

Martin Buber and Henri Maldiney on the Notion of Event

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Abstract

This paper investigates the thematization of the event from two different, yet related approaches. First, I will analyze Martin Buber's notion of the relational event, following its manifold usage in his writings. Buber's perspective will help in emphasizing the relational character of the event, which happens between I and Thou. Secondly, I will interrogate Henri Maldiney's concept of the event, in relation to what he has called transpassibility (*transpassibilité*), namely our radical openness towards the event. Transpassibility will be analyzed alongside the notion of trust, and I will attempt to prove that this radical openness to the event will be the key element that allows the human being to resist and cope with it. My claim is that the perspectives of both Buber and Maldiney can be taken in conjunction and provide a unitary whole regarding the process of attuning to the world. Buber stressed the importance of genuine encounters in the life of the person, while Maldiney addressed the problem of rhythm, regarding our relationship with the world. An adjacent aim of my paper will be that of showing how the conceptualizations of the two authors can lead us to a different approach concerning the psychotherapeutic relationship, hence I will also venture into the paths that Martin Buber and Henri Maldiney opened towards a dialogical psychotherapy. Nevertheless, both authors acknowledged the importance of trust in the world and its distinctive function, which allows the person to cope with the traumatic event. Finally, my paper will test the limits of the possibility of comparing Buber's philosophy of dialogue and Maldiney's phenomenological stance towards events.

Keywords: Martin Buber, Henri Maldiney, phenomenology, event, trust, rhythm, openness, receptivity, responsivity, psychotherapy

Introduction

Neither Martin Buber (1878-1965), nor Henri Maldiney (1912-2013) were trained in psychiatry, yet their works bear a certain importance and impact on the issue of human suffering.

Both knew Ludwig Binswanger, the phenomenological psychiatrist, and corresponded with him (Agassi 1999, 184). Unfortunately, Buber's interest in psychiatry started late, and here we could remember his attempt to elaborate a philosophical anthropology, which could have been used also by therapists. In this sense, his lectures delivered at the *Washington School of Psychiatry* in the *United States of America*, alongside his collaborators Maurice Friedman and Leslie Farber, become very telling. At their invitation and initiative, Buber discussed the issues of guilt, the notion of the interhuman field, but also his concept of the unconscious. On the other hand, after a period dedicated to the interpretation of works of art in light of the phenomenological approach (Maldiney 2003a, 33), Maldiney started stressing the relationship between man and madness. His main sources of inspiration were the abovementioned Ludwig Binswanger, but also the philosophies of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. While Maldiney has drawn explicitly on the works of several psychiatrists such as Viktor von Weizsäcker, Leopold Szondi and Erwin Straus, in an original attempt to think the relation between the human being and mental illness, Buber has drawn inspiration from the fragments of Heraclitus, and tried to apply his thoughts concerning the philosophy of dialogue to the framework of psychotherapy. Buber was also a critique of psychoanalysis, especially of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung, whereas Maldiney was sympathetic towards certain psychoanalytical theories, especially of the notions of introjection and projection.

This paper attempts to give an original interpretation and understanding of the concept of event, in light of the philosophies of Martin Buber and Henri Maldiney. Even though recent contributions in the philosophy of the event have been made (Marquet 1995; Romano 2009, 2014; Raffoul 2020; Prasek 2021a, 2021b) the conjunction between Buber's perspective on this issue and that of Maldiney was not underlined as such. The main theme which will guide our analysis consists in the way the philosophies of both authors provide a response to the notion of the event, thus allowing one to develop certain therapeutic consequences vis-à-vis the event. Our novelty might

consist in the way we highlight the relational character of the (traumatic) event, and the way we interrogate the relationship between the notion of transpassibility (being receptive towards the event) and trust.

Therefore, our paper will be divided into three sections. The first one will investigate Martin Buber's notion of the relational event, connecting it with his concept of the encounter in the case of the I-Thou relationship, but also with his notion of trust. In the second division of the paper, I will venture into Henri Maldiney's theory of madness, by investigating his notion of the event, its relation to the two main notions of his late philosophy, namely the couple transpassibility-transpossibility (*transpassibilité-transpossibilité*), and finally, his account of trust, or original faith, which he borrows from Husserl's concept of *Urdoxa*. The final section will be dedicated to the conjunction of the two authors' works, and their perspectives will be applied onto certain psychotherapeutic principles. Henceforth, I will be trying to suggest that the theories of both Buber and Maldiney have therapeutical implications, and if their theories were to be treated in conjunction, they might help the human being cope with suffering in the case of the psychotherapeutic encounter. While Maldiney was trying to solve the problem concerning the way in which Dasein might go insane, Buber was very careful in providing an account of the dialogical psychotherapist who has to be open and confirm the other, and most importantly, not to label the patient. Otherwise, the "moment of surprise" will not spring between patient and therapist. Likewise for the event, the "moment of surprise" might bear certain positive or negative features or effects. The moment of the surprise might even trigger a certain modification of our being-in-the-world, and the outcome of this modification depends upon our trust in the world and our rhythmical relatedness towards it.

1. The relational event

In his first major contribution to philosophy, namely the book *I and Thou*, Buber was thematizing the relational event between I and Thou as one which does not last that long, but which can nonetheless have a major impact on both the I and the Thou. In order to understand what Martin Buber was

proposing with his notion of the relational event, we first have to explain what he means by the genuine I-Thou encounter.

Already from the very first words of the book *I and Thou*, we discover that the human being's attitude towards the world is twofold, according to the fundamental word-pair which he or she uses in addressing the world. Thus, by virtue of the fundamental word-pair, which is addressed, the human being can enter either into an I-Thou relation, or into an I-It relation. (Buber 2013, 3) The I-Thou relation has to be first and foremost defined by mutuality, while the I-It relation is defined by experience and use. (Buber 2013, 6)

We will soon be informed that not only do the I-Thou relations apply to the interhuman realm, but rather, we can enter into an I-Thou relation even with the being of a tree, or even with a work of art. Buber's discussion of the work of art becomes very telling for our phenomenology of the encounter. Concerning the work of art, Buber argues that the artistic act consists in both a sacrifice and a risk, which also applies to the I-Thou relation between persons. (Buber 2013, 8) The sacrifice and the risk might also refer to the nature of the encounter itself, namely an encounter between two human beings, in which the spontaneity of the I and the spontaneity of the Thou come into contact. We are closely approaching the notion of the event, because as we will soon find out, the event reconfigures dramatically our projected possibilities towards the world. In this manner, Claude Romano's definition of the event becomes paramount for our analysis. Thus, he writes that the event reconfigures the essential possibilities of the human being (what he calls the *advenant*, i.e. the happening subject), but also his or her world, by bringing along a new understanding of the situation in which we find ourselves. (Romano 2009, 58) More precisely, the event brings along with itself a transformation of our being-in-the-world which involves a certain risk. (Romano 2009, 60) We can already notice how Buber's idea of the risk involved in the relational event anticipates Romano's thematization.

Buber considers that the Thou meets me through grace, and not by seeking. Therefore, anticipating Maldiney, we can already notice how the encounter is made possible by the

critical instant (*Kairos*). Maldiney himself continued the philosophical tradition which started from Plato, in speaking of the *Kairos*, the moment of opportunity and (decisive) action, which should be clearly differentiated from the notion of *Chronos* or briefly put, the passage of time. The Thou meets me, as Buber argues, and the relation means choosing and being chosen, suffering and acting. Moreover, Buber holds that this (inter)action should be carried out with our whole being. As he will develop his idea further in the case of his philosophical anthropology, when shaking hands, for example, we are not merely there either with body or psyche, but rather, with our whole being. (Agassi 1999, 241) The I becomes I by saying Thou, and all real living is meeting. (Buber 2013, 9) This effectiveness of the I-Thou encounter might prove decisive even from our being-in-the-world, because encountering the Thou, something is radically change in the being of the I. That would be Martin Buber's relational event. When I meets the Thou, all of the possibilities pertaining to the I are changed, reoriented and reconfigured in order to actually meet the other, and be responsible towards him/her. It is not the case that the world of It becomes insignificant when I encounter the Thou, but rather, the world of It comes to shine in light of the genuine I-Thou encounter. Therefore, there is an ontological distinction between the world of the It and that of the Thou, as Buber puts it. (Agassi 1999, 204)

In his commentary on Buber's philosophy and concerning the impact which his thought had on psychotherapy, Giovanni Stanghellini recalls the next passage which we are going to analyze. In this passage, Stanghellini observes a genuine phenomenological reduction of Buber's, concerning the dialogical life of the human being. (Stanghellini 2017, 11) We might add that this quote is very telling in its ethical implications. Thus, as Buber puts it:

“The relation to the Thou is direct. No system of ideas, no foreknowledge, and no fancy intervene between I and Thou.”
(Buber 2013, 9)

Therefore, as Stanghellini correctly notices, Buber insists that we should meet the other in his/her radical alterity or otherness. Moreover, Buber's phenomenological or dialogical

reduction also involves the subject's ethical position, because it means letting the other be, as in Heidegger's *Sein-Lassen*. (Heidegger 2001, 224) Nonetheless, it is also an effort coming from the part of the I, namely that of withholding any foreknowledge which might impede the genuine encounter between I and Thou. Buber will expand on this phenomenological reduction and as we are going to see he will apply this principle when he will be talking about the therapist's relation to his/her client.

"No aim, no lust, and no anticipation intervene between I and Thou." (Buber 2013, 9) These would be for Buber the essential preconditions of the genuine encounter. We must nonetheless remember the two key elements for further discussion, namely the letting-be of the other, and the phenomenological-dialogical reduction. These two components will prove themselves very useful when we are going to inquire into Buber's stance towards the psychotherapeutic relation.

Furthermore, Buber argues that the presence of the other gives rise to the authentic present (Buber 2013, 9), namely what we have called, following Maldiney, the critical instant. The relational event is deeply bound to the *Kairotic* instant, because it involves the unforeseen, and here we can remember the sacrifice and the risk involved in entering into the I-Thou relation. Nevertheless, as we have stated above, the instant is one of opportunity and of action, namely of decision. From this brief statement, we can deduce that the relational event demands participation from both I and Thou. Later, when we will discuss Maldiney's theory, we will find out that this participation is made possible by the radical openness towards the event, and the receptivity related to it, namely through transpassibility.

Maldiney is once again echoed by Buber's statements, namely when the latter suggests that true beings are lived in the present and object in the past. (Buber 2013, 10) This would be exactly Maldiney's difference between presence and representation, the first one being related to the present, and the second to the past. Buber discusses mutuality and reciprocity further and arrives at the conclusion that the Thou affects the I inasmuch the I affects the Thou. (Buber 2013, 12)

This mutual affection involves contact, which becomes for Buber the presupposition of trust. Let us now inquire into Buber's conception of trust.

In his book on faith, Buber argues that the human being has faith, or trust, in the other, without having sufficient conditions of explaining why he or she does so. The human being just trusts, naturally, thus we can draw the conclusion that trust is phenomenologically basic, as the Dutch philosopher Stephen Strasser puts it. (Strasser 1969, 127) Buber's equation is not so simple at all, because he insists that this sort of basic trust depends upon the contact between two beings in their wholeness. (Buber 1951, 8) Therefore, we could remember Buber's discussions from *I and Thou* about the dialogical life of the infant, in which the philosopher of dialogue argued that by virtue of his or her inborn Thou (Buber 2013, 19), the infant seeks human contact from the very beginning of his or her life. This contact is accomplished in the relation of tenderness between him/her and his/her mother. Buber here resonates with certain psychoanalytical approaches, such as those of Frances Tustin or Erik Erikson. In the case of these theories, the psychoanalytical authors argued that the feeling of basic trust of safety is guaranteed by the presence of the mother (Erikson 1995, 222) or even by the rhythmical interactions (Tustin 1986, 268) of the infant with the mother. Buber's theory becomes even more original because he states that this contact has to take place between two non-divided existences, namely, when contact takes place, we have to participate with our entire being, not solely psychically or physically. Moreover, Buber's thesis even resembles Wittgenstein's observations from the book *On Certainty*, a book in which Wittgenstein argues that trust is basic, and it is the presupposition of the interactive relationships in the case of the language-games which take place between children and parents. (Wittgenstein 1969, 23)

2. Receptivity and responsivity

In Buber's thematization of the human being's twofold attitude towards the world we found out the relational aspect of the event and the implications of the genuine I-Thou encounter

for restructuring our stance and even our possibilities towards the world. On the other hand, following Maldiney, we are going to insist upon the two components which render possible the “experience” of the event, namely its undergoing. These two elements are the radical receptivity and openness on the one hand, and the active and creative responsive aspect on the other.

From the beginning of his text, wherein he explains his core concepts pertaining to phenomenological psychiatry, Maldiney insists that transpassibility (*transpassibilité*) and transpossibility (*transpossibilité*) are two modes of existing in transcendence. (Maldiney 1991, 361) Before we are going to give a definition to either transpassibility or transpossibility, and correlate or differentiate them with one another, we ought to come back to Maldiney’s understanding of the event. The event becomes thus the building block of Maldiney’s entire theory of human suffering. Therefore, we should inquire into the nature of the traumatic event *vis-à-vis* Dasein and explain why it makes the original faith (*Urdoxa*) shake or collapse. We will soon notice that transpassibility is the capacity to undergo such a radical change in Dasein’s being-in-the-world, while transpossibility would be the creative response given by Dasein to that event. One could already notice how the undergoing of the event presents a sort of dialogical structure, namely an address and a response. Maldiney is very clear when he holds that his analysis will start from Heidegger’s fundamental ontology, in which the latter employed the notion of Dasein to explain the human being’s sojourn in the world. Therefore, even though he uses certain concepts which he borrows from Husserl, he will leave aside the notions of subject or ego, and their transcendental forms. Although Husserl seems to be sometimes neglected throughout Maldiney’s analysis of human suffering, the French phenomenologist nonetheless employs Husserl’s notion of *Urdoxa* several times. Likewise, for Maldiney, Husserl’s *Urdoxa* represents the original faith in the world, which is prior to the various sorts of belief modalities, such as doubt. (Husserl 1983, 252-253)

Maldiney states boldly that if the event and psychosis coexist or exclude each other, either way, the equation makes sense. Psychosis for Maldiney is a metamorphosis of our

existence as being-in-the-world, wherein the existential moment (Kairos) proves itself to be decisive. The event is for Maldiney something sudden, which is disconcerting for the human being. Due to the event, the course of the development of our lives is suddenly interrupted. (Maldiney 1991, 251) Thus, the event brings with itself a novel situation, which demands a response from us. The event also provokes a constitutive transformation of Dasein's being-in-the-world. (Maldiney 1991, 252) This sudden feature of the disconcerting event was also present in the works of Søren Kierkegaard, especially in *The Concept of Anxiety*, wherein the Danish philosopher explained the relationship between the instant and anxiety. (Kierkegaard 1980, 88)

Returning to Maldiney, one ought to draw the conclusion that the event is not only a sudden interruption of our being-in-the-world, but it is also related to our historicity. In light of this claim, Maldiney suggests that the event and the internal history of one's life are unrepeatable. Their encounter, which is unique, also represents the genesis of the present. The event is therefore a rupture, which takes place in the instant. (Maldiney 1991, 257-258)

Maldiney further distinguishes between the immanent time of experience and the transcendent time of experience. The transcendent time can be connected with Dasein's Umwelt and with the being ready at hand (Heidegger 1996, 97), while the immanent time is that of the development of the personality. The transcendent time passes, while the immanent one progresses. (Maldiney 1991, 261) But how are these two types of temporalities related to the question of the event? The event becomes now exactly the missing link between these two types of temporalities. As Maldiney suggests, the event involves the vital functions at a moment pertaining to transcendent time, yet it involves also our subjective affections of our internal life history. (Maldiney 1991, 263)

The French phenomenologist recalls Heidegger's thematization of being-in-the-world, insisting that Dasein and the world are not in a relation of opposition, rather in one of connection. (Heidegger 1996, 49) Moreover, the separation of

the event from meaning is as artificial as that of experience and meaning. (Maldiney 1991, 265)

Our anchoring in the world is provided by the original faith (Urdoxa), which becomes menaced by the upbringing of the event. As we were attempting to prove beforehand, the event does not alter Dasein's horizon of being-in-the-world, but rather it alters the ground of it. Consequently, connecting these two statements expressed above, the suddenness of the disconcerting event provokes a metamorphosis of our being-in-the-world concerning its ground. This is due to the failure of our anchoring in the world, of the original faith (Urdoxa). (Maldiney 1991, 272) As Maldiney emphasized several times, the disconcerting event represents a change of our being-in-the-world and of its openness. (Maldiney 1991, 273) The event becomes thereof an existential, in the Heideggerian meaning of the word. (Maldiney 1991, 294) Anticipating, the event is also connected to our rhythmical becoming in the world, as Samuel Thoma puts it. Rhythm would be the response to the event, namely to the encounter with and unprecedented strangeness which addresses us. (Thoma 2019, 283)

We will now briefly inquire into Maldiney's account of the dynamics of rhythm, so that we can set up some key aspects concerning one of the most important of his concepts, which is also related to the issue of the event. The therapeutical implications of rhythm will be left aside for the last part of our paper, in which we are going to suggest a possible conjunction between the ways in which the theories of Buber and Maldiney could be applied to the therapeutical set-up, bearing always in mind the notion of event. In his *Aesthetics of Rhythm*, Maldiney suggests that rhythm is the direct response to the experience of the abyss. The cosmogenic moment would be that in which a point is set up again chaos, which happens by virtue of rhythm. As the current exegesis suggests (Murakami 2021, 102-103), rhythm establish the "here" and the "there", in the phenomenological sense of the terms. Moreover, Marc Richir would stress the importance of the rhythmical exchange of regards between mother and infant. Thanks to this rhythmical exchange of regards, the mother fixes the infant's gaze, setting up an absolute "here" and an absolute "there". Marc Richir even

insists that this exchange involves the notion of the sublime, but we will not carry out the entire analysis here, rather we will leave it aside for further research. (Richir 2008, 84-85) Returning to Maldiney, rhythm establishes a sort of existential communication between self and world. (Maldiney 2012, 206-207) Rhythm could be also considered Maldiney's reconfiguration of Bergson's notion of the tensions of duration. Moreover, Maldiney would discuss even different types of tensions of duration, under the heading of creative and destructive ones. We could just consider the different ways of approaching the world, therefore, there would be creative acts and destructive ones, each of them bearing their own tension of duration. A comparison between the creative and destructive tensions of duration and Buber's notion of the mundane creation (synthesis) and destruction (analysis) would exceed the thematic and methodological limits of our paper.

Maldiney is very attentive in connecting rhythm with the critical instant (Maldiney 2012, 222), thus our rhythmical response towards the world, would be also a response towards the critical instant of choice and decision. In his paper on Maldiney's key philosophical concepts, Samuel Thoma provides multiple remarks concerning the elements which make up Maldiney's conception of human nature. For example, Thoma states that rhythm structures and stabilizes our communication with the world. Nonetheless, rhythm must not be mistaken for the various bodily rhythms, but rather, rhythm has to be conceived in relation to our being-in-the-world. Thus, it becomes a rhythm of existence. (Thoma 2019, 282)

Now that we have gathered all the key elements which form Maldiney's thematization of phenomenological psychiatry, we are going to finally give two short definitions to the notions of transpassibility and transpossibility. Following Samuel Thoma's paper wherein he provides a synthetic, yet original account of Maldiney's perspective on human nature, we could suggest that transpassibility refers to our capacity of undergoing a radical change in our being, due to the intervention of the event. Therefore, we are passible of encountering something which transcends our prior horizons of experiences and expectations. On the other hand,

transpossibility means the capacity to respond actively and creatively to the event which marks a breach into our existence. As for genuine decisions, this response has to be given with our entire being. This means that our response is not either a solely psychical one or a corporeal one, rather it involves our human wholeness. This would be the definition of authenticity for Maldiney. (Thoma 2019, 284)

3. Psychotherapeutic implications

We are now going to sum up all the abovementioned key aspects in order to present the possible conjunction between the perspectives of Buber and of Maldiney towards psychotherapy. Therefore, we will soon find out that there are ways to cope with the effects of the event, in the case of the therapeutic encounter. While Buber pointed out that there is not such a thing as a soul being sick alone (Buber 1965, 47), Maldiney stressed the importance of the encounter for what he designed under the heading of the “moment of reality”. (Maldiney 2003b, 21) From these two statements, we could already argue in favor of a relational and dialogical model of therapeutic intervention. The accounts of Buber and Maldiney concerning the human being even seem to complement each other, because while the latter discusses the ways in which Dasein could go insane, the former provides several valuable insights concerning the therapeutic process of alleviating this sort of human suffering.

Buber’s stance towards psychotherapy is most evident in his later writings concerning the issue of the interhuman realm. Buber clearly distinguishes the interhuman from the social. If in the latter we mostly speak about hierarchies, or even about social institutions and structures, in the former the key element which defines this interhuman field is the real encounter which takes place in the case of the face-to-face situation between I and Thou. The unfolding of the interhuman is called the dialogical. (Buber 1965, 75) If the interhuman were to take place, “being” has to take the place of “seeming”, namely we should leave aside all the social masks, and be authentic. (Buber 1965, 75-76)

We should also recall Buber’s discussion of his notion of distance. By this very event, the person sets a being at a

distance, entering into a relation with it, as a contrasting and independent opposite. (Buber 1965, 60) Nonetheless, we should remember that this primal setting at a distance does not occur only to other human beings, but also to the realm of art. As Buber puts it:

“Art is neither the impression of natural objectivity nor the expression of spiritual subjectivity, but it is the work and witness of the relation between the *substantia humana* and the *substantia rerum*, it is the realm of the between which has become a form.” (Buber 1965, 66)

Returning to our discussion of distance and relation, by virtue of the former, the human being sets another human being at a distance, thus entering into relation with him/her. Only by the event of distancing can the human being really make the other present and “imagine the real”. The making present is the presupposition of “imagining the real”. The first means that the other is recognized and acknowledged as an autonomous being before me, as an independent opposite. The latter is the capacity of feeling what the other wishes, desires and needs at a certain moment. This process is not mere empathy, because imagining the real demands of us to remain at a distance and respect everything that happens in between us. If empathy or sympathy was thematized in Buber’s times as a capacity to penetrate the being of the other as a sort of mentalization, the philosopher of dialogue holds that imagining the real is the work of the in-between, which is made possible by the primal setting at a distance. These capacities of making present and of imagining the real become so intense, that we even feel the other’s pain, for example, in our bodies. Thus, Buber concludes, I and Thou live a shared situation. (Buber 1965, 70) The event of confirmation becomes then possible. By confirmation Buber means a sort of acknowledging of the other’s dynamic becoming, alongside his/her unfolding potentialities.

Besides giving a speculative account of the unconscious, Martin Buber provides in his seminar held at the *Washington School of Psychiatry* several remarks concerning human suffering and how can the psychotherapist alleviate this pain. Consequently, Buber argues that if real meeting between I and

Thou has to take place, then the therapist must bracket the ready-made categories of his school of thought, in order to actually meet the patient in his uniqueness. (Buber 1999, 167) Buber values the importance of the “moment of the surprise” between therapist and patient. In order for this critical moment to spring, this sort of dialogical bracketing needs to take place. In other words, the therapist must withhold his ready-made categories of interpretation of the patient’s material and wait to see what happens. This was called by Martin Buber the “conscious liberating” of the patient, from the therapist’s “unconscious imposition”. (Buber 1999, 164) What exactly is at stake for Buber is not the specific method, whereas without the method the therapist would be a dilettante, but rather the actual person of the therapist. In other words, the therapist must take into consideration the unforeseeable, the unexpected, which was called by child psychologist Daniel Stern the “moments of meeting”. (Stern 2004, 23) These moments provide rich insights into the therapeutic process, by allowing both I and Thou to experience the other side of the relation, and by deepening the interhuman field. Nonetheless, Buber once again put great emphasis on existential trust. Buber even offers a paramount situation, namely one in which the patient puts his entire faith in the being of the therapist, thus the responsibility of the therapist becomes even more demanding. Nevertheless, cooperation is again a term employed by Buber in order to reveal the shared responsibility which needs to take place in the psychotherapeutic set-up.

On the other hand, Maldiney’s scattered remarks on the therapeutical process, and his insights into human suffering seem to resonate with Buber’s overall thematization of human encounters. Both acknowledge the way in which the event (the critical instant) brings a radical change into the beings of those who encounter each other, and moreover, both suggest that trust is the key element which renders possible coping with the excess of sense and affectivity provided by the relational event. In his synthetic paper on Maldiney’s key concepts, Samuel Thoma provides a chapter wherein he discusses the therapeutic implications of Maldiney’s overall work. Therefore, the former suggests that Maldiney defines psychosis as a loss of openness

in the face of the event and a preponderance of the cognitive and reflective aspects of the human being. Comparing once again the thematization of Buber and Maldiney, while for the first the I-Thou relation opened the present and the I-It relation pertained to the past, for the latter, human suffering and even psychosis were exactly the passage from presence to representation. Returning to Thoma's paper, and following Maldiney, the former suggests that therapy's principal aim would be that of integrating the event in the patient's rhythmical becoming. This happens by virtue of staying open to the event, both in a receptive and a responsive manner. The radical openness towards the world and the event (which opens the world), is called by Thoma the new and unprecedented alterity. For Maldiney, our receptivity and responsiveness are situated at the sensing bodily level of existence. This statement reminds us of Buber's notion of the unconscious, which could have been as well rendered as a sort of bodily presence. Therefore, the genuine encounter between patient and therapist would be, as Buber considered, one between two non-divided existences. Moreover, the therapist should help the therapist integrate the event in his or her rhythmical becoming, in this sense, art therapy becomes here a key tool for this process to unfold. Thoma recalls Hölderlin's saying that we should come and meet into the Open as an imperative of the therapeutic process, in which both therapist and patient share a unique cooperation. Maldiney's understanding of the therapeutic process becomes evident, and similar to Buber's at the moment when Thoma suggests that the therapist should leave aside his or her professional standpoint and empathize with the patient's world. These processes were named by Buber the "conscious liberating" from the "unconscious imposition" and "imagining the real". Thoma is most clear when he asserts that openness is a shared process. (Thoma 2019, 289)

We should come for a moment back to the issues of surprise and of the unforeseen, comparing it with Maldiney's receptive and responsive stances towards the event. As Thoma puts it, in terms of receptivity, openness implies that the therapist must be ready to be surprised by the patient's

experiences. This also involves letting them speak for themselves and appear as they are, thus not categorizing or typifying (labelling) them. Responsivity is thus as important as receptivity, because if there were not any responsivity from the part of the therapist, the therapeutic process would become a solitary monologue. Being open means actively and creatively respond to what the one who suffers presents in the therapeutic set-up. If this elementary responsiveness to the event would not function as such, there would be no dialogue between I and Thou. Authenticity is the key term employed by Thoma. (Thoma 2019, 190) Unpredictability becomes the key element with which the therapist must accommodate to. Therefore, the therapist has to let all the masks down (the persona), and be who he or she really is, in order that he or she might encounter the patient's actual needs. Henceforth, a re-attunement due to rhythm takes place not only between self and world, but also between I and Thou. (Thoma 2019, 291)

Finally, concerning the problem of the loss of trust in the world, which is shaken by the traumatic event, both Buber and Maldiney provide rich insight into the nature and genesis of this original faith towards the world and others. Nonetheless, trust in the world could be regained, in the case of the therapeutic set-up, by virtue of the rhythmical interactions between patient and therapist, namely by remaining into the Open, and being receptive and offering a creative response towards the situation in which they find themselves. Paraphrasing Buber, trust in the world would not be only the greatest achievement of education, but also the greatest achievement of psychotherapy. (Buber 2002, 116)

For example, in their paper on the transcendental history of trust, Fazakas and Gozé argued that basic trust, which is built up by the to-and-fro movement of introjection and projection of what is internal, respectively external, renders possible the way in which the human being can live in the world, without a fear of being menaced by something indeterminate. Moreover, this sort of basic trust makes the world feel hospitable and render possible human encounters. Now it becomes more evident why both Buber and Maldiney stressed the notion of trust on several occasions throughout

their works. Likewise, Buber, for Fazakas and Gozé, the basic trust is configured by the contact between two non-divided human existences, namely by the repeated interactive patterns of mother and infant, especially in the case of holding behaviors. (Fazakas & Gozé 2020, 185) While Buber spoke quite generally about the event of contact, Fazakas and Gozé clearly distinguished the multiple architectural strata throughout which the infant has to pass in order to gain this basic trust in the world and in others. Therefore, Fazakas and Gozé draw on Marc Richir's theory of the process of humanization, arguing that the maternal holding is introjected in the guise of the transcendental soil, which enables the infant to project this basic feeling of security onto the external world. This would be the alternative phenomenological account of Buber's notion of the event of contact, or of Maldiney's appropriation of the Husserlian *Urdoxa*.

Conclusion

Concluding, in this paper we have ventured into the specific dynamics of the event and tried to delineate its consequences for a possible dialogical stance towards psychotherapy. We have drawn mostly on Buber and Maldiney and noticed how their conceptions of the event bear certain resemblances. In the case of Buber, we have explained how the relational event functions, namely we have inquired in the specific mode of the I-Thou relation and followed its direct consequences. The relational event was for Buber that specific sort of encounter which reconfigures our being-in-the-world, by readjusting our possibilities towards the world. More precisely, the I-Thou encounter opens the realm of responsibility towards the other. Being responsive meant for Buber listening to the fact of being addressed and responding with our whole being. Henceforth, we have clearly delimited the effects which the I-Thou relational event bears on the human being from the realm of experience and use which pertained to the realm of the I-It relation. Already when analyzing the I-Thou encounter, we have given some hints concerning Buber's stance towards psychotherapy, namely at the moment when we discussed the phenomenological or

dialogical reduction implied in Stanghellini's reading of Buber's *I and Thou*. Next, Maldiney's concept of the event is very rich in content, because it allows one to explain the certain dynamics of our being-in-the-world, especially the case in which Dasein's sanity is at stake. More precisely, this means that the event might be responsible for Dasein going insane, because as we have described, the event is first and foremost a happening which reconfigures our being-in-the-world and readjusts our possibilities. The event could be either have positive consequences or not. If the event is a traumatic one, namely a happening which exceeds Dasein's grasp of affectivity at a specific moment, then Dasein becomes disconcerted, due to this sudden change. Marc Richir's theory of the positive and negative versions of the sublime was not the aim of this paper, but nonetheless, the theory of the Belgian phenomenologist could be of interest for further research. (Richir 2015, 217-218) Returning to the positive and negative events, whereas we labelled trauma as a negative event, the positive event could be exactly the "moment of the surprise", namely a surprise which allows the human being to develop further and reorient his or her possibilities towards the world. We have given a hint at this moment of the surprise, when discussing Buber's event of confirmation. Finally, we have stressed the possible therapeutic implications of both Buber and Maldiney's philosophies, in order to show how these two different, yet very related conceptions of the world, could throw light on the issue of the encounter with the event. Therefore, from Buber we have taken his account of the dialogical therapist, and concerning Maldiney, we have followed Samuel Thoma's synthetic, yet original development of Maldiney's phenomenological psychiatry in light of current research in the field of dialogic psychotherapy. Nevertheless, both Buber and Maldiney discussed the ways in which the event is related to the encounter. This possible conjunction could be also left for further investigations, because in the present paper, we have only given hints towards the relation between the event as a happening and the encounter as a way of being-in-the-world.

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[All paraphrases in the text, from French to English, are mine].

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