

POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY; IMPLOSION OF THE IMAGINARY IN TO THE POLITICS

I. POLITICS BEYOND REASON

The Enlightenment paradigm, with its obsessive reliance on reason and the consequent modernistic extreme push towards rationality, has bought many totalitarian expositions on the political stage. Those ideas namely, are exponentially failing in regard to presuppositions that people/ subjects/ persons are rational and reasonable beings¹. With that “enlightened” spirit imagination was treated as something that is or out of reality; as a non-reasonable and non-rational activity. Accordingly, analyzing politics, it was reduced to its manifestations strictly deriving from the legalo-normativistic symbolic order [e.g. the State or the Procedural Republic], and without taking any account on other factors of organizing human reality. A paradigmatic example of such logic lies also in a prolonged domination of the rational choice theory in the field of political science for many decades. In studying politics, namely, there was no room left for emotions, nor for the imaginary, since both were treated as something completely opposite of what reason and rationality means. Nevertheless, as we can see, such a view is profoundly distorted because political reality contradicts with it. Of course, Enlightenment ethics is disputable on many different grounds². Yet, for a purpose particularly interesting for us is its sequence that has disciplined a binary logic - the one related to a false dichotomy, as if there are fixed oppositions between the mind vs. body, or reason vs. emotions, the imaginary vs. reality, etc. Relevance for analyzing politics out of the rational choice theory lies in the fact that it is not sufficient in explaining phenomena such as those related to violence, conflicts, control, fear, traumas, fundamentalism and extremism, voters’ behaviour... We cannot analyse political mobilisation, as it is only “rationally motivated”, nor can we talk about the voters and citizens as they are permanent “rational beings”. In this line, “out of the box” reasoning becomes a necessity for understanding what lies beneath the political surface. For that purpose, I will try to attract attention on some not as strictly political areas as imaginative and emotional dimensions of human and political life are. Consequently, I will focus the deserved attention towards the notion of the Imaginary, and attempt to explain how it implodes into Politics.

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¹ An extreme illustration in this line can be found in the answer of the question : what was reasonable and rational in conducting the Holocaust, or in any other genocide ?

² For example , Alford & Hibbing instead of rational theory, they prefer to analyze politics according to an evolutionary theory of political behavior. Alford J.R. & Hibbing J.R. “*The Origin of Politics : An evolutionary theory of political behavior*”, Prospective on Politics , Vol2/n.4, December , 2004 (p. 707-723); Or for dialectical connotation of the “enlighten” spirit one can consult Adorno, T. W. & Horkheimer.M, in “*Dialectic of Enlightenment*”, Edmund Jephcott tr. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002; As well interesting overview on Enlightenment ethics gives Gray in Gray,J. “*Two Faces of Liberalism*”, The New Press, 2000;

II. THE IMAGINARY AND ITS DIFFERENT ASPECTS

As it was previously mentioned, connoting the Imaginary within an “enlightened” spirit would probably be seen as something negative and very close to something “out of reality”, “illusionistic”, “irrational” and “non-reasonable”. Yet, contrary to such views, there are arguments that can serve to demonstrate exactly the opposite, namely, that the imaginative human capacity is the one that makes a difference. In this line, we can paraphrase Rorty and agree with his claim that what differs humans from animals is not their capacity of rationalization and reasoning, but their capacity to imagine and fantasize; he also adds: “...what is specifically human, contrary to the animalistic, is that the flow of every human life is a symbolic processing of each person, objects, situations, events³.... ” A similar inside view on this specific human capacity is given by Kristeva’s relevant explanations of phantasms, as “[they] come to remind us in its their own way that drive and, by inference, affect are not only a myth, but a factor of organization and permanence which fundamentally modules the activity of thinking, of judging, of speaking⁴... “ After such remarks, a legitimate question arises in the context of politics : is it possible, if humans have the imaginative capacity according to which they process their reality and symbolic order, hence consequently they make judgments; and this is always accompanied with certain emotions - that such human capacity has nothing to do with politics?! The answer is simple: no! This is because each human being as potential integral person is determined by its socio-political environment⁵, and vice versa, any social or political imaginary, in one or another way; it is a reflection of personal judgments, thinking, affections...

The imagination has many different connotations and aspects. According to some, it is related with the individual and personal capacity of radical creativity, while others are relating it

³ Rorty, R. “*Contingency of Selfhood*” , (p. 168) ; in Filiozofsko citanje Frojda, pr.Savic Obrad , Istrazivacko izdavacki centar- SSO Srbije(p.161-172), 1988; Rorty, also makes correlation between fantasies and the historical situation: at p. 169 : “.... in some of the fantasies it can happens that those can be understood by some – because of historical coincidence of some situation , as some special need that certain community has in particular time..”; “ Poetic, philosophical, scientific, or POLITICAL progress, it is the result of accidental overlapping between personal obsessions and public needs...”; Please see Rorty , R. “*Contingency of Selfhood*” (p.161-172) in Filiozofsko citanje Frojda, pr.Savic Obrad , Istrazivacko izdavacki centar- SSO Srbije, 1988; and please note that all of the above quotations are in mine translation from srbo-croatian language.

⁴ She refers to Freud also , saying that Freud’s practice “ ...had revealed that this web of signifying relations which characterizes a symptom , a discourse, a transference, a subject , while being a theoretical construction , none the less remains the one and only REALITY in which the physic life realize itself , comes to know it self...” (p.18); According to Kristeva’s interpretation on Freud is stressing that “...the drive is ultimate level of organization and permanence reached by listening, or the analytic construction i.e. IMAGINATION ...” (p.16); “ ...It is with in this frame of drives that an EGO with its relation to an object will gradually module itself...” ! (p.16); And she continues “...Even it is true that the structure of the subject builds itself precisely from different positions vis a vis different modalities od the object , the Freudian analyst would not forget that this subjective structure is loaded with the fate of drives and their double nature : biology and non-linguistic representation...” !; As I will develop my paper, all above quotations are worth to remember since the final intention will be analyzing populism but relaying in a way on phantasm which according to Kristeva’s observations : “...the one can be understood as the result of interruption of the drive in to the serene logic of judgments - and the later finding itself modified to the point of hallucinations or delirium ...”!; See in Kristeva, J.” Psychoanalysts in times of distress” (p.13-27),in Speculations after Freud - Psychoanalysis, philosophy and culture, Shamdasani, S & Munchov,M. ed., Routledge London & NY, 1994;

⁵ Please see Putnam’s positions on the level of trusting behavior that varies widely around the world and even within the country in Putnam, R.D. “Making democracy work: civic traditions in modern Italy”, Princeton University Press, 1993;

to social imaginaries. But most of them agree that it is a capacity which can be experienced collectively [i.e. Mills, Castoriadis, Teylor], as well as personally [e.g. Lacan] so they are not mutually exclusive. It is stressed, furthermore, that imagination is a human capacity directly related to emotions [Lennon], as well as aesthetics [Collingwood⁶]. Le Dœuff speaks of the philosophical imaginary⁷; Castoriadis, Mills and Taylor are involved in explaining what the sociological Imaginary and psychoanalysis are, paying a lot of attention to it. The examples are countless. Obviously, since it is an inescapable human capacity of reasoning, the Imaginary has also to do with politics.

An important aspect related to the imaginary is that it is not something which is in a binary opposition to the Real, but rather that it is the actual faculty through which the world is made real to us⁸. Along this line, Lennon argues that, far from being a realm of illusion, the imaginary world is our most direct mode of perception and plays a role in the formation of the Self and the social world. On Anderson's trajectory⁹, she denotes that the imaginary is the shape or form in terms of which we experience the world and ourselves; a gestalt, which carries significance, affect and a normative force. Our activities and responses are both motivated and legitimized by the shape which the world, including the social world and its imagined history, carries for us¹⁰.

If for Lennon the Imaginary is relevant for self-creation and has affective powers, according to Bottichi, and in line with Castoriadis' view¹¹ where we are immersed in the social imaginary in which we have grown up, she reminds us that psychoanalysis has shown that the individual is created through a process of socialization exactly by the imaginary significations of society¹². According to her, Castoriadis by starting with the premises of psychoanalysis investigates the space of radical imagination in a way that perhaps no other philosopher has done and he made decisive contributed to the passage from the paradigm of imagination as an individual faculty to that of the imaginary as a social context¹³. As we can already see, the complexity of the idea behind the notion of the Imaginary is evident, although it is a notion far from being non-relevant. Hence, we have to stress the most profound attributions towards it.

According to Lacan's approach, which is basically psychoanalytical, The Imaginary [along with the Real and the Symbolic] is one of the three basic registers of human experience. Bottichi recaps: "... with his emphasis on language and the importance of society in the socialization of individuals, Lacan went beyond the idea of imagination as an individual faculty; as a result, the term Imaginary became central to his theory..."¹⁴; Even though the Lacanian "Imaginary" is related to the mirror stage in an infant's development, according to her it is not strictly related to this phase but is also an experience that is constitutive of our psyche in general. Lacanian Imaginary is the basis of the ego, since the ego is formed through identification with such an image - so that the imaginary. Namely, the imaginary intrinsically captures us with an

⁶ Collingwood, G. R. "The Principles of Art", Oxford University Press paperback, 1958;

⁷ Le Dœuff, M. "The Philosophical Imaginary", tr. Gordon Colin, Stafford University Press, 1989;

⁸ Lennon, K. "Imagination and the Imaginary", (p.2), Routledge, 2015;

⁹ See in Anderson, B. "Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism", Verso, 1991

¹⁰ Lennon, K. "Imagination and the Imaginary", (p.73), Routledge, 2015;

¹¹ See in Castoriadis, C. "The Imaginary Institution of Society", Kathleen Blarney tr. Polity Press, 1987;

¹² Bottichi, C. "Imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary", (p.4), [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014,;

¹³ . Bottichi, C. "imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary", (p.45) [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014;

¹⁴ (Bottichi, 2014, p.35);

endless series of imaginary identifications, which only symbolic interpretation can put an end to¹⁵. While in the imaginary subject is permanently caught by his own image, the symbolic order presents itself to the subject as the big Other, as the Law, which is counterpoised to the real (that is, what is outside of language and, therefore, cannot be symbolized). In this sense, consequently, the Imaginary becomes the place of alienation attached to the decentered subject. And what is more relevant in regard to the Lacanian imaginary is the notion that [as Bottici reflects]: the form of the image possesses a surplus and adds something that is not in reality itself. This surplus of the form as such gives the infant the peculiar pleasure of unity and also explains the captivating power of the imaginary domain more generally. Here ultimately lies the seductive power of the imaginary in Lacan's sense of the term. Furthermore, although imaginary identifications are endless, within the process of symbolic interpretation—leading to the recognition of the impossibility of a definitive identification, lies the possibility of liberation. As emphasized, despite the difficulties of providing an univocal interpretation of this theory, according to Bottici: “Lacan always understood symbolization as a kind of an emancipatory process, releasing the subject from tutelage and stasis, from the dependency of an alienating image...”¹⁶. In sum, as many agree with Lacan, whereas the symbolic discloses the possibility of emancipation, the imaginary is by definition a place of alienation.¹⁷

Another interesting aspect which connotes to the Imaginary more or less collectively, is the one conceptualized independently by Wright Mills, Cornelius Castoriadis and Charles Taylor. This is “social imaginary”. Agreeing with Castoriadis, Lennon notes that the concept of the social imaginary shifts the attention away from imagination as a faculty of an individual subject, and onto imaginaries as features of socio-historical contexts which can be countered and shared; anonymous daily creations in which everyone participates. Imaginaries conceived as social and inter-subjective are both instituted and instituting; broadly, both are passively found or encountered as conditions for experiencing the world, and are actively and innovatively transformed, as they are re-experienced¹⁸. Charles W. Mills also, when writing on sociological imagination, indicates such capacity that enables its possessors to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning regarding the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. Sociological imagination, according to him, is the most fruitful form of this self-consciousness. It is something which works between ‘the personal troubles of a milieu’ and ‘the public issues of social structure’; it is a quality of mind that seems most dramatically to promise an understanding of the intimate realities of ourselves in connection with larger social realities¹⁹.

Cornelius Castoriadis has an enormous impact on conceptualizing the imaginary institutions of societies i.e. the social imaginary. He makes a certain difference between radical imaginary as a) existing as the social-historical and b) as psyche/soma. As social-historical, it is

¹⁵ (Bottichi, 2014, p.36); She also refers to Lacan stressing that at the age of one year and a half, infants still perceive their body as fragmented which is as a body in pieces over which infants do not have control and therefore, the specific joy derived from recognizing oneself in the mirror at this stage would be due to the fact that the infant perceives herself as a reflected unitary image. Thus a discrepancy arises between the subject on this side of the mirror, which is an *i* (*je*) without any unity, and the unitary and idealized image (*moi*) that is reflected in the mirror. While the lack of coordination and fragmentation of the former generates a sense of frustration, the image in the mirror gives a reassuring sense of unity and control over one's own body ...” (Bottici, 2014, p.35);

¹⁶ Bottici, C. “*imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary*”, (p.36.) [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014;

¹⁷ (Bottichi, 2014, p.36), where there is exact Lacanian quotation;

¹⁸ Lennon, K. “*Imagination and the Imaginary*”, (P.73-74), Routledge, 2015;

¹⁹ Mills, W.C. “*The sociological imagination*”, (p.5-7), Oxford University Press, 2000;

an open stream of the anonymous collective; as psyche/soma, it is a representative/affective/intentional flux. ...That, which in the social-historical is positing, creating, bringing into being, we call “social imaginary” in the primary sense of the term, or instituting society. That which in the psyche/soma is positing, creating, bringing-into-being for the psyche/soma, we call “radical imagination”²⁰. In Castoriadis’ view, every act, both individual and collective, without which no society could survive—labor, consumption, love, war, etc.—is impossible outside of the social imaginary²¹. According to Lennon, in Castoriadis’ account of the workings of the imaginary, he offers a picture of the relation between the psyche and the social in which neither is reduced to the other. There is rather a relation of interdependency which he terms ‘leaning on’²². Every society, continually defines and redefines its needs, and no society can ever survive outside the imaginary significations that constitute it and are constituted by it. The institution of a society presupposes the institution of the imaginary significations that must, in principle, be able to provide meaning to whatever presents itself²³.

For Castoriadis, institutions are socially sanctioned symbolic networks in which a functional component and an imaginary component are combined in variable proportions and relations²⁴ and they have drawn their source from the social imaginary!²⁵ Similarly for Taylor, the social imaginary is something much deeper than the intellectual schemes people may entertain when they think about social reality in a disengaged mode; it is something about the ways how people imagine their social existence and fit together, but also, it is about deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations²⁶. Our social imaginary at any given time is complex since it is about common understandings on how to carry out the collective practices and such understandings are both factual and normative. Implicit to this understanding of the norms is the ability to recognize ideal cases; and beyond the ideal stands some notion of a moral or metaphysical order, in the context of which the norms and ideals make sense. Indeed in this line he points that the social imaginary extends beyond the immediate background understanding that makes sense of our particular practices, and an important part of this wider background is what the sense of certain moral order is above all²⁷

²⁰ Castoriadis, C. “*The Imaginary Institution of Society*”, (p.369) Kathleen Blarney tr. Polity Press, 1987;

²¹ Bottici, C. “*imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary*”, (p.48), [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014;

²² Lennon, K. “*Imagination and the Imaginary*”, (p.77) Routledge, 2015;

²³ Bottici, C. “*imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary*”, (p.48), [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014;

²⁴ Castoriadis, C. “*The Imaginary Institution of Society*”, (p. 123), Kathleen Blarney tr. Polity Press, 1987;

²⁵ (Castoriadis, 1987, p.131);

²⁶ It is worth to not that Taylor draws sharp difference between social theory and social imaginary :”...there are important differences between social imaginary And social theory. I adopt the term imaginary (i) because my Focus is on the way ordinary people “imagine” their social Surroundings, and this is often not expressed in theoretical Terms, but is carried in images, stories, and legends. It is also

The case that (ii) theory is often the possession of a small minority, Whereas what is interesting in the social imaginary is

That it is shared by large groups of people, if not the whole Society. Which leads to a third difference: (iii) the social imaginary

Is that common understanding that makes possible common /Practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy..” (p. 23). Taylor,C.” Modern Social Imaginaries”, Duke University Press ; Durham and London, 2004;

²⁷ Taylor,C.” Modern Social Imaginaries”,(p. 23-30), Duke University Press ; Durham and London, 2004;

III. IMPLOSION OF IMAGINARY IN TO THE POLITICS

Indicating above just some basic connotations in regard to the Imaginary, it is still not sufficient to define what the Political Imaginary is, although I believe many will agree that certain experiences [collective and individual] can be recognized as such. Hence, one general characteristic resonates as evident: explicitly, that political institutions are reflections and deposits of certain imaginaries [personal or social, or both]. Political imaginaries are indisputably related to those psyche-social instances that have to do with understandings and experiences in relation to power. But any attempt to define what the political imaginary is would probably have to define what politics means, and what political subjects are. Nevertheless this is a question of another kind. For us it is important here to denote that the Imaginary implodes into politics at the momentum when a certain legalo-normativistic symbolic order is contested, or, when power relations are litigated. Whether such an implosion would change those concrete socio-historical power relations is a matter of radical creativity of that concrete political Imaginary. Politics, in any case, cannot be seen as something out of its psycho-social attribution, since *de facto* it is as personal as much as it is collective, in a sense of an experience, as well as practice. The same would be valid for political subjectivity, too. Correspondingly, human experience involved in regard to the Imaginary gives a capacity for personal radical creativity, as well as for social imaginary creativity. There can be no politics at all, indeed, without certain Imaginary/ies, never mind if they are personally or collectively exposed and experienced. In other words, any transgression of a symbolic order with the purpose to shift its meaning/s has to have the primal support from the Imaginary - and again, never mind if this occurs as a personal or collective rupture against the symbolic. Acting against the authority of power, it is the political activity that has to do with the transgression of symbolic order for which the Imaginary is a necessary precondition. This is also the moment of possibility for bringing out a certain political subjectivity; a Deleuzean transformative momentum of “becoming”²⁸, or Zizekian momentum as “acting out”²⁹. This is a political momentum *per se*! The rupture within the symbolic order always gives an opportunity, namely, for re-subjectification and again, this is not a question if political subjectivity is exhibited on a personal or collective instance.

As a condition for self-creation, re-subjectification, or autonomisation, the Imaginary is a place of alienation, also³⁰, since it always presupposes a reflexive relation to the Other. For example, in the Lacanian scene, the image is always alienating for the subject/ the self/ the ego; Lacan openly states, “...the first effect of the imago which appears in the human being is an effect of subjective alienation...”³¹ This condition is fundamental for the subject, and because of the one toady we can speak about a “de-centered” or a “split subject”. Or, to put in other words, the subject is always in the mood of a distance towards the Other in order to be/ become such. As Bottichi reminds us with a Lacanian quotation: “... the gap lies between the fragmented subject (*je*) and the unitary image that the mirror reflects as an idealized ‘me’ (*moi*). However, this does not mean that the Imaginary is always illusory...” It remains constitutively the locus of

²⁸ Deleuze, Gilles, “*Negotiations: 1972–1990*”, (p.170-171), Columbia University Press, NY. 1995..

²⁹ Zizek, S. “*Looking Awry : An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*”, (p.139), The MIT Press;

³⁰ Lacanians agree on this.

³¹ Bottichi here also, directly refers to Lacan; in Bottichi, C. “*imaginal politics: images beyond imagination and the imaginary*”, (p. 36), [New Directions in Critical Theory], Columbia University Press, 2014;

alienation³². Let us put this logic in a simple manner: imaginative but reflective alienation toward the Other is a basic precondition for subjectivity. Hence, if this is the case with the subjectivity in general, why would someone suspect that the same is not applicable for political subjectivity as well (and that is such subjectivity that arrives as a result of a transgression against power relations and power authorities). In similar vein, Castoriadis speaks about institutional autonomisation (as *auto + nomos vis a vis heteronormativity*; my remark) which is born at the very moment when the alienated imaginary component of that institution becomes autonomous in relation to its functional component and consequently predominates with respect to society³³. Hanna Arendt, also, speaks about the power of imagination, as it is the faculty to represent what is absent. In this way, she concentrates on just one aspect of the imaginary: images of what is absent that allow for the creation of a distance, precisely because of this absence³⁴. As we can see, the distance is an important feature of the Imagination. From now, such an alienated, distant, autonomous and decentered subject is exactly the open residence for constant re-subjectivity since the Imaginary is a condition for autonomisation in regard to the heteronormative symbolic order. Also, as much as the imaginary is a place for “othering”, it is also a locus of creativity and possibility for new imaginaries to arise. It is a condition of autonomy and a state of possibility.

III (1.) REFLECTIONS ON PRESENT POLITICAL IMAGINARY / IES

The Occidental political imaginary that is “othering” the Orient with the intention to build a certain political subjectivity is not something new. Unfortunately, this kind of Imaginary has a permanent political currency. The latest American electoral campaign with Donald Trump in focus, Brexit and the British nationalists, Orban’s Islamophobic pleas, French radical republicanism and the anti-refugee mobilization across Europe, all have one thing in common – a populist political imaginary that is attached to an exclusive denominator of a supposedly nativist occidental “People”. While Islamophobia is just one in many populist fragments that can be interpreted as a reflective response to the current refugee crisis, the terrorist attacks or ISIL crimes, this particular fragment might also be seen as just another kind of object invention in reference to certain groups and their intention to build their own political subjectivity.

Nowadays, it is apparent that the populist imaginary sounds noisy xenophobic and islamophobic intonations where refugees are portrayed as “The Other”, “invaders”, as “Terrorists”, as “the dangerous enemy” to the “Christian original native people of the West”. Although mostly present in the “ideological Right”, populist political imaginary is not just their exclusive feature important for building a popular political subjectivity/ identity. In this line, it is worth mentioning Panizza’s “populism’s analytical core” in terms of the three elements that he has detected – namely: the mode of identification; the process of naming and the dimension of politics³⁵; according to these, we can easily detect that in relation to refugees, all three elements

³² Here as well, Bottichi is in line with Lacan, see in (Bottichi, 2014 p. 36);

³³ Castoriadis, C. “*The Imaginary Institution of Society*”, Kathleen Blarney tr. Polity Press, 1987; (p.132) “...the institution is a socially sanctioned, symbolic network in which a functional component and an imaginary component are combined in variable proportions and relations...; ”.. Alienation occurs when the imaginary moment in the institution becomes autonomous and predominates, which leads to the institution's becoming autonomous and predominating with respect to society...”

³⁴ (Bottichi, 2014, p.169);

³⁵ Panizza, F. “*Introduction: Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*”, (p.1), in *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy*, ed. Panizza F. Verso, 2005;

are present in the portraying the Other in the refugees. Firstly, the mode of identification goes in line with the strict and antagonized division between two tendentiously produced versions of identities – the one of native , indigenous Christian Europeans / Westerners versus the Other, Muslim refugees/ terrorists; secondly, the process of naming is ever present in relation to such a division where “ The People” are simply those that are original and native, exclusively Christian Europeans/ Westerners and consequently, people that are not “Muslim refugees “; thirdly, a dimension of politics, namely, politisation, polarization and antagonisation are present by pointing the finger at Muslim refugees as people that, for example, are coming into Europe in order to invade it³⁶. One might easily notice that at the backstage of the current populist Islamophobic imaginary there is such a system of values that is profoundly illiberal and reactionary in its essence. Or to put in other words, this kind of political imaginary can be located in legacy of illiberal values³⁷. Anti-refugee and Islamophobic appeals, seen as reactionary and illiberal, have the intention to transgress the symbolic order of a genuine liberal democracy, and because of that characteristic they are substantially related to a populist imaginary which is considered illiberal, too. The common tissue in both (populism and anti-refugee Islamophobia) is exactly its illiberal value system. Since populism is fundamentally illiberal, its political imaginary doesn't belong to anyone particularly, but to all reactionary illiberals equally, and it doesn't have to be related to one particular topic, but on the contrary.

That is why populist political imaginary appears both in the ideological Left and Right equally, choosing different object inventions and different topics that have the intention to transgress the moral order of liberal democracy.

In the leftist political imaginary of popular radical democracy for example, there is not much space left for liberal multicultural accommodation. The debate regarding “recognition versus redistribution” sounds also similar, according to which we are obliged to choose between binary logics – that of cultural determinism, and cultural identity versus economic determinism / class status, as if they are mutually exclusive social realities and this is another fragment. Many other points can scratch different populist fragments suitable for the leftist populist imaginary. Such are anti-elitist, anti-capitalist, anti-globalist, anti-anti-neoliberal expositions based on values contesting a “market conceptualized freedom” and “ market based liberalism”. Consequently, in current liberal democracy, they find a post-political situation where there is no politics , or no democratic policy because the decision making process is happening far away from the People - the Demos. In other words, the Other is located in the Banks, Corporations, Neoliberal agreements, non-popular Elitism, the 1% present against the 99% and all against “The People”.

³⁶ In context of “ refugee question “, let us give one more indicative point. At first glance it seems like the tendency to confront this question is more present in “new Europe” (particularly, Eastern post-communist mainstream politicians) than in other places (“old Europe”). This is because the most vivid populist anti-refugee Islamophobic appeals were exponentially visible at the political mainstream in Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland. Though this , also, is not an exclusive case, but to the contrary. Eastern bloc populist narration, namely , simultaneously points the finger to the invasive refugees against native European people, but on the other hand points the finger against the “old Europe's hegemony”. Similarity is clear in the case of Brexit campaign complaining on “dictates” from the European Union to accept migrants. In this line we cannot talk about identity division that exists in Europe in regard to the refugee question , but about political division between illiberal versus liberal stripe. This could be confirmed by noting Taylor's attribution in regard to social imaginaries - that they have to have certain moral backgrounds as support. In this case such attribution is related to illiberal and reactionary values.

³⁷ An important point is that of inherent tension between liberalism and democracy.

Although in the case of populist political imaginary we can detect profound intention for building a certain political subjectivity, some sequences in both ideological instances are not showing any emancipatory capacities. What we are witnessing, let us put it vulgarly, is the presence of populist fragments in the form of anti-refugee or anti-elitist appeals (accompanied with commentary fragments) emerging everywhere, independently from geographical locations and ideological instances. The bond that fits together this populist imaginary is its iliberal background value system that supports it. The Populist political imaginary, namely, maintains such a political subjectivity building that would be supposedly capable to change current state of affairs within liberal democracy and supposedly have a potential to replace it with “real democracy that belongs to the People”. But then again, as populism itself is an inherent paradox of democracy, it is precisely liberalism within a liberal democracy that has the potential to be its counter, or a corrective force³⁸. If political subjectivity has to do with the imaginary logics that will support transgression against authorities of power, accompanied with a certain moral / value system in a populist era, it is evident that we should look for new emancipatory political imaginaries that will have a bit different moral background than the populist one. What kind of moral background would be attached to the emancipatory political imaginary is a question of another kind, although I believe such can be found in values that will have to accept all inherent tensions living within liberal democracy itself. An emancipatory project of any democratic liberal political imaginary as a supportive value system would have to take seriously all of the specific tensions inherent to its logics: tension between democracy and liberalism, between equality and freedom, between individual and collective identities, between cultural and economic determinism, between elitist decisions making and direct democracy, and so on. An emancipatory political imagination with an intention to build political subjectivity would have to absorb all of the mentioned contradictions. From such a focal point, a credible transgression and consequent shift of meaning in a symbolic order related to power relations might be possible. A starting point of potential considerations in this line I believe is the differentiation between particular traditions within liberalism - the classical tradition and the social one. I put forward the incorporation of the second tradition. In an era of populist political movements where just the symptoms produced by the inherent paradoxes of liberal democracy are contesting, a valid therapy would not be in symptom – elimination. Neither would be the completion of different populist imaginaries. An emancipatory logic has to take advantage of the mentioned paradoxes and accommodate them within a certain balanced value system, or moral background that can handle those different logics and that can “live with them”. In other words, there has to be a balance, a *modus vivendi* as *modus operandi*, a constant invitation for accommodation and a room left for new imaginaries to emerge³⁹. The first condition for such an emancipatory project would have to open the ground for a continuous democratization of democracy itself or, to say for Deridarian democracy⁴⁰ to come (*a venir*), but also, it would have to limit the possibility of its inherent deviations in a sense of Demo(s)pathology, which means that it would have to eliminate its authoritarian/ populist shadow by taking into account those liberal traditions that are not strictly related to a “market conceptualization of freedom”, but to solidarity and social justice.

³⁸ This is on the level of political system.

³⁹ A test for such an emancipatory project would be a dissent European project of multicultural accommodation.

⁴⁰ See in Derrida J, . “Specters of Marx”, Rothledge Classic, Rutledge, 2006; ” The Politics of Friendship” Verso, London, 2005; and in ”Rogues: Two Essays on Reason”, Stanford University Press, 2004

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