

# THE PERFORMATIVE POWER OF TRANSLOCAL CITIZENSHIP

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## ABSTRACT

### **The Performative Power of Translocal Citizenship**

In topical debates on migration and global, world and cosmopolitan citizenship, the article introduces the anarchist idea of translocal citizenship. With its vision of communitarian nomadism, the concept aims at an idea and praxis of municipalized citizenship that is constituted beyond the nation-state, sometimes in opposition to it, but always surpasses the parochial forms of political community that make global connectedness impossible.

KEY WORDS: citizenship, democracy, anarchism, alter-globalization movement, globalization

## IZVLEČEK

### **Performativna moč translokalnega državljanstva**

Članek v aktualne razprave o migracijah in globalnem, svetovnem ter kozmopolitskem državljanstvu posega z rekuveracijo anarhističnega koncepta translokalnega državljanstva, ki z vizijo komunitarnega nomadizma cilja na idejo in prakso municipaliziranega državljanstva. To se konstituira mimo države, včasih nasproti njej, vedno pa se oddaljuje od ideje nacionalnosti, pri tem pa seveda presega parohialne oblike politične skupnosti, ki ne upoštevajo ali pa celo onemogočajo globalno povezanost.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: državljanstvo, demokracija, anarhizem, alterglobalistično gibanje, globalizacija

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“What touches all ought also to be approved by all.”  
– Johannes Althusius, *Politica methodice digesta*, 1603

Two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and in the middle of a global financial and economic crisis, we are discovering a deeper crisis of politics *per se*, where the crisis is not understood as the incompetence of politics to mitigate the contradictions inherent to the current economic model, but as its incompetence to transcend the very same economic model. We could also say that we are witnessing a triple crisis of politics – a crisis of participation, representation and, consequently, legitimacy. Following

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Nicos Poulantzas (2008: 294–322) and his warning that, with the word crisis becoming overused, the word is also losing its content and clarity, we should at the outset theoretically elaborate the concept of crisis and our own understanding of it. In the past a crisis – economic and political – has merely been perceived as an anomaly or rupture within the harmonious working of a self-regulatory system, as a dysfunctional moment that will be overcome when the balance of the system is restored. This conception of crisis results in myopia that overlooks many crises that do exist but are not perceived as such because of their positive role in consolidating and reproducing the status quo, despite their undemocratic and even anti-democratic inclinations; and, by contrast, equates with a crisis various ruptures that are inherent to the hegemonic economic paradigm and do not represent a threat to its functioning since they are a permanent part of its consolidation and reproduction.

The current crisis is therefore an economic and political crisis in the proper meaning of the word, a “crisis of crisis”, since we face such a concentration of contradictions inherent to the system that they now represent a threat to its stability and very survival. A new meditation about political alternatives – on the level of theoretical paradigms, as well as political praxes – is therefore more than appropriate. A myriad of innovative solutions can be found within the alter-globalization movement (AGM). Gustavo Esteva described the AGM as “one no and many yeses” since many different movements, in many different places, are united in their critique of neoliberal globalization, whereas their aspirations, goals and visions are diverse (Esteva in Kingsnorth 2004: 44).

When the first World Social Forum was convened in 2001 under the event’s official slogan “Another World is Possible”, Naomi Klein (2002: 193) remarked that the various groups and collectives gathered in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre were not cheering for a specific other world, just the possibility of one: “We were cheering for the idea that another world could, in theory, exist.” Although the AGM is a diverse “coalition of coalitions”, as Klein described it, and unites various collectives and movements that were often oppositional in the past, the AGM has still managed to develop its own collective identity and practice. According to Giorel Curran (2006: 2), “post-ideological anarchism” represents the main current within the AGM and at the same time is its best response to the reconfigured ideological landscape that renders doctrinal purity obsolete. “Post-ideological anarchism” adopts ideas and principles from classical anarchism very flexibly and non-doctrinally, and simultaneously rejects its traditional forms to construct genuinely new autonomous politics. David Graeber (2004: 214) also ascertains that anarchism represents not only the main locus of creativity within the AGM, but also the movements in new (post) ideology that are immanent in the anti-authoritarian principles underlying its political practice.

The main aim of this article is to rescue democracy and citizenship from the narrow statist confines. Since today, with acceleration of global migration and globalization processes, it is possible to talk about separation of political membership from the idea of the state and its constitution according to entirely new criteria, we will intervene in topical debates on post-national citizenship with the “anarchist” concept of translocal citizenship or subaltern cosmopolitanism. In the long run, with its vision of communitarian nomadism, the concept may prove to be the single most subversive theoretical and political innovation the “post-Seattle” alter-globalization movement (AGM) has recuperated. Translocal citizenship does not represent the depoliticization of political membership, but is – acknowledging the mobility of the *demos* – instead a substantive understanding of the concept that in past decades has too often been reduced to a legal or contractual status that does not anticipate political activity. Since translocal citizenship highlights the performative dimension of citizenship, it is constituted beyond the nation-state, sometimes in opposition to it, but always transcending the parochial forms of political community that make global connectedness impossible (cf. Fisher and Kling 1993; Castells 1994).

Intrinsic to this aim is an attempt to provide a preliminary reflection on the main coordinates of a “new” citizenship. We therefore address in our analysis the mechanical link between rights and duties, as well as the relationship between equality and difference. We will upgrade the idea of *differentiated citizenship* (Young 1989) and *differentiated universalism* (Lister 1998b) with the innovative meta-right of *equal difference* (Santos 2007). Yet we should emphasize that our imagining of a “new” citizenship

should not be understood as a total break from all previous conceptions of citizenship. “New” citizenship should not be understood as a *novum*, but as a new constellation of its basic tenets whereby an explication of the original intent and meaning of citizenship represents one of its major characteristics. “New” citizenship is therefore as much a thing of the past as it is of the future, as much a thing of continuity as it is of discontinuity.

In the last part, our preliminary attempt to imagine a new citizenship will follow Arjun Appadurai (2004: 273) and his warning that nowadays many concepts and categories are too elusive for traditional disciplines, classical theories and Western epistemologies and the analysis must therefore be founded on a new, more flexible epistemology. Imagining a new citizenship further supports Appadurai’s thesis that research in the globalization era is a peculiar optical challenge since it reveals this task is not simply a political challenge but, above all, an epistemological one. We therefore argue that in imagining a new citizenship, conceptual clarity and theoretical thoroughness are insufficient since this task demands a wider epistemological or cognitive transformation. We will indicate beneficial directions for the epistemological transformation within the social sciences in Raimon Panikkar’s idea of diatopical hermeneutics and, above all, in Boaventura de Sousa Santos’ theory of the sociology of absences. Santos, namely, ascertains that we are witnessing epistemological ignorance and the suppression of knowledge, a form of *epistemicide*, that strengthens the status quo and at the same time dismisses, discredits and trivializes arguments and solutions not in line with the hegemonic epistemological position – a hegemonic notion of truth, objectivity and rationality. “The sociology of absences” thus rescues and reveals the diversity and multitude of political practices and ideas that may inform a credible new counter-hegemonic conception of the discipline suitable for the globalized world.

In short, our analysis will not examine a particular aspect of new citizenship or attempt to constitute a new citizen upon a particular issue. Our aim and thesis is therefore not to advocate ecological citizenship (van Steenberg 1994), cultural citizenship (Turner 1993), cosmopolitan citizenship (Held 1995) etc., but it rather attempts to imagine citizenship holistically and without the state. We will not offer a modest modification of the traditional conception of citizenship as a special relationship between the state and citizen whose contents are certain rights and duties, but will instead offer a new understanding of citizenship within the AGM or translocal polities, where the mechanical link between rights and duties is finally loosened, as is the relationship between equality and difference.

## 2. CITIZENSHIP BEYOND THE NATION-STATE?

Political membership beyond the state is, according to Scott (2009: 3–4), the regularity of history, despite an inscription on the political map with nation-state and consequently with the sedentarization or administrative, economic and cultural standardization of fluid political entities. In addition, Harold Barclay (1996: 12) concludes in his anthropological study of non-statist polities that such a conceptualization of citizenship and political community is by no means unusual and, furthermore, “it is a perfectly common form of polity or political organization. Not only is it common, but it is probably the oldest type... and one which has characterized most of human history.” In the past many intellectual currents preceding the AGM still subsumed *politics* under *statecraft*, a mistake that has attracted considerable criticism. It has resulted in a theoretical purism and anti-intellectualism that has rejected every in-depth reflection on key political concepts such as political power or even citizenship. Persistent compliance with an idea of prefiguration within political praxis resulted in a reductionist examination of concepts that were perceived as anomalies of the past that have no place in the project of horizontal political organization and consensus decision-making.

But, according to Murray Bookchin (2007: 93–94) and James Scott (2010: ix–x; 1–39), politics and statecraft are not only significantly different, but are in fact in opposition to each other. Historically, politics has not and could not be developed within the state since it has always been closer to a philo-

sophical concept of praxis as a free and creative activity of individuals within fluid polities. Only in our present has politics been integrated by the state and strengthened the belief that there is no distinction between the political realm and the statist realm, even though the modern state was born exactly as a reactionary response to Renaissance humanism, and has always been an obstacle to global democracy (cf. Mertes 2002). Moreover, for Richard Day (2005: 38), the struggle to dismantle community through demutilization that is being waged between the AGM on one hand, and state and corporate forms on the other, is indeed the struggle of the (post)modern condition.

Although the etymological origin of the word citizenship – from *civitas, civitatus*, to the modern *citoyen* – always linked political membership to smaller and more fluid polities, we still find it difficult to understand the relationship between citizenship and the state in societies where the leveling of political membership to national or even ethnical identity results from a linguistic or semantic similarity between both concepts. We often forget that at the very beginning, citizenship was not related to the state but solely meant a specific “urban relationship” between rights and duties in the city (Delanty 2000: 12). *Citizenship* therefore meant political membership in a *city*. It is thus erroneous to talk only about a “citizen of the state” since we can also identify other types of citizenship that are built on different – e.g. territorial or functional – criteria.

A new imagining of citizenship and its constitution upon different criteria necessarily leads us to enquire into the relationship between the nation-state and citizenship, and the relationship between democracy and citizenship. It therefore leads to a familiar question that does not allow unambiguous answers: Is representative democracy within nation-states in an era of globalization and unprecedented mobility of the *demos* still a proper framework for “full membership of a community”? Do the fragmented sovereignty (Tilly 1990), post-sovereignty (Scholte 2000) or partial erosion of sovereignty (Santos 2005) of nation-states also indicate a crisis and even the decline of citizenship (Touraine 2000), or rather a crisis of the state and representative democracy?

If we understand democracy and citizenship in broader terms – not simply as a specific institutional design and legal status, respectively – then we can negate the above thesis. This is especially so if we understand both concepts outside of the political sphere (an achievement of the 18<sup>th</sup> century) so they also include a social and economic dimension, and we understand them instead as practice. If we bear in mind acceleration in the rate of international migration, we can agree with Ruth Lister (1998a) when she writes that to avoid a partial integration of a new political subject into the polity – and therefore rising numbers of *denizens* or *margizens* – we should once again understand citizenship not only as a legal status but also as a practice. We should add that it is not enough to understand performative citizenship as a practice *per se*, but as a *praxis* or a philosophical category of practice. *Praxis*, namely, differs considerably from the epistemological category of practice, which can, in fact, mean an activity that remains entirely alienated.

Although the word *praxis* is commonly used in everyday language and appears relatively clear and understandable since it is primarily used as a synonym for activity, creation, work, habit, experience, training etc., its meaning within philosophy, especially praxis-philosophy, is considerably more profound and specific. *Praxis* is equated only with free, universal and creative activity with which man creates and transforms his world and consequently himself. The key characteristic of *praxis* as a normative concept therefore lies in the fact that this activity represents a goal and purpose in itself. It is an activity that is supposed to be unique to mankind and through which man obtains his main distinctiveness from other living beings. Of course, freedom in this case should not be understood in a negative sense as an absence of external obstacles and limitations, but rather in a positive sense whereby the creative moment of this action is emphasized. *Per analogiam* with Gajo Petrović's definition of praxis (1978: 64), performative citizenship or citizenship understood as praxis “is the most developed form of creativity and the most authentic form of freedom, a field of open possibilities and the realm of the truly new. It is the very ‘essence’ of Being, the Being in its essence”.

The performative citizenship closely resembles the idea of “infrapolitics” that, according to James

Scott (1990: 184), “provides much of the cultural and structural underpinning of the more visible political action on which our attention has generally been focused”. It is as much a product of political necessity as of political choice, so we should understand the infrapolitics of a new (performative) citizenship not only as a form of political resistance under the conditions of tyranny, but also as “the silent partner of a loud form of public resistance” of modern democracies. Performative citizenship is not part of the mainstream, and although many times it is hard to detect this “immense political terrain that lies between quiescence and revolt”, it is still real politics, “in many respects conducted in more earnest, for higher stakes, and against greater odds than political life in liberal democracies” (*ibid.*, 200). The political struggles of *Sans-Papiers* in France, the Erased in Slovenia, “illegal” immigrants in the United States *et cetera*, only attest this further.

### 3. IMAGINING A NEW CITIZENSHIP

A reconfiguration of the relationship between equality and difference will, according to Gerard Delanty (2000: xiii), be one of the most important aspects of a new citizenship. Citizenship is nowadays perhaps the most important point of contest about the identity and recognition of (group) differences that cannot be resolved by the current model of multiculturalism, or can rather only be resolved in times of economic growth. Today it is obvious that the multicultural project in its hegemonic form did not succeed. Yet, contrary to the plethora of conservative and nationalistic objections to multiculturalism, we can detect its limitations, *inter alia*, in its following characteristics:

1. it is an inappropriate framework for new citizenship because it still places citizenship within the framework of the nation-state;
2. it overlooks that the *integration* of “others” can, at the same time, lead to their *exclusion* or *subjugation*;
3. it is still a Eurocentric approach to the reconfiguration of equality – a difference that is unable to understand Western universalism simply as another particularism;
4. it is the prime expression of the cultural logic of global capitalism; and
5. it tends to be apolitical, thus ignoring the problem of power relations, inequality and exclusion and, with an emphasis on tolerance that does not demand active participation and cooperation with others, it results in “repressive tolerance” (Marcuse 1965).<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, a new citizenship also rejects the paradigm of universalism since it only results in the homogenization and uniformity of polities, but not also in social justice and the inclusion of their members. Universal citizenship and the related enlargement of the scope of the political subjects have certainly represented an important political achievement. We should still understand this process within its historical context as this would reveal that it has not been initiated to empower new political subjects but to reflect a deep concern about the fate of the new political innovation – the modern nation-state. The concept of a uniform, homogeneous citizenship emerged as a political tool and is, according to James Scott (1998: 32), merely a poor abstraction that can be compared to the invention of meter, kilogram and other units of measurement, standards and reforms needed for the administrative, economic and cultural standardization of heterogeneous and fluid political entities. We can thus understand universal citizenship as a political equivalent to the meter that was introduced with a revolutionary decree stating: “The centuries-old dream of the masses of only one measure has come true! The Revolution has given the people the meter” (*ibid.*). If the universal meter swept away differences in the units that it measures, then universal citizenship swept away and denaturalized differences among “unmarked”

<sup>1</sup> For more on the limitations of multiculturalism as a political project and a description of social reality, see Santos, Nunes and Meneses (2008: xxiii–xxiv).

and “one-dimensional” citizens. Hence, the affirmation of equality and universalism also does not mean emancipation since it can result in a loss of identity. Affirmation of differences and relativism can, conversely, result in another anomaly – in the justification of discrimination and subjugation. Is there any solution to the so-called “politics of difference”?

Worth mentioning here is Will Kymlicka's liberal theory of minority rights, as outlined in his seminal *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995), which represents an important contribution to the debates on “the dialectic of nation-building and minority rights”. Kymlicka admits that his theory has sometimes been criticized as “insufficiently liberal, and too willing to compromise universal liberal principles to accommodate particularistic and often non-liberal sentiments, identities and aspirations”, while sometimes as “too tied to universal liberal values, and insufficiently sensitive to contextual factors and to cultural differences” (Kymlicka 2001: 49). Since Kymlicka's examination of the “principles for distinguishing the claims of various sorts of minority groups” (2001: 1) is possible within a liberal-democratic framework only, and implicitly reflects the characteristics of a specific polity, we will not proceed any further here. The same holds true for Charles Taylor's short but still detailed reflection of the philosophical assumptions underlying the *politics of universalism* and the *politics of difference* respectively, where the possible “fusion of horizons” could be found in the *politics of equal respect*. Since in this article we cannot address all of the issues that may fairly be raised in a thorough reading of Taylor's “politics of recognition”, and, above all, since Santos' theory of “equal difference” in many aspects follows Taylor's theory, but at the same time surpasses the shortcomings of the liberal and statist position, we will not delve into this either.<sup>2</sup>

The errors and limitations of universalism along with relativism can be eliminated with the use of diatopical hermeneutics (cf. Panikkar 1999). Diatopical hermeneutics can be understood as a *dé-tournement* of perspective that, instead of one (hegemonic) position from which we determine the relationship between equality and difference, proposes a plethora of such perspectives and “dialogical dialogue” between them. It builds on the thesis that *topoi* – places of (self)understanding within a certain culture and tradition or, to put it differently, forms through which we think, although we do not think about them – cannot be understood with tools and categories of other *topoi*, but at least we can gain a better understanding of them by traversing between various *topoi*. In moving between *topoi* (dia-topoi), Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2008: 28) identifies the meta-right of equal difference. The meta-right of equal difference is based on two axioms that transcend the old relationship equality *versus* difference in a genuinely new relationship of equality *et* difference: first, it stresses difference when equality would threaten our identity and, second, it stresses equality whenever diversity would result in inferiority and discrimination. The differences that would remain when inequalities and hierarchy vanish thus become a powerful denunciation of the differences that the status quo reclaims in order not to disappear.

Yet the reconfiguration of equality and difference is not the only key characteristic of a new citizenship. Another important novelty is a loosening of the mechanical link between rights and duties or, rather, the constitution of citizenship beyond this link. Within different theories of citizenship we find various understandings of the link between rights and duties – e.g. the preponderance of duties within the republican tradition and the preponderance of rights within the liberal one – but it is always established and perceived entirely mechanically. Citizenship as a special status is thus impossible without a burden of corresponding duties. Although such a definition of citizenship may seem logical and reasonable, it is highly problematic in many aspects. With the current processes of economic globalization the nation-state is being forced to redefine its position and purpose, thereby also significantly transforming the arena of political participation. What is left from Marshall's triad of citizenship rights is largely only political rights, and we can therefore understand objections that citizenship is nowadays merely a legal status without a performative dimension. Since citizenship and citizenship rights are allocated only to subjects able to accept corresponding duties, a national citizenship is not open to subjects who are

2 See also Kymlicka (1995); Kymlicka (2001); Taylor (1994).

unable to be bearers of duties. This logic of reciprocity ensures, *inter alia*, that children, future generations, or nature cannot become full members of a community. Identifying an individual as a subject with rights and duties furthermore prevents the identification of group rights and group identity, and results in the exclusion of all indigenous communities that do not want to enter into a polity without their particular group identities.

## 4. TRANSLOCAL CITIZENSHIP AND SUBALTERN COSMOPOLITANISM

The new concept of citizenship moves away from the nation-state as its territorial reference point, but simultaneously rejects its continuation within some new supranational entities. We could argue that it rejects the very notion of permanence and continuity and therefore builds on the municipalized political praxes of the “newest social movements” (Day 2005). Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007: xv) agrees that we can find many important innovations – on both political and theoretical levels – within a network of local initiatives (urban or rural) that have gradually developed ties of mutual recognition and interaction. For Santos, this network represents the beginning of a translocal yet truly global network of direct democracy that, in its fight against social exclusion and the “trivialization of citizenship”, has recuperated an idea of alter-globalization, direct democracy and subaltern cosmopolitanism.

After the protests against the World Trade Organization summit in Seattle in the late fall of 1999, the mainstream media tried to dismiss the protesters and their demands with distorted reports that depicted them as “global village idiots” (*The Wall Street Journal*), “a guerrilla army of anti-trade activists” (*The Washington Post*), or even as “a Noah’s ark of flat-earth advocates, protectionist trade unions, and yuppies looking for their 1960s fix” (*The New York Times*).<sup>3</sup> Despite the vast amounts of media coverage and books and articles on the AGM, the movement’s innovative solutions and proposals have still not been properly addressed. That writing about the AGM and its political aspirations is a demanding and perilous endeavor – particularly because the AGM is a colorful coalition of ecologists, indigenous activists, farmers, feminists, trade unionists, NGOs and other initiatives that, according to Esteva, offers “one no, and many yeses” – is still a very poor excuse for any further neglect of this task.

The AGM was born, or at least came to world attention, when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into force. On January 1 1994, the indigenous people of Chiapas, Mexico, chose to start a war against oblivion, as the NAFTA – which enabled the buying of communal land and simultaneously banned subsidies for indigenous farm cooperatives – would bring the “summary execution” of all indigenous people in Mexico. The Zapatista uprising and the later *encuentro* against neoliberalism and for humanity (*Encuentro Intercontinental por la Humanidad y contra el Neoliberalismo*) mark the birth of the AGM or the “movement of movements”. The *encuentro*, organized in the Lacandon jungle in 1996 by the EZLN, resulted in an appeal for an

intercontinental network of resistance, recognizing differences and acknowledging similarities [that] will strive to find itself in other resistances around the world. This intercontinental network of resistance will be the medium in which distant resistances may support one another. This intercontinental network of resistance is not an organizing structure; it has no central head or decision maker; it has no central command or hierarchies. We are the network, all of us who resist (Marcos in de León 2001: 125).

An important outcome of the Zapatista *encuentro*, one that is still often overlooked, was the global network called the *People’s Global Action* (PGA), which unites anarchist collectives in Europe and elsewhere

<sup>3</sup> For more about the media representation of the AGM, see McNally (2006).

with groups ranging from Maori activists in New Zealand, fisherfolk in Indonesia, or the Canadian postal workers' union, and that would become one of the main organizers of the counter-summits from Seattle and Prague to Quebec and Genoa (Graeber and Grubačić 2004). The network includes many movements and collectives that cannot be reduced to a single ideological platform but, as can be seen from its *Hallmarks*, the organizational principles of the PGA are identical to the main anarchist ideas:

1. A very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism and feudalism; all trade agreements, institutions and governments that promote destructive globalization.
2. We reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings.
3. A confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organizations, in which transnational capital is the only real policy-maker.
4. A call to direct action and civil disobedience, support for social movements' struggles, advocating forms of resistance which maximize respect for life and oppressed peoples' rights, as well as the construction of local alternatives to global capitalism.
5. An organizational philosophy based on decentralization and autonomy (PGA 2001).

The story of the AGM continued with the growing (international) recognition of the Brazilian landless farmers' movement (*Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra*) and the Indian Karnataka State Farmers' Association (*Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha*); together with the strengthening of the global coalition of small farmers *Vía Campesina*; the restoration of the international network for the democratic supervision of financial markets and institutions ATTAC (*Association pour la Taxation des Transactions par l'Aide aux Citoyens*); revolts against privatization of the water system (and rainwater) in Bolivia, privatization of the energy system in South Africa, the "Washington Consensus" policies, and neoliberalism in Argentina; the creation of the international research and education institution The International Forum on Globalization; the organization of the first World Social Forum (*Fórum Social Mundial*) in Porto Alegre, that was followed by regional social forums in Europe, Africa, and Asia; leading to the biggest protests in the history of mankind when on February 15, 2003 over 20 million people all over the world protested against the war in Iraq.

The common denominator of the various movements and collectives that comprise the AGM and its most interesting contribution on the political and theoretical level can be found in their new understanding of political community and political membership – the idea of translocal citizenship. Nowadays, when within the top 100 economies we find more multinational corporations than national economies, the nation-state ceases to exist as the only centre of sovereignty and arena where key political decisions are made. At the same time, the altered local – regional – global nexus makes it possible to finally separate political membership from the nation and its constitution according to entirely new criteria. Translocal citizenship therefore does not represent the depoliticization of political membership but a substantive understanding of a concept that in past decades has been reduced to a legal status without substance. It is yet another outcome of the AGM's focus on prefigurative politics as an attempt to create the future in the present through political and economic organizing alone, or at least to foresee the social changes to which we aspire. It is indeed an attempt to overcome current limitations through the construction of alternatives from the bottom up, since it foresees a renewal of the political power of local communities, and their federation into a global non-statist network as a counterbalance to nation-states and corporate power.

Translocal citizenship resonates the theory of the German anarchist writer Gustav Landauer, who already early in the 20th century revealed that for political emancipation we should overcome the negative fetishization of the state, since the people do not live in a state, but rather they are performing and creating the state (Landauer 2010: 249). According to Landauer, an author not well known outside anarchist circles, the state is rather "a condition, a certain relationship among human beings, a mode of



behaviour” that must be theoretically addressed and not rejected merely due to our theoretical purity or ontological principles. Therefore, a state is not something that can be destroyed by means of a revolution, which is why it is necessary to build libertine enclaves next to it, or to postulate a revolution as a “peaceful and gradual creation of counterculture” opposite to the idea of “a revolution as a violent mass rebellion”. It is impossible to attain a free society merely by replacing an old order with a new one since it can only be attained by spreading the spheres of liberty to such an extent that they finally prevail over all social life. If the state is in all of us, then we can only abolish it by revising our behavior.

One can overturn a table and smash a windowpane; but they are puffed-up word-spewers [*Wortemacher*] and gullible word-adorers [*Wortanbeter*], who hold the state for such a thing – akin to a fetish – that one can smash in order to destroy. The state is a relationship between human beings, a way by which people relate to each other; and one destroys it by entering into other relationships, but behaving differently to each other... [W]e must recognize the truth: we are the state – and are it as long as we are not otherwise, as long as we have not created the institutions that constitute a genuine community and society of human beings (Landauer in Graham 2005: 165).

Within the AGM, the prefiguration of alternatives is also accepted through Hakim Bey’s popular conceptualization of the spontaneous and subversive tactics of Temporary Autonomous Zones (TAZ) “which liberates a part (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, before the State can crush it” (Bey 2003: 99). According to Jeffs’ (1997: 368–369) elaboration of Bey’s theory of TAZ, the political change should be “detrterritorialized, decentralized, and delinearized on all political, economic, social, libidinal, and, last but not least, narrative levels, and small and nomadic forms of resistance introduced, also because there is not a single place in the world, which has not been delineated by the nation state. ... [TAZ] is invisible to the state and flexible enough to vanish, when determined, defined, and fixated.”

Such emancipation does not have to postpone its mission for fulfillment of the necessary precondition – the maturity of objective historic circumstances, or the formation of some coherent subject or class – since it builds on the supposition that every individual is capable of co-creating the world with their, even if very small, gestures (cf. Jeffs 1998: 22–23). Going back to Landauer, the necessary change “concerns every aspect of a human life, not only the state, class structure, industry and trade, art, education. ... The path to a new, better social order runs along a dark and fatal road of our instincts and *terra abscondita* of our souls. The world can only be formed from the inside out” (Landauer in Marshall 1993: 411–412).

The concept of translocal citizenship represents a significant departure from classical theories of citizenship because it builds on *inclusion* and *participation* rather than on *identity* and, instead of *equality*, it accentuates *differences*, or “equal differences”. Yet translocal citizenship should also not be understood as another postmodern conception of political membership characterized by relativism and particularism that, according to Rizman (2008: 37), only detects diversity, difference, fragmentation, conflict and opposition, but not also commonality, equality, integration, consensus and integration. Referring to Darren O’Byrne (2003: 227), it “embraces plurality without being relativistic, universality without being deterministic, and identity without being unduly subjectivistic.” Translocal citizenship thus represents a critique of the universalistic assumptions within the liberal tradition, or their upgrade with differentiated universalism that draws close to Habermas’ idea of “constitutional patriotism”. Considering that translocal citizenship offers a different understanding of political community and stresses its constant reinvention, we should instead conclude that translocal citizenship represents a form of “unconstitutional patriotism” that in its replacement of *ethnos* with *demos* follows a significantly more radical definition of democracy than Habermas’. It does not equate democracy with a particular constitutional system only, nor with a particular constellation of centers of power within a society, but instead understands democracy in Westian terms – as a verb, and never as a noun (cf. West 2005: 68).

## 5. CONCLUSION – NEW CITIZENSHIP AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

Our attempt to imagine a political membership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century soon revealed that a new citizenship is not only a political question but an epistemological one, since exclusion, oppression and discrimination have not only economic, social and political dimensions but also cultural and epistemological ones (Santos, Nunes and Meneses 2007: xix). As opposed to past practices, political control and domination are today not grounded solely on economic and political power, but foremost on knowledge or the hierarchization of knowledge. They also do not aim at the exclusion of others, but rather at specific ways of their inclusion that result in a certain constellation of a political community and the asymmetry of power within it.

When imagining a new citizenship, conceptual clarity and theoretical thoroughness are thus insufficient since this task demands a wider epistemological or cognitive transformation. Particularly beneficial directions for the epistemological transformation within the social sciences can be found in the idea of diatopical hermeneutics (Panikkar 1999) and, above all, in Boaventura de Sousa Santos' theory of "the sociology of absences". We are witnessing epistemological ignorance and the suppression of knowledge, a form of *epistemicide*, that strengthens the status quo and at the same time dismisses, discredits and trivializes arguments and solutions not in line with the hegemonic epistemological position – a hegemonic notion of truth, objectivity and rationality. Santos (2004: 238) reasonably warns that there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice. What is therefore needed is an epistemological transformation that will broaden the spectrum of (relevant) political solutions and innovations.

According to Santos, the solution is "the sociology of absences" which transforms impossible into possible objects, absent into present objects, or irrelevant into relevant objects. If the production of the non-existence, ergo the hegemonic conception of political science and sociology, is founded on:

1. a monoculture of science that turns modern science and high culture into the sole criteria of truth and aesthetic quality, respectively;
2. a monoculture of linear time that dismisses as "backward" whatever is asymmetrical and contrary to whatever is declared "forward";
3. a monoculture of classification that attempts to naturalize social differences and hierarchies;
4. a monoculture of the universal and the global that trivializes all particular and local practices and ideas, and renders them incapable of being credible alternatives to what exists globally and universally; and
5. a monoculture of capitalist production and efficiency that privileges growth through market forces and dismisses other systems of production as non-productive (*ibid.*, 233–239)

then "the sociology of absences" should be founded on the following epistemological assumptions:

1. an ecology of knowledges that recognizes other knowledge and criteria of rigor that operate credibly in social practices;
2. an ecology of temporalities that understands linear time as only one of many conceptions of time and that it is not even the most commonly adopted one. The rejection of linear time places other and different political and social practices on the same level as political and social practices of the West since now they become another form of contemporaneity;
3. an ecology of recognition that rejects the colonial ideas of race and sexuality, and tries to articulate a new nexus between the principles of equality and of difference, thus allowing for the possibility of equal differences;
4. an ecology of the trans-scale that rejects the logic of the global scale and recuperates particular and local practices and ideas as relevant alternatives;

5. an ecology of productiveness that refutes the hegemonic paradigm of development and infinite economic growth. It recuperates and validates alternative systems of production, popular economic organizations, workers' co-operatives, self-managed enterprises etc., which have been trivialized by the capitalist orthodoxy of productivity (*ibid.*, 239–240).<sup>4</sup>

“The sociology of absences” thus rescues and reveals the diversity and multitude of political practices and ideas that may inform a credible new counter-hegemonic conception of the discipline suitable for the globalized world. Paraphrasing Eduardo Restrepo and Arturo Escobar (2005), such an epistemological transformation calls for a critical awareness of both the larger epistemic and political field in which disciplines have emerged and continue to function, and of the micro-practices and relations of power within and across different locations and traditions of individual disciplines. We should add that the shift would also result in the acceptance of new methodologies, research foci and research ambitions which would be a first step towards the pluralization and decentralization of political science.

Although our epistemological position is not a sweater that we simply take off to be replaced by another, as already warned by Furlon and Marsh (2002), the difficult task of changing “a skin, not a sweater” is a prerequisite for a new imagining of citizenship. If we return to Gustav Landauer (2010: 88), the necessary change “concerns every aspect of a human life, not only the state, class structure, industry and trade, art, education. ... The path to a new, better social order runs along a dark and fatal road of our instincts and *terra abscondita* of our souls. The world can only be formed from the inside out.”

In the article we have argued that on the margins of the political map various “subterranean” collectives and movements are developing a genuinely new political alternative, and with it also a new understanding of political membership that can be and needs to be worked out first on a more manageable scale, *ergo* within local communities. A new citizenship is not leveled to a legal status, but is rather as a performative status, that is constituted beyond the nation-state, sometimes in opposition to it, but which always transcends the parochial forms of political community that make global connectedness impossible. In times of global migration and unprecedented mobility of the *demos*, this idea can indeed be understood as a much-needed *panacea* for the shortcomings of national citizenship. We have sought to indicate that a new citizenship closely resembles the idea of “infrapolitics” that provides much of the underpinning of the more visible political action on which hegemonic political theories have generally been focused. The conclusion we draw from it is that a new citizenship is already here, it is only upon us to rescue it from the shackles of our epistemological ignorance.

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4 For a further elaboration of the sociology of absences, see Boaventura de Sousa Santos, “The World Social Forum: Toward a Counter-Hegemonic Globalisation (Part I),” in *World Social Forum: Challenging Empires*, ed. Jai Sen et al. (New Delhi: The Viveka Foundation, 2004), 235–245; Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *The Rise of the Global Left: The World Social Forum and Beyond* (London: Zed Books, 2006); Boaventura de Sousa Santos (ed.), *Cognitive Justice in a Global World: Prudent Knowledges for a Decent Life* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007); Boaventura de Sousa Santos (ed.), *Another Knowledge Is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies* (New York, NY: Verso, 2008).

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## POVZETEK

### PERFORMATIVNA MOČ TRANSLOKALNEGA DRŽAVLJANSTVA

Žiga VODOVNIK

Članek v razpravi o postnacionalnem državljanstvu posega z idejo translokalnega državljanstva, saj izhaja iz predpostavke, da danes ni mogoče govoriti zgolj o večplastnosti državljanstva, ampak končno tudi o njegovem ponovnem odmiku od nacionalnega in konstituiranju po novih kriterijih. Gre torej za idejo in prakso municipaliziranega državljanstva, ki se konstituira mimo države, včasih nasproti njej,

vedno pa se oddaljuje od ideje nacionalnosti in pri tem seveda presega parohialne oblike politične skupnosti, ki ne upoštevajo ali pa celo onemogočajo globalno povezanost.

Cilj prispevka tako ni naivna negacija kategorije državljanstva, ampak prispevek k afirmaciji drugačnega razumevanja in prakticiranja državljanstva oziroma političnega članstva v globaliziranem svetu. Predvsem gre za osvoboditev demokracije in državljanstva iz ozkih etatističnih okvirov. S tem ciljem je neločljivo povezan poskus preliminarne refleksije temeljnih koordinat »novega državljanstva«. Translokarno državljanstvo kot »novo državljanstvo« seveda ne pomeni popolnega preloma z vsemi predhodnimi koncepcijami državljanstva, torej ne gre za *novum*. Prej ga je treba razumeti kot njegovo ponovno vsebinsko polnjenje z ekspliciranjem izvirnega pomena in namena državljanstva, ki ga ni bilo mogoče izenačevati s statusnim oziroma pravnim determinizmom. Zato je »novo državljanstvo« posledično vsaj toliko stvar preteklosti kot stvar prihodnosti, vsaj toliko stvar kontinuitete kot stvar diskontinuitete.

Članek osvetljuje vprašanje reartikulacije odnosa med enakostjo in različnostjo, kjer lahko idejo diferenciranega državljanstva oziroma diferenciranega univerzalizma nadgradimo z inovativno konfiguracijo metapravice enake različnosti. Vendar rekonfiguracija odnosa enakost–različnost ni edina značilnost »novega državljanstva«. Pomembna novost je tudi rahljanje vezi med pravicami in dolžnostmi oziroma razumevanje državljanstva onkraj te mehanske vezi. Članek v tem pogledu poudarja omejitve logike recipročnosti, ki onemogoča, da bi polnopravni člani politične skupnosti postali *inter alia* otroci, prihodnje generacije, narava. Spremenjeni *nekus* med lokalnim, regionalnim in globalnim prav tako kliče po elaboraciji oziroma natančnejši konceptualizaciji postnacionalnega državljanstva. »Novo državljanstvo« namreč dokončno opušča nacionalno državo kot svojo teritorialno referenčno točko, pri tem pa se ne konstituira v okviru nekih novih supranacionalnih entitet. Lahko bi zapisali, da zavrača idejo fiksnosti in teritorialnosti, zato že nekaj časa glavne teoretske in praktične nastavke črpa iz municipaliziranih praks najnovejših družbenih gibanj.

Avtor tako konstatira, da translokarno državljanstvo pomeni odmik od klasičnih teorij državljanstva, saj namesto na identiteti temelji na vključenosti in participaciji, namesto enakosti pa poudarja različnost oziroma enako različnost. Translokarnega državljanstva kljub temu ne smemo razumeti kot postmoderno koncepcijo političnega članstva, ne gradi namreč na relativizmu in partikularizmu, saj zgolj zavrača univerzalistične postavke liberalne koncepcije državljanstva oziroma jih nadgradi z diferenciranim univerzalizmom, ki se deloma približuje Habermasovi ideji »konstitucionalnega patriotizma«. Glede na radikalno razumevanje politične skupnosti in poudarjanje njenega konstantnega izumljanja je translokarno državljanstvo »protiustavni patriotizem«, ki *ethnos* nadomešča z *demosom*, ob tem pa sledi dosti bolj radikalnemu razumevanju demokracije kot Habermas.

V zadnjem delu članek pri poskusu zamišljanja »novega državljanstva« sledi opozorilu Arjuna Appaduraija, da so danes številni koncepti in kategorije preveč izmuzljivi za tradicionalne discipline, klasične teorije in zahodnjaške epistemologije, zato mora njihova analiza temeljiti na novih in bolj elastičnih epistemoloških predpostavkah. Ker je raziskovanje v dobi globalizacije po Appaduraiju v prvi vrsti optičen izziv, tudi obravnava »novega državljanstva« kmalu pokaže, da njegovo zamišljanje ni zgolj političen, temveč v prvi vrsti epistemološki izziv. Pri iskanju novih epistemoloških predpostavk, ki so nujne pri zamišljanju in analiziranju »novega državljanstva«, članek sledi Boaventuri de Sousa Santosu in njegovi teoriji sociologije odsotnosti.

Če povzamemo, članek ne obravnava posameznega vidika »novega državljanstva« oziroma poskusa konstitucije »novega državljanca« na podlagi partikularnega vprašanja. Cilj članka tako ni zagovarjanje ekološkega državljanstva, kulturnega državljanstva, kozmopolitskega državljanstva, ipd., pač pa skuša državljanstvo misliti holistično. Ne gre torej za nadgradnjo tradicionalnega razumevanja državljanstva kot posebne vezi med državo in državljani, katere vsebina so pravice in dolžnosti, ampak za razumevanje državljanstva znotraj translokarnih političnih skupnosti, kjer je mehanska vez med pravicami in dolžnostmi končno razrahljana, kot je razrahljan oziroma modificiran tudi odnos med enakostjo in različnostjo.