, stockpiled more food than he could consume at any given time" (Dubnička 2013b, 35). This strategy made it possible to survive periods of crop failure, prolonged drought or rain and subsequent floods. "The production of overproduction was caused by the existential need to preserve the species" (Dubnička 2013b, 35), so it primarily concerned food[14], but relatively quickly it also began to cover all means of obtaining, transporting and storing food. Mankind has never abandoned this strategy, but has extended it to all kinds of goods and services. In addition, it has built up a psychological dependence[15] on the growth of overproduction and its consumption. However, overproduction also makes it possible to continue the growth of the global human population, which results in the need for further growth in production.[16]

Dubnička's knowledge of the realities of life of the indigenous people of North America[17] allows him to avoid in environmental thinking a frequent romantic view of the life of indigenous tribes as idyllic in harmony with the needs and possibilities of nature. On the contrary, he points out that many of the indigenous tribes faced very similar problems to that of modern civilization before the arrival of Europeans. Population growth has forced these tribes, but also civilizations that originated in the Indian subcontinent, either aggressively expand their territory at the expense of other tribes, or formulate and enforce strict rules of birth control if the tribal territory could not be further expanded (Dubnička 2007a, 153 a 159). Many of these, from today's point of view cruel and unimaginable mechanisms of birth control, or population size, however, still persisted in relatively complex state units in antiquity and in many cases such mechanisms are documented in modern times e.g., discoverers, or rather conquerors of America. However, I. Dubnička does not interpret the origin of these practices as a consequence of the feeling of environmental

[14] The need to provide sufficient food determines the material and spiritual culture. According to I. Dubnička, in myths, as well as in religions, the emphasis is always on food and the way of subsistence, the way of obtaining food. Most prayers and sacrifices, as well as images of the afterlife in any religion, lead to food. Prayers and various rituals or sacrifices were to be provided by rich hunting grounds, eternal green pastures, rain, water or, as in Christianity, by "our daily bread". From this point of view, religions are "a barometer of the biological needs of *Homo sapiens*" (Dubnička 2011b, 66). It is questionable to what extent they are able to give relevant answers to the threats facing humanity with their conceptual framework.

[15] I. Dubnička talks about the dependence of humanity on the growth of overproduction, which he compares to the addiction of a drug addict. Just as an addict needs an increasing dose of his drug at all costs, so does humanity need an increase in the amount of overproduction, even at the cost of self-destruction through the depletion of natural resources and the devastation of the environment. This self-destructive cycle stems from the fact that "the larger and more modern production is, the more natural resources as well as energy are needed, resulting in more and more overproduction to be consumed" (Dubnička 2011a, 61), but redistributed beforehand, so with the growth of material production and its efficiency, social inequalities and thus the conflict potential in human societies are also growing. In addition to the social and environmental consequences of this development, civilization thus faces the fact that there are no longer enough natural resources for further growth in production and consumption.

[16] However, I. Dubnička's hypothesis needs to be supplemented at least by the phenomenon of trade, the significance of which was already reflected by Rousseau (Rousseau 1978, 186). It was overproduction that enabled the emergence of trade, which is key in several respects. The production of overproduction, i.e. the accumulation of stocks, can also be observed in some animal species, but trade and long-distance transport are created, organized and technically secured and continuously improved only by humans. And trade, on one hand, accelerates the processes of division of labour and deepening of social disparities, on the other hand, it allows humans as a biological species to circumvent the limits resulting from climatic conditions and raw material resources of specific areas. Therefore, man could populate and live for a long period in areas that did not and do not provide the opportunity to produce a sufficient amount of renewable and non-renewable resources necessary for the life of human communities. Thus, trade makes it possible to at least mitigate the immediate determination by specific natural conditions, even in prehistoric times. The biological species Homo sapiens has long managed to circumvent population growth limits, which do not allow any other animal species to grow long-term and globally. Whenever an animal species exceeds the limits set by a particular habitat to feed on it, the overpopulated population dies out. However, thanks to trade – except for local fluctuations – man has been able to circumvent this basic limit given by biological origin for a long time. At present, thanks to trade and transport technologies, there is a number of countries that do not have enough of their own resources and raw materials for their own populations and industries. However, from a global perspective, trade and transport have become not only major causes of economic, social, political and environmental crises, but also of a number of conflicts. See (Suša – Sťahel 2016).

[17] The first book by I. Dubnička (with co-author B. Šikulinec, 1998) *Prírodný svet Indiánov* [The Natural World of Indigenous Americans] is written as a cultural and anthropological study of the life of the indigenous people of North America. In this work, he already notes the key role of the environment in the formation of cultural and social institutions, but also the impact of the application of these institutions on the environment, which multiplies with the growing population.

responsibility resulting from a truly ethical, i.e. selfless relationship of natural nations (tribes) to the country and animals living in it, but as a sign of environmental pragmatism which results from hard-won experience of recurring famines and the associated disruptions, or often collapses of societies. From the point of view of environmental pragmatism, according to I. Dubnička, it is possible to explain not only the differences of individual religious systems in the approach to meat[18], but also to many other phenomena of family and social life or even the very forms of religiosity, and associated rituals and cultural norms.[19]

Dubnička´s environmental pragmatism is much more a description of approaches applied universally – i. e. in all cultures – in relation to the environment, respectively to resources that can be extracted from nature at a given time and place and regarding available technologies, rather than consciously applying environmental pragmatism as philosophical concept. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify precisely those approaches in Dubnička's texts which, according to Emil Višňovský, are characteristic for this part of pragmatism, respectively for environmental philosophy inspired by pragmatism, which is "analysis of socio-cultural practices and their corresponding normative orders" (Višňovský 2014, 69). However, Dubnička's approach is also in line with philosophy of pragmatism – it seeks ways or arguments that would allow environmentalism to be applied in practice. In his understanding, should be environmentalism a practical philosophy, not just an academic theory that is not interested in the possibility of its application in practice. Višnovský's characteristic of environmental pragmatism, which, in addition to solving theoretical problems, tries also to "focus on the contribution to environmental policy" (Višňovský 2014, 78) could be applied to Dubnička.

One of the sociocultural practices that Dubnička pays attention to is genocide. On the side-lines of supposed European humanism, which was supposed to manifest itself in more "civilized" behaviour, I. Dubnička recalls the practices of systematic extermination of the indigenous people of North America used in the 19th century, which was publicly defended and even publicly funded, with an excuse that immigrants[20] coming from Europe need the land (Dubnička 2007b, 130–144). European colonial expansion was thus driven by the same motives and needs as the self-destructive conflicts of the natives – the pursuit of land as a basic resource, as a precondition for life and development of any community. I. Dubnička therefore states that "land is fought for always, everywhere and against all" (Dubnička 2007b, 133), not only against the original population, but also against those animal species which in their way of livelihood competed or compete with the livelihood of the given society.[21, 22] It is in this context that Dubnička points to

[18] Environmental pragmatism is in his view also the gradual transformation of Indian cultures into lacto-vegetarian ones, as due to the rapid growth of the population it was no longer possible to produce enough meat for the entire population in the Indian subcontinent and geographical factors very significantly limited the possibility of territorial expansion. The original Vedic and Buddhist texts not only do not forbid the consumption of meat, but take it for granted, as well as professions associated with them, e.g. butcher. (Dubnička 2012a, 125).

[19] I. Dubnička elaborated this aspect of his concept in his last work *Šamani, mesiáši, proroci a reformátori* [Shamans, Messiahs, Prophets and Reformers] (Dubnička 2013a).

[20] In connection with the settlement of the American West, N. Chomsky talks about "settler colonialism", which is "the worst of all, because it eliminates the original population. Other kinds of imperialism exploit it, this one eliminates it" (Chomsky 2013, 9). In this connection, A. M. Lause points out that the expulsion, expropriation and often the extermination of the indigenous population, which took place in parallel with wiping out the wildlife, in particular bison, did not end the struggle for land. Small farmers were gradually expropriated by cattle breeders, often as violently as the indigenous people, so that originally independent farmers became (at best) dependent on rental work. Subsequent fencing of large farms together with the construction of railways made it impossible for small farmers to manage, so that dramatic changes in the social structure of society continued even after the expulsion, or rather extermination of indigenous people (Lause 2016). Livestock farming and the relocation of multi-thousand herds over hundreds of kilometres have often devastated the environment more than small farms. At the same time, fenced large farms and railways prevented not only the free movement of settlers and cattle drivers, but also the free movement of wildlife, thus preventing the seasonal movement of herds. This coincidence of environmental and social devastation is key to understanding the real causes of the environmental crisis and formulating possible ways to overcome it.

[21] Dubnička's research makes it clear that genocide is relatively common against various animal species as well as against other human communities. The genocide of Native Americans, carried out for centuries by farmers and governments, is relatively well documented. I. Dubnička points out that it took place not only in the form of direct killing or intentional spread of infectious diseases (e.g., smallpox spread by distributing infected blankets

the elasticity of moral norms or ethical cynicism, as the genocide of animal species and ethnic, national or religious groups is almost always justified, or sometimes even adored by ethical, religious or ideological arguments. (Dubnička 2007b, 120, 140 – 141). Using a number of examples from history, I. Dubnička documents that the perpetrators of genocide often have no problem offending and invoking their "moral right", or even "moral duty", to proceed even more uncompromisingly and harder when their victims oppose them. From an anthropological, political, cultural, philosophical and, last but not least, environmentalist point of view, it is therefore important to note that genocide is not a discovery of the 20th century, but is at least as old as humanity.[23]

"Genocide pursued a very specific goal – territorial gain, i.e. the acquisition of property in the form of land, which is the basic material unit in the production of overproduction" (Dubnička 2007a, 236). This strategy was not only a specific feature of European complex societies, because "the age-old wars were fought between, for example, Eskimos and subarctic Indians, the peoples of Polynesia, etc. In environmental terms, wars have always been waged in order to obtain resources. The food and raw materials that these resources represent are a guarantee of existence"[24] (Dubnička 2007a, 247). The indigenous people of Polynesia and America simply did not have the technical and organizational skills to apply this strategy to other continents. Finally, it can be stated with I. Dubnička that "civilizations arose from war nations, which drove peaceful hunters and gatherers to the periphery of the world" (Dubnička 2007a, 261). This is an important finding for the political and philosophical reflections of global civilization, because "in today's technical and global world, "territory", i.e. resources, is fought for not only with neighbours but also on another continent" (Dubnička 2007a, 261).

With the continuing devastation of the environment and the spending of final resources, without which not

to Indigenous people), but also in the form of systematic devastation of the environment (pasture of game, game itself, e.g., bison, crops in the fields, etc.), which enabled the life of indigenous tribes (Dubnička 2007b, 127-144). In this context, Dubnička also notes the similarity between the practices of hunting carnivores (mostly wolves) and humans (Indigenous people), in both cases for decades for remuneration paid from public funds, as well as motives (mostly economic) and their ethical and legal justifications.

[22] However, the American philosopher F. Jameson emphasizes that even "today it is all about land", whether it is sources of water, raw materials, deforestation, construction of highways, power plants, water reservoirs, destruction of monuments by developers or the rights of natives, it is always a struggle for land and its use. At the same time, he adds that "all these struggles are the result of land commodification" (Jameson 2016, 13). In short, land is a basic non-renewable resource, the availability of which is declining only due to population growth.

[23] This finding is particularly important in the context of discussions of biocentrism and anthropocentrism, because if one has repeatedly committed genocide since ancient times, it means that even interspecies altruism is not the absolute norm for him. This is also pointed out by less drastic, but in human history prevalent forms of human relations such as slavery, servitude, or colonialism, and many other forms of oppression of one social group against another. From this point of view, the requirement, or even the assumption of interspecies altruism, which is one of the central premises of biocentrism, appears to be fictitious or utopian, or in the words of J. Kučírek romantic. D. Špirko in connection with the demand for interspecific altruism and biotic egalitarianism even points out that "slavery could be born in its earliest forms only in the conditions of such a socio-ethical concept, which did not yet separate man from nature and make him equal with other living creatures" (Špirko 1996, 109). According to Špirko "it was the non-anthropocentric ethics that was the prerequisite for the emergence of social inequality and unfreedom" (Špirko 2011, 15), because "slavery actually appears immediately after the domestication of some animal species and perhaps at the same time" (Špirko 2011, 14). In contrast, it was "anthropocentric humanism that represented the path to the emancipation of man to man" (Špirko 1996, 110). Z. Palovičová also states that: "Interspecies altruism, which is the essence of Earth's ethics and deep ecology, has not been proven" (Palovičová 2012, 53). This also has consequences for the possibility of resolving the environmental crisis in the form of a new environmental ethics. If even classical anthropocentric ethics has not been able to eliminate genocide in interpersonal relationships, it is only illusory to assume that environmental ethics could succeed in eliminating humanity's predatory relationship with living beings, or even the environment as a whole.

[24] This is quite evident in the retrospective view of the settlement of America, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, but also many areas in Africa by people from Europe in the 19th century. The Nazi attempt to acquire habitat (land and other resources) a century later, carried out with almost identical methods and justification as the settlement of the American West, was morally and legally condemned only after its military defeat. This enabled the emergence of international law, which outlawed genocide and aggression. However, the erosion of this system in the first two decades of the 21st century resurrected the threat faced by small or less developed human societies from prehistoric times: those who do not defend themselves have no right to property, land, and ultimately their own existence. Given that populating of the Earth was completed more than 10000 years ago, except for a few remote areas, especially the islands of the Pacific Ocean, it is therefore necessary to be very sceptical about all concepts considering the possibility of building a new society "on a green field" – for a few millennia, this must have been preceded by the expulsion or genocide of indigenous peoples and often indigenous species.

only overproduction but also basic reproduction of society is impossible, it is becoming increasingly clear that the struggle for resources will not only continue but will also become increasingly ruthless. Today's civilization is existentially dependent on oil, because "almost everything works on oil energy and what doesn't, is made from oil" (Dubnička 2011a, 59). And it is this mass use of oil, or fossil fuels in general, that is a major source of global pollution and a cause of climate change. At the same time, however, a civilization dependent on oil is threatened by its possible lack. Mankind "spends energy from fossil fuels a thousand times faster than nature stores in an underground bank, and these resources are not bottomless" (Dubnička 2011a, 68). In this context, I. Dubnička points out that a peak oil will endanger not only the functioning of industry and transport, but also the production of food and the distribution of drinking water. This would mean not only a crisis of industry and transport, but especially food crisis, which has great potential to threaten the stability of the social and political systems and thus, ultimately, global civilization because "if once fossil fuels run out, and humanity has not migrated to other, equally effective energy source, 90% of the population of our planet will be completely without resources" (Dubnička 2011a, 71), which would only further deepen the already dangerously large inequality between people and countries. Thus, Dubnička, like Kučírek, also thematizes the social dimension of the meaning of the concept of environmental crisis and the possible political consequences arising from it.

However, Dubnička's study of the development of the relationship between human communities and the natural environment, which enables their existence, also makes it possible to outline the periodization of history, which depends on the way of subsistence which predominates a particular historical period. From Dubnička's viewpoint, hunting and gathering, agrarian and finally industrial societies can be distinguished according to the determining method of overproduction production. However, I. Dubnička shows in several examples that the sequence of these types of society is not one-way, and even, it is not clearly conditioned by technological development. When some Native American tribes, originally subsisting on agriculture, were given horses and later firearms by Europeans, they abandoned the settled way of life and replaced agriculture as the dominant means of obtaining food by hunting bison. They thus returned to hunting culture, but this development cannot be clearly described as a regress, because, as Dubnička points out, new technologies have made hunting a much more efficient and even safer source of food than agriculture could have provided to the tribes at the time. In addition, hunting was less strenuous and time consuming than the previous exclusively manual cultivation of not very fertile fields. From this point of view, the decision of these tribes can be understood as a manifestation of environmental pragmatism. Other tribes were forced to return to the lifestyle of hunters and gatherers by the expansion of Europeans, who pushed them out of their original tribal territories, where many of the indigenous tribes had established permanent settlements as well as agricultural land. When these original sources of their existence were lost, the choice of harvesting and hunting as a way of obtaining food was again a manifestation of environmental pragmatism.

I. Dubnička also developed his philosophical concept in the reflection of the phenomenon of culture and those aspects of human evolution which were key to its constitution. He thus formulates the evolutionist philosophy of culture, which is beneficial precisely by its anchoring in the reflection of the global environmental crisis. Material and spiritual culture, in his opinion, therefore deals primarily with the solution of two basic problems, which are food and sexuality (Dubnička 2012a, 23). He considers the production and consumption of meat to be a key phenomenon, which has significantly contributed to both the biological and cultural evolution of man. It convincingly proves that the claims about the nature of vegetarianism, with which some biocentric concepts work, contradict the findings of evolutionary anthropology and culturology. He points out the very close connection between human sexuality and meat consumption and, to some extent,

their interdependence, which is most evident in the oldest human communities, but is present, albeit in much more sophisticated forms, in contemporary cultural and social institutes. In addition, in most past and present cultures, the availability and possibility of meat consumption is considered a sign of higher social status, which also affects the choice of a life partner, or rather the possibility of procreation and rearing offspring. For most of human history, vegetarianism has been more a sign of environmental necessity, i.e. lack of meat food, or the impossibility of its production, than the conscious choice of individuals or entire communities. Even in this case, according to I. Dubnička, it is possible to use environmental pragmatism as an argument. From the beginnings of humanity to the present, most people prefer meat or at least do not exclude it from their diet and give it up only if its production or availability is limited. He concludes that "ecological conditions dictate the way of subsistence which subsequently determines spiritual culture," and extends it with an assumption that "all decisive external determinants and biological laws which influenced the phylogeny of *Homo sapiens* are transformed into spiritual culture, into traditions, customs, and religions" (Dubnička 2012a, 24). I. Dubnička thereby assumes that biological and cultural evolutionism is connected, which allows him to examine meat not only as a form of food, but also as a cultural and social phenomenon.

The consumption of meat has been a privilege of elites for most of human history, which had and still has socio-cultural as well as economic and political causes and consequences. Access to meat is still an indicator not only of social status, but also of quality of life. The rising standard of living in the world's most populous countries is also reflected in an increase in meat consumption. However, trying to meet this growing demand has serious global environmental and social consequences, as "one hectare of land will feed only one person eating meat, but the same area of land can feed up to 50 people eating plant food" (Dubnička 2012a, 125). The continuing growth of the world's population and the parallel increase in the consumption demands of the inhabitants of the world's most populous countries make the phenomenon of meat consumption a fundamental environmental as well as a philosophical and political issue.[25] Despite this fact, according to Dubnička, vegetarianism cannot be considered as a starting point for finding alternatives to face deepening social inequality, "or for finding alternatives to face the global environmental crisis" (Dubnička 2007b, 190-191), because even in India, which is 80% vegetarian "there is violence, crime, religious or ethnic intolerance, and, which is very important from an environmental point of view, India is one of the countries with the highest population mortality from malnutrition" (Ibid.). A closer look at the quality of life and the state of the environment in India shows that even the prevailing "vegetarianism doesn't bring about the desired environmental reconciliation" (Dubnička 2007b, 191). The popular search for ethical or even biocentric attitudes and solutions to overcome the global environmental crisis in Eastern religions, or cultures is therefore, according to I. Dubnička, extremely problematic.

In his concept, Ivan Dubnička identifies the causes of the global environmental crisis in the very evolutionary strategy of humanity, i.e. much deeper than conventional environmental thinking is willing to admit. This usually finds them in monotheism, modern rationalism or utilitarianism and subsequent industrialism, and especially in anthropocentrism. But according to I. Dubnička, all these phenomena are only a development or improvement of the basic evolutionary strategy of humanity – to produce and consume overproduction. If the global environmental crisis is a consequence of the evolutionary strategy of humanity, or rather the failure of this strategy due to the overpopulation and effectiveness of technology that mankind has created to fulfill

[25] Its urgency is exacerbated by the fact that livestock farming is extremely demanding not only on the amount of feed consumed, which could otherwise be used for direct human nutrition, but also on drinking water consumption, and also contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, especially methane, which effects climate many times more than the gases produced by burning fossil fuels.

this strategy, then the global environmental crisis is also a crisis of this strategy, i.e. a crisis of culture, a crisis of humanity as a whole, not just modern, Western or industrial civilization. However, without a proper identification of the real causes of the global environmental crisis, the proposals derived from them to overcome the threats facing humanity as a result of environmental devastation cannot be effective either. Following J. Kučírek, I. Dubnička therefore refuses to see the causes of this crisis only in the anthropocentrism of monotheistic religions or modern secular humanism, as well as biocentric concepts seeking a way out of the crisis in the rejection of anthropocentrism. Dubnička points out not only the internal contradictions of biocentrism, but also suggests the problem of transforming biocentric concepts into economic and political reality. His reflection on the global environmental crisis thus not only has a purely theoretical character, but also has a considerable practical aspect, practically in the sense of Aristotle's understanding of practical philosophy. It is from this point of view that environmental anthropocentrism, as understood by I. Dubnička, can also be considered pragmatic, in terms of seeking not only the causes of the global environmental crisis, but also a thought and argumentation framework to influence real social, political and economic institutions[26] so that their functioning ceased to jeopardize the preconditions for sustaining human life on Earth.

It is from this point of view that the position of anthropocentrism, or more precisely environmental anthropocentrism, seems to be key. Indeed, if environmental thinking is to have a chance to influence the development of society and, above all, the current economic and political system so that human life is sustainable in the long term, including the system of constitutional democracy

[26] In one of his last texts (Dubnička 2016; the text was published posthumously) I. Dubnička also reflects the factual failure of the ideas and organizations of the Slovak environmental movement, which before 1989 and during the breakthrough events at the end of 1989 was among the most vocal critics of the pre-November regime. This is evidenced not only by the marginal position of the Green Party in the Slovak political system, which in no elections since 1989 alone won enough votes to enter parliament, but also by the de facto collaboration of the Green Party with political forces promoting a neoliberal economic and political system, when the party was in 1994 and 1998 elected to parliament as a joint candidate with right-wing political parties. The reforms, which during this period were approved by the parliament also with the votes of the deputies elected for the Green Party, made it possible to intensify the exploitation of the environment and citizens, thus contributing to the devastation of the living and social environment in the country. The ideologies of growth and consumerism were implemented into Slovak public discourse and state policies, at least with the tacit support of the Green Party. The results of the political activity of Slovak environmentalism are both in clear conflict with the basic premises and goals of environmental ideology, both in the environmental and social field. I. Dubnička sees primarily three causes of this condition. The first is the fact that Slovak voters are not quite clear where in the classical political dichotomy left – right to place the Greens, or rather environmentalism, to which the majority of Slovak green activists, who after 1989 tended to the political right, made a very significant contribution. Some even to the extreme forms of neoliberalism, or market fundamentalism, which they have become open heralds and apologists (Dubnička 2010, 273), ignoring the fact that "environmentalism has been characterized by criticism of capitalist society since its inception" (Dubnička 2016, 486). Elsewhere, however, Dubnička states that "because environmental attitudes are not state-forming in any political regime, they become a welcome tool for opposition parties and movements, regardless of who is in power" (Dubnička 2012b, 310). This is one of the reasons why several protagonists of the post-November regime were involved in the environmentalist movement during the previous regime, but they quickly forgot about their environmentalist "past" in the new regime. He sees the second reason in the low social level of people mainly from the lower social class, which causes that "all their interest is focused on job opportunities and other existential problems" (Dubnička 2016, 489). The third reason, which I. Dubnička considers anthropological, is, according to him, the tendency of a person to behave like a consumer, which is based on his knowledge that the primary evolutionary human strategy is the production of overproduction and its consumption. Moreover, according to Dubnička, this tendency was given unprecedented space precisely as a result of massive propaganda and at the same time uncritical acceptance of the idea of consumerism after 1989, which was essentially a logical consequence of one of the causes of the collapse of the pre-November regime. I. Dubnička sees this in agreement with J. Keller in the fact that the regime of real socialism failed to meet the consumer expectations of the population (Dubnička 2016, 490-491), which it directly and indirectly evoked. The calls for voluntary consumption restrictions posed by various environmental movements are thus still identified in the current regime as restrictions on freedom of consumption, which is considered to be one of the crimes of the former regime. It turns out that e.g. freedom of movement, i.e. the possibility to travel, regardless of the environmental consequences of mass tourism and the air transport associated with it, is still one of the pillars of the legitimacy of the post-November regime. At the same time, this freedom of movement is understood not as political freedom, but above all as freedom of consumption. Even the fact that the economic transformation has devastated Slovak national economy to such an extent that around 300,000 citizens have had to leave the country due to a lack of jobs is presented as an achievement of a new regime that has brought people the freedom to travel. At the same time, the catastrophic consequences of the fact that so many people of active working age left to work abroad not only for environmental, but also for demographic and subsequently social and political sustainability, or rather basic reproductive ability of Slovak society, are ignored.

and civil rights and freedoms, it must remain anthropocentric. Only anthropocentric arguments can reach a sufficient part of the population in the limited time left to humanity before the devastation of the environment and climate change reach a level that will make it impossible for human life to continue on its current scale. Without the democratic consent of at least a part of the human population, the necessary changes to the current social, political and economic institutions will be possible only by suspending democratic principles and rules for the adoption and enforcement of legislation. In short, anthropocentrism has a better chance of reaching enough people than biocentric concepts. If it turns out that even a relatively understandable anthropocentric humanism for a large part of the population is not sufficient for real changes in the redistribution of natural resources, as evidenced by deepening social inequality and persistent hunger in many parts of the world, it can hardly be expected that biocentric arguments[27] succeed in support of substantially more extensive changes to current institutions. If so, certainly not in the limited time humanity still has to make fundamental changes.

For environmentalism to really become the main political movement of the future and replace the ideologies of the 19th century (liberalism, conservatism, socialism), as announced by H. Skolimowski (Skolimowski 2006), or rather so that at least climate change and its impact on human society can mitigate while the democratic framework of the organization of society is still maintained, it will be necessary to obtain the consent of the majority in a relatively short time. If the value reorientation of humanity based on biocentric arguments, the transformation of traditional anthropocentric morality into biocentric morality, a change in the civilization paradigm, or a change in the mentality of individuals of future generations of mankind had a chance to succeed because of the evolutionary cognitive and psychic equipment of humanity, these changes would take a long time. It would be a process that would literally take generations. However, the speed of climate change, population growth and the devastation of the global ecosphere shows that humanity does not have that much time.

Conclusion

Kučírek's and subsequently Dubnička's critique of biocentrism and Christian environmentalism in many ways anticipated the attitudes and arguments that began to appear in environmental thinking in an effort to philosophically reflect the causes and possible consequences of the anthropocene. The current state of the global environment, devastated by the growing human population and its increasing consumer expectations, practically doesn't allow for another possibility in the relationship between man, or humanity as a whole and the planetary environment, as the relationship of a sensible steward or administrator to the limited and vulnerable resources enabling life (Planetary Stewardship). Thus, in the interests of self-preservation alone, mankind must begin to view the environment and the resources that this environment provides to man as something so rare and limited that it must be not only managed, but also handled very sensibly in any other way. The question is how to formulate arguments in favor of such an attitude so that it is truly universally, i.e. across the social, national, and religious lines dividing contemporary humanity, acceptable. However, it is possible to agree with Dubnička that remaining in religious positions (conceptually, argumentatively and terminologically), which arose in a completely different cultural, knowledge and climatic environment than the current humanity is exposed to, does not provide the arguments needed for the necessary global consensus.

[27] From this perspective, biocentrism appears as a relatively elitist concept, able to address only a very small circle of highly educated and at the same time relatively well-situated individuals. A person struggling for survival – enough water and food for every day – cannot afford a biocentric attitude – they see everything in their surroundings only as a potential source of food or heat or as a building material. The key to tackling the global environmental crisis will be how humanity manages to deal with the social crisis – deepening social inequality and the growing number of people worldwide who do not have access to the basic resources of life – water, food or shelter. Of course, this also means the need to address the problem of global human growth.

As the current and critical environmentalism also appears in connection with how intensive natural scientists involved in the refinement of the anthropocene concept point out that the cause and thus the potential possible solution to the global devastation of the environment is in the field of economic-political and socio-political relations, which is one of the central theses of critical environmentalism. J. Kučírek outlined it already in the 1990s, i.e. at a time when the current extent of climate change, extinction of plant and animal species, deforestation and many other negative phenomena could still be prevented. However, even in our public discourse, the ideas of industrialism, consumerism and the need for continuous economic growth prevailed, which are incomepatible with the need for social and environmental sustainability. In accordance with Dubnička's environmental pragmatism, the priorities of the economic and political system of global industrial civilization should be adapted to changing climatic, biological and social conditions so that humanity does not exceed the limits of the planetary ecosystem, as it has been doing for decades. Tribes and local civilizations that did the same in the past, mostly devastated their environment to such an extent that they eventually disappeared. There is no reason to believe that the same fate will not await global industrial civilization if it does not radically and quickly reconsider its basic imperatives.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the Slovak critical environmentalism is characterized primarily by an anthropocentric basis, or the position of environmental anthropocentrism and environmental pragmatism, critique of the principle of biocentric egalitarianism and emphasis on democratic and human rights aspects, or rather on the consequences of environmental devastation, as well as the social and political causes of these phenomena. At the same time, the basis is the fact of the existential dependence of any social, economic, and political system on the environmental conditions available in a particular region in a particular historical period. In their work, they were sketched by J. Kučírek and I. Dubnička. However, they are also further developed by D. Špirko (See for example Špirko 2011 a 2013) and also (Sťahel 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2020 a Suša – Sťahel 2016).

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DEWEY ON EDUCATION

NEW EDUCATION AND DEWEY´S PRAGMATISM

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the concept of education in John Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism. Dewey addressed education as it related to the development of American democracy. He considered democracy to be the fundamental pillar of democratic society, and not only understood democracy as a political system, but as a way of life. Dewey's concept of education is based on the epistemology of pragmatism: he rejects the traditional division of theory and practice; truth is not something given in advance but is the result of experimental science. The barrier isolating doing from knowledge should be eliminated. Dewey emphasizes doing and social interaction, and therefore tends towards operationalism and experimentalism. This leads to a reassessment and rejection of the existing philosophical tradition represented primarily by Plato, Aristotle and Kant. Pragmatism rejects metaphysics, Christianity, and embraces biological evolutionism with all of its implications for education. Dewey's revolution in American education is intended to be entirely in the service of democracy and its values. Unlike traditional concepts of education, which were primarily concerned with educating the elite, Dewey desires a social and political transformation of the world strongly shaped by social policy. Dewey develops his concept based on the historical optimism stemming from the Enlightenment, many aspects of which he himself criticized. The present study recapitulates the basic thoughts of Dewey's concept of education and shows its limits.

Keywords: education, philosophy of education, Dewey, pragmatism, democracy, progresivism, school system

The nineteenth century was a time of extensive social changes in the western world. At that time, North America became aware of its dependence on European heritage in many areas. Scientific, technological and sociopolitical development resulted in a great many stimuli to which America in particular responded with a newly emerging philosophical direction - pragmatism.[1] The greatest proponent of classical pragmatism in upbringing, education and schooling was John Dewey. His efforts opposed traditional education, which in his opinion was inadequate for the new age. His concept of education is tied to the democratization of all areas of social life. In his time, Dewey was a leading social reformer who helped found the New School for Social Research, American Civil Liberties Union, American Federation of Teachers and more.

Dewey not only understood democracy in the narrow political sense as a form of government, but also as a way of life, a way of solving problems. (Višňovský 2001, 25.) Dewey himself was a completely committed public intellectual; he was able to reach the broader non-academic public and ordinary people. He knew that democracy is fragile and requires a strong democratic culture; its primary constituent is a democratic *ethos*. If this *ethos* dissipates, democracy becomes false and meaningless. Dewey knew that he could only help defeat the enemies of democracy by shaping the personal attitudes of individuals. Based on this broader conception of democracy, one can understand Dewey's lifelong interest in education. The problem, however, turns out to be the epistemological positions from which he does so.

Among his most influential writings with regard to education is his work from 1916 Democracy and Education, along with the books: Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology, Schools of Tomorrow (1915) and Experience and Education (1925). Democracy and Education represents Dewey's main interest: to prepare students for democratic citizenship. Dewey realized that to have civic character one requires "mental equipment" and moral character. Dewey developed "scientific thinking", which as a "mental habit" is characterized by free research, mutual tolerance of diverse opinions, and open communication. (Jenlink 2009, ix)

Democracy and Education was for many just as important as Plato's *Republic* or Rousseau's *Emil*. Everything is summarized here into one coherent concept. In it, Dewey presented a number of topics that he did not think through in sufficient depth, but he congenially linked the development of democracy and educational reform. The great theme is the vision that American democracy is based on a revolution in education. The democratization of society should instigate a move away from the elitist concept of education.

1 "The term ‚pragmatic', contrary to the opinion of those who regard pragmatism as an exclusively American conception, was suggested (...) by the study of Kant. In the *Metaphysic of Morals* Kant established a distinction between *pragmatic* and *practical*" – writes Dewey in his article *The Development of American Pragmatism (1925). (Dewey 1998, 3)*

To this day, Dewey and pragmatism continue to have exceptional influence on American education and intellectual life. This influence can be well understood through the lens of an evolutionary interpretation of the American experience. American self-confidence was formed through the experience of moving from the Old World to the New World, an opportunity to begin again. This process was also imbued with the optimism that one could learn from past mistakes and thus break free from the consequences of the past. The realization that the future can be actively shaped had a strong effect. Belief in change and the formation of customs and conditions not only affected American reality but also intellectual life. "Society itself is a process of interactive changes among people and their various institutions, institutions that over time become outdated and must be changed." (Campbell 1995, 2)

Dewey's democratic spirit is influenced by two seminal figures. The first is Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1892), whom Dewey counts among the New World citizens who have broken free from inherited doctrines. The second is Charles Darwin (1809–1882), who brought attention to the variability of life and emphasized its ability to adapt. However, Dewey did not only understand the American experience from these two perspectives. (Campbell 1995, 2) This experience goes hand in hand with the possibility of a new beginning. It was the Protestants who wanted to break with the Roman tradition in America, which they were not permitted to do in England. America (the New World) thus embodied the chance to cut relationships encumbered with social traditions. A troubled life is here given a chance to start anew. It is an opportunity to build a new life, not be limited by the customs and obstacles of old Europe.

Building the new face of America above all concerned the manner of upbringing and education; this area became Dewey's passion. Upbringing and education – more than politics – were to promote things that were practical, not abstract and theoretical. Achieving this through politics would be slow and ineffective. That is why Dewey wanted to change the world through schooling. His goal was the political and social transformation or reconstruction of the world. In several ways Dewey tends more towards a concept of instrumentalism than pragmatism. (Edmondson 2006, 7) Under the influence of his or "instrumentalism" or "experimentalism", Dewey claimed that philosophy is a waste of time if it is not useful. Upbringing and education – more than politics – should promote things that are practical, not abstract

Dewey's America was characterized by a sharp increase in population, which grew mainly due to the influx of immigrants. It was a time of social protests and *laissez-faire* capitalism. Dewey became convinced that a changing society needed a new school system that would be more influenced by science than ever before. Students would no longer just sit on benches and memorize, but would solve problems and learn to work together. Scientific habits should be formed in elementary school. Science shouldn't just be something esoteric for students, but should help to develop proper attitudes. It is precisely "the development of scientific attitudes of thought, observation, and inquiry that is the chief business of study and learning." (Dewey 1981, 394) Manual training should also come to the fore. In addition to science, students need to be led to experiment. For Dewey, education is a laboratory in which philosophical concepts are to be tested and presented. The reconstruction of education should result in the reconstruction of personal and social life. (Višňovský 2001, 26)

With this emphasis, Dewey turned against the authority in education held by the thinkers of ancient Greece. He believed that their age had ended. The modern revolt began with an appeal to experience and turned away from the purely rational concepts that needed to be practically verified by experience, or were merely an expression of prejudice and institutionalized class interest. (Dewey 1916, 338) Dewey was very much in favor of eliminating mere book learning (bookishness), as it would not achieve a consistent reorganization of education. What he welcomed, on the other hand, were advances in psychology, industrial methods, and experimental science. This was proof to him that experience is

primarily practical, not cognitive. Dewey emphasized that the problem with education lay in the separation of knowing from doing. (Dewey 1916, 306) Learning should be achieved by doing, based on evolutionary conceptions of mental development.

Epistemological prerequisites for new education

Dewey's educational reforms are tied to a new epistemology, which consists of overcoming the traditional concepts of theory and practice, which have been valid in philosophy since the time of Plato. Dewey believed that this problem would be resolved by replacing the traditional spectator theory of knowledge, the truth of which was immutable, with a theory where truth is the result of experimental sciences. This new theory would be built on action and would abolish the mutual isolation of knowledge and action. The classical philosophical tradition overlooked experience as such and posited the real goal and ideal to be knowledge of reality, which cannot be known by experimental methods. According to Dewey, traditional philosophical idealism carries the pathos of nobility, as it sees its highest duty in providing "an intellectual or cognitive certification to the ontological reality of the highest values." (Dewey 1981, 378) In this classical tradition, true knowledge is only accessible through reason. In the seventeenth century this was changed by the scientific revolution, which introduced a new epistemological paradigm. Mathematical knowledge of nature formulated by mechanical concepts declared itself to be the only voice of natural philosophy. (Dewey 1981, 373) Older philosophy became untethered from natural science at that time, lost its support and ceased being the superior form of knowledge. Dewey believed that knowledge now requires action, and that scientific methods are also about the formation of values. For Dewey, doing is therefore the heart of knowing. Instead of intellectualism, Dewey emphasizes empiricism.

The task of philosophy should be to facilitate fruitful interaction: "our cognitive beliefs, our practical beliefs about the values, the ends and purposes, that should control human action in the things of large and liberal human import." (Dewey 1981, 379) Although Dewey considers it necessary to abandon the traditional view, which considered action to be significantly inferior to knowledge, he is far from claiming that "action is higher and better than knowledge, and practice inherently superior to thought." (Dewey 1981, 380)

Dewey accepted the spirit of the age and its intoxication with the scientific method, which he advocated in education. He emphasized his belief in science as a guide to life by announcing the "Copernican revolution." Dewey understood science as knowledge itself. While many thinkers have distinguished between knowledge and action, Dewey abolished this distinction, stating that knowledge is nothing but doing. He was an advocate of the theory of operationalism, which states that knowledge is only the scientific method in action.

In general, pragmatism desires to be scientifically oriented; the gains of modern science are to balance out Christian fundamentalism. Pragmatism is directed against metaphysics, against natural law, so it does not believe in the idea of its own truth, which would be a purpose in itself. The purpose of research is not to attain the truth about oneself, but to seek consensus on what needs to be done. Investigation that does not coordinate action is mere wordplay; it is a matter of making technological or political progress – that is why pragmatism does not see a sharp line between the natural and social sciences, between social sciences and politics, or even between politics, philosophy and literature. There is no profound gulf between theory and practice; theory must have an effect on practice, otherwise it remains mere wordplay. Indeed, the whole of culture is part of the same effort to improve society. (Rorty 1999, xxv)

School as community: "New education" as an introduction to social life

Dewey characterized his time as the "twilight of intellectual transition" (Dewey 1998, 41), which requires a new philosophy. While within the ivory towers of academia the scholastic-conservative concept still survives, beyond

them philosophy is heading in a new direction. Social progress demands new goals for education. Especially with regard to the democratization of society; philosophy and education can no longer be just for the elites, but should touch broad swathes of society. This effectively abandons the concept of education and begins the machinery of training, where education appears only as an exception.

Education for Dewey is a social process, school for him is a form of community life. After all, the entirety of American society is to be transformed from "The Great Society" into "The Great Community". According to Dewey, schools should transform society democratically and socially. A school represents society in a small microcosm of social life – the education of students here replaces the process of their socialization. It is important for a progressive educational system to have a strategy of creating small groups: in classrooms, in schools. (Schutz 2020, 124) Instead of competing with one another, students are encouraged to learn to cooperate. Academic priorities in education should give way to social goals.

For Dewey, belief in objective truth or an authoritarian determination of good and evil is detrimental to students. Dewey himself considered his work to be experimental. He is more committed to breaking down traditions and conventional religions than exploring how students can learn more effectively. He wants to establish a new political and social reality. He understands education in the broadest sense as the continuity of social life. Learning and education, transmission and communication. These are necessary for the continued existence of society. (Dewey 1916, 4)

The new transformation of society and its new needs requires new schooling. "A new system of education" must be built in response to the changing world. It must be rid of its isolation from society. "I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race." (Dewey 1981, 443) Education and upbringing is a social process, meaning that it must consist primarily of social experience. It is a process of life taking place now, not a preparation for future life. (Dewey 1981, 445) School must represent, in simplified form, current social life. Dewey believes schools fail because they too often neglect this community life. It appears crucial to Dewey's thesis that teachers are not in school to represent an idea or to form certain habits in the students, but are here to be members of the community; their task is to encourage influences that will nurture students. The point is to help students respond properly to such stimuli. It is not the immediate task of the teacher to discipline. Discipline should pass to the student from the overall life of the school. (Dewey 1981, 447) Students in school should not be exposed to a sudden amount of special studies, reading, writing geography etc. without these being related to social life.

Rather than just science, literature, history or geography, it is important for Dewey that the core of a school be the student's own social activity. (Dewey 1981, 448) Science only has a role to play in education if it helps social life; language *is not* to serve primarily to express thoughts but rather to communicate – is is a social instrument. "Education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing." (Dewey 1981, 450) It is necessary to rebel against traditional schooling; progressive schools cannot rely on traditional customs. New education should be simpler than the old, it should be at one with the principle of growth. (Dewey 1981, 510) Here, Dewey is already strongly at odds with the tradition of formulating ideas and expressing them in language.

Dewey devoted great attention to Rousseau, who had considerable influence on his thinking about progressive education (regardless of how critical Dewey was of the way Rousseau treated his own children). Dewey and Rousseau both shared a belief in the inherent goodness of people.

His book *Democracy and Education* (1916) represents the true spirit of an America that is fascinated by the departure from theory and ultimately from philosophy. After all, Richard Rorty reminds us that for sixty

years his teacher Dewey tried to wean his students off of Plato and Kant. Like other pragmatist philosophers, Dewey was labeled a relativist. In general, however, the pragmatists themselves describe themselves negatively, such as anti-Platonists, or anti-metaphysicians, or anti-fundamentalists. (Rorty 1999, xvii) Pragmatic philosophers criticize old philosophical dogma, what their opponents call *common sense,* while the opponents of pragmatism consider clinging to these dogmas to be sensible. It is precisely from the position of traditional sensibility that Dewey's efforts appear in their main aspects to be an attempt to destroy all philosophy. He thus helped strip America of a perspective that represented intellectual potential. His pedagogical considerations are closely related to his ethical considerations. He turns against abstraction, ethical and philosophical problems which in his view have been wrongly posed. In a sense, he can be considered an "anti-philosophical philosopher": he believed traditional philosophers to be people unable to live in the real world, who therefore construct their perfect and unchanging worlds of ideas or science. (Višňovský 2001, 23)

The limits of pragmatism and education

Dewey did more work in the field of education than on his own philosophy. Although his importance for the level of education and organization of the American school system is often emphasized, there are also critical voices who point out the negative influence of pragmatism and Dewey on philosophy and education.

According to Hannah Arendt, pragmatism and modern psychology influenced pedagogy and teaching faculties so much that they have become a scourge for education. [2] (Arendt 1961, 182) Arendt made this statement about American education in her essay *The Crisis in Education* in 1954. She gave the following reasons: Teaching today emphasizes didactics, which brought general principles of how to teach regardless of the specific subject. The teacher has become a mere manager of knowledge that he may not know in depth; such a teacher can teach anything. This attitude brings with it a new understanding of what it means to teach. The personality of the teacher, which has traditionally played a major role in upbringing and education, recedes into the background. On the contrary, the mere ability to teach is overemphasized. However, a teacher should know his subject inside out. Arendt showed that this predominantly didactic relationship to teaching leads to a weakening of the authority of the teacher, who is often only a few lessons ahead of the students. This modern theory of learning, criticized by Arendt, found its basic systematic and conceptual expression precisely in pragmatism, which has had a fundamental formative influence on modern education in America.

In 1955, Paul Crosser published a book called *The Nihilism of John Dewey*, where he shows Dewey's attempt to destroy all philosophy, and in 2006 Henry T. Edmondson published *John Dewey and the Decline of American Education*. Both authors point out the weaknesses of Dewey's concept of education and state that education with an emphasis on social experience tends to disrupt, which is evident in its relationship to classical education. Arendt characterizes Dewey's philosophy with the words: "But hard as it is to agree with Dewey, it seems even harder to disagree with him, for such disagreement is to disagree with common sense personified. And who would dare or like to do that?" (Arendt 1994, 195) What is so complicated about his philosophy is that it is just as difficult to agree with it as it is to disagree. Arendt pointed out that, according to Dewey, the source of all the social and political evil of our time lies in *laissez-faire*. However, in light of recent history, Arendt knows that true hell can only be established by thoroughly opposing *laissez-faire* through scientific planning. (Arendt 1994, 195) She emphasized this in her essay *Social Science and Concentration*

2 "The ... basic assumption which has come into question in the present crisis has to do with teaching. Under the influence of modern psychology and the tenets of pragmatism, pedagogy has developed into a science of teaching in general in such a way as to be wholly emancipated from the actual material to be taught. (...) But this pernicious role that pedagogy and the teachers' colleges are playing in the present crisis was only possible because of a modern theory about learning." (Arendt 1961, 182)

Camps (1950), where she writes about the involvement of science during the extermination of people. She reminds us that Dewey's central concept is not a concept of man but of science. "Dewey´s main effort aims at applying to the social sciences scientific concepts of truth as a working hypothesis. This is supposed to put the social sciences on a sound epistemological basis from which they and we will progress until the supposed gap between natural and social science is closed." (Arendt 1994, 195) Arendt's critique of social sciences is well known, along with Strauss' critical view of Max Weber (Strauss 1953, 42), whose concept of non-evaluating social sciences he considers a manifestation of nihilism.

It is no coincidence that Rorty wrote about Dewey trying for sixty years to free students from the domination of Plato and Kant. Dewey's main achievements were rather negative: he showed how to break free from the shackles of intellectual burden we inherited from the Platonic tradition. (Rorty 1999, xiii) It is precisely the attempt to break free from the Platonic tradition that brings the post-Nietzche tradition of European philosophy together with the pragmatic tradition of American philosophy. (Rorty 1999, xvi) The critique of Plato and Aristotle lies in the fact that man is characterized by the ability to penetrate beyond the curtain of phenomena. Pragmatic philosophy is not concerned with knowledge that is self serving – this sets pragmatism apart from the philosophical tradition. On the contrary, it wants to cultivate knowledge that contributes to human happiness. Rorty emphasizes that a specific and necessary ability is to trust and cooperate with other people, and to be able to cooperate to improve the future. He cites three Utopian projects as examples: Plato's ideal state, the Christian attempt to realize the kingdom of God, and Marx's vision of the victorious proletariat. (Rorty 1999, xiii) These attempts were aimed at improving our institutions by having more and more people work together to attain happiness.

Dewey was often accused of being a relativist. Pragmatic philosophers, however, never call themselves relativist. Rather, they define themselves negatively as anti-Platonic, anti-metaphysical or anti-fundamentalist. Pragmatic philosophers don't even want to be labeled subjectivists. They want to abandon the vocabulary of their opponents and not have it imposed on them. Pragmatism is about avoiding Platonism and metaphysics in the broad sense as expressed by Heidegger – metaphysics is Platonism; the central concern of pragmatism is the usefulness of terms we have inherited from Plato and Aristotle. Opponents of pragmatism believe that getting rid of these terms means abandoning rationality; rationality according to them consists of respecting the difference between absolutism and what is relative, between the discovered and the made, the object and the subject, nature and convention, reality and phenomenon. Pragmatists respond, according to Rorty, that if this is rationality, then they are undoubtedly irrationalists. They completely refuse to speak in a Platonic way and therefore are gradually looking for new forms of speech. The pragmatic philosophers call themselves anti-dualists – which is again directed against Plato. (Rorty 1999, xix)

Rorty notices that the distinctions between philosophy, science and politics is disappearing in American pragmatism. Pragmatists are often consider themselves naturalists, although they deny being reductionalists or empiricists; they object to both British empiricism and the Vienna Circle, which are not even sufficiently naturalist. The Americans went down a different path than the Europeans. European philosophy according to Rorty is full of proclamations (phenomenological ontology, hermeneutics, archeology of knowledge, genealogy). While Dewey spoke of the scientific method, he never explained exactly what it meant. James occasionally spoke of the pragmatic method, but this meant nothing more than his words about anti-Platonism. None of this, according to Rorty, became a prerequisite for a skeptical stance against traditional philosophical questions and concepts. Quine, Putnam and Davidson may have been labeled analytical philosophers, but none considered themselves to be thinkers who carried out conceptual analysis. (Rorty 1999, xxi) "Philosophers in the English-speaking world usually do not take the work of philosophers in the non-English-speaking world very seriously,

and conversely. The gap between so-called ‚analytic' and so-called ‚Continental' Philosophy shows no signs of being bridged." (Rorty 1999, 47)

Here, pragmatism rejects the philosophical tradition based on the discovery of natural laws, on the contrary, it is inclined to believe that philosophical problems are artificial by nature. Pragmatism criticizes traditional philosophy for dealing with virtually absent pseudo-problems; instead it wants to only deal with what is actually present and unleash capacity to address real problems of the present day. That is why pragmatists would like to break with the Cartesian-Locke image of the mind, which seeks contact with a reality outside itself.

Pragmatism is based on an evolutionary/biological perspective, which rejects miracles and is characterized by an aversion to metaphysics (it considers faith to be a habit of action and questions the usefulness of faith). Pragmatism is close to Darwin's conception of man as an animal that adaptively overcomes itself to cope with the environment; man strengthens his abilities that bring him more pleasure and less pain. In his article *The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy* (1909), Dewey notes that Darwin's *Origin of Species* not only represents a watershed moment for natural science, but is also an intellectual revolt, a new way of thinking. This in turn leads to a transformation of the logic of knowledge, which affects morality, politics, and religion (Dewey 1998, 39). The influence of Darwin on philosophy is so significant that it has taken control of the phenomenon of life, which is characterized by constant transition. The principle of transition brings with it a new logic for the interpretation of mind, morality and life.

The human body is in contact with reality just like any other organism. The very idea of being out of contact with reality presupposes a non-Darwinian, Cartesian notion of the mind, which is independent of the causal reality of the body. If pragmatism wants to accommodate Darwinian thinking, it must abandon traces of Cartesianism and stop thinking of words as a representation of reality; words should only be taken as nodes in a causal reality connecting an organism with its environment. In pragmatism, language is understood through a biological perspective (Rorty 1999, xxiii). After all, we know that Dewey developed his view of mind, thought, and language in constant dialogue with the biology and psychology of his time (Johnson 2010, 123).

Conclusion

Even if pragmatism rejects the Enlightenment, which refers to the supernatural light that leads a person to the truth, in the end it is clear that Dewey himself trusted science too much. His concept of developing society through the Enlightenment ideals of science and education is indicative. It fails to evaluate the assumptions of the modern idea of progress, and certainly not the fact that pragmatism shares progress itself with the Enlightenment; there is also no consideration of the "dark side" of human life, while at the same time the formation of habits driven by planning and reason (or science) is overvalued and considered a non-problematic positive phenomenon. Although Dewey talks about modern psychology and its place in education, he understands it in its positivist reductionism. Pragmatism is certainly not mistaken in the fact that the Enlightenment replaced the supernatural idea of God with a quasi-divine authority - reason, but pragmatism itself could not break free from the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment's emphasis on science, despite the limited scope of its methodology, is characteristic for pragmatism. Morality is more a matter of compromise between competing versions of good than between absolute good and absolute evil. (Rorty 1999, xxix) The question remains, to what extent it is possible to renounce the category of absolute evil, or to what extent can the dehumanization of man (e.g. the Holocaust) be considered the result of competing versions of good.

Pragmatism desires to reduce human suffering and strengthen human equality. In its view, this goal cannot be secured by any supernatural power, but rather by purely technocratic and excessive – almost revolutionary – optimism. Pragmatism thus represents one form of modern earthliness. It confidently anticipates a great

scientific revolution which will occur as a result of the collective cooperative organization of knowledge and safeguarding of social values. Interpersonal relations are to be scientifically controlled. Unlike Arendt or others, Dewey is unconcerned with the impact this will have on a person's life. He emphasizes collectivism at the expense of the individual. While the emphasis on interaction, collectivism and the practical aspects of education enables better technical management of many social tasks, its leads to the neglect of the importance of classical literature, philosophy and history for education. The disappearance of these areas from education and from life leads to what Arendt has already pointed out: the understanding of the importance of authority disappears, and not only in education. Pragmatism rejects the universally valid truth that is called reason, or human nature, considering it only as an idea that can serve as a starting point for debate. Paradoxically, however, Dewey and pragmatism do so from a position of reason, while undermining belief in its universality.

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Book Reviews

VIOLA, TULLIO. PEIRCE ON THE USES OF HISTORY. BERLIN/BOSTON: WALTER DE GRUYTER, 2020. PP. 250 & V–XI. INDEX OF NAMES AND INDEX OF TERMS.

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In a clear, engaging, textually informed, consistently nuanced, and extremely insightful manner, Tullio Viola addresses an integrated set of important questions. More than a hundred years before the publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (1962), C. S. Peirce realized what science is and what it might become can be ascertained only by a detailed familiarity with the actual history of various communities of experimental inquiry. He implies as much when he writes: Even "the method of science is itself a scientific result. It did not spring out of the brain of a beginner: it was [itself] a historic attainment and a scientific achievement" (*The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* [hereafter CP], 6.428). If such history of science were not yet written, then the philosopher of science must, to some extent, become an historian and execute the task. Peirce's manuscripts especially reveal how seriously he took this implication of his understanding of science (witness what Viola refers to as the "Putnam history" [p. 41]). This interest was far from being purely antiquarian; it was rather one cultivated primarily for the sake of facilitating the growth of thought. "Opinion has," Peirce was convinced, "a regular growth [or destined outcome], though it may be stunted or deformed. To take the next step in philosophy vigorously and promptly, we must study our own historical position" (quoted in Viola, p. 45, note 34). Elsewhere he refers to the "drama of the last three centuries of struggling thought, in politics and sociology, in science, in mathematics, in philosophy." "If there is a regular growth about philosophy, *we want to place ourselves historically*, and take the next inevitable step in the most vigorous and prompt way" (NEW IV, 379; emphasis added). Peirce did just that: he situated himself historically and his understanding of continuity, semiosis, and indeed science enjoined him to do so. In turn, Viola has situated himself in the cross-currents of Peirce's voluminous writings for the sake of showing in detail how Peirce's uses of history were central to virtually every facet of his philosophy. Whatever shortcomings mark his endeavor, Viola's principal aims have been largely realized. Though he is carrying forward the work of Max H. Fisch, Carolyn Eisele, and more recent scholars, he is doing so in an original and innovative manner. One of the inevitable next steps in Peirce scholarship was a fuller treatment of the "historicist" Peirce than was available before the publication of this monograph. Viola has taken this time in a timely and vigorous manner.

Though he covers a range of topics, there are two principal questions with which he is preoccupied: (1) What are the distinct, though possibly related senses of history discoverable in Peirce's voluminous writings? (2) What are the uses to which Peirce puts history in these different senses? Of course, he is deeply appreciative of the fact that history is itself (in W. B. Gallie's memorable expression) "an essentially contested concept" (a concept to which he is fully committed). While Viola takes pains to disambiguate history, he might have taken even greater care in this regard. Even so, the two main senses of this equivocal word are for his purposes sharply delineated.

In addition to the sense of history as it was identified in Peirce's classification of the sciences (put most simply, history as knowledge of the past), there is that of *historicity*. Think of Fisch's essay "Was There a Metaphysical Club in Cambridge?" He sifted through, again and again, a wide array of primary sources simply to establish the existence of this "club." Or take the alleged existence of a historical figure of world importance, say, Napoleon. It is noteworthy that Richard Whately, the author of Elements of Logic (1826), so pivotal in Peirce's intellectual development, also wrote *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Buonaparte* (1819). It is also noteworthy that Viola takes account of the fact that "a copy of Whately's book about Napoleon could be found in Peirce's private library" (p. 204, note 48). Finally, consider the legend regarding Pythagoras. An understanding of history including a critical embrace of – hence, a reliance on – testimony, tradition, and the vague ideas of common sense is unavoidable. Please notice how much of the concern here is focused on simply *establishing* on the basis of testimony, monuments (including documents granted the status of monuments) and possi-

bly other sources of evidence, the basic historical facts (e.g., the existence of Napoleon or the periodic meetings in Cambridge, Massachusetts, of a group of intellectuals). What is in evidence here is just how seriously Peirce took skepticism, without being a skeptic. "I applaud skepticism with all my heart," he insists," provided it have four qualities: first, that it be sincere and real doubt; second, that it be aggressive; third, that it push inquiry; and fourth, that it stand ready to acknowledge what it now doubts, as soon as the doubted element comes clearly to light" (CP 1.344). In no arena of inquiry is such aggressive skepticism more of a methodological prerequisite than historical investigations, where human commitments, passions, and especially antipathies are likely to stunt or deform, if not actually block, inquiry. Even so, Peirce appreciated Whately's book on Napoleon for what it was, a satire. Given the weight of historical testimony, it would be unreasonable to suspend belief in the existence of this figure. Indeed, the point of this satire is aimed at exposing the fatal flaw in the wholesale reject of eyewitness testimony. To nullify this weight, in the name of what seems reasonable to us today (as David Hume tried to do in his rejection of miracles), is in effect to make historical actuality conform to contemporary fashions. We are too much at risk of etherealizing the actuality of the past, in its alterity from the present (see, e.g., Viola, pp. 100ff.). To presume we are in a position to know better than those who were present smacks of arrogance, while to accept without question what they testify to have witnessed points to credulity.

Regarding *Geischichtlichkeit* (Viola, p. 67), Viola makes a bold, pivotal, and, in my judgment, plausible claim: "Peirce cultivated a strong conception of historicity, one that becomes most visible once we focus on the processualist nature of his semiotics, metaphysics, and of his theory of evolution" (p. 7). To history in the sense of our accredited knowledge of past events, there is accordingly *Geischichtlichkeit* and, moreover, our consciousness of this historicity. (There are of course not only more senses of history in general than these two but also more uses of this word in Peirce's writings than these. It would accordingly have been helpful for Viola to have offered a fuller disambiguation of this contested concept.). There are, in addition, at least two sides to our consciousness of historicity. On one side, there is an appreciation of how decisively the past has shaped the present (see, e.g., p. 7 and p. 71). On the other, there is an awareness that our locus in the present decisively shapes not only interests in the past but also our understanding. The former can be made to look as though the historical present is in the iron grip of a completely determinate past. The latter can be taken to imply we are imprisoned in the present. As Viola notes, Peirce implicitly recognizes "that history can only be written from a specific historical angle, i.e., the stage of scientific development at which historians find themselves" (p. 59, note 81). Hence, historicity seems to pose a dilemma: Either historical determinism or invincible presentism. On Viola's reading, however, the historical present is a site of intellectual autonomy (see Chapter 4, especially pp. 100-104). Moreover, the actual past is always to some extent discoverable by those situated in the historical present. Because Viola focuses on facts rather than the significance of facts, that is, because his main concern is with establishing historical facts rather than interpreting their contested meanings, some thorny but crucial questions are largely evaded. In this he is faithful to Peirce, at least to a foreground feature of his subject's intellectual persona.

In a work deserving far more attention than it has received, Joseph L. Esposito suggests: "In contrast with the one-sided idea that we are either always within history, or mystically transcending it, the critical appreciation of the variety of forms of historical consciousness … suggests instead the possibility of an evolution of such consciousness to the point of heightened self-awareness" (*The Transcendence of History*, p. 169). In the history of Peirce's thought, precisely as portrayed by Viola, we observe nothing less than different forms of historical consciousness reaching a "point of heightened self-awareness." In his case, then, we do not catch Peirce either endorsing the view that we are imprisoned within history or advancing the position that human beings

possess a capacity to transcend, as timeless spectators, the flux of history. With great subtlety, he (at least) implies that the transcendence *of* history, insofar as it is possible, is an achievement in history. While it is always partial, provisional, and fallible, such transcendence is real. But historical consciousness, not least of all such consciousness evolved to the point of heightened self-awareness, "is not something that stands apart from human cognition, but is in fact [!] a construction of the mind itself" (Espositio, pp. 169-70). While he would readily grant a constructivist role to the inquiring mind, Viola would nonetheless never abandon the objectivist commitment of the working historian. This pertains both to himself (as an intellectual historian, he is committed to a realist approach) and Peirce (as an interpreter of Peirce, he is convinced that, vis-à-vis history, Peirce is as much a realist as he is elsewhere in his philosophy). Even with regard to the reconstruction of the past, "the outward clash" plays a decisive role (see, e.g., Viola, pp. 109–12).

Reality, understood as that which possibly "stands apart from human cognition," is in a weak sense a construction of our minds. It is how some thinkers conceive reality. This conception might track its object better than other notions, but it is one among other "essentially contested concepts." So, too, are facts. Facts are not data: they are not given. Rather they are established. What is established as a fact stands firm. The hardness of facts is not compromised by acknowledging that the status of anything as a fact is, especially in the context of history, the result of self-controlled processes of inference. As a result, its brute actuality deserves to be acknowledged, not slighted by exaggerated emphasis on the fallible procedures by which typically contested claims are sorted out and the "hard facts" are themselves established. While facts are in a sense, as the word suggests, "fabrications," calling attention to them as the compelling results of human procedures does nothing to reduce them to *mere* constructs. As Joseph Margolis and Bruno Latour, along with others, have argued, constructivism and objectivism are not necessarily exclusive alternatives.

One of the merits of Viola's book is to be so alive to the issues of Peirce's day and of our own time, without either conflating these or presuming them to be utterly disparate. In his account of Peirce, he at once avoids both the insularity of presentism and the incoherence of historical relativism. As a result, Peirce does not abide in the eternal present but lives in the historical present, in all of its fissures, ambiguities, and indeed, contradictions. To live in such a present is ineluctably to be caught up in processes of renegotiating the terms of one's inheritances and confronting more squarely than has yet been done disconcerting novelties, novelties indicative in crucial respects of a future at odds with the present. What enables Viola to accomplish this is having so thoroughly done his homework, specifically, having raked the unpublished manuscripts, read the published writings, consulted his intellectual predecessors and contemporaries, also an impressive amount of secondary literature, pertaining both specifically to Peirce and generally to the topics treated in this book (e.g., periodization, testimony, and narrative).

"The study of Peirce's approach to history itself has," as Tullio Viola notes in the Introduction to this book, "a history" (5). Such historical self-consciousness informs *Peirce on the Uses of History* at every turn, without undermining the author's hermeneutic commitment to Peirce's avowed realism (not least of all, the insistence on seeing realism as "a leading motif not only in his history *of* science, but also in his conception of history *as* a science" [p. 223]). In reference to history (our knowledge of the past), then, Viola is committed to reading Peirce as a realist. But Peirce's attunement to the historicity of his own endeavors *and* his commitment to realism are among the defining features of his philosophical project, as Viola so deftly exhibits in this monograph (a contribution to Peirceana, a series edited by Francesco Bellucci and Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen). In this regard, Viola's own orientation is unmistakably Peircean: his advocacy of realism is not allowed to blunt his awareness of the historicity of *his* project. But, then, this awareness is in

turn not allowed to compromise this advocacy. Contra such interpreters as Joseph Esposito, Peirce delicately balances rival impulses.

The history of the study of Peirce's engagement with history is thus worth recalling here, if only briefly. After mentioning the names of Max H. Fisch, Murray G. Murray, Philip P. Wiener, and Walter B. Gallie as scholars who in the 1950s oriented the study of Peirce to include an historical dimension and the formal consideration of historiographical questions. The title of Murray's book (*The Development of Peirce's Philosophy*) was itself instructive, for it unambiguously indicated the model for how to study Peirce (developmental studies were ideally suited to the dramatically unfolding character of Peirce's philosophical investigations). At the very time when academic philosophy was increasingly becoming an ahistoric discipline (see, e.g., Gallie 1964, pp. 145-51), philosophical attention to the nature of historical knowledge, especially on the part of "American" philosophers (e.g., Morris R. Cohen, Arthur O. Lovejoy, and John H. Randall, Jr.), but also analytic philosophers (e.g., Alan Donagan, William Dray, and Patrick Gardiner) was a notable feature of academic discourse. For those such as Fisch whose interests extended to Giambattista Vico, such attention was welcome, even if all too often this attention assumed forms in which broad questions of fundamental importance (above all, those pertaining to the relationship between philosophy and history) were occluded.

Viola takes care to highlight certain salient details in what for many Peirce scholars is an unknown story. In 1971 Willard M. Miller published in the *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* an article entitled "Peirce on the Use of History." In it he was critical of Phillip P. Wiener's "Evolutionary Interpretation of the History of Science." This prompted Wiener to respond ("W. M. Miller on Peirce's Interpretation of the History of Science"). He makes a point of charging Miller with exaggerating Peirce's historical concerns. It is possible to make too much of Peirce's use of history. This in effect is what Wiener is claiming in his response to Miller. "Peirce's philosophy of science and metaphysics was [sic.] more intimately linked to his logical studies than to his historical interests … he wrote much more on the logic of science than on its history, and … he minimized the logical strength of historical explanation and yet used it in his metaphysical; evolutionism inconsistently" (1971, 233). But, then, it is possible to make too little of Peirce's engagement with history. This is clearly Miller's position against Wiener's onslaught. Peirce's "work as a philosopher of history," he contends, "is valuable both for understanding Peirce's other work [including that on the logic of science] and it is own right as a theory of history" (1971, 105). This work is more intimately related to Peirce's focal concerns (e.g., offering a normative account of objective inquiry or instituting a theory of signs) and more consistent than expositors such as Wiener are willing to grant.

Other knowledgeable, sympathetic expositors of Peirce appear to side with Wiener in their misgivings about Peirce's understanding or appreciation of history. W. B. Gallie goes so far as to suggest, in one place, that Peirce lacked nothing less than "historical imagination." As Peirce conceived it, *inquiry* is the name for "the fact that somehow a wide variety of our activities have come to be initiated and guided by signs which admit of logical criticism and correction" (Gallie's *Peirce and Pragmatism*, p. 92). This manifestly makes inquiry depend "on the fact that man is a sign-using animal and the sign-systems which he employs include signs for the questioning, correction, and qualification of other signs." Peirce however does not even try to explain, at least in detail, how this situation has come about. "Like almost every other philosopher of the western tradition, Peirce lacked the kind of historical imagination which this task would have required." In his own work on history, however, Gallie praises Peirce for his "historical-mindedness." He claims, "with comparatively few exceptions – Aristotle, Leibniz and Peirce being the greatest – philosophers have displayed a fantastic lack of historical mindedness and an almost total lack of interest in their own historical role within intellectual life" (*Philosophy and the Historical Understanding*, p. 146; quoted in part in Viola, p. 150). It is difficult to know

how to reconcile Gallie's characterization of Peirce as lacking a specific kind of historical imagination and his praise of Peirce as a philosopher uncommonly marked by historical-mindedness. Perhaps he changed his assessment. Or perhaps there simply is no incompatibility between lacking the specific kind of historical imagination required to execute the task in question (constructing a detailed explanation of how a sign-using animal instituted self-corrective procedures) and what is meant by "historical-mindedness." What is especially noteworthy is that the very same commentator (if only at different times) criticizes Peirce for his lack of historical imagination and praises this figure for his historical-mindedness. Conflicting assessments of Peirce's historical sensitivity are – or at least appear to be – evident in different texts by the same author but far more so in the critical exchanges between different expositors.

Let us return for a moment to a previous discussion. In "Peirce and the Philosophy of History" (1983) and other writings, most notably, if only by implication, *The Transcendence of History: Essays in the Evolution of Historical Consciousness* (1984), Joseph Esposito, another informed, sympathetic expositor, discerns an unresolved tension between Peirce's objectivist and constructivist (or "transcendentalist") tendencies. "The first position is decidedly realist ('without a past to study there would be no historical consciousness'), while the other is more 'constructionist' ('without an historical consciousness there would be no past to study') (Viola, p. 6; Esposito 1983, p. 156). As Esposito sees it, Peirce oscillates between these two positions. In other words, there is an unresolved tension in Peirce's commitment to historical consciousness (at times, his realism seems to undermine or even preclude his appreciation of the historicity of all human undertakings, including his philosophical projects), whereas at other times, his very appreciation of this historicity seems to compromise his realism). In *The Transcendence of History*, Esposito, with only passing reference to Peirce, develops his own stance. In the end, Viola's stance is not far removed from Esposito's in *The Transcendence of History*. He does stress the extent to which Peirce achieved a delicate, if unstable, balance between these rival tendencies. But, like Esposito, Viola does not judge Peirce to have articulated a fully satisfactory position in which the reconstructive activity of the historian is perfectly balanced with the irrevocable actuality of history itself (see, e.g., Viola, pp. 109–11; also, pp. 224–26).

Before any of the essays mentioned above were published in *The Transactions*, Max H. Fisch presented a paper at what was then called the Western Division of the APA (Chicago; May 3, 1957) entitled "The Philosophy of History: A Dialogue" (*Philosophy and the History of Science: Essays in Honor of Max Fisch*, edited by Richard Tursman). The last word is given the Philosopher in this dialogue ("a Philosopher"). After the Historian discloses s/he discerns "a continuum of inquiry connecting the shortest-tethered grubbing of the historian with the most abstract and universal critiques and speculations of the philosophy," the Philosopher offers this speculation: "the ultimate problem of the philosophy of history may well be that of the relation between history and philosophy. … For the solution we had best look to philosophers who are also historians, or to philosophers who have carefully considered the work of such philosopher-historians" (205) – or thinkers who are both.

Almost exactly fifty years after the publication of Miller's article ("Peirce on the Use of History"), Tullio Viola has published *Peirce on the Uses of History*. Like his predecessor (Miller earned his doctorate for his dissertation at the University of Illinois; 1970), he is drawing upon his doctoral work ("Philosophy and History: The Legacy of Peirce's Realism," a dissertation at Humboldt-Universität Berlin; 2014). Viola self-consciously joins a historiographic lineage.

The title of Miller's article (Miller being one of Fisch's students at Illinois) is slightly but significantly altered by Viola. The emphasis on the plurality of uses is announced in the title of the exemplary study under review here. There are arguably more uses of history than those to which Viola attends, as there are unquestionably more sense of *history* than he identifies.

Even so, the scope of this study is ambitious. Viola is appreciative of what he in a single monograph can reasonably achieve. "Needless to say, I cannot pretend to offer an exhaustive interpretation of this very large segment of Peirce's production. Rather, I isolate some of the most significant themes from his historical writings" (p. 8). While he is here specifically referring to his descriptive account in Chapter 6 ("Peirce the Historian") of Peirce's actual work as an intellectual historian, this lack of pretense marks this study as a whole. Viola does not take himself to be offering an exhaustive account of any specific facet of Peirce's engagement with history. He cannot but be selective in focusing on what he judges to be "the most significant themes" and, in my judgment, his own is in this and other respects solid and reliable.

This book is divided into three untitled parts. They are enclosed within an Introduction and Conclusion ("The Legacy of a Realist"). Part I is comprised of two chapters (Chapter 1, "The Making of a Polymath," and 2, "Not a Mere Wonder Book"); Part II of three chapters (3, "Historicity as Process," 4, "Autonomy and the Value of Experience," and 5, "Sociality, Dialogue, and Disagreement"); and Part III is comprised of two Chapters (6, "Peirce the Historian," and 7, "The Logic of Historical Inquiry"). In a brief Conclusion (pp. 218-26), the author highlights the "complex and multi-layered interplay between historical and philosophical inquiries," alleging this interplay is more intricate and layered than Peirce was disposed to acknowledge (p. 218). Doing so allows him "to focus on three major themes that have emerged" in the course of his investigation. The first of these themes is the one signaled in the title of this study, "Peirce's pluralism with regard to the uses of history" (p. 218). The second theme is "the relation between Peirce's interest in history and his more general philosophical commitments." The third one is "the problem of realism."

Each of the chapters is divided into titled sections, most of which are quite short (e.g., the sections making up Chapter 5, "Sociality, Dialogue, Disagreement," are: "The Problem of Peirce's Social Thought"; "The Guiding Thread of Dialogue"; Science: A Community in History"; "Philosophy: The Architectonic Principle"; "Disagreement and Convergence"; "Conservatism and Sentimentalism"; and "The Ethics of Terminology," several of these sections being only two or three pages). It is perhaps not too much to suggest that the "architecture" of this study is, in important respects, Gothic. In particular, the ribbed vault is herein a structural feature calling the mind to the highest level of philosophical generality (this is nowhere more evident than in pressing the question of the relationship between philosophy and history), while the intricate details and massive weight of such accumulated details combine to achieve a paradoxical result – a sense of solidity and weightiness conjoined to the power of making stone feel ethereal.

In the Introduction, the author helpfully provides a map for his readers. The function of Part I is introductory: it is designed principally to frame the project, first in biographical and then in philosophical terms. Chapter 1, "The Making of a Polymath," turns out to be a portrait of both an historian and an historicist. Chapter 2, "Not a Mere Wonder Book." Viola makes explicit his intention in identifying this chapter as such: "History is not a mere wonder book [a chronicle of events and incidents eliciting our amazement]; it is a necessary implement in every scientist's toolkit" (p. 49).

"Part II (Chapters 3–5) contains," Viola stresses, "the argumentative gist of the book." For in these pages the author provides "a comprehensive reconstruction of the different senses in which Peirce's philosophy allows history to play a significant role" (p. 7). This however identifies the function of Part II too modestly, for Viola presents the substance of his argument in Chapters 3 through 5, not merely his "argumentative gist." Finally, "Part III … focuses on Peirce's actual work as a historian and as a methodologist of historical inquiry" (p. 7). The arc of the book is accordingly from the very selective sketch of an intellectual biography to a detailed portrait of Peirce as a working history (even if in the field a history, as he was in other engagements, an autodidact).

In his presidential address to the American Historical Society, "Every Man His Own Historian"), Carl Becker

(delivered in December, 1931, published in *The American Historical Review* in January. 1932) argued every responsible person must, to some extent, become a historian. That is, each one of us must in a careful, painstaking, and conscientious manner reconstruct those parts of the past directly bearing on our central, especially our defining, interests or concerns. Peirce certainly discovered this about himself, precisely as a philosopher. He was nonetheless acutely aware of his lack of training. He readily admitted he "was no scholar of history except that of science, including philosophy" (quoted in Viola, p. 42). But his very understanding of science forced him to make himself into a historian of inquiry (see pp. 18–21). Given his methodological bent, this meant developing, along with his actual investigations of intellectual history, a methodological self-consciousness (a self-consciousness however cultivated to serve self-criticism and ultimately self-control). In Peirce's judgment, "progress in science depends upon the observation of the right [or relevant] facts by minds *furnished with appropriate ideas*" (Peirce CP 6.604 [1893]; quoted in Viola, p. 47; also, see Chapter 4).

In "The Critic of Institutions," his Presidential Address to the Western Division of the APA (Bloomington, IN; May, 1956), Max Fisch stressed at the conclusion of his talk, "the history of philosophy has an importance [for philosophers] the history of science cannot have," at least for scientists preoccupied with the first-order questions of their disciplines. "The history of philosophy is," he rather playfully notes, "philosophy itself taking its time." But how does philosophy take its time, how does it engage with its historicity? This involves more than "merely a continual bringing forth of things new," for it encompasses "a continual review of the old." More fully, philosophy in taking its time "continually re-sifts, re-selects, and re-orders its past creations, re-edits, re-translated, re-reads, re-interprets, and criticizes afresh." In this process, "its great classics do not diminish but grow in power. Indeed, their very status as classics is most dramatically revealed in the course of such processes.

Tullio Viola's *Peirce on the Uses of History* exemplifies how philosophy takes its time, how it confronts its own historicity, in just the sense pragmatically clarified by Max Fisch. The pragmatic meaning of the working conceptions of the engaged historian can only be clarified by carefully – thus, critically – attending to the habits of re-sifting, re-selecting, and re-ordering, also those of re-editing, re-translating, re-reading, re-interpreting, and evaluating anew historical materials – moreover, the disposition of documents and texts to resist certain interpretations and appropriations.

As Viola emphasizes, we certainly ought not to trifle with facts. But we ought to tarry longer with the narration and interpretation of these facts than the gifted author of this admirable study is apparently disposed to stress. Unquestionably, Peirce "indicated the path for a hermeneutic strategy that relies on a robust contextualism as well as a tight interaction between interpretation and discover" (Viola, p. 226). It is however hardly sufficient to point out such a path. At least at more advanced stages in their investigations, historians must make their way some distance down such paths. The extent to which interpretation is an abductive process should not be allowed to obscure the extent to which history is a hermeneutic enterprise. As crucial as establishing the basic facts is, explanations, interpretations, and an unending process of innovative recontextualization of those historical facts are arguably more important. To grant that Peirce's approach to history allows for these processes is encouraging; to show in convincing detail how a Peircean approach to historical facts would explain, interpret, and recontextualize those facts is "the next inevitable step." But, whatever shortcomings there possibly are in this book, its contribution to our understanding of Peirce and, beyond this, to the topics to which Viola, tracing the trajectory of Peirce's own thought, has devoted himself is singular. To this author, a large gratitude is owed for this immensely – and diversely – useful study.

RENZI, KRISTEN L. AN ETHIC OF INNOCENCE: PRAGMATISM, MODERNITY, AND WOMEN'S CHOICE NOT TO KNOW. SUNY, 2019. PP. 298.

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The epistemologies of the oppressed, including their pragmatist versions, often focus on the knowledge oppressed groups need to produce to pursue their struggles for emancipation. As Axel Honneth (2017) puts it, oppressed groups have an interest in generating knowledge that contributes to denaturalizing hegemonic norms that exclude them from full social participation. Miranda Fricker (2007) a has put forward the idea that the oppressed depend on the availability of hermeneutic resources to be able to account for their own experiences of oppression (see also Medina 2013, Serrano Zamora 2021). To this we must add, as Emmanuel Renault (2021) argues drawing on Dewey's notion of inquiry, that social struggles often need to generate knowledge about the causes of oppression as well as about the means to effectively fight against it. In the same line, the Epistemologies of the South argue that oppressed groups have historically suffered from epistemic oppression (including epistemicide), and that we need to re-valuate non-Western and non-male knowledges and methods as part of a larger emancipatory project (Sousa Santos 2014).

Kristin L. Renzi's *Ethic of Innocence: Pragmatism, Modernity, and Women's Choice not to Know* aims at showing that the current focus on knowledge acquisition and production needs to be complemented by a serious consideration of the emancipatory potential of not-knowing. Hence, behind this focus on knowledge of critical and feminist epistemologies seems to hide the assumption that not-knowing corresponds to a lack of agency that is contrary to any emancipatory[1] project. In contrast to this assumption, Renzi's book represents a formidable study of historical, literary, and other artistic sources around the idea that not-knowing can be an active form of epistemic agency working against oppression.

Renzi's analysis mainly focuses on the concrete forms of ignorance enacted by women representations at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Since in this context women's particular form of experiencing and enacting ignorance corresponded to a "literary conflation between knowing, sexual experience, public-sphere activity, infantilization, and idealized femininity within the Victorian and modern eras," (16) Renzi prefers to use the term "innocence" to talk about women's specific form of ignorance. The idea of an ethic of innocence should then point to the plurality of active ways in which women representations of that time made the choice to display innocence instead of knowledge. Among these ways Renzi includes forgetting, fantasizing, lying, refusing objective reality, and dreaming.

Renzi approaches women's ethic of innocence from the perspective of feminist pragmatism. Drawing on Shannon Sullivan, she argues that pragmatism and feminism can complement each other: while feminism can profit from pragmatism's "emphasis on real life or lived reality, a rejection of a neutral God-like point of view, and an inclusive and collaborative style of thinking, writing, and working" (14), feminism can further pluralize the ways in which pragmatism understands subject positions. The influence of pragmatism becomes particularly clear at least at three different moments of her analysis. First, her analysis of an ethics of innocence as a form of knowledge-practice profits from the central role pragmatism attributes to practices in the production of knowledge (see Renault 2021). This practice-based view makes possible an approach to women's display of innocence as fundamental part of an epistemology of oppression. Secondly, pragmatism influences her understanding of emancipatory project that is at the core of the book. Its central idea is that of creating new realities, for example, by imagining worlds with non-binary sexual division. This understanding is influenced by a Rortyan version of pragmatism. As I aim at showing, by drawing on Rorty, Renzi discards other available understandings

[1] In her book Renzi does not use the terms "emancipatory" and "emancipation." In my view, this is due to her Rorty-inspired rejection of any positive social ideal situation as the goal of social struggle (see Rorty 2001). Here I will use those terms to refer to any political project of social transformation aiming at the reduction of oppression. Understood in this negative sense, I think Renzi's book can be viewed as contributing to an emancipatory project.

of pragmatism which have a different approach to emancipation. I believe that these available understandings of pragmatism – which, drawing on Honneth, I will call recognitional approaches – can also establish a fruitful dialogue with Renzi's book. Finally, and related to this previous point, Renzi's specific reading of pragmatism also influences her emphasis on the political ambivalence of women's ethic of innocence. Regarding this latter point, Renzi argues that

> As such, if theorists or critics have feminist political or social goals in mind, reading the epistemics of innocence – the choice not to know – via a lens of pragmatism may not always work in service of these goals, in part because the pragmatist methodology of innocence this books explores can be used to express not only the human desire to progress forward and imagine differently, but also the very real and pragmatically valid desire to stay put (245).

Renzi's book is divided in two halves. This division is relevant to the extent that in each of the two halves the meaning of women's ethic of innocence for a pragmatist-feminist emancipatory project clearly differs. In the first half, Renzi mainly focuses on literary texts picturing women figures who actively choose not to know as a strategy to cope with their own life circumstances. Central to this first half is that these women do not display innocence with the aim of changing the social conditions that are responsible for these circumstances. The latter case constitutes the object of the second half of the book. Renzi's main aim in the first half is to contradict many hegemonic readings of these texts, including feminist readings, which depict those (represented) women as passive, or even as actively (and irrationally) contributing to their own situation of oppression. In contrast to these readings, Renzi reads various episodes of adoption of an ethics of innocence as the way those women could enhance their agency under serious cultural and structural limitations. Renzi's main message is that we should learn to see those women as active agents looking for their own freedom and/or happiness.

The first chapter of the book has a methodological orientation. More concretely, it draws on the figure of Jane Addams as a model of how to approach women's ethic of innocence. Renzi's analysis focuses on a relevant episode of Addams' life during her years at the Hull House settlement in Chicago. It concerns the spread of the rumor that the Hull House was home of the Devil's child. This rumor quickly developed into different episodes involving large numbers of people visiting the house to see the child. Among those people were many poor, migrant women form the near neighborhoods, who in their visits also told fantasized stories about their own lives. What mostly interests Renzi is Addams way of dealing with the stories of these women. Hence, she sees Addams as set in a "pragmatist dilemma" concerning the way she should react to women's display of innocence: The dilemma consists in having to accept as valid either modern traditions of rational knowledge or the epistemic alternatives – which correspond to forms of "pre-modern" knowledge – these women enact. According to Renzi, Addams' interesting strategy consists in enduring the tension between these two kinds of knowledge in ways that are particularly productive. Hence, Addams realizes that only through telling fantastic stories belonging to the realm of innocence, women can tell things about their lives they would otherwise be unable to tell.

Regarding the emancipatory function of an ethic of innocence, we can say that Addams was able to understand that, by refusing to know, women can make public aspects of their life that would otherwise remain silenced. I find the claim convincing that we should not quickly dismiss women's voices as passive or self-oppressive, even when they display pre-modern, or non-rational forms of knowledge. However, one can identify an ambivalence in Renzi's analysis that would need further clarification in her book. Hence, it is not clear if Addams' position towards pre-modern knowledge is that of taking it as an alternative, but valuable form of rationality or if she merely attributes to these irrational stories the capacity to convey a rational message that would otherwise remain hidden (i.e., the real stories of these women). If the latter option is the case, one can wonder

if a clear-cut distinction between rational and non-rational/pre-modern knowledge is convincing, at least in some cases. Surely, the case of the Devil's baby women's stories concerns verifiably false fantasies whose irrationality can hardly be doubted. But what about other forms of knowledge, for example, traditional non-western forms knowledge of indigenous peoples? Should our strategy as listeners be to endure "irrational knowledge" to discover a hidden rational message? If this were the case, the possibilities of questioning the validity of our own notion of rational knowledge would be substantially reduced. In other words, as listeners we cannot take the question of the rationality of the other's stories for granted but must also remain open to revise our own understanding of rational knowledge by itself. I am not arguing that Renzi defends the idea of such a clear-cut distinction between rationality and irrationality, however I think that her book and the contribution it can make to an epistemology of the oppressed would benefit from a clarification of these issues

Drawing on several literary sources and different topics such as marriage or domestic violence, the following three chapters focus more directly on the reevaluation of women's choice of not knowing as part of a larger ethic of innocence. As said, Renzi's general point is that a pragmatist feminist project must be able to see the display of innocence of these women not as a form of passivity but as a successful form of active coping with the limited conditions provided by a white male-dominated world. Successful, because through these choices, women are able to preserve something they value like their personal freedom or happiness. In the second chapter, Renzi delves into three women figures depicted in naturalist novels from the second half of the 19th century. In different ways, the figures of "Charity Rola, Maud Marth Brown, and Arway Henson use their performances of innocence in order to preserve and carve out something other can hopelessness for themselves." (100)

In the same line, in the third and fourth chapters, Renzi focuses on naturalist depictions of the cycle of domestic violence. According to her, we are deeply mistaken when we ask the following question: Why do so many women stay or return to their husbands even when they are victims of domestic violence? To make her point, Renzi draws on the idea of an ethic of innocence and develops an argument with two main steps: First, she shows that neither material-structuralist sociological nor psychological accounts can properly account for women's agency in cases of domestic violence. While psychological accounts tend to explain the cycle of violence by showing that women's choices to stay with their husbands are pathological, material and structural accounts portray women as social constructs who are unable to make choices as subjects. While this characterization of psychologist and "material-structural" views may concern many available approaches to domestic violence, Renzi does not seem to take into account that there are alternative sociological approaches available which do not reduce human agency to be a product of material circumstances nor of a pathological act of masochism. Here, John Dewey and George H. Mead-based sociological approaches such as the sociology of creative action of Hans Joas and what he calls constitution theories (*Konstitutionstheorien*) are good candidates for accounting for agency under conditions of material and structural limitations (see Joas 1996: 326-357)

In any case, showing the limitations of materialist-structural and psychological accounts gives Renzi an opportunity to show the methodological interest of literary analysis. As she argues "literature's sociological weakness – it presents, after all, characters, not people, stories, not lives – is its theoretical strength (113). This is so because through literature we can have access to woman's understanding of what are often, in the real domestic scenario, very private experiences that are not easily communicated – and whose ignorance makes us think of women as passive agents. But also, because it can motivate readers to reflect on our sympathies with those women and on the interpretative habits with which we read their stories.

Renzi's main point is that when we ask why women stay with their husbands in cases of domestic violence, we

are easily prompted to see women as willingly participating in their own abuse. This becomes particularly clear in the psychological narrative of the masochist woman, who depicts women as actively and willingly contributing to their own suffering. For Renzi, women's display of an ethic of ignorance – which here takes the form of not acknowledging the abuses of their husbands – means making a choice within the limits imposed by society. Instead of asking why they stay, we should then the question about what should be changed so that women do not find it a reasonable option to stay. This constitutes the core message underlying the first part of the book. Hence, Renzi warns those who are interested in the emancipation of the oppressed from dismissing too quickly women's apparent passivity and self-inducted harm as irrational. I believe that this appeal can perfectly combine with certain sociological approaches of the kind I have previously mentioned. Surely, literary analysis has a particular contribution to offer to this project of revindicating agency – namely, exploring intimate reasons of women and making us reflect about our habitual ways of "reading" the behavior of these characters – but non-reductivist, agency-centered sociological views can also help to revindicate women's agency also in difficult cases of domestic violence. Moreover, there is a risk of moving too quickly from sociology to literature since it may negatively affect sociology's possibility to reflect on the means to ameliorate its own research methods. Here the figure of Jane Addams as a social worker and researcher can be of unvaluable use (Miras Boronat 2021). Hence, the acknowledgment of an ethic of innocence can stimulate incorporating Addams methods into creative methodologies of sociological action research.

In the second half of the book Renzi analyses different kinds of "textual" materials such as women's artistic performances, social protests, writers, films, and, again, literary figures. While in the first half women's ethics of innocence is displayed within certain boundaries, the women of the second half clearly aim at exploding those boundaries. But how do they do it? Precisely through the display of an ethic of innocence in which women refuse to know – or to act as if they did. Here is where Renzi's pragmatist understanding of the social-emancipatory project of feminism comes to the fore. Central to this second half of the book is Renzi's adoption of Rortyan lens to read the contribution women's ethic of innocence make to an emancipatory project. Central to Rorty's view is the idea that the social struggles of women are not merely struggles for recognition – at least if we understand them as struggles for being recognized as belonging to a hegemonic social category, for example, the hegemonic definition of person or human being. Rather, struggling for emancipation is about *creating* non-hegemonic forms of personhood by the use of imagination. This creative moment is necessary since the logic of recognition tends to be oppressive: "the ways in which [women] are considered to be people serve not to empower but rather, contradictorily, to hamper and restrict them." (188) Finally, a central aspect to this view is that this creative moment consists in an imaginative engagement with ontological potentialities that have not been year realized by the hegemonic social order. This often involves that those members of oppressed groups that display non-hegemonic possibilities of being will be taken to be crazy (Rorty 2001) by society until these possibilities come to be accepted.

Let me briefly focus on Renzi's (and Rorty's) point that the struggle for recognition as persons or subjects cannot be experienced by women as liberating. This view clearly differs from Axel Honneth's understanding of a struggle for recognition (1996) as well as of a recognition-based reading of John Dewey's *Lectures in China* (Särkelä 2013). According to Honneth's view, societies are permeated by a moral grammar that includes normative ideals that constitute the normative expectations of individuals. These general normative ideals or principles are instantiated by hegemonic interpretations that exclude certain social groups. However, in their struggles for recognition, oppressed groups reinterpret normative ideals in non-hegemonic ways and struggle for the public acceptance of these new interpretations. In other words, the struggle for recognition of the oppressed does not

consist in uncritically appropriating hegemonic categories but in transforming (reinterpreting) the latter so that the specific features of the oppressed groups can be properly recognized as valuable. Surely, the struggle for recognition includes a subversive and creative moment, but it draws from an existing moral grammar whose potential always remains partially unrealized. This means then that recognition does not mean subjugation, as Rorty and Renzi would have it, but a deep transformation of the normative categories that articulate the normative orders of society.

It is important here to note that most of the examples Renzi studies refer either to preconditions or to realizations of Rorty-inspired activity of emancipatory creation of women's personhood. In other words, an ethics of innocence is put here at the service of the larger emancipatory project of *creating* (and not recognizing) woman's personhood. So, one can wonder how a different, recognition-based approach to emancipation would affect Renzi's analysis. I will consider this question at the end of this review. In any case, it is from a Rortyan perspective that Renzi proposes to interpret the political struggle of the suffragists in chapter five. In the two examples she analyses, Mary Richardson's famous attack on Velasquez's Rokeby Venus and Alice Duers Miller's columns and poetry, what she identifies are first attempts at "creating the female person" (187). The ethics of innocence both historical figures display – by attacking Velasquez's work and by using absurd language respectively – aims precisely at doing that: it consists in women's active engagement with the problem of female subjecthood. This problem is particularly acute for the suffragettes who often come to be considered "criminal, lunatics, and illogical, defective, or child-like adults," (171) in other words, as not fully human.

According to Renzi, however, the political relevance of Richardson's and Miller's cases is only limited. They are prophetic in the sense that they that they protest subjugation to social oppression and limit themselves to pointing to the possibility of alternative social realities. A further step to emancipation is provided by the literary sources analyzed in chapter six: Virgina Wolf's *Orlando: A Biography*, Sherwood Anderson's "The Man Who Became a Woman," and Katharine Burdekin *Proud Man*. Renzi provides a rich analysis of these texts whose goal is to show that women's ethic of innocence is being displayed at the service of a process of liberation from the "reality of binary bodies." (194) In a progressive way, the figures depicted in these literary texts show ways of liberation involving "sex change, sex loss, mourning, melancholia, and moments of happiness" (226). In the three texts, the point of the display of an ethic of innocence is to maintain the hope that there are other possibilities of being that are not yet recognized by society, but which can be.

Finally, chapter seven turns to the role community for emancipation and argues that communal agreement is condition for the kind of social change involved in the creation of personhood previously analyzed women's figures attempted. For this reason, Renzi proposes to move the analysis from individuals to the "communities that surround these 'innocent' individuals." (230). Here it is worth noting that Renzi has in mind the power of a community's imaginative abilities and the need to cultivate this power. To make her point she focuses on Recca West's novella *The Return of the Soldier* and Nancy's Oliver and Craight Gilespie's film *Lars and the Real Girl*. Both in the novel and in the film – which is much more recent – we find depictions of males who refuse to know, but whose refusal is largely sustained by a community of women who "'play' along with the delusions of the central male characters" (234). Renzi's idea is that these text display an ethic of innocence as community-dependent, which means that our imaginative and creative capacities – and, hence, our ability to promote social change – are largely determined by the community in which individuals live. Change, at this basic level of the individuals capacity to create new realities is accordingly, community dependent, which makes the project of emancipation an ambiguous and difficult one, since emancipation does not only fully depend on those who have an interest in it.

In my final remarks let me just briefly turn to the question about the adoption of a Rortyan approach to the feminist struggle against oppression and how it affects Renzi's book. Hence, I believe that the pragmatist recognition-paradigm could also have contributed to a productive analysis of the ethics of innocence that modifies one central aspects of Renzi's analysis, namely the role she provides to social suffering as the motivating force of social struggle. According to Rorty, oppressed groups are often only able to perceive injustice when somebody (imaginatively) creates new realities that unveil that some possibilities of social being are not possible. This means that social suffering emerges only when individuals use their creative imagination: "this voice she [i.e. the struggling woman] in a new language must describe not the wrongs that she has suffered based on her so-called natural rights but rather her 'previously unplayed role,' a future creation she imagines but is currently prohibited from embodying." (175) This contrasts with the view of a theory of recognition, for which injustice can be sensed – if not be fully articulated – by oppressed group thanks to the normative potential of the ideals that constitute the normative grammar of society. This explains why perceiving an injustice is possible also under conditions of hegemony: hegemonic interpretations do not exhaust the meaning of the general categories of a society. Social creativity is important because it is part of a collective labor of reinterpretation of norms and categories, but the sense of being wronged and the suffering it generates can appear earlier than when a future possibility can be imagined by members of oppressed groups. Indeed, it is the often not fully articulated suffering of the victims of oppression, which shows that basic normative principles are not being adequately institutionalized, and which initiates social struggle. In my view, parting from a recognitional paradigm would mean that an ethic of innocence is not only to be put at the service of the creation of new realities but also about the rejection of certain specifications of universal categories and principles. I believe that this would make the emancipatory signification of a pragmatist approach to the ethics of innocence less ambivalent than what Renzi believes it to be. Hence, social struggle and the emancipatory display of an ethic of innocence would be anchored not only to the possibility of imagining a different world but to the – more or less articulated – experiences of social wrongs oppressed groups often experience as negative.

In these few pages it has not been possible to be fair to the richness and subtilities of Renzi's analysis, which clearly shows how much literary studies can contribute to understanding mechanisms of social oppression and strategies of resistance and social change. The aim of my criticisms has not been to reject Renzi's core idea, namely, that we must see women's choices not to know as reflecting different rational strategies by which women become agents of their lives – via coping with limited social circumstances or by exploding the boundaries of what is possible in a world permeated by class, gender, and racial domination. However, my aim has been to show that Renzi could have explored another understanding of pragmatism and its view on emancipation. Hence, as I have briefly argued, a Rortyan view does not explain satisfactorily why an individual would "wish to have" (175) certain rights since it does not connect them to people's social suffering. At the same time, a recognition-based approach, has also a lot to learn from Renzi's analysis to avoid falling back to an exaggerated focus on knowledge as the only way to provide critical perspectives on social reality and the norms that sustain the status quo. Hence, a pragmatist approach to an ethic of innocence could explain that not-knowing can be inserted into a more general strategy of oppressed groups for denying the validity of hegemonic and oppressive interpretations of the principles that regulate social life.

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