



Warwick Continental Philosophy Conference (4th Edition)

09-11 June 2022



BSHP

British Society for the
History of Philosophy



ANALYSIS

MIND

This booklet collects all the relevant information for WCPC 2022 Conference
*Continental Philosophy and Global Challenges: Historical perspectives through practical
engagements.*

The information presented here should be accurate.

In case of discrepancy, the information on the conference website takes precedence:

[https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/philosophy/research/activities/postkantian/
events/wcpc/](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/philosophy/research/activities/postkantian/events/wcpc/)

NOTE: In case of last minute changes please follow the guidelines communicated to you from the
conference email account.

Conference Booklet Version 1.1

This template originates from [LaTeXTemplates.com](https://www.latextemplates.com) and is based on the original version at:

https://github.com/maximelucas/AMCOS_booklet

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About

WCPC

Warwick Continental Philosophy Conference is an annual conference organised by the Postgraduate and Early-Career community of the University of Warwick Philosophy Department. The conference aims to be a meeting point for scholars who understand their work as falling within the purview of 'Continental Philosophy' broadly construed. WCPC operates as a part of the *Centre for Research in Post-Kantian European Philosophy* at the University of Warwick.

PKEP

The Centre for Research in Post-Kantian European Philosophy at the University of Warwick provides a unique forum for discussion and research in 19th and 20th century European philosophy, including interdisciplinary research with scholars across the humanities and social sciences. It organises regular seminars, workshops and conferences to promote innovative work in the field of post-Kantian European philosophy and provide a stimulating research environment for MA and PhD students, junior and senior faculty. For our programme of events, [please click here](#).

As a complement to its research programme, the Centre is also closely associated with the [MA in Continental Philosophy](#).

The other departments and centres affiliated to the Centre for Research in Post-Kantian European Philosophy include Philosophy, French Studies, German Studies, Film & TV Studies, English, History, Sociology, Politics and International Studies, as well as the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies and the Social Theory Centre.

The Centre is run by a Director, [Andrew Huddleston](#), and a Deputy Director, [Daniele Lorenzini](#). For a full list of staff associated with the work of the Centre please [click here](#).

Organisation

Main Organisation

Raffaele Grandoni Camilla Pitton

Organising Committee

Jonathan Clarke-West Mostyn Taylor Crockett Daniel Davis

Organisational Advisors

Dino Jakušić Lorenzo Serini

Panel chairs

Bernardo Ferro	Simon Gansinger	Robert Hogg-Thompson
Luke Valentine Leong	George Mey	Michi Nanayakkara
Oscar North-Concar	Toby Tricks	

Special thanks to

Sarah Taylor Emily Hargreaves

Joining the Conference

Conference format - PLEASE READ

The conference is organised as a pre-read event. This means that the papers submitted by the speakers will be circulated in advance. There will be no long presentations of articles. Instead, the panelists will be given **5 minutes to introduce their paper**, with the rest of the time (25 min) being dedicated to questions and answers from the audience. Panelist presentations and Q&A will proceed sequentially in 30-minutes slots. Due to this, please familiarise yourself with the submitted papers in order to better follow the discussion.

This structure will **not apply to keynote presentations**. Instead, they will proceed in a more traditional manner (45 min presentation + 45 min Q&A without pre-circulation). We hope to record keynote lectures and make them available on the conference website after the conference. Panels and Keynote Q&As will **not** be recorded.

The conference will take place in hybrid format, with both in-person and Zoom presentations. We have organised one Zoom meeting, so you can join any slot you wish by using the same link. You can either use the link in this booklet, or enter the meeting ID and password.

During the Q&A, audience questions will be selected by the chair. Please raise your hand if you are attending in person, or use the Zoom 'raise hand' function if you would like to ask the question.

Links to pre-circulated papers, as well as to Zoom meetings are available in the next section.

If you require a letter confirming your attendance at the conference please email us as wcpc@warwick.ac.uk.

If you encounter any other issues or have questions regarding the conference, please feel free to contact us on the same address as above.

Attending the conference

Link for conference papers

Please [click here in order to access the papers for the conference](#). The link should allow you access to the conference OneDrive account. You will be able to read and download papers, but not modify them. Papers are separated per day and panel. Please familiarise yourself with the papers for the panel(s) you wish to attend.

Zoom links

Please consult the timetable before joining the meeting.

Day 1

WCPC Conference is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98855464955?pwd=Ump00TF3dHNDajY3TWNoZFpuVU1QZz09>

Meeting ID: 988 5546 4955

Passcode: 730838

Day 2

WCPC Conference is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97636504339?pwd=aFVKMDhZZkJXMmhFaDN2RHNuK0J4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 976 3650 4339

Passcode: 713529

Day 3

WCPC Conference is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96618299696?pwd=REdqK2NReHdwWkU0endhRmp5WFNmZz09>

Meeting ID: 966 1829 9696

Passcode: 824722

Conference Room

Room: **OC0.04**

The conference room used is wheelchair accessible. It also has accessible toilets nearby. Gender neutral toilets can be found in the Social Sciences building, in the Student Union Headquarters and in the Dirty Duck pub (these last two buildings are located on the main campus piazza). If you would like to discuss accessibility details further, please don't hesitate to contact us via the relevant section on the registration form or email us at wcpc@warwick.ac.uk.

For more information on possible routes to the conference see the map attached in the end of the document or visit the official interactive map online (<https://campus.warwick.ac.uk/>).

Travelling to the University of Warwick

The University of Warwick lies between the area of Coventry city and two other towns, Kenilworth and Leamington Spa. Train services run from London Euston station to Coventry train station and from London Marylebone station to Leamington Spa town. Ticket prices vary depending on the time of travel but its best to book your rail tickets in advance to get a good deal. You can book by visiting the following website: <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk>.

From Coventry train station: you can either take a taxi or a bus to the University's central campus (you will need to get off at central campus' Bus Interchange, ask the driver if you are unsure).

A taxi rank operates outside the station. The journey will cost you approximately £8-10 and will take 10-15 mins depending on traffic.

Bus services run between Coventry station and the University of Warwick. You can take either the number 11, 11U or the 12X bus from Coventry station (and back). The journey time with the 11 and 11U buses takes 20-25 mins, whereas journey time with the 12X takes 12-15 mins. A single journey costs £2.20 and an unlimited day pass costs £4.00. You can pay by either cash or contactless debit/credit card on the bus (Note: international credit/debit cards may not work on the bus as forms of payment).

From Leamington Spa train station: you can either take a taxi or a bus to the University's central campus.

No taxi rank is in operation at Leamington Spa train station but you can call a cab (01926 42 59 59) to take you to the University's central campus. The cost will be approximately £20 and the journey time will be approximately 25 minutes.

Bus services run between Leamington Spa station and the University of Warwick. You can take the number 11 bus, which will take you to the University. The bus stop for number 11 is located on High Street. As you come out of the rail station you will find yourself on a road called Old Warwick Road. Turn left and walk down the road; as you walk down the road you should see opposite a big building called 'Station House', if you see this then you are going the right way. Continue down this road, crossing Lower Avenue. Upon crossing Lower Avenue you will notice that Old Warwick Road has now become High Street. On the opposite side of the road you should see a convenience store called 'Wisla Delikatesy'. From here one can take the 11 or the 11U bus to Warwick University (the 11 and the 11U follow an identical route).

The bus journey goes via Leamington Spa city centre and Kenilworth town and lasts approximately 40 minutes. All bus services run to the main campus' Bus Interchange. A single journey costs (£2.40) and a day pass (£4.60). Be advised that drivers will only accept the exact cash amount and do not give change, alternatively you can pay via contactless.

University Campuses and Accommodation Locations

The University of Warwick is comprised of three campuses: Westwood campus, Central or Main campus and Gibbet Hill campus. They are a short distance apart.

University Address: University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL, United Kingdom

Please visit this site for an Interactive Campus map: <https://campus.warwick.ac.uk/>. If you are looking for a particular building or room, just type its name in the search bar and you will be shown its exact location.

You can either walk, which takes around ten minutes, or take a taxi between Westwood and Main Campus. If you decide to go by taxi, then you can pick a taxi up at the Central campus' Bus Interchange to take you to Westwood campus. The University's Bus Interchange is located right next to the Warwick Arts Centre.

Buses from Coventry and Leamington Spa all stop on **Kirby Corner Road**.

Information regarding accommodation in the Coventry, Kenilworth and Leamington areas can be found here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/accommodation/staff/offcampus/relocationsservice/shorttermaccommodation/>

Information regarding hotel rooms located on campus can be found here:
<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/conferences/bed-and-breakfast>

Assistance and Emergency Contact

In case of emergency, please dial 999 from any phone and speak either to police or ambulance services. For less urgent matters, campus security are available 24 hours a day and can be reached on 024 7652 2083, or 22083 from an internal Warwick campus phone.

Timetable

- IP In-person presentation
- OL Online presentation
- KL Keynote Lecture
- CC Cancelled talk

Thursday, 09th of June

10:00–10:20	Introduction to the Conference		
10:20–11:30	Panel 1		
10:20–10:50	IP	Joshua Kaluba Independent	False Posterity: Afro-Pessimism and the Cultural Logic of Slavery
10:50–11:30	OL	Wang X., Ling F., Ye J., M. Kuhlmann Sun Yat-sen; Munich/Renmin	The Influence of Continental Philosophy on Chinese Discourse about Global Challenges
11:30–12:00	Coffee Break		
12:00–13:30	KL	Elena Louisa Lange Zurich	The Counter-Enlightenment Scheme: Fear, Global Covid-19 Policy, and the New Authoritarian Character
13:30–15:00	Lunch Break		
15:00–16:00	Panel 2		
15:00–15:30	OL	Kenneth Novis Edinburgh	<i>The Need for Roots</i> in Italy: Lessons For/From Simone Weil
15:30–16:00	IP	Adam Herpolsheimer Center for Public Health Law Research, Beasley, Temple	Footnote 15: Foucault, Camus, and Plague in a Plague-Stricken Society
16:00–16:30	Coffee Break		
16:30–18:00	Panel 3		
16:30–17:00	OL	Solmu Antilla Vrije Amsterdam	Valentin Voloshinov as a Philosopher of Emancipation
17:00–17:30	IP	Richard Lambeth Newcastle	Non-violent Reversibility: Dealing with Complexity and Uncertainty with the Thought of Mahatma Gandhi and E. F. Schumacher
17:30–18:00	OL	Tim Christiaens Tilburg	Searching for an Ungovernable in Latin America
	Day 1 End		

Friday, 10th of June

11:00–12:30	Panel 4		
11:00–11:30	OL	William Konchak Iceland	The Beautiful, the Good, and Meeting Global Challenges
11:30–12:00	IP	James Vatter Sussex	A Disastrous Conversation: Blanchot, Heidegger and the End of Philosophy
12:00–12:30	IP	Gerrit Strydom Independent	Race and Aesthetics - Historical Regime, Speculative Present
12:30–14:00	Lunch Break		
14:00–15:30	KL	Hourya Bentouhami [online] Toulouse II / IUF	Disobeying Borders
15:30–16:00	Coffee Break		
16:00–17:30	Panel 5		
16:00–16:30	OL	Gustavo Ruiz da Silva PCU São Paulo	Amerindians and Our New Heterotopias
16:30–17:00	OL	Christopher Allsobrook University of Fort Hare, South Africa	A Genealogy of Trusteeship over Post-Apartheid Bantu Governmentality
17:00–17:30	OL	Hassan Ali Memphis	Hindutva: Exploring Contemporary Biopolitics in South Asia
	Day 2 End		

Saturday, 11th of June

10:00 – 11:30	Panel 6		
10:00 – 10:30	IP	Bernardo Ferro Warwick	The Owl of Minerva and Philosophy's Belated Flight: A Heterodox Reading
10:30 – 11:00	OL	Oriane Petteni ULiège / UCLouvain	Hegel and Schelling on World History: Contemporary Perspectives
11:00 – 11:30	IP	Oliver Garratt Exeter	In the Absence of Conclusion, the Conclusion is Absence: Koselleck, Foucault and the Temporality of Crisis
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break		
12:00 – 13:30	Panel 7		
12:00 – 12:30	IP	Karl Landström CTPSR, Coventry	Framing Global Challenges, Epistemic Freedom and a Role for Philosophers
12:30 – 13:00	IP	Linde De Vroey CEP, Antwerp	Re-contextualizing Rewilding in Europe: Rewilding and the Continental Tradition
13:00 – 13:30	IP	Jacopo Morelli Padova	Global Warming and Climate Change: An Ethical Constructivism Approach
13:30 – 15:00	Lunch Break		
15:00 – 16:30	KL	Bernard E. Harcourt [online] Columbia/EHESS	What Good Is Genealogy for Praxis?
	Conference end		

List of Abstracts

Day 1

False Posterity: Afro-Pessimism and the Cultural Logic of Slavery

Joshua Kaluba

IP

Independent Scholar

Despite the global, historical, attempts to end slavery through legislative measures, and thus insist a narrative of post-slavery, this paper argues that the event of the slave trade persists in the form of a cultural logic of slavery. To formulate this argument, this paper re-interprets the arguments of afro-pessimism, popularised in African American race theory by Frank B. Wilderson III's eponymous text, as to formulate a novel theory regarding the interplay between anti-black racism and the scope of anti-racist projects. In structure, this paper begins by consulting select contemporary works engaging with afro-pessimism and presents these arguments as challenging the notion that true posterity of slavery has been reached. Galvanised by both Saidiya Hartman and Calvin L. Warren's critiques of the ramifications of slavery, this challenge of posterity is then built on by developing an account of afro-pessimism which frames racism as an ontological violence; a violence which undermines black persons' very status as 'human,' and more fundamentally, as 'being.' Thus, the violence done to the 'non-being' becomes so negligible as to be permissible, an interpretation of racism which is particularly salient considering recent worldwide discourse regarding the failure to hold those who discriminatorily enact violence upon black bodies materially accountable.

From the continental tradition which considers our place in ever-developing histories, this paper will consult the work of Michel Foucault as to draw out the critique of historicity which facilitates this reading of afro-pessimism. Foucault's arguments of discipline and the emergence of the subject, that the subject arises historically through discipline, will be placed into dialogue with contemporary afro-pessimist critiques of a post-slavery era. This move is made as to consider the black subject which arises from a cultural logic of slavery, and the limited scope of the anti-racist projects such a subject can imagine. This argument extrapolates the positive project from Warren as one which strives to abandon the privileging of being and the human, as what is at stake in maintaining this binary is that this history of ontological violence produces a black subject who can only envisage anti-racist projects in which the black subject strives to be recognised as human, as being. In this striving, in Foucauldian terms, the black subject is disciplined to mimic, assimilate, and internalize.

It is from this argument that this paper develops its theory in which the cultural logic of slavery limits the scope of pro-black, anti-racist projects. The cultural logic of slavery is articulated as that in which the master is the inventor of value. Consequently, the scope of the slave's attempt to rise above the status of slave, and be recognised by the master, is limited by master-made values, as the slave inhabits a desire to embody such values. While for Warrens these values are being and

human, such an argument may expand beyond ontological categories into the socio-economic, as to include the values of contemporary neoliberalism which proliferate systemic racism on a global scale.

In applying Foucault's arguments regarding the subject's emergence from historicity and discipline, one finds that what is at stake is not only the justification of abusing black bodies in rendering them non-being, but also the delimiting of the possibility space of anti-racist projects so that they never truly long to dismantle the systems which reproduce the slave logic which is, in this interpretation, central to the critique of afro-pessimism.

From this revision of afro-pessimist arguments, the conclusion is reached that the event of slavery persists as a cultural logic of slavery. This paper argues that this is a form racism takes which limits the scope in which blackness is conceptualised, as well as the scope of the form in which pro-black and anti-racist projects may take. In critiquing this interplay between racism and the scope of anti-racist projects, a new theory of racial assimilation is reached, in which it is argued that these projects are limited in that they still operate in accordance with the cultural logic of slavery. As such, they recapitulate blackness back into this logic, measuring their successes in line with capitalistic liberal values and being recognised as human by those who dehumanise them, rather than dismantling the logic itself.

The Influence of Continental Philosophy on Chinese Discourse about Global Challenges

Wang Xingsai, Ling Feixia, Ye Jiabin, Moritz Kuhlmann

OL

Sun Yat-sen University; University of Munich / Renmin University

The theoretical discourse about global challenges bears the risk of being an obstacle to their solution, if it reproduced structures that are causally related to them. Among these structures is geo-political segregation, being both the origin of global challenges as well as a hindrance of their effective overcoming. It is a characteristic of Western modernity conscious of its own contingencies, to depend on a "procedural reason" that continuously "puts itself on trial" (Habermas 1992). In the present age of a growing awareness of man-made socio-ecological crisis, the specific appearance of such self-critique by reason is the exploration into its "imperial" nature and the "imperial mode of living" (Kopp 2017; Brand/Wissen 2018) it creates and legitimizes: Western thinkers problematize the expansionary and repressive dynamic of their own philosophical system and call for the decolonialization of academic discourse and globally standardized categories of rationality (Smith 2012, Blakeley 2019, Piketty 2021, Dörre 2021). In face of today's global challenges, Western reason decries its responsibility for providing the deeply rooted structures of dominance, segregation, and exclusion that underly them. A cultural context rarely included in the bill of indictment which self-deimperialising Western reason brings forward against itself is China. In Chinese self-perception though, Western dominance has been a major shaping factor in its modern history up to a degree that justifies the self-attribution of "semi-colonialism" (Mao Zedong 1937; Constitution of the PRC 2018). However, Western philosophy, above all modern and contemporary continental philosophy, has been and continues to be very influential in Chinese academia and the shaping of official political ideology. The relation is highly asymmetrical: In China, Continental philosophy is being studied much more than Chinese philosophy would be studied in the West. At the same time, the relation towards Western thought is ambivalent and by being reflected on

a Chinese background it is adapted towards carrying “Chinese characteristics”. The influence of continental philosophy and its marking with Chinese characteristics is also present in Chinese discourse about global challenges. The contribution our paper wishes to offer lies in the attempt to connect Western and Chinese discourse about global challenges by analyzing the way continental philosophy informs Chinese reflection about global challenges and by communicating this back to scholars of continental philosophy. The focus of this paper is likely to allow for a direct comparison with Warwick Continental Philosophy Conference: From March 26th to 27th, Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou hosts the Fifth Chinese-Language Conference of Practical Philosophy dedicated to the topic of “Global Risks and Contemporary Practical Reason”, co-organized by one of China’s two “National Key Research Institutes of Marxist Philosophy and Chinese Modernization”. This conference will be analyzed regarding the questions in what way continental philosophy is referred to by Chinese scholars when reflecting global challenges and whether/in what way continental philosophy is adapted to the Chinese context. Contributions to the conference that draw on continental philosophy include among others: Prof. Wu Xiaoming, from Fudan University, draws upon theories of Kant, Hegel and Marx to show how modernity opens up world history and sets its basic structure so that the process of modernisation in China becomes inevitable. Prof. Yan Hui, from Shanghai Normal University, provides an article titled “From Phenomenology to Ethics: Two Paradigms for Thinking about Global Risk”.

Prof. Sun Xiaoling, from Nanchang University, will dwell on “Moral Divergence and the Constructivist View of Practical Reason”. Yu Yue, from Xichuang University, wants to put forward a doctrine of shared risk from the Hegelian philosophy of spirit. Through our contribution, we aim at bridging Chinese and Western perspectives on global challenges and thereby contribute to facing one of the larger global challenges of our time: The systemic segregation between China and the West.

Authoritarianism, Fear, and Global Covid Policy

Elena Louisa Lange



University of Zurich

This talk will focus on the civilizational rupture that the Covid-19 pandemic, and especially the political response to it, presents to global liberal democracies. I will show why and how the disenfranchisement of the bourgeois individual subject, through a 2-year long global health emergency campaign based on the deliberate stimulation of panic and fear, led to a collapse of political ideas that are tied to the question of human progress. I call this rupture the counter-enlightenment scheme put to the service of global elites in key functions of capital accumulation. This new notion of a reified humanity - presented in models, simulations, nodes, vectors, “fatality rates” and “cases” - also enabled a new wave of authoritarian characters in the humanities who theoretically aim at abolishing the idea of “society” altogether.

The Need for Roots in Italy: Lessons For/From Simone Weil

Kenneth Novis

OL

University of Edinburgh

Simone Weil (1909-1943) remains a relatively understudied figure from the history of French Marxism. However, her life and work places her at the centre of many of the 20th century's most pioneering political movements. In 1933 Leon Trotsky stayed at the Weil family apartment in Paris and debated with the young woman consistently throughout his time there. He commented upon leaving that "the fourth international was founded in your home" (Weil 2018). Relatedly, Weil's political philosophy has mostly been explored from one of two angles: emphasising her early (though by no means uncritical) commitment to Marxism (e.g. Blum and Seidler 2009), or her later spiritual turn (e.g. Dietz 1988).

A number of recent studies on Simone Weil, including Ritner's (2020) 'Simone Weil's Heterodox Marxism: Revolutionary Pessimism and the Politics of Resistance' and Gilman-Opalsky's (2020) *The Communism of Love: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Exchange Value* indicate another direction in which to take her political thought. This direction focusses on her similarities to and influence upon contemporary Italian political philosophy. The purpose of this paper is twofold. In the first case, I will overview and assess the factual use to which Weil's philosophy has been put in the works of Paolo Virno, Roberto Esposito and Giorgio Agamben. In the second case, I will consider the value of the Italian interpretation of her ideas for a Weillienne politics. In particular, I will be concerned with understanding the purpose of the Italian naturalistic deviation, and the benefits conferred upon Weil's ideas by it.

Between Virno, Esposito and Agamben, I find that it is Weil's conceptualisation of attention which is adopted, albeit each time a different aspect is emphasised. Virno (2015) discusses the dual character of prayer, as either a defence of the 'I' as a subject of enunciation, or the embracing of its obliteration, while identifying Weil's position with the latter. Esposito (2010) sees in Weil a structuralist critique of personhood and rights, as well as a reorientation towards the 'impersonal' domain of the body. Agamben's dissertation on Weil has never been published; however, assessments of his work (e.g. Marovich 2017) indicate the importance of Weil's concept of decreation to his ongoing work. Prayer, the impersonal and decreation all figure as central nodes within the complex web of concepts Weil associates with 'attention' [*attendre*].

What is noteworthy about the Italian appropriation of these concepts, at least among Virno, Esposito and Agamben, is the naturalistic, even biologicistic interpretation which is offered. On this interpretation the decreative movement towards the impersonal which is inspired by prayer is simply a move towards the bare life of the body. This way of reading Weil is certainly fraught with exegetical difficulties related to her actual writing; these difficulties have been exacerbated by the failure among authors of secondary literature on the three authors to conduct a sufficient study of Weil on her own. But, as is often the case in the history of philosophy, a creative reading can sometimes be more fruitful than a careful one. In this case, by associating the supernatural in Weil with the strictly bodily or creatural, the idealist perspective of Weil's later political outlook is inverted.

On a typical reading of Weil's spiritualist politics (e.g. Kotva 2021), attention prepares the mind as a

vacuole, through which God, grace and the supernatural may freely flow into the natural world of forceful politics. On the Italian reading of Weil however, it is not the gates to heaven above that attention opens, but the cellar-door to the earth below. The standard reading of Weil associates creatural life with force and affliction, and heaven with grace and love. However, for her Italian readers it is everyday politics which forces us to live in a hinterworld of abstract ideas, and the supernatural which returns us to the concrete and the immanent. This has the benefit of clarifying the reality of freedom in Weil's philosophy. From this perspective, freedom is not obtained in the death of the organism, as in Weil's reading of Plato's *Apology*, but in its liberation from those forces which would consign it to death in life (as in Nietzsche's critique of Christianity).

Global Politics and the (Precarious) Life of the Mind: Henri Bergson at the League of Nations

Carolyn Biloft



International History and Politics, the Graduate Institute, Geneva

Between 1920 and 1924, the French Philosopher Henri Bergson served as the first president of the League of Nations' Institute for International Intellectual Cooperation (I.C.I.I.), the predecessor to UNESCO.¹ Bergson expressed that his willingness to take on an official role in the newly-minted intergovernmental organization grew from his conviction that intellectual cooperation across borders constituted a fundamental prerequisite not only for international peace, but also for the nourishment of more open societies everywhere. Following from those convictions, one of his first acts as president was to launch an exhaustive inquiry into the "conditions of intellectual life and work" around the world. Under his purview and guidance, thus, the institute sent out surveys to universities, research-centers, individual scholars and artists, and governmental bodies all over the world. The sheer volume of responses was staggering: the archival documents on the inquiry amount to literally thousands of pages of letters, statistical tables and governmental white papers.² Only a fraction of those materials filtered into the (still ample) official reports and publications on the inquiry.³

On the one hand, this paper sets out to trace the origins and outcomes of this inquiry as bound to Bergson's own effort to influence international politics by promoting the global importance of the "life of the mind." Of course, Bergson saw intellectual connection as a sturdy scaffolding for peace. However, it is also significant that in moment of global-workers' revolts, unfolding under the shadow of the Russian Revolution, Bergson expressed a concern that the rights and conditions of intellectual work were being mis-classified as "elite issues." Part of Bergson's logic was that protecting and promoting intellectual labor served as the best defense against autocratic political tendencies. As such, this paper will use Bergson's own philosophical writing as a way of "reading" his efforts to shape the global public sphere via the League of Nations. In particular, it will revisit Bergson's weaving together of metaphysics and epistemology as a way of understanding his

¹Daniel Laqua, *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011). Daniel Laqua and Rachel Bouyssou, "Internationalisme Ou Affirmation de La Nation? La Coopération Intellectuelle Transnationale Dans l'entre-Deux-Guerres," *Critique Internationale*, no. 52 (2011): 51-67; Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order," *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (July 2011): 223-47.

²The League of Nations archives holds more than ten archival boxes of material dedicated to the subject.

³See for example, *League of Nations and International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, Enquiry into the Conditions of Intellectual Work: First and Second Series* (Geneva, 1923).

concern with and political commitment to the “life of the mind.” Following other authors who have revisited the political potential of Bergson’s thought, the paper will claim that Bergson spent his career mapping what we might call an anti-totalitarian philosophy, which emphasized contingency, fluidity, and the workings of free will, both in the nature of being and in the nature of knowing.⁴

This reading becomes all the more pertinent giving that years later in 1941, Bergson would register himself as Jew, despite the fact that the Vichy Government offered him a dispensation. Thus, I claim that the same philosophical-as-political grounds that pushed Bergson to openly defy the encroachments of Nazism in France, were already audible in his work at the League, including his decision to resign from that body in 1924. For, the results of Bergson’s inquiry into intellectual life—and his sense of urgency in protecting free thought—never materialized as a program of action in Geneva.

Footnote 15: Foucault, Camus, and Plague in a Plague-Stricken Society

Adam Herpolsheimer

IP

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In January of 1975, at one of his Lectures at the Collège de France –the course titled “Abnormal” that year, Michel Foucault contemplated the nature and formation of what in subsequent years he would come to know as governmentality, or the structured techniques by which subjects are governed. For Foucault, plague marks the rise of the invention of positive technologies of power, where these relations center around inclusion, multiplication, and security, rather than exclusion, negation, and rejection. As opposed to the exiling of lepers, Foucault suggests that the partitioning and regulation of both populations and bodies became the response. We see those same practices invoked today in the midst of a global pandemic with quarantining procedures, mask mandates, and even vaccination passports the world over. And yet, was Foucault predicting this repetition? Returning to his text in 2022, I want to reconsider a minor passage to consider the implications and context of these issues from the present.

In a point that might at first seem ancillary to his central argument, Foucault comments on literary works about plague, such as those exemplified by Albert Camus. In footnote 15 from the manuscript of his January 15, 1975, lecture, in an offhand critique of what he deemed the “literary dream of” plagues, Foucault lists Camus’ 1947 novel *La Peste*, among other works, as representative of “a kind of orgiastic dream in which plague is the moment when individuals come apart and when the law is forgotten.” (Foucault, 2004, 47). Challenging that literary simplification –that order and structure are immediately and axiomatically lost in a moment of crisis– is of course valuable, but what if in this rejection, Foucault loses something bigger about the pertinence and complexity of time itself in facing the global challenge of plague?

This paper returns to that moment and to Camus’ text directly to reconsider this discrepancy. More specifically, it places Camus in conversation with Foucault on governmentality, albeit contra-Foucault, to demonstrate the ways in which individualism itself can be viewed biopolitically. In so

⁴Gilles Deleuze, *Le bergsonisme*(Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 2014).; Andrea J Pitts, Mark William Westmoreland, and Leonard Lawlor, *Beyond Bergson: Examining Race and Colonialism through the Writings of Henri Bergson*(Albany, NY : State University of New York Press, 2020).

doing it offers an urgent intervention that speaks powerfully to the current global pandemic. It does this by first offering a robust reading of Foucault's historical understanding of the invention of positive technologies of power with Camus' treatment of "the absurd" in and out of the plague context. It then argues that this juxtaposition offers a more holistic understanding of governmentality and the nature of biopolitics because Camus' notion of "the absurd" tell us about how both individuals and institutions handle a plague-stricken society, how subjects are formed, and how counter-conduct is constituted within the framework of disciplinary institutions. It then concludes by explaining how human beings' relation to "the absurd" function within Foucault's understanding of ethics and technologies of the self (Foucault 2012). In other words, only by pairing these two accounts, Camus and Foucault together can we better explain the degree to which human interaction with "the absurd" is itself parrhesiastic, a form of courageous truth-telling.

The paper argues that the standard reading which assumes that Foucault is viewing plague historically as a constructive tool for the formation of society while Camus is utilizing plague as metaphor for all of the similarly oppressive challenges human beings could potentially face misses a crucial problem. I argue instead that human beings' endless pursuit of meaning in spite of "the absurd" functions as an integral biopolitical force within the paradigm of a plague-stricken society and the invention of positive technologies of power. As a conceptualization of current global challenges, this biopolitical realization becomes crucial in any attempt to navigate the ways in which societies and individuals interact. While Foucault postulates the latent ways in which governmentality is constructed within a plague-stricken society, the global COVID-19 pandemic makes clear that this historical view of plague does not account for the very concrete ways in which global citizens are forced to engage with biopolitical structures, governmentality, and the socio-legal maneuvers that constitute existence within a pandemic. These philosophical insights are not simply a polemical matter, rather I argue that, viewed in real time, they offer modes of both subversive-action outside of the constraints of institutional power, as well as parrhesiastic contemplations of the nature of existence itself.

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Valentin Voloshinov as a Philosopher of Emancipation

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This paper provides a novel reading of Marxist linguist and theoretician Valentin Voloshinov's *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*(1930) as a text containing a linguistic philosophy of emancipation. While Voloshinov has been mostly overlooked by critical theorists and philosophers, this paper aims to show the distinct value of Voloshinov's materialist philosophy of language for theoretical projects on collective emancipation and account for its unduly forgotten influence on Marxist theory.

The first section of the paper is an overview of the main components, key terms, and their relationships in Voloshinov's Marxist philosophy of language. It discusses the significance and role of symbols, words, language and their study in ideology and their location in the material realm, and sets them in the historical context of Voloshinov's writing.

The second section explores how the contextual, historicist, and materialist nature of symbols, words, and language places Voloshinov's theory in a special position to connect the struggle for meaning in ideology with class struggle, while eschewing what Voloshinov takes to be the traps of individualist social psychological and physical interpretations of ideology and language. While Voloshinov avoids an ontological reduction to collectivity by accepting individual consciousnesses as units of ideological transformation, I read Voloshinov as providing a theory of collective emancipation as the shaping of collective meaning through social verbal interaction. In this theory, symbols and language are developed through social verbal interaction but do not exist separately from the material realm. Voloshinov suggests that ideological contestability, which I understand to be necessary for emancipation, is a linguistic phenomenon, is enabled by a correct order of symbols and language with other, contextually relevant material conditions.

The third section discusses the implications of this reading for the practice of linguistic and political theory. I argue that the potential for emancipation through the struggle of meaning in Voloshinov's theory is lost when theory becomes a self-referential system, and its symbols no longer appropriately connect with other components of material reality relevant for class struggle and emancipation.

The last section of the paper further defines Voloshinov's emancipatory and practical philosophy by contrasting it to the critical philosophies of Antonio Gramsci and Mikhail Bakhtin, who shared, influenced, and were influenced by Voloshinov's Marxist perspective to the study of language.

Non-violent Reversibility: Dealing with Complexity and Uncertainty with the Thought of Mahatma Gandhi and E. F. Schumacher

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This paper examines the ways in which the thought of E. F. Schumacher, heavily influenced by the philosophical principles of Mahatma Gandhi, allows us to contend with global problems. By engaging with the epistemological dimensions of Gandhian non-violence and Schumacher's philosophical work, we find the justification for principles of caution, conservation, and small-scale action with regards to the irreversible nature of our political actions when dealing with global problems. I will therefore respond to the call for papers in two ways: first of all, by looking beyond the confines of Western philosophy through an engagement with the work of Gandhi, and, second of all, by promoting responses to global challenges as they are unfolding and through the use of principles determined prior to action, rather than dealing with problems in their aftermath.

Schumacher, a renowned economist and philosopher and a central figure in the British environmentalist movement of the 1970s, understood the global problems facing society to be an expression and manifestation of the prevailing scientific and economic paradigms of his time. He considered the global issues he identified, such as the increasing degradation of Earth's ecological systems, to be products of the prevailing epistemological underpinnings that framed contemporary economic

and political practice. Rooted in Cartesian empiricist epistemology, orthodox economic narratives rendered the world infinitely predictable and manipulatable. These epistemologies informed an increasingly inert technology productive of its own laws and teleology, forming complexities progressively more difficult to extricate ourselves from and generating solutions that displaced rather than resolved issues. The problem-complex that confronted Schumacher has not disappeared, with many of the questions he provoked proving to be even more relevant today given the multiplication of ecological problems and the seeming inability to extricate ourselves from existing economic, social, and political systems. To some degree, as Schumacher (1974) observed, we are still operating under a metaphysic of 'the Reign of Quantity, Materialism, not knowing where to stop in our pursuit of material satisfactions, [and a] disregard of non-material values'.

The 'Reign of Quantity' not only heralded anthropogenic global problems, but necessarily involved the neglect of the qualitative aspects of existence that are often the most important to the human experience. Schumacher considers some of the most important things to be essentially uncertain but completely inaccessible to the methods of empiricist science. Viewing reality through the lens of quantity involves a radical reduction of quality, and thus frames our relations in instrumental terms.

Schumacher's response to these problems was to promote a philosophical and economic doctrine based on Gandhian non-violence. Gandhi argued that, because humans lack perfect knowledge, it is unjustifiable to make others suffer the consequences of one's own beliefs. Gandhi posits the perspectival nature of knowledge, noting that ideas such as justice, or what constitutes right or wrong differs from person to person. The rationale underpinning non-violent principles is thus rooted in the inescapable fact that human knowledge is imperfect and we therefore inevitably face uncertainties, meaning we ought to exercise caution when acting in relation to these uncertainties. Non-violence is thus prior to issues of value, of right and wrong – it acts as a protection against the fallibility of our own judgements. Schumacher takes this rationale to promote conservation and caution, to promote small-scale action that limits our impacts on the tolerance margins of ecological systems, and in so doing urges an approach to political action that avoids the creation of unwieldy complexities and destabilising interventions into fragile ecological systems.

By exploring the ideas of Gandhi and Schumacher, I argue that their reflections provide an epistemologically-rooted rationale for following principles of caution, conservation, and reversibility in our political actions. By understanding the essentially limited capacity of human knowledge and the perennial nature of uncertainties, this should urge caution in how we act upon the world and give us a sense of humility in relation to our ability to master, manipulate, and understand it.

This should not engender political inaction, however. First of all, as Schumacher argues, this can mean working according to smaller scales so that our actions do not exceed the capacities of the ecological systems we operate within. Second of all, in order to reduce the risks associated with increasing complexity we need to develop a sharpened sense of when technologies, systems, and practices can lapse into points of no return. As Gandhi (1996) notes, the practice of non-violence is an 'intensely active' vocation. When dealing with global problems from a Gandhian and Schumacherian perspective, we must both assess the uncertainties of our actions relative to their scale and impact prior to their actualisation, and also assess ongoing processes that are increasing in complexity and generate problems that are more and more difficult to deal with.

Searching for an Ungovernable in Latin America

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In the aftermath of Foucault's research on the rise and spread of governmentality, philosophers like Giorgio Agamben have attempted to delineate forms of conduct that could be classified as 'ungovernable', i.e., life beyond the reach of governmental power. Foucault himself delineates an historically and geographically situated genealogy of governmental power in the Global North in his lectures at the Collège de France of 1978 and 1979, but he would have rejected the notion of 'the ungovernable'. For Foucault, the term would have suggested that human conduct could be enacted beyond the reach of power-relations. Although Foucault accepted the existence of resistance against governmental power, he denied there could ever be a life entirely devoid of power-relations. In his view, resistance to governmentality rather expressed a call 'to be governed differently' or 'not to be governed quite so much'. He describes resistant forms of life as 'counter-conducts' that prefigure alternative forms of government but not a wholesale abolition of power-relations.

In this paper, I will use the theological and political writings of cultural critic Ivan Illich to describe 'the vernacular' as a form of ungovernable life. Illich is mostly known as a critic of institutions like the school system, public medicine, and industrial technology, but he was originally a Catholic missionary tasked with spreading the Gospel in Latin America. However, Illich objected to the Church's use of charity to 'governmentalize' Latin American populations, an accusation that led to his marginalization in the Church. In his view, local populations cultivated a 'vernacular' form of life qualitatively distinct from the 'institutionalized' form of life of the Global North. While in the Global North the Catholic Church and later the State have steadily enveloped human subjects in institutions that produce particular human conducts, local populations in Latin America have organized themselves without the interventions from governmental authorities. Illich coins these forms of horizontal self-coordination 'vernacular life'. Though Illich was unaware of Foucault's lectures on governmentality, his genealogy of the disappearance of the vernacular and the subsequent integration of human subjectivity under governmental forces runs remarkably parallel to Foucault's genealogy – from ecclesiastic pastoral power through the modern governmental state to contemporary neoliberalism. In contrast to Foucault, however, Illich constantly relates this diffusion of governmentality to the eradication of forms of life previously ungoverned. He describes the governmentalization of life as a colonization of vernacular forms of conduct.

In this paper, I wish to highlight how Illich's notion of the vernacular can disclose an ungovernable form of life. I first compare the genealogies of governmentality of Illich and Foucault to show how Illich's critique of the Church and modern governmental institutions relates to Foucault's description of the history of governmentality. Secondly, I show how Illich's experiences in Latin America and his critique of the Church depend on the notion of the vernacular as a form of life beyond the reach of governmentality. This does not entail the complete evasion of power-relations, but the cultivation of power-relations significantly distinct from governmental power-relations. In the third and final part, I argue that this defense of the vernacular against governmentalization leads to a form of resistance that does not call for 'to be governed differently' or 'not to be governed quite so much' but not to be governed at all. This form of resistance is illustrated in the struggles of indigenous peoples and local peasant populations not to be integrated in the culture and institutions of the Global North.

Day 2

The Beautiful, the Good, and Meeting Global Challenges

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OL

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As we consider the current global challenges we face, looking to the past is an important source for inspiration. According to Hans-Georg Gadamer, when we interpret our historical traditions and seek to understand them, this is a dynamic process which involves application to our current situation. In this paper, I will explore Gadamer's interpretation of Plato and suggest that as we look to the global concerns it provides important resources for continental philosophy and its broader cultural contributions. I will examine how Gadamer's interpretation of Plato's beautiful and good offer valuable practical approaches for encouraging self-understanding, dialogue, solidarity, and potentially more harmonious communities. For example, given the limitations of competitive individualism and capitalism and attendant iniquities, and the seeming recent tendencies towards increasing polarization within societies, it is arguable that an approach that encourages dialogue, beauty, goodness, and solidarity is a timely one for our times. Given Gadamer's concerns over technologically driven mastery and control and related visions of progress, I will consider how Gadamer points to a type of transformation that occurs through discussion, which he relates to progress, but with the qualification that this is "not the progress proper to research in regard to which one cannot fall behind, but rather a progress that always must be renewed in the effort of our living" (Gadamer 2007, 244). Gadamer's model of dialogue can be seen as promoting transformation and encouraging solidarity in a manner that appreciates our temporality and historicity, promoting the progress towards more respectful interactions. I will explore how Gadamer's understanding of Plato's beautiful and good may further support this and point to how Gadamer's interpretation of Plato with its emphasis on dialogue, human finitude, and practical emphasis is a helpful reading of Plato for our times. For example, Gadamer relates the beautiful and the Greek conception of *theoria* to surpassing our ordinary sense of purposefulness and associates these with what is shared and belongs to everyone. We also find the encouragement of participation and community in Gadamer's aesthetic conception of the festival. Gadamer also points to the importance in Plato's thought regarding overcoming the excessive use of power in general and in relation to politics and points to the role of education to promote this. We can see in these ideas an attempt to conceptualize something that is shared and held in common, emphasizing participation rather than exclusion and control and promoting a sense of thoughtfulness, mutual respect, and solidarity.

In his reading of Plato, Gadamer points to how the good takes refuge in the beautiful and maintains that the good is something that operates in entities and relates to their own nature (Gadamer 1991, 209). According to Gadamer, the beautiful overcomes the gap between the ideal and the real, and the good appears through the beautiful. For Gadamer, the good isn't found in another world beyond ours, but rather appears in the beauty, truth, and measure of human conduct. This provides a practical emphasis on the good that I think could potentially be understood to lead to a person being in some way authentic to themselves and harmoniously interacting with others and a greater whole. I will explore Gadamer's interpretation of Plato's good and how the good is both one and many, and will draw out potential implications of this and other aspects of his thought for

respectful dialogue and harmony with one another and oneself. Gadamer's hermeneutic approach arguably provides an important counterpoint to the excesses of contemporary individualism and subjectivism, but I will also examine tensions and possible limitations in Gadamer's views. For example, Gadamer has more generally been criticized for not sufficiently appreciating difference and I will consider Gadamer's reading of Plato in relation to this issue. I will look at how the beautiful and good may promote self-understanding and truth, consider how this relates to his hermeneutic and aesthetic conceptions. I will suggest that Gadamer's reading of Plato has important resources for continental philosophy and its contributions to addressing pressing global challenges such as climate change, overcoming injustice, and more generally encouraging the transformation towards practices of greater mutual respect and solidarity.

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A Disastrous Conversation: Blanchot, Heidegger and the End of Philosophy

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The aim of this paper is to engage with a single question: are events such as climate change and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—both of which, it could be argued, represent an articulation of an experience outside of human subjectivity—possible to delineate from a philosophical perspective?

In responding to this question, this paper considers the work of two figures within the continental tradition: Maurice Blanchot and Martin Heidegger. Specifically, the aim of this paper is to stage a conversation between these two interlocutors; a conversation which itself questions whether 'philosophy' as a term represents an appropriate path to follow in order to continue thinking in the aftermath of disastrous historical events, most notably for the figures noted above, the Second World War.

After an initial consideration of the notion of the 'end of philosophy' as it is given in Heidegger's Letter on Humanism and The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking, the paper posits that the Heideggerian insistence on a turn (in the sense of a *Kehre*) towards a thinking of that which is more originary than metaphysics, retains an essential anthropocentrism, and therefore retains an intrinsic link to this same tradition. That is, even at its most esoteric and obscure level, the question of the meaning of Being (itself the central premise of the Heideggerian project) is still too grounded within the human, which is to say, within the subjective perspective; within the experience of an agent which retains the power to say 'I', and, by extension, within philosophical discourse.

It is here that Blanchot's meditations on literature and on disaster (as they are articulated in The Writing of the Disaster), a term which designates the displacement of a coherent, systematic thought, such as philosophy, are brought to bear. Indeed, it is the disaster's relation to *le neutre*, itself an articulation of an experience outside of subjectivity, that provides a counterpoint, both to

the Heideggerian motif of an originary thinking, and to philosophical thought more broadly. For Blanchot, the term 'disaster' represents that which is both most separate from thought—what cannot be represented in strictly philosophical terms—but also that which precedes thought. That is, the thought of disaster is the thought of an original experience; of an experience of an origin outside of human subjectivity, wherein it is impossible to say 'I'. Such an experience, it will be explained, is intrinsically linked to literature, and to the category of writing more generally.

And yet, as Blanchot articulates in an earlier essay from *The Infinite Conversation*, such a distinction is not entirely straightforward. Indeed, insofar as the experience of the disaster and of the neutral can be said to diverge from philosophical discourse, it is at once constitutive of a return to this same discipline, albeit in a manner and a resonance that differs from its historical articulation.

It is here that this paper develops its central claim. Namely, that we can only approach global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, from the perspective of a discourse that is at once outside of the philosophical whilst also repeating it. Which is to say, that it is precisely in this conversation between Blanchot and Heidegger—between philosophy and literature—that we might begin to articulate a means by which we can approach the global, non-human events which have framed our lives over the ensuing years of the 2020s.

Race and Aesthetics - Historical Regime, Speculative Present

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IP

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Blackness and race have constituted the (unacknowledged and often denied) foundation, what we might call the nuclear power plant, from which the modern project of knowledge — and of governance — has been deployed.¹

This paper proposes to take seriously 'the theme or question of race...[as something which might take] us closer to the root of that which we consider constitutive of our world, of our modernity, of our common colonial nexus'. I want to look at the relationship between race and the universalising gesture in philosophy, particularly in modern European philosophy. I will attempt to explore the race/aesthetics relationship through two questions. Firstly, what is the place of race in the structure of critique, in our critical heritage? Secondly, what does the acknowledgment of the racial/racialising architecture of critique mean for its present and its future? For both of these questions, the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant will serve as what Walter Benjamin called a 'tradendum to be transmitted' (and subsequently recast). 'Aesthetics' refers to both the broad sense of the word (for which Kant's third critique serves as a kind of 'foundational text') and the more technical sense of the word as it is used in the 'Transcendental Aesthetic' section of Kant's first critique (the aesthetic as a 'doctrine of sensibility').

Within Kant's critical system, the ability (or the power) of aesthetic judgment functions as a universalising bridge: our shared capacity to disinterestedly judge the beautiful becomes the theoretical link that connects our shared morality to our shared accountability to reason and its universal

¹Joseph-Achille Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*, trans. by Laurent Dubois, A John Hope Franklin Center Book (Durham London: Duke University Press, 2017)

laws. David Lloyd's argues in *Under Representation* that the formal and therefore reproducible model of aesthetic theories of the eighteenth century that, along with their core presuppositions about a certain kind of conditioned (by disinterestedness or lack of desire) 'universality', informed 'not only subsequent ideological discourse [including education and the humanities generally] but also [...] material institutions [both political and pedagogical]'. Aesthetics as an instructive form of thinking provided an 'as if' or hypothetical *sensus communis* that the historically specific material reality, or political institutions could not provide, but the idea of which those institutions could rely upon for a semblance of intellectual consistency and ideological support. Eighteenth century aesthetic theory is argued by Lloyd as being the (idealist) solution to the contradictions contained in the bourgeois revolutions and the emerging liberal humanist politics of the time: as the theoretical and formal foundation of the conception of the political subject of civil society. However, it is necessarily along these same conceptual lines that the aesthetic, ethical, reasonable, and ultimately political subject is conceived, that it's constitutive 'double' is created: the racialised non-subject, or 'not-yet-subject'. What Lloyd's analysis of the modern university's institutionally foundational aesthetic theories shows, beyond specific elements that are now recognisable as overtly racist, is the racializing logic that hides in plain sight within the theoretical architecture of humanist aesthetic, moral, and political theory and by extension within their corresponding institutions and the material reality that those institutions help to produce or maintain. This paper is an attempt at reading critique along with what Achille Mbembe calls the 'other of reason'. As Adorno says: 'there is no question which we might simply ask, without knowing of past things that are preserved in the question and spur it.'

The second question that structures this paper (what now?) is interested in, after acknowledging Mbembe's 'the other of reason', attempting a speculative recasting of the conditions of experience (following Benjamin's recasting of Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic). This will tendentiously and explicitly place the racialising gesture side by side with the universalising gesture in suggesting the 'postcolonial' as a temporal condition of contemporary experience. How do we experience a world, when postcolonial temporality is a condition of the 'legibility' of that experience.

Disobeying Borders

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Speaking of global challenges means asking the question of what matters to and concerns us all, because global stakes by definition go beyond borders. However, the crossing of national, class, racial or gender borders is the subject of redoubled vigilance today. In this talk, I would like to question borders from the perspective of the bodies that are intimately constituted and crossed by them. What do the movement of bodies and their modes of appearance in the public space tell us about contemporary global challenges that are determined by our primary attachments, our entanglement with other living beings and our postcolonial condition? Adopting a critical phenomenological approach, I will focus on two examples that seem important to me to define a disobedience to borders understood as a visible one: the example of migrants illegally crossing European biotechnological borders, on the one hand, and the example of veiled Muslim women in Europe, on the other. Both examples will allow us to explore the status of the (real or supposed) foreigner at the heart of postcolonial societies.

Amerindians and Our New Heterotopias

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OL

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This conference discusses (from the autochthonous Brazilian impasse) ethical questions concerning constitutions of subjectivity and (dis)obedience. The issue of indigenous obedience will rest on Clastres' *societies-against-the-State*, giving an extent to De Castros' perspectivism and possible relationships with Western reality. Thereby, the subjectivity question will stem from Foucauldian theory. Facing the Amerindian realities as *heterotopias*, how could we produce resistances and dissonant possibilities in our present reality?

As the Amerindians have systematically faced a destruction machine (colonial expansion and methodical massacre), they have been victims of two destructions: genocide and ethnocide – physical annihilation (race-centered) and cultural violence (against their symbolical existence). Furthermore, it is important to distinguish Amazonian societies as *against-the-State*:¹ their organizational cosmological view does not carry the notion of unity, but of multiplicity; for them, the One is responsible for extinguishing the multiple. Otherwise, a specific political apparatus maintains their (dis)organization: the opacity of the leader's speech.²

Upholding the aforementioned, for Veyne,³ the State cannot appear in its sovereign wholeness if not entering communication; videlicet, being necessary a communicational "chief", a sovereign who manages the chain of words. This is a question, says Muñoz,⁴ regarding the relationship that the self establishes with itself when obeying the State or Society: it is a fold within the self (*autokrateia*) that institutes a subjectivity in the pair *domination-obedience*.⁵ Thus, the interest lies in "how the State shows itself as an announcer entity (...) one must give it a voice since an entity does not own it."⁶

Yet, Amerindians are still a reminder of possibilities beyond political-economic obedience and productiveness – the "primitive society" is the immanent state exteriority because it is an anti-production force⁷ – *spaces-others* surrounded by multiplicities and other potentialities. They are a constant materialization of heterotopias: multiple concrete "utopias" that lodge the imagination.⁸

Besides these secluded hamlets, it is essential to notice that these societies obey rules different from ours;⁹ these heterotopias are not unreal, but something physically situated in specific locations that continuously reminds the Western that differences can emerge and might not follow the same

¹Clastres, Pierre. (2008) *A Sociedade Contra o Estado*. São Paulo: Cosac&Naify, p. 170-193.

²Ibid., pp. 39-55; 153-158.

³Veyne, Paul. (1988) "O indivíduo atingido no coração pelo poder público". In: *Indivíduo e Poder*. Lisboa: Ed. 70, p. 17.

⁴Muñoz, Yolanda. (2015) *Obedecer! Escutando ecos nos escritos de Michel Foucault e Paul Veyne*. Sofia, 4(2).

⁵Foucault, Michel. (1998) *História da Sexualidade II*. RJ: Graal, p. 66.

⁶Silva, Gustavo. (2020) *A imagem de si: entre obediência e subjetividades dissonantes*. CIPPUS, 8(2), p. 29-67

⁷De Castro, Eduardo. (2010) "Introduction: The Untimely, Again". In: Clastres, Pierre. *Archeology of Violence*. LA: Semiotext, p. 15.

⁸Foucault, Michel. (2009) "Les Heterotopies". In: *Le Corps Utopique, Les Heterotopies*. Paris : Nouvelles Édition Lignes, p. 19-30.

⁹Foucault, Michel. (2001) "Des espaces autres". In: *Dits et écrits II, 1976-1988*. Paris: Gallimard, p. 1571-1581.

power meshes.

Nevertheless, what is to be Amerindian? To De Castro,¹⁰ a certain *becoming*¹¹ -- something essentially invisible yet certainly not less effective: an infinitesimal ceaseless differentiation movement; a changeable identity, not a “difference” interiorized and stabilized state. It enables a differentiative possibility: everybody can be Amerindian, except those who are not – the resistance is amplified to all those willing to experience an Amerindian-becoming to become a warrior-against- the-State. Therefore, it is conceivable now to prioritize circulation, appropriation, and cultural reframing ideas, valuing situations, interests and possible implications produced by the transformations Amerindians experienced. Hence, putting it as an epistemological horizon, an “indigenous conceptual imagination reconstitution by our own imaginative terms”¹² is planned, opening its structure to a differential grammar of multiplicity.¹³

Concluding the abovementioned, the subject is linked to its own portrayal of self, taking care of its own image, which may lead it to disobey or to *over-obey*.¹⁴ Likewise, new subjectivities are created, something typical of whose do not accept being normalized, as State domination and destruction techniques overcoming consists in anti-hegemonic compositions. Finally, heterotopic marginality can establish itself as something within the order of things simultaneously as outside the hegemony; this may be a way to constitute subjects not overpowered by the State morality – “another world possibility, way more combative (...) ungovernable”.¹⁵

A Genealogy of Trusteeship over Post-Apartheid Bantu Governmentality

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OL

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This paper takes its local cue from the “post-apartheid” afterlife of racial, ethnic, and class segregation in contemporary South Africa, with a view to the flourishing of apartheid in a global context. The brutality of the apartheid regime gave rise to a common misunderstanding of White settler coloniality as a sovereign, public, and repressive mode of power imposed on and against Black subjects and on African culture. But power is complex and productive. While public apartheid was formally signed off, its features are reproduced by citizens in private, often without knowing it.

While it was anticipated that the formal demise of apartheid would free black citizens of South Africa from systematic racial oppression, many of its informal features remain. With reference to this context, the paper traces the genealogy of a distinctively pluralist conception of Trusteeship, which took hold in the early years of South African state formation, as a mode of apartheid gover-

¹⁰De Castro, Eduardo. (2007) “No Brasil todo mundo é índio, exceto quem não é”. In: Sztutman, Renato. *Encontros: Eduardo Viveiros de Castro*. RJ: Beco do Azougue, p. 130-161.

¹¹Mutual transformation and double capture within both parts change (Deleuze, Gilles ; Claire Parinet (1977) *Dialogues*. Paris : Flammarion, p. 8).

¹²De Castro, Eduardo. (2017) *A inconstância da alma selvagem*. SP: Ubu, p. 15.

¹³De Castro, Eduardo. (2008) Claude Lévi-Strauss, fundador do pós-estruturalismo.

In: <https://umaincertaantropologia.org/2011/11/24/claude-levi-strauss-fundador-do-pos-estruturalismo-eduardo-viveiros-de-castro/>

¹⁴Silva, Gustavo. (2020) Resenha: GROS, Frédéric. *Desobedecer*. São Paulo: Ubu, 2018. 224p. *Argumento*, n. 16, p. 117-126.

¹⁵Silva, *A imagem de si...*, p. 65.

nance, when British imperial legitimation shifted from assimilative direct rule toward segregated indirect rule in the late nineteenth century. The ideology of segregated Trusteeship evolved to task segregated, pseudo-independent nation states with autonomous expropriation, in a situation the philosopher Mogobe Ramose (1999, 2005) calls *Bantocracy*.

Trusteeship took a distinctive meaning in South Africa as it came to justify separate development, informed by a segregated conception of cultural identity, which introduced a promise of self-determination that suited cost-effective devolution. As Trusteeship evolved to justify indirect rule, so, the accountability it espouses was devolved to culturally distinct nation states.

The idea of segregated Trusteeship was that people with essentially different customs would be assisted to develop separate political institutions to suit their own respective needs. Customary differences were essentialised and sanctified in South Africa, with the effect that accountability for differential civil relations between racial and ethnic groups was de-contested, with the responsibility of direct rule deferred to ethnic client regimes. Within the customary idiom of Trusteeship, liberal ideas of self-determination and practices of indirect rule evolved toward a programme for the retribalisation of separate ethnic homelands to be ruled by bought collaborators. This changed the function of “Trusteeship” from a justification for formal empire to a justification for informal empire.

Drawing on Steven Biko’s insights into the structure of colonised subjective agency, I explain how Trusteeship continues today to influence self-defeating Bantu governmentality, such that public apartheid is cultivated in private Black subject-formation. In so doing I correct a misunderstanding of freedom from apartheid, common in scholarly receptions of Biko’s writing, as a negation of the White face of public representation. With reference to Foucault’s theory of power, I offer an alternative account of Biko’s insights into subjective and national liberation, to identify colonial power as a facticity-inducing force for postcolonial Black subjectivity.

Finding convergence between Foucault’s genealogies of disciplinary power in governmentality and Biko’s Black Consciousness critique of Bantu governmentality, this critique of *Bantocracy* in segregated Trusteeship helps to explain how racist disciplinary habits of Black self-limitation and self-defeating subjective agency make Black South African subjects the complicit agents of secondary apartheid in the post-apartheid private civil order.

Hindutva: Exploring Contemporary Biopolitics in South Asia

Hassan Ali

OL

The University of Memphis

In *Society Must Be Defended*, Michel Foucault develops his theory of biopolitics, in part through his analysis of the German National Socialist (Nazi) movement of the 20th century. While the Nazis are his primary point of focus for biopower, other nationalist movements are left relatively unexamined, and the goal for the first part of this paper is to analyze the Hindu Nationalist (*Hindutva*) movement through a Foucauldian lens, using the work of Aijaz Ahmad to support my reading. In *Lineages of the Present*, Ahmad presents aspects of *Hindutva* that I interpret as fundamentally biopolitical, such as the interlocking relationship between Sanskrit and ‘High Brahminism’ in homogenizing Brahmin culture as the default cultural mode of India, as well as the epistemic construction of the

concept of 're-conversion'. Progenitors of *Hindutva* such as Vinayak Savarkar used 're-conversion' to annex all Indian religions and ethnicities into the grasp of *Hindutva*, by asserting that Hinduism is the true religion for all Indian citizens, and those that follow other religions have 'converted' into them, even if they were born into them. Therefore, they must 're-convert' back to their true religion, i.e. Hinduism. Such epistemic constructions are novel biopolitical phenomena that do not appear in the Foucauldian analysis of the Nazi movement.

In the second part, I will make the argument that while the Hindu Nationalist movement is at its heart fundamentally biopolitical, it cannot be holistically explained through biopower alone. The works of Santiago Castro-Gomez, Divya Dwivedi, and Achille Mbembe allow us to bridge the gaps — Castro-Gomez provides a more holistic theoretical framework by underscoring supra-state technologies of power, Dwivedi sheds light on the colonial origins of High Brahminism, and Mbembe helps us understand the necropolitical construction of space during the decolonization and partition of South Asia in 1947. In "Michel Foucault and the Coloniality of Power", Castro-Gomez critiques Foucault's isomorphic account of power, and theorizes that there are three different levels of power that utilize distinct technologies of power: there is the microphysical level, where power acts through processes of subjectivation, the mesophysical level, where power acts through Foucault's theory of biopower, and the macrophysical level, where power acts through a supra-state dispositif. Castro-Gomez analyzes Foucault's account of the Treaty of Westphalia as the origin for the birth of Europe (in the way that it functions in the modern age), and argues that this is a macrophysical account of colonialism in Latin America that cannot be explained through biopower alone.

Just as Castro-Gomez formulated a macrophysical account of power in Latin America, one can also develop such an account for the South Asian subcontinent that more holistically explains the phenomenon of Hindu nationalism. In order to outline this theory, I will be turning to Divya Dwivedi's article "How Upper Castes Invented a Hindu Majority", to underscore the role that British colonialism played in fostering Hindu nationalist sentiment. The most important takeaway from Dwivedi's essay for the purposes of this paper is the fact that Hinduism as a totalizing religion that encompasses all the traditional casts is a 20th century invention — one that has been developed through indirect collaboration between the Brahmins and the British colonizers. This totalizing account of Hinduism was then used for political means by the Brahmins to oppress the lower castes and foster Hindu Nationalist sentiment by epistemically constructing a false majority for Hinduism in India.

One can observe another element of macrophysical power through the necropolitical framework of Achille Mbembe — I will be using his account of space construction to analyze the infamous border debacle during partition at the hands of Cyril Radcliffe. The dysfunctional implementation of borders followed the colonial strategy of 'divide and rule', creating many 'death-worlds' across the two new nation-states of Pakistan and India by prompting the largest mass migration in human history (20 million people) leading to the deaths of around 2 million.

To conclude, while Foucault's biopolitics remains a valuable and productive theoretical framework within which to analyze various constructions of power, it is apparent that it does not provide us with the full picture. The *Hindutva* movement at its heart is biopolitical, but it utilizes many technologies of power that biopolitics cannot holistically capture. However, there are many other thinkers that allow us to fill in these gaps: Divya Dwivedi's account of the epistemic construction of Hinduism as a majoritarian religion; Achille Mbembe's necropolitics which deals with the construction of

borders as a tool of power; and Santiago Castro-Gomez, who provides us with a more holistic theoretical framework within which to articulate these macrophysical workings of power.

Day 3

The Owl of Minerva and Philosophy's Belated Flight: A Heterodox Reading

Bernardo Ferro

IP

University of Warwick

In the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel claims that philosophy 'always comes on the scene too late' to teach 'what the world ought to be. [...] As the *thought* of the world, it appears only when actuality [*Wirklichkeit*] has completed its process of formation and attained its finished state.'¹ This passage, along with the well-known image of the owl of Minerva, whose flight begins 'with the falling of dusk',² led some interpreters to view Hegel's practical philosophy as a fundamentally *descriptive* enterprise, whereby a world that is already rational is merely revealed or recognized as such. In this paper, I argue instead that Hegel's work amounts to a *normative* enterprise, grounded in a critical reconstruction of objectivity. Accordingly, like Andrew Buchwalter, I believe that the sentences quoted above 'do not preclude ascribing to Hegel an evaluative or critical stance toward existing reality.'³ What they do rule out is the idea that the practice of philosophy might transform reality in some direct or immediate way. And Hegel rejects this idea for at least two main reasons.

First, he is clear about philosophy's theoretical nature. Its aim, he writes, is to show how reality 'should be understood',⁴ not to effect actual empirical change. In this regard, Hegel can be seen as a forerunner of the Marxian debate about the relationship between theory and practice. Although his conception of philosophy as a normative undertaking anticipates Marx's famous call on philosophers to cease interpreting the world and to start changing it, this change is conceived in an indirect way, as a potential by-product of a critical diagnosis of reality. While some of Marx's more pragmatic formulations seem to suggest, as Adorno put it, that 'philosophers would in fact be best advised to pack it in and become revolutionaries',⁵ Hegel is wary of any direct translation of theory into practice. In his eyes, practical change depends on historical and political factors that may well be influenced by philosophical reflections, but which are ultimately extraneous to the philosopher's critical task.

Second, Hegel's reference to philosophy's 'belated flight' is also linked to the critical method usually employed in his writings. As he repeatedly argues, in philosophy 'we can assume nothing and assert nothing dogmatically.'⁶ While other forms of knowledge 'apply presupposed forms of definitions

¹G.W.F. Hegel, *Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) [hereafter PR], 16.

²Ibidem.

³Andrew Buchwalter, *Dialectics, Politics, and the Contemporary Value of Hegel's Practical Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2012), 14.

⁴PR, 15.

⁵Theodor W. Adorno, *Lectures on Negative Dialectics* (New York: Polity, 2008), 51.

⁶Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline. Part I: Science of Logic*, trans. K. Brinkmann; D. Dajlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) [hereafter Enc], §1.

and the like without further ado',⁷ philosophy is characterized precisely by its rejection of all such presuppositions. Therefore, instead of endorsing a *transcendent* criterion of truth, with which existing objects and conditions must conform, philosophy must proceed in an *immanent* manner, by focusing on a specific object and determining whether it fulfils its own potential. Only by 'letting go of its *particular* beliefs and opinions and letting the *basic matter* [*die Sache*] hold sway in itself'⁸ can philosophy avoid the pitfalls of dogmatism. And only then can it accomplish its true task, namely to show how reality 'makes itself through and out of itself into what it is.'⁹

It should now be clearer in what sense philosophy is a *retrospective* activity: the rational standpoint it aims at is not a preformed concept or worldview, to be proven or defended; it can only emerge as the result of philosophy's critical efforts, 'when actuality has completed its process of formation.' But this process must not be reduced to an empirical or historical process. As Hegel is careful to point out, the transformation he has in mind refers not to reality as such, but to actuality, or *Wirklichkeit*, i.e. to the endpoint of the immanent movement whereby reality is raised to truth. Therefore, while philosophers need to engage with the world as it is rather than conjure up an alternative version of reality, this engagement is grounded in a conception of philosophy that is ultimately directed at a new and different world. Indeed, Hegel's critical model is aimed precisely at revealing a different form of reality—the form that reality must take if it is to be *true* or *actual* reality.

Hegel and Schelling on World History: Contemporary Perspectives

Oriane Petteni

OL

Liège University / Louvain-la-neuve University

In diagnosing the reasons for humanity's current morbid condition, many cultural theorists, from Mark Fischer to Jonathan Crary, Elie Ayache, and Boaventura de Souza Santos, come to the same conclusion: the contemporary is marked by a compulsive hyper-present that colonizes both the past and future, converting all expressions of difference into its monological movement. In doing so, what is currently called the Neo-colonial Order or Global Capitalism, makes sure that no event likely to disrupt its logic can occur. The aim of this paper is to underline how a revaluation of German Idealism (and more precisely, of what we call the "Hegel-Schelling debate on World History") can provide us with a consistent framework to describe this logic, but also point out possible alternatives. To do so, the paper proceeds in three steps.

First, it argues that Hegel's philosophy provides the most consistent conceptual framework to approach the specific temporal logic of late modernity in which we are still enclosed today. In fact, the paper insists on the *recursive* mode in which the Hegelian dialectic operates. It shows how the latter subsequently drives the unfolding of history, by gradually erasing alternative temporal systems and cultures in its quest for absolute self-referentiality.

Second, the paper reevaluates Schelling's *Philosophical Inquiries into the Essence of Human Freedom* as an original answer to Hegel's eventual monological perspective on World History. In fact, the paper interrogates the meaning of Schelling's insistence on the innately repressed, chaotic, obscure,

⁷Hegel, *Science of Logic*, trans. G. di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23.

⁸Enc §23.

⁹Enc §83.

matrix, and material principle (the *Ungrund*) that grounds the unfolding of the modern world system when approached in light of World History issues. Through the mediation of William Blake's literary and visual work, the paper excavates the social realities enclosed in Schelling's metaphysical cosmology. It shows that the dark principle can be seen as figuring the erased and yet crucial role played by (women) domestic labor, slavery, and nature exploitation for the rise of the modern world system. The paper thus reads Schelling's 1809 text as staging the conflict between the explicit telos of the modernization program initiated by the West, namely the "mondialatinisation" of the globe that sets it up in his image, and a deep past that cannot be sublated. It shows how this noncontemporary and nonlinear force defers infinitely the end of history and complexifies modernity's linear temporal system.

Third, the paper puts this reading of Schelling's *Philosophical Inquiries* in dialogue with the latest research in *Black Studies*, namely Jared Sexton and Fred Moten's specific brand of Afro-pessimism. It excavates the contemporary "Schelling Renaissance" at stake in the most radical trend of Critical Theory today and draws the main conclusions of such phenomenon: (i) the Hegel-Schelling diverging views on World History constitutes the conceptual matrix that still grounds contemporary debates in Continental Philosophy (especially in Culture Theory and Critical Theory) about Globalisation, Modernisation and World History (ii) by inscribing themselves in the continuity of this conceptual matrix, contemporary cultural theorists give themselves the proper means to reprogram it in order to open diverging futures.

In the Absence of Conclusion, the Conclusion is Absence: Koselleck, Foucault and the Temporality of Crisis

Oliver Garratt

IP

University of Exeter

A meditation upon the theme of global problems invites one to consider what it is that makes a "problem" show up as a problem for us, and similarly, what it is about "global" problems that makes them show up as global. Thus, in the first part of this presentation, I draw upon Reinhart Koselleck's historical accounts of the Enlightenment in order to describe, provisionally, the modern understanding of *global problems*. Koselleck recounts that, since the time of Kant, history has been conceptualised as a procession of *crises*, *critiques* and *resolutions*. Within this Enlightenment experience of time, there is an ambiguity about whether the future represents a logical necessity or a moral obligation. This aspect of the Enlightenment is encapsulated in Koselleck's observation that critique has 'transformed the future into a maelstrom that sucked out the present from underneath the feet of the critic'. This ambiguity is still present in contemporary thought, as exemplified in Michel Foucault's essay 'What is Enlightenment?', whose prescriptions can be read both as ethical injunctions *and* as historical inevitabilities.

Within the Enlightenment then, the *problem* is that which shows-up in terms of *crisis*; the *global* is that which shows-up in terms of the *universality* of the critical philosopher's ethical/moral thought. The question that arises is to what extent (continental) philosophy must be bound to this mode of thinking about *global problems*, in which the future appears as a *fait accompli*. This question applies both to the cultural-critical gesturing characteristic of the canonical figures of post-Kantianism, but also to the way in which concrete problems such as global warming, ecological crises and epidemics are conceptualised in contemporary thought.

To answer this question, the second part of the presentation puts forward a reading of two early texts by Foucault which can be read as deviating from this mode of thought, namely, his “Introduction” to Ludwig Binswanger’s *Dream and Existence* (1954), and “*la recherche scientifique et la psychologie*” (1957). I read these early texts as showing an alternative to the contemporary fixation on the *critical*. This *showing* happens by way of the gnomic remarks Foucault offers up as conclusions; conclusions that offer no concrete solutions to the historical problems diagnosed within the texts. This absence of a solution points beyond the form of temporality presupposed by standard readings of Foucault, in which the ‘history of the present’ is most often taken to mean the elaboration of a *crisis* (or crises) that one hopes to transcend. The unintentional effect of Foucault’s enigmatic statements in these texts is to dissolve the conceptual triad of *crisis/critique/resolution* as meaningless, thus allowing the reader to encounter the world differently. That is to say, they challenge the assumption that crisis necessitates critique, that critique necessitates prescriptive norms as a corrective to our problems, and that such correctives are *prima facie* desirable. Foucault’s early texts therefore bring into question the universality, authority, and desirability of the normativist identification/proliferation of historical crises.

More positively, in these texts, a conclusion may take the form of an enigmatic wonderment in the face of historical entanglements and cultural paradoxes. In the two texts I consider, there is no external vantage point from which Foucault the critic pretends to speak, or from which prescriptive solutions could gain any authority. We are instead trapped on the inside of the historically-conditioned cultural paradoxes identified in Foucault’s texts. The refusal of anything but cryptic solutions suggests that the critical worldview (in which diagnosis necessarily implies cure) does not adequately encompass the phenomena at hand. In other words, Foucault’s semi-mystical pronouncements allow us to see the form in which Enlightenment-critique poses itself as an artifice. This kind of Foucauldian *anti-conclusion*, in which there is precisely a *lack* of solutions, invites us to acknowledge, rather than to fix, the ambiguity and intractability of our various *local* predicaments, and of our experiences of them more generally.

Thus, I venture that this absence of solutions does not invite the reader to fill the gap with their own ready-made solutions, but rather to engage in *experimentation*. To “experiment” in this new context would mean asking, with all openness, how to *live with*, rather than to *refuse, deny, resist*, the spiritual and political perils (bio-politics, technology, nihilism – but also global warming, mass extinction, pandemics, *etcetera*) which face us today, and for which there seem to be few, if any, clear-cut solutions. The question is how, or whether it is even possible, to develop a new language which is neither moral, ethical nor political in its register, yet which is capable of encompassing the experience of what has hitherto been called *global problems*.

What Good Is Genealogy for Praxis?

Bernard Harcourt



Columbia University/EHESS

“In any case, I hate everything that merely instructs me without augmenting or directly invigorating my activity.” It is with those words from Goethe, you will recall, that Nietzsche opened his untimely meditations on history. Perhaps, we should return there to ask some untimely questions about genealogy today.

Amy Allen, Colin Koopman, Daniele Lorenzini, and other critical philosophers have proposed various readings of Foucaultian genealogy—whether problematizing or possibilizing—as a unique method distinct from the debunking genealogical approach of Nietzsche, as well as from the vindication-of-values approach of Bernard Williams. Lorenzini associates his reading with the notions of counter-conduct and the critical attitude Foucault discussed in relation to Kant.

It may be time to strike again and ask the hard question whether any of these interpretations of genealogy are truly fruitful for critical praxis. In this talk, I propose that once again and together we philosophize with a hammer.

Framing Global Challenges, Epistemic Freedom and a role for philosophers

Karl Landström

IP

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In this paper I set out to offer a caution pertaining to how global challenges are framed, and to suggest that philosophers can play a central role in identifying and addressing the material and epistemological consequences of how such framings. This paper consists of three sections. In the first section I draw on the work of geographers Patricia Noxolo (2017a, 2017b) and Deirdre McKay (2021) to discuss the UK's Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) as an example of how certain powerful actors and institutions have the ability frame what counts as and constitutes global challenges, which has both material and epistemological consequences. With the creation of the Global Challenges Research Fund, a £1.5bn fund aimed at addressing global sustainable development challenges, the British government dedicated a large sum of money for research that addresses global challenges. The fund was aimed at promoting research into eleven challenges that had been distilled from the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, while also strengthening research capacity in both the UK and the Global South. Noxolo (2017a, 2017b) argues that the GCRF recreates and reinforces colonial hierarchies while McKay (2021) argues that the GCRF functions as a framing device that shapes inclusions and exclusions of certain research themes and research objects, thus obscuring and deprioritising some while highlighting others.

In the second section I turn to the work of decolonial philosophers Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) and Paulin J. Hountondji (2002) to argue that such framing devices can constitute infringements on epistemic freedom. That is, as an infringement on the ability and right to think, theorize and interpret the world using from one's own location, using one's own methodologies unencumbered by existing global power structures and colonial matrices of power.

In the final section of this paper, I put forth a proposal for a role for philosophers in combatting such framing devices. I argue that the continental tradition offers not only the tools for critically interrogating such framing devices to bring to light that which is obscured, but also for the envisioning other possible ways of thinking. To illustrate this, I turn to the work on Foucauldian genealogy of David Owen (2002) and Daniele Lorenzini (2020). Owen (2002:227-228) argues that genealogy is best understood as a practice of critical reflection directed at freeing oneself from what he calls aspectival captivity. That is, to enable agents to escape acting and reflecting upon themselves in terms of a given picture or perspective as the only possible picture or perspective available. The initial aim genealogy according to Owen (2002:221) is to free the agent of this captivity by exhibiting the possibility of other perspectives and pictures. Lorenzini (2020) in turn

argues that there is a possibilising dimension to genealogy, a dimension that defines and elaborates forms and practices of counter-conduct. A counter-conduct that aspires to destabilise a given power/knowledge apparatus governing a certain area of one's conduct. Thus, within the discipline of philosophy one finds the tools that makes possible the envisioning of alternative perspectives, pictures and forms of conduct than those emphasised through framing devices such as that of the UK government and GCRF's 'Global Challenges'. Thus, the philosopher can play a multifaceted role in understanding such framing devices, in looking back at their formation and setting in place, in understanding their ramifications for contemporary conduct, but also for envisioning alternatives for the future.

Re-contextualizing Rewilding in Europe: Rewilding and the Continental Tradition

Linde De Vroey

IP

Center for European Philosophy, University of Antwerp

In its 2018 report, the Club of Rome addressed the elephant in modernity's room: the *philosophical roots* of the ecological crisis. The Club framed one of our biggest global challenges, climate change, as not just an ecological but also a philosophical challenge, inviting decision makers and academic readers to come up with "*a new mind-set*" and "*a new philosophy*" (Weizsäcker & Wijkman 2018). And though not considered in the report, *rewilding* – the practice and theory of restoring the wild – is increasingly brought up by activists, philosophers and scientists as a powerful answer to this *ecological-philosophical challenge*. In this presentation, I assess the rise of rewilding as a response to our double global challenge, with a focus on its European applications, meanings and origins in continental critiques of modernity.

The word *rewilding* was introduced at the turn of the millennium in activist circles in the USA, in answer to the ecological challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, but also as a cultural critique on modern civilization. By the second decade of the 21st century, rewilding conquered Europe, with the establishment of *Rewilding Europe* (2011) and *Rewilding Britain* (2015) and the publication of Monbiot's best-seller *Feral* (2013). Monbiot expresses a popular European vision in which rewilding is promoted as a promising ecological tool and a cultural solution for modern issues like alienation, disenchantment and "*ecological boredom*". Numerous other organizations since adopted the name rewilding, claiming to remedy modern lifestyles and mind-sets. Rewilding can thus be seen as both an ecological practice *and* a philosophy, critical of modern civilization. While this last aspect partly reflects rewilding's origins in North-American activists circles, in Europe it also reflects *continental* views on wildness in critiques of modernity.

In this talk, I argue that rewilding in Europe cannot be understood as just an imported American invention, but that the ideas behind European rewilding run back to a critical continental tradition (or a plurality of traditions) of fascination with the wild. So far, the academic literature on the origins of rewilding shows a heavy emphasis on North-American transcendentalism and the wilderness movement of the 19th and early 20th century, and more recently on North-American radical activism and primitivism (Jorgensen 2014, Lorimer et al. 2015, Prior & Ward 2016, Gammon 2018). However, rewilding in Europe differs from rewilding in the USA, emerging as a distinctive and autonomous type. Rather than rewilding landscapes 'back' to an 'original' state, rewilding in Europe is focused on (re)creating natural processes by productive land abandonment, the reintroduction

of keystone species and wildlife protection. Not all rewilding projects cover vast uninhabited areas, but they may take place on a small scale, often next to human occupation, and facing cultural attitudes and lifestyles. This aspect, while challenging, is also considered a strength, for it bridges the nature-culture dualism of some of the American wilderness views. It has therefore been argued that rather than recreating *wilderness*, European rewilding encourages *wildness* (Tanasescu 2017, Ward 2019).

To fully understand this key characteristic of European rewilding, we should study it within its own cultural, historical and philosophical context. The unique character of European rewilding is not only originating in Europe's geography or its *cultural history* of land use, but also reveals different priorities and views on 'the wild/wildness/wilderness' rooted in a *philosophical* tradition. Ideas of outer and inner wildness have long haunted the European mind, operating as the imaginary opposite of civilization, instilling fear and/or offering escape from and concepts of critique against society and culture. Civilization critique by means of the wild reached a climax in Enlightened and Romantic philosophies. Rousseau and Nietzsche are perhaps the most iconic philosophers who elaborated ideas of wildness as critical concepts against society, culture, rationalism and moralism. Similar critical ideas of wildness/wild nature play a role in, among others, notions of the Sublime, the Romantic poetry of Burns, Coleridge and Shelley, critical theory, disenchantment philosophy, German fascism, neo-pagan ecological activism and spiritual feminism (Thacker 1983, LaFreniere 1990, Oelschlaeger 1991, Drenthen 2005, Monbiot 2013, Bone 2018, Pike 2019).

The point of this talk is not to give a detailed analysis of all these philosophies. Rather, I aim to show that rewilding projects in Europe are inspired by a variety of local sources providing them with autonomous ideas about wildness, thus contributing to a rich landscape of rewilding projects that bring into practice various ideas on rewilding. These ideas can be considered as united by an overarching vision in which wildness is deployed as part of a critical tradition, reacting against different aspects of modern society/civilization, in philosophy and practice. I conclude with emphasizing the need to further study European rewilding from this *contextualized perspective*: as a distinctive type that is part of a critical continental tradition, existing within European landscape, history, culture and philosophy.

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Global Warming and Climate Change: An Ethical Constructivism Approach

Jacopo Morelli

IP

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Global warming and climate change are two of the topics that have entered with insistence in the public debate in the last decades. Although scientists have provided several confirmations regarding the dangerousness of future and ongoing changes on our planet, there is still uncertainty between politicians and philosophers about what practical direction to agree and to follow. In this paper, I will argue that moral constructivism, specifically Kantian constructivism, can provide some tenets to guide our actions toward such a complex but also urgent phenomenon.

Firstly, I will rapidly summarize the contemporary debate on environmental ethics, trying to bring out the most common problems and issues regarding global warming, as well as the solutions that are usually proposed. Secondly, I am going to show how moral constructivism can present itself as the most convincing framework to deal with this topic. For moral constructivists, the objectivity and force of norms derive from their being the product of a procedure which is itself objective – that is, free of the subjective biases which inform the worldviews of individual agents. To adapt North's phrasing: a key strength of such an approach is that constructivism can justify principles of justice without invoking controversial metaphysical questions about the existence and nature of moral entities, whilst at the same time explaining the moral objectivity of principles of justice in a way that is authoritative for agents (North, 2010).

Finally, I will try to reply to some usual objections against constructivism when applied to climate change. I will refer specifically to Calder (2011) according to which if constructivism is true, then climate change is doctrine-relative and therefore depends on different agent points of view, a conclusion that is practically undesirable. I argue that this is true only of some specific versions of constructivism, while Kantian constructivism can provide a starting point that all reasonable agents can agree with, which is precisely reason itself. And it is because of reason that we can construct some specific principles to guide our actions contingently and accordingly. This construction is not solipsistic or arbitrary, since the materials of construction are contingent facts of the world, usually provided by science.

As Norton (2001) says, the world faces a global challenge to see if different human groups, with very different perspectives, can perhaps accept the responsibility of maintaining a set of opportunities based on possible uses of the environment. The preservation of options for the future can easily be

linked to notions of equity if one agrees that future generations should not face, as a result of our actions today, a drastic reduction in options and choices, while trying to adapt to the environment they face. The future of the basic conditions for all life on the planet is in our hands, but we must act as soon as possible. And to do this, what we need is exactly some principles that can guide a coordinated global action.

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