International
Institute of
Social Studies

Perspectives in Development

AN EXERCISE IN WORLDMAKING

Best Student Essays 2019/20

Erasmus University Rotterdam
Make it happen.

Perspectives in Development: **an Exercise in Worldmaking Original and great student essays 2019/2020**

Editorial Board:

Drs. Peter Bardoel *Chair* (ISS Faculty)

Student editors (alphabetical order):

Taiwo Racheal Adetunji, Mai Al Shamlan, Mark Justine Gatdula, Lucia Landa Sotomayor, Tendai Joshua Madzivanyika, Karishma Shelar, Katharine Van Amburg, Nino Zotikishvili.

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Editorial Board

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Gronemeier, Lisa-Marlen (SJP, Germany)

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Acronyms

AFES – Agrarian, Food, and Environmental Studies

ECD – Economics of Development

GDP – Governance and Development Policy

MiG – Migration and Diversity Studies

MM – Mundus Master Programme in Public Policy

SJP – Social Justice Perspectives

SPD – Social Policy for Development

Acknowledgements

Appreciation goes to all the ISS students, batch of 2019/2020 for the efforts incurred throughout the academic year writing great essays.

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Foreword

An Exercise in World Making represents the annual collection of the best MA student essays. The wide array of selections available to the editors for the 2020 edition reflect the treasure trove of globally diverse knowledge exchanged at the ISS. The themes of the essays cover various topics of the development studies field and offer the readers an opportunity to comprehend a particular theme through students' perceptions.

The COVID-19 pandemic, some have suggested, may serve as a catalyst for radical social transformation. While reflecting on the essays that faculty members submitted and that our editorial board chose, a similar narrative emerged. Many of the works in this journal push the boundaries of a traditional academic essay, challenge our conceptions of what learning, and essay-writing is, and lead us to consider what academia looks like during COVID-19 (and what it will look like after). The essays may trigger our imaginations on the possible paths that may be chosen to rebuild and restore our broken and unequal systems on principles of social justice, care, and compassion.

In gathering these essays, our editorial board began to collectively question the idea of a "best" essay by challenging ideas of the "proper" or "correct" form and content of an essay and of a collection of essays. While these essays were submitted by professors and selected by an editorial board, this journal reflects a kind of refusal of the hierarchical and competitive nature of academic work by highlighting works that challenge ways of learning, thinking, and living, both in the academy and beyond. This editing process revealed the intellectual, physical, and emotional action that goes into reading, scrutinizing, and choosing one essay over another. Therefore, it serves as a reminder that being a writer or reader remains a courageous feat worthy of accolades… one is not greater than the other.

Some essays contain stories, poems, and art. Some challenge Eurocentric, capital-centric, or binary ways of thinking and governance. Some write about radical forms of care—for us and our communities during a pandemic, for other students through collective learning, for research participants, for those who have been made "Other," and for the Earth. The authors use creative reflexivity in grappling with large questions of being, doing, and unlearning. The content of the essays was eclectic, ranging from multi-stakeholder engagements to rehabilitate refugees to

examining the trade war between the USA and China, as well as insightful book reviews and personalized autoethnographic notes.

Finishing a degree during a particularly difficult time awarded us the opportunity to think in creative ways, to understand more about our power. It gave us the chance to translate concepts like care and community into practice. Maintaining a connection with our classmates during these 16 months became essential to remind ourselves why we are where we are. Our hope is that this collection also leads you, our reader, to ask questions, like: what is a "best" essay? And, importantly, what parts of academia do we want to refuse or transform? How can we think beyond the constraints of an essay or classroom to re-imagine other epistemological and even ontological possibilities?

We hope to provide not just a selection of academic essays, but a story: one of an international class of students brought together to learn, challenge, and think beyond international development studies before and during an international pandemic. While we cannot hope to represent all stories of the class of 2020, we have done our best to present this journal as one such story, keeping intact the spirit of the ISS. Here you can find works written on the eve of the lockdown, during its first disorienting weeks and months of online learning and social isolation, and in the grim yet hopeful waves of peace as we finished our courses and began our individual research projects, many of which reimagined possibilities for fieldwork and research. Our world has transformed, and we with it, and it has beckoned us toward transformative futures. Herein, we offer some of our thoughts and works during these times—a story of the ISS MA class of 2020.

A MAP OF OUR WORLD

In this edition we hoped to keep the structure as organic as possible: as you read these essays, anticipate being teleported across oceans and borders with each turn of the page, critically and creatively engaging with one author before jetting off to the next. Worldmaking is an expansive and intricate endeavour; thus, for your comfort, we provide mental refreshments and breaks along the way.

We decided to begin and end this year's selected essays with Conceptual Notes on Institutions—a lovely gesture to the diverse ways students visualize the ever-present institutions around them while simultaneously aiming to complete their studies in an institution, e.g., ISS. This year we inserted four ethnographic pieces that textualize the day-to-day experiences of ISS students. Each offers you, the reader, an in-depth glimpse into the events that followed the announcement of a global "new normal." Working remotely wasn't for the privileged, Zoom became the hottest dance scene and the # carried more hopes and dreams than we anticipated.

SYNOPSES

Conceptual Notes on Institutions: *Kurniawati Kurniawati (GDP, Indonesia)*

This is not a regular argumentative essay but an illustration of how diverse academic output of student work can be. After giving definitions of what institutions are, examples are given. These examples serve two ends, first they translate the abstract language of an academic definition to something that is recognized and people are familiar with. Secondly, the example makes manifest what reconstitutive upward/downward causation is. Both rules, manifest behaviour and habits are all integral to how institutions work, which the student illustrates with table manners as an institution. Kurniawati's (GDP, Indonesia) ability to analyze an institution allows her to explain certain problems, for which purpose she mentions models that specify what theories are about which in turn function within a framework. This is illustrated with a village cadre in an education institution.

Ethnographic Insert 1: An Auto-Ethnographic Letter Reflecting on COVID-19: *Nafeesa Usman (SJP, India)*

Usman (SJP, India) describes all the questions that reached her mind in the process of adapting to a new normality, since the beginning of the lockdown. We can feel familiarized with her story of observing from her window how the world adapts, while welcoming new activities in her routine. She speaks for all when she wonders whether these events will translate into a lesson or will just remain a memory.

Academic Scholarships, a Tool of Soft-Power: The Case of Fulbright Scholarships in Mexico: *Brenda Georgina Morales Ruiz (Mundus MAPP, Mexico)*

Morales (Mundus MAPP, Mexico) lets the readers look beyond the idea of academic scholarships and to critically analyze the motives behind it. The essay develops an argument that education and specifically, the academic scholarships serve as a tool for soft power that allows the hegemons to maintain the stability of international order. The focus is on the case of Fulbright programme in Mexico. The essay discusses how the US uses the scholarship to align the interests of the Mexican elite which influence Mexican politics to the interests of the United States by comparing it to the Chinese scholarships as an attempt to create a counter hegemonic bloc.

Beyond Doing: A Conversation about Being and Caring: *Karah Brink (SPD, USA)*

In her essay, Brink (SPD, USA) walks us through her own process of 'unlearning' our preconceived notions of 'work' and 'productivity' which have defined our 'being' today, and how the need to commodify our bodies to survive the market-oriented society led to the negative connotations of 'welfare' and 'dependency'. By acknowledging her 'white privilege', she challenges us to liberate ourselves from the hegemonic colonial and capitalist trappings of 'freedom' and encourages us to envision a different way of 'being' built on the idea of caring and community.

"I have time; I am not in a hurry, you know": Creating Time and Space with Caring and Refusing: *Arca Arguelles-Caouette (AFES, Canada)*

Arguelles-Caouette (AFES, Canada) writes about her experiences with unlearning and refusing extractive social science research practices while designing her research paper, which focuses on a French peasant farmer cooperative and their collective knowledge co-production toward more human, sustainable, and resilient food cultivation practices. The author reflects on how academia molds students into "knowing subjects" who neglect other knowledges. Unlearning and refusing extractive research practices, she argues, offers possibilities to become a more humanized researcher, such as through recognizing embodied knowledges, emphasizing caring and tenderness, co-constructing spaces of dialogue, and rethinking "fieldwork" as situated and relational "encounters." The paper describes one such encounter, where the author meets with a peasant farmer in Brittany. Together, they create a safe space of dialogue through openness, trust, and demonstrations of care by sharing space and time with each other. Through this, Arguelles-Caouette refuses extractivist research in order to work toward a more caring and nurturing ethics.

Ethnographic Insert 2: An Autoethnographic Account of Adjusting to Working from Home: *Ewa Brand (MIG, Poland/The Netherlands)*

Brand (MIG, Poland/The Netherlands) lets us into her home for 10 minutes and beautifully illustrates what it is like to have all our different lives intersect in one single space due to the pandemic. She tells the story of herself as an employee behind the screen and narrates the feeling of being trapped in one corner, as she cannot escape to her role as mother to make sure her children respect the household rules.

Crude, Correa and Corona: *Aditya Maruvada (AFES, India)*

Maruvada (AFES, India) situates the documentary *Crude* against the political and economic backdrop of Ecuador under Rafael Correa's regime. The essay dives deep on how Correa's political means of extractivism disconnects with his vision of a *Buen Vivir* society, ultimately putting Ecuador's indigenous peoples at odds with the state. As a conclusion, he posits a re-imagination of *Buen Vivir* that can serve as an alternative to development amid the current Covid-19 pandemic.

Has the Doctrine of Comparative Advantage Been Unsuccessful in Predicting the Development of Developing Countries? : *Victoria Manya (GDP, Nigeria)*

Situating herself in an understanding of development from a heterodox perspective, Manya (GDP, Nigeria) argues that the doctrine of comparative advantages has created more disadvantages for developing countries, than what the theory promises. She performs a critical analysis of the literature and highlights that previous works have focused mostly on the benefits for developed countries and not on the impacts on institutions or on the sustained economic disadvantages for developing counties. Building on that, the author reflects on how the model adopted by China, as a deviation from the comparative advantage doctrine, would be a valuable alternative to achieve development.

The NATO-Russia Conflict in Relation to the Crimean Crisis: *Bianca Damati (Mundus MAPP, Italy)*

In this essay, Bianca Damati (Mundus MAPP, Italy) investigates the conflict between Russia and the liberal international order comprising of NATO, the USA and the EU in relation to the Crimean crisis. For this purpose, the author relies on a neorealist theoretical framework and subsequently contrasts and compares with the theory of neoliberal institutionalism. According to Damati, the later which relies on the maximization of power through cooperation between actors for a pareto efficient solution, does not provide an adequate explanation to the geopolitical turmoil in the Crimean region. Instead, the neorealist approach conceptualizes anarchic international systems, power balancing and the principle of self-help for maximizing a state's power to pursue hegemony. Damati argues that these principles provide a more accurate interpretation to the Russian state's preventive violent offensive action to protect its interests in the Crimean region from the liberal international order, without leaving the possibility for dialogue and cooperation between the stakeholders.

The Impact of the Trade War Between the US and China on the Global Trading System: *Rofi Cahyono (ECD, Indonesia)*

Cahyono discusses the implication of US-China trade war on world economies and specific countries in Asia by highlighting the major changes that occurred. He showed these changes using world reports from international organizations following the economic tussle between these countries. Cahyono presented the before trade-wars economic exchange between US-China and the after trade-wars which shows the fall in exportation on the part of the US and China's strategy in exporting to Taiwan, Philippines and Vietnam thereby making their economies flourish amid the power-tussle between both countries. Cahyono concluded by showing how the war may have caused some fallout in economic growth in some region and economic increase in others telling us to lookout for such fast-emerging economies if this trade-war persist.

Ethnographic Insert 3: A Distanced Dance Class: *Angela Sabogal Camargo (SPD, Colombia)*

Angela (SPD, Colombia) tells us her personal story about having an online dance classes in Covid-19 pandemic. In her ethnographic notes, she invites us to feel and experience the "new normal" reality with her. While online connection creates digital space between remote places, yet the offline reality does not always correspond to the online one. The contrast between the offline and the online reality brings the feelings of excitement, frustration, confusion that do replace each other promptly. While reading her ethnographic notes, the readers can follow Angela's thoughts and draw parallels with their own everyday living experiences in time of Covid-19 pandemic.

Mobilizing the Child's Right to Nature: A Case Study of the Children and Nature Network: *Brian Degross (SJP, USA)*

In this paper, Degross discusses child's right to nature as an important element in today's world particularly in school environment. Using C&NN as a case study, Degross invites readers to follow C&NN's work in mobilizing communities to create green playgrounds and parks for children to enjoy the gift of nature and ultimately contribute to children's academic performances. He further argued excluding children from decision-making process of environmental SDGs makes it more obvious that children's right to nature and environmental justice is not up for discussion. Degross

concluded by acknowledging the hopeful possibility offered by C&NN's commitment and this could be further strengthened by finetuning current laws and environmental policies.

A Letter on Radical Inhabiting: Thinkering Together for a Transition for Social Justice: *Katharine Van Amburg (SJP, USA)*

The sheer beauty of this essay speaks to you from the first sentence on. This is academic writing which is remarkably convincing, due to an original voice that Van Amburg (SJP, USA) has found. In the letter to a former colleague, the author discusses the impacts property development in West Oakland on the lives of the black community. Van Amburg acknowledges her position while contributing to the larger discussion on racialized systems of violence. The recipient is invited to think in-depth about the effect's gentrification has on black businesses and livelihoods. By unpacking the historical and political motivations that oil the real estate machine, the author recognizes that if any true reconciliation is to be done, those born with white privilege need to understand the role they play within the system and hold themselves accountable for their consumer behaviour. Through the concept of "Radical Inhabiting", the author reminds the recipient that their actions affect other people, who have histories, cultures and wounds that should be acknowledged as theirs and not made trendy.

Recognizing the 'Unrecognized': Exploring Performativity, Precarity and Resistance Through Eric's Character in the Netflix Series *Sex Education*: *Ximena Argüello Calle (SJP, Ecuador)*

This essay uses the concepts of hegemonic masculinity, power relations, intersectionality and more to analyse the Netflix original show *Sex Education*. Focusing on Eric's gender identity and sexual expression as performative, and its relation to social precarity. Argüello (SJP, Ecuador) discusses nuances of 'acceptability' (as seen by the self and others), the impact of external influences on one's self-expression and the struggles faced by many Queer individuals to negotiate their place in different settings, and how the body one inhabits can radically alter understandings and expectations of what is 'masculine' – not only for the inhabitant of that body, but for third parties reacting to them as well.

Ethnographic Insert 4: Digital Ethnography Notes: *Heidy Heidy Angelica Suharno (SPD, Indonesia)*

With her digital ethnographic notes, Suharno (SPD, Indonesia) presents us the trending tweet in Indonesia #TerserahIndonesia (#whateverIndonesia) that caught her attention on May 18, 2020. Through this tweet and the follow-up video, she offers the readers to dive into the digital world of the tweets that reflect the feelings and multiple social struggles of Indonesian people alongside the Covid-19 pandemic. From her personal observation, the author explains the practices of netizens in Indonesia and specifically, how and why do they involve themselves in digital world. At the same time, the author shares her own perceptions and experiences on examining the video material and on the process of coding.

Unlearning and Relearning Hate: *Nafeesa Usman (SJP, India)*

Usman (SJP, India), using an auto-ethnographic approach to decipher the complexities of hatred within her community in India. Focusing on the tensions between the Hindu and Muslim sects in India, erupt affecting women and children in the process to be more dominant than the other. She zooms into the home to observe how micro level forms of hatred are displayed within the family. Uncovering how ideas of coloniality and power shape how society is organized, asking "What happened to my secular India?"

The Unchanging Nature of Oppression? — Gender in *The Changing Nature of Work* (2019): *Giovanni Austriningrum (AFES, Indonesia)*

In this essay, Austriningrum (AFES, Indonesia) critically assesses the World Development Report 2019 by the World Bank from a gendered lens. The report advocates making the requisite investments in 'human capital' to ensure an efficient and productive workforce in the age of technological development. Leveraging discourse analysis through the 'What's the Problem Represented to be? (WPR)' approach and content analysis, she critiques the New Institutional Economics (NIE) and Women in Development (WID) framing of the report to address gender equality at workplaces. The author questions the report's narrative on gender which promotes women's empowerment by integration into regulated formal institutions while dismissing women's

social reproduction contributions to the workforce. She also problematises the report's deafening silence on patriarchy and capitalism as systems of oppression, and of its attempts to normalise the logic of categorizing anything outside the formal waged labour regime and market as "non-work".

A Story of Un-learning the Epistemic Privileges of a 'Knowing-Subject' and the (Im)possibility of Becoming Transitional Allies: *Lisa-Marlen Gronemeier (SJP, Germany)*

Guided by how she can contribute to the possibility of an ethical life, Gronemeier (SJP, Germany) asks: "(How) Can white German academic feminists un-learn the epistemic privileges of a 'knowing-subject' complicit in the silencing of the racialized 'other' to become transitional allies?" She argues that, to cultivate transitions for social justice, white German academic feminists must become attentive to their epistemic privileges and how they are implicated in colonial erasures of racialized women. The essay follows the author's un-learning through dialogical auto-ethnographic vignettes reflecting on her encounters with decolonial and anti-racist feminists in Berlin-based collectives. By 'daring to listen' and drawing from affective, emotional, and embodied experiences—interwoven with theory as a form of thinking-sensing—she refuses academic Monologue while working toward awareness of her location and implication in colonial difference. Gronemeier sees the un-learning of her knowing-subjectivity as a process that may open possibilities of knowing otherwise and becoming a transitional ally.

The Long March of Protests and Resistance: A Transition Toward Debt-Free Agrarian Systems: *Karishma Shelar (AFES, India)*

This essay uses the example of *Kisan* (farmers) marches to draw attention to their conceptualised position within India's (post)colonial political economy, the stark differences between urban and rural life, and how accessibility to social justice (or lack thereof) oftentimes depends on the specific intersections faced by the bodies in question. It aims to challenge current framings (particularly relating to knowledge creation and the valuation of such), and the disproportionate, silenced, role played by women in agricultural/rural work. Shelar (AFES, India) draws connections between bodies and the land they inhabit, then highlighting the issues farmers face within the current systems of rural indebtedness in India, and alternatives and resistance movements taken up by women affected by centralised seed distribution. Shelar understands the craft to combine good writing style with solid

academic thinking, a hallmark of a promising writer of sorts. She depicts the shocking scenes so lively that it arouses compassion while at the same time keeping aloof, carefully striking a balance between moral indignation and objective academic analysis.

Female Masculinities: Implicating IAAF's Sport Regulations and Policing in Society: *Taiwo Racheal Adetunji (GDP, Nigeria)*

An extraordinarily original reflection on female masculinity and a critical analysis of gender policing of (black) female athletes through the gender policies of the IAAF and Olympic Committee. Through the case study of Annet Negesa, a Ugandan runner subjected to hormonal treatment, Adetunji (GDP, Nigeria) unravels the gendered and racialized assumptions underlying these interventions as well as the devastating consequences for those athletes. The essay skilfully uses theoretical lenses - Halberstam's theorization of female masculinities and expansion of this concept towards feminine masculinities- and Butler's theory of gender performativity and precarity. The essay is written in such an eloquent way that it immediately captures the reader's interest and the presence of the author's voice is remarkable. The essay makes clear that the racial underpinning of these policies needs to be seen in the context of the colonial legacy of gendered, sexualized and racialized representations of black (female) bodies.

Conceptual Notes on Institutions: *Victoria Manya (GDP, Nigeria).*

This contribution is not an essay but a colourful reminder what academic work can also comprise. It is a blend of creativity on the one hand and a short academic review of the concept of institutions on the other. Enjoy watching it.

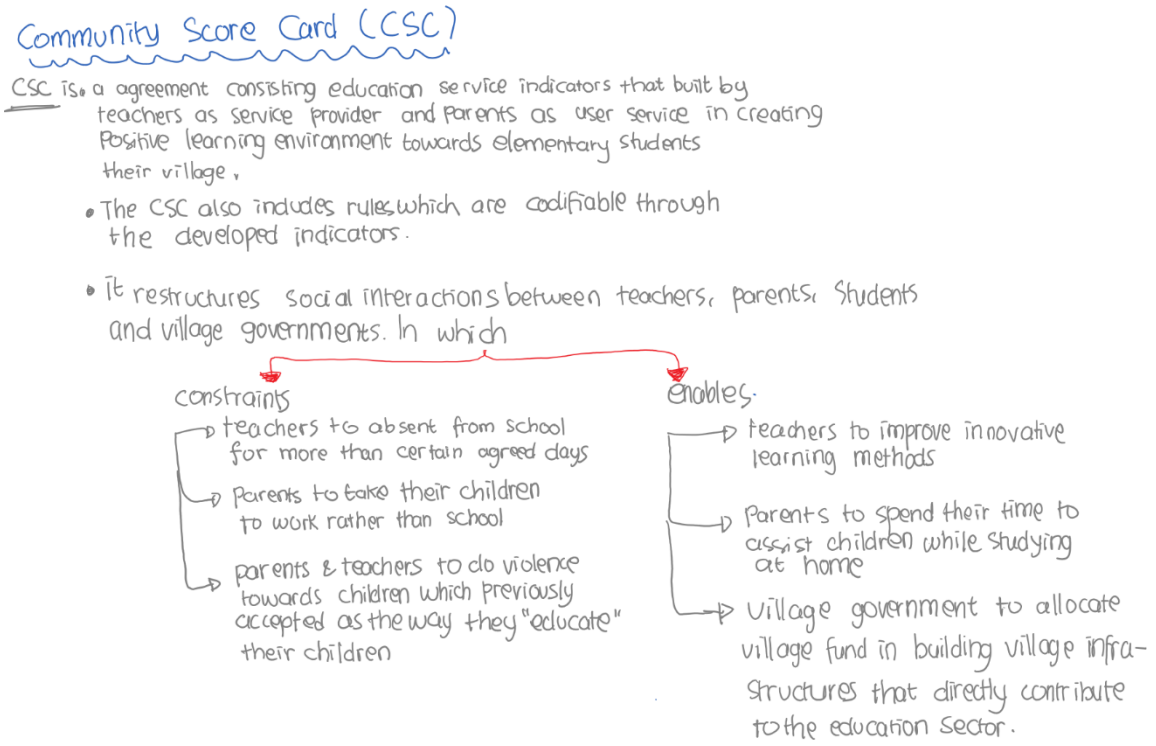
Conceptual Notes on Institutions

By Kurniawati, GDP, Indonesia

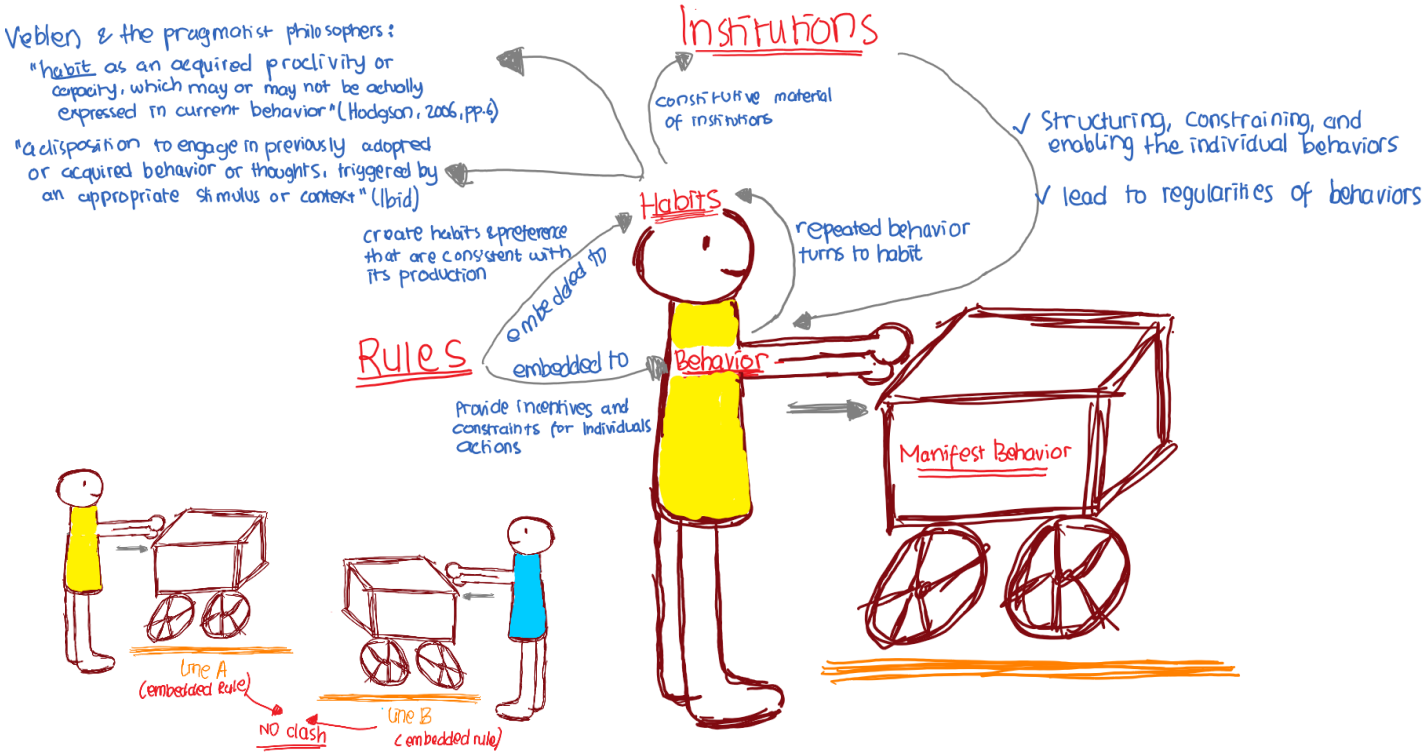
Key terms related to Institutions

Terms	Definitions	Examples
Social Structure	"Sets of relations that may not be codified in discourse" (Hodgson, 2006, pp.3)	Demographic structures
Institutions	-"System of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions. Institutions create stable expectations of the manifest behaviour of others (Hodgson, 2006, pp.2). -According to institutional economists, Thorstein Veblen and John R., institutions is understood as "a special type of social structure with the potential to change agents, including changes to their purposes of preferences" (Ibid).	Language, money, law, systems of weights and measures table manners, rules, firms, community score cards.
Organizations	"A subset of the set of institutions that involve (a) criteria to establish their boundaries and to distinguish their members from non-members, (b) principle of sovereignty concerning who is in charge, and (c) chains of command delineating responsibilities within the organization (Hodgson, 2006, pp.8). "a set of institutional arrangements and participants who have a common set of goals and purposes, and who must interact across multiple action situations at different levels of activity" (Cole et al., 2017, pp.14)	Parliament, government agencies, schools, universities
Convention	According to the Sudgen and Searle, it is a particular instance of an institutional rule (Hodgson, 2006, pp.2).	Driving on the right side in several countries and on the left side for the other ones; Greeting by shaking hands or by hugging; Eating with right hands for Indonesians
Rule	-"A socially transmitted and customary normative injunction or immanently normative disposition, that in circumstances X do Y" (Hodgson, 2006, pp.3). -Rules are embedded with a specific role which are codifiable and include norms of behaviour and social conventions as well as legal rules. -According to Hayek "a rule is any behavioural disposition, including instincts and habits, which can lead to "a regularity of the conduct of individuals" (Hodgson, 2006, pp.4)	Teacher → to teach Data Analyst → analysing and interpreting data for different purposes Manager → managing a particular team

Example of an Institution



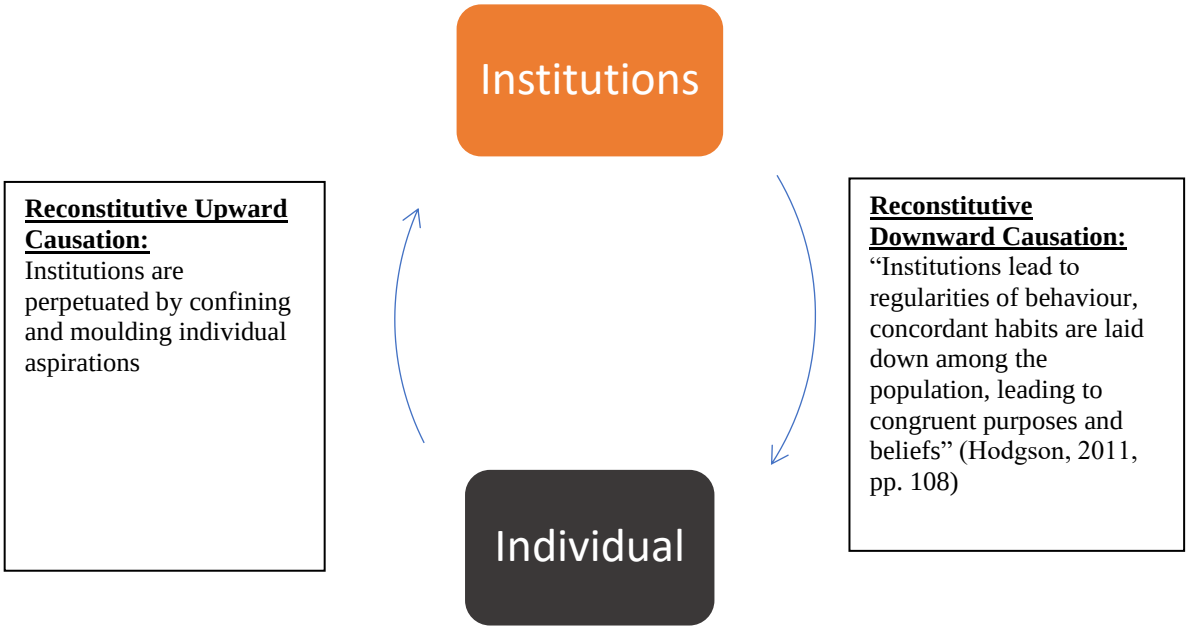
How Institutions Work



Note:

- Institutions include system of rules which embedded with behaviour and habit of each Individual.
- The embedded rules provide incentives and constraints for individual action which intended to avoid clash between individuals

Institutions and Individual



Institutional Analysis

Study of institutions depend on three essential foundations. Each foundation provides different degree in explaining certain problem. The essential foundations are (Ostrom, 2011, pp.8):

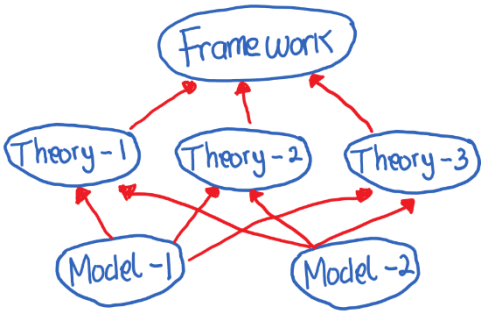


Illustration 1: *Three essential foundations*

1. Frameworks: provide analysts the set of variables to analyze all types of institutional arrangements; and metatheoretical language to compare theories. Individual choice also requires a framework in making sense the world (Hodgson, 2007, pp.96).
2. Theories: enable analysts to decide and use specific elements of framework in answering relevant questions. Multiple theories are usually fit with one framework.
3. Models: affirm analysts in obtaining precise predictions from particular set of variables and parameters. Multiple models are usually fit with most theories.

> "*One needs a common framework and family of theories in order to address questions of reform and transition. Particular models then help the analyst to deduce specific predictions about likely outcomes of highly simplified structures*." (Ibid, pp.9)

In the framework for institutional analysis, identification of the action situation in which brings the external variables to interactions and then outcomes are the key part. Action situation is defined as *"the social spaces where individuals interact, exchange goods and services, solve problems, dominate one another, of fight (among the many things that individuals do in action situations)"* (Ostrom, 2011, pp. 11). However, there are several problems in identifying this issue which are (1) operational tiers; (2) collective-choice tiers; (3) constitutional tiers (Ibid, pp.10). Therefore, in analysing a problem the institutional analyst can do several steps which are (1) understand the initial structure of an action situation; (2) dig deeper and inquiry factors that affect the structure of action situation; (3) explore how action situation changes over time (Ibid).
In evaluating outcomes, there are several criteria that may be useful to consider, which are (1) economic efficiency; (2) equity through fiscal equivalence; (3) re-distributional equity; (4) accountability; (5) conformance to values of local actors; and (6) sustainability (Ostrom, 2011, pp. 16).

Question: A village cadre is assigned by the local government to facilitate village government and local communities as participants in creating positive learning environment for children located in remote area. According to this case, please analyze village cadre role using action situation framework!

Answer: Putting a village cadre in an education institution, village cadre acts as an agent of change. His/Her roles are to bring information as triggers to the routine interactions between schools and parents as well as individual sequences of actions which is to be more involved in the education for their children. As a person who is assigned to do special task in a village, the village cadre needs to obtain legitimation from the village government and schools in a village. With these new information and embedded role to advocate village government and influence communities to change their habits. Also, in doing his/her actions, village cadre need to understand how participants value and belief to the expected outcomes. This means that cultures, behaviour, necessities of the participant influence the level of control over choice toward making positive learning environment.

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Ethnographic Insert 1: An Auto-Ethnographic Letter Reflecting on COVID-19

By Nafeesa Usman, SJP, India

Dear Dhilip,

When the Covid19 outbreak began, I was like the rest of the world, consuming the news reporting infection numbers and the memes ridiculing the outbreak. But once the situation got bleaker with increasing deaths, I grew sombre.

I remember the day the lockdown was announced. It was around 8 am and I was travelling to the Hague for my class at 11 am. It was an hour-long journey to my destination and the tension in the train was palpable. The intercity trains which are fast and efficient are usually filled with people during this time, as it is the peak hours, but that day the train was almost empty, no sharply dressed people on their way to work. From my window, I noticed the stations looked bleak, shops were shut and people in the platforms moving around nervously, wary of each other. I wasn't sure if my college had shut too. I got down at the eerily quiet Hague central station and I had received a mail from my course leader, informing the cancellation of the class. I didn't quite know what to think of it. I walked around the centrum of the Hague, a place bustling with shops to find it quiet and deserted. It was as if a strange calm had descended on the city. I walked to my house, located in one of the migrant neighbourhoods of the city, enjoying the quietness but also wondering what's going to happen next. As I neared my neighbourhood, the familiarity was welcoming, the old box-shaped buildings with grey walls, the congested horizon, Muslim women with their colourful hijabs, and the brown-skinned people with their many tongues. The neighbourhood is comforting to my immigrant sensibilities; that day it was quieter, but people were still moving around with purpose, almost scoffing at the quarantine.

That evening was spent amidst panic shopping and checking the news every other minute. I don't remember much about what I felt then. But now when I look back, looks like I was excited, like I always am when facing a new thing. I felt disconnected, I think, watching what was happening with a sense of aloofness as if it wasn't happening to me.

It has been a few weeks now. I sit in front of the laptop placed on my study desk, facing the wall, which holds memories of my time in the Netherlands; museum tickets, train tickets, postcards and birthday wishes and a map of Europe, that taunts me with memories of all the places I wished to

go and all I places I went to. The rack of books lying in front of me, a symbol of my time here, and of the concepts I left behind in the last term and the concepts I need to master in the coming one. This table is where I spend most of my waking hours. When I am bored or when I need to stretch, I move to my couch near my window which faces the noisy street. On some warm days I put my head out and watch the passing cars, some days the loud banter of the Turkish men travels up to my room from the streets to amuse me. I am tired now, of the news, of the countless debates on Covid19 responses, policies, authoritative governments, economic recession, the future. I am tired of the quarantine.

It has been more than a month. I have a small windowsill garden now. The weather has been good, warm and sunny for long hours. I thought, what a shame to let all the sun to go to waste. I decided to start a container garden, maybe for a sense of purpose, maybe I wanted to see if I could. I have pots of all shapes and sizes on my windowsill, with herbs like coriander, mint, green onions and pepper plants. I have a geranium for some blooms too. This takes up most of my time now. I google gardening tips, check on them a few times in the day and worry about them when they show signs of distress. But mostly I just enjoy watching them. When I see the plants dance in the sun and drink up the water I give, to make new leaves, I wonder at the phenomenon of photosynthesis, something I never paused and admired. You don't have to say, I know I sound silly.

The other day I saw a post on Instagram. You know, in one of those sites that posts memes. It said, "What do you want to do when life goes back to normal?". The comment section was full of people's wishes. That post gave me anxiety. I wondered if life will ever go back to normal. I wondered if I will ever return to normal. I figured I may. I may resume my travels plans. Party invitations will be accepted and efforts to fulfilling academic and social goals will take importance again. My windowsill garden may be forgotten.

How can I resist? I am not sure. Do you think it is possible for us to resist the well-oiled machine that is our society with its hundreds of rules and norms? I worry our experiences of Covid19 will remain only that, experiences and not lessons to learn from. I worry I may go back to the normal (I am not even sure what that was), and this time in which I have had to pause and grow life will remain forgotten in the rush to write a thesis and get a degree.

Love,
Nafeesa

Academic Scholarships, a Tool of Soft-Power: The Case of Fulbright Scholarships in Mexico

By Brenda Georgina Morales Ruiz, Mundus MAPP, Mexico

Introduction

"I can think of no more valuable asset to our country than the friendship of future leaders who have been educated here" (Powell 2001). Every year, more than 4,000 students receive, as a part of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program, the Fulbright scholarship to go to the United States (US) to study and conduct research (Fulbright COMEXUS 2020). This programme, according to the Fulbright's website benefit people from more than 160 countries. They can receive their graduate education fully or partially sponsored by the Government of the US or by the US Government and the local bi-national Fulbright Commissions.

For more than seventy years this programme has been promoting the internationalization of education among graduate students and young professionals, in order to "promote international good will through the exchange of students in the fields of education, culture and science" (Fulbright 1945 in About Senator J. William Fulbright, n.d.). Along with this motivation, the Fulbright programme pursued a more concrete interest from the beginning, such as functioning as a tool for public diplomacy and serving as a soft power vehicle. As the father of the Fulbright's programme, J. William Fulbright argued, "international cooperation was essential if the [American] free enterprise system were to be preserved" (Woods 1987:31); and internationalization of education had a vital role in protecting the United States democratic institutions and maintaining the world's order through the appreciation of the American culture and values (Woods 1987). Therefore, the implementation of an exchange programme allowed young elites to overcome cultural prejudices, especially those regarding the US and was "the cultural equivalent of collective security and multilateralism" (Woods 1987:35).

More than seventy years have passed since the creation of the Fulbright's programme and almost 400,000 students have directly been involved with international education as a way of public diplomacy (Fulbright COMEXUS 2020). The scholarship, as it was said, intends to promote the understanding between nations and to maintain the world order. I consider the second goal particularly interesting. Even though the international order has changed since 1946, the US has continuously kept its position as a hegemon. This fact motivated me to analyze the role of

education – as a vehicle of soft power – in keeping the world's order. Specifically, it motivated me to explore the role of Fulbright's scholarships as a US soft-power-tool, paying special attention to the role of the Fulbright programme in Mexico as an example of how US' soft power acts towards aligning the interests of other nations with their own in order to guarantee the stability of the international order.

By analyzing the case of Fulbright scholarships in Mexico, I will attempt to answer the following questions: are the academic scholarship programmes used as a tool of maintaining the international order? and particularly, how can the Fulbright scholarships in Mexico be understood as a tool of the USA for maintaining the international order? To answer these questions, I will first analyze through a Neo Gramscian framework the role of academic scholarships in maintaining the international structure, which places nowadays the US as a hegemonic power in the international structure. Second, I will explore how the US – through the Fulbright programme – makes use of the scholarship to align the interests of the Mexican elites who influence the Mexican politics to the interests of the United States.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned aim, I will briefly describe the role of education as a soft power tool, by linking the role of education for development and the concept of soft power and public diplomacy. In the second section, I will analyze the role of education as a soft power tool in the light of a neo-Gramscian framework and examine the intensification of the trends of internationalization of education under this theoretical perspective. Furthermore, I will explore the case of Fulbright scholarships for Mexican students as an example of the role of education for maintaining the international order comparing it to the Chinese scholarships as an attempt to create a counter hegemonic bloc. Finally, I will wrap up the discussion regarding the use of academic scholarships as the vehicle of soft power, its implications and the challenges that the Fulbright programme as a soft power tool faces to keep the international order as it is nowadays.

The role of education as a soft power tool

Education for a long time has been used as a vehicle for transmitting apart from knowledge, certain values, ideas and culture. However, the study of education in relation to power is rather a recent phenomenon. Since Nye in 1990 coined the term soft power referring to "getting others to want the outcomes you want" (Nye 2004:12), the study of power expanded to include soft power as another

form of power beyond the coercive power or hard power[1]. Nye (2004) in his work "Soft Power and Higher Education", explores different sources of soft power which include culture, political values and practices when they are legitimate. As he highlights, soft power is about consent, not imposition, and in order to achieve this consent and legitimacy, universities and colleges play a leading role. For the US case, they promote and cultivate a better understanding of the US values, the culture and the foreign policy.

Later, Nye (2008) linked soft power to the concept of public diplomacy which allowed to put together the role of education as a soft power tool with the mechanisms of spreading such education around the world via academic scholarships. Public diplomacy refers to the means that a country uses towards promoting its soft power; for example, such as subsidizing cultural exports, academic exchanges, merit scholarships and broadcasting (Nye 2008: 95).

Having said that education is a vehicle of soft power, academic scholarships could be considered the wheels of such a vehicle. Most of the academic scholarships around the world – Fulbright, Chevening, Erasmus, among others – are given to the talented students based on their academic performance but mostly on their leadership skills. These criteria make sense if we assume that academic scholarships are, among other things, a public diplomacy tool. Therefore, if one of the purposes of these scholarships is that students from foreign countries explore the language, values, ideas and culture of the host country, when they return to their country of origin, it is expected that they will promote – form each one's trench – the interests of the country where they had studied.

As Aras, Mohammed (2019: 421) states, through scholarships countries are establishing a pool of brand ambassadors to promote the image and interests of the country abroad. Hence, the effectiveness of the academic scholarships can be measured as the possibility to build fruitful long-term relationships that can advantage the interests of a nation (Nye 2004).

As it was said, one of the most evident strengths of soft power is its ability to produce long-term benefits. As Nye (2004) exemplifies, Aleksandr Yakovlev "the godfather of glasnost[2]" (Richmond 2005:258) before becoming a high ranked politician, was one of the Soviet students who attended an American university, graduating from Modern American History and Politics at

[1] According to Nye, *hard power* or *command power* refers to the "ability to change what others do. It can rest on coercion or inducement" (Nye 2004: 12) and is highly dependent on military and economic capabilities of a country

[2] Glasnost was the policy implemented by Mikhail Gorvachev to promote openness a more open and democratic government (Collins Dictionary 2020)

Columbia University in 1958 (Nye 2004; Richmond 2005). Yakovlev was not the exception, other important figures such as Oleg Kalugin[3] and Nikolai Sivachev[4] who – each one form their field – promoted better cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States, were also students at Columbia University. Thus, they had the opportunity to analyze what was the American culture, values, political system and the foreign policy and to become better critics of them (Richmond 2005). As it can be seen through these examples, the usage of education as a soft power tool precedes in time the term itself: just two decades have passed since the creation of the concept while the education has been used for more than five decades as a vehicle of soft power.

A constructivist and Neo-Gramscian understanding of education as a soft-power tool

Hegemony is a term commonly associated with Gramsci and Neo-Gramscian theorists, and although the term is used by different historical materialist theories of power, in this essay I will make use of the Coxian[5] interpretation of Gramsci and his terminology. According to Cox,

> hegemony is a structure of values and understandings about the nature of order that permeates a whole system of states and nonstate entities. In a hegemonic order these values and understandings are relatively stable and unquestioned…[however], such a structure of meanings is underpinned by a structure of power. Hegemony derives from the dominant social strata of the dominant states in so far as these ways of doing and thinking have acquired the acquiescence of the dominant social strata of other states (Cox 1990 in Gill 1993:42).

In other words, hegemony as interpreted by Cox,

> refers to the ability of the ruling class to provide intellectual and moral leadership to the ruled class, and the ability to persuade that their interests are the same as those of the sovereign (Korkmaz 2016 in Gramsci and Hoare 1971:350).

Following this interpretation, hegemony has an element of soft power – for the ruling class being

[3] Kalugin studied at Columbia University in 1958 and later became an intelligence officer who defected to the United States (Richmond 2005:385)

[4] Sivchev was a researcher at Columbia University in 1961, and later became the creator of the "Five Year Plan", which consisted in an exchange for professors between the Moscow State university and an American University Richmond 2005:385).

[5] By a Coxian interpretation of Gramsci, I refer to the interpretation of the work of Gramsci made by Robert Cox and his disciples (i.e. theorists from the Amsterdam School and New Neo Gramscians) which are characterised by their understanding of the relationship between agents and their social context, which is always embedded - never detached and ontologically, prioritize the existence of a material structure with properties before the agents' association of meaning to the structure

able to persuade the ruled class – and one tool of persuasion is education. As Gramsci stated,

> every relationship of hegemony is necessarily an educational relationship and occurs not only within a nation, between the various forces of which the nation is composed, but in the international and world-wide field, between complexes of national and continental civilizations (Gramsci and Hoare 1971: 350).

Therefore, I consider under a neo-Gramscian framework that education serves as a soft power mechanism, but to what purpose? I will argue that it is the hegemons' goal to maintain the international order – which situates the hegemon as a hegemon. In order to build this argument, I will use the concept of historical bloc.

A historical bloc can be understood as "an alliance of those whose interests is served and whose aspirations are fulfilled by [a certain] economic and social system" (Murphy 1994: 46). In this sense, the American elite who benefit from the existing economic and social system – neoliberal capitalism – would use education in the world-wide field to persuade potential policy makers of foreign countries that their interests are the same as the interest of the US. It is important to note that I use the word potential policy makers because as it was mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the soft power tools aim for the long-term benefits. In that sense, to process applications for granting scholarships, the Fulbright commission carefully selects candidates based on their inferred potential to become "organic intellectuals" (Gramsci and Hoare 1971:131) with political leadership and moral capacity to win the consent of the people (Moolakkattu 2009:441). The importance of attracting such talented people relies on the fact that the elites are the leaders of historical blocs, either hegemonic or counter-hegemonic ones (Cox and Sinclair 1996).

To prevent that organic intellectuals, either coming from the working class or the national elite, would play a key role in the creation of a new national or international counter-hegemonic bloc – which could affect the interest of the US – the US department through sponsoring the education of some of the potential intellectuals intends to shape their minds and hearts in a way that is favourable to the interests of the US. This way, when they have a power position within their own countries, they are expected to be less inclined to produce counter-hegemonic ideas and strategies that given their closeness to power could damage the interests of the US (Moolakkattu 2009: 442). Moreover, from a neo-Gramscian perspective, the US elites would seek to consolidate a transnational elite bloc whose interests are shared with the US elite.

It is important to note that the construction of hegemony is dialectical, it implicates negotiation and compromise, and this compromise is not eternal but varies. Therefore, it must be "negotiated, re-negotiated and re-secured in changing historical circumstances to keep the consent

of the people" (Moolakkattu 2009: 441). This can clearly be seen through the Fulbright programme. The criteria for applying it varies from region to region and from time to time in relation to the emerging counter-hegemonic blocs that challenge the existing world order[6].

For instance, with the continuous rise of Chinese influence in the world, the role of Fulbright scholarships in maintaining the world order is becoming more and more important. It also intends to prevent China from gaining more influence especially in regions – as Latin America – that have typically been spheres of influence of the US. This, along with two reasons that I will illustrate in the following paragraphs, could explain the tendency of intensification in international education.

The first one is intensification of process of neoliberalization in which nowadays the liberal international order is embedded[7]. Neoliberalism, under a Neo-Gramscian *Coxian* perspective could be defined as a finance-led regime of accumulation, where ideas play a very important role in the creation of consensus (Knio et. al 2021). When the processes of commodification and marketization which characterize the neoliberalization process, expand to the education sector, the policies such as privatization of public universities and colleges start to appear. This leads to the talented people, especially those coming from the working class, to consider academic scholarships as a financial mean to study.

Additionally, the role of ideas[8] plays a tremendous role in establishing common sense. I am making use of Bieler and Morton (2004) interpretation of this Gramscian concept to refer to the national elite's intuition of what ought to be done in this case regarding education. National elites, influenced by organic intellectuals, many of which were educated in the US, persuade the masses and in order to succeed professionally, one must have a quality education from a recognized university. Those who were educated in the US would recommend an American university. Along with the organic leaders' intuition, comes the public diplomacy tools that the US master to promote

[6] For instance, the number of scholarships given to countries from East Europe and Central Asian countries intensifies when a counter-hegemonic bloc (i.e. the Soviet Union or China) gains strength and influence in the region.

[7] Even though neoliberalism was born within international liberalism, due to its emergent properties (Archer) it can be argued that it has taken over the international liberal order. Practically, nowadays it is not possible to think about the international liberal order without relating it to the commodification and marketization processes that characterize neoliberalization.

[8] Which for some Coxian Neo-Gramscians (i.e. Amsterdam school) the role of ideas could be understood as *causally constitutive* to the structure -agency relationship (Knio et. al. 2021). In this sense, they have a vital role in construction of consensus, however the material (structural) elements precedes their role.

Andreas Bieler and Adam Morton (2004), understand this *causally constitutive* role of ideas as vital for the creation of consensus though the notion of *common sense*, to analyse how the elites' *common sense* or the elites' intuition on what ought to be done become hegemonic

its image, via movies, fairs, social media, among many other soft power sources. Considering the mentioned phenomena, it is no surprise that many young students have a new American dream to study in a top university in the US. One of the ways to fulfil their dreams, if they have limited resources, is to seek for the Fulbright scholarship.

The case of Fulbright scholarships for Mexican students: education for maintaining the international order

Since the last decades of the 19th Century, Latin America has become an area of influence by the US, which in various occasions intervened in domestic affairs of the Caribbean and Central America based on the Monroe Doctrine when the US interests were not fulfilled. The Monroe Doctrine was a message that in 1823 the President James Monroe addressed to the congress, which stated that the US would not tolerate European interventions in the continent (Henry 2012). As a corollary of this doctrine, in 1904 Theodore Roosevelt added the duty of the US to militarily intervene in the continent once the countries lacked the ability or the will to execute justice at home (Roosevelt 1904). The corollary of the Monroe Doctrine de facto marked Latin America as an area of influence of the US, which not only established the use of military power to preserve their interest, but also defined a direction of forging relationships with the elite in order to gain influence in the countries' internal policies. One way of influencing the elite's opinions was through education, which was accomplished through students' exchanges that existed prior to the Fulbright programme through the State's Department Division of Cultural Relations (Henry 2012: 62).

The US did not only coerced Latin American countries to protect their interest, but they also paid attention to the persuasion side that under a neo Gramscian perspective, comes after coercion in terms of time but is equally important to export and maintain the systems of production and reproduction (Murphey 1994:43). Therefore, between 1955 and 1960, just a few years after the programme's creation, the US expanded their programme to some countries in Latin America, namely Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Argentina, Colombia, Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay (Bettie 2014: 75), even though they already were part of their area of influence. This is very important, considering that at the time the cold war was at its peak, and the US was trying counterbalance the communist block by extending their influence; however, it was important to avoid

> the resentment of those who come from countries which have recently entered a regional, imperial, or global manufacturing system, and of those who cannot do so even if they want to (Murphey 1994:43)

such as Latin American countries, and by avoiding it, one of the hegemons could avoid internal crisis in their spheres of influence.

In Mexico, the Fulbright scholarships started to operate in 1990, when the Mexico-United States Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange (COMEXUS) was created to be in charge of the administration of the 'Fulbright-García Robles scholarships', as it is called in Mexico the programme for graduate student's mobility. The funds for the scholarships in the Mexican case come from the US and Mexican governments as well from the private donors in a small percentage and are intended to partially fund graduate students prioritizing strategic areas in the field of the common interest between the countries (Fulbright COMEXUS 2020).

Under a Neo-Gramscian perspective, the establishment of COMEXUS responds to the necessity of shifting US priorities in the light of the new world international order. With the evident collapse of the Soviet Union, the US was preparing to become the new hegemon in a unipolar world, which would allow the country to re-allocate its resources in a coherent way that responded to the new superstructure. Additionally, since the early 1980s in Mexico, there existed a new common sense within the elite which was aligned with part of the US elites' common sense regarding the neoliberalization processes and the importance of it.

The Mexican elite traditionally educated in Mexico or in Europe, since the 1970s started to study in the US, influenced by the US public diplomacy at first. Later, the trend was reinforced by the organic leaders, who after studying in the US came back home and convinced by the quality of American education, urged other elite members to go and study there as well. For instance, between 1970 and 1988, the number of public officers in the Mexican Federal government who studied in the US had duplicated. By the year 1990, half of the Mexican politicians with a postgraduate degree had obtained it from an American university, and most commonly from an Ivy League one (Camp 1996:140). Back then, American universities had the small groups who supported and promoted the processes of marketization and commodification as a best form of capitalism, in other words, they were the forming neoliberal capitalist supporters. Mexican students have also encountered these ideas and been convinced by them, seeking to implement them once returned to their home country. The new elite reached the high-level positions in the early 1980s, and the Mexican presidents M. de la Madrid (1982-1988) and C. Salinas (1988-1994) were the incarnation of the new allies of the process of neoliberalization, which was strongly supported by the American elite. In words of Murphy "the cosmopolitan bourgeoisie has always been part of the historic blocs that have partially fulfilled the liberal internationalist vision, but the allies of this class have changed" (Murphy 1944:

43) in this case, the new elites were the allies of the neo international order, in which neoliberalism as an economic model has been quickly strengthening.

Once in power, the new Mexican elite intended to liberalize the Mexican market, and the idea of a free trade agreement was very attractive for them. Within this context, the US and Mexico established COMEXUS in order to provide Fulbright scholarships to Mexican talented students and to create an educated generation of professionals, who could protect the shared interests of both countries. The negotiations about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were led by Herminio Blanco, a recognised economist and politician from Chicago University. He, as an organic leader, played a very important role not only in reaching the government's goals, but also in forming the next generation of the Mexican elite in prestigious private universities where he gave classes.

In 1994 NAFTA was signed. After the signature of NAFTA, the number of Fulbright scholars has increased (Bettie 2014: 89), and as Bettie states "the Fulbright Program was increased in order to benefit American business interests in Mexico" (Bettie 1994: 89), making use of the scholarship as a tool of public diplomacy to protect the interests of the hegemon which by that moment were promoting a neoliberal economic model. After 1995, the number of Mexican students going to the US has been increasing over time, as well as the number of scholarships[9], confirming the increasing trend of internationalization of education in Mexico. For instance, the number of scholarships rose from 700 in 1948-1990 to a total of 4,000 in 1991-2011 (Soberanes 2014: 1).

While the US is aiming to maintain its position as a hegemon, China is rising as a counter-hegemonic bloc to the US. Therefore, it is interesting to analyze if the country is following the same route with regards to the use of academic scholarships as a soft power tool. Unfortunately, the information about Chinese scholarships in Mexico is hard or impossible to find, which apparently is a common problem and scholars often face this phenomenon (Cardenal and Cerulli 2018:18). The website of the Mexican Embassy in China highlights that 40 fully funded scholarships will be given for Mexican students who started studying in a Chinese university in 2020. The applications that would be prioritized are Chinese language, martial arts, traditional Chinese medicine and business, which contrasts with Fulbright scholarships that have recently prioritized STEM postgraduate studies. Chinese category of prioritization could be understood as an attempt to introduce the

[9] No information regarding the exact number of Mexican Fulbright Scholarships could be found, however the Fulbright COMEXUS website states that the number vary year by year but generally, the number of scholarships has either increased or maintained since 1995 (Fulbright COMEXUS 2020).

Chinese culture and traditional knowledge, mostly unknown for Mexicans – through Chinese language, arts and traditional medicine – as well as a road for intensifying the presence of Chinese business, investments and aid in Mexico.

Information about Chinese presence in South America is more complete than information about China's presence in Mexico, because of the greater interaction of China with South America. Nonetheless, in 2016 China announced that the number of training programmes for Latin professionals was going to increase up to 10,000 places in the next three years (Cardenal and Cerulli 2018, p.23). Additionally, the number of foreign students in China quadrupled between 2004 (84,000 students) and 2014 (377,000 students) with plans to expand the scholarship programme in 6,000 more academic scholarships for Latin American students (Cardenal and Cerulli 2018). Analysing this information, the role of China in South America is much greater than in Mexico. However, the increasing presence of Chinese programmes in Mexico, without doubts, are a sign and a symptom of the reconfiguration of the world order, where the unique hegemon is intensifying its soft power tools in order to keep the hegemonic structure that beneficiates the country, whereas the counter-hegemonic bloc is, by material (coercive) and ideational (persuasive) means, gaining influence on areas of influence that were exclusively of the US for a period of time.

Conclusions

This work aimed at answering two questions: are the academic scholarship programmes used as a tool of maintaining the international order? and particularly, how can the Fulbright scholarships in Mexico be understood as a tool of the USA for maintaining the international order?

This essay followed the neo Gramscian, Coxian framework to structure the answer to both questions. For the first question, the answer would be yes, Academic scholarships are often used as a tool for international diplomacy and intend to promote a particular country's interest. To structure this answer, I linked the concepts of hegemony and academic scholarships via the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy. By engaging in a theoretical discussion under the neo-Gramscian framework, I unpacked the argument at two levels: the international and the national level. At the international level, I highlighted the role of the soft power tools for the hegemon, which are used for persuading the elites of non-hegemonic countries. These elites could be convinced that it's in their best interest, individually and as a country, to defend the interests of the hegemon that would be perceived as a shared interest. The real purpose of the hegemon is to maintain the coherence in

the historical bloc that would keep their role away from trouble.

To answer the second question, I analyzed the importance of the organic leaders and other sources of soft power beyond education, to persuade the masses that the common sense of the elite – which was previously shaped by the common sense of the international elite – it's their common sense too. As a real case example, I presented the case of Fulbright scholarships for Mexican students. I analyzed it under a neo Gramscian perspective, how the US mechanisms of coercion – through the Monroe Doctrine – and their mechanisms of persuasion – via Fulbright scholarships – operate in order to look for the interests of the US in order to maintain its position as a hegemon.

Finally, and very broadly due to the lack of available information, I analyzed Chinese academic scholarships as a counter hegemonic mechanism which although is incipient in Mexico has been showing some growth, likewise the path followed by China in South America where its presence increases day by day. I consider that the steady growth that can be seen in Mexico corresponds to the motivation of China to promote their interests even if it implies to challenge the current hegemon by becoming a counter hegemonic leader. One of the steps to do so is co-opting the minds of the Mexican talented youth and allowing them to familiarize with the Chinese culture and to pave the road for a better understanding among the potential organic leaders. By the same token, the previous cases have shown how useful it becomes.

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Beyond Doing: A Conversation about Being and Caring

By Karah Brink, SPD, USA

"Radical simply means grasping things at the root"

(Davis 1984: 14)

Hello.

Welcome.

Please make yourself comfortable.

You seem tired. I can sense the weariness in you, it goes bone-deep.

I understand. I am tired too.

But what if there was another way of being? Can we stop for a moment and imagine that?

Today I am sharing a piece of my story with you, my fellow white Americans. I do not say middle-class because I know our backgrounds vary; social constructions that guide our ways of being and our beliefs about government social protection measures often transcend class. Not always, but often.

I would like to share a piece of my (un)learning with you about the dangers of some of our common-sense assumptions about 'welfare'. Today, I hope we can talk about our emphasis on 'work' as the primary provisioner of meeting social needs. An emphasis we not only put on ourselves, but also on to others. An emphasis that places us in a position where we question others' motives and character when they are in need and turn to the government for support.

I am positioned alongside you as a white, middle-class American woman. These common-sense assumptions have been ingrained into me as well. I am positioned alongside you because I am still (un)learning, still asking questions, still wondering and seeking to imagine how we can live differently. To be honest, I am speaking and at the same moment questioning what gives me the right to speak when I still do not always have the words to say what I mean. But maybe you have the words I do not. I would like to borrow Ivan Illich's concept of the thinkery to guide us today. A thinkery is based upon the idea of creating spaces for interculturality. A space where we can "talk about ideas that (we) do not have" (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015a: 531). A space where we can begin to find the words through our interactions together. A space to transcend the

logos and speak heart to heart. As Esteva (as cited in O'Donovan 2015a: 531) explains, "not from mind to mind, because let's assume that our minds are fundamentally different and we must not impose one mind on the other, one rationality on the other rationality".

I hope we can engage in dialogical construction which "breaks the domination of Monological thought, practice, and being as it opens up the space for multiplicity, for doubts, questions, and discontent with the world as it is (both internal and external)" (Motta 2016: 41). In this space, there may be uncertainties and questions.

I hope we can show up in this space as our authentic selves, aware of our own multiplicity. I use 'we' in this discussion not to connote that I am speaking for all of us here but to acknowledge the "ancestrality, history, memory and multiplicity of knowledges" that follow us "on every step of our path" (Chavez and Vazquez 2017: 39).

Let us start with 'work'. A good work ethic. These are words that are given to us at such a young age. Engrained so deeply in us that we cannot pinpoint the moment we came to believe that our feelings were dispensable and our job in life was to sell ourselves within the labour market. It starts so early, this notion of 'work' and 'productivity'. Insidious in the way it functions as praise. We are lauded for our achievements starting at such a young age. For every piece of paper granted to us in school that signifies a level of performance achieved. For juggling a multitude of advanced classes, sports, and social activities all at once. For running ourselves ragged at a breakneck speed where every hour of our day is planned otherwise, we would sink. This praise comes from all sides. From those we hold dear and from those afar. It comes from the awe given to us by our peers when they hear how many things we have accomplished, how many committees we are on, how many meetings we have in one week. A sense of importance given to us by our busyness. It comes from the praise given to us from our first boss. "You are the best worker we have ever had". A title given to us due to never saying no. For me, it came most recently from my father-in-law. This kind man who goes out of his way to be there for me whenever I am in need, asking me how my work was going. When I explain my enjoyment of my current project but my struggles to take a break, he laughs and tells me that it sounds like I am driven?

We praise the busy. We praise the commodification of our bodies. Commodification - when one must sell their labour on the market to an employer for survival. Or as Esping-Andersen (1990: 105) describes it "as commodities in the market, workers depend for their welfare entirely on the cash-nexus".

We have been taught that upon entering the workforce, we entered a life-long stage where our sole purpose was to prove that we were worthy enough to be there. Appease, please, perform. This performance cannot be put on hold. Not for when our bodies are riddled with exhaustion or illness, not for the monumental moments in our family's life, not for time to listen to our body or soul as mental health deteriorates at an alarming rate within our communities. Appease, please, perform.

Those who take time to rest are the 'lazy'. They are those who do not pull their weight. They are those who do not care about their co-workers. They are those who do not deserve to be there. To be worthy, your needs must cease to exist.

There was a time that our ancestors understood the subjugation that we were placed under when it came to capitalist labour. Going back to the days before they colonized North America, under feudal systems in preindustrial England, it was understood that dependency was a 'normal' social condition where one relied upon another for their work (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 313). The word 'dependency' implied status inferiority, where "subjection, not citizenship was the norm" (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 313). But this meaning has changed and shifted, as white working men gained citizenship. *Dependency* changed from being understood as a reliance upon someone else for wages, to wage labour becoming a symbol of our independence (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 315). The idea of wage labour has become entangled with our identity, with our conceptualization of what it means to be 'free'.

We hold the concept of 'freedom' dear. Mettler and Walker (2014: 629) tell us that, "in the United States, employment status has long been associated with independence and freedom". But this freedom has only been an illusion. A status given to very few and denied to many. With the advent of citizenship for the white working man, the burden of dependency was placed on the non-citizen (the poor, gendered, racialized 'other') through a moral/psychological register which removed the acknowledgement of social relations and instead posited dependency as a "defect of individual character" (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 320). This ideology controls our understanding of 'welfare' and of those who rely on government aid. It blinds us to our own subjugation and the oppression we place on others.

Is there another way of being?

Is there a way beyond our gendered, racialized view of welfare dependency?

Is our value founded upon our frenetic pace of *doing*?

We exist within this one-world world (OWW) told that this is the right way, the only way to be. Created by Euro-modernity, suffocated by capitalist, rationalist, liberal, secular, patriarchal, white world-making practices that dominate, subjectify and erase other ways of being (Escobar 2016: 15). In this OWW, we are separated from nature. Separated from each other. Separated from our complicity in sustaining current power relations (Escobar 2016).

But this sociology of absences is not by accident (Escobar 2016: 15). Our inability to dream of a different way of being, our tenacious attachment to our value being founded upon our job title, our inability to acknowledge our fellow Americans' experiences of oppression based on their class, race and/or gender, our inability to see how the job market is rife with inequality, our inability to see that the American dream is just that-a dream. This inability is no accident. "What doesn't exist is actively produced as non-existent or as non-credible alternatives to what exists" (Escobar 2016: 15).

Our beliefs about work, freedom, welfare, and dependency are reflected within the power structures of our society. Ideologies that influence social constructions (and vice versa) which are perpetuated by politicians and the media which influence the decisions made about our welfare system (Henry, Reyna, and Weiner 2004; Mkwandire 2005; Schneider and Ingram 1993).

Capitalism co-created and sustained by coloniality (Motta 2016: 34). Coloniality of knowing that is predicated upon "a particular politics of knowledge that is naturalized and universalized" (Motta 2016: 35). Within coloniality of knowing, we are created as knowing subjects, as individualized beings. But this individual knowing-subject is built upon the "dualistic exclusion of the raced and feminized less-than-human other" (Motta 2016: 35).

Is there another way of being?

Every day, I am peeling back the layers of these bindings of the individualized knowing subject that finds its value in selling its labour. Sometimes I wake up and find them tangled amongst my limbs once again. Have you ever felt them too? These are the same bindings that have pushed us to believe that 'success' is important. That work is equal to freedom. That our needs must cease to exist. That this OWW we live in, separated from the earth and each other, is our only option. Our bindings are very light in comparison to others. Our white privilege protects us every day in a million ways. These bindings come from not only the commodification of our own bodies. It also comes from our own complicity in the erasure and violence against the classed, raced, and gendered 'other'(Motta 2016).

This erasure shows up in countless ways but a few that have been at the forefront of my mind that relate to this conversation are these. When we cling to our belief that this nation-state, we call our home offers equal opportunity for all, we participate in this erasure. When we claim that anyone can find a job if they try and people who accept social assistance are lazy, we participate in this erasure. When we perpetuate the belief that all that we have as white Americans we have because we earned it, we participate in this erasure. When we deny the need for reparations to be given to people of colour in the United States for the land and lives, we have stolen, we participate in this erasure.

Is there another way of being? What would it look like to live in a world where we value ourselves and each other outside of wage labour and productivity? Where we believe that everyone deserves to have their needs met and to be valued regardless of their employment status?

I wonder if we can move beyond *doing* to a place of *being.* Just *being*. What would that look like for you? For me, I think of re-ordering the structure of my days. Placing as the priority the things that feed my soul. Mindfulness. An increased awareness of my body, my thoughts, my feelings. I think of setting clear boundaries with my work. Days set aside for only rest, only *being*. No *doing* or *should haves* or *productivity*. I think of space made for wonder and I think of celebrating when others rest. "What a beautiful, good thing!"

What would it look like for you?

What if *being* could lead us to *caring*?

If our focus is on *being*, how would that change the way we view *welfare*?

Would we be able to empathize with the struggles of others more deeply? Would we understand the ways those struggles have been actively erased from our awareness by the OWW and coloniality of knowledge?

When I think of *being*, I see that this ability to rest is a privilege that many do not have. I think of those I know who must work two, three jobs just to pay their bills. Those who are surveyed and stigmatized within our current welfare system, disproportionately experienced by women and people of colour (Brody and Destro 2014; Chhachhi and Truong 2009; Fording et al. 2011)

If our focus is on *being* and *caring*, would we value the social protection measures that may help create a safety net for those who are unable to work or face unequal treatment within the market? Would we see an error in having a welfare system that replicates the oppression and unequal treatment of people based on their class, race, and gender (Moller and Misra 2014: 616)?

Would we advocate for systems that are stripped of their bureaucracy and surveillance measures that have been put in place in order to ascertain who is 'deserving' of assistance (Fraser and Gordon 1994)?

When I think of *caring*, I think of connection. In *caring*, I wonder if we can break down the individualized, knowing-subject we have been constructed as and move into communal ways of being (Motta, 2016).

We have been constructed as individuals, but this is not who we are (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015b: 749). We are a web of interconnected beings, reliant on each other. Seeing through the eyes of relationality brings this to light (Escobar 2016). Rooted in wisdom from Epistemologies from the South and relational ontologies, relationality calls us to see the interconnectedness of all living beings and places us within a non-linear temporality. Relational ontologies are the worlds that emerge from these complex interrelations (Escobar 2016: 17).

> These 'worlds without objects' are always in movement, made up of materials in motions, flux, and becoming; in these worlds, living beings of all kinds constitute each other's conditions for existence, they 'interweave to form an immense and continually evolving tapestry. (Ingold 2011, as cited in Escobar 2016: 18)

Perhaps the notion of the commons could help us envision ways of existing within relational ontologies. The commons are an Anglo-Saxon notion of going beyond capitalism. It is merely one word to describe this; there are many other ways of being beyond capitalism from many other cultures (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015b: 744). But maybe today it is useful for us in thinking about *caring*?

We have talked about the constraints of capitalism upon our bodies and the individualism it espouses, yet it is also true that these relations of commodification have been applied to nearly all aspects of earth and more than humans. Commodification guides our social relations under capitalism (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015b: 744). Esteva (as cited in O'Donovan 2015b: 745) claims the commons can be "the cell of the new society". There has been a movement to reclaim or regenerate the commons, to take back what has been lost in the enclosure that occurred under capitalism (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015b: 744).

Perhaps this is an avenue to another way of being? Learning to care for the Earth and others.

Harcourt (2020) has beautiful wisdom on this, telling us that as we learn to care for the Earth we must "reappropriate, reconstruct, and reinvent personal and political lifeworlds" that

contain both economic and ecological concerns. To understand ourselves as situated within entangled becomings. To come with open hearts to listen and learn and bear witness to the experiences of others (Harcourt 2020).

If we apply these concepts to our understanding of work and welfare, what emerges? When we see ourselves as intricately connected to each other through relational ontologies, perhaps we can begin to see our own personal well-being as tied to the well-being of our fellow Americans. When we see ourselves outside of capitalism perhaps, we can see the value that each person brings to our community outside of the notion of work as we know it. When we listen to each other with open hearts and care, perhaps we can begin to dismantle our monological understanding of welfare. Perhaps we could see welfare as not a stigmatized form of assistance, but as a way we can enact caring within our communities. As one of the ways we can address the harm caused by coloniality.

What do you think?

Does this world of *being* and *caring* seem possible?

I feel hope. Hope that there are other ways of being beyond a commodified, individualized knowing-subject. Hope that we can open our hearts to bear witness and undo the erasure enacted through coloniality of knowing. Hope offered through the concepts of the thinkery, dialogical construction, the de-professionalized intellectual, relational ontologies, and the commons. Hope in thinking about the shift from doing to *being* and *caring*.

I feel thankful for this space to imagine. Thankful for your presence. We do not have to have all the answers at this moment. We do not all have to agree. But maybe we can keep holding space for these questions. Maybe we can keep imagining together.

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"I have time; I am not in a hurry, you know": Creating Time and Space with Caring and Refusing

By Arca Arguelles-Caouette, AFES, Canada

Introduction

Can you recall the last time you fixed or built something with your hands? Was it a little adjustment for your bicycle? A new cooking apparel to mount and test? A broken cell phone screen to repair. How did you resolve the need to fix or assemble? Did you go through a user manual or a tutorial on the internet, or did you ask someone for help? What feelings emerged when you came to know 'how' to fix or mount the thing, tool, or technology? Confusion? Satisfaction? Empowerment? Gratitude?

My intention of recalling such memory and feelings in the reader is to acknowledge the different forms of knowledges, such as embodied knowledge and know-how (skills), and relate with them while reading my experience with Aude[10], an organic peasant farmer based in Brittany, the western part of France. A month ago, I met her at her farm to present myself and discuss the possibility of exchanging with her this summer for my research paper (RP). I am interested in engaging with peasant farmers who have taken part in the activities of a cooperative named L'Atelier Paysan (AP), which advocates for peasant-driven technologies and knowledges reappropriation and sharing[11]. Aude had taken part in numerous training workshops led by the cooperative and was introduced to me by close peasant farmer friends, who identify as such. She seemed interested in my motivations and research topic, and we agreed on themes to discuss during the summer. Our first encounter was a positive experience, but it stirred many doubts and uncertainties in me. I began questioning my positionality, practices, and relations with others as an MA student on the cusp of undertaking research. These uncertainties were certainly rooted in my (un)learnings with the Transitions for Social Justice Lab course. In the last two months, the required readings and participatory lectures have brought me moments of enlightenment, excitement, and doubts about my position as an MA student in a European university and about the RP journey I was

10 Aude has kindly agreed to the release of her name for this work and prefers the pronouns "she/her."
11 This essay is built on my RP design. See Arguelles-Caouette (2020).

commencing. I recollect feeling perplexed after the first few online sessions. It was like an unexpected cold shower running down my back, as we say in French. And so, in the past weeks, I have found myself (and still am) confronted with the question "so what is the story in your RP?"

I view my RP as a journey. Thus, I understand that I may come across multiple paths and that the story's angle may change in the next months. Hence, the one I intend to illustrate at this moment is the story of the encounter with Aude, the story of unlearning extractive and individualist social science research practices and (re)thinking them through transitions and action verbs as invited in the Transitions for Social Justice Lab course. By narrating this experience with Aude, I want to explore other ways of telling one's story with more "horizontalidad" (horizontal) (Sitrin 2012: 61) research practices that are oriented towards desire for non-hierarchy and open participation (ibid.).

My intentions are to participate in the recognition of the embodied, situated, relational, and emotional knowledges (Bartos 2017: 156; Kloppenburg 1991: 253; Motta 2016: 35) that as an MA student I have at times forgotten, or that I have been educated, and even encouraged, to neglect. These knowledges are as vivid as the feelings and memory I asked you to recall earlier. For this participation, I will refer to the themes of storytelling, refusing, and caring through reflecting on my positionality, practices, and relations with others in the context of my research. I understand this essay as a continuity of what I have listened to, shared, questioned, co-constructed, and encouraged to practice with my fellow students, lecturers, and course leaders within the Transitions for Social Justice Lab. It is a reminder and a grounding for the next steps into my RP journey.

Briefly on L'Atelier Paysan

Before going further with my encounter with Aude, it may be relevant to briefly address my RP topic that I have been reading about, listening to and writing on, in the past months. Through a discussion with my peasant farmer friends, with whom I have been taking part regularly on their farming activities for the past two years, I have come to a crossroads with the French cooperative L'Atelier Paysan (AP). For the past decade, this non-profit peasant-based organization has been

accompanying peasant farmers across France in co-innovating technologies[12] made *by* and *for* their farming practices and ensuring the accessibility and sharing of such knowledge co-production (L'Atelier Paysan n.d.). AP holds a critical position towards the current dominant agricultural model in the country, which is characterized as fossil fuel– and high tech–dependent. AP believes that such a food production model is "dispossessing" and "destructive" towards peasant communities' autonomy, the environment, and food systems (ibid.). The cooperative advocates the reappropriation of tools and related skills through training workshops, where participants come to learn how to assemble, fix, and adapt tools for their farming grounds in a collective way of doing or making (ibid.).

Since the beginning of the RP process, I have remained fascinated by the cooperative's call for collective learning, knowledge reappropriation, co-construction, and sharing. In some ways, I understand AP's activities and practices as a possible way of transitioning towards a more human, resilient, and sustainable food production. And so, my questions were oriented to finding who participates in AP's training workshops. What led them to join these activities? In which ways do they feel more autonomous on their farming grounds and realities? What knowledges do they feel are reappropriated and shared? With these questions, I assumed my RP would be oriented towards peasant farmers. "Doing research" did not seem like a challenge; my peasant farmers friends were open to putting me in touch with potential participants. Yet, the outcomes of my (un)learnings in the past months at ISS have confronted me to (re)think about my positionality.

Positionality

Thinking about positionality (Rose 1997) and reflexivity (Crossa 2012) has been a major learning for me through my studies at ISS. Recognizing and identifying my privileges; my knowledges, as situated and partial (Rose 1997; Kloppenburg 1991); and the shifting and complex positions I may hold has enabled me to move bit by bit away from the knowing rational subject (Motta 2016: 35) that I may have come to enact owing to my Western education. I recognized that at times in such an educational environment, "emotional, embodied, oral, popular and spiritual knowledges are delegitimised, invisibilised and denied" (ibid.) by the coloniality of the knowing-subject.

12 Technologies are understood as all the socio-technical artifacts and related knowledges for their use; in this case, it is all the tools and equipment required for farming activities.

These acknowledgments have opened me to embrace the uncertainties and vulnerabilities I sense and embody, particularly in this RP journey. This is not to confuse reflection with navel gazing, but rather to seek to undo the immutable rationales in social sciences research (Tuck and Yang 2014: 229) that I have been educated to endorse as a middle-class, woman MA student from the Global North. I am increasingly aware of the multiple layers that may lead to a researcher–researched relationship with the participants and members of AP I hope to engage with. These are, for instance, the considerations of not being from the land or a peasant farmer, of coming from the academia and using terms related to the institution, of speaking French with a different accent, and, lastly, of being a city dweller in recent years. All these layers may contribute to shape me as an "outsider," and furthermore as an "extractivist" researcher of people's stories (Tuck and Yang 2014: 235). This reference of "extractive practices" is articulated by Tuck and Yang's paper on refusal (2014). This reading has provided me critical insights on how academic knowledge is "particular and privileged yet disguises itself as universal and common" (ibid.) and the university institution as "an apparatus of settler colonial knowledge [that] already domesticates, denies, and dominates other forms of knowledge" (ibid.). And so, I do not pretend to speak in the name of the people involved with AP when they are fully able to do so (hooks 1990: 341–2), and I am conscious that my interest of research is most likely "not an intervention they need" (Tuck and Yang 2014: 224).

Thus, recognizing these positions can help me (un)learn and "refuse" (Tuck and Yang 2014) some research practices in social sciences and (re)think of more caring and nurturing ethics. Indeed, as I have learned through the past weeks, "refusing" is not a negation, but an open window to new possibilities to become more "humanized researchers" (Tuck and Yang 2014: 244). Such a humanized researcher may recognize "embodied knowledge" as highlighted by Bartos (2017), of doing and knowing with your body, your senses, your hands. Bartos (2017) explains "how we come to know is partly a result of a variety of deeply personal and intimate relationalities that we encounter viscerally through our bodies" (Bartos 2017: 156).

Such a humanized researcher may also be seeking to embody the figure of the storyteller as described by Motta (2016), who "co-constructs spaces of dialogue through nurturing safety and recognition" (Motta 2016: 43). In order to embody Motta's storyteller (2016), I want to allow time and space in co-constructing spaces of dialogues with my participants. This way, I do not intend to engage with as many participants as possible during the period allocated for "fieldwork," but

rather commit to take the time and space for "creating affective and embodied interactions, connections and relationships enacted through the loving eye, the tender touch, the attentive ear and the knowing heart" (Motta 2016: 43).

Encounter with Aude: Practices and Relations with Others

I first met Aude in person on a hot, sunny Monday afternoon at her farm, where rose eight plastic tunnel greenhouses of 50 meters long on a one-hectare field. Aude has been growing more than 30 varieties of vegetables and fruits for the past five years. She was not working at the time I met her because of the unbearable temperature under her greenhouse tunnels. I was excited to finally meet her in person. Our brief telephone calls, the previous week, had left me with an impression of a calm, well-spoken, and open person. As I was about to introduce myself, I became immersed in a wave of questions. Which "hat(s)" was (were) I wearing as I walked through the farming grounds of Aude? Was it that of an of MA student researcher? Of a friend of peasant-farmer friends? Or of a curious plant lover and amateur gardener?

Motta's ethics of love (2016) echoed my questioning. Which ways could I co-construct a 'safer' space of dialogue nurtured with care and recognition (Motta 2016: 43)? I decided that I would present myself with the multiple selves (hats) mentioned above and that I would not monopolize the thread of our dialogue. I had written down some key questions I wanted to ask her, but I did not seek to establish a "semi-formal" interview space with her. Instead, I thought that this was an opportunity to listen, in order to create a relationship that required time, openness, and care. My understandings of caring are informed by D'Emilia and Chávez's Radical Tenderness Manifesto (2015), where radical tenderness:

> is to know how to accompany one another, among friends and lovers, at different distances and speeds…
> is to carry the weight of another body as if it were your own…
> is to embrace fragility. (D'Emilia and Chávez 2015: 1)

D'Emilia and Chávez's manifesto (2015) thus reminded me not only about being attentive and present, but also being mindful of the fragility of the "new" relation with Aude. I was grateful of Aude's availability and for her trust in me, and for sharing with me her experiences and feelings of having been associated with AP training workshops. As I feared taking much too much of her

space and time, she reassured me and repeated to me many times "I have time; I am not in a hurry, you know." This was to me a beautiful demonstration of caring.

Aude patiently showed and explained to me the tools she had participated in conceiving and learning to build and repair during her training workshops with AP. These are impressive steel structures with sturdy disks and forks and curious names such as "BUZUK[13] crimper roller" or "BUZUK strip till cultivator" (L'Atelier Paysan n.d.). They are used to prepare and carefully work the plant beds, without going beyond 30 cm under the ground. According to Aude, these tools do not "harm the soil," and they ensure sustainable peasant farming. A smile of satisfaction lit up her face when she recalled that she had to fix one of her tools after five years of use. I sensed a feeling of empowerment and pride when she described how she proceeded with welding the broken part by herself. She laughed at herself—an expression of humbleness—when remembering the great amount of time and tinkering she took to set up her improvised "fixing station" in the middle of the farm.

Now, I wonder: had I brought along a voice recorder, would I have noticed Aude's body and emotional language when speaking in detail on her tools and her care for the soil? Would I have been more focused on the position of the voice recorder to capture both of our voice and the questions to ask? Would Aude have been so open and at ease to share about herself in this first encounter? I tend to believe not.

To avoid embodying the "extractive" posture of a researcher, I "refused" to have at hand a pen, notebook, or voice recorder. I usually greatly appreciate the possibility of re-listening to exchanges with such tools. In many circumstances, the voice recorder has allowed me to grasp slipped elements. Yet I felt that "recording" the conversation with Aude was premature and perhaps not coherent with the ethics I intended to follow. This refusal is mainly inspired by Da Costa, Icaza, and Ocampo Talero's (2015) trialogue about the use of the voice recorder and the term of "fieldwork." In this trialogue, the use of the voice recorder may participate in reproducing extractive research practices (Da Costa et al. 2015: 266–8). The term "fieldwork" is also questioned and raises multiple points of view. Da Costa, for instance, confronts its so-called "neutrality":

> the term was coined in this very extractive rationality and it usually comes together with many

13 "Buzuk" means earthworm in Breton language.

> other words and practices—for example, we go out and conduct fieldwork to collect data and to contact informants and then we come back to our offices and libraries to produce knowledge. (Da Costa et al. 2015: 270)

This led me to reconsider the use of the terms "fieldwork" and "data collection," and their related practices and contexts in which they emerge. On one hand, I associate "fieldwork" as work related with the land and people and one that involves a social activity. Similarly, for Icaza the term evokes agricultural activities like planting and harvesting (Da Costa et al. 2015: 256) and working your hands through the soil and plants. On the other hand, the term also reminds me of disciplined measure, such as picture- and note-taking on multiple sites in former scientific projects I have taken part in. The latter association does not seem coherent with how I want to proceed with my RP. Hence, I want to follow Da Costa's description of fieldwork and preferred term of "encounters":

> it is not only about research but also about life. We meet people, we share ideas, emotions, knowledges. These can be positive and exciting moments, but there is also a lot of tension. Tensions that emerge when we meet people that are very different from us. (ibid.: 270)

My encounter with Aude brought me many doubts and confirmed some ethics I intend to practice during my RP journey. By refusing the use of the term "fieldwork" and preferring "encounter" and its understandings, I am attempting to hold a "more" uncertain, vulnerable, and caring gaze rather than a settler colonial one (Tuck and Yang 2014: 245).

Concluding Reflections

In this essay, I have illustrated through my first encounter with Aude some of the numerous (un)learnings of the Transitions for Social Justice Lab course that have encouraged (and still are encouraging) me to transition from a rational knowing-subject (Motta 2016) towards a more caring and refusing MA student researcher. I believe these (un)learnings have allowed the co-construction of a space of dialogue (Motta 2016: 46) with Aude and opened my understandings of embodied and relational knowledges (Bartos 2017). It is key to highlight that these (un)learnings have emerged through lectures and readings, but also, more importantly, through sharing with and listening to students and lecturers during the participatory workshops. This essay is understood as a continuity of reflections that have emerged in these past two months.

This story proposed a venue of reflections and practices to Da Costa et al.'s question: "How to move from doing research *about* and instead to do research *with*?" (Da Costa et al. 2015: 261). I shared my encounter with Aude as my own attempt to embrace the figure of the storyteller (Motta 2016) and ground research ethics and practices with care, based on radical tenderness (D'Emilia and Chávez 2015) and refusing (Tuck and Yang 2014). I hope to continue seeking and creating time and space for more such encounters I may come across in my RP journey.

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Ethnographic Insert 2: An Autoethnographic Account of Adjusting to Working from Home

By Ewa Brand, MIG, Poland/The Netherlands

In your last letter you asked me what my experience working from home was like. Well, I think that the concentration is a small problem. Let me "show" you why. Imagine me Monday 09.00, having a 1-hour meeting with my team. I choose a strategic place to sit down with my computer; I sit at the table with my back to the wall in the way that no one can pass behind me. On the screen you can just see me and a piece of olive-green wall; no pictures, paintings or statues can be seen. Somewhere I internalised the warnings about privacy protection and spying through Zoom or Teams.

I put some make-up; strange thing in these days when going out to the garden or for a walk in the park is the only moment to meet people other than your family. I use a brown eyeliner to make a line on my upper eyelid; not too thick as I reserve it for an evening out (seem ages ago: an evening out!) and I put on a brown mascara which I bought last summer in Poland. It was very expensive so I try to use it for special occasions only; I never expected an online meeting to be such an occasion...life can be surprising! My hair is freshly washed and still a bit wet but not dripping anymore and I smell like strawberry as I used the shampoo of my youngest son (all the other bottles were empty, but still neatly set on the shelf in the shower). I changed my usual hoody for a nice t-shirt, but I still wear the "home" jeans; after many washes just too short, and too thin on my butt and knees but invisible on the screen so who cares.

The meeting starts, from my place at the table (in the eating room) I can see the kitchen, which is empty, but in expectation of the invasion of my 4 sons. My manager greets us and asks what exciting activities we did during the weekend; a joke which after few weeks of lockdown starts to sound irritating and stupid. I see my colleagues on the screen laughing politely and I get a WhatsApp from one of them saying "ha ha so funny" with an emoji rolling eyes out of boredom and frustration. I quickly sent a "LOL" and open my mail on my phone.

I half listen to my manager and try to look very interested frowning my forehead while reading the mail from the mentor of son number 3 -during a meeting on Friday he was chatting online with other students in the meeting… how stupid can you be, just use your phone and not a chat which is also visible for your teacher! - I put the phone down and look at the screen. I see 4 colleagues: 2 man and 2 women. I notice something remarkable, behind the women nothing but

an empty wall, but behind both man you can see shelfs full of books, not neat rows though, but half rows, half piles. As if they would like to communicate “here is an intellectual working, surrounded by books which he continuously consults, but too busy and too involved in solving the world to care a bit about the chaos”. From the place where I sit, I can see one of my bookshelves; all books neatly set down, every shelf containing only one language; the books of the same author standing next to each other. I didn’t resolve yet the problem of the books of the same author in different languages (you know Umberto Eco in Polish and Italian); now I have a shelf apart for such cases.

I hear my name; my manager asks if I want to add something to the agenda. No idea what is on agenda as I can’t find it (I didn’t master Microsoft Meetings yet) so I turn on the mic and say “no, all the points I wanted to discuss are already there”. My mic is not yet off as I hear an app; my colleague says “LIAR”, followed by an emoji with a raised finger as to say, “bad girl!”. Before I can answer, son number 2 enters the kitchen. He is wearing his bathrobe which is too short for him, as he grew a lot in last few weeks, his too long hair is wet, his big feet leave wet prints on the wooden floor. Only now I notice how hairy his legs are and how abnormally long his toes seem. He looks around, sees me behind the laptop. His lips move and formulate a word “working?”, I raise my right hand vertically and move it from left to right as to say, “not quite” and I whisper, “a meeting”. My mic is out and still I whisper as if someone could hear me. On his face I see a mischievous smile. He heads to the windowsill, where the phones lie during the night and picks his phone (the rule is that the phones stay downstairs until the homework is done). He laughs and keeps the phone on the height of his face on the right site, moves it and says, “catch me if you can”, then he turns around and leaves the kitchen.

I can hear him heading upstairs while calling his brothers “guys let’s play Fortnite, mummy is stuck behind the computer”. A lot of noise upstairs; laughs, doors getting open, 3 pairs of feet running down and son number 4 calling “I claim the Switch” as he has no phone yet. The kitchen door is pushed aside with such a force that it bounces against the wall and back straight to the face of son number 3. I am happy my mic is off because the words which he uses to express pain and frustration cover all intimate parts of the body plus few serious illnesses. He recovers quickly and just as his brothers get his phone; off they are. I stay behind, stuck behind my laptop, smiling, frowning my forehead in faked interest, meanwhile I am fantasizing about the times when corporal punishment was still allowed. It’s 09.10, still 50 minutes to go…

Crude, Correa and Corona

By Aditya Maruvada, AFES, India

Abstract

Taking the movie *Crude* as the starting point for this essay, I briefly summarize the indigenous peoples' crusade against Chevron and the movie's depiction of it. I try to place some of the events in the movie in a larger historical and political context. Using this backdrop as a springboard, I dive into the politics, policies and aftermath of Rafael Correa's presidentship that lasted between 2007 and 2017. I investigate Ecuador's institutionalization of *Buen Vivir* often celebrated as an alternative to development and neoliberalism. I situate Correa's politics and initiatives in the contradictions between his ends (ushering in *Buen Vivir*) and his means (intensified oil, mineral and agro-extractivism). I then try and briefly examine the impact that the current Corona and Oil-price crises might have on the Ecuadorian economy. Apart from laying bare the weaknesses of previous paradigms, crises can also spawn and reinvigorate alternatives to development. In this spirit, I turn to Cuba's example to demonstrate what an 'alternative to development' might look like, while also being mindful of the attempt's shortcomings. Lastly, I explore an alternative construction of *Buen Vivir* and briefly return to the movie to understand how this alternative may be better articulated, enriched and embraced.

Crude, CONAIE and Correa

Directed by Joe Berlinger, *Crude* is a 2009 movie portraying the painstaking struggle of the indigenous peoples demanding (through a class action lawsuit) to be recompensed by oil-behemoth Chevron for the environmental degradation it caused in its 26 years of extractive operations in Ecuadorian Amazon Basin. The movie depicts the environmental havoc that Chevron wreaked on indigenous communities and shows the various tactics that Chevron employed to exculpate itself by downplaying and denying its own role in contamination (Scott 2009).

The movie highlights the efforts of lawyer activist Pablo Fajardo, who with help from indigenous organizations, international civil society and an American law firm, mobilized international support for the cause. The efforts manifested in an influential article in the Vanity Fair that in turn led to subsequent widespread coverage, acclaim and endorsement by a variety of actors ranging from celebrities to international environmental organizations. The movie ends on a

note of victory for the indigenous people, with Chevron, however, continuing to challenge the legitimacy of the judgement (Crude 2009).

Importantly, the movie welcomes Rafael Correa's rise to power as a crucial positive development for the case, showing his support for the plaintiffs and covering his tour of the affected regions. However, in retrospect, reactions to Correa's environmentalism are mixed at best. Intensified state-led extraction of oil and other resources on one hand and a severe clampdown of indigenous movements and organizations on the other marked his tenure between 2007 and 2017 (Jima-González and Paradela-López 2019). The movie then also serves as a useful starting point to grasp larger social, political, and economic phenomena that shaped Ecuador in the 1990s and 2000s. This understanding is critical to understanding Correa's rise to power and unpacking his policies, politics and their aftermath.

The rise of Rafael Correa was preceded by widespread social unrest that led to the coalescing of diverse indigenous and peasant organizations into a formidable political force. For two decades, Neoliberalism wreaked havoc on Latin American countries, resulting in greater wealth disparity, exacerbated environmental degradation and intensified exploitation of indigenous peoples. Ecuadorian indigenous and peasant organizations, beginning in the 80s adopted various forms of resistance such as agroecology (that was coupled with food sovereignty in the '90s) to counter the onslaught of agro and oil extractivism. The '90s and early 2000s witnessed widespread political mobilization under organizations such as Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) to counter the neo-liberal state (De La Torre and Ortiz Lemos 2016). It is in this socio-political context that Fajardo's fight against Chevron-Texaco, beginning in the early '90s, is to be situated.

In 2006, Correa, an erstwhile professor of Economics and a complete outsider to civil society, managed to harness these and other progressive movements and couple them with the support he got from middle class (*forajidos*) to usurp the neo-liberal paradigm and bring in the socialism of the 21st Century. Correa's 'socialism' was to be based on a neo-extractivist paradigm with the profits from state-supervised extraction and trade of crude and other primary commodities used to fund populist social programs (Tilzey 2019).

Interestingly, Correa's administration also attempted to transform the relationship between the state and the environment. Correa's support for plaintiffs in the Chevron-Texaco case, Ecuador's redrafting its constitution around *Buen Vivir*, and the institutionalizing of food

sovereignty and agroecology are to be interpreted as evidence of this transformation (Intriago et al. 2017: 9). Similarly, the Yasuni-Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (Yasuni-ITT) initiative to leave the oil under the soil was looked at as a genuinely innovative solution to decouple extraction and development (Kingsbury et al. 2019: 530). How then are we to understand the puzzling relationship between Ecuadorian state, society, and nature?

Correa's Buen Vivir and Chayanov's Peasant Utopia

Once in power, Correa sought to fulfil his populist ambitions by nationalizing and intensifying extraction. This intensified extraction, crucial to maintaining Correa's legitimacy, obviated the need for deeper structural reforms. Between 2007 and 2017, there were significant gains in the general living standards of Ecuadorians, with improved minimum wages, more jobs, and better infrastructure (Ruales 2017).

Simultaneously, Correa also set the stage for redrafting the constitution of Ecuador. By 2008, Correa's administration, in consultation with the Andean and Amazonian peoples, began institutionalizing agroecology and food sovereignty (Intriago et al. 2017: 9). Ecuador became one of the first countries to recognize *Buen Vivir* (and *Sumak Kawsay*) as an alternative to development and to enshrine it in its constitution. These constructions however were "utilitarian" (in their) conceptualization, and essentially "rooted in the Western episteme" (Zaldivar 2017: 192) and would be enforced in a top-down manner with indigenous peoples relegated to the role of silent spectators. Pro-regime technocratic intellectuals like Ramirez charted a state-led linear plan of transition to this alternative, the first step of which unsurprisingly, was an intensification of extraction. The plan would ultimately culminate in ushering *Buen Vivir*, a green economy based on eco-tourism, knowledge, and ecosystem services (Zaldivar 2017: 190-192).

At this point, I turn to examining this model's similarities with the conception and functioning of the peasant utopia in the 1924 novella *The Journey of My Brother Alexi to the Land of Peasant Utopia* written by Alexander V. Chayanov under the pseudonym Ivan Kremnev. The utopia, I contend, has important parallels with Correa's *Buen Vivir* and can help us understand it better. Also worth considering are the differences between the utopia and Correa's *Buen Vivir* that can help us understand the contradictions that marked his rule and exit.

In the novella, the protagonist Kremnev is transported 60 years into the future to a Russia that is a peasant paradise. Following their rise to power, the peasant parties redistribute all the land,

destroy all cities, and transform the country into a checkerboard of fields, gardens and peasant communities. Capitalism, all but vanquished, is replaced by vertical integration and cooperative based exchange. Even different forms of political organizations within individual communities are allowed to flourish (Kremnev 1976: 72-81).

Commentators from across the Chayanovian spectrum have taken the peasant utopia at face value and have proceeded to evaluate its political and economic architecture while condemning/acknowledging its supposed ludditism and "small is beautiful" message (Brass 2000; Orvoskii 1976; Shanin 1966). However, a closer reading reveals that the day to day functioning of the utopia is in fact based on significant technological progress ranging from Eugenics to advanced communication and transportation systems (Kremnev 1976: 68-100). Of particular interest here are the Metreophores; gigantic state-owned agricultural engineering installations that literally send "rain and fine weather" from above (Orlovskii 1976: 68). The plenitude of the peasant utopia, its very existence then, is contingent on relentless extraction of nature.

The parallels with Correa's *Buen Vivir* do not end with their dependence on extractivism. As the novella progresses, it dawns upon Kremnev that what he had once assumed to be "the marvellous anarchy of Prince Kropotkin" (Kremnev 1976: 75) is after all "no more than a sophisticated oligarchy of a couple of dozen very clever and ambitious men" (Kremnev 1976: 100). As it became clear, Correa's co-opting and quelling of indigenous resources and resistance movements seemed to attest to his increasing authoritarianism.

In the novella, though the utopia is modelled along the logic of peasant economy and the virtues of peasantry are constantly extolled by the elders, the peasants themselves are portrayed as lacking culture. To solve this "social problem", the elders constantly fling a totalizing amalgam of "High" (Shakespeare and Brueghel) and "Low" (Knucklebones) culture into the farthest corners of the utopia (Kremnev 1976: 70). Strikingly similar, is Correa's *Buen Vivir*, in its appropriation of indigenous motifs in service of a totalizing project and his later denunciation of naive indigenism as one of the threats to this project. As Caria and Dominguez note, "(Correa's) *Buen Vivir* presents reality as perceived through a lens that turns the object upside down" (Caria and Domínguez 2015 : 24).

Central to both the peasant utopia and Correa's *Buen Vivir* is the state and its ever-increasing control over nature and people. While in the utopia, "there are special associations, large and powerful, which have millions of people under their observation" (Kremnev 1976: 100),

in Correa's *Buen Vivir*, media is suppressed/nationalised, and resistance to the state is quelled by branding agitators "criminals and subversive terrorists" (in Becker 2011: 58).

While in the utopia, the state "kept the countryside in a state of psychological tension" (Kremnev 1976: 99), Correa gave a call for a "citizen's revolution" (Ortiz 2015). It is considering these centralizing aspirations that Correa's support for the battle against Chevron, and the much-touted Yasuni-ITT initiative should perhaps be seen. For Correa then, *Buen Vivir* is but a tool to consolidate state's power over nature (Arsel and Angel 2012). When his extractivist means are challenged *Buen Vivir* quickly becomes "a "distortion of thought," a false consciousness— harmony with Nature— that covers up the real consciousness, that of "beggars sitting on a sack of gold" (Caria and Domínguez 2015: 24).

Where Chayanov's peasant utopia and Correa's *Buen Vivir* differ are the sources they derive their legitimacy from. In the utopia, the peasant parties after coming to power institute deep structural reforms (redistribution of land, incomes, and destruction of urban centers). These reforms, though initially threaten the stability of the regime, ultimately are instrumental to its consolidation. However, fundamental structural changes do not accompany Correa's *Buen Vivir*. There is no land reform here. Radical concepts such as agroecology and food sovereignty are robbed of their political potential and are relegated to techno-managerial and bureaucratic realms (Jima-González and Paradela-López 2019). Instead, an increasingly authoritarian Correa is forced to continually and solely derive his legitimacy from intensified extractivism. And unlike the peasant utopia's sovereignty inducing extractivism, Correa's agro and oil extractivism and the visions they help support depend heavily on external factors, disproportionately so on one, China. (Gonzalez-Vicente 2017) The crash in global oil prices, coupled with the demands of an increasingly restive middle-class burst Correa's development bubble and paved way for his exit.

An alternative to development: Corona, Cuba, and Acosta's *Buen Vivir*

Correa was succeeded by Lenin Moreno, who, taking over the office during a slump in global oil prices, began breaking away from Correa's socialism of the 21st century. Anticipating a reduction in exploration and extraction, CONAIE supported Moreno in the referendum against Correa. However, his government's subsequent policies indicate "no move toward breaking from a resource extractive model" (Becker and Riofranco 2018: 128). Moreover, his decision to privatize some state industries, and his negotiations with the IMF for a $4.2 billion loan indicate his keenness

to bring Ecuador back into the neo-liberal fold. Ecuador's neo-extractivist paradigm and by extension its economy, was and continues to be heavily dependent on China, the epicenter of the still raging Corona Virus pandemic, whose devastating economic impacts across the world are only beginning to unravel. Descriptions ranging from "very difficult" to "cataclysmic" (Associated Press 2020: n.p.) have been used to characterize the impact of the pandemic on Ecuador's economy. Crises such as this could also be critical inflection points, opening up fissures to challenge 'business as usual', as was the case with Cuba in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union.

Dependent on agro-extractivism (predominantly sugar), Cuban economy took a massive hit after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent tightening of trade regulations by the USA. In the absence of imported food and fertilizers, Cuba was forced to switch to a less input intensive form of agriculture. This was accompanied by large scale land reforms, transitioning from the state-led input-intensive collectivist model to one based on Roegenian logic of organic agriculture, individual small farms and vertical integration. This agroecological transition occurred hand in hand with a marked improvement in health and education indices, prompting commentators to remark on it as an ideal example of Degrowth. However, they also bemoan the movement's squandered potential, citing Cuba's attempt to use it to return to pre-crisis status quo (Boillat et al. 2012).

Given the current crises, can we envision a transition from the current polyarchy to an alternative paradigm that fosters greater democracy and ensures basic human needs while remaining within planetary limits? What might such an alternative, to both neo-liberal and state-led neo-extractivist paradigms look like? And what might be the characteristics of the state-society-nature relationship in this alternative paradigm? In order to answer these questions, I turn to Alberto Acosta's alternative imagination of *Buen Vivir*.

Acosta's *Buen Vivir*, based on a recognition of the worldview and the rights of the indigenous peoples, goes beyond being a development alternative, and is conceived instead as an 'alternative to development.' As Santos (in De Zaldivar 2017: 194) notes, it may be analysed in the following main dimensions:

> […] as an alternative to development, as a new dimension of rights (the rights of nature); as a seed that can only germinate in a new type of state, the plurinational state, which is built with the participation of citizens, peoples and nationalities through different forms of democracy [...]; as the matrix of a new solidarity and plural economy of post- extractivist and post-capitalist inspiration.

Essentially plurinational in character, Acosta's *Buen Vivir* recognizes the inviolability of nature and calls for an end to extractivism. It pits for the development of strong local markets that can help reduce the dependence on global markets. Moving away from extractivism, this alternative would "promote sustainable activities, which may take place in the sphere of manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, and especially knowledge" (Acosta 2013a: 80). In this respect, Acosta's *Buen Vivir* is strongly compatible with the principles of Degrowth. The state here, while guaranteeing nature's rights, would also want "to introduce profound structural changes", and unlike Correa's *Buen Vivir*, the state in Acosta's *Buen Vivir* undertakes "in-depth income and wealth redistribution process(es)" (Acosta 2013a: 81). But Acosta's alternative, as Salzidar notes, is also open to the charge of not being grounded in actual historical and sociological processes and of essentializing indigeneity (De Zaldivar 2017: 195).

This charge is also empirically supported by Arsel and Pellegrini, who colour-code various environmental justice conflicts taking place in the indigenous regions of the Amazon basin to classify them into those that fundamentally oppose extractivism (green), those that do not oppose extractivism per se but argue for an equitable distribution of the benefits (brown), and those that are a combination of both (mixed) (Arsel and Pellegrini 2018). They find that the 'brown' conflicts predominate the struggles, indicating indigenous communities' possible preference for 'development alternatives.'

How do we then transition to a post-extractivist society, based along the lines of Acosta's plurinationalism while accommodating the actual desires of indigenous communities without essentializing them? In the spirit of Green and Dennis' paper, I propose that a multi-pronged strategy could mark the beginning of the shift to this post-extractivist society.

On one hand, indigenous fights for reparations against the extractive excesses by Multinational Corporations/State, by the likes of Fajardo can and ought to expand. Welcome are initiatives such as *All Eyes on the Amazon*, that acquaint indigenous communities with frugal technologies to document environmental degradation in their fight against extractivism (Carlos et al. 2019).

On another hand, the state can implement a mix of supportive and restrictive measures both on the demand and supply side of energy and materials. Among other Restrictive Supply Side measures, initiatives such as the Yasuni-ITT ought to be spawned and supported, neither as models of extortion nor to perpetuate the essentially capitalistic carbon credit paradigm, but as attempts

"to profoundly change their (peoples) relationship with nature by contributing to the establishment of a new global legal institution that transcended national and private interests" (Acosta 2013b: n.p.). The state can also initiate Supportive Supply Side measures by playing a role in the development renewable sources of energy like solar, wind and geothermal as governments around the world are increasingly doing (Acosta 2013a: 65).

On yet another hand, existing grassroots movements around agroecology and food sovereignty can be expanded and built upon to include initiatives around other necessities such as clothing, shelter, and energy. The state can endorse local cooperatives that employ local communities to "prosume" energy like in Netherlands (Campos et al. 2019), clothing as was done in the attempt to promote Khadi and village industries in India (Torchia 1997), and sustainable shelter solutions perhaps along the lines of Laurie Baker's principles (Bhatia 1991).

This multi-pronged approach accompanied by deep distributive structural reforms could be the first step in strengthening national sovereignty and in redefining state-nature-society relations that may ultimately help realize a more socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable *Buen Vivir*.

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Has the Doctrine of Comparative Advantage Been Unsuccessful in Predicting the Development of Developing Countries?

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Introduction

Developing countries have religiously followed the predictions of the Ricardian model of comparative advantage through specialisation in primary products and trade liberalization in a bid to achieve economic growth. However, the dividends of this followership are yet to manifest. In this essay, I argue that, as opposed to the predictions of the comparative advantage doctrine espoused by David Ricardo, developing countries that specialize in and trade primary products (for which they are assumed to have the least opportunity cost) still experience underdevelopment.

Locating myself in literature, I logically examine the arguments of Felipe and Vernengo (2002), Rodrik (2006), Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik (2007), Chang (2002, 2005), Bleaney (2001), Imbs and Wacziarg (2003) and others, who maintain that even after implementing the comparative advantage formula through free trade and specialization, developing countries are met with negative effects on outputs and a decrease in living standards of their population. These works of literature contend that the privileging of specialization in primary products over diversification, and liberalization (free trade) over export promotion without more, have left developing countries underdeveloped today.

Furthermore, due to an overall assumption that we live in a frictionless world, the doctrine cannot account for the events that shape the specialization patterns of developing countries. This literature review further argues that trade decisions and practices as undertaken by advanced countries and China (after deviating from the doctrine) constitute the formula for development. Further in my analysis I will explore the major counter-arguments and show that among others, literature focuses on the successes of comparative advantage in advanced countries rather than on its counter effects in developing countries. They further query the institutions, human capital and structures in developing countries rather than countering arguments that insist advanced countries did not have these institutions while they were at the current stage of developing countries. I will later show that a huge reliance by counter-arguments on attacking the modalities of data collection -employed to empirically show the ills of comparative advantage in developing countries - rather than providing empirical evidence to rebut these claims whittles down these arguments.

The development I argue is as described by the Heterodox school which is equivalent to growth plus a rise in living standards (real wages) of the majority of the population.[14]

Exploring an unsuccessful prediction

The Ricardian theory is grounded on the assumption that countries enjoy more benefits from trading goods for which they have comparative advantage i.e. the opportunity cost of production is less than the opportunity cost of producing the same good in another country. It further emphasizes that countries would by this obtain other goods (for which they lack comparative advantage) from other countries through trade. (Felipe and Vernango 2002: 51).

The anticipation of these benefits in developing countries has been met with disappointing outcomes which stem from the support for specialization (within products) as opposed to diversification, and trade liberalization as opposed to export promotion. Empirical evidence reveals the correlation between the underdevelopment of developing countries and specialization in primary products with subsequent exchange channels through free trade (Felipe and Vernango 2002).

It is important to mention that the criticism of the doctrine is best revealed through practices in globalization with the likes of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) preying on developing countries who rarely have voting rights in such organisations.[15]

Its prescription therefore was and still is that, if all countries obey the rules of the game, they will attain development. However, trends that show that developing countries followed the rules, specialised in trading primary goods (as the basis for their comparative advantage) and are today highly underdeveloped, while China, a former developing country, (after building its capacity in manufacturing) deviated from the model and is advanced today. Furthermore, advanced countries destroyed the institutions in developing countries through structural adjustment programs of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, sold and imposed the doctrine on developing countries, then accumulated all the wealth of the world by leveraging on the doctrine to create uneven trade relationships while trading in manufactured goods and diversifying. (Chang 2005; Felipe and Vernengo 2002)

[14] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures “Global Economy” at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

[15] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures “Global Economy” at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

How comparative advantage in primary products underdeveloped developing countries

The current underdevelopment in developing countries due to specialization runs contrary to the doctrine of comparative advantage which predicts that the "gains from trade arise from specialization" (Rodrik 2006a: 4). This is because poor countries specialize in a limited range of primary goods (for which they are assumed to have comparative advantage) with less productivity. Rodrik, citing Imbs and Wacziarg provides evidence to show that economic growth and income levels experience a negative relationship with specialization in primary products (2006a:4).

Primary products are more prone to price fluctuations and have little or no room for product upgrading in which case, countries that specialize in them, compete only in price which is highly elastic to demand. (Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik 2007)

In differentiating the impact of primary products from those of manufactured goods, Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik (2007) explain that "rich countries are those that have latched on to "rich-country products," while countries that continue to produce "poor- country" goods remain poor" (2007:2). Countries, therefore, become what they produce because of i.e. the "quality of countries export basket". To this end, specialization in primary goods has harmed the productivity and growth in developing countries. The pattern of specialization thus influences the position of a country within a hierarchical spectrum of importance from the core to periphery (Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik 2007:24). This has placed developing countries at peripheral positions and impoverished them. The export basket of a country is a strong determinant on growth predictions and primary commodities tend to be items with low productivity. (Rodrik 2006:11)

The table below further explains the point of specialization in primary products as the basis for poverty and stifled growth in developing countries. Niger, a developing country in sub-Saharan Africa has specialized in figures 10120, it generates one of the lowest income levels and as such, impacts on the per capita GDP. Figures 90500 and 90700 are shown to have extremely low-slung productivity value even though they are products in which sub-Saharan African Countries find their comparative advantage. (Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik 2007:12)

	Product	Product name	Mean PRODY, 1999–2001
Smallest	140490	Vegetable products nes	748
	530410	Sisal and Agave, raw	809
	10120	Asses, mules and hinnies, live	823
	90700	Cloves (whole fruit, cloves, and stems)	870
	90500	Vanilla beans	979
Largest	721060	Flat rolled iron or non-alloy steel, coated with aluminium, width > 600 mm	46,860
	730110	Sheet piling of iron or steel	46,703
	721633	Sections, H, iron or non-alloy steel, nfw hot-roll/drawn/extruded > 80 m	44,688
	590290	Tyre cord fabric of viscose rayon	42,846
	741011	Foil of refined copper, not backed, $t < 0.15$ mm	42,659

Table 1: *Largest and smallest PRODY values* (Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik 2007)

Developing countries focusing on the production and exports of primary products tend to be more income inelastic. Large quantities of primary goods are exported with substantial negative effect on terms-of-trade. Developing countries through specialization in trade have therefore not advanced till this day. (Imbs and Wacziarg 2003; Cuddington, Ludema and Jayasuriya 2002).

The failure of single product specialization in developing countries is made obvious with the diversification of China in its sets of export goods. Export baskets (diversification) exerts its independent influence on economic growth without standing as a proxy to other factors. Therefore, developing countries remain underdeveloped as huge reliance is placed on goods that are less productive and income inelastic to demand. (Rodrik 2006b: 23)

There also exists a negative relationship between specialization and income levels. The adverse trends in primary product prices and high volatility in primary product prices have caused local exporters to experience instability in export revenue. (Bleaney and Greenaway 2001; Imbs and Wacziarg 2003 in Rodrik 2006b).

In Ghana, specialization in cocoa and other primary products have seen the producer prices remain low. This has resulted in a decrease in producer's income and inhibited savings necessary for investment in manufacturing. This has negatively affected the productivity of the sector and the growth of their economy. (Kolavalli and Vigneri 2011).

Another empirical evidence can be found in the fact that the relative price of coffee has been on a decline of 0.77% per annum (p,a.). More testing also revealed that hide, tobacco, wheat and other primary commodities at the long-run present a negative downward trend in their relative prices. (Harvey et al. 2010)

The principle of comparative advantage presumes full employment in the economy from

specialization, however empirical studies of developing countries have proven otherwise. Widespread unemployment has bedevilled developing nations due to the failure of their balance of payment to self-equilibrate (they operate in deficit). This is because the doctrine of comparative advantage ignores the monetary consequences of trade for growth. (Felipe and Vernengo, 2002)

Citing the Prebish (1950) and Singer (1950) theories (Prebisch-Singer hypothesis) it has been argued that world prices of primary products decline over time as opposed to manufactured exports, this occasion declines in terms of trade and the prices of primary products as well. Significant emphasise is also placed on the effect of the monopoly power in manufactured goods, the price of primary products and the income elasticity of demand in primary commodities (Cuddington, Ludema and Jayasuriya 2002:5).

Trade liberalization and the underdevelopment of developing countries

Free trade involves the reduction of tariffs, removal of barriers, cutbacks and abolition of subsidies, adherence to the intellectual property rights of the World Trade Organization, other reforms and policies involving foreign investors and international trade. (Felipe and Vernango 2002; Shaikh 2007).

Through the doctrine of comparative advantage, trade liberalization has been predicted to present the unsurpassed approach to accelerate development (Felipe and Venango 2002).

Unfortunately, even though its prescription is based on the interpretation that "free trade makes everybody better off" (Felipe and Venango 2002:51), it has however served as a tool to put developing countries at a disadvantage in the international trading system with trade in primary goods (raw materials) as the driver (2002:51). This has been due to terms of trade instability influenced by volatility and the downward trend of the prices of primary products and the destruction of internal workings of institutions in developing countries by agents of privatization and other neoliberal policies.[16] (Bleaney and Greenaway 2001).

Free Trade on the premise of specialization in comparative advantage assumes that all countries are capable of producing all goods and are at liberty to revert to producing the same (all goods) if the attempt at the exchange (free trade) is unsuccessful. However, while this might be true for advanced countries with balance of payment in their favour, for developing countries, they have become trade prisoners (a market for manufactured goods and source of cheap raw

[16] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

materials) and cannot go back. No evidence that trade liberalization (as opposed to export promotion) has resulted in a rise in real wages or growth in developing countries.[17]

These neoliberal policies on free trade perpetuated by the Washington Consensus left devastating and disastrous effects on developing countries. They moved from a 1.9% rate of GDP growth to 0.5% per year after implementing these policies. While developing countries were bearing the brunt of free trade, China deviated from these policies and negotiated their terms of trade and thus have experienced growth rates accelerations. (Chang and Grabel 2004)

Further, on this, empirical evidence shows that a significant correlation exists between the volatility of terms of trade and patterns of specialization in primary products. This results in the volatility of exchange rates, weakened foreign direct investments and lower GDP growth at the long-term. (Blattman, Hwang and Williamson 2007; Aiyar et al. 2013; Eichengreen 2008)

Specialization in open economies has been predicted to "accompany any reduction in the impediments to trade". The deterioration of terms of trade has however been a major inhibitory factor to the development of developing countries. This has restricted the output level in developing countries as they rely heavily on the importation of manufactured goods rather than exports (Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik 2007)

The terms of trade have thus been pushed against developing countries and particularly sub-Saharan Africa and is a major contributory factor to the shrink in growth i.e. the decrease in total output which has also caused a fall in living standards (real wages) of a vast majority of the population (especially the working classes). That is why over 400 million are living in abject poverty and hunger.[18]

Between 1980 to 1995 investigated data from the IMF database of 14 sub-Saharan African countries shows a heavy reliance on raw materials export to the tune of 80% and growth rate averaged 2.8% p.a., deviation of 5.0% indicating large negative productivity variations. Public investments recorded a continuous downward trend at 0.23% of GDP and exchange rates depreciated by 4.7% p.a. This concludes that the real exchange rate and price volatility attached to trade in primary products negatively affect economic growth. (Bleaney and Greenaway 2001)

The effect of comparative advantage on developing countries has indicated that any gain to

[17] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

[18] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

one group will mean a huge loss to the other. Its proponents admit that in its early operationalization periods, it will produce asymmetries between countries with gains that will allow one country to dominate another, but this -it argues- will eventually lead to a balance in trade provided there is no interference with the market; "however, no such tendencies are discernible in real life" (Felipe and Vernengo 2002:53), since "history has shown itself to be cruel in this respect" (Cohen cited in Felipe and Vernengo 2002:53)

Some literature has also regarded the model as a tool of colonization, which ensured that developing countries could not create an advantage in manufactured products as countries of the west (Felipe and Vernango 2002: 58). Empirical studies show a correlation between the poverty and de-industrialization of the developing countries and the development and industrialization of advanced countries (Felipe and Vernango 2002:60). Disconcertingly, while preaching free trade to developing countries, advanced countries adopted free trade only when they had advanced and dominated the world market, i.e. at the point when the economic advantage was in their favour (Shaikh 2007:61).[19]

Present-day advanced countries employed protectionism (domestic market protection), export promotion and several policies that allowed the state to intervene to protect infant industries. Armed with the knowledge that free trade on comparative advantage can only permit the self-adjustments of the balance of payment under restrictive conditions as protectionism and state interventions (Shaikh 2007). They however ensured through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that they introduced policies and structural adjustment that has culminated in the underdevelopment of developing countries by fostering free trade through the theory of comparative advantage that saw developing countries pay back millions in USD to advanced countries as terms of free trade (Shaikh 2007; Chang 2005).

In the early nineteenth century, Britain through free trade and specialization policies underdeveloped India. They were forced to trade in primary products for which they lacked advantage. "But the tragedy did not stop here" (Cohen in Felipe and Vernengo, 2002:59). England chose to import the same goods -for which India specialized -from the United States; this condemned India to an economy with too much of its primary products unsold and too much import of manufactured goods (Felipe and Vernengo, 2002:59). Free trade was a policy undertaken in

[19] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

search of markets and not mutual benefits with developing countries (Cohen in Felipe and Vernengo, 2002; Rodrik, 2006a)

The division of labour by specialization through free trade has not developed Africa. Almost in a statement that looked like an acceptance of the failure of free trade, Krugman (1987) subtly admitted that:

> free trade is not passe, but it is an idea that has irretrievably lost its innocence. Its status has shifted from optimum to reasonable rule of thumb (…) it can never again be asserted as the policy that economic theory tells us is always right. (Krugman 1987:131)

Just like specialization without more, opening the markets of developing countries trading in single primary products puts the countries at the bottom of the value chain since international trade is not an equalizer (Felipe and Vernengo 2002; Shaikh 2007). This is because only manufacturing-oriented diversified economies grow rapidly and dominate.[20]

Evaluating some criticism

The last section introduces arguments that provide a provisional indication of why the doctrine of comparative advantage has been unsuccessful in predicting the development of developing countries. To test the veracity of this argument, I will now examine counter arguments raised against it.

In assessing the accuracy of Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik (2007), Grancay, Grancay, and Dudas (2015) applied the conclusions to situations of economic crisis and rising prices of primary commodities relying on data set of 2004-2013. They find that increasing prices of primary products within the period under review have altered the relationship between diversification and economic growth. This is, however, missing empirical counter arguments on the effect of the prices on specialization and economic growth.

Santos-Paulino (2010) also argues against the privileging of specialization above diversification by indicating that fundamentals, i.e., "real income and human capital endowment, determine the productivity of exports on growth inter alia" (2010). Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik (2007), however, have insisted that even if fundamentals are of importance, unlike specialization or diversification, fundamentals do not exclusively decide what countries produce for trade and export.

[20] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

Lin and Chang (2009) argued that Chang's criticism fails to understand that comparative advantage remains the only basis for achieving competitiveness in international trade and the lack in human capital, infrastructure and institutions in poor countries are the reasons why they are poor. They further insist that Chang misses the point of the Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson (HOS) addition to the theory of comparative advantage in terms of factor endowments as the basis for measuring comparative advantage. Lin and Chang (2009) however respond by insisting that specialization and trade liberalization have produced so many losers and as such comparative advantage cannot empirically be the basis for establishing competitive advantage but if that was the case, developing countries would have been developed by now. They further explained that the addition of the HOS model introduces more contradictions to the Ricardian model because it fails to understand the importance of differential technological capabilities and the fact that developing countries did not just choose to specialize in primary products as opposed to manufactured products.

Another counter-argument to Chang was undertaken by Arne Rückert (2008) on Chang's view on protectionism and export policies undertaken by advanced countries and says there is a possibility that it was mere coincidence and that the growth might have been a function of some other measures other than protectionism and export promotion likewise for the underdevelopment in developing countries. Lastly, he criticised Chang for failing to consider the role of colonialism. As sound as this argument may seem, Chang did not set out to consider the ills of colonialism but the neoliberal policies of free trade. Again, the failure to provide contrasting evidence to oppose the data set as presented by Chang from developing countries whittles down the criticism and makes it speculative at best.

Krugman (2002) argues that the assumptions underlying the Ricardian model are reasonable but may not be obvious to those who lack capacity to understand it and so the critiques come from the premise of a lack of understanding of the concept of comparative advantage. On the argument about balance of payment deficits caused by the doctrine, he suggests that there is a possibility that countries use deficit as a strategy for attracting foreign investment. This, however, does not provide a convincing counter to the arguments (Krugman 2002).

Another critique insists that if the argument about free trade and developing countries were to be true, then this would have applied to advanced countries producing and exporting both primary products (wheat, beef, wool, cotton and sugar) and manufactured products (Cuddington,

Ludema and Jayasuriya 2002:7 citing Meier and Baldwin). They, however, miss the point that the balance of payment in advanced countries is already in their favour and the presence of manufactured goods in their export baskets also puts them at an advantage as espoused by Hausman, Hwang and Rodrik (2007).[21]

Conclusion

It has been stated that the major arguments on why the doctrine has been unsuccessful in predicting the development of developing countries is that through it, developing countries were made to specialize in primary products rather than diversification in manufacturing with trade liberalization as the focus on trade rather than export promotion. The formula for the doctrine did not take into consideration the volatility of the prices of primary goods, the need to protect infant industries and other factors discussed above. However, developing countries need to renegotiate their role in the global division of labour which might be met with some consequences from the world powers benefiting from their de-industrialization. There are no specific blueprints for this deviation or re-negotiation but taking the current situation into consideration requires action to alleviate the poverty and hunger of the population in developing countries.

[21] As discussed by Howard Nicholas in his lectures "Global Economy" at the International Institute for Social Studies, February and March 2020.

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The NATO-Russia Conflict in Relation to the Crimean Crisis

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Introduction

Starting 2013, the events that unfolded in Ukraine stirred the liberal international order and challenged its precarious stability. This occurred in a context of a political crisis which culminated with a change of the president of the Eastern European country. However, the situation escalated the following year after the referendum when the Russian government mobilised troops to the Crimean border region. This event spurred a series of criticisms from the international community, the United States of America (USA) being one of the most vocal, claiming that Russia acted in an interventionist manner in the neighbouring country (Bock et al. 2015). Drawing from the international response, this essay strives to investigate the extent to which the conflict between Russia and NATO can be explained in relation to the Crimean crisis. The case study at stake will analyse the mobilisation of Russian troops in the Crimea region and the possible theoretical explanations behind the subsequent conflict between Russia and the NATO. The conflict between the two was highlighted by a series of rejections towards the Soviet power from the USA and several countries in Europe. In this context, a clear polarization took place and generating NATO ties with countries like Ukraine would have then become a direct threat from the international community to Russia's interests in the region.

Based on the previous research question, this piece of work will begin with an historical review of what happened in the Crimea region, subsequently focusing on the current conflict. Thereafter, the essay will analyse the conflict based on a neorealist theoretical framework which will then be compared to and contrasted with an alternative theory of neoliberal institutionalism. Finally, it will conclude that the neorealist theory is more explanatory with regards to the tensions generated between NATO and Russia.

Historical Background

On examining the history of Ukraine, it is possible to establish that the eastern part of the country was once as nationalistic and Ukrainian-speaking as Western Ukraine is today. The dramatic transformation of the area was the result of an ethnic cleansing executed by Stalin in 1932. He designed a famine that killed approximately 10 million people, mostly located in Eastern Ukraine

(Marples 2007). Starting from 1933, the Soviets replaced the population with millions of deported Russians. In fact, Western Ukraine was added as part of Poland. This explains the origins of Ukraine as a divided country and the revolutions that have occurred in the last 15 years in Ukraine (Nitoiu 2016).

The first major revolution was the Orange Revolution which consisted of a series of protests and political events that took place in Ukraine from late November 2004 to January 2005, immediately after the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections. These elections were claimed to be marred by mass corruption, intimidation of voters and direct electoral fraud. Kiev, Ukraine's capital city, was the focal point of the movement's civil resistance campaign sparked by reports from various domestic and foreign electoral observers. The city was in fact the center of the widespread perception that the results of the second round of elections on 21 November 2004 between the candidates Viktor Yushchenko (pro-western) and Viktor Yanukovych were manipulated by the authorities in favour of the latter, supported by the Russian president Putin (Bock et al. 2015).

Protests across the country were successful when the results of the original election were overturned, and the Supreme Court of Ukraine confirmed the new results. Under intense scrutiny by national and international observers, the second round was declared "fair and free". The results showed a clear victory for Yushchenko, who was announced the official winner. The Orange Revolution ended with his presidential inauguration on 23 January 2005 in Kiev (Shelest 2015).

The second revolution that occurred in Ukraine was the Euromaidan Revolution. This was marked by a wave of demonstrations and civil unrest which began on the night of 21 November 2013 with protests in Maidan Nezalezhnosti, that is the Independence Square in Kiev. It happened after the Ukrainian government and President Yanukovych suspended preparations for the signing of the Association Agreement - a free trade agreement with the European Union in favour of strengthening closer economic relations with Russia (Shelest 2015). After several days of protests, an increasing number of university students joined the protests. However, the different sectors of the population subsequently joined to show discontent towards the management of the Party of Regions, the pro-Russian ruling party at the time, and the results of its socio-economic policy (Averre 2016). Between December 2013 and February 2014, the protests continued and provoked an escalation of violence at the hands of the government that forced a regime change.

The political turmoil culminated with the expulsion of President Yanukovich while the

Ukrainian population was virtually divided: 38.0% of Ukrainians supported an affiliation with Russia, while 37.8% preferred one with Europe (Shelest 2015).

Case study: the Crimean crisis

The annexation of the Ukrainian Crimean peninsula to Russia in 2014 is a consequence of the long history of Russian presence in Crimea and more directly of the Euromaidan protests which caused the pro-Russian government to be replaced by a pro-European one, in line with the principles of the Euromaidan Revolution. Russia intervened by moving regular troops into Crimea and blocking the port of Sevastopol and any movement of ships from Ukraine with its warships; with the aim to protect the ethnic Russian population of Crimea (Shelest 2015). Putin's statement essentially summarizes the Russian justification to invade Crimea: ''If you compress the spring all the way to its limit, it will snap back hard" (Putin 2014). In fact, covered under the nationalistic need to support the Russian population, Moscow's intention appeared to be aimed at stopping the admission of Eastern European states into the EU and especially into the NATO alliance. Moreover, Putin's military move was a necessity to stop NATO's force deployment in Crimea which would amount to a vital threat to Russia's national security (Bock et al. 2015).

Ukraine responded by mobilising its armed forces, although the main objective was to resolve the conflict through diplomatic channels since the Ukrainian military under no circumstances could compete with the Russian one. Thus, Russia counter acted by stating that its troops would not leave the Crimean region until the situation stabilised. The NATO Wales Summit Declaration (2014) claimed that Moscow's aggressive actions towards Ukraine challenged the vision of Europe as a peaceful and secure continent, compromising the security of the Euro-Atlantic region and stability across the globe. Thus, the international community, including the USA, the European Union, and 71 NATO member countries accused Russia of violating the international law and destabilizing Ukrainian sovereignty. The Western response appeared to be very sturdy, on the one side NATO guaranteed to improve its defence capabilities, conduct more regular live exercises and deploy its air, ground and naval forces in the Baltics, Poland and Romania (Averre 2016). On the other side, the US and the EU proved to support the latter measures by sanctioning the Putin regime. On the contrary, more authoritarian states (such as Syria, North Korea and Venezuela) supported Russia's actions and condemned the post-Euromaidan Ukrainian government to be illegal.

Theoretical explanations of the conflict

There are endless number of theoretical frameworks attempting to describe the conflict between Russia and NATO as a result of the crisis in Crimea in 2014 from several different perspectives. However, some theoretical frameworks appear to be more accurate than others to determine this ongoing struggle between Russia and the NATO in the liberal international system. Among those theoretical proposals, this essay will primarily refer to two theories: neorealism, specifically offensive neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism.

Neorealism is based on the premises that the modern international system is decentralized and anarchic. In this sense, there is no authority superior to the states that can monitor, judge, and process the behaviour of the state (Mearsheimer 2001). Anarchy is narrowly defined as "an ordering principle, which says that the system comprises independent states that have no central authority above them" (Mearsheimer 2001: 30). Due to this principle of order and the mistrust that occurs between the states, one state can only count on itself to ensure its survival, defined by neorealists as the principle of self-help. Each state will articulate its foreign policy first considering how to consolidate its territorial integrity and the autonomy of its internal political order or any other feature that constitutes its power (Mearsheimer 2006). Thus, the dynamics of the system compel states to think rationally in order to maximise their prospects for survival (Mearsheimer 2006). According to Mearsheimer (2019), an order is an organised group of international institutions that help govern the interactions among states and is managed by great powers. Orders are necessary to manage interstate relations in such a highly interdependent world. NATO, for instance, represents a security alliance formed because states are interconnected in the military realm.

However, if the state units in the international system share the same characteristics, the capacities within the system are not distributed equally. Power, defined in terms of material resources, is a changing element and tends to naturally concentrate on one or two poles forming different types of international orders. On the one hand, there are unipolar ideational or agnostic international orders where there is only one single great power and therefore there is no security competition. In the ideological order, the unipole assumes that its core values and its political system should be exported to other countries. On the other hand, realist bi- or multipolar international orders comprehend two or more great world powers engaging in security competition with each other (Mearsheimer 2019). If this last proposition is not accepted by all neorealist

thinkers, there is a consensus that the balance of powers cannot occur in a unipolar system because it would be in contradiction with its own premises. Therefore, it is safe to say that the balance of power is a dynamic mechanism and a direct consequence of the anarchic structure of the system (Mearsheimer, 2001).

The annexation of Crimea represents a turning point in the decline of the liberal international order that was established by the USA after the Cold War. In fact, under Bush's presidency, the thick bounded Western order that the USA had created to deal with the Soviet Union remained firmly intact, while the Soviet order quickly fell apart. Thus, the realist western order created by the USA during the Cold War was transformed into a liberal international order and the institutions that had made up the thin Cold War-era were incorporated in Bush's new world order, including NATO. However, the western liberal international order and its liberal principles which included new institutions, an open and inclusive international economy, maximised free trade and the promotion of liberal democracy around the world are considered an exceptional ideological order. They are connected to a unipolar moment led by the USA, which was deemed to fall due to the rise of different nationalisms (such as the Russian one) and the shift of the balance of powers politics (Mearsheimer 2019).

To better understand the conflict between Russia and the NATO, it is necessary to delve into the different branches of neorealism: defensive and offensive neorealism. The main difference between the two is in the states' attitude towards seeking power. For the former, any attempt to maximise power is a strategic error, which will be rebuked by the structure of the system (Waltz 1979). For the latter, on the contrary, states seek to maximise power as much as possible and, if the circumstances are right, they pursue hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2006). If the neorealists accept the premise that the maximisation of power is strategically feasible, it is because according to them, it represents the safest way to guarantee state survival.

In other words, the neorealists are opportunists; they defend and respect the mechanism of balancing powers when it satisfies the interests of their state; otherwise, a unilateral power-seeking policy meets state interests (Mearsheimer, 2001). In this case study, building on Mearsheimer's thinking, the doctrine of offensive neorealism will be applied. Analysing the case from the previously explained neorealist theory, it is possible to find conjunctures between the theoretical reasoning and the events that occurred in the Crimean region. This occurs when a state like Russia perceives NATO's western policy of expanding in eastern Europe as a direct obstacle to its

interests, the support for Ukrainian political resistance as hostile and the liberal value of democracy promotion in Russia as a threat (Kleinschmidt, 2019). Given this, there emerges a need for Russia to curb this Western pressure. Russian military actions in Ukraine can therefore be explained as part of a power balancing process in which the Soviet declining power resists the unipolarity of the liberal international order created by the USA and supported by most western countries. The brutal reaction triggered by the latter played out according to the balancing principles postulated by offensive realism (Mearsheimer, 2014).

Moreover, as the theory predisposes, not only Moscow acts by order of a power maximisation strategy, but it also demonstrates to be a rational actor seeking not to lose its regional hegemony and acting strategically in order to do that. This dominance functions according to the offensive realist logic. Russia's military annexation of Crimea shows how the state functioned as a strategic regional hegemon (Kleinschmidt, 2019). In times of high external pressure, Russia blocks competing great powers by using neighbouring states such as Ukraine as a military area and while making use of them as such, in the case of no substantial external military presence, Crimea is used as a neutral buffer state for its transport infrastructure and to avoid possible cut-offs from trade (Mearsheimer 2014). Likewise, this course of action finds parallels with the case of Georgia. The latter had also maintained agreements with the NATO that turned out in a civil crisis in the country where Russia had a strong role to play. Thus, from a neorealist point of view, Russia's strategy consisted of carrying out actions aimed at maximising power and, at the same time, denying possibilities of generating agreements between the countries under its sphere of influence and the NATO, distrusting the possibility of cooperation (Kleinschmidt 2019).

An alternative theory that attempts to explain the conflict would be the neoliberal institutionalist approach. This approach focuses primarily on "recent deductive theories based on the assumptions of rationality" (Keohane 1984: 65), which implies that actors can calculate the various costs and benefits of their actions. This theoretical approach stipulates that the international system is an anarchic system where states seek to cut transaction costs through three strategies: reduce information asymmetry between states, mitigate moral hazard problems and increase costs of irresponsible behaviour via economic or trade sanctions (Keohane 1984).

Unlike neorealism, states are considered here to be in a constant context of complex interdependence with other actors in the international regime. The basis of this theory is that states often have objectives compatible with those of others, so it is theoretically possible to cooperate

to reach an efficient result for every party. However, many times these actors fail to provide a satisfactory solution to their problems, since they are within a system of mixed-motive games (such as the prisoner's dilemma), characterised by "mutual dependence and the conflict between association and rivalry" (Keohane 1984: 67). For instance, the European Union is highly dependent on Russian gas. Many pipelines used in the region are owned and controlled by Russians. Neoliberal institutionalists would look at this context as a system of mutual dependence and mixed-motive games. Faced with this context, rational states seek to maximise their well-being through minimisation of transaction costs. According to Keohane (1984) this is sometimes achievable through cooperation. Thus, the role of institutions becomes essential in influencing the interaction of the actors, facilitating the path to reach a pareto efficient result, in other terms increased cooperation. Pareto efficiency regards that a nation's resources are distributed in the most economically efficient manner. However, the theory establishes that often resources cannot be reallocated in an equal way, meaning that one actor's choice to maximise its goals will make another worse off. In other terms, at most times, no change can lead to improved satisfaction for all actors (Keohane and Olmstead 2016).

Under this approach, both the NATO and Russia can be considered to have clear objectives. However, in the absence of any mechanism that allows for cooperation between these actors, a conflict has occurred between NATO and Russia. According to the theoretical approach, Russia on the one hand, calculated the costs involved in the military interventions in Crimea, so the current situation occurred after rational decisions taken by the actor regarding the way in which it intended to operate (Hellman and Wolf 1993). This means that Russia as a rational actor purposely decided to invade Crimea and counterbalanced the costs related to possible economic sanctions from the NATO, the EU and the USA against its hegemonic reinstatement of influence in the region.

On the other hand, the neoliberal institutionalist theory would explain NATO expansion in eastern Europe as a natural extension of the liberal principles of peace and democracy to countries that were formerly under the Soviet sphere of influence. However, this approach would still recognise that states like Ukraine or Georgia are prone to join NATO to maximise their own national interests, failing to reject the latter's neorealist principle (Hellmann and Wolf 1993). However, this approach proves to have certain limits, since maximising the status of one actor may be against the interests of the other, so reaching a pareto efficient result is not possible in the case of conflicting interests. In the case at stake, NATO is not willing to guarantee a better power

position to Russia in relation to Ukraine's sovereignty, and vice versa.

Another weakness of this approach is the fact that it considers that all the decisions taken by the actors are rational, so that the emotional part and the existence of errors in decision-making would be left out. Neoliberal institutionalists would also conclude that NATO failed as an international institution to cooperate and integrate Russia in the western liberal order which subsequently caused the Ukrainian crisis, failing to directly address the reasons behind Russia's military actions. Therefore, the neorealist approach provides a more comprehensive theoretical explanation to the conflict between Russia and NATO in relation to the Crimean crisis. In fact, offensive neorealism manages to better explain the causal mechanisms that produced the crisis between Russia and NATO from both sides (Kleinschmidt 2019).

Conclusion

In this essay, the research question investigates the causes underlying the conflict between Russia and NATO in relation to what occurred in Ukraine. It considers the historical background mentioned above and the possibility of explaining the origin of such tension from the conflict of interest of both actors over the Crimean territory. With this objective in mind, neorealist theory based on power-balancing successfully provides a convincing theoretical framework to understand the conflict.

The explanation of the conflict from a neorealist perspective, drawing on Mearsheimer's ideas (2001, 2006, 2019) presents an anarchic international system where the possibility of being certain of the intentions of other actors is not a given. Thus, this environment of mistrust often leads to preventative interventions to maximise actors' survival (principle of self-help). To be more precise, from an offensive neorealist approach, countries not only seek to maximise their power but also to pursue hegemony. In this way, the conflict presented is explained by the desire of the parties to maximise their power, as a given territory becomes an object of domination and influence for both, which translates into a direct threat to the interests of Russia.

For its part, neoliberal institutionalism, from the premises of maximisation of states' self-interest and the rationality of actors, proposes that even if Russia and NATO did not have common objectives, they could potentially adjust their policies to achieve cooperation in search of a pareto efficient solution for both. Given these assumptions and taking into account the historical background of the case-study, it is difficult to explain the causes of the conflict through this theory

precisely because in terms of the objectives and interests pursued by the actors, the conflict originates from not being able to satisfy them efficiently.

In conclusion, understanding the conflict of interests between the three actors NATO, Ukraine and Russia, where the security of the latter is threatened by NATO's enlargement in eastern Europe, creates a course of action in the liberal international order where the declining power (Russia) takes a preventive violent offensive action, in order to maintain its power and influence in the ex-Soviet region without leaving the possibility for dialogue and cooperation between the actors.

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The Impact of the Trade War Between the US and China on the Global Trading System

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Introduction

Context

The trade war between United States (US) and China has been started since early 2018 (Qiu et al. 2019: 148). The trade war first started by US act by imposing additional tariffs on many imported goods from China (an additional 25% tariff). China responded to the US act by imposing additional tariffs on some goods imported from the US. This war continues by several tariffs war escalation from 2018 till the end of 2019 and still has no sign of ending. The trade war between US and China has a significant impact on the economy of these two states. However, because US and China are the two largest economies in the world, this trade war also has a decisive impact on the rest of the world. Knowledge on how the mechanism and effect of trade policy on the global trading system, and the empirical data from around the worlds, mainly from Europe and Asia are being used in this essay to find a suitable explanation on the damage of trade war between US and China to the global trading system.

Theoretical positions

The Ricardian theory, based on work of David Ricardo in 1817, believes that the world will take benefit from free trade, under the assumption of an efficient market and comparative advantages (Qiu et al. 2019: 155). Based on this theory, each state in the world should concentrate their economy on the production of the goods that they have a comparative advantage. International trade would emerge, and all countries will take advantage of the trade. The global wealth will be maximized when free trade emerges and no barrier at all on international trade. Heckscher and Ohlin (HO) model (1993), shows that countries concentrate their export on the goods that produce by their abundant resource and cheap factors, and conversely import the products that use the scarce resource on their production. The Ricardian theory and the Heckscher-Ohlin model are two main arguments supporting free trade and that every country would produce, and trade different product based on their comparative advantages (Qiu et al. 2019: 155).

However, in recent decades of international trade, we saw a different pattern on global trade. Many countries trade on similar products and in the same industry, for instance, on the

automobile, handphones, electronics and technology product, agriculture. The explanation about why intra trading occurs in term of international trade could not explain by the Ricardian and the Heckscher-Ohlin. Krugman (1996) states that previous international trade theories entirely ignore the return of scale effect on international trade (Qiu Et al. 2019: 155). In his previous works (Krugman 1987: 143), Krugman also pointed about the imperfect competition on international trade and conclude that imperfect competition and increasing return on a scale are primary factors to international trade. Consequently, Krugman believes that government intervention could be the principle factor to improve the output of international trade. Samuelson (2004) also believes that the recent market in international trade is characterized by imperfect competition. The return of scale leads to a tendency of government intervention to protect their infant industry and help their firms to increase their economies of scale to be competitive with foreign firms. Consequently, trade policy among the countries will be a crucial factor on the direction of the global trading system and has a significant impact to international trade, especially trade policy of the main economic power country in the world (The US and China in the recent years).

Approaches and lines of argument

This essay aims to examine the impact of the trade war between the US and China on the global trading system. First, it gives a summary of the global trading system before the trade war. Second, the essay shows what happens in trade wars, especially in the US and China. Next, it investigates the empirical evidence around the world on this issue at trade war era. It then explains the impact of the trade war on the global trading system. Finally, the last section concludes this essay.

The Global Trading System Pre-Trade War

The global trading system after world war II was mainly affected by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade or GATT (1948), which then transform into a world trade organization (WTO) in 1995. WTO is the only global institution recognized by most countries in the world to oversee the rules of global trade. WTO set the rule of trading system that theoretically should follow by membership countries in international trade. WTO set principle on international trade, like reciprocity, non-discrimination, or Most Favour Nation (MFN) principle, transparency, special and differential treatment for developing countries, and enforcement and dispute settlement procedures. WTO also push the global trading system to be more open and become free trade, by

push the member to lowering trade barriers gradually through negotiation by bilateral and multilateral agreement (WTO.org). The world saw lower barriers to international trade, especially reduction on tariffs in the last decades.

WTO believes that global welfare would get advantages from free trade. International Monetary Fund data shows that the ratio of global import to global GDP has increased by 10.1 per cent from 1997 to 2016. The data also calculated that international trade increases the world welfare by 2.6-7 per cent of global GDP at that period. The United Nation report (UNCTAD 2019) shows that world trade in goods has increased significantly in the period of 2005 (about 10 trillion US dollar) to 2017 (about 17.5 trillion US dollar).

The US and China Trade war

The US and China trade war begin in early 2018 when the US under Trump imposing global tariffs on imported steel, aluminium, solar panel and washing machines. The initial policy did not intend to focus primarily on China, but to protect US domestic product and to stimulate US Industry (Egger and Zhu 2019: 6). However, because China is the largest trading partner in 2018 to US, the focus of the policy soon turned to China. The US policy under Trump administration saw China as the biggest threat to their industry.

Imports and exports of goods between The US and China 2017

	Value of Imports/Exports	**% of the country's total I/E**
China		
Import from the US	153.9 billion US Dollar	8.4%
Exports to the US	429.8 billion US dollar	19.0%
The US		
Import from China	505.5 billion US dollar	21.6%
Export to China	129.9 billion US dollar	8.4%

Since many years and become more after China joins WTO, US has alleged that China uses unfair policy to get advantages on international trade (Huang et al. 2018: 6). The position of China as the most significant partner for trade also rule as the main factor. According to UN. Comtrade (2018), in 2017, US has 363 billion US dollar trade deficit to China. In 2018, accounted for 42 per cent of the total US deficit in 2017. In 2018, the trade deficit with China became worst to US. The US and China trade accounted for 737 billion US dollar (13 per cent of US trade). However, US has 379 billion US dollar deficit in term of trade with China, accounted for nearly 60 per cent of US deficit.

The deficit of US with China increases if we only accounted for good, 419 billion US dollar in 2018. The combination of accusation unfair trade policy and China as the largest trading partner with deficit outcome to US, consequently, make Trump administration to impose tariffs policy to China (Huang et al. 2018: 8).

The trade war first started by US act by imposing additional tariffs on many imported goods from China (an additional 25% tariff) in March 2018. China responded to the US act by imposing additional tariffs on some goods imported from the US in April 2018. This war continues by several tariffs war escalation from 2018 till the end of 2019 (May 2018, July 2018, August 2018, September 2018, December 2018, May 2019) and still has no sign of ending.

Global Trade System on Trade War Era

Position of US and China to world economy

The impact of the trade war between US and China are significant to the world economy due to US and China position in the global economy. The US and China are the two largest economic countries in the world in the last decades. Data from the World Bank shows that from 2015 to 2018, the nominal GDP of the two countries has accounted for 38% - 40% of the global GDP (World Bank 2019). In term of world trade, US and China also hold the position as the world's largest trader.

The US and China Nominal GDP (billion US Dollar) /% Global GDP

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
The US	18.224/24.28%	18.715/24.57%	19.519/24.08%	20.580/24.25%	21.427
China	11.063/14.73%	11.194/14.69%	12.250/15.11%	13.608/16.03%	14.200

*World Bank data

The world's Top Trading Countries (2018)

Countries	% of global imports	% of global exports
US	13.92	8.98
China	11.37	13.45
Germany	6.69	8.43

*UN Comtrade

The composition of US and China leading trading partner also could be significant if we want to see the impact of the trade war on the global trading system.

Top Trading partner to US (2017)

Export (% to total export)

Mexico	Canada	China	Germany	UK	France	Netherland	HK	Belgium-Luxembourg	Sing
15	12	11	4.9	3.7	3.0	2.8	2.4	2.3	1.9

*OEC world

Import (% to total import)

China	Mexico	Canada	Japan	Germany	South Korea	UK	Italy	Vietnam	India
22	14	13	5.8	5.2	3.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.0

*OEC world

China Trading Partners (2017)

Export (% to total export)

US	HK	Japan	Germany	South Korea	Vietnam	India	UK	Mexico	Canada
20	11	6.5	4.5	4.1	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.2	2.1

*OEC world

Import (% to total import)

South Korea	Japan	US	Germany	Australia	Singapore	Brazil	Malaysia	Viet	Thai
9.7	8.8	8.7	6.2	5.5	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.6

*OEC world

Impact on US and China

The study by Guo et al. (Guo et al. 2018) shows that in the three different scenarios of US-China trade war, the US would have had a massive loss in social welfare in all scenario they proposed in the model. The first scenario is unilateral US tariff with trade balance. Second is the US with China will undergo retaliatory trade war with trade imbalance. The third scenario is that the US and China will have a retaliatory trade war with the balance in trade. China will have different impact depend on the policy scenario and result of the trade war.

International Monetary Fund report (IMF 2019) shows that although US export growth to China already weakens trend before the trade war. However, US export to China declines more after China imposed retaliatory tariffs. While US with Brazil is the biggest exporter to China on soybean, the export of US soybean has been dropped since China impose a tariff to US soybeans. The price of trade war consequently pays by US consumer. The study by Cavallo et al (2019),

shows that almost all of increase on tariffs impose by US to China goods has been paid by US importer, and in the end will likely be borne to US consumer. The wall street journal (WSJ, 2018) also has a similar conclusion on their study in 2018 based on the fact that Chinese Exporters did not lower their price even after tariffs imposed by US. They estimated that the additional cost that must be paid by US consumer is 1.4 billion US dollar every month.

IMF report (IMF 2019) also shows trade diversion as the effect of the trade war. The global import of US did not change dramatically, the overall export relatively unchanged. However, there are import shifting from China to other countries like Mexico. After second imposed tariffs in August 2018, there is a decrease of around 850 million US dollar on China goods. On the other hand, there is an increase in a similar amount of goods from Mexico. However, the difference in price will likely be paid by US consumer. For the producer, the impact of the trade war to US firms which involved in trade with China also can portray a big picture. Huang et al. (2018) show that the financial market performance of the US firms that involved in China trade tend to be weaker than other after the impose tariffs of US.

US's Top Trading Partners (2019)

Export (% to total export)

Canada	Mexico	China	Japan	UK	Germany	South Korea	Netherland	Brazil	France
17.8	15.6	6.5	4.5	4.2	3.7	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.3

*US Census Bureau

Import (% to total import)

China	Mexico	Canada	Japan	Germany	South Korea	Vietnam	UK	Ireland	India
18.1	14.3	12.8	5.7	5.1	3.2	3.1	2.5	2.5	2.3

*US Census Bureau

On the other hand, China market is less dependent on US product. China import from US only accounted for 8.7% to total import, compare to US with 22% (OEC World 2017). That gives China more power to impose tariffs to US goods with less damage to China consumer (Little House Capital 2019).

China's Top Trading Partners (2019)

Export (% to total export)

US	HK	Japan	South Korea	Vietnam	Germany	India	Netherland	UK	Taiwan
16.8	11.2	5.7	4.4	3.9	3.2	3	3	2.5	2.2

*OEC world

Impact to the rest of the world

Monetary policy report in July 2019 (IMF 2019), calculates that the impact of a trade war of US and China will be shrinking the global gross domestic product by 0.6 per cent. However, some countries still have a positive impact because of the shifting of US import to the country that did not impose by trade tariffs. The trade war has a direct effect on Mexico as one of the largest trading partners of US. In 2018 after other imposed tariffs to China, export to China rise by 850 million US dollar. According to International Trade Centre data (International Trade Centre 2019), between November 2017-April 2018 to November 2018-April 2019, Mexico export to US has increased as much as 5.6 billion US dollar. Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and Canada also saw their export rise after the trade war.

Top Gain Exporter to US from Trade War (increase amount of export in billion US Dollar)

Mexico	Taiwan	South Korea	Japan	Canada
5.6	3.3	2.3	1.9	1.2

*International Trade Centre

Top Gain Exporter to China from Trade War (increase amount of export in billion US dollar)

Australia	Switzerland	Brazil	Hong Kong	Canada
7.1	6.6	4.9	2.3	2.2

*International Trade Centre

In Asia, Vietnam is one of the biggest winners due to the US-China Trade war. Research by Nomura bank in 2019 (Sea View 2019) shows that US trade shifting from China to Vietnam toward trade war in the first quarter of 2019 accounted with 7.9 per cent of Vietnam's GDP. Interesting data that Vietnam import from China increased dramatically by about 16.6% compared to 2018. China's export to Vietnam increased from 2.9 (%) of total export in 2017 to 3.9 of total export in 2019. This data supports the opinion of the Wall Street Journal Report on June 2019 that billion dollars of Chinese goods exported to Vietnam, to re-export again to US, with the channel known

as transhipment. The China good relabelled as made in Vietnam to dodge the trade war tariffs.

Research by Shareef and Sajeev (Shareef and Sajeev 2019: 5) shows that the Philippines has again increase by 3.2% of their export from the semiconductor and electronic export. South Korea also has benefited from its increase export to US and gain 0.8% of its GDP. Another country who had gain form trade war is Malaysia accounted as 1.5% growth in its GDP. The Vietnam, Philippines, and Malaysia gain also predicted by the researcher. Pangestu (2019: 16-17) argue that Vietnam and Philippines will be greatest replacement potential of export to US due to their export similarity with China export to US. Vietnam and Malaysia also gain benefit because of trade reallocation through transhipment. Moreover, Southeast Asia could gain from trade wars through investment reallocation (Bloomberg 2019). Several producers like Harley Davidson, Panasonic, Steven Madden, Kayamatics, Delta Electronic and Merry Electronic shift their production from China to Southeast Asia countries (Thailand, Malaysia, and Cambodia).

The trade war between US-China is also feared to escalates protectionist action. The impact of market fear on protectionisms already take effect on Asian and European market (Calfruny 2018: 16). Global trade data shows that G20 goods trade continued a downward trend since 2018 (OECD 2019).

Conclusion

The trade war between US and China has a global impact on international trade. G20 export and import continue the downward trend since 2018. The global import of US in the flat trend and they begin to shift their import and US firm production to another country than China.

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Ethnographic Insert 3: A Distanced Dance Class

By Angela Sabogal Camargo, SPD, Colombia

I felt excited about having an online dance lesson. I've had some physical lessons back in Colombia but never a digital one. The awkwardness and embarrassment of being alone at my apartment moving my body in front of a screen were there too ("Will I look ridiculous? I know how to move a bit, but I am not a professional dancer").

I decided to have the class in my living room because it is the biggest open area in the apartment. Fifteen minutes before the class, I started preparing the set: clearing-up the area by moving out one pouf, connecting my laptop to the TV for having the bigger image of the class, and filling a bottle of water. I dressed myself up with a sports t-shirt and a workout short pants, though I was barefoot. I doubted highly if I should have to wear the shoes or not. I was comfortable with being barefoot, and it felt weird for me to put on the shoes since I've been barefoot the whole day. Anyway, I was at home, wasn't I? If I were at a dance academy, I would have never doubt wearing the sneakers; but I was not. ("How do we differentiate the private and the public spaces and the activities that belong to each space?").

It was 7.00 p.m. in AMS and 12.00 p.m. in COL when the lesson started. The left side of the screen showed José, a Colombian dancer wearing a basketball jersey, the short jeans pants, the sneakers, and a rapper hat ("I should have used the shoes", I thought). He was standing in a white backyard, probably the laundry area of his house. The right side of the TV showed me in the middle of my living room. On this occasion, we were only two of us in the online class because it was a private class. This feeling made me feel even more embarrassed.

> "¡Buenos días, mi Sabo! ¿Cómo estamos el día de hoy? Hoy arrancamos con champeta. Vamos a hacer calentamiento y luego coreografía. Los pasos que usemos para calentar los vamos a usar en la coreografía también así que no te preocupes"
>
> "Good morning, my Sabo (a friendly nickname derived from my surname Sabogal)! How are you today? This time, we are starting with champeta [afro-Caribbean rhythm]. We will do a warm-up and then a choreography. The moves we are using in the warm-up, we will use in the choreography as well, so don't worry"

Some reggaeton music started to emerge from my TV but it was played by Jose, the quality of the sound was not good, and it was too loud considering the regular standards of my apartment. Nevertheless, I kept the sound level like that to better feel the vibes of the music. (Technology helps us to connect with others but it is still far from real: the online connection allowed me to

hear what Jose was trying to play but my offline reality was different from him. Some of the thoughts came to my mind: “Can the neighbours hear this too? Will they piss off with the music? Will they think that I am a noisy Latina in a Dutch neighbourhood?”). Even though I was alone in my place, still I was very conscious about the others around.

Jose started with movements and I started imitating him. The warm-up part went slowly, the repetitive movements emphasizing each part of the body: rotation of the head at first, then the shoulders, the arms, the bust, the hips, ending with the legs. Easy movements helped me to feel well, my shyness as well as the rigidity of my body started to go away.

Once the steps became more dynamic involving mobilities through space or small jumps, I held myself back and performed the movements with half energy. I could only think of the old grumpy man who lives below me, who some months ago had sent me a letter complaining about the heavy blows coming from my floor. Moreover, from time to time I was crashing with the couch on the right side and with the flower’s table on the left; I haven’t realized beforehand that the space was that much small, or at least too small for dancing.

We continued with the choreography after the warm-up. He had chosen a classic champeta song: “Paola”. He put off the background music and started to show me the first eight movements. “Uno, pierna derecha al frente; dos, pierna izquierda al lado; tres, mueve la cadera; cuatro…” (One, right leg in front; two, left leg to the side; three, move your hip; four...). He did each movement separately and I imitated him. After repeated the sequence for four times he said: “Metámosle música” (let’s put some music on).

He played the music and started to count as giving me the sign to start moving: “five, six, seven, eight”. But when he started, I could not follow him at all. Choreographies involved the synchronization of physical movements with the melody of the music, performing each movement at a very specific moment. There, I started to realize that the sound of his voice and the background music were reaching The Hague in delay, one second before the images of his movements; it was a short delay but noticeable enough. Considering the delay, my brain got confused whether following what my ears were listening to or to what my eyes were watching at. The smooth and joyful flow that I managed to achieve with the warm-up had changed. I felt frustrated, clumsy and I was no longer enjoying with it. (“Would my performance be different in an offline lesson? Was it the internet connection, or was it the level of the choreography that Jose had chosen for me that day?”)

I asked him to pause the class and I tried to connect the internet network cable to my laptop to see if the connection could improve (digital spaces are very physical sometimes). The cable helped with the delay; it has also improved my coordination and I started to feel confident again. We continued practicing the next eight movements with the same strategy: first without music and then with the music on. Then we merge the first eight movements with the second eight ones. We repeated several times. With this logic, we completed the rest of the choreography, 40 tenses in total. When we finished, it was already one hour since we've started. The class was over.

Mobilizing the Child's Right to Nature: A Case Study of the Children and Nature Network

By Brian Degross, SJP, USA

> In our bones we need the natural curves of hills, the scent of chaparral, the whisper of pines, the possibility of wildness. We require these patches of nature for our mental health and our spiritual resilience. Future generations, regardless of whatever recreation or sport is in vogue, will need nature all the more. (Louv 2005: 256)

Introduction

Experience has taught me that tattoo artists are akin to therapists. For all the time and money spent lying on a table (not to mention the intimacy of baring body parts as someone constantly wipes away blood and ink smears caused by their efforts to needlepoint images into your skin), you have to build trust. Inevitably, a peculiar sort or relationship forms over months, or even years, when you return to the same artist for various pieces as I have. I turned 23 years old in 2006, the same age as my mother when she birthed me. I chose to collaborate with a local tattoo artist in Oakland, California (well-known for her realistic nature-inspired artwork) on a dedication piece. In other words, I wanted a "Mom" tattoo. Little did I know, but my mom tattoo (mangoes and mango blossoms) would send me on a nature-inspired, child-centered journey. Marie, my tattoo artist-cum-therapist, was then raising two young children with her partner. Upon learning of my interest in child development (this being prior to my career as an early childhood educator), she gifted me her personal copy of a book that would help ground me in the years to come: Richard Louv's (2005) *Last Child in the Woods*. Just as Louv's book spurred my own journey regarding children and nature, Louv (as co-founder) also spurred a movement and launched a network: the "Children and Nature Network" (C&NN). Although the C&NN does not explicitly frame its claims in a child rights-based approach, I will argue that the child's right to nature is an implicit foundation for their social movement. Secondly, I will discuss how the C&NN mobilizes members and communities around its "strategic agenda." Finally, I will consider the implications of the C&NN's activism on future generations' right to nature and the need to embrace human-nature solidarity.

Right to Nature?

> To take nature and natural play away from children may be tantamount to withholding oxygen. (Louv 2005: 108)

Figure 1 (C&NN, 2020b)

Louv's (2005) subtitle, "Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder," serves as a springboard into conceptualizing a child's right to nature. Louv (2005: 99) argues that, based on studies with children diagnosed with attentional difficulties (i.e. ADHD), the "concept—or hypothesis—of nature-deficit disorder is appropriate and useful as a layperson's description of one factor that may aggravate attentional difficulties for many children." Louv (2005: 107-108) reasons if "nature therapy" mitigates the symptoms of ADHD—potentially eliminating the need for medications—the opposite may be true; "ADHD may be a set of symptoms aggravated by lack of exposure to nature." Ultimately, more time with nature, less screen time, plus more engaging play and educational opportunities likely equates to reduced rates of childhood attention deficits, better health and wellbeing, and an increased "joy in life" (Louv 2005: 107; Fig. 1).

I turn to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as the most authoritative framework on children's rights, despite the United States' refusal to ratify, because numerous

articles, in addition to the (Article 3) "best interests of the child" general principle, can be interpreted as underpinning a child's right to nature (UN 1989). CRC Article 27(1) asserts the duty of states to "recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" (UN 1989). A decent standard of living can be interpreted to include a healthy natural environment with access to safe air, water, and land. In Turner's (2014: 121) "Draft Global Environmental Right," the preamble begins by asserting that parties to the treaty shall recognize "the integral and interdependent nature of the Earth, our home." While the majority of Turner's (2014) draft articles concern state and corporate obligations to avoid environmental degradation, the preamble situates our human right to an environment free from pollution—a clean home.

Within the right to education, CRC Article 29.1(e) states that education shall include, "[t]he development of respect for the natural environment" (UN 1989). While Louv (2005: 222) does not invoke the CRC in his book, he does assert "[a]n environment-based education movement—at all levels of education—will help students realize that school isn't supposed to be a polite form of incarceration, but a portal to the wider world." Nature education and nature play are foundational goals of the C&NN (C&NN 2020a). Louv (2005: 255) also acknowledges the work of the *International Association for the Child's Right to Play* and the understanding that children primarily interact with nature through play, so long as they have access to the natural world. The child's right to play is found in CRC Article 31:

> "1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts
>
> 2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity" (UN 1989).

C&NN's (2020a) vision statement, "a world in which all children play, learn and grow with nature in their everyday lives" and the mission to "increase equitable access to nature so that children—and natural places—can thrive" speaks directly to each of the aforementioned articles. Within these

CRC rights, the significance of nature is visible, and the child's right to nature is intertwined. Children do have a right to nature, and the C&NN has mobilized at multiple levels to advocate for that right.

C&NN Actors and Actions

On Earth Day 2011, along with colleagues from my Early Childhood Education MA program, I attended a children and nature forum in San Francisco's Presidio National Park. Dr. Nooshin Razani—who was then a Pediatrics Research Fellow at University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Children's Hospital—presented her research on children in nature and the burgeoning practice of medical prescriptions for time outdoors. This was similar to what Louv (2005) described as "nature therapy." While Dr. Razani and the UCSF program still exists (and has even expanded to include a Center for Nature and Health at its Oakland campus), they are not directly affiliated with the C&NN (UCSF 2020). However, the day of the forum, representatives from C&NN were there to answer questions, encourage membership, and hand out flyers. I was thrilled to witness the spirit of *Last Child in the Woods* mobilized into action, years after my first encounter. Jump ahead to present day and the C&NN website is a fantastic hub for resources, organizing, outreach, and more (C&NN 2020a). It is a far cry from a few members passing out glossy postcards to a crowd of under fifty people. "Advocacy networks," as Acosta (2012: 159) explains, "represent a tangible form of complex relations in our information society outside formal institutions, including governments and states" and "characterize a fluid kind of association of various groups of what has been termed 'global civil society.' " We were a hodge-podge of attendees, but a grassroots network by nature starts small and local, and in the case of C&NN with likeminded individuals passionate about the child's right to nature.

C&NN's current mission statement explains the network's overall purpose and advocacy strategy: "We are leading a global movement to increase equitable access to nature so that children– and natural places–can thrive. We do this by investing in leadership and communities through sharing evidence-based resources, scaling innovative solutions and driving policy change" (C&NN 2020a). Although the network's website includes an interactive world map which identifies global memberships, the majority of partners and community initiatives are based in North America—primarily the United States and a few in Canada. Further, with roots in urban California, the goals of C&NN are driven by a particular understanding of childhood. The fact is

"[a]dvocacy efforts are always situated," and "[c]ultural contexts and legacies" are important in understanding "the logic behind local policy-making and political practices" (Acosta 2012: 172). C&NN's mission to enact change on a global scale requires a certain amount of "indigenization" in order "to be resonant with cultural traditions" and for "narratives to be appealing" (Merry 2006: 41). The movement stems from an awareness that urbanization and city life are global phenomenon, and nature as well as access to nature are similarly (though not equally) impacted in that type of environment. By acknowledging a common denominator—cities as places where more and more people live and partnering with the *National League of Cities*—C&NN is able to coordinate "concerted action, discourse production and pressure on institutions" while "innovating political practice and spreading a renewed understanding of the interconnections between local and global issues" (Acosta 2012: 171). Through local, regional, and national initiatives, C&NN (2020a) strives to enact change through four main avenues: *personal action, community action, institutional change,* and *policy & education*.

Figure 2 (C&NN, 2020b)

C&NN's (2017) "2017-2020 Strategic Agenda" emphasizes six main goals which expand upon the network's mission statement:

1. “Reimagine cities as places of nature connection for more children where they live.”
2. “Invest in community leadership to increase nature access.”
3. “Improve educational outcomes through access to nature-based learning.”
4. “Enhance community health through increased time spent in nature.”
5. “Strengthen families through quality time together in nature.”
6. “Advance the evidence base to make the case for children and nature.”

The initiative I am most familiar with, from my time as a public school teacher in California, is the push for green schoolyards—which emphasizes the idea that “nature can improve academic outcomes” (as illustrated in Fig. 2) by bringing nature to school sites (C&NN 2020a). Green schoolyards range from designated garden areas to more integrated natural elements—such as tree stumps, mulch or sand, hay bales, boulders, plants and trees—on play yards. In my experience, school yards in the city tend to be what I have always referred to as “glorified parking lots,” basically lifeless blacktops with a few basketball hoops, hopscotch grids, and a small metal & plastic play structure. However, the school yards that have undergone a green renovation tend to have, in my estimation, more shade (i.e. trees), more opportunities for open-ended play (i.e. creativity and imagination), and truly more joy (i.e. less conflict). The idea is that with calmer, happier kids, academic learning becomes possible, and nature can (and should) be integrated into the classroom environment in addition to the classroom environment extending outdoors into nature.

According to C&NN’s “2019 Annual Report,” as of the year 2019, ten states had introduced legislation, while fourteen states had enacted legislation, “designed to get more kids and families outdoors” while many school districts throughout the United States had “launched efforts to provide students with regular outdoor experiences and to create nature-filled schoolyards for learning and play” (C&NN 2019). Further, over 800 leaders from 15 nations participated in C&NN’s 2019 biennial conference, “the largest gathering of children and nature leaders in the world,” in Oakland, California (C&NN 2019). Last year, more than 600 C&NN members (individuals and organizations) joined or renewed, and C&NN’s research “held nearly 1,000 studies, making it the world’s largest collection of scientific literature on the benefits of nature” (C&NN 2019). As Acosta (2012: 160) notes, compared to “legally bound institutions, advocacy networks can be said to rely more on individual choice of participation and activism,” a trait that

"permeates the whole network, regardless of its size or topic." In the case of C&NN, the issue at stake—the child's right to nature—is cross-cutting, not bound to any particular race, culture, religion, political party, etc. However, the fight for equitable access to nature acknowledges that certain communities face greater barriers, and "Outdoor Afro" (one of C&NN's affiliated community action programs) is just one example of how people are mobilizing to overcome such barriers (Outdoor Afro 2020).

Finally, last year marked the tenth anniversary of C&NN's "Natural Leaders Network," a youth "initiative that builds the power of young leaders, providing them with skills and resources to identify community-driven solutions to increase nature connection"—an initiative driven by C&NN's ongoing commitment to "invest in new generations of nature-smart leaders" (C&NN 2019). I find all of these statistics (mentioned in the annual report) extremely encouraging, and I consider the youth leadership program key not only to the success of C&NN in the years to come but, more importantly, to the broader implications of human-nature interactions and the role today's children and youth play in conserving nature for their own sake and that of future generations. This conservation extends beyond the physical, natural environment to understanding, appreciating, and respecting nature. I explore these values in more detail in the final section.

Human-Nature Solidarity & Future Generations

> Through nature, the species is introduced to transcendence, in the sense that there is something more going on than the individual. (Louv 2005: 296)

According to Arts (2019b: 545), nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include "targets that refer explicitly to children or youth" with some glaring exceptions: "SDG 7 (on energy), SDG 9 (on infrastructure), SDG 12 (on sustainable consumption and production patterns), SDG 14 (on the oceans and marine resources), and SDG 15 (on terrestrial ecosystems, forests, desertification, land degradation, and biodiversity loss)." If children are not included in any of the SDGs that relate either directly or indirectly to nature and environmental concerns, one may conclude that the UN does not see children (or youth) as part of the solution—in preventing climate change, environmental degradation, etc. On the issue of climate change, Arts (2019a: 234) asserts that children "can play a key role" in safeguarding "themselves and their communities against

some of the adverse effects of climate change," influencing "the actions of others," and problem solving to "transform their environment." Yet, this will only come to fruition if children are given the opportunities to "make direct inputs into the 'real' decision-making processes" (Arts 2019a: 234). Moreover, if children are absent from environmental SDGs, the implicit message is that the child's right to nature and environmental justice are of even less consideration than children's rights to participation.

Barnhizer (2001:5) acknowledges this dilemma by asserting "the excruciating complexity of the institutions and actors and the intertwining of so many needs and objectives" creates a central barrier to "an effective human rights system." While Barnhizer (2001:5) attributes these failures to insufficient laws, norms, institutions, political will, and a fear of accountability, I see the UN's gross SDG omissions as a shortsighted lack of imagination. An acknowledgement of human-nature interdependency and our collective duty to future generations—by excluding the role of current or future children—is completely absent. In the words of Duwell & Bos (2018: 25):

> "We have to see ourselves as responsible for a future that transcends our knowledge and that often even transcends our imagination. We bear responsibilities because our actions affect people that do not yet exist and that we will never know."

Figure 3 (C&NN, 2020b)

The Children & Nature Network (2020a) celebrates the power of nature "to make children healthier, happier and smarter" while acknowledging social and technological trends that have left increasing numbers of "kids disconnected from the natural world." Unlike the UN's failed SDGs, C&NN (2020a) is farsighted enough to understand this global "trend has profound implications for children's healthy development—and the future of our planet." As a child-centered environmental movement, C&NN and its initiatives exemplify the type of successful grassroots organizing that allow Gearty (2010: 11) to claim "the human rights movement could learn a great deal from the environmentalists…not least how to think about human rights." One essential component, as mentioned previously, is imagination and the willingness to think creatively about the current and future human-nature (child-nature) relationship. This ability, Gearty (2010: 12) hypothesizes, is due to either "the nonhuman rights community" freedom from "the great documents from the past" or the fact that "other social movements are seeking to innovate and almost by definition find they have to step outside the tradition to speak interestingly in the language of rights." In other words, not bound by legal frameworks and rights declarations, the C&NN is able to blaze a child's right to nature path that did not previously exist—stepping off the paved trail and into the bramble. The intent is not to get lost in the woods; the intent is to lead the way, with care, and conserve the path for others.

Conclusion

In the space of this essay, I could never fully address the multitude of initiatives, programs, actions, and goals put forth by C&NN, and I recognize that I did not discuss, for example, the goals of *enhancing community health* or *strengthening families*. However, I am confident in saying that promoting the child's right to nature, and more time together (as families and communities) in nature is a step in the right direction. There is a need to "emphasize why protecting the core values of our fundamental humanity is so important" (Barnhizer 2001:4). What could possibly be more critical to "our fundamental humanity" than our collective relationship—our solidarity—with nature? Although too many adults are apt to forget children are also human, the child's right to nature is a building block of both current and future generations' ability not only to survive but thrive.

While policy influence and institutional change are robust branches of the Children & Nature Network, they are only parts of a whole. The C&NN's mobilization for equitable access to

nature—the child's right to nature—serves as testament that successful "deployment of the language of human rights" does not limit social movements to the "legal arena" or creation of new laws, and this is clearest "in relation to environmental protection" (Gearty 2010: 20). For, protecting the environment means also protecting children and future generations. None of this is to say that policies and laws are not needed. On the contrary, forward thinking legislation is absolutely necessary to ensure environmental and child rights obligations are established and met, but while states, corporations, and development agencies fumble over the fine print, the C&NN and its child-centered, family and community-based initiatives will continue to connect children and nature in real time—with the objective that future generations will also benefit. As for me, I am currently on a hiatus from commissioning any new tattoo work, but I imagine my future children will inspire (and likely help me design) some joyful, inked masterpieces—whether by needle or magic marker. With thanks to the Children & Nature Network, I am hopeful that present and future children—my own and others'—shall be afforded their right to nature.

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A Letter on Radical Inhabiting:
Thinkering Together for a Transition for Social Justice

By Katharine Van Amburg, SJP, USA

Dear S.,

I want to tell a story about transitions.

You may wonder why I'm writing to you. For my MA, I'm studying real estate narratives in West Oakland's gentrification processes. When we worked together a couple years ago, you had just bought a house there. Your boyfriend is a real estate agent, one of the actors who works to tell the narratives that I'm studying. You are both middle-class white people, meaning that buying a house in West Oakland has made you part of its current wave of gentrification.

Please know that my letter is not meant to judge you. I am in no way innocent of this racialized system of violence, in which gentrification is just one symptom of the wound. I understand your desire to own a house. Like you, I was raised in our "national tradition" of the "American Dream." Because my parents were renters, I felt a deep longing growing up: if only we had a house. I dreamed of it, drew it, wrote it into my stories, pledged to win the lottery. Surely ownership would lead to happiness. Maybe you felt this way, too.

Rather than speaking *for* anyone in West Oakland, I am attempting to follow the invitation of Black people who have voiced a refusal to speak about race with white people, and who have asked that white people do accountability work with themselves and their white loved ones (Eddo-Lodge 2017; Garofoli 2020).

I'm not trying to "teach" you. I seek to think with you by telling a story of transitions. Following Illich, Esteva describes the "thinkery," in which we cannot fully articulate our thoughts until we think together, connecting in a way that is deeper than merely "mind to mind" (Esteva, as cited in O'Donovan 2015: 531). Together, we can begin to understand the words we don't yet have. Additionally, Motta practices storytelling as "break[ing] the domination of Monological thought, practice, and being as it opens up the space for multiplicity, for doubts, questions, and discontent with the world as it is" (Motta 2016: 41). This letter is not a monologue or a Monologic, it is an invitation. I seek to share a story I have been learning about, and welcome us to think together about our shared complicity and historical subjecthood in this story.

I invite us to refuse the desire to look away from the suffering caused by our consumption, instead facing "things head on by looking at them from the love of wanting to see" (D'Emilia and

Chávez 2015: 3). This loving can be done through "world traveling," in which we cross into other worlds for deep understanding of others and ourselves (Lugones 1987). World traveling is a refusal of the One-World World (the modern construction that only one world is possible), and ultimately guides us toward healing. How can we, as middle-class, white U.S. women, complicit in the violences of modernity, work toward a healing in our decisions around how we inhabit?

Inhabiting is not apolitical. Not simply a term for residing somewhere, inhabiting is about how we take up (or are refused) space, our embodied experiences of space, whether we can choose what spaces to inhabit, and more. Inhabiting can be a "harmful habit of being" (Andreotti, n.d.). It can also be a form of embodied and relational sensing, a way of understanding one's being in a place through refusing dominant perceptions and experiences. In this letter, following D'Emilia and Chávez's Radical Tenderness Manifesto, I call this second way "radical inhabiting," which I hope to thinker with you.

This is not *the* story, some source of mythical objective truth, but rather *a* story—imperfect, incomplete, inextricably bound to its storyteller. One story of many. It is about West Oakland, but it is a story for all white U.S. Americans—because we are all implicated.

West Oakland "In Transition"

West Oakland has long been a site of colonial and racialized dispossession (McElroy and Werth 2019: 879). Black workers came to California during World War II, living in segregated neighbourhoods like West Oakland, seen as undesirable for the white middle-class (Rhomberg 2004: 3). Over time, as West Oakland experienced systemic impoverishment and divestment, the city declared it blighted, lacking, violent—a threat. And an opportunity, for some. To the city and developers, West Oakland became a space for "renewal" and "redevelopment" per the mainstream white gaze, a modern transformation enforced by racialized and carceral modalities that policed and criminalized Black bodies, buildings, businesses (Ferrari 2000; Self 2003; Ramírez 2020; Tesfamariam 2019). Now, after much of nearby San Francisco has been gentrified, tech companies and housing developers have moved toward "underdeveloped" places in West Oakland (Ramírez 2020: 147).

Gentrification is the process of an elite group of people moving into a historically working-class neighbourhood, often referred to as a neighbourhood "in transition" (Hedin 2016). In the U.S., this often means that young, white, middle-to-upper-middle-class professionals are moving

into a historically Black neighbourhood (Zuk and Chapple 2015). This opposite "white flight" sees these professionals moving into these spaces because of their affordability, but also because of a kind of "cultural value": the nonwhiteness of the neighbourhood, exoticized as "authentic" and "hip." Gentrification displaces the neighbourhood's historic population through various means, such as real estate investment that commodifies this "authenticity" (Törnberg and Chiappini 2020).

Gentrification in West Oakland can be seen in the dwindling Black population, the growing white population, and increases in the unhoused population, evictions, and housing costs (BondGraham 2018; Ravani 2019; Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, n.d.; Zillow 2020). But it is harder to see how gentrification happens. It is not a simple story of a neighbourhood that happens to be "in transition." It is a phenomenon acted upon a neighbourhood by a variety of actors and institutions that operate along a racial capitalist logic relying on modern narratives of "development" and "progress." One of these institutions is the real estate industry, which directly profits from the increasing house prices of gentrification's urban development and property speculation. The real estate industry is invested in the very process that makes West Oakland prohibitively expensive and unlivable for the neighbourhood's most vulnerable people.

I know this is the field your boyfriend works in, and your connections with that field helped you buy a house. You may feel defensive. I'm not trying to position him as an enemy; it's more complicated than that. But remember that we are trying to think together. Understanding our role in this system means recognizing that none of us are innocent.

The stories told by real estate advertisements reveal, as they try to obscure, the tension and violence of gentrification. Once the meeting place of the Black Panthers, where Black boy Lil Bobby Hutton was killed by the police two days after Dr. King's murder, DeFremery Park is used as a selling point in real estate advertisements (Compass 2020). Brand-new neighbourhoods are built from the rubble of pre-tech industry, named in honor of Black union workers but peppered with Neighborhood Watch signs, symbols of racialized violence that recall Trayvon Martin's murder by Neighborhood Watchman George Zimmerman (Van Amburg 2020). In real estate ads, West Oakland is transformed from its previous description as dangerous, poor, deviant. In this process of rewriting West Oakland's Black stories and spaces into a commodity, the former "ghetto" becomes seen as "vibrant," "diverse," "hip"—even "East San Francisco" (Red Oak Realty 2015; Red Oak Realty 2016; Hedin 2016). Black culture and history are celebrated inasmuch as they can be sold. Emerging from the city's past-life images as a crime scene and site

of urban blight, a neighbourhood emerges, ordered, sensible, rational, fit for elites. A place where, real estate narratives claim, new "urban pioneers" and long-term residents "peacefully coexist" (Red Oak Realty 2016).

S., you and I work in words—in creating, crafting, and polishing them. We both know the power of words. We must also know the violence of words. The creation of stories, the naming of things, means the erasure and silencing of others.

We both have probably often heard that West Oakland is a neighbourhood "in transition." It implies an organic shift, like a geological occurrence. But "in transition" is "real-estate parlance for being on the path to gentrification, which is itself another bit of real-estate parlance for a place getting whiter" (Kaplan 2013). "In transition" is a passive euphemism that doesn't speak of the historical and human conditions that lead to this "transition," the people whose lives are being upended through it. It does not speak of the actors and the acted-upon. Its passivity is violent.

Do you remember when we first worked together? We reminded each other not to use the passive tone in our work. As good editors, we should recognize that "West Oakland in transition" should be rewritten, right? Yet, given our privileges, this rewriting should not be our undertaking. Instead, I think the transition we must grapple with is one within ourselves.

A Transition for Social Justice

What if we refused "West Oakland in transition"? Could understanding West Oakland differently mean that we can confront and change the modern, racialized stories that are told about it, so that displacement becomes seen as violence instead of improvement? Could we understand the practice of inhabiting in a radically different way? The concepts of refusal, the One-World World, world traveling, and healing can lead us toward a second transition: a transition for social justice, through what I am calling "radical inhabiting" (following the Manifesto for Radical Tenderness), written with both of us and our privileges in mind.

Radical inhabiting is looking out the window and seeing home.
Is not wanting to rewrite stories you don't understand.
Is listening to the sounds of places you're not from.

As middle-class, white U.S. Americans, our ability to consume consumes our lives. The

house—typically one's largest purchase—becomes a symbol of our power of consumption. But that power means consuming *someone or something*. Modernity's logic allows for dominant groups to consume "Others'" knowledge, land, labor, and more (Vázquez 2020; Tuck and Yang 2014; Simpson 2007). In West Oakland, real estate narratives capitalize on Black history; investors live off resale profit or the rent of low-income tenants. Who, and what, are you consuming when you buy a house there?

Vázquez (2020) questions: Is it possible to have an ethical life under modernity, when our senses of self and enjoyment are tied to the suffering of others through consumption? Sheik (2020) invites us to list our fundamental ethical beliefs and what refusals we must make for those beliefs. My beliefs and refusals surrounding the home have informed my manifesto of radical inhabiting.

Radical inhabiting is saying no to the home-turned-commodity.
Radical inhabiting is learning how you have consumed
and have been consumed, too.
Sometimes we consume for survival, but sometimes,
as my stepfather would say, it is purely recreational eating.
Radical inhabiting is resisting the urge to put something in your mouth
and bite down
when you're not even hungry.

Part of this is refusing what Escobar (2016) calls the One-World World (OWW). "Power-laden practices" have brought "into being a particular world or ontology," so there is only one acceptable way of understanding "the" world. This understanding is that of Euro-modernity and its "capitalist, rationalist, liberal, secular, patriarchal, white" ways of thinking (Escobar 2016: 15). Entire other worlds are made absent from history as the OWW becomes seen as "the way things are" rather than the result of historical processes (Escobar 2016: 21).

It is possible to nurture a pluriverse: "a world where many worlds fit" (Escobar 2016: 20). "Emergences" of other ways of thinking-being-feeling, such as "contemporary struggles for the defense of territories and difference" (like resistance to gentrification in West Oakland) exist as ontological struggles against the OWW and toward a pluriverse (Escobar 2016: 13). Key to these struggles is understanding "the conditions by which the OWW continues to maintain its

dominance" (Escobar 2016: 22). By investigating hegemonic discourses about inhabiting, like those in real estate texts, we can challenge the processes through which the OWW maintains itself via neoliberal values of home. Refusing the OWW means recognizing and nurturing a multiplicity of worlds.

Radical inhabiting is fighting for your home,
for your neighbours, for the world you inhabit,
whether or not it affects you-as-individual.
Is recognizing you are sometimes
problem, not solution.

Part of the refusal of the OWW means embracing "world traveling." Lugones argues that "only when we have traveled to each other's 'worlds' are we fully subjects to each other" (Lugones 1987: 17). We can travel to worlds that we are not fluent in, that we do not inhabit ourselves, as an act of love to those who do. By world traveling—done as a kind of loving and playfulness, rather than a modern exploring, conquering, researching—we can learn to understand "what it is to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes" (Lugones 1987: 17). West Oakland may not be a world you are fluent in or inhabit, even after years of living there. But it may be a world you can travel to, as a loving act to those who do inhabit it.

Radical inhabiting is learning to tend your home with care for others.
Is learning languages you never knew existed.
Is understanding why the train wakes you up at night;
why the highway cuts and shadows your new neighbourhood.
Is learning a place as music instead of noise.

I see healing as the goal of our refusal and world traveling. Whenever I've been frustrated by chronic pain or a lingering hurt, my mother reminds me that I'm still healing on the inside. External healing, where our bodies are closing wounds to protect them from greater pain, is faster. But internal healing—the healing hidden from the surface—lingers within.

You and I do not experience the colonial wound like the colonized subject and the

racialized body do. But we are wounded in a different way, as we become molded and shaped into beings of casual violence, those who inflict. Our psychic wounding—the one that scalpels and sutures our selves into individuals with a rational mind, a consuming body, an unquestioning heart—is what enables us to wound others. How have we been wounded to think in ways that compel us to ignore the colonial wound, or perceive it as a relic, an already-healed-over scar? What if we worked to see West Oakland as an open wound, as a borderlands (Ramírez 2020)? As part of the modern capitalist rhetoric that acts as our dissecting surgeon, real estate narratives—like a cheap home renovation—seek to mask West Oakland's wound, whitewashing violence and tension and claiming that gentrification is part of the neighbourhood's healing rather than its continual wounding. These narratives are themselves part of the wounding that they try to hide.

We can heal ourselves and our ways of thinking, being, and inhabiting. Through a refusal of the OWW and embracing world traveling, we can begin to challenge the narratives that construct our beliefs about West Oakland. This builds the foundation for a radical inhabiting—one that is not about wounding or consuming.

Radical inhabiting is a way of living and being that does not wound,
but that sees the wound and kisses it.

I have tried to tell a story of West Oakland "in transition," and what a transition for social justice could look like through a radical inhabiting approach to refusal, world traveling, and healing.

Radical inhabiting is a Commoning, a convivial caring-together.
Is a stewardship, not an ownership.
Is knowing you don't own the land and you never can,
but it is a part of you and you are a part of it.

Now I turn to you, in this thinkering and storytelling exercise. What do you think radical inhabiting looks like, based on your story?

Love,
Katie

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Recognizing The 'Unrecognized': Exploring Performativity, Precarity and Resistance Through Eric's Character in the Netflix Series *Sex Education*

By Ximena Argüello Calle, SJP, Ecuador

"- Eric you can't go out dressed like this, go and change
- Dad, it's okay, it's a costume
- Put a coat on, it's not safe"
(Sex Education, 2020).

Introduction

"How does one live with the notion that one's love is not considered love, and one's loss is not considered loss? How does one live an unrecognizable life?", with these questions Butler (2009: xii) concludes her article "Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics", and I am taking them as point of departure for this essay. By employing a particular story of violence encountered by Eric, one of the queer characters of the Netflix series *Sex Education,* this work attempts to explore the concepts of performativity and precarity, proposed by Judith Butler, as well as her theorization of resistance. For this, and after presenting my positionality, the case and a brief introduction of the concepts, I will undertake an analysis distributed in three sections. First, by using an intersectional approach, I will analyse how this character performs his masculinity. Although performativity can be explored beyond 'masculinity', I chose to centre the attention only on this because of the word limit of this essay. Second, I will demonstrate the connection between performativity and precarity, as well as the role of social norms in this regard. And third, following Butler's questions, I seek to explore how Eric resists these structural oppressions.

Positionality

I decided to begin this essay with a quote that made me feel somehow related to what Eric had to face because of his identity. Exposing my non-conforming sexual orientation have often represented a danger in itself, holding hands or kissing in public were actions that I needed to think twice before actually acting. However, I feel unfamiliar with the implications that the intersection of sexuality and race represent for black gay people, especially in Western countries. Considering that media representation is charged with differing meanings that are not only a projection of reality but are also constantly informing it, *Sex Education* offers me an opportunity to reflect about

this matter. My outsider position will prevent me to include personal reflections, however, as part of the massive audience of this Netflix series, I will be able to critically identify ideas and discourses that are being consumed about this topic.

Who is Eric?

Launched in 2019, '*Sex Education'* presents open conversations around sexuality by narrating diverse stories of a group of teenagers attending a British high school that is located in the countryside. Otis, a white blue-eyed teenager, is the main character and Eric is his best friend (Sex Education, 2019). An exuberant and vibrant black guy who grew up in a Christian Nigerian/Ghanaian family where only his father suspects his homosexuality, he is portrayed as a "loud, fun and bright personality [...] [who] uses his clothing and fashion sense to express himself by wearing colourful lively outfits and sometimes spruces up his looks with drag-inspired makeup" (Fandom 2020).

The story line I will concentrate this analysis on takes place in episodes 5, 6, and 7 of the first season. To celebrate Eric's birthday, Otis and Eric plan to attend the musical "Hedwig and the Angry Inch". They both dress up as the musical's main character: blond wigs, denim miniskirts, sparkling jewellery and striking make-up. However, Otis stood Eric up because he decided to help Maeve and lost his bus. After getting jilted, Eric decides to go back home but his wallet and cell phone were stolen at the bus station, forcing him to walk alone along a dark road. On his way, he is assaulted by a white middle-aged man who at first confused him with a woman, verbally harassing him. Disconcerted and scared, he borrows a cell phone and calls Otis' mother to help him. When he finally comes home, he did not explain his bruises to his worried father and remained quiet about what happened. Driven by anger and frustration, he decides to leave behind his colourful clothes and make-up. Later, Eric meets a flamboyant black middle-age gay man, wearing colourful outfit and make-up, who inspires Eric to go to church with his family. This was a turning point for this character, because after the church ceremony, where the pastor talked about self-love, he decides to attend the school dance wearing a drag-inspired outfit, that he modelled with pride and security (Sex Education 2019).

Theoretical Discussion

This analysis is informed by the concepts of performativity and precarity proposed by Judith Butler. On one side, understanding gender as performative opens up the possibility to move away from the conception of gender as "a sign of its internal or inherent truth" (Butler 2009: i). Gender is then produced by the reproduction of social norms, mostly within a binary thinking (Butler 2009: i). On the other side, precarity suggests that individuals "suffer from failing social and economic networks of support and become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death" (Butler 2009: ii). The relation between performativity and precarity becomes clear when social norms are not adequately performed (according to particular contexts) (Butler 2009: ii). Hence, performing gender represents a condition for subjects to become recognizable, whose bodies and lives matter (Butler 2009: x). I will be using the concept of precarity in order to illustrate how not performing gender "in intelligible ways are at heightened risk for harassment and violence" (Butler 2009: x).

This is why the question of "who is performing" becomes relevant. Analysing Eric's character requires an intersectional approach in order to understand how the different layers of his identity converge producing particular experiences of oppression that are framed within larger "inequality-creating social structures (i.e. of power relations), symbolic representations and identity constructions that are context-specific, topic-oriented and inextricably linked to social praxis" (Winker and Degele 2011: 54).

In order to support the analysis of the categories of gender and sexuality, I will employ the concepts of "compulsory heterosexuality" and "hegemonic masculinity. Rich (in Ryersbach 2005: 128) used the first concept to understand heterosexuality as socially constructed rather than "innate, natural tendency or a purposeful choice of sexuality", to which Butler (2006: xxxii) also referred as a "regime of power" that limits individuals' sexuality. Compulsory heterosexuality, together with other dominant socially constructed practices, conform what Tosh (2008: 48) calls "hegemonic masculinity" referring to the contextual "socially acceptable ways of being a man".

In this context, bodies navigate their multiple layers of identity under pre-existent social norms (Butler 2009: xi). Resistance is then not an expression of a "sovereign subject" but is rather "certain historical convergence of norms at the site of my embodied personhood [that] opens up possibilities for action" (Butler 2009: xii). It is important to recognize that contesting dominant norms is an essential strategy for sexual politics, but it is never done as a "deliberate decision" and requires to be exercised through "action" (Butler 2009: xii).

Analysis

Challenging dominant notions of masculinity

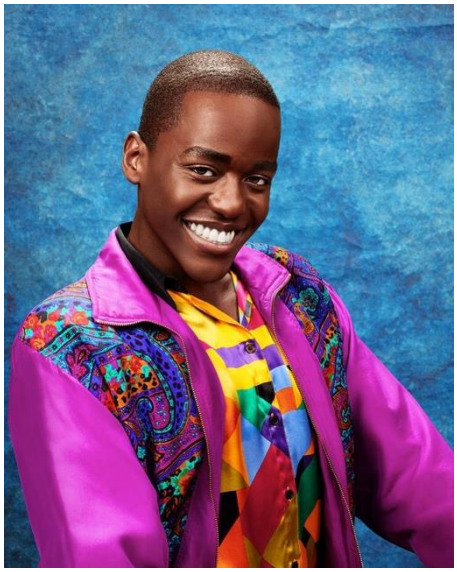

Image 1: *Eric Effiong* (Sex Education 2019)

Through different scenes Eric is depicted as the '*other'*. By using specific layers of his identity, such as sexuality, gender, race, religion, and so on, Eric is presented to the audience as 'different' - sometimes through explicit dialogues and actions, and others more through more subtle implications. In the following paragraphs I will explain how 'Sex Education' locates this character at odds with dominant notions of "acceptable" identity.

His identification as "homosexual" is repeatedly shown through narratives and stories around this topic (Sex Education 2019). By doing kin differently Eric challenges not only compulsory heterosexuality but also hegemonic masculinity. On one side, his sexual orientation challenges the idea that heterosexuality is something "natural" or "inner" (Butler 2009: i). Eric is the evidence that there is something much more powerful than this dominant social norm, which is driven by his desires that, as mentioned by Butler (2009: xii), cannot be "precisely choose[n]". Alternatively, and considering that hegemonic masculinity also supposes heterosexuality as the one and only form of sexual expression, Eric performs a different kind of masculinity that "subversively advertise an alternative to the heterosexual norm" (Tosh 2008: 51).

"Eric: I thought you forgot our tradition

Otis: How could I forget?

Eric: Mm (hugging him)

Otis: (Uncomfortable for the hug) It's ok, Don't get emotional"

(Sex Education, 2019)

This dialogue highlights one of Eric's non-conforming forms to express himself. "Being emotional", and the physical contact of hugging, made Otis feel uncomfortable to the point he needed to ask Eric not to do it. But his "emotional" attitudes were not the only features that placed Eric's masculinity far from the hegemonic one. As seen in Image 1, his colourful outfits and sparkling personality do not conform with the dominant masculine expectations set by other characters, particularly the 'heterosexual' ones, who wear sober clothes, act virile, are emotionally distant (especially in public) and love women, like Jackson, a swimming champion.

Together with gender and sexuality, religion is also a relevant category for Eric's character. '*Sex Education'* highlights his 'difference' by presenting scenes that contrast Eric's activities, family and community with other characters'. To illustrate, Eric and his family attend to a Gospel church with a black community, pray before eating, the house decoration includes some crucifixes, and he consults the bible for advice. Coming from a very religious family, the masculinity he is pursuing is also shaped by religious values. As said by Butler (2009: xii), what is (not) performed is a result of external norms.

For instance, his father suspected Eric's bruises were a result of a discriminatory assault and told him "If you're going to live like this, you have to toughen up". With this statement in mind and with the anger this episode produced on him, Eric reacted violently and hit a schoolmate because he was making fun of his new discreet outfit. His father, disappointed of his reaction, said "you can't go around punching people" to which Eric replied: "you told me to toughen up" and his father said "But not like that, what kind of man do you want to be?". To this, after a long silence, Eric claimed with frustration: "What kind of man do you want me to be, dad?" (Sex Education, 2019). In this conversation, we notice two things. First, his father expectations represent the social pressure over Eric's identity that he clearly tries to fulfil without enough success. And second, Eric equated his father's advice of "toughen up" with the use of violence. However, in this dialogue his father clarifies the alternative masculinity that he proposes to his

son: a strategy of resilience that responds to the intersection of his sexuality and religion. The series shows 'love' as the main religious feature preached by the priest and the church, so that 'violence' would represent its opposition. 'Violence' is then an unacceptable masculine behaviour for Eric even if used as a defence strategy.

Analysing what is (not) being performed is not enough without understanding *who* is actually performing it. I refer in this statement to how Eric's skin colour shapes the expectations around masculinity as well as the way he experiences life. In the 7th episode his father said, "When I first came to this country, I had to do so much to fit in". In fact, as confessed by Asante and Roberts (2014: 128), race can be "salient and primary" to how a body is, or not, treated. However, this is the only assertion about race and suggests that the experience of his father was conditioned by his race as well as his nationality, as if racism were an obsolete cause of oppression to which Eric was not exposed anymore. The implications of this will be analysed in the next section.

Here we can see how Eric's masculinity cannot be reduced to the opposition of what is hegemonic masculinity. First, because hegemonic masculinity is not a single one, it is contextual and needs to be understood in relation to other categories of analysis. And second, because performing gender is not a rigid nor binary practice of conforming or not with social norms (Butler 2009: xi). It is rather a constant process of negotiation that Eric strategically carries out across spaces and times. For instance, Butler (Butler 2009: xi) talks about the distinction between home and public spaces. Eric's character brings us information about his navigation in these spaces. He expresses himself with certain freedom in the public space, especially with his best friend Otis, whereas he limits some features of his masculinity at home in order to come closer to the hegemonic one. For instance, when he was called for dinner, he was putting make-up on, so he quickly cleans his face before seeing his family. This does not signify that he is simply conforming with the external masculine expectations. He is negotiating with these powerful notions, so that he performs specific masculinities in specific spaces. It is never fixed: at the end of the 7th episode, he decides to perform 'unexpected' features of his masculinity with his father, and claims 'this is me'. I will revisit this in the third section.

Not sufficiently conforming: violence as a form of precarity

Image 2: *Eric Effiong dressed up as the musical's main character* (Sex Education, 2019)

- **First man:** *Where you goin'?*
- **Second man:** *Excuse me, miss. Want a lift?*
- **Eric:** *Um, no, thank you.*
- **First man:** *look at him*
- **Second man:** *Have you got a penis, Miss? [laughter] Go on, show us your d*ck.*
- **Eric:** *Just leave me alone, please.*
- **Second man:** *[parks the car and approaches to Eric]*
- **Second man:** *you gay f**k*
- **Eric:** *Please, please. This-this isn't me. It's-It's a costume. I was going to see a film with a friend. I'm not a… [Second man punches Eric and spits on him]*

Image 3: *Dialogue before Eric's assault* (Sex Education, 2019).

This dialogue preceded Eric's assault and shows the way his non-conforming identity exposed him to violence and aggression. As mentioned in the last section, Eric's 'freak' masculinity did not fulfil the external expectations. His gender, sexuality, religion and race were some of the identity layers used by the series to portrait Eric's not conforming identity. Instead of just displaying an isolated aggression, *Sex Education* uses a crude dialogue to explicitly show the connection between his 'otherness' and the aggression he faced. Hence, violence is not detached from who suffers it, this scene shows the connection between performativity and precarity which, as stated by Butler (2009: i), resides on social norms. For his aggressors a denim skirt, drag-inspired make up, and a blonde wing (see Image 2) meant that Eric was "gay", and that his form of expression, love, and his sexual desires represented a subordinate masculinity that deserved to be spat on. According to Butler (2009: xi), conforming with social norms "conditions whose lives will be more liveable, and whose lives will be less so, if not fully un-liveable". He knew that his form of

expression in that particular moment would define his value and the external reactions towards him. Although, he tried to avoid the aggression by refuting the apparent cause: *"This-this isn't me. It's-It's a costume", "I'm not a...",* this was not enough, his 'freak' masculinity was not "sufficiently conforming" with certain gender and sexual norms.

Albeit subtler, his race is also present in the scene. It is not a coincidence that Eric was the chosen character, nor that Otis had another activity to do and left Eric alone. Otis was also dressed as a 'woman', walking around the town, but perhaps his whiteness, his heterosexuality and being accompanied by a girl kept him safe. Likewise, the contrast between the Otis' and Eric' families reactions give some indications on how this 'non-masculine' outfit is perceived. Whereas for Otis' mother, shown in the series as a white educated and open-minded sex therapist, does not problematize Otis' outfit, Eric's father, portrayed as a working-class black man, expressed concern about his son since transgressing social norms was not "safe" (See Figure 1). Considering that perceptions are shaped by life experiences, this contrast would suggest that his father, contrarily to Otis' mother, had to deal with a lack of safety due to who he is, which is also confirmed when he says to his son: "When I first came to this country, I had to do so much to fit in".

Eric vs Otis: Family reactions	
Eric	**Otis**
"**- Father:** Eric you can't go out dressed like this. Go and change [tone of voice of concerned] **- Eric:** Dad, it's okay, it's a costume **- Father:** Put a coat on, it's not safe"	"**- Otis:** I'm off. **- Mother:** [looks at his outfit] oh… you look fabulous! **- Otis:** thanks"

Figure 1: *Family reactions* (Sex Education, 2019)

Although race is used to show Eric's 'otherness', the oppression that this layer of identity, and its intersection with gender and sexuality (and significance to Eric) is not problematized. One could say that the silence is because *Sex Education* attempts to spread a message about equality by "ignoring" Eric's skin colour. However, *Sex Education's* strategy to combat injustices around sexual orientation consists of explicitly denouncing them on-screen. For instance, the aggression scene against Eric states that violence against queer people does happen and calls for attention. Based on this, the silence around race would instead represent the omission of a serious issue. This makes me think about Wekker's analysis about "white innocence" in the Dutch culture archive. What Wekker (2014: 166) calls double consciousness can be identified in this particular story, since issues about racism remain non-spoken as if it were inexistent (Wekker 2014: 168). A "quiet

racism" is reinforced when "denial reign supreme" (Wekker 2014: 159) obscuring not only its existence but also its seriousness.

Asante and Roberts (2014: 124) state that not all black gay men experience this intersectional oppression in the same way. This is why narratives around these bodies need to be explored, otherwise, they continue to be generalized or ignored (Asante and Roberts 2014: 124). The form that Eric's aggression takes reduces the problem to a lack of acceptance of his sexual orientation. Race, together with gender and sexuality, construct particular masculinities that can (not) conform with dominant notions. Ignoring this impedes the audience to understand how complex Eric's identity is and the way these complexities intersect producing bodies that deserve to be either respected or spat on.

Resisting is 'acting': destabilizing dominant social norms

Image 4: *Eric Effiong at the school dance* (Sex Education 2019)

Eric can be considered as "a socially produced 'agent' and 'deliberator' whose agency and thought is made possible by a language that precedes that 'I' " (Butler 2009: iii). That is to say that even if sometimes he acts in "unexpected ways", social norms always precede his actions (Butler 2009: xi). After his assault, he decides to conform with social norms by dressing with neutral colours in order to go unnoticed. He is then aware of what he is doing "differently" because the social norms that conceive his body and expression as "non-conforming" pre-existed his actions. When he actually takes the risk of adopting alternative ways of expressing himself, he is not a sovereign agent, but a socially constructed individual resisting social norms even if this could imply to expose himself to violence and an unrecognizable life.

For this to be considered resistance, it needs to be acted upon (Butler 2009; x). To say that one is different, to disagree with social norms or to have the power to act is not enough (Butler 2009: x). The only way to reclaim the power that one requires is acting (Butler 2009: x). Eric knew he had a choice after his assault, he had the power to act, to sufficiently conform or not with social norms, but this power was not enough to claim for his right to exist. What made his claims for rights real was his arrival to the school dance with a drag-inspired outfit and make-up (see Image 4). He not only destabilized the fixed notions of a binary gender, but he also transgressed the dominant model of masculinity.

Performing what is supposed to exclusively be performed by women, he questions the "naturalness" that is usually assigned to gender norms (Butler 2009: iii). With this act, he is reclaiming different rights without having them: the right to exist, to be in public, to freely express himself. In this sense, freedom existed only by exercising it, he made it a reality when he actually freely acted. Action was the language he used to claim for his rights, he decided not to conform in public, he decided to show his existence "to ratify his power" (ibid x).

His resistance is not limited to gender and sexual norms, Eric's character is also challenging the existing binary notion between religion and sexuality:

> "Pastor: Jesus loves! His love is greater than fear. His love is stronger than uncertainty. His love is deeper than hate. Jesus said: love neighbour as yourself. Yourself. Yourself. Love starts here [pointing his heart]. We must all learn to love ourselves, before we truly love others. Who are you to not love yourself?" (Sex Education, 2019).

The series shows this scene as a turning point in Eric's decision. He felt inspired to resist dominant norms, because the God he believed in encourages to love himself. This drives us again to what was analysed in the first section, understanding how religion is a relevant category of analysis for this character. This scene shows that the category supports not only his identity analysis but also to explore his resistance. In this case, an alternative conception of religion is presented. What is usually portrayed as an Institution reinforcing ideas of discrimination and un-recognizability to queer bodies, is presented in Sex Education as rather a possibility of support and personal healing.

Conclusion

Exploring this story through Butler's concepts highlights the importance to think about categories of identity as social constructions. By reflecting on the discourses and ideologies that invalidated

Eric's body and motivated the attack, this essay showed how homosexuality, gender expression, race and religion locate him at odds with what should be performed in order to be a "recognizable subject". The concept of intersectionality contributed to understand the different layers of his identity. This analysis revealed the connection between performing social norms and being vulnerable to violence. In the series, Eric's masculinity was not sufficiently conforming, and was given as the reason for his attack. This essay also discussed the lack of problematization of the oppression that the intersection of race with the other layers of Eric's identity can produce. For this, Wekker's contributions on race were included in the analysis. Finally, this paper showed the importance of action for political resistance and the way this character challenges the binary thinking constructed around religion and homosexuality. In conclusion, this intersectional analysis allowed me to demonstrate how the story of this character can only be understood in relation to the larger heteronormative and racist structures that govern society.

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Ethnographic Insert 4: Digital Ethnography Notes

By Heidy Heidy Angelica Suharno, SPD, Indonesia

It was May 18, 2020 when I opened Twitter and saw the first trending hashtag in Indonesia was #TerserahIndonesia (#whateverIndonesia). I clicked the hashtag to see the related posts. I saw several photos of medical personnel who were wearing fully covered PPE and holding the printed paper saying "Indonesia??? Whatever!!! Do as you like…". Many other tweets saying, "We are fighting 2 pandemics: Covid-19 and stupidity #TerserahIndonesia"[22]. From many similar tweets, the 'stupidity' frequently refers to both the failure of Indonesian citizens and the Government of Indonesia (GoI) in maintaining social distance to tackle Covid-19 pandemic. One of the tweets says, "I've given up on Indonesian people, flower (developing) country"[23] (I often find these cynical expressions implicitly/explicitly 'mocking' Indonesian people's 'backward' and 'uneducated' behaviors in relation to Indonesia as a developing country).

Many other tweets also put a video of one guy rapping in his room. The video title was 'IndonesiaTerserah' and the thumbnail showed medical personnel as its cover, while the first intro representing Indonesian flag with covid-19 molecules. I traced down to the original video on Youtube. The video was created by 'The Rap Up Indonesia' channel. They put a quote picture on the top of the channel's first display, it says "rapping your weekly news, differently"[24]. I saw the thumbnails of all their weekly videos and noticed that they had 3-28k views for each video. Yet, the 'IndonesiaTerserah' video had 204,000 views. In the comment sections, many people expressed their opinions and feelings toward the video content. "I swear, I can't agree more, cool lyrics![25]", "Come on guys, make this trending by giving likes and comments but don't use emoticon"[26], "Oh shit, 3 months stayed at home becoming poor and more stupid, in fact no use at all wkwkkw. Indonesian people are so barbaric, too barbaric to make people staying 3 months in vain"[27]. The most liked comment says, "Ayee.. the lyric is so powerful! #disstrackgovernment! This country needs movement", then it was replied by other comments inviting people to make the video viral. (The sudden popularity gained by the Rap Up Channel might indicate that the one

[22] Originally in English

[23] Originally*: Nyerah deh sama orang Indo, negara berflower (kembang=flower, berflower=berkembang, berkembang= developing)*

[24] Originally in English

[25] Originally: *Sumpah, gua setuju banget, cool liriknya!*

[26] Originally: *Ayo guys bikin trending caranya di like, di comment, tapi jangan pake emot*

[27] Originally: *Ah sialan 3 bulan di rumah jadi miskin tambah bodoh, ga guna ternyata wkwk (laugh). Emang kaum Indonesia terlalu barbar, saking barbarnya ngebuat orang 3 bulan di rumah jadi sia-sia*

specific video resonates many Indonesians feelings, who even encouraged others to make it viral. This may be seen as a gesture of speaking out load and eager to be heard).

The video w(rap)ped up the several events that happened within the week: crowd gathered for giving farewell tributes to the end of the first McDonald's in Thamrin street, Jakarta; Covid-19 fundraising concert by the government; sudden passed of the highly criticized mining bill; increased health insurance; the government's restriction for 'mudik' (travel back to hometown, especially for Eid Mubarak) yet still there are crowds in the airport, people selling false health letters, etc.

Along the video, the creator put Indonesian flag with Covid-19 molecules as the background and overlay it with a video of a guy rapping and changing images or news clips related to the events mentioned in the lyrics. Yet, every time the chorus 'terserah terserah' plays, the images of medical personnel holding #indonesiaterserah poster appears. Below are the translated lyrics with the specific gestures. The full Indonesian lyrics is attached in Annex.

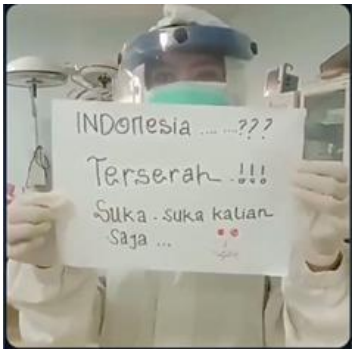
> There's a concert again in Jakarta. Thamrin area is corona-immune. (raised eyebrows) Eh being fined 10 million, will have to sweep the street. (both hands pointing and waving, drop beat, Chorus) Whatever! Whatever! You are corona-immune? (raised eyebrows) Whatever! Whatever! Your whole family is immune? Whatever! Whatever! (raised up both hands with head down, with medical personnel photos holding #IndonesiaTerserah posters as background) I will just follow. Suddenly social distancing is being relaxed. Vehicles began to crowd the street. Suddenly, the mining bill has passed. Suddenly, health insurance is being increased! (the background music built up, both hands raised) Aarghh..!! (screaming, drop beat, chorus). Whatever! Whatever! Do as you like, I'm just nobody (fingers waved 'no', 'crying' background), well let's just accept it. Staying at home for 3 months, I hope it's useful. 1000 people dead, I hope it's not in vain. Business adaptations are implemented, online streaming weddings, selling foods on Instagram, selling fake letters for profits, travelling tickets only 60.000 (keep dancing/waving hands). I heard mudik is not allowed, (music and hands are slowing down, raised eyebrows) but why so many people in the airport?? (frowned face) There is a chance, there will be 1000 reasons. (drop beat while waving hands rapidly) 3 months at home making Dalgona coffee, I hope it's not useless. 3 months at home playing TikTok until crazy, is that effective or useless? Whatever! Whatever! Do as you like! Whatever! Whatever! I will just follow. Whatever! Whatever! What can we do? (raised up both hands with head down, with medical personnel photos holding #IndonesiaTerserah posters as background) Whatever! Whatever! I will just follow (music slowly ends, then the rapping guy chilling drinking beers while shaking heads). (INDONESIA TERSERAH by Willy Winarko Produced by Corozonebeats 2020)

Pictures

1

1. Video thumbnails with medical personnel as a cover

2



2. Medical personnel with poster 'Indonesia? Whatever! Do as you like...'

3 4 5 6

3. Video intro: Indonesian flag with covid-19 molecules
4. Video Chorus: 'whatever', picture of medical personnel's poster and crowd at the airport
5. Video lyric about passed mining bill, raised hand
6. Video lyric about 'I'm nobody, just accept it' with crying picture background, raised hand
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDvEaSl9CFY>

Commentary

From my personal observation, Indonesian netizens (net-citizens) often express their opinions and feelings through creative medium: satirical jokes (from the previous notes), memes, photos, and here now the viral #indonesiaterserah tweet posts and a 'diss track' rap video among them. The video went viral and even the national mainstream media interviewed Willy, the video's creator. It was interesting to see the 'agency' besides the creator himself but also netizens who watched and shared the video. In the comment section, many netizens were strategizing to make the video

viral through making use of Youtube's algorithm. It seems that the video could express the shared feelings and experiences of many netizens. The word 'whatever' here expressed 'disappointment', anger, sadness or being so done/giving up rather than being 'ignorant/unbothered'. Even though it expressed hopelessness, the fact that the channel still put efforts to make music and edit the video and netizens tried to viral it, shows that they want to be heard, still hoping for a change. The #indonesiaterserah posts and netizens comments targeted not only the government but also the Indonesian people who ignored social distancing norms. In addition, there is a troubling underlying assumption of blaming the government and people's failures in maintaining Covid-19 measure. Indonesia failed because the people are still 'barbaric', 'behind', and having 'developing country behaviors', while the netizens who commented this are also Indonesians. What about the people who chose to return to their hometown because the living cost in Jakarta is not affordable for them without working? The question about class comes up again to my mind. Does this thought come from the middle-upper class? Are they dominating the digital space and the meanings circulations?

Reflections

The use of video material for observation and notes has enriched the data. Through listening to the audio and observing the visuals and gestures, I can capture more details which then emphasize the meanings and feelings. When I first read the #indonesiaterserah tweets, I could only sense the 'anger'. After watching the video, I could see both anger and sadness. Through the images, I could also understand the connection of the video to the other posts or events and notice which of them are being repeated/emphasized. Shortly, using additional materials in digital ethnography apart from the text provides the richer details. Consequently, it was also adding more complexities to the coding process.

I tried to make more general abstractions of what's happening, while still maintaining close direct attachment to the data. For example, instead of putting 'disappointment' or 'hopelessness' codes which are too general, I wrote 'hopeless' with 'developing behavior country' of Indonesians. The specific connections to the data content/context are helpful to show meanings and underlying assumptions (Emerson 2011). In addition, there were some codes that seem 'less important' or not really relevant to my initial focus (people disappointments and digital criticism). For example, 'Actor: Rap up channels', 'Actor: medical personnel' or 'people activities during quarantine'. However, I decided to still create the codes because it may open the notes for various directions of

the research analysis (ibid).

Moreover, I wrote very specific codes such as ‘video IT (Indonesia terserah) lyric/gestures’, ‘Netizens comments IT’ because I was picturing/visualizing a continuous process of this digital ethnography. I imagined if I observe various media in different platforms, from different actors, and put it in different notes, the use of specific codes will be helpful to organize the data, especially if I use a software. It will be easier to recall the certain expressions or discourses coming from a certain media (e.g: ‘I am nobody’ or ‘dalgona coffee’ from video *Indonesia Terserah*-IT). It could be easier to compare data and make connections between the codes across the bunch of notes. It seems a bit complicated and lengthy but I think for me, personally, the structured codes will be more helpful. At first, I thought the codes went into too ‘micro details’ but then I treated this exercise as initial open coding process. I think I should not easily put the data into too abstract/analytical boxes. After collecting more notes, I will probably create the second bigger level of codes such as ‘netizen digital strategy’, ‘shared feelings’, ‘creative medium for criticism’, etc.

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Annex

Original lyrics of 'Indonesia Terserah' (in Bahasa) by Willy Winarko (Produced by 27 Corozonesbeats)

Ada konser lagi di Jakarta. Thamrin area kebal Corona. Eh kena denda 10 juta. Nanti harus nyapu jalan raya
Terserah, terserah! Lo tuh kebal Corona?
Terserah, terserah! Kebal sekeluarga?
Terserah, terserah! Ibu bapak semua?
Terserah, terserah! Gua ikutin aja.

Tiba-tiba PSBB di longgarkan, kendaraan udah mulai mau penuh di jalanan
Tiba-tiba undang-undang minerba juga di sahkan
Tiba-tiba BPJS di naikan haaahhh

Terserah, terserah! Mau nya apa Gua bukan siapa-siapa Yaudah Terima aja
Di rumah 3 bulan semoga ada gunanya 1000 orang mati semoga gak sia-sia
Adaptasi bisnis jungkir balik di jalankan, pernikahan streaming online
Jual makan di Instagram Jual surat bodong demi dapat keuntungan
Cuma 6 puluh ribu dapat tiket jalan-jalan

Katanya mudik udah di larang? Mudik ngumpet di truk enggak di perbolehkan
Tapi di bandara kok banyak orang? Ada celah ada seribu alasan

3 bulan di rumah Ngaduk kopi dalgona Itu ngaruh atau cuma sia-sia
3 bulan di rumah Tik tok'an sampe gila Itu ngaruh atau cuma sia-sia
Terserah, terserah! Lo mau apa yaudah
Terserah, terserah! Gua ikutin aja
Terserah, terserah! Yaudah mau gimana
Terserah, terserah! Gua ikutin aja

Unlearning and Relearning Hate

By Nafeesa Usman, SJP, India

The following is my account of my experiences in a polarized India, the stories I heard, the events that unfolded and how that shaped my research paper idea. Research is a continuous, constantly evolving and changing process and in this account, I add my reflections on how the literature I stumbled upon during the 4354 Transitions for Social Justice Lab helped me make sense of what we are experiencing, rethink the convenient explanations, and gave me the vocabulary and imagination to see my 'research problem'.

In September 2019, I moved to The Hague, Netherlands to pursue my master's in development studies from the International Institute of Social Studies. In the initial months, the more concepts I learned about the social world, the more unsure and separated I felt from my lived experiences. In December 2019, the news I heard from India was disturbing. The Indian government had introduced a Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and a National Registry for Citizens (NRC) which determines citizenship based on religion, excluding specifically the Muslims. The CAA and NRC when implemented together will sift the Muslims in India and place the onus of proving their citizenship squarely on them (Chapparban 2020). Following this, several women and student group protests broke out across the country which incited police brutality against them. Sitting in my student room in the Hague, I watched news clip after news clip of women protesting, students bleeding from the police attacks, and debates on prime time making sense of these events. The Indian mainstream media and its news has become constitutive of the nationalist policies practiced by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its ideological parent Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a paramilitary voluntary organization. In the events following the announcement of CAA and NRC, Muslim men and women were framed as the agitators who slide with India's arch nemesis Pakistan. "Why don't these Muslims go to Pakistan?" one anchor screamed while the other reasoned that the CAA and NRC protestors are anti-Indian supported by Islamic extremists and a pro-Indian will have nothing to worry about.

I grew up in a secular India. At least as a child I believed I was in a secular country where I wasn't the victim of violence and war. I was a Muslim woman, and as a child and a young adult I was only reminded of my minority as a Muslim every time I filled an application or a form. It wasn't until a few years ago, the Indian public sphere was completely taken over by the nationalist process, particularly Hindu nationalist process which defined itself by defining the 'others' the

‘Muslims’ (Udupa 2020). Gradually the public sphere, including a range of institutions, executive, legal, educational, were taken over by the ‘Hindu’ nationalist ideology and its violence. Since the rise of the right-wing Hindu nationalist party and its Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014, the conversations in families have turned highly political and polarizing. In the digital space, hate speech and bickering between Hindu nationalist supporters (called Bhakts meaning devotee) and liberals has become increasingly common (Udupa 2020). A year ago, my uncle and aunt who were visiting my family for a holiday from Dubai, started an innocent chit chat over the current politics in India. The conversation soon turned sour over a comment I made that we can’t simplify whatever was happening in India as Islamophobia. I remember my uncle and aunt disparage the Hindus, calling me a ‘pseudo liberal’ and urging me to be more ‘Muslim’. In the last few years, in the backdrop of large political upheavals in India, I noticed my relationship with my friends and family changing, evolving, turning fragile and bitter. My ‘Hindu’ tuition teacher from my 11th and 12th grade who taught me brilliantly the basics of physics and Math, today condemns the Muslims for atrocities and hails Hindus as scientifically proven superiors and rightful heirs of India in her Facebook posts. I wonder if she is still the caring and supportive teacher who didn’t see me as a ‘Muslim’ student.

This transformation of Indian communities and societies into bickering, squabbling, hating individuals exacerbated by the advent of digital media not only showcases the pervasiveness of ‘Hindutva’ ideology, but also its nefarious intent. At its core, Hindutva aims to transform the fabric of Indian society by instilling religion-based values of ‘Indian-nes’ rooted in the superior ancient Hindu past and masculine in its priority to high-caste, vegetarian, repressive ideals. The right-wing populist politics of BJP and RSS has been successful in co-opting the public as ‘vigilantes’ for their hate politics (Banaji 2018).

Away from home, I experienced this breaking down of the social fabric of my community and my country more sharply than I ever imagined. Displaced spatially, I felt more Indian, more Muslim, more woman, more of everything as I watched and heard news about what was happening in my country. And I have come to realize that I was living a life of privilege. As Jacqui Alexander (2005) puts it I was living a privilege “of believing the story that state owns and can therefore dispense security”. I believe this transition that is painful, confusing, and seemingly directionless is the fracture of this privileged belief. But there was hope. I saw hundreds of Indians and others gather in the Hague and Amsterdam and elsewhere in the world to protest against the CAA and

NRC. These Indians far from their homeland, yet invested in its events, inspired me to understand the transitions they are undergoing in the face of massive transformations happening in the Indian soil.

However, I lacked the vocabulary to understand the severity of my experiences and thoughts. Why? Why are the neighbors and friends hating each other? Where did my secular India go? Why am I feeling more Muslim now and taking every hate comment and slogan against my community as if directed towards me? I found some answers in the modernity/coloniality project. The hatred towards another human being, based on their religion has been fundamental to the populist and nationalist politics. The BJP and its ideological parent RSS, since the 1920s have argued for India as a rightful home of the Hindus and Muslims as invaders and 'others'. After independence and in the early 1990s following the neo-liberalization of Indian economy, right-wing politics started gaining traction and momentum in India (Banaji 2018). Along with popularizing Hinduism and practices like cow worship, came the fear of the Muslim terrorists, who were claimed invaders and whose aim is to convert Hindus to Islam. In "On Difference without Separability" Denise Ferreira da Silva (2016) argues "fear and uncertainty, to be sure, have been the staples of modern racial grammar". This idea fundamentally draws from the scientific rationality which views human beings as individual atoms and not as complex and entangled (Ferreira da Silva 2016).

According to Ndlovu Gatsheni (2019), this universalism is a fundamental problem of modernity/coloniality which destroyed diverse worlds and "created all sorts of pseudo-scientific discourses to divide people racially across the planet" by denying us 'common humanity'.

In the month of April, as I was designing my research paper proposal, I spent hours on online chat rooms, skimming through numerous posts to only find anger, hate, and vitriol. Individuals, self-appointed as the guardians of Indian culture and tradition spewing hatred towards their brothers and fellow humans. Sara Motta (cited in Motta and Bennett 2018) claim "this ideal type neoliberal subject is 'grounded in individualization, infinite flexibility, precarious commitments, orientated toward survivalist competition and personally profitable exchanges'... This attempts to produce a culture of hierarchy, competition and individualism through the eradication of cultures of solidarity, care and collectivity".

I saw what the colonial project had done, it created a nation-state within whose boundaries hierarchies of humans were created with insiders and outsiders; "racial relations that created

certain people as objects of hatred" and "institutionalized market relations that created uneven data relations" (Udupa 2020).

My research which aims to understand and unpack how the hate pervasive in the society, functions at the micro level, in the family, especially in the families displaced spatially from the nation-state territory of India. In a recent conversation with a friend something struck me. She called the hate speeches and online vitriol, and even her younger brother's foolish support of Modi's policies, as irrational. She quipped that people engage in passionate irrational conversations where nothing comes out of it.

It made me wonder, if what I was experiencing around me can be easily categorized as irrational and passionate political debates. Isn't this 'irrationality' that I witness around me a construct of the modernity/coloniality where the calm rationality belongs to the west and the irrationality and passion to the non-west (Udupa 2020). Isn't this what Sara Motta (2018) calls 'troubling dualisms'? Sara Ahmed (2014) in her book The Cultural Politics of Emotion makes a compelling case for emotions, especially hate. She claims hate acts at an unconscious level, but not ''unconscious of a subject'', it does not origin nor end with a subject but rather the subject is ''just one nodal point of it''. The circulation of hate she argues works 'through associations between objects, signs and figures'' (Ahmed 2014). The media coverage of the events that followed the CAA, NRC showcased how the ruling party ministers used slogans like "Shoot the bloody traitors" to refer to anti-CAA protestors, constructing the figure of protestors (Muslims in this case) as objects of hate and how such speeches led to the bloody Delhi riots, where angry Hindu mobs attacked Muslims brutally destroying their homes, places of business and worship (Jose 2020).

Ahmed (2014) in 'Organisation of Hate' mentions how hate always "aligns the particular with general". Isn't that what I observe around me? Hindus claiming Muslims as traitors for being anti-Indian, and pro-Pakistan, assuming the hate resides in their bodies. But Sara Ahmed (2014) offers me the words to make sense of this, and I find it convincing and moving. By choosing hate, we do not propose an absence of love, in fact the people become attached to their subjects of hate through this hate, they bring them into their lives and communities and keep them as objects of threat. But what I found most striking in her account of working on 'hate' is how the hated body looks at itself through certain actions that create objects of hate where the feelings are temporarily sealed in the body of 'hated' (Ahmed 2014). When my uncle called me a pseudo liberal, he could

have moved on, however that word remained within me, made me question for a moment in time who I am.

This understanding of hate and its workings offered by Sara Ahmed and other decolonial thinkers has made me rethink the hatred I see in my society and community. The modernity/coloniality project has made us the participants of its crime and violence, be it Hindu mobs attacking Muslims physically or psychologically be it Muslims gathering to defend their faith, or the vitriol in digital platforms. It has also given us a false sense that this 'oppression is inescapable' (Lugones 2003). This is what I plan to understand through my research paper. The transformation of Indian society where hate and superiority of race have become common parlance, how are the families and their relationships with each other being altered and shaped and how do they escape this oppression of hatred imposed on them by the state.

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The Unchanging Nature of Oppression?— Gender in *The Changing Nature of Work* (2019)

By Giovanni Austriningrum, AFES, Indonesia

Introduction

The World Development Report (WDR) is an annual publication produced and circulated by the World Bank to address a specific issue in global development. Published in the same year as the International Labour Organization's (ILO) 100th anniversary, WDR 2019 tackles the consequences of the ongoing wave of technological advancement on the changing nature of work. The report was also launched concurrently with the bank's Human Capital Project. Human capital, as the report argues, is the "no-regret" investment that will prepare society to embrace and thrive with any kind of future challenges (World Bank 2019: 2-5).

The several articles and reviews in response to the WDR 2019 have failed to critically investigate the gendered elements of the report. Gender, as a set of power relations that socially constructs meanings and relations about men and women, including gendered roles, division of labour, experience, expectations, and interaction, is embedded in development narratives and institutions (Razavi and Miller 1995: 12; Young 2002: 323). Examining how gender intersects relationally with other social processes can help analysing power relations and structures underpinning particular discourses.

In '*The Changing Nature of Work'* (2019), there are at least two starting points for interrogating the gendered problem-solution narrative. First, "women" is one of the most frequently mentioned words (84 times) in the report, with one subchapter dedicated to discussing the problem of working women. Second, the notion of 'human capital' which is a central theme in the report is interlinked with the concept of social reproduction, historically associated with women's work and responsibility (Bhattacharya 2017). From those departures, I choose the 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' (WPR) approach formulated by Bacchi (2009) as a macro framework. At the micro level, content analysis provides the identification of keywords, collocations, and concordance to show how a particular problem representation is reiterated (Alexander 2009).

Context and General Structure

The World Bank (2020) proudly announced on its website and foreword of engaging with "...civil society, foundations, youth and women's groups, business groups and other multilateral organizations" for the report consultation and drafting. However, the primary target audience for WDR 2019 is the national governments, assumed as the most effective stakeholder that can implement the recommended measures. Since its first publication in 1978, the WDR is designed as a prescriptive consultation document informed mostly by development economics, featuring statistics and international economy trends to canvas recommendations and domestic strategies. It borrows the academic rigor of using citations to refer to previous authorial works and projects from different countries. In the core team of WDR 2019, all the 2 directors, 8 principal authors, and 1 program assistant come from finance and economic backgrounds and only 1 communication officer from the field of journalism. It is also interesting to see that 8 of the 12 members are female, while reflecting the common assumption and question whether women's representation in the redaction automatically means gender equality and justice in the narrative.

After a foreword and an overview, the document is organized into seven chapters: (1) The changing nature of work, (2) The changing nature of firms, (3) Building human capital, (4) Lifelong learning, (5) Returns to work, (6) Strengthening social protection, and (7) Ideas for social inclusion. A first whole reading of the document was done during the group work of this course. Thus, to draw a general insight of how gender relations are particularly discussed in the report, I did a general screening of the report using the keywords "gender", "women", "woman", "girls", "mother", and "maternal". In a separate document, I compiled each paragraph containing the keywords and their contexts of usage in each chapter, resulting in the following inference*[28]:

Overview: How to enable and increase women's participation in the waged labour force - to work outside the households through elimination of discriminatory limitations and restrictions.

Chapter 2: The flexibility of the gig economy enabled by technology gives women greater opportunity to participate in the workforce, with the needed measures to address

[28] *the keywords are not mentioned in Chapter 1 and 6

issues associated with informality and casual work.

Chapter 3: Women's better access to quality education, job training, and independent income will result in better and prepared motherhood, reduced unplanned pregnancy, thus positively impacting infant health that forms the basis of human capital.

Chapter 4: The importance of designing adult learning and on-the-job training programs, along with their supporting institutions, that address socio-economic constraints in lifelong learning, especially those of girls and women.

Chapter 5: The various gender gaps in economic opportunities, occupational positions, legal structures, and societal norms; and the significance of reform programs and laws to allow women to obtain access and assets for their individual and households' well-being improvement (discussed extensively in the subchapter "Working Women"). Formal jobs are also promoted as providing greater lifelong learning opportunities.

Chapter 7: The need for integrated government policies and programs to realize effective social contract which will ensure early childhood development as the foundation of human capital, including maternal access to education, health, and employment, as well as formalized public care facilities.

Beside the subchapter of working women, the bulk of the keywords are found in chapters 3 and 4 on human capital and lifelong learning (which is a continuation of human capital lifelong accumulation). A closer reading of these two chapters proffers a preliminary understanding of the interwoven linkages between the bank's human capital project and the feminist concepts of social reproduction and feminization of labour. Drawing from Adam Smith's proposition, human capital is defined as "...the knowledge, skills, and health that people accumulate over their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of society" (World Bank 2019: 50). The salience of "soft skills", such as socio-behavioural and cognitive aptitudes, are also emphasized to navigate the current and future challenges implicated by technological development. In relations

to the feminist debate, both human capital and soft skills signify a value extraction from intimate, social reproductive relations, and emotional elements, historically associated with women's "experiential baggage" (Morini 2007: 40). This contextualization endows a useful framework to proceed with the WPR analysis.

More Than Just a Women Problem

The first question of this approach is the title itself: what's the problem represented to be? Through a reversal tracing of the prescribed proposals and solutions, the first step is to identify the problem those prescriptions intend to resolve, as expressed in the text (Bacchi 2009: 79). In the WDR 2019, there is a positive and linear progression between women's engagement in the formal, waged workforce with a nation-state's prosperity. Enabling and increasing women's economic participation through property rights, legal reforms, and formal jobs will lead to women's empowerment. Empowering women, in turn, "...will raise the stock of human capital in the economy" (World Bank 2019: 102). As human capital accumulates, countries become richer.

The problem with the proposed solution lies in the limitations and restrictions women must face, like gender discriminatory laws, job sector-specific gendered restrictions, gender gap in education, gender imbalances in positions of power, and women's expected responsibilities in the domestic spheres; all of which exclude women from work (World Bank 2019: 96). One aspect of this problem statement is the lack of modern formal institutions to ensure women's equal access to human capital accumulation. The other aspect of the problem, which is the exclusion of women from "work", is shown in the collocates for chapter 3, 4, and the subchapter on working women (Figure 1). As we shall see, the word "work" comes as the most frequent collocate of "women".

Figure 1: Collocates of "women" (stopwords excluded)

Rank	Freq	Freq (L)	Freq (R)	Collocates
1	27	12	15	work
2	23	17	6	men
3	13	9	4	restrictions
4	9	7	2	world

5	9	7	2	legal
6	8	8	0	young
7	8	4	4	training
8	8	6	2	returns
9	8	3	5	jobs
10	8	6	2	experience

Curiously, there is no clear definition of what is meant by the titular "work" throughout the document. It does not even mention the labour theory of value, the foundation of the neoclassical perspective of development economics. In this document, what the authors meant by "work" can be inferred only through its association with paid jobs.

These aspects of the problem statement can be interrogated further through the second question of the WPR: what presuppositions or assumptions underlie the representation of the problem? By identifying binaries, key concepts, and categories, the conceptual and theoretical propositions that base the problem representation can be mapped. Some of the key binaries that are identified throughout the focused chapters and subchapter are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Identifying Binaries

Men	women
Formal	informal
Work	non-work
productive	less/non-productive
employment	unemployment
workplace	households
wealthy	poor

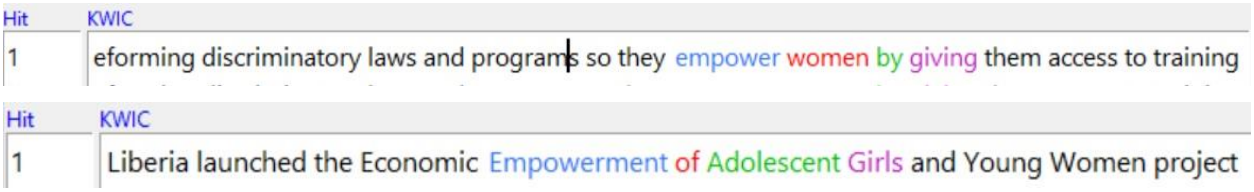
From the table, we can infer that closing the gender gap and realizing equality in the report's narrative means making women (and all the associated categories and keywords in the right

column) to become more like men (and all the associated categories and keywords in the left column) (Shiva 1989). The binaries, key categories, concepts, and premises stated in the report are within the framework of New Institutional Economics (NIE), an institutional modification of the neoclassical paradigm embraced by the World Bank since its emergence in the 1990s phase of neoliberalization (Stiglitz 1998).

NIE "...builds on, modifies, and extends neo-classical theory" (The Ronald Coase Institute, 2000), departing from the fundamental assumptions of scarcity and competition. When neoclassical economists underplay the role of institutions, NIE underlines it as preconditions for establishing effective market economy and sustainable growth. Institutions are "the rules of the game of a society … the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction" (North 1995: 54). These constraints can be categorized into two: formal rules (statute law, common law, regulations) and informal constraints (conventions and norms). These institutions are embodied in various social, political, economic, and educational organizations. In this perspective, the transition to formal institutions is encouraged. Informality - pervasive with traditions, customary relations, and all its loose ambiguity, is considered too expensive in terms of transaction cost due to their high unpredictability. Therefore, they need to be abstractly generalised and standardised to be regulated through modern contracts, property rights, laws, or projects such as the Human Capital Index. They are less uncertain, and therefore more efficient. Change enforced through formal institutions is also assumed to be more effective (North 1995; Babayev 2015).

The authors' views on gender equality are embedded within this paradigm, believing that promoting gender equality and women's empowerment will contribute to enhanced productivity and growth - also known as the "smart economics". The World Bank is a well-known advocate of this approach, commonly referred in the development literature as Women in Development (WID) discourse. Like the title suggests, WID prefers to integrate women into "development" without problematising the development discourse itself. Its analysis focuses on the gender gaps in economic, social, and political opportunities. Following the NIE assumptions, WID believes that the starting point of change and challenging "traditional" gender norms should be reform in "modern" formal institutions. WID's roots in liberal feminism can be seen through the centrality of education and equal opportunity programs to eliminate customary expectations and relations that disadvantage women (Razavi and Miller, 1995).

Figure 3: "Empower" and "empowerment" concordance



The Dominance of NIE and WID

The third question of the WPR approach asks: how has this representation of the problem come about? This is to identify the conditions that allow a particular problem representation to rise and become a dominant narrative (Bacchi 2009).

The historical conditions that allow the rise and dominance of NIE cannot be separated from the mutation of neoliberal capitalism. The Washington Consensus and Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) entailed a policy package of liberalization, deregulation, and privatization. In the words of the World Bank senior vice president and chief economist of that time, Joseph Stiglitz, the Washington Consensus "...focused on privatization, but paid too little attention to the institutional infrastructure that is required to make markets work" (Stiglitz 1998). In the era of the post-Washington Consensus, the state's role as a regulatory institution is not minimized but promoted. However, the logic of the state is realigned and subsumed within neoliberal governance to facilitate market efficiency, competition, and growth (Babayev 2015).

The prevailing hegemony of WID in mainstream development and financial institutions is also related with these phases of neoliberalization. As Fraser (2009) analysed, the second-wave feminism that criticized capitalism in its androcentric, paternalistic state-managed form has become "a handmaiden of neoliberal capitalism" (Fraser 2013) that promotes free-market litany and individual-entrepreneurial ethos. Feminism's critique of the "family wage" and its male breadwinner-female homemaker dichotomy, for example, is re-articulated to justify flexible labour regimes and recruitment of women into the (low) waged labour force. The critique of economism and class-centric analysis through the valorisation of "the personal is political" is appropriated and reduced into individualist identity celebration, throwing economic redistribution and structural concerns out of focus. It is through this historical dynamic that feminism, despite the movement's achievement on the issues of recognition and representation, lacks questioning the macro political-economy structures that underpin the development discourse.

Layers of Silence, Alternatives at Point Zero

The final strategies in the WPR are to identify what is left unproblematic and silenced in the problem representation, and what discursive and material effects it produces. Finally, we can explore other alternative ways to represent and think about the problem (Bacchi 2009).
Acknowledging this essay's limited space, and the cruciality of "work" and "human capital" in the report, I choose to focus on their common link of social reproduction.

The main silencing, I noted, is the absence of a clear conceptualisation of what is meant by work (as previously mentioned) and capital, as well as the relationship between them. The report appropriates Karl Marx and John Maynard Keynes' quotations in the first two opening sentences (World Bank 2019: 2). It also uses Diego Rivera's painting as its visual stock and acknowledges that he is a communist (World Bank 2019: 96). However, capitalism, being the major preoccupation of the three personalities - Marx and Rivera criticizing it, while Keynes discusses the state management of it - is only mentioned once. Quoting Schumpeter out of the broader context of his work, "capitalism" is naturalized to justify the negative impacts of technological development for the socially disadvantaged groups by saying that "Capitalism requires 'the perennial gale of creative destruction'" (Schumpeter 1942 in World Bank 2019: 36). Although unsurprising coming from an institution like the World Bank, this repetitive silence is deafening and should not be normalized, since analysing capitalism as a historically specific mode of production enables us to scrutinize the capital-worker/labour nexus.

Regarding gender relations, patriarchy as a system of oppression is not mentioned either. The overemphasis on the economic and "business case" for gender equality silences the understanding of gender as systemic relations and processes that intersect with others, including the accumulation processes of capitalism supported by NIE (Berik 2017; Razavi 2017). The origin of capitalism itself is intertwined with patriarchy. It relies upon subordination, housewifisation, and destruction of women's non-modern knowledge (Mies 1986; Federici 2004), in which the treatment of social reproduction as "non-work" is central to the patriarchal-capitalist historical evolution. Before delving further into that, it is interesting to check the alternative definition of social reproduction proposed by the feminist scholars of Social Reproduction Theory (SRT) and see its striking resemblance and interconnection with human capital concept used in the document. Brenner and Laslett (1991 in Bhattacharya 2017) suggest that social reproduction involves,

> [...] the activities and attitudes, behaviors and emotions, and responsibilities and relationships directly involved in maintaining life, on a daily basis and intergenerationally. It involves various kinds of socially necessary work—mental, physical, and emotional—aimed at providing the historically and socially, as well as biologically, defined means for maintaining and reproducing population. Among other things, social reproduction includes how food, clothing, and shelter are made available for immediate consumption, how the maintenance and socialization of children is accomplished, how care of the elderly and infirm is provided, and how sexuality is socially constructed.

This definition recognizes that social reproduction is socially necessary *work*. Social reproductive work is necessary as it reproduces human labour, enabling her to do "productive" work that formally creates surplus value (Bhattacharya 2017).

On the other hand, the WDR conceptually frames this same range of activities under "human capital", focusing more on how to invest in, measure, accumulate, and index the result, as shown in the concordance table. Hence, this report does not problematize modern capitalist logic and attitude, as well as the gendered social differentiation resulting from that political-economic framework.

Figure 4: "Human capital" concordance

Hit	KWIC
1	overlooked, by generating higher incomes, human capital accelerates the demographic transition and redu
2	nomies—countries become richer as more human capital accumulates. Human capital complements phys
3	shortages. *** Work is the next venue for human capital accumulation after school. Poorer economies ha
4	an important role to play in fostering human capital acquisition. Many disadvantaged families want
5	netric to benchmark certain components of human capital across countries.25 The new index measures
6	technology is changingpeople with higher human capital adapt faster to technological change. Indeed,
7	ing at home.12 These individual returns to human capital add up to large benefits for
8	world without improving the individuals." Human capital also fosters social capital. Surveys typically
9	to human capital. Many existing indexes of human capital and human development resort to arbitrary
10	and scale of interventions required to build human capital are not the same from country
11	a vital role to play in building human capital: as providers of health, education, and
12	learning. As the nature of work changes, human capital becomes more important. Yet significant gaps
13	government is fully willing to invest in human capital. Both Peru and Vietnam have implemented

Finally, the contradictory sacrosanct of the whole document's problem-solution progression is their refusal to acknowledge that social reproductive work, mostly performed by women in the domestic spheres with informal arrangements and no payment, is work. In the report,

the collocates of “care”, “child-rearing”, and “learning” use the words “responsibilities” and “activities” to limit and silence any understanding of social reproduction as “work”. Here, NIE and WID reinforce the capitalist logic by categorizing anything outside the formal waged labour regime and market as “non-work”, hence providing neither value, productivity, nor lifelong learning opportunities. It is interlinked with the patriarchal logic, that if women do not engage in waged work, they must depend on men’s wage, providing a reason for men to subordinate them. Here, the World Bank’s point zero problematisation that “women are often excluded from work” is deconstructed.

For better or worse, the WDR 2019’s assertion in this matter is intriguing. Nowadays, even well-known neoliberal development agencies such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have recognized women’s unpaid social reproductive work in their gender mainstreaming program and assessment (IFAD 2016; FAO 2019). Under the directorship of Shahra Razavi, a salient proponent of Gender and Development (GAD) framework, the UN Women’s 2019-2020 report on family challenges WID by not only recognizing social reproduction work, but also dedicates a chapter to analyse care work, its commodification, and the limits of neoliberal austerity policies in addressing the complication.

As one of the most hegemonic multilateral institutions, the World Bank’s positioning is worrying since it translates into policies that devalue and normalise the unpaid/underpaid reproductive work. By recruiting women labour in the name of empowerment and equality, it will unevenly add more burdens to women from precarious backgrounds. Forcing women to work more and longer, WDR 2019 ironically betrays its own narrative that current technological advancement and flexibility have a positive impact for the future of work.

Conclusion

The WDR 2019 framing around gender relations traced through the WPR and content analysis in this essay shows that gender equality and women empowerment is subjugated under mainstream economic development discourses, informed by NIE and WID. Understanding the report’s ways of silencing, alternatives and counter-narratives to challenge the dominant representation can be thought from the report’s problematic problematization which views anything outside the capitalist waged labour regime as “non-work”. Due to space limitation, this paper does not elaborate much

about modernity, central in the NIE conceptualisation of institutions and capitalist development and various other aspects of gendered experience. Further discussion on these matters can be future interesting entry points to read the text.

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A Story of Un-learning the Epistemic Privileges of a 'Knowing-Subject' and the (Im)possibility of Becoming Transitional Allies

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Introduction

Berlin is celebrating 30 years since the fall of the Berlin Wall and 'German unification.' Meanwhile, a global pandemic is deepening the colonial divide, which has differentially dismembered us through histories of colonization and racial dualistic hierarchization (Roshanravan 2018: 162). Emboldened right-wing extremists, alongside others scorning life, recently stormed the Bundestag (German federal parliament), raising the German imperial flag. As the violent logics of patriarchal capitalist-coloniality become more ferocious and visceral, socially and epistemically privileged feminists committed to social justice must ask 'ourselves' whether 'our' practices contribute to the cultivation of politics otherwise, "beyond these deathly logics of being and knowing" (Motta and Seppälä 2016: 6). The dominant politics of knowledge in Berlin's gender studies departments is constituted by the erasure of racialized women*[29] as knowers, which legitimizes colonial logics of domination, exploitation, and destitution (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2016; Motta 2018: 8–9). "Whose knowledge counts, whose politics matter and who gets to be part of [German (her)stories]" (Emejulu and Sobande 2019: 6)? The epistemic grounds for these questions have long been cultivated by local communities in resistance. Entering dialogue with decolonial feminist researchers-activists engaged in Berlin-based collectives, I seek to demonstrate to privileged white German academic feminists that 'we' must become attentive to modernity's exteriority and listen across the colonial difference to cultivate transitions for social justice. To "change the terms of the violent conversation" (Motta 2016: 34) that renders feminists of colour absent, 'we' must recognize 'their' feminist interventions as philosophical and as defying assimilation. This requires un-learning dominant knowledge subjectivities and practices (Motta 2016: 44). In this essay, my guiding question is: ***(How) Can white German academic feminists un-learn the epistemic privileges of a 'knowing-subject' complicit in the silencing of the racialized 'other' to become transitional allies?***

In the following, I delineate the beginning of my journey of un-learning the self-attributed

[29] The asterisk (women*) connotes the historical constitution of gender and leaves room for the self-positioning and self-identification beyond normative, binary classifications (Piesche 2019: 136).

epistemic privileges of a 'knowing-subject,' from my position of being implicated in the erasure of (hi)stories and knowledges as a white German feminist. Attentive to my historically situated locus of enunciation, I focus on the *why* and the *how* of my research, asking 'what is this knowledge for?' and 'how can I contribute to the possibility of an ethical life?' Following Icaza (forthcoming: 7–8), I present vignettes as dialogical auto-ethnographic reflections in which feminist politics of knowledge is thought-sensed from the embodied experience of the "un-learning and/or refusal to reproduce epistemic privileges of a 'subject' that interprets and represents reality" (Icaza forthcoming: 8). This opens the possibility of exposing and critically rethinking the "self-ascribed [epistemic] privileges of the West *knowing subject*" (Woons and Weier cited in Icaza forthcoming: 6–7). Simultaneously, the process of un-learning 'knowing-subjectivity' may open possibilities of knowing otherwise and becoming transitional allies (Icaza forthcoming: 7). This essay understands experience and theory as intermeshed and weaves ideas and affective, emotional, and embodied understandings (Aguilar and Icaza forthcoming: 1; Everingham and Motta 2020: 10–1).

Un-learning the Epistemic Privilege of 'Knowing-Subjectivity'

What is the knowledge cultivated through my journey of dialogically un-learning the epistemic privileges of 'knowing-subjectivity' for? This question will accompany me throughout my research, as I attempt to move from a 'knowing-subject' complicit in epistemicides to a transitional ally by refusing and laying bare the epistemic privileges reproduced in white-dominated gender studies departments in Berlin. By listening to decolonial feminist interventions, I become attentive to the coloniality constituting dominant white academic feminist knowledge production, which erases resisting knowledges and experiences of the underside of modernity.

"I can't breathe," expresses decolonial feminist Vanessa E. Thompson (2020) in an online panel discussion[1] on the recent waves of antiracist protests across cities in Germany. Seated in my room, I listen. "I can't breathe is a historical, epistemological, and enfleshed experience that traverses the lives of people of colour." She recounts Fanon's equation of breathing under colonialism with "combat breathing": "Gasping for breath, shortness of breath, suffocation, panic attack." As I listen to her words, my chest is constricting and my breath flattening. The familiar feeling of anxiety. I try to breathe slowly, deeply. We are breathing coloniality—*the process of domination, exploitation, and destruction of worlds, earth and ways of knowing-being that is the underside of modernity* (Maldonado-Torres 2007: 243). "The impossibility of breathing for the colonized has survived colonization" (Thompson 2020, online panel). Confined. Drowned. Raped. Murdered. Silenced. *Resisting*. As I am writing this, my heartbeat is throbbing in my chest. I remember the fire raging in my dreams and the blood pouring down my knee as we were running from gunshots. Silence. The killings of racialized and feminized 'others' in Germany, on Europe's shores, and in global territories remain silenced and un-mourned. Taking a breath, I feel deeply implicated in the suffocation of different ways of being and knowing as a white German feminist endowed with epistemic and social privilege. How is my freedom, emancipation, and safety entangled with the incarceration, disenfranchisement, and insecurity of racialized 'others'? How are my forms of becoming 'somebody' (a researcher, a 'gender expert') implicated in the subjugation of 'others'? (Vázquez 2019: 3) How can my speech be an "act of suffocation" of other ways of knowing-being (Motta 2018: 13, 26)? When the meeting ends, there is only silence. Breathing deeply, I feel the silence pulsating in my veins. Silenced histories. My implication in these silences. I catch my breath.

This vignette describes my embodied experience of entering dialogue with decolonial researchers-activists in Germany and listening to words spoken from the colonial difference—the epistemic locations subjugated by and resisting modernity/coloniality (Mignolo 2017: 14). It gives a glimpse into the embeddedness of the incarnated, fleshly existence of bodies in coloniality, where the simple act of breathing is rendered impossible for the colonized (Icaza forthcoming: 6). It also touches on my "embodied consciousness" (Icaza forthcoming: 6) as I become aware of my location at the privileged, perpetrating site of the colonial difference. Although we breathe it every day,

coloniality is concealed, the dehumanization and resistance of racialized women* silenced in Berlin's gender studies. Positioned as the 'knowing-subject' in moments of my academic and professional life, I have often failed to refuse Monologue and to centre colonial entanglements. The feminist 'knowing-subject' reproduces modernity's onto-epistemological logics and rationalities through her incapacity to listen across difference and to relate through and with difference. In her Monological speech, she breathes hastily, is unable to listen, and stifles the life-preserving, life-regenerating breath of others. She is thus implicated in the social and epistemological erasure and non-being of the racialized 'other,' "whose words are reduced to fiction" (Motta 2018: 27).

I listen to the podcast of a conversation with Jennifer Kamau and Denise Garcia Bergt, who are the founding members of the self-organized anti-racist feminist collective International Women* Space in Berlin (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). The collective emerged from an autonomous women*'s space created during a refugee movement's squatting of a school in Berlin-Kreuzberg. They have since engaged in communal learning and self-education, the self-organization of a feminist library and conferences, and solidarity action with racialized refugee, migrant, and non-migrant women*. They have self-published several books carrying their testimonies and stories "in [their] own words" (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). Their book *We Exist, We Are Here* tells stories of struggle and resistance of racialized women*. Asked what the words "We exist, we are here" mean to them, Kamau explains: "We want to take the spaces, claiming and projecting our presence" (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). They speak about continuously being silenced and erased. About not being given platforms. About layers of trauma "that is ongoing and keeps being silenced" (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). The trauma of living colonialism and its legacies across ancestral and geographical lines. The colonial wound that is still bleeding. Remembering Rita Awour Ojunge, a migrant woman murdered near her refugee camp Höhenleipisch in 2019, they explain that her death and the denied justice for her murder are the result of "negligence that we experience from the structures that exist here" (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). Negligence. Silence. Erasure. As I listen, I feel the heaviness of my body, the impact of their words. But I also sense their enfleshed power (Motta 2018: 38).

These women*'s epistemologies and politics give a glimpse into everything dominant feminist 'knowing-subjectivity' erases (Motta 2018: 38). A subjectivity constituted by the denial of 'their' existence and the disavowal of 'their' epistemological difference (Motta 2016: 8). The racialized woman* only becomes visible when she speaks in the master's tongue; otherwise, she is denied (Motta 2018: 26). Her experience is excluded from the realm of intelligibility, rendered unspeakable in Berlin's gender studies (Motta 2018: 36). These women* are telling their stories in their own words and ask 'us' to "dare to listen" (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019). Thereby, they resist being absorbed into the Monological logics of 'knowing-subjectivity' that cannot listen, that assimilates and renders 'them' absent as knowing beings (Motta 2018: 5, 39).

Silences and erasures ≠ total eradication. Silencing hides and intends to eradicate knowledges spoken in tongues that are untameable and sovereign, resisting eradication. (Motta 2018; Ureña 2019: 1649; Mignolo and Vázquez 2013)

Listening to the women*'s words, I revisit a central concern of my research. How does dominant white feminist knowledge production in Berlin conceal the exteriority of modernity and reproduce colonial wounds?—*the living memory of the destruction of land, lifeworlds, and ways of knowing-being from which unassimilable knowledge is cultivated* (Ureña 2019: 1649; Vázquez 2011: 28; Gill et al. 2012: 11). I understand my research as "daring to listen" across the colonial difference and to the living memory of the colonial wound. This means centring the concrete embodied-enfleshed knowledges cultivated by feminists of colour, who resist dehumanization by patriarchal capitalist-coloniality. Thereby, 'they' begin unravelling the violent erasures constituting dominant white feminist knowledge production (Icaza forthcoming: 5; Lugones 2020: 44). Un-learning my 'knowing-subjectivity' is integral to this journey, to understand how 'we' as privileged white feminists reproduce the logic of coloniality, which hides and effaces ways of knowing-being that do not belong to modernity's genealogy. How 'we' silence the plurality of alternatives (Mignolo and Vázquez 2013; Ureña 2019: 1654). I remember many moments in which I 'translated' the realities and unassimilable knowledge cultivated at the colonial difference into modernity's framework of intelligibility (Vázquez 2011: 27). When I attempted to 'translate' the politics of the Black German feminist movement into dominant feminist frameworks, I felt that 'their' feminist theorizing/praxis could not be encapsulated. Indeed, I felt that such a 'translation'

would erase 'their' enactment of radical alternatives and their fundamental questioning of "the dominant ways of thinking and ordering of the real" (Icaza and Vázquez 2013: 683).

"Translation" = erasure. A mechanism through which modernity demarcates and fortifies its epistemic territory. Through assimilation or exclusion, it renders absent everything that does not fit into its horizon of intelligibility. (Vázquez 2011: 32; Motta 2018: 13)

Through the self-determined cultivation of knowledge, Black feminists in Germany disrupt the epistemic order that normalizes and conceals the domination of racialized women* (Eggers 2011: 195–6).

> *"Over and over again*
> *there are those who are*
> *dismembered, sold off and distributed*
> *those who are always are, were, and shall remain the 'others'*
> *over and over again*
> *the actual others declare themselves*
> *the only real ones*
> *over and over again*
> *the actual others declare on us*
> *war"*
> —Excerpt from May Opitz's (later Ayim) poem "Blues in Black and White" (1992: 232), translated by Tina Campt

War. Combat breathing. Our breaths are entangled. When I speak over, for, I cannot listen. I silence. I suffocate the possibility for life. (How) Can I move from the indolence of arrogant perception to an ethics of responsibility and a knowing otherwise (Lugones 1987: 18; Aguilar and Icaza forthcoming: 4)? (How) Can I become a transitional ally?

Un-learning and the (Im)possibility of Becoming Transitional Allies

Following the Transitions for Social Justice Lab course's core guiding question, I ask whether and how my un-learning of the epistemic privileges of 'knowing-subjectivity' can "contribute to the

possibility of an ethical life in a world that is deeply divided between those who consume and those who are consumed?" I present tentative ideas that may guide the dialogical journey of becoming a transitional ally.

Refusing Monologue—Entering Dialogue

The Monological subject speaks for and silences the 'other' in an "act of suffocation" (Motta 2018: 26–7). She either assimilates or eliminates (Motta 2016: 35; Gill et al. 2012: 11). Through her white gaze, she consumes, categorizes, contains, and tames the 'other' and enforces modernity's epistemic regime (Trejo Mendez 2016). Encloses. Reduces reality to representation (Vázquez 2019: 4). The 'knowing-subject' loses the capacity to listen; to relate through and with difference (Motta 2018: 27).

> *"Dare to listen."* (Castro Varela & Diallo 2019)

My research is an attempt to refuse this Monological subjectivity. I enter dialogue with decolonial feminist researchers-activists and seek to listen across the colonial difference. Listening across, I refuse my "epistemological habit of erasing" the colonial difference (Lugones 2010: 742) and of translating the cultivated "untameable knowledge" into modernity's horizon of intelligibility (Motta 2018; Ureña 2019: 1649; Vázquez 2011: 27). Dialogue means becoming receptive to radically different ways of knowing-being and embracing not-knowing and uncertainty as fundamental questioning of the real (Aguilar and Icaza forthcoming: 3). Moving away from an authoritative, separating, appropriative gaze, listening may create the conditions for relating otherwise (Vázquez 2019: 5). It may build spaces to "bear witness and remember" (Motta 2016: 44) and become aware of 'our' multiple entanglements and connected histories. Listening means "letting ourselves be transformed without ceasing to be what we are" (Aguilar and Icaza forthcoming: 5), which to me means "embracing the 'other'" (forthcoming: 5), while remaining aware of my implication in coloniality, of the entrenched colonial ways of being-knowing that I embody (Mack and Na'puti 2019: 354). I understand this duality as integral to transitional allyship.

Refusing Separability—Thinking-Sensing Through Feminist Entanglements

I understand the dominant academic feminist politics of knowledge in Berlin as ruled by the

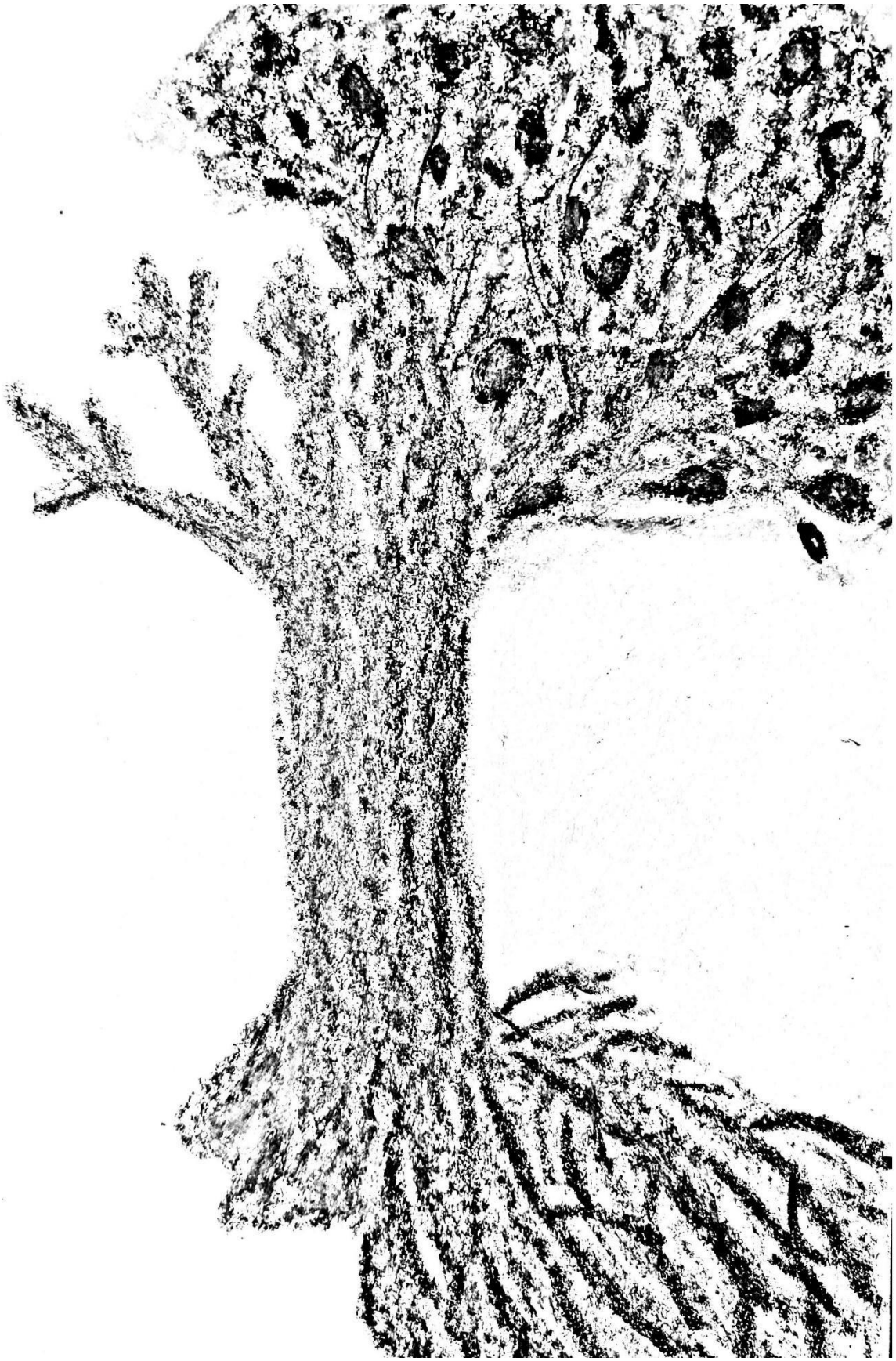
modern principle of separability (Silva 2016: 63). This principle reproduces the social in terms of separate, independent units rather than an entangled and interdependent whole. Perceived as spatio-temporally disparate, the units are measured against the Eurocentric notions of humanity, gender, and knower (Silva 2016: 63). Feminists of colour are perceived in terms of conservative particularity, victims without voice, or adherents to illusive "identity politics" who have nothing to contribute but "pre-theoretical raw material" (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2016: 4; Bilge 2013: 412; Motta and Seppälä 2016: 6). I connect this with Lugones' (1987) analysis of white women*'s failure of identification with women* of colour as "the manifestation of the 'relation'": ignorance, indifference, ostracization, erasure (Lugones 1987: 7; Motta 2018: 10). This failure of identification is the result of an "arrogant perception" (Lugones 1987: 18).

From my situated understanding, leaving behind arrogant perception requires becoming attentive to our entanglements across the colonial difference. Understanding how my well-being as a white German woman is historically entangled with the disenfranchisement of the racialized 'other.' How my epistemic and social privileges are entangled with the epistemic erasure and "social death" of the 'other' (Motta 2018: 26–7). How "we are fully dependent on each other for the possibility of being understood" (Lugones 1987: 8). I understand dialogically thinking-sensing through entanglements as an opening, as a possibility for breaking with a 'knowing-subjectivity' founded on violent separation. Moving from a complicity in enclosure, fragmentation, and dismemberment, transitional allyship may nurture relational forms of being, through an ethics of responsibility and capacity for compassion (Alexander 2005: 306; Aguilar and Icaza forthcoming: 4; Chávez and Vázquez 2017: 41). Finally, transitional allyship is aligned with concrete decolonial and anti-colonial feminist struggles in Berlin, whose prefigurative epistemologies and politics are breaking from the enclosure and deficiencies of modernity/coloniality and are revealing its *beyond*.

Nurturing Alternatives?

Un-learning 'knowing-subjectivity'
That silences. Erases. Suffocates. (Motta 2018: 26)
becoming transitional allies *beyond*
Monologue.
Learning to listen across difference,
becoming transitional allies *beyond*

the individualized, atomic, indolent self—
learning interconnectedness and entanglement?
Wholeness. (Alexander 2005: 306–7)
Beyond the modern temporal confines of contemporaneity—
learning "deep temporality" (Chávez and Vázquez 2017: 43; Vázquez 2018: 100)?
An active relation to time in which
people have lived, suffered, resisted.
The living memory of the colonial wound
raises fundamental questions of
justice (Vázquez 2018: 100).
Nurturing an awareness of
multiple ways of knowing-being, multiple tongues, *beyond*
modern boundaries of intelligibility (Motta 2016: 44–5; Sitrin 2012: 61)?
Can 'we' demarcate and historically situate
dominant feminist knowledge production?
Reveal its erasure of
epistemologies and politics *otherwise,*
defying modern/colonial logics?
Can 'we' nurture the ground for
alternatives beyond these deathly logics? (Motta and Seppälä 2016: 6)



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The Long March of Protests and Resistance: A Transition Toward Debt-Free Agrarian Systems

By Karishma Shelar, AFES, India

On 21 March 2018, a stream of bodies engulfed the streets of India's financial capital, Mumbai, demanding a reparation from the abusive and exploitive state regime which has corrupted their lands, assaulted their rightful access to resources and stripped them of their dignity and right to life. The sweltering summers, bleeding feet and minimum nourishment for those who nurture the land to nourish other bodies did not deter their grit and determination. More than forty thousand peasants and landless embarked two-hundred-kilometers on a foot march to protest atrocities on their lands and bodies. The other bodies residing within the sparkling glass façade of the corporate capital city remained oblivious to the marchers and nurturers, to the very bodies from whose blood, soil and hands they consume and flourish.

The geographies occupied by the two set of bodies while juxtaposing in this territory were spaces of unequal exchange, of power and control, of ruthless expropriation and violence by one over the other. The urban agglomeration of Mumbai does not merely house the state legislature, a democratic institution elected to rule and regulate human and non-human bodies, it embodies a history of other travelled bodies and of their brutal occupation and corporatization of land and the environment. The red flags and the Gandhi caps which adorned the nurturers were not a fluke spectacle. The red is not merely symbolic of the Marxist party of India under which the protest marches have been organized. It is representative of the gruesome atrocities and the bloodshed dawned upon bodies of the oppressed peasants, workers, the landless and women by capitalist regimes of the state, corporates and socially powerful castes, classes and gender. The interweaving of spaces, bodies, identities and histories marks the stories of the *kisan* (farmer) marches which have burgeoned across India.

A thousand kilometers away, in the state of Chhattisgarh with predominantly indigenous communities, the *jal*, *jangal* and *zameen* (water, forest and land) movement has for more than a decade protesting state violence on indigenous bodies and lands. In 2018, farmers from across the country have made the long and treacherous travel to New Delhi, the upper echelon of state power to bring to the fore the agrarian distraught among the communities. Female bodies widowed and exploited by socio-economic, political and ecological hierarchies of power have congregated to bring to light the gendered violence of agrarian distress. Each of these marches and the bodies that

make up the marches are gut wrenching stories of loss, pain, violence, coercion and destruction. Financial debt forms a critical source of agrarian distress and credit-debt relations reflect social, political, economic, ecological and historical power hierarchies.

Figure 1: *Kisan Long March, Mumbai.* (Photo Credit: Parth M.N.)

I interact with these bodies and listen to their stories recorded, dispersed and retold through several mediums such as podcasts, videos, news reports and academia. But as I respond to academic commitments such as this piece of knowledge production, I acknowledge and question my positionality as a social science researcher in framing stories which put such bodies as harmed and trampled upon without providing a space to such bodies to produce knowledge which is not disdainful towards them (Tuck and Yang 2014: 277). According to (Tuck and Yang 2014), "a settler colonial ideology holds the wounded body as more engrossing than the body that is not wounded" (2014:227).

With utmost humility, I will use the blank space which I have the privilege to fill with stories of resistance from the anti-debt struggles of female bodies part of agrarian communities. I also acknowledge my privilege here as an upper class and upper caste urban bred body who stands in deep solidarity *with* resistance against social injustices such as debt enslavement and anti-debt

movements.

For the purpose of this academic commitment, this essay has been organized into co-creating knowledge *with* the female bodies mutilated by the burden of debt and their relations to the land as nurturers and social reproducers, their resistance towards such debt by participating in women-based collectives and if a transition to debt-free state must be imbibed as a core value as we think through transitions for social justice. Finally, I draw out a brief reflection on my positionality in producing knowledge about such bodies ethically and collectively through my research processes.

Doomed to Debt

Unable to repay their financial debts, over three hundred thousand farmers have committed suicide in India between 1991 and 2016 (Panditrao Ghunnar and Bhatt Hakhu 2018: 47). The rising incidence of indebtedness among the farmers and those whose livelihoods are directly dependent upon lands is attributed to increasing corporatization of agriculture in India and loss of autonomy and sovereignty over agricultural practices, lands, natural resources and forests (Mohanty 2016). The state's response to India's agricultural crisis is bent on pursuing neoliberal responses such as furthering privatization, corporatization and expanding institutional credit to the farmers and the landless through state-based mechanisms (Shiva and Jalees 2006; Shiva 2016b, 2016a). This has further burdened the agrarian communities not just financially, but also physically and emotionally causing an irreparable sense of loss and grief which social structures and state mechanisms are inept to heal.

Take for example the case of privatization of seeds and hence the loss of food diversity and localized knowledge of food systems. Traditionally, women have autonomously protected and preserved seeds which allowed for them to decide on the choice of crops based on indigenous knowledge of geographical conditions. This also helped protect and ensure food security in the community and households at the time of climatic uncertainties such as droughts and floods (Shiva and Jalees 2006). The onset of hybrid seed varieties propagated by corporations not only led to the loss of this traditional function performed by communities, it also caused homogenization of food varieties and damage to the environment since these seeds were water intensive as compared to the more traditional varieties preserved by the communities. Further, homogenization of food has caused loss of nourishment and nutrition among communities (Agarwal 1989). This has also led

to a loss of food self-sufficiency among communities since it required them to engage directly in markets to make profits to repay the debt undertaken to purchase seeds, dig deeper borewells to access groundwater and additional investments in pesticides and fertilizers (Shiva 2016b).

This burgeoning debt crisis which forced suicides of farmers is rooted in the colonial agrarian history of India which dates to the nineteenth century to serve the commercial interests of the British East India Company, when traditional food crops were replaced by cash crops such as cotton and indigo (Klein 2008: 734). In post-colonial India, colonial agrarian practices continued through the advent of Green Revolution, further assaulting lands and bodies associated with agricultural practices amongst communities (Shiva 2016b).

Feminization of Debt

The issue of farmer suicides then is an assault on the bodies of those who produce the food to nurture and nourish not just other bodies but also the environment. The suicides are not merely familial emotional losses but cause severe trauma to households and importantly to women (Padhi 2009; Panditrao Ghunnar and Bhatt Hakhu 2018). They are now burdened with the responsibility to repay the debt inherited from the indebted members of the household but will also have additional responsibility to reproduce the household, through care and nourishment of the children, elderly, land and the community. Further, the non-payment of such a debt could cause loss of land and autonomy over their agency to adjudge the employment of their labour (Padhi 2009).

High level of indebtedness among the agrarian households also forces migration of the male bodies to urban centers for employment which is alienated from their lands and their traditional occupations, leaving behind women with the sole responsibility of the farmland (Mosse D. *et al.* 2002). However, under the colonial state induced systems of defining agrarian roles and responsibilities, with no title to the land, women are recognized as merely agricultural workers and not farmers, further obstructing their rightful recognition to the land they care for and nourish (Agarwal 1994).

Common lands are also critical spaces for women since they contribute in the form of food, fuel and fodder for the reproduction of the household (Agarwal 1989). Loss of common land inadvertently impacts communities. Over the past decade, there is a tendency of corporatizing the protection of commons by entities such as the World Bank as compared to allowing communities to build the necessary arrangements for protecting the commons (Caffentzis and Federici 2014:

i97). Further, the non-recognition of the state of the rights of communities to forest resources and forest lands also forms a part of the colonization project by the state to obstruct the rights of indigenous communities to their traditional lands. This allows the state to be able to exploit such land for extractive purposes of mining, industrial expansion and urbanization (CFRLA 2016). By not recognizing the rights of communities to common property resources and common land, the state institutionalizes systems of oppression against the indigenous communities and uses brute force and violence for eviction from their ancestral land (Kumar and Kerr 2012). The loss of commons, thus, unleashes violence against women and the environment by state-bred capitalist regimes.

Decolonizing Debt

According to Rolando Vasquez then, from the perspective of decolonization, "justice has to do with a recognition of what has happened, what needs to be healed, what cannot be forgotten, because we are all implicated in histories of injustice" (Kunstlicht 2018: 101). The women at the protest marches then are not merely demanding a reparation from the state but are resisting state atrocities and those of unequal social structures and relations of exploitation to their bodies, those of their communities and to the land. The women are demanding that historical injustices be undone, and a loan waiver is a first step towards the formation of debt-free agrarian systems.

The urban geographies where the women have conglomerated are not merely spectators to the plight of agrarian classes. They have contributed to the atrocities of the bodies of those engaged in nourishing the land by way of their consumption patterns and indulgences of state supported capitalist systems of production and their ignorance to the plight of the agrarian communities.

Agrarian problems emerging then are a result of the colonial past that must be disbanded (Plumwood 2012: 1). As part of the anti-debt struggle, several localized and decentralized movements have flourished toward the building of anti-debt alternatives. Women self-help groups are demanding an abolishment of micro-finance institutions which exploit by way of high rates of interest and harassment by collecting agents and offer no leeway even in times of crisis such as climate calamities (Bureau 2017; Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) 2017).

This is also then an opportunity for us to reconceptualize and revision our relationship to food (Plumwood 2012: 18). Navdanya supports localized seed banks to protect indigenous varieties of seeds which is looked upon as a form of civil disobedience to protest high handedness

of the state in controlling the distribution of seeds (Kloppenburg 2014; Trauger 2018: 106). Similarly, there are several women groups which have undertaken the practice of collective farming by way of land pooling to overcome the issue of land titles and patriarchal systems of oppression which prevent women from making decisions on issues related to agricultural practices on family farms (Agarwal 2018, 2019).

These practices are an opportunity for women to cultivate alternative forms of practices which allows them to nurture and protect the lands, their indigenous knowledge systems and their rights and access to resources, restore food sovereignty and food security in the communities and the households. The alternatives and the resistance movements are seeking a way to replenish the harm inflicted upon natural systems and protecting traditional forms of agricultural practices. These are alternatives to the current systems of recommended structural reforms by the state that only reinforce existing capitalist regimes. The role of commons, communities, women and autonomous spaces must be emphasized in ensuring a socially just transition to agrarian practices. It is then extremely critical that "autonomous spaces from which to reclaim control over the conditions of our reproduction, and as bases from which to counter the processes of enclosure and increasingly disentangle our lives from the market and the state" (Caffentzis and Federici 2014: i101).

Conclusion

The *kisan* (farmer) protests are a form of epistemologies of the south framework as proposed by (Escobar 2016: 14) where safeguarding of lands of indigenous communities is part of ontological struggles and as part of a pluriverse where multiple knowledge systems exist. Such struggles are then part of an effort by communities to protect their common territories and their historical ancestral connections to the lands they toiled on and have protected. The current state regimes propagate forms of modernity, neoliberalism, fascism and homogenization of knowledge. They desire to tarnish and destroy indigenous knowledge systems and the other ways of knowing, preserving and caring which is not mainstreamed and profit oriented. Such decentralized and localized knowledge systems also oppose "human dominance" (Escobar 2016: 20) over corporatizing and branding of nature.

Through my research, I hope to take utmost care for imbibing the principal of refusal through "words—for resistance, reclaiming, recovery, reciprocity, repatriation and regeneration"

(Tuck and Yang 2014: 244). Even as I work towards highlighting the drudgery of debt among agrarian communities and women, I will acknowledge my positionality as a social science researcher who has not embodied the experiences of debt and inflicted social injustices from debt, but stands in solidarity with those have been affected and pained as they speak and share their stories.

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Female Masculinities: Implicating IAAF's Sport Regulations and Policing in Society

By Taiwo Racheal Adetunji, GDP, Nigeria

Female Masculinity: a floating category, rued by the society, ascribed a pseudo-masculine stance within lesbian circle and a sore in feminist lens – Taiwo Adetunji *(2020)*

Abstract

Generally, sports have always been reserved for men. Such sport includes football, athletic display, wrestling to mention but a few. However, from the 80's, more women have gone into sport defying what the society thinks or believes and excel in this area (Elsas et al. 2000: 249). Due to the successes of these women, more and more questions kept surfacing about the abilities of these women to not only thrive but succeed exceedingly in these sports. While these questions translated into the beginning of regulatory policies established by those (men) in power to either restrict women from competing or subject their bodies to several demeaning scrutiny (Elsas et al. 2000: 250). The society on the other hand openly display hostility towards masculine women either by labelling or even policing them publicly particularly in bathrooms (Halberstam 1998: 20). Labelling in the sense of calling them names such as man, unescaped tomboy, wannabe male and policing them within the sport's sphere. This paper seeks to unravel the connection between female masculinity and sport's regulation particularly those that inspects masculinity found in female athletes. I will use the case study of Annete Negesa, a Ugandan, to explain implications of such policing and how it affects certain bodies.

Introduction

Masculinity and sport have one thing in common – they are men's domain. The first gender policy was established in 1946 by the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) to derive proof from participants that they are in fact females by providing medical certificate (Anawalt et. al 2019). By 1966 during the European Athletics Championship, female athletes were subjected to a visual examination of their genitals (Heggie 2010:160). Athlete Maren Sidler said, 'you stand in front of the examiners naked and they just look at you while you wait for them to make a decision' (Heggie 2010:160). In the same year, during the Commonwealth Games in Jamaica,

manual examination which is tantamount to 'groping' was carried out on female athletes' bodies (Heggie 2010:160). This suggests those in-charge touch these women to confirm they are female-enough. By 1967 during the Pan-African Games in Winnipeg, female athletes were paraded naked for visibility amongst their peers and the experience was described by many athletes as demeaning and inappropriate (Heggie 2010:160).

These complaints made the IAAF upgrade to scientific testing, such as the chromosomal and hormonal testing. Even this was discarded and given a more sophisticated name – Manual and Visual Check' in 1988 (Heggie 2010:160). In 1992, the IAAF decided to halt 'blanket testing' reserving it for those whose gender is called into question (Heggie 2010:160). This means when certain bodies are seen as unsuitable for specific gender, such person must undergo gender testing. This line of reasoning influenced the Stockholm Consensus which mandates those who underwent sex change to complete surgical anatomical changes and hormone therapy before they can participate in sport and this was adopted by International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 2004 (Anawalt et.al 2019).

The gradual changes co-opted by the IAAF and IOC to affirm gender in sport gave credence to science, making it the final decider of who is male or female and certified to compete. The interesting dimension is that while the IAAF and IOC focuses solely on subjecting bodies to undue examination, determining the possibility of participating in sport, the individual is required not to only follow this procedure but to pay for it (Camporesi, Maugeri 2016:55). This therefore suggests that masculine female athletes are not only going to lose their self-worth during this procedure but will also bear the financial burden.

It is within this discussion that the paper seeks to theorize female masculinity(ies) and its subjection to public scrutiny and policing. It will argue that policing resulted in institutionalization of policies forcing masculine women to undergo surgery or hormonal treatment to reduce testosterone levels or be restricted from competing. The paper will present the case of Annet Negesa, whose career was cut-short due to a surgical alteration and address the outcome of such surgical alteration and its immediate and future adverse effect on individuals.

Theorizing Female Masculinities

Before the late 90s, masculinity is discussed strictly within male gender and seen as a natural process restricted to men and rightfully belonging there (Connell 2005:45). However, in 1995 Connell disclosed the possibility of having more than one masculinity. He describes masculinity as a process and practice that reproduces itself within and outside bodies of men (2005:45). Connell then proposes three levels of masculinities – hegemonic, subordinate/marginalized and complicit masculinity (Connell 2005:71). The hegemonic masculinity (those in the position of authority, having affluence) is seen as the dominant feature within the male domain that subjugates and oppresses other masculinities (complicit and marginalized) and women based on class, race and other social factors (2005:77). Subordinate/marginalized masculinities depicts the relationship between the marginalized (particularly gay men, men of colour) and those in authority (hegemonic masculinity) (2005:80) while the complicit masculinities are those who do not fit the ideal hegemonic masculinity but benefit from the dividend of being male (2005:79). Connell's submission gave rise to the possibility of having other forms of masculinity and therefore paved way for a deeper discussion around it. However, his work still limits masculinity(ies) to being found predominantly in men.

In the light of this discourse, Sedgwick (1995:12-3) proposes a scrutiny of masculinities that has nothing to do with maleness, in that way, the representation of women within masculinities inquiry will surpass victimization and oppression but may represent power and the ability to act in that capacity. It is within this framework that Halberstam (1998) identified masculinity within female gender. Halberstam observed that female masculinity is generally ignored culturally and within academia and that this further restricts masculinity within maleness (Halberstam 1998:2). According to Halberstam, female masculinity is described by the society as a 'pathological sign of misidentification and maladjustment and a longing to be and have power that is always beyond reach' (1998:9). This implies masculinity in women is not taking seriously but seen as a simple misdemeanour that could and should be rectified as soon as possible. Rectification here gives a clue on why women in sports (particularly sports originally reserved for men) are required to undergo gender tests and eventually surgery to reduce the level of testosterone produced by their hormones.

Whereas within the lesbian and feminist circle, female masculinity is seen as a site for

patriarchy to replicate misogyny in femininity by working on female consciousness (Halberstam 1998:9). This indicates that masculinity is present in women only to fulfil patriarchal tendencies without having the agency to perform their own form of masculinity in comparison to the 'supposed original carrier (Men)'. This is no surprise as the second wave of feminist found men as dominating women through patriarchal practices (Levitt and Hiestand 2005:40). These practices then subjugate and reduces women to nothing but housewives and house maidens existing to serve the thirst of men (Levitt and Heistand 2005:40). If masculine women are then seen as a replica of patriarchal image, then they are seen only as ally of men and therefore a carrier of their innate ability (aggression) which puts masculine women in the league of aggressors.

Halberstam further observes that some other categories perceive female masculinity as tomboyism, a term signifying 'an extended childhood period of female masculinity' (1998:5). This indicates masculine residual that girls did not live-out after teenage years. Therefore, limiting female masculinity to childhood exuberance reflects the idea of masculine women as children who continues to follow the footsteps of the men in their lives without creating their own path. So, it is almost easy for them to be treated as deviant children whose bad behaviour need to be scrutinized, probed, poked, and eventually declared as the reason why they behave in a certain way.

Breger (2005:82) however proposes that female masculinity as conceptualized by Halberstam is not enough to include every masculine woman and therefore replaced it with 'feminine masculinities. She claims female masculinity further binarizes gender which defeats the effort of academia to move beyond them. Breger defines feminine masculinities as a strong combination of both masculine and feminine gender identification and performance domicile in one person who may be referred to as 'third sex' (2005:82). According to Breger, feminine masculinities allows the inclusion of intersex persons who are sometimes refer to as 'fuzzy gender' (2005:82). Therefore, feminine masculinities are the fusion of masculine women whose claim to this identity has nothing to do with their hormones or androgyny and masculine women whose hormones has everything to do with such identity.

It is within this discourse that I explore further the connection between masculine women and the need IAAF sees in forcing these women to undergo gender testing. This also links why these women's stand is continuously threatened in their various sport clubs and even the society at large.

Case Study

In 2011, the IAAF reached a consensus to allow female athletes with hyperandrogenism to compete if their testosterone level is below those of male and if otherwise, they agree to subject themselves to medical diagnosis and treatment (World Athletics 2011). This rule came at a time when athletes were preparing for the 2011 London Olympics. Annet Negesa was 20years old at the time when she received news of her dismissal from the Olympics games due to her high testosterone level.

At that time, she was at the peak of her career. Just a year before, she won the national 800 metres race in the Netherlands, won a golden medal for her country at the 2011 All– African games and received an award from the Ugandan Athletics Federation as 'Athlete of the Year' (Abdul 2019). She was asked to undergo gonadectomy before she could compete in the Olympics and because of her love for the game, she succumbed. She paid $900 for the surgery which involves removing her internal testes without her knowledge.

Seven years later, she still suffers from joint pain and headaches because her postoperative care did not include hormonal treatment that would help her body adjust to the changes (Abdul 2019). She also suffers from depression since she is unable to return to sports. During a video interview, Annet confirmed she was asked to fake a leg injury as the reason for her absence at the Olympics (The dark side of sport 2019). She is still traumatized from the experience and hope to follow through with litigation.

What has gender testing got to do with it?

Gender testing is a stereotypic stance which seeks to maintain not only the binary of man versus women but also control how bodies should look (Heggie 2010:158). The documentary made by a German company showed that most of the women who were forced to undergo sex testing and surgery were muscular women with strong features (The dark side of sport 2019). If we go by *bodies* and *looks*, Annet could pass for a man however, gender and sex is beyond bodies but rather a continuous expression of an individual. However, the IAAF does not see gender in this way.

One major reason given by the IAAF for requesting certain women to undergo 'gender testing' and subsequent surgery is to ensure 'fair play' amongst competitors by ensuring every female athlete play on the same footing and strength as their colleagues (Camporesi and Maugeri

2016:46). For IAAF, possessing higher testosterone of 7 to 30 nanomoles than others could potentially place an individual at an advantage over others. Testosterone is supposedly genetically found in males and the ability to produce it in high quantity helps athletes to run faster and display more endurance while competing (Camporesi and Magueri 2016:48).

While this claim might be true, several scholars have debunked its goal of ensuring fair advantage as false since it ultimately promotes marginalization, discrimination, and exclusion (Anawalt et.al 2019). This shows in the way many female athletes whose gender identity is called to question face series of unkind scrutiny from their team mates, families, friends and even tabloids do little to respect their privacy (The dark side of sport 2019). The IAAF insistence on controlling bodies to suit dominant connotation is beyond the violation of human rights, it operates in the realm of blatant dethronement of individual's acceptance and understanding of her own body. Consequently, more chaos is caused by exposing such individual to public ridicule in ways that could be demoralizing.

Despite calls for IAAF to put a stop to gender testing, it fell on deaf ears. In 2018, the IAAF updated their policy regulation which targets those tagged as having 'Disorder of Sex Development' (DSD) (Anawalt et al. 2019). DSD are those who identify as female but intersexed, possesses testes not ovaries, whose level of testosterone is within the *male* range and able to circulate it androgynously (Anawalt et al. 2019). This category of people is required to lower their testosterone level to compete internationally in 400metres to one-mile race (Anawalt et.al 2019). This rule further narrows the chances of masculine women with the above features from competing. Even Caster Semenya, a double 800m champion confirmed the rule targets her specifically to dissuade her from competing in subsequent race (Anawalt et al. 2019).

The IAAF's policy reinforces hegemonic femininities, a term that ascribes soft, thin, and delicate features to women while excluding those not possessing such features. As Krane (2001:117) rightly observed, the sport domain is ill-bent on maintaining gender roles. That is, men should be masculine, and women should be feminine. Any individual who crosses this line is seen as deviant and falls under suspicion. Therefore, women who possesses 'masculine traits' (assertiveness, muscular strength, and competitiveness) are treated differently since they are not performing the usual feminine traits (dependence, emotional, maternal) (Krane 2001:117). This line of thinking simply promotes heteronormativity, heterosexuality, and gender stereotypes within

the sport sphere and ultimately the society at large (Krane 2001:117).

The continuous fixation on 'non-muscled softly shaped body' as the ideal woman is the reason other athletes police masculine women and pressure IAAF to ensure fair playing field. During an interview, athlete Elisa Cusma Piccione, asserted that 'these kinds of people should not run with us' (Camporesi an Magueri 2016:47). This observation is no different from Halberstam's account of incidents in designated women public bathrooms where 'feminine women' police 'masculine women' because they look different from them (Halberstam 1998:20).

This discourse is incomplete without stressing the role of the media. The influence of media cannot be overemphasized considering their storytelling is perhaps the most visible public outlet in the world. It has contributed immensely to how women's bodies fit hegemonic femininity by selling certain images and messages to the public. Several studies have shown newspapers, magazines and other sport news outlets display women's bodies in sexualized forms while using descriptive adjectives such as sexy, beautiful, slim, and cute without any reference to their athletic skills (Abraham 2016, Lamoureux 2012). Anna Kournikova who had never won any medal before is considered the most photographed athletes of her time particularly for her looks (Abraham 2019). Maria Sharapova also attracted same praise for her looks and slim body, whereas Serena Williams a multi-world tennis champion was openly labelled an ape, gorilla and booed for her *manly physique* (Abraham 2019).

Also, the media bites happily on athletic women who maintain their feminine looks and fulfil appropriate heterosexual orientation (Abraham 2019). Such women's life stories are splashed on front pages – pregnant with a beaming husband while the public devour this information with approving gaze. Masculine women on the other hand are automatically labelled lesbians and repeatedly stalked for confirmation or denial (Abraham 2019). This sometimes forces these women to either dissociate themselves from lesbians or start making effort to look more feminine or simply forced to *come out* as lesbian just as Dutee Chand did and was named the first gay athlete in India (BBC 2019). This means that yet again, masculine women are not put in the spotlight for their athletic skills but for their appearance and how that appearance hints at their sexuality.

This is not to say masculine women should not explore their preferred sexuality but that some of them suffer from assumptions printed by the media for the world to see. For instance,

during an interview after Serena Williams announced her pregnancy, she said 'now they will see that I am a real woman' (McDonald 2017). This sort of tension between bodies, gender connotation and public assumption/scrutiny causes many masculine women anxieties and forces them to doubt their identity. They spend a better part of their lives trying to either prove something to the world or to themselves.

Even though scientifically, it is assumed that high testosterone level is mostly found in males which boosts their energy, speed, and endurance level especially in athletics activities (Anawalt et al. 2019). But clearly things have changed, and any *bodies* could carry this trait. However, having a woman possess such trait, particularly in 'high' quantity generates undue attention from IAAF. This further confirms IAAF's unwillingness to understand the possibility of women possessing masculine traits without questioning or trying to rid them of it.

The implications for masculine women

Butler's account of gender performativity and precarity gives a clear example of the kind of life masculine women are forced to live. Gender performativity is the obligatory condition in which individuals find themselves living and re-living within gender binary norms (Butler2009: i). This indicates masculine women are required to choose a side when going into sports by living up to societal standards and binarize norms declaring themselves female and eligible to perform within female sport league. This performance includes adhering to the female gender disposition while negotiating daily activities and interactions in ensuring this identity is put forward, protected, and used appropriately within the society. In this way, masculine women then become eligible for recognition and have a space within the society.

However, Butler opines that because gendered individuals can perform does not exonerate them from facing precarious situations. Gender precarity depicts possible violence, discrimination, exclusion or even death that could affect certain individuals based on their gender performance and how differently they express it (Butler 2009: ii). For instance, Annet at the peak of her career was required to take a gender test to prove she is eligible to play in the women's league. This requirement led to the end of her career because she succumbed to undergoing gonadectomy.

Linking gender performativity to gender precarity, Butler posits that when gender identity (performance) is not in sync with gender expression (actions), it puts individuals in precarious

situation within the society (2009: iv). In the case of Annet, even though she was performing within the female sport league, she did not adequately fit into the hegemonic feminine figure. Furthermore, she had difficulty telling the people in her community about the test result for fear of being ostracized because LGBT rights is non-existent in her country and they face prosecution or even death. This led Annet to sought asylum in Germany where she lives to date (Abdul 2019).

If the IAAF gender testing were non-existent, Annet would never have needed to scientifically prove who she is and how she expresses her person. She would not need to flee her country for another to save face and her life. Therefore, IAAF's policy is detrimental to bodies that are perceived as different from hegemonic femininities and clearly puts them in dire situation.

Finding Intersections

Intersectionality is the interactions between one of more inequality indicators such as race, sexuality, gender, and class (Winker and Degele 2011:51). These social indicators may put an individual in a privileged or unprivileged situation. Following a documentary published by a German company in 2019, it told the story of five women (Caster Semenya, Dutee Chand, Annet Negesa, Lara and Pratima Goankar, who committed suicide) who were all from Third World Countries. Most of them are either in court fighting to get back on the field or recovering from medication/surgery prescribed to reduce their testosterone level. It is no coincidence that these women were targeted because they won gold medals consecutively thereby making huge leaps in their career.

Is it possible the IAAF thinks women of colour could not attain such high standard in athletics unless they are men or possesses masculine traits? This question remains a puzzle however, it is loud enough to remind us of institutionalized racism that is present in many spheres of life and activities such as sport. For instance, the media fawns over athletic women with Eurocentric features – fair skin, slim, flowing hair which appeals more to the public (Abraham 2019). In the US, athletes that are regarded as attractive 'tend to be white, thin, tall and heterosexual' (Hunt 2018). It is no wonder commentators emphasizes 'deep brown skin' whenever Serena Williams walks into the field (Abraham 2019). This emphasis serves as reminder of who and what brown colour signifies and maybe even serves as a decider on the kind of treatment it should be given.

This sort of treatment may have been responsible for how poorly the IAAF treated Annet's situation. Dr. Stephane Bermon the current Chief Medical Officer at IAAF supposedly recommended Annet's surgery but denied any involvement and the IAAF supported his claim (Anawalt et al. 2019). Annet ran in 2017 but performed so poorly she dropped from the level of elite athletes to a club level runner. Her story did not raise enough media ruckus due to her social class and race.

Finally, gender remains the most visible factor as male athletes are not required to undergo gender testing since it is inconceivable that a woman would be conceited enough to compete as a man in male sport league. Even if that were to happen, she would have to possess the *abilities* of a man to do so. Therefore, gender testing remains an unequal rule that trivializes the athletic strength of women and idolizes strength of men.

Conclusions

While the IAAF may justify their actions as efforts in ensuring a level playing field for everyone, it however neglects the adverse effect on the lives of these women within and outside sport's sphere and within their communities. Annet was robbed of her identity and home due to a 'test result' and remain a fugitive seeking refuge in Germany.

In this essay, I have given an historical account of the IAAF policy and how it has evolved through the years. I have shown that this policy continues to exclude masculine women from sport. I have also described how such exclusion costs masculine women their career, self-identity and in extreme cases their lives.

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Conceptual Notes on Institutions

By Victoria Manya, GDP, Nigeria

This image depicts a summary of the author's perspective on institutions: Institutions organize us!

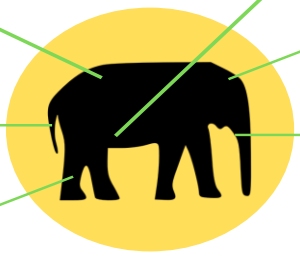
- According to Gomez (class note:16-1-2020), the complexity in Human Nature, and interactions with one another necessitates the establishment of institutions to reduce it.
- However, as important as institutions are, Gomez and Hodgson's reflect on the lack of an agreed definition (Hodgson, 2006: 1)

- The following definitions further reiterate the different views of the term institutions where every proponent sees contextual representations of the term.

"a special type of social structure with the potential to change agents, including changes to their purposes or preferences" (Hodgson 2006:2 citing Veblen and Commons.)

- "systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions. Language, money, law, systems of weights and measures, table manners, and firms (and other organizations) are thus all institutions" (Hodgson 2006 :2)

"prescribed patterns of correlated behavior" (Hodgson 2006:3 citing and criticising Foster 1981)



"structured processes of interactions" (Olson,1998)

"the rules of the game in society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interactions" (Hodgson 2006 :9 citing North 1990)

S"table Paths of action for economic agents" (Lawson,1996)

- Hodgson criticizes fosters definition by insisting that Institutions cannot be limited to behavior because it subsists even when behavior is interrupted.
- North has also been criticized by Hodgson for the ambiguity in his definition and use of terms Rules and constraints without clarity as to what each stands for

In my understanding of Gomez and Hodgson, the concept of institution is likened to an Elephant. Large, has many different parts, difficult to confine its various parts to one definition and could mean different things to different people, depending on the side of the Elephant visible to them.

However, most of the definitions imply or directly refer to the existence of rules and so we can accept that institutions consist of a system of rules (Gomez class note:16-1-2020)

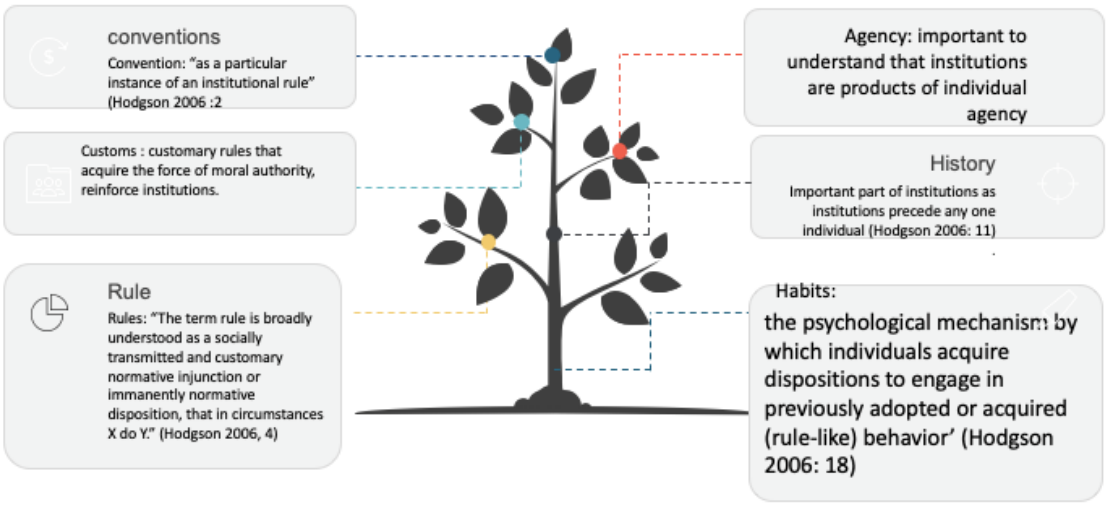
Resolving Terminological issues

Terminology	Definition	Status
Social Structure	**"**Social structures include all sets of social relations, including the episodic and those without rules, as well as social institutions." (Hodgson 2007: 96)	
institutions	"systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interactions.'(ibid). eg Language, money, wages, laws (not ignored laws), Christmas.	Subset of social structure/ Made up of a system of rules that could be implicit or overt but not dormant/ penalties could accrue/do Y in X situation /" immanently normative and socially transmitted" =codifiable and capable of been transferred with clarity. (Hodgson 2007: 96)
Organizations	**"**special institutions that involve (a) criteria to establish their boundaries-members from non-members, (b) sovereignty - who is in charge and (c) chains of command -responsibilities." (ibid)	Subset of institutions eg Parliament, Army, school, family, church

Notes:

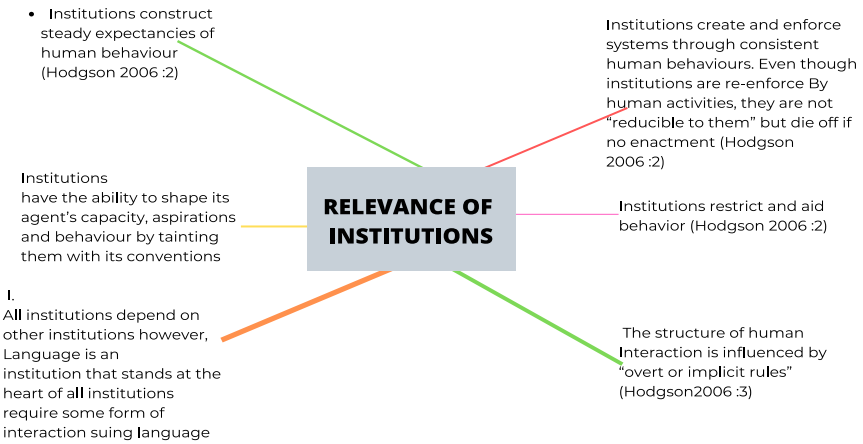
- Not all institutions are organizations-eg Language
- There are conventions and habits within institutions than bring it to life and make it for specific in application
- Some institutions have tripartite nature/simultaneously organizations, institution and structure e.g. business firms. (Hodgson ,2007: 96)
- My Reflection- Even though not all institutions are organizations, the nature of some births organizations e.g. Religion is an institution that births churches and mosques which are organizations. Education is an institution that births organizations like schools.

What constitutes institutions?



Notes:

- Rules cannot be purely a matter of conscious deliberation as citing Polanyi, Hodgson argues for the existence of some "tacit substratum of knowledge that cannot be fully articulated" (Hodgson, 2006: 4)
- Habits, behaviours and institutions are mutually interwoven and reinforce each other: (Hodgson, 2006 :8)
- Habits provide institutions with "enhanced durability, power and normative authority"- (Hodgson, 2006: 7)
    - Hodgson further answered the question of why institutions have become increasingly important. He gave the following reasons:



- How do institutions work?

I. The subjective and objective structures of Institutions are one and the same as likened to the Klein bottle (Hodgson, 2006: 7) = Inadvertently means human actions or activity is controlled by the mind (reasoning faculty) which is in turn controlled by institutional structures. Therefore, Gomez, employing Klien bottle explains that "any reasoning is impossible outside institutional context" (Gomez, class note: 2020)

Our subjective is the same as the objective created by institutions (ie,what is out there).

***Figure** 1**:** Design thinking* (Adapted from Association for talent development 2012)

Institutions make its agent reason within its contextual framework

***Figure** 2**:** Digital note taking strategies* (Adapted from Mind shift 2017)

II. Institutions = Rules but not all laws are rules

a. Ignored laws are not Rules, so cannot constitute institutions (Hodgson, 2006 :6)

b. Only laws that are enforceable, customary and possess normative status can become rules that constitute a system to be regarded as institutions (Hodgson 2006 :6)
c. Institutions constitute Rules that have accompanied incentives or constraints (Hodgson, 2006 :6)

III. Institutions are a type of social structure but do not constitute the entire thesis on social structure (Hodgson, 2006: 7)

IV. Institutions possess "self-reinforcing and self–perpetuating characteristics" (Hodgson, 2006: 7)

V. Institutions do not stand in isolation of human agency as human interactions form the foundation upon which institutions subsist

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