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Aims and Scope:

Changing Societies & Personalities is an international, peer-reviewed quarterly journal, published in English by the Ural Federal University. *CS&P* examines how rapid societallevel changes are reshaping individual-level beliefs, motivations and values – and how these individual-level changes in turn are reshaping societies. The interplay of personality traits and sociocultural factors in defining motivation, deliberation, action and reflection of individuals requires a combination of theoretical and empirical knowledge. Since an interdisciplinary approach is needed to understand the causes and consequences of the contemporary world's changing socio-political institutions, moral values, and religious beliefs, the journal welcomes theoretical and empirical contributions from a wide range of perspectives in the context of value pluralism and social heterogeneity of (post)modern society.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to

- value implications of interactions between socio-political transformations and personal self-identity;
- changes in value orientations, materialist and post-materialist values;
- moral reasoning and behavior;
- variability and continuity in the election of styles of moral regime and/or religious identity;
- the moral bases of political preferences and their elimination;
- social exclusion and inclusion;
- post-secular religious individualism;
- tolerance and merely "tolerating": their meanings, varieties and fundamental bases;
- ideologies of gender and age as variables in political, moral, religious and social change;
- educational strategies as training for specific social competences;
- social and existential security.

The journal publishes original research articles, forum discussions, review articles and book reviews.

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EDITORIAL

Editor's Note

The current issue of *Changing Societies & Personalities* aims to investigate value transformations in various spheres of social life, such as the image of religion in the memorial places and its impact on national identity; the concept of time maintaining full openness to the future and remembering the past, as well as messianism in the works of prominent contemporary French philosophers; the balance between openness to global influences and national identity in education; the role of professional organizations in civil society; and review of the research on ethical and psychological reasons in reproductive donation.

Tomáš Bubík in his article *A Graveyard as a Home to Ghosts or a Subject of Scholarly Research? The Czech National Cemetery at Vyšehrad* questions the generally accepted claim that the contemporary Czech society is one of the least religious nations in Europe and stresses the importance of focusing not so much on general claims but rather on specific segments of culture intertwining religious and non-religious elements. Bubík's research is focused on the Vyšehrad cemetery in Prague as a vivid example of close links between the religious and the secular. He shares the assumption about a close relationship between personal religiosity and its funerary expression, being convinced that the study of Vyšehrad gravestones in a historical perspective can contribute to elucidating the transformations concerning the attitude of Czech society towards life and death, the country and its religion. Bubík observes the history of the Vyšehrad national cemetery and its contribution to the formation of national identity in the light of the traditional "mortuary ideology" widespread in the country, concluding that "religion is an important element of the grave architecture of the national cemetery from its founding up until the present, despite the fact that it does not clearly predominate at present".

In the article *"Messianicity Without Messianism": On the Place of Religion in the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida*, Roman Soloviy explores the interpretation of messianicity by the prominent French philosopher Jacques Derrida in the light of ideas expressed by key Jewish thinkers of the beginning of the 20th century. Soloviy stresses that Derrida turned to the analysis of religious issues at different stages of his intellectual career, thus calling into question the traditional view on Derrida's deconstruction as generally being not favourable to religion. At the

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same time, Soloviy proves that Derrida's understanding of religion goes far beyond the terms of traditional denominational beliefs and practices. In addition, Derrida denies the traditional concept of time as a sequence of modalized presents: that is why, Soloviy believes, "the future cannot be regarded as a projected continuation of the present. It is not a descriptive empirical future, but a messianic eschatological future, an expectation of the arrival of an unpredictable other, in which our 'come' is turned to the point that we cannot determine, predict, or calculate in advance who or what is coming". Derrida's messianisity, concludes Soloviy, remains fully secular and separate from any particular socio-cultural context.

Fairuza S. Ismagilova, Aleksey V. Maltsev and Erkinbai N. Sattarov in their article *The Uzbek National Tradition in the Pedagogical Practices of Adult Education* search "for the right balance between openness to global influences, on the one hand, and the desire to preserve the country's national identity, on the other", namely, the centuries-old cultural and historical traditions of Uzbek people in the sphere of professional education. Following the results of a focus group analysis, the authors formulated four research hypotheses concerning teaching strategies and methods in the Uzbek education system: (1) Professors tend to choose interactive methods by following one of the four strategies in relation to the national context and national identity; (2) Experts will consider such methods as buddying, discussion, role-playing and metaphorical role-play as having limited applicability in the Uzbek national context; (3) Experts will consider the methods of case study, in-basket technique and shadowing as holding more potential for training the civil service talent pool in Uzbekistan; (4) Experts will consider mentoring, coaching and workshops as the most effective teaching methods. In the conclusion, the authors present the results of the conducted empirical study, which are partly confirmed and partly refuted.

Identification of the main objective and subjective reasons that determine nurses' membership/non-membership in professional associations is the focus of Natalia A. Akimova and Elena N. Medvedeva article *Factors Influencing Nurses' Decision to Join a Professional Association in Russia*. Following a comprehensive literature review, the authors analyse the role of nurse professional organizations as an important element of civil society, describe their history and present status in various countries, including Russia. The authors' intention is to address the existing research gap in studying professional nurse associations in Russia. In-depth interviews with nurses from different Russian regions were conducted to clarify their motivation for membership/non-membership; nurses' awareness of the activities of medical associations; the role of professional associations in nurses' daily practices, etc. The authors conclude that "factors contributing to the popularity of professional nurse associations can be quite diverse: starting from formal obligations… and ending with personal interest and commitment to the organization's goals and mission".

Elvira E. Symaniuk, Irina G. Polyakova and Elena V. Kvashnina present the article *Review of International Research on Ethical and Psychological Barriers to Reproductive Donation,* which covers most recent studies on reproductive donation written in English. The analysis includes about 70 publications devoted to the ethical and psychological motivation of donors to participate in reproductive donation. The

authors believe that the review can be beneficial for professional Artificial Reproductive Technologies (ART) organizations, "in particular those engaged in recruitment of new donors. The results of this review are meant to provide useful information for medical and legal professionals as well as policy makers on reproductive health". The conclusion is drawn that reproductive donation is underpinned by a variety of motivations and faces multiple obstacles; therefore, research into psychological and ethical aspects of reproductive donation should be continued.

The section OPENING THE DEBATE introduces Dmitriy A. Davydov's article *The Crisis of Humanism and Emerging Post-Anthropocentric Epoch: A Personalistic View*. In a quite provocative way, the author poses the problem of "increasing unpredictability" […] and "danger of manmade interventions in human nature", stressing the importance of approaching reality through a personalistic path. The latter is considered to be not a specific philosophical school, but rather "an attitude, a way of thinking that can be present in certain people, regardless of whether they consider themselves to be personalist philosophers or not". Davydov analyses the concept of "humanism" in the modern socio-cultural context: he insists that the "humanistic civilization" has entered its "sunset period" and sets up a variety of arguments to prove this assumption. He believes that humanism as a historical phenomenon of European culture experiences a deep crisis, which "provides the impulse towards mechanisms of technological changes in the biological nature of individuals". Turning to the prospects of changing human nature by technologies, Davydov warns about their possible dangers, namely, the "destruction of the universal human 'lifeworld'". In particular, Davydov's article may be seen as the invitation to discuss perspectives of transhumanism and its impact over human body and mind.

In the BOOK REVIEW section, one can find Elena Trubina's review of Germaine R. Halegoua (2019), *The Digital City: Media and the Social Production of Place* (New-York University Press). Trubina stresses that the focus of the book is "first, how citizens daily engage in the digital placemaking practices; second, the diversity of ways in which various populations employ navigation technologies and media platforms".

Discussions around the topics raised in the present issue will be continued in the subsequent issues of our journal. In planning to introduce new interesting themes, we welcome suggestions from our readers and prospective authors for thematic issues, debate sections or book reviews.

For more information, please visit our Journal's website: https://changing-sp.com/

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ARTICLE

A Graveyard as a Home to Ghosts or a Subject of Scholarly Research? The Czech National Cemetery at Vyšehrad

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ABSTRACT

Confirmed by a variety of sociological research, modern Czech society is considered deeply secular, non-believing, rejecting religious institutions and traditional forms of religion. This paper focuses on a field study of religiosity, namely on funeral artifacts in Vyšehrad, the Czech national cemetery in Prague, the Czech Republic's capital. Based on the findings of ethnographer Wilbur Zelinsky, the paper assumes that gravestones in particular record very private, innermost feelings, messages, tidings, and personal values, which can provide us with important knowledge about (especially) the bereaved persons' attitudes to human ultimate things including religious issues in the moments of a great loss of a loved one, i.e. in the situation of so-called existential crisis. The aim of the paper is to answer two key questions: firstly, how religion (or non-belief) is presented in the Czech national cemetery and secondly, to what degree is the gravestones' character influenced by significant historical events of modern Czech history. In other words, how much the image of religion in this nationally important cemetery corresponds with the degree of religiosity researched by standard sociological means.

KEYWORDS

funerary religiosity, national cemetery, Czechness, national identity, Vyšehrad, non-religion

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Introduction

A secular and unbelieving character, latent anticlericalism, apathy and indifference concerning religious questions and even atheism are all positions, which have been linked in recent decades with the Czech Republic as well as with Estonia within the framework of European society (Bubík, Remmel, & Václavík, 2020). Contemporary research confirms that religion is not an important theme for Czech society and is much less visible in public life than is the case, for example, in the neighbouring countries like Poland, Slovakia and Hungary (Máté-Tóth, 2019), that is in countries with a similar historical and cultural experience. There is nevertheless a need to distinguish within the positions of the Czech population between the relationship to religion and the relationship to churches, that is between the institutionalized form of religion and personal faith, religiosity. In this context we define religion in Durkheim's sense as unified system of beliefs and practices uniting believers into one community (Durkheim, 1912/2003, p. 65), whereas religiosity is a personal expression of faith that is not necessarily tied with it.

A number of specialized studies dealing with the decline in the importance of religion in Czech society are usually based on sociological studies, and they reveal much of importance (Hamplová, 2013; Horák, 2015; Lužný, 1999; Nešpor, 2010; Václavík, 2009). This is first and foremost a significant decline in trust in religious institutions, rejecting traditional faith, loss of religious identity, as well as civic awareness of the importance of protecting one's own privacy, in particular, when it comes to questions which are viewed as personal including the relationship to religion. It is nevertheless specifically this fact, the possibility of not answering questions about religious perception (for example, when carrying out a census), which significantly limits sociological inquiry (Fialová & Nešpor, 2018, p. 210; Havlíček, 2019). Although it has been clearly demonstrated that the number of people identifying with traditional religious perception has markedly decreased in the Czech Republic in recent decades, this does not necessarily mean that the number of non-believers or even atheists is growing. Whatever the case, the set of so-called "religiously unaffiliated" significantly complicates a scientific view of the actual level of secularization of Czech society. Specifically, these circumstances can markedly relativize the specialized and lay claims that contemporary Czechs rank among the least religious nations at present.

This study attempts to take another approach. It is based on the conviction that science needs to focus attention primarily on research into so-called small and narrowly focused issues. Contemporary society is extremely different in terms of ideology and values, and social science continues to succumb to the temptation to produce extremely general claims, for example, in connection with the character and level of religiosity or secularity. The author of this study is therefore putting forward the markedly more modest aim, this being to contribute to the study of one of the most important segments of material culture, these being cemeteries as locations with a cultural memory. This study specifically focuses on the Vyšehrad cemetery in Prague, which is specific in that it has been viewed as the Czech national cemetery from as far back as the nineteenth century (Gade, 2015).

This study is influenced by an emphasis on "a grounded theoretical and inductive approach to religion in locality" propagated by the Religious Studies scholar Kim Knott, according to whom the religious and non-religious are situated in the structure of the seeming secular world together. These do not therefore consist of two spheres of reality, which are distinctly separate, but which actually interlink with one another. The author of this study does not therefore share the traditional concept of "the holy and the profane" as ambivalent realities, but is of the opinion that specifically public space, in our case the cemetery, appropriately manifest these two categories.

The role of the body is also essential in the framework of the study of religiosity in public space, which in our case will consist of a body (bodies), which is dehumanized. The method of placement of the body into a space actually constructs social reality, thereby giving (the body) a truly specific symbolism (Knott, 2005), which can play an important role, for example, in the framework of religious, cultural, historical or political narrative, which they can even mutually link. The body and space will be therefore key components of this study, by means of which we can try to explain not only the processual changes in relationship to death among the Czech intelligentsia, but also their relationship to religion.

The Study of Funerary Religiosity

Research into cemetery artefacts of the Vyšehrad cemetery follows one essential aim, thus being a contribution to understanding so-called "funerary religiosity" (Zelinsky, 2007, p. 453), as we are of the opinion that this type of religiosity is not only neglected, but is also an important component of the study of religiosity as such.

Although the fact that exploring something such as "funerary religiosity" can sound somewhat strange, it is important to emphasize that this primarily concerns the religiosity of the bereaved, which is manifested first and foremost in the formation of the gravestones of the close deceased and in adaptations to grave sites. The ethnographer Wilbur Zelinsky, for example, is convinced that gravestones in particular are artefacts expressing extremely internal feelings, messages and a mission, personal values and that "the testimony of cemeteries is some kind of final letter to the world" (Zelinsky, 2007, pp. 446–447). Laura Suchan is also of the opinion that "gravestones are more than just memorials to the deceased" (Suchan, 2008, p. 41). It is important in her view to view gravestones and cemeteries differently than merely from the perspective of genealogy. This consists, that is, of a form of expression, which is able to provide insight into the social history of the given society and thus "convey messages about religion" (Suchan, 2008, pp. 41–43, 45). In other words, research into cemeteries can provide us with important knowledge about local history, period literature, architecture, art and about religion (Mitoraj, 2001, pp. 82–87), or generally said about "mortuary ideology" and its conditioning to religious, social, historical, cultural and economic factors (Gorman & DiBlasi, 1981, p. 79).

While the work up until now focused on research into graveyards has been focused on the denominational affiliation of the deceased, the localization of graveyard motifs in various geographical areas, the diversity of iconography, the

change in gravestone motifs, etc., specifically Zelinsky's research is unique in that it is focused on research into funerary religiosity in connection with the study of the level of secularization. This is based on the fact that the bereaved confronted with the reality of death and mortality, along with the name, date of birth and date of death freely place on gravestones symbols and inscriptions, which correspond with their personal values and convictions. This therefore consists of an extremely sensible form of religiosity, which needs to receive deserved attention even in religious research (Zelinsky, 2007, p. 453), and this specifically because it does not have always to correspond with a publicly declared religiosity, can be coordinated or supplemented.

Zelinsky's working hypothesis is the assumption, which I also support in this study, that there is a close relationship between "deep down personal religiosity and its funerary expression" (Zelinsky, 2007, p. 457). In other words, a person who experiences his faith personally, also expresses it in this manner. The submitted study therefore attempts to make use of this theoretical assumption[1]. One of its main goals is to therefore capture the changes in the attitudes of the Czech intelligentsia to religion in time, along with the onset, character and changes to secular thinking.

The research was focused on one concrete cemetery, which is unique in the Czech environment. Vyšehrad or also the Slavín cemetery at the church (basilica from the year 2003) of St. Peter and St. Paul in Vyšehrad in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, is a locale where a number of renowned Czech personages are buried, including their families. Originally, however, only Catholic Christians were buried in this cemetery, and its western part serves as a burial ground for higher ecclesiastical dignitaries, priests, clergymen and nuns.

The reasons behind the selection of this cemetery were several. The first of them is the fact that this cemetery in particular is the modern Czech burying ground for a range of personages who contributed significantly to the building of Czech national consciousness and the development of Czech society. Secondly, these people are perceived historically as models and examples of modern Czechness. Thirdly, there is the assumption that specifically the gravestones of these personages can help us understand the transformations on the relationship of Czech society to religion.

It is also assumed that the graveyard space, in the same manner as "funerary religiosity" in Bohemia, underwent changes as of the nineteenth century which are linked with important ideological and also political milestones of Czech history, that is:

1) the period after the year 1848 when transformations to the absolutist system of the Austrian Empire came about, which the Czech Lands were part of;
2) developments after the year 1918, which are linked with the emergence of an independent Czechoslovakia and the democratization of society;
3) the events after the year 1945, when World War II came to an end and essential changes in the national composition occurred (the expulsion of one third of the population) in post-war Czechoslovakia;

[1] Zelinsky compares a large amount of data obtained from gravestones in the United States, Canada and Great Britain. The greatest surprise of this research is the fact that the level of British and Canadian religiosity recorded on gravestones is permanent and far greater than the American value, even though the United States is generally viewed as an extremely religious society.

4) the events after the year 1948, when the Communist regime came to power and the national establishment of atheism;
5) changes after the year 1989, which are linked with the fall of Communism, the gradual renewal of democratic society, its differentiation, pluralization, and also marked by great consumerism.

In other words, this paper presents the research into "the temporal patterning" (Gorman & DiBlasi, 1981, p. 81) of the content of the gravestones of Vyšehrad cemetery and what these gravestones can tell us in a time perspective about attitudes to death, to the nation, to the country and to religion, that is how so-called "mortuary ideology" changed over time, in the key historical stages, which Czech society went through in the modern age.

In light of the above-mentioned, there will be an attempt to answer two key questions:

1) how and to what extent religion is represented at the Czech national cemetery – with the assumption that if this cemetery is a national symbol characterizing modern Czechness, then this cultural icon should correspond roughly to the attitudes of Czech society to religion in the modern age;
2) whether and to what extent the so-called final letters to the world of this cemetery are influenced by the significant historical events, which Czech society underwent in its modern history.

In contrast to Zelinsky, I am of the opinion that gravestone messages, despite being direct and often of an internal character, are therefore conditioned by an ideological fixation, that is the spirit of the time and key historical events.

The Idea of the National Cemetery in Prague

The history of Europe as well as of the Czech Lands relate of several key characteristics, which local cemeteries are marked by. So-called "mortuary ideology", corresponding to established Christian tradition and its traditions concerning the character of burial and treatment of remains (of the body) of the deceased, has penetrated deep into social awareness and the legal principles of the particular European countries in existence at present.

The traditional character of this "ideology" is based on biblical teachings about the body and physicality, the main idea of which is that the body was created by God and will one-day rise from the dead. The Christian concept views death as a transition, which corresponds to the traditional emphasis on a respectable treatment of the body, including the placement of the remains in a chosen piety locale, this being a graveyard. Over the course of centuries, a truly thorough manual of burial rituals came about, a prayer practice for the deceased, including so-called commemorative day for the deceased entitled "All Souls' Day". Visiting a cemetery, at least on the day of the anniversary of a birth or death of a deceased person, belongs to the unwritten rules, a publicly respected form of piety. Emotional respect for a close deceased person is thus a truly natural form of behaviour.

With transformations in the area of religious faith in Europe, which arise primarily in the Reformation, changes also come about in the understanding of

mortuary ideology, the relationship to the body including attitudes toward death[2], which culminates in the modern era in a requirement for a secular burial and with the right to engage with one's own body (for example, in the form of the so-called cremation movement). According to Olga Nešporová, "the perception changed as to what behaviour is considered pious (in burial practice), and this in the sense of much greater tolerance for various kinds of treatment" in recent decades (Nešporová, 2013, p. 234). It has also become apparent that Christian symbolism is retreating to the background and that new parts of cemeteries in the Czech Republic not only do not make use of Christian symbolism, but do not use anything else instead (Nešporová, 2013, pp. 237–238). It is therefore clear that a marked change in traditional funeral practice, the customs connected with it, in particular those which are based on Christian attitudes to death, is coming about in contemporary Czech society.

5522 cemeteries and 266 private graveyards were listed in the Czech Republic in the year 2006 (Eliáš & Kotrlý, 2006). Vyšehrad cemetery in Prague, which is the central locality for the present research, is a piety location, where burials took place, according to archaeological findings from as far back as the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Nechvátal, 1991, p. 5). A small graveyard emerged here over the course of time, where burials only took place occasionally (Bedrníček, 2008, p. 4). The idea of building a national cemetery specifically at this spot emerged in the 1860s as part of the newly established association of Czech writers under the name *Svatobor*, the members of which were renowned personages from the ranks of Czech cultural and business life, with the extremely renowned historian František Palacký at the forefront (Potoček, 2005, p. 16). A number of nationalist focused Catholic priests and later even Tomáš G. Masaryk, the first President of democratic Czechoslovakia from the years 1918 up to 1935 and also his successor in the presidential office Edvard Beneš, were involved in it.

The motto of the association was: *Pomáhej! Osvěcuj! Pamatuj!* (*Help! Enlighten! Remember!*). The aim was to support financially Czech writing[3], in particular impoverished writers, their families and the bereaved as a central element of the national revival and also, which is significant for our purposes, "the celebration of their memory" (Liška, 2006, p. 11). Help was provided also by means of prizes, scholarships or rewards, which was supposed to develop their further creative work, although this did not consist of only support for literary works, but also scientific work or historical (Potoček, 2005, pp. 342–344). There was also a focus on publishing important works written in Czech, the building of monuments, gravestones and memorial plaques at places of reverence, which contributed in a significant manner to the development

[2] Philipe Ariés (1977, 1983) distinguishes between the old and the modern approach to death, which are perceived as clearly contradictory. The modern period and man, in contrast to the so-called old approach, do not in his view know how to deal with death and attempts to eliminate it from life. He distinguishes in this sense between the "sauvage' and "domestiquée" approach to death.

[3] Literature was viewed as the most important source for national life and the national language, even being viewed as "a holy thing", as mentioned in *Ohlášení* (*Announcement*) by Svatobor, which was printed in *Národní listy* ("The National Newspaper") (1862, no. 89). The authors of this text included František Palacký and Jan E. Purkyně.

of national writing and culture, and this not only in the Czech Lands, but also abroad (Potoček, 2005, p. 342).

The actual association Svatobor came about in the year 1862, this being a time when the Czech Lands were still a part of the Hapsburg monarchy (from the years 1526 to 1918). The political situation in the monarchy, after the revolutionary year of 1848[4], was liberalized somewhat, leading to more open propagation of national consciousness and patriotism. This led to the idea of founding the national cemetery in an appropriate locality. After a certain period of weighing various possibilities, the choice was made for a locale, which had been the seat of Czech political power in the past; it was also the burial site of the first Czech King Vratislaus I (888–921), from the Czech royal Přemyslid dynasty, which ruled the Přemyslid state from this locale (Nechvátal, 1991, p. 7). Vyšehrad was an ancient Slavic fortress "linked with mythical legends from the oldest national past". It was viewed in the modern age as "the historical picture of Czech life" (Balák, 1946, p. 8). A number of renowned personages had been buried here from the time of the establishment of the national cemetery, including the poet Karel Hynek Mácha (1810–1836), the writer Božena Němcová (1820–1862), the composers Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) and Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904), the painter Mikoláš Aleš (1852–1913), the writer Karel Čapek (1890–1938) and a range of others.

According to the founders of the association, the true greatness of the nation was to be embodied not only in care for its own history and language, but also in care for "the sons of the nation", and this not during their lives, but also after their deaths. The national cemetery is therefore a graveyard where Czechs are buried not in accordance with their religious allegiance or piety, but in accordance with their loyalty to the language and to the nation. In relation to the study of mortuary ideology, this cemetery is therefore a truly suitable locality. It helped to create the story of Czechness, which contributed to the formation of national identity, and also reflects the Czech national character.

Slavín Tomb as a Czech Pantheon

The memory of a nation is undoubtedly conditioned by the level of education, the character of the political system, technological development or the ruling ideology. The life stories of renowned persons therefore only have a time-limited length in the framework of the national memory. Some of them can even be completely intentionally forgotten, and others, in contrast, recalled. Awareness of the societal-wide importance of particular people is not only a generational, but a personal (for example, an intellectual) issue, and this is also the case with the individuals buried at the Vyšehrad cemetery, where among the more than 600 buried only a few are still part of current-day general awareness (a number of the buried are, however, their relations).

The idea of transforming Vyšehrad cemetery into a national graveyard came about, however, gradually (Nechvátal, 1991, pp. 8–11). The first separate, so-called national

[4] The year 1848 is primarily linked in the Hapsburg Monarchy with the struggle of Hungarians for freedom and independence, which helped other nations or ethnic groups in the monarchy with their efforts.

graves were established with the aim of burying Czech writers. We therefore read of one of the newly built graves: "Nations cannot disappear if their language is alive"[5]. The maturity of a nation was supposed to consist of the maturity of the language and its writing. Apart from language, there was also an emphasis on, for example, the idea of the country or nation, but language was viewed as the main element for forming continuity of national awareness, national identity and national distinctiveness. It is not therefore the territory, bloodline or religion, but the language allegiance, which is of the greatest importance for self-definition in the modern concept of Czechness; it was defined in the nineteenth century in confrontation with Germanness and the German language as well as in relation to Austrian absolutism and the Austrian form of Catholicism or Austro-Catholicism.

Another idea emerged in the 1880s in connection with discussion about the character of a cemetery, thus being the establishment of a shared honorary tomb. This was not, however, accepted unanimously, with resistance even among the Czech intelligentsia (Nekula, 2017, pp. 389–390). This was supposed to consist of a so-called Czech "Pantheon", a kind of "temple of humanity", as is written on its epitaph. The tomb was finally built and named Slavín (Figure 1). It has been situated in the eastern part of Vyšehrad cemetery from the year 1893[6]. The first to be buried there was the renowned poet Julius Zeyer in the year 1901, this being eight years after the completion of the tomb. The last to be buried there was the conductor Rafael Kubelík in the year 1996. The personage of the poet Zeyer, as the first to be buried, was supposed to imply "the Christological and national narrative", and specifically his burial at Vyšehrad cemetery became "a visible symbol of Czechness" not only for Czechs, but also for Prague Germans, as it became a symbol of the nationally divided Prague (Nekula, 2017, p. 389), in the same fashion as in the Czech Lands.

Figure 1. *Slavín tomb*

The tomb was built at the end of the nineteenth century, still during the period of Austria-Hungary. The Habsburgs, over the period of the three-hundred-year empire, was responsible in particular for the forced recatholization of the inhabitants of the Czech Lands, this involving the eradication of Protestantism and also supporting the privileged position of German and German speakers and the confession of the Catholic population. From the time of the Imperial Patent of Toleration from the year 1781, the constitution guaranteed complete freedom of confession for

[5] This was a motto by the Czech writer, national patriot and Slavist Václav Hanka (1791–1861).

[6] Slavín tomb was built in the year 1893. The first to be buried there was the poet Julius Zeyer.

even non-Catholics; however, within the Protestant confession only Lutherans and Helvetian Calvinists were allowed, these being non-Czech denominations. Czech and Brethren confessions were not allowed. Modern Protestantism finally built upon these concepts, but only after the year 1918. These two Protestant confessions, the Helvetian and the Lutheran, were extremely small in terms of numbers in the Czech Lands, thus being a result of the forced recatholization. Protestants thus became a minority confession in the Czech Lands, which currently consists of half of a percent of the population. Religious identity of the nineteenth century that is at the time of building national identity was primarily Catholic. It is therefore not surprising that specifically church Catholic symbolism played an important role in the symbolic and aesthetic creation of the national Slavín tomb.

55 people were buried in this tomb over the course of more than one hundred years. The greatest number consisted of poets and writers (12), followed by actors (7), opera singers (6), painters (5), sculptors (5), architects (4), violinists (3), pianists (2), conductors and composers (2), directors (2), philologists (2), historians (2), archaeologists (1), literary historians (1), theatre critics (1), inventors (1) and economists (1).

The tomb consists of a crypt, a catafalque with a cross and a monument with a sarcophagus, which are linked by a balustrade stairway. The tomb is covered by the gravestones of the persons buried there. They are simple and list, with one exception, only the birth-date and date of death. The cross as a traditional cultural burial symbol depicts the crucified Christ, with a stone table underneath upon which the remains of the deceased are placed during funerals before being placed into the tomb (Liška, 2006, p. 21). An inscription is on the table in the form of a verse from the New Testament from the Gospel of John 11:25: *"Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live"*. A monument rises behind the cross in the form of a stylobate, upon the top of which is an allegorical figure of so-called the Genius of the Nation with wings seated on the sarcophagus. An inscription is placed under the sarcophagus, which is also the motto of Slavín: *"Although having died, they still speak"*. Another two sculptures representing the nation are situated in the lower part of the sarcophagus. The first of them depicts "The mourning nation" with the inscription *"His great sons now dust – the nation mourns, returning to earth"*, the second "The nation rejoices" with the inscription *"Their deeds, rejoicing, celebrate for humanity for ages"* (Liška, 2006, 21).

The tomb is dominated by four figures, with two of them being most prominent – the person of the crucified Christ and the figure of the Genius of the Nation, which is reminiscent of an angel because of its wings. The symbol of the cross of Christ is understood in Christian culture as a symbol of suffering, death and crucifixion and victory over death in the form of resurrection. Christian culture does not view suffering as an end in itself, but attributes it with a deep meaning; just as death does not represent a definitive end, but a transition, a hope for a new eternal life. The excerpt from the Gospel of John thus makes reference to the importance of faith as a condition for future life, which expires without faith, in the same manner as a nation without a language.

The character of a national tomb links the Christian symbolism of a cross with the symbolism of the nation as a place for a life which is ours, which we own and from which we arose. The nation is a place where a person is born and dies; it takes care of life and death, which is shared with others; it is both the birthplace of ordinary people as well as remarkable ones, geniuses. The central figure of the Genius of the Nation, as well as the words placed on the inscriptions located on the monument, such as "genius", "nation" or "land" are linked into one whole thanks to the arrangement of the space of the monument; but one cannot not notice that the symbolism of the Christian cross is only a kind of transition or transitional level to something else, something higher, which can also be symbolized by the stairs of the balustrade, which lead from the cross to the actual monument. From the spatial perspective, the Christian cross in Slavín does not stand out, but in comparison with the character of the monument of the nation finds itself in its shadow. The memorial with the cross is significantly smaller than the monument with the sculpture of the Genius of the Nation placed on the top. The proportionality of both sculptures is thus diametrically different. The expression of the tortured Christ also comes across as passive and, in this respect, both monuments are contrasting in expression. The majesty of the Genius of the Nation has wings, which manifest freedom, power and strength and which are as if in contradiction with the helpless position of Jesus on the cross. The sculpture of Genius also evokes the expression of a caring being, bending down over the coffin of the deceased son of the nation, and seeming to be preparing to breathe new life into him, while in contrast the sculpture of Christ seems to loom in isolation in the space.

The Slavín tomb thus makes the strong impression that traditional religious identity and Christ as a model followed (still ongoing) in the Christian type of society are only a symbolic expression of a transition to a new, earthly and humanly focused ideal. At the same time, the process of social and cultural development begins to be understood in an environment of nationalists and intellectuals as a path to Humanism, which leads from religion to a nation, from the Church to a country, from the following of Christ to the following of great personages of a nation, their great ideals.

The philosopher Ladislav Kunte (1874–1945) truly distinctly captured the spirit of the day, which corresponds with our theme, when he wrote in the 1920s that modern man is not only losing faith in life after death, but that "life and the world as it is today has become the starting point and goal of the new faith" (Kunte, 1920, p. 27). He at the same time realises that the nation for the Czech patriot is "a being of its kind, which through something great, living, demanding respect, honour, devotion, sacrifice – a deity of its own kind, and everything which links one to a nation evokes mystical respect: the language of a nation, its history, a historical locale, historical personages, days" (Kunte, 1920, pp. 94–95). Even the patriotic phraseology has, in his view, a religious character, when he speaks of the responsibility to love the nation and the country, about sacrifices for the nation, about the altar of the nation and so on (Ibid.). It is therefore apparent that the national tomb reveals that the importance of Christianity was receding among the Czech intelligentsia in the nineteenth century in favour of period nationalism and preparing a new path, an earthly one and most importantly one focused on human ideals.

The Gravestone Symbolism of the Vyšehrad Cemetery

Several important facts need to be kept in mind when studying national symbolism. First of all, the erection of the gravestones usually did not correspond in terms of time with the date of the death of the personages. In addition, various changes involving repairs, adaptations, overall reconstruction or even the selling of a grave spot could come about over the course of time. When studying this issue, we also became aware of the fact that a certain level of symbolic, aesthetic and cultural conservatism exists in the question of the character of the gravestones. Their selection was thus influenced not only by the personal taste of the bereaved, but also by period fashion and local customs.

The Christian cross ranks among the most traditional symbols to be placed on the graves of the deceased in Western culture generally, along with in the Czech Lands. This is also the case at the Vyšehrad cemetery, where the symbol of the cross (Figure 2) is not only part of the Slavín tomb, but also predominates as a symbol in the architecture of the entire cemetery. If one were to briefly contemplate the meaning of a traditional symbol like the cross, one should emphasize that it consists of a symbol of a geometric shape, which consists of two pieces overlaying each other at a right angle. The actual word ("cross": from the Latin "crux") originally meant an instrument of torture, used by a range of ancient nations for executing criminals. Jesus of Nazareth was also killed on a cross, as a result of which the cross became the main symbol of this religion and consequently even Christian graves.

Figure 2. *Symbol of a cross*

Apart from Christian crosses, there are also various depictions of the face of Jesus on the gravestones in the cemetery, usually with an anguished expression, with the crown of thorns which was supposedly placed on the head of Jesus during the crucifixion. The motif of the lamb of God as a sacrificial animal also appears in one case on a gravestone, this being a symbolic depiction of the sacrificed Jesus. A christogram was also used on several gravestones, with this ranking among the oldest Christian symbols, even being used on the gravestones of Christians back in Classical times. This consists of the first two letters referring to the name of Jesus in Greek, that is the Greek letters "X" and "P" (read together as Chi-Rho), when the letters are written after each other. Apart from these Greek letters from the alphabet, there are also its first and last letter, that is "A" and "Ω", which indicate the beginning and the end, birth and death, which refer in Christian theology to the fact that God

is the origin of everything and where everything returns, that is even the bodies of the deceased.

The mother of Jesus, Mary, who is viewed as the mother of the Catholic Church, is also depicted on several gravestones. The Catholic Church is comprehended as the Madonna protector, who cares for the souls of the deceased in a special manner and intercedes for their salvation. She is sometimes even portrayed with the infant Jesus or also with the crucified Christ in the form of piety (Figure 3). Finally, there are figures of angels, spiritual beings in human form with wings. The Bible perceives them as messengers of God, who link the eternal world with the earthly one and who are also viewed as protectors of the bodies, whose souls have departed.

Figure 3. *Gravestone in the form of piety*

All of these presented symbols are traditional signs of Christian identity and its mortuary ideology, and do not differ from established views as to what a usual Christian tomb should look like. They consist of symbols, which are personal and which can be viewed as a so-called final letter to the world, but also as a letter fully corresponding with the cultural dominance of the Catholic church in society. Life in this cemetery over the last 150 years is therefore evidence of the fact that Christian discourse and its mortuary ideology is still deeply rooted in Czech society.

When we speak of the Vyšehrad cemetery as a national graveyard, we have to keep in mind that this consists of a cemetery, which was originally Catholic. This serves to explain why there are no gravestones with Protestant gravestone symbols in the national cemetery, such as the chalice or the Bible, despite the fact that Protestantism in the Czech Lands is among the most important religious traditions of a dynamic society from as far back as the high Middle Ages. The symbolic grave (a so-called cenotaph built in the year 2000) of Dr. Milada Horáková (she was a member of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren), who was a victim of a judicial murder at the time of the rise of the Communist regime and was publicly executed in 1950, is located at the cemetery, but the symbolism of the grave is political emphasizing the heroic position taken against the despotism of the Communist party.

Seemingly, for the same reason, due to this being originally a Catholic cemetery, the national cemetery is missing any Jewish grave symbols, such as blessing hands, a pot or the Star of David. A number of Jews identified historically with the German culture and language, but also with the Czech culture after the establishment of Czechoslovakia in the year 1918. These Czech Jews usually came from the circle of so-called assimilants, many of whom, however, were either murdered during World War Two or emigrated prior to the War. The renowned Prague Jews included, for example, Franz Kafka (1883–1924), who is buried in Prague, but not at Vyšehrad cemetery. The reason for this could also be the fact that he wrote in German.

When it comes to depictions of secular gravestones, the approaches are quite rich in variety and make up a significant part of this cemetery. A number of the graves in the Vyšehrad cemetery are of a secular character and do not have any religious symbolism. The most frequent depictions are busts of the deceased personages, sometimes of larger than life size. This type of gravestone is therefore linked to a concrete deceased person, who is artistically rendered, often without any other secular symbols, which would indicate the position of the deceased or his or her family to death or to religion. The personality of the deceased is emphasized, his or her human dimension and skills, thanks to which the person became known. Gravestones in the form of a bust were most frequently built during the period of the Communist regime. This emphasis on individuality and the importance of the personage did not, however, actually correspond with the collective concept of Communist society, which rejected and openly criticized the cult of the personality as of the 1950s. These gravestones actually served to evoke this impression.

Additional secular expressions of interest include, first and foremost, engravings of the personal autographs of the deceased, these being artistically stylized figures, most frequently women, as well as various musical instruments (guitar, violin, harp) or other objects, which are connected with the deceased (hands, football, ball), with even symbols of the scouting movement in several cases. A number of gravestones have both religious and secular symbols at the same time.

One interesting discovery is that Christian motifs continued to be used for decorating gravestones during the forty-year period of the Communist regime. Also, of interest is that no gravestones have been preserved with typical Communist symbols such as the sickle, hammer or red star from the same period. There are none of them in the cemetery at this time. Even the gravestones of renowned figures of the Communist regime, such as the poet and writer Vítězslav Nezval (Figure 4) or the historian

Figure 4. *Grave of the Communist poet Vítězslav Nezval*

and celebrated Communist politician Zdeněk Nejedlý, do not contain any Communist symbolism, or any other. The question therefore arises as to why certain renowned Communists were buried specifically here in this cemetery, when the Communist regime advocated an international, that is a non-national, policy.

Epitaphs as Messages to the Future

It has already been mentioned that gravestones are understood here as bearers of reports, messages, which are designated, first and foremost, for future generations. They are expressions from the bereaved, usually related to the deceased person, but also expressing values, desires and convictions in order to communicate something completely personal. It is apparent that in existential situations, as in the case of the death of someone close, personal convictions appear more often and more open than is the case, with so-called ordinary life moments. I therefore attempt here to capture the content of this communication and place it into the period and cultural contexts.

A chronological perspective can be very helpful in order to understand the transformations of mortuary ideology. Gravestones and their inscriptions, if we were to arrange them from the oldest to the most current, can indicate transformations over time and their possible connection to the character of the day and our formulated key historical events.

To create a time axis, I chose as the criteria *the date of the death of the first person* listed on the gravestone, and this as the approximate period for the erection of the gravestone. I should emphasize that this only consists of "a framework chronology". I am aware, of course, of the fact that the time period of the erection of the gravestone often did not correspond with the year of the death of the personage and that gravestones were often built somewhat later. In addition, gravestones could be changed, altered or rebuilt completely new over time[7]. Despite the fact that the exact time of the final adaptation to the gravestone cannot be verified, I finally did not resign on this criteria, as I am of the opinion that thanks to this we can at least approximately determine the time of its creation. In light of this fact, I will only attribute a corresponding weight to the conclusions.

Christian symbolism, if we leave out at this time the Slavín tomb and the part of the cemetery where Catholic clergy are buried, is present in more than half of the overall number of 46 inscriptions. The most frequent themes are references to God, the Lord, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, the idea of eternal truth, the theme of resurrection from the dead, the Final Judgement or the awareness that man comes from the dust of the earth. The following can be seen as an example of this theme: *"Beatified be the deceased who die with the Lord"* (year 1887), or the introductory words of the hymn Hail Mary in the Latin version: *"Ave Maria, gratia plena"* (year 1892), *"His soul lives with God"* (year 1940), *"Thy will be done"* (year 1949) or the New Testament verse

[7] The administration of the Vyšehrad cemetery is not managed by any archive, which would contain information about the period of the building of the tombs or their consequent adaptations. There was not a requirement for the approval of the administration of the cemetery for building structures (repairs) of grave equipment at the cemetery in the nineteenth or even in the twentieth century, as is there is at present.

from the Gospel of John *"Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live"* (year 1954). These therefore consisted of standard religious texts, which fully correspond with mortuary ideology and which are an expression of a personal, Church conceived piety. It is of interest that this traditional form did not even become significantly less frequent in the first decades after the Communist takeover (1948), which was accompanied by persecution of the Church and denigration of religious faith in society.

Epitaphs from the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, in contrast, thematise the idea of the country and the nation, these themes having become extremely important and powerfully resonating within society. This is also attested to by particular examples: *"If and when God gives you life, be loyal to your nation and faithful to your friends"* (year 1869) or *"My nation is my motto"* (year 1888), *"If only the misfortune of my nation could join me in one grave"* (year 1890), *"I wish my nation from all my heart that it would never descend into small-mindedness or ascend into arrogance"* (year 1895) or *"He went out into the world to seek truth in his great longing, fighting for the rights of his nation, rest in the arms of eternal truth"* (year 1917). These inscriptions indicate, however, an already unclear link between the idea of the nation and religion. Additionally, it seems as if the theme of the nation is gradually dwindling, which could have been the result of the gaining of national independence in the year 1918, with the founding of Czechoslovakia.

Apart from Christian, patriotic and nationalist themes, there are a number of inscriptions on the gravestones also emphasizing the themes of futility, fate and the transience of human life (for example, *"Where are those times, where is that time"*; year 1962), the cycle of life (*"The tree of knowledge is in sudden sorrow, what time has taken, it will also give"*; year 2011), sorrow from the loss of a loved one, the importance of internal experience of reality, the seeking of truth within the human or in contrast the importance of seeking out oneself in nature (*"We only find ourselves in nature"*; year 1922). They further celebrate family, marital and filial love (*"I love you to the skies, Mother"*; year 2004), as well as promoting the importance of faith, loyalty, justice or a life lived in devotion to music and art. These consist therefore of expressions of internal human feelings and basic values, which are not conditioned by period mortuary ideology or by important historical events, which occurred in Czech society. They are expessions, which could be labelled as eidetic, as they express pure personal feelings which are a result of the loss of a loved one. These inscriptions in particular, as letters to the future generation, can be viewed as "secular humanist".

The Non-Religious Character of the Tombs

Gravestones and their symbolism are conditioned not only by the ideological beliefs of the deceased and their families, the traditional forms of their formation, the funeral mode, but also the economic possibilities of the bereaved. It is therefore assumed that the greater the originality of the gravestone, the larger the financial costs connected with its realization. In addition, these kinds of gravestones have a greater informative value than those which are simple and basic. Originality of gravestones, which we

comprehend in the sense "of an unconventional design", is also more typical among the intelligentsia and the more prosperous layer of society, among artists, and also with those deceased whose gravestones were financed from public resources. In other words, a higher economic status on the part of the bereaved makes possible a more distinct, that is a more original expression, this being the bearer of a richer informative message.

While the gravestones situated on the national Slavín tomb (with the exception of the tomb itself) are simple and only have a basic message about the deceased, that is the date of birth and death, a number of additional gravestones in the Vyšehrad cemetery are extremely varied in terms of their content and execution, often truly atypical and interesting artistically. The gravestones of actors, artists and athletes rank among the most original. I have chosen as examples the gravestones of personages who died after the year 1989, that is after the fall of Communism so as to be able to attempt to capture the character of the time period. These gravestones are executed, not only in an original manner, but a number of them also have a religious character. It is therefore assumed that their content will correspond to the freedom of the time and independent expression in questions, which concern the final affairs of individuals.

It is apparent that the originality of gravestones is more frequent with actors or artists than with other professions. One of them, for example, is the gravestone of the actor Antonín Jedlička (1923–1993) with the artistic pseudonym "Uncle Jedlička". This actor was primarily known for establishing a theatre focused on children, "who were introduced to theatre in the form of play" (Potoček, 2005, p. 101). He also worked as a sound imitator (he was able to imitate hundreds of different sounds) in the radio and television and also wrote books for small children (Ibid.). The gravestone is specific in terms of the fact that the only symbol which it contains is a (simple) symbol of a fir as a tree. This is located in the place where usually the symbol of a cross is placed on graves. The symbol of the tree was chosen because the name of this actor in Czech consists of a diminutive of the word for a fir tree, that is jedlička (in English "little fir-tree"). The gravestone also contains his artistic name, which was primarily known by his child audience, that is "Strýček Jedlička" (in English "Uncle Fir-Tree"). The gravestone does not make any reference to any post-humous content, but instead recalls the artistic role of this actor, in particular the role of the good uncle, who is kind-hearted, merry, friendly and who even has a sense of humour even after the graves, which is confirmed by the symbolic tree on his gravestone.

Another original gravestone from the present is that of the actor Radoslav Brzobohatý (1932–2012), who was known as both a theatre and film actor and who was famous as a young man on the big screen, not only for his acting talent, but also for his manliness. His name is engraved on the gravestone, his own signature and also an excerpt from the song *"Moravia, Moravia! dear Moravia, what comes from you, noble band"*. This consists of a nationalist song apparently from the time of the Napoleonic (French-Austrian) Wars which took place in the Czech (Moravian) territory. This song is sometimes even viewed as the unofficial Moravian anthem. The song has more verses, some of which emphasize, for example, an anti-French, others an anti-German character, etc. The reason for the placement on the gravestone is in all

probability the fact that the actor had a deep affection for Moravia and Wallachia (the eastern part of the Czech Republic) where he was born. Although he spent most of life in Prague, he was a Moravian patriot, and also truly loved Moravian folk songs. His gravestone, similarly as in the case of the actor Jedlička, did not contain any religious motifs, but was intended to recall two things. The first is the personality of the actor, which is supposed to be captured by the engraving of his signature as well as the engraving of his portrait. The second, his deeply personal relationship to his native land, is his birthplace. The words of the song therefore emphasize the nobility of the personages who came from this region. The gravestone does not contain any information about his profession, but does recall his human character and relation to his homeland.

The gravestones of the Czech football players Josef Bican (1913–2001) and Josef Masopust (1931–2015), who were icons of Czech football in the twentieth century, are also original. Bican is even considered one of the greatest Czech football players of all time. He first played for Rapid Vienna and later for Slavia Prague. He was the leading scorer, not only in the Austrian, but also in the Czech football league. Josef Masopust, in contrast, won a silver medal at the World Cup in 1962 as a member of the Czechoslovak national team and received that same year the Golden Ball for the best football player in Europe. He is ranked among the top hundred world football players of all time.

Bican's grave is primarily decorated by his bust with his name and then an engraving of a football, above which is the inscription "football international". When his wife died in the year 2011, another gravestone was placed on the grave with her name and a message, which is a deeply personal message from his wife: *"It wasn't always easy, but life with you Josef was lovely"*. Masopust's gravestone (Figure 5), which was an initiative of the Club of Friends of Josef Masopust, is in the shape of a smaller football pitch. Apart from his date of birth and death, there is an engraving of his signature and a football. His signature is supposed to represent purity of play fair play. The model for the sculpture of the ball was the one used by Masopust in the year 1962 at the World Cup in Chile, where he achieved his greatest success. The artistic goal behind the execution of the gravestone was for the ball to loosely diffuse into the space and be transformed into "the shape of a heart as an expression of the fact that the famous football player was first and foremost a husband, father, grandfather, friend and primarily a model of honesty. (...) This therefore serves as Josef Masopust's eternal legacy primarily as a person" (Pašková, 2017). Both of these personages are linked by a

Figure 5. *Josef Masopust's gravestone*

love for sport, specifically to football, where they achieved remarkable successes. Their gravestones communicate that remarkable sports success also requires a remarkable character.

Additional interesting gravestones include those on the graves of personages such as the singer and musician Waldemar Matuška (1932–2009), the violinist Josef Suk (1929–2011) or the conductor Jiří Bělohlávek (1946–2017). All three of these personages are primarily linked by their relation to music, with this also being expressed in the stylization of their gravestones. All of them are also missing religious symbolism or inscriptions of this meaning. The singer Matuška ranked among the most well-known singers of the second half of the twentieth century. Near the end of the Communist regime, he had emigrated to the USA in 1986, where he became especially popular among the Czech and Slovak expatriate community. His marble gravestone is decorated with an engraving of the body of a guitar, his favourite musical instrument, which a number of his listeners associate him with. An engraving of one of his most well-known songs "Sbohem Lásko" (Farewell Love) is located on the left side. The words are the introductory words of the refrain of this song and sound as follows: *"Farewell love, allow me to go, allow me to go, it will be peaceful, no tears will help with my wandering feet, I truly loved you, what more can I give you, I'm not perfect, allow me to move on to another house"*. Another of the personages is Josef Suk (Figure 6) who was a renowned Czech violinist, a soloist in the Czech Philharmonic, the grandson of the world-famous composer Josef Suk the great-grandson of the composer Antonín Dvořák. He was also considered one of the finest performers in the world of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart or Ludwig van Beethoven. His gravestone therefore has understandably a violin, which was symbolically broken in half as a result of his death. His authentic signature is consequently depicted underneath. The last of our list of aesthetically remarkable secular gravestones belongs to the conductor Jiří Bělohlávek, who conducted a range of renowned orchestras both at home and abroad and who was the head composer of the Czech Philharmonic during the last five years of his life, where he also tried to propagate musical works by Czech composers. The gravestone, apart from basic data, also contained the legend: "a renowned Czech conductor", an engraving of his signature and most interestingly an obelisk with his conducting notes which is particularly impressive.

Figure 6. *Gravestone of the violinist Josef Suk*

These gravestones are of interest due to several basic characteristics. This is first and foremost their secular character, which do not

contain any religious symbolism. In addition, the personages are linked by their love for music, with their gravestones expressing this connection both in words, as well as symbolically (in the form of the body of a guitar, the name of a song, notes for a violin or a conductor). Finally, there are personal signatures, which are understood in the Czech culture not only as an identification sign of the person, but also an expression of the character of the personage.

The secular character of gravestones in the national cemetery began to be completely normal during the period of Communism, where gravestones were built alongside each other with both Christian and secular themes. This trend is current and completely natural at present which demonstrates that this cultural space, thanks to the initial efforts of the nationalists, changed significantly over the course of the following 150 years.

Conclusion

This study attempts to answer several questions, which generally link academic study of religiosity in the Czech Republic. I consequently chose one of the important national and artistic gems, this being the national cemetery at Vyšehrad in Prague. The assumption behind this was that if this cemetery is a national symbol characterizing modern Czechness, then this cultural icon should correspond with the attitudes of Czech society to religion in the modern age. I further assumed that the attitudes of individuals to religion are not conditioned merely by personal experience, but also by the historical events which society undergoes, as these events have their own narrative power which influence public opinion, including attitudes to death on the part of society.

The findings have led to the following conclusions. First, religion is an important element of the grave architecture of the national cemetery from its founding up until the present, despite the fact that it does not clearly predominate at present. Second, a religious-patriotic or nationalist character was only of a time-limited duration, this being evidently the result of the obtaining of national independence. Third, the inscriptions and gravestones remained completely untouched by the ideological influence of Communism, with an extremely characteristic, for this time period, emphasis on the importance and significance of the deceased personages, which was, however, in my view not in ideological agreement with the concept of a classless and egalitarian society. Fourth, apart from a religious and national perspective, the perspective of secular humanism also became important, thus being manifest as the most distinct form of a message to the future generations, as it represented generally shared desires and values and was to a minimum possible extent subject to important historical events and the character of the time. Fifth, a significant part of the so-called final letters to the world, despite being personal considerations, corresponded to the spirit of the time in the sense that they adopted its discursive framework (religious, secular, national).

It is therefore apparent that, despite the relatively secular character of modern Czech society, the religious (Christian) theme of the national graveyard is an important and permanent element. It is present in all of the historical periods and

predominates significantly in some of them. The theme even became an important means of self-expression of the elite during the time of the Communist dictatorship. The secular humanist character of the gravestones, which are characterized by an emphasis on originality and the society-wide contribution of the deceased personages, consequently recedes over the long-term perspective. The character of this graveyard as a whole does not, however, clearly support the argument about a strongly secular or atheist character of Czech society, if we take into consideration its thorough break from religion.

The above-mentioned reasons therefore indicate that the Czech national graveyard can also be understood as a certain kind of ideological laboratory; thanks to it we can determine that it was apparently the idea of a nation, which helped Czechs overcome the hundreds of years of ideological conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism. This was not, however, an idea of a nation, which would focus on one of these confessions, but one which represented its secular humanistic perspective, which primarily placed an emphasis on man, on its early humanity and upon the construction of humanitarian ideals. In the first phase of the building of the national cemetery, the religious theme tended to be presented as more of the beginning of the process of national emancipation, which was moving from a religious perspective to a national one, but which did not amount to a marginalization of religion. This would seem, from today's perspective, to reflect the fact that the efforts of nationalists were not established, over the long-term, by mere religious motivated nationalism, as was the case in neighbouring Poland or Slovakia, but seemingly not by any other. Neither religious nor secular nationalism were the phenomena, which became established over the long-term in the character of the national cemetery, or among the Czech intelligentsia. The development of modern Czech society instead tended to lead from national consciousness to Czechness, which, in my view, came about primarily through the attainment of political and national sovereignty.

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ARTICLE

"Messianicity Without Messianism": On the Place of Religion in the Philosophy of Jacques Derrida

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ABSTRACT
This article examines Jacques Derrida's concept of "*messianicité sans messianisme*" ("messianicity without messianism") as an important example of rethinking the role and nature of religion in the late period of the work of the philosopher. Historical and philosophical analysis demonstrates that the appeal to the problem of messianism is inherent to many Jewish philosophers of the early twentieth century. They tried to develop a concept of time that would maintain full openness to the future and at the same time remember the past. Their work affected the interpretation of messianism in Derrida, because he developed his concept in discussion with Walter Benjamin and Emmanuel Lévinas. As the most general structure of the experience of justice, openness to the undecidable future, and respect for other messianicity do not exclude the religious manifestations of messianism, calling instead for the unceasing deconstruction of their fundamentalist claims.

KEYWORDS
Jacques Derrida, religion, messianism, messianicity, hospitality, other

Introduction

The overall goal of this article is to examine the rethinking of religion in contemporary continental philosophy as illustrated by Jacques Derrida's concept of messianicity, which, according to many scholars, was the most influential form of philosophical interpretation of messianism during the twentieth century. With this aim in mind, we will start exploring the resurgence of the ideas

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of hope and the future in the works of the key Jewish thinkers of the beginning of the twentieth century. Then we will analyze how their work affected the interpretation of messianism in Derrida, who developed his concept in conversation with Walter Benjamin and Emmanuel Lévinas. The central part of the article will study in great detail the peculiarities of the Derrida's interpretation of messianicity as a primordial structure of experiencing an openness to the coming of the others when we are unable to foresee their arrival. It is impossible to predict what is coming, or to become ready for it. It should be noted that Derrida's idea of messianicity is strongly linked to his conceptualization of an alterity. It's also worth noting that *other* is a key word in Jacques Derrida's terminology. The concept of otherness is essential in all of his work, even when it is examined with varying methods. According to Derrida, this concept cannot be reduced to a simple linguistic formulation; every other is wholly other, and any idea of the other is open to paradoxes and aporias. However, close reading of Derrida's work proves that he calls it "something that is completely other, something that cannot be returned to the same by any form of dialectical sublation" (Miller, 1996, p. 155). The Derridian concept of the other that implies absolute singularity of every being has essential consequences for moral obligations, political activities and religion. As we will demonstrate, Derrida's notion of messianicity does not exclude the religious phenomena. We will conclude with an analysis of the full range of interpretations that Derrida's concept of messianicity has been received. While some researchers have interpreted it as a clear sign of the religious intentions of the late Derrida's philosophy, others have maintained the atheistic nature of the concept, as simply deconstruction.

Appealing to philosophical thought when developing the theological concept of messianism is a recent phenomenon related to historical developments during the last two centuries. One of the main paradoxes of modern history is that the unprecedented growth of violence and the cruelty that characterizes it have been accompanied by a previously unknown revival of the concepts of hope and the future. The decisive role played in this process belongs to a number of prominent Jewish intellectuals who were active during the beginning of the twentieth century (Walter Benjamin, Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, Ernst Bloch, Theodor Adorno, Gershom Scholem, among others). They all sought to clarify the nature of the relationship between European and Jewish culture, as well as find answers to current social and political challenges. As the French philosopher Pierre Bouretz (2003/2010) emphasized, their versions of the messianic utopia were developed as a faithful companion to twentieth-century suffering and terror, and at the same time as a form of protest against the concept of the irreversible progress of the world – that is, against the horrific excesses of immanence. By promoting the concept of being "witnesses of the future," they rejected the idea of the past as completed and done with, they defied attempts to predict the blind future, and they encouraged resistance toward the view of man "having become purely a historical being" (Bouretz, 2003/2010, p. 11). Their purpose was to remember the past and tradition while also developing a concept of time that retains full openness towards a future, which cannot be confined by any horizons of significance and expectation. Philosophical reflection on messianism continued during the second half of the last century.

Derrida's Messianicity in the Context of Jewish Philosophical Messianism

It should be noted that while attention to ethical and religious issues is inherent to Derrida's later work, the texts from his early years also address topics related to religion. Already in *Glas* (Derrida, 1974/1986), the question of religion is the focus of the philosopher's attention in his reading of Hegel's early texts. Between 1980 and 1990, Derrida turned to the analysis of negative theology and the problems of the translation of sacred texts, as well as to phenomena such as confession, faith, hospitality, and gifts. Works of this period call into question the established treatment of Derrida's philosophy as promoting atheism and late period modern secularism. Is it possible to talk about the appeal to religion of a philosopher who has gone to so much effort to critique the metaphysics of presence, which is so important to religious discourse? According to Derrida, the fundamental feature of the history of western metaphysics is the modality of thinking about Being in terms of presence. Human thought and language always refer to something external, and the Being is an ultimate reference and "transcendental signified" of our discourses. As such, it provides a metaphysical justification of certainty of human knowledge. Derrida claims that metaphysics of presence is a profound mistake since it fails to recognize that human understanding of reality is linguistically mediated. His philosophical project intended to undermine the possibility of disregarding the linguistic mediation of reality by deconstructing the "transcendental signified." At first glance, deconstruction is not favorable to religion. If the idea of God is regarded as the name of transcendental signified, then the classical theistic view of the omnipotent God as a ground of all meaning can be deconstructed as a merely human concept. However, as the reading of Derrida's texts shows, he is not interested in returning to traditional theism. His purpose is much more radical, for he is convinced that the God of conventional theism has become a thing of the past. Derrida tries to think of God and faith after Enlightenment skepticism, the death of God, and the destruction of metaphysics.

"Messianicity" is one of the essential leitmotifs of the final decade of Derrida's work. Philosopher explores traditional theological themes without reference to religion as an established system of dogmas, mode of social organization, or a foundation for the moral life. The methodology of Derrida's employment of theological concepts is well illustrated by his reflections on the nature of religion in *The Gift of Death* (Derrida, 1992/1996). The ambiguity of the issue of death is understood here as the context for analyzing the responsibility of free subjectivity, access to which is provided by religion. However, religion here doesn't mean traditional denominational beliefs and practices, but what Derrida defines as "religion without religion," that is, not classical theism or institutional patterns of religion, but a form of faith that does not require an event of revelation for its existence.

Derrida addressed problems of messianism initially in the essay "Violence and Metaphysics: An Essay on the Thought of Emmanuel Lévinas" (Derrida, 1967/2001). Lévinas' project was aimed to break with Husserlian phenomenology and Heideggerian ontology, which by attempting to possess and know the Other, concealed its infinite alterity and reduced it to the Same. Derrida offers an extensive critique of Lévinas'

interpretation of Husserl and Heidegger and questions his explanation of the ethical relationship in a face-to-face encounter. He also analyzes Lévinas' appeal to the tradition, which is beyond the bounds of the key concepts of Greek thought, namely to "messianic eschatology." It is certainly not that Lévinas' philosophy is based on the religious texts of Judaism or is a form of "Jewish theology" or "Jewish mysticism." Moreover, the philosophy of Lévinas "can even be understood as the trial of theology and mysticism" (Derrida, 1967/2001, p. 103). In this sense, Derrida is close to Lévinas himself, who in *Totality and Infinity* denies the idea that eschatological theologies can supplement philosophical discourses through their prophetic proclamations of the ultimate purpose of being and through offering a clear picture of the future. In order for the "eschatology of messianic peace" to gain significance in philosophical thinking, it needs, according to Lévinas, a primordial and original relation with being, a "relation with being beyond the totality or beyond history" (Lévinas, 1961/2011, p. 22).

Derrida interprets this "beyond" as an appeal to experience itself, to practice, and to the irreducible alterity of the other. Therefore, owing to eschatology, which goes beyond all totality and objective experience and awakens people to the fullness of their responsibility, a figure of the other is discovered, which, according to Lévinas, cannot be understood within the framework of traditional philosophy, and which is the sole source of ethics. Thus, in one of his earliest texts, Derrida picks up on Lévinas' idea of messianic eschatology and uses it to assess if Lévinas' efforts to go beyond Greek philosophical tradition are productive.

It should be noted that despite the fact that for the first time Derrida addresses the subject of messianism under the influence of Lévinas, an even more important role in the development of his conception of the messianic was played by the philosophical legacy of Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), the author of one of the most influential versions of the philosophical understanding of messianism.

Written shortly before his tragic death in September 1940, Benjamin's *On the Concept of History* (Benjamin, 1996) denies that historical progress will inevitably lead to the replacement of capitalism by socialism. Instead, the thinker underpins his own conception of historical time, the defining aspect of which is the idea of breaking, active messianic intervention in the course of events. Refusing to interpret the historical process as a homogeneous and linear "empty time," Benjamin claims that every moment of the history is "the small gateway in time through which the Messiah might enter" (Benjamin, 1996, p. 397). For Benjamin, temporality of "a time to come" is not of future as coming present, "but that of the future anterior, a time in which future and past do not so much come together as come about one another, doing so in a way that circumvents conventional modalities of presence and holds time open to the coming of another (Levine, 2014, pp. 5–6).

The sudden arrival of the Messiah and the end of the history of the world – that is to say, large-scale historical transformations – can occur in an unprogrammed way, at any moment, even when their arrival is not expected. They are possible only as the radical interruption of linear time. Therefore, Benjamin is trying to defend the possibility of a revolutionary breakthrough in a situation where its occurrence is not conditioned by any socio-economic realities. Here we find an echo of the widespread

belief in Jewish mysticism that glimpses of future salvation can be found in the present. In this context, it should also be noted that the experience of the moment as a moment of the symbolic unity of the religious community and its intense expectation of salvation is also inherent in the philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig. The author of *The Star of Redemption* (Rosenzweig, 1921/2005) emphasizes that the community must be in a state of intense expectation that the Kingdom of God is about to come. This experience of maximum intensity reveals an important paradox: the balance between the concentration of history in one moment interacts with a permanent delay, shifting the finale of history into the future. A critical moment of world history is approached by people who "have been endowed with a weak messianic power, a power on which the past has a claim" (Benjamin, 1996, p. 390) – people who seek justice for the dead, forgotten in the whirlwind of historical cataclysms. They do not cherish the vain illusion that a happy future is coming as a result of rampant scientific and technological progress but retain the memory of a "secret agreement between past generations" who seemingly expected that new generations will set them free from stories written by the victors.

The question of the degree of influence of Benjamin's "weak messianic power" on Derrida's "messianicity" remains debatable. At first glance, the approaches of the two philosophers are close enough, since both appeal to Marxism and employ the notion of messianism. What is common to Benjamin and Derrida is "a certain messianic weakening," or the refusal to give some specific content to the messianic promise or to determine the form of the messianic event. On this basis, John D. Caputo even argues that Benjamin's "weak messianic power" and Derrida's "messianicity" are expressions of the same idea (Caputo, 1997, p. 352). However, commenting on Benjamin's statement about weak messianism in *Specters of Marx* (Derrida, 2006), Derrida argues that the logic of his messianic thought is "turned toward the future no less than the past, in a heterogeneous and disjointed time" (Derrida, 2006, p. 228). Thus, while Benjamin's weak messianism contains a strong ethical impulse, calling for remembering the forgotten victims of history (or those who are at risk of oblivion), his appeal to the past carries with it the risk of losing focus on the future – that is, giving attention to what is always yet to come. History could be addressed with the critical selection of the heritage we want to bring to the future. The work of mourning is not a one-time task that can be accomplished and completed, but is rather an indication of an important way of being human. At the core, the formation of subjectivity takes place in the process of mourning, inheriting what is passed on from previous generations and developing an awareness of one's duty toward them. We are not able to bring the dead back to life, but we are capable of witness and sorrow. It is impossible to establish justice and prevent the recurrence of wrongs from the past simply by "burying" the past. Instead, one should constantly practice the "work of mourning" with its continued attention to the past for the sake of preserving the messianic hope for the future.

Thus, the decisive difference between Derrida's messianism and Benjamin's weak messianic power lies in the various "logics of inheritance." For Benjamin, it is important to preserve the totality of the past in order to perpetuate the memory of the forgotten victims of coercion and injustice, as well as to open up the possibility of

reawakening the past in an era of revolutionary catastrophes that threaten to forget about the suppressed. According to Derrida, the duty toward the past consists not so much in preserving a certain tradition, but in remembering the past for the sake of repeating and confirming the difference of the other.

Mourning over difference requires a kind of "exorcism," but not in order "to chase away the ghosts, but this time to grant them the right, if it means making them come back alive as *revenants* who would no longer be *revenants*, but as other *arrivants* to whom a hospitable memory or promise must offer welcome – without certainty, ever, that they present themselves as such" (Derrida, 2006, p. 220). Although inheritance confirms the return of the past, this past, paradoxically, is a time yet to come, a time that is fundamentally different from any other period in history that we know of. The task, therefore, is to open the past for the future, to leave in it the cracks through which newness can enter, to provide an opportunity for the disruption of the usual course of things.

Messianicity as Openness to the Arrival of an Unpredictable Other

Messianicity appears as a sign of the openness towards the future that is fundamentally unpredictable. This radical openness to the possibilities of the forthcoming offers a hope for coming of justice. Undoubtedly, openness is never absolute – at every step forward something from the past is lost, and every moment of inheritance opens new possibilities for transformation and the multiplication of tradition. The driving force and at the same time the vulnerability of the gesture of inheritance Derrida exposes in the concept of promise. According to the general structure of promise, the future (that is, not the future in conventional sense of the word, but the radical future – what Derrida calls *l'avenir*) always exceeds any prediction or calculation. Derrida denies an understanding of time as a sequence of modalized presents – the past is not the present that is past, and the present is not a mere result of the past. For this reason, the future cannot be regarded as a projected continuation of the present. It is not a descriptive empirical future, but a messianic eschatological future, an expectation of the arrival of an unpredictable other, in which our "come" is turned to the point that we cannot determine, predict, or calculate in advance who or what is coming.

Messianicity calls for inheriting those texts of the past that are most open to the future. This approach is exemplified by Derrida's interaction with the legacy of Marxism, in which he sees the most striking modern manifestation of messianic hospitality, "certain emancipatory and *messianic* affirmation, a certain experience of the promise that one can try to liberate from any dogmatics and even from any metaphysico-religious determination, from any *messianism*" (Derrida, 2006, p. 111).

As Derrida explains in his important essay *Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of Faith and Knowledge at the Limits of Reason Alone* (Derrida, 1996/2002), messianicity is depicted not as a religious phenomenon, but as the primordial general structure of experiencing an openness to the forthcoming (*l'avenir*) beyond any horizon of expectations defined by religious conceptual schemes. This messianic dimension does not depend on any messianism; it does not come from a definite revelation of

the Abrahamic religion. Its essence consists in "movement of an experience open to the absolute future of what is coming, that is to say, a necessarily indeterminate, abstract, desert-like experience that is confided, exposed, given up to its waiting for the other and for the event" (Derrida, 2006, p. 112). In contrast, religious and political messianisms form in advance a set of expectations and prophetic predictions that determine how, where, when, and under what conditions the other may appear. Because messianisms contain a predetermined horizon of expectation, they inevitably commit violence towards unique singularities.

Thus, it is anticipated that we will extend radical hospitality to the *arrivant* without imposing on him any prior obligations or conditions. Derrida defines it as "a waiting without horizon of expectation," that is, "awaiting what one does not expect yet or any longer, hospitality without reserve, welcoming salutation accorded in advance to the absolute surprise of the *arrivant* from whom or from which one will not ask anything in return" (Derrida, 2006, p. 211). An example of this register of an appeal to the present to go beyond itself is Derrida's interpretation of a "democracy-to-come," which means not a specific form of government but something fundamentally different, something that still has to come, going beyond the previously known. The effectiveness of a democratic promise is linked to the eschatological expectation of some unpredictable alternativeness. It cannot be identified with any particular embodiment of democracy but calls for the endless transformation of the societies that exist here and now.

In explaining the meaning of the messianic, Derrida repeatedly uses the famous Aggada of the Babylonian Talmud. He appeals to this story, influenced by the earlier interpretations of Blanchot (1980, pp. 214–215). Aggada begins with Rabbi Joshua ben Levi meeting the prophet Elijah and asking him when the Messiah will come. The prophet replies that the rabbi can ask this question directly of the Messiah, for he is sitting at the gates of Rome dressed in rags. When the rabbi reaches Rome and indeed meets the Messiah in the company of the poor at the gates of Rome, he asks him, "When will you come?" and the Messiah answers, "Now." Derrida notes a discrepancy, an inadequacy between the generalized and specific "now" in this story. In the same way that the Messiah is not waiting and is coming right now, we should anticipate the coming of the future right at this moment in time. The Messiah is not some future present; his coming is here and it is inevitable. The parable points to the messianic structure as responsibility, for the coming of the event. At the same time, Derrida notes the "ambiguity" of the messianic structure: we can expect the arrival of the other, hoping in reality that he will not come, that the arrival of the Messiah will remain in permanent delay. Derrida points out that "we wait for something we would not like to wait for" (Derrida, 1997, p. 24), or as John D. Caputo explains, "The Messiah must always be to come. The Messiah is a very special promise, namely, a promise that would be broken were it kept, whose possibility is sustained by its impossibility" (Caputo, 1997, p. 162).

Although Derrida calls for a careful delineation of the notions of messianism and messianicity, he still leaves the question of the connection between them open. Religious and political messianisms always annunciate the arrival of a clearly defined

messiah at a certain time and place. When the Messiah actually comes, as soon as the future really becomes a definite presence, the messianic will immediately cease to exist, because its essence lies in the expectation of what is yet to come. The proclamation of the arrival of the Messiah will pave the way for the other whose messianic experience is different from your messianism. Derrida's Messiah is the one we hope to come to, even though we know he will never come. This is an impossible opportunity of the future. The impossible goes beyond the possible, not as its direct opposite, but as the desire to overcome what is obviously predictable. The coming of the Messiah, his full presence, would deny any messianic expectation. By pointing to a particular Messiah, confessional messianism defines the future and limits it to the scope of specific messianic determination. Justice and expectations become related to counting, program, conformity, and predictable outcomes.

Idea of Messianicity and Religious Messianisms

Derrida emphasizes that although his idea of messianicity is not related to what is considered to be the essence of religious messianisms, that is, the historical revelation and figure of the Messiah, it does not mean that they should be dismissed as absurd eschatological fabrications. He refuses to identify messianicity with messianism, since the latter is always associated with a particular religion, limited by a specific cultural environment and a dogmatic system of beliefs. Derrida's secularized messianicity retains its separation from specific socio-cultural and religious contexts, allowing it to be a truly universal category. At the same time, as the most general structure of experience, messianicity does not exclude religious manifestations of messianism. At a roundtable at Villanova University (1997), Derrida explained his position in more detail.

> When I insisted in *Specters of Marx* on messianicity, which I distinguished from messianism, I wanted to show that the messianic structure is a universal structure. As soon as you address the other, as soon as you are open to the future, as soon as you have a temporal experience of waiting for the future, of waiting for someone to come: that is the opening of experience. Someone is to come, is now to come. Justice and peace will have to do with this coming of the other, with the promise. Each time I open my mouth, I am promising something. When I speak to you, I am telling you that I promise to tell you something, to tell you the truth. Even if I lie, the condition of my lie is that I promise to tell you the truth. So the promise is not just one speech act among others; every speech act is fundamentally a promise. This universal structure of the promise, of the expectation for the future, for the coming, and the fact that this expectation of the coming has to do with justice – that is what I call the messianic structure. This messianic structure is not limited to what one calls messianisms, that is, Jewish, Christian, or Islamic messianism, to these determinate figures and forms of the Messiah. As soon as you reduce the messianic structure to messianism, then you are reducing the universality and this has important political consequences.

> Then you are accrediting one tradition among others and a notion of an elected people, of a given literal language, a given fundamentalism. That is why I think that the difference, however subtle it may appear, between the messianic and messianism is very important (Derrida, 1997, p. 23).

Having stressed the necessity to maintain a distinction between the concepts of messianism and messianicity, Derrida still hesitates about the true nature of their relationship, considering two possible hypotheses in *Faith and Knowledge*. According to the first one, messianicity is the most basic structure of experience, which has particular representations in historical messianisms. In this case, messianicity should be viewed on the same basis as the general structure of the *Offenbarkeit* (Revealability) developed by Heidegger in *The Question of Being* (Heidegger, 1957/1958), in order to clarify specific ways of Being's revealing itself and to evaluate their authenticity. Religions are then only concrete examples of the universal structure of messianicity, and its study later involves first of all research into the fundamental ontological conditions of the possibility of religion. At the same time, Derrida suggests another hypothesis, according to which the *Offenbarung* (Revelation) of Abrahamic religious traditions were absolute, unique events, through which universal possibilities of messianicity have shown themselves. Derrida does not give a definitive answer as to which of these hypotheses is more likely; he would like to find an explanation that combines both. The philosopher points out that, although his notion of messianicity is significantly different from that of Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, it still depends on these singular events of revelation.

Interpretations of Derrida's Messianicity

Derrida's concept of messianicity has a wide range of interpretations. While some researchers have assessed it as clear confirmation of the religious intentions of the late Derrida's thought, others have insisted on the atheistic nature of the concept, as all deconstruction. The atheistic reading of Derrida was supported by the Swedish philosopher Martin Hägglund. In his view, widespread theological interpretations of Derrida's thought are inconsistent. The trajectory of deconstruction fits in completely with the logic of radical atheism, which not only denies the existence of God and immortality, as does traditional atheism, but also denies the very possibility of a person's desire for God and immortality. In the seeming pursuit of infinite being and fullness, Hägglund sees a desire to survive, to increase life expectancy that is determined by an openness to the unpredictable future that can either enrich or destroy us. "I argue that the so-called desire for immortality dissimulates a desire for survival that precedes it and contradicts it from within" (Hägglund, 2008, p. 1).

Hägglund also sees radical atheism in Derrida's concept of messianicity. Although this concept, more than any other, led to the suspicion that the philosopher secretly cherished the religious hope for salvation, according to Hägglund, such readings of Derrida's thought are based on confusion of the notions of messianicity and concrete religious forms of "messianism". In Derrida's vocabulary, messianicity

is just another name for the undecidable future, which creates a chance for the desirable, but at the same time threatens it from within. At the same time, traditional messianism is a religious or political belief in the future that will put an end to time, replacing it with an eternal tranquility that cannot be destroyed. The only common feature of messianicity and religious messianism is the formal structure of the promise of the coming, by which Derrida reads messianism against itself. Thus, Hägglund concludes that Derrida is inverting the logic of religious eschatology. Derrida emphasizes that the coming of the other does not contribute to the end of time, but always exceeds any definite end of life or history. His version of eschatology proclaims not the end of time, but only absolute openness to the uncertainty and unpredictability of the future. In addition, messianic hospitality for the future is not connected to the promise of peace. The *arrivant* may not be the bearer of peace, the Messiah, but as Derrida recognizes, the wrongdoer, the bearer of hatred, evil, and violence.

John D. Caputo, an American philosopher and one of the influential proponents of the use of deconstruction in religious thinking, disagrees with such a reading of Derrida[1]. In his interpretation, the concept of messianicity refers to the core of Derrida's special religion, "of the call for a justice, a democracy, a just one to come, a call for peace among the concrete messianisms" (Caputo, 1997, p. xxviii). The difference between messianicity and messianism is interpreted as the difference between peace and war. The messianism of concrete, historical religions is always a source of exclusivism and violence, while the true meaning of messianicty lies in the promise of divine peace and the Kingdom of God accessible to all. Treating a specific religious tradition as the possessor of higher knowledge, granted only to God's chosen people, is a formula for endless war. For instance, Derrida viewed the conflict in the Middle East as a merciless war of dangerous "messianic eschatologies", driven by the desire to prove the truth of a particular version of messianism. Therefore, as opposed to confessional messianism, Caputo draws attention to the proclamations of the biblical prophets, who reminded their readers that God is seeking not ritual sacrifices, but justice for all oppressed people. In this approach, deconstruction is seen as the salvation of religion, because it cleanses it of its worst instincts.

Responding to Hägglund's reading of Derrida in an atheistic perspective, Caputo argues that the Swedish philosopher misunderstood the deconstructionist's interest in religion as an effort to protect common religious beliefs and denominational tenets. Relying on Derrida's distinction between faith and religion, Caputo defines the purpose of deconstructing religion in its reimagining as "religion without religion", that is, more primordial faith (*foi*), quasi-transcendent for both theism and atheism, which are just different forms of dogmatic beliefs (*croyances*). This faith does not

[1] For instance, see Derrida, J., & Caputo, J.D. (1997). *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press; Caputo, J.D. (1997). *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press; Caputo, J.D., Dooley, M., & Scanlon, M.J. (Eds.). (2001). *Questioning God*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press); Caputo, J.D., & Scanlon, M.J. (Eds.). (2005). *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press.

exist in a state of unbroken peace; it is not protected from doubts, error, evil, violence, or death. Rising from the abyss of unbelief, this "unprotected religion" is more open to uncertainty and structural risk. As Caputo points out that in his analysis, Hägglund relies on a truncated, caricatured version of deconstruction when he claims that it is the decisive refutation of religion and that "deconstruction proceeds on a level of neutral, value-free descriptive analysis of the logic of time" (Caputo, 2015, p. 155). In fact, however, deconstruction is not about destroying religion by means of radical atheism; rather, it is a way of rereading and rethinking religion.

Caputo's views on deconstruction are largely shared by another influential continental philosopher of religion, Richard Kearney. Analyzing Derrida's statement that the name of God, like any other name, should be considered in the context of radical atheism, Kearney concludes that Derrida's purpose is not to abandon the phenomenon of God as such, but to sustain a general openness to difference without name, that is, without the identity of the historical givenness of the deity of historical religions (Kearney, 1999, p. 122). This general disposition to the arrival of the other, which is understood as the unpredictable occurrence of an event, is a messianicity that contradicts any form of the messianism of positive revelation. Therefore, according to Kearney, atheism for Derrida is not a total rejection of the idea of God, but rather a disagreement with the statement that a definite God is a condition for the possibility of God, who still has to come, to be named. While agreeing with Derrida's call for unconditional openness to the arrival of the other, Kearney nevertheless critically appreciates the assertion that the *arrivant* may be anyone or anything. He hopes that deconstruction waits for the coming of justice and associates this coming with the notion of a transcendent God who comes to save and liberate.

However, for Kearney, the possibility of combining the coming of this good God with the radical unpredictability of the future remains extremely problematic. Caputo ignores this problem, agreeing with Derrida that justice is concerned with the other, whose arrival cannot be predicted, while at the same time emphasizing that the other is always a victim and not a wrongdoer. Given that, as Derrida points out, anyone who comes can change his or her name and become anyone at any time, in "Desire of God" (1999) Kearney asks how we can distinguish between "between true and false prophets, between bringers of good and bringers of evil, between holy spirits and unholy ones … between a living God and a dead one, between Elijah and his 'phantom', between messiahs and monsters" (Kearney, 1999, p. 127). Such a distinction is possible only if there are clear criteria. Without giving them, Derrida underestimates "the need for some kind of critical discernment based on informed judgment, hermeneutic memory, narrative imagination, and rational discrimination" (Kearney, 1999, p. 139).

However, it should be noted that Derrida's refusal to articulate a specific set of criteria does not mean that he underestimates the importance of identification and differentiation. On the contrary, Derrida argues that such acts are necessary because of the unpredictability of the future. We have to identify and make decisions each time because we are not able to predict in advance how the other will act. Establishing clear

preliminary criteria for the arrival of the other, Derrida points out, would be an act of discrimination and a restriction of unconditional universal hospitality – openness to the newcomer, whoever he may be. Total security is possible only if the possibility of something unexpected is closed. The rejection of the threat of trauma associated with the arrival of an unpredictable other is possible only at the expense of the rejection of the opportunity for transformation.

Another line of criticism of the messianic tradition of Lévinas and Derrida relies on a renewed reading of the texts of the Apostle Paul. In particular, we would like to mention such philosophers as Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek, and Giorgio Agamben. All of them, to one degree or another, accept Jacob Taubes' confidence in the determining role of messianism in the theology of the Apostle Paul. They also share the conviction that messianism was an important structural factor in the history of Western thought, finding expression not only in the Judeo-Christian religious heritage but also in secular phenomena. The findings of these philosophers signal a break with the phenomenological tradition of interpreting messianism. In particular, Badiou deploys criticism of Lévinas' ethic of alterity, which, in his belief, either falls into quasi-theological piety that emphasizes the absolute otherness of God or reduces itself to a liberal assertion of difference and individuality. Badiou's criticism of messianic ethics is based on a new reading of Pauline messianism. The Apostle's faithfulness to the event of Christ's resurrection serves as foundation for a new universal truth that eliminates the conflict between Jewish law and the Greek *logos*. If Badiou contrasts Lévinas' messianic otherness with Paul's messianic universality, Žižek calls into question Derrida's messianic future, relying on the urgency of the messianic moment of the Apostle's theology, his emphasis on the Messiah's coming. The Apostle's belief that the Messiah is here, according to Žižek, resists the Derridian existence in a state of uncertainty and constant delay, calling for life in the new space already opened by the Event of Christ (Žižek, 2003, pp. 136–137).

Conclusion

Summarizing the analysis of Derrida's concept of messiancity, it should be noted that despite the criticism it has faced, the concept of "messianicity without messianism" has already became an influential concept in contemporary philosophy of religion. In the context of current civilizational challenges, it calls for openness to an absolute, unpredictable future and a respect for the other. In our view, Derrida's philosophy of religion and his call for the deconstruction of traditional messianism should not be characterized as atheistic. Religious and political messianisms need constant deconstruction because, unlike abstract messianicity, they are incapable to respect the irreducibility of the other. However, their deconstruction is by no means an attempt to return to some sort of Enlightenment version of "religion within reason alone," for, as Derrida points out, religion and science share a common source—the primordial faith that forms the basis for any social connection and communication. Therefore, the deconstruction of messianisms means releasing religions from their fundamentalist claims in order to promote their openness to the other.

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ARTICLE

The Uzbek National Tradition in the Pedagogical Practices of Adult Educators

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ABSTRACT

While Uzbekistan strives to preserve its traditional culture and values (for example, respect for elders), interest in modern teaching methods is growing incrementally. This study aims to investigate whether and to what extent the national context affects teaching methods, in particular the interactive methods, which Uzbek professors use for training the civil service talent pool. The study is based on focus groups and content and cluster analysis. The results show that although Uzbek professors acknowledge the importance of the national context, their adult students' needs and their own pedagogical experience are paramount in their choice of interactive methods.

We also found that professors are highly motivated to try new methods, despite the lack of adequate access to cutting-edge resources. Therefore, their professional development should be aimed at improving their teaching qualifications by introducing the latest global trends in instruction methods. Conventional methods have to be revised and complemented with modern ones. This will lead to mutual enrichment between unique and strong Uzbek national traditions in education and contemporary international trends.

KEYWORDS

national identity, interactive methods, adult training, focus group

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Introduction

Problem: The education system in Uzbekistan aims to protect national interests and preserve the country's unique cultural and moral values along with its customs and traditions. Some traditions are passed from generation to generation, such as *Shashmaqom* (the classical music tradition), *Katta Ashula* (a type of traditional Uzbek song), *Nowruz* (rituals marking the celebration of the New Year) and *Askiya* (the art of wit) (included in the UNESCO Representative List). However, equally important for Uzbekistan is the task of keeping up with global realities and trends in education.

The search for the right balance between openness to global influences, on the one hand, and desire to preserve the country's national identity, on the other, inevitably affects professional education programs. Today's Uzbekistan is a country seeking to adopt modern social practices while preserving its cultural and national identity, which means that the innovative methods of training in Uzbek education need to be adjusted not only to the requirements of specific disciplines but also to the culture-specific characteristics of teachers and students. Generational differences are most keenly felt in adult education. Adult training methodology and techniques are now being actively developed, numerous methods are being adopted from other countries' experience. The application of such methods in Uzbekistan, however, may fail to be as effective as expected and encounter resistance on the part of teachers and/or students. The generation gap and the corresponding clash between tradition and modernity exacerbates the problem: young people are more oriented towards "modern" values while the older generation have deeper respect for long-held cultural and religious values (Yuldasheva, 2018). To address the problem under investigation, we need to consider the following question:

Does the national context affect Uzbek professors' choices of interactive methods? And what are the other factors that play a significant role in their choices?

Research purpose: The purpose of the study is to explore Uzbek professors' ideas about the barriers to and opportunities for the effective use of interactive methods for training the civil service talent pool.

Method: We used focus groups for data collection. In our case, the focus group discussion centred around the limitations and strengths of 14 teaching methods. In particular, we asked the participants to answer the following question: do you recommend using this or that method in training the civil service talent pool in Uzbekistan? Why or why not? The sample consisted of 27 leading professors of the Academy of the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan. All of these educators were involved in training the talent pool for the national civil service. The resulting responses were grouped with the help of cluster analysis.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Education and National Culture

Integration of positive international experiences and the centuries-old cultural and historical traditions of Uzbek people is at the core of the development of national

mentality in Uzbekistan (Yurevich, 2013). This approach known as "pragmatic traditionalism", implies that an individual is proud of their origins but at the same time manifests certain behavioural modifications (Finke, 2014). Sometimes, however, these two tendencies contradict each other: some Uzbek researchers are concerned about the impact that the unquestioned authority of the elders resulting from the eastern system of social relations has on younger generations. They believe that younger people's respect for the authority of older people impedes the former from acting on their own and generating new ideas. A study of the values prevalent among young Uzbek adults found that they attach little significance to such values as the "spirit of innovation (willingness to generate and adopt new, original ideas)" and "pro-active attitude in life" (Seitov, 2018). The dominant role of the national-ethnic factor and the persistence of cultural norms and traditions despite the influence of globalization have been emphasized in a number of studies (Adams, 2004; Bekmurodov, 2004; Ne'matov & Enikeeva, 2016; Welter et al., 2006). According to Zh. Ne'matov and A. Enikeeva (2016), it is necessary to analyse the applicability of international management models and generalize available positive national experiences in order to create new management models adapted to the country's unique context (Ne'matov & Enikeeva, 2016). While accepting this argumentation, we believe it would be more reasonable to adapt methods, which have already been internationally tested to the local cultural context rather than design new ones.

Trying to strike the appropriate balance between teaching goals and promoting national culture and values, professors tend to choose one of four possible strategies: avoidance, promotion, rejection and problematisation (Sant & Hanley, 2018). Avoidance means that teachers can choose to avoid the topic of national identities by simply "skirting around it in lessons and steering discussion into safer territory when it is raised by students" (Hand & Pearce, 2009). Active promotion of national identities stems from the assumption that shared values are necessary for the survival of any community; however, this strategy may make some teachers and students resentful (Sant & Hanley, 2018). Rejection implies that teachers can choose to assert their personal views rather than the values commonly shared in society (Peterson, Durrant, & Bentley, 2015). Finally, the strategy of problematizing national identities means that teachers can take "a stance of neutrality, inviting discussion" and present it "as an open question or controversial issue" (Maylor, 2016). As E. Sant and C. Hanley (2018) show in their study of British teachers, these four strategies co-exist in contemporary teaching practices.

Interactive learning means that all participants of the process engage with one another to find answers or solve problems together (Panina & Vavilova, 2007). The interactions described by Panina and Vavilova (information exchange, evaluation of one's own actions and the actions of other participants, joint search for solutions) need to be carried out in a specific multi-cultural environment, in an atmosphere that fosters cooperative work (ibid, pp. 33–34). The choice of methods is made even more complicated by the fact that at the moment there are no officially established criteria for the comprehensive evaluation of civil servants in Uzbekistan (Malikova, 2018). Therefore, regarding the national identity factor, we suggest that professors

follow one of the above-described strategies in their choice of interactive methods. As we can see, in Uzbekistan much of the attention of academia and the wider public is focused on the challenges of strengthening national identity; this goal is also described in many official policy documents. This trend is also observed in the sphere of adult education. The possible downside of this emphasis on national identity is that it can impede efficient application of those interactive methods that conflict with the national or cultural characteristics of teachers and students. In view of the above, the *hypothesis 1* to be considered in this study is as follows:

- *Professors tend to choose interactive methods by following one of the four strategies in relation to the national context and national identity.*

Interactive Methods in Adult Learning

Interactive forms and methods may be roughly divided into discussion-based ones and role-playing. Discussion-based methods include dialogue, group discussion, the case method (discussion of real-life situations), and meetings with guest experts. Role-playing methods include business role-playing, simulations and management games (Panina & Vavilova, 2007; Senashenko & Marushina, 2018). Recently in education there has been an upsurge of interest in international corporate training techniques, such as buddying, shadowing, workshops and rotation. Buddying is based on mutual help and monitoring between the two individuals while job shadowing implies that a younger employee should follow a more experienced worker to learn new aspects related to the job, organization, certain behaviours or competencies. Buddying is sometimes described as informal two-way peer-to-peer mentoring or coaching (Aban'kina & Medvedeva, 2017). Such methods as workshops, internships and rotation are also widely used (Shubina, 2017). It is easy to see simply by looking at the terms, most of which are adopted from the English language, that the majority of the above-discussed methods appeared in response to globalization in professional education (Azizkhodzhaeva, 2009). This makes the choice of methods harder for many professors since working with adults requires them to take into account the specific aspects of the socio-cultural enbironment, in which their students are operating.

Our analysis of the studies focused on socio-cultural characteristics of Uzbekistan has shown that respect for parents and the elderly is a significant national value. Other values include self-command and obedience to elders; gravitas, dignity; deliberative decision-making; love and care towards spiritual values, national history and culture (Abdukakhkharova, 2017); and unquestioned fatherly authority (while the mother takes charge of domestic life in Uzbek families, the father is responsible for all important family decisions and provides support to children only when necessary) (Ubaydullayeva, 2018). Training programs for young adults are oriented towards maintaining and developing these values. Since the buddying method is based on equal partner relationships between the teacher and the student, we may suppose that its application in adult training in Uzbekistan will be constrained. The limitation is linked to the fact that in Uzbekistan a teacher (*domla*) is considered as a kind of father figure, someone who should be looked up to and respected, a student could find it difficult to engage in an equal partnership with him.

On the other hand, programs aimed at helping students build their professional skills mostly deal with the cognitive sphere, which includes such qualities as tolerance towards other people's opinions and views (Siddikov, 2019) and divergent thinking (Magroupov, 2019). These considerations lead us to suppose that the application of such methods as discussion, role-playing and metaphorical role-play will have limitations resulting from the prevalence of strict traditional business etiquette, convergent thinking (tendency to come up with a single, well-established answer to a problem) and lack of tolerance towards other people's opinions.

The results of our theoretical analysis have led us to formulate three more hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 2. *Experts will consider such methods as buddying, discussion, role-playing and metaphorical role-play as having limited applicability in the Uzbek national context.*
- Hypothesis 3. *Experts will consider the methods of case study, in-basket technique and shadowing as holding more potential for training the civil service talent pool in Uzbekistan.*
- Hypothesis 4. *Experts will consider mentoring, coaching and workshops as the most effective teaching methods.*

Method and Procedure

Focus Group Discussion

To test the above-described hypotheses, empirical data were collected by using the focus group method. The focus groups comprised professors involved in training young adults for the civil service talent pool at the Academy of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan. This method was chosen because the sample was comparatively small and it was impossible to conduct a larger-scale survey. We identified 14 interactive methods used by adult educators (Babić, Vukmirović, & Capko, 2015; Corder, 2008; Kelly, 2017; Makarova, 2014; Marin, et al., 2010; Roach, 2014; Settles, 2009; Shen, Xue, & Zhu, 2016; Smith, 2017; Wuestewald, 2016).

The participants were given the following instructions: There are many teaching methods and techniques used for training young employees to perform a variety of tasks and improve their overall work performance. Such an abundance of methods sometimes makes it difficult for professors to decide, which methods to apply and when. At certain moments you may feel at a loss, not knowing, which method to go for. Therefore, it is important to have a toolbox of effective teaching methods at hand, especially when the need arises to design a new curriculum program or to spice up your methodology. We propose to discuss 14 modern adult training methods. Please read the descriptions of these methods; in 30 minutes' time, we are going to discuss the following questions:

1) Which of these methods do you consider effective for training the civil service talent pool? Give reasons for your answer.
2) Which of these methods do you find ineffective or even inappropriate for training the talent pool? What are the limitations and barriers to applying these methods in your or your colleagues' practice?

The list of interactive methods of adult learning:

1) *The project method* is a method of instruction based on solving practical problems that students define themselves. The role of the teacher in this method is to facilitate group work and monitor the progress of groups as they work through the task.
2) *In-basket technique* is used to teach students how to set their priorities right, deal with the most urgent problems, work with data, systematize, analyze and make well-informed decisions; in other words, to try and cope with the administrative and planning aspects of a managerial position. The student's task is to perform a manager's job when confronted with issues and problems that have accumulated in a manager's "in-basket" and to take action on these issues and problems.
3) *The case study method* is based on active imitation non-role-playing learning. Students try to resolve dilemmas (taking decisions or solving problems) from actual real-life situations (cases).
4) *Role-play* that allows students to explore realistic situations by assuming certain roles and/or acting out professional situations.
5) *Metaphorical role-playing* is a creative technique aimed at encouraging a collaborative search for solutions or a shift of perspective. What distinguishes this method is that the role-play centres around a metaphor (a legend or a parable symbolically representing real-life problems and relationships).
6) *Internship* is a form of experiential learning, which allows a student to develop their skills in a professional setting under the guidance of an experienced specialist.
7) *Rotation* is a training method where members of staff rotate roles or tasks by going from one job to another or from one department to another inside their organization.
8) *Shadowing* is based on learning the reality of a job by spending time with a person working in that career.
9) *Discussion* is based on the collaborative exchange of ideas in order to try to reach some kind of agreement regarding the given problem or question.
10) *Distance learning* is a method of studying individually or in groups when lectures, seminars and tutoring sessions are conducted via the Internet (Skype, for example).
11) *Mentoring* is a process in which senior professionals guide younger ones by sharing their knowledge and experience; from the psychological perspective, it is a relationship between people from two generations to ensure the transfer of skills and experience.
12) *Buddying* is based on pairing two individuals in a single unit. The relationship established in the buddy system implies equality, sharing the information and/or providing each other with objective feedback and support in achieving personal and corporate aims and learning new skills.
13) *Coaching* is a method of instruction, which is more structured, focused and short-term than mentoring. Coaching sessions are held regularly and concentrate on specific development areas and issues.

14) *Workshop method* is usually time limited, often to a single session, and implies that a top-level professional shares their experience and expertise with a group of students.

Procedure. The focus group gathered in a separate room and the whole session lasted for about 1.5 hours. In the first 30 minutes, the participants were given a list of methods to study and prepare. The discussion was conducted in Uzbek, which is the language of instruction: the guidelines were also provided in Uzbek. The moderator asked clarifying questions. The focus group discussions were recorded with the help of a voice recorder. The records were later transcribed and the data used for statistical and content analysis.

Participants' responses were first entered into a simple table where we listed all the arguments for each method that participants mentioned in favour or against applying it. Then all choice criteria were evaluated by two independent experts according to the provisions described further. There were no disparities in the expert evaluations.

Content and Cluster Analysis

First, we conducted primary clustering of the factors that affected the choice of methods. These factors were then divided logically into three larger groups of factors related to social environment:

1) national cultural context of the learning process;
2) professional environment where adult students act and use their expertise;
3) pedagogical practice professors are involved in and their teaching experience.

At the stage of secondary clustering, all the factors were decomposed; for each of the factors, the clusters and units of content analysis of the choice criteria were specified. To identify the criteria for the factor "national cultural context", we used sources describing the cultural values and unique traditions of Uzbekistan. Finally, we identified 6 clusters as choice criteria (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Cluster Analysis of the Choice Criteria of the Factor "National Cultural Context"*

No.	Nation-specific characteristics	Cluster
1	respect for elders; leadership of the elders in the family; the family elders as the ultimate decision-makers by virtue of the richness of their knowledge and life experience (Seitov, 2018).	transfer of knowledge from mentor to student
2	decisive power of public opinion (Farmanova, 2019); sense of belonging to a community (Muminov, 2017); connectedness and attachments; importance of reputation (Urinboyev & Svensson, 2018).	working in a team
3	dignity (Farmanova, 2019); long-standing authoritarian traditions (Ne'matov & Enikeeva, 2016); hierarchy (Urinboyev & Svensson, 2018).	large distance in a teacher-student relationship
4	low value of innovation and personal initiative; importance of conformity (Seitov, 2018).	prevalence of traditional views
5	low tolerance of uncertain, unstructured situations or changeable environments; lack of divergent thinking skills (Magroupov, 2019).	search for the right answer

Within the factor "professional environment where adult students act and use their expertise", we identified four clusters of criteria depending on the following characteristics of the student group:

a) age;
b) high status in the civil service system;
c) highly regulated professional activities;
d) participation in the civil service talent pool.

The factor "pedagogical practice professors are involved in and their teaching experience" was divided into three clusters of criteria depending on the participants' individual attitudes to specific methods:

a) knowledge of the method and ability to use it (teaching expertise);
b) belief in the universal applicability of this or that method regardless of the cultural environment;
c) willingness to expand and update the inventory of teaching practices inventory to keep up with cutting-edge global practices.

Results

Sample

We conducted 2 focus group discussions including 12 and 15 participants. The average age of the participants was 45.2; their overall length of service was on average 21.1 years; and their work experience in education was 9.4 years. All professors teach different courses at the Academy of Public Prosecutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Their students are adults with university education, lawyers who are improving their qualifications at the academy. The average age of the students is 28 to 40 years: they have an average of 5-10 years of experience in law and public service.

Content Analysis of Responses

To test our first hypothesis about the significance of the national context in Uzbek teachers' choice of interactive methods, we focused on those responses that dealt with the applicability of these methods in Uzbekistan, that is, whether they are considered appropriate for use in Uzbek education or not. These responses, which are in fact subjective criteria of each method's applicability, were then divided into five clusters. Examples of clustering are given below.

The cluster of the criteria "transfer of knowledge from the mentor to the student as an established Uzbek national tradition" included such responses as "the mentor-student system has been one of the leading methods in professional training for as long as anyone can remember"; "Uzbeks have a saying *ustoz kurgan*, which means 'educated by a teacher'".

The criteria included in the cluster "teamwork as a national collectivist practice (community life or *mahalla*)" can be illustrated by the following example: "This method is effective because it helps you learn to work together, as a team".

The cluster “a large teacher-student distance based on unquestionable respect for the teacher (*domla*)” includes such responses as “a young generation always needs a teacher to teach them professional secrets” and “the situation when actual managers and their subordinates participate in role-playing together is unacceptable”.

Examples of the criteria included in the cluster “prevalence of traditional views and respect of the national mentality” are as follows: “This method disagrees with our national mentality” and “this method is not suitable for us because it requires us to make a lot of extra effort and it is against our laid-back national attitude”.

The cluster “search for the right answer” can be illustrated by such responses as “this method is suitable because it allows us to give the right direction to young specialists", and “it is an effective method because it helps develop decision-making skills”.

We calculated the number of culture-related responses given by each participant. Table 2 shows the results of the content analysis of the choice criteria (“For” or “Against”) for specific interactive methods within the factor “national cultural context”.

Table 2. *Content Analysis of the Choice Criteria (“For” or “Against”) for Specific Interactive Methods from the Group “National Cultural Context”*

No.	Clusters of criteria	Number of content units		Frequency of content units, %	
		For	Against	For	Against
1	transfer of knowledge from mentor to student	35	16	34.3	42.1
2	working in a team	22	1	21.5	2.6
3	large distance in a teacher-student relationship	1	8	1.0	21.1
4	prevalence of traditional views	2	6	2.0	15.8
5	search for the right answer	42	7	41.2	18.4
	TOTAL	102	38	100	100

As Table 2 shows, there are two dominant criteria in our experts’ evaluations of interactive methods. First, there is the possibility of knowledge transfer from mentor to student (51 responses). Second, there is the orientation of the method towards the “search for the right answer” (49 responses). Both criteria correspond to the cognitive rather than the behavioural aspect of the method. At the same time, neither of the two behavioural criteria (the method fits into the national context or not and the method supports the patriarchal tradition of large teacher-student distance or not) appeared to have any significant impact on the choice of the method.

In order to identify the role-played by a factor like “national culture” in comparison with others, we conducted content analysis of the criteria for the factors “professional environment where adult students act and use their expertise” and “pedagogical practice professors are involved in and their teaching experience”.

After separating the responces, responses which we identified as clusters of the factor “national context”, we conducted content analysis of the remaining responses and divided them into two groups (factors “professional environment of adult students” and “pedagogical practice of professors”) and then assigned them to clusters within each group.

The responses that corresponded to the professional and other characteristics of students included the following:

1) the method was described as "intended for adults" and "applicable to their work"; "it takes into account employees' age"; and "it can be applied depending on the level of psychological maturity" (cluster "psychological maturity");
2) the method was described as "unsuitable since not all people in these positions are ready to accept advice from others" (cluster "high status in the civil service system");
3) the method was described as "suitable" since "students' professional activities are rigorously regulated"; "the method contributes to a better understanding of the particularities of work in this profession" and "can be widely used to explain new laws and their correct application"; and "they are dealing with complicated work processes, which are not always open; therefore, this method will be of no use in training civil administration employees" (cluster "highly regulated professional activities");
4) the method was described as "inappropriate" since "superiors often fear competition from their subordinates": "It gives learners an opportunity to gain first-hand experience of what it's like to be a boss" (cluster "participation in the civil service talent pool").

The quantitative results of the content analysis of these clusters are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Content Analysis of the Choice Criteria for the Factor "Professional Environment of Adult Students"*

No.	Clusters of criteria	Number of content units		Frequency of content units, %	
		For	Against	For	Against
1	psychological maturity	8	9	4.4	12.5
2	high position in the civil service system	24	15	13.2	20.8
3	highly regulated professional activities	91	25	50.0	34.8
4	participation in the civil service talent pool	59	23	32.4	31.9
	TOTAL	182	72	100	100

Table 3 shows the prevalence of the cluster "highly regulated professional activities" (n = 116), that is, those criteria that focus on adult students' professional needs and characteristics. Thus, in their evaluations of interactive methods, professors put the main emphasis on whether or not these methods can help students meet the professional requirements and perform well at work. Such aspect as students' psychological maturity turned out to be the least significant factor in professors' considerations (n = 17).

Finally, the third group of responses where the main factor was the pedagogical practice and experiences of professors can be illustrated by the following examples:

1) the method was described as “tried and tested” and “often used in practice” (cluster “professor’s knowledge and application of the method”);
2) the method “provides opportunities for gaining experience in different spheres”; “develops skills of dealing with difficult situations, problem-solving abilities”; the method was described as “too time-consuming as takes too much time to find the necessary learning materials”; the method “requires certain expertise” (cluster “evaluation of the method as a tool, regardless of the national context”);
2) the method was “new for me but I hope to use it for problem-setting” (cluster “evaluation of the method’s potential in terms of the most recent international trends”).

Quantitative results of the content analysis of these clusters are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Content Analysis of the Choice Criteria for the Factor “Pedagogical Practice and Teaching Experience of Professors”*

No.	Clusters of criteria	Number of content units		Frequency of content units, %	
		For	Against	For	Against
1	professor’s knowledge and application of the method	32	11	14.5	18.7
2	evaluation of the method as a tool, regardless of the national context	174	34	78.7	57.6
3	evaluation of the method’s potential in terms of the most recent international trends	15	14	6.8	23.7
	TOTAL	221	59	100	100

Table 4 demonstrates that the most significant cluster of criteria is “evaluation of the method as a tool, regardless of the national context” (n = 208): a method is evaluated as suitable (n = 174) or unsuitable (n = 34) from the perspective of its efficiency as a teaching tool, that is, outside of the national or professional context. In other words, in their choices professors were guided primarily by the efficiency principle rather than by nation-specific considerations (avoidance strategy).

Table 5 shows the results of our content analysis used to test hypothesis 1.

Table 5. *Distribution of the Three Factors of Interactive Method Evaluations Based on the Results of Content Analysis*

Factors of method evaluation	Method considered as suitable		Method considered as unsuitable		Total	
	Number of content units	Frequency of content units, %	Number of content units	Frequency of content units, %	Number of content units	Frequency of content units, %
national culture	102	20.2	38	22.5	140	20.8
students’ professional activities	182	36.0	72	42.6	254	37.7
pedagogical practice and teaching experience	221	43.8	59	34.9	280	41.5
TOTAL	505	100	169	100	674	100

The results of our theoretical analysis have led us to formulate hypothesis 1: professors are likely to evaluate interactive teaching methods by the following specific strategies of strengthening national identity. If hypothesis 1 had been confirmed, the factor "national context" would have been shown to dominate in relation to other factors such as "professional environment of adult students" and "pedagogical practice". As Table 5 demonstrates, however, the dominant factor was "pedagogical practice" (41.5% of all units of content analysis). The factor "national context" (20.8%) ranked third after the factor "professional environment of adult students" (37.7%).

To test hypotheses 2, 3 and 4, we calculated choice frequencies and ranked the fourteen interactive methods. Table 6 shows method preferences expressed by the participants of our focus groups. The methods were ranked based on their popularity among the participants (see Table 6).

Table 6. *Choice of Methods by Focus Groups (27 people)*

Ranking position	Method	Number of choices	% of choices	% of Errors
1	*Discussion*	26	96.3	±7,6
1	*Case study*	25	92.6	±10,6
1	*Mentoring*	25	92.6	±10,6
2	*Project-based learning*	24	88.9	±12,7
2	*Role-playing*	23	85.2	±14,3
2	*Workshops*	23	85.2	±14,3
2	*In-basket technique*	21	77.8	±16,8
2	*Internship*	21	77.8	±16,8
2	*Distance learning*	21	77.8	±16,8
2	*Buddying*	20	74.1	±17,7
2	*Rotation*	18	66.7	±19,0
2	*Coaching*	18	66.7	±19,0
3	*Shadowing*	10	37.0	±19,5
3	*Metaphorical role-play*	8	29.6	±18,4

The determination of the confidence interval for the choice of teaching methods allowed us to distinguish three groups: 1 – the most preferred methods, 2 – the medium preferred, and 3 – the least preferred (Table 6).

According to hypothesis 2, such methods as buddying, discussion, role-playing and metaphorical role-play are likely to rank low due to the limitations associated with the national culture of Uzbekistan. As Table 6 illustrates, however, only shadowing and metaphorical role-play were rejected by the professors more actively than the other methods. Moreover, the method of discussion ranked at the top of the list.

According to hypothesis 3, experts are likely to attach greater significance to such methods as case study, in-basket technique and shadowing. This hypothesis was confirmed partially since only the case-study method ranked high while in-basket technique was in the middle of the ranking and shadowing occupied a low position. Finally, according to hypothesis 4, mentoring, coaching and workshops are likely to be seen as the most effective methods. As Table 6 shows, this hypothesis turned out to

be only partially correct since professors in our focus groups deemed mentoring and workshops as effective, but their preferences did not extend to coaching.

Discussion

Empirical data were collected with the help of focus groups, which consisted of professors training the civil service talent pool of Uzbekistan. The purpose of our study was to find out which factors influenced focus group participants' choices of interactive methods (the participants were given a list of 14 interactive methods). The first such factor was the influence of national context. This factor corresponded to our hypothesis that in their choices adult educators should take into account their national culture. Drawing from our theoretical analysis, we supposed that this factor would be prevalent in our participants' choices and preferences. The second factor we considered was associated with the characteristics of students as such. We called this factor "professional characteristics of students". The third factor was referred to as the "pedagogical practice professors are involved in and their teaching experience". We used cluster analysis to identify the clusters of criteria the participants of our focus groups mentioned in their responses. Content analysis has provided us with a better understanding of the reasoning behind our respondents' choices of methods. Thus, in our study we moved from the analysis of theoretical premises to building hypotheses and to statistical and content analysis of the collected data.

The theoretical analysis of the relationship between globalization trends, on the one hand, and the desire to preserve national identity and culture, on the other, has shown that in the case of Uzbekistan, the latter trend prevails. Therefore, we suggested that in their choice of teaching methods, Uzbek professors are oriented primarily towards the national context. The results of our empirical study, however, refuted this hypothesis.

All our hypotheses were confirmed only partially. We found that, apart from the national context, professors' choices are determined by their personal experience and the needs and characteristics of their students. Interestingly, both of these factors have a greater influence than the national context. In light of the above, the idea about the dominant role of traditionalism, especially among young people in Uzbekistan (Seitov, 2018), seems quite doubtful. It can be supposed that the results would be different if the sample consisted of rural schoolteachers.

Our study is theoretically relevant because it shows the influence of the following factors on the strategies professors use to adjust their teaching practices to the culture-specific characteristics of their audience. As the research makes clear, however, culture is not the only significant factor in the professors' choices; professors also take into account such factors as the characteristics and needs of their students, their own teaching experience and established pedagogical practices. In other words, in their choice of training methods, professors do not prioritize the connection between the national culture, values and identity alone; but instead consider other factors such as their own prior professional experience and the needs of their adult students. It can thus be concluded that Uzbek professors adopt a neutral position regarding the priority of national identity and culture in their teaching strategies (Sant & Hanley, 2018).

Limitations

Our study has several limitations worth noting. First, the research was limited by a relatively small sample size as the sample comprised 27 professors. Even though we conducted a detailed analysis of their responses and comments, a larger sample would be more representative, leading to stronger, more conclusive results.

The second limitation – the social desirability response bias – is connected to the respondents themselves. To minimize this limitation, we tried to provide a friendly, relaxed atmosphere for our focus group discussions, eliminating time pressure on the participants as much as we could. Nevertheless, since all the participants were experienced professors, enjoying a high social status, they could control their answers and shift them in the direction of what they felt to be more socially acceptable. Therefore, the possibility of bias cannot be fully eliminated as professors could be trying to project a more favourable image of themselves as modern, open-minded and cosmopolitan.

Finally, the third limitation was related to the translation of the participants' answers from Uzbek into Russian. In order to deal with this limitation, we used back translation of the answers from Russian into Uzbek to eliminate the inconsistencies and inadequacies in translation. For the purposes of this article, the answers were then translated into English.

Practical Implications

The results of this study reveal at least two possible practical applications: first, the analysis of evaluative comments made by professors shows, on the one hand, their interest in new teaching methods and practices and willingness to adopt them and, on the other, a lack of adequate access to cutting-edge methodology. Therefore, teacher training in Uzbekistan should be aimed at improving professors' methodological knowledge to keep them up to date with the latest global trends in this sphere. Second, as the participants of our focus groups observed, although traditional teaching methods share a number of aspects with mentoring and coaching, the former enjoy less popularity in the sphere of adult training than the latter. Thus, a thorough revision of conventional methods is required and they should be complemented with more up-to-date methods, which will lead to mutual enrichment between strong and unique Uzbek national educational traditions and contemporary international trends.

Avenue for Future Research

Some responses we received from focus group participants were not considered in the analysis since they addressed the questions outside of the scope of this paper. For example, some professors expressed regret that traditional, "tried and tested" teaching methods were being replaced by others and no longer used that much. Another interesting observation was that experienced professionals are often wary of becoming mentors, fearing that students may become their rivals in the future. We believe that this phenomenon requires a separate study focusing on the mentor-mentee relationship and its development over a period of several years.

Conclusion

The results of our study do not support the hypothesis that the national context is a crucial factor in Uzbek teachers' choices of interactive methods, which are widely applied in international teaching practice. Moreover, the factor "national context" ranked third (last) in the group of factors shaping the professors' choices of this or that interactive method, with the professional needs and characteristics of adult students at the top of the list followed by the professors' own pedagogical experience. Thus, as our study has shown, even though culture-related considerations play a certain role in the process of adult education, they are not the most important. The problem of integrating international teaching practices into the national cultural context can be addressed by expanding the range of criteria for evaluation of teaching methods as applicable or inapplicable. These criteria include certain aspects of the particular occupations for which training aims to prepare people and specific aspects of the corresponding teaching practices.

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ARTICLE

Factors Influencing Nurses' Decision to Join a Professional Association in Russia

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ABSTRACT

Many professional associations of nurses in Russia and other countries struggle to increase their membership. Even though there are obvious advantages of membership in a professional organization, many people decide against it, which makes the study of factors that affect their decision-making a pertinent task.

The aim of our research is to study the factors of membership or non-membership of nurses in professional organizations in Russia. We conducted semi-structured interviews among nurses in different Russian regions (N = 16). Their responses were analyzed by qualitative content analysis. We identified the main factors that determine nurses' membership or non-membership in professional associations and distinguished between objective and subjective reasons as well as active or passive attitudes demonstrated by our respondents in this regard.

The conclusion is made that nurses often adopt a "formal" approach to membership in professional associations, seeing it primarily as a certification requirement. This means that their interests may not coincide with the goals and mission declared by these associations in their charters. Some respondents, however, demonstrated a more active attitude, pointing out such reasons for membership as professional growth, opportunities for advanced training, socialization, exchange of ideas and so on.

KEYWORDS

nursing, motivation, professional organizations, nurse, membership, qualitative content analysis

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Introduction

Professional culture based on shared beliefs and values is crucial to any profession. Professional organizations are important elements of civil society and provide collective protection of the interests of their members. In our study, we are going to focus on professional associations of nurses in Russia and their role in the life of the nursing community.

The first professional nursing organization appeared in the USA: it was the American Society of Superintendents of Educational Institutions for Nurses, founded in 1893 (later renamed as the National League of Nurses). In 1896, the second nursing organization was founded – the Associated Graduates of Trained Nurses in the United States and Canada, which later became the American Nurses Association (ANA). Professional nursing associations went global in 1899, when the International Council of Nurses appeared, which was the first international professional nursing organization. There are currently more than 100 national professional organizations all over the world and their number is steadily growing (Matthews, 2012). Together, they have a significant impact on the healthcare sector by tackling various professional, political, regulatory, clinical and educational issues.

There is vast research literature on the work of health care professionals that demonstrates that professional associations provide their members with numerous benefits, including mentoring, continuing education opportunities, leadership development and professional development prospects (DeLeskey, 2003; Esmaeili et al., 2013; Greggs-McQuilkin, 2005; Goolsby & DuBois, 2017; Wynd, 2003). In addition, researchers have drawn attention to the relationship between an employee's membership in a professional association and the level of their professionalism (Hall, 1982; Wynd, 2003). It was shown that professional associations help health care professionals improve their competencies and ensure continuous improvement of their professional skills (Bruhn, 2001).

Wynd (2003) studied nursing professionalism by using Hall's Professionalism Inventory Scale (Hall, 1982) and found that professionals tend to adhere to the concepts of faith in public service, the right to self-government, faith in self-regulation, and a sense of vocation. Moreover, compared to those professionals who do not belong to professional associations, their members demonstrate significantly higher levels of professionalism (competence, integrity, etc.) (Wynd, 2003). Wynd's work highlights the importance of professional membership for retaining qualified and dedicated nurses and for ensuring the overall efficiency of a medical institution. Membership in professional organizations contributes greatly to the development of medical practitioners (American Nurses Association, 2016). Professional organizations disseminate information and create evidence-based professional standards that enable nurses to be informed and educated. The opinions of deans, teachers, supervisors and fellow students play an important role in nursing graduates' decision to join a professional association (Bailey, 1987). Nurses who continued their education and joined professional organizations in

most cases were able to make their own decisions regarding the patient's treatment and participated in solving problems related to the organization of work in a medical institution (Haley-Andrews & Winch, 2001).

Despite numerous advantages of membership in professional associations, not all medical practitioners are keen on joining them (DeLeskey, 2003; Esmaeili et al., 2013; Goolsby & DuBois, 2017; White & Olson, 2004). 50 percent of registered nurses who were not members of a professional organization cited high membership fees and inconvenient location or meeting times as reasons for not joining or leaving the organization (DeLeskey, 2003). DeLeskey showed that nurses unsubscribed from membership because they did not feel that the benefits they received covered the cost of their membership in the organization. Exchange theory (Alotaibi, 2007; DeLeskey, 2003; Esmaeili et al., 2013; Walton, 2017) has been used as a theoretical and methodological basis for understanding why health workers do not join professional associations. The advantages of membership in a professional association are often compared against its cost. Yeager & Kline (1983) developed the Professional Association Membership Questionnaire (PAMQ), which is now widely used to identify factors that contribute to employees' decision to join a professional association. PAMQ helps determine the factors that influence nurses' decisions and to identify the most important ones, including continuing education, professional development and leadership development, networking, mentoring and professional development. The most common barriers are the lack of time, cost of membership and family responsibilities (DeLeskey, 2003; Esmaeili et al., 2013; White & Olson, 2004).

Professional organizations can create positive social change by improving the quality of medical services. They provide medical professionals with opportunities for enhancing their expertise through continuing education and professional development (Esmaeili et al., 2013). Professional organizations help nurses expand their powers and exercise their professional rights. Kung and Lugo (2015) found that participation in professional organizations, knowledge of legislation and political processes were important predictors of nurses' political participation in the development and decision-making process of a health system reform. Dollinger (2000) notes that professional organizations provide healthcare professionals with opportunities to discuss and develop standards, share experiences, and create a platform for enhancing professional relevance.

In Russia, professional associations of nurses have appeared relatively recently. The Russian Nurses Association (RNA), which is now the largest professional association of this kind in the country, was established in 1992. The second organization uniting nurses of a certain specialization – The Transregional Public Organization of Scrub Nurses (RSNA) – was set up in 2001. In addition, in 2010, the Department of Nursing Management and Social Work of the Faculty of Higher Nursing Education and Psychological and Social Work of the I. M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University established a non-profit partnership called "Association of Specialists with University-Level Nursery Education". In 2015, the association of organizations supporting specialists with higher and secondary nursing education and pharmaceutical education founded the Union of Medical Professional Organizations

(MPOU), which is currently the youngest and the most active professional organization of nurses and pharmacists. Only legal entities can be members of the MPOU; it comprises regional organizations of medical workers, including nurses, from 24 regions of Russia.

There are practically no studies of professional nursing associations in Russia. We believe that one of the reasons behind the apparent lack of academic attention to this question is that the institution of professional associations as such is not sufficiently developed in Russia. In this paper, we are going to address this research gap.

Research Methodology

For our study, we interviewed 16 professional nurses from different Russian cities. We selected respondents from the regions where RNA's offices had more than 2,000 members. To this end, we used the list on the association's official website[1]. Another important criterion was the number and density of the population in cities and regions. According to the RNA's website, it has most members in the central part of the country (Central Federal District) as well as in other large regions – the Southern, North-Western, Ural, Siberian and Volga Federal Districts. Thus, we considered Moscow region (8,000 RNA members), Bryansk region (5,189 RNA members), Kursk region (4,981 RNA members) and Voronezh region in the Central Federal District (13,448 RNA members); Saint Petersburg in the North-Western Federal District (2,902 RNA members); Rostov region (4,200 RNA members), Astrakhan region (6,700 RNA members) and Volgograd region (5,820 RNA members) in the Southern Federal District; Kemerovo region (12,159 RNA members) and Omsk region (15,924 RNA members) in the Siberian Federal District; Tyumen region in the Ural Federal District (7,236 RNA members); and the Mari-El Republic in the Volga Federal District (3,853 RNA members).

In total, 16 experts were interviewed: two representatives from each region (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Voronezh region, Rostov region, Volgograd region, Kemerovo region, Tyumen region, Mari-El Republic) with at least five years of nursing experience. The median work experience of our respondents was 18 years (from 7 to 37 years). The median age of nurses was 42 (from 27 to 56). All participants in the study were women. They work in different hospital units and medical organizations, such as TB care, intensive case, reception, physiotherapy unit, and so on. However, the data on the respondents' medical specialization were not taken into account when analyzing their responses due to the fact that there are no professional nursing associations for nurses of a certain specialization in Russia.

At the first stage, this study used the semi-structured interview method; at the second stage, the data were analyzed by applying the qualitative content analysis method.

Since not all of our respondents were affiliated with the RNA or a similar organization, we included two options in our interview guide: for those respondents who

[1] https://medsestre.ru/regions

were members of a professional organization and for those who weren't. Respondents were then divided into two subgroups for subsequent analysis (N = 16, n_1 = 9, n_2 = 7).

For those respondents who were non-members of a professional association, we included two questions in the interview: questions about the conditions and factors that influenced their non-membership in an association and about their awareness of the activities of professional associations. For those respondents who were members of an association, there were three questions: concerning the factors that influenced their decision to join an association; the role of associations in their personal life and work; and their personal interest in activities of professional associations (see Appendix 1). In addition, the structure of each interview guide included questions related to respondents' gender, age, work experience, place of work, medical specialization, and education.

The data were interpreted by applying the qualitative content analysis, based on the "infrequent model of text content" (Pashinyan, 2012). In other words, the analysis focuses only on those elements of the text content that serve as indicators for the interpretation of meanings and correspond to a certain category of content. In this paper, the method of qualitative content analysis is based on an inductive approach similar to the one applied by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) in processing the data of their interviews with nurses. The key feature of this method is that the text is divided into several smaller categories. While preparing for data interpretation, we selected units of analysis, specific topics and categories. The next step is to organize high-quality data through open coding, which means highlighting the main categories (or titles) during the reading of communication texts (in our case, interviews). Then, in accordance with the induction categories, headers of a higher order are identified, which helps us reveal the relationship between the data, identify various subgroups of categories and describe their values.

The transcribed interviews that were the units for content analysis were assigned identification numbers in accordance with the division of the respondents' responses into two subgroups. We compiled a general categorical matrix based on five main topics for analysis and discussion of the received material (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Categorical Matrix*

Subgroups	Reasons for membership/non-membership			Awareness scale
Members of a professional association	Subjective	Active position	a) Obligatory participation	3
		Passive position	b) Voluntary participation	1; 2
Non-members of a professional association	Objective	c) Activity/passivity is not determined		
	Subjective	Active position	d) Professional agnosticism	
		Passive position	e) Personal indifference	0

As far reasons for membership or non-membership in professional organizations is concerned, we distinguish between obligatory and voluntary participation. Voluntary participation corresponds to such personal motives as as obtaining professional knowledge, professional mobility and similar. Obligatory participation includes such reasons as confirmation of qualifications, membership required due

to one's senior position. There are also objective and subjective reasons: the former include, for example, absence of a professional association in one's region or one's lack of awareness of such associations. Subjective reasons may vary: for example, professional agnosticism is characteristic of non-members and correlates with an active attitude and skepticism about professional associations' efficiency; personal indifference is also characteristic of non-members but is based on a passive attitude and the lack of personal interest. We have also used the following 4-point awareness scale: from "0" denoting a complete lack of awareness to "3" corresponding to full "insider" knowledge of a professional association's activities (for members).

Our respondents were divided into two subgroups corresponding to their participation or non-participation in a professional association. The reasons that influenced their opinions of professional associations could be objective or subjective, which, in their turn, were related to active researchers identified the main reasons that influenced the assessment of professional associations by informants. These reasons are most commonly determined by objective or subjective factors, which in turn is associated with the active or passive position of the respondents themselves. Positions of activity or passivity are expressed in certain personal practices in relation to professional associations, and depend on the level of awareness of nurses.

This study complies with ethical requirements for high-quality sociological methods. All potential respondents received verbal and written information about the research being conducted; voluntary participation in the study was emphasized. In addition, confidentiality was kept; in particular, all names were removed from the transcripts of the interview; the interviews got their identification numbers. The results are presented in such a way that it is impossible to identify participants by their specific statements. Audio recordings and transcripts of interviews are available only to the researchers.

Results

The length of an interview ranged from 37 to 49 minutes, with the average length of 42 minutes. In total, we identified five main topics, two of them for the first subgroup and three for the second subgroup (Table 2).

Table 2. *Key Interview Topics*

Topics for discussion for the first subgroup	(1) Reasons (factors) for non-membership
	(2) Awareness of the activities of medical associations
Topics for discussion for the second subgroup	(1) Reasons (factors) for membership
	(2) The role of professional associations in the nurses' work
	(3) Assessment of the nurses' interest in the activities of a professional association (obligatory or voluntary membership)

Response Analysis of the First Subgroup (Non-Members)

1. Reasons for non-membership in a professional association

In this section, we are going to discuss the factors and conditions that influence nurses' decision not to join a professional association.

The first reason cited by our respondents was the lack of personal professional need or interest:

Well, I heard something about it but somehow I never got around to looking into this topic properly (nurse working in TB care, 33 y.o., 9 years of experience).

Another reason behind unwillingness of some Russian nurses to join professional associations was the relatively short history of such associations in Russia or their absence in some regions:

Because it has just appeared, and the organization has not yet recruited members (nurse working at hospital reception, 38 y.o., 15 years of experience).

The third factor is our respondents' skepticism about the efficiency of professional association and its inability to help their members to achieve their personal professional goals:

I do not see any prospects for myself in the future. (...) I can't say that my colleagues are happy with their work. Many of them have already left associations, some are only planning since they've received nothing. It is only annual membership fees and empty talks (nurse working in TB care, 44 y.o., 22 years of experience).

2. Nurses' awareness of the activities of medical associations

In general, when being asked about the nature of the activities of professional medical associations, many respondents demonstrated either a total lack of awareness or only a superficial knowledge thereof. Some nurses pointed out that professional associations fail to meet their expectations regarding the functions such organizations should perform:

Creating opportunities for development of the medical staff; organization of training and conferences; assistance in professional growth (nurse working at hospital reception, 38 y.o., 15 years of experience);

Yes, of course, they greatly facilitate the solution of many problems and tasks that medical personnel face in their professional activities. ... Professional associations in my town do not provide support for their members (nurse working in TB care, 44 y.o., 22 years of experience).

Response Analysis of the Second Subgroup (Members)

1. Reasons for membership in a professional association

On average, those nurses who answered affirmatively to the question about their membership in a professional association have been affiliated with various regional associations for 3–6 years. The main reasons for membership include access to knowledge; confirmation of their qualifications and professional skills; and upward professional mobility. Such factors as protection and development of nursing in the region were cited much less frequently:

To pass the accreditation at work, you need to score a certain number of points. Participation in activities of a professional association contribute to the accumulation of points for promotion or serve as confirmation of qualifications (chief nurse of a private multi-purpose clinic, 47 y.o., 25 years of experience);

The main reasons are the opportunities for professional development, for obtaining new information (...) *for gaining practical knowledge. They hold various conferences at the regional level, there are online conferences, training seminars, which is very useful and relevant. They also support participation in professional contests* (...)*, and they share their first-hand knowledge.* (...) *And membership fees* (...) *are spent on the development of nursing in this region; they also help in difficult life situations, in conflict situations directly with the employer who provides protection* (senior nurse of the physiotherapy department, 53 y.o., 32 years of experience).

It should be noted that some respondents indicated that for some nurses their membership in professional association was more an obligation rather than a voluntary impulse. For senior and chief nurses, membership in a professional association is determined by their job responsibilities and status:

In our area, all chief nurses are members of the association (chief nurse of a private clinic, 56 y.o., 37 years of experience).

Nurses noted that in practice, what professional associations offered was in line with their personal expectations. Those respondents for whom confirmation of their qualifications was an important factor pointed out that their membership in a professional organization helped them raise their social status:

I guess, yes. They have a charter, everything is spelled out, what are the pros and cons. It is also publicly available. In our country, the head of this association is the chief nurse of the region (...)*, there are very competent people who can give advice, if something is not clear, discuss some orders, or something else, that is, from the professional point of view, they support you very well* (senior nurse of a physiotherapy unit, 53 y.o., 32 years of experience).

2. The role of professional associations in nurses' daily practices

Nurses' decision to join a professional association often depends on their opinions about the role such associations play in everyday life of the professional nursing community, including the lives of respondents themselves. Nurses pay attention to such functions of professional associations as training and exchange of experience, support in professional growth, communication platform, and, in some cases, financial support:

They gather us every month, conduct training in different fields, talk about innovations in medical education. They also congratulate us on professional holidays. They also hold large educational events, a lot of people come there: students, doctors and medical staff, but this happens just several times a year.

They gather chief nurses for conferences on a monthly basis (chief nurse of a private clinic, 56 y.o., 37 years of experience).

All respondents in this group agreed that professional associations not only contributed to their personal success but also to the general prestige of the profession:

Yes, professional contests prove it. (...) *But then again, if you are constantly advancing in your profession, only [then] the association can help you with something, promote and support you* (senior nurse working in intensive care, 45 y.o., 25 years of experience).

Respondents, however, also observed that in their daily work they did not face the need to contact a professional association in order to protect the rights of workers:

No, we didn't have it; there was no need to contact the association (nurse working in a laboratory, 27 y.o., 7 years of experience).

3. Nurses' interest in activities of a professional association

A sign of respondents' interest in the activities of professional associations can be their willingness to participate in the events organized by such associations. Our respondents mentioned that they took part in scientific, educational and qualification activities that raised their status in the profession. In other words, respondents of the second subgroup, considered membership in a professional association as an essential practical component of their work:

Yes, I take part in such events. For example, (...) *the annual conference 'Sanitary Autumn', it is held both for doctors and nurses. There are different sections there, and I participate in it every year* (senior nurse of a physiotherapy unit, 53 y.o., 32 years of experience).

All nurses of this subgroup answered affirmatively to the question about membership, explaining this by the need for continuing education, obtaining relevant medical information and professional development:

The association is very active in organizing events, contests, and it provides information, so it has a developed structure (senior nurse working in intensive care, 45 y.o., 25 years of experience).

Some respondents pointed out the importance of leadership skills in raising nurses' awareness of the activities of professional associations. In some regional offices, apart from the members who were obliged to participate as a part of their duties as a senior or head nurse, there were also active members who participated on their own accord:

You know, some people say: 'Where is my money? I don't see what I get in return', but that doesn't mean that everyone is like that. (...) *You understand, leadership qualities are needed here, that's how one gets by in this profession.* (...) *Personnel, nurse leaders who can show by personal example what is really necessary at this stage.* (...) *It's not only the head nurses that are members, no.*

So, in 2014, I invited 60 people, I have their applications. We just need to speak more about it, the information should be accessible to people (chief nurse of a multi-purpose private clinic, 47 y.o., 25 years of experience).

Discussion and Conclusions

The lack of nursing associations in many Russian regions is connected with the paradoxical situation in the country's health care management. On the one hand, the existence of public associations and their active work in Russia shows the professional community's desire to transition to the public management model in the healthcare sector; on the other hand, the above-mentioned management model is a relatively new phenomenon in this country. The Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 315-FZ *"O samoreguliruemyh organizacijah"* ["On Self-Regulatory Organizations"] was adopted only in 2007. According to this law, a self-regulatory organization can develop and adopt standards and rules for professional activity, disciplinary measures, business ethics, that is, requirements for all members of this organization. The RNA's Charter published on the association's website makes a reference to this law (Russian Nurses Association [RNA], 2008, Clause 1.5). Thus, membership in a professional nursing association entails acknowledgement of the norms and rules stipulated by the Law and the Charter and thereby the consent to comply with them. The latter indicates a specialist's willingness to take responsibility.

The structure of regional nursing associations in Russia is extremely diverse: in some regions, this function is performed by associations of medical workers, in others – by regional branches of national public organizations, and in some regions there no professional associations at all. It should be noted that not all Russian regions have branches of medical and other professional organizations (Ivanova, 2013). Thus, even those nurses who are willing to join a professional organization may be not able to do so.

Other factors preventing nurses from joining professional organizations are the lack of interest or motivation as well as the lack of awareness of the activities and functions of such organizations. According to L. Rapp and P. Collins (1999), the lack of information about the goals and objectives of an association as well as the practical benefits of membership were often mentioned by nurses as important reasons for their decision not to join. Thus, broader information support in regions can be recommended as one of the strategies for attracting members into professional organizations. Studying the problem of membership in professional nursing organizations in Iran, M. Esmaeili et al. (2013) found out that the lack of motivation was one of the reasons for refusing membership as people didn't consider the organization's performance as efficient. Other reasons included the general lack of interest in profession and negative publicity of professional nursing organizations (Esmaeili, et al., 2013).

The factors contributing to the popularity of professional nurses associations can be quite diverse: starting from the formal obligations (chief and senior nurses are expected to be members of such organizations) and ending with personal interest and commitment to the organization's goals and mission. The need for

certification and the support of nursing managers can be indicative of a rather formal and passive attitude of the respondents to membership. These factors, however, can play a serious role in people's decision to join an organization or leave it: a study of professional nurses communities in Kuwait has shown that people's decisions were often influenced by the policies initiated by senior managers of nurses in their workplaces (Alotaibi, 2007). The Order of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation No. 240n of April 23, 2013 "*O poryadke i srokah prohozhdeniya medicinskimi rabotnikami i farmacevticheskimi rabotnikami attestacii dlya polucheniya kvalifikacionnoj kategorii*" ["On the Procedure and Dates of Certification for Medical and Pharmaceutical Workers for a Qualification Category"] specifies the evaluation criteria, which include participation in the work of a scientific society and professional association (Par. 24). Thus, nurses may decide to join a professional organization in order to improve their qualifications and pass the certification. The same Order states that the expert group's report should include the assessment of the specialist's theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to assign the declared qualification category, including knowledge of modern diagnostic and treatment methods, participation in the work of a scientific community and professional association; publications (Par. 24, Section III of the Order). The Order was amended in 2019 and it now specifies that the appointment of the chairman of a territorial certification committee should be agreed upon with a medical professional non-profit organization. Thus, the RNA is directly involved in the process of nurses' certification.

As active members of professional associations, nurses pay particular attention to professional development programs, prospects related to continuing professional education and the benefits of social interaction with other members of the organization. Membership in professional organizations provides opportunities for professional growth, for obtaining advanced training, exchanging new ideas and knowledge, learning about advanced achievements of medical science, and professional socialization. Professional organizations enable nurses to develop a sense of identity with their professional community. Indeed, real career prospects, opportunities for improving the qualification and skills contribute to the prestige of the profession in society – the latter, in turn, can affect the change in the public perception of the nursing profession and help retain the nursing staff.

In many countries, membership in professional organizations is associated with the protection of workplace rights. Such organizations assist nurses in demanding a pay increase, the reduction of working hours, improvement of the working conditions. They also promote professional independence, organize leisure activities, and arrange meetings with government officials and prominent public figures to express their professional concerns and legislative initiatives. Despite the fact that the RNA Charter mentions the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of medical personnel with secondary special and higher education specializing in nursing among its goals, there is no established practice of applying to public associations for protection of employees' rights in Russia. The development and discussion of professional standards is the main area related to the support of labor rights

of medical personnel by professional associations. Our respondents noted that they were not aware of the cases when their colleagues applied to a professional organization for legal assistance or protection.

In its 2017 report, the RNA indicated the following areas of work: accreditation and development of continuing medical education; scientific and practical activities; public activities to improve public health literacy; development of professional standards; protection of professional interests and international cooperation. Protection of interests is described the following way: In 2017, The Russian Nurses Association conducted a continuous dialogue with the heads of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation and the Central Committee of the Trade Union of Health Workers of the Russian Federation concerning nurses and junior personnel salaries (Russian Nurses Association [RNA], 2017). We believe, however, that the legal protection of nurses' interests provided by this professional association is limited to counselling on certain legal aspects of labor activity. This situation is quite different from the practices of professional organizations in other countries, where members are provided with comprehensive legal protection, including representation in court.

The factors determining the decision of nurses concerning their membership in a professional association include objective and subjective factors; the latter correspond to respondents' active or passive attitude towards the activities of professional associations, regardless of their membership (subgroup of members and subgroup of non-members). Members of professional associations that demonstrate a passive attitude tend to view their membership as an opportunity to confirm their qualifications or as related to their job responsibilities (obligatory participation). Non-members demonstrating a passive attitude usually lack interest in public associations (personal indifference). Members of professional associations with an active attitude generally seek to acquire new knowledge and to improve their status (voluntary participation). Non-members demonstrating an active attitude are quite skeptical about the efficiency of professional associations (professional agnosticism).

The awareness of nurses of the functions and nature of work conducted by professional associations in Russia is of great importance. According to our study, nurses' degree of awareness ranges from the complete lack of knowledge to sufficient "insider" knowledge about the activities of such associations.

Based on the answers of some respondents, it can be concluded that the professional associations exist only formally in the territories of certain regions, and they fail to fulfill the stated promises and functions mandatory for self-regulatory organizations.

Limitations

In this paper, the method of qualitative content analysis is used for interpreting the interview data. However, unlike the data used for quantitative content analysis, such content cannot always be clearly interpreted and the research results may be difficult to reproduce.

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Appendix 1

Guide to the semi-structured interview (for respondents who are members of professional associations).

1. Are you a member of a professional association?
2. What professional medical association do you belong to?
3. How long have you been a member of a professional association?
4. What were your reasons for joining a professional association?
5. What were your expectations when joining a professional association?
6. What role does a professional association play in your life?
7. Have there been cases when a professional association managed to protect your rights or the rights of your colleagues?
8. Do professional associations help to enhance the prestige of nursing as a profession?
9. Have you participated in any events organized by a professional association?
10. Do you plan to renew your membership in a professional association in the future? Why or why not?

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ARTICLE

Review of International Research on Ethical and Psychological Barriers to Reproductive Donation

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ABSTRACT

This review examines the international research literature discussing the barriers for those considering the possibility of becoming donating sperm, eggs, or embryos or becoming surrogate mothers. While there is a significant body of research on donors' motivations, less attention is given to the reasons why potential donors decide not to donate or withdraw from donation procedures. Nevertheless, we have collected about 70 studies, including journal articles, book chapters and reports. Contemporary findings show that as much as there is no single motivation for reproductive donation, there is also no single barrier to it. The studies we considered deal with two salient themes. First, barriers to reproductive donation serve as a space for negotiation of a donor's beliefs, fears and perceived consequences of donation to themselves, the recipients and resulting offspring. Second, these barriers are a complex web of intersecting factors, influenced by secondary factors. This review reveals the limited nature of our current knowledge of barriers to reproductive donation. Indeed, research on this problem needs to catch up with research on motivation because obstacles to reproductive donation are no less important than the stimuli.

KEYWORDS

assisted reproductive technologies (ART); motivation of reproductive donation; motivational barriers; legal regulation of assisted reproduction

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Introduction

In the light of the rising number of infertility cases across the globe, reproductive donation has been the subject of extensive international interest in the past decade. This interest has been propelled by two main developments. First is the availability of technology for different types of donation such as sperm, eggs, and embryo donation, and surrogacy. Second is the growing need for ethical frameworks of legislation and medical practices in assisted reproductive technology (ART). Studies on reproductive donation have predominantly been aimed to identify the ways in which donors are motivated to donate; but less attention has been given to the reasons why potential donors may decide against it. To our knowledge, no systematic review of the literature on this topic has been done yet, especially the studies of the factors that hinder certain types of donation more than others.

This review focuses on the current body of knowledge on ethical and psychological barriers in reproductive donation. It is also aimed to provide insight into the specific differences in the barriers' characteristic of each type of reproductive donation. In our analysis, reproductive donation refers to donation of sperm, eggs, embryos and surrogate motherhood. Barriers are understood here as the factors that impede the initiation or continuation of the process of reproductive donation. These aspects are crucial because even though significant efforts have been made to improve the quality of reproductive donation, there are still potential donors who opt out of donation, which calls for a more in-depth consideration of decision-making in reproductive donation. This review can also be beneficial for professional ART organizations, in particular those engaged in recruitment of new donors. The results of this review are meant to provide useful information for medical and legal professionals as well as policy makers on reproductive health.

To this end, we collected materials written in English such as academic articles, book chapters and reports dealing with factors that deter potential donors from participating in reproductive donation. The reference search was conducted in 7 databases (EBSCOHost[1], ScienceDirect[2], Sage Journals[3], PubMed Central[4],ProQuest Central[5], Scopus[6], and JSTOR[7]), using the following terms alone and in combination: "motivation", "reproductive donation", "reproductive donors", "sperm donors", "sperm donation", "egg donors", "egg donation", "oocyte donors", "oocyte donation", "embryo donors", "embryo donation", "surrogates", "surrogacy", and "ethical aspects".

1 https://www.ebsco.com/

2 https://www.sciencedirect.com/

3 https://journals.sagepub.com/

4 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/advanced/

5 https://about.proquest.com/products-services/ProQuest_Central.html

6 https://www.scopus.com/home.uri

7 https://www.jstor.org/

The search was limited to articles published in scientific journals in English between years 1992 and 2018. To be included in the sample, materials had to include a description of ethical and psychological reasons why donors may be hesitant about participating in reproductive donation. Criteria used for exclusion include: date range, data on reproductive recipients alone, clinical research on gamete donation. However, articles containing information on donors' perception on reproductive donation were not excluded because data on why they did not donate can be considered as barriers to reproductive donation. After the materials were screened and checked for eligibility and all duplicates were removed, about 70 references were identified as fitting the inclusion criteria. These were quite diverse in focus and method, with some works covering reproductive donation in general rather than dealing exclusively with the barriers to reproductive gamete donation. This systematic review has some important limitations. First, it provides a comprehensive overview only of the research on ethical and psychological barriers to reproductive donation published in English; this implies that there may be also non-English publications describing other barriers. Second, we recognize that the references reviewed in this work do not comprise all information about donation barriers, and thus the information used in the discussion may not have been fully comprehensive. These limitations, however, are opportunities for further research.

Sperm Donation

Barriers to sperm donation provoke a lot of discussions as different countries face a number of ethical and psychological challenges in dealing with this sphere, such as donor recruitment, donor compensation, donor anonymity, contact with donor-conceived offspring, etc. Psychological matters are usually related to donors' altruistic motives and their concerns about the well-being of the resulting children while ethical issues, to donors' anonymity, compensation, and contact with the resulting offspring (van den Broeck et al., 2013).

Ethical Barriers to Sperm Donation

Since matters of privacy are crucial for sperm donors, anonymity is an important consideration in donating. Some donors are ready to participate in the process only if they remain anonymous because this way they can avoid conflicts or tensions in their own families (Mohr, 2014). This becomes more relevant because of the global changes in regulations of anonymous donorship. For instance, Denmark allows anonymous sperm donation (Mohr & Koch, 2016), but there is an increasing number of countries that mandate the removal of donor anonymity and urge fertility banks to register all potential donors with necessary information (van den Broeck et al., 2013). Donors might consider this as a threat to their privacy since donor-conceived offspring will be able to trace and find their donors as well as half-siblings through these registries. There are also cases with courts mandating sperm banks to turn over a donor's medical records when there is a need to check his or her medical history to resolve some health issues of the offspring (Andrews & Elster,

1998). Therefore, it can be difficult both for donors and sperm banks to have control over anonymity, which can lead to the scarcity of sperm donors (Pennings, 2005). However, it is not much of a hindrance to donors if the release of information only includes non-identifying information, such as physical characteristics and the level of education (Godman et al., 2006). As such, in countries where anonymous donation is prohibited by law, donor anonymity is ensured through the informal settings, in which this procedure is carried out (Bossema et al., 2014).

There are also barriers related to the moral side of reproductive donation itself or to how it is practiced. Some potential donors hesitate to donate because of religious considerations about the unnaturalness of ART, which can be seen as a form of discreet eugenics (van den Broeck et al., 2013). Meanwhile, there is also a moral concern about ART disturbing the traditional bilineal kinship (Mohr, 2018). For instance, potential donors may not be willing to share their sperm with single/lesbian women and lesbian couples because they believe that a child should be raised by parents of both sexes (Ekerhovd & Faurskov, 2008).

Psychological Barriers to Sperm Donation

Donors may experience feelings of anxiety, insecurity and disgust concerning the process of donation. They may feel uneasy about having masturbatory ejaculation of semen in a sperm bank on moral grounds, which constitutes a "possible transgression of these boundaries for sperm donors" (Mohr, 2018, p. 139). Some may see the secretion of bodily fluids in plastic cups as inappropriate because this action is beyond their normative boundary (Mohr, 2016). Muslim men, in particular, experience conflicting attitudes to delivering semen samples in sperm clinics since masturbation promotes "guilty pleasures", especially when pornographic materials are offered in clinics (Inhorn, 2007). Interestingly, donors may also be anxious about the possibility of discovering a fertility problem of their own (Cook & Golombok, 1995).

Sperm donors may also feel anxious lest others should find out about their donorship (Schover et al., 1992; Shepherd et al., 2018). Anonymity may be particularly important when family issues are involved, which can serve as secondary barriers. While in some countries sperm donation between brothers is considered to be an acceptable intra-family situation (American Society for Reproductive Medicine [ASRM], 2017), anonymity is crucial for other forms of donation (brother–sister, father–daughter) because it can be classified as incest. This may prove to be a relevant dealbreaker for married heterosexual men since it can cause frictions in their relationships with their spouses and children (Riggs & Russell, 2011). The donor's partner and family members can react differently to the situation of donation. Therefore, in some cases, donors prefer not to inform their partners about their participation in the donor program while in other cases, donors, on the contrary, seek their partners' explicit approval (Lalos et al., 2003; Thorn et al., 2008). Thus, donors tend to be serious about the consequences of their donation both for themselves (van den Broeck et al., 2013), for their families, and for the future children. Each of these considerations can act as a barrier to donating (Bossema et al., 2012).

Egg Donation

An important theme in research literature on egg donation is donors' motivation to donate only for a specific segment of the population, which restricts the act of donation. In egg donation, barriers are mainly related to the process of donation and concerns about the welfare of the resulting offspring. Yet donors may also have other ethical and psychological reasons to opt out of the donation process.

Ethical Barriers to Egg Donation

There are two main ethical obligations that egg donors feel: towards the recipient women and towards the resulting children. First, while women might feel a moral obligation to share their eggs with infertile women (Blyth et al., 2011), this obligation can be restricted. Some donors would only donate if they are personally acquainted with the prospective recipients (Winter & Daniluk, 2004; Yee et al., 2011), which means that they may have reservations concerning donation to other recipients in need. Moreover, as much as some donors would be delighted to meet the resulting offspring, some might not be at ease about it. Second, donors might also feel morally obliged to ensure that the resulting offspring will be in good hands. Some donors feel that they are responsible to ensure the resulting child's emotional stability by being identified as his or her biological mother (Bracewell-Milnes et al., 2016). Therefore, they express the desire to obtain information about the recipients before donating in order to evaluate the kind of life the resulting offspring will have (Yee et al, 2011).

Interestingly, financial compensation is related to egg donors' perception of fairness (Partrick et al., 2001). Some donors would be unwilling to donate unless monetary compensation was provided (Ibid.), which can be corroborated by the fact that there are fewer egg donors from countries that prohibit commercial egg donation (Gezinski et al., 2016). There are statutory restrictions such as legal measures that limit donation of oocytes due to the risk of possible kinship in the future (ASRM, 2017). For instance, in Canada it is prohibited to share one's eggs and to engage in any commercial transactions of selling or buying oocytes (ASRM, 2017). Aside from ethical issues, religion also plays a part in potential donors' decision not to donate. For example, the dominance of Catholicism in Italy and Costa Rica currently makes their context very restrictive for reproductive donation. Likewise, Muslim countries are very strict in regulating gamete donation (Inhorn & Patrizio, 2012). Another factor that may be off-putting for potential egg donors is the mandatory lower age limit for those who want to be a donor with the goal of "ensuring donor maturity sufficient to understand the conditions of the procedure and make an informed decision" (ASRM, 2017, p. 5).

Psychological Barriers to Egg Donation

Fear and anxiety are crucial barriers to egg donation (Shepherd et al., 2018). Women may feel uncomfortable in the process of egg donation because of such medical procedures as injections and penetrations (Ibid.). Fear of the physical and

psychological risks associated with oocyte donation also plays a role in potential donors' decision-making, especially when they are considering the implications of the procedure for their own reproductive health in the future (Kenney & McGowan, 2010; Yee et al., 2011). Furthermore, donors might have the fear of regret. For example, when the previous donation did not result in pregnancy, the donor may experience a feeling of disappointment that may deter her from donating again (Winter & Daniluk, 2004). Donors may also feel uncomfortable with the idea of having "unknown" offspring (Blyth et al., 2011). Some donors would only donate if their anonymity is guaranteed (Gürtin et al., 2012).

Embryo Donation

Unlike gametes, which are the biological sources of human reproduction, an embryo is not a raw resource but rather an outcome from an assisted union between gametes. As such, embryo donation is a multi-party decision, which can be a battle between donors themselves or donors against time. There are two purposes of embryo donation: for reproduction or research. Yet some couples choose to have their embryos destroyed. The general practice in embryo donation involves giving a written consent to freezing the embryos resulting from the IVF treatment. Couples are also expected to communicate their desire to donate or discard their frozen embryos before the expiration of the storage period (Svanberg et al., 2001).

Ethical Barriers to Embryo Donation

Ethical principles, such as perceiving embryo donation as "child relinquishment", play a part in donors' decision-making (de Lacey, 2005, p. 1661). In these cases, couples would choose to discard their embryos rather than donate them for research when the storage time has ended (Svanberg et al., 2001). Some donors view an embryo as a person/child and see the situation as an ethical dilemma. Donors who eventually became parents through successful IVF brood over the idea that their embryos-turn-child would be mistreated and decide that it is better to terminate their embryos than to open the likelihood of these embryos having a life different from what their genetic parents want them to have (de Lacey 2005). In another work of de Lacey (2007, p. 1757), it is shown that provisional donors and discarders differ in terms of their interpretation of embryos, that is, embryo donors relate more to the "metaphor of pregnancy termination" while those who discard embryos emphasize the adoption metaphor.

Couples may choose to discard an embryo even after they have given their initial agreement to donate it, at the final stage of agreement and after passing all the necessary procedures (Bangsbøll et al., 2004; Laruelle & Englert, 1995). Nachtigall et al. (2005) report that as many as 88 percent of the couples who had initially decided to donate their embryos to research reconsidered their decision later. When they decided to donate, they might have "supported ED in principle, but only a small subgroup would actively consider donation" (Newton et al., 2003, p. 27). This finding is consistent with the earlier studies that showed that more than a half of couples change their initial

intention to donate embryos to research (see Brinsden et al., 1995; Cooper, 1996; Hounshell & Chetkowski, 1996; Klock et al., 2001; Saunders et al., 1995).

Psychological Barriers to Embryo Donation

The option to delay the decision to donate serves as a psychological barrier to embryo donation because this option reinforces the "behavior in which individuals seek to avoid the responsibility of making a decision" (Anderson, 2003, p. 139). McMahon et al. (2003) report that 70 percent of participants intended to delay their decision on what to do with their embryos for as long as possible. In some cases, partners failed to reach a joint decision or forgot about the request (Provoost et al., 2001). Decision avoidance results in many embryos remaining in storage unclaimed or "lost to follow-up" (e.g. case in Canada, See Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, 1993 cited in Cattapan & Baylis, 2016).

Decision avoidance (Anderson, 2003) intersects with the dual nature of embryo donors: a sperm donor and an egg donor. Deciding with another person is much more complicated than making an individual decision, and usially state regulations in clinics require the consent of the two donors. For instance, the Iranian Parliament passed a law stating that infertility centers can donate embryos to the infertile only after the permission is obtained from the donor couples (Alizadeh & Samani, 2014). Decision avoidance happens when some donor couples struggle with decision-making and find it difficult to reach a joint decision (Provoost et al., 2011), especially whether to donate or to discard their frozen embryos. Davis (2012, p. 386) observed that the possibility of a dispute within a couple led clinics "to require couples undergoing IVF to sign a cryopreservation consent or agreement to address the disposition of embryos in the case of divorce, death, or abandonment". In the US, for example, in the event of death or divorce, which prevents donor couples from using their embryos for conception, courts can decide which donor's interests must prevail (Sheinbach, 1999). For many couples, however, financial reasons meddle with their decision-making as keeping embryos in storage will inevitably incur more expenses (Davis, 2012). For example, the Advanced Fertility Center of Chicago charges $800 for embryos to be cryogenically frozen and stored for one year, and a certain amount for each subsequent year[8].

Surrogate Motherhood

Surrogacy is the most service-oriented type of reproductive donation. Compared to the transactions of sperm, oocyte or egg donors, the duration of the surrogate's involvement in the reproductive process is substantially greater and longer. Barriers to surrogacy are related to donors' trust in the recipients and fear of risks.

Ethical Barriers to Surrogate Motherhood

Most ethical concerns about surrogate motherhood are related to donors' religious views. For instance, in Islam, surrogacy is ethically problematic because a woman

[8] http://www.advancedfertility.com/ivfprice.htm

becomes “impure” when she receives sperm from a man to whom she is not married (Inhorn, 2006). Muslim women believe that surrogacy can presumably be connected to ethical issues because it meddles with the sacredness of the husband-wife relationship (Lasker, 2015). While the idea of surrogate motherhood is gradually gaining acceptance among the Shiite population in Iran and a part of Iraq, Lebanon, Bahrain, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (Abbasi-Shavazi et al., 2008), many might still not be comfortable with being a surrogate mother. Moreover, for some Christians, surrogacy may confuse the child’s identity; obstruct the naturalness of procreation and child rearing (Lones, 2016).

In some cases, surrogates would only enter in a surrogacy arrangement with close relatives. Some may involve sister-sister (Kirkman & Kirkman, 2002) and mother-daughter (Brazier et al., 1997). Some potential surrogates fear that they will eventually develop affection for the gestated offspring (Agnafors, 2014; Larkey, 2003) and this may complicate the separation later on. However, if the surrogate knows the recipients, it will be easier to compartmentalize her feelings because her duty as a surrogate is clear.

Psychological Barriers to Surrogate Motherhood

Potential surrogate mothers have a common fear of having to regret their decision over time (Teman, 2008). Since potential surrogates need to feel sure of the people they are going to deal with, an initial negotiation is set (van den Akker, 2000). Agreements are based on trust arrangements (Edelmann, 2004). An important factor is whether a surrogate mother has already experienced a positive relationship with the trusted couple or not. Depending on this factor, she would want to make subsequent surrogacy arrangements in the future or not (Imrie & Jadva, 2014). However, in cases of mediated surrogacy, “surrogacy agencies choreograph the entire process, from matching of the surrogate and intended parents to administration and enforcement of contractual matters” (Holcomb & Byrn, 2010, p. 651). In this case, potential surrogates agree if they trust the agency involved.

Potential surrogates are also affected by the fear of hostility and humiliation from their families or friends (Jadva et al., 2003; Shenfield et al., 2005). The approval of their spouses may indirectly affect their decision to become a surrogate mother because a surrogate’s husband must agree to abstain from sexual intercourse during the given period (Sama, 2012).

Conclusions

It is now evident that in so far as there is no single motivation for reproductive donation, there is also no single barrier to it. As the studies covered by this review have shown, there may be multiple barriers to reproductive donation related to each other. Barriers may overlap and can be influenced by secondary factors, which inform the donor’s decision. Thus, a more comprehensive approach is necessary to the study of the psychological and ethical aspects of reproductive donation (Sandberg & Conner, 2008). The decision not to donate may be even more significant for donors

than the decision to do so. More importantly, the decision not to donate does not necessarily mean that potential donors are against reproductive donation as such. Donors' selectivity is based on what they think is best for themselves, the recipients and the resulting offspring. Moreover, as shown in this review, barriers to reproductive donation vary depending on the type of donation (reproductive material). For instance, some donors might be very picky regarding the sexuality of the recipient couple, their socio-economic status or even personality. Of particular interest in this review are instances when donors would rather not donate for the fear that their donation's costs will outweigh the benefits.

Barriers are often indicative of the fact that non-donation is not inaction. First, barriers remind donors of their expectations of themselves and the ways their bodies should be handled. Second, non-personal barriers show that potential donors are not isolated individuals and interact with other stakeholders in the field of reproductive donation. Barriers serve as a space for negotiation of a donor's beliefs, fears and perceived consequences of their donation to themselves, the recipients and resulting offspring.

This review has shown that research on the barriers to reproductive donation needs to catch up with the research on motivation because hindrances to reproductive donation are not less important than what motivates donors to participate in reproductive donation. One aspect to focus on is the population included in research. While reproductive donation is practiced globally, there seems to be an imbalance in terms of what segment participate in research for each type of donation. For instance, there is a lack of comparison between what could be a barrier for sperm donors and what prevents non-donors from donating (Daniels et al., 2005; Frith et al., 2007). While there were reports on non-donors' attitudes towards sperm donation (Cook & Golombok, 1995; Lui & Weaver, 1996), it still remains unclear if these attitudes were actual barriers. Moreover, the research on sperm donation has been conducted predominantly in Western countries, with an emphasis on actual sperm donor population (Del Valle et al., 2008; Ernst et al., 2007), which means that some research findings should be interpreted with caution as there may be biases influencing their generalizability.

As for the practical implications of the contemporary studies described above, they demonstrate the need for clear guidelines for reproductive donors. A more nuanced evaluation of informed consent should be discussed: if informed consent is measured only in terms of signed papers this concept can have hidden exploitative practices. Donation contracts also often lack clarity regarding donors' rights and obligations at different stages of the donation process. The majority of donors face a range of psychological and ethical problems concerning the reaction of their partners/spouses, their immediate family members and friends to this situation, as well as diverse anxieties about the future of their own families, on the one hand, and the future of their potential offspring, on the other. We hope that the findings discussed in this review will allow researchers, medical practitioners, policy makers and reproductive donors alike to formulate recommendations on how to ensure more ethical practices of reproductive donation.

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OPENING THE DEBATE

The Crisis of Humanism and Emerging Post-Anthropocentric Epoch: A Personalistic View

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ABSTRACT

The present article is devoted to a discussion of the crisis of humanism and prospects for a post-anthropocentric society. The evolution of humanism is traced as a broad cultural phenomenon that affects all spheres of society. The author sets out to show that the crisis of humanism is associated not only with philosophical criticism from the perspectives of trans- and post-humanism, but also with the prospects for a society in which humanistic ideas about a person as a bodily- and mentally-autonomous being continue to predominate. In this regard, various ethical and philosophical concepts are considered that seemingly point to the inevitability of going beyond the limits of anthropocentrism. However, one particular problem that emerges is either ignored by many authors or remains to be properly resolved. This problem is associated with the prospect of losing the capability of "metamorphosis" due to the latest human technologies for universal communication (empathy and understanding) along with the destruction of the fragile global "lifeworld". The destruction of this lifeworld is fraught with alienation and the multiplication of planetary risks. The author proposes that the problem of unpredictability and the danger of manmade interventions in human nature can best be approached by considering the hypothetical posthuman in close relationship with the social whole. This philosophical "optics" can be borrowed from the philosophy of personalism, understood here as the set of philosophical attitudes that affirm the highest value of a personality as a transcending being, involved in a timeless dialogue with other personalities.

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Introduction

In this article, I address the theme of the crisis of humanism. Although this topic has been relevant since Nietzsche, today the prospect of a posthuman society (in the broad sense) is becoming quite real. Humanism has suffered a double blow: on the one hand, as anthropocentrism comes under increasing criticism; on the other hand, as a set of value attitudes that emphasise the unique and exceptional nature of man, which may be radically transformed in the not-too-distant future. In this context, corresponding ethical discourses arise, which state both the inevitability and the desirability of the post-anthropocentric era. Nevertheless, in what follows, I aim to show that discussions about a post-anthropocentric future are far from being concluded. Rather, in stating the problem, the unsatisfactory nature of the available solutions only becomes more glaringly apparent. This problem involves the imminent destruction of the fragile planetary "lifeworld" (or intersubjective space) as a result of chaotic "improvements" carried out by people to their bodies and consciousness. As I will try to show, the destruction of this intersubjective space is fraught with alienation and the multiplication of global risks. Thus, in order to address the problem of increasing unpredictability and mitigate the danger of manmade interventions in human nature, it will be necessary to consider the hypothetical posthuman in close interrelation with the social whole. The necessary "optics" for such an approach is provided by the philosophy of personalism, which can be understood in a broad sense as giving the central role to *personality*, considered as a transcending being in timeless dialogue with other personalities. The main thesis of the article is that, unlike other "post-anthropocentric" philosophical concepts, the personalistic way of understanding reality is more "sensitive" to the issues of maintaining unity, integrity – and, accordingly, the vitality of society.

Humanism: From "Dawn" to "Dusk"?

To begin with, due to ambiguities inherent in the term "humanism" stemming from its use in a variety of contexts, it will be necessary to try to create some conceptual clarity. In a broad sense, humanism can be used to describe any orientation towards human beings in terms of their happiness, material or spiritual well-being, etc. Thus,

for example, one can sometimes find such usages as “Christian humanism”. In what follows, however, the term “humanism” is understood in its narrowest sense as comprising the set of common ideological attitudes within which a human being is considered as a *free, unique, autonomous and terrestrial – or “earthly”– creature.* Humanism, therefore, proceeds: (1) from the immanence of human existence, the humanity of man; (2) from the fact that the ultimate source of higher values, forming a kind of “ethical measuring stick” is man himself, his “interests”; (3) consequently, the consideration of everything else only through the conceptual prism of a person understood only in this way (i.e. anthropocentrism). Here I would like to once again emphasise that, in what follows, humanism is not considered as an ideology in its own right and should therefore not be exclusively associated with e.g. liberalism, since it can also be present in varying philosophical or ideological trends (for example, in sometimes absurd and contradictory combinations in the ideologies of national socialism or communism). Subsequently, we will not additionally distinguish between the various varieties of humanism (e.g. Renaissance, Enlightenment, modern secular humanism, etc.). It is undoubtedly worth pausing to consider the very significant differences between the different varieties of humanism, since these involve the most diverse understandings of man in terms of his nature and essence. At the same time, we will note not so much the specifics as those elements of continuity that allow us to draw conclusions about humanism (and its crisis) as a kind of integral cultural phenomenon or at least an interconnected set of those traits in philosophical thought and everyday thinking that originated in the Renaissance era and which, albeit gradually changing, have survived to this day.

In order to show that “humanistic civilisation” has entered its sunset period, it will be first necessary to clarify what are the constituent elements forming the backbone of humanism itself. Here it will be necessary to take cognisance of the inseparability of *humanism from those processes that gradually led to the formation of bourgeois society (*some historians attribute these changes to the so-called Commercial Revolution, which took place from around the end of the 13th to the 18th century[1]). The rise of bourgeois society was accompanied by a disenchantment (Weber, 1905–1910/2002) of the world. As Solomon Stam notes, the advent of humanism (here we are talking about its earliest form during the Renaissance) became possible because at first in the most developed cities of Italy of the 14th–15th centuries, and then in other Western European countries, a capitalist system arose, an early bourgeoisie, adversarial dominant feudalism and its powerful servant – the church (see: Stam, 1984, p. 4). Humanism would not have been possible without first creating a basis for the direct growth of material well-being, providing giving hope for a joyful life together, for incremental progress – in short, the possibility of realising Heaven on Earth. Stam continues that after a millennium that saw the domination of Christian-ascetic ideology proceeding from the dogma of “original sin”, it was as if comprising an inevitable gravitational force over people, concerning the depravity and insignificance of a

[1] This was facilitated by the rapid growth of cities, the emergence of banks, joint-stock companies, the growth of money circulation, the gradual technological progress in navigation, cartography, the discovery of America, etc. (see Spufford, 1989).

person (Innocent III equated a person with a worm, even placing him lower than the worm); and it should have been, first of all, moral to rehabilitate a person, justify his high dignity, his limitless possibilities for improvement and creativity, to which Giannozzo Manetti would refer as "the greatest and immeasurable glory of our humanity" (see: Stam, 1984, p. 6).

Accordingly, in justifying the desire for "earthly" well-being, humanism as "immanent" anthropocentrism rehabilitates what was earlier considered in terms of vice: ambition, the desire to receive earthly pleasures (including "earthly" love) – even, in some cases, greed. The sacralisation of *earthly man* along with his own *earthly aspirations (*not transcendental essences) was expressed in the praise of all the "earthly" ones, from the ubiquitous eroticism and satire of the Decameron (Boccaccio, 1353/2003), the erotic love stories of the Heptameron (Marguerite of Navarre, 1558/1984), Bracciolini's earthy scatological humour (Bracciolini, 1470/1984), the vulgar jokes and relentless satire of Gargantua and Pantagruel (Rabelais, 1532–1564/2016), Erasmus' Praise of Folly to the thoroughgoing (not to say humorous) disparagement of all Christianity of Bonaventure Des Périers' (Des Périers, 1537/1965) in Cymbalum Mundi. In his Utopia, Thomas More depicts a hedonist society for whom the highest happiness is to have all material wealth in abundance and a "pleasant life":

> The Utopians therefore regard the enjoyment of life – that is, pleasure – as the natural object of all human efforts; and the natural, as they define it, is synonymous with virtuous. However, Nature also wants us to help one another to enjoy life, for the very good reason that no human being has a monopoly of her affections (More, 1516/2003, p. 92).

Moreover, the philosophy of Renaissance humanism is already characterised by an internal antinomy associated with the understanding of "liberation" from the transcendental. The labours of many early humanists are characterised by a duality of evaluations of the "immanent"[2]. It would seem that this dichotomy had already encompassed "in itself" the embryo of the subsequent long (still ongoing) philosophical discussion concerning the shortcomings of "immanent" anthropocentrism, within which framework the philosophy of posthumanism would arise. As noted by R. Chen-Morris, H. Yoran, and G. Zak,

> Optimism and doubt are different sides of the same coin as they are minted from the same presupposition of humanist discourse, namely, the undermining of the metaphysical mooring of human reality. Humanist discourse rejects – usually implicitly – the fundamental assumption of the Western philosophical tradition that behind phenomenal reality there is an intelligible and unchangeable substance. Instead, humanists often assume that human reality is an artifact that can be fashioned by human efforts: hence humanism's sense of liberation, creative

[2] Even in Petrarch's "contempt for the world", we see precisely the internal struggle of striving for the active affirmation of the ambitious contemporaneous "earthly man" with an ascetic worldview (Petrarch, 1343/2011).

> cultural energies, and anthropological optimism; and hence the novel historical, ethical, and political theories elaborated by the humanists. But the undermining of the traditional metaphysical order of things necessarily threatens basic beliefs and convictions and creates a sense of cultural dislocation and psychological anxiety. In the intellectual sphere, this shift gave rise to fundamental questions concerning the ultimate foundation of ethics and the legitimation of the political order. It is this ambiguity that characterises the humanist discourse and establishes it as the foundation of modernity itself (Chen-Morris, Yoran, & Zak, 2015, p. 430).

The further evolution of humanism took place mainly in the direction of an "excision" of its former theistic "birthmarks"[3]. In its mature, completed ("pure") form, humanism is precisely *secular ("exclusive") humanism*, characterised by the primacy of reason, ethics based on critical thinking – and, of course, the ideal of freedom (Kurtz, 2007).

The Crisis of Humanism: "External" or "Internal"?

The emergence of the critique of humanism may be dated to around the same period as criticism of the Christian worldview started to become a feature of the philosophical thought of the Modern era. Although the isolated "I" of the modern individual subject would give rise to a sense of strength, power, invulnerability to spirits, along with pride and dignity, at the time, it was confronted with a disenchanted world that was typically experienced as flat and empty (Taylor, 2007, p. 593). All of this not infrequently resulted in an urge to overcome the "immanent order" of modern reason, to go beyond the present dimension of a disciplined economic or reproductive activity. Charles Taylor, for example, views some manifestations of romanticism as an attempt to revolutionise the "immanent order". He writes:

> The depth and fullness of ordinary life has been articulated for us in an art which constantly seems to transgress the limits of the natural-human domain. The Romantic sense of nature, for instance, is hard to separate from images of a larger force, or a current of life sweeping through all things. These images, central for instance to Wordsworth's poetry [...] break the carefully erected boundaries of the buffered identity, which neatly divide mind from nature (Taylor, 2007, p. 701).

The Romantic search for inspiration and "depth" in the boundless forces of nature can be seen as a kind of attempt to break out of the "immanent" order.

To a certain extent, a "anti-humanistic" attitude was characterised by heroic ethics centred around aristocratic military virtues that resisted the humanistic affirmation of the highest value of human life (Taylor, 2007, p. 320). In terms of being impregnated with references to heroic ethics, Nietzsche's philosophy can also be *conditionally* referred to as anti-humanistic. Nietzsche's Superman is a being who, in standing *over* the "ordinary" man and his present being, affirms his self-over-others.

[3] Here we must emphasise the word "old", inasmuch as we are talking about medieval theology. Here it is worth noting that Christianity itself also subsequently absorbed the influence of humanism.

Nietzsche considers the lives of individuals to be below the values that the Superman creates ("creating *values* is the true right of masters" (Nietzsche, 1886/2017)). Many of Nietzsche's ideas were anticipated by Max Stirner, who contraposed humanistic "faith in man" with the egoism of *the Unique*. Stirner's interpretations of the overwhelming and exclusive "religion of humanism" turned out to be prophetic (we recall, for example, the totalitarian USSR, in which masses of people were destroyed in the name of the abstract "man" of the communist future). As Stirner writes,

> If as in the revolution, "the human being" is understood as the "good citizen", then from this concept of "the human being" come the well-known political offenses and crimes. In all this, the individual, the individual human being, is regarded as scum, and contrarily, the universal human being, "the human being", is honoured (Stirner, 1845/2017).

Nevertheless, humanism should not be considered solely as a belief in an abstract "person" (the so-called "metaphysical" humanism – see Heidegger, 1946/1978). The fact that such a faith has appeared and still exists only implies that humanism as an "immanent" anthropocentrism has become the source of various corresponding ideological trends connected with the construction of abstractions – or, as Stirner would say, "spooks". Like Nietzsche, however, Stirner can also be seen in partially humanistic terms. For both thinkers, there is no "higher" reality. There is only the "I" (Superman / The Unique), confronted both by a hostile material world and the "others". Their philosophy is imbued with love for man as a terrestrial creature, the only difference being that the humanism in question is not misanthropic, but egocentric. One can even say that this is the "purest" anthropocentrism, because the human being itself is taken here not as some kind of abstract whole, but as directly existing. Therefore, we should not be too surprised when Jean-Paul Sartre, in his famous essay "Existentialism is a Humanism", sets forth ideas that have much in common with Stirner's ideas. Here, true humanism is to be found in the freedom of choice of an "abandoned" person. Sartre writes:

> This is humanism because we remind man that there is no legislator but himself; that he himself, thus abandoned, must decide for himself; also, because we show that it is not by turning back upon himself, but always by seeking, beyond himself, an aim which is one of liberation or of some particular realisation, that man can realise himself as truly human (Sartre, 1956/1989).

Nevertheless, humanism gradually "accumulated" contradictions. In the first place, the internal contradiction of humanism inherited from the Renaissance, consisting in an ambiguous combination of the "costs" and "benefits" of rejecting the transcendental, never disappeared. Therefore, strictly speaking, humanism has never been able to achieve absolute dominance or completely push out the transcendent from social life – which today, although in a somewhat individualised form, has maintained its position in the search for religious meaning (Taylor, 2007). Secondly, the "immanent order" of modern societies accumulated its own set of contradictions. Belief in reason, freedom

and human dignity did not end up saving humanity from destructive wars, exploitation, violence and injustice. Serious damage to humanism was inflicted by Sigmund Freud with his criticism of man as a rational autonomous being (see, e.g., Freud, 1927/1949). In the end, this accumulation of contradictions led to serious philosophical criticism of the "predominating" position of humanism. Posthumanism thus emerges as a kind of development and deepening of postmodernism (the term "posthumanism" in the modern sense appears in 1977 (Hassan, 1977)[4]. The philosophy of posthumanism is gradually being formed and developed in the field of literary criticism (Hayles, 1999), as well as in philosophical studies on the deconstruction of "the human". Today, it is widely represented in feminist discourses (Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, Karen Barad, Stacy Alaimo, F. Ferrando [Alaimo, 2016; Barad, 2003; Braidotti, 2013; Ferrando, 2019; Haraway, 1991] and others).

In general, posthumanism is characterised by a scepticism towards any idealisation of human subjectivity. Thus, the idea of the Cartesian subject was first deconstructed within the framework of the "linguistic turn", when it was shown that man comprises a location where discourses intersect, something hidden by the veil of the unconscious; that the free subject is an illusion, and that, in general, as Michel Foucault observes, "man is a recent invention". Subsequently, however, the conceptual focus has shifted somewhat, with proponents of the "new materialisms" trying to overcome the dualism of matter and culture that resisted the efforts of postmodernists. "The death of the subject" means that, in the material sense, a person is not a "centred" monad point in space. Moreover, between matter and culture there is an "intra-action" – that is, an instantaneous two-way relationship. From this perspective, a person can only be seen as part of a very complex material and cultural "context". In other words, it is not man, but matter itself that turns out to be "agential" (agential matter – "agent", acting matter). As Mónica Cano Abadía explains,

> This critical posthumanism, indebted with French antihumanism, feminist anti-universalism and anti-colonialism, tries to disconnect the definition of the human of its universalist position. The human within humanism is a "systematised standard of recognisability – of Sameness – by which all others can be assessed, regulated and allotted to a designated social location" (Cano Abadía, 2018, p. 173).

To abandon this regulatory notion of the human means to embrace a more complex and a less discriminatory vision of the subject. Thus, a posthuman vision of the subject could lead toward more respectful, anti-universalist, materialist and post-anthropocentric ways of analysing our world (Ibid.). In essence, the posthumanist position entails an abandonment of ethics based on anthropocentrism. "Posthumanism", writes Francesca Ferrando, "can be seen as a post-exclusivism: an empirical philosophy of mediation, which offers a reconciliation of existence in

[4] Foucault's Death of the Subject (Foucault, 1966/1994), Derrida's grammatology (Derrida, 1967/1977), the collapse of metanarratives in J.-F. Lyotard (Lyotard, 1979/1984), schizoanalysis by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972/1977) and many more.

its broadest significations. Posthumanism does not employ any frontal dualism or antithesis, demystifying any ontological polarisation through the postmodern practice of deconstruction" (Ferrando, 2013, p. 29).

Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that post-humanism, though dangerous, is not fatal to humanism. In the end, posthumanist criticism focuses mainly on a very specific *ideological* form of humanism. The direct association with humanism of such phenomena as colonialism, racism and male domination by some post-humanist philosophers[5] seems at least dubious. Here we are again talking about criticism of the humanistic "spooks" (or rather, constructed ideas about the abstract "human"). At the same time, it is possible to doubt the sequence of posthumanistic anti-anthropocentrism. In this form, posthumanism continues to take the form of the self-reflection of the modern "isolated self". However, ultimately, this "isolated I" cannot offer anything more than a particular recognition of "myself" that emerges from the process (assembly/relational entity, etc.) consisting in the general cosmic order of things. Thus, although a different "spook" is being constructed, a different idea of the abstract "man", it is already striving for a peaceful life-coexistence within the framework of an infinite variety of different forms of subjectivity, as well as "reconciliation" with "matter" itself (for example, planet Earth and biological processes occurring on it). Here it becomes apparent that we are talking about a new humanistic "spook". However, if previously the criterion of non-human could be applied to one who did not meet European norms of rationality/subjectivity, today a non-human becomes one who does not agree with the "new" values of tolerance, multiculturalism, etc., towards which posthumanism is ostensibly oriented. While this may no longer be aggressive anthropocentrism (although it is necessary to consider *in relation to whom* this aggression is considered), from the very fact that a "person" recognises his responsibility for aggression or violence against any *other* and from free choice in favour of moving to the "ontological equality" of various forms of being, it is still possible to make out the outlines of anthropocentrism. Rather, it consists in an act of self-reflection, a kind of "goodwill", but not a consistent and direct departure from the limits of humanism (in fact, in some cases there are no intentions to build any kind of neo-humanism (Braidotti, 2019, p. xiii)[6].

[5] R. Braidotti: "The human is a normative convention, which does not make it inherently negative, just highly regulatory and hence instrumental to practices of exclusion and discrimination. The human norm stands for normality, normalcy and normativity. It functions by transposing a specific mode of being human into a generalised standard, which acquires transcendent values as the human: from male to masculine and onto human as the universalised format of humanity. This standard is posited as categorically and qualitatively distinct from the sexualised, racialised, naturalised others and also in opposition to the technological artefact. The human is a historical construct that became a social convention about 'human nature'" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 26).

[6] Consistent posthumanism would completely deny the anthropocentric view. This would mean, for example, the struggle for recognition of the "right" of SARS-Cov-2 and all other bacteria and viruses to equal existence as forms of vitality/materiality/agency and so on. It would also imply the denial ("deconstruction") of all elementary "human" categories of thinking (like "tolerance", the desire for equality, the maintenance of life, etc.). To consistently avoid anthropocentrism, posthumanists should author their writings on the "behalf" of assemblies/relationalities, avoiding all human "proper names" that imply centring on a particular person. However, it turns out to be based on the same anthropocentrism, but with a conscientious (often hypocritical) overlay expressing concern for non-human others.

Far more dangerous to humanism is humanism itself, with the real threat consisting not in "external" criticism, but rather in terms of an "internal" transformation into something hostile to it. And here it is necessary to look not so much at the various ethical positions, not at the sphere of philosophical discussions, but at humanism as a cultural *fact of social life*, as an "immanent" anthropocentrism permeating the consciousness of a modern person. This "immanent" anthropocentrism implies the consideration of man as one of the "objects" of the material world that can undergo a radical transformation. Technological development itself warrants the relatively rapid disappearance of the human, i.e. the very species *Homo Sapiens*. A number of philosophers and researchers argue that sooner or later technologies will allow the creation of superhumans (immortals with "improved" brains and physical abilities), that people will change genes, integrate into the technological environment (i.e. become cyborgs) – and that artificial intelligence technologies will develop giving rise to superconsciousness or super-beings endowed with such a consciousness (or there will be a union of all beings into one super-being, etc.). Here we are talking about the philosophy of transhumanism as espoused by Julian Huxley (Huxley, 1958), Robert Ettinger (Ettinger, 1972), F. M. Esfandiary (Esfandiary, 1989), Nick Bostrom (Bostrom, 2016), Ray Kurzweil (Kurzweil, 2005), and many others. Transhumanist philosophers emphasise the *inevitability* of overcoming humanity's limitations by means of technology. "Backward" humans will continue to occupy a place either in some kind of zoo reservation or on the fringes of the future civilisation, while the initiative passes to a new race (or races) of intelligent artificially-derived superhuman humanoids (or completely artificial robotic creatures). At the same time as adhering to liberal or libertarian beliefs that advocate the freedom of everyone to control their bodies, most transhumanist authors somewhat paradoxically assert the futility of attempts to prevent the appearance of the transhuman[7].

However, the prospect of a radical technological transformation of human nature does not in itself imply a crisis of humanism. After all, as has been repeatedly noted by various theorists (see Ferrando, 2019), transhumanist discourses remain primarily anthropocentric in their basic orientation. A genuine crisis of humanism is rather associated with those *dangers* that logically arise from the attempts of human beings to intervene in their own biological natures. This perspective has spawned a whole branch of ethical debate – for example, as seen in polemics between bio-conservatives and techno-liberals (see Bailey, 2005; Fukuyama, 2003; Habermas, 2003, etc.). At the same time, it should be emphasised that the prospect of a radical transformation of human nature is not something that has been "invented" by ideologists or ethics. Rather, it is the reality of a *society* in which the principles of "immanent" anthropocentrism come to prevail. In such a society, the introduction of technologies for changing the nature of man is indeed *inevitable*. In a disconnected and alienated world, in which there is no single organising and controlling centre (after all, the "highest value" of

[7] As clarified by Y. N. Harari, "This will not happen in a day, or a year. Indeed, it is already happening right now, through innumerable mundane actions. Every day millions of people decide to grant their smartphone a bit more control over their lives or try a new and more effective antidepressant drug. In pursuit of health, happiness and power, humans will gradually change first one of their features and then another, and another, until they will no longer be human" (Harari, 2017, p. 60).

bourgeois society continues to be a certain "isolated" entity, considered in terms of its essential *separateness*), it is impossible to completely ban certain experiments aimed at the transformation of the human body and consciousness. Even if such bans were to be applied in some countries, there would still continue to be numerous "dead zones" that do not fall under the purview of ethical regulation.

What dangers are we talking about here? In most cases, we are talking about potentially unpredictable health risks for those whose bodies will be "improved", be it genetic engineering (using CRISPR genome editing mechanisms, etc.) or cyborgisation (implantation of mind-changing chips in the brain, etc.). There are also risks associated with the insecurity of human nature transformation technologies themselves (for example, scenarios of uncontrolled self-replication of nanorobots – the so-called "grey goo"). Finally, we can mention potential "social" risks: e.g. unequal access to human improvement technologies, which may result in a further increase in social inequality.

Nevertheless, I consider that these are not the principal problems associated with technologies for changing the nature of a human being. Much more serious, yet rarely-considered despite being the potential source of an infinite number of additional misfortunes, is the very *real prospect of the destruction of human "lifeworld" as a result of an infinite number of "modifications" that make the achievement of global unity unrealistic*: the destruction of the "organic" basis for an empathic commonality of experience due to prevailing practices that radically alter the body and mind. Such a destruction of the "community of experience" is fraught with alienation, the disintegration of humanity into "(post-)humanity" lacking mutual comprehension and the total chaos of untrammelled technological progress. All this can lead to the destruction of the ability to reach consensus, which is fraught with the most adverse consequences imaginable. Therefore, *what is important concerns not so much how we look at various technologies today, but whether we will be able to enter into any constructive dialogue* about them in the future?

We shall not assert that this problem has been completely ignored in modern discourses concerning technologies for changing the nature of man. However, the available responses are not altogether convincing. In briefly considering them, we will also try to outline one of the possible approaches to solving this problem, which can be formulated based on the philosophical optics of personalism.

The End of Dialogue?

From a personalistic perspective, the main problem facing "changing" humanity today can be seen to consist in the "disappearance" of *dialogue* (as a moment of intersubjective unity). There is no philosophical consensus about what constitutes the *essence* of a person: despite many scientific and technological advances, we still do not *know* what a human being is. However, it is difficult to argue with the proposition that all representatives of the species *Homo Sapiens* have something in common. No matter how cultures, languages, social idealities, etc. may vary, there is something that allows all people to at least partially understand the experience of other people,

even those who lived in previous times. Nearly everyone is able to admire the heroic exploits of the characters of the *Iliad* or appreciate the rousing signification of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Although this experience can be perceived by us in a "distorted" sense, i.e. not in the same way it would be perceived by our contemporaries, nevertheless, it still will not be something completely alien for us or inaccessible to our *understanding*. At the genetic level, changes taking place in a human being over thousands of years have been insignificant; therefore, a certain set of common biological processes preserved in the human body and brain still determine repetitive patterns of behaviour conferring the capability of empathic experience (for example, the activity of mirror neurons).

Needless to say, today we live in a world of alienation, full of injustice, cruelty and indifference. Nevertheless, remaining common "species" traits inspire the hope that someday it will be possible to arrive at a more solidary state (the hope for a post-capitalist society, in which the alienating principle of the pursuit of profit is replaced by the principle of solidarity on a global scale is still very much alive (see, e.g., Mason, 2017; Srnicek & Williams, 2015, etc.)). The main obstacle to this is, as already noted, that technologies used to change human nature can destroy that *generality*, which supports – however tenuous and barely noticeable – a unity between people (what can be referred to as a "universal human identity"). How do the proponents of various ethical and philosophical movements respond to this challenge?

As we have already seen, the crisis of humanism is experienced not so much in ideological terms as at a social level. Therefore, it becomes necessary to focus not on the ideological component of humanism *per se*, but rather at how it affects society (or reflects this structure) and what risks connected with further technological development can be mitigated or obviated by this social structure. Since humanism is "genetically" associated with the bourgeois economy (Gorfunkel, 2017), the modern capitalist world-system (see, e.g., Wallerstein, 2004) – along with its inherently competitive struggle and individualism – is also largely a product of humanism (although, of course, we are talking here about an interdependent relationship, expressed in Marxist terms concerning the dialectic of the "basis" and "superstructure"). Along with "improvements" connected with increasing individualisation, such social conditions are likely to lead to an increasing descent into chaos. Thus, it follows from humanism and the forms of transhumanism ensuing from it that people should have *the freedom to change their own organism*. As Gilbert Hottois notes, the vast majority of transhumanists are agnostics or atheists, secularists and free-thinkers. The values and intentions they proclaim are close to modern secular humanism (see Hottois, 2014, p. 48). Liberal and libertarian transhumanists assert that, if an "earthly man", on the basis of his own "earthly" moral principles or preferences, receives technological capabilities allowing him to cease to be a representative of the species *Homo Sapiens*, then such is his choice, which should only be supported. Moreover, all liberal and libertarian transhumanists do is to take this same "earthly man" and unfold the old anthropocentric ethics of the "supremacy of a higher being" over the rest of the world in a new way. Hence, the main problem, for this is the direct path to a chaotic collapse of the processes of transformation of human nature, leading to the destruction of what

can be conditionally designated as the "lifeworld"[8]. As Spanish scholars Armesilla Conde and Santiago Javier point out, transhumanism will give rise to a minority of creatures for an indefinitely long time, economically and politically influential, proud of their way of life, separated from the rest of humanity that experiences less improvement, which will be developed only to maintain the appropriation of capitalist property, of the capitalist division of labour, of capital as the primary element of industrial relationship (see Conde & Javier, 2018, p. 66)[9].

Since the individualised and atomised society is already characterised by a mass of contradictions, the ultimate diversification of human corporeality will only deepen these contradictions, destroying the already fragile organic "props" of universal solidarity.

Of course, not all forms of transhumanism are blind to issues connected with maintaining the integrity of the social organism. In this connection, so-called *democratic* (social democratic?) transhumanism deserves special attention. For example, James Hughes focuses on problems related to the provision of equal access to "human improvement" technologies, as well as on issues of reaching consensus on the control of technological risks associated with the use of these technologies. However, the main thrust of Hughes's "social" discourse emphasises the exclusive right of people to something he refers to as "bodily sovereignty". Hughes writes:

> We not only need to radicalise our understanding of citizens, the bearers of rights, but also of the rights we have to control our bodies and minds, and the structures we need to make those freedoms real. The right to control our bodies and minds should include the right of sane adults to change and enhance their own minds and bodies, to own our own genetic code, to take recreational drugs, to control our own deaths, and to have ourselves frozen. Procreative liberty, an extension of the right to control our body and life, should include the right to use germinal choice technologies to ensure the best possible life for our children. Strong democratic government is required not only to protect these rights, but to ensure that the technologies are tested for safety so that consumers understand their risks and benefits. We also need strong social democracies to ensure all citizens have access to these options, not just the affluent (Hughes, 2002; see also Hughes, 2004).

[8] The understanding of "lifeworld" here is close to that expressed in the work of Jurgen Habermas. According to Habermas, "the lifeworld is, so to speak, the transcendental site where speaker and hearer meet, where they can reciprocally raise claims that their utterances fit the world (objective, social, or subjective), and where they can criticise and confirm those validity claims, settle their disagreements, and arrive at agreements. In a sentence: participants cannot assume *in actu* the same distance in relation to language and culture as in relation to the totality of facts, norms, or experiences concerning which mutual understanding is possible" (Habermas, 1987, p. 126).

[9] Accordingly, "liberal-libertarian" transhumanism turns the old idea of perfecting man inside out, reducing him to a purely technological problem. As Nicolas le Dévédec remarks, "in its journey from the Enlightenment to transhumanism, the notion of perfectibility has been particularly distorted. Though it refers to a political project and an improvement of human beings in and by society in the Enlightenment (proposed in particular by Jean-Jacques Rousseau), it is simplified in transhumanist rhetoric to the technoscientific adaptation of the human being and of life itself. For transhumanism, politically changing the world is no longer the question" (le Dévédec, 2018, p. 3).

Admittedly, a "democratic" approach may help to mitigate "direct" risks, but it will not solve the problem of maintaining a "communicative whole". Sooner or later, "improved" (post-)people will lose their ability to sympathise with everyone else and, as a consequence, will cease to share a common human identity (I would label such a hypothetical situation with the term "*great misunderstanding*").

Here we can assume that the problem consists in the "immanent" order of modernity. At the same time, any appeal to the transcendental is likely to lead to even greater risks of destruction of the already tenuous layer of the universal human "lifeworld". There have been many recent attempts to include the idea of technological "improvement" of a person in various religious discourses (see, e.g., Cole-Turner, 2008; Donaldson & Cole-Turner, 2018; Maher & Mercer, 2009; Maher & Mercer, 2014, and other). In other words, although an appeal to the transcendent can function as a source of basic values and life guidelines (for example, God the Father as something that binds all that exists into a single whole, etc.), a transcendental *a priori* cannot form the basis of social unity – at least, not on a global scale. However, in adhering to the positions of humanistic naturalism, we can at least – as Francis Fukuyama does – appeal to "natural equality" (Fukuyama, 2003).

As we already noted, human nature provides the vast majority of people with a basic set of behaviour patterns, including the universal capacity for empathy. Since, by its very nature, what is transcendent is fundamentally unknowable, anyone may have their own ideas about it – or, for that matter, may choose not to acknowledge its existence in any way. As history clearly shows, all attempts to universalise the transcendent have led to aggression, wars, extremism, the destruction of trusting relationships, etc. When it comes to factors of estrangement, it is clear that religious disputes can only "add fuel to the fire". However, we can say that mainstream religious worldviews predominating in contemporary society have either been supplanted by "immanent" humanism and have, as a consequence, become highly individualised (Taylor, 2007).

From here, it is possible to progress to a "posthumanistic" position, in which the emphasis is shifted from the person to agency *per se* and whose claims to universality repudiate all hierarchical forms of organisation. If all forms of being are fundamentally equal, then social unity is feasible precisely in such a denial of all totality. Thus, the idea of de-universalisation (deconstruction) can itself become universal and unifying. If there is no longer such a thing as a universal Truth, then there remains only the universal *enjoyment of diversity and the freedom to play with various significations*. Here we see something akin to the Christian idea of unconditional love. The postmodern philosopher Gianni Vattimo aptly notes that in the era of the collapse of metanarratives, the Christian doctrine of universal love experiences a second birth along with the decline of metaphysics as a systematic philosophy (or the possibility of such philosophies), capable of offering a coherent, unified, strictly justified picture of the unchanging structures of being, having itself exhausted the possibility of a philosophical refutation of the existence of God (see Vattimo, 2007, p. 22).

This also means that it is possible to take another look at the idea of Christian love through a distinctive kind of "weakening of being". Every life, writes Vattimo, is

nothing but a perfect enjoyment of the meanings and spiritual forms produced by the history of mankind and constituting the "kingdom of immortality" (see Vattimo, 2007, p. 65). Under the pretext of combatting humanistic myths and affirming true diversity, posthumanism actually leads to a blurring (as it were, "comparing") of differences (as, for example, occurs in the desire to blur gender differences in the future cyborg society imagined by Donna Haraway (Haraway, 1985)). As the posthumanist philosopher Francesca Ferrando writes, "posthumanism challenges biocentrism, sentiocentrism, vitalism, and the concept of life itself, blurring the boundaries between the animate and the inanimate, in a quantum approach to the physics of existence" (Ferrando, 2019, p. 5). Within this approach, the human "dissolves" into matter, breaking up into atoms ("waves", "assemblies", "relativities", "vibrations") to reach a state in which everything is intertwined with everything else. Although this might sound attractive in theory, it is not at all clear how it can be put into practice. Here posthumanistic discourses can be seen to possess a certain critical energy, which nevertheless starts to flag whenever its creative potential is called into question. In this case, there is nothing with which to replace humanism, due to the tendency of posthumanism to establish a "negative" agenda (i.e. to deny some points of mastery and dominance), while little attention is paid to maintaining social unity. Posthumanistic discourses can thus be seen as focusing on *distancing*[10] rather than on unity and transformation. Finally, many controversial contemporary social phenomena can be described in terms of a movement toward posthumanism: the erasing of cultural differences, the emergence of human-gadget, human-product and product-human blends, the hybridisation of person and machine, as well as the prospect of disposing of people considered "superfluous" to the contemporaneous economy into the virtual space (Fishman & Davydov, 2015). In the *Manifesto of Metahumanism* (metahumanism compromises a movement within which a philosophical synthesis of posthumanism and transhumanism is attempted), authored by Jaime Del Val and Stefan Lorenz Sorgner, we find the following:

> It deepens the view of the body as field of relational forces in motion and of reality as immanent realised process of becoming which does not necessarily end up in defined forms or identities, but may unfold into endless amorphogenesis. Monsters are promising strategies for performing this development away from humanism (Del Val & Sorgner, 2011).

However, it is hard to understand how "monsters" resulting from unrestrained and chaotic self-transformations can even share common experience or emotions, let alone agree on socially significant problems having a global scope.

Thus, as we have discussed, the crisis of humanism is not *in the first place* an ideological crisis. Rather, it is a crisis of "immanent" anthropocentrism as a broad

[10] R. Braidotti: "We have to realise that, contrary to the Marxist-Leninist idea of a global revolution, the changes that we can achieve are collective, but step by step, by distancing ourselves. Look at how feminism has shown us how to distance ourselves from male violence. Or how anti-racism has shown us how to distance ourselves from white supremacism. The point is to distance ourselves. It is like an exercise in detoxification. We have to detoxify our bad habits, in our way of consuming, of thinking, and of relating with others" (Andrés, 2019).

cultural phenomenon, serving to legitimise, in particular, the modern capitalist world-system. The essence of this crisis lies in the destructive potential of the activities of the "immanent man". Moreover, the main problem here is not so much that the modern order is capable of creating global problems that could potentially lead to the destruction of life on Earth, but rather that the "immanent man", as a result of interventions in his body and consciousness, risks breaking the last strings that connect him with other people in common *humanity*. In the latter case, the mechanisms of empathy and collective reflexivity are destroyed, which is a direct path to an ultra-alienated society. In order to solve this problem to overcome such a crisis, a shift in ethical optics is necessary. Accordingly, the focus of our consideration should shift from the human as "being present" (*Dasein*) to *personality forming an organic part of the social organism*. Such optics can be provided by the philosophy of personalism.

A Personalistic Perspective?

We should start by noting that the term "personalism" has many possible meanings. We can take "personalism" to refer to that idealistic philosophy, which asserts that the real is the personal. Within the framework of this approach, it is assumed that personality is substantial, i.e., comprising the primary form of being. However, here personality is not only substantial, but forms the primary category, within which any explanation of reality may be proposed on the basis of personal "attributes": consciousness, thinking, self-awareness, individuality, goal-setting, progress towards an established goal, modes of development, etc. Accordingly, it is asserted that God, comprising *personality per se*, is real. This understanding is most closely related to Christian tradition, being rooted in the doctrine of the Trinity. According to Niels Gregersen, the doctrine of the Trinity was truly revolutionary in relation to pre-Christian thought due to the fact that the very existence of God began to be seen as consisting in acts of communication. Divine personalities (*prosopa* = *hypostaseis*) are defined as existing in relationships, in communication. Thus, the Father is the Father only in relation to the Son, the Son is the Son only in relation to the Father, the Spirit is the Spirit only in relation to the Father from whom it emanates. It is only in the mutual surrender and perichoresis of divine personalities that God exists as God (see Gregersen, 2013, p. 11).

Modern forms of personalism arose as a kind of reaction to the depersonalising elements in the rationalism of the Enlightenment, including pantheism, Hegelian absolute idealism, individualism, as well as political collectivism informed by materialistic, psychological and evolutionary determinism.

Although personalism is very closely associated with Christian theology, there are also aspects of personalism that not only go beyond the Christian philosophical picture of the world, but also beyond religion itself. Personalism affirms the supreme reality and value of personality, i.e. both divine superpersonality and a human person in dialogue with it (in the image and likeness of God). The personalistic approach emphasises the significance, uniqueness and integrity of personality, as well as its fundamentally relational (dialogic) or social dimension (Williams & Bengtsson, 2018).

Since we cannot consider all possible personalistic philosophical currents here (not least on account of their diversity and abundance), instead we will try to state the position that seems most relevant to the context of philosophical discussions about technologies for changing the nature of man. The personalism to which we now turn is not represented by a specific philosophical school or movement. Rather, it consists in an attitude, a way of thinking that can be present in certain people, regardless of whether they consider themselves to be personalist philosophers or not. Moreover, it makes no difference whether a particular discourse is defined as "religious" or not. Here we will agree with Jean Lacroix, according to whom personalism is not a philosophy in the proper sense of the word. Or, seen another way, it is possible that not one, but several philosophical concepts of personalism exist, feeding on the same inspiration, but deriving from it various, largely dissimilar teachings: there are, for example, atheistic and Christian concepts of personalism, not to mention many others (see Lacroix, 2004, pp. 15–16). Accordingly, we refer here to personalism as consisting in a particular view of the world, in which the focus is on the being of *personality as an organic part of the social whole* (here we must separately emphasise the word "*organic*" – see below).

At this point, we will pause to make a necessary distinction, since the term "personality" has its own special meaning in the personalistic "tradition". This does not refer to the same thing as each and every individual or individuality. In the context of personalism, personality exceeds the set of "social qualities" of an individual human being. The philosophers Nikolay Berdyaev (Berdyaev, 2010; 2018), E. Mounier (Mounier, 1999), Jean Lacroix (Lacroix, 2004), and many others understood personality as an ecclesial being constituted as such by mode of existence and independence of being; this existence is supported through the adoption of a hierarchy of freely applicable and internally experienced values, through responsible inclusion in activity and a constant process of conversion; thus, it carries out its activities in freedom and, moreover, develops its vocation in all its originality through creative acts (see Mounier, 1999, p. 301).

In other words, a personality is a *spiritual being involved in creative activity* who actively *asserts him- or herself through an intersubjective individuality*. Here it is necessary to once again emphasise that personalism implies a fundamental distinction between the terms "personality" and "individual" or "individuality". This difference could not be more perfectly expressed by Nikolay Berdyaev. According to him, the concept of personality should not be confused with the concept of the individual, as frequently occurred in the thought of the 19th and 20th centuries. Since the individual implies a naturalistic category, i.e. biological and sociological, the concept appertains to the natural world. If, from a biological point of view, an individual forms part of a genus, then from a sociological perspective it functions in terms of forming part of society. That is to say, it comprises an atom – indivisible, without internal life, anonymous. Thus, an individual cannot be said to have an existence independent of genus or society. In itself, the individual is an inherently generic and social being, only an element or part defined by its interrelationship with the whole. Personality, on the other hand, has a completely contrasting meaning, which derives from spiritual and religious categories.

Personality speaks of a person's belonging not only to the natural and social order, but also to another dimension of being, to the spiritual world. Therefore, personality invokes a higher order of being than the natural and social. We will see that it cannot be part of anything whatsoever.

Society tends to consider personality in terms of an individual subordinate, as something that it owns due to having created it. From a sociological point of view, personality indeed forms a part of society – and a very small part at that. Thus, if society comprises a big circle, personality represents a small circle inserted into it. On a sociological basis, personality lacks the ability to oppose itself to society and cannot fight for its own interests. However, from the point of view of existential philosophy, the opposite is true: society is a small part of personality, merely its social aspect; even the world is only a part of personality. It is not society nor nature that form an existential centre but personality, which cannot be reduced to object but is always an existential subject. Of course, personality realises itself through social and cosmic existence, but it can only do this due to a principle that is independent both of nature and of human society forming within it. Personality is not defined as a part in relation to any whole (by "part of the whole" here Berdyaev means precisely a mechanical, instrumental unit as part of the whole. In what follows, I will use the more appropriate term "organic part of the whole" – D.D.). Personality is itself a totality, integrating the universal in itself and refusing to be part of any generality, world or society, universal or even Divine Being. Since personality is not in any way natural, it does not belong to an objective natural hierarchy and cannot be inserted into any natural series. Rooted in the spiritual world, the existence of personality presupposes a dualism of spirit and nature, freedom and determinism, individual and general, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Caesar. The existence of human personality in the world suggests that the world is not self-sufficient, that the transcendence of the world is inevitable, its completion being found not in itself, but in God, the supermundane being. The freedom of the human personality is freedom not only in society and in the state, but also from society and from the state, determined by the fact of forming an exception to the world, an exception to nature and society, an exception to the kingdom of Caesar (see Berdyaev, 1999).

Here, we should not be confused by the appeal to the term "existential". In the sense that personalism is the philosophical attitude of a "sufferer" confronted with the abyss of its own subjective non-existence, the personalistic attitude is very close to the existentialist position. Nevertheless, the personalist philosophers *tend to avoid all individualism*. In experiencing its finiteness and mortality, as well as the emptiness of the modern "immanent order", the personalistic "personality" experiences something like "existential suffering". However, it is not by reflective "withdrawal into oneself" (as, for example, in Sartre), but by transcending *or going beyond one's own limits – i.e. by becoming an involved, social being* – that it is possible to escape from this condition. Thus, we may also consider personalism as a distinctive philosophy of acquiring the *sense of life* by means of an "active" appeal to the eternal. Such an appeal is possible either by means of *creative dialogue* with the divine superpersonality, or through *involved* being in this world. A man struggles with his finiteness and mortality, with all

"dissolving" tendencies; in so doing, he is *included* in what can be designated as *eternal*. This "inclusion" or involvement occurs without loss of individuality, as a face portrays the uniqueness of *countenance*. On the other hand, it is exactly in creative activity that true individuality can be exercised, which receives its meaningful content in *dialogical relationship with others*. Personalism, therefore, invokes the space of *intersubjectivity*. At the same time, we understand intersubjectivity specifically in terms of *sincere understanding of the other, i.e. compassion or "sympathy" for his or her experience*. Here, personality is subjectivity (*including inherent subjectivity*), *which transcends the biological matter of its medium, in the intersubjective space of culture*.

It may be objected that, if considering personalism as a certain tendency or the aggregate of some characteristic premises of thinking, then the features of personalism can be found in many philosophical trends. Thus, a personalistic way of thinking (although often not in its entirety!) can be seen in Teilhard de Chardin's concept of the noosphere (the noospheric planetary unity of mankind here functioning as an analogue of the personalistic "superpersonality") (Teilhard de Chardin, 1955/2008), the personalistic *spirit* of Russian religious philosophy (from Vladimir Soloviev and Fedor Dostoevsky to Aleksei Losev [see Kolesnichenko, 2018]), the philosophy of cosmism of Nikolai Fedorov, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, Vladimir Vernadsky and others, as well as the communist *god-building* project of Anatoly Lunacharsky (Lunacharsky, 1925), and others.

Nevertheless, special attention should also be paid to Marxism, which in many of its variations is very close to the personalist worldview (for example, some works of Freudo-Marxist Erich Fromm are conceptually very similar to the works of the personalist philosopher Emmanuel Mounier (see, e.g., Fromm, 1955/1990, 2013). The proximity of personalism and Marxism has been repeatedly noted by the classic personalist writers themselves (see Lacroix, 2004, pp. 290–535). Such proximity should not be surprising, since in both philosophical traditions *people are no longer considered as isolated beings, but rather as located between the immediate bodily, biological being and the social organism*. There can be no such thing as an isolated "personality", any more than personality can be located in the faceless, mechanical part of the collective whole. Karl Marx himself showed a particular sensitivity to this question, describing man as an "ensemble of social relations" (Marx, 1969). In his exploration of Marx' philosophical and anthropological ideas, Pyotr N. Kondrashov cites the following features of the author's personalistic understanding of man: a person is both originally built into the object-external world (nature, culture, society, the world of symbols, social consciousness) as well as being in a dialectical relationship with it, forming and revealing itself in the intersubjectivity of social relations, experiencing its being-in-the-world as a suffering person in the form of partial, existential relations-to-the-world and to-oneself (see Kondrashov, 2019, pp. 154–165). Therefore, for Marx, more important than all other questions was the achievement of a social condition that would eliminate *alienation* between people. The movement towards such a state could also be described as *humanism* (i.e. "genuine", "real" humanism, etc.). However, from the point of view of semantics, it would be preferable to consider this in terms of *personalism*, since it is assumed

that there can be no autonomous, free, truly "personal" being as long as the social organism is loaded with contradictions. If, strictly speaking, there is no dialogue (but there is monological "imposition", "violence", "coercion", "deception", "repression", "insincerity", etc.); if there is an alienation of individual public "bodies" (or even "cells") with respect to the organic whole, then the human "I" is not free (i.e. it does not seem to belong to itself), because it is (and is being formed!) in the discursive chaos of hostile forces. This point should be emphasised due to its relevance in the context of attempts to change human nature: "personality", according to this approach, cannot have any kind of independent existence or be confined to an isolated *natural* container such as the individual human brain. Thus, personality consists in a set of relationships converging in a certain *relatively* autonomous whole. This statement recognises the posthumanistic approach discussed above. However, for Marx, along with many other personalist philosophers, a person cannot be liberated from the "fetters" that confuse and oppress him unless or until the social organism itself is freed from its internal contradictions as an intersubjective *whole*[11].

In this sense, Marxism is essentially personalistic. However, here we by no means assert that Marxism is the same thing as personalism. Although we have seen that personalistic intuitions are present in many Marxist schools, we should also consider some elements of Marxism that would appear to be hostile to personalism. For example, personalistic philosophers have repeatedly criticised depersonalising interpretations of Marx's philosophy, which reduce the being of personality to class categories in a kind of "tilt" towards collectivism (Berdyaev, 1999). It would also seem that historical relativism and anthropological praxis involving essentialist doctrines concerning humanity (see Kondrashov, 2019, pp. 91–153) are somewhat contrary to the personalistic way of thinking. In reducing the essence of humanity to a revolutionary change in the person and his/her environment, a consideration of subjectivity is constrained to the context of the present set of social relations, thus denying the essential personalistic idea of eternal dialogue. In this case, a public organism (the "totality" of social relations) is considered only in the context of a certain temporal discreteness, within which elements of the "new" are extrinsic (alien) to the elements of the "old". In this regard, a real dialogue of personalities (and, therefore, a truly inalienable personal being) becomes impossible as a consequence of the denial of intersubjective continuity. Here we will draw attention once again to the

[11] Karl Marx: "Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have, in two ways, affirmed himself, and the other person. (1) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and, therefore, enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also, when looking at the object, I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses, and, hence, a power beyond all doubt. (2) In your enjoyment, or use, of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature. (3) I would have been for you the mediator between you and the species, and therefore would become recognised and felt by you yourself as a completion of your own essential nature and as a necessary part of yourself, and consequently would know myself to be confirmed both in your thought and your love. (4) In the individual expression of my life I would have directly created your expression of your life, and therefore in my individual activity I would have directly confirmed and realised my true nature, my human nature, my communal nature. Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature." (Marx, 1966, pp. 126–127).

"existential" component of personalism: an inalienable personality can only find life to be meaningful through engagement in eternal or *timeless* dialogue. In this context, a personalist is any person who strives to ensure that his or her activity involves some kind of *meaning*, comprising a kind of *being for the sake* of descendants. Accordingly, if the intersubjective space of culture is subjected to rupture, then any meaning appertaining to the personal existence of living people is lost. For this reason, personalism implies a rather negative attitude towards the transhumanistic rhetoric of a "rupture" leading to the transition to a new, "postsingularity" level of consciousness (for example, Ray Kurzweil's computron (Kurzweil, 2012)). According to personalist ethics, any creation of "monsters" with which it is impossible engage in sincere dialogue starts to look something like collective suicide. Even if the "monsters" themselves do not pose an immediate danger, this scenario would rupture the relatively fragile strands that bind humanity into a single intersubjective whole.

It should have already have become clear that personalistic optics implies an appeal to social holism – here it is emphasised once again that we refer to an "organic", not a mechanical (!) whole. Relatively speaking, the crisis of humanism pertains to the *humanistic society* in which the individual and his or her "earthly being" forms the "centre" of the universe (and worldview). Conversely, a personalistic society (as a normative ideal) is first and foremost one comprised of those who strive to become part of a bigger picture, taken in the timeless (absorbed into eternity) dimension of the intersubjective space of culture (history, memory, etc.). This is neither consumerism nor hedonism, neither thrillseeker nor everyman, but rather encompasses those who go beyond the narrow framework of material existence, striving *for an active creative statement in the world*. However, such an ideal can only be constructive if the person is striving for *mutual love and the unity of the intersubjective space itself*. One of the most significant axiological shortcomings of both post- and transhumanism is their focus on the destruction of all intersubjective unity. Posthumanism, as we have seen, entails risks leading to value chaos, while transhumanism leads to chaotic technological transformations of the human species, which can lead to the complete disappearance of that which serves as the basis for possible *commonality of experience*, as well as affection and feelings. Post- and trans-humanism can thus be seen as two essentially different paths to the destruction of a common mental space, to total alienation and the *destruction of commonality*. Conversely, the ideal of personalism implies that the larger (wider, deeper, longer up to eternity) the intersubjective space, the stronger the unity of the person with the entire world (for example, through creativity aimed at the benefit of all of Humanity).

We will try to concretise the foregoing regarding its prospects for technological transformations of human nature.

1. First of all, it is worth noting that the personalist perspective – at least in the version that we are considering here – implies its own "ethical perspective", in which the focus is placed not on the individual, but on the personality forming an organic part of the social whole (here, the social whole should be understood as the *human social whole whose formation takes place on a planetary scale*). Thus, it is meaningless to consider ethical problems associated with trying to change human

nature if the ethical problems of a changing society are ignored. This position finds agreement with Habermas' position that irreversible interventions in the genes of unborn children should not be allowed, since this implies a "predetermination from the outside" (Habermas, 2003) involving a kind of "ontological lack of freedom". However, no less unfree is the one whose "I" is formed in a monological (alienated) framework of social relations. It should be borne in mind that the biological "substrate" of innate physicality serves as a kind of "barrier" that protects against manipulative external interventions in subjectivity (for example, while advertising can encourage a person to buy sparkling water, it does not in itself generate thirst). However, the technological "erosion" of this biological "barrier" has the potential to make people more vulnerable to such "transforming" power. Here, it is irrelevant if the changes are reversible or not, or whether they are the subject of formal consent. In an alienated world, overcoming such "natural" boundaries is the path to absolutely asymmetric relationships (for example, when a person ceases to understand whether he or she really is the person as whom he or she identifies or whether he or she (or some other gender identification) has been completely "constructed" by someone else).

2. Accordingly, truly symmetrical, dialogical relations are possible only if the main social contradictions are "resolved": socio-economic inequality on a global scale, the division of humanity into hostile nations, poverty and indigence, aggression and exploitation, etc. Only in such a case is it possible to predict the advent of personal freedom. This is also a kind of "posthumanistic" perspective, since the "authenticity" of a person's personality is then considered in terms of the *transparency of the communicative space*. A personality does not belong to itself until it participates on an equal footing in a collective, (self-)identification as an equally-valued and equally-participating member of a social organism (there is no paradox here since "immersion" in a social whole and dependency on it are inevitable: the only question is whether this "whole" is hostile or friendly, whether it is partly "mine" too). Therefore, the ethical priority in this case is expressed in the desire for at least an approximate achievement of a "disengaged" state, i.e. the struggle for a post-capitalist future (see, e.g., Davydov, 2020), direct e-democracy (see, e.g., Fuller, 2015), world citizenship[12], etc., and only then – balanced and gradual technological interventions in the human body. Such a perspective is certainly no more utopian than transhumanistic anticipations of technological singularity, universal cyborgisation, or, say, the construction of the above-mentioned computron.

3. The main danger associated with technologies for changing human nature is associated with the potential chaos of bodily and mental transformations, which can lead to the destruction of the universal human intersubjective space (lifeworld). The only obvious means by which this can be countered consists in collective reflexivity. At the same time, it is clear that simple democratic declarations or appeals to the existing mechanisms of nation states or international organisations will not be sufficient. What is needed is not more formal prohibitions or permits, but a genuine *rapprochement* of people on a global scale: a movement towards understanding and the possibility of sincerity. In this connection, the "noospheric" optics of Teilhard de

[12] World standardisation: https://www.mundialization.ca/about-hmc/history-of-mundialization/

Chardin might seem to offer the best fit. A growth in global consciousness (collective self-awareness) becomes necessary due to a constant increase in complexity of the human social organism itself. Conversely, a lack of connectivity, "centring" and "nervous" (communicational) sensitivity or coordination of the social whole can lead to a systemic inability of mankind to prevent global catastrophes. In demonstrating to what extent the human organisation is "ungathered" or "mismatched" on a global scale, the COVID-19 pandemic recalls the postmodern "body without organs": humanity is not able to recognise itself in its entirety (totality) or make timely, reflective decisions. Under such conditions, endless (and unprecedented!) interventions in the human body and consciousness are likely to lead to the destruction of what unites people into a single unified species (without "bodily" understanding, the possibility of achieving mutual understanding of the "social" becomes extremely doubtful). In addition, the technologies for changing human nature, as already noted above, are freighted with all kinds of inherent risks.

4. A personalistic perspective does not exclude the possibility of carrying out technological "improvements" to the human body. Rather, such improvements should be dialogical and transparent. In this context, we may simply remark that personalistic ethical optics is free of many of the essentialist features of anthropocentrism. A person is someone with whom I, also a person, can enter into sincere relationships, one whom I can try to understand and towards whom I can experience empathic feelings. Finally, a person is someone who is in the same dialogical and symmetrical relationship with the social whole in which I also participate. Therefore, a purely biological personality can be non-human in the "natural" sense. But if someone "drops out" or "withdraws into the shadows", losing the ability to engage in dialogue, sincerity, love, then, for the public organism, such an element may turn out to be something like a cancerous tumour, representing a mortal danger. Accordingly, the personalistic approach suggests that all kinds of transformations of the human body should flow out of social dialogue itself, collectively and excluding any intersubjective asymmetry.

5. Finally, the desire for unity of the intersubjective space of culture, affirmed by personalism, implies a special, "existential" view. The state of personalistic unity and integrity ("collectedness") is possible only within the framework of continuity. "Novelty" is to be celebrated not as something that breaks intersubjective space, but in its *enrichment or transformation* of this space. Otherwise, we are merely discussing the existence of what is *alien*. Such activities are, therefore, only meaningful to the extent that they are addressed to eternity. The person finds him- or herself not only in being present in the here and now, but also in the social whole, which goes beyond the boundaries of *the present*. Thus, personality does not exist here and now, but rather in the timeless dialogue of everyone with everyone else. Only in and through such a dialogue does personality acquire ontological status. Therefore, technological "improvements" to human beings can be directed not only to the future, but also to the past, i.e. towards an understanding of past experience including aesthetic enjoyment of what has already been. Maintaining the reflective unity of the social organism involves a *consolidation* of past and future.

Conclusion

In the foregoing, I have tried to show that the historical phenomenon of humanism (as "imminent" anthropocentrism) is in deep crisis. Moreover, this crisis is not limited to strictly ideological considerations. In essence, it is a crisis of humanistic anthropocentrism itself, which provides the impulse towards mechanisms of technological changes in the biological nature of individuals. Such "improvements" in the conditions of existing alienated social relations are likely to lead to the destruction of the universal human "lifeworld", a further increase in disunity and to general misunderstanding (up to the complete loss of the ability to empathise). In the long run, we are talking about the disintegration of a relatively unified humanity into many (at best, autonomous; at worst, mutually hostile) *humanities*. In this article, I have tried to show that many of the concepts of a post-anthropocentric future that are available today do not offer any reasonable solution to this problem. In response to this lacuna, a personalistic alternative is presented, which places personality – considered as an organic part of the global social whole – at the centre of the consideration. Here it is important to emphasise the risk that humanity may presently be approaching a situation where further centrifugal forces applied to an already atomised society (consisting of *people* considered as self-identical) threaten an "ideal storm" in terms of an outsurge of accumulated problems. Such a "storm" will quickly overwhelm a fragmented "posthumanity", which is at best incapable of mutual understanding; at worst, comprising a society of monsters. As we have seen, only a humanity unified by a timeless dialogue between personalities can hope to emerge from such a maelstrom unscathed. Nevertheless, personalism does not exclude the possibility of changing human nature. On the other hand, would not it be necessary to first address much more important problems associated with alienation and disconnection, creating an atmosphere, in which any "improvement" is fraught with "superiority" and the destruction of the "lifeworld"? Therefore, in taking a personalistic approach, people should first understand each other and the world around them, multiply sincere and warm relationships many times, and only then seriously think about "improving" the human body and consciousness.

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BOOK REVIEW

Germaine R. Halegoua (2019). *The Digital City: Media and the Social Production of Place*. New York: New York University Press.

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Techno-capitalist urban redevelopment is marked by an increased popularity of digital urban governance and various intersections between platforms and urbanity. These exacerbate the existing socio-spatial inequalities while depolitisizing dataisation and digitalization, which now are widely considered the popular ways of general advancement of city life, particularly by authorities of all levels and corporations. While research into so-called "smart" or "digital" cities has mushroomed over the two last decades there remain some considerable gaps in our understanding of the links among the tangible, physical urban spaces, and the changes that the digital age brings, namely and most elementary, that participating in city life is impossible without being plugged.

Two of the most pressing gaps form the focus of this book that seeks to elucidate: first, how citizens daily engage in the digital placemaking practices; second, diversity of ways in which various populations employ navigation technologies and media platforms. While the attempts to make sense of the growing digitization and datafication of cities are timely and much-needed, a key limitation is that these often tend to locate governance strategies and processes of data circulation almost wholly in the digital realm. Digitization, further, is often described as the top-down strategy increasingly used by the governments, municipalities and corporate players. This fails to make sense of numerous and intricate intersections of digital and physical spaces. It underestimates the material transmission of digital content in offline surroundings, as well as the digital remediation of urban places. However, since the uses of information and communication technology in the city are promoted by firms and governments, it is important to consider the tensions among citizen-oriented digital tools and "steering" of digitization by powerful urban and national players. In this vein, Halegoua critically juxtaposes the visions and practices of digital urban professionals, the authorities, and the urban residents in five chapters.

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Chapter 1 "Smart City: Strategic Placemaking and the Internet of Things" looks at the image-making processes as envisioned by the corporations and authorities in "smart-from-the-start" showcase projects in three countries, namely, Songdo International Business District in South Korea, Masdar City in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and PlanIT Valley near Porto in Portugal. United by their artificiality, these cities, the author shows, have difficulties attracting residents because they lack vibe, vibrancy, and history – traits that cities build for centuries. Strategic placemaking and imagination are reductive in a sense that citizens are understood here as "points of data collection" and community as "quantified" (p. 53).

In the next chapter, the one on digital infrastructure and urban transformation, Halegoua focuses on the controversies stemming from the ambitious project undertaken by Google corporation – Google Fiber in Kansas City. Google chose Kansas City and surroundings in 2011 as the first city to launch a citywide network of fiber cables: a cheap super-fast Internet and TV was made available. There, the corporate ideas about efficient services clashed with the values of citizens and their ways of understanding community and home. The author reflects on the contrasts between the rhetoric of "broadband optimism" and "ameliorating the digital divide" and things on the ground and claims that many efforts, which were progressively framed to be "sold" to municipal authorities did not materialize (p. 75). Joining the growing group of scholars investigating the tactics of non-use, media refusal, and opting out and drawing on an extensive fieldwork, Halegoua shows that the Kansas City residents quickly realized that it is not their sense of place and identities that Google had in mind. In other words, "Google Fiber was perceived as service that didn't imagine them as potential users in realistic and meaningful ways" (pp. 87–88).

Reaching beyond the substantial social, technical, psychological and practical issues raised by the implementation of the top-down digital projects, the book also examines anthropological and other theoretical underpinnings of the digitalized everyday practices of navigating cities in chapters 3 (on navigating space as place) and 4 (on the spatial self). Drawing on the mix of questionnaire use and interviews conducted in Madison and Lawrence, as well as the studies of spatial cognition, the author shows the changes in mental mapping of a city caused by the use of GPS and other navigation devices. If in classic Lynch's study, it is the city's legibility, that is its capacity to generate its image as a whole that is continuously emphasized, today the citizens not only are not concerned with "wholeness" but they delegated wayfinding tasks to their devices and are quite comfortable about it (p. 123). Visualizing of routes and paths affords citizens' "agency in placemaking" (p. 144).

Devices are also of great importance for broadcasting visited places that the users knowingly perform. In the strongest, in my view, chapter 4, the author traces the genealogy of the ways of registering and demonstrating one's presence in place and their importance for constructing identities and building a sense of belonging. "Geocoded self-presentation", as well as selfie-making become parts of the spatial self which is interestingly discussed in this chapter. Halegoua embeds her analysis of the connections between who urban dwellers are and places they want to be and seen in the account of the changed sense of the world, and asks a highly relevant

question: “When the world is presented as an expansively locatable series of places where a person can perpetually belong, does this alter individual or collective agency to intervene in the social production of place?” (p. 149). Lefebvre’s perspective on the production of space in the current digital context is used by the author to problematize a number of skeptical and critical assessments of the impact that the digitalization has on a sense of place.

Rather than mourning the alleged fragmentation of places caused by digital navigation, etc., she powerfully shows how the very practices of constructing the cities are changing and how productive tensions between people, technologies, subjective connective and place-related agency, and embodied practices emerge. One of the subchapters of the book, I believe, will particularly resonate with readers: there, the author talks about self-quantification as the popular strategy of place-making. The datafication of people’s bodies and practices is implemented through monitoring apps and wearable devices. The amount of attention directed at variously measuring a number of one’s steps, heartrate, distances covered, minutes spent without web surfing, etc. is indeed remarkable. Equally remarkable is enthusiasm with which people entrust their privacy and autonomy in hands of global platforms, producers of smartphones and applications like Fitbit, Samsung Health, Getupp and many, many others. Intense global tracking, processing and selling of personal data would be impossible without voluntary self-tracking and it is exactly its voluntariness that interests the author. Halegoua charts ambivalences characteristic for those “new algorithmic identities”, for instance, the reduction of a sense of surprise and strangeness, which are historically important for exploring a city (p. 176). Ambivalent is also the process of making sense of data since it is, as a rule, easier to gather data than to interpreted it and, as a result, location itself becomes context: “In the datafication of location, paradoxically, a sense of place is often the context that is both lost and sought through data collection and analysis” (p. 177).

The final chapter of the book is devoted to the uses of digital media in creative place and the author completes a sort of the circle: having started from rendering the top down approaches to placemaking facilitated by professionals, the book in the end again returns to the practices of those who professionally implement placemaking activities (p. 183). Continuing with capturing ambivalences of the urban digital era, the author admits to the vagueness of the very goals of creative placemaking (p. 185). Indeed, for starters, what exactly differentiate creative placemaking from “simple” placemaking, particularly given that in the preceding chapters of the book Halegoua impressively demonstrated richness and diversity of the everyday spatial-digital practices of lay citizens. It is natural then that creative placemaking is met with a great deal of skepticism, and the images of Trojan horse covered with the blanket saying “Art place grant” are used in the posters depicting what seem to be self-serving agendas of the boosters, which promise to bring vibrancy back to cities.

Summarizing the activities of three American funds for creative placemaking, Halegoua posits a few contradictions marking the use of digital media to promote and indeed make spaces. Deemed drivers of economic development, creative industries contribute to decrease of local business and physical sense of place. One

of the conclusions she comes to in this chapter is that "a shift in perspective and the incorporation of digital media as creative rather than commercial could help recognize experiences of place attachment and place identity that are emerging alongside digital media use in everyday life" (p. 213). This strikes me as not particularly realistic hope: first, the very juxtaposition of "commercial" and "creative" seems at odds with the predominant understanding of everything creative these days, namely, the commodification, mediatisation, and instrumentalization of creativity; second, however different the practices of users are, they obviously lack cultural or aesthetic novelty, which is commonly associated with creativity. Similarly, I failed to fully grasp the force of the author's juxtaposition of "the space of humanistic use and the space of top-down exchange process" (p. 222).

The possibility of gaining "right to the city" through digital media and related placemaking – which is one of the main arguments of the book – seems to me very modest. I think that the book insufficiently takes into account an extent to which datafication is linked to dataveillance and more generally, the immense internalization by citizens of strategies of digital capitalism. Whether their digital practices present the case of everyday creativity, as the author claims, or the case of puzzling compliance with the norms of big data epoch, is an open question. The book ends with generous suggestions for future research, and I am confident that it will acts as a stimulus to further research into digital cities. While you may not agree with all Halegoua' s arguments, this is a useful book, which should be read widely by all those interested in the connections between digitality, cultural politics, and everyday life.

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Edited	Editor, J. J. (Ed.). (2012). *Book Title: And Subtitle*. Abingdon: Routledge. Editor, J. J., Editor, A. A., & Editor, P. P. (Eds.). (2012). *Book Title: And Subtitle*. Abingdon: Routledge. Editor, J. J., & Editor, P. P. (Eds.). (2012). *Edited Online Book: And Subtitle*. Retrieved from https://www.w3.org
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Multiple volumes from a multivolume work	Levison, D., & Ember, M. (Eds). (1996). *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology* (Vols. 1–4). New York, NY: Henry Holt. Use Vol. for a single volume and Vols. for multiple volumes. In text, use (Levison & Ember, 1996).
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Journal	
One author	Author, A. A. (2011). Title of Article. *Title of Journal*, 22, 123–231. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx Provide the issue number ONLY if each issue of the journal begins on page 1. In such cases it goes in parentheses: Journal, 8(1), pp–pp. Page numbers should always be provided.

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More authors	Include all names up to seven. If there are more than seven authors, list the first six with an ellipsis before the last. Author, M., Author, B., Author, E., Author, G., Author, D., Author, R., …, Author, P. (2001).
Organization as author	American Psychological Association. (2003). Title of Article: and subtitle. *Title of Journal*, 2, 12–23. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx
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Peer-reviewed article published online ahead of the issue	Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (2012). Article title. *Title of Journal*. Advance online publication. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxx If you can update the reference before publication, do so.
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Article in journal supplement	Author, A. A. (2004). Article title. *Title of Journal*, 42(Suppl. 2), xx–xx. doi:xx.xxxxxxxxxx
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Paper	Presenter, A. A. (2012, February). Title of paper. *Paper Presented at the Meeting of Organization Name*, Location.
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Thesis	Author, A. A. (2012). *Title of Thesis* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation or master's thesis). Name of Institution, Location.
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May or may not be peer-reviewed; may or may not be published. Format as a book reference.	Author, A. A. (2012). *Title of work* (Report No. 123). Location: Publisher. Author, A. A. (2012). Title of work (Report No. 123). Retrieved from *Name website*: https://www.w3.org
Working paper	Author, A. A. (2012). *Title of work* (Working Paper No. 123). Location: Publisher. Author, A. A. (2012). Title of work (Working Paper No. 123). Retrieved from *Name website*: https://www.w3.org
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Personal communication	Personal communication includes letters, emails, memos, messages from discussion groups and electronic bulletin boards, personal interviews. Cite these only in the text. Include references for archived material only.
Other reference types	
Patent	Cho, S. T. (2005). U.S. Patent No. 6,980,855. Washington, DC: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.
Map	London Mapping Co. (Cartographer). (1960). Street map. [Map]. Retrieved from http://www.londonmapping.co.uk/maps/xxxxx.pdf
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Audio and visual media	Taupin, B. (1975). Someone saved my life tonight [Recorded by Elton John]. On Captain fantastic and the brown dirt cowboy [CD]. London: Big Pig Music Limited. Author, A. (Producer). (2009, December 2). *Title of Podcast* [Audio podcast]. Retrieved from *Name website*: https://www.w3.org Producer, P. P. (Producer), & Director, D. D. (Director). (Date of publication). *Title of Motion Picture* [Motion picture]. Country of origin: Studio or distributor. Smith, A. (Writer), & Miller, R. (Director). (1989). Title of episode [Television series episode]. In A. Green (Executive Producer), Series. New York, NY: WNET.

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Computer program	Rightsholder, A. A. (2010). *Title of Program* (Version number) [Description of form]. Location: Name of producer. Name of software (Version Number) [Computer software]. Location: Publisher. If the program can be downloaded or ordered from a website, give this information in place of the publication information.

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