

Otherness within Community. Social Contract Tradition Reinterpreted

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The wave of social movements after 2008 in western countries can be interpreted as an endeavor to create new practice of intersubjectivity, where tense relation between sameness and otherness is overcome without losing the uniqueness of otherness. The same movement can be observed in philosophy. Such concepts as “coming community” by G. Agamben (2007), the multitude by A. Negri and M. Hardt (2000) or vision of new type of social movements by G. Deleuze can be interpreted as attempts to create community not with sameness which destroy otherness but in celebrating otherness.

In the paper this transformation in political philosophy will be presented with the examples of social movements in western countries after 2008 based on the literature and my own anthropological research in social movements in Poland. I present this transformation as the reinterpretation of social contract tradition in western philosophy.

The modern acceleration of changes in western societies caused a need of a new conceptual frame for social self-understanding. Broadly speaking, tradition was replaced with contract (with concepts of social contract from Hobbes to Rawls). Strong social bonds were replaced with interests and weak social bonds as by-products of this shift. New wave of social movements after 2008 crisis can be interpreted as a search for new conceptual frame for social self-understanding.

The wave of contention after 2008 crisis in western countries can be interpreted especially in following ways:

- 1 as an expression of materialistic interests in line with (classical) marxist tradition or
- 2 as an expression of postmaterialistic interests/values (Inglehart’s term) in line with sociological paradigm of new social movements or
- 3 as an overcoming of hitherto western traditions concentrated on interests in line with Giorgio Agamben’s vision of “coming community”.

One of the most popular slogan of these movements – “We are 99%” usually was understood in the first way: the social polarization has caused the solidarity of almost whole society based on the commonality of materialistic interests. Nevertheless, this slogan can be read also in a different way. Strong community perceived as a blockade for modernist changes was replaced with interests and rivalry in consequence of social contract tradition (mechanism of psychological sublimation). In the situation of a blockade of the possibility of fulfilling interests and in the situation when the winning in the struggle for recognition in social competition have become less and less probable for an individual, his/her more basic but repressed need is revealed – the need of a broad community. In consequence, the solidarity of the majority (the multitude) has become possible despite the difference between their interests.

According to the first interpretation, the community (in which an individual can achieve recognition) can be constructed only on the base of common interests. Thus, recognition is secondary to interests and parallel to community. According to the second interpretation, the interests are secondary to the community and the recognition of an individual is also secondary to the community.

In the third interpretation, these relations are overcome. The community is constructed in effect of mutual recognition of individuals and in this (contractual) act the interests are also recognized/revealed. This interpretation of the community can be treated as an alternative for two dominant hitherto opposite visions: 1) community as an effect of interests and 2) community as culture or effect of tradition/history.

This overcome is an effect of the epistemological shift in consequence of the establishment of the community. The changes in character of intersubjectivity due to this transformation were not sufficiently recognized in social contract tradition. They can be understood properly only with epistemology inspired by ethics as virtue epistemology [e.g. Sosa 2007] or feminist epistemology [e.g. Code 2006]. Therefore, the nature of intersubjectivity within community could not be properly recognized in former social contract tradition.

This interpretation can be treated as a continuation of social contract tradition, since the mechanism of theories of social contract is preserved (the act of decision) however it is at the same time radicalization or overcoming of this tradition, since it is the community (*Gemeinschaft*)

not society/association (Gesellschaft) what constitutes an effect of the decision.

Another Otherness or Intersectionalism: Anarchafeminists' Experience

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My paper discusses the questions of intersectionality on the basis of anarchafeminists' experiences in Poland. Anarchafeminist ideas as located at the junction of feminism and anarchism hardly ever satisfy those who have chosen one of the ideologies. In Polish society feminists and anarchists are usually constructed as Others. Anarchafeminists combine the ideas of both the groups and consequentially, become aliens not only in society, but also inside feminist and anarchist movements. Addressing various forms of oppression, anarchafeminism seems to be a form of intersectionalism, which some anarchists and feminists may regard as a dissolution of their movement goals. Historically, anarchists used to claim universalism and accused feminists of particularism, as well as reductionism. Feminists, on the other hand, often regard anarchafeminists as unrealistic.

Anarchafemism was developed by women active in anarchist movement. Although the term was coined in the 1960s, Emma Goldman and Voltarine de Clayre – anarchists working in the 19th century – are considered the founding mothers of anarchafeminism. They were concerned with women's inferior position in society and addressed its various aspects such as the institution of marriage, reproductive rights, women's work. Many male anarchist ideologues criticized discrimination of females in society, but they believed that anarchist revolution will emancipate every individual, regardless of sex. Therefore, Kropotkin was not pleased when his female comrades occupied their thoughts with feminism.

Similar approach to feminism was present in anarchists' debate on feminism published in the zine titled *Inny Świat* in 2002. Some of the anarchists, who presented their point of view in the magazine,