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Rada at play

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Abstract

This paper explores the concept of dominance in traditional rural and remote island communities in the Zadar island archipelago in Croatia. Like their EU counterparts, these communities struggle with geographical remoteness; island depopulation, irregular ferry connections, lack of entrepreneurship, unemployment and poverty. A previous study captured a complex web of communal relationships that play a part in minimising these negative effects on the island communities' lives. This study focuses on studying one such behaviour - dominance and, thus, is concerned with two questions: How does dominance reveals itself, and what is its significance in practice? A conceptual and methodological approach consisting of living acts in Roman Ingarden's spirit, ethnography, deconstruction and storytelling becomes a tool for observing the rural island communities' experiences. In the process, the approach undergoes a qualitative metamorphosis – it co-exists and co-evolves so to help us to better understand how island life unfolds. Findings show that dominance reveals itself as *rada*, signifying the approach of bonding the members into the island community. *Rada* in this sense symbolizes Deleuze's weapon against the governmental economisation. To engage and support the needs of the island communities, it is vital to understand how they make informal decisions, and studying local communal practices in this sense, has practical implications for the policy makers with the responsibility for small island development.

Introduction

The paper argues that dominance plays an important role in minimising the negative effects on island communities that we spoke earlier, namely, depopulation, poor ferry links, unemployment, an ageing population, etc. The paper explores how dominance as the kind of thinking influences rural life and how it co-exists and clashes with the local social activities. While dominance often brings about associations of negative influence and suppression upon the other, I would like to stress a more positive perception of dominance, where it is conceptualized as influencing the *Other* (community) or

tending the flock (keeping the community together), which in many ways resembles the social behaviour of the island community that I explore.

I ask the following questions: How dominance reveals itself? What is its significance for practice? To address these questions, I deconstruct the life and stories that unfold around a particular mode of dominance. The article provides critical insight into how that works and is played out. Findings show that dominance reveals itself as *rada*, which is seen as a way of domination that bonds the members together in these remote communities.

The paper is organized as follows. First I introduce the notion of dominance and how it relates to the rural island communities in Croatia. This includes going through some of the etymological meanings of dominance found in different languages where I end up with coming with the more positive conception of dominance that I mentioned above. I then present the community as a traditional social organization, where *rada* is played out, and where relations are non-monetary even if they have significance for the community's economy.

Second, I introduce elements of Deleuze's society of control, which in this case represents regional policy making from what I call governmental economisation. *Rada*, as a kind of dominance, is seen as counter-acting and balancing this form of control and can thus be seen as one of the weapons against the new monster as Deleuze (1992) calls it.

Third, I introduce a conceptual and methodological approach for carrying out the ethnography at the Island communities. This includes presenting Ingarden's (1973) concept of living acts combined with Derrida's notion of deconstruction. The intention is capture dominance in the notion of living acts, which captures acts and experiences, which are co-effected and co-experienced together with others. In these processes of co-acting, experiences and meaning undergo continuous transformation as they are deconstructed and reconstructed. I capture these processes in the notion of storytelling understood as the dynamically evolving micro-stories that emerge from these places (e.g. Jørgensen & Boje, 2010).

This is followed by the discussion of the micro-stories so that it becomes clearer what these islanders are actually struggling with as a consequence of government economization. I tell four stories, which are linked to four acts: 'Communal decisions', 'Dad's army', 'Communal spirit', and 'Gathering'. The last section concludes the study.

Dominance

The thought of dominance generally brings about a negative or suppressive feeling, but it also represents one facet of a much broader concept of control. In this article, I explore the theme of dominance in the way that it goes beyond absolute measures of right and wrong, as essential to the living within the rural island communities in Croatia. The below prelude encapsulates, in the broadest sense, motivation for introducing the theme of dominance in this paper.

“When I first visited the island of Rivanj, I did not know what to expect, but it did not take me long to learn about how things work there. It was during the annual seasonal olive picking harvest that begins every October. I saw my neighbour, a local fisherman, approaching the porch to our house, that I was cleaning, and he greeted me. I greeted him back. Then he asked me: ‘Will you join us in the olive picking harvest this weekend?’ I replied: ‘Oh, I am afraid no, I am busy with research writing’. His face turned dark and hissed: ‘No? You should come and help me’. Then he turned away, nodding his head in disbelief. I stood there wondering why he had got angry at my response. I did not realise the consequence until later in the week when my neighbour explained to me that islanders help each other during the harvest time, as there are too many olive trees and the rain starts to replace the hot summer air. The implication being that harvesting has to be done quickly, while the olives are ready for picking. Time and extra hands are of the essence here. No one pays anyone for doing this but you will get a bottle of olive oil and a vine in return and you will be invited to a nice feast once the harvest is completed. Everyone does it.”

Two concepts emerge from the prelude. When I recollected this encounter later, I concluded that the reason why I rejected was that I felt uneasy and almost felt threatened by the fisherman's dominant behaviour. I spoke to other islanders about our conversation and I heard from them that he is a difficult person to deal with; he keeps telling people what to do, like the ship's captain to his crew. Yet, they defended his approach, saying that “you must understand that this is a way of life on the small islands”. I was not familiar with the island life so I thought that I might look a little closer into this behaviour – dominance, and find out why and how it exists in the context of island rural life, as well as explore local

social activities that seem to support it. We familiarise the reader with these two ideas, dominance and social activities, in more detail below.

The definition of dominance (n.d.) suggests multiple meanings, for example, “control over others” or the state of being above others in rank or importance. It can also be interpreted as the position in relation to knowledge and experience or history, with the Latin interpretation of “dominion” attributing its meaning to a historical influence of the Roman Empire. In this sense, dominance appear to be place and time bounded. A more appealing interpretation of dominance can be found in religious texts, in Hebrew. A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of Hebrew for Readers of English, written by Klein (1987) defines it as “to tread, to rule, have dominion, to dominate”. An interesting interpretation of dominance is seen in the word *rada* that appears in other ancient languages. It is defined in Judeo-Aramaic as “he drove, ruled, chastised”; in Syriac as “he went on, moved along, drove, chastised, it flowed”; in Arabic as “he trod”; and in Akkadian” as to drive, tend the flock”. Alter (1996) translates *rada* in Genesis 1:26 as “hold sway”; and not as the normal Hebrew verb for “rule”, which the word “dominion” aims at. Because we study dominance as an essential behaviour, *rada* in the Akkadian language offers an interesting and rather positive perception of dominance; so we refer to dominance in our text as influencing the *Other* (community) or tending the flock (keeping the community together), which in many ways resembles the social behaviour of our island community.

This concept of dominance can be applied in understanding the traditional social organization of the island community, I am studying. Economic anthropologists like Marshall Sahlins, Karl Polanyi, Marcel Mauss and Maurice Godelier, for example, argued for a gift economy; a system characterised with kinship-based reciprocity that held together traditional society. Islands and their communities which are part of island economy, and can be described as a system of production and exchange of goods and services of a group of people. We need to study their social relations in which island’s economic life is embedded; Svedberg and Granovetter (1992) argue their work in “The Sociology of Economic Life”, alongside with the social approach to economics, promoted by Becker (1976) and Down (1957). More specifically, an island community can be viewed as a collective of the individuals who are engaged in elementary production; producing and demanding the goods and services which are circulated within the communal space (within the island, between other islands and the mainland). It is an example of a human economy, where the survival of the communities depends on the collective behaviour between the members, as seen in traditional economies of gift and exchange, discussed by Mauss (1925) in his seminal work “*The Gift*”. He argues that to give a gift is to transfer something without any immediate return, or guarantee that there will ever be one, and, thus, the term “gift economy” can apply to any, not organized on market principles. He spoke of a process of ritualisation in which the deed of gift take place, of a perseverance to keep the sacred quality of the domestic threshold that cannot be fast-forwarded (Graeber, n. d.). Mauss (1925) stresses the “pleasure” and “joy” of giving instead of a transaction viewed as obtaining the useful things that have monetary values and which observed in economic terms are labelled as goods and services in gift economies. What matters is building healthy social relations between individuals or communities, such as creating friendships, working out rivalries and fulfilling the obligations (Graeber, 2001) instead of the monetary exchanges. In this study, I present the island communities as the social organisation and system with its structure, where members of the community engage with each other in non-monetary exchange of goods and services. As we shall see from the stories, they might choose not to participate, but then they risk alienation within the community itself. It is this fear of alienation that drives all kind of informal behaviours. Preserving the cultural customs and norms is essential to island communities, especially those which are in remote and distant spots. As Graeber argues (2001), in this sense, the islands and their communities behave like social organisations with own codes of behaviour. They are social beings, as Jørgensen et al. (2015, p.1) argues ...”*People are thrown into the world, which conditions what they can do, how they perceive themselves and so on. They are as such social beings, who cannot be understood independently of the particular time-spaces in which they have grown up and in which they live their lives.*”... They also live within their means and while in the Akkadian Empire the economy was highly planned, with the rations of grain and oil distributed, taxes paid in produce and labour on public walls, thus producing huge agricultural surpluses (Fagan, 2004), today scarcity in resources appears to be more prominent and may prompt members to behave in a certain way. Island communities in remote islands, too, have difficulties accessing the natural resources. They will adopt the behaviours that reflect their situation; etilogists would refer to this type of behaviour as the *situational dominance*, which we argue, is influenced by two features: scarcity and positionality. With reference to scarcity, one ought to consider the element of the ‘*priority access to a preferred, limited resource*’ within the context of our discussion of the dominance within the island communities. With reference to positionality, certain members will exhibit certain behaviors in line with their position or rank in the group, which again would give them the right to resources before lower ranked members. It

was not my aim to study group behavior in an etiological sense, however, this discussion is useful in the sense that it emphasises dominance as the behavioral pattern of a much bigger stratum of diversity of cultures. For example, island communities are shaped by their environment and interact with the environment to shape them, leading to their adaptation to the changes in the environment. Observing an island community as the social organisation in its natural setting paves the way for using organisational ethnography, and more specifically, auto-ethnography in this study. This could shed richer insight into the role of dominance in the traditional social organisation of the remote and rural island communities. Before we go ahead with developing the conceptual framework for describing dominance in these communities, I will describe how our notion of dominance can be understood as a counter-balancing act or as resistance to economic forms of control, which have become dominant in Western societies. This is done in the next section.

Deleuze's Society of Control

Rural island communities have no choice other than to organise themselves, so as to become less financially dependent, and find their own sources of income. Dominance, as we shall see later, becomes a local weapon, a communal strategy against the governmental economisation in Deleuze's society of control. Deleuze (1992) in his essay describes control as the monster of different new economic thinking and market possibilities offered by the free-floating market and information and which is in contrast with a disciplinary society. Here, we contemplate the definition of the monster. This brings us to the question: what is a monster? It is above all, subjective, as Leibniz would argue, "there are no monsters, we are all monsters in each other's eyes, at one time or another" (Leibniz, 1990). In her book *The Life of the Mind*, Arendt, in her reflection on the report "Eichmann in Jerusalem", speaks of the nature of the monster's actions... "*I was struck by the manifest shallowness in the doer that made it impossible to trace the uncontestable evil of his deeds to any deeper level of roots or motives. The deeds were monstrous, but the doer—at least the very effective one now on trial—was quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic nor monstrous*"... (1977, p.4); rather, it is "thoughtlessness" that enabled him (Eichmann) to commit monstrous acts, argues Arendt (1965). Like many others from his time, Eichmann believed in dominance of the nation that works in the best interest of their nation. Modern government act in the best interest of the society hence political and economic dominance that Perroux (1948) spoke of. Even if dominance is inevitable, one could argue that we actually prefer a mode of domination, which is a monster itself. Deleuze gave one such example of the modern monster of control—code: "*In the societies of control, on the other hand, what is important is no longer either a signature or a number, but a code: the code is a password, while on the other hand the disciplinary societies are regulated by watchwords* (as much as from the point of integration as form that of resistance) (Deleuze, 1992, p.5), Crain (2013) further elaborates by using the analogy of the web surveillance used by businesses, that enables customer profiling. This offers the business world vast revenues, by means of complex electronic gathering of a customer's profile based on the variety of information they give to companies via their existing purchasing patterns and any demographic info they have such as where they live, the kinds of material they purchase, as an indicator of their socio-cultural values etc. These are then recursively fed back into suggestions for further purchases you might like to make. All these are used as a control over the customer demographics using the single point – code. In contrast, in our island communities, people are not numbers; they are seen as humans, actively engaged in various activities that enable their survival. They are physical beings with emotions, they care for each other, and this implies that there is some kind of resistance to control in traditional systems like remote and rural islands. One also has to mention something about the differences in perceptions of the value of money. Perhaps it is money that expresses the distinction between the two societies best, since discipline always refers to back to minted money that locks gold in as a numerical standard (as wealth), but, in our context, the islands, gold has no role whatsoever. What matters is the non-monetary exchange and in the spirit of Mauss (1925) of traditional society where the emphasis is on making good communal relations through friendship and mutual respects, and help, working out rivalries and fulfilling the obligations (Graeber, 2001) instead of pursuing the monetary exchanges, or in other words, following the path of economisation. One such informal communal practice in rural communities still exists in continental Croatia, - *moba* - a mutual aid between individuals or families, which remain persistent in rural parts of the country. *Moba* means help that is returned. In many rural field activities, including islands, that needed tasks to be done at a specific time during the year, neighbours offer voluntary help to each other, e.g. olives harvest in October, help with boat repair, etc. One striking feature of *moba* is that individuals do not expect to be paid in monetary value, but receive an invite to a feast and a bottle of olive oil or wine once it is pressed. I participated in such an event on a number of occasions. Thus, a non-monetary exchange takes place in the form of a gift that Mauss (1925) spoke of. Other important characteristic of the modern society of control that Crain (2013) discusses is an illusion of freedom ... "*it is important for*

the society of control to maintain the illusion of freedom...the important thing to grasp is the way in which apparatus of power is largely unrecognised over us precisely by letting us 'do whatever we want....a negative is created - a class that falls outside the 'we' who have freedom – and deep though about the shared humanity of these individuals is strongly discouraged"... In the study, this illusion of freedom manifests itself as the government leaving the islands to manage their own economies, but at the same time imposing constraints. For example, it dictates the frequency of ferry access as well as the amount of subsidies available for the island's development. While permanent resident islanders receive 50% discount on their daily journeys, at the same time this is offset to a large extent by the limited amount of travel routes to and from islands operated during the non-season period. It dictates the movement of population between the island and mainland as well as the demand and supply of the housing in the city of Zadar.

We also need to return to Deleuze's monster of control. The following question arises here: what is the monster in our study? This paper explores how dominance is used against the governmental economisation that stems from its financial control with reference to inward investment and subsidies for the development of the Croatian islands. In this sense, government is seen as an economisator; here we make reference to the establishment (e.g. the finance minister of an organization or other structure based on economic principles, and more specifically concerns the careful or sparing use of resources. We refer to economisation (n.d.) as the action or process of economizing by making efficient use of resources. To this definition, we add economic scarcity as the government has a limited amount of money to spend on certain areas, e.g. island development. One such example could be seen in the case of inward investment into the islands, including the levels of subsidies for ferry transport. In spatially and geographically remote regions such as island archipelagos, island infrastructure has historically been neglected, but is crucial for the future sustainable island development. A study into the socio-economic impact of ferry services in the Zadar archipelago (Mendas, 2015), reveals that subsidies in the form of travel concessions, e.g. "vinjete" (50% of concession fares) remain an important element of financing the ferry service provision, in order to provide concessions for specific groups of island residents. Island-based small businesses also face difficulties, due to poor access and infrequent ferry routes, high transport costs and the cost of living on the islands (50%); decrease in protected space on the islands from 30% to 6% and the islanders were denied participation in consultation over the proposed ferry transport pricing (Luić, 2013). Here, government financial assistance includes a subsidy that can be used to ameliorate the cost of trade on the islands and subsidies, thus, remain an important element of funding and supporting the island's development (Mendas, 2015). Despite this, remote islands generally, receive less funding than the islands close to the coast. The European Small Islands Federation (ESIN) argues that one of the main challenges is the perception of remoteness by the different levels of government that limits the inward investment flowing into these communities. Controversially, the further the islands are from the coast, the lower the jurisdiction and interest from the government. Therefore, governmental economisation as the mechanism of control represents the monster in this study. Deleuze (1992) also spoke of the need to look for a weapon against this control. Crain (2013) elaborates here *"One can exert (apply) some kind of counter pressure to the way in which power is exerting itself. But, as Deleuze says, we need new weapons...It fails to us to figure out how to resist this control"*. This poses us with the further question: what is the weapon against the control in this study? We shall return to this question in the discussion section. For now, it would be sufficient to say that the paper provides a novel context for analysing the mechanism of control using the theme of dominance in the traditional social organization of the remote and rural island communities of the Zadar island archipelago in Croatia. This brings us to the aim of the paper, which as noted previously is to explore how dominance influences rural life and how it co-exists and clashes with the local social activities. To do that I have applied the concepts living act, deconstruction and storytelling to conduct ethnographic fieldwork. This is described in the following section.

Methodological framework

Living acts

We begin with the old saying "De nobis fabula narrator!" because this is what and how this study is trying to portray the theme of this paper; as the living acts in Roman Ingarden's spirit. I made the decision to rely on micro stories, which were available mostly in visual and oral forms as well as memories of the various events that took place. They became living experience; living acts in Ingarden's sense. Ingarden (1973, p.333-334) in the seminal work "The Literary work of Art" argues that these acts "are conscious, simultaneously experienced (or executed) and interwoven acts that represent various conscious acts and experiences"; and are "co-effected", co-experienced due to a change in the direction of our attention. The same could be said for the living acts of the dominance captured in the study through visual and written stories. In the process between researcher and community members, both become co-effected and co-experienced. Their

story becomes mine, hence an auto-ethnographic approach. The strata of the work is being written and read, but it is always different, e.g. one act is presented as a picture, the second as a dialogue, the third as memories, and so on. These strata co-vibrate and co-speak and in this way “colour the totality of the work in the particular manner...” as Ingarden (ibid, p.337) argues results in a perspectival foreshortenings “...The literary work is never fully grasped in all its strata and components but always only partially always, so to speak, in only a perspectival foreshortening. These “foreshortenings” may change constantly, not only from work to work but also in one and the same work; in fact, they can be conditioned and required by the structure of the given work and its individual parts...”(ibid, p.337). What remains to be discussed is how the concept of a living act in Ingarden’s spirit could be preserved in this study. We turn to deconstruction for help.

Deconstruction

A key approach to presenting the living acts is seen through deconstruction in Derrida’s sense. Derrida argues that *“The very meaning and mission of deconstruction is to show that things – texts, institutions, traditions, societies, beliefs and practices of whatever size and sorts you need – do not have definable meanings and determinable missions, that they exceed the boundaries they currently occupy. What is really going on in things, what is really happening, is always to come. Every time you try to stabilize the meaning of the thing.”* (Caputo, 1997, p.31). This implies that in the process of deconstruction, the text (narratives) undergoes changes; it lives; *”work “lives” when it itself (and not merely its concretizations, as in the above instance) undergoes various changes as a result of variously formed concretizations”* according to Ingarden (1973, p.331); he refers to text as living intercourse *“bringing the literary work into the contact with the reader (audience) and introducing it into concrete spiritual and cultural life in order to see what new situations and problems arise as a result”*. I deconstructed acts of the social activities captured as conscious interconnected acts that took place. These are concretizations that Ingarden spoke of and without which the work cannot be completed. *“These concretizations are...a manifold of interconnected conscious acts and other experiences which no longer have the special structure of the act. All these experiences and acts are of a very diverse nature and may be effected in various combinations and complications”* (ibid. p.332). Since deconstruction requires stories, this brings us to the role of storytelling in our approach.

Storytelling

Some islanders are more co-operative than others, but all fear social exclusion and being treated as second class citizens. Storytelling helps us to make their voices heard by capturing spoken and unspoken language and translating the visual data, and in this way, conveys the message in the form of the living acts of dominance. A friend of mine once pointed out to me “because what is right, reasonable or appropriate always depends on the actors that speak”. In this sense, these actors, islanders’ voices, the marginalised *Other*, take on the responsibility for their actions concerned with the welfare of the island communities. Their actions speak for themselves and in doing so they reveal judgements. We judge others by their deeds or our deeds are judged by the others, acquaintances or close family or members of our community, especially when members do things for the community. Being able to judge sensibly is, thus, important, as Adam Smith [1776] (1976) argues. Arendt (1987, 2003) in her “Judgement” uses historical stories to develop her own concept of judgement. She argues that judgement that drives action needs in turn an audience, that is, a community of hearers who become the transmitters of the deeds that have been immortalised. She argues that society’s members should bear a responsibility for carrying and passing on the values through saying the story. In this sense, stories represent deeds of the past for the benefit of future generations. Although Arendt focuses on a political and historical role of storytelling based on memory, this is also true for our island communities. Stories about community’ actions are encapsulated in the researcher’s (mine) and community members’ memoirs of how people deal with various issues. Storytelling becomes a part of methodology in this study. As a researcher, I became a witness and a narrator; as in *“behind the actor stands storyteller, but behind the storyteller stands a community of memory”* (Wolin, 1977, p.97) and interested in pure experiences that stories reconcile, like Arendt argues *”storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it, that it brings about consent and reconciliation with things as they really are.”* (Arendt, 1983, p.147). Storytelling, in this sense, has meaningful purpose.

Ethnographic fieldwork

Our field study includes one of the small islands of the Zadar archipelago in Croatia, Rivanj¹. Like the other islands in the Zadar archipelago, Rivanj is inhabited by the families of seamen and anglers who have lived here for the centuries. The main industries on the islands are agriculture, fishing and tourism and agriculture is primarily devoted to viticulture and olive growing.

Picture 1: Island Rivanj



Photo: © Zrinka Mendas, 2014.

The on-going struggle of spatially remote island communities on small islands like Rivanj, which suffer the undesirable effects of litoralisation, poor ferry connections, lack of entrepreneurship, higher unemployment, and levels of poverty; all this reflects the lack of government's interest in remote and rural, smaller island development and contributes to the growing problem of marginalisation of the island communities. The local economy is relatively underdeveloped while the cost of living is 10 to 30% higher than on the mainland. Despite the government provision of various kinds of support and protection through its Islands Act (Ministry of Development and Reconstruction of the Republic Croatia, 1997) to stimulate the economy of the islands, including providing subsidised ferry tickets for islanders (Ministry of Maritime affairs, transport and infrastructure of the Republic Croatia, 2010), regional remoteness and rural deprivation remain core issues. According to the European Small Islands Federation², there is strong a correlation between remoteness and jurisdiction; the further the islands are from the mainland; the more likely it is that government interest fades in island development and jurisdiction. Consequently, distant islands inevitably become municipalities with an ability to take care of their own interests through different strategies. One such strategy that this article explores is dominance using ethnography. Because of its anthropological nature, ethnographic studies tend to intersect between the individual cultures and collective society.

Recent ethnographic studies concerned with the studies of the communities include, for example, community festival within the village (Michael, 2014); rural community organising with the help of Rural Chamber of Commerce (Crawford et. al., 2015) or gold mines practices in Johannesburg (Phakathi, 2013). Doloriert et al. (2012) critically summarises autoethnography as a contemporary approach to organisational ethnography. Stockenstrand et al., (2014) applies ethnography to explore resistance to financialisation through distancing and persistence within the orchestra management. Ethnographic studies of islands communities and their resistance include, for example, Amoamo (2012) who argues that in the experiential ethnographic work of islands 'community' is viewed as a cluster of embodied dispositions and practices. In her fieldwork of Pitcairn Island in the Pacific, its culture facilitates co-operation, collectivity, and thus seeing the community as a cultural field with a complexity of symbols whose meanings vary amongst its members. Stephens (2010) carried out a narrative ethnographic study into the local aboriginal communities' perceptions of risk as they relate to ecosystem integrity, human health and well-being and their resistance in the form of the community's distinct genre of discourses, "toxic talk", that situates environmental degradation within larger historical and political processes of colonialism and institutionalized social injustice to powerfully communicate and contextualize the devastating political,

1 Topological map of the location of Rivanj within Zadar archipelago can be found via this link: <http://mapcarta.com/18728920/Map>.

2 See European Federation of Small Islands: <https://europeansmallislands.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/island-matrix-0305.pdf>.

economic, social, and cultural impacts of pollution and environmental crises on Indigenous communities. Most, thus, remain done and published within the domain of anthropology, but it could be placed within the organisational ethnography studies. Recognising the communities as social organisations, Watson (2011) points at the need to produce and acknowledge the work which “softens the boundaries” between organizations and society (Brannan et. al., 2012). We discussed earlier island communities as traditional island social organisation.

From the methodological viewpoint, concerns such as choice, power relationship, reflectivity and ethics also have to be considered. Power relationship between the researcher and the participants in the process, a distance between the *Other* and researcher is determined by the researcher who, as Foucault (1983) states, needs to build a strategic knowledge, step by step. According to Tedlock (2001) the researcher can choose between being a marginal native, professional stranger, going native or maintaining some distance. Crewe and Harrison (1998) argue that a particular circumstance, such as development, requires groups and individuals to position themselves in relation, especially to the dominant group. The researcher must be fully integrated within the research process while trying to understand the nature of the world encapsulated and characterised with the solitude; sovereign, grammar and codes of conduct; the features of the communal space in which the community functions as a self-sufficient (Durkheim, 1893); with one such example of dominance. Lastly, the participants need to decide whether to participate or not on a voluntary basis and this resolves the ethical issue such as data confidentiality and approval.

Conversation

The theme of dominance is encapsulated in the series of living acts narrated as micro stories in an auto ethnographic manner. It was mentioned previously that communities must organise themselves to become less financially dependent from its monster of governmental control - economisation. Dominance, as we shall see here, has a rather positive influence in preserving the communal relationships. It was also discussed in the introductory section that I adopted the meaning of dominance as the essential communal behaviour, *rada*, which in the Akkadian language is translated as “tending the flock”. Since I study island communal relationships within one such traditional island society, I extend the definition to include influencing the *Other* (e.g. community) or tending the flock (e.g. keeping the community together). At this point, I introduce dominance as *rada* into the context.

Rada

Deleuze spoke of developing new forms of resistance against the societies of control (1992, p.7). *Rada* represents one such form of resistance and a local weapon in fighting Deleuze's monster of the control. It is also clear that this kind of ‘new monster’ – governmental economisation (e.g. in the form of the subsidies control in the case of island development) implies a new kind of domination and that the whole article can be said to actually be about this tension, the new kind of monster (governmental economization) and *rada*, and the conditions for making a living that follows from it. *Rada* is explored through four living acts; “Communal decisions”, “Dad’s Army”, “Communal Spirit” and “Gathering”

Act One - Communal decisions

This act is about the theme of the communal meeting - water. During the exceptionally hot summers, with July and August temperature reaching 40°C, water is delivered by tanker according to the booking arrangements between the islanders who need it. The picture 2 provides an interlude to the story.

Picture 2: Navy water tanker



Photo: © Zrinka Mendas, 2014.

The story is narrated as follows:

When I first arrived on the island, I noticed very early on that my stepfather was getting out of bed each Sunday morning at 7am. I was curious about his whereabouts and asked my mother: “Where is he going so early?”

Mother: “He has a meeting that he cannot refuse. He must go.”

Me: “But, what could be so important to wake up so early on Sunday?”

Mother: “If he does not go, the old man (the Chief of the island committee) will get upset. The old man himself is a former soldier and he installed an army discipline in this place. So every Sunday at 7am the men meet at the old man’s house to discuss important matters.”

On one occasion, I asked my stepfather: “Can I come along?”

Stepfather: “No, residents only”

I become even more determined to get into the inner circle and one day while I was talking to the Chief, I asked him: “Can I come along?”

Chief: “What do you drink?”

Me: “Brandy.”

Chief: “I just happen to have one. Come around next Sunday.”

The next Sunday my stepfather was absent so I told my mother:

Me: “Mother, I am off to Chief’s house.”

Mother: “I am telling you, you will not like it.”

I was not put off by this comment. The Chief’s house was second on the right and when I entered it, suddenly there was silence. There were already five men there, turning their heads towards me and at the Chief. I greeted everyone. The Chief showed me the chair and spoke in a calm and soft voice: “Now, brandy for you, isn’t it?”

Me: “Yes. Thank you.”

While the Chief was distributing drinks around the table, everybody returned to the main purpose of the meeting: to discuss the problem of the water supply. The islanders were discussing the date and people availability on the island at the time, as they needed to be organised to help with the delivery of the water to each house through the heavy water pipes that are linked to the water tanks situated under the house. The same local fisherman that I introduced in prelude to this paper, was in charge of water allocation and payments. He complained that some people did not want to pay for the previously agreed amount of water and tried to negotiate to get more for less. He hinted to my stepfather: “Wait till they receive the bill! You organise everything and then they try to play with you. No way! They know our rules!” The discussion started to escalate into a scene from a western movie, the noise was deafening, the atmosphere electric. Shouting is, as I came to learn, the norm in these meetings. Simultaneously, some islanders shouted in approval while others complained. I was sitting and listening quietly to their conversation about the hot summer, the suffering olive trees and a shortage of water supply. I knew that the island has no mains water supply; each house has its own water tank situated below the house in which the rain water collects from the roof. The

meeting lasted an hour and eventually an agreement was reached. Everyone has to write down how much water they want so that this information could be dispatched to the local council. In this way, no one could receive more than they asked for. Chief was leading the discussion, giving advice to the others. Everybody respected him, after all, they were all members of the same communal group, some were family and some were newcomers, like my stepfather. At the end, everyone started to leave to do their odd weekend jobs. Some of them work on the mainland during the week but come after work, during the weekend or summer holidays on to the island. When I returned home, my mother asked me: “So how did it go, did they throw you out?” I replied to her: “Actually no! Chief said that I can join them and that was it. I wanted to be there because I want to know what is going on so that I can help if needed.”

Act One highlights scarcity of natural resource - water. Scarcity was discussed in the introductory section as one of the characteristic of situational dominance which here becomes more prominent. The dialogue also reveals the underlying problem of the current state of water supply in the Zadar region, and is hindered by the lack of actual data on how far water supply stretches, how much water is distributed and lost, what is the consumption and whether and to what extent there are illegal connections. Table 1 provides figures from the commissioned report into investigating these issues.

Table 1: Water delivered (cubic metre) to islands in Zadar region between 2011-2013

	2011	2012	2013
SILBA	8,893	9,143	4,493
MOLAT	6,020	4,655	2,575
BRGULJE	4,530	2,700	1,650
ZAPUNTEL	2,550	1,490	945
VELI IŽ	10,670	8,950	7,800
MALI IŽ	4,420	4,340	1,620
POROVAC	2,095	2,905	1,760
OLIB	160	490	0
PREMUDA	2,820	2,740	1,780
IST	5,160	5,360	2,625
VELA RAVA	3,260	2,240	1,565
MALA RAVA	630	885	855

Source: adapted from Hidroproject-ing d.o.o. (2014)

For simplicity, the table excludes figures for the number of residents; the largest amount is associated with the island with a population of up to 200 residents. It also ignores the breakdown by month, as it varies from year to year, with the biggest demand for water during the summer months June - August. Other islands generally use water tanks and the water supply takes place by means of water carriers. In many cases the problem lies in the location of the reservoirs since the greater part of the islands have limited elevation, the ground may be inaccessible because of poor road infrastructure, so it would be difficult to lay a pipeline route (Jurjević, 2013), and is particularly relevant to the health and safety of drinking water. Much needed investment into island road infrastructure becomes a part of the governmental economisation - monster in our case. The dialogue also reveals how the island community organises itself to address this issue locally. It introduces two essential characteristics of the island community, including: i) a kinship structure of culture, society or community, as constituted in a stabilized network of rules of descent and residence; and ii) a system of relationship between persons and among groups or communities, with regard to the division of activity and the functional arrangement

of mutual obligations within society, as well as the broad informal interrelationships within a society. Act One reveals that island communities are organised in informal communal groups, as the social organisation with the setting in which community members deal with everyday problems (with me participating in a few such meetings). They meet in a convenient place, usually in a local building used for different types of communal activities, for example, communal meetings where the islanders meet the members of local government officials and for celebrating the all-year-around traditional island events. Charon (1986, p.110) argues about the patterns of interactions within groups, which, similarly to within island communities, are visible through organising communal tasks, supporting members, and attending communal meetings where the members meet local government official and events. Ostrom, in her *Governing the Commons* (1990), analysed how people can co-operatively manage common resources such as fish stock, water and forests without the need for government regulation or private ownership; her focus on institutional cooperation in the case of resource allocation; of “polycentrism”, vest more authority over regulating the use of common resources to individuals, communities, local authorities and local NGOs. The same could be said for our island community. Members agree or disagree on the important matters and in this way exercise control of the group that leads to informal forms of communal decision making. For example, the Chief and fisherman are two major players who tend the flock during the communal meetings. The tone of the fisherman appears rather harsh while the chief assumes control of the situation in a diplomatic manner, and that leads to a solution being reached that is in the best interest of the community. In this sense, this act reveals dominance as an essential weapon in managing communal relationships within sometimes chaotic groups of island communities. In this act, this kind of dominant behaviour is seen as intentional and as the necessity for community survival, and in the spirit of the *rada*. What is in the interest of the whole community is important, but members do not always need to be directly reminded of it, they may choose to act on a voluntary basis. Living act Two provides an example.

Act Two - Dad's Army

This story introduces the trace of the dominance in daily communal tasks on the islands.

It was one of those hot summer Sundays in August 2010. At 7am, I was standing on the house terrace that faces the newly built island ferry dock with a freshly made cup of coffee in my hands. Around the dock were the piles of rubbish standing out in the sun. These were left by the contractor who had built the new ferry dock, just completed after two years of mining, drilling and underwater cementing. Someone had to clear it. The locals had avoided this for months, finding all sorts of excuses and complaining that this was the contractor's responsibility. In reality, no one wanted to do it. When the islanders realised that the contractor would not return and clear it, they finally agreed to take action. Around 10am, I saw a group of the locals approaching the dock. There were six of them. The ferry was due to dock soon, around 12am. Following the meeting with the Chief that took place at 7am in his house, the group devised a plan. They first had to clear the dock of rubbish and afterwards they would help each other to collect the cargo they expected from the ferry. You could see them approaching from 100m, armed with spades and bags and dressed in sun washed baggy clothes, and determined to do it right this time. This picturesque scene made me laugh. They reminded me of Dad's Army (BBC TV series). “Friends in need”. How interesting. I began recalling all those individual conversations with them, when they had been full of hate for each other, spitting on each other, making drunken abusive remarks and playing bad jokes on each other. I asked myself a question: How, on earth, did we arrive at this point?

This act reinforces two previously discussed points; island communities share, think and behave as a social organisation that has a common purpose - survival and as such it represent a traditional human economy that is characterised with the non-monetary exchange of goods and service. Remoteness and irregular ferry services mean little aid from the local government – the monster of economisation, and, in many ways, emphasises the need for self-organising to combat the lack of governmental support. Consider the words “Friends in need”; it imply the presence of the fraternity amongst the islanders in Montaigne [1877] (trans. 1909–1917; 2001) sense; fraternity as common friendship that demands from us to question our own motives. Like in the case for many other rural communities, collective gain overcomes individual gains. Fraternal friendship, as such, appears to be an important motive in pursuing the dominance within the island communities in their management of the human economy. It is characterised with, as Mauss (1925)

stresses, the "pleasure" and "joy" of giving back to the community. It supports his idea that to give a gift is to transfer something without any immediate return, or guarantee that there will ever be one. It reminds us of the ritualisation in which the deed of gift takes place. While living act One introduced obligatory and intentional dimension of the dominance while here it appears to be voluntary. For example, the Chief uses his influence to tend the flock; passing on to the Dad's Army a responsibility for the island environment. Therefore, dominance, presented as fraternal friendship in Dad's Army, reinforces further the positive role of dominance's as tending the flock. Mauss (1925) also argues that what matters is building healthy social relations between individuals or communities, such as fulfilling the obligations. Living act Three provides the context.

Act Three –Communal Spirit

This living act shows an annual sacred event that takes place on Rivanj each year in August while similar events take place on the islands at different time of the year. The below photographs were taken at the event held on 18th August 2014 on the island Rivanj to mark 225 years of Queen Jelena who was later proclaimed the saint.³

Picture 3: Communal Spirit



Photo: © Zrinka Mendas, 2014.

What follows is the act narrated as it happened:

Every year, islanders and their families gather on the island on 12th August to celebrate the day of St. Jelena, a saint of the island. Each island carries the name of one island. St. Jelena was also considered to be a protector of the Croatian people. The celebration of her life is the biggest event for the island communities on Rivanj. Relatives from the islanders, who live in the city of Zadar and on other islands, come to join them. Thus, it is essential for preserving the island's way of life, authenticity and promoting the respect of traditions. The event involves a communal gathering outside the chapel that lies on the top of the island, including a prayer blessing and a traditional religious ceremony. I first attended the event at the onset of the study in August 2010, returning regularly every summer. I was told that it is important to attend this event as a part of the summer celebrations. My mother mentioned: "You must go because everyone goes" I replied: "Well, it is a rather hot summer day, 38°C! I am going to drop dead." Soon afterwards, the neighbour dropped by saying: "You are coming with us!" I found myself in a cul-de-sac corner: I had to choose between being seen as an insensitive person by the already grumpy islanders or disrespecting their tradition; a religious mass on the

³ Apart from being known for her role to help the poor, she was a mother of Constantine the Great who signed the Edict of Milan in 313 (last year was 1700 years anniversary); an act ended the centuries of persecution of Christians and adopted the principle of freedom of religion. In many ways, this act is seen as act of tolerance and equality of all religions in the country that changed the course of history.

top of the island which can be reached in 30 minutes walking along a stepped road and at 38°C. It had not rained for two months and the islanders had become frustrated. Celebrations like this one tend to lift the islanders' moods because it diverts their attention from the problems they experience. To avoid gossip, I chose to join the group of elderly women, my first neighbour and her family. The event begins with the religious mass lasting 1 hour during which the community members and their families sing old traditional songs. This year was significant and numerous islanders, who had never attended the event due to their religious background or disinterest in such matters, decided to join this year. The prominent and dominant centre of attention in this religious mass was the altar where an elderly respected priest gave a rather patriotic speech about the need for community to stay together in bad and good times. Every year I hear the same story. We return to the definition of dominance that stems from the religious translation - tending the flock. Because the religion has a historical connection with the island community, the priest was using the event to emphasise the need for compassion for others. The crowd murmured in approval. After the mass, the islanders make a journey lasting 30 min around the chapel, presented on the second picture above, with the priest stopping and blessing the carefully marked points on the road until they return to the chapel on the hill. Young girls are obliged to carry the statue of St. Jelena. The ceremony finishes with the choir of women singing. Then the community slowly disintegrate and descend back to the village below the chapel. Time for the feast!

This story reconstructs dominance as influencing the *Other* and as in tending the flock. I choose the title "Communal Spirit" to emphasise the role of the community in this process of influencing newcomers to join the cultural events, including myself. These forms remain preserved in some modern societies; communities remain organised as self-sufficient unities that function on their own (Durkheim, 1893, p.181). The annual communal event implies and supports the interpretation of dominance as *rada* in Akkadian language a "tend the flock" by exercising the term influence through the priest's speech about compassion and need to love each other. One could argue that in joining the community one needs to be accepted. This acceptance may not be granted by proxy but must be earned through an active participation either voluntary or morally obligatory; these are the significances of the *rada*; an influencing and persuading through participation in traditional events. This kind of influence - *rada*, is, again, intentional; as a deliberate imposition of influence, for example, by the priest as an attempt to call for communal bonding and by my mother's persuasion about going there. At the beginning, as the act shows, there was resistance on my side but later I realised that I was proud to be part of such an event because of the fact that my dad died on the same day and I decided to commemorate his life by attending the event every year. In this way, I bonded with the community. I also observed that this intentional influence may similarly take another turn; changing into something much deeper; so that the meaning of *rada* becomes more profound. This brings us to the Act Four.

Act Four – Gathering

In this living act, we now move away from *rada* as influence through persuasion and step into further analysis and deeper meaning of *rada*; *bonding*. It was summer 2014. I captured the task of pulling the author's stepfather's fishing boat out of the water. Every year, the anglers must pull their boats out of the sea in order to strip off the old paint and algae and repaint it. Fishing boats can range in size from a small vessel to much larger boats that can weigh up to 1.5 tonnes, in which case one needs to find 10-15 people. Towing the boat to another island with the facility for boat repair is rather expensive. This task also cannot be done during the winter where there are few people on the island. In the process, islanders performed different roles in order to pull the boat out of the sea and move it to the designated area, so the renovation work on the boat's hull could be carried out. The story is narrated in the form of the dialogue between myself and local islander and is supported with the picture 4 below.

Picture 4: Gathering



Photo: © Zrinka Mendas, 2014.

Below is dialogue narrated after capturing the process:

It was Saturday morning around 7am when at breakfast my stepfather announced that pulling the boat out of the sea must take place today at 10am. The previous night he called all islanders to come around next morning and help him pull boat out. The task is not easy. We would have to pull the boat out of the water so the old blue antirust paint could be stripped off and then the algae deposits on the hull could be removed. After this, the boat is left to dry overnight before it is repainted on Sunday. At 9.45am sharply I was sitting on the ferry dock while my stepfather was preparing the boat and tools for towing. I waited and looked at my watch. It was 9.50am. But there is no one on the horizon. I turned to my stepfather and said:

‘Are you sure that they are coming?’

He replied ‘Yes, do not worry. They will be there. I lent each of them my boat when they needed it as they only have small fishing boats, and helped them pull out their boats many times. They ought to do the same for me.’

5 minutes passed, still no one had approached the dock. I turned to my stepfather again, saying ‘No one is coming, it is 10am now’ of that I am sure!’

He replied again ‘Wait until 10.05am’.

I began thinking why are they not coming. They must come because my stepfather had helped them. It would be very foolish of them not to come. Suddenly, I saw a line of people approaching, slowly, one by one. I turned to my stepfather, saying ‘So, here they are! Honestly, I really thought that no one would come’.

He replied ‘I told you so, have patience!’

We both started laughing. The crowd got bigger and bigger. Around 20 people gathered out of nowhere. The job of pulling the boat out of the water could finally start. It was getting hotter, around 35C. Most of the men wore swimwear and some jumped into the sea straight away to cool off. Some waited for instructions. My stepfather started assembling them. First, the boat had to be tied to a rope connected to machines that would slowly pull the boat out of the sea. 5 people went to one side of the boat and another 5 on the other. Together they held the boat across the thick wooden trenches that lie in front of the boat. The idea is to hold the boat from both sides, making sure that it remains towed straight while it is being pulled out. With much

effort, plenty of shouting and frantic movements on the way, at each step of towing, it took 20 min to pull the boat out. The first part of the mission is completed. The next involves stripping off the old paint, letting it dry and repainting it. The next day, they will have to put the boat back into the sea. On Sunday, at 5pm, the men gathered again and towed the boat back into the sea. The mission for this year was accomplished.

Lets' us summarise what is happening during the *Gathering*. The living act began with a dialogue between myself and my stepfather. At the onset, there is a feeling in the air, of an uncertainty and a possibility of no one coming and a stubborn confidence of believing that someone is coming. Then the tempo of the process intensifies, the arrival of the islanders is happening; the *Gathering* is taking place. The act ends with a happy outcome: the boat was pulled out without any damage. What follows is a celebration of the success; my stepfather sums everyone to his house for a glass of wine to thank them for coming. The story emphasises my stepfather's endeavour to use his influence over others by reminding them of their islander's duty. *Rada* here takes place in the form of bonding amongst the members. At this juncture *rada* materialises as unintentional; as non-deliberate imposition of the influence on *Other*. Again, we closely align this interpretation of *rada* as influence or tending the flock; as influencing the *Other* in an affirmative manner. Gatherings, in this sense, represent the *flock* and my stepfather takes the role of *tending the flock*. No one has to join, no one has to come but they do. Here, we have a link between act One, Two and Three, which further strengthen the meaning of *rada* amongst the members of the island community. The members start developing a natural sense of duty and obligation in the process of displaying dominance. On the one hand, fear of isolation drives members to participate while on the other, they want to be part of the community. Also, this act further emphasises the interpretation of *rada* as tending the flock; as influencing the *Other* in an affirmative manner. So, we have moved away from intentional to unintentional *rada*; from intentional to unintentional mode of dominance.

We arrive at some interesting results. Island communities represent a flock of members that spring to each other's aid when needed. They stick together in good and bad times, regardless of friendship or animosity. *Rada* represents the example of collective action in traditional societies or rural and remote islands. We started with the argument that dominance plays an important role in minimising the negative effects on island communities such as the undesirable effects of litoralisation, poor ferry connections, lack of entrepreneurship, unemployment and poverty. The study has generated some interesting insights. Amongst others, in terms of the positionality, *rada* is irrelevant, meaning that it is not important to have a hierarchical order in a strict sense as you would expect to exist in a modern society of control. This is shown in "Communal decisions"; where the dominance centres on the elderly who provide advice to younger people, through diplomatic persuasion; as an intentional mode of dominance that concerns the island's wellbeing, water supply. Another example is seen in the living act "Communal Spirit" which influences members to participate in a local traditional religious communal activity; for the sake of the community itself. The local priest attempts to influence his flock of followers (members) by emphasising the need for bonding so to preserve the island's identity. One also needs to bear in mind that *rada* may not be desired or shared equally or amongst the community members, as some islanders choose not to follow. In that case, they face isolation and no one to turn to in the case of illness or food or water shortage. Thus, *rada* seem also seem to be driven by resource scarcity and distribution; a scarcity of money and labour resources, which is evident in the living act *One and Four, Gathering*. It is also interesting to note that that *rada* is preserved in a visual way, as a physical presence (on the stage), that flows through all acts; it becomes living experience in Ingarden's sense.

Conclusion

This paper argues that dominance emerges as the positive and fundamental force for the island's existence. Dominance implies *rada*, which in our context is characterised by the intentionality and unintentionality. We closely align this interpretation as an influence or tending the flock - *rada*; as influencing the *Other* in an affirmative manner. *Rada* becomes a weapon in fighting Deleuze's monster - governmental economisation from the control of subsidy policy related to ferry access to the islands. As the stories show, island communities welcome the presence of that kind of dominant behavior, thus, confirming the positive assertion of the dominance as *rada* as tending the flock of community members through intentional or obligatory and unintentional or voluntary influencing and persuasion. In this sense, *rada* is seen as a vital driver of integrating into island life, helping us to better understand its role in the survival of the remote and rural island communities. To capture what constitutes dominance in the sense of *rada*, we introduce the idea of living acts with the help from deconstruction and storytelling. They help us to better understand its role in survival of the remote and rural island communities. This paper pays homage to Ingarden's work of the role of the aesthetic experience in literary work.

"The literary work...exists and lives and works for us, it enriches our lives to an extraordinary degree, it gives us hours of delight, and it allows us to descend into the very depths of existence." (Ingarden, 1973, p.373). More research would reaffirm the gains that the ethnographic studies based on our approach offers to academia in terms of the neglected value of an aesthetic experience. This thought remains open to future readers.

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