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Culture Machine

The Geopolitics of Open

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Introduction

The Geopolitics of Open addresses issues of difference, ideology and infrastructure across the stratified geographies of open access publishing. It examines the construction of power and inequality in our scholarly practices and discourses around the open. How can we contextualise open access, as a contingent and politically-laden concept, within particular historical and regional contexts and socio-political struggles? This will involve asking questions about how notions of openness have been implicit in processes of global knowledge appropriation and exploitation in a postcolonial neoliberal context.

The three exploratory essays that make up this pamphlet all pursue this attempt to regionalise and, in the process, politicise how open access infrastructures form and for whom they become beneficial, both financially and socially. They share a commitment to articulating a scaled down *geo*-politics that asks of publishing infrastructures: where and by what means? And also consider how varied institutional contexts, from multistate formations like the European Union, to urban and regional universities in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, start to shape the varied epistemological and political geographies of situated open access practices.

The Knowledge G.A.P (Geopolitics of Academic Production), a research collective dedicated to foregrounding the marginalization of Global South researchers across diverse forms of academic knowledge production, offer a timely critique of the 'EU Horizon 2020 Open Research Europe' tender process. The collective lays bare how structural inequalities and exclusions, particularly falling upon knowledge producers and holders of the Global South, inhere in the tender's promotion of an infrastructural capacity that aligns with the metrics (equally citational and financial) of for-profit scholarly publishing. They also pause on how 'open' infrastructures are multidimensional, relationship-building phenomena that move through a differential *geos*—earths and linguistic worlds where there are horizons of justice, ethics, and inclusion when it comes to building and participating in such infrastructures of access. Gabriela Méndez Cota extends this consideration of the situated politics of open infrastructures. She offers her own scalar and situated critique of how a feminist driven infrastructural care can start to reorient the dichotomous tension present across Mexican academic production, that between 'impact on knowledge' and 'impact on society.' Her offering is in conversation with Ángel Octavio Álvarez Solís' reflection on the historical and philosophical ties that bind the managerial fate of the contemporary Mexican university system. As colleagues in the Department of Philosophy of the Universidad Iberoamericana Ciudad de México, they articulate how there is an interwoven linguistic, epistemological, ethical commitment shaping the state of university knowledge(s) in Mexico—Anglophone metrics and State-led policy development. As Álvarez Solís has it, 'the horizon of the university today is one in which professors can become both aristocrats without nobility and proletarians without a class.'

This pamphlet lays the groundwork for more in-depth studies and conversations about the infrastructural geographies of open access publishing activities—alliances to be made and unmade. This is an opportunity, as Méndez Cota insists, to 'become more responsible for the other' through the design, maintenance, and future-oriented repair of the human geographies underlying our open access infrastructural politics and capacities.

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Geopolitical Inequalities Behind "Open" Infrastructures for Academic Knowledge Production

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Even though the turn to "openness" in scholarly communications was initially mobilized by activist academics - who advanced Open Access, Open Data and Open Science as a route to the democratization of knowledge - it is increasingly being adopted by state and private sector players. The growing number of policies and programs that promote openness usually cite broader access to knowledge by the general public, accelerated discovery, wider collaboration between researchers across fields and geographies, and overall, the promise of a more productive and efficient scientific production process, consolidating openness as the new mainstream (Bartling & Friesike 2014). Yet the debate around what openness means and more importantly, who it is for, has not yet been resolved. One of the largest points of contention comes from critical theory scholars (Lawson 2018; Moore 2017; Okune 2016), who claim that an uncritical uptake of "openness" that does not actively work to redress power imbalances in the current system of academic knowledge production - such as the primacy of knowledge written in colonial languages in historically dominant institutions and validated by international academic journals (Chan 2011; Czerniewicz 2015; Canagarajah 2002) - threatens to replicate and amplify them.

Building on this critique, research done by the Knowledge GAP[1], a volunteer-led, collaborative research collective that interrogates the potential structural marginalization and underrepresentation of Global South' researchers in academic knowledge production, indicates there are two more emerging patterns relevant to this debate. First, there is preliminary evidence that suggests that regional and international actors who have been historically dominant in geopolitics, such as the European Union and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), are taking the lead in operationalizing openness at the policy level, which promotes (a) an emphasis on technological and infrastructure development as the road to openness and (b) the adoption of open practices as a means to gain competitive advantage in an increasingly expanding knowledge economy (Albornoz et al. 2018). This scenario of geopolitical and economic competition, in which openness is equated with modernity, is reminiscent of narratives of modernization that attributes the transition from "traditional to modern societies" - or in this case from "closed to open research" - to technological improvements and the transfer of knowledge from higher income countries to peripheral regions.

And second, there is an increased role of private sector actors, and more specifically big publishers such as Elsevier and Taylor & Francis, in the design and governance of scholarly communications infrastructure (Albornoz et al. 2018; Chen and Posada 2018). The cultural turn to openness has forced these players to reconfigure their business strategies and focus on the development and deployment of infrastructures and services which, they claim, are designed to guarantee and enhance the "quality" of science (Chen and Posada 2018). Big publishers are in this way consolidating and securing control over the scholarly infrastructure market by selling new forms of institutional workflows, research facilitating software, and data analytics services to universities and research institutions. We find this shift concerning as the market of academic services remains controlled by a few dominant market players while there is an absence of support for infrastructure and alternative workflow development by smaller local providers.

Building on Stuart Lawson's work on more ethical approaches to openness (2018), we argue that these two trends promote a system that creates dependency on standards set by historically powerful institutions and prioritizes market-based incentives in knowledge production. To illustrate these ideas, we will use the case of the 'EU Horizon 2020 Open Research Europe', a tender for a peer-reviewed open-access publishing platform developed for the beneficiaries of the EU Horizon 2020 grants, as a reflection of how infrastructural specifications can perpetuate dominant paradigms that sustain global inequality. As a disclaimer, we recognize this tender is not actively attempting to undermine academic knowledge production in peripheral regions, yet we believe it is a good example of how regional initiatives stemming from historical sites of power can have an understated impact on dynamics of global knowledge production.

To explain these effects, we will focus on two characteristics: (1) First, on how it amplifies a Europe-led rhetoric of openness that sustains geopolitical power structures and (2) second, on how it creates conditions of dependency upon a set of metrics that constrain notions of quality and legitimacy in scientific knowledge production (Chen & Posada 2018). This short analysis will attempt to showcase how the tender promotes a rhetoric and standards that could potentially exacerbate the marginalization of knowledge produced in the Global South, and demonstrate how this potential exacerbation can have adverse impacts on a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable scholarly communications system.

The case of the EU Open Research Europe Tender

The European Union wishes to select an eligible contractor to develop a platform according to specific technical, business and sustainability requirements, outlined in the tender specifications document. This tender, titled "Open Research Europe" is associated with the EU's Horizon 2020 initiative, a research and innovation programme offering nearly €77 billion of funding (from 2014 to 2020) made available via calls for proposals on various topics related to science and technology (European Commission 2018). All research grant beneficiaries must make their publications open access, which the Open Research Europe platform then plans to share and disseminate through the development of a free (to its authors) peer-reviewed open access publishing service (European Commission 2018: 9-11). It is worth noting that applications for funding proposals require a minimum of three collaborators, who must be situated in the EU or associated countries (countries in Europe, and Tunisia, Turkey, and Israel) (European Commission 2017).

Amplification of EU Rhetoric of Openness

One of the tender's primary purpose in developing this platform is to promote European innovation and the role of the European Commission as "a funder that leads by example in operationalizing open science" (European commission 2018: 9 -11). If we situate this as part of the wider narrative of openness advanced by

other European Union initiatives such as the European Open Science Cloud, OpenAIRE and the Connected Digital Single Market Policy, we understand the efforts to incentivize and amplify European Union research as part of a geopolitical strategy, in which developing efficient and productive regional infrastructures to practice openness is a mechanism to "gain authority in the international stage", take a global leading role that "enables them to remain at the forefront" of science and technology production and secure global competitive advantage against countries like Japan, US and China. This model exerts pressure on peripheral less powerful actors, for whom the risks of non-alignment and non-participation in the "global and interoperable scholarly commons" as envisioned by the European Union - which can include loss of access to potential funding, loss of legitimacy, and non-consideration for global partnerships and memberships - are much larger than the loss of autonomy in developing open research infrastructures in a more contextualized manner, adapted to local barriers and needs (Albornoz et al. 2018).

The amplification of European research in these platforms can also contribute to the further visibility and overrepresentation of knowledge produced in historically dominant institutions. By enforcing the regional eligibility to European grant recipients and their collaborators, and enabling free worldwide open access for readers the platform will further amplify publications produced by Europe, an already highly visible region within academia. Such attempts to enhance visibility by developing regional infrastructure may encourage other regional actors to do the same (especially if their content is excluded), thereby resulting in the silo-ing and disaggregation of academic production across multiple platforms. This could potentially lead to reduced visibility of platforms perceived to be less reputable, efficient in search and visibility, user-friendly, valuable, and more. Given the relative lack of technical and financial resources in the Global South, this may further marginalize the visibility of their knowledge.

This scenario also threatens to cement the representational disparity in academic knowledge production between institutions in the Global North and Global South in the international journal system (Goudarzi and Mewa 2018). Preliminary data collected from the development journal *Third World Quarterly* suggests that from 2005-2009, the number of annual publications increased from 50 to 60 while the representation of institutions located in Global South remained relatively stagnant, signaling a proportional decrease of global South affiliations within the development studies field (ibid). Even though there have been attempts to bolster voices from peripheral regions in journals such as *Third World Quarterly*[2] the acquisition of *Third World Quarterly* by Taylor & Francis show financial returns take precedence over expanding diversity in academic knowledge production. Concurrently, other Global North actors may launch similar platforms inspired by the EU and the rhetoric of competition in open science, potentially leading to reduced visibility and ability to react due to historical, financial, and technical constraints may thus lead to the further marginalization of the Global South.

Reinforcement of Metrics and Exclusionary Standards

Another feature of the tender is its reinforcement of the primacy of article metrics to measure quality and validity. The tender builds on the EU report on "Next-generation Metrics" (European Commission 2018, 17) to encourage the development of "a set of innovative metrics" as one of the award criteria (European Commission 2018, 36). While the use of metrics/standards is "optional", network and lock-in effects (Farrell & Klemperer 2007) are used by stakeholders for tenure and recruitment to support institutional workflows and decision making in higher education and research institutions (Chen & Posada 2018); this contributes to the production of metrics-oriented infrastructure and a subsequent "compulsory" uptake of metrics. The tender also describes the support of Persistent Object Identifiers such as the DOI, which furthers individual researcher dependency on the existing big publisher-developed DOI system. The increasing use of the DOI, leads to exclusionary tendencies against journals unable to afford the DOI designation particularly those within the Global South. As a tool of indexing, the absence of a DOI means the research will be rendered increasingly invisible on platforms reliant on the identifier for search and recommendations.

The promotion of metrics can also be understood as part of a recurring narrative to embrace scientific standards as a mode of 'quality' control for academic production (Albornoz et al. 2018). As more metrics are created to control "quality", the established modality of knowledge production becomes further entrenched. In this case, the adoption of "innovative" metrics in university evaluations may result in the ceding of control to what is most likely a commercial contractor. Here, the further adoption of metrics introduced by the platform may generate pressure for institutions to adopt modalities of knowledge production as promoted by the European Union. Similarly, the adoption of "innovative metrics" by state sponsored regional infrastructures may enhance the attempts of commercial publishers at maximizing impact factors. As a precedent, after the acquisition of *Journal of Peasant Studies* in 2003 by Taylor and Francis, the journal's ... impact Factor saw a 40 percent increase due to a "a 359 percent increase in the number of authors…" in 2015 (Goudarzi & Mewa 2018). From an epistemic point of view, the further visibility of Northern research vis-a-vis that of peripheral regions also means the latter's research will continue to be deemed "low-impact" in regards to the demands of the international research community regardless of its local relevance.

Towards more Ethical and Inclusive Infrastructures

Overall, the evidence we have provided seeks to promote a more critical understanding of the collateral implications of the promotion of open research infrastructures that is situated in the historical imbalances that precede them. A more ethical approach to inclusive knowledge infrastructures, as posed by the work developed by the the Open and Collaborative Development Network, not only considers the tools, protocols and platforms that need to be in place in order to advance collaborative research production, but also considers socio-technical mechanisms that could deliberately allow for multiple forms

of participation amongst a diverse set of actors, and actively seeks to redress power relations within a given context (Okune et al. 2018). In this sense, the principles proposed by the Open and Collaborative Science in Development Manifesto offer a useful roadmap to consider how we can integrate considerations around inclusion and equity in how we assess the impact of "open" infrastructures. For example, Principle 2 recognizes cognitive justice, the need for *diverse* understandings of knowledge making to co-exist in scientific production; Principle 3 promotes *situated openness*, a notion of openness that addresses the ways in which *context, power* and *inequality* condition scientific research; Principle 4 advocates for every individual's *right to research* and Principle 5 fosters equitable collaboration and Principle 6 incentivizes *inclusive knowledge infrastructures*.

Even though a large part of our analysis focused on the rhetorical and technical aspects of just one regional open infrastructure, the EU Open Research Europe, we sought to shed light on how infrastructures do not emerge in a vacuum. Being embedded in power relations, standard and norm setting in historically dominant regions can have a direct impact on the capabilities of individual researchers around the world to thrive, affecting the type of knowledge they are incentivized to produce as well as their ability to subsist and make a living from academic production. The promotion of metrics rewards those already participating within Western academic discourse, putting pressure on researchers from peripheral regions to adopt practices, in occasions costly such as the DOI. The shift to data analytics by former publisher companies also exacerbate concerns of EU amplification as increased data contributes to its algorithmic optimisation and search, strengthening the efficiency, effectiveness, and strength of the platform.

For researchers, particularly those hailing from poorly resourced institutions, and/or peripheral regions of the world, the development of further metrics means further symbolic and material barriers to participation in global knowledge production. Failure to adhere to the set of standards and metrics promoted by the aforementioned initiative, hinders researchers' "right" to research, facing loss of funding, international exposure,

and their access to job security (Hicks et al. 2015). Different regions should retain the autonomy to adopt different notions of "quality", highlighting the subjective nature of standard development and the power inherent in the capacity to define and develop them.

The potential implications of dominant actor proposed infrastructures such as "Open Research Europe" also showcase the need for funding and resources channeled towards the development of alternative localized infrastructures that bolster the right to research of diverse epistemic communities. Otherwise, we will continue to witness the strengthening of systems that seek to be global and "open" research infrastructures, yet continue to limit wider and equitable participations from researchers in less powerful regions and institutions. From a development perspective, we are not only losing access to more diverse perspectives in knowledge production, but also the possibility to amplify localized knowledge that could have an impact on the rights and livelihoods of people affected by research-inspired top-down development projects.

[1] Knowledge GAP is affiliated with the Center for Critical Development Studies at the University of Toronto, Scarborough and the Open and Collaborative Science in Development Network. The project works to identify the mechanisms through which structural inequalities are actively produced, reproduced and embedded in the global publishing system and the associated implications.

[2] *Third World Quarterly* is a journal originally helmed by independent academics to garner attention for third world media outlets.

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On Being Heard: the Content and the Form of Geopolitics

Gabriela Méndez Cota

In a recent talk (2018) Stuart Lawson observed that 'wider access to scholarship does not necessarily mean that all inequalities have dissolved in relation to that scholarship. The question of who gets to participate, whose voices are heard, is still open'. I want to address this question by raising several others from the standpoint of an early-career female researcher employed by a private university in a 'marginal' country such as Mexico. What is that scholarship one is expected to participate in, to be equal with, under what conditions, with what consequences, and for whom exactly? Is scholarship the same thing and equally relevant to everyone in the world, so that participation in it is mostly a matter of economic access, technical expertise or academic know-how? Is the will to participate about getting recognition ('being heard' or 'being seen') in the liberal terms universal scholarship or can it be, or even should it be, about attempting to transform the very definition and practice of scholarship in relation to particular situations? At once personal and geopolitical, these questions define my current ethical predicament as an academic labourer in Mexico. I agree with Lawson when he relates the ethics of open access to the recognition that colleagues are human beings with complex needs that cannot be squeezed into market-like patterns of behaviour. My own complex need here is to ellucidate how to participate effectively in a global conversation about the geopolitics of open in a way that eschews the 'macro' or abstract style of geopolitical discussion so as to open up a space for listening to the singular, the peripheral, the micro, the 'private' and, of course, always to some extent fictional voice of the (feminine) first person. I hope, in this way, to illuminate how knowledge geopolitics is experienced when one is supposed to 'have a voice' and 'participate' in global scholarship on the contemporary Humanities from within a Mexican university. Is access all that it takes?

In a qualitative investigation of 'the failure of Latin American intellectuals to claim a prominent place on the international academic stage' of Latin American studies, Enrique Mu and Milagros Pereyra-Rojas (2015) assert that such a failure cannot be attributed simply to a lack of exposure. After citing all the other well-researched 'lacks' —of knowledge, of peer-group support, of social stability, of fluency in English, of the appropriate rhetorical mode —that place Latin Americans at a disadvantage in global academic publishing, Mu and Pereyra-Rojas set out to show by means of interviews that the marginality of Latin American voices in the international academic community is *also* due to how academics based in Latin America positively understand and practice their scholarship within their local and regional contexts. Whereas US/UK-based scholars see themselves mainly as experts in a research field that seeks to impact world-class knowledge, most of the interviewed Latin American scholars identify as social actors whose research is directly instrumental to the solution of pressing regional issues. The implications of this difference —'impact on knowledge' versus 'impact on society' —are many and profound, and should be considered carefully alongside questions of how much 'access' everyone has to knowledge in general. In the contemporary Humanities, in Mexico, who and why would want their voices to be heard, by whom?

Mu and Pereyras-Rojas warn that their findings apply mainly to senior level faculty born before 1961 and that it would be important to extend their study to younger scholars like me — born in 1982. As a child of globalisation who returned to Mexico after undertaking a non-disciplinary kind of postgraduate studies in London (very unusual by Mexican university standards, which cultivate strong disciplinary cultures), I find no unified conversation in which I can participate comfortably in Latin America. My doctoral research on certain contemporary varieties of Mexican nationalism as cultural political reactions to technoscientific capitalism has been difficult to 'apply' in a classic Latin American sense ('impact on society'), but the fact that it is published in English has given me a chance to enter the local academic job market. First it was funded with a scholarship by the National Council of Science and Technology (Conacyt) and once published it rapidly unlocked the doors of the National System of Researchers (SNI), a system of economic bonuses for fully-employed academics with proven research potential or, more precisely, with a particular kind of research output that requires the skills and the privileged experiences of a tiny elite of Mexicans bred by Conacyt ('impact on knowledge'). Increasingly since its inception in 1982 —also the year of a historic economic crisis that seriously undermined public universities and unleashed neoliberal policies in Mexico — becoming a member of SNI has been a requisite in the academic job market, and staying there by publishing scientific articles in prestigious Anglophone journals has become a financial priority for many academic labourers —well above solving the social problems of Latin America, and teaching. Thus, SNI has transformed many Mexican academics from self-identified 'social actors' into individualised human capital and high-risk investors, and has shaped scholarship according to international US/UK standards, diverting its goals from 'impact on society' to 'impact on knowledge'. Given the high personal and social cost of this shift, 'having a voice' or 'participating' in the international academic stage is a fraught issue for early-career researchers based in Mexico, who struggle to accommodate, as a matter of survival, both neoliberal governmentality and a cultural and political imperative to engage with the injustice, inequality and structural violence that plague Latin American

countries. The question for me is how my scholarship in the Humanities can relate critically to these conflicts, as opposed to pretending to ignore them by holding on to the universalist, abstract, impersonal voice of traditional Philosophy, including talk of the human, the posthuman, or the nonhuman.

A short account of Latin American STS, a field inaugurated by a convergence of history and sociology rather than philosophy and literature, is useful to illustrate the totalising effects of neoliberalism on conceptions of scholarship in Latin America (Kreimer, Vessuri, Velho, and Arellano 2014). Latin American STS was preceded by the 'Latin American thought on science, technology and development', which was voiced between the 1950s and the 1980s by men —yes, men —of the natural sciences and technologists who resorted to the militant essay form in order to denounce the imperialist domination of Latin America. Such thinkers framed their early critique of knowledge geopolitics through the dominant discourses of economic development, in some cases influenced by the Marxist-inspired dependency theory and occasionally echoing the international radical science movement (Rose, H. & Rose, S. 1976). In the 1980s, a new generation of thinkers, now predominantly in the social sciences, set out to create the professional field of STS by means of postgraduate programmes, research agendas and publications. A constructivist turn was induced by the enthusiastic reception of Pierre Bourdieu's work, which inaugurated a shift of from a political economic critique of science and technology towards an empirical analysis of the constitution of scientific disciplines at the local level, the regional interactions among scientists and technologists, relations between scientific knowledge production and the market, as well as between science policies and stake-holder strategies. According to some historians of Latin American STS, the replacement of militant essays ('impact on society') by methodological and theoretical discussions of 'case studies' ('impact on knowledge') was also a loss of critical edge. Instead, professional STS implicitly aligned itself with neoliberal governments through its interest in measuring technological innovation, increasing productivity and strengthening economic competition. More recently, and in view of the failure

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of neoliberal promises to the region, Latin American STS has been undergoing repoliticisation around the destructive effects of corporate-led, extractive technoscience on Latin American regions devastated by neoliberalism's structural violence. Since the tradition of STS activism in Latin America belongs to the natural and the social sciences rather than to university-based Humanities, we are now witnessing something like a renovated call to 'impact on society' by means of 'excellent' science, or empirically grounded case studies involving, as research subjects, the victims of structural violence. In this context, a Humanities-based approach to issues of knowledge geopolitics seems out of place —and even immoral —unless it either presents itself as empirical and scientific or resorts to the militant essay form —denouncing imperialism, exalting its victims —that is so culturally resonant in Latin America. Such an automatic gesture, however, would risk instrumentalising writing as opposed to *caring* for it, which means that it would allow neoliberal calculation to operate within and through the calculations of academic militancy.

An alternative to such a strange situation would be to try to renovate the Humanities by mobilising, in writing, more incisive analyses of how scholarship itself is being made, remade and capitalised by means of supposedly progressive agendas. For instance, much of Latin America has enthusiastically embraced open access. Following the example of other initiatives such as the Brazilian electronic library Scielo, in 2005 Mexican academics set up Redalyc, an impressive repository of open-access scientific journals in Spanish. Continent-wide networks of academic journal editors have been growing ever since and continue to focus their efforts on strengthening the quality and accessibility of scientific research in Spanish through the management of digital platforms, and on building a 'Global South' model of academic publishing. This search evokes the classic Latin American dream of sovereignty, even when it is combined, as in the Mexican case, with a neoliberal vocabulary of competitive advantages in the global knowledge economy. In 2014, the Mexican government issued the Open Access Law, which compulsorily makes state-funded research publicly available. While the Law itself and the increasing online availability of research in Spanish are potentially very important for the articulation and strengthening of Latin American research communities, they do not modify by themselves or even challenge the structural conditions of academic labour I described in earlier paragraphs and which enforce a neoliberal conception and valuation of scholarship. Moreover, in a country where neoliberal policies have for three decades systematically favoured transnational corporate interests over those of the nation, the Open Access Law looks, somewhat like gay marriage, like a superficial concession to the small cosmopolitan sector that is the Mexican research community. Political narratives of open access in Latin America are, in sum, dominated by ineffectual liberal vocabularies that I suggest need to be critically addressed through a different kind of scholarship that is conceived and practiced in non-instrumental (or at least not purely instrumental) ways, and which cuts across the pressing demands for both quantifiable 'impact on knowledge' and political 'impact on society'. Such a scholarship would need to call into question the nation-state, the traditional family (or the academic discipline) and any moralistic connotations of the concept of 'care'. In this regard, I ask: would a feminist 'ethics of care' be a natural consequence of including more women voices in scholarship, science and technology? The obvious answer is no.

On the same year that Mexican academics were setting up Redalyc, the open-access repository of scientific journals in Spanish, Hester Eisenstein was arguing, in *Science and Society*, that feminism had become an instrument of neoliberal capitalism. The ensuing debate around 'neoliberal feminism' in the Global North is brilliantly summarised and enriched in a recent issue of *new formations*, titled *Righting Feminism*. There, the editors and contributors explain how 'neoliberal feminism'—or the use of feminist vocabulary by high-power women working at the intersections of global corporations and governance institutions—operates as a governmental strategy within the neoliberal colonisation of everything, starting with new markets in the Global South where women supposedly need 'empowerment'. In 2016, only two years after the Mexican government issued the Open Access Law, the

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On Being Heard: the Content and the Form of Geopolitics

Gender Summit (registered trademark) landed in Mexico hand in hand with the Elsevier Foundation, and was openly welcomed by Conacyt and several public universities from Mexico and Latin America. A sort of innovation festival, the Gender Summit presents itself as a space for dialogue among scientists, stakeholders, gender experts and decision-makers in science policy. Its origins lie in the project genSET, which was originally funded by the European Commission and had the aim of improving the 'excellence' of European science by including 'a gender perspective' in scientific research. By 2012, the genSET was left in the private hands of Portia, a Limited Company founded in Britain by an academic group led by Elizabeth Pollitzer, an expert in gender, information science and biophsyics who is responsible, according to her online biography, of turning a modest national project into multiple international alliances. Such alliances are meant to 'innovate through gender equality', that is, to articulate gender equality with economic development. Portia Ltd claims to have a strategy to help women make a career in science by ensuring the quality of their research and the finding of new markets in which women can become co-proprietors of innovative solutions of social problems. In regions like Latin America, Africa and 'the Arab world', the Gender Summit has the specific mission of making science relevant to society by increasing the 'impact' of gender-aware research. Hence the Elsevier Foundation, which is in charge of mapping tendencies and measuring the impact of scientific research that is 'sensitive to gender'.

The Gender Summit provides an answer to the question of being heard and participating in global scholarship that has nothing to do with an ethics of care, because it focuses on the content rather than on the form —of scholarship, of 'being heard'. According to feminist critics, such a 'neoliberal feminism' that views gender as an instrument for economic development is less about co-opting feminist discourse than it is about turning women into generic human capital. In Stuart Lawson's words about neoliberalism more generally, it 'has no space for the attentiveness and responsiveness to both individual and collective needs that is embodied in the concept of care.' To this I only want to add the suggestion that a feminist ethics of

care would more deeply interrogate the very instrumentality of care, and would do so at the level of form (an essay, a poem, a photograph) even more than at the level of content (women). For, is not writing itself, with all its incalculability, something to be cared for at a time of generalised precarisation of intellectual work?

My point so far has been to situate the discussion of geopolitics in order to address its ethical dimension, which I understand in terms of careful singularity rather than in terms of universal values of 'care'. By way of conclusion, I want to pursue the question of what I would want to care for in the current intersection of two geopolitical imperatives, 'impact on knowledge' and 'impact on society', and to do so from the singularity of my position in a university, in the Humanities, in Mexico, from where I try to co-edit the journal *Culture Machine*. *Culture Machine* is an open-ended, experimental journal of cultural theory fundamentally connected to the Radical Open Access Movement in the Anglophone world. As a Spanish-speaking, non-EU based editor of *Culture Machine*, I have found it difficult to keep up with the futurist pace of academic conversations in the Global North (the content) and to develop the skills necessary for creative journal crafting (the form) addressed to a transnational English speaking audience. Whatever the role of geopolitics in such a difficulty, the experience of a cultural disconnection between the 'Global North' and the 'Global South' in my role as editor of *Culture Machine* has certainly taught me something about the material, non-heroic realities of writing and editing, which actually depend on many care infrastructures including generous mentorships, academic spaces, hospitable peers and linguistically shared efforts to understand and to respond to what is going on in unequal corners of the world. While I have been exceptionally fortunate to count on national and transnational care infrastructures —or I would not be here in the first place —and while I am even more fortunate now that I have an academic job, the ethical question regarding the form and the content of *Culture Machine* remains open and vulnerable in the conversation between my Canadian co-editor and me. How can *Culture Machine* preserve its unconditionally

theoretical, non-instrumental orientation without losing academic presentation, metrics and standards of excellence? How can it become more responsible for the other, both the cultural other and the nonhuman other, while avoiding the daunting labour of cross-cultural networking, translation and *care*? Questions like these have unequal implications in different parts of the globe, in different languages, and in different sexed bodies too. Drawing of my experience of, so far unsuccessfully, trying to 'situate' the intellectual legacy of *Culture Machine* in relation to the culture and politics of Mexican academia, I can only conclude that such an effort must remain an open *collective writing* project that absolutely exceeds the management of individual academic careers in diverse geographies.

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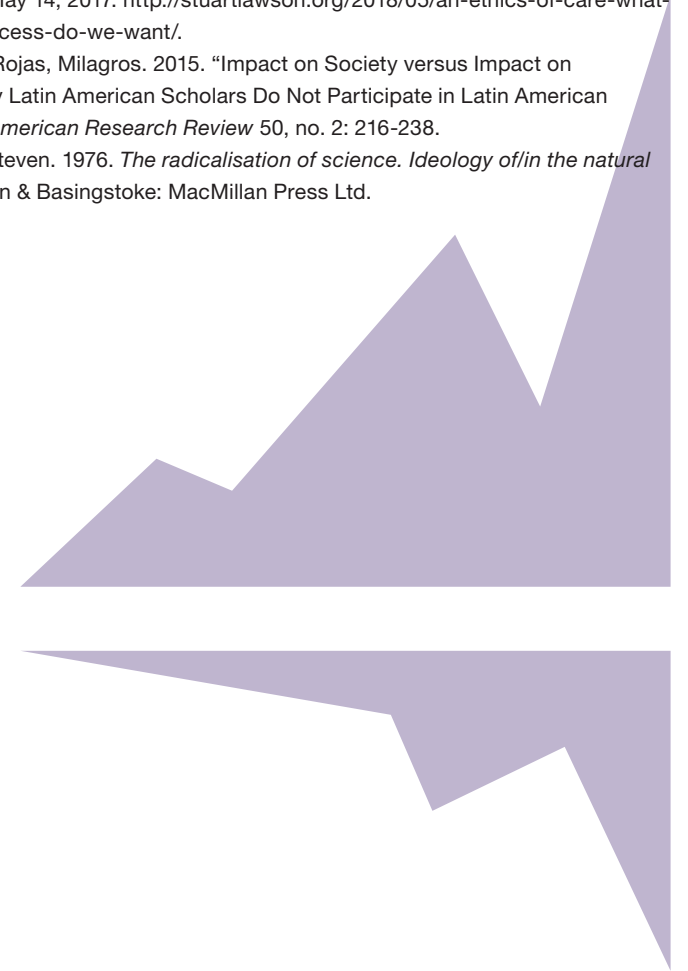
Geopolíticas del conocimiento y lengua universitaria

The managerial impasse of the Latin American university

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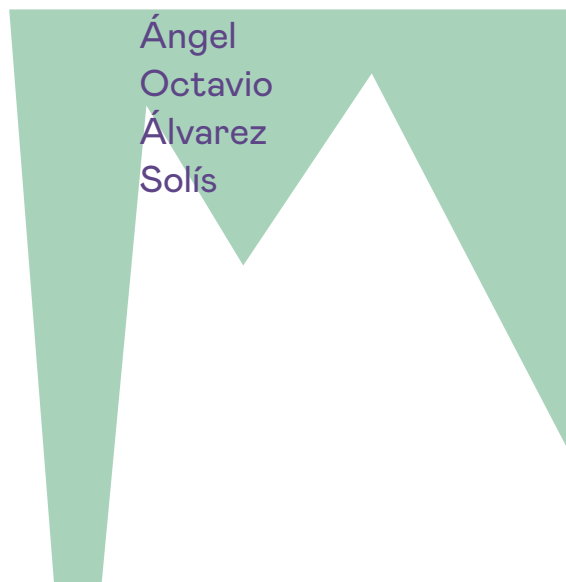
La universidad es y ha sido una contradicción histórica. Hace más de ochenta años, en 1930, José Ortega y Gasset declaró que el fracaso de la universidad provenía, básicamente, del siglo XIX. El error de este siglo radicó en que confió el poder emancipador del saber ilustrado al mito de la institución universitaria. La universidad decimonónica no estuvo a la altura de los tiempos y exageró su dimensión educadora, pues atribuyó a la universidad una fuerza histórica "que no tiene ni puede tener" (Ortega 1930, 8). Ortega acertó en su juicio. Con el tino del pesimista ilustrado, Ortega argumentó que la idea de universidad como figura de universalidad nunca ha sido del todo exacta. Desde su surgimiento en la Edad Media, la *"universalidad"* de la universidad no es más que un gesto de singularización y exclusión: la formación de una elite detentadora del saber académico. El monopolio de la interpretación legítima. Sin embargo, Ortega explica que la institución universitaria es igualmente un espacio de democratización, un lugar para que el "hombre medio" pueda adoptar *la cultura* y,

de esta manera, asumirse como un sujeto de universalidad. La contradicción surge, entonces, en el hecho que la universidad tiene una vocación ilustrada pero transmite las formas canónicas de la tradición: censura y emancipa, pues el ser de la universidad radica en su malestar por la modernidad.

The university is and has been a historical contradiction. More than 80 years ago, in 1930, José Ortega y Gasset declared that the university's failure originated in the nineteenth century. That century's mistake was to entrust the emancipatory power of the Enlightenment to the myth of the university institution. Instead of rising up to the challenge of the times, the university of the nineteenth century exaggerated its educational dimension, and in doing so it accorded a historical force to the university 'that it does not and cannot have' (Ortega 1930, 8). Ortega judged correctly. He argued, with the wisdom of an enlightened pessimist, that the idea of the university as a figure of universality has never been accurate. Since its emergence in the Middle Ages 'universality' has been nothing but a gesture of exclusion, the formation of an elite who possesses academic knowledge, that is, the monopoly of legitimate interpretation. Nevertheless, the university is also a space for democratisation, where 'the average man' can adopt culture and, thereby, assume himself as a universal subject. Contradiction emerges from the fact that the university adopts an Enlightened mission at the same time that it reproduces the canonical forms of tradition; it emancipates through censoring, and so the being of the university resides in modernity and its discontents.

Por tal motivo, y para eso sirve la reflexión de Ortega, cabe preguntarse si puede decirse lo mismo de la universidad del siglo XXI: si su crisis histórica depende directamente del fracaso de la universidad del siglo XX o, por el contrario, si el modelo actual de universidad está adaptándose a las nuevas formas de circulación del conocimiento. Efectivamente, el siglo XX probó que la universidad ilustra y censura, incluye y segrega, universaliza y estigmatiza, aunque este comportamiento podría ser extensivo a cualquier época histórica de la universidad. Pero la universidad del siglo XX mostró, como ninguna otra, que tal institución supone la disolución final de los Estado-

nación. La universidad está conectada con los avatares políticos de cada nación, pero cada nación proyecta un objetivo político a la universidad. ¿Qué son las cuotas universitarias de acción afirmativa sino la extensión compensatoria del multiculturalismo conservador estadounidense? ¿Cómo pensar la gratuidad de la universidad mexicana sin la neutralización de la revolución popular? La política universitaria es una alegoría de las políticas nacionales.

Ortega's reflection invites us to reflect on the twenty-first century university. Does its failure directly depend on the twentieth century's university? Or is the university merely adapting to current modes of knowledge circulation? Indeed, the twentieth century demonstrated that the university simultaneously enlightens and censors, includes and seggregates, universalises and stigmatises. Yet, and since this behaviour can be made extensive to every other historical period in which the university existed, what the twentieth century's university uniquely demonstrated is something else, namely, the final disolution of the nation-state. The classical university is connected to the political vicisitudes of a nation, which in turn provides the university with a political goal. Hence, for instance, affirmative action in the context of US conservative multiculturalism. In Mexico, it is difficult to think about the university's being free or gratis without also thinking about the neutralisation of popular revolution. University politics is an allegory of national politics.

Indicaré un caso más trágico. El 27 de abril de 1933, a unos cuantos días de asumir el rectorado de la Universidad de Friburgo, Martin Heidegger firmó, con motivo de la celebración del día nacional del trabajo, la primera circular dirigida a los docentes. La circular conminaba la nueva tarea de la universidad: "La construcción de un nuevo mundo espiritual para el pueblo alemán llegará a ser la tarea futura más esencial de la universidad alemana" (Heidegger 1982, 82). Asimismo, en los *Cuadernos negros*, Heidegger admitía que la posibilidad futura de la universidad alemana dependía de su propio aniquilamiento: "La universidad está muerta. ¡Viva la futura escuela superior de la educación de los alemanes para el saber!" (Heidegger 2015, 105) ¿La universidad alemana es la objetivación del espíritu alemán o, como pensó el viejo Kant, la condición de la vida universitaria depende la afirmación radical de la autonomía, la distancia oportuna con el príncipe? En tal caso, más que afirmar la relación intrínseca entre el espacio universitario y los proyectos de nación, lo relevante consiste en analizar las formas típicamente nacionales de construcción del saber universitario para así poder dar cuenta de la "aparente" homogeneización de la universidad del siglo XXI. Por consiguiente, la hipótesis de esta exposición es que la universidad perdió su función ilustrada debido a que permitió la des-estatalización del conocimiento y, por extensión, la pregunta por la posibilidad de la universidad depende de la respuesta por la desaparición del Estado como horizonte de sentido.

On 27 April, 1933, a few days before becoming rector of Freiburg University, Martin Heidegger signed a memo on occasion of the 'national work day'. In it, Heidegger invoked 'the construction of a new spiritual world for the German people' as the task of the German university. Later, Heidegger admitted that the future of such a university depended on its self-annihilation (2015, 105). So, is the German university the objective expression of the German spirit or, as Kant thought, does it depend on the radical affirmation of its autonomy with regard to the prince? Beyond asserting the intimate relationship between the university and the national project, we must analyse the typically national forms of the construction of university knowledge in order to account for the merely apparent homogenisation of the twenty-first century's university. My hypothesis is that the university lost its Enlightened function by allowing for the de-statalisation of knowledge, which rendered obsolete the very question of the university as an entity that defines itself in relation to a state.

Para explicitar la relación entre Estado y universidad recordemos a Max Weber, quien en su análisis de los procesos de racionalización y diferenciación de la sociedad y la ciencia moderna anticipó que sería un error confundir la estatalización del conocimiento con su politización. Para Weber, la universidad es una entidad moderna, ilustrada, emancipadora, porque es un modelo de administración colegiada en el que la racionalidad burocrática permite la división de responsabilidades (Weber 2010, 223). Ahora bien, mientras que la estatalización reside en la administración gubernamental del aparato universitario, la politización se refiere a la construcción de hegemonía, y la confusión entre ambas exige al profesor universitario algo que no puede ofrecer: la solución a los problemas nacionales.

In order to render explicit the relationship between the university and the state, let us remember Max Weber. In his analysis of the rationalisation and differentiation processes of modern society and modern science, Weber anticipated a confusion between the statalisation and the politicisation of knowledge. For him, the university is a modern emancipatory institution in which bureaucratic rationality allows for the division of responsibilities (Weber 2010, 223). Thus, while the

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statalisation of university knowledge refers to the administration of the university apparatus, its politicisation refers to the construction of hegemony. The failure to distinguish them leads to placing a demand on university professors that they cannot fulfill, namely, the demand of solution to national problems.

Como buen liberal, Weber consideraba que el saber universitario—la *ciencia* como el la llama—podía aspirar a una especie de neutralidad valorativa, a una ciencia libre de juicios de valor debido a que la universidad no tiene preferencia por ningún tipo de opción política. En cambio desconfiaba de la instrumentación política de la cátedra universitaria, y en particular de la tentación carismática del profesor en el aula, porque borraba la distinción decimonónica entre el político y el científico y daba lugar a que los profesores se comportaran como mandarines sin escrúpulos. La experiencia de la universidad contemporánea prueba la distancia y quizá la ingenuidad con la cual Weber confió en la universidad como una institución ilustrada. El propio Weber sabía que era imposible despolitizar el saber universitario y, por ende, justificó la necesidad de establecer límites al poder carismático de los profesores por medio del principio de colegialidad.

As a good liberal, Weber thought that university knowledge –or *science*, as he called it –could aspire to a sort of value neutrality since, he pretended, the university as such has no political preference. He distrusted any kind of political instrumentalisation of teaching and warned against charismatic temptations, as these threatened to erase the nineteenth century's strict distinction between the politician and the scientist, and to allow for the transformation of professors into reckless mandarins. Experience of the contemporary university proves, however, that Weber was too optimistic in continuing to regard the university as an Enlightened institution. He knew well, after all, that it was impossible to depoliticise university knowledge. That is precisely why he insisted on the necessity of establishing limits to charismatic power by means of collegial decision-making.

El fin de la estatalidad indica un momento nuevo en la historia de la universidad. Al perder el horizonte de estatalidad, la universidad admite cuatro opciones que pueden estar combinadas entre sí: (1) la privatización paulatina del aparato universitario, (2) el repliegue comunitario de los saberes (que en México prolifera a través de instituciones 'desprofesionalizadas' como la Universidad de la Tierra en Oaxaca) (4) la instrumentalización social de la experiencia política de la universidad. Ante estas cuatro modalidades, resulta crucial dar cuenta del advenimiento del dispositivo gerencial en las prácticas universitarias y distinguir con cuidado entre *dispositivo y aparato*. Un dispositivo, para decirle de manera general, es todo aquello que regula o puede regular las conductas individuales e institucionales. En cambio, un aparato

activa la posibilidad histórica de los dispositivos en la medida que produce las condiciones de epocalidad pues mantiene una dimensión estrictamente técnica. Pueden existir aparatos sin dispositivos pero no dispositivos sin aparatos. El aparato universitario contemporáneo posibilita el dispositivo gerencial porque el incremento de las funciones universitarias repercutió en la invención de un modelo de gestión multifuncional fuera de la administración estatal.

The end of the statal horizon indicates, at least, a new epoch in the history of the university. The options seem to be the following: (1) progressive privatisation of the university apparatus, (2) the communitarial withdrawal of knowledge – which proliferates in Mexico in the guise of 'deprofessionalised' institutions such as Universidad de la Tierra in Oaxaca –, (3) the social instrumentalisation of the university's political experience. Before advocating any of these options it is crucial to account for the advent of the managerial dispositif in university practices, and to distinguish carefully between a dispositif and an apparatus. A dispositif is anything able to regulate institutional and individual behaviours. By contrast, an apparatus is what activates the historical potentiality of a dispositif; it produces the epochal, that is, technical conditions that allow a dispositif to work. Thus, the contemporary university apparatus is the condition of possibility of the managerial dispositif, for it is the increase in university functions that led to the invention of a multi-functional management model (or dispositif) that crosses the boundaries of state administration.

Cabe preguntarse qué fenómenos de la estatalidad posibilitaron la introducción de los dispositivos gerenciales en la universidad o, de manera inversa, qué aparatos universitarios motivaron la distancia respecto de la regulación pedagógica del Estado. Si la universidad alemana no puede ser explicada sin la estructuración luterana del seminario o la actitud fiduciaria de la nota al pie de página, y si la universidad francesa solicita un nexo causal entre la dramaturgia profesoral y la puesta en escena de la escritura por medio de la disertación, entonces la universidad iberoamericana no puede ser explicada sin la clasificación gremial de los saberes propia de una complicada lógica de división de poderes. La

universidad iberoamericana adopta la forma corporativa que más le conviene porque no dispone de un aparato como el seminario o la disertación como criterios de identidad nacional. ¿No es acaso la noción de responsabilidad social propia de la universidad latinoamericana una forma oculta de política pública? ¿Los *think-tanks*, tan exitosos en la región, no apuntan a la imitación del modelo estadounidense precisamente porque son consejeros de príncipe? La lógica de la universidad iberoamericana antes que nacional es estatal.

One could ask what sort of state phenomena made possible the introduction of the managerial dispositif into the university or, conversely, what sort of university apparatuses distanced the university from the pedagogic regulation of the state. While the German university cannot be explained without the Luteran structure of the seminar or the fiduciary duty of the footnote, and while the French university stages a causal link between professorial dramaturgy and the mis-en-scene of writing in a dissertation, the Iberoamerican university is impossible to understand without attending to a guild-like classification of knowledges that pertains to a complicated logic of division of powers. The university in Latin America adopts the corporatist form that is most convenient to the ruling elites because it does not have an apparatus such as the seminar or the dissertation as fundamental criterion of national identity. Is not the 'social responsibility' of the Latin American university merely public policy in disguise? Is not the regional success of university think-tanks due to the fact that they are counselors to a prince? More than national, the logic of the Latin American university is statal.

De ahí que el ensayo o el periodismo sean los modos hegemónicos de la comunicación de las ideas por encima de la investigación profunda o los impulsos de la teoría, pues el imperativo detrás de muchas prácticas universitarias consiste en ser la conciencia crítica y emancipadora de las fuerzas sociales que impiden la modernización. El problema aparece cuando la universidad latinoamericana incorpora como afecto nacional la estructura global de la circulación de los conocimientos. El malestar proviene de que la desestatalización del conocimiento supuso el abandono del disciplinamiento de la soberanía estatal y, al

mismo tiempo, abrió la posibilidad de una universidad post-soberana basada en los indicadores del mercado: acreditaciones, certificaciones, indexaciones, elementos que confirman que el conocimiento puede ser medido, cuantificado y, sobre todo, capitalizado como cualquier otra mercancía.
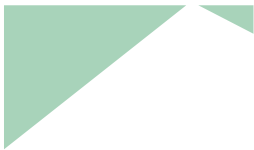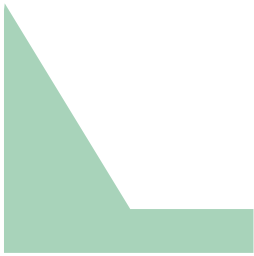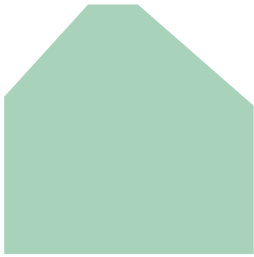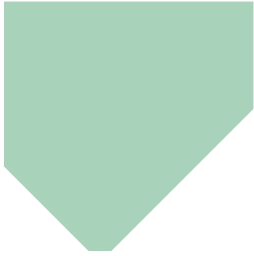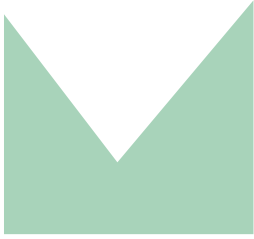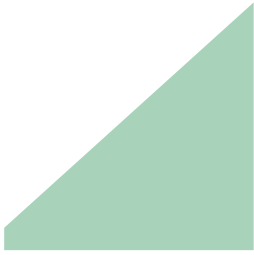
Hence journalism and the essay form as hegemonic means for the communication of ideas at the expense of theoretical impulses and even serious in-depth research, since the fundamental imperative that has animated many university practices in Latin America is about being the critical and emancipatory consciousness of those social forces that otherwise would impede modernisation. The problem emerges when the Latin American university incorporates, as a national affect, the structure of the global circulation of knowledge. Discontent arises from the fact that the de-statalisation of knowledge entailed the end of state sovereignty and opened up the possibility of a post-sovereign university based on market indicators: accreditations, certifications, indexations, all sorts of elements that confirm that knowledge can be measured and, above all, capitalised as any other commodity.

Es necesario asumir las condiciones abiertamente econométricas de la universidad contemporánea, no más un caso amigable de división de responsabilidades, sino un espacio de hiperinflación normativa en el que los procesos colegiados, las juntas y los informes de actividades superan, en ocasiones, a las actividades docentes y de investigación. La legitimidad de los saberes universitarios recae ya no en profesores sino en evaluadores de procesos. La universidad es así un punto ciego de las querellas por la nueva lucha de clases: la lucha entre los administradores y los profesores por incrementar el capital universitario. Este comportamiento está impulsado por el hecho que la universidad es un lugar de desplazamientos de clase en los que los profesores pueden llegar a ser tanto aristócratas sin nobleza como proletarios sin clase.

One must acknowledge the openly econometric conditions of the university today, which is a space of normative inflation where meetings and reports take the place of teaching and research. The legitimacy of university knowledges is thus transferred from professors to bureaucrats, and the subsequent struggle between these figures is in any case oriented towards the increase of university capital. Thus, the horizon of the university today is one in which professors can become both aristocrats without nobility and proletarians without a class.

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