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ISBN 978-3-8498-1292-8
ISSN 1432-5306

AV

Komparatistik 2017

Komparatistik

Jahrbuch
der Deutschen Gesellschaft
für Allgemeine und Vergleichende
Literaturwissenschaft

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AISTHESIS VERLAG

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Herausgegeben im Auftrag des Vorstands
der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Allgemeine
und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft
von Joachim Harst, Christian Moser und Linda Simonis

AISTHESIS VERLAG
Bielefeld 2018

ICLA2016
VIENNA

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.d-nb.de abrufbar.

Redaktion: Joachim Harst

© Aisthesis Verlag Bielefeld 2018
Postfach 10 04 27, D-33504 Bielefeld
Satz: Germano Wallmann, www.geisterwort.de
Druck: docupoint GmbH, Magdeburg
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ISBN 978-3-8498-1292-8
ISSN 1432-5306
www.aisthesis.de

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Kathrin Schödel

Political Speech Acts?

Jacques Rancière's Theories and a Political Philology of Current Discourses of Migration

When the topic for this paper was first chosen in early 2015, discourses of migration were rather different from how they have developed since, especially in a German-language context. At the time, migration was not the prominent theme it became later in the same year: even the fact that thousands of people had already drowned and continued to die in the Mediterranean on a dangerous journey towards Europe[1] had not led to a wide-spread debate in German-language media.[2] This was before the so-called 'refugee crisis'[3] and a supposed German 'welcome culture'[4] became predominant topics in summer 2015. Since then, there has again been a rise in open anti-immigrant discourses and violence by right-wing nationalists as well as an implementation of restrictions on migration so that the 'welcome culture' has been frequently called into doubt from various perspectives.[5] 'Discourses of migration,' thus, have become a large

1 Cf. the documentation of deaths in the Mediterranean by journalist Gabriele del Grande since 1988 in his blog *Fortress Europe*. <http://fortresseurope.blogspot.de> (accessed August 20, 2017).

2 In June 2015, for example, a campaign by the Berlin artist-activists "Zentrum für politische Schönheit" ("Centre for Political Beauty"), which focused on the many deaths and unburied corpses at the European borders, was seen as a necessary call for more attention to the deadly consequences of European politics. Cf. Arno Widmann. "Kommentar zum Zentrum für politische Schönheit. So werden Flüchtlinge zu Menschen." *Berliner Zeitung*. June 19, 2015. <http://www.berliner-zeitung.de/kommentar-zum-zentrum-fuer-politische-schoenheit-so-werden-fluechtlinge-zu-menschen-1009808> (accessed August 20, 2017).

3 The widely used term 'refugee crisis' ('Flüchtlingskrise') tends to frame the appearance of refugees as a situation of crisis in the countries people are fleeing to, which creates a one-sided and often exaggerated perspective on the 'problem' of refugees for receiving countries.

4 The established term 'welcome culture' ('Willkommenskultur'), often also 'German welcome culture,' used to refer to governmental decisions as well as voluntary work in summer 2015, constructs these as cultural phenomena, thus depoliticising them and creating a notion of cultural identity which is a generalising and euphemistic representation of the ambivalent reactions to the arrival, or only attempted arrival, of refugees in Germany. Implicitly, the term reinforces notions of cultural difference and hierarchy: Germans are in a position to extend (or refuse) welcome to 'others.'

5 Cf. for example cht. "Flüchtlinge in Deutschland: Willkommenskultur, das war einmal." *Der Spiegel*. April 7, 2017. <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/fluechtlinge-in-deutschland-willkommenskultur-war-einmal-a-1142147.html> (accessed August 20, 2017); the rise in open anti-immigration sentiment is reflected in the rise of the AfD party; it also shows in the frequency of attacks on refugees and refugee

and highly topical field, they are also partly diverse and dynamic, but at the same time, some predominant, fairly stable structures and—to use a Rancièrian term—'partitions'[6] can be identified. The political theory of Jacques Rancière is relevant for an analysis of these dominant structures and of the potential to challenge and change them.[7] In the current historical context, the positions of 'the migrant' and more specifically the 'illegal migrant' and the contradiction between human rights and rightless humans are especially significant in relation to Rancière's concept of the political subject. As will be argued below, constructions of 'the migrant' and the crucial difference—in terms of access to rights—between 'migrant' and 'refugee,' can be shown as connected to a fundamental 'partition,' the distinction between the political and the private, which structures discourses as well as institutions and practices. As Rancière emphasises, this division functions as an instrument of exclusion from political visibility. A reversal of such an exclusion, in turn, the political articulation of a subject assigned to the private realm, can be defined as a 'political speech act.' This paper will explore in how far 'political speech' in the emphatic sense Rancière gives these terms can be found in current discourses of migration. After a discussion of Rancière's theories in relation to language and politics, I will turn to paradigmatic examples of engagements with migration, especially those trying to establish a more positive view of migrants. These will be analysed with regard to two main questions: firstly, what kinds of interventions can be seen

homes (cf. Amadeu Antonio Stiftung/PRO ASYL. "Chronik flüchtlingsfeindlicher Vorfälle." *Mut gegen rechte Gewalt*. <https://www.mut-gegen-rechte-gewalt.de/service/chronik-vorfaelle> [accessed November 30, 2017]).

6 Cf. for instance Jacques Rancière. "Ten Theses on Politics." Trans. Davide Panagia/Rachel Bowlby. *Theory and Event* 5.3 (2001), thesis 7. Rancière's concept 'le partage du sensible' is translated into English as "partition" or "distribution of the sensible" (Gabriel Rockhill. "Appendix I. Glossary of Technical Terms." Jacques Rancière. *The Politics of Aesthetics.* Ed. and trans. Gabriel Rockhill. London et al.: Bloomsbury, 2014, pp. 82-98, here p. 89).

7 Indeed, there are quite a few recent publications which analyse issues of migration on the basis of Rancière's theories; the following articles are especially pertinent to this paper: Markus Gunneflo/Niklas Selberg. "Discourse or Merely Noise? Regarding the Disagreement on Undocumented Migrants." *European Journal of Migration and Law* 12 (2010), pp. 173-191; Naomi Millner. "From 'refugee' to 'migrant' in Calais Solidarity Activism: Re-staging Undocumented Migration for a Future Politics of Asylum." *Political Geography* 30 (2011), pp. 320-328; Noelia González Cámara. "Challenging Illegalization: Migrant Struggles, Political Actions and Rancière's Political Philosophy." *Spheres of Global Justice.* Vol. 1: *Global Challenges to Liberal Democracy: Political Participation, Minorities and Migrations*. Dordrecht et al.: Springer, 2013, pp. 379-390; Raffaela Puiggioni. "Border Politics, Right to Life and Acts of Dissensus: Voices from the Lampedusa Borderland." *Third World Quarterly* 36.6 (2015), pp. 1145-1159. For a short theoretical exploration of Rancière's theories and migration linked to a discussion of the concept of utopia see also my chapter "Insularity Now Here and Nowhere: Private Circles and Utopian Isles." *Insularity: Representations and Constructions of Small Worlds.* Ed. Katrin Dautel/Kathrin Schödel. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2016, pp. 43-54.

as 'political speech acts,' that is, as constituting a particular rupture in existing discourses. Secondly, what does this rupture entail as to reconsidering migration and ultimately envisioning political possibilities beyond the exclusionary 'partitions' established by national(ist) politics and a global economy of inequality.

As the references to 'speech' and 'speech acts' already indicate, there are several levels on which Rancière's political theory and its application to discourses of migration can be related to issues of language and philology. Rancière often develops his theories by engaging with single terms, redefining and, thus, reclaiming them from their predominant usage. This concerns, for example, the connotations of central political concepts within predominant ideologies and the functions of their usage: Rancière's detailed and provocative analysis of 'democracy' and the 'hatred of democracy' in current politics is a topical example for this method.[8] Another such term, which will be discussed further below, is 'politics' itself. Reflections on the common use of general concepts and their different possible meanings are, therefore, closely connected to Rancière's political theory. He explains for example: "To understand what democracy means is to hear the struggle that is at stake in the word."[9] By highlighting the tensions, ambivalences and contradictions surrounding such terms, Rancière explores existing political conditions—for instance, as mentioned, the current understanding and practice of democracy, in which he identifies an underlying "hatred" of "democratic society."[10] At the same time, he emphasises the potential to move beyond them—in this case, by advocating a more radical interpretation of democratic politics.[11] In addition to this analysis of single terms and concepts, a distinction between different forms of utterance is also central to Rancière's political theory and his notion of the political subject: the difference between 'voice,' or 'noise,' and 'speech.'[12] As will be explained below, this means that an understanding of language in use, or of political speech acts, is crucial for Rancière's conception of politics. This is linked to his reference to the *lógos* as a basis for a politics of equality.[13] Finally, the—albeit brief and exemplary—analysis of discourses of migration offered in the second part of this paper is itself a philological practice. This approach—the combination of theories of politics and language with the close linguistic analysis of political discourses—is proposed here as a form of political philology.

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8 Cf. Jacques Rancière. *Hatred of Democracy*. Trans. by Steve Corcoran. London/New York: Verso, 2014.

9 Ibid., p. 93.

10 Ibid., p. 4.

11 Cf. ibid., pp. 94-97.

12 Cf. Jacques Rancière. *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Trans. by Julie Rose. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, pp. 1-2.

13 A further important aspect of the relevance of Rancière's theories for philological enquiry, which is not developed in this paper, is Rancière's frequent engagement with literature (cf. for instance Jacques Rancière. "The Politics of Literature." *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. Ed. and trans. Steven Corcoran. London et al.: Bloomsbury, 2014, pp. 152-168).

In order to give a brief outline of Rancière's definition of politics, the following interview statement, where Rancière talks about his practice of "creating concepts," can serve as a starting point which demonstrates the interconnection between language and politics in Rancière's theories:

> Creating concepts also means destabilising the borders between the disciplines (philosophy, political science, history, sociology, literature, and so on). The point is less to destabilise words and meanings than to destabilise the order of the disciplines that say that each thing must be in its place. For me, of course, this is a political question.[14]

Rancière defines as "political" this very act of destabilising "the order of disciplines" as well as discourses and institutions "that say that each thing must be in its place," and we can add, that 'each human being must be in its place.' This links to Rancière's notion of the 'partition' or 'distribution of the sensible'[15] and his distinction between a *police* order, which consists precisely in this 'distribution' of fixed places, and, on the other hand, *politics* as a disruption of such orders.[16] The interview statement also highlights the broad political relevance Rancière attributes to his 'theoretical' engagement with language and concepts. His opposition to 'disciplining' boundaries of academic enquiry goes beyond a call for 'interdisciplinarity' towards questioning the whole socio-political order in which academic research is situated and which is all too often simply reproduced by its 'disciplinary' practices: for instance, when a strict separation between political positioning and academic enquiry is postulated as a form of scientific neutrality without a reflection on the unavoidably political contexts of such enquiry, for example, in terms of choice of topics, established academic canons of subjects deemed worthy of research—which is connected to the issue of (political) visibility—as well as the political and socio-economic conditions of academia itself.

'Politics,' then, is one of the concepts Rancière 'creates' by redefining it. In his definition, it becomes a positive notion of change, a disruption of established boundaries in the name of democracy and equality.[17] The latter concepts, too, are reclaimed in their radical sense. In Rancière's redefinition, politics does not refer to those institutions, roles and processes which are usually called political; he also opposes negative connotations of the term, including the common link between politics and power.[18] A political moment in his theory is the moment when something which had been excluded from the public-political realm becomes perceptible within this realm. Political speech reveals and challenges

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14 Jacques Rancière in Max Blechman/Anita Char/Rafeeq Hasan. "Democracy, Dissensus and the Aesthetics of Class Struggle. An Exchange with Jacques Rancière." *Historical Materialism* 13.4 (2005), pp. 285-301, here p. 299.

15 See note 6.

16 Cf. Rancière. *Disagreement* (note 12), pp. 21-42.

17 Cf. ibid., p. 33 and 99.

18 Rancière's pointed text "Ten Theses on Politics" (note 6) starts with "Thesis 1. Politics is not the exercise of power."

those boundaries which—despite professed democracy and equality—serve to exclude certain spaces, and the people 'distributed' to them, from political debate and public attention and thus maintain an unequal 'distribution.' Existing political institutions and the predominant discursive construction of 'politics' are part of this established 'distribution' or 'partition,' which Rancière calls 'police,' a concept he introduces as the opposite of his own understanding of politics. 'Police' is used in its original broad sense, which according to Foucault designates a "mode of government."[19] This is not restricted to "the 'state apparatus,'"[20] though, but the state and also the police in the contemporary sense of the word are part of a more general 'police' order. Associations with control and force are pertinent here, and a connection to the main tasks of the police in the narrow sense, namely law enforcement, and thus also enforcing the 'exclusive' order of private property as well as 'policing' national borders, for example, is relevant. However, 'police' more generally refers to the whole social order, the fundamental constructions governing ways of perceiving and speaking. In the context of migration, a paradigmatic example of a policed space kept from public visibility together with the people assigned to, or imprisoned in it, are detention centres; at the same time, the discursive exclusion of migrants and their very construction as an 'other' also belongs to the 'police' order. Politics in Rancière's sense disrupts this order, which ensures that "each thing must be in its place."

The following quote from Rancière's *Ten Theses on Politics* further elucidates his distinction between police and politics. It also demonstrates a stylistically interesting combination of the literal and the metaphorical in his development of concepts:

> "Move along! There is nothing to see here!" The police says that there is nothing to see on a road, that there is nothing to do but move along. It asserts that the space of circulating is nothing other than the space of circulation. Politics, in contrast, consists in transforming this space of 'moving-along' into a space for the appearance of a subject: i. e., the people, the workers, the citizens: It consists in refiguring the space, of what there is to do there, what is to be seen or named therein.[21]

When Rancière refers to "a road" here, it is a comment on actual, physical public space but also on the public sphere in a metaphorical sense. The wordplay on circulation is significant, too: on the one hand, circulation is simply moving along in the face of situations the police order hides from public visibility, it is also the predominant function of current public spaces as mere spaces of transit; additionally, the change from "circulating" to "circulation" is a reference to the other predominant use of what could be public spaces: the circulation of capital and commodities. Public spaces in the police order are occupied by private economic agents, not political subjects.

The link between the construction of 'private' versus 'public' and Rancière's understanding of the political is explained in the next paragraph of his *Ten*

19 Rancière. *Disagreement* (note 12), p. 28.

20 Ibid.

21 Rancière. "Ten Theses" (note 6), par. 22.

Theses on Politics, which also provides an introduction to his distinction between 'speech' and 'voice'—or here even 'noise'—both referring to utterances not perceived as political 'speech:'

> In order to refuse the title of political subjects to a category—workers, women, etc …—it has traditionally been sufficient to assert that they belong to a 'domestic' space, to a space separated from public life; one from which only groans or cries expressing suffering, hunger, or anger could emerge, but not actual speeches demonstrating a shared *aisthesis*. And the politics of these categories has always consisted in re-qualifying these places, in getting them to be seen as the spaces of a community, of getting themselves to be seen or heard as speaking subjects […]. It has consisted in making what was unseen visible; in getting what was only audible as noise to be heard as speech […].[22]

"[T]o refuse the title of political subjects to a category" means to suppress a whole 'category' of people so thoroughly that they do not even qualify as subjects in political debate and struggle. The term 'subject' can here be understood in the double sense of a topic for debate and of a speaking subject, which is Rancière's main emphasis. As he provocatively puts it, the voices of those who do not qualify as political subjects are only perceived as "groans or cries" and not "speeches demonstrating a shared *aisthesis*," that is, a shared space of perception, a political space where subjects can articulate their interests as the political concerns of a communal public. The distinction between 'voice' and 'speech,' therefore, emphasises the perception of speech together with its articulation: linguistic utterances can either remain mere voice when they do not find a shared political space of perception, or they can turn into speech when they manage to establish themselves in the realm of politics, or rather, when they succeed in redefining the realm of politics in such a way that it now includes their voices as political speech. For Rancière, a political moment is this very moment of a disruption of the previous 'distribution of places.' This understanding of politics is linked to the issue of private versus political since the distinction between 'domestic' and 'public' functions as a crucial tool of political exclusion. The construction of the female role as 'domestic' is a prominent example of this: it concerns women's role as 'domestic workers' fulfilling unpaid, or low-paid, labour in the house and, at the same time, it is a refusal of the very possibility of articulating this 'place' and the female position in it as a political issue. In reverse, the insistence on a political debate about gender roles, the gendered distribution of labour and the exclusion of women from the public realm is a political moment in Rancière's sense as it disrupts the established order of visibility. The well-known feminist slogan 'the private is political' refers to such a politicisation of what was excluded from the political public before. Rancière's mention of "workers" together with "women" as examples of this relegation to a 'domestic' space may seem less obvious at first. However, work and thus the role of the worker in the economy is, in fact, construed as an opposite to the political

22 Ibid., par. 23.

realm in a capitalist economy.[23] This is highlighted by the term 'economy' itself referring to the 'household' (*oîkos*); work and the position of the worker are largely part of the private economy. This means, in parallel to the female sphere of the private household, that issues concerning work and production are not conceived as common political concerns but as the responsibility of private individuals. Workers are private economic agents of their lives—of finding a job to pay for their living—and owners of capital, respectively, are agents of their own profit. This latter private aim fundamentally shapes the sphere of work—unless a political moment in Rancière's sense occurs: all forms of workers' struggles disrupt this order and insist on a political debate of working conditions, wages and, more radically, the private ownership of the means of production, turning work and the worker into political subjects. The 'domestication,' here of women and workers, becomes visible in its dual function of establishing exploitative conditions as well as political exclusion. This is also crucial in the context of migration and the distinction between the *political* refugee and the *economic* migrant, which will be discussed below.

Rancière's notion of political change countering the police order of inequality is linked to an understanding of language as the basis of all social orders. In his conception, each political moment relates to an "assumption of equality,"[24] which gets displaced in the unequal 'distribution of the sensible' and is reasserted by political acts. Language, the *lógos*, is central to this notion of politics and equality.[25] Rancière argues that the police order of unequal distributions nevertheless has to refer to a shared *lógos* and thus always bears within itself the potential for a disruption by a claim to equality:

> this assumption of equality is to be discerned even within a discourse proclaiming the fatal fact of inequality. [...] [it] must presume the equality of speaking beings, which contradicts the police distribution of bodies who are put in their place and assigned their roles.[26]

Without assuming this "equality of speaking beings," it is not possible to establish a social order since this must necessarily rely on communication, on the 'order' being 'understood' by those 'ordered.'[27] Hence, it also contains the seed for a reversibility of the roles of the 'sender' and 'receiver' of speech, which in this case implies a reversal of power relations, and means that there is always a contradiction between any order of inequality and the underlying "equality of speaking beings," the common *lógos*, this order is based on. Language is thus at the core of equality and political change in Rancière's sense. It marks the tension between the 'body' 'put in its place,' whose utterances are only heard as 'noise'

23 Cf. on the split between the economic and the political Ellen Meiksins Wood's seminal article "The Separation of the Economic and the Political in Capitalism." *New Left Review* 127 (1981), pp. 66-95.
24 Rancière. *Disagreement* (note 12), p. 33.
25 Cf. ibid., pp. 23-25.
26 Ibid., p. 33.
27 Cf. ibid.

or 'voice'—a mere expression of affects—, and the political subject able to resist this order with their 'speech' challenging the limited boundaries of the political public. Such political speech not only articulates demands or protest but enacts a restructuring of the political sphere, and in this sense it is a 'speech act.'[28] Through its utterance together with its reception as political speech the delimitations of the political sphere are unsettled and altered:[29] the moment of political communication, the speech act, brings into being a new space of politics.

Rancière connects this conception of politics with the notion of human rights in his article *Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?* and proposes an understanding of human rights as a means of political change.[30] This is opposed to the current predominant context of human rights, humanitarianism, which Rancière criticises for its reduction of the rights of man to the mere "rights of victims."[31] He states pointedly:

> Ultimately, those rights appear actually empty. They seem to be of no use. And when they are of no use, you do the same as charitable persons do with their old clothes. You give them to the poor.[32]

This ironically sums up that the charitable use of "old clothes" as well as "rights" leaves the order of inequality untouched: "the poor" remain the poor in humanitarian discourse and the connected practices, those "deprived of any right"[33] remain in their rightless state even if they are the objects of "'humanitarian interference.'"[34] In contrast to this current use of human rights, which does not constitute a political act in Rancière's sense as it does not challenge the basic 'distribution of the sensible,' Rancière proposes the possibility of a political 'subject of the rights of man.' This subject emphasises human rights as a radical notion of universal human equality[35] and confronts them with existing inequalities and exclusions. This means to "construct a dissensus against the denial of rights,"[36] which goes beyond a claim to minimal rights for the rightless. Such dissensus is a political use of human rights in Rancière's sense of the term because it demonstrates that the current police order of inequality at the same time

28 In his discussion of Rancière's understanding of human rights, Illan rua Wall, for example, also refers to this form of political communication as "the political (revolutionary) moment of the performative speech act" (Illan rua Wall. *Human Rights and Constituent Power: Without Model or Warranty*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012, p. 94).

29 Cf. Jacques Rancière. "Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?" *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 103.2/3 (2004), pp. 297-310, here p. 303.

30 Rancière develops his argument by engaging with Hannah Arendt's famous analysis of the "Perplexities of Human Rights" (ibid., p. 298), which he attempts to overcome with his reading of the political potential of human rights (cf. ibid., p. 302).

31 Ibid., p. 298.

32 Ibid., p. 307.

33 Ibid., p. 306.

34 Ibid., p. 298.

35 Cf. ibid., p. 303.

36 Ibid., p. 306.

bears the "inscription" of equality, an explicit assumption of the shared *lógos*, in the form of human rights.[37] By highlighting this tension, the 'subject of the rights of man' disrupts a "*consensus*" which cements the status quo and entails a "depoliticization"[38] because it tries to foreclose the political struggle over the establishment of unequal 'distributions' and their underlying logic of what is considered a political issue.

The critique of the current application of human rights as well as Rancière's politicisation of them can be linked to the topic of migration. Indeed, Rancière mentions "clandestine immigrants in the zones of transit of our countries or the populations in the camps of refugees"[39] as examples for potential political 'subjects of the rights of man.' The 'humanitarian' treatment of migrants corresponds to Rancière's critique: the space assigned to the migrant, be it during unsafe, deadly journeys avoiding border controls as well as in detention and even 'reception centres' is depoliticised. It is removed from public visibility as democratic concern, left only to policing and the administrative 'distribution' of minimal aid: the 'management' of human bodies—sadly alive and dead.[40] The right to apply for asylum and later—perhaps—citizenship also remains firmly within the police order of nation states and their 'distribution' of access or exclusion.[41] This becomes obvious by the actual policing that accompanies this seeming application of 'human rights:' detention, a long and complicated process of claiming asylum together with 'relocations,' forced evictions and the creation of 'illegal' or 'clandestine migrants' prove that this is a rigorous process of selection rather than a political extension of universal rights. According to Rancière's view of the political potential of human rights, however, the 'illegal migrant' can become a political subject by making their exclusion from equal rights visible.[42] For this to constitute a political speech act, it requires a platform for its visibility. It has to find or create a political public ready to perceive the excluded migrant as a subject of a political articulation, rather than the mere voice of a victim, which is currently the predominant perception—if it is not construed even more negatively as the voice of an intruder with no right to make a political claim in the receiving country. Within the existing humanitarian logic, a refugee fleeing persecution, and to a degree also those fleeing war, can at least officially appear as a political issue in those countries where the right to asylum and 'subsidiary protection' is established. However, this does not mean that access to claiming these rights is facilitated, and thus human rights have a very limited reach even

37 Cf. ibid., pp. 302-303.

38 Ibid., p. 306.

39 Ibid., p. 305.

40 For a critique of humanitarian approaches to migration see also Millner. "From 'refugee' to 'migrant'" (see note 7), pp. 321-322.

41 Cf. also Gunneflo/Selberg. "Discourse or Merely Noise" (note 7), pp. 181-182.

42 Cf. González Cámara. "Challenging Illegalization" (note 7) and Gunneflo/Selberg. "Discourse or Merely Noise" (note 7). Puiggioni offers an interesting Rancièrian analysis of protests by inhabitants of a "borderland," here Lampedusa, against European border politics as an act of creating political visibility for this space and its practices of violent exclusion (cf. Puiggioni. "Border Politics" [note 7]).

with regard to those eligible for asylum.[43] Furthermore, a migrant fleeing desperate economic conditions is excluded from refugee status by definition. This split between the political refugee and the economic migrant corresponds to the established division between public and private: economic issues, be they structural or individual situations, are not perceived as part of the political public.[44] The 'voice' of poverty may be heard and even responded to with charitable acts including some governmental measures, but there is no "shared *aisthesis*" for the political speech of the global poor and disadvantaged. This becomes especially obvious in the consensus that economic migrants do not deserve asylum or any other form of the right to move and settle elsewhere—unless they are attractive for the job market, i. e., for private economic actors, and special regulations are implemented as within the EU. Otherwise, the economic migrant is 'none of our business,' so to speak. This also means that the connection between economic inequality, migration to richer countries and the very 'business' of these countries and the companies based in them—that is, relations of exploitation and one-sided profits within a system of structurally unequal 'distributions'—is not a subject tackled in the context of the so called 'crisis of migration' in its predominant framing. Economic migrants and the conditions of their appearance are not currently perceived as political subjects in both senses: their voices are not heard as political speech but excluded, even from an appeal to human rights, and the systemic reasons for economic migration generally do not qualify as a topic for political debate, at least not in the sense of a political moment as a fundamental disruption of existing structures of inequality. How, then, can a "dissensus" against this depoliticisation be constructed?

In the following final part of this paper, three paradigmatic examples of discourses of migration will be analysed with the aim of exploring how migrants can become political subjects in Rancière's sense. The first example is a popular argument which engages with the economic side of migration. In an attempt to create more positive attitudes towards immigrants, their economic usefulness is

43 For an overview of the legal situation regarding refugees and the realities it creates, often leading to situations where access to states as well as to their legal protection, even if it is granted in theory, is not actually provided, see Maria O'Sullivan/Dallal Stevens. *States, the Law and Access to Refugee Protection. Fortresses and Fairness*. Oxford/Portland, OR: Hart, 2017.

44 Cf. Raia Apostolova. "The Real Appearance of the Economic/Political Binary: Claiming Asylum in Bulgaria." *Intersections: East European Journal of Society and Politics* 2.4 (2016), pp. 33-50. Apostolova also analyses the distinction between economic migrant and political refugee in relation to larger ideological frameworks, namely, "liberal definitions of what constitutes violence and who has the right to escape it" (ibid., p. 34). She shows how the economic realm is not perceived as an area of violence in liberal ideology. This is part of the depoliticisation of the economic and provides a justification for excluding economic migrants from the right to asylum (cf. ibid, pp. 34-38). Whilst political refugees appear as victims of 'force,' economic migrants are construed as voluntary actors without a right to protection (cf. ibid., p. 37). On 'refugee' and 'migrant' see also Schödel. "Insularity Now Here and Nowhere" (note 7), pp. 52-53.

often emphasised. A crowd-funded poster campaign in the U.K., for instance, consists of several different posters with portrait photos of men or women under the headline “I am an Immigrant”[45] and accompanied by a short statement as well as information about their name, country of origin and occupation:

> I am an Immigrant
> “For 7 years I have been saving lives and your life could be saved next”
> Name: Lukas Belina
> Country of Origin: Poland
> Occupation: Firefighter
> Noxenophobia.org[46]

This structure is the same on all the posters and the message of the campaign is clear: it represents immigrants as valuable members of society who should not be discriminated against. This is framed within economic terms by highlighting the occupation of the depicted immigrant, which is also referred to in all the quoted statements.[47] The emphasis is, therefore, not on the voice of the victim—as it is in campaigns for charity—but on the immigrant as an active participant in society. This line of argument, however, obviously creates its own exclusionary notion: a member of society to be welcomed is a member who holds a paid “occupation” and for that reason can demonstrate their “contribution.”[48] The implicit reverse of this are those who are perceived as not ‘contributing’—a recurring motive in anti-immigrant resentment. The message of the campaign may help to counterbalance some forms of racism and generalised negative attitudes towards immigration. Yet, it does not create a public appearance of the migrant as a political subject; quite to the contrary, it emphasises the private success of individual immigrants within the existing social order, here the job market, and thus also within structures of competition and inequality, excluding others from the depicted economic inclusion. The campaign underscores a consensual, legitimising discourse for the current economic system—the narrative that people work in order to ‘contribute’ to a common good—rather than, as is predominantly and fundamentally the case, working to earn a living, on the one side, and to make profit on the other. It thereby depoliticises class relations as well as migration. When the website explains that “[t]he campaign is a response to the increased anti-immigration rhetoric occurring in politics and the need to shed a positive light on immigrants and the social, economic and cultural

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45 *I am an Immigrant*. <http://www.iamanimmigrant.net/i-am-immigrant-poster-campaign> (accessed August 25, 2017).

46 Ibid. The posters were mainly displayed in tube stations in London and train stations in the U.K. in 2015 (cf. ibid.) and can still be viewed online, where the campaign also continues, inviting immigrants to upload their photos together with their stories, which follow the same structure as the posters.

47 To give another example: “‘I assist around 1000 customers daily and have been working in National Rail stations for 15 years’/Name: Mary Sithole/Country of Origin: Zimbabwe/Occupation: Customer Service Assistant” (ibid.).

48 Ibid.

prosperity migrants bring to the nation,"[49] it adopts a discourse of nationalism, which glosses over social differences within nation states and also forms a contradiction to the overt pro-migration message. If the "prosperity" brought to "the nation" is the main argument for immigration, this can all too easily be turned against immigrants or certain groups of immigrants who are (seen as) unable to bring such "prosperity." By focussing on the "occupation" of the immigrants, the campaign also fails to give examples of a "social" or "cultural prosperity" outside of the economic realm. Rather than being a political engagement with migration in Rancière's terms, this well-meaning campaign supports the existing police order, which precisely sorts human beings according to their value for national economies; for example, when well-trained immigrants are invited to counterbalance a shortage of skilled workers but those suffering from a lack of education and economic perspectives are returned to their countries of origin or already barred from entering—with the known, often fatal consequences.[50]

49 Ibid.

50 A recent advertising campaign in Germany takes the logic analysed here even one step further: the campaign by a non-profit company with the aim of bringing potential employers and refugees looking for work into contact shows photographs of four different men, with first names and countries of origin, and captions such as: "I'M A TEAM PLAYER/ 'I survived crossing the ocean in a small rubber boat with 85 other people.'", "I AM RESILIENT/ 'We were stuck at the border to Turkey. We didn't have food for three days.'", "I AM STRESS-RESISTANT/ 'During my journey, I was arrested and interrogated for several days.'" (Social-Bee. "Soft skills can come the hard way." <http://employ-refugees.de/#soft-skills> [accessed January 28, 2018]) This campaign, which was also shown on posters in German cities (cf. Melanie Staudinger. "Provokante Kampagne." *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. January 23, 2018. <http://www.sueddeutsche.de/muenchen/fluechtlingshilfe-provokante-kampagne-1.3837622> [accessed January 29, 2018]), takes the economic perspective to an extreme by framing the traumatic experiences of refugees with the slogan: "Soft skills can come the hard way." The apparently well-meaning and intentionally provocative campaign nevertheless unintentionally becomes a cynical comment on the situation of migrants and the discourse about their economic usefulness. The central focus of the campaign is the experience of migration. This leads to a construction of refugees as a collective with this experience as their single defining trait, which is then presented as an 'asset' on the job market. According to this argument, the particular value of refugees for employers ironically lies in the suffering inflicted upon them by the border politics of the countries they fled to. Their skills are not portrayed as individual characteristics but as generic qualities. Especially in the accompanying four video clips, "The story of my escape," which end with sentences such as "I am highly motivated to work here," their desire to work is directly linked to the emphasis on hardship and "resilience" acquired during migration. Together with an aesthetics of heroism, also using gender stereotypes by only choosing men, this suggests the notion of a "stress-resistant" work force ready to take on employment under any conditions, which matches the fact that the organisation only offers temporary jobs (cf. also Julia Pustet. "Soft Skill Zynismus." *Jungle World*. 2018/04. January 25, 2018. <https://jungle.world/artikel/2018/04/soft-skill-zynismus> [accessed January 28, 2018]). The campaign is both a problematic depiction of refugees and the

A nationalist logic also informs the next example, which is an illustration of the many appeals against discrimination in the context of migration. *Der Spiegel* showed several portrait photos of refugees in a series of different covers for the same issue attempting to counteract prejudice.[51] The photos are accompanied by name (first name and initial of the surname), age and country of origin ("refugee from..."), each with a different headline which engages with a stereotypical notion about migrants:

> Raffgierig? Arm. (Greedy? Poor.)
> Habgierig? Hungrig. (Avaricious? Hungry.)
> Gefährlich? Gepeinigt. (Dangerous? Tormented.)
> Ungebildet? Unterdrückt. (Uneducated? Suppressed.)
> Bedrohlich? Bedroht. (Threatening? Threatened.)
> Kriminell? Verfolgt. (Criminal? Persecuted.)[52]

All the covers share the same subtitle: "Fremdenhass vergiftet Deutschland" ("Xenophobia poisons Germany"). At first sight, the images with their captions make issues of social discrimination and material inequality visible, and thus potentially create a "dissensus" against racist ideologies and prevailing politics of exclusion. They combine references to both political and economic reasons for migration, thus potentially unhinging the distinction between refugee and economic migrant. But the subtitle again corresponds to a nationalist logic by using the strong image of a 'poisoned' country, which carries racist or antisemitic connotations, and uses the same focus as anti-immigrant nationalists: it is Germany, the nation state, one should chiefly be concerned about. The recurring subtitle shifts attention from the reasons for migration to a reflection on Germany and "the state of the nation" ("die Lage der Nation"[53]). Fittingly, the main article about the title-topic in the magazine ends up revoking the message of the cover and insinuating a fear of 'masses' of refugees. After referring to "touching" ("bewegend")[54] individual examples, including the refugees depicted on the cover, the article states: "What if the individual fates, the individual human beings turn into a crowd so large that it cannot be managed by all the helpers in the country?" ("Was, wenn aus den einzelnen Schicksalen, den einzelnen Menschen eine Menge wird, so groß, dass sie für all die Helfer im Land nicht mehr zu bewältigen ist?"[55]). The individualisation of refugees seemingly fostered by the cover images is thus explicitly taken back. The possibility of seeing refugees

world of work when the requirement of extreme skills of endurance is presented as a positive opportunity.

51 *Der Spiegel* 31 (2015). <http://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/index-2015-31.html> (accessed August 25, 2017).

52 Ibid. All translations from *Der Spiegel* are my own.

53 Matthias Bartsch et al. "Die Grenzen des Glücks." *Der Spiegel* 31 (2015), pp. 14-18, p. 15. <http://magazin.spiegel.de/EpubDelivery/spiegel/pdf/137324450> (accessed August 25, 2017).

54 Ibid., p. 17.

55 Ibid.

as individual humans is no longer construed as a matter of perception but rather as dependent on quantities. The best means against xenophobia is consequently identified as reducing the number of immigrants by sorting according to those "politically persecuted" ("politisch [...] verfolgt") or "fleeing a war" ("vor einem Krieg flüchten") and those having the same reason for migrating as "billions" of others: seeing no positive perspectives for their lives in their home countries ("weil sie sich von ihrem Leben in der Heimat nichts mehr versprechen. Auch das ist ein guter Grund, aber nur der Grund, den Milliarden Menschen weltweit genauso gut hätten."[56]) The question why these masses of people excluded from wealth and opportunities exist is not explored. A politicisation of global inequality is not offered, only the seemingly reluctant acceptance that in the face of such masses of less privileged people, numbers of immigrants have to be controlled—so that, paradoxically, the German 'welcome culture' can survive;[57] the price for its survival is not discussed any further. Ultimately, the message of the article is that the 'poison' of xenophobia has to be kept from Germany by keeping the masses of the poor from entering. In this way, the focus on Germany and even the discussion of xenophobia becomes apparent as conforming to the existing police order of exclusion. The refugees depicted on the cover, who are only mentioned briefly in the article, are not heard as political subjects, they are examples for a mass 'Germany' has to deal with, not an equal subject in a debate, let alone in a shared democratic political space. On the contrary, the borders of the nation and the limits of the political are reinforced in the name of avoiding xenophobia.

While this *Spiegel*-title and article may seem rather crude examples of an inherent contradiction of nationalist arguments against excesses of nationalism, they are just a more pointed expression of a wide-spread discursive pattern: the pattern of approaching the topic of migration mainly with constructions of identities. On the one hand, there is the obsession with cultural differences in anti-migration discourses, on the other, what is often referred to in pro-migration arguments are also shared cultural values, of a nation, as in *Der Spiegel*, or 'European' and 'Western,' which are seen as endangered through the lack of a humane response to refugees. The same values, however, are invoked when, for example, a generalised 'threat' through the presence of a Muslim 'other' is fabricated. Such homogenising notions of collective identities, be it one's own or the 'other,' are the opposite of Rancière's notion of political subjectification—even when their aim is the inclusion of the 'other' and the construction of an identity based on ethical values. To underline his idea of a political subject beyond such collective identities, Rancière reclaims the term 'proletariat.' In the interview already quoted at the beginning of this paper he explains:

> It [the proletariat] can at one and the same time be the name of a class and the open name of the uncounted [i.e. those disregarded within the political realm, K.S.]. What I call positive subjectification is this process of disidentification.

56 Ibid., p. 18.
57 Cf. ibid.

> What is important is the disidentifying moment that shifts from an identity or an entity as a worker, as a woman, as a black, to a space of subjectification of the uncounted that is open to anyone.[58]

The idea of a political subjectification in the "open name of the uncounted" can be seen as an understanding of universal democratic equality which avoids turning the notion of universalism itself into an exclusionary cultural identity ('Western universalism'). Universalism and equality are not ultimate aims to be arrived at and established, but universal equality is the underlying notion which is at the core of the concept of politics as a continuous process of ever again breaking established as well as new boundaries or 'distributions' causing unequal relations. The ideas of equality and a universal political space, "open to anyone," then, remain an instigation for political change rather than becoming 'totalising' concepts.[59] The word 'proletariat' is used by Rancière—following and re-appropriating Marx—for this notion of the political subject: it is that class of a social, political and economic system which is not included in the very definition of its political public.[60] Hence, its demands for political visibility lead to an unsettling of the whole structure; they go far beyond simply establishing less prejudiced perspectives or the inclusion of one more specific group and its interests in an otherwise unchanged political scenario. The political subject claiming visibility in the public realm enacts the reconception of the political itself. For example, as I will argue further below, perceiving the economic migrant as a political subject unsettles the division between private and public, economic and political and, ultimately, unsettles the material basis of this division.

The idea of disidentification developed by Rancière in this context is helpful for rethinking migration beyond constructions of collective identities. The "process of disidentification"[61] can also be understood as a philological practice, a political philology: disrupting 'identifications' through the analysis of their linguistic, discursive construction, highlighting their arbitrariness and, following Rancière's understanding of politics, relating them to the underlying "equality of speaking beings,"[62] the shared *lógos*, which undermines essentialising notions of identity and difference. Rancière's interview statement continues explaining the moment of disidentification:

> This means making the same words mean different things, so that it [sic] can refer to closed groups or to open subjects. This open process of disidentification is also a

58 Rancière in Blechman/Char/Hasan. "Democracy, Dissensus and the Aesthetics of Class Struggle" (note 14), p. 290.

59 Cf. Antonia Birnbaum. "Die unbestimmte Gleichheit. Jacques Rancières Entwurf einer Ästhetik der Politik." *Von Michel Serres bis Julia Kristeva*. Ed. Joseph Jurt. Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1999, pp. 193-209, p. 203.

60 Rancière refers to Marx's "Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right" (cf. Rancière in Blechman/Char/Hasan. "Democracy, Dissensus and the Aesthetics of Class Struggle" [note 14], p. 287).

61 Ibid., p 290.

62 Rancière. *Disagreement* (note 12), p. 33.

> process of universalisation. Take the declaration 'We are all German Jews' in Paris, May '68, or the present 'We are all children of immigrants' slogan in France. These names of subjects don't designate groups, they disrupt the system of designations that frame the community in terms of definite standards of inclusion.[63]

The examples Rancière gives highlight a potentially problematic side of such a process of disidentification: the smoothing over of differences and specific historical situations of oppression and persecution and even the lines between victims and perpetrators. To avoid this, it is important to emphasise dis-identification as a twofold process: it starts with an identification before the disidentification can begin. It identifies group-specific instances of exclusion and discrimination with the aim of an eventual disruption of the whole system of 'identifications.' In this way, Rancière's examples, 'We are all German Jews' and 'We are all children of immigrants,' have to be contextualised.[64] They are meant as the construction of a 'we' which makes experiences of oppression and their systemic conditions visible. As a political gesture, this should not entail an appropriation of victim status or a disregard for different experiences of intersecting forms of suppression or privilege, respectively. The examples used by Rancière are problematic if they conceal the fact that the discrimination directed against those identified as part of the excluded groups precisely does not affect all of 'us' in the same way. However, the slogans may also be seen as highlighting this difference: as opposed to simply stating, for example, 'we are all human,' the excluded subject named in the slogans focuses them on a specific situation where common humanity and equality are denied and reclaims these notions by emphasising their denial. The 'open,' universal subject thus envisaged is not the subject of a vague universality, but one that begins to appear in the recognition of its very absence. The—linguistic—operation of 'naming subjects,' thus, has to be understood as the formation of a dynamic and temporary joint political subject, not the claim of a shared identity. When Rancière refers to this subject as 'proletariat' this highlights that its categorisation is not based on any natural, or even cultural, inherent differences, but is the result of power structures and socio-economic conditions, which have to be seen in their historical specificity and limitation. At the same time, the 'we' of this political speech act ultimately refers to all human beings as speaking subjects, and thus—as a processual notion—to a radically democratic politics of equality. The slogans quoted by Rancière are, therefore, not supposed to designate an identification with a particular group but use the name of a subject excluded from political discourse in a provocative

63 Rancière in Blechman/Char/Hasan. "Democracy, Dissensus and the Aesthetics of Class Struggle" (note 14), p. 290.

64 The slogan 'We are all German Jews' was created in France in 1968 as an expression of solidarity with Daniel Cohn-Bendit after a French politician had said that he should not interfere in the student movement in France because he was 'only' a German Jew (cf. Dietmar J. Wetzel/Thomas Claviez. *Zur Aktualität von Jacques Rancière. Einleitung in sein Werk*. Wiesbaden: Springer, 2016 [= *Aktuelle und klassische Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaftler/innen*], p. 50). The slogan is, thus, connected to the question of who can appear as a political subject in a shared political space.

way. The process of disidentification, however, goes further than the ambivalent 'we are all…' slogans: it is a process of unsettling the very structures which create identifications leading to unequal possibilities of access and participation. Of course, 'we' are not 'all German Jews,' 'children of immigrants,' or members of the proletariat, but by acknowledging the systematic production of inequality, a politicised 'we' can form provocatively in order to challenge the actual denial of the 'we' of equal human beings. A political 'universalisation' in Rancière's sense starts as a moment of challenging conditions of exclusion by first of all foregrounding them. The specific structures of oppression are articulated together with the demand for destroying them and moving towards a politics of universality. This is not based on a hypocritical declaration of a supposedly already existing equality qua humanity, which masks actual inequalities and the fact that even access to the articulation of political universality is unequally 'distributed;' neither is it based on an identification with one of the identity groups created within the present system. It is a disidentification from all such groups and existing subject positions since identifying with them ultimately means to remain within the established hierarchies of power and exclusion. If the 'immigrant' speaks 'as immigrant,' or the non-immigrant 'as national citizen,' the regime of grouping human beings along these lines remains intact. Only if the 'national citizen' speaks as 'immigrant,' thus not accepting the privileged subject position offered by the existing system, and if the immigrant speaks as political subject, from the position reserved for the 'citizen,' these 'partitions' are radically called into question and the whole structure establishing them becomes unsettled.[65] As explained, such a political disidentification, however, does not deny the different experiences of those placed in an excluded position, on the one hand, and those granted full citizenship rights and not targeted by negative discrimination, on the other. It consists of the twofold process of identifying one's position in the current system and then disidentifying from it by demanding its alteration. Therefore, declaring 'we are all children of immigrants' as an act of creating equality cannot mean that once more the privileged non-immigrant ends up speaking *instead of* or *for* the excluded.[66] If it is a political moment in Rancière's sense and an enactment of equality, it can only mean speaking *with* the excluded in both senses: in dialogue with each other, thus creating a "shared *aisthesis*," and thereby adding 'our' speech to 'theirs' in rejecting the very creation of hierarchies of 'us' versus 'them.'

In order to sketch how such a political moment in Rancière's emphatic sense could come about in the context of migration, a final example, a political demonstration, will now be considered.[67] In July 2015, African migrants from various countries of origin protested in Valletta, the capital of Malta, in order to

65 See also González Cámara. "Challenging Illegalization" (note 7), p. 383.

66 Cf. also Millner. "From 'refugee' to 'migrant'" (note 7), who emphasises a new form of "listening" (p. 325) practiced by activists.

67 Cf. also, for instance, González Cámara. "Challenging Illegalization" (note 7) for an analysis of protests by 'undocumented migrants' as a political moment in Rancière's sense.

highlight discrimination and racism, both in its structural form, such as limited access to rights, as well as everyday experiences of personal discrimination.[68] By organising a demonstration in Valletta and attracting some media attention to it[69], a space of visibility was created which is radically opposed to the way African immigrants are usually seen—or not seen—in the streets of Malta, often either doing low-paid menial work or looking for such work, waiting to be picked up for a day's job at the side of the road.[70] Otherwise, African immigrants tend to be hidden from sight in detention and even in 'open' centres so that they rarely appear as part of the usual "circulation"[71] of consumers in Valletta. Therefore, the demonstration and the posters held up by the protesters are quite literally political speech acts "demonstrating a shared *aisthesis*"[72] against the prevailing police order of public visibility.[73] This shared space is, for instance, emphasised in these posters: "We work with permit, pay tax and national insurance but when we have no work we receive no benefits,"[74] "We are slaves for the

68 Cf. Mark Micallef. "'We Are Part of Economy But Not of Society'." *Xchange: Research on Migration*. July 19, 2015. <http://migrantreport.org/we-are-part-of-economy-but-not-of-society/> (accessed August 25, 2017).

69 Cf. also, for example, "No status, no benefits, no way to return home." *Times of Malta*. September 21, 2015 <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150921/local/no-status-no-benefits-no-way-to-return-home.585283> (accessed August 25, 2017), which refers back to the protest in July 2015.

70 Cf. Mark Anthony Falzon. "Operation Marsa swamp." *Times of Malta*. April 16, 2017. <https://www.timesofmalta.com/mobile/articles/view/20170416/opinion/Operation-Marsa-swamp.645296> (accessed August 25, 2017). The discussion about this informal 'job market' in the town of Marsa (near Marsa Open Centre) referred to in this article highlights how important issues of visibility are in the politics of immigration. Rather than focussing on the precarious situation of the immigrants, the negative perception of these conditions revolves around the appearance of migrants in public spaces: for example, in 2015, the Maltese Prime Minister commented "that the place 'looked like something from the Third World'," another politician is quoted as saying "that residents […] feel 'frustrated at the presence of such a large number of migrants wandering about in their communities'." The article itself describes a police raid in 2017 directed at the migrants in the area and argues convincingly that this was "racial profiling:" "it is clear that the only problem with the migrants' presence at Marsa is their skin colour. Put bluntly, to be black is to be seen as a threat to the economy, to law and order, and to much else."

71 Rancière. "Ten Theses" (note 6), par. 22.

72 Ibid., par. 23.

73 This, of course, again needs to meet an audience for its visibility. A reaction quoted in an article about the protest confirms that this political articulation was seen as a transgression of established boundaries: "'They should thank their lucky stars that we are tolerating them. Now they protest as well? What next?' an elderly woman from the capital commented." (Micallef. "We Are Part of Economy" [note 68]) The woman articulates – only in an unusually blunt way – that tolerance and gratitude are the terms on which migrants may be accepted, as a humanitarian, ethical issue, creating people dependent on the charity or even just tolerance of others, but the attempt to appear in a shared political space is rejected.

74 Quoted from a photograph in "No status, no benefits" (note 69).

economics of Malta."[75] By provocatively referring to structures of exploitation, race and class with the term "slaves," what was conceived as a 'contribution to society' in the 'I am an Immigrant' campaign discussed above, becomes visible as a scene of extreme inequality. This articulation of political speech also challenges the division between 'migrant' and 'resident' or 'national citizen' by showing the interconnection between the two which the economy has already established—along radically unequal lines.[76] The nation appears not, as in the example from *Der Spiegel*, as a seemingly value-based community but as the framework for this class-based economy. This disrupts the prevailing focus on national economic interests constructed as 'our' economic interests and highlights the class division within these economies. The political protest also unsettles the division between private and public or economic and political by insisting that conditions of work and of making a living are not only an issue between workers and employers but a subject for democratic public-political concern. If in this way, the economic migrant becomes a political subject in both senses of the word, this entails a Rancièrian destabilisation of the 'domestication' of economic issues and the related disregard for class structures, globalised exploitation and inequality. Making economic migration visible in the political sphere also means to insist on perceiving modes of production as well as the 'distribution' of its results as subjects of democratic debate and practice. This connects the so called 'crisis of migration' to a politicisation of larger frameworks of exclusion, inequality and political invisibility. It means to take away the constant gaze on 'the migrant' as an 'issue,' a 'problem,' and even as an object of aid, and to turn this either hateful, fearful or even empathic humanitarian gaze into a political perception, and thus, further, into the creation of a new shared and mutual *aisthesis*. As a concrete manifestation of this, 'national citizens' would have to join the demonstration of the African migrants in Valletta or elsewhere to protest against a system which exploits and at the same time excludes them and of which the 'resident' citizen also forms a part.[77] Such a joint protest could highlight the class division

75 Quoted from a photograph in Micallef. "We Are Part of Economy" (note 68).

76 Cf. also González Cámara. "Challenging Illegalization" (note 7), p. 386.

77 For a Rancièrian analysis of a joint protest movement see, for instance, Millner. "From 'refugee' to 'migrant'" (note 7), who writes about forms of political activism in Calais, where "a coalition of activists – including anarchists, local inhabitants and undocumented migrants – have worked to trouble the easy separation between the motivations of 'forced' and 'economic' migrants" (p. 321). Millner describes this coalition, in the context of the concrete situation in Calais, as political in Rancière's sense since it transgresses established boundaries, such as 'refugee' and 'migrant' as well as 'migrant' and 'activist' (cf. ibid., p. 325), and thus creates new forms of political visibility, or "conditions of speech and listening" (ibid.). See also the different reactions of two labour unions in Sweden to demands by 'undocumented migrants' to be included in their support analysed by Gunneflo/Selberg. "Discourse or Merely Noise" (note 7), pp. 186-188: whilst the larger union rejected the claim for membership of 'undocumented migrants' and thus reinforced a national(ist) conception of workers' rights (cf. ibid., pp. 186-187), a smaller "syndicalist" (p. 186) union created a shared political space by accepting 'undocumented migrants' working in Sweden

within the economic system and thereby identify unequal relations of power and hierarchy and disidentify from the division along national(ist) and racist lines. In this way, it can become a political speech act forming a new subject of articulation within the political sphere and thus, ultimately, aiming to restructure its whole set-up. As an articulation of systemic conditions of exploitation and inequality it turns the economy into a scene for democratic intervention, thereby challenging the split between private economy and public politics and the socio-economic relations established by capitalism.

as members despite their exclusion from citizenship, thus, restructuring the 'police' order of an unequal 'distribution' of rights (cf. pp. 187-188).