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META: Research in Hermeneutics, Phenomenology, and Practical Philosophy

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# **Research Articles**

## **Pour introduire la rumeur en pragmatique. Performatif et politiques de la voix après Benveniste**

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### **Abstract**

#### **For an Introduction of Rumour to Pragmatics. The Performative and the Politics of Voice after Benveniste**

During these last decades a category of performative has polarized the problematic articulations between the analysis of power and the theory of discourse. This article starts from Deleuze and Guattari's criticism of one of its sources, namely Émile Benveniste's theory of enunciation. We aim at reconstructing a heuristic contrast between two borderline cases of speech acts, enlightening and contesting, in two opposite ways, the discursive-institutional presuppositions of standard pragmatics: the Leninist revolutionary slogan (*mot d'ordre*), the rumour in M of Fritz Lang. These two singular speech acts are also two types of voice as "the effect of bodies" or "body events" in a political field. They both raise the problem of incorporation of the voice in a subject of political enunciation, or the problem of the material operations that "machinate" voices onto bodies, amplify them, or, on the contrary, disconnect them so as to produce disembodied voices or voiceless bodies. Finally that leads us to outline how the Deleuzian conception of performative incorporates the reflections presented in *Cahiers du cinéma* in the early 1970s concerning the concept of "voice-over", the ambiguity of the relationship between the voices and bodies suggested, and the ambivalence of the powers of voice for an entire century which, undoubtedly, is not over yet; herein, the creation of new phonic bodies and the political capture of stagings of discourse have both intensified.

**Keywords:** performativity, linguistic pragmatic, Benveniste, Deleuze-Guattari, revolutionary slogan, rumour

Cette étude portera sur la relecture critique que Deleuze et Guattari font de la théorie de l'énonciation d'Émile Benveniste, et sur ses conséquences pour la catégorie de



« performatif » qui a polarisé ces dernières décennies les réflexions sur l’articulation entre théorie politique et analyse du discours. Entrouverte dans *Kafka, pour une littérature mineure* en 1975, cette critique trouve sa formulation systématique cinq ans plus tard dans la 4<sup>ème</sup> des *Mille plateaux* (1980), quand le programme des deux auteurs est d’établir l’universalité d’une fonction « mot d’ordre », qui inscrit le rapport de force ou de pouvoir au cœur des pratiques discursives quelconques. Mais cette critique trouve aussi un après-coup encore cinq ans plus tard, dans *L’image-temps* (1985), quand Deleuze s’attarde sur le facteur sonore au cinéma, sur les objet « cinélinguistiques » inédits que produit le premier cinéma parlant, et sur les nouvelles modalités subjectives et politiques d’incorporation des voix qu’il expérimente. D’un texte à l’autre, deux types de corps sonore interviennent : le mot d’ordre révolutionnaire léniniste, la rumeur dans *M le Maudit* de Fritz Lang. Je souhaite montrer que cette singularité double est aussi contrastive : deux types de voix comme effet-de-corps ou « événement de corps » dans un champ politique (macropolitique chez Lénine, micropolitique chez Lang), qui sont aussi deux mises en crise, par transgression ou par subversion, de la catégorie benvenistienne de sujet d’énonciation. Au fil de cette trajectoire, il s’agira alors de mettre en évidence le fait que le terrain cinématographique fournit moins un champ d’« application » à une théorie linguistique de l’énonciation, qu’une condition historiquement contraignante de ses enjeux et de ses présupposés technologico-politiques. En faisant du problème de la mise en scène du discours et des « actes de parole » cinématographiques le *télos* de son dyptique sur le cinéma, Deleuze enregistre après-coup les réflexions menées dans les *Cahiers du cinéma* au début de la décennie 1970 sur la notion de *voix off*, sur l’ambiguïté des rapports entre voix et corps qu’elle regroupe, et sur l’ambivalence des pouvoirs de la voix durant tout un siècle, dont clairement nous ne sommes pas sortis, où se sont intensifiées mutuellement la création de nouveaux affects sonores et la capture politique des mises en scène du discours. Il subordonne ainsi le problème des agencements collectifs d’énonciation au traitement technologico-politique de l’objet *voix*, aux opérations matérielles qui « machinent » des voix sur des corps, les

capitonnent ou au contraire les déconnectent pour produire des voix désincarnées ou des corps aphones. La politique y devient un autre nom de ce système d'écart entre corps et voix, et de l'intensification de ces écarts problématiques tant pour pouvoir parler que pour pouvoir avoir un corps. En ce sens la politique n'est ni la gestion des corps muets qui travaillent, consomment et circulent, ni l'administration des opinions ou énoncés abstraits des sujets qui prennent la parole, c'est-à-dire qui y exposent – rendent manifeste, et du même coup mettent en péril – leur corps. Elle est l'espace conflictuel où est remise en jeu la disparité entre corps et voix, où cette disparité est à la fois contestée et déplacée performativement.

### **1. Performatif, mot d'ordre et subjectivité dans le langage : l'antinomie de Benveniste**

Repartons directement du point litigieux que Deleuze et Guattari identifient dans la théorie de l'énonciation de Benveniste<sup>1</sup>. Les termes en paraissent fixés en 1980 dans le plateau « Postulats de la linguistique » ; ce sont alors pourtant des termes de seconde main, empruntés pour l'essentiel à une critique déjà formulée par Oswald Ducrot. Schématiquement : il s'agit de retravailler la catégorie du performatif (les actes qu'on effectue en *les* énonçant), et plus généralement celle de l'illocutoire (les actes qu'on effectue en parlant), pour fonder l'universalité du *rapport de pouvoir* dans les pratiques discursives. Deleuze et Guattari en attendent un nouveau concept de « mot d'ordre », désignant, non un type d'énoncés particuliers, mais le rapport *synthétique* et *nécessaire* d'un énoncé quelconque avec un acte de pouvoir ou de contre-pouvoir. Synthétique, car cet acte ne découle pas analytiquement de la langue comme « code » ; nécessaire, car sans lui aucune énonciation ne « passerait à l'acte ».

Une objection de Benveniste avait par avance bloqué un tel mouvement d'universalisation : la catégorie austinienne de l'illocutoire est mal fondée, et celle de performatif ne peut l'être qu'en vertu de certaines propriétés syntaxico-sémantiques assurant la sui-référentialité de l'énonciation, la capacité essentielle au discours de « représenter » dans un énoncé l'acte de son énonciation et ses déterminants minimaux, de personne,

de temps, de lieu. Ces déterminants doivent être remplis empiriquement, mais ils ne peuvent l'être qu'à la place que leur assigne *a priori* « l'appareil formel de l'énonciation », et ce, en premier lieu, par le moyen des pronoms de personne. De Ducrot, Deleuze et Guattari reprennent l'idée que Benveniste développe ainsi moins une théorie de « la subjectivité dans le langage » qu'une théorie subjectiviste de la sui-référentialité. En subordonnant la nature et l'efficace des *speech acts* à une structure d'intersubjectivité préalable, il réduit la matérialité discursive des rapports de pouvoir à la forme dialogique d'une communication entre des personnes. Ce n'est pas une réponse à l'objection, c'est une inversion de la charge de la preuve : « ce n'est pas le phénomène de sui-référence qui peut rendre compte du performatif, c'est l'inverse, c'est "le fait que certains énoncés sont socialement consacrés à l'accomplissement de certaines actions", c'est ce fait qui explique la sui-référence. Si bien que le performatif s'explique lui-même par l'illocutoire, et non l'inverse ». (Deleuze et Guattari 1980, 99-100) Notons que cette inversion de l'ordre des raisons ne prouve pas ce qu'il fallait démontrer. Que la *particularité* des énoncés performatifs s'explique par le mécanisme plus *général* de l'illocutoire, ne nous donne nullement *l'universalité* d'une fonction « mot d'ordre ». Aussi Deleuze et Guattari doivent-ils ajouter : « l'illocutoire, à son tour, s'explique par des agencements collectifs d'énonciation, par des actes juridiques, des équivalents d'actes juridiques, qui distribuent les procès de subjectivation ou les assignations de sujets dans la langue, loin d'en dépendre. (...) Les mots d'ordre ne renvoient donc pas seulement à des commandements, mais à tous les actes qui sont liés à des énoncés par une "obligation sociale". Il n'y a pas d'énoncé qui ne présente ce lien, directement ou indirectement. Une question, une promesse, sont des mots d'ordre ». (ibid. 100) Mais l'ordre des raisons est alors rompu par un passage à la limite, qui fait reposer l'universalité des mots d'ordre dans la langue sur un *principe métalinguistique* : un « tout de l'obligation sociale », définissant le rapport social par sa redondance (l'obligation d'avoir des obligations), et un acte d'énonciation quelconque par l'actualisation d'un tel rapport. Le subjectivisme reproché à Benveniste est-il réellement dépassé ?

Ou bien l'est-il au profit d'un nouveau sujet d'énonciation subrepticement réintroduit : la Société-en-tant-qu'elle-oblige ?

La référence, insistante dans ce contexte, au modèle de l'« agencement *juridique* », permet au moins d'attirer l'attention sur l'instabilité de l'antithèse dans laquelle Deleuze et Guattari prennent position. Car Ducrot admet que même un énoncé illocutoire doit réfléchir d'une manière ou d'une autre son énonciation en tant que « créatrice d'obligation pour le destinataire ». Refusant de réduire cette sui-référentialité à la seule modalité des pronoms personnels, il doit la renvoyer à une convention présumée, garantissant une subjectivation préalable des locuteurs comme membres d'une *communauté homogène*, censée partager une même « déontologie linguistique ». (Ducrot 1972) Que cette convention soit dite linguistique ou sociale ne change rien : elle est nécessairement les deux, et doit invoquer à la fois un « langage ordinaire » et une « socialité ordinaire » pour garantir la liaison d'une obligation à tel ou tel énoncé. Inversement Benveniste reconnaît évidemment que la pronominalisation « personnelle » du discours ne suffit pas à rendre compte de la performativité d'un énoncé. Celle-ci mobilise nécessairement des circonstances institutionnelles capables de doubler la structure d'intersubjectivité dans le discours d'un mécanisme d'*autorisation*, qui renvoie nécessairement au champ social et politique considéré. D'où l'exemple fameux : « N'importe qui peut crier sur la place publique : "Je décrète la mobilisation générale." Ne pouvant être *acte* faute de l'autorité requise, un tel propos (...) se réduit à une clameur inane, enfantillage ou démenche. Un énoncé performatif qui n'est pas acte n'existe pas. Il n'a d'existence que comme acte d'autorité. Or, les actes d'autorité sont d'abord et toujours des énonciations proférées par ceux à qui appartient le droit de les énoncer. » (Benveniste 1966, 273 ; cf. Deleuze et Guattari 1980, 104) Cette assertion relève de ce qu'on pu appeler à juste titre la tendance « institutionnaliste » de Benveniste (Milner 2008, 137). Celle-ci pourtant ne nous fait pas sortir du subjectivisme ; elle en conserve le postulat, en le sociologisant : l'acte de parole, l'efficace de son énonciation, découlent de la position préalable d'un locuteur déjà individué et qualifié à conférer l'« autorité

requisse » à son discours. On comprend que Bourdieu ait pu s'en réclamer – dans « L'économie des échanges linguistiques » (voir Bourdieu 1982, ch. 1) – pour arguer que « l'autorité advient au langage du dehors » (ibid. 105), et que le « pouvoir des mots » n'est jamais que le pouvoir « représenté dans les mots » en même temps que « délégué » au locuteur autorisé à les énoncer. Surtout se reconduit ainsi, de Benveniste à Bourdieu, une difficulté classique : celle d'extraire la catégorie même de *sujet* de sa double référence théologique et juridique, et de penser l'efficacité des actes de parole autrement qu'en projetant à sa source l'instance d'un Sujet souverain (divin, royal ou étatique) faisant représenter son pouvoir par les individus qu'il interpelle et institue en « petits sujets » du discours, comme autant de locuteurs habilités à porter, non un pouvoir de la parole, mais la parole du Pouvoir.

Qu'est-ce que cela change alors, au juste, de se référer à une convention tacite ou à une souveraineté explicite, et de fonder les *speech acts* sur une « institution de l'obligation sociale » conçue comme consensus d'une « déontologie linguistique » ou bien comme émanation d'un centre d'autorité transcendant ? Si Deleuze et Guattari reprennent ici un intérêt, ce n'est pas celui de trancher dans cette faible antinomie. C'est au contraire par les cas singuliers qui, plutôt que de l'illustrer, s'en exceptent. Le premier est pris dans la brochure léniniste de juillet 1917 « À propos des mots d'ordre », qui est une transgression en acte du dispositif de Benveniste. Le second, trouvé plus tard, dans la rumeur que propagent les premières scènes de *M le Maudit*, subvertit au contraire la « curieuse personologie linguistique » de Benveniste en lui donnant un rendement théorique inouï, ce qui cette fois désorganise complètement le dispositif de Ducrot.

## 2. La performativité du mot d'ordre révolutionnaire

Rappelons que l'analyse léniniste porte moins sur le mot d'ordre « *Tout le pouvoir aux Soviets* » lancé dans les manifestations populaires de Petrograd depuis février 1917, que sur sa péremption subite cinq mois plus tard. Lénine énumère : la fin de la période d'instabilité du pouvoir entre le Gouvernement provisoire et les Soviets ; la recombinaison des

Soviets eux-mêmes qui jusqu'en juillet « étaient formés par les délégués de la masse des ouvriers et des soldats libres, c'est-à-dire ne subissant aucune contrainte extérieure, et armés » ; le reflux de la « lutte des classes et des partis *au sein* des Soviets » qui avait permis un temps « le développement pacifique de toute la révolution ». Avant de conclure : « la situation politique actuelle en Russie, après le 4 juillet, est radicalement différente de la situation que nous connûmes du 27 février au 4 juillet », si bien que « ce n'est pas avec les anciennes catégories de classes et de partis qu'il faut opérer, mais avec des nouvelles, celles d'après juillet » ? (Lénine 1970, 198-205) Les enseignements qu'en tirent Deleuze et Guattari peuvent se résumer en trois points.

1. Lénine nous donne une définition réelle, et non plus seulement nominale, de l'objet de la pragmatique linguistique, en le faisant entrer dans un rapport déterminé avec une pragmatique de « contenu », comprenant toutes les catégories d'actions et de passions susceptibles d'affecter les corps d'un champ politique. Mais c'est un rapport paradoxal, un rapport d'*intervention* du langage dans les corps qui excède les catégories de la représentation linguistique, de signification, de référence, ou même de contexte et de modification performative de la seule situation linguistique des interlocuteurs. Deleuze en ajuste la description dans sa terminologie stoïcienne : un acte de parole ne fait mot d'ordre que s'il exprime une « transformation incorporelle », une rupture dans l'économie de la détermination causale ou même symbolique des corps ; mais un mot d'ordre ne fait acte que s'il « attribue » cette transformation aux corps eux-mêmes, provoquant leur recomposition, et reconfigurant les actions et passions sont ils sont capables. Événement « incorporel » dans le symbolique (« jaculation » de sens, dirait Lacan) et « événement-de-corps » dans le réel (« frayage d'un impossible ») : le mot d'ordre est le point de *jouissance* de la politique de transformation. Il est inévitable, dans ces conditions, qu'un mot d'ordre court le risque d'être pris pour une clameur inane ou infantile, ou d'avoir quelque chose de « dément ».

2. C'est qu'en second lieu, la conjoncture révolutionnaire est une critique « à l'état pratique » des images du pouvoir que véhicule la pragmatique standard : l'autorité d'une

souveraineté, le consensus d'une convention – c'est-à-dire, nous l'avons vu, deux figures de la « communauté » en même temps que deux manières de penser la garantie linguistique du pouvoir qui en fonde l'homogénéité. Tout le problème du mot d'ordre, pour Lénine, est justement que le « lieu du pouvoir », comme le tracé de ses divisions, sont devenus incertains dans le langage non moins que dans le socius<sup>2</sup>. Leur localisation est rendue objectivement problématique par une conjoncture par définition « loin de l'équilibre », où l'institution réciproque du pouvoir des mots et du pouvoir politique est mise en crise, où les schémas subséquents de représentation et de délégation du pouvoir institutionnel dans le discours sont court-circuités. De là deux raisons pour lesquelles, écrit Lénine, « chaque mot d'ordre particulier doit être déduit de tout l'ensemble des caractéristiques d'une situation politique déterminée » (ibid. 198), et rigoureusement daté. Le mot d'ordre a la structure d'un passage à l'acte, non d'une roulette russe : il est inséparable d'une intuition politique apte à évaluer *le plus vite possible* ses effets, ses contre-effets, les revirements de conjoncture qui en imposent la rectification ou l'abandon. C'est que, plus profondément, sa performativité est rétroactive : son sujet d'énonciation, et l'autorité qu'il s'attribue, loin de fonder son efficace, découlent de la *justesse* politique du mot d'ordre lui-même : justesse provisoire, contingente, mais non aléatoire. C'est pourquoi Deleuze et Guattari corrélent à l'analyse léniniste du mot d'ordre une redéfinition du Parti lui-même comme *effet* de la transformation incorporelle qu'il s'incorpore : « C'était déjà une transformation incorporelle qui avait dégagé des masses une classe prolétarienne en tant qu'agencement d'énonciation, *avant que* soient données les conditions d'un prolétariat comme corps. (...) [À] la faveur de la rupture avec les sociaux-démocrates, Lénine invente ou décrète encore une autre transformation incorporelle, qui dégage de la classe prolétarienne une avant-garde comme agencement d'énonciation, et va s'attribuer au "Parti", à un nouveau type de parti comme corps distinct (...). On peut assigner toutes les circonstances extérieures : non seulement la guerre, mais l'insurrection qui force Lénine à fuir en Finlande. Reste que, le 4 juillet, s'énonce la transformation incorporelle, avant que le

corps auquel elle s'attribuera, le Parti lui-même, soit organisé. » (Deleuze et Guattari 1980, 105-106)

3. Dernière remarque : soumettant la pragmatique des *speech acts* aux conditions d'effectivité du mot d'ordre révolutionnaire, Deleuze et Guattari y réintroduisent la question de la temporalité, mais aussi la question de la voix. La première est explicite dans un passage soulignant « l'instantanéité » du mot d'ordre : « En exprimant l'attribut non corporel, et du même coup en l'attribuant au corps, on ne représente pas, on ne réfère pas, on *intervient* en quelque sorte, et c'est un acte de langage. (...) les expressions ou les exprimés vont s'insérer dans les contenus, intervenir dans les contenus, non pas pour les représenter, mais pour les anticiper, les rétrograder, les ralentir ou les précipiter, les détacher ou les réunir, les découper autrement ». (ibid. 110) Le mot d'ordre intervient, non dans une situation statique, mais dans les rapports de changement du corps social, les rythmes de ses mouvements, ses temps matériels. Son efficace est de changer la manière dont les corps changent. Ce qui est instantané, c'est cette différentielle elle-même, à laquelle Deleuze donne depuis longtemps la formule lucrétienne : « le plus petit intervalle de temps » pensable et incorporable, qui fait du mot d'ordre révolutionnaire le *clinamen* du temps politique (cf. Deleuze 1969, 311 *et seq.*)<sup>3</sup>. Mais ce passage a aussi une signification discrètement cinématographique. « Découper » et « recomposer » des corps pour accélérer ou ralentir leurs mouvements ne sont autre chose que des opérations de *montage*. Bien plus, l'exigence que le rapport entre acte de langage et corps ne soit pas de signification ou de représentation, enregistre dans la théorie du mot d'ordre le problème que les cinéastes soviétiques rencontreront bientôt dans l'apparition du *facteur parlant*. Dans leur Manifeste de 1928, Eisenstein, Poudovkine et Alexandroff exprimeront leur méfiance que les paroles entendues soient simplement « redondantes » avec l'image filmique, qui organise déjà par elle-même ses rapports de connotation et de dénotation (voir Deleuze 1985, 305-306, 326). Poudovkine préconisera de privilégier les sons renvoyant à une source hors-champ, et des voix *off* en contrepoint avec l'image visuelle. Une remarque plus générale de Deleuze suggère autre



chose, lorsqu'il souligne que la voix *off* a d'emblée donné lieu à l'invention d'« actes de parole » spéciaux, qu'il dit « réflexifs ». Il désigne par-là l'événement sonore apte recueillir, dans les mouvements des corps visibles à l'image, le changement qualitatif d'un tout temporel qui s'y exprime (« comme une migration d'oiseaux exprime un changement de saison »). Il faut alors opposer les actes de parole d'*intervention* et de *réflexion*, mais seulement au sens d'un contraste intensif interne au mot d'ordre révolutionnaire lui-même : entre un pôle intensifiant l'attribution de la transformation incorporelle dans les corps politiques, et un pôle intensifiant au contraire l'expression de la transformation incorporelle pour elle-même. Que Deleuze suggère que les actes de parole réflexifs au cinéma se prêtent singulièrement au chant et à la musique, ferait comprendre que les mots d'ordre inspirent si facilement les chants des partisans, qui en sont la contre-effectuation. Aussi chanter s'expose-t-il au même risque que lancer un mot d'ordre : le faire à contre-temps, se tromper d'acte de parole, au péril des corps qui s'y compromettent.

### 3. Vers une catégorie pragmatique de rumeur

Mais Deleuze lui-même place les actes de parole réflexifs dans un autre contraste : il les distingue d'actes de parole dits d'« interaction », dont il trouve l'un des prototypes les plus inventifs, dans le premier cinéma parlant, dans la fabrication cinématographique des *rumeurs*. Le thème n'est pas neuf, mais il est resté longtemps bloqué dans l'alternative entre vertiges heideggériens de la « banalité quotidienne » et prestiges blanchotiens d'un impersonnel être-du-langage (Deleuze 1986, . 17, 26, 62 *et seq.*). Dans *Mille plateaux* encore, la rumeur reste une métaphore pour dire que la translation primaire au langage n'est pas la métaphore mais le discours indirect, celui qui ne va pas « de quelqu'un qui a vu à quelqu'un qui n'a pas vu, mais nécessairement d'un second à un troisième, ni l'un ni l'autre n'ayant vu ». C'est avec le travail sur le cinéma qu'elle franchit son seuil de positivité prosaïque, technologique et populaire, épistémologique aussi : elle devient un objet d'analyse pragmatique à part entière, pourvu qu'on la considère comme un *objet linguistique cinématographiquement construit*.

J'en retiendrai seulement, ici encore en quelques points, ce qui permet de mettre ce type d'acte de parole en continuité et en contraste avec le mot d'ordre léniniste, et les effets critiques qui en résultent, d'une part pour la pragmatique linguistique, d'autre part pour le problème des politiques de la voix.

1. D'abord, comme le slogan révolutionnaire, la rumeur constitue un type d'acte de parole loin de l'équilibre discursivo-institutionnel que la pragmatique postule ordinairement. Seulement au décisionnisme du révolutionnaire, elle substitue l'opportunisme le plus radical : elle se plie d'autant mieux aux conventions discursives qu'elle s'en sert pour poursuivre son propre mouvement ; elle se définit moins par le contenu informatif qu'elle véhicule, ou par les sujets qu'elle met en communication, que par sa capacité à faire des contenus et des sujets les simples occasions de sa propagation même. Dans un cours du 16 avril 1985, Deleuze annonce qu'un tel objet est de nature à provoquer la conception benvenistienne du discours et de ses conditions d'autoréférentialité, sans même avoir besoin de convoquer « une source d'obligation sociale » comme le voulait Ducrot. C'est dans *L'Image-temps*, paru la même année, que la démonstration en est donnée, sur les premières séquences de *M le Maudit* : « Un homme fait la lecture à haute voix d'une affiche de police devant laquelle une foule s'est assemblée ; le même texte se poursuit sous la forme d'une annonce radiophonique d'abord, puis sous celle de la lecture à haute voix d'un journal dans le café qui sert de cadre... et où des clients surexcités finissent par en venir aux mains, la victime accusant son assaillant d'être un *souilleur de réputation*. Cette phrase par laquelle la scène s'interrompt rime avec *Quel diffamateur !* lancé par un homme dont la police fouille l'appartement sur la foi d'une lettre anonyme ; enfin, lorsque cet homme, injustement soupçonné, avance que le tueur pourrait être n'importe qui dans la rue, cette réplique introduit le quatrième épisode de la série : un quidam se fait malmener par la foule à la suite d'un malentendu tragique... » (Deleuze 1985, 296 [citation de Noël Burch])

En quoi consiste la transformation incorporelle exprimée par la rumeur et attribuée au corps social ? Le mot d'ordre révolutionnaire, disait Lénine, doit condenser « l'ensemble des

facteurs d'une situation déterminée»; la rumeur procède inversement par *dispersion* des termes entre lesquels elle passe. Elle intervient dans les corps précisément en créant des *interactions proprement énonciatives* au-delà de leurs actions et réactions possibles, en mettant en interaction des personnes et des circonstances qui *n'agissent pas* les unes sur les autres, en mettant en communication des sujets qui ne « s'informent » ni ne « communiquent » entre eux sur un mode interpersonnel. Sans doute cette possibilité d'interaction à distance n'est pas fondée dans l'instance du discours, ni formellement ni matériellement, mais renvoie à des facteurs sociotechniques extrinsèques. Formellement, car la contagion de la rumeur est donnée à voir au moyen d'opérations de montage qui appartiennent à l'art cinématographique, et non à la forme linguistique de l'expression. Matériellement, car elle fait appel, non seulement à une matière phonique segmentable suivant une linéarité de la chaîne vocale, mais à des artifices techniques de réception à distance qui permettent d'éluder des interlocuteurs intermédiaires. Ainsi du rôle du journal, de la radio, de la lettre anonyme et du téléphone dans *M le Maudit*. Encore faudrait-il expliciter la situation que l'on présuppose alors comme *non* médiatique, *non* technique, vierge de tout « artifice ». En quoi la situation empirique de deux interlocuteurs conversant *en présence* serait-elle plus conforme à la corrélation « je-tu » dans la langue, sinon en lui supposant l'évidence d'une situation « naturelle » en droit, et en faisant de la communication intersubjective le *télos* de l'énonciation ? Quant à la rumeur, dans *M* comme ailleurs, elle est médiatique par essence, au sens où la « communication » médiatique se définit moins par les propriétés techniques du médium d'émission et de transmission, que par son aptitude à entrer lui-même dans une série de media hétérogènes, et de les relayer à son tour. Par là la rumeur remplit ce que Deleuze et Guattari appelaient en 1980 la condition de « surlinéarité » de la forme d'expression langagière : une linéarité sans cesse *dé-linéarisé* et *re-linéarisé*, dont même les interruptions, les bifurcations et les raccordements à distance font partie, et qui permet à un énoncé de « sauter » d'un journal imprimé, à une bouche qui le lit à haute voix dans la rue, à une autre voix qui en poursuit la

lecture dans un poste de radio... Quant aux médias eux-mêmes, comme appareils d'information ou de communication « de masse », ils expliquent moins la rumeur qu'ils ne la supposent : ils y trouvent leur condition matérielle, qu'ils doivent réguler, recoder en permanence, en sélectionnant les interactions que propage la transmission des mots d'ordre. Les *mass media* sont de la rumeur institutionnalisée, techniquement organisée et socialement validée.

2. Il n'en faut pas moins examiner cet acte de parole sur le plan des lois de l'énonciation, au nom même des conditions qu'elles trouvent dans le facteur parlant au cinéma. Car « dans cet exemple de Lang comme dans beaucoup d'autres, que l'écrit (l'affiche, le journal) est là pour être rendu à la voix, repris par des actes de parole déterminés qui font rimer chaque scène. Si bien que, en fait, c'est un seul et même acte de parole indéterminé (la rumeur) qui circule et se propage, en faisant voir des interactions vives entre personnages indépendants et lieux séparés ». (Deleuze 1985, 292-294) Des intertitres dans le cinéma muet, Deleuze remarquait qu'ils étaient nécessairement lus au style indirect (« L'intertitre "Je vais de tuer", est lu sous la forme "Il dit qu'il va le tuer" »), et que seul le parlant redonnait aux actes de parole « les traits distinctifs du "discours" qui se trouvaient altérés dans le muet et l'écrit », à commencer par la corrélation de personnes dégagée par Benveniste (Je-Tu) (ibid. 292-294). Dès lors la rumeur devient un objet énonciatif hybride. D'un côté le style indirect lui est essentiel, non parce qu'elle est un discours rapporté, mais parce qu'elle a en propre d'affaiblir les conditions sous lesquelles un discours peut être identifié comme « rapporté », en vertu d'une individualisation préalable des énoncés (rapporté et rapporteur), et d'une subjectivation préalable des énonciations (rapportante et rapportée). De ce point de vue, ce n'est plus le discours indirect libre comme trope qui éclaire la rumeur ; c'est au contraire la construction cinématographique de la rumeur qui, en *désindividualisant* son énoncé, et en *déssubjectivant* l'énonciation, spécifie les conditions auxquelles le discours indirect libre prend la valeur exemplaire que lui attribuaient Deleuze et Guattari dans leur débat avec la linguistique.

Mais simultanément, sous un second point de vue, le facteur parlant donne à voir la conversion de cet indirect libre en discours direct, et la façon dont un agencement collectif d'énonciation régit les procès relatifs de *signifiance* et de *subjectivation* dans le discours. *Mille plateaux* leur faisait correspondre deux types de « redondance », de « fréquence » et de « résonance », « la première concernant la signifiance de l'information, la seconde (Je=Je) concernant la subjectivité de la communication ». (Deleuze et Guattari 1980, 99-100) La première propage, par rimes sonores d'une scène à l'autre (*Mörder, Ruf, Polizei !*), le minimum d'information requise pour traverser le bruit de la ville, et fait de chaque geste ou chaque regard le signifiant flottant d'une culpabilité diffuse et illocalisable. La seconde distribue dans chaque scène les interlocuteurs auxquels la rumeur s'attribue instantanément comme délateurs ou accusés. De l'une à l'autre, la rumeur ne transgresse pas la théorie benvenistienne de l'énonciation ; elle l'entraîne au contraire dans une *hypertrophie de la subjectivation du discours*. Benveniste insistait sur le fait que « il » ou « elle » ne forment pas un troisième pronom personnel, mais le pronom de la *non-personne*, puisque ne renvoyant à aucune instance susceptible de le remplir sémantiquement par une énonciation, sauf à se « convertir » précisément en un *Je* ou un *Tu*. Mais loin de l'aimable libéralité laissant cette conversion au bon vouloir des locuteurs, la rumeur de *M* en impose le *forçage* permanent, dont elle en tire toute sa puissance paranoïaque, en rabattant sans cesse l'instance du *récit* sur celle du *discours*, c'est-à-dire le « il » d'une histoire qui se raconte (le Meurtrier comme le tout Autre et tout autre) sur un « moi » déjà suspect et un « toi » d'emblée coupable. Ainsi à la table des convives écoutant la radio : ce *il* dont on parle, ce n'est *pas moi*, c'est *donc toi* ! Nous sommes alors proche de l'inversion projective dédagée par Freud chez Schreber, qui en connaissait un brin en matière de rumeur... (Freud 2014).

Deleuze en tirera pour sa part, du point de vue d'une typologie des *speech acts* proprement cinématographiques, un nouveau contraste intensif (comme précédemment le mot d'ordre révolutionnaire opposait ses pôles d'intervention et de réflexion) : un contraste à présent interne aux mots d'ordre

d'interactions, selon qu'ils réfléchissent dans leurs liaisons à distance l'atmosphère paranoïaque d'un vaste discours indirect libre, ou contraire qu'ils les attribuent à la forme dialogique de la communication elle-même, en imposant à la « corrélation de personnes » (Benveniste) des dissociations, des sauts et des variations de perspective rendant inexorablement équivoques le « je » et le « tu » mis en présence. Deleuze appelle spécifiquement la *conversation*, dont les virtualités schizophréniques font pendant aux potentialités paranoïaques de la rumeur, ces actes de parole qui font la matière même de la comédie américaine classique, et que retrouvera d'une autre manière la Nouvelle Vague. Mais « la conversation est une rumeur contractée, et la rumeur, une conversation dilatée, qui révèlent toutes deux l'autonomie de la communication ou de la circulation. » (Deleuze 1985, 299-300) La conversation « surlinéarise » la communication comme la rumeur surlinéarise l'information. De ce point de vue, elle n'est pas la forme dégradée d'un dialogue idéal, mais la limite dynamique de tout dialogue réel : elle inscrit une polyphonie faites de discontinuités, de coupures et de « faux raccords », bref tout un montage, toute une cinématographie interne à « l'échange » linguistique, qui font que ce dernier n'est jamais dialogique qu'à *la limite*. La conversation fait du dialogue la limite d'une rumeur tendant vers son seuil de dépotentialisation maximale – sa limite d'annulation, où s'annulerait la translation énonciative elle-même.

Quant au film de Lang, il y faudra autre chose qu'une conversation pour que sa rumeur cesse, pour que son signifiant cesse de flotter et trouve enfin son sujet : il faudra que sa lettre soit capitonnée à un *corps*, un « M » marqué à la craie sur une épaule. En fait elle ne cessera pas, mais trouvera une nouvelle économie, donnant encore à voir une efficacité illocutoire qui ne suppose garantie aucune instance d'obligation ou d'autorisation, et bien plus, qui tire sa force de s'y soustraire. Nous avons vu que le mot d'ordre de l'intervention révolutionnaire précipitait un effet de corps en décidant d'un nouveau lieu de pouvoir, et en mesurant sa justesse politique à cette relocalisation (des Soviets au Parti d'avant-garde...). Inversement les mots d'ordre d'interactions présentent une

situation où « plus l'acte de parole devient autonome en dépassant les personnes déterminées, plus le champ de perception visuelle qu'il ouvre se présente comme problématique », ou s'oriente vers un lieu de pouvoir comme « point problématique à la limite des lignes d'interaction enchevêtrées ». (ibid. 296) La sentence d'un magistrat – exemple standard de la pragmatique depuis John Austin – aurait pu terminer un film de George Cukor ; seulement Cukor fait des comédies de conversation : le magistrat de *Madame porte la culotte* (Spencer Tracy) perd son pouvoir de sentence dans la joute verbale que lui impose l'avocat de la défense, qui n'est autre que son épouse (Katherin Hepburn) ; il en perd du même coup la parole, ne pouvant rétorquer sans se mettre à bégayer... Très différente, la critique du jugement langienne oriente *M le maudit* vers un obscur Verdict, comme objet de la collaboration de classe, ou plutôt de non-classe, entre l'enquête de la police et le tribunal de la pègre, comme parties non-communicantes que fait paradoxalement communiquer le montage alterné d'un seul et même acte de parole, tel qu'« une phrase commencée par le commissaire sera continuée, prolongée ou transformée par le chef de la pègre, en deux lieux différents, et fera voir une interaction problématique des parties elles-mêmes indépendantes, en fonction des "circonstances" ». (ibid. 297)

#### 4. Voix off et acousmètres

Faut-il réitérer l'objection déjà rencontrée, que tout cela concerne le cinéma plutôt que l'énonciation ? Elle m'amène à mon dernier cas d'analyse : il sera plus court, et servira à conclure en tirant d'abord de ce qui précède trois remarques générales :

1. La critique guattaro-deleuzienne des « postulats de la linguistique » au nom d'une « pragmatique généralisée » ne va pas sans une critique des postulats *politiques* de la pragmatique elle-même : quelles « images du pouvoir » véhiculent nos analyses sur le « pouvoir des mots » ?

2. Cette question critique impose de passer de « l'appareil formel de l'énonciation » dont Benveniste dégagait les lois, aux « agencements matériels » de sa production, aux

synthèses historiques des mises en scène du discours avec leurs conditions sociotechniques, esthétiques et politiques, qui surdéterminent les opérations de description et d'abstraction que la pragmatique linguistique mène sur son objet.

3. Y a-t-il lieu alors, à suivre Deleuze dans cette direction, de donner au traitement cinématographique des actes de parole un privilège, fut-ce relatif ? La radio ne serait pas moins significative ; sans doute fut-elle même historiquement déterminante pour l'entrée en crise de la conscience cinématographique elle-même, quand elle fut sommée de penser son rôle dans l'orchestration de la propagande et de la mobilisation de l'État total. On l'a parfois remarqué, Hitler fut d'abord une Voix, un événement radiophonique. Il est remarquable que le débat de Deleuze et Guattari sur le terrain de la linguistique s'ouvre, intercalée entre le titre et le premier paragraphe du 4<sup>ème</sup> Plateau, par une vignette d'un poste radio, légendée « L'agencement du mot d'ordre ». Mais justement la radio est fichée dans un photogramme, tiré d'une scène du « *Testament du Docteur Mabuse* » où, Kent et Lily venant de tirer le rideau noir derrière lequel l'inquiétant Mabuse lançait ses ordres et ses verdicts, l'énonciateur se révèle être une silhouette de carton, la voix impérative et menaçante l'effet d'un pavillon de haut-parleur, et Mabuse un « acousmètre » plus indécidable que jamais. Le film sort en 1933 : peut-être present-il déjà l'envers ironique de « l'esthétisation » spectaculaire de la politique (Benjamin), et, sous l'aura hypnotique de l'autorité, la figure blafarde et sans visage de la transmission machinique et anonyme des mots d'ordre.

Le terme d'acousmètre est forgé par Michel Chion en 1982 pour désigner ces corps sonores inassignables dans les corps visibles à l'image ; et il commence son analyse en montrant comment le *Testament du Docteur Mabuse* en explora d'emblée toutes les potentialités, selon deux polarités de la voix *off* (cf. Chion 1993, 41-51) : selon un hors-champ relatif ou de contiguïté, « la voix terrible semble toujours être à côté (...) ; mais, dès qu'on pénètre à côté, elle est déjà ailleurs », et finalement nulle part, voix englobante ou surplombante renvoyant à un hors-champ absolu d'où elle tire la puissance de réflexion terrible d'un sujet-supposé-savoir, omnipotent et



panoptique (cf. Deleuze 1985, 307-308). Chion remarquait en effet que la voix de Mabuse n'est pas seulement entendu, mais paraît voir elle-même, et tout voir. Comme Deleuze il prolongeait ici une réflexion sur le traitement cinématographique de la voix qu'avait déclenchée dix ans plus tôt, dans les *Cahiers du cinéma*, une conjoncture précise, où interféraient transformations des formes de l'engagement politique, crise du cinéma militant, difficultés à redéfinir la possibilité même d'une énonciation politique dont les conditions tendent à se confondre avec celles de sa « mise en scène » audiovisuelle, mutations d'un genre documentaire soumis pour une part croissante aux contraintes techniques, économiques et idéologiques du système d'information télévisuel. On débattait sur « *Mai 68* » de Gudie Lawaetz, sur « *La Chine* » d'Antonioni, sur « *Attica* » de Cinda Firestone. À distance, ces débats à l'aune desquels ce qui s'énonce aujourd'hui dans l'exigence de « donner voix aux sans-voix » paraît bien souvent sous-déterminé, conservent l'intérêt d'avoir situé cette conjoncture dans le cycle plus large de l'histoire des technologies politiques de production des voix, de part et d'autre de la crise majeure que constitua la rencontre de l'art de l'image-mouvement et des programmes politiques de « mise en mouvement » des masses.

Serge Daney, qui en fut avec Pascal Bonitzer l'un des principaux diagnosticiens, reprochait aux notions conventionnelles de voix *in* et *off* de se référer à un primat implicite du visuel. Cette insuffisance ne les rendait pas moins adéquates à une première séquence de ce cycle historique, où la voix était justement traitée comme une composante de la visibilité des corps, comme un événement de corps lui-même vu plutôt qu'entendu (ibid. 294, 302-303). C'est les actions et affections de corps qui discriminaient la voix des autres bruits et sons que la bande sonore présente dans un même continuum auditif. C'est le cadrage des corps qui mettait à son service le jeu du *in* et du *off* selon les deux aspects du plan, érotiser ses bords en isolant l'image comme une partie d'un ensemble, lier le désir de voir à la profondeur d'image en multipliant les caches mobiles qui lui font obstacle. C'est sous la détermination des corps visibles que la voix pouvait même devenir dominante, comme dans les différents actes de parole que nous avons

rencontrés, en faisant voir des communications ou interactions entre personnages non-communicants, ou en donnant la puissance réflexive d'un sujet omniscient à une voix qui évoque, qui commente, qui maîtrise toute la suite des images, prescrivant à l'œil ce qu'il y cherche et décidant ce qu'il y trouve. Seulement dans ces conditions, la voix n'en restait pas moins soumise à la loi des corps qu'elle dominait éventuellement. Bonitzer remarquait : ce qui fait le sur-pouvoir de la voix *off* en fait aussi bien le risque et la dérision. Il suffit que cette voix prenne corps en apparaissant dans l'image, « et ce n'est plus que la voix d'un homme, autrement dit d'un imbécile quelconque : la preuve ? un coup de feu, et il tombe – et avec lui, mais dans le ridicule, son discours aux accents prophétiques ». (Bonitzer 1975, 25) Chaplin, qui résista longtemps au parlant, parce qu'il savait que celui-ci introduirait d'abord dans le cinéma la parole du pouvoir dépossédant les corps de leur expressivité plastique et leur polyvocalité propre, en fit l'expérimentation dans *Les Temps Modernes*. La parole du pouvoir seule y est sonorisée, on en voit même les sources mécaniques : voix autoritaire du pouvoir patronal diffusée par l'écran qui surplombe la salle des machines et ordonne l'augmentation des cadences ; voix standardisée du pouvoir commercial émise par le parlophone édictant le fonctionnement de la machine-à-manger (« *c'est le représentant mécanique qui vous parle* »), sont les métonymies du cinéma parlant lui-même<sup>4</sup>. Mais que le patron se retrouve dans l'arène et, corps parmi les corps, il finira tôt ou tard aspergé d'huile. Que la machine-à-manger se mette en mouvement comme un corps, et elle s'expose à ce qu'il a de plus infaillible, sa distraction et son emballement burlesques.

C'est la formule de l'humanisme critique de Charlot : à la voix qui est du Pouvoir, les corps muets opposent, avec leur humour, la chance fragile d'une subversion. Elle a fait jouir d'une certaine audience, dans les Nuits Debout de 2017 en France, un film comme celui de François Ruffin « *Merçi patron* », qui est une variation sur la formule chaplinienne. Libre de la juger trop fragile, on voit pourtant qu'elle n'est pas nulle au fait que la formule ne disparaît quand elle passe dans son contraire. Par exemple, dans le pessimisme que Bresson

tire de son antihumanisme proprement cinématographique : l'appareil respiratoire et phonatoire du corps humain en fait un corps sonore parmi d'autres, plutôt piètre comparativement à beaucoup, et prompt à compenser sa carence en discourant, pour immanquablement pérorer, en versant dans le pathos, l'emphase et l'histrionisme d'acteurs de théâtre. Daney en voyait l'illustration limpide dans une scène de *Le Diable probablement*, où Charles retrouve le camarade Michel s'attelant avec quelques militants écologistes au montage d'un film où s'enchaînent images de dégazage d'un pétrolier, de coulées rouges de boue oxydée, de massacre de bébé-phoques, d'arbres immenses qu'on abat l'un après l'autre :

« scène tout sauf simple. Car le film d'intervention est muet et Michel et ses amis en "disent" le commentaire dans le temps même de la projection. Ce commentaire, qu'il n'a jamais été aussi justifié d'écrire, à la suite de Pascal Bonitzer, "comment-taire", ils le lisent, le répètent, l'annoncent. On assiste rien moins qu'à la fabrication d'une voix off. Il y a, du coup, quelque chose d'inquiétant dans le spectacle alterné des images du film dans le film (et à leur violence immédiate) et du mouvement des mains des commentateurs (...) circonscrivant sur le papier l'information à réciter – à plaquer sur les images. (...) Le spectacle du décollement [est] en train de s'opérer là, sous nos yeux, entre la violence muette des images et le commentaire blasé de la voix, entre le cri silencieux de ces images et la voix "planquée" dans l'obscurité. » (Daney 1996, 165-166)

En fait ces images ne sont pas exactement muettes. Chaque tronc d'arbre qui s'effondre fait résonner longuement un son fracassant qui n'est plus du bruit et pas encore du discours, qui est plus proche du cri, donc d'une limite intensive de la voix. Et c'est ce corps sonore qui fait entendre l'« incapacité des discours humains (et de la voix qui les porte) à *soutenir* la violence du monde ». Le problème de Bresson ou de son « modèle » n'est pas de savoir s'il faut adhérer ou pas à la lutte écologique, mais dans le fait que « le débat d'idées (...) s'enlève toujours sur un dispositif sonore déjà assourdissant », et que « le bruit atroce que font les arbres dans leur chute rend *a priori* tout débat *inutile puisqu'inaudible* ». De là un étrange « état de nature » dans le matérialisme sonore de Bresson : tout corps étant d'abord corps sonore, la loi est celle du son le plus fort. Ce qui n'est certes pas une simple affaire de décibels, mais rend à tout le moins la consistance politique d'un discours

inséparable de la capacité à inventer des affects sonores, et phoniques, ou quasiment phoniques, capables de le soutenir.

Par là nous retrouvons la situation générale à laquelle, selon Daney et Bonitzer, devaient se confronter cinéastes et documentaristes dans les décennies d'après-guerre. De la guerre le cinéma sortait disqualifié non seulement idéologiquement, mais cinématographiquement. Son rôle dans le théâtre des « grandes mises en scène politiques » et « manutentions humaines de masse », mettait en cause ce qui avait fait triompher l'âge d'or de son art du leurre par excellence : créer sans scène une scénographie de la profondeur (ibid. 207), machiner le désir d'un « plus-de-voir », dans, derrière ou au-delà de l'image, et lui subordonner des voix discourantes accumulant et reproduisant ce plus-de-voir. Le cinéma ne pourrait se reconstruire que sur les ruines de cette scénographie (ibid.). Ce serait un cinéma assumant la non-profondeur de l'image, dont la « platitude » n'aimerait plus le regard par le jeu du fond et de la figure (idole ou monstre, Mabuse ou Maudit), qui serait hantée plutôt par son envers irréversible, à la fois image impossible et « vérité honteuse » du cinéma : celle des camps. C'était ainsi un nouveau réglage de la pulsion scopique, ou plutôt son « bouclage » : « Le regard ne se perd plus entre obstacle et profondeur mais est renvoyé par l'écran comme une balle par un mur », en même temps que l'image renvoie au sujet spectateur sa place de regardant, sinon de voyeur, en tout cas d'intrus. Un regard en plus, et en trop, qui ne se demanderait plus ce qu'il y a à voir derrière, mais *comment* voir l'image, sur elle et dans son interstice. Question d'art et de pédagogie (comment, de quelle façon et par quels moyens), mais aussi de morale (comment soutenir ce qui est donné à voir) (ibid. 210). Mais c'était du même coup une transformation de la voix, la montée de paroles elles-mêmes « plates » et intransitives, et surtout leur autonomisation dans des « images sonores » dissociées des images visuelles, des voix, comme dira Duras, « dévissées » des corps. Bouclage de la pulsion invocante rebondissant sur des corps sonores qui ne peuvent être qu'écoutés, ne donnant rien à voir, en excès ou en défaut par rapport avec l'image.

Quant à savoir si ces nouveaux acousmètres ouvriraient aussi une nouvelle *politique des voix*, Deleuze devra à Daney l'idée qu'on ne pourrait en approcher le problème sans considérer la façon cette première crise, pas même consommée, s'engrènerait aussitôt dans une seconde. Car l'idée d'une telle « disjonction audio-visuelle » ne pouvait venir du cinéma lui-même, mais seulement de la télévision naissante. Ignorant encore tout de ses pouvoirs, celle-ci était à l'horizon de tous les grands cinéastes modernes. Quand certains s'en empareront (Rossellini, Goddard, Fassbinder), elle avait déjà perdu la naïveté d'un champ de création expérimentale, et s'assujettissait d'autant mieux la création cinématographique comme « sa rente, son otage et sa danseuse », qu'elle s'asservissait elle-même à une pure fonction de contrôle informatif et d'encadrement idéologique, encastrant tout problème de mise en scène du discours dans l'étau de sa perfection technique et de sa nullité esthétique et noétique. Je m'en tiens seulement au nouveau sens de la voix *off* que Daney en tirait. Non plus une voix reléguant hors-champ sa source, et avec elle, l'état de corps, les conditions matérielles, les titres ou les raisons de son émission, mais une voix qui ne « rencontre » jamais les images (aussi nombreuses qu'on voudra, et même idéalement ininterrompues), qui ne s'expose jamais au démenti, humoristique ou ironique, des corps. Voix du commentaire, elle n'a même plus besoin de se « planquer » ; elle s'exhibe même avec toute l'arrogance que lui assure le seul « contrat » qu'elle passe avec l'auditeur-spectateur « sur le dos des images », dans le dos des corps. Mais c'est un contrat pour rire ; en fait il n'y a même plus besoin de contrat, qui supposerait un *assujettissement social* préalable des sujets d'énonciation mis en « communication ». Nous sommes plutôt dans la situation que Deleuze et Guattari décrivaient en 1980, d'un « asservissement machinique » incorporé dans la matérialité de dispositifs sociotechniques qui se passent aussi bien de toute formalisation juridique ou quasi-juridique en termes d'interpellation d'un sujet de volonté, d'obligation, ou de responsabilité : « on est assujetti à la télé pour autant qu'on en fait usage et qu'on en consomme, dans cette situation très particulière d'un sujet d'énoncé qui se prend plus ou moins pour sujet d'énonciation

(“vous, chers téléspectateurs, qui faites la télé...”); la machine technique est le médium entre deux sujets. Mais on est asservi par la télé comme machine humaine pour autant que les téléspectateurs sont, non plus des consommateurs ou des usagers, ni même des sujets censés la “fabriquer”, mais des pièces composantes intrinsèques, des “entrées” et des “sorties”, des *feed-back* ou des récurrences, qui appartiennent à la machine et non plus à la manière de la produire ou de s’en servir. Dans l’asservissement machinique, il n’y a que des transformations ou des échanges d’informations dont les uns sont mécaniques et les autres humains ». (Deleuze et Guattari 1980, 572-573) Dans ces conditions, la voix-off télévisuelle n’a nul besoin de « prendre la parole » – ce qui l’exposerait à la question de sa légitimité, et ses actants à celle de leur responsabilité –, mais seulement d’*occuper le temps de parole* – ce qui est exactement le contraire. On occupe le temps d’antenne comme Fanon disait qu’on occupe les ondes (Fanon 2011) : à la façon d’un territoire conquis. Mais *qui* parle dans cette voix ? La Voix de son Maître, sans doute. Mais qui est, où est « le Maître » ? Jamais les magnats des consortiums médiatiques n’ont été aussi puissants, et pourtant jamais aussi vive l’impression qu’ils sont eux-mêmes, dans leur pouvoir même, de simples rouages d’une cybernétique de contrôle informatif, qui rendrait presque rassurante leur intrusion périodique dans les « choix » des rédactions (voir Lancelin 2016). Cette voix n’a ni Mabuse ni Kane à l’horizon, mais seulement des *porteurs, speakers* préposés à la parole, et n’ayant donc pas besoin de la prendre, ne *devant surtout pas* la prendre. Il y faut un talent spécial qui est comme la revanche des journalistes sur le « modèle » bressonien : une voix particulièrement atone épurant les accents régionaux et de classe, une médiocrité intellectuelle adéquate à la standardisation des énoncés, une surdité capable de neutraliser tout énonciation en rupture, une irresponsabilité notoire où s’emmêlent naïveté et cynisme, et qui n’est aucunement un problème de déontologie professionnelle, mais un effet immanent à cette production d’énoncés qui ne se réfléchit dans aucune prise de parole, dans aucune instance d’énonciation, mais seulement dans le continuum de perfection technique

assurant la continuité idéale de ces énoncés renvoyant les uns aux autres, redondants les uns avec les autres, se « commentant » les uns les autres. La télévision a horreur du vide, et annule en elle-même toute possibilité de faire silence ; mais elle a tout autant horreur de la référence, qu'elle évite, et à laquelle elle impose silence. Les chaînes dites « d'information continue » en sont l'aboutissement logique, cependant que les journalistes ont définitivement renoncé à la fonction de *reporter* (qui supposerait qu'il y ait *quelque chose* à « rapporter ») pour se faire *speakers*, et ont transformé la fonction intellectuelle dont ils meublent leur plateau en fonction de « commentateur » (comment-taire).

Au pouvoir de la voix *off*, les ripostes seront évidemment multiples pour inventer autant de voix de contre-pouvoir. Riposte pédagogique-dialectique : une voix étant donnée, trouver l'image qui l'interrompt, ou inversement pour une image, trouver l'autre image visuelle ou sonore qui la contredit (Godard). Riposte politico-morale, nourrissant à l'« indéracinable fantasme » de rendre les voix aux corps auxquels elles ont été prises, l'exigence que les autres produisent eux-mêmes leur propres sons et leurs propres images (l'âge de la Tricontinentale). Riposte mélancolico-archéologique : faire résonner dans la voix *off* les corps en lutte dont l'image montre simultanément l'effacement dans les paysages évidés qui en furent le théâtre (Straub-Huillet), ou les voix de désir hantant les lieux d'où ont disparu les corps qu'elles ont un jour transis (Duras). Riposte fétichiste : accoler la voix au plus près d'un corps, mais vu de dos, ou en partie seulement, rendant au corps son opacité, et à la voix l'incertitude de sa source, mettant en demeure de l'écouter sans savoir, ni ce qu'elle dit, ni d'où ni à qui (Bresson encore). Bien sûr toutes ces intensifications de l'insistance ou de la résistance de voix mineures dévissées des corps, se jouent à l'intérieur du panthéon cinématographique des *Cahiers* qui circonscrira encore en 1985 les analyses des actes de parole cinématographique dans *L'image-temps*. On ne peut donc préjuger de leurs actualisations ou réinventions ; on peut à tout le moins identifier la condition *sine qua non* qu'elles assignent à la politique en la rendant inséparable des corps phoniques, des

agencements corps-voix que l'on est capable, en chaque cas, de créer, pour entendre la protestation des acousmètres, le silence des causes mineures, et les arbres qui crient.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Quant à son cadre général, voir Lecercle (2002, 154-201 ; 2004).

<sup>2</sup> « Les révolutions nous montrent précisément à chaque pas combien est obscurcie la question de savoir où se trouve le pouvoir véritable (...). En mars et avril 1917, on ne savait pas si le pouvoir réel appartenait au gouvernement ou au Soviet » (Lénine 1970, 202).

<sup>3</sup> Sur la reprise de la notion différentielle et dynamique de « plus petit intervalle » dans le contexte de la réflexion sur les actes de langage, voir Deleuze et Guattari (1980, 119).

<sup>4</sup> Je m'appuie ici sur deux études inédites d'Armelle Talbot (2014 et 2015).

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## The un-original Origin of Art has an un-essential Essence: The Heideggerian Issue

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### Abstract

The paper discusses the possibility of applying Heidegger's considerations on art to the problematic and multifaceted field of contemporary art. The questions of origin and essence, which we are accustomed to refer to the metaphysical tradition, take on new significance by connecting art not to beauty, but to truth. In this epochal change of position, we can find the identity of contemporary art, which reveals itself not by offering edifying meanings, but by indicating a horizon of comprehensibility in which we are involved. Starting from the innovative status of the *Dasein* as a projecting being-in-the-world, the horizon of comprehensibility of contemporary art outlines a context in which there is no subjectivity using a work, but in which an encounter happens. In its intrinsic and sometimes complacent contradictoriness, contemporary art, especially installations and performances, always manifests its identity as a struggle between truth and untruth, as an *event* that has no steady ground, and no unique or ascertained origin or monolithic essence, and which is nevertheless expressive and meaningful. The quality of being an event implies that contemporary art is not something objectifiable, representable, or categorizable, but is something that *happens*. What happens cannot become a substantial foundation, because it remains perpetually a happening, which affects us with its different languages and perspectives. The poetic matrix of contemporary art indicates the uniqueness and unrepeatability of each work of art, which shows us how the un-originality and un-essentiality of art is the main pathway to arrive at an experience of the world that each time is like the first time.

**Keywords:** Heidegger, art, contemporary art, truth, origin/un-originality, essence/un-essentiality

### Introduction

Contemporary art is quite simple in its complexity: provocation, asymmetry, unpredictability, and destructuring, and a taste for paradox are all intended. No strings attached,

except those of the sale and visibility. It is not about cynicism or pragmatism, or at least not only. The whole concept of art has changed. A body can be art, but so can even a touch, a smell, a glance. This revolution has profoundly modified not only how art is made, but even and above all the way it is intended and understood. Contemporary art is an art that has intentionally lost its sacredness, its privileges, and wishes to be ‘contaminated’ by the world. No longer content with merely describing the world, it wants to influence it, affect it, be fully a part of it. This kind of art is purposely evasive, proudly uncataloguable, and yet desirous of creating new trends and being imposed within the social context. At the same time, contemporary art rejects and involves, because it has no more edifying targets; it wants primarily to express itself.

And so? Can philosophy, this ancient and glorious yet irrevocably passé, have something to say before all this sometimes cheerful, sometimes cynical irreverence? Can philosophy, hardly in possession of edifying targets, understand that which is the opposite of every predetermined structure? Perhaps philosophy has still something to say – if anyone is still listening.

In the great philosophical debate about art, Heidegger’s work surely constitutes an eminent and still-interesting path. Heidegger is widely recognized for his ontology, regarded as the most abstract and theoreticistic of philosophy’s possibilities. Could Heideggerian philosophy – precisely that philosophy which spoke resoundingly of the necessity to look for the *origin* [*Ursprung*] of art (Heidegger 1971a)<sup>1</sup> – have something to say? Is not the search for origins an outdated paradigm, the exhausted legacy of a discipline unable to accept the loss of its centrality in a world where life dashes ahead quickly and almost unthinkingly? Yet according to Heidegger, the question of origin is worlds away from abstract theoreticism; in fact, it defines the identity of all of philosophy as it always remains the future, since the “origin [in this case *Herkunft*] always comes to meet us from the future” (Heidegger 1971d, 10). According to the German thinker, this question is not the heirloom of a bygone tradition, but a question able to revive even the question about art. Yet difficult as it is to make definitive

statements about contemporary art, we can surely assert that it is deeply *un-original*, if we consider the multiplicity of origins due to the impossibility of finding a mythological provenance by reducing it to a metaphysical fundament. The issue becomes more complicated if we take into account the epochal incipit of the essay on the origin of the work of art of 1935-1936, in which Heidegger clearly connects the question of origin with the question of essence: “*Origin here means that from and by which something is what it is and as it is. What something is, as it is, we call its essence [Wesen]*” (Heidegger 1971a, 17). So, we must deal with two very problematic issues, origin and essence, which we usually are given to referring to the metaphysical tradition, which indeed recognises them as “ground and foundation” (Heidegger 1968, 100). Paradoxically, however, when Heidegger speaks of the origin and essence of art, he means precisely the overcoming of metaphysics, i.e. a new way of thinking not only being, but even our relationship to the world. Therefore, we must return to his analysis if we wish to think philosophy and art together, innovatively.

### **1. The Challenge of Truth**

It is known that in his essay of 1935-1936, Heidegger intends to effect a real revolution: for the first time, art no longer gravitates toward beauty, but definitely toward truth (Heidegger 1971a, 35ff.). This revolution has great potential for our understanding of contemporary art, as it is enough to go to any museum of contemporary art to see that the discrepancy between truth and beauty is quite pronounced. Could we say, for example, that a painting by George Grosz is beautiful? Or one by Francis Bacon? Could we use the term “beauty” to designate these works? Or are we accustomed to using other words to show our interest and underline our attention? Many would find it difficult to define these works as beautiful, at least in the traditional sense. Yet many of us like them, and feel something satisfactory and attractive when looking at them. This means it is still worth wondering about the connection between beauty and truth, and art and truth, as we find in the essay on the origin of the work of art.

Heidegger wrote this essay after the two major events characterizing his theoretical path: the conclusion of his first phase with the composition of his masterpiece *Being and Time*, and the gestation of the so-called *Kehre*<sup>2</sup>, the “turn” from an ontic point of view toward a purely ontological perspective. The starting point is the rejection of the aesthetic tradition: art and aesthetics have nothing in common, since they are two different and incompatible dimensions. The essay on the origin of the work of art affirms precisely that philosophy of art needs to be defined in its identity by a new way of understanding art, not by aesthetic studies on art. Aesthetics standardizes and normalizes art, by confining artistic expression within an objectifying boundary. Along with logic and ethics, aesthetics is an articulation of metaphysics (Heidegger 1991, 77); in fact, aesthetics *is* metaphysics: it thinks art as an essent, something at its disposal, an object for thought and man. Aesthetics is metaphysics because the issue here is that of facing the metaphysical diktat:

This question is most intimately connected with the task of overcoming aesthetics and that means simultaneously with overcoming a certain conception of beings as what is objectively representable [*als das gegenständlich Vorstellbaren*]. Overcoming of aesthetics again results necessarily from the historical encounter with metaphysics as such (Heidegger 1999, 354).

What does Heidegger mean by “objectively representable”? Let us think for a moment of a “Heideggerian” artist, Eduard Chillida (Heidegger, Chillida 1969), and of his sculptures: we see forms and structures standing out in the world, impossible to be reduced to predetermined and prefixed forms and structures because of their capability to draw a horizon. This means to think as Heidegger does in opposition to the objectively representable. Aesthetics as philosophy of art demands isolating the work of art, making it one object among others. In *Truth and Method*, Gadamer talks about the principle of “aesthetic differentiation”, i.e. the theoreticistic tendency to make the work of art a pure abstraction, detached from any context. He develops this argument wholeheartedly by analysing the paradigm of the isolated and entirely abstract work of art: “thus through “aesthetic differentiation” the work

loses its place and the world to which it belongs insofar as it belongs instead to aesthetic consciousness. Correlatively, the artist too loses his place in the world” (Gadamer 2004, 79). This allows one to represent [*Vorstellen*] the work of art, but art, and above all, contemporary art, cannot be represented. The ontology of art thinks the work of art, as we will see shortly, starting from the world around it, by making any representation impossible.

This quotation about the “objectively representable” comes from a paragraph of *Contributions to Philosophy* entitled “*Metaphysics and the Origin of the Work of Art*”, which represents a self-overcoming of Heidegger’s previous essay on the origin of the work of art. This self-overcoming is unavoidable, since in *Contributions* the critique against metaphysics is by now stable and unquestionable. It also occurs because the overcoming of aesthetics is played out above all as the overcoming of metaphysics, in the field of truth. For Heidegger, the truth as *Wahrheit* must be traced back not to the Latin *veritas*, but to the ancient Greek *aletheia*: the discrepancy between these two terms shows an epochal difference between two different basic concepts. *Veritas* is correctness, exactness, even consonance and correspondence (Heidegger 1998, 138), but not yet truth. In fact, truth is *aletheia*, *Unverborgenheit*, which means “unconcealedness” (Heidegger 1992, 11-12). This notion is one of the most relevant of the entire Heideggerian ontology, because it represents the inner matrix of the *Kehre*: the metaphysical tradition has thought truth as a logical *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, i.e. the adequation of things and intellect, the equation of the thing to the name which speaks it and to the thought which thematises it. Truth is not a logical, predicative dimension, but an ontological one. It speaks of being, not the correctness of a phrase. Heidegger derives the connection between truth and art from Nietzsche (Heidegger 1991, 74-75), but with meaningful modifications: truth is not a static dimension, but a dynamic one. Tradition says that truth reveals itself, expresses itself by making itself visible and intelligible; but it is not just an exposing, it is also a hiding, a retracting. Truth is an ontological conflict between clearing and concealing: this is *aletheia*. We live in a world in which we are connected, but our life cannot be

explained only by considering the net of relations of the world. This conflict is always present: the world as an open, exposed dimension always corresponds to a closed, retracting dimension, i.e. the earth. It is impossible to argue the wholeness of our existence if we consider only what opens itself; we must look also for what closes itself. The concept of world developed in *Sein und Zeit* is no longer applicable, because it indicates only what we see and perceive. Now the concept of unconcealedness becomes clearer: truth states the struggle of what is projecting with what is retracting – precisely that which we experience when we come into contact with art. Let us continue with the Chillida sculpture: the struggle between clearing and concealing is extraordinarily evident. Though strongly rooted to the ground, his pieces project themselves into the air: they exhibit the fundamental conflict between world and earth. They belong to the world, in which they seem to breathe, but only because they come from the earth, from which they seem to be born. Chillida's works are never isolated: they are always connected to the context to which they belong. With Heidegger, we can go further and argue: these works of art do not describe their context, do not fill their world, but they define their context, they create their world by coming from the earth. The materials do not simply occupy a space; they *are* all the space that must be seen. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger depicts the modus in which the subjectivity, the *Dasein* as *Being-in-The-World* [*In-der-Welt-sein*], lives immersed in the world: it does not live in an aseptic, neutral scenario, but is related to others in an already meaningful context (Heidegger 1996a, 71-83, 134-156). This revolutionary way of understanding the subjectivity, which intends to overcome every transcendental subjectivism, proposes a *Dasein* as an open and dynamic dimension, which is always connected in a net of relations. It is well known that after the *Turn* Heidegger would refuse every subjectivist subsidence, even his own. But this openness remains central to understanding even the question of the work of art, that is always a dimension open to others. Contemporary art starts to live as art only when it is seen, perceived, experienced as art. An isolated work of art is not a work of art, which is always connection, even if this does

not necessarily mean sharing the same point of view. In art, in fact, things shed their pragmatic anonymity and functionalistic utility to achieve a meaningfulness able to go beyond their ordinary use, by revealing their extraordinariness. This is one of the reasons why, after the *Turn* in the Heideggerian path, the analysis regarding the *Dasein* is replaced by the analysis of the work of art, and consequently, the *Dasein*'s connection with the world replaced by the work of art's connection with the world. This is not a question of the simple replacement of man by thing, because perhaps the philosopher can theoretically better handle a thing than a man. The antisubjectivism of the work of art can indicate the real possibility of overcoming the supremacy of objectification and the typical representation of the metaphysical tradition. Paradoxically, man can be an object of thought – and according to Heidegger, this is precisely what happened in modern philosophy – but philosophy can never possess the work of art without losing it. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger speaks of the risk of losing the real identity of things by reducing them only to a *presence-at-hand* [*Vorhandenheit*] (Heidegger 2001, 129), i.e. a “constant objective presence” (Heidegger 1996a, 89), something we have here, in front of us, always at our disposal, only because they can be perceived, and then categorized and judged. *Vorhandenes* is the thing as a mere object, but the world is full of things that cannot be considered only as objects. The concept of *readiness-to-hand* [*Zuhandenheit*] (Heidegger 2001, 98ff.) has been developed precisely to describe all those things that are primarily a tool to act, and consequently what we use to handle our life in common in the context of the world. The *Dasein* lives in a world where things do not appear primarily as separated objects of a subject who perceives and thematizes them by elevating them to categories in a pure speculative abstraction, but where things are capable of being used with a view to actions and tasks, of which *Dasein* takes care. However, this analysis regarding things finds a limit: the concept of *readiness-to-hand* cannot really overcome the metaphysics of presence of the *Vorhandenheit* by avoiding entification: both *Vorhandenheit* and *Zuhandenheit* remain metaphysical concepts. The *Zuhandenheit* indeed cannot demolish the subject-object



dichotomy: by being ready-to-hand, things risk being mere objects, neutral and indifferent outside a purely functionalistic vision. For this reason, after the *Turn*, Heidegger intends to overcome the concept of readiness-to-hand through the perspective according to which things can never be objects because they are always paradigmatic in their unicity and unrepeatability, i.e. art. The thingness of the thing (Heidegger 1971a, 20) is in fact a thingness that has much in common with the essence and origin, thus it is a thingness that can teach us what the authentic thing-being of the thing is. Starting from such an assumption, the thinker proposes reliability [*Verlässigkeit*] as the real essence of the thing. It is well known that, as a guide along this path, Heidegger uses Van Gogh's painting depicting a pair of peasant's shoes: "the equipmental quality of the equipment [*Zeugsein des Zeuges*] consists indeed of its usefulness. But this usefulness itself rests in the abundance of an essential being of the equipment. We call it reliability" (ibid., 33). In an audacious analysis, he argues that the thing is really a thing if we do not use it as an object we need, but only if we open ourselves to it as something we rely on, something we trust, by projecting our expectations on it and by pouring our hopes into it. "By virtue of this reliability", that links her to her shoes, "the peasant woman is made privy to the silent call of the earth; by virtue of the reliability of the equipment she is sure of her world. World and earth exist for her and for those who are with her in her mode of being, only thus—in the equipment" (ibid., 33-34), because things are precisely what allows us to relate authentically to the world. Only thanks to a painting it is possible to understand deeply, at the root, what things are and our relation to the world: "The art work lets us know what shoes are in truth" (ibid., 35).

The uniqueness and unrepeatability of the work of art show that the things populating the world are not there only as objects we need, helping us, but as something with which we establish relationships, with which we interact. It is the connection between subjectivity and world that has been defined and reformulated by the thingness of the thing of the *Kunstwerk*: in this way, the definitive overcoming of aesthetics is achieved because the work of art has been finally

investigated not by referring to the beautiful and the pleasant, but in its inescapable relation to the truth. This is the main reason art becomes necessary: by becoming the way for philosophy to overcome metaphysics. The work of art is the only way to destroy the supremacy of the *Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung*, the relation between subject and object. The artist is not a subject, and the piece of art is not an object; in the struggle between clearing and concealment, this relation no longer has sense, because the struggle itself indicates the truth: “truth and untruth go together in every work of art” (Kockelmans 1986, 17). This does not mean the artist does not exist, or even that the piece of art is something real, yet the process is not derivative or exclusive. In the important paragraph 7a of *Being and Time*, in which Heidegger begins to construct his phenomenological-hermeneutical ontology, we find the mode in which this relation occurs ontologically: “*Phenomenon* - the self-showing in itself - means a distinctive way something can be encountered” (Heidegger 1996a, 27). Heidegger says it very clearly: *Dasein* is not the metaphysical subject that reduces the knowledge of the world to its own knowledge, but a subjectivity immersed into the world. How does the *Dasein* live in this world into which he has plunged? Without thinking it as an object, but by encountering the worldly phenomenon: in an encounter, there is a mutual belonging of the parts; subject and object are not separated from each other. This is exactly what happens with the work of art. The artist opens himself to art by creating a work; the viewer likewise opens himself to the same world in which the piece of art exists. This encounter is primarily a *context of sense*. In this case, we use “sense” to translate the Heideggerian term *Sinn*, usually translated with *meaning* (ibid., 151). However, *Sinn* should remain untranslated because the term “sense” refers to the empirical dimension of perceiving, while the term “meaning” refers to the linguistic dimension of understanding. In both cases, we lose a relevant part of what Heidegger means by *Sinn*, i.e. the temporality of *Dasein* living in the world. *Sinn* is a primary relation with time, which we can experience through art, especially contemporary art. When we look at an installation or experience a performance, we do not see only the piece, but the

world that opens itself starting from that piece, and this world is essentially temporal. And time is a being outside any stable and permanent fundament and substance, because we can always feel how much time is simultaneously filling and depriving us. Time is always both gain and loss, light and dark, world and earth.

For this reason, the analyses of the Greek temple in Heidegger's essay of 1935-36 are impressively relevant today. We have already underlined that the peculiarity of contemporary art is that of opening up the possibility of having an experience of the tension between clearing and concealing. In paintings, this tension is present but not paradigmatic. For this reason, Heidegger needs to focus his attention on a work of art such as a temple, and more specifically, the most celebrated architectonic element of the classical world: the Greek temple. When we visit a Greek temple, we are not simply standing before a monument; we are living in the context made up of this monument. Having an experience of the Greek temple means having an experience *in* the Greek temple: we live in the streets of those who frequented the temple, in the atmosphere created by the people who lived the temple before us, by looking at it not as an object, but as a living context that involves us. This experience is possible because in the work of art such as a Greek temple, there is not something that stands before a viewer, but *a world that opens itself*, with no caesura or distinction between viewer and object viewed. To describe what the ancient temple was and still is, Heidegger does not speak of artistic excellence, though he is obviously aware of this undeniable excellence; he talks about paths and gods: "It is the temple work that first structures and simultaneously gathers around itself the unity of those paths and relations in which birth and death, disaster and blessing, victory and disgrace, endurance and decline acquire for the human being the shape of its destiny" (Heidegger 1971a, 20-21). We walk in the streets near the temple and we taste the atmosphere of victory, we fear ancient disasters, we live in a world to which we do not belong. It is precisely because we do not belong to this previous life that we can understand it. We have experience even of the hidden earth, of all that is far and unreachable in this ancient world. The temple creates a world by gathering its secrets in the earth

from it rises up. The context of world and earth disclosed by the temple is not a utopia, a no-place, a fantastic duplicate of a dead framework that no longer exists, but the place where one can live the connection of relations that has made that world the work of art it truly is. We can live in the openness of meanings and significations that belongs to the Greek temple, even if the world of this temple is no longer present.

The transformation of the *Dasein* with the work of art overcomes the notion of world [*Welt*] in *Being and Time* as mere disclosure. Every true work of art establishes that there can be no disclosure without concealment; there is no manifesting world without a retracting earth. Every temple remains, in fact, bounded to the earth on which it stands, even if we can see only that which is in the world we live in. The temple can show the world only insofar as the earth hides. This is the tension that the Greek temple makes apparent: on the one hand, the visibility of a world offering itself to the sight of a viewer by exposing and manifesting itself in all its power and majestic charm, on the other hand, the concealment of an earth that keeps to itself by closing itself off from the others, that hides itself from sight and from the external attempts of viewers to find its essence. Every work of art is filled with an ineluctable contrast, a conflict between visible and invisible, between what can be touched and seen and what cannot even be approached under pain of losing its essentiality.

World and earth are opposite in a co-belonging, which finds its *Sinn* in the contention between exposition and keeping: “in its resting upon earth the world strives to surmount it. As the self-opening, it will tolerate nothing closed. As the sheltering and concealing, however, earth tends always to draw the world into itself and to keep it there” (ibid., 26). The *Sinn* of the work of art does not cease to address this conflict, this fracture; since the opposition of world and earth is intrinsically strife, this strife is the authentic *Sinn* of every work of art, with which we can try to reach the main *Sinn* of the space.

The Greek temple is not only the paradigm of beauty and majesty, it is also one of the places where the essentiality of contemporary art reveals itself: art is the struggle between

earth and world, and the truth that only art can indicate is the unconcealedness of the struggle between earth and world. The truth meant as *aletheia* makes the relation between subject and object impracticable, because the subject loses its ontic centrality and ontological primacy. Art cannot be measured or quantified, because it is nothing outside its own openness of *Sinn*. Contemporary art does not provide a *Sinn*, it opens a *Sinn*. This demonstrates why we can find a *Sinn* even when apparently, there is none. The extreme provocations of contemporary artists, who often humiliate the viewer by presenting nonsense or something unbearable, even pornography and profanity, intends to achieve this goal: art has no higher meaning to teach, it must only express itself, by expressing the contradictions and misery of the human condition. There is no superficiality in the flamboyant neon colors of the installations, nor abyss in the most obscure pieces we find in museums, because art simply discloses itself. It is highly probable that many of the perverse and provocative pieces crowding museums today would never be considered art by Heidegger, despite the capacity to fit this connection of art and *aletheia* with the meanings and functions of contemporary art. Though included in a theoretical framework, these analyses describe the innovative status of contemporary works of art that intends to overcome every merely functionalistic boundary. A horrible war scene presenting unbearable images of dead children can be awful to see, but can also reveal a truth, which has nothing to testify to but itself. It can allow us to see a message that exposes one *Sinn* by hiding another.

## 2. The Project of Meaning

In a seminar of 1969, Heidegger resumes this discourse on *Sinn* and retraces this argument throughout his works, starting from the existential analytic of *Being and Time*, in which he wants to “raise anew the question of the *Sinn* of being” (Heidegger1996a, XXIX). This question transforms itself by becoming first a question about the truth of being and finally a question about the placement of being. To explain the central passage of his entire work, the author writes deliberately in capitals: MEANING [SINN]—TRUTH—PLACE [*topos*]

(Heidegger 2012a, 47). Heidegger himself is aware of the relevance of this change for his philosophy, which corresponds perfectly to the meditation on art, even if nothing has been said about art here. The transition occurs from the question of sense as meaning to the question of sense as truth: the possibility of speaking cannot reach being outside of all entification, if we do not understand that meaning must always refer to what is exposed and what is hidden. Finally, the question becomes a question of place: truth cannot be only linguistic, nor only ontological, but must also be spatial. The famous analyses of the poetic dwelling<sup>3</sup> have gone in this very direction. In this way, the relation between subject and object has been finally overcome, because subjectivity is no longer an entity dominating the world and worldly objects, but a dimension always open within a context of sense. The truth happens not only in words and in the struggle between clearing and concealing: the truth happens by opening a context that includes us. The subject-object relation is overcome: when we have an experience of truth, we encounter it in an event, which involves and transforms us, even if we do not become better, even if we are unaware of this involvement. This is exactly what happens when we experience a work of art.

Contemporary art fits this conception – even if the latter was conceived primarily to overcome traditional philosophy, and even if the former has nothing in common with this theoretical undertaking. In the 1930s, this task of overcoming metaphysics was achieved through concepts such as origin and essence; later, these concepts would no longer be used in this context. Indeed, to attempt to defeat the metaphysical diktat through this type of question seems odd. Heidegger intends to reformulate these two concepts, by depriving them of all their metaphysical connotations. However, will he manage to achieve this goal? Or will the considerations of the 1930s remain embroiled in the net of Western tradition? Surely he is convinced of the innovative and revolutionary paradigm of truth as *aletheia*, but is this enough to start a new and different thought, another beginning [*anderer Anfang*], as said in the *Contributions* (Heidegger 1999, 3)? These questions about essence and origin are indisputably metaphysical, even if the

answers attempt to exit tradition. Contemporary art is intrinsically *un-original* and *un-essential*. Heidegger can already say something important about art, by saying what it can no longer be. The un-originality of the origin of the work of art means that contemporary art has no privileged place in which to arise; it can arise everywhere because there is no external origin that, as a higher authority, preserves and gathers it. Art's place is where we can reach a *Sinn* without thinking a unique and normative meaning. Signification is what involves us linguistically; *Sinn* is what involves us temporally. We are time, and we live our temporality in a world of *Sinn*, which we currently contribute to and constitute. Significance is fundamental to our existence: it determines, detects, explains, explicates; but *Sinn* is necessary, because it opens us to being as time, i.e. being outside all entification. Despite directing his research toward the horizon of being, by focusing his attention on topics far from the existential analytic, Heidegger would always remain faithful to the famous definition of *Sinn* in *Being and Time*, according to which it is not the revelatory content of a fundament, but a "an existential of Da-sein" (Heidegger 1996a, 142). If we connect *Sinn* to the fundamental structure of *Dasein*, we include even the *Sinn* of the world in a temporal horizon, because it is not only what simply defines something, by attaching a comprehensible reality to a thing, but a "project" [*Entwurf*] (ibid., 136), an openness involving *Dasein* itself, attempting to comprehend. *Sinn* is not something fixed, completed, which can be established once and for all and codified by reducing it to a predefined meaning with no semantic fluctuations, but a "passage" challenging the one who exposes himself to the risk of interpreting it, a link with something that cannot be exhausted by scientific reasoning. This concept of *project* is central not only to *Sein und Zeit*, but to the whole path of the Heideggerian work on art:

Project is the existential constitution of being in the realm of factual potentiality of being. And, as thrown, Da-sein is thrown into the mode of being of projecting. Projecting has nothing to do with being related to a plan thought out, according to which Da-sein arranges its being, but, as Da-sein, it has always already projected itself and is, as long as it is, projecting. As long as it is, Da-sein always has

understood itself and will understand itself in terms of possibilities (ibid.).

In this passage, Heidegger establishes the projectuality not only of human efforts, but even and primarily of human identity, of the *Dasein* itself. *Dasein* as an openness is a project, because it stretches itself over its own existence, it breaks the isolation of the metaphysical subject and ‘dirtyes itself’ with the world. With this concept of project, Heidegger intends to overcome precisely this tendency to close the phenomenon within a theoreticistic framework, with no connection to life, and Gadamer shows that the new status of the subjectivity that can be found in *Being and Time* fits perfectly with an ontology of art. Therefore, the project means an openness, which we constitute and at the same time which constitutes us. This also means that the relation between subjectivity and world is always characterized by the primacy of possibility over reality. This perspective also holds great significance for the meditation on art: even contemporary art indicates the primacy of possibility because it always shows the absolute lack of fundament, of external authority, of a rigid reality justifying art itself.

### 3. The Event of Art

These reflections about the openness remain central to Heideggerian philosophy: starting from *Being and Time* and dealing with the relation between world and subjectivity, they pass through the essay on the origin of the work of art, dealing with the relation between world and earth, to reach the essays of the 1960s about art and space [*Raum*]<sup>4</sup>. These writings underline all the relevance of the question of art for the entire Heideggerian path, because they show this question is necessary to think a new concept of space. It is well known that, after the *Turn*, the centrality of space replaces the centrality of time in Heidegger’s philosophy, and this is possible only thanks to art. The metaphysical tradition has imposed a concept of space as a measurable quantity from that which contains it, from what it contains, from a body, from a movement, but never from itself. Now we must think the *Raum* starting from the fact that it is not a static dimension, but a dynamic one; not by



looking for its essence, but by looking for the fact that *der Raum räumt: the space spaces*. This means that space must define itself only by itself, only when it spaces. *Raum* must be thinkable only by its *räumen*, because space cannot be a mere quantity, but an essential *event*, it is not something measurable, but something primary that happens. The fundamental connection between art, space and event [*Ereignis*] is clearly present in the *Bemerkungen zu Kunst – Plastik – Raum* dating back to the 1964, in which we read: “Vielmehr braucht der Raum, um *als Raum* zu räumen, den Menschen. Dieses geheimnisvolle Verhältnis, das nicht nur den Bezug des Menschen zum Raum und zur Zeit betrifft, sondern den Bezug ‘des Seins zum’ Menschen (Ereignis)” (Heidegger 1996b, 15) is indeed an event. In this passage, Heidegger talks about two concepts he has always preferred not to use, i.e. the ‘mysterious’ and ‘man’. He defines the relation between man and space something mysterious, and at the same time, he introduces the concept of *Ereignis* to describe the relation between man, space and time. This is necessary precisely because these considerations derive from the question of art, indicating that space is thinkable only as what makes space, what happens. Man is involved in this context without any ontic repercussion or subjectivism: the event as *Ereignis* is the disappropriating appropriation [*das Ereignis ereignet*] (Heidegger 1997, 24), in which it is possible to overcome both the relation between man and being in the context of the world present in *Being and Time* and the struggle between world and earth present in the essay of 1935-1936. The *event* as co-belonging of *Ereignen* and *Enteignen*, of appropriation and disappropriation, becomes the final stage of the entire Heideggerian philosophical project about art, because already the struggle between earth and world, between truth and untruth, is “on the way to the *Ereignis*” (Harries 2009, 109ff.). Only art can outline the authentic dimension of the event outside any substantialistic metaphysics, because an event can never be a permanent fundament, a substantial foundation, it remains indeed always what “only” happens.

## Conclusion

Given this, what is contemporary art? Now we can answer this question: it is an *event*. Nothing objectifiable, representable, categorizable, but something happening. Another relevant contemporary philosopher has connected art and event, and not by chance - he is a pupil of Heidegger: Hans-Georg Gadamer. In *Truth and Method*, as mentioned before, he constructs his ontological hermeneutics on aesthetics, precisely because it is possible to overcome the historical consciousness thanks to the overcoming of the aesthetic consciousness. To achieve this, art is thought as an event, and strictly connected to language: “*all encounter with the language of art is an encounter with an unfinished event and is itself part of this event*” (Gadamer 2004: 90). In this way, we have placed the discussion in a new place that exceeds the mere artistic one: the place of language. And not by chance, because this intuition was already present in the essay on the origin of the work of art, in which at the end of the argumentation Heidegger makes a shocking proposition by arguing that *Dichtung*, i.e. poetry, poetizing, is the essence of art: “*all art (...) is, as such, essentially poetry [Alle Kunst ist (...) im Wesen Dichtung]*” (Heidegger 1971a, 44), because actually “*all art [...] is, in essence, poetry*” (Heidegger 2002, 44). What does this mean, that poetry is the essence of art? Was not Heidegger speaking of Van Gogh’s shoes and Greek temples? Why does he need now to introduce another term to the equation? Why does he even want to discuss poetry? Possibly because contemporary art is, above all, about language. This is clear even when Heidegger discusses the dwelling as the main topic of his last works, when he writes that the “*dwelling rests on the poetic*” (Heidegger 1971c, 212). When we approach a genuine work of art, we dwell in the context it creates around us. This dwelling is poetic because it confronts the extreme forces of existence by speaking them unhesitatingly. This happens because the dwelling is an intrinsic dimension of language, because this is what poetry always discusses: language. Even if in the essay of 1935-1936 poetry is meant as an ontological essence without a strong and clear reference to language, to understand the deep meaning of the thesis “*all art is essentially poetry*”, we must refer to poetic

language. We experience this every time we approach a contemporary piece of art. What we see first is indeed a language. When we look at an installation surprising us with its colored and exaggerated provocation, we are actually confronted with a code, with a language different from any seen before. This means art is poetry: we learn art by stealing its sense as we repeat a verse. We do not possess words, even if we currently use them like coins. We are in intimate contact with language, but we do not own it. Moreover, this is what happens with a contemporary work of art: we cannot possess it even if we approach it directly, because it always speaks a different language from ours.

Let us think of the different expressions of contemporary art: performances, visual, sound and luminous installations, videos, public art, street art. Are not these different languages in which to say the same thing? Moreover, it is precisely in this difference that we can find identity (Heidegger 1969, 64): “but the same is not the merely identical. In the merely identical, the difference disappears” (ibid., 45). However, what does the secular “Pity” of Ernest Pignon-Ernest, in which an extraordinary Pasolini, energetically earthly, concrete and fresh, holds in his arms a disfigured Pasolini, defeated and faded, have in common with the assembly of suspended grids of the *Flyng Carpets* of Nadia Kaabi-Linke? The first uses an iconographic code, well recognizable in the category of portraiture, albeit entirely originally transformed, the latter uses forms and materials anti-iconically. Despite this, we have an artistic experience in both cases, because we can understand the different languages spoken by the artists. The connection between art and language is of such paramount importance due to the status of the language itself. These artistic languages tell us what an authentic language is: a metamorphic dimension, a multiplicity of forms and not a set of fixed structures: new types of language are continuously being born, while others disappear, in an osmotic flow that is never completed. Language is always a process of changing, unpredictable and interactive, though it is even a stability in our common life, a certain warehouse on which we can always rely. Language is never a granitic monolith, but a material moulding itself

constantly and at the same time constantly moulded. For Heidegger, the poetic language is a very special one, because it can show, more than philosophy itself, the uniqueness and the unrepeatability of the human: “the poet always speaks as if beings were expressed and addressed for the first time. In the poetry of the poet and in the thinking of the thinker, there is always so much world-space to spare that each and every thing – a tree, a mountain, a house, the call of a bird – completely loses its indifference and familiarity (Heidegger 2000a, 28)”.

Therefore, in this “first time” we can find an “every time”, in this ordinary we can find an extra-ordinary, in this instability we can find stability, in this un-essence we can find an essence, in this un-origin we can find an origin. In this shout, we can find the necessary silence of art. And this is not only out of a taste for provocation, even if this latter element is always very important: contemporary art teaches us how to understand the world we live in, in which truth is no longer a transcendent paradigm, but a primary involvement, the possibility of seeing lights and colors through obscurity, of seeing lights and colors thanks to obscurity.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> In the lecture notes for the 1939 seminar about Herder, Heidegger argues for six essential meanings for the term *Origin* [*Ursprung*]: 1. From where of the origination—as composition. 2. From where and manner of the development—unwrapping of the already present-at-hand. 3. From where and whereof the mere starting point—provenance (source). 4. Possibility of the essence—(essence as idea). 5. Ground of the essence as abysmal-ground. 6. The first leap into the essencing and this itself; see Heidegger 2004, 43.

<sup>2</sup> For the *Kehre* as the *Turn*, see Heidegger 2012b.

<sup>3</sup> See the analyses contained in Heidegger, 1971b, 141-159; Heidegger 1971c, 209-227, and Heidegger, 2000b, 60ff.

<sup>4</sup> See the conferences about art and space contained in Heidegger 1983, and Heidegger 1996b.

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## **Politique et dialogue. Réflexions inspirées par Eric Weil et Hannah Arendt**

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### **Abstract**

#### **Politics and dialogue: Reflections inspired by Eric Weil and Hannah Arendt**

The article analyses the main characteristics of dialogue seen as a political dimension of language starting from Eric Weil and Hannah Arendt. The importance of the topic is given by the difficulties of political debates that deal with the existential problems of people who live in multicultural and multi-religious societies. Our choice for Arendt and Weil finds justification in the genuine effort made by the two philosophies to turn dialogue into the true condition of possibility for political action. For this purpose, we return to the approach of dialogue as virtue in Eric Weil and as expression of the human world in Hannah Arendt to show that in these “dark times” (Arendt) the “courage of reason” (Weil) is required to overcome violence through comprehension and reasonable action.

**Keywords:** politics, dialogue, political action, modern society, Eric Weil, Hannah Arendt

### **Introduction**

L'article reprend certains caractéristiques fondamentales du dialogue en tant que dimension politique du langage à partir de la philosophie d'Eric Weil et de Hannah Arendt.<sup>1</sup> D'une part, la pertinence du sujet est démontré par les difficultés des débats politiques face aux problèmes communs de la coexistence dans les communautés multiculturelles et multi-religieuses. La situation actuelle des émigrants est certainement le cas le plus urgente, mais pas le seul. D'autre part, le choix de la pensée de Weil et d'Arendt est due à la



contribution de deux pour mettre le dialogue comme véritable condition de possibilité pour l'action politique. En fait, chez Weil, le dialogue est pris comme une vertu politique, au sens classique (aristotélien) du terme, tandis que, chez Arendt, il se présente comme une source pérenne de la constitution du monde humain, à savoir, en tant qu'élément constitutif de l'espace dans lequel la politique est faite. Dans les deux cas, le dialogue est considéré comme un antipode de la violence, respectant le sens propre de ce dernier terme selon chacun des deux penseurs. Pour atteindre notre objectif, nous partons de la description du *status quaestionis* de la politique moderne à partir de ses éléments constitutives, c'est-à-dire, de la sécularisation et de la mondialisation des questions politiques. En second lieu, nous cherchons, avec Weil, illustrer le dialogue comme un registre politique du langage, véritable pierre angulaire de toutes les formes du discours politique, d'où pouvons-nous comprendre le dialogue comme une vertu. Enfin, avec Arendt, nous arrivons à la compréhension du dialogue comme une source inépuisable de la politique, le fond à partir de laquelle les hommes peuvent partager le monde.

### 1. *Status Quaestionis*

La société moderne occidentale, telle que nous la connaissons aujourd'hui, a commencé à se former dans un double processus qui a débuté il y a 500 ans. D'une part, en particulier après la découverte du Nouveau Monde, les penseurs politiques européens devaient recréer certaines notions fondamentales sur lesquelles reposaient les principales idées politiques et juridiques du Vieux Continent, la question du *jus gentium* n'est qu'un exemple.<sup>2</sup> Cependant, la signification complète de ce premier processus n'était possible que par le début du commerce (et d'échange d'informations) dans le monde "proto-capitaliste".<sup>3</sup> Le caractère mondial de la société moderne est un fruit mûr de ces transformations. Ici, nous ignorons les nuances de ces termes et considérons la "mondialisation" comme synonyme de la "globalisation", de telle sorte qu'une "société mondiale" doit être simplement compris comme une société globale.<sup>4</sup> D'autre part, dans la même période, la société passe d'une structure dont les bases sont

justifiées par des discours religieux et traditionnels à un nouveau contexte dans lequel une raison séculaire apparaît comme la seule forme possible au discours véritablement universalisable (voir Taylor 2007). Donc, ce que nous appelons “double processus” s’est révélé comme le binaire sur lequel avance une société qui est simultanément “mondiale” et “séculaire”. Même si cela est insuffisant, cette description est essentiellement indispensable, car aucune analyse de la société moderne ne peut échapper à sa nature mondiale et à la sécularisation qui caractérise les fondements sur lesquels une société multiculturelle et multireligieuse s’est organisée.

Pour le domaine de la pensée, ces transformations impliquaient, entre autres choses, le tournant épistémologique représenté par René Descartes. En d’autres termes, il s’agit du passage d’un idéal de connaissance du modèle aristotélicien à un autre dans lequel le premier et fondamentale problème philosophique devient la procédure méthodologique. Mais, si dans le domaine spirituel, le problème était une nouvelle façon de comprendre la recherche de la certitude (parce que le problème de la vérité devient de moins en moins possible); sur le plan politique, la question est le choc entre les différentes perspectives culturelles exhaustives, et pour la première fois dans l’histoire occidentale, sans aucune référence transcendante capable de valider un discours “universel” ou “absolument cohérent”.<sup>5</sup>

Alors que nous sommes soucieux par la politique – et pendant que nous savons que la politique a lieu sur le terrain de l’histoire –, nous pouvons voir dans la Révolution française l’événement paradigmatique du passage du monde ancien au monde moderne (voir Weil 1999). Le fait est que, à la fin du XVIIIe siècle, en France, les problèmes propres à la politique moderne ont trouvé leur formulation adéquate. Seulement alors, le “moderne” peut vraiment signifier le *modus hodiernus*, c’est-à-dire, le façon actuelle de voir et de penser la politique et en particulier la société selon une perspective rationnelle spécifique, formée par l’idéal de l’organisation du travail et en vue d’une idée de bien partagé selon un point de vue matérialiste. En d’autres termes, il s’agit de penser la société à la lumière du modèle économique, et un correspondant État

bureaucratique, d'une part, et, d'autre part, la supposition de l'expérience démocratique de profil libéral comme le but de l'action politique.

En fait, l'Économie, l'État bureaucratique et la démocratie, sont les trois facteurs qui se rencontrent à la base de l'autocompréhension de la société occidentale moderne. Le problème divient une urgence pour la philosophie politique à partir d'un paradoxe sous-jacent, parce que, tout d'abord, le modèle économique de nature technique, ne correspond pas aux idées fondatrices de la pensée et surtout de la pratique politique occidentales. En second lieu, l'accent du caractère bureaucratique de l'État coïncide avec sa réduction à l'administration, ce qui implique, bien sûr, un manque général d'intérêt pour la politique, surtout parmi la population plus jeune. Maintenant, le paradoxe est devenu évident car l'actuel modèle économique (*chrématistique*, pour souvenir à Aristote) et la bureaucratisation de l'État s'opposent à l'exercice de la démocratie.

Le problème peut enfin être posé avec toute son urgence: comment articuler les exigences modernes qui sous-tendent l'efficacité économique et l'organisation bureaucratique avec une procédure démocratique qui accueille et favorise l'horizon formé par une dissonance nécessaire des opinions ouvertes au débat et fondées en même temps sur la renonciation à la violence et sur la disposition au dialogue?

Nous espérons contribuer à la réflexion sur le problème par la reprise d'une dimension politique du langage, en effet, la dimension vraiment fondamentale, le dialogue. Pour le faire, nous voulons prendre deux penseurs contemporains qui, dans diverses perspectives, sont retournés aux origines de la pensée politique et ont redécouvert leurs fondements dans la pratique du dialogue au milieu de l'abondance des discours et des débats sur la scène politique mondiale. Nous devons tout d'abord observer que le mot "origine", ici, signifie la source permanente de la pratique politique, ainsi que le discours et le débat constituent légitimement des registres politiques du langage, mais pas son fondement.

En fait, seul le dialogue, selon la penser politique d'Eric Weil et de Hannah Arendt, peut soutenir la pratique politique,

parce qu'il est le seul qui peut garantir les conditions dans lesquelles le discours et le débat politique seront donnés de manière équitable. L'importance du thème est inépuisable et l'avantage des deux auteurs est de l'insérer dans le plan politique.<sup>6</sup> Pour nous, la question est importante précisément parce qu'elle nous aide à réfléchir sur les possibilités réelles de sortir des faux dilemmes posés par les vicissitudes politiques actuelles, comme la question des sociétés multiculturelles, et les problèmes de l'immigration, de la crise écologique<sup>7</sup> et de la violence internationale des groupes organisés. Nous appelons de "faux dilemmes", parce que nous croyons que la solution est plus réelle que nous sommes parfois tentés de penser (est loin de nous le désir de minimiser les souffrances de ceux qui traversent ces signes de ce que Kant appelait une fois "la malignité insurpassable du cœur humain").

Eric Weil et Hannah Arendt enrichissent notre réflexion dans une double direction. Les auteurs suivent des chemins différentes, mais la proximité thématique nous permet de les rassembler, et notre objectif n'est pas une présentation de la pensée complète d'Eric Weil ou de Hannah Arendt, ni l'analyse des possibles relations entre leurs différents angles, mais, plutôt, une réflexion sur la dimension politique du dialogue inspirée par leur philosophie. En effet, alors que Weil pense la politique autour des conditions pour la formation de l'État constitutionnel<sup>8</sup>, Arendt vise à la réflexion sur les conditions générales de l'action de l'homme dans le monde politique moderne. Le caractère circonscrit de notre objectif est encore confirmé par le choix de textes spécifiques comme notre clé d'interprétation. Dans le cas d'Eric Weil, il s'agit de l'article "Vertu du dialogue", publié en 1953, et un texte conservé inédit et publié en Italie par Livio Sichirollo avec la collaboration de Gilbert Kirscher. Pour Arendt, nous avons pris en particulier "On humanity in dark times: Thoughts about Lessing", texte qui ouvre le livre *Men in dark times*.

## **2. La dimension politique du dialogue**

Le début de la réflexion de Weil a une double direction: l'auteur note et questionne en même temps: "Il est philosophes qui doutent de la vertu du dialogue. Cela est étonnant. Le

philosophe n'est-il pas l'homme qui croit que parler est une occupation sensée, voire la seule occupation sensée, puisque seule elle ne mène pas à la violence, du moins n'y mène pas nécessairement?". (Weil 2003, 279) L'assertion initiale révèle un doute sur le sens du dialogue, le fait provoque un certain éloignement, une surprise, parce que ceux qui doutent sont les mêmes qui disent que le dialogue est la seule alternative à la violence. La raison du doute se manifeste. Si la violence continue dans le monde, elle peut être comprise précisément comme l'échec du dialogue, la raison d'être du désir de silence, de la volonté de se retirer du monde des hommes, du désir d'entrer dans la solitude, de la bête ou de la divinité. La violence reste l'*ultima ratio regum*, c'est-à-dire "que le plus forte a raison dans tous les sens du mot raison, que c'est lui qui forme la raison des générations montantes, et qu'en un mot, le dialogue ment en affirmant pouvoir éliminer la violence". (ibid., 280)

Mais le doute n'est pas épuisé par l'échec du dialogue. Au contraire, leur succès est également problématique. "Si les hommes avaient renoncé à la violence, s'ils n'étaient plus – c'est tout un – passionnés, pourquoi parleraient-ils les uns aux autres?". (ibid.) Alors, le dialogue, et Weil l'affirme fortement, est la caractéristique des êtres qui ne sont pas des êtres de dialogue, c'est-à-dire, c'est la caractéristique des êtres passionnés, des êtres qui dialoguent précisément à cause de la passion et de la violence enconre présents dans le monde des hommes. De sorte que le dialogue ne peut être pensé à cause de son succès ou de son échec, mais de sa continue réalisation, dans sa réalisation réelle, "historique". Les hommes se parlent parce qu'ils ne sont pas "raison pure", parce que leurs discours ne coïncident pas, donc ils recherchent par le dialogue la création de l'unité entre eux, une unité capable de rendre la violence insensée.<sup>9</sup> La question est pourtant une matière du domaine politique et nous pouvons reprendre l'axe à partir duquel le dialogue doit être compris comme vertu, nous pouvons maintenant reconnaître le "secret" du dialogue: "le dialogue n'est pas la politique, mais il est politique, au sens le plus fort : il est la voie de la pensée qui crée la politique dans le monde qui se prétend raisonnable et veut donc l'être". (Weil 2003, 295)

En effet, dans son efficacité historique et selon son véritable sens, le dialogue acquiert sa densité et sa extension proprement politiques, puisque c'est il qui donne à l'action la dignité et l'originalité sans lesquelles nous ne pouvons pas agir raisonnablement. La nouveauté du dialogue est donc ce qui nous permet d'échapper aux limites étroites de la discussion technique de l'économie et de l'administration. En d'autres termes, le dialogue convoque les "hommes de culture", les porteurs des valeurs qui forment la communauté historique, valeurs qui permettent à leurs membres d'agir de manière raisonnable dans le monde dont la réalité est formé aussi par la rationalité technique et par la menace de la violence; ainsi que par la possibilité d'accord entre les hommes sur les critères fondamentaux qui guident l'action au sein de la communauté, guides toujours précaires et continuellement soumis, si nous voulons rester des êtres raisonnables, au tribunal de la raison.

Tout d'abord, Weil souligne les cinq conditions de possibilité d'existence du dialogue sur le sol politique. Ce que nous appelons ici "conditions" sont, plus précisément, des règles qui ne sont pas exclusivement *réglementaires*, mais véritablement *constitutives* d'une forme de relation "entre hommes conscients de leur nature d'êtres dialoguants". (ibid., 282) En premier lieu, comme nous l'avons déjà vu, le dialogue est l'antithèse de la violence. Ensuite, il repose toujours sur une valeur partagée entre les personnes concernées dans le processus dialogique. La troisième condition concerne à les critères de vérité, ce qui implique la participation des personnes aux mêmes règles logiques et formelles. Quatrièmement, il faut rejeter à toute discrétion ou l'absolutisation de n'importe quel élément historique. Enfin, toute relation asymétrique entre les personnes concernées dans le dialogue est exclue à l'avance, est équivalente à dire que la reconnaissance de chaque individu et son traitement comme fin en soi-même sont nécessairement requises.

Après avoir décrit les règles constitutives du dialogue, c'est-à-dire les règles sans lesquelles nous ne pouvons pas parler d'un vrai dialogue entre les hommes, il faut maintenant penser à leur nature. Le point de départ weilien est la question à propos de la juste placement de l'interrogation, la question de

savoir si on peut parler du *dialogue* ou seulement des *dialogues*? La réponse vient comme une série d'observations qui révèlent les deux principaux plans de la pratique dialogique. Dans le premier plan, “nel dialogo propriamente detto le persone che vi partecipano non sono d'accordo, e intendono mettersi d'accordo” (Weil 1997, 193); “il piano è quello del sentimento (oppure della sensibilità)” (ibid.), plan dans lequel la principale préoccupation est de convaincre l'adversaire. Dans sa deuxième forme, “il dialogo passa sul piano dell'universale e del necessario, dove vi sono regole riconosciute da tutte i partecipanti”. (ibid., 194) Dans ce deuxième plan, il ne s'agit plus de convaincre, mais d'avoir raison. La technique de la discussion s'est pleinement développée:

Il dialogo si riduce a un'intesa dei partecipanti intorno a certe premesse, dopo di che ogni individuo sano di mente e dotato di pazienza sufficiente può mettersi ad elaborarne le conseguenze: il dialogo divienne discorso e monologo, e l'altro vi interviene solo per fare osservare all'autore del discorso questo o quel punto, o l'infrazione delle regole: l'interlocutore si trasforma in critico e altro non fa che ricondurre l'autore a ciò che l'autore stesso há voluto. (ibid.)

Discuter sur les présuppositions du dialogue peut sembler une entreprise simple. Cependant, le problème est à son point de départ: tout dépend des fondations et le dialogue lui-même cesse, car après avoir atteint ses principes, nous ne pouvons plus discuter, nous pouvons seulement essayer de convaincre. En d'autres termes, le développement complet du deuxième niveau du dialogue est, inéluctablement, un retour au premier; après la technique, seul le sentiment subsiste.

Alors, le problème peut présenter toute sa gravité, pas le problème de l'accord entre les techniciens mais entre les hommes. Ceux-ci, on le sait, ne sont pas toujours rationnels, leurs arguments ne sont pas toujours valables et, dans certaines circonstances précises, s'imposent et ne sont compris que dans une situation historique, sociale et économique. Les questions de Weil pointent, pourtant, dans deux directions: soit que nous revenions au premier plan du dialogue, soit que nous l'abandonions complètement. Cependant, une fois que la décision a été prise:

bisogna vivere, e vivere in comunità. La comunione del primo dialogo è possibile per noi solo in quelle situazioni che chiamiamo, forse a torto, eccezionali e che sono tanto più importanti: l'amore, il dialogo con dio, e, se è permesso ancora parlarne, l'amicizia. Che cos'altro fare se non cercare degli ambiti sempre più estesi per potervi vivere in comune, se non in comunione almeno in comunicazione?". (ibid., 196)

De cette façon, aux cinq conditions déjà énumérées, on ajoute deux exigences externes aux participants du dialogue. Tout d'abord, l'importance des institutions politiques visant à "rendere possibile il successo dei dialoghi". (ibid.) Ensuite, il y a le rôle fondamental du développement du dialogue dans son domaine technique "dove se affrontano principi differenti senza che vi sia modo di ricondurli a principi comuni situati su un piano più profondo". (ibid.) Tous les principes, religieux ou moraux, des individus qui vivent ensemble dans les communautés multiculturelles doivent être conduits à la reconnaissance d'un unique principe, c'est-à-dire que "la violenza è un male". (ibid., 197)

Cependant, les institutions ne garantissent pas la réussite du dialogue. Weil reconnaît que nous ne vivons pas dans un dialogue institutionnalisé, "la vita dell'uomo se svolge nel dialogo degli uomini vivi, il suo lavoro se realizza nel monologo *universale* del lavoro e dell'organizzazione. Ma è grazie al dialogo secondo regole e sotto la protezione delle istituzioni che una vera vita umana può essere e devenir sempre più complete". (ibid., 198)

### **3. Le dialogue comme une vertu politique**

Le point de départ de la nouvelle étape de l'argument est la définition "moderne" du dialogue, c'est-à-dire d'une description un peu plus précise de ses caractéristiques à partir des résultats du double processus de sécularisation et de mondialisation, selon ce que nous avons déjà souligné. La méthode qui nous permet de reconnaître les traits essentiels du dialogue dans la modernité est sa confrontation avec l'ancien modèle, dans lequel le dialogue était limité à la réalité immédiate de la Cité et même de l'État.<sup>10</sup> Ainsi, à partir de la confrontation entre l'ancienne conception du dialogue et le dialogue moderne, évidemment, tandis que le premier soit



essentiellement une relation au sein d'une communauté politique, l'autre devient réel dans une communauté de valeurs, c'est-à-dire entre les personnes qui partagent les mêmes notions générales de bien et les mêmes critères réglementaires pour évaluer les actions des hommes. Cependant, la condition moderne pose encore la question de la possibilité ou de l'impossibilité du dialogue entre les nouveaux sujets, à savoir entre les États et entre les institutions sociales, politiques et économiques, et d'autre part, elle nous force à penser, à nous qui sommes préoccupés par le dialogue, aux risques représentés par la collaboration technique comme la valeur ultime et l'interdépendance économique comme le seul horizon réel de la société.

En fait, nous vivons dans un monde où tous travaillent, et où participer au travail organisé est la seule source pour la dignité individuelle. En d'autres termes, contrairement à l'ancien monde, le travail est devenu, dans la modernité, la réalité essentielle de la vie humaine. – Et nous pouvons presque dire que le travail est la seule réalité pour la vie de l'homme insérée dans la société proprement moderne. (voir Weil 1956, 76-80)

Car l'organisation du travail social s'est développé dans le cadre de l'État national, elle est liée à la politique, que celle-ci dépende de celle-là, ou inversement, ou qu'il y ait confusion des deux. La valeur fondamentale qui est la travail n'est plus alors la seule valeur fondamentale, et la discussion entre les grandes entités, économiques et politiques à la foi (c'est intentionnellement que nous évitons ici le terme de dialogue), est celle de systèmes historiques dont chacun prétend à l'universalité, non en un sens "philosophique" ou "moral", mais dans celui de la technique. Or, la supériorité technique se prouve par le succès, et le succès d'un système national sur une autre s'appelle la victoire : le vainqueur impose son organisation, avec les caractéristiques de sa tradition autant qu'avec ses procédés rationnels. (Weil 2003, 286)

Par conséquent, le dialogue n'est pas possible entre les États, car ils sont déjà d'accord sur ce qui compte, sur la seule chose qui compte vraiment: l'organisation sociale du travail sur le plan mondial. C'est cette organisation, dit-on, la seule possibilité d'apporter à l'avenir a satisfaction des hommes, leur dignité et leur liberté. Donc, les politiciens professionnels ne peuvent pas être des hommes de dialogue, mais doivent être des

hommes de discussion technique, et ils s'efforcent d'éviter le conflit violent. Pour les hommes de culture, au contraire, le dialogue est à la fois leur métier, leur travail et leur spécialité. "Ils peuvent dialoguer, puisqu'ils sont d'accord sur la valeur du dialogue, étant à la violence". (ibid., 287)

Maintenant, les questions nous conduisent dans deux directions différentes. D'une part, nous devons encore nous demander sur la valeur du dialogue et, d'autre part, il faut discerner, outre les hommes de culture, qui sont les autres sujets qui participent au dialogue dans la condition politique moderne. En d'autres termes, il faut savoir qui d'autre est concerné dans ce dialogue avec l'homme de culture. En général, on peut dire que l'homme de culture est, dans la structure même de la société moderne, essentiellement placé devant le politicien et l'opinion publique. Enfin, nous pouvons aborder les raisons pour lesquelles l'homme de culture joue un rôle fondamental dans le dialogue compris ici comme la pierre angulaire de la politique dans son sens le plus légitime. En effet, où la politique a été réduite à l'administration technique et traite seule de «l'humanité nue», l'homme de culture a la tâche indispensable d'informer l'opinion publique et le politicien sur les valeurs qui constituent l'identité d'une communauté donnée. Donc, nous trouvons le retour de la fonction sociale du philosophe, une fonction récupérée chez Weil et chez Arendt soit par la figure de l'éducateur, soit par la reprise de Socrate comme le modèle du philosophe par excellence. (Arendt 2005, 5-39)

La tâche de l'homme de culture concerne le processus ininterrompu de sensibilisation des autres citoyens afin de les transformer en «citoyens politiques». (Weil 2003, 292) C'est en tant que citoyen politique, conscient, que l'homme de la communauté devient aussi un penseur, c'est-à-dire devient quelqu'un qui interroge continuellement ses propres convictions, "il sera l'être parlant (...) l'homme du dialogue". (ibid.) La vertu du dialogue est l'action en vue de l'éducation, dans le domaine politique, de personnes qui sont toujours plus patês à dialoguer, c'est-à-dire capables d'articuler raisonnablement les exigences techniques de l'économie et l'administration de la société avec les valeurs morales d'une communautés déterminé. Ce qui est en jeu, c'est la possibilité

même d'une vie raisonnable et sensée dans la propre communauté particulière sans abandonner les réalisations de la victoire moderne du travail organisé sur les besoins matériels.

Contrairement aux autres registres politiques du langage, comme c'est le cas du discours et du débat, le dialogue n'a pas de but spécifique en dehors de lui-même, mais c'est lui-même sa finalité, en tant que exercice de la liberté et du caractère raisonnable de l'homme du dialogue. En bref, si les hommes dialoguent, ils le font parce qu'ils ont des convictions différentes, et ils essaient librement de comprendre ces diverses convictions conflictuelles. Maintenant la nature du dialogue apparaît clairement.

En quoi consiste ce dialogue? Ce sera la confrontation des convictions présents dans le monde historique – Ils facile de le dire que d'instaurer un dialogue qui ait vraiment ce contenu. Ce sera la tentative, toujours renouvelée, de comprendre les oppositions agissantes qui déchirent, et en le déchirant, animent ce monde. Ce sera l'essai de voir ce que les mots veulent dire. (ibid.)

La dernière question s'adresse à ce que le dialogue peut ajouter au contexte proprement politique, c'est-à-dire il faut se demander: "apportera-t-il ainsi quelque chose à l'homme politique?". (ibid., 293) Nous arrivons au moment où le dialogue fait son apparition définitive dans la scène politique. Il révèle ainsi le caractère essentiel de l'homme de culture qui maintient vivantes les valeurs de la communauté face aux réalisations irréfutables de la modernité. Donc, si, d'une part, la société moderne représente aussi pour l'homme de culture, pour le philosophe, la victoire sur les besoins matériels, c'est-à-dire un état de bien-être et de liberté; d'autre part, il faut réaffirmer que cette liberté ne peut pas être comprise légitimement comme une forme de liberté *de la* politique. En d'autres termes, on ne peut pas concevoir la liberté comme l'éloignement des intérêts politiques, le désir d'une vie indifférente aux affaires politiques.

Le mérite du dialogue repose précisément sur sa capacité de comprendre toutes les convictions – traditionnelles ou techniques – en vue d'une vie toujours plus raisonnable, la forme de vie qui peut donner un plein sens aux conquêtes modernes. Donc,

Il ne s'agit donc pas de prendre place en dehors de la discussion politique qui continue entre les États et les partis, cette discussion dont l'enjeu est formé par les grandes intérêts traditionnels et ces autres, non moins grandes, qui se sont révélés au monde moderne parce qu'ils se sont produits seulement dans ce monde. (ibid.)

Le défi pour l'homme que a la "volonté de *fair* de la discussion un dialogue" (ibid., 294) est de reconnaître positivement ce que les différentes convictions ont d'irréfutable, c'est-à-dire souligner ce qui est vrai dans les valeurs traditionnelles et dans les réalisations techniques.

L'homme de culture prendra au sérieux les affirmations des parties en présence et les prendre *au mot* quand ils parlent des valeurs qu'il reconnaissent, des buts qu'ils se proposent, des institutions et des formes de la vie en commun qui leur semblent nécessaires. (ibid.)

Cela permettra aux défenseurs de différentes convictions sociales et politiques de comprendre que, ensemble, ils réduisent à la fois la violence présente dans le conflit entre leurs intérêts et surtout la violence dans la vie.

#### 4. Le dialogue véritablement humain

La philosophie d'Eric Weil nous a conduit à une compréhension du rôle essentiel du dialogue comme une dimension politique du langage. Ce caractère fondamental est justifié parce que seulement si les règles du dialogue sont maintenues la discussion et le débat peuvent avoir une juste signification sociale. Cependant, la compréhension du rapport entre le dialogue et la politique nécessite encore d'une analyse plus subtile des conditions indispensables pour "the disclosure of the agent in speech and action". (Arendt 1998, 257)<sup>11</sup>

Après tout, l'affirmation du caractère politique décisif du dialogue soulève la question essentielle de sa relation avec la réalisation de l'homme et du monde, plus précisément, d'un monde et d'une vie véritablement humains. À ce nouveau point de notre argument nous évoquons en particulier la philosophie de Hannah Arendt, une réflexion qui reprend sous différentes formes certains idées centrales d'une tradition philosophique qui s'étend de Herder à Heidegger.<sup>12</sup>

The world lies between people, and this in-between (...) men or even man – is today the object of the greatest concern and the most

obvious upheaval in almost all the countries of the globe. Even where the world is still halfwat in order, or is kept halfway in order, the public realm has lost the power of illumination which was originally part os its very nature. (Arendt 1973, 12)

Le dialogue dans la pensée d'Arendt doit être considéré comme un thème politique legitime à partir de sa relation essentielle à la liberté, alors que Arendt considere "the freedom from politics as one of the basic freedoms". (ibid.)<sup>13</sup> Par conséquent, la liberté doit être considérée comme la situation de l'homme qui, d'une part, vit concrètement la possibilite d'une "Real wordlessness" (Arendt 1973, 21), et, d'altre part, est confronté à la "question of openness to others, which in fact is the precondition for 'humanity' in every sense of that world". (ibid., 23) Le dialogue pose donc la question la plus fondamentale de l'être humain en tant qu'être du langage, c'est-à-dire un être qui a la médiation linguistique comme la condition de la possibilité de toutes ses relations, comme la toile de fond de son existence. L'ouverture aux autres est essentiellement liée à la possibilité de déterminer le sens du monde et, par conséquent, la signification de l'action. Cette question est essentielle à la compréhension de la pensée d'Arendt parce que l'auteur insiste sur la *pluralité* comme condition distinctive de l'être humain.<sup>14</sup> Et c'est cette même pluralité qui dispose et impose à l'homme "au singulier" les conditions pour la participation dans la création d'un monde avec les autres hommes.

Comme Eric Weil, Hannah Arendt distingue également le dialogue des autres formes politiques du langage, c'est-à-dire le distingue de la discussion et du débat. Mais dans le cas d'Arendt, il y a une deuxième distinction sous-jacent et seule implicitement placée: celle entre le véritable dialogue et le dialogue faux: "Truly human dialogue differs from mere talk or even discussion in that it is entirely permeated by pleasure in the other person and what he says. It is turned to the key of goldness, we might say". (Arendt 1973, 23)

Le dialogue faux peut être reconnu comme celui qui se concentre exclusivement sur le sentiment, sur l'instinct, enfin, sur ce qui est exclusivement individuel et qui maintient l'homme fermé en lui-même. En fait, pour le dialogue faux, "the

decisive factor is the pleasure and pain, like everything instinctual, tend to muteness, and while they may well produce sound, they do not produce speech and certainly not dialogue”. (ibid., 23) Alors, ce qui est en jeu c’est beaucoup plus que l’utilisation du langage comme instrument pour dire le monde. En d’autres termes, le langage n’est pas seulement descriptif, il est vraiment constitutif de l’être humain. C’est en elle que l’homme se montre au monde et à l’autre homme. C’est donc dans son analyse du langage et plus précisément dans l’analyse du dialogue que Arendt articule la complexité de l’apparition de l’homme dans le monde, c’est-à-dire de sa visibilité essentielle à l’existence politique. Dans le langage, l’homme peut non seulement se manifester au monde, mais plutôt c’est dans le langage qu’il peut voir le monde. Encore une fois, le langage c’est l’arrière-plan à partir duquel l’homme peut comprendre la réalité, est la façon dont il sort de l’obscurité de l’espace privé et peut atteindre la lumière du monde commun.

And in invisibility, in that obscurity in which a man who is himself hidden need no longer see the visible world either, only the warmth and fraternity of closely packed human beings can compensate for the weird irreality that human relationships assume wherever they developed in absolute worldlessness, unrelated to a world common to all people. (ibid., 24)

Alors, l’importance du dialogue est révélé. Il se produit en vue du monde commun, d’un monde qui s’offre comme une réalité dialectiquement mise devant l’homme comme condition et fin d’action politique. Arendt, de sa manière particulière, converse avec la tradition de la pensée philosophique sur le dialogue, sauvant dans une large mesure la forme classique de le comprendre. D’un côté, nous sommes confrontés à la reprise de la “political relevance of friendship” (ibid., 32), mais, d’un autre côté, Arendt propose d’une manière originale la relation intrinsèquement essentielle entre l’action commune et une conception particulière du pouvoir. La distinction entre force et pouvoir est fondamentale pour la compréhension de cette notion de Arendt, la notion dans laquelle la puissance repose sur la relation entre les sujets et qui nous permet d’interpréter le dialogue comme sa forme la plus élémentaire: “Its limits are inherent in the fact that strength and power are not the same;

that power arises only where people act together, but not where people grow stronger as individuals. No strength is ever great enough to replace power; wherever strength is confronted by power, strength will Always succumb”. (ibid., 30) Ayant retrouvé la valeur politique de l’amitié, dit Arendt avec une certaine poésie: “Indeed that a life without friends was not really worth living”. (ibid., 31)<sup>15</sup>

La relation entre les termes prend finalement ses conséquences les plus profondes, car dans la philosophie politique d’Arendt – nous avons déjà dit – il y a certaines réflexions de la pensée de Heidegger sur le langage, des réflexions évidentes quando l’auteur déclare, par exemple, que “this converse (...) is concerned with the common world, which remains ‘inhuman’ in a very literal sense unless it is constantly talked about by human beings”. (Arendt 1973, 32) Pourtant, c’est le dialogue entre les hommes qui humanise le monde. Cette affirmation est importante car elle donne au dialogue, dans la pensée d’Arendt, une dignité similaire à celle que l’auteur consacre à l’action, le terme clé et l’axe de tout le développement de sa philosophie politique. L’extrait suivant ne laisse aucun doute:

For the world is not humane just because it is made by human beings, and it does not become humane just because the human voice sounds in it, but only when it has become the object of discourse. However much we are affected by the things of the world, however deeply they may stir and stimulate us, they become human for us only when we can discuss them with our fellows. (ibid.)

## Conclusions

En proposant le dialogue comme la dimension politique fondamentale du langage, on peut concevoir, dans Weil et Arendt, une perspective originale à partir de laquelle est possible de maintenir un discours sur l’individu sans tomber nécessairement dans une vision atomistique de la société et de l’action politique. En effet, la structure circulaire des arguments conduit à considération d’une dimension linguistique sous-jacente à le discours politique, dimension sans laquelle la politique serait impraticable. D’une part, l’entreprise dialogique établit les règles constitutives de toute

discussion politique, tandis que, d'autre part, il construit entre les hommes un monde commun à partir duquel ils peuvent se comprendre mutuellement.

La partie descriptive a mis les notions nécessaires à la compréhension des conditions modernes de l'action et, essentiellement, du dialogue, c'est-à-dire des notions de sécularisation et de globalisation. Ce n'était absolument pas le cas d'ajouter quelque chose à la compréhension de ces mêmes notions, mais d'étendre le sol moderne pour vivre la vertu du dialogue. La confrontation avec ce nouveau cadre nous permet, d'une certaine manière, de reprendre d'un mode original certains aspects traditionnels de la pensée occidentale. Sous la forme de conclusion, nous pouvons souligner, essentiellement, la récupération d'une idée politique de la vertu et, plus fondamentalement, la redécouverte d'une conception classique du rapport entre pensée et dialogue, c'est-à-dire du "mental dialogue", pour revenir aux mots d'Arendt. (Arendt 1977, 185)

En second lieu, nous cherchons, avec Weil, illustrer le dialogue comme un registre politique du langage, véritable pierre angulaire de toutes les formes de discours politique. Seulement en comprenant le caractère fondamentalement politique du dialogue que nous pouvons le comprendre comme une vertu ; cette affirmation exige la confrontation ininterrompue de tous les efforts pour la construction du dialogue avec les vertus de l'honnêteté et de la justice. Donc, ce qui est en jeu c'est la construction de l'homme et, par conséquent, du monde, donc le dialogue, en tant qu'antipode de la violence, est un choix qui doit être renouvelé à chaque instant, la décision pour la création d'un monde où chacun peut vivre honnêtement en profitant de la justice dans ses rapports avec tous les autres hommes.

L'analyse du dialogue en tant que mode politique du langage est orientée dans deux différentes directions. D'une part, il nous demande d'examiner les conditions présentes dans les institutions politiques qui garantissent les possibilités de la discussion libre, et d'autre part, il rappelle la liberté sur laquelle repose le dialogue, une liberté qui est en même temps le fondement et le but du dialogue dans le domaine politique. Alors, les deux auteurs nous conduisent aux mêmes



conclusions, puisque l'une et l'autre mettent l'accent sur le dépassement d'une vision instrumentale du langage, comme s'il s'agissait seulement de *dire* le monde et non de le *construire*. L'homme est un être de langage, mais pas naturellement un être de dialogue. Donc nous pouvons parler de vertu, car il s'agit du choix de ceux qui veulent voir la violence disparaître du monde, de ceux qui savent que rien ne peut garantir le succès de leur travail, mais qui ne refusent pas d'assumer le "courage de la raison".

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Au sujet de l'approximation entre la pensée d'Arendt et de Weil, voir Canivez (1989) et Calvet (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Pour une approche inhabituelle du processus de mondialisation, voir Grusinski (2004).

<sup>3</sup> Pour la description de ce processus à partir de la perspective particulière des transformations de la sphère publique, il faut encore recourir à Habermas (1990).

<sup>4</sup> Sur les différentes nuances entre les termes "mondialisation" et "globalisation", voir la synthèse présent dans Gilbert (2009).

<sup>5</sup> La forme de cette rencontre a été présentée par quelqu'un sous la forme de choc, sans comprendre la possibilité alternative et coexistante du dialogue et de la coopération entre les "civilisations". Cette présentation partielle de la question est disponible dans le célèbre travail de Huntington (1996).

<sup>6</sup> L'approche politique justifie le fait que nous n'avons pas mentionné les auteurs qui ont fait du dialogue *le* problème capital de leur pensée, comme, pour citer l'exemple définitif, la pensée de Martin Buber, dont le noyau est constitué d'une perspective plus anthropologique et existentielle. Voir Buber (1984).

<sup>7</sup> Crise écologique que nous voulons comprendre au sens plus large, y compris la menace que elle représente à l'humanité dans son ensemble et en particulier à la vie et à la dignité des pauvres et des marginalisés complètement vulnérables aux conséquences des déséquilibres dans les rapports entre l'homme et la nature.

<sup>8</sup> Sur le rôle capital de l'État constitutionnel dans la pensée politique d'Eric Weil, voir Bescond (1982).

<sup>9</sup> Sur l'importance de la discussion, "le point de départ de l'histoire", voir Weil (1950).

<sup>10</sup> "Le dialogue antique, le modèle sur lequel nous vivons en dialogant est dialogue à l'intérieur d'une communauté politique constituée, à l'intérieur de la Cité ou de l'État, à l'abri de la violence, sans la protection d'institutions qui, sans exclure la violence, se réservent le monopole de son emploi. Le dialogue, en notre temps, part d'une communauté de valeurs : et nous exigeons de lui

qu'à partir de ces valeurs communes il crée tout d'abord la communauté des institutions qui doivent réaliser ces valeurs, plus exactement, dans lesquelles seules ces valeurs peuvent être réelles et agir en réglent les actions des hommes" (Weil 2003, 283).

<sup>11</sup> Ce qui peut être enrichi avec le commentaire de Jeremy Waldron lorsqu'il affirme que: "The central case of an Arendtian *zoon politikon* is a person who engages seriously and responsibly in public business under the auspices of public institutions. He has the judgment to discern which issues are political and which are merely social or personal. He can see that what matter in politics are interests and purposes that are shared by all as agents in a community. He has the patience to listen to others and to respond to their intelligence in a way that treats them as equals. Above all, he has respect for the structures and procedures that frame the political enterprise and that make possible deliberation and action with others. He takes the framework seriously, and he resists the temptation to dazzle his audience or further his own aims by subverting the formalities it imposes" (Waldron 2000, 202).

<sup>12</sup> Sur le lien entre Heidegger et la tradition "Expressive-constitutive" du langage, voir Taylor (1995).

<sup>13</sup> L'analyse de la liberté comme une «priorité politique» ne peut apparaître pleinement qu'au XXe siècle, car seulement dans cette période les menaces à la liberté se manifestent dans sa pureté. Est ce que l'on peut voir, par exemple, dans le commentaire de Jerome Kohn: "It is only in the present dimension of time – that which lies between past and future, between what has already happened and what is yet to come – that freedom and the priority of the political for the human world fully emerge in Arendt's thought. For her the political is by no means the be-all and end-all of human experience. It is distinct from 'what we can do and create in the singular: in isolation like the artist, in solitude like the philosopher, in the inherently worldless relationship between human beings as it exists in love and sometimes in friendship'. The point is rather that apart from free political activity, which is to say apart from action and judgment, both of which depend on human plurality, human experience as such is thrown into jeopardy. Arendt was not born with this insight, but discovered the meaning and the importance of the political by witnessing its negation in the multiform linkages of evil that were manifest in her lifetime. These linkages, however, did not form a necessary concatenation of events; they were contingent, as everything human is contingent: man is 'the dwelling place of the contingent', for better and worse. It is due to their contingency, to the fact that they were not causally related but the results of the 'crystallization' of 'elements' of Western history (to use Arendt's familiar language), that the story of 'the real twentieth century' remains open. We turn our backs on it at our own peril, for the 'elements' themselves have accompanied us into the new century, where they remain as dangerous as they were in the one that has passed" (Kohn 2000, 113-114).

<sup>14</sup> Comme elle le précise depuis le début de *The human condition* : "Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter, corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world. While all aspects of the human condition are somehow related to politics, this plurality is

specifically *the* condition – not only the *conditio sine qua non*, but the *conditio per quam* – of all political life. Thus the language of the Romans, perhaps the most political people we have known, used the words ‘to live’ and ‘to be among men’ (*inter homines esse*) or ‘to die’ and ‘to cease to be among men’ (*inter homines esse desinere*) as synonyms. But in its most elementary form, the human condition of action is implicit even in Genesis (‘Male and female created He *them*’), if we understand that this story of man’s creation is distinguished in principle from the one according to which God originally created Man (*adam*), ‘him’ and not ‘them’, so that the multitude of human beings becomes the result of multiplication. Action would be an unnecessary luxury, a capricious interference with general laws of behavior, if men were endlessly reproducible repetitions of the same model, whose nature or essence was the same for all and as predictable as the nature or essence of any other thing. Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live” (Arendt 1998, 7-8).

<sup>15</sup> Dans le texte *On Violence*, Arendt pose d’une autre perspective la même question: “Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he is ‘in power’ we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name. The moment the group, from which the power originated to begin with (*potestas in populo*, without a people or group there is no power), disappears, ‘his power’ also vanishes. In current usage, when we speak of a ‘powerful man’ or a ‘powerful personality’, we already use the word ‘power’ metaphorically; what we refer to without metaphor is ‘strength’” (Arendt 1972, 143). Pour nous, cette référence est importante car le dialogue est une expression concrète de la formation de ce groupe.

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## Place and Psychoanalysis

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### Abstract

In this article, we highlight the importance of psychoanalysis and the Heideggerian concept of ‘place’ for each respective domain of inquiry. In particular, the writings of Jung and Lacan can un conceal and reveal new dimensions of Jeff Malpas’s work on place. Alternatively, Malpas can extend the work of these psychoanalysts by showing new dimensions of their ideas through an analysis of ‘place’. Ultimately, this article sets up a number of possibilities for future research through this novel interaction and engagement between the philosophy of place and psychoanalysis. One of these possibilities is in genomics and genetic determinism, which we briefly acknowledge throughout.

**Keywords:** Heidegger, Malpas, Jung, Lacan, place, genetic determinism, psychoanalysis

### Introduction

For humans, the influence of ‘place’ is profound. As Marcia Cavell has rightly pointed out, “Philosophy itself begins in the only place it can, *here*, in the midst of things” (Cavell 1996, 41). Many eminent philosophers have considered the concepts of space and place. Aristotle noted that, “the place of a thing is the innermost motionless boundary of what contains it” (Aristotle in Barnes 2014, 361). Sigmund Freud identified place as the second of three forces that are a constant threat to

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humans (Freud 1930, 77). Einstein focused on the definitional uncertainty of words like space and place (Einstein 1993, xiv). More recently John Agnew has reminded us that when thinking about place we must take definitional care. He argued that place can be a location, or series of locales or as ‘sense of place’ where place is grounded in social-spacial imaginations reflecting visions or fantasies of located connection that are fundamental to understanding knowledge production and dissemination (Agnew 2011). Jeff Malpas connects an understanding of place to Martin Heidegger. Malpas argues, “The idea of place-of *topos*-runs through the thinking of Martin Heidegger almost from the very start” (Malpas 2012, 1). The importance of this is highlighted when he says, “it is impossible to think with Heidegger unless one attunes oneself to Heidegger’s own attunement to place.” (ibid.) Malpas emphatically claims, “Indeed, I would argue that Heidegger’s work provides us with perhaps the most important and sustained inquiry into place to be found in the history of Western thought” (Malpas 2008, 3). Throughout this article, we will demonstrate that a Heideggerian understanding of place can provide a deeper understanding of the ideas of both Jung and Lacan. Additional connections can be made to the work of Nietzsche and Saussure, as well as other aforementioned scholars, which shows the expansive reach that ‘place’, has for a number of influential philosophers. Importantly, this deeper understanding has broad practical relevance to applied ethics and philosophical analysis across a range of areas including in other modes of psychotherapy, generic mental health care, Indigenous health, rural health as well as to genomics and genetic determinism (Crowden 2016).

Psychoanalysis and the goal to enlarge choices by enhancing knowledge of self, of others, the world about us, as well as increasing skills in dealing with persons and things holds a special place in the history of humankind. Attempts to restore or enhance individual psychological well-being and autonomy are important. Psychoanalysis and place are intrinsically connected. Both the aims of Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis can be informed by an understanding or restoration of place. As a result, the foreclosure of ‘place’ is one

way to explain ‘the return of the repressed’ or “the return of the living dead” (Gildersleeve 2018, 175). Essentially what we argue is that the foreclosure of place creates the obstructiveness of a complex and the experience of ‘not-being-at-home-in-the-world’ (Gildersleeve 2017, 2) and the aims of Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis can be understood to change this so the analysand can “‘return’ to place — as a homecoming” (Malpas 2012, 19). Ultimately, this can bring about a “changed conception of both our usual ways of thinking about philosophy, about ourselves, and about our own experience of involvement in the world” (Malpas 2012, 4). Therefore, psychoanalysis allows a broadening of an analysand’s horizon to place because place is “a structure that resists any reductive analysis.” (ibid.) Psychoanalysis can initiate the analysand into thinking about place but “It is an exploration that can never be complete, but always and only proceeds through the following of particular pathways that follow particular directions and move through particular landscapes. Recognizing the topological character of such thinking gives an added significance to Heidegger’s insistence on his own thinking (and genuine thinking as such) as always ‘on the way’.” (ibid.) Furthermore, the analysand’s, or indeed anyone’s, discovery of place as well as it being accepted philosophically requires “a willingness on the part of the reader to participate in that exploration, and in the peregrinations that make it up.” (ibid.)

What is essential to highlight is a recognition that place is “constituted through an essential mutuality of relation at every level, and that is unitary even while it also contains an essential multiplicity.” (ibid.) Therefore, what Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis offer the analysand is an opportunity to “find their unity not in any single preexisting element in that place from which the unity of the whole derives, but rather in the way in which the multiple elements of the place are gathered together in their mutual relatedness to one another” (Malpas 2012, 18). Malpas highlights an example from Heidegger’s writing to elucidate place when he says:

“Thus, in Heidegger’s example in ‘Building Dwelling Thinking,’ the bridge appears as a bridge not through the exercise of its own qualities indetermining an otherwise featureless terrain, but



through a coming to appearance in which bridge, river, and the entirety of the countryside around it are gathered together as one and as many, and are thereby determined, in their being, as bridge, as river, as countryside. It is this essential gathering of elements in a mutual belonging together in which they come to presence that Heidegger also describes as the *Ereignis* — an event that is to be understood not as purely temporal, but as the temporalizing of space and the spatializing of time in the single gatheredness of place.” (ibid.)

An important theme of this quote is what Heidegger calls ‘gathering’. Our article will demonstrate that ‘gathering’ is essential to both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis because it reveals the ‘place’ of the analysand through the *Ereignis* (or Jung’s transcendent function). This is a ‘moment’ when the analysand discovers the Self (Jung) or Subject (Lacan) (Gildersleeve 2017, 3; Gildersleeve 2018, 176) by uncovering the meaning of their ‘place’ for being-in-the-world. With this unconcealment of place, *Dasein* (being-there) is also revealed (Gildersleeve 2016a, 22) and “This place is one that is constantly before us, in which we are always situated, and yet from which we often seem estranged” (Malpas 2012, 14). Thus, both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis can be understood as removing this estrangement to discover the analysand’s authentic place in the world and history. Jung appears to have achieved this in his own life: “At times I feel as if I am spread out over the landscape and inside things, and am myself living in every tree, in the plashing of the waves, in the clouds and the animals that come and go, in the procession of the seasons. There is nothing in the Tower that has not grown into its own form over the decades, nothing with which I am not linked” (Jung 1961, 225).

What will become clear and what we argue, is that place is uncovered when the analysand opens up the space of the desire of the Other (this is where Lacan is important) which is reflected in the words of Malpas when he says “a place is precisely that which opens up to allow room for what belongs within it. The return to place is thus the turning toward that which allows for, that which gives room, but also that which withdraws” (Malpas 2012, 19). Psychoanalysis helps the analysand toward this goal and this is where the barred subject

or Self is discovered through the Other. Put differently, this is when the analysand ‘lets the Other be’ (Gildersleeve 2017, 21) by ‘allowing for, giving room and withdrawing’ from the space of the desire of the Other. This is a negative movement where the analysand discovers the impossibility of their desire and therefore reveals the ‘barred subject’. On the other hand, the impossibility of the analysand’s desire is revealed through the positive ‘thrown’ possibilities the Other has received from their ‘place’ in the world. Succinctly put, what Lacanian psychoanalysis aims to achieve is for the analysand to traverse their fantasies to uncover this authentic situation or ‘place’ between the barred subject and the Other, rather than covering it over by ‘misrecognising’ place. Jung and Lacan are brought together in the same way Malpas talks about Heidegger’s work being brought together through place when he says, “all of Heidegger’s thinking itself turns around the single question of place, and in which, in this place, all of the other elements in his thinking are brought together” (Malpas 2012, 37). Here we detail this notion further in relation to Jung and Lacan.

### **1. Remembering and Turning**

In this section we aim to clarify how the intrinsic foundations of Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis are built implicitly on the phenomenon of ‘place’. Both of these psychoanalytic frameworks aim to promote “remembering that is itself invoked in Heidegger’s characterization of philosophy as marked by forgetting” (Malpas 2012, 20). Both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis aim at remembering to surpass “a forgetting, not only of finitude and questionability, but of place.” (ibid.) Questionability and discovering finitude (the impossibility of the barred subject) (Gildersleeve 2016a, 16) are both intimately related to the analysand’s success of uncovering and remembering ‘place’. This remembering or “return at issue here is not, however, a return that is predicated on a genuine moving away from – if that were the case there could be no possibility of return at all. Instead, the return is a ‘turning back’ to that in which we already find ourselves (a turning back, in one sense, to our very placedness)” (Malpas 2012, 19). This remembering overcomes misrecognition and is another

way of saying ‘making oneself seen’, shifting from desire to drive (see Gildersleeve 2017) or “truth emerges out of failure, in which failure makes itself an immanent constituent of truth” (Zizek 2014, 89).

Place can remain unconscious or ‘misrecognised’ (Gildersleeve 2016a, 8) if the analysand does not follow the ethics of Lacanian psychoanalysis to act in “conformity with the desire that is in you” (Lacan 1992, 314) to unify their desire with the desire of the Other through Jung’s transcendent function (Gildersleeve 2018, 183). When the analysand achieves this; place is experienced where “It is like the movement in which, having been engrossed in some activity, we look up to see the place that has been around us all the time, and that has also enabled and supported the activity in which we have been engrossed” (Malpas 2012, 19). We argue the ambitions of Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis are to achieve this as “a turning or a coming back to place, or to a place, in a way that also brings that place itself into view. It is an occurrence that is mirrored in Heidegger’s own image of the “clearing” (*Lichtung*) that allows the emergence of things into presence.” (ibid.) Malpas states, this “movement back to place – back to that which otherwise remains unnoticed and unremarked (as place itself often remains in the background of our activities) – can also be understood as a movement of recollection, of remembering again, and Heidegger draws directly on this idea alongside that of return or homecoming.” (ibid.) This homecoming is in contrast to ‘not-being-at-home’, which occurs when an analysand has not removed an obstructive complex from being-in-the-world (Gildersleeve 2016d, 967). What this means is that removing an obstructive complex leads the analysand toward a ‘turning’ or ‘homecoming’ to place. To remove this obstructiveness of a complex is to see that “The historical is thus not opposed to the topological, but encompassed by it. The history of being is itself a history of place” (Malpas 2012, 35). In other words, removing a complex requires the analysand to understand authentically their thrown ‘place’ in history. If the analysand was to not discover their ‘place’ in history this would lead to “the ending of history” which “is to be found in the nihilism of the almost complete

forgetting of being that is also a forgetting of place”<sup>1</sup> (ibid.). As will become clear as this article progresses “Place cannot be other than what is given in the multiplicity of places – to suppose otherwise would be to envisage the possibility of place, *topos*, as itself *atopic*” (Malpas 2012, 49). If the analysand does not recognise the importance of the multiplicity of places for the turning to homecoming, an atopic understanding of place will lead to the analysand experiencing obstructive being-in-the-world as an estrangement and alienation from place.

Looking into this further reveals that the transcendent function (Jung) or traversing the fantasy to uncover the barred subject (Lacan) (Gildersleeve 2017, 11) “is a turning back to place, [and] it is also more immediately understood in the Heideggerian context as a turning back (in the sense of a returning or reorienting) to being” (Malpas 2012, 36). In other words, these actions of psychoanalysis lead the analysand to reveal a truth of Being through a discovery of their place in the world and history. Both Jungian and Lacan psychoanalysis allow the analysand to achieve “a turning back into the place in which we already find ourselves” (Malpas 2012, 37). The analysand achieves this by discovering their relation to the Other/s which is “a structure that is constituted through the mutual interplay of multiple elements, a structure that encompasses the entities and elements that appear within it rather than underlying them, a structure to which belongs a unity that is given only in and through the mutual relatedness of the elements that make it up” (Malpas 2012, 40). These elements are the analysand’s multiple relationships with Others, more specifically, the analysand’s desire in relation to the desire of the Other/s. Essentially we argue this is a major focus of both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis; to reveal the structure of the analysand’s place within the world and history by developing their understanding of the relationship of their desire to the desire of the Other or Others. What is important to understand is that the structure of the analysand’s place “is a certain definite region, *bounded* and yet also thereby *gathered*, in which we and the things around us are given *together*” (Malpas 2012, 45). Furthermore, this discovery of place does not only occur once because “The

gathering of place that is the happening of presence and of world is a constant and multiple occurrence rather than a single founding or positing” (Malpas 2012, 38). This is consistent with a Lacanian understanding of hysteria with Nietzsche’s Will to Power (Gildersleeve 2016b). As a result, both Nietzsche’s Will to Power and Lacanian hysteria can be understood further by connecting them to place.

## 2. Nihilism and Homelessness

Malpas highlights that “We may become estranged from place, we may forget or cover over our essential placedness, but these are all forms of concealing, disguising, or denying a relatedness to place that nevertheless perdures” (Malpas 2012, 63). Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis combined with Malpas and Heidegger can be understood as aiming to reveal or unconceal this place that perdures to remove the analysand’s estrangement from place. Malpas indicates, “under the reign of technological modernity, our relatedness to place is not obliterated, but is rather covered over, ignored, made invisible.” (ibid.) Importantly, in reaction to this covering, Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis as well as Heidegger’s philosophy can mount a “critique of the placelessness of modernity – such a critique depends on the contradiction, within modernity itself, between its refusal of place (a refusal that refuses to recognize itself as a refusal) and its own inescapable placidness.” (ibid.) Here modernity itself can be compared to an analysand who is estranged from and has covered their place in the world and history.

The forgetting of place is “The nihilism of modernity” (Malpas 2012, 98). In other words, nihilism results from “a denial of the very *topos* in which thinking itself comes to pass” (Malpas 2012, 97) and therefore nihilism with affect (through the obstructiveness of existence) the analysand who denies or covers their place in the world and history. To surpass this nihilism “it is only in the direction of the thinking of *topos*, itself an essential form of questioning – of holding open a free-play of possibility (a ‘play-space’) – that any proper response to the overpowering movement of nihilism can be found” (Malpas 2012, 111). This questioning is depicted in Jung’s interpretation

of the 10 woodcuts of the *Rosarium Philosophorum* as well as in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Gildersleeve 2016c). Malpas also recognises a connection between Nietzsche and place when he claims "Nietzsche's preoccupation with the need to find a location attuned not only to his physical but also to his mental and spiritual needs. Here is a thinker who is far from being detached from his surroundings but whose very capacity for thought depends on them. Scattered throughout his writings, one finds comments concerning the relation between his work, his state of mind, and the places in which he resides, as well as descriptions, positive and negative, of those places" (Malpas 2015b, 195).

Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis assists an analysand in "the form of a returning to place, a refinding of oneself, a reorientation (even, perhaps, a repositioning) – as Heidegger himself refers to it, a form of *homecoming*, although a coming-home to that from which we never really departed" (Malpas 2012, 111). When the analysand does not reveal their place they experience an obstructive complex (Gildersleeve 2016c, 90) indicative of "Homelessness... consists in the abandonment of beings by being. Homelessness is the symptom of oblivion of being" (Gildersleeve 2016c, 154). Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis assists the analysand "back to that place in which we always already are, but from which we are so often turned away, and which modernity threatens to hide almost completely" (Malpas 2014a, 21). Malpas explains "The need for the recovery of place, for a return home, arises, then, only because of the way in which our very being 'out of place' is itself a failure to grasp our being already 'in place'" (Malpas 2008, 309) which occurs when the analysand has not discovered the Self or barred subject. Both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis implicitly understand that "We dwell, and yet we do not dwell; we belong to being, and yet are separated from being; we are in place, and yet we find ourselves displaced; we are at home, and yet nevertheless remain homeless." (ibid.) As a result, both theoretical orientations aim toward a "homecoming' of which Heidegger speaks is a return to the *nearness* of being" (ibid.), the barred subject or Self. Malpas also shows that Heidegger identified an error of the philosophical

“tradition as having largely overlooked such ‘situatedness’” (Malpas 2008, 39) of place. Correcting this error is important to prevent the analysand’s ‘homelessness’ and “On this basis the central questions of philosophy, questions of being and existence, as well as of ethics and virtue, must themselves take their determination and their starting point from this same place.” (ibid.)

### **3. Boundaries and Multiplicity**

What we aim to show in this section is that for Jung and Lacan and “Fundamental to the idea of place, and so to the idea of philosophical topography, is the notion of bound or limit” (Malpas 2014c, 14). The notion of bound or limit is essential to both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis as well as place. Boundary and limit are essential to Jung’s transcendent function as well as discovering the barred subject in Lacanian psychoanalysis (Gildersleeve 2017, 3). This combination of discovering the barred subject through the transcendent function is how an analysand surpasses an obstructive complex and this highlights that “The idea of bound or limit that appears here is one that takes bound or limit to be essentially productive, rather than merely restrictive. As Heidegger famously puts it ‘a boundary is not that at which something stops but... that from which something begins its presencing’” (Malpas 2014c, 14). This boundary, loss, impossibility or limit discloses the place of the barred subject of the analysand and allows them to traverse their fantasy to remove the obstructiveness of their complex from being in the world with Jung’s transcendent function (Gildersleeve 2017, 3). The transcendent function takes place when the analysand unifies their desire (conscious) with the desire of the Other (unconscious) through the drive (Gildersleeve 2017, 9). When this occurs, this reveals the boundary, impossibility or limit of the barred subject through the possibilities or boundaries of the desire of the Other/s. This is how the analysand goes beyond their imaginary fantasies to find their place in the world by discovering ‘the impossible’ (the possibility of the impossibility of their desire) (Gildersleeve 2017, 23) which equates to Lacan’s formula “the real as the impossible” (Lacan 1998, 167). Since

the analysand has removed their imaginary fantasies by discovering the impossibility of their desire, their complex no longer obstructs their world because they have found a more authentic or *Real* 'place' in the world. When this occurs through the drive/transcendent function, the analysand reaches the 'place' of *Gelassenheit*, which is an "experience of letting go, being let, and letting be" (Gildersleeve 2017, 20). This is when the limit or boundary of the barred subject/Self is revealed to the analysand; this is elucidated by Heidegger when he says, "the boundary, in the Greek sense, does not block off but, rather, as itself something brought forth, first brings what is present to radiance" (Malpas 2012, 101). This radiance of the boundary of the barred subject/Jungian Self is 'the event' or '*Augenblick*', which we will discuss in a later section of this paper.

Another important aspect to detail is the "*complexity of place*. This complexity is evident in the 'folded' character of place" (Malpas 2012, 49). In Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, the analysand needs to come to an understanding that "any place encompasses other places within it while also being encompassed by other places in its turn." (ibid.) For the analysand to discover the place of the Self or barred subject they must appreciate that place is always "a manifold of places [that are] reciprocally related by belonging together, which we call a settlement or a district [*Ortschaft*]. That 'place' in which the essence of Being comes to presence in an eminent sense" (Malpas 2012, 154). In other words, when the analysand discovers the manifold of places reciprocally related together they are able to turn toward their homecoming to remove the obstructiveness of their complexes and imaginary fantasies. This understanding of place is important because "Rather than presenting human beings as deterministically constrained, such a conception opens up a view of the human as enmeshed in an essentially reciprocal relation with the world in which it is also situated. The human thus cannot be assumed in advance, nor can it be taken to arise out of only one set of structures or elements alone" (Malpas 2012, 156). As a result, the analysand needs to understand their "reciprocal relation with the world" to achieve their homecoming rather than understanding themselves as isolated from others. This also



highlights the idea that place and the foundations of Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis are important instruments to understand the ethics of genomic futures and in particular criticize the philosophy of ‘genetic determinism’ (e.g. see Dar-Nimrod & Heine 2011, Kirby 2000, Gilbert 2002, Crowden 2016).

To reiterate, Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis enable “a return to our own experience of being, and one might say, our own experience of ourselves. It is also, it should be said, a remembering of place” (Malpas 2012, 173). In other words, psychoanalysis assists the analysand to “that open realm in which self, other selves, and things first come to presence” (ibid., 197). This occurs when a “multiplicity of elements is gathered” (ibid., 202) by the analysand by going beyond an imaginary relationship to themselves and the Other (Gildersleeve 2018). This happens through Jung’s transcendent function, which unifies the analysand’s desire with the desire of the Other to disclose each other’s ‘place’ in the world. Jung’s transcendent function discloses the possibilities of the analysand and the Other but also their impossibilities (Gildersleeve 2017, 13) which is “a certain boundedness, but it is a boundedness that opens up rather than closes off” (Malpas 2012, 202). This boundedness is the structure of the Self or barred subject and this is what allows the analysand to remove the obstructiveness of their complex to find their place, freedom (Gildersleeve 2017, 7-8) and homecoming in the world. To summarize, the ‘place’ of the barred subject or Self is disclosed by Lacanian and Jungian psychoanalysis through “a unitary structure that is constituted in terms of a multiplicity of irreducible elements; a structure that is bounded and yet open” (ibid., 203).

#### **4. Mapping Out, Topography and Poetry**

As we have been claiming throughout this article, Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis shift an analysand from error (misrecognition) to a truth (Gildersleeve 2017, 16) in an “attempt to illuminate a place in which we already find ourselves and in which other things are also disclosed to us” (Malpas 2008, 34). This can be detailed further by noting that the processes developed by these psychoanalysts “bears

comparison with the idea of the writing or ‘inscribing’ of place that is undertaken by the traditional topographer. The topographer who is concerned to map out a particular region.” (ibid.) The analysand needs to map out their place in the world in connection to the Other to discover the Self or barred subject to remove an obstructive complex or fantasy from being in the world. The analysand like a topographer “has the task of mapping out that region while located within it. Such a task can only be accomplished by looking to the interconnections among the features of that region and through a process of repeated triangulation and traverse-and a good deal of walking-on the basis of which such interconnections are established.” (ibid.) In other words, the analysand discovers their place in the world by understanding their interconnection to others through the transcendent function like that depicted in the 10 woodcuts of the *Rosarium Philosophorum* and Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Gildersleeve 2016c). The analysand achieves this by acting in conformity with their desire (through introversion) until they discover their boundary or limit through the desire of the Other (extroversion) (Gildersleeve 2018, 176). The analysand discovers their interconnections with others through this process of acting in conformity with their desire until they experience the obstructiveness of their complex through the desire of the Other. When this happens, the analysand can come to a deeper understanding of their place by discovering the impossibility of their desire through the desire of the Other, which reveals the barred subject or Self to the analysand. Once this has been achieved the analysand can traverse their fantasy by understanding the impossibility of their desire which allows the obstructiveness of a complex to be surpassed (Gildersleeve 2016a, 14-16). When this happens, the analysand has a deeper understanding of their authentic ‘place’ in the world (Gildersleeve 2018, 199) by understanding their interconnectedness to Others through “the crisscrossing pathways that represent the topographer’s travels through the landscape” (Malpas 2008, 34). This analogy is very important because it “suggests that it is a mistake to look for simple, reductive accounts-whether we are exploring a concept, or problem, or the meaning of a term, the point is always to look to

a larger field of relations in which the matter at issue can be placed” (ibid., 35). This again highlights the errors of genetic determinism and psychotherapies that do not conceptualise the human being as having a ‘place’ in the world and history through their interconnections with Others.

Similar to the topographer, the analysand must unify introversion with extroversion (Gildersleeve 2018, 167) to map out and come “to understand a place, and so to grasp the more particular localities and places situated within it, through walking around and getting used to the various pathways and sites that make it up” (Malpas 2012, 203). In other words, this is the analysand’s journey to ‘act in conformity with their desire’ (Lacan 1992 314) through introversion to discover if that desire is possible or impossible by discovering the desire of the Other through extroversion (Gildersleeve 2018). This is how the analysand maps out their place in the world and history “through repeated triangulation and traverse across the face of that terrain” (Malpas 2012, 203) which is guided by the obstructions of their complexes they experience along the way.

In contrast to those who argue for genetic determinism (Dar-Nimrod & Heine 2011, 22; Gilbert 2002, 123), the analysand’s unobstructed freedom and place in the world is not “a matter of finding just one point from which everything else falls into view. The elements within the landscape provide the focus through which the unity of the landscape is grasped” (Malpas 2012, 203). Malpas ardently states that place is discovered through “a multiplicity of elements that are focused and gathered together” and place “is to be located within a unitary but differentiated ‘region,’ each element of which is interconnected and mutually defining” (Malpas 1999a, 133). This differentiation comes from the differences between the analysand and the Other. The analysand and Other are interconnected and their place is mutually defined by the ‘thrown’ possibilities and impossibilities of their desires. As a result, the analysand’s discovery of place “is to encounter oneself only inasmuch as one also encounters others, and inasmuch as one also encounters things.” (ibid.) The analysand’s discovery of place “is always a ‘there’ belonging to the many rather than the one – a ‘there’ that must be always

multiple and never single in any simple fashion – and so also as the place in which being, that is, the nearness of the presence of things, also comes to light” (Malpas 2007, 495). This is why introversion combined with extroversion is necessary to discover place (see Gildersleeve 2018).

Finally, Malpas brings attention the relationship between place and the poetry of T.S. Eliot. He suggests, “Perhaps *Four Quartets* can be seen as an example of what Heidegger would call ‘the poetry that thinks,’ and so perhaps Eliot can be seen, in a certain way, as moving in the direction of his own topology of being” (Malpas 2012, 267). He adds, “In his juxtaposition of end and beginning, Eliot also gives added emphasis to the image of turning and return that is so central to the thinking of *topos*.” (ibid.) Malpas quotes Eliot’s *Four Quartets*: “What we call the beginning is often the end/And to make an end is to make a beginning” as well as “We shall not cease from exploration/And the end of all our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time.” (ibid.) This connection between beginning, end and place is also found in Sartre as a change in a ‘fundamental project’ (see Gildersleeve 2017, 12).

## 5. Gathering and the Other

The task for the analysand for both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis “is never a matter simply of the coming to presence of a single being-as if presence was something that could attach to a single self-sufficient entity. The presencing or disclosedness of a being is always a matter of its coming to presence in relation to other beings” (Malpas 2008, 14). Jung’s transcendent function and Lacan’s traversing the fantasy is only possible when the barred subject or Self of the analysand comes “to presence in relation to other beings” (the Other/s). This occurs because the analysand comes to understand a “gathering of otherwise multiple elements in a single unity” (ibid., 16). This gathering of place is structured through the analysand’s desire (introversion) in relation to the desire of the Other/s (extroversion). This also emphasizes the importance of the analysand’s balance between introversion and extroversion and this is how the analysand appropriates

their place in the world and history in ‘the moment’ (Gildersleeve 2016c, 102) “in which we find ourselves along with other persons and things” (Malpas 2008, 221). The analysand reveals their place in this moment through the barred subject or their boundaries by discovering the possibilities and impossibilities of their desire. Place involves a gathering of the “interrelations between the originary and mutually dependent (‘equiprimordial’) elements” (ibid., 306). As a result, the analysand’s task of understanding their place in the world is never complete and understanding their relationship to others can always be developed through more gathering (this will be detailed in the penultimate section of this article)<sup>2</sup>. This elucidates Malpas when he states, “idea of boundedness and that of focus or gathering are themselves closely tied to a conception of place as constituted through a gathering of elements that are themselves mutually defined only through the way in which they are gathered together within the place they also constitute” (ibid., 29). This is important because it highlights that the analysand will only be ‘at home in the world’ if they are able to discover their place, which is mutually, defined in relation to the desire of the Other/s. Again, this shows the errors of genetic determinism that excludes an analysand’s relationship to others by focusing solely on the genetic makeup of the individual as “separate and autonomous entities” (Malpas 2011, 49). Supporters of genetic determinism do not recognise “that we cannot understand ourselves independently of the places in which our lives unfold even though those places may be complex and multiple” (Malpas 2014a, 22). Haslam eloquently describes the problematic consequences of genetic determinism when he notes this “thinking has an insidious tendency to deepen divisions among human groups, creating a view of the social world as collection of fixed and segregated categories” (Haslam 2011, 822). What we aim to show is that both place and psychoanalysis provide a way out of this nihilism.

The analysand’s place is arranged in “both a being gathered into as well as a differentiating from” (Malpas 2014a, 22) the desire of the Other/s. This is how the analysand ‘gathers’ an understanding of their place by unifying their

desire with the desire of the Other/s to establish their “identity through differentiation” (Malpas 2016, 7). When supporters of genetic determinism isolate the individual from their relationship with others both place and “identity through differentiation” is lost and misrecognised which can contribute to an ideology that is similar to one that condones an analysand’s imaginary fantasies and obstructive complexes. In other words, “while one can take the thing at issue at a certain ‘instant’ and then analyze or dissect it into its apparently separate elements, treating each as if it had an identity of its own, any such analysis is always somewhat artificial” (Malpas 2008, 59).

## **6. Reciprocal Determination and Language**

The analysand’s unobstructed place in the world and history stands “within a dense web of relations – through those relations it gives shape and focus to other things, but in doing so it also gives shape and focus to itself” (Malpas 2016, 8). The analysand discloses their place “through the interrelating of the elements that already belong to the situation” (Malpas 2008, 59) of their desire. The possibility or impossibility of the analysand’s desire is determined by the possibility or impossibility of the desire of the Other resulting in “the reciprocal determination of elements.” (ibid.) The analysand’s identity and place in the world “is given only in and through the ongoing and reciprocal determination of the elements of which it is constituted” (ibid., 60). Because the “identity and unity is thus not to be found at any statically conceived ‘instant’ in that constitution” (ibid.), the analysand needs to always be open to more ‘gathering’ to be unobstructed by complexes and to find their authentic place in the world (for more, see footnote on previous page).

The analysand’s understanding of place is similar to the hermeneutic circle where “the elements that make up a text can only be understood in relation to the unity of the text as a whole, while the unity of the text is only to be understood in terms of the elements that contribute to that unity.” (ibid.) This again highlights the importance of non-reductionism and extroversion so the analysand can discover their place through

the desire of the Other/s. This is also supported by “Heidegger’s account of being-there as always social of being-there as always ‘being-with’ [which] indicates the way in which Heidegger takes issue with the predominantly solipsistic underpinning of many traditional ways of thinking of human being-especially those ways of understanding that are taken to have their origins in the internally centered thinking exemplified in Descartes’s *Meditations*” (ibid., 89). This reductive solipsism is still prevalent in genetic determinism, which “reduces the self to a molecular entity, equating human beings, in all their social, historical, and moral complexity, with their genes” (Parrott et.al. 2012, 763).

In contrast, Jung’s transcendent function is a “unifying occurrence in which differentiation is also evident” (Malpas 2008, 116) where the analysand removes their obstructive complex by discovering the possibilities and impossibilities of their desire and the desire of the Other. Place and psychoanalysis are developed by noting that they “stand in an important and essential relation to *language*. This is so in at least two respects: first in the character of place and language as ‘gathering,’ and, second, in the character of language and space as both ‘differentiating’ or ‘dif-fering’” (Malpas 2012, 263). It is vital to point out the relation to Saussurean linguistics here. Place, the barred subject and the Self have an essential relation to Saussurean linguistics since they all share the characteristic of being “purely differential and defined not by their positive content but negatively by their relations with the other terms of the system. Their most precise characteristic is in being what the others are not.” (Saussure 1959, 117) Furthermore, place, the barred subject and the Self like “Language is a system of interdependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others” (ibid., 114). Lastly, Saussure’s linguistics can critique genetic determinism by recognising that “The idea or phonic substance that a sign contains is of less importance than the other signs that surround it. Proof of this is that the value of a term may be modified without either its meaning or its sound being affected, solely because a neighboring term has been modified.” (ibid., 120) The

analysand's place in the world is discovered through "a gathered unity in which things find themselves brought together with one another while they are also disclosed in their difference-‘language’ is a key word that names this happening of unifying and differing" (Malpas 2008, 264). Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis helps the analysand "allow the world, and the things that make up the world to come forth in their abundance and multiplicity." (ibid., 271) As a result, in contrast to genetic determinism or reductive psychotherapies that eliminates place, the analysand's "identity is never just a matter of the self-sameness of the thing, but always directs us towards the thing in its relationality" (Malpas 2014a, 19). The analysand discovers their place in the world and history through the desire of the Other/s which is "a difference that itself arises only in and through an essential relatedness. It is this event of gathering - which is also a belonging, a unifying, and a differentiating" (ibid.) and this is what we believe both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis aim toward.

## 7. Homecoming, Reorientation and *Ereignis*

We claim the analysand visits the psychoanalyst because of their ontological 'homelessness' in the world. They experience this homelessness because they have 'forgotten' or misrecognised their place in the world and this results in the obstructiveness of a complex. The job of psychoanalysis is to change this through a "reversal of forgetting [which] is also a turning back to our proper place-and it is in just this sense that Heidegger will frequently, in his later writing, call upon the idea of the reversal of forgetfulness as a matter of 'homecoming' (*Heimkunft*)" (Malpas 2008, 149). Thus, psychoanalysis is a form of 'transhumanism' because it promotes a "returning to this dwelling-place, the place in which we already are and yet are not, that we come into the 'being-there' that belongs to our 'future humanness'." (ibid., 180)

When the analysand discovers the barred subject or Self, a turning to their place in the world/history occurs, but "this turning is not a change in standpoint, but rather what might be thought of as a 'reorientation' that enables the proper recognition of the place, the locality, in which thinking already



finds itself.” (ibid., 151) This is possible because the analysand is no longer obstructed by their complex or fantasies because they have gone beyond an imaginary relationship to themselves and the Other/s. The analysand can now see their *Real* place in the world more authentically through this ‘event’ or “*Ereignis*”. Malpas explains this by saying “‘*Ereignis*’ is the idea of ‘coming to sight,’ ‘being disclosed,’ ‘being made evident.’ Etymologically ‘*Ereignis*’ has its roots in the now somewhat archaic term ‘*eräugnen*’ meaning to see or to be evident. Once again this is suggestive of a connection back to *Being and Time*—to the idea of the ‘moment of vision,’ *Augenblick*, in which being-there grasps its existential situation.” (ibid., 215) The *Augenblick* was briefly mentioned earlier as the radiance of the boundary from the barred subject. As a result, this connection can be retrieved here where “‘*Ereignis*’ is the name for the particular sort of unifying and differentiating happening by which things come to presence, by which they come to be” (ibid., 216) as the analysand discovers the place of the barred subject/Self through the impossibility of their desire through the desire of the Other/s. In other words, we believe the aim of both Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis is to achieve this “‘visionary moment,’ the ‘*Augenblick*,’ as that in which being-there grasps its ‘Situation,’ the idea of authenticity, can all be seen as articulations of aspects of this original understanding of situatedness as ‘eventful)’” (ibid., 59). This is “the “other beginning” of the turning back to being that occurs in the disclosive gathering of belonging that is the Event—a turning in which we regain a proper relatedness to the world and ourselves, in which we recognize the proper place, and so the boundaries, of our dwelling.” (ibid., 299)

## 8. Triangulation and Psychoanalysis

Malpas also sees some important connections between triangulation and place. For example, “in a terrain that is not yet mapped, triangulation, together with movement across the terrain, allows the mapping of the terrain through the successive triangulation of the different locations within it” (Malpas 2014b, 4). This analogy has resonates with Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. The success of these

psychotherapies depends on the analysand taking the journey of triangulation to map out the terrain of their place in the world (Cf. Gildersleeve 2016c). This involves the analysand ‘acting in conformity with their desire’ until they discover the unconscious through the impossibility of their desire via the desire of the Other. This unconceals the barred subject or Self through the unification of opposites (the transcendent function – conscious/unconscious, desire/desire of the Other, introversion/extroversion).

The analysand discovers their place in the world “through the interconnectedness of the places” (Malpas 2014b, 4). In other words, their interconnectedness with the desire of the Other/s and place is revealed in more depth and detail “through repeated sightings and movements across it” (ibid.) (see next section for more on this). The meaning of the analysand’s place in the world is “an interconnection that can never be given all at once, nor in any final or exhaustive fashion (no mapping is ever complete)” (Malpas 2014b, 6; Gildersleeve 2016b, 6). As a result, the analysand needs to continue “repeated tracing out of those connections” (Malpas 2014b, 6; Gildersleeve 2016b, 21) to become more authentic and at home in an unobstructed world. The analysand’s place is “not given independently of other places-for there to be one place is for there to be many places, and so places appear always as part of a larger topographic or topological field” (Malpas 2014b, 8). Finally “Given the dynamic character of triangulation, and so of the formation of place and region, the relationality of place and region is itself always in process” (ibid.) which is the focus of the penultimate section of this article.

## 9. Hysteria, Will to Power and Place

We contend that an analysand’s task is to discover their “place that is essentially unitary, dynamic, and constantly unfolding” (Malpas 2008, 65). The analysand displays authenticity by understanding “the structure that appears here-whether understood through the *Ereignis*, the happening of place that is the happening of the Fourfold, the ‘event’ of disclosedness that is the event of truth (the ‘clearing’ – *Lichtung*) – never achieves completion even though there is a

sense in which it is always moving towards completion” (Malpas 2014b, 12). As the analysand discovers their place in the world through the relation of their desire to the desire of the Other/s they are “unifying but not unified.” (ibid.) As a result, to be authentic to their place in the world the analysand requires an understanding “that rejects the idea of a finished system” (ibid.)<sup>3</sup>. The analysand’s “Returning to place is a returning to nearness to things, but such nearness is a matter of allowing things to be what they are, in their closeness as well as their distance, in their unity and differentiation” (Malpas 2008, 310). The analysand achieves this through introversion to act in conformity with their desire until they discover the boundaries of their place by traveling to the desire of the Other/s through extroversion and this is “why returning to place, as Hölderlin makes clear, stands in an essential relation to ‘journeying’” (ibid.)<sup>4</sup>. The analysand metaphorically undertakes the ‘journey’ of triangulation by acting in conformity with their desire until they discover the desire of the Other/s and this is how the analysand can remove their obstructive complexes and find their place at home in the world. To achieve this, the analysand needs to understand that “triangulation has the character of an always unfinished process” and “triangulation is a potentially continuous process that is brought to an end only temporarily and on the basis of more or less arbitrary convention or decision” (Malpas 2014b, 7). As a result, the analysand’s “Authenticity would thus be tied, not to adherence to some determinate inner ‘truth’, but rather to an openness to what Heidegger calls the ‘event’ of appropriation—an openness to the happening of place” (Malpas 2014a, 22)<sup>5</sup>. Finally, this means being authentic takes “the form of a returning to place that has always to be repeated—a returning that is never simply accomplished and completed, a returning that never brings us, once and for all, into a fully and enduringly-present ‘there’, a returning that never results in our finally and forever finding ourselves simply and unequivocally ‘at home’” (Malpas 2015a, 4).

## Conclusion

In conclusion only through the analysand's "active involvement with the landscape" (Malpas 1999b, 40) (i.e. involvement with Other/s) and "repeated triangulation and traverse, can a picture of" (ibid.) their authentic place in the world/history be built. Our article highlights that in contrast to supporters of genetic determinism, in psychoanalysis, the analysand "must be understood through their interconnection rather than their reduction, through their interdependence rather than their simplification." (ibid.) The analysand is "on the way" (Malpas 2012, 4) to their homecoming when they understand that "No single sighting is sufficient to gain a view of the entire region; multiple sightings are required, and every sighting overlaps, to some extent, with some other sighting" (Malpas 1999b, 41). Finally, and to reiterate, the analysand's "delineation of place can only be undertaken by a process that encompasses a variety of sightings from a number of conceptual 'landmarks' and that also undertakes a wide-ranging, criss-crossing set of journeys over the landscape at issue-it is only through such journeying, sighting and resighting that place can be understood." (ibid.) This investigation of place and its relation to psychoanalysis provides important insights which we plan to examine in our future research on genetic determinism. Our forthcoming work explores in more detail how place can reveal the errors of genetic determinism in connection to the media, education, discrimination and debates on genetic modification. The movie GATTACA provides us a vehicle and platform to achieve these aims.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nihilism in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Gildersleeve 2016c, 103).

<sup>2</sup> See Gildersleeve 2016b, 3 for how this connects with Nietzsche's "art is worth more than truth".

<sup>3</sup> Cf. „Hysteria and the Will to Power" in Gildersleeve 2016b.

<sup>4</sup> This is comparable to the journey of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*; see Gildersleeve 2016b, 20-21.

<sup>5</sup> This equates authenticity with hysteria and the Will to Power.

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## Untersuchung der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Hermeneutik der Faktizität beim frühen Heidegger

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### Abstract

#### An Investigation of the History of Evolution of the Hermeneutics of Facticity in early Heidegger

The hermeneutics of facticity, which constituted a part of the prehistory of Heidegger's thinking before *Being and Time*, has itself also a prehistory, which is manifest in the investigation of the early Freiburg lectures. The central question here is how the non-theoretical access to the factual life and its movement is possible. Accordingly, Heidegger develops three conceptions one after another in his lectures: The original science of factual life in and of itself, the categorial explication of factual life and finally the hermeneutics of facticity. These conceptions are examined from a thematic and a methodological perspective in order to bring to light the development of Heidegger's thought in his early Freiburg lectures, which finally ends in the hermeneutics of facticity.

**Keywords:** Pre-theoretical, ontologizing, factual life, facticity, self-world, original science, categorial explication, hermeneutics of facticity

### 1. Einführung

Als einer der wichtigsten Titel für Heideggers frühen Gedanken gilt die *Hermeneutik der Faktizität*, wegen deren Entwicklung er zu Recht als eine der wichtigsten Figuren in der Geschichte der Hermeneutik angesehen wird (Vgl. Grondin 2012, 133ff; Greisch 1993, 177ff). In Hinsicht auf den Weg in die phänomenologische Hermeneutik in *Sein und Zeit*<sup>1</sup> gilt sie auch als ein Meilenstein, wie es sich an der viel zitierten Fußnote im fünfzehnten Paragraphen dieses Buches zeigt: „Der Verf. darf bemerken, daß er die Umweltanalyse und überhaupt

die ‚Hermeneutik der Faktizität‘ des Daseins seit dem WS 1919/20 wiederholt in seinen Vorlesungen mitgeteilt hat.“ (Heidegger 1977, 97) Allerdings lässt sich die Bedeutung der Hermeneutik der Faktizität auch unabhängig von den später entwickelten Gedanken Heideggers hervorheben, was mehrfach in der Forschung aufgewiesen wurde.<sup>2</sup> Darüber hinaus kann bei eingehender Betrachtung nicht übersehen werden, dass die Faktizitätshermeneutik selbst auch ihre Entstehungsgeschichte hat, was sich dadurch bestätigt, dass die Entwicklung des Gedankens Heideggers von der 1919 vorangestellten „hermeneutischen Intuition“ zu der 1923 endlich festgehaltenen „Hermeneutik der Faktizität“ freilich folgerichtig ist, aber der Gedanke auch eine nicht unwesentliche Verwandlung erfährt.

In diesem Aufsatz wird zu untersuchen versucht, die Faktizitätshermeneutik in ihrer Entwicklungsgeschichte zu beleuchten. Es ist vor allem die hauptsächliche Fragestellung von Heideggers frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen aus verschiedenen Perspektiven zu erklären, um den Leitfaden für die weiteren Überlegungen zu gewinnen. Anschließend daran folgt eine genetische Untersuchung der Faktizitätshermeneutik, die den Hauptteil des vorliegenden Aufsatzes ausmacht. Durch diese Untersuchung soll die thematische und methodische Entwicklung in Heideggers frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen ans Licht gebracht werden. Schließlich lässt sich fragen, wodurch sich Heideggers Konzeption charakterisiert und woher diese Charakterisierung motiviert wird.

## **2. Zur Erklärung der Hauptfragestellung der frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen Heideggers aus thematischer und methodischer Perspektive**

Die Aufgabe, vor die sich der junge Heidegger in seinen frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen gestellt sieht, ist das Lebensverstehen, dessen zentrale Frage darin liegt, *ob und wie der Zugang zum faktischen Leben und zu seiner Bewegtheit nicht-theoretisch möglich ist.*<sup>3</sup> Vor der Entfaltung der Diskussion ist es aber hilfreich, die leitenden Begriffe in der vorliegenden Fragestellung zu erleuchten. Sie lassen sich unter zweierlei Kategorien zuordnen: thematisch das faktische Leben

und seine Bewegtheit, methodisch der Zugang und die nicht-theoretische Zugehensweise.

Die Formulierung *des faktischen Lebens* steht im Zentrum von Heideggers früher Philosophie und gilt ihm als der geeignete Ausdruck für das Leben.<sup>4</sup> Es ist bemerkenswert, dass zwischen den Verwendungen des Ausdrucks „das faktische Leben“ bei Heidegger in verschiedenen Kontexten zu unterscheiden ist. Manche Forscher sind der Auffassung, dass Heideggers Lebensbegriff „auf die *alltägliche* ‚faktische Lebenserfahrung‘ des menschlichen Individuums“ (Großheim 2009, 136) bezogen sei. Das ist insofern zutreffend, als Heidegger diesen Ausdruck oft im Sinne des alltäglichen Lebens benutzt. Gleichwohl soll auch nicht vergessen werden, dass der Ausdruck gelegentlich in einem spezifischen Sinne angewendet wird, nämlich im Sinne des eigentlichen Lebens, welches die Alltäglichkeit, die der Verfallenstendenz entspricht, übersteigt und den ursprünglichen Vollzug des Lebens bedeutet (Vgl. Elm 2007, 279).

Eine ähnliche Formulierung zum *faktischen Leben* ist der Begriff *Faktizität*. Nach Heidegger findet dieser Begriff Verwendung, um „den Seinscharakter ‚unseres‘ ‚eigenen‘ Daseins“ (Heidegger 1988, 7) zu bezeichnen. Das besagt aber, dass dieser gerade zwecks der Hervorhebung des Seins des Lebens entwickelt wird. In den vielfältigen Bedeutungen des Lebens legt Heidegger insbesondere darauf den Schwerpunkt, das Leben als eine Seinsweise zu bestimmen. Die Ontologisierung des Lebens bekundet sich außerdem darin, dass das Leben in seiner Bewegtheit zu erfassen ist. In der Vorlesung aus dem WS 1921/22 bestimmt Heidegger „die Grundstrukturen des *Lebens als Bewegungen*, Beweglichkeiten“ und behauptet, dass „bei der Explikation des Grundphänomens Leben es auf ‚Bewegungscharaktere‘ abgesehen [ist]“ (Heidegger 1994, 114). Es wird von dem Wort „Bewegtheit“ Gebrauch gemacht, um sich von der Bewegung im Allgemeinen zu unterscheiden, da sich die „Bewegtheit“ als die Ontologisierung der „Bewegung“ erweist.

Es ist außerdem darauf zu verweisen, dass die hier genannte Bewegtheit keine einfache Ortsbewegung bedeutet, sondern diejenige Bewegung, die mit dem Verstehen sowie dem

Auslegen des faktischen Lebens einhergeht. In diesem Sinne lässt sich die Philosophie resp. das Philosophieren auch als eine Art der Bewegtheit erachten. Dabei geht es darum, einen *Zugang* zur Lebensbewegtheit zu finden, jedoch nicht durch das theoretische Begreifen. Während das Wort „Begreifen“ an die traditionelle Art und Weise des Begriffs erinnert und demnach abgelehnt wird, gilt „Zugehen“ oder „Zugang“ in diesem Zusammenhang als eine vortheoretische, damit angebrachtere Formulierung. Der vortheoretische Zugang zum Seienden als solches verwirklicht sich aber durch die Destruktion der alltäglichen theoretischen Vorurteile.

Wichtig ist nicht nur, dass der Zugang zur Lebensbewegtheit *nicht-theoretisch* sein soll. Hinzu kommt, dass die nicht-theoretische Weise des Zugangs zum faktischen Leben nicht mit dem unmittelbaren, auf das Verstehen verzichtenden Erleben gleichgesetzt werden darf. Hier zeigt sich vor allem der aktive Charakter des Zugangs zur Lebensbewegtheit. Es ist zu beachten, dass der Zugang zu einem Gegenstand nicht nur passiv geschieht, sondern es auch nötig ist, ihn aktiv zum Verständnis zu bringen, d.h. unser Zugang zum faktischen Leben muss ein aktiv verstehender Zugang sein.

Bemerkenswert ist, dass das philosophische Programm des Lebensverstehens von Heidegger dem Anspruch der Allgemeinheit keineswegs gegenübersteht, da dieser von ihm niemals aufgegeben wird und eben das Grundmotiv seiner ontologischen Wende ausmacht. In seinen Notizen hat Heidegger einmal Folgendes geschrieben: „Für die Philosophie handelt es sich gerade um radikalste Erhellung – philosophisches kategorial-untheoretisches Aufbrechen.“ (Heidegger 1994, 198) Daraus lässt sich sehen, dass die kategoriale Explikation, die allgemeiner Natur ist, mit der a-theoretischen Weise des Lebensverstehens durchaus vereinbar ist. Es steht deswegen zu vermuten, dass das, was bei Heidegger auf Ablehnung stößt, nur die theoretische Allgemeinheit ist. Im Gegensatz dazu spricht er sich für die a-theoretische Allgemeinheit aus.<sup>5</sup> Was Heideggers Entwicklung einer a-theoretischen Allgemeinheit erschließen kann, gilt es im Folgenden weiter zu analysieren.

### 3. Eine genetische Untersuchung der Hermeneutik der Faktizität

Es wurde dargestellt, dass Heidegger in seinen frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen darauf abzielt, diejenige Art und Weise aufzudecken, in der die Philosophie als die Ursprungswissenschaft in ihrer verstehenden Auffassung des Lebens seiner Lebendigkeit gerecht wird, um so die Tendenz der Theoretisierung des Lebens selbst abzuwehren und zugleich die a-theoretische oder vorthoretische Allgemeinheit der Konzeption des Lebensverstehens zu gewinnen. Ausgehend von der vorliegenden Kardinalfrage und der damit zusammenhängenden Hauptaufgabe werden drei in den frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen nacheinander dargestellte philosophische Konzeptionen ausgewählt und in Erwägung gezogen, die jeweils auf WS 1919/20, WS 1921/22 und SS 1923 fallen. Die Vorlesung aus dem KNS 1919 wird in diesem Zusammenhang insofern übersprungen, als Heidegger dort hauptsächlich noch gegen die damaligen philosophischen Strömungen Stellung bezogen hat<sup>6</sup> und erst in der Vorlesung aus dem WS 1919/20<sup>7</sup> begann, seine eigene Bestimmung der Philosophie deutlich zu konzipieren.

Es ist im Voraus darauf zu verweisen, dass Heidegger in diesen drei Vorlesungen jeweils eine philosophische Konzeption herauszuarbeiten versucht, aber jeder dieser Versuche unvollständig bleibt. Diese eine innere Entwicklung in sich schließenden Konzeptionen mit unterschiedlichen Titeln spiegeln aber die kontinuierliche Denkbemühung des jungen Heidegger wider. Darin trat die Analytik des Umwelterlebnisses bereits 1919 hervor, während der gesamte Titel *der Hermeneutik der Faktizität* erst 1923 erschien.<sup>8</sup> Im Folgenden wird zunächst Rücksicht auf die Titel dieser Konzeptionen genommen: *Ursprungswissenschaft des faktischen Lebens an und für sich* (Konzeption A aus dem WS 1919/20), *kategoriale Explikation des faktischen Lebens* (Konzeption B aus dem WS 1921/22) und *Hermeneutik der Faktizität* (Konzeption C aus dem SS 1923). Aus dem Aufbau dieser Titel lässt sich erkennen, dass Heideggers Bestimmung der Philosophie in thematischer und methodischer Hinsicht zu erschließen ist. Dementsprechend wird unsere Untersuchung

auch zweigeteilt sein: die Verwandlung des Themenfeldes einerseits und die der einschlägigen Methodik andererseits.

a) *Das faktische Leben - Faktizität - Dasein*

Es wurde aufgezeigt, dass der Begriff *des faktischen Lebens* von Heidegger auf zweierlei Art gebraucht wird: Einerseits meint er das „zunächst und zumeist“ alltägliche Leben, andererseits jedoch das eigentliche Leben. Dieser Unterschied wurde in der Konzeption A schon angedeutet. In seiner Lektüre von der Vorlesung aus dem WS 1919/20 hat G. Imdahl darauf verwiesen, dass der auf Hegel zurückzuführende Unterschied zwischen „das Leben an sich“ einerseits und „das Leben an und für sich“ andererseits bei Heidegger „eine subtile, aber wichtige Errungenschaft“ (Imdahl 1997, 110) impliziert. Der Grundzug des Lebens an sich stellt die Selbstgenügsamkeit dar, die als eine durchschnittliche Erfüllungsform des Lebens gilt (Vgl. Heidegger 1993a, 30f.). Davon ausgehend aber vollzieht sich die phänomenologische Forschung, die darauf abzielt, das Ursprungsgebiet der Phänomenologie, das Leben an und für sich, zu gewinnen.<sup>9</sup>

In der Ausführung Heideggers spitzt sich das Leben an sich, das zunächst nivelliert und nicht abgehoben ist, auf die *Selbstwelt* zu: „Es zeigt sich, daß *das faktische Leben in einer merkwürdigen Zugespitztheit auf die Selbstwelt gelebt, erfahren und dementsprechend auch historisch verstanden werden kann*“ (Heidegger 1993a, 59). Der Einführung der Selbstwelt liegt die Dreiteilung der faktischen Lebenswelt in Um-, Mit- und Selbstwelt (Vgl. Heidegger 1993a, 33) zugrunde. Diese Dreiteilung wird nicht nur nach den verschiedenen Sachgebieten entwickelt, sondern sie verkörpert auch die sich voneinander unterscheidenden Deutungsrichtungen der Lebenswelt.<sup>10</sup> Um in das ursprüngliche Feld der Phänomenologie zu gelangen, wird nunmehr das Augenmerk von der Lebenswelt auf die Selbstwelt gelenkt. Von Belang sind aber nicht „bestimmte einzelne Selbstwelten“, sondern ist *die* Selbstwelt „in ihrem Selbst selbst“ (Heidegger 1993a, 86). In der späteren Analytik schenkt Heidegger dem formalen Moment des „Selbst“ mehr Beachtung, was endlich dazu führt, dass der Ausdruck *der Selbstwelt* in *Sein und Zeit* durch den *des Selbstseins* ersetzt wird.<sup>11</sup> Auf der Suche nach dem Ursprungsfeld wird deshalb nicht direkt die

Selbstwelt als die Antwort gegeben, sondern sie dient eher als der Zugang zum Ursprungsfeld und bereitet den Erfahrungsboden dafür.<sup>12</sup>

Darauf aufbauend hinterfragt Heidegger weiterhin den Seinscharakter sowie den Seinssinn des faktischen Lebens, als dessen Folge die Entwicklung des Ausdrucks „Faktizität“ gilt, der in der Konzeption B ausführlich behandelt wird. Beseitigt man den von der Anwendung dieses Ausdrucks in *Sein und Zeit* verursachten Eindruck, dass die Faktizität ein Wesensmoment der Sorge ausmache, dann lassen sich zwei Merkmale von ihm zutage fördern. Vor allem betont die Faktizität, die sich im Gegensatz zur Logizität als zeitlich, zufällig, individuell, konkret, einmalig und unwiederholbar erweist (Vgl. Kisiel 1987, 94), den nicht-theoretischen Charakter des Lebens. Außerdem wird mit dieser Bezeichnung der Seinscharakter des Lebens dadurch hervorgehoben, dass das Leben nur im Lichte seines Seinssinnes zu verstehen ist. Die Frage nach dem Leben gilt in diesem Sinne als eine Vorstufe der Seinsfrage. Bei der Vermittlung der beiden Fragen spielt die Faktizität eine bedeutende Rolle. Weiterhin wird der Ausdruck *des Daseins*, um den Seinscharakter offenkundig zu machen, in der Vorlesung aus dem SS 1923 eingeführt.

Zugleich mit der Tendenz der Ontologisierung, also mit der Transformation vom faktischen Leben über die Faktizität zum Dasein, wird Heideggers Behandlung des alltäglichen Lebens ebenfalls allmählich forciert. Von der Entdeckung des Charakters der Selbstgenügsamkeit des Lebens an sich in der Konzeption A ausgehend, wird „Verblässen der Bedeutsamkeit“ (Heidegger 1993b, 37) im unmittelbar folgenden Semester zur Kennzeichnung der faktischen Lebenserfahrung vorgebracht. Dem folgt die Herausarbeitung der Bewegtheit der Ruinanz im faktischen Leben in der Konzeption B (Vgl. Heidegger 1994, 131-155), die im *Natorp-Bericht* sowie in den Marburger Vorlesungen weiterentwickelt wird und endlich in die Analytik der Verfallenstendenz des Daseins in *Sein und Zeit* mündet. Es soll hier darauf aufmerksam gemacht werden, dass die Ruinanz durch die Erläuterungen in der Konzeption B in Verbindung mit der Zeit gebracht wird: „Die Ruinanz nimmt die Zeit weg, d.h. aus der Faktizität sucht sie das Historische zu tilgen.“

(Heidegger 1994, 140) Das wird in der Konzeption C insofern immer deutlicher, als dort das „Heute“, eine Selbstbestimmung der jeweiligen Faktizität, als der Ausgangspunkt der weiteren Explikation erachtet wird, demzufolge sich das faktische Leben als das Dasein *des Heute* zunächst in der zeitlosen Öffentlichkeit und Durchschnittlichkeit bewegt (Vgl. Heidegger 1988, 29-33). Das sorgt dafür, dass der Deutungsversuch, die Seinsfrage im Horizont der Zeit zu exponieren, zum Vorschein kommt.

Es ist schließlich darauf zu verweisen, dass sich die Ausführung des faktischen Lebens bei Heidegger nach und nach polarisiert. Einerseits wird die destruktive Analyse des uneigentlichen alltäglichen Lebens vervollständigt, andererseits rückt das eigentliche Leben durch die Zuspitzung der Lebenswelt auf die Selbstwelt und die Ontologisierung des Lebens in den Mittelpunkt. Der rudimentäre Unterschied in der Konzeption A vergrößert sich und wird schließlich zum Gegensatz zwischen Uneigentlichkeit und Eigentlichkeit in *Sein und Zeit*. Gerade in diesem Punkt steht Heidegger vor dem Einwand, dass das Leben dadurch gespalten wird. Indes muss zugleich im Blick behalten werden, dass diese beiden Pole trotz allem auf dasselbe Themenfeld fallen, nämlich auf das faktische Leben und seine Bewegtheit. Die Zweifaltigkeit des faktischen Lebens, das einerseits den Ausgangspunkt der phänomenologischen Forschung und andererseits doch ihr anvisiertes Ende ausmacht, gilt ihm als eine Differenz innerhalb des faktischen Lebens selbst.

Es lässt sich nicht vergessen, dass Heideggers Konzeption auf die Übersteigerung des alltäglichen Lebens zugunsten des eigentlichen Lebens angelegt ist. Aber es muss aufgewiesen werden, dass hier das eigentliche Leben keineswegs das transzendente theoretisierte Lebensideal darstellt, das sich vom alltäglichen Leben entfernt. Wie das eigentliche Leben nicht theoretisch möglich ist, stellt eine Methodefrage dar und wird im Folgenden erklärt.

*b) Ursprungswissenschaft - Kategoriale Explikation – Faktizitätshermeneutik*

Angedeutet wurde: Es gilt Heidegger, die geeignete vortheoretische Methodik herauszuarbeiten, um zu garantieren, dass das eigentliche Leben dem alltäglichen nicht



gegenübersteht. Die Fragestellung lässt sich so formulieren, wie die Überwindung des alltäglichen Lebens und die Verwirklichung des eigentlichen Lebens nicht-theoretisch möglich ist, um so den Zugang zum faktischen Leben und zu seiner Bewegtheit zu gewinnen. Angesichts dessen werden die vorliegenden drei Konzeptionen erneut betrachtet.

In der Konzeption A ist von der Herausarbeitung der Ursprungswissenschaft die Rede, die sich im Unterschied zu den auf bestimmte Gebiete beschränkten Einzelwissenschaften auf die Gewinnung des ursprünglichen Lebensverstehens ausrichtet. Vor allem macht sie sich zur Aufgabe, „die Urparadoxie des Lebens an und für sich“ (Heidegger 1993a, 2) zu bekämpfen. Diese Paradoxie kann so formuliert werden: Das Begreifen des Lebens setzt das Begreifen der Methode des Lebensbegreifens voraus, die wiederum aus dem Leben selbst zu gewinnen ist. Zwischen Leben und Lebensbegreifen besteht ein hermeneutischer Zirkel, der zur Problematik der traditionellen Erkenntnistheorie gehört und dessen Überwindung durch die Entwicklung der Urwissenschaft ermöglicht wird. Daher kann die Urwissenschaft nach der objektivierten Erkennungsmethode zugunsten der Gewinnung eines systematischen Ordnungszusammenhangs nicht zustande kommen, sondern ihre Aufgabe liegt in der „*echte[n], konkrete[n] Verwirklichung* und de[m] Vollzug der in ihr selbst wirkenden ‚Tendenzen‘“ (Heidegger 1993a, 2), um so in den eigentlichen Lebenszusammenhang zu gelangen.

Die Ursprünglichkeit der Methode verwirklicht sich vornehmlich darin, dass das auf der Selbstausslegung des Lebens fußende Lebensbegreifen keinen äußerlichen Denkraum voraussetzt. Die Urwissenschaft verhält sich keineswegs gegen das faktische Leben, sondern sie entstammt ihm. In diesem Sinne wird das Leben nicht als etwas gehaltsmäßiges, das Was-sein, angesehen, sondern es gilt eher als eine bewegliche Situation, als ein Wie-sein.<sup>13</sup> Den Situations- sowie Vollzugscharakter des Lebens im Auge behaltend, lässt sich die Philosophie, nämlich die Ursprungswissenschaft des faktischen Lebens, als eine Weise des Lebens verstehen, und zwar als eine ausgezeichnete Lebensweise. In dieser Vorlesung hat Heidegger wiederholt vom Wort „Mitgehen“ Gebrauch gemacht (Vgl.

Heidegger 1993a, 161, 255), welches bekundet, dass der Zugang zum faktischen Leben ausschließlich durch die Enthüllung seiner Selbstbewegtheit geleistet werden kann, ohne irgendeinen Denkraum von außen hinzufügen zu dürfen. „Die phänomenologische Interpretation muß dem Dasein selbst die Möglichkeit des ursprünglichen Erschließens geben und es gleichsam sich selbst auslegen lassen,“ so Heidegger später in *Sein und Zeit*, „sie geht in diesem Erschließen nur *mit*, um den phänomenalen Gehalt des Erschlossenen existenzial in den Begriff zu heben.“ (Heidegger 1977, 186) Daraus ist zu folgern, dass der Versuch der Deutung des Lebens aus ihm selbst schon in der Konzeption A zum Vorschein kommt, wodurch sich der Gegensatz zwischen Leben und Verstehen auflöst und sich der vortheoretische, ursprungswissenschaftliche Weg anbahnt.

Dem folgt die Methodik der *kategorialen Explikation* in der Konzeption B, die sich im Schluss der Konzeption A schon aufspüren lässt. Die Betonung des *Mitgehens* mit dem Leben selbst schließt keineswegs das Verstehen und Auslegen vom Leben aus, sodass der Ausdruck mit der Anschauung des Lebens gleichgewichtig ist und zwischen beiden ein dialektischer Zusammenhang besteht (Vgl. Heidegger 1993a, 225f., 255), aus dem die kategoriale Explikation entsteht. Mit der Kategorie ist Sinnrichtung bzw. Interpretationsweise gemeint, von der aus eine Sache prinzipiell zur Auslegung gebracht wird: „Kategorie ist interpretierend und ist nur interpretierend, und zwar das faktische Leben, angeeignet in existenzieller Bekümmern.“ (Heidegger 1994, 86f.) Als die Interpretationsweise wird der Begriff der Kategorie mit dem hermeneutischen „Als“ verbunden, das gegenüber dem apophantischen „Als“ abzugrenzen ist.

Somit werden die Kategorien nicht äußerlich gebildet, sondern „sie sind in ursprünglicher Weise *im Leben selbst am Leben*; am Leben, daran Leben zu ‚bilden‘.“ (Heidegger 1994, 88) Nehmen wir die Kategorie der Welt bei Heidegger als Beispiel. Als das Worauf des Lebensbezugs wird die Welt als der Gehaltssinn des Lebens bezeichnet (Vgl. Heidegger 1994, 86). Sie ist allerdings nicht etwas, das vor dem Leben steht, sondern verhält sich immer in Bezug auf das Leben. Auf diese Weise gilt das Verhältnis zwischen Leben und Welt nicht als

Subjekt-Objekt-Verhältnis, sondern vielmehr ist das Leben gleich seine Welt, nämlich die aus den mannigfaltigen Sinnrichtungen des Lebens gebildete Bedeutsamkeit. Aus der Erhellung der Kategorie *der Welt* ergibt sich, dass die Kategorie dem Leben entstammt und es wiederum ausbildet.

Die beiden Konzeptionen Heideggers machen zwar von den traditionellen Termini Gebrauch, gleichwohl sucht er eine neuartige Methode zu entwickeln, um seine zentrale Fragestellung zu beantworten. Es liegt nahe, dass diese Methode nicht außerhalb des Lebens zu finden ist, sondern sie der Lebensfaktizität selbst entspringt und ihre Selbstausslegung bezweckt. Auf diese Weise verschwindet der Gegensatz zwischen Subjekt und Objekt, zwischen Methode und Gegenstand. Jedoch darf nicht vergessen werden, dass die Selbstbewegung des faktischen Lebens auch verfallend sein kann. Diese Verfallenstendenz wohnt eben dem faktischen Leben inne (Vgl. Wang 2017, 96). Macht die Philosophie dagegen nichts, dann wird das Leben ohne weiteres ent-lebt und theoretisiert, denn allein die Entdeckung dieser Tendenz vermag das Problem noch nicht zu lösen. Die Aufgabe der Philosophie ist aber, dem Verfallen nachdrücklich entgegenzuwirken und die Wachheit des Lebens zu erlangen und zu halten. Diese Aufgabe wird von Heidegger als „Gegen-bewegtheit“<sup>14</sup> gegenüber der Verfallenstendenz bezeichnet und führt endlich zur Freilegung und Entwicklung der hermeneutischen Methode.

In der Konzeption C tritt die Hermeneutik hervor, die als die Selbstausslegung der Faktizität zu verstehen ist. Bemerkenswert ist, dass die Beziehung zwischen Hermeneutik und Faktizität „nicht die von Gegenstandserfassung und erfaßtem Gegenstand“ darstellt, sondern „das Auslegen selbst ist ein mögliches ausgezeichnetes Wie des Seinscharakters der Faktizität“ (Heidegger 1988, 15). Die Faktizität gilt nicht nur als Gegenstand der Hermeneutik, sondern ist auch das Vollziehende der Hermeneutik, nämlich das Verstehende und Auslegende. Zugleich muss beachtet werden, dass die Hermeneutik nicht so sehr das Was-sein der Faktizität ans Licht bringt als deren Wie-sein, weil die Faktizität selbst nicht ein festgelegter Gegenstand ist, sondern auf eine bewegliche

bezugsmäßige Situation verweist, deren Erschließung die Aufgabe des Lebensverstehens ausmacht.

Der in der Konzeption A skizzierte Entwurf der *konkreten Lebenssituation* wird nunmehr zum Entwurf der *hermeneutischen Situation* weiterentwickelt, die jedoch auf das KNS 1919 zurückgeht, wo sie „die hermeneutische Intuition“ (Heidegger 1999, 116f.) genannt wurde. Der Zugang zum faktischen Leben hängt nicht mehr von dem einseitig auf den Gehalt ausgerichteten Begriff ab, sondern muss sich auf hermeneutische, nicht-theoretische Weise abspielen. Gerade hier befindet sich die Lösung zum Problem des Verfallens der Philosophie. Der Akzent fällt darauf, dass der philosophische Begriff nicht verabsolutiert, sondern als vorläufig und inhaltlich unbestimmt angesehen werden sollte, was sich im „Vor“-Charakter der hermeneutischen Methode äußert. Der „Vorgriff“, der in der Vorlesung aus dem KNS 1919 bereits aufgetaucht ist, bleibt in der Konzeption C erhalten, während die „Vorhabe“ hinzugefügt wird (Vgl. Heidegger 1988, 16). Die diahermeneutisch etablierte Einheit zwischen Vorhabe und Vorgriff wird durch die in einer späteren Vorlesung eingeführte „Vorsicht“<sup>15</sup> ergänzt und weiterentwickelt; daher ergeben sich endlich die in *Sein und Zeit* herausgebildeten drei Momente der Auslegung (Vgl. Heidegger 1977, 199f).

In den frühen Vorlesungen bedeutet die Vorhabe Heidegger zufolge aber die faktische Lebenserfahrung, während die Vorsicht als eine Sichtweise gilt, die den Ausgang von der Vorhabe nimmt. Aus der Tatsache, dass Heidegger im *Natorp-Bericht* die hermeneutische Situation durch die Unterscheidung zwischen Blickstand, Blickrichtung und Blickweite neu formuliert hat (Vgl. Heidegger 2005, 346f.), lässt sich folgern, dass das Sehen im Kern dieser Situation liegt. Außerdem spielt die Vorsicht eine ausschlaggebende Rolle, um Vorhabe und Vorgriff zu vermitteln. Bei der hermeneutischen Situation handelt es sich darum, dass die Momente *Vorhabe*, *Vorsicht* und *Vorgriff* nicht absolut sind, sondern sich im Lauf des Interpretationsvollzuges noch entwickeln und bereichern können. Gerade dieser „Vor“-Charakter, der die Vorläufigkeit und Beweglichkeit der Methode bekundet, ermöglicht den vortheoretischen Zugang zum faktischen Leben.

#### 4. Resümee

Die Hermeneutik der Faktizität stellt den letzten Versuch Heideggers in seinen frühen Freiburger Vorlesungen dar und kennzeichnet sich durch folgende beide Merkmale. Erstens hat die Auslegung den Auslegenden selbst zum Gegenstand und in diesem Sinne macht sie eine Selbstauslegung aus; zweitens ist der Vollzug der Auslegung niemals endgültig und immer unterwegs, d.h. das Lebensverstehen geht immer auf das Leben zurück und entzieht sich diesem niemals. Eine vortheoretische Konzeption des Lebensverstehens ist nur unter diesen beiden Bedingungen möglich. Hier besteht kein Gegensatz zwischen Leben und Lebensverstehen, zwischen dem alltäglichen und dem eigentlichen Leben, sondern eine hermeneutisch konstituierte Einheit zwischen beiden Polen, eine Einheit, welche die innere Bewegung in sich schließt und dynamischen Charakters ist.

Hier kann Heideggers Unterschied zwischen der ontischen und der ontologischen Ebene in *Sein und Zeit* eingeführt werden. Man darf behaupten: Auf die ontische Ebene ist zwischen dem konkreten alltäglichen und dem allgemeinen eigentlichen Leben eine Spaltung zu finden, die nur nachträglich vermittelt werden kann. Grundlegend dafür ist der Gegensatz zwischen Konkretem und Allgemeinem in Orientierung an einem theoretischen Modell der Philosophie. Hingegen vollzieht Heidegger eine ontologische Wendung der Philosophie und entdeckt dadurch ein vortheoretisches Modell, das auf die hermeneutische Weise die a-theoretische bzw. konkrete Allgemeinheit in den Vordergrund rückt.

Auf die ontologische Ebene vereinbaren sich sodann das Konkrete und das Allgemeine. In diesem Sinne wird die Behauptung nicht unterstützt, dass Heidegger das faktische Leben in zweierlei Dimensionen spalte und er dann nicht umhin komme, in eine andersartige Theorie zu geraten. Heidegger hat weder das alltägliche Leben noch ein über es hinausgehendes eigentliches Ideal vorausgesetzt, sondern das faktische Leben und seine beiden Tendenzen, die verfallende, uneigentliche und die gegen-verfallende, eigentliche. Diese Differenz innerhalb des Lebens, wenn sie ein Vorurteil

ausmacht, ist dann ein produktives, die Bewegtheit des faktischen Lebens ermöglichendes Vorurteil. Gerade durch die hermeneutische Bewegung dieser innerlichen Differenz gewinnt das faktische Leben seinen dynamischen Charakter, infolgedessen ist die gesamte Konzeption des Lebensverstehens von Heidegger, die in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Hermeneutik der Faktizität ihren Ausdruck findet, nachvollziehbar.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Um die wichtigsten Ergebnisse in der Forschung über dieses Thema zu nennen, lässt sich zunächst auf Th. Kisiel und C. Strube verweisen (Vgl. Kisiel 1993; Strube 1993).

<sup>2</sup> Die Ansicht, das Denken in *Sein und Zeit* als Rückschritt, nämlich als Entwicklung im negativen Sinne, im Denkweg Heideggers zu erachten, ist nicht etwas Neuartiges. Dies wird von den frühen Schülern Heideggers wie Gadamer und Becker betont, denn „den ursprünglichen philosophischen Impuls“ (Gethmann 1987, 28) in seinen frühen Vorlesungen kann man in *Sein und Zeit* nicht mehr finden.

<sup>3</sup> Diese Frage bleibt G. Figal zufolge womöglich bis für den späten Heidegger noch wirksam: „Damit hat Heidegger eines seiner großen Themen gefunden: die Frage nämlich, wie Philosophie möglich ist, ohne Theorie zu sein. Von dieser Frage leben noch die späteren Überlegungen zum Wesen des ‚gelassenen‘ Denkens, zu ‚Seinsgeschichte‘ und ‚Metaphysik‘.“ (Figal 1996, 35)

<sup>4</sup> Das Wort *des faktischen Lebens* ist erstmals wohl in der Vorlesung aus dem WS 1919/20 aufgetaucht. Davor war ständig vom *Leben an sich* die Rede und der Gebrauch des Ausdrucks *des faktischen Lebens* schien plötzlich zu sein. Eine Erklärung der Umwandlung der Formulierung fehlt aber bei Heidegger (Vgl. Heidegger 1993a, 54). Zu seiner Zeit waren die Ausdrücke *Leben* und *Erlebnis* in ihrem Gebrauch verwirrend. Diese Verwirrenheit versucht Heidegger zu überwinden (Vgl. Heidegger 2005, 352; Heidegger 1999, 66).

<sup>5</sup> Diese kann ihrerseits mit der Hegelschen konkreten Allgemeinheit verglichen werden, die darauf abzielt, zwischen absoluter Konkretheit und Allgemeinheit einen Mittelweg anzubahnen (Vgl. Dahlstrom 1994, 179-181). Über den Unterschied zwischen der abstrakten und konkreten Allgemeinheit bei Hegel spricht M. Theunissen folgendermaßen: „Bloß abstrakt oder formell ist das Allgemeine überall da, wo das Besondere von ihm getrennt und infolgedessen auch auf sich fixiert bleibt. Demgegenüber besteht die Konkretion des Allgemeinen in der Durchdringung des Besonderen mit ihm.“ (Theunissen 1982, 20)

<sup>6</sup> Aus dem gleichen Grund stehen in der vorliegenden Untersuchung die Vorlesungen aus dem SS 1920, WS 1920/21 und SS 1922, die vor allem historisch orientiert sind, außer Betracht.

<sup>7</sup> Die beiden Teile dieser Vorlesung, *das Leben als Ursprungsgebiet der Phänomenologie* und *Phänomenologie als Ursprungswissenschaft des*

*faktischen Lebens an sich*, konstruieren jeweils die Thematisierung der alltäglichen Lebenswelt und eigentlichen Selbstwelt. Diese Unterscheidung entspricht dem Begriffspaar „Eigentlichkeit - Uneigentlichkeit“ in *Sein und Zeit*.

<sup>8</sup> Der Begriff *der Faktizität* erschien erstmal aus dem SS 1920, während der Begriff *der Hermeneutik* im letzten Teil des KNS 1919 den Hörern schon vermittelt wurde.

<sup>9</sup> Das lässt sich aus dem folgenden Absatz von Heidegger deutlich ablesen: „Das Ursprungsgebiet, das Gegenstandsgebiet der Phänomenologie ist im ‚Leben an sich‘ nicht gegeben. Es ist nur durch wissenschaftliche Methode zu erreichen. Welche methodischen Ansätze sind zu machen, um aus ‚dem Leben an sich‘ das Urgebiet, das ‚Leben an und für sich‘ zu entdecken?“ (Heidegger 1993a, 203)

<sup>10</sup> Manchmal werden Umwelt und Selbstwelt nebeneinandergesetzt (Vgl. Heidegger 1993a, 77). Gelegentlich werden Umwelt und Mitwelt zusammen im Gegensatz zur Selbstwelt gestellt (Vgl. Heidegger 1995, 119). Dennoch ist es nicht immer so. Die Umwelt gilt oft als der gesamte Titel der dreifachen Welt, d.h. die Umwelt im weiteren Sinne schließt alle drei Welten in sich (Vgl. Heidegger 1988, 102).

<sup>11</sup> Der Ausdruck *der Umwelt* wird von Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* weiter benutzt, während die Ausdrücke *Mit- und Selbstwelt* durch *Mit(da)- und Selbstsein* ersetzt werden. Diese Verwandlung hat sich schon in der Vorlesung aus dem SS 1925 angebahnt. In Paragraph 26 verwies Heidegger darauf: „Phänomenal ist der Befund nicht abzuweisen, daß Mitdasein - das Dasein Anderer - und das eigene Dasein von der Welt her begegnen. Aufgrund dieses weltlichen Begegnens der Anderen könnte man diese im Unterschied zu den Welt dingen in ihrem Vor- und Zuhandensein in der Umwelt als ‚Mitwelt‘ abgrenzen, und das eigene Dasein, sofern es umweltlich begegnet, als die ‚Selbstwelt‘ fassen. In meinen früheren Vorlesungen habe ich die Dinge so gesehen und die Termini in diesem Sinne gefaßt. Die Sache ist aber grundfalsch.“ (Heidegger 1979, 333)

<sup>12</sup> An dieser Stelle lässt sich fragen, ob das Ursprungsgebiet, nämlich das Leben an und für sich, eben die Selbstwelt ist. Auf diese Frage zu antworten zögert Heidegger. In der Notiz von O. Becker finden wir solchen Hinweis: „Das Tendieren auf die Zugespitztheit auf die Selbstwelt ist eine Einseitigkeit, die zurückgenommen werden muß.“ (Heidegger 1993a, 228) Daraus lässt sich sehen, dass Heidegger mit der Feststellung der Selbstwelt als des Urgebietes noch nicht völlig zufrieden ist. Um das eigentliche Ursprungsgebiet der Phänomenologie zu entdecken, gilt es ein Stück weiter zu gehen. Bis zum Ende der Vorlesung bleibt allerdings diese Frage ungelöst. G. Imdahl ist der Ansicht, dass dies Ursprungsgebiet nichts anderes als die Situation sei, die als Bedeutsamkeit den konkreten Vollzug der Selbstwelt darstellt (Vgl. Imdahl 1997, 115f.).

<sup>13</sup> „Diese Zugespitztheit [auf die Selbstwelt] ist kein Wasgehalt, sondern ein Wiegehalt, in dem jeder noch so verschiedene Wasgehalt stehen kann.“ (Heidegger 1993a, 85)

<sup>14</sup> „Die phänomenologische Interpretation als existenzielle bekundet wesentlich eine ‚Gegenbewegtheit.‘“ (Heidegger 1994, 132)

<sup>15</sup> „Die Hinsichten, bezüglich deren die Welt besorgt wird, sind schon da. Die Vorhabe ist im vorhinein schon gestellt in eine bestimmte *Vor-sicht*.“ (Heidegger 2002, 275) .

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## **Gadamer e Vico: il sensus communis nell'ermeneutica filosofica**

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### **Abstract**

#### **Gadamer and Vico: The Common Sense in Philosophical Hermeneutics**

This article deals with the question concerning the role played by the concept of sensus communis in the philosophy of Giambattista Vico and the interpretation of it provided by Hans-Georg Gadamer in the context of his project of a philosophical hermeneutics. Gadamer's rehabilitation of the concept of commonsense, derived from an early work of Vico entitled *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione*, is functional to his criticism of the methodological model of knowledge that the humanities (or, in German, the *Geisteswissenschaften*) have borrowed from the natural sciences, to which Gadamer opposes the rhetorical-linguistic experience that one can make in a real community. Comparing these two philosophers will lead me then to analyze the interpretations of Gadamer's hermeneutical appropriation of Vico that various scholars have provided, mostly to criticize Gadamer by arguing that his treatment of Vico's concept of commonsense eventually falls prey to some kind of relativism. This topic also implies a critical analysis of the two authors' overall philosophies, in particular with regard to the difference between Vico's project of developing a science of human history grounded on universal transcendental structures in his *Scienza nuova* and Gadamer's concept of extra-methodical truth and experience that forms the basis of his philosophical hermeneutics in *Wahrheit und Methode*.

**Keywords:** Gadamer, Vico, hermeneutics, sensus communis, rhetoric, method, history, experience

### **1. Introduzione**

Si potrebbe dire – in modo certamente provocatorio, ma in realtà senza “sovrainterpretare” fino a fuoriuscire da ciò che si può definire ermeneuticamente corretto – che a due testi

fondamentali di Vico e Gadamer, *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione* (Vico 1990a) e *Wahrheit und Methode* (Gadamer 2000), sia quasi possibile scambiare il titolo: titolo che rimarrebbe, in entrambi i casi, ancora appropriato. Se si accetta infatti la traduzione di *ratione* con *Methode*, allora si può facilmente scorgere in questo termine il fulcro intorno al quale ruotano entrambe le opere, sia qualora esso sia inteso (nel caso del titolo della settima orazione vichiana) in senso generale, sia qualora si faccia riferimento più specificamente (e qui i nostri autori si incontrano in una comune polemica, seppure ovviamente a secoli di distanza) al metodo geometrico (nella polemica anti-cartesiana di Vico) o al metodo scientifico (nella polemica di Gadamer contro l'adozione dell'approccio delle scienze naturali nelle *Geisteswissenschaften*). In questo senso, non stupirà il riferimento di Gadamer a Vico come interprete e restauratore-rinnovatore della tradizione umanistica nel momento in cui questa era posta per la prima volta sotto attacco da parte di quella filosofia moderna (rappresentata ai tempi di Vico da Descartes, ma non solo) che intendeva estendere il metodo delle scienze matematico-sperimentali su tutto l'orizzonte dell'umana esperienza. Quindi Vico come primo critico del "metodo", nel suo momento genetico e trionfale, e Gadamer come osservatore, nella tarda modernità, del fatto compiuto, cioè dello svuotamento di significato della tradizione umanistica e, più in generale, dell'impoverimento dell'esperienza umana a causa della svalutazione di tutte le sue dimensioni non- o extra-metodiche.

Nel presente contributo, per mettere in evidenza questa sintonia sopra descritta, analizzerò in particolare il rapporto fra questi autori intorno al concetto di *sensus communis*, facendo riferimento ad un paragrafo di *Wahrheit und Methode* in cui Gadamer (2000, 61-93), nel contesto del ripercorrimto critico della storia di alcuni concetti-guida umanistici, tratta proprio questo tema, confrontandosi con Vico stesso – oltre che con Shaftesbury. Quello che emergerà è una forte consonanza, nel comune intento polemico sopra evidenziato e nella rivalutazione di una forma di sapere pratico e di una concezione della vita comunitaria che il mondo moderno – secondo questi autori – tende a negare. In questo senso, l'analisi del tema specifico – la rivalutazione gadameriana del *sensus communis* vichiano – si

intreccerà con un confronto più libero fra le filosofie degli autori, al fine di far valutare la pertinenza generale dell'operazione di appropriazione del pensiero vichiano condotta dal filosofo tedesco. Come anticipato in apertura, particolare attenzione nell'opera vichiana sarà prestata al *De ratione*: questo per il semplice motivo che è lo stesso Gadamer, sia in *Wahrheit und Methode* che altrove (Gadamer 2012, 189),<sup>1</sup> a dichiarare di riferirsi a quel testo. Scrive infatti il filosofo tedesco: «È naturale, in questa situazione, riesaminare la tradizione umanistica e domandarsi che cosa essa ci può insegnare circa il modo di conoscenza delle scienze dello spirito (*Geisteswissenschaften*). A questo scopo un valido punto di riferimento è rappresentato dallo scritto di Vico intitolato *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione*». (Gadamer 2012, 62-63)

In questa indagine terrò conto di una non esigua produzione critica intorno all'argomento trattato, consistente di studi che affrontano il tema del *sensus communis* in Vico come quelli di G. Modica (1983), G. Giarrizzo (1981), F. Tessitore (2002), G. Cacciatore (1999), M. Mooney (1991);<sup>2</sup> e poi, ancora, di una monografia di S. Marino (2009), che interroga l'opera gadameriana da un'angolazione particolarmente interessante per questo lavoro, e infine dei saggi di alcuni studiosi – J. D. Schaeffer (1990, cap. 5: “*Sensus Communis in Vico and Gadamer*”), D. P. Verene (1997), D. Piccini (2003), C. Gonzalez (2002), C. Jermann (1993), – che analizzano l'interpretazione gadameriana di Vico, muovendo talvolta anche forti critiche all'autore di *Wahrheit und Methode*. Prima di arrivare al confronto diretto tra Gadamer e Vico, o meglio all'interpretazione di Vico fornita da Gadamer e alle opinioni di alcuni studiosi a tal riguardo, è però opportuno fornire almeno una ricostruzione cursoria sul tema del *sensus communis* nel filosofo napoletano (cosa che farò nel prossimo paragrafo, a sua volta articolato in tre sottoparagrafi). Ciò, al fine di fornire al lettore alcuni presupposti di fondo, utili a capire meglio l'operazione gadameriana di assimilazione – se forzata o meno, lo vedremo in seguito – di Vico al paradigma ermeneutico.

## 2. Vico e il *sensus communis*

**2.1.** L'importanza di Vico nella storia della filosofia – o, più in generale, nella storia delle idee – non è oggi passibile di discussione. Posizione, questa, non di certo conquistata in vita, bensì attraverso un plurisecolare percorso tortuoso, contrassegnato, soprattutto in Italia, dall'etichetta di “anticipatore” che gli conferirono i cosiddetti neoidealisti (Croce e Gentile), i quali videro nell'opera del filosofo napoletano una prima e confusionaria formulazione dell'idealismo stesso.

Ma Vico nella filosofia del suo tempo, rispetto agli altri autori del canone moderno, con cui pure si confronta, rappresenta un'eccezione. Innanzitutto – ed è questo l'elemento che qui più ci interessa e che viene posto al centro dei loro lavori da Mooney e da Schaeffer, ad esempio – egli è un professore di retorica. Con questo non si vuole sminuire la cultura filosofica dell'autore napoletano, giacché ad esempio Platone e Aristotele sono autori con cui si confronta continuamente, e, del resto, il nesso fra filosofia ed eloquenza è costitutivo del discorso vichiano, tanto da dedicargli il discorso inaugurale del quinto anno dell'Accademia degli Oziosi (Vico 1990b). Il punto fondamentale è che la formazione retorica di Vico è decisiva per la sua filosofia e va a determinare la sua nota presa di posizione nel dibattito del tempo contro il filosofo del metodo per eccellenza, cioè Descartes. Infatti, quando Vico lavora nell'Università di Napoli, sono ormai dominanti i cartesiani; la «nuova critica» (Vico 1990a, 97) è il metodo che si sta imponendo nelle scienze e che, con la sua vocazione all'universalità, sta fagocitando le altre pratiche, tra le quali appunto la retorica.

Mooney, nella sua monografia su Vico e la tradizione della retorica, ricostruisce questo processo di distruzione della retorica ad opera dei nuovi critici:

Descartes (1596-1650) non meno di Ramo, credeva in un unico metodo valido per l'insieme di scienza e apprendimento, ma in luogo delle ingombranti offerte delle categorie topiche egli sostenne fermamente le più limpide premesse delle idee chiare e distinte, concepite in base ad un modello matematico. [...] L'opera che rivelò Descartes al mondo, e mostrò le implicazioni delle sue idee in logica e in retorica fu *L'art de penser* (1662) di Antoine Arnauld (1612-1694) libro meglio conosciuto come «la logica di Port Royal». Se un

pensatore ha mai saputo ciò che voleva questi fu Arnauld: introducendo la seconda edizione dell'opera (1664), Arnauld difese la pretesa della propria logica di essere di fatto una completa arte del pensiero, una guida per tutte le attività della mente. (Mooney 1991, 82-83)

È Vico stesso che nel *De ratione* chiama in causa Arnauld, contrapponendolo a Cicerone in relazione alla funzione della topica («Eppure anche Arnauld, dottissimo sotto ogni aspetto, la dispregia e la giudica buona a nulla [la topica]»). (Vico 1990a, 109)<sup>3</sup> Pur essendo apparentemente neutrale, egli in realtà sostiene le ragioni di Cicerone. Con questa orazione, infatti, Vico interviene sulla *Querelles des anciens et des modernes* sostenendo di voler «combinare i vantaggi di entrambe le età» (Vico 1990a, 95), poiché la critica persegue il vero mentre la topica l'eloquenza: due elementi, questi ultimi, che sono necessari per poter coniugare scienza e prudenza, vita teoretica e vita pratica. Come già detto, in questo scontro Vico si pone in una posizione apparentemente neutrale, ma in realtà ha nei sostenitori della nuova critica i veri obiettivi polemici, e questo è il risultato di una precisa concezione della conoscenza e della sua funzione. La rivalutazione della retorica porta infatti con sé la critica ai cosiddetti «filosofi monastici o solitari», cioè ad una concezione individualistica della conoscenza a cui oppone i «filosofi politici» (Vico 1990c, 496), legati all'ideale classico della prudenza e dell'eloquenza, per cui la dimensione collettiva, lo spazio pubblico, il “mondo civile”, è il luogo in cui si situa la ricerca della verità. In questo senso, al primo vero della critica la retorica e l'eloquenza accostano il verosimile, strumento della possibilità di deliberazione nel contesto incerto della vita pratica. Vico sa che l'ideale cartesiano del chiaro e distinto esclude la possibilità di giudizio sul politico, e in questo è fondamentale il ruolo del filosofo sapiente, che unisce appunto alla conoscenza del vero la capacità di sostenere attraverso argomenti (e qui l'importanza della topica per la deliberazione) una determinata scelta pratica. Scrive Mooney:

L'interesse di Vico per la vitalità della vita civile, e per la forma di educazione che ne è garante, fu molto vicina ad essere un tratto ossessivo. Incessantemente egli si scaglia contro una «sapienza priva di voce» (Cicerone, *De inventione rhetorica*, I, 2,2) ed una vuota

retorica: le società crollano quando sapienza ed eloquenza vengono disgiunte, quando filosofi come i cartesiani dimenticano come comunicare e quando i retori quali i manieristi giocano col linguaggio e lo concepiscono come meramente ingegnoso, e non come vero. Il segno della più completa decadenza, notava Vico con una magnifica immagine adattata da Cicerone (*De republica*, I, 17, 28) è quando gli uomini, a dispetto della moltitudine e della ressa dei loro corpi, vivono in una profonda solitudine di spirito. (Mooney 1991, 122-123)

Da questa analisi della funzione della retorica iniziano ad emergere tutti gli elementi che contraddistinguono la filosofia del senso comune in Vico, poiché è in buona parte da questa pratica che le posizioni teoriche vichiane prendono forma. Schaeffer, come vedremo, costruisce la sua interpretazione di Vico proprio sulla centralità della pratica retorica, intesa in senso stretto come *performance* orale.

Possiamo istituire già qui un primo nesso con l'altro autore di cui si occupa il nostro lavoro, cioè Gadamer, dal momento che l'interesse per la retorica sta, in una certa misura, anche alla base delle sue dottrine che tratteremo. La rivalutazione della retorica e della vita pratica, con riferimento ad Aristotele, è infatti un tema che Gadamer assorbe nel contesto dei corsi tenuti dal giovane Heidegger a Friburgo (1919-1923) e poi Marburgo (1923-1928). Secondo lo Heidegger di *Essere e Tempo* – opera pubblicata nel 1927, quindi perfettamente immersa nel contesto dei corsi cui prese parte Gadamer – la *Retorica* di Aristotele rappresenterebbe la prima ermeneutica sistematica dell'essere-assieme quotidiano. (Heidegger 2005, 172) Vediamo qui come si possano collocare su una stessa tradizione i nostri autori, tradizione che ha come capostipite Aristotele che penetrerà tanto in Vico<sup>4</sup> quanto in Gadamer (attraverso Heidegger e lo stesso Vico); una tradizione accomunata – al di là delle notevoli differenze – dall'idea di uno spazio relazionale-linguistico espresso nella forma pubblica della retorica, un luogo di determinazione di verità pratiche, contrapposte – o, se non altro, alternative e complementari – alla pura trascendenza della verità della filosofia platonica. In questo schema il riferimento diretto di Gadamer a Vico segna in realtà un punto di maggior contatto fra i due nel richiamarsi alla tradizione umanistica – cosa che, ad esempio, non è presente nella filosofia anti-umanista di Heidegger<sup>5</sup> – in



relazione al tema del senso comune: vediamo quindi, restringendo il *focus*, cosa rappresenta questo concetto per i nostri autori.

**2.2.** Come scrive G. Modica nella sua monografia su questo tema, «la filosofia vichiana del senso comune nasce con l'esigenza stessa delle *Orazioni inaugurali* di assegnare alla *sapientia* la funzione *normativa* dell'«*Hominis emendatio*» e l'attitudine onnicomprensiva di connettere organicamente il «certa scire» della «scientia» e il «recta operari» della «prudentia» (Modica 1983, 23). Il problema del senso comune nasce quindi con la stessa filosofia di Vico e si intreccia, durante tutta la sua produzione, a una vasta serie di temi, in particolare con la funzione di mediare fra coppie di concetti che costituiscono polarità opposte. Per quanto riguarda le prime orazioni Modica parla della dialetticità fra utile/onesto e individuale/sociale, nesso in cui però permane un dualismo fra mente e corpo con una forte gerarchia di matrice platonizzante. Questo schema inizia ad incrinarsi nel *De ratione*, in cui nella polemica anti-cartesiana viene rivalutato il tema della corporeità in vista di una «sapienza socialmente connotata», per cui «la mente può assolvere il suo potere direttivo solo a condizione che non svaluti il corpo, ma vi si immerga, antropometricamente, per attingervi il senso della propria misura». (Modica 1983, 35) In questo contesto il senso comune diviene l'elemento di mediazione fra mente e corpo sul piano antropologico, mentre sul piano epistemologico lo è fra il *primum verum* e i *vera secunda*. Questi due aspetti vengono legati in un progetto pedagogico che è l'intento esplicito dell'orazione. Vico sta infatti definendo quelli che sono gli strumenti delle scienze, che, dice, vengono – secondo l'opinione dominante nel suo tempo – rinvenuti nella critica che libera preliminarmente la verità da ogni sospetto di errore, fino a negare ogni statuto epistemologico e pedagogico ai *vera secunda*, cioè al verosimile.<sup>6</sup> Vico, al contrario, propone un discorso basato su una pedagogia della gradualità, su un'antropologia dell'«interalità» e su un'epistemologia della mediazione concreta: tutti elementi che ruotano attorno al suo interesse per concezione sociale della vita umana e della conoscenza.<sup>7</sup> L'educazione dei giovani deve avvenire infatti

attraverso lo sviluppo del senso comune – il fondamento per la vita pratica – che si genera dal verosimile, come la scienza dal vero e l'errore dal falso. (Vico 1990a, 104)

Attenendoci strettamente al piano pedagogico, uno dei problemi principali è che la critica, ponendo il vero della ragione sopra ogni immagine e credenza di derivazione corporea-sensoriale –«Infine i nostri critici pongono il primo vero come anteriore, estraneo e superiore ad ogni immagine corporea» (Vico 1990a, 105) – impedisce l'esercizio del senso comune e, così, limita lo sviluppo di due facoltà per Vico necessarie alla vita umana: la fantasia e la memoria. I giovani sono per Vico naturalmente portati a queste attitudini, le quali sono necessarie per sviluppare l'ingegno – vera potenza creatrice che precede la razionalità critica – alla base di tutte quelle arti fondanti nella formazione di un uomo educato nella cultura umanistica come la pittura, la poesia, l'oratoria e la giurisprudenza.<sup>8</sup> Nel discorso del *De ratione* troviamo l'idea che sia necessaria una mediazione fra il vero e il falso, tanto per seguire la gradualità e completezza del processo educativo quanto per fornire concretezza all'ideale attraverso l'immersione nella prova dell'umanità concreta e del consenso comunitario. Vediamo così che il senso comune è necessario anche sul piano strettamente metodologico, per cui, per rispettare lo specifico modo di conoscere dell'uomo (fondato sull'idea, che abbiamo visto, di "interalità" della natura umana), si deve passare da questa mediazione. Scrive G. Modica: «ciò che gli uomini *communiter sentiunt* intorno al vero è non soltanto altrettanto importante del vero stesso, ma è anche e soprattutto il modo *tutto umano* di concepirlo e viverlo, sì che l'apparire (*videri*), piuttosto che attestarsi come mistificazione dell'essere, si configura come sua testimonianza». (Modica 1983, 42)

In questa sua concezione della *verità* e del *metodo* si vede così venire alla luce quel tratto, che Mooney ha definito ossessivo (Mooney 1991, 122-123), di interesse verso la vita sociale; emerge cioè «l'esigenza di rendere la filosofia e la morale operanti nel vivo tessuto della realtà sociale attraverso una mediazione tendente anzitutto a calare il vero nell'universo, tortuoso ma concreto, del libero arbitrio». (Modica 1983, 60) Nel rilevare questa funzione del senso comune è

importante comprendere il rapporto che questo intrattiene con la *prudentia* e con l'*eloquentia*, due virtù sociali collocabili nello schema epistemologico che definisce il rapporto fra i vari gradi del vero in quel livello medio e mediatore fra l'ideale e la realtà storico-antropologica. Siamo giunti qui al centro della critica all'astrattezza del metodo scientifico:

Per non aver «coltivato il senso comune né mai perseguito le verosimiglianze», credendo che tutto fosse a posto quando si «misurassero i fatti secondo la retta ragione “adottando” nella prassi della vita il metodo di giudicare proprio della scienza», ciò che va perduto è proprio la vita, la *sapientia* della vita nella stoltezza di una ragione «defecata» per astrattezza. Al contrario il senso comune è la regola dell'eloquenza ma anche della *prudentia*, ossia già qui, del retto agire nella vita civile, che è la vita degli uomini interagenti e interlocutori. (Tessitore 2002, 15-16)

Tessitore coglie qui perfettamente con questi due termini (inter-agenti e inter-loquenti) il modello di umanità che troviamo in questa opera, così come in quella che abbiamo definito la tradizione di matrice aristotelica che, passando per Vico, arriva fino all'ermeneutica gadameriana. Si comprenderà allora l'importanza di questi due elementi (*prudentia* ed *eloquentia*) di cui il senso comune si fa regola e misura.

### 2.3. Secondo Vico,

il più grave danno del nostro metodo<sup>9</sup> è che, mentre ci occupiamo assiduamente di scienze naturali, trascuriamo la morale, specialmente quella parte che si occupa dell'indole dell'animo nostro e delle sue tendenze alla vita civile e all'eloquenza [...], per noi se ne sta trascurata e incolta la compiutissima e nobilissima dottrina dello stato. (Vico 1990a, 131)

L'idea di verità pura e trasparente delle scienze naturali ha tacciato di falsità il verosimile del senso comune, lasciando però così gli uomini completamente incolti intorno alla «natura umana, perché incertissima a causa dell'arbitrio». (Vico 1990a, 131) La conseguenza di questo modello educativo è la formazione di *docti imprudentis*,<sup>10</sup> cioè uomini di scienza privi di quella razionalità pratica che li possa guidare nell'azione della vita civile; questi sono i «teorici della verità fredda e astratta perché avulsa dal variopinto mondo della vita, [...] “imprudentes” perché “docti”, cioè non solo in quanto privi di prudenza e di senso pratico, ma soprattutto perché la loro

“doctrina” può fondarsi solo svalutando la pratica». (Modica 1983, 47) Al contrario, il modello positivo della vichiana rivalutazione del sapere pratico (la *phronesis* aristotelica secondo quanto dirà Gadamer, come vedremo) sono i *sapientes*, «teorici del verisimile e del senso comune e, come tali, della verità calata nelle azioni umane». (Modica 1983, 47) Torna qui il tema della mediazione fra gradi di verità: i *docti imprudentis* «dai veri universali scendono direttamente ai veri particolari», non accettando la necessità della mediazione del senso comune per prendere «decisioni utili» aggirando «le tortuosità e le incertezze della vita pratica», cosa che è invece assolta dai *sapientes*, i quali, avendo anch'essi di mira l'«eterno vero», conoscono i mezzi adatti per perseguirlo.

Abbiamo visto che il sapiente deve saper ben mediare attraverso la prudenza fra il vero universale della scienza e la realtà particolare del mondo umano, per non cadere vittima della tortuosità della vita pratica. Ma il sapiente deve attuare un'altra mediazione per elevare il *vulgus* alle virtù che lui possiede in quanto prudente: il percorso che legava il primo vero della scienza con la realtà particolare viene ridefinito in relazione al tema dell'eloquenza quando il sapiente si deve relazionare con la *multitudo*. L'eloquenza, in questa opera, viene presentata come «la facoltà di persuadere al dovere», il quale è perseguito normalmente dai sapienti – poiché la loro virtù sottomette volontà a ragione – ma non dal volgo, che, al contrario, è «travolto dalla bramosia, che è tumultuosa e turbolenta» (Vico 1990a, 137), e perciò va indirizzato, guidato verso la virtù. E la persuasione è l'arma fondamentale che i sapienti possiedono per svolgere questo ruolo di guida, poiché solo con l'eloquenza si possono indirizzare i moti dell'anima. Ma, di nuovo, regola dell'eloquenza è il senso comune<sup>11</sup> e infatti quei sovrani che non hanno coltivato il senso comune, che non hanno cioè apprezzato come in concreto la pensano gli uomini, furono per questo colti da «gran danno e rovina». (Vico 1990a, 135) Scrive efficacemente Modica:

se la *prudentia* è – come abbiamo mostrato – *sapienza del verisimile e del senso comune*, la vera *eloquentia* è, altrettanto, non solo «sapienza che parla», ma inevitabilmente, *sapienza che parla al senso comune*, giacché – specifica Vico – essa giudica e ragiona «non... pro philosophorum placitis, sed ad sensum communem». E se la prudenza

regola la vita civile guardando alle verità universali sulla base e attraverso verità particolari, l'eloquenza si adopera affinché gli *officia* della vita civile vengano attuati – sulla base e attraverso la persuasione dell'animo – anche dal volgo. (Modica 1983, 49)

Abbiamo fin qui tracciato le linee generali della trattazione del senso comune limitandoci – come da programma – al testo cui fa principalmente riferimento Gadamer: il *De ratione*. A partire da questa prima formulazione si apre tutta una serie di problemi parzialmente risolti da Vico nella *Scienza nuova*, primo fra tutti quello di una fondazione metafisica del senso comune che lo porti fuori dalle sue coordinate specificamente retoriche. Questo aspetto riemergerà nei paragrafi 5-6, quando – seguendo alcuni interpreti del rapporto Gadamer/Vico – apriremo un confronto a tutto tondo fra i nostri autori. A questo punto invece andiamo a vedere come Gadamer riceve e rielabora il tema vichiano del *sensus communis* all'interno della sua ermeneutica filosofica.

### 3. Gadamer interprete di Vico

Il riferimento fondamentale di Gadamer al senso comune vichiano lo troviamo nel primo capitolo della prima sezione di *Wahrheit und Methode* intitolato *Il significato della tradizione umanistica*. Gadamer prende le mosse dall'analisi delle scienze dello spirito (*Geisteswissenschaften*) per come esse vengono concepite a partire dal XIX secolo, rilevando che queste «intendono sé stesse in base all'analogia con le scienze della natura». (Gadamer 2000, 31) Questo è appunto il metodo,<sup>12</sup> che secondo il filosofo tedesco va ad imporre la propria logica su un terreno, quello dell'esperienza dell'uomo, cui la tradizione aveva dedicato altre forme di sapere. Gadamer intrattiene in tutto il suo capolavoro del 1960 uno scontro con questa idea di unità del metodo scientifico come metodo di ricerca della verità – analogamente al *De ratione*, potremmo dire – e infatti quasi all'inizio del testo troviamo un'analisi dei *Concetti-guida umanistici* finalizzata a mostrare come la tradizione umanistica abbia pensato altre forme di sapere rispetto a quello metodico-scientifico. Scrive Gadamer:

Il moderno concetto di scienza e il concetto di metodo che ne dipende non possono bastare. Ciò che costituisce le scienze dello spirito come

scienze si capisce più in base alla tradizione del concetto di cultura che in base all'idea di metodo della scienza moderna. È la *tradizione umanistica* quella a cui è necessario rifarsi. Proprio nel contrasto con le pretese della scienza moderna essa acquista un nuovo significato. (Gadamer 2000, 59)

Gadamer inizia la sua ricostruzione precisamente a partire dal concetto di cultura (*Bildung*), inteso come un processo di «innalzamento al di sopra di sé verso l'universalità». (Gadamer 2000, 55) Quest'ultima, però, non pensata come l'universalità del concetto, da dimostrare, bensì come un senso in grado di abbracciare in sé gli altri punti di vista, un senso generale o senso comune. Come possiamo vedere, questa forma di esperienza propria della cultura va a comporre l'orizzonte di verità proprio della tradizione umanistica in cui emerge il tema del senso comune, che non a caso è il secondo dei *concetti-guida* esaminati.

La trattazione del senso comune viene costruita significativamente da Gadamer intorno ai due elementi che abbiamo segnalato come centrali nel discorso vichiano del *De ratione*, e cioè l'*eloquentia* connessa all'idea di un sapere retorico e contrapposta alla svalutazione che di questa fanno prima Platone e poi la polemica antiretorica del metodo moderno, e poi la *phronesis* come sapere pratico (la vichiana *prudentia*) legata alla figura di Socrate, recuperata anch'essa nella tradizione retorica contro il dogmatismo degli stoici. Gadamer connette subito questa polemica vichiana a quella che – utilizzando qui con una certa cautela questo termine, non appartenente di per sé alla terminologia filosofica del nostro autore ma comunque impiegabile con accortezza al fine di rafforzare un po' il senso del discorso – potremmo chiamare una “decostruzione” del metodo scientifico. Infatti Vico, trovandosi di fronte all'avanzata della critica, si trova a combattere un vecchio nemico, ma vivendo «entro una tradizione ininterrotta di cultura retorico-umanistica [...] non doveva far altro che rimettere in vigore il suo non ancora perduto valore». (Gadamer 2000, 71) Ovviamente per il filosofo novecentesco questo non è più possibile e, nel rifondare le scienze dello spirito, egli non può che cercare di richiamarci a questa tradizione indebolita. È in questo senso, dunque, che Gadamer legge Vico, un Vico che – come nota Verene – non è mediato dalla lettura crociana di

matrice storicista, per cui se ne possono recuperare le radici nella tradizione retorico-umanista. (Verene 1997, 138)

Abbiamo detto che sono i concetti di *eloquentia* e di *phronesis* (*prudentia*)<sup>13</sup> a definire la lettura gadameriana di Vico, venendo però reinterpretati rispetto al dettato vichiano in una precisa direzione. L'*eloquentia* ha secondo il filosofo tedesco un duplice significato che travalica quello strettamente retorico: «“ben parlare” (*eu legein*) [...] significa anche il dire il giusto, il vero, e non solo l'arte del discorso, l'arte di dire bene qualcosa» (Gadamer 2000, 63), e questo viene legato all'ideale della saggezza. Il concetto di *eloquentia* va così ad intrecciare, nell'ideale del saggio, quello di *phronesis* distinta dalla *sophia* che ormai nella polemica vichiana è diventata la scienza moderna con le sue pretese di verità e con il suo apparato pedagogico che forma i *docti imprudentis* che abbiamo visto sopra. Ma il concetto di *prudentia* travalica il mero modello di uomo scaltro, capace di risolvere situazioni pratiche, e ha invece da essere inteso come una forma alternativa di sapere – «Il sapere pratico, la *phronesis*, è un altro genere di sapere» (Gadamer 2000, 67) – che riconosce implicitamente una certa idea di bene riconosciuta dalla comunità attraverso il senso comune. Scrive Gadamer:

Nella dottrina aristotelica agisce [...] un motivo positivo, etico, che passa poi nella dottrina stoico-latina del *sensus communis*. Per cogliere e dominare la situazione concreta occorre sussumere il dato sotto l'universale, cioè sotto il fine che ci si propone, in modo tale che il risultato sia giusto. Ciò presuppone dunque un già certo orientamento della volontà, cioè un modo di essere morale (*hexis*). Per questo la *phronesis* è per Aristotele una «virtù morale». [...] Il suo distinguere tra ciò che si può e ciò che non si può fare implica già sempre la distinzione tra ciò che è moralmente conveniente e ciò che non lo è, e presuppone quindi un atteggiamento morale che a sua volta contribuisce a sviluppare e perfezionare. (Gadamer 2000, 67)

Per Gadamer il riferimento vichiano al senso comune si inserisce in questo motivo aristotelico contro la trascendenza dell'idea del bene di Platone, anche se il filosofo napoletano si allontana dal concetto greco di *Koinē dynamis* mutuando dai classici latini quello di *sensus communis*, in cui emerge la «loro autoctona tradizione di vita politica e sociale [...] contro la speculazione teorica dei filosofi». (Gadamer 2000, 69) Per come

Gadamer interpreta Vico il senso comune va oltre quella funzione di mediazione in cui lo avevamo visto operare al di sotto del “primo vero”, dando la regola alla *prudencia* e all'*eloquentia* del sapiente, per farlo discendere nella tortuosità della vita pratica e per informare in qualche modo la materia passionale di cui la *moltitudo* è composta. Il *sensus communis* che interessa Gadamer è quel «senso che fonda la comunità», cioè quella essenziale unità di ogni gruppo umano costituita dall'*ethos*, frutto di una concreta relazione pratica e linguistica che va a fornire lo sfondo dell'esercizio della razionalità pratica. In questo senso, si può dire che «l'inscindibile nesso che sussiste [secondo il filosofo tedesco] fra *ethos* e *phronesis*» (Marino 2009, 172) in Vico viene ravvisato nell'idea che il senso comune sia misura della *prudencia*.

Scriva Gadamer: «Ciò che indica la direzione alla volontà dell'uomo, pensa Vico, non è l'universalità astratta della ragione, ma l'universalità concreta che costituisce l'unità comune di un gruppo, di un popolo, di una nazione, di tutto il genere umano. La formazione di questo senso comune è perciò di importanza decisiva per la vita». (Gadamer 2000, 65) E ancora: «per Vico [...] il *sensus communis* è un senso per il giusto e per il bene comune, che vive in tutti gli uomini, che si acquista nel vivere comune e che viene determinato attraverso gli scopi della vita sociale». (Gadamer 2000, 69) Il senso comune viene così ad assumere, teoreticamente, la forma di un *universale concreto* (come scrive Modica, facendo anche riferimento a Gadamer tra l'altro):

*universale* in quanto comune a tutti nella sua originaria apertura alla verità, *concreto* in quanto l'originaria apertura alla verità è concretamente *sentita* dalla comunità degli uomini; ma anche, dialetticamente, *universale* in quanto *sentito* e *concreto* in quanto *comune*: ossia un universale che affonda le proprie radici nel sentire e che trova concretizzazione proprio nel suo essere patrimonio *comune*. (Modica 1983, 77)

In questa operazione Gadamer è alla ricerca di un'altra forma di sapere come strumento per deliberare intorno al bene comune, e con ciò, di un'idea di comunità e – in ultima istanza – di umanità alternativa a quella della scienza moderna. È interessante, in questo senso, ciò che egli dice in un'intervista, significativamente intitolata *Il «sensus communis» contro la*



*tecnocrazia* (Gadamer 1980), in cui, sollecitato dall'intervistatore, Gadamer tratta il nostro tema da un punto di vista più pratico. Secondo Gadamer, «ci troviamo in un momento storico estremamente critico, in cui la fede negli esperti evoca il pericolo che la capacità di decisione mediante il buon senso scompaia dal mondo», ed è contro di ciò che egli avrebbe cercato di «ridare la sua legittimità al *sensus communis*, un modo conoscitivo vecchio e un tempo del tutto legittimo». (Gadamer 1980, 269) È quindi contro il dominio del sapere tecnocratico e la sua pretesa di essere la misura del giudizio che Gadamer cerca un'alternativa, e quando deve rispondere ai dubbi dell'intervistatore sulla possibile modalità di distinzione, in questo modello decisionale, fra i pregiudizi produttivi e quelli viceversa falsanti, ci dice una cosa interessante. Il punto non è operare questa distinzione metodicamente, secondo criteri, ma, in maniera completamente diversa, adoperare il senso comune, cioè «lasciare parlare una coscienza socialmente integrata». (Gadamer 1980, 270) Nella sua trattazione del senso comune, quindi, Gadamer, come emerge anche da qui, non fa altro che descrivere quelle che secondo lui sono le modalità più proprie dell'esistenza umana condivisa. Troviamo qui quella corrispondenza con Vico, nel rilevare, secondo le parole di F. Tessitore richiamate prima, che gli uomini sono esseri interagenti e interlocutori. Scrive G. Cacciatore in un passo molto efficace, sempre in relazione a Vico:

Cosa altro è il *sensus commune* se non l'esito della continua riconoscibilità da parte dell'uomo, nel *medium* dell'esperienza storicamente determinata di principi comuni, delle forme elementari della comunanza intersoggettiva nel linguaggio, della socievolezza nella creazione di ordinamenti politici e nella costituzione di possessi personali, dell'incontro con l'altro da sé nel rapporto sessuale e, infine del sapersi comunemente vincolati in una fede religiosa? (Cacciatore 1999, 197)

Questa modalità di intendere la comunità umana e le sue relazioni ci sembra corrispondere sufficientemente con le coordinate essenziali della filosofia ermeneutica gadameriana, tanto da giustificare il richiamo esplicito. Nella tradizione retorico-umanistica e in Vico, infatti, Gadamer ritrova in relazione inscindibile tra loro quelle esperienze non riducibili «a

controllo metodico o analisi scientifica» (Marino 2009, 126), come quella linguistica e quella pratico-morale. (Marino 2009, 126-133)

#### 4. La critica di Schaeffer

Nel paragrafo precedente abbiamo cercato di mostrare la pertinenza dell'opera di appropriazione da parte di Gadamer del pensiero vichiano, in particolare in relazione al senso comune. Schaeffer, ad esempio, riconosce parzialmente questa convergenza ma la colloca ad un livello più superficiale, per cui sussisterebbe una differenza di fondo che l'interpretazione gadameriana non vedrebbe nella sua opera di appropriazione del pensiero vichiano. La discrepanza è dovuta alla loro appartenenza a due tradizioni differenti, quella retorica in Vico e quella filosofica<sup>14</sup> in Gadamer. Una differenza fondamentale viene rintracciata nella definizione del rapporto fra senso comune, pregiudizio, tradizione e autorità. Gadamer, nella sua ben nota rivalutazione di questi concetti, sostiene che il più fondamentale fra i pregiudizi illuministi sarebbe quello contro i pregiudizi stessi, che depotenzia la possibilità di vita della tradizione. Il pregiudizio, in questo senso, sarebbe la base ineliminabile per la stessa ricerca della verità e, secondo Schaeffer, Gadamer lo considererebbe l'origine del contenuto del senso comune – «Hence prejudice is not *sensus communis*, but rather prejudice make up *sensus communis*'s "content"» (Schaeffer 1990, 108). Si viene qui però ad istituire un rapporto fra senso comune e autorità/istituzioni/tradizione che, secondo Schaeffer, non appartiene al pensiero vichiano. Infatti, se per Gadamer sono questi ultimi ad inculcare il contenuto pregiudiziale al senso comune, per Vico è al contrario l'esistenza del senso comune a garantire la possibilità della comunità costituita. Scrive Schaeffer:

for Vico *sensus communis* inheres in language and allows communities to form institutions according to the dictates of the natural law. Those institutions include the family, society, and eventually, the state. For Gadamer, on the other hand, these institutions inculcate prejudices, which in turn form the *sensus communis*. The difference is crucial. What Gadamer sees as the origin of *sensus communis*, that is, institutions, Vico sees as

emerging with *sensus communis* and the imaginative universals. (Schaeffer 1990, 108)

L'elemento trans-storico nel pensiero di Vico è costituito secondo Schaeffer dagli universali fantastici, prodotti appunto mediante la fantasia, che unificano il simile e si esplicano nella comunità attraverso la *performance* retorica che li fa emergere dalla tradizione – che è un dato storico. Gadamer, al contrario, avrebbe cristallizzato la tradizione nel dato del testo scritto con cui il filosofo intrattiene un rapporto ermeneutico, e lo avrebbe fatto poiché concepisce l'oralità come una semplice metafora del lavoro filosofico e non nella viva forma sociale della pratica retorica a cui Vico ancora apparteneva.

Schaeffer invece di cercare di attenuare, come fa Gadamer, il contrasto fra filosofia e retorica e lo sottolinea, ponendo l'accento sulla impossibilità del progetto gadameriano di tenere insieme dialettica e retorica. La concezione della verità cui Gadamer infatti farebbe riferimento, quella platonica, è per Schaeffer incompatibile con quella retorica che valorizza il potere veritativo della *doxa*. Gadamer avrebbe una concezione statica e individuale della verità – è il rapporto ermeneutico del filosofo con il canone che produce verità – che riempie i concetti di pregiudizio, autorità ecc. che vanno a formare il senso comune. Vico, al contrario, avrebbe una concezione olistica di tradizione, ermeneutica e cambiamento sociale,<sup>15</sup> per cui è nella pratica pubblica che si va a determinare il nesso dialettico fra la comunità concreta e i suoi valori ereditati producendo così le istituzioni. Scrive Schaeffer: «The *sensus communis* cannot be merely a static set of values embodied in literal canon. [It] is constantly reinterpreted and reshaped by the decision of the community. [...] In short, rhetoric transmits the *sensus communis*; eloquence transmutes it; the community tests it». (Schaeffer 1990, 115)

Quindi, questa diversa interpretazione del senso comune, del suo rapporto con la tradizione e l'autorità, segna secondo Schaeffer una differenza fondamentale fra i due autori, per cui il riferimento di Gadamer alla tradizione – compiuto fuori dalla pratica retorica – implicherebbe una ricaduta in una concezione statica e politicamente reazionaria che non comprende il mutamento sociale. Schaeffer individua nel diritto

naturale e nell'idea di universale fantastico un fondamento universale che fornisce unità al genere umano, cosa che non avviene nel filosofo tedesco, che avrebbe così consegnato ogni comunità umana all'imperio delle sue singole tradizioni storiche.

## 5. “Vico è un filosofo ermeneutico?”: le letture di Verene, González, Jermann e Piccini

5.1. Come abbiamo visto anche da questo ultimo paragrafo, indagare il problema del senso comune per come esso viene posto da Gadamer in relazione a Vico apre ad un confronto a campo aperto fra le due filosofie. A questo punto, la domanda che ci poniamo – seguendo la conclusione del succitato saggio di Verene – è: possiamo definire Vico un filosofo ermeneutico?<sup>16</sup>

Verene nel rispondere a questo interrogativo è perentorio: «No, Vico is not a hermeneuticist». (Verene 1997, 149) L'errore di collocarlo nella tradizione ermeneutica verrebbe commesso, a suo giudizio, a causa della stessa idea gadameriana di ermeneutica, che Verene definisce «a great intellectual amoeba, from which there seems to be no escape». (Verene 1997, 149) Per poterlo considerare un pensatore ermeneutico, secondo Verene, Vico andrebbe interpretato come uno storicista, ma questa interpretazione sarebbe scorretta, poiché questi considererebbe la riflessione ermeneutica una barbarie al pari di quella di Descartes, proprio perché storicista.<sup>17</sup> Infatti, secondo Verene, il senso comune gadameriano sarebbe anti-universale e relativistico, poiché basato sull'idea di tradizione come «common simpathy» (Verene 1997, 149) di un popolo specifico, laddove Vico, con la teoria della provvidenza, fornirebbe un fondamento universalistico alla nozione di senso comune.

Un'altra interprete che ha proposto un'analisi analoga è Catilina González, che del resto si rifà esplicitamente a Verene. Secondo González, quando Gadamer pensa al senso comune vichiano come elemento comune di un gruppo, popolo, nazione e genere umano, non accetta fino in fondo l'universalità che Vico gli conferisce nella *Scienza nuova*. Scrive:

[...] Gadamer parece volver a situarse más del lado de la concreción histórica de cada pueblo que del lado de su universalidad. En fin, Gadamer claramente vacila ante la decisión de rescatar o no la referencia a la universalidad del sentido común que estaba presente en la *Ciencia nueva*. De allí que la interpretación de Gadamer pueda ser legítimamente tomada como una relativización del sentido común. (González 2002, 87)

Gadamer, secondo González, avrebbe compiuto questa relativizzazione per spogliare il senso comune di ogni interpretazione naturalista. Un senso comune universale dovrebbe essere pensato come una facoltà, ed in particolare come una facoltà di giudizio dell'essere umano come tale, quindi naturalisticamente inteso, e non storicamente situato. (González 2002, 87) Per González disconoscere questo aspetto del senso comune significa più in generale, da parte di Gadamer, rifiutare l'impianto teorico della *Scienza nuova*. Scrive a tal proposito:

En mi opinión [...] Gadamer descocería el intento del Vico en la *Ciencia nueva*, por fundar trascendentalmente las ciencias humanas (en especial, los estudios históricos, jurídicos y filológicos) sobre el sentido común. Es decir que, al contrario de lo que parecería ser la intención general de Gadamer, al desvincular el sentido común de cualquier posible interpretación del mismo como capacidad natural y al enfatizar en su "contenido ético", Gadamer sitúa a Vico, en el debate entre los antiguos y los modernos, enteramente del lado de los primeros, atenuando toda la dimensión científica de su obra, que es, en últimas, su mayor legado para la modernidad. (González 2002, 89)

Si impone a questo punto la necessità di un confronto fra l'interpretazione gadameriana del Vico del *De ratione* – che come abbiamo visto è esplicita e approfondita – e del Vico della *Scienza nuova*, il che significa problematizzare a tutto tondo il rapporto fra l'ermeneutica filosofica di Gadamer e la scienza storica vichiana. Seguiremo a tal fine il lavoro di due interpreti (Jermann 1993; Piccini 2003) che hanno trattato direttamente questi temi.

**5.2.** In *Wahrheit und Methode* troviamo “due visioni antitetiche del filosofo Vico” (Piccini 2003, 166), quella che deriva dall'analisi del *De ratione* che è concentrata nel paragrafo sul *sensus communis* e una seconda, che troviamo evocato in alcuni passaggi successivi – principalmente nella

parte seconda del testo intitolata *Il problema della verità e le scienze dello spirito* – in cui Gadamer usa «la comoda etichetta di “vichismo”» (Piccini 2003, 102), in relazione ad alcune tendenze filosofiche successive che avrebbero recepito alcuni principi della teoria della storia presente nella *Scienza nuova*. Secondo Piccini, questo Vico è per Gadamer la «matrice [...] più originaria» (Piccini 2003, 101) dell'ermeneutica romantica e poi storicista, con il suo principio della convertibilità tra vero e fatto. In questa interpretazione, però, ad un attento approfondimento dell'opera vichiana prevarrebbe «la tendenza a recepirne superficialmente i motivi più macroscopici, a trasformarli in approssimative categorie concettuali sotto le quali sussumere all'occorrenza atteggiamenti filosofici giudicati affini». (Piccini 2003, 102)

Secondo i nostri interpreti il nucleo dell'interpretazione gadameriana del secondo Vico – che sarebbe il principio fondante tutta l'ermeneutica storica vichiana – starebbe nell'aver teorizzato quella «congenerità (*Gleichartigkeit*) di soggetto e oggetto che fonda la possibilità della conoscenza storica». (Gadamer 2000, 463) Insomma Vico nella *Scienza nuova* sarebbe quel proto-idealista<sup>18</sup> che ha anticipato – sul piano del rapporto fra soggetto della conoscenza storica e oggetto storico come prodotto spirituale – le acquisizioni teoriche dell'idealismo di Fichte e poi di Hegel e, da qui, i principi fondamentali dell'ermeneutica romantica e poi storicista. Per essere più precisi, qui il riferimento è a due principi della *Scienza nuova* vichiana: 1) l'analogia fra le strutture mentali e i processi storici reali, mediata dall'idea di “storia ideal eterna”, quindi la corrispondenza fra ontogenesi e filogenesi; 2) l'idea – strettamente connessa con la precedente – di una piena convertibilità fra vero e fatto, cioè la possibilità garantita all'uomo di una piena conoscenza storica (*verum*) sulla base dei principi per cui è l'uomo stesso a farla (*factum*). Sono queste le acquisizioni che fondano metodicamente la conoscenza storica secondo Vico e che torneranno nella fondazione delle scienze umane del XIX secolo, in particolare per quanto riguarda l'opera di Dilthey.

Il problema del metodo qui diviene centrale; infatti, la fondazione di matrice vichiana che troviamo ad esempio in

Dithey è «il tentativo di oltrepassare i limiti posti all'interprete dalla sua posizione storica», cioè «assicurare alle scienze dello spirito la stessa scientificità che Cartesio aveva attribuito allo statuto delle matematiche». (Piccini 2003, 140) Questa fondazione metodica – rifiutata nel *De ratione* – è il fine della *Scienza nuova*, ripreso da Dithey sia direttamente che mediato dall'«ideale di fondazione filosofica [delle scienze dello spirito] proprio della tradizione idealista» (Jermann 1993, 328) che cozza con l'idea gadameriana di rivalutazione dell'esperienza extra-metodica. Quindi, che sia la pretesa cartesiana di conoscenza obiettiva della natura o quella vichiana di un metodo della conoscenza storica fondata sul principio proto-idealistico di congenerità di soggetto e oggetto che permette al soggetto autore-interprete della storia la piena intelligibilità della stessa attraverso la conoscenza delle sue strutture antropologico-trascendentali, sempre sul terreno di un'ideale di conoscenza metodicamente fondata ci troviamo. Scrive Jermann:

Come si può desumere da diversi accenni Gadamer ritiene i due lavori posteriori del filosofo napoletano una sorta di tradimento del patrimonio ideale che lo aveva affascinato nel *De nostri temporis*. Egli vede in essi un erroneo conformarsi alla razionalità delle scienze della natura. Sulla critica nei confronti dell'orientamento del comprendere nelle scienze dello spirito in direzione di un ideale di spiegazione metodica, proprio delle scienze della natura, poggia non solo l'elogio del *De nostri temporis*, ma anche il rigetto del *De antiquissima* e della *Scienza nuova*. (Jermann 1993, 327)

In questo quadro di senso “vichiano”, «l'arte e la storia [sono] sostanzialmente accomunate dallo stesso destino ermeneutico» (Piccini 2003, 164): entrambi prodotti umani – anzi, la storia lo è in seconda battuta in analogia con l'arte – sono in virtù di ciò pienamente comprensibili. Ed è contro queste pretese che il filosofo tedesco propone una riscoperta del sapere della finitezza, dell'ermeneutica pratico-retorica del *De ratione*, con la sua rivalutazione dell'esperienza situata nella concretezza storico-comunitaria. Scrive Piccini:

[Per Gadamer] la nostra partecipazione all'accadere del senso dell'opera d'arte e degli eventi storici si configura come una relazione d'essenza con eventi ontologici che costituiscono nel profondo del nostro essere, secondo modalità e forme che non possiamo

determinare fino in fondo. Rispetto a questa situazione di condizionatezza porsi il problema dell'oggettività dei procedimenti di comprensione significa pretendere di poter stabilire in maniera distaccata e trasparente le «irrisalibili» (e quindi non indagabili) condizioni di possibilità della nostra esperienza storica. (Piccini 2003, 165)

È a partire da questa idea che Gadamer declina – nell'interpretazione di Vico – «l'alternativa tra *verità* e *metodo*, tra razionalità retorico-ermeneutica e razionalità scientifica», per cui si potrebbe definire «tutta la sua ontologia ermeneutica in fondo come il tentativo di opporre il Vico “umanista e retore” del *De ratione* al Vico “idealista e storicista” della *Scienza nuova*.» (Piccini 2003, 166-167) In questo senso il problema di una fondazione trascendentale dell'ermeneutica storica – problema centrale in Vico – viene da Gadamer scansato con un gesto filosofico di recupero della dimensione esperienziale finita dell'uomo.<sup>19</sup> Ci apprestiamo a concludere, vedendo quali sono le conseguenze di questa ipotesi interpretativa sui problemi posti in apertura di questo paragrafo.

## 6. Considerazioni conclusive

A questo punto le argomentazioni di Verene e González sul rifiuto gadameriano di una concezione universalistica del senso comune si comprendono meglio. Il senso comune universalmente inteso è concepito da Vico principalmente come criterio della *Scienza nuova* per andare a rintracciare nella storia quell'uniformità legata alle strutture mentali comuni e in ultima istanza al disegno provvidenziale. Insomma è uno strumento di quella fondazione metodologico-trascendentale della scienza vichiana. In tal senso è chiaro perché Gadamer rifiuti la nozione universalistica di senso comune così intesa – fondata sulla comprensibilità razionale della storia attraverso il nesso fra questa e la mente umana – e al contrario faccia riferimento a quella contenuta del *De ratione*, in cui ci si riferisce ad un'esperienza ermeneutico-linguistica nella comunità storicamente situata. Come scrive Modica, nel *De ratione* è presente «una rivendicazione che potrebbe dirsi “ermeneutica” della verità, in quanto, se per Vico la verità non si offre se non all'interno di una prospettiva storica e temporale che



sappia formularla, tale prospettiva si fa a sua volta via d'accesso e organo di penetrazione della verità stessa». (Modica 1983, 52)

Quello che Verene sembra non cogliere è che la dimensione concreta, la “situatazza” della verità costruita ermeneuticamente, non ne elimina la possibilità di accesso all'universalità, da intendersi, come il senso comune vichiano-gadameriano, come universalità concreta. Quello che Verene afferma spregiativamente dell'ermeneutica, e cioè di essere un'ameba intellettuale, in realtà ne costituisce proprio l'essenza universale, come forma di esperienza-sapere che, come ha notato un interprete di Gadamer, «“abbraccia l'intera sfera del mondo della vita umano, nella sua autocomprensione pratica, in tutte le sue dimensioni” tra cui “arte, ragione scientifica, ambito etico, diritto, filosofia, relazioni sociali e politiche dell'esistenza quotidiana”». (Marino 2009, 162). Continua Marino:

E proprio per questo, in qualità di riflessione che si assume il compito di difendere la specificità di “qualsiasi tipo di creazione culturale (*Kulturschöpfung*)” sia in grado di partorire “esperienze vive che non possono essere amministrate, scelte e presentate dalla scienza”, l'ermeneutica filosofica o filosofia ermeneutica ritiene di poter conseguire la propria universalità. Una “universalità pratica (*praktische Universalität*) che [...] ci riguarda tutti e in modo totale”, essendo fondata sulla “peculiarità [del] sapere umano [...] linguisticamente mediato” e scaturente dalla “realtà sociale dell'uomo”. (Marino 2009, 162-163)

Rivolgendo in conclusione uno sguardo retrospettivo ai paragrafi precedenti del presente contributo (nel quale abbiamo trattato del concetto di senso comune nei due autori qui presi in esame), ci sembra di poter dire che le ragioni dell'operazione di Gadamer di appropriazione del pensiero vichiano nella sua costruzione di una filosofia ermeneutica siano più pertinenti di quanto esse non siano apparse invece ad alcuni studiosi.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Si tratta della traduzione italiana di un'intervista a Gadamer condotta dal suo allievo Jean Grondin e pubblicata in tedesco col titolo *Dialogischer Rückblick auf das Gesammelte Werk und dessen Wirkungsgeschichte*.

<sup>2</sup> Questo testo non è specificamente dedicato al tema del *sensus communis* ma, trattando della rapporto di Vico con la tradizione retorica, incrocia spesso tematiche afferenti al nostro argomento.

<sup>3</sup> Si è deciso, per conferire unità e fluidità al testo, di inserirvi citazioni in traduzione italiana e non l'originale dei testi latini di Vico. Quando invece vengono riportate citazioni in nota, non sussistendo questa necessità, si è deciso di mantenere l'originale latino per garantire la piena fedeltà al testo vichiano.

<sup>4</sup> L'influenza di Aristotele e di Platone sulla filosofia vichiana è un problema ampiamente dibattuto. In questo luogo faccio mia l'analisi di Cacciatore: «Vico stesso ricorda – in una pagina dell'*Autobiografia* – come, sollecitato dalla lettura di un passo dell'*Ars poetica* oraziana, si fosse, giovanissimo, rivolto allo studio della “morale degli antichi greci”, ad iniziare da Aristotele, cioè da quell'autore che, nelle sue letture, egli vedeva spesso richiamato in relazione a “vari principi d'instituzioni civili”. Qui naturalmente, non si tratta di indagare sul significato e la portata che ha l'aristotelismo nella riflessione vichiana, né questa è la sede per indagare il complesso rapporto che si instaura, nell'intero corso del pensiero vichiano, tra aristotelismo e platonismo, cioè tra una metafisica delle forme particolari e una metafisica dell'idea eterna. Quel che, piuttosto, si vuole segnalare è l'indubbio debito che Vico contrae nei confronti della filosofia pratica nata da Aristotele e, più in generale, l'uso vichiano della tradizione politica classica» (Cacciatore 1999, 191-192). Questo rapporto aristotelico fra retorica, vita pubblica e filosofia pratica – come pure si vedrà – è costante nei nostri autori ed in questo senso ci siamo richiamati a questa tradizione di matrice aristotelica.

<sup>5</sup> Nel parlare di “filosofia anti-umanista di Heidegger” il riferimento, chiaramente, è alla celebre *Lettera sull'umanismo* del filosofo di Meßkirch e al suo anelito di superamento dell'umanismo in quanto esso, per Heidegger, sarebbe ancora irretito, in tutte le sue forme, nelle dinamiche della cosiddetta storia della metafisica.

<sup>6</sup> «Et principio, quod ad scientiarum attinet instrumenta, a critica hodie studia inauguramur; quae, quo suum primum verum ad omni, non solum falso, sed falsi quoque suspitione expurget, vera secunda et verosimilia omnia aequae ac falsa mente exigi iubet» (Vico 1990a, 104).

<sup>7</sup> Questi tre elementi (gradualità, “interalità” e concretezza) sono individuati da Modica (1983, 39-44).

<sup>8</sup> «Nam ut senectus ratione, ita adolescentia phantasia pollet; neque sane pueris, quae beatissimum futurae indolis specimen semper habita est, excaecari ullo modo oportet. Et memoriam, quae cum phantasia, nisi eadem, certe pene eadem est, in pueris, qui nulla alia mentis facultate praestant, excoli impense necesse est: neque ingenia ed artes, quae phantasia, vel memoria, vel utraque valent, ut pictura, poëtica, oratoria, iurisprudentia, quicquam sunt hebetanda: neque critica, quae omnium artium scientiarumque instrumentum nostris commune est, ulli debet esse impedimento» (Vico 1990a, 104, 106).

<sup>9</sup> Qui, dicendo «nostro metodo» Vico si riferisce a quello dominante, il cosiddetto metodo critico, non alla sua proposta.

<sup>10</sup> «Idque adeo fit, quia scientia ad summa, sapientia ad infima vera spectat: unde stulti, illitterati astuti, docti imprudentis et viri sapientis distinguuntur characteres et notae [...]» (Vico 1990a, 132).

<sup>11</sup> «Praterea sensus communis, ut omnis prudentiae, ita eloquentia, regula est [...]» (Vico 1990a, 104).

<sup>12</sup> «[...] ciò che nella scienza moderna si chiama metodo è chiaramente identificabile e unitario, ed è improntato al modello delle scienze della natura.» (Gadamer 2000, 39)

<sup>13</sup> Come si sarà notato, qui vengono sovrapposti i concetti di *prudentia* e di *phronesis*. In questo si segue il testo gadameriano, in cui di fatto la *prudentia* vichiana e la *phronesis* aristotelica sono la stessa cosa.

<sup>14</sup> A tal proposito Verene, parlando della critica vichiana alla “barbarie della riflessione”, dice che, a differenza del filosofo napoletano che connette l’uso della fantasia con la pratica retorica di ricerca della verità, in Gadamer permarrrebbe «the ghost of “reflection”» (Verene 1997, 147) proprio a causa del suo riferimento al canone della filosofia moderna.

<sup>15</sup> «The orality implicit in Vico’s idea of *sensus communis* allows for a holistic view of tradition, hermeneutic, and social change» (Schaeffer 1990, 121).

<sup>16</sup> «Is Vico a hermeneuticist?» (Verene 1997, 149).

<sup>17</sup> «Thus hermeneutic reflection is barbarism. It is not the barbarism of Descartes, but is for Vico barbaric because it puts us in history without an origin, without the common mental dictionary.» (Verene 1997, 149).

<sup>18</sup> Si pensi al riferimento di Piccini (2003, 143-144) alla presunta lettura crociana di Gadamer della *Scienza nuova*.

<sup>19</sup> Al tema dell’“auto-fondazione riflessiva” della teoria del comprendere storico è dedicata la maggior parte del saggio di Jermann, il quale rintraccia una carenza fondativa sia nella *Scienza nuova* che in *Wahreit und Methode*, nel primo caso come limite del tentativo vichiano, nel secondo invece come un preciso intento programmatico (cfr. Piccini 2003, 328-343).

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## Putnam's Argument that the Claim that We are Brains-in-a-vat is Self-Refuting

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### Abstract

In *Reason, Truth and History*, Putnam provides an influential argument for the materialist view that the supposition that we are all “actually” brains in a vat [BIV's] is “necessarily false”. Putnam admits that his argument, inspired by insights in Wittgenstein's later views, is “unusual”, but he is certain that it is a correct. He argues that the claim that we are BIV's is *self-refuting* because, if we *actually* are BIV's, then we cannot refer to real physical things like vats. Although the present author agrees, fundamentally, with Heidegger's view that we are essentially “in a world” (a real world, not a private “vat-world”), and, therefore, with Putnam's *conclusion* that we cannot possibly be BIV's, the paper argues that Putnam's *argument* is fallacious. The proper conclusion to draw from Putnam's argument is that asserting that one is a BIV is beyond the limits of a BIV's (private) language. That is, Putnam only shows that if we actually are BIV's, then we cannot think or assert either that we *are* or that we *are not* BIV's. It does not show that we are not “actually” BIV's. The cogency of this criticism is illustrated with a concrete “science-fiction” example.

**Keywords:** Putnam, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, brains in a vat, intrinsic reference, private language

“Being in a world is something that belongs essentially ... to Dasein” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, § 4).

In *Reason, Truth and History (RTH)*, Putnam provides an influential argument for the view that “the supposition that we are actually brains in a vat [BIV's] ... *cannot possibly be true* [P's emphasis]” (*RTH*, 7). By the thesis that we are BIV's he does not mean that some people some of the time are BIV's, but that “everything [in human experience] is a collective

hallucination” produced either by an “evil scientist” or an “absurd” universe consisting of machines tending to BIV’s (*RTH*, 6-7, 130-131). Putnam regards this view, which he attributes, somewhat tongue in cheek, to most Australians, but especially to “the Guru of Sydney” (who he names “David”), as “incoherent” (*RTH*, 131).<sup>1</sup> Putnam admits that his argument, broadly inspired by insights in Wittgenstein’s later views, is “unusual”, but he is certain that “it is a correct argument”. (*RTH*, 7) He argues that David’s assertion that we are brains in vats (hereafter WBV) is *self-refuting* because, if we *actually* are BIV’s (hereafter WAABV’s), we cannot refer to real physical things like vats.<sup>2</sup> (*RTH*, 7) BIV’s “cannot think or say that they are brains in a vat”. (*RTH*, 14) Thus, WBV is “necessarily false”. (*RTH*, 7-8, 15) However, Putnam admits that WBV “violates no physical laws and is perfectly consistent with everything we have experienced”.<sup>3</sup> (*RTH*, 7) But then how can one conceivably demonstrate that WBV cannot *possibly* be true? Putnam explains that one must not take “physical possibility as the touchstone of what might actually be the case”, a common mistake in misguided ages that “takes physics as [their] metaphysics”. (*RTH*, 15) The present paper argues that Putnam’s argument is fallacious. The fact, if it is one, that WBV is self-refuting on Putnam’s grounds is logically irrelevant to the question whether we “actually” are BIV’s. The proper conclusion to draw from Putnam’s argument is that asserting that one is a BIV is beyond the limits of a BIV’s (private) language. That is, Putnam only shows that if we actually are BIV’s, then we cannot think or assert either that we *are* or that we *are not* BIV’s. But it does not show that we are not “actually” BIV’s. It is worth emphasizing that although the present author agrees fundamentally with Heidegger’s view in *Being and Time* that human beings are essentially “in-the-world”, and, therefore, agrees with Putnam’s *conclusion* that the view that we are all BIV’s is incoherent, the problem is that Putnam’s *argument* does not eliminate the possibility that we “actually” are BIV’s.

Putnam lists two main assumptions of his argument. The first is that “magical theories of reference”, which hold that representations can intrinsically refer to something beyond

themselves, are wrong. (*RTH*, 16-17, 21).<sup>4</sup> The second is that one can refer to a given kind of things, say trees, only if one has some causal interaction with them, or with things in terms of which they can be described. (*RTH*, 16-17)

The first premise is needed because, if brains contain representations which intrinsically refer to things beyond themselves then there is no reason why BIV's could not think or assert that they are BIV's. Although philosopher's do not normally, in public at least, declare support for magical theories of reference, the point needs to be stated because it is alleged that many philosophers, presumably without explicitly recognizing this, *tacitly* assume that there are representations that intrinsically refer to things outside themselves, e.g., Fodor, Chomsky and others hold that mental representations display their meaning intrinsically" in a way that no mere physical sign can do (Goldberg 1983, 196-210).

The second premise is needed because causal interaction with things in the external world is precisely what BIV's lack. Putnam does not specify precisely how much causal interaction with objects in the world is required if one can refer to them but he insists that a certain level of causal interaction is necessary. For example, if a mad scientist produces images of trees for BIV's by using only electronic impulses without the causal involvement of trees, and if a BIV's entire experience is produced in this way, then that BIV cannot refer to trees.

Deprived of magical representations and causal interactions with trees or things connected with trees, BIV's can only think, not in English, which refers to trees, but in vat-English,

The truth-conditions for 'There is a tree in front of me' ... in vat-English are simply that the tree in the image be 'in front of' the 'me' in question – in the image – or, perhaps, that the kind of electronic impulse that normally produces this experience be coming from the automatic machinery, or, perhaps that the feature of the machinery that is supposed to produce the 'tree in front of one' experience be operating. (*RTH*, 14)

Since BIV's are trapped inside their envatted experience (or, perhaps, being generous, the impulses and machinery that produce that envatted experience), their sphere of reference is



severely limited. It is this that Putnam claims makes a BIV's assertion that it is a BIV self-refuting.

Using the acronyms, Putnam's central claim that if we actually are BIV's, then "We are BIV's" is self-refuting becomes: "If WAABV, then WBV is self-refuting". Call this Putnam's Conditional or PC! WAABV is the antecedent. "WBV is self-refuting" is the consequent. But why is WBV self-refuting? "If ... we really are brains in a vat, then what we now mean by 'we are brains in vats' is that *we are brains in a vat in the image* or something of that kind (if we mean anything at all) [P's emphasis]" (*RTH*, 15). That is, if we "actually" are BIV's, then WBV is stated in vat-English, not English proper. Since vat-English cannot refer to real physical vats, WBV cannot refer to real physical vats and, therefore, cannot assert that we are "actually" are BIV's. Putnam does *not* claim that WBV is self-refuting because it *contradicts* itself. WBV is self-refuting because if we actually are BIV's then our attempt to assert that we are BIV's necessarily fails.

Putnam is vague about what WBV can mean. He lists three possibilities, 1.) It means we are brains in a vat "in the image", 2.) It means "something of that kind", 3.) It may not mean anything at all. (*RTH*, 15) Putnam is not admitting to some flaw in his formulation. The implicit claim is that there is an objective unclarity in WBV and Putnam is merely reflecting that unclarity. However, it is this that first signals that Putnam's argument is fallacious.

Consider the third of Putnam's glosses on WBV, that it may not mean anything at all. But if it does not mean anything, then it is neither true nor false, in which case it cannot "refute" anything in the sense of showing that it is false. Since this is one of Putnam's possible readings of WBV, WBV is not "self-refuting" in the sense required to show that WBV is false, let alone "necessarily false". Indeed, if WBV may not mean anything at all the category of "self-refutation" is misapplied here. In fact, much of the obscurity in Putnam's argument traces to his odd notion of self-refutation. However, one might think that this objection is unfair. Perhaps Putnam is in that third gloss merely registering puzzlement about what WBV can

mean while his first and second readings of WBV are meant more seriously.

Consider Putnam's suggestion that WBV means that 1.) we are brains in a vat "in the image" or 2.) "something of that kind". Putnam's second reading is given because it is so hard to know how, precisely, to specify WBV's meaning. Does WBV mean that in a BIV's *image* of its world we are BIV's, or that in the BIV's image of the world we are images of a brain in an image of a vat—or something else? In any case, WBV's meaning must, if we actually are BIV's, be specified in vat-English, not English. Thus, WBV's statement that we are BIV's cannot mean "we" in the sense in which this is understood in English to refer to real human beings "in the world". It can only mean "we" in the sense available in vat-English. The "we" in WBV has to mean the "we" in a BIV's private vat-language, roughly, whatever concept vat-English can have of the human family. The same holds for the meanings of "brain" and "vat" in vat-English. In order to distinguish these words in vat-English from their counterparts in normal English one can subscript them, "brain<sub>ve</sub>", "vat<sub>ve</sub>", etc. The words in normal English are not subscripted. Thus, one can replace WBV by WBV<sub>ve</sub>: "We<sub>ve</sub> are brains<sub>ve</sub> in vats<sub>ve</sub>". Plugging in the subscripted terms, PC becomes: "If WAABV, then WBV<sub>ve</sub> is self-refuting". The appearance that WBV<sub>ve</sub> is self-refuting (or necessarily false) arises because it attempts, but necessarily fails, to affirm what is plainly affirmed in the antecedent, WAABV (that we "actually" are BIV's). However, WBV<sub>ve</sub> is not necessarily false in the case envisaged by Putnam. The two assertions, WAABV and WBV<sub>ve</sub>, written in different, but superficially similar looking languages, English and vat-English, are about entirely different things. WAABV is about physical human beings "in the world" and about brains and vats described in everyday English. WBV<sub>ve</sub> is, roughly, about the brains and vats "in the image" ("or something like that") as described in vat-English. There seems no obvious reason why one cannot provide truth-conditions for WBV<sub>ve</sub> ("We<sub>ve</sub> are BIV<sub>ve</sub>'s") that are independent of the truth-conditions for the normal English WAABV in the antecedent, "We actually are BIV's". The illusion that there is a conflict between WBV<sub>ve</sub> and WAABV, thereby making WBV<sub>ve</sub>

necessarily false, is fostered by the false assumption that the words in WAABV and WBV<sub>ve</sub> are about the same things. It is, admittedly, difficult to know how to fill out the truth conditions for WBV<sub>ve</sub>, as Putnam acknowledges, but that just emphasizes the point. To the degree that it is difficult to fill out the truth conditions for WBV<sub>ve</sub> (in the consequent), then it is difficult to assert that they are “refuted” by the truth conditions for WAABV (in the antecedent). There is, therefore, no obvious reason (or none given so far by Putnam) why we cannot actually be BIV’s and yet the vat-English “We<sub>ve</sub> are BIV<sub>ve</sub>’s” is also true. A science fiction example to illustrate this point is provided later.

This highlights the self-admitted “unusual” logic of Putnam’s argument. Putnam’s key claim is that WBV<sub>ve</sub> is “self-refuting”. But this is misleading. The reason WBV<sub>ve</sub> is supposed to be self-refuting is that since WBV<sub>ve</sub> is in vat-English, not English, WBV<sub>ve</sub> necessarily fails to state what it purports to state. However, the fact that WBV<sub>ve</sub> necessarily fails to state what it purports to state has *nothing* to do with the question whether we *actually* are BIV’s. Since WBV<sub>ve</sub> is a statement in vat-English, the proper conclusion to draw from Putnam’s argument is not that the statement in English that we are BIV’s is necessarily false, but that a BIV, speaking vat-English, is not in a position to meaningfully assert *either* that we are or that we are not BIV’s. Indeed, if we actually are BIV’s (WAABV), then Putnam can no more deny that we are BIV’s in his vat-English than the guru of Sydney, David, can affirm it in their shared vat-language. Putnam has demonstrated that the question whether one is a BIV is beyond the limits of a BIV’s private vat-English. That is, he has demonstrated that if we actually are BIV’s then neither Putnam nor David can even represent the thesis that we are BIV’s in their private vat-languages. But that has *nothing* to do with the truth or falsity of the assertion, in normal English, that we are BIV’s.

In order to illustrate this, consider the following science fiction example. Suppose that the what we call the human race is a vast science experiment by Arcturian scientists to study BIV-functioning. There is no planet called “earth” peopled by philosophers such as Putnam and David. Since the earthly

Putnam and David do not exist, call these Arcturian BIV's Putnam<sub>A</sub> and David<sub>A</sub>! Putnam<sub>A</sub>'s and David<sub>A</sub>'s beliefs that they belong to a distinguished history of earthly human philosophers has been induced by artificial electronic means by Arcturian scientists. Putnam cannot object to the example because he admits that this is physically possible and consistent with everything we have experienced.

Two of these Arcturian scientists, Trin and Tran, stand on a raised walkway surveying rows of experimental BIV's. Examining some computer printouts of BIV activity, Trin remarks: "Poor Putnam<sub>A</sub> over there in vat # 29 takes himself to have demonstrated that he and David<sub>A</sub> in the adjacent vat # 30 are not BIV's on the grounds that David<sub>A</sub>'s claim that they are BIV's is self-refuting, when, as you and I can both see [with our electromagnetic sensory organs], they both manifestly are BIV's. We Arcturians easily grasp this because we, being creatures who live "in a world", speak a genuine worldly language (Arcturian-English). Putnam<sub>A</sub>'s "refutation" of David<sub>A</sub>'s claim that they are BIV's is only expressed in vat-English and that has nothing to do with the question whether he and David *actually* are BIV's. Unfortunately, the only way we could explain this to Putnam<sub>A</sub> is by showing him that he is only speaking vat-English, rather than English proper, but, deprived as he is of any contact with the real external (to his vat) world, he is not even in a position to grasp that he is speaking vat-English rather than English". Tran replies, "Well I do not deny that Putnam<sub>A</sub> is in a bad way, but it's not his fault. One cannot expect too much of a BIV. But David<sub>A</sub> is certainly no better off. One might think that David<sub>A</sub> is closer to the truth because he says that he and Putnam<sub>A</sub> are BIV's and they are, but that's an illusion. For David<sub>A</sub> takes himself to believe that he is a BIV when, in fact, confined to vat-English as the poor brain is, he is only capable of thinking that he<sub>ve</sub> is a BIV<sub>ve</sub> (the semantics for which even we Arcturian "beings in a world" cannot quite figure out). Neither one is any closer to the truth than the other. What we have here in Putnam<sub>A</sub> and David<sub>A</sub> are two BIV's, one of them arguing that they are BIV's and one of them arguing that they are not, and yet neither one of them is right because neither of them is even able to

represent in their limited vat-language the thesis in English that they actually are BIV's, which is supposed to be at issue. Trin remarks, "I get that. But surely you admit that Putnam<sub>A</sub>'s argument appears to show that David<sub>A</sub>'s claim that they are BIV's is self-refuting. It fooled me". Tran replies, "Putnam<sub>A</sub> has shown that if they actually are BIV's, then David<sub>A</sub>'s claim (WBV) cannot state what it purports to state (that they are BIV's). One can call that "self-refuting" if one wants, but the only thing that is "refuted" here is that WBV is the statement in English that it purports to be. Putnam<sub>A</sub> has shown that if we actually are BIV's, then David<sub>A</sub>'s thesis is really only a claim in vat-English, not the claim in English that David<sub>A</sub> purports to assert and Putnam<sub>A</sub> purports to deny". Trin sums it up, "What Putnam<sub>A</sub> has really shown is that if they really are BIV's, then they do not even know, and *necessarily* cannot know, what language they are speaking?". "That's it", Tran replies, "a BIV's claim that they are thinking in a genuine worldly language" cannot be true". Trin cannot resist a final quip: "No doubt Putnam<sub>A</sub> and David<sub>A</sub> are in a bad way. But do not even get me started on Heidegger<sub>A</sub> in vat # 47, who has been vehemently insisting that he is essentially 'in-a-world' when we both see clearly that he is really only 'in-a-vat'".

As stated earlier, the present author agrees with Putnam (and, presumably, Heidegger) that the view that all human beings might be BIV's is incoherent. The problem is that Putnam's argument does not demonstrate that we, and Heidegger, are not in the peculiar envatted position represented by the above science fiction example. That is, Heidegger, the real earthly Heidegger "in-the-world", is correct that we are essentially "in a world", and Putnam may take himself to have demonstrated this, but his argument fails to do so. A new, and superior, argument is required to show that the view that we are BIV's is incoherent.<sup>5</sup>

In summary, Putnam's argument that we are not BIV's is fallacious. Putnam's PC boils down to this: If we actually are BIV's, then, since our language is vat-English rather than English proper, our attempt to assert that we are BIV's necessarily fails because BIV's cannot even represent the thesis in English proper (English "in the world") that we are BIV's. It

can at most represent the thesis that we<sub>ve</sub> are BIV<sub>ve</sub>'s. But, as the Arcturian example illustrates, PC is logically irrelevant to the truth of the ordinary English assertion that we "actually" are BIV's. Putnam intuition that if we actually are BIV's there is *something* very peculiar about David's WBV is correct. But what is wrong with WBV is not that it is necessarily false. What is wrong with it is rather that it necessarily cannot be the English assertion it purports to be. Putnam has only found a complicated way of saying that since a BIV-language is a private language, BIV's necessarily cannot either assert or deny in (public) English "in the word" that they are BIV's. That should not be surprising, and it has nothing to do with the *substantive* question whether we really are BIV's, as Trin and Tran can clearly see from their walkway above the vats containing the ever squabbling (or, more precisely, squabbling<sub>ve</sub>) Putnam<sub>A</sub> and David<sub>A</sub>. Heidegger is right that we are essentially "in-a-world", not "in a vat", but Putnam has not demonstrated that the claim that we are all "in a vat" is incoherent.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For a survey of the various responses to Putnam's argument, see S. Goldberg (2016). Goldberg's Introduction to the volume is quite useful. Putnam's "David" is, presumably, David Armstrong. Mumford (2007, 130) states that Armstrong's (2002) *A Materialist Theory of Mind* remains "an authoritative [and seminal] statement of Australian Materialism. See also Armstrong (1985)!"

<sup>2</sup> One might be tempted to use the same acronym in the antecedent and consequent as follow: If WBV then WBV is self-refuting. However, Putnam distinguishes the antecedent and consequent by describing the antecedent as the thesis that we "actually" are BIV's. This is represented here by "WAABV." The limited similarity between the two theses is reflected in the limited similarity in the two acronyms. Indeed, the partial similarity between the two verbal formulations may help to facilitate Putnam's mistaken inference.

<sup>3</sup> Putnam only refers here to what we "have experienced," leaving open the possibility that something in our future experience might disconfirm the thesis, e.g., the mad scientist tending the vats reveals the BIV's real situation to them somehow. However, this is not directly relevant to the present paper.

<sup>4</sup> Putnam should not say "magical theories of reference," but, rather, "theories of magical reference". For it is not the theory per se that is magical but the kind of intrinsic reference envisaged by the theory that is allegedly magical.

However, this nuance does not affect Putnam's argument or the argument of the present paper.

<sup>5</sup> The present author holds that Wittgenstein's (2010, para's 243-271) "private language argument," may provide just such an argument, for BIV is just a physicalistic version of the view that human beings have a private language, but a discussion of that the private language argument is beyond the limits of this paper.

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## **Refining Affective Disposition Theory: Towards a Theory of Narrative Equilibrium**

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### **Abstract**

This essay presents a preliminary theoretical development that attempts the importation of Heider's Theory of Balance into the domain of narratology. Heider's elemental POX structure offers ways to complement Affective Disposition Theory, opening the possibility for generating technical descriptions of easily recognizable but also subtle experiential aspects of the processing of narrative products. Traditional concepts like open-endings, focalization or identification will be productively revisited after considering the notions of narrative balance and narrative (affective/dynamic) imbalance. A network approach to affect distribution throughout the elements of a fictional world will allow us to isolate some specific effect-oriented authorial strategies. And finally, the study suggests that Heider's notion of balance recovery through cognitive-affective reorganization might contribute to the understanding of typically elusive ethical and world-view transformation issues.

**Keywords:** Heider's Theory of Balance, Affective Disposition Theory, affect, psychonarratology, sympathy

### **Introduction**

Equilibrium within the domain of narrative might be understood in a variety of interesting and productive ways. From a purely formal point of view, for example, a narrative text might be distributed along several parts, each one containing equal number of chapters. Or, from a structural point of view, actant forces may be assigned symmetrically: There might be one hero and one villain, and both might be assisted by an equal number of corresponding co-adjuvants. And so forth.

However, for the purpose of the present theoretical exercise I will be concerned with equilibrium as a phenomenological category, and, therefore, with equilibrium as something felt or experienced by the human agent who processes the narrative product. In this particular sense, the notion is relatable to well-known narratological concepts such as poetic justice, (un)happy endings, or even suspense. In a preliminarily intuitive sense, equilibrium might be defined as a sense that all is fine and harmonious within the represented narrative world.

I will assume that as the author gradually populates the fictional world with interrelating characters, actions, objects, events, etc., every new emergence constitutes an issue of balance, since there is an overall, overarching concern with stability on the part of the processing agent, usually dependable on the well-being of the protagonists. Most if not all of what is introduced in the fictional world is likely to play a role in the (non)attainment of final pleasant repose by the processing agent. This balance-sensitive rendering of the narrative experience is compatible with classic Affective Disposition Theory (ADT) (James 1860; Zillman & Cantor 1974; 1977), according to which we like it when the protagonist prospers, and also when her enemies suffer. But there are recognizable aspects of the narrative experience, captured by the notion of equilibrium, that seem to escape the discriminatory powers of ADT. Those scholars who have worked with this theory have articulated their approaches usually around the notions of protagonist-predicament-solution cycles (Shafer & Raney 2012; Weijers 2014) and character development (Kleemans et al. 2017). In terms of the reader/listener/spectator's experience, concern mainly focuses on enjoying the story and (dis)liking the characters. In its present form, ADT would welcome some kind of theoretical and methodological complement that could allow it to account for finer aspects such as interrelatedness, counter-balancing, ambiguity, relative distances, network structure, and other aspects related, as I will show, to felt equilibrium.

The notion of balance implies the integration of diverse elements into a final state of stable repose. The total integrative

effect of a story on the human processing agent seems underdefined by the general features of enjoyment and liking. ADT is not yet at a point where it can fully grasp the experience of narrative as a dynamic, step-by-step actualizing and integrating whole. Despite interesting attempts of total effect calculation based on folk-psychology (Smith, 2015), we still miss a theory that explains how a diversity of different and differing experiences is integrated by readers and spectators in order to contribute to a total effect of (dis)satisfaction. The present attempt will not offer such theory, but it will clear some portion of the path that takes us in that direction. I will try to do so through a theoretical consideration of equilibrium in narrative that is modelled after Heider's classic Theory of Balance (1958).

### **1. Four premises concerning the processing of narrative texts**

The present theoretical development stands upon a set of four interrelated premises.

**(1.) *Processing leads to experiencing.*** My first premise asserts that narrative texts, whatever their format—written narratives, campfire stories, film narrations, etc.—work upon the processing agents so as to make them undergo a variety experiences. As the agent processes the material, she becomes the ground for transformations, sensations and mental and affective motions in general. The gamut of effects potentially caused by the processing of narrative material encompasses skill development (Black & Barnes, 2015), feelings and emotions, appreciations of beauty, valuable realizations about life, attitudes and affect directed towards elements of the fictional world, etc. (Miall 2006). Some effects are subtle and tend to operate outside of immediate consciousness. We are not usually aware, for example, that reading fiction improves our theory of mind (Kidd & Castano 2013). Just as subtle is the experiencing the fictional world as if it were a portion of real life (Caracciolo 2013; Wolf 2004). Narrative texts are said to mediate psychological projections (Whiteley 2011), processes of perspective-taking (Caracciolo 2013), and even changes in the processing agent's world-view (Hakemulder 2000; Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora 2004; Oatley 2002). The operation of other

effects such as suspense, a need to know more, or negative emotions that emerge out of sympathy towards suffering protagonists are somewhat more *impacting* and easily verifiable by most introspecting processing agents.

This first premise is largely uncontroversial. The question has never been whether we do experience as much as whether our experiences are relevant in one way or another. Participants in myriads of experiments carried out over the last four decades do report undergoing particular states while processing narrative (Miall 2006). Emotions have been privileged by researchers who have proposed them as the main reason for processing narrative texts (Oatley, 2002), or as constitutive elements in the process of making sense of stories (Miall 2011). Other equally noticeable effects such as suspense have also been studied from a variety of perspectives (Brewer & Lichtenstein 1982; de Wied 1994; Dijkstra, Zwaan, Graesser, & Magliano 1994).

Two particular cognitive-affective mechanisms are especially relevant to the present theoretical development: sympathy and antipathy. For the purpose of this particular essay, sympathy will be defined as the mechanism by which processing agents become interested in particular characters, experience an urge to know about their evolution, and desire to witness their well-being and success. Antipathy constitutes a similar mechanism whereby processing agents find themselves in need to witness the downfall of certain characters. A similar conception of the sympathy/antipathy mechanism has been expounded and developed by Giovannelly (2009), and it is also present in Oatley (2004), who grants it a pivotal role in emotional engagement with narrative.

**(2.) *Some experiences are predictable.*** My second premise proposes that at least some of the processing agents' experiences are to a certain extent predictable. This is pretty uncontroversial when it comes to daily life. We anticipate the emotions someone is likely to experience when we give her an unexpected present, or when we give her bad news. Some aspects of human affective behavior which are relevant to our interests here have, in fact, been confirmed by psychologists. They have determined, for example, that in the face of conflict

between two disputants, we predictably side with the one who is morally right, and/or with the one who is most familiar (and/or liked by us), and/or with the one who will better ensure our well-being (Yang, van de Vliert, & Shi 2011). It is very unlikely that these mechanisms be suspended when dealing with narrative entities; on the contrary, moral constraints, for example, have been proposed as a relevant factor in granting our sympathy to a particular character (Giovannelli 2009, 90); exposure to a fictional character, simply by virtue of our becoming acquainted with her, has been said to lead to varying degrees of empathic identification on the part of the processing agent (Gavins, 2007, 64); and even self-interest might play a role in our sympathizing or antipathizing with particular characters, insofar as narrative products may exert a transforming influence upon us (Oatley 2002), which we might choose to accept or resist. In a study carried out by Oatley and Biason (Oatley 1996; 1999), the researchers found that male readers resisted identification with protagonists of the opposite sex—and therefore world-view transformation—much more than female readers did.

The predictability of a processing agent's experiences usually incorporates aspects which are much more accessible to common introspection. We will, for example, identify the hero and sympathize with him; we will feel frustrated when his goal is not achieved; or worried when he is in danger. Similarly, we will identify villains and hate them, want them neutralized, punished or even dead, and so forth. In fact, characters, costumes, appearances, objects, spaces, actions, behaviors, movements, music and most elements within a narrative world are likely to have affective correlates which might differ peripherally across different processing agents, but which must also share a number of core phenomenological properties either by cultural or biological imposition, or by both. This must be the case if we assume, as we do in premise number 3, that these correlates are consciously or intuitively exploited by the author of a narrative.

**(3.) *Some experiences are technique-triggered.***

Premise number three might in fact be understood as already implicit in premise number two. It contends that many of the

experiences facilitated by narrative products, and especially those related to affect, are in fact calculated and pre-designed by the creator of the story, at least to a certain extent (Plantinga 2011). Brewer and Lichtenstein (1982) implied so much when they proposed that the force of stories is to entertain. The notion of force, derived from classic pragmatics, is inseparable from authorial intention and authorial know-how. It is, for instance, by eliding information about events in the story that the author procures enjoyable effects of surprise and suspense. According to Smith “filmmakers design their stories with the expectation that certain moments in them will make audiences laugh, cry, or clutch their armrests until their knuckles become white” (2015, 486). Although the experience of a particular processing agent can be personal and unique, especially when considered in full detail, we must not disregard the significance of the consensual acknowledgement that, for example, horror movies are scary, and designed to be thus experienced by a majority of spectators.

**(4.) *Experiences are directional and integrative.***

The fourth premise is the most daring. It contends that undergoing a particular experience is bound to have an effect on the quality and intensity of the next experience facilitated by the narrative text. In common life terms, we perceive lukewarm water as hot if we have been previously immersed in ice-cold water. Experiences do not simply add up, but integrate in structured interrelated wholes. I find that most of what John Dewey wrote about the continuity of experience in the field of pedagogy might be applied here.

[E]very experience affects for better or worse the attitudes which help decide the quality of further experiences, by setting up certain preference and aversion, and making it easier or harder to act for this or that end. Moreover, every experience influences in some degree the objective conditions under which further experiences are had. (1938, 37)

Since, according to Dewey, experience conveys inertia, “It is the business of the educator to see in what direction an experience is heading” (1938, p. 38). It is also, I claim, the business of the author of narratives to consciously or intuitively anticipate the directionality of each particular experience

facilitated by the text, and to calculate its repercussions in the overall affective structure. This is very clearly perceived in narrative when we consider the experience of positive or negative affect towards fictitious entities. The more intense the sympathy we experience towards the hero, the harsher the hatred we experience towards the villain who threatens her well-being. The same principle justifies the fact that those who help the hero immediately win our sympathy, and they do so just as fast as we extend our antipathy towards those who assist villains in their evil doings. We might quite accurately understand such extensions of affect as spread-activation processes where the affect invested in a particular element radiates out, engulfing all other elements positively associated to the former.

## 2. Heider's Balance Theory

If, as our premises contend, we experience affects in a principled and structured way when processing narrative products, then a theory of affective balance based upon Heider's classical proposal might constitute a useful analytical tool to be especially considered by those narratologists who are interested in phenomenological issues.

Heider's theory is exquisitely simple and intuitive. Nearly folk-psychological, I would say, it is concerned with the affective relationships that occur in a microcosm minimally inhabited by a person P, who relates to another person O, and where both P and O relate to an object X. Their relating is minimally described as experiencing either a positive or a negative attitude. Such minimalistic microcosm, allows Heider to discern two fundamental distributions of affect: balanced and imbalanced structures.

A situation is balanced according to the theory when O is positively regarded by P, and she coincides with P in her liking or disliking X; and also when she is negatively regarded by P and disagrees with P in her appreciation of X. In simpler terms: my friends like what I like (→) and dislike what I dislike (⊥); my foes like what I dislike and dislike what I like; and that is all fine and balanced:

- (1)  $P \rightarrow O \wedge P \rightarrow X \wedge O \rightarrow X$  [P likes O and P likes X and O likes X]
- (2)  $P \rightarrow O \wedge P \not\rightarrow X \wedge O \not\rightarrow X$
- (3)  $P \not\rightarrow O \wedge P \not\rightarrow X \wedge O \rightarrow X$
- (4)  $P \not\rightarrow O \wedge P \rightarrow X \wedge O \not\rightarrow X$

But when my friends like what I dislike and dislike what I like, or when my enemies coincide with me in their positive and negative appreciations, I find myself in a situation of imbalance:

- (5)  $P \rightarrow O \wedge P \rightarrow X \wedge O \not\rightarrow X$
- (6)  $P \rightarrow O \wedge P \not\rightarrow X \wedge O \rightarrow X$
- (7)  $P \not\rightarrow O \wedge P \rightarrow X \wedge O \rightarrow X$
- (8)  $P \not\rightarrow O \wedge P \not\rightarrow X \wedge O \not\rightarrow X$

In our everyday lives, it is not uncommon for most of us to partake in imbalanced situations. For example, P may have a friend O whom he likes very much except for the fact that O loves rugby, a sport which P happens to detest (situation 6 above, X = 'rugby'). P can, of course, live with that. Imbalanced situations are not necessarily unbearable. However, the theory has it that all imbalanced situations generate some degree of strain and stress or, in any case, some form of aversive phenomenology. The theory also includes a valuable predictability component. According to Heider, when we find ourselves in a situation of imbalance we will always feel a more or less pressing inclination to recover balance.

So, if P finds himself in the previously mentioned situation of imbalance, where he likes his friend O, O likes rugby, and P hates it, P may try to reach balance in just two ways: either (1.) by changing the world outside (rugby or my friend), or (2.) by changing himself through cognitive-affective reorganization. In the first case, for example, P may try to convince O that rugby is a very silly sport. If he succeeds at that, and O learns to hate rugby, then both will unite in their disdain of it and live happily ever after. When changing the world is not possible, or not too easy, P may try to see the bright side of things and learn to tolerate, appreciate or even love rugby, and reunite with O in this new passion. Of course, a more radical way of cognitive-affective reorganization might

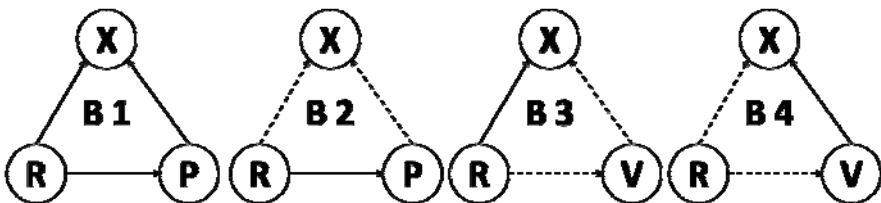


imply for P to teach himself to dislike O, and drastically recover balance by turning O into a disliked other.

As far as I know, Heider’s Balance Theory has never been applied to the study of the phenomenology associated with narrative processing. De Nooy (1999) tackled the possibility that literary evaluations of Dutch literature during the 1970s conformed to Heider’s POX structures. He is, in fact, a pioneer of the exploration social networks in relation to literary matters (De Nooy 1991). Heider’s balance was re-introduced by Cartwright and Harary (1979) into the wider domain of graph theory and network theory. But the original notion of an aversive phenomenology associated with imbalance and the prediction of a pull towards recovery was played down in the process, and it is totally absent from recent applications of graph and network theory to fiction, where any reference to effects in the reader is mostly anecdotal (Alberich, Miro-Julia, & Roselló 2008; Moretti 2011; Selisker 2015; Stiller, Nettle, & Dunbar 2003).

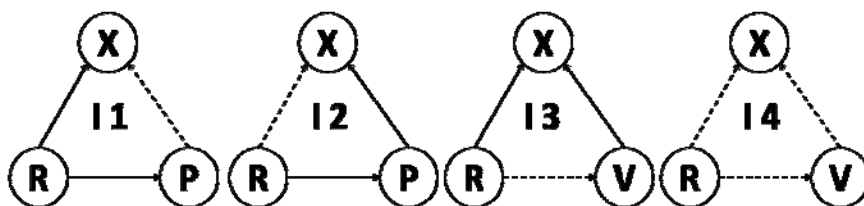
### 3. Importing balance into phenomenological narratology

By assimilating Heider’s P to the processing agent R (reader/spectator), and O to a character P (protagonist)/V (villain) in the story, the benefits of importing Heider’s balance theory into narratological analysis become clear: We may use the theory to predict some basic affective states, affective tendencies and expectations in R. The mechanical transposition of the theory into the narratological domain would render the following four balanced structures:



**Figure 1.** Balanced structures. Social-psychological perspective.  
 R: Reader/Spectator; P: Character (Protagonist); V: Character (Villain, antagonist)

In Figure 1, a continuous arrow represents a positive polarity ( $\rightarrow$ ) towards or an association with an object/behavior/event/etc., whereas the discontinuous arrow stands for negative polarity or dissociation ( $\parallel$ ). In the first two structures, a character P towards whom we (R) experience sympathy, relates to X with the same polarity that we would display. In B1, X might stand for [courageousness], for example, a positive value in our culture; we regard it positively, the protagonist displays it, and all is fine and balanced. In B2, X might stand for [cruelty], from which we are culturally trained to dissociate, just as the protagonist does in this particular structure, leaving readers at peace. In B3, we feel antipathy towards a villain who dissociates from, for example, compassionate behavior [X=compassion]; and in B4 we experience antipathy towards a villain who behaves, let us say, with cruelty [X=cruelty].



**Figure 2.** Imbalanced structures. Social-psychological perspective  
 R: Reader/Spectator; P: Character (Protagonist); V: Character (Villain, antagonist)

A mechanical transposition of the theory also renders Figure 2, which must be more thoroughly studied. To discuss this second set of structures I will introduce an element of chronology. Suppose that you (R) are exposed to a particular narrative where you are first made to sympathize with the protagonist P. Then, in a later turn of the story, P finds herself in a situation where courageousness (X) is required and, to our disappointment, she dissociates from such behavior. This will put readers in an uncomfortable situation of imbalance, I1 above, introducing a sort of affective deficit that could only be solved either by changing our attitude towards P, or by watching her overcoming her lack of courage in future situations. In structure I2 we would have our

protagonist behaving with cruelty, for example. In structure I3, we have a villain whom we hate, and whose downfall we ardently desire, behaving with heroic courage, tender compassion, amazing intelligence, etc. In I4, we see our much hated villain explicitly rejecting cruelty, or racism, or cowardice, or infidelity, etc. and therefore commanding sympathetic respect from us.

Imbalance is frequent in narrative, and it contributes very much to making it entertaining and interesting. So much so that we might even question the possibility of real balance in any ongoing narrative process. My claim is, in fact, that only B1 above constitutes a truly balanced situation in narrative. In a narrative world where B1 is the only structure, we would experience sympathy towards all characters, and the narrative world would be exclusively and idyllically populated by things that we like and guarantee well-being, constituting a utopian web of harmoniously distributed affect. A description of movements, actions and events in such a world would not constitute, from my point of view, a narration proper. Certainly, some forms of entertainment for children might *progress* along such lines: the description of a memorable picnic with mom, and dad and the grandparents; a day for flying kites, swimming in the lake, and watching lovely animals. That is all fine and balanced, but narrative proper seems to require undesirable bugs, ominously clouded skies, dangerous snakes, and so forth.

Structures B2, B3 and B4, provisionally transposed as balanced, are not so when considered from this narratological perspective. A typical B2 structure is that where a horrendous virus (X) comes out of nowhere and spreads a lethal illness throughout the world, and where our protagonist (P) shares with us (R) a negative attitude towards X. As long as P dislikes, fights and reacts against X, our expectations are satisfied; but there can be no real balance until the virus X is substituted by a cure C, mutually appreciated by R and P, and until we are brought from a B2 structure into our really balanced B1 structure:  $R \rightarrow P \wedge R \rightarrow C \wedge P \rightarrow C$ . This B1 structure is not only balanced, it is a structure

of narrative repose, and therefore the end of the narrative inertia.

According to theory, B3 is balanced; but imagine a supposedly balanced situation S like the following:

$$(9) \quad S = R|V \wedge R \rightarrow P \wedge VIP$$

We could flesh out S as follows: The processing agent R feels antipathy towards the villain V and sympathy towards the protagonist P. Conforming perfectly to B3 and to our expectations, the villain wants the protagonist's downfall and her suffering. The structure is balanced in terms of affect, but we cannot easily leave it at that; in line with ADT, our sympathy towards P makes us wish for the eradication of any danger that might spoil the happily ever after represented by B1. The villain must die, he must be neutralized, or he must stop being an enemy to P; only then will there be real balance. As long as there are active antipathies at work, a narrative structure may satisfy our expectations concerning characters' behavior without being narratively balanced.

Only B1 constitutes a fully balanced structure from all possible points of view. On the other hand, B2–4 are imbalanced structures, but not in the same way as I1–4 are. I propose we refer to this particular form of imbalance—where expectations are met but where antipathies remain—as Narrative Dynamic (N-Dynamic) Imbalance. This form of imbalance has to do with the perception on the part of the reader that a situation of final repose permeated by lasting harmony has not yet been reached. The other types of imbalance, I1–4, where protagonists and villains disappoint us and surprise us respectively, with unexpected attitudes and associations, clearly have a different feel. I propose we use the term Narrative-Affective (N-Affective) Imbalance to refer to these four situations. Notice that the difference between N-Dynamic and N-Affective forms of imbalance is phenomenological in nature; from a strictly functional point of view, they are all equally characterized by their deviation from a situation B1 of repose, due to the presence of negative polarities. Both N-Dynamic and N-Affective imbalances are solved when transformed into a B1 structure.

#### 4. Open endings and imbalance

Our hero has prevailed and her nemesis has, once more, been defeated. But, as usual, the villain has not been fully neutralized: He manages to escape and he takes refuge somewhere where he will recover, where his hatred towards the hero will continue simmering, and where new plots against her will be thoughtfully planned. ‘You win today... But I will be back’—that is often the final cry of nemeses. This story ends on a type of N-Dynamic imbalance already discussed—B3. This kind of ending, which I will consider open, makes it possible for the story—this particular story—to be continued through subsequent installments, with new appearances of an ever slyer and more dangerous nemesis.

Our developing theory of narrative balance may contribute to an enrichment of the notion of open ending. In relation to film narrations, Preis (1990) described four types of opening:

The open ending... ..often leaves us with an ambiguous or missing plot resolution. The story may not offer any clues to the whereabouts and future of the main characters. An open ending often fails to fulfill the viewer's emotional expectations by not offering a climax or other emotional relief. Finally... .. an open ending doesn't confirm or reassure existing ideology; it questions ideology and demystifies it. (18)

Particularly, the third kind of opening described by Preis, the one that has to do with the processing agents' attainment of emotional relief, could be expanded and explored by considering N-Affective Imbalance. Our N-Dynamic imbalance seems closer to the second type of opening in Preis' view. In any case, open endings need not be strictly based on the inconclusiveness of objectively described processes—like capturing the killer, solving the case, finding the cure, determining whether they were real aliens or just hallucinations, etc.—but may also be dependent on the processing agents' experience of aversive affects due to the fact that, in their view, some stress generating antipathies remain active in the fictional world: Either a potential for entropy has managed to survive (N-Dynamic open ending); or the loved characters have not managed to grow beyond

meanness (N-Affective open ending); or characters regarded with antipathy retain, when the story is over, a perplexing light that commands respect and love (N-Affective open ending).

Concerning open endings, I must make an important disclaimer at this point. The notion that any narrative text will be perceived as imbalanced and open-ended unless it reaches a utopian B1 conclusion is by no means intended either as prescriptive or as a prerequisite for quality or good reception—although there seems to be some evidence of a general preference for happy-ending, plot-closing and suspense-solving narratives (Brewer & Lichtenstein 1982; Preis 1990; Smith 2015). Both in closed and open stories, however, dynamic and affective imbalances must be regarded as defining and constitutive elements of narrative. Our balanced B1 structure, even if it is not attained, remains essential by virtue of its cardinal nature and the tensions it exerts upon processing agents as it stands as a horizon of possibility or vanishing point.

## **5. Balance calculus, strategies and designed epiphanies**

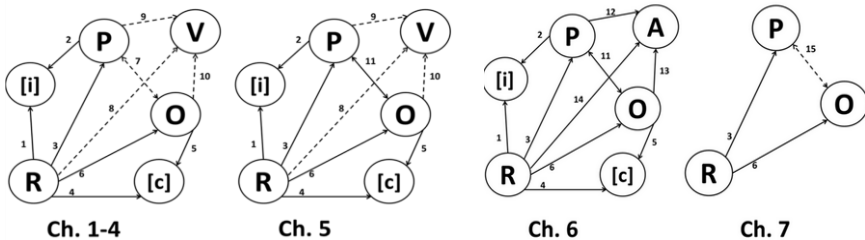
As mentioned earlier, a consideration of narrative balance along the lines drawn by F. Heider will allow us to circumscribe some otherwise fuzzy experiential aspects associated to narrative processing. Hopefully, our theory is not an extraneous structure forced upon narration, but the formalization of already existing and fully functional intuitions that account both for the ability of narrative authors to affect us in particular ways, and for our tendency, as human processing agents, to respond in similar ways to specific stimuli. If this is so, narratological analysis guided by this theory should be able to isolate aspects of narrative functioning whose *raison d'être* is none other than to trigger specific affective states in the audience. In fact, there must be four fundamental maneuvers at the author's disposal for eliciting affect, balance-wise, from an already depicted situation: (1) introducing sympathies, (2) introducing antipathies, (3) turning sympathies into antipathies and (4)

turning antipathies into sympathies. Table 1 summarizes a simple artificial example that includes instances of some possible strategies; it is a basic narrative structure consisting of seven chapters:

Chapter 1	B1: $R \rightarrow [i] \wedge P \rightarrow [i] \wedge R \rightarrow P$ ;	Narrative repose
Chapter 2	B1: $R \rightarrow [c] \wedge O \rightarrow [c] \wedge R \rightarrow O$ ;	Narrative repose
Chapter 3	I1: $R \rightarrow P \wedge R \rightarrow O \wedge (P \rightarrow O \wedge O \rightarrow P)$ ;	N-Affective destabilizing strategy
Chapter 4	B2: $R \rightarrow (P \wedge O) \wedge R \rightarrow V \wedge (P \wedge O) \rightarrow V$ ;	N-Dynamic destabilizing strategy
	I4: $P \rightarrow O \wedge P \rightarrow V \wedge O \rightarrow V$ ;	De-focalized affect/N-Affective imbalance
	I4: $O \rightarrow P \wedge O \rightarrow V \wedge P \rightarrow V$ ;	De-focalized affect/N-Affective imbalance
Chapter 5	B1: $R \rightarrow P \wedge R \rightarrow O \wedge (P \rightarrow O \wedge O \rightarrow P)$ ;	Reconciliation Epiphany
Chapter 6	B1: $R \rightarrow (P \wedge O) \wedge R \rightarrow A \wedge (P \wedge O) \rightarrow A$ ;	Epiphany of Victory (over V)
Chapter 7	I1: $R \rightarrow P \wedge R \rightarrow O \wedge (P \rightarrow O \wedge O \rightarrow P)$ ;	N-Affective open ending

**Table 1.** Balance structure of an artificial story

Figure 3 below represents the story described in Table 1, and it captures balance structures along chapters as social psychologists do when studying intra-group relations. The numbers 1-15 attached to the arrows indicate the chronology of the events as they are narrated. The story could be read as (arrow 1) R likes [i], then (arrow 2) P associates with [i], then (arrow 3) R develops liking towards P, etc.



**Figure 3.** Schematic representation of the artificial story

We could typically flesh out this seven-chapter story as follows: In chapter one, we find ourselves (R) in a situation of

balance, where we appreciate intelligence [i], a character P associates with it and as a result we develop sympathy towards him (arrows 1, 2, 3). The next chapter also ends in perfect balance and repose, since we appreciate courage [c], character O associates with [c] and we begin to sympathize with her (arrows 4, 5, 6). In chapter three the creator of the story introduces a situation of N-Affective imbalance I1 by informing us that P and O, both of whom we appreciate, hate each other (arrows 3, 6, 7). This situation, according to the theory, generates a certain level of strain in us (R). At this point, theoretically, a desire for reconciliation between P and O is to be experienced by R; it is in the hands of the author to satisfy such desire or not to do it. As it happens, in chapter 4 an N-Dynamic imbalance is introduced in the form of a lethal virus (V), which is disliked by R, P and O as expected (arrows 8, 9, 10). We must notice at this point, that the situation is affectively imbalanced (I4) for P and O since they dislike each other, but coincide in their rejection of X (arrows 7, 9, 10). Notice that, in relation to V, we (R) find ourselves in a situation of N-Dynamic Imbalance, whereas P and O would be construed as also undergoing the effects of N-Affective imbalance. I will discuss such aspects of focalized and de-focalized affect in the next section.

Chapter 5 contains one of the maneuvers predicted above: P and O decide to unite forces and put their talents at the service of a common cause. As they begin to cooperate and to develop a fluent, efficient and successful relationship, discontinuous arrow 7 changes into continuous arrow 11, antipathy is replaced by mutual sympathy and we (R) experience, according to balance theory, a predesigned and calculated epiphany of reconciliation.

On top of that, in chapter 6, P and O find an antidote A and save the world. The resolution of the B2 structure introduced with the virus in chapter 5 gives way now to the euphoria of victory over the elimination of the V antipathy, or its substitution for the sympathy towards the cure A (arrows 11, 12, 13, 14). Up to this point, at the end of chapter 6 we have reached a moment of repose B1 where the narrative could end. But the author of this particular story has decided to reactivate through a seventh chapter the old feud between P and



O, who disappointingly go back to their antipathetic relationship once danger is over (arrow 15). Despite having reached a happy ending, we can now see that the story remains open due to an N-Affective conflict, which will stir in us (R) a certain sense of dissatisfaction, incompleteness and a desire for future reconciliation. Although the story is not a very original one, the deductive task of isolating strategic narrative transformations that theoretically bring about affect transformations in the processing agents has been, I believe, satisfactorily accomplished.

### 6. Focalized and De-focalized affect

Consider the three structures represented in Figure 4. According to standard Balance Theory, all of them are B1 balanced structures. However, there are important differences between them.

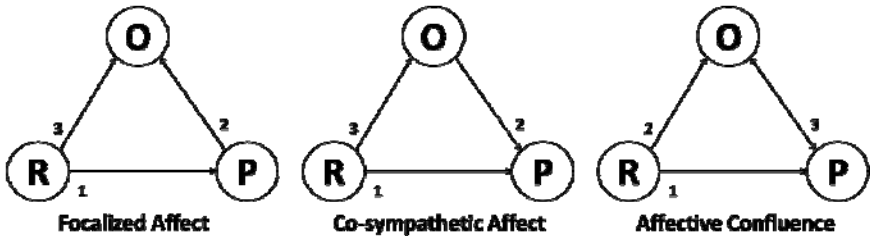


Figure 4. Focalization and affect

As before, the arrows have been numbered according to chronology, which appears to play an essential role in narrative phenomenology. In what I have called focalized affect, first we sympathize with a particular character P (arrow 1), then we learn that P has a positive attitude towards O (arrow 2), and as a consequence we are inclined to also develop sympathy towards O (arrow 3). In this way we will tend to develop special sympathy towards the hero's family and close friends, for example. This procedure has the logical structure of a conditional:

$$(10) (R \rightarrow P \wedge P \rightarrow O) \rightarrow R \rightarrow O$$

If we like P and P likes O, then we will naturally tend to sympathize with O in our search for balance. Our attitude towards O has been focalized through P and therefore coincides with P's. The logic of the second structure, co-sympathetic affect, can be captured as:

$$(11) (R \rightarrow P \wedge O \rightarrow P) \rightarrow R \rightarrow O$$

In co-sympathetic affect of this kind we develop liking towards a character because she helps or assists our protagonist in her predicament, or expresses a disposition to do so. Our affect here is de-focalized in relation to P, since the protagonist might not even be aware of O's existence. Co-sympathetic affect will emerge, for example, when an unknown stranger O rescues and revives our protagonist P who remains unconscious for some time after, say, having had accident in the jungle. Finally, the logic of the third structure in Figure 4, affective confluence, can be expressed as follows:

$$(12) (R \rightarrow P \wedge R \rightarrow O) \rightarrow (P \rightarrow O \wedge O \rightarrow P)$$

In this case, our sympathy towards P and O is established separately, before P and O meet and begin to relate to each other, or before we learn that they are already related in any way. The artificial story represented by Figure 3 above constitutes an adequate example: First we get to know P, and we like him; then we get to know O, and we develop sympathy towards her; and from that moment the expectation that P and O must get along is established. Although the affective confluence seems logically close to focalized affect, as a form of bi-focal or multi-focal distribution of liking, it is not really the case, since our liking of P and O is not mediated through either O's or P's perspectives, but independently attained. Both co-sympathetic affect and affective confluence are forms of de-focalized affect. The three situations may be easily extended in order to incorporate antipathy, and they could all be combined in complex stories.

In a story where affect is completely focalized through a protagonist, our distribution of polarities would fully coincide with hers, since it is through her value system that we are measuring the entire narrative world and all its inhabitants. In

such structure we would also inherit P's balances and imbalances as shown in Figure 5 below.

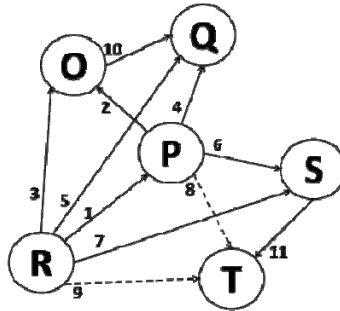


Figure 5. Affect focalized through P

As Figure 5 shows, we (R) relate to O, Q, S and T in exactly the same modality as P does. So the triangle POQ (2, 4, 10) is accurately mirrored by the triangle ROQ (3, 5, 10), and the structure is balanced B1 in both cases. Notice also how imbalanced PST (6, 8, 11) is punctually reflected in RST (7, 9, 11). Figure 6 represents a much more complex and interesting kind of story because it transcends focalized affect.

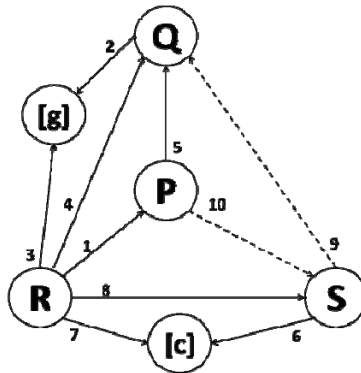


Figure 6. De-focalized affect

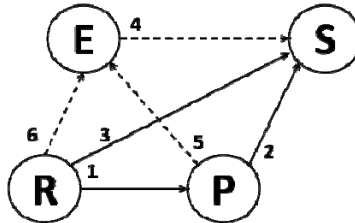
In the story represented by Figure 6, characters P, Q and S are presented in different chapters and then brought together, once the path towards affective confluence has been drawn. First, sympathy is procured towards the main

protagonist P (arrow 1). Then, in a second chapter, Q gains our sympathy due to her generous behavior [g] (arrows 2, 3, 4). In chapter three, an affective confluence takes place when we are informed that P satisfies our expectations by positively associating with Q (arrow 5). In a fourth chapter, we are introduced to yet another character S, towards whom we develop sympathy due to his courageous disposition [c] (arrows 6, 7, 8). In the next chapter we learn that S is full of resentment towards Q and seeking vengeance (arrow 9), and on learning about this, Q's friend P, our main protagonist, of accordance with Heider's intuitions and predictions, declares war on S (arrow 10).

If all our affect here had been focalized through P, triangle RQS would simply mirror PQS, which is not the case. Here, we (R) would not be simply inheriting P's affections. In fact, the triangle PQS is perfectly balanced from a socio-psychological point of view—structure B3 above. The triangle RQS, on the other hand, is imbalanced both narratively and socio-psychologically—structure I1.

A major difference between focalized and co-sympathetic distributions has to do with the construal of our protagonist P either as a focal origin of affect or as the receiver of external affect. A story has both aspects when the protagonist loves and hates, and is loved and hated. There is no reason, however, why stories cannot belong exclusively to one or the other extreme types. Figure 5 above represents, for example, a story where all affect is focalized through P, and where narrative movement is associated to P's emotional stability, which is threatened by his disagreement with loved S about disliked T. Figure 5 would underlie, for example, a story where a loving father P is under strain because her daughter S is in love with a vicious mafia boss T. Likewise, we might as well conceive of a story where the protagonist P is presented exclusively as the object of external constructive and destructive influences. This is, for example, the story of the shipwrecked sailor who ends up in an island where he will find both challenges to his life and unexpected assistance from, say, a friendly native towards whom we will develop de-focalized co-sympathetic affect. However, our guess is that in most existing stories protagonists are constructed and

construed both as focal origins and as targets of affective movement and therefore focalized and de-focalized distributions of affect tend to co-exist. Furthermore, it might happen that our affective link with certain characters in a narrative world is at the same time focalized and de-focalized.



**Figure 7.** Simultaneous focalized and de-focalized affect

In Figure 7, our dislike of E can be understood as triggered by focalization through P, and also through co-sympathetic affect in relation with S. The question here is whether in our disliking of E we are empathizing with P—that is, feeling what we believe he must be feeling—or sympathizing with S, or both. A second question concerning this matter is whether these two affective mechanisms—focalized and co-sympathetic affect—correlate with the same qualia or are, instead, felt differently by R. The answer to both questions would welcome an empirical approach; however, and to the extent that personal introspection constitutes a valid provisional approximation, our answer would be that arrow 6 in Figure 7 represents both mechanisms, and that they feel slightly different just as empathy and sympathy are, in fact, related but distinctive phenomena.

## 7. The Ethics of imbalance

If our theoretical development is in fact capturing existing aspects of the phenomenology associated to narrative processing, then there can be no doubt that the effectiveness of a story depends largely on its potential for emotionally destabilizing its readers/listeners/spectators. If, on the other hand, it is true that we are biologically determined to recover balance and that we can do so through cognitive-affective

reorganization, then we can only conclude that many stories have a potential for inviting or tempting us to change our views of the world (Kuiken et al. 2004; Oatley 2002). This leads to ethical issues: The narratives we consume have a potential for shaping our worldview, and our worldview determines our social behavior.

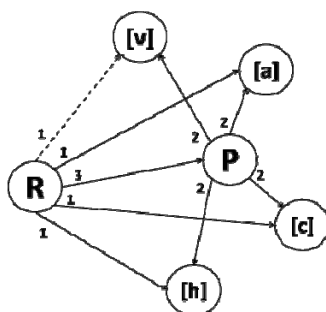


Figure 8. Balancing violence

In Figure 8, R represents the processing agent of a narrative product, and [v], [a], [c] and [h], targeted by their respective arrows, represent features of behavior. Our agent R here associates positively with humbleness [h], courageousness [c] and abnegation [a], and dissociates from violent behavior [v]. Satisfactorily enough, the protagonist of the story P provides ample evidence of humble, courageous and self-denying behavior; but he is clearly one those heroes who justifies violence in specific situations, and does not hesitate to exercise it with exacting dexterity. Character P is a case of morally ambiguous characterization (Kleemans et al. 2017) As we said earlier, imbalances are not necessarily unbearable, and some agents could probably go through the whole narrative process simply coping with or perhaps even enjoying a bit of smarting imbalance.

Now, since changing the protagonist is totally out of the question in most forms of narrative texts, the only way that R has to reestablish balance is through cognitive-affective reorganization. A reader might for example decide that she does no longer like P; but this puts her in more trouble, since it brings imbalance to the part of the structure that has to do with

[a], [c] and [h]. Changing our mind about P on account of his violent nature, would require the willing disregard of his virtuous facets, or a reinterpretation of them as fake, unreliable, pretense, hypocritical, low in intensity, relatively insignificant, etc. But there is yet another possibility; one that involves changing our mind about violence, and adopting the belief that as long as you remain humble, selfless and courageous, it is fine to resort to violence on certain occasions. Whatever R does in the end, the story presents her with a moral dilemma that crosses the apparently impenetrable barrier that divides the fictional from the real. Besides, the cognitive and affective mechanisms at work within R may not be fully or even barely conscious; in their innate search for pleasant balance, processing agents may end up shaping their worldviews without being at all aware of the process.

### **Conclusions and future refinement**

The adoption of Heider's Balance Theory for predicting the effects on a reader/listener/spectator of possible distributions of affect throughout the elements of a fictional world appears to be not only possible but also useful and revealing. It allows us to capture integrative aspects of experience that strike us, I believe, as intuitive and ordinary, but that have evaded so far the nets of technical analysis. It allows us to trace, understand and discuss special strands of aversive phenomenology and pleasant homeostatic processes that seem to play a central role in narrative dynamics.

A tentative first approach has made it possible to discern potentially complex affective and dynamic destabilizing strategies, and the category of effects that have been referred to as epiphanies. It has allowed us to reconsider and refine our awareness of open-ended narrative structures. Under the light of Balance Theory, effects related to empathy and sympathy appear to possess an analyzable molecular structure, and we can now distinguish between focalized affect, co-sympathetic affect and affective confluences where we used to have, quite simply, identification processes. Balance Theory also offers an explanation and a way of analyzing what other researchers have already proved through empirical approaches: The

processing of narrative texts may effect transformations of the world-views, value systems and personality of the processing agents. An element of self-definition and self-image is theoretically involved in the distribution of affect throughout the entities and events that constitute the story world. Narrative products, by virtue of the processing agent's innate need for balance, end up exerting pressure over the self, especially in those cases where affective balance may be preserved through cognitive and attitudinal self-corrections. This opens the door to considerations of ethics in narrative consumption.

We cannot expect more from a theory. It must provide us with the kind of concepts and analytical tools that allow for a richer, more refined and more discriminatory rendering of what is otherwise familiar—I would be very suspicious indeed of any insights pointing to extraordinary or extremely sophisticated experiences. The effects that I have been aiming at are by no means strange; the gain here has to do with realizing that they are principled and analyzable in rather simple and self-demonstrative ways.

Some aspects of the theoretical development drafted in this essay remain as yet underspecified. Such is the case of our continuous and discontinuous arrows. An expression like  $P \rightarrow O$  has been quite diversely translated as: P sympathizes with O, P likes O, P helps O, etc. The opposite,  $P \nrightarrow O$ , has been taken to express: P does not like O, P wants O's downfall, P is actively committed to O's downfall, P is planning to kill O, etc. An element of intensity or degree appears to be relevant to the issue at hand; processing agents will not find a situation where their hero is simply disliked just as destabilizing as another where the hero's life is seriously under threat. The meaning of the arrows, on the other hand, is also determined by the nature of their targets. In relation to objects, concepts and behaviors, a positive arrow seems to generally mean "association with" in the sense that one's notion of self tends to incorporate the targeted elements; whereas the negative discontinuous arrow means "dissociation with" and otherness.

Our *RPO* structure invites considerations of reciprocity that have not been considered here: A situation where  $P \rightarrow O$  but



OIP is very likely to be felt as imbalanced independently of whether R sides with P or with O. Furthermore, attitudinal paradoxes are bound to occur where the recipient of the story would have grounds both for sympathizing and antipathizing with the same characters. So, the affective potential of a narrative structure is clearly not limited to the generation of sympathies and antipathies, but also and importantly, to the stirring of affective impasse and affective paradox, which should be more thoroughly explored.

All in all, the results of this theoretical exercise are, I believe, promising enough. I have used simple artificial stories to prove my points, but I hope that, with a little more refinement of the tools here drafted, we will be able to advance predictions concerning the likely effects of a variety of narrative structures, and then it will be possible to test their empirical validity.

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## Oneiric Foundations of Philosophy: Saint Augustine

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### Abstract

The aim of my article is to highlight the way in which dreams have influenced or prefigured Saint Augustine's conversion to Christianity. Starting from the autobiographical writing *Confessions* Augustine is paradigmatic in developing what may be defined as “an oneiric autobiography”. In Christianity dreams have been associated with heresy being subject of demonic influence, in this sense, what is revealed in a dream should be treated with utmost caution. Augustine's perspective shows that dreams may have a different significance; they might also predict a future benign choice or path to follow, such as his conversion to Christianity. The way in which one will perceive the concept of dreaming will be radically shifted among Christian approaches due to Augustine's *Confessions*. Dreaming has never been more interesting after this.

**Keywords:** Saint Augustine, dreams, Christian philosophy, Neo-Platonism, conversion

Between the 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD sleeping and dreams have represented the area confiscated by individual freedom. No one may abduct someone's right to dream (Le Goff 2014, 950-968; Le Goff 1991, 219). In Christianity, the dream has been sometimes associated with heresy, becoming in a certain way suspect, or even demonized. According to this reason, dreams have been “supervised” (Le Goff 2014, 950-968). This aspect has not hindered the development of an “oneiric autobiography”, the case of Augustine being in this sense paradigmatic. Before the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD the position of Christianity related to dreams indicates interest, anxiety,

incertitude. In the beginning, until the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, Christians are interested in dreams and they are related to conversion, to the contact with God, to martyrdom. In *Against Celsus* (*Contra Celsum* I, 46), Origen shows that many have been converted to Christianity as a result of dreams. In *On the testimony of the soul* (*De testimonio animae*) XLVII, 2, Tertullian agrees that the majority of people know God through visions, and Saint Cyprian understands through rapture the supreme form of dream, although later observes that between prayer and dream (sleep) there is an opposition. The idea is also present at Clement of Alexandria in *The Instructor* (*Paedagogus*) (II, 9) who reminds the saying of Paul on the permanence of prayer and vigil or watch (Romans 12:12); this is one of the reasons that has determined the association of dream with heretics. A first treatise on dreams is to be found at Tertullian (*De anima*, chap. XLV-XLIX) who names dreams *negotia somni* – activities of sleep, the dream representing an accident of sleeping and not a necessity. Released during sleeping of the external demands of the body, the soul discharges its own outputs, the dreams. In contrast to Homer, Aristotle and Epicurus, Tertullian believes that there are real dreams and offers a Christian interpretation of a threefold classification of dreams: dreams sent by demons, dreams sent by God and dreams that our own soul is sending itself according to different contexts (Le Goff 1991, 226).

As Jacques Le Goff observes, between the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD something occurs that will be known as “the genesis of Christian oneirology” represented by authors like Gregory the Great and Isidore of Seville. Briefly, this process has various steps: the generalization of dreams, the prohibition of predictions after dreams, the classification of dreams after origin, the demonization of dreams, the disparagement of dreams made through sexuality – Augustine having a significant contribution in this sense (Le Goff 1991, 230).

Augustine knows that dreams have powers. He refers to them especially in the letters to Nebridius and in *De Genesi ad litteram*. He admits that God may speak to men directly through the means of their dreams, but also that dreams may be a psychological or mental reflex of the person dreaming

them. Anyway, says Augustine, people dream what they need and not necessarily what they desire. After their purpose is fulfilled, dreams disappear. The ones that do not fulfill their purpose remain and keep an appearance of a hallucinating reality.

In *Confessions*, Augustine's autobiography is also an oneiric one. In his conversion, dreaming plays an essential role. It's about a prophetic dream that does not belong to him in an immediate manner. From the oneiric-autobiographical point of view, Augustine and Monica form a couple. The fact that he attributes his mother his first dream related to conversion highlights the importance of dreaming in his existence (Le Goff 1991, 232). Chapter XI from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Book of *Confessions* speaks of *planctus et somnium matris de filio*. Monica dreams that "she saw herself standing on a sort of wooden rule, and saw a bright youth approaching her, joyous and smiling at her, while she was grieving and bowed down with sorrow" (Augustine 1955, III, XI, 19). Monica was suffering at the time for Augustine as he was ill more with the spirit, than with the body. The young man from the dream "bade her rest content and told her to look and see that where she was there I was also. And when she looked she saw me standing near her on the same rule. Whence came this vision unless it was that thy ears were inclined toward her heart?" (Ibid.) The dream continues with Augustine as he was an adept of Manicheism in that period of time: And what was the reason for this also, that, when she told me of this vision, and I tried to put this construction on it: "that she should not despair of being someday what I was," she replied immediately, without hesitation, "No; for it was not told me that 'where he is, there you shall be' but 'where you are, there he will be'?" (Augustine 1955, III, XI, 20)

When Augustine was writing his *Confessions* he was already a Christian for 19 years. Thus, he had no doubt anymore: the young man from the dream of his mother was God, and the dream was a prophetic one.

In the year 383, Augustine goes to Rome and approaches skepticism, but finds it insufficient. This probabilism will be criticized by Augustine in *Contra Academicos*. He does not adapt to Rome. The prefect of Rome, Symmachus, a sympathizer of the Manicheans, helps him in achieving the job

as rhetoric professor in Milan. Augustine was 30 when he met Saint Ambrose. The first impression of this encounter is related in *Confessions* (V, XIV, 24): “while I opened my heart to acknowledge how skilfully he spoke, there also came an awareness of how truly he spoke”. The consequence will be a clear one: “I resolved, therefore, to become a catechumen in the Catholic Church – which my parents had so much urged upon me – until something certain shone forth by which I might guide my course.” (Augustine 1955, V, XIV, 25) The thing that attracts him the most on Ambrose is the allegorical method and, step by step, Christianity gains a place in the heart of Augustine. He reads Plato, what was translated from him at the time, Plotinus and Porphyry as they have been translated by Marius Victorinus. In a certain sense, Plato is the one who will prepare him to become a Christian, but also the one who determines the apparition of a void in his soul, a void that for the moment could not be filled. Through Platonism (and Neo-Platonism) Augustine has the revelation of the true God but not the means to rise himself towards Him. Plato contributed in Augustine’s knowledge of the true God, and Christ showed him the way (Augustine 1955, VI, X, 16-17) (Plato is for Augustine the occasion of Christ, not his cause). Also now he reads Plotinus, Books I and V of the *Enneads*, the only ones translated into Latin at the time. Augustine discovers in them the Logos defined by John the Evangelist in the Prologue of his Gospel, but he finds nothing about the Word that incarnated himself and became a Mediator between God and man. This Mediator is the one sought by Augustine and this is the one dreamed by Monica. He reaches again the Scriptures that he despised at the age of 19. He is now 32. Simplicianus, the spiritual father of Ambrose, makes him understand that philosophy is not a barrier for faith and Augustine will no longer be troubled by this perspective. He feels that the final crisis is near, the oneiric sum fruits. He is still off the beam; he still searches for the truth. “I will set my feet upon that step where, as a child, my parents placed me, until the clear truth is discovered. But where and when shall it be sought? Ambrose has no leisure – we have no leisure to read” (Augustine 1955, VI, XI, 18). Louis Bertrand says that from this reference to



Ambrose and from others that are to be found in *Confessions*, references that contrast the encomiastic passages addressed to the Bishop of Mediolanum, would result that if God used Ambrose to convert Augustine, it is possible that Ambrose in person did nothing or not that much in the direction of this conversion (Bertrand 1913, 120). According to others, Augustine's conversion is one exclusively related to philosophy and the biggest obstacle to surpass for the real religious conversion seemed to be the final renunciation of marriage. The problem is the following one: was Augustine a Christian in Cassiciacum (the place where he retired with Monica, Adeodatus and with his friends before the conversion)? Harnack asserts in commenting the *Confessions* that Augustine projects upon the hermit of 386 the feelings of the bishop that he was in 400 when writing this major work. Other two authors, F. Loofs and L. Gourdon, affirm that the solitary man living in Milan was not a Christian of the heart, but a Neo-Platonist. The scene of the garden was indeed a conversion, not to Christianity, but to philosophy. According to Gourdon the real Christian phase of Augustine does not begin until 390 (Portalié 1931, col. 2273). What does Augustine want from the Neo-Platonists? Nothing else than to harmonize their explanations with faith; insofar as in the philosophical dialogues from Cassiciacum we do not find a Platonist speaking, as Portalié may think, but a Christian or to a certain extent, both a Christian and a Platonist. For Augustine, at that time, the truth is only one, that of the Gospels, so that the error of Loofs and Gourdon is their attempt of discovering in the spirit of Augustine our modern distinctions. What is sure is that the intellectual pride is abolished in Augustine through the readings of Neo-Platonists and the dreams of his mother.

The conversion occurs in 386 and it is described in *Confessions* (VIII, XII, 29). A controversy arises when one has to establish how much of the story is a pure depiction of real facts and how much it represents only a fiction. Of course one may find a literary element present here at work. The conversion follows after a certain preparation, an oneiric one as well; this is why Augustine compared it to labor. "The choice marked a change of content, a rather ethical one than

intellectual” (Chadwick 1986). He hears in the garden the voice of a child: *tolle, lege; tolle, lege*. He opens the book of the Apostle Paul and reads in silence the following chapter: *ambulemus, non in comessationibus et ebrietatibus, non in cubilibus et impudiciis, non in contentione et aemulatione, sed induimini Dominum Jesum Christum, et carnis curam ne feceritis in desideriis* (Romans 13:13-14). “I wanted to read no further, nor did I need to. For instantly, as the sentence ended, there was infused in my heart something like the light of full certainty and all the gloom of doubt vanished away” (Augustine 1955, VIII, XII, 29).

Disconcerted, Augustine stops from his reading at the above mentioned passage not knowing what follows next. His friend, Alypius, will read what follows: “receive the one who is weak in faith” (Romans 14:1) and Alypius will believe that this passage refers directly to him. This scene is extremely and strongly contested. We may assert that it represents an auditive revelation, although Augustine himself will be reserved in expressing his ideas towards this vision (related to the dreams in which dead people appeared in, to a certain extent, the aversion towards the body/ sensuality). This was happening around 421 (*De cura pro mortuis gerenda liber*), nine years before his death. In other words, as he grows older, Augustine trusts less and less the dreams. In conclusion, Augustine reduces the dream to a psychological phenomenon and his credit is that he observes that the oneiric does not represent a recommended path to access the truth. Augustine will always feel certain awkwardness related to dreams. He feels a state of discomfort regarding them, an oneiric discomfort that he will assume in an autobiographic manner. Anyway, Augustine is not a knight of oneiric certitude. And after him, maybe as well because of him, dreams enter under a form of surveillance (I remind the fact that Augustine has a short chapter on signs, dreams and revelations in *De catechizandis rudibus*, VI, 10).

The final chapter from the third book of the *Confessions* (III, XII, 21) speaks about the encounter between Monica and Saint Ambrose, who is not explicitly named by Augustine. Augustine relates to him with certain deference in this text.

Augustine says about Ambrose that he is a servant of God and that he is familiar with the divine books (*sacerdotem tuum, quemdam episcopum nutritum in Ecclesia, et exercitatum in Libris tuis*). Ambrose, instead, relates to Augustine in a more prudent manner when he is to correct his errancy and considers him indomitable (*esse indocilem*). At last, at the instance of his mother that wanted for Ambrose to discuss with Augustine, the Bishop of Mediolanum is infuriated and tells her disgusted (*ille jam substomachans taedio*): “go away from me, woman, and do as I have told you, because it is not possible for the son of all these tears to perish” (*vade, inquit a me; ita vivas: fieri non potest ut filius istarum lacrymarum pereat*) (cf. François 1845, 7-8). It is notable that Augustine is not very delighted of this episode despite the ending of the third book.

When God chooses someone He firstly takes him to the desert. Jesus, after the baptize, spent 40 days in the desert; Saul, converted on the road of Damascus, spent two years in the desert of Arabia; Augustine retires in Cassiciacum and in the Easter night of April 24<sup>th</sup> 387 (he was then 33 years old) is baptized among Adeodatus and Alypius by Saint Ambrose in the cathedral of Mediolanum. The writings of Augustine from this period lead to the idea that he was no longer disappointed by philosophy, but by his own self. This is the main reason of his conversion as long as he accepts, now, the solution of double authority: the authority prior to time (Christ) and the authority prior to the order of reality (reason). If we are correct, we have to assert that Augustine has never differentiated philosophy from theology very clearly, maybe because his Platonism (to which it is added the oneiric situation) has decisively contributed to his conversion.

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## Le désir dans l'acte de connaissance. La présence du désir dans l'acte de connaissance selon Aristote et Thomas d'Aquin

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### Abstract

#### **The Desire in the Act of Knowledge: The Presence of Desire in the Act of Knowledge According to Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas**

The human intellect has the capacity to assimilate the external world to man. This assimilation takes place according to the proper mode of the intellect that has an intentional manner to know. Thus is realized the act of knowing by which man manages to read from within the different realities, according to the etymology of the Latin word *intellectus*. Yet the intellect is not the only spiritual capacity of man, but there is also the will. The latter has a special role in the act of intellectual knowledge. It is dependent on the action of the intellect, but it also influences the action of the intellect. In the following article I analyze this interdependence, especially the place of desire in the act of knowledge. Thomas Aquinas attributed desire to the will. In which sense can we attribute desire to the intellect as well?

**Keywords:** soul, passive intellect, active intellect, desire, knowledge, life, will, mind, interrogation

Au début du traité *De l'âme*, Aristote montrait la valeur de la connaissance et sa diversité. Il soulignait deux critères qui font la distinction entre les différentes connaissances : l'exactitude et la dignité de leur objet (Aristote 1995, I, 1, 402 a). Dans ce sens, l'étude de l'âme se situe parmi les meilleures recherches. La connaissance de l'âme humaine conduit à une compréhension de la diversité et de l'unité de la vie humaine. En tant qu'objet d'étude, l'âme humaine a une dignité intrinsèque grâce à l'extraordinaire synthèse des opérations

vitales, mais l'exactitude de sa connaissance n'est pas toujours atteinte. Dans son temps, Aristote disait que la majorité des hommes vivaient dans le sensible (Aristote 1994b, I, 5); et cela était un obstacle pour accorder attention à ce qui est proprement humain, la vie de l'âme spirituelle.

Cet obstacle est vrai pour nos jours aussi et, par conséquent, un surcroît d'admiration est nécessaire pour ce qui n'est pas palpable, mais invisible pour l'homme, la vie de son esprit. Aristote analysait les différentes activités vitales parmi lesquelles on trouve le processus de connaissance qui dépasse la connaissance sensible (Aristote 1995, III, 4, 429a 10). L'intellect (Thomas 1970, art.12, *resp.*), la capacité qui permet ce dépassement, est divisé en intellect passif et intellect actif (Aristote 1995, III, 5, 429b 10). C'est une distinction originale qui a fait naître beaucoup de débats (Thomas 1999, 338, 354, 356). Thomas d'Aquin commentait ce texte en confirmant sa validité et sa véracité.

Aristote a mis en évidence la vie de l'intellect, mais il ne s'arrête pas à une analyse de la volonté humaine. Après l'analyse de l'intellect, il étudie la faculté locomotrice. Une de ses parties est le désir. Le désir montre des manques que l'homme ne peut pas combler par lui-même, mais par les réalités extérieures. En rapportant le désir à l'intellect, on peut se demander: dans quel sens le désir est propre à l'intellect?

Nous essayons de répondre à cette question en regardant attentivement le texte d'Aristote et le commentaire fait par Thomas d'Aquin au traité *De l'âme*. Parce que nous ne pouvons pas séparer réellement l'intellect de l'âme, c'est-à-dire la faculté de sa source, on va essayer de garder le rapport juste entre le tout et la partie. Ainsi l'ordre de notre analyse est le suivant: la relation entre l'âme et l'intellect, la distinction entre l'intellect passif et l'intellect actif et le rapport entre le désir et l'intellect.

## 1. L'âme et l'intellect

L'homme ne peut expérimenter que sa propre vie et, par analogie, la vie des autres vivants. Dans le traité *De l'âme*, Aristote montrait la voie de connaissance de la vie humaine. C'est la voie de la découverte de l'âme comme acte d'un corps

qui a la vie en puissance (Aristote 1995, II, 1). Les actes vitaux de l'homme sont divers (se nourrir, se mouvoir, sentir, penser), mais cette diversité demande une source. On ne peut pas avoir une connaissance philosophique de la vie humaine sans découvrir son principe. L'âme est différente du corps en étant la source des capacités vitales. La vie végétative, la vie sensitive et la vie spirituelle sont présentes dans l'être humain dans une synthèse et un ordre extraordinaires. On a une expérience différenciée de la vie, et non pas générique.

L'analyse des facultés de l'âme conduit à sa connaissance. Aristote montrait quelles sont ces facultés. On voit une progression dans leur description. D'abord, on décrit celles nutritive, sensitive, pensante et le mouvement (Thomas 1999, 156-7), après on ajoute celle désirante et on précise le mouvement selon le lieu (Aristote 1995, II, 3, 414a 30). En commentant ces passages, Thomas se demandait pourquoi on a cinq facultés au lieu de quatre (Thomas 1999, 156). Premièrement, Aristote les considérait comme parties de l'âme et elles désignaient les degrés des êtres vivants. Deuxièmes, ces parties sont facultés de l'âme et il souligne l'activité propre à chacune. La faculté désirante est distincte de celle sensitive, mais la présuppose. Ce n'était pas nécessaire de la mentionner la première fois parce qu'elle ne constitue un degré en plus pour les êtres vivants sensibles. Chaque être qui a la faculté sensitive, a aussi la faculté désirante.

Il est intéressant pour notre étude que la faculté désirante apparaisse comme une faculté distincte de l'intellect. Elle est en lien direct avec le sens. Le sens est la condition nécessaire pour l'imagination et le désir. L'existence d'un seul sens présuppose l'existence du désir: „Mais avec la faculté sensitive, ils ont aussi la faculté désirante. En effet, le désir comprend à la fois l'appétit, le courage, la volonté. Or, tous les animaux possèdent l'un des sens: le toucher, et celui qui a la sensation ressent par là-même le plaisir et la douleur, l'agréable et le douloureux; les êtres doués de la sorte possèdent aussi l'appétit, puisque celui-ci est le désir de l'agréable.” (Aristote 1995, II 3, 414b 5)

Le lien entre les sens, l'imagination et la faculté désirante montre dans la pensée d'Aristote et de Thomas le

rapport et la relativité entre la connaissance et l'affectivité. La faculté de connaître fait que le monde extérieur est assimilé à l'intérieur de l'être vivant, dans un mode intentionnel (Philippe 1990, 70), pendant que la faculté affective réoriente l'être humain vers l'extérieur pour un nouveau contact avec la réalité maintenant connue.

Thomas a expliqué cette complémentarité par la dépendance de l'être vivant à l'égard de sa forme. Un être de vie sensible a une forme sensible, un être de vie intellectuelle a une forme intelligible. Chaque forme a une inclination propre, c'est-à-dire une faculté affective propre. En fonction de la forme, il existe la faculté désirante sensible et la faculté désirante intellectuelle. Il mentionne aussi une faculté désirante naturelle, propre aux êtres sans vie. Par exemple, la forme du feu fait que le feu a un mouvement ascendant (Thomas 1999, 157).

De fait, ces deux types des facultés désirantes propres aux vivants sont différenciés par les deux types de connaissances, sensible et intellectuelle. Thomas affirmait cet aspect important: „Or si le principe sensitif est là présent, il est nécessaire qu'un troisième principe y soit: le principe appétitif; qui est certes divisé en trois: le désir, qui naît de la puissance concupiscible, et la colère, qui naît de la puissance irascible; et ces deux appétits appartiennent à la partie sensible, ils naissent en effet de l'appréhension du sens; le troisième est la volonté, qui est l'appétit intellectif en tant qu'il découle d'une appréhension de l'intellect.” (Thomas 1999, 158)

Ce lien entre la connaissance et l'affectivité indique quelque chose de leur source, c'est-à-dire de l'âme, et réciproquement. Parce que l'âme est l'acte du corps, il est nécessaire que dans ces facultés il y a quelque chose qui lui ressemble. Ses facultés passent de la puissance à l'acte grâce à leur objet. En ce qui concerne l'intellect, ce passage est un processus complexe. L'intellect humain use de la connaissance sensible, les sens et l'imagination, pour arriver à son objet propre, ce qui est intelligible dans les choses.

Cette dépendance réelle est une condition qui ne disparaît pas dans le processus de connaissance. Même dans les plus profonds raisonnements, l'intellect pense avec l'aide des images. Aristote montrait très bien ce conditionnement de base



que Platon a voulu éviter sans succès. L'intellect humain dépasse la connaissance sensible non pour une découverte et une contemplation du monde des idées (Platon 1983, 114; Platon 1943, VI, 508e; VII, 517c), mais pour une découverte des principes et causes des réalités (Aristote 1986, I, 6; II 1, 993b; Platon 1994b, VI, 7, 1141 a). Le retour à l'expérience rectifie la connaissance acquise de l'intellect.

Cependant, le processus de connaissance a quelque chose de mystérieux parce qu'il se réalise à l'intérieur de l'âme et il n'est pas tout de suite perceptible. Il y a une croissance de la connaissance qui se fait du simple au complexe, du singulier à l'universel. Aristote a essayé de pénétrer dans cet univers intérieur et de l'expliquer dans un mode original. Après avoir traité de l'intellect qui devient toute chose, il fait une distinction à l'intérieur de l'intellect. Celle-ci a été retenue comme celle de l'intellect passif et de l'intellect actif.

## 2. L'intellect passif et l'intellect actif dans l'acte de connaissance

Aristote arrivait à cette distinction, entre l'intellect passif et l'intellect actif, après avoir montré la condition fondamentale de cette partie par laquelle l'âme pense. Avant de penser, *l'intellect est en puissance comme une tablette où rien ne se trouve inscrit en acte* (Aristote 1995, III, 4, 429b 30). Il a trois caractéristiques: séparé, impassible et sans mélange. Dans le passage suivant on voit comment il fait cette distinction :

**4310a10** Ἐπει δ' [ὥσπερ] ἐν ἀπάσῃ τῇ φύσει ἐστί [τι] τὸ μὲν ὕλη ἐκάστῳ γένει (τοῦτο δὲ ὁ πάντα δυνάμει ἐκεῖνα), ἕτερον δὲ τὸ αἴτιον καὶ ποιητικόν, τῷ ποιεῖν πάντα, οἷον ἡ τέχνη πρὸς τὴν ὕλην πέπονθεν, ἀνάγκη καὶ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ὑπάρχειν ταύτας τὰς διαφοράς· καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὡς ἕξις τις, οἷον τὸ φῶς· τρόπον γάρ τινα καὶ τὸ φῶς ποιεῖ τὰ δυνάμει ὄντα χρώματα ἐνεργεῖα χρώματα. Καὶ οὗτος ὁ νοῦς χωριστὸς

**4310a10** De même que dans toute la nature, il faut distinguer, d'une part, la matière pour chaque genre d'objets, la matière étant ce qui est tous ces objets en puissance; et, d'autre part, la cause, et ce qui fait, parce que c'est la cause qui fait tout, comme l'art fait tout ce qu'il veut de la matière; de même, il faut nécessairement aussi que ces différences se retrouvent dans l'âme. Telle est, en effet, l'intelligence, qui, d'une part, peut devenir toutes choses, et qui,

καὶ ἀπαθῆς καὶ ἀμιγῆς, τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὄν ἐνέργεια· αἰεὶ γὰρ τιμιώτερον τὸ ποιῶν τοῦ πάσχοντος καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ὕλης. [Τὸ δ' αὐτὸ ἐστὶν ἢ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμη τῶ πράγματι· ἢ δὲ κατὰ δύναμιν χρόνῳ προτέρα ἐν τῶ ἐνί, ὅλως δὲ οὐδὲ χρόνῳ, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὅτε μὲν νοεῖ ὅτε δ' οὐ νοεῖ.] Χωρισθεὶς δ' ἐστὶ μόνον τοῦθ' ὅπερ ἐστὶ, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ αἰδῖον (οὐ μνημονεύομεν δέ, ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν ἀπαθές, ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς φθαρτός)· καὶ ἄνευ τούτου οὐθὲν νοεῖ.

d'autre part, peut tout faire. C'est en quelque sorte une virtualité pareille à la lumière; car la lumière, en un certain sens, fait, des couleurs qui ne sont qu'en puissance, des couleurs en réalité. Et telle est l'intelligence qui est séparée, impassible, sans mélange avec quoi que ce soit, et qui par son essence est en acte. C'est que toujours ce qui agit est supérieur à ce qui souffre l'action, et que le principe est supérieur à la matière. La science en acte se confond avec l'objet auquel elle s'applique. Mais la science en puissance est pour l'individu seul antérieure dans le temps. Absolument parlant, elle n'est point antérieure dans le temps. Mais ce n'est point lorsque tantôt elle pense et tantôt ne pense pas, c'est seulement quand elle est séparée que l'intelligence est vraiment ce qu'elle est; et cette intelligence seule est immortelle et éternelle. Du reste, cette partie de l'intelligence ne nous donne pas la mémoire, parce qu'elle est impassible. L'intelligence passive, au contraire, est périssable; et, sans le secours de l'intelligence active, l'intelligence passive ne peut rien penser (Aristote 1995, III 5, 430 a 10-25).

Par l'analogie de la nature et de l'art, Aristote soulignait la nécessité de cette distinction. Les distinctions entre la cause matérielle et la cause efficiente et entre l'art et la matière s'appliquent aussi à l'intellect. L'intellect passif et l'intellect actif sont exprimés par Aristote selon le génie de la langue grecque, *celui qui devient toutes choses et celui qui produit toutes choses*.

En commentant ce passage, Thomas accentuait deux aspects: l'intellect actif n'est pas un habitus des principes et il n'est pas une substance séparée. L'accent qu'il met sur l'intellect actif, nous aide à comprendre ses qualités. En tant qu'habitus, il se distingue d'un manque et d'une puissance. Comparé avec la lumière, il fait que les intelligibles en puissance deviennent des intelligibles en acte. Dans le cas des couleurs, visibles comme telles, la lumière fait qu'elles deviennent an acte par l'illumination du diaphane. Celui-ci permet la visibilité des couleurs. L'intellect actif a cette fonction de sortir les intelligibles de leurs support matériel sensible où elles se trouvent. Elles existent par elles-mêmes, mais dans le sensible. Cette précision est importante pour montrer que la position de Platon était erronée: les intelligibles n'existent pas séparées de la matière et en acte (Thomas 1999, 355).

Thomas montrait les caractéristiques de l'intellect actif. Celui-ci est séparable, impassible, sans mélange et *en acte*. La dernière caractéristique le distingue de l'intellect passif. Les premières sont communes parce que les deux intellects appartiennent à la même faculté (Aristote 1995, III, 4, 429a-429b). La supériorité de l'intellect actif face à l'intellect passif vient de cet *état d'acte* dans lequel il se trouve. Celui qui agit est plus noble que celui qui pâtit.

Même si la distinction entre la puissance et l'acte est au niveau métaphysique, Aristote l'utilisait au niveau de la vie. En fait, ce qui se trouve au niveau de l'être se retrouve aussi au niveau vital. L'existence de l'intellect actif est nécessaire pour expliquer la croissance de la vie intellectuelle. Comment peut-on avancer dans la connaissance si l'on est seulement passif? L'existence des formes intelligibles dans l'intellect, montre l'existence d'un principe interne qui les produit. Ce constat indique que le passage du sensible-singulier à l'intelligible-universel a été fait<sup>1</sup>. Par exemple, le concept *d'animal* n'est plus de l'ordre sensible, mais de l'ordre universel.

Si le passage des sensations à l'image se fait par une inversion des éléments sensibles, le passage de l'image au concept se fait par une opération d'abstraction. Cette

abstraction est comme une purification du sensible, une illumination de l'intelligible existant dans l'image en état de puissance. Les éléments sensibles ne sont pas ignorés ou simplifiés. Les images ne sont pas détruites ou jetées parce qu'en pensant on en use. Il s'agit d'une connaissance profonde de la réalité représentée par l'image. L'intellect actif abstrait son objet propre, l'intelligible, en présence des images (Thomas 1928, Ia, q.79, art.4, *ad tertium*). Cependant, Yves Floucat précise que nous ne trouvons pas une réponse explicite dans la doctrine thomiste sur le processus d'abstraction des formes intelligibles (Floucat 1997, 476).

Les images nous font comprendre l'analogie avec la matière, même si elles sont aussi des instruments de l'intellect actif. Comme instruments, elles sont dépendantes de l'intellect actif parce qu'elles ne peuvent pas expliciter par elles-mêmes les formes intelligibles. Comme matière, les images doivent être présentes et elles conditionnent l'activité de l'intellect. Sans elles l'intellect n'a pas sur quoi travailler, il n'a pas d'où abstraire l'intelligible. En les utilisant, l'intellect ne les détruit pas, mais en les illuminant il met en lumière ce qui était en puissance.<sup>2</sup> Cette activité n'est pas volontaire, autrement on l'aurait remarqué, mais elle est naturelle. L'intellect actif agit comme le soleil, illumine et perfectionne, mais au niveau intelligible.

*L'état d'acte* qui existe à l'intérieur de l'intellect, a fait que certains<sup>3</sup> ont pensé que l'intellect actif est une substance séparée et qu'il n'est pas de la même substance que celui passif. Cependant, le processus spécifique de la connaissance humaine montre que les deux intellects sont présents dans l'homme et non pas à l'extérieur. Ces deux opérations, de l'abstraction et de la saisie des intelligibles, sont attribuées à l'homme. Cela montre que le principe formel de ces opérations fait partie de l'être humain.

Le fait que la même faculté se trouve face au même objet en puissance et en acte, ce n'est pas une raison pour séparer les deux intellects. L'intellect passif se comporte vis-à-vis de l'intelligible comme l'indéterminé face au déterminé. Il est comme une tablette de cire sur laquelle on peut écrire ou dessiner. L'intelligible n'est pas présent en lui, mais l'intellect

a la capacité de le recevoir. Cette action se fait par l'intellect actif. Celui-ci ne contient pas l'intelligible, sinon l'intellect passif aurait été déterminé directement par l'intellect actif, et les images étaient en vain. Il a cette capacité de rendre semblable à soi, c'est-à-dire immatériel, l'intelligible en puissance présent dans l'image. L'image est *id quo* de la connaissance intellectuelle et non pas son *id quod* (Băltuță 2011, 67). La comparaison avec la lumière montre exactement cette chose, la lumière n'a pas la détermination des couleurs en elle-même, mais elle fait visible les couleurs. L'intellect actif n'est pas l'intelligible lui-même, mais il rend actif l'intelligible au niveau immatériel, c'est-à-dire spirituel.

L'autre analogie de l'identité entre la science en acte et son objet, souligne la spécificité de l'intellect actif. L'intelligible extrait par l'abstraction de l'image devient un avec l'intellect. Il passe de la puissance à l'acte. Sa nouvelle existence au niveau immatériel n'est plus localisée dans l'image, mais dans l'intellect. Par la forme intelligible, l'intellect actif agit sur l'intellect passif. Cette action est naturelle et, effectivement, l'intellect passif est illuminé par cette forme intelligible. L'intellect actif est comme une cause efficiente, comme un art qui actualise ce qui était en puissance. L'analogie avec l'art montre cette opération de perfectionnement et de détermination de l'intellect passif. De même que l'idée artistique donne forme à la matière, d'un morceau de bois on fait une statue, de la même manière la forme intelligible détermine l'intellect passif. Ainsi se réalise l'acte de connaissance. Celui-ci s'accomplit par l'opération d'abstraction et d'accueil de la forme intelligible dans l'intellect.

Chronologiquement, la science en puissance est antérieure dans un individu. Elle devient actuelle par l'acte de connaissance. Ce passage de la puissance à l'acte nous fait affirmer que parfois l'intellect actif pense, parfois il ne pense pas. Aristote a résolu ce problème en affirmant qu'*il est* et en montrant son état existentiel et non pas son exercice. Parce qu'il est conditionné par la connaissance sensible et par la condition de l'âme unie au corps, il n'a pas toujours un exercice actuel. Par exemple, il est difficile d'affirmer que l'homme est dans une recherche intellectuelle pendant son sommeil.

On pourrait ajouter que l'existence de l'intellect actif dans l'âme est nécessaire pour éviter deux erreurs. La première est de considérer que l'intellect humain n'a pas d'autonomie d'exercice. La deuxième est contraire, en mettant l'accent sur l'autonomie de la vie intellectuelle, l'homme sera enfermé dans son subjectivisme. Le fait qu'il soit séparé, mais appartenant à l'âme humaine, résout la première erreur. La seconde est solutionnée par la dépendance de la connaissance sensible qui oblige à une objectivité de la connaissance.

Les deux actions, d'abstraction et de saisie, sont des moyens par lesquels la connaissance se réalise. L'intellect par ses deux fonctions réalise l'assimilation intentionnelle immatérielle d'un monde matériel intelligible.<sup>4</sup> L'analyse de deux intellects ne supprime en rien l'unité de l'intellect en tant que faculté vitale ordonnée à la connaissance.

### 3. Le désir et l'intellect

Dans la *Somme contre les Gentils*, Thomas d'Aquin parlait d'un *désir* de connaître qui augmente à mesure que la connaissance croît (Thomas 1993, III, 25). Essayons de comprendre ce *désir*.

Aristote affirmait que l'affectivité est une capacité distincte de l'âme. Cette capacité (*appetitus animalis*) est différente de l'appétit naturel (*appetitus naturalis*) grâce à la faculté de connaissance propre aux vivants. L'être vivant est incliné affectivement vers une réalité connue, pas seulement par sa forme, mais surtout par sa connaissance. Par exemple, par sa forme naturelle le feu tend vers le haut, pendant que l'aigle tend vers sa proie parce qu'il la voit, et donc la connaît. Cependant, chez l'homme la faculté affective est aussi au niveau spirituel, c'est-à-dire le niveau qui dépasse le sensible. Aristote faisait la distinction entre ces deux types d'affectivité (Aristote 1995, III, 9-10). *Appetitus intellectivus* ou la tendance affective intellectuelle se différencie de celle sensible par son objet (Thomas 1928, Ia, q.80, art. 2). L'objet connu par les sens est différent de l'objet connu par l'intellect. Par exemple, nous pouvons avoir une affectivité pour un objet universel (nous aimons la vertu du courage ou nous détestons le mensonge), tandis que l'affectivité sensible est pour un objet singulier

considéré comme un bien sensible ou un mal sensible (nous aimons cet orange ou nous écartons la main de ce feu).

D'ailleurs, dans la *Somme contre les Gentils*, Thomas précisait la différence entre les trois tendances affectives (*appetitus naturalis*, *appetitus sensibilis*, *appetitus cognitionis*) en fonction du rapport que les réalités ont avec la connaissance. Il insistait sur la dernière qui est la volonté et qui a trois actes spécifiques: le désir, l'amour et la délectation. Le désir montre l'état de manque de la volonté. Ce qui est propre au désir est d'être en recherche de ce que nous manque. Même si le contexte de l'analyse de Thomas est éthique, on voit l'influence que le traité *De l'âme* a eu sur sa pensée.<sup>5</sup>

La faculté affective est passive. Elle ne s'actualise pas seule, mais par l'influence de son objet. L'objet connu et désiré agit sur elle. Si celui-ci n'est pas connu au moins par les sens, alors il ne peut pas mouvoir la faculté affective. C'est une condition nécessaire que l'objet soit connu et désiré. De fait, les deux facultés affectives, sensible et spirituelle, se distinguent par la différence de ce qui est connu et de l'attraction propre de l'objet connu. Le bien sensible et le bien spirituel peuvent se rencontrer dans la même réalité, mais leur perception est différente. Le même homme peut être agréable à voir et aussi attirant par ses vertus.

Le désir peut être un mouvement sensible ou spirituel vers un bien absent. Quand le désir a comme objet un bien sensible, il n'est pas un acte exclusif de l'âme, mais de l'âme et du corps ensemble. Il est un acte d'une faculté organique proportionnée avec ce type du bien sensible. Le désir de boire un verre d'eau appartient à la faculté nutritive. Quand elle est ordonnée – il est bon de boire deux litres d'eau par jour- c'est la raison qui intervient.

Le premier élément commun du désir et de l'intellect est la manque de leur objet. On veut ce qui nous manque et savoir ce que l'on ne sait pas. Le désir meut vers une réalité absente, tandis que l'intellect connaît l'intelligible et il cherche à approfondir cette connaissance. L'intellect revient à la connaissance sensible par un jugement qui montre la conformité entre l'intelligible et la réalité qui le contient. L'eau

et l'intelligibilité de l'eau sont différentes, mais par le jugement: *ceci est de l'eau*, on atteint le bien de l'intellect qui est la vérité.

Le deuxième élément commun est l'attraction que l'objet propre exerce sur la faculté affective sensible et la faculté affective intellectuelle. Le bien sensible attire au niveau sensible, le bien intellectuel attire au niveau spirituel. L'intellect peut devenir toute chose et il peut produire toute chose. La présence de *l'intellect en acte* empêche de considérer un désir à son niveau, parce que *l'acte* exprime une perfection. Il semble que c'est plutôt *l'intellect passif* qui nous permet d'attribuer *un désir* à l'intellect.

Rappelons-nous que la différence entre le désir sensible et le désir intellectuel se fait grâce à l'existence de cette faculté affective intellectuelle, la volonté. Elle est distincte de la faculté d'assimiler intelligiblement les choses. Elle réalise le mouvement vers l'extérieur. Le lien intrinsèque entre l'intellect et la volonté est important pour résoudre notre recherche. On peut souligner deux points: le rapport entre elles en tant que facultés de l'âme, la distinction par leur objet et l'enveloppement mutuel de leurs actes.

Le premier point, le rapport entre l'intellect et la volonté, a été esquissé par Aristote quand il analyse la fonction motrice: „Car c'est dans la partie rationnelle que le vouloir prend naissance, comme font, dans la partie irrationnelle, l'appétit et l'impulsion.” (Aristote 1995, III, 9, 432b 5) L'intellect ne peut pas tout seul mouvoir l'homme. Même s'il pense les choses au niveau spéculatif ou pratique, il ne réalise pas le mouvement. C'est la volonté qui fait cela, mais avec le minimum de connaissance de la part de l'intellect. Il est nécessaire que la réalité vers laquelle la volonté nous meut soit connue sous la raison de bien (Thomas 1928, Ia, q. 82, art.5, *resp.*). L'information de la volonté avec cette connaissance intellectuelle la distingue des mouvements nés dans l'ordre sensible. Dans ce sens, la volonté est relative à l'intellect.

Cependant, l'on peut voir cette relativité dans le sens inverse. Parce que la volonté est ordonnée vers le bien, elle peut mettre en mouvement toutes les facultés de l'âme vers leur bien propre. Le bien comme concept analogique, est différent pour les facultés de l'âme. Le bien de l'ouïe est d'entendre le son, le



bien de l'imagination est de produire l'image, le bien de l'intellect est l'intelligible comme vrai. La raison de *bien* est propre à la volonté et c'est pour cela qu'elle peut agir sur les autres capacités. Dans ce sens, l'intellect est relatif à la volonté.

Le deuxième point, la distinction par leur objet et l'enveloppement mutuel de leurs actes, montre la coopération entre les deux. L'objet de l'intellect est la raison même de *bien*, tandis que celui de la volonté est le bien qui attire. La raison de bien se trouve dans l'intellect et la réalité du bien est à l'extérieur (Aristote 1986, VI 4, 1027b). L'action de l'intellect est de faire sien intelligiblement la réalité et l'action de la volonté est de mouvoir vers la réalité elle-même. Thomas soulignait leur ordre en fonction de la dignité de la réalité; il vaut mieux connaître la réalité inférieure à l'âme plutôt que de l'aimer et il vaut mieux aimer la réalité supérieure à l'âme plutôt que de la connaître (Thomas 1928, Ia, q 82, art.3, *resp.*). Donc, elles s'enveloppent mutuellement par leurs actes: „Car l'intellect comprend que la volonté veut, et la volonté veut que l'intellect comprenne. De même, le bien est inclus dans le vrai, en tant qu'il est un certain vrai saisi par l'intellect, et le vrai est inclus dans le bien, en tant qu'il est un certain bien désiré.” (Thomas 1928, Ia, q.82, art. 4, *ad primum*)

L'intellect et la volonté ont cette transparence mutuelle grâce à leur caractère immatérielle. Chacune a son objet propre, mais elles agissent de façon complémentaire. La même âme spirituelle comprend et veut. C'est pour cela que parfois dans notre langage on attribue à l'intellect ce qui appartient à la volonté et inversement. En ce qui concerne *le désir*, celui-ci est un acte de la volonté. Ce qui ressemble au désir au niveau de l'intellect est *l'interrogation*. Un intellect qui interroge est un intellect qui cherche son bien, ce qui est intelligible et vrai.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> La conscience ne surprend pas l'abstraction. On ne peut pas assister à la naissance des formes intelligibles et non plus au perfectionnement de l'intellect par elles, mais on saisit le résultat de l'abstraction, le terme *universel*.

<sup>2</sup> Augustin d'Hippone soutient que Dieu est le principe d'illumination de notre intellect et, par conséquent, toute la connaissance humaine se réalise par l'illumination divine (Augustin 1999, I, 6, 12; Gilson 2003, 103-130).

<sup>3</sup> Alexandre d'Aphrodise considère cette séparation ontologique de l'intellect actif. Sa thèse a influencé la pensée arabe représentée par Avicenne et Averroès (Thomas 1999, 356).

<sup>4</sup> On n'exclue pas les autres actes de l'intellect qui font progresser la connaissance. Par la composition et la division des intelligibles, l'intellect réalise son œuvre propre de connaître. Les raisonnements et les jugements font partie intégrante de ce processus (Aristote 1994a, I, 1, 16a).

<sup>5</sup> La *Somme contre les Gentils* a été écrite avant le commentaire sur *De l'âme*. Thomas l'a écrite pendant son séjour à Rome quand il écrivit la *Summa Theologiae*. Il a bénéficié de la nouvelle traduction faite par Guillaume de Moerbeke (Torrell 1993, 249-259).

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# **Book Reviews**

## La philosophie est-elle toujours utile, dans un monde pragmatique comme le nôtre ?

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Thomas De Koninck, *À quoi sert la philosophie ?*, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval, Collection « Kairos », 2015, 142 pages

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La réflexion philosophique s'est confrontée, au long de son existence, avec deux questions fondamentales auxquelles elle a essayé de trouver les réponses les plus adéquates : son identité et son utilité. Les questions "Qu'est-ce que la philosophie ?" et "La philosophie est-elle utile ?" ont préoccupé presque chacun des philosophes les plus importants et autour de ces deux questions se sont développées toutes les autres, concernant les catégories, les principes, les domaines. Après plusieurs livres qui s'occupent des problèmes relatifs à la première catégorie (la dignité humaine, la culture, le devenir humain, l'éducation, la foi, le bien commun), le professeur Thomas De Koninck s'attaque directement à la seconde, en analysant l'utilité de la philosophie.

Quant à cette question, l'histoire de la philosophie est pleine de surprises. Des philosophes de premier rang ont contesté avec véhémence l'utilité de la philosophie. Après avoir constaté que "[l]es Romains ont ainsi vécu leur meilleure époque sans philosophie", Nietzsche (1990, 12) s'interroge de façon rhétorique : "Mais où trouverait-on l'exemple d'un peuple atteint de maladie et à qui la philosophie aurait rendu sa santé perdue?". La réponse est rapidement sous-entendue : nulle part ! De son côté, Ortega y Gasset (1945, 30) trouve une seule

utilité de la philosophie, mais totalement déshonorante : “Théroïsme particulier des philosophes” est celui de dire les choses ridicules que les autres gens n’ont pas le courage de dire ! Si nous ajoutons l’esprit sarcastique de Voltaire qui affirmait : “Quand un homme parle à un autre homme qui ne le comprend pas et que le premier qui parle ne comprend plus, c’est la métaphysique !” (Huisman et Vergez 2009, 5), alors nous avons devant nos yeux toute l’inutilité de la philosophie ! Dans ces conditions, une question s’impose avec toute force : Pourquoi l’individu aurait-il besoin de philosophie ?

Contrairement à ces opinions d’un scepticisme évident, Thomas De Koninck souligne que la réflexion philosophique est inhérente à l’individu et que celle-ci l’accompagne toujours : “Chercher à savoir si l’on doit, ou non, faire de la philosophie, c’est déjà philosopher, puisque c’est rechercher. On est vite obligé, en outre, de constater que même argumenter contre la philosophie, c’est philosopher au sens le plus propre du terme, comme l’a fait observer très tôt Aristote. Car vous argumentez et vous prétendez donc à quelque vérité ; autrement, pourquoi argumenter ?” (De Koninck 2015, 1).

Son attitude n’est pas singulière. Dans son *Initiation à la méthode philosophique*, Jaspers (1970) reconnaît que, pour l’esprit commun, la philosophie est une chose “trop compliquée”, une “affaire des spécialistes” qui dépasse la tête des individus quelconques. Mais il est obligé de reconnaître également qu’elle “s’adresse à l’individu”, qu’elle “fonde la libre communauté” des individus, qu’elle a l’ambition de rechercher “la vérité entière” même s’il a la conscience vive qu’il ne va jamais la trouver (Jaspers 1970, 141-151). À son tour, Michel Meyer (1997), fondateur d’une philosophie du questionnement, essaie de répondre à la question “Qu’est-ce que la philosophie”. Voilà ci-dessous quelques-unes de ses interrogations et de ses réponses : “À quoi sert la philosophie aujourd’hui ? À comprendre l’univers ? À donner un sens à sa vie ? À nourrir sa raison ? À se lamenter sur son déclin et ses impossibilités naturelles peut-être ?” (Meyer 1997, 151).

À quoi sert, donc, la philosophie selon l’auteur dont nous analysons l’ouvrage ? Thomas De Koninck répond à cette question d’une façon personnelle. Il essaie d’investiguer

quelques domaines de la réflexion critique où la philosophie s'est confortablement installée comme si elle était chez elle, un lieu où sa présence est reconnue comme étant hors du moindre doute. Quelques concepts fondamentaux tracent le contour de cette présence intempestive de la philosophie.

Commençons par l'éveil. On sait, les philosophes n'ont pas eu une très bonne relation avec le sommeil ! Le motif est déjà souligné par Socrate : la tyrannie du sommeil est la mort de l'esprit ! L'effort soutenu de Socrate dans le sens de discuter avec les autres constitue son combat permanent avec le sommeil de son esprit et, en égale mesure, avec le sommeil de l'esprit des autres (ses disciples). D'autres philosophes ou scientifiques, anciens ou modernes, viennent confirmer l'importance de l'éveil pour l'esprit critique et pour la manifestation de la libre réflexion. Kant n'a-t-il pas dit que la lecture de Hume l'a réveillé du "sommeil dogmatique" de son entendement ? L'éveil est la première condition nécessaire du philosophe pour dépasser sa condition de "vivant le plus authentiquement vivant" et d'entrer en ce qui encore Aristote tenait pour condition suffisante de son statut : l'étonnement. L'étonnement est l'expression du "choc" de l'esprit ressenti par celui réveillé devant quelque chose qui dépasse le sens commun et la banalité du quotidien. Le mystère caché du tout est, pour le philosophe, cette première impulsion de l'étonnement. Celle-ci est le générateur d'une nouvelle attitude : la *curiosité*. La curiosité exprime le courage du philosophe de dépasser le stade de l'étonnement devant ce qui est unique et incroyable et d'essayer de le comprendre. Le signe qui dévoile la mise au travail de cette curiosité est l'interrogation : qu'est-ce que c'est ? Le résultat de cette "effectivité" du philosophe est formulée habituellement, au moins chez les grands philosophes, sous la forme d'une explication. C'est le système philosophique qui constitue la *réponse personnelle* du philosophe à l'éveil de l'esprit, à l'étonnement de l'inconnu, à la curiosité de comprendre. Une bonne partie de l'ouvrage de Thomas De Koninck analyse avec pertinence, en évoquant des noms et des textes remarquables, cette relation entre éveil, étonnement et curiosité qui constitue le fondement de la présence, partout et toujours, des traces de la pensée philosophique.

L'éveil, l'étonnement et la curiosité constituent les points centraux qui peuvent générer la construction théorique à l'intérieur de la philosophie. Avec l'*indignation*, la philosophie fait le premier pas dans la vie pratique de l'homme. C'est en prenant cette voie qu'elle entre dans la cité pour y mettre un peu d'ordre, parce qu'elle constate que la vie pratique de l'homme (*ce qui est*) n'est pas en accord avec la théorie (*ce qui doit être*). L'indignation est la caractéristique de l'homme mécontent. Or, l'homme véritable, l'homme qui mérite tous les éloges pour sa dignité, doit être toujours mécontent. Tant que la satisfaction envers ce qui est provient du fait que cela est suffisant, la mort du désir de l'homme est le dépassement de ce qui est, pour arriver à quelque chose de mieux. C'est donc la mort de la création ! Thomas De Koninck dévoile dans son texte une multitude de noms de ceux qui ont traité – de manière plus ou moins appliquée – cette passion profondément humaine : Héraclite, Nietzsche, Aristote, Strawson, Habermas, Camus. L'indignation est la réaction de l'homme face à un défi des normes du modèle : modèle de recherche, modèle de conduite, modèle d'action, modèle de comportement. Le cri d'indignation de Cicéron contenu dans ses interrogations rhétoriques qui ouvrent sa première *Catilinaire* ("Jusques à quand, enfin, Catilina, abuseras-tu de notre patience ? Combien de temps encore ta fureur esquivera-t-elle nos coups ? Jusqu'où s'emportera ton audace sans frein ?") expriment précisément la distance entre le modèle de conduite de tout citoyen romain et la conduite de Catilina. L'indignation est, du geste presque insignifiant jusqu'à celui d'une visible grandeur, une *attitude morale*, un positionnement de l'homme par rapport au bien que tout homme a le *devoir* de défendre.

Il y a au moins trois cadres où s'insinuent les concepts que nous avons évoqués comme points générateurs de la philosophie : le *langage*, l'*art* et la *philosophie*-même. Tout ce qui se passe à l'intérieur de l'intelligibilité de l'individu est déterminé et développé par l'intermédiaire du langage. Les mots sont l'expression de notre pensée et notre pensée est le fondement de nos actions, de nos comportements, de nos créations. Tout ce que peut obtenir l'homme – les biens matériels ou spirituels, les progrès moraux, les satisfactions



esthétiques – sont la conséquence du dialogue avec lui-même et avec les autres, un dialogue où le langage est l'instrument premier. Le langage traverse d'un bout à l'autre toute la culture humaine, des sciences jusqu'à la littérature ou aux beaux-arts. Il constitue "l'archive" de cette culture où peuvent être retrouvées toutes les ressources de connaissances de l'humanité. Comme le remarque De Koninck, parfois le langage est le seul moyen de connaître l'altérité : une personne ne peut pas être connue en tant que telle que si elle veut se dévoiler à l'autrui par l'intermédiaire du langage. Toute la connaissance morale s'inscrit dans ces exigences de la communication de soi.

Une remarque subtile sur ce point qui appartient à De Koninck : "S'il est vrai que la philosophie et les sciences ont oublié l'être de l'homme, il apparaît d'autant plus nettement qu'avec Cervantès, un grand art européen s'est formé qui n'est rien d'autre que l'exploration de cet être oublié" (p. 39). Le dépassement de cet "oubli de l'être" (Heidegger) est réalisé par l'intermédiaire de la littérature. Kundera est l'un des auteurs préférés par Thomas De Koninck pour illustrer "l'immense apport de la littérature à la philosophie" entrevu encore dans les dialogues de Platon (p. 41). À part la littérature, tous les autres arts expriment, dans une mesure plus ou moins grande, par l'intermédiaire du sensible (la réalité "en chair et en os" comme dirait Husserl), ce qui est intelligible à tous. C'est la raison de l'universalité de la "réception unique et individuelle" d'un tableau de Picasso, d'une symphonie de Beethoven, d'une tragédie de Shakespeare, d'une sculpture de Rodin. Bien qu'elles expriment une individualité, leur aspiration individuelle est réalisée dans l'universalité ! C'est la supposition éternelle de la philosophie. Quelle que soit la dimension philosophique qui constitue le fondement d'être de l'un ou autre des arts, le temps (la littérature, la musique) ou l'espace (l'architecture, la peinture, la sculpture, la danse), ils répondent, tous, à cet impératif du passage du subjectif et individuel à l'objectif et universel. Chaque récepteur se retrouve d'une certaine façon dans l'harmonie cruelle de *Laocoon*, dans l'exaltation joyeuse de la neuvième *Symphonie*, dans le destin implacable de l'*Œdipe*, dans la grandeur de la statue de Jésus. Dans ces conditions, vivre la réception des grandes œuvres d'art

est un moyen important, peut-être même décisif, pour la formation de l'homme en tant qu'homme, pour son éducation, pour sa perfection à laquelle il aspire avec tout son être. Thomas De Koninck insiste de façon particulière et à juste titre sur le rôle de la lecture (pp. 55-63).

La philosophie entretient de bonnes relations avec la littérature et également avec tous les autres arts grâce à une intentionnalité commune : la *recherche du sens*. Le destin de l'homme, le sens de la vie, le drame de la mort, la peur de l'inconnu sont des lieux communs où les trois domaines de la connaissance se rencontrent pour chercher ensemble le sens. Les deux premiers trouvent dans la généralisation de l'individualité la voie d'accès au sens du sens. La philosophie procède inversement : elle veut expliquer le sens d'une individualité (d'un "étant") en l'encadrant dans une construction théorique qui explique le sens de tous les sens individuels et subjectifs ("l'être en tant qu'être").

Une première utilité de la philosophie vise sa place dans une vision plus ample du concept d'utilité : les *conséquences pratiques des explications théoriques* (pp. 69-83). Il existe un préjugé qui circule sans entrave dans l'esprit commun : la philosophie est une construction explicative qui provient de la pensée du philosophe et qui n'a aucun rapport avec la vie pratique de l'homme et de la société ! Une telle affirmation signifie, en elle-même, perdre le contact avec réalité. Une courte inspection de l'histoire de la philosophie nous montre assez clairement que Socrate s'engage dans ses disputes philosophiques avec un but très précis : la découverte de la vérité ; que Descartes est préoccupé prioritairement par l'idée de trouver un point d'appui pour la connaissance ; que Kant fait de la critique la méthode d'appropriation adéquate du monde ; enfin que Husserl insiste pour trouver une méthode qui puisse assurer la vraie connaissance de l'homme. Or, le but ultime de la découverte de la vérité, de l'identification d'un fondement pour la connaissance, de tracer le contour d'une méthode, c'est l'action pratique efficace de l'homme. Thomas De Koninck insiste, à cette étape de sa réflexion, sur le "pouvoir des idées" évoquant précisément les propos d'un homme orienté vers la *praxis*, l'économiste John Maynard Keynes. On dit souvent que

les idées peuvent changer le monde si elles trouvent un contexte favorable ! La démocratie moderne a été liée à l'influence de la philosophie des Lumières, de l'utilitarisme américain sur la philosophie pragmatiste, de la philosophie de Nietzsche sur le nazisme. Thomas De Koninck renvoie à une remarque d'Isaiah Berlin qui est suggestive : "... des concepts philosophiques entretenus dans le calme du cabinet de travail d'un professeur pouvaient détruire une civilisation" (p. 70). Est-ce vrai ?

Thomas De Koninck accorde une importance particulière au rôle de la culture dans la société. La marche en avant de la société a comme point d'appui la culture où la pratique philosophique occupe elle-même une place à part : "[l] évolution des sociétés est en réalité déterminée par la culture avant tout, bien avant les modes de production ou les régimes politiques" (p. 70). L'auteur a une compréhension spéciale pour le terme de *culture* (culture à laquelle il a dédié un livre entier !), une compréhension qui vise le discernement et la capacité de l'homme de bien juger (p. 71). Cela se place dans la continuité de la conception de Cicéron pour lequel "la culture de l'esprit, c'est la philosophie" (p. 71). L'exercice intellectuel de la culture est pour l'esprit ce qui est l'exercice physique pour le corps : il maintient en éveil les ressources de pensée, les tonifie et les amplifie, pour permettre l'engagement dans la compétition acerbée de la création de la culture. L'auteur illustre très bien quelques conséquences favorables de l'acte d'assumer la culture en général et la culture philosophique en particulier pour le développement de l'homme et de la société. En même temps, il met en évidence le péril de la "fragmentation", de l'unilatéralité, de la spécialisation limitée ("idiots savants"), de "l'homme unidimensionnel" qui ne comprend pas parce qu'il sait !

Il semble que la *philosophie accroit de plus en plus en importance en même temps avec la "croissance exponentielle de la science"*. Le développement des sciences constitue le miracle bien compris qui explique la modernité. Les sciences et leurs conséquences immédiates – les réussites techniques – se sont donné la main pour réaliser le passage du primitivisme à la modernité. Avec toutes ses conséquences favorables

exceptionnelles, la science ne peut pas mettre à la disposition de l'homme quelque chose dont il a toujours eu besoin: l'explication de l'ensemble ! C'est là qu'intervient la philosophie. La physique et la chimie expliquent le "tout de la matière", les sciences biologiques, le "tout du vivant", les sciences de la terre, le "tout de notre planète et de notre galaxie" et ainsi de suite. Aucune de ces sciences ne peut pas expliquer "la totalité de ces totalités particulières". C'est la préoccupation de la réflexion philosophique qui contient, en elle-même, cette "appétence vers l'universel". D'ailleurs, Thomas De Koninck remarque que "les sciences ont débuté comme des parties, en quelque sorte, de la philosophie" (p. 86). Aristote est, peut-être, l'un des exemples les plus convaincants. Plusieurs autres questions concernant la relation entre la science et la philosophie, les vertus d'une bonne collaboration et insertion réciproque mais encore les limites et les périls d'une séparation des "deux cultures" (humaniste et scientifique) sont analysées par l'auteur dans son livre. La "mort de l'homme" dont on parle de plus en plus est, en fait, la mort d'une certaine image de l'homme, bien chérie, avec laquelle l'homme s'est habitué au long du temps. Détruire les habitudes de l'homme réveille des réactions parfois surprenantes.

La philosophie peut jouer comme *porteur du cri d'espérance devant les ravages du pouvoir*. La pensée critique qui est consubstantielle à la réflexion philosophique n'a jamais pu supporter les excès du pouvoir. C'est la raison de l'apparition de l'éthique comme partie significative de la réflexion philosophique. La distinction entre le juste et l'injuste est essentielle pour le fonctionnement d'une société. Cette distinction vise les relations entre les individus. Mais les frontières entre les deux sont transgressées rapidement et facilement par les individus qui détiennent le pouvoir. L'attitude critique est le gardien qui surveille le respect de ces délimitations par le pouvoir. Thomas De Koninck constate que les deux domaines théoriques – l'éthique et la politique – sont "tous deux constitutifs, pour Aristote, de ce qu'il appelle « la philosophie de la vie humaine »" (p. 101). Quelques concepts analysés par l'auteur invoqué tracent l'espace de manœuvre des individus à l'intérieur de cette relation dynamique et fragile

entre l'éthique et le politique : l'équité, l'amitié, la discrimination, les droits de l'homme, la liberté.

Après une vie entière passée sur le champ plein d'incertitudes de la philosophie, le professeur Thomas De Koninck s'interroge : À quoi sert la philosophie ? Cette "interrogation radicale" (Michel Meyer) de type kantien est le signe visible que, accumulant toute son expérience, le professeur est arrivé à une certitude : la philosophie sert, vraiment, à quelque chose.

Son livre explique donc au lecteur l'utilité de la philosophie et, en même temps, invite celui-ci à la lecture !

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## On the Aspects of Reference

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Alina Silvana Felea, *Aspects of Reference in Literary Theory. Poetics, Rhetoric and Literary History*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang Edition, 2017, 166 p.

**Keywords:** reference, interpretation, poetics, rhetoric, literary history

Alina Felea's work which came out in the Literary and Cultural Theory Collection at Peter Lang deals with the problem of reference in the study of literature and literary theory, tackling three areas of investigation: poetics, rhetoric and literary history. The author aimed at a propaedeutic meant to serve even a less informed public, hence the abundance of historical information. The three chapters of the book define the object of study for these disciplines and provide a historical perspective on their evolution so as to reach certain conclusions on how reference works in literary language.

Approaching the problems of poetics from the perspective mentioned above, in the first chapter of the book the author expands on the idea that "the major aim of this discipline has always been that of observing and studying literature in its specificity [...] it attempts to delimit and analyze the defining criteria of literary language in order to reveal the functioning of the art of words from that perspective" (p. 15). To properly explain these statements, the author draws on the significant moments in the developments of poetics, from the Plato's objection to poetry to mathematical poetics. The essential point of reference is definitely Aristotle's *Poetics* despite the fact that we only received a part of the original treaty. Giving up on the idea of the supernatural character of

poetry proclaimed by ancient Greek poets (Pippidi 1998, pp. 36-37), Aristotle looked for the *causes* that contributed to the birth of poetry. These are “imitation [...] as also the sense of harmony and rhythm” (Aristotle 1991b, 1448 b-20); *Poetics* is reputed for its treatment of *mimesis*, an essential feature for the rise of the derived and secondary character of language as “sign of actual things” (Aristotle 1991a, 16a4-16a9). A special discussion on *mimesis* and *catharsis* in tragedy completes the list of mandatory terms that post-Aristotelian poetics will develop. Felea then reviews the developments of poetics in the Latin milieu (Horace, [Anonymous] *Treaty On the Sublime*) and in Renaissance (Boccaccio). Aristotle’s rediscovery in *quattrocento* bears the mark of the tension between poetry and the *Scripture* or between *mimesis* and normativity which laid the groundwork for the baroque “ever since theorists were no longer afraid to replace the *mimesis* with the miraculous” (p. 37). Eighteenth century theories are defined by the opposition between *mimesis* and *poiesis* (Bodmer, Breitinger) and the solving of this opposition in the organic model (Goethe); afterwards romantic poetics (Wordsworth, Coleridge, Hugo, etc.) rise in opposition to the ideal of normativity and open a path to modern poetics through the concern of how something new is possible.

An important place in the architecture of the chapter on poetics is not only held by the social transformations – the reference plan –, but also the transformations at the level of values and literary, philosophical, aesthetic theories, etc. “Language became the main concern in all issues connected with philosophy and was even considered essential to the structuring of the world. The innovations [...] of poetics were chiefly due to linguistics [...]” (p. 48) If, until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the study of literature included biographical, social, historical, psychological, moral, ideological considerations and other, this would change with Russian formalism and also with *new criticism*, structuralism and semiotics. The concern of poetics will be from now on „the internal logic of the literary work, its organization and the structural connections that define it.” (p. 48). The stress will no longer fall on *what* is communicated, but on *how* it is communicated. The tradition of scientific research in literature

was initiated by Russian formalism which established the autonomy of literature and poetic language in relation to any external element, social and historical context or psychological factors. The notion of *close reading* pertaining to New Criticism has its phonetic, syntactic or lexical aspects, as well, yet it does not reach the type of formalisation promoted by the Russian school; all in all, its theoretical premise (the concept of “organic form”) is an aesthetic, not a linguistic one.

Further on Felea shows that Russian formalism exerted a major influence on structuralism. The first literary structuralism occurred in the Prague linguistic circle at the half of the second decade of last century. However, their ideas may seem simplistic today, but “at that moment they were new, especially with regard to their manner of systematization; thus, poetic language was understood as a whole whose component parts interact, (actually a multitude of levels among which reciprocal connections were established) because poetry was considered the only manner in which language as creative energy was highlighted, and which fully capitalized on its potentiality.” (p. 59) In the 60s, during the rise of structuralism, ambitions for scientific rigour rose. The main concept was that of structure, understood as system of relations for all objects and processes. The understanding of an object results from the comparison with other objects and the consideration of its position in a system of reciprocal relations. If psychology was marked by behaviourism and sociology by functionalism, linguistics was marked by semantics. Poetics followed the general movement in linguistics and semiotics adopting structuralist methods, yet it reached a dead end as “individual literary creations are *sui generis* phenomena, autonomous and autotelic objects that abide by their own laws and are endowed with their own inner goals” (p. 49).

In the second chapter of the work dedicated to rhetoric, Felea follows the same structure as in the previous chapter aiming at a historical outline of the discipline and its developments. At the beginning, rhetoric rose in philosophical schools. In ancient Greece sophists considered it a form of knowledge and virtue: Isocrates and Demostene believed that rhetoric was the foundation of education and Aristotle granted



rhetoric equal and complementary status to philosophy because both were accessible to all mankind to a reasonable extent. Systematising rhetoric with the distinction between *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos* represents a key contribution to the development of the discipline even if these concepts would be relativized later on. Rhetoric also achieves significant development during the Roman period by means of Cicero and Quintilian. “For Cicero, beauty, the compulsory privilege of every discourse, means force, kindness, pathos, Attic transparency and Asiatic deployment. [He] knew how to unify different principles belonging to different schools. He mastered the art of creating in his discourses the most diverse emotions [...]” (p. 93)

Once democracies in Greece disappeared and the Roman republic fell, rhetoric declined losing its social usefulness. Although it was maintained as a discipline of study for a while, grammar shortly assimilated it. In the modern era rhetoric fell into the philosophers’ disgrace who considered it useless. Descartes rejects it because it is incapable of providing indubitable truths, whereas Kant despises it due to its capacity of manipulation. Beyond its conflict with philosophy (as science) in the modern pragmatic world, rhetoric seems to be an obsolete discipline. However, it is precisely the pragmatic viewpoint that will lead to the revival of rhetoric in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is because the formation and fixation of opinions in the modern social (democratic) environment cannot be conceived without a persuasive discourse and in the lack of an art of conviction. “The notion of ethos is easily linked to that of utterance (an act through which the speaker mobilizes [the resources of the] language). Therefore studies have been conducted on subjectivity, on the modality of the speaker to be part of the discourse.” (Burbea 2014, 8). This explains why there is a comeback of rhetoric in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century along with an increase in interest for communication and discourse. “The prestige of rhetoric was due to the fact that it knew how to explore the resources of the language and to transform them into an efficient and persuasive means of communication, but also into a possibility for knowledge.” (p. 115) Felea accounts for the main directions of reformation in rhetoric in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: philosophical neo-rhetoric (Perelman and

Olbrechts-Tyteca), argumentation theories, linguistic new rhetoric, the Liège group. At the end of the chapter the author draws attention to several points of significance for rhetoric in the literary phenomenon. Rhetoric analysis is not a prevailing method of textual analysis, it is rather an adjacent one; “it is a type of interpretation” (p. 142).

The third chapter focuses on literary history, a discipline that aims at studying the evolution of literature in time: „it is interested in the individuality of the writings that make up a literature and also refers to the literary system, a concept included in the very idea of history.” (p.121) Literary history as discipline emerged in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with literature itself as autonomous field. The field of literary history consists of literary works, on the one hand and the theoretical context (theories, concepts, principles), on the other hand. The scientific spirit that influenced the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century inevitably left its mark on literary history. The view of literary work as the result of a combination between social, political and economic factors lead literary history to adopt a historical-sociological method of positivist inspiration and to limit itself to it: “Sainte-Beuve, for example, the creator of “the portrayal” in criticism, paid crucial importance to biographical study” (p. 123), and positivists (Scherer, Lanson) claimed that biography and a writer’s personality were strongly influenced by heredity, environment and culture. This vision was strongly criticised by main directions of literary studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Russian formalism (Jakobson), German philology (Curtius, Auerbach) and structuralism. For structuralists, the literary historian needs to describe narrative techniques, poetical structures, rhetorical codes (Genette) or the functions of literature (Roland Barthes). In fact, structuralism is a „categorical denial [...] of the very status of literary history”. (p. 126)

To face this challenge, Felea overviews and assesses the main methodological issues of literary history: the opposition between extrinsic and intrinsic (the role of context in the research of the literary phenomenon), classification as method, the model of continuity (“national” literature, philosophy of history in the study of literature, the coherence principle), the antinomy between synchrony and diachrony or the problem of

relativism in value judgement. Moreover, the author reviews several attempts to revise literary history: the narrative paradigm (Ricoeur), archaeology of discourse (Foucault) and topographic historiography (Valdés).

Finally the author reaches a general conclusion: given the plurality of approaches in the study of literature, the plurality of disciplines, the plurality of paradigms, the plurality of theories and concepts, the problem of reference will be considered starting from the concept of dynamic reference. Obviously, the issue has major consequences on interpretation: the literary text is not only subject to multiple interpretations – it has always been this way, but every interpretation will also find its *place* starting from the conscience of its fallibility and ephemerality.

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## Les Capita de Maxime le Confesseur. Une nouvelle édition critique

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*Maximi Confessoris Capita de duabus Christi naturis necnon Capita gnostica*. Edidit Katrien Levrie, *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca*, 89. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017.

**Keywords:** Maximus the Confessor, Capita Literature, Capita gnostica, De duabus Christi naturis, critical edition, Corpus Christianorum

« J'ai résumé en phrases brèves l'essentiel des longs discours, afin qu'ils puissent être embrassés d'un seul regard en étant faciles à retenir » (Maxime 2004, 373). Maxime le Confesseur (580-662) offre par ces mots une sorte de définition du genre κεφάλαια (chapitres). Il fallait formuler les textes de manière que les destinataires parviennent à les mémoriser facilement, bien qu'il arrivât souvent qu'aucune liaison évidente n'existe pas entre eux. Par l'intermédiaire de l'écrit, l'information devait être transmise dans sa forme la plus concise (Géhin 2013, 1-50; Van Deun 2013, 51-66). Parfois, Maxime regroupe ces *capita* par centaines en formant des *centuriae* (ἐκατοντάδες).

Le genre des *capita* bénéficie d'une tradition bien solide surtout pendant la période patristique de langue grecque, et notamment dans le milieu monastique, où l'on rencontre les « chapitres pratiques (πρακτικά) et gnostiques (γνωστικά) ou plus

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fréquemment de chapitres neptiques (νηπτικά) » (Géhin 2013, 1). Si les exégètes admettent unanimement que c'est Évagre le Pontique (346-399) qui est le premier auteur chrétien à recourir à ce style de rédaction – ne nous restent de lui que les célèbres *Kephalaia Gnostica* (CPG 2432), en syriaque et en arménien –, on rencontre également des éléments du genre *capita* chez les auteurs « externes » (von Ivanka 1954, 285-291), tels Porphyre, Epictète et Sexte Empirique (Géhin 2013, 31-34; Van Deun 2015, 278-281). Maxime a assurément lu les œuvres d'Évagre, notamment les *Kephalaia gnostica* (comme Viller l'a démontré, avec des arguments : Viller 1930, 156-184). A. Lévy retient deux aspects essentiels de la discussion des savants au sujet de l'influence d'Évagre sur Maxime: 1. le Confesseur a lu *Kephalaia* – néanmoins, il a lu ce texte en syriaque, car il ne cite pas d'après la version originale, mais d'après celle révisée par le rédacteur syriaque (le plus probablement, Philoxène de Mabboug). Cette connaissance du syriaque (par Maxime) confirme *La Vie* de la même origine : jusqu'à la moitié du VIIe siècle, dans les monastères palestiniens, on parlait plutôt le syriaque que le grec ; 2. Maxime s'inspire des écrits évagriens – et plus précisément des passages où ces derniers ont été artificiellement composées selon une interprétation conforme à celles des Pères (implicitement de Denys), en étant ainsi privés de ce que donnait leur saveur hétérodoxe. Ce qui conduit A. Lévy à renverser la thèse de I. Hausherr (1936, 351-362), conformément à laquelle Maxime a exprimé, par des mots dionysiens, des idées évagriennes, et à affirmer que c'est Évagre qui se superpose sur Denys, et non l'envers : à l'aide des mots évagriens, Maxime n'a fait qu'exprimer des idées dionysiennes (Lévy 2006, 488).

Il nous reste de Maxime une série d'œuvres appartenant au genre *capita*, comme, par exemple : *Capita de caritate* (CPG 7693); *Capita theologica et oeconomica* (CPG 7694); *Capita XV* (CPG 7695); *Diversa capita ad theologiam et oeconomiam spectantia deque virtute et vitio* (CPG 7715) – Peter Van Deun dit que ce centon tardif ne revient pas directement au Confesseur (Van Deun 1994, 297; Van Deun 1995, 19-24). En vérité, « dans un type de littérature foncièrement traditionnel,

l'originalité n'est pas ce qui est recherché en premier lieu » (Géhin 2013, 40).

Récemment, il a été publié dans le cadre de la prestigieuse collection *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca* le volume *Maximi Confessoris Capita de duabus Christi naturis necnon Capita gnostica*. Edidit Katrien Levrie, CCSG 89. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017. Dans ce volume, Katrien Levrie réalise une édition critique de deux collections de κεφάλαια attribuées par les exégètes à saint Maxime le Confesseur, accompagnées par un riche appareil critique.

Il est réjouissant, avant tout, que des jeunes chercheurs sont attirés par les textes patristiques, qu'ils désirent les éditer et les traduire, en s'inscrivant ainsi dans la succession des érudits qui se préoccupent depuis quelque temps déjà de l'édition critique des textes attribués à saint Maxime, dont Carl Laga, Carlos Steel, José H. Declerck, Bart Janssens, Peter Van Deun, Bram Roosen, Christian Boudignon, Basile Markesinis *et alii*. Puisqu'on considère Maxime comme étant l'un des auteurs les plus difficiles de la période patristique, son style d'écriture a soulevé des problèmes majeurs non seulement aux exégètes contemporains, mais aussi à l'érudit patriarche Photius (810/820-893).

L'éditrice de ces textes, Katrien Levrie, a élaboré une thèse de doctorat, sous la direction du classiciste Peter van Deun, ayant comme sujet deux ouvrages attribués à Maxime le Confesseur, *Capita Gnostica* (CPG 7707.11) et *De Duabus Christi Naturis* (CPG 7697.13): « L'ordre du désordre : la littérature des chapitres à Byzance. Édition critique et traduction du *De duabus Christi naturis* et des *Capita gnostica* attribués à Maxime le Confesseur » (Louvain, 2014, 575 p.). Une partie de ses recherches ont été valorisées dans une série d'articles (Levrie 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016).

Dans la vaste introduction (p. 27-279) que K. Levrie réalise on présente des données relatives à la vie de saint Maxime et aux périodes où certains textes maximiens ont été écrits. De même, on y analyse la structure et le contenu de chaque opuscule édité, en présentant aussi en détail la tradition manuscrite directe et indirecte de deux ouvrages. Les textes

grecs – *De duabus Christi naturis* (p. 1-13) et *Capita gnostica* (p. 15-72) – sont suivis par des Indices (p. 73-96).

Le premier des opuscules bénéficiant d'une édition critique est *De duabus Christi naturis* (CPG 7697.13), qui appartient à la collection formée de vingt-sept opuscules que les exégètes nomment *Opuscula theologica et polemica* (CPG 7697). Ce n'est pas par hasard que cet ouvrage a 10 chapitres, vu que l'on considèrerait, pendant la période patristique, que le nombre 10 était un nombre parfait, symbolisant à la fois le nom du Sauveur, parce qu'il commence par  $\omega\tau\alpha$  (= 10). « Maxime a d'ailleurs écrit plusieurs opuscules de 10 chapitres : Les *Capita X* (CPG 7694a), ainsi que deux ouvrages anti-monothélètes (les *Capita X de duplici voluntate Domini* [CPG 7697 (25)] et les *Capita X de voluntatibus et energiis* [CPG 7707 (19)]) » (Van Deun 2013, 52). Aucun exégète n'a jamais mis en doute l'authenticité de l'opuscule *De duabus Christi naturis*; il appartient avec certitude à saint Maxime, vu que, comme l'affirme l'éditrice de l'opuscule, « le style et le contenu nous donnent l'impression qu'il s'agit d'un texte maximien » (Maxime 2017, 35).

Les *Capita gnostica* (CPG 7707.11) appartiennent à la catégorie de textes que Bram Roosen appelle, dans sa thèse de doctorat (2001, I, 2), l'*Appendix Maximiana*, à savoir il s'agit d'une œuvre pseudo-maximienne. I. Hausherr considèrerait lui aussi que cet opuscule n'est pas authentiquement maximien. Quand même, d'autre part, un exégète si important que H.-U. von Balthasar était sûr qu'on avait affaire à un texte appartenant à saint Maxime, à un ouvrage de jeunesse de celui-ci. Un autre spécialiste avisé des écrits patristiques estime que « la paternité maximienne est douteuse, mais ne peut pas être exclue » (Van Deun 2013, 52). L'éditrice de cet ouvrage, K. Levrie, analyse les *Capita gnostica* par rapport aux *Capita XV* et aux *Diversa capita* et elle considère que ce texte n'est pas authentiquement maximien (Maxime 2017, 48).

En vérité, « cette centurie gnostique n'a reçu que peu d'attention » (Maxime 2017, 44), toutefois, les sept premiers chapitres des *Capita gnostica* ont été traduits en roumain par Ioan Ică jr. dans sa thèse de doctorat en théologie : *Mystagogia Trinitatis. Probleme ale teologiei trinitare patristice și moderne cu referire specială la triadologia Sfântului Maxim*

*Mărturisorul/ Mystagogia Trinitatis. Problèmes de la théologie trinitaire patristique avec référence spéciale à la triadologie de Saint Maxime le Confesseur*, 1998, p. 516-517. La seule traduction de cet opuscule – bien que partielle – est mentionnée par K. Levrie dans la note 103, p. 265. C’est toujours là qu’on apprend que cette « dissertation n’est pas publiée ». Encore une fois, l’insuffisante connaissance de la littérature des auteurs de l’Europe de l’Est conduit à des pareilles affirmations. Ce n’est pas la première fois que des traductions des écrits de Maxime ou des textes consacrés à celui-ci ne sont ni même mentionnés, pour ne plus dire utilisés, par les chercheurs occidentaux. La dissertation doctorale de Ică jr. a été publiée aux Éditions Deisis de Sibiu, en 1998 (ISBN: 973-9344-20-8).

Pour l’autre texte dont elle réalise l’édition critique (*De duabus Christi naturis*), K. Levrie mentionne les traductions modernes de cet ouvrage réalisées par Ponsoye, Piret et celle partielle de Garrigues (Maxime 2017, 171). Cet opuscule est toutefois traduit dans d’autres langues aussi, non seulement en français. C’est I. Sakalès (1985) qui a donné sa traduction en néogrec ; en roumain, il a été traduit par D. Stăniloae (1990), *PSB* 81, p. 254-257, nouvelle édition 2012, p. 384-388. La traduction en italien de ce texte a été réalisée par D. De Angelis (2007). En vérité, chaque édition critique publiée « constitue un progrès considérable pour l’étude de Maxime le Confesseur » (Maxime 2017, 5), mais la section consacrée aux traductions modernes de ces opuscules édités par K. Levrie est incomplète et elle jette ainsi une certaine ombre sur un travail impressionnant, fruit de nombreuses années de recherche.

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## Thinking After Heidegger?

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Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Eds.), *After Heidegger?*, Series: New Heidegger research, Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018, 392 p.

**Keywords:** Heidegger, phenomenology, ontology, ideology, cross-cultural philosophy

The question “after Heidegger?” includes in fact three philosophical problems: the question regarding the **after**, the question about **we** and the question of **Heidegger**.

First of all, what does it mean **to be after**? In the fifth book of *Metaphysics*, Aristotle indicates a plurality of meanings of the concept of *prior* (*πρότερος*) and its opposite – **after** (*ὑστερος*), emphasizing their relational aspect. Something can only be *prior* or *after* in relation with something else that is a specific *starting-point* and, in a sense, is pre-given or already chosen. At the same time, the idea of *prior* or *after* presupposes, on the one hand, a series or continuity and, on the other hand, the idea of difference which in its turn needs a criterion. Even though Aristotle develops in detail only *the prior*, we can deduce his characterization of *the after* by simply reversing the given description and keeping the criteria. Following Aristotle’s observations, something could be after: in an *absolute* way, by *nature*, by either of the *categories* (quality, quantity, time, location, etc.), by *movement*, by *potency* or *actuality*, by *power*, and so on (*Met* V. 11, 1018b9 - 1019a15).

Secondly, what are **we** supposed to do after Heidegger? Does after mean to simply succeed him? To follow? To mimic?

To pursue? To surpass? To move on and leave him behind? When we straightforwardly ask “*after Heidegger?*”, we lack the criteria of difference, and, it could be argued, even a clear grasp of what Heidegger means (the specific that in a sense is pre-given). In other words, this question implies an enormous undertaking of evaluating our position in history and opens a stupendous space to debate our comprehension of Heidegger. Fortunately, the two praiseworthy editors of the “*After Heidegger?*” volume designated the *after* as the place *where Heidegger’s thought leaves philosophy today* and specified the criteria as *the relevant, provocative and the most and least promising elements of his legacy*. The volume covers 33 original answers by internationally renowned scholars to this multilayered challenge. The fact that the editors managed to bring together many remarkable names from the USA, UK, Germany, Italy, Australia, China and India, makes this tome a major event in Heidegger scholarship which should now be appropriated by the readers.

Due to the intrinsic boundaries of a review, I aim to provide only a short description of what I find to be the most appealing basic intention of each text. Undeniably this procedure, as any reduction, is bound to sometimes leave behind too much and occasionally to bring forward too little.

The volume’s 33 articles are grouped in seven thematic parts and although they are independent, they communicate with the others. The first part, called *Overviews*, gathers the contributions that have a holistic image of Heidegger’s thinking. The primary concern here is how to process Heidegger’s entire philosophical inheritance.

Drew A. Hyland argues that Heidegger’s sagacious appreciation of the fundamental role of *the question* as a way of thinking and his reflections on *the distinction between calculative and meditative thinking* are worth keeping. Furthermore, he identifies Heidegger’s project of a *philosophy beyond good and evil* as a mistake that made him vulnerable to political prejudices. The question of the good is the missing ingredient that remains to be our task.

Gregory Fried points out the paradoxical situation of thinking that depends both on *dare* and *piety*. Heidegger’s dare

to question the entire Western tradition is simultaneously fascinating and dangerous in its limitations. We can go beyond Heidegger only if we rethink *the krisis* of modernity from our point in history, *in dialogue with his readings* and never forget to carefully evaluate risks.

Daniel O. Dahlstrom makes a philosophical inventory consisting of five major contributions (the considerations on the thematic of *being and existence*; of *truth, alētheia, and the eventful hiddenness of being*; of *the timeliness and historicity of human existence and the history of being*; of *the experience of truth in art and poetry*; and of *the essential challenge of modern technology*) and six deficiencies (*an irresponsible aloofness; a parochial, uncritical metaphysics; a metaphorical language; an ontological animism; a world without values and causes; history of philosophy myopia and philosophical grandstanding*) of Heidegger's thought.

Peter E. Gordon proposes a different approach by discussing five important heideggerian ideas and carefully distinguishing the pertinent parts from the *ideological distortions*. For example, he shows how *the existential analytic of the lifeworld* is cross-bread with an *anti-modernist resentment against the cognitive and practical achievements of the modern natural sciences*.

Thomas Sheehan claims that *the scandalous state of Heidegger scholarship today* is partly due to the uncertainty about what the core of Heidegger's thinking was. *It may be too early to speak of «an after Heidegger» as long as there is such confusion regarding what Heidegger's own work was about*. Sheehan proposes an innovative phenomenological reading as an attempt to *make sense of what comes before the after*. Accordingly, he asserts that Heidegger's main concern always evolved around *the question of meaning and why there is meaningfulness at all: Ex-sistence, Dasein, Ereignis, Lichtung*.

The second part, *After the Black Notebooks*, focuses on the thematic of Heidegger's anti-Semitism and his involvement with National Socialism. Donatella Di Cesare depicts Heidegger as a particular and nevertheless guilty subject in a tradition of *metaphysical anti-Semitism*, which stems from *the anti-Judaism of the Church Fathers* and extends to the philosophies

of Kant, Fichte, Hegel and Nietzsche. Peter Trawny shows how the *transformative* intentions of Heidegger's philosophy *inscribe themselves in the National-Socialist-anti-Semitic dogma by, at the same time, destroying it*. Julia A. Ireland questions *how the trenchancy of Heidegger's metaphysical critique of racial biologism can live together with his anti-Judaic statements*. Babette Babich reflects on our postmodern conditions in striving to go further in our understanding of Heidegger.

In the third part dedicated to *Politics and ethics*, John McCumber separates the *Seinsgeschichte* contaminated by anti-Semitism from the fresh ideas of *finitude, temporality of death and meaning*, which in a sense contradict it. Lawrence J. Hatab advocates for a prudent reading of the connections between Heidegger's early philosophy and politics. Arun Iyer emphasizes the revolutionary aspect of Heidegger's philosophy in his *attempt to reveal the praxiological essence of thinking*. Dennis J. Schmidt examines Heidegger's way of philosophizing by searching for clues that might help our understanding of *ethical life*.

In the fourth part named *Life and Existence*, Robert C. Scharff explores the depths of Heidegger's hermeneutics of life in relation to Dilthey's and Husserl's positions. Eric S. Nelson highlights the strange character of Heidegger's account of life that, on the one hand, starts from the basic level of immediate givenness and, on the other hand, *explicitly rejects* some of its aspects (*the psychological, biographical, autobiographical, and anthropological dimensions of a unique individual life*). Charles Guignon and Kevin Aho promote Heidegger's critical attitude powered by the belief in the *questionability of all traditional assumptions* and the *question-worthiness of the philosophical tradition as a whole*. In consequence, the task of critical philosophy after him must also include him as a subject. Starting from Heidegger's sense of responsibility concerning our *Dasein*, Richard Polt sketches the plan for a *traumatic ontology*. Skeptic to the idea of a *fix body of assertions* that could endure after Heidegger, Polt considers the latter's philosophy a provocation and inspiration to think. Lee Braver calls attention to Heidegger's ingenious schematizations, arguing that the endeavour of *re-grounding abstract concepts and theories in the*

*concrete details of our lives* remains important for philosophy nowadays. Theodore Kisiel investigates Heidegger's different articulations of Dasein from *the situational I*, *historical I*, *existential situation*, *existence to appropriation in the event*.

In the fifth part *Phenomenology and Ontology*, Steven Crowell maintains that Heidegger's later work is still ripe for a phenomenological picking. In dialogue with the other authors, Katherine Withy reengages the *question of being*, while Simon Critchley asks about *the meaning of the meaning of being*. François Raffoul meditates on the future of thought by deepening Heidegger's late suggestion of a *phenomenology of the inapparent*.

In the sixth part – *Thinking with late Heidegger* –, William McNeill exposes the genesis of *Ereignis* in Heidegger's reading of the Greek *technē* and *poiēsis*. David Kleinberg-Levin focuses on the late Heidegger's account on vision and his critique of *vision-generated metaphysics*. Miguel de Beistegui takes up the massive challenge of determining Heidegger's meanings of thought and points out that a *strong account of the aesthetic* is missing. Günter Figal outlines a *phenomenology of the space* starting from the affirmation of *the Clearing (Lichtung)* as Heidegger's main *matter of thinking*. Daniela Vallega-Neu finds in Heidegger's assessment of dispositions and attunements open possibilities for thinking beyond him into a *dynamic ontology*. Andrew J. Mitchell argues that Heidegger's work could inspire *contemporary attempts at thinking subjective identity in terms of sex, gender, race, and so on*. Richard Capobianco analyses a Heideggerian address on *Alētheia*, searching for clues of a non-phenomenological philosophy.

The final part is named *Openings to others*. In Iain Thomson's view, Heidegger's penetrating critique of modernity, his effort to transcend nihilism and his solution, which involves art and poetry, count as a ground to name him *the original post-modern thinker*. Bret Davis describes Heidegger's affinities with *eastern thinking* and advocates for a *cross-cultural philosophy*. Using Heidegger as a starting point, Trish Glazebrook reflects on the present-day issues of environment, globalization, gender, dehumanization and feminism.

After a careful reading, the most striking traits of this volume are the diversity and the originality of the ways of thinking opened by dealing with Heidegger's legacy, ways that frequently go beyond, in the sense of the Hegelian *Aufhebung* (Polt's *traumatic ontology*, Figal's *phenomenology of the space*, etc.). The articles prove that Heidegger's writings can still fuel philosophy today and spark new beginnings if we are up to the task. Furthermore, the book renders a refined image of Heidegger's limits in a triple sense: aporetic (to state some examples: the ambiguity of the metaphorical use of language, the indeterminacy of *the Turn*, *the uncritical view of metaphysics*), negative (ideological involvement with *the National-Socialism and the anti-Semitism*) and positive (for example the idea of a *meditative thinking* that draws insight from art and poetry as a solution against the objectification of humanity through technology). Nowadays, part of thinking beyond Heidegger presupposes applying his lesson of daring to question the limits against him. The question regarding which limits are worth challenging rests open.

The substantial mix of the topics, which range from Heidegger's fundamental questions (*being, truth, meaning, existence, time*), concepts and ideas (*the Open, Ereignis, finitude, fundamental dispositions and attunements, authenticity*), critiques (of metaphysics, of modernism, of technology, etc.), his accounts on life, phenomenology, hermeneutics, ontology, art, poetry, history, to matters concerning his *historical situation* (the *theological roots*, political involvement, racism, *antimodernism* and *post-modernism, Europocentrism*, etc.), makes this volume relevant for a wide range of researchers. It can also be highly engaging to thinkers interested in pre-Socratics, Aristotle, Augustine, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dilthey, Husserl, or those ones dealing with topics such as the purpose of philosophy nowadays, the analytic-continental divide, the possibility of a *cross-cultural philosophy*, and so on.

Overall, with its rich and original content, renowned international authors and thematic diversity, "After Heidegger?" has all the ingredients to be a sought-after



milestone when one genuinely embarks on the adventure of thinking after Heidegger.

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## Idealizations in Science and Interventionist Causation

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Potochnik, Angela. *Idealization and the Aims of Science*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017. ISBN 9780226507057 (Hardcover), pp. x + 252.

**Keywords:** causal pattern, interventionism, manipulability, agency in science, truth in science, levels in science

Angela Potochnik's *Idealization and the Aims of Science* sorts out a number of debates on the epistemology and metaphysics of scientific representations that prove usefully false. Such purposely false representations Potochnik calls "idealizations," and she argues that because idealizations rarely undergo excision from science, philosophy needs to account for their role in the explanation of phenomena and the organization of scientific methods (2). The main corollary of her argument is that science pursues understanding rather than truth, and so she expects metaphysical import from science to be minimal.

Chapter 1 primes the intuition that whatever the purpose of idealizations in science, they are *not* means to a complete and perfect theory of the universe. To support her claim, Potochnik highlights the dependency of scientific pursuit on the aims of "limited human beings . . ." (7). She documents a change over time in field observations and research topics within primatology, for example, a change which according to Potochnik resulted from women entering the mostly-male discipline. Nor does Potochnik surmise that scientists actually

pursue or expect to achieve a teleological end of scientific inquiry. To motivate the contrary view, she examines the Human Genome Project. While praising its collaborative successes, Potochnik points out that researchers still face obstacles to predicting disease incidence from gene correlation, and that the project accounts for neither microbial nor environmental effects on human traits. Her point is that the profitable study of a complex world requires the employment of idealizations: analyzing human heritability “*as-if*” (57) the influences of microbiome and environment can be neglected.

Potochnik’s technical term for ‘effect’ and ‘influence’ is “causal pattern,” (23) which she defines in Chapter 2. By “patterns,” she means “regularities exhibited by phenomena” (27), and by ‘causal’ she means analyzable according to a manipulability or interventionist account of causation, such as that found in James Woodward’s *Making Things Happen* (published 2003), which Potochnik endorses (29). To employ a manipulability account (roughly characterized), a theorist holds certain system variables ‘fixed’; then the theorist toggles an unfixed variable to ascertain if other unfixed variables toggle, inferring a cause according to certain rules of counterfactual dependence. The agent’s role in assessing the manipulability relation, moreover, is what Potochnik finds (28) to justify “rampant and unchecked” (41) idealizations in science. Idealizations are rampant, because they exist in the “best” theories (41); they are unchecked because few scientists “eliminat[e]” them from theories (42). Potochnik affirms that idealizations are “positive” representations of causal patterns (50), not abstractions that merely ‘ignore’ or ‘omit’ certain details (55). As an example, she depicts a passenger rail map. Rail stations are *not* evenly spaced in a straight line through San Francisco, but such an idealization is *precisely* what renders the map useful to commuters (50-51). In accord with her metaphysical reservations, Potochnik declines to treat causal patterns as laws that obtain of necessity. Regularities in the world tend to have exceptions (28, 155).

In Chapter 3, Potochnik surveys idealizations more scientific than railway maps. Behavioral ecologists discriminating “reciprocal altruism” from “kin selection” or

“group selection” (63) models of food-sharing among vampire bats, for example, find the prisoner’s dilemma model salient for representing reciprocal altruism. Such salience depends, however, upon the researchers’ purposefully (mis-)representing the bats ‘as-if’ they reproduce asexually and number infinitely large. Yet as Potochnik clarifies, each of the three model types facilitates the same, scientific “aim” of studying the causal pattern of natural selection (67). She concedes that more causes than natural selection affect the evolution of traits, and that reciprocal altruism may not obtain for all evolutionary timescales. Thus Potochnik reviews similar trade-offs and philosophical controversies about idealizations in behavioral and molecular genetics (human aggression), climate research, and the physical sciences (Batterman on fluid dynamics, Bokulich on electron orbitals).

Having portrayed idealizations in science as a “division of labor” (74) among useful falsities, Potochnik commences Chapter 4 and its self-titled thesis, “Science Isn’t after the Truth.” Transcending the trivial claim that no laborer expects perfection, Potochnik denies that most scientists even seek “successive approximation” to truth (90). They instead seek *understanding*. Potochnik distinguishes understanding as both “a cognitive state and an epistemic achievement” (94). As cognitive, understanding depends for its existence on the psychological states of understanding agents, a dependency that Potochnik finds unnecessary for truth (94). On the other hand, to render understanding an achievement, Potochnik does incorporate a “threshold requirement” for truth (95). As she parses Catherine Elgin, “a claim must be ‘true enough’ to be epistemically acceptable” (95), and on Potochnik’s account, acceptable means *understandable* (100). Thus she renders truth an instrumental (117), threshold function of understanding, a threshold that varies with scientific aim (96). Qualifying her claim, however, Potochnik denies that understanding is the *solitary* aim of science. She observes that science sometimes promotes “action within a short time span,” or “accurate prediction...” (98). Anticipating the charge of scientific antirealism, Potochnik denies it, maintaining that “truths of causal patterns are by and large partial truths about

phenomena, accomplished with the use of idealizations” (119). Causal patterns are “real,” Potochnik explains, but phenomena are that which become understood (119).

What promotes understanding, on Potochnik’s account, is scientific explanation (123), the topic of Chapter 5. Potochnik claims that explanations prove “adequate” (though not necessarily “good”, p. 158) when representations of causal patterns, “together with idealized assumptions, must entail the explanandum...” (155). To this definition of explanatory adequacy, she proposes two caveats. Firstly, the ‘entailment’ cannot be a hard, logical entailment, since as mentioned above, “causal patterns tend to have exceptions” (156). Secondly, Potochnik argues that non-idealized entailments lack “scope,” or an identification of the “range of circumstances” (136) under which to expect or apply the causal pattern of interest. An agent resembling Laplace’s Demon, for example (Potochnik does not mention Laplace, but the similarity in her example is obvious), who knows both the present configuration of all matter and all laws of physics, lacks the scope to explain anything (cf. 140). Potochnik criticizes philosophers such as Michael Strevens and David Lewis for over-emphasizing the Laplacian “ontic approach” to explanation (127), and she demonstrates advantages of non-ontic, “communicative” approaches (123) in two explanations of bird coloration; explanations that vary by “research program...” (150-151).

With agency, understanding, and explanation thus prioritized in her philosophy of science, Potochnik concludes her book with criticisms of metaphysics. In Chapter 6, she calls for a wholesale abandonment of talk about “levels” in mechanistic explanation, and in other, scientific domains (185). Levels, as Potochnik describes them, purport to structure the “composition, scale, metaphysical determination, and causal dependence” of phenomena (161). Against this purported utility, she demonstrates not only a research-aim *relativism* about levels, but also the “incomparable” functions that an entity may perform at different levels (183). Her examples include the non-metaphysical reality of camouflage in nature, and the integration of levels within an ecosystem, an integration that she finds to defy traditional hierarchy (171).

Chapter 7 again recommends “caution” (207) against extracting metaphysical insights from a science filled with idealizations.

Overall, Potochnik’s book proves informative and well-sourced, and she summarizes each chapter and major idea with a clarity not exhibited by other philosophers. Two criticisms, however, bear mentioning. Firstly, she ignores an embarrassing counterexample to Woodward’s interventionist causation. As demonstrated by Eric Hiddleston in 2005 (“Causal Powers,” doi:10.1093/phisci/axi102), a Woodwardian<sup>1</sup> agent threatened with a potential, poisonous terror attack, who pre-emptively ingests an antidote to the poison, but then emerges from his bunker the next day to learn that no poison was in fact released, still has to credit the antidote as a *cause* of his survival in that particular instance. Now, what is a scientist to think of this counterexample? Endorsing it as a ‘vehicle for understanding’ (cf. Potochnik, 123) would be sardonic at best, and dangerously bogus medical advice at worst. I do not claim that Woodward has no possible responses to Hiddleston, but Potochnik should paint a more sober picture of pending challenges.

Secondly, I picked up *Idealization and the Aims of Science* because of my interest in the most widespread, scientific idealization of all: mathematics, and its curious (or not) applicability to science. To my chagrin, Potochnik treats very little of mathematical themes, relegating them at a stroke to the domain of ‘non-causal’ explanation (143), and that somewhat unfairly. For example, when she claims that “there is simply no basis for asserting that scientific representations relate metaphysically” (175), I ask: What about the mathematical relations between representations? (Cf. Potochnik, 18, where she almost engages this point.) In Potochnik’s own words, scientific progress sometimes depends on “refined relatives of [some] original pattern” (121), but in my view, such refinements are unquestionably often *mathematical* refinements. What explains the success of mathematical refinement? And are not mathematical relations paradigmatically *true*, if anything is? For a second example, on the topic of explanation, Potochnik identifies one explanandum as “heritable variation in smoking initiation among humans” (154). But what is variance? According to science, variance is

standard deviation *squared*, a *mathematically* defined concept. Even if ‘variation’ is not strictly ‘variance’ (I cannot tell from the context), no public health researcher long ignores variance. Thus, a word on why mathematics seems to help *all scientists* achieve understanding would have been enlightening. The ironic upshot is that realist sympathies for the efficacy of mathematical idealizations do not seem strongly muted by Potochnik’s book.

**Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Hiddleston (2005) does not explicitly mention Woodward, but the account he attacks finds endorsement in Woodward’s *Making Things Happen*, pp. 83-84ff.

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## **New Philosophy is Actually Old Philosophy: Slow Philosophy as a Preoccupation towards Love of Wisdom**

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Michelle Boulous Walker, *Slow Philosophy, Reading against the institution*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2017, pp. 336.

**Keywords:** slow philosophy, love of wisdom, slow reading, instituted philosophy, instituting philosophy, desire to know, preoccupation

A handful of philosophers have judged that in the current way in which scientific activity is undergone, philosophy cannot integrate itself. This should not be the case just because someone has to deal with the issues of thinking in the speed and with the bureaucracy to which science is subject.

Michelle Boulous shows a particular interest in this issue in her book, and wonders at every step at what the institutionalization of philosophy has taken away from these profound and important concerns of man. She militates for a *slow* philosophical activity, one that came along and developed with the thinkers of old, hence it would be an old philosophical system that nowadays would be considered a new one in the spectrum of contemporary philosophical concern. Starting with the preface, she wonders how, in today's age, we relate to simple acts of existence, such as seeing, listening, speaking, or reading.

What does reading, or any kind of thinking activity, mean for us today? It is one of the questions the author insists on in her book. She is interested in exploring the interconnections between philosophy and slowness, as they can



provide us with valuable ways of asking questions regarding what philosophy has become today.

Thinking, reading, or judging are all activities that take time, hence they are slow processes. Michelle Boulous wants to explore how slow reading allows philosophy to embrace a certain degree of complexity within an institutional context dominated by speed and efficiency. Her main argument is that slow reading restores “the relevance that the instituting moments no longer hold”. Or, better said, that slow reading is an alternative to the institutional reading that is being practiced today in our culture, a culture that is largely dominated by efficiency, speed, and a general sense of hurry. The book itself is divided into a preface, an introduction, six chapters, and the conclusion. This structure testifies to the author’s preoccupation with the delimitation of institutional philosophical activity and embracing life as a way of life.

In the introduction, Michelle Boulous firmly believes in the dichotomy of what she names „the complex interplay between the instituting moment of philosophy“, as a love for wisdom, and „the instituted structure of philosophy“, as a need for knowledge. By doing so, the author describes how philosophy as a way of life has gradually undergone philosophy as a desire to know. In the introduction the author also describes how the philosophical practice of slow reading can revitalize the institutional work in which philosophy is currently enclosed.

In the first chapter, the author’s interest is to polarize the attention of the reader between the instituting moments and the instituted structure of philosophy, as well as to the relation between the two. She offers Michele Le Doeuff’s work as an example on how important a transformative work of wisdom, such as the habit of reading, is in the process of shifting the mental paradigm from one stage to another. Her interest in this chapter is to explore slow reading as an attentive rereading, rather than a speed reading, as an open reading rather than a closed one, and ,last but not least, as a field of adventure where you explore ambiguity and contradiction, rather than a desire or a need to know. She argues that the *love of*

*wisdom* can inaugurate a transformative relation, a way of life that truly binds the philosopher to philosophy.

In chapter two, the author's main objective is to describe essayistic activity as a form of slow reading. Essayistic reading can create a perspective of non-systematic philosophical activity, and it is a way to resist the limiting gesture that holds philosophical activity on a need-to-know basis. She further explains how essayistic reading waives the need for certainty and comprehension. Furthermore, on this particular matter, she offers Levinas' work and Adorno's work as good examples for understanding her point of view. For Levinas, it is advised to accept that in Western philosophy the paths which lead to a patient attitude, and an ethical attitude respectively, were practiced.

The author will prefer the path of Levinas' patient attitude. In agreement with Levinas, Michelle Boulous believes that one's ability to practice honest and benevolent reading offers a sufficient reason for the existence of an ethical responsibility towards the text. As for the reference to Adorno's call to resist the system, Michelle considers it to be useful because, in her opinion, reading in an essayistic manner offers the possibility of acquiring the skills of slow reading and ethical reading. The institutionalization of philosophy constrains it to be a wonderful commitment to life, to be a way of life assumed by the individual, chosen over the desire to know, in this case the act of thinking becoming a mere instrument.

In chapter three, Michelle uses Irigaray's work on love and wonder in order to build an open-ended opus of essayistic reading. She argues that this term provides, among others, practical strategies that the reader can incorporate. Moreover, she even adds to Irigaray's work by saying that love and wonder open us to a stranger, and even to otherness. The attitudes of love and wonder are intertwined in a contemplative relation with the actual text of the book. This relation is open to different interpretations and there are many ways to understand it. "Wonder involves rest and contemplation, a kind of temporary withdrawal that is simultaneously active and passive". It is an interval that allows us to contemplate the otherness of our encounter, and to resist acceleration. An ethics

of wonder offers possibilities to experience the other in a new, different manner from how we imagined them to be. She is convinced that both love and wonder have the power to create an open intersubjective relation, which would be far more generous for a future philosophy that would re-engage the instituting moments of philosophy in practical ways.

In chapter four, Michelle continues to insist on Irigaray's work, this time to emphasize what it means to practice a form of attentive listening. Michelle claims that listening is "a way of thinking differently about how we read"; in fact it is about the ability to speak with another. Intersubjective exchanges are provided if readers are open to accept that listening is more important than reading in regards to common understanding. In Michelle's opinion, listening has the function to provide a context to proximity by bypassing instituted philosophy and building a bridge between instituting moments of a love of wisdom and philosophy as a way of life. If we are to read her words carefully and have the required patience to listen to what she says, Michelle believes that this bridge would strengthen the dialogue and, implicitly, the relationship we have with the other, because it is from this type of relationship that beneficial outcomes for the community may appear. Here the important role of philosophy is signalled: it allows us to listen and be engaged, and moreover, it allows us to pause patiently until some form of knowledge emerges, or until we can truly discover out other. Sitting patiently and waiting allows the workings of our minds to fully rise up. Therefore, the patience to listen carefully offers the possibility of an open exchange between ways of listening that are not a matter of common understanding, but a matter of different opinions, ideas, and perspectives.

In chapter five Michelle returns to debate the link between slow reading and love by using Simone de Beauvoir's work, entitled *The second sex*. She argues that in this case an interconnection between love and text exists. If we are to accept Beauvoir's opinion on romantic love as a flow, we can then say that such a thing as romantic reading exists, and it helps putting us in an authentic experience with the text itself, helps us to be close to the text, and it also offers the possibility of a mature and open-ended approach. "An authentic or genuine

reading would regard the text as being an *other*, independent, yet it would see itself as connected to, and in a positive relation with what it reads”. What she calls authentic reading is actually the type of reading that perseveres in the detriment of institutional reading. Romantic reading is the one that puts us in an authentic text, with applications in reality. Thus, authentic reading is an exercise of a type of attention that occurs in a similar way to the process of maturation. This is not a fast process by any means, as it takes a significant amount of physical time and it also requires the spontaneity of a romantic love.

In chapter six, Michelle explores the practice of slow reading as an approach to intimacy and genuine love. She argues that an understanding of the text is not acquired with speed alone, it has to be grasped patiently, and when it is obtained in that manner, it can make us believe that reading is a process of transforming ourselves from one existential state to another. To read, and then understand what you are reading, you need to have an intimate relationship with the text, one in which you show wholehearted love and kindness. Here is how, the author concludes, the importance of the philosophical practice of love of wisdom “can be the source of transformative relations, and this idea is evident in the in the practice of intimate reading”. From here on out, reading will establish an ethical relationship between one another precisely because, with this intimate practice with the text, any individual can learn to have the necessary patience in the process of knowing the *other*, whether it is a text or another person. All these processes need time in order to form a foundation for thought-based activities, hence a hefty price is put on reading slowly and on the philosophy of wisdom.

First of all, this book has the merit of posing the problem of philosophical activity as a whole, and, secondly, it provides an attempt to reconsider certain biases and / or judgements by giving time to reading as an implicit philosophical activity. It can be considered a gesture of benevolence on behalf of the author, who puts her entire text as a gift for the philosophy of wisdom, a philosophy which can be released from the domination of the institutional conditioning it is caught in.

Michelle Boulous is worthy of praise for contributions in the field of comprehensive understanding of the importance of reading slowly. Reading slowly involved intensity, increased attention, and a qualitative focus on the ideas of a text. Reading slowly matters because through it you can perfect certain practices through which philosophy can be rediscovered. Slow reading entertains the idea of a philosophy based on wisdom, aimed at restoring philosophical potential to the community, and it also ensures that philosophical practice does not become irrelevant, or merely a preoccupation of select academic groups.

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## **Between theology, literature and life: Virgil Gheorghiu and his biography**

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Thierry Gillyboeuf, *Virgil Gheorghiu l'écrivain calomnié. Essai*, Paris: Editions de la Différence, 2017.

**Keywords:** communism, *25<sup>th</sup> Hour*, trial, Monica Lovinescu, novel, conflict, Gabriel Marcel

Important writer of Romanian exile during the communist exile and author of the *25<sup>th</sup> Hour*, Virgil Gheorghiu<sup>1</sup> was also a controversial personality. Showing an early talent, he started to publish during the interwar period (*Viața de toate zilele a poetului [The daily life of the poet]*. Bucharest: Romanian Book Press, 1937), and he was even from that period a known and successful writer (with a prize from the Romanian Royal Foundation for his poetry book from 1940; *Caligrafie pe zăpadă [Calligraphy on snow]*. Bucharest: Royal Foundations „Charles the second” Press, 1940). Still, his main success will be the aforementioned book entitled *25<sup>th</sup> Hour*, where he denounces the communism crimes but also the bad behaviour of the Nazi and legionary movement.

In the same time, the success will bring him a lot of problems: a trial with Monica Lovinescu for the copyrights<sup>2</sup> after his previous appreciations (*Ibidem*, p. 481) and recommendations to Gabriel Marcel for the foreword (Gabriel Marcel, “Preface,” in *La vingt-cinquième heure* by Virgil Gheorghiu, translated into French by Monique Saint-Come, col. “Feux Croises,” Paris: Librairie Plon, 1949 p. I-IX), and a huge

scandal started by Virgil Ierunca, where many accusations will be never proved.

Despite of his importance and of the fact that, during the time, some authors have written about him<sup>3</sup>, there has never been until now a complete and impartial biography dedicated to him. Therefore, the recent work of Thierry Gillyboeuf, French researcher closed to the writer and specialised on this topic (Thierry Gillyboeuf, „Cel de-al treilea volum al *Memoriilor* [The 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of the *Memories*]”, in Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu, *Omul care călătorea singur [The man who was travelling alone]*, translated into Romanian by Gheorghiu Ciocoi. Bucharest: Sophia Publishing House, 2010, p. 5-11), entitled: *Virgil Gheorghiu l'écrivain calomnié. Essai* (Paris: Editions de la Différence, 2017), is an important and necessary contribution for this topic and it will bring not only new information about it, but also a synthesis and some clarifications.

Structured as an essay without the pretensions of a scientific research (but without a lack of scientific rigor) and accompanied by some interesting photos with the writer (pp. 49-64) and a complete list of his publications and their translations in different languages (pp. 93-95), his presentation starts with the beginnings of the future writer's life and ends by presenting his posthumous reception.

Using information provided by the two volumes of his diaries (Virgil Gheorghiu, *Memorii – martorul orei 25 [Memories. The witness of the 25th hour]*, translated into Romanian by Sanda Mihăiescu-Cârsteanu, col. “Sinteze-documente-eseuri,” Bucharest: 100+1 Gramar Press, 1999; *Ispita libertății – memorii II [The temptation of freedom – 2nd volume of memories]*, translated into Romanian by Sanda Mihăiescu-Cârsteanu, col. “Sinteze. Documente. Eseuri,” Bucharest: 100+1 Gramar Press, 2002), but also from other sources (like his novel *The man who was travelling alone*, considered the 3<sup>rd</sup> volume of his diary; Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu, *Omul care călătorea singur [The man who was travelling alone]*, translated into Romanian by Gheorghiu Ciocoi. Bucharest: Sophia Publishing House, 2010, other works of the author, books and articles dedicated to him and s. o.), he goes deep with his research presenting biographical aspects

analysing his works, or arguing with some of his enemies. For highlighting the context of his life and activity he uses sometimes comparisons with other Romanian writers from exile like Vintilă Horia (and his work *God has been born in exile*; Vintilă Horia, *Dumnezeu s-a născut în exil [God has been born in exile]*, Madrid: Carpații Press, 1978) or with the international situation of the time. Also he compares different descriptions of the same event before subscribing to one or presenting it in his book.

Conscious about the complex social, cultural and political context where Gheorghiu lived, Therry Gillyboeuf states from the beginning of the presentation the fact that “the political, literary and human course of Virgil Gheorghiu is really married with the deflagrations and the changes of his country, but also with the changes of the tormented and torn 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is how the son of a fumble priest from Carpathian Mountains became at thirty years the author of the greatest success of the bookstore of the immediate post-war period and one of the major books of our time, before making the object of an extremely violent cabal that will definitely make him a dubious character, even infrequent, leading in a regrettable forgetting a work to rediscover” (p. 8).

Then like a man born in Romania he goes deep into the details of Gheorghiu’s biography and speaks about the local context of his birth, his childhood and adolescence, period of study, the beginnings of his literary and publicist activity and his marriage. Afterwards, he presents in a very animated manner his diplomatic activity, his glory period, the scandal with Monica Lovinescu and his difficult life in exile. Of course, he doesn’t forget to speak also about his clerical career, his meetings with the Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople, to whom he will dedicate a book (Virgil Gheorghiu, *Viața Patriarhului Athenagoras [The life of Patriarch Athenagoras]*, translated into Romanian by Cristian-Dumitru Moldovan, Alba-Iulia: Reîntregirea Publishing House, 2009), or about his travel to Lebanon from where he will return inspired and, in consequence, will publish a new book (*Hristos în Liban [Christ in Lebanon]*, translated into Romanian by Valentin Vesa, Alba-Iulia: Reîntregirea Publishing House, 2009). In this book he



doesn't avoid sensible topics like the conflict with Monica Lovinescu or the serious accusations brought by his detractors, offering interesting arguments in his defence.

In his conclusion, referring to some aspects from one of his apologetically texts (Virgil Gheorghiu, "Le sceau de l'infamie (Journal intime)", in *La cravache*, Paris: Librairie Plon, 1960, pp. 219-237), he also highlights the fact that: "the virulence of the attacks of which it has been the subject is inconceivable. But even today, his name bears the marks of it. That's what he himself called the Seal of Infamy (the title of a beautiful text he wrote in those years)" (p. 90).

By presenting in a complex and dynamic way the life, activity and work of Virgil Gheorghiu, highlighting some hidden aspects of the controversies to which he was often victim and bringing a new approach of his writings, Thierry Gillyboeuf brings again into attention the work and life of the great Romanian writer from the French exile of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, translated in 30 languages and screened in a movie with Anthony Quinn as a principal character. Let's hope that his work will be just the first one from a long list where his name will be again valued and his personality will be investigated at its real dimension.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Virgil Gheorghiu, *La vingt-cinquieme heure*, translated into French by Monique Saint-Come, col. "Feux Croises", Paris: Librairie Plon, 1949), and of some other important books of literature (like: *La seconde chance*. translated into French by Livia Lamoure, col. "Feux Croises", Paris: Librairie Plon, 1952; *L'homme qui voyagera seul*, translated into French by Livia Lamoure, col. "Feux Croises", Paris: Librairie Plon, 1954; *Le Peuple des Immortels*. translated into French by Livia Lamoure, col. "Feux Croises", Paris: Librairie Plon, 1955; *Les Sacrifices du Danube*, translated into French by Livia Lamoure, ol. "Feux Croises", Paris: Librairie Plon, 1957; *Viața lui Mahomed [The life of Mahomed]*, translated into Romanian by Gheorghiuță Ciocoi, Bucharest: Sophia Press, 2016), or theology (see: *Saint Jean Bouche d'Or*, translated into French by Livia Lamoure, col. "Hommes de Dieu," Paris: Librairie Plon, 1957; *Condotiera*, translated into Romanian by Georgiana Matei, Cluj-Napoca: Renașterea Publishing House, 2011; *Sfântul Ambrozie al Milanului [Saint Ambrosius of Milan]*, translated into Romanian by Gheorghiuță Ciocoi. Bucharest: Sophia Press, 2013; *Tatăl meu, preotul care s-a urcat la cer*.

*Amintiri dintr-o copilărie teologică [My father, the priest who ascended to sky. Memories from a theological childhood]*, translated into Romanian by Maria-Cornelia Ică jr. Sibiu: Deisis Press, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> These are described in: Monica Lovinescu, *La apa Vavilonului [To the Vavilonvalley]*, col. "Memorii-Jurnale-Convorbiri," Bucharest: Humanitas Press, 1999, p. 67; Neagu Djuvara, *Amintiri din pribegie (1948-1990) [Memories of wandering (1948-1990)]*, 2nd edition, Bucharest, Humanitas Press, 2008, p. 132-134; Virgil Ierunca, *Trecut-au anii... Fragmente de jurnal. Întâmplări și accidente. Scrisori nepierdute [The years have passed.... Journal snippets. Incidents and accidents. Unsold Letters]*, col. "Memorii – Jurnale – Convorbiri," Bucharest: Humanitas Press, 2000, p. 338-339; Sanda Stolojan, *Nori peste balcoane. Jurnal din exilul parizian [Clouds over the balconies. Diary from Paris exile]*, translated into Romanian by Michaela Slăvescu, col. "Memorii-Jurnale," Bucharest: Humanitas Press, 1996, p. 22-23), the jealousy of Mircea Eliade (Mircea Eliade, *Europa, Asia, America... Corespondență A-H [Europe, Asia, America... Correspondence]*, 1st volume, edited by Mircea Handoca. Bucharest: Humanitas Press, 1999, p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Traian Cicoare, "Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu, la trei lustre de postumitate," in *Symposium*, vol. V (2007), Issue 1 (9), p. 366-370; Gabriela Pliuță, "Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu, "Exile dans la Coquille de l'écriture du roman „La seconde chance”, in *Language, discourse and multicultural dialogue*, 1st volume, Târgu Mureș: Arhipelag XXI Press, 2013, p. 552-565; Constantin Cubleşan, *Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu – aventura unei vieți literare [Constantin Virgil Gheorghiu – the adventure of one literary life]*. Bucharest: Sophia Press, 2016; Amaury D'Esneval, *Gheorghiu*. col. Qui suis-je? Pardes: Puiseaux, 2003) or have mentioned him in their books dedicated to the Romanian contemporary literature (Dumitru Micu, *Literatura română în secolul al XX-lea [Romanian literature in the 20th century]*, Bucharest: Press of the Romanian Cultural Foundation, 2000, p. 320-324; Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu, *Literatura română între cele două războaie mondiale [Romanian literature between the two World wars]*, 2nd volume, Bucharest: Minerva Press, 1974, p. 562-570), or in some studies or articles (Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Elemente ale spiritualității ortodoxe în opera literară a lui Virgil Gheorghiu [Elements of Orthodox spirituality in the literary work of Virgil Gheorghiu," in *Symposium – "Cultural Transparency and the Loss of Privacy in the Era of Digital Technology: How Is This Shaping Our Becoming and the Ethical Dilemmas Related to It"*, Edited by The Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality from New York, vol. XXIII (2016), p. 63-73; Iuliu-Marius Morariu, „Conflictul dintre Virgil Gheorghiu și Monica Lovinescu, reflectat în scrierile lui Mircea Eliade și Neagu Djuvara [The conflict between Virgil Gheorghiu and Monica Lovinescu reflected in the writings of Mircea Eliade and Neagu Djuvara," in Doru Sinaci, Emil Arbonie (eds.), *Administrație românească arădeană – studii și comunicări din Banat – Crișana [Romanian administration from Arad – studies and communications from Banat]*, Emil Arbonie, Arad: "Vasile Goldiș" University Press, 2017, p. 575-585; Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine, *Cioran, Eliade, Ionesco: L'Oubli du fascisme*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002; Florin Țurcanu, "Un moment roumain a Paris." in Mihai Neamțu, Bogdan Tătaru-Cazaban (eds.),

*Memory, Humanity and Meaning. selected essays in Honor of Andrei Pleșu's Sixtieth Anniversary offered by New Europe College Alumni&friends, 515-530.*  
Bucharest: Zeta Books, 2009, p. 515-530).

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