

A Critique of Mimesis

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Abstract

Following an inspiration offered by Gebauer and Wulf's *Mimesis*, in this contribution we put forward the hypothesis that *mimesis* should be understood as an *intermediary device* and a *categorizing faculty* at play in all our functions and namely in our judging power. To argue this claim, we analyse the notion of *schema* in Kant's first *Critique* and find that, as product of *mimesis qua imagination*, *schemata* intermediate sensibility and intellect and allow reason to issue *good* judgements and steer clear from metaphysical self-referential ones. Showing what very special *theatrical* feature Kant's *Critique* shares with the Bible, we then analyse the function of *figura* in traditional Biblical hermeneutics and find that here again a product of imagination is needed as mediator to keep *mimesis* and self-referential *mechanisms* in check in order to prevent them from issuing *satanic* judgements. Playing along with the *metaphorical* setting that has come to the fore, we find in Plato's *Timaeus* a third case in which *mimesis* is set to play an intermediary role in a judicial account of categorization. By confronting and interweaving the insights gathered from these most relevant references, we claim that *mimesis* names a «technical procedure of schematization».

Keywords: Kant, Plato, Bible, schema, figura, judgement, demiurge

The most essential part of knowledge is the study of reasons. (Aristotle 1960, 93 [APo, I, XIV, 79a, 23])

1. Preliminary considerations on the problem of judgment

After the hermeneutical take on the matter disseminated the narrative turn, the idea that the human being is a sort of narrative animal has been revived in a number of different disciplines, most interestingly in the endeavor of Jordan B.

Peterson's *Maps of Meaning* (1999). At the crossing of neuropsychology, psychoanalysis, religious studies and philosophy, well at ease in a thoroughly Darwinist paradigm, Peterson offers a coherent anthropology of the human being centered on such fundamental claim: as a consequence of a number of evolutionary steps which we will not take into consideration, we are animals that have to answer questions such as *what do I do, now?* in narrative terms, in order to act. According to both Peterson and the hermeneutical tradition, it is by implicitly answering such questions that we categorize the environment, not the other way around: we categorize our environment not so much in terms of *real things displayed in a catalogue*, but in terms of *tools whose relevance to our aims makes them appear to us*. We inhabit stories more than we inhabit the world, let alone a world of objects. No surprise then, that stories help us make sense of the world.

The oldest stories we have, be it archaic mythology, such as the Sumerian creation myth, the Enuma Elish, or the Egyptian cosmology, be it the Christian myth or most of the fairy tales, resonates with us, archetypally, because they deal with the way we should orient ourselves. They don't tell us as much about the way the world is, as about how we should act and tell ourselves in it. Peterson's *grand récit* is coherent, both in terms of methodological inspiration and in terms of fundamental claims, not only with the most relevant heralds of the Hermeneutical *koiné*, but also with René Girard's Mimetic Theory: a set of interpretative tools taking literary and religious texts as seriously as it gets. If Peterson claims that religious texts tell us about the way we should orient ourselves in the world, about what we should do in general in order to face the constant pressure of Nature, survive and have a meaningful experience of our lives, Girard's main tenet is that religious texts tell us mostly about the way archaic communities dealt with a very specific situation, the so-called *crisis of undifferentiation* (Girard 1977), a peculiar situation in which the fundamental orienting differences of the community were shaken down and torn to pieces. When something as catastrophic as such happens, according to Girard, the *what do we do* question is preceded by a *what happened* question and

the most immediate way to investigate on what happened is to ask who's guilty. Most stories – especially those that really resonates with us and capture us – offer knowledge expressed in terms of investigations about culprits. Only later this will turn into investigation about causes, and then in what we now tend to call science. The transformation of guilt into cause had already begun way before he took office, yet it is Aristotle who marks the beginning of this long process: 'to know the reason of a thing is to know it through its cause' (Aristotle 1960, 61 [*APo.*, I, VI, 75a, 35ff]). Indeed, to have true knowledge of whatsoever, we need to be able to formulate a proposition in which we attribute a predicate to a subject, but the most fundamental way of achieving such an operation is to attribute a cause to an effect. We usually call the result of such an essential feature of ours, judging. To tell stories is the most archaic way of judging and thus it also is the most fundamental way of putting forward useful knowledge. Stories that teach us, or show us how to orient ourselves in the world are true in a different but no lesser way than what we now call science. In some sense, should we take into consideration the notion of the *Lindy effect* disseminated by Nicolas Nassim Taleb (2012, 318), since they have been around for a much longer time and they still are relevant to our endeavor, they are even *more* true.

If we consider then that Aristotle also stated that we 'have a natural disposition for the true, and at the same time [...] hit on the truth' (Aristotle 2007, 34 [*Rhet.*, I, I, 1355a, 15-16]), it would be a rather safe guess to say that human beings have a sufficient natural faculty to compose judgements in which we attribute predicates to subjects, a *δύναμις* which in Aristotelian Greek sounds as *κατηγορώ*: *categorising*. Should we play along the Aristotelian way of thinking, we might then indicate in this attitude the attribute that differentiates us from the rest of our fellow members of the genus *ζῶον*. Is the human being a *ζῶον λόγον ἔχον*? Is it not just as much a *predicating* or *categorising animal*?

When dealing with Aristotelian texts, the term 'category' usually is received as a neutral notion pertaining to the most abstract realm of knowledge, that meta-science which we now call *logic*. Yet, in common Greek, still nowadays, *κατηγορώ*

means something much more intriguing and rather disturbing: ‘I blame you’, and *κατηγορία* ‘accusation’. The common ground on which the two translations or meanings of such term stand is quite clear: in *κατηγορώ* we can distinguish the prefix *κατά* which might mean ‘about’, ‘on’, ‘at’ but also ‘*versus*’ and ‘against’ and *ἀγορεύω* which means ‘to speak (in public, in the *αγορά*)’, but also ‘to know’. So we get that categorising both means speaking about something and pleading for something, but also speaking *against* someone, accusing. When we judge, we attribute a predicate to a subject, S is P – or as Aristotle would put it, P pertains to S –, when we accuse someone, we do not do anything differently; indeed, we just play along the polysemy of the very ancient Greek notion of *αἴτια*, both cause and blame at the same time – giving αἴτιος as both the responsible and the culprit. C is responsible for E, be it in terms of cause or in terms of guilt. Following this line of reasoning, we found ourselves dealing with a much less flattering definition: we might be ‘animals having language’ (as Heidegger would render the already mentioned original Aristotelian definition), or ‘thought bearing animals’; we surely are ‘communal animals’, or ‘political animals’, but we might as well consider ourselves ‘accusing animals’. Thus, to put forward a synthesis of what has been said so far, one might say that we are ‘thought bearing animals who tell stories about accusations in order to orient themselves in a world made of events more than it is made of facts’. It is by telling stories that we first encountered the problem of truth, but do we really tend to get it right, instinctually, as Aristotle put it, and thus arrive at the truth?

The aim I am assigning myself in this paper is to sketch out a theoretical understanding of the notion of *mimesis* as a *categorizing faculty*, or, to put in other terms, to sketch out a *critique of mimesis* by showing that three fundamental texts of our tradition focused on the *pharmacological* role of *mimesis*, being it both a somehow technical – and not instinctual – device thanks to which we can grasp something like a *veritas*, and the most insidious obstacle to the formulation of true judgments. Indeed, the three texts I am willing to refer to, in a comparative way more than in an analytical one, share a common setting or a common set of references to one same semantic galaxy, a galaxy

that is figured mostly in literary terms even when philosophical in their genre: the galaxy of judgement. I will be able to face the daunting task taking into consideration Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the Bible and Plato's *Timaeus* counting on the comforting convergence with Günter Gebauer and Cristoph Wulf's 1995 *opus*, which inspired this investigation by means of a number of intuitions on the role of mimesis in our culture, art and society.

2. The schema

2.1. Kant's first *Critique* deals with a number of problems but at its core we find an attempt to *judge* our power of judgement. Indeed, the central section of the *Critique* is not by chance introduced by a chapter whose title is 'On the Transcendental Power of Judgement in General'. What follows goes under the title 'On the Schematism of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding' (Kant 1998, 271-277 [A137-147/B176-187]) where Kant takes up the most obscure of his doctrines about the *art* 'hidden in the depths of the human soul' (Kant 1998, 273 [A141/B180-1]). To put it in the simplest possible way, by presenting the doctrine of the transcendental *schemata*, Kant is here answering to a vital question emerging from his work: his problem is that in order to issue a judgement, we need to apply a concept to an intuition, the two being *ontologically* heterogeneous (Kant 1998, 271 [A137-8/B176-7]). To do so, we need an intermediation:

There must be some third thing [*ein Drittes*], which must stand in homogeneity [*Gleichartigkeit*] with the category on the one hand and the appearance on the other, and make possible the application of the former to the latter. This mediating representation must be pure [...] and yet intellectual on the one hand and sensible on the other. Such a representation is the transcendental schema. (Kant 1998, 272 [A138/B177])

These intermediary *entes* allow the interconnection between the manifold of the intuition and the pure and simple ideas of the *Verstand*. According to the *Kritik*, the *schema* mediates between sensibility and intellect, *projecting* (Stiegler 2004, §58) pure *a priori* categories on the gathering of intuition and thus making *representations* possible. The schema is both a

device and a procedure with which reason can put the data received by sensibility into forms; it is the rule following which reason can subsume the particular of the intuition into the universal of the category; it is the means by which reason can *fill* the concept with the sensible.

2.2. *Schemata* allow reason to produce representations, which amount to issuing judgements, in other words to put experiences in their corresponding categories. This is a first, paramount, result of Kant's because it clears out that in order to produce good and sound judgements, we need to put together intuitions and ideas. As far as the origin of *schemata*, Kant attributes the schematizing activity to the productive imagination (Kant 1998, 274 [A142/B181]). Such indication leads to the following one, to be commented upon: Kant explicitly refers to schematism as an *Art, eine Kunst*.

In order to make a concept sensible, then, the imagination must rely on resources outside of theoretical knowledge. [...] The imagination's ability to make a concept sensible is just that, an ability (*Können*): it involves skills that outstrip our theoretical knowledge (*Wissen*). [W]e find that [imagination] relies on several skills. It must be able to *project* and *anticipate* how the various marks of the concept in sensible, holistic terms and, at least in the empirical case, to *adjust* and *readjust* our schematic representation of a concept on the basis of further sensible experience or increased knowledge. (Matherne 2014, 14; emphasis added)

Following Samantha Matherne, we can refer to Kant's third *Critique* in which he states that 'Art, as human skill, is distinguished also from *science* (as *ability* from *knowledge*), as a practical from a theoretical faculty, as technic from theory (as the art of surveying from geometry)'. (Kant 2007, 133 [KU §43, 303]). Therefore, the faculty of judgement *hosts* at its very core a sort of technical device resulting from the hidden (to the judging subject) artistic activity of the productive imagination, *projecting* and *anticipating*, adjusting and readjusting the various characters that would make a concept apparent in a unified sensible way.

2.3. Bernard Stiegler has commented upon these pages shedding light on the role of the technical supports – or *supplements* – in the genesis of schemata. In volume three of

his masterpiece, *Technics and Time* (2001), Stiegler confronts Kant's schematism arguing that in order to clear out such obscure doctrine, we might want to read Kant's presentation of the triple synthesis (of apprehension, of reproduction and of recognition) put forward in the first version of the *Transcendental Deduction* along with the phenomenological account of the experience of temporal objects. Stiegler shows us that the *impasse* in which Kant had probably found himself trapped was the same one that, according to Husserl, Brentano had fallen into. Neither of them had managed to move beyond the analytical distinction between apprehension and reproduction. When describing the synthesis of reproduction, Kant might well be referring to what Husserl labelled as "primary retention." In version A, he is eventually led to assert that "the synthesis of apprehension is therefore inseparably combined with the synthesis of reproduction" (Kant 1998, 230 [A102]). Keeping the two syntheses clearly separated, the former as primary retention, the latter as secondary retention, Stiegler can state – in line with the spirit of Kant if not the letter – that the synthesis of reproduction *accompanies* the synthesis of apprehension: which is to say that a memory always escorts, as a criterion of selection, every primary retention. The third synthesis, of recognition, assures, as protension, the coherence of consciousness with itself and the unity of consciousness as a stream. Tertiary retentions would then offer a fourth, technological synthesis, keeping everything together – against our intrinsic temporal *default*, or finiteness. Following this line of reasoning means to concede to imagination all the space Brentano, Husserl and Kant himself were reluctant to concede and accept that images, which is to say *differed* – as in not-directly-lived – experiences, do intervene in our process of categorization: as medial images, they actually offer the matrix of schematism. Schemes are medial images that offer an intermediation between the outer world and the inner one and thus *enable* us to issue judgements.

Considering that the word imagination, through Latin *imaginem* – which in Porfirius is *imitaginem* – shares its root with the Greek *μίμος*, 'mime' and the verb *μιμεομαι*, 'to imitate',

it will not be surprising to realise that such result resonates with Gebauer and Wulf's renown *opus* where they focus on the *intermediary* character of mimesis and its location in medial images, «which occupy the space between the inner and the outer worlds» (Gebauer and Wulf 1995, 1). Such *medial* and *intermediary* character of mimesis is the *punctum* of this contribution. Inasmuch as *mimesis* is tantamount to schematism and schemata are the connecting dash that enables us to produce representations, it is very clear why culture is nothing but an endless variation on the medial themes one is socialised in (Cappelletto 2019, 191); it always is about an endless variation on images and figures, literary or iconic, serving as schemata categorizing our aboutness to the everchanging world in view of the aims we are willing to achieve.

The first purpose of this analysis was to point out that in order to produce a judgement, a categorization, we need imagination to produce schemata, a process that is, thus, implicitly performed by taking into account the medial images in which we are socialised. Indeed, the *künstliche*, artistic nature of schematism was so evident to Kant that he deemed appropriate to consider the power of judgement as a very special, non-procedural, talent; the result of training and exercise, helped by convenient *examples* (Kant 1998, 267 [A 131, 26-28]). Here is where mimesis' adversary twin-brother shows up. We should in fact add that in order to judge we need to have preliminary taken inspiration from or, to put it bluntly, to have always already been imitating those around us who seem to be able to do it. Kant was clearly concerned by this implicit result because the stage he put up to discuss it is notoriously a *trial*: he put reason to test and tried it because he realised it often issues problematic, untrue, self-referential (which in this case is to say without sufficient evidence) judgements. The arguments he brings offer a sort of 'code of procedure' to verify whether we are in presence of true – as in good, or at least not patently bad – judgements: 'never let intellect part ways from intuition', being the fundamental rule. Yet, imagination as *mimesis* represents a risky mediator, because on the one hand it reduces the self-referentiality of a metaphysical and solipsistic attitude by bridging the gap

between intuitions and ideas and thus keeping them together, but at the very same time, it brings forward the risk of a different kind of self-referentiality, *i.e.* the one sparkled by multiple subjects imitating each-other, sharing *media* and parting ways from *reality*, and from time to time entering in the dreamy world of fake news, conspiracy theories, new mythologies and so forth, caught in shared imaginary concepts, but immune to the unreachable evidence of empirical facts. *Unfortunately*, Kant did not expand on this; we thus will have to look elsewhere.

3. The figura

3.1. Our ambitious list of texts presents us with an even more intimidating assignment. When reading the Bible through the interpretative lenses of the mimeticist René Girard, one cannot but realise that it shares with Kant's *Critique* a rather unnoticed common feature, which is the fact of representing a *trial*. When translated without reluctance, the main characters of the Holy Scriptures are clearly putting on stage a judicial action; we just need to understand what is the theme and who is playing which part. One thing is for sure, *Satan* is the prosecutor. In fact, the term *Satana*, "*ha-satan*", is derived from the Accadic *Sataran*, and in the Jews judicial environment was employed to denote the *accuser*, he who stands on the right of the *accused*, or *defendant*, and denounces his faults – or guilts, or sins. It could also mean 'adversary'. The very same word *devil* comes from the late Latin *diabolus*, again from Greek διάβολος, which literally means 'divider', but also stands for 'slanderer', 'defamer', 'opponent', 'accuser' or 'contradictor'. A *martyr*, from Greek μάρτυρος is notoriously a 'witness' (or a spectator). The Holy Spirit, in accordance with Girard's interpretation and investigation, is the 'advocate' (2001). In John (14:16), it is referred to as the παράκλητος: this word, which though being Greek is uncommon in non-Jewish text, is often used to denote "one called to help in a lawcourt", and "angels, prophets, and the just as advocates before God's court", or also "one who consoles" (Barton & Muddiman 2007, 987). We also have *victims*, countless victims, all of which are eventually

redeemed by the perfect one, Jesus Christ who shall later come back as the last, or ultimate *judge*.

When we read the Bible within the framework put forward by Girard, we are immediately set to interpret it as a list of judgements issued by a people who from the very beginning seems to have been aware of the risks implicated in the action of judging and in the notion of *guilt*. Was the victim guilty? Was he or she really deserving what eventually happened? This daunting question emerges, in Girard's perspective, as the true *fil rouge* of most of the vicissitudes of which the Bible is about. And it is precisely this question that differentiates the Bible from every – or from most of – other religious texts. It is not the events that are told, but the perspective from which they are told and the moral reflection that goes with them. If we compare two renown texts as the foundational myth of Rome and the episode of Cain and Abel, we are being told *à peu près* the same story, but in one case, the pagan myth, the victim is guilty and the persecutor is right; in the other one, everything is upside down: the victim is innocent and the perpetrator guilty. Along with this intuition, Girard put forward a *mimetic* theory whose fundamental tenet is that being *mimeticus*, the *animal* that we are tends to follow others in issuing his own judgements about causes and guilts – and therefore often goes *awry*. When everybody is imitating *with* each-other the *result* can be very far from *correct*, the judgement very far from *true*, the punishment very far from *deserved*. Girardians describe this kind of fundamental events, produced by the *victimage mechanism*, by referring to the notion of self-referentiality and automatism. The mechanism acts, indeed, somehow self-referentially and automatically, without actually referring to any fact, or evidence, or investigation, and seemingly without anything that can stop it. The result is a more or less implicit story that those who are living the crisis of undifferentiation tell themselves in mythical forms and with regard to which they join together in a victimage that they live and perform as justice; a killing with which everybody seems to agree even if nobody actually was sure about anything in the first place. It is a rather surprising correspondence with Kant's result, metaphysics being the result

of Reason failing to confront with intuitions – with evidences –, going self-referential and putting forward *dreams of spirit-seers*. Thus, mimesis schematises experiences by offering schemata through which reason can mediate sensory data and ideas, by referring to *mediators* – which in Girard's terms are those we take example from.

3.2. We have a further level of interest in the emerging matter. *Mimesis* is the problem which these two texts reflecting on the problem of judgement seem to be investigating, but in a very pharmacological way it has also been considered as a possible remedy. Indeed, the *figural* interpretation of the Bible seems to suggest a new level of correspondence with Kant's theory of judgement.

When confronting with Auerbach reading of the notion of *figura*, we fall on a promising path: the notion of *figura* translates into Latin the Greek notion of *schema*. If in etymological terms *figura* and *schema* are immediately connected, from a functional perspective they share a very interesting feature, that our analysis lets emerge as central. According to Auerbach, «figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfils the first» (Auerbach 1957, 53): the fulfilment is, in general, defined '*veritas*', while the *figura* is the *umbra* or *imago*. The notion of *figura* is entirely understood when we realise that it shares with the Kantian *schema* a mediating function. Just as with Kantian *schema*, *figura* can operate such mediation because of its *ontological* specificity, being both *historical* and *ideal*; though mundane, it participates in the divine history: this is the feature that makes out of it a *link* between two vicissitudes that might look incompatible or even incommensurable, but that instead grant a full experience of truth precisely by virtue of the connection that unites them. Yet, this role is not to be confined to the intra-textual analysis: we do not need the figural interpretation only to better understand the connections between the Old and the New Testament. In general theological terms, we need the figural interpretation to be able to couple our ordinary, manifold and chaotic experience to the ideal and divine history of salvation.

In terms of judgement, which is our focus, we need the figural mediation to be able to connect our everyday –fatally exposed to *mimesis* – faculty of judgement with the *paracletus*, the advocate of the victim, in order to issue a *good*, sound and just judgement. We need the *figura*, just as we need the *schema*, in order to couple intuitions and categories; what in Kantian terms is the path to every judgement in general, in the Biblical reasoning is instead a much more defined case: a careful approach to an *accusation*. The manifold of intuition of which the reader of the Bible can find in the text the means to have a meaningful and true experience is not the Old Testament, but his own ordinary, historical, and real life. Reading the Bible, for the acolyte, is as reading a code of procedure to issue good judgements when accusations are coming along. English gives us a powerful chance: when we understand something, which means that we are able to put it in the right box, we *figure* it out. When reading the Bible, we can use *figuras* to mediate our own chaotic experience, our inexplicable everyday life and put it into the corresponding boxes; when we are about asking *why*, we can figure it out, find out the causes or the guilts, orienting our power of judgement by referring to sanctified (which in this case actually means both – and consequentially? – *sanctioned* and *made sanctus*) examples.

3.3. On a further and last level of analysis, we might find in this argument a sort of recursive proof of the soundness of the Stieglerian analysis of Kantian schematism. In its ultimate sense, the *figura* is indeed an example and a product of imagination, externalised in a literary text – or in multi- or crossmedial contents such as images, or memes, etc. – through which the acolyte can direct his judgement trying to stay on course, away from what Girard would call *internal mediation*, which is to say from the mimetic influence of peers, and its self-referential risks. In order to keep in check such risks of a self-referential runaway produced by the *mimetic* nature of our power of judgement, both Kant and the Bible seem to converge on a common, pharmacological use of mimesis itself as *imagination*. This resonates with Girard’s hermeneutics of the Bible because the Neo-Testament would come out as what Girard has somehow always said it was, the achievement of a

Critique of judgement; or, even better, the achievement of a *Kritik der Nachahmung*, a *Critique of mimesis*.

4. The Demiurge

The first philosophical author to have come to terms with *mimesis*, even if in its own peculiar way, and last to be commented upon in this paper is Plato (2008). Again, I do not intend to dig into such very complex issue in general; I will only focus on one particular aspect of the Platonic use of the notion of *mimesis*, starting once again from an etymological notation going along with our theatrical observations. This time, somehow not surprisingly considering the Girardian perspective, the stage is a foundational myth, the “likely story” (εἰκὸς μῦθος) or “plausible myth” told by Timaeus (Plato 2008, 18,19 [29d, 30b]). In this dialogue, Plato puts forward a theory on the origin and nature of everything that is. For the economy of this contribution, I will only focus on some of the many issues that emerge in this dialogue – mostly a long monologue – starting from the Platonic ontological dualism.

Timaeus begins by presenting the distinction between the perfect, simple and eternal world of ideas, which *are* in the fullest sense of being, and the physical world, which changes and perishes: the former is seized by reason (Plato 2008, 16 [28a]), the second is the object of opinion and sensation. The main character of the likely story is the mediator that couples the two distinct levels of being, the *demiurge*. This divine father and maker of the universe, a godly craftsman, using the eternal and perfect forms of ideas as prototypes, or templates, *mimetically* gives shape to the *chora* producing the existing world. The structural analogy with the rest of our already mentioned matter comes forward: the divine craftsman, a talented technician, takes the chaotic and manifold primal material of the *chora* and by virtue of a *mimesis* of eternal *ideas*, creates things. *Mimesis* is thus a measuring device that allows the demiurge to literally make things from scratch.

Such *demiurge* is a special character indeed, in fact, between many others, he has a very distinctive feature: he acts both as a member of the third class of the citizens of *Kallipolis*, in its capacity as craftsman, and as a member of the first one,

as the one who creates or actually makes the universal order appear. Even if it represents more of a function than an individual, he has the possibility, or so we are told, to operate in view of a τέλος exercising a βουλεσθαι (Plato 2008, 19 [30d, 1-3]), a sort of will, because: 1) it is ἀναυτιος – without cause (Plato 2008, 32 [42d, 3-4]) and irreducible to what there is (Chiurazzi 2021) –, 2) it acts εθελειν – voluntarily (Plato 2008, 31 [41a, 4]) –, and 3) its *thoughts* appears under the shape of προνοια – prevision (Plato 2008, 19 [30c, 1]). Thus, on the one hand the *demiurge* is a craftsman, practicing its τέχνη (which in Greek meant at one time ‘art’ and ‘technique’ and unsurprisingly we have just enumerated the features of the already mentioned Kantian commentary on *Kunst*), with prevision and in view of an end. Yet, it is somehow much more than this. Δημιουργος has some very intriguing meaning along – and in certain cases before – the most renown one of ‘maker’; it means ‘originator’, ‘generator’, which are certainly more abstract and general but do not offer any more insights than craftsman; but it also means – and in ancient Greece was more commonly used to denote – a ‘magistrate’, or a ‘judge’. As a matter of fact, a Δημιουργος was a very important magistrate, a coloniser, a founder of cities – and a master of the art of persuasion: he certainly was a member of the class of the philosopher-governors! According to Luc Brisson, the Δημιουργος is the representative of the juridical order of the world; its work matches that of the legislator of the *Laws*: the two having to “order a primitively disordered matter while keeping their eyes fixed on the world of intelligible forms” (Brisson 1974, 50ff). As a maker and as a judge, the Δημιουργος thus mimetically associate the disordered matter of the *chora* – which actually means country, land, territory, area, undefined space outside or *before* the polis –, with the corresponding categories of the ideal and eternal world. Once again, thus, we have a judicial setting in which a somehow technical entity, mimetic and imaginative at the same time, mediates between the unordered and the ordered, *categorizing*.

In conclusion, we then find that, according to three of the most relevant books of all time, even if not explicitly and programmatically dealing with it, to most of the implicit

knowledge embedded in our languages, *mimesis* names a somehow technical procedure – a by-product of interdividual (Girard, Lefort, Oughourlian 2003; Oughourlian 2016) processes of socio-cultural interaction (Portera 2019) and of associative learning (Heyes 2009; 2013) – that tends to *schematise* what it runs into – be it an action, an *ens*, a person – through time, in a dialectic of experiences (memory) and anticipations (imagination). The most ancient expression of such faculty gave place to stories whose figures has been concentrating all the knowledge we have been gathering for the last forty centuries or so, thanks to which we can categorize our own world and orient ourselves in it. So do, today, the stories, the memes, and any other crossmedial content we expose ourselves to. To critique mimesis and the vast amount of intermedial figures we daily deal with should mean to also keep in check the internal mediation to which mimesis recurs every now and then, by imitating others with the effect of judging all together, self-referentially.

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