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# The Possibility of Philosophy of Nationality through Bertrando Spaventa's Thought and its Alternative<sup>1</sup>

Sevgi Doğan

University of Pisa

## Abstract

The discussion about the possibility of national philosophy is still actual philosophical problem. Because of his concern of the identity and originality of *Italian philosophy*, Bertrando Spaventa initiated this debate in a nation, which was being established. I will try to discuss the possibility of a national philosophy, which was asked by Bertrando Spaventa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in some sense, discussed by Antonio Gramsci in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well. My question is not if Italian thought or philosophy—whatever you call it—, exists or not but the question is whether a national philosophy still exists in a national context; if there is a national philosophy what makes it to have a national character. Can we still talk about national philosophy and what makes a philosophy to be a national? The presentation tries to answer these questions. Besides, it tries to suggest a new concept in substitution for national philosophy. This proposed concept is the *philosophical-culture*, which contains the universal and particular in itself. Therefore, we can avoid the limitation of the conception of national philosophy. In this respect, another point worth mentioning is Gramsci's evaluation of the separation between national-international or cosmopolitanism-national State will shed light on the discussion about national philosophy by his theory of intellectual. In this point, Gramsci's conception of culture helps us to understand the proposed concepts.

Keywords: culture, Gramsci, international, universal, national

## Introduction

The main question of debate in this paper is that a pure national philosophy is not possible. There can be a philosophy which has cultural values different from others. Culture and the manner of life lead a philosopher to create philosophical concepts peculiar to these nations. This creation through specific cultural values makes a philosophy different from other national philosophies. The nations that are able to combine their cultural values with other philosophical arguments and conceptions achieve to create their own philosophy and therefore we call it, for example, as German, French, Italian, Arabic or Islamic philosophy. While crossing borders or exceeding the limits enables philosophers to encounter different manner of thinking and different philosophical concepts, there is always a risk, since philosophers can exclude their own philosophical dynamics and limit themselves with the philosophical system coming from "outside."

My interest in the problem of national philosophy or the relationship between nation and philosophy arises from my concern about the originality of philosophy in Turkey. I try to avoid calling it Turkish philosophy because it refers very much to Turkish nationality excluding other nationalities or ethnic groups or excluding the contributions of other ethnic groups to philosophy in Turkey. For this reason, I will call it "philosophical-culture" in a country. Spaventa's idea of national philosophy leads us to understand this relationship between nation and philosophy. Instead of national philosophy, I will introduce "philosophical-culture". The concept of "philosophical-culture" contains the universal and particular in itself. While philosophy refers always to a universal, culture refers to particular. With this proposed concept, the limitations of a national philosophy can be avoided because while nation signifies also particular as culture, a culture might involve only one culture or can address to the multiple cultures. While the concept of "national philosophy" introduces or reveals nationalist feelings or sentiments, the concept of "philosophical-culture" is far from these feelings, far from such a risk to

fall into nationalist sentiments. Spaventa on the one hand tried to avoid from such a risk, on the other hand, with his conception of national philosophy he was still at the border of this risk.

On the one hand, it is possible to talk about a national philosophy, on the other hand it is difficult to claim that there is a national philosophy because of its eclectic form. The question is as follows: what does make a philosophy or a philosophical claim a national? It is a difficult question to answer. This specific question was asked by Spaventa in *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazioni con la filosofia europea* in which he investigates the originality of Italian philosophy. Is there a French, English, or German philosophy? Why do we claim that there was a Greek philosophy which was essentially different from the Indian philosophy?<sup>2</sup> This is still an actual question, which has been recently asked by Roberto Esposito in *Da fuori: Una filosofia per l'Europa*.

Esposito points out that the character of Italian philosophy or Italian thought is the relationship between theory and praxis: the thought of praxis with a practice of thought.<sup>3</sup> It means that the philosophy in Italy was created because of political events, political situations. It was created against the political situation of the country. Without consideration of this political situation of country which was lack of unity, it is difficult to comprehend the origin of Italian thought. For example, Dante and Machiavelli were exiled; Bruno was burned; Galilei and Campanella were imprisoned; Gramsci was also death after a long prison life. For Esposito, the power or repression produces the resistance.<sup>4</sup> He talks about two elements of Italian thought: 1) the influence of political atmosphere that leads the creation of philosophy or thought of praxis, practice of thought; 2) the contamination, or interaction with other paradigms (*paradigmi*). Here I found some similarities with Spaventa's claim because when Spaventa tried to reveal the originality and identity of Italian philosophy he first looked at Italian philosophical culture and then its relation to other philosophical culture. Both Spaventa and Esposito tried to define Italian philosophy through its relationship with the concepts of *inside* and *outside*.

Esposito defines the Italian thought as follows:

“It can be said that all Italian thought is a thought of life within its tension with politics and history. Our philosophy is not neither a philosophy of consciousness, like that of classical French philosophy, nor an elaboration of metaphysics like German philosophy. But it is also a philosophy of logic and language like in Anglo-Saxon countries.”<sup>5</sup>

The problem that I found both in Spaventa and Esposito is the limitation of philosophy with the Europe, which refers to the *Exclusion*. Continue to remain within “Eurocentric” perspectives.

Shortly for Esposito, it is a knowledge or consciousness of life, body and world. German Philosophy is based on the concept of negation (*negazione*), French Theory relies upon *neutralization* (*neutralizzazione*) and Italian Thought depends on affirmation or it is a sort of *affirmative thought*.<sup>6</sup> It means that Italian thought is not reactive but it is active, affirmative, and productive. Esposito refers very much to culture to explain the character of Italian philosophy.

Philosophical-culture in Italy is related also to the power of church or catholic religion as a hidden or masked, esoteric or implicit effects over Italian thought. It can be said that one of the strong paradigm is theology for the reason of being *affirmative*. It means that even if (although) Italian thought or philosophy at least last forty years criticizes the religion, it is not easy to disconnect or disassociate itself from its influences. They continue to have unconsciously the connections with the theology. Another definition of Italian thought is to be *in between* the religious, ecclesiastical or theological idea and the secular, progressive thinking. These cultural features differentiate Italian philosophy from others that Spaventa also tried to discover its identity and originality.

Francesca Menegoni speaks of the importance of Spaventa, whose influences still exist on Italian philosophy. She points out that the reflection of Spaventa is

extraordinarily actual even today not only for those who wish to overcome the national philosophy in the direction of supernational philosophy but he is also actual in debates on Hegel. Hegel in his inaugural speech for Lectures on the *History of Philosophy* claims that “[...] in other European countries [...] Philosophy [...] has sunk from memory, and that it is in the German nation that it has been retained as a peculiar possession.”<sup>7</sup> Hegel believes that the German nation attained to a greater point which Spaventa also agreed with. Therefore, it was the German nation—philosophical-culture—which kept philosophy to exist. In this respect, Hegel attempted to define the relationship between philosophy and nationality or nation—it can be called philosophical-culture. But he did not do it in a nationalist or chauvinist way. Spaventa found the key sources in the German philosophy to make the Italian national consciousness possible. For him, philosophy was driving force to get the *consciousness of a nation*.

## Spaventa and the nationality of philosophy

Spaventa tried to identify nation with philosophy. But while he identified nationality with philosophy, he was also aware of the universal character of philosophy. In his short article “False Accusa contro l’Hegelismo” (False Accusation against Hegelianism), he wrote that “among different cognition, the one in which the natural element of nationality of a people is less demonstrated is philosophy.”<sup>8</sup> He continued that “philosophy represents the most intimate and substantial form of national life in the highest form.” This highest form is its universal character, that is super-national form. The aim of Spaventa was to overcome the national character of philosophy and to arrive at super-national form, the highest form, that is philosophy.

According to Gentile, Spaventa in Hegel’s *Phenomenology* finds a philosophy of history, in other words, “the demonstration of rationality in the whole historical process of human spirit (*Weltgeist*).”<sup>9</sup> Hegel presented that every moment in civilization, all system is a necessary moment through which the spirit passes to achieve or conquer the consciousness of its creative activity.<sup>10</sup> Spaventa found his idea of the national consciousness in this view of Hegel, in the idea of *Weltgeist*. The possibility of a philosophy lies behind the consciousness and free thought of a nation. Here we can find the priority of theory.

Spaventa emphasized the creativity or originality of a new philosophy. Nietzsche in *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* pointed out that from Thales to Socrates philosophy was one-sided and their followers including Plato were many-sided.<sup>11</sup> In other words, after Socrates the philosophy was characterized as a mixed type and before Socrates philosophy for Nietzsche was pure, which meant not eclectic but one-sided. He gave example of Plato’s philosophy which consisted of Socratic, Pythagorean, and Heraclitic elements. Spaventa was also aware of this eclecticism and he was conscious of the idea that there was not pure philosophy as Nietzsche found it before Socrates. But Spaventa believed that with this eclecticism a new philosophy appeared. He emphasized the originality existing outside of repeating and commenting it mechanically. In this regard Spaventa wrote as follows:

“In philosophers, in true philosophers, there is always something in deep, which is more than themselves, and of which they have no awareness; and this is the germ of a new life. Mechanically repeating philosophers is to destroy this germ, to prevent it from developing and becoming a new and more perfect system. If Plato had done nothing more than repeating Socrates, we would not have had the world of ideas [*idee*]. If Aristotle had repeated Plato, we would not have the first concept of substance [*sostanza*] and individuality [*individualità*]. If Spinoza had done nothing more than repeating Descartes, we would not have the first concept of God as a simple causality [*causalità*], as an identity that is the cause. If Fichte had repeated Kant, we would not have the concept of self-knowledge, of mind [*mentalità*]. If Schelling had repeated Fichte, we would not have the concept of identity

[*identità*] (of being and thought [*di essere e di pensiero*]), as mind [*mentalità*], as reason [*ragione*].”<sup>12</sup>

Spaventa believed that it is necessary to understand generally the meaning of nationality in the life of philosophy in order to discover the nationality of Italian philosophy.<sup>13</sup> It would not be sufficient to claim that philosophy is the clearest expression of the life of people. He found this sort of definition abstract. This definition or determination was needed to be clarified through its historical existence.<sup>14</sup> Before everything else, nationality was not a simple geographical phenomenon but “nationality is for us unity: living unity, free and powerful like a State. But why do we want this unity as a free State? Because we know that just in this unity as free State the powers of our life can be freely explained; just in that we can be ourselves and know really ourselves.”<sup>15</sup> Through these statements in fact Spaventa explained the possibility of a national philosophy, which was contingent upon the existence of a free State leading a unity of a nation.

The idea of nationality is not always the same in different nations and throughout history. He defined nationality as “absolutely a spiritual product”<sup>16</sup> because before everything else, nationality was not a natural and immediate thing.<sup>17</sup> Nationality was not exclusion or assimilation of other nations but nationality signified an autonomy of people in common life of people. The main question is always, in Gramscian sense after the cosmopolitan period and with the rise of national-state, how it is possible to re/combine the particular and universal or cosmopolitan and national elements. The nationality of a philosophy is also based on this debate.

## Gramsci and universal intellectual

Gramsci in *Prison Notebooks* (Q 1, §150, p. 133) writes that Italian intellectuals are not national but cosmopolite. He refers to the origin of national idea and Italian culture which he finds in other countries. For him, Italian national culture follows the medieval cosmopolitanism connected to the Church and Roman Empire. They are conceived as universal. But geographically they locate in Italy.

The nationality of philosophy appears sometimes with the question of possibility of universal intellectual. It seems much simpler question than the question about the national philosophy. When Gramsci in the *Prison Notebooks* (Q 19, §27) (1934-1935) talks about Italian culture and philosophy, he believes that during the period of Risorgimento, there are some intellectuals who presented an original, even a national philosophy. In this regard, Gramsci mentions Gioberti who offered a philosophy to the intellectuals which appeared as an original and at the same time a national philosophy.<sup>18</sup> The philosophy of Gioberti, according to Gramsci gave a new dignity to the Italian thought; for this reason, Gramsci differentiates Gioberti from Mazzini. It seems that Gramsci like Spaventa also believes that there is a national philosophy. For Gramsci, the cosmopolite role and function of Italian intellectual waned or approached the end of its period in eighteenth century (1700s).<sup>19</sup>

Gramsci in *Notebooks* (Q 10, §41, IV) writes that Croce is the last man of Renaissance who represents the international and cosmopolite relations. But he also expresses a national element.<sup>20</sup> Gramsci calls Croce the last man of Renaissance because according to Gramsci Renaissance has an international or cosmopolite character. He does not ignore the national element in Croce.

“Croce has succeeded in recreating his cosmopolitan intellectual function in his personality and position as a world leader in culture that has been carried out almost collectively by Italian intellectuals from the Middle Ages to the end of the sixteenth century (Q10, §41, IV).”<sup>21</sup>

When Gramsci compares Croce’s view of intellectual with French philosopher’s approach to intellectual question, even if both philosophers are liberal, they are cultural and traditional different from each other. These features make them different (Q 10, §47).<sup>22</sup>

When Edward Said as a follower of Gramsci refers to the intellectual task, in some sense, he mentions the universal task of intellectual. For him, the intellectual is the person who universalizes the existing crisis and relates this crisis to a greater human scope and therefore explains the sufferings of a nation or race and also associates this experience with other nation's or race's sufferings.<sup>23</sup> In fact Said believes that the intellectual does not only have national task but the intellectual must always concern with the universal one, which leads him/her to be a universal intellectual even if Said thinks that every individual belongs to a national culture, feelings, values, religion, etc. that is not beyond the nationality, which according to Spaventa "never becomes a simple geographical expression."<sup>24</sup>

Spaventa gives the role to intellectual to transform the ambiguous and indeterminate feeling of revolution into determinate thought.<sup>25</sup> According to Spaventa without intellectual, or philosophers the revolution would be blind, indeterminate and lacking of scope.<sup>26</sup> Also without philosophers, the consciousness of right could not exist. Therefore, the world would be dominated either by despotism of a few or by despotism of multitude. It means that he gives the intellectual a universal role to realize the freedom of thought and freedom of absolute human right as being universal qualifications. It seems to me that the universality or internationality of intellectual and philosophy is clear when Spaventa talks about the *freedom of thought, intellect, and feeling*, which are the unique condition for the political freedom as well. But what does the concept of liberty mean for Spaventa? According to him, the concept of liberty has its meaning when human beings are the *consciousness of themselves*, of their *nature* as absolutely *free spirit*.<sup>27</sup> Gramsci describes that "human being is especially spirit [*l'uomo è soprattutto spirito, cioè creazione storica e non naturale*]." But by spirit he means that human being is a historical creation [*creazione storica*] and not nature.<sup>28</sup> Because if human being is not a historical creation it will be difficult to explain why always there has been the exploited and exploiter, the creators of wealth and he selfish consumers of it.<sup>29</sup>

The possibility of nationality of philosophy according to Gramsci is related to intellectuals in a nation or country or territory. Gramsci examines this problem through the analysis of Italian literature. Gramsci's main question is why Italian people read the foreign authors or intellectuals but not national intellectuals or intellectual in those territories.

## Conclusion

The idea of the national philosophy is based on some fundamental concepts such as *national consciousness*, the *concept of identity*, and the *idea of nationality*. Spaventa tried to give a role and responsibility to philosophy or more precisely to the *theory* in order to construct a "moral and political Italian consciousness,"<sup>30</sup> which he clearly explained in his work, *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazioni con la filosofia europea* (1862).

Also in contemporary period, Esposito claimed that the thought/thinking [*il pensiero*], not only the philosophical thought (professional way of thinking) but the thought/thinking developed a *constituent* function or played a crucial role to constitute the part of Europe.<sup>31</sup> It is very important to observe that the function and the role that Esposito gave to the thought was already given by Spaventa to the philosophers and philosophy who talked about it in *La rivoluzione e l'Italia* published in 1851 in *Il Progresso*. In this regard, Spaventa wrote that philosophers created and transformed the feeling of a people into a thought. This thought is a sort of mirror in which people can see their nature, their needs and also themselves.

"When the political and social conditions of a people's life do not correspond to the new principle that has developed in the world of intelligence; when the fact is in contradiction with the idea; the revolution already exists as a germ in national consciousness [*coscienza nazionale*]. But then in the people the revolutionary idea is a vague, obscure, indeterminate feeling. Philosophers transform this feeling into a certain thought; this thought is like a mirror in

which the people recognize themselves, their new instincts, their new needs; in which he finds the contradiction between what is and what it should be.”<sup>32</sup>

Philosophy, thought, or thinking takes the responsibility to support the unity of Europe, in which the western philosophy was born. Philosophy can save the Europe.

Philosophy, which aims to reveal what truth is or what truth ought to be, has no nationality but it contains some national characters because of its origin. It is better to call it not national philosophy but “philosophical-culture”. Every nation has its own “philosophical culture”. Besides, it is clear that philosophy is much richer when it is supranational, that is not being limited to one nation or nationality.<sup>33</sup> Spaventa discussed that there was a “circulation of European thought.” It means that the Italian philosophers had already mentioned and argued “all the main elements of modern European philosophy.”<sup>34</sup> From my reading of Spaventa, I can derive that the problem of nationality of philosophy is very much about two important Hegelian concepts, “liberty” and “conscious,” that is the liberty and conscious of a people through which the philosophical and intellectual development possible.

In *La rivoluzione e l'Italia*, Spaventa wrote that now the important thing for Italians was to accomplish the work that had already began with their revolution. In other words, the important thing was that the consciousness of absolute human right, reason, and thought for Italians became universal and national; besides another important thing was that this fundamental principle would penetrate into all the manifestation of human life. In other saying, the realm of or rule of the intellect embodied itself not only in art but also in the religious feeling. The main aim was not just to achieve the civil liberty that have been always wanted but had to target the liberty of intellect and liberty of thought<sup>35</sup>, which is the main problem of the current world. The idea of nationality of philosophy developed around politics, or political philosophy.

As far as I'm concerned, the main characteristic of Italian philosophy is its relation to its own culture, its own philosophical tradition through critical thinking, which gives it also a historiographical and historical feature. Spaventa clarified this view by indicating his aim as desire and pursuit of his life. His desired “a nation free and equal in the community of nations”<sup>36</sup> which is significant for the existence of a national philosophy. This distinctive character can be found in Spaventa and Gramsci when they analyze Italian culture through its philosophical, political, literary tradition.

The existence of philosophical-culture and the originality of philosophy are possible in a territory in which the process of democratization is completed since the elements of democracy enable the “critical thinking.” If in a country, the process of democratization is not completed but rather has been interrupted/destroyed and continues to being destroyed, philosophical-culture is impossible. If in a territory there is no consensus (*consenso*) which is an important element of democracy, political and philosophical culture cannot be developed. if in a country there are always strict and uncompromising opposite poles, there will be always negation, no affirmation. If there is affirmation of foreign philosophy (outside) and there is no consensus between cultural dynamics and other philosophies, or philosophical conceptions, it is because the hegemonic culture is based on “negation” but not based on affirmation of others.

To conclude, Spaventa was not only interested in the Italian philosophical development from XVI century until his time but he was very much interested in foreign studies and philosophies particularly German idealism. Through the comparison of these philosophies Spaventa came to a conclusion that *without liberty of intellect and thought*, which he found in Hegel, in Germany<sup>37</sup>, the national and even international philosophy was possible. Another important conclusion is that there is not a nationality of philosophy but there is a spirit of a nation in that philosophy: a *national spirit* can be felt in that or this philosophy. He

found the key source in the German philosophy to make the Italian national consciousness possible.

The problem in Spaventa is that he defines the principle of Italian and European philosophy by reducing it into just German idealism, especially into Hegelian idea. In this regard, he explained in his third lecture in Napoli by describing that the character of Italian philosophy is the same as the modern philosophy; that is “the research for the principle of all things not in the absolute objectivity, material or ideal but in the absolute mind.” And he continued to explain that “the development was the explanation, the opposition and finally the unity of two moments of absolute mind, that is the infinite subjectivity and objectivity: the living reality of nature and the autonomy of human consciousness.”<sup>38</sup> These last sentences summaries Hegel’s dialectic.

Spaventa claimed that the nation created a spirit. The nation is not only a geographical territory but it has a meaning with its spirit. He gave the importance to the national spirit and national consciousness which would create a unity.<sup>39</sup> For him, the political freedom of Italians was not possible without freedom of thought and feeling since if there is liberty of thought, then being consciousness will become possible and therefore comes political liberty. The last thing I would like to add is that for Spaventa the cultural and intellectual liberation comes before the political liberation. It signifies that theory precedes or anticipates practice or praxis.

The greatness of Spaventa lies behind his analysis of appearance of nationality and idea of nations by drawing a parallel between the Middle Ages and modern period, which allows him to arrive at the modern philosophy. Therefore, he achieves to make connection between nationality and modern European philosophy.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Bertrando Spaventa, *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazione con la filosofia europea*, ed. G. Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1937), xv.

<sup>3</sup>Roberto Esposito, “German Philosophy, French Theory, Italian Thought,” in *Differenze Italiane: Politica e filosofia: mappe e sconfinamenti*, ed. Dario Gentili e Elettra Stimili (Roma: Labirinti, 2015), 12.

<sup>4</sup>Esposito, “German Philosophy, French Theory, Italian Thought,” 12.

<sup>5</sup>“Si può dire che tutto il pensiero italiano sia stato un pensiero della vita nella sua tensione con la politica e la storia. La nostra non è stata né una filosofia della coscienza, come quella classica francese, né una elaborazione metafisica come la tedesca. Ma non è stata neanche una filosofia della logica e del linguaggio, come nei Paesi anglosassoni.” Esposito, “German Philosophy, French Theory, Italian Thought,” 13-14.

<sup>6</sup>Esposito, “German Philosophy, French Theory, Italian Thought,” 15. His idea of affirmation or affirmative thought refers to the immanence philosophy.

<sup>7</sup>Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 1816,

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/hp/hpinaug.htm>

<sup>8</sup>“Fra le diverse sfere della cognizione, quella nella quale meno si dimostra l’elemento naturale della nazionalità d’un popolo è la filosofia; o, per dir meglio, la filosofia rappresenta nella forma più elevata quella parte intima e sostanziale della vita nazionale, che sopravvive alla grandezza ed alla prosperità storica di uno Stato, ed è un momento particolare dello spirito del mondo.” Spaventa, “False Accusa contro l’Hegelismo,” *Opere*, ed. Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1972), 632.

<sup>9</sup>Gentile, “Prefazione,” in *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazione con la filosofia europea*, ed. G. Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1937), x.

<sup>10</sup>These are the explanations that we can find or encounter in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Gentile, “Prefazione,” x.

<sup>11</sup>“After these reflections, I shall presumably be understood if I speak of the pre-Platonic philosophers as of one homogenous company and plan to devote this essay to them alone. With Plato, something entirely new has its beginning. Or it might be said with equal justice, from Plato on there is something essentially amiss with philosophers when one compares them to that “republic of creative minds” from Thales to Socrates. Whoever wants to point out the disadvantageous aspect of the older masters may call them one-sided and their posterity, including Plato at the head, many-sided. But it would be more correct and simple to comprehend the latter as philosophic mixed types. and the former as pure types. Plato himself is the first mixed type on a grand scale, expressing his nature in his philosophy no less than in his personality. Socratic, Pythagorean and Heraclitic elements are all combined in his doctrine of Ideas. This doctrine is not a phenomenon exhibiting a pure philosophic type. As a human being, too, Plato mingles the features of the regal exclusive and self-contained Heraclitus with the melancholy compassionate and legislative Pythagoras and the psychologically acute dialectician Socrates. All subsequent



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philosophers are such mixed types. Where a certain one-sidedness is paramount in them. in the Cynics for example, it is not a type phenomenon but one of caricature. What is far more important, however, is that the mixed types were founders of sects, and that sectarianism with its institutions and counter institutions was opposed to Hellenic culture and its previous unity of style. Such philosophers too sought salvation in their own way, but only for the individual or for a small inside group of friends and disciples. The activity of the older philosophers. on the other hand (though they were quite unconscious of it) tended toward the healing and the purification of the whole. It is the mighty flow of Greek culture that shall not be impeded; the terrible dangers in its path shall be cleared away: thus, did the philosopher protect and defend his native land. But later, beginning with Plato, philosophers became exiles, conspiring against their fatherland.” Nietzsche, *Philosophy in Tragic Age of the Greeks*, trans. Marianni Cowan (New York-Washington: A Gateway Edition, 1998), 34-35.

<sup>12</sup> Gentile, “Prefazione,” xii. “Nei filosofi, ne’ veri filosofi, ci è sempre qualcosa sotto, che è più di loro medesimi, e di cui essi non hanno coscienza; e questo è il germe di una nuova vita. Ripetere macchinalmente i filosofi, è soffocare questo germe, impedire che si sviluppi e diventi un nuovo e più perfetto sistema. Se Platone non avesse fatto altro che ripetere Socrate, non avremmo avuto il mondo delle idee. Se Aristotele avesse ripetuto Platone, non avremmo avuto il primo concetto della sostanza, della individualità. Se Spinoza non avesse fatto altro che ripetere Cartesio, non avremmo avuto il primo concetto di Dio come semplice causalità, come identità che è causa. Se Fichte avesse ripetuto Kant, non avremmo avuto il concetto dell’autocoscienza, della mentalità. Se Schelling avesse ripetuto Fichte, non avremmo avuto il concetto della identità (di essere e di pensiero), come mentalità, come ragione.”

<sup>13</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” in *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazioni con la filosofia europea*, ed. Giovanni Gentile (Bari: Laterza, 1926), 10. This title was not given by Spaventa but by Gentile because he found it very general. The real title given by Spaventa was *Prolusione e introduzione alle lezioni di filosofia nella Università di Napoli, 23 novembre-23 dicembre 1861*.

<sup>14</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” 11.

<sup>15</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” 11. “Nazionalità è per noi unità: unità viva, libera e potente come Stato. E perché noi vogliamo questa unità come libero Stato? Perché noi sappiamo che solo nella unità come libero Stato possono spiegarsi liberamente tutte le potenze della nostra vita; solo in quello noi possiamo essere e saperci veramente noi.”

<sup>16</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” 12.

<sup>17</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” in *Opere*, vol. II, ed. Giovanni Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1972), 428.

<sup>18</sup> Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, vol. 3 (Quaderni 12-29), ed. Valentino Gerratana (Torino: Einaudi, 1975), Q 19, 2046-47.

<sup>19</sup> Valentino Gerratana, “Intellettuali italiani del XX secolo: il problema del postfascismo,” in *Studi Storici: Rivista Trimestrale* (Istituto Gramsci Editore, anno. XV, no. 3, July-Sep., 1974), 704.

<sup>20</sup> Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, vol. 2 (Quaderni 6-11), Q 10, §41, IV, 1302.

<sup>21</sup> Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, vol. 2 (Quaderni 6-11), Q 10, §41, IV, 1302.

<sup>22</sup> Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, vol. 2 (Quaderni 6-11), Q 10, §47, 1334.

<sup>23</sup> “For the intellectual the task, I believe, is explicitly to universalize the crisis, to give greater human scope to what a particular race or nation suffered, to associate that experience with the sufferings of others.” Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual: The 1993 Reith Lectures* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), 44.

<sup>24</sup> Spaventa, “Prolusione,” *Prolusione e introduzione alle lezioni di filosofia nella Università di Napoli: Novembre-Dicembre 1861*, Napoli, 1862, p. 2. Also in Spaventa, *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazioni con la filosofia europea*, ed. Giovanni Gentile (Bari: Laterza, 1926), 11.

<sup>25</sup> Spaventa, “La rivoluzione e l’Italia,” in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, (established by Gentile), (Firenze: Sansoni, 1963), 69.

<sup>26</sup> Spaventa, “La rivoluzione e l’Italia,” 69.

<sup>27</sup> Spaventa, “La rivoluzione e l’Italia,” 70. But we should not forget that when Spaventa speaks of the freedom of thought he always refers to Hegel’s idea that we can find in *Geschichte der Philosophie*. In his another, article called *Rousseau, Hegel, Gioberti*, Spaventa quoted from *Geschichte der Philosophie* and wrote that “Quando si dice—*volontà universale*—non bisogna intendere per quella la somma delle volontà universale è la volontà individuali o la volontà *ragionevole*, e la *sovranità* non consiste nel *numero*, ma nella *ragione*. Laddove una maggioranza impone la sua legge alla minoranza, non v’ha la libertà. La libertà è il pensiero; e chi, spregiando il pensiero, parla di libertà, non sa quello che dice” (Hegel’s, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, t. III, 477-478) (Spaventa, “Rousseau, Hegel, Gioberti,” in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1963), 92).

<sup>28</sup> Gramsci, “Socialismo e cultura,” in *Scritti Politici I*, ed. Paolo Spriano (Roma: Riuniti, 1967), 18. Also:

[http://www.classicistranieri.com/liberliber/Gramsci,%20Antonio/scritt\\_p\(2\).pdf](http://www.classicistranieri.com/liberliber/Gramsci,%20Antonio/scritt_p(2).pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Gramsci, “Socialismo e cultura,” 18-19.

<sup>30</sup> Fernanda Gallo, “Philosophical Revolution and the Shaping of European Consciousness: Bertrando Spaventa’s *La filosofia italiana nelle sue relazioni con la filosofia europea*,” in *Phenomenology and Mind* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2015), 212.

<sup>31</sup> Esposito, in a talk on *Da fuori. Una filosofia per l’Europa* Lectio magistralis - Futura Festival 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEndg0V32XQ&t=5>

<sup>32</sup> “Quando le condizioni politiche e sociali della vita d’un popolo non corrispondono al nuovo principio che si è sviluppato nel mondo dell’intelligenza; quando il fatto è in contraddizione con l’idea; la rivoluzione già esiste come germe nella coscienza nazionale. Ma allora ne’ popoli l’idea rivoluzionaria è un sentimento vago, oscuro, indeterminato. I filosofi trasformano questo sentimento in un pensiero determinato; questo pensiero è come uno specchio nel quale il popolo riconosce se medesimo, i suoi istinti nuovi, i suoi novelli bisogni; nel quale egli trova risoluta la contraddizione tra ciò che è e ciò che dovrebbe essere.” Spaventa, “Rivoluzione e utopia,” *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, (established by Gentile), (Firenze: Sansoni, 1963), 69. Spaventa published his articles in the journal called *Il Progresso* respectively on the 3

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and 15 June 1851 as *La rivoluzione e l'Italia* and, on the 31 August and 11th October as *Le Utopie*. Then he added another article *Rousseau, Hegel, Gioberti* on 26 December 1851. Also see: Italo Cubeddu, "Rivoluzione e Utopia: Articoli di Bertrando Spaventa su 'Il Progresso'," *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, ed. Giovanni Gentile, 1963.

<sup>33</sup> Marcel Grilli, "The Nationality of Philosophy and Bertrando Spaventa," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Jun., 1941), 346.

<sup>34</sup> Ted Honderich (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 453.

<sup>35</sup> Spaventa, "La rivoluzione e l'Italia," *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1963), 69.

<sup>36</sup> Spaventa, "The Character and Development of Italian Philosophy from the Sixteenth Century Until Our time," 1860 in University of Bologna, in *From Kant to Croce: Modern Italian Philosophy 1800-1950*, Brian Copenhaver-Rebecca Copenhaver (ed. and trans.), (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 343.

<sup>37</sup> In the "Prefazione dell'autore" (1867) in *Logica e Metafisica*, Spaventa explains the character of German philosophy as follows: "Il processo del pensiero tedesco è naturale, libero, consapevole di sé: in una parola, critico. Quello del pensiero italiano è spezzato, impedito, e dommatico. Questa è la gran differenza. Ora l'Alemagna è entrata in un nuovo periodo critico, più ampio e vigoroso del precedente, e al quale succederà una nuova costruzione del reale" (p. 26)

<sup>38</sup> "[...] la ricerca del principio di ogni cosa non nella assoluta oggettività, materiale o ideale, ma nella mente assoluta. lo sviluppo è la esplicazione, la opposizione e finalmente la unità de' due momenti della mente assoluta, cioè la oggettività e la soggettività infinita: la realtà vivente della natura e l'autonomia della coscienza umana." Spaventa, "Carattere e sviluppo della filosofia italiana dal secolo XVI sino al nostro tempo," *Opere*, Vol. II, ed. Giovanni Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1972), 480-81.

<sup>39</sup> Spaventa, "La rivoluzione e L'Italia," in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, ed. Giovanni Gentile (Firenze: Sansoni, 1963), 69.

<sup>40</sup> In *Carattere e sviluppo della filosofia italiana dal secolo XVI sino al nostro tempo* Spaventa writes that "Lo scopo della mia Prolusione è stato di vincere l'uno e l'altro pregiudizio, che sono in sostanza uno solo; cioè esporre il vero concetto— quello che io credo vero—della filosofia nostra e della europea, e far vedere come coincidono e devono coincidere." (*Opere*, ed. Gentile, 462) At the end of his lectures (10th lesson) he states that by means of these lectures he tried to overcome the idea that Italian philosophy and European philosophy are in opposition to each other. (*Opere*, 605) He believes that he demonstrated that Italian and European philosophy had the same progress and had the same results. The character and development of Italian philosophy after Risorgimento was the same as European philosophy (*Opere*, 605). The character of Italian and European philosophy was "the research of absolute principle in absolute mind." The result was "explanation, opposition and unity of the two moments of the absolute mind: infinite objectivity and subjectivity."

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#### **Short-Bio:**

Sevgi Doğan is a visiting fellow at the University of Pisa, currently working on the 19th century Italian ideology and Gramsci since October 2016. In 2014, she took her doctorate degree from Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa with a thesis on the problem of individual in the philosophy of Hegel and Marx. After obtaining her doctorate, she taught particularly political philosophy in Turkey in different public and private universities.