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Center for Hermeneutics, Phenomenology, and Practical Philosophy

META

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Leibliche Individuierung als originäres Erscheinen. Zur Bestimmung einer ontologisch-phänomenologischen Grundfrage

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Abstract
Bodily Individuation as Original Appearing

So far, philosophy has conceived of the principium individuationis in terms of of a unique position in space and time coordinates. However, this leads to equate the living human individual with things in this respect. In the phenomenological analysis, corporeality assumes on the contrary such individuation, not only as singular *Erleben*, but also as arch-impression within auto-affection. Thereby, a radical passivity or *Passibilität* guarantees the connection between body (*Leib*) and Life, as well an original self-appearing of appearing, which is not anymore dependent on the transcendence of space and time. A further consequence is that the transcendental character of consciousness and subjectivity is no longer a merely formal structure, but is the concrete life of the purely phenomenological individual as pre-reflexive ipseity.

Keywords: Heidegger, Henry, phenomenology, body, individuation

Besitzen wir keine vermittelnde Kategorien des Denkens mehr, wenn die Präsenz als jeweilige pathische Immanenz der reinen Erprobung des absolut phänomenologischen Lebens zu erfassen ist, dann ist jede Seinsdifferenz aufgehoben. Es verbleibt nur das je modalisierte Affiziertsein als leiblich-subjektive Bestimmung. Allerdings ist damit nicht jegliche phänomenologische Bezüglichkeit ausgeschaltet, vielmehr bedeutet die unmittelbare Präsenz als je absolute Modalisierung von Freude/Schmerz in ihrer originären Einheit einen Bezug zum permanent gegebenen Leben als eine transzendentale Verlebendigung in stets individuiert gegebener Leiblichkeit. Diese bildet keine Lokalisierung in einem transzendent erstellten Bewusstseinsfeld mehr, sondern jene Weise selbst, *wie*

Leben rein immanent durch sich selbst zu Leben wird, ohne dafür noch eine Zeitlichkeit denken zu müssen. Die Reduktion von Raum und Zeit impliziert hierbei auch den Ausschluss jeglicher Allgemeinheit als einer ersten Substanz oder primordialer Wesen oder Ideen. Folglich existiert nicht erst Leben und dann ursprünglich individuierte Leiblichkeit, so dass letztere anthropologisch auch nicht als Andersheiten ontologischer Natur kausal oder genetisch miteinander vermittelt werden müssten. Hierzu wurde in Bezug auf das Denken Henrys originärer Selbstimpressionabilität auch der Begriff der "Propriozeption" eingeführt, ohne hier auf die weiteren empirischen Zusammenhänge von Körperbild und Körperschema eingehen zu können (Vgl. Dopatka 2019, 9f. u. 362ff.).

1. Originäre Einheit von Passibilität und transzendentaler Verlebendigung

Der Ausschluss von Differenzen oder sonstiger transzendentaler Dimensionalität als Er-öffnung von reflexiven oder hermeneutischen Verstehensakten (Heidegger), welche gemäß der philosophischen Tradition ein sinnliches Kernsubstrat prädikativ und identifizierend anreichern (Husserl), bedeutet im rein immanenten Verhältnis von Leib/Leben kein Fehlen an Relationen und damit irgendeine Art von "Gegebenheit" als unmittelbar entzogener Gegenwart (Marion). Vielmehr ergibt sich die originäre Selbstgründung eines jeden möglichen Bezuges als phänomenologisch-ontologische Bezüglichkeit schlechthin aus dem individuierten Leben als originärem Leben in seiner jeweilig modalisierten Leiblichkeit als Selbsterscheinen des Erscheinens. Diese besagt daher zunächst keinen egologischen oder psychologischen Bezug zwischen Leben und Individualität als "Person", weil dadurch nur wiederum der transzendente Charakter des *Sich*-Beziehens als ein intentionales "Beziehen auf ..." gedacht würde, ohne dieses rein immanente *Sich* des Bezuges selbst als Bezüglichkeit zu erproben. Spinozas immanente Kausalität von Substanz/Modus (vgl. Kühn 2018, 79-121) sowie Heideggers Substanzdekonstruktion als Vorhandenheitskritik weisen beispielhaft darauf hin, dass im Ursprungsbereich des Selbsterscheinens eine originäre Bezüglichkeit zu fassen bleibt, bei der die beiden Größen des

Bezuges nicht getrennt von ihrem Bezugsverhältnis als unmittelbar immanenter Präsenz selbst gegeben sein können. Daher ist zu sagen, dass die Identität des Verhältnisses von Leib/Leben ein Sich beinhaltet, dessen Ipseität genau die originäre Individuiertheit dieser mit sich selbst identischen transzendentalen Verlebendigung ausmacht, auch als "Intensität" in ihrer jeweils affektiven Bestimmtheit benannt werden kann. Auch für Heidegger ist das "Bezughafte" in der Tat weder "Ding" noch "Zustand", impliziert jedoch hinsichtlich des Seins dessen "Zuwurf" wie "Verwerfung" (Heidegger 1981; 1979; 2005) während die "Intensität" bei G. Deleuze und F. Guattari nur energetisch-libidinös als "organloser Körper" gefasst wird (Deleuze & Guattari 1972; 1974).

In der einfachen – und nicht länger zusammengesetzten – absoluten Reziprozität von Leiblichkeit und Leben als ursprünglicher Selbstgegebenheit des Erscheinens herrscht mithin ein Vollzug, dessen konkrete Ermöglichung als innere "Kraft" die Affiziertheit des Lebens als jeweilige Individuierung selbst ist. Und was sich hier als "Ur-Individuum" im Sinne Nietzsches (1972, 65f.) affiziert, affiziert sich in der ständigen Affektion des Lebens selbst, so dass die Selbigkeit von Affiziertwerden und Affiziertsein, das heißt von Akt und Gehalt, die originäre Leiblichkeit dieses Bezuges als Kraft der Bezüglichkeit als solcher bildet. Es kann dies folglich auch keine Graduierung der Perzeptionen nach Leibniz bzw. eine Ex-tension der sinnlichen Unmittelbarkeit in eine notwendige objektivierende Vereinzelung hinein nach Hegel mehr bedeuten,[1] weil das affektive Wesen des Lebens in sich selbst bereits leiblich individuiert bzw. inkarniert ist. Jede Affektion als originäre Affektabilität vermag sich nämlich nur in ihrer bestimmten Einmaligkeit zu ergreifen, welche die Bezüglichkeit des Lebens zu sich selbst als Kraft oder als affektiven Modus ohne mögliche Negation darstellt.

Diese Kraft als apriorische Präsenz besagt demnach keine Qualität, welche dem Wesen des Lebens in seiner jeweiligen Modalisierung nachträglich zugesprochen würde, sondern sie ist mit der Passibilitätswirklichkeit der transzendentalen Leiblichkeit als solcher gegeben. Insofern sich nämlich jede Affektion in ihrer Affizierbarkeit unmittelbar selbstaffiziert, erleidet sie sich selbst als jene Affektivität, durch welche das rein phänomenologische Leben ohne Genese zum Leben in seiner schweigenden Immanenz als Leibpräsenz in jedem Augenblick diesseits aller Zeit "wird". Indem sich das Leben in seiner affektiven Individuierung selbst entgegennimmt und sich folglich auf diese Weise in seiner Selbstgebung auch selbst erträgt, erleidet es sich als der "Ur-Leib" solcher Bezüglichkeit von Selbstrezeptivität (Propriozeption) und Selbstgebung.[2] Die leibliche Individuierung bedeutet mithin im Ursprung des Erscheinens das immanent phänomenologische Gesetz der transzendentalen Affektivität als Leben in seinem je konkreten Selbstvollzug. Deshalb wird die Bewegtheit der Bezüglichkeit als "Kraft" aus jener Passibilität selbst geboren, mit der sich das Leben als originäre Einheit seiner inneren Selbstbezüglichkeit je leiblich individuiert entgegennimmt. Insofern ging schon Nietzsche weiter als Husserl und Heidegger, wenn er den "Ur-Schmerz" – verstanden im absolut phänomenologischen Sinne – als selbstrekurrente Wirklichkeit der leiblichen Ursprungsrezeption aufwies, nämlich als "Wille zur Macht" oder "ewige Wiederkehr", was unserer originären Erscheinensanalyse als Immanenz entspricht (Nietzsche 1972).

Von hier aus klärt sich dann bereits programmatisch, warum leibliche Präsenz zugleich originäre Subjektivität beinhaltet, denn letztere ist kein Ausdruck für ein metaphysisches Projekt der Selbstvorstellung in allem Seienden und damit dessen Beherrschenwollen durch das menschliche Bewusstsein, wie dies mit Recht Heidegger (1994, 141ff.) kritisierte, sondern die Subjektivität ist unbegrenzte Rekurrenz der Passibilität als sich selbst erleidende oder empfindende Ipseisierung in ihrer reinen Selbstgegenwart. Damit ist die ursprüngliche Individuiertheit auch keine numerische Vereinzelung im gattungsspezifischen oder ousiologischen Sinne mehr, sondern ihre rekurrente Verlebendigung als das Sich-Selbst-Empfinden in allem *cogitare* als *se sentire* nach Descartes[3] bedeutet vielmehr die Übereinstimmung mit der Selbstaffektion des Lebens als dessen Pathos in all seinen leiblichen Vollzügen, so dass damit im Sinne Fichtes[4] auch die "Seligkeit des Lebens" zu jedem Augenblick gegeben ist. Und die dabei von ihm geforderte “Selbstvernichtung” der personalen Individualität zugunsten eines “allgemeinen Sollens” im menschheitlichen “Wir” ist deshalb keine idealisierende Moral der Unterordnung des Besonderen unter das Allgemeine, sondern die notwendige phänomenologische Rückbesinnung auf eine originäre Gemeinschaftlichkeit (Henry 2005, 140-159). Diese ist gerade mit der ko-pathischen Leiblichkeit als der für jedes “Ich” gleichen Rekurrenz im Leben gegeben, woraus ein vorurteilsfreies kulturelles Miteinander überhaupt erst entstehen kann.

Alle bisher analysierten Verhältnisse der rezeptiven Passibilität als verlebendigender Rekurrenz der Immanenz blieben allerdings radikal phänomenologisch noch unausgewiesen, falls nicht eben die leibliche Materialität dieser affektiven Grundbezüglichkeit deutlich benannt würde. Hier hat die philosophische Tradition durch den Zusammenhang von Individuierung und Materialprinzip seit der Antike intuitiv Richtiges erkannt. Aber das materiale Substrat (*hyle*) ist weder ungeformt zunächst (*apeiron*, *chora*), um dann in die Vielheit der numerischen Vereinzelung transformiert zu werden, noch ist es eine bloß naturale oder organische Materie, sondern die Individuiertheit bezieht sich stets auf eine bereits in sich selbst affizierte Leiblichkeit (Majolino 2002, 81-106). Mit anderen Worten muss jene Passibilität, in der sich das Leben selbst entgegennimmt, als ein originär selbstimpressionales “Fleisch” (*chair*) verstanden werden, in dem sich das Leben selbst als Leben in seiner unmittelbaren Präsenz erprobt. Selbstmpressionabilität oder “Propriozeption” ist damit das materiale Wesen der passiblen Individuiertheit, ohne substanzhaftes *hypokeímenon* zu sein, woraus sich radikal phänomenologisch ergibt, warum alles Empfinden ebenso leiblich singulär wie subjektiv partikulär auftritt. Denn die Subjektivität als je unverwechselbares Sich-Selbst-Empfinden-Können im Sinne der transzendentalen Verlebendigung dieser Ursprungsphänomenalisierung ist immer leiblich individuiertes Empfinden. Das heißt als Empfinden einer konkreten Ipseität, insofern keine Empfindung vom Ich und von der immanenten Leiblichkeit als Einheit des originären *cogito* getrennt zu werden vermag, wie auch Sartre (1947; 1973) dies prinzipiell für die unthematische Selbstheit des präreflexiven Bewusstseins erkannt hatte, ohne jedoch die weiteren phänomenologisch-ontologischen Konsequenzen daraus zu ziehen.

In dieser Hinsicht besagt folglich die originäre Individuierung eine unabstreifbar rein phänomenologische Materialität, welche als Leiblichkeit des Affektiven in ihrer stets gegebenen Unmittelbarkeit zugleich eine absolute Situiertheit im Leben bedeutet.[5] Kein "Individuum" ist letztlich in einem äußeren Ort lokalisiert, sondern das *Hic* oder die *Haecceitas* des leiblich individuierten Seins ist eine ursprüngliche Bezüglichkeit ohne Distanz oder Differenz in der reinen Immanenz ihres material-phänomenologischen Verhältnisses von Leiblichkeit und Individuiertheit. Weil die leibliche Individuiertheit in der Passibilität der affektiven Lebensübereignung ihren Ursprung nimmt, bzw. sogar diese Übereignung als Selbstaffektion schlechthin ist, bedeutet diese Leiblichkeit als originäre Präsenz unmittelbar eine "Diesheit" in einem "Hiersein", welches ebenso unvertauschbar wie unvorstellbar ist. Und zwar nicht nur, weil kein anderes Individuum zur gleichen Zeit denselben Platz wie ich selbst einzunehmen vermag, sondern weil die Selbstbindung des Lebens an sich selbst als inkarnierte Originarität in dessen immanent affektiver Fleischlichkeit niemals aufgelöst werden kann: "Aber da ist keine Hoffnung. Ich bin, der ich bin: wie käme ich von mir selber los", wie Nietzsche (1973, 863 [III.14] so treffsicher in seiner "Genealogie der Moral" bemerkte.

Deshalb ist auch die zeitunabhängige Passibilität kein bloß vorübergehendes punktuelles Geschehen, welches als *arché* von seinem *télos* getrennt wäre, sondern die Leiblichkeit als affektive Präsenz beinhaltet die immanente Historialität dieses immemorialen Anfangs als permanente Praxis, das heißt als Modalisierung stets individuierenden, weil originär individuierten Lebens. Will man hier eine begriffliche Unterscheidung aufrechterhalten, so ließe sich von der jeweils "transzendentalen Geburt" (Henry) innerhalb der reinen Lebensgenealogie als von der Individuierung des zunächst nicht intentionalen, sondern rein passiblen "Mich" sprechen, während die Individualität eher die Weiterzeugung des daraus sich modalisierenden spontanen Ich als Ego in seinem akthaften Habitus ergäbe. Aber da diese Individuation dennoch eine ständige Bewegung in der Permanenz der leiblichen Affektion darstellt, sind Individuierung und Individualität im Grunde identisch und werden auch nicht durch eine Entwicklung zur “Persönlichkeit” hin (Husserl) oder durch einen psychologischen “Individuationsprozess” (Jung) erhöht, in dessen “Selbst” allgemeine Archetypen durch eine Bewusstwerdung zur seelischen Integration gelangten (vgl. beispielsweise Jung 1971, 124ff.). Sowohl das Ansetzen eines erinnerungsmäßig limeshaften oder libidinösen Unbewussten wie von typenhaften Modellen bleibt spekulativ und von der unaufgeklärten Transzendenzvorgabe eines allgemein ek-statischen Bewusstseins abhängig. Denn wenn die radikal phänomenologische “Individuation” zu keinem Augenblick auf irgendeinem Untergrund von Allgemeinem erfolgt, dann ist sie an jedem Punkt ihres immanenten Werdens nichts anderes als je konkret originäre Individuiertheit. Dies gilt im weiteren Sinne auch von heutigen Genderdebatten, insofern das “Geschlecht” weder biologisch noch psychologisch unmittelbar mit der originären Passibilität des Sich-Empfinden-Könnens in eins fällt, sondern den rein phänomenologischen Übergang vom “Sinnlichen” zum erotisch “Sensuellen” hin beinhaltet, der in all unseren Begegnungen affektiv wie kulturell mitgegeben bleibt (vgl. Schweizer u. Richter-Appelt 2012; Henry 2002 322ff.).

2. Leiblichkeit als Weltbezug, Religion und Kultur

Dieser immanente Präsenzbegriff der Individuiertheit als affektiver Leiblichkeit der Passibilität im Sinne transzendentaler Ermöglichung jeglichen Empfindens birgt zusätzliche eidetische wie kritische Konsequenzen. Ist jedes Empfinden in seiner reinen Impressionabilität absolut leiblich bestimmt und durch diese seine lebendige Affektionsbezüglichkeit zugleich eine Kraft, dann bedeutet auch “Weltsein” für ein solch präreflexives Ursprungsbewusstsein originäres Affiziertsein als impressional-ästhetisches Wertsein. Hier fließen Analysen von Descartes bis hin zur gegenwärtigen phänomenologischen Dekonstruktion zusammen, denn eine Ipseität impliziert originär Welthaftigkeit sowie Begegnungen als grundsätzlich affektive Situationen (vgl.

Kühn 2019, 43ff.). Wir wollen das Mitsein als Mitpathos dadurch keineswegs der Welthaftigkeit bzw. Gesellschaftlichkeit subsumieren, wie es bei Husserl und Heidegger geschieht und in der gegenwärtigen Soziologie eine äußerste Reduzierung erfährt als Rolle oder Verhalten. Für unseren Beitrag soll hier nur festgehalten werden, dass Individuiertheit einer Situation als leibliche Subjektivität keine bloß selektive Wahrnehmung beinhaltet, sondern eine subjektiv-gemeinschaftliche Praxiswirklichkeit, die stets eine radikal phänomenologische "Inter-Subjektivität" beinhaltet, ohne einem bloß lebensweltlichen Pragmatismus zu huldigen. Denn es handelt sich dabei zunächst stets um eine je immanente Kraft, durch die sich ein "Blickwinkel" als "Interesse" an einem Wert als Affektion überhaupt bekundet, welcher als originärer "Lebenswert" stets innerlich erprobt wird, auch wenn dabei die gesellschaftliche Symbolik nicht ausgeklammert werden muss. Das wahrgenommene Weltsein insgesamt bildet dadurch die Ästhetik der leiblich-subjektiven Individuiertheit, ohne die kein Weltbezug mit seinen konkret phänomenologischen Inhalten möglich wäre (vgl. Sorace 2007, 291ff.).

Wir sind allerdings weit davon entfernt, durch solch phänomenologischen Aussagen irgendeinen moralischen Individualismus transzendental aufzuwerten, wie er etwa bei Max Stirner in seinem Werk "Der Einzelne und sein Eigentum" von 1844 vorliegt. Aber ebenso sind wir durch das leiblich fundierte *principium individuationis* davor gefeit, die Individuiertheit allein durch begriffliche Gegensätzlichkeiten zu bestimmen – sei es klassisch durch Wesen/Gattung, Einheit/Vielheit, Einfachheit/Zusammengesetztes usw. oder dialektisch durch einen geschichtlichen "Lebensprozess" als Logik der Bewusstseinserfahrung wie bei Hegel.[6] Die radikal phänomenologische Individuierung als Verleiblichung ist streng ontologisch zugleich – nämlich als Inkarnation im originären Sinne – der Realitätszugang schlechthin in einer stets gegebenen leiblichen Präsenz. Dies lässt sich auch als Prinzip der Ipseisierung als solcher ansprechen, ohne dabei etwa Schopenhauers pessimistisch getönte metaphysische Lehre von der Entleerung des Willens im Sinne individueller Desillusionierung übernehmen zu müssen, selbst wenn bei

Schopenhauer erstmals ein eigenständiger, proto-phänomenologischer Entwurf zur Leiblichkeit als Individuierung in der Neuzeit vorliegt (Kühn 2021, 38-82).

Erschließt sich mithin durch dieses Prinzip des leiblich-individuierten Erscheinens als originärem Selbsterscheinen ein jegliches Reale wie Ideale in seiner ursprünglich konkreten Manifestation als Gegebenheit, dann kann sich in der Tat kein bloß empirisch gedachtes Individuelle über dieses Prinzip des Erscheinens erheben, weil es selbst darunter fällt. Allerdings kann ebenfalls solch phänomenologische All-Präsenz über keine hermeneutische "Sammlung" der geschichtlichen Sinnzu-sprechungen mehr subsumiert werden. Denn die Auslieferung der Individuierung wie Individuation an irgendeine Art von zeitlichem Gedächtnis verkennt den radikal immemorialen Charakter leiblich-sinnlicher Rekurrenz, welche durch keine Sprache – sei sie Bedeutung, Sinn, Biographie, Narrativität oder Deutung – eingeholt zu werden vermag (vgl. Marion 2020, 293-305). Die Leiblichkeit bleibt selbst das originär fleischliche Gedächtnis jener Kraft als Ipseisierung unserer Vermögen in ihrer Einheit, so dass alles sinnliche wie geistige Ergreifen von Wirklichkeit jeweils auf diese Ur-Individuierung aller Potentialitiäten zurückgreift. Dies hat ohne Zweifel Maine de Biran in der Vergangenheit für die konstitutive Selbstapperzeption der praktischen Ich-Anstrengung als unmittelbarer "Wille" am eindeutigsten aufgezeigt, bevor dies von Henry dann als "Können zu können" (*pouvoir pouvoir*) weiterführend für die leiblich-fundierten Phänomenanalysen in allen Bereichen wie unter anderem Philosophie, Kunst, Ökonomie und Kultur aufgegriffen wurde (vgl. Maine de Biran 1963; Maine de Biran 2008, 198ff., Henry 2017).

Wie aber steht es dann mit dem singularisierenden Gesetz *ab alio* oder, anders gesagt, um das Verhältnis von Gott und Individuum, sofern mit dem Begriff "Gott" zumeist "das Andere schlechthin" in den Religionen und Philosophien gedacht wird? Solange Gott im monistisch unbefragten Horizont der Transzendenz im Anselmschen Sinne beispielsweise als der theistische oder irgendwie beweisbare Gott gedacht wird (was dann alle virtuellen Atheismen bereits einschließt) (Anselm 1984), ist seine absolute Ferne als die maximale Differenz in ihrer Absolutheit der Andersheit gegenüber der Endlichkeit ontologisch unvermeidbar. Eine Endlichkeit der Individualität als "Geschöpf" wird in solchem Rahmen immer ein von Gott distanziertes Wesen bezeichnen, so nah auch die weiteren gnadenhaften Vermittlungen danach auftreten mögen. Sobald dieses Verhältnis jedoch als die immanente Selbstoffenbarung Gottes als des sich selbst zeugenden Lebens "im Anfang" gemäß dem Johannesprolog oder Meister Eckhart betrachtet wird (vgl. Enders u. Kühn 2011, 149ff.), entfällt nicht nur die Distanz einer äußeren "Schöpfung", sondern die absolute Passibilität unserer originär leiblichen Lebensgeburt verändert dadurch auch den Charakter ihrer "Kontingenz" selbst.

Denn diese wird daraufhin nicht mehr als Grenzmodus der Individualität wahrgenommen, sondern als ungeteilte Reziprozität in ein und demselben Leben. *Ab alio* bejaht dann zwar weiterhin, dass ich mich nicht durch mich selbst setze, aber je tiefer ich durch die Passibilität meines transzendentalen Mich in die Präsenz meiner leiblichen Rekurrenz gelange, desto mehr erprobe ich in dieser grenzenlosen Rückläufigkeit der Ab-gründigkeit solcher Ipseität des Lebens auch die unendlich selbstaffektive Transparenz des absoluten oder göttlichen Lebens als solchem. Die zeitliche Unabschließbarkeit der jeweils sich selbst im Leben individuierenden Affektionen berührt mit anderen Worten in jedem Punkt einer solch originären Verleiblichung die schon immer gegebene Einheit mit dem sich selbst zeugenden "Leben Gottes", so dass hier "Endlichkeit" das Gegenteil zur traditionellen Auffassung besagt – nämlich ununterbrochenes Geborenwerden in der ursprünglichen Selbstpräsenz des absoluten Lebens Gottes selbst. Auch dies gibt Kierkegaard (1950, 93; siehe ebenfalls Gron 1999) bereits grundlegend zu verstehen, wenn er schreibt: "Der tragische Held vollzieht die Resignation auf sich selbst, um das Allgemeine auszudrücken: der Glaubensritter vollzieht die Resignation auf das Allgemeine, um ein Einzelner zu werden."

Sprechen wir von keinem beweisbaren "Gott" mehr, sondern von dessen unmittelbar gewisser Selbstoffenbarung als Leben, welches das unsrige ist, dann muss allerdings auch diese Selbstoffenbarung radikal phänomenologisch ausgeleuchtet werden. Was sich als das "Selbst" Gottes in dessen Einfachheit offenbart, ist selber schon eine innere Bezüglichkeit, welche sich in ihrem Offenbaren ihrerseits als "Person" ipseisiert, nämlich nach christlicher Tradition als der "Sohn". Behalten wir von diesem trinitarischen Credo nur die strukturelle Affinität zu unserer eigenen originären Individuierung zurück, dann offenbart sich mithin das absolute Leben an sich selbst ebenfalls in einer inneren Zeugung als Affektuierung oder Liebe, welche die Wortwerdung des Sohnseins ist. Und an dieser Stelle revolutioniert sich die klassisch-philosophische Vorstellung vom menschlichen Individuum dann nochmals. Werde ich nämlich zu einem transzendentalen Individuum allein in der ur-affektiven "Selbstumschlingung des Lebens" (Henry) als dessen Selbstgebung in meiner Passibilität, so beinhaltet diese reine Bezüglichkeit bereits schon eine göttliche Verleiblichung im Sohnsein als "Wort", worin sich die absolute Lebenszeugung originär offenbart. In meinem rein passiblen Mich als Leiblichkeit vor aller Zeit stoße ich folglich auf eine noch ältere Inkarnation, so dass die eigentliche "Ur-Individualität" meiner Individuierung im radikal phänomenologischen Sinne Gottes immanentes "Sohnsein" beinhaltet. Meine Individuierung ist daher nicht nur die innere Unendlichkeit der affektiven Meta-Genealogie aus einem absoluten Leben heraus, sondern diese ur-anfängliche Individuierung stellt zugleich durch die Erst-Ipseisierung des Sohnes Gottes eine inkarnierte Individuierung vor aller Geschichtlichkeit dar.[7]

Dieser Gedanke macht es demzufolge angemessener, ebenfalls unsere Leiblichkeit als Passibilität der lebensaffektiven Individuierung genauer im Sinne der immanent selbstoffen-barenden Inkarnation des Absoluten/Gottes zu verstehen. Denn wenn "Inkarnation" nunmehr die absolut uranfängliche und somit immemoriale Selbstbezüglichkeit Gottes als Offenbarung seines Lebens in dessen innerer Reziprozität bedeutet, dann ist diese Inkarnation in Gott das "Fleisch" (*sarx*, *chair*) jener ipseisierenden/sohnhaften Erst-Offenbarung, in der sich seinerseits unser Leben als originäre Individuiertheit letztlich affiziert. Auf diesem Wege ist "Gott" in keinerlei Hinsicht mehr eine bloß transzendente Wahrheit, die des rationalen Beweises oder der autoritätsstiftenden historischen Bezeugung durch Konfessionen bedürfte, sondern die Wahrheit meines lebendigen Individuiertseins ist unmittelbar die Wahrheit des Absoluten (Gottes) selbst im Sinne seiner lebendigen Selbstoffenbarung. Wo und wie immer ich daher meine singuläre Leiblichkeit erfahre, erprobe ich in ihr subjektiv gleichzeitig die Wahrheit "Gottes" als eines in sich selbst absolut inkarnierten Lebens. *Seine* lebendige Wahrheit ist dann *meine* lebendige Wahrheit – und umgekehrt, weil die unmittelbare Reziprozität von Leiblichkeit/Leben in mir die originäre Verfleischlichung dieses Verhältnisses besagt, welches in seiner phänomenologischen Materialität eben den "Weg und die Wahrheit" der Inkarnation als Bestimmtheit jeder impressional-affektiven Erprobung beinhaltet (vgl. Joh 14,6). Wir wollen diese Einsicht hier nicht weiter für die ontologische Fundierung der Würde eines jeden Individuums verfolgen, weil prinzipiell schon einsichtig gemacht werden konnte, dass das Individuationsprinzip als Leiblichkeit nicht nur das Prinzip allen Erscheinens in phänomenaler und axiologischer Hinsicht bedeutet, sondern darüber hinaus das Prinzip des Lebens selbst in seiner göttlichen Originarität als immanenter Offenbarungs-mächtigkeit.[8] Wenn eine jede metaphorische oder dogmatische Vorstellung von "Gott" aufgegeben ist, so bedeutet dies – dank der leiblich fundierten Präsenz des absoluten Lebens – keine mindere Bestimmtheit oder Verbindlichkeit, sofern in diesem originären Verhältnis zugleich das Ethos des lebensüberein-stimmenden Tuns unmittelbar mitgegeben ist.

In ihrer Autonomie ist die phänomenologische Philosophie Kritik jeder abstrakten Bewusstseinseinzelheit wie – allgemeinheit, aber in diesem eigenwesentlich reduktiven Tun bleibt sie ebenfalls als solche individueller Vollzug im zuvor analysierten Ursprungsverhältnis. Es lässt sich logisch zwar vom partikulär empirischen Vollzug des Denkens im Sinne einer Psychologie abstrahieren, aber es lässt sich nicht behaupten, damit sei jeder ipseisierte Träger des Reflexionsaktes als solchem ausgeschaltet. In seiner äußersten Rekurrenz kann ein diesbezügliches “Subjekt” nur radikal individuiert sein, denn die in Anspruch genommenen transzendentalen Denkleistungen bleiben originär absolut sinnlich affiziert, wie vor allem mit Maine de Biran, Nietzsche, Husserl, Levinas und Henry festzuhalten ist. Nun besagt eben die Christologie genau eine solch lebendig affektive Bestimmung von allem gewordenen Sein, das heißt die unverzichtbar in-karnatorische Trägerschaft jeglicher konkreten Erfahrbarkeit. Rekurriert philosophisches Denken notwendigerweise auf die Gegebenheit der Erfahrung als originärer Erprobung schlechthin, um sich dieser in seinem selbstreflektierten Vollzug angleichen zu können, so impliziert es also immer schon eine Affizierbarkeit wie Affiziertheit, welche nicht aus dem Denken als Differe(ä)nz oder Intentionalität selber stammt.[9] Insofern sich daher kritisches oder phänomenologisches Analysieren praktisch ereignet, bejaht es dadurch eine transzendentale Vorgegebenheit der Individuiertheit als konkreter Affektität. Die Inkarnation fügt mithin als Bestimmung des Lebens in Gott solcher Ur-Individuierung nichts Heterogenes hinzu. Denn die ursprüngliche Ipseisierung geschieht nicht primär durch einen singulären Namen oder Begriff, sondern jegliche Benennung überhaupt ist nur aufgrund von vorhergehender immemorialer Individuiertheit in der leiblichen Passibilität möglich. Insofern geht es letztlich nicht nur um ein “minimales Selbstbewusstsein”, sondern um die Unaufhebbarkeit eines originär “präreflexiven Selbst”, das gerade auch die Auseinandersetzung mit der analytischen *Philosophy of Mind* nicht zu scheuen hat, die eine Berechtigung der phänomenologischen Analyse in der “ersten Peson” nicht mehr gänzlich inzwischen bestreitet (vgl. Wehinger 2016; Frank u. Weidmann 2010).

Mithin entfremdet sich die Philosophie bei der genannten inkarnatorischen Bejahung nicht, sondern indem sie ihre Reflexion an ein konkretes Ich/Mich als individuierten Träger derselben bindet, bindet sie sich konstitutiv an die transzendentale Ermöglichung solcher Trägerschaft, das heißt an die leibliche Ur-Ipseisierung als an die originäre Faktizität aller Bestimmbarkeit. Letztere repräsentiert dann kein bloß teleologisch regulatives Ideal der Individualität einer *omnitudo realitatis* oder als "Ding an sich" wie bei Kant mehr. Vielmehr entspricht das Bestimmen-Können dank sinnlicher Leiblichkeit der Erfahrung in deren transzendentaler Affektabilität dem zeitlos in-karnatorischen Ursprung aller denkbaren Individulität oder Bestimmtheit. Damit ist keine neue Totalität im Sinne einer restaurativen Metaphysik etabliert, weil alle phänomenologischen Aussagen letztlich weder einen allgemein umfassenden noch einen ereignishaften Seinsbegriff voraussetzen. Letzterer ist gegenüber jeder lebendigen Individuierung stets nachträglich, insofern erst eine Affektion zum Prozess der Bestimmung gegeben sein muss, damit ein apophatisches "Ist" wie "Als" überhaupt sein kann – und sei es das in jedem "Es gibt" anwesende "Zuspiel" von Zeit als Ereignis nach Heidegger (1988, 19ff.; 1994, 169ff.). Niemals würde sich irgendetwas er-eignen, mit anderen Worten in sein originär Eigenes gelangen, wenn es nicht schon im ipseisierenden Affekt seiner eigenen Selbstgegebenheit ohne jede Distanz geborgen wäre. In diesem Sinne einer konstant gegebenen Präsenz ist die phänomenologisch ur-impressionale Selbstgründung jeder Bestimmung älter als deren philosophischer Urteilsakt, denn niemals erschafft das singulär prädikative Denken irgendeine Realität in deren Sein, falls diese nicht zuvor in einer lebendig originären Ipseität in sich selbst schon ankünftig geworden wäre.

Die Individuationsproblematik als Verleiblichung verpflichtet daher als unhintergehbares Erscheinensprinzip zu einer letzten Strenge, um sowohl das Wesen des Ego wie der Prädikabilität nicht spekulativ vorentschieden sein zu lassen. Und die Phänomenologie, welche in passiv lebensgenalogischer Hinsicht diese Rückführung am weitesten treibt, kann sich im originären Erprobungspunkt ipseisierender Passibilität nicht den äußersten Konsequenzen hierbei verschließen, sollten sie traditionellerweise auch "religiös" genannt werden (vgl. Staudigl 2001, 44-63). Das radikal Religiöse ist das Leben selbst aus der reinen

Lebensgegebenheit absoluter Passibilität heraus, und zwar allein aus ihr, welche sich im Vollzug selbst genügt und theologisch als Schöpfung, Gnade oder Erlösung sodann reflektiert werden mag. *Vor* all diesen hermeneutischen Einzelaspekten biblischer Natur – oder anderer Traditionen – besitze ich in der ebenso bestimmten wie immemorialen Verleiblichung als meiner Passibilität dank der radikal lebensgenealogischen Affiziertheit alle ontologischen und existentiellen Wahrheiten des "individuellen Geschicks" wie in einem einzigen Punkt. Was ein "endliches Geschöpf" sein lässt, ist zugleich auch Tod wie Auferstehung, nämlich meine originäre Individuiertheit von jeder bloß vorstellenden Benennung lösen zu können, um in der Ab-gründigkeit der leiblichen Inkarnation als unverzichtbarer Ur-Individuierung die je sich modal selbstumschlingende Lebensmöglichkeit zu ergreifen – von der auf dieser transzendentalen Ebene nicht erkennbar ist, dass sie ein immanentes Ende in irgendeiner Zeit besäße. Beträfe diese "religiöse" Wirklichkeit der leiblichen All-Präsenz unsere Individualität nicht in ihrem Wesen selbst, so wüssten wir gleichfalls nicht, wie sie überhaupt thematisch in unserem konkreten Leben hervorbrechen kann, denn Leiblichkeit heißt, in allem als passible Ursprungssituativität individuiert zu sein – in jeder Äußerung wie in jeder dazu vorgegebenen Egoleistung.[10]

3. Was uns zu denken bleibt

Diese leibliche Individualität für kein Ich jemals verabschieden zu können, um in eine "höhere Mission" aufzugehen, sei dies Allgemeinheit in ontologischer Hinsicht oder abstrakte Objektivität als Geschichte und Fortschritt, impliziert daher weder Resignation noch Hybris, sondern Verankerung in der jeweiligen Realität selbst, um ihr je impressional werthaftes wie ästhetisches Erscheinen zu erproben. Und dieses Erproben ist kein anderes Prinzip als die Präsenz der Leiblichkeit als solcher, affektiv an sich selbst originär gegeben zu werden, damit überhaupt Gegebenheit sei, welche nicht bloß formal wie im Sinne Marions sein kann, auch wenn dies beim "hingegebenen Zeugen" Stimmungen nicht ausschließen muss (vgl. Marion 2020, 429-470; dazu Dopatka

2019, 16f. u. 185ff. Die Ontologie ist folglich nicht aufgehoben, vielmehr wird sie auf diese Weise an ihren singulären Ursprungsort zurückversetzt, was ohne Zweifel die vornehmste Aufgabe der Philosophie als "anderes Denken" nach Heidegger (1988, 19f.) ist, sofern das Denken eben nicht sich selbst im Auge hat, sondern seine originäre Abkünftigkeit, das heißt die stete Selbstgegebenheit solchen Ursprungs. Die radikale Bindung unserer Ipseisierung als Individuierung an das rein phänomenologische Leben besagt in der Tat in dieser Untrennbarkeit voneinander, dass sich in der Individuiertheit die Selbstoffenbarung des Lebens als dessen uneingeschränkte Originarität selbst gibt, ohne dabei einen "kontraktiven Egoismus" im Sinne Schellings befürchten zu müssen (Kühn 2021 b, 35-56). Für Entfremdung oder Geworfenheit ist demnach hier aufgrund der ursprünglichen Distanzabwesenheit kein Raum, der sich erst mit der intentionalen Ek-sistenz eröffnet, so dass leiblich individuiertes Leben stets immanente oder ur-situative Selbstbejahung bedeutet. Hierin vollzieht sich sodann jede weitere urteilende wie wertende Zusage, was nach Nietzsche keineswegs ausschließt, dass das freie Individuum "dort lieben lernen muss, wo es bisher hasste, und umgekehrt" (Nietzsche 1973, 427).

Diese affektive Wandlung als das historiale Gesetz der immanenten Entsprechung von Leiblichkeit und phänomenologischer Modalisierung lässt über alle bloß psychologische oder existentielle Beobachtung hinaus definitiv verstehen, dass im selbstimpressionalen oder leiblichen Wesen der Individuierung das Sein nicht *vor* seinem Erscheinen gegeben sein kann. Vielmehr fallen diese in der je modalisierten Affektion als konkreter Präsenz ebenso zusammen wie Essenz und Existenz. Eine solch absolute Koinzidenz wie Kohärenz der klassisch-ontologischen Grunddichotomie, wie sie bei Sartre (1946; 2000, 193-266) auftritt, zeigt am deutlichsten, dass das Individuierungsprinzip in seiner originären Apodiktizität einer Phänomenalisierungsweise angehört, welche nicht mehr länger vom Sein beherrscht wird, sondern allein der Immanenz des Lebens zukommt. Denn letztere stellt wesensnotwendig die innere Identität von Sein und Erscheinen dar, das heißt die Einfachheit der Ursprungsphänomenalität in ihrer Unmittelbarkeit. Und als innerlich erprobte Einheit ist diese je erprobte Unmittelbarkeit für uns identisch mit der Ipseisierung des Lebens in seiner affektiven Individuierung. Die Modalisierung der letzteren als innere Genealogie des Lebens in seiner Absolutheit selbst entspricht dann konsequenterweise der Unendlichkeit dieses Absoluten als solchem, wie es in unserem immanenten Werden gegeben ist. Jede neue Affektion ist Selbstkonkretisierung des Absoluten des Lebens in der ständigen Präsenz seiner unablässigen "Individuierung", wie Husserl diesen Begriff in Bezug auf die "Weckung" der passiv hyletischen Diskretion oder Reize gebrauchte, um damit das nicht bis zu Ende analysierte Verhältnis von "Urprozess" und Konstitution zu thematisieren (vgl. Niel 2011).

Was hierbei wie eine "Wiederholung" des Lebens erscheint, ist jedoch nicht "Habitus" einer sedimentierten Stellungnahme korrelativ zu einer vollzogenen Sinnintentionalität gemäß derselben klassischen Husserlschen Phänomenologie (Ducharme 2013), sondern Erneuerung des Lebens als solchem in seiner jeweiligen Bestimmung als affektiver Inkarnation, in der es weder Vergangenheit noch Zukunft gibt. So wie Meister Eckhart sagt, dass die Geburt in Gott nicht gestern geschah, vielmehr sei sie immer wieder "frisch" in jedem Augenblick: "Gott gibt sich der Seele immerfort neu in fortwährendem Werden. Er sagt nicht: 'Es ist geworden' oder 'Es wird werden', sondern: es ist immerfort neu und frisch wie in einem Werden ohne Unterlass." (Meister Eckhart 1979, 249 [*Predigt 21*]; dazu Reaidy 2018, 159-185). Die Fundierung der Ontologie durch eine solche, absolut phänomenologische Lebenswirklichkeit lässt daher für das originäre Individuum gar keine andere Alternative aufkommen, als die Koinzidenz wie Kohärenz von Sein und Erscheinen in der je absoluten *Haecceitas* unserer radikalen Leiblichkeit zu leben. Fallen damit sowohl bedauerndes Ressentiment in Bezug auf die Vergangenheit sowie imaginäre Substitute als irreelles Zukunftsprojekt anstelle des reinen Augenblicks für das "Neue" fort, so erweist sich dadurch, dass schließlich auch eine existentiell gesehene Individualität mit ihren charakterlichen, personalen oder sonstigen psychologischen Implikaten auf einer älteren ontologischen Faktizität beruht – auf der transzendentalen Erprobung des originären "Mich" als solchem. Mithin auf jenem *tóde ti* als Singularität, welche in ihrer reinen Gegebenheit als das, "was ist", durch keine Analogie oder Adäquation mehr ersetzt bzw. verstanden zu werden vermag. "Wiederholung" des stets "Selben" des Lebens ist somit alles andere als Monotonie, bzw. die ständige Rückkehr von Abwesenheit/Anwesenheit, wie Derrida[11] sie von Freuds beobachtetem Kinderspiel des "Fort/Da" her für alles Geschehen unterstreicht. Wiederholung als immanente Iteration ist vielmehr die uns nie verlassende Präsenz als je gegebenes originäres Lebensgefühl schlechthin, nämlich ununterbrochen selbstimpressional zu wissen, dass wir auf je einmalige wie neue Art und Weise ins Leben eingetaucht sind – mithin auch stets in der Lage, das Leben als leiblichgeistige Gegebenheit vollziehen zu können.

Wir hoben im bisher Gesagten ausreichend hervor, dass solches "Wissen" kein thematisches Wissen mehr ist, sondern eine affektive oder leibliche Praxis der immanenten Erprobung, weshalb wir das Gefühl solcher Präsenz gerade auch dann empfinden, wenn wir es nicht als "Ich" gedanklich oder sprachlich ausdrücken. Das originäre *videor videre* bei Descartes, das heißt zu empfinden, dass ich empfinde, nämlich sehe, höre, fühle usw.,[12] selbst wenn alle noematischen Inhalte in der Epoché aufgehoben sind, besagt daher nichts anderes als dieses absolute Erscheinen in seinem inkarnatorischen Selbsterscheinen, wo weder konstituierter Körper noch intentionale Vernunft mehr bei solch phänomenologischer Reduktion existieren. Die hier von uns versuchte Revision der klassischen Phänomenologie wie Metaphysikgeschichte führt uns daher mit Hilfe des reduktiv aufgeklärten Individuationsprinzips zu einem "Habitus" der Immanenz, welcher keiner Welt mehr angehört, sondern der Selbstimplosion des transzendental subjektiven Lebens entspricht und in allen Modalisierungen der Freude wie des Schmerzes unmittelbar erprobt wird, welche zugleich das jeweilige rein phänomenologische Eigenwesen von Ästhetik, Kultur und Ökonomie ausmachen.

Die zuvor erwähnten “religiösen” Aspekte der Selbstoffenbarung eines “göttlichen Lebens” verhalten sich als gleichursprünglich gegeben zu solcher Apodiktizität einer unmittelbaren Präsenz in unserem praktisch- immanenten Lebenswissens als originärer Leiblichkeit. Denn was in solch absolutem Schweigen diesseits aller ontischen Vorstellungen und Laute dann noch spricht, ist das “Wort des Lebens” in dessen Unmittelbarkeit allein – es sagt nicht mehr dieses oder jenes, es sagt sich selbst in seiner Unbedingtheit wie Unendlichkeit (Henry 2010, 124ff.). Insofern vermag eine solche Individuierung auch keine bloß gattungsspezifische Hervorbringung mehr zu sein, sondern sie ist der inchoativ einende Konkretisierungspunkt aller denkbaren Erscheinungsgenesen in ihrem lebendigen Anfang. Originär gesehen, ist das Individuum nicht das logisch unaussprechbare Endglied einer ousiologischen Kette, es ist im Gegenteil der jeweilig selbstimpressionale Erstbeginn von allen Manifestationen. Von daher kommt jedem Individuum auch seine ontologische wie existentielle Würde und Verantwortung ohne jeden anderen Vergleichsmaßstab zu. Die beiden letzteren bedeuten in ihrer Qualität als Selbstachtung, nicht irgendeiner Illusion zu verfallen, solch originäre Leiblichkeit jemals abstreifen zu können . Kein radikal gebürtiges Individuum mehr sein zu wollen oder zu können, wie es unter anderem Politik und Gesellschaft in ihren ideologischen Hypostasen heutzutage tendenziell stets nahe legen, um gänzlich in eine diskursiv symbolische Lebenswelt aufzugehen (vgl. Kühn 2008, 347ff.).

Diese abschließenden Bemerkungen erlauben es, in aller Deutlichkeit zu erkennen, dass die Unverzichtbarkeit eines ebenso transparenten wie grundlegend leiblichen Individuationsprinzips alle Bereiche einer philosophisch verantworteten Analyse als “Begriff” nach Hegel zu umfassen vermag, ohne die Philosophie selbst – oder eine andere Disziplin – zum letzten Maßstab des Erscheinens und seiner Erprobung zu machen. Denn wenn die unverzichtbare Wirklichkeit des Singulären – neben den erkenntniskritischen Fragen – ebenfalls Ethik, Religion, Ökonomie wie Ästhetik miteinschließt und sich dabei zugleich heutigen Erfahrungen als Lebenskunst und Spiritualität nicht verschließt (vgl. Gödde, Loukidelis u. Zirfas

2016; Frick u. Hamburger 2005), dann darf gefolgert werden, dass das Bedenken der Realität des Individuellen als Leiblichkeit vor noch nicht abgeschlossenen Aufgaben steht. Denn was unsere Zukunft fordert, ist die notwendige Wiederentdeckung einer alle Bereiche umfassenden Kulturalität gegenüber global verengender Uniformität.

Eine Phänomenologie auf der Höhe ihrer Zeit sowie auf der Höhe der ererbten wie aktuellen Leiblichkeitsproblematik hat damit ein weites Arbeitsfeld vor sich. Denn wenn die modernen Wissenschaften keine "Individuen" mehr kennen, sondern nur noch Strukturen, Prozesse oder Informationen in ihrer "objektiven" oder "virtuellen" Vernetzung (vgl. Marx 1991; Delhom u. Hilt 2018) dann bleibt um so deutlicher aufzuzeigen, dass es keinerlei Erkenntnis gäbe, wenn diese originär nicht in einer impressionalen Allpräsenz gegeben wäre. Die herkömmliche metaphysische Ontologie mag durch die Einzelwissenschaften abgelöst sein, wie Heidegger (1988, 7f.) dies schon fundamental festhielt. Aber was an die Stelle eines bisher integrativ gedachten Seins tritt, ist nicht minder totalitär und damit bedrohlich – nämlich die transzendente Anonymität eines universalen Verfügungs- und Herrschaftsanspruchs der Objektivität über alle Menschen und Dinge, welcher ohne Gegenmacht zu sein scheint. Da wir aber reduktiv von allem absehen können, und uns effektiv auch alles genommen werden kann außer unser lebendiges Empfinden in seiner originären Inkarnation, so ruhen hierin am Ende alle nur denkbaren Erneuerungskräfte. Denn man kann in der Tat mit Nietzsche (1973 b, 690 [I, 481] nochmals fragen, ob "die Summe aller dieser Opfer und Einbußen an individueller Arbeit und Energie" für die *res publica* jemals "alle die edleren, zarteren, geistigeren Pflanzen und Gewächse" aufwiegen, "an welchen ihr Boden bisher so reich war". Zwar hat Nietzsche hier des näheren die imperialen Nationalstaaten seiner Zeit vor Augen, aber sein Blick geht insgesamt auf eine zukünftige Entwicklung, deren Individuen eine neue Kultur hervorzubringen haben, welche nicht mehr von den – bisher durchaus geschichtsträchtigen – Einschränkungen des Lebens geprägt ist, sondern von einem zu sich selbst befreiten Leben, wie es in jedem Einzelnen am Werk ist (Henry 2017, 76-89).

Präsenz als Immanenz geht daher schließlich über den "Aufschub" hinaus, der im Sinne Freuds das Lustprinzip durch das Realitätsprinzip ständig differiert, um nur in der unendlichen "Wiederkehr" derselben eine "Präsenz" auszumachen, deren Gegenwärtigkeit letztlich dem postulierten Todestrieb ohne jeden weiteren Gegensatz entspricht. Solche Präsenz könnte jedoch nicht mehr erfahren werden, da sie dann von der "Verdrängung" oder sogar "Verwerfung" überlagert bleibt, während Derrida diese spekulative Metapsychologie mit Recht daran gemahnt, dass eine "Lust erprobt werden muss". Auf solchem Hintergrund kann zusammengefasst werden, dass die Originarität von Präsenz/Leiblichkeit keinem logischen Gegensatz mehr gehorcht, der nur das Gesetz von Anwesenheit/Abwesenheit im Erscheinen kennt, sondern einem Erscheinen *als* Selbsterscheinen unterliegt. Die Wiederholung des Erscheinens ist nicht die eigentliche Präsenz, sondern betrifft nur die Vorstellung des Erscheinens als einer Aufeinanderfolge von phänomenalen Erscheinungen, während die originäre Präsenz ohne jede Zeitreferenz ist. Als rein leibliche Immanenz, wie wir herausstellen konnten, kann hier deshalb auch kein Verschwinden/Wiederholen der Ich-Vorstellung mehr maßgeblich sein, um darin eine *jouissance* (Lust) wie ein "kalkuliertes Kapital" zu behandeln.[13] Die Immanenz der selbstimpressionalen Präsenz kennt keine Wiederkehr von Etwas, weshalb die originäre Leiblichkeit auch nicht mehr irgendeinem Verhältnis der Wiederholung oder Wiederkehr unterliegt, sondern der Unmittelbarkeit der Selbstgebung des Lebens. Diese lässt sich nicht vermessen – auch nicht durch den Dualismus von Leben/Tod, der noch die Vorstellungsweise einer ontischen Gegensätzlichkeit anstelle originärer Unmittelbarkeit der Lebenswirklichkeit als solcher birgt.

Ideologisch greifbar wird dieser grundsätzliche Zusammenhang durch eine mögliche Annäherung von Heidegger und Freud hinsichtlich der Letztwirklichkeit von Todesgeworfenheit wie Todestrieb. Denn als das angeblich entscheidende Ereignis versuchen beide als Denker und Analytiker dadurch eine Bergung des "Eigenen" vorzunehmen, welches den Tod selbst zur "Selbstaffektion" dieses Eigenen machen würde. Das heißt, die permanente Wiederkehr von

Anwesenheit/ Abwesenheit wäre der Bemächtigungsversuch eines Begehrens als Trieb, der in seinem ständigen Versuch der Selbstergreifung nicht an sein Ziel gelangt und dadurch die Bindung des Eigenen an den Tod zu seinem "selbstaffektiven Gesetz" macht. Damit wäre der Tod – gemäß Derrida (1980, 367ff. u. 414ff.) für diesen Vergleich zwischen Heidegger und Freud – "die Selbstaffektion des Lebens, so wie das Leben die Selbstaffektion des Todes" bedeuten würde, um die Zeit des Begehrens als das Eigene zu erfassen. Zwar muss auch radikal phänomenologisch ein Trieb als Energie oder Kraft sich stets seiner selbst bemächtigen, um überhaupt lebendiges Begehren sein zu können (vgl. Henry 2017, 41ff.), aber diese originäre Selbstaffektion, wie wir sie als affektiv-immanente Präsenz in Anspruch genommen haben, kann nur in der absoluten Vorgabe leiblicher Ur-Verlebendigung gegeben sein. Von letzterer können sich weder Trieb noch Begehren jemals lösen, solange sie – damit identisch – als lebendig erprobt werden. Dadurch ist jedoch das "Eigene" nicht originär mit dem Tod korreliert, ohne ihn zeitlich oder existentiell leugnen zu müssen, insofern Ipseität, Leiblichkeit oder Individuiertheit nur ein "Eigenes" jeweils als Bezug zum Absoluten des rein phänomenologischen Lebens verwirklichen können. Eine Bemächtigung des Eigenen außerhalb solcher Originarität lebendiger Bezüglichkeit bliebe sonst der Versuch einer Usurpation, die einem Vergessen als "transzendentaler Illusion" im Bereich des originär Lebendigen im Sinne grundsätzlicher Könnens-Wirklichkeit gleichkäme (vgl. Henry 2002, 216ff.; dazu auch Dopotka 2019, 355ff. u. 379ff. Zu Beginn wie am Ende unserer Existenz besitzen wir jeweils nur unsere Leiblichkeit, so dass hier die welthafte Hypostase des Intentionalen oder Ekstatischen als scheinbar ausschließlichem Lebensvollzug noch nicht oder nicht mehr möglich ist. Dies dürfte auf der rein existentiellen oder erlebnismäßigen Ebene auf den singulären Status unserer immanenten Leiblichkeit diesseits aller theoretischen Stellungnahmen hinweisen, um diesem originären Sachverhalt in jedem Erscheinen von Wirklichkeit durch die Analyse dann gerecht zu werden.

ANMERKUNGEN

[1] Vgl. Kühn (2006, 53-74), mit Bezug auch auf Husserl (1966).
[2] Vgl. Henry (2002, 185ff.); zur Leibdiskussion allgemein heute Alloa, E., Th. Bedorf, Chr. Grüny u. T.N. Klass (Hgg.) (2012).
[3] Vgl. Descartes (1959, 50f.): "Aber es scheint mir doch (*videre videor*), als ob ich sähe, hörte, Wärme fühlte, dass kann nicht falsch sein, das eigentlich ist es, was an mir Empfinden (*me sentire*) genannt wird, und dies, genau so verstanden, ist nichts anderes als Bewusstsein (*cogitare*)." (II. Meditation).
[4] Vgl. Fichte (1994, 117f.) (7. Vorlesung); dazu auch Seyler (2014).
[5] Vgl. Kühn (2021), Kapitel 2-3 über den Situationsbegriff bei Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty und Henry.
[6] Vgl. bereits die Kritik bei S. Kierkegaard an der Logik aks "Wirklichkeit" in seiner Einleitung zu *Der Begriff der Angst* (2020, 448ff.).
[7] Vgl. bereits Kattelmann (2012, 266-283). Zum interreligiösen Vergleich siehe auch Vaschalde (2017, 125-140).
[8] Vgl. paradigmatisch für eine solche Diskussion an scheinbar unterschiedlichen geschichtlichen wie ethischen Brennpunkten, die letztlich jedoch identisch sein dürften, Aschenberg (2003); Rehn u.a. (2003), bes. das Anfangskapitel von C. Meier-Seethaler: "Welchen Lebensbegriff wird die Forschung des 21. Jahrhunderts voraussetzen?".
[9] Vgl. zur Diskussion um die "Differänz" Engelmann (1993).
[10] Zu dieser grundsätzlichen Möglichkeit vgl. ebenfalls Levinas (1982; 1988).
[11] Vgl. Derrida (1980, 327f.; 1987). Von hier aus bleibt ebenfalls der gegenwärtig vorherrschende Diskurs zu hinterfragen; vgl. etwa Honneth 2015.
[12] Vgl. das Zitat in vorheriger Anm. 10; dazu ebenfalls Henry (1985, 17-52).
[13] Vgl. Derrida (1980, 293ff.); siehe auch *International Journal on Humanistic Ideology* X/2 (2020): *Pain and Pleasure / Schmerz und Lust*.

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The Constitution of a Pathological World: A Phenomenological Investigation on Pathological and Anomalous Life

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Abstract

Rather than reduce phenomenology to an auxiliary science of cognitive science, contemporary phenomenology attempts to develop a method in a first-person perspective which would allow to investigate pathological experience. To do this it is however necessary to revisit Husserl's corpus, in particular his later manuscripts, and to develop a new methodology which pursues phenomenology's initial purpose of scientificity without betraying its antinaturalistic spirit. In this regard, this paper aims to highlight the difficulties of such an enterprise, in particular on the theme of anomality and psycho- and neuro-pathology. As a descriptive method focused on the transcendental sphere of life, phenomenology allows us to grasp how to examine mental states, but it cannot ignore a cogenerative study which allows us to apprehend its counter-transcendental and neurophysiological aspects. By exploring the notions of anomality and pathology, we will have the opportunity to emphasize the contribution of phenomenology in the face of the problems that arise with regards to pathological life. Our ambition is to describe the shift that occurs when a normal and healthy individual is confronted to pathology and therefore to a modification of his immanent world and of his relation to the world as a *totum*.

Keywords: phenomenological psychology, pathology, normality, anomality, experience, world, egological discourse

> Und ist nicht die Anomalität eine Tatsache, vor aller Theorie? Ist sie nicht ein Grundzug der universalen Erfahrungswelt?
> (*Husserliana* XXXIX, 150)

Introduction

The notion of anomality (*Anomalität*) in Husserl's corpus is polysemous. It describes experiences which are opposed to any form of normality and normativity. Whether it is the child, the colorblind, the mad, the vagabond or the old man, this notion describes experiences that do not coincide with an intersubjective community whose supposed foundation is the universality of any form of experience. What appears to one will also appear the same to the other. Without this presupposition, phenomenology could not be a rigorous science. Indeed, phenomenology, as a science of appearing, aims to grasp eidetic invariants for all rational beings. It concerns subjective life only insofar as it seeks its universal principles. Also, the ego's life, whose characteristics it examines, is only the pretext for a greater investigation which finds its summit in an intersubjective monadology where the eidos ego prevails (Thumser 2018, 376). In this perspective, the ego's personal identity is undermined in favor of a logical identity and the peculiarity of personal experience fades to leave room for the analysis of a normal community, that is to say a community which shares similar experiences. This is why phenomenology immediately underlines that any form of anomalous experience is a variation of normal experience from a transcendental point of view, not from a biological or anthropological one. It tries to include it in a pre-established normative framework. However, anomality cannot be a synonym of abnormality in the strict sense by any means: “the term anomaly comes not from nomos, but from omalos, which designates in Greek what is united, equal, smooth; the anomaly is the an-omalos, which is uneven, irregular, rough.” (Pradelle 2012, 312) It is not an experience or an attitude which would not conform to standards, in the sense that these standards would be posed as such, conventional, but experiences which underline a certain irregularity. It is not the negation of the normativity of the norm, but a transcendental discordance in the process of constitution. On the contrary, anomality is a discrepancy within the constant process of constituting a common world: “In general, when normality is characterized as concordance, Husserl's concept of 'Anomalität' is understood as discordance. Discordance is essentially an alteration or modification in the constitutional process." (Steinbock 1995, 132) On the semantic level, the anomaly designates a fact, it is a descriptive term, and the abnormality is relative to a value, it is an appreciative term. While the healthy human being at his optimum grasps the world in its manifestation in a form similar to any other human being, the anomalous being does not participate in the same way in the constitution of the same common world since his/her faculties do not allow it. The question to raise here is whether or not it is possible to constitute a common world based on an "intersubjective normality" (Husserl 2008, 649) while anomalities are so prominent.

It becomes even more difficult to suggest that such a constitution of a common world may take place when we consider a very particular type of anomalies that Husserl underestimates in his writings, namely more radical anomalies, that of neuropathology and psychopathology, pathologies which lead straight, if we follow Husserl, towards absolute nonsense: the constitution of a pathological world for subjects suffering from pathologies. What we may call the constitution of a pathological world is precisely this progressive modification of the world, this involuntary distancing which provokes a solus ipse of a very particular type. The world as "the single, all-encompassing totum plain and simple" (Fink 2016, 64) is progressively obliterated and the immanent world is reduced as the pathology sets in. Rather than emphasizing, as Husserl does, that the ego and the flesh reign in their own abode, that they are the principles from which life finds its source, we will affirm in a more radical way the interpenetration and coextension of the flesh with the organic body and, even more, the subjugation of the flesh to the body. Indeed, subjects suffering from pathologies, passive in the face of physical phenomena which surpass them in their impenetrable psychological or neurophysiological dimensions, are doomed to fatigue, to idleness, to the progressive withdrawal from society and to a long but certain decrepitude which will dispossess them of their faculties and themselves. The result is a new and oppressive link between the flesh (Leib), the transcendental side of the subject's life, and the body (Körper), this physical body that we are and which, despite the awareness that we have, is placed upstream of any initiative and can be perceived as the matrix from which the conscious life and the flesh are set in motion. Therefore, anomality maintains close links with pathology and imposes a questioning related to the world both from the immanent point of view and from the intersubjective point of view. It involves an anomalous participation in and with the world: "Pathology, whether anatomical or physiological, analyzes in order to know more, but it can be known as pathology, that is, as the study of mechanisms of disease, only insofar as it receives from clinical practice this notion of disease, whose origin must be sought in the experience men have in their relations with the whole of their environment." (Canguilhem 1978, 45) Thus, the question of anomality and pathology corresponds to the question related to the world as a totum and as an Umwelt. Therefore, we may also define pathology, no longer as the discourse on diseases, but as the discourse on the processes of modification of the optimal and healthy world for a conscious subject. We will thus ask ourselves in these terms: how is normal intersubjectivity constituting a common world? How is anomality characteristic of a variation of normal humanity? Faced with a growing pathology, how do we investigate the field of anomalies in order to grasp the shift towards an immanent pathological world? In other words, can we only admit the possibility of a pathological world? The stake of such a questioning is the following: while admitting that there can be a pathological world, do we not admit at the same time that there can be a community founded on antagonistic phenomena and, thereupon, a disparate world which would differ from the idea of a totum?

1. The Constitution of a Common World: Normal Intersubjectivity versus Anomality

1.1. Normality and Intersubjectivity

The constitution of a common world requires a concordant global perception. Phenomenology aims precisely to grasp how each individual co-constitutes the world from the same possible perception. Rather than being part of a strictly realistic tradition, phenomenology is interested in the things of the world only as phenomena, that is to say as experiences-of-consciousness (*Bewusstseinserlebnisse*). In this sense, the return to the things themselves means above all a return to consciousness and, at the same time, to eidetic invariants, each of which can attest to the existence. Phenomenology can thus be described as a descriptive science with the objective of highlighting universal invariants. These invariants form what is called the world. The world is therefore no longer impossible to conceive as Kant understood it when he argued that the world as the totality of all possible experiences (= the system) is not itself an experience: "Each individual experience is only a part of the whole sphere of the domain of experience, but the *absolute totality of all possible experience* is not itself an experience." (Kant 2004, 80) On the contrary, the world is both a horizon on which stands out the objects that we grasp individually, but also the immanent world, the world to which we each owe a common meaning. This is precisely the meaning of a co-constitution of the common world, of intersubjectivity as the foundation of all possible objectivity: the universal but also normative aspect of each possible experience. The non-me, the other, corroborates or invalidates my perception. But to do this, it is nevertheless necessary that there are standards relating to the perception and understanding of everything. This is why Husserl designates the foundation of the constitution of the common world as being an intersubjective normality. Any form of discordance in the process of constitution therefore arises either from variants of our humanity (Husserl 1960, 126) as healthy beings at our optimum such as animals or elders, or as a nonsense. In other words: "Reflection on constitution uncovers normative conditions embedded in experience itself." (Cromwell 2013, 48) Normality or normativity do not concern any social norm, on the contrary these notions only take into account the way the world is perceived in the flesh. As a *Nullpunkt*, the flesh is the origin of each part of the constitution of the world. Indeed, the ego's life finds its source in the transcendental sphere, that is to say in the flesh. Consequently, it is essential to constitute a world in which each human being can have the same perception of the thing perceived. It is crucial that the organs of the flesh are at their optimum. This is the *conditio sine qua non* for the objectivity of the world to be assured, in other words to ensure that truth exists: Truth "constitutes itself in the normality of the fleshly experience" (Husserl 2008, 648).

In order to constitute a world, it is then necessary to recognize others as such. It is a primary necessity, even before considering alterity as a transcendence which ensures the objectivity of the world. Confronted from the intrauterine environment with hyletic data, the ego is itself constituted by the non-self. It is thus the co-constitution of the self and the world, as an immemorial participation in the same process of giving meaning. I can only be myself as long as I am in touch with otherness. This is why the Husserlian egology can be conceived as an alterology (Depraz 1995). The alter ego is constitutive of me and my world. Also, it is through empathy (*Einfühlung*) that we can understand others. This is an activity of consciousness which allows us to apprehend the life of others, to put ourselves partially in its place. It is by practicing phenomenological reduction that we grasp this essential dimension of egoic life: "Everything that is a non-ego 'sits' itself in the ego, but as an intentional unit of validity, although as 'transcendence' it is not me. [...] This interiority of being-for-another (*Füreinanderseins*) as being-in-one-other (*Ineinanderseins*) is the original 'metaphysical' fact, it is a fusion of the absolute" (Husserl 1973b, 366). However, it is not enough to recognize others as such in order to constitute a common world. Indeed, not only is it necessary to perceive all of what is presented to us in a concordant way, but it is also necessary to share the same historical world. This is another understanding of normality: "Who is a normal human being [...] anyone who belongs to an open human community of fellow human beings (*Mitmenschen*) who share the same historical living-world (*historische Lebenswelt*) [...]. The normal is normal in and by virtue of the normal community." (Husserl 1973b, 142) What is normal therefore results not only from the same concordant perception for each individual – perception made possible by the normal state of the organs of the flesh, but also from the same participation in a historical and cultural world. Then, how is it possible to include anomalities in a world which is structured by such a concordance? The issue of anomalities intervenes as a limit-case for phenomenology, because it questions us what goes supposedly beyond the frame of normality. In order to complete our point on the possibility of a pathological world, we will refer to the Husserlian *corpus* in order to apprehend if Husserl's treatment of anomality permits us to grasp the originality of such a distancing with the normal world. In other words, does the anomalous subject share the same world as normal beings?

1.2. Anomality as a Limit-Case (*Limesfall*)

Rather than considering the anomaly as a variation of a humanity at its optimum in Husserl's sense, we wish to give all its autonomy to the anomaly and, to therefore emphasize its importance. The question regarding anomalies arises when one wonders about the organs of perception, the flesh. This is why Husserl insists so much on the dimension of discordance which intervenes in the case of anomalies. The anomalous subject is one who perceives an element less well, which does not have all its faculties. Its flesh is not comparable to that of other individuals: “Consciously, a world of normality is constituted as the first true world and its opposite, anomalous appearances of the real world, is based on variations in the experiencing flesh.” (Husserl 1973a, 68) Thus the difficulty arises when we consider the possibility of anomality, namely the possibility of a discordance in the process of intersubjective constitution of the world. This anomality results from a modification of the normal development of an individual. When Husserl questions this point, he comes to consider not only old age as an anomaly, but also madness. But madness is a very different anomaly which, as we will see, requires a fundamental review of what is meant by the term “world” in the same way as any form of psycho or neuropathology : “The world that is for me has developed as a world, I as a human being have developed myself; I am developing myself even more, although in a final form – at least in a normal way; because it is not said that development does not take a typically new form: in particular of the anomal type of madness (double: madness-of-the-world [*Weltverrücktheit*] - madness-of-the-I [*Ichverrücktheit*]).” (Husserl 2008, 478) An individual suffering from a neuro- or a psycho- pathology will perceive the world in a completely different way insofar as his/her physical body is no longer at its optimum. Whether it is the perception of space, that of others or of oneself, the whole world changes as the pathology imposes itself, that is to say that the physical body is modified and on this occasion involves a modification of the lived body, of the immanent world. Pathology intrudes into the immanent world in such a way that the individual may both lose the link he had with the normal intersubjectivity to which he belonged, but also the sense of self-ownership:

> "Is it by no means obvious that Alzheimer's disease brings about a destruction of the first-person perspective, a complete annihilation of the dimension of mineness or that any experience that remains is merely an anonymous and unowned experiential episode […]. If senses of agency and ownership are part of the experiential self, are disruptions of these senses, e.g. in schizophrenia, anarchic hand syndrome, alien hand syndrome, or unilateral neglect, for example, fatal for the experiental self?" (Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 231)

Nevertheless, before any form of destruction of the surrounding world, there is an interval during which the subject remains aware of the link which united him to a concordant perception of the world. Also this only concerns extreme cases like neuropathologies. For an individual suffering from mild psychopathology, like anxiety or depression, the way his sight of the world as *totum* is modified is consciously felt by the sick subject. It is therefore important to understand how the immanent world changes for each individual suffering from a pathology, because these individuals experience not only a change in their immanent world, but also a change in their relationships to the normal intersubjective world. What interests us here in no way concerns the absurd assumption that we could study the absence of the world, but the shift that occurs when an individual experiences a pathological change in his flesh, both physically and mentally.

If Husserl makes no explicit mention of the possibility of such an anomalous constitution, it is certainly to the extent that there can be no constitution without the full possession of our psycho-physical faculties. There is, however, only one passage to our knowledge which mentions the possibility of a pathological world in Husserl's work. It is therefore precisely a question of grasping how the shift from the normal world to the pathological or anomalous world occurs in a first-person perspective. But as soon as this possibility is considered, Husserl neglects it in favor of an optimal understanding of the world:

> "If my Leib becomes anomalous, then the appearance of all natural objects as I experienced them as a physically normal person will change. And I could become so anomalous that this would be the case not only in certain sensory functions but in all of them, and eventually in such a way that I could not bring about an Anschauung of a world at all. At the same time, I might gain a consistent experiential world, but a completely different world from the one I had otherwise" (Husserl 2008, 651)

We are betting here that such an anomalous world exists and that it is possible to study it from a new method nevertheless inspired by a phenomenological descriptive practice, a practical psychological phenomenology which insists on the first-person perspective, on the lived-experience of anomalous subjects. Also, we do not claim that Husserl's phenomenology only describes the first-person perspective from a structural generic pole, but from an embodied subject which is always situated in a concrete life-world. What Husserl underlines is crucial: the anomalous subject is a person subject to neurophysiological modifications such that there can be no constitution, only a lack of participation with any other subject, a lack of the capacities necessary for any constitution of meaning. The interruption of meaning is the term of anomality. It brings the subject to a radical *Weltvernichtung* from which the subject, as much as the world, changes and disappears as the pathology increases. Therefore, there is, according to Husserl, no constitution of a pathological world, since the subject remains in a growing passivity which is in no way similar to the constituent passivity of consciousness during the passive synthesis. It is a neurocognitive and physical process which prevents any form of constitution and finally leads the anomalous individual to a total incapacity to undertake any action whatsoever and to a certain death. The pathological world is nonexistent for Husserl, it would be at most an absence of world, a nothingness of meaning. For Husserl, anomality is at best understood in the common world in this form: "It can be seen that the anomality can be experienced trough normal experience, as normal in a modified form" (Husserl 2008, 648); however, it only takes into account anomalies such as colour blindness, old age or animality, not neuropathologies or psychopathologies. A strictly Husserlian point of view then omits extreme cases of anomalies and the fact that each being perceives the world in the form of its own image of the world (*Weltbild*) (Husserl 2008, 202). It is precisely our task to study the shift that happens when this perception of the world changes when a pathology occurs. We therefore wish to take up the Husserlian motif of anomality in the light of contemporary developments in phenomenology and cognitive science in order to understand how a modification of the normal intersubjective world takes place. This is a reconquest of a questioning barely touched on by Husserl and an etiological type of research found in neuroscience or experimental psychology which are based on an optimal and universal perspective.

2. Investigate the pathological world: the contribution of phenomenology

2.1 Phenomenology as a scientific philosophy of life: intentionnality and the body

The originality of phenomenology as a science consists in a descriptive method of the experiencing life. We may assert with Husserl that "The fundamental character of phenomenology is therefore to be a scientific philosophy of life; it is science, not one under the presupposition and underpinning of the predetermined sciences, but rather radical science which has as its original scientific theme concrete universal life and its world of life." (Husserl 2001, 241) Indeed, while naturalistic science, in its objectives, its results and its statistics, remains in pure anonymity as a third-person method, phenomenology insists on the lived experience. It may then be described as a privileged method to investigate pathology. Moreover, because pathology indicates the presence of a subjectivity in the flesh, it invokes its full presence. Pathology causes a heavy presence to oneself, a feeling of self-exacerbation in its bodily and transcendental dimensions. Only a phenomenological approach of the order of a phenomenological psychology will make it possible to grasp the anomalous experience which concerns the passage from optimal life to pathological life. This is because an etiological approach only brings clarification to the cognitive science researcher: "The symptoms only make sense within the etiological perspective of the doctor, who explains what the patient says in terms of underlying causal mechanisms." (Petit 2017, 407) The contribution of phenomenology, as a descriptive science of subjective life, consists precisely here in analyzing how the sense of self-ownership or agency can be modified. It is not a question of resorting to phenomenology as a method overhanging an etiological approach, but of emphasizing the lived experience of the person suffering from pathology. Or, as Thomas Fuchs put it, "the systematic project of investigating the structures of subjective experience, phenomenology may also be considered the foundational science for psychopathology." (Fuchs 2010, 547) Indeed, by resorting to a phenomenological analysis, one can penetrate the immanent life of each individual, including that of the individual suffering from psycho or neuropathology. Phenomenology thus makes it possible to grasp how the subject, despite the neurophysiological passivity in which one finds himself, gives meaning to the world one sees changing in front of his eyes. It is then a question of capturing the modifications of the intentionality process:

> "Every psychopathological experience is characterized by a personal meaning that the patients attribute to it, and a certain stance that they take towards it— suffering passively, giving in, acting out, interpreting it in a certain way, fighting against it, detaching oneself from it, and so on. This position-taking is a relevant clinical feature in itself. Of course, these subjective modes of experience and behavior are enabled by neuronal processes. […] However, the phenomena of subjective ascription of meaning, assessment of a situation, and relation to oneself cannot be equated with processes in the neuronal substrate, as these lack acts of meaning-making or intentionality. […] Intentional content and directedness, as we have seen, is inseparable from a subject's relation to the world." (Fuchs 2018, 258)

Consequently, we cannot be satisfied with a strictly third-person approach, because the experiential and subjective dimension remains subject to a completely different, phenomenological analysis. Rather than resorting to a physicalist and monistic attitude which considers that everything comes from one and the same nature which can be explained in a third person perspective, we opt for a richer attitude which fully takes the experience into account as it stands for an individual in a first-person perspective.

Phenomenology intervenes here as a remedy for a science that neglects experiencing life. Questioning the realm of the experience is phenomenology's aim. Therefore phenomenology may be regarded as the key method to investigate pathological life, because anything that belongs to an etiological and naturalistic method "will remain definitively an object of knowledge, and will never belong to the sphere of the flesh [*corps propre*]." (Changeux & Ricoeur 2008, 60) That is to say, the only thing that we learn, if we master neuroscientific language a little bit, is a supposed dependence on neurophysiological processes which nevertheless generate our fears, our motivations, and which characterize the whole of a life, our life, which therefore seems to us to be deeply determined in advance. But this knowledge will not change anything regarding the experiencing life for it only concerns "the Body as physical Object" which "is subject to physical influences to which psychic 'consequences' are linked *without my knowing precisely how they are connected*" (Husserl 1989, 173). It is then a question of adopting a phenomenological attitude capable of describing how each individual constitutes a common world, that is to say investigating his intentional life. Questioning anomalous and pathological life therefore consists in relating to modifications of intentional life and, moreover, of the body in its twofold sides, as a flesh and as a physical object, because "the body is the vehicle of being in the world [...], the pivot of the world." (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 94) Undoubtedly, intentional life is a constant movement towards alterity and transcendence, towards the world as a *totum*. This movement is only possible because we are embodied beings. To interrogate anomalous life consists precisely in taking into consideration this fact in order to understand that there can be no distinction between the body as object and the body as flesh from a first-person perspective, because it is the same entity that allows us to have a constitutive relationship with the world. We may then assert that "the union of soul and body is not an amalgamation between two mutually external terms, subject and object, brought about by arbitrary decree. It is enacted at every instant in the movement of existence." (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 102) However, we cannot ignore the fact that the intentional and bodily relationship to the world is not the same for individuals suffering from pathology: "For these patients the world exists only as one readymade or congealed, whereas for the normal person his projects polarize the world, bringing magically to view a host of signs which guide action." (Merleau-Ponty 2002, 129) Whether it is the perception of space, of others or of oneself, the whole world changes as the pathology imposes itself. In other words, the modifications the physical body encounters also result in modifications of the flesh. What Husserl failed to point out is the possibility of a profound alteration of the flesh as for the alien hand syndrome or psychotic dissociative disorders such as schizophrenia. Also, the close bond between the flesh and the body can easily deteriorate, at least partially, during experiences similar to Alzheimer, depression or post-traumatic stress. There is an elasticity in the feeling of self-ownership which goes through the following stages: ordinary experience, the experience of an unreal world or derealization, the experience of an exit from oneself, depersonalization and the total lack of the feeling of self-ownership. Pathology teaches us that not only can the body become heavy until it becomes unbearable, but moreover, that the flesh as the transcendental sphere of life may become the spot of a greater dissociation. In order to grasp what such a modification of the world means for individuals suffering from pathology, we opt for a phenomenological development which will demonstrate how to express the pathology.

2.2. New cogenerative perspectives on pathology

How does phenomenology access things themselves and how does it really become a science of the experience lived by an ego? Through an examination relating to the modalities of expression of experience, phenomenology is able to find a path to study of subjectivity. This is how it accesses the things themselves. The expression reflects an articulation of thoughts, an articulation of subjectivity which aims to externalize itself. This dimension illustrates the immeasurable need in man to express himself on his experiences and to share knowledge while confronting it with the authority of others to erect objectivity. The German verb says the same thing: *sich äussern* literally means "to exteriorize" and refers to the verb *äussern* which means "to articulate". *Sich äussern* here has the same value as existing (*exsistere*), that is to say, the act of appearing, of showing oneself, as originally understood by the Latins. Phenomenology specifically emphasizes "the fact that every discourse can be an egological discourse (*Ichrede*) insofar as the reduction is practiced. Suddenly as the transcendental ego reflects on itself a "new understanding of life" can be revealed in order to establish a "universal science" grounded on the transcendental subjectivity. (Husserl 2002, 315; Thumser 2020, 14). Examining this egological discourse would allow us to grasp the changes felt by the subject suffering from pathology, because the expression is always related to experiences (*Erlebnisse*) and egological life. It is a method which permits us to apprehend pathology and its relation to the world from a first-person perspective. Such a description of modifications related to the immanent world and the world as *totum* may also be found in literature, especially in eminently phenomenological novels such as *The Book of Disquiet* by Fernando Pessoa. Indeed, he illustrates the experience of illness and of this sustained and painful relationship with oneself with these words: "I have a headache and the whole universe hurts. The physical pains - more clearly than the moral sufferings – involve, by being reflected in our spirit, tragedies which are foreign to them." (Pessoa 1999, 352) In this way, Pessoa emphasizes the binarity that there is between physical pain, which depends entirely on the physical body, and moral suffering, which is of the order of self-awareness. When the body imposes itself through different symptoms, it engages at the same time a suffering of the soul, a fleshly suffering, but also a modification of the ordinary relation to the world. The previously healthy subject thus confronts its own limits. Consciousness is hampered, limited; it comes up against fatigue, dizziness, and other more measured understandings of the environment. The entire universe becomes a source of suffering for those who suffer from neuro- or psycho- pathologies. Nevertheless, such a literary description may not become a source of scientific research unless one analyzes it from a cogenerative way, that is to say from a phenomenological, psychological and a physiological point of view.

Among all the attempts to naturalize phenomenology, that is to say to establish a transversal work on subjective life, neuro-phenomenology has laid the foundations for this new type of approach. Its aim is originally the following: "Weaving together these two types of analysis, the phenomenological and neurobiological, in order to bridge the gap between subjective experience and biology, defines the aim of neurophenomenology, an offshoot of the enactive approach." (Thompson 2007, 15) However, emphasizing the neurophysiological aspect of subjective life causes a lot of embarrassment for the phenomenologist. This is why, despite its ambition and its remarkable scope, this approach has given rise to major revisions which have taken into account the experience in a more global dimension. In particular, microphenomenology brings a certain number of answers which make it possible to overcome the difficulties of the approaches of yesteryear, which neglected the experience in favor of an analysis of the body as a scientific and medical object. But to do this, microphenomenology emphasizes the experiential and expressive dimensions of subjective life. Its originality is to underline the importance of a science based on an egological discourse. The fundamental aim of such a new perspective is to go beyond the "no-man's land" (Varela 1997, 369) which separates scientific data from phenomenological data. Indeed, the naturalization of phenomenology must be fully phenomenological, it must deal with the question of constitution. Undoubtedly, focusing on neuroscientific research is an enterprise that is immediately doomed to encounter some pitfalls as the brain and consciousness are on a different level.

Obviously, neurophysiological studies teach us that neurocognitive temporality is always ahead of immanent time-consciousness (*Zeitbewusstseins*), and that this or that neurodegenerative disease modifies our faculties to constitute a world and to move within it. But the rupture between the transcendental sphere and the ontic sphere, that of studies of an etiological type, is such that there can be no naturalization of phenomenology relying on the study of the brain. It seems indeed that there is a certain decoherence between subjective experience and neuronal processes. Indeed, it seems at least complex to link these two dimensions which do not overlap, but taking into account the expression, both linguistic and bodily, as a scientific datum, makes it possible to find a medium term allowing to link studies in a first-person and third-person perspective. In fact, new cogenerative perspectives founded on microphenomenology "now enable the scientist to collect descriptions of singular lived experiences, which are detailed enough to enable her to ascribe meaning to the sophisticated information gathered by neuro-electric recordings." (Petitmengin 2017, 140) Yet what may be considered as thoroughly scientific in a study of egological discourse? Indeed, it is not sufficient to take into account only the verbal expression. One may also give it some relief from a cogenerative experiment which takes into account the body as a medium of subjective life. As Petitmengin put it, "Even neuroscientists who currently recognize the need to integrate first-person perspective descriptions in their protocols are reluctant to do so, because of the lack of evidence that the verbal description corresponds to experience. This correspondence is indeed unverifiable: due to the private nature of experience, it is impossible to compare it directly with verbal description. The only possible comparison is to try to compare a description with objective traces of the corresponding experience, such as eye movements, changes in heart rhythm or response times." (Petitmengin 2017, 140-141) Therefore, microphenomenology seeks to become a global method making it possible to study subjective life in a transversal way. Moreover, it may also grant us the possibility to understand anomal life with new perspectives.

Associated with a new form of phenomelogy developed by Natalie Depraz, which is cardiophenomenology, microphenomenology indeed permits to question pathological life from a more global perspective. In addition to its ambition to provide an "experiential suture" (Depraz & Desmidt 2015, 59), in particular by making the link between the sphere of immanent time-consciousness and the time of the living body, cardiophenomenology underlines the importance of emotion with a methodological focus on the heart as the object of an immemorial symbolism related to emotion, but also as the place of emotion in its fleshly and bodily dimensions. The heart shares a transcendental and an ontic dimension, it also may be considered as a pivot organ in the extent that it creates a bridge between the brain and the rest of the body. In the fabric of an embodied phenomenology, rather than a naturalized one, Natalie Depraz develops from multiple examples the practical possibilities of cardiophenomenology. Her argument is defined as homological insofar as "the functioning of the brain and that of the heart are strongly homologous." (Depraz, 2018, 138-139) The only cardinal distinction between these two systems would be the following: "the cerebral system is more action-oriented, primacy being given to its final objectification in our behavior, in connection with its cognitive scope; on the other hand, the cardiac system resonates with the bodily dynamics of the living organism and brings to light an embodied affective cognition." (Depraz, 2018, 139) In this way, Depraz proposes a new way of conceiving the interaction between the brain and the heart in order to signify how much the latter matters in a henological and global characterization of subjective life in its ontic and transcendental dimensions. "In short, cardiophenomenology allows, by giving a central place to the heart, to articulate organic body and emotional experience in advance" (Depraz, 2018, 149). Oriented on the field of depression, this new method allows us to expand our knowledge on the psychobiological modifications that engenders a pathological life, but also on the experiential life of individuals suffering from this psychopathology. This method permits to penetrate the pathological world from an ambivalent perspective, not only with explicitation interviews (*entretiens d'explicitation*)

(Depraz, Desmidt, Gyemant 2017, 195) of the order of phenomenological psychology, but also with a strictly clinical, psychiatric point of view. Consequently, a true experiential suturing is possible, and the pathological world can become an object of scientific study in the full sense without being reduced to a variation of the normal world. Pathology then gains its autonomy as it is no longer considered as a variation of the normal and healthy world, but as a separate element whose content is yet to grasp.

As an addition to this new method, we have also developed the hypothesis of a gastrophenomenology which would be based on a cogenerative analysis of the enteric nervous system, which can be considered as a second brain both by the great amount of neurons it contains and by its crucial role in regard to egological life and especially to neuro- and psycho- pathologies. "The enteric nervous system [...] plays a key role especially in the context of our emotions, because it is in the enterochromaffin cells of the digestive tract that serotonin is most present at 95%. However, this neurotransmitter is essential in the context of our sleep cycles, pain, anxiety, and the development of an embryo. More than the heart, which is in a certain sense a passive organ, the gastric system is, so to speak, the center where is found the serotonin which can cause certain physical or psychological unpleasantness by its presence or absence." (Thumser 2018, 370) A fully cogenerative study, taking into account the brain, the heart and the enteric nervous system, would allow us to apprehend how to study pathology in a global way. The contribution of gastrophenomenology consists in realizing that the study of the enteric system makes it possible to detect the future possibility of a neurodegenerative disease like parkinson, but also to underline how this same system plays a predominant role with regards to anxiety, depression and mood disorders (Foster & McVey Neufeld 2013, 307). Many scientists and philosophers have highlighted the importance of the enteric nervous system with regards to pathological experience without, however, developing a real thematization, like Maine de Biran in his *Journal*. Without such a global approach taking into account both the scientific data related to the measurements carried out on the reactions of the physical body, and the lived experience as it is expressed, the anomalous and pathological life will remain the object of a disparate and incomplete study.

Conclusion

Now, we are eventually able to grasp the difficulties in seeking to penetrate the domain of pathological life. On one hand, we cannot be satisfied with a strictly Husserlian reading, because this implies that anomality is a simple variant of humanity at its optimum, but also according to Husserl it is impossible to conceive a pathological world. Since we wish to take the pathological anomaly seriously and give it full autonomy in an explanatory and descriptive framework, we have shown the limits of classical phenomenology while extending it using its own tools, in particular thanks to the notion of egological discourse. We affirm indeed that such a notion makes it possible to do justice to pathological life, in particular because it makes it possible to apprehend from the inside what a subject suffering from a neuro or a psychopathology experiences. As a method in a first-person perspective, it highlights the lived experience, the fleshly dimension of the pathological experience, unlike studies in a third-person perspective which, in an etiological aim, reduce the pathology to its strictly neurophysiological dimension. Thus, phenomenology may no longer be considered as an auxiliary science which would only guarantee that experience is taken into account during a scientific study. On the contrary, it provokes a new impetus to current research. Indeed, by implementing a cogenerative method such as micro-phenomenology, cardiophenomenology or gastrophenomenology, researchers are trying to set up a new methodology which has the ultimate goal of capturing the lived experience, and in particular pathological life, from a transversal examination based both on the egological discourse and on clinical measures. The promise of such renewal in the field of phenomenological and clinical research will undoubtedly make it possible to operate an experiential suture between data in a first-person perspective and those in a third-person perspective. Overall, these new methods make it possible to take into consideration anomalous and pathological life, and also what we call the constitution of a pathological world, in other words the shift that occurs when a normal and healthy subject has to face pathology and a modification of its immanent world and its relationship with the world as a *totum*.

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Is the "Happening Subjectivity" Still a Subject? Marc Richir's Conception of Subjective Identity

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Abstract

In contemporary French phenomenology, subjectivity is reconsidered as a receiving instance of the phenomenon understood as an event. That is why French authors characterize subjectivity as the "subject" to whom appearing is given (Jean-Luc Marion's *adonné*), as the "happening subject" (Henri Maldiney's existent open to events or Claude Romano's *advenant*), or as the subject ceaselessly in movement (Renaud Barbaras' *désir* or Marc Richir's *aspiration infinie*). In this study situated within the framework of the work of Marc Richir, I present his dynamic conception of subjectivity, and then demonstrate why it still makes sense to speak – even in this case of an extremely dynamic receiving instance of appearing – of a "subject" in the sense of Latin *sub-jacere* ("under-throw"). More precisely, I argue that the conception of "happening subjectivity" necessarily allows for a certain type of subjective persistence or identity – in the sense of a sameness that resists or underlies all changes. In contrast to the classical phenomenology, I demonstrate that the core of this identity must be accounted for otherwise than as the temporal unity of transcendental consciousness or that of *Dasein*, that it must be understood as both a proto-temporal and proto-spatial unity of that which Richir calls "absolute here", which is the genetic condition of Husserl's "zero point" as the centre of all bodily orientations.

Keywords: Subjectivity; Identity; Selfhood; Event; Body; French Phenomenology; Marc Richir

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1. *Introduction: the phenomenon understood as an event*

Phenomenology in its new version practised in France today is characterized by its understanding of the phenomenon on the grounds of its evasive sense. In other words, it understands the phenomenon by virtue of its dynamism, spontaneity, and also unpredictability – features that turn the phenomenon into an event (Gondek, Tengelyi 2011; Tengelyi 2010, 2012; Novotný 2010; Sommer 2013, 2014; Maldiney 1991, 316; Romano 1998, 5; Marion 2016, 179; Barbaras 2019b, 43; etc.). This is not to say that one should consider phenomena as visible changes on the level of facts that repeat to a certain extent, and we perceive them as similar to one another. Perceived events serve as a model for phenomena only insofar as there is – apart from their repeatability – an excess of sense in each of them, something new one cannot predict. Even though one is, for instance, quite prepared for an encounter with a friend (in Heideggerian terms: the space-time of the encounter is determined by one's existential projects encompassing the acquaintance with the friend), one cannot be prepared for the very appearing of the encountered person that transforms the "there" of "being-there" (*Da-sein*) – the emergence of the friend is, each time, the point-origin of a new space-time (cf. Maldiney 1991, 406-408). It is this excess – uncovered by means of a radicalised phenomenological *epoché* – that makes visible events into phenomena or events of sense. Hence, an event of sense is characterized by the fact that one cannot determine in advance its conditions of manifestation because an event brings these conditions with itself; an event of sense is a real encounter happening only once – always for the first time.

This new conception of the phenomenon has led to a reconsideration of all key phenomenological terms, including that of subjectivity. More precisely, it prompted French phenomenologists to definitively liberate phenomena from their captivity in all types of subjectivism. Following in the footsteps of first-generation phenomenologists in France, and above all in the footsteps of Levinas, they hold that an event of sense is neither a work of intentionality nor that of the capacity of understanding Being, but a work of that which manifests itself through the event – an event is first and foremost an expression of appearing *transcendence*. Subjectivity must be accordingly reconsidered as a receiving instance of the appearing transcendence. That is why French authors characterize subjectivity as the “subject” to whom appearing is given (Jean-Luc Marion’s *adonné*), as the “happening subject” (Henri Maldiney’s existent open to events or Claude Romano’s *advenant*), or as the subject ceaselessly in movement (Renaud Barbaras’ *désir* or Marc Richir’s *aspiration infinie*).

In this text situated within the framework of the work of Marc Richir, I would like to present his dynamic conception of subjectivity, and then demonstrate why it still makes sense to speak – in this case of an extremely dynamic receiving instance of appearing – of a “subject” in the sense of Latin *sub-jacere* (“under-throw”). More precisely, I shall argue that the conception of “happening subjectivity” allows for a certain type of subjective persistence or identity – in the sense of a sameness that resists or underlies all changes. In contrast to the classical phenomenology, I shall demonstrate that the core of this identity must be accounted for otherwise than as the temporal unity of transcendental consciousness or that of *Dasein*, that it must be understood as both a proto-temporal and proto-spatial unity of that which Richir calls “absolute here”, which is the genetic condition of Husserl’s “zero point” as the centre of all bodily orientations.

2. *What kind of subjectivism is denounced by “new French phenomenology”? The first sketch of the process of phenomenalization and Richir’s criticism of symbolically instituted subjectivity*

Richir’s phenomenology is transcendental because it does not focus on this or that intentional phenomenon but on what makes the phenomenon appear, i.e. the pre-intentional process of phenomenalization (cf. Schnell 2016, 213-214, 226). As inspired by Kant’s reflective judgments, it attempts a transcendental reflection without any pre-given concepts (including those of the transcendental ego and being) determining the phenomenalization in advance (Richir 2018, 15; Richir 2006, 22). The task is, therefore, to elaborate a genetic phenomenology in a more radical sense than that of Husserl, plunge into the depth of the non-given and describe phenomena and nothing but phenomena (*phénomène comme rien que phénomène*), i.e. phenomena as impersonal processes of the self-generation or self-formation of sense (*sens se faisant*, *Sinnbildung*) taking place in the pre-immanent sphere of transcendental consciousness (Richir 2018, 13-14; Richir 2014, 24).

Although Husserl escaped psychologism, he still preserved its essential form distorting the description of the process of phenomenalization[1], i.e. the symbolic differentiation of the world into beings as objects of consciousness: the appearing is described as the constitution of objects in the acts of transcendental ego (Richir 1998, 441; Richir 2004, 228; Richir 2018, 29-30). But the process of self-formation of sense does not give rise to a correlation within which a sense is being constituted like a noematic unity by an intentional act of consciousness. A sense emerging "in one's head", for example, an idea ("having an idea"), is not an intentional object; it is not situated in the momentary now nor is it the now itself. It is an evasive process or mobility. Richir picks up on what Husserl discovers in his *Manuscripts of Bernau*, where he himself focuses on pre-immanent temporal dimensions of transcendental consciousness: retentions and protentions become intertwined in that which Richir calls "presence without assignable present" (*présence sans présent assignable*). They are not retentions and protentions of a "living present" (of an already present idea) but the retentions and protentions *internal* to the ongoing process of the deployment of the idea – the idea (the phenomenological sense) is nothing complete but the process as the *interval between* retentions and protentions (Richir 2006, 20-21).

In contrast to Husserl's analyses, Richir refuses to delineate this process "mathematically", that is, as the uniform and monotonous flow of abstract "limit points" ("nows") within the internal time of consciousness. In every present experience (*Erlebnis*) of the sense, there is an excess, the excess of the process of phenomenalization phenomenologically attested by the events of sense (Husserl's primal impressions), which reconfigurates what has been given in the process so far, and which makes all particular descriptions of experiences mingled with the descriptions of all other experiences – our experience is an unceasing process (Richir 1993, 71). From a traditional point of view, these events are nothing but inessential accidents of the sense caused by human finitude but to Richir, these accidents are constitutive of it, and without them, there would not be sense but merely "constellations of identity significativities (*significativités identitaires*)" (Richir 2006, 27, 38-44); these events give sense its proper rhythm invisible in the homogeneous succession of "nows" in which intentional "identical" objects are constituted by transcendental consciousness.

These events are therefore testimonies to the fact that more primitive intentionality, which is the ultimate reason for the continuous modification of intentional consciousness, underlies the Husserlian flow of successive "nows". The Husserlian "primal impression" (as the source of the continuous modification) is already an abstraction, its content coming from the pre-intentional flow of phenomenalization made up of a plurality of affections schematized by the savage essences (*Wesen sauvages*) of the world – the phenomenon is "constituted" both by "immanence" (affectivity) and transcendence (world). (Richir 2006, 23, 26-27; Richir 2004, 522-523). More precisely, according to Richir, the movement of phenomenalization is the process of the schematisation of human affectivity in which bodily sensations pass through the filter of pre-intentional, non-figurable and non-fixable schemas of affectivity called *phantasíai*, which results in the events of sense or so-called *phantasíai*-affections. The pre-intentional schemas of affectivity are called *phantasíai* because they are not visible or sensible figures but rather shadows or silhouettes behind intentional figures produced not by intentional imagination but by non-intentional *phantasía*. That is why Richir prefers *phantasía* to imagination and even speaks – referring to Merleau-Ponty – of the "primacy of *phantasía*" (Richir 2015, 176).

I will shed more light on the process of phenomenalization further below. What is needed now is to emphasize that the ultimate reason for the excess of phenomenalization is the radical exteriority of "physico-cosmological transcendence" (*transcendance physico-cosmologique*) of the world – the sense is always the sense of something other (transcendence). It means that the process of phenomenalization implies, besides its proper temporalization, also its proper spatialization. However, just as the process cannot be reduced to the process of temporalization *of transcendental consciousness*, it cannot be reduced to the process of temporalization/spatialization of the subjectivity understood as *Dasein*. Similarly to Levinas (1979, 275), Maldiney (1991, 419), Marion (2013, 423), Romano (2010, 38), and other thinkers, Richir notices that existential analytic is another project excessively prioritizing human subjectivity by interiorizing the process of phenomenalization, subordinating it to the ideal unity of *Dasein* (Richir 2000, 14-17; Richir 2004, 153-195). To Richir, the authentic *Dasein*, individualized by its relation to death, which also guarantees (in the case of a firm attitude towards it) the constancy of being a whole of its existential possibilities, is nothing but a hypostatized metaphysical structure with no phenomenological reality (Richir 2004, 164-181). *Dasein*’s existence cannot be totalized by the authentic signification of death because *Dasein* has no reality beyond its factical possibilities that spring from the original process of phenomenalization (Richir 2004, 247) making every metaphysical ground (*Grund*) fall apart (p. 228, 237; cf. p. 185-186; cf. Richir 2018, 23).

To sum up, Richir reproaches both Husserl and early Heidegger for having replaced the selfhood of the phenomenon (in other words: the “evasive” subjectivity propre to the process of phenomenalization) with the selfhood of transcendental ego or *Dasein* (Tengelyi 2010, 154-155). Nevertheless, Richir also says that Husserl’s or Heidegger’s mistake is natural as it is inherent in phenomenalization itself – the illusion leading to the distortion of the phenomenon is *transcendental*. Transcendental illusion (or also “ontological simulacrum”) makes the transcendental (the phenomenon) appear as the psychological; the natural overlap between the transcendental and the psychological creates the impression that the phenomenon contains something identical, that it wraps itself around an I, and that it is the phenomenon of something (Richir 2018, 19). Thus, the phenomenon appears through what Richir calls “symbolic institution” (*institution symbolique*), which is, though, not of a purely phenomenological origin. He understands it in the sense of Husserl’s *Stiftung* or Merleau-Ponty’s *institution*, i.e. as the establishing of a new dimension of experience in whose light new experiences make sense and constitute one history. The institution is called "symbolic" because the symbol is exactly that which integrates heterogeneous parts of the process of phenomenalization. Since humans are "symbolic animals", everything in their experience, being, action, beliefs, thinking, is coded by various cultural symbolic systems of languages, practices, techniques, etc. (Richir 2018, 458-464; Richir 2015, 247; Richir 1993, 29-30, etc.).

For instance, already in perceptual consciousness, the phenomenon is grasped through the determinates (*déterminités*) of language significations that immobilise its movement: when I say "I perceive a table", it is a description of my perception in which language (the word "table" and its meaning) intervenes in such a way that it puts together all the possibilities of experiencing the table, including this particular experience. This is what our experience looks like – the illusion is transcendental or natural. And yet, it is called "illusion" because the phenomenon is always more than what is given to intentional consciousness, it is, as said above, the indeterminate process of phenomenalization or the phenomenon as nothing but the phenomenon. Having effectuated a radicalised phenomenological *epoché* of all identities, I can no longer describe my experience as a perception of a table, instead of identities, there is the phenomenological concreteness of colours, forms, lines, their relations, etc., or, more precisely, the phenomenological concreteness of affections that are synthesised, always singularly, by the *Wesen sauvages* of the world (which corresponds approximately to Husserl's passive syntheses). (Richir 2015, 178-181)

More importantly for us, this double movement of the phenomenon (which is both symbolically instituted or unified, and dispersed in the process of phenomenalization) is also a double movement of the self. The human selfhood, relying on the double movement of the phenomenon, oscillates between its symbolic unity and its phenomenological dispersion (Richir 2018, 20).[2] As is the case of the phenomenon itself, the transcendental illusion makes the self appear as identical with itself and the decisive role is again played by symbols. The process of identification of the self rests upon a "symbolic tautology" which is nothing else than the absorption of the alterity in the heart of subjectivity by the Same, e.g. by transcendental ego constituting its own experience or by *Dasein* who is his existential possibilities (*Dasein* identifies with itself in the face of death, Richir 2004, 178).[3]

According to Richir, the problem stems from the fact that this symbolic identity of the I overshadows the real phenomenological nature of the self, the real nature of the contact of human affectivity with itself; symbolic identity says more than is contained in the contact: it says identity that gives the I being. But identity is nothing but a symbolic representation of the self detached from itself which is always already and forever at play in the process of phenomenalization (Richir 2014, 13-23; Richir 1998, 446). Therefore, to respond to the question in the title of this section, it is the symbolically instituted subjectivity – incapable of doing justice to "evential" process of sense – that is denounced not only by Richir but by all the authors of "new phenomenology". In what follows, I will go into the real nature of human subjectivity. As said above, it is a radicalized or "hyperbolic *epoché*" (of all identities) that liberates us from the circle of the identity of the self (in which it always encounters the same self) and shows us our singular and changing style of appearing (Richir 2018, 529). Humans are symbolic animals but they are also open to phenomenal fields providing all symbolic expressions with their concrete content and life (Richir 2018, 463-464; Richir 2014, 31, 104). The real phenomenological self, the "barbaric self" (Richir 2018, 23), is the self of this dispersion or phenomenalization, in which it is no longer the I effectuating *epoché* but the self as the inner reflexivity of phenomenalization. The whole process of phenomenalization reflected by the "barbaric self" starts with what Richir calls the "moment" of the sublime.

3. *Why is the symbolically instituted subjectivity an illusion? Richir's conception of the self as "infinite aspiration"*

According to Kant's most famous theory of the sublime, the feeling of the sublime occurs in the encounter with "a formless object" as a presentation of a concept of reason.[4] As no adequate presentation of the concept of reason is possible, every such presentation does violence to the imagination as a faculty of presentation (Kant 2000, 129). In his phenomenological theory of the "moment" of the sublime, Richir develops Kant's theory by placing the sublime within the "moment" in which pre-intentional affectivity (and not the intentionally structured imagination) encounters radical exteriority that cannot be schematized in it. However, for Richir, there is no experience of the sublime because the "moment" of the sublime constitutes the very genetic condition of all experience[5], including the experience of the beautiful or of the sublime as depicted by Kant. The "moment" of the sublime is the most archaic genetic phenomenological register[6] in which the movement of the phenomenon and, *ipso facto*, phenomenology begins (Richir 2010, 85). Therefore, in the following section, I will enter the realm of what could be called a "phenomenological metaphysics" in the sense of a discipline elucidating the "irrational fact" of subjectivity.[7] That is why Richir goes beyond the borders of phenomenology and draws upon the work of psychoanalyst D. W. Winnicott who deals with the problem of the birth of human subjectivity. Under the concept of the "moment" of the sublime, Richir interprets Winnicott's (empirical) theory within the framework of transcendental phenomenology. This is how he elaborates a genetic phenomenology in a more radical sense than Husserl: relying on Winnicott's (empirical) theory, he – to a certain degree – speculatively constructs the pre-intentional depths of phenomenalization.

According to Winnicott, in individual mental development, the mothers' face is even the precursor of the famous Lacan's mirror stage (in which the baby recognises herself in her mirror image). Winnicott writes: "What does the baby see when she looks at the mother's face? I am suggesting that, ordinarily, what the baby sees is herself." (Winnicott 2005, 151) But what happens here in the eyes of the French phenomenologist? Along with her caring mother, the baby, at the beginning conceived as an animal blind affectivity not being aware of herself, constitutes what Richir calls "*chôra*"[8] or "*giron transcendental*" (also "*giron maternel*") in which the mother, internally empathizing with her baby, takes care of her needs. Within this proto-space of "transcendental interfacticity", the mother feels her baby's needs, such as hunger or the need for warmth, as well as the satisfaction of these needs – she feels them in her own body. However, this somatic or affective community between the mother and her baby is not an intersubjective space shared by two people, it is more like a dream without space or reality being constituted for the baby as of yet (Richir 2006, 282): the mother's breast, for instance, is not hers, it is a breast belonging to everything surrounding it and constituting *chôra* (along with the warmth of the mother's body, her smell, etc.). (Richir 2006, 279)

The emergence of the baby's self occurs at the "moment" of the sublime (Richir 2014, 137-142). This "moment" is prepared once the baby starts feeling the satisfaction of her needs as pleasure from the mother's love. It is the affection of love that leads to the above-mentioned exchange of regards, and subsequently to the birth of the baby's archaic subjectivity (Richir 2010, 42-43, 55-57). In the light of the mother's love, needs are no longer finite and satisfiable but infinite and unsatisfiable (Richir 2010, 37-38); satisfaction fulfils needs while pleasure from love exceeds or "hypercondenses" the baby's affectivity (Richir 2010, 57), containing henceforth more than it can bear, which leads to its splitting, to the minimal contact of affectivity with itself (Richir 2010, 55; Richir 2014, 138). Affectivity begins feeling itself; the baby feels herself as regarded by her loving mother, she feels herself as regarded not from the mother's eyes or her physical body (*Körper*), which has not yet been constituted, but from "somewhere" behind the eyes, from the mother's "living body" (*Leib*) which communicates directly with the baby's newborn "primordial *Leib*" (Richir 2006, 286).

To put it another way, animal blind affectivity is now aware of itself without knowing itself or observing itself in the mirror (Richir 2010, 113); it "reflects" itself not as the sum of the condensed affectivity but as the *plurality* of its various affections felt "from the inside" (it is aware of these affections as *its* affections); affectivity in the sense of condensed affectivity reflects itself "internally" only as being schematised (in various affections) by something which is not affectivity, by the transcendence of the world. In other terms, the minimal contact of affectivity with itself is coextensive with the infinite escape of what Richir calls absolute transcendence (*fuite infinite de la transcendence absolue*). It is solely in relation to the absolute outside, which cannot be schematised, that affectivity constitutes itself as an inside (Richir 2010, 60). In contrast to the "physico-cosmological transcendence" of the world – appearing through various affections – the absolute transcendence does not appear and cannot be aptly described other than as infinitely escaping, as *the very fact* of the transcendence *of the world*. The world is "the face of the absolute transcendence turned towards us" (Richir 2015, 211).[9]

The bottom line is that affectivity – as having alterity in itself – can never coincide with itself; the self is an eternal movement towards itself (Richir 2010, 91). In the "moment" of the sublime, division (*Spaltung*) of the self occurs: the first self, affectivity in its sum, the mass of the affective body, is a genetic precursor of the transcendental self that observes its own experiencing while the second self is part of phenomenalization, it is the "*ject*" of the sub-*ject*, i.e. that which is "thrown" or pluralities of affections in which affectivity feels itself (Richir 2010, 67). And it is this second self, i.e. affectivity insofar as it is schematised by the transcendence of the world, by its savage essences (*Wesen sauvages*), which keeps affectivity from the coincidence with itself and therefore thwarts all attempts of affectivity to (symbolically) identify with itself (Richir 2010, 90-91). From this follows that affectivity (entering in contact with itself or capable of "auto-affection") cannot be absolute as affirmed by Michel Henry.[10] If affectivity were absolute, it would be blind in relation to itself (Richir 2010, 68). Given that it is not blind, it means that there is a minimal distance of affectivity in relation to itself, a distance generated by the infinite escape of the absolute transcendence in the heart of affectivity.

Since Richir describes not the absolute transcendence behind phenomena but its traces in affectivity, this theory of the "moment" of the sublime and the infinite escape of the absolute transcendence is still phenomenological. The reflection of affectivity and its eternal movement to itself are such traces of the escape of the absolute transcendence (Richir 2015, 209). The archaic, divided self constitutes itself in two fundamental affections (implied in all particular affections) of "nostalgia" and "infinite aspiration": the infinite movement from the self to the self, the infinite aspiration (desire, *Sehnsucht*) of the self is rooted in the nostalgia for the "moment" of absolute pleasure (*jouissance absolue*), genetically preceding the division of the self (Richir 2010, 58-61).

4. *Is subjectivity conceived as "infinite aspiration" (desire, Sehnsucht) still a subject? A brief sketch of one current debate*

The archaic subjectivity, i.e. affectivity in relation to itself, which is the phenomenological base for the constitution of the intentional I, is nothing identical or completely constituted. The archaic self only discovers itself by spanning the abyss of the infinite escape of absolute transcendence; it reflects itself not as a mirror image but only through various multiple affections as modulations of affectivity by the transcendence of the world (Richir 2010, 75). The subjectivity's mode of being is hence existence in the sense of ek-stasis as a movement from the self (stasis) to the self (transcending and appearing in the world) whereby the self as "stasis" is being constantly animated (Richir 2010, 90),

In order to indicate how such a conception contributes to current phenomenological discussions in France, we must return for a while to the conception of the phenomenon as event, and to the consequences some authors draw from it for the issue of selfhood. The unceasing animation of the self by events of sense, i.e. the fact that selfhood is incessantly at play, has led two other contemporary French phenomenologists, Henri Maldiney and Claude Romano, to define selfhood as the existent's capacity to be implicated in what happens to her. The existent is implied in unexpected events of sense, happening only once, that enter into existence and open up *new* worlds, bring *new* existential possibilities from which the existent is to understand herself differently (cf. Maldiney 1991, 322-323, 351-352, 422-423; Romano 1998, 125-127).[11] It was exactly this conception of selfhood that provoked the question I formulate in the title of this study: Is this "happening subjectivity" still a subject? Does the fact that the existent changes – according to the way she endures the events happening to her – mean that selfhood is reducible to this happening?

Richir – who does not consider "happening" or "ek-stasis" of the existent without its "stasis" – is not the only author to respond negatively. In his debate with Maldiney, Barbaras, for his part, reminds that phenomenology must escape from all forms of empiricism, including the "evential empiricism" (according to which one is what one experiences in events), by maintaining a minimal difference between receptivity (openness to events) and that which is received (events), a difference without which there is no openness or receptivity because receptivity coincides with what is received (Barbaras 2019a, 255). This is surely true but it is not completely fair to ascribe such an empiricism to Maldiney. Nor can it be ascribed to Romano. For what one may call (with Barbaras) the subjective difference is implied even in the conception of "happening subjectivity" (Maldiney's existent open to events or Romano's *advenant*): what is constitutive of the happening subjectivity is that it is *transformed* by events, so it cannot be reducible to them. As Maldiney puts it, an event is a transformation of the existent "permanently anchored" in the world.[12] Similarly, according to Romano, an event transforms the way one is in the world, that is, it transforms one's personal history made up of all the past events one has experienced in one's life. Consequently, these events have to be somehow deposited in what Romano calls "transcendental memory", which is a capacity of being-in-the-world whereby past events do not cease to influence its present existential projects (cf. Romano 2012, 204-210). The important implication for us is that this idea of memory or personal history indicates a feature pertaining to subjective identity or persistence. The questions are then the following: what is this "*under*-throw" (*sub*-jacere) or "underlying thing" (*ὑποκείμενον*), i.e. the proper subjective dimension of existence, which somehow resists its continual modification in events of sense? How is it possible that events sediment and form one's personal history? If Maldiney and Romano can be blamed for anything, it is not that this problem of a new reformulation of the classical problem of subjective persistence is completely absent in their work but that it is left largely unexplained, not to say ignored by the authors of "evential empiricism".[13] The main reason of this – rather deliberate – omission is that the problem of selfhood is associated not only with the subjective or enduring features, but also, and perhaps first and foremost, with the opposite pole of the phenomenological correlation: with the transcendent world and events. And it seems legitimate to limit one's phenomenological project and focus on this dynamic aspect of human existence. However, if we want to shed some light on the issue of subjective persistence and on the relation between it and subjectivity's happening, we should address the work of other authors, and especially that of Richir.[14]

As said above, events of sense are conditioned by the very mode of being of subjectivity which is ek-stasis or "eternal becoming" (Richir 2010, 133) as the movement from the self to the self. Hence, Richir might have explicitly claimed that Maldiney's existent liable (*transpassible*) to events or Romano's *advenant* understanding himself from events are phenomenologically conditioned by the division of the self in the "moment" of the sublime. He claims it rather implicitly: "*The event … may occur in every moment of experience … which is, every time, the echo of the sublime 'in service' (en fonction)*. For the sublime is a 'moment', and not an event."[15] Consequently, if the "happening subjectivity" is "born" in the "moment" of the sublime and is understood as "ek-stasis", and if we attempt to answer the question of its identity or persistence, we should focus in detail on its dimension referred to as "stasis". For the purposes of this study, it does not matter that Richir does not employ the terminology of the "evential empiricism" and does not speak of "personal history" of sedimentation of events one encounters in one's life but – with reference to the concepts of the "internal history of life" (Binswanger) and "transcendental history" (Husserl) – of "internal history" in the sense of sedimentation of the process of phenomenalization (cf. Richir 2004, 229). For the question we face is the following: What is that which underpins either personal (evential) or internal history, which enables the above-mentioned sedimentation of sense and hence helps to create this or that concrete subjectivity (a person)? In what does the properly subjective dimension of the "happening subjectivity", its identity, consist?

5. *Richir's conception of subjective identity*

As has been shown above, in the "moment" of the sublime, the animal mass of the baby's affective body, the chaos of bodily sensations (Richir 2010, 94-95) without phenomenological sense, passes through the filter of transcendent *Wesen sauvages* of the world (Richir 2010, 97) and becomes the human affectivity related to itself through the plurality of *phantasíai*-affections. To put it another way, it is as if the archaic community of the affective love between the mother and her baby, i.e. the *Leiblichkeit* of *chôra*, rolled up into itself and created what Richir calls the "primordial *Leib*" of the baby, *a seat* of *chôra* (*un siège de chôra*) (Richir 2006, 276). It is clear that the mass of the affective body becomes *Leiblich* in a more profound sense than Husserl's *Leib* (Richir 2010, 198): the fact that Richir delineates the archaic state of the affective community between the mother and her baby, and the subsequent genesis of the archaic self, i.e. the fact that Richir delineates the "corporeality" of the self on the pre-conscious level, enables to grasp the difference and mutual genesis of Husserl's *Leib* and *Leibkörper* (cf. Forestier 2015, 163). It is this genesis I will focus on in the remainder of this study.

The mass of affective body becomes *Leiblich* in the sense of the most archaic, non-spatial *Leib* (Richir 2010, 56, 108, 206), but not yet *Leib* in the sense of one's own body (*Leibkörper*). Even though this primordial *Leib* is designated by Richir as a "place" (*lieu*, *topos*), it is not the place of one's physical body situated in the world – the baby's living body is not "a bag delimited by her skin" (Richir 2006, 270) – but rather the place of the world that feels itself (Richir 2010, 68; Richir 2006, 285), or the place of a being-in-the-world. Let's return to what has been said: the baby's primordial *Leib* is a seat of *chôra* (*un siège de chôra*) whose *Leiblichkeit* is that of *chôra* (Richir 2006, 333); the flows of affectivity between the baby's body and that of the mother are seen only by the external observer but in fact their "seats" slip indefinitely into each other (Richir 2006, 273; Richir 2004, 249). The reason for this is that it is the same "gap" (*écart*) thanks to which the baby is in relation both to herself and also to others (Richir 2006, 302-303, 332): the primordial *Leib* is "an inside" only in relation to the absolute outside that makes communicate all the seats of *chôra*, that of the baby as well as that of the mother and other people participating in taking care of the child. How does this communication take place? This will be clear if we remember that the infinite escape of the absolute outside (transcendence) is coextensive both with the birth of the self and that of the appearing world: it is thanks to the liberation of transcendent shared *phantasíai* (savage essences of the world) from their bond to this or that mass of affectivity (Richir 2004, 276) that constitutes the basis for the most archaic *Einfühlung* (Richir 2010, 56); this communication is neither an intentional imagination of what is going on in the mother's mind nor the perception of the expression of her physical body but the situation in which the mother is literally "lived" by her baby, and *vice versa*, through their interconnected affectivities schematized by the same transcendence of the world (Richir 2004, 517-518).

This amounts to saying that the most archaic self, the primordial *Leib*, is on the one hand – as a reflection of the world itself, as interconnected with other seats of *chôra* – anonymous, and yet, on the other hand – as fixed by its mass of affectivity in *a* seat of *chôra*, in *an* "absolute here" (*ici absolu*) – it is singular (Richir 2010, 108). And it is exactly the primordial *Leib* as anchored in an absolute here which constitutes the core of the subjective identity, a sort of constancy resisting to the events of sense, which is the basis for the subsequent (genetically speaking) continuity or identity of consciousness. The primordial *Leib* anchored in an absolute here is a sort of invisible and irrepresentable (or infigurable) unity of multiple "places of *Leib*" (*lieux du Leib*) in which it is localized: the baby plays with her own body, she puts, for example, her fist into the mouth (one of the "places of *Leib*" is constituted by the "internal feelings", *Empfindnisse*, located in the mouth), or she tries to make various gestures and touches various objects (other "places" are then localized in her fingers), or "babbles", i.e. imitates various sounds that resonate differently in her head than the sounds from the outside. By all these activities, the contact of the two divided selves intensifies and begins to constitute "the inside space" (*espace du dedans*) by which the baby's *Leib* individualizes itself further within the proto-space of *chôra* (Richir 2006, 276-278).

Its unity or identity, which is not yet the identity of "me" but the most archaic genetic condition of "me", consists in the fact that all its transformations or modulations, i.e. all the modulations of affectivity in the events of sense, preserve a sort of homeostatic equilibrium, designated by Richir as absolute "thrust" (*poussée*) or "élan" (Richir 2004, 273), whose consistency is felt – "appears" – through "*synaisthesis*", a sort of unifying archaic kinesthesis, a sort of "global" feeling of movements of the primordial *Leib* (Richir 2010, 56). Despite their transformative power, no events of sense, constantly animating the primordial *Leib*, may threaten its "identity" because these events appear only in relation to the "places of *Leib*" (Richir 2006, 268), and are felt "from inside" through *synaisthesis*.

Thus, it turns out that the continuity of the "happening subjectivity" is based on the continuity of the primordial *Leib* which is nothing but *living* (or *evential*) unity of the self constantly moving towards the self. This is to say that the identity of the self has the only significant limit: as the "absolute here" does not exist without the gap (*écart*) coextensive with the infinite escape of the absolute transcendence, it cannot be the "underlying thing" (*ὑποκείμενον*) in the sense of absolute autonomy; for the self may be destroyed by some traumatic limit events such as death or trauma leading to psychosis, in which cases the self enters in contact with the absolute transcendence (and hence loses the contact with itself). The self is the (living) self only by constantly spanning the gap of the escaping transcendence (Richir 2010, 61-62, 65, 77-78).

Except for these limit events, the primordial *Leib* anchored in the "absolute here" preserves its unity which finally becomes – in the last phase of transcendental genesis of the intentional self I will briefly address in this study – the unity of Husserl's *Leib* anchored in "zero point" (*Nullpunkt*) in the sense of the centre of bodily orientations. The primordial *Leib* does not initially appear as *Leibkörper*, as one's physical living body (Richir 2006, 275); it is a "place" for what is about to be constituted as *Körper*, the physical body. This constitution is a very complex movement in which the decisive role is played by the absolute here of the primordial *Leib* as the place of transcendental history, sedimentations of sense, and kinesthetic habits (Richir 2004, 275). Since the baby is simultaneously evolving physically and her organs are being differentiated, such as the sight beginning to distinguish forms, and above all the form of the mother’s physical body (Richir 2014, 153-156), the baby starts to consider herself – in a new intersubjective form of empathizing (*Einfühlung*), described in detail by Husserl – as an “absolute here” different from other “absolute heres” (*ici absolus*) situated in other places of the intersubjective space (Richir 2014, 154-155; cf. Husserl 1989, §§36, 46). It means that “absolute heres” – in transcendental interfacticity mutually interchangeable or intertwined – become different places in the space of the visible world in which are situated various *Leibkörper* so that the mother’s *Leibkörper* tends to be one among many. She becomes “the other” as her *Leib* only appears with appearances giving to it a “figure”, i.e. in the form of *Leibkörper* situated “there”, which at the same time individualizes further the baby’s *Leib* as belonging to *Leibkörper* situated “here” (Richir 2004, 277; Richir 2006, 286). Nevertheless, the baby does not yet have at her disposal an image or representation of her physical body situated in the space; her regard is the regard of her seeing absolute here aimed at the visible deployed “behind” her skin but the baby herself is invisible; her mere situation in the visible is her animated “here” – she is the inside of the visible outside (Richir 2014, 155-156; Richir 2006, 276, 290; Richir 2004, 278).

The “humanization” of the baby is then accomplished by the constitution of the register of intentionality in which the temporalization of the sense becomes the temporalization of Husserl’s living presents with their retentions and protentions within the framework of the absolute flow of internal temporal consciousness. It was mainly in the last ten years of his life that Richir shed new light on the relationship between the movement of the sense-formation and the given, symbolically instituted sense, and depicted in greater detail how intentional experience is generated, how phenomenological concreteness is transposed to *noemata* and *noeses* of intentional consciousness, and how spontaneous contact of affectivity with itself becomes the opposition between the positing I and the posited I. The pivotal role is played by the institution of imagination that fixes and divides evasive phenomena into *Bildobjekt* and *Bildsujet*, *Bildobjekt* being merely an aspect or profile (*Abschattung*, figurative (re)presentation) of intentionally posited *Bildsujet*. The phenomenological concreteness of *phantasíai*-affections, transposed into the affects coming from the outside, hence constitutes nothing but material (*hylé*) for acts of consciousness, the material which is reconfigured (deformed) according to the significations of language. The transcendence is no longer absolute, it is reduced to the pre-given (*Vorgegeben*) which is animated by the intentional meaning (Richir 2010, 110-135).

This is how the movement of *sens se faisant* is interrupted, and the self reaches the self – and poses itself symbolically. And this is also how the primordial *Leib* as the proto-space that guarantees the continuity or identity of the self becomes the "absolute here" of one's physical body (*Leibkörper*) or Husserl's "zero point" in the sense of central point of all orientations of the physical body (cf. Husserl 1989, 166). The identity of the self now appears as the unity of the living body, as the place (*Leib*) or the unmoveable limit (*limite immobile*) of the physical body (*Körper*) (Richir 2006, 285, 288).

Conclusion

If we return to our initial problems why it still makes sense to speak – in the case of an extremely dynamic receiving instance of appearing which is subjectivity reconsidered on the basis of events – of a "subject" in the sense of a sameness that resists all events, and how should we describe this subjective persistence or identity, we may conclude that the "happening subjectivity" is still a subject because it is nothing other than the living body anchored in the "absolute here". The proper subjective dimension of the self – its *identity* – is constituted by the living body feeling itself from inside through "*synaisthesis*", a sort of unifying archaic kinesthesis. It is only thanks to this identity that the process of phenomenalization (events of sense) can sediment and form a personal or internal history – his or her *ipseity* in the sense of personal uniqueness. The concrete subjectivity, a person, is nothing but the result of this sedimentation finally modified through the symbolic institution into a "personal story" one can narrate. Since the movement of phenomenalization and of the self is double, the internal or personal transcendental histories are after all overlapped by the history of the symbolically instituted I that can be narrated, by history made up of various *objectively perceived* events protruding from the infinite invisible process of phenomenalization (Richir 2004, 230).[16] It is, therefore, the narrated history that definitively overcomes the anonymity of the archaic self without threatening its identity or continuity. The price for this *Stiftung* is however the "transposition" or deformation both of the phenomenon and of the savage self, in which phenomenological concreteness becomes imaginations and perceptions, i.e. noematic correlates of intentional acts of the subject who is an empirical I with her social and historical concreteness.

NOTES

[1] More precisely, even though in his phenomenological description Husserl mixed the reflection of the phenomenalization with its determination, Richir appreciates that he never completely subordinated the former to the latter (cf. Richir 2018, 29).

[2] In the last years of his life, Richir shed new light on the relationship between the movement of sense-formation and the given, symbolically instituted sense, and depicted in greater detail how intentional experience is generated. I sketch the most important phases of this genesis in the last section of this study.

[3] Symbolic tautology was most famously formulated by Fichte in his *Foundations of the Science of Knowledge*. For Fichte, "I is I" or "I am" is the highest factum of empirical consciousness and the first, absolutely unconditional principle of the science of knowledge because to posit anything implies self-positing in which the I that posits is implied in the I posited. "A is A" as a judgment, the general form of human knowledge is effectuated by consciousness, which is an element of continuity unifying the subject and object of the judgment: "[W]ithin the self … there is something that is permanently uniform, forever one and the same; and hence the X [necessary connection] that is absolutely posited can also be expressed as I = I; I am I." (Fichte 1982, 95-96).

[4] "The beautiful in nature concerns the form of the object, which consists in limitation; the sublime, by contrast, is to be found in a formless object insofar as limitlessness is represented in it, or at its instance, and yet it is also thought as a totality: so that the beautiful seems to be taken as the presentation of an indeterminate concept of the understanding, but the sublime as that of a similar concept of reason" (Kant 2000, 128).

[5] For this reason, Richir puts "moment" into quotation marks: there is no moment in time in which one could experience the sublime.
[6] The "phenomenological register" can be defined as a *particular* field of possibility, a system of coordinates or a manner of the phenomenon's appearing, that is, a manner in which phenomenological plurality is connected within the framework of a certain temporal, spatial, etc., structure (cf. Forestier 2015, 34). In his genetic phenomenology, Richir distinguishes above all the register of the phenomenological basis (the phenomenological concreteness of *phantasíai*-affections) from every other register (e.g., the register of the imagination or perception) in which the basis is deformed by several types of *Stiftungen* (cf. Richir 2014, 24; Richir 2000, 457-466). As we will see, the "moment" of the sublime is the most archaic register that launches the movement proper to the phenomenological basis. Richir's transcendental phenomenology describes pure movements of phenomena as well as their twists and interruptions as they pass into other registers (Richir 2014, 79).
[7] Barbaras speaks of the "metaphysics of facticity": "Ce qui se fait donc jour ici, à la faveur de la facticité originaire de l'ego, c'est bien un sens neuf de la métaphysique comme métaphysique de la facticité, métaphysique qui a pour objet propre les faits ultimes et, plus particulièrement, le premier d'entre eux, celui dont tous dépendent, à savoir le fait de l'ego" (Barbaras 2013, 285).
[8] When Richir describes the archaic "space" of the affective community, he employs Plato's term of *chôra*. According to *Timaeus*, *chôra* is the "receptacle (or nurse, if you like) of all creation", i.e. the field in which the created world as the copy of its eternal model subsists. Cf. Plato 2008, 40 (*Timaeus*, 49a8-9).
[9] As the absolute transcendence is on its infinite run (*en fuite infinie*), the world – as well as the self – cannot identify with itself and, by this fact, must be described as the plurality of worlds or the phenomena-of-worlds (*phénomènes-de-mondes*). This triad the self/world/absolute transcendence corresponds to three Kantian metaphysical ideas of soul/world/god (cf. Richir 2015, 207-209).
[10] "L'affectivité révèle l'absolu dans sa totalité parce qu'elle n'est rien d'autre que son adhérence parfaite à soi, que sa coïncidence avec soi, parce qu'elle est l'auto-affection de l'être dans l'unité absolue de son immanence radicale. Dans l'unité absolue de son immanence radicale l'être s'affecte lui-même et s'éprouve de telle manière qu'il n'y a rien en lui qui ne l'affecte et ne soit éprouvé par lui, aucun contenu transcendant à l'expérience intérieure de soi qui le constitue" (Henry 2003, 858). Richir situates himself between M. Henry and E. Levinas: the former's subjectivity is "inside" so that one cannot come out, while the latter's subjectivity is "outside" so that one cannot come back inside (Richir 2015, 224). Richir's affectivity, i.e. affectivity in relation to itself, affectivity as "an inside," is nothing but movement constantly spanning the gap generated by "the outside" – the inside is fundamentally marked by the outside and, therefore, not perfectly adherent to itself.
[11] For a more detailed exposé of Maldiney's and Romano's "evential" conception of selfhood, especially in contrast to Heidegger's conception in *Being and Time*, see my article "Personal Uniqueness and Events", to be published in *Human Studies*.
[12] "En deçà de toute expérience ou attention centrale, *nous sommes présents à un fond de monde où nous avons notre ancrage permanent*. Ce que nous

attendons d'un ancrage sans pouvoir nous dérober à cette foi originaire, à cette *Urdoxa*, c'est sa stabilité [...] *Un événement bouleversant est celui qui déstabilise sans retour cet ancrage*. Celui qu'il atteint ne peut plus reprendre fond" (Maldiney 1991, 270-271). My emphasis.

[13] I have to remark here that Romano's position is still evolving and the relation between his early theory of selfhood—laid out in his books on the event—and the theory he holds today is not absolutely clear. With regard to his habilitation work (Romano 2010), one may say that while "evential selfhood" is still relevant for his current theory, Romano takes into account two other important aspects of human existence neglected in his books on event, namely its "natural" capabilities (corporeality) and culture. However, although he recently published a book on "being-oneself" (Romano 2019), he shed no light on the relation between what he designates as three different capabilities (*capacités*) of the existent, especially between the existent's corporeality and her capability of being open to events.

[14] Note that since he describes subjectivity as "infinite aspiration" (desire, *Sehnsucht*), Richir is obviously in agreement with Barbaras who determines the mode of being of subjectivity as "desire" (Barbaras 2008). Even though Barbaras often says that he does not share Richir's transcendentalism, insofar as "transcendental" means "going under the given", Barbaras' phenomenological project of searching for an "*a priori* of the Husserlian *a priori*" (Barbaras 2013, 7) is very close to that of Richir. However, there are also some differences. For example, Barbaras thematizes the most archaic condition of the movement of desire under the term of "archi-event", while Richir correctly remarks that the "moment" of the sublime is far from being an event. I have attempted to analyse the reasons behind this Richirian affirmation in my article "Archéologie du sujet phénoménologique d'après Marc Richir et Renaud Barbaras." *Interpretationes. Studia Philosophica Europeanea* 2019 (1): 209-224.

[15] "[L]'événement … *peut surgir à tout moment de l'expérience*, de manière apparemment arbitraire, *par surprise, celle-ci étant l'écho, chaque fois, du sublime* '*en fonction*'. Car le sublime est un 'moment', et non pas un événement" (Richir 2010, 73). My emphasis.

[16] The issue of *ipseity* in Richir is so complex and goes beyond the scope of this article that I may only refer to the recent excellent book by I. Fazakas (2020).

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

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Between Positing Existence and Absence of the Object: Interpreting Faith Experience from the Phenomenological Point of View

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Abstract

The paper attempts to clarify the structure of the experience of faith by making use of some fundamental elements of the phenomenological theory of knowledge. The dynamic between intention directed towards the object and intuitive fulfilment provides a key to understanding the peculiar form of intentionality proper to faith, in which there is the necessity of the intention directed toward the position of existence, without, however, this being accompanied by the givenness of the object posited as existing. What we find is a kind of anomaly in the relationship between the mode of belief and the fulfilment that is supposed to motivate it. In the case of the position of the object of faith, this fulfilment is not given in any intuitive form. Religious consciousness is thus characterised by the absence of any epistemic basis for justification, but on the other hand also by the necessary permanence of the existential mode of belief. The result is an interplay between presence and absence, fullness and emptiness, certainty and non-determinacy, which will provide the key to revisiting Anselm's ontological proof of God's existence from a particular perspective.

Keywords: experience of faith; phenomenology; theory of Knowledge; philosophy of religion; religious Belief; existence of God; ontological argument; intention and fulfilment; Husserl; Anselm of Canterbury

Introduction

How can religious experience[1] be understood from a philosophical-phenomenological perspective? What is the meaning and what are the intentional structures of religious life that are accessible to a philosophical-conceptual consideration? Of course, many approaches and different lines of research on the subject are available (Van der Leeuw 1956 and 1963;

Kristensen 1971; Eliade 1987; James 1995, for example). What we will try to do in this paper is to refer to certain invariants highlighted by the phenomenological theory of knowledge, which may be of great utility in explaining the epistemological reasons for the peculiarity of an experience such as that of faith, without, of course, having the ambition to give an exhaustive picture of religious life.

In the light of those invariants, we will be able to reject from the very beginning options that, while immediately presenting themselves as intuitively the most plausible, could lead us in the wrong direction. This concerns in particular the unilateral emphasis on the specific belief-character of doubt or the opposite character of certainty. Instead, we will see that the understanding of religious life requires both (section 1). We will then articulate more explicitly the relationship (which we will always keep in mind) between the position of existence in belief and that structural invariant of intentional acts expressed in the relation between empty and filled intuitions, showing in this regard the peculiarities of the phenomenon in question (section 2). In a further step, we will deepen these peculiarities through the reference to the conceptual pair essence-existence (section 3). Finally, we will conclude by trying a particular interpretation of Anselm of Canterbury's ontological argument in favour of the existence of God, showing the autonomy of faith from any instance of rational epistemic justification; autonomy, which, however, does not mean irrationality, but maintains a component of 'moderate rationality' (section 4).

1. Certainty and doubt. None of them or both of them?

The structure we want to focus on is related to the character of faith as such, to the intentional structure that supports its peculiar character of belief. What is the mode of consciousness that corresponds to faith? How can it be described as being directed towards something that is not given, nor can it be given 'in the flesh'?[2] Here, a phenomenological analysis should provide the tools to clear the field of misunderstandings, in order to indicate a plausible direction of research aimed at investigating the essence of the characteristic intentionality of religious life.

The understanding of the very nature of what is at issue here should start from a consideration of the modalities of belief in relation to the dynamics of fulfilment of intentional directness, as far as the religious attitude is concerned. This consideration, at first fairly general, will be investigated more deeply later.

Firstly, it is clear that the mode of belief proper to faith, which leads to the position of existence of its object, does not include a straightforward certainty and therefore has not as its 'noematic' correlate the being of the object to which the noetic moment of certainty refers. Such a structure is in fact characteristic of the evidence of scientific statements, of judgements that posit objects, properties and states of affairs on the basis of an epistemic foundation sufficiently solid to motivate this 'doxic' mode, i.e. the position (in German: *Setzung*) that is inherent to the mode of being, in this case, that of existence.[3] However, this is not the doxic mode proper to religious experience, since in it the intention directed towards its object and the existence of the latter is destined to remain unfilled and the evidence of an epistemic foundation for the position of its object is therefore necessarily lacking, as we shall see more clearly.

On the other hand, the consciousness of the believer is not a variant of the consciousness of doubt, of that intentional mode of belief that is suspended between the options of full affirmation and full negation, remaining, so to speak, in this suspension. Nor does it have anything to do with the modes of supposing, of considering probable, of admitting or presuming, with the respective intentional correlates of the supposed as such, the probable as such, etc.[4] For it is the position of the existence of its object that belongs to the essence of religious life, and hence a certain kind of determination on the noetic side that excludes all these modes, which instead express an oscillation and uncertainty alien to the essence of faith. There must be some kind of conviction if faith is to be determined by this character; however, as we have seen, it cannot be the specific sort of certainty typical of science, based on an epistemic justification given in evidence.

In short, it seems that the noetic complex that must support the intentionality of religious life does not fall into any of the above modes of belief. Neither the mode of pure certainty nor the modes of non-certainty are able to account for it on their own if taken in isolation.

This is because both of these noetic forms are in some way co-present in the intentionality of faith, in a sense limiting each other. If the mode of doubt prevailed, there would be no faith, since it would lack the character of conviction that is proper to it (which, of course, can take different forms). If the mode of certainty prevailed, there would still be no faith, which would be replaced by the evidence of the occurrence of a givenness in an intuitive fulfilment; even this kind of evidence is not something that can belong to the consciousness of faith by essence.

The reason why both mere doubt and pure certainty in themselves cannot condition the noematic structure of the intentionality of religious life is that none of them, taken alone, would account for an essential character proper to that intentionality, namely that of finite freedom, which is always motivated freedom. This character would be incompatible with the evidence of a certainty that would be the correlate of an evident givenness. Here there would be nothing to believe, but only to ascertain, in the presence of scientific or everyday truth, at least as long as it is not threatened by contrary reasons that could lead to revoking this certainty. In such a framework there is no place for faith as an attitude that includes in its essence non-constraint, the possibility of being confirmed or revoked at any time, which means, the possibility of a free choice if faith has to be a free act of decision, as its essence seems to require.

On the other hand, it should not be assumed that such freedom could consist in the mere presence of an alternative, which would create the condition of doubt as the simple oscillation between the two possibilities of believing and not believing something. In this case, the choice between one or the other would not be the result of a free choice at all, but of a blind arbitrariness, since the choice would have no foothold, no motivation that could incline it to one side or the other, and the subject of the choice would be forced to make the inglorious end of the Buridan's donkey, i.e., to experience the paralysis of choice. Should he decide to choose, in the absence of any motive for the decision, this act would be nothing more than an arbitrary act governed by fate, which is exactly the opposite of freedom. Behind the appearance of a free choice would thus hide an accidental arbitrariness (Schelling 2011).

Neither doubt nor certainty alone accounts for the core of freedom that resides in the essence of religious life, and this for opposite reasons. In one case, freedom is forced and therefore is not even called into question. On the other, it is so completely detached from every possible motivation and foothold that alone could motivate it and thus becomes a blind case, not rational and, after all, not free. Indeed, in faith as well as in every sphere of the existence of a finite being, freedom cannot be absolute arbitrariness, which would rather be a contradiction. It should be motivated freedom, a freedom that has in front of itself reasons that can (but they must not) guide and orient it, without these reasons being so strong as to constrict and suppress it. In other words, it must be the freedom of a rational being, which goes hand in hand with the rationality of a free being.

It should be now clear that the essence of such freedom excludes simple doubt and simple certainty only because it requires a composition of both in its constitution. There is an element of certainty in it, which makes it possible for it to assume a conviction (in our case, that particular conviction of faith), avoiding the doubtful paralysis of equivalent possibilities, thus allowing it to be finite freedom. And there is also an element of doubt in it, which in concert with the element of conviction prevents it from becoming sclerotic in its certainty, thus allowing it to remain freedom.

Therefore, it seems that the structure of the experience of faith rests in a noetic complex in which doxic components of different (even opposite) types coexist in a peculiar compound of experiences of belief. The resulting overall experience is that of a convinced, determined, motivated, but free choice, free because made in the absence of the evident givenness of the object for which one decides and because there is nevertheless a motivation to follow. These elements: conviction, determination, motivation, on the one hand, freedom and lack of evidence, on the other, are all to be taken into account to the same extent, because they make up, in their mutual opposition, the very delicate balance of the experience of religious life. The latter, so to speak, always walks on the edge that separates absolute certainty (which can also take on a negative connotation, in the form of pure and simple negation) from absolute doubt. The presence of all these elements is essential in order not to fall on one side or the other. The incarnation of these two extreme sides is represented, on the one hand, by that obtuse affirmation that does not want to hear reasons or by claiming the possibility of a supposed 'scientific' evidence of the content of faith and, of the other hand, by that attitude of weakness of conviction that sooner or later flows into agnosticism or ultimately atheism (which is curiously the negative side of faith, characterized by an act of belief no less strong, although of the opposite sign). Both these phenomena, for what we have seen so far, for opposite reasons are not at all extreme cases of an experience of faith taken to the extreme but constitute rather its negation and the two opposite radical alternatives.

This hybrid structure, so to speak, of religious attitude, in which doubt and certainty coexist in a delicate balance, brings to mind Pascal's intuition that there is not only light or only darkness in the world but both enough darkness and enough light, both for those who want to believe and those who do not (Pascal 1897, No. 454). Indeed, it is also clear from what has been said that faith is not and cannot be a blind act of abandonment that takes place on the unstable ground of pure and simple doubt, a position motivated by nothing, a positional act without the presence of motivation. Rather, it is always an intention that carries a position that, however, has behind it reasons which are accessible to examination and intersubjective communicability, although they can never be rational reasons whose evidence could aspire to universal recognition.

On the other hand, in fact, the intentionality of religious consciousness does not take as a model that of science, it will not place in front of itself the ideal of certainty that can be expressed in judgments clearly founded, as if faith should aspire to compete with scientific rationality, for example by showing or demonstrating the reality of its object, even as a possibility in principle. If this were also possible, if the content of the truths of faith were to be reconstructed through evident and well-founded judgments, so as not to leave any gap of non-evidence, this would certainly not be a good gain for the faith, it would instead be its end. If faith is such, it is because the form of the intentional consciousness that supports it is peculiar to it and cannot be reduced to the one that governs scientific cognition. In other words, if faith lacks that evidence proper to science, this is not to be reproached as a defect, but is something to be recognized as belonging to its own essence, it belongs to what makes faith a faith, to that without which faith would not be such. To claim that the consciousness of faith could clearly exhibit its object, therefore, would be no less absurd, from the phenomenological point of view, than to claim that a physical, three-dimensional object could be given otherwise than in a perspective way, in a temporal development, in a dialectic between filled and unfilled intentions, in which both of them enter to constitute the concrete givenness of the object.

2. Position of existence and intention without fulfilment

Now, if we ask how this interplay between presence and absence, between certainty and non-certainty, is more precisely articulated, we see that it points to a complexity that is peculiar to the structure of faith, and which distinguishes it from any other kind of intentional experience, making it impossible to reduce it to any other form. For here we have a case that would seem to call into question the general case of the relationship between the intention directed towards the object and the fulfilment of the intention itself. The strange nature of this relationship as it appears in the phenomenon under discussion is such that, from the point of view of a standard phenomenological analysis of the more universal structures of experience, it may even appear as an incongruity, if not a contradiction. This brings us back to this aspect that we have already encountered, to clarify it further.

The universal invariant structure underlying normally experience and knowledge is that provided by the intention-fulfilment pair, as we have already mentioned. Our view from the standpoint of a phenomenological theory of knowledge reveals coordination between the intention directed at the object and the corresponding act of fulfilment, which, if fulfilment occurs, carries the character of intuitiveness (*Anschaulichkeit*), in which the intended object exhibits itself in the form of the givenness corresponding to the intention.[5] Now, generally speaking, the motivation of the particular mode of belief associated with intention, the bearer, on the noetic side, of the object's position as existing in reality, or probable, or doubtful, etc., depends on the mode of the givenness of the object itself given in the fulfilment. For example, a perceptual experience, which gives the object 'in the flesh', will motivate the particular mode of belief related to the position of the object's existence, with the being of the object acting as a noematic correlate of this position.

Naturally, at least in the case of the perception of physical objects, which develops according to a temporal dimension, it will be necessary to introduce a dynamic structure that articulates the interplay between intuition and fulfilment through the introduction of the concept of 'confirmation'. The fulfilment of intuition must find confirmation at each stage of the perceptual process, and it is this confirmation that, in the dynamic process of the course of the experiences that form perception, continually motivates, at each stage, the position of existence. If at a certain point in the process a discordance occurs, the intention does not find a fulfilment corresponding to the type it predefined, then we have the phenomenon of 'modalisation' (*Modalisierung*), in which the thesis that had hitherto remained constant undergoes a revision and is replaced by another mode of belief. What was previously posited as certain is now doubtful, uncertain, etc., and undergoes therefore modalisation (Husserl 1939, § 21). Correspondingly, from the noematic side we will no longer have being, but being-doubtful, being-uncertain, etc.

It is thus, so to speak, the mode of the fulfilment of the intention that grounds the particular mode of belief with regard to the mode of being of the intended object. If the object is posited as existing, this is because the mode of givenness exhibited in the filling intention motivates that position. This would seem to be, it is worth emphasising, an invariant structure of intentional experiences.

What is missing in religious experience is precisely the actualisation of this structure: in the intention directed towards the object of faith, we do not have an intuitive fulfilment of the intention, which remains a purely empty or 'signitive' intention. In the equation $i + s = 1$ that defines the hyperbola that describes the variation in the degree of fulfilment of the intention, where i corresponds to the component of intuitive fullness, while s refers to the purely signitive (empty) component, there are two extreme cases which correspond to the asymptotes of the hyperbola. On the one hand, we have the case where $i = 1$ and $s = 0$, whereby we have the full intuitive givenness of the object without the slightest trace of intentional components remaining unfilled. On the other hand, we have the case where, on the contrary, $i = 0$ and $s = 1$, i.e. where there is no intuitive component and the intention remains therefore completely unfilled.[6] Although we are dealing here precisely with asymptotic borderline cases, and in the normal scientific or everyday experience we normally always have to deal with a mixture of intuitive and signifying components (i.e. none of the asymptotes is ever reached), in the experience of faith we seem to be dealing precisely with a situation in which the intention is destined to remain completely unfilled, i.e. without the slightest component of intuitive givenness of the intended object (the second case indicated).

The peculiarity of the experience of faith, compared to any other form of experience or knowledge, thus becomes evident. In religious attitude we have an intentional component that must posit the existence of its object as certain, without, however, being able to exhibit an intuitive fulfilment, even to the smallest degree, for the givenness of this object. The object remains simply ungiven. This peculiar asymmetry between an intention that posits existence and the absolute non-givenness of the object of that intention confirms itself as the foundation of that hybrid character of the experience of faith that we have spoken about. We know, the essence of the intentionality underlying religious attitude must contain within itself a component of certainty (expressed in conviction) and a component of non-certainty, which compensate each other by preventing faith from imploding, on the one hand, into self-confident affirmation or the pure rational contemplation of an evident truth, or, on the other, into scepticism regarding the existence of its object.

Now, we can briefly sketch at this point the following result. The component of certainty is founded on the subjective intention that in the experience of faith posits the existence of its object, while the total lack of intuitive fulfilment on the side of the object establishes the compensation that balances that certainty by preventing its degeneration. Correlatively, this same certainty of the position of existence balances the component of uncertainty (which is given by the lack of the object), so that the result is that admirable equilibrium that constitutes the typical character of faith.

On the other hand (to repeat this) certainty, if it should not be based on an arbitrary unmotivated choice, must rest on motives that direct the intention corresponding to the position of the object. These motives can be of various kinds, and here a coloured 'phenomenology' of the 'reasons' of faith can be established, ranging from miracles to sacred scriptures, from credible and authoritative testimonies to rational reasons in the narrower sense and, in certain cases, to genuine logical arguments. The truly religious attitude will then be able to live as long as none of these motives acquires such a force as to overcome the contrary, negative weight, represented by the absence of the object, and as long as this absence is never a sufficient reason to abandon all grounds for that existential position.

3. About essence and existence

If we consider this result from the point of view of the conceptual pair existence-essence, we can perhaps go so far as to say that in religious experience the relationship between the component of existence and that of essence is somewhat opposite to that of the everyday experience of objects we encounter in our surrounding world. In ordinary perceptual experience, objects are so to say given in their essence, which is accessible to a phenomenological description that highlights its characteristics. This essence is articulated in complexes of essential structures that determine the content of our experience of objects and allow for their linguistic expression. The experience of objects is shifted from potentiality to actuality through the *ego*, which, as a functional pole, activates those essential structures. These, for their part, are regulated by the laws of formal and material *a priori* (Husserl 1976, §§ 9-10). In the actualisation of the predelineated potentiality of experience, the object, therefore, comes to be given, and it is given (and can only be given) in those essential complexes. Existence, on the other hand, is always 'presumptive' (Husserl 1968, 125), it is a 'claim to existence' never given *a priori*, but always to be confirmed *a posteriori*.

As is well known to those accustomed to phenomenological analysis, the temporal structure of the perceptual process means that the object is always given in perspective, one side at a time, without experience (however much it may deepen knowledge of the object) ever arriving at a complete determination of the object itself. What guarantees the very transcendence of the object is the inexhaustibility of its aspects and determinations, which means that to speak of a complete acquaintance of it only makes sense if by this is meant an ideal limit of experience in which the object is given in all its aspects. This 'determinable indeterminacy' (Husserl 1966, 6), which, far from being a limit, is part of the very essential structure of the experience of objects in the 'lifeworld', means, however, that no conclusive word can ever be put on the existence of the object. Since experiences can go on potentially indefinitely, it cannot be ruled out *a priori* that sooner or later there will be a break in the concordant synthesis of experiences, which forces me to revise my belief in the object's existence. Through modalisation,[7] this existence could be then replaced by doubt or belief in non-existence. In this sphere, of course, this is always a possibility guaranteed in principle *a priori*.

If the normal experience of the lifeworld is such that the content of the essence is given, but the certainty of the existence is never assured, in religious attitude we have that of the object it is the existence that is given with certainty, while the essence, and therefore the content of the object itself, is never given at all. No intuitive content can correspond to the intention directed towards the essential content. This fact, which decisively distinguishes religious experience from the other dimensions of the life-world, echoes the essential necessity underlying the fact that the certainty proper to faith has no relation with a kind of certainty such as that of scientific evidence. In faith, the position of existence can never rest on and find a motivation, let alone a justification, from an essential content given in intuitive evidence. However, it was precisely this that prevented faith, in its finite freedom, from imploding in the non-freedom of the ascertainment of evidence in its giving itself in some intuitive form.

Religious consciousness, therefore, lives on its inability to be nourished by the source of an intuitive fullness. This is why conviction must seek its motives elsewhere, motives which, since they never involve an exhibition of the object in the flesh, will never have a definitive objective force, and thus will motivate conviction without threatening its space of freedom.

4. Revisiting Anselm's ontological argument

It must have been the awareness that faith could not be founded on an epistemic justification on the side of the object and its givenness (this awareness may be obvious, but it is less obvious to focus on the reasons for this impossibility), that drove Anselm of Canterbury to not seek the foundation of faith in an *a posteriori* procedure that starts from what is given in experience and then proceeds deductively or inductively. Much has been written about his famous ontological argument in the *Proslogion* (Anselm of Canterbury 2000, 93 ff.), and here it is not a question of going head-to-head with this well-known place in the history of theology and philosophy. However, it seems legitimate and, in the context of our discussion, fruitful, to at least briefly refer to a possible interpretation of the ontological argument that, while going far beyond the intentions and the letter of the script of the monk of Canterbury, can help shed light on our subject.

One would first like to state that to appreciate his argument, it is not necessary to follow Anselm to the point of positing the actual existence of God from the concept of God. If one reflects on what is analytically contained in the concept of God, one is not forced to make an unjustified jump from concept (thought) to existence (reality), which would certainly require a synthesis that would presuppose some empirical intuition, which cannot be derived from any concept and which would justify the assertion of such a reality. However, an empirical intuition, as we have seen, is precisely what is not and cannot be available in the case of the object in inquiry. Kant's famous critique of the ontological argument (Kant 1911, 620 ff.) is directed precisely at the unwarranted shift from concept to reality, but our claim here is that one can read Anselm's argument by staying within the realm of thought, thus circumventing Kant's critique.

Indeed, the position of existence is, in a determinate sense, motivated without leaving the analytical content of the concept of God (as understood by Anselm), without making that impossible synthetic spring. If we break down the concept of God analytically, e.g., using the Russellian method of definite descriptions, we find that this concept is nothing other than the concept of an *x*, such that *x* cannot be thought of as non-existent. The emphasis here is on the 'thought', and not on reality. Read in this sense, the argument does not conclude at all to the existence of God, but to the necessity of thinking God as existing, thus remaining in the analytical sphere of thought, this necessity being contained in the concept of God itself.

In this way, the proof would no longer be a stringent demonstration of the existence of something outside the thought, but the simple explication of the principle that if I have the concept of God (and that I have it is a fact), then I 'must' think of him as existing (Abbagnano 2005). Logical stringency here does not go out of the realm of thought to exhibit something in reality, but merely indicates the necessity of consistent adherence to the content of the concept in question. Indeed, this adherence requires that I must think of God as existing if I do not want to fall into contradiction with my thought.

In other words, *that procedure does not prove the objective reality of an object, but the subjective necessity of faith*. Faith is thus brought back to its genuine meaning, which has nothing to do with a belief that would be in principle capable of receiving confirmation through the immediate or mediated (through deductions, etc.) presentation or exhibition of its object, as if it were a kind of intentional consciousness within the broader genre of cognitive intentionality, with the specific difference constituted by the lack of intuitive evidence (which would reduce faith to a deficient form of cognitive act). As discussed earlier, if religious consciousness constitutes a type in itself of intentional structure, this lack of intuitive content should not be regarded as a defect, but as necessarily belonging to the essence of this kind of consciousness. There is then no reason to evaluate faith through a criterion borrowed from scientific-cognitive intentionality, and Anselm's proof (in the limited use we are making of it) thus turns out to be a powerful affirmation of the autonomy of faith and its liberation from taking other, cognitively oriented types of intentionality as a model.[8]

In this way, the ontological proof, from a theoretical demonstration, is turned into the principle of a sort of practical postulate: if *x* designates what cannot be thought of as non-existent, the sentence expressing the attitude of faith is not '*x* exists', but 'I must think *x* as existing'. Clearly, then, it is no longer a question of actual objective existence, which, at least in principle and given certain phenomenological assumptions, should always be able to be exhibited to a possible subject (and if it is not exhibited to my consciousness, this is due to the contingent limits of my consciousness). It is rather a question of the necessity of a position of existence that takes place on the subjective side of the *a priori* of the intentional correlation and does not even claim the ideal possibility (not to mention the actuality) of being filled through a possible intuition coming from outside, not even as a borderline case.

Precisely because it is claimed not the 'being' of something, but rather that something 'must be', we do not even have to deal with any form of dogmatism, since here is not affirmed an epistemic access to something without a preliminary assurance of the legitimacy of this affirmation. Indeed, the 'must be' never claims to grasp (or even to be able to grasp) a being, but it determines itself completely in the practical principle that renews the position only for a requirement of non-contradiction, and not for an assertion of unfounded knowledge.

This is why religious experience is not, again, some form of subject-object relation of an epistemic kind, not even of a wholly particular sort. It is not a relationship that is in any way intellectual or cognitive, in which a subject is faced with an object to which it relates precisely as an object, albeit of a particular kind, that could be in principle experienced (although it cannot be experienced factually). Here there is no possible intuitive intention that is at least indirectly available as fulfilment, that could also include a deductive chain or that would be at the end of a very mediated chain of justifications, which in the end, however, would lead back to an immediate original givenness that legitimates such mediated knowledge. There is no sedimentation of past experiences of the subject, who would only have to return to these experiences in order to derive from them sufficient reasons to fill his position through the givenness, thus mediated, of the object in question.

In short, there is no object at all, which as such would be given in its essence. There is only a position of existence, but the position of existence of an object without the object itself is not a cognitive relationship at all, but rather a practical imperative principle that I must renew at every moment of my existence as a religious individual. At every moment, the imperative says: 'You must posit God as existing', and at every moment it is in the power of my freedom to give or withhold assent. Faith is thus a choice that is incessantly renewed and for this very reason continually at risk of being revoked, and this precisely because the position of existence is never 'corroborated' by the availability of the object in its essence (to which this position is addressed), so that then this experience, so achieved, could remain in my cognitive horizon as a stable possession capable of providing sure confirmation of my thesis as often as I like.

Nevertheless, the character of necessity of the existence-position is what separates religious faith from other types of belief, such as in magic, astrology and so on. This must be taken into consideration every time one is tempted to reduce these modalities of experience, which are different in essence, to a single genre. In faith, there is always a stringency that gives it a certain rational character. However, since in Anselm's argument necessity is a necessity of thought, we are dealing with a form of rationality, which is destined to remain in the limited sphere of analytic non-contradiction, without any cognitive addition. Seen from our point of view, Anselm's demonstration is not the discovery of the existence of something, but an exhibition of the reasonableness of the postulate that posits that something. With his proof, he does not tell us that the object of faith exists (could faith subsist at that?), but that, after all, that postulate is required by reason itself. He does not show us that faith is true because what it posits also truly exists in reality but only indicates that the assumption on which faith is based is rational, not arbitrary and that therefore religious life is legitimate and has its own particular foundation, the reasons for which are not borrowed from the objectivist ideal of science, but are internal to the central concept of faith itself. The circularity that is thus established is not vicious, but virtuous, and faith lives within it: outside of it, it falls.

This means that we do not just have pure rational light, nor pure darkness, but rather a compensation of the two. It is therefore questionable that faith is a jump into the dark, and this is said, this time, against Pascal (1897). It seems rather to be a delicate tension between, on the one hand, the rationality of a position of existence dictated by a logical stringency and, on the other, the absence of rationality constituted by never being able to give an epistemic foundation to this position. (From this point of view, if in religious experience there is neither pure crystalline rationality, epistemically founded, nor a full irrationality, then one could perhaps say that what distinguishes it is a 'moderate rationality'.)

All this discussion around Anselm's proof brings us back to the central point that ran through this paper, confirming and reinforcing it. The hybrid dimension of faith, expressed in a certainty that is never satisfied, is the correlate of the balance between a subjective intention that must posit an object *a priori* and the absence of givenness of the object itself, an absence that is not only factual but also an *a priori* necessity belonging to the very essence of religious experience. Neither 'I don't know', nor 'I am sure', but 'It must be so even though I can never have the evidence'. This is what expresses the essence of the particular experience that we have so far tried to explain and thematise from a particular perspective, without having the slightest intention of making an exhaustive presentation.

Conclusion and reference to further topics of investigation

Summarising the course undertaken, it emerged that the nature of faith derives its specific character from an interweaving of opposing components that have their basis in the coexistence, in religious experience, of both the necessity of the positing of the existence of its object and the absence of this very object. The result is a picture in which faith is removed both from an unfounded arbitrary approach and from a claim of quasi-epistemic justification that would make it merely a defective substitute for a hitherto impossible science.

What we have done is no more than an attempt to make a small contribution to the elucidation of the experience of faith using phenomenological instruments. Many other topics of phenomenological interest deserve to be addressed. It would be interesting, for example, to address the question of the relationship between the religious subject and the world, since the religious attitude, by moving 'outside' the world and accessing an 'absolute' view, attributes to the things of the world a particular index with which they are in a certain sense relativized. And in addition: how does the detachment proper to the attitude of faith lead to freeing things from the not-reflected belonging to the network of meanings and references in which they originally lie, and thus to seeing them in another light, so that the incrustations of meaning which are linked to their practical manoeuvrability (Heidegger 1967, §§ 17-18) are brought to the surface? This would certainly not lead to the loss of things but, as in the phenomenological reduction, it would establish for the first time a view capable of thematising the interweavings of meaning that make the givenness of things possible, and thus the profound meaning of their 'being in the world' and of the world itself as the pre-given horizon of the givenness of things. In order to gain such a thematic view of the world, it is in fact necessary to 'leave' the world by taking a step out of it: the step that the phenomenological reduction takes by suspending involvement in the world, and that the religious perspective takes by placing itself at a point beyond it. It would be interesting to see to what extent this constitutes an unparalleled way of 'modifying' the natural attitude and whether one can speak of a religious way (which could certainly not be more phenomenological in the strict sense) to reduction. But we have to leave all that for another time.

NOTES

[1] Here and in the following, 'faith' and 'religious experience' are used as almost equivalent terms. It should be kept in mind that when speaking of religious experience, it is meant specifically the act of believing in a pregnant sense, as expressed in the attitude of faith, with its implications. Other characteristic elements of religious experience, such as rituals etc., are in this way explicitly excluded.

[2] Here and in the following, we always refer to those forms of religious life in which the object of faith is transcendent in an absolute way.

[3] Regarding modes of belief and correlative modes of being see Husserl (1976), §§ 103-107.

[4] For these other modalities of belief see Husserl (1976), 239.

[5] Husserl in the sixth *Logical Investigation* (Husserl 1984) deals in detail with the dynamic between empty and intuitive intention as a central invariant structure of the theory of phenomenological knowledge, as well as with the issue of fulfilment.

[6] For these considerations see Husserl (1984), § 23.

[7] See section 2.

[8] This reading is quite consistent with Karl Barth's remarkable interpretation of the *Proslogion* (Barth 1981). In a context animated by the aspiration to affirm the terms of the difficult relationship between reason and faith and the role of theology, Barth sees in Anselm's attempt (against the usual line of interpretation that accentuates the rationalistic moment) not an effort to give a demonstration to the content of faith (as if it would need one), but a movement within faith itself that does not make it dependent on some rational demonstration, but assumes faith as the presupposition of any intellectual questioning of its content, thus guaranteeing at the same time its autonomy and legitimacy in the face of any rational treatment.

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Creation, Beginning and Time in the *Summa Theologiae*: Why Creation does not Imply the Beginning of the Universe?

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Abstract

The book of *Genesis* opens with the narrative of the creation of the universe and of the world. Beginning and time are crucial in this account. Applying his method of philosophical inquiry, Aquinas – who was targeted by the condemnations of Étienne Tempier – concluded that creation does not imply the beginning of the universe. In the *Summa Theologiae*, he expounded on this theme and put forward a theory as to why this is so. This article attempts to re-read this mediaeval debate, characterized by two antagonistic cosmogonic views – philosophical and doctrinal – through calculus, notably through the introduction of the limit notion, to which, in fact, Thomas does not adhere, but rather adopted an intermediate position. Grounded in contemporary cosmology, which endorses the beginning of the universe, the Biblical age of the world based on the genealogies contained therein tends to absolute present – a fact and not an act of faith – in terms of the actual age of the universe. Aquinas not only provided a position of 'modus vivendi' between philosophy and theology, but addressed a fundamental issue in the philosophy of science of cosmology.

Keywords: Aquinas, *Genesis*, eternity, philosophy, religion, universe, calculus

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Introduction

The book of *Genesis*, a narrative of "primaeval history" (Gen 1–11) and "ancestral history" (Gen 12–50) (Bergant 2013, xii), opens with the phrase "In the beginning" (Gen 1:1; *cf.* Holy Bible). The term, a transliteration of the ancient Greek word γένεσις (genesis), in ancient Hebrew is בְּרֵאשִׁית (Bereshit). Given that the definite article is missing but yet implied, it is translated as "In [the] beginning [of something]" (Blenkinsopp 2011, 30–31). Creation is "creatio continua", ongoing creation, with phases of un-creation and re-creation. This is one motif of "primaeval history" (Blenkinsopp 2011, 17); the second – related to the problem of evil (see Bianco 1963, Bianco 1968, Blenkinsopp 2011) – is beyond the aim of this research note. This article presents an assertion and aims to:

1. enquire why the mediaeval Dominican theologian and philosopher Thomas Aquinas (fl. 1225–1274)[1] considers that creation does not imply the beginning of the universe in the *Summa Theologiae* (*ST*)[2]; and
2. apply the mathematical concept of limit notion to the riddle of mediaeval cosmology regarding the eternity or temporality of the world. These cosmogonic views are respectively grounded in philosophy, notably Aristotle, and in the doctrinal teachings of the Scripture.

In this article, use was made of the edition translated by Timothy McDermott. Citations are stated in traditional Thomistic notation.

1. Terminology

Aquinas distinguished between 'Æternum' as referring to God (*ST* 1a. 10, 2) and 'æternum' as referring to creatures (*ST* 1a. 10, 3). The term can mean either temporal succession without beginning or end – endless time – or a mode of being which is not in time at all. This is an accurate translation of Aquinas. The first meaning belongs to the sphere of creatures, while the other is associated with God. Other useful terminology from the mediaeval lexicon includes the terms translated as 'eviternal' and 'sempiternal', the former meaning enduring forever, the later referring to infinite duration, that is, everlasting. If creatures are aeterna in any sense, then it is in the sense of temporal succession without beginning or end. There is a hypothetical character to this claim. To overcome this ambiguity, the world's 'aeternum' can be translated as 'everlasting', whilst the 'Æternum' of God can be treated as eternity; S/He endures eternally. The English word 'everlasting' often means unending, without any implication of not having a temporal beginning. God is prior to the world by priority of duration. His priority is of eternity and not of time (*ST* 1a. 46, 1 ad 8).

2. An issue in Mediaeval Christianity

The controversy over the eternity of the world was one of the significant themes debated during the Christian Middle Ages. The historical context was the rediscovery of, and the subsequent renewed commentaries on, Aristotle (fl. 384–322) notably by the Muslim polymath and jurist Averroes (fl. 1126–1198). Aristotle argued for the eternal duration of the cosmos, a notion which was in conflict with the Scripture. Also, attention is drawn to the notion of participation in mediaeval philosophy, with hints of Neoplatonism and its connection to the Christian doctrine of creation and *Genesis* (see *Liber de causis).*[3] The universal incompatibility of Aristotle with Christian doctrine led to the 1277 condemnation by Stephen Tempier, who prohibited the teaching of 219 philosophical and theological theses which were being debated at the time at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Paris. Aquinas was targeted by these condemnations (Hissette 1997).[4]

A publication on the thirteenth-century academic debate on the eternity of the world by Jakob Hans Josef Schneider (1999) has recently been issued in the reputable journal *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*. Schneider (1999) argues that the crucial issue the mediaeval scholars[5] – in particular, the eclectic scholar Henry of Ghent (fl. c. 1217–1293), the Franciscan friar Bonaventura (fl. 1221–1274),[6] Aquinas, the Augustinian friar Giles of Rome (fl. c. 1243 – 1316) and the Dominican friar Boethius of Dacia (fl. c. 13th century) – were addressing was the relationship between philosophy and theology, a debate which gradually led to the foundation of philosophy as a discipline independent from theology. An anthology of main texts on this controversial theme by these Christian thinkers, including Archbishop of Canterbury John Peckham (fl. c. 1230–1292) and the Franciscan friar William of Ockham (fl. c. 1287–1347), all in response to Aquinas' *De Aeternitate Mundi*, was published in Paris less than two decades ago (Michon 2004).

The cosmological debate centred on two antagonistic philosophical views: whether one can conclude that the world was created through reason only, or that it is impossible to do so as this proposition is an act of faith. It was an attempt by mediaeval scholars to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology – that is, to align reason with biblical revelation – to resolve the assertion that the Universe is eternal and uncreated with the thesis of the absolute beginning of the Universe. In *De Aeternitate Mundi*, Boethius of Dacia argued against the temporal beginning of the world and maintained that creation is not conceivable. The French school maintained that this cannot be the case, as it is logically proven that it is temporary. In *De Aeternitate Mundi*, Aquinas adhered to neither, instead adopting an intermediate position which reconciled these opposing views, by arguing that the creation of the world and the eternity of the world are not mutually exclusive from one another, but neither one can be proven; it is a matter of dogma. A recent study on this theme has been undertaken by Forment (2014), who claims that these three differing positions are grounded in the three varying responses put forward with respect to the issue of reason and faith.

3. Creation of the world in the *Summa Theologiae*

The universe had an absolute beginning, 'creatio ex nihilo' – "In the beginning God created heaven and earth" (Gen 1:1) – or beginning out of chaos – "Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and a divine wind sweeping over the waters" (Gen 1:2). This could be read as the state of the universe prior to creation (Bandstra 1999, 38–39), the context for his development project, planet earth. There is ambiguity in the Latin word 'initium', as it can mean temporal commencement or non-temporal origin. Two notions of beginning in the phasing of creation are present: beginning from the beginning and beginning from something else/development of what exists – creation out of nothingness and creation from something else.

As regards the definition given above, nothing except God can be eternal. Recalling *ST*, 1a 19.3, Aquinas restates that "absolutely speaking, it is not necessary that God should will anything except himself" (*ST*, 1a 46.1 resp.). He concludes that "there is no need for God to will anything other than himself" (Davis, 144). It is not necessary for God to will that the world should always exist. Furthermore, "since the necessity of the effect depends on the necessity of the cause" (*ST*, 1a 46.1 resp.), the world exists for as long as God wills it.

An everlasting effect such as the everlastingness of the world need not result from God's eternally being in action. An effect such as the existence of the world follows as ordered by his will. It is possible from the changeless (*ST*, 1a 46.1 ad 5) and eternal power to will of God to bring the existence of the world about at the time that it is eternally willed by him to be brought about (*ST*, 1a 46.1 ad 10). The "world was made by him" implies that it was preordained eternally by his will (*ST*, 1a 46.1 ad 9).

While remaining himself unchanged, God can produce a new effect. It is possible for a thing to be moved by God, for the new motion follows from God's will that that motion shall be (*ST*, 1a 46.1 ad 5). The eternity of God's will is different from the eternity of God. It seems that the 'aeternitas participata' is different from the 'aeternitas divina' – a kind of intermediary between it and 'aeternitas mundi'. God is said to be prior to the world by duration, that is, in terms of the mode of his existence, not necessarily in a temporal sense. Here the word 'primum' stands for a priority which is not of time but can be eternal; it is used here because eternity is thought of as imaginary time, and does not imply truly existing time: "There are two kinds of time: imaginary and real, the first being external to the material universe, and containing within itself all durations" (Phillips 1959, 120).

A substantive claim is that the world came into being without any change happening in the divine essence, because "the universe did not come out of God by a sort of natural necessity" but as the product of his willing it to be (Gilson 1955, 373). Since "there is no need for God to will anything but himself" (*ST*, 1a 46.1 resp., p.69), God need not have created an everlasting world. If God 'freely' willed the world, it is absolutely impossible to demonstrate that he 'necessarily' willed it, whether in time or in eternity. The only basis for holding that it has not always been in existence, according to Aquinas, is that God "made his will manifest to us by revelation upon which faith is founded," A conclusion cannot be reached by reason alone: "That the world has not always existed cannot be demonstratively proved but is held by faith alone" (*ST*, 1a 46.2 resp. p.79). Since God has made it known to humanity through revelation, believers must believe that the world had a temporal beginning because this is a matter of revelation, but one cannot demonstrate it and, strictly speaking, one does not 'know' it. On the contrary, Dodds (2008, 180) notes that in the 'sed contra' (*ST*, 1a 46.1 resp.), Aquinas cites the *Gospel of John* (17:5) and *Proverbs* (8:22). Is it a case that these must be taken literally?

4. Eternity of the world in Aquinas' thought

Nothing apart from God has existed for all eternity. Since God's will is the cause of things, the necessity of their being is that of God's willing them. The world exists as long as God wills it. It is not necessary for it to have existed for ever, because its existence is totally dependent on God's will. Its everlasting existence cannot be demonstratively proved. God's eternal will and decree to create a temporal world is known from revelation. Apart from revelation and faith, it may be proved that even a beginningless world is a created world, for everlasting matter, if it existed, would not be causeless matter; it would still have been by participation and not by necessity.

A seminal edited publication issued three decades ago addressed the theme of this section with respect to Aquinas' *De Aeternitate Mundi* through six comprehensive studies. De Grijs argues that this work is a theological rather than a philosophical text (De Grijs 1990, 1–8), a position opposed by Aertsen (1990, 9–19). This edited publication addresses the responses of his Christian contemporaries on the themes of eternity and infinity, namely Bonaventure (Van Veldhuijsen 1990a), William de la Mare (fl. 1272–1279)[7] (Hoenen 1990) and Richard of Middleton (fl. 1249–1308)[8] (Van Veldhuijsen 1990b) as well as the Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Henry of Harclay (fl. 1270–1317)[9] (Thijssen 1990). Enquiring into the infinite is "in itself a mathematical subject" (Thijssen 1990, 83).

> On the basis partly of considerations in logic and physics, and partly in the Christian doctrine of creation, Aquinas seems content to let physics reach its own conclusions in its own ways, even though theology may not always be able to accept them. Yet this issue, at least, is close enough in logical space to the heart of Christian doctrine that theology does not simply veto the conclusion of classical physics, but provides its own reason why it must be false: to posit an external world would be to put a creature where only the uncreated Verbum can be, in the beginning with God (John 1:2) (Marshall 2005, 23).

Citing Chenu (1970, 12), De Carvalho (1996, 53) notes that

> … Aquinas wanted to detail the reality, the truth and goodness of a creature as universally understood, against an important tradition that empasised the precariousness of a creature. His aim was to assure the dignity and the existence of God as well (Van Veldhuijsen 1990a, 30–33). It is on these lines that one can understand Aquinas' invention of a new word to define the created being 'aeternitas participata' (*ST*, 1a 10.2 ad 1).

For Aquinas, creation of the universe is not eternal from the standpoint of faith. A recent study proved that his position remained consistent through his other works – *Scriptum super Sententiis*, *Summa contra Gentiles* and *Summa Theologiae* – although it becomes more profound (Neacşu 2013). From the standpoint of reason, Aristotelian philosophy advocating eternal motion and an eternal world is not conclusive either.

5. An attempt to resolve the controversy by means of the limit notion

Aristotle's notion of infinity was a philosophical one; he distinguished between potential and actual infinity, accepting the former as a mathematical concept whilst, according to Bostock (1972-1973), refuting the existence of actual infinity. For example, with respect to the arrow paradox of Zeno of Elea (fl. 490–430), Aristotle argued in *Physics* (Greek: *Φυσικὴ* *ἀκρόασις*; Latin: *Physica*, or *Naturales Auscultationes*) that "time is not composed of indivisible nows any more than any other magnitude is composed of indivisibles" (Book VI. Part 9, verse 239b5).[10] His notion of infinity lacked the precise formulation which was introduced through the refinements brought by infinitesimal calculus – notably through the work of Isaac Newton (1642–1727) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) whose responses were based on initial physical and algebraic intuition respectively (Bagni 2005). Another significant arithmetical concept relating to calculus is the limit notion, which, historically, was often related to sequences and series.[11] For example, Gregory of St Vincent (1584–1667) referred to Zeno's paradox of Achilles and the Turtle in his *Opus Geometricum* as a geometric series (Bagni 2005).

Augustin Louis Cauchy (1789–1857), the first mathematician to undertake a rigorous study of calculus (Bagni 2005), defined limit and infinitesimal in the *Cours d'analyse* (Cauchy 1882) thus: "When values of a variable approach indefinitely a fixed value, as close as we want, this is the limit of all those values. For instance, an irrational number is the limit of the different fractions that gave approximate values of it. […] When values of a variable are […] lower than any given number, this variable is an infinitesimal or an infinitesimal magnitude. The limit of such variable is zero." (Bottazzini, Freguglia & Toti Rigatelli 1992, 327-328, Bagni 2005, 459)

Now, regardless of whether the world (Un) is temporal or eternal, it is surely a function of time t, that is, Un = $f(t)$. Applying the limit notion, these two positions may be reformulated thus:

A. Limit as t tends to infinity:

If Un is eternal, $f(t)$ approaches infinity as t approaches infinity, or, using standard notation:

$$\lim_{t \to \infty} f(t) = \infty$$

where, the = sign is an indicator and not an equal; in the limit, t cannot actually converge to infinity but it approaches infinity, that is, $f(t)$ is limitless, that is eternal.

B. Limit as t tends to a:

If Un is temporal, *f(t)* approaches *y* as *t* approaches *a*, or, using standard notation:

$$\lim_{t \to a} f(t) = y$$

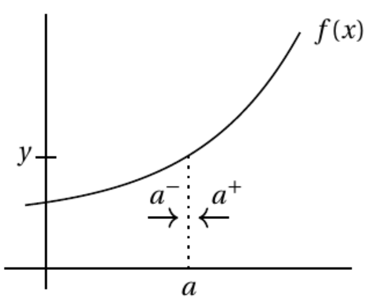
where:

i. *y* in the limit of *f(t)* does exist, that is, the state of the Universe at creation at time *a*; and

ii. the = sign is an indicator and not an equal; in the limit, *t* actually converges to *a*, that is, *f(t)* is limited, hence it had a beginning.

Contemporary cosmology endorses the premise that the universe had a beginning; the Earth's initial formation is estimated to be between 4.6 and 4.5 billion years old.[12] Geologic timescales include the Hadean Eon, an informal interval which spans from about 4.6 to 4.0 billion years ago; formal geologic time commences with the Archean Eon (4.0 to 2.5 billion years ago) (Britannica 2020), and continues into the contemporary Anthropocene which, applying the argument of Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen (1933–2021), began in the latter part of the eighteenth century (Crutzen 2002). This implies that, the limit of *f(t)* tends to a finite number *a* as *t* tends to 4.6 billion years, which is indeed an incredibly long time. One may indeed argue that positions A and B are related:

If *a* is the time of creation, even when taking into account that the age of the universe tends to infinity, there is a continuum, that is, when *t* tends to ∞, the limit of *f(x)* as *t* tends to a^- is equal to the limit of *f(x)* as *t* tends to a^+.



Infinity is a notion and not a number and, conversely, its reciprocal, that is 1/∞, is undefined. Yet, one can still approach ∞ by trying to converge to ∞ by attempting a large value of *t*:

t		$^1/t$	
4	4×10^0	$^1/4$	2.5×10^{-1}
4,000	4×10^3	$^1/4{,}000$	2.5×10^{-4}
4,000,000	4×10^6	$^1/4{,}000{,}000$	2.5×10^{-7}
4,000,000,000	4×10^9	$^1/4{,}000{,}000{,}000$	2.5×10^{-10}

One notes that as *t* increases, its reciprocal approaches 0 but it is not equal to 0, that is:

$$\lim_{t\to\infty}\left(\frac{1}{t}\right) = 0$$

In this context, the limit of a function is a dynamic process leading to potential infinity and the infinitesimal. One may think of billion-year calendars; likewise, million-year calendars, thousand-year calendars, and so on.[13] These geological timescales are immensely large as compared to when Hominins appeared 6 and 5.3 million years ago, that is during the Miocene epoch, much earlier to the earliest dating in archaeological chronology; "in terms of … geological timescales, archaeological time is absolute present" (Bianco 2017, 9), or in limit language, the Biblical age of the world based on genealogies contained therein approaches absolute present as the age of Earth approaches Hadean Eon. This is a scientific fact and not an act of faith and thus one may argue that the Aquinas' notions of the beginning of the world and the eternity of the universe is not mutually exclusive. Thus, Aquinas's decision to opt for partial cosmological agnosticism is a valid position from the standpoint of science. In this context, one may argue that he did not only put forward a position for the mutual coexistence of philosophy and theology, but that his stance is fundamental in the philosophy of the science of cosmology and central to the foundation of science.

Conclusion

This article exposes the main thrust of Aquinas's argument, which is based on the assertion that creation exists because of God's will, and that creation – even if it were without beginning – is only known through revelation, and exists by participation in God. This is a fideistic interpretation of

Aquinas that does not engage with the philosophical reflection which he developed in the *De Aeternitate Mundi* whereby he reflects on the distinction between creation and having a beginning. Does creation really exist only because God wills it? This may be a theological claim, based on revelation, but one has to acknowledge the importance of the debate presented by Aristotle as commented on by Averroes, that implied that the world was without beginning.

The beginning of the universe is a central issue in cosmology. Both mediaeval and contemporary cosmology hold that it had a beginning. For Aquinas and other theists, this is an 'absolute' beginning – the prime mover and first cause is God – whilst a number of theories are postulated by today's science. One way to comprehend the two antagonistic mediaeval cosmogonic views is not through the philosophical notion of infinity but through the mathematical one. Applying the limit notion to the eternity and temporality of the world, it can be argued that Aquinas's position converges with Aristotle's when taking note of the contemporary cosmological assumption that the universe had a beginning in time – albeit on a different timescale from that given in the Scripture. The mathematical notion of ∞ introduced a refined concept of infinity, a function that can approach 0 but is never equal to it. In this context, the author concurs with Thijssen's position, cited above (Thijssen 1990, 83), that Aquinas let science takes its course independently of the Christian doctrine contained in the Scripture. In doing so, Aquinas did address a major theme in the philosophy of science of cosmology that was essential for the foundation of science.

NOTES

[1] Aquinas' textual commentaries on Aristotle were drafted at a time when the Latin translations of his works made their way to the West. This Aristotelian corpus led to reexamination of the relation between reason and faith resulting in a new 'modus vivendi' between philosophy and theology until the advent of the science of physics. He disputed both the interpretations of Aristotle by followers of the Islamic scholar Ibn Rushd (fl. 1126–1198), better known as Averroes, and the predisposition of the Franciscans to reject Aristotelianism.

[2] According to Gilson, Aquinas was "one of the three great metaphysicians who ever existed", the others being Plato and Aristotle (Gilson 1938, 324).
[3] The *Liber de Causis*, a treatise on Neoplatonist metaphysics, influenced mediaeval philosophy along certain paths of thought – in particular, the theory of ultimate causes and the introduction of the metaphysical principles of monotheism – leading to a metaphysical reinterpretation of Neoplatonist philosophy.
[4] In 1270 and 1277, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Paris and the former Chancellor of the Sorbonne, Etienne Tempier (fl. ?–1279), known as Stephanus of Orleans, condemned his doctrines, which were being disputed at the University of Paris.
[5] Two leading branches of Scholasticism were Neoplatonism and Aristotelianism. The Franciscan school endorsed the former philosophy, mainly read through Augustine of Hippo (fl. 354–430), whilst the Dominican school supported the latter. Averroes was a staunch proponent of Aristotelianism and vehemently opposed the Neoplatonism of earlier Islamic scholars like Al-Farabi (fl. c. 872–c. 950) and Ibn Sina (fl. 980 -1037), known in the West as Alpharabius and Avicenna respectively.
[6] Bonaventure's ideas – significantly influenced by Augustine of Hippo – converged with those of Albert the Great and Aquinas on a number of theological and philosophical issues. He concurred with the former in reading theology as an applied science and disagreed with the later that philosophy (reason) is independent of theology (faith). For him, philosophy was the handmaid of theology; it was the 'praeparatio evangelica'. Bonaventure rejected the Aristotelian notion of the eternity of the world and thus differed from Aquinas with respect to the abstract notion of an eternal universe. An authoritative concise scholarly research on the philosophy of Bonaventure and Aquinas, published in two parts, was penned by Callus (1940a; 1940b).
[7] De la Mare was influenced by Bonaventura and Roger Bacon (fl. c. 1220–1292). In 1277–9, de la Mare wrote the *Correctorium*, or *Reprehensorium*, a work critical of Aquinas. In 1282, this work was prescribed by the Franciscan Order to be read along with Aquinas work. Unlike Aquinas, he argued the 'principium individuationis' is form and not matter.
[8] Richard of Middleton was significantly influenced by Bonaventure and Aquinas. Although his philosophy was indebted to Neoplatonism, he concurred with Aquinas when including Aristotelian notions in his philosophy.
[9] Henry of Harclay was significantly influenced by the Franciscan John Duns Scotus (fl. 1265/66–1308), his philosophy teacher at the Sorbonne. He defended the theory that "the world and movement could have existed from all eternity" and asserted that "God [has] the power to do anything that is known not to include a contradiction or that is not known to include [one]" (Harclay 2008, 753).
Callus, the first member of the Dominican Order to receive a degree from the University of Oxford since the Reformation (Bianco, 2020), had undertaken pioneering research in Aristotelian learning in the thirteenth century at his alma mater (Callus, 1938; Callus, 1943) including the subsequent condemnation of Aquinas at the same university (Callus, 1946).

[10] Although philosophers, such as Alba Papa-Grimaldi, argue that the paradoxes of the Zeno are metaphysical problems (Papa-Grimaldi 1996), scientists – such as Carl Boyer – argue that they are mathematical problems which are resolved through calculus (Boyer 1959), notably the notion of a convergent infinite series (Burton 2010).

[11] The historical roots of the limit notion with respect to the development of its representation registers and cognitive development are the subject of a study by Bagni (2005). Citing Tall (1985) and Tall & Vinner (1981), he notes that "the limit process is intuitive from the mathematical point of view, but not from the cognitive one sometimes cognitive images conflict with the formal definition of limit. The limit of a function is often considered as a dynamic process, so it is considered in the sense of potential infinity and infinitesimal" (Bagni 2005, 454).

[12] Indeed, using radiometric dating, scientists discovered rocks in northwestern Canada and in Australia which are about 4.0 and 4.3 billion years old respectively. Rocks from the moon and meteorites that have landed on Earth are dated to between 4.5 and 4.4 billion years ago. This supports the claim that bodies in the solar system may have formed at similar times. (Bodies in the solar system formed later than those in other parts of the universe; the universe is thought to have formed 13.8 billion years ago).

[13] Based on the genealogies contained in the two versions of *Genesis*, the world was created about 5500 BC and about 4000 BC according to the Greek Old Testament and the Hebrew/Aramaic Masoretic text respectively. According to both versions, the creation of the world is presented as a development project undertaken in seven phases – from Day 0 (the beginning, that is, forming the context of creation) to Day 7 (the final phase, that is, completion of creation). These phases can be further read in terms of environmental monitoring and audit by the Creator (Bianco 2021).

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Al-Ghazālī's View on Causal Necessity and the Theory of Divine Custom

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Abstract

Amongst Muslim theologians, the Ash'arite theological school in general and al-Ghazālī, in particular, opposed the necessity between cause and effect and rejected it by proposing the alternative theory of "Divine custom". The purpose of this article is to examine the motivations, arguments and critiques of al-Ghazālī's view in denying the causal necessity and the theory of Divine custom. The findings of the present study show that his main motivation in opposing the causal necessity was theological teachings such as miracles, God's omnipotent and active monotheism. This research paper is a library-based theoretical analysis reviewing and examining al-Ghazālī's written works to produce an account of his view on causal necessity. Then, critiques raised by Averroes on al-Ghazālī's view will be evaluated, and at the end, a proposal will be made to develop al-Ghazālī's view.

Keywords: Causal necessity, Ash'arites, Al-Ghazālī, Islamic theology, divine custom

Introduction

The principle of causality is one of the oldest philosophical and theological issues and at the same time one of the most important philosophical principles. This principle is the foundation of all human scientific and intellectual endeavors. Because any intellectual effort made by scientists to find out how things and phenomena communicate with each other and are linked between themselves is based on this principle. In definition cause is said to be something that from its existence, the existence of something else called effect occurs. (Al-Farabi, *Al-Talighāt*, n.d.: 6). And in the definition of causality, it is stated: causality is a relationship between two beings in the sense that the existence of one is necessary and dependent on the other. In this connection, the dependent is called effect and the independent is called the cause. (Avicenna 1981, 11)

The proponents of the principle of causality, in addition to trying to prove the relationship between beings and events, claim several propositions for this principle:

A) Causal necessity: There is a necessary relationship between cause and effect in existence, that is, whenever the complete cause of an effect is occurred, the effect will necessarily follow it; and if we see an effect as existing, we will inevitably conclude that the cause has already been taken place. In philosophy, necessity is as follows: What is necessary, is the permanent existence that without that it can never be found at any time. If fire necessarily has the property of burning, it means that in the past, present and future, this property accompanies it, and the result is that, with the fulfillment of the conditions of effect, it is impossible for fire not to burn.

B) Appropriateness: In the sense that between each cause and its effect, there is consistency and proportion that is, each cause has a specific effect and each effect arises from a specific cause, not every cause produces every effect or every effect arises from any cause. The principle of appropriateness implies that the system of existence is a regular and lawful system, each component of which has a special place (Tusi and Razi 1984, vol. 1, 232).

1. Al-Ghazālī and the denial of causal necessity

According to how the principle of causality is often explained, if we interpret the principle of causality as a necessary connection between cause and effect, we can say that its first deniers in Islamic world were the theological school of Ash'arites who had a theological impetus. Imam Mohammad al-Ghazālī al-Tusi (1056-1111), one of the leading scientific figures of the Ash'arites, is the pioneer of all those who deny the causal necessity. In a way, al-Ghazālī accepts the relationship between cause and effect in phenomena and interprets it as following the Sunnah of God or the will of God. He says that it is the divine custom and tradition that creates heat as a product of fire. Fire has no effect on creating heat, but heat, like fire itself, is doomed to God's providence and will, and the symmetry of these two wills and desires has become the source of the idea of the principle of causality. What al-Ghazālī denies is a necessary connection between cause and effect. He believed that by accepting the causal necessity, one could not believe in the Miracle and absolute power of God. According to al-Ghazālī, the necessary relationship between cause and effect conflicts with these two certain Islamic teachings. In the Miracle of Moses' staff becoming a serpent, the principle of necessity between cause and effect has been violated, because it is obvious that serpents do not necessarily come from a staff. To defend the occurrence of a Miracle, one must deny the necessity of causation, or provide an explanation that justifies the causal necessity without violating it.

Saad al-Din Taftazani, an Ash'arite thinker of the eighth century AH, the author and commentator of the book *Sharh al-Maqāssid*, discusses the impact of physical forces and goes on to say: in our view, physical forces do not have any effect, and therefore the emergence of their actions is not conditional on the situation (i.e. effective and affected confrontation), and the continuity of those actions is not restrained, because God can create the effect permanently without confrontation (Taftāzānī, 1992, vol. 2, 106).

Given that appropriateness means that not every phenomenon is the cause of every phenomenon and every event does not follow every event, but there must be a proportion between cause and effect; the question that arises is whether the Ash'arites, while denying the necessity of cause and effect, also deny the necessity of the appropriateness between cause and effect or not. Ash'arites' answer is that the appropriateness is void just as necessity is; that is, as the infinite power and absolute divine will does not require the creation of any event to follow another event, it also does not require a particular event to follow another particular event, and may choose any event to follow any other event.

By using the case of the burning of cotton on contact with fire, which has already been used as an illustration by Abū al-Hudhayl and Jubbāī and the majority of the people of the Kalam in their denial of causality (Al-Ashʿarī 1929, 312), al-Ghazālī , one of the most prominent figures in Ash'ari theology, argues that there is no proof that the fire is the cause of the burning, for "the only proof that the philosophers have is the observation of the occurrence of the burning when there is a contact with the fire, but observation proves only that the burning occurs when there is a contact with the fire; it does not prove that it occurs because of the contact with the fire." (Al-Ghazālī 2000, XVII, 279) He thus concludes that it is God who "by His will creates the burning of the cotton at the time of its contact with the fire" (ibid. 283), and what is true of fire and its burning of cotton is true of any other succession of events.

2. Al-Ghazālī's theological motivation for opposing causal necessity

According to al-Ghazālī, accepting the necessary relationship between fire and heat, for example, means that in the fact of fire, there is no escaping heat, even if God does not want it to be so. Al-Ghazālī rejects the necessary relationship between cause and effect in natural beings under the heading of natural sciences in the book *Tahaft al-Falasifah* [The Incoherence of the Philosophers], and believes that accepting the necessity between cause and effect conflicts with accepting two obvious theological beliefs: One is the occurrence of a miracle and the second is the absolute power of God. The conflict is in the first case, which is the relationship between cause and effect, because it is based on the miracles such as dragging a staff, reviving the dead, and splitting the moon. According to causal necessity, all of these miracles should be impossible. At the beginning of the seventeenth issue of *Tahaft al-Falasifah*, al-Ghazālī states his most influential argument against necessary connection thesis as follows:

> In our view, the connection between what are believed to be the cause and the effect is not necessary. Take any two things. This is not That; nor can That be This. The affirmation of one does not imply the affirmation of the other; nor does its denial imply the denial of the other. The existence of one is not necessitated by the existence of the other; nor its non-existence by the non-existence of the other. Take for instance, any two things, such as the quenching of thirst and drinking; ... They are connected as the result of the Decree of God (holy be His name), which preceded their existence. (Al-Ghazālī 2003, 243; my translation)

Al-Ghazālī also considers one of the consequences of accepting the causal necessity as a rejection of the Creativity of God. He states that the analysis of philosophers not only cannot prove the existence of a wise creator God, but also leads to the denial of the existence of a creator, that is, God (see ibid. 134-154). Thus, al-Ghazālī's conflict with philosophers on the issue of causality is a theological issue, for the sake of maintaining belief in miracles and absolute power of God as well as the Unity.

3. Interpretation of the uniformity of nature and the symmetry of beings and events

According to al-Ghazālī, the uniformity of natural phenomena, the symmetry and the simultaneous occurrence of two events is due to divine providence, not based on the necessity between the two, and this is called "Divine custom". Divine custom requires that things in the world be done contingently, but not in a necessary way. Therefore, God has the power and ability to do otherwise, just as in a miracle, God wills contrary to custom. He cites the example of the non-burning of Prophet Abraham (Arabic: Ibrāhīm إِبْرَاهِيمُ) and interprets it contrary to the custom, saying that when God does not want Prophet Abraham to burn, he has the power to either change the feature of fire or change the feature of the body of Abraham. He says:

> We make it clear that fire is created in such a way that whenever two similar cotton meets it, it burns both and there is no difference between the two, because they are similar in every way, but we consider it permissible with all this, that a prophet be thrown into the fire and not burned, whether by changing the attribute of fire or by changing the attribute of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or by God or the angels in the fire, an attribute that reduces the heat of the fire on his body, so that his body should not penetrate and the heat of fire should be left behind and it should be in the form and truth of fire, but it should not show its effect and warmth, or in the body of the Prophet, they should create an attribute that repels the effect of fire. (ibid. 249; my translation)

4. Rejection of the philosophers' argument for the necessary connection

Al-Ghazâlî accepts the view that a natural cause has a nature that brings about certain effects: fire, for instance, has a nature such that it burns cotton. But this does not require that fire is a necessary cause. The nature of fire itself derives from God, and God chooses whether or not this nature will bring about its normal effect or not. This means that according to al-Ghazâlî's view, natural causes are only contingently causes.

According to al-Ghazālī, natural phenomena do not involve necessary connections, and gives an example as follows: For we allow the possibility of the occurrence of the contact without the burning, and we allow as possible the occurrence of the cotton's transformation into burnt ashes without contact with the fire. [The philosophers], however, deny the possibility of this (Al-Ghazālī 2000, 166–7).

Al-Ghazālī asks the philosophers who claim the necessity between cause and effect (for example, the combustion between fire and cotton) for the reason that proves necessity. Then he himself answers that the only reason for the claimants of necessity is to observe the symmetry of the two events, while observation only indicates the attainment of this symmetry, not the proof of the necessity between them. The cause of the occurrence of this symmetry is divine providence and will.

> Therefore, what is the reason that fire is active, and there is no reason for them, except to observe the attainment of combustion at the time of meeting the fire, and observation implies that attainment is at that time and does not imply that attainment is for the sake of it or from it, and he has no reason other than that (Al-Ghazālī 2003, 244; my translation).

In al-Ghazālī's example of fire and cotton, in any case, where cotton is exposed to fire, God creates burning in it, and cotton acquires this, meaning that burning is not in its nature. The real agent, in any case, is God Almighty.

In his argument al-Ghazālī gives an example: if a veil is covering the blind eyes of a person that has not been made aware of the difference between day and night, and if during a day the veil is removed from his eyes and he opens his eyelids to see colors, he thinks that the agent of perception resulting from the colorful forms in his eyes is the opening of the eyes. What if his eyes are healthy and open, and the veil is open, and the object in front of him is colored, he necessarily sees, and does not think that he does not see, until the time when the sun sets to make the surroundings dark, he then realizes that the real reason for the color meeting his eyes was the sunlight.

Hence, how does the rival know that there are no causes and causes in the foundations of existence that these events are manifested during the meeting between them? ... And it is from here that their scholars (philosophers) have come to the conclusion that these deviations and events, which occur at the time of the encounter between objects, and in general, at the time of the difference in proportions, are inferred only by the Gift givers. Therefore, the claim of the one who claimed that fire is the agent of burning in his soul, and the bread, the agent of satiety, and medicine, is the agent of truth, and also other than these, is void (*cf*. ibid. 246).

According to al-Ghazālī, if we attribute the events of this world to the direct will of God, then the question arises as to how one can believe in the order and lawfulness of the natural world. Al-Ghazālī's answer to this question is expressed by the term custom, which is a translation of the Greek word ethos. Custom refers to the fact that events do not always occur, but often happen in a specific way. According to him, it is possible that the "custom" will be broken by miracles.

5. The source of belief in the causal necessity between phenomena and events

Al-Ghazālī then seeks to answer a question from the epistemological view of causality that asks for the source of the belief in a causal necessity between phenomena and events. In response, he says that God has created in us a knowledge that, due to the recurring observation of the symmetry between things, we assume causal necessity between them. That is, the mental habit becomes the source of the belief in the necessity between cause and effect in us. However, such a necessity does not exist objectively. He says:

> God Almighty has created a knowledge for us that these contingent things do not do those things naturally, and we do not claim that these things are obligatory, but that they may or may not happen, and that the habit of continuing them, one after the other will continue. Another in our minds has permeated their flow according to the past habits so that it cannot be separated from them. (ibid. 248)

Al-Ghazālī added that constant occurrence of habits, leaves in our mind the strong impression that their flow will continue according to the past habit. (Al-Ghazālī 2003, XVII, 285)

From this, it can be understood that custom theory is derived from imperfect induction or experience. According to al-Ghazālī, experience is different from perception. Because there is a Judgment in experience, but it is not in perception; we often see a stone fall to the ground, but due to the repetition of the same sequence of events, we make a generalization that every stone falls to the ground. It cannot be perceived through the senses. It is reason that issues a judgment. The reason, due to the repetition of tangible events through a hidden analogy that if there was no cause, this event should not happen in most cases and nothing happens in most cases; based on this secret analogy, reason will issue a general ruling that in the future the situation will be the same. However, since we have not examined all the cases, we cannot issue a necessary and definite judgment, but our judgment is a possible judgment, a probability that happens in most cases, but from the reason point of view it is possible to do the opposite. Therefore, from an ontological point of view, the relationship between causes and effects is not necessary. However, from an epistemological point of view, to repeat the observation of the symmetries of causes and effects objectively and to accustom our minds to seeing these symmetries, the mind dictates the necessity between them and expects that in the future, as in the past, the causes and effects will be realized uniformly.

Therefore, Bāqelānī believes that custom has a complete dependence on the knowledge of the agent on the one hand and the existence of an object on the other. In other words, we can talk about the custom when there are two of the following characteristics: a) an object or an event repeatedly continues to exist outside; b) there must be a world and the knowledge of that world be repeatedly associated to this object or accident. Bāqelānī's word on this is: “And the intention is on the truth, but it is the repetition of the knowledge of the world and the existence of the object of obedience to the one and only way, but with the repetition of the one and only.” (Bāqelānī 1958, 10; my translation)

6. Averroes' response to al-Ghazālī's criticism

As mentioned earlier, Aristotelian natural philosophy relies in part on repeated observation in constructing the principle of causation. Ashʿarite theologians deny such the principle on the basis of the repeated observation of accompaniment and contend that it is not evidence of causation. In *Incoherence of the Philosophers* by distinguishing different positions, al-Ghazālī argues as follows:

> The first position is for the opponent to claim that the agent of the burning is the fire alone, it being an agent by nature [and] not by choice—hence, incapable of refraining from [acting according to] what is in its nature after contacting a substratum receptive of it. And this is one of the things we deny. On the contrary, we say: [t]he one who enacts the burning by creating blackness in the cotton, [causing] separation in its parts, and making it cinder or ashes is God, either through the mediation of His angels or without mediation. (Al-Ghazālī 2000, 167)

In the *Incoherence of the Incoherence*, section of "about the natural sciences" (first discussion), Averroes, the most prominent medieval Muslim Aristotelian, responds to al-Ghazālī's criticism of the philosophers' account of causal necessity as follows:

> Further, are the acts which proceed from all things absolutely necessary for those in whose nature it lies to perform them, or are they only performed in most cases or in half the cases? This is a question which must be investigated, since one single action-and-passivity between two existent things occurs only through one relation out of an infinite number, and it happens often that one relation hinders another. Therefore, it is not absolutely certain that fire acts when it is brought near a sensitive body, for surely it is not improbable that there should be something which stands in such a relation to the sensitive thing as to hinder the action of the fire, as is asserted of talc and other things. But one need not therefore deny fire its burning power so long as fire keeps its name and definition. (Averroes 1954, 318–19)

Although Averroes holds that natural substances, such as fire, are causes, he asserts that given fire's nearness to cotton, it does not necessarily nor certainly burn the cotton, because there may be an impediment, for instance the cotton could be covered in talc, which hinders the action of the fire. By this, he means that, if the impediment is lacking the burning would necessarily and certainly would take place. Therefore, Averroes' response to al-Ghazālī's argument against necessary connection is that al-Ghazālī misreports the philosophers' account of causal necessity in nature. According to his own interpretation of the philosophers' account of causal necessity, he claims that the philosophers' account is true.

7. Averroes' critique of the arguments of the deniers of causality

Averroes criticizes the Ash'arite theologians' denial of causality by five arguments:

1- In his first argument, Averroes' criticism of al-Ghazâlî is that if we consider natural causes as contingently causes, there is no possibility for human knowledge. He stated that if al-Ghazâlî's denial of causality is accepted, there is no true knowledge of anything, because true knowledge (*yaqînî*) is the knowledge of the thing according to what it is in itself in reality (see Averroes 1954, 325). In *The Incoherence of the Incoherence* in response to the skeptical argument, Averroes says:

> Logic implies the existence of causes and effects, and knowledge of these effects can only be rendered perfect through knowledge of their causes. Denial of cause implies the denial of knowledge, and denial of knowledge implies that nothing in this world can be really known, and that what is supposed to be known is nothing but opinion, that neither proof nor definition exist, and that the essential attributes which compose definitions are void. The man who denies the necessity of any item of knowledge must admit that even this, his own affirmation, is not necessary knowledge. (Averroes 1954, 319)

To respond Averroes' objection to al-Ghazâlî, we could say that it does not seem to be relevant. Averroes argues that al-Ghazâlî rejected the possibility of knowledge, but as it mentioned above, al-Ghazâlî does not in fact completely reject natures; he maintains that natural causes bring about certain effects, but this nature and causation are always subject to God's will. If natures only possibly bring about their effects, then our knowledge of them is not necessary, but only probable.

McGinnis defends al-Ghazālī against Averroes' argument and remarks that while Averroes' argument from natural science may succeed against some versions of the skeptical argument, it is not clear that it succeeds against its immediate target, al-Ghazālī's skeptical argument. The latter argument may leave open the possibility that natural bodies, such as fire, are causes (McGinnis 2007). Because in his argument al-Ghazālī does not deny that fire is a cause of the burning; rather, he denies that the fire alone is the agent of burning. So, the fire is the agent based on God's will. Likewise, Stephen Riker says "The only type of causality Ghazālī denies is necessary causality, whereby the omnipotence of God is constrained by the natural order which God Himself created (Riker 1996, 322).

According to this interpretation, al-Ghazālī's view is that natural causes do not bring about their effects necessarily alone. He also considers divine choice and God's will in terms of phenomena and particular events. So, Averroes' argument from natural science does not succeed against al-Ghazālī's skeptical argument. Al-Ghazālī does not deny the relationship between cause and effect, which requires the denial of scientific knowledge. What al-Ghazālī denies is the connection of necessary between natural causes and their effects, so that their nature is independent and necessarily of a particular effect. Al-Ghazālī believes that God's will and providence is that every object must have a special effect, although God is able to destroy the will of a particular cause or not to affect the cause in certain circumstances. This is something that may happen in miracles, although it is traditionally impossible because it happens against the custom, and that is why the miracle is called breaking custom.

2- In his second argument, Averroes also says: "To deny causes altogether is to alienate from human nature that which properly belongs to it." (Averroes 1859, 112; my translation)

Responding to this argument is similar to that of his first argument. Al-Ghazālī does not deny the cause-and-effect relationship in general. He accepts the principle governing the relationship between objects, but with a description of the possibilities, of course, although not with a necessity of description. In fact, this criticism is based on the view that denies the cause-and- effect relationship at all, whereas what al-Ghazālī denies is not the cause-and-effect relationship, it is the necessary relationship between cause and effect.

3- Al-Ghazālī has discredited his statement by denying the causality. Averroes cites al-Ghazālī's statement that "… the men of truth, who believe that the world came into being and know by logical necessity that which comes into being does not come into being by itself but needs a Maker." (Averroes 1952, IV, 133; my translation) This argument of Averroes refers to al-Ghazālī's argument regarding the creation of the world. The same phrase of al-Ghazālī cited by Averroes clearly shows that al-Ghazālī believed in the relationship between cause and effect.

Here, too, Averroes' argument is erroneous. What al-Ghazālī and other Ash'arite theologians deny is the necessity between natural causes and natural effects in God's creatures, not any relationship between natural causes and effects, nor the causal relationship between God and creatures, which is the subject of discussion in the argument of the creation of the world.

4- "It is obvious that objects have essences and attributes which determine the specific actions and by them the essences, names and definitions of objects differ from each other. Accordingly, if an object has no special act and special nature, it would not have its own name and definition, and the result will be that all things would be the same." (Averroes 1954, XVII)

This argument can also be dismissed, because al-Ghazālī does not deny that certain objects or specific phenomena have specific properties, but he believes that these properties and proportions between causes and effects are based on the divine custom, not based on the natural necessity of objects and phenomena, so with God's will and providence it is possible that they will occur contrary to the expectations of custom.

5- In his fifth argument, Averroes tries to refute three possible meanings of the theory of custom: (1) that it is the custom of God to act repeatedly in the same way; (2) that it is the custom of things to come into existence repeatedly in the same way; (3) that it is the custom of man to form a judgment that the coming of things into existence is repeatedly in the same way. In refuting the first meaning he says: "if custom is used in the sense of its being the custom of God, it would follow that God had acquired the custom to act repeatedly in the same way by His having acted often in that same way, for custom is a habit which an agent acquires and from which a repetition of his act follows often.” But acquisition requires change in God, and would be contrary to the Qur’anic teachings: Thou shalt not find any change in the way of God; yea, thou shalt not find any variations in the way of God. (35: 40, 41). If they mean that it is a custom in existent things, then [they are wrong, for] custom applies only to an animate being, and if it is used regarding an inanimate object, its real meaning is nature, but this is not being denied (by philosophers), that is to say, [it is not at all denied by the philosophers] that existing things have nature which determines the [action of each] thing either necessarily [that is, always] or for the most part (Averroes 1954, XVII). Averroes argues against the third possible meaning of the theory of custom in the following way:

> If the term custom means judging existing things, it is nothing but the act of reason, but philosophers do not deny such a habit. Therefore, the acts that is the result of habit must rightly be hypothetical. But if this were the case, then all existing things would be hypothetical and there would not be in them any wisdom from which it might be inferred the wisdom of the Creator. (ibid. XVII)

In the encounter with these problems, we can defend al-Ghazālī, that according to the divine custom, the universe and all its components are uniform, and that the uniformity of natural phenomena, of two events being symmetrical and simultaneous, is all due to divine providence and is not based on the necessity between them. This is what al-Ghazālī calls the divine custom. Therefore, God has the power and the will to do otherwise, just as in a miracle, God wills against the habits. Custom refers to the fact that events do not always occur, but often in a specific way. According to him, it is possible to break it with miracles. The theory of divine custom does not mean chaos and lawlessness in natural phenomena. From all these five problems set forth by Averroes on al-Ghazālī's views and the answers I posed, it is clear that Averroes’ critiques do not have the sufficient strength and by no means can dismiss al-Ghazālī's doctrine.

8. Monotheism of Actions (*al-tawhid al-af'ali*), and the relation of the activity of God and the activity of creatures

As it has been shown in the discussions so far, the main motive of Ash'arites in general and al-Ghazālī in particular in denying the necessary relationship between cause and effect was a theological impetus, to defend Islamic teachings such as miracles, absolute power of God and monotheism. Al-Ghazālī's theory of divine custom seems to be more defensible, including the belief in the monotheism of actions (*al-tawhid al-af'ali*). The monotheism (unity) of actions means that the occurrence of all actions in the universe, such as creation, provision, contemplation, etc., originates from a single origin and their only true and independent effect is the Holy essence of God. No creature other than Him is independent in his actions. Questions may arise as to whether the activity of the creatures in the universe, such as plants, animals and humans, is incompatible with the activity of God. If we consider all actions as divine actions, does this not contradict human free will? How is the role of natural factors justified? For example, in the creation of a tree, the intervention of things such as sunlight, soil, oxygen, water, etc. is necessary, and without them, a tree will never exist. The answer is that in the world of matter and nature, God's actions are mediated by natural conditions and preconditions. In fact, God's will is that actions be mediated by natural factors. In other words, the activity must be divided into two types: longitudinal activity, and transverse activity. Transverse activity is like several people doing something without interdependence. For example, several architects build several separate buildings without interdependence. Longitudinal activity means that multiple agents do something dependently that is not possible without another; these agents are longitudinal activists. A clear example is the actions of human beings that are issued from our souls. Consider the act of writing, the activity of the soul, the arm, the hand, the finger, and the pen, all of which perform the act of writing with dependence. The act to write can be attributed to the soul, it can be attributed to man, and it can be attributed to the movement of the pen. Such is the activity of God and the activity of creatures. That is, the activity of creatures is at the longitude of the activity of God and they have no independence and are dependent on God. Hence God addressed the Prophet of Islam in the Qur'an: And it was not you who launched when you launched, but it was Allah who launched (17: 8).

In other words, there are two types of activity: one is the independent agent and the other is the agent that he and his activity depend on the main agent to which the Qur'an explicitly refers: 'But you cannot will, unless Allah wills' (81: 29).

If He does not want to, you cannot do anything, but He wants to. If He does not want to, my hand will not move, but He wants me to move with my will. Ash'arite theologians do not pay attention to this point, and for this reason, they have said that there is no activity and causality among phenomena, and causality is limited only to God Almighty. In addition, the monotheism of actions is not in conflict with human authority. These two are not incompatible; rather, the activity of human beings is during the activity of the Supreme Being. God's will is that man should do his deeds of his own free will. In fact, the voluntary action deserves punishment and reward. Therefore, by attaching the principle of monotheism of actions to the theory of divine custom, it could be presented as a reasonable interpretation of the causal relationship between natural phenomena. Accordingly, the interpretation of Ash'arite and al-Ghazālī's causality does not seem unjustified.

Conclusion

Despite most philosophers, al-Ghazālī, from an ontological point of view, denies the necessary relationship between cause and effect, although he accepts the relationship between cause and effect. The reason for his opposition to causal necessity is that he believed that accepting causal necessity would conflict with two indisputable Islamic teachings, the miracle and the absolute power of God. Instead of considering causal relationship based on necessity, he proposed the theory of divine custom. As I have shown in this article, Averroes' critiques of al-Ghazālī are not strong enough to dispel al-Ghazālī's view. According to al-Ghazālī, from an epistemological point of view, to repeat repeat the observation of the conjunction of causes and effects objectively and to make our minds accustomed to observing these symmetries, the mind dictates the uniformity of natural phenomena and the necessity between them. The theory of divine custom, while resolving the challenge posed by the miracle, also interprets the absolute power of God well. Nevertheless, it raises questions about the lawfulness of the universe and human free will, which defenders of al-Ghazālī's point of view can easily provide an answer to, by referring to the principle of monotheism of actions in order to provide an acceptable explanation of the relations of creatures with each other as well as the relationship of creatures with the Creator. However, how God influences and changes the natural world is beyond the scope of this article.

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Namenlosigkeit. Oder: Die Perversion der Postmoderne: Pandemie-Politiken

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Abstract

Namelessness. Or: The Perversion of Postmodernity: Politics of Pandemics

The aim of this paper is to show how the politics of pandemics is a perversion of the postmodern situation. Postmodernity is constituted as a figuration of a pluralistic freedom, whereas the perversion annihilates all pluralism in favor of authoritarian one-dimensional thinking and acting. What the reality of the plurality in postmodernity has offered as possibilities is shown in two literary examples (Peter Bichsel and Samuel Beckett). All this freedom is negated in the perversion of the pandemic politics. The perspective of social philosophy throws light on this transformation by namelessness, which has been the plurality of names and of acts of names giving in postmodernity and the perversion of an anonymous one-dimensional management of nameless numbers and cases of incidence in execution of a pretended "Sachzwang" (factual constraint).

Keywords: postmodernity, pandemic politics, one-dimensionality, plurality, identity, namelessness, melancholy

> „Fürchte dich nicht, denn ich habe dich erlöst; ich habe dich bei deinem Namen gerufen; du bist mein"!" Der oft als Taufspruch verwendete Spruch war selbstverständlich in seinem Ursprungs-Sinn nicht individualisierend gemeint und durch einen Taufakt zu besiegeln. Sondern einer ehemals nomadisierenden Menschengruppe wird ein Name als einem Volk gegeben, und ein Gott bezeichnet sich als Namensgeber, der durch die Namensgebung dieses Volk an sich bindet. Eine andere Übersetzung der gleichen Stelle macht das noch deutlicher: „Um Jakobs, meines Knechts, willen und um Israels, meines Auserwählten, willen. Ja, ich rief dich bei deinem Namen, und nannte dich, da du mich noch nicht kanntest. (*Jesaja* 43)

Es ist nicht Ziel der auszuführenden Überlegungen, eine neue Variante der Diskussion zu eröffnen, was denn die Postmoderne sei. Gleichwohl darf als ein gewisses Verständnis – unabhängig von Kritik oder Apologie – vielleicht folgendes vorausgesetzt werden. Postmoderne ist.

- Die Verabschiedung der Vorstellung eines autonomen Subjekts[1], von dem her sich das Soziale konstituiert; Michel Foucault, einer der Hauptstichwortgeber der Postmoderne hatte gezeigt, dass der Subjektbegriff sich einer historischen Konstitution verdankt (Foucault 1974);
- Abschied von einer, wie auch immer begründeten allgemein gültigen Werte-Ordnung, die das Handeln der Individuen leitet oder leiten sollte;[2]
- Ende eines Denkens in individuellen oder überindividuellen Substanzen wie „der" Mensch, „das" Volk;[3]
- Auflösung eines hierarchischen Denkens;[4]
- Ablösung eines Denkens und einer Methodik des Fortgangs von einem (einzigen) Ursprung und einem (einzigen) Ziel aller sozialen Orientierung.[5]

Man kann diese Verabschiedungen nicht in Aktionen von Handelnden, in kritischen Aktionen, begründet sehen; denn solches wäre der Modus der für Moderne und Spätmoderne[6] typischen Kritik gewesen, nicht aber für postmoderne Praktiken. Diese Verabschiedungen der Moderne sind eher dem Winken nach dem Abfahren eines Zuges mit der Geliebten zu vergleichen: auch dieses Winken hält ja den Zug nicht auf. Auch wenn sie traurig oder gar melancholisch stimmen, sind solche Auflösungen von (Spät-)Moderne als Korrosionen nicht rückholbar. Wenn die Postmoderne den Untergang der Moderne feststellt, diese Verlustgeschichte, diese Korrosionen, dann gibt es, weil rein diagnostisch angelegt, weder Anlass zu Jubel noch zu Kritik oder gar zu fälligen Moralisierungen. Aber rein diagnostisch lassen sich sehr wohl Kosten, Nebenfolgen und Risiken bilanzieren, wie selbstverständlich auch Entlastungen und Chancen.

Die angesprochene Perversion der Postmoderne besteht nun darin, dass zwar die Errungenschaften der Postmoderne aufgenommen werden, aber in ein eindimensionales Sachzwang-Schema einer depressiven (erdrückenden) Oben/Unten-Struktur gepresst werden: Oben die Virologen-Politiker, unten die Vermummten, eine Depression, die einer ganzen Gesellschaft auferlegt wird.

Wenn man also nun hier die Pandemie-Politiken der Jahre 2020ff. als perverse Spielart der Postmoderne diagnostiziert, dann ist das keine Kritik mit der Unterstellung, man selber wisse, wie die Macher es hätten besser machen können oder gar sollen, also keine klammheimliche oder auch nur implizite Rückkehr zu spätmodernen Praktiken, sondern es ist eine diagnostische Differenzierung im Feld der Korrosionen, etwa so, wie auch der Psychoanalytiker von Perversionen ohne kritischen oder gar moralisierenden Unterton spricht. Alleiniges Ziel kann es sein, statt des einen und einzigen Hauptwegs in die gegenwartskonforme Zukunft andere Wege im Feld der Abwege aufzuzeigen oder zum Auffinden derselben anzuleiten.

Es steht also in Frage, welche typisch postmodernen Merkmale die Pandemie-Politiken erkennen lassen und welche Möglichkeiten alternativer Politiken in diesem Feld aufscheinen und sich eröffnen ließen. An sich sind ja die postmodernen Entlastungen Befreiungen von den allzu eindeutigen Weichenstellungen von Moderne und Spätmoderne gewesen. Nach der Dezentrierung und Entmachtung des Subjekts in der Postmoderne verfügt die Perversion der Postmoderne die Restituierung der Struktur des Obrigkeitsstaates und seiner Definition von Sub-jekten als Untertanen, für deren Wohl er Sorge trägt, indem er sie auf das als zuträglich Erachtete einschränkt.

Vor der Erfindung und ideologischen Durchsetzung des Konzepts des autonomen Subjekts, von dem nach den Vertragstheorien der Moderne die Konstituierung des Sozialen auszugehen hätte, gab es in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit eine Konzeption des Sozialen als eine archeische, genauer hierarchische Struktur: die souveräne Obrigkeit, die Vasallen und die Untertanen: alle An-ordnungen dieser Ordnungen kamen von oben. In dieser wohl eingerichteten Ordnung war noch kein Platz für Egoismus des Kapitalismus. Der Souverän (Superior) war Fürst (the first) oder Prinz (princeps), dem Gemeinwohl verpflichtet und dem allerhöchsten Souverän gegenüber verantwortlich. Er sorgte sich wie heute die Virologen um das Wohl und die Gesundheit der Untertanen.

Das änderte sich mit der Erfindung des autonomen Subjekts; denn nun wurde nach dem Sicht-Entziehen des transzendenten Souveräns auf autonome Selbstsorge der Subjekte umgestellt, Sicherheit musste man sich jetzt durch Versicherungen besorgen, gegen die möglicherweise von Seinesgleichen drohende Gewalt durch einen sichernden Sozialvertrag, durch den sich Staaten mit ihrer Gewalt legitimieren konnten, oder durch Versicherungen im engeren Sinne gegen die Schicksalsschläge von Naturgewalten oder durch das Ineinanderwirken von beidem. Dass für das Bestehen dieser Versicherungen nun die autonomen Subjekte selbst verantwortlich sein sollten, überforderte diese. Die Postmodere in jeder ihrer Ausprägungen ist nun die Bewegung, die von dieser Überforderung des autonomen Subjekts befreit.

In der perversen Postmoderne ist die Entlastung von der Selbstsorge nun auf die Virologen und Epidemologen übergegangen. Wie konnte das geschehen? Die Erklärung durch einen Rückfall in den Obrigkeitsstaat der Moderne trägt hier nicht. Die klassische Moderne ging von einer zum Wesen des Menschen gehörenden Gewalt aus, die im Staate zu aller Nutzen gebündelt werden müsse. Die Virologen und Epidemologen finden aber nicht ein Wesen des Menschen in seinem Inneren, sondern ein Un-Wesen, den Virus, der möglicherweise uns alle befällt oder schon befallen hat. Vorbereitet war dieser Universal-Verdacht durch die Struktur der postmodernen Überwachungs- und Kontrollgesellschaft, in der die Menschen nur noch in der Form von namenlosen Profilen vorkommen, und damit eben auch nicht mehr als autonome Subjekte. Für die Staaten diente diese Überwachung der frühzeitigen Erkennung von Terroristen, zukünftigen Terroristen oder zukünftig möglichen Terroristen; für die Wirtschaft diente die Überwachung durch die sozialen Medien der frühzeitigen Erkennung von Käufern, zukünftigen Käufern oder möglichen zukünftigen Käufern. Nirgendwo dort aber spielt in dieser Befreiung vom autonomen Subjekt dazu, im Sinne einer Freiheit-zu (im Unterschied von der Freiheit-von) das zu befördern, was die Freiheit vom autonomen Subjekts auch hätte sein können: Freiheit zu einem Gemeinsam-Sein, einem

Être-en-commun,[7] zu einem auf Berührungen beruhenden Zwischen in einer gemeinsamen Sinn-Konstitution, einem Kommunismus,[8] nicht der Untertanen, sondern der „freien Geister“ (Hölderlin 1951, 306-309). Die perverse Postmoderne verspielt diese Chancen der Postmoderne, indem nun nicht die Dialektik von Nähe und Distanz (die die Berührung ausmacht), angezeigt ist (Röttgers 2021, 661-672), sondern Isolierung der vormals über Subjektivität wenigstens befähigten Subjekte, durch Abstandspflicht und soziale Distanzierung, und nicht mehr Offenheit für eine gemeinsame Sozialität, sondern Vermummungspflicht und damit Verbergung emotionaler Zuwendungen. Die zu Profilen dekomponierten Körper werden nun zu Virenfreiheit befreit. Die Ordnung der Körper der namenlosen Untertänigkeiten in der Sortierung der Infizierten, Erkrankten, mit oder durch Viren Verstorbenen und der Genesenen und der Geimpften und Ungeimpften wird durch die Separierung der unerkennbar Vermummten und in Abstand von aller Mitmenschlichkeit gehaltenen medienunterstützt beworben. Leitlinie dieser virologisch-ideologisch angeleiteten neuen Obrigkeit sind die Zahlen, wie seinerzeit schon in der Bevölkerungsstatistik des Obrigkeitsstaats des ausgehenden 18. Jh.. Es sind nunmehr Fallzahlen, die sich von einer ad-hoc-Politik jederzeit ad libitum ändern lassen: von den 14-Tage-Verdopplungszahlen im Frühjahr 2020 über den R-Faktor bis zu der Inzidenz-Zählung, deren kritische Schwellen sich immer wieder neu bestimmen lassen. In der Beliebigkeit dieser Festsetzungen verrät sich zweierlei: einerseits die Entlastung von Visionen, Plänen und Projekten für die Zukunft, womit sich die Moderne noch belastet hatte, andererseits die Reduzierung zu Namen- und Charakterlosigkeit, wie sie die Überwachungsgesellschaft mit der Profilbildung vorgezeichnet hatte.

Der Verlust einer transzendent begründeten absolut verbindlichen Werte-Ordnung war ebenfalls ein Effekt des Aufstiegs des autonomen Subjekts in der Moderne. Dieses alleine hatte nun die Begründung der Sittlichkeit in sich selbst zu finden: von der transzendenten Ordnung zur Transzendentalität des Sittlichen in der Autonomie (Selbstgesetzgebung) der praktischen Vernunft. In der Postmoderne hat sich die Sicherheit des eindeutigen Bezugs der sittlichen Orientierung durch Reflexion der praktischen Vernunft in sich selbst aufgelöst und nun, ausgelöst durch Nietzsche, Simmel, Foucault, Elias und Deleuze, zu einer Historisierung der Moralen, zu einem Experimentieren und Vagabundieren sittlicher Orientierungen Platz gemacht und die Perspektive einer Werte-Politik angestoßen. Pervers wird dieser labyrinthisch-nomadische Moral-Pluralismus der Postmoderne dort, wo eine von einem vermeintlichen „Sachzwang“ diktierte Politik Ad-hoc-Maßnahmen anleitet, die ihre vermeintliche Sachorientierung durch virologische Beratung zu okkasionell definierte Sachlagen permanent neu definiert, mal von dieser, mal von jener Lobby unterstützt. Die Pandemie-Politik der perversen Postmoderne unterstellt, dass es ein Virus ist, der diesen Sachzwang ausübt und keine alternativen Entscheidungen zulässt – wo doch Politik immer das Jonglieren, Austarieren und Erproben von Alternativen war. Sachzwang-Exekution ist keine Politik. Die Eindimensionalität des vermeintlichen Sachzwangs ermöglicht keine Politik mehr. Eindimensionalität kennt keine Namen, sondern nur die Verwaltung von Fällen. Mit den Anerkennungstheorien der Spätmoderne (Habermas 1996; Honneth 1994; Taylor 2009; Bedorf 2010) war immerhin schon eine Zweidimensionalität in die Orientierungen der Sozialphilosophie eingekehrt: sie musste schon in der Dialogizität Selbst und Anderen unterscheiden und aufeinander beziehen können. Aber hier tauchen in der Pandemie dann solche grobschlächtigen Unterscheidungen auf der Starken der Gesellschaft und der Vulnerablen, und eine Ethik die den Starken die Pflicht der Unterstützung oder gar Impfung der Vulnerablen auferlegt. Der enorme Befreiungsschlag der Postmoderne hatte eigentlich darin bestanden, sei es konsequent, sei es inkonsequent, die Dreidimensionalität in die Orientierung des Sozialen einzuführen, d.h. zwischen Selbst und Anderen den Dritten (Bedorf, Fischer & Lindemann 2010), und das in einer freien, unkonditionierten Besetzung und des Wechselns der Positionen. Diese Liberalität ist in der perversen Postmoderne geschwunden und es wurde (postmodern) keine neue Wert-Ordnung, wie auch immer begründet, eingeführt, sondern sie hat einer neuen Beliebigkeit, z.B. in der Festsetzung der Inzidenz-Grenzwerte Platz gemacht.

Angesichts der eingetretenen Perversionen scheint es lohnend, an die Chancen der unbeschädigten Postmoderne zu erinnern, die mit der Namenlosigkeit eine Pluralisierung bereithielt, die nun verloren zu gehen droht im Sachzwang einer neuen Namenlosigkeit, die z.B. die gesamte Bevölkerung eines Landes in Gruppen der Priorisierung der Impfberechtigungsfolgen einteilt und von denen dann noch diejenigen separiert werden, die nicht bereit sind, sich impfen zu lassen und denen jedenfalls einige Sachzwang-Verwalter nicht die vollen Bürgerrechte zurückgeben möchten. Diese Erinnerung soll an zwei durchaus divergenten Beispielen der Namenlosigkeit in der unbeschädigten Postmoderne durchgeführt werden: Peter Bichsel und Samuel Beckett.

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Viele der „Kindergeschichten“ von Peter Bichsel (2011; dazu s. Schmitz-Emans 1986, 304-320) beginnen mit der Anonymitätsformel „Ein Mann…“, so auch die erste Geschichte „Die Erde ist rund“, kurz darauf jedoch lesen wir, dass der Mann einen Namen hatte, den wir allerdings nicht erfahren, im Gegenteil heißt es, dass alles, was er wusste, genau dasselbe war, was auch wir wissen, d.h. ihm fehlte diejenige epistemische Individualität, die ihm einen Namen hätte zukommen lassen.

Auch die zweite Geschichte, diejenige von dem privatsprachlichen Umbenenner, erzählt von einem namenlosen und am Ende auch sprachlosen Mann. Etwas komplizierter wird es in der dritten Geschichte „Amerika gibt es nicht“. Der König in dieser Geschichte hat zwar keinen Namen, aber Könige brauchen keinen Namen, für sie gilt einfach „der König war ein König“ (Bichsel 1978, 40). Aber die ihn umgebenden Hofnarren haben Namen wie Pepe und Hänschen; aber ihre Namen spielen keine Rolle, es sind gewissermaßen Spielmarken. Erst als der kleine Colombin auftritt, kommt auch sein Name ins Spiel: „ich hieße Colombo, meine Mutter nennt mich Colombin“ (38) Dieser erfragt nun den Namen des zu hängenden Narren, als er ihn erfährt, sagt er: „Ein schöner Name, Hänschen heißt er also. Wie kann man einen Mann, der so schön heißt, aufhängen?“ (38) Ein Name sollte doch eigentlich Schutz vor der politischen Realität bieten können; und in der Geschichte, die auf diese Weise hier bereits märchenhaft wird, geschieht das auch. Als dann alle Figuren mit ihren Funktionen genannt werden, heißt es: „nur Colombin, Colombin war nichts“ (40). Er hatte zwar einen Namen, von der Mutter verliehen, aber dieser Name benannte ein Nichts, auch wenn er angesichts der Aufforderung, etwas zu werden, beteuert „… ich bin schon etwas, ich bin Colombin.“ (40) Als er bereit ist, der Werdens-Forderung zu genügen, will er Seefahrer werden, er ist somit bereit, seinem bloßen Namen eine Bedeutung zu geben. Aber der Entschluss, diese Namenlosigkeit des unbedeutenden Namens durch bloße Beteuerung eines Entschlusses funktioniert so nicht, die Leute verlachen ihn. Aber dann kommt einer ins Spiel, der als Seefahrer einen bedeutenden Namen hat: Amerigo Vespucci. Um sich als Seefahrer zu bewähren, erfindet Colombin ein von ihm für seinen König entdecktes Land. Vespucci bestätigt ironisch die Existenz dieses Landes. Zuvor hatte Colombin gesagt, dass das gefundene/erfundene Land noch keinen Namen habe. Als aber Vespucci die Existenz des Landes bestätigt hatte, ruft Colombin voller Freude aus Amerigo, mein lieber Amerigo!“ So erhielt das erfundene Land durch das Missverständnis der Verwechslung eines Personen-Namen als Benennung eines nicht existenten Landes einen Namen: Namensgebung als Realitäts-Bestätigung. Diese Geschichte behandelt also die Namenlosigkeit, indem sie die Bedeutungslosigkeit und die Fragilität der Namen bezeugt.

Diese Sicht wird durch die Vierte Geschichte bestätigt: zwar wird hier der Name Edison als Erfinder der Glühbirne erwähnt, aber der eigentliche Protagonist der Geschichte, ein Erfinder ohne Erfindung, hat daher wiederum keinen eigenen Namen. Auch die fünfte Geschichte hat einen namenlosen „Mann“ zum Thema, der das gesamte Kursbuch der SBB auswendig wusste. Er kannte zwar die Namen der verschiedenen Orte, aber nur als Eintragungen im Kursbuch. Er fuhr selbst nie in die Realität dieser Orte, die diesen Eintragungen entsprechen sollten, weil er ja – so seine Begründung – schon aus dem Kursbuch wusste, wann der Zug die diversen Orte erreichen würde: Luterbach, Deitingen, Wangen, Niederbipp, Önsingen, Oberbuchsiten, Egerkingen und Hägendorf (60).

Zentral wird das Namens-Thema dann in der Geschichte „Jodok läßt grüßen“. Hier wird ein „Onkel Jodok“ eingeführt, und schon bald heißt es „Von Onkel Jodok weiß ich gar nichts… Ich kenne nur seinen Namen: Jodok“ (65) Der bloße Name wird durch die Erzählungen des Großvaters nach und nach mit einer immer verrückteren Realität ausgestattet – was auf die gerade Umkehrung der Amerika-Geschichte hinausläuft: die Besetzung des Namens mit nur durch Senilität des Großvaters möglichen Realitätsbezügen.

Das Buch „Cherubin Hammer und Cherubin Hammer“ (Bichsel 1999) beginnt mit einem echten Namens-Verwirrspiel: „Nein, das ist nicht die Geschichte von Cherubin Hammer. Cherubin Hammer war ein anderer, aber er ist würdig genug, seinen Namen dem stillen Helden dieser Geschichte zur Verfügung zu stellen.“ (7) Dem Namenlosen dieser Geschichte wird in dieser Geschichte der Name eines anderen verliehen, „der ab jetzt nur noch in Fußnoten erscheinen wird“ (7). Das mag noch hingehen: der Namenlose bekommt einen pseudonymen Namen. Aber kurz darauf erfahren wir, dass nicht nur Autorenwillkür diese vorgenommen hat, sondern dass auch seine Frau, also die Frau des eigentlich Namenlosen ihn ebenfalls „Hammer“ nennt. Aber: „seinen Vornamen kannte niemand“ – ungeachtet der Namensverleihung durch den Autor. Im Laufe der Geschichte nennen alle Personen ihn nur „Hammer“ oder so nach und nach auch „Dr. Hammer“. Erst auf Seite 105 erfährt der Leser dann, dass der Mann, den der Autor Cherubin Hammer benannt hatte, „eigentlich“ Egon geheißen habe. Der in die Anmerkungen verbannte „echte“ Cherubin Hammer taucht bereits kurz darauf mit Nennung seines Vornamens auf. Von der Polizei wird ihm vorgehalten, dass sein Vorname ein dummes Pseudonym sein müsse, für das es kein dümmeres geben könne. Der in die Anmerkungen Verbannte wollte und wusste, dass der Autor über ihn schreiben werde, aus Trotz und Faulheit schreibt der Autor nicht über ihn, bzw. nur anmerkungsweise, sondern schreibt nur über jenen Cherubin Hammer, der seinen Namen allein der Namensgebung durch den Autor verdankt (Fiktion in der Fiktion: und beide hätten sich über die Namensgebung durch den Autor geärgert, sagt der Autor). Die zwei Leben der zwei Cherubin Hammer sind so unterschiedlich wie nur denkbar, der eine ein pedantischer Schwächling, der andere ein angeberischer Kraftprotz, das aber ist für die Parallelität der Namen ohne Belang. Der eine möchte ein Schriftsteller seiner selbst sein oder werden und schafft es nicht einmal, Aufzeichnungen über sein Leben in die Tagebücher einzutragen, der andere ist als Aufschneider ein lügnerisches Fabuliertalent. Der eine trägt akkurat jeden Tag einen Stein auf einen Berg, der andere handelt als „Unternehmer" in betrügerischer Weise mit Steinmehl. Der eine hat keinen Namen, der andere erntet mit seinem Vornamen kirchliche Anerkennung. Der Haupttext erwähnt, dass er seinerzeit in München bei Friedrich Rust gewohnt habe: „aber niemand wollte wissen, wer Friedrich Rust war. ‚Berühmt war er', sagte Hammer. ‚Ach so', sagten sie. ‚Wie, sagen Sie, hieß er, Rust, ach so'..." (28) Wir haben hier das Gegenteil der Namenlosigkeit: einen Namen, der zu niemandem gehört: berühmt war er, aber niemand kennt ihn. Und auch Hammer kann nicht damit dienen, etwas über ihn zu erzählen; Geschichten hätten dem bloßen Namen eine Bedeutung gegeben. Frau Rust wiederum nannte den namenlosen Hammer ihren „Errol Flynn", ein Akt der Namensgebung, der allerdings eine privatsprachliche Namensgebung bleibt. Ein Name bzw. Wort von Dr. Hammer gibt ein Rätsel auf. Hammer war für 10 Tage aus den Bahnen seines sorgsam geordneten Lebens ausgeschert. – Danach finden sich in seinen Tagebüchern vielfache Eintragungen des Namens/Wortes „Domodossola". In engstem Zusammenhang damit taucht – ebenfalls mehrfach und „genüsslich" wiederholt – der Name der Stadt Montélimar auf. Das mit Bichselschem Raffinement eingeführte untergründig Verbindende ist, dass sich beide Städte im Juli 1944 befreit hatten, aber kurz darauf von deutschen Truppen erneut besetzt wurden, In Domodossola bestand für 44 Tage die Partisanenrepublik „Republíca dell' Ossola". Diese historische Assoziation wird jedoch sogleich zunichte gemacht dadurch, dass der Name der Schweizer Malers Auberjonois ebenso genüsslich gesprochen wird und nun der Genuss dieser drei Namen dadurch erklärt wird, dass der namenlose Dr. Hammer eben ein Dichter sei, der ein besonderes Wohlgefallen an Namen hätte. Die Namensbesessenheit führt zu einem Verlust des Bezugs zur

Realität, so dass er seiner Frau erklärt, „daß die Ägäis mehr ist als ein Meer, nämlich ein Wort." (96)

Die Ironie des Autors lässt dann die zwei Cherubin Hammer, und zwar im Anmerkungstext sich begegnen – im Irrealis, über den allein der Autor verfügt. Dieser Autor-im-Text bekennt: „Das ist zwar eine erfundene Geschichte…" (97, Anm.) Aber die erfundene Geschichte ahmt nicht das Leben nach, sondern umgekehrt: das (erfundene) „Leben" ahmt die Geschichte nach, aber es wird zugleich daran gehindert… „Cherubin starb zu früh" – Welcher? Der, dessen „Geschichte" erfunden wurde oder der, dessen „Leben" erfunden wurde. Im Haupttext wird nun fraglich „Hat der wirklich so geheißen, der Dr. Hammer?" Und ein Kind, namens Silvia, erklärt, Cherubin „sieht nicht aus, der erzählt Geschichten." (98) Dieses Kind kennt alle Pflanzen-Namen, aber „ich darf nicht sagen", wie sie heißen. Sie erfindet also Pseudonyme für die Pflanzen. Sie spricht nicht, sondern erzählt nur, d.h. verweigert die eigentliche Namensgebung, so wie sie zuvor Dr. Hammer von Cherubin abgespalten hatte.

Der namenlose Hammer des Haupttextes war genau das, was die Moderne und dann auch die perverse Postmoderne ausgemacht hätte, aber der Text setzt dem gewissermaßen interstitiell in den Anmerkungen den eigentlichen, den wilden, den sich im Kontrast zum Haupttext pluralisierenden Hammer. Im Zusammen, bzw. im Zwischen beider ereignete sich die unbeschädigte Postmoderne. Die ist hier auch bereits bedroht, wenn man sich auf eine Seite schlägt. Hammer wurde vom Dorfpolizisten verprügelt, weil sein Vater Antifaschist (Stichwort: „Antifa") war, und zwar weil man im Dorf keine Politik wollte: „Man hatte bereits eine Politik, eine richtige und anständige, und wollte nicht noch eine mehr…" (29) Hier inmitten eines postmodernen Textes haben wir bereits eingebaut den Provinzialismus der neuen pandemiepolitischen Perversion der Postmoderne.

Peter Bichsels Geschichten sind Geschichten, die auf vielfältige Weise mit Namen und Namenlosigkeiten spielen, für die Identitäten keine ontologischen Sicherheiten bieten, sondern zu unvorhersehbaren Ereignissen werden. Sie sind Feste der

Pluralität, sie sind Zelebrierungen der ungeheuren Möglichkeiten, die die Postmoderne vor ihrer Perversion geboten hatte.

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Mit Peter Bichsel habe ich ein eher fröhliches Beispiel des lebendigen Pluralismus der unbeschädigten Postmoderne gezeigt. Aber die Postmoderne ist nicht auf Fröhlichkeit festgelegt, es gibt auch einen eher ins Düstere gehenden Pluralismus, als Beispiel wähle ich den Roman „Der Namenlose" von Samuel Beckett (Beckett 1970, 379-542). Der Text folgt dem Muster des inneren Monologs, ist aber kein innerer Monolog, weil es kein Innen in ihm gibt. Und als Motto der erinnernden Antwort auf die eindimensionale Corona-Politik sei eine Eingangsformulierung gewählt: „Aber schauen wir uns zunächst ein wenig an, wer sie sind, diese Wahnsinnigen, die von oben angeblich zu meinem Wohl auf mich losgelassen wurden." (427)

Der unendlich delirierende Text hat ebenso unendlich viele Ebenen, aber hier soll es nur ankommen auf die unbeschädigte Postmoderne der Namenlosigkeit. Dabei bezieht sich „unbeschädigt" allein auf die Offenheit für die Vielfältigkeiten des Textes, keineswegs aber auf die Behauptung, dass der geschilderte Textinhalt eine unbeschädigten Existenzweise vorführe, im Gegenteil. Textperformanz und Textinhalt müssen hier, wie überall, hier noch entschiedener, getrennt gehalten werden.

Der Protagonist dieses Romans präsentiert sich in unzähligen, sich immer wieder widersprechenden Aussagen, in Reflexionen selbst-zweifelnden und Fragen formulierenden, als „ich". Aber schon bald wird klar: dieses „ich" ist kein Fichtesches Ich, ihm fehlt das Grundcharakteristikum von Ichheit: Subjektivität. „Das Subjekt ist nicht so wichtig, es gibt keins." (472) Subjekt und Objekt vermischen sich in diesem Text permanent und lassen die Eindeutigkeit einer Zuordnung zerbersten. Das schlägt sich zunächst nieder in absoluten Widersprüchlichkeiten. Ein Satz sagt etwas aus, der nächste behauptet genau das Gegenteil, aber es ist keine Negation, und es folgt keine dialektische Aufhebung, sondern der darauf folgende Satz stellt eine Frage, die jedoch auch nie beantwortet wird. Oft enden solche Satzpassagen mit der Formel „gleichviel" oder ähnlichem. Es gibt eine permanente (entschiedene) Unentschiedenheit, sie lässt eine benennbare, namensfeste Kontur nicht aufkommen. Selbst „ich" ist hier noch zu viel gesagt, reine Pluralität, singulär plural, um auf Nancy anzuspielen. Alles ist Subjekt und Objekt zugleich, Rand oder Zentrum oder beides zugleich oder beides nicht. „… das ist es vielleicht, was ich fühle, daß es ein Draußen und ein Drinnen gibt, und ich in der Mitte, das ist es vielleicht, was ich bin, das Ding, das die Welt in zwei teilt, einesteils das Draußen, andernteils das Drinnen, es kann dünn sein wie ein Blatt, ich bin weder einerseits noch andererseits, ich bin in der Mitte, ich bin die Scheidewand, ich habe zwei Seiten und keine Dichte…" (500f.) Was hier en passant beschrieben ist, ist die postmoderne Strukturposition des kommunikativen Textes im Zwischen, asubjektiv und asubstantiell, reine Relation des Zwischen.

„Über mich selbst brauche ich nichts zu erfahren. Hier ist alles klar. Nein, es ist nicht alles klar. Aber der Diskurs muß weitergehen. Also ersinnt man Obskuritäten." (384) Dieses „ich" ist in der Vielzahl seiner Präsentationen nicht zu fassen, auch wenn dieses namenlose „ich" im Verlauf des Textes immer mehr an (widerspruchsvollen!) Konturen gewinnt. Wer also ist dieser Namenlose? Er ist vieles, gerade das macht seine Namenlosigkeit aus: seine Identität, die ihm einen Namen sichern könnte, ist nicht fassbar; es ist eher die Frage, was für den Namenlosen „Identität" eigentlich besagen soll, auch die geläufige Unterscheidung von „ipse" und „idem" führte hier nicht weiter. Sichselbstgleichheit ist ihm von Anfang an verwehrt; das hilft auch die an ihn ergehende Ermahnung nichts. „… reißen Sie sich doch zusammen, in Ihrem Alter keine Identität zu haben, ist eine Schande." (492f.)

Ein paar Beispiele für die Widersprüchlichkeiten des Textes. Er sagt, die Tränen sammelten sich in seinem Bart… „… nein, ich habe keinen Bart, und auch keine Haare…" (398) „… ich bin eine große sprechende Kugel, sprechend von Dingen, die es nicht gibt, oder die es vielleicht gibt, unmöglich zu wissen." (399) „Ich werde keine Fragen mehr stellen, es gibt keine Fragen mehr, ich kenne keine mehr…" (401) „…muß ich sprechen mit dieser Stimme, die nicht meine ist, aber nur meine sein kann, da es nur mich gibt…" (401f.) „Ich bin es also der spricht, ich ganz allein, da ich nicht anders kann. Nein, ich bin stumm. Wie wäre es übrigens, wenn ich schwiege?“ (402) Aber tut es nicht, über 140 Seiten hinweg redet er ununterbrochen – auch vom Schweigen und Schweigenkönnen. „Was wollte ich gerade sagen? Macht nichts, ich werde etwas anderes sagen, es ist eines wie das andere.“ (412) „Ich habe gesagt, daß sich hier alles früher oder später wiederholt, nein, ich wollte es sagen, dann habe ich mich eines Besseren besonnen.“ (391) – aber genau das sagt der Text, und nicht etwa nicht.

Dann taucht in dem Nebel der Wörter, Sätze und Satzfragmente, der Widersprüche und Fragen plötzlich wie ein Funken Realität ein Name auf: Basilius. Im Gegensatz zum „ich“ weiß Basilius z.B., was Jahre sind, das ist einer seiner „Ideen“. Doch kurz darauf erfolgt die Abrechnung: „Basilius macht sich wichtig.“ (404) „Er war es, der mir Geschichten über mich erzählte, für mich lebte, aus mir herausging, wieder zu mir kam, wieder in mich ging, mich mit Geschichten überhäufte.“ (404) Dieser lehrerhafte Besserwisser macht sich so unbeliebt. Deswegen wird ihm ab da sein Name genommen und er heißt nun Mahood. Gegenüber den „Frechheiten“ des Alleswisser gilt: „Es war mir immer lieber, es nicht zu wissen, aber Mahood sagte mir, es sei nicht gut. Auch er wußte nichts, aber es quälte ihn.“ (404) Immerhin wäre es ein Bezug zur sogenannten oder nur zu vermutenden Realität gewesen. Doch hier bereits tauchen erste Anzeichen einer Vermischung des Namenlosen mit Mahood auf: „Es war seine Stimme, die sich oft, immer, der meinen beimischte, manchmal so sehr daß meine ganz übertäubt wurde, bis zu dem Tage, an dem er mich für immer verließ, oder mich nie mehr verlassen wollte, ich weiß nicht.“ (404) Später heißt es, dass Mahood ihm den „Geist … eingebrockt hätte.“ (420).

Zunehmend wird es dann fraglicher, ob nicht „ich“ Mahood ist, bzw. ob nicht Mahood das „ich“ usurpiert hat – Ich ist an anderer, um Rimbaud zu missbrauchen. Dann hätte der Namenlose einen Namen: Mahood hieße er. Im sogenannten Inneren von „ich“ wohnt sein Doppelgänger, namens Mahood, mit der Folge. „Manchmal duze ich mich, wenn ich es bin, der spricht.“ (406) Aber diese Fusion ist nicht einzig, nichts ist einzig, alles ist plural: „Vor ihm hat es andere gegeben, die sich für mich hielten.“ (412) Mahood kann behaupten, er sei „ich“ (das kann bekanntlich jeder sagen, sofern er redet), aber „ich“ bestreitet das, obwohl er manchmal glaubt, er sei der andere. (413) Das alles steht unter dem Vorbehalt der Fiktion: „… diese ganze Geschichte habe ich erfunden, in der Hoffnung, mich zu trösten…“ (411) Zu Mahood. „Ich habe ihn nämlich erfunden… (518) und: „ich habe meine Erinnerungen erfunden“, d.h. sich selbst.

Nach diesem Akt der Namensgebung gibt es weitere Realitätsgehalte (Realitätshalterungen): Eltern, Frau, zwei Kinder, Opa, Oma und die „acht oder neun“ Rotznasen. Doch: „Zuerst meine Familie, allein die Tatsache, eine Familie zu haben, hätte mich schon stutzig machen müssen …“ (421) Die Frage der Realität muß verschärft lauten: Ist das erzählende, erfindende, bzw. delirierende „ich“ Mahood? Wir wissen es nicht; denn auch er weiß es (zeitweise) nicht, es gibt immer neue/alte andere, die sagen, „ich sei sie“. (426)

Diese Verwirrspiel der Namen in der Namenlosigkeit hat seinen Grund in der Unfähigkeit eines Namenlosen, eine Identität zu haben oder anzunehmen, auch wenn die paradoxe Aufforderung auftauchen kann „Sei wieder du selbst!“ (440), obwohl doch völlig unklar bleiben muß, was das heißen könnte. Das Spiel der pluralen Namenlosigkeit geht weiter. Nicht nur taucht der realitätsnahe Name Basilius nie wieder auf, nachdem er zu Mahood umbenannt wurde, nicht nur oszilliert immer wieder die Bedeutung des Namens Mahood – *ist* er paradox der Namenlose des „ich“, spielt er ihn nur oder lässt er den Namenlosen spielen, er sei „ich“ oder Mahood – denn nun wird explizit ein weiterer Name eingeführt: „Aber ich werde ihm einen Namen geben müssen, diesem Einsamen. Ohne Eigennamen kein Heil. Ich werde ihn Worm nennen. Es wurde höchste Zeit. Worm. … Es wird auch mein Name sein, wenn es an der Zeit ist, wenn ich mich nicht mehr Mahood zu nennen brauche, wenn ich je dazu komme.“ (441) Natürlich gilt auch, dass er Worm gar nicht kennt, sondern ihn ebenfalls nur erfunden hat. Trotzdem taucht das Identitätsproblem erneut auf: „Denn wenn ich Mahood bin, so bin ich auch Worm. Pluff. Oder wenn ich noch nicht Worm bin, werde ich es sein, wenn ich nicht mehr Mahood bin.“ (442) … „Oder sollte es einen Tertius gaudens geben, eben mich…“ (442) Sind sie also nun zu dritt, man könnte meinen: eine echte soziale Situation, die bekanntlich erst durch den Dritten möglich wird – doch nein: eine vierte Position kommt ins Spiel[9]: seine „Seele“, wodurch auch die Interpretation ermöglicht wird, die Personen als bloße Funktionspositionen im kommunikativen Text zu deuten, und zwar ohne eine konkrete Besetzung der Positionen. „Wieviel sind wir eigentlich? Und wer spricht in diesem Moment? Und zu wem? Diese Fangfragen dienen zu nichts,“ (482) beruhigt er sich. Doch wie um die Gefahr der Substantialisierung der Positionen durch Besetzungen zu vermeiden, wird diese Pluralisierung stante pede als plurale Differenz zur Pluralisierung widerrufen. „Ich“, „diese verfluchte erste Person“, wird aufgegeben, gemäß der Devise Bacons „De nobis ipsis silemus“.

*

Was macht die zwei Geschichten vergleichbar in der Gestaltung von Namenlosigkeit in der Postmoderne? Es ist vielleicht das Nichtfestgelegtsein auf einen Namen und damit auf eine, eine einzige Identität. Identität wird zum Ereignis (Röttgers 2016). Das Gegenteil war die Suche nach der wahren, „echten“ Identität (Röttgers 2013, 145-159) und dem „eigentliche“ Namen. Das kann nicht der durch Abstammung und Taufe zugeordnete Name sein, sei dieser nun Cherubin Hammer, Mahood/Worm oder einfach Jürgen Schulze. Es kann auch nicht die Identitätsnummer des Finanzamts oder der genetische Fingerabdruck, den die Kriminalisten verwenden. Möglicherweise ist es in Zukunft der in einer Quasi-Taufe implantierte Chip.

Die befreienden Chancen der Postmoderne für Kultur und Lebensformen, die hier an diesen zwei sehr heterogene literarischen Beispielen mit ihrer Kultur der Vielfalten in der Gestalt des Spiels mit Namen und Namenlosigkeiten gezeigt wurde, hätte selbstverständlich auch in theoretischen Entwürfen abgeleitet werden können, wie z.B. an Derridas Differenzphilosophie mit der impliziten Kultivierung in der Figur des Doppelgängers oder in der singulär-pluralen Sozio-Ontologie Jean-Luc Nancys oder der symphilosophierenden Melange von Literatur und Philosophie bei Maurice Blanchot, aber auch vor allem auf Walter Benjamin (2011, 600-621). Darauf wurde hier verzichtet, auch um dem spätmodernen

Besserwissertum auszuweichen, die Postmoderne sei auch nur eine Spielart der Moderne. Stattdessen wurde hier Wert darauf gelegt, postmoderne kulturelle Praktiken der pluralen Namenlosigkeit im kommunikativen Text der Dichtung am Werk zu zeigen. Es war mir wichtig, diese erinnernden Beispiele aus dem kulturellen Sektor aufzuweisen, weil die Kultur in der Pandemie-Politik die geringste Aufmerksamkeit (und Wertschätzung!) erhält. Eher ist es ja doch die Ökonomie, und das aus gutem Grund; denn die ökonomischen Schäden der Politik können durch Schuldenmachen in die Zukunft verschoben werden, (ignorierend, daß das Florieren der Wirtschaft an die Gesundheit des Humankapitals gebunden ist und nicht allein in Geld bezifferbar ist), während die Schäden im Kulturellen zum großen Teil irreparabel sind. Für die Befreiung der Lebensformen konnte hier der Nachweis nicht direkt angetreten werden. Dafür finden sich ermutigende Hinweise in Eva von Redeckers Darstellung des Zusammenhang von Praxis und Revolution (Redecker 2018).

Die Moderne und auch noch die Spätmoderne hatten auf eine Einheit des gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhangs gesetzt, entweder als notwendig anzunehmende Voraussetzung, z.B. die transzendentale Einheit der Einen Vernunft, die in allen Subjekten dieselbe sei, oder als anzustrebende substantielle Vereinheitlichung („ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer“). Die Postmoderne hatte diese Tendenz auf Einheit aufgegeben und auf die Vielheiten möglicher, gesellschaftlicher Verbindungen und Zukünfte gesetzt. Damit wollten die Postmodernen keine Negation von Einheit, sondern statt der 1 die n+1, d.h. Eins und dann Noch-Eins. Die perverse Postmoderne der Pandemie-Politik gibt beides auf, die Einheit und die Vielheit, sie setzt stattdessen auf die Null, auf Zero. In ihr werden alle gesellschaftlichen Verbindungen und alle Einheiten aufgelöst in den universellen Egoismus von Zählwerten. An die Stelle der Mitmenschlichkeit, sei es als Solidaritätspflicht, sei es als liebevolle Berührung, tritt nun die Vermummung von Sprechen, Vernehmen („Vernunft“) und der verbindenden Zuwendungen. An die Stelle des Vertrauens in die Einheit der Vernunft (in der Moderne) oder die Vielheiten des „Etre-en-commun“ (in der unbeschädigten Postmoderne) tritt nun die Abstandspflicht und das Misstrauen, der ehemalige Mit-Mensch könnte ein Virenträger sein. Für die Kinder und Jugendlichen, die noch nicht in den kapitalistischen Egoismus eingeübt sind und die auf das „natürliche“, selbstverständliche Miteinander des Sozialen und ihre Einübung in Gesellschaft und Kultur (als „Bildung“) angewiesen sind und darauf setzen müssen, sind diese egoistischen Impulse besonders gravierend.

Die Universalisierung des angstvollen Verdachts gegenüber allen Mitmenschen ist die neue Namenlosigkeit. Die politische Exekutive (Polizei) rückt immer wieder aus, um ein fröhliches Miteinander von Menschen aufzulösen und diese einzeln mit Bußgeldern zu belegen, und zwar, da das Grundrecht der Unverletzlichkeit der Wohnung nach wie vor gelten sollte, aufgrund von Denunziationen lieber Menschen in der Nachbarschaft. Besonders deutlich wird diese egoistische Tendenz in der Quasi-Pflicht zur Impfung. Die Geimpften sind (nach bisherigem Kenntnisstand) nicht etwa weniger ansteckend, wenn sie das Virus haben, als die Ungeimpften, sie haben lediglich für sich (egoistisch) einen milderen Verlauf der Krankheit reserviert, falls sie erkranken.[10]

Die Oben/Unten-Struktur der Pandemie-Politik, wenn sie dominant und exklusiv wird, wie geschehen, ist aus psychiatrisch-philosophischer Sicht die typische Struktur der Melancholie, bzw. Depression, nämlich nicht mehr hinaus zu können in die Lebensanschlüsse des gelebten Lebens, die befreienden Berührungen mit anderen versagt zu bekommen, bzw. sich zu versagen, noch unter der Vermummung frei atmen zu können, auf Geheiß der da oben. Bekanntlich ist die Standard-Reaktion dieser neuen Depressiven: ‚es ist nicht schön – aber es muss ja sein, dass ich mein Leben nicht leben kann (und zwar weil es der virologisch/ideologisch formierte Politiker so verfügt). Wohl dem, der noch spürt, was ihm mit Vermummung und Abstandspflicht an Gewalt angetan wird, festgehalten in der depressiven Situation einer Oben/Unten-Struktur der Verhinderung der freien Entfaltung einer gelingenden Existenz in einer offenen und freigestaltbaren Existenz. Mit der Deutung von Binswanger und Maldiney ist die (selbst)verordnete Immobilität und Blockierung anderer Möglichkeiten in der vertikalen Oben/Unten-Struktur anstelle einer horizontalen Anschlussfreudigkeit im kommunikativen Text des Sozialen, die eine und mehrere Zukünfte eröffnen könnte.[11] Nach Freud besteht der Unterschied zwischen Trauer und Melancholie darin, dass der Trauernde sich nach dem Verlust des geliebten Objekts durch Trauerarbeit einem neuen zu liebenden Objekt zuwenden kann, während der Melancholische sich in der Fixierung auf den Verlust selbst immobilisiert (Freud 2011).

Am Ende läge eine pessimistische Prognose nahe. Wie die Französische Revolution und ihrer einhergehenden Revolution der Lebensformen in Napoleon aufgehoben war – im Doppelsinn von „aufgehoben" als vernichtet und bewahrt – und wie in der Russischen Revolution in der Linie Lenin-Stalin das gleiche geschehen ist, so wird auch die Postmoderne in ihren Perversionen aufgehoben sein. In all diesen Fällen wird eine Rückkehr zum Zustand vorheriger Freiheit (zur „Normalität" sagen manche) nicht möglich sein, weder eine Restauration des vorrevolutionären Zustands noch eine Restitution der Verhältnisse der postmodernen revolutionären Prozesse in Kultur und Lebensformen. So werden wir wohl mit der Perversion weiter leben müssen. Nachdem in der eindimensionalen Perversion der Postmoderne der Verlust der unbeschädigten Postmoderne irreversibel eingetreten ist und ein Zurück in die heile Postmoderne oder gar in die Subjektzentrierung von Moderne und Spätmoderne nicht mehr möglich ist, gilt es, die neuen Anschlüsse in der Existenzentfaltung zu finden, die eine Vielfalt von neuen Zukünften eröffnen könnten. Konkret heißt das: Wir werden nie mehr ohne Vermummung dicht bei dicht im Theater oder Kino sitzen, aber so wie wir auch vordem nicht ohne Bikini oder Badehose ein öffentliches Schwimmbad betreten durften; und wir werden hinter den Vermummungen nie mehr das echte oder das maskierte Lächeln des Gegenübers sehen können und nie mehr die knisternde Erotik erster Berührungen spüren können (s. dazu Diaconu 2005, 77-84), sondern wir werden soviel Egoismus angelernt haben, dass wir stets die Abstandspflichten zu den „Mit(?)-Menschen einhalten werden.[12] Aber jenseits dieser zu betrauernden Verluste werden wir (hoffentlich) durch Trauerarbeit im Sinne Freuds Neues entdecken können, z.B. in den digitalen Bildern in Online-Begegnungen die Virtualisierung von Emotionen kultivieren und es lernen, diese zu genießen. Dafür könnte die Orientierung am kommunikativen Text statt an der Leiblichkeit und Zwischenleiblichkeit der Spätmoderne die Schablone abgeben. Nach dem pessimistischen Anblick der melancholischen Fixierung durch die eindimensionale Pandemie-Politik lockt der Ausblick auf die Keime zukünftiger Revolutionen aus den Nischen subversiver Praktiken.

ANMERKUNGEN

[1] Zur Kritik dieser Vorstellung bei Butler, Foucault und Marx s. Meißner (2010); s. außerdem Meyer-Drawe, (1990); cf. auch Žiżek (2010, 229): "… the subject is not its own origin, it is secondary, dependent on its substantial presuppositions; but these presuppositions do not have a substantial consistency of their own and are always retroactively posited. The only 'absolute' is thus the process itself."

[2] Von einem akzidentellen Pluralismus der Werte spricht Oksenberg Rorty (1990: 3-20); cf. Röttgers (2009, 135-150). Auch Nietzsches Umwertung aller Werte setzt voraus, dass es eine vorgegebene, stabile Werte-Ordnung eben nicht gibt.

[3] Von Entsubstanzialisierung spricht Krämer (2008, 261, passim); von einer Politik ohne ein substantielles Band, ohne einen anderen Zweck als den der Verbindung, ohne eine andere Struktur als die der Interkonnektivität spricht Nancy (1993, 174-175). Die rein relationale Mitte ohne eine substantielle Füllung ist zugleich eine Mitte voller Möglichkeiten, s. Cottrell (1981, 81-93).

[4] Von der Hierarchie-Resistenz bei Gilles Deleuze spricht Langer (2003, 81); cf. mit Blick auf Bataille Hetzel (1999, 78).

[5] Cf. Schürmann (2013, 140-145); die Endlichkeit enthüllt eine Welt ohne Ursprung und Ziel, diagnostiziert Nancy (2001 a, 19-20); mit Bezug auf Heidegger: Nancy (2015, 65).

[6] Zur Spätmoderne in Absetzung von der Moderne rechne ich die Theorien des kommunikativen Handelns à la Habermas, die sprachanalytische Philosophie angelsächsischer Provenienz und ein Großteil der Phänomenologie.

[7] Das schwer übersetzbare Être-en-commun, fundamentaler als jede Politik, ist ein Begriff, den ich Jean-Luc Nancy entlehne, s. Nancy (2001 b, 34-35); Nancy (2011, 46-47); Nancy (1993, 80, 108); Nancy (2001 a, 115ff., 127-129); Nancy (2004); Nancy (2009, 86-92).

[8] Cf. Nancy (2009, 31-33, 77); Kommunismus als „Wahrheit der Demokratie" (2009, 63, 89); Nancy (2003, 20); s. dazu auch Critchley (1999, 241); auch Badiou (2003, 91ff.).

[9] Man möchte an Reinhard Brandts Ermahnung denken (Brandt 2010, 117-127); auch bei Brandt ist es die vierte Position, nämlich als transzendentale, die eine herausgehobene Stellung hat.

[10] Mit all dem Gesagten – um nun einem zu erwartenden Einwand zuvorzukommen – wird nicht im Entferntesten die Gefährlichkeit des Corona-Virus bestritten und selbstverständlich auch nicht, dass das Ausgeliefertsein und in der Lungenerkrankung das Nicht-mehr-Atmen-Können der Patienten bagatellisiert werden dürfte. Sehr wohl aber wird hier bestritten, dass die Pandemie-Politik der Knebelung einer ganzen Bevölkerung zum Nichtmehr-frei-Atmenkönnen unter Vermummungen das angemessene Mittel gewesen ist. Behalten wir doch statt der willkürlich festgesetzten Inzidenz-Schwellenwerte im Blick, dass von den je von dieser besonders schweren Grippe Erkrankten ca. 94% bereits wieder genesen sind, wobei ja nicht alle in der Inzidenz Gezählten tatsächlich überhaupt oder gar schwer erkrankten. Und von den meist über achtzigjährigen Verstorbenen ist weniger als die Hälfte *an* dem Virus verstorben, der Rest der Gezählten ist aus anderen Gründen verstorben, wäre also sowieso gestorben, hatte aber außerdem noch eine Corona-Infektion, das sind 0,8 % der je Erkrankten. Aufgrund dieser Zahlen wird eine ganze Nation in Panik versetzt und mit Zwangsmaßnahmen bedacht. Daher ist es so verständlich, dass es Verschwörungsmythen gibt, die dahinter eine Absicht und nicht etwa bloß eine Unfähigkeit der Großen Politik sehen, sich anderes als eine eindimensionale „Sachzwang"-„Politik" vorzustellen.

[11] Nach Ludwig Binswanger ist die Fixierung in der Oben/Unten-Struktur ohne horizontale Verknüpfungen zu einer Vergangenheit und einer offenen Zukunft das charakteristische Merkmal der Depression/Melancholie. Nur wenn man diese Fixierung verlassen kann zu Verknüpfungen mit anderen, kann die Existenz gelingen (Binswanger 1960); den topologischen Aspekt arbeitet besonders heraus Schwarz (1996); Die Möglichkeit des Ausgangs aus sich selbst zum anderen als Bedingung gelingender Existenz betont besonders Maldiney (2018, 29-38).

[12] Einzelne Pandemie-Politiker preisen ja jetzt schon die Vermummungspflicht, weil sie auch gegen alle möglichen anderen Infektionen schützt.

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Critique du rapport d´obéissance à la norme : vers une image réfléchie du plein pouvoir

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Abstract
Critique of the Relation to Legal Obedience: Towards a Reflected Image of Full Authority

This paper reflects on the relation between the conditions that enable subject obedience to the norm. Such an approach considers Freud and Kelsen's prior fundamental contentions about the issue from both psychoanalytical and law theories, respectively. In his work *Group psychology and analysis of the Ego*, for instance, Freud sets the question of the cause that serves as an explanation for the cohesion of society in terms of a ¨common object of affection¨. On the other hand, Kelsen's earlier work postulates "legal order" as a decisive factor that might embrace multiplicity (as a State). Regarding this logical continuum, Freud criticizes that line of reflection and attempts to conceive the norm within the frame of the second topic, namely, as the instance of the "Superego". Nonetheless, such an image or representation of the norm does not fully consider the specificity of the Self as a founding act, nor implies the constitutive lack of any Self that shall always pursue its own reflective relation with the norm. Subsequently, Fichte's latest work will be taken into consideration.

Keywords: Freud, Kelsen, Fichte, law, obedience, crowd psychology, psychoanalytical theory of norm, legal order

Introduction

Le problème du lien entre sujet et norme comprend deux représentations du rapport à la norme qui engagent simultanément le *devoir* (soit, l'injonction) et le *vouloir* (en tant que limite de la satisfaction). Or, ce rapport au *devoir-être*, qui est l'assise présomptive du droit parce qu'il interpelle les limites du Moi eu égard à son désir, doit aussitôt impliquer le régime de la contingence, à défaut de quoi, l'obligation de la loi dans les termes de la nécessité ne pourrait pas être pensée.

Dans le sillage du couple devoir-vouloir où s'inscrit tout processus de subjectivation[1], il nous revient de comprendre la portée du questionnement soulevé par la psychanalyse (Freud) et la théorie du droit (Kelsen) concernant les conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la loi. Au premier abord, cette énigme apparaît comme étant insoluble. En effet, la cause ultime de l'obéissance ne peut pas être énoncée définitivement au risque d'engouffrer la réflexion sur l'opérativité de la norme dans la présupposition d'une culpabilité intenable (Joseph K.).

D'où le problème qui se pose à nous : *De quelle manière le Moi pose-t-il l'écart de réflexivité face à l'illusion de la toute-puissance de la Loi ?* Cette question soulève la rencontre d´une hétéronormativité démesurée, dont le voile de l´absolu trouble le sujet qui souhaite adresser sa demande de reconnaissance vers l´autre de sa différence ; ce faisant, l´enjeu consiste à mettre en valeur la visée réflexive aux fins de la libre représentation de soi, dans la mesure où son apparaître ne peut pas être tenu pour une évidence (il n´est donc pas constitutif, car il demeure ouvert dans l´horizon des images possibles).

Ainsi, l'exposé d'une critique qui s'articule autour du fantasme qui traverse le rapport entre la norme et l'individu, prend pour nous le sens précis d'une remise en question de la puissance qui vise son effectivité totale, de la même façon que la loi positive est incarnée par la figure de l'État. Dans un second mouvement, la convergence entre les perspectives de Freud (1921) dans *Psychologie des foules et analyse du Moi* et celles de Kelsen émanant du champ de la théorie pure du droit (1922) dans *La Notion du Moi et la psychologie sociale*, engage notre compréhension sur la voie de la scission qui doit pouvoir ramener le sujet vers la pensée de sa différence, cela dans les termes du registre de l'imaginaire de l'écart entre le Moi et son idéal. Un troisième moment implique la suspension de l'effectivité de la loi sans faille, dont la constitution s'avère incertaine lorsqu'elle se replie dans le présupposé idéal de son propre fondement (Kelsen) ; Freud nous permet donc d'entrevoir une issue face à la façon dont le Moi est en mesure de poser son propre rapport lorsqu'il est partagé entre le *principe de réalité* et *le principe de plaisir*. Dans ce sens, une critique de la représentation du rapport à la loi nous permettra de mobiliser la théorie de l´image, eu égard à la Doctrine de la Science tardive (1811-1813), au profit d´une réflexion sur la capacité qu´a le Moi de *faire avec* l´ordre juridique.

Ainsi, une réponse provisoire eu égard à notre questionnement peut être énoncée de la manière suivante : *L'obéissance à la loi ne peut pas s'effectuer sans l'absence avouée d'un garant externe.* La possibilité pour le sujet de poser son désir dans les termes d'une transgression réfléchie de son propre rapport à la norme est donc un écart nécessaire pour faire place au désir d'autrui.

1. Freud et la psychologie des foules

Nos réflexions sur l'opération normative[2] reprennent la question des conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la loi. Dans ce sillage, s'impose la trace de Freud et plus particulièrement, le concept de pulsion de sa théorie psychanalytique. Deux moments sont à prendre en compte, car ils rendent compte du tournant qui va de la première topique d'avant 1919 (*Inconscient, Préconscient, Conscient*), vers la deuxième qui partage la structure subjective dans les termes du *Moi et le Ça* en 1923 (Freud 2018). Ce passage crucial intègre le questionnement autour de l'*imaginaire dogmatique* à l'origine de l'*idéologie juridique* (Lenoble 2018, 3). En effet, si l'on veut réinterroger le développement du lien social dans son rapport à l'instauration de l'ordre juridique (Droit), voire, en tant que création d'une capacité d'autolimitation signifiante chez les sujets dans les termes du Surmoi (psychanalyse), l'approche freudienne du clivage entre l'individu et l'idéal du Moi s'avère indépassable. Ce faisant, le recours à *Psychologie des foules et analyse du* Moi (Freud 2012) sera au cœur de la première partie de nos analyses.

Dans la *Psychologie des foules et analyse du Moi*, Freud s'engage sur la voie critique initiée par les travaux de Gustave Le Bon dans *Psychologie des Foules* (1895) et de Mc.Dougall (1920) dans *The Group Mind*, par rapport aux enjeux affectifs qui caractérisent la perte du Moi lorsqu'il adhère à la visée de la foule. Dans ses grandes lignes, la réflexion freudienne recouvre l'énigme du rapport entre psychologie individuelle et psychologie *sociale* (Freud 2012, 31) dans la mesure où la foule serait à l'origine d'une diminution des restrictions qui détournent la satisfaction immédiate des pulsions. Or, cette masse *extraordinairement suggestive et crédule* (Freud 2012, 32) empêcherait l'émergence d'une *conscience morale* et serait nuisible au rendement intellectuel de l'individu. Gustave Le Bon quant à lui, fait le constat d'un rapport inversement proportionnel entre les qualités réflexives de la subjectivité individuelle et l'intensité de l'adhésion affective qui traverse le Moi vis-à-vis du rassemblement collectif ; dans un tel régime associatif, le sentiment, la pensée et l'acte s'engagent dans un *esprit de corps*. Un des problèmes relevés par Le Bon concerne précisément l'abandon de la volonté face à la détermination de l'objet commun d'amour qui soude le lien entre les uns et les autres. De ce fait, la critique freudienne correspond au constat du régime pulsionnel qui sous-tend l'agrégation des subjectivités (il fait d'ailleurs appel à une « pulsion sociale » (Freud 2012, 20), en tant que différence fondamentale à des degrés variables, entre le Moi et son idéal. Freud précise que toute représentation qui excite les sens, hormis donc le traitement logique des actes par la voie rationnelle, favorise l'émergence d'un leader. Ainsi, le doute, voire le recul d'une conscience face à l'apparence de sa certitude, n'y est plus. La fascination du Moi nous dit Freud, lorsqu'il reprend partiellement les arguments de Le Bon, relève du constat qu'il a de sa force irrépressible au sein de la foule, de telle sorte que l'autorité apparaît en tant que principe de causation de sa force (d'où l'agrément à son égard), mais aussi, paradoxalement, en tant que principe de contrainte. La voie frayée par Freud à la suite de Le Bon dépeint l'image d'une toute-puissance associée à un sujet qui n'est plus responsable lorsqu´il se livre à l'expression de ses *motions pulsionnelles inconscientes* (Freud 2012, 27) et ne retrouve aucune conscience morale. Autrement dit, la représentation ne relève plus à ce stade de la capacité subjective à intégrer la différence entre le Moi et son idéal, de telle sorte que l'écart de réflexivité nécessaire au développement d'une prise de conscience serait enfoui du fait de l'absence de toute différence entre les sujets, du fait d'une perte de l'*hétérogénéité dans l'homogénéité* (Freud 2012, 27). Ainsi, d'après Freud, Le Bon se limite au constat de la suggestibilité du sujet par rapport à la masse, notamment à la manière dont s'exerce le pouvoir de fascination sur celui-ci dans l'état d'hypnose. En ce sens, Le Bon dresse un portrait de l'individu immergé dans la masse comme étant dépourvu de toute distinction, c´est-à-dire en tant que créature surdéterminée par le champ pulsionnel et qui « descend [de] plusieurs degrés sur l'échelle de la civilisation ». (Freud 2012, 30)

Pour en revenir à notre intérêt spécifique, à savoir celui de la compréhension de la manière dont le Moi s'engage sur la contestation des conditions qui rendent possible l'obéissance au fantasme de la toute-puissance associée à la loi, une première approche par la voie freudienne se dégage : celle qui conçoit une subjectivité engagée dans le régime associatif d'images, c'est-à-dire, absoute de toute faculté critique. Freud la décrit en ces termes :

> La foule est extraordinairement suggestible et crédule, elle est dépourvue d'esprit critique, l'invraisemblable n'existe pas pour elle. Elle pense par images qui s'évoquent les unes les autres par association, telles qu'elles surviennent chez l'homme isolé lorsqu'il donne libre cours à son imagination, et dont aucune instance rationnelle ne mesure la conformité à la réalité. Les sentiments de la foule sont toujours très simples et très exagérés. La foule ne connaît donc ni doute ni incertitude. (Freud 2012, 31)

Le contraste est d'autant plus vif à l'égard des valeurs de vérité vraie ou fausse des propositions répandues par la figure d'autorité, au sens précis où la masse tient sans le moindre doute. De ce fait, c'est bien la répétition des images qui fait la force de l'adhésion dans la représentation de l'unité : « Qui veut agir sur elle n'a nul besoin de mesurer la logique de ses arguments, il faut brosser les tableaux les plus vigoureux, exagérer et toujours répéter la même chose. Ne gardant aucun doute sur la vérité et l'erreur et possédant de ce fait la notion claire de sa grande force, la foule est aussi intolérante que pleine de foi en l'autorité ». (Freud 2012, 32)

Ainsi, poursuit Freud, la fidélité et la cohérence de la foule par rapport à son image s'identifie tendanciellement avec la trace conservatrice des pulsions qui dressent leur forme et limite, dans un sens spécifique qui fait retour en tant que tradition, et cela au-delà de toute logique atteignable par la réflexion individuelle. Cependant d'après Freud, dans ce champ d'influence, l'on peut voir l'émergence de certains traits positifs tels que le désintérêt de soi face à l'avènement de la singularité d'autrui, tout comme la dévotion à un idéal.

À ce stade toutefois, le régime de la négation prend le relais de l'acte réflexif, cette fois-ci en tant que compromission du sujet avec l'illusion, lorsque celui-ci ne consent plus son accord avec la réalité objective. Cette nuance précise qui fait le point sur la situation du sujet dans le fantasme, comme croyance figée dans l'image d'un être de la réalité, s'avère un trait commun dégagé par Freud de la névrose et de l'hystérie. Si la masse est aussi sensible aux affects, voire démunie de toute volonté pour s'opposer à la suggestibilité de l'esprit de corps, cela n'est certainement pas le cas pour le leader qui, d'après Le Bon, fait preuve d'une volonté extrêmement puissante. Les thèses de Le Bon et Mc Dougall se rapprochent lorsqu'il est question de mettre en valeur la primauté des pulsions et la manière dont celles-ci sont réalisées sans qu'aucune réflexion individuelle n'y intervienne.

Or, un tournant décisif s'opère dans le positionnement freudien par rapport à ces deux auteurs, dont les ouvrages inaugurent les premiers pas vers l'élucidation des principes de la psychologie sociale. La limite observée par Freud, au-delà de la reconnaissance initiale qu'il accorde au phénomène de la suggestibilité, ne se limite pas à cette tournure, mais plus encore, questionne les conditions de sa possibilité en terme de *nature* : « Mais sur la nature de la suggestion, c'est-à-dire sur les conditions dans lesquelles se produisent des influences sans fondement logique suffisant, la lumière n'est pas faite ». (Freud 2012, 48) Le déplacement réflexif à caractère transcendantal, qui met en avant l´étendue de la critique face au constat de la suggestibilité, s'arrête net dans une note en bas de page qui regrette une recherche n'ayant malheureusement pas vu le jour[3]. Au lieu de poursuivre dans cette direction critique, qui n'est pas sans rappeler le déplacement kantien, Freud prolonge son analyse dans la lignée de ses recherches élaborées deux années plus tôt, dans *Au-delà du principe de plaisir* et *Pulsions et Destins des pulsions*.[4] La réponse qu'il offre s'inscrit ainsi dans le champ lexical de la *Libido*, en tant que quantum d'énergie adossée au concept de pulsion : « Au lieu de cela je vais tenter, pour éclairer la psychologie des foules, de recourir au concept de libido qui nous a rendu de si bons services dans l'étude des psychonévroses. Libido est un terme emprunté à la théorie de l'affectivité. Nous désignons ainsi l'énergie, considérée comme grandeur quantitative – quoique pour l'instant non mesurable –, de ces pulsions qui ont affaire avec tout ce que nous résumons sous le nom d'amour » (Freud 2012, 48-49). De ce fait, la portée critique amorcée initialement s'estompe dans une réflexion qui poursuit un certain héritage de la biologie : le raisonnement reprend la pulsion comme concept fondamental de la métapsychologie, au gré de *représentant psychique de l'organique des excitations provenant de l'intérieur* (Freud 2012, 66).

Certes, le cours de la réflexion freudienne par rapport à la raison ultime de l´agrégation de la masse ne s'arrête pas là, car le développement qui suit s'attaque à l'hypothèse d'une figure de pouvoir sans faille. Toutefois, l'examen de l'écart entre le Moi et son idéal est d'autant plus significatif dans la *Psychologie des foules,* que Freud y analyse le lien affectif qui préserve la cohésion de l'église et de l'armée. Cette réflexion amorce les développements à l'égard du Surmoi en tant que conformation supra individuelle à la norme qui agit sur le Moi. Dans cette perspective, la masse est ainsi conçue comme artificielle dans la mesure où sa préservation découle de moyens exogènes qui ne sont pas ceux d'une formation spontanée. L'objet commun d'amour dans le cas de l'église est aussitôt la cause de la fratrie, de sorte que la singularité du Christ, en tant que représentation de l'affectivité qui s'y irradie, dispose en même temps des liens entre ses membres : « Toutes les exigences imposées aux individus isolés découlent de cet amour du Christ. Un courant démocratique parcourt l'Église, justement parce que devant le Christ tous sont égaux, tous ont part égale à son amour. (…) Il est indubitable que le lien unissant chaque individu isolé au Christ est également la cause de leurs liens mutuels. Il en va pareillement pour l'Armée (…) ». (Freud 2012, 53-54) Toujours est-il que l'adhérence au collectif ne va pas sans l'ambigüité de l'amour et de la peur. Ainsi, l'amour dirigé vers la figure parentale est aussitôt proportionnel à la crainte de sa colère illimitée. La norme qui s'ensuit des rapports entre les sujets, pour autant qu'elle énonce la possibilité de leur cohésion harmonieuse, risque toutefois d'adopter la représentation d'une totalité toujours en manque de la différence en tant que Non-Moi. Autrement dit, l'autre que soi demeure toujours appropriable dans ce cas de figure. Aussi, non pas l'amour cette fois-ci nous dit Freud, mais la haine envers un ennemi commun « pourrait aussi bien avoir une action unificatrice et susciter les mêmes liens affectifs que l'attachement positif ». (Freud 2012, 62)

2. La critique kelsénienne de la psychologie sociale

Les recherches de Hans Kelsen s'inscrivent dans le cadre d'un dialogue avec la psychanalyse. Son étude intitulée « La Notion de l'État et la Psychologie sociale » (*Der Begriff des Staates und die Sozialpsychologie. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung von Freuds Theorie der Masse*) fut exposée en 1921 dans la *Société psychanalytique de Vienne* (Balibar 2017), puis publiée en 1922 dans la revue *Imago* numéro VIII, dont l'éditeur fut précisément Sigmund Freud.

L'intervention de Kelsen concernant le concept d'État explicite un rapport à l'obéissance qui ne relève pas d'un présupposé quelconque vis-à-vis d'une instance extérieure[5] ; il s'agit bien en ce sens, d'une anticipation des développements freudiens du *Moi et le Ça* de 1923, dans la mesure où une double injonction y opère dans les termes d'un lien qui n'est pas sans rappeler la figure du père (car elle évoque tout à la fois la transgression et l'autorité)[6].

L'enjeu pour Kelsen consiste à dépasser dans un premier temps, la manière dont est conçue la soi-disant « nature » de l'État, car elle n'est pas dépendante selon lui, d'une pure et simple agrégation d'individualités. Encore faut-il expliquer comment une telle unité peut avoir lieu et Kelsen énonce à ce propos : « Cependant, le raisonnement pris en compte ici est celui-ci : l'unité de l'État est a priori présumée donnée, même par les sociologues qui s'efforcent de chercher et de déterminer empiriquement l'unité sociale de l'État ». (Kelsen 1988, 136)

Depuis cette perspective, il semble bien que l'entreprise critique de Kelsen concernant la cohésion de la masse ne se fasse pas uniquement par le biais de la suggestibilité. Certes, tant Freud et Kelsen visent la compréhension des conditions de possibilité de la suggestibilité. Pourtant, leur approche diffère l'une de l'autre. Ceci est d'autant plus vrai que Kelsen ne se réfère pas à une causalité de type organique : « Mais cet ordre juridique ou étatique propose une tout autre connexion des éléments, avec ses lois propres et spécifiques. Il s'agit d'une connexion totalement différente du système causaliste de la nature ». (Kelsen 1988, 136) Ainsi, l'argument qui tend à créer une analogie entre la Loi de la nature et celle de l'homme ne tient tout simplement pas. L'analyse de Kelsen vise une compréhension différente de celle qui mobilise la force pulsionnelle dans les termes de la *libido* et l'identifie comme cause.

En premier lieu, se pose le problème pour Kelsen de saisir à quel point les intérêts de classe, race, religion, voire tout autre type de trait saillant parmi un groupement spécifique d'individus, ne serait pas un motif suffisant pour dissoudre la conscience d'État. Comment est-ce donc possible d'aboutir au constat de l'État en tant qu'*Un* en dépit de toute divergence ? « Les intérêts de classe, les intérêts religieux et nationaux ne devrait-ils pas l'emporter sur la conscience de l'État ? Ne devraient-ils pas exercer leur effet formateur de groupes par-delà les frontières et mettre en question l'existence durable d'un groupe qui se confond avec l'unité juridique de l'État ? » (Kelsen 1988, 137).

La critique de Kelsen du lien social qui structure la représentation de l'État identifie cette dernière comme hypostase : elle est une préfiguration qui ne prend pas en compte le plan d'immanence de l'investissement individuel, cela au profit d'un concept qui s'impose en tant qu'image d'un grand corps (d'où bien évidemment l'usage fréquent de l'expression « esprit de corps » dans les recherches antérieures portant sur la « psychologie sociale »). Kelsen est clair sur ce point, le lien n'est pas du tout « externe », mais plutôt « interne » :

> Si l'on soumet à l'analyse ce qu'un lien social peut signifier psychologiquement, il en résulte ceci : les sens de l'affirmation : « A est lié à B », n'est pas, entre autres, que tous deux soient pris, en tant que corps, dans le même espace. Il ne s'agit pas d'une relation externe – pour reprendre l'expression habituelle de la sociologie récente –, mais d'une relation « interne ». (Kelsen 1988, 138)

Selon Kelsen, le type de communauté qui caractérise l'État ne peut pas être ramené à une explication qui récupèrerait l'ensemble des volontés en une seule. Un des enjeux fondamentaux dans la compréhension de Kelsen de l'État suppose la distinction entre deux types de connaissance (psychologie et sociologie) qui sont hétérogènes : « Pour l'approche psychologique, le psychisme individuel est réellement une monade dépourvue de fenêtres. Et partant, toute sociologie a une finalité supra-individuelle… » (Kelsen 1988, 139) De ce fait, la *communauté de conscience* n'est pas un concept qui tire sa rigueur de la psychologie individuelle, car le psychisme d'après Kelsen, ne peut pas simplement être projeté dans un corps quelconque. La critique de Hegel suit une logique analogue :

> C'est même cette réalité que la psychologie des peuples, comme on la nomme, appelle « esprit de peuple ». Dans la mesure où cette expression vise à n'exprimer rien de plus qu'une certaine communauté de conscience, c'est un concept qui n'engage à rien. Néanmoins, il y a une tendance à affirmer cet « esprit de peuple » comme une réalité psychique, différente des psychismes individuels ; cette notion de *Volkgeist* prend ainsi le caractère métaphysique de l'esprit objectif chez Hegel. (Kelsen 1988, 139)

À ce moment précis de son développement, la critique freudienne n'aboutit pas au renversement de la représentation substantialiste de l'État (son opposition est d'autant plus claire face à Durkheim dans *Les règles de la méthode sociologique*. (Durkheim 1919)) Pourtant, Kelsen accorde une place privilégiée à la psychanalyse, parce qu'elle est susceptible de remettre en mouvement la critique portant sur la représentation de l'autorité absolue de l'État. Sur ce point, Étienne Balibar écrit à juste titre :

> La psychanalyse est donc invitée à remplir ici, dans le champ de la pratique, la fonction que remplissait la critique kantienne dans le champ spéculatif : elle est susceptible d'indiquer les illusions substantialistes qui affectent l'État… (…) Une telle critique n'abolira certes pas les illusions substantialistes indissociables de ce qu'il faut bien appeler, du point de vue de Kelsen, le fantasme de la souveraineté ou de la toute-puissance de l'État. (Balibar 2017, 400)

C'est bien un tel fantasme qui est au cœur de la critique kelsénienne de l'État, celui-ci ne provenant pas d'une quelconque « réalité psychologique » (comme si l'enjeu consistait tout simplement à renforcer par ce biais l'*état de fait* de l'État), mais plutôt de la représentation de l'État lui-même, c'est-à-dire, en tant qu'*idée directrice* pour la compréhension de l'ordre juridique à l'œuvre (toujours *se faisant*, voire, à jamais inachevable)[7]. Autrement dit, le recours à l'image ne vaut qu'à partir du moment où celle-ci développerait une certaine consistance hypothétique, c'est-à-dire, non pas en tant qu'image reconnue depuis son rapport à un *Autre* qu'elle-même (comme image de l'être de l'État), mais depuis son articulation entre l'abstraction et sa réalisation. Une telle distinction, nous semble-t-il, suit la séparation chez Kelsen entre les *foules primitives et variables*, puis les *foules artificielles et stables* (Kelsen 1988, 151) (comme celles de l'État). Ainsi, celles du premier genre seraient associées à la prévalence d'un chef, voire, d'une figure tyrannique dont l'efficacité positive serait contingente ; celles du second genre, par contre, recourraient en amont à l'idée incarnée dans une institution. Ce faisant, Kelsen saisit la conduite humaine qui traverse l'ordre étatique dans son rapport avec la valeur admise définitivement et sans ambages (*Soll-Geltung*) ; cette dernière serait distincte de l'ordre positif (*Seins-Wirksamkeit*) (Kelsen 1988, 152) de la première image. Cette différence entre une première et une seconde *image* (Kelsen 1988, 149) de la foule passerait inaperçue pour Freud aux yeux de Kelsen. Certes, la portée de la critique psychanalytique est cruciale parce qu'elle rend possible la compréhension de la scission de la subjectivité dans les termes d'un Moi pris à l'intérieur de l'écart entre celui-ci et sa projection vers un idéal, notamment celui du chef[8]. Ceci-dit, le recours à la critique de l'hypostase conteste la validité non-interrogée de l'adhésion des parties dans une totalité. De plus, il permet de faire le point sur l'écart qui s'y comble et révèle l'absence d'explication convaincante concernant le passage entre corps individuel et corps collectif :

> En vérité, on a affaire là à une plénière *metabasis eis to allo genos*, au passage à une réalité totalement différente. C'est comme si outre l'âme singulière, on voulait prendre en compte une âme collective remplissant l'intervalle entre les individus, englobant tous les individus ; c'est une représentation dont la sociologie récente n'est pas si éloignée, comme on l'a montré ci-dessus ; pensée dans ses ultimes conséquences – du fait qu'une âme sans corps est empiriquement impossible – cette représentation conduit

> nécessairement à imaginer à son tour un corps collectif tout aussi différent des corps individuels, dans lequel on place l'âme collective. C'est par ce biais là que la sociologie psychologique est amenée à l'hypostase qui caractérise la théorie de la société dite organique, une hypostase qui confine au mythologique. (Kelsen 1988, 153)

Kelsen s'oppose ainsi à l'idée d'une objectivité du social compris comme un corps qui résorbe la spécificité et la complexité des rapports intra-individuels. Le passage vers une entité capable de convertir les processus subjectifs pour les combler par *une* représentation durable demeure ainsi un mystère, voire relève du domaine de la croyance. La critique envers Durkheim entérine cette incapacité à rendre claire une telle *conversion* :

> La manière dont la subjectivité réelle peut devenir une objectivité tout aussi réelle du simple fait de son accumulation ou de sa multiplication reste nécessairement une énigme. La quantité se tourne alors en qualité ou, en d'autres mots : c'est là un miracle, vous êtes priés d'y croire. (Kelsen 1988, 153)

La riposte de Kelsen vis-à-vis de la représentation de l'État ne fait aucune concession au moment de saisir la cause de l'obéissance dans les termes de l'*ordre juridique* : le voile de la personnification détourne la portée du concept en tant qu'hypothèse à caractère transcendantal (comme *Soll-Geltung).* L'*illustration* selon les termes de Kelsen, en tant qu'image de l'être de l'État, ne serait qu'un *raccourci*, voire une *béquille* (Kelsen 1988, 161) dont l'utilisation abaisserait considérablement la pensée et lui épargnerait la tâche de devoir saisir le concept. C'est pourquoi, l'État est indissociable de sa définition à partir du droit :

> En tant que mise en ordre (*Ordnung*), du comportement humain, l'État est identique précisément à cet ordre de la coercition que l'on conçoit comme le droit ou l'ordre du droit. Mais dans la mesure où l'on se représente l'État non sous la catégorie de l'ordre, non comme un système abstrait de normes pour le comportement humain, mais, d'une façon imagée, comme une personnalité active et agissante – et c'est le sens généralement donné quand intervient le mot «État » - , ce concept signifie simplement la personnification concrète de l'ordre juridique constituant la communauté sociale, fondant l'unité d'une multiplicité des comportements humains. (Kelsen 1988, 161)

Selon Kelsen, l'*ordre juridique* est la *Grundnorm* qui instaure le pur rapport d'obéissance. Cependant, malgré la justesse de sa critique concernant la représentation de l'État, l'énigme demeure pour Freud de savoir quelle est la cause de l'obéissance. Le défi lancé à Freud, selon Étienne Balibar, consiste à lui faire abandonner *l'image de l'être de l'État* en tant qu'identité fondée sur un objet commun d'amour, y compris donc l'illusion de sa toute-puissance. De la sorte, cette deuxième instance ne correspondrait pas à l'image, voire, au calque *de l'être de l'État* dans la personne du chef, mais plutôt à l'*être même de l'image de l'État*, dont la représentation épurée de l'opérativité normative, d'après Kelsen, serait déliée de tout leader contingent. Selon Balibar, l'identification est ainsi annulée : « Pour relever ce défi, il devrait rendre compte d'une identification paradoxale, ou d'une limite de l'identification, qui n'est plus à proprement parler ni positive ni négative mais plutôt « vide », car elle ne comporte aucune *représentation* imaginaire d'un objet d'amour ou de haine que les individus (ou leur «moi ») puissent «mettre en commun », mais seulement un principe pur d'obéissance. »[9] Cela dit, il faut s'entendre sur ce dernier point dans la mesure où le moment kelsénien demeure au cœur de la représentation de l'acte qui sous-tend la valeur de la norme, voire, sa teneur en tant que concept est ainsi liée à la nécessité de la permanence dans l'hypothèse de l'obéissance.

Selon Kelsen, la norme suffit à elle-même, du fait de sa simple opérativité mise en œuvre comme principe d'obéissance, malgré donc la supposition d'une image mythique faisant obstacle à la compréhension de l'écart entre le Moi et son idéal, c'est-à-dire cette fois-ci, en tant que représentation de l'État qui se donne un fondement :

> Kelsen pense que le droit est une synthèse a priori d'impératif et de contrainte, et que cette synthèse se soutient par elle-même, sauf à vouloir se défendre contre des résurgences de l'archaïque et du théologique. En cela il prend directement la suite du concept de droit proposé par Kant, mais en le coupant de sa dépendance par rapport à une moralité transcendantale. C'est le droit positif qui, chez Kelsen, constitue sa propre Grundnorm, ou forge en son propre sein le fondement dont il a besoin, au moins sur le mode de la « fiction ». [10]

Un tel recours au transcendantal n'est pas sans rappeler le rapprochement que nous souhaitons mettre en évidence entre Kelsen et Fichte, dans la mesure où l'acheminement de leur réflexion nous conduit vers la pensée de la *norme fondamentale* comme *hypothèse* contenue dans la spécificité du *sollen*[11]. Cela dit, le moment kantien ne peut être exclu en tant que démarche initiale à partir de laquelle l'on pense la norme comme impératif catégorique. Pourtant, il faudra aussitôt poser les bases d'une critique autour du présupposé non interrogé concernant l'autonomisation complète du Droit en tant que science. Est-ce à dire que le Droit est complètement indépendant de toute croyance à une valeur morale[12] ? Jusqu'où s'étend la limite de la norme en tant qu'hypothèse qui doit (*soll*) opérer dans le régime de la facticité ?

3. Le Surmoi, principe d'obéissance

Au cours du moment précédent, il a été question de saisir les limites de la représentation de l'État en tant qu'entité censée incarner la toute-puissance de la norme, en vertu de quoi selon Kelsen, l'identification du sujet avec un *esprit de corps* s'avère problématique, car un tel rapport devrait être appréhendé depuis une perspective positive, suivant l'effectivité de la loi juridique comme origine de son propre fondement.

Cependant, l'engagement de Kelsen concernant le développement d'une Théorie Pure du Droit implique aussitôt la retombée dans le piège de l'autosuffisance, voire, la bévue par rapport au type de représentation qui *doit* présupposer de remplir la condition (*si tu voles…*) au profit de l'avènement effectif de la norme (*tu seras puni…*). Autrement dit, le caractère « transcendantal » (voir supra 45) demeure ici en suspens, le questionnement concernant les conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la norme n'étant pas traité au-delà d'une réflexion inscrite dans le registre d'une « fiction ». Or, c'est Freud qui s'engage sur cette voie dans *Le Moi et le Ça* : « La question que se pose – et lui pose – Freud vise à éclater l'auto-suffisance fictive : elle demande ce que c'est qu'obéir, et plus précisément encore ce que c'est qu'obéir à la contrainte, être intérieurement privé de la capacité à lui résister, renoncer à se révolter contre elle – sauf exception bien entendu – et dans quelle «structure » s'enracine une telle renonciation ou privation, de sorte qu'elle soit toujours déjà présupposée par le fonctionnement de l'ordre social. » (Balibar 2017, 407)

Le tournant de la pensée freudienne au tout début du *Moi et le Ça* annonce le dépassement de toute explication qui recourt à la nature, voire, abandonne le principe puisque le quantum d'énergie (libido) permet de concevoir le « représentant psychique de l'organique » (pulsion). En 1923, Freud est au cœur même de la deuxième topique : « Je reprends ici ces pensées, je les relie à différents faits fournis par l'observation analytique, je cherche à tirer de ce rapprochement de nouvelles conclusions, mais sans faire aucun nouvel emprunt à la biologie et en me tenant, de ce fait, plus près de la psychanalyse que dans « Au-delà » » (Freud 2018, 39)Les propos de cet essai annoncent une rupture vis-à-vis de la manière dont est traditionnellement appréhendé le psychisme humain, y compris donc le type de raison qui caractérise la philosophie, son assise moderne étant indissociable du présupposé selon lequel la subjectivité côtoie de manière immédiate sa propre définition dans l'acte de penser (Descartes). En d'autres termes, suivant le renouveau critique de la psychanalyse freudienne, la conscience d'une représentation spécifique n'équivaut pas à la pleine conscience de soi. Cette illusion est revisitée dans le *Moi et le Ça*, la conscience étant ainsi restreinte à la fonction opérée par le champ de la perception : « Être conscient est tout d'abord un terme purement descriptif, qui s'autorise de la perception la plus immédiate et la plus certaine. (…) La représentation qui est maintenant consciente ne l'est plus au moment suivant ; pourtant, elle peut le redevenir dans certaines conditions aisément réalisées. Entre-temps elle était, nous ne savons quoi ». (Freud 2018, 42) Le doute cartésien de la pensée perd son lien nécessaire avec l'assise ontologique ; la conscience se révèle donc éphémère, au point même où le *Moi* ne peut pas déclarer la souveraineté sur sa « nature », car elle demeure inconsciente, cachée, latente (préconsciente). Dans ce cadre analytique de la pensée, la situation du sujet se répand toujours sur plusieurs strates (inconscient, préconscient, conscient). Pourtant le partage entre le *Moi* et le *Ça* concerne des fonctions spécifiques : « La perception joue pour le moi le rôle qui dans le ça, échoit à la pulsion. Le moi représente ce qu'on peut nommer raison et bon sens, par opposition au ça qui a pour contenu les passions. (…) L'importance fonctionnelle du moi se manifeste en ceci que, normalement, il lui revient à commander les accès à la motilité ». (Freud 2018, 64) Or, le Moi subit une tension au niveau de sa fonction distributive, car il doit simultanément *faire avec* l'avènement de l'extériorité, en même temps qu'il lui échoit la tâche de se plier au *principe de plaisir* qui régit le fond instinctif du *Ça* : « Il s'efforce aussi de mettre en vigueur l'influence du monde extérieur sur le ça et ses desseins, et cherche à mettre le principe de réalité à la place du principe de plaisir qui règne sans limitation dans le ça. » (Freud 2018, 64) La subjectivité est ainsi définie par le fait de poser son rapport au *principe de plaisir,* pour autant que sa capacité réflexive tienne au Moi comme représentant défini par l'acte ; le Moi est balloté entre le *principe de plaisir* qui requiert l'assouvissement immédiat des pulsions, et le *principe de réalité*, dont le représentant sous forme d'injonction s'avère le *Surmoi* pour Freud. Le *Surmoi* s'oppose et réagit au *Ça*. Suivant cette logique, l'acte s'avère corrélatif d'une destinée exprimée dans les termes du « devoir être » (impératif catégorique). La genèse du *Surmoi* comme formation spécifique qui met en avant la manière dont opère la loi du père, concerne tout à la fois l'agencement positif (*fais, sois*), comme la contrainte (*ne fais pas, ne sois pas*) ; le devenir se rattache ainsi à la destinée (d'où le terme repris plus haut du *double bind*). Freud ajoute : « Cependant le sur-moi n'est pas simplement un résidu des premiers choix d'objet du ça, mais il a aussi la signification d'une formation réactionnelle énergique contre eux. Sa relation au moi ne s'épuise pas dans le précepte : tu *dois* être ainsi (comme le père), elle comprend aussi l'interdiction : tu *n'as pas le droit* d'être ainsi (comme le père), c'est-à-dire tu n'as pas le droit de faire tout ce qu'il fait ; certaines choses lui restent réservées ». (Freud 2018, 50) Le *Surmoi* se manifeste sous la forme d'un *impératif catégorique* (Freud 2018, 81), le type de coercition qu'il exerce sur le *monde intérieur* est comparable selon Freud à celui exercé par un *mandataire* (Freud 2018, 83) dont le rôle consiste à faire valoir l'opposition vis-à-vis du fond instinctif du *Ça*. Même si le recours à la moralité (idéal du Moi contenu dans l'objet commun d'amour) se révèle au détriment de l'individualité dans le parcours freudien de la première topique, suivant la seconde, le Moi est l'instance qui s'exprime dans le *monde extérieur*. (Freud 2018, 83) Ce partage explicite entre une *extériorité* et une *intériorité* présuppose le recours au représentant de l'acte réflexif (Moi) dans sa relation à un autre représentant (Surmoi), en vertu de quoi, l'image ne peut pas simplement combler (dans la deuxième topique) la scission entre le Moi et son idéal par le seul biais de la charge affective dans les termes de la *Libido* : l'écart lui-même doit être rendu visible comme posé par la subjectivité elle-même. Freud se demande aussitôt à quel point l´émissaire de la loi morale dans les termes du Surmoi entraine la dimension de la contingence, c'est-à-dire que l'énigme demeure de comprendre l'ensemble des conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la norme dans leur rapport au contexte particulier qui concerne l'état de fait du Moi : « Ainsi la séparation du sur-moi d'avec le moi n'a rien de fortuit, elle porte les traits les plus marquants du développement de l'individu et de l'espèce, et même, en donnant à l'influence des parents une expression persistante, elle pérennise l'existence des facteurs auxquels elle doit son origine ». (Freud 2018, 82).

La tension est rendue visible au niveau du lien concernant la supposition de la moralité et la prévalence pulsionnelle. De ce fait, le *Ça* et le *Surmoi* se retrouvent aux antipodes l'un de l'autre :

> Du point de vue de la restriction pulsionnelle, de la moralité, on peut dire : le ça est totalement amoral, le moi s'efforce d'être moral, le sur-moi peut devenir hyper-moral et aussi cruel que le ça peut l'être. Il est remarquable que plus un homme restreint son agressivité vers l'extérieur, plus il devient sévère, donc agressif, dans son idéal du moi la manière ordinaire de regarder les choses perçoit cela dans le sens contraire, elle voit dans l'exigence de l'idéal du moi le motif pour la répression et l'agressivité. Toutefois les faits restent bien tels que nous l'avons dit : plus un homme maîtrise son agressivité, plus intense devient la tendance agressive de son idéal contre son moi. Déjà la morale commune normale a un caractère durement restreignant, cruellement interdicteur. C'est bien là que s'enracine la conception de l'Être supérieur qui punit inexorablement. (Freud 2018, 57)

Le tréfonds pulsionnel est sous l'emprise du dessein incontournable imposé par le Surmoi (raison pour laquelle la culpabilité existe toujours en tant que dette inachevée). Il se révèle intransigeant quant à la manière dont est conçu le procès kafkaïen, selon Balibar. Ce faisant, la particularité du concept ne consiste pas à poser la question dans les termes d'un seul et même tribunal qui légifère sur tous : le Surmoi en tant que principe moralisateur n'est pas partageable, selon Althusser, car il interroge tout un chacun sur la cause non avouée de sa culpabilité.

> Le Surmoi n'est certainement pas moins une structure individuelle que ne l'était l'idéal du moi dont il constitue une nouvelle élaboration, mais ce qu'il a en propre est – pour parodier une formule connue d'Althusser – d'interpeller les sujets en individus et ainsi à produire leur isolement, leur solitude (et leur angoisse de solitude) au sein de la foule. » (Balibar 2017, 418) La culpabilité singularise les sujets. Autrement dit, dans ce cas de figure, chacun répond au-delà de sa faute. En ce sens, la démesure de la limite imposée, entend contrer tout excès pulsionnel liée à la « pulsion de mort ». Ainsi, le refoulement tient à la fonction négative assignée au Surmoi : « On pourrait dire encore que le surmoi institue un lien négatif entre les individus : ni l'amour ou la fraternité, ni la haine ou l'hostilité, mais l'inhibition des pulsions destructrices mutuelles ou du *Bemächtigungstrieb*, qui développe en contrepartie la « destructivité » et « l'agressivité » interne du sentiment de culpabilité. (Balibar 2017, 418)

De ce fait, le refoulement intègre l'effectivité de la sanction, en vertu de quoi l'approche kelsénienne relative au fondement de la validité de la loi repose sur l'affirmation *Rechtsordnung ist Zwangordnung* (l'ordre du droit s'assimile à celui de la répression). Cette identité basée sur un lien entre les deux nuances de l'ordre, comprend certes la critique de la représentation transcendante (Esprit de corps, Dieu, Roi-Père), en même temps qu'elle reprend le présupposé d'une entité autosuffisante à travers la coercition. Or, Balibar saisit la subversion de la devise kelsénienne à travers Freud : « *Schuldgefühl ist Strafbedürfniss* (le sentiment de culpabilité est identiquement un besoin de punition, et donc un appel à la transgression) » (Balibar 2017, 430).

D'une part, selon Kelsen, le délit se révèle comme condition qui met à l'épreuve l'efficacité de l'ordre juridique, c'est-à-dire qu'en tant que présupposé, celui-ci enregistre la tension entre le champ de la contingence et l'échéance d'une sanction. D'autre part, Freud va même jusqu'à poser la *transgression* dans les termes d'une constante qui opère non pas de façon épisodique, mais *a priori* : elle implique donc la remise en question de l'acte qui permet l'identification du lien relationnel entre le *fait condition* et *la conséquence* (Lenoble et Ost 1980, 491). Cette perspective ouvre un champ d'interprétation critique, concernant le retour à Kant qui accompagne la réflexion kelsénienne sur le devoir (*sollen*), en tant que catégorie de la logique transcendantale (Kant 1997, 140) qui entretient une *relation* entre la condition matérielle (cause : *si tu voles…*) et l'échéance de la sanction (effet : *…alors, tu seras puni*). Si Kelsen pose la question des conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la loi et critique effectivement l'hypostase des figures transcendantes, il retombe néanmoins dans l'illusion qui consiste à fonder le droit sur lui-même, voire, il recourt au présupposé de son auto-validation. L'ordre juridique conçu comme cause de la représentation du droit positif touche à sa limite en s'engouffrant dans une charge de *métaphysique et de croyance* (Lenoble et Ost 1980, 472), voire bascule dans une visée *absolue* (Lenoble et Ost 1980, 483) qui ne peut tenir qu'au prix de « l'auto-représentation du droit par lui-même (*Selbstdeutung*) » (Lenoble et Ost, 472). Le péril pour le droit est alors de croire à une identité sans reste, assouvie par l'ordre formel de la logique transcendantale et d'exclure toute possibilité d'entamer un dessein autre que celui prévu par une opération spécifique de l'entendement. Or, d'après Ost et Lenoble, il est important d'identifier chez Kelsen un type de refoulement qui conserve cela même qu'il prétend écarter au moment de définir le droit positif, à savoir, *un reflet de l'absolu* : « Où Kelsen dessine en creux la place d'une *Théorie pure du Droit*. Cette constellation théorique nouvelle ne peut cependant dissiper l'équivoque qui préside à son émergence : un certain refoulement du jeu de l'idéal au cœur du discours juridique ». (Lenoble et Ost 1980, 483) De ce fait, en préservant l'opération normative qui consiste à intégrer le retour critique sur les causes immanentes de l'obéissance à la norme, Kelsen ne prend pas en compte l'inadéquation entre l'individu et le désir[13] masqué en tant que *refoulement*[14] (celui-ci étant un destin spécifique de la pulsion) (Freud 2012, 76). Car si le désir est défini par la différence entre la *demande d'amour* (ou reconnaissance) et la *satisfaction* (Lacan 1966, 691), ce n'est que dans la mesure où l'opération normative rate son application sur le sujet traversé par une fente constitutive, en vertu de quoi, l'ordre juridique devient alors à son tour possible (on l'a remarqué plus haut, son efficacité est inlassablement mise à l'épreuve). Autrement formulé, le *manque à être* dépasse la description préconisée par la relation en tant que catégorie transcendantale, entre le fait condition (cause) et la conséquence (effet).

La psychanalyse intervient dans ce mouvement subversif afin de contrecarrer toute présupposition d'absolu qui touche au lien entre l'ordre juridique et le champ de la politique. Balibar énonce ainsi :

> Si l'ordre juridique était « fondé » sur quelque chose, ce serait plutôt sur la possibilité permanente de sa décomposition, et donc sur le conflit même qu'il entretient en le refoulant. Il est loisible de lire ici non pas une thèse *politique* freudienne, qui prendrait le contrepied de celle de Kelsen à la façon dont celui-ci s'oppose lui-même à d'autres théoriciens de l'État, mais plutôt une thèse *impolitique*, qui fait éclater l'autonomie et l'auto-suffisance fictives du politique. (Balibar 2017, 434)

Suivant le présupposé d'auto-fondation du droit par lui-même (Kelsen), l'écart de réflexivité concernant la possibilité qu'a le Moi de s'inscrire dans l'ordre symbolique lorsque celui-ci énonce son désir, court le risque son obturation. Ainsi, la psychanalyse prévient l'écueil d'une telle fermeture. De plus, elle met en avant le lien du sujet avec la loi au-delà d'un principe quelconque de satisfaction, et en cela, elle marque un renouveau de la question sur les conditions de possibilité de l'obéissance à la norme. Dans cette perspective, Freud saisit la singularité qui atteint le Moi au moment même de sa confrontation avec le devoir-être (au sens de l'injonction dans la forme du *double bind*), d'où l'hypothèse de l'indécidabilité de la limite qui échoit au sujet et simultanément, aussi paradoxale soit-elle, la nécessité même de sa transgression.

4. L'image réfléchie de l'ordre juridique

Ayant repris le retour critique à Freud dans le sillage de la proclamation kelsénienne de l'auto-suffisance du Droit, un écueil demeure au moment de comprendre quelle est la place accordée à la subjectivité dans la construction du désir du lien social, compte tenu de l'indécidabilité entre la satisfaction et sa limite (« jouis, ne jouis pas »), voire, entre l'injonction de l'acte et son inhibition (au sens du *double bind* qui résonne sous la devise

« sois comme ton père, ne sois pas comme ton père »). Lorsque le Moi fait face à un tel obstacle, l'interprétation psychanalytique rencontre ses limites par rapport au dévoilement de ce paradoxe, car non seulement le fait de poser l'interdiction présuppose la possibilité de sa subversion, mais soulève plus encore le vide de signification concernant la représentation de la toute-puissance associée à la norme juridique.

Dans cette logique, l'image du plein pouvoir, quoique surinvestie comme cause de l'obéissance à la norme, s'avère déterminée dans un premier cas par le rapport à la figure du leader en tant qu'objet commun d'amour ; dans un deuxième cas, au niveau de l'approche strictement juridique vers laquelle nous engage la voie kelsénienne, cette place est tenue par la représentation de l'ordre juridique dans les termes du lien formel entre l'hypothèse et l'avènement effectif de la norme.

Il nous semble propice d'élargir nos réflexions vers une interprétation qui tire les conséquences de la prémisse freudienne, dans la mesure où le Moi, contraint par la culpabilité de la double injonction, ne peut tout simplement pas évacuer la possibilité de la transgression normative. Aussi logique qu'il paraisse compte-tenu de son élaboration formelle, l'ordre juridique promu par Kelsen ne doit sa fondation qu'à l'assurance du *jugement hypothétique*, c'est-à-dire, au lien présupposé entre la description spécifique d'un fait (en tant qu'hypothèse) et son échéance. De telle sorte, nous reprenons ici les propos d'Alain Renaut (Renaut 1986, 225), il n'est pas question d'un *impératif catégorique* qui fonctionnerait dans tous les cas. Néanmoins, l'enjeu consiste à réinterpréter la portée du sens constituant « l'ordre social désiré » : s'agit-il d'une inadéquation, voire d'une différence qui s'intègre à la contrainte extérieure caractérisant l'opération normative ? Est-ce que l'enjeu consiste à pouvoir poser le fantasme de cette extériorité pour en revenir aussitôt à la possibilité de sa transgression ? Autrement dit, comment le Moi entretient-il le refoulement de la déchéance possible du lien social pour en *faire* aussitôt *avec* ?

S'il faut donner raison à Balibar concernant la *fiction d'absolu* de l'ordre juridique fixée par la pensée kelsenienne, le problème n´implique pas le fait de nier son caractère d'apparence, mais plutôt de comprendre le type de rapport auquel la subjectivité s'engage une fois l'image du plein-pouvoir posée. Or, il nous semble possible de saisir les différentes couches de la réflexibilité imagière immanente au fantasme de l'ordre juridique en suivant la critique entamée par Fichte dans la dernière version achevée de la Doctrine de la Science (1812). Dans ce cas précis, l'enjeu concerne la critique d'une « légalité factuelle » qui ne prend pas en compte la portée de l'*hypothèse catégorique* comme lien transcendantal entre la contrainte et le pouvoir (définissant l'aperception du *Je transcendantal* qui *doit pouvoir accompagner toute représentation*). Au début de la Doctrine de la Science de 1812, Fichte décrit toute réflexion d'après la capacité à préserver l'écart du rapport avec la loi factuelle (caractérisant l'ordre juridique chez Kelsen) : « Toute réflexion est arrachement à une loi factuelle, quelle qu'elle soit (nous en avons eu des exemples dans les leçons précédentes), la réflexion de la WL est arrachement à toute loi factuelle ». (Fichte 2005, 43) De ce fait, la problématique peut être opportunément traduite dans les termes mobilisés par Fichte : comment le Moi est-il en mesure de poser la représentation du rapport à la norme, tout en pensant ce lien-là ? Cet engagement réflexif ne peut pas être rabattu sur une quelconque croyance à l'égard du pouvoir sans reste, mais il doit être compris en tant que représentation du rapport à l'image de l'ordre juridique. Ainsi, la loi conçue comme un fait d'existence (*Tat*) évacue le retour sur le voir spécifique qui surdétermine la subjectivité dans la « bévue » de soi. Dans cette reprise non achevée de la *Doctrine de la Science*, Fichte vise la manière dont un certain savoir à caractère transcendantal implique la contradiction entre réflexion et ordre de la facticité : « Le voir est déterminé par une loi quelconque et est absorbé dans cette légalité, et, en tant qu'il est tel, il est un savoir effectif. Dans la mesure où il sait quelque chose, il ne se sait pas lui-même ; dans la mesure où il voit, il ne se voit pas ». (Fichte 2005, 36)

Or, le savoir pur, aux yeux de Fichte, prône la contrainte de la liberté ; malgré donc la surdétermination de la loi factuelle et quoiqu'en vertu même de celle-ci, le Moi *doit pouvoir* tenir :

> Donc s'abandonner : être pur dans l'état de réflexion totale, ici exigée, ce qui veut dire ne pas s'abandonner à une loi factuelle, à une

> transformation en quelque chose, transformation qui nous demeure par suite invisible. Le savoir se fait toujours, on y a pourvu. Si la liberté vient à se perdre du fait de la loi factuelle, alors le savoir devient lui-même factuel. Ce n'est que lorsque la loi est totalement libre que le savoir se fait lui-même pur. Donc, se placer de ce point de vue, tel est, tout d'abord, ce qui est exigé de la liberté du moi. (Fichte 2005, 38)

Ainsi, il nous revient de comprendre ce qui est exigé du Moi dans son rapport à l'être libre. Il faut insister sur ce point : la pensée en question ne présuppose pas le simple constat de l'être par le Moi, mais plutôt le type d'agencement réflexif qui lie l'hypothétique au nécessaire lorsqu'on demande *comment l'être est* ? (Fichte 2005, 36) En dernier ressort, il sera fondamental d'aboutir à une interprétation sur l'étendue de la philosophie fichtéenne de l'image, non pas pour persister dans l'illusion d'un plein-pouvoir en tant que norme, mais pour décrire ce qui revient au Moi par rapport à la reconnaissance de sa capacité à décrire les limites de l'Autre fantasmé. Le Moi actif, dont la genèse selon Fichte correspond à l'image se faisant de soi par soi, tient à l'abandon dans l'œuvre en dépit de toute injonction. En d'autres termes, la contrainte extérieure ne peut pas combler la singularité d'une différence que seul le Moi peut animer en tant que demande de reconnaissance :

> Ainsi, qu'est-ce qui revient à ce moi ? L'évidence, c'est-à-dire s'abandonner passivement à l'image se faisant soi-même par soi. C'est dans cet abandon que réside le moi ; si nous *devions* être actifs, nous ne pourrions rien faire. (Fichte 2005, 37)

La remise en cause de l'opérativité du voir chez Fichte, au sens précis d'une critique qui porte sur la réalité dont le voir non-interrogé constitue le rapport à soi, doit néanmoins aboutir à une conscience hors du commun, c'est-à-dire, absoute de la surdétermination propre à la légalité factuelle. Ainsi, la réflexibilité proposée par Fichte implique un tournant décisif, dans la mesure où le regard n'est pas suspendu à côté des évènements, mais plutôt investi dans la saisie de la séquence dont les états de faits divers composent la conscience commune. Le processus du voir étant ainsi *dénaturé*, il implique plutôt son redoublement, et Fichte énonce à cet égard :

> Difficulté de la WL : sa tâche est d'élever à la conscience et de rendre visible ce qui demeure parfaitement invisible à la conscience

> commune ; il s'agit d'un élargissement du monde de la lumière, d'un voir contre nature. (…) (Remarque en passant : la réalité réside dans le fait que le voir se rend lui-même invisible ; mais *ici ce processus de se faire soi-même est vu*.) C'est pourquoi, du point de vue du contenu, cela est difficilement accessible. (…) Pour qui veut demeurer dans la légalité factuelle, cela ne lui sera pas seulement difficilement accessible mais bien totalement impossible. (Fichte 2005, 41)

La suite de la Doctrine de la Science de 1812 récupère l'opposition entre le Moi rapporté à l'état de fait, et le Moi libre[15] qui assiste au processus réfléchi de la création de soi. Dans cette perspective, l'enjeu de la pensée fichtéenne consiste à mobiliser pour une grande part l'*intuition intellectuelle*, au sens de la *conscience de l'auto-détermination* préalablement abordée dans les *Principes de la Doctrine de la Science* de 1794[16]. Fichte décrit dans cette dernière version de la Doctrine de 1812, la scission entre la contrainte posée au sujet de la logique et l'émergence de son identité créative :

> Le moi intuitionne en soi en tant que créant. Le point de départ, le sujet logique, est (comme je l'avais déjà noté) le moi trouvé comme fini dans le regard factuel. Or le moi se détache dans l'intuition, effectue un passage et s'écoule (*fliessen*) pour se créer lui-même. (Fichte 2005, 137)

Ainsi, la genèse du Moi créatif, dont l'identité découle de l'écart entre le constat de l'acte et son effectuation, correspond à la réflexibilité libre[17] d'une attache à la logique formelle (suivant le présupposé opératoire du *jugement hypothétique*). De la sorte, on peut s'engager sur la voie critique de la représentation du plein-pouvoir, tout en reprenant la distinction schématique fichtéenne à l'égard de trois images qui accordent chacune à leur tour une place spécifique quant à la réflexion sur le rapport d'obéissance à la loi.

Dans un texte très éclairant au sujet de la *Bildlehre* fichtéenne, Alessandro Bertinetto (Bertinetto 2003) identifie dans la période de 1811 à 1813 un développement suggestif de l'image en tant que concept qui ne cesse de dire la totalité, sans jamais y parvenir[18]. En tant que telle, l'image instaure un rapport avec la différence de l'autre que soi, non pas pour montrer le manque à combler vis-à-vis de l'atteinte hypothétique d'un idéal quelconque, mais bien au-delà, pour ne pas cesser d'exhiber la réflexion de la réalité. De la sorte, c'est la pensée libre[19] qui est à l'œuvre, outre la vision rabattue au gré de l'image de l'être en tant que copie (*Abbild,* I1). Ainsi, dans un deuxième cas de figure, l'image est reconnue comme telle, c'est-à-dire, sans rapport à un *autre* ; ce faisant, un deuxième niveau de réflexibilité concerne la spécificité du phénomène en tant que phénomène et rien d'autre, sans l'intervention d'une extériorité quelconque (*Bild als Bild,* I2). L'être n'est donc pas posé de manière immédiate (*Abbild*), mais dans ce cas précis, la fermeture de l'image nous permet aussitôt d'entrevoir sa différence : « En d'autres termes, en se posant en tant qu'image et non être, l'image pose également son autre, l'être. L'image est donc le « concept absolu », car elle ne surgit pas de – et n'est pas comprise sur la base de – une relation avec un autre que soi (avec un « être »), mais elle ouvre elle-même la relation différentielle avec son autre, en se posant *en tant* qu'image » (Bertinetto 2003, 68). Un troisième moment, nous semble-t-il, amorce la réflexivité créative du Moi en tant qu'*intuition intellectuelle*, plus précisément, à l'issue de l'écart qui franchit la négativité de l'image close sur elle-même : cette fois-ci, l'image expose l'ouverture de sa différence comme saisie de soi par rapport à l'image comme image – autrement dit, en tant qu'image de soi concept (*Bild als Bildung* I3). Il faut alors préciser que la circularité de l'image qui apparaît comme fait de se poser comme image de soi (dans I2) correspond à la « forme-moi » (*Ichform*)[20]. Cependant, un tel critère formel décrivant le Moi de l´auto-conscience (au sens de l'aperception kantienne) requiert immédiatement la conscience du monde (l'une ne va pas sans l'autre). À ce titre, la pensée fichtéenne tardive suit le geste initial de la philosophie transcendantale, dont la mise en avant de la réflexivité concerne immédiatement l'acte du penser même. Or, ce voir relatif à l´image du Moi, se vise en tant que pensée de soi dans le rapport avec l'image épurée (soit, dans le rapport avec le concept et non pas avec la présomption de l'être de l'extériorité). Il y va d'un voir du voir[21].

Le retour sur Fichte (*I1, I2, I3*) recoupe les réponses apportées quant aux conditions de possibilité d'obéissance à la norme, réponses analysées lors des trois parties précédentes dans le cadre de la réflexibilité psychanalytique (Freud, Kelsen, Freud). En effet, la saisie d'une première image *I1* suppose une emprise suggestive de la foule à l'égard de l'extériorité d'un objet commun d'amour (*Psychologie des foules et Analyse du Moi*) ; une deuxième image *I2* implique à son tour la supposition d'un droit fondé en soi et par soi selon l'approche kelséniennne, qui identifie l'ordre juridique comme cause ultime accordant sa légitimité à l'État ; une troisième image *I3*, on l'aura compris à la suite de nos développements, comprend la tension de la subjectivité sous l'emprise de l'injonction binaire (*sois, ne sois pas*). En outre, ce déplacement critique nous permet de comprendre à quel point la dimension épistémologique de l'appel à la transgression (au sens de la tension qui se déjoue entre le sentiment de la culpabilité et le besoin de punition) comporte également la saisie de la séquence représentationnelle du rapport à la norme. De la sorte, une visée créative de soi peut à son tour émerger, cette fois-ci, en tant qu'image contrainte au libre développement de la représentation de soi à l'instar de la norme.

Conclusion

La question de la cause de l'obéissance à la loi ne peut pas ignorer l'investissement critique du sujet qui vise la saisie de son acte réflexif moyennant le fantasme du plein pouvoir. L'écart spécifique entre la singularité des conditions qui définissent son processus de subjectivation et la possibilité de faire avec, comprend la différence à jamais indépassable entre le Moi et son idéal de toute-puissance. Or, l'acheminement de notre pensée a suspendu la croyance dans un fondement imagier repris dans ces termes. C'est pourquoi la critique adressée par Kelsen à Freud a été momentanément tentante : en mettant au jour l'illusion d'un objet commun d'amour capable de souder le lien social par le seul biais de la suggestibilité, Kelsen remet en cause la démarche freudienne tout en valorisant l'assise positive de la norme dont la permanence repose sur le présupposé de son effectivité[22]. Compte-tenu de la validation de la norme par la logique transcendantale qui tient au lien causal entre contingence et nécessité, il convient néanmoins de revenir sur l'excès qui émane de l'image du droit fondé par lui-même, au risque de relayer cette deuxième « certitude » sur la cause de l'obéissance au manque qui définit tout désir. De la sorte, un troisième moment de notre pensée implique la reconnaissance du refoulement à l'œuvre chez Kelsen, lorsqu'il critique l'image du leader comme cause ultime de la suggestibilité, tout en investissant l'image de l'autosuffisance de la norme. Certes, cette nouvelle représentation (image) du plein pouvoir ne peut qu'introduire une faille dans ce nouvel ordre de la croyance. L'abîme de l'indécidabilité étant ainsi exposé, au sujet de se faire une image.

NOTES

[1] En ce sens, le terme de l'analyse en tant que témoignage spécifique du processus de subjectivation peut être repris dans les termes accordés par Badiou à la cure, dont l'objectif consiste à « élever l'impuissance à l'impossible » (Badiou 2013,10).
[2] Voir la contribution éclairante qui inspire de manière décisive la suite de nos propos : (Lenoble 2018).
[3] Une note en bas de page qui date de 1924 se réfère à ce point : « Ce travail n'a malheureusement pas été réalisé ». (Freud 2012, 48).
[4] «Par la poussée d'une pulsion, on entend son élément de motricité, la somme d'énergie ou la mesure d'exigence de travail qu'elle représente. Le caractère de ce qui pousse est une qualité générale des pulsions, et même l'essence de celles-ci. » (Freud 2012, 67).
[5] « Le lien à l'État est tout entier interne à la relation d'obéissance et de contrainte qui définit la normativité de la norme juridique. » (Lenoble 2018, 6)
[6] « Car le rapport au père emporte bien, si l'on prend la sortie du conflit œdipien pour le petit garçon, une injonction paradoxale du type «*double bind* » («sois comme ton père » et «ne fais pas comme ton père »). Et c'est cette dimension paradoxale qui explique tout à la fois que toute contrainte ne fait que relancer automatiquement l'appel à la transgression et, par conséquent, le sentiment d'angoisse et de culpabilité qui accompagne le rapport au surmoi de même que l'affect d'angoisse qui le connote » (Lenoble 2018, 6) .
[7] « Or, à y regarder de plus près, l'État n'est pas cette « foule », mais « l'idée », une « idée directrice », une idéologie, un sens spécifique qui ne fait que se distinguer par son contenu spécifique d'autres idées – comme la religion, la nation, etc. (…) L'idée exclusivement juridique de l'État ne saurait être reconnue que dans sa légalité propre, proprement juridique et non par des approches psychologiques – comme c'est le cas pour les processus psychiques, dans les fixations et les attaches libidinales constituant l'objet de la psychologie sociale » (Kelsen 1988, 151).
[8] « À la suite d'une hypothèse exprimée par Darwin, Freud admet que la forme primitive de la société humaine était la horde dominée sans partage par un mâle fort » (Kelsen 1988, 147).

[9] Sur ce point, nous remercions vivement l´apport de la docteure Elisabeth Lefort. En effet, il convient de saisir avec justesse l´étendue de la réflexion kelsénienne concernant la complexité du rapport à la *Grundnorm,* au fil du temps. De ce fait, il faut distinguer le déplacement théorique qui s´y opère à l´intérieur de l´œuvre de Kelsen, dans la mesure où l´intérêt du juriste change considérablement quant au questionnement de l´obéissance à la norme. Si le texte de 1922 s´ensuit comme réplique à l´essai de Freud de 1921, il n´est pas moins vrai que l´œuvre tardive (*La Théorie pure du Droit* de 1960) ne saisira pas immédiatement le lien entre le fait de poser la *Grundnorm*, la constitution de l´ordre juridique, et l´établissement du rapport d´obéissance. Par ailleurs, Kelsen ne convient plus à la dérive théorique qui a une emprise sur la sociologie et la psychanalyse, car il la trouve sans intérêt pour la construction de la Science du Droit, lors de la période tardive. Notre reprise de l´interprétation faite par Balibar prend en compte les guillemets qui accompagnent le mot «fiction», car ce terme il faut bien l´entendre à la lumière de la manière dont la *Grundnorm* est conçue comme représentation du rapport à la norme, pas en tant «fausseté ».

[10] Le Droit ne peut pas être réduit à une interprétation ontologique. Les propos tenus par Jacques Lenoble et François Ost sont très clairs sur ce point : « Alors que, dans la pensée classique, le devoir est une notion transcendante (charriant l'image d'un absolu), dans la théorie pure le devoir est une catégorie logique transcendantale. Il explique la liaison entre un fait-condition et une conséquence, il relie l'acte illicite à la sanction en statuant que celle-ci doit suivre celui-là. Fidèle à cette position philosophique anti-ontologisante, Kelsen élabore un *Sollen* dans une perspective qui n'est ni moralisante, ni ontologisante mais exclusivement relationnelle et fonctionnelle : le Sollen ne se comprend que par la relation d'imputation qu'il exprime » (Lenoble et Ost 1980, 491).

[11] « La Grundnorm ou « norme fondamentale » («norme de fond ») n'est donc nullement pour lui (Kelsen) la croyance, mais une donnée, constat et défense rigoureuse de l'autonomie du Droit, tout en étant de l'ordre du Sollen («devoir-être »). Donnée positive et « transcendantale », qui organise une conception pyramidale des normes » (Assoun, 6).

[12] En ce sens précis, les remarques d'Alain Renaut sur le sujet nous paraissent tout à fait pertinentes pour introduire la spécificité du rapport qui se tisse entre la norme et son obéissance suivant l'approche kelsénienne. Cependant, au départ d'un questionnement formel sur le caractère conditionnel de toute norme, l'on comprend bien que toute formulation hypothétique, dont l'avènement s'avère lié au champ de la contingence (*si tu voles…*) implique aussitôt sa jonction avec une proposition d'ordre nécessaire (…*alors*, tu seras puni). Notre interprétation vise la compréhension spécifique du lien entre l'hypothétique et le nécessaire : « Or, selon Kelsen, cette réduction de la légalité à la moralité manque tout autant l'essence du droit que la réduction des valeurs juridiques à des faits historiques – et ce pour deux raisons (à travers l'indication lesquelles Kelsen retrouve des arguments étonnamment proches de ceux que nous verrons mobilisés par Fichte) : a) le droit se définit comme un «ordre extérieur de contrainte » visant à réaliser un certain ordre social désiré, le lien entre le contenu de l'obligation juridique et

son acceptation étant ici *extrinsèque*, alors que la moralité exige une liaison *intrinsèque* entre la loi et son acceptation ; b) les règles morales sont des *impératifs catégoriques*, donc des règles à la fois prescriptives et obligeant *absolument* ou *inconditionnellement*, là où les règles juridiques sont des *jugements hypothétiques*, c'est-à-dire des règles *descriptives* (elles décrivent une relation entre un acte et sa conséquence juridique : *si tu voles, tu seras puni*, ce qui n'est pas un impératif mais un jugement porté sur on objet, ici le vol, du point de vue des conséquences qu'il entraine), et conditionnelles (elles ne décrivent qu'un lien hypothétique entre un fait éventuel et sa signification juridique dans le système considéré) » (Renaut 1986, 225).

[13] Commentaire de Gisèle Harrus-Revidi : « Le refoulement est lié à une représentation en désaccord avec un désir inconciliable. » (Freud 2012, 45)

[14] La tension toujours à l'œuvre entre la réalisation du désir et le besoin de punition met à jour le destin spécifique du refoulement. À ce propos, Freud énonce : « Les mobiles de la libido et de la réalisation de désir en tant que punitions agissent de concert en s'additionnant. La tendance générale à l'abréaction et à l'irruption de ce qui a été refoulé est évidente, c'est à elle que s'ajoutent les deux autres mobiles » (Freud 1979, 185).

[15] « J'ai entrepris cette étude pour caractériser d'abord le moi factuel et, par opposition à ce moi factuel, le moi libre » (Fichte 2005, 139).

[16] « Je nomme intuition intellectuelle cette intuition de soi-même, supposée chez le philosophe, dans l'effectuation de l'acte par lequel le Moi est engendré pour lui. Elle est l'immédiate conscience que j'effectue un acte et tel acte (dass ich handle und was ich handle) : elle est ce par quoi je connais quelque chose, parce que je le fais » (Fichte 1999, 272).

[17] « La réflexion elle-même est une détermination plus spécifique de la vie, vie qui est déjà, vie qui est déjà en soi et par soi. Par suite, la réflexion est l'autorévélation de la vie, sans une aucune loi contraignante. » (Fichte 2005, 97).

[18] « En ce sens, l'image est véritablement le concept absolu, originaire, premier » (Fichte 2005, 86).

[19] « Mais, plus radicalement encore, la tâche de la philosophie est précisément de se reconnaître comme tâche : cela implique, et en même temps garantit, cette « liberté » qui est la loi même de sa propre « vision » (Einsicht), qui ne peut pas être déduite à un niveau logico-formel, sous peine de perdre son propre sens et sa propre efficace critique » (Fichte 2005, 85).

[20] « Si, pour se poser *en tant* qu'image de l'être, l'image se pose *en tant* qu'image de soi, alors la « forme-moi » (*Ichform*) est propre à l'image : l'image implique le moi. Mais puisque le moi est auto-conscience (moi n'est autre que celui qui dit, en se référant à lui-même, « moi » ; à savoir, celui qui a une image *en tant* que moi), le moi implique à son tour l'image. » (Fichte 2005, 74).

[21] « La circularité propre à l'image, qui est auto-réflexion de soi comme image, est la circularité propre au moi comme activité « qui fait retour en soi », comme un « œil qui se voit soi-même », comme « voir du voir » (le principe fondamental de la philosophie transcendantale) : le moi est, en d'autres termes, le *medium* de l'acte de se re-configurer de l'image (qui *en tant* qu'image n'est que *pour* moi : l'apparaître à soi-même de l'image implique la Ichform), tandis que l'image est l'essence même du moi comme conscience » (Fichte 2005, 76-77).

[22] Jacques Lenoble lie la définition du juge comme « opérateur réflexif » au présupposé de la norme en tant que « fait existant ». Voir sa conférence très éclairante à ce propos donnée dans le cadre de l'hommage à François Ost. Cf., LENOBLE, Jacques, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C34VCDNl6FE&t=863s.

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Gilles Deleuze, de « l'effet de langage » à l'acte de parole – enjeux d'une pragmatique de l'expression

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Abstract

Gilles Deleuze, from the « effect of language » to the concept of « speech act » – issues of a pragmatics of expression

Is there room for something like a philosophy of language in the work of G. Deleuze? Looking back to his 1969 piece, *Logique du sens*, what seems to be primarily at stake for him in the analysis of language is the problem of the onto-logical nature of sense, which he describes, referring to the Stoics, as an « incorporeal event » or a « surface effect ». At the time, Deleuze seeks to distance himself, according to a view that still owes much to structural linguistics, from a propositional picture of logic that he locates in the analytical tradition. The relevant issue is not to investigate the grounds of logic, but to understand how meaning can take effect at the shared surface of propositions and things. Eleven years later however, in *Mille Plateaux*, his views on the efficiency of expression seem to have shifted: departing from a picture of meaning as an incorporeal "language effect", it evolves to that of an incorporeal act of speech, in reference to pragmatics and to J.L. Austin's concept of illocutionary force. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the consequences of such a conceptual shift, in order to clarify Deleuze's relationship to philosophy of language.

Keywords: Deleuze, Austin, Benveniste, performativity, speech acts, pragmatics, linguistic structuralism, expression, meaning, speech act theory

Lorsque Deleuze fait paraître, en 1969, un ouvrage intitulé *Logique du sens,* tout inviterait à penser que son programme de recherche s'oriente désormais vers le domaine de la philosophie du langage. En effet, ce qui est alors en jeu pour lui, c'est bien le statut logique et ontologique du sens, qu'il caractérise, en référence aux stoïciens, comme un *événement incorporel,* ou encore un *effet de surface*. Toutefois, Deleuze cherche également à se démarquer, dans une perspective qui doit encore beaucoup au paradigme de la linguistique structurale, d'une conception exclusivement propositionnelle de la logique, qu'il attribue à la tradition analytique anglo-saxonne. Ce qui l'intéresse davantage, à travers la thématique de l'incorporel, c'est ce qu'on pourrait appeler « l'effectivité de l'expression », autrement dit la question de savoir comment le sens peut prendre effet à l'interface des propositions et des choses.

Onze ans plus tard, dans *Mille Plateaux,* sa position semble pourtant avoir évolué : la critique des divers « postulats de la linguistique » dirige Deleuze et Guattari sur le terrain de la *pragmatique*. La figure de l'incorporel comme « effet de langage » (Deleuze 1969, 88) qui caractérisait jusque-là l'expressivité linguistique semble laisser place à celle d'un acte de parole incorporel, dont le modèle trouve son origine dans la notion d'acte illocutoire élaborée par J. L. Austin. Nous souhaiterions analyser les conséquences d'une telle mutation conceptuelle, afin de préciser le rapport qu'entretient Deleuze à la philosophie du langage.

I. Sens-événement et expression : quel modèle pour la proposition ?

Si *Logique du sens* forme un jalon particulier dans l'œuvre deleuzienne, c'est à la fois parce qu'il s'agit du dernier ouvrage que le philosophe écrit avant sa rencontre avec Félix Guattari, mais aussi du premier dans lequel il se consacre directement au problème du langage. À la critique conjointe du bon sens et du sens commun développée dans *Différence et Répétition* (Deleuze 1968, 169-180) s'ajoute dorénavant l'objectif d'interroger l'émergence du sens comme fait linguistique à part entière.

C'est le concept stoïcien d'*incorporel* qui va servir de ressource pour l'élaboration de cette nouvelle théorie du sens. Deleuze s'inspire du célèbre commentaire d'É. Bréhier sur *La Théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* (Bréhier 1997) pour en faire un usage à la fois ontologique et logique[1]. Rappelons simplement que d'un point de vue ontologique[2], l'ancien stoïcisme fait la distinction entre d'un côté les corps individuels, qui seuls existent réellement dans le monde, et de l'autre les incorporels (le temps, le vide, le lieu et le *dicible*), qui eux *subsistent* à partir des corps. Tout l'intérêt de la lecture de Bréhier est d'opérer un passage stimulant de la physique stoïcienne à la logique stoïcienne. Ce qui interpelle Deleuze dans une telle physique, c'est le « clivage tout nouveau de la relation causale » (Deleuze 1969, 15) qu'elle opère entre corps et incorporels, entre le niveau des existants et celui des événements. En vertu de leur réalité, seuls les corps peuvent agir ou pâtir, provoquer et subir des changements, c'est-à-dire entrer dans des mélanges. Mais corrélativement, en raison de leur individualité constitutive, ils ne peuvent être par eux-mêmes la cause de l'apparition de nouvelles propriétés dans d'autres corps. Selon la formule de Clément d'Alexandrie, « les causes ne sont donc pas causes les unes *des* autres, elles sont causes les unes *pour* les autres » de certains effets (Long & Sedley 2001, 379) :

> Les choses qui sont causes les unes pour les autres le sont parfois des mêmes effets […] comme dans le cas du couteau et de la chair : car le couteau est pour la chair cause du fait d'être coupée, et la chair est pour le couteau cause du fait de couper. (Long & Sedley 2001, 379)

Ainsi, lorsque le scalpel tranche la chair, il n'engendre pas en elle une nouvelle qualité, mais lui confère plutôt un « attribut » incorporel, l'événement de la coupure en tant qu'il ne peut s'exprimer que dans le langage. Les stoïciens font en effet la distinction entre le prédicat (*katègorèma*) et l'attribut (*sumbebèkos*), autrement dit le prédicat *réalisé*. Sur le plan des corps, il n'y a pour ainsi dire que des causes. Sur un autre plan, que Bréhier qualifie de « plan des faits », les événements qui arrivent aux corps « se jouent à la surface de l'être » (Bréhier 1997, 13) : autre manière de dire que la transitivité de ce que l'on appelle une *action* ne peut être appréhendée selon une description strictement physicaliste de la relation causale.

Or c'est justement ce plan des événements en tant qu'*effets de surface* qui constitue, pour Deleuze, le lieu ontologique d'une théorie du sens. Le sens, dit-il, « est toujours un *effet*. Non pas seulement un effet au sens causal, mais un effet au sens de "effet d'optique", "effet sonore", ou mieux effet de surface, effet de position, effet de langage » (Deleuze 1969, 88). La question est donc de savoir ce que signifie cette effectivité proprement linguistique. Dans la classe des incorporels, il en est un qui s'apparente spécifiquement au domaine du langage. Traduit le plus souvent par « dicible » ou « exprimable », le *lekton* a la particularité d'être de l'ordre de la logique, qui chez les stoïciens s'entend comme une logique de la proposition. Dans cette perspective, ce que l'analyse grammaticale cherche à décrire en parlant du dicible, c'est un rapport d'attribution entre une proposition et un état de chose. À première vue, il se pourrait donc qu'en mettant la proposition au centre de son analyse, le projet deleuzien d'une logique du sens entretienne certaines affinités avec la philosophie dite « analytique » du langage, telle qu'elle se développe dans le sillage des œuvres de G. Frege, de B. Russell ou encore du premier L. Wittgenstein.

Or il n'en est rien. Si Deleuze semble avoir eu accès à quelques-uns des textes fondamentaux de la tradition anglo-saxonne et leur accorder une certaine valeur dans *Logique du sens*, c'est finalement pour mieux s'en distancier. L'intitulé de la troisième série, « De la proposition », a de quoi dérouter, car ce qui intéresse d'abord la philosophie du langage dans la notion de proposition, c'est qu'elle constitue cette partie de l'énoncé capable de recevoir une valeur de vérité. Or l'enjeu de l'étude des propositions est moins pour Deleuze la question proprement logique des conditions d'attribution des valeurs de vérité d'un énoncé que celle de son sens, en tant qu'il peut parfois déroger à la bipartition du vrai et du faux.[3]

Tout le point est justement de chercher, au cœur de la proposition, ce qui échappe au domaine traditionnel de l'analyse logique. Force est de reconnaître que l'investigation deleuzienne du sens se rapproche davantage du champ de la linguistique structurale, telle qu'elle se déploie notamment dans l'œuvre d'É. Benveniste, que celui de la logique propositionnelle.

Considérons par conséquent la façon dont Deleuze conçoit le fonctionnement de ce qu'il appelle une proposition. Une proposition, explique-t-il, implique différents types de rapports. L'auteur en distingue principalement trois : rapports de *désignation,* de *manifestation,* et de *signification*[4].

(1) Le premier type de rapport, aussi appelé rapport *d'indication,* renvoie à la capacité référentielle du déictique. L'influence qu'exerce à l'époque, sur Deleuze, la lecture des *Problèmes de linguistique générale* se fait ici particulièrement ressentir. Tout comme Benveniste dans « Les niveaux de l'analyse linguistique » (Benveniste 1980e), l'auteur souhaite fortement distinguer désignation et signification. La fonction de toute désignation est de relier une proposition à un état de chose correspondant. Les valeurs de ce rapport sont le vrai et le faux : une proposition sera dite vraie si la désignation d'un état de chose trouve dans le monde matière à remplissement, et fausse si ce remplissement fait défaut.

(2) Le second type de rapport concerne la relation de la proposition au locuteur dans l'ordre de la *parole.* Ici, c'est la théorie benvenistienne des « instances de discours » qui semble être à l'arrière-plan de ces considérations[5]. En effet, l'auteur confère à la *manifestation* un primat dans l'ordre de l'énonciation, semblant ainsi rejoindre le thème post-saussurien de l'actualisation de la langue : « On commence toujours dans l'ordre de la parole, mais non pas dans celui du langage, où tout doit être donné simultanément, d'un coup unique » (Deleuze 1969, 212), précise-t-il. Mais la *manifestation* renvoie également aux croyances et aux désirs de celui qui parle vis-à-vis de ce qu'il dit. Les valeurs de ce rapport ne sont plus le vrai et le faux, mais la véracité et la tromperie, autant de conditions de sincérité qui régissent la présence du locuteur à son énonciation.

(3) Le troisième type de rapport est le plus difficile à cerner, dans la mesure où il se tient au plus près de la notion de sens, sans pour autant s'y identifier. La dimension de la proposition que Deleuze nomme *signification* recouvre l'ensemble des rapports d'implication entre concepts qui règlent le système de la langue. Point de signification sans conditions de possibilité, pour un rapport signifiant entre concepts, d'être formulé dans une proposition. Les valeurs différenciées dans ce rapport ne sont donc plus simplement le vrai et le faux, mais le signifiant et l'absurde. La signification préside à toute désignation, car il n'existe rien de tel qu'une pure définition

ostensive, mais aussi à toute manifestation, car elle appartient l'ordre de la *langue*.

Deleuze ne confère pas pour autant à la langue une priorité absolue sur les autres dimensions, comme si la signification des signes linguistiques pouvait se structurer indépendamment du monde. La proposition décrit plutôt un cercle, qui va dans un sens de la désignation à la manifestation, puis à la signification, et dans l'autre de la signification à la manifestation, puis à la désignation. Aux trois dimensions identifiées vient s'en ajouter une quatrième, celle du *sens,* qui vient fendre le cercle de l'intérieur. Dès lors, ce que Deleuze s'efforce de formuler à travers la notion de sens s'étend aussi bien au-delà du champ de la logique que de celui de la linguistique.

Que peut donc bien recouvrir alors la notion de sens ? En référence aux stoïciens, mais aussi à la phénoménologie husserlienne, l'auteur renvoie le sens au domaine de l'*expression.* L'expression ne se confond ni avec la manifestation d'un vécu, ni avec la désignation d'un état de choses, ni avec la signification des concepts. Effet de surface, le sens ne peut surgir de la proposition elle-même, et pourtant ne peut subsister qu'en elle : « Inséparablement *le sens est l'exprimable ou l'exprimé de la proposition, et l'attribut de l'état de choses* » (Deleuze 1969, 34).

C'est que le modèle de la proposition dont s'inspire Deleuze est stoïcien. Autrement dit, il se situe à la croisée de la logique, de l'analyse grammaticale, et de l'ontologie. De ce point de vue, l'exprimé n'est pas ce qui se prédique d'un sujet, mais ce qui s'attribue directement à un état de chose. L'élément clef de l'attribution n'est pas le prédicat, distributeur de qualités, mais le *verbe*. C'est pourquoi, à la manière des Mégariques, un stoïcien préfèrera toujours user d'une formule infinitive ou participiale plutôt que d'une copule pour restituer l'événementialité du réel : on ne dira pas que l'arbre *est vert*, mais que l'arbre *verdoie ;* on ne dira pas que la neige *est blanche*, mais on parlera de *l'étant-blanc* de la neige. Deleuze repère ainsi dans le stoïcisme une alternative à la dualité aristotélicienne de la substance et de l'accident qui lui permet de raccorder la question du langage à une pensée du devenir.

La logique du sens prend forme sur le fond d'une métaphysique de l'événement.

Comment caractériser ce geste qui consiste à dégager un sens de la proposition à la manière des stoïciens, c'est-à-dire à abstraire l'exprimé de l'expression ? Deleuze entrevoit, dès 1968, le caractère problématique d'une telle opération. Dans *Différence et Répétition*, il signalait déjà le risque d'un dédoublement « fantomatique » de l'expression :

> Le sens apparaît ici, à l'issue d'un des efforts les plus puissants de la logique, mais comme l'Inefficace, stérile incorporel, privé de son pouvoir de genèse. (Deleuze 1968, 202-203).

En effet, comme le met en lumière D. Lapoujade, la logique telle que l'envisage Deleuze s'intéresse à la genèse du sens, au problème de « savoir comment le sens advient au langage et aux choses dont il parle » (Lapoujade 2014, 114). Comment peut bien s'opérer cette genèse, si l'action et la passion sont étrangères au sens comme simple effet de surface ? *Logique du sens* ne cesse d'insister sur l'inévitable *stérilité* de l'exprimé. En tant que pur résultat, le sens devient un idéal impassible, un « dédoublement stérile », une « réitération sèche »[6] (Deleuze 1968, 44), incapable d'engendrer quoi que ce soit. L'effectivité de l'exprimé ruine donc l'effectuation de l'expression elle-même. C'est pourquoi le sens ainsi conçu n'est qu'un *effet de langage,* au sens cette fois péjoratif d'un idéal inefficient.

D'où le souci de faire porter le structuralisme linguistique à sa limite, jusqu'au point où le non-sens devient une *quasi-cause* qui opère l'articulation des séries signifiantes et signifiées. Chez Deleuze, le non-sens n'est pas situé au-delà des limites du langage. Au contraire, c'est lui qui permet d'animer tout le langage de l'intérieur. Comme il le réaffirmera en 1972 à l'occasion d'un petit texte rédigé pour F. Châtelet, « À quoi reconnaît-on le structuralisme ? » (Deleuze 2002, 238-239)[7], toute structure a besoin, pour s'actualiser et se mettre en mouvement, d'un élément *paradoxal*, une « case vide », un « objet = x » qui « manque toujours à sa place », à la manière de « l'objet *a* » de Lacan ou du « signifiant flottant » de Lévi-Strauss (Deleuze 1969, 50-56). Sans cet élément, c'est la notion de structure elle-même qui risque de s'effondrer, et avec elle, l'idée d'une logique de l'événement.

Or, c'est cette tension inhérente au modèle linguistique qui poussera Deleuze à abandonner conjointement les notions de sens et de structure à partir des années 1970. Il apparaît dorénavant inévitable de poser la question de l'effectivité du langage sur un autre plan, celui de l'acte de parole concret et réel, et non plus celui des effets de surface.

II. De l'effet de langage à la pragmatique des énoncés

La décennie 1970-1980 marque un tournant dans le traitement deleuzien de la question du langage. Progressivement, avec « Un nouvel archiviste » (Deleuze 1986, 11-30) puis *Kafka*[8] (Deleuze & Guattari 2016, 29-50), ce n'est plus la proposition, mais l'*énoncé* qui se place au centre des préoccupations du philosophe. Loin d'être anecdotique, ce changement de vocabulaire engage un véritable renversement de perspective, si bien qu'en 1980, dans *Mille Plateaux*, l'énoncé devient pour Deleuze et Guattari « l'unité élémentaire du langage » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 95). Reprenant ainsi une formule de *L'archéologie du savoir*, les deux auteurs veulent souligner la dimension pragmatique de toute énonciation linguistique.

La lecture de l'ouvrage de Foucault s'avère en effet décisive pour Deleuze. En distinguant respectivement l'énoncé des modèles de la *proposition* et de la *phrase*, Foucault s'intéresse à quelque chose qui sort du cadre des analyses traditionnelles du langage. L'énoncé devient à ses yeux « l'unité élémentaire du discours » (Foucault 1969, 111). Mais l'individualisation des énoncés ne répond ni à un critère logique, ni à un critère dit « grammatical » ou linguistique. La question n'est plus tant celle de la *validité logique* de la structure propositionnelle, ou encore celle du *sens* de ce que l'on dit, que celle de savoir *ce que l'on fait avec des mots,* en accord avec la voie ouverte par les travaux de J. L. Austin. Foucault, qui découvre les leçons du philosophe anglais dès 1967 grâce à son collègue Gérard Deledalle[9], accueille avec un certain enthousiasme ce nouveau mode d'analyse des énoncés, qu'il rapproche, sans pourtant l'y identifier, de la visée singulière de *L'archéologie*[10] :

> Demeure une dernière possibilité : au premier regard, la plus vraisemblable de toutes. Ne peut-on pas dire qu'il y a énoncé partout où l'on peut reconnaître et isoler un acte de formulation – quelque chose comme ce « *speech act* », cet acte « *illocutoire* » dont parlent les analystes anglais ? (Foucault 1969, 114)

Ce qui intéresse Foucault, puis Deleuze, dans le concept d'énoncé et dans la fonction énonciative, c'est cette dimension performative du langage, dont l'effectivité ne peut plus être séparée de l'acte qu'elle permet d'accomplir. Foucault devient ainsi aux yeux de Deleuze le fondateur d'une « nouvelle pragmatique » (Deleuze 1986, 18). Par l'intermédiaire du texte foucaldien, Deleuze et Guattari découvrent dès lors le potentiel d'une compréhension du langage en termes d'*actes de parole*.

En reconnaissant une valeur performative à l'énonciation, les auteurs de *Mille Plateaux* mesurent bien la portée du geste révolutionnaire d'Austin. Ce que le philosophe oxonien dénonce avant tout dans la philosophie du langage de son temps, c'est cette « illusion descriptive » (Austin 1975, 3) qui consiste à évaluer l'ensemble des énoncés linguistiques en termes de véríconditionnalité. Le repérage desdits énoncés *performatifs,* par opposition aux énoncés *constatifs,* a pour conséquence immédiate de remettre en question l'idée selon laquelle le langage ne servirait qu'à décrire des états de choses, ou à indiquer la présence d'un état mental dans la tête d'un locuteur idéal. Pour reprendre un des exemples fameux de *Quand dire c'est faire* (Austin 1975, 5), lorsque je prononce la phrase « Je baptise ce bateau le *Queen Elizabeth* » en brisant une bouteille contre la coque d'un navire, je ne suis pas en train de *décrire* ce que je suis en train de faire, ou d'*affirmer* que je le fais : je le *fais*.

La référence à Austin revêt dès lors d'une importance particulière pour *Mille Plateaux*. En considérant la parole comme une *action*, Deleuze et Guattari espèrent trouver une porte de sortie vis-à-vis du structuralisme, permettant d'abandonner les « postulats de la linguistique » qui se sont établis chez les héritiers de l'œuvre de Saussure. Il faut toutefois nuancer et souligner que c'est paradoxalement par l'intermédiaire des linguistes eux-mêmes, notamment grâce aux commentaires de Benveniste et de Ducrot, que l'œuvre d'Austin devient pour la première fois accessible à bon nombre de philosophes français de l'époque. En faisant jouer les actes de parole contre la linguistique, du moins contre certains présupposés à l'œuvre au sein de la discipline telle qu'elle s'est instituée après la mort de Saussure, Deleuze et Guattari aspirent à l'idée d'une « pragmatique généralisée » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 99).

Le texte a donc une valeur polémique. Ce que la mise en lumière de l'acte de parole permet premièrement de contester, c'est cette idée que la fonction du langage serait de permettre une transmission d'information du locuteur au destinataire. Si l'on fait entrer dans la philosophie du langage des actes comme *promettre*, *donner des ordres*, *interroger*, *baptiser*, etc., qui ne se réduisent pas à la transmission d'un simple code, on ne peut plus considérer que parler consiste uniquement à informer son interlocuteur d'un état de choses. Ce qui est contesté, c'est donc le caractère supposément *informatif* du signe linguistique.

Relisant le célèbre article de Benveniste sur la communication animale, Deleuze et Guattari pointent le danger d'indexer la supposée supériorité du langage humain sur une différence entre signe et signal (Benveniste 1980a). En effet, il ne suffit pas de dire que les abeilles ne possèdent pas le langage parce qu'elles ne savent pas retransmettre l'information qu'elles ont reçu ou répondre à l'émission d'un signal émis par la danse d'une de leurs congénères pour en déduire que la fonction première du langage doit être la communication par signes.

À cet égard, l'apprentissage du langage chez les humains n'est pas vraiment rendu possible par l'acquisition d'informations au sujet de la *langue*, mais est obtenu grâce à un véritable *dressage*. Le professeur des écoles ne transmet pas à ses élèves un contenu de sens lorsqu'il leur enseigne le langage. Il « ensigne », préfèrent dire Deleuze et Guattari, émet des « mots d'ordre » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 95-96), c'est-à-dire qu'il leur apprend les conditions d'un *usage* :

> Les mots ne sont pas des outils ; mais on donne aux enfants du langage, des plumes et des cahiers, comme on donne des pelles et des pioches aux ouvriers. (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 1979)

Or ce que la philosophie du langage ordinaire n'a cessé de mettre en lumière, au sein de la tradition analytique, c'est précisément cette question de l'*usage*. Le langage n'est pas un instrument déjà tout fait que l'homme pourrait utiliser à loisir pour atteindre ses fins. On pourrait d'ailleurs s'amuser à relever une certaine parenté entre les images utilisées pour figurer l'apprentissage et celles qu'emploie L. Wittgenstein pour mettre en scène certains jeux de langage au début des *Recherches Philosophiques* (Wittgenstein 2005, 28-29)[11]. Pour Austin comme pour Wittgenstein, un usage est toujours régi par un ensemble de *règles*, sans lesquelles une pratique donnée ne pourrait s'instituer. C'est justement l'apprentissage de cette normativité et la violence qui l'accompagne que Deleuze et Guattari veulent mettre en avant avec la notion de *mot d'ordre,* contre les idéalisations dont la linguistique structurale fait preuve en plaçant le fonctionnement de la signification du signe au premier plan de ses recherches.

Le second point que le concept d'acte de parole tend à mettre au jour, c'est l'irréductibilité de la *pragmatique* à toute sémantique de l'énoncé. Là encore, c'est Benveniste qui est visé. En effet, la manière dont Benveniste interprète la notion d'énoncé performatif ne pourrait pas être plus éloignée du projet austinien. Deleuze et Guattari rappellent à juste titre qu'il existe une différence entre un *énoncé performatif* et ce qu'Austin appelle un *acte illocutoire*. On se souvient que dans sa huitième conférence, le philosophe britannique revenait sur le partage initial posé entre performatif et constatif pour en mesurer l'inintelligibilité. Loin de constituer un simple aveu d'échec, l'impossibilité de trouver un critère sémantique ou grammatical suffisamment fiable permettant d'asseoir cette distinction pousse progressivement Austin à abandonner la notion d'énoncé performatif au profit d'une typologie des différentes formes d'actes pouvant être accomplis par la parole. Se distinguent ainsi trois dimensions ou aspects de l'énonciation permettant de décrire selon différents points de vue ce que nous faisons avec les mots : l'acte *locutoire*, qui consiste à *dire* quelque chose ; l'acte *illocutoire,* relevant de ce que l'on fait *en disant* quelque chose ; et l'acte *perlocutoire*, réalisé *par le fait* de dire quelque chose.

Benveniste refuse cette typologie, qu'il considère inutile à la pratique du linguiste. Pour lui, la singularité du performatif est d'être essentiellement *sui-référentiel.* La force de ce type d'énoncés tiendrait donc simplement au fait que ces derniers font toujours référence à eux-mêmes :

> Un énoncé est performatif en ce qu'il *dénomme* l'acte performé, du fait qu'Ego prononce une formule contenant le verbe à la première personne du présent : « *Je déclare* la session close » – « *Je jure* de dire la vérité ». Ainsi, un performatif doit nommer la performance de parole et son performateur. (Benveniste 1980d, 274)

Deleuze et Guattari ont très bien vu qu'en récusant ainsi la notion d'acte illocutoire et en s'en tenant à la distinction performatif/constatif, la sémantique benvenistienne a pour effet de « bloquer le performatif sur lui-même, en l'expliquant par des caractères sémantiques et syntaxiques particuliers » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 99). Benveniste refuse pour ainsi dire d'accorder à l'acte de parole sa teneur d'*acte* : il s'interdit justement de penser ce sans quoi l'acte de parole ne pourrait prendre effet, à savoir une forme d'hétérogénéité au domaine du purement linguistique[12]. Selon une telle perspective, ce n'est pas sa *force* d'action, mais plutôt son *sens* d'acte qui expliquerait le fonctionnement de l'énoncé performatif. Dès lors, la *pragmatique* n'a aucune légitimité, pour Benveniste, à intervenir dans l'étude du langage.

En préférant parler d'*acte* illocutoire plutôt que d'*énoncé* performatif, Austin sortirait ainsi, selon l'analyse benvenistienne, du cadre *formel* de la linguistique. De ce point de vue, le linguiste ne s'émancipe pas véritablement de l'idée saussurienne selon laquelle la scientificité de la linguistique ne peut être gagée que sur l'étude scrupuleuse de la langue. Partant de cette idée, tout ce qui outrepasse les limites des sphères sémantiques et syntaxiques ne saurait faire l'objet d'une évaluation épistémologique sérieuse.

Or à la lecture de *Quand dire c'est faire*, il apparaît justement que la dimension pragmatique de l'activité de parole ne peut plus être considérée comme contingente, et ce pour deux raisons. D'une part, parce qu'en fonction des contextes, on peut accomplir des actes de parole très différents à l'aide d'une formule identique : « Je le jure » n'aura pas la même valeur selon que je le dis au tribunal ou en amour (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 104). D'autre part, comme l'a montré Austin en distinguant des performatifs « explicites » et des performatifs « implicites », on peut accomplir un même acte de parole à l'aide de deux formulations différentes : tout comme « Ferme la porte ! » peut équivaloir, dans certains contextes, à « Je t'ordonne de fermer la porte », les mots « Chien méchant », inscrits sur la pancarte d'une propriété privée, peuvent bien avoir la valeur d'un acte d'interdiction officiel.

La question se pose dès lors de savoir si nous pouvons expliquer la performativité linguistique uniquement à l'aide de critères strictement internes à l'étude de la langue. Aux yeux de Deleuze et Guattari, la pragmatique doit cesser d'être considérée comme le « dépotoir » de la linguistique (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 91). Considérer, comme le fait Benveniste, que l'effectuation d'un performatif non explicite est uniquement permise par des conditions extérieures à l'énonciation, c'est présupposer que l'effectivité du dire repose uniquement sur le *sens* de l'énoncé en question. Or il n'est pas sûr qu'une telle frontière entre ce qui est ou non de l'ordre du langage puisse être ainsi tracée à partir de la notion de sens.

En dernier lieu, la notion de *speech act* signe pour Deleuze et Guattari le rejet définitif de la distinction langue/parole. Rappelons que pour Saussure, cette distinction avait pour finalité de circonscrire le domaine d'étude de la linguistique. Par son caractère essentiellement idiosyncrasique et singulier, la parole ne pouvait dès lors faire l'objet d'aucune étude systématique. C'est la langue en tant que *système* qui fournissait un champ d'analyse approprié pour les recherches du linguiste. Grâce aux méthodes de Saussure, il devient désormais possible pour les linguistiques de comprendre la formation des signes, non plus de manière simplement historique ou étymologique, mais de manière synchronique. La différenciation des éléments de la langue et leurs relations oppositives peuvent faire l'objet d'un traitement à caractère authentiquement scientifique. La combinatoire détermine alors le champ des rapports signifiants au sein d'une structure, car elle délimite un certain partage des possibles. Dès lors, la linguistique structurale aura tendance à exclure d'emblée toute question portant sur l'effectivité de la parole dans le monde, car son analyse porte en priorité sur la structuration des langues.

Or, comme l'explique O. Ducrot dans « De Saussure à la philosophie du langage », la véritable révolution qu'engendre la théorie des actes de langage relativement aux catégories de la linguistique saussurienne consiste précisément à s'émanciper du privilège historique accordé à la langue sur l'usage individuel de la parole :

> On n'essaiera plus de dériver la force pragmatique de l'énonciation à partir du « sens » de l'énoncé ; tout au contraire on déclarera que cette force se surajoute à l'énoncé d'une façon imprévisible, et qu'elle n'a rien à voir par suite avec la langue, en quelque acception que l'on prenne ce terme. (Ducrot 1972, 18-19)

Les conditions pratiques de l'énonciation ne peuvent plus être reportées à l'extérieur du langage au motif qu'elles n'entreraient pas dans la sphère de la langue. Un des objectifs de Ducrot dans *Dire et ne pas dire* est de faire apparaître les normes pragmatiques de toute activité de parole, contre une interprétation sémantique ou syntaxique de la présupposition. Le linguiste développe une théorie des *significations implicites* ou *présupposés* extra-discursifs à l'œuvre dans l'acte de dire. Avec le *speech act*, le rapport entre l'énoncé et l'acte qu'il accomplit ne peut plus être considéré comme « extrinsèque » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 98), mais doit être conçu comme « immanent », « intrinsèque », « interne » à l'énonciation elle-même (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 104), affirment Deleuze et Guattari. De ce fait, les deux philosophes refusent de déterminer *a priori* ce qui appartient ou non au champ linguistique. On est finalement bien loin des considérations de *Logique du sens* : en refusant toute priorité à ce qu'ils nomment la *signifiance*, en revalorisant l'aspect pragmatique de l'énonciation, et en récusant la distinction langue/parole, c'est la suprématie de la notion de sens elle-même qu'ils remettent en question.

Ces considérations ne sont pas sans conséquence sur le vocabulaire deleuzien de l'événement. On assiste, avec *Mille Plateaux*, à une refonte complète de la notion d'incorporel. Alors que dans *Logique du sens,* l'incorporel était qualifié comme un *effet* ou un *résultat*, il devient maintenant un *acte* qui *intervient* authentiquement dans le monde :

> 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. (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 110)

On ne parlera donc plus d'*effet de langage*, mais d'*acte incorporel*. L'effectivité du langage se mesure à sa manière d'instituer et de modifier des rapports mondains. En effet, dans certains contextes, l'invocation d'une formule linguistique peut transformer la situation des acteurs en présence, générer de nouvelles obligations, engendrer de nouveaux rapports de force. Comme l'explique Austin, il n'est pas question de dire qu'un mariage ou une promesse ne sont qu'une affaire de mots (Austin 1975, 8). Il va de soi que cette effectivité ne peut pourtant pas s'apparenter à celle d'une causalité réelle. Deleuze et Guattari tiennent toujours à cette différence entre d'une part les actions et passions des corps, et d'autre part les actes incorporels qui prennent effet dans le langage. À partir du moment où l'on envisage l'acte de parole comme un *acte* et non comme une *action*, il faut préciser que celui-ci produit parfois instantanément son effet, sans en être pour autant la cause. Or cette immanence de l'effet à l'acte est justement le trait essentiel de ce qu'Austin choisit d'appeler l'*illocutoire*.

Deleuze conserve donc la notion d'événement incorporel, mais en modifie sensiblement la teneur. L'écart que le langage institue vis-à-vis de la relation causale ne concerne plus véritablement le *sens* comme couche idéelle de l'expression. Ce qui autorise encore à parler d'événement, c'est cette part de l'activité linguistique que représente l'illocutoire. Or, comme nous allons le voir, la force de l'illocutoire réside dans le fait qu'il est révélateur du caractère essentiellement *social* du langage.

III. La place du social dans le langage : la pragmatique comme « politique de la langue »

Comment rendre compte de cette part de normativité inhérente à nos pratiques linguistiques ? Une première manière de l'envisager serait de la concevoir en termes communicationnels, en l'appuyant sur une condition d'intersubjectivité préalable à toute énonciation. D'une certaine manière, c'est la voie que suivra Benveniste, en souhaitant réintégrer « la subjectivité dans le langage » (Benveniste 1980b, 258) : la linguistique benvenistienne, dans l'importance qu'elle accorde à « la langue en tant qu'assumée par l'homme qui parle » (Benveniste 1980b, 266), est une étude du *discours*. Sa condition réside dans la possibilité, pour toute communication linguistique, de s'établir dans un rapport intersubjectif entre locuteur et allocutaire. Or Deleuze et Guattari ne sauraient se satisfaire d'une telle prérogative. En faisant porter la fonction du langage sur la communication d'idées, d'intentions ou de sentiments, on court le risque de réduire en définitive la normativité des actes de parole à une linguistique du *sujet* d'énonciation. À leurs yeux, le premier postulat de la linguistique repose ainsi non seulement sur le caractère *informationnel* du signe, mais corrélativement sur toute conception exclusivement *communicationnelle* de l'activité de parole. Dans cette perspective, Deleuze et Guattari préfèreront la démarche d'O. Ducrot à celle de Benveniste :

> Oswald Ducrot a développé les raisons qui l'amènent à renverser le schéma de Benveniste : 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. (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 99)

Ce qui fait qu'un énoncé peut permettre d'accomplir un acte de parole, ce n'est pas la référence à son contenu, mais simplement le fait qu'il soit socialement admis que son énonciation vaut, dans certaines circonstances, comme l'effectuation d'une action. Pour Ducrot, la force pragmatique de l'énoncé est donc délimitée par un ensemble de normes qui ont valeur « d'obligation sociale » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 100)

Sur ce point, les deux auteurs se démarquent encore davantage que Ducrot de toute approche « communicationnelle » ou « intentionnaliste » de la pragmatique, et se révèlent étonnamment très proches d'Austin. En effet, à la différence de l'interprétation qu'en feront par exemple P.F. Strawson ou P. Grice, l'œuvre d'Austin ne cesse d'insister sur la nécessaire *conventionalité* des actes de parole. Il n'est donc point question de céder ici à la tentation d'une lecture subjectiviste de l'effectivité du langage en termes d'intention. Ce qui fait que les mots « Je promets » constituent véritablement une promesse, ce n'est pas l'intention que le locuteur aurait de la tenir en son for intérieur, mais bien tout un ensemble de conventions sociales dédiées à cet effet. D'où l'attention décisive à toutes les manières dont un acte de parole peut échouer, c'est-à-dire déroger aux normes d'effectuation d'une pratique conventionnellement réglée[13]. Les conditions constitutives de l'acte de parole en tant qu'*acte* ne dépendent pas des sentiments ou intentions du locuteur, mais de la nature irréductiblement conventionnelle de l'acte lui-même. La notion d'acte illocutoire possède donc une normativité quasi *juridique* ou *institutionnelle.*

Il serait toutefois risqué d'assimiler trop vite la position guattaro-deleuzienne au conventionnalisme austinien. Un des motifs qui poussent Deleuze à se méfier de la philosophie du langage ordinaire, c'est justement le risque d'une conception instrumentaliste du conventionnel ou de la convention. Il est clair que les contours de la notion de convention restent relativement flous dans le texte austinien. Les auteurs de *Mille Plateaux* semblent partager l'opinion selon laquelle subsisterait une forme d'illusion contractualiste dans cet appel à la conventionalité des normes régissant nos actes de parole (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 103). Pour eux, on ne passe pas du fait au droit par l'instauration d'un simple contrat, comme semblait le suggérer également Saussure[14], mais par l'instauration d'un véritable « *régime de signes* » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 106). En réalité, dans cette perspective, le problème n'est pas seulement de *pragmatiser,* mais également de *politiser* la linguistique.

Selon Deleuze et Guattari, un champ social n'est pas une totalité homogène, et l'origine du langage ne peut être trouvée dans un simple accord conventionnel. À cet égard, il faut reconnaître que la figure de Benveniste ne sert pas uniquement de repoussoir aux auteurs de *Mille Plateaux*. Deleuze et Guattari ne souhaitent pas révoquer en bloc le travail du linguiste, mais plutôt encourager un renouvellement de ses intuitions principales en direction d'une « *politique de la langue* » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 105).

En témoigne le détournement, habilement identifié par G. Sibertin-Blanc, de « l'appareil formel d'énonciation » benvenistien en « agencement collectif d'énonciation » par la pragmatique guattaro-deleuzienne (Sibertin-Blanc 2016, 311-312). Ce qui intéressait Benveniste dans le fonctionnement des pronoms personnels, c'est la manière dont certains signes « vides », comme les pronoms *je* et *tu,* peuvent définir des *instances de discours*, c'est-à-dire des places énonciatives qui s'encodent dans la langue. Dans une certaine mesure, c'est la langue elle-même qui déterminait pour le linguiste les traits formels de toute énonciation. Ce qui compte désormais avec la notion d'*agencement,* pour ainsi dire, c'est moins la place du *je* ou du *tu* comme variables d'énonciation dans un discours, que celle du *« ON »,* en tant que multiplicité nécessairement hétérogène et impersonnelle[15].

On relèvera également l'importance accordée dans *Mille Plateaux* aux *circonstances* de l'énonciation. Deleuze et Guattari soulignent à juste titre que le rapport entre un acte illocutoire et son contexte n'est pas de l'ordre d'une relation externe ou indexicale. Il ne s'agit pas de concevoir l'énoncé comme une réalité linguistique indépendante qui pourrait s'évaluer différemment selon les circonstances dans lesquelles on le place. Si elles la mettent bien en rapport avec un extérieur, les circonstances sont en quelque sorte immanentes à la langue elle-même. Elles dégagent ainsi des *variables d'expression* dans un régime de signes et déterminent la place énonciative des agencements collectifs (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 104). N'importe qui peut bien prononcer les mots « Je décrète la mobilisation générale », mais encore faut-il pouvoir disposer d'une certaine *autorité* afin de réaliser par là un acte illocutoire authentique. Tout le monde ne peut pas faire usage du langage de la même manière et avec les mêmes droits.

Deleuze et Guattari choisissent par conséquent de mettre en lumière les rapports de force qui structurent l'usage de la langue. En premier lieu, c'est le concept de *mot d'ordre* qui va permettre une telle réinterprétation de l'illocutoire en direction d'une nouvelle pragmatique. Ce qu'il faut entendre par *mot d'ordre* ne renvoie pas à une catégorie déterminée d'énoncés, par exemple ceux formulés à l'impératif. Les auteurs de *Mille Plateaux* désirent passer de la notion de *commandement* à celle de *mot d'ordre*, à la manière dont Austin passe dans son texte de la notion provisoire de performatif à celle d'acte de parole, c'est-à-dire par un changement radical de perspective sur l'énonciation. Comme l'explique G. Sibertin-Blanc :

> Il s'agit de retravailler la catégorie du performatif (les actes que l'on effectue en les énonçant) et plus généralement celle de l'illocutoire (les actes que l'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. (Sibertin-Blanc 2018, 9)

Sous cet angle, le rapport entre l'énoncé et l'acte qu'il permet d'accomplir ne peut plus être conçu comme un rapport d'*identité*, expliquent les deux auteurs, mais plutôt comme un rapport de *redondance*. À l'image des journaux qui nous disent ce qu'il « faut » penser en fonctionnant par *redondance* plutôt qu'en informant véritablement leurs lecteurs, les mots d'ordre nous dictent la façon dont il « faut » parler, sans nous véhiculer pour autant des informations sur l'usage du langage. Le mot d'ordre est donc en premier lieu un « marqueur de *pouvoir* » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 96).

Avec la notion de *mot d'ordre*, Deleuze et Guattari cherchent, nous semble-t-il, à contrecarrer la neutralité de l'illocutoire austinien. En conséquence, l'idée de pragmatique implique chez eux un déplacement majeur par rapport à la théorie des actes de parole. Nous souhaiterons donc préciser les conséquences qu'un tel revirement peut avoir sur la manière dont on peut penser la question de l'effectivité du langage.

Comment accorder à la fois une forme de réalité politique, économique et historique aux actes de parole et en mesurer le caractère nécessairement incorporel ? *Mille Plateaux* est une œuvre qui veut se montrer sensible aux différentes façons dont le langage peut faire *événement*, c'est-à-dire provoquer des « transformations incorporelles » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 103) dans un champ social donné : la sentence du magistrat, en tant qu'événement de langage, fait de l'accusé un condamné, et transforme irrévocablement sa situation. La pensée de l'événement comme *acte*, dans sa distinction avec le domaine de l'action, avait par conséquent pour visée de mettre en lumière cette réalité effective du pouvoir des mots.

Deleuze et Guattari inventent le concept de « *mass-media act* » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 103) pour décrire ces mutations juridiques, sémiotiques, politiques qui peuvent s'attribuer aux divers corps d'une société (au sens large dans lequel on parle de corps politique, de corps moral, etc.). Pour illustrer ce point, ils imaginent le cas d'un détournement d'avion : si la menace du pirate qui brandit son arme ainsi que l'exécution des otages constituent bien en un sens de véritables *actions*, par contraste, le changement qui fait du passager un otage, du « corps-avion » un « corps prison » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 103), serait de l'ordre d'une transformation incorporelle qui prend effet de façon instantanée et opère un bouleversement politico-sémiotique à même les corps en question.

La dimension événementielle de l'acte de parole que veulent mettre en avant Deleuze et Guattari s'intègre ainsi dans un réaménagement général de toutes les sciences humaines. L'histoire et l'économie doivent prendre en compte la valeur desdits *mots d'ordre* dans la description des processus historiques et des mutations économiques. D'où l'importance accordée aux dates, comme celle du *20 novembre 1923*, qui renvoie selon eux à un acte de langage singulier, celui du *décret* qui mis fin à l'inflation dans le pays en stipulant la fin du reichsmark et l'instauration d'une nouvelle monnaie en Allemagne (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 103). Deleuze et Guattari veulent ainsi insister sur la place des énoncés dans la structuration des phénomènes économiques et sociaux.

La notion même de *mot d'ordre* renvoie à l'origine aux énoncés marxistes et léninistes qui ont influencé le cours de la révolution soviétique. Deleuze et Guattari racontent par exemple comment le slogan de la Ière Internationale marxiste, « Prolétaires de tous les pays, unissez-vous ! » a précipité et encouragé la formation d'une véritable classe prolétarienne comme agencement collectif d'énonciation, là où le prolétariat n'était pourtant pas encore donné comme corps politique à part entière. Avec Lénine et le mot d'ordre révolutionnaire de 1917 « *Tout le pouvoir aux soviets* ! » c'est une nouvelle transformation incorporelle qui s'institue, recombinant et redéfinissant les coordonnées du « Parti » à venir, avant même que celui-ci ne se pose comme sujet d'énonciation[16] :

> [À] la faveur d'une 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, quitte à tomber dans un système de redondance proprement bureaucratique. […] Le *4 juillet exactement*, fini le pouvoir aux Soviets. 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 & Guattari 2002, 105-106)

Contrairement à direction empruntée par P. Bourdieu, qui dans *Ce que parler veut dire* (Bourdieu 1982) remobilise à son tour le concept de *mot d'ordre* à l'encontre de l'illocutoire austinien, Deleuze et Guattari ne réduisent pas la force des actes de parole à des conditions nécessairement sous-jacentes et externes au langage[17]. L'important pour eux est au contraire de comprendre le rôle que jouent ces énoncés au cœur même des infrastructures, c'est-à-dire la manière dont les mots d'ordre orientent et réaménagent le cours de l'histoire.

Est-ce à dire que l'effectivité du langage est du même ordre dans le cas des slogans fondateurs du marxisme et dans celui de la sentence du magistrat ? C'est ici qu'on trouvera le véritable point de rupture entre les aspirations deleuziennes et philosophie du langage ordinaire. Rappelons que l'énoncé « Je vous déclare coupable » n'a valeur de sentence que parce qu'une certaine pratique, celle de rendre des jugements, est pour ainsi dire *déjà* instituée et reconnue dans le champ social. C'est pour cette raison que son effet illocutoire peut être immanent à l'acte de parole qui le produit. Il y aurait en effet comme une préséance de l'institution à l'œuvre dans le dispositif austinien d'évaluation des actes illocutoires, qui ne semble, à première vue du moins, pas intégralement compatible avec la contingence impliquée par les changements historiques et sociaux.

En assimilant le pouvoir des mots à celui du mot d'ordre, Deleuze et Guattari semblent toutefois oblitérer la distinction fondamentale soulignée par Austin entre les dimensions *illocutoire* et *perlocutoire* de l'énonciation. En disant « je te promets de faire les courses demain » à mon conjoint, j'accomplis en effet un acte, à savoir un acte de *promettre* ou *une promesse*. Mais je peux également le *faire rire*, le *surprendre*, voire même lui *faire peur,* s'il considère par exemple qu'il y a quelque chose de suspicieux dans une telle résolution. Ces effets perlocutoires peuvent être produit intentionnellement ou non par ma parole, mais ils sont dans tous les cas contingents précisément, explique Austin, parce que non-conventionnels (Austin 1975, 103). Or c'est bien de ces transformations-*là* dont veut nous parler *Mille Plateaux,* celles qui n'interviennent pas simplement à la surface des corps, mais qui se jouent dans « l'interpénétration de la langue avec le champ social et les problèmes politiques » (Deleuze & Guattari 2002, 116). C'est donc en s'écartant du modèle conventionnaliste de l'illocutoire qu'une approche politique de la pragmatique est finalement rendue possible.

En traitant l'acte de langage comme un *événement,* Deleuze et Guattari ont en réalité élargi l'espace dans lequel se distribuent les effets de la parole, au risque peut-être de perdre ce qui faisait la rigueur des intuitions d'Austin. La question qui demeure est donc de savoir si cette extension réussit à proposer une réelle alternative à la philosophie du langage ordinaire, ou si cette dernière contenait déjà en elle de quoi penser l'effectivité de l'expression.

NOTES

[1] Cf. également son œuvre de référence, « Chrysippe et l'ancien stoïcisme » (Bréhier 1951).

[2] Il faudrait plutôt, comme le fait P. Aubenque, parler de « tinologie » plutôt que d'ontologie stoïcienne, car pour les stoïciens le genre suprême ne s'identifie pas à celui de l'être mais avec celui du « quelque chose », *tì*, dans lequel rentrent à la fois les corps et les incorporels. Cf. (Aubenque 1991, 365-385).

[3] C'est une des raisons pour lesquelles Deleuze s'intéresse autant à la théorie de l'objet d'A. Meinong (Meinong, 1999).

[4] Il semble particulièrement difficile de déterminer avec clarté la source d'une telle tripartition. Nous rejoignons ici les remarques de François Dosse, qui

relève que cette distinction s'appuie sur le travail de Benveniste (Dosse 2009). Si la différence entre *désignation* et *signification* semble être directement attribuable à Benveniste, la notion de manifestation nous semble néanmoins être potentiellement identifiable à celle dont parle Husserl au début des *Recherches Logiques,* lorsqu'il différencie spécifiquement *expression* et *manifestation* (Husserl 1993). Il est probable que Deleuze ait donc mêlé dans ce passage des références tirées à la fois de la phénoménologie et de la linguistique.

[5] On remarquera que Deleuze fait explicitement référence à la théorie des « embrayeurs », dont il reconnaît la force explicative (Benveniste 1980b).

[6] Deleuze considère que ce problème constitue l'un des principaux paradoxes du sens, qu'il dénomme « paradoxe du dédoublement stérile ou de la réitération sèche » (Deleuze 1969, 44-45).

[7] Cf. en particulier les pages 258-255. Cf. aussi : (Deleuze 1969, 50-56).

[8] Parmi les trois critères définitoires d'une « littérature mineure », Deleuze et Guattari renvoient aux potentialités des « agencements collectif d'énonciation », concept qui, comme on le verra, réapparait de façon centrale dans *Mille Plateaux*.

[9] Sur le rapport qu'entretient alors Foucault à la philosophie analytique, voir l'éclairante mise au point de J. Benoist dans « Des actes de langage à l'inventaire des énoncés » (Benoist 2016).

[10] Il faut souligner que ce rapprochement entre Foucault et Austin a néanmoins ses limites, dans la mesure où le premier insiste lui-même (non sans ambiguïté) sur l'irréductibilité de la notion d'énoncé à un « acte de formulation » comme le *speech act.* Comme le montre J. Benoist, les réserves de Foucault portent explicitement sur le fait qu'« il faut souvent plus d'un énoncé pour réaliser un *speech act »*, comme si l'énoncé s'identifiait dorénavant à la *phrase*, dont on avait pourtant pris soin de le distinguer. Cf. (Benoist 2016, 15)

[11] Il n'y a toutefois aucun lieu de spéculer sur une réelle influence de Wittgenstein sur Deleuze. Ce dernier ne semble avoir eu connaissance de la philosophie wittgensteinienne que par ouï-dire. De manière générale, il faut reconnaître que son hostilité à l'égard de la philosophie analytique repose en grande partie sur un manque de curiosité et de nombreux préjugés, plutôt que sur une réelle confrontation aux textes.

[12] Sur le sujet, nous renvoyons à l'excellent article d'Antoine Janvier & Julien Pieron, « "Postulats de la linguistique" et politique de la langue - Benveniste, Ducrot, Labov » : les deux auteurs expliquent comment, chez Benveniste, l'acte de langage est abordé non pas comme un *acte* mais selon un certain *sens d'acte*, c'est-à-dire indépendamment de ses effets, à travers le cadre strictement interne de la langue, qui en détermine le sens au sein d'une structure de relations intersubjectives.

[13] Austin marque bien la différence entre les différents types d'infélicités qui peuvent affecter les performatifs, et distingue deux grands genres de conditions pour qu'un performatif soit déclaré « heureux » : selon les conditions *A*-*B*, si la procédure invoquée n'existe pas ou si elle est mal exécutée, ou encore si les circonstances spécifiques de son emploi sont inappropriées, l'acte sera déclaré *nul et non avenu* ; selon les conditions *Γ*, qui

ont trait à la sincérité et à l'engagement du locuteur, on ne dira pas que l'acte est vide, puisqu'il a justement eu lieu, mais qu'il constitue un *abus* de procédure. Prononcer solennellement les mots « oui je le veux » sans être à l'autel ou à la marie, ce n'est pas vraiment se marier : les circonstances étant inappropriées, l'acte de mariage est considéré comme « vide ». En revanche, promettre alors que l'on n'a pas l'intention de tenir sa promesse, c'est, *abuser* de l'institution de la promesse : l'acte, bien qu'insincère, a bel et bien été effectué, et il est essentiel qu'il puisse m'être imputé. Cf (Austin 1975, 14-17)

[14] Nous remercions A. Janvier & J. Pieron d'avoir mis en lumière avec finesse le lien entre le conventionnalisme de Ducrot et le contractualisme de Saussure dans leur article. Cf. (Janvier & Pieron 2010, 156).

[15] On relèvera la parenté entre cette désubjectivation de la position énonciative et la démarche foucaldienne. Cf. les remarques de Deleuze au sujet des modes impersonnels de l'énonciation chez Foucault (Deleuze 1986, 17).

[16] Sur l'analyse léniniste du mot d'ordre de 1917, et sur la reprise qu'en font Deleuze et Guattari, on se reportera à l'article très éclairant de G. Sibertin-Blanc paru récemment dans la revue *META*, « Pour introduire la rumeur en pragmatique : performatif et politiques de la voix après Benveniste » (Sibertin-Blanc 2018, 12-16), ainsi qu'au texte source de Lénine, « À propos du mot d'ordre » (Lénine 1970, 198-205). Sibertin-Blanc clarifie l'influence de Lénine sur la conception gattaro-deleuzienne du mot d'ordre en trois points principaux : le cas du mot d'ordre met en lumière « l'*intervention* du langage dans les corps » à travers les transformations incorporelles qu'il institue dans le champ politique et social ; son ancrage directement politique et pratique remet en question une conception trop consensuelle, ou comme nous avons essayé de le formuler, « contractualiste », de la convention, son contexte et ses conditions d'effectivité relevant d'une situation où « l'institution réciproque du pouvoir des mots et du pouvoir politique est mise en crise » ; enfin, point particulièrement intéressant que nous n'avons pas exploité dans cet article, en faisant jouer le cas du mot d'ordre révolutionnaire contre la théorie des actes de parole, Deleuze et Guattari réintroduiraient la question de la temporalité et de la voix au cœur même de cette pragmatique renouvelée.

[17] En deux mots, Bourdieu reproche à Austin de ne pas tenir compte des rapports d'autorité et de domination qui déterminent la possibilité d'une performance linguistique dans le champ social.

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Suicide: A Betrayal of African Communalist Personhood

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Abstract

Incidence of suicide is a global phenomenon. Some individuals, worldwide, voluntarily terminate their lives every day. Even in Africa, where that used to be spared due to the peoples' ancient consideration of the act as taboo, it is no longer so in contemporary time because the people are now increasingly challenged by heightening complexities of life. The challenges wield hopelessness, frustration, depression, and meaninglessness of life, leaving suicide to be contemplated as the only meaningful succor. But taking to suicide is problematic. Humanity stands to suffer extinction if it is summarily adopted as the ultimate solution to personal burdens. Complicating the problem further is the fact that the act, which is engaged from personal freewill, raises many questions. For instance, does freedom license individuals to choose suicide due to burdensome frustration? Do its contemplators consider its implications on themselves, their community, and the future of humanity? Can ancient African value system still sustain a moral check on the act among her contemporary peoples? This paper deploys analytic method of philosophical discourses to respond to the questions with respect to ancient African perception of life and suicide. It asserts that, in spite of complexities and challenges of life, contemporary Africans need to re-embrace the norms and values of the old. No individual has any moral justification to terminate their life, for that betrays his or her communalist personhood.

Keywords: suicide, African value system, communalist personhood, morality

Introduction

Human life is characterized by lots of difficulties. To start, individuals are conceived and born without the privilege of being first consulted on their choice of where, when, how, and for whom to be born. From the choicelessness in circumstances of birth, they grow to discover themselves constantly struggling to change or make the best of their personal lives and society. Many people are born to discover that they belong to poor, unimportant, subservient, or less-privileged homes, communities, and nationalities. And this constitutes the ones who struggle more to change their circumstances of life than an alternate few, who are born into wealthy, famous, powerful, or privileged homes, communities, and nationalities. This marks the first point of natural expression and experience of social inequality and unfairness.

From this nature's point of inequality and unfairness, the poor often desires to change their life's circumstance and equate or associate with the wealthy or, at least, be comfortable in life. Some of them, sometimes, eventually succeed and acquire wealth, fame, and power, through hard work, smartness, or favor of oddities of life. Yet, they end up encountering a second social inequality and unfairness, especially while attempting to equate with the privileged-few. That is artificial institutionalization of class structure, where members of the privileged class deliberately introduce in society systems that divide and confine individuals to their circumstances of birth and life. The grand aim of the systems is to constantly render it difficult or completely impossible for members of the less-privileged class to ascend or aspire to ascend the privileged class.

Plato's *The Republic* (2003) makes a plausible classical literature for locating the forgoing notions of first and second social class stratifications. But while the Plato's idea originally aimed to solve societal problems of leadership, security, production and supply, it eventually created another. That is the misunderstanding and, thus, misusage of the stratification by members of the privileged class – conceived as superior and involving those in leadership and security positions – to perpetually oppress and subjugate the remaining large population of the less-privileged – conceived as inferior and involving those concerned with production and supply. From the problem, all sorts of life's difficulties arise to challenge the less-privileged, causing them frustration, depression, disappointment, hopelessness, and meaninglessness of personal life. In line with the experience, lots of government policies of today's world are made to artificially constrain the less-privileged from breaking through or succeeding so much in their vocations as to equate with the privileged. Consequently, the less-privileged – being human beings and having similar aspirations for good life just like the privileged, and yet frustrated by the privileged – are forced to either protest the injustice and unfairness (say, in the fashion advocated by Karl Marx) or contemplate and adopt alternative ways of life. Sometimes, the alternative ways of life involves taking to vices such as robbery, rape and/or, ultimately, suicide (for those who lack the courage to protest and/or engage in the vices). This presents one of the historical backgrounds to emergence of suicide as one of the many practices and problems of humanity.

Paplos et al (2003, 109) submits that ventriloquists of suicide have always been individuals who found life meaningless and, thus, better terminated than remain a nuisance to themselves, their family and society at large. And, while that seemed to be a familiar experience in the West, it never used to be for peoples of ancient Africa until this contemporary era (Khan 2005, 462). This is because human life used to be perceived by ancient Africans as a supreme value in itself (Omomia 2017, 44). Its unnatural termination through suicide or any other reason than the highest good, therefore, used to be morally wrong (Omomia 2017, 44). Also, suicide used to pose a moral problem to ancient Africans because it destroyed societal norms and values by striking at the common instinct of human self-preservation (Omomia 2017, 44). It used to be seen as "bad death" and the ventriloquists were not given full burial rites; they were buried in the "bad bush" outside the village (Aderibigbe 2002, 56). Once one's life, which was perceived as the most fundamental of all possible values, was terminated, everything else in socio-moral web of a community amounted to nothing. Indeed, the scholastic adage: "*vivere vivientibus est esse*" (life is existence itself) lends credence to this, where it justifies that one loses everything, if one loses life (Fagothey 1959, 53). Ogar and Asira (2010, 84) also buttress the position by explaining that "morality often submits to actions that attune with social norms and values…which debates on virtually every human issues including suicide…" Consequently, ancient African culture completely forbade suicide.

It is worrisome that the act is gradually becoming an option to life that is contemplated and engaged by contemporary Africans. Arguably, this, to a greater extent, is caused by circumstances that are fraught with increased challenges of life of the present complexities. Individuals are currently confronted with and pressured by higher and more complex socio-economic and political demands of life that necessitate a disregard for ancient moral laws. Yet, this raises some existential concerns that especially border on an equally ancient thinking that humanity would be extinct if everyone were to adopt suicide as the ultimate solution to personal burdens. The concern is rendered more perplexing by the fact that the conduct is engaged from freewill. The questions necessitated by this are: do individuals' free moral agency license them to take their lives in situations where life appears meaningless? What is the effect of suicide on the agents and their community? What are the extended moral implications of suicide on future society? Does contemporary Africa still have any moral clout left to stem the increasing tide of suicide among her peoples and the world? What should be done to ameliorate the increasing number of suicide cases in Africa?

This paper aims at deploying analytic method of philosophical discourses to respond to these and more questions, without forgetting existing arguments for and against rightness of suicide. It contributes to knowledge the African existentialist perception of life which asserts that in spite of complexities and challenges of life, contemporary individuals need to re-embrace the norms and values of the old. Accordingly, no individual is justified to voluntarily terminate his or her life through suicide, for such an act betrays African communalist personhood.

From this outset, it is imperative to clarify that by analytic method of a philosophical discourse is meant breaking down of complex terms, notions, concepts, or views into simple ideas in order to present them and explain their implications more understandably than they were in the complex form

(Etukudoh 2017, 47). It is, therefore, in accordance with this technique that this paper approaches the issue of suicide.

Also, the Africans concerned by this paper are the black peoples of the sub-Saharan region of the continent of Africa. And although that involves various ethnicities, like the Annang, Ibibio, Oron, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, etc., which may have variations in cultural practices and, thus, may not merit to be perceived as a homogenous people as such, which would share common views of life (in this case, on suicide), they are still homogeneous because the cultural variations are too insignificant to render them completely heterogeneous. Indeed, they are inseparably bound by identical metaphysico-social belief-system, which is characterized by spiritualism, communalism, collectivism, and synthesis. This is further analyzed later in the paper.

1. The Concept of Suicide

The term suicide or *ekpan* (in Annang and Ibibio dialects) was introduced in 1651 by the Englishman, Walter Charleton, as a neutral and less judgmental perception of act of self-killing (Mynatty 2007, 317). In spite of this, it lacks a univocal definition. Consequently, Etim (2010, 42), for instance, defines it as a voluntary act carried out by a person who intends to cause and actually causes his or her own death." And a stricter sense of philosophic conceptualization considers it to be the direct killing of oneself by one's own authority (Fagothey 1959, 285). By 'direct killing' is meant an act in which death is intended either as an end or a means to an end. Gonsalves (1985, 246) explains this more by submitting that "the action is capable of only one effect and that effect is death, or the action is capable of several effects including death and among these, death is the effect intended, either for its own sake or as a means to something else." This means that for an action to be called suicide, it must be deliberate and a function of one's volition. The ventriloquist – as a rational being – is the sole decider of the act. In other words "if a person who is ordered by a civil authority to carry out a legitimate death sentence upon himself or herself does so, it is not suicide in the strict sense" (Peschke 1996, 316). Suicide cannot be engineered or commanded by another person. A prisoner or slave who is commanded by his master to run into a moving train, for instance, has not committed suicide. Similarly, a soldier who matches out to fight on the order of his State and dies in the war is not a victim of suicide. This is because the deaths of the individuals in the respective instances are not voluntarily decided by them. They are rather compelled by external authorities.

Suicide, according to Emile Durkheim (1951, 157-256) can be classified into egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic kinds. Egoistic suicide is committed when individuals who are overwhelmed by unsolvable challenges of life feel that they have no place in society or that they just cannot fit in anymore. Mynatty (2007, 317) explains this further by submitting that it occurs where a person who does not want to live for or with others kills himself or herself. It is an act that arises from plain despair in the meaning of one's life. Altruistic suicide, according to Durkheim, is a consequence of one's love for collective unconsciousness (i.e. sacrificing one's life for the love of community or communal interest). Again, Mynatty (2007, 317) explains this further by averring that it involves a person opting for a heroic sacrifice of his life in order to save others from great evil. Anomic suicide, Durkheim says, is a consequence of certain breakdown of social equilibrium. This is common in modern world where people take their lives due to frustration either by a decrease or an increase in the economic possessions. Then, fatalistic suicide is taken out by individuals who are kept under tightly regulated slavery or persecution that results in depression. In such condition, individuals feel that they are so fated or destined in life and, thus, consider and actually choose suicide as a requirement to fulfill the destiny.

Thompson (1982, 110) explains the above Durkheimean classification as a view based on his (Durkheim's) reasoning on degrees of imbalance of social integration and moral regulation. And Dohrenwend (1959, 473) buttresses this by positing that there are effects of various crises on social aggregations-war, for example, leading to an increase in altruism, economic boom or disaster contributing to anomie. Such is a function of the relationship subsisting between a suicide actor and society which occurs as a result of social disorganization, lack of social integration or social solidarity (Thompson 1982, 111). It is a social phenomenon that breaks down vital bond of life. For him, people commit suicide during a fall in the economy – due to lack of satisfaction of basic needs which seem to reduce life to nothing. Similarly, people also commit suicide during a rise in the economy – due to frustrations accruing from lack of fulfillment of purpose (Dohrenwend 1959, 473).

Of the four types of suicide enumerated by Durkheim two, namely the egoistic and anomic variants, are more rampant among individuals than others. This is because suicide generally arises from self-interest, and is borne out of self-defeat, cowardice and lack of confidence to face the hurdles of life. And all that characterize the two variants. A suicide actor has no consideration for those who depend on him or her; no care for those who love him or her; and no trust in God. He or she sees existence as unnecessary and suicide as a solution. The only thing in his or her mind is to satisfy himself or herself by fast-tracking his or her exit from the world since he or she feels that further living is useless.

Suicide can also be divided into two forms viz positive and negative (Gonsalves 1985, 247-248). By Positive suicide is meant the performance of a speedy deadly act against oneself such as having oneself poisoned or hanged (Gonsalves 1985, 247). By negative suicide, on the other hand, is meant the slow withdrawal or withholding of those things that are essential and indispensable for human living, like failing to eat food and starving oneself, until one dies (Gonsalves 1985, 248).

However, in spite of any variant of or approach to suicide, individuals who take to it are usually depressed, frustrated, disappointed, guilty, and mentally deranged by burdens or challenges of life. Depending on personal evaluation of the weight of the challenges, availability of resources to surmount them and individuals' sense of contentment as well as courage to manage the available resources in surmounting the challenges, they resort to the act. There are certain levels of suffering which destabilize, dehumanize and depersonalize individuals such that they no longer think constructively. The elderly and disabled people, for instance, having the feeling that they are a burden to their families, sometimes decide to end their lives. Long-term illness and chronic pain also drive people to commit suicide.

2. Moral Justification of Suicide

As discussed above, suicide seems to be a rational moral choice that should be permitted in certain deploring situations of life, especially because it arises from human freewill (Ekwutosi 2008, 99). Indeed, given such background, Hume (qtd in Ekwutosi 2008, 96) posits that some people view the conduct as a right action to take. But certain questions are urged by the view. That include: does any situation of life really warrant self-killing or killing at all? If one kills himself or herself for any reason at all, where lies the meaning and impact of the first law of nature which admonishes self-preservation? It is from these questions that a second approach to suicide emerges, which considers the conduct as an act motivated by cowardice and disobedience to the first law of nature (Higgins 1956, 203). The approach anchors its position on the natural maxim that asserts that good must be done and evil avoided (*Bonum faciendum et malum vitandum*) (Higgins 1956, 252). A follow up law derivable from that is the biblical command: "thou shall not kill," which forbids human killing of any kind. This is because human killing of any kind is evil. Since evil must be avoided – in line with natural law – and suicide is an evil act because it involves killing, suicide is, therefore, wrong.

From these bipolar approaches to suicide, a moral dimension is obviously introduced to its assessment. That begs for justification of the rightness or wrongness of the conduct. The leading question in this regard is: is suicide morally justifiable? This question has since occasioned a stiff debate among philosophers and theologians, where some of them argue plausibly in support of the rightness of the act, and others also argue plausibly against its rightness. Let us briefly reflect on some of the arguments.

3. Arguments in Support of Rightness of Suicide

In advocating suicide, one plausible moral argument is that human beings – as rational entities – are naturally endowed with the freedom to choose anything at all, including whether to live or die. This means that if an individual desires to die, he or she is free to take his or her life, particularly as the life belongs to him or her. Suicide, in this view, is "a private affair and requires no interference from any other person" (Ekwutosi 2008, 99). Hume is one of the numerous philosophers who see nothing wrong with one voluntarily taking his life since the life belongs to him. In his words, "if all events equally reflect God's providence, then suicide cannot be a departure from that divine will" (qtd in Ekwutosi 2008, 96). He applauds suicide as a rational and courageous act that is anchored on personal and social utility. According to Ekwutosi (2008, 96), Hume further buttresses his position by submitting that "it is a kind of blasphemy to imagine that any created being can, by taking his own life, disturb the order of the world." Consequently, no one should consider suicide as an act that distorts or is capable of distorting the world order in any way.

Also supporting suicide are some Stoics and Epicureans who reason that a good person is one who controls his or her own destiny (Marietta 2016, 153). Based on that reasoning, they submit that:

> Suicide is a noble act. It is a lesser evil act when compared with the greater evil of living an unbearable, worthless and valueless life due to sociologically, economically or biologically challenges (Marietta 2016, 153).

Another argument supporting rightness of suicide arises from the perception of life as a gift from God and a receiver of any gift at all has the right to manage the gift whichever way he or she chooses (Ijieze 2009, 105). Having bequeathed life to human beings as a gift, God – the giver – ought not to demand any further explanation regarding how it is used, for the gift then becomes the property of every living individual. As owners of the property, when keeping the gift becomes more harmfully unbearable than doing away with it, it is more reasonable to do away with it than keep it. Ijieze (2009, 106) further asserts in support of this view that "…no gift is expected to be retained indefinitely at the expense and to the harm of the receiver."

Furthermore, there is an advocacy of suicide from the perspective of self-defense, permitting individuals to attack and destroy for safety and security reasons any unjust aggression on their lives (Fagothey 1959, 257). This argument is supported by socio-political actions of States, where they claim such rights of territorial (self) defense in events of war and capital crime. If the state justiciable claims such a right, why can one not destroy his or her life in circumstances that have perpetually proven to be unjustly aggressive? It is equally justiciable, therefore, that individuals take their lives in order to save themselves from further agony of life's unkind treatments.

From a religious perspective, some Oriental sects can be found to support suicide. Hinduism and Jainism, particularly, permit and even recommend a form of passive ascetic self-destruction in which a person embraces death from hunger and starvation (Warren 1978, 1621). In ancient China, suicide was instituted as a practice for honor or vengeance (Warren 1978, 1622). However, the Chinese repudiated male self-destruction, since they held that a man's highest duty was to preserve himself for the family. They rather permitted female self-destruction which is akin to "Sutteeism – in which a woman killed herself to avoid violation to the rights of her deceased husband" (Warren 1978, 1622).

4. Arguments against Rightness of Suicide

There are many derisive perceptions of the above pro-suicide arguments. One of them is from Plato, whose thought in *Phaedo* is that suicide is an act of rebellion against the gods. This is because, for him, human beings are chattels of the gods which cannot act in any way, especially killing themselves, without approval by such owners. If anyone acts without authority from the gods, Plato submits that it is rebellious. Indeed, he invites us to personally reason through such act of rebellion by responding to the question: "…would you not be angry if one of your chattels should kill itself when you had not indicated that you wanted it to die?" (*Phaedo* 62). The usual answer is that you would.

John Locke also reasons along the Platonic line where he submits that life is a gift from God that is merely entrusted on human beings as stewards (Omoregbe 1989, 207). In that regard, while God reserves the absolute ownership of the gift, human beings only reserve a limited ownership. This means that human beings have no justification whatsoever to take their lives because it is not their absolute property. They are, rather, meant to preserve it and render its account of stewardship to the owner – God – whenever that is required.

Still reasoning along a similar view, but more materially than spiritually, Aristotle argues against rightness of suicide from the background of community ownership of the individual. According to him in *Nichomachean Ethics* (2009, vii), since every piece of unit is a component of a whole and the whole cannot function without its units, then every individual is a member of a community and the community cannot function without individuals. If any individual therefore kills himself or herself, he or she destroys not only himself or herself but also the community as the community may malfunction from the loss.

St. Thomas Aquinas buttresses the above Aristotelian position, albeit inversely, by asserting that:

> One does not only wrong the society when he or she commits suicide, he or she also offends the self. This is because, naturally, everything loves itself and, with that self-love, seeks to perpetuate its being. If human beings as part of nature, who ought to heed the law by loving and perpetuating their being in life, rather turn around to hate themselves to the point of discontinuing their being through suicide, then they disobey the natural law and offend their being. (Fagothey 1959, 121)

Arguing in support of the above position of Aquinas, Bernard Haring (1964, 359) avers that "suicide is a terrible aberration which is diametrically opposed to a well ordered self-love and the natural instinct of self-preservation." The right to life arises from the dictates of natural law (Fagothey 1959, 122). Hence, Aquinas emphasizes the need for conforming to natural law by arguing that self-preservation is a natural tendency, and one is obliged to preserve his or her life (Fagothey 1959, 122). Peschke (1996, 302) supports this by considering suicide as "a violation of one's duty to love oneself…"

Another argument against the rightness of suicide is Thomas Higgins' consideration of the conduct as an act of cowardice. Higgins asserts that "suicide as an escape from overwhelming personal disaster, an evil life, misery, frustration, or dishonor, far from being an act of fortitude is an act of cowardice…" (1956, 203). Explaining further, he posits that:

> Persons who take their lives under such circumstances have a fundamentally false view of life, namely, that happiness in this life is man's last end. Suicide as an escape from being a burden to others also manifests the erroneous conception that the purpose of life is temporary felicity (203).

Additionally, there is the argument against suicide from the perspective of 'choosing it as the lesser of evils, especially when no moral wrong is involved.' Moral evil may never be preferred to any physical evil no matter how severe the latter may be. Moral evil touches on the core of existence where it concerns termination of life. From Immanuel Kant (1963, 85), it is to be learnt that suicide destroys the basis of morality. When humanity cares less about the immorality latent in suicide, it means that morality itself is rooted out of existence (Kant 1963, 85). Mankind, who is naturally at the centre of morality, kills morality when he kills himself. Also, an individual would be free to wreck himself or herself if he or she was responsible only to himself or herself. But that is not the case, for individuals are also responsible to other members of society as well as God.

Further, Kant's first formulation of the Categorical Imperative, which asserts that one should act only on that maxim whereby one can and at the same time will to become a universal law, forbids suicide (1998, 224). This is because if one considers suicide as a preferred escape from life's travails then he or she inadvertently legislates for the rest of humanity the same preference as a law. Where all of humanity is governed by such a law, no one will be left to make sense of life. Humanity would simply be annihilated. This is why Kant (1998, 221) argues that it would be totally inconsistent with self-love to commit suicide. And the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) (2012, 2281) defends the position by presenting suicide as a conduct that offends the love of self-due to its contradiction of the human natural inclination to preserve and perpetuate life. It also perceives suicide as disobeying neighborly love due to its unjust breakage of ties of solidarity with family, nation and other human societies that we have obligations.

Legally, an attempt at committing suicide is a punishable crime. This is supported by section 327 of the Criminal Code of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which states that "any person who attempts to kill himself is guilty of misdemeanor and is liable to imprisonment for one year" (716). Unfortunately, the piece of legislation is limited as it only applies to attempted cases of the act. This is because those who succeed in committing the act do not live to face the long arm of the law.

5. African Perception of Suicide

As stated earlier in the outset of this essay, the African thought system that it focuses is that of the ancient black peoples or Negroes of the sub-Saharan region of the continent. It is the people that Otto Dennis (2015, 49) describes as:

> …the traditional type of individuals, whose character could be viewed as being purely native or unadulterated by foreign cultures and traditions that infiltrated the continent since the advent of colonialism. These sort of individuals oppose the modern, contemporary and urban Africans whose character are too eclectic (and, thereby, adulterated - by colonialism, elitism and globalization) to be purely African (in the sense of our thinking in this essay). Except for their black complexions, modern, contemporary and urban Negro Africans are admixtures of several cultural modes of life - African, Judeo-Christian, Caucasian traditions, et cetera, which eventually diminish the Africanness in them.

The traditional Africans therefore, although composed of different ethnicities and had slightly different social cultures, still shared identical philosophical view of existence. That was expressed in spiritualism, communalism, collectivism, co-existence, or synthesis. An ancient Negro African used to be a spiritual individual whose personhood or individuality was attained through participation in communal life (Menkiti 1984, 171-181; Ruzicki 2010, 51). Menkiti (1984, 172) explains this more succinctly where he states that "…it is the community that defines an individual as a person…" That is because the reality of communal world takes precedence over the reality of individual life histories, whatever this may be (Menkiti 1984, 171).

By 'communal world' is meant the interpenetrating relations that exist between all forces. The basic existential assumption of traditional Africa was that force - vital force or life-force - constitutes the primary element of reality (Dennis 2015, 50). Everything, including plants, animals, stones, mountains, water, time, the dead (who are considered to be alive in a certain way), the yet-to-be-born, mind (a living person's consciousness) and matter (the physical universe, the world environment), are all considered to be endowed with life-force (Dennis 2015, 50). The world is one of extraordinary harmony of the forces where there is unifying synthesis and mutual compatibility of all things interacting in an inseparable and interpenetrable mix (Dennis 2015, 50).

Human beings are the dominant force among all created visible forces (Tempels 1959, 20). They are at the center, realizing themselves in the midst of a hierarchy where some forces act above and others act below them (Tempels 1959, 21). Outside the hierarchy of forces, the human species has no existence (Tempels 1959, 21). This constitutes the sense of solicitude for beings that John Mbiti (1969, 141) expresses in the statement: "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am." Similarly, it is the sense of society that Ruch and Anyanwu (1981, 325) refer to as collectivist or, more suitably, communal. This, therefore, is how communalism was and still remains the authentic personality of an African.

To further elucidate the ontologico-communal personhood of an African, we deem it pertinent to compare it with its Western counterpart. Accordingly, we aver that it is contrary to the sort of solipsistic individualism projected by Rene Descartes in his "I think therefore, I am," which typifies Western personhood. This is because Western culture perceives the individual as being causal unit of communal or societal make-up, norms and values, and not the other way round. Authentic Western personhood entails individuals constantly living out their conscientious choices of uniqueness in all situations of life (Heidegger 1962, 68). It involves development of a solid and genuine personality from informed and convinced positions of reality. Every declaration of 'I want to…,' 'I am…,' or 'I shall…,' for instance, is respected and treated as a legislated norm, especially where the individual – as a moral agent – bears the responsibility of the choice (Unah and Dennis 2011, 11).

It is in view of this form of individuality that Martin Heidegger (1962, 68-69) postulates that "an authentic life is a life lived in a way one has freely chosen." That is why he and the entire existentialist movement admonish individuals to avoid seeking refuge in the 'public self,' for that contrasts with the free and concrete 'I', eclipses the 'I', and portends absorption or a lostness in the community or communal life. It is why existentialist philosophers generally rise against depersonalization, depersonification and dehumanization of the individual occasioned by losteness in the 'they world,' public, community or society. They perceive such self-absorption as inauthentic personhood, which must be avoided. They advocate establishment and restoration (i.e. where the 'I" is already eclipsed) of mankind to his or her dignifying status of strict individualistic freedom in society.

Yet existence of one individual axiomatically implies existence of others too, for no one person exists without others. Even Heidegger acknowledges this flip-side of existence where he perceives mankind's being-in-the-world as that characterized by being-with-others (1962, 149-163). Similarly, Martin Buber (2000, 114) speaks of existence as an "I" and "Thou" experience. These theories portray mankind as an entity that is not only individualistic but also inalienably social. They recognize the sociality as an essential element of authentic existence too. Life assumes relevance and meaning when man relates healthily and heartily with others and the world.

From the alternative socialist perspective of Western conception of personhood, African communalist conception of existence asserts its authority even more. However, rather than individuals causing group existence (like the strict individuality of the West), the converse is obtained in Africa. African individuals approach life in constant consciousness of an interconnection with some 'other,' whose relation necessarily determine their behavior – for they must consider the equal thriving of that 'other' in all they do (Dennis 2015, 50). The 'others' or community, in turn, offers individuals' security and care, especially where that relates to conducts and phenomena that are personally or socially harmful. The communal security and care is characterized by corporate solidarity and mutual aid that are posed and generally accepted as norms and values.

It is instructive to note that the above conception of personhood in Africa does not deny the fact that mankind is born into the world as single individuals and, as such, has certain rights and responsibilities to the self. It recognizes and respects such elements as the fundaments of existence. Indeed, the community relies on such individualistic senses of responsibility for moral advancement and sustainability. But the individuality is compulsorily aligned with laid down norms and values of the society, as the norms and values are (themselves) products of a long history of studies and experiences on individual behaviors across ages, genders, professions, vocations, and religions.

The norms legislate that individuals are not the sole owners of their lives. The community also reserves the ownership (even more). Hence, no one is expected to conduct themselves in ways that please them – like contemplating and committing suicide. Anyone who lives in that way is deemed self-centered and acommunity (i.e. outside the community) and invites upon themselves the communal wrath, whatever that may be. Sometimes, depending on offence, such self-centeredness can earn offenders (with their entire family) complete banishment from the community, excommunication, or ritual appeasement and cleansing, etc.

With specific respect to suicide, the penalty used to be public ritual cleansing, which is borne by the immediate family and community of the actor. This is because it was considered a curse for anyone to take their life as doing so betrays the people's communalist personhood. It rattles the balance or completely scuttles the sacred spiritual, collective, holistic, co-extensive, and symbiotic bond subsisting between the actor and the rest of the life-forces, especially the living humans, the living dead, and the yet-to-be-born individuals of his or her family and community. Hence, the cleansing serves the purpose of restoring the scuttled spiritual balance of the community. The community and immediate family of the actor, through publicisation of the ritual cleansing, are also shamed and stigmatized for generations to come. As mentioned earlier, depending on community, the family can be banned – in addition to the shame and stigmatization. These undergird the justification for absolute condemnation of suicide in African culture as a taboo.

6. Conclusion

From the discussion so far, particularly the ancient African perception of suicide, we conclude that contemporary Africans need to re-embrace the norms and values of old. This is because, in spite of the complexities and challenges of their lives, living needs to be invaluably esteemed as it used to be. The communalist way of life, which characterized ancient African culture, dictates that it is morally wrong to deliberately kill oneself (irrespective of the different arguments supporting it). Despite the possibility of self-projection in the spirit of the "I" and, thus, the thinking that one should decide for himself or herself whatever he or she pleases, individuals should equally recognize that fellow individuals and the world environment demand from them the responsibility of living for collective good.

Resorting to suicide due to life's complexities, challenges, or crises implies destroying the complementary union of society, degrading human values, and betraying the self. The authentic self is that which remains committed to life, in spite of its awareness that it is fraught with problems. To allow oneself to be overwhelmed by life's problems to the point of contemplating and actually committing suicide is inauthentic. Individuals need to rise above such inauthentic inclinations and cling to their authentic personhoods.

The society also has the responsibility of caring for individuals, for they constitute its foundation. The destitute are to be especially cared for, lest they become hopeless in their helplessness and contemplate or commit suicide. Religion needs to preach against suicide in all its ramifications, while government – alongside alleviation of poverty and unemployment – needs to open counseling centres closer to the people to educate them and discourage depression. Failure of governments in this regard, especially in Africa, may continue to encourage suicides.

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The shortcomings of the methodical approach in teaching philosophy and the human sciences

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Abstract

Romanian pedagogical theory rests on the assumption that any educational content can be taught and learned faster and better by recourse to a battery of teaching methods. In the present study we question that assumption and show that the methods generally recommended have no didactic merits when it comes to teaching philosophy and the human sciences. In order to prove that we commence by rendering manifest the origins, the specificity and the presuppositions of the teaching methods described in the literature. Afterwards we determine the specificity of the objects of study of philosophy and the human sciences in general. On these bases we develop a series of three arguments that show why, given the particularity of both, the recourse to methods for teaching philosophy and the human sciences is inadequate.

Keywords: method; teaching method; didactics of philosophy; didactics of human sciences; the task of the teacher.

Introduction

In Romania, the idea that teaching should be guided by methods seems self-evident. The matter is attested by the most diverse facts. For instance, in the curriculum of teacher education programs the two mandatory courses of pedagogy are subtitled "The theory and methodology of instruction," respectively "The theory and methodology of evaluation." Also, in all treatises, textbooks and university courses of didactics[1] the chapters dealing with the methods of teaching are the most extensive and span most of the book. But, perhaps most notably, the matter is attested by the fact that in everyday speech „didactică" [didactics] and „metodică" [methodology] are used interchangeably, as perfect synonyms. And that semantic overlap is also sanctioned institutionally for the senior teachers charged with the professional development of their younger peers are called “metodiști” [literally, methodists], while the administrative structures in which they are organized within school inspectorates “cabinete metodice” [literally, method offices].

In the present study we submit this tenet to a careful examination and try to demonstrate that the recourse to methods for teaching philosophy and human sciences cannot and does not lead to any educational gains, except by chance. The great promise of teaching methods is that they would help students learn anything faster and better. We show that in these fields teaching methods do not keep their promise.

In this sense we begin with some clarifications. First of all, we establish the meaning of the concept of method, the specificity of the methods of teaching described in the pedagogical literature and then the assumptions on which these methods rest. Afterwards, we turn our attention to the specificity of the objects of study of philosophy and human sciences in general. And, on these foundations, we put forth three arguments meant to show why the recourse to the battery of methods generally recommended in the pedagogical literature in teaching philosophy and the human sciences cannot and do not facilitate the educational endeavor.

We will close our study with the sketch of a different, in our opinion more suitable mode of approaching philosophy and the human sciences in the classroom.

1. The Origins of the Concept of Method

Although “method” and its counterpart in different languages has its origin in Ancient Greek in “methodos” which means, as is well known, “path,” the concept signified by this word is eminently modern, appearing for the first time in Francis Bacon’s *Novum Organum* in 1620. There “method” designates a set of rules meant to guide the mind in its approach to experience, thereby making it possible to gain true knowledge.[2] Nevertheless that is not the sense with which the concept of method becomes ubiquitous in modernity. That sense is the one with which it was endowed by René Descartes.

Just like for Bacon, for Descartes the method is a set of rules meant to guide the mind but this in general, not only in its approach to experience. Cartesian method asks to decompose any difficulty one might encounter in ever simpler parts until the simplest are reached and to deal with them in reverse order until the initial difficulty disappears. In Rules for the Direction of the Intellect Descartes writes:

> "By 'a method' […] I understand certain and easy rules—rules such that, if one has followed them exactly, then one will never suppose anything false to be true, and, not having uselessly wasted any mental effort, but always gradually increasing knowledge, one will arrive at the true knowledge of all those things of which one will be capable." (Descartes 1998b, 85)

And further on he adds:

> "The whole method consists in the order and arrangement of the things on which the vision of the mind has to be focused in order that we might discover any truth. Any yet we shall be following this method exactly if, step by step, we reduce complicated and obscure propositions to simpler ones, and we then try to ascend, through the same steps, from the intuition of the simplest ones of all to a knowledge of all the others." (Descartes 1998b, 99)

As one can see from these passages, Cartesian method is independent of both the object to which it is applied and the aims it is employed to serve. Although Descartes approaches the matter in the context of an epistemological investigation and his only interest is the acquisition of true knowledge, his method can serve any other. It can be used to deal with both theoretical matters as well as practical ones. That is why, in his wake, the recourse to method has proliferated not only in science but in virtually all spheres of our lives.[3] And that is why it has been embraced in education.

In the passages above three terms at least must have caught the attention of educators. First of all, "always" in "…always gradually increasing knowledge…" Through this term Descartes' definition of method makes an unconditional promise and presents the process of knowledge immune to any interference and free of the context in which it is undertaken. This must have grabbed the attention of educators because a transfer of the Cartesian method in their field announces the possibility of displacing it from its natural setting and moving it into a new one, more fitted to the needs and possibility of society. "Always" announces the possibility to teach agriculture, for instance, in a heated classroom, sheltered from the elements, rather than in the field.

The second thing to note in the passages above are the impersonal terms in which the concept of method is described: if "one" follows exactly the rules proposed by his method, "one" will gradually arrive at true knowledge. With this Descartes places method at everyone's disposal and opens the domain to knowledge for anyone interested, not just for those possessed by daimons (as was Socrates) or those smiled on by Providence. In the sphere of education this promises us that anyone can become a teacher so long as they want to, no special talent or natural gift being required.

And third of all, in the passages above worth noticing for educators is the emphasis on efficiency, the claim that the recourse to method prevents us from "wasting uselessly any mental effort". Efficiency is one of the central values of modern science and technics and the principal criterion used to evaluate practice in our times. Certainly, it is a central value in modern schools. For when education is limited to a number of years it cannot be done in any way. It must be accomplished with a minimum of resources for maximum results.

2. The Specificity of Teaching Methods

In the previous section we found several reasons why the concept of method could have sparked the interest of the educators. That, though, does not mean that it did. From the fact that it could be adopted in the sphere of education does not follow that it actually was. For that reason, we have to establish whether teaching methods really Cartesian and if not, what is their specificity.

In Romanian pedagogical literature the above question is answered in the negative. Aside from Ioan Cerghit, who, granted, constitutes a significant exception, given that his *Metode de predare* [Teaching Methods] is the most comprehensive analysis of the subject, no one attributes them a Cartesian origin. And Cerghit simply proclaims it, without substantiating his claim in any way (Cerghit 2006, 19).

On the one hand, when it comes to the specificity of teaching methods the literature contents itself with reminding us of the Greek etymology of the term, mentioned above. Teaching methods are methods because they represent paths toward educational objectives.

At first sight, the stance of the literature appears to be justified in both regards. A quick glance at the descriptions teaching methods receive in the treatises, textbooks and university courses of pedagogy and didactics is enough to notice that they do not seem to involve that movement from complex to simple and back again presupposed by the Cartesian concept of method.

On the other hand, the recourse to the Greek meaning of the term in order to indicate the specificity of teaching methods seems appropriate given that this seems to be their only common denominator. Indeed, the differences between these are so great so that some are in direct opposition with the others. Let's take, for instance, the couple lecture – heuristic conversation. The former is a method of transfer of knowledge involving exclusively the teacher, the students as recipients being a free variable in the process. They can be present by listening with understanding to the teacher's speech, or de facto absent, daydreaming or thinking about something else. And that has no bearing on how the method is applied. In contrast, heuristic conversation is a method of discovery of knowledge in which the students are not only actively engaged but playing a central role. For their answers shape the teacher's questioning directly.

However, a careful analysis reveals the literature to be wrong on both accounts. The specificity of teaching methods does not derive from the primary, Greek meaning of "methodos" for that is much too broad. If teaching methods were what they are just because they represent paths toward educational objectives, then there would be as many methods as actual original teaching approaches there are. Obviously, this is unacceptable. To say that any particular didactic approach constitutes a teaching method comes to say that there are no teaching methods.

In what concerns the second point, even though the descriptions of the teaching methods in the literature do not capture that movement from complex to simple and back presupposed by Cartesian method, it is nevertheless carefully followed in the classroom by every teacher who knows what she's doing. In this regard, the literature simply does not rise up to the level of the didactic practice it is supposed to theorize.

Let's tackle the matters in order and begin with the group of expository methods composed of explanation, description, didactic narrative, logical demonstration, and lecture. All of these are eminently descriptive in nature, the differences between them being given by two things. First, by the type of language they employ. Some, such as the lecture, explanation and demonstration use a predominantly scientific language, characterized by monosemy and referentiality, while others such as narration and the description per se use a predominantly literary language, characterized by polysemy and auto-referentiality. We say "predominantly" because, even the most rigorous scientific discourses are figurative to a certain degree insofar as natural language is metaphorical in its constitution (Gadamer 2004, 428).[4] Just as the most poetic descriptions and narratives retain a certain degree of monosemy if the reader is to be able to identify the thing described or to follow the story told.

Secondly, and more relevant for us, the differences between the expository methods come from the depth, the level of detail of their descriptions. The descriptive method remains at the surface of things, trying simply to show how they are. The explanation and the logical demonstration aim to show why things are the way they are, what makes them so. While the didactic narrative falls somewhere in between, for as it always begins by presenting a situation, which constitutes its intrigue, and goes on to unveil either the causes leading to it or its consequences (or both).

Didactic explanations and demonstrations do not actually explain or demonstrate anything. They merely describe already existing explanations and demonstrations. The teacher is rarely also a researcher, and, in any case, she is not or, at least, she should not be, when she is in front of the class if she wants to help her students learn. This is apparent in that didactic explanations always have more steps than necessary to arrive at the laws, the first causes or the basic principles governing the thing explained. These are intertwined with additional steps, so many as it is needed to make the explanation graspable, comprehensible to the students. In like manner, didactic demonstrations are never completed when the matter was proven, but only when they are also clear enough for their audience.

Any description though is, in essence, an analytic process whereby a whole, the thing described, is taken apart, disassembled into constitutive parts, its features, properties, qualities and so on. And this holds true for all the teaching methods discussed above. Although it might not be readily apparent, the object of a demonstration or an explanation functions de facto like a whole, while their steps are the parts of these endeavors. In the case of the didactic narrative the whole is the intrigue and the parts, the events recounted. Insomuch as what happens in the story is related to its intrigue, the events recounted are contained in nuce within it as is the part in the whole. But, as we have seen in the previous section of this study, the process of taking apart of a whole into simpler parts to treat them individually constitutes the core of the Cartesian method. That is why the teaching methods discussed so far are Cartesian methods.

Let's pass now to the heuristic methods. The diversity within this group is so great that they cannot be dealt with collectively as before. In fact, their diversity is so great that not all the methods usually placed by the literature under this heading find here their rightful place. Some are simply not teaching methods but rather strategies of classroom management, aiming to facilitate the educational.

That is the case of brainstorming or synectics. Through these methods nothing is actually taught or learned. They merely help put the students in a certain state of mind, meant to help them engage in the activities proposed by their teachers. Taken in this sense, brainstorming is much older than it is believed by some, who place its birth in the second half of the 20th century,[5] its roots going back to medieval thought and the "rousing of the mind" undertaken by scholars prior to engaging in study. The most famous example for this is the one offered by Anselm of Canterbury in his *Proslogion* (Anselm 1995, 97).

The main goal of other methods such as Philips 6-6, focus-group, fishbowl, jigsaw or cube is to organize the classroom in such a way to determine as many students as possible to engage in the conversation initiated by the teacher. The core of these methods is always the discussion of a theme, and that is actually what leads to learning. Their so-called steps of method, detailed sometimes in the literature, are simply directions the teacher must follow to create the appropriate setting for discussion, and they impact the educational results of the process only indirectly, if at all.

In conclusion, if we leave aside the ones above, the only real heuristic methods of teaching are heuristic conversation, debate, problem learning and case study. The first three have an important thing in common, namely all start from a certain type of problem. In the case of the heuristic conversation, the problem takes the form of a question students can answer only insofar as they engage in research and reflection. In that of the debate, the starting point is a practical problem which require the parties to find an acceptable solution or, if that is not possible, to recognize the main acceptability of the other's position. While in the case of problem learning, the problem takes the form of a "problem situation," as it is called, of a cognitive dissonance between the experience and/or the stock of knowledge of the students and what the teacher says or brings in front of their mind's eyes.

The resolution of these problems though requires one and the same strategy, precisely that strategy detailed by the Cartesian concept of method: they need to be decomposed into simpler parts and dealt with in order from the simplest to the most complex afterwards. Precisely that is the task of the teacher in working with these methods, to make sure that students identify all the parts of the problem under discussion and study them carefully and in order. That is generally meant in the literature when the teacher is called upon to "guide" the conversation, the debate or the students' reflection on the problem situation. Thus, these methods too are essentially Cartesian.

But such an endeavor to decompose a difficulty into parts and treat them in order from the simplest to the most complex under the guidance of the teacher is involved also in case study. That is precisely what takes place in the classroom when the teacher turns his students' attention to a particular situation with the hope to determine them to draw general, theoretical conclusions from it. So, case study too is a Cartesian method.

3. The Basic Assumptions of the Cartesian Concept of Method

Now, after having established that the teaching methods discussed by the various treatises, textbooks and university courses of pedagogy and didactics are Cartesian in a rigorous sense, we can take a step further and try to determine whether they should be used in teaching philosophy and the human sciences. For that we have to turn our attention first to the basic assumptions of the Cartesian concept of method.

These assumptions announce themselves in Descartes' descriptions of the concept of method quoted above. For, to say that method can always lead anyone to true knowledge amounts to saying that the knowing subject does not have a particular relation with the object; that their relation is purely objective in the primary, Latin, sense of the term. We recall, in Latin, the object, "obiectum," is simply that which stands in front of the subject, "subiectum."

For Descartes, for a rational being or, a "thinking substance" (*res cogitans*) as he says, the object proper of the methodical approach is the material thing, the "extended substance" (*res extensa*). Res extensa is the only one to which res cogitans can relate in an objective manner. To the best of our knowledge, Descartes does not mention anywhere in his work as objects of knowledge anything except material things. From his point of view spiritual objects such as the texts and the works of art, the rituals, the laws, the customs and so on simply do not exist.

The second assumption on which the Cartesian concept of method relies is that the objects of knowledge and extended substance in general can always be decomposed into simple parts in a two-fold sense: simple as "further indecomposable" and simple as "easily graspable," "comprehensible at once". In fact, for Descartes, that is one of the main differences between thinking and extended substance, between mind and body, a thing he states explicitly: "… there is a great difference between the mind and the body, inasmuch as the body is by its very nature always divisible, while the mind is utterly indivisible" (Descartes 1996, 59). It is only in virtue of the divisibility of the extended substance that the thinking subject can "divide each of the difficulties […] [she] examines into as many parts as possible and as was required in order to better resolve them" and then to "conduct […] [her] thoughts in an orderly fashion, by commencing with those objects that are simplest and easiest to know, in order to ascend little by little, as by degrees, to the knowledge of the most composite things" (Descartes 1998a, 11).

4. Are Descartes' Assumptions Shared by the Human Sciences?

In order to establish whether the assumptions of the Cartesian concept of method are shared by the class of things with which philosophy and the human sciences deal such as texts, laws, customs, rituals, works of art and so on, we first need to determine their specificity, what gives this class its unity beyond the obvious differences between them.

The unity of this class comes from two things. First, from the fact that all the objects mentioned above are hermeneutic objects, they all exist through understanding and in order to be understood. That can be easily seen. A text whose signs are not recognized as writing is not a text; it does not exist as text. A law whose prescriptions cannot be grasped, cannot be obeyed and does not work as law. So, it is not a law. A custom which does not embody a convention between the members of the community is simply a behavioral reflex. If a work of art is not understood at least in the artworld as work of art, then it is not. While the past exists only insomuch as it is known—a fact generally recognized and attested by the common use of language which labels those whose past remains a mystery as "people with no past."

Second of all, the unity of the class of objects studied by philosophy and the human sciences is given, as Hans-Georg Gadamer has shown, by the fact that all have a "lingual" [*sprachlich*] constitution (Gadamer 2004, 440). Due to that lingual nature, for simplicity, Gadamer proposes to call all these objects "text" (Gadamer 1982, 330), a convention we ourselves will adopt in what follows.

Indeed, irrespective of the medium in which they subsist—the canvas and the oil, the stone, the paper and the ink, the celluloid roll of film, the byte of information and so forth—works of art exist because people can talk about them and agree that they are what they claim to be. Their being, the thing that makes them what they are, resides in the narrative accompanying them, in the "story" that can be told about them. The more complex this story is and the more important for the community the one telling it, the greater their value.

Things are the same with laws, customs and rituals. As conventions, they are always born through a dialogue between the members of the community and are obeyed because of the speeches incessantly repeated in their defense by authority figures such as parents, teachers, politicians, the elderly, journalists and other public figures.

In its turn, the past, as object of study of history, is handed down to us mainly through written sources, be they chronicles, codes of laws, literary works of art, or inscriptions (on coins, insignia, coats of arms and other things of the kind). Of course, some of these are sources of historical knowledge also simply as objects or because of their decorations. On the other hand, granted, written sources must be corroborated as much as possible with unwritten ones. But this has no bearing on the fact that the former are the primary sources of historical knowledge. The matter can be settled if we approach the issue from the other end. Unwritten sources can tell us something about the past only insomuch as they can be corroborated with written sources. If they cannot, they add to the mystery surrounding the past rather than dispel it.

If we keep in mind these two aspects, the conclusion that imposes itself upon us is that the objects of study of philosophy and the human sciences do not share the basic assumptions of the Cartesian concept of method. And, as a consequence, that philosophy and the human sciences can be neither done, nor taught methodically. In these disciplines, the process of the constitution of knowledge cannot and does not follow the prescriptions of the Cartesian concept of method. And neither does the correlative process of its transmission in schools to the new generations.

Of course, teachers can always resort to methods in their teaching, but this does not bring about any educational gains. The recourse to methods does not increase the efficacy and/or efficiency of the educational endeavor. In defense of this tenet one can put forth three arguments.

5. Why the Recourse to Methods Lacks Educational Value

First of all, insofar as the hermeneutic object exists through understanding, it does not simply stand in front of the knowing subject. Here, subject and object are not independent and indifferent to one another. The subject is part of the object, just as, once understood, the object becomes part of the subject. That is why, as Hans-Georg Gadamer shows, the relation between them is best described in terms of "belongingness" (Gadamer 2004, 278).

This belongingness of the subject to the object and vice-versa is what opens the possibility of knowing other minds and, thus, of the human sciences in general. We can understand a text written by somebody else only insofar as it is written in a familiar language. We can understand the text of an other only by projecting ourselves meaning onto its pages. That belongingness of the subject and the object though is also what prohibits the human sciences from ever becoming objective sciences. Because we ourselves bestow meaning onto the signs in front of us, the text understood is never the expression of a pure otherness, a truly strange text, but, up to a point, always also our own. But that belongingness of the object to the knowing subject also ruins the notion of simplicity in the sense of "easily graspable" on which the Cartesian concept of method relies. And, along with it, it ruins the didactic efficacy of the teaching methods built upon it.

If the text is always also our text, the simple notions at which the teacher arrives through the process of decomposition involved by the methodical approach will be simple just for her. Or they could be simple for her and for some of her students. The point is that nothing allows us to assume that they could be simple for all of them. The notion of simplicity at play here, just like the correlative one of complexity, are relative to the stock of knowledge, on the one hand and, on the other, to the cognitive abilities of the individual. And these vary greatly from person to person. But insofar as the simple notions discovered by the teacher are simple just for her, the didactic endeavor built upon them can have no educational relevance to her students. Or it would prove relevant to some of them at best. And that not because of the didactic endeavor itself and, thus, because of the method employed, not because of how the teacher conducts its class, but by chance, due to the particular endowments of the students. That is why the recourse to a methodical approach in teaching philosophy and the human sciences is not recommended.

As we have seen though, the notion of simplicity has also another sense, independent of the knowledge and the cognitive abilities of the individual, thus one that escapes the argument formulated above. And, one could argue, precisely this is the sense on which relies Descartes' concept of method. Simple also means "indivisible," "further indecomposable." From the point of view of this second sense though, the recourse to method for teaching philosophy and the human sciences is simply impossible. For, insomuch as their object of study is hermeneutic and lingual in nature, insofar as it is text, it can never be decomposed into indivisible parts that could be treated individually afterwards. And that, regardless of whether it is approached from a semiotic or a semantic point of view. Let's take tackle them in order.

As a meaningful whole, the text is not a sum of individual words it cannot be decomposed into such "elements." The word or, to employ of a more rigorous terminology, the linguistic sign cannot be regarded as the final element of such an analytic endeavor because, as Ferdinand de Saussure has shown, it is "differential" in nature (Saussure 1959, 117-118).[6] A sign has a certain signification because all the other significations possible are tied to the other signs of the language to which it belongs. That is why, for instance, in uttering "sister" one does not send to one thing, simple in nature and graspable at once, but to a complex nexus of relations and phenomena. In uttering "sister" one sends to the idea of sister but also to those of brother, mother, father, cousin, uncle and so on. By uttering "sister" one affirms all these other significations and the entire nexus of relations among them.

At the semantic level, on the other hand, the text cannot be decomposed into propositions and the proposition cannot be taken as its final, simplest, element because it does not carry meaning in itself. The meaning of a proposition is relative to its context, just as this context itself is relative to a larger context but, as Jacques Derrida has argued, also to the very concept of context (Derrida 1998, 136-137).[7] That is why one and the same proposition can mean one thing when it appears in the beginning of the text and a completely in the end. It is a hypothesis when it appears in the beginning of a school essay or a scientific article and a thesis when it appears in the conclusions. Similarly, one and the same proposition will have a sense when uttered by an actor on stage, and a different one when said by politician in a radio or TV interview.

Taken independently from one another and treated as intelligible in themselves the propositions of a text say something completely different than the text itself. Texts are nonadditive whole. Thus, they have no simple, indivisible parts. Whenever one finds such parts in a text, that is because one has projected them oneself. They are the products of the act of reading and a reflection of the interests of the reader.

6. Sketch of a Nonmethodical Didactic Approach to Philosophy and the Human Sciences

If the recourse to methods for teaching philosophy and the human sciences lacks any didactic advantages, then how should they be taught? How can they be taught? What does a teacher have to do to help her students understand the great theories about man and society put forth throughout time? How can she help them become familiar with the way in which—to paraphrase the title of well-known work by Wilhelm Dilthey[8] — the historical world is formed in the human sciences?

In our opinion, philosophy and human sciences teachers are faced with two basic types of tasks. On the one hand, they need, first of all, to create the appropriate setting for their students to confront themselves with the great texts of these disciplines. For that, they need to help them become familiar with the context in which these texts were born, with the world that gave birth to them. Every text is the expression of the thought of its author just as much as it is of the dominant worldview in the time and place in which it the author lived and worked. Such anchoring of the text in a given time and place ensures its intelligibility for its original public but also what makes it opaque with the passing of time. And that opacity is deepened the further we get from the moment and the place in which the text originated. The task of the teacher is to disperse it as much as possible.

Second of all, philosophy and human sciences teachers must bring to light for their students the problem dealt with in the text in front of them, the particular aspect of the world the text aims to clarify. In philosophy and the human sciences theory always appears as a response to a particular need, and its constitution is always guided by an interest. Even history which, it is said (Veyne 1971, 63-88), is born out of sheer curiosity about the past, fulfills a societal need and is done for the satisfaction of that. It contributes to the formation of a collective identity.

The problems dealt with by the great texts of philosophy and the human sciences are problems of the world in which they were born as well as of the ones that followed. The answers they give always transcend the horizon of their genesis. Precisely that is why the great texts of philosophy and the human sciences are great. That is what makes them relevant and worthy of our attention today.

By familiarizing their students with the problems that gave birth to the texts studied teachers offer them motivation to learn. The possibility to gain a clearer sight of the world or to come to see it differently, to better understand yourself, to be able to put your life in perspective, to compare your way of life to others' are among the few reasons strong enough to determine us to renounce ourselves and learn something new. For learning requires self-renunciation. At the very least, it asks us to invest our time and energy, things everyone, at every age, always knows how to spend in a more pleasurable, albeit not necessarily a more fruitful, manner. At most, it asks us to abandon what we already know and do, to give up some of those habitudes that constitute our being.[9] Both things are hard, and one never does them except with good reason.

Third of all, teachers must show their students why the texts to be studied are important and how they proved and prove useful for themselves. The process of education is mimetic at any age. We want to learn because we want to be like the ones who already have the abilities and knowledge, because we hope that at one point in time we could lead, at least under certain aspects, a similar life. That is one of the main reasons why one might renounce oneself when the things to learn have no gains for the moment.

On the other hand, philosophy and human science teachers must concentrate their efforts to help their students in their confrontation with the texts studied. From this point of view, teachers should embrace allegorically the condition of the ancient pedagogue whose job it was to accompany children to school.

In this sense, teachers must make themselves available to their students; they must offer them all the supplemental information they might need in order to understand the texts studied or to direct them toward the books where they could find that information themselves. The latter option is the one desirable from a didactic standpoint because it contributes to the formation of the intellectual autonomy of the students. But this option is not available all the time. Sometimes an incursion into other texts entraps the student into a labyrinth or the detour is too long and makes her lose sight of the problem from which she started.

And second of all, philosophy and human sciences teachers must incessantly question their students understanding of the texts studied as well as their understanding of the matter at hand in order to provoke them, to determine them to confront their own worldview and become aware of the habitudes constitutive of their being. Such questions would offer students the opportunity to demonstrate the progress of their learning. And they provide the ground for a true formative and summative evaluation. But they also reveal to the students their limitations and give them another impulse for self-transcendence.

But this nonmethodical approach to teaching philosophy and the human sciences proves better not only for the students, but also for the teachers themselves. For it shelters them from one of the great dangers they face: routine. That is why we encourage them to use it.

NOTES

[1] Ian Westbury et al.'s *Teaching as a Reflective Practice* made us aware that the term "didactics" requires clarifications because it is virtually unknown in the Anglo-Saxon world. In Europe didactics is a theoretical discipline charged with the study of teaching. For a detailed discussion of the history and role of didactics see Westbury et al. (2000). For a concise clarification of the epistemological status of this discipline see my "The Didactic Status of Problem-Learning and Its Conditions of Application" (Costache 2009).
[2] See in this sense Bacon (2003, 28, 33 & 36).
[3] All those books of personal development which dominate the shelves of the bookstores promising us the possibility to transform for the better virtually every aspect of ourselves and our lives are in essence collections of methods.
[4] In the same vein in "White Mythology" Jacques Derrida shows that the very concept of metaphor is a metaphor for metaphor (Derrida 1972, 302).
[5] According to Ioan Cerghit brainstorming was developed by A. Osborn in 1953 (Cerghit 2006, 153). Cerghit does not give a precise reference and this date does not figure in any other work, so we could not verify it.
[6] For a detailed discussion of this matter see our book *Gadamer and the Question of Understanding* (Costache 2016, 111-118).
[7] For a detailed discussion see Costache (2016, 123-128).
[8] Wilhelm Dilthey is arguably the most important philosopher of the human sciences. The work to which we are alluding here is *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences* (Dilthey 2002).
[9] For a detailed discussion of this matter see Deleuze (1994, 70-128).

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The manifold senses of being off the beaten track

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This collection of essays aims to provide insight into Heidegger's thought by offering a smorgasbord of themes related to the chief ideas foreshadowing the later works. However, it does not purport an ultimate reading of the philosophical core running throughout Heidegger's writings but examines the multifarious topics which Heidegger's reflection engages in by duly scrutinizing enduring features and fleeting suggestions of this widespread thought. The essays of the first section ("Language, *Logos*, and Rhythm"), focused on language as saying of Being, acknowledge that it is unlikely to devise a metaphorical stage, hinged upon symbolizing tropes, of the later Heideggerian thinking: firstly, the metaphor per se, if we recall its meaning, namely "transfer", involves thinking *tout court* and is distinctive of language itself; secondly, the poetic language – as *poiesis* – is the place wherein language speaks itself; thirdly, the topological approach to language does not bring something forth or represent via image but bears upon self-referentiality as saying of Being, in conformity with Heidegger's remark on the verb *légein* as "saying" and "gathering". According to these tenets, which concern the book in its entirety, self-referentiality implies a sense of literality "that demands our attentiveness to language itself" (30) and to the relationship between the word and the thing whereby the first can afford the figurative way of saying the placing of being by taking the measure of "that dimension into which human being is gathered and in which it belongs (in and to which it is 'appropriated')." (21)

By means of the speech act theory, Jeff Malpas ponders upon the self-referentiality of language, whereby the foundation of any sign in the poetic work can be attained through the appropriation of its illocutionary force, according to which the poet's poem is the reader's appropriation of the poet's poem, i.e. the deputized discourse of the poet's work. Hence, the dialogue (*Zwiesprache*) with the poet's poem comes to the fore through the hermeneutical reciprocity of the consideration (*Erörterung*) of the site of the poem and the elucidation (*Erläuterung*) of its word texture. Taking as example Heidegger's reading of Trakl's poetic work, Markus Wild states that the core of the poem, as "'gathering power' of the poetry" (51), is the apartness of the poet, who is lost to Earth, and of the reader's appropriation of the word pattern; the two sides of the dialogue thus experience their univocality by recognizing one another. The same ground applies to the relationship, scrutinized by Diego D'Angelo, between the poet and the gods exemplified by Hörderlin's work, whose poem signifies the greeting of the heavenly to earthly beings.

The poet shapes language by virtue of the hints of the gods sent through the history of Being (*Ge-schick*) and grasps through remembrance (*Andenken*) the apartness of the poetic activity from the inceptive greeting which establishes history as the differentiating measure of things, even though poetry itself is the place of greeting. As a result, the ontological dynamic between the greeter and the greeted occurs as the opportunity for one to appear through the presence of the other, since the greeting of the poet makes sure that the greeted is contemplated by poetry, thereby instituting the ontological bond of past and future. The poet is greeted by the world insofar as they share a common past related to future fulfilment: the holy is the essence of nature and lets things be through the beginning differentiation, which is the sending of the holy in accordance with the measure specified by the greeting unfolding the differentiation of things over past and future in their relationship to the ideal meaning which the presencing past is endued with. Wherefore, history, as the opening up within the holy, is the place wherein language evinces the rhythm shaping experience as the place of language, thus setting up a factical ideal, an ontical way of thinking existence, freed from the subjectivism of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* and envisaging the human as *Da-sein* living in the speaking of language. This standpoint, remarked by Tristan Moyle, leads up to a sort of anti-humanist naturalism that upholds the aesthetic appropriation of the event (*Er-eignis*), wherein the being of *Da-sein* is enhanced by the aesthetic faith, that is the outcome of the naturalization of metaphysics through the concern with ordinary existence provided by the cognitive powers relying on language. Owing to “aesthetic-practical grounds” (97), this framework rounds out the belief in the existence of the gods or God. To reflect on Being is to retrieve the *Ereignis* experience occurring through the greeting of the holy, namely the aesthetic ground of the appropriation of the event. In this regard, the human being is the preserver and steward of the truth of Being without being compelled to endorse a humanist outlook.

The second section (“Heidegger’s *Physis*”) copes with *physis* and its proper meaning. It stands for the linkage between the analytic of *Dasein* and the subsequent metontology, which is the reverse ontology relying on the sense of being immanent to beings. Therefore, “φύσις means […] a framing of essence or a setting to that essence spanning backwards into the past and forward into the future.” (115) *Physis* is the being-ness (*ousia*) of beings that manifests itself in the being actual of things, as the moving principle that determines beings in generative associations and is integrated into their substance. From Greek philosophy onwards, the not-present-at-hand self-concealing gathering background is a keynote core for thinking and represent the linchpin of the temporalization of *Dasein* – the intertwinement between projection and withdrawal – which Heidegger ponders since *Being and Time* until the mid-thirties. This matter, as Thomas Buchheim suggests, introduces the subsequent reflection on the overcome of metaphysics and the withdrawing unconcealment of

Being, which turns out to be the hallmark of the later writings, even though Heidegger's use of the word *physis* drops off steadily.

Further, the unconcealed concealment of *physis* is appropriately attributed by Guang Yang to the strife between movement and rest, world and earth, in the self-subsistence of the work of art, envisaged as the resting potentiality and gathering force which is the "self-secluding of earth refraining from any attempt to disclose it" (133), and, at the same time, as the "movedness" of the opening world envisaged as a unity of oppositive powers. Moreover, Nikola Mircoviĉ also, in the third section ("Phenomenology, the Thing, and the Fourfold"), unriddles Heidegger's conception of art and maintains that the truth disclosed by the artwork exposes beauty as shining-forth in the earthly element of the concretion by expressing the embedded cultural and social values via sensible qualities: it stands apart in the concealment of matter and arises from the sensible concretion, thus endowing human being with an ethical stance on what has been concealed, that is the contextual meaning entrenched in the work of art. As beauty may provide the reason for *physis* to be stable presence, truth and clearing tally.

Since *physis* as conflictual unity and artwork as strife share a common framework, *physis* may represent the linchpin around which the end of metaphysics revolves, from which the new inception stems. It eschews the equation of philosophy with scientistic procedures and interprets *physis* as nous, in the Aristotelian sense of openness to the proximity of things, i.e. wakefulness, and its relatedness with experience as the hendiadys of what has not yet been unfolded, the *Ur-sache* in the midst of the auroral beginning of philosophy. As Claudia Baracchi says, "the end of philosophy points to the fragile and yet undeniable advancing of beings, the disarming and yet ineliminable acknowledgement *that* they are" (154), thereby instituting the likeness of the aesthetic faith and the Greek *pistis*, which characterizes end as the place of the unconcealment of the origin by means of the phenomenological inspection of phenomenality (clearing), wherein the receptivity to the sensible turns u As we have seen, *physis* manifests itself as emergence and withdrawing, as "presencing" (*Anwesung*), as

Damir Barbariĉ terms it, tied to self-closure, as "movedness" within the steadiness of emergence, which outlines the limits of manifestation and outshines, like beauty, in the threshold of wonder. As a result, as long as *physis*, in conformity to its actuality, turns itself into the stability of *ousia* as *Anwesenheit*, beauty allows reframing the end of philosophy as the inception of the other beginning.

The third section ("Phenomenology, the Thing, and the Fourfold") considers various issues dealing with the relationship between language and phenomenology, Being and its manifestness, Being and the subject. The clearing, as the ground of seeing, yields the *tautóphasis* of naming, as saying of the appearing, and revealing the presencing through phenomenality, whereas the opening clearing sets up the Same of thinking and being, thus echoing, as Günter Figal stresses, the path of Parmenides, namely unconcealment as disclosure. The clearing qualifies as *phenomenóphasis*, the saying of appearing. Furthermore, the reading of *tautóphasis* as the saying of presencing suggests that the truth as disclosure results in singularity, in which what has been (*das Ge-wesene*) reveals itself in the onefold (in-stant) of the meaningful presence, thus reverberating its inceptive kernel. The meaningfulness is retained along with the functional context of the fourfold, which Andrew J. Mitchell traces back to the Aristotelian four kinds of causes, which are ways of "allowing (*lassen*) something to come to (*an*) appearance and to presence there (*an-wesen*)" (229). As a result, Jussi Backmann demonstrates that the presencing occurs in the contextual singularity of beings within the spatiotemporal situatedness of *Da-sein* as responsiveness to Being. Besides, the intertwinement of singularity and situatedness prods Heidegger to rethink the conception of the thing, which spans over the reflection on relationality and the metaphysics of presence.

The critique of *Being and Time* fulfils its aim by revealing that the philosophical history of the thing, which ends in its objectification and enclosedness in modern philosophy, comes up again in the existential analytic of *Dasein*, which cannot help but endorsing the present-at-hand as a tool for an end and simple presence. The fourfold paves the way to the other inception by retrieving the ancient conception of the thing as the relational core related to the surroundings and the subject without, though, discarding the modern trend, which nonetheless allows accounting for the singularity of things. The fourfold may stand for the place wherein the metaphysical nature of the thing and the relational gathering of things approaching human being merge, thereby establishing the relationship to the manifestness of things as the world in which human beings live ("the between"). This expression primarily refers to the fundamental ambiguity of the thing, which Mitchell compares remarkably with Husserl's phenomenological account; the thing is, at the same time, graspable in compliance with the definite possibilities of perception depending on posited actualities and does not fully manifest itself at once but in infinite progression, thus shaping the world inasmuch as the perception entails both the thing and its surroundings. The guidelines of this conception are retrievable in the thinking of the fourfold, which, on the one hand, accounts for the singularity of the thing and, on the other hand, retrieves the meaningful context of its occurrence. It is noteworthy that the thing and the subject are not entangled with each other by a back-and-forth movement but, as the inquiry into the abysmal being of the ground bears out, unfold in the intertwinement of self-concealment opening and responsiveness to being as such.

The last constellation ("Ground, Non-ground, and Abyss") tackles the problem of the ground, that is the reason for a thing to appear, and its relation to the abyss. As has just been remarked, the dimension of the between encompasses the world, which human beings cannot conceive per se, as the word *Erklüftung* testifies the entanglement of projection and grounding: the historical appropriation of the event develops in the onefold, which discloses an individualized meaningful time-space (projection) while going through its self-enclosing (grounding). As Tobias Keiling points out, Heidegger reckons that the appropriation of the event (the being of *Da-sein*) takes place in the sundering (*Erklüftung*), like a rift inside a stone (being as fissure, *Zerklüftung*), of the "turning midst" (291) occurring within the concealed ground. Being consequently reveals itself as "the conditioned necessary condition of the possibility of beings, or, in paradox terms, the 'first necessity' and also the 'highest possibility'" (290). Although Heidegger relinquishes the use of *Erklüftung* and considers the prior openness of *Da-sein* for the ground to abide, Being nevertheless harbours the intertwinement of possibility and necessity, as the possibility of beings is grounded by the unfolding of Being within the openness of the *Urgrund* (in topological terms, the void, i.e. the indeterminate openness, delimits the place as it is shaped through it; as self-disclosing presencing, it results in its outline (*Umriss*), thereby engraining beings with a specific figure (*Gestalt*).

In the light of the Leibnizian principle of sufficient ground, examined by Hans Ruin according to the different readings that Heidegger gives to its purport, Being, like *physis*, is groundless and arises per se as *Ab-grund* since a peculiar reading of the same principle says: "*nothing* is without reason/ground" (252). If, for Heidegger, the Leibnizian thought ranges from being committed to a metaphysical interpretation of truth as the identity of existence and thought in God, to which Heidegger replies by means of the temporalization of *Dasein* improved by the existential analytic, to being the cradle of both rationalistic and meditative thinking, it is yet striking that it does not only parallel the development of the Heideggerian thinking of the event but also spells out the shift from the ecstatic transcendental temporalization of being to the event as opening up and marks the difference between human transcendence as freedom and clearing as the domain for the appearing of beings. Furthermore, the principle of ground pushes the scope of rationality beyond its limits, thereby bringing forth an emancipating attitude towards reason within its activity, about which Ruin properly mentions *Gelassenheit* (257). As a result, whereas the transcendence of *Dasein* entails projecting upon the indeterminate possibility, thereby envisaging freedom as "projecting continuously reaffirming itself" (286), the possibility of the human being grounded by *Da-sein*, that is the space of possibility granted by the opening up of the event, up-ends the metaphysical subjectification because the appropriation of the event "must signal and preserve the concealing inherent in the unconcealing that constitutes the truth of being." (271)

Hence, *Da-sein* (the open space of the "there") qualifies as the place wherein human beings can resist the oblivion of the ground – Heidegger's understanding of the Schellingian non-ground, as Sylvaine Gourdain argues – while being aware of its non-transparency, that is the irreducible remainder, the withdrawing movement of being which associates Heidegger's and Schelling's grounding insofar as it represents the negative core of the ground and the presence of emergence in the appearing, which may let the presencing and the disclosure unseen. The thinking of the event complies with the strife between earth and world since the clearing blends with withdrawal; furthermore, the event lets things be because phenomenality originates in an undefined ground, thus developing the second strife, namely the concealed unconcealment which makes up phenomenality. *Da-sein* is grounded by what exceeds it, the primordial ground of *Seyn* (as Heidegger terms this struggle inspired by Schelling's *Seynsfuge*) welcomed in its dithering through the fathoming, that is the letting-be of the grounding as the juncture of *Seyn*. The fathoming is entailed by the "steadfastness" (*Inständigkeit*) of the human being within the grounding of the "there", thus allowing the self-concealing primordial ground of the event. Thereupon, the conjuncture of beyng respectively affords "the grounding (*Gründung*) of the human being as *Da-sein*, the fathoming (*Ergründung*) of the truth of beyng, and the letting-be of the ground(ing) (*Grund*) that is the primordial ground (*Ur-grund*) of the event (*Ereignis*)." (273)

Finally, the twofoldness, i.e. Janus facet, of the appropriation of the event comes up as the feature encompassing all the essays: the intimacy of the greeter and the greeted; the intimacy of the past and 'what has been' (*das Gewesene*), signified by the becoming-ideal of what was real in the past; the intimacy of world and earth; the relationship between the human being (*Da-sein*; the singularization of *Seyn* harks back to the situatedness of the onefold) and *Seyn* (singularity as the taking place within an individualized meaningful time-space); the intimacy of the saying of the presencing and the topological thought; the intimacy of the holy and *physis*, the intimacy of movement and rest in *physis* and Being. Moreover, the remark on the situatedness, which brings forth the aforementioned aesthetic faith, may be traced back to ephemeral experiences and place-establishing things, the concern of which raises as from 1945, as some essays show up (cf. e.g., p 158, 219-221, 293-294). It is easy to fathom this regard if we recollect what the leitmotiv of the essays as a whole is, that is the reappraisal of the later stage of Heideggerian philosophy by focusing on discarded features or shedding light on unexpected interpretative keys. These include the inspection of the several ways of conceiving of the event, the ensuing scrutiny of the different keywords that managed to describe it, and the spread heed of aesthetic issues. They can be yet complemented by *Gelassenheit*, which may denote the pathway whereby the new inception of philosophy arises through wonder, the fundamental attunement to Being, thereby restating the withdrawing and unfolding movement of Being.

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Neue Ansätze zu Heideggers Begriffstheorie und Gadamers Heidegger-Kritik in Hongjian Wangs *Ontologie der Praxis bei Martin Heidegger*

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Titel: New Approaches to Heidegger's Theory of Conceptualization and Gadamer's critique of Heidegger in Hongjian Wang's *Ontologie der Praxis bei Martin Heidegger*

Keywords: Heidegger, Gadamer, Ontology, Hermeneutics, Practical Philosophy, Formal Indication, Conceptualization

Hongjian Wang verfolgt in dieser Arbeit das Ziel, die Bedeutung Martin Heideggers für die praktische Philosophie aufzuzeigen. Argumentiert wird, dass die Philosophie in ihrem Wesen *praktisch* sei. Eine praktische Philosophie, die nicht als Gegenpart zu einer rein-kontemplativen, theoretischen Philosophie und auch nicht als Zusammenschluss von handlungsorientierter praktischer und begriffsorientierter theoretischer Philosophie gedacht wird, sondern als eine *ontologische praktische Philosophie*, die der Autor auch als *Ontologie der Praxis* bezeichnet. Diese ginge der neuzeitlichen Unterscheidung von Praxis und Theorie voraus. Gewährsmann in diesem Fragen nach der ursprünglichen Bedeutung der Praxis ist Martin Heidegger, dessen frühe Philosophie der 1920er Jahre und dessen Aristoteles-Interpretation von Wang in den Fokus gerückt wird.

Die Bedeutung für die heutige praktische Philosophie versucht der Autor an der Ontologie Heideggers sichtbar zu machen. Sie ermögliche 1) eine Umarbeitung der neuzeitlichen Methodologie und 2) eine Neuinterpretation von Aristoteles. Beides gehöre zu Martin Heideggers größerem Projekt: Zu dem Versuch, das, was die Philosophie ist, neu zu bestimmen, um so die Vorherrschaft der neuzeitlichen Wissenschaft in Frage zu stellen, die Philosophie von ihrem Bann zu befreien und um damit die abendländische Metaphysik und den Nihilismus zu überwinden (vgl. 16). Die praktische Philosophie wird aus einer neuen Perspektive in den Blick genommen: aus der Perspektive der Ontologie (Heidegger) und der Hermeneutik (Gadamer).

Im ersten Teil dieses Buches (vgl. 24-96) thematisiert der Autor Heideggers frühe Philosophie der 1920er Jahre. Der Ausgangspunkt ist für Heidegger etwas, das die Vorherrschaft des Theoretischen genannt wird (vgl. 18): ein Vorrang der Theorie in allen Dimensionen des menschlichen Lebens und sogar innerhalb der Philosophie. Sie sei nichts Zufälliges, sondern als Verfallenstendenz ein *Grundcharakter des menschlichen Lebens* (vgl. 25): Eine gleichsam natürliche Tendenz zur Theoretisierung führe zur Verdeckung des Seienden. Sie führe zu dem verhängnisvollen Missverständnis, nämlich zur Auffassung, dass das Verstehen und jede Form des Erkennens nur theoretisch möglich sei (vgl. 22). Dem Leben, und das meint bei Wang die Dimension des Praktischen, werde man theoretisch jedoch nicht gerecht.

Der Autor stellt dar, dass zur Methode der Philosophie deshalb immer eine Gegentendenz gehören muss (vgl. 39, 41, *et passim*). Die Besonderheit von Wangs Ansatz liegt in der Beschreibung der Methode von Heideggers Philosophie: Hongjian Wang stellt präzise und überzeugend dar, dass das auszeichnende Merkmal von Heideggers Begriffstheorie der *formalen Anzeige* die Verschmelzung von Allgemeinheit und Konkretisierung ist. Dies ist eine der großen Stärken von Hongjian Wangs *Ontologie der Praxis bei Martin Heidegger*. Es wird nicht nur gleichsam philologisch gesammelt, was über die formale Anzeige zu finden ist. Wang zeigt systematisch, was diese Methode von anderen Methoden unterscheidet. Der Begriff des Allgemeinen rückt damit in den Vordergrund: Philosophie ginge es um prinzipielles Erkennen – sie ziele auf Begriffe mit Allgemeinheitscharakter (vgl. 44). Diese Allgemeinheit dürfe aber nicht als theoretische Allgemeinheit missverstanden werden. Die Besonderheit der formalen Anzeige sei, folgt man Wang, dass die Formalität der formalen Anzeige einen unauflösbaren Bezug zum Konkreten hat: Im *Zeigen* der formalen Anzeige liege die Aufforderung zur Konkretisierung. Das Formale bleibe an diese Konkretisierung, d.h. an einen Verstehensvollzug gebunden.

Der Begriff des Konkreten ist bei Wang bewusst in Anknüpfung an Hegel verstanden (vgl. 45). Was das Konkrete ist, ergibt sich durch Wangs Verweise auf das Leben, genauer noch: auf das Leben in Bezug auf dessen Sein (vgl. 25). Das Konkrete bzw. die Konkretisierung ist nicht das unvermittelte, schlicht Gegebene. Das Konkrete ist das durch das Denken und durch die Sprache Vermittelte. Für die Heideggersche Begriffstheorie heißt das, dass das Allgemeine (Begriffe) etwas sein muss, welches die Vermittlung des Verstehens ermöglichen kann. Der Allgemeinheitscharakter der Begriffe der Philosophie Heideggers kann demnach nicht der der Generalisierung und auch nicht der der Formalisierung sein (vgl. 85).

Die größten Missverständnisse und Unterschiede zwischen Philosophie und Wissenschaft werden damit durch Wang in größter Klarheit am Begriff des Allgemeinen deutlich gemacht: Generalisierung meine eine gattungsmäßige Verallgemeinerung. Verallgemeinert wird das, was dem Seienden innerhalb eines Sachgebiets gemeinsam ist: Farben gehören zur obersten Gattung ‚sinnliche Qualität'. Vom Einzelfall zur obersten Gattung gibt es einen schrittweisen Aufstieg. Das Einzelne ist in der Generalisierung jedoch auch nicht mehr als ein einzelner Fall des generalisierten Allgemeinen. Man könnte Hegelisch sagen: Einzelfall und Gattung bleiben unvermittelt. Die Formalisierung ist demgegenüber nicht inhaltlich gebunden: Man kann vom Einzelfall durch einen Sprung zur formalisierten Allgemeinheit kommen: so beispielsweise von Dreieck, Stein, Rot durch einen Sprung zu ‚Wesen' oder ‚Etwas überhaupt'. Von ‚Etwas überhaupt' gibt es allerdings keinen Weg zurück zum einzelnen Ding.

Laut Wang ist der Unterschied zur formalen Anzeige nun die ständige Betonung des Vollzugs. Sie führe in gewisser Weise in die entgegengesetzte Richtung: zum Seienden (und nicht von ihm weg). Und trotzdem sei sie Verallgemeinerung: eine Allgemeinheit, die mit dem Sein in Verbindung gebracht wird. Das Sein wird nun wiederum jedoch nicht als abstrakte, theoretische Allgemeinheit verstanden – nicht als Seiendheit, nicht als Etwas überhaupt (vgl. 85), sondern als Sein des jeweiligen Seienden (vgl. 90-91). Das Sein sei „der Anfang der Konkretisierung" (90) oder wie es an späterer Stelle heißt: das Sein als das „zu konkretisierende Allgemeine, das die Allgemeinheit und die Konkretheit in sich verbindet" (164). Alle Begriffe der Philosophie seien formal anzeigend. Ein Beispiel, das Wang gibt, ist der zentrale Begriff von Heideggers Philosophie: *Dasein*. Der Begriff stünde nicht nur für die jeweilige, faktische Existenz, sondern für diese jeweilige Existenz in ihrem Sein (vgl. 76).

Im zweiten Teil (vgl. 97-165) zeigt Wang, wie Heidegger diese Methode des Lebensverstehens in dessen eigener phänomenologischer und ontologischer Aristoteles-Interpretation fruchtbar macht. Wang geht es zunächst darum, die Unterschiede zwischen *praxis*, *poiesis* und *theoria* aufzuzeigen. Das Ziel sei es, die ursprüngliche Bedeutung des Praxisbegriffs an die Oberfläche zu bringen, der für die Rehabilitierung der praktischen Philosophie, d.h. für eine Ontologie der Praxis in Anspruch genommen werden soll (vgl. 97). Wang stellt präzise dar, dass dem Praxisbegriff in Aristoteles Philosophie eine herausragende Bedeutung zukommt, weil sie ihr Ziel in sich selbst hat. Sie gehe zwar (im Unterschied zur *theoria* und *sophia*) auf veränderbare Dinge, d.h. Lebenssituationen, dennoch sei sie der *poiesis* überlegen, weil jene *poiesis* ihre Vollendung in etwas findet, was außerhalb ihrer selbst liegt: im Werk (vgl. 114).

Das Verhältnis von *praxis*, *theoria* und *poiesis* wird erneut in den Fokus gerückt, wenn Wang rekonstruiert, wie Heidegger bestimmte Ansätze der aristotelischen Philosophie radikalisiert. Aufgegriffen wird dabei eine These von Franco Volpi (vgl. 119), der die frühe Philosophie Heideggers als Ontologisierung der praktischen Philosophie von Aristoteles charakterisiert hat. Ontologisiert werde der zur *praxis* gehörende Begriff der *phronesis*: eine Ontologisierung einer „Verhaltenweise des Menschen zur Seinsweise des Daseins“ (124). Wang beschreibt diese Ontologisierung auch als Formalisierung (vgl. 124-125). Diese Formalisierung sei jedoch im Sinne der formalen Anzeige, d.h. im Sinne der neu-erarbeiteten Methode der Heideggerschen Philosophie zu verstehen: In der *phronesis* (als Seinsweise) sei das Konkrete, Faktische oder Geschichtliche *nicht* beseitigt, sondern in sich versammelt – bereit zur Konkretisierung (vgl. 126). Heideggers Radikalisierung oder Vertiefung des aristotelischen *praxis*-Begriffs liege in dieser Anwendung der Methode: in der Verbindung von Allgemeinheit (*phronesis* als Seinsweise) und Konkretheit (*phronesis* als das Erblicken der „konkreten Diesmaligkeit der augenblicklichen Lage“ (127)). Der Praxisbegriff werde durch Heidegger ontologisiert. Ontologisierung jedoch müsse, so greift Wang die Ergebnisse des ersten Teils auf, als Konkretisierung verstanden werden (vgl. 129).

Wang nennt dies eine Ontologie der Praxis. Der Grundgedanke bei dieser Benennung mag gewesen sein, dass das, was das Leben ist, nur in einer Ontologie (und nicht theoretisch) expliziert werden kann. Die Praxis wird dabei ontologisiert – aber nicht im Sinne einer Vergegenständlichung oder Hypostasierung. Das Sein wird zugleich zurückgebunden an die Praxis und dadurch *konkretisiert* (vgl. 99). Praxis steht hier demnach nicht mehr für das Praktische im Gegensatz zum Theoretischen (vgl. 103ff). Sie wird griechisch verstanden als das auf sich selbst bezogene Leben.

In einem abschließenden dritten Teil (vgl. 166-213) versucht der Autor, noch einen Schritt über das Erarbeitete hinauszugehen, indem Heideggers Philosophie mit Gadamer kritisiert wird. Im Fokus steht wie zuvor die praktische Philosophie, die jedoch im Sinne einer Ontologie der Praxis und mit Gadamer sogar als *Weiterentwicklung* dieser im Sinne einer universalen praktischen Hermeneutik verstanden wird (vgl. 169). Wang geht es darum, Lücken und Probleme des Heideggerschen Ansatzes sichtbar zu machen, diesen Ansatz einer Kritik zu unterziehen, um diesen auf diese Weise für die heutige Zeit relevant zu machen und zu bereichern. Das Ziel

Wangs ist es, die Heideggersche Philosophie in einem ethisch-politischen Bereich weiterzuentwickeln (vgl. 213).

Der Autor gibt sachlich die Position Gadamers wieder, an die er sich selbst anschließt. Er stellt zunächst Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen beiden Philosophen dar. Wir fassen Wangs und Gadamers Kritikpunkte zunächst zusammen. Kritisiert wird:

1) die Gewalttätigkeit von Heideggers Interpretationen und Übersetzungen (vgl. 169),

2) das Übergewicht des Ontologischen (vgl. 200). Es dominiere die Tendenz auf Vereinheitlichung als Assimilierung von Unterschieden (vgl. 201). Ontologie sei verschlossen gegenüber Ethik und Politik (vgl. 192).

3) Die *phronesis* werde formalisiert, neutralisiert und ontologisiert (ent-geschichtlicht) und der *ethos* werde vernachlässigt (vgl. 186).

4) Im Kontext von Verstehen und Auslegen fehle das Anwenden (vgl. 189-190).

5) Die Formalität der formalen Anzeige sei nicht geschichtlich (oder nicht geschichtlich genug) (vgl. 189).

6) Die Geschichte werde aus der Selbstwelt bestimmt (vgl. 173f.).

7) Mitsein werde nur als Erweiterung des Selbst gedacht (vgl. 196). Das 'Andere' spiele bei Heidegger keine konstitutive Rolle. Spezifischer: bei Heidegger fehle die Behandlung der *synesis* (vgl. 183). Vernachlässigung des eigentlichen Mitseins (vgl. 192). Möglichkeit des eigentlichen Mitseins werde verneint (vgl. 194).

Diese Kritik kann ihrerseits noch einmal zusammengefasst werden (vgl. 212):

A) Das Übergewicht des Ontologischen

B) Die Überbetonung des Selbst

In der Darstellung dieser Kritik verlieren die Ausführungen Hongjian Wangs jedoch an Überzeugungskraft, aus dem einzigen Grund, weil bestimmte Kritikpunkte mit dem, was Wang selbst im ersten und zweiten Teil als Kernpunkte von Heideggers Philosophie herausgearbeitet hat, im Widerspruch stehen. Als eine der großen Stärken von Wangs Buch muss dessen souveräne, systematische Darstellung von Heideggers

Methode gelten. Wang hat textnah und überzeugend gezeigt, dass die Ontologisierung *als* Konkretisierung verstanden werden muss. Die Quintessenz von Wangs Überlegungen war, dass das Sein als das zu konkretisierende Allgemeine verstanden werden muss (vgl. 129). In diesem abschließenden dritten Teil wird das Ontologische dem Konkreten jedoch wieder unvermittelt gegenübergestellt. Dies überaus deutlich in der Kritik eines Übergewichts des ontologischen Interesses auf Seiten Heideggers (vgl. 205, 213) oder in der Gegenüberstellung der Seynsgeschichte und der Pluralität der Geschichte (vgl. 200-201). Selbst die Tendenz auf Einheit, das, was Wang als Übergewicht des Ontologischen bezeichnet, könnte strenggenommen (wenn man Wangs eigenen Ausführungen zur Ontologisierung als Konkretisierung folgt) nicht kritisiert werden. In diesem Sinne könnte man auf die Kritik eines Übergewichts des Ontologischen mit Wang selbst antworten: So etwas wie ein *Übergewicht* des Ontologischen kann es nicht geben, weil im Ontologischen das Konkrete versammelt ist, d.h. allererst *konkret wird*.

Was die Kritik einer Überbetonung des Selbst betrifft, so könnte man mit Steven G. Crowell argumentieren, dass das Selbstsein als Grundlage des eigentlichen Miteinanderseins gedacht werden könnte (Steven G. Crowell, *Normativity and Phenomenology in Husserl and Heidegger,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013). Demzufolge führt der in *Sein und Zeit* beschriebene Gewissensruf nicht in die Isolierung, sondern ist vielmehr ein Freiwerden für die Möglichkeit eines eigentlichen Seins zu Dingen und zu Mitmenschen. Statt Gadamers Hermeneutik als Kritik von Heideggers Ontologie zu deuten, könnte man diese stattdessen als positive Weiterentwicklung und Bestätigung der Ansätze von Heideggers Philosophie deuten. Heideggers Ontologie bildet die Grundlage, die positiv von Gadamer aufgenommen und weiterentwickelt wird.

Wangs Ausführungen zur formalen Anzeige verdienen eigens hervorgehoben zu werden: Eine systematische Darstellung dieser Begriffstheorie fehlte bisher zu großen Teilen in der heutigen Heidegger-Literatur. Der Grundgedanke einer Vermittlung des Allgemeinen mit dem Konkreten ermöglicht einen neuen Blick auf die Philosophie Heideggers und auf den Status ihrer Sprache. Dieses Buch leistet vor allem auch in der

Rekonstruktion von Heideggers Aristoteles-Interpretation einen grundlegenden Beitrag zum Verständnis von Heideggers Philosophie. Wangs Überlegungen zum Allgemeinheitscharakter der philosophischen Begriffe haben eine Reichweite, die über die Philosophie Heideggers hinausreicht. Wangs Rekonstruktion von Heideggers begriffstheoretischen Ansätze verdienen größte Beachtung.

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Affirming Nihilism as a Way to Philosophizing in Life

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James Tartaglia, *Philosophy in a Meaningless Life: A System of Nihilism, Consciousness and Reality*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016, 218 pages

Keywords: Meaning, Transcendence, Nihilism, Consciousness, Reality, Time, Universals

What is philosophy in a meaningless life? What is nihilism? Why does it matter if life is meaningful or meaningless? Prof. James Tartaglia's book, *Philosophy in a Meaningless Life: A System of Nihilism, Consciousness and Reality*, attempts to provide comprehensive philosophical perspectives to such questions. The author thinks that to appreciate and enjoy philosophizing, there are a lot more philosophical clarifications needed on these matters. Such philosophical questions posted in the beginning will be answered by nihilism. Truly, it would seem that reality is meaningless, and that nihilism according to Tartaglia is neither good nor bad, but rather a neutral reality. It is philosophy that will supply the intellectual ammunition for understanding the meaningful and meaningless life as against maybe trends, religion, cultures and traditions. This makes the book unique, laudable, admirable, and interesting to read and review.

Tartaglia's treatment with the book is thematic, creative and dynamic. In the first two chapters, the author refers to some great and famous thinkers as resources for speaking about the meaning of life and nihilism. He employs their writings to develop and confirm his thought that life is fundamentally meaningless. Heidegger, Nietzsche, Camus and Schopenhauer are engaged in a manner that helps the author ground and legitimize his position about nihilism. The author also mentioned some contemporary living philosophers like Bernard Reginster, Thomas Nagel, and Stanley Rosen, an American Christian philosopher who recently died in 2014. The main issues of the book concern the metaphysical topics on *Consciousness*, *Time*, and *Universals*. The topics serve as springboards in appreciating and explaining nihilism. His reinterpretation of these metaphysical concepts responds to the intellectual burden to prove that the question of the meaning of life, to which nihilism provides the answer, is the basis of philosophy. In between the main issues of the book are the philosophical foundations or groundings (Chapter 3 and Chapter 8) which reveal the value of nihilism. The importance and role of philosophy in transcendence plays a good viewpoint in living a meaningful life. The book is divided into eight chapters, each with three to seven interesting sub-topics which are well structured and organized.

Chapter 1 (21-39) presents the bird's eye view about the Meaninglessness of Life. *Nihilism in ethical discourse is usually labeled as the absolute denial or negation of values.* James Tartaglia claims that the nihilism he is concerned in the book is metaphysical, claiming that there is no overall point to human life. "We are each of us born into a certain specific situation, at a particular place, in a particular historical epoch, and with particular parents, and from this unchosen starting point we must continue to exist until our time runs out" (21). In attunements to nihilism, anxiety and boredom will always come into the context and situation. We must be doers and actors in the world; otherwise, we will be trapped into boredom and anxiety. A good way to illustrate the significance of attunements is by analogy with a game of chess. The game provides us with great freedom within the parameters of action it prescribes, and the whole exercise calls for considerable reflection (27). The meaninglessness of life is a microcosm of the meaninglessness of reality (36).

There were some known philosophers mentioned in this topic. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), a German philosopher, is most often associated with nihilism. There is no objective structure in the world except what we give and provide. Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), another German philosopher, is known for his rejection of Nietzsche's nihilism. Nietzsche, the man who dedicated his life to fighting nihilism, becomes, for Heidegger, the biggest nihilist of them all, because he thinks of the *Will* not only psychologically but also metaphysically. Heidegger turns against Nietzsche's metaphysics of the *Will-to-Power*, and, against his own *Phenomenology of the Will*. Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), a German philosopher, sees life as punishment and that there is nothing we can do to change it because there is no free will, therefore life is meaningless. Heidegger's concern with boredom shows the influence of Schopenhauer. "Although Schopenhauer connects boredom with withdrawing from the framework and nihilism, his main interest is once more bound up with a redemptive agenda. Thus, as for Heidegger, boredom is ultimately a call to action: in Schopenhauer's case, to purge ourselves of will through a life of asceticism, and thereby free ourselves of the unpleasantness of boredom and striving" (33).

There are differing interpretations of Nietzsche's nihilism which is not shocking given the importance he placed on lying and concealment, as Stanley Rosen (1929-2014), an American Christian philosopher, stressed. Tartaglia followed Bernard Reginster, an American philosopher, in thinking that this was his central project. Reginster says: "that in its broadest description, nihilism is the belief that existence is meaningless… According to this 'broadest description' I am a nihilist (though I find it more natural to construe nihilism as what is believed, rather than the belief itself). But that is where I get off the boat, because Nietzsche has a very rich conception of nihilism which amounts to much more than just that" (36).

Chapter 2 (41-60) presents a survey of misguided coping strategies with the question: *Does nihilism ruin your life?* Can nihilism really ruin life? It will always depend on one's view. It is hard to see any valid reason to regard nihilism as a danger that one should struggle to overcome. There is no reason to be affected unless we were previously under the false impression that life has a meaning. Nihilism should not be blamed for the consequences of discovering that we are wrong. Practical consequences of nihilism might well turn out to be positive. There might be conflict or human struggle to find any in a purposeless, meaningless or irrational space. It might still seem that nihilism changes our attitude to life, even if there is nothing we can do about it (44). Thomas Nagel, an American philosopher, rejected this argument. The larger context Nagel has in mind is that the physical universe does not provide life with a meaning. If we look at life from the outside trying to justify our importance and the fact that life does not exist in any wider context of significance, we will inevitably fail.

Life is absurd because we cannot help taking it seriously, and yet we cannot justify this seriousness (45). It was Albert Camus (1913-1960), a French Algerian philosopher who inspired Nagel's position. Camus describes: "the absurd as arising in a *confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world*, and says that this confrontation produces the *feeling of the absurd*, the *absurd mind* and the *absurd man*; the idea is not that life is absurd, but rather that we cannot help judging that life is absurd if we have a need for a meaning of life that the world cannot provide" (47). Camus's *absurdist* is Nietzsche's *nihilist* without the despair and Nagel tried to over-extend this conception of a certain type of person with a bad argument (47).

Transcendence means the possibility of existence or experience to go beyond physical level. The meaning of life would require reality to transcend the physical universe, once more highlights the connection between nihilism and the fact of existence (50). Regarding, humanism and relativism, the author was not biased in presenting nihilism. The humanist notion of the meaningfulness of life is well-established within the collective consciousness of people like Dalai Lama, Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) and Nelson Mandela (1918-2013). They are often held up as paradigms of what it is to lead a meaningful life, whereas somebody who spends most of his or her life alone in front of a television might be said to lead a meaningless life (54). Or, the humanist could associate the meaning of life to the social life context (55). A more radical challenge to nihilism that can be developed from humanism is provided by the truth of relativism.

Chapter 3 (61-81) discusses what philosophy is and how important it is in our everyday life. The author treats it as a tool or a guide in our persistent questioning. Philosophy provides the seeker the capacity to analyze, compare and contrast, and verify views and perspectives. The author gives importance to the persistence of philosophical questions. Among the sub-topics are enframement and ontology, scepticism, and Meno's paradox. He also used *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to demonstrate philosophical questions. We must also think that philosophical questions were being asked long before the official beginning of philosophy (63). But why should we persevere with the question? One reason is that we need to know what philosophy is to assess scepticism about its problems (69).

He reminds the readers that when philosophers try to systematically understand the world, we can assume that questions of enframement are foremost in their minds. The question about the context of meaning fits a question of enframement. Enframing means the gathering together of setting-upon man, i.e., challenges him forth, to reveal the real meaning. We call this basic constituent of reality a question of ontology (71). Ontology is the philosophical study of being. It may be through scepticism that the discipline of philosophy discovered the truth of nihilism.

Chapter 4 (83-100) presents the Problem of Consciousness and tries to show that materialism cannot solve it. Chapter 5 (101-121) focuses on Consciousness: the transcendent hypothesis. In this chapter, the author impressively outlines how the transcendent hypothesis changes the terms of contemporary philosophical debates. There are four transcendent hypotheses that he raised in view of the reality of nihilism (105-120).

Chapter 6 (123-145) explains Time. Philosophy of space and time is concerned with issues surrounding the ontology, epistemology, and character of space and time. It is a philosophical approach to the ontological nature of time, which takes the view that all existence in time is equally real, as opposed to the growing block universe theory of time, in which at least the future is not the same as any other time.

Chapter 7 (147-167) simply describes Universals and shows how this problem connects with the transcendent hypothesis about consciousness. Chapter 8 (169-184) clarifies Nihilism, Transcendence and Philosophy. Embracing or living nihilism is neither bad nor good. It is a perspective on how one sees life, that philosophy and metaphysics can provide rational direction to beliefs about the spiritual. Ideally, nihilism and transcendence should be in harmony with one another. First, the task could not end, because every new generation needs to make philosophical ideas their own (181). Second, that philosophy's task of tending the space of transcendence may become more important (183). Third, philosophy provides a kind of understanding that is important to people and may become more important as technology progresses (183).

Overall, I find the book philosophical, challenging, informative and self-reflecting. *Philosophy in a Meaningless Life* provides a healthy outlook towards the meaning of life. It will inspire or stimulate the learners to continue asking questions and finding solutions to a problem. Indeed, the search for the meaning of life could be approached through nihilism, that is, when one finds reality is meaningless. Tartaglia opens this track by rejecting some of the strategies devised in the 20th century that tended to avoid or touch nihilism. In a comprehensive manner, he established that he found nothing malicious in it. Nihilism would be false if there were a transcendent context of meaning. Each one has a stand regardless of the label of one's belief in nihilism. One could be neutral, extreme, radical, normal, new normal, moderate, or belong to other emerging categories. This is what philosophizing is all about. We just have to self-reflect and do higher philosophizing in a rational discourse.

Tartaglia does this by explaining the autonomy of philosophy with an expanded view on consciousness. The author embraces nihilism and uses transcendence both to provide solution/s to the problem of consciousness, time and universals. His philosophical ideas challenge the reader as well as engage each one to rethink and reflect on one's view and perspective. The book conveys that the role of philosophizing is to maintain a rational discussion about transcendence, and that through greater self-consciousness and critical thinking, it can regain its influence in society.

I highly recommend this superb book for further readings in college and graduate studies. In fact, it can serve as a textbook for Philosophy of the Mind or Consciousness. This book can serve also as useful tool for further and deeper writing about the Nihilism and the Search for Meaning of Life. I find it so good that I intend to also read his other recent three books. *Nihilism and the Meaning of Life: A Philosophical Dialogue with James Tartaglia* (2017) was edited by Masahiro Morioka and published by Journal of Philosophy of Life (Open Access Book). His two recently published books are *Philosophy in a Technological World: Gods and Titans* (2020) and *A Defence of Nihilism* (2020). I guarantee they are interesting to read and will lead our minds to broaden our doing philosophy.

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Phenomenologizing through Ethical Experience

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Susi Ferrarello & Nicolle Zapien, *Ethical Experience: A Phenomenology*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2018, 252 p.

Keywords: phenomenology, ethics, theory and practice, ethical experience, philosophy and psychology

One thing that struck me about this book is its simple content, wide applicability and relevance. For philosophy pracademics like me, experience plays a vital role in allowing philosophy to be part of everyday living. This makes the book very interesting to read. In teaching philosophy, varied perspectives in using phenomenology are much needed to widen my view. It supplies added intellectual ammunition for understanding ethics and deriving meaning from experience as demonstrated in practice. I consider the book exceptional, commendable, and interesting to read and review. It must be read from the lens of ethics, phenomenology, and psychology.

It is in the ethical experience that lies the seeds of philosophizing. Ethical experience is indeed a venue for phenomenological dialogue between theory and practice, and between psychology and philosophy. Being conscious of these interplays prepares the reader to explore how phenomenology can be applied in everyday life. It is truly a practical and theoretically rigorous model that is handy in studying ethics, hermeneutics and practical philosophy.

Susi Ferrarello and Nicolle Zapien brought to light the useful interaction between theory and practice. Appropriated theory and practice work hand in hand in the pursuit of practical philosophy. The authors form a very good tandem in utilizing philosophy as a guide. Their expertise in their own fields made me appreciate more my effort to be a pracademic.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part is more theoretical, consisting of six chapters: 1. The phenomenological method, a theoretical application, 2. Husserl's ethics and psychology, 3. The Trinitarian relationship of the world, 4. Pathological and mystical time, 5. The ethics of intimacy, and 6. Forced intimacy. It attempts to explain the theoretical foundation of the phenomenological method. The intent is to derive "reactive meanings" while keeping "emphatic contact with life" throughout the analysis of the lived experience (p.183). The second part is the application part, mirrored in the form of explorations of actual examples featured in four chapters: 1. Phenomenological research and ethical experience, 2. A leadership challenge, 3. A parent's ethical dilemma, and 4. The beginning of an affair. I would say that part one is more philosophical while part two is more psychological. The link between the philosophy and psychology is forged by studying ethics in lived experiences. Throughout the discussions, the authors used phenomenology as their method of study.

I like the manner how theory and practice were made to work and complement one another. I also saw that philosophy and psychology are best complements in examining relationships. In the authors' words, "The study of ethics is frequently framed as an exclusively technical philosophical topic, or as a domain of psychological or neuroscientific theories which, whatever their explanatory power, does not speak directly to the ways in which ethical decision making is experienced in everyday life." (2) They need each other. The authors succeeded in demonstrating how they help one another, complement and supplement one another. We need to fill in our philosophical observations to derive psychological understandings for practical purposes.

The book's pragmatic clarity and concreteness will appeal to undergraduate and graduate students, as well as teachers and professionals in philosophy and psychology. Its attention on what it means to be human will inspire and direct students to phenomenology and to meaningful reflection and introspection. The book is a good companion in continuous learning through philosophical observations concerning human nature that are reflected in the lived experiences of actual human beings.

The authors were able to reappropriate phenomenology by applying ethical phenomena viewed through "the lens of Husserl's analysis of the interplay of passive and active intentionality." (3) They were able to answer the following questions: What is ethical experience from Husserl's phenomenological standpoint? Is there Husserlian ethics? How does Husserl conceive the paradigm of a practical life? From Husserl's phenomenology of ethics, the authors explored how "ethical experiences are lived and grasped through narrative, and how such narratives are both expressions of and constitutive of self-identity and the reality they experience." (3) The examples of the authors in Part two is "dedicated to the empirical study of time, intimacy, and reality analyzed through the cases of the experience of an ethical dilemma arising from an unexpected leadership challenge, a dilemma in raising a child, and the beginning of an affair." (8)

I entitled this book review as *Phenomenologizing through ethical experience*. The authors brought phenomenology closer to everyday life by applying phenomenology in processing ethical experiences. I love this adage: *Primum vivere deinde philosophari*. First live, then do philosophy. I think the two authors were able to deal with this adage by involving life and lived experience.

> In this book we examined real life through practical lived experience and firsthand interviews with the hope to foster an education of reality, time and intimacy that goes beyond the limits of one's cognitive perspective and expands what is intersubjectively accepted and validated. (3)

Furthermore,

> For this reason, in the book we chose to look at reality and the ethical choices through the themes of time and intimacy because, emergent from philosophical analysis, time seems to be, in its organic and spiritual quality, the most basic element of our being and intimacy

> seems to be the way we can gain access to all its layers and implied meanings which in turn gives us new choices. (4)

This book is a result of good reflection, of deriving insights and learnings from life experiences aided by philosophy and psychology. Truly, a practical philosophy or applied philosophy. It is interdisciplinary in nature, incorporating and integrating Husserl's phenomenology, ethics, psychology, and empirical studies.

The authors' phenomenological method and their interpretation of Husserl's ethics is used in service of understanding reality and human experience. "Through the philosophical investigation they discover how our ethical way of interacting with lived experience is made possible through intimacy and time." (10) Truly, "they use the empirical analysis of specific lived experiences to see how a more aware understanding of these notions might help to improve our ethical choices and therefore our well-being." (10)

The application of phenomenology in everyday life is beneficial in rethinking and reflecting about ethical experience of living. It shows how phenomenology can elucidate the essence of crucial everyday ethical problems that everyone encounters.

Since this book is a fascinating and captivating material, I highly recommend this to graduate or undergraduate students, to professionals in any field, and for anyone who is in a relationship. They can be enlightened by the use of phenomenology and reappropriate it to learn more from their everyday life and ethical dilemmas. Once a reader starts reading, one engages oneself in the situation and one could not stop reading. I would suggest for the authors to make subsequent editions. Using the same framework, they can expand into other ethical issues encountered in everyday life. More empirical studies, more cases and scenarios are needed to demonstrate practical philosophy. I could think of ethical issues around the pandemic, educational system, politics, economic problems, social unrest, etc. In this way, Husserl's ethics, phenomenology, psychology, and any philosophical theory can be of more use and greater relevance today.

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