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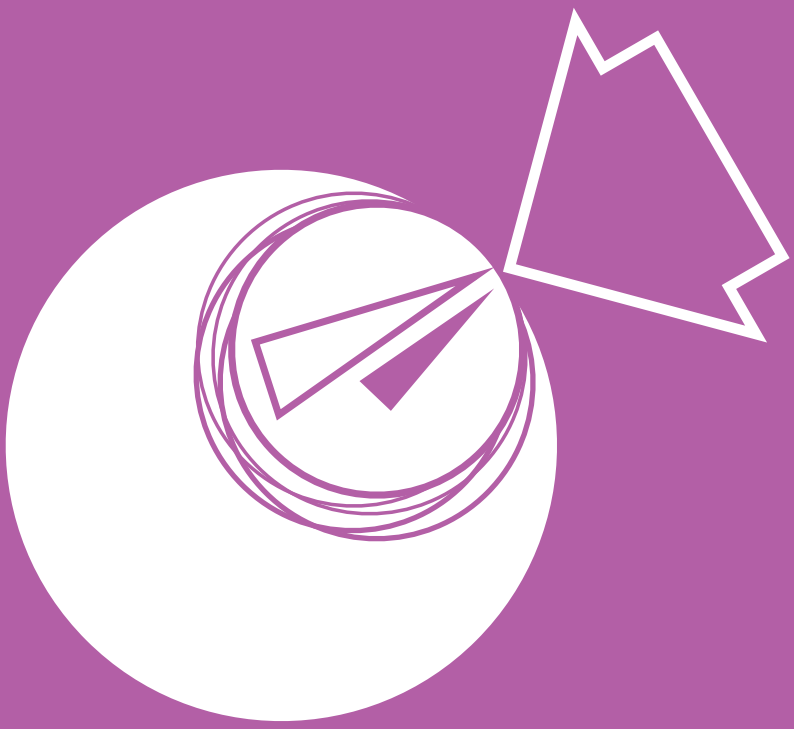

SUBVERSIVE CONCEPTS: EMPIRES AND BEYOND

Bonin/ Kowalewski/ Kuligowski/ Marzec/ Nakhutsrishvili/
Tikhonova/ Turunen/ Śmiechowski/

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Subversive Concepts: Empires and Beyond

"The worst thing one can do with words," George Orwell once wrote, "is to surrender to them." One must "let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way," to use language for "expressing and not for concealing or preventing thought," he continued (1953, 169). For centuries, social movements "let the meaning to choose the words" and actively sought new categories to grasp the world. They also expressed the desire for a new world but often surrendered to words when imagining it. Medieval heretics, French revolutionaries, and various socialist movements on the fringes of the Russian Empire one hundred years later, as well as groups like nationalist urban reformers, Muslim modernizers, and democratic antisuffragists–all had to face fossilized concepts that they attempted to question and modify, actively reappropriating them to forge new configurations. They also inherited the existing language and other sign systems, which cannot be modified at will without the risk of losing the capacity to communicate. To paraphrase Karl Marx's nutshell definition of historical agency, people make use of their concepts but they do not do so as they please; they do not do so under self-selected circumstances but, rather, under the already-existing circumstances given and transmitted in language and social relations.

While elite writers might act subversively by coining concepts that could become weapons in the hands of mass social movements, countless individuals in various social positions made new uses of them. Simul-

While elite writers might act subversively by coining concepts that could become weapons in the hands of mass social movements, countless individuals in various social positions made new uses of them.

taneously, a juxtaposition of bottom-up agency against elite actors does not do justice to the reality of multidirectional transfers across hierarchies. Concepts wandered across social structures, in space, and between languages and cultures. Such transfers happen in the multidimensional space of differences, where any given position is relationally dependent on others and embedded in various disparities of power. One may describe this dynamic by borrowing the notion of intersectionality from feminist studies, where it is used to understand how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. The perspective is also the characteristic of the empire as a complex political space composed of different and unequal positions.

These positions could be actively questioned and reconfigured by the actors. Concepts used challenged the multidimensional political space where they appeared by forging identifications and challenging modes of possible political action and hierarchies coded in speech. To grasp the operation of concepts within such multidimensional and unequally patterned spaces of an empire, we propose a toolkit of approaches present in various proportions in the contributions to this volume.

While bottom-up movements widely reshaped the political vernacular, academicians long restricted their studies to elite discourses. In recent decades, and after several subsequent methodological turns, the (widely understood) history of ideas passed through a profound transformation; as a result, the discipline in its current form differs highly from the one established in the 1930s by such scholars as Arthur O. Lovejoy and George H. Sabine (Lovejoy [1937] 1964; Sabine [1938] 1961). Generally, the history of ideas has gradually become less elitist and more transnational and contextual. Objects of scrutiny (be they ideas, discourses, concepts, and the like, depending on the perspective) are conceived as created in definite social situations. In this vein, when mapping out the methodological interventions into the field, one may stumble upon the social history of political ideas, the materiality of ideas, the people's history of ideas, and, finally, new imperial history.

The first approach, the social history of political ideas, is prevalent within the French academia landscape, where it is known as *histoire sociale des idées politiques* (often referred to as HSIP). It has a strict sociological bent, and the meaning of ideas is seen as grounded in the characteristic of a social group that produces and absorbs them. Its representatives are social scientists rather than historians and they focus, for instance, on modes of producing ideas (including the living conditions of authors and intellectuals), relations within the market of ideas

and communication contexts (i.e., the functioning of publishing houses, editorial boards, journals, think tanks, and the like), social settings of the consumers of ideas, and, finally, the institutionalization of ideas (Matonti 2012; Rioufreyt 2019). Arnault Skornicki and Jérôme Tournadre-Plancq stress that political ideas never exist beyond usages and utterances, which, in turn, are historically situated and depend on the strategies of the actors who seize them (2015, 4). Nonetheless, this does not mean a retreat to old-guard Marxist materialism. The simplified scheme of inferring ideas from economic relations would lead to the neglect of the symbolic and social contexts typical of a given epoch (Smadja 2016, 112). However, the materiality of ideas as a research method is, here, a useful supplement.

The neo-materialist approaches focus on media by which ideas may travel through national or linguistic borders and different social groups or strata. Concentration on these elements, in turn, mitigates the role of authors who produce ideas: They are perceived not as autonomous creators but, rather, as figures situated within entangled networks of co-production. From this perspective, the agency of publishers, translators, editors, designers, booksellers, librarians, and, finally, readers is of crucial importance, as they are regarded as creative actors involved in the co-production of the meaning of given texts and ideas (Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira 2019). The HSIP and the materiality of ideas as research methods should not be confused with (but can be supplemented by) the people's history of ideas.

This heterogeneous set of perspectives reflects on historical phenomena that escape the more traditional approaches. It may offer insights into the conceptual and ideological micro-cosmos of subaltern groups like indigenous people of the world, slaves, peasants, and proletarians of various stocks (Bonin and Dupuis-Déri 2019, 293–300). Here, there is the biggest challenge, as it is evident that subalterns often did not use scripts to communicate their ideas. Even if they did, they had little or no access to the institutions for producing texts and, in effect, for speaking on their behalf in a way preserved for us. What is at stake in different variations of the people's history of ideas is a search for a new type of source through which subalterns of the past may not only speak but also be heard.

For this reason, students of people's history of ideas are sensitive to channels of expression such as songs, woodcuts, proverbs, religious practices, and many others (Scott 1990). They also read between the lines of texts produced by other groups, looking for slips of the tongue and mediated traces left by the subaltern populations. In any case, their ideas

and thoughts appear to be a collective work rather than an individual effort and are often slotted between elite discourses in both their production and their transmission.

Various approaches interested in the comparison, transfer, translation, and hydridic cross-fertilization of concepts came to the fore.

In addition to such a–crudely put–vertical transfer, what has gained much attention in the last decades is the horizontal transfer between cultural and language contexts. Various approaches interested in the comparison, transfer, translation, and hybridic cross-fertilization of concepts came to the fore. This diversity is, however, to be studied, according to the intersectional raster, neither denying various forms of asymmetry and inequality nor reducible to any single hierarchy of domination. The multidimensional contestations researched in this volume, in a nutshell, can be summarized by a notion of "imperial situation(s)." In this respect, many of the studies presented here subscribe to the decentralized and situational approach in numerous cases called new imperial history while advancing studies of political language in use. New imperial history offers "a multidimensional view of social, political, and cultural actors, and of the spaces in which they function" (Gerasimov et al. 2005, 54). The "focus on the imperial situation of complex societies and multilayered, irregular diversity" (Mogilner 2014, 25) helps to study multiple, relational, and unequal public spheres where subversive concepts were adapted, contested, and uttered. The empire is here understood as an analytical category grasping multidirectional flows in a non-homogeneous space of dependence, characterized by multi-ethnicity and hybridity, sprinkled with domination and fractured by resistance in a joint effort to make the rapidly and asynchronically changing world one's own.

Thus, subversive concepts within imperial spaces are concepts used with conscious performative content questioning the existing multi-modal and multi-directional disparities of power or unintentionally modifying those relationships.

Because the non-elite groups are now in focus, new questions emerge regarding conceptual change dynamics across the imperial social spectrum. How did new conceptual innovations impact broader populations and what channels were used to transmit them? What does a circuit leading from conceptual innovators, via second-hand dealers of ideas, newspapers, and rank and file party functionaries, to "end users" look like? Is it a one-way street, and if not, how can we conceptualize–and research–bottom-up transfers and various feedback loops between actors in such tiered public spheres? How are transfers and translations strategically used and abused in such contexts? Finally, how were asymmetric imperial situations negotiated and how could various groups being sub-

altern along one line of division strive for domination along other lines or against other groups? The authors of contributions collected in the issue, searching for possible answers to similar questions, offer insights into diverged geographical areas and linguistic spaces, focusing on social situations in which habits concerning public performance and relationships to other actors and the world were broken and communicative practices questioned the most fundamental assumptions about the participants of the situation, contributing to what Benjamin Arditi called the "polemicization of the commonplace" (Arditi and Valentine 1999). The articles gathered below are attempts to research subversive concepts which modified various imperial situations in their social, cultural, and material contexts.

The main block of texts touches upon different situations on the fringes of the Russian Empire. Luka Nakhutsrishvili, in his extensive essay, develops a situational understanding of imperial domination and excavates peasants' autonomous initiative from between the lines of evidence left by various hegemonic actors, be it the Russian state or Georgian revolutionary intelligentsia. Risto Turunen sheds light on various forms of public activity and socially embedded practices of subversive horizontal communication such as writing and reading handwritten newspapers by Finnish workers, housemaids, and the rural proletariat. Analysing these vernacular publics, he claims that the concept of socialism had multiple meanings in the discourse produced by low social strata, always carrying a potential for re-subjectification. Such a gesture could also be performed by the explicit renegotiating of hierarchies and categories of social-self description, as Kamil Śmiechowski demonstrates. Wielding the toolkit that urban studies offers, he analyses the redefinitions of the concept of *mieszczaństwo* (or, broadly, urban society) in Russian Poland in 1905–1914. He also shows the double edge of such self-assertion, often directed not only against the state authority but also against other social or ethnic groups. Nadezhda Tikhonova likewise focuses on the press, examining the crucial Muslim newspaper in the late Russian Empire. She scrutinizes its careful tactical bilingualism to show how breaking the habits of mind served to remold intergroup identifications and visions of community.

Beyond the Russian Empire, Hugo Bonin questions the cliché that British antisuffragists in the early twentieth century were reactionaries, spelling out the democratic foundations of their convictions. Jakub Kowalewski, in his paper, sheds new light on the history of the Hussite Revolution, focusing on the transfigurations of spacetime related to the concept of Tabor. Using Husserl's and Althusser's theories, the author

explains how the heretical movement produced its subversive, spatialized concepts, by which Hussites could go beyond the Catholic and feudal moulds.

Tracing the dynamic of subversive concepts and the creativity of actors from the past, these studies show how doing things with words challenges situations around us. So, read through to speak out.

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Autorzy: Piotr Kuligowski, Wiktor Marzec
Tytuł: Wywrotowe pojęcia w imperiach i poza nimi

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Peasant Oaths, Furious Icons and the Quest for Agency: Tracing Subaltern Politics in Tsarist Georgia on the Eve of the 1905 Revolution

Part I: The Prose of the Intelligentsia and Its Peasant Symptoms

This two-part transdisciplinary article elaborates on the autobiographical account of the Georgian Social-Democrat Grigol Uratadze regarding the oath pledged by protesting peasants from Guria in 1902. The oath inaugurated their mobilization in Tsarist Georgia in 1902, culminating in full peasant self-rule in the "Gurian Republic" by 1905. The study aims at a historical-anthropological assessment of the asymmetries in the alliance formed by peasants and the revolutionary intelligentsia in the wake of the oath as well as the tensions that crystallized around the oath between the peasants and Tsarist officials. In trying to recover the traces of peasant politics in relation to multiple hegemonic forces in a modernizing imperial borderland, the article invites the reader to reconsider the existing assumptions about historical agency, linguistic conditions of subjectivity, and the relationship between politics and the material and customary dimensions of religion. The ultimate aim is to set the foundations for a future subaltern reading of the practices specific to the peasant politics in the later "Gurian Republic". The first part of the article starts with a reading of Uratadze's narration of the 1902 inaugural oath "against the grain".

Keywords: agency, intelligentsia, oath, Orthodox icons, peasantry, political theology, Russian Empire, secular studies, speech-act, subaltern

I.1. The Oath as Event and Metaphor

> Unbreakable, solid, unshakeable was this oath, which throughout decades, notwithstanding a thousand hardships, the countryside has kept and still keeps with such firmness…
> (Uratadze 1933, 2)[1]

Such overblown rhetoric, seasoned with extraordinarily frequent references to oaths, dominated much of the February 1933 issue of the newspaper *Brdzolis Khma* (Georgian for "sound of battle") published by Georgian Mensheviks in their Parisian emigration. The issue was dedicated to celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the Marxist movement in Tsarist-ruled Georgia, which by the turn of the century had joined in the all-Russian revolutionary process. It was only in the wake of the October Revolution that the Georgian Social-Democrats broke with the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and came to establish, in 1918, the short-lived Georgian Democratic Republic whose politics and public life they dominated until the Bolshevik Red Army occupied the country in February 1921 (incorporating it later into the Soviet Union). It was against this background that the 1933 issue of *Brdzolis Khma* mobilized the notion of the oath as a rhetorical device for upholding the image of a Georgian people persistently loyal to the emigrated Mensheviks despite the Bolshevik yoke. What distinguishes the above-cited piece penned by Grigol Uratadze (1880–1959), however, is that its evocation of oaths is not simply metaphoric but, rather, refers to an actual oath pledged by the peasants of the Nigoiti community in Guria[2] in the late spring of 1902. This oath marked the start of

1 For their valuable comments on various drafts and/or for support with material, I would like to thank Maia Barkaia, Ia Eradze, Mariam Goshadze, Barbare Janelidze, Tamta Khalvashi, Nino Simonishvili, Zaal Andronikashvili, Akaki Chikobava, Bruce Grant, Giorgi Maisuradze, Florian Mühlfried, William Tyson Sadleir, the participants in the history seminar led by Tamar Keburia and Ana Lolua at Ilia State University as well as two anonymous reviewers. My special thanks to Piotr Kuligowski and Wiktor Marzec for their infinitely patient and encouraging editorship. All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

2 Now a separate administrative unit in Western Georgia, Guria was a principality that the Russian Empire annexed in 1829. By 1846, it had been integrated into the Kutaisi *gubernya* of the Caucasus Viceroyalty under the name of Ozurgeti *uyezd* (see Church 2001).

the peasant movement in Transcaucasia, which became a turning point in the history of Georgian social democracy.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, three decades after the Emancipation had "freed" the Gurian peasants not only from their subjection to feudal lords but also from the land they had been tilling for their masters, the peasants refused to work the nobles' lands. Several factors account for their dissent–their land hunger and tensions with the local land-owning nobility in the context of the gradual capitalist transformation of the countryside, their discontent with the corruption and arbitrariness of the local administration and the burden of a number of taxes and obligations (Suny 1994, 166; Jones 1989). The protest eventually became a boycott of all administrative institutions, culminating during the high tide of the 1905 Revolution in full-fledged armed peasant self-government. Admired throughout the Russian Empire as the "Gurian Republic," it stood out for its exceptional endurance among the many efforts of the Empire's various subaltern groups to establish "republics"(Jones 1989, 2005; Shanin 1986). In the initial stage of the protest in 1902, it was Uratadze, then a local school teacher, who assisted the Gurian peasants with formulating their demands. Not without some pride, Uratadze implicitly credited himself with having initiated the collaboration between the Marxist intelligentsia and the peasants whom the former designated as "village workers" in an attempt "to square Marxism with organization among the peasantry" (Jones 2005, 143). This collaboration eventually transformed the Gurian peasants into the base of the Georgian branch of the RSDLP and largely determined the political success of Georgians within the all-Russian organization. For, as Stephen Jones has forcefully argued, Georgian Social-Democracy stood out not only due to its unique mixture of social and national/anti-colonial struggle (a trait it shared with the revolutionary groups of other national minorities of the Russian Empire) but, most eminently, for the substantial role assigned to the peasantry based on the Gurian experience. In defiance of all Marxist orthodoxy concerning peasant backwardness, the Georgian position on the peasantry, not to mention the news arriving from Guria, contributed considerably to shaping Lenin's views on the revolutionary-progressive potential of peasants (Jones 2005).

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Uratadze claims that all this started on a hill that later came to be called *napitsvara*, i.e. the place "where an oath was pledged," on "one dark spring night" when "the entire society of Nigoiti swore to each other fraternity, unity, liberty." Even as Uratadze refers to one particular

night, the concept of the oath subcutaneously shifts from a particular event to a generalized ethical and political metaphor.[3]

> This was the *first* oath of the peasantry, pledging that through common struggle they would ameliorate their condition; this was the *first* encounter of Social-Democrats and village workers; this was the *first* foundation of that unshakeable and inextricable union between us and the countryside, which, till this day, no misfortunes of Time have been able to severe. Here, *for the first time*, the peasantry met its protector, the attendant of its illness, the confidant of its intents, the guesser of its heart's desires, the devoted guardian of its interests (Uratadze 1933, 2).

More significantly, in this article, Uratadze omits mentioning that the oath was taken at the emphatic request of the protesting peasants. This we learn only from his book-length Russian autobiography of 1959 (Uratadze 1968), in which he elaborates on the prequel and sequel of the oath, restating with certain minor yet telling changes the earlier short article. This crucial omission invites us to take with a grain of salt the rhetoric with which Uratadze's 1933 celebration of the Social-Democrats' alliance with the "People" tends to reduce the same "People"–to being a passive mass gratefully receptive of the protection and discernment of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia.

In the 1933 article, the narration of the oath on Napitsvara leaves the event as a rhetorically overblown and somewhat farcical occurrence due to the absence of any mention of its preconditions (certainly both for the sake of brevity imposed by the limits of a short newspaper piece and to not obscure the celebratory effect by introducing avowedly ambivalent causal threads). "What did they swear that night and how?" With this rhetorical question, Uratadze jumps from the above-mentioned metaphoric effusion straight into the middle of the plot, where we find him meeting one last time with representatives of peasants in the house of "comrade Samsonadze" to approve the hill as the site of the nocturnal assembly of around 700–800 persons. The ensuing account leading to the solemn gathering on "that holy place" to which he hurried inspired with "faith-like, divine grace" is worth quoting at length:

> It must already have been midnight when we reached the appointed place. The majority of the people had already arrived and gathered (*dagubashebulik'o*) on the slope, silently waiting for us. As soon as we were there, there was a whisper: He's here, he's here, but no one really knew who.

3 For a paradigmatic discussion of how a specific event can become a political metaphor, see Amin 1995.

> The tide of the people had ceased. Comrade L. Samsonadze asked for silence. Deadly silence set in, interrupted only by the rustling of leaves trembling in the gentle breeze. Except for the guards, everyone sat on the ground. I placed myself in their middle and begun: Comrades! The Day of Judgment has come. Today, we are starting the fight that will give us what is due to us; that will return to us what has been taken away from us… The product of our sweat to us shall belong etc. etc. The workers of all countries are with us – and I read out an old proclamation issued on the occasion of the Tiflis [Railway] Workshop strike. Let us swear to each other that we will stand together, fight together until victory, that we will lynch the traitor and the snitch. Upon these words, everyone, as one, stood up in silence. I began to read the paper with the oath. I was reading by candle light and I noticed that those next to me stood bareheaded, with a raised arm and three fingers extended. The next day I was assured that the entire assembly had been standing like this. When I finished reading, I heard the people whisper in unison the last words of the oath: "May he be cursed. Amen." The cool breeze caught the whisper of the people, flew it to the clefts of the ridge and from there, as if in confirmation, in the darkness of the night a deaf echo was heard: "Amen. Amen" (Uratadze 1933, 2).

As much as Uratadze would have liked to settle the question, "What did they swear that night and how?," upon closer inspection, the 1933 article reveals a fundamental ambiguity as to who swore to whom and what kind of oath. This ambiguity only intensifies with the multiplication of factors and protagonists in the later autobiography. Since its publication, Uratadze's Russian autobiography, *Reminiscences of a Georgian Social-Democrat*, has been one of the most important sources for studying the Gurian movement, not least for the valuable information it discloses concerning its beginnings in 1902, including the inaugural oath in Nigoiti.[4] However, none of the historians who have consulted Uratadze's text as a "source" seem to be completely comfortable with the many contradictions, specifically in regard to the "real" or metaphoric quality of the religious component. While Ronald Grigor Suny refers to Uratadze's account of the very first peasant boycott in

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4 Understandably, before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the autobiography of an *émigré* Menshevik like Uratadze could have been a useful source only for non-Soviet historians, whereas since independence, a general disinterest in the revolutionary past within Georgian academia delegated the peasant movement to near-total oblivion, with the exception of Irakli Makharadze, a film director, amateur historian and author of the only book-length popular monograph on the "Gurian Republic" (2020), which abundantly relies on Uratadze's autobiography.

Nigoiti without dwelling on the oath at all (Suny 1994, 163; 2020, 282–4), Teodor Shanin treats Uratadze as an "embarrassed young rationalist (…) pressed into acting the way a priest would, administering an oath in a religious ceremony of a most solemn nature" and labels the entire sequence a "tragi-comedy rapidly turned into high drama" (Shanin 1986, 104). As a consequence of the nocturnal oath, a carnivalesque proliferation of misunderstandings and misattributions as to who did what seems to have occurred. As Uratadze recalls the aftermath of the event:

> I was dressed in the *chokha*[5] of someone taller than me; probably that was the reason why on the next day the rumor went around that some priest had sworn the Nigoiti community into an oath against the landlords. Concerning this, all kinds of legends spread. The administration of the *uyezd* searched for this priest for a long time and more than one actual priest was declared suspicious and subjected to surveillance… (Uratadze 1933, 2).

Stephen Jones' exhaustive assessment (1989; 2005) of the variety of factors that contributed, along with the crucial involvement of the Social-Democrats and their support for the peasants' demand for land ownership, to making the Gurian peasant movement of 1902–1905 "so organized, powerful and enduring" (Jones 2005, 156–7) duly mentions the "semireligious" inaugural event of Napitsvara (142). However, in the overall explanatory economy, the observation that besides being "frustrated landowners who wanted to legally own land", "Gurian peasants were religious believers who swore oaths on icons" remains rather inconsequential (156). In both versions of Jones' study, references to the arsenal of religious items involved in the peasant gatherings leave them in a state of interchangeability. As the swearing on crosses and bibles seems to be as good as the swearing on Orthodox icons to convey the "religious" flair of peasants' actions, the 2005 version readily omits the earlier casual reference (again, based on Uratadze's account) to "[t]he religious faith of the peasantry [having been] successfully exploited by the tsarist authorities who, by making Gurians swear on a famous icon, discovered the whereabouts of a number of revolutionaries" (Jones 1989, 416). The only Georgian author currently engaged in the history of the Gurian movement, Irakli Makharadze (2020), extensively relates both the event on Napitsvara and the later incident to

5 *Chokha* is a woolen coat that is a traditional male dress all over the Caucasus.

the much-feared Orthodox icon named "Lomiskareli." However, he does not go beyond treating it as a zesty anecdote seasoning the legendary beginnings of the movement.[6]

What unites all the above-mentioned historiographies is that, in drawing to various degrees on Uratadze's text, none of them dwell on its letter (or even have time or space for this within their respective narrative and scholarly agendas). Yet, a close reading reveals that, in its description of the event on Napitsvara, the text not only omits all religious items, but also manifestly engages in an elaborate discursive operation of replacing "religious" gestures and meanings with allegedly "secular," "revolutionary" ones. No less telling of a certain ideological work underlying Uratadze's text is his account of the incident with the "Lomiskareli" icon. I argue that the uneasiness of the above-quoted historians with the religious element of peasant mobilization, far from being accidental, is essentially complicit in the epistemological regime established by Uratadze's own account of the oath insofar as they all share in a basic framework that, following recent critical studies in the anthropology of modernity and religion, we could define as "secular." This modernist framework readily cuts off a certain self-sufficient realm of the "social"–of human action and agency–from "religion" as a mental state (in terms of "belief"), which is more often than not understood as an "alienated" consciousness finding "symbolic" externalization in "rituals" (Asad 1993, 2003; Taylor 2007; Keane 2007). Such an approach easily tends to reduce religious practices to being nothing more than decorative accessories of some "real," self-sufficiently "secular" historical processes. Thus, operating within an ultra-modernist framework, Soviet Georgian historiography completely glossed over the practices specific to the Gurians' mobilization, hastily subsuming any possible reference to its religious character under the rubric of blind 'spontaneity', as illustrated by the following laconic formulation from the main late Soviet textbook on Georgian history: "The peasants spontaneously[7] revolted on the grounds of a dispute over pastureland,

6 In his study of the Georgian Democratic Republic, Eric Lee (2017) also mentions the "religious" beginnings of the Gurian movement. However, due to lack of knowledge of both Russian and Georgian, his discussion is derived entirely from existing English-language scholarship.

7 The Georgian equivalent of "spontaneity" is *stiqiuroba* (derived from the Russian *stikhiinost'*) and bears the connotation of something being "elemental," blind like the natural elements.

soon the Social-Democratic organization took over the leadership of this revolt" (Kikvidze 1972, 175).[8]

The aim of this article, then, is to take somewhat more seriously the vernacular religious practices and their "messy materiality" (Manning and Meneley 2008) and to answer a number of questions: What could it have meant to a Gurian peasant in 1902 to take an oath? What rationalities were prescribed by the materiality of specific practices of oath-taking? In what power structures were these practices embedded? What were the conditions for specific practices of oath-taking to be translated into metaphors? A more sustained ethnographic research into these matters should enable us to disclose the politics specific to the beginning of the Gurian movement in a somewhat different light from how historians have approached it to the present day. This entails taking time to delve into the letter of Uratadze's text as a "source" and starts by asking: Why did the peasants want to swear oaths in the first place and what implications does this have for the dynamics of the peasant mobilization as such? In the end, such inquiry invites us to think about the oath as a juncture between religion and political practice that goes beyond dichotomies counterposing tradition to modernity, religious passivity to some "properly" secular political agency, self-contained individuals to collectivities, speech to act and the oral to the written.

What could it have meant to a Gurian peasant in 1902 to take an oath? What rationalities were prescribed by the materiality of specific practices of oath-taking? In what power structures were these practices embedded? What were the conditions for specific practices of oath-taking to be translated into metaphors?

In asking these questions, this study does not engage in historiography of the Gurian movement but, rather, aims at a historical-anthropological close-up on a somewhat familiar story told by a prominent member of the Georgian radical intelligentsia in his autobiographic narrative. I understand narrative as an emplotted story with a central character, fundamentally participating in forming a coherent class identity for the narrator and enabling her to make sense of historical occurrences (Steinmetz 1992), whereas the "gaps" in such a narrative point to fundamental contradictions inherent to the social position of the narrator. It is, then, the very discrepancies and omissions in Uratadze's text that

8 A fundamental factor preventing the proper study of the 1902–1905 revolutionary movement in Soviet historiography even after de-Stalinization was its outright falsification by Lavrenti Beria in 1934. This version not only erased the fact of Menshevik dominance in revolutionary Georgia, but also denied any possible substantial agency to the peasants by cementing the dogma that "the Georgian peasants were led by the local proletariat, led by the Russian senior proletariat, led in turn by the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin as advised by Stalin" (Shanin 1986, 153). Crucially, even after Beria was declared "enemy of the people," this erasure and the epistemological framework it put in place remained intact and was simply passed down without citation of the original reference (156, 343–4).

invite us to read them *symptomatically* in the sense of a reading that pays attention to the symptomatic silences (Althusser et al. 2015) of a text, exposing what the text could impossibly have said unless it were to avow its own ideological condition of possibility. Yet, as the silence inherent to such prose always consists of an active effort of *silencing*, it barely manages to hide its power asymmetry in relation to what it tries to silence.

Jones (1989; 2005), while demonstrating the prominence of the Georgian Mensheviks, mostly of Gurian origin themselves, in assuring the longevity of the Gurian movement, has also pointed to the tensions that emerged between the party intelligentsia, peasant "newbies" and those stuck somewhere in between after the Social-Democrats took over leadership of the peasant protest. However, in concentrating on the inaugural oath and its immediate aftermath as a short historical sequence, this article strives to pave the way to a more sustained inquiry into the workings of that hegemonic take-over on the part of the intelligentsia, which Uratadze's narrative once again naturalizes through the way he frames his narrative while leaving behind symptoms that permit us to trace this work of subordination. What is crucial to my inquiry, then, is not so much whether what Uratadze describes "really happened" but, rather, how his text, as a major document of political commemoration, participates in cementing the subjugation of "the peasantry" by "its protector" and "devoted guardian of its interests." With archives remaining closed for an indefinite amount of time[9], Uratadze's narrative as a document of hegemonic consolidation will be read in constellation with the reports left by the Tsarist administration on the 1902 Gurian disturbances and other accessible sources. The goal is to reconstruct the oath as a multifaceted social practice containing a "trace of independent initiative on the part of subaltern groups" (Gramsci 1971, 55), including traces of peasant realities persisting within the hegemonic effort of the rural intelligentsia itself. What binds these readings is attention to the oath as an embodied utterance fraught with ethical and political concerns for language, and as a contested terrain where the subaltern mobilization of local religious-legal practices interacts with concerns about legality and theological legitimacy raised by various agents of the post-Reform Russian Empire and the local intelligentsia as their conscious or ina-

9 Besides two smaller regional archives in Guria, it is the Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (an institution whose openness and organization left much to be desired even before the COVID-19 outbreak) that houses the archives of the former Tbilisi-branch of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, which includes yet untapped material on the Gurian movement.

dvertent allies.[10] As a first step towards exposing this complex interplay of forces, I will set out to problematize "who" swore "what" and "how" on that "dark spring night".

I.2. The Protagonists of the "Oath Scene"

In the 1959 memoirs, we learn why the movement was initiated in the community of Nigoiti. Since Emancipation, the largest noble landholdings had been preserved in Nigoiti, making the peasants–the majority of whom were still "temporarily obliged"–ever more dependent on a minority of noble rentiers (Uratadze 1968, 32–3).[11] Thus, given that 700–800 persons out of more than 1600 inhabitants of the Nigoiti community allegedly joined the meeting on Napitsvara hill, if we subtract the local noble and clerical minority as well as the women, children and very elderly of the peasant families, we can conjecture that the congregation on Napitsvara consisted of the vast majority of temporarily obliged male peasants.[12] Upon final approval of the peasants' demands (the right to free grazing, reduction of the land rent, participation of all estates in public works and maintenance of the infrastructure as well as the abolition of a particularly burdensome form of church tax), Uratadze and his comrades proceeded to constitute a delegation that would present these demands to the landlords.

Uratadze emphasizes that he "convinced" the sixteen peasant representatives, "among whom were both youngsters and adults and even a couple of old men," not to include anything in the list that could have

10 For a discussion of how the Georgian intelligentsia contributed to a certain imperial project of modernization, see the seminal studies of Jersild (2002) and Manning (2012).

11 As much as it is true that since Emancipation, the economic dynamics of the Georgian village were becoming increasingly capitalist, their agricultural "look" notwithstanding, we certainly could not call the Gurians involved in the oath-taking "proletarian peasants" in the literal sense in which Robert Edelman (1987) describes the peasants on the Right Bank of Ukraine around 1905, who were indeed engaged in an agriculture organized along capitalist principles.

12 According to available sources, in 1886, Nigoiti, an ethnically homogeneous community (*sel'skoe obschestvo*), counted 1929 inhabitants (from the total population of Guria, which did not exceed 100,000 people), with the majority belonging to 205 households of temporarily obliged peasants, among them 820 men and 733 women (see Svod statisticheskikh dannykh 1896, Part II, 9). In 1897, 179 households of temporarily obliged peasants were counted, all of them working for the big landholding princes Machutadze, as opposed to 20 households of free peasants, 4 households of high nobles, 12 households of petty nobles and 15 clerical households (see Jorbenadze 1897, 241–2).

led from a purely "economic" set of demands to "political" ones, drawing excessive attention from the government at a premature stage of the peasants' mobilization (Uratadze 1968, 32–4). In the narrative, the well-known conceptual dichotomy between "economic" and "political" struggle overlaps with that of sustainable "organization" and "spontaneity," which was common parlance among Russian Marxists (Haimson 1955). This is how Uratadze frames the peasant representatives' urge "to call in a general meeting of all peasants in order to take, *as they said*, an oath of 'fidelity to the peasant movement'." Uratadze, as if excusing himself, adds: "I was unable to convince them to refrain from such an oath. They categorically declared that without it they refused to continue participating in this affair. *I had to give in*." To Uratadze's "surprise (*k moemu udivleniyu*)", in the subsequent meeting with more than fifty people, all those who were ready to fight once again "unanimously professed the necessity of an oath". It is during this meeting that, Uratadze claims, he was "entrusted with the preparation of the text of the oath" (35, my emphases), without, however, specifying who exactly entrusted him–and why *him*?

It is important to bear in mind that for the most part, this revolutionary intelligentsia "who gravitated toward Marxism in the 1890s were not the product of the established intelligentsia of urban Georgia, but rather neophytes who emerged from the most backward rural districts of western Georgia, most often from Guria" (Suny 1994, 156). They were either the offspring of peasant families, like Uratadze, or came, like Noe Zhordanya, the leader of the movement, from families of impoverished gentry, which "were all but indistinguishable in their economic position, their mores, their economic, social, and political aspirations from the peasant population of their native villages" (Haimson 1968). Instead of thinking of Uratadze's relationship to the peasants in terms of a stark dichotomy between intelligentsia and peasantry, we should instead read the tensions and ambiguities in his narrative as part of the retrospective autobiographical effort of an *intelligent* to disentangle himself from his provenance in a lowly differentiated rural community and the condition of subalternity to which the Gurian village of Uratadze's youth seemed to condemn its poor majority. Amidst this desolation, the prospect of one's child becoming a "student" was charged, as in the case of Uratadze's mother, with dreams that could be regarded as phantasmagoric, as becoming a real university student was a rarity in the Gurian village towards the end of the nineteenth century (Uratadze 1968, 2–6). Uratadze dropped out of the teachers' seminary, much to the regret of his father, who would have liked him to become a teacher–"the most hono-

rable of deeds" (6)–insofar as this type of rural intellectual represented "a social model for the peasant to look to in his aspiration to escape from or improve his condition" (Gramsci 1971, 14). After an academic detour in St. Petersburg, Uratadze, in fact, returned to Guria to become a village teacher in Lanchkhuti without, however, losing an eye toward "professionally" dedicating himself to "revolutionary activities" (21–2).

As a rural intellectual, Uratadze found an established intelligentsia culture of printed public discourse, of which the newspaper *Kvali* constituted a Social-Democratic variety and to which Uratadze also used to contribute.

As a rural intellectual, Uratadze found an established intelligentsia culture of printed public discourse, of which the newspaper *Kvali*[13] constituted a Social-Democratic variety and to which Uratadze also used to contribute. This culture provided the infrastructure of what Barbare Janelidze, drawing on Paul Manning's seminal book on the formation of the Georgian intelligentsia in late nineteenth-century Georgia (2012), calls the "advent of secularity"[14] as a distinct regime of knowledge and sensibility. This new horizon generated a possibility both for the integration of Orthodox Christianity into the secular temporality of Georgian nationalist history and the development of materialist-humanist atheism and for cultivating a modern subjectivity capable of producing the autobiography of a self-sufficient "I" (Taylor 2007, 714). Whereas Manning has thoroughly analyzed the infrastructure of such public discourse in its formative decades of the 1860–1880s, when the intelligentsia, for the most part, fulfilled the cultural-nationalist task of transcribing "the unlettered voice of the people" (Manning 2012, 79), Uratadze's encounter with the peasants is both formative and part of the historical moment at the turn of the century when the "neophyte" *intelligenty*, emerging from that same "people" for the first time formed an actual political alliance with the "people."

It is, then, precisely because of the ambiguities and tensions inherent to the respective positions held by the members of this alliance that the discrepancies in Uratadze's retrospective account of the Napitsvara oath become symptomatic. This begins with Uratadze's recasting of a collective initiative into an individual endeavor of an autobiographical "I." With evident pleasure, he indulges in his incognito, which only boosts the importance of his persona to the entire happening ("He's here, he's here, but no one really knew who"). Alongside the heroic pathos, the description of the event bears a disrespectful and farcical quality: When talking about the gathering of the peasants, he employs the rare dialec-

13 *Kvali* (Georgian for "track", "trail") was, since 1896, the first legal Marxist newspaper in the Russian Empire (Jones 2005, 66–71).

14 I want to thank Barbare Janelidze from the University of Kassel for sharing her manuscript, which is part of her doctoral thesis, working title: "Umstrittene Säkularität: Religion, Politik und Öffentlichkeit in Georgien".

tal verb *dagubasheba* from Upper Guria (Uratadze's point of origin) specifically reserved for designating the gathering of livestock. By reading out a proclamation issued on the occasion of a past strike in Tiflis, he admittedly tricks the assembly into believing that their struggle was supported by "workers of all countries." However, it is his excessive emphasis on his authorship of the content of the oath that most forcefully demonstrates Uratadze's urge to impose a directorial script on the entire happening to identify himself as the one agent fully in control of the circumstances, consciously producing them and, therefore, able and willing to take over the responsibility of speaking for them (Asad 2003, 67–9). It is, then, all but accidental that, in both versions of the story, the precise wording of the oath is missing, as Uratadze (having to reconstruct the speech from memory) cites only part and offers an indirect account of the rest. In 1933, he writes that after the final council in "comrade Samsonadze"'s house,

> everyone left to take care of their business. I stayed and went about to compose the text of the oath, but this proved quite hard. I struggled for hours; how much did I write only to rip up each version. In the end, I managed to compose the text, with which I swore the people who came on that night in crowds and which was later passed on to the other districts to administer the oath (Uratadze 1933, 2).

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In one of the rare amendments to the body of the 1933 text, in the 1959 autobiography Uratadze explains why it was so difficult to compose it: "What was I supposed to write in the text? *It had to be neither churchly nor Marxist* (*ni tserkovnym, ni marksistkim*)" (Uratadze 1968, 36, my emphasis). But the solution to his dilemma, which Uratadze believes he has found in a simple semantic substitution, only makes things more complicated:

> We swore that we would be together and not betray each other, not give each other away and if among us a traitor and a snitch were to be discovered, he would be anathematized, banished "in the name of the People" (instead of "in the name of God") – and it ended like this: "Be cursed the traitor and the snitch. Amen. Amen. Amen" (Uratadze 1933, 2).

Is this secularizing substitution of the traditional formula "in the name of God" with "in the name of the People", fashioned after the language of the French Revolution, the gist of the entire text? Clearly, Uratadze deems it necessary to let the readers know that he made that substitution. He does not stop at simply stating that he wrote "in the name of the

People"; he *must* let us know that it is nothing less than God that he substituted. In the face of this neat semantic secularization, we have to complement the earlier question of *who* assigned him to compose the text of the oath with another question: Is such a secularized oath what the "peasant representatives" would have wanted/meant when insisting on pledging an oath?

Uratadze seems to be driven by the modernist paradigm of novelty: The oath simply cannot have been the usual, "churchly" one if it was to mark the beginning of a historical turning point, for, in such modernist reasoning, "history is not made unless significant change occurs" (Asad 1993, 14). As I will argue below, it is rather improbable that the peasants would have requested that the text of the oath exclude references to the transcendent, as that would have invalidated the very principle of the oath, which would have moved them to pledge it in the face of the challenges ahead. What or who, then, gave Uratadze the prerogative to effectuate this fundamental shift in the semantic horizon? When trying to "convince them" to drop the oath, did he also negotiate the content with them? Did he try to "convince them" that in such an unprecedented struggle no old formulas would do? If he did, why does he not mention this in the expanded narrative of 1959? Most importantly, we have to ask that one basic question that Uratadze himself seems to be unable to ask, as his "surprise" in the face of the peasants' initiative forbids him to question the very thing that conditioned his "surprise": *Why* did the peasants deem it necessary to pledge a collective oath in the first place?

We might be able to at least partially answer this question if we bring Uratadze's narrative of the oath of 1902 in constellation with another major event from the first half of the same year. In February and March, massive strikes in the port and oil refinery of Batumi, a major port city on the Black Sea coast to the south of Guria, led to violent clashes with the police and the subsequent repatriation of hundreds of workers of Gurian descent to their home villages, resulting in a considerable politicization of the countryside. As Uratadze himself relates, this was of immediate import to the formation of his own political position, as his encounter with those legendary semi-proletarian, semi-peasant figures whom the peasants themselves reverently singled out as the "Batumi workers" opened his eyes to the revolutionary potential of the village (Uratadze 1968, 21): It was their initiative to launch revolutionary activities among the peasantry, and it is with them that he chose Nigoiti as the most fecund place for sparking the protest.

What now needs to be scrutinized is the profound entanglement of peasant and worker social-cultural conditions in turn-of-the-century Georgia, which gave its shape to the peasant movement, with the institution of the oath fulfilling a productively multivalent function.

I.3. Peasant-Workers, Oath-Strikes and Strike-Boycotts

Gurian peasants working in the urban industries were not different from other workers in other cities across the Russian Empire in that they were mostly either first-generation immigrants or seasonal workers who, thanks to the geographical proximity of their home villages, maintained close contact with their communities and traditions (Jones 2005, 80–2). In this regard, it is noteworthy that many of the first significant strikes that took off in the 1890s (arguably, before the Social-Democratic propaganda introduced new understandings of "organization") involved the workers swearing an oath of loyalty to each other in a church, which, in Stephen Jones' formulation, "reflected village traditions of oath taking" (Jones 2005, 97–8). In fact, the current common Georgian word for "strike"–*gapitsva*–literally signifies "taking an oath" or "creating a bond through an oath," although today this original semantics rarely springs to the minds of most of the speakers of the Georgian language. In the late nineteenth century, this word won the race against other words that were competing in public discourse for designating the new social-political phenomenon starting to proliferate in various industries. Before *gapitsva* asserted itself, the other words would sometimes appear together in a single paragraph and either denoted cessation of work (*mushaobis aghkvetha, shek'eneba*) or of conspiracy (*shethqmuloba*).[15]

The oath had been a fundamental part of the legal, political and everyday culture of feudal Georgian principalities, including Guria (Church 2001, 165–7), and remained so even after their gradual integration into the Russian administrative system after their incorporation starting in 1801. As a rule, the oath was pledged on an Orthodox icon, given the exceptional importance accorded to icons in Eastern Christianity (Kenna 1985) and consisted, as did most oaths in non-secular settings, of invoking "powers greater than oneself to uphold the truth of a declaration, by putting a curse upon oneself if it is false" (Richard Janko cited in Sommerstein und Torrance 2014, 1; see also Agamben

15 This is the case in an article in the newspaper *Iveria* ("Mushaobis aghkvetha" 1894, 2).

2011, 43; Prodi 1992, 22–3). The most important document of local legal culture from the pre-Tsarist period, the Code of Laws (1704–09) of Vakhtang VI, was itself a compilation of pre-existing customary law (Nadareishvili 1963, 43). It featured oath-taking by both accusers and accused as one of the main forms of proof as well as a highly elaborate system of co-swearers (*thanamopitsari*) whose number would go up to twenty-four males if the cause was particularly grave. The custom excluded women on principle, for an oath sworn by a woman was deemed untrustworthy (26–30), making our entire inquiry essentially a male-centered account. The high importance accorded to the oath meant that people reverted to it only as a last resort. Oath-taking was preceded by a long process of spiritual preparation (21), for exposure to divine punishment through the self-curse implied a full ethical engagement of the human as a being essentially constituted by language in approximating himself to the divine coincidence of words, things and actions (Agamben 2011).

In Guria, the customary legal framework maintained its importance within the Russian administrative system, both in its everyday social function as a set of rules for legal litigations and in its political function insofar as oaths of allegiance constituted a local tool of political legitimation on which the Russian Empire continuously relied to ensure the loyalty of the Gurian elites (Church 2001). The oath as a pledge of unity also became an instrument of consolidation for the lower classes when they rebelled in the 1841 Gurian uprising before being crushed by the Russian forces and coerced to pledge allegiance to the Tsar (see Akty 1884, 174–7; Church 2001, 317–24). Having "heralded the establishment of an idiom of revolt among the lower echelons of Gurian society, particularly the gentry nobles and serfs" (Church 2001, 17), at the end of the nineteenth century, the memory of this rebellion was vivid enough among Gurians, so much so that it inspired Egnate Ninoshvili (1859-1894), a realist writer of Gurian origins and one of the founders of the Georgian revolutionary movement, to use it as one of the main sources for his novel *The Uprising in Guria* (Khundadze 1932, 288), which *Kvali* started to posthumously publish in early 1902 before the series was terminated due to censorship immediately after the very first chapters were published.[16]

Besides obtaining allegiance through oaths in the process of Guria's

16 It is precisely in these first chapters that Ninoshvili describes rebels pledging oaths of unity on icons. Given the intense circulation and avid consumption of *Kvali* in turn-of-the-century Guria, both Uratadze and the literate peasants would most certainly have read the mentioned chapters in early 1902.

complete integration into the imperial system in the mid-nineteenth century, the Tsarist Empire continued to rely on and institutionalize the operation of local custom as a means of stabilizing imperial rule (Church 2001). Yet, one should bear in mind that while the "imperial rights regime" endowed all of its subject populations with differentiated/unequal rights based on ethnicity, religion, sex or other factors (Burbank 2006) and allowed for the integration of the respective local "customs" (Jersild 2002), in Transcaucasia the Tsarist state implemented Alexander II's legal-administrative reforms in only a severely truncated form. As this included the imposition of Russian as the exclusive language of judicial procedure, the language barrier created a fundamental obstacle for the local populations to benefit from whatever rights the Great Reforms had granted them (Bendianishvili 1970; Sadleir 2020), whereas low-level courts remained in the hands of the police (Jones 2005, 138–9).

Thus, it seems all the more likely that, alienated as they were from the modernized legal order (to be sure, not because of some immutable incompatibility of "the peasant" to modern forms of law, but because of the inconsistent character of the reforms), at the turn of the century the Gurian peasants' tools of resistance and sense of justice continued to rest on the lived memory of (however transformed) customary understandings. In this sense, the shifts and subversions in the semantics and practices crystallized around the word *gapitsva* are symptomatic of state-sponsored "belated" modernization. Partha Chatterjee suggests that as the modernizing state fails to impregnate the entire social body–notably, the lower classes on the peripheries (like the peasants in Guria)–in a "capillary" manner with the bourgeois regime of legality that was supposed to complement and foster economic transformation, a condition of fundamental indeterminacy emerges, creating room for "many unexpected possibilities" in regard to "the political role of the peasantry" (Chatterjee 1988, 389).

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The difficulty of assessing the novelty of the Gurian mobilization, in contrast to Uratadze's model of authorial innovation, lies in understanding the shifts within the framework of the customary law itself, which enabled the peasants to resort to old means in order to achieve new ends. In fact, what happened in Guria in 1902 could be considered an explosive symbiosis of *gapitsva* in the sense of urban strike and *gapitsva* in the sense of rural boycott. Peasant boycott indeed became one of the most powerful tools of the people's self-empowerment, culminating in absolute self-government in the "Gurian Republic" and the refusal to work the lands of the nobles, serve in their households or engage in any traditional form of loyalty such as participating in the funeral ritu-

als of a noble (Makharadze 2020, 45–9; Jones 2005, 147). While "boycott" as a loanword had already entered the vocabulary of the Gurian Georgians by the beginning of the twentieth century, boycott as ostracism for breaching customary norms had been an integral part of Gurian customary law (Davitashvili and Zoidze 1991, 177). Because, in principle, the customary boycott targeted only individuals (or, at most, an incriminated family) found guilty of breaching the order of a community, the novelty of the 1902 conflict resides in the extension or transfer of the boycott to a *collective* challenge against an antagonistic group within a community torn (and structured) by relations of domination and exploitation.

Arguably, a feudal tool of ostracism could not have transformed into an instrument of class struggle had customary law, and oaths as its integral part, not been inherently constituted by what E.P. Thompson has called "the social dialectic of unequal mutuality" (Thompson 1993, 344). Such was the institution of co-swearing as the main form of "proof" in customary litigations. In the institution of co-swearing, the oath of the litigant parties established them as equals before God. However, this equality drew its legal force from a complex process of additively equalizing incommensurate, unequal individuals segregated into different estates. Thus, the higher the rank of a noble, the greater the value of his word and the greater the number of peasants whom the opposing party would have to present as co-swearers if no nobleman could be found (Nadareishvili 1997). The oath of two "grand nobles" equaled the oath of twenty "middle nobles" or, respectively, that of sixty "petty nobles" (Nadareishvili 1963, 63–7). The more unworthy one was, the greater the need to ally with equally unworthy individuals to prove, through sheer number, the value of one's word. It is then safe to assume that, in sealing with an oath the demands formulated with Uratadze's help, the temporarily obliged peasants of Nigoiti, former serfs, were behaving like co-swearers in customary litigation with former masters, with the difference being that no particular individual acted as the principal litigant. While, given the subsequent developments, the oath on Napitsvara might certainly be called one of "secrecy" (Jones 1989, 416), the peasants nevertheless seem to have meant it to be apprehended by the landholding noble minority as a challenge to a litigious dialogue.

However, it remains to be clarified where the peasants of Nigoiti came up with the idea of *collectively* refusing to work the nobles' lands as a tool of protest. What is at stake in the tectonic shifts inherent to the notion and practice of *gapitsva* clearly calls for a different paradigm than that of an encounter between tradition and modernity in the con-

text of what Eric Hobsbawm has called the "adaptation of popular agitations to a modern capitalist economy" (Hobsbawm 1971, 9), which suggests that either a modern "form" remolds a traditional "content" or a modern "content" is being poured, at a "primitive" stage of encounter with forces of modernization, into a "yet" traditional "form." Tradition thus acquires the meaning of only appearance and garb, while the process of modernization becomes the "real" work being conducted beneath those somewhat exotic traditions and rituals. I argue that the urban oath-strike or the rural oath on Napitsvara eludes any attempt to establish causal precedence, disqualifying on principle the stark dichotomy between tradition (conservation) and modernity (innovation). Instead of stating that "the peasants successfully internalized from the workers the method of striking" (Kikvidze 1972, 174), one ought to emphasize that the famed "Batumi workers" could not have introduced the idea of collectively withdrawing from sowing the landlords' lands without the experience of peasants-turned-workers resorting to–and, in the process, transforming–the village custom of oath-taking as the practice that gave its historical shape to strike in turn-of-the-century Georgian industries. The "destabilization" of "spiritual life" experienced by the peasants who, in migrating to alien, urban spaces, became disembedded from their familiar environments might, thus, be said to not have followed a trajectory of neat "secularization" but, rather, to have conditioned a specific "recomposition" of rural forms of spirituality (Taylor 2007). A separate study would be needed to find out, without resorting to facile schemes of secularization, exactly when and under what circumstances the religious connotations of the word *gapitsva* receded to the point of total oblivion in its contemporary usage.

I.4. The Prose of the Intelligentsia and the Prose of Counter-Insurgency

We have been tracing, within Uratadze's text, the work of silencing peasant initiatives and practices, questioning his secularization of the oath on Napitsvara. We tried to recover the relevant legal and religious context that might disclose the rationale behind the initiative of the Nigoiti peasants. What best reveals Uratadze's work of erasure, however, are the reports of Tsarist officials on the "disturbances" that proliferated from the spring of 1902. Famously named "the prose of counter-insurgency" by Ranajit Guha, these reports are productive to a critical historian in that, while systematically denigrating the rebel, they "can hardly

Constitutive of such prose, among other elements, are the belated comprehension of the actual nature and scale of the popular discontent on the part of those in power and their gradual discernment of a set of repetitive practices on the rebels' side.

afford a discourse that is not fully and compulsively involved with the rebel and his activities" (Guha 1999, 15), thereby yielding precious clues about the rebelling opposite. Constitutive of such prose, among other elements, are the belated comprehension of the actual nature and scale of the popular discontent on the part of those in power and their gradual discernment of a set of repetitive practices on the rebels' side. The "prose of counter-insurgency" meticulously tracks these patterns and makes them readily available for the historian in the absence of documents left by the rebels themselves.

Having drawn a generalized picture of the peasant gatherings in Guria that proliferated after Napitsvara, a report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs from September 1902 stated that "the decisions of these gatherings were formulated similarly, were accompanied by a vow to each other (*klyatvoi drug drugu*) and an oath on icons (*prisyagoi pod obrazami*)" ("Krestyanskoe dvizhenie" 1940, 97). Later, in 1909, an official survey of the spread of the revolutionary movement in Transcaucasia distinguished a particular organizational pattern by highlighting 'similarities' or even the "exact repetition" by non-Gurian rural communities of protest measures first implemented by Gurian peasants (boycott against landlords, oaths, refusal to pay the clerical tax, arson, etc.). Thus, examining the activities of a "secret delinquent society" in Guria in 1902, the survey emphasized that "the orators requested that the peasants pledge an oath that they would fulfil what the propagandists told them. In fact, the peasants used to pledge the oath on an icon held by the propagandist" ("Saqarthvelos revolutsionuri modzraoba" 1925, 117).

Adding this official evidence to our earlier discussion of the customary legal-religious practices that most likely shaped the peasant initiative, it seems unlikely that the "*first* oath", as Uratadze calls the Napitsvara assembly, would, of all things, have lacked an oath on icons. In this regard, reading the prose of counter-insurgency against the grain turns out to be a rather straightforward endeavor due to the unambiguousness of its language, whereas a narrative like Uratadze's proves to be far more difficult to decipher. Not only does the latter operate through factual omissions and semantic appropriations but it is also shot through with a modernist teleology of a Marxist engaged in the political and autobiographical effort to bring together the peasantry and a (proto)revolutionary cause. As the Tsarist reports reveal precisely what Uratadze silences, the critical historian discovers that the prose of counter-insurgency can be a better ally in deciphering how the peasants organized than what we could call "the prose of the intelligentsia." Intended to be a partisan of the peasant cause, the distance of the prose of the intelligentsia from

the prose of counter-insurgency might, in reality, be only "a declaration of sentiment" (Guha 1988, 84). If, in fact, Uratadze forcefully removed icons from the narrative, his text can be considered fairly representative of the "mixture of myopia and downright refusal to look at the evidence" (Guha 1988, 82) that Guha identifies in leftist historiographies whenever it comes to the non-secular character of popular protest.

Uratadze's narrative could not have possibly accommodated an icon, for his is an enactment of the Feuerbachian restoration of self-conscious collective human agency ("in the name of the People") from its false self-projection unto superhuman beings ("in the name of God") and their material carriers like icons. Even if we suppose that the oath on Napitsvara had "secularized" content, the admission of an icon would have reintroduced the interaction between humans, divine actors and deified objects that Uratadze is so keen to exclude in his "work of purification" (Latour 1993), which seeks to disentangle the human from the non-human to unequivocally establish one's modernity. One could say that from the double gesture of a "vow to each other and an oath on icons," noted in the report of September 1902, Uratadze is keen to keep the secular, *horizontal* "vow to each other" while discarding the *vertical*, God-oriented "oath on icons."[17] The "vow to each other" in this case embodies what I call an *oath of immanence*, following Taylor's understanding of the secular horizon as the "immanent frame" (Taylor 2007). The "immanent frame" envisions a self-sufficiently human, social realm of action and fulfilment without any reference to divine transcendence or accepts religion only as a product, again, of the same immanent humanity. In an oath of immanence, people can swear *to* each other *before* each other "in the name of the People," whereas the "oath on icons" consists of what I call an *oath of transcendence*, in which people swear to each other *before God* through the mediation of an icon as the career of divine grace, arguably inaugurating a completely different political trajectory.

What Uratadze's text accomplishes, then, is not only a rhetorical transformation of the event of oath-taking into a metaphor for the alliance between peasantry and Social-Democracy but, also, a metaphorization of the very substance of the oath. The text depicts, with poetic emphasis, the traditional gestures of anathema, with which the peasants unanimously repeated the last words of the curse and the final "Amen."

17 Many similar references to horizontal oaths can be found in militant texts like the 1904 brochure on the Gurian protests issued by the Caucasian Committee of the RSDLP (Kavshiris Komiteti 1904) or in the standard late Soviet textbook for Georgian history (Kikvidze 1972, 177).

However, by focusing on these "religious" attributes and seasoning the entire narrative with quasi-religious references to nature, his own "divine" inspiration or the "Day of Judgment" for the exploiters, Uratadze creates the impression that the gist of the entire event lies elsewhere. Namely, it is supposed to lie in his authorship of the new, "secular" content of the oath that is simply adorned with the "old language" of religion, the choreography of the "people" performing certain religious gestures and a quasi-pantheistic complicity of Nature with man's goals.

Given the heavy theatricalization of the scene, which the metaphoric or analogic appropriation of religion makes possible in the first place, it is all the less surprising that, in the darkness of the night and under acoustic conditions that could hardly have been advantageous for communicating with 700–800 people, the entire happening becomes an outright travesty, as Uratadze claims to have been misidentified as a priest because of his oversized *chokha*. The "mirage" of a priest, however, would not have arisen without reason. Uratadze, the school teacher and atheist *intelligent*, might have inadvertently fulfilled the task of a priest in the popular perception and memory of peasant mobilization. As also attested to by various first-hand reminiscences, literary accounts or police and media reports about similar oaths of unity, whether in the countryside or among urban workers, a priest would have effectively been expected to side with the exploited, provide the sacred text, read it out to the mostly illiterate or only insufficiently literate people,[18] supervise the proper repetition of the formula and engage in the obligatory bodily interaction with the icon. By transforming the figure of a priest into a carnivalesque outfit, however, Uratadze would like to keep the agency of his autobiographic 'I' focused as the clandestine guarantee of the proper course of action.

This unambiguous agency becomes increasingly destabilized by the gradual appearance of an ever-greater number of individual or collective characters.

Yet, this unambiguous agency becomes increasingly destabilized by the gradual appearance of an ever-greater number of individual or collective characters: Uratadze's to-be Marxist colleagues, Tsarist administrators and the miracle-working Orthodox icon named "Lomiskareli."

18 The level of literacy of the Gurian peasantry by the very end of the nineteenth century is supposed to have been considerably higher than that of the lower classes in the rest of Georgia as well as in the entire Russian Empire (Jones 1989, 413–4; 2005, 139–40), although it cannot be determined definitively and the information is sometimes exaggerated. In the Nigoiti community, two schools were operating: one single-class school founded in 1872, which in 1899 taught 62 pupils, and one two-class school founded in 1894, which in 1899 taught 128 pupils, providing an education that with all probability was not more than rudimentary. For the data see Otchet popechitelya, Appendix 2, 50–4.

The second part of this study will explicate the implications behind Uratadze's removal of icons from the main event on Napitsvara as well as the vigorous comeback of the icon in the aftermath, when "the rumor went around that some priest had sworn the Nigoiti community into an oath against the landlords" (Uratadze 1933, 2). In looking at this aftermath, the various actors, notions and experiences (described above as decisive in making the oath the historically determinate form of the Gurians' incipient protest) will be recast in an explosive conjuncture, where incompatible forms of political legitimacy and community clash with each other over what is to be done with oaths and how.

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Autor: Luka Nakhutsrishvili
Tytuł: Chłopskie przysięgi, wściekłe ikony i zagadka sprawczości. Na tropach polityki podporządkowanych w carskiej Gruzji w przededniu Rewolucji 1905 roku
Abstrakt: Ten dwuczęściowy, interdyscyplinarny artykuł przygląda się autobiograficznej relacji gruzińskiego socjaldemokraty Grigola Uratadze, opisującej przysięgę chłopów Gurii w 1902 roku. Przysięga ta rozpoczęła rebelię w carskiej Gruzji, kulminującą w 1905 w samorządnej chłopskiej „republice Gurii". Studium to ma na celu historyczno-antropologiczne badanie asymetrii w aliansie zawiązanym przez chłopów i rewolucyjną inteligencję oraz napięć jakie wywołała owa przysięga między chłopami a przedstawicielami carskiej władzy. Próbując odsłonić ślady chłopskiej polityki w relacji do różnych hegemonicznych sił na modernizującym się imperialnym pograniczu, artykuł zachęca czytelnika do ponownego rozważenia założeń na temat historycznej sprawczości, językowych uwarunkowań podmiotowości i relacji

pomiędzy polityką a materialnym i zwyczajowym wymiarem religijności. Ostatecznym celem jest wypracowanie lektury praktyk typowych dla chłopskiej polityki w Republice Gurii z perspektywy podporządkowanych.

Pierwsza część artykułu rozpoczyna się analizą pod włos narracji pozostawionej przez Uratadze na temat przysięgi z 1902 roku.

Druga część artykułu poświęcona jest relacji Uratadze na temat następstw przysięgi oraz konfliktów i rozbieżnych interpretacji, jakie wywołała pomiędzy chłopami, inteligencją i carską administracją.

Słowa kluczowe: akt mowy, chłopstwo, Imperium Rosyjskie, inteligencja, prawosławne ikony, przysięga, sprawczość podporządkowanych, studia sekularne, teologia polityczna

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Peasant Oaths, Furious Icons and the Quest for Agency: Tracing Subaltern Politics in Tsarist Georgia on the Eve of the 1905 Revolution

Part II: Agents and Items of (Counter)Insurgent Political Theology on the Imperial Borderland

This two-part transdisciplinary article elaborates on the autobiographical account of the Georgian Social-Democrat Grigol Uratadze regarding the oath pledged by protesting peasants from Guria in 1902. The oath inaugurated their mobilization in Tsarist Georgia in 1902, culminating in full peasant self-rule in the "Gurian Republic" by 1905. The study aims at a historical-anthropological assessment of the asymmetries in the alliance formed by peasants and the revolutionary intelligentsia in the wake of the oath as well as the tensions that crystallized around the oath between the peasants and Tsarist officials. In trying to recover the traces of peasant politics in relation to multiple hegemonic forces in a modernizing imperial borderland, the article invites the reader to reconsider the existing assumptions about historical agency, linguistic conditions of subjectivity, and the relationship between politics and the material and customary dimensions of religion. The ultimate aim is to set the foundations for a future subaltern reading of the practices specific to the peasant politics in the later "Gurian Republic". The second part of the article delves into Uratadze's account of the aftermath of the inaugural oath and the conflicts it triggered between peasants, intelligentsia and the Tsarist administration.

Keywords: agency, intelligentsia, oath, Orthodox icons, peasantry, political theology, Russian Empire, secular studies, speech-act, subaltern

II.1. The Oath as Speech and Act (and Beyond)

The oath on Napitsvara constituted a certain new beginning. But was the *oath* itself the beginning or only a beginning of *something else*? What kind of resistance did it swear? Was it (already) a rebellion, if at all? For Uratadze, a discrepancy already makes itself known when, to his "surprise," the peasants insist on sealing, with a solemn oath, what to him is rather a set of strictly "economic" demands. And yet, the oath contained an ambivalence that turned it into an *insurgent speech*, leading the Tsarist police, in their search for the "instigator," to split the oath into speech and act to preemptively criminalize it as *act*.[1] In the face of the haunting elusiveness of what the oath had "done," what it had spoken and, most of all, "whodunnit," a reflection on oaths as speech-acts would be apposite before we turn to what happened in the aftermath of that "dark spring night" on Napitsvara. Given the historical specificity of the oaths we encountered in the first part of this article, we have to ask: What could speech-act theory offer us, if anything at all?

What do oaths do? Alex Garganigo (2018, 8) has succinctly asked this, hinting at J.L. Austin's foundational work on speech-act theory, *How to Do Things with Words* (Austin 1962), all the while admitting that "[a]part from their scant treatment by Austin and Searle, oaths hardly figure at all in classic speech-act theory" (Garganigo 2018, 10). Even when they do, oaths seem to be considered merely as a variant of promise, a favorite example for theorizing speech acts (as in Searle 2001). When treated in its religious form, the oath is again subsumed under the category of promissory speech acts (see Rebillard 2013). Both the lack of special consideration of the oath as a linguistic phenomenon and its subsumption under assertory/promissory performatives (Austin 1962) could be seen as resting on a secular framework in which a powerful subject uses language as an external "translation" of internal "intentions," turning language into an instrument to "do things with words." Rarely does one ask about "what language does *with* and *to* us" (Asad 2018, 50) or, as in the case of an oath involving holy icons, what certain *things* might *do* with *words* to *us* as linguistic beings.

This weakness of a particular Western strand of inquiry to fathom the oath might rest on the general sensation that the "good old" oath is irretrievably lost and that the contemporary, religious or secular forms of oath-pledging on Bibles or Constitutions are mere formalities.

This weakness of a particular Western strand of inquiry to fathom the oath might rest on the general sensation that the "good old" oath is irretrievably lost and that the contemporary, religious or secular forms of oath-pledging on Bibles or Constitutions are mere forma-

1 On the criminalization of certain forms of speech as acts, see Butler 1997.

lities. It has been argued that this loss is due to the loss of the capacity to invoke God as the guarantee for one's word, entailing a crisis of the essence of the political community itself (supposed to have depended largely on oaths in the pre-modern West) as well as of the human as a linguistic being (Prodi 1992, Agamben 2011). To be sure, there have been efforts to philosophically rehabilitate the oath, which, however, tend to fall prey to their own generality, as in the case of Jacques Derrida's identification of oath with the principle of language or, rather, the very basic ethical horizon of language as primordial trust towards one another, as "oath before the letter" (Derrida 1999, 34). The idea of primordial linguistic trust and its fragility transforms the oath into the *différance* of "archi-writing" within language itself, which ends up locating the oath in a purely intra-textual realm "separable from any consideration of the social," as Judith Butler (1997, 148) recognized in Derrida's notion of iterability.[2]

We, therefore, have to shift our attention to the properly political side of the oath as entangled and lived in particular practices and historical conjunctures. Arguably, what makes up the "historical grammar" (Asad 2003, 189), within which the oath of 1902 acquired its unique, unexpected and lived shape and meaning, must be distilled from what went on with the rumor of the oath that spread after Napitsvara, namely, the alleged "comedy of errors" between peasants, Social-Democrats, Tsarist authorities, the mirage of a priest and a miracle-working Orthodox icon. Similar to the critical reading of Urutadze's narration of the event of Napitsvara in the first part, our current task is to recast, into a range of symptoms, what followed Napitsvara, along with indeterminacy and productive misunderstanding between

2 In the face of such want of specificity, Giorgio Agamben's "archeology of the oath" promises to provide a historically grounded philosophical approach. However, as he tries to think of the 'original' truth of the oath as the ethical aspiration of human language to adequate itself to the divine coincidence or unity of words, things and actions, the essential undecidability about whether the oath is trustworthy because it enacts divine perfection or whether God is God because of the possibility of the oath within human language itself (Agamben 2011, 21–2) makes the oath a perfectly auto-referential speech act (54–6). In the end, Agamben's discussion either moves on too broad a philosophical plane or is concerned only with the political practices of the Greco-Roman world. But even then, his exaggerated emphasis on the oath as the ideal of the divine coincidence between words, actions and things leaves out the Schmittian character of the political oath as something which not only unites, but also excludes (Garganigo 2018, 11–3), as was clearly the case in Guria.

peasantry, intelligentsia and the government regarding the oath's limits and meanings.

II.2. Rumored Oaths and Specters of Authorship

As the rumor triggers copy-cat oaths across communities in all of Guria, the police start to frantically search for the "instigator" but fail because the villagers diligently deny that anything like an oath/conspiracy happened. Uratadze becomes increasingly concerned that an over-reaction on the part of the administration might prematurely stifle the movement (Uratadze 1968, 37–40) and decides to seek help from the Georgian Social-Democrats in Batumi. He finds them, however, extremely reluctant not only because of "their Marxist dogma" (42), which denied the peasantry any revolutionary potential, but principally due to the rumor about the priest and the oath. The first important Social-Democrat whom he meets, Isidore Ramishvili (1859–1937),[3] eagerly asks if "it is true that someone *forced* the people to pledge an oath and, if true, *who was it*?" (40, my emphasis). In various meetings in Batumi and then Kutaisi, and ultimately in his decisive conversation with Noe Zhordanya and Silibstro Jibladze, which would bring the peasants under Social-Democratic guidance, Uratadze discovers that the Marxists were obsessed with one question: *Who was it?* Given the rumored involvement of "an icon, a cross and maybe indeed also of a priest" (41), some clandestine subject must have been manipulating the "unwitting" peasants.

As a matter of fact, Uratadze consistently left the Social-Democrats in suspense as to the identity of the priest, inflating, through this travesty, his self-ascribed role of an outstanding individual who kept "pulling the strings." Accordingly, in Uratadze's account, the Social-Democrats' skepsis recedes as soon as they finally learn "whodunnit," as Uratadze unmasks himself in front of Zhordanya and Jibladze in an over-emphasized dramaturgical twist:

> I declared: "*It was I* who administered the oath." Jibladze suddenly became enthusiastic, approached me, put his hand on my shoulder and said with a bright smile: "*So it was you* who made the people pledge an oath of fidelity to the

3 Ramishvili, in his own elaborate memoirs (2012), does not mention Uratadze, nor does he refer to the Napitsvara legend, although he repeatedly addresses the Gurian peasants' practice of taking oaths on icons and their "superstitious" fear of miracle-working icons, to which we will come back in the course of our analysis.

revolution?" and upon these words turned to Zhordanya: "Stand up immediately, we have to talk about this" (Uratadze 1968, 45, my emphasis).

Curiously, in the typescript of the Russian-language memoir, which Uratadze deposited to the archive of the Project on the History of the Menshevik Movement shortly before his death in 1959, the above-cited passage reveals an all too significant "slip of the tongue." While in the published version of 1968 Uratadze's self-revelation vis-à-vis Zhordanya and Jibladze–"It was I who administered the oath" (*Eto ya privodil k prisyage*)–resorts to the correct transitive form of the Russian verb "swear" (making someone swear), the Russian typescript renders it in the intransitive form "*Eto ya prisyagal*" (Uratadze [1959], 40), which literally means: "It was I who swore the oath." Language fails him in the very passage where the agent-subject Uratadze and the specter-object of a priest are supposed to fully coincide as Uratadze triumphantly discloses himself as the disguised manipulator of others ("It was I who administered [*them* into] the oath"). (Made) aware of this linguistic mishap, Uratadze notes, in the margin of the typescript, the proper transitive form. Remarkably, the *intelligent* Uratadze, a Georgian native-speaker, but obviously fluent in the language of empire,[4] misuses the Russian intransitive form of "swearing" while meaning it in the transitive in every single occurrence (around fifteen in total), making it, within the 240 typed pages of the entire typescript, the only major linguistic error to systematically recur and receive correction in the margins. The regularity of the misuse of the Russian intransitive makes one think that it is a mistranslation from Georgian, which, being an agglutinative language with a polypersonal verb morphology, allows both transitive and intransitive actions involving as many as three participants to be expressed in a single word (Boeder 2002). Thus, the complex action "I administered them into an oath" translates as *davapitse*, whereas the simple "I swore" is rendered by modifying a single affix–*davipitse*. In Uratadze's typescript, this leaves us with bizarre formu-

4 Uratadze was the plenipotentiary who went to Moscow in 1920 to sign the treaty that recognized de jure the independence of the Georgian Democratic Republic. In the 1950s Uratadze produced another lengthy monograph in Russian besides his autobiography, claiming, not without some false modesty, that the reason for writing in Russian was that there were many Russophones in the political emigration who had to be properly informed about Georgian history and because "I have sufficient knowledge (*sakmarisad vitsi*) of the Russian language" (Uratadze 1958, 3).

lations like "who swore them?" (Uratadze [1959], 41–2), "who exactly swore the people?" (46) and "So it was you who swore the people to the revolution?" (40), the syntax of which suspends in a state of indeterminacy the directional relation between subject and object, its inherent Georgianization of Russian blurring the very imputability of agency. Importantly, this textological curiosity once again raises the question of how we are to ultimately deal with the fundamental indeterminacy inherent to the Napitsvara event as well as to its rumors.

Through his journey from one group of Social-Democrats to another, Uratadze's discursive effort aimed to bring full circle everything that the rumor had let loose. Uratadze's handling of the priestly "mirage" is a virtuoso endeavor to permit the oath and the untraceability of its author to spread, all the while giving him control of the desired effects of the rumor's contagious anonymity so that he could intervene at the right moment and reveal the truth.

Rumor has indeed been widely identified as the single most powerful carrier of the uncontrollable spread of insurgency across all pre-industrial societies (seminally, Guha 1999, 251–77). However, because Uratadze has to mitigate the scandal of the copycatting of an oath that peasants are rumored to have sworn with the help of a priest, he offers assurances that it was "the text, with which I swore the people [that] was later passed on to other districts to administer the oath" (Uratadze 1933, 2). This assures the reader that the circulated message had a well-defined meaning textually fixated by a reliable author who knew what he was writing, namely, a secularized "oath of immanence" (see I.4). However, this clear "authorization" of the circulated text manages to remedy neither the profound ambivalence of the content of the text, despite Uratadze's insistence that it was reliably secular, nor the blurriness of the entire scenography of Napitsvara (see I.2). Even before the rumor starts spreading the next day, Uratadze's insecure handling of the nocturnal event itself–the dim candlelight, words mumbled under conditions of deficient acoustic control, gestures being made by 700–800 people in the darkness–has already admitted rumor, hearsay and mirages into the very description of the scene.

The traces left by Uratadze's effort at textual fixation, then, seem to participate in the diffusional quality of rumor as an oral phenomenon in which Gayatri Spivak recognizes the workings of an uncontrollably proliferating trace without clear origins or authorship. Spivak advances this vision of rumor against Ranajit Guha's under-

standing of rumor as "spoken utterance *par excellence*" (Guha 1999, 256), which, for her, rests on "a phonocentric concept where authority is supposed to spring directly from the voice-consciousness of the self-present speaker" (Spivak 1988, 24). While Guha is convinced that it is impossible to do justice to the agency of the insurgent peasant "merely as a history of events without a subject" (Guha 1999, 11), making it imperative to ascribe unequivocal authorship even to rumor, Spivak redefines rumor as "primordially (originarily) errant, always in circulation with no assignable source" (23) to foreground its "revolutionary non-possessive possibilities" (24). It is this "non-possessive" quality of rumor that would make the rumored oath essentially complicit with the indeterminacy and suspension of the directionality of the grammatical subject and object in articulating who swore who(m). The intra-textual indeterminacy of the syntax that gets stuck between Georgian and Russian in Uratadze's later narrative, in turn, opens unto the de-subjectivized, de-centered constellation between peasantry, Marxist intelligentsia, Tsarist government and their practices, giving the oath of 1902 its determinate shape and meaning.

Ultimately, following Rosalind O'Hanlon's critique (2000) of Guha and other historians of subaltern studies, such entanglement, obliges us to (re)write the history of Napitsvara and its aftermath in a way that enables restoring the subaltern to their place in this history without ascribing to them the formerly denied liberal humanist notions of self-possessive subjectivity and consciousness. Assessing the "revolutionary non-possessive possibilities" of rumor and the specter of the priest amounts to dealing with a fundamental conjunctural entanglement of subaltern and elite politics (the latter comprising both the local intelligentsia and the colonial administration). This urges us to read traces of subaltern politics not as some self-enclosed domain, but as inextricably relational to the elite reactions, preventive or proactive, and, as always, already embedded in a structure of domination, while remaining an intractable element within it. This approach, therefore, also moves away from whatever humanist implications Gramsci's reference to the subalterns' "independent initiative" (Gramsci 1971, 55) might bear.[5]

5 For a recent productive engagement, in the context of modern Russian imperial history, with this approach to subalternity on the basis of later elaborations on the South Asian historians' initial humanist usage of the concept, see Gerasimov (2018, 1–17) and his discussion of Gyan Prakash's conceptualization of subalternity (see Prakash 2000).

In the face of this relational complex, we must now enquire into what was actually at stake in the authorities' concern about individuating the author of the oath and what makes, in the end, Orthodox icons–with their irreducible objectality and the divergent rationalities they develop in different political frameworks–the focal point of the power dynamics constitutive of the "historical grammar" of oaths in turn-of-the-century Guria.

II.3. Icons, Bibles, Crosses and the Oath of Allegiance

Uratadze's narrative insists that the entire "witch-hunt" in the aftermath of Napitsvara gravitated around the authorities' effort to extract from the peasants and himself the one essential piece of information ("Who administered the oath?") so that they could arrest this or another suspect only to eventually let them go (Uratadze 1968, 44). However, this self-aggrandizing emphasis on both the government and the intelligentsia concentrating on finding the one clandestine subject-agent receives ample confirmation from the Tsarist "prose of counter-insurgency." Besides the reports from 1902, as late as 1909 the authorities tried to convince themselves, in a typical elite disavowal of the legitimacy of popular demands, that peasant activism throughout Transcaucasia was "artificially" instigated by "propagandists" from the "outside" ("Saqarthvelos revolutsionuri modzraoba" 1925, 117–41). It is this criminalization that requires individuating the unequivocal source of the insurgent speech, to "pull individuals out of the collective for the purpose of interrogation" (Chakrabarty 2011, 213). Notable in this regard is the first encounter, in mid-July 1902, of the Governor-general of Kutaisi *gubernya* Smagin with the people of Nigoiti, who had gathered at his bequest after the rumors had grown sufficiently alarming. As Uratadze writes, Smagin shouted at the people that they were, in fact, against the Emperor and demanded the "list of rebels" as well as the name of the person who had made them swear. In response, the peasants assured him that they had never been against the Tsar and that they were simply conducting negotiations with their landlords (Uratadze 1968, 47). This refusal to identify a single personality demonstrates what Partha Chatterjee observed about various rebellious peasantries of colonial India, namely, that their ethos of collectivity "does not flow from a contract among individuals; rather, individual identities themselves are derived from membership in a community" (Chatterjee 1993, 163),

preventing the individuating eye of the state from "treat[ing] the collective agent as a collection of so many individuals" (Chakrabarty 2011, 214).

Importantly, besides the Gurian peasants' protest/oath/conspiracy against the local triumvirate of clergy, nobility and village administration, which induces Smagin to point out to the Gurian peasants the *illegality* of their demands and their boycott ("Krestyanskoe dvizhenie" 1940, 93), the reports' emphasis on the regular presence of Orthodox icons in the nocturnal gatherings, as well as Smagin's claim that the peasants engaged in anti-Tsarist activities, opens up an implicit polemics between peasants and high-ranking Russian officials around the political-theological *legitimacy* of imperial rule. Arguably, this double concern is concentrated in the oath insofar as the crime to which Smagin appealed was the peasants' boycott and refusal to pay taxes, which they had sealed with the oath, as well as that the oath itself constituted such a crime, an illegal act touching the very legitimacy of the existing order. This is also why the police effort to individuate the singular instigator(s) of the unrest concentrated on the swearer who was supposed to have administered the strike/boycott by making peasants "pledge the oath on an icon held by the propagandist" (see I.4).

Certainly, the oath was neither an 'everyday form of resistance' of the weak avoiding symbolic confrontation with the powerful nor a rebellion, i.e. an open challenge to the rulers (Scott 1985). At least, it was not intended to be any kind of rebellion against the state and the Tsar, neither by the peasants nor by Uratadze, who was keen on curbing the premature expansion of the demands from "merely" economic to political ones. And yet, the presence of a priest can be said to have made the government immediately read–correctly misread, one could say–the oath as an eminently symbolic, political challenge to itself. Besides the peasants' refusal to pay the burdensome clergy tax, the rumors and reports of the oaths evoked many real and imagined material signs–icons, formulae of oaths, ritual gestures, invocations of God–of which the Orthodox priest was the custodian and executor, contributing to the reproduction of the Empire's political-theological legitimacy by means of sanctioned usages of this inventory. Here again, the prose of counter-insurgency proves to be much more attentive to details, religious materiality and its logic than either the Social-Democrats in Batumi who seemed to have confused "icons, crosses and maybe also a priest" or the historian who tends to treat

icons, crosses and priests as randomly interchangeable objects belonging to an indiscriminate hotpot of Christianity or some other (alienated) "religious consciousness' (see I.1).

We might better understand why, in 1902, Smagin preemptively accused the peasants of Nigoiti of rebelling against the Tsar if we look at the prose of counter-insurgency from the later period, when revolution, particularly in Western Georgia, was in full swing. In February 1905, Lieutenant General Malama sends a telegram to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in which he reiterates that "the population *is freeing itself* from the oath of allegiance and is pledging to the revolutionary committee" ("Krestyanskoe dvizhenie" 1940, 111, my emphasis). Significantly, his appeal to the inhabitants of Western Georgia contains a more euphemistic formulation: "Having trusted the criminal propaganda, you declared yourselves enemies of state order and public peace and even *dared to speak of freeing yourself* from the oath pledged to the state in order to serve the underground organization ("Zhyteli Gurii" 1925, 98, my emphasis). In talking to the rebels, Malama *must* substitute the reference he made in his report to actual apostasy ("*is freeing itself*") with a double circumscription ("*dared to speak* of freeing yourself"), as confirming to the "enemies of state order" that they have succeeded in freeing themselves of their oath of allegiance to that very same order would amount to the admission of its collapse.

Malama's reference lays bare one of the main political-theological pillars of order in Tsarist Russia since Peter the Great, namely, the oath of allegiance to the Tsar and to his heir, which, as already mentioned, was also a crucial part of Russia's effort throughout the nineteenth century to stabilize its rule in the Caucasus (see I.3). According to Inna Barykina (2015, 265), as an instrument for ensuring the continuum of power, the oath was of considerable importance to late Tsarism as a regime not interested in cardinally transforming the existing system. Before the Great Reforms, the oath had been obligatory for all adult men except serfs (Gerasimov et al., 2017, 200; Barykina 2015, 261). However, even after Emancipation made peasants into "equal citizens," the rule was not modified until the 1884 Manifesto of Alexander III, leaving the great rural majority of the population as the only ones not having pledged allegiance to the "liberator" upon their emancipation (Barykina 2015, 264). We might then conclude that the Gurian men who by the turn of the century were participating in the revolutionary movement would have pledged allegiance to Nicholas II upon his intronization in 1896, indu-

cing Malama to acknowledge their deed as proper perjury.[6]

Against the oath of immanence which only recognized secular human beings swearing *before* each other *to* each other, both the peasant oath and the oath of allegiance to the Tsar constitute what I call the "oath of transcendence" insofar as they both rely on a commitment before God (see I.4). However, there remains a fundamental difference between their theological and political implications, which ultimately pertain to who holds the prerogative of punishing the breaking of an oath of transcendence.

Given that, as a rule, a "full" oath involves invoking a supra-human punishing force in case of perjury (see I.3), it seems highly consequential that, besides the invocation of the Last Judgment, the Tsarist oath of allegiance did not contain an explicit reference to perjury or self-curse as the condition for punishment. The reason for this might be that state power, and an absolutist one at that, could not have relegated the punishment of state treason to superhuman justice. On the other hand, any explicit reference to perjury and its punishment on the part of the state would have amounted to integrating into the foundation of the Tsarist order the possible collapse of the stability that the oath guaranteed. At the same time, one cannot doubt the sincerity of the peasants' conviction that in pledging an oath to a cause against landlords they–at least initially–did not mean to de-legitimize state authority; for some time, they even seem to have thought that the Emperor himself had sent the "students" (the "propagandists" in the officials' language) to incite them to rebel against nasty landlords and clerics (Kavshiris Komiteti 1904, 24). However, crucially for the authorities, the Gurian oath rested on a self-curse which, via its vertical connection to a divine force mediated by a holy icon, left the earthly Leviathan offside in case of the need to punish perjury.

Since Peter the Great, the Russian imperial model combined the Byzantine sacralization of the monarch and the Synodal organization of the Orthodox Church with the Protestant primacy of the secular

6 Herein lies the fundamental difference to the Tsarist government's reaction to the rebels' oaths of unity in the Gurian uprising of 1841 (see I.3). In 1841, the authorities defined these oaths as "contrary to God" (*bogoprotivny*), i.e. injurious to the order established by God, but not as perjury in the proper legal sense, for pre-Emancipation peasants had been excluded from the "all-national oath" (*vse-narodnaya prisyaga*) to the Tsar (Akty, 174–7). In 1841, the government simply acknowledges the need to symbolically integrate an evasive peripheral population and resorts to the oath of allegiance as an exceptional measure.

sovereign and his domination of the church (Uspenskij and Zhivov 2012, 38). As "limbs" of a state attempting to enclose divine transcendence in its all-engulfing immanence, high-ranking Tsarist officials like the generals Smagin and Malama were right to flare early on that the Gurian peasants were constituting themselves as a self-sufficient God-sanctioned community by pledging an oath that, with its political-theological thrust, competed with the oath of imperial order. By pledging a "full" oath, the peasants created a theo-anarchist community independent of legitimation and enforcement by state institutions and their "legal violence."[7] It comes as no surprise, then, that when, at the onset of the government's bloody reaction in the "Gurian Republic," the punitive expedition "arrived in a village, they would call on a meeting and *at first* force [the peasants] to pledge an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, and *then* advance the demands" (Uratadze 1968, 122, my emphasis), such as the disarming of the population, the restoration of state institutions, the payment of all state taxes left unpaid during the peasant self-government and the handing over of the leaders of the rebellion.

Yet here we should ask what exactly the political-theological mindset was that enabled an act like forcing the Gurian peasants to re-pledge their allegiance in the first place. Arguably, such a possibility rests on a specific understanding of religious "faith" that becomes the precondition of the political trustworthiness of imperial subjects only insofar as trust and loyalty constitute the very meaning of "faith." This ethical semantic horizon is clearly at work in a report of the punitive expedition sent to Guria in February 1906:

> The majority of the villages pledged their oath of fidelity to the Sovereign and promised to the head of the expedition unit that they will fulfil all of his demands. But the promises of the Gurians do not mean anything, for among them there are very few faithful (*veruyushchikh*). The Gurian people are unfaithful. The Gurians give promises, but fulfil them only under the pressure of force (cited in Uratadze 1968, 122).

Dorothea Weltecke has convincingly argued that in the pre-modern Latin period, *fides* and *infidelitas* signified not so much "belief," "convictions held" or the lack thereof but, rather, trust, loyalty and, respectively, disloyalty or the breaking of an oath (Weltecke 2008, 108–10; see also

7 In this framework, the execution of punishment remains in the hands of human beings, but here human agency becomes merely the articulation of a collective will sanctioned by some transcendent, divine power.

Agamben 2011, 32–8). Following her call to broaden the research of this semantic question beyond the limits of Latin Christianity (Weltecke 2008, 114), we can attest to the fact that in both Russian and Georgian, the original meanings of "faith" and "faithfulness" (*vera, verny, rtsmena, sartsmuno*) were indeed "trustworthiness" and "loyalty" (Nadareishvili 2005, 26; Imnaishvili 1986, 513). Far from being an epistemological category (Asad 2011, 46) and a cognitive condition relegated to the "interior" psychological realm of a "buffered" self (Taylor 2007), "faith" embodied the ethical practice of loyalty that would bind a certain community through God. In this, Gurian peasants and Tsarist administrators shared an ethical understanding of faith as what made oaths of transcendence ensure communal unity. Divergent, however, were not only their political aims, but also the material practices involved in such oaths.

Across the Orthodox Christian populations of the Empire, peasants tended to confer to the icon an excessive agency that, during the late Tsarist period, both the state and the Russian Orthodox Church (to which the Georgian Orthodox Church had lost its autocephaly in the first half of the nineteenth century) strove to contain in their parallel effort to institutionalize and control peasant religious practices while keeping up divine order against the onslaught of atheistic scientificity and revolutionary doctrines (Shevzov 1999; Frank 1999; Chulos 2012). Thus, out of all obligatory oaths, the imperial law prescribed that subjects of Christian faith should pledge them by kissing the cross and the Gospel (Svod zakonov 1857, 56). This said, Stefan Kirmse suggests that "the influence of religion on state policy in the late nineteenth century must not be overstated. The use of religious symbols continued to be largely instrumental: more than anything else, it expressed the elites' desire to visualize and reinforce the state's authority and unity" (Kirmse 2019, 44–5). Yet, Kirmse explicitly refers to the pre-revolutionary, "normal" period, in which a largely symbolic function of officially sanctioned religious items in officially sanctioned circumstances seems to have been complemented by the gradual implementation of more privatized notions of religiosity, such as "freedom of conscience" as part of the post-Reform project of promoting "civic-mindedness" (*grazhdanstvennost'*). The disturbing effect that the oath of the Gurians had on the government clearly suggests a more than "instrumental" concern. Arguably, the local administration itself "discovered" this concern only when it encountered the icon–a familiar religious object and one of the pillars of Orthodox Christianity–being appropriated by the peasants in a counter-hegemonic way. This was, moreover, occur-

ring in a region of the Empire's special interest due to Georgia's perceived centuries-long history of uninterrupted Orthodox Christianity, which provided the perfect civilizational pretext for Russia's geopolitical aspirations in the Caucasus (Church 2001; Jersild 2002).

In fact, what the government deemed an emergency in the face of the oaths proliferating from 1902 on was, as William Sadleir shows (2020), frustratingly experienced daily by "enlightened" judicial employees in the dysfunctional post-Reform courtrooms of Transcaucasia. One such agent of the modernizing empire was the Russian jurist of Lutheran faith, August von Raison, who, between 1893 and 1898, had acted as President of the Court of the Kutaisi *okrug* in today's Western Georgia. His text explicitly links the concern over the seeming ubiquity of false testimonies (*lzhesviditel'stvo*) to the local Christians' disloyalty, in the judicial setting, to the religious symbols of Empire due to their customary attitudes towards icons and oaths. Referring to his own legal practice among Orthodox people, von Raison claims that, besides other reasons, they tend towards perjury

> because the form of the oath itself established by the Court Regulations [of 1864, L.N.] for Christians, does not correspond to the religious beliefs of the local population: namely, in the past they used to swear in front of (*pred*) icons that were specially venerated by the people, in which case the testimonials could have been given full credence, whereas witnesses do not bestow much importance onto oaths in front of the Cross and the Gospel and do not consider this oath obligatory. (von Raison 1899, 221–2)

Von Raison admits that the cross and the Gospel are inefficient because they are Russian "imports." The perceived power of oaths on "specially venerated" icons[8] even led certain district courts to use the customary oaths as means not simply of ascertaining the truthfulness of testimonies but also of resolving relatively large numbers of civic litigations (225–6), attesting to the "legal pluralism" of the post-Reform judicial system in Georgia (Sadleir 2020).

Essentially, what made the cross and the Bible sanctioned items for oath-taking was that they were conventional signs. This made them substitutable and multipliable, allowing for their implementation in the everyday religious reproduction of imperial legitimacy. Their conventionality implied that, as substitutable symbolic objects, they

8 On "specially venerated icons" in late Tsarist Russia, see Shevzov 1999.

were detached from the sacralized autocrat as the guarantor and personification of the God-sanctioned order. In contrast, the essentially non-conventional character of Orthodox icons, already pushed to its limit in folk usage in the judicial practices that von Raison observed in 1899, was inherently prone to a politicized excess like the oath(s) of protest in 1902.[9] Here, not only was the icon used to delegate the mentioned guarantee immediately to God and his saints but, more importantly, the (imputed) anti-imperial usage of this most eminently Orthodox item scandalously overlapped with another pillar of Tsarist political theology–the notion that the Tsar himself was a "living icon." As this notion too dangerously vacillated between canonical and heterodox, official and vernacular understandings, with peasants seen lighting candles and crossing themselves if they were to behold the Tsar (Uspenskij and Zhivov 2012, 47), it seems all the less surprising that Tsarist officials facing peasant unrest in Guria did not hesitate to homeopathically revert to the same heterodox usage of icons, which until then had been confined to customary legal litigations.

One particular icon that lent itself to the counter-insurgent appropriation of its customary legal functions was the wondrous icon of St. George called "Lomiskareli" (translatable as "lion's gate"), which was much-feared and particularly respected in Guria. Around 1902-1905, the government instrumentalized Lomiskareli to make the sworn Gurian peasants pledge a counter-oath in order to extort from them "at least for the fear of the oath" (Uratadze 1968, 52) the truth about the whereabouts of hidden revolutionaries. Not accidentally, in narrating this incident, Uratadze's autobiography allows for the icon that had been suspiciously absent from his preceding account to receive, as if in a compensatory move, an excessive presence.

II.4. The Fury of Icons

While accommodating local customary law within the "imperial rights

9 Around the turn of the century, both peasants and workers participated in oaths administered with crosses and Bibles, as suggested by various kinds of evidence. However, if an oath did not involve the usage of icons, it was conditioned by the unavailability of a particularly venerable icon as a shared item of communal veneration. This was the case, for example, when oath-strikes happened far from home, i.e. when peasants went to cities for work. In other words, it is not *any* Orthodox icon that would do for an oath-strike but, rather, only a "specially venerated" one whose force consisted of being bound to a particular rural locality and constituting the cohesion and boundaries of its community. However, by the same token, both the icon and "its" community remained determined by "territoriality" and "localism" (Guha 1999, 278–332).

regime" (Burbank 2006), as shown, among other evidence,[10] by recourses to icons in district courts mentioned by von Raison, the deficient implementation of legal reforms in the Caucasian colony denied the local populations justice in the vernacular language(s), besides the introduction of trial by jury. The language barrier led to the diffusion of perjury within a judicial procedure which the majority of non-Russian-speaking locals neither respected nor trusted or understood (Sadleir 2020). It is in this context that a "specially venerated" icon like "Lomiskareli," a trustworthy item for swearing a trustworthy oath in an understandable language, i.e. in a language capable of speaking the truth, acquires its crucial function. Uratadze relates that whenever there was no written or oral proof between litigants, they would resort to swearing on "Lomiskareli." The one who declined to swear would be found guilty by the rural judges. Importantly, "people claimed that someone had sworn a lie on "Lomiskareli" and won the cause, but in a week that someone walked about and screamed that he had told an untruth and until he hadn't corrected his mistake, he could not calm down and screamed incessantly that he had lied" (Uratadze 1968, 51).

It is precisely such a maddening effect that makes von Raison resort to the civilizational argument that if fear of the despotic fury of icons "is effectively the provenance of their veneration, then this evidently does not flow from the rules of faith, but from superstition, and the latter ought to be exterminated with time" (von Raison 1899, 223). Speaking from the point of view of the modernizing center keen on controlling the proper usage of religious symbols, von Raison emphasized that such oaths were "not required by the rules of the Orthodox church" (224), which, instead, instructed that icons were "to be treated not as powerful in their own right but only as 'channels of grace'" (Kenna 1985, 346). Following von Raison, in the Caucasus, the Empire found itself in a different "time zone," surrounded by populations who lacked a propensity towards "civic-mindedness" for the very basic reason that they were, in Charles Taylor's terms, "porous" selves, lacking the kind of "buffer" (Taylor 2007) that would distance them from an "immediate" impact of an icon invested with special agency.

Curiously, von Raison corroborates his argument about the Christian Caucasians' "time lag" by appealing to the *Journal du voyage* of the seventeenth-century French merchant Jean Chardin, whose lengthy descriptions of various Georgian regions include the report of

10 See, for example, Ramishvili 2012, 121.

a Theatine missionary regarding the "idolatrous" veneration of icons among the Mingrelians.[11] In evaluating the heterodox attitudes of late-nineteenth-century populations of today's Western Georgia towards Orthodox icons, what better ally and witness can a Lutheran enlightener from late Tsarist Russia find than a Catholic merchant relating how a Catholic missionary describes and condemns the fetishism of Mingrelians in seventeenth-century Western Georgia? From Chardin's work, von Raison cites a passage in which the traveler says that the Mingrelians particularly revere icons

> that are reputed to be Cruel, easily Provok'd, and apt to Kill those against whom they are Incens'd (…) They are Horribly afraid to swear by those rever'd Images, and when they do, there is no gainsaying such an Oath. For they believe whatever is sworn by those Images. Some there are that will not call these Images to Witness the most certain Truths, for fear of being Kill'd by 'em (Chardin 1686, 98)

The folk usage of icons and oaths was no less forcefully denounced by the local enlighteners of the peripheries as both a pagan distortion of "true" Christianity and a superstitious projection of special agency onto particular icons. In participating in this hierarchization of folk practices into "customs," "beliefs," "religion" and "idolatry," the Georgian intelligentsia partook in the Russian imperial project of mastering, through the production of knowledge, the wealth and hybridity of regional, ethnic and religious specificities in the Caucasus (Jersild 2002). Guria was one of the hotspots for such taxonomic work. Before Russia took over the region of Adjara on Guria's south-western frontier (so-called "Ottoman Georgia") as a result of its victory in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, Guria had been a frontline against the Muslim enemy (Church 2001). After it had ceased to be a spatial frontline, local enlighteners started pulling down the temporal frontlines as well. Thus, in depicting the vernacular veneration of icons, school teachers such as Uratadze or, a generation earlier, Isidore Ramishvili, who persistently combatted the "harmful customs and traditions" of the peasants (Ramishvili 2012, 176–7, 220–2), betray a general affinity with Chardin's relation of the Mingrelian "idolatry." It could even be argued that the same type of discourse provided the blueprint for the internal colonial gaze of Gurian enlighteners and von Raison alike. While von Raison

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11 Mingrelians are considered an ethnic sub-group of Georgians originating from a region in contemporary Western Georgia to the north of Guria.

cites Chardin in the French original, the Gurian radical intelligentsia will have been aware of the Russian translation of the Caucasian episode of the travelogue, first in the monthly journal *Kavkazsky Vestnik* in 1900–1901 and then as a book (Chardin 1902).

Ramishvili, in describing a post-Emancipation Gurian folk culture, where the demarcation line between the agency and functions of lay persons, priests and sacred objects was impermissibly unclear to modernist sensibilities, explicitly referred to "Lomiskareli," which was housed in the church of his home village, Surebi. Ramishvili describes it as a big cross fully embroidered in silver, draped in a "shirt of red broadcloth" and popularly designated as a "saint" (*tsmindani*). He adds to Uratadze's reference to the peasants' fear of swearing on "Lomiskareli" that

> not only a liar, but *even the righteous one* hardly dared to swear on it, to touch it with his hand–"Lomis Kareli will make you scream," so they said, and if one were to believe the legend, certain people in fact "swore" on the icon, went mad and used to *interminably repeat this single word*: "Lomis Kareli, Lomis Kareli" (Ramishvili 2012, 120–1, my emphases).

Ramishvili's reference to the madman screaming nothing but "Lomiskareli" embodies the destruction of reason, language and their universality insofar as the madness-of-the-icon strips language of its very conventional generality, forcing it to utter nothing but the one unsubstitutable name of the one unsubstitutable icon. Other sources acknowledge that not only was Lomiskareli mad in the sense of being irascible like the icons in Chardin's travelogue, but its maddening impact would make even the truth-tellers scream ("Lomis Kareli" 1925, 3). The question to be asked, then, is whether one is to treat such excess as yet another illustration of a 'porous' consciousness reduced to utter cognitive misery or as an extreme experience of "linguistic vulnerability" (Butler 1997)–of being *taken by the oath* instead of taking it–in the face of the fear of ethical failure in keeping one's word or of saying the truth even when one is free of fault.

A cognitivist mindset clearly prevails in Uratadze's own description of the popular attitudes towards "Lomiskareli." Once again, his usual detached "surprise" at what he does not (want to) understand in the peasants' behavior stands out: "One cannot say that Gurians are a very pious people"–he notes –"on the contrary, they are rather atheists (…) but for some reason they were very afraid of this icon. (…) I was unable to find out why this icon had such an influence and why they

were so afraid of it" (Uratadze 1968, 52–3). As his understanding of peasant religiosity is essentially conditioned by the modernist semantics of "faith" as an internal, cognitive state cut off from the practical ethical realm or at least from any "authentic" form of social practice, he fails to understand the intrinsic complicity of the administration's and peasants' attitudes towards oaths even as their political aims diverge. This also explains how both Uratadze and the administration, in the earlier-cited 1906 police report, can advance identical statements–"The Gurian people are unfaithful", "One cannot say that Gurians are a very pious people, on the contrary, they are rather atheists"–and nevertheless arrive at divergent conclusions. While Uratadze is left "surprised" by the peasants' fear of the icon *despite* their alleged "faithlessness," for the administration, the Gurians' faithlessness/secrecy is a reason for not trusting them *and* for enforcing an oath of allegiance as an embodied act, in Asad's sense, that ought to practically induce faithfulness/loyalty and extract the truth out of the peasants. While the possibility of going mad was what, in the customary setting, assured the delegation of punishment of perjury immediately to the invoked divine power, it is precisely the vulnerability of this anarchistic moment in the customary legal practice that the empire managed to capitalize upon. Having been denied proper participation in the reformed legal system, the peasants had even their customary juridico-religious practice turned against them by the colonial state.

But what actually happened after the government decided to use the icon for its counter-insurgent aims? Of this, Uratadze offers a particularly symptomatic account. He claims that as soon as the revolutionary committee had learned about the government's intention, they gathered to discuss what was to be done, for they were sure that some people would not dare pledge a false oath on "Lomiskareli." According to Uratadze, his proposition, advanced out of 'respect for the religious feelings of the people', to clandestinely transport the icon to some other church until the danger had passed met with the greatest approval. As with the task of composing the text for the Napitsvara oath, allegedly it was him to whom the committee assigned the evacuation of the icon (53–4). After having negotiated with a priest (yet another hypothetical priest!) to shelter the icon in his church, Uratadze says, he entrusted the abduction of the icon to three valorous comrades. However, when they entered the Church of Surebi to seize it, "they didn't even dare to approach the icon. 'It shone so powerfully that it seemed that it was about to scream at us. The main thing is that it looked at us with such ire that we preferred to leave the church and go home'". Uratadze says

he was ultimately obliged to order other comrades to do the job.

A huge scandal ensued upon the discovery that "Lomiskareli" had disappeared. With rumor once again asserting its special power, two conflicting legends are supposed to have engaged in a "hushed anonymous polemic" as to why the icon had left Guria. According to one version, the icon had emigrated in protest against the emergence of godless revolutionaries in Guria and preferred to move to a more god-fearing place. Uratadze individuates the Tsarist administration as the force behind this rumor. As for the alternative version, "Lomiskareli is supposed to have said that 'he is leaving Guria because the police want to use him against the people, but he will never go against the people and therefore is leaving Guria until a people's government is established'" (54).[12] In this deliberately comical tone, Uratadze ends the story of "Lomiskareli." Thus, "Lomiskareli" flies away like the "formidable" icon of St. Job whom, as Chardin says, the Mingrelians, "these blind people", particularly feared: "They relate how this Image being one day carry'd a Journey, and passing by a Lake or Marsh full of Frogs, the noise of the Frogs so amaz'd it, and put it into such a Fury, that it flew away to a Church that stood upon a Mountain. They report moreover, that it Kills all that approach too near it" (Chardin 1686, 99). Uratadze's discourse seems to mime the modernist/colonial gaze of Chardin on "the fetishist non-European," with, however, one fundamental difference: While Chardin treats the icon that is irritated by quaking frogs as fantastic hearsay, Uratadze positions himself as the emphatic first person who pretends to be pulling the strings behind the demonstrative emigration of "Lomiskareli" and the ensuing rumors. However, this trick of reasserting his unipolar agency over the vertiginously a-polar "comedy of errors" turns out to be profoundly self-defeating. For, to the misfortune of the truth-value of Uratadze's account, the hiding of "Lomiskareli" in some unnamed church with the clandestine support of some unnamed priest neither is the end to the incident nor corresponds with other testimonies about the fate of the icon.

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Uratadze claims that the icon was hidden *as soon as* the administration decided to instrumentalize it. Because he was sent into exile in September 1903, having already spent some time in prison before that, the kidnapping of "Lomiskareli" must, therefore, have occurred

12 Although the gender of the Russian word for icon (*ikona*) is feminine, Uratadze systematically uses the masculine gender when referring to "Lomiskareli," the icon of St. George, an eminently masculine saint.

sometime between the second half of 1902 and early 1903. However, all the other sources unanimously affirm that it was in 1904 when, upon the recommendation of a local spy-priest who was later liquidated by the revolutionaries (Ramishvili 2012, 293), "Lomiskareli" effectively "entered into counter-revolutionary service" and was successfully used by the government to uncover the identity of many a revolutionary and the whereabouts of rebels and conspiratorial gatherings (415). According to Ramishvili, just before the 1905 Revolution, "five revolutionary peasants entered the Surebi Church, took the icon, smashed it, bereft it of its riches and made the icon disappear without a trace" (122). Parmen Tsintsadze, another Gurian revolutionary, attests to the smashing of the icon (Tsintsadze 1923, 184), while Silibistro Todria, later Bolshevik and head of the Union of the Militant Godless of Soviet Georgia, claims the icon was melted down („Lomis Kareli" 1925, 3). To the secularist socialists, "Lomiskareli" manifested the monstrous objectal excess of divine agency in the folk version of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. It was, then, with explicit pride that they announced the icon's evident impotence to retaliate.

In this chorus of iconoclasts, why is Uratadze the only one to claim that instead of being destroyed, "Lomiskareli" was hidden and that this was done before the administration could use the icon for their reactionary aims? With his version of the story, Uratadze shields not only those who broke their oath of secrecy by pledging a counter-oath on "Lomiskareli," but also "Lomiskareli" itself from the shameful "counter-revolutionary" role to which the retrospective accounts of the Bolsheviks and the Menshevik Ramishvili equally condemned it. Uratadze's solution to the secret of "Lomiskareli" leaves the icon the option of being restored to its former glory. His talk about the peasants' "religious feelings" as the reason for evacuating "Lomiskareli" as well as his condescension towards his revolutionary comrades who feared kidnapping the icon might simply be another manifestation of the modernist urge to fantasize about fanatical others "who are naive enough to believe" (Dolar 1998, XXIII) while unburdening "the secular, disenchanted subject of the weight of his own less than limpid relations with political authority" (Toscano 2010, 168). By storing "Lomiskareli" in a secret shelter of which only he and his confidant priest are aware, Uratadze tries to provide closure to the sequence leading from the drafting of the peasants' demands via the oath on Napitsvara to the witch-hunt in its aftermath. Yet, the closure remains deeply ironic as it only pushes

the agency that he would like to firmly locate in his own intentions further into inscrutable indeterminacy. As Uratadze's syntax gets lost in translation somewhere between Russian and Georgian, suspending the directionality of subject and object (II.2), what makes his narrative "scream" might be the living trace of his own peasant subalternity that he, as a rural *intelligent*, is repeatedly obliged to overcome in order to assert his modernity.

II.5. Towards a Subaltern Reading of the "Gurian Republic"

In critically re-telling Uratadze's story about the inaugural oath on Napitsvara, this article strove to detect politics–the event of initiating a new challenge to existing power relations and forms of human togetherness–in places where it tends to be overlooked. By washing away the weight of particular legal-religious forms, we might lose sight of the practices which, in 1902, came to constitute a historically determinate beginning. Beneath, around and in the very heart of what Uratadze's 'prose of the intelligentsia' narrates, there is an entire dimension of the materiality of religious items and signs that follow their own ethical and political logic. In suppressing or trivializing them, he misses the political dynamics that unfold around the oath. He is eager to emphasize that the initial demands he claims he elaborated with/for the peasants were purely economic (I.2) and that it was only after the intensification of Tsarist repressions that peasants became convinced of the government's affiliation with the landlords (Uratadze 1968, 51). However, in concluding this, Uratadze ignores that the peasants' initiative to pledge an oath that he tried to discursively secularize and domesticate inadvertently constituted that *excess* of the political, which, notwithstanding the narrow breadth of the actual demands, launched a revolutionary dynamic–i.e. a dynamic perceived as revolutionary by the authorities–which from the very start deprived him of control over the entire development. The icon that Uratadze thought he was manipulating might be the ironic symptom of this loss of control.

The method this article pursued relied on identifying what the work of silencing in Uratadze's discourse reveals of the subalterns' actual share and position in that historical conjuncture. However, it is hardly enough to simply unmask the intelligentsia's discursive work of erasure as long as one continues to equate "consciousness" with the written word, as Gramsci seems to be doing. In a famous passage on spontaneity from the *Prison Notebooks*, he claims that, as the

subaltern "have not achieved any consciousness of the class 'for itself' (…) it never occurs to them that their history might have some possible importance, that there might be some value in leaving documentary evidence of it" (Gramsci 1971, 196). Here, the description of an alleged fact inadvertently becomes an accusation against those underprivileged who did not produce documents, and such an approach essentially fails to consider the specific *ethics* inherent to the orality of the oath as the condition of a subaltern politics, in which pledging oaths in a complexly embodied and envoiced interaction with icons shaped communities and their struggles.

In this sense, the phenomenon of the oath that this article followed in as "total" a manner as possible certainly represents but one particular trace of subaltern politics as it was enacted in the famed "Gurian Republic." It might nevertheless bear a paradigmatic function in opening up the path for future engagement with the subaltern practices of this peasant republic. When, at its height, the peasants indeed rendered inoperative all Tsarist administrative institutions,[13] in judicial matters, they are said to have abolished all paperwork, substituting it with the oral enactment of justice in long, inclusive debates (Marr 1905, 16). More literate than any low-class community across the Russian Empire, this animosity towards the written cannot, however, be reduced to "the peasants' hatred for the written word" (Guha 1999, 52) perceived as a manipulative tool in the hands of the masters. Having acquired literacy from the various Ramishvilis and Uratadzes, the peasants seem to have decided to break with that one pathology of post-Reform modernity that they experienced in the endless kafkaesque regime of paperwork, bureaucracy and waiting in the empty time and corridors of a modern law conducted in the unintelligible language of empire. They thus fulfilled the Georgian nobles' earlier timid pleas to the imperial government to allow the administration of justice in the language(s) understandable to the local population(s) and to shift the emphasis from formalities and paperwork to the "living word" (*zhyvoe slovo*) as enacted in the process itself. This solution, which, according to the noble petitioners, would undo the locals' mistrust against the judicial system as well as their tendency to pledge false oaths of testimony (Tumanov 1903; Bendianishvili 1970; Sadleir 2020), culminated in the popular courts

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13 This might only be another way of saying that the peasants in fact took over and made actually operative the rural self-governing mechanisms (inefficiently) put in place by the Great Reforms (Jones 2005, 139).

of the "Gurian Republic" as the site where the peasants celebrated the "living word", reclaiming their right and desire to engage in the fulfillment of justice as linguistic beings.

Our historical-anthropological reading against the grain of the various proses of the intelligentsia, of counter-insurgency, and historiography that engaged with the legendary oath on Napitsvara, thus serves as a point of entry into the complex world of self-organizing Gurian peasants. The future inquiry into that historical sequence and complex of practices called the "Gurian Republic" will have to foreground how the peasants were productively entangled in and influenced by various intellectual, political and institutional forces of modernity and forms of organization while retaining a fundamental dimension not so much of independence as of intractability in their relation to the respective hegemonic projects,[14] be they imperial or socialistic. The oath on Napistvara on that "dark spring night" in 1902 stands as an exemplar of such intractability, calling upon the critical historian to indefatigably track its traces.

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14 In using the concept of subaltern intractability, I take inspiration from Prakash 2000.

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Autor: Luka Nakhutsrishvili
Tytuł: Chłopskie przysięgi, wściekłe ikony i zagadka sprawczości. Na tropach polityki podporządkowanych w carskiej Gruzji w przededniu Rewolucji 1905 roku
Abstrakt: Ten dwuczęściowy, interdyscyplinarny artykuł przygląda się autobiograficznej relacji gruzińskiego socjaldemokraty Grigola Uratadze, opisującej przysięgę chłopów Gurii w 1902 roku. Przysięga ta rozpoczęła rebelię w carskiej Gruzji, kulminującą w 1905 w samorządnej chłopskiej „republice Gurii". Studium to ma na celu historyczno-antropologiczne badanie asymetrii w aliansie zawiązanym przez chłopów i rewolucyjną inteligencję oraz napięć jakie wywołała owa przysięga między chłopami a przedstawicielami carskiej władzy. Próbując odsłonić ślady chłopskiej polityki w relacji do różnych hegemonicznych sił na modernizującym się imperialnym pograniczu, artykuł zachęca czytelnika do ponownego rozważenia założeń na

temat historycznej sprawczości, językowych uwarunkowań podmiotowości i relacji pomiędzy polityką a materialnym i zwyczajowym wymiarem religijności. Ostatecznym celem jest wypracowanie lektury praktyk typowych dla chłopskiej polityki w Republice Gurii z perspektywy podporządkowanych.

Pierwsza część artykułu rozpoczyna się analizą pod włos narracji pozostawionej przez Uratadze na temat przysięgi z 1902 roku.

Druga część artykułu poświęcona jest relacji Uratadze na temat następstw przysięgi oraz konfliktów i rozbieżnych interpretacji, jakie wywołała pomiędzy chłopami, inteligencją i carską administracją.

Słowa kluczowe: akt mowy, chłopstwo, Imperium Rosyjskie, inteligencja, prawosławne ikony, przysięga, sprawczość podporządkowanych, studia sekularne, teologia polityczna

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Making of Modernity in the Vernacular: On the Grassroots Variations of Finnish Socialism in the Early Twentieth Century

The article scrutinises the concept of socialism at the grassroots of the Finnish labour movement during the early twentieth history. Primary sources consist of three handwritten newspapers, produced by industrial workers, housemaids and the rural proletariat. While factory workers could adopt the orthodox formulation of socialism from *The Communist Manifesto*, the socialism of the housemaids had a more existential function for it gave them a political voice to articulate a greater meaning in life that stood in sharp contrast to the silent servility demanded by their mistresses. The concept of socialism gained most explanatory breadth among the rural proletariat in north-eastern Finland, where it was used as an indicator of inequality locally, as a weapon in national elections and as a direct linkage to the international labour movement. The examples demonstrate that vernacular socialism was more multidimensional than what the contemporary critics and later researchers have suggested. The concept of socialism was one of the main tools in the making of proletarian modernity: it was used to claim political subjectivity in the public sphere, to imagine a gap between the old world left behind and the new coming world, and to extend their spatial horizons beyond the local community.

Keywords: Grand Duchy of Finland, handwritten newspapers, modernity, socialism, workers

Introduction

Rolf Reichardt noted in the 1980s that the history of ideas had been dominated by what he labelled as *Gipfelwanderungen*, "summit hiking," referring to the focus on canonical elite thinkers and theories instead of populaces and everyday language (1985, 63). Still in the year 2020, it is difficult to find examples of intellectual history or *Begriffsgeschichte* ("the history of concepts") that would scrutinise texts written by those people who did not write for living, which means the vast majority of human beings ever existed on this planet after the invention of writing. Probably there are both ideological and practical reasons for this elitist trajectory. The ideas of "best" thinkers, usually white men of privilege in "Western" history, have been perceived more coherent and refined than fuzzy and raw thoughts imagined by the uninitiated populaces (Maciag 2011). In addition, elitism is embedded in the histories of our archival systems that have preserved precisely that what has been valued important from the perspective of the past present (Carter 2006). The writings of ordinary people are scattered around the archives, and for a scholar interested in their ideas, tracing these fugitives of history requires extra work if compared to the more easily available sources–and extra work does not fit well with the current academic fashion of "publish and perish" (Colpaert 2012). Thus, we live in the strange situation in which the giants of conceptual history and ideology studies have for long ago acknowledged the importance of studying concepts and ideologies as they were used by the populaces (Koselleck 1972; Freeden 1997, 7), but theoretical endorsements have not led to the breakthrough of concrete works specialising in vernacular political languages. It seems that the most innovative contributions to the history of ideas at the grassroots of societal life have not originated from conceptual history or intellectual history but rather from the fields like cultural history, microhistory and book history (see e.g. Thomas 1971; Ginzburg 1980; Darnton 1985).

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This article turns the scope of scholarship towards the very beginners of political thinking. The concept of socialism will be studied in the Grand Duchy of Finland in the early twentieth century by reading texts composed by housemaids, unskilled factory workers and rural proletariat. In the classical accounts of Finnish and European socialisms, the idea of socialism itself has been sketched on the basis of the most prominent theoreticians and the leaders of the labour movement, whereas its meaning for the rank and file has largely been based on anecdotal evidence or ignored entirely (Soikkanen 1961; Schieder 1984; Freeden

1996, 417–55; Eley 2002). Departures from this trend are unusual (Marzec 2017). Although there has been a welcome shift to write women as part of the intellectual history of socialism since the 1980s, even the most recent attempts have focused on the educated minorities instead of ordinary working-class women (Kemppainen 2020).

On those rare occasions in which the socialist writings from below have been taken seriously, the results have been open to debate. For example, Jari Ehrnrooth's dissertation *Power of the Word*, *Force of Hatred* argued that while at the top of the Finnish labour movement the hegemonic Kautskyite Marxism dominated socialist thinking, at the grassroots, socialism was transformed from international, theoretical and rational to local, concrete and emotional. Instead of modern political thinking, Ehrnrooth found what he labelled as "old-fashioned" and "archaic" hatred in the handwritten newspapers of 1905–1914, produced by the rank-and-file workers (1992, 484, 491–2, 494, 563, 572–4). While some reviewers appreciated that Ehrnrooth had fleshed out the emotional dynamics pushing the labour movement forwards (Kujala 1995, 21–2), others questioned whether emotionality was specific to socialism or rather part of the Finnish modernity more broadly. Tapio Bergholm suggested that the Finnish popular movements at the turn of the twentieth century were not characterized by a deep antagonism between passionate hatred and rational education, but powerful collective emotions and enlightenment ideals coexisted simultaneously (2002). While the major Finnish interpretations during the 1980s and 1990s tended to explain the nature of the socialist labour movement either as an instigator of violent class conflict (Ehrnrooth 1992) or as a constructive element in the rise of civil society (Alapuro et al. 1987), it seems that the latest research has moved beyond the antagonism between emotion and reason (Teräs 2001; Salmi-Niklander 2004; Suodenjoki 2010; Rajavuori 2017). These studies have carefully analyzed proletarian agency in local contexts by limiting their focus on individual communities.

Using three case studies, this article wishes to expand from these regional reflections towards the general thought patterns of Finnish socialism and European modernity. Thus, in the following pages, a fresh interpretation of vernacular socialism will be constructed from all the mentions of socialism published in three different handwritten newspapers. While three papers with 115 issues in total cannot provide a comprehensive description of all the nuances attached to the concept, a surprisingly rich mosaic of proletarian socialism emerges from the found speech acts. Instead of archaic, authentic and irrational, the socialism I have encountered in the writings of the ordinary working people seems

"politically modern." By this I mean that the working-class writers used the modern concept of socialism in order to 1) to claim political subjectivity in the public sphere, 2) to make a stark difference between the present and the past, and 3) to expand their spatial imagination beyond the local community. These features–subjectivity, temporality, and spatiality–have been noticed in the previous research on political modernities (see e.g. Rancière 2004; Koselleck 2004, esp. 255–75; Anderson 2006), but their concrete manifestations in the vernacular language have escaped critical scrutiny. This article hopefully not only broadens our scholarly picture of the most influential ism in the long nineteenth century but also challenges the age-old idea of the ordinary people not having enough intellect to be counted as truly modern political thinkers.

Socialist movements arose throughout the European political space in the course of the long nineteenth century, but measured by seats in parliament it was in the Grand Duchy of Finland that the largest socialist party emerged.

The Making of Modernity with the Concept of Socialism

Socialist movements arose throughout the European political space in the course of the long nineteenth century, but measured by seats in parliament it was in the Grand Duchy of Finland that the largest socialist party emerged (Hilson et al. 2017, 7). The specific features of Finnish socialism included 1) late beginning in the 1890s compared to other European socialist parties, 2) exceptionally large size of the party in the early twentieth century, 3) broad agrarian base but insignificant support from the intelligentsia, 4) highly political nature of the labour movement, i.e. political organization under the socialist party was more extensive than organization into trade unions, and 5) ideological moderation compared to other socialist parties operating in the Russian Empire (Kirby 1987, 482, 484; Alapuro 1988, 114–27, 178–9; Kettunen 1986, 61–9; Kujala 1989, 28, 326). However, the general features of Finnish socialism attached it to the mainstream of European socialism at the turn of the twentieth century, i.e. "vulgar Marxism" or "simplified Marxism" that was popularized by Karl Kautsky. The doctrine consisted roughly of three key elements: 1) economic theory of exploitation, 2) materialist conception of history, and 3) the independent organization of working classes into political parties as the main strategy (Sassoon 2010, 5–6; Soikkanen 1961, 28).

The concept of socialism played a key role in the formation of European socialist movements. In the German-speaking world, socialism had become a slogan during the revolutions of 1848 (Schieder 1984, 968), but for the imperial borderlands of the Russian Empire, such as the Grand Duchy of Finland, it was the Revolution of 1905 that played

a paramount role in the mass circulation of socialism (Marzec and Turunen 2018, 41–7). This revolution ushered new populaces into the political sphere, and for many Finnish workers the General Strike in November 1905 meant their first involvement in socialism. The strike also ended preventive censorship, and during the years 1906–1907 one could write about socialism more freely than ever before in Finnish history, until the Russification measures were reinstated in 1908 (Nygård 1987, 93). Even during this so-called second era of Russification, 1908–1917, the position of Finnish socialism was unique in the context of the Russian Empire in the sense that Finland had the only legally operating socialist party which could practice public agitation and spread the concept of socialism through newspapers, booklets and social evenings (Kujala 1989, 28, 326). The quantitative strengthening of socialism in the aftermath of the General Strike of 1905 had important consequences for the conceptual history of Finnish socialism. The number of those people who used the concept in order to make sense of their life multiplied, and this, in turn, led to rich conceptual variations of socialism at the grassroots of Finnish labour movement which will be studied with the help of three handwritten newspapers.

Handwritten newspapers used in this article were not a mere product of a unique historical event, i.e. the General Strike of 1905, but part of a wider and longer term cultural phenomenon: the rise of Finnish civil society and popular movements caused handwritten newspapers to flourish at the turn of the twentieth century (Salmi-Niklander 2013, 77–8). These papers were written collectively, meaning that the roles of editors, sub-editors, reporters and contributors would be changed after every issue. When the issue was ready to be published, it was usually read aloud at the workers' meetings (Turunen 2019, 174, 177). Orality affected the content. Many of the texts became extremely context-dependent with multiple references to local personalities, events and places (Berrenberg 2014, 315, 322–3; Salmi-Niklander 2006, 113). Thus, compared to the printed newspapers, the relationship between the creators and the audience was closer in the handwritten papers. In addition, ordinary workers had more political agency as producers of handwritten newspapers than as mere consumers of the print. The handwritten examples below will show that the concept of socialism was one of the main tools that these rising subjects of Finnish civil society exploited to re-interpret their own social world anew: although the working people had gained universal suffrage in the parliamentary reform of 1906, they still felt lacking equality in practice, and this experience of inequality was repeatedly constructed using socialism as a conceptual gauge.

Becoming a Political Subject

According to Rancière's definition, a political subject is a capacity for staging scenes of dissensus, "putting two worlds in one and the same world" (Rancière 2004, 304). He uses the French women in the late eighteenth century demanding equality as subjects of the Rights of Man as a historical example of political subjectivity. In the case of the Finnish housemaids living in the early twentieth century, a similar phenomenon of finding one's own political voice can be heard in their handwritten union newspapers in the capital of Helsinki. There is a dialogue, probably fictional, on the topic between two housemaids. Another one of them thinks that handwritten newspapers are useless for their content is of little value and already well known, thus, printed newspapers should be read at the union meetings instead of low-quality proletarian scribbles. The other housemaid disagrees and explains that writing develops thinking skills much more than just reading thoughts completed by other people. According to her, housemaids had been taught to be silent and their condition could be compared to the condition of the dumb: "we cannot interpret our emotions, thoughts, neither strivings nor hopes." She continues that in Finnish literature, the housemaids had been portrayed as simple-minded people, but, in reality, housemaids were no different from other people. This argument convinces the more skeptical housemaid, and she promises to contribute to the next issue of the union paper (*Palveliatar*, January 23, 1908).

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Based on their handwritten formulations, the housemaids believed that they were marching at the tail end of the Finnish labour movement: they were the lowest underclass of the working classes, with the longest hours and least political awareness. However, the situation was not hopeless: "After all, there are some among the housemaids who are developed and lively, who value their lives and who do not drag along without a goal, namely, they are aware of the ideal, that great and common socialism of the poor." (*Palveliatar*, February 9, 1911). Spelling errors and missing punctuation in the Finnish original suggest that housemaids' harsh self-criticism was not entirely misplaced. Although this variant of socialism is perhaps not the most theoretically or technically sophisticated formulation found among the handwritten newspapers, the use of the concept in this environment shows how becoming a political subject might have looked like from the grassroots perspective.

In the union meeting of 1913, a housemaid shared her story that had happened a decade ago in Tampere. The amount of details in the story indicates that it was most likely based on real events. One day she

was walking outside with her mistress. The lady became extremely irritated when the newsboys were trying to sell the local labour paper "to one of the finest ladies in town," meaning herself. The lady called the paper "savage" and "inferior": only "the riffraff" read it. This event ultimately transformed the housemaid's life: "I got interested, I bought it secretly, I read it secretly at night and this is how I found out why it was dangerous." Some weeks later a confrontation develops between maid and mistress over time off on Sundays. The mistress wants the maid to attend church during her two-hour break, but the maid wants to meet her friend instead. The maid gets her way, and the mistress is astonished by her stubbornness. The mistress complains that, in the good old days, maids used to go to church on Sundays, stay in service in the same house for long and did not constantly demand more money and time off. The maid suggests that perhaps the mistresses have become evil, too, earning the maid the title of "the most impudent maid we have ever had" from the mistress (*Palveliatar*, January 30, 1913).

Fundamentally, this is a story of a maid finding her own voice and becoming a political subject: running accidently into a socialist newspaper on the street initiated a transformation, changing a humble servant into a quick-tongued fellow citizen who could hold her own in a debate with her employer. The story also demonstrates the adaptability of the concept of socialism to the local conditions: when the class conflict was portrayed in the Finnish working-class fiction from the gender perspective, the hegemonic plot concerned a poor girl abused by the predatory upper-class men (Palmgren 1966, 387–9), but in the stories imagined by the housemaids, it is the ladies of the house who come in for the sharpest criticism and most unfavourable portrayals. Ladies are described with negative adjectives such as "mocking" and "mean" (*Palveliatar*, May 12, 1910) and sometimes sarcastically called as "Her Ladyship" (*Palveliatar*, May 12, 1910). They have an "angry voice" and "fierce look" when commanding their servants (*Palveliatar*, May 26, 1910). In real life, it was often wiser for housemaids to remain silent and submissive in the house, but the domestic tyrants could be ridiculed in the realm of a handwritten newspaper that served as a medium of sweet revenge.

It might seem paradoxical that these housemaids often addressed their words directly to their oppressors who were not physically present in the union meetings, but this can be understood once the function of handwritten newspapers is explained more in depth with a help of another story published in *Palveliatar*. A young girl is trying to organize housemaids but her more conservative colleagues blame socialists for

atheism, strikes, riots and wasting money. These maids are afraid of being dismissed from their place of service, dream about getting a better life through marriage and make fun of the young agitator. The story ends with a question posed to everyone present in the meeting where the story was read aloud: "What could I do to awaken their understanding?" (*Palveliatar*, March 7, 1917.) It is typical of this specific paper to process the concept of socialism through fiction in which the housemaids act as protagonists. Surely many in this audience consisting of unionized housemaids had been in a similar situation in their own lives as the girl from the world of fiction. Why did the housemaids prefer fiction to factual prose when dealing with clearly political topics such as questions of union organization? Only speculative answers can be found: perhaps fiction made dull topics more captivating for the live audience, perhaps the short story as a genre simply happened to develop into a local tradition among the housemaids who then took themes and characters from their daily surroundings, or perhaps they wanted to challenge the mainstream image of housemaids in fiction that portrayed them in passive roles, as the minor characters of human life. In contrast, their own stories showed people who had perhaps never dreamt of entering domestic service but who, nevertheless, had found a greater meaning of life through socialism.

Even more important than the choice of genre is the question of why to formulate thoughts about socialism in a handwritten newspaper in the first place. The short answer is that handwritten newspaper enabled maids to create their own public sphere with minimal resources: only pen, paper and some kind of a shared meeting place were needed (Berrenberg and Salmi-Niklander 2019, 134). The concept of socialism, in turn, helped to restructure the everyday life: in the handwritten newspaper, housemaids imagined a narrative in which they were not weak and mistresses rude because of their personal qualities but because of the societal position they happened to inhibit in the capitalist system. Thus, socialism as a concept of modern political thinking helped housemaids to see their local oppressors from the systems perspective.

Travelling Back and Forth in Time

If the making of modern political subjectivity by entering the self-made public sphere characterized the handwritten paper of the housemaids, industrial workers concentrated more on mental time travelling in the modern fashion. The General Strike of 1905 brought socialism to the

greatest factory in the Grand Duchy, namely, the Finlayson cotton mill in Tampere. The cotton mill workers established a social-democratic trade union in 1905 and started to publish their handwritten union newspaper *Tehtaalainen* from 1908 onwards. According to Koselleck's famous thesis on temporality, the emergence of modernity–especially the unexpected rupture of the French Revolution of 1789–diminished the value of experience in forecasting the future (Koselleck 2004, 263–7), but in this factory it was the year 1905 that had brought the modern temporality among the unskilled industrial workers: in their own words, the strike was "such an alarm clock for the proletariat in our miserable Finland that it should be time to wake up and sleep no more" (The annual report of the Finlayson cotton mill union in 1905, Tampere City Archives).

The factory workers who had woken up to socialism used their political imagination to travel back into their pre-socialist youth. A working woman wrote that in her youth socialism and the labour movement were practically unknown in Finland, apart from bourgeois newspapers that carried short pieces on "socialist riots" abroad. Back then, socialism "was thought to be only a treat for the great countries," but now Finnish workers enjoyed "the luxury of a special labour party" (*Tehtaalainen*, May 1, 1914). Using a very similar periodisation, a working man from the same factory recalled his elementary schooldays at the turn of the twentieth century, when he was first introduced to socialism. According to his teacher, socialism meant dividing everything evenly between the rich and the poor, which would have to be done very often for there would always be lazy and drunken people. The teacher predicted that socialism would "disappear after spending a while in some dreamers' heads." Now, around fifteen years later, the working man could update the situation of socialism in Finland: "There were a lot us working-class children in that class who have later come to realize that socialism is precisely the idea that wants to promote the interest of the poor and to create happiness and wellbeing for each class." (*Tehtaalainen*, March 27, 1914). These two examples show how the factory workers used the modern concept of socialism in order to re-interpret their personal past. They clearly recognized the historical layers embedded in the concept and wanted to shape this tradition with their own hands.

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Perhaps the shortest sensible definition of political modernity can be constructed from the experience of time: modernity means a belief that tomorrow will be different than today. This idea was famously crafted in *The Communist Manifesto*: "All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober

senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind." (Marx and Engels 2010, 16). In the Finlayson factory, one worker conceptualized the modern era with its increasing uncertainty as the "age of ideological currents" and warned the audience not to "blindly follow a current" but to "open their eyes" instead. A socialist current gained a positive definition: it wanted to improve the condition of the proletariat by taking the means of production to the collective ownership of all social classes (*Tehtaalainen*, no. 0, 1910). This formulation was close to the mainstream ideology of the Finnish labour movement, i.e. Kautskyite Marxism that highlighted the economic interpretation of socialism. It seems that ideological challengers of materialist understanding of socialism, e.g. theosophical socialism, did not threaten proletarian orthodoxy in these industrial conditions. The term "theosophy" received only one dismissive mention in the whole history of the union paper: "The theosophical direction dreams strange assumptions and arbitrary contemplations of god and his revelation." (*Tehtaalainen*, no. 0, 1910).

The dominance of simplified Marxism at the Finlayson factory is not surprising since the main figures of the union were well connected to the social democratic mother party (Kanerva 1986, 611–2). One of the leading figures of the union, a female cotton mill worker, Ida Vihuri, wanted to define the concept of socialism in relation to the state church: "Socialism tries to release the working people from the spiritual and economic oppression in which the church keeps it." (*Tehtaalainen*, August 15, 1908). The Christian labour movement was a local rival, and their party won a surprisingly large share of the votes in Tampere in the first parliamentary elections of 1907. Previous research has estimated that many religious factory women in particular contributed to their success (Haapala 1986, 307). Nevertheless, according to the Finlayson union minutes, the Christian labour movement was not seen as such a great threat as "the unorganized," who fiercely opposed all united action (The minutes of the Finlayson cotton factory union's board meeting 12.12.1913, The People's Archives). According to Vihuri, the main challenge of socialism was to make the working people understand their miserable condition and to raise hope for a better tomorrow (*Tehtaalainen*, no. 1, 1911). Here two different political temporalities collided: many older Christian workers claimed that they were not living in misery and that socialists should not always lambast religion and church, whereas in the socialist understanding, the Christians were still sleeping the capitalist dream and believed falsely in the Divine Providence that would compensate their obedience in the life after death (The minutes of the carding section women

workers' meeting at the Finlayson cotton mill 11 December 1913, The People's Archives).

One source of the socialist misery in the present is easy to pinpoint: *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, translated into Finnish for the first time by N. R. af Ursin in 1905 (Kujala 1995, 55–6). Another key character at the Finlayson factory, Alfred Wuolle, introduced the ideas of "the main theoretical founders of contemporary socialism, Karl Max [*sic*] and Friedrik [*sic*] Engels" by transcribing long fragments from *The Manifesto*. The names of both German experts of socialism were misspelled, but the introduction to class struggle was faithful to the original formulation:

> Thus, the nature of classes gives birth to the class solidarity and instincts of class hatred, and socialists claim that the attempts of each class to maintain or improve their condition and the conflicts arising from these attempts make up the politics and history of each nation. (*Tehtaalainen*, February, 1914)

The writer's choice of words, "socialists claim," indicate that Finnish workers were capable of adding reservations and adjusting their intellectual commitment to the new concepts of Marxist socialism. In other words, the fact that the proletarian workers were influenced by the print does not mean that their political imagination was determined by the socialist authorities abroad. All in all, the names of the socialist giants appear very infrequently at the grassroots of political thinking: Marx is mentioned twice, Engels once, whereas Kautsky, the leading thinker of the Second International and Finnish labour movement (Geary 2003, 219–20; Soikkanen 1975, 50–1), received precisely zero references in the three handwritten newspapers analyzed. It seems that socialist name-dropping did not have much currency in this environment: more important than the origin of an idea was whether or not the idea could be applied to lived life of the industrial proletariat.

The ability to crack political jokes can be seen as additional evidence of independent political agency at the grassroots of socialism. In this handwritten newspaper, one million Finnish marks was promised to a person who would develop a serum that would cure "the deliriums of socialism" and make patients "silent" and "as stupid as possible." The serum would "release the educated class of Finland from the malicious nightmare which is known by the name of socialism." (*Tehtaalainen*, March 19, 1908). This joke can be deciphered in the context of long antisocialist tradition: bourgeois newspapers had presented socialism as a disease or poison since the 1870s (see e.g. *Uusi Suometar*, August 9, 1871; *Uusi Suometar*, August 14, 1871). When a local priest compared

socialism to brothels in that both had a bad effect on young people, the cotton mill workers did not consider this as a threat to their socialist ideology, but as a humorous statement that should be written down and laughed at in the union meeting (*Tehtaalainen*, March 1, 1909). Both humorous anecdotes were targeted against the old world of hysterical bourgeois newspapers and deadly serious priests who could not read the signs of the times correctly. For these proletarian prophets of modernity, the old did not have any intrinsic value: history was valuable only as far as it showed way towards the socialist future.

Expanding Spatial Horizons

Perhaps the richest understanding of socialism can be found among the rural proletariat in Niinivedenpää, a small village in North Savo. Counting the combined frequency of the terms "socialism" and "socialist," the members contributing to *Kuritus*, the organ of the orators' society in the local workers' association, wrote more about socialism than the other two handwritten newspapers put together.[1] The concept of socialism was here "rich" especially in terms of its spatial coverage: in contrast to previous research that portrays Finnish rural socialism as simple-minded land distribution in the local context (see e.g. Soikkanen 1961, 391), the political imagination of the rural proletariat contributing to this paper far exceeded the limits of the local community. Borrowing Benedict Anderson's theoretical formulation (Anderson 2006, 6), it could be phrased that the Finnish workers in this rather peripheric village used the modern concept of socialism to imagine the universal political community of the proletariat in their handwritten newspaper.

One rural worker articulated the modern spatiality of socialism with an apt definition:

> Socialism is that every human is guaranteed a fully sufficient material livelihood and that a worker gets the fruits of his / her labour. That nobody has to suffer from hunger and need, that all human beings could feel happy. (*Kuritus*, December 26, 1910)

The quote sheds light on the basic structure of socialism in the vernacular language of politics. First, socialism is firmly attached to the concept of work. The same writer localized the Marxist idea of class

1 "Socialism" (*sosialismi*) was mentioned 12 times in *Kuritus*, 16 times in *Tehtaalainen* and two times in *Palveliatar*, whereas "socialist" (*sosialisti*) was used 43 times in *Kuritus*, 17 times in *Tehtaalainen* and five times in *Palveliatar*.

struggle to the agrarian surroundings with a simile that the rural proletariat could easily comprehend: "For the interests of the rich and the poor are as opposite as the interests of wolf and sheep on the pasture." As another writer elaborated, if everyone did useful work and lived from their own labour, the "wonderful goal that socialism is after" would soon be achieved. But, in "this societal order," there were useless extra mouths to feed, namely, those who owned "the greatest riches in society and means of production." (*Kuritus*, September 12, 1909). The choice of words, especially "means of production," can be read as another sign of Marx's influence at the grassroots of Finnish socialism, more specifically, at least a preliminary understanding of his value theory.

While the first pattern meant reinterpreting the local working conditions from the extra-local perspective of modern socialism, the second pattern, visible in the quote and in other proletarian expressions, too, is presenting socialism as universal happiness. This conceptual structure was usually built with the help of terms referring to human beings, humanity and humankind. A woman under a pseudonym exploited the structure in her writing entitled "How Did I Become a Socialist?" The answer was unambiguous: "Because I don't have any of the qualifications needed in contemporary society to be a true citizen, to be a human being in people's eyes." Although these statements may appear superficially as innocent appeals for universal humanity, there could be an element of particularism inside the argument. For example, this writer contrasted her missing humanity with "the ones with capital" who already had "won privileges." (*Kuritus*, November 28, 1909).

In addition to marrying socialism with the concepts of work and universal human happiness, the rural version of socialism includes patterns that are familiar from other handwritten newspapers: socialism as a certain victory in the future (*Kuritus*, December 19, 1909), youth being the vanguard of socialism (*Kuritus*, October 16, 1910), socialism as the elevator of working women (*Kuritus*, March 13, 1910), and socialism conceptualized through political jokes and short stories (*Kuritus*, April 3, 1910). More exceptionally, the concept of socialism pervades a new genre, i.e. poetry, a unique phenomenon that cannot be found elsewhere in the handwritten newspapers. This poem is an adaptation of an unidentified original and tells about "the spirit of socialism" whose prime force cannot be understood by "the bourgeois intellect" (*Kuritus*, January 1, 1910). The general lack of the concept of socialism in proletarian poems cannot be explained by the lack of proletarian poetry itself: as Kirsti Salmi-Niklander has shown, poetry was a common genre in the handwritten newspapers (2004, 544–5). It rather seems to be

a terminological issue: nor does the Latin-based ism term appear in any famous labour songs, for there were other more poetic alternatives such as idea (*aate*) to refer to the concept of socialism.

One distinguishing feature of socialism among the rural proletariat is its extraordinary aggressiveness. Ehrnrooth has interpreted this quality as primitive, archaic hatred, rising from the ecstatic proletarian consciousness (1992, 29, 389–91, 401–3). The critical juncture when the aggressive messages were composed should be identified here: most of them are from the years 1909–1910, i.e. the period of heated national electioneering since the Tsar Nicholas II dissolved the Finnish parliament four times between the years 1908–1910. Thus, it is not entirely surprising that the concept of socialism emerges repeatedly as a fierce rallying call for the socialist party: "fulfill your duty in the socialist camp" (*Kuritus*, January 1, 1910), "obstructionism cannot kill the idea of socialism, only slow down its progress" (*Kuritus*, December 19, 1909) and "show them that socialism has not reached its peak" (*Kuritus*, November 13, 1910). This variant of socialism often positions itself against party-political opponents in the Grand Duchy, especially the Finnish Party, whose conservative ideology is constantly mocked in the handwritten newspaper. The Finnish Party for example spread lies about socialists "under the banner of nationalism, the language question and hypocrisy" (*Kuritus*, August 8, 1909). While the aggressive statements inside the political language of the rural proletariat are certainly characterized by their confrontational undertone, they are in my interpretation better understood as "electioneering socialism" than, for example, as primitive hatred flourishing among the masses.

Finally, considering the lower level of education in the peripheral rural areas compared to the cities, this socialism of the rural workers, rural servants and rural crofters seems to be surprisingly well informed in its relation to the Finnish mother party and to international socialism. For example, this paper contains a rare comment on the party tactics from the year 1910, when the socialist party and labour newspapers debated whether the Finnish parliament should send its opinion on the new Russification measures to Nicholas II in the form of a short notice or a longer petition. The debate was connected to the broader question of cooperation with the domestic bourgeoisie: should the socialists work together with the domestic bourgeoisie in the defense of Finnish autonomy or rather preserve the purity of Kautskyite class struggle? Here socialists divided approximately into two main camps, the nationalist reformists supporting cooperation and orthodox Marxists promoting parliamentary isolation (Soikkanen 1975, 136–46). However, this pro-

letarian writer in his local paper claimed that "unanimity" should be valued over "squabbles," both inside the mother party and his local association (*Kuritus*, November 27, 1910). The tendency to avoid disputes on the correct nature of socialism is clear in other handwritten newspapers too, and it is perhaps best explained by the limited resources available for political thinking: it was more important to agree on a good enough definition of socialism than to spend finite time and energy on ideological hair-splitting about correct socialist tactics.

The political imagination of the writing rural proletariat even exceeded the framework of national and imperial politics, for there is an abundance of references to great thinkers outside the Grand Duchy and the Russian Empire. For example, the concept of socialism was enhanced with ideas taken from Enrico Ferri, Eugene W. Debs and Aristotle (*Kuritus*, May 21, 1911; *Kuritus*, October 10, 1909; *Kuritus*, August 8, 1909). It seems that these workers living in a tiny and remote village truly believed they were fighting on a global battlefield: "But when everybody joins the international socialist party, they will form a great and strong army for class struggle." (*Kuritus*, October 16, 1910). All in all, socialism, as it appears in the pages of this handwritten newspaper, stands in stark contrast to those early twentieth-century scholarly analyses and artistic novels that portrayed agrarian socialism as a naive dream of getting rich quick (Forsman 1912, esp. 41–2; Kianto 1909). Rather, the concept of socialism was used here not only to reveal how the fruits of labour were distributed unfairly in the local context, but also as a weapon in national elections and as a direct linkage to the international labour movement.

Conclusion

Three handwritten newspapers from three different Finnish locations do not equal to a grand pile of first-hand evidence, but they nevertheless can be used to correct some common biases in the historiography of socialism. The analysis of the vernacular expressions of socialism has shown that the people who do not write for living are not mere passive recipients of political messages from the leading ideological thinkers, but possess more intellectual agency than what might seem plausible for scholars using armchair introspection as their main method to venture into the proletarian thoughts of the past (for the most famous examples, see Le Bon 1896; 1899). The conceptual variations of socialism at the grassroots of the Finnish labour movement proves that it is

not fruitful to chain workers under a single reductionist category (e.g. "the populace" in the singular) for such one-dimensional monoliths do not shed much light on the complexity of human history. While it is true that there were no major internal controversies over the correct use of the concept in the rank-and-file utterances, this does not mean that they lacked the political intelligence needed for conceptual contestations of socialism: rather, they chose to spend their resources differently, not on debating on the theoretical differences between scientific socialism and theosophical socialism, or on studying the international disputes between Kautsky's Marxism and Bernstein's revisionism, but on constructing a definition suitable for their own local environment.

In his pioneering work of Finnish labour history, Hannu Soikkanen commented on the vertical diffusion of socialist ideas and argued that when socialist concepts spread from the top of the movement to the grassroots, they transformed into "a few simple slogans" or adapted to local needs (Soikkanen 1961, 391). Based on the examples in the analysis, the latter part of this interpretation seems to be true, but the adaptation of socialism to the local conditions was more complex than the idea of simplification implies. The socialism of the housemaids in Helsinki had an existential function: it gave them a political voice to articulate a greater meaning in life that stood in sharp contrast to the silent servility demanded by their mistresses. Factory workers in Tampere could adopt the orthodox formulation of socialism almost directly from *The Communist Manifesto*, and used the vantage point of socialist temporality to re-evaluate their past and present. The concept gained most explanatory breadth among the rural workers in north-eastern Finland where it was used as a mental bridge that led the local members of the universal movement from their tiny village to the national, imperial and world-wide battleground of socialism. The high level of popular education can be seen in all of these grassroots formulations of socialism written by various groups of unskilled workers, a factor that was crucial both for the breakthrough of the concept and for the phenomenal rise of the Finnish socialist movement more widely. What I see in these grassroots formulations of socialism is political modernity in the vernacular: if modernity means becoming a political subject by entering the public sphere, imagining a gap between the old world left behind and the new coming world, and extending the spatial horizons beyond the immediate community, then one could say that the concept of socialism was one of the main tools in the making of proletarian modernity.

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Tytuł: Wytwarzanie nowoczesności w języku potocznym. O oddolnych odłamach fińskiego socjalizmu w początkach XX wieku
Abstrakt: Artykuł analizuje znaczenie pojęcia socjalizmu wśród szeregowych przedstawicieli fińskiego ruchu robotniczego w początkach XX wieku. Źródła, na których opiera się tekst, to trzy odręcznie pisane czasopisma, wytwarzane przez robotników przemysłowych, pokojówki i wiejski proletariat. Podczas gdy robotnicy przemysłowi przejmowali ortodoksyjne sformułowania z *Manifestu Partii Komunistycznej*, socjalizm pokojówek miał sens bardziej egzystencjalny, dostarczając im politycznych narzędzi do artykulacji tego, co uznawały w życiu za ważne. Taki akt ustawiał pokojówki w kontrze wobec służalczości, której na co dzień od nich wymagano. Z kolei wśród robotników rolnych w północno-wschodniej Finlandii pojęcie socjalizmu uzyskało szeroki zakres znaczeń, gdyż było używane w dyskusjach o nierówności na poziomie lokalnym, jak również przy okazji wyborów na poziomie krajowym; wreszcie: jako koncepcyjny łącznik z międzynarodowym ruchem robotniczym. Zebrane przykłady dowodzą, że oddolnie wytwarzane znaczenia socjalizmu były bardziej

wielowymiarowe, niż sugerowali to ich ówcześni krytycy i późniejsi badacze tej problematyki. Tym samym, pojęcie socjalizmu było jednym z głównych narzędzi, służących do wytwarzania proletariackiej nowoczesności w Finlandii. Używano go do konstytuowania podmiotowości politycznej w sferze publicznej, do myślenia różnicy między przeszłym i przyszłym porządkiem społecznym, jak i do poszerzania politycznego horyzontu odniesień poza lokalną społeczność.
Słowa kluczowe: nowoczesność, odręcznie pisane czasopisma, robotnicy, socjalizm, Wielkie Księstwo Finlandii

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Imagining the Urban Poland: Revolution and Reconceptualization of Urban Society in the Kingdom of Poland, 1905–1914

The aim of this article is to analyze how the concept of *mieszczaństwo* was redefined in Polish political discourse between 1905 and 1914 in conjunction with concepts of intelligentsia and bourgeoisie. My hypothesis is that before the Great War, in a time of powerful social and political revolutions that took place on the streets of Warsaw, Łódź and other cities, new ways of conceptualizing the urban society emerged. I shall discuss the circumstances that led to the forming of the concept of the Polish *mieszczaństwo* during the debate about the urban self-government in the Kingdom of Poland after the 1905 Revolution.

As the city itself became the subject of political competition, and the right to govern the city became a demand of the Polish public opinion. For National Democratic Party it was an excellent occasion to expand anti-Semitic rhetoric and promote the idea of the Polonization of cities as a long-term goal. However, I argue that this rhetoric would not find public response if the intelligentsia itself would not redefined its attitude to other groups of urban dwellers. The *mieszczaństwo*, which had no political meaning previously, became the main factor of the imagined modernization of Poland. Despite the price of the ethnic conflict it became obvious that Poland had to be urbanized to be modernized.

Keywords: antisemitism, intelligentsia, Łódź, *mieszczaństwo* (burghers), modernization, urban society, Warsaw

At the beginning of the twentieth century Tsarist Russia experienced many events that could be called "revolutionary." Although the proletarian revolution of 1905 was the most important and the best recognized of them, it had been preceded by profound changes in social structure and mass communication. Historiography is generally convinced that late imperial Russian was the place where some kind of "urban revolution" took place (Brower 1986). The growing importance of cities itself and *meshchanstvo*, "the lowest order of the urban population," or–in different words–"indigenous urban stratum" (Koshman 2016, 97), prepared a ground for modernization and political change.

The Kingdom of Poland, the western frontier of the Empire, played an important role in this process. What should be stressed here is, Russian Poland was, together with the Pale of Settlement–the huge area of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (modern Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine), where Jews were allowed to settle after the 1880s. Liliana Riga argued that "provinces of the Jewish Pale constituted a sensitive geopolitical frontier, triggering some of the Russian state's most repressive and Russificatory policies" (2008, 669). What was characteristic for this multiethnic region, the agrarian social structure went hand in hand with weakness of towns (Kochanowicz 2006, 186).

Unlike central Russia, in the Kingdom of Poland and other Western Provinces of the Russian Empire, the meshchanstvo (in Russian) or mieszczaństwo (in Polish) – the strata of urban dwellers – consisted there mostly of Jews who lived in towns.

Unlike central Russia, in the Kingdom of Poland and other Western Provinces of the Russian Empire, the *meshchanstvo* (in Russian) or *mieszczaństwo* (in Polish)–the strata of urban dwellers–consisted there mostly of Jews who lived in towns. Traditional Jewish *Shtetl* was in fact a specific form of urban life, very far from what is used to be regarded as the predominant model of urban life (Katz 2007).

However, in the same time, Russian Poland became the most urbanized and industrialized part of the Empire, with Warsaw and Łódź as the third and fifth largest cities in 1900. Cities became an important factor of the social change and modern politics (Blobaum 1995, 18–28) but, like the whole country, they were ruled in an archaic, oppressive and undemocratic way, with the embarrassing cultural and infrastructural underdevelopment, comparing both to Europe and Russia (Śmiechowski 2014b, 75–80).

Following Ernest Gellner, I believe that concepts "are correlates of *all* the institutions of a society; and to understand the working of the concepts of a society is to understand its institutions" (Gellner 1970, 115). All dimensions of political language which are connected with social structures are dependent on processes and changes that happen in historical time, including urbanization and democratization of the social communication. The nineteenth century was a huge "transformation of the world," when whole regions evolved from feudal to capitalist,

from rural to urban, and from traditional communities to modern nations. From this point of view, case of partitioned Poland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century also should be considered in reference to broader processes of nation-building and modernization of society (Tréncsenyi et al. 2016).

As Wiktor Marzec and Risto Turunen noted, "the Revolution of 1905 played a paramount role in the mass circulation of political concepts" in East Central Europe (Marzec and Turunen 2018, 41). After the political system in Russia became liberalized, the press achieved higher social recognition. The number of legal Polish newspapers and periodicals increased from 111 before 1904 to 316 in 1907 (Kmiecik 1980, 22–4). For the first time in Poland dailies were sold on the streets. Mass demonstrations, rallies, thousands of illegal brochures changed cities in Russian Poland into a "social laboratory," where different political concepts competed for the support of the masses (Blobaum 1995; Samuś 2013). When political language moved from salons and newspapers onto the streets, the most significant internal barriers that prevented the transformation of Polish political language into a modern tool of social communication disappeared. Consequently, it can be stated that the foundations for the modern Polish public sphere were established in the Kingdom of Poland as an aftermath of the 1905 Revolution (Marzec and Śmiechowski 2016).

What interests me here is the reconceptualization of relations between strata of urban society that determine shape of modernity in Polish political language after the 1905 Revolution. What is necessary to stress here is that the Polish word "*mieszczaństwo*" is similar to English "burghers"–a city dwellers, and means just all people living in the city. Thus, it has a different meaning than *burżuazja*, which in Polish often referred only to the economic elites of urban society, the "upper bourgeoisie." Adam Kożuchowski, who tried to define the difference between *burżuazja* and *mieszczaństwo* in Polish, argued:

> In short, the difference between *burżuazja* and *mieszczaństwo* is that the former were having fun, blithely and brazenly–they overtly worshipped profit and success, were never embarrassed about it and did not even care about their hypocrisy. (…) *Mieszczaństwo* has stayed a more convenient construction: timid by definition, embarrassable, disrespectable and snubbable–hardly a rival for the status of the social elite. (Kożuchowski 2020, 92)

This situation muds the waters when comparing Russian Poland with the West, certainly. Nonetheless, this ambiguity is quite typical for Russia

and other Eastern European societies, where "burghers, mainly small merchants and craftsmen, were a dispersed provincial class with mediocre aspirations" (Jedlicki 2009, 21). As Robert Blobaum noted, the political discourse of the time, freed from pre-revolutionary restrictions, was a place where Polish path to modernity was trodden (Blobaum 1995, 188–233).

The questions about the role of the intelligentsia and *mieszczaństwo* in the future urban society were answered in a different way depending on who and where was formulating the answers. Following this line of thought, I am interested how concept of the *mieszczaństwo* was used in the public discourse created by the Polish intelligentsia between the 1905 Revolution and the Great War.

Transformation of the Intelligentsia: From Social Sphere to Political Concept

What is clear, the intelligentsia itself is considered to be one of the overarching concepts in modern Eastern European history (Sdvizkov 2006). This term appeared in Polish in the mid-1840s and replaced an older term, "intellectual class" (in Polish: "*klasa umysłowa*") (Walicki 2005, 3; Jedlicki 2009, 17). In the 1860s, the term spread from Central Europe and became common in Russia (Pipes 1960, 488). The concept of the intelligentsia evolved and crystallized over time and finally became commonly understood as "the class consisting of educated people."

By 1900 this definition, linking the level of education with being a member of this social group became a default one. For instance, *Ludzkość* (Humanity), the leading liberal journal from Warsaw, described the intelligentsia in the following way: "scientists, doctors, attorneys, teachers, authors, artists"–this is category of the favored intelligentsia where ideas are blossoming and culture is being looked after. Of course, the awareness of civilization and intellectual light is also on the rise among other professions.

However, the more intellectual the work, the more direct the way in which cultural progress takes place. The intelligentsia, understood in this way, is to some extent a separate social class" (Moszczeńska 1906). The understanding of the intelligentsia and its social mission was highly idealistic, obviously, and therefore difficult to fulfill. On the other hand, Jerzy Jedlicki underlined that "the social form of the intelligentsia's existence is its milieu. (…) The intelligentsia, wherever they were found, even in small numbers, created a milieu: local, professional or academic, in a word, a social milieu of their own choice" (Jedlicki 2009, 19).

The question is, however, how separate this specific strata was from the other spheres of urban society? Obviously, the intelligentsia generally was a typically urban strata, strongly connected with the metropolitan social environment and the associated lifestyle which a capital city could offer. Being a part of the intelligentsia meant being an active member of the new urban society, whose individual moral stance and unswerving service set the targets to which the whole nation should aspire.

Obviously, the intelligentsia generally was a typically urban strata, strongly connected with the metropolitan social environment and the associated lifestyle which a capital city could offer.

However, even if the intelligentsia itself was an urban group of the population, interested in urban topics and binding their future with cities, the mentality of this group was still closer to the old nobility, the "*szlachta*," then to Western bourgeoisie (Zarycki and Smoczyński 2017). The reason was quite obvious–Polish intelligentsia was formed mainly by the outclassed nobility, while in the West creation of the bourgeoisie was mainly a result of the rising aspirations of burghers (Janowski 2014).

In pre-modern Poland, urbanism generally had a low status in the value system of the nation's intellectual elites (Kopczyńska-Jaworska 1993). For instance, the so-called "Warsaw positivists," the leading intellectual movement in the Kingdom of Poland in the second half of the nineteenth century, were strong advocates of the idea of progress and westernization of Poland. Nevertheless, they distanced themselves from the *mieszczaństwo*, dominated by Germans and Jews, and believed that the processes of assimilation and economic development would Polonize these groups in the future (Jedlicki 1999). They believed that next to Jewish or German Kronenbergs, Lilpops or Grohmans, soon Polish Wokulscy, and Borowieccy would appear. However, they had neither strength nor means to make this dream come true. As a result, if the affluent German or Jewish bourgeois families represented by the first set of names in the Kingdom of Poland were tangible, their Polish counterparts remained only a literally fiction created by famous novelists Bolesław Prus and Władyslaw Reymont, respectively.

The younger Warsaw's intellectuals were also very sceptical about burghers as possible supporters of the national movement (Śmiechowski 2018). In 1904 *Przegląd Wszechpolski*, the most important journal of the National Democratic Party, stressed:

> Our *mieszczaństwo* have never proved that they have political passion and tendencies. [They never proved] that by using its ambition and civic virtues they reach beyond the narrowly understood professional interests, speculations and markets. From the political point of view, they have neither attitudes nor intentions, plans or purposes. The question inevitably arises: why? Why do the wealthiest strata in our country not show predispositions based on their social status?

> Why do our bourgeoisie not follow their Western European and American counterparts, who achieved political hegemony with steady hands? The most probable answer is that our wealthy and even wealthier urbanites are, including even those of Warsaw, not national in their blood and spirit. (Wolomirski 1904)

However, the real impact of the ideas and concepts created by the intelligentsia were limited by the position of this group in the urban social hierarchy. Serving as the vanguard of society, or fulfilling the public mission that a real member of the intelligentsia was expected to do was much easier in Warsaw than in any other place in the Kingdom of Poland. Warsaw, which had 700,000 inhabitants in 1900, was a real metropolis, and only this huge cultural center, unlike the provincial cities and small towns, offered suitable conditions (Corrsin 1989).

Newspapers from Warsaw often criticized professionals who lived in the province and their "provincial lethargy" became a permanent topic of complaints. There was only one city in Russian Poland where the Warsaw's point of view was challenged. This was the industrial city of Łódź, the second biggest city in the Kingdom of Poland, with over 300,000 inhabitants in 1897, located just 100 kilometers west from Warsaw. Flourished during the nineteenth century, Łódź was the vanguard of modernity in the Polish (if not Eastern European) context (Zysiak et al. 2018, 18–24).

The public opinion of Łódź offered alternative perspective on the modern urbanity, which often went against the grain. Łódź was a place where the process of strengthening the Polish influences took place in real life, but in different form that the Polish intelligentsia had imagined (Śmiechowski 2020a). This industrial hub was a conglomerate of three nations –Germans, Jews and Poles, with Germans building the most affluent and long most influential strata of the urban society. Poles in turn, were the poorest group, and remained simple workers, often with rural origins.

However, in the 1880s Poles made up the largest section of the population while the Germans were the third-largest one. The cultural and economic hegemony of the Germans was considered to be a serious threat in Warsaw. In the 1880s and 1890s Polish public opinion thought of Łódź as an "alien city," where workers were exposed to foreign influences and cosmopolitanism (both exaggerated in Polish public discourse at the time). Indeed, the German community in Łódź was well organized and little interested in close relationships with Polish elites.

It may therefore be concluded (Śmiechowski 2012, 94–104; Marzec and Zysiak 2016), that when mapping the national structure on the social stratification, the German population constituted a *Bildungsbür-*

gertum, typical for German-speaking countries, and characterized by a hierarchic model of social bonds and common respect for the richest members of community. Contrary to popular idealistic opinions, so-called "*Lodzrmenschen*" had very limited relations with the Polish elites until the beginning of the twentieth century (Żarnowska 2004).

Before the 1905 Revolution local Polish journalists from Łódź tried to develop the concept of the "provincial intelligentsia," which was generally a variant of social identity available for educated people living outside Warsaw (Śmiechowski 2014a, 131–44). Local activists believed that they had many specific missions and tasks to do while compared to the commercial elites of society: organizing, developing and enlivening local cultural life with a very little hope of replacing the local bourgeois elites.

However, even for them political outbreak was necessary to initiate action (Iwańska 2015). The project of citizenship-building among the Polish elites of Łódź was intended to make them capable of competing with groups perceived as foreign. For instance, German and Jewish bourgeois elites were compared to migrating birds which fly from one country to another: "I hope," the author stated, "that thousands of these bird-citizens approach citizenship duties honestly and seriously" ("Mały Felieton. Powrót Ptactwa." 1906).

After local industrial *bourgeoisie* started the great lockout in 1907 and thousands of workers were left starving in the middle of winter, the intelligentsia of Łódź lost any hopes for the cooperation with the factory owners. At the same time, intelligentsia was more and more alienated from the workers, engaged in sectarian quarrels and street violence. In the reality of Łódź, local intelligentsia still had to conceptualize itself. This inconvenient situation was, firstly, the result of its weakness towards to the German and Jewish *bourgeoise* communities, and secondly, its cultural distance to workers, who were actually excluded from any form of communication with the educated elites.

For the editorial board of *Nowy Kurier Łódzki*, a progressive newspaper from Łódź, post-revolutionary shock became an opportunity to rethink the relations between the intelligentsia and other social strata. Inasmuch as the hopes for a collaboration with the bourgeoisie had failed, it became obvious that the intelligentsia could not be a real social power without the support of workers.

The question was raised in an article from 1912:

> How many times is it seen that the ordinary craftsmen or worker can be a person with a vital and open mind, critical and working on further self-education. A smart person with real intelligence and knowledge of his own can be much

> clever than the quasi-intelligent in a fashionable frock coat. It is necessary to redefine the intelligentsia. External features under any circumstances cannot be an index of intelligentsia. ("Inteligencja umysłowa." 1911)

One year later the newspaper categorically stated that:

> it is not the formal position but the moral values of the individual that can be the measure of being a member of the intelligentsia. (…) What is a doctor, attorney, professor or writer if he does not understand the life of his society and does not understand what society currently thinks? Is this the intelligentsia of the nation? No, people like this are mental simpletons. ("Kto jest inteligentem?" 1912)

There is no doubt that the new concept of intelligence was associated more with the sphere of morality than with formal framework of belonging like education or profession. On the other hand, searching for the cooperation with open-minded workers or craftsmen testified to the practical problems with implementing the ideal of a socially involved intelligentsia in the industrial society. What should be stressed here, Łódź's approach to this topic remained specific until the city become big academic center after 1945 (Śmiechowski 2020a, 156–9).

Reconceptualizing of Urbanism

Similar dilemmas were not so widespread in Warsaw, where shortly after the Revolution Polish intelligentsia has become ready to dream about its political hegemony over others groups of the urban society. I assume, therefore, that the idea of a Polish *mieszczaństwo*, developed after the 1905 Revolution, was indeed the last step in the transformation of the intelligentsia from a theoretical concept that had to be still adapted in real life, to the leading actor of the modern urban society, aspiring to act as the dominant power.

To answer how it happened, some analyze of the psychological basis of changes in the perception of cities after 1905 is needed. Firstly, we must remember that Polish intellectual elites, especially liberal elites, never gave up the dream of Polonization of the cities. The intelligentsia, being itself a creation of factors like the outclassing of *szlachta*, abolishment of serfdom, rapid urbanization and social changes linked with it, observed with fascination intermingled with fear how in the rural landscape of the Kingdom industrial giants like Łódź or Żyrardów grew.

Secondly, the rise of the intelligentsia occurred in the same time when Warsaw turned from the capital of a fallen empire into an European city on imperial periphery (Porter 2000, 76–8). Educated elites of the Polish urban society could not accept the fact that they did not have the decisive role in the Polish capital because of their own weakness and predicaments of the Russian rule. While the government was seen as a foreign, imposed enemy, Jews were perceived as a malevolent force trying to weaken Polishness from within (Weeks 2006, 152–6).

However, until the urban question in the Kingdom of Poland became a political issue, the predominance of Jews among the population of the towns was generally accepted. In 1905 Bolesław Prus, alarmed by the fledgling Zionism, wrote: "for us Poles, Jews are not only our closest neighbours, but they have become a very important social organ, the *mieszczaństwo*" (Prus 1905, 783). As mentioned above, the 1905 Revolution changed the Polish public sphere deeply. The intensity of proletarian riots, not free of aggression and brutality stirred up critique. As well popular agitation on huge mass meetings were considered too chaotic, uncultured if not dangerous by many elite actors. As Grzegorz Krzywiec argued:

> The social strata on which the pre-revolutionary social order was based, as well as a large number of the intellectual elites considered the revolution to be a historical scandal and act of violence against traditional values. (…) The fear or, more precisely, awe of uncontrolled masses became the motif which, after all, linked the dominant part of the public opinion together. (Krzywiec 2017, 24–5)

These changes had an understandable psychological basis.

> During the first months, Krzywiec argues, the revolution showed and actualized two, perhaps most ominous, fears of the social establishment, middle classes, bourgeoisie and burghers about modernity: uncontrollable masses on the streets as well as sudden and unexpected deaths, rapes, terror and violence involving revolutionists.

Fear was even stronger than the real scale of this events. Under this circumstances, the nationalist political camp, National Democracy successfully remodeled its political strategy (Marzec 2016). This transformation was easily seen in the endecja's political magazine, *Przegląd Narodowy*. Leaders of National Democracy admitted that:

> there was a moment when we were all convinced that all our working people were strangers to national matters and were committed solely to class slogans.

> Fortunately, this conviction had to be altered due to the rapidly developing national workers' movement and the cultural progress among an important section of workers. It should be stressed that cultural and educational activities among this sphere reached impressive results very quickly. This fact has great importance for predictions about our cultural and national future. ("Przyczynki do bilansu sił narodowych w Królestwie." 1908, 76)

In the same article the bourgeoisie was described in the blackest colors. The national democrats had no doubts that "one of the historical failures of Poland was the lack of the native bourgeoisie," who could be a patron of the national democratic movement. This kind of splendid isolation of the bourgeoisie was also the crucial problem for the Polish urban intelligentsia, consisted of "medical doctors, lawyers and factory clerks" who were doing "diligent and fruitful work on the national culture in the most difficult conditions" ("Przyczynki do bilansu sił narodowych w Królestwie." 1908, 64–5). In a result, cities, previously considered lost, suddenly became sites of political expansion.

In 1909, five years after the initial announcement, legislative procedures with the project of urban reform in the Kingdom of Poland were finally initiated by the government. All voters were to be divided on ethnic groups which could elect limited number of councillors. Tsarist government wanted to limit the number of Jewish councillors to 10% in the biggest cities and 25% in the smaller ones, where Jews were generally a majority of inhabitants.

This anti-Semitic law initially surprised the public opinion in the Kingdom of Poland. In the so-called "Polish" draft of the future urban reform, prepared in 1906 by well-known lawyer Adolf Suligowski, voting system was based on economic, not ethnic division of urban population (Śmiechowski 2014b). Idea of curial voting was introduced mainly to ensure the influence of the Russian, rather than to play Poles and Jews against each other. However, new situation quickly turned into the ethnic conflict, what was a challenge for different Polish political groups.

The question was–should the Poles support limitations for Jews or stay with the principles of democracy? (Weeks 1994; 2008, 152–71). What interest me here is how the *mieszczaństwo* has been revaluated in these discussions. To follow this process, I will analyse here some selected, but the most representative examples.

First of all, as a consequence of the government project, the size of Jewish population in Russian Poland became an object of interests in the daily press. In 1908 some *Głos Warszawski* published some interesting opinion of "well-known progressive writer," who argued:

> We are the minority in many cities where Polish blood was shed in history and we will cease to be hosts there if the voting laws will be equal for all. Let us take, for example, Lublin, the old Polish city, occupying the third place in the Kingdom of Poland, which has so many threads connected with the history of the Polish nation–Jews have the overwhelming majority there. With equal rights, the Jews themselves would be elected as councillors and a Jew would be the mayor of the city. (…) Most importantly, Jewish victory would also be possible even in Częstochowa. Częstochowa is our Jerusalem, where the greatest holiness of the Polish nation is located. (…) How could we agree that Jews will be hosts of that city because of the principles of equality? ("Samorząd a Żydzi." 1908)

In my opinion, this quote perfectly reflects what was happened in minds of the Kingdom's Polish intelligentsia at that time. The fact that Poles were not the majority in cities was of course well known to the participants of the debates and could not come as a surprise to anyone who seriously wanted to talk about urban issues of the Kingdom of Poland. Nevertheless, in statements such as the one quoted above, there is a certain hint of disbelief that a scenario in which Poles would lose control over Polish cities as a result of the elections would indeed be possible.

The fact that Poles were not the majority in cities was of course well known to the participants of the debates and could not come as a surprise to anyone who seriously wanted to talk about urban issues of the Kingdom of Poland.

For instance, *Kurier Warszawski*, published an analysis of data on the structure of estate possession in the Kingdom's cities, prepared during the parliamentary debate over the local government. The author wrote with an unmasking tone:

> it can be easily said that we do not know our country. This ignorance is noticeable in any possible moment. (…) Cities, that we believe to be ours, to be our century-old heritage; cities, for which we bring our monuments and mementos, are only half-way our possession, and there are such cases where our possession is only a percentile. ("Stan posiadania miast naszych." 1910)

"The inner enemy" created on the pages of newspapers, turned out to be the strongest exactly where the biggest damage could be done–in big cities and national industry centers.

The answer to the "Jewish threat" could be only the Polonization of the cities. This could only be done, however, by systematic work on the Polish weaknesses. Liberal journalist Wincenty Rzymowski did not have any doubts that:

> the 19th century passed by, marked by the hegemony of the middle-class. (…) The city humiliated the country. The *mieszczaństwo* became the master of the 19th century." Meanwhile, "the Polish nation did not own the cities. (…) During

> the 19th century the country, due to political storms, ended torn, but the city did not rise; the nobility was pushed away from forging culture. However, the middle-class did not take over in the national work, because in the past, we did not have the intelligentsia, in the past foreign elements thrived, strange to our culture and nationality.

Due to the fiasco of the assimilation idea there could only be one answer:

> We must raise a huge national wave and direct it towards the city. The country must go to conquer trade and industry. This levy in mass happened in Western Europe 500 years ago; in Poland it must happen now: otherwise–the country, cut from the city, will go deaf, become infirm, will seal up and die. Getting the cities for the Polish culture is a life necessity for our nation. It is to be or not to be for our nation. (Rzymowski 1912, 3–4)

Fighting for the Right of the City

There is no need to remind what happened to Polish-Jewish relations just before the First World War (Weeks 1994; 2008, 152–70; Zieliński 2010, 65–99). If the local government debate triggered the intensification of anti-Semitic sentiments, the elections in 1912 caused an open conflict between Poles and Jews. In all elections in Russian Poland after 1905 system of curiae, which guaranteed majority for the Polish right--wing and conservatives parties, was implemented.

However, in 1912 electoral law was changed in a way which ended the political hegemony of National Democracy. After Dmowski's resignation historian Jan Kucharzewski was appointed as a moderate candidate of Polish national political parties ("Koncentracja Narodowa") from Warsaw. However, Kucharzewski refused to promise that if elected, he would vote against the Jewish limitations in the future local government.

As a result, Jews decided to select a socialist Eugeniusz Jagiełło, who as a Duma member collaborated with the Russian left not the Polish Circle. For the Polish such results of the 1912 Duma elections were shocking. Even centrist started to believe that Dmowski was right and Jews were "inner enemies" who just wanted to harm Polish political interests (Weeks 2006, 163–9). The old idea of assimilation became dead and National Democracy triumphed even if it lost prestigious seat in the parliament. The dream about "truly Polish" middle--classes has changed from the nightmare into the actual political

demand of the majority of opinion-makers.

However, the concrete visions of how the Polonization would happen in practice were rather foggy. Even in the pages of the right-wing *Gazeta Warszawska* it was only believed that the Polish intelligentsia should emerge not from educated individuals, but from the Polish folk–however, there was little hope for quick realization of these plans. As one of the journalists wrote:

> I believe that the only way to the creation of a strong and industrious middle class in the city is the revolution from the very bottom, awaking the industrialism in the folk stratum–lower middle class and peasant. These stratums, as those pursuing fortune, are frugal, rough, and even–ruthless. These are the virtues that are necessary to withstand the competition with the Jews who overtook the petty trade and crafts. ("O polski stan średni." 1912)

One can say that the whole concept of the "Polish *mieszczaństwo*" was just an element of the ideology of the National Democrats, the direct consequence of their antisemitism and dreams about the "national expansion" (Porter 2000, 219–31). Obviously, such an opinion would be correct. But it is worth to ask why the anti-Semitic seeds directed by National Democracy found such a fertile ground. In my opinion, an answer could be as follows: the idea of the Polonization of cities would not have found wide hearing if had not met the desires of the urban intelligentsia, dreaming about its own rules over Warsaw and other urban settlements.

Ideologies, especially the expansive ones, do not achieve mass support if conditions are not suitable. Meanwhile, after the 1905 Revolution important part of the "progressives" wanted to participate as actors in a play written by Roman Dmowski and his circle. The one who voiced his opinion regarding the boycott was, among others, Jerzy Kurnatowski, who willingly joined the infamous "antisemitic conduct" of the progressivists after Andrzej Niemojewski and Iza Moszczeńska. The reasoning of Kurnatowski was rather simple. He wrote:

> The situation today appears as follows: our cities are in the hands of Jews and Germans who are not Polonizing themselves. Our country sends yearly emigration (…) of over a million people. At the same time, we have money. The Polish middle-class does not have much, but peasants have it in credit unions, and so does the aristocracy in covered bonds and other calm assets.

What was to be done with all this capital according to Kurnatowski?

> There is a need for people who, with Polish money (that there is), would create a Polish industry and trade in such a way that would enable giving more work to Polish workers and stop the emigration. (Kurnatowski 1913)

Of course, if it were so easy, the Kingdom of Poland in 1913 would have already been filled with industrial and trade achievements of numerous Polish industrialists. This, however, did not happen. A seemingly natural, logical consequence that Kurnatowski found, was the mass emigration of Jews from the Kingdom.

> The most reasonable answer–he pointed–that the Jews could give to the Polish society is, on one hand intensive and final Polonization of these Jewish elements that wish to remain in this country, and facilitating the emigration to wide masses of the Jewish *mieszczaństwo* and cottage workers. (…) And this decision Poles must not only make but also perform if they want to exist at all. (Kurnatowski 1913)

It needs justice that boycott action conducted by endecja after the 1912 elections gained radical critics as well. Ludwik Krzywicki, the prominent Marxian intellectualist, accurately exposed its weakness when writing for *Nowa Gazeta*:

> Polish trade is still at the stage of its creation. This hatching happened when capitalism started issuing higher forms of commercial brokerage, on one hand huge warehouses of retail sales, and on the other hand, food cooperatives. It is worth remembering when talking about Polonization of the cities. (Krzywicki 1912)

After 1912 the logic based on strong antagonization of the Polish majority and the Jewish population reached far beyond acceptable frames of public debate. At the same time, the anti-Semitic spectacle by National Demoracy, took up so easily by the commercial, apolitical press like *Kurier Warszawski* and others. *Robotnik*, the official magazine of Polish Socialistic Party commented:

> What *Dwugroszówka* [officially *Gazeta Poranna 2 Grosze*, an aggressive anti-Semitic daily published from 1912] in its unbelievable rudeness expressed without any reserve, is in a more general and delicate way repeated by the whole bourgeois press, conservative and the so-called progressive alike. The future of the Polish nation is not with the fight with the tsarism but with the fight with Jews–this is the motto of the whole Polish *mieszczaństwo*. ("Kronika." 1913)

Although Polish socialists and leftist intellectuals accurately scored all shallows of the nationalist fever, they did not have a language that could convince the majority of the intelligentsia. Like their Russian counterparts, they overestimated the importance of the working class in society. As Robert Edelman argued: "Russian Marxists had fixed on the urban proletariat as the social force that would lead an eventual socialist revolution. Yet the working class of the cities was still a small fraction of the entire population. To be politically effective, workers had to seek allies" (Edelman 1987, 8). For socialists, the successful revolution would overthrow all urban elites including the bourgeoisie and middle--class and make a workers' proletarian government possible with the necessary support of the intelligentsia. An alliance with the *mieszczaństwo* was out of the question. The Polish Socialist Party body commented on the boycott as follows:

> The fact that this advertising magazine of a Polish shop assistants could, without its incomparable coarseness and stupidity, obtain such a large influence among the *mieszczaństwo*, that even these groups and bourgeois bodies that initially opposed to it, yielded, proves how low the Polish *mieszczaństwo* fell, how it is retarded, how it debased itself. ("Kronika." 1913)

Urbanization of Minds

Neil Davidson offers an interesting distinction between political and social revolutions. As he argues:

> political revolution does no more than sanction a socio-economic situation that has been able to impose itself at least in part upon the economic reality. Such a revolution forcibly replaces the old legal order, now felt to be "unjust" by the new "right," "just" law. There is no radical reorganization of the social environment. (…) Social revolutions, however, are concerned precisely to change this environment. (Davidson 2012, 500)

In a similar vein, Piotr Kuligowski noted that "conceptual change is therefore never a purely theoretical issue, but it involves significant phenomena from the political space. Language changes interfere with transformations taking place in the socio-economic context" (Kuligowski 2017, 163).

Although the Polish-Jewish conflict intensified before World War I undoubtedly was grounded in traditional popular antisemitism, supported by the Catholic church, it also had a solid foundation in the very

modern changes in social relations in Russian Poland. (Blobaum 2001; 2015; Zieliński 2010) It seems, however, that ethnicizing the discourse and its infamous consequences bore witness not only to the degeneration of the Polish *mieszczaństwo*, but also to the entrance of the Polish intelligentsia into a new phase.

The city, from a liveable space, became for this group a political stake or domain where moral "right" to rule could be executed, and hence an area for which one needs to fight. To apply this transformation in politics, some important reconceptualization of the urban society had to be done. After the 1905 Revolution, the intelligentsia and mieszczaństwo did not only redefine themselves, but also the expected relations between these groups in the envisioned modernization of Poland were rearranged.

How far did this program reach? As it seems, it could be successful in Warsaw where there was quite a broad presence of Polish petty bourgeoisie. However, in Łódź, not far away, it was unthinkable to effectively take "the right of urban citizenship" away from the "foreigners." The response to the nationalistic turn that happened in the Kingdom after 1905 was in Łódź rather late and more toned down than in Warsaw where the aggressive antisemitism oozing from the pages of the capital's *Dwugroszówka* hold sway (Zysiak et al. 2018, 98). On the other hand, in the provinces where the Polish *mieszczaństwo* was even weaker than in Warsaw or Łódź, and Jews were majority of the population, like in Lublin, there were no circles capable of opposing the growing hatred between Poles and Jews.

It is worth noting that it was on the local level where the shape of citizenship was decided–nations are not divided into local communities, but rather consist of them.

Even though the ethnic conflict in the Kingdom became very aggressive, it should be considered the outcome of modernity rather than its reverse. Such a tension was by any standard a Polish specificity–after all the example was coming even from Vienna, where anti-Semitic urban politics loomed large (Boyer 1981). The core of this ethnic conflict in the cities of the Polish Kingdom were tensions between fast modernizing urban communities–Polish and Jewish. Both of these groups–Poles not agreeing to the Jewish majority in the future local-government and Jews not accepting attempts of sidelining them–were well aware that success or failure of their modernization would be defined in the cities (Ury 2012). For the Jewish urban dwellers, the city was an everlasting, obvious component of their identity, but for the Poles, in turn, including the urban perspective in their own nationalistic project was a significant *novum*.

It is worth noting that it was on the local level where the shape of citizenship was decided–nations are not divided into local communities, but rather consist of them. Belonging to the community of a given

region and of a particular city implies the identification with the nation and not the other way round (Lowndes 1995, 162). Thus, when the Polish public opinion grasped its own weakness and even "alienation" from the cities, not only the poison of antisemitism was released, but also strives to change their own status boosted. The city became a crucial forum of politics, where "to be or not to be" of the Poles was played, just like in the case of other nations in East-Central Europe. Idea of modern Polishness was to be defined not in the countryside, but on the streets of Polish towns. This change is perfectly pictured by a quotation from the early 1914. *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, the same magazine where Prus just a decade earlier identified the Jews with as the "our *mieszczaństwo*," stated in the editorial:

> There is no Pole who would not dream a beautiful dream of the future: a country cut through with a network of solid roads, iron railways, canals linking navigable rivers. A country smiling with prosperity and culture, combining together a high level of farming with a high level of industry. A country covered with schools, hospitals, functioning from the top to bottom like a fit, well-composed organism. A country of affluent villages with brick houses and farmsteads, a country of white cities, flooded with the greenery of gardens, happy and pleasant for the eye. ("Miasteczko." 1914)

What was the paradox of the situation, in Russian Poland it was not possible to introduce a local government that would fulfil Polish national aspirations? Moreover, Poles themselves were also not ready for full democratization of the urban political life (Śmiechowski 2014b). Without the influence on urban politics and economy, creating of the domestic *mieszczaństwo* could only be a utopia. So, it was obvious that cities in Russian Poland would remain as they were so far: multicultural and religiously diverse, with a significant influence of the Jewish and German communities.

However, despite these circumstances there is no doubt that cities took its rightful place in the value system of the Polish intelligentsia before the Great War. The urban intelligentsia of the Kingdom of Poland believed that it could exercise power over the cities–become the *mieszczaństwo* by necessity.

Although the Polish *mieszczaństwo* had to remain only a dream in the forthcoming decades, this concept had an undeniable emancipatory dimension. Riga claims that in late imperial Russia "class (economy) and status (politics) were both autocratically organized around ethnicity" and "living in the empire's borderlands, multiethnic urbanism, and quasi- or problematic assimilationism" were "a common dimension of

experience" among the marginalized groups (2008, 653).

The class-universalism and aggressive nationalism become the alternatives for the Polish intelligentsia. Both took the city in the center of the imagined future, breaking with traditional concept of Polishness embedded in an agrarian society and the *szlachta*'s country house as a center of the universe. Despite its agrarian past, Poland had to become urban if it wanted to be modern and the intelligentsia had to become urban if wanted to create real Polish *mieszczaństwo* in the future. In Polish case, those liberation of minds from existing patterns had significant long-term consequences.

The class-universalism and aggressive nationalism become the alternatives for the Polish intelligentsia. Both took the city in the center of the imagined future, breaking with traditional concept of Polishness embedded in an agrarian society and the szlachta's country house as a center of the universe.

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Autor: Kamil Śmiechowski
Tytuł: Wyobrażając sobie miejską Polskę. Rewolucja i rekonceptualizacja społeczeństwa miejskiego w Królestwie Polskim (1905–1914)
Abstrakt: Celem artykułu jest analiza zmiany znaczenia pojęcia „mieszczaństwo" (w powiązaniu z takimi kategoriami, jak inteligencja czy burżuazja) w polskim dyskursie politycznym w latach 1905–1914. Hipoteza autora jest taka, że przed Wielką Wojną, w czasach rewolucji społeczno-politycznej, której areną były ulice Warszawy, Łodzi i innych miast, pojawiły się nowe sposoby konceptualizacji społeczeństwa miejskiego. Tekst omawia zatem okoliczności, które doprowadziły do uformowania się sposobów rozumienia mieszczaństwa w ramach szerszej debaty na temat samorządu miejskiego w Królestwie Polskim po rewolucji 1905 roku. Z uwagi na fakt, że w interesującym autora okresie samo miasto stało się przedmiotem rywalizacji politycznej, postulat prawa do rządzenia miastem był głośno formułowany w przestrzeni polskiej debaty publicznej. Dla narodowej demokracji była to doskonała okazja dla szerzenia retoryki antysemickiej i propagowania idei polonizacji miast

jako celu długofalowego. Autor twierdzi jednak, że retoryka ta nie znalazłaby posłuchu, gdyby sama inteligencja nie przedefiniowała swojego stosunku do poszczególnych grup mieszkańców miast. W ten sposób mieszczaństwo, które wcześniej nie miało większego znaczenia politycznego, stało się istotnym elementem postulowanej modernizacji Polski; choć ceną za to posunięcie było rozpalenie konfliktu etnicznego. Tym samym, dla protagonistów ówczesnych sporów stało się jasne, że Polska nowoczesna to Polska zurbanizowana.

Słowa kluczowe: antysemityzm, inteligencja, Łódź, mieszczaństwo, nowoczesność, społeczeństwo miejskie, Warszawa

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The *Perevodchik-Terjiman* Newspaper: A Bilingual Phenomenon of the Muslim Press in Late Imperial Russia

This case study examines the bilingualism of the prominent Russian Muslim newspaper of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, known as the *Perevodchik-Terjiman* (literally "Translator" or "Interpreter") by means of discourse analysis. This newspaper was published from 1883 to 1918 in Crimea, until 1914 by Ismail Gasprinskii (1851–1914), a prominent enlightener of Russian Muslims. Until December 1905, the newspaper was issued in two languages–Russian and so-called *common-Turkic*. The latter language was unsuccessfully intended to become a common literary language for Russian Muslims. Despite the declarations, the parallel articles in Russian and Turkic barely presented direct translations from one language to another. On the contrary, there were significant differences. The differences in Russian and Turkic narratives were not markers of opposing intentions or obscure meanings. It is argued here that this feature can be qualified as an instance of *cultural bilingualism*, which reflected the multiculturalism of the newspaper's heterogeneous audience.

Keywords: The Perevodchik-Terjiman newspaper, bilingualism, Ismail Gasprinskii, Russian Muslims, common-Turkic language, late-imperial Russia, Russian Revolution of 1905

Introduction

At the turn of the twentieth century, there were just a few Muslim newspapers in Turkic languages in the late Russian Empire. The most influential among them was the *Perevodchik-Terjiman* newspaper (hereinafter, the *Terjiman*[1]), published for over thirty years in Crimea by Ismail Gasprinskii (1851–1914), a prominent enlightener of Russian Muslims. Until December 1905, the newspaper was issued as bilingual, parallel texts published in two languages–Russian and so-called *common-Turkic*. This fact was captured in its name, which literally means "Translator" or "Interpreter."

The *Terjiman* assumed that along with educational reform, national press, and "new literature," the *common-Turkic* language would become a common literary language for Russian Muslims, or at least for Russian Muslim Turks, imaged as a common "nation" within the Russian empire. At the same time, the *Terjiman* advocated for Muslims' duty to learn the Russian language. In doing so, it promoted further integration of Muslims into imperial society with the preservation of their cultural particularism. Hence, as Peter M. Judson exemplified in the case of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the concepts of nationhood and ideas of empire "developed in dialogue with each other, rather than as binary opposites" (2016, 9). In this sense, the *Terjiman*'s bilingualism could be qualified as a reflection of imperial multiculturalism.

At the same time, the *Terjiman*, which until 1905 was in some way the monopolist in the Muslim media sphere in the Russian Empire, could be considered in terms of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power. It is particularly notable in cases in which the *Terjiman*'s editorial staff retranslated its progressist position as common for all Russian Muslims or presented its own vision of socio-political developments on behalf of the Muslim population as a whole. In addition, according to Bourdieu, "In the case of symbolic production, the constraint exercised by the market via the anticipation of possible profit naturally takes the form of an anticipated censorship, of a *self-censorship* which determines not only the manner of saying, that is, the choice of language–'code-switching' in situations of bilingualism–or the 'level' of language, but also what it will be possible or not possible to say" (1991, 77). Particularly, self-censorship in this sense can be

1 I have chosen the Latin spelling "Terjiman" due to its official denomination by Ismail Gasprinskii according to Crimean Tatar phonetical rules. As far as newspapers that were published in Arabic script, there are some other possible spellings, such as "Tarjuman" and "Terjuman."

defined within the differences between Russian and Turkic narratives in the *Terjiman*.

Moreover, the newspaper's bilingualism gives rise to numerous speculations about its content or even ideological bent (which, incidentally, was loyal and statist) even after 1905 in the circumstances of the increasing socio-political demands of Muslims. As many of the articles of the *Terjiman* consisted of at least two discourses of a different nature (such as nationalistic but loyal or European-style progressive but religious), they can be read variously depending on the recipient and his anticipations. For instance, according to Yusuf Akçura, the *Terjiman* should be "read between lines" due to the censorship in the Russian Empire, while Gasprinskii himself should be acknowledged as an all-Turkic nationalist–in other words, "pan-Turkist" (Akçura 1978, 91–102). Still, the comparison between parallel Russian and Turkic articles in the *Terjiman* shows none of the opposing intentions or obscure meanings but largely the shift of the emphasis.

As many of the articles of the *Terjiman* consisted of at least two discourses of a different nature (such as nationalistic but loyal or European-style progressive but religious), they can be read variously depending on the recipient and his anticipations.

Thus, the case of the *Terjiman*'s bilingualism, exemplifying no literal translation from Russian into Turkic or vice-versa, might provide new insights into nationalism studies in the imperial context, as well as enrich media studies in terms of the symbolic power it presents.

Despite the wide scientific coverage of the language issue in the *Terjiman*, there is no consensus regarding the definition of the Turkic language used in this newspaper. Many researchers agree that the newspaper used a simplified version of the Ottoman-Turkish language with local Tatar elements (Kırımlı 2001; Gubaydullin 1997). However, some consider the language to be Old Crimean Tatar (Kurkchi 1986) or *common-Turkic* (Yaman 2002), without providing an exhaustive definition of the latter. Moreover, most of the studies on this newspaper's language focus either on the linguistic features of its Turkic section (Kurkchi 1986) or on the role of the common literary language for Russian Muslim Turks in the ideological aspect (Akçura 1978; Gubaydullin 1997).

At the same time, there are also scholars who deal with the bilingualism of the *Terjiman* in a broader context, such as the emergence of the Muslim intelligentsia or the newspaper's history (Tuna 2017; Lazzerini 1992).

In my turn, I address the phenomenon of the *Terjiman*'s bilingualism itself as a particular feature of this newspaper. Addressing the bilingualism of the *Terjiman* by means of discourse analysis, I imply the structuralist approach, initially based on the linguistic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure. At the same time, in accordance with Bourdieu's methodology,

I examine the *Terjiman*'s discourse in terms of language as *symbolic capital*. In this sense, the *Terjiman*'s intentions to create a common literary language for Russian Muslims should be qualified as an attempt to define their *linguistic habitus*, as well as its monopolistic role in the *field* of Muslim press until 1905, to establish a dominant discourse among Russian Muslims. Furthermore, I define the newspaper's inequal bilingual appeals to a multicultural audience (Muslim and non-Muslim) as *cultural bilingualism*, therefore, redefining the term suggested by Yuriy Lotman, who speaks about *cultural bilingualism* as a frontier zone, "providing the semiotic contacts between two worlds" (1992, 15).

The first stage of this research was the selection process. The statement quotes were selected due to their relevance to revolutionary events in the Russian Empire in 1905. Subsequently, all 110 issues of this newspaper in 1905 were consulted. At the same time, the terminology samples exemplify the features of the *Terjiman*'s socio-political and religious discourse from the whole "bilingual" period between 1883 and 1905.

In the second stage, I implemented structural discourse analysis on the selected items, focusing on newspaper's terminology features as well as on differences between Turkic and Russian texts.

The items exemplified in this research are open-access, digitalized copies of the *Terjiman* from 1883 to 1905, published on the official website of the Russian National Library in Saint Petersburg.[2]

Ismail Gasprinskii and the *Terjiman* Newspaper in the Russian Imperial Context

First, I suggest that a brief review of the biography of Gasprinskii, whose life story can be explained as a model biography of an imperial national activist in the period under consideration, as well of the *Terjiman*'s pre-history, could help to better contextualize the newspaper's discourse.

Ismail Gasprinskii was born in Crimea in 1851. His father, Mustafa Gasprinskii, was a military translator who, by his service, obtained nobility status for his heirs. Gasprinskii received his primary education at a *mekteb* (elementary Muslim school) in Bakhchisarai, then attended secondary school in Simferopol. He continued his studies at the military schools in Voronezh and Moscow but did not complete the full course (Gankevich 2001, 138–40). From 1871 to 1874 he lived in

2 See http://nlr.ru/res/inv/ukazat55/record_full.php?record_ID=193088. Accessed April, 16, 2021.

Paris and then spent a year in Istanbul, where he tried to enroll in a military school. Upon being refused, he returned to Crimea. Between 1878 and 1884, Gasprinskii was engaged in political activity, being first a member of the city council and then the deputy mayor and mayor of Bakhchisarai, respectively. After several years of attempts to establish his own newspaper, he finally succeeded in getting a license for the *Terjiman* in 1883 (Lazzerini 1992, 144–6). Henceforth, publishing activities became his life-long project. Consequently, Gasprinskii's strong attempt to establish own media outlet reflects his understanding of the consolidation potential of newspapers, which he systematically referred to as "a language of people."

Ismail Gasprinskii was one of the key figures in the educational movement among Russian Muslims, known as *Jadidism*. *Jadidism* took its name from the renewed educational method *usul-i jadid* (literally "new method"), which Gasprinskii actively popularized in the *Terjiman*. However, contrary to common belief, Gasprinskii was not the only pioneer in the implementation of the *usul-i jadid* in the Russian Empire, as he testified to himself in the *Terjiman* (Terjiman 1883).

There are several opinions about the emergence of *usul-i jadid* and its correlation with Gasprinskii's activities (Landa 2011, 144–5). According to the *Cambridge History of Turkey*, *usul-i jadid* emerged in the Ottoman Empire as early as the *Tanzimat* period (1839–1876), eventually spreading into Central Asia, where its adherers became known as *Jadids* (Findley 2008, 22–23). However, according to Adeeb Khalid, it was Gasprinskii who inspired the emergence of *Jadidism* in Russia, including its Central Asian realms and protectorates (Khalid 2010, 81–2, 93). These controversies notwithstanding, the so-called *new method schools* gradually spread among Muslims in Russia and beyond. The all-Russian *Jadidism* as an educational movement was clearly inspired by Gasprinskii's activities including those in the *Terjiman*. Additionally, Gasprinskii's aspiration for educational reform could be better illustrated in the following statement: "education is the soul and strength of every nation" (Terjiman 1890).

It is also common to find Ismail Gasprinskii's name among the ideologists of *Pan-Turkism* (Akçura 2015, 104–6; Gökalp 2017, 12–3). In particular, the slogan *Dilde, fikirde, işte birlik* (Unity in language, thoughts, and business), which emerged in the *Terjiman* in October 1912, is sometimes interpreted as an appeal to a worldwide political union of the Turks under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire. In this case, the ideas of Gasprinskii are wrongly presented as anti-Russian or even separative. What he actually advocated for was the consolidation

of Russian Muslims on the basis of a common religion (Islam) and language (so-called *common-Turkic*) but in order to secure national-cultural (non-territorial) autonomy for Muslims within the Russian Empire (Tsibenko and Tikhonova 2019).

The *Terjiman* was published in Bakhchysarai (the former capital of the Crimean Khanate) from 1883 to 1918 and served as a significant informational platform for Russian Muslims. According to Edward Lazzerini, the *Terjiman*'s "very existence, was constant testimony to veritable revolution in communication", which changed "not only a nature of public discourse, but its level and impact as well" (Lazzerini 1992, 154). However, being a media outlet, the *Terjiman* presented the opinion of a certain social group–in this case, Russian Muslim progressives.

In the light of the liberalization of the Russian press in 1905, between 1906 and 1908 the *Terjiman* was almost entirely published in Turkic, except for official documents, announcements, advertisements, and some articles in Russian. In 1908, the newspaper's Russian section was restored as an independent part, which henceforth did not necessarily have a parallel text in Turkic and was significantly inferior in its volume. Since then, the Russian section became a platform for polemics with other Russian newspapers or public figures on issues related to the internal life of Russian Muslims, as there was a significantly increased interest in this topic after the First Russian Revolution of 1905–1907.

While other Russian Muslim newspapers in Turki, such as Ekinci or Keshkul, were closed after their short existence, the longevity of the *Terjiman* can be explained by, among other reasons, its bilingualism.

From 1891 to 1903 the *Terjiman* was the only private Muslim newspaper in the Russian Empire. While other Russian Muslim newspapers in Turki, such as *Ekinci* or *Keshkul*, were closed after their short existence, the longevity of the *Terjiman* can be explained by, among other reasons, its bilingualism. Russian section though contributed more to a credit of the authorities in terms of censorship, rather than directly whipped up the popularity of the newspaper, whose subscribers were mainly Turkic-speaking readers. The restoration of the Russian section after its almost two-year absence indicates that it was a necessity, apparently due to the strengthening of state control over Muslims, which was inspired, among other things, by the revolutions in Iran (1905–1911) and Turkey (1908–1909) (Arapov 2012, 121–6).

The Terjiman's Turkic Language and its Significance

Unless we address the *Terjiman*'s bilingualism *per se*, it is important to mention some features of the so-called *common-Turkic* language used in the newspaper, because of this language's artificial nature and signi-

ficance in terms of Gasprinskii's intentions to consolidate the Muslim community.

Noteworthily, Gasprinskii emphasized that this language was not his individual invention but, rather, a "fruit of writings" of a set of contemporary authors such as Shihabeddin Marjani, Kayum Nasyri, Husain Faizkhanov, etc. (Terjiman 1905j).

However, the *Terjiman*'s editorial staff did not have a systematic approach to the definition of the Turkic language used in the newspaper. It was called *Tatar*, *Turkic-Tatar*, *Turkic*, *common-Turkic*, *the language of Muslims*, etc. This non-systematic approach seems to be a result of the artificial nature of this language, as well as an attempt to meet the expectations of different audiences; some could prefer the term *Tatar*, while others *Turkic* or any other. Moreover, where applicable, different languages of Russian Muslim Turks were referred to as *lehçe* or *dialekt* (dialect) but Ottoman Turkish was always qualified as a *dil* or *yazyk* (language). In addition, Gasprinskii himself denied the similarity of the newspaper's language to Ottoman Turkish (Terjiman 1905g), which did not correspond to the linguistic facts.

According to a brief linguistic analysis of the *Terjiman*'s language, it was simplified Ottoman Turkish with a significant local Tatar element. Eclecticism was a common feature of this language due to its developing literary norm. Despite the trend towards simplification, the language was complex in terms of vocabulary and some grammar. In particular, there was the Persian ezafe–for example, *kemal*-i *hürmet* (full respect) – and an abundance of Arabic and Persian loanwords, such as *rafik* (friend), *sene* (year), *rüzgar* (wind), etc., some of which were used simultaneously with their Turkic counterparts.

This *common-Turkic* was rather difficult to understand for those who did not study it on purpose (Samoylovich 1916, 7). Still, Gasprinskii and his supporters intended to develop *common-Turkic* to the status of a common literary language for Russian Muslim Turks, appealing to the necessity of its widespread dissemination and adaption by means of a unified educational system (namely, *new method schools*), national mass media, and *new literature*. In this regard, Gasprinskii, through the *Terjiman*, actively promoted the *new literature* in *common-Turkic*, personally being an author of some novels, as well as the idea of teaching this language in *new method schools*.

Additionally, Gasprinskii advocated for the preservation of the traditional Arabic script for Turkic writing with its subsequent modification. Particularly, *yeni imla* (new spelling) was adapted in the *Terjiman* in 1913. The need for Arabic script was portrayed in *Terjiman* as an assu-

rance of the unification of so-called *common-Turkic*, as the use of this graphics largely erased the phonetical differences between various Turkic languages (Tatar, Azerbaijani, etc.) but even the Arabic script could not level out existing morphological or lexical differences between them. Moreover, according to Mustafa Tuna, Gasprinskii's attitude towards the Arabic script reflected his project, aimed at the national consolidation of Russian Muslims (Tuna 2002, 270).

However, the process of forming a common literary language for Russian Muslims was not completed. It failed after the First Russian Revolution of 1905–1907, when the tendencies to develop a literary norm based on regional Turkic languages–such as Tatar, Azerbaijani, etc.–prevailed.

The *Terjiman*'s Bilingual Discourse

First, while the *Terjiman* was published as two parallel texts in Russian and Turkic between 1883 and 1905, there were many remarkable differences in its Russian and Turkic narratives. In some cases, parallel articles had different headings; in others, there was a lack of passages in one of the versions, either Russian or Turkic. For instance, an article about Crimean Tatar emigration was titled in Russian as *Vozvrachsheniye iz Turtsii* (Return from Turkey), while its Turkic counterpart was termed *Kidenlerin kaytuşi* (Return of leavers) (Terjiman 1903).

Despite the newspaper's official program, ensuring that the parallel texts were "direct translations from Russian into Tatar", it could be stated that Russian and Turkic versions corresponded to each other with respect to the general meaning but were not literal translations from one language to another.

Despite the newspaper's official program, ensuring that the parallel texts were "direct translations from Russian into Tatar", it could be stated that Russian and Turkic versions corresponded to each other with respect to the general meaning but were not literal translations from one language to another. (CGAK, f. 26, op. 2, d. 1595, ll. 17–18, 21: quoted after Kerimov 1999, 298). It should be mentioned, though, that Edward Lazzerini, with reference to Gasprinskii's statement in the *Terjiman* (Terjiman 1905i), questioned his proficiency in writing in Turkic and translating into this language himself (Lazzerini 1992, 153). Still, what Gasprinskii actually stated, was: "Until nowadays due to special conditions a significant part of the Terjiman was filled with useless Russian text of all that we translated for the Tatars" (Terjiman 1905i).

The second feature of the newspaper's discourse could be qualified as *cultural bilingualism* (a term of Y. Lotman), common to the written legacy of Russian Muslim progressives, whose monolingual texts consisted of at least two discourses of different natures. For instance, their European-style discourse of progress was supplemented with quotations

from the Quran or Sunnah (Bessmertnaya 2019). The *Terjiman*'s bilingual case in this sense is far more complicated but representative. Thus, speaking about the secularly defined progress, the *Terjiman* quoted the Quran or Sunnah in both Russian and Turkic versions. Still, many religious terms were secularized while being translated into Russian. For instance, such Islamic terms as *mumin* (believer, faithful Muslim) and *fard* (religious duty commanded by God) were translated into Russian simply as *Muslim* and *something obligatory*, respectively.

Additionally, parallel texts of the newspaper were written primarily according to recepients' expectations and cultural background, therefore further exemplifying *cultural bilingualism*. For instance, once addressing the Russian Muslims' emigration to the Ottoman Empire, the Russian version simply criticized the very fact of emigration, while its Turkic counterpart, beyond the critique of emigration itself, discussed whether this emigration was religiously motivated and concluded that it was not (Terjiman 1903).

Furthermore, Gasprinskii, along with other authors who wrote in *common-Turkic*, was, in this respect, a "legislator." He was able to determine the appearance of this language in terms of its vocabulary and grammar, hence affecting the *linguistic habitus* of the readers. Of particular interest in this sense is Gasprinskii's experiments with the Russian term *intelligentsia* (loosely, "intellectual class"), which did not have a direct equivalent in Turkic. As Mustafa Tuna exemplified, Gasprinskii initially translated *Muslim intelligentsia* into Turkic as *erkan-i cemiyet* (pillars of society), *erkan-i milliye* (pillars of nation), and *tabaka-yı aliye* (upper strata), though finally deciding on *ziyalılar* (enlightened). The variations in Turkic translations–all being magnific–present the value that Gasprinskii attached to *Muslim intelligentsia*, appointed to become a societal vanguard of the Russian Muslim community (Tuna 2017, 264–77).

However, many Russian terms were provided in a Turkic version without translation, by simple transliteration into Arabic script–for instance, *gosudar*' (sovereign), *knyaz*' (prince), *zemstvo* (municipality), *uyezd* (district), *gubernator* (governor), *gradonachal'nik* (mayor), etc. Possibly, this set of terms was intended to be fixed in *common-Turkic* in a transliterated form to emphasize their direct correspondence to the socio-political realities of the Russian Empire.

There was also modern phenomenon such as *proletariat* (proletariat), *industriya* (industry), and *zavod* (factory), which also had simply been transliterated due to the absence of translated equivalents in Turkic. At the same time, such terms as emperor (*imperator/ padişah*), ruler (*tsar/*

malik), civil servant (*chinovnik/ memur*), and manifesto (*manifest/ ferman*) were used in Turkic both as simple transliterations of Russian terms (*imperator, tsar, chinovnik, manifest*) or as direct translations (*padişah, malik, memur, ferman*). The latter set shows the eclecticism of *common-Turkic* in light of its developing literary norm.

Additionally, the Russian section of the *Terjiman* regularly used the term *tuzemtsy* (natives) or the single-rooted adjective *tuzemny* (native). This term, having a direct equivalent in Turkic (*yerli*), was almost entirely replaced by the terms *islam* or *müslüman* (Muslim) in the Turkic version. Only on rare cases were such collocations as *yerli dil* (native's language) used as an equivalent for Russian *tuzemny yazyk* (native's language), which, incidentally, was more frequently translated as *islam dili* (Muslim's language). Obviously, such terms as *tuzemtsy* (natives) along with *inorodtsy* (non-Russians) were accepted in the newspaper from the official imperial discourse but the sphere of their usage shows an absence of negative or derogative meanings. It seems that the editorial staff redefined the term *tuzemtsy* to emphasize the indigenousness of Muslims in Russia. In this sense, the substitution of this term in the Turkic version can be explained due to its semantic redundancy for Muslim readers, as well as an instance of *self-censorship*.

It is also worth distinguishing synonyms given from secular and religious contexts. For example, such terms as *sharia* (law) and *muallim* (teacher) were limited by religious sphere of usage in both Russian and Turkic, while in a secular context they were replaced by their synonyms, *zakon* (law) and *uchitel'* (teacher).

Concerning the *Terjiman*'s reflection of the socio-political status of Muslims in Russia, one should mention terminological coincidence in both Russian and Turkic versions–namely, *vernopoddannye* or *sadakatlı tebaalar* (loyal subjects), *patriotism* or *vatanperverlik* (patriotism), *rodina* or *vatan* (Motherland), *veroterpimost'* or *dine kemal-i hürmet* (religious tolerance), *ravnopraviye* or *bir derecede / adil haklar* (equal / fair rights), etc. The usage of these terms indicates a positive image of the Russian Empire as their resident country and the idea of their loyalty to the authorities.

At the same time, in both the Russian and Turkic sections, one can note the terms which reflect the nationalistic orientation of the newspaper and distinguish Muslims as a particular group of Russian subjects who were nationalized by the imperial state–for instance, *natsionalizm* or *milletperverlik* (nationalism), *podchinyonnye / pokoryonnye narody* or *zapt edilmiş / tabi edilmiş halklar* (nationalized / refrained peoples), *russifikatsia* or *ruslaşdırma* (Russification), *inorodtsy* or *gayri Ruslar* (literally, "non-Russians"), etc.

The *Terjiman*'s Bilingualism in the Context of the First Russian Revolution of 1905–1907

In this part, I address the *Terjiman*'s reflection of revolutionary events in Russia until December 1905, when the newspaper ceased being bilingual, namely, both within the period of existing censorship and a short while after its elimination in October 1905. I argue that even in the circumstances of a sufficiently altered political atmosphere in the Russian Empire in 1905, the *Terjiman*'s bilingual content presented a shift in emphasis rather than obscure meanings. This shift, though, reflected the newspaper's *cultural bilingualism*, appointed to address different audiences–Russian and Muslim ones.

The *Terjiman*, being located far from the cultural-political centers of the Russian Empire, issued all-Russian political news with some delay, and based it on information from official sources and metropolitan newspapers (*Novoye Vremya*, *Russkaya pravda*, etc.). At the same time, news concerning Russian Muslims in a revolutionary context was produced by the *Terjiman* itself, or as referred to in Russian newspapers from different regions with a large Muslim population (*Volzhskiy listok* from Kazan, *Kaspiy* from Baku, etc.). In this regard, of particular interest is how the *Terjiman* bilingually represented the revolutionary events of 1905 in Russia from the perspective of both the imperial periphery and the Muslim community.

First, this newspaper, as a representative of the legal press, does not use the term *Revolution* in describing the events of 1905. Instead, the mass strikes, riots, and demonstrations were qualified as violent civil unrest. Moreover, the editorial staff emphasized that during the political unrest in Russia, Muslims remained loyal to official authorities, stayed away from both social-democrats and the Black Hundred, and did not participate in antisemitic acts, even being defenders of Jews. In this tone, they promised their loyalty and declared gratitude after the October Manifesto:

> The Manifesto of Freedom was greeted by Muslims with great joy, full dignity, and restraint. In Crimea, in the Caucasus, in Kazan Muslims stood under the state flag, avoiding both the red flag and the Black Hundred outrages. Thank God, nowhere in the days of joy and freedom, our Turkic hand did not touch blood or other people's goods. Muslims from Kazan, Bakhchisaray and Yalta were ready to defend students and Jews from terror violence and robbery (Terjiman 1905h).

At the same time, the Turkic version of the abovementioned passage distinctly shifted the emphasis of the information given. In contrast to its Russian version, the passage in Turkic emphasized twice the nonparticipation of Muslims in the outrages of the Black Hundred, especially in their antisemitic acts. Additionally, the Turkic version strictly criticized the far-right, monarchist movement of the Black Hundred, which emphasized the liberal position of the *Terjiman*:

> In the demonstrations that followed the proclamation of the Manifesto of Freedom, Muslims (for example, in Baku, in Kazan, in Crimea) did not join the representatives of the red flag (that is, the members of the Social Democratic Party), but friendly greeted those who carried the Russian flag. However, in addition to these national parties, there was the "black party" [namely, Black Hundred] that blackened these glorious days with murders and outrages, so not a single Muslim joined them. There have been no reports of Muslims committing dishonor and injustice by unlawfully taking away the parts of the property of Jews or others. Muslims from Kazan, Bakhchisaray and Yalta were ready to defend students and Jews from the "black party" (Terjiman 1905h).

Apart from such statements, imaging Muslims as those who did not take part in any outrages, the *Terjiman* actively offered insight into the bloody events in Baku, referred to as *armyano-tatarskaya reznya* (Armenian-Tatar killings) in Russian or *ermeni ve müsülman vuruşmaları* (Armenian-Muslim combat) in Turkic. The series of related articles (Terjiman 1905c; 1905e, etc.) were focused on the unacceptability of any inter-ethnic conflict and its harm for the Russian Empire, as well as on conciliatory cooperative measures by Armenian Catholicos and Muslim Shaykh al-Islam. One such event was qualified in the *Terjiman* as a result of anti-governmental provocations, inspired by Armenian and Russian revolutionary social democrats (Terjiman 1905c). In this context, the Tatars/ Muslims (i.e., Azeris) were presented as "the most peaceful element", enforced to "defend themselves" (Terjiman 1905c). Moreover, describing the conflict, the *Terjiman* made references to an 'unprejudiced actor', namely, to famous millionaire and manufacturer Nobel from Baku, whose business was harmed by the bloody events.

In addition, within the revolutionary events of 1905, the *Terjiman* systematically published official documents that declared the political reforms and proclaimed civil rights in Russia. Noteworthily, the *Terjiman* presented these changes as consequences of successive reformist activities initiated by the sovereign already in the pre-revolutionary period, rather than as political developments inspired by general socio-political unrest

in the country. For instance, in one of the *Terjiman*'s articles, the official decrees of 1903 and 1904, giving Russian subjects some civil rights, including religious equality, were mentioned as pathbreaking changes. The Russian version of the article stated:

> Our time seems to be the most significant time in the modern history of Russia and its peoples. This time is important due to the great war that Russia is waging in the Far East, but it is even more important due to the renewal work that our Government began at the direction of the Emperor. Our readers know that in 1903 there was the Imperial Manifesto, which firmly adapted the idea of religious tolerance. The Decree of December 12, 1904, developed this great idea and graciously outlined many other reforms inspired by the life conditions (Terjiman 1905f).

The same passage in Turkic differs in emphasis. As distinct from the Russian version, it did not stress the role of the emperor and government in current political developments, which, however, were still presented as reforms from above instead of revolution from below. Moreover, the Turkic version supplies readers with information about the "privileges for all nations" (Terjiman 1905f).

Furthermore, the *Terjiman* published the text of the October Manifesto of October 17, 1905 (officially, *The Manifesto on the Improvement of the State Order*), supplying it in Russian with comments focused on civil liberties, provided by the government:

> Great, great is this day, which has become a day of all-Russian veneration, omen, and unity. The cherished dreams of people who truly love Russia and its peoples seem to have come true... The published Imperial Manifesto entails the responsibility of the United Government to implement in Russia the unshakable foundations of civil liberties on the basis of the true personal integrity, freedom of conscience, speech (of course, oral and printed), meetings, unions (Terjiman 1905a).

The Turkic version of this passage shifted the emphasis to the value of the *Manifesto* as a document that "opened up opportunities for freedom, recognition, and progress of all peoples." Still, if the Russian version presented the October Manifesto as the realized "cherished dreams of people who truly love Russia," in Turkic it was qualified as a result of "the stubbornness of all nations and tribes of Russia" in their common will of freedom (Terjiman 1905a).

Additionally, of particular interest was the *Terjiman*'s coverage of the establishment of the *State Duma* and the elections of its deputies. Cer-

tainly, this first-ever democratic election in the Russian Empire was a significant political development. For Muslims, it meant the possibility of political representation as a particular group of Russian subjects, which they subsequently gained while forming a small but self-interested Muslim faction in the second–forth *State Dumas*. In this sense, a number of active Muslim voters was potentially crucial in regard to a number of Muslim deputies. Hence, the *Terjiman*, seeking to establish the dominant discourse among Muslims, was used as a platform for political agitation:

> Although the elections will be regional, regardless to the social class, ethnicity, or religion, it would be desirable that the Duma included representatives of all Russian peoples… If Muslims wish, within the election process to the Duma they could support such persons who knows their condition and can speak and act for them (Terjiman 1905b).

In a similar vein, the *Terjiman* closely covered the process of establishing the cultural-political association of Russian Muslims, the *Ittifak al-muslimin* (Muslim Union), which, however, never became an official political party due to its self-dissolution in 1907. Thus, while describing the first congress of *Ittifak* in Nizhny Novgorod in August 1905, the Russian version of the *Terjiman* stated the internal consolidation of Russian Muslims and the liberation from their inter-confessional disagreements, with the aim of showing Russian-speaking readers that Muslims were united in their socio-political demands. It was crucially important for the *Ittifak*, which was intended to serve as the associated voice of all Muslims in Russia regardless of their confessional differences or political views:

> It is very significant and gratifying that in business as well as in the public sphere, Shiites, Sunnis, and Shafi'is have almost completely merged, burying in oblivion the sad traditions that once alienated them. It was also gratifying to hear moderate and honest judgments of Muslims regarding the duty and benefits of going in with the best people and forces of the great homeland (Terjiman 1905d).

The same passage in Turkic, targeting Muslim readers and denoting them as "people of the Quran"," did not mention the existence of internal contradictions between Muslims. Namely, the unity in interests and intentions of all Russian Muslim subjects, which did not and could not exist *de-facto*, was presented as *de-jure* existent due to their common religion, Islam. At the same time, emphasis on the common desire of Muslims to provide benefits to the state along with "such lovers of

progress and justice as Russians," in this sense, meant the popularization of a statist position among Russian Muslims, as Gasprinskii considered the Russian Empire to be the only polity to realize his national intentions (Terjiman 1905d).

Conclusion

The prominent *Terjiman* newspaper served as an important informational platform, promoting the progressist ideas of its editor-in-chief, Ismail Gasprinskii, and his supporters among Muslims in Russia and beyond.

The so-called *common-Turkic* language, used in the newspaper along with Russian, was, due to its developing literary norm, eclectic in both its vocabulary and its grammar. However, this language unsuccessfully intended to develop to a status of common literary language for Russian Muslims.

Being a monopolist in the Muslim press until 1905, the *Terjiman* used its *symbolic power* to establish the dominant discourse among Russian Muslims (namely, the progressist) as well as to specify the appearance of a common literary language (namely, *common-Turkic*) in terms of defining *linguistic habitus* for Russian Muslims.

Still, if the usage of the Turkic language marked the national intention of its editor-in-chief Gasprinskii, the usage of the Russian language showed the *Terjiman*'s inclusion in all-Russian imperial discourse, for instance, in regard to usage of the official terminology to cover the socio-political realities of the Russian Empire.

At the same time, there were several remarkable differences in its Russian and Turkic narratives. While in Russian (namely, for Russian readers) the editorial staff distinctly emphasized the internal unity of Muslims and their loyalty to the Russian authorities, especially during the revolutionary events of 1905, in Turkic (namely, for Muslim readers) the emphasis was shifted mostly to the internal interests of Muslims and the necessity of their loyalty. That is, an instance of *cultural bilingualism* of the *Terjiman* served to retranslate the same information for two different audiences.

Gasprinskii was one of the "legislators" in terms of the appearance of the *common-Turkic* language, therefore affecting the *linguistic habitus* of the Muslim audience as well as features of the *Terjiman*'s bilingualism. Thus, he could choose whether some Russian terms, which did not have direct translations in Turkic, would simply be transliterated into Arabic script or would be adapted using most-likely equivalents.

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The *Terjiman*'s bilingualism, therefore, should be qualified as a particular approach that the editorial staff used in an attempt to carry out their position comprehensively. It expresses the instances of both *cultural bilingualism*, simultaneously addressing its Muslim and non-Muslim audiences, and *symbolic power*, establishing a dominant discourse and *linguistic habitus* for Russian Muslims.

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Tytuł: Gazeta *Perevodchik-Terjiman*. Przykład dwujęzycznej prasy muzułmańskiej w późno imperialnej Rosji

Abstrakt: Prezentowane studium przypadku bada dwujęzyczność kluczowej gazety rosyjskich muzułmanów z przełomu dziewiętnastego i dwudziestego wieku za pomocą analizy dyskursu. Gazetę *Perevodchik-Terjiman* (w przekładzie „Tłumacz") publikowano od 1883 do 1918 na Krymie, a jej redaktorem naczelnym był Ismail Gasprinskii (1851–1914), ważny działacz edukacyjny wśród rosyjskich muzułmanów. Do grudnia 1905 roku gazeta była dwujęzyczna, publikowano ją po rosyjsku i w języku ogólno-tureckim. Ten drugi miał się stać językiem literackim dla zamieszkujących imperium rosyjskie muzułmanów. Pomimo deklaracji, artykuły nie były dosłownymi tłumaczeniami i różniły się między sobą w kluczowych punktach. Nie chodziło jednak o zwykłe zatajenie czegoś przed niektórymi czytelnikami. Artykuł ten dowodzi, że jest to przykład bilingualizmu kulturowego, odzwierciedlającego wielokulturowość odbiorców gazety.

Słowa kluczowe: dwujęzyczność, gazeta *Perevodchik-Terjiman*, Ismail Gasprinskii, język ogólno-turecki, późnoimperialna Rosja, rewolucja 1905 w Rosji, rosyjscy muzułmanie

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"Woman Suffrage Would Undermine the Stable Foundation on Which Democratic Government is Based": British Democratic Antisuffragists, 1904–1914

From 1904 to 1914, the British debate on women's suffrage was at its height. Suffragism has been the subject of numerous studies, however, few have paid attention to its opponent, "antisuffragism". This article focuses on antisuffragists' speeches, pamphlets and books to examine their uses of "democracy" and grasp the conceptual struggles at play. Most "Antis" painted women's suffrage as a step towards a degenerate democratic society. However, more surprisingly, some also mobilised the democratic vocabulary positively, as a reason to disallow women the vote. Several authors considered that "democracy" rested on the capacity of the majority to impose its decisions through physical force–thus rendering a government elected by women impotent. Politicians also opposed granting women suffrage on a censorial basis since it went against the "democratic spirit of the time". These findings demonstrate the increased importance of "democracy" in Britain and how a "conservative subversion" of the concept was attempted.

Keywords: antisuffragism, Britain, conceptual history, democracy, suffrage

Introduction

For most of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, "democracy" was a highly controversial concept in British politics, and in Europe in general (Innes and Philp 2013, chaps 7–9; Saunders 2013a; Kurunmäki, Nevers and Velde 2018). Members of Parliament (MPs) and the political elite were anxious to distinguish the British parliamentary model from unstable democratic rule (Bonin 2020). Pasi Ihalainen's recent work has shown how it is only with the 1918 Representation of the People Act that most political actors finally embraced a democratic idiom (Ihalainen 2017, chap. 4.1). Nonetheless, before World War I, "democracy" played a key role during the debates surrounding women's right to vote in national elections.

Indeed, from 1904 to 1914, the British suffragist movement was at its height. In an international context marked by breakthroughs in cis--women's rights across Europe and the British Empire (Markoff 2003; Ruthchild 2010), as well as increased labour militancy on the domestic front (Béliard 2014), the debate on women's suffrage polarised public opinion. While the suffragist movement has been the subject of countless studies (Griffin 2012; Kent [1987] 2005; Mayhall 2003; Pugh 2002; Purvis and Holton 2000), the question of its opponents' relationship with "democracy" has seldom been analysed.

Albeit antisuffragism has been attracting more scholarly attention in recent years, it has generally been characterised as a reactionary and antidemocratic movement. But, in order to understand the place of the word "democracy" in the debates on women's suffrage, one needs to understand not only the place of the democratic and constitutional idioms in the pro-suffrage movement (Holton [1986] 2002; Barnes 2018), but also to study their challengers. Drawing on conceptual history, antifeminist studies and democratic theory, this article asks how did the "Antis" use "democracy" in their arguments, and what can these uses tell us about the political struggles of the day?

During the period under study, while the meaning of "democracy" varied considerably, three main trends can be distinguished: political, societal and categorial (Saunders 2013a). "Democracy" could refer to a type of political regime, generally associated with (male) universal suffrage. In this political sense, the British state was not necessarily seen as a democracy (since only 60% of adult males voted), while countries like France and the United States were. In its second meaning "democracy" designated a type of society, characterised by "an equality of conditions," to borrow Alexis de Tocqueville's famous formulation. In

this use, the word was often seen as a modern process ("democratisation"), associated with industrialisation, urbanisation and the emergence of "mass culture." Finally, the expression "the democracy" signified the people, and especially the working classes in opposition to "the aristocracy." As the following pages make clear, British antisuffragists' use of "democracy" varied between these three axes.

By using antisuffragist[1] books, pamphlets and discourses as primary sources, this article grasps the conceptual redefinitions of democracy at play between 1904 and 1914 in the struggle between suffragists and antisuffragists. At first, most Antis seemed to have a profound distrust of "democracy" and painted women's suffrage as the ultimate step towards a degenerated democratic society.

However, throughout the years, a second, and more surprising trend emerges: some antisuffragists also mobilised the democratic vocabulary positively, as a reason to disallow women the vote. A challenge to women's suffrage in the name of "democracy" seems to us particularly incongruous today.

Nevertheless, it is a good illustration of the gendered nature of the term at the beginning of the twentieth century in Britain, and of the conceptual debates surrounding it. Two "democratic antisuffragist" tendencies emerged at that time: I call them the "physical force" and "moderate" democratic antisuffragists. The first, resolutely Anti, considered that while democracy was synonymous with equality, it did not imply an arithmetic equality. Thus, democracy as a political regime must guarantee the political equality of its citizens, but since women are naturally–and physically–different, they cannot be granted the same rights. The second trend was more circumstantial, but seemed to have a greater impact on the suffragist movement. For these "Moderate" antisuffragists, giving women the right to vote on a property basis went against the democratic spirit of the time and thus needed to be resisted.

It should be remembered that in the United Kingdom in the 1900s, to vote, one needed to own or occupy a property of a certain minimum value. This meant nearly 40% of adult men were still excluded from the franchise (Holton [1986] 2002, 53). Thus, there were three possible ways of extending the right to vote: 1–"women's suffrage," conferring the vote to women on the same property qualifications as men; 2–"man-

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1 On the relationship between antisuffragism and antifeminism, I follow Lucy Delap for whom "it is helpful, then, to distinguish antisuffragism, as a specific campaign, from antifeminism, which represents a much more diverse cultural and political discourse" (2005, 381). In this article, the focus is on antisuffragism.

hood suffrage," meaning universal adult male suffrage; and 3–"adult suffrage," conferring the vote to adult men and women. This last label had a certain ambiguity: some "adultists" were mainly in favour of extending the right to vote to men – which led some suffragists to prefer the more explicit banner of women's suffrage (Holton [1986] 2002, chap. 3). Conversely, some suffragists might choose to call themselves adultists, as the term offered a more universalist perspective.

After a brief overview of the British Antisuffragist movement (part I), this article focuses on their positive uses of "democracy." Two different strands are explored: what I termed the "physical force democratic Antis" (part II) and the "moderate" ones (part III). In conclusion, I propose more general reflections on the "subversion" of concepts from a conservative perspective.

Revisiting the Antis

In British historiography, the opposition to women's suffrage was first depicted as a reactionary movement, characterised by a strong adhesion to the idea of a natural distinction between men and women. Brian Harrison's classic *Separated Spheres* (1978) argued that antisuffragism "rested on a clear view of the male and female temperament, physique and intellect" ([1978] 2013, 56). Barbara Kaplan-Tuckel's thesis similarly claimed that antisuffragist MPs "maintained that females occupied socio-political status that was fundamentally and naturally different from the status occupied by men" (Kaplan-Tuckel 1983). In general, historians were more concerned with recovering the voices of suffragist men and women than reconstructing the arguments of a few obscurantists on the "wrong side of history."

At the turn of the twenty-first century, a renewed interest in antifeminism meant that such claims were revisited. Several authors have instead underlined how the borders between suffragism and antisuffragism were porous. Julia Bush has demonstrated that while some antisuffragists did resort to a gendered "separated sphere" rhetoric, some pre-eminent antisuffragist women combined it with a more positive strand, "the forward policy'" which defended an active role for women as citizens (Bush 2002, 2007; Joannou 2005). While Lucy Delap resituated antisuffragism within the larger context of Edwardian debates about gender (Delap 2005), Martine Faraut argued that the Antis were, paradoxically, heir to Mary Wollstonecraft's ideas on women and citizenship (Faraut 2003). Ben Griffin has resituated the Antis' discourse

in the reconfiguration of Victorian and Edwardian masculinities (Griffin 2012, chap. 9–10). By reassessing the uses of "democracy" within the antisuffragist literature, this article follows these various reconsiderations of the "Antis" to underline that they cannot be dismissed as antidemocratic reactionaries as was easily thought.

Indeed, just like the suffragist movement was heterogeneous, defining the Antis position when it comes to "democracy" can be difficult. It is clear that antisuffragist organisations and individuals, especially those with aristocratic ties, often positioned themselves as antidemocratic. As Bush explains:

> Organized anti-suffragism often chose to cast itself in the role of last remaining bulwark of civilisation and rational government, holding back democratic forces which endangered far more than merely the efficiency of parliament: the abandonment of restraints upon democracy would be rapidly followed by subversion of the gender order and of society itself (2007, 15).

This opposition to "democracy" could be on several levels: political, societal or categorial. Antisuffragists were often critical of democratic government, of the egalitarian principles underlying democratic societies, and had a strong fear of "the rabble." For example, positivist and jurist Frederic Harrison (spouse of Ethel Bertha Harrison, an important member of the *Women's National Anti-Suffrage League*) argued that women's suffrage "would have a tendency to [intensify] all the evils of our present democracy, and destroying all the present value of the moral influence of women in things political" (1908, 136–37). On the other hand, Rhodesian antisuffragist Ethel Colquhoun criticised in *The Vocation of Women* (1913) the current "tendency in both democratic and feminine education (…) to encourage a superficial knowledge and to stimulate self-consciousness" (1913, 213). But not all antisuffragists displayed such a strong contempt for "democracy."

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Indeed, several antisuffragists were also careful to point out the power of words, and especially of the word "democracy." Harold Owen, in his *Woman Adrift* (1912), argued that "To the man who is hypnotised by the very words »Democracy« and »Progress,« so hypnotised that he cannot distinguish the thing from the name, arguments are useless" (30). Far from abandoning "democracy" to the suffragists, some Antis tried to reclaim the word. As the "imperial activist" (Riedi 2000) Violet Markham expressed in a February 1912 speech, she rejected women's suffrage on the grounds it "will not promote true liberty or true democracy. You must discriminate carefully between real and nominal extensions of

those great principles" (Markham 1912). As the following section demonstrates, not all Antis were thus willing to leave the powerful word "democracy" in the hands of the suffragists: for some of them, "true democracy" meant a government resting in the hands of men.

Before diving in, a last word on the scope of this research. As historians have been claiming for quite some time now, women's suffrage was a highly transnational movement, whether in the British Empire or beyond (Fletcher, Levine and Mayhall 2000; Rupp 2011). With the progressive adoption of women's suffrage at the national level in New Zealand (1893), Australia (1902), Finland (1906) and Norway (1913), international comparisons became more frequent and organisational structures developed (Markoff 2003). However, as Bush notes, anti-suffragists in Britain were less concerned with movements abroad–although they did link with their counterparts in the United-States (Bush 2007, 10). Nonetheless, as Sharon Crozier-De Rosa underlines, as the examples of New Zealand and Australia were increasingly mobilised by suffragists, the Antis had to revisit their claims to universality. Emphasising the socio-economic differences between Britain and the colonies, the Antis argued that due to the "burden" of the empire, British women were "doubly unsuited" to voting (Crozier-De Rosa 2013, 56). However, as the following makes clear, while some Antis did refer to the international context, it seems that comparison was not one of their favourite rhetorical tools, especially when it came to the question of "democracy."

Although this article focuses on the British case, extensive research on antisuffragist discourses in other countries, as well as their transnational connections could help to deparochialize the analysis. What kind of rhetoric did Antis in countries with different and more generally positive uses of "democracy," such as France and the United-States, mobilized? Inversely, what role did the word play in suffragists' and antisuffragists' struggles where voting rights were absent (such as Russia) or formal (such as Germany)? While researchers have been studying and underlining the transnational nature of political movements such as socialism and feminism, a similar perspective should be adopted by those investigating conservative forces. Through this contribution, I hope to lay some groundwork for such a future endeavour.

Democracy as the Threat of Violence: The Physical Force Antis

The first democratic antisuffragist trend was clearly a minority in the British political landscape, both in relation to the larger Anti movement,

and to other political forces. It nonetheless deserves some attention. For these Antis, there was an incompatibility between the political inclusion of women and democratic government. The arguments put forward changed, but they generally boiled down to the issue of physical strength and the resulting political incapacity of women. These authors considered that power in a democracy ultimately rested on the ability of the majority to impose its decisions through force. In this perspective, including women would distort the democratic process, creating majorities composed of people physically incapable of imposing their will to the others. This type of rhetoric appeared as early as the 1880s, when the anti-suffragist movement began to emerge.

In 1889, novelist Mary Augusta Ward and several other public figures published a tribune in *Nineteenth Century* entitled "An appeal against female suffrage." The text struck a careful balance between acknowledging a public role to women, while denying them the parliamentary vote. Praising women's participation in School Board and Boards of Guardians, the signatories argued that this "emancipating process has now reached the limits fixed by the physical constitution of women" (Ward 1889, 782). The question of the physical differences between men and women was already–and would continue to be–a favourite trope of antisuffragist discourse (Bush 2007, 11; Jorgensen-Earp and Jorgensen 2016; Sanders and Delap 2010, XLI–XLII). However, it took a new turn throughout that period.

Indeed, during the same year, jurist and Liberal Party member Heber L. Hart published a book entitled *Women's Suffrage and National Danger*. While most of his arguments for opposing the suffragists were relatively common, he did innovate by linking the question to "democracy." Hart stated that "the whole rationale of democracy must disappear if we repudiate presumable intellectual and moral fitness as the basis of the electoral Franchise" (Hart 1889, 38). For him, this "intellectual and moral fitness" could not be achieved by women, because, even in democracies, the government "is grounded upon force–upon the power of the majority" (Hart 1889, 157–58).[2]

2 In the United States, Francis Parkman advanced a similar argument a few years before Hart. In an article in *The North American Review*, the historian argued: "Since history began, no government ever sustained itself long unless it could command the physical force of the nation; and this whether the form of the government was despotism, constitutional monarchy or democracy. […] Finally, the majority in a democratic republic feels secure that its enactments will take effect, because the defeated minority, even if it does not respect law, will respect a force greater than its own" (Parkman 1880, 26). Parkman's arguments were compiled in a popular pamphlet *Some of the Reasons Against Woman Suffrage* (1890), which was eventually published in Britain (Marshall 1997, 81).

The notion of a government resting on physical force, of course, preceded Hart. What was novel about his claim is the relation he establishes between democracy, understood as "majority rule," and the physical capacities of the voters. While no explicit in 1889, Hart eventually spelled out the argument twenty years later, in a pamphlet published by the *Women's National Anti-Suffrage League*. On the opening pages, he stated that "if the suffrage were granted to women, the majority of votes cast at an election would bear no ascertainable relation to physical power. (…) *Democratic institutions would no longer be self-supported*" (Hart 1908, 3). For Hart, since democratic government rested on the capacity of the majority to subdue the minority through force, women's suffrage would turn things around. Indeed, a government elected by a majority of women could be successfully resisted by a minority of men, thus undermining the constitutional balance of modern democracy. Contrary to some of the more reactionary Antis mentioned earlier, Hart thus denied women the vote not because he thought democracy to be a scourge, but in order to preserve its foundations.

In the twenty years between Hart's two texts, this type of argument became more widespread in Britain. For example, in 1905, the well-known Radical MP Henry Labouchère opposed women's suffrage "as a Radical and a Democrat" because "after all, women were different from men physically and intellectually" (HC Deb, 12 May 1905, vol. 146 col. 226). More nuanced, the Unionist legal scholar, Albert V. Dicey argued that democracies were too "emotional" and that giving women the right to vote would only aggravate the problem, which would have the effect of "weakening English democracy" (Dicey 1909, 61, 91).

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Between 1908 and 1914, as the suffragist movement grew in popularity and intensity, anti-suffragist arguments increasingly focused on the issue of physical strength and the differences between men and women (Jorgensen-Earp and Jorgensen 2016). In 1912, Hart's 1889 book was republished under the title *Women's Suffrage: A National Danger* (Hart 1912). At the same time, Winston Churchill's secretary and Liberal MP Alexander MacCallum Scott published *The Physical Force Argument Against Woman Suffrage*. He prefaced the book by stating:

> Instead of being a necessary consequence of Democracy and Justice, Woman Suffrage would undermine the stable foundation on which Democratic Government is based [because] the only stable form of government is one which secures that the balance of political power is in the same hands as the balance of physical power. (Scott 1912)

MacCallum Scott's pamphlet was probably the clearest and most influent expression of what could be termed "physical force democratic antisuffragism." Tellingly, it was summed up in the widely distributed *Anti-Suffrage Handbook* edited by the *National League for Opposing Women Suffrage* (1912, 60–3).

MacCallum Scott's arguments offer an interesting example of the subversion of concepts with a conservative objective. To affirm that woman suffrage undermined democracy, he had to argue that democracy (in a political sense) boiled down to the threat of physical violence. The power of the majority rested not on its popular legitimacy, but on its capacity to impose its decisions through force. By doing so, MacCallum Scott went against another discourse, which underlined the power of democracy (understood as universal male suffrage) to defuse social conflicts. Dating at least to the 1840s, this was exemplified in the opposition between "the ballot and the rifle," by Republicans in France and Chartists in Britain (Rosanvallon 1992, 372–87; Gurney 2014). In the second half of the nineteenth century, the international peace movement was also founded on the tenet that "democratic government was antithetical to militarism" and violence (Laity 2002, 157). MacCallum Scott was thus clearly subverting one of the arguments favoured by Radicals and Liberals in favour of democracy in a political fashion.

The suffragist response to the rhetoric used by MacCallum Scott also mobilised a democratic discourse and evoked this idea of "democracy as social peace." Then well-known suffragist Agnes Maude Royden, responding directly to MacCallum Scott, stated "The vote is the democratic way of bringing that [spiritual and moral] force to bear on the problems of government and we are committed to democracy" (Royden 1912, 13). While most nineteenth century suffragists framed their demands in terms of the "constitutional idiom" (Barnes 2018), at the turn of the century, more suffragists presented their demands by appealing to the democratic ideal. In this context, Royden–and others–were keen to reclaim a democratic discourse against the Antis.

This type of "physical force democratic antisuffragist" rhetoric seemed to become particularly explicit in 1911–1914. As mentioned, those years witnessed "the Great Labour Unrest," an unprecedented wave of strikes and militant actions in Britain (Béliard 2014). These events raised larger questions about the "condition of England" and the role of the State in addressing social conflicts (Thompson 2014). It is thus not surprising that Antisuffragists shifted their discourse to appeal to the (male) working-class. Their democratic rhetoric had the advantage of being both compatible with the political inclusion of male workers, while denying women the right to vote.

This was precisely the road taken by Almroth Wright, a famous bacteriologist and immunologist. A well-known Anti, he published in 1913 a book against women's suffrage in which he followed almost *verbatim* MacCallum Scott's arguments. According to Wright, democracy and "the internal equilibrium of the State (…) would be endangered by the admission to the register of millions of electors whose vote would not be endorsed by the authority of physical force" (Wright 1913, 33). Wright was not opposed to an extension of the suffrage to working-class men. Indeed, he explicitly stated that the admission of more men under the franchise made the government stronger by making the application of laws harder to resist. But he was also careful to specify that, on the opposite "an extension which takes in any women undermines the physical sanction of the laws" (Wright 1913, 33).

It is, however, a socialist that offered the most elaborated democratic defence of the exclusion of women from the electoral sphere: Ernest Belfort Bax. An important figure of the *Social Democratic Federation*, the editor of the party paper, *Justice*, Bax established himself as a notorious antifeminist and masculinist figure with the publication of *The Legal Subjection of Men*, a book republished in 1908 (Bax [1896] 1908). Although his ideas on women's suffrage were considered "eccentric" within the socialist movement, he took advantage of his position to divulge them on numerous occasions (Bax 1889; 1907; 1912). Thus, his *New Catechism of Socialism* (1904), written with Harry Quelch, argued that "the relation of sex is largely unique in its character as implying an organic difference, and not a mere social one, and hence quite distinct from the relation of class or of race" (Bax and Quelch 1903). And from this "organic" difference, Bax justified the political inequality between the sexes.

His essay *The Fraud of Feminism*, published in 1913, when the suffragist movement was at its height, offers a synthesis of his thinking on the issue. According to him, "The illegitimate application of the modern democratic notion of the equality of classes and races, to that of sex, has contributed to the modern revolt against natural sex limitations" (Bax 1913, 28). Bax considers that the extension of suffrage has always taken place in democracies through the abolition of social barriers (class, race), never biological barriers (sex, species).

And this distinction allows him to affirm that "this difference rules out the bare appeal to the principle of democracy per se as an argument in favour of the extension of the suffrage to women" (Bax 1913, 155–56). Democrat and antisuffragist, such was the explicit position held by Bax.

Not a Democratic Proposition: The Moderate Antis

If what I labelled the "physical force democratic Antis" were a marginal–but vocal–part of the antisuffragist movement, several more opportunistic uses of "democracy" were made during the debates on women's suffrage. Here it was not so much the political inclusion of women that was deemed problematic, but the various projects to extend the right to vote to women on a censorial basis. The argument went that the enfranchisement of "proprieted ladies" and not "working women" was against the democratic spirit of the time, since it enshrined social distinctions. This antisuffragist trend was particularly visible in parliamentary debates and reveals another dimension of the conceptual struggles around "democracy" at the time.

In February 1908, Liberal MP Henry York Stanger introduced a private member's bill to extend the right to vote to women on a censorial basis. Surprisingly, several Liberal MPs justified their opposition to the proposition in the name of "democracy." For them, only adult suffrage could be seen as democratic, as any other measure would only reinforce the elitist nature of the electoral system. For Maurice Levy, York's project "was a retrograde measure going back to the old reactionary days of the property qualification. It would not democratise the House of Commons, but make it less representative than it was at the present time" (HC Deb 28 February 1908, vol. 185 col. 252; Clement Edwards, HC Deb 28 February 1908, vol. 185 col. 262). Out-of-doors, Emily Maud Simon developed the same type of arguments on behalf of the *Women's National Anti-Suffrage League*, claiming that the proposal would not give women workers the right to vote. Thus, according to her, the suffragist movement "can in no sense be regarded as having a democratic basis" (Simon 1908, 3–4). This "societal" and "categorical" uses of "democracy," as meaning popular and especially working-class women, would gain traction in the following years. As for York's bill, even if a majority of MPs did vote in favour, the Commons Speaker and the government defeated his proposition.

Between 1908 and 1910, the actions of the suffragist movement grew in intensity: demonstrations, breaking of windows (June 1908), picketing in front of the Commons (July 1909) and hunger strikes for female prisoners (summer 1909). Following the January 1910 election,[3]

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3 The January 1910 election led to the following results: Liberal 274 (loss of 123 compared to 1906), Conservative & Liberal-Unionist 272 (gain 116), Irish Parliamentary 71 (loss 11) and Labour 40 (gain 11). Asquith's Liberal government stayed in power with the support of the Irish Parliamentary Party.

a committee was set up on the issue of women's suffrage, composed of MPs from all four parties. The more bellicose *Women's Social and Political Union* (WSPU) agreed to stop its pressure tactics for a while (Wingerden 1999, 118). The committee produced a *Conciliation Bill* which was introduced in June. It aimed to reconcile, on the one hand, aspirations for universal suffrage and, on the other hand, a property-based enfranchisement of women. Voting rights were to be based on "the independent occupation of property" (Holton 1986, 70), thus, according to its supporters, the bill would give the right to vote to one million independent women (widows and single women), nearly 80% of whom were working women.

However, it was precisely on the democratic nature of this *Conciliation Bill* that the debates stalled. According to Conservative M.P. Frederick Edwin Smith, since the proposal aimed to extend suffrage to "proprieted ladies" and not "working women," there was a "profoundly undemocratic quality in the provisions of this particular measure" (HC Deb, 11 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 55–56).

Liberal M.P. Charles Lyell made similar arguments: "So far from this Bill being a step along the democratic path, it will be erecting a barrier against which many friends of democracy will labour in vain for a great number of years" (HC Deb, 11 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 138). It was therefore in the name of democracy, understood as an egalitarian society that some MPs refused to extend the right to vote to women homeowners.

This was indeed the line of thought of important Cabinet figures such as Home Secretary Churchill and Prime Minister Herbert H. Asquith. For the former, "it is not merely an undemocratic Bill; it is worse. It is an antidemocratic Bill. It gives an entirely unfair representation to property, as against persons" (HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 224). The second was even more explicit about its definition of democracy. According to Asquith, "By democratic I understand a measure which does not create but removes distinctions – a measure which, in granting new political rights, grants them upon some intelligible principle of equality as between the different classes of claimants" (HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 253). The creation of new women voters on a property basis was, they argued, as contrary to the egalitarian spirit of democracy. Asquith went even further, approaching the "physical force Antis" examined earlier, by evoking the fact that the "democracy wages [*sic*] war against artificial, and not against natural discriminations" (HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 247). As mentioned, this distinction between an artificial and social distinction (based on property) to be abolished, and a natural one (based on gender) to be maintained was particularly impor-

tant in Bax's argument. But most parliamentarians were not so draconian. They merely justified their opposition to the *Conciliation Bill* by stating that the enfranchisement of women based on property was not democratic in the societal sense of the word.[4]

Somewhat surprisingly, these debates witnessed then Conservative leader Arthur Balfour attacking Asquith's speech and defending women's suffrage in the name of democracy. For Balfour, there was "no use in manipulating the word »democracy« and turning it round and round." If the Liberals were playing at being democrats and considered that the measure presented as undemocratic, it was only to allow MPs "who willingly or unwillingly have allowed themselves to become inconveniently pledged to women's suffrage, to get out of those pledges on some broad ground." Balfour, arguing he was not a hypocrite, declared to be prepared to vote for the *Conciliation Bill*, particularly because he defined democracy as "government by consent" and when "a class feels itself as a class excluded, and outraged by being excluded" (HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 256–258), it was the duty of democrats to include it in the political arena. The previous day, Keir Hardie, leader of the Labour Party, had also insisted that "if anyone opposes this Bill on the ground that it is not democratic it shows he understands neither the question nor the terms of the Bill" (HC Deb 11 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 142). Several other parliamentarians also pointed out the democratic nature of the measure by stating the majority of new women voters would belong to the working classes.[5]

This debate on the democratic aspects of the *Conciliation Bill* in Westminster echoed the debate in the press. In the weeks before and after the deliberation, several suffragist newspapers questioned the meaning of "democracy" and pointed out the Liberal hypocrisy.[6] The following year, when two separate major figures of the suffragist movement, Sylvia Pankhurst and Millicent Fawcett, published their accounts of this period, both also attacked the duplicity of Churchill and Asquith regarding the democratic quality of the *Conciliation Bill* (Fawcett

4 See Allen Baker, HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 275; David Lloyd George, HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 309. Socialist H. Quelch brought forward a similar argument (Quelch 1910).

5 See David Shackleton, HC Deb, 11 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 47; Walter McLaren, HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 212; Henry George, HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 col. 243; Alfred Mound, HC Deb, 12 July 1910, vol. 19 cc277.

6 *Common Cause*, May 2, 1910; *The Vote*, May 25, 1910; *Common Cause*, July 14, 1910; *The Vote*, July 23, 1910; *Votes for Women*, July 29, 1910; *The Vote*, July 30, 1910; *Common Cause*, August 18, 1910; *The Vote*, August 27, 1910.

1911; Pankhurst 1911). As summarised in an August 1910 *Common Cause* editorial: "We wonder how long it will be before the male electors awake to the knowledge that those leaders who talked most about »Democracy« are those who have in truth no respect whatever for representative government" (*Common Cause*, August 4, 1910). It is clear from these articles that suffragists were increasingly claiming the right to vote in the name of democratic equality and following the principles of representative government. While some did so in the name of a "feminisation of democracy" (Blease 1910, 219), where women's particular interests in health, housing and education would benefit the nation as a whole, this type of argument seemed to be secondary in the democratic discourses.

As for the 1910 *Conciliation Bill*, although passed by a majority of 110 votes on July 12, it was set aside by the government and abandoned following the December 1910 election.[7] In May 1911, a slightly amended *Conciliation Bill* was reintroduced in the House by George Kemp to give the franchise to women householders. In his opening speech, Kemp pointed out that "those who are responsible for this Bill believe that it is a democratic Bill," particularly because "the vote would be granted in fair proportion to [women of] all classes in the country" (HC Deb, 5 May 1911, vol. 25 col. 738–739). The pamphlets produced by the suffragist movement also detailed the different social classes from which the new voters would come. The moderate *National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies* (NUWSS) called on the British public to support this measure for three reasons: "Because it is just. Because it is moderate. Because it is democratic" (NUWSS 1911b). And to those who defended adult suffrage, the NUWSS retorted that a partial victory was better than nothing given the current composition of the Commons: "the Conciliation Bill is small [but] it is democratic" (NUWSS 1911a).

In Westminster, the arguments of the suffragists seemed to bear fruit, since no MPs opposed the measure on the basis of its undemocratic character. However, we can see some MPs rejecting the *Conciliation Bill* using the argument of physical force. Thus, for Liberal-Unionist Halford Mackinder, women should be content to exert their influence on men and not to vote since "a vote is a cheque or draft on power, and, ultimately, on physical power." For him, "The whole history

7 The December 1910 election, on the issue of the People's Budget vetoed by the House of Lords, gave similar results to the preceding: Liberal 272 (loss of 2), Conservative & Liberal-Unionist 271 (loss 1), Irish Parliamentary 74 (gain 3) and Labour 42 (gain 2).

of democracy has consisted simply in that you recognise force (…) and that, by giving the vote, you seek to obtain the acquiescence of those who have power in the government of the country" (HC Deb, 5 May 1911, vol. 25 col. 763). MacCallum Scott would defend a position similar to the one he took in his pamphlet the following year. For him, the physical inferiority of women condemned them to remain outside the electoral sphere, since "democracy has built itself up by physical force; democracy maintains itself by physical force"(HC Deb, 5 May 1911, vol. 25 col. 793).

But these arguments did not prevent the 1911 *Conciliation Bill* from being approved by more than 288 MPs (versus 88) for a second reading. Subsequently, a tug-of-war between the suffragist movement and the Asquith government ensued. On several occasions, the Liberals assured suffragists that time would be set aside for parliamentary debate on the bill in 1912. However, in November 1911, Asquith announced that he would introduce a *Manhood Suffrage Bill* the following year, where the issue of women's suffrage could be freely discussed. The government also maintained that the *Conciliation Bill* could be dealt with in the House in parallel. The NUWSS approached the situation with some optimism, while the WSPU felt cheated by Asquith and renewed its militant actions (Mayhall 2003, 104). In the suffragist press, calls for opposition to manhood suffrage in the name of "complete democracy" multiplied,[8] notably under the impetus of the left wing of Labour, which refused to adopt a reform without including women's suffrage (Holton 1986, 73). In December 1911, a meeting of the NUWSS, the *Women's Liberal Federation* and the *Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association* led to the creation of a *Women's Suffrage Joint Campaign Committee* responsible for coordinating parliamentary work. These organisations agreed to demand "a measure of enfranchisement on broad and democratic lines" (*The Vote*, December 23, 1911).

These efforts proved to be vain. Dissent in the Liberal Cabinet meant that the promised reform was postponed until the following year. The *Conciliation Bill*, now seen as an alternative, was introduced in the House in March 1912. Parliamentary debates were a repetition of precedents. Suffragists defended the democratic nature of the proposed measure, while their opponents reiterated that it was not really

8 *Votes for Women*, November 24, 1911; *Common Cause*, November 30, 1911; *Common Cause*, December 07, 1911; *Votes for Women*, December 08, 1911; *Votes for Women*, December 22, 1911; *Votes for Women*, January 12, 1912; *Votes for Women*, February 16, 1912; *The Vote*, February 24, 1912; *Common Cause*, March 28, 1912.

democratic.[9] MacCallum Scott repeated his belief that the balance of political power rested in the balance of physical force and that "among nations that we call democratic (…) the unit of physical force is the individual male citizen" (HC Deb, 28 March 1912, vol. 36 col. 722). MPs rejected the measure, this time at 222 to 208. Several factors are put forward to explain this defeat: the prospect of wider reform for some Liberals, the absence of several Labour members following a mining strike, the fear of Irish nationalists that the debate on women's suffrage would encroach on the Home Rule issue, but also the militant actions of the WSPU in the weeks leading up to the vote (Wingerden 1999, 132; Pugh 2002, 140–41).

The failure of the 1912 *Conciliation Bill* is generally regarded as a turning point for the suffragist movement. From that point on, the NUWSS abandoned any hope that a Liberal government would ever pass women's suffrage. A rapprochement with the Labour Party then took place, notably through the creation of the *Election Fighting Fund*, which made the financial and material resources of the NUWSS available to Labour candidates during by-elections in 1912 and 1913 (Holton 1986, 4). It also appears to be a transition period for the anti-suffragists, as their democratic rhetoric diminished. For example, in the debates on the government *Reform Bill* in June 1912 and January 1913, no MPs opposed the extension of the right to vote–and an amendment to give women the vote–on the basis of democracy. Both Liberals and Conservatives defended the importance, in a democracy, of giving all citizens the right to vote equally.[10] However, the Chair of the Commons decided that the amendment concerning women's suffrage distorted the original proposal and the *Franchise and Registration Bill* was eventually dropped (Holton 1986, 92).

In May 1913, Liberal MP Willoughby Dickinson introduced a private member's bill to give women homeowners the right to vote. Defeated by 266 to 219 votes, this was to be the last time that issue of women's suffrage was raised in Westminster until 1917 and the debates

9 For the "democratic argument" see Alfred Moritz Mond, HC Deb, 28 March 1912, vol. 36 col. 624; Philip Snowden, HC Deb, 28 March 1912, vol. 36 col. 709. For the counter-argument, see Harold Baker, HC Deb, 28 March 1912, vol. 36 col. 633–634.

10 For the Liberals, see Joseph Pease, HC Deb 17 June 1912, vol. 39 col. 1327; Joseph King, HC Deb 17 June 1912, vol. 39 col. 1398; William Byles, HC Deb 17 June 1912, vol. 39 col. 1425. For the Conservatives, see Alfred Lyttelton, HC Deb 24 January 1913, vol. 47 col. 886; John Rolleston, HC Deb 24 January 1913, vol. 47 col. 929; Hugo Cecil, HC Deb 27 January 1913, vol. 47 col. 1086.

leading up to the adoption of the *1918 Reform Bill* (Ihalainen 2017, 232–35). In May 1913, proponents of women's suffrage continued to stress the importance of allowing women to vote in a democratic society.[11] Nevertheless, Prime Minister Asquith reiterated his opposition to such a measure, in particular because for him democracy aimed "at the obliteration of arbitrary and artificial distinctions. Democracy has no quarrel whatever with distinctions which nature has created and which experience has sanctioned" (HC Deb 06 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1911). But this kind of statement seemed to have been more and more marginal in the parliamentary arena. And if 1913 saw the publication of the physical force democratic Antis works of Wright and Bax discussed above, it is increasingly clear that the suffragist movement had successfully appropriated "democracy" and a democratic rhetoric, leaving the Antis to grapple with the label of "antidemocrats."

Conclusion: Subversion for Conservation?

As these examples demonstrate, the "democratic rhetoric against women's suffrage," much like the opposition to women's enfranchisement, cut across party lines. High-ranking Liberals, pre-eminent Conservatives and eccentric Socialists could all mobilise "democracy" against any gendered extension of the franchise. To do so, they either resorted to complex arguments linking physical force and democratic government, or, mundane and fashionable attitude, contrasted propositions to grant women the vote on a censorial basis with the egalitarian and democratic spirit of the times.

The recovery of these forgotten–and sometimes quite odd–uses of "democracy" by Antisuffragists is not only valuable to historians and rhetoric scholars. These discourses also offer a clear example of a conceptual subversion in a conservative fashion. Subversion is generally understood as a disruption of the status quo. Revolutionary and popular movements often have to engage in subversion both on the theoretical and practical level. Conceptually, they can 1) (re)appropriate established categories, 2) challenge connotations or 3) create new meanings. In Britain–and one could argue that similar processes were at play across Europe–the struggles around "democracy" offer examples of all three.

11 James Parker, HC Deb 5 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1749; Philp Snowden, HC Deb 5 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1902; Edward Grey, HC Deb 6 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1937; Athelstan Rendall, HC Deb 6 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1960–1961; George Touche, HC Deb 06 May 1913, vol. 52 col. 1976.

As mentioned, political and cultural elites eschewed democracy in the nineteenth century. Popular movements, from the Chartists to the Socialists and the Feminists, had to challenge the negative and riotous images associated with the term, reinvent democracy as a modern concept, and push it in new directions (social democracy, industrial democracy, "true democracy," etc.).

However early twentieth century British Antis were also engaged in conceptual subversion. By redefining "democracy" as a government resting on both majority rule and physical force, they challenged previous associations between democratic government and social harmony. Of course, this idea of democracy as the rule–or tyranny–of the majority was a common interpretation of democratic government in Western political thought at the time. These Antis, by drawing both on this conception of democracy and a "realist" understanding of politics as the never-ending struggle for power, were reinterpreting democratic government in a new way. Far from being a consensual discussion between peers, "democracy" was foremost about the creation of a majority capable of potentially coercing minorities.

But the Antis were not only merging different understandings of "democracy." Figures like Wright, Bax and Asquith also appropriated democratic arguments by defending male suffrage while rejecting women's suffrage by drawing a strong line between "artificial" and "natural" distinctions. In doing so, they were also anxious to challenge associations between "democracy" and "universal." Far from an ever-expanding project, democracy could and should be limited: to men, and in a context increasingly marked by social Darwinism and eugenics, to white men especially. This defence of the political inclusion of men at the expense of the exclusion of women resonates strongly with Carole Pateman's idea of "sexual contract" (1988), the fraternity of men being justified by their alleged superiority over women.

Through this "conservative subversion" of democracy, the British Antis–whether doctrinal or opportunistic–were grappling with the increased popularity of the word. Like many political movements, they realised the importance of certain keywords and refused to let their opponents master them. As Robert Saunders has demonstrated, a similar process of "conservative subversion" can be seen at play in the Conservative party regarding the Irish question between 1900 and 1914. By contesting the legitimacy of Home Rule through a democratic discourse and playing the Cabinet against the people (Saunders 2013b), Conservatives not only accommodated themselves to democratic principles but also tried to push "democracy" in new directions. While the uses might have been

more tactical than doctrinal, they nonetheless reflect a certain inclination to subvert the concept in order to defend the established order.

In conclusion, even if the Antis lost the battle of suffrage in 1918, the continued opposition to women's suffrage in 1920s Britain (Binard 2014) proves that the war around "democracy" raged on for many more years. Indeed, one could argue it still wages on.

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Autor: Hugo Bonin
Tytuł: "Prawa wyborcze kobiet osłabiłyby stabilną podstawę, na której opiera się rząd demokratyczny" – brytyjscy demokratyczni antysufrażyści (1904–1914)
Abstrakt: Między 1904 a 1914 rokiem brytyjska debata na temat prawa wyborczego kobiet osiągnęła szczyt intensywności. Tymczasem, choć sufrażyzm był jak dotąd przedmiotem licznych badań, niewiele uwagi poświęcono przeciwnikom praw wyborczych kobiet – antysufrażystom. Artykuł koncentruje się na przemówieniach, broszurach i książkach, publikowanych przez antysufrażystów, i ma na celu prześledzenie ich intelektualnych zmagań z pojęciem demokracji. Jak się okazuje, większość z nich przedstawiała nadanie kobietom praw wyborczych jako krok w kierunku degeneracji społeczeństwa demokratycznego. Jednak, co bardziej zaskakujące, niektórzy antysufrażyści używali również demokratycznego języka w sposób pozytywny, wskazując za jego pomocą powody, dla których kobiety nie powinny głosować. Kilku z analizowanych w tekście autorów uważało, że „demokracja" opiera się na zdolności do narzucania woli większości siłą, co czyniłoby bezsilnymi rządy, wybrane przez kobiety. Sprzeciwiano się również sufrażyzmowi dlatego, że był on postrzegany jako nurt, rozwijający się wbrew "demokratycznemu duchowi" tamtych czasów. Poszczególne przykłady, zgromadzone w tekście, wskazują na rosnące znaczenie pojęcia demokracji w Wielkiej Brytanii w początkach XX wieku, oraz odkrywają próby zdefiniowania go jako kategorii konserwatywnej.
Słowa kluczowe: demokracja, historia pojęć, prawo wyborcze, sufrażyzm, Wielka Brytania

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The Transfigurations of Spacetime: The Concept of Tabor in the Hussite Revolution and its Implications for Philosophy of History[1]

In this paper, I aim to show how medieval political theology and contemporary philosophy of history can inform one another. To do so, I examine the concept of Tabor–a notion which emerges among the radical Hussites, known as the Taborites, during the Hussite revolution in medieval Bohemia. I believe that the politico-theological concept of Tabor puts into question modern philosophies which think of history in terms of time, by clearly showing the insufficiency of a purely temporal approach to historical ideas and experiences. To successfully articulate the Taborite concept, we must understand history as structured not only by time but also by space and ideology. Conversely, a historical study guided by the philosophical categories of ideology, space, and time can expand our understanding of Hussite political theology by revealing notions and experiences which cannot be identified by an exclusively ideological, or solely spatial or temporal, analysis.

Keywords: apocalypticism, heresy, Hussite revolution, ideology, medieval communism, philosophy of history, political theology, space, time

1 I would like to thank Szymon Pankiewicz, Patrick Wheatley and Rosie Worsdale for their help in preparing this article. I am also grateful to the editors and the anonymous reviewers for their useful suggestions.

In this paper, I aim to show how medieval political theology and contemporary philosophy of history can inform one another. To do so, I examine the concept of Tabor–a notion which emerges among the radical Hussites, known as the Taborites, during the Hussite revolution in medieval Bohemia.[2] I believe that the politico-theological concept of Tabor puts into question modern philosophies which think of history in terms of time, by clearly showing the insufficiency of a purely temporal approach to historical ideas and experiences. To successfully articulate the Taborite concept, we must understand history as structured not only by time but also by space and ideology. Conversely, a historical study guided by the philosophical categories of ideology, space, and time can expand our understanding of Hussite political theology by revealing notions and experiences which cannot be identified by an exclusively ideological, or solely spatial or temporal, analysis.

This paper has two parts. First, I trace the history of the concept of Tabor. Because the concept of Tabor reflects the changing situation of the radical Hussites, it is an invaluable resource for studying the religious, political, and geographical experiences of the Taborite community during the revolution. More specifically, the idea of Tabor attests to the fact that, based on their experiences, the Taborites developed a unique and effective political theology, which led to the establishment of an anti-feudal city outside the control of the Catholic Church.

The second part of this paper is concerned with two interrelated theoretical implications of the concept of Tabor. Firstly, the Taborite notion helps us to recognise the constitutive role of space, and its relation to time, in the formation of experiences and ideas. This means that spatial categories should complement their temporal counterparts in guiding our research into history. Secondly, the analysis of Tabor demonstrates that a spatiotemporal study of experiences and notions must be supplemented with a discussion of ideology, as without the category of ideology, we would be unable to account for the historically specific content of past lives and ideas. The articulation of the concept of Tabor,

2 There has been a debate over whether the terms "Hussite" and "revolution" are appropriate to describe the events in fifteenth-century Bohemia. In this paper, I continue to use these terms, agreeing with Fudge that, "Symbolically, Hus is the fountainhead of the revolution which followed his death" (2010, 147). I also second Kaminsky's opinion that though the Hussite movement was interested in reforms, these reforms were inseparable from the revolution, and that "the two lines of Hussite development [reform and revolution] progressed together, in mutually reinforcing resonance" (1967, 3). For a discussion of the reforms which preceded and followed the Hussite revolution, see Nodl (2016).

therefore, presupposes a philosophy of history which can ground and direct research into historical experiences and notions by conceiving of history as structured by space, time, and ideology.

1. The Concept of Tabor in the Hussite Revolution

In Czech literature on the Hussites, we can distinguish between two main approaches. The first one focuses on the relation between Hus, Hussitism, and Czech national identity (Palacký 2007; Šmahel 2015), while the second one offers a Marxist analysis of Hussitism as a revolutionary movement fighting for socio-economic reforms (Macek 1958; Kalivoda 2014). This latter strand of Hussite historiography, and especially Kalivoda's focus on the role of Hussite ideology, seems to have influenced the dominant approach in the Anglophone scholarship. For example, in his influential study of the Hussite revolution, Howard Kaminsky explicitly acknowledges his debt to both Macek and Kalivoda (1967, 4). The difference between the Marxist and Anglophone literature lies in their respective interpretations of religion. As Thomas Fudge points out, the Czech Marxist scholarship sees religion as a secondary factor which "serves only as a mask for the truly significant social issues" (1994, 101). Anglophone scholars, by contrast, supplement the socio-economic analysis with arguments which show the fundamental role of religion in the Hussite revolution (Kaminsky 1957; Lahey 2019; Fudge 2020).

Surprisingly, the Hussite revolution has received relatively little attention in the Anglophone world. Hussitism is often seen as one of many failed popular heretical movements found across medieval Europe. For instance, the American historian Martin Malia, despite devoting a whole chapter of one his books to the Hussites, writes in a rather disparaging fashion:

> the Hussites produced no new concepts, whether religious or political, no corpus of doctrine or treatise comparable in originality to those of such later religious revolutionaries (...). Similarly, even though they turned Bohemia upside down for twenty years, when the dust settled the realm had not broken out of the medieval Catholic and feudal mold (…). The Hussite overturn left no legacy or legend to the rest of Europe: for centuries it remained in the consciousness of Christendom largely as a "heresy" that was eventually defeated. (2008, 38–9)

The aim of this section is to demonstrate that the above view is mistaken. Hussites did produce new concepts, and they did–however

Hussites did produce new concepts, and they did–however briefly–manage to escape the Catholic and feudal moulds.

briefly–manage to escape the Catholic and feudal moulds. To substantiate my claim, I will focus on the period of the Hussite revolution directly surrounding the emergence of the notion of Tabor. I will explore the history of the Taborites from pacifist hilltop congregations concerned with taking communion in the form of both bread and wine, through a militant group prepared to wage war and hasten the coming of the apocalypse, to a communist city. My goal is to demonstrate the originality of their political theology, as well as its effectiveness, attested to by the establishment of the Taborite city. In so doing, I continue the approach of Anglophone scholars who emphasise the importance not only of socio-economic questions, but also of religious ideology; in fact, I aim to demonstrate that in the Taborite political theology, it is impossible to clearly separate social, economic, and theological elements. However, where this paper differs from other approaches is in its emphasis on the importance of the experiences of space and time, which underlie the developments of the Hussite ideology. The spatiotemporal approach to Taborite political theology, in turn, explains how the religious, political, and geographical experiences of the radical Hussites produced a concept of Tabor, as well as how changes in this concept were able to continually transform the Taborite experience. The focus on space, time, and ideology, therefore, enables me to present a history of the notion of Tabor and its role in the Hussite revolution, which accounts for the emergence, transformation, and effects of the Taborite concept.

A) Utraquism, camps, and hilltops

One of the controversial debates which preoccupied the inhabitants of Bohemia in advance of the rise of Hussitism was the question of communion "in both kinds" (*sub utraque specie*)–that is to say, in the form of both bread and wine. While the official position of the Catholic Church restricted communion in both kinds to clergy, allowing the laity to take communion only in the form of bread, the Utraquists–as the proponents of communion *sub utraque specie* came to be known–argued for lifting the official restrictions and allowing for "lay chalice," i.e. for the laity's access to communion in the form of wine as well as bread. The reason why the issue of communion in both kinds was so controversial is that it put into question the hierarchical separation between clergy, who enjoyed the privilege of communing by wine and bread, and laity, who, by communing only in one of the two possible ways, were deprived of the privileges of the priests. As Malia observes, denying the

chalice to lay members of the church, "had the long-term effect of emphasizing the separation between the sacerdotal priesthood and the body of the faithful. Returning the cup to the laity thus meant narrowing that gap and democratizing the church" (2008, 46). The democratising tendency of the Utraquists was further expressed in the demand to extend communion to women and children, and to take it daily.[3] Thomas Fudge notes that one of the precursors of Hus, Matěj of Janov,

> made it abundantly clear that the medieval assumption(…) that a priest may commune on behalf of the faithful was not tenable. Matěj explicitly argued there were priests who regarded themselves more important than the laity and had no desire to allow common people to be equated with them through the practice of frequent communion(…) While underscoring disputes over the practice Matěj advocated for it concluding men and women should commune frequently(…) In this sense Matěj regarded the eucharist as a social leveller (2010, 152–3).

The democratising demands of Utraquists were met with opposition from the Catholic Church. In 1415, the Council of Constance forbade the practice of Utraquism and threatened to punish those who disobeyed the ruling. As Fudge observes, "At the Council it had been argued that if a layman allowed consecrated wine to wet his beard, he ought to be burned along with his beard" (2010, 158).

It is at this point that the concept of Tabor begins to germinate. Those Utraquists who, due to the official ban, were unable to take communion in both kinds in churches sought alternative spaces. These were offered on the tops of Bohemian hills and mountains. The hilltop meetings where people communed *sub utraque specie* soon become mass events marking a separation from the official church.

There are at least two reasons why we can speak of the gathering on hilltops as connected to the figure of Hus, and thus as constituting a phase of Hussitism. Firstly, as Fudge observes, towards the end of his life Hus became an advocate of Utraquism–a conviction which only became more radical with the official ban (2010, 156). Secondly, the gatherings in the open air were a continuation of a practice started by Hus himself.[4] J.K. Zeman remarks that, threatened by the official authorities in 1412,

3 For a discussion of the role of women in the Hussite revolution, see Klassen (1981).

4 To see how Hus's life and work compare to those of earlier European "heretics," cf. Frassetto (2007). For an exploration of how Hus influences later religious movements, see Haberkern (2016).

Hus left Prague and moved to the countryside, where he "preached to large outdoor assemblies of common people." Importantly, Zeman notes that these mass meetings, which continued after Hus's death, were called camps–or *Tabory* in Czech (1979, 17).[5] The use of the vernacular word *Tabor* to refer to the early Hussites' gatherings attests to the popular character of the meetings, which, as makeshift camps, stood in stark contrast to the *ecclesia*, which gathered in stone buildings of the Latin church.[6]

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Importantly for our purposes, Howard Kaminsky notes that one of the hills "near Bechyně castle" where the Utraquists gathered was "renamed 'Mt. Tabor'(...) The congregants themselves became known as Taborites" (1957, 44–5). It is likely that homonymity led to the naming of one of the hilltops where a *Tabor* was set up as Mount Tabor. However, there are also symbolic and conceptual reasons for the name. In the Christian tradition, Mount Tabor is associated with the transfiguration of Jesus–an event during which Jesus reveals his divine nature to three of his disciples by becoming radiant with light and appearing alongside Moses and Elijah (Matt., 17:1–3). The Biblical account of transfiguration could explain the choice of the name for the Bohemian mountaintop: Mount Tabor is a privileged space insofar as it is both a site of revelation (it is *there* where Jesus shows himself to be Christ to a group of chosen disciples who climbed the mountain with him) and a site of the transformation of Jesus's human form (it is *there* where Jesus becomes radiant with divine light). To name the hilltop Mount Tabor, therefore, is to conceptualise it as a space where one learns the truth about Christ, and where one witnesses the divinely inspired metamorphosis of the human form on the condition that one is willing to walk up the mountain and join the camp. In other words, the name Tabor affirms that the correct teaching of the Gospel and genuine spiritual metamorphosis can no longer happen in the official churches but only on a hilltop. This sentiment is confirmed by Jakoubek of Stříbro, a Hussite preacher who writes:

5 The word *tabor* is only one of the examples which illustrate the importance attached to the vernacular among the Hussites. Brušák, for instance, discusses Hussite poetry written in the vernacular (1998). Interestingly, as Rychterová argues, the usage of the vernacular in the Hussite movement led to "an acceleration in the process of the vernacularization of written culture that decisively influenced the subsequent development of literary culture and intellectual life in Bohemia" (2020, 297).

6 The fact that the meetings had a popular character does not imply that Hussitism was exclusively a peasant movement. As Klassen notes, the appeal of Hussitism cut across social classes (1990).

> In the year 1419 there took place a congregation of the laity on a certain mountain and in an open place near the village of Chrástan in the region of Písek and Bechyně, to which place people came from many other towns and regions of Bohemia and Moravia, to hear and obey the word of God and to take communion freely, with their children too, in the glorious sacrament of the body and blood of Lord Jesus. There they recognized, through the gift of the Holy Spirit and of the word of God, how far they had been led away and seduced by the foolish and deceitful clergy from the Christian faith and from their salvation; and they learned that the faithful priests could not preach the Scriptures and the Christian doctrine in the churches. And they did not wish to remain in that seduction. (McGinn 1979, 263)

I believe that by 1419 the concept of Tabor crystalises in its earliest form, as a notion which expresses the spatial and ideological experience of the radical Hussites. More specifically, the concept of Tabor captures the space that the Taborites occupied in a threefold opposition to the Catholic Church: Firstly, as makeshift popular camps, Tabor undermines the role of churches as centres of preaching; secondly, as gatherings on mountaintops, Tabor effectively claims space from the control of the Catholic Church; lastly, as a symbolic successor to the Biblical site of transfiguration, Tabor provides a conceptual justification for the Utraquist deviation from the official Catholic practices, as well as for the privileged position of hilltop camps over churches. In the second part of this paper, I will return to the theme of space in Taborite political theology to examine how it bears on contemporary philosophy of history.

B) Five cities of refuge

Soon, the Taborites faced opposition. Kaminsky observes that a truce between Prague–a centre of Hussite reforms–and the feudal powers loyal to the Catholic Church, which took place on November 13, 1419, "was the signal for a savage persecution of non-royalist Hussites throughout Bohemia" (1957, 45). The attendees of hilltop gatherings became victims of violent attacks. A chronicle from the time notes a horrific purge carried out by an anti-Taborite group of inhabitants of Kutná Hora, who, "inhumanly threw them–some alive, some first decapitated–into deep mine shafts, especially into the mine shaft near the Church of St. Martin." The incident in Kutná Hora, while demonstrating the bloody character of the persecution of the rebelling Utraquists, also attests to the circulation of the concept of Tabor among the enemies of the Tabo-

rites. The chronicler remarks that the mine shaft and a mass grave–an *inverse* of a mountain of transfiguration–was mockingly "called 'Tabor'" (in Kaminsky 1957, 46).

The violent opposition to both the Taborites and the idea of Tabor forced the radical Hussites to change their tactic and revise and expand their conceptual self-understanding. These changes can be grouped into two categories, corresponding to a shift in the experience of space and an emergence of a new experience of time.[7] On the one hand, we witness a transition from organising in makeshift camps on mountaintops to permanently moving to walled cities sympathetic to the Taborite cause. On the other hand, we can observe that the experience of persecution sparked an apocalyptic understanding of the world as nearing its end. These two "spatiotemporal" developments among the Taborites are confirmed by a moderate Hussite, Lawrence of Březová:

> To the extent that they desired to be saved from the wrath of Almighty God that they said was ready to come upon the whole world each and all should move from the cities, fortresses, villages, and towns to the five cities of refuge, as Lot left Sodom. These were their names–Plzeň, which they called the city of the sun, Zatec, Louny, Slany, and Klatovy. Almighty God wished to destroy the whole world with the sole exception of those people who fled to the five cities. (McGinn 1979, 264–5)

The pragmatic decision to move to cities–most likely motivated by the fact that a walled city provides better protection from one's enemies than a camp–was accompanied by conceptual developments attested to by Lawrence, who notes that the Taborites' towns were understood as the five cities of refuge. The latter concept is, in fact, an amalgamation of two Old Testament notions: the five cities in the book of Isaiah, and the cities of refuge. The five cities appear in Isaiah 19:18–an apocalyptic chapter which prophesies the destruction of Egypt and the survival of five Hebrew cities–and one of them is named the "City of the Sun" or the "City of Destruction" (a title apparently given to Plzeň). Because Isaiah's prophecy almost perfectly explains the situation in Bohemia, it is understandable why the Biblical five cities would warrant the identification with the

7 It is unclear whether Hus's views on temporality influenced the Taborite experience of time. Although it is possible that Hus's writings on the subject had *some* impact on the radical Hussites, the Taborites' notion of time, as I show below, can be successfully explained in terms of more likely sources: Biblical narratives and the experience of violent struggles. For a discussion of Hus's ideas on time and eternity, see Matula (2003).

Taborite cities. The conflict between the people and the enemies of God (i.e. the radical Hussites and the forces allied with the Egypt-like Catholic Church) will be resolved by an imminent apocalypse which will destroy the land loyal to the Catholics but will save the walled cities of radical Hussites. One should, therefore, relocate to the five Taborite cities which, as has been prophesied, survive the apocalypse. As Lawrence of Březová puts it: "At this time some of the priests of Tabor were preaching a new coming of Christ to the people. In this advent all the evil and those who envied truth would perish and be exterminated; at least the good would be preserved in the five cities" (McGinn 1979, 264).

Malia notes: "On the basis of astrological calculations" the radical Hussites "had expected the end of the world between the eleventh and fourteenth of February 1420" (2008, 48). Interestingly, the fact that the world continued to exist as normal and that the enemies of God were not destroyed after this date did not deter the Taborites. Instead of giving up on their apocalyptic expectations, they re-interpreted them–the apocalypse and the destruction of one's enemies are not to be simply awaited; rather, they are to be brought about by the effort of the faithful.[8] More specifically, the apocalypse was to be hastened by a violent struggle against the forces of the Anti-Christ, i.e. the armies loyal to the official church.[9] In effect, the shift from passive to active apocalypticism was equivalent to an embrace and justification of violence.[10] John of Příbram, critical of the Taborites, writes:

8 As Bartlová observes, one of the ways in which the Hussites fought their enemies was through "the destruction of precious objects connected to religion and the social elites" (2016, 58). "In a wider anthropological sense," Bartlová suggests, "we may diagnose this aspect of Hussite iconoclasm as an attack on the sources of the enemy's symbolic power" (2016, 65).

9 For a discussion of the role of the Anti-Christ in the Hussite political theology, see Cermanová (2020) and Buck (2011).

10 Interestingly, attempts to justify violence can also be found among the reformist wing of the Hussites. Kaminsky points out that the moderates tried to develop a "doctrine of legitimate revolution"–a doctrine which was immediately limited and in effect neutralised (1957, 52). Malia observes that the justification of violence was also implicit in the articles of Prague on which all Hussites agreed: "the final article was the most radical of the four. It decreed that 'all mortal sins' and 'other disorders offending against the Law of God shall be (...) prohibited and punished (...) by those who have the authority to do so.' In other words, the church should be forcibly purged and revolutionized by the temporal authorities, that is, the Hussite nobility, the urban communes, and such armed confraternities of true believers as the Taborites" (2008, 51). This suggests that the Taborite justification of violence was simply a radicalisation of Hussite beliefs, and not a doctrine which would separate them from the wider Hussite movement. For a more detailed discussion of the articles of Prague, see Christianson (2012).

> At this point the false seducers thought up a new lie somehow to console the people, and they said that the whole Christian Church was to be reformed in such a way that all the sinners and evil people were to perish completely, and that only God's elect were to remain on earth (…) And they said that the elect of God would rule in the world for a thousand years with Christ, visibly and tangibly (…) Then the seducers, wanting to bring the people to that freedom and somehow to substantiate their lies, began to preach enormous cruelty, unheard-of violence, and injustice to man. They said that now was the time of vengeance, the time of destruction of all sinners and the time of God's wrath (...) in which all the evil and sinful ones were to perish by sudden death, on one day. (...) And when this did not happen and God did not bring about what they had preached, then they themselves knew how to bring it about, and again thought up new and most evil cruelties. (...) And again those cruel beasts (…) preached that it was no longer the time of mercy but the time of vengeance, so that the people should strike and kill all sinners… (McGinn 1979, 265–6)

The embrace of militant apocalypticism can explain the introduction of the notion of the cities of refuge and its conceptual merger with the five cities of Isaiah. The cities of refuge in the Old Testament are places where someone guilty of manslaughter can be protected from vengeance allowed by law outside of the city walls. To refer to the Taborite cities as the cities of refuge, therefore, is to endow them with a power to suspend the punishment for bloodshed. The protection from punishment provided by the Taborite cities of refuge can be understood in two ways at once: physically and spiritually. On the one hand, the defensive qualities of the walled cities made it more difficult for the enemies to retaliate; the cities thus provided a refuge from the physical consequences of warfare. On the other hand, belonging to the cities and engaging in their defence was presented as protecting the Taborites from damnation, i.e. the spiritual consequences of violent acts. Interestingly, the imagery used at the time seemed to symbolically link violence against enemies to the practice of Utraquism, and specifically, to the communion in the form of wine. As Fudge points out, for the Utraquists, "The bread facilitated union with Christ while the blood washed sins away" (Fudge 2010, 153). Over time, however, the absolving or "cleansing" effects of the blood of Christ received passively as wine seem to have been extended to the blood of the enemies shed actively on the battlefield. An apocalyptic letter states that "the just (...) will now rejoice, seeing vengeance and washing their hands in the blood of the sinners" (Kaminsky 1957, 68). Similarly, an anti-Taborite article admonishes the radical Hussite belief "that in this time of vengeance any one of the faithful is

accursed who holds his sword back from the blood of the adversaries of Christ's Law from personally pouring it out. Rather, each of the faithful ought to wash his hands in the blood of Christ's enemies, because blessed are all who return vengeance to the woeful daughter [i.e. the Catholic Church], just as she has done to us" (McGinn 1979, 267).

By the early months of 1420, the initial idea of Tabor was revised. Recall that in 1419 the concept of Tabor designated a popular camp on a mountaintop, which peacefully claimed space from the control of the Catholic Church and which perceived itself as a site of transfiguration effected by Utraquist practices. However, the experience of persecution, combined with the strategic choice to effectively fight against the enemies by exploiting the defensive features of cities and the offensive qualities of an organised militia, led to clear conceptual developments and revisions. Tabor became identified with the five cities of refuge–a notion which connected the antagonistic experience of space, apocalyptic expectation, and justification of violence. In the revised idea of Tabor, the space was claimed from the Catholic Church through warfare, and the transfiguration of the faithful was a result of bloody violence which hastened the end of times.[11] In the second part of this paper, I will examine how the particular spatiotemporal experience of the radical Hussites captured by the transformed concept of Tabor can influence our philosophical approach to history.

C) The city of Tabor

The concept of Tabor, as we have examined it so far, was used primarily as a weapon in a struggle against the Catholic Church. Around the year 1419, the Taborite community undermined the official church by moving to hilltops in order to practice Utraquism; at the beginning of 1420, fuelled by apocalyptic fervour, the Taborites violently resisted the forces they deemed loyal to the Catholic Church. Interestingly, during 1420, the antagonism towards the official church was extended–now the Taborites fought not only the dominant religious structures but also Bohemia's economic and social organisation. In short, Tabor became both an anti-Catholic and an anti-feudal concept. This expanded notion of Tabor manifested itself inside a city named, appropriately, Tabor. For a brief period, the economic, social, and religious relations in the city

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11 For a discussion of how Hussite apocalypticism relates to the medieval apocalyptic tradition, see Lerner (1982).

neutralised the traditional feudal hierarchies and division. The radicality of Tabor's organisation led some contemporary commentators to call the city communist (Kaminsky 1957, 54; Fudge 1998) or even "avowedly anarchic" (Bookchin 1982, 202).

The beginning of the city of Tabor can be traced to the early spring of 1420, when several radical Hussites captured a town called Ústí-nad-Lužnicí. Kaminsky observes: "A few days later these Taborites took possession of the nearby abandoned fortress of Hradiště, on a much stronger site, and they began to move there, renaming it Tabor." By March 25, the Taborites stationed in Plzeň left the City of the Sun and moved to Tabor. Soon, "Tabor emerged as *the* chiliast city of the realm, the heir of all the previous congregations and communities, and the main center of attraction for new adherents to the chiliast revolution" (Kaminsky 1957, 54–5).

The Taborites living in the city believed in common ownership of goods. Kaminsky notes that inside the city walls, the Taborites established the practice of a common chest–a system in which individual citizens of Tabor waived their right to own goods privately by allowing their property to be held in common (Kaminsky 1957, 54, 66). "Just as at Tabor there is nothing mine and nothing yours, but everything in the community is possessed equally, so everything should always be in common for all, and no one may have anything privately; if he does, he sins mortally" (Kaminsky 1957, 58) In addition, the Taborites advocated for the reappropriation of property and land in the vicinity of the city from the hands of feudal owners. Angered, John of Příbram complains that the radical Hussites "preached to the people, 'Now you will not pay rents to your lords any more, nor be subject to them, but will freely and undisturbedly possess their villages, fish-ponds, meadows, forests, and all their domains'" (McGinn 1979, 265).

The radical economic policies which covered the space inside and outside the city walls had radical consequences–by neutralising the power of property and land, the policies in effect eliminated the economic causes of social inequality. The common ownership of goods and the reappropriation of land destroyed the traditional hierarchy between feudal property owners and those who must serve or pay in order to enjoy the property that others possessed. "In that time there will be no kingship or dominion on the earth, nor any subjection. All rents and dues will cease. No one will compel another to do anything, but all will be equal brothers and sisters…" (Kaminsky 1957, 58)

The final levelling policy targeted the privileged position of the preachers. The Taborites embraced apocalyptic antinomianism, which, by

advocating for the transformation of humanity and the eventual supersession of religious law, in effect denied the need for priests as elite interpreters of the Scripture and its commandments.[12] An anti-Taborite article notes that for the radical Hussites, "the written Law of God will cease in the Restored Kingdom of the Church Militant and written Bibles will be destroyed because the Law of Christ will be written in the hearts of all and there will be no need of a teacher" (McGinn 1979, 268). Interestingly, the antinomian attack on the division between clergy and laity seems to have been simply a radicalisation of the democratising Utraquist postulates, which argued for the extension of the communion in both kinds to non-priests.

The economic, social, and religious policies of the city of Tabor attracted an array of various heretical groups who hoped to escape both the Catholic Church and the feudal relations of medieval Bohemia. Interestingly, the non-Taborite heretics were welcomed and allowed to settle in the city. As Malia observes, the city of Tabor soon became a pluralist community where groups of differing views co-existed:

> In the enthusiasm of the first months of the new Tabor's existence, underground heretics who had long existed in Bohemia flocked to the community. There were Waldensians drawn by the prospect of apostolic poverty. There was also a representative of Europe's newest heresy, Wyclifism, the Englishman Peter Payne, who learned Czech and became an important spokesman of the movement. There were Pikards, or Brethren of the Free Spirit, who expected the imminent coming of the Final Days (…) Finally, there were antinomian Adamites who believed that the world's impending end authorized a return to the innocence of Eden, sexual liberation, and the community of wives. (2008, 49)

To sum up, during 1420, we can identify an expansion of the concept of Tabor along three interrelated lines. Firstly, the privileged status of the five cities of refuge, grounded in their role in the coming apocalypse, became concentrated in the one city of Tabor. Secondly, the city was a space which escaped and resisted not only the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church but also the economic, social, and religious hierarchies of feudal Bohemia. Thirdly, Tabor ceased to designate a community united solely by its radical Hussitism; instead, it denoted a pluralist society open to various expressions of anti-Catholic and anti-feudal views. We could, therefore, conclude that during 1420 the notion of transfiguration–intimately tied to the

12 The Taborites' antinomianism can be contrasted with the concern for legal justification found among the less radical Hussites. For a discussion of the latter, see Grant (2015).

concept of Tabor from its very inception–can be reconceived as involving a spiritual metamorphosis *with a material basis* in the city's radical organisation. As Kaminsky aptly puts it:

> The peasant or artisan who abandoned his land or sold his property, who burnt his home and left his friends and family, and who then made his way to (…) chiliast Tabor, was truly passing from one world into another, in which neither the first principles nor the practical arrangements of the old order had validity. In actual fact, the (…) vision of the chiliast prophets, who included almost all the Taborite priests in 1420, had set the Taborites free from the feudal order. They could now build their own society. (1957, 62)

I will come back to the significance of the Taborite city for philosophy history in the next part of the paper. To conclude this section, we should note that the radicality of Tabor was short-lived. The city soon re-established a feudal relationship with the villages and peasants under its control, becoming "economically similar to most of the royal towns of Bohemia" (Kaminsky 1957, 62). The equality between clergy and laity was effectively denied by an election of a bishop in September 1420. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the above changes were coupled with a shift in the theological orientation–apocalypticism ceased to play a central role and soon was replaced by less radical doctrines. "In the mid-twenties a leading Taborite… wrote: 'We do not consider as true that story which some tell, that a good age is coming, in which there will be no evil doers, and that they will not suffer at all but will be filled with ineffable joy'" (Kaminsky 1957, 63). Furthermore, towards the end of 1420, the Taborites expelled and slaughtered the members of the more radical heretical groups.[13]

2. The Implications of the Concept of Tabor for Philosophy of History

I believe that the concept of Tabor, in addition to being truly fascinating from a historical point of view, allows us to draw some interesting theoretical consequences bearing on philosophy of history, and with it, on the conditions of historical research. Firstly, the specific way in which

13 Interestingly, Fudge identifies, as one of the reasons for the end of the Taborite experiment, the fact that the city was not *communist enough*: "the Taborite experiment was limited to consumption communism, not production communism" (1998, 39). As a consequence, the non-communist production could not sustain the communist consumption of the goods produced.

the concept of Tabor expresses the spatiotemporal experiences of the radical Hussites enables us to rethink the role that space and time play in structuring history and forming historical notions. The concept of Tabor was concerned primarily with *spaces*: mountaintops, cities of refuge, sites of transfiguration, etc. The primacy of space found in the concept of Tabor suggests a revision of the view of history conceived as primarily a concatenation of temporal phases and with its supplementation with a model of history involving a constitutive spatial dimension.[14] Furthermore, and following from the previous point, the spatial model of history calls for an expansion of our approach to the reconstruction of historical concepts, which can no longer limit itself to a simply temporal analysis but, instead, should also recognise the spatiality inherent in historical notions. I will explore these points below with the help of the works of Reinhart Koselleck and Edmund Husserl.

Interestingly, the concept of Tabor allows us also to problematise the spatiotemporal model of history and historical analysis suggested above. From its inception, the concept of Tabor has expressed the antagonistic relation of the Taborites to the dominant religious practices and institutions in terms of religious imagery. This is visible in the example of the five cities of refuge–a notion which employs Biblical terms to capture the antagonistic experience of space and the apocalyptic experience of time. However, a study of historical concepts which operates solely within the categories of space and time cannot explain why the Taborites framed their spatiotemporal experiences in religious terms. In other words, because space and time are formal structures of history, they are necessary yet insufficient to account for the *specific* ways in which a given society articulates spacetime. For instance, a spatiotemporal reading of the five cities of refuge can disclose an antagonistic experience of space and an apocalyptic experience of time, yet this type of reading cannot account for why the Catholic forces persecuted the Taborites, as well as for why this persecution led to the expectation of the end of times. Similarly, while a spatiotemporal interpretation can capture the role of mountaintops in the formation of the concept of Tabor, it cannot offer the reasons why these mountaintops became the sites of transfiguration. As I will demonstrate below with the help of Louis Althusser, the questions that the spatiotemporal reading leaves unanswered can be addressed by recourse to the *religious ideology* of the medieval Bohemian

14 In addition to Koselleck's approach discussed in this paper, time seems fundamental for other modern philosophies of history, whether they are hermeneutical (Gadamer 2013), archaeological (Agamben 2017), or deconstructive (Kleinberg 2017).

society. As a consequence, I believe that the philosophy which conceives of history as being structured by time and space should incorporate ideological analysis, as it the latter can account for the specific ways in which spacetime is realised in a given society. The overall aim of this section is, therefore, to demonstrate that it is the tripartite structure of time, space, and ideology which enables us to capture historical periods and which guides our analysis of the periods' concepts.

For Koselleck, the twentieth-century German thinker who pioneered conceptual history, "all histories, wherever they are to be found, are always concerned with time" (2004, 245). This is because, according to Koselleck, history cannot be conceived without two inherently temporal categories of *experience* and *expectation*. Whereas experience is "present past, whose events have been incorporated and can be remembered," expectation "is the future made present; it directs itself to the not-yet, to the nonexperienced, to that which is to be revealed" (Koselleck 2004, 259). It is the interaction between the past presents found in experience and the future presents found in expectation which generates historical time. Experience and expectation, therefore, "indicate an anthropological condition without which history is neither possible nor conceivable." (Koselleck 2004, 257).

Koselleck's anthropological philosophy of history, in turn, is directly related to his account of historical research. Experience and expectation are "formal determinants" which can guide our study of a particular historical period and its notions. As Koselleck puts it, the "conditions of possibility of real history are, at the same time, conditions of its cognition" (2004, 258). Experience and expectation offer the "index of temporality" which can help us reconstruct and analyse concepts operative in a given epoch. For instance, the developments in Taborite apocalypticism can be partly explained by a shifting relation between experience and expectation. In its initial stage, the experience of persecution led to a "passive" expectation of the end of times sometime in February 1420, while in its later phase, the apocalyptic expectation became "active" as a result of the experience of the failed prophecy.

However, as we have seen, the concept of Tabor, as well as presupposing temporal categories, consists of a range of elements which explicitly relate to space. The congregations on mountaintops, the five cities of refuge, and the policy of reappropriating land surrounding the city of Tabor–all of them, in addition to the "index of temporality" recognised by Koselleck, seem to involve an "index of spatiality." Interestingly, Koselleck thinks of space as a metaphor for temporal experiences of the past, thus reducing spatiality to a figurative expression of time (2004,

260). Although it might be possible to reframe the spatial notions operative in the concept of Tabor in terms of temporal categories of experience and expectation, doing so would essentially miss the specific spatial character of these experiences. For instance, it is unclear what the benefit would be of conceptualising the mountaintops as structured by experience and exception without recognising them as, simply, *spaces*. The concept of Tabor, with its irreducible spatial dimension, therefore, seems to disclose a limit of both the purely temporal understanding of history and the solely temporal analysis of historical notions.[15]

I believe that Koselleck's philosophy of history can be expanded by another twentieth-century thinker, the founder of phenomenology, Husserl, whose writings on space can help us account for the possibility of research into primarily spatial historical concepts, such as the concept of Tabor. Husserl offers an extensive treatment of space in one of his later essays (with the rather lengthy title of "The Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature"). There, Husserl examines how we experience the Earth. For Husserl, the Earth possesses two meanings: On the one hand, it refers to a body examined by science–a planet in the shape of a globe subject to physical laws; on the other hand, the Earth is not a body but, rather, a *condition* which makes possible the experience of bodies in space (Husserl 1981). The Earth as a condition of experience has two interrelated functions. Firstly, it is a "ground" or a "base" in relation to which we can determine the rest and motion of other bodies. For instance, the movement of the car and the rest of my table are both relative to the same ground: the Earth conceived as a base.[16] Secondly, the Earth as a condition of experience accounts for the location in which bodies move–the bird is flying over *there*, while my coffee cup stands over *here*. "We have surrounding space as a system of places–i.e. as a system of possible terminations of motions of bodies. In that system all earthly bodies (…) have their particular 'loci'" (Husserl 1981, 225). In short, for Husserl, the Earth is a universal structure which makes spatial experience possible by enabling us to determine the movement and location of bodies.

Importantly, because space is a universal structure, it is necessarily found at work in history. Because all historical events involve bodies

15 A similar critique of the purely temporal analysis of history has been made by Hagen Schulz-Forberg (2013). Although I share his conclusions, my approach differs from his. While Schulz-Forberg is interested in global history, my starting point is a specific historical community.

16 One of the consequences of Husserl's view is that the movements of the Earth as a physical body are determined on the basis of the Earth as a ground.

and locations, any possible history presupposes the Earth as a condition which determines its spatial character. As Husserl puts it:

> every people and their historicity (…) are themselves ultimately made at home, naturally, on the 'earth.' All developments, all relative histories have to that extent a single primitive history of which they are episodes (…) they all exist for one another in open, undetermined horizons of earth-space. (1981, 228)

The Husserlian category of the Earth, therefore, enables us to account for the spatiality inherent in the concept of Tabor. The latter comprises spatial elements because the experience of the Taborites it captures was necessarily structured by spatial determinations of bodies and locations. Consequently, because the experience of the Taborites was spatial, the concepts which articulate their experiences would involve an index of spatiality. Moreover, because any historical experience must be spatial, it would follow that any historical notion related to experience must possess some spatial elements.[17]

Of course, the Husserlian category of space does not invalidate Koselleck's temporal notions of experience and expectation. The concept of Tabor expresses an *intertwining* of space and time, which demonstrates that Husserl's and Koselleck's respective models of history are, in fact, complementary. This is recognised by Husserl, who identifies time and space as the "universal historical a priori" (1989, 180)–categories which structure history and, in so doing, provide the ground for the analysis of specific historical epochs or events. However, we should also recognise that space and time do not necessarily play equal roles in constituting history. The apocalyptic experience of time which develops amongst the Taborites in response to the persecution was, in fact, anchored in a more complex articulation of space, divided between areas and cities sympathetic to the Taborites and those loyal to the Catholic forces. This is particularly visible in the notion of the five cities of refuge, where apocalypticism becomes superimposed on the defensive and offensive roles of particular cities, i.e. specific walled spaces. Thus, though we can

17 The importance of space to the constitution of social and political experiences has recently been explored by Marchart and Massey. While Marchart, drawing on the writings of Ernesto Laclau, views space as essentially antagonistic (2014), Massey thinks of space as a process "always under construction" (2005, 9). For both, space is a universal structure which makes possible human experience. My analysis in this section aims to supplement their view by demonstrating that space as a formal structure is insufficient to account for its own antagonistic and ever-changing character, and that these properties of space are grounded in specific ideology and ideological conflict.

conclude that history is structured by both space and time, we should also recognise that one of them might play a more significant role than the other.

We can now introduce the third term which I believe is essential for a philosophical understanding of history and, consequently, for a study of historical concepts: ideology. As Koselleck himself admits, the temporal notions of experience and expectation "are merely formal categories" which tell us nothing about factual history. As he puts it, "there is no history which could be constituted independently of the experiences and expectations of active human agents. With this, however, nothing is yet said about a given concrete past, present, or future history" (2004, 256). Analogous claim can be made with regards to the Husserlian category of space–while the latter offers a formal outline of possible historical events, it does not, by itself, provide any information about the historical specificity of the events under investigation. In short, what our spatiotemporal philosophy of history allows us to say is *that* particular historical subjects experience their world in terms of time and space, as well as *that* their concepts involve a spatiotemporal index. However, what this philosophy seems to be lacking is the account of *how* particular historical subjects experience spacetime, as well as *how* their concepts capture and express their spatiotemporal world. In the case of the concept of Tabor, the recognition of the constitutive role of space and time makes us attentive to how the mountainous landscape of Bohemia played a role in articulating the Taborite experience; however, what we seem unable to derive from our spatiotemporal categories is that the mountaintops were sites of transfiguration based on Utraquist practice, in direct opposition to the Catholic Church. For our analysis to access the specifically religious syntax of the concept of Tabor, as well as its function as a weapon against the dominant institutions, we should recognise the role of ideology in the constitution of history.

Althusser, the French Marxist active in the second part of the last century, defines ideology as "a certain '*representation of the world*' which relates men and women to their conditions of existence":

> Ideological *representations* concern nature and society, the very world in which men live; they concern the life of men, their relations to nature, to society, to the social order, to other men and to their own activities, including economic and political practice. (Althusser 1990, 24)

Defined this way, ideology emerges as "a structure essential to the historical life of societies" (Althusser 1969, 232). The set of ideological

representations which relates humans to their environment makes people equipped to navigate, use, and transform the natural and social world around them (Althusser 1969, 235).

Although ideology is an essential historical structure, it should not be confused with the "universal historical a priori" of time and space. Spacetime constitutes an empty formal structure of every possible world, which, as Koselleck recognises, says nothing about the specificity of a given historical period. By contrast, ideology has a historical content which, on my reading, "fills" the empty spatiotemporal form. More specifically, I believe that ideology assigns to space and time a particular set of representations, which results in a specific spatiotemporal experience–as Althusser puts it, in ideology, members of society "*become conscious* of their place in the world and in history" (1969, 233). This means that insofar as we experience the spatiotemporal world, this experience is necessarily mediated by ideology; or, to put it more precisely, ideology *is* our world, as none of its elements can be experienced outside ideological representations. As Althusser puts it, people "'live' their ideologies (…) as their '*world' itself*" (1969, 233). On my reading, therefore, we can represent the relationship between spacetime, ideology, and concrete experiences as three distinct yet interrelated "levels": universal categories of space and time determine the form of all possible experience; ideological representations actualise or represent these universal categories in a historically specific way, producing an experience proper to a given historical society; and, finally, concrete individuals and collectives live their ideology and, in it, they live the ideologically mediated universal form of experience–or spacetime.[18] In the case of the radical Hussites, it is ideology which allows us to understand why the spatiotemporal elements of the concept of Tabor were expressed in Biblical terms. Tabor weaves together spatial, temporal, and Biblical elements because it captures and informs an ideologically mediated spatiotemporal experience. For the Taborites, because the categories of religious ideology mediated both space and time, they experienced their spatiotemporal world as structured by a specific set of Biblical representations.

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Additionally, ideology–and, more precisely, the notion of "ideological struggle"–can help us account for the essentially antagonistic character of the concept of Tabor, as well as for the need to establish the Taborite city. For Althusser, a given society's ideology is never uniform; rather,

18 The differences in ideologically mediated spatiotemporal experiences enable us to distinguish between different historical societies. The ideological world of medieval Bohemia, for instance, can be distinguished from the ideological world of ancient Rome or communist Russia.

the ideological structure is always differentiated. Ideology can be divided according to specific regions and tendencies, some of which exert a more powerful influence on society than others (Althusser 1990, 26; 30). Furthermore, Althusser notes that the internal hierarchies which structure ideological regions and tendencies generate an ideological struggle–an antagonism between the dominant and the subordinate ideological elements (1990, 38). Importantly, though ideological struggle involves concepts, it should not be understood as simply a conflict between sets of ideas. Because ideology structures spatiotemporal experiences, "ideological struggle embraces the totality of human activities" including the conscious and unconscious "representation people have of their world, their place, their role, their condition and their future" (Althusser 1990, 36). It follows, then, that a defence of, or an attack on, a particular ideological concept is, in fact, a defence of, or an attack on, a particular spatiotemporal experience captured and informed by the concept–that is to say, a particular way of representing and relating to the world.

By articulating a distinctive spatiotemporal experience, the concept of Tabor is, by definition, differentiated from other types of ideologically mediated experiences found in medieval Bohemia. Furthermore, because ideological differentiation is necessarily hierarchical and antagonistic, the birth of the notion of Tabor is simultaneously a beginning of an ideological conflict between the dominant ideology of the Catholic Church and the subordinate, Utraquist tendency. This is why, from its very inception, the concept of Tabor has marked an antagonism towards the official Church, which eventually leads to a theological justification of violence. Moreover, because ideological struggle is essentially a war over possible experiences, it raises the question of material conditions which could secure and further develop a particular way of relating to the world. For the Taborites, these material conditions were initially constituted by the mountaintops but over time – and in response to the increased persecution which aimed to suppress the Taborite way of representing the world (recall how the inhabitants of Kutná Hora attempted to undermine the notion of Tabor by linking it to the mass grave of the Hussites they murdered)–they were replaced by walled cities and, ultimately, the city of Tabor. The creation of the Taborite city, therefore, was not a contingent fact but a material necessity determined by ideological struggle.

This section aimed to reconstruct a philosophy of history presupposed by the analysis of the concept of Tabor. As I have shown, history is structured not only by time but also by space. However, as I have also suggested, solely spatiotemporal analysis is insufficient to capture histo-

rically specific content. To account for the latter, we must rely on ideological analysis. Consequently, as the concept of Tabor makes clear, research into historical experiences and concepts should recognise the constitutive role of three structures of history: time, space, and ideology.

Conclusion

In this paper, relying on the categories of space, time, and ideology, I have demonstrated that the years 1419–1420 in Bohemia witnessed a process of intense conceptual production which resulted in the emergence and development of a unique political theology reflected in the notion of Tabor. This concept eventually led to the establishment of the city, which, however briefly, escaped both Catholicism and feudalism. I have also offered a sketch of a philosophy of history which accounted for the possibility of articulating the concept of Tabor. By situating the Taborite political theology in the context of contemporary philosophies of Koselleck, Husserl, and Althusser, I have shown how time, space, and ideology structure history, producing notions which express the spatio-temporal experiences of historical communities. This philosophy of history, in turn, secured the conclusion that a historical analysis of experiences and concepts is grounded in, and should be guided by, temporal, spatial, and ideological categories. In so doing, I hope to have shown how medieval political theology and philosophy of history can inform one another.

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Autor: Jakub Kowalewski
Tytuł: Transfiguracje czasoprzestrzeni. Pojęcie Tabor w rewolucji husyckiej i jego implikacje dla filozofii historii
Abstrakt: Ten artykuł ma za zadanie ukazać sposób w jaki średniowieczna teologia polityczna i współczesna filozofia historii są w stanie wzajemnie się uzupełniać. W tym celu przedstawiam koncept „Taboru" – pojęcia które wyłoniło się wśród radyklanych husytów, zwanych taborytami, w trakcie rewolucji husyckiej na terenie średniowiecznych Czech i Moraw. Moim zdaniem teologiczno-polityczny koncept Taboru stawia pod znakiem zapytania współczesne filozofie, które traktują historię w pojęciach czasu, poprzez ukazanie niewystarczalności czysto „czasowego" podejścia do historycznych idei i doświadczeń. Aby z powodzeniem nakreślić koncept Taboru, powinniśmy rozumieć historię jako strukturę nie tylko czasową, ale również przestrzenną i ideologiczną. Równocześnie studium historyczne kierujące się filozoficznymi kategoriami ideologii, przestrzeni i czasu pozwala na rozbudowanie naszego rozumienia husyckiej teologii politycznej poprzez uwidocznienie pojęć i doświadczeń, które pozostają niezidentyfikowane czy to w analizach wyłącznie ideologicznych, jedynie przestrzennych lub czysto czasowych.
Słowa kluczowe: apokaliptycyzm, czas, filozofia historii, herezja, ideologia, przestrzeń, rewolucja husycka, średniowieczny komunizm, teologia polityczna