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Subject-predicate-inversion of Gender-neutral-language: An emancipatory confusion

ABSTRACT. In this paper, I proposed a paradigm shift in Gender-Neutral-Language. The claim, which Gender-Neutral-Language can account for reality grasping and, thus, enable its actualization, is challenged; in place of an abstract reach towards social change, a more concrete emancipatory praxis must arise. Its current emancipatory prerogatives are not confronted from the standpoint of its already-established arguments but a more comprehensive standpoint of language, more specifically, of the philosophy of language.

KEYWORDS: gender-neutral-language, emancipatory-struggle, feminism, ontology, marxism

Introduction

The modern feminist theory claims that Gender-Neutral-Language can account for giving representation to Gender (e.g. Mikkola, 2016). In this paper, such a claim is challenged through a philosophical investigation of language. Four parts encompass the investigation. At the start, language is examined to enable the understanding of words' meaning and how they affect reality. Second, the relation between *Geist*, meaning and communication to apprehend how consciousness relates to language. Third, the fundamentals of current western societies are explained in general (ontology) and in particular (political economy) to permit a deeper comprehension of history and, hence, reality. Fourth, examples are used to elucidate the theoretical background and show in which way gender-neutral-language represents a subject-predicate-inversion, accounting, therefore, for emancipatory confusion. The latter is regarded in a double-part conclusion.

From von Schöfer to Wittgenstein

Let me try to give a deeper account of the matter by, first, illustrating it with one historical inquiry of words and, then, proposing the understanding of their meaning. The first part deals with the book *Was Geht uns Noah an?: Aus dem Unbewußten der Sprache* (“What is Noah’s To Us?: From the Unconscious of Language”) by Wolfgang von Schöfer. In this book, von Schöfer carries out a philosophical/philological analysis of the transformation of words over time to show that notions and meanings of language change simultaneously. This means with the transformation of words, both their meaning as well as our consciousness suffer transformation. (See section: *Geist, Meaning, Communication*.) The second part, which is essential, consists of the work *Philosophische Untersuchungen* by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1967). In which we deal with the meaning of the word and how its meaning belongs to practice.

A) Unstoppable transformation in/of language

Von Schöfer begins the analysis of the language with the biblical story of *Noah’s Ark (Arche Noah)*. For him, this story can be explained in various ways, in archaeological, historical or mythological ways. Von Schöfer is interested in the mythological level of the event. The question, “*was heißt eigentlich fromm?*” (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 10) (“what is pious, after all?”), interests him, for God warns Noah, “*ihn als einzigen*” (“him alone”) and no one else—only Noah was warned of the flood—because of this piety. Why is von Schöfer interested in the meaning of the word “pious”? What is the origin of the mythological/mythical level? Von Schöfer shows that the meaning of a story can change intensely only through the changed meaning of the words. “The key to the story is the phrase ‘Noah did all that God has commanded.’” (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 13). The investigation of the word *bieten* becomes a necessity. In German, command means *Gebot*, derived from *bieten*.)

Language appears to change from conscious to unconscious only due to the new understanding of a word. With the help of philology, he investigates the development of the word “*bieten*” (“offer”): “the etymological genealogy of ‘offer’ evidently has a number of meanings”. (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 13)

He finds the root ‘*bheudh*’, which at the same time contains different meanings:

“1st to be active, to be awake; 2nd to ask; 3rd to hear; 4th to give; 5th to commend”

According to current understanding, one could erroneously assume that Noah is aware of his actions as if “*er die Gebote halte*” (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 16) (“he keeps the commandments”).

This (misunderstood) hold is anything but unimportant and harmless: it justifies what, in sharp contrast to Noah’s piety as piety of law, stifles life again and again and everywhere [...]. This inconspicuous hold constitutes a stable world in which man is passively confronted with any authoritative, perhaps even arbitrary demands of a foreign power, called God, whom he is now to fulfill by virtue of some law which he understands or does not understand (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 16–17).

But, as I said, that is a misunderstanding, and the word ‘hold’ is again a good example of how deeply and how much to the detriment of understanding the whole meaning of the words is forgotten, not only individually but collectively: ‘hold’ means nowadays almost exclusively ‘stop’, [...] which is the opposite from do and move [...] (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 17).

“*In Wirklichkeit ist auch, halten’ ein Ausdruck der Bewegung*”, (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 17) (“In reality, ‘hold’ is also an expression of the movement”), von Schöfer presents, then, the root and the genealogy to make his argument explicit, which enables him to proceed with his investigation. He returns to the root “bheudh” and shows it emanates from “Buddha”. In fact, “Buddha” is worldwide an idea of passivity, but he shows that “offer”, and hence “bheudh”, and consequently “Buddha”, the opposite is, “*das heißt, daß ein Buddha nicht nur passiv erweckt wird, sondern auch ganz aktiv aufwacht*” (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 20) (“that means that a Buddha is not only awakened passively, but also actively awaken”).

After explaining this relationship, one can regard that “Noah, like Buddha, is the one who is so active that his motions are easy. Buddha emphasizes in his name the movement, Noah the rest, but both Buddha and Noah mean [...] the same truth.” (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 22). In this sense, we look at the clear reversal of the meaning of language, and with this linguistic reversal, communication changes, and with it, history and its meaning. The change takes place slowly:

for this is what Noah has to tell us, and what we know is as vital to us today as it was two thousand or four thousand years ago: this earthly realm is an area of change, of perpetual flow as Heraclitus saw it, of dying and becoming as Goethe understood him. Everything in this area is in motion, and now, as we move ourselves, we are alive (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 24).

And,

[c]hange—that’s what he has to say to us deeply—means not only life but also death. And again, the connection between life and death is not paradoxical but a logical and understandable one, like that of holding and moving, and of rest and movement. For transformation is change, and when something changes, it takes on the one hand a new form, on the other hand, it dies from the old form. Only what dies can become new, and what is new must at the same time give up its previous form (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 25).

So the line of death is actually and at the same time the lifeline (von Schöfer, 1968, p. 25).

Moreover, life, language, words, the meaning of words, and most important: consciousness, they all die, live and transform themselves—and conversely are transformed. This is how, over time, language and words are changed, reformed or no longer used and thus the meaning of this and above all the consciousness changes. Nothing is rigid; everything is a process.

B) Wittgenstein’s essential contribution

I am intentionally avoiding the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, since in this early work Ludwig Wittgenstein reduces the world to logical relations—hence, unable to give a real account of reality. However, in his *post mortem* work *Philosophical Investigations* he reverses (here *unimportant* if consciously or not) his methodology and instead of being trapped in the abstract absoluteness of logic, he achieves an investigation of reality, hence, indirectly, advocating for the prevention of *subject-predicate-inversion*. This should become clearer in our investigation below.

In some sense, Wittgenstein actualizes Immanuel Kant’s comprehension of the concept: “A concept that includes a synthesis in it is to be held as empty, and does not relate to any object, if this synthesis does not belong to experience.” (Kant, 1998, p. 323 [A220, B267]).

What is Wittgenstein reckoning?

In *Philosophical Investigation* on §§ 40 and 43, Wittgenstein examines the idea that in-itself a word neither has nor carries denotation. The word in itself has no meaning, it has to correspond to something, it must stand for something. What is an apple? What would be an apple? The word *apple* has only meaning due to the praxis—namely its employment, use—, the denotation associated with its use, or rather with its praxis.¹

¹ Interestingly, one could claim the word apple is the idea of the fruit apple, it contains in-itself an embedded truth of a specific praxis, however, if we disregard the mythological

§ 40: Let us first discuss *this* point of the argument: that a word has no meaning if nothing corresponds to it.—It is important to note that the word ‘meaning’ is being used illicitly if it is used to signify the thing that ‘corresponds’ to the word. That is to confound the meaning; of a name with the *bearer* of the name. When Mr. N. N. dies one says that the bearer of the name dies, not that the meaning dies. And it would be nonsensical to say that, for if the name ceased to have meaning it would make no sense to say ‘Mr. N. N. is dead.’ (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 20)

If this is true, namely that ‘*the meaning of a word is its use in the language*’ (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 20), then the *meaning arises from the praxis itself, as the expression of a given praxis and not from the intention over the praxis*. Moreover, we shall come to a new realization when we assume that the word or language is the access to the *Geist* (“mind”, “spirit”, “intellect” etc.) and consciousness. Considering Michael Pauen’s argumentation, first, it must be argued that words ought to be considered the access to consciousness, and second, the tentative of explaining the concept of consciousness, through words, certainly creates circularity. Therefore, understanding the practice of words becomes a precondition to drawing nearer to the vast scope perception of human consciousness.

Now, with the help of §§ 40 and 43, the meaning of a word itself is regarded. If words are the condition for understanding human consciousness, then one needs to grasp the meaning of the word. Nevertheless, the meaning of a word is its use (practice) and not the idea of the practice of the word. Accordingly, when grasping the understanding of consciousness, then practice entails a twofold sense. On the one hand, the practice of words allows access to consciousness; on the other hand, the practice of words shapes the meaning of the words. Therefore, the word and consciousness cannot be considered in isolation from each other. Word, meaning and consciousness are linked.

Following this argument, I begin to explore another next point within the next paragraphs of Wittgenstein’s examinations: language/consciousness in a private sense; or rather, to what extent language/consciousness is [are] possible in a private sense?

meanings of the word apple – which somehow relates to the fruit –, in our contemporary time we cannot disregard for the technological company apple, which is a trademark for technological gadgets, hence, it has a completely different meaning than the one from the fruit apple – even if the intention was to relate brand of technology to the bitten apple of the tree of knowledge.

Wittgenstein's reflections problematize the matter of a private language. After considering communication to be the mediation, the words the access, and the practice of both communication and words the real meaning of consciousness, a better understanding of this Wittgensteinian problem, relating and comparing private language and private consciousness becomes possible. According to him:

§ 243: A human being can encourage himself, give himself orders, obey, blame and punish himself; he can ask himself a question and answer it. We could even imagine human beings who spoke only in monologue; who accompanied their activities by talking to themselves.—An explorer who watched them and listened to their talk might succeed in translating their language into ours. (This would enable him to predict these people's actions correctly, for he also hears them making resolutions and decisions.)

But could we also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences—his feelings, moods, and the rest—for his private use?—Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language?—But that is not what I mean. The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 88).

In § 243, the philosophical investigation of the private language begins. Wittgenstein commences the analysis with a clear assumption that a person can be self-conscious in it-self. If there were a person who could develop his own language, then that language would be understandable only to himself but not to any other person. Therefore, this language would be sterile, unfruitful, incomprehensible and pointless, since it does not enable communication: "*So another person cannot understand the language.*" Wittgenstein continues:

§ 246: In what sense are my sensations *private*?—Well, only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it.—In one way this is wrong, and in another nonsense. If we are using the word 'to know' as it is normally used (and how else are we to use it?), then other people very often know when I am in pain.—Yes, but all the same not with the certainty with which I know it myself I—It can't be said of me at all (except perhaps as a joke) that I *know* I am in pain. What is it supposed to mean—except perhaps that I *am* in pain? Other people cannot be said to learn of my sensations *only* from my behaviour,—for *I* cannot be said to learn of them. I *have* them. The truth is: it makes sense to say about other people that they doubt whether I am in pain; but not to say it about myself (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 89).

Not only interesting but § 246 is also essential for the understanding of this investigation. While it is clear that a private level of sensations exists, the question remains, what does this mean? Everyone feels their own feelings, everyone is both the bearer and the access to his sensation. But a private sensation stripped out from words is nothing more than a pure perception. On one hand, Wittgenstein clarifies that someone else cannot know exactly my sensation; but he contemplates, on the other, that the reflexivity of a sensation reveals the private character of the sensation. For the self-reflexivity of a sensation, one would have to think about this sensation and try to grasp it with words. That is: our private sensation, if it is not to exist as a mere perception but to be understood and contemplated as a sensation, then it cannot be private. The words themselves cannot be private if they are to embody meaning and enable our consciousness: words can only have meaning if they are not private.

Following, § 256 illustrates the just-mentioned explanation of § 246. Moreover, it becomes clear that § 243 is however incomplete and even contradictory because the assumption that a private viewing of the consciousness can be independent of the language is wrong and inconsistent. The following § 257 continues this last point. If someone could himself develop a word without having prior knowledge of the social usage of the word, or if there is no word yet, then that word would be meaningless if it exists as a word without any practical relevance. To make sense of that word, a general language would have to exist to explain that word. Also, words and the evolution of words are always dependent on other words. Words first arise as the expression of determining social relations. They depend on the practice of communication, which is why a single independent word is meaningless.

§ 256: Now, what about the language which describes my inner experiences and which only I myself can understand? *How* do I use words to stand for my sensations?—As we ordinarily do? Then are my words for sensations tied up with my natural expressions of sensation? In that case my language is not a ‘private’ one. Someone else might understand it as well as I.—But suppose I didn’t have any natural expression for the sensation, but only had the sensation? And now I simply *associate* names with sensations and use these names in descriptions.— (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 91).

§ 257: ‘What would it be like if human beings shewed no outward signs of pain (did not groan, grimace, etc.)? Then it would be impossible to teach a child the use of the word ‘tooth-ache.’—Well, let’s assume the child is a genius and itself

invents a name for the sensation!—But then, of course, he couldn't make himself understood when he used the word.—So does he understand the name, without being able to explain its meaning to anyone?—But what does it mean to say that he has 'named his pain'?—How has he done this naming of pain?! And whatever he did, what was its purpose?—When one says 'He gave a name to his sensation' one forgets that a great deal of stage-setting in the language is presupposed if the mere act of naming is to make sense. And when we speak of someone's having given a name to pain, what is presupposed is the existence of the grammar of the word 'pain'; it shews the post where the new word is stationed (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 92).

Now, let's imagine two examples to illustrate the previous point: namely pain as a sensation. It could be a sensation, an explanation, an idealistic private understanding, but in all cases, the words belong to the general public. A dismembering of words from a general language and their transformation into a private level of language reveals an irreconcilable misunderstanding. On the one hand, the very self-perception expressed by words is already a general apprehension of perception, because the general language is used to describe and summarize that perception. But if we consider something "with philosophical intentions", when we think about perception, then we use our private experience to explain the perception. Nonetheless, the private experience is never really private, because, on the one hand, to be conceptually recognized as an experience, one has to grasp it with thoughts and words, and, on the other hand, a human-being without society is ontologically impossible, that is, the separation of human society and singular human, who is a social product, is a pure illusion. Humans cannot exist as mere individuals; methodologically, this private abstraction is ontologically impossible; furthermore, historically, individuality—not singularity—arose from the development of human society—this point shall be further regarded later (Lukács, 1984).

§ 261: What reason have we for calling 'S' the sign for a *sensation*? For 'sensation' is a word of our common language, not of one intelligible to me alone. So the use of this word requires a justification which everybody understands.—And it would not help either to say that it need not be a *sensation*; that when he writes 'S', he has *something*—and that is all that can be said. 'Has' and 'something' also belong to our common language.—So in the end when one is doing philosophy one gets to the point where one would like just to emit an inarticulate sound.—But such a sound is an expression only as it occurs in a particular language-game, which should now be described (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 93).

§ 275: Look at the blue of the sky and say to yourself 'How blue the sky is!'—When you do it spontaneously—without philosophical intentions—the idea never crosses your mind that this impression of color belongs only *to you*. And you have no hesitation in exclaiming that to someone else. And if you point at anything as you say the words you point at the sky. I am saying: you have not the feeling of pointing-into-yourself, which often accompanies 'naming the sensation' when one is thinking about 'private language'. Nor do you think that really you ought not to point to the color with your hand, but with your attention. (Consider what it means 'to point to something with the attention'.) (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 96).

Wittgenstein conceives the memory as a part of the mind. Insofar. This part is inseparable from *Geist*. The denial of this mental process means the denial of remembrance itself. But how do we remember something but as representations, or rather representations of words? Pictures themselves are only pictures, because we bring and, hence, save them into consciousness. If I said, 'Do you remember '...?', What would that be? This word '...' does not exist except from individual compound letters, or this question has no meaning for me, the questioner, as well as for the recipient, because both do not know what '...' means. Therefore, it does not mean anything, and, as a result, neither memory nor access to the mind can exist. If it were not '...' but any existing word, then we would have just had a mental process of memory. Even if our answer to the question: "do you remember ...?" was *no*, then "the mental process of remembering ..." "has now taken place in" (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 102) us, because the condition of the answer "no" is the understanding of the word "...", and therefore we would have reminded ourselves of the word "...".

C) Transition

The conception of a word does not depend on my sole desire; "that will depend on the circumstances under which it is given, and on the person I give it to." (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 14).

Language presupposes (inter-)dependence and relation: "One has already to know (or be able to do) something in order to be capable of asking a thing's name." (Wittgenstein, 1967, p. 15).

A word and its bearer are not in themselves a unity, but rather in and for themselves, that is, when the bearer is no longer there, a word does not lose its meaning, for its meaning is given by a general [external, or rather social] use, not private.

Then it is an impossibility to create a static, private language, one that has in itself determinations; in other words, a new language to enable

emancipatory commitments, to carry meaning and actualization, is in itself impossible; if this is true, would it be possible to use language to create consciousness to change reality? Is language an instrument to achieve and change consciousness? Does consciousness create reality?

***Geist*, Meaning, Communication**

How can we regard *Geist*, meaning and communication as one? Are there connections between the terms? I summarize these general questions into just one question: What is the sense of communication in *Geist* (mind/spirit), or namely, what does communication mean to the *Geist*?

The answer to this question is still unclear, so we carry out the investigation of this subject with the help of other authors, and then we can get a more concrete view on the subject.

According to Thomas Nagel, consciousness is a multifarious phenomenon. “[I]t occurs at many levels of animal life” (Nagel, 1974, p. 436) meaning “that there is something it is like to be that organism” (Nagel, 1974, p. 436). Furthermore: “But fundamentally an organism has conscious mental states if and only if there is something that it is like to be that organism—something it is like for the organism.” (Nagel, 1974, p. 436).

Also, he underlines:

We may call this the subjective character of experience. It is not captured by any of the familiar, recently devised reductive analyses of the mental, for all of them are logically compatible with its absence. It is not analyzable in terms of any explanatory system of functional states, or intentional states, since these could be ascribed to robots or automata that behaved like people though they experienced nothing (Nagel, 1974, p. 436).

One looks into Michael Pauen’s book, *Fundamental Problems of the Philosophy of Mind* (Pauen, 2005), to understand to what extent consciousness can be a synonym of *Geist*. Or how we have access to consciousness, conversely, to our *Geist*? Could it even be possible to capture the *Geist*?

The concept of *consciousness* itself, or rather the use of the term has a broad spectrum, as Pauen explains in the next citation, that is, there are several uses for this term, each of which depends on a particular situation:

However, it would also be helpful to have a closer look at the different ways of using the word. Sometimes we just say that we are ‘conscious’, in other cases

we say that we have a 'consciousness of ...', but thoughts, feelings and feelings represent also forms of consciousness, after all there is the 'self—Consciousness'—it seems necessary to agree on similarities and differences of these very different kinds of consciousness (Pauen, 2005, p. 9).

Aside from this difficulty, one could start to assert the relation between consciousness and mind. Although many levels of consciousness exist, when one considers consciousness as a general view, then it appears as the access of the *Geist*. Indeed, sciences have often assumed concerning this problem that the technical understanding is not only sufficient but that it can indeed grant access to the mind. In contrast, Pauen asserts:

Thomas Nagel's 1974 essay, *What is it like to be a bat?*, has been of relevant share in bringing the debate on the difference between phenomenal and scientific knowledge into the center of discussion within the philosophy of the mind. Nagel's basic reasoning is as simple as it is plausible: even if we knew all about the neurobiological properties of a conscious organism, what there is to know, this knowledge would not provide us with direct access to the conscious experiences of that organism (Pauen, 2005, p. 176).

Nagel explains this consideration using the example of a bat. Even though the neural processes in the brain of a bat are fully explored, we still have no access to the bat's experiences. We still do not have to be *what it is like to be a bat*. Of course, it could be like trying to imagine what it would be like to be short-sighted, to orient ourselves with the help of ultrasound, to catch insects in the night and to hang upside down during the day. With this, Nagel emphasizes, we would at best imagine what it would be like for us humans to be a bat; we still would not know what it's like for a bat to be a bat and make that experience (Pauen, 2005, p. 176–177).

How does consciousness work? What are its capacity and properties? The apparent variety of discussion is limited here. On the one hand, if science considers itself complete, namely, as if its knowledge could explain and comprehend everything, then it immediately finds the finite capacity apprehension colliding with the infinitude that encompasses reality, hence, an ontological impossibility; to which Karl Marx says "all science would be superfluous if the appearance and essence of things immediately coincided" (Marx, 1964, 825); on the other hand, every form of knowledge can be nothing more than a simple description of a simplified reality. While the whole mechanism of the functioning of the consciousness can be understood, that is, the mechanism of the understanding of the brain could be

fully grasped, an explanation of its actions, its meaning, its *Geist* remains out of reach—insofar, there is no access to such parallel, to the meaning of consciousness, to the grasping of the *Geist*. Therefore, *Geist* cannot be fully understood by the natural sciences. But if the scientific description is too limited to capture *Geist*, is it possible to comprehend it at all? One could elucidate such concepts with words, but would it suffice?

The fact that the resulting progress in knowledge is not all that impressive becomes clear at the latest, when one strives for a more precise definition of the meaning of the term 'consciousness'. Here deny those strategies that can otherwise be used in the understanding of a term. The most serious problem may well be that there is nothing that would be 'like' or 'something other than' consciousness, without having to resort to the very same description of *the* property that you just wanted to determine. Of course, there are transitional states in which our consciousness slowly awakens or gradually declines, but here, too, as before, a knowledge of the term, if we want to describe what is going on or increases. Yes, even the similarities of states, which certainly do not have anything to do with consciousness, can only be named by referring to this term—as just happened—as a delineation. A non-circular definition seems hardly possible (Pauen, 2005, p. 21).

Not only is the full scientific knowledge of consciousness limited and therefore incomplete, but also a clear explanation and a definition seem impossible. The constitution of a concept of consciousness must be represented by words, creating, consequently, circularity. Explaining the meaning of words with words corresponds to the meaning and conceptuality of the word, so the explanation cannot escape this self-referred idea, it remains circular. The conceptuality of the words is intended to clarify the word itself, but if there cannot be any clear definition for consciousness, then we cannot accept the meaning of consciousness as the access of the *Geist* but rather the activity of consciousness, namely the understanding and manifestation of consciousness—its expression not as a word but as a practice/activity. Words cannot be explained as pure concepts, they are foremost understood in the practice of their use. Moreover, communication is the condition for access to the mind, because every mental reflection is mentally comprehensible only through the representation of understanding—even if distorted. How does communication work concerning *Geist*?

Marx summarizes it:

Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical, real consciousness that exists for other men as well, and only therefore does it also exist for me;

language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity of intercourse with other men (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 49).

In summary, although consciousness can be understood from different perspectives, it must represent access to the mind/spirit/*Geist*. Accordingly, an understanding of consciousness becomes essential. But can it be scientifically determined? No, because pure knowledge—and technology—does not allow access to the mind, it can insofar only point towards a form of consciousness. On the contrary, access to the *Geist* is attained in practice; but how? Access is created through words and their meaning comes from cultural-historical development. But then how can we be conscious of consciousness? We do not look, however, at consciousness in the sense of a definition, but rather, the practice/activity of the words (of what words express) creates the specific social consciousness that allows access to the *Geist*.

Beyond Irrationalism: Relation between the different languages and reality

A) Grasping reality presupposes an ontological apprehension

To understand the relation of language, of consciousness, in reality, one has first to apprehend reality. Here, I try to discuss such categories, which can help us comprehend reality.

What is the nature of the human being, or, simply, what is being human? These questions long concern philosophy. However, in the last 250 years, *western* philosophy has discussed categories of *being* profoundly influenced by bourgeois society, hence its ideology. To fully grasp the political economy and, hence, the meanders of our socialization, there is the need to explain the reasoning behind them. Since this section is almost a digression, I shall throw light on ontological relations through the prism of the so far established methodological standpoint and will not be able to establish multiple relations.

Arguing against much of the ideology of the 21st century, which is in itself a historical product of multiples schools of thought—e.g. neoliberalism, post-modernity, existentialism, critical theory, even Marxism, etc.—that have transformed history in philosophy of history, I claim to bring back the category of history to my analysis; not as an abstract category or a logical one, namely one category that contains movement in itself but

rather history as a result, not as a starting point, i.e., history as a product of different relations and contexts.

György Lukács apprehended such problematic and pointed to the correct understanding:

In the meantime, however, it has become clear to many that Kant's propertyless-unknowable-abstract thing-in-itself conception, which conceives of our reality as a world of mere appearances, like Hegel's logistical-historical ontology of the identical subject-object and more than ever the irrationalist dreams of the nineteenth century often remove us from any real problem of being (Lukács, 1984, p. 11).

Instead, he called attention to the materiality of being, reality constitutes the very essence of what ought to be grasped in thought. For instance:

Cars on the street can be explained epistemologically very easily as mere sensory impressions, ideas, etc. Nevertheless, when I get run over by a car, it does not create a clash between my idea of the car and my idea of myself, but my being as a living person is endangered by a car-being in existence (Lukács, 1984, p. 11).

Though Jean-Paul Sartre apprehends reality of being as movement, its real movement becomes constantly a product of idea: "Since it is the being that *has* nothing without doing (condemnation of freedom), the world appears to him as that in which nothing is given to man, which man has no place unless he carves it out for himself." (Sartre, 1992, p. 44). This transforms men in ahistorical men since its claim of "nothing without doing" transcends the teleology as a necessity within causal relations and becomes absolute truth—*absolute Geist*. The same truth Sartre criticizes Hegel of defending an "absolute-subject" (Sartre, 1992, p. 53) and also Marx for being mechanical. (Sartre, 1992, p. 11). By suppressing causal relations, Sartre becomes rigid himself, the total teleology falls into the above critique established by Lukács. Insofar, a fetishized natural-being appears the criterion of reality.

Nevertheless, if human-beings belong to nature as natural-beings, they also belong to society as social-beings. They can never separate themselves from nature, the process of socialization, the process of becoming human, nevertheless, necessitates a retreat of the barriers of nature but not its abolition. (Marx, 1906, 1992).

The grasping of the determinations of being can either be true or false (non-moral and non-normative apprehended), but only the grasping, the

ideology, the form in which the determination is apprehended; whilst the determinations, themselves, cannot be true or false, they can only be. However, the essence of the being is not given, is a product of a process, as an unceasing-process, being can only perceive as a given being, it can never be a given being, its essence is a non-essentialist.

The human-being as an unceasing social determination must, hence, be socially produced, cannot be socially given. This ontological fact regards the form and content in which human-beings produce themselves as human beings, namely labor (Marx, 1992, p. 329). Lukács explains:

This is immediately evident in the basic essential fact of social being, of work. This is, as Marx has shown, a deliberately accomplished teleological-setting which, if it proceeds from correctly recognized facts in the practical sense and correctly utilizes them, is capable of establishing causal processes, which otherwise only spontaneously functioning processes, objects, etc. to modify oneself to be, yes, being objectives that did not exist before work at all (Lukács, 1984, p. 14).

If the humans shape the world according to his teleological-setting, then the form in which humans apprehend the world gains greater significance. As apprehension is immediately a collective fact, the form and content, which society grasps reality, can be translated as ideology, which immediately appears as a non-moral-normative category but merely as an in-nature-qualitative-different one. The social execution of labor presents constant conflicts, its impacts can be translated through decisions, which, though teleological, are always constrained within casual relations—both social and natural. The less a social body grasps reality, the more important it becomes ideology for its functioning. Insofar ideology appears as an ontological necessity for the development of the-social-being. (Lukács, 1984, p. 17).

Lukács underlines the importance of differentiating causal and teleological relations (Lukács, 1984, p. 20). He gives an account of Kant's brilliancy for grasping the singularity of such problematic:

If Kant calls the adaptation act of organisms 'expediency without purpose', then this saying is also highly intelligent in the philosophical sense, because it aptly refers to the peculiarity of the reactions that the organisms in opposition to their surrounding are constantly forced on his own part to carry out spontaneously in order to be able to reproduce at all (Lukács, 1984, p. 20).

He continues:

That is why in Kant's definition the "without purpose" is so witty, because the process itself ontologically points to the essence of the purpose—in contrast to the purely causal consequence—because it seems to be set without being really set with the awareness of something conscious. Where Marx talks about the first concept of work, he emphasizes this very moment (Lukács, 1984, p. 20).

However, Marx emphasizes:

But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the laborer at its commencement (Marx, 1906, p. 198).

Hence, despite the plenty of well-founded critiques on capitalism, the development of the capitalist mode of production stands out for making possible for the first time in history a truly social society, in which the conscious teleological-setting becomes dominant, leading to the birth of particular sciences (Lukács, 1984, p. 29). However, even though the latter represented a breakthrough in historical terms, they have never been free from ideology, especially its self-preserving reactionary one, which has made them uncritical (Lukács, 1984, p. 34).

Lukács summarizes his ontological thesis as follows:

The genuine recourse to being itself can only take place if its essential properties are always grasped as moments of a process of historical development, and—on accordance with the specific character of historicity, precisely in accordance with its particular mode of being—placed at the center of critical consideration (Lukács, 1984, p. 35).

Lukács criticizes Sartre, in the same form he criticizes his earlier self by weaving criticism to his famous work "*Geschichte und Klassenbewußtsein*"; for both cases, he claims Marx' conception had been distorted (Lukács, 1984, p. 38). Hence, they were unable to grasp the essentiality of Marx ingenious. Such a mistake is already contained in Ludwig Feuerbach's views and Lukács explains the centrality of it:

For Feuerbach divides here intellectually the co-existent inseparable, he must completely misunderstand this human being, the *genericity* of man. He carelessly avoids the novelty of human-social existence, for he is so compelled to

conceive of the *genericity* arising here, as it is in organic nature, as essentially 'dumb,' which the many individuals merely natural connects (Lukács, 1984, p. 38–39).

This concept of 'genericity'² expresses Marx' ontology, which appears as the starting point to where Lukács builds his own, where he makes careful consideration of Kantian and Hegelian ones, to derive an authentic apprehension of the being. The genus merely given from nature becomes in and through socialization changeable, namely social-historic determined. This does not wipe the genus of human beings, it, instead, adds a social-historical component to it, broadening it, never being able to obliterate it as an immediate part of nature (Lukács, 1984, p. 43).

Further, according to Lukács, Leibniz had already shown the relation of the universality and the singular,

[a]s a matter of fact, detail, like universality, is one of the basic categories of every being: there is no being that would not exist at the same time a copy of his Genus (general) and as a single objectivity (individual) (Lukács, 1984, p. 44).

It appears, however, more important, even more relevant, the assertion grasped both by Marx (in his "*Grundrisse*") as well as by Lukács that the development of individuality is always socially funded, never naturally given, hence, it appears as a rupture from its very natural singularity. Such development is a complex process, "which basis of being indeed forms the teleological-settings of practice with all its concomitant circumstances, but which itself has by no means a teleological character." (Lukács, 1984, p. 29).

It is not an absolute-teleological but a historical process. The more complex the labor activities become, the more sociability is required to overcome their obstacles. The consolidation of socialization and the emergence of language derive from necessity, they are simultaneously a historical and an ontological process of the social-being. As apprehended by Marx and Engels when they stated that language is the practical consciousness (see above).

Language here goes beyond mere communication, further than those from the natural realm of higher animals. Historically, going beyond signs

² There is no translation for the world *Gattungsmässigkeit*, hence I have to use neologism, Gattung=genus, genre; gattungsmässig=generic; Gattungsmässigkeit='genusity', 'genrity', 'genericity', I shall choose the last.

became imperative. “From the known-being (the being-for-us concrete and immediate) develops a perception from the being-in-itself.” (Lukács, 1984, p. 46).

Insofar, language emanates from socialization, and yet, the former makes a “separation” of oneself from the latter possible. Meaning, the language makes it possible for one to begin to differentiate, to enable a consciousness which, although derives from, is not identical to his/her ‘genericity’. But, as *practical consciousness*, a language cannot ontologically create its own reality. As the praxis changes so does its corresponded practical consciousness mutates; the latter occurs when foundations of nature and economy change, namely those elements to be grasped and modified while shaping reality are altered; economy changes within the reproduction of human-life, creating new objective conditions, which lay grounds for a new economy, hence, for new social relations. Thus, when conditions of production vary, then social teleological-settings are transformed through labor practices, conversely, political arrangements, social concessions, commitments, etc. must gradually be adapted and accommodated towards reality. The conditions, in which new arrangements can be developed, derive from a combination of causal processes. The multiple elements of teleological-settings account necessarily for a non-singular, non-homogeneous teleological-setting. This process breaks away from any natural determination, it constantly influences and, hence, modifies reality, however, it remains part of a causal process. Its outcome cannot be determined *a priori*. This process is, consequently, determined as a human historical process and not solely the transformation within natural history (Lukács, 1984, p. 47–54).

Such developments, frictions, results are products of class struggles, namely struggles to determined concrete interests and, first and foremost, relations of power (Lukács, 1984, p. 60). The changes in objective conditions change, necessarily, the subjective ones. Under different conditions, the same person can have and develop different subjectivities.

If this is true, then it is necessary to throw light on, at least, some capitalist relations, namely, it becomes imperative to unveil its objective conditions to lay focus in contemporary reality as part of my methodological claim.

B) Grasping contemporary reality presupposes understanding Political Economy

Directly above, I have discussed some of the real ontological conditions of human life. However, such an analysis focused on grasping its universal-

ity. Now, I should shift the focus to elucidate our problematic, namely how to account, or rather, to change consciousness in relating to emancipatory struggles, more specifically to struggles of gender.

Any given reality has multiple variables as constituents of reality, insofar it is impossible to claim to explain any given reality without a totalizing theory. Furthermore, to pay proper attention to ontology, that is to say, if social relations are to be explained, one must first understand their underlying determinants. Ontologically, the categories that determine the existence of the organic nature and separate the latter from the inorganic nature, namely its genesis, are the categories of production and reproduction. Considering this central aspect of Lukács' Ontology, I emphasize the Aristotelian paradigm "that man is by nature a political animal" (Aristotle, 1984, 4268 [1252^b1], if so, then human-being must also be inherently social. This sociability is understood in Marx's assertive view that the fact of living human-beings presupposes the production of living human-beings. (Marx, 1992, p. 283) Marx is unequivocal, "[I]f life itself appears only as a *means* of life." (Marx, 1992, p. 328). As an existential being as human-being cannot be conceived isolated, then social life appears as a means of individual life.

By incorporating economy into social relations, subjects of political decisions, or rather, of political social (tautology) arrangements, create economic structures of and for the production of life that reciprocally alter the concrete social structures and, hence, the social tissue of the very political arrangements that actualized them. Nonetheless, as the present analysis relinquishes giving ontological priority to logical abstract categories but instead asserts the need to focus on real relations, the analysis of the particular form, from which our social relations emerge, becomes an imperative, in one word, political economy, namely capitalist relations, must be regarded to discuss emancipation.

Under capitalist relations, life itself appears not as a means of life anymore but rather a means of wealth, or rather of capital reproduction. Life ceases to be the means to the end that is itself *life*; instead, it becomes the means to an external end, external-to-life, estranged-to-life. Life becomes an external means of and beyond itself. The first paragraph of *Das Kapital* summarizes this accurately.

The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, present itself as 'an immense accumulation of commodities,' its unit being a single commodity. Our investigation must, therefore, begin with the analysis of a commodity (Marx, 1906, p. 41).

From start, it discloses that the nexus of the society appears³ as something external to this society. The being of this society becomes capital—as hypostatized social relations—, which, in its first, specific form, appears as money, and the latter appears as one specific form of commodity. Money is presented by Marx as the “unit” of the whole capitalist society. At the ontological level of production and reproduction, human relations become relations between commodities. It presents at the outset that relations in a capitalistic society appear as non-human relations, namely estranged relations. Society becomes, hence, ahistorical, *i.e.*, a product of an external-being. Hence, a hypostasis.

If the nexus of social relations is external to social relations, this nexus appears as the non-nexus, as an entity with no reality, no substance. The relation between all commodities appears as the relation with the one commodity which represents all and no commodity simultaneously, as a universal-commodity-non-commodity, which is money. Since the relations in capitalist society are relations among equivalents, their specifics, characteristics and specificities must disappear, they must succumb to equality, to equivalency, to different proportions of the same. Insofar, individuals must constantly renounce their individuality and actualize their lives amorphously.

Hence die magic of money. In the form of society now under consideration, the behavior of men in the social process of production is purely atomic. Hence their relations to each other in the production assume a material character independent of their control and conscious individual action. These facts manifest themselves at first by products as a general rule taking the form of commodities with the character of money. Hence the riddle presented by money is but the riddle presented by commodities; only it now strikes us in its most glaring form (Marx, 1906, p. 105–106).

In the *Grundrisse* Marx reveals the opposition between the objective conditions of the lively labor and the worker, whose working abilities are antagonized by independent exchange values. The latter appears, then, as a subject-existence from the former-objectify-labor of the worker. The labor conditions appear as subjects, the subjects of labor appear as objects subjected to those estranged subjects—namely his labor conditions.⁴

³ Appears is translated from German as “presents itself” from *erscheint*

⁴ “The objective conditions of living labor appear as separate. Independent [verselbstständigte] values opposite living labor capacity as subjective being, which therefore appears

Marx shows that under capitalist relations a human being can never be fully human. The subject becomes constantly an object; while the object, as the new subject, dominates the immediate conditions. The living work faces his objectified work.

In bourgeois society, the commodity becomes and, conversely, is the true community:

In bourgeois society, the worker e.g. stands there purely without objectivity, subjectively; but the thing which *stands opposite* him has now become the *true community* [*Gemeinwesen*], which he tries to make a meal of, and which makes a meal of him (Marx, 1993, p. 496).

C) Grasping human reality presupposes a historical investigation

Such relations of oppositional, contradictory interests are by no means merely a matter of economics. They are very much embedded in the way whole cultures think. Not only the production and the reproduction of working conditions affect almost the whole society and has multiple implications in other organizations and cultural aspects. But also, they are politically organized to foster a one-dimensional ideology, hence, leaving no room for real emancipatory struggles.

This becomes clear when one regards France Stoner Saunders' historical research encompassing the time frame of the Cold War both concerning the USA and Western Europe. While in the Soviet Union it was explicit that the government was supporting its ideology with propaganda and censorship, in Western countries the discourse of freedom of speech and thought was strongly emphasized to make the case for the so-called capitalist democratic system(s). However, Saunders' *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (Saunders, 2013) shows how the political left and many artists were vastly used for Western pro-capitalist political-economics agendas as—and most of them unknowingly—propaganda instruments. Governments, private companies, selected individuals

to them only as a value of another kind (not as value, but different from them, as use-value." Marx grasps the Subject-Predicate-Inversion: "The objective conditions of living labor capacity are' presupposed as having an existence independent of it, as the objectivity of a subject distinct from living labor capacity and standing independently over against it". "What is reproduced and produced anew [neuproduziert] is not only the presence of these objective conditions of living labor but also their presence as independent values. i. e. values belonging to an alien subject. confronting this living labor capacity." In: K. Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)* (London, New York, Victoria, Ontario, New Delhi, Auckland, Rosebank: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 461–462.

from the elite, foundations, NGOs, secret services, etc. worked together to achieve concrete, specifically set goals. However, in the present days, such unilateral exercise of power persists. Moniz Bandeira's analysis regarding history and geopolitics unveils such relations (Bandeira, 2014, 2016), which in other times could have been accounted as "conspiracy theory", but due to the work of Snowden, WikiLeaks (<https://wikileaks.org>) and others whistle-blowers have been proven to be true. Even in the CIA Library (www.cia.gov/library), one can find official information concerning such matters.

Point being, emancipatory struggles, on the one hand, and intellectual analysis, on the other, cannot abdicate to introduce such real categories and relations, and, by doing so, they enable both a better understanding of reality and attain an openness for self-critique.

Concrete Example among Languages

A) Emancipation in thought

Example 1: In Brazil, the slums (*favelas*), ghettos, which have become quite ordinary but being common does not make them part of a less tragic situation, less deplorable; currently, they are being called 'communities' (*favela* becomes *comunidade*). The historical existence of *favelas* gives way to the ahistorical absolutization of the concept *comunidade* by surrendering its specificities. In idealism, by simply changing the name of the slums, one is creating a better life for the oppressed people that live in them, they are not regarded as sub-humans anymore, hence it is possible to enhance real-life conditions by changing it from a degraded perception into a one more dignified.

Example 2: For some years, in the USA and Brazil, a strong campaign to change the word nigger and substitute it either black or Afro-American has been promoted, to overcome racism, of emancipating the "black community". In idealism, changing the name grants the oppressed "black community" dignity and empowerment, hence it is an emancipatory struggle.

Example 3: Also, in Brazil, for over the past 10 years the worker, namely the labor force is being regarded not as a worker or employee (*trabalhador*, *funcionário* respectively) anymore, but collaborator (*colaborador*). Does exploitation, namely the gratis labor hours which the employer, or rather the capitalist appropriates, acquires as gratis hours, does it disappear? Does alienated labor become immediate labor? In idealism changing the

name, i.e., how workers are regarded as grants workers independence and liberty, brings democracy to the work environment.

Example 4: This last example considers something that though has not been yet implemented, it could just as the former examples been implemented with the reasoning of possessing an emancipatory potential in-itself. Around the world, US-Americans are regarded as Americans and the United States of America as America. Nations and continents become identical. This has a historical dimension and is aligned with Monroe Doctrine prerogative: American for Americans, which means, within the imperialist powers only the United States of America can determine the destiny of their fellow American nations (all in North, Central and South Americas). By calling people from other nations from the American Continent also Americans, that would bring balance, equality, self-determination, and representation to all other countries of the Americas and their peoples.

Critique on example 1: But how does calling slum a community change the degraded conditions of it? Do the people who live there get better jobs, health care, education, security, infrastructure and so on, merely because its name was changed? The clear answer is no. What idealism does instead of grasping reality and trying to overcome it in praxis, meaning, changing its real conditions; it overcomes reality solely in thought. The impact of such is tremendous but not in changing reality but rather in perpetuating the very condition it claims to overcome. Instead of achieving emancipatory consciousness, calling a slum community establishes a rather comfortable situation (for the outside world), a situation that needs less (if any) effort to overcome at all, since this has already been achieved in thought. It has no emancipatory impact in reality from within; it does, however, have a political impact from without. It avoids confrontation and relinquishes any real struggle for better conditions.

Critique on example 2: In the same manner, idealism confuses real conditions of black people with only imagined ones. In Brazil and USA, a great number of black people suffers prejudice, live in degraded conditions, suffer violence in work, suffer violence from the state with marginalization, suffer violence from the police with beatings and killings; insofar, racism is still very much present and calling it otherwise does not change this fact, not from within. But only from without as a mere perception, or rather an illusion. This allows ideology to transform the imaginary of anyone who still thinks racism is a problem by appeasing the urgency of the problem.

Critique on example 3: Idealism presupposes to give representation to the labor force by changing its name, *i.e.*, the worker becomes a collaborator. Hence, it imagines superseding the inherent antagonism between the labor force and capitalist, employee and employer, or those disposed of the means of production and the owner of them. However, if exploitation, namely appropriation of gratis-labor, persists as the foundation of productive forces if workers still are dispossessed from means of production if workers are commanded; how can workers be collaborators? They are only collaborators in the sense of accepting antagonism but by no means superseding it; they become collaborators as a docile working force, as apolitical-beings, as those, who succumbed to their fates as commodities, as raw materials to set motion into the externally-owned means of production. In this sense, they do not collaborate with each other, affirm themselves and their activities. Idealism transforms class struggle in struggle of semantics, the struggle of thoughts and ideas. Idealism relinquishes the political struggles of the social-being and substitutes them with subjective struggles of the self.

Critique on example 4: Regarding Mexicans, Argentinians, Nicaraguans, etc. as Americans, would not change the fact that the USA commands almost all countries in America, all three Americas: North, Central, and South. It would not change the fact that *regime change* is the real practice of the Monroe Doctrine. It would not change the fact that those who refuse to align suffer (or are going to suffer) moral, mediatic, economic (sanctions and embargo) wars and, also, the constant threat of real war. The emancipation of nations, by changing the way they are regarded to, would only have occurred as mysticism, the reality remains veiled under the mist of idealism,

Idealism appears in all examples rather as reactionary instead of emancipatory. It turns everything upside down. Only by flipping it over again, one can confront reality.

Quoting Marx: “As *species-consciousness*, man confirms his real *social life* and merely repeats in thought his actual existence; conversely, *species-being* confirms itself in *species-consciousness* and exists for itself in its universality, as a thinking being” (Marx, 1992, p. 350–351).

B) Portuguese, English, German and the Gender-Neutral-Language

Now I compare three Indo-European languages: Portuguese, German and English. However, it lies beyond the scope of this paper, arguments regarding the specific genesis of those three languages. These languages en-

able different approaches towards feminine, masculine and neutral; hence possessing comparable groundings for discussing gender-neutral-language.

The problem, though, with these considerations, lies in the fact that I am arbitrarily selecting these three languages and some words to create a tangible understanding with concrete examples. Nevertheless, since a theoretical discussion has already been introduced above, which grasps language in its general and not in its specific form, then, methodologically, this arbitrariness does not constitute a problem in essence but merely a problem in appearance.

Luise F. Pusch claims the suffix—and this constitutes the category number 3, according to her, when regarding the German language—is one of the forms of genus in language. In German, it specifies the female gender with ‘in’ (Pusch, 2010, p. 193), moreover, it, still according to her, what constitutes the centenary subordination of women from men (Pusch, 2010, p. 202). However, Pusch also claims that the history of the genesis, functionality, etc. from the German suffix ‘-in’ has not been yet written (Pusch, 2010, p. 198). Insofar, after grasping the thesis and antithesis, she achieves the reconciliation in her synthesis; the emancipation of women should introduce the abolishment from ‘-in’ (Pusch, 2010, p. 201). In other words, Pusch provides a double transcendental argument to establish a connection between language and emancipation. First, she postulates a historical category, which she claims there is no historicity behind it, hence an abstract history, a transcendental history, an ahistorical history. Second, she claims emancipation in the language, meaning abolishing the term is a necessary condition for emancipation. Thus, she considers neither the present nor the past to realize what the term means; instead, she creates a transcendental argument to establish a normativity—how should it be—towards a transcendental future.

Pusch also derives from genus-in-wording two other categories: 1. Lexicon (a): attributes of male and female: such as male child and female child (Pusch, 2010, p. 193). Lexicon (b): inherent pairs such as sister and brother, or mother and father. 2. Grammatical categories such as genus masculine and feminine.

For 1.(a): In German and English the primordial term for both son and daughter is children (in German: *Kinder*); while in Portuguese is *filhos* (‘sons’). The feminine term in Portuguese arises when it is comprehended for daughters only (*filhas*). How does this impact reality? Are Brazilian/

Portuguese children more “oppressed” because of the term used? Furthermore, child in general—when not regarding son and daughter—is in English neutral, *the child*, and in German as well, *das Kind*, while in Portuguese it becomes feminine, *a criança*. In Brazil, Portugal, etc., are female children not represented at home and male children not represented in non-parental-groups?

For 1.(b), it is analog: parents (G: *Eltern*) and siblings (G: *Geschwister*). In Portuguese however, would one regard parents as *pais* (‘vaters’) and siblings as *irmãos* (‘brothers’). Do such differences affect reality? Is the mother unrepresented? Among male and female siblings, do the female ones become oppressed by their representation of language?

For 2.: In respect of these three languages, we can discuss two different concepts: *human* and *person*. In English, the articles of these categories are *the* human/person or *a* human/person, so both are neutral. To account for a specific person, one would have to add some attributes to these concepts, e.g., a female person. While in both German and Portuguese human becomes ‘male’—*der Mensch, o homem*—and person becomes ‘female’—*die Person, a pessoa*. Do feminine and masculine articles account for only male and female beings?

Here the problematic reveals itself, meaning, can language create reality? Is everything performative, as respected feminists have claimed;⁵ does, hence, changing language change consciousness, changing, therefore, reality? Do linguistic categories account for real categories in the sense of creating/shaping reality?

Questions were posed without direct answers because the theoretical background presented earlier has already revealed that giving independence to language, to give language creative power in- and for-itself is an impossibility. As practical consciousness, when one changes the language, one creates a different perception of reality but never changes the embedded reality. Therefore, for thousands of years, the power of rhetoric and words has been perceived as a means of domination. Changing language creates a consciousness detached from the immediate reality, it separates

⁵ E.g.: According to Butler (Butler, 1999, pp. 10–11), sex and gender distinction is unintelligible: “If the immutable character of sex is contested, perhaps this construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed, perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all.” Further: (p. 179) “Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*.”

praxis from its perception. The gender-neutral-language, like any other claim for shaping reality through language—instead of its opposite: language as practical consciousness—must turn reality upside-down to hover above it.

Subject-predicate-inversion of gender-neutral-language: Hypothesis as reality

When one compares feminist claims, any notion of homogeneity concerning the apprehension of reality disappears. For one, Judith Butler argues a complete des-ontologizing of the being by claiming “[t]hat the gendered body is performative suggests that it has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality.” (Butler, 1999, p. 173). On the one hand, Linda Alcoff shows partial agreement by asserting that “[g]ender identity is not exhaustively determined by biology; it is not ahistorical or universally the same. Thus there is no gender essence all women share. But gender is, among other things, a position one occupies and from which one can act politically.” (Alcoff, 2006, p. 175). On the other hand, she opposes an all-embracing des-ontologizing by claiming recognition of an objective type without having to fall into a “reified nature” (Alcoff, 2006, p. 175), as it occurred in the past. Insofar, Alcoff’s assertions verge on the notion of the ontology of the social-being in Lukács’ sense, whereas Butler’s claim constitutes a transcendental notion of culture, as the latter appears as a determination in-itself.

Elizabeth Spelman does not claim a non-ontological woman and argues against the reduction of the multiplicity of women in an abstract bourgeoisie woman:

Western feminist theory has in effect used Stamp’s argument⁶ whenever it has implicitly demanded that Afro-American, Asian-American, Latin American women separate their ‘women’s voice’ from their racial or ethnic voice without also requiring women to distinguish being a ‘woman’ from being white (Spelman, 1988, p. 13).

⁶ Spelman clarifies what the Stamp’s argument means: “Stamp goes on to say that the fact that Black men really are white underneath gives ‘their story a relevance to men of all races’” (Kenneth Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Knopf 1956), vii-viii., in Spelman, 1988, p. 12).

Yet, Spelman acknowledges the importance of the category woman, especially, to truly portray reality. Not in the slightest can this claim be confused with an abstract all-encompassing woman, such as a white western middle-class woman. “In order to speak if someone is a victim of sexism, as being oppressed on account of her being a woman, she has to be identifiable as a woman.” (Spelman, 1988, p. 13).

Even though Mari Mikkola’s understanding of ontology do not grasp the centrality of the dialects in the sense of Lukács’—namely the causal and teleological relations, which can transform, but never fully suppress—, she allows part of reality to presents itself as determinant category:

[E]ither feminists work hard to modify everyday conceptions of sex and gender so that they are in line with the conventionalist and abolitionist views, or feminists modify their conceptions of sex and gender so that they are closer to everyday thinking (Mikkola, 2016, p. 69).

Finally, we give voice to Nina Power, who demands going beyond capitalist Manichaeism among feminist struggles and theories:

If feminism takes this opportunity to shake off its current imperialist and consumerist sheen it could once again place its vital transformative political demands center-stage, and shuffle off its current one-dimensionality for good (Power, 2009, p. 69).

Power grasps the central role which feminism plays in emancipatory movements. However, she also realizes feminism has to enable a self-critique to turn itself upside down and, by doing so, to realize its centrality beyond its one-dimensional idealism instead of a multi-dimensional reality. Or, as Nancy Fraser puts it: “Henceforth, feminist theorists cannot avoid the question of capitalist society” (Fraser, 2013, p. 227).

Hence, the present analysis tends to agree with Aristotle, when he says:

Medicine, for instance, does not theorize about what will help to cure Socrates or Callias, but only about what will help to cure any or all of a given class of patients: this alone is subject to technique—individual cases are so infinitely various that no knowledge of them is possible (Aristotle, 1984, 4628 [1356^b1]).

The base of science is also the base of knowledge, it is also the base of language: it is always a generalization. Even if we consider a microscopic sphere, *e.g.*, genetics, it can only be regarded as science, as knowledge

as soon as its further development unveils a world of possibilities, from which general “laws” can be extracted and in which they can also be applied. Conversely, when knowledge cannot extract a trend, a generality from the totality either of singular beings/objects or broader relations, then the lack of reduction represents the impossibility of the abstract movement of turning the infinite into finite. The complete relativism succumbs to irrationalism as by crossing its ontological limits rational thinking becomes pure mysticism.

Following Marx’s methodology, I synthesized this problematic as the Subject-Predicate-Inversion of Gender-Neutral-Language.

If capitalist relations represent the reproduction of the objective conditions of oppression. So-called emancipation, which reproduces such relations, appears necessarily not only a non-emancipation but also, ontologically, cannot never become one. Every objectified relation becomes the very relation which oppresses the subject (Marx, 1993, p. 266–367).

To actualize the emancipatory claim of gender, a claim that argues to give gender voice, recognition, neutralize the oppression, then one has first to recognize the existence of the opposition between oppressor and oppressed. Marx discloses, “[h]ow does one resolve an opposition? By making it impossible.” (Marx, 1992, p. 213). Insofar, I paraphrase his conclusions: How does one resolve any oppressive opposition in human relations? By abolishing all oppression in human relations, by making them impossible.

Finale

Emancipatory struggles must leave the realm of idealism, where the idea appears to acquire an independent existence. Where social relations appear as a mere product of the idea, insofar praxis appears as a predicate, idea as a subject. Or as Feuerbach puts it: “A being undifferentiated from thought, a being, which only is a predicate or a determination from reason, it is merely a thought abstract being, in reality however not a being.” (Feuerbach, 2013, p. 29–30). As a product of thought, any social nexus appears above and beyond society, it acquires a transcendental existence. Considered ontologically but not metaphysically, such ideal struggles for affirmation become struggles for self-denial. The subject becomes predicate; predicate becomes subject. An inversion has been performed; emancipation appears now as its reversal. Only when conceived from within,

i.e., as real relations, namely as general conditions, only then can emancipatory struggles realize any real emancipatory claim, that is to say, not because of their claim in- and for-themselves but because of their practice.

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