

The Role of Philosophy in the De-traumatizing of the Sedimented History

Abstract:

The aim of this essay is to answer the question of what philosophy has to offer for the de-traumatization of unreflected history, or the historical sediments of the undifferentiated continuum of our consciousness. Often the historical sediments of everyday anxieties and imaginings have never been subjected to proper critical reflection, and the official narrative is still based on the representation of historical grandeur through which the Real is institutionally defended. The article interprets the Real in Lacanian and Slavoj Žižek's sense. Whether represented or propaganda, the Real conceals historical traumas, the fears and anxieties that haunt us like an unconscious command. The article argues that a mere critical, hermeneutical, philosophical exposure of a hidden trauma is not enough because it violates dignity. Dignity can be secured through mutual new acts of recognition based on the idea of rational authority. It requires philosophical mediation or mutual equal negotiation: clarifying the conditions of mutual understanding and recognition.

Keywords:

sedimented history, trauma, prohibition of the prohibited, philosophical mediation and diplomacy

Silent and Traumatized Consciousness and the Sting of the Order

By traumatized social consciousness I mean a state of mind that lacks critical reflection on the origins of its anxiety or fear, and thus becomes unconsciously altered, incapable of civic responsibility and autonomy. In this case, decisions, even criminal ones, are taken by a higher authority, a hierarchy of power: Leviathan. We are not talking about the personal trauma of the individual, which classical psychoanalysis examines and tries to alleviate, but about the traumas of large masses of people, of nations, which accumulate in the form of historical sediments or in the form of unreflected traditions, architecture, customs, and language. When we talk about historical memory, it can also be an inspiration for civil liberty, autonomy, and the struggle for the right to decide and to mature in the Enlightenment sense. But there is also the historical sedimentation of slavery, subjugation, and fear, its deep legacy, which large groups of people are incapable of reflecting on. This negative historical legacy, or rather its irrational sedimentation, affects the masses and helps propaganda and the institutions of power to create a society of fear and repression.

Historical sediments are currently latent symbolic constellations, whether in the form of impotent tradition, or in local memory and stereotypes (in the form of lore as opposed to knowledge), or in dusty archives, or in some other monument. To say that historical sediments are currently inactive does not mean that they will remain so. Historical legacies can act as a latent and inaccessible but permanent influence, or as an awakened energy, or as a relic mutated by its relationship to the present, or as a constantly invisible, changing, smoldering energy, an opportunity or a threat. So, it is not only external propaganda that creates a dependent consciousness, and alters and replaces forms and modalities of thought. It would have little effect in a free, enlightened society where the element of autonomy is strong. On the contrary, in societies with a deep and long experience of repression, the sedimented history itself acts, empowering its institutions to recreate fear, anxiety, altered states of consciousness, and false consciousness without the need for special efforts of power and propaganda.

Theodor Adorno explains sedimented history as the condition for the rise of the individual, for his immanence. What the individual considers immanent and subjective is just as objective as the other transcendental conditions of thought of which Kant speaks. Adorno observes:

The object opens itself to a monadological insistence, to a sense of the constellation in which it stands; the possibility of internal immersion requires that externality. But such an immanent generality of something individual is objective as sedimented history. This history is in the individual thing and outside it; it is something encompassing in which the individual has its place.¹

Adorno uses two related formulations: “*geschichtliches Sediment*” – historical sediment, and “*die sedimentierte Geschichte*” – sedimented history. Sedimented history appears as the politics of declaring and forbidding, and historical sediment shows a larger picture: not only in acknowledged, but also cancelled, silent layers of consciousness. Sedimented history, or the undifferentiated and unreflected content of historical consciousness, is part of social reality, the invisible shadow of publicity (*Öffentlichkeit*). Usually, when we speak of “publicity,” we mean social openness, without thinking that it has its own long and active shadow, which can be disturbing, as described in weird fiction. The term “*Öffentlichkeit*” is understood to denote a concept that extends beyond the mere act of communication, encompassing openness, visibility, as well as the invisibility, non-conscious, dispositive. The concept of a “publicity” as an object has the capacity to transcend our ability to provide a comprehensive description of it. This quality enables the object to possess a “shadow” or an invisible, irrational aspect. In this context, the concept of an ‘objet’ is employed in the sense of Graham Harman’s speculative realism (weird realism). Thus, the visible social reality is both a concrete historical moment and a shadow, pushing toward a future that is often utopian, or pulling back, which is why its social reality is not identical to its visible representation. Susan Buck-Morss, following Adorno, observes:

Because this general social reality was also not absolute, but a particular moment within the historical process, instead of being ontologically and eternally valid, it was itself “sedimented history.” There was also a utopian dimension to nonidentity as it related to the concrete particular.²

1) Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 163.

2) Buck-Morss, *Origin of Negative Dialectics*, 76.

The utopian and regressive non-identity is a site of conflict that affects the public as a whole, and consequently a nation or a political class, through invisible or visible contradictions. In the case of this conflict, it is not always clear what is the normal rivalry between tradition and the new vision, its agon, and what is the effect of pathological anxiety and unreflected historical sedimentation. This is why an interdisciplinary and philosophical analysis of the situation is necessary, an analysis of the continuum of excluded consciousness.

Hidden Traumas and the Problem of the Enlightenment

Why are Poles, Lithuanians, and independent Belarusians afraid of the name “Eastern Europe”? Przemysław Bursztyka seeks to reconceptualize the completely wrong and erroneous characterization Eastern Europe and rehabilitate the EE by separating it from the more Asian-culture-oriented Russia.³ The main imagined and exaggerated threat is that to be Eastern Europe is to be Russia or to be identified with Russia and wild Asia. It is a childish and traumatic nightmare to remain forever in Russian Asia: in a permanent authoritarian, slave state. Conscious and unconscious fears and anxieties remind us of the communist repression and deportation of people during the Stalinist and post-Stalinist periods, and symbolize colonial oppression in the long history of the Russian Empire. So, the trauma comes from the Russian imperial, hierarchical type of colonial government, from the subaltern consciousness, which is different from classical colonial thinking. The colonialism of the Russian Empire did not separate the masters from the serfs on the basis of nationality, but on the basis of class and language. It should be remembered that serfdom in the Russian Empire was similar to the traditional slave system, and the majority of the nobility, with the exception of the Poles and Finns, were Russified. In Lithuania, between 1864 and 1904, the restrictions on the Latin alphabet – and to some extent on the Lithuanian language, especially for educational purposes – were particularly severe.

Despite the differences between Russian and British colonialism, the terms used by Antonio Gramsci to describe them are apt: dominant cultural hegemony and subaltern exclusion from the right to rule. Gramsci and Spivak use the term subaltern to

3) See Bursztyka, “Reconceptualizing Eastern Europe.”

refer to lower social classes or social groups that are marginalized; they are dependent, have no autonomous agency, and are beyond the possibility of maturing, becoming enlightened, and making their own independent decisions, and thus becoming socially and politically active citizens.⁴ Thus, the majority of the Lithuanian population, peasant serfs, had no experience of autonomy and were unable to make autonomous decisions in practice until the Russian Revolution of 1905. Many scholars of the time thought that the Lithuanian nation had become a relic of history, suitable only for ethnographic research in the countryside. The threat of this total alienation and the simplicity of human dignity later marked the entire national revival as a trauma hidden in the consciousness and still active.

As a result, the stereotypes of oppression – and the traumatic attitude of withdrawing from the circle of the dependent and oppressed by forgetting, hiding, or publicly negating one's servile character – have been formed over the centuries. This is where Spivak's question "Can the subaltern speak?" comes in; that is, can it decide autonomously? "The inability to speak, or trauma of speaking itself leads us to examine the historical sedimentation of oppressed consciousness, which in the cases of Lithuania, Belarus, or Ukraine was not properly discussed until 1990. During the Soviet period, when the working and peasant classes were publicly glorified, it became even more difficult to talk about their dependence on and oppression by the Soviet collective and party system. What Lacan and Žižek call the great idea of the Real was put forward: the Real: a glorified construction of power that forbids talking about the fact that it is only a transformation of dependence and captivity.

When I speak of the lack of autonomy, I mean the lack of enlightenment in the Kantian sense and in the sense of Hannah Arendt. The lack of enlightenment regenerates the dependence of the serf, returning them to immaturity and the inability or prohibition against making their own decisions. On the other hand, this fear of a lack of autonomy and authoritarian rule hides from us the possibility of civic, cultural, and ultimately, international solidarity. I am not saying that this problem cannot be solved. The question is the depth of the solution. The Baltic, Lithuanian struggle for independence showed that the autonomous civic spirit that emerged in the interwar period was strong enough to regain independence in 1990, to fight for a parliamen-

4) Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak*, 66–111.

tary democratic republic, and later to begin discussing the invisible traumas and fears of Lithuanians. The cases of Ukraine and Belarus are much more dramatic, probably because of a much deeper fear and irrationality, a deep dependence and lack of enlightened autonomy.

Another example is the history of repression and victimization of consciousness, linked to the experience of the Holocaust, the Gulag, and their aftermaths, which shows that public criticism of crimes does not always lead to freedom of mind and the right to make independent decisions. The struggle of philosophers, writers, and partisans for an enlightened and autonomous mind becomes less visible and less influential when it comes to the consciousness of millions of oppressed people. The Gulag – the repressive labor camps and prisons that not only created the need for resistance, but also a dependent, oppressed, traumatized consciousness, which was evident throughout the Soviet Union – remains present in a latent form in the countries formerly occupied by the Soviet Union. It became particularly visible in Russia after 1995, when attempts were made to revive old Soviet stereotypes and recreate the totalitarian Leviathan. Elias Canetti, who was concerned with the irrational sting of fear, the invisible order that grows in the unconscious of oppressed and humiliated people, called this invisible traumatic order a sting:

Every command consists of momentum and sting. The momentum forces the recipient to act, and to act in accordance with the content of the command; the sting remains behind in him. When a command functions normally and as one expects, there is nothing to be seen of the sting; it is hidden and unsuspected and may only reveal its existence by some faint, scarcely perceptible recalcitrance before the command is obeyed⁵.

Canetti interprets the sting and the irrational fear in terms of the ontogenesis of the individual. We interpret them from the angle of historical experience and the language, myths, and religious rules of a concrete nation or class.

This means that an undifferentiated, unelected historical heritage, which I call historical sedimentation, can conceal a whole series of stings that can be activated

5) Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, 305.

during ontogeny, in specific social and political situations. I do not want to exaggerate the importance of such invisible stings because it depends on many individual and social factors. The historical traumas or wounds that influence our choices depend not only on the individual's personal experience, but also on his or her relationship to the legacy, both reflected and unreflected. This is similar to language: the individual speaks, says what they want to say, but language, as Martin Heidegger observes, also speaks itself. In this sense, the historical sediments act themselves.

Gulag culture affected hundreds of thousands of people in Solovki (near Arkhangelsk), Vorkuta (Komi Republic), Kolyma, and elsewhere. The problem I see is that this whole experience of the culture of the labor camp and the culture of the prison has taken root as a radical anti-enlightenment, as an industry for the destruction of autonomous thought. Anti-enlightenment attitudes are alive, no matter who is president or which Eastern European country we are talking about. Let us remember that during the Yugoslav war, the same concentration camps of extermination were immediately rebuilt, first in Serbia. At the moment in Russia, this whole system of fear and oppression has been reproduced one hundred percent. That is why Canetti's idea of the sting of fear can be combined with Kant's idea of enlightenment. So, I am talking about the unreflective features of industrial thinking that need to be critically identified and deconstructed. I call it a politics of detraumatization in the context of the Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*).⁶

Regarding the Double Prohibition

I will reconstruct the logic of Žižek's argument of the prohibition of the prohibited as an example of the preservation of the Real and the concealment of the other, the subaltern, and historical sedimentation. The first example is taken from the Max Horkheimer's and Theodore Adorno's reflections on the dialectics of the Enlightenment but interpreted in Žižek's way: a) the Enlightenment prohibited prejudices and myths because they are false; b) criticism of the Enlightenment is only possible in the Enlightenment sense, that is, in the technical and positivist scientific view. This is how the Enlightenment became total and the Real. c) Those who are criticizing the

6) Kant, "Was ist Aufklärung?"

Enlightenment from the point of view of myth are not enough “correct” educated. This logic of consideration conceals mythic, irrational side of our consciousness. This is the prohibition of the prohibited. A second example, taken from Žižek’s lectures: the phallic signifier is a complex concept. It combines symbolic, imaginary, and real dimensions and allows for a double self-reflection based on the principle of the “negation of the negation.” Žižek gives the following analogies: a) it is strictly forbidden to rape innocent girls; b) a dictator rapes them because his phallus is a symbol of his power; c) it is strictly forbidden to talk about a dictator who rapes innocent girls because he is the pride of the nation; it is even more prohibited to discover the truth that the dictator is impotent or indifferent to sexuality. A third example from Žižek: a) Stalin proclaims the “most democratic constitution” of 1937, which guarantees freedom of criticism; b) unofficially it is completely prohibited to criticize Stalin; c) it is prohibited to tell anyone that it is also prohibited to criticize Stalin, and all the more so because it might reveal that the Stalinist constitution is a lie. In this way, the dictator who represents the Law, the ideal Truth, or the Real, is not himself part of that law. He is both inside and outside the regulated set, and this is the only explanation for the paradox of the double prohibition. Cultural anthropology and cultural studies discover many similar paradoxes when they discuss, for example, the inviolability of the totem, the sanctity of the totem, and the need to kill it at the same time. However, Žižek does not base these ideas on anthropological examples, but on references to Lacan: “Therein is grounded the link between the phallic signifier and the Name-of-the-Father, the paternal Law; here also, Lacan accomplishes the same self-relating reversal, for the paternal prohibition is itself prohibited.”⁷

The silent or invisible order that hides the complicated reality of everyday life is the phallic signifier, or the sting, and it is both inside and outside the sentence. The sting penetrates the various laws of sedimented history and at the same time grows out of them. The order of the Real (God, dictator, eternal law) is at once presented as good and just, while it is cruel and abusive. The prohibition of the prohibited conceals the presence of the absent or the trauma, for example the fear of the resumption of slavery, serfdom, or the colonial system of oppression, or of cruel political power. Detraumatization means the critical discovery at all levels of

7) Žižek, *Less than Nothing*, 592.

prohibition, but also the creation and mutual, dialogical, diplomatic recognition of a new civic dignity.

On the contrary, the double prohibition initiates false recognition, and supports the illusion of self-recognition. It is important to distinguish between the need for self-recognition and the creation of false external recognition by the media and public relations. However, detraumatization can be contaminated by the “ethical prettification” of the victim or of the colonizer and aggressor. So, the process of detraumatization should be empirically correct, but it should not interfere with new and fruitful imaginations. In combining critique and art, Žižek’s critical analysis is not always helpful, so I turn to Adorno’s aesthetics, which is particularly concerned with the fragile balance between critique and creative imagination.

Žižek discusses the silence of the prohibited consciousness in *Less Than Nothing* and begins with Wittgenstein’s statement in *Tractatus*: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”⁸ Žižek applies the statement to the situation of excessive ideological prohibition: we ask you to be silent about what is already not only prohibited but prohibited by the critics of prohibition. This double prohibition creates the illusion of freedom in light of the Real, or during the Enlightenment, of the Real. This excessive demand is to conceal the drama or the trauma: it is to be silent about what can be described as the fear and anxiety that comes from historic sedimentations.

The system of false recognition is well organized in Putin’s Russia, where the dignity, greatness, and honor of Russian citizens are officially demanded to be recognized, even though they are afraid to recall and update the memory of their own Gulag, repressions, and mass crimes, even though they are afraid to talk about their own dependent, unfree condition. The Russian government requires its citizens to accept an aggressive imperial state as a form of respectable identity, thus not only concealing familiar fears and dependencies on the local power hierarchy, but also forbidding criticism of these dependencies. So, we have a classic case of the subaltern and double negation: the prohibition of the prohibited.

Another illusory form of self-recognition was and is the fear that Europe will not accept the Baltic countries, now Ukraine and Belarus, and this fear also creates a lack of autonomy in assessing one’s own spiritual, cultural, and historical memory. The fear

8) Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 149.

of not being recognized as an equal is expressed by three metaphors: the last carriage of the train, the geographical center of Europe, and a common European mentality. “The last carriage metaphor,” popular in Lithuania around 2004, refers to the imaginary conclusion to the formation of the EU and NATO, when people were persuaded by spreading fear not to be recognized as a European country and remain in the sphere in the sphere of Russia’s hegemonic influence. The metonymy of the European center, popular in Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine, conflates the center of interests, culture, and life with the psycho-geographical concept of the center of Europe, thus drawing paralogical conclusions that our thinking is essentially Enlightened, and we do not need to analyze our own consciousness because we are Europeans. We just need to be recognized as essential Europeans, even in the last carriage. Another problem is the illusion that the Europe is a common mental space for all human groups and demands the recognition that all Europeans have a similar mentality, thus concealing the fact that Europe is based on cultural diversity and tolerance of the other. In the case of the latter, the studies of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, in some cases associated with Lithuania, helped in the acceptance of the need for the radical other as an appropriate demand for Lithuanian democracy. However, even this attitude has not been accepted by the majority of the population in Lithuania, which still denies gender diversity and equality.

The cases of false recognition led to this question: “How should the unconscious, sedimented heritage of Easter Europe be interpreted?” If the history of freedom and progress has been written, the history of the states of captivity and subjugation has not been examined enough. What is pathological is considered to be episodic, accidental, and what is progress is considered to be consistent. This reading of history creates an illusion, a false notion that the nation is rational, that it is on the path of light, progress, and happiness, without seeing what dangers lie beneath the supposed layer of rationality. Even more deceptive is the technological illusion of progress, which says nothing about the fears of consciousness and its lack of autonomy. On the contrary, technology as a prosthesis often promotes forgetfulness and dependence rather than autonomous decision-making. The official ideology is synonymous with the history of progress and imagined freedom, while the structures and conditions of slave, serfdom, dependency, oppression, and the results of Soviet consciousness are excluded. On the contrary, many proponents of the theory of mentalities will argue that what matters

is the undifferentiated residue of various memories, traditions, legends, and superstitions. From these undifferentiated sediments, people create imagination, form their stream of consciousness, and consequently, the stream of the world.

Adorno and Critics of the Transparent Tradition

The social sciences and humanities appear in different ways: as a cherished tradition, as institutional policies and activities, but also as an extension of irrational sediments, dependencies, or hegemony. When Husserl invites us to look for scientific inspiration in the axiomatic origins of Euclidean geometry, he chooses the visible, transparent tradition. He sees in the geometric tradition an inspiring energy, clarity, and power behind which there is no traumatic past of undefined sediments. Husserl wants to build his phenomenology on the model of Euclidean geometry. He follows only his own imaginary scientific tradition, not a religious one, and he believes that truth is not mixed up with religion and politics, with the authorities, despite the fact that the Church has long promoted a Ptolemaic world view, persecuting scientists who have chosen the path of the Copernican revolution, despite the fact that many authorities and scientific institutions insist on upholding creationism and denying the claims of Charles Darwin's theory, or still blindly follow the state programs. Husserl's tradition, the path of consciousness, can be interpreted as an accumulation of axiomatic theory that hides intellectual violence. One can get the impression that the whole history of humanity is one of discovery after discovery, without seeing the regression and the destructive side of history. His choice is completely based on the ideals of the Enlightenment that was criticized by many philosophers: Horkheimer, Adorno, Foucault, Žižek, and others. Hegemonic ideologies including the Enlightenment try to hide basic contradictions and construct the illusion of a transparent history. In its praxis, this form of hegemony also creates traumatic consciousness and false recognition.

Husserl's dream of a clear and axiomatic origin of science based on tradition increases the danger of a false recognition. The threat was realized in Heidegger's philosophy by the mystification of self-manifesting sources. Heidegger trusted the pre-Socratic sources of philosophy, just as Husserl trusted Euclidean geometry. However, Heidegger's sources are not scientific, but a pre-Socratic passivity and willingness to accept the enlightenment of being. Similarly, the ideologues of Italian

Fascism and German Nazism argued for their ideology of “true verse.” There are many contemporary national ideologies which constructed illusion of transparency of traditions in a similar para-scientific, para-historic way. Adorno found this neo-Nazi language unacceptable, and his skepticism is spread across many other cases.

Adorno’s critical argument against Husserl’s idea of tradition⁹ and especially against Heidegger’s self-manifested sources (language, myth, being)¹⁰ is based on two presuppositions: on the one hand, blindness to the history of captivity and oppression, and on the other, the unwillingness to see that the future is not opened up by the linear accumulation of traditional knowledge, but by the formation of a new transcendence, a new artistic or scientific vision. Using the example of Arnold Schönberg’s music, Adorno notes that for a long time music was presented in the shadow of geometry and mathematics, in the blinding light of Euclid’s geometrical reasoning. On this basis, musical institutions rejected radical compositional innovations, such as composers’ resistance to the devil’s interval – the tritone. The tritone was interpreted as a melodic dissonance, an error. But Franz Liszt found a way to use the devil’s interval to represent hell in his Dante Sonata. Schönberg’s musical revolution was much more far-reaching, breaking with the belief in geometric musical harmony. A similar thing happened with Euclidean geometry and the origins of hyperbolic and elliptic geometry. Institutions defending the Euclidean world view denied other geometries derived from Einstein’s theory of relativity.

Why should transcendence be negative? It opens the doors to the unknown future that art can create. Artworks with living and dead elements of undifferentiated sedimentation hides and/or awakens the old ghosts and mutants of the past, or ironically, cynically, and radically negate and create new ways and horizons of thinking. The most interesting case is the penetration of the artistic and creative spirit into the field of institutionalized science, into bureaucratized museums and universities in order to transform them, to liberate them from staying within well-differentiated knowledge, from internal boundaries.

Undifferentiated sediments of historical consciousness are material for new works of art, but they are also a passive threat, creating fear of society, creating a traumatic

9) Adorno, *Against Epistemology*, 91.

10) Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 88.

consciousness. Why are Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine afraid of the sedimented irrational history of Eastern Europe? All these countries were much more damaged by the oppression of serfdom than Latvia, Estonia, Finland, and Poland. "But Lithuania and Belarus are also different because of their experiences in the interwar period." One of the answers is in the unique traumatic memory associated with Lithuania's national humiliation at the time of Russian tsarism, for example, the persecution of the Latin alphabet and the Lithuanian language, which was not relevant to Belarus or Latvia. But there are common features of traumatic consciousness based on the negation of the indigenous histories of the Baltic states, or the deportation to Siberia, the forced creation of *kolkhozes*, and the control of cultural education. The state of subaltern consciousness can be broken by the uprising of the oppressed, by the violent negation of the previous situation and state of consciousness. But this is a necessary condition, not a sufficient one. After the revolution, there is other work to be done: discovering the traumas, discussing them, and supporting new processes of dignity and recognition.

How is it possible to analyze the silent subaltern consciousness? What mutations take place in the repressed state of mind? Hegel argued that after active negation nothing happens to the former state of mind, and it simply remains in the new state of consciousness. On the contrary, the theory of undifferentiated sedimentation predicts many possible mutations independent of and in opposition to the new state of consciousness. The mutations and changes that occur in the subaltern mind create new paralogisms, illusions, false hopes, and fears. Thus, the subaltern mind retains and unconsciously develops symbols of trauma, altering public meanings and thus enabling paradoxical double prohibitions.

There are many layers of false recognitions that cover invisible structures of the oppressed consciousness in historic sedimentation. There are the myths about the Grand Duchy of Lithuania before the Crusades, legends about heroism during the Crusades and before the union with Poland, fantasies about the modernity of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, uncritical trust in the nineteenth and twentieth century visions of national rebirth, and the idealization of nationality in the interwar period. The false stories created imaginary symbols of pride that hides the unrecognized, undifferentiated historic sedimentation of the oppressed consciousness even deeper. The protracted, heroic and dramatic propaganda-history of the Russian nation has a detrimental effect on the struggle for liberation of colonised "local" nations. For instance, those who conform to

the local Russian Empire may seek to negate their own colonised identities, languages and genealogies, and attempt to escape the conflicts of recognition of their otherness. Besides, historical relics, even long-dormant ones, change under aggressive conditions such as an ideological interest. Moreover, one layer of sediment influences the other. For example, the silent history of the oppressed people of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was interpreted one way in the Russian Empire, then another way under the demands of communist ideology, and then a third way under the contemporary needs of the proud.

Sedimentation in the Soviet Period

All periods of unconscious or semi-conscious sedimentation are characterized by a specific nature and relationship between a visible and invisible habitus. For example, the visible Soviet character was the dedicated and honest worker, while its invisible side was the worker thieving from mass production facilities,, the *blat*, the black market, and contempt for honest communist activists. If communist unity with the working class was the official, propagandist surface, the Soviet sediment covered sub-groups: the *nomenklatura*, the semi-conformists, the religious, and the frustrated. The class of the *nomenklatura*, for example, was not the ordinary Soviet bureaucracy but the way of life of their extended families and friends, the semi-visible class. The Communist Party occasionally criticized the Soviet bureaucracy, but never recognized it as a special class. Even the activists of the Chinese Cultural Revolution blamed the party bureaucracy of revisionism, but never saw it as a special class with special Relations of Production (Marxist *Produktionsverhältnisse*).

The *nomenklatura* was a rational class, equally capable of adapting and recycling both Western and Communist ideals, combining freedoms and arts not available to others with the principles and organization of the Communist Party. However, the national *nomenklatura* also had its own national interests, which allowed it to oppose the decisions of the allied parties and propose new fashion trends. The national Soviet *nomenklatura* demonstrated a certain degree of tolerance with regard to national consumption, style and fashion, despite the fact that national consumption did not correspond to the principles of Marxism-Leninism. It is evident that contemporary critics of socialism, who are often motivated by populist and nationalist ideologies, frequently seek to conceal an additional imagined national disgrace. This disgrace is characterised by the participation

of numerous national heroes in the Soviet nomenclature, or active participation in its consumption trends. Perhaps the first author to identify the nomenklatura as a class was Milovan Djilas, one of the founders of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, a comrade of Joseph Broz Tito and later a dissident.¹¹ Djilas's observations became important in the light of György Lukács's reflections on historical class thought. Lukács, who sympathized for a time with Leninism and Stalinism and then turned away from them, supported the Budapest Spring Uprising in 1956 and became Minister of Culture of the insurgent republic; he did not explicitly discuss the phenomenon of nomenklatura class consciousness, despite his attention to Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy. The other description of the nomenklatura class was given by Mikhail Voslensky in his book *Nomenklatura: The Soviet Ruling Class*.¹² As a Communist Party activist and later a dissident himself, he clearly understood the differences between the Communist Party, workers, and the nomenklatura and explained, based on the work of Leo Trotsky and Djilas, why the classical, Weberian bureaucracy was not the nomenklatura class.

When we talk about the Soviet communist legacy in the post-Soviet countries, we fail to notice that much of this legacy was recreated by the Soviet nomenklatura for the interests of the nomenklatura class, without direct application of communist ideology.¹³ A good example is the construction of national museums in Lithuania during the Soviet period, which also included hotels, saunas, and restaurants for the nomenklatura. Two great symbols of contemporary independent Lithuania, the medieval castle of Trakai and the palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania in Vilnius, were rebuilt by the Lithuanian communist and post-communist nomenklatura, hiding the inner intentions of the new class behind the Real of the national glory.

Philosophical Traumatizing of the Sedimented History

The Lacanian Real can be conceptualised as the primary or original order of experience. It is characterised as noumenal, infinite and absolute. In contrast, empirical reality is dependent on the flux of sensual perceptions, concerns of everyday life and

11) Djilas, *The New Class*.

12) Voslensky, *Nomenklatura*.

13) Ivanauskas, *Lietuviškoji nomenklatūra biurokratinėje sistemoje*.

hidden subaltern trauma. The Real legitimizes the prohibition of the prohibited and the invisibility of historical sediments. For example, the Real can be the myth of the fatherland, which is indefinable and is the subject of moral maxims; the Real is the inner civic responsibility based on the blind symbolic interpretations of the Constitution. The Real does not exist as a thing, but it is some kind of *egregore*: an only thinkable entities. It is not enough to interpret the Real in the context of S. Freud's super-ego and id, but it is the role and order of separation of the officially represented and the hidden. However, the Real cannot be too much the Real. Žižek wrote: "Real Socialism failed because it was – in its Stalinist version – ALL TOO 'REALISTIC,' because it underestimated the REAL of the 'illusions' which continued to determine human activity."¹⁴

When it is all too realistic, the Real encourages us to criticize the existing façade of propaganda and not only to create a new imaginary façade, but also to talk critically about the invisible side of social life and the traumatic or toxic residues. Exposing the toxicity of sedimentation is part of the critique of undifferentiated consciousness. Contemporary pro-Kremlin Russian propagandists are too realistic in their portrayal of reality, and it is necessary to discover what is invisible and to ask why the Russian population is ready to die, to sacrifice itself to Leviathan. The answer requires a critical analysis of the historical and cultural traumas that exist in Russia in order to support the new forces of opposition and to conduct cultural diplomacy that will help to accept a less certain post-Putin future.

What does it mean to support Eastern European cultural diplomacy? It could be based not only on the desire to position oneself on the market for cultural products, but also to promote the analysis and critique of historical and cultural failures, to organize negotiations for a new cultural recognition of each other and to overcome various traumas. There are many such symbols of anxiety, and joint conferences, joint articles, theatre, and film projects that are a way of entering a sphere where different parties are either unwilling to talk or have deeply toxic, stereotyped views. And if the painful cultural dialogue between Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, and part of Belarus is not only possible but also sluggish, it is hard to imagine what problems await a new discussion on Russia.

14) Žižek, *On Belief*, 81.

The idea of detraumatizing sediments of history is based on several assumptions. The first is that in representative history it is not only the visible heritage of the idea of God, the Church, a class, or a nation, not only the myth of the state and its reality, that is important, but also the much larger, more important, and almost invisible layers. Most of them coincide with the memory of not only alienated but also invisible groups: women, peasants, merchants and traders, the bureaucracy, artists or bohemians, and national and religious minorities. For example, the colonial status and subaltern consciousness of many non-Russian nationalities is still a silent volcano in contemporary Russia. Their history coincides with the experience of oppressed peoples and their communities. The misrepresentation of their nobility and ancient greatness prevents people from critically recognizing the genesis of their modern dependencies and freedoms; on the contrary, the uncritical glorification of the past hides their inability to be citizens, their lack of solidarity and partnership in the present.

That is why we are thinking about how to detraumatize history, not only by exposing the lie of the double prohibition, but also by securing principles of mutual recognition. Mutual recognition is the only possible form of non-pathological recognition, as long as it is dialogical and egalitarian. It should be noted that mutual recognition is also based on the recognition of rational authority and the criticism of irrational authority. This does not mean, however, that the mythology of the nation, the heroic epic of historical fantasy, should be abolished or relegated to the history of national literature. It simply means that all these narratives are not given the exclusive, hegemonic status of the real, but remain within the field of their own imagination, their own genre. Mutual recognition is also a recognition of the strangeness and queer-ness of the other, without giving it the status of a special enemy or an exclusive value, but only judging it on the basis of rational authority by saying, for example, that this historical fantasy is a new model of romanticism or a case of weird fiction.

The role of philosophy here is not only to unmask fantasies and images of the Real, their propagandistic function, and the logic of silence, but also to help us recognize a new, creative dignity. Given that historical sediments often contain the histories of many surrounding peoples, a mutual recognition of each other's diversity and imaginative trajectories and configurations, and thus a mutual critique of double negation, is necessary. Imaginative trajectories and configurations eliminate the construction of a unified, hegemonic history based on the desire to exalt the real,

even if it is a philosophical absolute mind. And so, philosophy itself must first liberate itself and acknowledge the necessity of its diversity and incompatibilities, its differences. And this is possible not so much through philosophical hermeneutics, which often serves the philosophical grimaces of the Great Reason, as through philosophical diplomacy,¹⁵ that is, negotiation, which brings out the differences, even the chasms, and builds the grounds for agreement.

15) Mažeikis, "Philosophical Mediation."

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