Power and Truth in Political Discourse

Language and Ideological Narratives

Vassil Hristov Anastassov

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2018

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-5275-0796-3
ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-0796-8

TO MY STUDENTS, COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS AND FAMILY
WHO WERE THERE FOR ME IN HAPPINESS AND TROUBLE

The major claim of this book is that in communal language interaction the speakers impose (political) power on each other by creating discourse, based on the dominance of "my" narrative over "your" narrative. This is what suggests an "agent" manipulating a "target" by "playing" (linguistically -ideologically) with the plausible issue of (political) truth.

I use this framework to create a universal model of the power of political discourse with reference to social semiotics (from structural to post structural) in an interdisciplinary relation with philosophy of politics and philosophy of language. The basis for this model is a historical overview from Plato and Aristotle via Machiavelli and Nietzsche to Foucault, Chomsky, Derrida, and Fukuyama. It examines a process that has always existed in the history of humankind with special attention to the leading role of "strong individuals" within the context of communal order. The model satisfies the need of a larger scope of interdisciplinary analysis than the one that conventional political theory offers usually.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I was not alone in the clarification and the formulation of many of the problems that I am discussing here. In the long and stormy history of this small book, colleagues made me feel the reliability of professional critique. Friends and family gave me warmth, love, and care. Students creatively discussed my lectures and helped me strengthen my points. It will be a long list of names should I decide to include all those that I am obliged to for the appearance of this work. It is impossible though not to mention Stephen Rosow (State University of New York at Oswego), Ivani Vassoler-Froelich (State University of New York at Fredonia), Ivan Dinev Ivanov (University of Cincinnati), and Jean Crombois (American University in Bulgaria) for their positive feedback and friendly attitude. The Cambridge Scholars Publishing team tried their best to make all the technical sides of the "birth" of this "Language, Power, and Politics" as easy as possible. Last but not least: I owe a special "thank you" to the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry and the Bulgarian Consulate General in Istanbul for their support and encouragement.

Istanbul-Sofia 2016-2017

PREFACE

The aim of this research is to point out the link between linguistics and political science in the study of the power of political discourse. It comes as a logical continuation of my previous book on "The Dynamics of Human Interaction". I profit there from my linguistic professional background to analyze the capacity of language to create power imbalance in human communication. It leads me further to the present study of the issues of power and truth in political discourse.

The analysis starts with an introduction of the language base of political discourse. It is argued that in communication, instead of the commonly accepted by traditional linguistics "balanced role-shifting" of speakers and listeners, there always is a stronger side that dominates with its "will to power". This makes the so-called "Barthes'" myths function as ideological narratives that maintain the power of political discourse.

This feature of human language communication relates to the political character of classical rhetoric. I refer to its persuasive-manipulative force to construct a linguistic model of political power. The claim is that the manipulative force of language itself when applied in political rhetoric "keeps away" the average citizen from real knowledge of the "political truth" by creating the "myths-narratives" in question, which suit the doctrine of the rulers.

In this context, the study refers to some basic principles of social semiotics (both structural and post structural) in the analysis of the ideological connotation of narratives. This is an attempt to determine political power imposition as an innate (language-based) capacity of humans, when applied to the political governance of communal life.

The official language used for the manipulation of the average consumers of "political knowledge" includes information stimulating reaction that matches the above-mentioned "ruling doctrine". Consequently, the discourse that conceals the "political truth" often disguises the actual reasons for some political maneuvers. The term "official language" here does not stand for the "official language of the state". It is the same "language of the ruling doctrine", that supports the adopted discourse of

the communal governance. This is what directs my research into the investigation of the role of the "actors-manipulators" and the language that they use in between "the state" and the average citizen. The assumption is that the basic linguistic "interactional imbalance" emerges from the capacity of "Homo Loquens" (The Talking Human) to dominate over the rest of the members of the polity as "Homo Politicus" (The Political Human). In other words, my focus goes on language creativity with its innovative force to create powerful discourse, coming from gifted individuals...

One can argue further that language is "Freedom within Constraints" which means that it is "obedience and sticking to the rules of a certain code" along with the capacity to "play", and to "break" them at the same time... The implication is that the "breaking of the language code rules" supposes an ability for "breaking any rules". It makes the Aristotelian individual "good among men" with his/her superior strength, supposed to direct the whole community toward its welfare.

The study presents the "welfare of the community" here as a general model of the political governance of human societies based on the Machiavellian principle of "(individual) leadership for power maintenance". It brings up the issue of "will to power" in the context of the philosophy of ethics of Nietzsche. The individual "actor(s)" manipulate(s) the life of the community by imposing a certain "way of talking about it" to shape up the "way of thinking about it"...

This leads toward the "linguistic relativity-linguistic determinism" principle, and the Whorfian idea that different people think and behave differently depending on the specific languages they speak. When applied to an "official language" of the type mentioned above, the same principle applies in the imposition of power. It "conceals" some language units from the communal vernacular with the intention to eradicate the concepts (the thinking about them) that they stand for. To put it in the terminology of Saussure: alongside the "signifier" to "wipe out" the "signified" with the final goal to achieve a full control on social conduct and hence – total power maintenance.

All this requires an explanation of the status of the state, as an institution maintaining the governmental power and imposing it on the average communal members. The claim is that it functions as a "text", namely: it exists "independently" in between the community and its members and the governmental body. The "strong individuals" use it in the manipulation of

"the average citizen" to achieve the "shaping up the preferred/manipulative reading" (i.e. his/her perception, understanding and acceptance, followed by a respective provisional social conduct) of the ideological narrative of power. The idea of a "state" related to a "text" becomes obvious when remembered that the latter occupies a similar place (an "independent" one) between the author and the readers. Just for the sake of clarity, it will be relevant here to consider the capacity of the readers of any (literary) text to interpret the initial message of the author in a variety of different ways. This is a point that I refer to on many occasions in the further development of my thesis.

Structural semiotics, in this context, positively contributes to the understanding of the linguistic base of the manipulation as part of the process of knowledge acquisition of the "political truth".

It fails, however, to explain political interaction outside the rigid framework of the binary oppositions of (+marked) and (-marked) sides: an important issue to refer to in detail in the chapters to follow. In brief: when "my" narrative is juxtaposed to "your" narrative for the sake of power predominance (in a positively versus negatively marked binary opposition) there is a "tertium non datur"-situation. A "third way" could break the dualistic "vicious circle" by offering an option "out". That is why this analysis introduces Derrida's post-structural political deconstruction with the intention to investigate power in the context of the status quo of the twenty -fist-century- narrative of (Fukuyama's) "Western liberal democracy". More specifically: it investigates how power imbalance could be counteracted in a really democratic society that fits the demands of today's globalized world for no "black" and "white" division of human values.

The conclusion is that the power imbalance of the linguistic interaction of humans is historically inseparable from the imbalance of power in their political communal life. This parallel explains communal life as a complex model of dynamic relationships. It uses as a base the linguistic capacity of humans to impose and maintain political power by generating "new" language in the creation of a discourse of ideological narratives. I strongly believe that it positively contributes to the better understanding of the activities of "Homo Loquens-Politicus" in today's "Global Village" in his/her desire to find a way for a "better world" with no antagonistic binary oppositions and no power imbalance...

Vassil Anastassov

FOREWORD

In any polity, this is a complex space, laced with power. This book presents this space as a space of linguistic power. Language, it tells us, is inherently political, inherently a struggle between a will to domination and the will to freedom. Ranging from Saussure, to a critique of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, to Chomsky, and working through Aristotle, Orwell, Machiavelli, Derrida, and others, Anastassov gives us a powerful argument about the manipulative force of language and its role in maintaining unequal power. Language both confines through the myths-narratives leaders and states present to enforce order and promote unity and it enables a freedom of a subject to break the rules, to make new sentences and speech acts that breach that order.

The space in-between citizen and state reflects the “complicated relations between separate individuals and the collective of people performing communal life together”. Speakers and hearers are not of equal status in speech acts. The space in-between is a space of myths-narratives that create power relations between speakers and hearers, relations of domination. Leaders manipulate the dominant myths-narratives while average citizens come to be captivated by them, accepting the narratives as common sense. In political theory since the 19th Century, the space in-between has generally been theorized as “civil society”. As Anastossov’s linguistic analysis presents it, however, the in-between is not a civil society in the Hegelian and liberal sense of an equal realm of voluntary associations governed by mutual self-interest, intersubjective norms that constitute civility, and voluntary associations. There is little egalitarian about it, and the extent to which it is “civil” the civility disguises undercurrents of domination and resistance.

Political discourse conceals “truth”. Linguistic exchange is not equal and mutual. It constitutes different kinds of subjects: speakers and listeners. Western modernity has tended to treat this as a binary opposition, with the result that it privileges the state as controller of citizens through control and manipulation of dominant narratives that it is able to naturalize as “public opinion." The result is that the inherent power asymmetry of language allows leaders and states to create a “truth” that conceals the “real”. Citizens become passive conduits who accept the “truth” of the

dominant order. Nevertheless, Anastossov argues, drawing on Chomsky and Derrida, the relation of citizen and state is dynamic and unstable. Dominant ideologies struggle to achieve and maintain their status in democracies as "public opinion", unable in the end to eradicate the contestability of dominant narratives. States and societies remain unbalanced, and "human linguistic interaction is inseparable from the imbalance of power in their political communal life."

The in-between is an unstable space in which ideologies operate to stabilize unifying narratives that conceal their instabilities. For example, we might cite the neoliberal identity of freedom with private property. So long as people are free to buy and sell, the ideology goes and political freedom will follow. The ways in which this ideology requires policies that remake the self as an "entrepreneur", responsible individually to negotiate an increasingly precarious economic environment produced by neoliberal policies, are hidden. In this way, a new truth – the identity of political freedom with private property – is established. Rather than a "free" rational agent, the neoliberal self is constituted by specific policies, the subject of new scientific discourses of "economic man". The ideology serves to deflect the contestation of the dominant narrative by making alternative narratives of freedom and politics unthinkable. Racist narratives of the poor and immigrants, for example, associate the poor with the other who illegitimately demands "entitlements," re-characterizing people as threats and dangers to the neoliberal unity, delegitimizing narratives that defend them or seek to include them as equal citizens. Another strategy, prominent in the United States, is the redefinition of "free speech" to identify it with economic choice, extending free speech to corporations not just individuals. The disproportionate and corrupting contributions of wealthy donors and corporations to politicians, and political lobbying thereby become "democratic", simply expressions of "free speech". These myths-narratives become widely accepted as neoliberal ideologues deftly re-speak democracy, giving the narratives the status of "public opinion".

This book contributes to our understanding of the complex relation between state and citizen that has been a subject of democratic theory from its beginnings. It is especially timely in the current era in which national identity and citizenship is more and more called into question. Fukuyama's triumphalism may have receded in intellectual discourse, but it still feeds a "clash of civilization" argument in which the Western powers arrogantly assert the superiority of their dominant narrative of neoliberal democracy, and seek to maintain linguistic, ideological, and material strategies to cement that dominance. We know have wars to

promote democracy and free trade as international, if not universal global norms to be enforced by a global "consensus" about right and wrong. This dynamic operates inside and outside states, blurring those boundaries as linguistic forms slip and slide across borders.

This book opens questions for democratic theory as well. Democracies are particularly subject to the problematics of asymmetrical linguistic power because democracies need to tell certain kinds of stories about themselves, stories of equality, of self-rule, of mutual respect, that chafe against the domination of the state. As states, however, they must also tell stories about the need for order. Here democracies especially are subject to the life of linguistic power in the space in-between the state and the citizen. Political struggles in democracies take place in the space in-between that is pregnant with the linguistic power this book charts.

"Public opinion," Anastassov reminds us in this book, conceals political truth as it imposes "my" narrative that constitutes *the* political truth. Public opinion is a production of the power of the strong to use language to dominate the masses. While Anastassov argues that this is a general condition of human communities, in democracies it is particularly deceptive. Recent democratic theories have appealed to the power of language in exactly the opposite direction. Discursive democratic theories drawing on Habermas argue that democracies involve a public sphere of undistorted communication. Language can be a great equalizer if all remain committed to free, open, and truthful dialogue. Anastassov's more Nietzschean perspective is a useful corrective.

Power is never eliminated from language. On the structural level, subjects of discourse are never equal; some set the terms of dialogue while others accept them. Often, as Foucault reminds us, both dominating and dominated are constituted by the epistemic conditions of their truth. For Foucault, no subject stands outside of the discursive practices through which they are constituted. But language expresses a will to dominate, and Anastassov warns us that "consensus" does not mean truth or equality. It means *someone's truth* and linguistic relations are always unequal between speaker and hearer. This is especially difficult for democracies to accept, and "public opinion" becomes a strategy to disguise and dissemble the instability of any democratic consensus.

Where does this leave would-be democrats? Here, Anastassov leaves us with an interesting assimilation of a Derridean deconstructive gesture and Chomsky's appeal to the creative powers of language. On the one hand,

there is the question of time inherent in the phonocentrism of traditional Saussurean linguistics. In a reversal of some classical assumptions of Western metaphysics, writing appears more democratic than speaking. The immediacy that allows for the manipulation of myths-narratives by speakers/leaders must eliminate time as duration as much as possible. Donald Trump and the so-called alt-right succeed, in the US and elsewhere, to the extent the "news" does not live beyond the moment of its speech. This moment allows no questioning, deflects the thoughtfulness that Hannah Arendt argued is so necessary to real political action. Donald Trump does not read books; he swims only in the immediacy of information flows. He gets his news from television, rants against any analysis of policy as "fake news" (news is only what is reported in the immediacy of the moment, all surface, nothing behind it that would require time for analysis and deliberation). If nothing matters but the immediate locution, the response can be little but an emotional, unthinking affirmation or rejection. No elaboration of what it means to "make America great again" for to question what this means elongates the linguistic act, it allows speech to become writing. And writing – written news stories, in archives that can be referred to – can be analyzed, make criticism possible. Writing, in good part by problematizing the binary of speaker/listener, subject/object opens up democratic possibilities. It complicates the temporality of democratic language and politics.

Here is, to me, the most significant aspect of this book for democratic theory. By focusing our attention in the in-between of state/citizen in all its complex linguistic construction, the book opens up thinking about strategies for democratizing democracy. It dovetails with recent agonistic theories of democracy, such as William E. Connolly, Chantal Mouffe, Jacques Ranciere and others. As citizens, we can contest the dominant narratives not in order to replace them with new dominant narratives, but to re-think our communal life according to more democratic imaginaries. Therefore, for me, while this book starts out on what seems a pessimistic note about the inevitability of domination, it ends with a more hopeful gesture to new forms of democratic theory and action.

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The words of the great Eighteenth-Century French philosopher below reveal in a Gnomic form the power of the individual ruler to silence critique and disobedience

> *"POUR SAVOIR QUI VOUS DIRIGE VRAIMENT IL SUFFIT DE REGARDER CEUX QUE VOUS NE POUVEZ PAS CRITIQUER"*
>
> *(To learn who controls you simply find out who you are not allowed to criticize)*
>
> *VOLTAIRE*

CHAPTER ONE

THE LANGUAGE BASE OF POWER IMPOSITION

"My" Narrative vs. "Your" Narrative: From Shifting to Power Imbalance

This introductory chapter investigates the linguistic side of human social interaction as a process of creation of discourse of power. The assumption is that in the relationship between a "talking agent" and a "listening target" there is no balanced "role shifting". Instead, there is always a stronger part, that exercises power on the weaker one…This type of relationship suggests the existence of narratives in human communal life that function as "Barthes'" myths ,i.e. what is believed to be "right" or "wrong" is taken for granted ("goes without saying") and keeps people away from the real state of affairs (the truth). The result is "shaping up of the preferred reading" of these narratives, often used by politically interested (governing) sides to manipulate the average community members with imposition of power as a final goal.

We tend to believe that in language communication there is a 'shifting' role of speaker and listener, which provides a 'balance of power' between the two:

speaker ↔ listener

As Marina Yaguello claims in her impressive "Language through the Looking Glass":

> "I" and "you" alternate during dialogue and for this reason are called shifters
> (Yaguello 8)

This formula presupposes that the "speaker" and the "listener" are in an equal position as regards the level of imposition of power onto each other. However, it can easily lead to a logical misunderstanding, as humorously

suggested by the same scholar with the reference to the following Jewish anecdote:

> Dear Riwke, be good enough to send me your slippers. Of course, I mean "my slippers" and not "your slippers". But, if you read "my slippers", you will think I mean your slippers. Whereas, if I write: "send me your slippers", you will read *your* slippers and will understand *my* slippers. So: send me your slippers
> (Yaguello 8, original emphasis)

More than a century before Marina Yaguello, Lewis Carroll noticed the same in his famous novel "Through the Looking Glass":

> Alice attended to all these directions, and explained, as well as she could, that she had lost *her* way. "I don't know what you mean by *your* way," said the Queen: "*all the ways about here belong to me* – but why did you come out here at all?
> (Carroll 61, original emphasis)

The implication is that "role shifting" may lead toward identity swap between the "speaker" and the "listener" due to the reversibility of the personal pronouns, which causes the confusion. The specific humorous effect taken aside, in both Carroll's and Yaguello's works there is an implicit skepticism as regards the existence of an absolutely balanced shift between the interlocutors in the process of communication. Cf. Noam Chomsky's reference to the same process in his "Aspects of the Theory of Syntax":

> Linguistic Theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker – listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows the language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance
> (Chomsky 3)

Chomsky's requirement for a "perfect and unaffected knowledge of the shared language" (for the sake the ideal mutual understanding) implies at first site an equal position of each of the interacting language users. Similarly, a speaker – listener "shifting relationship" lies in the base of Roman Jakobson's model of communication as regards the "constitutive factors…in any act of verbal communication":

context

message

addresser .....addressee

contact

code

(Jakobson 353)

The "constitutive factors", according to the famous linguist imply provisionally equally powerful sides in the process of interaction. This is the base upon which he built his well-known scheme of the functions of language:

speaker.....listener

expressive function	**phatic function**	**conative function**
(emotion)	**(contact)**	**(command)**

(ibid.)

One can explain the "shifting" in question accordingly with the expressed emotion coming from the speaker that reaches the listener as a "command". It comes as the result of the urge or the impulse to communicate something. The "command" then represents the reaction to the emotional flow from the speaker, taken by the listener as a message to be "obeyed". The latter provides the contact line with the former which (seemingly) "keeps the balance" by means of the phatic function. Following the same model Jakobson introduces the metalingual function with its major task: to point at the specific code of the narrative:

speaker.....listener

emotion code command

expressive function + metalingual function

↓→ poetic/creative function ← ↓

He claims further that the combination between the expressive and the metalingual functions creates the so called "poetic function of language":

> …the *poetic* function (which I intended to refer to any creative use of language rather than simply to poetry) highlights "the palpability of signs", undermining any sense of natural or transparent connection between a signifier and a referent
> (Chandler 185, original emphasis)

However, at this point the "poetic/creative" function of language indicates a certain "break in the shift". It logically suggests a "stronger" and a "weaker" position in the exchange of meaningful utterances in the process of verbal interaction. One cannot expect each side to be equally creative, simply because creativity that depends on emotion excludes uniformity. This view, on its turn, supports Chomsky's idea of "language competence", as relevant to Jakobson's "creativity" connected in fact with the capacity of the speakers to "generate new language"…

> A grammar of a language purports to be a description of the ideal speaker – hearer intrinsic competence. If the grammar is, furthermore, perfectly explicit – in other words, if it does not rely on the intelligence of the understanding reader but rather provides an explicit analysis of his contribution – we may somewhat redundantly call it a generative grammar.
> (Chomsky ibid.)

Apparently, Jakobson and Chomsky, independently from each other started the development of their theses from the assumption that "role shifting" really exists, to come indirectly (without though officially admitting it) to the awareness of the "imbalance". This is the major claim of this part of my study and it matches the thesis that the linguistic side of power imposition is expressed ("generated") when "my" narrative is juxtaposed to "your" narrative. In what comes next, I build a model, based on the assumption that the capacity of humans to generate creatively "new language" makes them successfully use these narratives in a discourse where they exercise power on each other. This explains how these narratives in question appear and function on the base of the interpretation of "myths", as shown in the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes:

> It is very interesting to look at the way /../ in which an individual, who has by right and by inheritance a certain account of the mythology or the legendary tradition of his own group, reacts when he listens to a different version given by somebody belonging to a different family or to a different clan or lineage, which to some extent is similar but to some extent too is extremely different
> …….

> Now we would think that it is impossible that two accounts which are not the same can be true at the same time, but, nevertheless, they seem to be accepted as true in some cases, the only difference made is that one account is considered better or more accurate than the other
> (Lévi-Strauss 41-42)

The implication is that myths, in their evolution in human cultural history from religious parables to Barthes' beliefs "that go without saying" have always been in a serious connection with the creation of narratives of power:

> For Lévi-Strauss, myths were systems of binary alignment mediating between nature and culture. For Barthes, myths were the dominant discourses of contemporary culture. He argued that myths were a metalanguage operating through codes and serving the ideological function of naturalization.
> (Chandler 254)

All of the above requires a deeper insight into the type of interrelationship between "narratives" and "myths". Narratives, according to Michael Toolan:

> …are everywhere, performing countless functions in human interaction… systematic analytical attention to the logic and dynamics of language behavior can shed light on any sub-domain or mode of (language) behavior. The mode spotlighted here is narrative
> (Toolan 8)

This complex observation provokes the author to exclaim:

> What is it about narrative that makes it such a pervasive and fascinating phenomenon? And how can one begin to answer such a question without entering into a narrative of one's own?
> (ibid.)

In the search of an answer to this rhetorical question, Michael Toolan discovers the basic components: the "tale" and the "teller" with the remark that:

> There is always inherently a speaker, separate from what is spoken
> (ibid.)

The inference is that narratives exist somewhat "independently" between the "teller" and the "addressee". This is what makes possible the freedom of a "teller" to shape up the preferred reading, i.e. – to interpret the "tale"

in such a way so that it manipulates the addressees and imposes power on them because:

> Narrators are typically trusted by their addressees…Narrators assert that their authority to tell, to take up the role of knower, or entertainer, or producer in relation to the addressee's adopted role of learner or consumer.
> (ibid.)

The author supports the idea more specifically with the following statement:

> Narratives…told by journalists, politicians, colleagues…. all those, which originate from those who have power, authority, or influence on us
> ……..
> Any narrator then is ordinarily granted, as a rebuttable presumption, a level of trust and authority which is also a granting or asserting of power
> (ibid.)

All of the above allows Michael Toolan to conclude that:

> **To narrate is to bid for a kind of power**

This conclusion determines the narrative itself as a source of power. One can explain it logically with the previously mentioned "trust". The question however is "what is it that makes the average community member trust the narrators to an extent, which gives them power to manipulate the former"?

> The narrator him/herself according to the same author: …is often "impersonalized" and attended to as a disembodied voice
> (ibid.)

In other words, they function as the myths above that go "without saying". Therefore narratives execute power on the addressees, being the product of an (kind of a)" impersonalized" teller. This definition can easily lead toward links with mythology and religion because of the "whiff" of metaphysical power coming from a "disembodied voice" …

Originally, myths are narratives that are associated with secrets and mystery on a religious basis as the very etymology of the Greek word "mythos" (μῦθος ,with the same original meaning) suggests.

As regards their contents, they represent attempts to explain the basic principles of cosmogony.

One can admire the creativity and the poetic value of the metaphors referring to the human habitat, no matter how unreal, metaphysical or fantastic they may sound. On the contrary, quite often these metaphors give artistic, but absolutely down-to-earth answers to questions that humans have always been interested in…

However, myths not only are the earliest cognitive narratives in the history of human culture: they also represent the beliefs of our ancestors about the structural organization of individuals into communal political order. A relevant reference here would be the Ancient Greek "Pantheon" as a projection of the relationship between the "oikos" (οἶκος – the household) and the "polis" (πόλις – the city-state, the polity). The "community" on top of Mount Olympus, for example is a sample of both a polity and a big family (not far though from the structure of ancient/primordial societies) where the frequent adultery of Zeus, the jealousy and the vindictiveness of Hera, the repulsiveness of Ares and the vanity of Aphrodite, the clumsiness of Hephaestus, etc. form a bunch of individuals subjugated to a certain common order that every normal human society is built upon. These myths give an explicit idea of the beliefs of the Ancient Greeks about the political structure of a society, based upon the specific role of individuals within its collective "ensemble".

That is why part of my analysis of myths as political (ideological) narratives indicating social order is related to the interaction of an individual or a group of individuals (different from the rest) and the collective of community members.

As I claim elsewhere:

> In an archetypal community … "to be different" is unacceptable, not allowed, even dangerous
> (Anastassov 2012 a)

The problem is that to be "individual" traditionally means to "sway" from the communal rules, which immediately triggers creation of ambivalent narratives, because there will be many in favor of the "rule break" alongside those who would stick to the status quo.. A striking example in this respect is the controversial stance on Prometheus' behavior in the famous myth. The trivial story goes that the titan saved humanity from annihilation (as Zeus had planned) by giving people the divine fire from Heaven (I am not going here into the details of the symbolic meaning of "fire" – it is the subject of a different type of study). The meaning of the endeavor has two well known antagonistic interpretations: Hesiod's – who

claims that Prometheus was a rebel who committed a crime because he disobeyed the will of Zeus (as the chief God) and deserved to be punished, and the other one - belonging to Aeschylus who praises the bound titan as the Hero-Savior.

The fact that there are two narratives supports the above idea by Claude Lévi-Strauss about the two different interpretations of the same myth with one of them considered "better" than the other, depending on the ideological position of the interpreters. This is what creates the antagonism between what is believed to be the "right" and what - "wrong". Moreover, it provides the necessary circumstances for the proclaiming of an (ephemeral and plausible) "objective truth" according to the specific biased interests of groups of people.

It would be a triviality to refer here to the universally valid at all times cultural opposition between "positive" and "negative". Science in its long history did not always need structuralism and post-structuralism to discover the natural human urge to polarize the surrounding world into "paired signifiers", a term used by Daniel Chandler in his "Semiotics. The Basics" in the explanation of "semiotic alignment":

> Paired signifiers are seen by structuralist theorists as part of the "deep/or "hidden"/ structure" of texts, shaping the preferred reading
> (Chandler 100)

"Semiotic alignment" suggests sets of references/associations that go alongside the "paired signifiers" and function as myths/narratives. A general "good" vs. "evil" will then evoke the emergence of series of clusters of aligned oppositions (of the type of "black" and "white" or "up" and "down") offering a useful platform for the perception of the polarization in question "for granted":

> Myths can function to hide the ideological function of signs. The power of such myths is that they "go without saying" and so appear not to need to be deciphered, interpreted or demystified. The similarity to Levi-Strauss is clear here: "I claim….to show, not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men's minds without being aware of the fact"
> (Chandler, 145).

In other words: Lévi-Strauss' claim supports Barthes's definition of "myth" as equal to "metalanguage":

> For Barthes, myths were the dominant discourses of contemporary culture. He argued that myths were a metalanguage operating through codes and serving the ideological function of naturalization.
> (Chandler 254)

It is way of conceptualizing the human need for "approval" of (among other things) their social behavior, cf.:

> …cultural myths help us to make sense of our experiences within a culture: they express and serve to organize shared ways of conceptualizing something within a culture
> (Chandler 143)

All of the above leaves the impression of the existence of a human desire for a "general rule" that controls with no exceptions social behavior within the framework of communal life.

However, in the formation of narratives that reflect the social behavior in question there is a certain "gap" between the "rule obedience" (collective) and the "rule breaking" (individual) as mentioned above. The correlation between the individual and the collective side of language is referred to by Saussure in two at first sight contradictory explanations which in fact supplement each other:

> A language as a collective phenomenon, takes the form of a totality of imprints in everyone's brain, /.../ Thus it is something which is in each individual, but is none the less common to all. At the same time, it is out of reach of any deliberate interference by individuals
> (Saussure 19)

And:

> There is *nothing collective* about speech. Its manifestations are *individual* and *ephemeral.* It is *more than an aggregate of particular cases,* which may be represented by the following *formula*: (1+1'+1"+1'"…)
> (ibid.)

There is nothing extraordinary about the two statements: they go "hand-in-hand" to justify the common role of both sides in the shift from "language competence" to "language performance". The implication is that the "collective" capacity of humans to generate new language performs "individually" in the process of interaction, which causes the imbalance of roles and hence – the possible power imposition and maintenance as a final aim.

To illustrate how the suggested "model" works in a literary text, here is an abstract from Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking Glass" (often referred to by political theorists) where the language base of the "power of the individual narrator" is demonstrated with a focus on his/her expected dominance:

> There is glory for you
> I don't know what you mean by "glory,"' Alice said.
> Of course, you don't – till I tell you. I meant there is a nice know-down argument for you!
> But glory doesn't mean a "nice knock-down argument,"' Alice objected.
> When I use a word, /.../, it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.
> The question is, said Alice, whether you can make words mean so many different things.
> The question is, said Humpty Dumpty, which is to be master – that's all.
> (Carroll 100)

Apparently, power imposition in human language interaction relies on the "individual play with language" within the constraints of the communal linguistic code. Humpty Dumpty challenges inquisitive Alice by breaking the language code that she sticks to, by using his ability to "play" with it (and generate new meanings). In human communal interaction, it will be easy to project the "language play" onto the "(individual)play with community rules" within the constraints of the general communal code.

"Individuality" is crucial in the creation of a model of the structure of human communities where "communal egalitarianism" gives way to the dominance of a powerful persona who maneuvers the "listener – community member" in the direction of what was previously determined as "shaping up of the preferred reading of a narrative". All this leads toward a language "ego-trip", or the superiority of "my" narrative, as it will be discussed more in detail in the following chapters.

In what comes next there is an additional reference to the function of the offered model in a literary text. In two samples of "Barthes' myths" (Jesus as a "Sad God" and the Aristotelian "Perfect" Tragedy) Umberto Eco in "The Name of The Rose" introduces the political connotation of the opposition between "my" narrative vs. "your" narrative, as follows:

1. Did Jesus Ever Laugh? (The Myth of Jesus as a "The Only True, Sad God")

This is the "myth" of "A Jesus" as a symbol of suffering and sadness, presented by Umberto Eco according to the commonly accepted doctrine of the (Medieval) Catholic Church. It follows the clash between the narrative of Jorge de Burgos (the voice of the "manipulator") and William of Baskerville (the voice of the "truth"). The dialog reflects the antagonism between two opposing political ideologies and reveals the way in which an interested institution (The Church) creates a manipulative narrative in order to maintain the already achieved status of power:

> Our Lord never told comedies or fables, but only clear parables which allegorically instruct us on how to win paradise, and so be it I wonder, William said, why you are so opposed to the idea that Jesus may have laughed. I believe laughter is a good medicine, like baths to treat humors and the other afflictions of the body, melancholy in particular.
> ..
> Laughter shakes the body, distorts the features of the face, makes man similar to the monkey.
> Monkeys don't laugh; laughter is proper to man, it is a sign of his rationality, William said. Speech is also a sign of human rationality, and with speech a man can blaspheme against God. Not everything that is proper to man is necessarily good. He who laughs does not believe in what he laughs at, but neither does he hate it. Therefore, laughing at evil means denying the power through which good is self-propagating.
> ..
> Pliny the Younger wrote, Sometimes I laugh, I jest, I play, because I am a man. They were pagans, Jorge replied. The Rule forbids with stern words these trivialities:
> ..
> (Eco 131a)

This part of the "dispute" introduces Jorge de Burgos and his obsession with the idea that Jesus never laughed. Umberto Eco constructs a religious framework of an ideology that aims at a "preferred reading" of the myth of Jesus for the sake of political manipulation in the direction of power. Taking Eco's Mediaeval setting into account, one should remember that Europe of that time was extremely poor, and the idea of a "Sad God who suffered on the cross to absolve us from our sins" perfectly matched the manipulative ideology of the suppression of any other understanding of life, but misery. The roundup is that a "myth-narrative" of the type presented here can be created by hiding part of the "truth about something", so that finally a certain ideological aim is achieved.

The ideology itself traditionally includes reference to an authority, often rejected and "blasphemed and stigmatized" as a "wrong one" for the needs of political manipulation. It follows the same logic as above: concealing of the "whole truth" about something with the intention to leave the average community members believe that it (the "something") does not exist. One can discover it in the next sample passage from "The Name of the Rose" as regards:

2. The issue of the second part of Aristotle's "Poetics" on comedy
(The Myth of Tragedy as "The Only True, Serious Art")

The passage reveals Jorge de Burgos' principles of creating the narrative in question with the very mechanism of "hiding the truth":

> I want to see the second book of the Poetics of Aristotle, the book everyone has believed lost or never written, and of which you hold perhaps the only copy
> (Eco 466a)

How did you guess it was the second book of Aristotle?

> Your anathemas against laughter/.../ Here Aristotle sees the tendency to laughter as a force for good, which can also have an instructive value /.../ it makes us say: Ah, this is is just how things are, and I didn't know if. Truth reached by depicting men and the world as worse than they are or than we believe them to be, worse in any case than the epics, the tragedies, lives of the saints have shown them to us...
> *(Eco 471-472a)*

In the debate between the two men, one can observe Eco's post-structural/post-modern tendency to discover the "truth" as based on the match of supplementary forces rather than oppositions. However, the Benedictine monk prefers to keep away the ideologically embarrassing part of it by hiding it.

> To William's question, "Why did you want to shield this book more than so many others?" Jorge answers back: "Because it was the Philosopher. Every book by that man has destroyed a part of the learning that Christianity had accumulated over the centuries"
> (Eco 473a)

The hiding of a prestigious ideology is part of the function of the model of "my" narrative vs. "your" narrative. Politicians often applied it in human political history for the sake of power imposition. This is, for example, the

case of the "sacred status" of the Bible, which (before it was translated into the modern European languages) was kept out of the reach of the regular believers. This is also the case of incriminating and even burning of books in the remote and more recent past and (sadly) now. This is also the common practice of the "shaped up" reading of the philosophy of any authority according to the particular needs of the political governance in power. Aristotle's and Plato's philosophy played an enormously important role in the establishment of Medieval Christian- religion-based political ideology for the implementation of the binary opposition of "right" and " wrong" in human life. However, what Aristotle and Plato had in their vision of the perfect community differs from the Medieval (Christian) application of their philosophy of "just" and "unjust". A deeper insight into similar problems in human history reveals the relevant case of conventional Christianity and its difference from the much closer to the initial story of Jesus "Gnostic Gospels". The same exists also in the notorious discrepancy between Islamic Philosophy, originally based on the human desire for knowledge and Political Islam as a deviation of the former. More recent examples refer to Karl Marx' s deviation of Hegel's philosophy, reaching a climax with Soviet-Leninism so drastically differing from Classical Marxism in the direction of dictatorship... The whole problem of the use of prestigious ideologies for the production of "readymade answers" to political issues will be discussed further within the context of "leadership".

To conclude with the introduction of the "Barthes' myths" and how they contribute to the creation of ideologically powerful narratives: there is one more important problem to be seriously considered. Namely: Before the actual end of "The Name of the Rose", the reader comes across the author's attempt to demonstrate the human natural desire for obedience of the rules of "right" and "wrong". It is a step "backwards", somewhat surprising with its "withdrawal" from the initially presented post-structural line of rebuttal of the rigid binarism:

> Do you mean, I asked, that there would be no possible and communicable learning any more if the very criterion of truth were lacking, or do you mean you could no longer communicate what you know because others would not allow you to?
> At that moment a section of the dormitory roof collapsed with a huge din, blowing a cloud of sparks into the sky. Some of the sheep and goats wandering through the grounds went past us, bleating horribly. A group of servants also went by us, shouting, nearly knocking us down
> (Eco 493a)

The scene that reveals in an almost cinematographic Hitchcock style a "confusion" that triggers William's final word, "the" word that "was with God, and the Word was God" (the logos) that fights against the restrictions of order and cannot live without it:

There is too much confusion here, William said:

> ***Non in commotione, non in commotione Dominus...***
> (Not in confusion, not in confusion, Lord)
> (ibid. a)

With this final exclamation, uttered by William of Baskerville Umberto Eco offers a proof of the necessity of humans to follow the Barthes' myths. It declares the need of the average community members of a binary opposition in the perception of the world. This is what supports my thesis that narratives are used for the imposition and maintenance of powerful order over these community members that need to both follow it and break it. The implication is that "to follow the rules" makes the self-imposed power (naturally) possible...

This chapter concludes with reference to Chomsky's "language competence" as innate and universal Cartesian capacity of the human mind to use language as a means of political interaction. The "generation of new forms" at any language level is in the base of the creation of narratives used as "Barthes'" myths when it comes to the imposition of power and its maintenance in the dynamic communal life of "Homo Loquens-Politicus".

In general: the final judgement is that human language communication itself exists on the base of imbalance of power between the interlocutors. It is a characteristic feature that further affects the political status of the community where these interlocutors live in the sense that it allows them to create narratives of manipulation for the sake of power imposition. It is the power of a discourse, created on the base of an antagonistic clash of these narratives with a division between a "stronger" and a "weaker" one...

CHAPTER TWO

THE LANGUAGE OF POLITICAL PERSUASION IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

Rhetoric and Drama as Sources of Power Imposition

This chapter uses Classical Rhetoric as a base to elaborate further on the linguistic side of the power of political discourse. I refer to drama performance as a support of the argument that Aristotelian "ethos" (that is, the dynamics of emotion in human social interaction) plays a significant role in the use of rhetorical power in political governance. The point is that in Classical Antiquity the persuasive and manipulative language of rhetoric did not differ much in the domains of drama, law, and politics. Drama itself was the perfect way of educating the average citizen of what was beneficial for his/her communal political life. The conclusion is that the language of rhetoric provides the necessary "emotion" to keep it relevant to the binary character of social and cultural ethics and thus – to impose and maintain political power.

Scholars agree in general that human language follows a certain logic that makes communal life possible with its members taken as a group of people obeying its "strict" and" unbreakable" rules. Language, however, as pointed in the previous chapter, has an intellectual power that turns speech into something more than just a formal code. No matter how logically "strict" language structural rules may be – the fact that they can be creatively modified (exceptions to the rules can be "generated" as shown above) means that it is an open system that cannot be explained simply by means of just formal logic. It implies reasoning, inseparable from "ethos" (and even "pathos" – the basic Aristotelian components of rhetoric) because emotion plays an important role in language interaction. As I argue elsewhere:

The use of the term "logos" for "word", as it appears in the Middle Greek version of the Bible:

> Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
>
> En archē ēn ho Lógos, kaì ho Lógos ēn pròs tòn Theón, kaì Theòs ēn ho Lógos.
>
> (In beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the God, and God was the Word).
>
> suggests the power of the human intellect that turns speech into something more than just a formal-mechanical code. The human word as "logos" goes along, according to Aristotle also with "ethos" and "pathos" because of its ability to creatively impose power using the manipulative-emotional side of rhetoric. In the social, political and cultural history of "Homo Loquens" ("The Talking Man"), emotion has always played an important role in the social identity of people on the principle of "my word" vs. "your word".
> (Anastassov 32b)

The explanation goes chronologically far back to the times of the emergence of language as a human attribute. I would rather ignore here the popular theory of origin of language as the result of collective survival and go for the idea of its emotional character as defined by Jean Jacques Rousseau:

> One does not begin by reasoning but by feeling. It is argued that men invented speech to express their needs, but this view seems untenable to me. The natural effect of the first needs was to separate men, not to bring them together.
> From that alone it follows that the origin of language is not really due to the first needs of men;
> ……..
> From what then could come this beginning? The answer is from moral needs, from the passions. All passions bring closer men driven apart by the necessity of trying to survive. It is not hunger or thirst, but love, hate, pity, anger that draw out the first voices.
> ……..
> And so, the most ancient words were invented; and so, it was that the first languages were musical and passionate before being simple and methodical.
> (Rousseau 13)

Rousseau's claim suggests an imbalanced level of impact when it comes to the power of the expressed emotion in human interaction. In the exchange of passionate feelings there must have been a "stronger" counterpart with the desire to dominate over the "weaker" one. As I previously suggested: it

is difficult to imagine a "balanced" emotion in human interaction. In this respect, we can interpret the already discussed scheme of the functions of language, suggested by Roman Jakobson:

contact

speaker.....listener

expressing emotion receiving/obeying command code

As:

I (the speaker) want you (the listener) to share with me my emotion the way I feel it

In the discourse that was referred to above between Lewis Carroll's characters Alice and Humpty Dumpty, the latter that creates the "narrative of powerful discourse" by imposing on the former his conception of "truth". Hence: "The question is, which is to be master" is a statement where the use of the pronoun "which" instead of "who" suggests the binary character of the type "which one(of the two)", implying "the ontological division of a domain into two discrete categories (dichotomies) or polarities", as defined by Chandler (244-245).. It is a definition that supports the idea of the existence of a stronger part in human language interaction with the claim that the" "truth" belongs on its side. (How Carroll gets there is yet another interesting story that I am planning to do research on in the near future…) The binary character of the opposition, in this context (considering Saussure's structural language philosophy into account) seems to be the source of "objective" knowledge about "the truth" (if anything like this exists at all)), based upon the principle of "markedness":

> Every single constituent of any linguistic system is built on an opposition of two logical contradictions: the presence of an attribute ("markedness") in contraposition to its absence "unmarkedness")
> (Chandler 93-94)

The implication is that there is no knowledge about "what things are" (what is" true" or "considered to be true") without a contrast to "what they are not" (what is "not true" or "not considered to be true"). When it comes to the structural analysis of political discourse the knowledge of the "objective" truth (following the logic of the present study) will depend on the skills of the "stronger interlocutor" to use emotion (that is, to

artificially manipulate the "markedness") so that "my truth" counts as the only valid one for the welfare of the community. "My truth" in this context is the one that suits the interests of the ruling part of the community. All of this suggests that the persuasive power of language can be used for the creation of discourse, based on the strength of the one of the competing narratives ("my" narrative vs. "your" narrative) to dominate with its" version of the truth". Aristotle had a slightly different way of defining rhetoric with the claim that it is "composed of analytical knowledge and the ethical side of political knowledge" (Garver 4). It means that rhetoric as knowledge acquisition of the "political truth" according to the Classical philosopher depends on the contrast between reasoning and emotion. In other words: knowledge of the "truth" about a certain political situation depends basically on "logos" (reasoning), but the "speaker" by using "ethos" can emotionally affect (manipulate) the "listener". Aristotle tells us that rhetoric is an intellectual virtue oriented toward "good ends". What "good ends" means becomes clear when we consider the the following (Aristotelian) statement:

> There is no great gap between my deliberating on what is best for me and my persuading you about what is best for you, because the human good is best for both of us
> (Garver 10)

The above statement sounds far too idealistic-utopian for the people of today. It is not surprising why Eugene Garver asks himself:

> **Is Aristotle naive?**

It is difficult, from our contemporary point of view to give an immediate answer to this question. It triggers on its turn the issue of the aims of Aristotelian rhetoric:

> The central question that makes the Rhetoric of compelling interest is whether there can be a civic art of rhetoric, and, if so, how such a civic art can negotiate a place for itself alongside professional arts, on the one hand, and ethical and professional activities that are matters of virtue, not art, on the other
> (ibid.)

What is important to remember about Aristotelian rhetoric in this context is the fact that it plays an extremely serious role in the political life of the community:

> Making policy decisions and legal judgements, giving advice, persuading others about matters of polity and law, these are all essential political activities
> (Garver 7)

This is what leads the cited author to his further comments:

> Aristotle wants to show how the activities that are central to citizenship and human well-being can be subject to rational analysis and to presentation as an art
> (Garver 7)

The problem with the answer to this question depends on the meaning and the place of "rational analysis" in communal political life. Garver's analysis of Aristotle's "Rhetoric" offers two parallel definitions of its political meaning:

1. The Civic Art of Rhetoric

A civic art of rhetoric combines the almost incompatible properties of craft and appropriateness to citizens

2. The Professional Art of Rhetoric

> A professional art of rhetoric like any power proves opposites, while civic activities are oriented toward the good
> (Garver 7-8)

In this respect, the position taken in this study allows a reference to the basic characteristics of human language as a means of "self-expression". To believe that it is just an instrument for communication would be an exaggeration, considering the above mentioned Rousseau's thesis about the origin of language. All living beings on Earth have their own communication systems and many of them depend on the articulation of vocal sounds as in human language, but none of them possesses the capacity of "generating new language". This is what makes me confident in my belief that this "human capacity" (the "language competence-language performance" of Homo Loquens), functions, like art, on a platform of shared emotions. In this respect, Garver's question about Aristotle's naivety can be answered very cautiously negatively with the warning that the Ancient Greek philosopher might have believed in the "civic" side of rhetoric as the holder of a "political truth" (tentatively: a real "objective truth"), "safe "from the artistic "instability" of emotion.

This further leads the classical philosopher to the distinction between rhetoric and oratory:

> Rhetorical power and excellence of speech (which together constitute rhetoric) belong to fine art but oratory (ars oratoria), the art of using people's weakness for one's own aims /…/ is unworthy of any respect whatsoever
> (Garver. 10)

This is a thought that supports the language base of power imposition in the sense that oratory is an extreme stage in the hierarchy of professional rhetorical persuasion.

Aristotle's idea of rhetoric as "performance" suggests a certain "priority" of the "professional" (emotional) element (the changeable, the creative one; the one that can be both beneficial and manipulative for the community members) over the "civic" one (the stable, the reliable, the "true, authentic" one). The "creativity" suggests "freedom" which Aristotle connects with "democracy":

> Art – techne –teachable techniques for success is a threat to the established order because it offers equal opportunities, focusing on performance instead of provenance
> (Garver 7-8)

that is:

> Rhetoric is a liberating force in the hands of democratic politicians, focusing against the irrationalities of entrenched privilege
> (Ibid.)

and finally:

> Rhetoric, he (Aristotle) tell us, is a faculty that proves opposites, that allows us to argue on both sides of a question
> (ibid.)

When "arguing on both sides of a question" we come to the point of a presumably democratic dispute of opposites, but supposedly implying power imposition coming from the stronger part:

1. Something that "threatens the established order", because it depends on the capacity of language to "generate" new forms and meanings, i.e. the above discussed "breaking of rules"

2. Something that absolutely fits the idea of "markedness" of structural semiotics, seemingly providing the debate with the "real" knowledge of the political truth

Structural semiotics itself discovered that:

> Opposites are rarely equally weighed. How strongly a term is marked also depends on contextual frameworks such as genres and sociolects and in some contexts a pairing may be very deliberately and explicitly revised when an interest group seeks to challenge the ideological priorities which the markedness may be taken to reflect
> (Chandler 93)

Chandler's statement leads further to the broader issue of the importance of opposites in human life:

> It is an open question whether our tendency to think in opposites is determined by the prominence of oppositions in language or whether language merely reflects a universal human characteristic
> While there are no opposites in nature, the binary oppositions that we employ in our cultural practices help to generate order out of the dynamic complexity of our experience. It is a feature of culture that binary oppositions come to seem natural to members of a culture
> (Chandler 92)

All of the above implies that binary oppositions are inseparable from the routine cultural practices of humans in their everyday communal life. They seem to function as a way of life that is natural to the members of a culture. They give the necessary feeling of order that everybody wants to see and experience in their understanding of happiness, confidence, and safety. This sense of "order" emerges from the desire to trust a "power" that establishes this order. On the level of political governance, myths and religious beliefs fulfilled that role by means of the "impersonalized, disembodied voices that make things go without saying". It is a fact that in the history of human culture religious rituals initiated the tradition of drama performance. At the time of Classical Antiquity, the latter was inseparable from the political education of the communal members. Ancient drama often uses (ritualistic) religious-mythological attributes to offer on a much more direct (hence much easier and better acceptable) level than strictly speaking political persuasion an ethical model of "orderly well-being". Its educational role never ceased to influence people ever since, as noticed by drama theorist Martin Esslin:

> Drama has become one of the principal vehicles of information, one of the prevailing methods of "thinking" about life and its situations….Drama has become one of the principal means of communication of ideas and, even more importantly, modes of human behavior in our civilization… Aristotle's Poetics derives its consequences, which have often assumed the authority of unbreakable rules from consideration of what kinds of action, what kinds of characters would exercise the most powerful emotional effect upon the audience
> (Esslin 13)

In a similar context, American scholar Elizabeth S. Belfiore with the claim that "tragedy is a living thing" offers the following statement:

> Aristotle's views on tragic emotion" were so much a part of Greek history, philosophy, and social tradition
> (Belfiore 4)

An explanation of this statement can be found in the everlasting crave of humans to rely on a criterion that gives them confidence in the "righteousness" of their social conduct. It relates to their common tendency to observe themselves "from a distance", be it a "Bildungsroman", or a modern "soap opera", or an "action movie" … I never peer into the neighbors' kitchen from my kitchen's window to check what they are having for breakfast, but I would enjoy watching it presented in a TV serial for example. It gives me an idea of what my "relationships with the neighbors" look like outside my subjective (and biased) egocentric judgement. Apparently, humans in their communal essence need (emotional) narratives to teach them how to "locate" their individual ego" in a collective habitat, that is, by observing themselves "from a distance" – to "objectively" judge whether they are wrongdoing or not…

Martin Esslin asks himself:

> if a play, or a dramatic work of cinema or television produces certain effect, insights, or emotion in a member of the audience what has actually taken place? How was it brought about?
> (Esslin 18)

And the answer follows in his definition of "drama performance" as an "analysis of what happens between the originator of the communication and its recipient". This is what makes him believe that:

> Semiotics provides a most valuable method for a better understanding of the way dramatic performance creates its mimesis of human interaction
> (Esslin 21)

Let us go back to Belfiore's idea of tragedy as a living thing. It will be relevant here to look at the way she finds an answer to the question "How tragedy affects the audience the way it does?" by following her own statement that: "The tragic plot arouses emotion in the audience" (Belfiore 34). In deepening her analysis the author goes beyond Aristotle's postulate about "pity, fear and catharsis" to concentrate on a more reasonable (practical) definition of what she calls "beneficial fear":

> It is a commonplace in Greek thought that a certain kind of fear is essential to a well-ordered society. This beneficial fear, which preserves law and custom prevents civil strife, and averts shameless crimes against kin, is the fear of wrongdoing and the respect parents, gods and custom
> (Belfiore 9)

The "fear of wrongdoing" in Belfiore's understanding is a fear of breaking the rules of a "well-ordered" society alongside with the awe for its symbolic attributes: "parents, gods, custom"…The author associates the "breaking of the rules" itself, as she claims, with a more practical reason:

> Particularly at feasts, festivals and symposia (drinking parties) all of which involved drinking celebrating and competition, disruptive strife among friends (philoi) was always a danger ... Tragic fear, according to Aristotle, is aroused not by what is merely painful and destructive but by deeds of violence among kin
> (Belfiore 10)

I take the liberty here to express my doubts about the relevance of the last two lines of the citation as ascribed to Aristotle and point at another statement, made by Belfiore herself where she explains the notion of "fear" in a more general (and more convincing) way:

> The Greeks were much aware of the need of fear, a certain kind of fear to control the aggressive and competitive tendencies of their society. In lyric poetry, in tragedy and in philosophy, it is a common theme that fear of wrongdoing is a necessary antidote to a natural desire to act aggressively and shamelessly
> (Belfiore 4)

Belfiore's "fear" then is the same as the Aristotelian "good" in Classical Ancient society. It functions in an antagonistic clash with the destructive

force of "wrongdoing". The logic of the "model" would be easy to grasp if in the drama of Greek Antiquity there existed a direct persuasive line coming from the stage action and approaching the viewer. However, there is the mediating role of the chorus that engaged the mind of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in his analysis of "The Birth of Tragedy", metaphorically presented by means of the dichotomy between Apollo and Dionysus. According to Richard Harland, Nietzsche is aware of the presence of the purity, lucidity, poise and formal harmony in Greek tragedy, associating them with the Greek god Apollo, but:

> …he also recognizes a darker side, which Classical scholars and critics had preferred to ignore.
> (Harland 128)

Walter Kaufmann declares that:

> Dionysus, in Nietzsche's first book is the symbol of that drunken frenzy which threatens to destroy all forms and codes
> (Kaufmann 128)

We should take the "drunken frenzy" (as part of the cult of Dionysus) here metaphorically because it symbolizes the wild freedom of "breaking rules" going up to the extreme of destruction. No matter how carefully a parent would teach a child to construct, say, a tower of cubes, the child would enjoy even more kicking it, with all the cubes flying around the place, rather than admiring the completed result of the construction. The "freedom of destruction" on its turn, as Gilles Deleuze admits is a clash:

> …between primitive units and individuation, willing and appearance, life and suffering
> (Deleuze11)

In this respect the Apollo: Dionysus dichotomy, according to the French scholar is a relationship where:

> Apollo is the divine incarnation of the principle of individuation .He constructs the appearance of the appearance, the beautiful appearance. Dionysus, on the contrary, relates to the primitive units, he shatters the individual, drags him into the great shipwreck, and absorbs him into original being…
> (Deleuze 11)

Deleuze concludes that Apollo and Dionysus do not appear in a binary opposition but rather function as two antithetical ways of resolving the

contradiction where the antithesis transforms into a unity. Tragedy is then: "…this reconciliation, this wonderful and precarious alliance dominated by Dionysus" (Deleuze 12)

A reference to what has already been said about Aristotelian rhetoric immediately evokes association with the "civic" moment in it with the harmony, order and beauty of Apollo, and the professional-emotional one – with the chaos, destructive force and ugliness of Dionysus. It would not be fair to stop here though, without the reminder that "Dionysian" destruction also means the freedom of "breaking the rules" which leads to further associations with change, creativity, innovation and finally, movement and progress. The implication hence is that Belfiore's - Aristotelian "fear of evil" is a warning that comes from the chorus as "the only logical spectator" who mediates it to the audience because, as Deleuze puts it: "it sees Dionysus as its lord and master" (Deleuze Ibid.). It is a kind of a warning that the dynamics of power imbalance in people's interaction is the natural way of establishing political order rather than the idealistic "order", coming from Apollo…

> Whereas attention had been previously focused upon the audience's identification with the individual tragic protagonist (…), Nietzsche argues that the audience also, and more importantly, identifies with the chorus. The audience of Attic tragedy discovered itself in the chorus of the orchestra. And the chorus has a ritualistic role, associated with music, and expressing communal feelings, dark fears, instinctive premonitions. (Harland 126)

The conclusion is that classical rhetoric and ancient drama as the basic sources of ideological narratives are linguistic instruments of power imposition because they taught (preached to) our ancestors how to tell apart "right" from "wrong". The assumption is that the established order in the polity requires obedience of rules, while breaking those means a crime. However, in reality things look much more complex than that. Aristotle in his speculations about the artistic-emotional side of rhetoric and classical drama with its "fear of evil, shame, and disgrace" proves that human social life is based on oppositions with power playing a crucial role in the establishment of communal order. It is power, emerging from the capacity of humans, as Aristotle had noticed, to "invest" emotion in the persuasive use of language.

CHAPTER THREE

LANGUAGE AND THINKING IN THE IMPOSITION AND MAINTENANCE OF POWER

Language Relativity and Political Communal Order

This chapter deals with the possible (believed or imagined) impact of "language" over "thinking" in the conceptualization of the political life of human society. I refer to the Sapir-Whorf -Hypothesis and the theory of linguistic relativity in the identification of language as the source of political power. George Orwell's theory of "Newspeak" ("1984") supports the idea of the use of language for political manipulation. The correlation between "language" and "thinking" is referred to the link between "language" and (political) "reality" (which on its turn triggers debate on the issue whether "language" reflects "reality" and hence – whose "reality" and what "reality?") The two questions are interdependent because together they shed light on the issue of "political truth." (to be referred to in the next chapter from a different perspective).

As an answer to the question: "Which goes first? Language or Thinking?" many non-biased people would definitely go for "Thinking". It is an answer that reflects the romantic" à la Rousseau" understanding of the emotional-expressive origin of language as discussed above. It means that the majority of humans are predisposed to believe that language serves as a formalistic way of articulating "free" thoughts that are "trapped" in the structural framework of a "formal code".

However, in the history of linguistic, social and political anthropology and philosophy there have been many attempts to prove the priority of language over thought in the sense that human speech predetermines conceptual thinking about "reality". One can see this idea most explicitly in the (known among linguists and language anthropologists) "Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis", which follows the principle of "linguistic relativity":

> Sapir's and Whorf's ideas on these issues inspired a series of empirical and theoretical studies around the issue of "linguistic relativity"
> (Duranti 31-32)

Linguistic relativity (along with linguistic determinism and linguistic functionalism) is a trend, followed by many scholars who study the role of language in the "shaping up" of the worldviews of community members:

> Linguistic forms, either because of their arbitrary nature (for Sapir) or because of their implicit worldview (for Whorf), are seen as constraints on the ways in which individual speakers as members of speech communities perceive reality or are able to represent it
> (Duranti 26)

The arbitrary nature of language in Sapir's thesis for Alessandro Duranti is the lack of correspondence between form and connotation. This is what explains the fact that individual speakers do not possess the freedom of "playing with the linguistic forms". It is right the opposite of what lies in the fundamentals of my research (There is a more detailed reference to the Saussure's "arbitrariness of the linguistic sign" in the following chapter). As for the Whorfian "implicit worldview" – the belief is that the "constraints" come from the claim that the linguistic forms "a priori" comprise a certain view or attitude toward "reality".

Scholars agree that linguistic relativity has been the first major theoretical issue that occupied the minds of linguistic anthropologists. The belief is that there are two elements in its basis:

1. An "Idea"

About the Nineteen-Century Romantic association between language and the "spirit"

> (Geist) of a nation or the language and the worldview (Weltanschauung) of its speakers
> (Duranti 11)

This is popular among all scholars with knowledge of the effect of the discovery of Sanskrit on the development of both Indo-European linguistic-cultural studies and European Romanticism (Eighteenth – Nineteenth Centuries). The fact is that the Indo-European idea gave birth to nostalgic feelings toward a "glamorous past". Divided Italy remembered its Roman-Latin background. The Greeks under Ottoman hegemony realized that they were the successors of Homer and Aristotle. The Polish

craved for an old forgotten political might and Slavic-Catholic unity. The Germans living in many disconnected and dispersed principalities awakened for their common "Aryan" origin. When William Jones gave his famous report to the Asiatic Society in 1786 about the genetic relation between the Indo-European languages, nobody expected the significant political outcome from his discovery. The birth of Indo-European comparative-historical linguistics alongside the definition of the language families and their proto-status gave the initial impulse for the emergence and evolution of the typical for the epoch "Romantic Nationalism". At the beginning, the link between "Romantic Nationalism" and the Indo-European science revealed the Nineteen-Century tendency for generalizations based on just only the Indo-European languages. Later, the comparative-historical analysis of the Non-Indo-European ones discovered and added many more features to the universal picture of the languages of the world. The same link played a significant role in the process of "nation building" on the way to the establishment of "nation-states". Inasmuch positive its initial role was in the creation of the concept of "nation" and "national identity", it finally contributed to the disintegration of people on the principle of "una lingua – una patria". On the other hand: some expansionistic political regimes used the knowledge of the proto-status of language families as a reason for claiming dominance – as in the case of the Russians and the Pan-Slavic idea, the Germans and the Germanic "superiority" or the Turks and the Pan-Turkic model.

"The Idea" prepared the ground in its own way for the catastrophic events of the twentieth century. Throughout time, "Nationalism" deviated into "Chauvinism" and even "Nazism". Finally, instead of integrating people, the whole process triggered antagonism and hatred amongst them. All this made some scholars feel "a priori" predisposed against the "linguistic relativity" theory and the way Sapir and Whorf handled it due to its selective (biased) stance on different world cultures.

2. An "Encounter"

With the languages of the indigenous peoples of the Americas and the other continents (re)discovered by Europeans:

> The earlier encounters with American Indian languages sparked an interest in what a language could reveal about a people's view of the world……. since to be a full participant in a community, a person needs to be a speaker of the language(s) spoken in that community /…/ our interaction with the /…/ world around is always mediated through language(s)
> (Duranti 31-32)

"The Encounter" gives as a result classifications that essentially differ from the "standard" characteristic features, as postulated by comparativists for the Indo-European languages. This is why:

> …the Whorfian thesis is that people who speak languages with very different phonological, grammatical and semantic distinctions perceive and think about the world quite differently, their world views being shaped or determined by their language
> (Chandler 153)

This is the base of Whorf's "relativity principle" as formulated in his research on the language of the American Hopi Indians:

> Users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different type of observation and different evaluations of extremely similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world
> (Duranti 14)

As Andrea Nye further observes:

> Embedded in the grammar and lexicon of the American Hopi people, Whorf argues, is an ontology and a metaphysics radically different from those found in European languages… when a linguist "imposes his own ontology and linguistic pattern on the native he fails to understand the Hopi speaker
> (Nye 252)

"The Encounter" itself evokes critique from a couple of points of view. The Hopi language case that stimulated Whorf to draw his well-known conclusions can easily be associated with the so-called "hierarchical classification of languages". It suggests difference between Indo-European and Non-European languages based on the supposed "lower" cultural-intellectual development of the speakers of the latter ones. Nye's above mentioned reference to "European languages" is incorrect, since there are many languages spoken on European territory that do not belong to the Indo-European family, like Hungarian, Finnish, Lapp and Estonian, related to Turkish, that does not even originate from Europe.

Finally, this is why both "The Encounter" and "The Idea" made some of the contemporary linguists feel reluctant to accept fully the "Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis" in its extremes. About a decade after Whorf's observations on the language of the Hopi Indians there appeared Chomsky's theory of the universality of syntactic structures, based on the assumption that every

human being equally possesses the "language competence" of articulating and creatively using this "competence" in the generative processes of "language performance". It proves that no matter how different the culture of the "input" may be – the capacity of expressing thoughts in syntactic structures is equally valid for all of the representatives of the human species. It is known for a fact that if a newly-born-baby is taken, say, from an underdeveloped place in the Rain Forest Amazon region and is given for adoption to a family from Sweden, the child will start, when the appropriate time comes, to speak Swedish like a native speaker. This is what makes Chomsky's relation between "competence" and "performance" extremely valuable linguistically and politically, because it proves that there are no biological grounds for racial segregation and discrimination globally.

Let me generalize here that the language relativity theory and the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis do not give any serious proof for a certain priority of language over thinking in human political life. It becomes clear from all the references above, that politicians can obviously use language to manipulate thinking, but the opposite is also true because it interacts with the former in the reflection of the political habitat. The result is a "vicious circle" where the two mutually affect each other without any priority of one of them over the other. It will be interesting, in this respect, to investigate how language affects people's knowledge about their political time and space from a variety of different angles. In the context of my working platform, it will not be difficult to identify the "different items of knowledge", depending on the "clash" between the different "angles" from which the narratives of power are projected. It often happens in historiographic analyses where facts are either hidden or misinterpreted according to "which is master" (cf. Chapter 1) and how s(h)e presents them to the public.

The implication is that the "there can be more than one reality"- position matches in a way the major relationship between "my narrative" and "your narrative". If the former belongs to the "stronger side" of the interaction, it may "shape up" the desired (view on) "reality" by means of language. This is where some scholars believe that "linguistic relativity" brings up the issue of the supposed "priority of language over thinking" because:

> …the real world is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group….: We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation
> (Duranti 383)

"Certain choices of interpretation" however does not mean an "unconsciously built real world". It is simply another way of referring to the already discussed "shaping up of the preferred reading". The way Duranti formulated it suggests a use of language in the (manipulative) construction of worldviews among the average members of a polity. It supports my general idea that politicians use language as an instrument to manipulate people's views on the world, which is something very different from the belief that it "constructs reality". What in fact happens is (again) an actual construction of a narrative that makes the communal members take it "without saying"…

One of the most striking examples of the application of this process to a fictional (realistic though) political context in a literary work is George Orwell's conception of "Newspeak" in his famous dystopian novel "1984". The very term "Newspeak" implies a binary opposition with "Oldspeak" as a typical prerequisite of dystopian literature where a totalitarian political rule claims that it "builds" a "better" society than the previous one, which must be rejected. One can expect hence the language of the new social reality to reflect it by using a respectively new lexicon.

The basic principles of "Newspeak" follow the deliberate intention of the ruling class to manipulate the official language of "Oceania" (the imagined polity in the dystopian novel) so that threatening concepts for the regime "disappear" along with the words for them. With no words for "freedom" "peace", "self-expression", "democracy" or "equality", "individuality" and the like as in the vernacular of democratic societies, no thinking about them will be expected. This "abuse" affects not only the vocabulary, but also all the rest of the systematic levels of language, making any variety, color and creativity in its use impossible. The intervention into the relatively independent status of the language engulfs its system as a whole and thus achieves totalitarian goals such as control on the life of individuals, ban on initiative, deviation of history to end up finally with non-thinking, passively vegetating group of people instead of a normally living society. The example from Orwell's novel relates very strongly to the above given example from Umberto Eco's "The Name of The Rose" with the only difference that in the case of "1984" the focus goes not that much on the "hiding of a certain political truth", but rather on the way it is used to create a worldview without it…

There are many examples of deliberate intervention into language in the political history of humankind. A trivial example is the well- known reform of Atatürk in republican Turkey with the eradication of words from

Arabic and Persian origin attempting to break up with the Ottoman past. By pretending that there are no words of these origins in the Turkish language, Kemalists manipulated its history with the final goal to create a "new reality" for the inhabitants of this country. Some ex-Soviet satellite political governments had the language policy to coin up new words for existing concepts in an attempt to modify the connotation. For example, in expressing opinion or voting: the authorities used "concern" instead of "nay", with the intention to leave the (Orwellian) impression that there is no possible negative attitude toward the decisions of the respective political governance. In a similar way, the officially sanctioned "comrade" in some ex-communist countries for all the citizens meant to imply a total (quasi-democratic) "equality". It neglected the paradoxical "contradictio in adjecto" that in a society where the political regime divided the people into party-members and non-members there could not be any "equality" at all…

Back to the above example from Umberto Eco's "The Name of the Rose": William de Baskerville's argument: "You cannot eliminate laughter by eliminating the book" perfectly illustrates Sapir-Whorf's "relativity" and Orwell's "Newspeak", because it follows the principle of concealing (literally and metaphorically in the novels) the part of "the truth" that is politically unacceptable for a biased side. It means a conflict between two "realities" each of them supported by a certain ideology. In the case of Jorge de Burgos (William's counterpart in Eco's text) the hidden reality of "Aristotelian-Christian Laughter" infers suppression of "joy of life" (to further develop during Renaissance times) for the sake of the tolerated for political reasons gloomy atmosphere of tragedy and sorrow. In the case of "Newspeak", it is the expected total perception of a world with no concepts of democracy and freedom.

From a more general and political perspective: there are plenty of examples of the same type in history where "narratives-myths" are made use of to "hide" or "undermine" facts that are politically inappropriate for a person or a group of people. It will be enough to compare the myth about the actual beginning of WW II on September 1 1939, with the German invasion in Poland to the much less known (even "silenced") date of September 17th same year. On that day, the Soviets entered the same country from the East. This was a creation of "reality", which made millions of people believe that the Slavic country was the victim of only German fascism. Or, the construction of the "Berlin Wall"(1961) with the claim that it was erected because of the "threat coming from the West" with no admission of the fact that East Germany was becoming a "waste

land" under communist governance due to its harsh despotism and poor economy that urged people to flee...

As shown above: the present analysis has reservations as to the capacity of the "linguistic relativity"-theory to explain the role of language in the "construction of realities". I should admit though that it precisely points at the ability of political "actors" to manipulate people's views on the surrounding world by means of language. Whether we can call it "reality creation" is a complicated debatable issue that needs a deeper philosophical investigation. What linguistics may contribute with in the search of an answer to the question "What is real?" is the observation that language representations of "reality" are not identical copies of what they are supposed to represent, hence:

> Semiotics keeps us to not to take representations for granted as reflections of reality enabling us to take them apart and consider whose realities they represent
> (Chandler 81-82)

What is more to the point:

> Those who would learn from semiotics should search for /.../what has been denied, hidden or excluded so that the text may seem to tell the whole truth
> (Chandler ibid.)

This association with semiotics allows an interpretation of the political environment that "...becomes a text to be read like any other text" (Chandler 152-153). As in the case of the multiplicity of different possible readings of a text, the status of a polity can also be a subject of multiple understanding. The conclusion is that language participates in the construction of different worldviews among the inhabitants of the polity that can potentially function as ideological narratives, depending on their relevance to the process of power imposition.

In general: this chapter offers a critical stance on the language relativity theory and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, based on the assumption that language and thinking are dependent on each other in their function as an instrument of socio-political interaction. This observation leads further to an agreement with the constructivist idea that language participates in the creation of worldviews for the sake of political manipulation. It supports the basic idea of this research about the competition of narratives in the struggle for power imposition on both intra- communal and inter-communal level.

CHAPTER FOUR

LANGUAGE, REALITY AND TRUTH

Language, the Creation of "Political Reality" and the Manipulation of "Political Truth"

As a continuation of the previous chapter, this one offers some more speculations on the power of language to conceal the "(political) truth". I critically analyze some semiotic views on the role of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign in this process. Moreover, I pay attention to "constructivism" in the support of the idea that language "creates" different types of "truth" for the average consumers of political knowledge. The mechanics of "concealing the truth" is associated here with Foucault's definition of "discursive relations" in his analysis of madness.

The previous chapter expressed a critical stance on the theory of "linguistic relativity" and the "Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis" because language as "shared emotion" makes the supposed "priority over thought" more complex that it looks at first sight. In a speech act, the speaker and the listener are involved in an emotional game of rivalry between views. This rivalry requires a serious impact of thinking on language because the intellectual energy of the interlocutors engages into a struggle for dominance. The explanation of the process is in the role of the human brain to convert the uttered vocal signals of speech into analytical work:

> For Dewey, language is a biological activity continuous with other organic activities, but it also involves a "giant" step of requiring a speaker to take the view of others
> (Nye 5)

All of the above means that "what is said" (language) and "what is thought about what is said" (thought) are interrelated in a very sophisticated "liaison". "Taking the view of others" in this context means that in their dynamic linguistic interaction people exchange information with a different intensity of emotional impact that requires speculation and feedback. Semioticians usually go together with philosophers in the search

of an explanation of how this impact affects the way humans think about the surrounding world: how they perceive it, explain it and store it in their minds. In other words: how the previously mentioned liaison between language and thought contributes to the knowledge acquisition of truth about it…It is important to understand in this respect, how it functions in between the world itself and the human thought about it:

> …one cannot engage in the semiotic studies of how meanings are made in texts and cultural practices without adopting a philosophical stance in relation to the nature of signs, representation and reality
> (Chandler 59)

To be "thinking about the surrounding world" by "making sense of representation and reality" suggests a much more complex relationship between speech and thought than just the former shaping up the latter or vice versa. The exchange of power means that the "stronger" side tries to dominate with its own views on the "surrounding world" and the truth about it. However, the "weaker" side possesses the power of free interpretation of the initial message, as shown above in the citation from Dewey. This becomes explicitly clear when compared to the relationship between an "author" and a "reader" with a "text" in between as tentatively suggested by the end of the previous chapter. The existence of so many different individual readers explains the variety of different readings of the same text. (About their limits see chapter 6):

> This is how in literary text analysis (and in the analysis of art in general) a variety of different "realities" is established, considering the different interpretations of the "author's" message, i.e.- individual readers create their own "realities" out of the master text: … reality has authors; thus, there are many realities rather than the simple reality posited by objectivists
> (Chandler 65)

One can explain the fact that "individual readers create their own realities" again with the help of Chomsky's "competence-performance" where the common knowledge of the language works together with the individual capacity of its creative use. Here comes at aid Saussure as well with his idea of the "arbitrariness" of the linguistic sign that is the lack of a direct link between the structural form of the word and its meaning:

> Saussure emphasized that the relationship between the linguistic signifier and signified is arbitrary: the link between them is not necessary, intrinsic, or natural
> (Chandler 244)

The arbitrariness in question makes it easier to understand the freedom with which the creative individuals load existing linguistic units (words) with meanings that match the principle of "which is to be master" (with a quick reminder to Humpty Dumpty again)…

More to the point

> To semioticians, a defining feature of signs is that they are treated by their users as "standing for" or representing other things
> (Chandler 60)

This is a statement that reveals a whole philosophy of signs as in the famous "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" ("This is not a pipe") in René Magritte's "La Trahison des Images" ("The Treason of Images") or in the saying "the word "dog" does not bark"… It follows Saussure's idea of the linguistic sign as a combination of "signifiers" and "signifieds" (the form and the concept) in the construction of words as mental abstractions of "reality". This "reality" has nothing to do with the fabric of language itself. It will be "naive realism", therefore, to believe that "words simply mirror objects in an external world":

> A radical response to realists is that things do not exist independently of the sign-systems that we use; reality is created by the media which seem simply to represent it"
> (Chandler ibid)

In other words, the arbitrary signs of language are loaded with meaning when used to stand for the speakers' conceptual thinking about "reality":

> … (Saussure) stressed that in linguistics /…/ it is the viewpoint adopted that creates the object
> (Chandler 62)

And, hence:

> Signifieds are socially constructed
> (Chandler 63)

In this respect the statement:

> According to the Whorfian stance the signified is an arbitrary product of our culture's' "way of seeing". The Saussurean perspective 'tends to reverse the precedence which nomenclaturist accords to world outside language, by proposing that far from the world determining the order of our language, our language determines the order of the world'
> (Chandler 63)

can be taken as an attempt to define language as a system of signs which shapes up our individual perception of the surrounding world and emotionally imposes it on other individuals. How this actually happens depends on the ability of the "ego" to use creatively his/her ability to dominate by maintaining the power imbalance. According to Andrea Nye:

> Whatever language can be "used for" – whether to model reality, elicit behavior, or regulate concerned attempts to control the environment – the unique essence for Benveniste is its role in communication. Language is not a "tool" that humans invent; it is constitutive of the human subject. The basis of the subjectivity that language constitutes is not in logical structure or relations between concept or forms, but is inherent in hierarchical and reversible system of personal pronouns
> (Nye 5)

Further:

> Pronouns establish a relation between self and other that is supported by complementary system of indexicals: adverbs, demonstratives and time indicators that is position what is said around a speaking human object
> (Nye Ibid.)

Benveniste's observation points at the "egocentricity" of human language interaction, which supports the major idea of this study about power imbalance replacing "shifting". The "relation between self and other" is more "hierarchical" rather than "reversible" (alternating) because of the very central position of the "I" amongst the rest of the pronouns as reflecting situational relations.

It will be enough to modify the previously discussed formula:

I, the speaker want you (the listener) to share with me my emotion the way I feel it

(According to the type of interdependence between "I" and "You" as regards "He/She/It) into:

I, the speaker want you (the listener) to know/do something about somebody/something

to finally get to the imbalance principle of Carroll's "Humpty Dumpty":

The question is which is to be master

All of the above supports the idea of Benveniste about language as the constitutive of the human subject in his/her desire to execute power on other subjects. It can be argued that it helps in the creation of narratives to be trusted by "the other subjects" as a "word that goes without saying".

The significant role of "the impersonalized and disembodied voice" mixes up with the "I" in the process of the implementation of the concept of "logos" in the ethical code of human interaction:

> The use of the term "logos" for "word" suggests a certain metaphysical ("divine") connotation of power that must be obeyed without question. It appeared in human cultural history together with the invention of writing: The argument of the power of language over mind and society was also present in the discussion of the impact of the invention of literacy. Jack Goody and Ian Watt /.../ argued that alphabetic writing has a crucial role in the development of Western civilization. This role was accomplished by transforming oral messages into a permanent record and thus introducing the practice of "history" (as opposed to "myths" or "legends") and by helping the "change from mythical to logico-empirical modes of thought" (Duranti 27).

The invention of writing (it would be more accurate to speak about "graphic systems" as not all writing is alphabetic!) plays one more essential role in the maintenance of power in human language interaction. It started from the simple "permanent record of speech" as noticed by Goody and Watt and marked a discrepancy between spoken and written language. (About the importance of graphic systems as signs themselves and Derrida's view on the subject, see Chapter 8). Before changing "myths" and "legends" into "history" writing contributed to the conceptualization of the "sacred text". Recorded speech remained unchanged and fixed forever. This is how the idea about a mystical connection with the past life of the "ancestors" developed along with the belief that any "tampering" with it is "sinful" and hence – forbidden. On the other hand – its idealistic character matches the social semiotic model of Saussure with "words as mental abstractions". Epistemological realism on the other hand and the idea of an objective reality that exists "indisputably and independently" cannot explain efficiently the capacity of language to generate new forms and meanings. Apparently, these "new forms and meanings", follow the assumption that "signifieds are socially constructed". One can also regard them as part of the role played by language in "the social construction of worldviews", which is the main argument of "constructivists":

> Constructivists insist that realities are not limitless and unique to the individual as extreme subjectivists would argue; rather, they are the producer of social definitions and as such far from equal status. Realities are contested, and textual representations are thus 'sites of struggle'.
> (Chandler 65)

There arises the logical question:

What are the constructed realities "struggling" for?

Consequently, the only possible logical answer is:

"**The Truth**" (or, the right of "my" constructed worldview to be called so, instead of "yours")

Chandler supports the argument of Kren and Leeuwen that:

> A social semiotic theory of truth cannot claim to establish the absolute truth or untruth of representation. It can only show whether a given "proposition" ... is represented as true or not. From the point of view of social semiotics, truth is a construct of semiosis, and as such the truth of a particular social group, arising from the values and beliefs of that social group
> (Chandler 64-65)

"The truth of a particular social group" along with its "values and beliefs" infers not only "struggling" with another "truth", but also often ignoring one for the sake of the imposition of another. It finally suggests condemning, discriminating or even eliminating it which in semiotic terms stands not far away from Umberto Eco's claim that:

> …semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything, which can be used in order to lie
> (Eco 7b)

The boundary between "to lie" and "not to tell the truth" is a very plausible one especially when it comes to political discourse. The problem, as pointed above arises from the different socially constructed "truths" of different social groups. To decide on which side resides "the real one" depends, according to Michel Foucault on the "formation of objects" that is in the basis of the discursive relations. In other words:" the group of relations that discourse must establish in order to speak of this, or that object" (Foucault 170a).In the case of politics this is often based, as the same author argues on "procedures of exclusion" among which:

> The most obvious and familiar is the prohibition. We know quite well that we do not have the right to say everything that we cannot speak of just anything in any circumstances whatever and that not everyone has the right to speak of anything whatever.
> (Foucault 109a)

To "prohibit" in political- communal discourse often has the connotation of "forbidding one's own self to admit something" which is the opposite side of the discussed above "taking for granted" or "going without saying". It ranks with (governmental) "political correctness" to disguise or conceal "the truth about a certain political action" in an "Orwellian-Newspeak" way.

The truth – the everlasting desire of all humans at all times has always been somewhat "wrapped up" in the mystery of the "abnormal", "unnatural", "disorderly"...It needs some courage that merges with folly to tell the truth directly in the face of those in power who are hiding it. Different types of more or less explicitly totalitarian political governance have often used it in the history of humankind. This is perhaps what stimulated Foucault to align social exclusion and prohibition with the history of treatment of madness. In his monograph "Madness and Civilization", he starts the defense of his thesis with a quote from Dostoyevsky to refer to the usual confinement of madmen:

> It is not by confining one's neighbor that one is convinced of one's own sanity
> (Foucault ix b)

With the development of the thesis, the French philosopher defines the confinement of mentally ill people as the common "Western" way of keeping the "sane ones" safe and comfortable which brings up the issue of the "binary opposition" between "reason" and "non-reason":

> ...the caesura that establishes the distance between reason and non-reason, reason's subjugation of non-reason, wrestling from it its truth as madness, crime, or disease, derives explicitly from this point
> (ibid. b)

Further on Foucault's observations lead toward the link of non-reason as "folly" with the language of art and the uncontrolled imagination and associations of mentally ill people as referred to in the history of medicine:

> The Renaissance, with Erasmus' "Praise of Folly" demonstrated how fascinating imagination and some of its vagaries were to the thinkers of the day
> (Foucault v-vi b)

Imagination itself as an inseparable part of creation of art is related then to the discovery of the unconscious:

> Madness is really a manifestation of the "soul", a variable concept, which from antiquity to the twentieth century covered approximately, what came to be known after Freud as the unconscious part of the human mind
> (ibid. b)

The final connection between "madness" meaning "non-reason" representing the "freedom of language" and "sanity" meaning "reasoning" as "constraints, rules, and order" appears in the following statement:

> Folly is so human that it has common roots with poetry and tragedy; it is revealed in the insane asylum as in the writings of a Cervantes or a Shakespeare
> (Foucault ibid.b)

This reference to Cervantes and Shakespeare brings up here the issue of the political side of (literary) madness. One can distinguish different types of it, as represented in world literature as regards its attitude toward (political) "truth":

The "Don Quixote" type: The naive idealist, looking for a "truth" that is nowhere to be found; a sad caricature of the Medieval "Furor Poeticus". The political connotation is visible in the disappointment of Cervantes in the mercantile character of a growing bourgeois world that leaves no place for idealism.

The "Hamlet"-type: The fake madman, manipulating his audience with his play in the search for a specific truth. This is the individual fighter against the crimes of a corrupt monarchy. (One can also think of the madness of Lady Macbeth from "Macbeth" in the same context).

The "Odysseus"- type with his "hubris" (to be referred back to in the next chapter): The aggressive "madman" using his intellect to discover the "satisfaction of power"; the "strong individual" who wins, using his sharp and cunning mind to impose his power over the rest.

It is a fact in psychology and psychiatry that “madmen” and small children share the capacity of giving direct names to objects and actions, which “sane” adults usually refer to by means of indirect “signifiers”. I get back to this problem later in the discussion of the issue of “politically incorrect language”. The following abstract from the famous tale written by Hans Christian Andersen is about “the innocent prattle of a child” ranges with Foucault’s “madman’s speech” as regards the attitude toward “the truth”:

So off went the Emperor in procession under his splendid canopy. Everyone in the streets the windows said, "Oh, how fine are the Emperor's new clothes! Don't they fit him to perfection? And see his long train!" Nobody would confess that he couldn't see anything, for that would prove him either unfit for his position, or a fool. No costume the Emperor had worn before was such a complete success. "But he hasn't got anything on," a little child said. "Did you ever hear such innocent prattle?" said its father. And one person whispered to another what the child had said, "He hasn't anything on. A child says he hasn't anything on." "But he hasn't got anything on!" the whole town cried out at last.

(The Emperor's New Clothes: A translation of Hans Christian Andersen's "Keiserens nye Klæder" by Jean Hersholt.)

The above citation from the story of the famous Danish writer (whose message, like Lewis Carroll’s tried to reach a much more mature audience than the one of little children) reveals a philosophy that stands on the same basis as the philosophy of Foucault: imposition of power by means of silencing the “(political) truth”. The idea that only innocent children and “insane adults” are capable of “telling the truth” follows a very simple logic: it is a characteristic feature of human beings who are unaware of the self-imposed social-ethical restrictions of the “normal” ones...something that gives them the power of unconscious courage (Cf. the reference to Jacques Lacan’s “mirror stage” further on).

In a yet another statement from “Madness and Civilization” Michel Foucault suggests a follow-up that points at the typical “sane human” trait to draw a demarcation line, keeping those labeled as “insane” aside. The judgement, however, is not very negative: it comprises an element of admiration, a subtle revelation of envy for their uncontrolled freedom...

> Correctly or incorrectly, the author feels that Freud’s death instinct also stems from the logic elements which led men of all epochs to worship, laugh at and dread folly simultaneously
> (Foucault, vi b)

This is what leads toward to the controversial statement that humans as "political animals" have always been afraid of the freedom of "folly" and have tried to fight it by means of confining it, while suppressing his/her own inferior admiration for it. As I claim elsewhere:

> ...the Man of Today (Homo loquens and Homo politicus) is a creative individual who, for the sake of survival and coexistence within the limits of communal life, needs "to be political" and needs to keep the balance between desire for freedom and the chains of collective responsibility (Anastassov 71a)

All of the above means that humans are (and have always been) at crossroads as regards their attitude toward the world around them and the truth about it. They have no one single and commonly accepted concept of the "political truth" but rely instead on the arbitrary character of language to create different competing views on the subject. As a result, different "readings" become possible, which, on their own turn suggest different types of socially constructed "truth" in an incessant struggle between each other. In the process humans often neglect, ignore or eliminate those "types of truth" that are inconvenient, for one or other reason, sometimes at a very high price: the fear from freedom.

CHAPTER FIVE

FROM POWER IMPOSITION TO POWER MAINTENANCE

The Narrative of the Political Leadership

This chapter examines the way in which political leaders create narratives to impose and maintain power. It looks into the (Aristotelian) "natural" existence of leadership with an analysis of the different place of powerful individuals in the structure of communal political life. It goes through the "Odysseus-Type" of imposing power by means of "hubris" to move on to Machiavelli's flexibility and maneuvering in the process of maintaining it. Finally, I referred to some recent ways of "individual means of creating narratives for the sake of political power" in the construction of a "universal" model. The assumption is that in the development of theoretical thinking about political leadership throughout history there have been different types of perception of the role of the individual.

The previous chapter ends up with the assumption that the influence of language on the creation of worldviews gives as a result the construction of more than one political truth. This sentence by itself sounds paradoxical because the universal belief is that "the truth" is unique. The word has no grammatical plural, which suggests various controversial solutions. The easiest one seems to be the bi-partition of the problem into a pair of competing narratives about it. In fact, there is a certain tendency amongst the "political animals" to choose (identify) a pair with a prevalent ("real", "true") one in a binary opposition with a rejected ("false") one. As previously discussed:

> It is a feature of culture that binary oppositions come to seem natural to members of a culture. Many pairings of concepts /…/ are familiar within a culture and many seem commonsensical distinctions for everyday communication purposes…
> (Chandler 93)

In the context of human communal organization "the truth" (rather, the differently constructed views) about it becomes a matter of political debate when a certain "established order" is challenged by the demands for a change. The "commonsensical distinctions for everyday communication purposes" or the commonly accepted "pairings of concepts" are replaced (not without a fierce struggle) by yet another series of pairings of a similar type. This is what historically marks the difference in the evolutionary phases of human society. No matter how distant from each other they may seemingly appear, they follow the same model of rivalry between the various socially constructed views on the political truth. As discussed above, which of the constructed views will prevail depends on the power of the stronger individual members of the community to create ideological narratives that "go without saying"… This is a statement, which brings up the issue of the role of the individuals in the change of an old order and the establishment and the maintenance of a new one. Many scholars tend to believe that individuality symbolizes the freedom to oppose the constraints of an established and conservative order. An "established and conservative order" means for many of the citizens of a polity a natural status of communal existence, providing them with a feeling of safety and stability. "Freedom" in this case is associated with the possible threat of disruption. This is what leads toward a serious debate about the value of the concepts of "freedom" and "order" in the search of the political truth about the "desirable" human society:

> A quest for the absolute is a tendency of human behavior that cannot be ignored /…/ for the desire to see the world as an orderly and nominative set of interrelations has direct repercussions. Such a desire expresses itself in the conviction that there is one and only one answer to the nature of truth, beauty and good life. It sustains in the belief that the best way to achieve certainty and predictability is by the establishment of uniform attitudes and prejudices above personal responsibility and choice
> (Holland 59)

This is what makes the same author "take for granted" that:

> Any social group needs leadership, the art of motivating and coordinating individuals and group toward desired goods
> (Holland 230)

(Whether "any social group needs leadership" depends on how high the level of acceptance of Platonic "Agathon" – The City of Love is, and how developed in people's minds Zeno's idea of "Anarchy" is…Apparently something that doesn't apply to today's society globally!)

The "desire for order", as the result of the natural human fear of social chaos (including the fear of freedom as a potential threat for the "stability" that this order seemingly provides society with) depends too much on language again if we believe in Jacques Lacan's theory of "the name of the father". In his Neo-Freudian way of defining the "self" the French scholar explained "human socialization" by means of the "symbolic role" of language in the "ushering" of a child into the adult world of "the father" with its (the world's!) norms, standards and rules (in short: the "order" in question):

> As the child gains mastery within the pre-existing "symbolic order" (the public domain of verbal language (which can be mentally manipulated) helps to foster the individual's sense of a conscious self, residing in an "internal world" which is distinct from "the world outside". However, a degree of individuality and autonomy is surrendered to the constraints of linguistic conventions, and the self becomes a more fluid and ambiguous relational signifier rather than a relatively fixed entity. Subjectivity is dynamically constructed through discourse
> (Chandler 93)

Therefore, what humans take for "natural" in the way they are governed depends on how they handle this "symbolic order" personally and collectively. In this respect, the understanding of "individuality" vs. "communality" differs in the history of people's thinking about politics. One of the popular beliefs is that the former relates to "freedom" and "democracy" and is thus juxtaposed to the "stability and order" of "totalitarianism" and "conservatism":

> Totalitarian politics becomes then an organized opposition to individual freedom and diversity. Because the "spirit" of a people or official interpretations of history provide the only roots to truth, individual efforts to find or create it are forbidden
> (Holland 59)

Opinions of this type lead toward the widespread belief that "individualism" in politics is always associated with creativity and progress while the quest for "stability" means conservative lack of any movement:

> Political leaders have to discover an effective balance between change and stability, between innovation and conservatism. A true leader seeks not simply to maintain his own power and personal integrity but also to offer policies that have durable meaning for his followers
> (Holland 60)

Not only in today's global complex clash of political interests, but ever since the times of European Renaissance (as it will be more specifically referred to a bit later) this statement has sounded "naive". "Stability" may be either the result of conservative and non-democratic political governance, or, the achievement of a democratic one, at the same time. In this context, the often referred to in this chapter Henry M. Holland Jr. makes an important observation that has remained somewhat unnoticed (at least to my knowledge) in current political theory:

> Some people are skeptical about the ability of democracy to satisfy individual wants, they search for political ideologies on the extreme right or left, in an attempt to find readymade answers to their political problems (Holland ibid .)

Looking for political ideologies to find" readymade answers" is a tactics that proves to be extremely helpful in the power maintenance of non-democratic regimes. In the first chapter of this book the reference to the Medieval religious ideology in Umberto Eco's "The Name of The Rose" was meant to point out how old(and authoritative) dogmas can be re-used "to satisfy the wants" of those in need of "stability and order". Something similar is noticeable in Russia and some of the ex-satellite states with the official revival of the once banned Orthodox Christianity as an ideology that helps the maintenance of political power. By doing it, the Russian Post-Soviet authorities manage to influence (and control) larger part of the population rather than they did by means of Communist ideology. These authorities cleverly realized that religion is a powerful weapon in the manipulation and the control of people in their fear of social instability. Relevantly, Islam in Iran satisfied the anti-monarchic feelings that ended up with the establishment of a totalitarian regime. Turkey has been making similar attempts in the last decades against the "West-oriented" secular democracy, by opposing the religious feelings of people with insufficient education to the knowledge of highly educated intellectuals. It is important to bear in mind that in all of the cases above the "readymade-answers"-policy faces as a major enemy all the secular and intellectual individuals simply because they represent the critically thinking part of society that are in the search of their own answers. It can be concluded that the "readymade" ones that Holland discusses above exist immanently in the (again!) narratives-myths that "go without saying" among the average community members and can be very successfully taken advantage of for the imposition-maintenance of political power. This is what makes his idea of the satisfaction of the majorities as a consequent step toward the welfare of the community quite debatable:

> Such persons (who, as the author claims, are beset by neurotic anxieties and tend to support political movements which will not merely reduce the threats they perceive, but will totally eliminate them) become the practitioners of a paranoid style of politics which sees immediate and immense dangers to sanity and civilization in the activity of rubble-rousers, cliques, "insiders", political elites, communist sympathizers. As a consequence, what satisfies the majority – perhaps because it is the majority – will not satisfy them
> (Holland 263)

It is debatable because "what satisfies the majority" is not always the best option for the benefit of the community. This is something that I will discuss much more extensively in the following chapters. Actually "the majority" "takes thinks for granted" in most of the cases by trusting the role of the "tellers-narrators" (as discussed in chapter 1). The political leaders who use ideologies to manipulate the average citizen-voter (This is Nietzsche's view on "the herd"- to be discussed in the next chapter- as humorously and informally supported by a French relative of mine as follows: "Tous les peuples sont bêtes!" ("All peoples are stupid")

The issue of the "manipulative role" of the individual political leader is a very plausible one because it cannot be related simply to a "conservative dictator", nor can it be associated just only with the works of Machiavelli on state governance as it is commonly believed (to be discussed in detail later). The Prometheus-type of a "hero" plays this role. The Aristotelian "rebel-king" is the one who is the society outcast and its leader at the same time.

This study ascribes a historical role to this "hero", who, according to Joseph Campbell, at the dawn of Western Civilization:

> …is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. …. The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man -…- he has been reborn
> (Campbell 19-20)

My comment on Campbell's view goes as follows:

> The "Rebirth" phase in "The Voyage of the Hero" in this context means that "the Hero" acquires new knowledge about himself (also understandable as: new knowledge about reality/truth) that he aspires to share with the rest of the community members (..) This "shared new knowledge" which definitely means "breaking the already established

> existing rules (of knowledge)" marks a new era in the life of the community to "push it ahead". Without it there will be no change, no movement, no progress…
> (Anastassov 52a)

Politically speaking, "the new knowledge of the hero" means new attitude toward the binary oppositions in a traditional human society. When it comes to power imposition and power maintenance – the "struggle" shifted in Classical times from the direct (even physical) fight to the creative (and manipulative) use of intellect. This is how the "equal position" in world famous legendary "encounters" of the type of the one between Achilles and Hector (Homer's "Iliad") or Beowulf and Grendel ("Beowulf") was replaced by the "outis", "metis" and "hubris" of Odysseus (Homer "Odyssey"):

> Odysseus' stage of *outis* ("nobody") comes after a series of other stages that include *metis* ("cunning intelligence") and *hubris* ("arrogance") in his final accomplishment of a hero of a "modern" type. It is his "cunning intelligence" that makes him the hero of the Trojan War, with the idea of the Trojan horse. It brings the war to a successful end for the Greeks in a way that is totally different from the classical belief of a heroic battle like the one-to-one encounter between Achilles and Hector. Odysseus' *metis* which helps him disguise his real intentions in the case of the Trojan horse, develops to another stage when he refers to himself as *outis* "nobody". *Hubris* in its turn makes him think of himself as "the greatest possible hero". The comparison between the two types of encounters (…), or the two types of "heroism", helps clarify the above-mentioned "unequal shift of power" from yet another perspective: the *Achilles/Hector* one implies "equality in the shifting process", whereas the *Odysseus* one means (intellectual) superiority.
> (Anastassov 53a)

It can be assumed that the "metis", the "outis" and especially the "hubris" of Odysseus characterize the new individual – "the hero" who is "a winner" and hence – capable of being "a leader". Much later –during Renaissance Times- the "Rebirth of Classical Individualism" redirected Homer's idea of "hubris" (Foucault also refers to it in his analysis of madness taken as "violence", cf. the previous chapter) toward the "individual leader" of Machiavelli. The "hubris", by itself implies "assertion", "aggression", and even "arrogance" in a very special connection with "cunning wit": something that very well characterizes Homer's Odysseus as a symbolic step toward "Machiavellianism".

Renaissance Individualism and Ancient Classical Humanism combined within the context of 15-16 Century Italian "City-State" reality served as the basis for Machiavelli's philosophy of political governance. The traditional opinion is that in "Il Principe" he analyzes the monarchic political governance of a community vs. the republican one in "I Discorsi". Both of them offer however a general model of the political governance of human communities, based on the principle of "leadership for power maintenance".

The Italian Renaissance thinker suggested that the "Janus-Faced" political leader could be "cruel" when it is necessary to stay in power, with the assumption that his "cruelty" is beneficial for the whole group. He constructs thus a "role-model", based on the combination of the" love" and the "fear" of the governed population. This is what requires from the prince "to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man":

> You must know there are two ways of contesting, the one by the law, the other by force; the first method is proper to men, the second to beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, it is necessary to have recourse to the second. Therefore, it is necessary for a prince to understand how to avail himself of the beast and the man.
> (Machiavelli, downloaded)

as further developed by Machiavelli into one of the most brilliant ever metaphors in the history of political philosophy about the Centaur Chiron – the mythical figure – half horse and half man- who was believed to have educated Achilles:

> This has been figuratively taught to princes by ancient writers, who describe how Achilles and many other princes of old were given to the Centaur Chiron to nurse, who brought them upon his discipline; which means solely that, as they had for a teacher one who was half beast and half man, so it is necessary for a prince to know how to make use of both natures, and that one without the other is not durable.
> (Machiavelli, downloaded)

Machiavelli's views reveal, as usually interpreted, the fundamentals of today's "western conception about the political actor". They explain the need of "cruelty" directed toward those members of the community that do not participate in the Aristotelian-Platonic "shared perception" of the communal order. Machiavellian theory shares the same attitude toward those 'men who are not good and thus cannot be controlled by good'. This is why the famous Italian Renaissance thinker believes that acts, which are

"other than good", are necessary for the acquisition and preservation of power.

In a traditional ("Classical" in the Aristotelian sense of the term) society the people that are "other than good" seem to be the ones who are "different" from "the rest" (in other words: the "individuals", breaking up with the "collective")... On the other hand, though the same "individuals" are the ones who make the good leaders because of their ability to impose their power over the average population and hence – govern them. One can distinguish then different types of "individuals": the ones who belong to the group of free, creative and innovative people in a democratic society where "difference" is tolerated and respected, and those who use their "creativity" for leadership based on power.

In this context, a "Real Machiavellian" type of individual leaders is hard to distinguish in contemporary society because political reality today is much more complex than it used to be during Italian Renaissance. Many different names of political leaders from more recent historical times are applicable here: Bismarck, Stalin, Franco, De Gaulle, Pinochet...and many more recent ones...each of them "Machiavellian" in their own specific way.

What stands behind them suggests political leadership often associated with despotism or dubitative democracy. The stories of many of them reveal "national interests", close but not identical to Machiavelli's original model.

Stalin for example, managed to profit from the defeat of the German Reich, by expanding Russian Soviet political influx on a vast territory that nourished "him" in the process of turning the USSR into the World's No. 1 (Military) Superpower, playing "second fiddle" just only to the USA.

(Whether the ordinary people of the USSR benefited from all that themselves... is a different issue...)

In addition, this is Franco's politics of suppression of the Civil War (1936-1939) with the intention of keeping Spain away from Communist (Soviet) influence. The process went along with a total abolishment of any (leftist) democratic thought or activity and a complete disregard of human rights... A striking parallel here is the role of Pinochet in the maintenance of a "Pro-American Capitalist Status Quo", against the USSR-supported, anti-US Salvador Allende regime in Chile in 1974. The fact that Allende's governance caused chaos in the economy of Chile still does not justify

Pinochet's brutal treatment of young intellectuals who were scattered all around the world. They often landed at communist countries, without having anything to do with communism at all...

In 1981 in Poland, Wojciech Jaruzelski took upon his shoulders all the responsibility (and the hatred of the Polish nation!) for the establishment of the Martial Law, avoiding, by doing so, the bloody massacre of a potential Warsaw Pact intervention. In the early 80 s, when the Soviets were deeply engaged military wise in Afghanistan, "Jaruzelski's Model" came as a real "Machiavellian" solution to the problem for the USSR who pretended at that time to be absolutely distant from " a case of Polish domestic political matter"... (This is a controversial view that not many Polish people share, either political theorists or just average citizens. As somebody from communist Bulgaria, living in Poland at that time, I strongly believe that the Soviets would have done anything possible to protect the Warsaw-Pact status quo).

As for today: the "Machiavellian" character of political leadership becomes more and more complex and difficult to grasp the principle of at first sight. Technological progress that makes communication much quicker and efficient puts culturally different types of political governance on a same dimensional plain. This observation implies a "co-existence" of historically different types of political leadership. The WW II Aftermath with the consequent "Postcolonial Era" and "Iron Curtain" brought together on the global stage traditional western capitalist political governance with a variety of newly born and lacking experience types of power performance. This led the world economy toward disproportion that finally evoked the collapse of the Soviet system. In the meantime, due to the intensive process of Globalization political leadership became more and more a matter of international interest. As for the expansion of the EU – it triggered controversy that developed into nostalgic nationalistic feelings with the latest examples of "anti-EU" action. This situation produces "fake Machiavellians" who use the phraseology of the myth-narratives that "go without saying" and manipulate the conservative voters by pumping in them primitive feelings against "the other".

Despite the specific differences in time, place, culture, or personality – political leadership has always been a reflection of the complicated relations between separate individuals and the collective of people performing communal life together. The individuals impose and maintain power over the group by directing their social behavior with the help of narrative creation...

The general conclusion is that language functions as the basic platform for the creation of ideological narratives for the imposition and maintenance of political power. What seriously contributes to their active influence on the average citizens is the capacity of the human major means of communication to construct a multiplicity of worldviews which leads to the idea that there is no one single political truth. This is a situation that groups of individuals often (if not always) use for the establishment of a rule of their own preference and benefit.

CHAPTER SIX

THE STATE, THE LEADERS, THE LEADERSHIP, AND THE CITIZENS

The "Narrative" of the State

This chapter looks into the way the state handles the "narratives of power" in between the leaders and the citizens. The assumption is that the "leaders- narrators" use it as a medium to indoctrinate politically the average citizens. I use the link between the modern state and the ancient polis for the identification of the former as a "text" (as a continuation from the previous chapter). My argument is that the communal political leaders play the role of "authors (tellers, narrators)" who use their power to make the members "read" it and take it "for granted". Reference to social semiotics supports the major idea of this study about the linguistic background of political dominance.

The Aristotelian conception of the "polis" builds upon on the urban character of the "city-state" vs. the "natural rurality" of the cultivated land of agriculture. The Ancient Greeks noticed it and symbolically admitted it in their mythology even before Aristotle with the characterization of Pallas Athena as the Goddess- protectress of urban life. The myth suggests a praise of the priority of intellect in the life of the urban polities, considering the belief about the extraordinary birth of the "Parthena" (The Virgin) from the head of Zeus. The assumption is that ever since Classical Antiquity there has been an understanding of the "urbs" as the somewhat "unnatural" product of the human intellect when compared to the "naturalness" of the rural areas. This leads further to the conclusion that for its survival the "urbanity" of the polis counts too much on the benevolent agreement, the consensus, the Aristotelian "convention" among its members. At the same time the rural community in its dependence on the laws of Nature sticks to the more severe demands for hierarchical social stratification, discipline, obedience and indisputable dominance, that is: power coming from the "naturally strong" and imposed on the "weaker" members of the community... (In our particular case: by

imposing "stronger narratives of power" over the "weaker" ones) It so happens in history that the two types of communal organization regularly meet (rather merge, or even fuse) with a clash between their two cultures that are antagonistic, interdependent, and interchangeable at the same time.

As Barker claims:

> A distinction between "nature" and "convention" /.../ had been drawn by popular teachers in Greece for a century before Aristotle's time. Some of them regarded the state, in the form of the civic republic, as merely a conventional thing /.../and some even argued that it had better not be at all, because it defeated the good old rule and simple play of "nature" that the strong man should dominate the weak for his own advantage
> (Barker xlviii)

The citation above is part of Barker's analysis of Aristotle's views on "nature" and the "natural". He claims further that:

> It was /.../ this theory and doctrine which identified "nature" with nothing more than primary instincts and primitive impulses, were entirely opposed to the general philosophy of "nature" which Aristotle had himself
> (Barker xlviii-xlvix)

The "clash" comes from Aristotle's distinction between the civic republic that marks the "nation" (a term used by Barker in the referred analysis that should be treated with extreme caution) and the rurality of the "ethne". (Cf. Chapter 2 about the narrative of persuasion of the Aristotelian "civic republic"). The polis, in this respect is:

> ...a small and intimate society, ..., an integrated system of social ethics which realizes to the full the capacity of its members, and therefore claims their full allegiance
> (Barker ibid.)

This "small and intimate society" as juxtaposed to the "barbarism" of the "ethne" apparently "cannot be a Babylon" as the referred scholar argues. It also ascribes a certain "elitist" character to the "polis" as a human construct on a much higher ethical level than the "primitive instincts of rural/barbaric people":

> Aristotle would have presented the distinction of the two worlds: he advised Alexander, ..., to distinguish between Greeks and barbarians, dealing with the former as a leader or hēgemon, and with the latter as a master or dēspotes .Alexander did the opposite. He preferred to act in the spirit of Erastothenes /.../ who refused to agree with men who divided

> mankind into Greeks and barbarians and advised Alexander to treat the former as foes and the latter as friends, declaring that it was better to divide men into good and bad
> (Barker xlix)

The distinction in question is based on the shift from the "polis" to the "cosmopolis" that started with Alexander the Macedon and never stopped in the history of human political life:

> By 330/Alexander The Great.../ was already planning an empire in which he should be equally lord of Greeks and Persians, and both should be equally knit together by intermarriage and common military service. This meant a great revolution. It meant the appearance of the cosmopolis in place and instead of the polis.
> (Barker xlx)

More specifically: all of the above suggests a certain sequel of shifting stages in the evolution of this political life where the closed "polis" opens up to a "Babylonian" texture:

> This conception of the cosmopolis, and the cognate conception of the equality and fraternity of all men within its general embrace, are the two fundamental conceptions which inaugurate a new epoch – an epoch which succeeds to that of the polis, as it precedes that of the national state
> (Barker ibid.)

These stages look "sinusoidal" if attention is paid to the sequence in which they appear on the arena of history. The "polis" with its elitist homogeneity changes into a society where "fraternity" and "equality" are a type of phraseology that disguises political expansionism. Later in history the Renaissance tendency for withdrawal from Christian-Religious identity for the sake of a territorial one (especially in the case of the Italian "city-states" like Florence, Pisa, etc.) shows an opposite one – into the direction of shrinking back to the unity of place, language, culture, and economy. The French Revolution (to be specifically referred to further) again "plays" with the cosmopolitan slogans of "equality" and "fraternity" to cover for actions of harsh despotism, violence, and genocide. (A similar process takes place after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, with the establishment of the USSR and the use of the term "Soviet nation", thus masking the real ambitions of Russian expansionism). The following "Romantic Nationalism" sticks to the principle of "una lingua – una patria" to reach the climax of Hitler's "Nazionalsozialismus" and WW II, succeeded by Monet, Schuman and the idea of the EU, that again experiences the challenges of Brexit and the nationalistic movements in

Europe and elsewhere nowadays. In the context some scholars criticize Globalization as a "disguised form of imperialism", undermining the fact that it is a spontaneous process and cannot be too seriously manipulated. It is often taken as a specific form of "cosmopolitanism", with no real awareness of the role of advanced technology in the case that gives spontaneity to the process (to be discussed in detail later).

Following my ambition to define a universal model of the "city-state (polity) narrative" here, I refer to the story of "The Tower of Babel" because it is a symbol of urban identity. It supports my major idea, as shown below, about the need of (intellectual) consensus in the construction and the maintenance of an urban polity. As many other Classical myths, it offers a metaphor in the search of political knowledge. The story itself appears in many Ancient texts. The idea of "building a tower as high as the sky" there is represented as the attempt of a group of people speaking the same language to build themselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens: "let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." (Genesis 11:1–9). In the existing abundance of interpretations, ranging from naive to sophistically philosophical the accent goes on the "common language" that allows these men to communicate and agree with each other. The "Good Lord" mixes up their languages so that they cannot understand each other anymore and are scattered around the world. Scholars usually take this as an explanation of the existence of the variety of different human languages. They understand the idea of the existence of the one single "language of Babel" literally, with no reference to a possible interpretation in the sense of the Aristotelian "convention". It is highly possible that the word combination "common language" initially meant "common understanding, consensus". There is no emphasis (at least to my knowledge) on the moment of "building a city that gives a name". It redirects the meaning of the whole metaphor toward the importance of the "urbs" (the Aristotelian polis, the city-state) in the creation of a narrative. The idea of belonging to a place with a common set of "rules" gives the "name" of a population, which, by obeying them forms the core of the community. A polity that is supposed to function by convention (based on common agreement).

The "Tower-of-Babel-Metaphor" along with Aristotle's definition of "polis" contributes to the identification of the universal "model" of the "conventional state". It builds on the territorially based set of rules as in the modern concept of nation-state in constant ("pulsating") shift to-and-fro with the openness of the "cosmopolis". The reason for this "instability" lies in the attachment of the population to the idea of "my place-my rule"

which appears to be stronger than the idea of the universality of humanity and depends on its narrative. A closer investigation of these narratives reveals that humans are naturally predisposed to be attached to their "own space". On the other hand, though, there was a regular compromise of the "polis" principle history for the sake of migration, new settlements, and the overall movement of humans around the globe. The different narratives of power that appear as a result turn the urban structures into meaningful entities in a paradigmatic unity. By "paradigmatic city" scholars today, almost unanimously agree that:

> ...cities are mirrors and microcosms of society and culture at large with every viewpoint contributing something to their understanding
> (Batty and Longley 1)

The reference to "society and culture" implies that in a paradigmatic city there is a complex interaction between what is collective and what is individual in the making of the communal urban life:

> The environment of cities is dynamic and is the result of numerous individual actions. However, this environment is not of individual agents acting randomly and without boundaries, but within a set of boundaries that have been shaped by past super agents, thus framing the actions of all participants
> (McAdams 22)

Or, in other words:

> ...spatial systems can be characterized by individual cognitive experiences and by social, economic, and political practices and the power relations emerging from them
> (Lopez-Varela 23)

Thus, the individual citizens with their role in the modeling of the urban collective life attach to the political time-space historic panorama of the polity a paradigmatic character, which by itself implies (inter)textual meaning. The mosaic of the urban structure of of any polis compares with the intertextuality of a piece of literature, that is:

> ...the various links in form and content which bind a text to other texts
> (Chandler 251)

A parallel between "textual structure" and "urban structure" on a diachronic basis reveals the semiotic value of the city in its paradigmatic

essence. The inference is that one can ascribe the status of a "text" to the former:

> The city is a great book of time and history with diverse meaning for different readers
> (Treviño-Cantu 248)

The above metaphor includes in the understanding of the paradigmatic role of "the city" the notion of meaning which takes the analysis further to the point of: "the city as text" As the same scholar suggests:

> The word "text" as well as the word "textile" comes from the Latin *texere* that means web or woven fabric. /.../ the city is a web, a piece of woven fabric: a text. The text of our daily lives is inscribed in the city and in the house, in the spaces we inhabit.
> (ibid. 250)

The idea of the "woven fabric" of language appears as far back as the times of Plato:

> *Socrates*: When someone says, "A man learns", of things said this is the smallest and the first, is it not? /*Thaetetus*: Yes. / *Socrates*: For he signifies when he says that, something about what is, or is coming to be or has become, or will be... He completes what he says, combining verbs with names/…/ To this, to this weaving together of terms, we give the name of speaking
> (Plato 9)

Although by "weaving of terms" Plato understands the grammatical forms that shape up the linguistic utterance on a synchronic level, the whole fabric of language also relates to the different historic levels of the paradigm. In this case it will be easy to compare the two types of fabric: the "city-state" and "language text" on a diachronic basis with reference to their constitutive elements. Both of them will then reveal, on a paradigmatic scale, as Trevino-Cantu suggests, a multiplicity of "text readers" with their individual "readings". However, the number of these "readings" is not limitless: there is a certain tendency for generalization that reduces the diversity down to a common "collective reading" which can easily be "shaped up" by "the authors"... This "collective reading" will then integrate part of the communal members, who follow the principle of "political alignment" as the result of the manipulation of the interested "authors". As for the rest – they can either take the side of an oppositional and liberal part of the "free thinking society" or become...part of these "authors" …

All of the above brings up the issue of the different types of individuals that a polity consists of. It is not an agglomeration of identical mechanical robots, but a dynamic entity where, for the sake of a (relatively and temporally) "stable" coexistence there has to be a conventional consensus among the inhabitants. This is what, on its own turn, reminds us of the "set of communal rules" and the issue of their (Aristotelian-Platonic) "shared perception" and its function. In this context: how does the "public opinion of the majority" relate to the topic? Who are "the majority" and do they really represent the "shared perception" in question? Is the latter the same as the collective opinion on the community welfare? Additionally does the majoritarian – collective opinion really contribute to this welfare? Moreover how does the state integrate (balance between) the separate individual members and its leaders?

People commonly believe today that modern (western liberal) democracy relies (is based on) the public opinion:

> The importance of public opinion in a democracy is that it represents the belief that public affairs can be carried on by the consensus that emerges through discussion and persuasion
> (Holland 111)

In the context of the discussion so far, the terms "consensus" and "persuasion" suggest a "classical" view, based on an Aristotelian "agreement". Holland's definition implies that:

> ...if men believe that they can arrive at an understanding of the popular will, if they believe that a free exchange of ideas helps the majority to decide what it will support their belief in the value of public opinion becomes an essential part of democracy
> (Holland ibid.)

The two citations from the work of Henry Holland Jr. reflect a widespread view on the "popular will" as a major characteristic feature of conventional (Aristotelian) democracy. It is often believed to represent the state consensus in question as follows:

> The Greek philosopher Aristotle studied the constitution of many city-states to determine what combination of groups in society provided the most desirable base for a political order. In his classic work "Politics" he reached the conclusion that the existence of a large middle class ensures the utmost liberty and order upon which states depend because that class tends to support moderate policies and progress
> (Holland 30)

The problem, as reported by Aristotle and his "studiosus" of our times reveals an oversimplified picture of the structure of a democratic state where the "middle class" representing the majority of the population is considered to be the desired "Vox Populi – Vox Dei" ("The Voice of the People – The Voice of God"). In fact, the structure of a state, from a historic point of view is much more complex, especially when it comes to the identification of its "narrative". It is most often based on different imagological or narratological schemes with "the rest and we" as one of the most popular ones.

It is quite popular that the "consensus of the middle class" provides:

> The belief in public opinion as a means to popular government (that) stimulates the interchange of thoughts and diffuses among individuals a sense of responsibility
> (Holland 111)

This statement triggers speculations on the different types of responsibility within the general framework of leadership. It refers to the difference between the responsibility of the state and the responsibility of the community members. The responsibility of the leadership functions on the platform (the time-space dimension) of the state where it imposes its power onto the "middle class" and maintains it with their assistance. A responsibility that is different from the responsibility of its non-conformist individuals. All of the above helps in the distinction between "societies as a whole", the "individual members of society" and "the leadership of society". It is also relevant to Denneson's observation on Nietzsche's analysis of the type of relationship between "society", the "individual", and "the will to power". It is a "life-affirming view, argues the American scholar, in that creatures affirm their instincts to acquire power and dominance. He points at Nietzsche's distinction between a society that demands duty and obedience and individuals as "truly great men, branded as criminals in some respect", because "crime belongs to the concept of "revolt against the social order." (Denneson, downloaded). This is a conception, which does not differ much from the Classical idea of the "Hero-Rebel", shared also by Aristotle in his "Politics".

Denneson's interpretation of Nietzsche's social philosophy supports the major claim of this study about the imbalance of power in human interaction because it explains the function of the state as an arena of power imposition going from "my narrative" onto "your narrative". It stands in between the leadership and the average citizens as a "text" that

turns it from a locus of interaction between them into the diachronic continuum of an "ideal abstraction".

The general conclusion is that ever since the times of Classical Antiquity human communities have existed in social structures, where the narrative of intellectual consensus gets in conflict with the natural character of the power of "the strong". The analysis shows that the two types have been merging into dynamic polities ever since the times of Aristotle up to the formation of the modern "nation-state". In this respect, the concept of "equality" seems to have always been, in the political history of humankind, a disillusion that played a significant role in the creation of narratives of power. In what comes next in the chapters to follow, I pay special attention to the possible damage that the application of artificial equality can cause to real democracy.

The final roundup is that the leadership, the state, and its members are in a constant, dynamic and complex interactional process of creating narratives that play a significant role in the turbulent game of power exchange in human socio-political life.

CHAPTER SEVEN

"VOX POPULI – VOX DEI" ("THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE – THE VOICE OF GOD")

The Narrative of "Western" Democracy

This chapter investigates the principle of "equality" in the context of "Western Democracy". My critical stance on the traditional definitions depends on the observed complex status of "nation-states" with their ambivalent implementation of the principle of "equal options for everybody". It requires deeper insight into the "layers of a democratic society" with regard to the issue of "human rights". The assumption is that the social imbalance of power, as represented here, explicitly exists in modern democracies no matter how skillfully misleading phraseology may covered it. This is what modifies the democratic principle of "equality" into a fight for dominance of "anybody stronger". It challenges thus the common understanding of democracy as "Vox Populi – Vox Dei" ("The Voice of the People – The Voice of God") with the question: "Qui Sunt Populus?" ("Who Are the People?")

Who are the "real people" of a (democratic) community? The answer to this question often points at the "majority", the "middle class", the "average citizen", in short: all those who seemingly "share the perception" of a given social order. However, the very existence of a "majority" implies "minority/minorities" in a kind of a struggle for equality with the former. The belief is that democratic political governance imposes institutionalized control on the "balance" between the two sides:

> ...however attractive equality may be as a democratic ideal, it is not self-creating. To become operative, it must be sought for and established within practical circumstances. Its realization requires a continuous effort to remove artificial barriers or distinctions. Its realization requires as well institutional arrangements which limit the power of majorities to deprive minorities of their rightful claims to equal justice before the law
> (Holland 90)

The fact that there are groups of people who prevail in number (major: minor) presupposes "inequality" in their social performance, since (as already discussed) "democracy" is traditionally believed to be based on the "popular will" of the majority. It is a belief that is so deeply rooted in the mentality of people, no matter whether political scientists or just ordinary citizens, that when a critique appears it sounds unusual and unfair. A relevant example of such a critique is the statement of of the famous French political theorist Alexis De Toqueville that evokes surprise and disapproval even today:

> Alexis De Toqueville's classic analysis "Democracy in America", contains one of the sharpest critiques of popular government by public opinion ever written by any observer of American politics
> (Holland 112)

The "sharp critique" (it applies not only to America) simply and logically assumes that a "public opinion" which is expressed by a "majority" deprives "the minorities" of equal share in the benefits of communal life:

> A majority taken collectively may be regarded as a being whose opinions, and most frequently whose interests, are opposed to those of another being which is styled a minority
> (De Toqueville 113)

The French scholar admits quite convincingly that these groups are in opposition, i.e. there cannot be balance of power between them:

> I hold it to be an impious and an execrable maxim that, politically speaking, a people has a right to do whatever it pleases, and yet I have asserted that all authority originates in the will of the majority
> (ibid.112)

Logically comes his question:

> Am I, then in contradiction with myself?
> (Ibid.)

> Ça depends, Monsieur....
> (It depends, Monsieur)

It depends on how we interpret the term "people" in the phrase: "a people has a right to do whatever it pleases". The "popular will" and the "public opinion" as expressed by the "majority" (the "middle class") thus get into conflict with the idea of conventional (democratic) "consensus" because

the former usurps the meaning of the notion of "people". There are plenty of examples of this kind in the social, political, and cultural history of humankind. One of the most recent cases is the story of Orhan Pamuk who is often accused by Turks coming from a different social background that "he doesn't belong to the real people", because of his family, educational and cultural profile. The same model caused the sufferings of many citizens of the ex-communist countries of Eastern Europe, due to their bourgeois origin, that did not fit the idea of the "natural strength" (again!) of the proletariat.

All of the above poses with all its seriousness the painful question: who are the real people of a polity then? Qui sunt populus? (Who are the people?)

This is, historically speaking, a relatively new situation, dating back to the times of the French Revolution with the issue of "human rights" (implying: "equal rights for everybody") as a desire to reverse the existing dominance of the aristocratic minority in favor of the majority of the "sans culottes".(Whether the Revolution really achieved that is another issue). Even before the collapse of the Neoclassical Epoch with its "harmony", "order" "proportion" and the like, Western Europe started disrupting the established status quo by showing sympathy for the "negatively marked element of the binary opposition", that is: the poor and basic "demos" instead of the educated, refined and aristocratic "crème de la crème".. There are many examples of that type in European literature like the works of Milton, Goethe, Byron, Blake, to mention but a few. An interesting example in that case is the tandem of libretto-music of the opera "Don Giovanni", created by Da Ponte-Mozart with the type of relationship between Leporello and Don Giovanni typical for the epoch, considering Beaumarché's – Mozart's images of the smart servant (Figaro) vs. the spoiled and not very intelligent aristocrat (Almaviva) ..The opening of "Don Giovanni" with Leporello declaring that "Io non voglio piu servir"("I don' want to serve anymore") marks the politically based shift from the "harmony" and "order" of the Baroque era to the desire for Freedom of the Romantic Revolution rejecting "class distinction". The "Viva La Liberta" ("Long Live Liberty") moment – central to the opera action and addressed to the guests "In Maschere" ("In Masks") supports the idea of "speaking the truth the way it is" against the "anonymous rules that have to be obeyed without thinking" (i.e. – taken for granted and going without saying). The final scene – the stone-cold rigid statue that comes to seek revenge is no more than just a metaphor of the clash between the power of "established order" and the "energy of revolution".

It explains why the opera was labeled as "opera buffa"...making perfectly clear the grotesque meaning of the frivolous "dance" around the corpse of Don Giovanni at the end. The conclusion is that the "Mozart-Da Ponte" vision of the story of "Dissoluto Punito" ("Rake/Libertine Punished") has nothing to do with a religious "fighting with mortal sins". It has a deeper political connotation that brings up the modern concepts of freedom and individuality with its destructive (Dionysian, cf. Chapter 2) power, pointed against a rigid and hypocritical ethical code. (It is interesting, in this respect, to follow the history of the first performance of the opera and all the political character of the debate between Mozart and Joseph II about it).

All of the above proves that the Revolution didn't explode spontaneously out of the depths of social misery, but gradually emerged on the stage of history including all possible levels of social culture. As my analysis is not a historiographic one, I don't feel any necessity to provide details about the development of the French Revolution here. My emphasis goes on the controversial story of the narrative of "rights of humans" (regarding the problem of equality as discussed here) that started in France by the end of the eighteenth century and flourished during the next two to still cause problems when it comes to our contemporary way of defining real democracy and its message.

Two prominent British thinkers of the time of the French Revolution: Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine were engaged in a serious debate as regards the understanding of the moral values of the desire/demand for equality. Burke became quite famous as a passionate supporter of the American Revolution but later surprised his foregoers with his negative attitude toward the French one. I do not refer to the various explanations of the "inconsistency" in this research. What I consider important for my particular standpoint is the positions of the two men on the concept of "right" as expressed in their two famous clashing mottos: "The Age of Chivalry is Gone" (Burke) vs. "The Quixotic Age of Chivalry" (Paine). The reference to "chivalry" is significant because it takes the "sublimity" of its aristocratic elegance and refinement (that refer to the elitist status of the Aristotelian polis as discussed above) as a starting point for discussion on essential problems of human existence in a tough political habitat:

> For Burke, the beautiful is pleasant, attractive, appealing. We find it, he claims, in smoothness, smallness, subtle variation, delicacy, and mild colors. This is very much a neoclassical version of beauty – the version of beauty implicit in such favored Neoclassical critical epithets as "grace", "charm", "delicateness". By contrast, our sense of the sublime is inspired

> by ruggedness, irregularity, vastness, power and obscurity. (...) Going beyond Longinus, Burke links the sublime with terror: ...
> (Harland 54)

With the "Rights of Man" Thomas Paine puts the beginning of a series of treatises on the issue in British political literature where he supports the idea of the "natural" origin of human rights of the majority against the despotic rule of the monarchy (the minority). In his view, equality comes as the result of the power of the majority in a democracy, achieved by revolution as a natural way of fighting social injustice. This is what made him characterize Burke's stance as "Quixotic", finding it too idealistic/utopian for the practical needs of a democratic society.

Burke's stance on "Chivalry" is much more controversial, but, at the same time, much more sophisticated as regards his own understanding of the concept of majority in the history of human political experience:

> he was the first to rebut the conception made dominant by Locke, that every man's thought was s sufficient authority for himself, that the individual reason is a competent and sufficient guide to the truth. Burke argued on the contrary that society is an organic whole in which each mind is a particular growth, conditioned by the rest, and incapable of fully living if it detaches itself from the rest
> (Grieve *v*)

Hence, Grieve argues:

> ...the great value which he (Burke!) set upon custom and traditional opinion, the consensus of thoughts as opposed to individual judgement. All through career he attacked unsparingly the assertion of the individual, or as he called it, critical opinion as against the permanent conviction of society
> (Ibid.)

Burke's "permanent conviction of society" implies a stable line of continuity of human values throughout history which makes him believe in its collective basis. The idea of "rights" in this respect would , in his opinion, simply cause damage to its diachronic integrity:

> A right is merely an abstract metaphysical conception, which can never be imposed on society without disaster
> (Grieve *vii*)

When it comes to communal interaction, Burke's views sound much relevant to the views of Valentin Volosinov, who as a member of the

Bakhtin's circle successfully gave them a Marxist shape to avoid the wrath of Stalin's regime. According to the Russian-Soviet philosopher:

> Marxist philosophy /.../ emphasizes the link between language and consciousness as the result of the social organization of the communicators/interactors, with an emphasis of the "We"-experience against the "I"-experience.
> (Anastassov 23 a)

Volosinov's "We-Experience" vs. "I-Experience" supports the idea that:

> The immediate social situation and the broader social milieu wholly determine – and determine from within, so to speak – the structure of an utterance
> (Volosinov 132)

Both views express a standpoint in which social and linguistic interaction are "a priori" predetermined by the collective character of human communal consciousness. They can explain why Burke overthrew John Locke's understanding of the role of the individual in this interaction, with a focus on the "destructive" impact of "human rights" on the collective "organic whole". Contrariwise, Locke "shaped up" the image of the communal individual with a start from the arbitrary character of the (linguistic) communicative system which proves his/her priority over the collective:

> Man, he have great variety of thoughts, and such from which others as well as himself might receive profit and delight; yet they are all within his own breast, invisible and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made to appear. The comfort and advantage of society not being to be had without communication of thoughts, it was necessary that man should find out some external sensible signs, whereof those invisible ideas, which his thoughts are made of, might be made known to others.
> ....
> ...words /.../came to be made use of by men as signs of their ideas, not by any natural connection that there is between particular sounds and ideas /.../ but by a voluntary imposition, whereby such a word is made arbitrary the mark of such an idea
> (Locke 18)

A quick reference to Saussure reveals a similar opinion. The two abstracts from his "Course in General Linguistics" below that were previously discussed in another context (Chapter 1), are now repeated here in support of the opinion that human societies consist of individuals that communicate via arbitrary signs to reach a type of a "conventional consensus". It implies that the loose connection between words and

objects stimulates certain flexibility in the use and the understanding in their meaning in communal interaction. It is due to (as I stated in the reference to this excerpt in Chapter 1) the symbiosis of both the individual (generative) and the collective (performative) character in the same process:

> A language as a collective phenomenon, takes the form of a totality of imprints in everyone's brain, /../ Thus it is something, which is in each individual, but is none the less common to all. At the same time, it is out of reach of any deliberate interference by individuals
> (Saussure 19)

And:

> There is *nothing collective* about speech. Its manifestations are *individual* and *ephemeral.* It is *more than an aggregate of particular cases,* which may be represented by the following *formula*:
> (1+1'+1"+1'"…)
> (ibid.)

The Locke-Saussure position helps us to understand better, how the arbitrary character of language affects the groupings of narratives around different political ideologies. It integrates different groups of individuals, according to different types of social, political, educational, cultural, religious or whatever else criteria. This is how the "unstable" meaning of words as the result of the arbitrariness of language creates the variety of different narratives that can exist in any human society. In this case, the "public opinion" will emerge from a certain predominant narrative following the same principle as the one, applicable in the identification of a "common reading of a literary text". There is usually the need of a guidance to "shape up the preferred reading" of such a text. And, almost always – a "narrative" that "goes without saying" to be followed in the "shared perception" of a state governance. This is what finally traditionally defines the "majoritarian" character of the "public opinion" as a "democratic" one. It does not however give any answer to the question: where do the minorities belong in a society of this type?

The variety of multiple applications of the basic principles of democracy today makes it difficult to identify a simple criterion for a clear distinction between a "majority" and "minorities". The factor that integrates people into a "public opinion" includes a desire for safety, stability, tradition and confidence in the future, much more than an equality that many people don't believe in or simply misinterpret. This is what makes many people

critical toward the frequent changes in the policy of shifting democratic regimes and opens the gates to conservatism. It also explains why sometimes highly educated and open-minded individuals vote in elections for a party or a candidate that are not convincingly democratic. This "desire for stability" has its natural and deep roots in the consciousness of human "fear from freedom" (Cf. my Chapter 4) that makes Holland argue that:

> Most men instinctively accept the principles of hierarchy and discipline as the most certain ways to maximize their welfare and their political power. Since men fear freedom and crave authority, the critics of democracy believe that human nature requires the establishment of a state governed by a few in the interest of many
> (Holland 30)

The "crave for authority" often emerges in critical situations where democracy is not enough to fulfill the feeling of stable welfare and demands a (strong) individual leader with a respective phraseology (usually the only thing that they possess) and a powerful "ego" that wins the approbation of the public. There is a moment that is even more important in this respect. It is the refrainment of many communal members to engage into individual responsibility for collective matters. It is a natural trait that goes back to the emergence of religion as a human construct, based (again) on fear. The invention of cult and worship (especially in monotheism and more specifically: in the three major Abrahamic religions) moderates the fear in question and transfers the responsibility onto the "disembodied voice" who acquires the function of a "narrator-protector". Nor is the situation with mono party systems much different as observable in the so-called "people's democracies", where the "Party" (with a capital "P"!) makes the decisions for society and is "right even when it errs…"

This is not democracy no matter how strong the support of the "majority" may be. "Real democracy" suggests a social stratification where each "minority" (along with the "majority") has the potential to develop and perform as an equally full member. Here belong many different kinds of "minorities", unfairly labeled as such by people, authorities, institutions, and governments. This is what often develops into a harsh struggle for dominance that follows the principle of the power of the stronger…Thus, the so-called "public opinion" emerges out of the complex and dynamic flux of emotions, fears, desires, hopes, beliefs, prejudices (superstitions even!), etc. …in short: everything that the human nature consists of.

Apparently, the strata of a sample contemporary democratic society should be classified following a set of criteria more complex than just the "quantity"-one. As in many other cases, a reference back to the Classical times of Aristotle helps contemporary science to find a clue to a question that has been answered millennia ago:

> Now every city is composed of quality and quantity. By quality I mean freedom, wealth, education, good birth, and by quantity, superiority of numbers. Quality may exist in one of the classes which make up the state, and quantity in the other. …there must be a comparison of quantity and quality.
> (Aristotle 57)

The conclusion is that the "majority" as the holder of "public opinion" is not a reliable source of democratic "equality". The latter implies (following a very simple logic) a state where everybody is satisfied with the social stratum where s(h)e belongs. Logically again, the very existence of "majority" suggests "inequality". A common fallacy in many states, labeled as "democratic" today is that assertiveness and aggression, rudeness and arrogance, egotism and intolerance, cunning wit and hypocrisy and all kind of political "mauvais gout" ("bad taste") are taken ("without saying!") for strength and reliable leadership. This is what finally supports (unfortunately!) the major thesis of this work about the universality of power imposition and maintenance. It defines the "narrative of western democracy" as based on "play on words" with the ever desired, but difficult (almost impossible) to achieve "equality", "democracy" and freedom"…

In general: it is argued in this chapter that the creation of ideological narratives of power depend on the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. This characteristic of language takes part in the maintenance of a political discourse that integrates groups of different citizens of a state into a majority with a public opinion. The major claim of this part of the study is that this integration functions on the same principle as the "shaping up of the preferred reading" of a text. The different "readers" of "text" of society" stick together in their desire for authoritative guidance. The follow up is that the formation of a "majority with a public opinion" is not a democratic one, because it implies the existence of other group(s) of minority(ies) that remain in an unequal position within the framework of the polity.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE DECONSTRUCTION OF IDEOLOGICAL NARRATIVES

Power Imposition/Maintenance in Poststructuralist Political Discourse

This chapter engages social semiotics in the debate whether poststructuralist approach toward the power imbalance of political narratives goes beyond the traditional structural binary character of oppositions or not. I argue here that the post-structural (Derrida's) "deconstructionist" attempts to "destabilize" it do not eradicate the "imbalance". This is what triggers discussion with Derrida and Fukuyama over the concepts of freedom, democracy and equality today to finally come to the conclusion that a really democratic governance should be based on a theory and performance quite different from what has been followed and performed so far for the last couple of centuries.

The previous parts of this study refer to the ideological antagonism of narratives, based on structural binary oppositions. This is an approach that puts political and semiotic analysis together, with the ambition to understand and explain how the investigated here "power imbalance" actually works. The implication is that we acquire knowledge about things not only in the area discussed above, but in general, "in absentia" (in the absence of one of the "marked" members of the opposition). It means that to get to know what, for example, "democracy" is it should be opposed to what it is not. It will be necessary then to define it in contrast to "non-democracy" and vice-versa, whatever the two terms are supposed to mean. Therefore, everything in human communication, according to Saussure, depends on the difference that the signifiers are involved in their structural relationships. According to the Swiss linguist words by themselves mean nothing; they get their denotation when involved into the structural relationships of language performance.

This "difference" supposes a certain "immateriality of the signifier", because of the status of signs as "mental abstractions" (if we believe the theory of the "father of twentieth-century linguistics"):

> A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept /signified/ and a sound pattern /signifier/. The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses.
> (Saussure 66)

Saussure's critics often take this theory skeptically. In the search of alternative, poststructuralist semioticians:

> ... have sought to revalorize the signifier. The phonocentrism which was allied with Saussure's suppression of the materiality of the linguistic sign was challenged in 1967, when the French poststructuralist Jacques Derrida in his book "Of Grammatology", attacked the privilege of speech over writing which is found in Saussure
> (Chandler 53-54)

The phonocentrism in question simply implies priority of the spoken language over the written one, which provoked Derrida to introduce the graphic sign (the writing) as a material one and therefore oppose Saussure's "mental abstractions". Hence, the rebuttal of the "privilege of speech over writing" starts from the rebuttal of the following tradition:

> From Plato to Levi-Strauss, the spoken word had held a privileged position in the Western worldview, being regarded as intimately involved in our sense of self and constituting a sign of truth and authenticity
> (Chandler 54)

This tradition helps to understand how notions such as "I am a unique individual" are:

> …created and maintained by our engagement with sign-systems; our sense of identity is established through signs. We derive a sense of self from drawing upon conventional, pre-existing repertoirs of signs and codes, which we didn't ourselves create
> (Chandler 216)

When it comes to the balance between "speech" and "writing", the above statement supports again the previously discussed idea that language is an instrument of self-expression along with its basic communicative function. Humans emotionally express themselves by means of signs, which they

exchange and share, no matter whether with the help of articulated language or anything else .In the process they develop a sense of the difference between "my sign" and "your sign" that finally results in the awareness of the "self", as in Jacques Lacan's theory of the "mirror stage":

> The Neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan argued that initially, in the primal realm of "the Real" (where there is no absence, loss or lack), the infant has no center of identity and experiences no clear boundaries between itself and the external world. The child emerges from the real and enters "the Imaginary" at the age of about 6 to 18 months, before the acquisition of speech. This is a private psychic realm in which the construction of the self as subject is initiated. In the realm of visual images, we find our sense of self reflected back by another with whom we identify. Lacan describes a defining moment in the imaginary which he calls "the mirror phase", when seeing one's mirror image (and being told by one's mother "That's you!") induces a strongly defined illusion of a coherent and self-governing personal identity. This marks the child's emergence from a matriarchal state of "nature" into the patriarchal order of culture.
> (Chandler 93)

Still in the same context: observations of children's development demonstrate a universal urge to scratch on surfaces as soon as they reach an age when they have fair command of their motoric functions (it can even precede speech). It can easily be associated with primitive "writing" if the non-alphabetical (pictographic-ideographic) graphic systems are considered. Here belong also the famous primordial cave paintings, the runes and all the possible signs that humans have left on wood, stones, etc. as an activity that they have performed from the very dawn of their intellectual evolution. This is the way I describe it in another research:

> Rousseau's understanding of human language as "shared emotion" allows us to draw certain parallels between art (more explicitly, music and visual art) and linguistically marked *realia*. A parallel with visual art /.../ in the prehistoric cave paintings, for example, taken as initial-primitive examples of art, supports the idea of the emotional experience of the "ego", projected on the cave wall and shared, as a reference, with yet another "ego" as a part of the process of interaction. Therefore, "language as knowledge", like "art as knowledge", apart from everything else that it is believed to be, is a human desire for self-observation that really integrates individuals, with a common understanding of the object of self-observation as a referent.
> (Anastassov 24 a, original emphasis)

This citation suggests that in the process of "sharing emotion" the "initiator" imposes power on the "consumer" by creating the narrative of "I am!" … Even scratches on trees or benches such as "Mary and John

were here" belong to the same type of "shared emotion" when combined with a desire for self-expression and proof of self-identity: "This is me, I am here, I exist!"

This is the start of Derrida's ambition to "dismantle the master's (Saussure's) house", as the famous saying goes. It is an informal reference to "deconstruction" - a sophisticated theory, often labeled as "fuzzy" if not properly referred to, especially when applied to political analysis. My task, naturally, is not to introduce its basics here, but rather, to look into the way the "revalorized signifiers" from above (as the result of the "deconstructed" opposition between "speech" and "writing") affect the "sense of being" of communal members in the creation of "powerful narratives". Saussure's "priority of speech" supports the idea of the words of a language as "mental abstractions". Derrida's critique "ushers" the graphic sign", the "writing" into the interactional life of humans as a material proof of the existence of the "I am"-model. The individual "ego-s" (the individuals of a community) can apply it then according to their own interests and understanding. In this respect: the first step in this "deconstruction" will be to identify the independent function of "signifiers" in the process of social semiosis. It follows the poststructuralist rejection of the "apparently stable and predictable relationship" embedded in Saussure's model of signifier and signified being "as inseparable as the two sides of a piece of paper":

> Jacques Derrida refers /.../ to the "play" or "free play" of signifiers: they are not fixed to their signifieds but point beyond themselves to other signifiers in an indefinite referral of signifier to signified. Signs then always refer to other signs and there is no final sign referring to itself
> (Chandler Ibid.)

The "free play" of signifiers implies, following Chandler's way of thinking about Derrida's "deconstruction", a variety of different references to the same object.

> Changing the signifier at the level of form or medium may thus influence the signified – the sense which readers mark of what is ostensibly the same "content"
> (Chandler 56)

A reference to a famous piece of literature here: Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" offers a relevant idea in a poetic form:

> What's in a name? That which we call a rose/ By any other name would smell as sweet
> (Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (II, ii, 1-2)

It is interesting to admit here that Shakespeare, long before Saussure and Derrida managed to grasp the need of "deconstruction" of the binary oppositions of the type of "Montague" vs. "Capulet", as the symbol of death in the famous tragedy and formulated it in the verse, uttered by Juliet to praise the unity in love:

> O Romeo, Romeo! Wherefore art thou Romeo? / Deny thy father and refuse thy name/. Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love/, And I'll no longer be a Capulet.
> (Shakespeare "Romeo and Juliet", II, 2)

Further, the idea of a "free play with the signifier" may become so intense as to influence the way we perceive the siginified (yet another example of linguistic relativism):

> Changing the signifier at the level of form or medium may thus influence the signified – the sense which readers mark of what is ostensibly the same "content"
> (Chandler 56)

Chandler's comment at this point includes the funny remark that: "Breaking up a relationship by fax is likely to be regarded in a different light from breaking up in a face-to-face situation" (Ibid.). It relates to the principle of "political correctness" as discussed in the previous chapters with the demands of the specific code for "appropriate language". This is where euphemisms and taboos are often welcome especially in the language of politics and the language of the media. A video clip posted on Facebook in 2016 seems symptomatic: a Canadian female MP from Alberta being reprimanded by the spokesperson, also a lady, for using "unparliamentary language" (the basic word for flatulence), when complaining about the unfair attitude of other MPs toward the problems of her province. It is a good example of how "politically incorrect" a sign may sound, when charged emotionally while meaning initially something entirely acceptable.

As a result:

> Socially oriented semiotics should alert us to how the same text may generate different meanings
> (Chandler 216)

This situation appears beyond the limits of regular textual analysis. In a "Derridean" context, it becomes even clearer that it applies to all kind of entities, which have meaning and structure:

> Derrida refers to the objects of deconstruction as texts. The term "text" does not only refer to texts in the usual sense of written words. Instead, it refers to any meaningful totality and this includes practices, institutions and structures, whether philosophical, economic or otherwise; ...
> (Thomassen 43)

Therefore, as previously discussed, the term "text" denotes a sign-system representing the "reality" of communal (socio-political) interaction:

> For those who adopt the stance that reality always involves representation and that signs are involved in the construction of reality, semiotics is invariably a form of philosophy
> (Chandler 59)

Being a form of philosophy which "constructs political reality", as the above citation goes, this type of semiotic analysis immediately evokes associations with linguistic relativism again, as discussed in my chapter 3. It reflects a position that has often been criticized by scholars who disagree with either Derrida or poststructuralism in general. Inasmuch this study shows reserves for the hypothesis of Sapir-Whorf, it should be admitted that Derrida's "deconstruction" implies an ability of language as a system of signs to manipulate the speakers in the creation of worldviews as communal narratives. In the context of the present research, "manipulation" refers to the ideological background of these "communal narratives" in question and belongs to the overall characteristics of the role of signs in human interaction:

> There are no ideologically neutral sign-systems. Signs function to persuade as well as to refer. Valentin Volosinov declared that "whenever a sign is present, ideology is present too /../ Sign systems help to naturalize and reinforce particular framings of the way things are, although the operation of ideology in signifying practices is typically masked. Consequently, on these principles semiotic analysis always involves ideological analysis"
> (Chandler 214)

All of the above implies that by ideological analysis based on signs we should understand an analysis of their ability to impose power by creating narratives:

> If signs do not merely reflect (social) reality but are involved in its construction, then those who control the sign-systems control the construction of reality
> (Chandler 219)

It is clear that "deconstructive reading" suggests "authors" ("tellers", "narrators") who possess the power of "shaping it up" according to the ideological demands of "those in control". It is not difficult to imagine how it works in the framework of Derrida's thesis when the "free play of signifiers" is considered. The loose (or even lost) connection with the signified allows a variety of different "readings", grouped in different types of "alignment". In the context of a state/polity, the latter implies a variety of different ideological narratives. The one that fits the scheme of the "controllers" is taken advantage of for the imposition/maintenance of political superiority .Quite often it coincides with the "public opinion of the majority" (in the way it was presented above) and is thus disguised as a democratic move. The follow-up is that within a "text" there is a myriad of floating signifiers with imbalance between "stronger" and "weaker" ones. They are connected (associated) to other signifiers with no direct link to the signified. A "deconstructive reading of the text of democracy" in this case points at the "unstable" links of "equality" and "majority vs. minority" with other signifiers such as private/corporative interests, initiative, ambition, connections, wealth, fear, hate, even likes or dislikes, etc. That is: everything that integrates people around the "stronger narratives of power" following a certain political "alignment", all of that under the cover of "democracy". It depends on the current situation in different polities and forms the "public opinion" by creating a manipulative narrative of power. This is what makes it possible for a "society with a stable democracy like the US-one" (Fukuyama) to vote for Donald Trump, after having elected Barack Obama president twice. Alternatively, in the context of religious metaphors: it explains the shift from "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him" within a week's time in the story of Jesus Christ. The assumption is that as in the example of the different readings of a (literary) text, in a polity these floating signifiers accumulate in a "public opinion" that represents the "shaped up", "preferred" reading of a narrative that fits the interests of groups of individuals that control it.

The major contribution of Derrida's approach in this case is that it provides theorists with a base for "deconstruction" of "western (liberal) democracy". It "destabilizes" the traditional binary conflict "democracy: dictatorship" with the discovery of many different oppositions fighting between each other in a particular "fractal" dynamics…In this respect the trivial understanding of "majority" loses its aura of "democracy-equality" because of its structural heterogeneity (eclectics). In other words: democracy can no longer be regarded as the symbol of "equality" as the expression of the "public will of the majority", simply because what integrates the latter is based on a variety of different signifieds, artificially

constructed and put together in a narrative that is supposed to be "read" according to the interests of those in power.

The "deconstruction" of democracy finally proves that such a notion does not exist strictly speaking at all. When related to Derrida's famous statement "il n'ya pas de hors-texte" it reveals that the text stands in between the "outside" and the "inside". It is something in a constant move from one of the sides to the other and vice-versa. It was erroneously translated in English, as "there is nothing outside the text", instead of the "there is no outside text", which is the correct one. The word "outside" here is an adjective in the sense of "outer":

> Nothing can determine the meaning of the text once and for all, neither the text as a coherent totality with determined limits (for instance a closed structure) nor something outside the text, such as its content of enunciation or the intentions of the author
> (Thomassen 46)

It can thus be argued that "(western) democracy as a text" is "deconstructed" when the seemingly "stable equal rights for everybody" are explained as a "free play of signifiers" referring not to "everybody", but just to a privileged part of the society. The "stable equal rights for everybody" is a narrative that has been (ever since the French Revolution) "taken for granted". As such it erroneously suggests that the democratic principles of equality are inseparable, "inside" ("dans-le-texte") signifiers fixed to the signified of democracy.

All of the above triggers serious concerns about the meaning (content) of the term "democracy" in the contemporary world. According to Fukuyama:

> Liberal democracy may constitute the "end of history". Stable democracies like the United States, France or Switzerland, were not without injustice or serious social problems. But these problems were ones of incomplete implementation of the twin principles of liberty and equality, on which modern democracy is formed, rather than of flaws in the principles themselves
> (Fukuyama *xi* a)

Discussing the stability of American, French, or Swiss democracy is not my priority here. Rather, I concentrate on the debatable part of Fukuyama's statement on the "incomplete implementation of the principles of liberty and equality" vs. "the flaws in the principles themselves". I have no clue as to what must have Fukuyama had in mind by "incomplete implementation of liberty and equality" when he discussed

their function in "stable democracies". A statement of the type evokes doubts about the "stability" of a democracy that does not allow the full implementation of its major principles. It rather means that either the democracy in question is not stable, or, there is indeed something wrong with the principles themselves. My approach so far has pointed at the debatable moments in the conventional understanding of the concepts of "democracy" and "equality". Fukuyama, in his conception about "the end of history" narrows down the scope of analysis to the time immediately after the collapse of communist regimes in Europe by the years 80-90 of the twentieth-century with the claim that:

> What we may be witnessing is not the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of the history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.
> (Fukuyama 1b)

What he actually means by "end of history" follows the idea of:

> The triumph of the West, of the Western idea, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism
> (Fukuyama ibid.)

The American-Japanese scholar supports his argument by building up a scheme, based on an impressive historical analysis of the contribution of Hegel to the thesis of the "end of history" with a brilliant (and rare) distinction between his idealistic philosophy and its Marxist deviation. With a further reference to Kojève (A French philosopher from Russian origin), Fukuyama comes to the following conclusion:

> For Kojève, as for all good Hegelians, understanding the underlying processes of history requires understanding developments in the realm of consciousness or ideas, since consciousness will ultimately remake the material world in its own image. To say that ended in 1806 (the year of the battle of Jena) meant that mankind's ideological evolution ended in the ideals of the French or American revolutions: while particular regimes in the real world might not implement these ideals fully, their theoretical truth is absolute and could not be improved upon
> (Fukuyama 6 b)

"HAVE WE in fact reached the end of history"? asks Fukuyama and there is the immediate answer:

> …we must seek an answer to this question in the realm of ideology and consciousness. Our task is not to answer exhaustively the challenges to liberalism promoted by every crackpot messiah around the world but only those that are embodied in important social or political forces and movements, and which are therefore part of world history.
> (Fukuyama 7 b)

Francis Fukuyama admits however, that during the twentieth century there have been "challenges to liberalism": fascism and communism with a thorough analysis of their emergence, evolution, and crackdown from an economic, political and ideological point of view. A parallel study of the German-Japanese form of fascism, followed by a similar one of Russian-Soviet and Chinese communism reveals a position that somewhat underestimates the challenges in question. It appears in his view on the situation in Post-Gorbachev Russia where:

> For authority to be restored in the Soviet Union after Gorbachev's demolition work, it must be on the basis of some new and vigorous ideology which has not yet appeared on the horizon
> (Fukuyama 13 b)

And, the other, extremely sensitive ones nowadays:

> The rise of religious fundamentalism in recent years within the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim traditions has been widely noted
> …
> In the contemporary world only, Islam has offered a theocratic state as a political alternative to both liberalism and communism. But the doctrine has little appeal for non-Muslims, and it is hard to believe that the movement will take on any universal significance
> ….
> The other major "contradiction" potentially unresolvable by liberalism is the one posed by nationalism and other forms of racial and ethnic consciousness/.../Nationalism has been a threat to liberalism historically in Germany, and continues to be one in isolated parts of "post-historical" Europe like Northern Ireland
> (Fukuyama 13 b)

All these statements are debatable if taken into account from the perspective of the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century: Putin's Russia swayed from the liberal path taken by Gorbachev, to establish a regime that very much resembles the despotism of the Soviet era. The imperial nostalgia brings together in a weird nexus the worst from the USSR along with the updated ideological importance of the Orthodox Church. It uses the "myth-narrative" of "The Father-Protector of Slavic

Christendom" for the imposition of power and Anti-EU/Anti-West feelings.

The issue of Islam acquires "universal significance" today not because it represents that much a "threat" by itself, but because of the manipulative way, some people use it for political reasons. The problem of Muslim refugees connected with "terrorism" is a serious obstacle for the peaceful existence of western liberal democracy. However, it often results in political narratives that misuse the major democratic principles by advertising fierce nationalism and types of governance based on ethnic, religious, and racist intolerance.

All of the above does not underestimate the values of "western liberal democracy" in their (kind of "romantic") sincerity, but expresses doubt as to their stability from a historical perspective. The fact that ever since The French Revolution and The Battle of Jena there have been regular "ups" and "downs" reflect a weakness in their maintenance. The principles of liberty and equality almost as a rule acquire throughout time draconian "Orwellian" meanings. "Strong leadership" turns democracy into authoritarianism by creating manipulative narratives that disguise the "I-am-narrative" as "democratic government". It changes the concept of "equality" into a groundless greed for power coming from aggressively ambitious, but lacking the necessary qualities "strong" people…Democracy by no means implies (or, shouldn't imply?) random access for all possible citizens to its political governance. The world of today needs a reference back to the philosophers-kings of Plato in the way he understood them: as those who have the perfect intellectual capacity to run fairly and wisely the politics of their country.

All of the above reveals something more than just the "will to power of man" if "deconstructed" in a Derridean way. The assumption is that in the very core of "western democracy" there is a dynamic coexistence between two supplementary moments: the primitive "nature", implying the power of the "strong" man and the communal (political) "convention", based on agreement and respect for "the other" .Their regular appearance on the stage of history suggests a "model" that constantly recreates itself. In this case, Derrida's "iterability" proves helpful:

> …Derrida argues that there can be no pure absolute origin because every act of institution …draws upon a context of norms and must be repeatable in other contexts.
> …

> Repetition is never pure, but always involves alteration. This is so because to repeat something is to place it in a new context, and meaning is contextual and constituted through relations of difference
> (Thomassen 47)

The "iterability" of the model of "nature" shows up in the history of human political governance in a diachronic continuity. This statement refers to the agitated debate among historians whether history repeats itself or not. Without going too much in the depth of the matter I'd rather support the idea of repetition, considering everything that has been discussed so far in this work:

As far as the "strong individual as a leader" is concerned, there are additionally the examples of the Roman Emperors who proclaimed themselves Gods. There is also the Machiavellian "prince", as well as the dictators of the type of Napoleon, Hitler, Stalin, Ceausescu, (let alone some very recent examples) who intervene into the democratic character of the "convention" with their ambition to rule not differently from the way Julius Caesar did…

On the other hand: the result of the deconstructive analysis shows that the convention in question and the "naturally strong individual" supplement each other, that is to say: history so far proves that they survive in a kind of a "unity" that forms then a community/ /polity/"urbs"/state with a regular shift of the prevalence. I stated before that this is not the real "democracy", which humanity has always aspired to achieve. The non-utopian and fully achievable one is yet to come, if we believe in Derrida's "differánce" as a process of "deferring", juxtaposed to Saussure's "difference". Derrida deliberately coined up a new word in the French lexicon using a pun that supports his theory of the destabilization of the western phonocentrism: the two words sound the same in the French language, but the different spelling implies a difference in the meaning. Namely:

> …the term is intended to remind us that signs also defer the present of what they signify to endless substitutions of signifiers
> (Chandler 248)

The idea of the juxtaposition between "difference" and "differánce" makes sense when we compare Saussure's "structurally motivated meaning" to the "deferred, postponed, anticipated" one of Derrida. A deconstructionist approach will then reveal a "yet-to-arrive-moment" in the political definition of human society:

> Political critique would not consist in establishing a firm set of concepts and distinction, but, rather in putting these into question. For instance, rather than identifying the essence of democracy, Derrida (..) refers to a democracy to-come (*à- venir*). This is not a democracy that has not yet been realized, but will be so one day in the future (*avenir*). Rather, it is a democracy that will remain to-come, to be determined, but in the name of which any existent or present democracies can be questioned.
> (Thomassen 43)

This is an assumption that emerges from the historical experience of the twenty-first century- humankind in democracy (or what traditionally we understand as "liberal western democracy"). It reflects a political status quo that perceives (and implements) the principle of "equality" differently from the way John Lennon "imagined it" in the iconic song that goes much further than Derrida in its complete deconstruction. Most of the numerous analyses of the content emphasize on the utopian side of Lennon's dream for a better world. His pacifism and desire for equality and justice attracts special attention. Concepts, such as "brotherhood of men", "no possessions", or "all the people living life in peace" classify as trivial samples of utopian dreaming. His attitude toward religion has been the subject of heated debate. There exist different types of "etiquettes", ranging from "basic atheism" to "Lennon, the devoted Christian". Relatively rare are the studies dedicated to the way the iconic "Beatle" challenged the human self-imposed restrictions to the desired happiness. Lennon structured the text of the song as a binary opposition between the desired "imagined" and the factual "real": imagine/no heaven; imagine/no countries; imagine/no religion, etc. The implication is that in the non-imagined reality there exists the concept of "heaven", meant to watch us and to judge us, "countries" to separate us, and "religion" to control us. This is probably the reason why it sounds non-realistic to many of his fans. However, the gradually increasing emotional strength of the metaphors reveals a Derridean "différánce", in the sense that any of the restrictions in question are deconstructed to a further level of deference (différánce). namely: "Heaven" and "Hell" are juxtaposed to "above us only sky", which means that the religious terms are replaced by a concept that humans are familiar with; by ranging the religious connotation of "heaven" with the more ordinary "sky" (the adjective "only" supports this in the context) Lennon juxtaposes the manipulative metaphysics to the humane down-to-earth reality "Countries" and "reasons for killing and dying" are put alongside "religion", implying that these "reasons" are fictitious and metaphysical, because no ideology (either religious or secular) can find any acceptable and convincing "logic" in "killing and

dying" for the existing artificial boundaries between people; "No possessions" goes along with the rejection of "greed" or "hunger". The last two are interdependent: with no" hunger", in an opposition with "greed", there will be no aspirations for possession – hence the "brotherhood of men". One can discover here the leftist anti-capitalist views of Lennon, so typical among the western intellectuals of the second half of the twentieth century. Central and essential to the whole work is the reference to the "dream" itself:

> You may say I'm a dreamer/But I'm not the only one/I hope someday you'll join us/ And the world will live as one

It appears in both the center and at the end of the text, implying that John Lennon was aware of the fact that people would take it as utopian and non-realistic. He counteracted with the assumptions that: " I am not the only one" and "I hope someday you'll join us" .The two statements reveal a subtle, but strong belief in the validity of the Platonic ideal abstractions of the "Agathon", where "all the people will be sharing all the world". On the other hand, they do not sound like slogans or cheap propaganda: there is still the delicacy of the alternative hint that "you may not join us". People will be sharing the entire world if you do, but if you do not the dream of the world to live, "as one" will remain the imagination.

Lennon managed thus to acknowledge a status in the social psychology of humans that is scientifically explicable. The process of "differánce" follows Derrida's model of eradicating the limits of comprehensibility of human social behavior: his famous "aporias", meant to denote a logical contradiction or an inconsistent, even paradoxical statement.

This analysis shows how a deep philosophy, combined with artistic intuition and sensibility can give a post-structural critique of the contemporary world of restrictions and prohibitions that supplements the scholarly theory of semiotic-political deconstruction. It overthrows all the prerequisites of today's "liberal democracy" that make it illogical, to open up the "text of the deconstructed myth" as the rejection of the "narrative of power" …

This chapter offers an analysis of the power imbalance in human (political) interaction with reference to structural and post-structural social semiotic approach. The introduction of Derrida's political deconstruction as opposed to the Saussurean binarism help us explicitly and critically define modern western liberal democracy as a status where oppositions exist and supplement each other at the same time. This observation comes

as a proof of the hypothesis, suggested at the beginning of this study, that the imbalance of power imposition among humans as "political animals" is (and has always been) an inseparable part of their political existence.

CHAPTER NINE

THE COUNTDOWN (I)

The Power Imbalance in the Deconstructionist Aftermath

This chapter offers an attempt for a post-structural interpretation of the role of the social media in the deconstruction of the investigated here power imbalance in human political interaction. It is assumed, on the basis of the previous observations that contrary to the expected break in the rigid binary opposition between the official media indoctrination and the expected free, democratic access to the political truth, the social media maintain the conflict by following the same type of "free floating of signifiers" in the (majoritarian) public opinion as described above

Many people today share the opinion that the so-called official media usually disguise the political truth about the actual political reality. They believe that by doing so they serve the "politically correct" route of "those in power". With the constantly increasing importance of the social media though there was at the some point a feeble belief that they might go beyond the restrictions of the officially transferred information into an arena of democratically exchanged and mutually respected opinions on different political issues. This hope emerged from the desire to go beyond the limits of what is officially said or wrapped up into the mystery of the ignored, twisted or "half-said" and to get free access to the truth about their own political communal life. It was assumed that the information coming from the social media, with all its journalistic immaturity could give more reliable knowledge about the real "status quo" than the official one or mainstream (governmental) one could. Considering the growing number of citizens who have access to the social media, it seemed, at some point highly probable that they might develop into a stable factor for the maintenance of democracy in the near future.

In the significant number of years of its existence, the social media developed from an alternative instrument of mass communication with the ambition to provide people with the proper information about what really happens in the world of politics into a "sui generis" reflection of the

"voice of the public". I discussed it above with the assumption that it demonstrates the way in which the "majority" of the population of a certain polity forms the so-called "public opinion". It was also marked that it functions as a universal trait of human socio-political conduct. . No matter how unchangeable human nature is though, today's citizens of the world receive much more (and much more complex) information about everyday political life, which makes the task of rhetoric more difficult as regards the level and quality of persuasion. This is what marks the necessity of a distinction between the two types of media for the sake of scientific knowledge about the way political reality reaches the average consumers today.

The difference between the social and the official media was not clear, in the very beginning of the existence of the former as regards the targeted audience of the produced information. It is true that the "official media" intend to reach a large audience of individual recipients by offering them accessibility to production, based on "mass communication". The term when taken as a synonym for "mainstream media", implies a certain type of relationship with the political governance of the state where performed. The common belief is that in "western democracies" "mainstream" and "alternative" media both belong to the plurality of "mass media" where different types of political views are supposed to reach the variety of individual consumers equally. This statement sounds like a triviality to be taken for granted, but it poses nonetheless the serious question of "how equal" are the "mainstream" and the "alternative" media in the eyes of those who control them. In other words, how different could they be, as regards the major political line of the "controllers" in question? The geostrategic and economic position of the world states, along with the global importance of their raw materials, as it is well known, predetermines certain "grand strategies" that change insignificantly with the change of governing political parties. No matter whether the Democrats or the Republicans are in power in the US, or Conservatives or Liberals in the UK, the mainstream political orientation of the countries remains more or less unmodified. (This statement may sound debatable in the context of the present world crisis with the non-conventional way of maintaining political governance, taken by Trump administration, the political turbulence experienced by the EU, the claims of Russia and North Korea, Syria, ISIS and the like...) This is what brings up the issue whether the "mass media" – alternative or not – are really so democratically independent and different from each other. Aren't they (each of them) equally part of the "mainstream" –current-governance-oriented flow of information directed towards the average consumers (the public opinion

from the previous chapters)? The debate about what is politically appropriate to discuss freely in the public sphere is not at all new. Long before the works of Michel Foucault, Danish writer Hans Christian Andersen made the idea popular with his famous metaphor about the innocent child who was the only member of the group of people to admit publicly the His Royal Majesty...had no clothes on. Foucault's "Madman's Speech" puts the same idea on a serious philosophical basis. What is not "politically correct" seems like a deviation from what is "right" without saying, and therefore: "abnormal"...Much criticized "Orientalism" by Edward Said proves that "real political knowledge" could be "twisted" or even hidden from the average consumer by means of creating manipulative discourse. From the point of view of semiotics of power: Umberto Eco's half-scientific – half-fictional "Name of the Rose" clearly illustrates the manipulative value of "political alignment" (the so-called "shaping-up the preferred reading of a text") for ideological purposes, as pointed in the first chapter of this work. Said, Foucault and basically Jacques Derrida, belong to the generation of (poststructuralist) scholars who looked at "texts" as arbitrary signs that imply knowledge acquisition (of the truth) based on structural binary oppositions and felt tempted to determine them as the interdependent parts of a unit. A couple of millennia before poststructuralism, Aristotle did almost the same by explaining the basic function of rhetoric with the opposition between strophe and antistrophe (originally meaning a "turn" and a "turn back", i.e. – a movement of reversible, interdependent elements) as the two parts of a whole. However, the reference to the social media together with all the rest of the analyses from above shows that the language of political persuasion of Homo Loquens-Politicus has always been based on imposition of (manipulative) power. Post-structural science tried to offer a solution with Derrida's" deconstruction" with the attempt to go beyond the restrictions of structuralist binary oppositions and find "the truth about the truth" in a dynamic flow from "black to white"(hence the famous post-structural semiotic sophism: "black equals white")… It couldn't though, in this respect, find a possible "deconstructive" reconciliation between the knowledge that the" official mass media" gives and the "the shaping-up of the preferred reading" that is keeps away the average consumer from political reality. This is what the social media was expected to achieve (and never managed to) as a role at the dawn of its existence and political performance.

It is true that due to the social media as the result of advanced technology people all around the world know much more about each other. All electronic devices make humans acquire faster and deeper knowledge

about them. This is a fact that dramatically changed people's attitude toward each other. Internet, Facebook, Tweeter, Skype, Mobile phones, etc. make human communication quick and efficient. If agreed that knowledge about the "other" means power, then the recognition of the similarities with this "other" simply deconstructs the traditional antagonism (international, or within the framework of a nation-state). It seemed at some point as if the social media had started functioning as powerful factor making its first steps on the political stage. The increase of non-official knowledge, theoretically speaking, made many people believe that it would definitely positively affect the accepted "order" in the political rhetoric of the "mass media". The social media exists on the base of user-generated texts. There is no strict difference between "producers" and "recipients". This is what locates the role of the very text itself into a typically post-structural context. Keeping in mind Roland Barthes' "Death of the Author" along with the increasing role of "The Reader" (Umberto Eco) we may assume that the major positive trait of the social media" was the escape from the authoritative manipulative power of the mass media. However, the randomly chosen average opinion gives an ambivalent feedback:

> "The Social Media Is Bullshit" "The Social Media Evokes Social Isolationism" "The Social Media Makes You Feel Lonely" "The Social Media is Unreliable" "The Social Media Adds Up to the Noise" "The Social Media Offers Low Quality of Journalistic Information"

With such an outpour of negative feedback, it is clear that the social media has been for some time a non-reliable source of political information. What makes the crucial difference from the official media though is the variety of the expressed different "floating signifiers" as introduced in the previous chapter, which represent the different types of "reading of the initial text". It is true that there is no (at least visible) official "shaping up" of the "public reading", but there is still the trace of the clashing narratives, backed up (behind the scene) by groups of interested "strong individuals", similar to those that have been referred to so far. A relevant example in this case is the heated debate in the US and all around the world about the presidency of Donald Trump. No matter how variegated the multiple motifs "pro" or "con" his political performance are, the antagonism is again reduced to the struggle between two competing narratives. The support or the disapproval of the rest of the world simply reflects the conflict between the different views on different humans on freedom and democracy. Nor is the situation in Europe much different, be it the Brexit-case, or the Catalonian independence with the same type of

"behind-the-scene" clash of interests that produce the competing narratives in question.

All of the above means that the social media cannot be that much different from the manipulative and indoctrinated (government-sanctioned) mass media. Moreover, it is true that they stimulate the voicing of many opinions that we may have never heard of at all without them. It is also true however that they trigger an outpour of emotionally non-controlled statements that often turn political discussions into low quality arguments. This is an opinion that supports the previously stated thought about the basic drawbacks of contemporary western democracy where bad taste is often mistaken for real freedom of speech or human rights and equality.

It can finally be be concluded that the presented analysis of the role of the social media in fact backs up one of the major thesis of this study about the universal character of the human social beings. They seem to have always been at crossroads between the desire for freedom and the fear from its consequences. In the case of the definition of the role of the social media in the attempt of the modern world to find a way out of the chain of binarism, it simply shows that humans prefer the power of its maintenance rather than the reconciliation of the Aristotelian convention. The simple fact that the seemingly "free" exchange of standpoints in fact follows the above expressed idea of "floating signifiers", grouped under the common denominator of "my narrative" vs. "your narrative" supports the previous statement from a deconstructionist perspective.

It can be finally (cautiously though) suggested that the social media in a way functions similarly to the chorus from the Ancient Classical Drama (Cf. Chapter 2): as the "voice of Dionysus" talking to the average "Homo Politicus" with all his destructive and creative force about things that are supposed to be taken without saying...

CHAPTER TEN

THE COUNTDOWN (II)

The Endless History of the "I AM"-Narrative

This chapter offers a roundup, based on the major points of the whole work. The focus goes on the importance of language as the "raw material" that serves for the creation of ideological narratives of political discourse. The claim is that it functions "a priori" as an instrument for power imposition, because it is by itself a process of imbalanced interaction

Scholars realized long ago that texts do not fully belong to their authors. Once started, they follow their own line of development and lead their creators in directions, different from the originally taken ones. My text here makes no exception to the rule. At the beginning of the working process I imagined a final result with much stronger emphasis on language maintenance. The first steps in the analysis of the so-called "role-shifting" between a "speaker" and a "listener" diverted me toward power imposition that I had until then somewhat underestimated. The discovery made me realize that apart from maintenance, imposition of power plays a very special role in the political governance of human polities. The assumption is that the "political animals" of Aristotle obey a set of rules that allow them to understand each other and survive together. The "language rule" seems to be the most important one because it provides the base for collective life. However, the creativity of the speakers jeopardizes its stability because it constantly changes and replaces the existing rules with new ones. Historically speaking these new rules are created by the community members who "sway" from the accepted language order by deviating it .This is Chomsky's "language competence" – the capacity to create new forms, universally inherent in all speaking humans:

> From "creative" aspect of language to/…/ a universal grammar that accommodates the creative aspect of language use and expresses the deep-seated regulations which, being universal, are omitted from the grammar itself
> (Chomsky 3)

Not all of the community members though participate in the beginning of the process. It starts with sporadic "breaking of the rules" to spread over the whole system and its users. It implies imposition of power that thrives in the very base of language communication. It is an exchange of limited in number arbitrary signs from which people produce a non-limited number of meaningful units. It is similar to the creation of music where the limited number of tones gives as a result a non-limited number of musical pieces. This is a fact that explains the creative- emotional imbalance of power: it functions as a mathematical combination:

> …a real understanding of how language can (in Humboldt's words) "make infinite use of finite means" has developed /…/ in the course of studies in the foundations of mathematics /…/ to attempt an explicit formulation of the creative process of language
> (Chomsky 8)

These free combinations when used to refer to the same objects contribute to the imbalance in question by creating "stronger" signs imposing power on the "weaker" ones. Such an imbalance exists in the variety of different samples of oral tradition – myths, legends, tales, sagas, etc. where the production of different narratives often relates to the same concept from various perspectives. Almost as a rule, this variety is reduced to the opposition between "my narrative" vs. "your narrative". At this point, the "language competence" shifts into "language performance":

> To study actual linguistic performance, we must consider the interaction of a variety of factors, of which the underlying competence of the speaker – hearer is only one in this respect; study of language is no different from empirical investigations of other complex phenomena. We thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker-hearer knowledge of his language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations)
> (Chomsky 3)

The distinction between "competence" and "performance" relates according to Chomsky to the Saussure's distinction between "langue" and "parole". It points at a system of generative processes. Politically speaking: it stands in the base of the common crave of humans for order in the context of the collective welfare that takes the latter as "right" and confronts it to the change as "wrong". These rule-generating processes come from the narrative of the "disembodied voice" that is taken for granted ("goes without saying"). In the history of humankind, it has been basically associated with mythology and religion. It is the scriptures (books,

codices) that “permanently record the sacred texts” with narratives of “superior” power, offering instructions about the distinction in question.

More to the point: the issue of “communal welfare” shifts from “shared emotion” to “shared perception”. The latter introduces the ambivalent position of the individuals in the totality of the community. They are, on the one hand,” criminals”, because they disrupt the social order by disobeying the rules. On the other hand – they are the strong innovators who can easily become the leaders of the rest. Their leadership takes over the responsibility for the “obedience of the rules” by imposing power in the name of the “disembodied voice”. This is what explains the “divine” status of many monarchs in the history of humankind from Ancient Rome and Asia, to many recent dictators. with their lust for totalitarian power and impeccability. The shift from a “deity” to “big brother” seems thus to be at all times a very natural one for those “strong individuals” willing to rule...

Individuals in communal life are part of democracy as a political regime that supports freedom against authoritarianism. It is not easy though to put together “individualism” and “equality” as democratic principles (as traditionally believed) because they exclude each other. Equality implies “same social status” for everybody, which has never been possible in any historical epoch regardless the level of democracy:

> Some Socialists seem to believe that people should be numbers in a State computer. We believe they should be individuals. We are all unequal. No one, thank heavens, is like anyone else, however much the Socialists may pretend otherwise. We believe that everyone has the right to be unequal but to us every human being is equally important
> (Thatcher, downloaded)

The opinion of Margaret Thatcher supports the idea of the conventional character of human communal interaction where individuals respect each other in their search of harmonious co-existence. “Equality” however is unachievable in polities divided into “majority” and “minorities”. Aristotle’s “middle class” is not the solution to the problem since it excludes women and recognizes slavery in the structure of his “democratic” polity. Plato’s “Republic”” is orderly, but by no means democratic. Thomas More’s “Utopia”, as the very title suggests (a pun based on Greek “ou-topos”, meaning “no such place”, mixed up with “eu-topos”,meaning “the perfect place”), is practically non-achievable. The more time advanced to Modernity, the more philosophers and writers imagined the societies of the (dystopian) future as gloomy structures with despotic rule

The American and the French Revolutions marked the beginning of a new era with the efforts to establish "equality" as the major principle of modern democracies. They differ though in the way they perceive this principle, as Edmund Burke convincingly admitted. His claim that the establishment of the United States of America is an act of declarative sovereignty and independence and is in the basis of the country's major principle of "liberty for all" is absolutely correct. It implies that it is a democratic community, open for people from different origin to settle and cherish; that is why it has become the global-universal "land of opportunity". It has the "cosmopolitan equality" of Alexander the Great that is different from the "equality" of the French Revolution with its emphasis on its intra-social importance. Both countries have developed today into open political systems that have nothing to do with the "coziness" and the "intimacy" of Aristotle's "polis". "The American Dream" makes no exception in the generosity with which it has always fulfilled the desire of people from all around the world for a happy life (as claimed many times by politicians and intellectuals, ranging from Martin Luther King to Meryl Streep). It is amazing to realize how many of the celebrities from the political and the artistic world of France during the last two centuries are in fact not French., such as politician Nicolas Sarkozy (Hungarian) writers Henri Troyat and Elsa Triolet (Russian). Ths United Kingdom with all the post-colonial aftermath is also the crossroad of different groups of people sharing together the common perception of its political reality. An interesting example in this respect is Germany with her attempts to cover for the atrocities of the Third Reich Nazi rule by welcoming migrants from underdeveloped parts of the world. Today's immigration to Germany is often the subject of harsh criticism, coming from people who forget all the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese migrants from the near past. Nobody remembers and talks about the "Yugo-Deutschen (the born-in-Germany-children of migrants-from- ex-Yugoslavia)" now, but in the 80s of the last century it was a problem, as "hot" as the problem of the German Turks.

The formation of the EU in addition is the product of the same ("cosmopolitan") tendency to notice, praise and maintain the common historical, cultural, political and economic achievements of the "Old Continent":

> For ages, Europe has been sharing common (political) constructs, not necessarily common language. There are plenty of examples from literature, music, painting and architecture that illustrate why it is possible for German-born Handel to be considered one of the most remarkable British composers, or why "Carmen" became the symbol of Spain, though

> created by the French (Mérimée and Bizet), or how Russian born Henri Troyat and Elsa Triolet became famous French writers…
> (Anastassov 8 c)

In this context, all the fierce attempts to dismantle the unity, coming from different nationalistic sources inside and supported by interested political forces outside Europe are based on the specifically narrow principle of "I" vs. "You", implying "the right" vs. "the wrong". These speculations lead again to the basic assumption that in human interaction, there is a constant rivalry between the will for power imposition and the desire for consensus. Post-Modernism and Post-Structuralism brought, indeed some hope for a break with the rigidity of the traditional (structural) binary oppositions. However the recent development of events on the stage of the world, reveal a tendency for the opposite. Theoretically speaking, what contemporary humans experience today is a new wave of the regular shift between the "natural power of the stronger" and the desire for "intellectual convention". It proves Derrida's observation on the "iterability" of historical models and involves him in a debate with Fukuyama on the future of "Western Liberal Democracy". Is it really "The End of History" or, rather "The Endless History"?

This "Power and Truth in Political Discourse" is the result of my desire to find the right place of language analysis in the context of political studies, as it still is in the margin of the major theory. I demonstrate here the way in which it affects the imposition of political power in human communal interaction. In the study of ideological narratives, I found support for the idea that language is an area where the desire of people to dominate over each other is explicitly visible. During the working process, I referred mainly to structural and post-structural semiotics with the belief that the investigation of the exchange of signs in human political life gives a lot of information about the history and the nature of humanity in general. It is an enormously hard task, but it is worth… Homo Loquens-Politicus is a creature full of controversy, paradox, imbalance and illogicality, but still fascinating with his/her creativity and desire to know more and achieve more…

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