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Table of contents

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Problematization of Meaning: Subjective-Practical Possibilities for
Freedom/Liberation in Jan Patočka and Paulo Freire

MÁRCIO JUNGLOS

Pages: 307-329

Collective Affective Intentionality and Phenomenology of Togetherness

LASHA MATIASHVILI

Pages: 330-351

Sublimierung und Narzissmus zwischen Mystik und Ästhetik. Ihr
individueller wie kultureller Stellenwert als „libidinöse Ökonomie“
gemäß Freud, Lacan und Lyotard

ROLF KÜHN

Pages: 352-382

The Fundamental Ontology of Developmental Psychology: The
Development of the Self as a Systematic Relationship between the
Concept of the World and the Concept of the Self in Orientation
towards Absolute Infinity

CORDELIA MÜHLENBECK

Pages: 383-401

Der organlose Körper – Hineingehen in den glatten Raum und
Spekulationen über die Leere

STEFAN PAULUS

Pages: 402-430

The Temptation of Exteriority: Paradigmatic and Dramatic Examples
of the Narcissistic-Paranoid Structure of the I, as a Structure of
Exteriority

RAMONA ARDELEAN

Pages: 431-450

Attitude esthétique et unité de l'expérience

QUENTIN GAILHAC

Pages: 451-472

Institution symbolique et rapport à la norme

SANTIAGO ZÚÑIGA

Pages: 473-492

A Study of the Consequences of Secular Morality
With Emphasis on Mackie's Perspective
ABBAS YAZDANI, MOHAMMAD MAHDIPOUR
Pages: 493-510

Addressing the Problem of Individuality in the new African
Metaphysics
DIANA-ABASI IBANGA
Pages: 511-534

Manufacturing Coherence: On the Ricoeurian Symbolism of Grading
PATRICK F. BLONIASZ
Pages: 535-550

Dostoevsky and Arendt on the Crisis of Tradition
DANIIL KOLOSKOV
Pages: 551-580

Performance and Pedagogical Principles of Heinrich Neuhaus through
the Prism of Philosophical Hermeneutics
AYNA ISABABAYEVA
Pages: 581-598

Le contemplateur Guillaume de Saint-Thierry et ses sources
FLORIN CRISMAREANU
Pages: 599-623

*Visio latronis conversi (Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius, caput
XXIX): The Vision as a Purifying Act. Some Comparative
Considerations*
EMANUEL GROSU
Pages: 624-637

The Problem of Tyrannicide in the Monarchomach and Leaguer
Political Discourse During the Reigns of Charles IX (1560-1574) and
Henry III (1574-1589)
ANDREI CONSTANTIN SĂLĂVĂSTRU
Pages: 638-664

Biotechnologies and the Case of Surrogate Motherhood – Axiological
Implications and Their Connection with the Law
GEORGE COSMIN COLANG, LOREDANA TERC-VLAD
Pages: 665-676

Research Articles

Problematization of Meaning: Subjective-Practical Possibilities for Freedom/Liberation in Jan Patočka and Paulo Freire

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Abstract

This article will address the issue of problematization of meaning and its subjective-practical possibilities for freedom/liberation in Jan Patočka and Paulo Freire. In this regard, I will specifically analyze Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed* and Patočka's *Heretic essays in philosophy of history*. Each in their own way, these authors will build important conceptualizations for the possibility of a freer and more humane political society, whether through what I have called a *strong ontology* in Patočka or through a *strong praxis* in Freire. Both authors will seek a constant freedom/liberation that is always questioning the meaning, making unfeasible objectifying practices that hinder the liberating process itself in the constitution of humanity.

Keywords: problematization of meaning, freedom, liberation, strong ontology, strong praxis

1. Introduction

In the 20th century, there are many proposals that orbit around critical theories, the problem of freedom/liberation, human subjectivity and the question of autonomy. Along these themes, numerous philosophical currents arise. Among them, phenomenology, developed in Europe and branching out to other continents, and the philosophy of liberation, developed in Latin America, but which finds support in Western discussions. Jan Patočka and Paulo Freire were scholars of phenomenology, however Freire is also the result of the philosophy of liberation. These influences were decisive for the development of the philosophical proposals of these authors.

At first, I will expose the philosophy of these two authors in the book *Heretics essays in the history of philosophy* and in the book *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, through which I will see that each, in their own way, uses a peculiar language and subjects to deal with common themes, contributing significantly to such topics with different connotations. In a second moment, I will make some approximations between the two authors in order to identify common themes and objectives, as well as verify some differences that are essential to understand the focus given by each author to the respective themes leveraged in this article. In a third moment, I will conclude that there is a *strong ontology* in Patočka and a *strong praxis* in Freire that make a valuable contribution to the theme of freedom/liberation under the aegis of the problematization of meaning.

Jan Patočka, Czech philosopher, will bring an ontological basis through which the person, in caring for the soul, recognizes her own limitations and recognizes herself in solidarity with those who suffer some form of violence in relation to freedom. Therewith, a questioning consciousness emerges that is not reduced to its structures, but that transcends consciousness to reach the social being. The problematization of meaning gives constant dynamism to the freedom that is the foundation of political life. This problematizing process brings a responsibility and a risk before the objectifying structures that prevent political life that seeks justice and the good of society.

Paulo Freire, Brazilian philosopher, proposes a liberating action that fights for *the being more* of all. It is an achievement made by all. Consequently, liberation is always an achievement; it is not something that comes from outside, nor achieved by a single individual. This process of liberation will take place through the encounter between teacher/student, revolutionary leadership/people who together, through dialogue they decode reality, problematizing it to build a critical vision in an attempt to transform the oppressive reality through which the oppressed find themselves. This process of liberation will form the identity of a free people that seeks to be more, not allowing an oppressive dehumanization process to transform them into *a being minus*, devoid of autonomy. Thus, Paulo

Freire elaborates the problematizing pedagogy that is a method of liberation of the oppressed people, that is, a reflexive-practical methodological pedagogy for liberation.

Both authors make important considerations around freedom/liberation, being more subjective (Patočka) or more practical (Freire). Even though there are no concrete records that these authors exchanged knowledge in the 20th century, both work on common themes with political reverberations, questioning the meaning taken for granted, opening margins for the possibility of a freer society for all.

2. History, freedom and politics in Patočka: unfolding of the problematization of meaning

Patočka raises a question about the relationship between truth and history: how does the movement of truth take place in its relationship with history? This question will raise a problematization of meaning through which political life will become a search for freedom with all the risks and threats arising from this process. In such a manner, the author asks himself, is an objective, unique, dogmatic truth possible? Is history the representation of truth?

For Patočka, political life does not stand on the firm ground of generative continuity; it confronts itself by its finitude and the permanent precariousness of life. Only by accepting this threat, facing it undaunted, can free life as such develop; the freedom of the undaunted. In contrast to the immediacy of life that struggles for home, for the family, and for the continuum of life, political life is an unsheltered life (Patočka, 1996 pp. 38-39), a free life. The homeless life, a life of reach and initiative without pause or tranquility, is not simply a life of goals, contents, that is, a life of acceptance - it is different, for it itself opens the possibility that it achieves by seeing this liberation, seeing life as it can be (Patočka 1996, 39).

Conforming to Patočka, history arises and can only arise to the extent that there is an *arete*, the excellence of humans who no longer live simply to live, but who make room for their justification by looking at the nature of things and acting in harmony with what they see. Thus, they build a *polis* based on the law of the world that is *polemos*¹, speaking what they see

as revealing itself to a free, exposed, but undaunted human (Patočka 1996, 43).

Thus, the history of the West, and history as such, has a truly dignified beginning, which shows not only where the great rupture between prehistoric life and history lies, but also at what level historical life must be sustained in order to not succumb to external and internal threats. This beginning extends to a future historical scope, especially teaching what humanity does not want to understand, despite all the immense hardness of history, does not want to understand, something that perhaps only in the last days will they learn after reaching the *nadir* of destruction and devastation. That life needs understand itself not from the point of view of the day, of merely accepted life, but also from the point of view of struggle, of night, and of *polemos*. The purpose of the story is not what can shake itself; but the opening to the shaking (Patočka 1996, 44).

According to Patočka, experiencing the loss of meaning means that the meaning to which we may perhaps return will no longer be for us simply a directly given fact in its integrity. As a result, meaning will never be simply given or conquered. It means that a new relationship emerges, a new way of relating to what is significant; this meaning can only emerge in an activity that stems from a search for meaninglessness, as the vanishing point of the problematic being, as an indirect epiphany (Patočka 1996, 60-61).

In such a wise, the author defends, that history differs from prehistoric humanity by the shaken of the accepted meaning. In accepting responsibility for themselves and others, humans implicitly pose the question of meaning in a new and different way. They are no longer content with enslaving life to itself, with subsistence as the content of life and service in the sweat of their brow as the fate of beings destined for episodocity and subordination. Thus, the result of the primordial shake-up of accepted meaning is not a fall into meaninglessness, but, on the contrary, the discovery of the possibility of reaching a more free and demanding meaning. This connects itself with this explicit fear before being as a whole, the total realization that the totality of being exists, which, according to the ancient

philosophers, is really the innermost *pathos* and origin of philosophy (Patočka 1996, 62-63).

In such a way, in the historical epoch, humanity does not avoid what is problematic, but actually invokes it, promising itself an access to a deeper meaning than that of prehistoric humanity. In the community, the *polis*, in the life dedicated to the *polis*, in the political life, humans make room for an autonomous, purely human sense of mutual respect in meaningful activity for all its participants. That is not restricted to the preservation of physical life, rather is the source of a life that transcends itself in the memory of the action guaranteed precisely by the *polis*. In many ways it is a more risky and dangerous life than the vegetative humility on which prehistoric humanity depends. Likewise, the explicit questioning that is philosophy is much riskier than the submerged conjecture that is myth. It is riskier because it draws all life, both individual and social, into the region of the transformation of meaning, a region where it must completely transform in its structure because it transforms itself in its meaning. This is precisely what the story means (Patočka 1996, 63-64).

In line with Patočka, humans cannot live without meaning, and without a global and absolute meaning in that. This means: humans cannot live in the certainty of meaninglessness. However, does not that mean they cannot live with a sought after and problematic meaning (Patočka 1996, 75)?

In fact, we are dealing only with the revelation of a meaning, which explains not itself as a thing, but which is present only in the pursuit of being. For this reason, too, we cannot find it directly in things, directly together with them as a relative and positive meaning. The basis of this meaning, in Weischedel's terms, is the problematic; in Heidegger's terms, the concealment of what is as a whole as the basis of all openness and all revelation. Therefore, this mystery expresses itself in the shaking of a naively accepted meaning. Thus, the shake-up of naive meaning is the genesis of a perspective on an absolute meaning to which, however, humans are not marginal, provided humans are prepared to give up hope of a directly given meaning and accept meaning as a way forward (Patočka 1996, 77).

For Patočka, truth is a condition of historical life, not as absolute truth, but as a search for meaning, to problematize what prevents this search itself, that is, problematize what does not allow us to be free to give meaning. An absolute truth already takes away the essential character of political life - which is freedom. The restriction of freedom in the *polis* is a condition of the restriction of the truth itself, which is revelation and concealment, which is day and darkness. Nevertheless, what makes human beings just and true?

3. The care of the soul

For the author, what makes humans just and true is care for the soul. Caring for the soul is the legacy of ancient Greek philosophy. Taking care of the soul means that truth is not something that is given once and for all, nor is it merely a matter of observing and recognizing the observed, but a lifelong inquiry, a self-controlling and unifying intellectual and vital practice. Greek thought distilled care for the soul into two forms: we care for the soul so that it could undertake its spiritual journey through the world, the eternity of the cosmos, in complete purity and undistorted vision, and so for at least a brief time to achieve the way of existing typical of the gods. On the other hand, we think and learn to turn our soul into that firm crystal of being, a crystal of immaculate steel in the vision of eternity, which represents one of the possibilities of the being that carries within itself the source of movement, of deciding its being or not being (Patočka 1996, 82). Care for the soul is the practical form of that discovery of the Whole and of the explicit spiritual relationship with it that already takes place in Ionic proto-philosophy. In order for that to happen, it is necessary to recognize our own limitations of mortality and finitude and, with that, our condition of solidarity.

In a similar vein, Patočka uses the analogy of the experience of the front line of war, an expression used so powerfully by Teilhard de Chardin and Jung. Patočka speaks of the experience of the front as the liberating experience itself. The Force that subdues the individual, putting her in the front line, will make her fragile, mortal. Therefore, it appears characteristic of the solidarity of the shaken, which is originally

born among combatants who are aware of their own mortality and finitude. As a result, they question all goals in life. Therefore, the *Force* itself feels questioned in its dictating power. We can say that the means by which this state overcomes itself is the solidarity of the shaken, the solidarity of those who are capable of understanding what life and death are, and what history is. This story is the conflict of mere life, barren and chained by fear. Only the person who is capable of understanding this, who is capable of conversion, who is capable of *metanoia*; - is a spiritual person (Patočka 1996, 134-135).

In line with Patočka, the solidarity of the shaken is the solidarity of those who understand. However, understanding in the present circumstances must involve not only the basic level, that of bondage and freedom with respect to life, but it must also involve an understanding of the meaning of science and technology, of that *Force* that we are releasing. All the forces on which humans can live in our time are potentially in the hands of those who understand. The solidarity of the shaken can say no to the mobilization measures that make the state of war permanent. It will not offer positive programs, but will speak, like Socrates' *daimonion*, in warnings and prohibitions. It can and must create a spiritual authority, become a spiritual power that could bring the warrior world to some restriction, making some acts and measures impossible (Patočka 1996, 135).

As specified by Patočka, technical intellectuals must understand their position in this struggle against the *Force*, as they understand the current scientific and technical possibilities and have the vision that the *Force* has destructive possibilities. Patočka says that only when researchers and applicators, discoverers and engineers feel the influence of the solidarity of the shaken in their own skin, and when they begin to act in accordance with that solidarity, only then will it be possible to overcome the *Force*.

Humanity will not achieve peace by devoting itself and surrendering to the criteria of everyday life and its promises. All who betray this solidarity must realize that they are sustaining the war and are the fringe parasites who live on the blood of others (Patočka 1996, 134-135).

The important thing now is that the human being cannot reduce herself to consciousness and its structures. We need to transcend consciousness to reach the social being. Once we have reached that being capable of freeing herself from dependence on life and linking that life to something free, something capable of accepting responsibilities and respecting responsibilities, that is, the freedom of others. Then it will not be necessary to explain precisely the history, particularly, the most basic human realization, of this dimension of the human being, and not of consciousness (Patočka 1996, 153)?

The requirement that being defines our consciousness meet itself not when human life considers itself only as integrated into objective sequences. Within this framework, the question of the true nature of the human being is left aside, along with the whole fundamental problem of philosophy. Here is the problem of being as such, passing through a dimension of life as if life were on the one hand a basis objective on which it depends and, on the other hand, a subject who observes it and fixes it through her observation (Patočka 1996, 153-154).

Precisely in history, this domain of change in man's social being, the terrain of traditions in which we establish continuity with our positive and negative conquests, by rejecting or continuing, man's social being can manifest itself as essentially free. Therefore, accessible to us objectively insofar as we can retrospectively observe what of this transmutes itself into firmly established facts, but we cannot reduce them to these facts alone and perhaps attempt to explain them unreservedly in terms of some region of fact (Patočka 1996, 154).

Political life, which constitutes the *polis* under the aegis of freedom, through which the determined and objectified meaning shakes itself, problematizing it, assumes the responsibility resulting from a *homeless life*, that is, without security guarantee, but which bases itself on the discovery of new possibilities.

This is how the story begins, because of the risk of being open to the shake of meaning. Such a western heritage places meaning in a new and different way that characterizes itself as the discovery of the possibility of reaching a more free and demanding meaning. Now, the truth is a search for meaning

and it conjectures itself as a constant process of problematizing what prevents the search itself, specially, what suppresses the freedom to confer meaning.

Truth and justice are part of a search process that takes place through care for the soul, through which we recognize our own limitations of mortality and finitude, leading us to the path of solidarity. However, when we see ourselves in the same situation of domination as the other, whatever it may be, we feel in solidarity, shaken by the same dictating power (solidarity of the shaken). From this experience, a questioning consciousness emerges that is not reduced to its structures, but that transcends consciousness to reach the social being. It is a liberating experience, since, aware of domination and the structures of domination, one can say no, establishing restrictions that make some acts and measures impossible. For Patočka, history itself presents us with errors and possibilities for freedom, as well as the search for a social being, however without such sources that reduces itself to static truths that contradict the process of constant search for justice and the truth of social being.

4. Paulo Freire and the authentic struggle for *being more*

At the beginning of his work *Pedagogy of the oppressed* Paulo Freire states that humanization and dehumanization, within history and in a concrete and real way, are possibilities for people as uncompleted beings and conscious of their incompleteness. Dehumanization observes itself both in those who have their humanity stolen, and in those who steal it, as they distort the understanding of *being more* and *being less* (Freire 2018, 40).

For Freire, a strong factor that suppresses the search for *being more* is because in the behavior of the oppressed there may be a prescribed behavior, that is, one that has a hostile consciousness of the oppressive consciousness. This hostile consciousness fears freedom, because freedom requires filling the void with autonomy, and that brings responsibility. The author thus emphasizes that freedom is an achievement and not a donation; it requires a constant search. Hence the need to overcome the oppressive situation. This implies critical recognition together with a

transforming action, instituting another situation that allows that search for *being more* (Freire 2018, 40).

In conformity with the author, when the authentic struggle takes place to create the situation that will be born from the overcoming of the old, one is already struggling to *be more* (Freire 2018, 47). However, the oppressed will not become oppressors themselves if they generate from their *being less* the search for *being more* of all. In such manner, the authentic struggle is represented by the true solidarity that makes us be a being for another (Freire 2018, 50) in an objective and not just abstract way (Freire 2018, 51).

Within this context of authentic struggle, *praxis* becomes the reflection and action of people on the world to transform it. In that respect, in the wake of Lukács, Freire says that the more the popular masses reveal the objective and challenging reality on which they must focus their transforming action, the more they critically insert themselves into it. However, differing from Lukács, the issue is not exactly to explain to the masses, but to dialogue with them about their action (Freire 2018, 54). Even so, the duty that Lukács recognizes to the revolutionary party to explain its action to the masses coincides with the demand for the critical insertion of the masses into their reality through *praxis* (Freire 2018, 55).

Freire inserts his conception of pedagogy of the oppressed, in the clear intention of elaborating a method for pedagogical liberation; it is a humanist and liberating pedagogy, having two distinct moments. The first, in which the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and commit, in *praxis*, to its transformation. The second, in which, transforms the oppressive reality. This pedagogy is no longer of the oppressed and becomes the pedagogy of people in the process of permanent liberation. In any of these moments, it will always be the profound action, through which the culture of domination culturally confronts itself. At first, through a change in the perception of the oppressive world on the part of the oppressed; in the second, by the expulsion of the myths created and developed in the oppressive structure and that are preserved as mythical specters, in the new structure that emerges from the revolutionary transformation (Freire 2018, 57).

Paulo Freire recalls that the oppressed of yesterday, who detain the former oppressors in their eagerness to oppress, will be generating, with their act, freedom, insofar as, with it, they avoid the return of the oppressive regime. An act, which forbids the restoration of this regime, cannot compare itself with what creates and maintains it; it cannot compare itself with that through which some people deny the majority the right to be (Freire 2018, 60).

According to the author, the oppressors of yesterday will never recognize themselves in liberation. They will feel oppressed, because before they could eat, dress, wear, educate themselves, go for a walk, listen to Beethoven, while millions were not eating, not wearing, not studying, not even walking, much less listening to Beethoven. Any restriction on all this, in the name of everyone's right, seems to them to be a profound violation of their personal right (Freire 2018, 60-62). Accordingly, the oppressor sees the humanization of the oppressed as subversion and, consequently, freedom. Therefore, the need to maintain constant control over the oppressed, transforming them into things, into something that is as if it were inanimate. This tendency of the oppressors to inanimate everything and everyone, which is found in their craving for possession, is identified with the sadistic tendency (Freire 2018, 64).

Following Freire, if the oppressed cannot locate the oppressor concretely, as well as until she becomes a conscience for herself, she assumes fatalistic attitudes in the face of the situation of oppression she is in. In the author's understanding, this fatalism usually refers itself to the power of fate; for example, God willed it that way (Freire 2018, 67). Another factor is to feel an irresistible attraction to the oppressor, in the sense of wanting to look like the oppressor, imitating her, following her. There is also the issue of self-depreciation that results from the introjection that the oppressed makes of the oppressors' view of them. From hearing so much that they are incapable, they end up being convinced of their incapacity (Freire 2018, 69).

In accordance with the author, no one frees anyone; no one frees herself alone: people free themselves in communion (Freire 2018, 71). The oppressed, in the various moments of

their liberation, need to recognize themselves as people, in their ontological and historical vocation to be more (Freire 2018, 72). In light of this, political action with the oppressed has to be cultural action for freedom, and for that very reason, action with them (Freire 2018, 73).

In Freire's view, the education to be practiced by the revolutionary leadership is done in co-intentionality, that is, educator and students, co-intentioned to reality, find themselves within a task in which both are subjects in the act, not only of unveiling it and, thus, critically knowing it, but also in recreating this knowledge (Freire 2018, 77-78). In that case, through which paths and through which assumptions one could transform a submissive reality into a liberating reality. How to create a liberating pedagogy?

5. From banking education to problematizing education

According to Freire, educator-student relationships in schools have a special and remarkable character, which is that they are fundamentally narrating, lecturing relationships (Freire 2018, 79). The narration leads the students to mechanical memorization of the narrated content in such a way that the students are the depositaries and the educator, the depositor. That would be the form of banking education (Freire 2018, 80). The banking view of education encourages the absolutization of ignorance that always occurs in the other (Freire 2018, 81).

The oppressors are interested in people becoming passive and adapted to the world. For the author, the oppressors will be so much more at peace; the more suited people are to the world. On the contrary, the more concerned, the more people question the world. (Freire 2018, 88)

In line with Freire, the educator's thinking only gains authenticity in the authenticity of the students' thinking, both mediated by reality and in intercommunication. Therefore, there is no imposition in thinking or isolated thinking, however, in and through communication around reality. Influenced by Fromm, Freire asserts that oppression, which is overwhelming control, is *necrophilia* and not *biophilia* (Freire 2018, 89-90). In this particular field, when a mechanical, static, specialized

knowledge of consciousness found itself and in which, for this very reason, it transforms the students into recipients, into almost things, it cannot hide its *necrophilia* mark. It does not allow itself to move itself by the spirit of freeing thought through the action of men with one another in the common task of remaking the world and making it more and more human (Freire 2018, 91).

Unlike banking education, Freire presents problematizing education. The latter identifies itself with the very nature of consciousness, which is always consciousness of, not only when it intends on objects, but also when it turns back on itself, becoming consciousness of consciousness (Freire 2018, 94). In such manner, the problematizing educator constantly *re-does* her cognizing act, in the students' cognoscitivity. Thus, the role of the educator is to provide, with the students, the conditions in which knowledge overcomes itself at the level of *doxa* by true knowledge, which occurs at the level of *logos* (Freire 2018, 97). While banking education aims to maintain immersion; the second, on the contrary, seeks the emergence of consciences, resulting in their critical insertion in reality (Freire 2018, 98).

In Freire's view, people are historical beings and, as such, they are beings, as unfinished beings, unfinished in and with a reality, which, being historical too, is equally unfinished (Freire 2018, 101-102). In such wise, while the banking concept emphasizes permanence, the problematizing concept reinforces change. Problematizing education, which is not reactionary fixism, is revolutionary futurity. Hence, it is prophetic and, as such, hopeful (Freire 2018, 102).

For Freire, human existence cannot be mute, silent, nor can nourishes itself by false words, but by true words, with which men transform the world. To exist is to pronounce the world, to change it constantly (Freire 2018, 108). Thus, dialogue is an existential requirement (Freire 2018, 109) whereby where people meet to pronounce the world, it must not be a donation of the pronouncement of one to another. It is an act of creation.

In the author's view, there is no dialogue if there is not a deep love for the world and for people. Thus, it is not possible to pronounce the world, which is an act of creation and recreation, if there is no love to infuse it (Freire 2018, 110). Therefore,

sinking into love, as well as humility and faith in people, makes dialogue take place in trust and hope (Freire 2018, 113). In the dialogue, the programmatic content of education will emerge. It will take place in the present, existential, concrete context, reflecting the set of aspirations of the people (Freire 2018, 119). This context problematizes itself, bringing challenges, demanding answers (Freire 2018, 120). For Freire, it is in the mediating reality that we will seek the programmatic content of education. Thus, the moment of this search is what inaugurates the dialogue of education as a practice of freedom. It is the moment in which the investigation of what we call the thematic universe of the people or the set of its generating themes that carries itself out (Freire 2018, 121).

For Freire, the investigation of the generating theme carries itself out through an awareness-raising methodology, in addition to enabling its apprehension; it inserts people into a critical way of thinking about the world (Freire 2018, 134). There is a process of decoding the existential situation, which implies starting abstractly towards the concrete. This implies a journey from the parts to the whole and a return from this to the parts, which implies a recognition of the subject in the object and of the object as a situation in which the subject is. This process gains significance as it undergoes the split and in which thinking returns to it, based on the dimensions resulting from the split (Freire 2018, 135).

In Freire's view, the investigation of the people's thinking cannot happen without the people, but with them, as the subject of their thinking (Freire 2018, 141). Thus, the more one investigates the thinking of the people with them, the more we educate ourselves together. The more we educate ourselves, the more we continue to investigate (Freire 2018, 142).

6. The 'what-to-do': union between action and reflection

For Freire, we are beings of *what-to-do*, because our doing is action and reflection, it is transformation of the world. Thus, every doing of *what-to-do* must have a theory that necessarily enlightens it. *What-to-do* is theory and practice (Freire 2018, 167-168). As it is a theory of revolutionary action,

it is not possible to speak either of an actor, in the singular, or only of actors, in the plural, but of actors in intersubjectivity, in intercommunication. On this wise, to avoid dialogue is to fear freedom. It is fearing one's own people or not believing in them (Freire 2018, 173). That is why the revolutionary leadership cannot think without the people, not for them, but with them (Freire 2018, 176).

The theory of anti-dialogical action has characteristics of which it seeks to keep the people oppressed. Among them is the conquest that seeks to mythologize the world so that everything that is an object of oppression sees itself now as something positive, as if the oppressive order were an order of freedom. Thus, the conquerors are the heroes and the oppressed lazy, dependent, ignorant, etc (Freire 2018, 188). Another characteristic is to divide to maintain the oppression to the point that the oppressors find a series of tricks to divide the organization and communion of the people (Freire 2018, 190), because these unified and organized, make their weakness a transforming force, with which they can recreate the world, making it more human (Freire 2018, 195). A third characteristic is manipulation, which, like the conquest it serves, has to anesthetize the popular masses so that they do not think (Freire 2018, 200). Finally, we have the cultural invasion, which is the penetration made by the invaders into the cultural context of the invaded, imposing their worldview on them, while curbing creativity, being a violence to the being of the invaded culture, which loses its originality or finds itself threatened to lose it (Freire 2018, 205).

While in the theory of anti-dialogical action conquest, as its first characteristic, implies a subject who, conquering the other, transforms him into an almost thing, in the dialogical theory of action, for Freire, subjects meet for the transformation of the world into co-existence. In this degree, the anti-dialogical, dominating *I* transforms the dominated, conquered *you* into a mere *this*. The dialogic *self*, on the contrary, knows that it is exactly the *you* that constitutes it. She also knows that, constituted by a *you*, a not *me*, this *you* that constitutes her constitutes herself, in turn, like *me*, having in her *I* a *you*

(Freire 2018, 126-127). In this way, the *I* and the *you* become, in the dialectic of these constitutive relationships, two *you* that become two *I*. In agreement with Freire, contrary to the theory of anti-dialogical action that seeks to mythologize the world, dialogical action seeks to unveil the world (Freire 2018, 229).

According to Freire, in the theory of dialogical action, unlike the anti-dialogical one, leadership commits itself to the tireless effort of uniting the oppressed with each other, and with them, for liberation (Freire 2018, 234). Thus, the concrete situation of oppression, by dualizing the *self* of the oppressed, by making her ambiguous, emotionally unstable, fearful of freedom, facilitates the dividing action of the dominator in the same proportions in which it hinders the unifying action indispensable to the liberating practice (Freire 2018, 235-236).

Dialogical action aims to provide the oppressed, recognizing the why and how of their adherence, to exercise an act of adherence to the true *praxis* of transforming an unjust reality (Freire 2018, 237).

In consonance with Freire, while, in the theory of anti-dialogical action, manipulation, which serves conquest, imposes itself as an indispensable condition for the dominating act, in the dialogical theory of action, we will find, as its antagonistic opposite, the organization of the popular masses, which is a natural unfolding of the unity of the popular masses (Freire 2018, 240). Unlike anti-dialogical action, dialogic action, in its organization, does not objectify, but its organization leads to the practice of freedom. To this extent, in the theory of dialogic action, organization, implying authority, cannot be authoritarian; implying liberty cannot be licentious. On the contrary, it is a highly pedagogical moment, in which the leadership and the people learn together the true authority and freedom that both, as a single body, seek to establish, with the transformation of the reality that mediates them (Freire 2018, 245).

Unlike cultural invasion, dialogic action makes cultural synthesis. Thus, as there are no invaders in the dialogic action, there are no imposed models. (Freire 2018, p. 249). However, Freire reminds us, because it is a synthesis, it does not imply

that the goals of revolutionary action tie itself up to the aspirations contained in the people's worldview. In the words of Freire: "Neither invasion of leadership into the popular view of the world, nor adaptation of leadership to the aspirations, often naive, of the people (Freire 2018, 250)". The solution lies in synthesis. On the one hand, to join the people in the claiming aspiration. On the other hand, to problematize the meaning of the claim itself (Freire 2018, 251).

The people, in turn, while oppressed, introjecting the oppressor, cannot alone constitute the theory of their liberating action. It is only in her encounter with the revolutionary leadership, in the communion of both, in the *praxis* of both - that this theory makes itself and remakes itself (Freire 2018, 252).

Freire proposes a liberating action that fights for being more of all. It is an achievement made through a constant process of liberation from the state of oppression. This liberation, which is an achievement, accomplishes itself through political action with the oppressed, to wit, through revolutionary leadership with the oppressed.

7. Approximations and differences between Freire and Patočka

For both authors, problematization refers to problematizing a meaning seen as objectified and finished. For Patočka, the solidarity that emerges from the shaken gives itself by the problematization of our existence, to wit, by the weakening of certainties that continually question itself. This constancy in problematizing leads to a proposal of freedom exercised in the political sphere. The political life that takes place in this open sphere is one of freedom and for freedom. It is freedom, because it comes from open debate. It is for freedom, because it wants itself, that is, the continuity of the movement of existence (the shaken) through which this public, political space appears in genuinely free debates (Mensch 2016, 124).

Problematization, in accord with Patočka, is part of the third movement of existence. The exemplary figure is Socrates, whose movement was constantly to question his time assumptions. The questioning that it problematizes is

something founded on the deepest basis of our life, by which we affirm ourselves, and not on the certainties we previously assumed. This terrain is our own freedom. The problematization requires that we take responsibility for it, that we recognize that the certainties we assume are not fixed, but are, in part, the result of our choices. According to Patočka, the spiritual life based on such problematization is precisely also action based on the perception that reality is not rigid. Taking care of the soul in this context is taking care of our freedom as we engage in it. This is because to problematize something is to place it in the context of its alternatives. It is asking why we shape our world the way we do, and not the other way around (Mensch 2016, 125-126).

Life in the *polis* must always understand itself in relation to its strong understanding of history that characterizes itself, like the *polis* itself, by freedom from problematicity. (Adams, 2016, p. 224). Thus, for the author, what the spiritual person does by throwing her non-self-evident nature in the face of society is to show the groundless nature of society and existence, and this cannot be anything other than a political act. (Caraus 2016, 243). Therefore, constitutive pluralism comes from the contingency of meaning: the absolute/final meaning is problematic and this makes room for a plurality of meanings. (Caraus 2016, 246).

For Freire, the problematization of meaning has to do with an involvement with reality. There is not a reality in the classroom and another reality in the world outside the school walls. Therefore, problematizing education has the same structure that occurs between teacher/student and revolutionary leadership/people, to wit, the same liberating pedagogical method, which is one for society. Problematization promotes dialogue and a sense of critical analysis that allows students to develop a willingness to dialogue not only in the classroom but also outside of it. Paulo Freire's pedagogical proposal is not only to bring reality into the classroom, but also to bring the classroom to reality, in other words, pedagogy, in addition to liberating, must bring about its own leadership – the revolutionary leadership. Thus, the teacher is a revolutionary leader who forms revolutionary leaders who, in

turn, form a people who seek a transformation towards liberation. Of course, the ultimate goal is not to create leadership, but to liberate the people that we all are. Liberation, in turn, brings autonomy so that we can all be the author and protagonist of the constant search for liberation.

As liberation belongs to the people, this implies renouncing the oppressive elements juxtaposed in society and, at the same time, announcing the commitment to the liberation of the oppressed through dialogue, the problematization of social reality and political transformation (Roberts 2000, 59). Indeed, one of its most important messages is that we need to break with individualistic thinking and begin to problematize reality in holistic and structural terms. Freire defends collective action against oppressive social formations, of which banking education is an example (Roberts 2000, 66).

This process of liberation, the author assumes, drives itself by participation in critical dialogue and continuous emancipatory actions, in the name of social transformation (Darter 2015, 83). As such, the phenomenon of conscientization is also deeply informed by our ability to enter into the problematization of hegemony (Darter 2015, 88). Thus, any pedagogy in the interest of liberation must fundamentally focus itself on the problematization of our domestication and the transformation of the myths that preserve the oppressed-oppressor contradiction. (Darter 2015, 113). Here lies the strength of a problematizing pedagogy that problematizes everything that contradicts our freedom to be and fights for the restoration of our humanity (Darter 2015, 124).

The problematization, both for Freire and for Patočka, has political implications, as the problematization undermines the meaning taken for granted, pointing out new possibilities of meaning. For both authors, this problematization must lead to freedom/liberation that sustains itself by its questioning constancy. However, Patočka refers more to the individual who problematizes; even if this problematization awakens itself through the solidarity of the shaken and that it, itself has political implications within the *polis*, which, in turn, must watch over the very constancy of freedom, thus guaranteeing the problematic. Freire always refers to a problematizing

dialogic collective process that takes place between teacher/student, revolutionary leadership/people. Consequently, while in Freire liberation is only possible in a collectivity, in Patočka it is only possible for those who face the risk of responsibility arising from freedom.

As Patočka's concern directs itself more to those who assume responsibility for freedom, it will need to address ontological aspects. For that, the author will seek subsidies in the Greek concept of *taking care of the soul*. Care for the soul is a foundation for politics and ethics devoid of metaphysical character. Therefore, the understanding of soul care does not lead to transcendental harmony; caring for the soul is rather a difficult process that involves conflict and requires a willingness to sacrifice (Findlay 2002, 10). In such a manner, the willingness of the person to accept a problematic life and to speak with sincerity in the public sphere becomes important.

Philosophy defines itself, through the reading of Plato from Patočka, not as the guardian of the soul in its journey to a final truth, but as the action of directing its continuous movement through a process driven by the questioning of reality (Findlay 2002, 65). Truly, the concept of the soul and our care for it can serve as a basis for human behavior. It gives lasting and unified form to that part of our being, which directs our movement and activity. Through thinking that is at the heart of Patočka's view of philosophy, we engage in a process of "inner formation of the soul itself, formation into something uniformly solid and, in that sense, existent – precisely because it is engaged in thinking (Findlay 2002, 67).

Already in Freire, there is a natural condition in the human being to seek to be more. When the oppressed are prevented from being more, they dehumanize themselves. However, not only the oppressed, the oppressor dehumanizes herself by oppressing. This is because humanization is only possible through a collective process of liberation. In such terms, being more is only possible in the collectivity. We could say that, in Patočka, the individual establishes her identity from within herself, that is, she recognizes her existential condition and that of others, as well as seeks to question what is taken for granted. For Freire, the individual establishes her identity

based on the collectivity, in dialogues that problematize and decode reality, transforming it.

8. Final considerations

Both Patočka and Freire make important contributions to problematization. Such contributions foster practical implications in relation to subjectivity and human action in political life. These implications direct the search for freedom/liberation. In Freire, subjectivity is collectively constructed in relation to liberation, which leaves a gap in the understanding of the individual's autonomy. How can she be autonomous, be more, if her subjectivity is linked to the collectivity? Freire lacks a substantial ontology that gives autonomy to the person to disagree with her own revolutionary assumptions. We could say that Paulo Freire has a *weak ontology*, disconnected from the autonomous capacity of the individual. Thus, the person only makes sense in the collectivity, is not able to problematize alone, or find a way to liberation alone. Patočka, on the other hand, has a *strong ontology*, which allows the person to recognize herself as a free being, problematizing herself and who recognizes herself in solidarity with the other. We do not find, in Freire, the possibility of the human person perceiving herself as oppressed, of carrying out an analysis of society in its oppressive structure. There is a depersonalization in Freire, that is, the subject loses her autonomy in building her own personality, losing herself in a collective identity.

With regard to freedom, Patočka is unable to establish a practical proposal for its realization; it is only possible to draw implicatory practical questions, coming from a being who recognizes herself in existential solidarity with the other. We could say that Patočka has a *weak praxis*, through which she cannot give objectivity to her own freedom in a concrete way. Freire, on the other hand, establishes a clear proposal for the liberation of the people, including a pedagogical method of liberation, through which, teacher/student, and revolutionary leadership/people, together, can decode, criticize, problematize

and transform the reality that presents itself as oppressive. Perhaps the very connotation of the word liberation brings in itself a concreteness and a practical search, while the word freedom refers to a more abstract bias, an ideal achieved.

Although there are no reliable records that both authors exchanged knowledge in the 20th century, both work on common themes, albeit with different connotations. Thus, both authors contribute immensely to the theme of the human being in her quest for freedom/liberation. How can the human being be free, autonomous? How to build, concretely, the liberation of a people? How can freedom/liberation maintain itself as a constant practice? How can political activity help to build a free people? These questions can find possible answers in the assumptions leveraged by Paulo Freire and Jan Patočka.

NOTES

¹ In Greek mythology, *Polemos* was a daemon; a divine personification or personification of war. The pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus described *Polemos* as the king and father of all, with the ability to bring everything into existence and to annihilate.

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Collective Affective Intentionality and Phenomenology of Togetherness

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Abstract

In this paper, I seek to challenge some contemporary accounts of collective affective intentionality by arguing for irreducibility of ontological autonomy of individual affective experiences. By elaborating on several requirements for reciprocal affective responses, I propose that instead of endorsing tendency of experiential unification, phenomenal fusion and token identity accounts and conceiving of single body of collectivity in terms of extended self, as the ontological bearer of affective intentionality, one has to maintain at least minimal asymmetry of self and other. Moreover, I discuss the role of embodied interaffectivity and mutual incorporation accounts for collective affective experiences.

Keywords: phenomenology, affectivity, intentionality, embodiment, fusion

1. Introduction

Apart from sharing cognitive (belief) and conative (intentional) attitudes, what is a role of affective (emotive) sharing in constitution of community and to what extent are emotions intentional? In a debate about collective intentionality, the role and function of affectivity has been generally neglected. Are we able to experience certain emotions collectively and in what sense does it constitute a “we-

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community”? According Robert Solomon, feelings cannot be intentional, because they “do not have directions” (Solomon 2003, 4). In contrast to that claim, Hans Bernhard Schmid proposed phenomenological interpretation of collective affective intentionality, he claimed that one has to overcome the dichotomy of intentionality and feeling and therefore considered unintentionality of emotions as “the deep-seated preconception” (Schmid 2009, 63).

There are different layers and degrees of togetherness. One might join the forces with others to achieve certain common goal; I would call it *instrumental unification*. Such kind of collaboration does not necessarily presuppose the robust notion of “we” and the membership of community constituted by shared beliefs and the system of values. One can even does one’s part within the given organizational structure without feeling the sense of belonging to community and without sharing axiological patterns and affective states with other members. I would call it *deliberate operative membership*, in which concomitant predisposition of the subject is alienation from the work one does. One can remain the member of an organization or social structure without maintaining affinity to the group and experiencing the lack of the sense of togetherness. One of the main consequences of modernity is the structural transformation of the forms of communication, which enables us to interact with each other “as if” we succeed in elimination of physical distance. In such kind of disembedding of space and restructuration of time the sense of togetherness takes the form of virtual association in which shared perspectives and goals might unite participants. Having a shared view is the precondition for experiencing something like the sense of belonging to each other and to the broad community, however, I would argue that, not all forms of togetherness constitute the “we”. Individuals can feel something and act alongside with each other but not together. Feeling and acting together presupposes not only certain parallelism of intentional directedness of each person to the external object, but their reciprocal awareness of shared modes of feeling. In virtual communication via zoom or other platforms, expression of individual emotional stances and

affective intentional unification is very rare and almost impossible. There are numerous artificial images for expressing variety of complex emotional experiences, for example putting an icon of heart in message box for articulating love, emoji of smiling or distressed faces for communicating respective affective states, and even bodily gestures and postures aiming at compensation or virtual representation of certain emotions.

However, in an absence of embodied interaction, devised as a supplement and a certain prosthesis of body, these virtual images cannot function as the precondition for collective affective intentionality and bodily resonance. In the debate about the possibility of shared emotions, cognitivist account dominated the field about individual as well as collective intentionality considering affective dimension within the framework of shared intentionality and shared belief (Schmid 2009, 61). Hans Bernhard Schmid indicated on the necessity of an overcoming of cognitivist bias as well as feeling theorists account regarding unintentionality of emotions. By developing the conception of phenomenological fusion of consciousness during the process of sharing an emotion, he tried to bridge the gap between intentionality and feeling and provided phenomenological account of collective affective intentionality. The main question is about the possibility of the existence of one single body of collectivity as the ontological bearer of affective intentionality. How is it possible for collective to have affective intentionality? In her influential article about “mental commons”, Annette Baier having declared that we all have been brainwashed by Descartes asked the question “why should we take the first person singular to be more self-explanatory than the first person plural”? (Baier 1997, 18). She criticized accounts of analytic philosophers of action for their individualist biased perspective. Baier designated Gilbert’s theory as “weak analytic individualism”, Searle’s philosophical stance as “methodological individualism” and blamed Bratman’s account for being broadly individualistic in spirit. Schmid from his part referring to Gilbert’s account of “collective guilt feelings” wants to avoid the connection with tendency of action and to use his own words chooses “cooperatively less marked examples” (Schmid 2009, 61) of collective feelings, as

the shared grief, because in contrast to guilt it does not presuppose an action. Schmid's replacement of guilt by the grief is for avoiding cognitivist explication of shared emotions. As Gerhard Tonhauser remarked, "Cognitivist theories can simply treat collective affective intentionality as a special case of collective intentionality" (Tonhauser 2018, 102).

To what extent is intentionality necessary component for experiencing collectively certain affective state? In that context, should we have to consider intentionality in a distributive way as a mere aggregation or summation of which might be the precondition of collective affectivity? How is it possible to share emotion with others without being mutually aware of an affective state of each other? For the sake of the simplification, let me consider the moments of joy and exaltation during the sport match. Attending the match on the stadium, fans of the football team might experience different affective states such as happiness, sadness, disappointment, irritation, pride and excitement. Would it be legitimate to assume that if their beloved team win the match, experienced positive emotions can be shared with other fans without being mutually aware in a presence of each other? I would like to assume that fans being intentionally directed at the target of feeling do not have to be necessarily co-present at the stadium. One can watch a football match through TV and after the final whistle experience the same emotion as someone attended physically the game at the stadium. In that case, despite having the same target of feeling, there cannot be any rational discussion about collective affective intentionality, because fans do not experience a joy or happiness together and are unaware even in an existence of each other. Even those having attended the match at a stadium, do not reciprocate emotionally and do not recognize each other personally. Such collective celebration and collective experience of positive affective states are fragile, transient and temporarily short-lived. I do acknowledge an importance and necessity of plurality and integration requirements for shared emotions, but I would like to differentiate between weak notion of plurality and strong one. It is truism that one cannot share emotional episodes with others if literally there is no other. Sharing requires not an auto-affectivity, but hetero-affectivity,

in other words, one cannot share an emotion in an absolute loneliness.

However, getting back to and explicating an idea of weak plurality, I would assume that plurality does not yet imply that we experience certain emotion together and thus have the sense of “us”. Under the notion of weak plurality, I understand the situation when people share the common space without experiencing something together and without being affectively interconnected with each other. Moreover, for having collective affective intentionality there has to be embodied and not an abstract plurality. Therefore, I would like to propose, that for having collective affective intentionality embodied co-presence and interbodily affective resonance is needed. Apart from sharing an underlying concern, I think that the solid and temporarily enduring sense of us as being together with one another requires mutual awareness and embodied affectivity.

There are at least two possible forms of being together. The first one is physical localization of individuals and sharing of one spatial dimension, when they are mutually aware in the presence of each other. Another one is physical remoteness of subjects who identify themselves to the same community and share some cognitive or conative experiences with each other. When two or more scientists are working remotely from the different countries on the same project, they might share their research findings and cooperate with each other without being affectively unified. In that case, one can argue that there is some kind of disembodied collectivity without affective intentional states and that these scientists represent instrumental type of association. Where exactly to locate collectivity and how does it relate to plural subjectivity. Margaret Gilbert is one of the most prominent defenders of the plural subject conception. According to her proposal, for experiencing certain affective state collectively as a plural and not as a singular subject, the members of a given group should have been jointly committed to do something as body. As Gilbert herself writes, “there is a collective that intends to do something if and only if the members of a given population are jointly committed to intend as a body to do that thing” (Gilbert 2002, 115). Therefore, Gilbert aims at criticizing Kutz’s account

of individualism of feelings and rejection of collective affective states by holding on an idea of plural subjectivity, while Hans Bernhard Schmid despite sharing Gilbert's basic claim regarding collective affective states of plural subject, proposed alternative account that plural subjecthood can be conceived in terms of phenomenal subjectivity, while maintaining ontic claim about qualitative primacy and richness of individual emotions (Schmid 2009, 68). Schmid developed the concern-based account of collective affective states. According to him, "Feelings can be ascribed to groups by virtue of their member's experiencing their feelings as members of the group" (Schmid 2009, 68). Thus, if Schmid's assumption is correct, collectives can only have and not feel¹ an emotion as the phenomenal and not an ontic subject. In what follows, I will consider phenomenal fusion account and will juxtapose it with ontological primacy of individual affective experience.

2. Phenomenal Fusion or Ontological Autonomy of Affectivity

One of the remarkable and at the same time terrifying stories told by Max Scheller in his "The Nature of Sympathy" is well known and much cited scene of parent's grief of the dead son. In this episode, mother and father share, the content of the work of mourning and thus, their affective intentionality might be conceived of in a collective form, not as his or her feeling, but their feeling:

Two parents stand beside the dead body of a beloved child. They feel in common the 'same' sorrow, the 'same' anguish. It is not that A feels this sorrow and B feels it also, and moreover that they both know that they are feeling it. No, it is a feeling-in-common. A's sorrow is in no way an 'external' matter for B here, as it is e.g. for their friend, C, who joins them and commiserates 'with them' or 'upon their sorrow.' On the contrary, they feel it together, in the sense that they feel and experience in common, not only the same value-situation, but also the same keenness of emotion in regard to it. The sorrow, as value content, and the grief, as characterizing the functional relation thereto, are here one and identical (Scheler 2008, 12-13).

Ingrid Vendrell Ferran analyzing affective intentionality and different forms of being with one another commented upon Scheller's example of "immediate community of feeling" - "it is a

form of shared affective intentionality in the sense that two interrelated individuals share the same object and type of feeling” (Ferran 2016, 224). According to her account “sympathy” or “fellow feeling” in Scheller’s taxonomy of collective emotional life and forms of togetherness might also be characterized in terms of shared affective intentionality. As she writes, “Only ‘community of feeling’ and ‘fellow feeling’ can be considered shared forms of affective intentionality” (Ferran 2016, 225). As we have seen, Ferran qualifies this dramatic example of grieving parents as shared affective intentionality, which is correct. However, does the notion of “sharedness” entail the same valence as the term collective? For having collective affective intentionality at least, two or more participants have to share either mode or content of feeling. According to phenomenal fusion account developed by Schmid, by sharing the target and mode of feeling, parents are phenomenally intertwined with one another and they experience the grief from within as ours. In a received literature about collective affective intentionality and about the shared feelings, there are multiple interesting analysis and interpretations of this dramatic example; however, I would like to draw attention to what Joel Krueger called “synchronic bodily and spatial intimacy between parents and their dead child” and “diachronic narrative intimacy” (Krueger 2016, 270). In Scheller’s example, parents are physically co-present to each other and their feeling in common might be underpinned by the memory of shared experience. Similar idea to diachronic narrative unity can be found in Scheller’s work itself, in the notion of “life community” constituted by what he called co-experience (*Miteinander-Erleben*) (Ferran 2016, 225):

In the immediate experience of the life-community, there is no division between the experience of the self and that of the other: the content of this co-experiencing is identical. The self has an understanding of others, itself, and of the mutual belonging to a community (Ferran 2016, 225).

Such kind of construal of collective affective intentionality through co-experiencing seems to eliminate the difference between an experience of self and other and unifies them in one single collective or plural entity. Despite that we-

mode of shared experience with identical content, one has to maintain a distance between self and other; otherwise, the very sharing of affective experience would not be possible. Even phenomenal fusion account of shared feelings would have been undermined easily without presupposing genuine distance between two experiential subjects. Let us assume for a moment that parents are not standing together beside “the dead body of a beloved child”, In that case, to what extent can the claim about straightforward sharing of feeling would be justifiable, despite the “same” grief felt by each of them while being physically distanced from each other. However, this does not rule out the possibility of shared diachronic memory of parents. Diachronic constitution of parent’s plural experience as “ours” can persist without bodily synchronization. They can reflect upon the valuable episodes from their life, which are experientially owned by both, without being together and sharing their memories with one other:

“When gazing at the corpse of their beloved child, both parents draw upon this common stock of family knowledge; since they share this narrative intimacy, the child will, as an object of their mutual grief, be experientially given in a similar way, that is, via a similar network of memories and associations” (Krueger 2016, 271).

Both Schmid and Krueger have supported phenomenal fusion account and joint ownership thesis (Szanto 2018. 91; See also León, Szanto, Zahavi 2019). Ontological individualism claims that emotions or mental states can be owned and experienced only by individuals. Whereas epistemological individualism is committed to an idea that we have unmediated first-personal access to our own mental states and are not able to directly, grasp a mental state of other individuals (Schmid 2009, 72, 74; See also León, Szanto, Zahavi 2019). From Schmid’s and Krueger’s perspectives, both ontological and epistemological individualist bias should be somehow avoided in order to justify a phenomenal fusion and token identity theses. Schmid opposes the view that when sharing certain emotional experience, individual does not have a token of the same type of experience (Schmid 2009, 69; León, Szanto, Zahavi 2019). Instead, he insisted upon the numerical identity of the same token emotional episode and seems to extend ontology of

individual self to the ontology of plural self. Joel Krueger is also the proponent of a token identity account and argues against ontological individualism by claiming that “In cases of collective emotions, a token emotion extends across multiple subjects; here, one emotion is collectively realized by multiple participants (Krueger 2016, 269).

However, despite having first personal access to experience and being able to synchronically regulate each other’s emotions and diachronically unify experiential field of memory, this would raise the doubts about the possibility of dual ownership of the very same experience, when two individuals share allegedly numerically token state of feeling. Dan Zahavi for instance, thought that an account of shared token affective states might be fundamentally incoherent and based upon Scheller’s misinterpretation (See Zahavi 2014, 245). He indicates that on later pages of *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie*, Scheller elaborated on the different account of that episode:

The process of feeling in the father and the mother is given separately in each case; only what they feel — the one sorrow — and its value-content, is immediately present to them as identical (Scheler 2008, 37).

According to Zahavi “If the process of feeling is given separately to the father and the mother, it is certainly not obvious that Scheler should be defending the view that the same token experience is shared by several individuals” (Zahavi 2014, 245). For affective state to be shared, two or more individuals have to be perceptually co-present as embodied subjects and reciprocally aware in each other’s affective experience. Briefly, let us go back to Scheller’s example of parent’s grief and consider the third-person perspective of a friend who joins them and “commiserates upon their sorrow”. Parents are reciprocally aware in the grief of each other and share their affective states with one another, while a third person observing them from a distance and might also be in a same affective state, remains out of the parent’s horizon of grief. Therefore, for sharing an emotion, other awareness has to be reciprocal. The participants of the same emotional episode are aware not only in their own affective state, but also in the

fact that other, let say my teammate, experiences the same emotion and is aware that I am experiencing qualitatively identical emotion too. Reciprocal other awareness condition is not sufficient for emotion to be shared. Two or more participants might be reciprocally aware in their respective affective state, without necessarily experiencing the same emotion and having the same target. What follows from that premise? In order to share emotion across multiple subjects, individuals have to be intrinsically interrelated with each other and the sense of togetherness and belonging to the same experientially unified community might be the precondition. The members of that community should be able to synchronically and simultaneously identify and refer to the shared emotions as ours and not as just an individually experienced episode of affection.

Hans Bernhard Schmid argued that having the same target and focus is not necessary condition for affective state to be shared (Schmid 2009, 67). Two subjects might have the same target but different focus and in an extreme case different target and different focus. Schmid, then bring forth the powerful example of what he called “affective meeting of two minds” from Homer’s *Iliad*, referring to King Priam’s encounter with Achilles, who for the sake of revenge, murdered King’s son-Hector. Priam’s decision to sneak in the camp of an enemy discloses an act of unconditional self-donation and certain preexisted expectation or hope that Achilles can affectively attune with Priam’s condition, would be able to emphatically understand him, and thus hand him over the body of killed son.

Respect the gods, Achilles, and take pity on me, remembering your own father. I am more piteous far than he, and have endured what no other mortal on the face of earth has yet endured, to reach out my hand to the face of the man who has slain my sons.’ So he spoke, and in Achilles he roused desire to weep for his father; and he took the old man by the hand, and gently pushed him away from him. So the two remembered – the one remembered man slaying Hector and wept loudly, collapsed at Achilles’ feet, but Achilles wept for his own father, and now again for Patroclus; and the sound of their moaning went up through the house (*Iliad*, Book 24, 503–512).²

According to Schmid’s interpretation of that powerful passage of affective encounter, Achilles recognized something

similar to Priam in his own grief, which resulted in his decision to restore the world order by handing over the body of Hector to Priam. Schmid considers that Achilles “recognizes that the feeling is shared”. However, in what sense the feeling is shared? Did Achilles decide to show his goodwill towards Priam only after the recognition of shared feeling? In that case, the target and focus of feeling is different, Priam mourns his son, while Achilles “weep for his father” and for Patroclus. Despite that asymmetry of target and focus, both their affective experience is shared by similar underlying concern “behind the target-focus relation”. In another article, Schmid remarked, “Achilles's weeping is not a case of emphatic co-weeping. Achilles is far from weeping for Hector together with Priam”³ (Schmid 2013, 473). This might be right that Achilles does not weep for Priam’s dead son, but for his father and friend, or for himself. Sánchez Guerrero pointed out that their connectedness, which is affective in nature, is a “matter of Achilles’ capacity to (by means of a series of abstractions) ‘put himself in the shoes of Priam. At best, we can speak here, thus, of a case of sympathy ‘about something’ (Guerrero 2016, 123). According to Thiemo Breyer “In this interpersonal situation, the decisive factor is interaffectivity, not active empathizing with others”⁴ (Breyer 2015, 211). To what extent can this capacity of emphatic or sympathetic abstraction amounts to affective sharing? Does interaffectivity precede an empathy or are they equiprimordial? First, it is unclear whether putting oneself in other’s place amount to empathy or sympathy, in history of philosophy these terms have been frequently used interchangeably⁵. For example, according to Thiemo Breyer, what David Hume and Adam Smith meant by the term, sympathy “is usually called empathy today” (Breyer 2020, 434). Achilles and Priam do not share diachronic narrative; the grief of both is directed at the different object of remembrance. Achille’s capacity of affectively respond to Priam’s embodied grief has been preconditioned by Priam’s speech, which stirred in Achilles the desire to go through his own misery again. However, despite Priam being a cause for Achilles’s affective developing, he is not a focus of Achilles’s concern. Empathy is not necessarily a reciprocal experience, but it is oriented on other and according to

linguistic approach is “able to cognitively make sense of another subject’s psychological life, or to share an affective state with them” (Breyer 2020, 429). In the given example, one might be tempted to argue for emphatic comprehension of other’s affective experience, which can generate an affective response in empathizer. However, I think that Achilles does not put himself in Priam’s shoes, rather, he is more self-centered and though King actualizes his own grief. The same can be applied to Priam himself. In that case, one can argue that Achilles comes to his own grief through empathic understanding of Priam’s affective experience, or by identifying his own emotional predisposition with Priam’s affective experience. However, Schmid’s and Breyer’s interpretations seems to be more appropriate and that there is no preceding emphatic act, rather embodied interaffectivity. There is no “we” of affective response in this episode. They might lament together not as a “we” having shared one target and focus, but as opposed subjects having the same content and similar concern. Achilles does not experience sympathy either. Sympathy “is not so much a matter of what we understand or what we feel; rather, it is more about being concerned for the other (Breyer 2020, 429). Having the same concern beyond the target and focus, does not mean that Achilles is concerned for Priam, rather, he might be concerned for himself, or for the lost beloved persons. My point is that, before arguing for affective unification or for affective sharing, it would be reasonable to consider empathy as possible precondition for affective sharing⁶, but in that particular episode, there is no any sign of empathizing other’s experience, rather interaffective relatedness. Zahavi and RoCHAT critically reviewed arguments of contemporary theorists⁷ of empathy regarding the thesis that affective sharing is an essential structure and presupposition of empathy. Empathizing with someone does not necessarily entail mutual or reciprocal intentional response; therefore, it is an experience of empathizer, which does not conflate with an experience of empathized subject and maintains a substantial asymmetry (According to Zahavi and RoCHAT asymmetry is persisting existential fact) between an experience of self and other. In contrast to empathy, “affective sharing is necessarily

reciprocal” (Zahavi and Rochat 2015, 551), but at the same time, it is similar to it, because it does not also eliminate the asymmetry of self and other, rather is hinged upon it. Not all kind of interpersonal relatedness constitute the sense of “us”, or belonging to a larger “we”. For instance, emotional contagion is self-oriented and empathy despite being primarily an experience of empathizer originates from embodied cognitive and affective capacities of virtual comprehension of other’s minds. Thus, it is other oriented, while emotional sharing, in contrast to emotional contagion and empathy itself presupposes affective reciprocation between two or more participants and it might be the proper candidate for the constitution of a “we”. However, I would assume that “we” does not instantiate undifferentiated homogeneous entity and that it does not entail a status of ontological bearer of affective, cognitive or conative states. As it has been shown above, in order to share an affective state underling concern of each person is required. For rationalizing the mode of feeling, one has to be concerned about something. According to Schmid, “our concerns structure our lives in allowing us and others to make sense of our attitudes” (Schmid 2009, 65). However, such affective states might not always be intentional, as Salmela and Nagatsu underscored, their intentionality is a matter of contingency, while evaluative content is necessarily intentional and is always directed to some object of emotion (Nagatsu and Salmela 2016). Jan Slaby in contrast, assumes that “affective states in humans are (or essentially involve) intentional feelings” (Slaby 2008, 430).

I would argue that if affective states might be contingently intentional, in contrast to them, affective responses are always intentionally directed on certain emotional objects and are very similar to what Fuchs and Koch elsewhere called affective affordances (Fuchs, Koch 2014), when in given situation things appear to bear important and valuable features for us. The substantial difference of affective states and affective responses, has been drawn by early phenomenologist Dietrich von Hildebrand, according to whom:

As soon as the affective response is torn apart from the object, which has generated it, from which its sense and justification stem and to which it has a subordinated position, it will be reduced to mere

affective state, which ontologically stands even lower than a state such as fatigue and alcohol-induced hilarity. Because affective responses legitimately claim another position and another layer of the person, or, rather because they are essentially intentional, this separation from the object destroys their inner sense of being, dignity and seriousness⁸ (Hildebrand 1967, 28).

To go back to the paradigm of affective meeting of minds, I would argue that Achilles evaluates the content of Priam's grief and affectively responds to it by means of recognizing the same underlying concern. Priam's embodied grief generates Achilles's affective intentional response. Without Priam's affective self-disclosure, Achilles would have remained on lower ontological level of affective state. He could be able to respond internally to his loss, (which might not be always intentional) without reconceiving his identity as son, which enables him to recognize his grief in Priam. It is important to note that despite affective experiential resonance between these two, there is no merging or phenomenal fusion of Priam and Achilles in one single ontological bearer of emotion, because of their extreme polarity as enemies, the distance between self and other cannot be eliminated. I think that their emotional interlocking should be understood in terms of embodied interaffectivity and synchronization of their feeling.

Third and last example of interpersonal affective connectedness is another pinnacle of affective experiences in world literature – Shakespeare's Hamlet – The Prince of Denmark. Despite being enemies, situated on the different margins of experience, there is some kind of emotional correspondence between Hamlet and Laertes. Their affective intentionality is directed on the same target, Ophelia, who was Laertes's sister and Hamlets' beloved. However, extreme polarity of self and other, impede affective sharing between them. Both are revenging sons and they experience the double grief. Therefore, they have the same affective content, mode and concern. In case of father, target and focus of their mourning is different, but there is an underlying concern behind it, they both lost the father and they seek to revenge. However, despite having the same affective experience regarding Ophelia's death, they are emotionally alienated from each other. My point is that, despite having the same target

and concern and being bodily co-present at Ophelia's grave, there cannot be any affective convergence between them. Until a very last moment, they do not recognize each other's affective concerns. Now let me quote the passage from the play, which demonstrates unidirectional emphatic understanding and consequent affective identification with other's experience:

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself,
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.
But sure the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion (Shakespeare 5.2.75–135).

Hamlet sees Laertes's "portraiture" through his own experience; he finds something similar to himself in his enemy and this emphatic understanding of other's grief precedes and provides the ground for affective attunement with Laertes. Through introspective self-analysis, Hamlet is able to identify and see Laertes's affective experience and only after grasping his grief, he finds himself in "towering passion". Hamlet can have an understanding of Laertes's experience only by going through himself, by being centered on his own self; he can see other's image. Richard Meek relying upon Rene Girard's provocative reading of Hamlet suggests the different interpretation.

Hamlet becomes the other, or temporarily changes places with him. The play implies, perhaps, that moments of sympathetic 'recognition' are often about self-recognition, and that the distinction between the self and other in such moments becomes complicated or even collapses altogether (Meek 2019, 82).

This might be right, in case of accepting Girard's suggestion of reversed positions between self and other. According to Girard, Hamlet could say, "By the image of his cause I see the portraiture of mine"⁹ (Meek 2019, 82). This reversal would amount to introjection, in which Hamlet takes and internalizes external affective states of Laertes. I do not think that Hamlet even temporarily conceives of himself as other and by doing this blur the distinction between himself and Laertes. "Sympathetic recognition" of other and "self-recognition", might be dialectically interdependent, but in this

concrete episode, Hamlet's reflexive self-recognition precedes and conditions emphatic understanding, which leads to affective identification with other.

3. Embodied Inter-affectivity

The question about the possibility of collective affective intentionality rests upon an understanding of the very notion of collectivity. There are two radically divergent perspectives regarding it. First, we can conceive of collectivity in terms of ontologically autonomous plural subject having some kind of body with an ability to experience the certain affective state. Should we have to refer to it in first personal singular or first personal plural mode? I am far from accepting the proposal that it can be understood as an extended or larger I with its own embodied experience. If ontological individualism regarding feeling of emotions is right, and I think it is, having a certain affective experience or to feel an emotion is an a priori possible only within the confinement of our bodies. Gerhard Thornhauser raised the doubt regarding the possibility of collective emotions, according to him, "If the ability to experience emotions is necessarily linked to having a body, conceiving of collectives having emotions appears impossible (Thornhauser 2017, 102).

In examples I have already touched upon, understanding of other's emotions does not amount to sharing; rather it might be one of the preconditions of it. Such kind of intuitive understanding of others happens through bodily resonance (see Fuchs 2016, 195) and through interbodily modification of each other's affective states. Therefore, in order to share affective state or to have joint intentional affective experience, embodied synchronization of felt emotions might be the significant prerequisite. As I have already discussed, in face-to-face encounter of Achilles and Priam, they not only know each other, but they also have the background knowledge of each other's experience of grief.

Against predominant idea that emotions primarily reside in individual's inner mind, Thomas Fuchs claims that world around us

is not bare of affective qualities. “We feel, for example, the hilarity of a party, the sadness of a funeral march, the icy climate of a conference, the awe-inspiring aura of an old cathedral or the uncanniness of a sombre wood at night” (Fuchs 2016, 196).

According to Thomas Fuchs, embodied interaffectivity precedes and somehow provides the possibility for intuitive emphatic understanding and that subjects are intertwined in a process of bodily resonance (Fuchs 2016, 196). To apply this proposal to Achilles’ and Priam’s affective meeting, it turns out to be that they are affectively co-dependent upon each other, not only by sharing the same concern, but also by being entangled in circularity of intercorporeal affective space. They co-constitute each other’s affective state through circular interbodily resonance and “mutual incorporation”. Before discussing affective mutual incorporation of subjective lived-bodies, let me first consider what Fuchs and Jaegher called “unidirectional incorporation” (Fuchs & Jaegher 2009, 472). According to Fuchs and Jaegher, “incorporation is a pervasive characteristic of the lived body” (Fuchs & Jaegher 2009, 472), when objects or instruments might become an integral part of one’s bodily schema and function as additional phantom limb. “Instrument is integrated into the body motor schema like an extension of the body, subjectively felt as ‘melting’ or being at one with the instrument” (Fuchs 2016, 198).

Taking place on a pre-reflective level, examples of unidirectional incorporation might be a skillful play on musical instruments such as piano, when “fingers find their way by themselves; or when a blind man probes his environment with a stick and feels the surface at the top of it” (Fuchs, 2016, 198). Unidirectional incorporation does not necessarily imply a proximity of internalizing objects with us and it might be directed towards expressive and agentive acts of another person. Apart from unidirectional incorporation, Fuchs and Jaegher introduced the notion of “mutual incorporation”, which, as in case of other awareness should be reciprocal. Does Achilles’s and Priam’s affective encounter amount to mutual incorporation? As I have already stated, in that episode, participants are not phenomenally fused and they do not

experience the same token affective episode. It is possible that Achilles incorporate the Priam's affective experience, but this does not presuppose the concept of coordination, which has a characteristic of action tendency. According to Fuchs and Jaegher "mutual incorporation implies coordination with" (Fuchs & Jaegher 2009, 474). In dyadic framework of affective exchange, participating subjects function as "affective affordances" for each other, which makes emphatic understanding and sharing of emotional experience possible. Mutual incorporation does not presuppose merging of two divergent individual experiences into one ontological bearer of mental and affective states, rather, according to Fuchs and Jaegher, it "implies a component of autonomy and otherness that is absent in unidirectional incorporation" (Fuchs & Jaegher 2009, 475). From that perspective, having collective affective intentionality presupposes certain differentiation of self and other within the collectivity itself. Two subjects might be directed together on the same target and focus of a feeling, as well as they can share certain affective experience by having the same underlying concern. This means that they might refer to their own affective experience in first personal plural form such as "our" sadness, "our" grief and our "joy", without eliminating the privileged perspective of first personal singular experience. That is to say, affective "we" is possible through affective "I" and is constituted by the relational pre-reflective "intercorporality".

4. Conclusion

In a received literature about collective intentionality, researchers until sometime directed their focus on the concept of action and overlooked or even neglected an affective aspect of our togetherness. The questions touched upon our ability of cooperative intentional activity and did not sufficiently explore affective component of collective intentionality. However, as I have shown in this article, contemporary philosophers have been developing different proposals about the possibility of collective affective intentionality and emotional sharing.

How do we have to understand that conceptual coupling of intentionality and affectivity and to what extent might it be collective? While there are less doubts about intentional directedness of emotions, the question regarding the structure and nature of collectivity remains open and obscure. There are so-called phenomenal fusion and token identity accounts presupposing the unification of the subjective affective experiences, which might be resulted in ascription of the status of ontological bearer of emotion to collectivity, conceived of as a singular or extended “I” having its own body. According to another proposal, one can experience certain emotional episode together as a “we”, however, this does not eliminate, rather requires the difference between self and other.

Relying upon different theoretical frameworks and examples, I have presented few possible requirements for collective affective intentionality and supportive arguments for the later proposal. I think that for emotional sharing the distance between self and other has to be maintained. For sharing certain affective state, subjects have to be co-present and have to identify a similar concern apart from target and focus relation, beside this, another crucial requirement is reciprocal other awareness and mutual incorporation of each other’s feelings. I have also discussed the relatedness of empathy, emotional sharing and interaffectivity and got to the position that empathy might be the precondition for emotional sharing, but there are some cases, for example Achilles’s and Priam’s affective meeting, in which one can argue about the presence of interaffectivity without emphatic understanding of other.

NOTES

¹ Here, I am refereeing to Schmid, who accentuated that Knobe and Prinz discovered that people are reluctant to say that collectives feel emotions, rather than have emotions. See: (Schmid 2009, p. 68).

² Quoted from Schmid 2009, 67.

³ “Achilles’s Weinen ist kein Fall einführenden Mitweinsens. Achilles is weit davon entfernt, mit Priamos gemeinsam um Hektor zu Weinen”.

⁴ “Interaffectivität ist in dieser zwischenmenschliche Situation also das Entscheidende, nicht das aktive einfühlen in den Anderen, die kognitive Einsicht, die Selbstreflexion oder das Subsumieren unter ein Allgemeines”

⁵ For detailed conceptual and philosophical-historical analysis, see Thiemo Breyer, *Empathy, Sympathy and Compassion*.

⁶ Zahavi and Rochat developed the same argument in the following article- *Empathy ≠ sharing: Perspectives from phenomenology and developmental psychology*. According to them, empathy does not involve sharing, but it might be the precondition of it.

⁷ I quote the following authors from Zahavi's and Rochat's article. Pfeifer and Dapretto wrote that "shared affect between self and other" constitutes the experiential core of empathy" (2009, 184). Zahavi and Rochat noted that Preston refers to empathy as "a shared emotional experience occurring when one person (the subject) comes to feel a similar emotion to another (the object) as a result of perceiving the other's state" (2007, 428).

⁸ "Sobald die affektive Antwort von dem sie erzeugen- den Objekt losgerissen wird, aus dem ihr Sinn und ihre Berechtigung stammt, dem gegenüber sie eine dienende Stellung hat, wird sie selbst zu einem bloßen affektiven Zustand herabgewürdigt, der ontologisch noch tiefer steht als etwa Müdigkeit und alkoholisch bedingte Lustigkeit. Weil aber affektive Antworten legitim eine andere Stellung und eine andere Schicht der Person beanspruchen, oder vielmehr weil sie wesenhaft inten-tiona sind, zerstört diese Trennung vom Objekt ihre innere Seinsfülle, Würde und ihren Ernst." (Translation is mine).

⁹ I quote Girard from Robert Meek's article.

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Sublimierung und Narzissmus zwischen Mystik und Ästhetik. Ihr individueller wie kultureller Stellenwert als „libidinöse Ökonomie“ gemäß Freud, Lacan und Lyotard

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Abstract

Sublimation and Narcissism between Mysticism and Esthetics: Their Cultural and Individual Relevance as “Libidinal Economy” According to Freud, Lacan and Lyotard

With his concept of a “libidinal economy”, Lyotard connects perception with esthetics in everyday life and thus adds to Freud’s and Lacan’s analyses of sublimation. The aim is thereby to counter neo-liberal distortions of desire (*désir*) in a postmodern perspective. The article completes this angle with a presentation of radical phenomenological and originary passivity (*passibilité*), insofar as the latter constitutes the irreducible foundation for all concrete possibilities pertaining to the “I can”. In particular, it is shown to be the foundation for the clarification of phantasms as well as for the fulfillment of existential-esthetic sublimation understood as creativity in the sense of Lacan’s concept of “elastic logic”.

Keywords: esthetics, sublimation, mysticism, desire, passivity, moment, libido, new creation

Dass die Mystik eine sublimierte Form der Religion bietet, steht allgemein außer Zweifel, aber die Frage ist, ob eine solche Sublimierung nur eine spezifische Anwendung der letzteren im Freudschen Sinne bildet, sich nämlich unter dem Einfluss eines Ideals oder Verzichts auf unmittelbare Befriedigung zu einer höheren ethischen Ebene zu erheben. Im Zusammenhang mit der klassischen Psychoanalyse würde dies dann individuell und kulturell einen Prozess der "Verschiebung"

sexueller Aktivität auf andere Bereiche wie den ästhetischen, religiösen und wissenschaftlichen etwa bedeuten. Freud korreliert sogar eine gewisse energische Eroberung des Sexualobjekts "mit der ähnlichen Verfolgung anderer Ziele" (vgl. Freud 1948a, 129). Aber dann könnte man zu dem irrigen Schluss gelangen, dass sublimierte Ziele umso leichter erreicht würden, falls sexuelle Befriedigung gelingt. Jedoch führt auch die Umkehrung dieser "vulgären Vorstellung" keineswegs zu einem direkteren Verständnis der Sublimierung (vgl. Turnheim 1996, 35f.), wie unter anderem der Bezug von Mystik/*jouissance* nach Jacques Lacan zeigt, der hierbei sowohl eine Transgression der "Lust" wie eines jeden "Signifikanten" am Werk sieht. Dabei unterliegt die Regelung von Sexualität wie Phallus der Kastration, das heißt in beiden Fällen dem ursprünglichen Verlust oder Mangel im subjektiven Sinne eines abwesenden Signifikanten des "Urverdrängten", wie Freud diesen Begriff bereits kannte (vgl. Maleval 2000, 42ff.). Diese Interpretation der Sublimierung im Ausgang von Freud wie Lacan soll am Schluss durch die Position von Jean-François Lyotard ergänzt werden, der in der Postmoderne eine "libidinöse Ökonomie" vorschlug, die in allen Lebenssituationen Wahrnehmung/Ästhetik miteinander verbindet, um vor allem auch neo-liberalen Verzerrungen des Begehrens (*désir*) zu entgehen.

1. Sublimierung und Phallus

Latent wie dieses Urverdrängte - oder sogar ganz verborgen - ist mithin auch jener Signifikant, der es bezeichnen soll. Dadurch wird die Bezeichnungsfunktion als solche problematisch, dass nämlich etwas bezeichnet werden soll, das gar nicht gesagt werden kann. Kastration und Mystik gehören daher strukturell in dem Sinne zusammen, als es unmöglich ist, irgendwann einmal *alles* zu sagen, um die Erwartung an Sinnidentität zu erfüllen. Damit bekommt allerdings der subjektive Leib als originäre Sexualität bzw. Erotik oder Libido und Trieb eine Unmöglichkeit als Erleben oder Ausdruck aufgebürdet, die nur Unzugänglichkeit und Phallus miteinander korrelieren lassen können, was die *jouissance* als "Erotik Gottes" im Sinne Lacans (1975, 92ff.; vgl. Askofaré 2008, 12-23) eben zu übersteigen versucht. Insofern stößt in der Sexualität eine

unvorstellbare Vorstellung mit dem Verlorenen des Urverdrängten zusammen, so dass der Phallus nicht nur eine individuell imaginäre Schöpfung eines jeden Subjekts der "Lust" (*plaisir*) ist, sondern ebenfalls eine symbolische Konvention oder Ordnung, die von vornherein alle lebendigen Subjekte gemeinschaftlich betrifft. Demzufolge ist die Sexualität je singular wie außergewöhnlich in ihrem Vollzug - zugleich aber auch paradoxerweise ganz alltäglich durch die Wiederholung des Geschlechtsaktes. In seiner intimen Zurückgezogenheit als "Nacht der Liebenden" nach einem Ausdruck Michel Henrys (vgl. Kühn 2015, 151ff.)¹ impliziert daher der Geschlechtsvollzug einen *Bruch* mit dem Alltag, um allerdings in seiner Wiederholung ohne endgültige Befriedigung - selbst bei häufigem Wechsel der Sexualpartner oder bei Perversionen - eine grundlegende Anfrage an eben diese Wiederholbarkeit hervorzurufen. Dass sich hier neurotische Reaktionsbildungen im Sinne Freuds einstellen können, ist offensichtlich, und damit erhebt sich auch umso schärfer unsere Eingangsfrage nochmals, ob die Sublimierung in dieser Perspektive eine bloße Leitung der sexuellen Energie in andere "Kanäle" wie beispielsweise des Schönen oder Erhabenen sei.

Aufgrund der genannten Problematik von Geschlechtsakt und Wiederholung dürfte sich folglich ergeben, dass die Sublimierung eine "Dekonstruktion" gerade dieser Voraussetzung von Phallusfunktion und Wiederholbarkeit in die Wege zu leiten hätte. Regelt nämlich der Phallus die Wiederholbarkeit des Sexualvollzugs als selbstverständlicher Suche nach Lust, dann dürfte die Sublimierung eher der Forderung nach der unwiederholbaren Einmaligkeit und dem Unsagbaren wie unvorstellbaren Signifikanten gehorchen. Demzufolge nähert sich die Sublimierung durch eine solche Analyse der prinzipiellen Überschreitung der phallischen Routine, was etwa bei Michel Foucault (1984, 315ff.) zur Forderung an die Sexualität als einen Ort der Kreativität bzw. einer ästhetischen Ethik der "Selbstsorge" wurde. Wie nun besonders Lacans Mystikverständnis zeigen kann, ist die mystische *jouissance* als "Genuss" ihrerseits eine Sublimierung, welche jenseits aller etablierten Vorstellungen etwas von jenem unbekanntem Realen, Einen oder "Gott" zu erproben gibt, das

nicht durch den Phallus als gesetzmäßige Signifikanten der Wiederholung symbolisiert ist.² Insoweit wäre die Mystik in Bezug auf die Geschlechtlichkeit die Weise, in letzterer eine Wirklichkeit zum Vollzug gelangen zu lassen, der ein Unvorhersehbares gelten lässt - eine *jouissance* jenseits der Lust (vgl. Braunstein 1992; Rath 2017).

Anders gesagt, muss es einen Übergang von der Existenz des phallischen Objekts in der Sexualität ("Lust") zu einer Evokation des unvorstellbaren "Dings" (Eine, Reale/Schöpfung, Gott etc.) in der Sublimierung geben. Wenn Lacan (1986, 133) daher sagt, dass die Sublimierung "ein Objekt zur Würde des Dings (*la Chose*) erhebt", dann kann dies nicht den konventionellen Phallus betreffen, sondern nur einen Vollzug, der sich der Repräsentation prinzipiell entzieht, aber dennoch wie ein Kunstwerk zugleich einem allgemeinen Urteil im Sinne des "Erhabenen" bei Kant zugänglich bleibt (vgl. Lyotard 1991 / 1994), das heißt Liebe, Schöpfung oder Leben als mögliche wortlose Erprobung für jeden prinzipiell zugänglich macht. Denn im künstlerischen Werk bzw. im Naturschönen gibt es ein Zeigen oder Darstellen; aber das Gezeigte entzieht sich der alltäglich utilitären Wahrnehmung, so dass sich das darin Vorgestellte der Repräsentation als "Darstellung" durch ein Verschwinden entzieht. Auch im Phallus gibt es notwendigerweise ein Verschwinden durch die Kastration, um das Scheitern der Konvention (Gesetz, Routine etc.) anzuzeigen, während die Sublimierung diese Funktion des Verschwindens jedes Mal schöpferisch neu setzt oder zulässt. Das heißt, das künstlerische Werk oder die Mystik entziehen sich einem definitiven Zeigen und Sehenlassen, so wie "Gott" als das Eine oder die Liebe sich dem identifizierenden Besitz durch irgendeinen "Namen-des-Vaters" entzieht (vgl. Lacan 2005).

Damit verlassen wir die Freudsche Interpretation der Kunst wie Religion als einer bloßen Latenz von verborgenen oder archaischen Gedanken, sei es Mutterkomplex wie angeblich bei Leonardo da Vinci oder Vaternötung seit dem prä-animistischen Totemismus und in der Menschheitsentwicklung danach (vgl. Freud 2012), um das "Urverdrängte" vielmehr als jenen "Signifikanten" aufzufassen, der nie in einem Diskurs gesagt zu werden vermag. Jedes künstlerische Werk widersetzt sich in der

Tat einer endgültig abschließenden Interpretation, indem es eben eine unendlich subjektive Rezeption und Symbolisierung erlaubt (vgl. Ricœur 1965, 175ff.), so wie nach Lacan in der Analyse/Therapie jenes "rätselhafte Ding" umkreist wird, welches kein "Objekt" ist, sondern das Begehren als "Ich" in dessen singulärer "Wahrheit" allein ohne diskursives Wissen (vgl. Turnheim 1996, 38f.). Die Sublimierung innerhalb einer originären Ästhetik wie Mystik ist dann gleichfalls die Öffnung über alle phallischen Signifikanten hinaus, einschließlich des "Namens Gottes", sofern dieser keinerlei phallische Bedeutung mehr besitzt. Vielmehr deutet er als "Name" (Gott, Liebe, Eines, Reales, Schöpfer, Andersheit, Transzendenz etc.) jeweils das Darüber-Hinaus jeglichen Namens an, was radikal phänomenologisch auch als Immanenz des Lebens vor jeglicher Sprache selbst bezeichnet werden kann (vgl. Kühn 2016a, 194-209; Thiberge 2018, 177-190).

Die psychoanalytische Theorie der Sublimierung wäre dann nicht länger eine solche der sexuellen Energie, die in andere Bereiche geleitet wird, um dergestalt Verdrängtes hinter künstlerischen und kulturellen Leistungen aufzusuchen, sondern Bruch mit dem Primat der Vorstellung und Bewusstwerdung, wie dies hinsichtlich Freud in epistemologischer Perspektive diskutiert wird (vgl. Henry 2005, 106-123). Jedes Werk kann daraufhin durchaus weiterhin dem Trieb als Begehren (*désir*) zugeordnet werden, aber letzteres ist als *jouissance* keine ausschließlich biologische, phallische oder symbolische Faktizität mehr, obwohl es all diese ontischen Bereiche durchquert. Vielmehr ist solches Begehren in seiner sublimierten Selbstbewegung eine lebendige Unmittelbarkeit diesseits seiner phantasmatischen Fixierungen. Wenn in dieser Dimension die Leere der Vorstellung eine Fülle an originärer Lebendigkeit ausmacht, so wie auch die Architektur beispielsweise um die Leere herum errichtet wird, bzw. die Malerei und Literatur durch perspektivische Illusion und narrative Fiktion das Vorstellungssfreie umkreisen, so kann die Sublimierung daher als "die Befriedigung an Strebung am Wechsel ihres Objekts" bezeichnet werden (vgl. Lacan 1986, 339) - wie auch Freud bereits schrieb, dass die Triebanteile "beliebig oft gewechselt werden" (vgl. Freud 1992, 85, 93ff.). Sieht man

analytisch-therapeutisch wie radikal phänomenologisch die Triebanteile als Momente des Begehrens selbst, dann kann ein solcher "Wechsel" gegenreduktiv bis hin zur genannten Vorstellungsfreiheit gehen, insofern im reinen Begehren als Selbstbewegung des Lebens keinerlei welthaftes Objekt oder dessen Horizont mehr gegeben ist. Die "Sublimierung" wäre demzufolge ein anderer Name für die "Selbststeigerung des Lebens", welche alle intentionalen Objekte affektiv-leiblich ermöglicht, ohne in dieselben eigenwesentlich aufzugehen. Mit anderen Worten macht ein solch lebendiges oder transzendentes Begehren in keinem dieser Objekte sein eigenes Selbsterscheinen fest, ohne dabei jedoch die Freude des ontologischen Reichtums aller Dinge als innere Modalisierung zu verkennen (vgl. Proença 2013, 216-225).

2. Narzissmus und Selbstliebe des Lebens

Dies führt ebenfalls zur Neubestimmung des Verhältnisses von Sublimierung und Narzissmus, denn wenn die zuvor genannte Mystik und Ästhetik den Verzicht auf einen primären wie sekundären Narzissmus als Besetzungsenergie von Ich und allem Objektalen bedeutet, dann ist damit die Selbstliebe des Begehrens nicht verneint, die als "Liebe Gottes" oder "Vernichtetwerden" des Ichs³ im Einen ihre "Erotisierung" unmittelbar aus dem immanenten Leben selbst empfängt. Die Sexualität wird damit nicht abgetötet, denn sie ist nicht länger die Quelle einer narzisstischen oder masochistischen Egoität. Das psychoanalytische Konzept des Narzissmus meint seit Freud und Karl Abraham (1877-1925) eine primäre Objektabwesenheit, um sich ausschließlich auf das eigene Ich libidinös zu beziehen. In "Triebe und Triebchicksale" lässt Freud durchscheinen, dass der Hass älter wäre als die Objektliebe, denn das narzisstische Ich impliziere eine ursprüngliche Verweigerung der Außenwelt, welche unsere psychische Erregung über Empfinden und Wahrnehmung verursache. Damit sind bereits gewisse Vorgaben für Aggressivität, Destruktion, Masochismus und Todestrieb in der späteren Freudschen Sichtweise gemacht. K. Abraham (1999, 279; siehe ebenfalls Freud u. Abraham 2000) sah dann im Narzissmus vor allem auch einen neurotischen Widerstand mit

negativen Effekten innerhalb der Übertragung, da sich durch den narzisstischen Stolz "ein ungewöhnliches Maß von Trotz" herausbilde, wodurch in jeder Bemerkung des Analytikers/Therapeuten eine "Demütigung" erlebt werde. Dazu gesellen sich Neid und die Tendenz, "alles selbst und allein zu machen", so dass der Andere durchgehend zum Objekt von "Geringschätzung" werde, die sich zugleich mit Aggressivität und Todestrieb verbinde. Er differenzierte auch Freuds psychosexuelle Entwicklungstheorie um weitere Sub-Phasen: frühe und spätere oral-kannibalistische Stufe als Narzissmus und Totaleinverleibung des Objekts; frühe und spätere anal-sadistische Stufe als Objektliebe mit Genitalausschluss.

Auch Wilhelm Reich unterstreicht den "Charakterpanzer" des narzisstischen Menschen mit seiner stolzen und ironischen Haltung, die auf einer verdrängten Aggressivität beruhe und leicht zu Todeswünschen führe, auch wenn Reich den Todestrieb Freuds als solchen aus neo-marxistischen und politisch-gesellschaftlichen Gründen ablehnt (vgl. Reich 1970, 200ff.). Mit Melanie Kleins (1882-1960) "Objektsbeziehungstheorie" (1992; 1973; Caper 2000) ergibt sich sodann eine ausführliche Analyse von Gier, Neid und Eifersucht, welche die Mechanismen von "Projektion" und "Introjektion" einschließt, was für unseren Zusammenhang insofern von Bedeutung ist, als gerade Mystik wie Ästhetik mit diesen "Urkonflikten" narzisstischer Prägung einen Umgang zu ihrer Verwandlung hin finden. So betrifft die Gier nicht nur ein Begehren ohne scheinbare Sättigung, sondern auch einen Objektbezug, der jedes Maß überschreitet. Melanie Klein sah darin den Versuch, die "mütterliche Brust" vollständig zu leeren und anschließend mit "bösen Objekten" zu füllen, welche als Introjektion dann die Aggressivität zu legitimieren scheinen. Allgemeiner gesagt, bedeutet der Narzissmus hier eine idealisierende Objektbesetzung, welche als Phantasma einen Teil des eigenen Selbst und der subjektiven Leiblichkeit bildet. Die mystische und ästhetische Antwort hierauf kann nicht nur eine bessere äußere "Realitätsprüfung" im Sinne Freuds sein. Vielmehr muss der phantasmatische Bezug als solcher zwischen dem Objektalen und dem Ich durchschaut werden, um sowohl eine Erfüllung des Narzissmus durch das eigene Ich wie seitens irgendeines Objekts *ad absurdum* zu führen. Lacan sah diese

Möglichkeit in der Konfrontation mit dem Realen bzw. Einen, welche die Loslösung von idealisierenden Signifikanten erfordern, um dem "Überraschenden" der "Erotik Gottes" Raum zu geben, die weder die eigene noch projizierte Idealität aufsucht, wodurch dem Narzissmus sein innerstes triebhaftes Motiv für Gier, Neid, Eifersucht und Aggressivität entzogen wird.

Denn der Neid ist nichts anderes als der Zorn und die Wut gegenüber einer anderen Person, die etwas besitzt, das ich selbst - allein für mich - genießen möchte. Dies beinhaltet jedoch, die jouissance ebenso in einen symbolisierten Besitz als Phallus einschreiben zu wollen wie über die Eifersucht eine Liebe für sich zu beanspruchen, die nicht dem "Rivalen" gehören darf, sondern ausschließlich mir. Dahinter steht für Melanie Klein anfänglich ebenfalls die "mütterliche Brust" als "gutes Objekt" diesmal, das alles gibt, ohne sich ihm jedoch jemals angleichen zu können. Anders als bei Freud gibt es hier mithin einen primär narzisstischen Objektbezug, aber dieser hat sich als Phantasma auf innere Objekte verlagert, die um jeden Preis bewahrt werden sollen und nach außen dann Hass oder Zerstörungsaffecte zeitigen. Dem geht allerdings das Erleben ursprünglicher Ängste voraus, die alle um die Schwäche des Ichs und dessen fundamentale Furcht möglichen "Zusammenbruchs" im Sinne D. W. Winnicotts kreisen (1991, 1116-1126). Auch besonders die MystikerInnen kennen diese Angst, so wie etwa Theresa von Avila angesichts ewiger Hölle drei Tage wie im Koma lag. Aber schließlich wird die eigene Ohnmacht von ihr im ontologischen und existentiellen als auch ethischen und religiösen Sinne gesehen und angenommen (vgl. von Avila 2013, 45ff.), ohne sie als phantasmatischen Neid auf ein Unverfügbares zu projizieren, wie es die "Mutter" im Erleben des Kindes nach Melanie Klein in einem paranoid-schizoiden Sinne bleibt. Die "Ohn-macht" als Nichts, Nacht, Abgeschiedenheit, Vernichtetwerden etc. führt daher in der Mystik wie auch Ästhetik nicht zu einer negativen Übertragung, sondern wird als prinzipielle Leere akzeptiert, in die sich ein Unsagbares und Unvorstellbares (das Reale, Eine, Gott etc.) einzuschreiben vermag - nämlich im Modus des "Besitzes" als Entzug oder Verschwinden, was als "abwesende Anwesenheit" ohne Signifikant erprobt werden kann, mit anderen Worten als

Immanenz des absolut unmittelbaren Lebens in seiner unaufhebbaren Passibilität (vgl. Kühn 2018, 292ff.).

Was die verschiedenen Psychoanalytiker seit Freud für das Verhältnis zwischen Narzissmus und Übertragung beschreiben, kann daher auf jeden Ich- und Objektbezug einschließlich intersubjektiver Andersheit als "Beziehung" überhaupt angewandt werden, so dass der Bezug zwischen Mystik, Ästhetik und Narzissmus etwas Grundlegendes offenbart. Ohne die psychopathologischen Verzerrungen oder "Masken" durch einen primär aggressiven wie masochistischen Narzissmus in Abrede stellen zu müssen, bewegt sich unsere Analyse desselben jedoch originär um die rein phänomenologische Frage der passiblen Selbstgegebenheit des "Ichs" als "Mich".⁴ Denn was erlaubt es schließlich, dass ein Ich überhaupt "Ich" sagen kann, und zwar nicht nur als grammatikalischer Indikator in einer Satzaussage, sondern vielmehr als notwendiges unmittelbares "Selbstwissen" um sich selber im Sinne immanenter Selbsterprobung dieses selbstaffektiven Ichs? Letztendlich muss die konkrete oder material phänomenologische Möglichkeit einer lebendigen Ipseisierung apriorisch vorausliegen, damit das Ich solche "Selbstheit" als Identität zwischen dem erprobten "Mich" und präpositional ausgedrückten "Ich" über das Personalpronomen überhaupt vollziehen kann (vgl. Henry 2005, 33ff.).⁵ Jeder Narzissmus im analytisch-therapeutischen Sinne setzt diese originäre Ipseität vor einem primär psychologischen Narzissmus voraus, der bereits ein manifestes Ich sowie den phänomenologischen Selbstbezug darauf in Anspruch nimmt. Die Mystik als auch Ästhetik hinterfragt prinzipiell diese Inanspruchnahme des Ichs für etwas, das nicht das Reale oder Eine bzw. "Gott" wäre, um eben keine Illusion hinsichtlich eines narzisstisch besetzten Selbst- oder Objektbezugs aufkommen oder bestehen zu lassen. In dieser Hinsicht liegen die Mystik wie Ästhetik als Abwesenheit von Phallus und Signifikanten der Psychoanalyse als Theorie und Praxis noch voraus. Das kann Lacan ohne Zweifel durch seine Analyse der *jouissance* bezeugen, denn die Kur ist das Kreisen um diese singuläre Wahrheit eines Vor-Narzisstischen, ohne dabei "Religiöses" oder "Mystisches" in ihrem Verlauf doxologisch thematisieren zu müssen.⁶

Die analytisch-therapeutische Rückfrage an den narzisstischen Selbst- und Objektbezug betrifft praktisch vornehmlich jene projektiven und introjektiven Identifikationen, welche sich als "Allmacht" verstehen, wie Freud (2012, 93ff.) sie schon als affektiv oder erotisch fundierte "Gedankenallmacht" im Totemismus als Magie aufgefunden hatte. Die Mystik als Konfrontation mit der Kastration im Sinne subjektiver Ohnmacht der *ex-sistence* nach Lacan (vgl. Kühn 2016b, 95-113) kann daher als Rückführung jedes magischen Bezugs als "Aberglaube" auf die zuvor genannte Leere verstanden werden, die als phallische Namensabwesenheit die strukturelle Loslösung der Bedeutungsfunktion als Re-präsentation vom Ich wie Realen bzw. Einen beinhaltet. Dass paranoide Ängste schizoiden Zusammenbruchs des Ichs Auslöser für die "Skotomisation" der perzeptiven Allmachtsprojektion auf alle Dinge und andere Personen bilden, um triebhafte Aggression und entsprechenden Neid mit Eifersucht im Verhalten zu generieren, hat neben Melanie Klein ebenfalls Herbert Rosenfeld (2000, 169ff.)⁷ danach offen gelegt. Während Freud (1948b, 139) die psychoanalytische Behandlung vollständig narzisstischer Personen im Sinne von totaler psychotischer "Abwendung ihres Interesses von der Außenwelt" in Bezug auf Personen und Dinge noch für unmöglich - da unheilbar - hielt, betrachtet Rosenfeld eine adaptierte Behandlung als möglich, obwohl ein solcher Patient alles unternimmt, um den Analytiker/Therapeuten von dessen Unvermögen zu überzeugen.

Beispielsweise wird letzterer zur Ablage aller "bösen Objekte", damit sich ein solch narzisstischer Patient im Gefühl eigener umfassender Gutheit sonnen kann. Diese von Allmachtsphantasien genährte Idealisierung macht in der Tat jeden Zugang zu seiner seelischen Wirklichkeit wie zur Außenwelt schwierig, und eine entsprechende Analyse/Therapie vermag nur Fortschritte zu erzielen, wenn die Gefühle von Neid hinter der Frustration als Auslöser einer depressiven Disposition einsichtbar werden. Auf dem Weg dahin können heftige Reaktionsbildungen immer wieder zu schizoiden Widerständen führen, so dass die aggressiven Anteile hier nach und nach integriert werden müssen. Wenn Freud hinsichtlich solch schizophrener und paranoider Patienten mangels ihres

Introspektionsvermögens eine Kur für undurchführbar hielt, so bleibt jedoch zu sehen, dass psychotische Elemente in jedem Individuum gegeben sind, weshalb auch die Psychoanalyse nach Freud Fortschritte in diesem Bereich erzielen konnte.⁸ Denn die narzisstische Übertragung als Allmachtsphantasma impliziert unzutreffende Anfragen an die introjizierten Objekte, was zugleich die Unterscheidung von "Sich" und "Anderen" im eigenen "Selbst" schwierig macht. Wenn immer wieder diskutiert wird, inwieweit die narzisstischen und psychotischen Anteile gleichfalls bei den Mystikern wie Kunstschaffenden eine Rolle spielen,⁹ dann ist dies genau die Frage, bis zu welchem Grad entsprechende Phantasmen nicht mehr auf "Gott" oder das "Werk" projiziert werden, um die eigene Ohnmacht durch "Gottähnlichkeit" oder "Genialität" zu verschleiern (vgl. Kühn 2016a, 179ff.; Lyotard 1994a, 117-138), ohne die Gefühle von Affektion, Liebe und Beziehung selbstaggressiv oder masochistisch leugnen zu müssen.

Wenn nämlich die Mystik oder Ästhetik keinerlei Bezug zu Phallus/Signifikanten mehr beibehalten, sondern das bedingungslose Geltenlassen einer sublimierten und je neuen schöpferischen Beziehung zum Realen oder Einen, dann geht es nicht nur um "Triebentmischung" zwischen Eros und Thanatos nach Freudscher Auffassung (vgl. Ricœur 1965, 297ff.). Auch ergibt nicht länger ein Gefühl der Demütigung für eine "narzisstische Kränkung" das Motiv der mystischen *unio* bzw. des ästhetischen Schaffens, sondern die genannte "Ohnmacht" ist ausschließlich jene immanent erprobte "Gewalt des Lebens", deren "Wunde" (Lacan) auf ein absolut phänomenologisches "Voraus" oder "Mehr des Lebens" hinweist, ohne jemals im Begehren als Liebe zurückerstattet werden zu können, wie es unter anderem bei Hadewijch von Antwerpen (2010, 131; vgl. Ricard 2015, 223-246) unterstrichen werden kann: "In Bezug auf das, was Gott ist, kommt die Vernunft durch das weiter, was Gott nicht ist. [...] Wenn die Vernunft sich dann dem Verlangen der Liebe überlässt und die Liebe sich (andererseits) zwingen lässt [...], dann sind sie gemeinsam in der Lage, Außerordentliches zu vollbringen. Das aber kann man nicht lernen, es sei denn, indem man es erfährt." Wie jede so genannte "Psychopathologie" ist auch der Narzissismus bedingt durch ein

Zuviel des Lebens, durch ein Übermaß jener Passibilität unserer Geburt in diesem transzendentalen Leben, die in ihrer immanent affektiven Schutzlosigkeit als ein "Auf-Sich-Geworfensein" erprobt wird, ohne die Außenwelt irgendwie noch als Fluchtraum nutzen zu können. Führt man daher die narzisstische Grunderfahrung der objektalen oder welthaften Nicht-Bedeutsamkeit phänomenologisch noch einen Schritt weiter, nämlich als Kern der Passibilität in deren reiner Selbstaffektion, wo das Leben ausschließlich sich selbst berührt, dann leitet diese originäre Affektibilität durch das Leben allein zu dem, was Meister Eckhart unsere radikal phänomenologische Ursprungsgegebenheit als "Gott-Erleidende" nannte: "Der Mensch ist ein Gott-Erleidender [...], und dein Erleiden ist dein höchstes Wirken {...}, wenn Du nämlich diese Geburt in dir erfahren willst." (1979, 431 [Predigt 58])

Jeder Leser wird nach den bisherigen Ausführungen nachvollziehen können, dass wir kein narzisstisches Verhalten als solches legitimieren wollen, zum Beispiel die bekannte "narzisstische Wut", die alles beim Anderen verachtet und mit sadistischer Kraft vernichten will, weil man sich als narzisstisches Ich selbst verfolgt und kontrolliert vorkommt (vgl. Kohut 1971, 63ff.). Mit der Mystik und Ästhetik wollten wir nur auf die tiefste "Wunde" hinweisen, die der Narzissismus radikal phänomenologisch offenbart, nämlich kein Selbst ohne Bezug sein zu können. Denn das narzisstische Beharren auf das "Ich" zeigt gerade das affektive Wissen darum, dass dieses Ich aus sich selbst heraus nicht möglich ist - und manifestiert sich aus diesem Grund als Angst vor der Auflösung (vgl. Winnicott 1997, 145ff.). Die Psychoanalyse lässt weitgehend die Grundängste seit dem späteren Freud aus dem Todestrieb entstehen, auch wenn dessen genaue Konzeptualisierung weiterhin umstritten ist (vgl. Thiberge 2018, 127-148). Die Angst um die Desintegration als Auflösung oder psychisch-physischen "Zusammenbruch" des Ichs nach Winnicott setzt aber voraus, dass dieses Ich sich eben originär zunächst als Empfängnis im Leben erprobt und mithin eine unsichtbare Bezüglichkeit verwirklicht, die noch vor jeder "Projektion" im analytisch-therapeutischen Sinne angesichts dieser Angst die Selbstaffektion solch originärer Bezogenheit auf "Anderes" - das Leben - schlechthin erfährt. Ein solch

ursprünglicher Bezug ist dann im Sinne Kierkegaards (1984, 85) durch einen "Sprung" gekennzeichnet, das heißt sein Selbst als Bezug zu erfassen, ohne diesen selber gründen zu können: "Indem sich das Selbst zu sich selbst verhält und indem es selbst sein will, gründet das Selbst durchsichtig in der Macht, die es setzt." Die Projektion auf die "mütterliche Brust" nach Melanie Klein und Winnicott, der daraus eine therapeutische Verstärkung des Narzissmus beim Patienten als wohlwollende Zuwendung während der Kur ableitete, ist daher ein sekundärer Vorgang, da die "gute Brust" der Mutter nicht der originäre Lebensbezug als solcher ist. Deshalb wird die Primärangst der inneren Auflösung oder Zerrissenheit auch gegen eine neue Angst eingetauscht, welche die Angst vor der mütterlichen Brust als dem "bösen Objekt" geworden ist. Schizoider Widerstand wie paranoide Idealisierung bzw. die halluzinatorische Besetzung des "guten Objekts" als eines Phantasmas der Allmacht, welches dann das "böse Objekt" insgesamt verneint und vernichten will, bilden mithin Affekte einer narzisstischen Urangst, solange nicht die rein immanente Ursprünglichkeit des absoluten Lebensbezuges als nicht-repräsentierbare Fundierung des Ichs im rein passiblen Mich verwirklicht wird.

3. Sublimierung und "libidinöse Ökonomie" innerhalb von Kur und Kultur

Wenn die "projektive Identifikation" mithin einen Mechanismus ursprünglicher Abwehr bildet (vgl. Fink 2013, 239ff.), um gute wie schlechte Selbstanteile nach außen zu verlagern und sie dann als Objekte von Liebe und Hass zu erleben, dann bedeutet die Sublimierung, welche wir hier im Zusammenhang mit Narzissmus, Mystik und Ästhetik problematisierten, eine Gegenbewegung derartiger Identifikationen. Durch Reduktion der besetzten Objekte unterscheidet sich die Person von ihren Objekten, da nicht mehr die Kontrolle auf aggressive oder narzisstische Weise über das gehasste oder geliebte Objekt gesucht wird, sondern dessen Eigenleben, wie es besonders das je einmalige Kunstwerk bereits verdeutlichen konnte. Die Mystik geht sogar noch einen Schritt weiter und gesteht der "Schöpfung" insgesamt die Möglichkeit eines "Ko-Pathos" (Henry) zu,¹⁰ der primäre Besetzungen als

Identifikationen und Verschmelzungen aufhebt, um zumeist in einer poetisch-mystischen Sprache das Eigenwesen aller Dinge bejahen zu können, die insgesamt dem Einen entstammen. Auch W. R. Bions (2006) Beobachtungen zur projektiven Fragmentierung der Objekte, die zugleich eine psychotische Fragmentierung von Empfinden, Aufmerksamkeit, Gedächtnis und Urteil einschließt, sind ein Weg, über eine gelungene Sublimierung solche Aufspaltungen aufzuheben. Denn das Objekt ist dann nicht länger ein eingelagerter Teil der narzisstischen Person, da die Sinne nicht mehr an fixierte Wahrnehmungsvorstellungen als "Skotomisation" gebunden sind (vgl. Freud 1991, 191f.), sondern sich schöpferisch befreien für die Aufnahme von Neuem wie Anderem. In solcher Perspektive wird innerhalb der Mystik und Ästhetik eben die gesamte Schöpfung (Welt) nicht länger aus der eigenen narzisstischen Sicht in eingengter "Lektüre" wahrgenommen, sondern dank einer "entleerten Aufmerksamkeit" als das, was sie ohne Bedeutungsverzerrung für sich selbst ist. Simone Weil nannte dies die "De-kreation" für eine ungetrübte Wirklichkeitsbegegnung, das heißt eine Form philosophisch-mystischer Reduktion unserer übereilten und interessierten Sinngebungen mit Nähe zur Phänomenologie (vgl. Kühn 2019, 42ff.).

Da eine ähnliche Verwandlung durch die Lehranalyse aufseiten des Analytikers/Therapeuten stattgefunden haben sollte, könnte man mit Lacan sagen, dass deren "Selbstlegitimierung" von keinem Wissen mehr herkommt, sondern von dem, was der Analytiker *ist* (vgl. Langlitz 2005, 258ff.). Die Sublimierung innerhalb der Übertragungsphänomene wäre dann die Ebene des jeweilig singulären Seins, das nicht einem vorausbestehenden Theoriewissen angeglichen wird, sondern in seiner eigenen Wahrheit zu existieren vermag - was sich in der Folge als schöpferische "Freisetzung" in allen Bezügen auswirkt. Deshalb sollte der Analytiker/Therapeut seine eigenen narzisstischen und psychotischen Anteile gut kennen gelernt haben, damit sie nicht zu Abwehrmechanismen gegenüber den geäußerten wie verschwiegenen Gefühlen des Patienten werden und möglicherweise dadurch in die "Deutungen" einfließen. Er kann sich mithin nicht länger hinter seinem theoretischen Sozialisationswissen verbergen, da sonst

die narzisstische Gefahr bestünde zu wissen, was der Patient (noch) nicht weiß, wogegen die - nie im Vorhinein festgelegte - analytisch-therapeutische Erfahrung innerhalb der Kur insgesamt spricht (vgl. Haynal 2001, 63-82; Badiou u. Cassin 2012; 62ff.; Thiberge 2018). Die Sublimierung solcher imaginären "Allmächtigkeit" löst daher die Illusion eines *universalen Wissens* zugunsten der Singularität der jeweiligen Patienten auf, so wie ebenfalls die Mystik jedes einzelne Ding "in Gott" erblickt, um sein Eigenwesen dergestalt zu achten.¹¹ Wir beschreiben hier keinerlei Idealzustand, sondern die strukturelle Möglichkeit, wie Sublimierung, Mystik und Ästhetik in der Kulturwirklichkeit heute einen Weg bahnen könnten, die psychologisch narzisstischen wie perversen Elemente in eine Originarität zurückzuführen, wo sie nicht mehr von Urängsten und deren Abwehr genährt sind, sondern in die Selbstliebe des unmittelbaren Lebens und dessen *auto-jouissance* transformiert werden, die der Narzissmus als seine eigene phänomenologische Vorbedingung vergessen hat.¹²

In der Kur müssen ohne Zweifel weiterhin Angst, Neid, Hass und Zerstörungstendenzen vom Patienten entgegengenommen werden, so wie sich auch die MystikerInnen mit diesen affektiven Gegebenheiten zu konfrontieren haben, um sie in die genannte Quelle der Liebe zurückzuverwandeln, die für sie die "Erotik Gottes" ist. Sublimierung wie Mystik, aber ebenfalls die Ästhetik, setzen sich daher ohne phantasmatisch fixierte Einschränkung dem Realen aus, um jene Vorstellungsfreiheit zu verwirklichen, die jedes Mal am Anfang vom erwähnten schöpferisch Neuen steht, welches dann auch von allen Anderen prinzipiell als kulturelle Möglichkeit ergriffen zu werden vermag.¹³ Die symbolische Kommunikation ohne Fixierung auf den Phallus als fremdverfügte gesellschaftliche Wiederholung gehört daher zum kulturellen Wesen neuer sublimierter Zugänge zum Wirklichen ebenso wie die mystisch-ästhetische Sprache Bedeutungskonventionen aufbricht, um Widerstände und Abwehr von Mechanismen unmöglicher Veränderung zu befreien und das "Ungesagte" des Begehrens frei zu setzen (vgl. zum Beispiel Raynova 2009). Wenn der Narzissmus durchgehend eine *Über-Idealisierung* beinhaltet, die alles Erscheinende der Kontrolle des allmächtig gewählten

narzisstischen Ichs unterwirft, dann ist die Mystik/Ästhetik die Rückführung einer solch phallischen Begrenzung des Gegebenen auf das originäre Erscheinen-Können aller Manifestation als absolut phänomenologischem Selbsterscheinen des leiblich-affektiven Lebens. Dieses ist kein Ich, Selbst oder Subjekt im reflexiven oder psychologischen Sinne, sondern ein *sich*-gebender oder kreativer Erscheinensvollzug dank transzendentaler Subjektivität.

Die Mystik bzw. Ästhetik dieser lebendigen, realen oder "göttlichen" Ursprungsbezüglichkeit in allem Erscheinenden befreit den Narzissmus daher sowohl von seiner Selbstidealisierung als Selbstschutz vor Demütigungen und Frustrationen wie vor den entsprechenden aggressiven Tendenzen mit Allmachtsphantasien. Letztere lassen keine Abhängigkeit oder Ohnmacht gegenüber Anderen oder in seinem eigenen Inneren zu, weil die Ursprungsgegebenheit des passiblen Mich als *relatio* im Sinne Kierkegaards unter anderem verkannt wird. Die Mystik bei Meister Eckhart und ihre sonstige philosophische Interpretation beispielsweise durch Spinoza, Fichte und Henry ist daher nicht ohne Grund eine "Phänomenologie der Geburt" als jenem transzendentalen Ursprungsgeschehen, welches kein Phantasma der Übermächtigkeit oder Arroganz mehr zulässt, da die reine Passibilität solcher Gebürtigkeit jede Selbstüberschätzung im Sinne der Fundierung des eigenen Ichs durch dieses selbst grundsätzlich ausschließt (vgl. Reaidy 2008, 159-185). Demütigung, Neid, Hass und aggressive Strebungen sind als affektive Erprobungen im Bereich des Mystischen bzw. Ästhetischen daher von vornherein einer Motivations- oder Signifikantenreduktion unterworfen, um im wahrgenommenen Abstand zur ungeschuldeten Geburt im Leben jene "Erotik Gottes" im Sinne Lacans auszumachen, welche als "Ko-Pathos" die signitive Offenheit für das ganze Sein als "Schöpfung" oder "Leben" nicht ausschließt: "Gutheit aber ist das, worin Gott ausschmilzt und sich allen Kreaturen mitteilt." (vgl. Eckhart 1979, 234 [Predigt 18]; Henry 2005, 140-162)

Der Narzissmus prätendiert ein Absolutes seiner selbst, anstatt das Absolute als nicht-phallische Bezüglichkeit in der jeweiligen *jouissance* eines ent-idealisierten Aktes oder

Symbolischen zu verstehen. Auch die Todeswünsche im Narzissmus und Masochismus mit ihrem Hang zu Depression oder Melancholie auf der Basis ursprünglicher Traumatisierungen durch die "Urkonflikte" nach Melanie Klein (1992; vgl. Caper 2000; Kristeva 1987) bergen noch die absolute Selbstreferenz der Beherrschung, anstatt dem Absoluten oder Realen der objektal unbesetzten Lebensbezüglichkeit ihr immanent effektives Werk zu überlassen. Vergessen wir nicht, dass auch jeder Narzissmus ein subjektives Leiden diesseits aller psychopathologischen Aspekte darstellt, dann bleibt es die Aufgabe von Analyse/Therapie wie Kultur, jenen Weg der Selbstveränderung begehbar zu machen, welcher nicht zu einem neuerlich phantasmatisch besetzten "Ich" führt, sondern an jenen Punkt, wo Mystik und Ästhetik als "Kastration" sich immer schon bewegen - am Ort der transzendentalen Geburt als reiner Bezüglichkeit. Die Psychoanalyse muss denselben als solchen nicht benennen, aber auch sie ist nicht vom "Punkt Null" ausgeschlossen, wie W. R. Bion ihn gegenüber Freud erweitert hat (vgl. Bion 1993, 105f.; dazu Wiedenmann 2007; Witte 2010, 95ff.).

Ob die Mystik eine leitende "Systemrelevanz" für die heutige Kultur innehat, lässt sich naturgemäß nicht so leicht beantworten wie im Falle der Religionen, die in dieser Hinsicht erst von der Moderne zurückgedrängt wurden, weil sie kein sicheres Wissen mehr im Sinne der säkularisierten "Selbstbehauptung" liefern konnten, wenn man der thelogiekritischen These von Hans Blumenberg folgen will (vgl. Goebel 2007, 177-202). Auf der anderen Seite scheinen die neuen Formen an "Spiritualität" Freuds Religionskritik im Anschluss an Kant und Feuerbach insoweit in Frage zu stellen, als es eben nicht mehr darum vor allem geht, das gesamtgesellschaftliche System durch religiöse Gebote zu stützen. Vielmehr sollen andere bereichernde Selbst- und Weltzugänge gefunden werden, welche nicht unbedingt rein vernunftbasiert auftreten, sondern sich mehr einer "Lebensästhetik" angleichen (vgl. Kühn 2007; Gödde, Loukidelis u. Zirfas 2016). Paradoxerweise hat Freud indessen diese Entwicklung durch seine Kultur- wie Religionskritik selbst beflügelt, da auch er letztendlich weder eine Versicherung in der Wissenschaft noch durch die Natur

einsichtig machen konnte. Eher favorisierte er in seinem Spätwerk ein "schwebendes Subjekt", welches sich im internen Konflikt der topisch-energetischen Instanzen von Ich-Es-Überich in gewisser Weise ständig neu erfinden muss, was dann die Postmoderne aufgriff.¹⁴ Auf dieses Subjekt "ohne Wurzeln" antwortet heute die Spiritualität als eine offensichtliche Sehnsucht nach Kontinuität, während die Mystik weder einem Metaphysischen noch Naturalem im weitesten Sinne verpflichtet ist, sondern gerade jene phallische, symbolische oder welthafte "Unsicherheit" akzeptiert, die auch Freud kannte, indem er jeder Versuchung für sich widerstand, einen "festen Boden" durch "Wunschphantasien" zu erstellen - es sei denn, man fasst seine ethische "Resignation" hinsichtlich der Ananké als ein säkular Absolutes auf: "Für die [religiöse Weltanschauung] ist es aber nicht wesentlich, ob sie das Ideal menschlichen Handelns in Christus, Buddha oder Confucius sieht und zur Nachahmung empfiehlt. Ihr Wesen sind die frommen Illusionen von Vorsehung und sittlicher Weltordnung, die der Vernunft widersprechen." (Brief an Oskar Pfister vom 16. Februar 1929; vgl. Freud 1963, 267f.)

In der neueren Spiritualität geht es jedoch weniger um Vorsehung und Sittenordnung als um die individuelle wie kulturelle Problematik einer nicht-relationalen Negativität schlechthin, die an sich in Bezug auf Kierkegaard oder die Lebensphänomenalität nicht haltbar ist. Ob die Spiritualität heute beides miteinander verbinden kann - Verzweiflung bzw. Melancholie der post-modernen Negativität und "Sprung" in eine vorreflexive, unmittelbar lebendige Relation¹⁵ - ist kaum beantwortet, was jedoch für die Mystik als Erprobung des Abgrunds unserer Erfahrung schlechthin in jeder Bindung und Beziehung außer Frage steht. Sollte sich demnach die gegenwärtige Kultur noch stärker mit solcher "Bodenlosigkeit" oder "Nicht-Kontinuität" interreligiös wie interkulturell als auch technisch-wissenschaftlich konfrontiert erleben, dann besitzen Mystik wie Ästhetik ein Hinweispotential zum Durchschreiten dieser post-metaphysischen Gegebenheit. Zumal sie weniger die gesellschaftliche Systemrelevanz insgesamt in den Blick nimmt als die konkrete Wirklichkeit dessen, wozu jede Subjektivität ko-pathisch in der Lage bleibt: Phantasma, Signifikant oder

Phallus samt Narzissmus, Masochismus wie Aggressivität hinter sich zu lassen.

Jean-François Lyotard, der sich ausführlich mit dem "Erhabenen" bei Kant auseinandergesetzt hat, um die strukturalistische Beschränkung auf Diskurse und Texte in der Postmoderne zu überwinden, versuchte daher besonders mit Rückgriff auf die Malerei und Musik eine Ästhetik von Wahrnehmung und Affekten zu entwerfen (Lyotard 1994b, 71-90). Diese folgt seinem frühen triebökonomischen Ansatz im Sinne einer "libidinösen Ökonomie", um totalisierende Einstellungen zu überwinden, wie sie selbst noch bei Marx wie Freud vorliegen. Lyotards - als überall präsent gedachte - Energien sowie affektive Intensitäten, wie sie auch bei Deleuze und Guattari (1972) zur Durchführung einer Kritik am Ödipuskomplex vorliegen, sind nach dem Modell eines Möbiusbandes konzipiert, um sich als eine gegensatzfreie "kurzlebige Haut" (*pellicule éphémère*) zu ereignen (1974, 11ff.). Dies bildet insofern einen Zusammenhang mit unserer Diskussion zur Sublimierung, als Lyotard einerseits durch die libidinöse Intensität herkömmliche metaphysische Unterscheidungen wie Innen/Außen und deren Tendenz zu Verfestigung und Hegemonie überwinden will. Die Intensität der Affekte öffnet demzufolge einen Spielraum neuer Möglichkeiten im Sinne libidinöser "Ereignisse" (*événements*), die subversive Kräfte besitzen und daher zum Anlass für "widerstreitende" Äußerungen und Interpretationen gemäß seiner Auffassung vom *différend* im öffentlichen Diskurs werden können (vgl. Lyotard 1983), so wie die Sublimierung einen phantasieoffenen Schwebezustand herbeizuführen vermag, wie wir sahen. Dem entspricht Lyotards Kritik am Objektivismus jeder Art, insofern er für Psyche, Geschichte und Soziales durch diese allgemeine "libidinöse Ökonomie" des Bildhaften und der Affekte die Monotonie vorherrschender sprachlicher Ordnungen unterbrechen möchte.

Ästhetik und Intensität als Sublimierung übernehmen daher die Aufgabe, den Bedeutungsfluss menschlicher Kommunikation in jedem Lebensaugenblick als eine sich erneuernde Ausgangssituation zu ergreifen, welche die verschiedenen Diskursformen im Sinne von Lyotards Theorie

des postmodernen Denkens als plurale Verkettung entstehen lassen. Wenn Kommunikation somit nicht unter einer *einzig*en Regel subsumiert werden kann, dann ist auch die Sublimierung genau das Offenhalten für alternative Diskurs- und Handlungspraktiken, die unter ethischem Gesichtspunkt dem je eigenen Wahrnehmungsurteil in dessen singulärem Vollzug gleichkommen. Letzterer entzieht sich wie das "Erhabene" aller "Darstellbarkeit", so dass sich eine dadurch ergebende "postmoderne Moral" als das Überschreiten aller transzendenten Vorstellungsurteile zugunsten von ästhetischen Urteilen im Sinne eines "Bezeugens" erweist (vgl. Lyotard 2005, 185-198; Schlecht 2020). Die mit Th. W. Adorno geteilte Kritik an einer heute allseits "verwalteten Welt" (vgl. Zima 2016, 378ff.) will das Inhumane des aufklärerischen Humanismus daher nicht durch eine weitere Form desselben überwinden, sondern sich eher einer neuen "Kindheit" (*enfance*) vergewissern, aus der sich Affekt und Wahrnehmung ereignishaft oder intensiv speisen.

Demzufolge entspricht dann die ästhetisch lebensweltliche Sublimierung der "libidinösen Ökonomie" einem versuchten Hinausgehen über Subjektphilosophie wie Materialismus (vgl. Wendel 2002), um einen "Ort" aufzufinden, der nicht mehr gedanklich fixierbar ist. Der Bruch mit jeder Semiotik, Dialektik als auch Kritik bezweckt bei Lyotard eine Abwendung vom "Denken des Negativen", um eben die Sublimierung durch Intensitäten von Affekten zu ermöglichen, die sich im Denken und in der Bedeutungssuche selbst verbergen. Dieser Bruch mit der herkömmlichen Begriffs- und Vorstellungsphilosophie entspricht mithin einer "Verlagerung" des Sprechens, das wie bei Deleuze und Guattari, aber auch bei Pierre Klossowski, durch seine Ortlosigkeit von Identität wie Sinn ebenfalls zur "Abdrift" (*dérive*) wird. Die "libidinöse Ökonomie" ist hierbei eine semantische Entlehnung von Marx wie Freud gleichzeitig, um mit Hilfe des ästhetisch sublimierten Wahrnehmungsurteils der Unterdrückung wie Entfremdung durch Kapital und psychische Verdrängung zu entkommen. Lyotard geht dabei noch einen Schritt weiter, indem er auch die klassische Religionskritik über den laizistischen Atheismus hinausführt, nämlich in Richtung einer heidnischen Ersetzung der jüdisch-christlichen Tradition. Dies ist für die Frage der

Sublimierung strukturell insofern relevant, als die Götter und Göttinnen, welche es für alle Situationen, Naturbereiche und menschlichen Angelegenheiten in der griechischen wie römischen Antike gab, nunmehr das "Göttliche" (*le divin*) eines jeden Augenblicks bedeuten, sofern dieser eben in einmalig affektiver Intensität gelebt wird: "Wir begehren den Atheismus des libidinösen Möbiusbandes [...]; er muss heidnisch sein, das heißt bejahend (*affirmatif*)." Diese "Affirmation" ist nicht länger durch "eine paradoxe, dialektische, willkürliche, terroristische Verbindung mit einem abwesenden Gesetz oder Sinn verknüpft, sondern [sie wird] als Singularitäten empfunden, die sich in der Beteuerung selbst genügen. *Das Göttliche* [in den antiken Volksreligionen] war schlicht und einfach diese Selbstbeteuerung." Dementsprechend wird die ästhetisch perzeptive Sublimierung als Urteil des Augenblicks für das singular Gelebte ein göttliches, ohne noch irgendeinen Verweis auf eine externe Religion oder Theologie zu enthalten. Dies fasst der kurze Satz zusammen: "*Darin sein und vergessen*" (vgl. Deleuze u. Guattari 1974, 15 u. 11),¹⁶ um für die Sublimierung des Augenblicks jede Vermittlung abzulehnen, unter deren Kritik für Lyotard dann auch die Zentralbegriffe der Andersheit (A) und des phallischen Signifikanten nach Lacan fallen. Denn sie suggerierten noch den transzendenten Versuch einer Vereinheitlichung, indem sie das singular Gelebte mit dem Makel der Abwesenheit und des "Mangels an Sein" versehen. Damit avanciert die Sublimierung zu einem postmodernen Numen, wie es auch Deleuze/Guattari für ihre *machines désirantes* als Vorgängigkeit der Natur oder der Erde vor allen Teilungen durch die Repräsentation in Anspruch nahmen.

Über Freud hinaus gewinnt damit die Sublimierung nicht nur einen individuellen wie kulturellen Stellenwert im Bereich des Ästhetischen und Wissenschaftlichen, sondern ihre sekundäre Desexualisierung schränkt in keiner Weise die Kraft des Libidinösen ein, welches als Begehren immer nur sich selbst in seiner Intensität nach den zuletzt genannten postmodernen Autoren kennt. Damit ist auch der Bezug zum Narzissmus als Ich- und Objektaffirmation ein anderer, denn die Intensität des Begehrens misst sich - wie in der Henryschen Lebensselbstaffektion - schließlich nicht mehr allein an ihrem Bezug zum Ich

oder Objekt, sondern an der einmaligen Vollzugswirklichkeit des sublimierenden Aktes selbst, der damit außerhalb jeder allgemeinen Vergleichs- und Beurteilungsmöglichkeit steht. *Er wird immanent erprobt oder nicht.* Auf diese Weise fallen für eine analytisch-therapeutische wie radikal phänomenologische Aktanalyse die Singularität von Freisetzung aus dem Phantasma und die Sublimierung als Neuschöpfung von Wirklichem zusammen. Dadurch vermag beides als die ursprunghafte Potentialisierung eines jeden Lebensaugenblicks verstanden werden, welcher mit der je transzendentalen Geburt der Subjektivität in der *auto-jouissance* des rein phänomenologischen Lebens selbst identisch ist. Sublimierung entspricht daraufhin mit anderen Worten der "Selbststeigerung" des Lebens als einem ständigen Wachsen aus sich selbst heraus; mithin einer immanenten "Subjektivität", welche nicht mehr mit dem "Ich" der Vorstellung zusammenfällt, sondern mit dem undarstellbaren Ursprung als "Mich". Da in diesem letzteren keine Distanz zum rein phänomenologischen Leben mehr gegeben ist, besitzt auch der Narzissmus im primären wie sekundären Sinne keinen Entstehungsraum zur ausschließlichen Selbstfixierung eines "Ichs" mehr. Die Empfängnis des Lebens in dessen Originarität eröffnet vielmehr jeden Lebensaugenblick als mögliche Sublimierung von Sein und Begegnung, wodurch das Außen oder die Transzendenz der Realität in die Immanenz selbst hineingenommen wird. Denn die "Sublimierung" ist nicht etwas, das kontingent zum Leben hinzuträte, weil es unvollkommen wäre, sondern dessen innere Bewegung selbst, die sich aus seiner eigenen Fülle als Begehren, Affekt wie Intensität nährt (vgl. Vaschalde 2022, 192-204).

Damit sind Mystik und Ästhetik, die wir hauptsächlich als Beispiele der Sublimierung aufgegriffen, nicht beliebige Elemente solch transzendental lebendiger Sublimierung, sondern deren unmittelbare Vollzugsweise, insofern keine Potentialisierung ohne Empfängnis des sich affizierenden Lebens denkbar wäre (vgl. Kühn 2022). Die Psychoanalyse hat mithin eine Grundbewegung des "Unbewussten" als "Leben" richtig erkannt. Aber da diese immanente Lebensbewegung phänomenologisch als Ursprungsbezug des Lebens im metagenealogischen Sinne beschrieben werden kann, sollte

letztlich nicht der analytisch-therapeutische Zusammenhang von Sublimierung/Narzissmus allein maßgeblich bleiben, sondern die Einschreibung der Sublimierung in die Lebensursprünglichkeit mit hineingenommen wird. Als *Kraft* jeglichen Könnens ist der Vollzug solchen Könnens als lebendige Transzendentalität oder Subjektivität immer auch in seiner immanenten Verwirklichung "Sublimierung" für alle Kulturbereiche - nämlich nuancierter wahrzunehmen (Ästhetik), keinen Objektbezug zu hypostasieren (Mystik) sowie allem Sein sein Eigenwesen des Erscheinens zu lassen (Ethos). Diese Trias von Ästhetik, Mystik und Ethos ist nicht zufällig, insofern das individuierte Leben dessen Ursprung "erleidet", zugleich aber auch in die je subjektive wie kulturelle Steigerung mit hineingenommen wird, die keinem äußeren Maß unterliegt, sondern dem Vollzug der Immanenz als ihrer jeweiligen Selbstgebung entspricht, das heißt ihrer *auto-jouissance*. Damit ist die Sublimierung nicht länger - wie bei Freud - ein moralischer Sollensanspruch, über rein sexuelle Ziele hinaus zu gelangen, sondern eine permanente Vollzugswirklichkeit des rein phänomenologischen Lebens selbst, um in all seinen Punkten stets und überall mit sich selbst jeweils übereinstimmen zu können.

ANMERKUNGEN

¹ Vgl. auch M. Henrys *Roman L'amour les yeux fermés* (Henry 1976).

² Vgl. Ricard 2015. Zur Abgrenzung von Freud, der jedes "ozeanische Gefühl", Ekstase, Trance etc. als Verhaftung im primären Narzissmus ablehnt, siehe bereits Assoun (1980, 53-75), sowie H. u. M. Vermorel (1993) und Hulin (1993, 29ff.).

³ Letzteres besonders im Fall des sufischen Mystikers al-Halladsch; vgl. Tabatabaei (2017, 59-79, hier 69f.), Al-Halladsch (1985), Ricard (2015, 201-220).

⁴ Zur weiteren philosophisch-analytischen Diskussion der Ursprungsproblematik vgl. ebenfalls Laplanche u. Pontalis (1961) (dt. 1992); sowie Laplanche (1988). Dazu Kühn (2020a, 127ff.).

⁵ Vgl. Kawase (2018, 18-33), mit Fallbeispielen aus Schizophrenie, Epilepsie und atypischen Psychosen.

⁶ Für die Notwendigkeit inneren "Loslassens" im kreativen Akt der Malerei als "Inspiration" vgl. Riepl (2019).

⁷ Siehe außerdem Kernberg (1981), Titze (2011, 124ff.).

⁸ Wir verweisen hier gleichfalls auf die aktuelle Diskussion über die zunehmende "gewöhnliche Psychose" als narzisstische Identitätsbrüche im

Kontext der Postmoderne; vgl. Pirard (2010), Lasch (1986), Goldberg (2001, 49-60).

⁹ Vgl. die immer noch wertvolle klassische Studie von Janet (1926); sowie Skodlar u. Ciglencecki (2015, 151-169).

¹⁰ Für den Buddhismus vgl. Maithrimurthi (1999).

¹¹ Vgl. etwa Bonaventura (2019, 51f.).

¹² Zum "Vergessen des Lebens" vgl. Henry (1997, 186ff.; 2002, 291ff.).

¹³ Zur Rolle der kulturellen "Aneignung" durch "Nachahmung" vgl. Henry (1994, 355ff.), mit Rückgriff auf den Soziologen Guillaume de Tarde, was eine lebensweltlich weitgehend geteilte gesellschaftliche Symbolik mit einschließt; siehe gleichfalls Bohleber (2009).

¹⁴ Vgl. vor allem hierzu die Beiträge von R. Lesmeister, D. Finkelde und G. Schneider in: Frick u. Hamburger (2020b).

¹⁵ Vgl. zum Vorbegrifflichen die umfassende Untersuchung von Dopatka (2019).

¹⁶ Für die Mystikgeschichte vgl. auch Girndt (1992).

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The Fundamental Ontology of Developmental Psychology: The Development of the Self as a Systematic Relationship between the Concept of the World and the Concept of the Self in Orientation towards Absolute Infinity

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Abstract

In contemporary models of developmental psychology, human development is divided into a series of stages. All of these models are based on certain worldviews that create an overarching framework. This gives the world an arbitrary ontology as well as a limiting direction for development. In contrast, it is shown here that, following Jaspers, there is a need for the orientation towards absolute infinity and consequently an openness of worldviews, and that, following Heidegger, developmental psychology must necessarily build on fundamental ontology. This fundamental ontology of developmental psychology is then determined by, first, identifying the basic inner orientation of the self as the relation between the self and its most general essence and being, and, second, by describing the ontological nature of the most general essence of being and entity. Following this, a new development model based on the fundamental ontology is described.

Keywords: developmental psychology, fundamental ontology, absolute infinity, worldviews, being, entity

1. Contemporary models of developmental psychology: their orientation towards fixed worldviews and their lack of a relation to the being

Psychological models that consider the development of the self and its cognitive faculty extend Jean Piaget's stage model of cognitive development (Piaget 1964) to include further stages for the entire lifespan. These stage models primarily consider the entire course of ego or self-development without

focusing on specific areas of influence, as e.g. learning-theoretical, socio-biological or psychoanalytic approaches (e.g. Freud's drive satisfaction) do (Diem-Wille 2011; Gottlieb 1996; Maier 1988; Nielsen 1994). Piaget mainly looked at the human development of childhood and adolescence and considered development to be largely completed when the last stage of the adolescence was reached (Hasselhorn and Schneider 2007, chap. 3). The extended models, which examine the entire lifespan, are open-ended with regard to age, but, like Piaget's model for childhood and adolescence, they describe a fixed sequence of stages that is assumed to have a final stage. Examples of these models are: Jane Loevinger's model of ego development with nine stages (Hy and Loevinger 2014; Loevinger 1966), Cook-Greuter's extension of this model to ten stages (Susanne Regina Cook-Greuter 1999), Alexander's studies on higher levels of consciousness (Alexander, Boyer, and Alexander 1987), Gebser's stage model of the development of consciousness (Gebser 1985), Kegan's six-stage model (Kegan 1982), Kohlberg's six-stage model¹ (Kohlberg 1985), Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (Maslow and Lewis 1987), McClelland's model of motivation with three dominant needs², which is based on a personality theory by Henry Murray (McClelland 1961; Murray 1938), or Erikson's eight-level model (Erikson 2007). Although all of these development models attempt to provide a comprehensive system of human development, all of them have the characteristic in common that they are based on a specific worldview, i.e. consider a specific order of the world as given, whereby the respective worldview determines the development, its direction and possibilities, since there is agreement on the fact that the relationship between world and self is the dominant impulse for development.

However, neither the relation of the self to its being³ (including the relation of the self-development and the associated development of its cognitive faculty to their respective being), nor the nature of being, i.e. the fundamental ontological prerequisites of the world, are considered. This is necessary, since through its being-in-the-world every entity, and thus also every subject with its individual development, is bound to align itself with this respective being (Heidegger 1967, 104-106; Mühlenbeck 2021, 345). Hence, following Heidegger, it is shown that developmental psychology must necessarily be built on fundamental ontology. Heidegger pointed out how the individual sciences work within their own limited ontologies

and leave out their own question of being, which is why it is necessary to constitute them on a fundamental ontology - outside themselves: "The question of being therefore aims at an a priori condition of the possibility not only of Sciences that research entities as such and such entities and in doing so already move within an understanding of being, but on the condition of the possibility of the ontologies themselves that lie before the ontic sciences and that underpin them."⁴ (Heidegger 1967, 11) It is worth mentioning that the understanding of the terms 'subject' and 'self' are congruent in Heidegger's fundamental ontology and developmental psychology, because Heidegger no longer attributes a special position to the subject, since he highlights its being-in-the-world, i.e. the fundamental ontology is not derived from the subject, but must also be applied to it as it is applied to every other entity (Heidegger 2000, 72-73). The subject is thus understood as that which arises in relation to the specific being (the *Dasein*) and the most general being. Equivalently, in psychology the 'self' is that which emerges from the relation to its environment in the course of human development.

In addition, a predetermined direction of development, as implied in the stage models of development, creates an imbalance and an arbitrary limitation. Hence, following Jaspers, it is shown that there is a need for the orientation towards absolute infinity and consequently an openness of worldviews. When the direction and modality of one's own development are predetermined from the outside and can no longer be determined individually, the individual is disconnected from its natural, i.e. inner, orientation. Furthermore, an arbitrary determination of developmental stages and the associated identification with content of the worldview includes a form of fixation that C.G. Jung described as inflation (Jung 1999, 27-29), since for each stage a separation between subject- and object-contents is assumed, with which on the one hand an identification or on the other hand a differentiation is conducted (Mühlenbeck 2022, 202; Jaspers 1919; Kegan 1982). In addition, this determination of stages also includes a hierarchy of development, even though it is discussed whether this hierarchy should be understood as a vertical or horizontal direction of development or whether a higher development actually represents a 'better' development (Susanne Regina Cook-Greuter 1999; Susanne R Cook-Greuter 2000). If, however, a hierarchy is accepted in human development and consciousness in general, then it would have

to be accepted for all biological evolution as well, which is not the case within evolution. Despite the increase in complexity, evolution does not follow a development plan, but rather occupies all existing niches with suitable abilities, for which other living beings are less suitable (Darwin 1909). This assumption about the variety of evolution does not follow from a strict physicalism, in which chance is accepted as the only determining force besides the physical forces of nature, but rather from a strict ontological pluralism, in which no form of dominant determining force is assumed, as it applies to every form of development - and evolution is development *per se* - because there is no single determining essence of development. Instead, development is always the relationship between entities and their specific and most general being (Heidegger 1989, 407, 470, 494).

Therefore, Heidegger's and Jaspers' argumentation can be used to solve the existing problems, since the former exposed the limitations of the specific ontologies of the individual sciences and their associated necessity to be based on the fundamental ontology - as a condition of the possibility of the sciences in general - (Heidegger 1967, 11) and the latter highlighted, through his psychology of worldviews, not only the relationship between self, world and worldview but also our development within this relationship (Jaspers 1919, chap. 2-3). This will be used to determine the fundamental ontology of developmental psychology afterwards. Two things are necessary to be named and connected for this: on the one hand, the basic inner orientation of the self, which is already present before any specific orientation by worldviews and life cycles, i.e. the reference of the self to its most general essence and being, and on the other hand, the ontological nature of the most general essence of being and entity.

2. The necessity of the orientation towards absolute infinity and the openness of worldviews

First, we consider the relationship between every entity, and thus also every subject, to its most general essence and its most general being, i.e. the necessary anchoring of the subject in the being. Since every entity can be understood as a realm of being, the most general essence of entity and being coincide, so we can speak of the most general essence of being *and* entity (Heidegger 1989, 372; Lanzi 2013, 72; Mühlenbeck 2021, 348). That means, the essence of the subject already belongs to its

being, since the subject as an entity is constituted by any spatiotemporal background and foreground, whereby we arrive at absolute infinity in any direction (Heidegger 1967, 365-366; Mühlenbeck 2020, 261, 275), as we will see later in more detail. This constitution through absolute infinity characterizes the most general essence of being, which includes the being and the essence of any entity. And this most general essence of being (and entity) thus also constitutes the subject's natural inner orientation, as Jaspers described in his *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen* (Psychology of Worldviews) (Jaspers 1919, 129) and Heidegger explained in his *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*: for him the relation between every entity and its most general essence and being is the necessary condition of every existence and intuition (Heidegger 1967, 101; 1989, 411; Mühlenbeck 2021, 363-364). With both it becomes clear that the most general essence of being and entity can be identified with absolute infinity (Heidegger 1967, 101; 1989, 408; Jaspers 1919, 130, 370-371; Mühlenbeck 2021, 362). In contrast to the stage models of development described above, Jaspers described the development of humans and their (self-) consciousness as a process of differentiation in different dimensions and for this process the subject-object separation as fundamental for the formation of a self-concept and of worldviews. However, subject and object only describe different perspectives within the self. Subjective contents are attitudes and objective, concrete contents are the knowledge that a person has about the world, they form the worldview. As a result, the self consists of the relationship between inside and outside, without a clear division into two realms. (Jaspers 1919, 122) Therefore, in his psychology, the concept of the subject-object-separation is not to be understood as in contemporary development models. Because of its relational nature, it cannot be identified with one realm, subject or object. However, the most important feature of his psychology of worldviews is that the self does not only have a relation to its worldview, but in addition always a superordinate relation to infinity, which Jaspers describes in detail as necessarily absolutely infinite (Jaspers 1919, 129-130). Thus, the individual is at the center of a periphery that is formed by the worldview. The attitudes are functions within the worldview, which on the one hand seize the objective, on the other hand are trapped in it. (Jaspers 1919, 122) During development, however, the relation to this outer horizon, and beyond, is differentiated. At first, Jaspers distinguishes three modes of existence of the worldview, which

always exist simultaneously in the human being and interpenetrate or influence one another (Jaspers 1919, 126-127): 1. the experienced world, which is connected or interwoven with the soul and which is not objectively known; 2. the objectified, known and experienced world about which information can be given; 3. the merely known but not experienced world. These three modes of existence always shape the worldview simultaneously, i.e. they constantly influence and transform each other (Jaspers 1919, 128). Jaspers then describes this transformation as a process of differentiation, which leads from the immediate, concrete, to the depleted, abstract, or, conversely, from a merely known worldview to a process of awakening the soul (Jaspers 1919, 128). He distinguishes four forms of this process of differentiation, whereby the first three describe the way of transformation and the fourth the overarching direction of transformation (Jaspers 1919, 128-129): 1. what is practiced unconsciously is structured and consciously aware - development from within; 2. the ability to experience spreads out, i.e. experiences multiply and knowledge is restructured and expanded from the outside through new experiences - development through new external information; 3. a combination of an ordered unfolding of the worldview along with a chaotic mass of new content structuring and shaping one another; and 4. finally, as a superordinate direction, the visible unfolding of a series “from the immediate horizon of the individually centered world to absolute infinity”⁵ (Jaspers 1919, 129). Since this sequence of development is superordinate, absolute infinity is always present as the ultimate or original orientation, even if it is not consciously experienced. Thus, in the three modes of existence of the worldview absolute infinity is, to different degrees, always present as subconscious, conscious (or at least partially conscious through influencing the horizon of the worldview) and merely known (without being experienced), but nevertheless always as a necessary part of the worldview and as its prerequisite (Jaspers 1919, 126-129). That means, the orientation always takes place towards absolute infinity, only the type of orientation is unconscious, conscious or known. Although the individual in a way always perceives the horizon of the worldview as absolutely given (Jaspers 1919, 122), the subconscious influence of the orientation towards absolute infinity remains (Jaspers 1919, 126, 129). It is necessary, because there is no totality of the world, since there is no totality of the being, as we will see later, and therefore

also no totality of worldviews. If this orientation towards absolute infinity did not exist, an arbitrary limitation would be set to the world and, thus, to the direction of development, the possibilities of development, and also to the cognitive possibilities of the mind, because this orientation towards absolute infinity is “describable as a function of the infinite moving mind”⁶ (Jaspers 1919, 129). Jaspers describes the mind itself as absolute infinity:

“A highest level of consciousness cannot be described at all, but only this vivid becoming of the self be paraphrased in becoming manifest, how it is visible beyond all rational consequences in the experience and very concrete reaction and action towards itself.”⁷ (Jaspers 1919, 370)

He describes the human being as a synthesis between infinity and finitude, that can recognize and *be* absolute infinity in every supposed finitude. Through this synthesis, the self is never finished, but always in the process of becoming. In this process, by self-reflection, the individual gains the consciousness of a self through the infinite abstraction of everything external, whereby the self is always a self in relation to *something*. Through the recognition of the absolute infinity of the world, the absolute infinity of the mind and of the self is also recognized, since the self is always measured in relation to which it is a self. The more awareness of absolute infinity, the more awareness of the self is obtained, and vice versa. (Jaspers 1919, 371) But, this recognition of the absolute infinity of the mind and the self is not a fixation or self-inflation, which happens through identification as described by C.G. Jung (Jung 1999, 27-29), since no identification occurs here. In Jaspers' description the self remains the synthesis between infinity and finitude, i.e. a synthesis between general and specific relations: a contour between the inside and the outside, between inner abilities and the world, between essence and being, without fixation on or preference for one side (Jaspers 1919, 371).

3. The necessity of the fundamental ontology of developmental psychology

Now we consider the ontological nature of the most general essence of being and entity, which we identified above as absolute infinity. The absolute infinity of the most general essence of being and entity forms the fundamental ontology, since only this possesses the greatest possible power, so that

the being itself is not an entity (Heidegger 1989, 411; Mühlenbeck 2021, 364), as we will now regard in more detail. In this way we can later anchor developmental psychology in its original orientation by connecting the inner orientation of the subject with the basic prerequisite of the most general essence of being and entity and, thus, characterizing the essential properties of a new development model, that builds on fundamental ontology and is freed from all limiting structures. Through this connection to the most general essence of being and entity developmental psychology is placed on its natural basis, since only in this orientation towards absolute infinity the maximum of openness and freedom is given, without specifying directions, hierarchies or limitations for development.

In his elaboration of the fundamental ontology (Heidegger 1967), and later in its revision (Heidegger 1989), Heidegger identifies the *time-space* (the space-time) as the fundamental ontological foundation (Heidegger 1967, 430) that constitutes being and entity and thus allows each entity to be identified as an area of being (Heidegger 1967, 104-106; 1989, 372) and that constitutes the essential occurrence [*Wesung*] of being (Heidegger 1989, 101), through which everything already belongs to the being: any continua of possibilities that include non-being, and all forms of time and space that include different qualities and quantities of materiality and magnitude, but also different qualities in time like time expansions or durations (Heidegger 1989, 372; Lanzi 2013, 68-72; Mühlenbeck 2021, 348-349). The space-time in turn is shown to be completely continuous (Heidegger 1967, 101) and consequently to be absolutely infinite (Heidegger 1989, 372, 411). Since only this absolute infinity of the space-time continuum can reflect the immensity of being (Heidegger 1989, 411), it forms the fundamental ontology. This means that the essence of being, i.e. the absolute infinity identified above, is the necessary prerequisite of every existence (Heidegger 1989, 408). It is important that this fundamental-ontological foundation through the essential occurrence of being, i.e. through the absolute infinity of the space-time continuum, comes before any subjectivity, as Heidegger makes clear with “the turning” [*der Kehre*] (Heidegger 2000, 72-73), because the founding of fundamental ontology on the *Dasein*, as he first described in *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1967, 12-13), encounters the problem of the subject-object dialectic. This consists in the centering of philosophy and ontology on the subject and the

subjectively imaginative thinking (Heidegger 2000, 72-73). However, the subject or the subjective imagination cannot rank first and constitute everything else, since the subject itself is a first object of imagination: “The subject is the first object of ontological representation in the order of the transcendental genesis of the object”⁸ (Heidegger 2000, 72). Thus, absolute infinity, as the fundamental ontology, necessarily also underlies every knowledge:

“This absolute infinity of the space-time continuum is the primary orientation of every subject in cognition, because the *extensio* of beings and their being forms 'the basic determination of the »world«' (Heidegger 1967, 101). The space-time continuum and its necessary nature is the condition of every cognition and thus lies before it, and not as '[...] with Kant simply attributed to the human subject! But all this without any idea of the time-space' (Heidegger 1989, 373)”⁹ (Mühlenbeck 2021, 363)

This dissolution of the subject-object dialectic in Heidegger also corresponds to the elimination of identification or fixation in Jaspers, because in both, the inner and outer primary orientation is aligned towards the most general being, i.e. towards absolute infinity, and thus places the human being back in the middle of the relationship between inner abilities and outer requirements, as a contour within the being (Lanzi 2013, 71; Mühlenbeck 2021, 348). In doing so, during the course of its history, the individual develops through various relationships within the orientation towards absolute infinity, instead of identifying with external or internal parts. The difference is that relationships (towards other people, activities, one's own culture, etc.) always appear in their respective backgrounds, both of specific and most general nature, and that, therefore, the connection to the three modes of existence and the four processes of differentiation of the worldview, as Jaspers described (Jaspers 1919, 128-129), is present again. Then, relationships are fixed points in infinity, which are perceived in their relation to absolute infinity, and not, as before, as absolute fixed points. Figuratively speaking, with the words of the graphic artist M.C. Escher, who had a very clear notion of infinity and described these fixed points in infinity as follows:

“Anyone who plunges into infinity, in both time and space, further and further without stopping, needs fixed points, mileposts, for otherwise his movement is indistinguishable from standing still. There must be stars past which he shoots, beacons from which he can measure the distance he has traversed. He must divide his universe into distances of a given length, into compartments recurring in an

endless sequence. Each time he passes a borderline between one compartment and the next, his clock ticks.” (Escher 1972, 37-40; Schattschneider 2010, 715)

4. The fundamental ontology of developmental psychology

As a result from the above argumentation we receive the following model of developmental psychology in dependence on the fundamental ontology (for an overview see Table 1). Due to its being-in-the-world, every entity and thus every living being is in constant interaction with its environment. In the course of evolutionary and individual development (phylogenesis and ontogenesis), living beings have become increasingly complex in their ability to form concepts. Due to the permanent confrontation with a flood of information from the environment, every living being has continuously refined and systematized the concept formation by filtering out necessary and helpful information:

“This filtering functions through the formation of concepts, which are becoming increasingly complex the more knowledge about the environment is processed. This applies not only to humans, but to all conscious species from the beginning of episodic and phenomenological memory (for an overview of the evolution of consciousness and concept formation see: Donald 1991, 2001).” (Mühlenbeck 2022, 203)

Concepts are not only formed and retrieved consciously, but also unconsciously, since also attitudes, for example to certain values and norms, are partly unconsciously adopted from our social environment such as family, school, society or culture, and these are also formed on the basis of concepts, i.e. mental representations (Largo 2017, 291). Just as Jaspers described the knowledge about the world as unconscious, conscious and known (Jaspers 1919, 126). In relation to phylogenesis the formation (and storage) of concepts has the following importance:

[...] during cultural evolution humans were enabled to store information in material symbols (Donald 1991; Mühlenbeck and Jacobsen 2020; Mühlenbeck et al. 2017), i.e. to form higher-order concepts that take part in semantic memory and material symbols, and to transfer this knowledge to others and to future generations and, thus, to cumulate knowledge. This cumulated knowledge allowed worldviews and the idea of an absolute to emerge, because knowledge about the surrounding world and the functioning of the

environment was collected, stored, refined and deepened, and structured in knowledge systems, which function on the same conceptual basis as any symbolic knowledge. Therefore, the complexity of individual development and the complexity of one's worldview can be put in relation to each other, where the knowledge of the self and the world are interrelated." (Mühlenbeck 2022, 203-204)

As mental representations of the environment, concepts are thus the basis for symbolic thinking, for the externalization of symbols in order to accumulate and transfer knowledge about the environment, and for the formation of higher-order concepts, encompassing multiple concepts themselves, such as worldviews and self-concepts. The concept formation works as a link between the world and the self, in which new knowledge about one side affects the further development of the other side, and which constitutes the differentiation processes. This means, that the relationship between the self and the world is differentiated through the formation of new knowledge and experience (Jaspers 1919, 128-129), whereby this knowledge is unconscious, conscious or only known (Jaspers 1919, 126), but always formed on the basis of mental representations. Due to the accumulation, but also modification of knowledge in the course of the individual and evolutionary development, the knowledge systems constantly change, which affects the basis on which further generations form their own individual concepts of the world, the self and the relation between both. Accordingly, a further development of the self, e.g. in personal skills, leads to a change in the worldview through the generation of new knowledge. At a superordinate level, this concept formation and differentiation of the worldview always takes place in an orientation towards absolute infinity, since the self (the individual) is oriented towards the most general being, which also constitutes the overarching direction in which the relation between self and world unfolds. Table 1 shows schematically this relation between self and world in orientation towards the most general being and under the influence of the specific being. The specific being, the *Dasein* (Heidegger 1967, 11), lies within the most general being and forms, through the basic needs and competences on the one hand and the environment on the other hand, further direct influencing factors for the development of the individual.

world (environment)	↔ relationship	self (individual)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual has a relationship to its being: inner and outer relationship to its constituent backgrounds and foregrounds (Mühlenbeck 2020, 275) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ inner and outer orientation towards absolute infinity • Superordinate direction of the development of the relationship: from the immediate horizon of the individually centered world to absolute infinity 		
<p style="text-align: center;">Specific being /</p> <p><i>Dasein:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environment - family - partnership - friendships - workplace/school - economy - society - culture etc. <p>(Largo 2017, 346)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">conceptual</p> <p>knowledge of the world (worldview) including the self (self-concept):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • type of relationship with the environment / three modes of existence of the worldview that always exist together: unconscious, conscious, known (Jaspers 1919, 126-127) • differentiation processes, type of transformation of the worldview through new knowledge: - what is practiced unconsciously is structured and consciously aware, development from within; - development through new external information; - a combination of an orderly unfolding of the worldview together with a chaotic mass of new content structuring and shaping each other (Jaspers 1919, 128-9) 	<p style="text-align: center;">Specific being /</p> <p><i>Dasein:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic needs (Largo 2017, chap. 4): - physical integrity - emotional security - social recognition, position - self-development - performance - existential security • competences / types of intelligence (Largo 2017, 218): - social skills - language - musical skills - figural-spatial skills - logical-mathematical skills - scheduling and planning skills - motor-kinaesthetic skills - physical skills

environment \Leftrightarrow conceptual knowledge \Leftrightarrow activities, creations Interaction of the individual with the environment, interplay between: individual competences \Leftrightarrow concepts (worldview: internal and external representations through language, art, mathematics etc. = symbols and symbol systems) \Leftrightarrow interaction with the environment through activities / creations (Largo 2017, 293)		

Table 1: Development model based on the fundamental ontology of developmental psychology: development takes place through constant concept formation, which as a connection between self and world permanently changes our image of both. On a superordinate level development takes place in orientation towards the most general being, on a subordinate level towards the specific being. On both, the individual and the environment are in constant interaction.

The single basic needs are differently pronounced in every human being and, following Remo Largo, can be summarized in the generic terms of physical integrity, emotional security, social recognition and position, self-development, the pursuit of performance and existential security (Largo 2017, chap. 4). According to him, the competences are different types of intelligence, which can be summarized under the generic terms of social skills, language, musical skills, figural-spatial skills, logical-mathematical skills, scheduling and planning skills, motor-kinaesthetic skills and physical skills (Largo 2017, 218). The individual manifestation of our basic needs, strengths and weaknesses then determines in our specific being the way in which we can or want to interact with our environment. The direct, influential environment consists, for example, of the family, partnership, friendships, workplace or school, the economy, society and culture (Largo 2017, 346), whereby the individual is in constant interaction and exchange with this environment. The environment affects the individual, but the individual also affects the environment through its activities and creations. In this way, the environment and the individual influence each other and the individual is itself the environment (being) for every other entity.

In conclusion, we can say that the development is oriented towards the specific being - namely one's own basic needs, competences, and the environment - and on a

superordinate level towards the most general being - the absolute infinity - and right from the beginning, constantly, unfolds through concept formation. In this process of unfolding the human being is always a contour within the specific and most general being, in the relations between inner basic needs and competences and external requirements of the environment, which are always referenced differently and which always exist in orientation towards absolute infinity. In this way, any dictated orientation to a defined, limited absolute, its associated hierarchy and, hence, also any limitations of the direction and possibilities of development are eliminated. When these limitations to the outside and inside no longer exist, the human being is thrown back to its own being - to the *Dasein* and the most general being. Thus, the “development, which is the occurrence of being itself, [contains] [...] at the same time the development of the *Dasein* and of the entity”¹⁰ (Lanzi 2013, 68) In addition to this:

“The appearance of the being through the entity, which consists of the project as the *Dasein* itself, presents itself as an opening of the entity and thus of the openness itself, in which the being appears as the entity. The opening [...] belongs to the unfolding of the occurrence of being itself and is therefore an inner aspect of the occurrence. This opening constitutes the time-space”¹¹ (Heidegger 1989, 372; Lanzi 2013, 72)

This means that this orientation towards the most general being, i.e. absolute infinity, be it unconscious, conscious or just known, is present in any moment as a necessary prerequisite for existence and forms our innermost natural orientation.

NOTES

¹ Lawrence Kohlberg also suggested a hypothetical seventh stage, in which the individual has developed a transcendental moral judgment. (Kohlberg and Ryncarz 1990)

² Robert Kegan suggested a fourth stage for McClelland's theory and highlighted the parallels between McClelland's/Murray's theory of needs and the stage models of development. (Kegan 1986, 123)

³ Although in the literature the word *being* is very often used for the German word 'Seiendes', we will use in the following the term *being* for the German word 'Sein' and the word *entity* for the German word 'Seiendes', in order to avoid ambiguities.

⁴ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Die Seinsfrage zielt daher auf eine apriorische Bedingung der Möglichkeit nicht nur der Wissenschaften, die Seiendes als so und so Seiendes durchforschen und sich

dabei je schon in einem Seinsverständnis bewegen, sondern auf die Bedingung der Möglichkeit der vor den ontischen Wissenschaften liegenden und sie fundierenden Ontologien selbst.”

⁵ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “vom unmittelbaren Horizont individuell zentrierter Welt bis zur absoluten Unendlichkeit”.

⁶ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “[die] als Funktion des unendlichen bewegten Geistes beschreibbar ist”.

⁷ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Eine höchste Stufe des Bewußtseins läßt sich gar nicht bezeichnen, sondern nur dieses lebendige Werden des Selbst im Offenbarwerden umschreiben, wie es über alle rationalen Konsequenzen hinaus im Erfahren und ganz konkreten Reagieren und Handeln sich selbst gegenüber sichtbar ist.”

⁸ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Das Subjekt ist in der Ordnung der transzendentalen Genesis des Gegenstandes das erste Objekt des ontologischen Vorstellens”.

⁹ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Diese absolute Unendlichkeit des Raumzeit-Kontinuums ist die primäre Orientierung jedes Subjekts in der Erkenntnis, denn die *extensio* des Seienden und des Seins bildet 'die Grundbestimmtheit der »Welt«' (Heidegger 1967, 101). Das Raumzeit-Kontinuum und seine notwendige Beschaffenheit ist die Bedingung jeder Erkenntnis und damit vor ihr liegend, und nicht wie '[...] bei Kant einfach dem menschlichen Subjekt zugesprochen! Doch all dieses ohne Ahnung des Zeit-Raums' (Heidegger 1989, 373)“.

¹⁰ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Entfaltung, die die Wesung des Seins selbst ist, [...] zugleich die Entfaltung des Daseins und des Seienden.”

¹¹ Translation by the author. Quote in the original language: “Das Erscheinen des Seins durch das Seiende, das in dem Entwurf als dem Dasein selbst besteht, stellt sich als eine Eröffnung des Seienden und damit des Offenen selbst dar, in dem das Sein als das Seiende erscheint. Die Eröffnung [...] gehört zu der Entfaltung der Wesung des Seins selbst und ist also ein innerer Aspekt der Wesung. Diese Eröffnung macht den Zeit-Raum aus”.

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Der organlose Körper – Hineingehen in den glatten Raum und Spekulationen über die Leere

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Abstract

The Body without Organs: Heading into the Smooth Space and Speculations about the Void

For Deleuze and Guattari, the body without organs (BwO) refers to a psychological and physical state of intensity. The BwO can also be understood as a critique of social modes of subjectification and as a practice of desubjectification. However, a unified definition of the BwO cannot be identified in the works of Deleuze and Guattari. Therefore, this article explores the questions of how the BwO can be created or how it can be entered, how practices of desubjectivation take place. This search for traces leads into areas of perception of the void, the endless and the formless. Likewise, bodily practices of desubjectification are described. The path that is traced in this search for traces does not have the goal of developing an ontology of the BwO, but is rather oriented towards the rhizomatic working method of Deleuze and Guattari: An assemblage will be developed that adds further layers to the concept of the BwO. In this respect, in addition to the phenomenological approaches in the thought of Deleuze and Guattari, this article also deals with a hermeneutic interpretation of the concept of BwO.

Keywords: Deleuze/Guattari, body without organs, smooth space, void, wandering, breathwork, mountaineering

I. Einleitung

"Findet euren organlosen Körper, findet heraus, wie man ihn macht", rufen uns Deleuze und Guattari (1992, 207) förmlich in ihrem Werk "Tausend Plateaus" zu. Für Deleuze und Guattari bezeichnet der Körper ohne Organe einen psychischen und

physischen Zustand der Intensität, welcher nicht durch äußere oder innere Elemente reguliert ist. Eine einheitliche Definition des organlosen Körpers (oK) ist in den Werken von Deleuze und Guattari nicht auszumachen (Smith 2018). Z.B. wird der oK als "ein Ei" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 27) bzw. "das Ei" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 224) definiert, d. h. als ein durch Durcheinander von Eiweißgradienten, die unterschiedliche Intensitäten aufweisen und keine offensichtliche Struktur haben, ein Werden, ein Leben vor der Bildung von Schichten. Oder der oK ist "in der strengsten spinozistischen Bedeutung des Wortes die immanente Substanz" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 422). Zum Organismus oder zum vollen Körper hingegen wird man, so Deleuze und Guattari, indem man durch Regulationsweisen organisiert wird oder sein Verhalten gemäß gängiger Normen diszipliniert. D. h., "du musst deinen Körper gliedern – sonst bist du nur entartet. Du wirst Signifikant und Signifikat, Interpret und Interpretierter – sonst bist du nur ein armer Irrer. Du wirst Subjekt und als solches nur ein Penner" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 219). Der oK lässt sich somit auch als Kritik an gesellschaftlichen Subjektivierungsweisen verstehen. Um einen Körper ohne Organe zu schaffen, muss man sich dementsprechend den Regularien entledigen und sich mit Intensitäten füllen. Den Organismus aufzulösen verstehen Deleuze und Guattari jedoch nicht dadurch "sich umzubringen, sondern den Körper für Konnexionen zu öffnen" (ebd.). D. h., Körper und Geist über bestehende identitäre Verknüpfungen, Zurichtungen, Einengungen, Rollenzuschreibungen, Kategorisierungen hinaus zu transformieren bzw. zu glätten (Markula 2006). Intensitätsaggregate zum Glätten, zum Reduzieren und Entfernen von identitären oder automatisierten Praktiken finden in der "Desartikulation (oder *n* Artikulationen)" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 219), im Experimentieren statt dem Interpretieren, in der Bewegung statt; "bewegt euch, selbst auf der Stelle, hört nicht auf euch zu bewegen, Reisen an Ort und Stelle, Entsubjektivierung" (ebd.).

In diesem Artikel wird daher der Frage nachgegangen, wie man sich den oK erschafft bzw. wie man in ihn hineingelangt, wie Praktiken der Entsubjektivierung

stattfinden. Gemäß Deleuze und Guattari macht man sich diesen Körper im glatten Raum, der "ein taktiler oder vielmehr ‚haptischer‘ und klanglicher als ein visueller Raum" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 526), und somit zugänglich für Erfahrung ist. Insofern behandelt dieser Artikel auch phänomenologische Zugänge im Denken von Deleuze und Guattari, welche sich begrifflich an den Konzepten ihrer Geophilosophie, der territorialen Prozessualität und ihrer Immanenzphilosophie festmachen (Deleuze/Guattari 2003, Rölli 2003, 241ff; Günzel 2013, 154ff; Smith 2018). Da aber Deleuze und Guattari keine konsistente und systematische Anwendung der Konzeption des oK außerhalb von *Anti-Ödipus* (1977) und *Tausend Plateaus* (1992) entwickelt haben, sie ihr Konzept des oK gleichzeitig als analytisches Werkzeug anbieten, um Vervielfältigungen (n Artikulationen) herzustellen (vgl. Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 386), muss, wer mit den Begriffen von Deleuze und Guattari arbeiten möchte, sie für das jeweilige Thema neu modifizieren. Insofern gibt es nicht nur tausend Plateaus in ihren Werken zu entdecken, sondern auch tausend Wege, um mit den Werkzeugen von Deleuze und Guattari zu arbeiten (Colombat 1991). Wichtig sei jedoch, dass die lineare, transzendente Arbeitsweise, welche Modelle und Abbildungen entwickelt, nicht der rhizomatischen, immanenten Arbeitsweise gegenübersteht, welche die ursprüngliche Kartographierung der Modelle verwischt und in Phänomenen nur ihr Eigenleben erkennt. Es geht auch nicht darum bestimmte Orte oder Räume des oK ausfindig zu machen, auch nicht bestimmte Momente in der Geschichte als Ausgangspunkt zu nehmen, und noch weniger geht es "um diese oder jene Kategorie des Geistes. Es geht um das Modell, das unaufhörlich entsteht und einstürzt, und um den Prozess, der unaufhörlich fortgesetzt, unterbrochen und wieder aufgenommen wird" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 35). Eine derartige offene Darstellung, welche auch in diesem Artikel verfolgt wird, hat dennoch das Problem einen Rahmen zu entwickeln, welcher keine "Analyse und keine Synthese erträgt [und der] nur eine fortzusetzende offene Analyse und eine vollendende, aber nicht abgeschlossene Synthese ist" (Laruelle 2014, 148). Wenn nun im Zentrum dieser Ausgangslage die Annahme steht, dass eine

fortzusetzende offene Analyse nicht als einen Klon des oK von Deleuze und Guattari zu betrachten ist, sondern dessen Indeterminanten beschreiben will, hat dies wiederum zur Folge, die Phänomene des oK zu dechiffrieren (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 699; De Landa 2006). Deshalb stehen im weiteren Vorgehen weniger die begrifflichen Konzepte und deren Entwicklung im Vordergrund, sondern es werden vielmehr Erfahrungen des Organlosen beschrieben, welche die begrifflichen Konzepte des oK phänomenologisch entschlüsseln können. In ihren Werken verweisen Deleuze und Guattari aber auch auf vielfältige Empfindungen, Wahrnehmungen und Praktiken, welche sie mit dem oK assoziieren: Umherschweifen (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 46, 407), Wanderungen (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 107, 376, Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 668), Nomadismus (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 411), Metallurgie (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 568-574), Alchimie (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 345), Taoismus (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 216) oder Klang erzeugen, "Fröhlichkeit, Ekstase und Tanz" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 207). Denn der oK "ist eine Übung oder ein unvermeidliches Experiment", er ist "kein Begriff oder Konzept, er ist vielmehr eine Praktik, ein ganzer Komplex von Praktiken" (ebd.). Kategorisch lassen sich für diesen Artikel zwei verschiedene Komplexe unterscheiden: Äußere Reisen (Kapitel ii), als nomadisches Umherschweifen (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 39ff), sowie innere Reisen (Kapitel iii), die in einem Zimmer mit Körperpraktiken stattfinden (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 412) und dabei die "instinktiven Kräfte zerstören, um sie durch übertragene Kräfte zu ersetzen" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 214).¹ Insofern begibt sich dieser Artikel auch auf eine hermeneutische Spurensuche, um diese Komplexe von Praktiken weiter auszuleuchten. Der Weg, der bei dieser Spurensuche nachgezeichnet wird, hat nicht das Ziel eine Ontologie des oK zu entwickeln, sondern orientiert sich vielmehr an der rhizomatischen Arbeitsmethode von Deleuze und Guattari. D. h., es wird eine Assemblage (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 698-700) entwickelt, welche den Ebenen des oK weitere Schichten hinzufügt (Kapitel iv) und n Artikulationen, transversale Konnexionen und mögliche Überlagerungen der Schichten ableitet (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 370).

II. Umherschweifen: Hineingehen in den glatten Raum

Eisflächen, das Ununterscheidbare im Schneesturm, das Heulen der Winde in Sand- und Steinwüsten, das Offene der Ozeane mit unendlichem Himmel charakterisieren das Glatte. In dieser Weite können sich Objektformen der Landschaft vermischen, indem Linien, Flächen, Schatten, Reliefs in einer einzigen Oberfläche emergieren und dabei kontingente Ebenen entstehenden lassen, welche das intuitive Erleben verstärken und das interpretierende Sehen reduzieren. Eine solche Oberflächlichkeit des Raumes hilft die "nicht geometrische Tiefe" (Laruelle 2014, 70) und Glattheit des Raumes (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 700) zu sehen, womit letztlich eine Auslöschung des Repräsentationsmodus beim Betrachten einhergehen kann (Laruelle 2014, 67). Diesem glatten Raum – der durch Offenheit und Grenzenlosigkeit bestimmt ist, steht ein gekerbter Raum, mit Auf- und Zuteilungen von Territorien und Normierungen von Verhaltensweisen entgegen. Während sich im gekerbten Raum eine einengende Territorialisierung vollzieht, vollziehen sich im glatten Raum Öffnungen, Deterritorialisierungen, Möglichkeiten und Vielheiten von Verhaltensweisen. Für Deleuze und Guattari ist der gekerbte Raum ein Sinnbild für einen Raum, der vom Staatsapparat geschaffen und verwaltet wird: "Staat bedeutet Souveränität. Aber die Souveränität herrscht nur über das, was sie verinnerlichen, sich räumlich aneignen kann" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 494). Dieser gekerbte Raum erschafft Einschließungsmilieus (Familie, Schule, Arbeitsstätte, Vereine etc.), eine identitätsstabilisierende Gegenüberstellung von Innen und Außen und die dazugehörigen ordnungssystematischen Raumgefüge mit Staatsgewalt, Polizei, Zollämtern, Gefängnissen, Mauern, Einfriedungen, Grenzen, Verwaltungen, der Kontrolle der Verkehrswege. Diese Einschnitte im Raum kontrollieren gleichzeitig Bewegungsfreiheit und filtern das Eindringen von Waren und Menschen. Jeder Punkt im gekerbten Raum hat seine Bedeutung, ist strukturiert und strukturierend (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 502ff). Aber nicht nur Verortungen

spielen eine wichtige Rolle bei der Definition von den territorialen Herrschaftsbereichen des gekerbten Raumes, sondern auch die Wegweiser, in Form von Sprache, Schrift und Bedeutungen, die mit territorialer Übertragungsmacht ausgestattet sind. Sowie durch die Keilschrift dem Stein oder durch den Kerbschnitt dem Holz eine Bedeutung aufgezwungen wird, so verhält es sich auch mit territorialen Zuweisungen im gekerbten Raum: "Die Essenz des Sozius als Aufzeichner und Beschrifter besteht, insoweit er sich die Produktivkräfte aneignet und die Produktionsagenten aufteilt, in Folgendem: zu tätowieren, auszuschneiden, einzuschneiden, abzutrennen, zu skarifizieren, zu verstümmeln, zu umzingeln, einzuweihen. (...) es geht darum, dem Menschen ein Gedächtnis zu machen; (...) ein Gedächtnis von Zeichen und keines von Wirkungen mehr. Diese Organisation, die das Zeichen direkt in den Körper eingraviert, ist das System der Grausamkeit, das furchtbare Alphabet" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 183f). D. h. die Regulationsweisen und Vorschriften zur Anerkennung einer bestimmten symbolisch strukturierten und strukturierenden Ordnung dienen einer identitätsstabilisierenden Bedeutungsproduktion. Durch die eigene Wahrnehmung, entweder hier oder dort zu sein, entstehen gleichzeitig Ausschlussmechanismen und identitäre Selbstplatzierungen. Im individuellen Erfassen, Verarbeiten, Gehorchen oder selbst im Ungehorsam verwirklicht das Zusammenspiel der Organe den Organismus. Dadurch wird der gekerbte Raum ein geschlossener, definierter Raum, der begrenzt und begrenzend ist. Der Sozius befiehlt und erwartet Gehorsam: "Die primitive Territorialmaschine codiert die Ströme, besetzt die Organe, kennzeichnet die Körper" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977: 183). Deleuze und Guattari bringen diesen Umstand, dass im gekerbten Raum keine Bedeutung ohne Bezeichner entstehen kann, auf folgende Formel: "Keine Signifikanz ohne despotisches Gefüge, keine Subjektivierung ohne autoritäres Gefüge, keine Vermischung beider ohne Machtgefüge" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 248).

Mit der Sesshaftigkeit, dem Eigentum an Grund und Boden und damit der ungleiche Tausch von Arbeitskraft gegen Naturressourcen oder Geld dehnt sich der gekerbte Raum seit

der Jungsteinzeit in einer rasenden Geschwindigkeit aus. Die Ausdehnung der kapitalistischen Wirtschaftsweise, welche nach Arbeitskräften in jedem Winkel der Erde verlangt, auf die neolithische Revolution zurückgeführt werden. Damals tauschten die Menschen ihre nomadische Lebensweise, das Herumziehen orientiert an der Bewegung von Tieren oder dem Wachstumszyklus von Pflanzen gegen Sesshaftigkeit, Ackerbau, Viehzucht, Vorratshaltung ein. Allmählich sind das Produzieren und Tauschbarmachen von Gütern zur Lebensgrundlage geworden (N.N. 2022). Als quantitativen Sprung dieser Entwicklung kann sicher die industrielle Revolution genannt werden. 1848 schrieb Karl Marx: "Das Bedürfnis nach einem stets ausgedehnten Absatz für ihre Produkte jagt die Bourgeoisie über die ganze Erdkugel. Überall muss sie sich einnisten, überall anbauen, überall Verbindungen herstellen" (MEW 4, 465). Seitdem wird Eisenerz und Kohle abgebaut, um Stahl zu kochen, Maschinen zu bauen, um Produktionsprozesse schneller und effizienter zu organisieren. Ortsunabhängige Zeitzonen, jenseits von Lebensrhythmen, Sonnenaufgang und -untergang werden notwendig, damit Warelieferungen weltweit in einer "Rund um die Uhr Ökonomie" pünktlich ankommen (Postone 2003, 307-327). Bahngleise, Straßen, Tunnels, Kanäle, Landebahnen werden gebaut, damit Waren und Arbeitskräfte in einer höheren Geschwindigkeit von A nach B kommen. Hierbei hat der Sozios die Macht "die den Boden der Herrschaft bestimmt" und er ist ebenso "das zerstörende Wühlen in diesem Boden" (Debord 1996, §107).

Trotz der damit scheinbar weltweit einhergehenden Möglichkeiten des Mobilseins, lebt jedes Individuum in einen Rahmen, dessen Radius äußerst klein ist. Es pendelt zwischen Wohnung und Arbeitsplatz, geht zum Einkaufen, vielleicht noch ins Fitnessstudio oder Kino (de Lauwe 1952; Lynch 1960). In "Die Gesellschaft des Spektakels" beschreibt Guy Debord, wie Personen die Umwelt nicht mehr kritisch wahrnehmen, weil das gesellschaftliche Verhältnis zwischen Personen im kapitalistischen Zeitalter nur noch auf die zugewiesenen Rollen als Produzent*innen oder Konsument*innen reduziert worden ist und "in der das Spektakel der Automobile einen

reibungslosen Verkehr verlangt, der die alten Stadtkerne zerstört, während das Spektakel der Stadt selbst Museen-Viertel braucht" (Debord 1996, §65). Statt die je eigenen Bedürfnisse zu erkennen, liefert der Sozios vorgefertigte Lebensstile. Freiheit und Wildheit werden durch stellvertretende Existenzen (Schauspieler*innen, Bergsteiger*innen, Pornodarsteller*innen etc.) oder Substitute (Autos, Zigaretten, Alkohol etc.) vermittelt. Und je mehr die Zuschauer*innen zuschauen, umso weniger leben sie; je mehr sie akzeptieren, um sich in den herrschenden Bildern ihre Bedürfnisse wiederzuerkennen, desto weniger verstehen sie ihre eigene Existenz und Begierde (Debord 1996, §30). D. h., dass trotz der Nebenprodukte der internationalen Warenproduktion – Tourismus und Reisen – der moderne Mensch so arm an sinnlicher Erfahrung ist wie nie zuvor. Komfortabel geschützt sitzen Reisende in einem Flugzeug oder Auto, sehen Landschaften vorbeirasen und werden trotzdem und vor allem dadurch ihrer anderen Sinne beraubt. Um des Zieles willen wird die Strecke der Reise beseitigt. Reisende ohne Reise, ein "rasender Stillstand" hat Paul Virilio (1992) das genannt. Als unsere Vorfahren zu Beginn des Holozäns, der Warmzeit, noch Nomaden waren, bewegen sie sich auf Linien oder gehen von Punkt zu Punkt, beschreiben Deleuze und Guattari die Gegenbewegung. Aber im Gegensatz zu Sesshaften sind diese Punkte den Wegen untergeordnet: "Die Wasserstellen sind nur dazu da, um wieder verlassen zu werden [...]. Ein Weg liegt immer zwischen zwei Punkten, aber das Dazwischen hat die volle Konsistenz übernommen und besitzt sowohl Selbstständigkeit wie eine eigene Richtung" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 522).

Den Aspekt des Nomadischen bzw. des Umherschweifens hat sich die Situationistische Internationale mit ihrem Konzept der Psychogeographie zu eigen gemacht, um sinnliche Erfahrungen durch die Erforschung des Raumes zurückzugewinnen (Debord 1955). Das Adjektiv "psychogeographisch" beschreibt die Resultate des geographischen Einflusses auf menschliche Gefühle und die psychogeographische Praxis konzentriert sich auf die Erforschung von ordnungssystematischen Regimen: "Der

plötzliche Stimmungswechsel auf einer Straße in einer Entfernung von nur wenigen Metern; die offensichtliche Aufteilung einer Stadt in einzelne, scharf unterscheidbare psychische Klimazonen [...]; der anziehende oder abstoßende Charakter bestimmter Orte" (Debord 1955: 17). Die Praxis der Psychogeographie ist das Umherschweifen, Driften bzw. ein *Dérive*. Damit verbunden ist das Verlaufen oder das Sammeln, Protokollieren, Kartographieren von Fundstücken und Sinneseindrücken, das Führen zufälliger Gespräche mit Passanten über ihre Ortswahrnehmungen etc., um selbst neue Erfahrungen im zufälligen Zusammentreffen hervorzurufen. Dazu zählt z.B. auch, Stadtpläne zur Orientierung in ländlichen Gebieten zu nutzen. Mit anderen Worten lassen sich darunter Praxen des zufälligen Durchquerens von städtischen oder ländlichen Zonen verstehen. Hierbei geht es darum, die vorhersehbaren Pfade als Konsument*innen, Arbeitnehmer*innen oder Schüler*innen zu verlassen sowie Strategien, Methoden, Spiele zu entwickeln, wie Räume in Offenheit und in Zufälligkeit erkundet werden können (Debord 1955, 17ff). D. h., durch ungeplante Begegnungen werden zufällige räumliche und zeitliche Ereignisse erzeugt. Es entsteht ein Materialismus der Begegnung, des Zufälligen und des Unbestimmten (Althusser 2010, 47). Indem das Zufällige in den Vordergrund rückt, wird die Wahrnehmung und Bedeutungsproduktion selbst begrenzt, weil in der Zufälligkeit die Immanenz von Raum und Zeit erfahren werden kann. Man kann so dem Moment des Begegnens einen Status der Ekstase verleihen, der konstitutiv für die Wahrnehmung des Zufälligen wird (Laruelle 2014, 179f).

Die Praxis des Umherschweifens grenzt sich insofern auch insbesondere gegenüber dem touristischen Reisen ab, da das Zufällige und die Erkundung eigener Wahrnehmungsstereotypen und Verhaltensweisen bzw. objektiver Determinierungen und subjektiver Dispositionen im Vordergrund stehen. Es geht hierbei nicht um das Verorten und Festgeschrieben werden in einem Ort oder Raum, wie dies bei Pauschalreisen der Fall ist, sondern um Ortungsfreiheit, um die Erweiterung der vorherrschenden Wahrnehmungs-, Denk- und

Handlungsschemata durch die Bloßstellung eines eindimensionalen, vorcodierten und vorgeführten Alltags. "Rastlos umherzuziehen und umherzuwandern bedeutet daher auch", den Materiestrom und Intensitätsaggregate dort aufzuspüren, wo niemand sie vermutet und dafür "auch abstruse Wege zu beschreiten" (Maresch 2003: 204). In diesem Kontext lassen sich die Deterritorialisierungspraxen der modernen Gegenkultur verorten: Hobos, Beatniks und Hippies, die auf ihren Streifzügen kreuz und queer durch die USA, Europa, Westafrika oder Indien unterwegs waren. Auch die kalifornischen Freikletterer*innen, die Bergsteigenden im Alpinstil oder die Qalandariyyah, die wandernden Sufi Derwische, versuchen dort hinzugelangen, wo "der Geist die Materie berührt" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977: 28). Solche Arten des Umherschweifens können auch als eine Verweigerung verstanden werden, um die vorhersehbaren Pfade zu verlassen, um nicht als Arbeitskraft mobilisiert zu werden, indem man irgendwo im Unterholz, in einer Kuhle, in den Bergen, auf einer Gesteinsschicht, in Wüsten, an Ozeanen Stellung bezieht und regungslos erstarrt, wenn die Dinge anfangen lebendig und immanent zu werden. Der Beat-Poet Gary Snyder beschreibt solche Immanenzerfahrungen wie folgt: "Sich hinsetzen und ruhig sein und sich nicht bewegen und die Eichhörnchen im Kopf fangen an, aus ihren Löchern zu kriechen, fangen an herumzulaufen und zu singen, und wenn man das einfach zulässt, kommt man in Berührung damit" (Snyder 1984, 34). Bis man Insekten, Wassermoleküle, Winde, Reibungen sieht, das Pulsieren und Dröhnen des Inneren hört, bis man merkt was eigentlich schon die ganze Zeit da war, das Rohe, Fremde, Intensive der Natur (ebd.).

Im gewissen Sinn setzt eine solche Erfahrung ein pataphysisches Szenario voraus: „Man muss den Tod gegen den Tod ausspielen“ (Baudrillard 1991, 12f.). D. h., wenn Deleuze und Guattari fragen, wie man sich einen organlosen Körper macht, lässt sich ihre Anweisung sich auf einem Stratum, einer Gesteinsschicht, einzurichten (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 221) auch wörtlich verstehen. In Höhen, auf Höhenlinien, zwischen Geröll, Wasser, Muren, auf Firngraten und Sedimentgestein lässt sich

nicht nur dem furchtbaren Alphabet, dem Abtrennen, Einschneiden und Umzingeln, den Einkerbungen, Skarifizierungen und Verstümmelungen des Sozios entgehen: „Hier die Berge – dort die Stadt. Hier Freiheit, Weite, Stille – dort Begrenzung, Enge, Lärm [...] Unsere Welt ist programmiert, berechnet sind alle Möglichkeiten des kommenden Tages. Für jedes Risiko ist man versichert. Gewissheit, dass nur alles so und nicht anders verlaufen kann – ich ertrage sie nicht“ (Messner 1997, 7). Die Gänge auf Firngraten sind auch Immanenzerfahrungen zwischen Leben und Tod:

Am 26. April 1336 berichtet der italienische Dichter Francesco Petrarca in einem Brief, dass er den fast 2000 Meter hohen Mont Ventoux bestiegen hat, ohne militärische oder wissenschaftliche Notwendigkeit, sondern beseelt und aus einem Drang heraus, um ihn um seiner selbst willen heraus zu erkunden (Petrarca 2014, 11). Dies war zu der damaligen Zeit des Mittelalters ein moralphilosophisch unstatthafte Unternehmens (Groh/Groh 1991: 35). Auf dem Gipfel angekommen ist Petrarca tief bewegt: "Ich richte nunmehr meine Augen nach der Seite, wo Italien liegt, nach dort, wohin mein Geist sich so sehr gezogen fühlt. Die Alpen selber – eisstarrend und schneebedeckt –, [...] Erinnerungen an die Geburt des Menschen erschienen mir greifbar nahe, obwohl sie durch einen weiten Zwischenraum getrennt sind" (Petrarca 2014, 22). Petrarca nimmt auf dem Gipfel die Bekenntnisse des Augustinus heraus und schlägt zufällig eine Seite auf und liest: "Und es gehen die Menschen, zu bestaunen die Gipfel der Berge und die ungeheuren Fluten des Meeres und die weit dahin fließenden Ströme und den Saum des Ozeans und die Kreisbahnen der Gestirne, und haben nicht acht ihrer selbst" (Petrarca 2014, 30). "Ich war betäubt [...] schloss das Buch, zornig auf mich selber, dass ich jetzt noch Irdisches bewunderte, ich, der ich schon längst selbst von den Philosophen der Heiden hätte lernen müssen, dass nichts bewundernswert ist außer der Seele: Im Vergleich zu ihrer Größe ist nichts groß" (Petrarca 2014, 22). Ob diese Besteigung tatsächlich so stattgefunden hat, sei hier dahingestellt (Wrana 2018, 256ff). Sie hat aber einerseits den modernen Alpinismus begründet (Geyer 2016) und

andererseits auch eine neue räumliche Perspektive hergestellt. Der Mensch sieht nun von oben (wie ein Gott) auf die Welt, in die Weite und dadurch auch in sich hinein. "Petrarca erlebte damit erstmals, was den modernen Alpinismus im Kern heute noch umtreibt: Den Aufstieg in unbekannte Höhen zur Offenbarung des Unbekannten im Menschen" (Geyer 2016, Abschnitt 5).

Diese Innenschau, die bei Petrarca beginnt, erlangt in der Todeszone beim Höhenbergsteigen, beim "Ausgesetztsein" (Messner 1997, 83), neue Dimensionen: "Nach meinen ersten großen Expeditionen hatte ich mein Leben als erweitert empfunden und war gleichzeitig nachdenklicher geworden. Nach dem Hidden Peak, meinem dritten Achttausender, der eine beruhigende Wirkung auf mich hatte, glaubte ich zu ahnen, was das Nirwana ist, hatte ich also einen Hauch von dem geatmet, was über das Leben hinausgeht. Am Everest-Gipfel erlebte ich eine Art seelischen Orgasmus, ein emotionales Ausschwingen in einem raum-zeitlichen Allbewusstsein. Meine Ratio war völlig ausgeschaltet" (Messner 1978, 215). Eine solche Erfahrung beschreibt auch Reinhard Karl in seiner Biographie "Erlebnis Berg" als er am 1. Mai 1978 mit Oswald Oelz den Gipfel des Mount Everest, zwei Tage nach Messners Besteigung ohne Sauerstoff, erreichte: "Wir sind oben. [...] Ich, der Gipfelsieger. [...] Ich, das atemlose Wesen. [...] Ich ahne, dass auch der Everest nur ein Vorgipfel ist. Den wirklichen Gipfel werde ich nie erreichen" (Karl 2008, 111). Stefan Kaufmann beschreibt ein solches "Aufgehen im Tun" als einen Zustand, der die Trennung zwischen sich und Umwelt auflöst, als ein "vollständiges, rauschhaftes Eintauchen in die Mikrowelt des Felses" (Kaufmann 2004, 232). Die Innenschau oder auch die Auflösung des Ichs am Berg kann sowohl als eine kontemplative Erfahrung, einhergehend mit einem All-Gefühl sein oder als einen "Kampf gegen den Körper" verstanden werden, bis eine "körperlose Gestalt [...], die nackte Seele übrig bleibt" (Kaufmann 2004, 235). Gleichzeitig ist der Gipfel, der Weg oder Linie dorthin eine "Eroberung des Nutzlosen" (Messner 2002, 201) und wenn der Umherschweifende "im Gebirge, im Schnee, mit anderen Göttern oder ganz ohne Gott, ohne Vater noch

Mutter [ist], ist er mit der Natur. [...] Alles ist Maschine. Maschinen des Himmels, die Sterne oder der Regenbogen, Maschinen des Gebirges, die sich mit den Maschinen seines Körpers vereinigen. Ununterbrochener Maschinenlärm" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 7). D. h., wenn die Fern- und Nahsinne verschwimmen, sich Instinkte abschalten, reines Empfinden oder ein All Gefühl sich einstellt und man von Leben in jeder Form berührt wird, die Natur in sich aufnimmt, dann ist dies ein Verharren im Inneren, das Empfinden der Immanenz, ein Intensiv-Werden.

Mit einem Intensiv-Werden ändert auch das Bergerlebnis sein empirisch-ideelles Erscheinen und ermöglicht das Schauen mit halb geschlossenen Augen, eine alchemistische Synthese des Realen (Laruelle 2014, 109), die damit beginnt, dass die Ideen, Identifikationen und Codes von der Realität sich auflösen und sich Spekulationen über die Materie erzeugen lassen, bei der eine "Kontinuität der Echos, Resonanzen, der Vibrationen zwischen den verschiedenen Ebenen der Realität, zwischen dem Menschen und ihm selbst oder seinem Bild neu erschaffen" (Laruelle 2014, 110) wird. Stehen nicht mehr die Objektformen des Berges im Vordergrund der Erfahrung, sondern das Grenzenlose, Formlose, Endlose entsteht auch eine Grenzerfahrung mit dem Ich, weil die Wahrnehmung des Grenzenlosen, Formlosen und Endlosen, das sinnlich Fassbare sprengt (Kaufmann 2004, 214). D. h., im glatten Raum zu sein ermöglicht eine Erfahrung, die nicht darin besteht, das Gesehene rezeptiv aufzunehmen, zu verarbeiten und in Erinnerungen einzuarbeiten, sondern direkt und molekular wirken zu lassen, als einzigartiges Erlebnis, um das Unwahrnehmbare wahrnehmbar werden zu lassen. Diese Deterritorialisierung des perzeptiven Rohmaterials kann als Teil einer umfassenden Schaffensdimension des oK im Entstehungszustand verstanden werden, bei der sich ein Emergenzvermögen entwickelt, dass "die Kontingenz und die Zufälligkeiten all der Vorhaben, immaterielle Universen ins Sein umzusetzen, in sich begreift" (Guattari 2014, 129). Diese Umwandlung der Erfahrung resp. die alchemistische Synthese des Realen kann als Agens des Werdens fungieren, wenn das Unwahrnehmbare, das

Unbewusste geschaffen und nicht wiedergefunden wird (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 386f).

Das zurückziehen der Sinne, die mystische Innenschau, das Schauen mit geschlossenen Augen ist auch mit vielfältigen Körperpraktiken verbunden: Z.B., Atemtechniken, Luftanhalten, Stimulieren von Hormondrüsen.

III. Körperpraktiken: Spekulationen über die Leere

Friedrich Nietzsche ging in "Ecce Homo" und in der "Genealogie der Moral" der Frage nach, "wie man wird was man ist" (Nietzsche 1999, 399). Er beschrieb den Vorgang der Subjektwerdung als "Einverseelung" bzw. als "Einverleibung" gesellschaftlicher Moralvorstellungen, indem dem Körper die soziale Ordnung "eingebrannt" wird, um Ideen unauslöschlich, allgegenwärtig, unvergessbar und fix zu machen (Nietzsche 1999, 210). Auch Pierre Bourdieu spricht von einer "Somatisierung der Herrschaftsverhältnisse" (Bourdieu 1997, 166), Judith Butler von der "leiblichen Einschreibung" (Butler 2003, 190), Michel Foucault von der "Mikrophysik der Macht" (1976). Ihnen ist gemeinsam, dass sie die Subjektwerdung als Inkorporation hegemonialer Vorstellungen denken, die über eine bestimmte Wahrnehmung in Bezug auf den menschlichen Körper erzeugt wird und in der der jeweilige Körper durch entsprechende Praxen identisch gemacht wird mit den entsprechenden hegemonialen Vorstellungen. Das Erklärungsmodell der Einschreibung der Herrschaftsverhältnisse in den Körper beschreibt nicht nur geschlechtsspezifische Modellierungen der Körper oder die Ausübung geschlechtsspezifischer Hobbys, sondern verdeutlicht auch, dass die Subjektwerdung neben der Unterwerfung auch eine Selbstermächtigung beinhalten kann. Denn der Körper gibt dem Individuum die Möglichkeit sich eine Bedeutung zu verleihen. Demnach lässt sich der menschliche Körper als ein gesellschaftliches und kulturelles aber auch als subjektives Projekt verstehen. Es vollziehen sich nicht nur biologische Funktionen im Körper, er ist ein Aufbewahrungsort von Geschichte. Er behält das Erlebte und dient als

Informationsträger von sozialen Strukturen: Denn was "der Leib gelernt hat, das besitzt man nicht wie ein wiederbetrachtbares Wissen, sondern das ist man" (Bourdieu 1987: 135). Insofern können auch Körperpraktiken entwickelt werden, welche die einverleibten Kräfte zerstören (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 214), um individuelle Fähigkeiten zu vervielfachen. So beschreiben Deleuze und Guattari z.B. mit taoistischen Sexualpraktiken die Potenzierung menschlicher Fähigkeiten, indem die Bildung eines Intensitätskreislaufes von weiblicher (Yin) und männlicher (Yang) Sexualität durch gegenseitige Übertragung stärker wird: "Setzung für diesen Kreislauf und diesen Kraftzuwachs ist, dass der Mann nicht ejakuliert. Es geht weder darum, das Begehren als einen inneren Mangel zu erfahren, noch die Lust aufzuschieben, um eine Art von veräusserlichem Mehrwert zu schaffen, sondern vielmehr darum, einen intensiven organlosen Körper zu bilden, Tao, ein Immanenzfeld, in dem es dem Begehren an nichts mangelt und es sich daher auf kein äußerliches oder transzendentes Kriterium mehr bezieht" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 215f).

Das Prinzip der Potenzierung findet sich schon bei antiken Alchemisten, auch in den hermetischen und alchemistischen Schriften von Jabir ibn Hayyan im 8. Jahrhundert oder in deutschsprachigen Schriften, wie dem Aureum Vellum von 1598. Diesen Schriften ist gemein, dass sie über esoterische, psychische und chemische Prozesse zur Herstellung des Steins der Weisen, dem Prinzip der Transmutation des niederen in das höhere Selbst, spekulieren (Södergård 1996): "Dieser Stein, der kein Stein ist, dieses kostbare Ding, das ohne Wert ist, dieses mehrgestaltige Ding, das keine Form besitzt, dieses unbekanntes Ding, das jeder kennt" (Zosimos zit. nach Haage 1996, 84 f.) ist im alchemistischen Weltbild einerseits die Medizin, das Allheilmittel, das "Elixier der Elixiere" (Schütt 2000, 198) und andererseits die alles durchdringende Substanz, die endlose Formen annehmen kann und in allem enthalten ist (Golowin 1973). Ziel der alchemistischen Operationen ist es "einen Zustand zu erreichen, der in einer Aufhebung des Lebensstromes dem Tode gleicht und damit zugleich eine Erlösung des

Bewusstseins zu ewiger Dauer und also zu ewigem Leben bedeutet" (Schütt 1998, 204). Während das "Elixier der Elixiere" in der Wandlung von Metallen und der "Koextensivität des Metalls mit jeder Materie" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 568) gesucht wird, d. h., in der "Phänomenologie der Materie" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 568), in der Wandlung des metallischen, des mineralischen in Wasser, Pflanzen, Tieren oder Salzen, gibt es auch eine Strömung, die sich mit der geistigen Metallurgie beschäftigt, "als eine Legierung von Meditations-, also Yoga-Techniken, von schamanistischen Übungen, z. B. in Versuchen der Levitation" (Schütt 1998, 204).

Entsprechend des hermetischen Grundsatzes "innen, so außen", sind äußere oder innere Alchemie keine Gegensätze, sondern unterschiedliche Experimente – verbunden dadurch, das Lebenselixier im Körper oder für den Körper zu entwickeln und entsprechende Substanzen zu potenzieren. Diese Transmutationen hängen von der Feinheit ab: Je höher die Ausgangssubstanz, je feiner die Potenz, desto wirksamer, weil, so die alchemistische Spekulation, ein "tausendfaches Auf-sich-selbst-zurück-Verweisen" (Schütt 2000, 198) das Eigentliche enthalten muss: Das Pneuma; den Geist, Windhauch, das Chi (Qi) oder Prana (५५), den Lebensatem (Rosen 2002).

Die Verfeinerung des Atems (Prana) ist wesentlicher Bestandteil der Yogapraxis, um das Ruhen der Sinne, Impulse, das Erlöschen, Nachlassen, das große Aufhören zu erlangen (Bhagavad Gita 6, 15). Im Yogasutra des Patanjali, der wahrscheinlich im 2. Jahrhundert v. Chr. entstanden ist, werden Pranayamaübungen, d. h., Atemübungen beschreiben, welche dazu dienen durch eine Vertiefung und Kontrolle der Atmung Prana zu potenzieren- Letztlich soll so Körper und Gedanken auf das große Aufhören vorbereitet werden, den Zustand ohne Selbstinterpretationen, Selbstvergewisserungen, Selbst- und Weltvergegenwärtigungen, den Zustand der Selbstabgewandtheit (Patanjali 5, 21ff):

Während ein ungeübter erwachsener Mensch ca. 11-16 mal pro Minute atmet (Die Anzahl der Atemzüge kann je nach Tätigkeit und Erregungszustand variieren. In panischer Angst können es bis zu 100 oder mehr Atemzügen pro Minute sein.

Insofern hat Rhythmus und Menge der Atmung einen Einfluss auf das Empfinden und umgekehrt), sollen Yogis üben die Atmung zu reduzieren, um ihre Empfindungen zu reduzieren: "Solange sich der Atem bewegt, so lange ist auch alles Wandelbare des Menschen unet. Ruht das eine, kommt auch das andere zur Ruhe", wird das Ziel der Atempraxis in der Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika (2, 2), eine klassische Yogaschrift aus dem 14. Jh., beschrieben. Die Vorbereitung auf das Anhalten des Atems wird durch unterschiedliche Atemtechniken vollzogen, wie z.B. dem Kapalabhati (Schädelleuchten): "Wie beim Blasebalg eines Hufschmieds erfolgt die Ein- und Ausatmung sehr schnell" (Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 2, 35). Nach einer bestimmten Anzahl von Ein- und Ausatmungen kann der Atem entweder mit dreiviertel gefüllter Lunge (Antara Kumbhaka) oder mit vollständig geleerter Lunge (Bahya Kumbhaka) anhalten werden, um einerseits die Zunahme der Kohlendioxidkonzentration im Blut herstellen, um so die Aufnahme von Sauerstoff im Blut bei der nächsten Runde Kapalabhati zu fördern. Denn je mehr CO_2 im Austausch in der Lunge zur Verfügung steht, desto mehr O_2 kann wieder zugeführt bzw. wieder verstoffwechselt werden. Durch das Ausatmen bzw. Abatmen von Kohlendioxid werden wiederum längere Atempausen (bis zu mehreren Minuten) möglich. Der Rhythmus Kapalabhati-Kumbhaka kann so lange wiederholt werden, wie möglich: "Am Ende des Prana-Anhaltens durch Kumbhaka, soll der Yogi den Geist frei machen. So erreicht er durch diese Praxis den Zustand des Raja-Yoga" (Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 2, 77), die Kontrolle über Gedanken und Geist. Wenn der Atem unter Kontrolle ist, wird eine Alle-Krankheit-Zerstörung (sarva-roga-kshaya) bewirkt. In der Vereinigung des Atems mit Soma und des Lichts (Surya) kann die Kontrolle der Unsterblichkeit vollbracht werden. Dann entsteht ein Zustand des Totseins (Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 3, 28).

Der Begriff Soma kann hier vieldeutig ausgelegt werden: Er ist in der Psycho-Somatik, in der Physiotherapie, in der Zellbiologie die Beschreibung eines Körpers. In der Rig-Veda, einer Sammlung von Zauberhymnen, werden die Rösser des Sonnengottes Surya als Soma beschrieben, es kann auch ein

Nektar oder Presssaft damit gemeint sein. Der Mykologe Gordon Wasson geht davon aus, dass Soma das Extrakt einer Pflanze, dem Fliegenpilz; dem göttlichen Pilz der Unsterblichkeit, sei (Wasson 2017). Im Kundalini Yoga, dessen Ziele es ist, ebenfalls Körpersäfte bzw. Körperenergien, wie die Sexualkraft zu kontrollieren, ist Soma der Ausdruck nicht für eine äußere Substanz, sondern beschreibt eine innere Erfahrung bzw. eine innere Substanz, welche durch ein spezielles Mudra, dem Khecari Mudra, dem "Siegel des Weltraum-Durchwanderns" (Gammenthaler 2021: 425) ausgelöst bzw. stimuliert werden kann.

Reinhard Gammenthaler, der letzte Schüler von Dhirendra Brahmachari, wurde in "Guru-Shishya-Parampara", d. h., in die über Jahrtausende mündlich überlieferten Geheimnisse des Yoga, eingeweiht. Diese Form der Überlieferung steht in der Tradition Intensitäten, d. h., "Formen von Erregungen" (Deleuze 2007, 130), unendliche Differenzierungen und Kopplungen des Sinnlichen (ebd. 183; 282f), anhand einer Erbfolge, welche bis auf den Gott Shiva zurückgehen sollen, von Lehrer auf Schüler zu übertragen (Gammenthaler 2021). So beschreibt Gammenthaler, dass man beim Siegel des Weltraum-Durchwanderns einen Haken in den hinteren Rachenraum einführt und das Halszäpfchen nach vorne zwischen Zähne zieht, damit man es dehnen und festhalten kann. Dies ermöglicht wiederum eine Öffnung des Rachenraums, sodass die Zunge in den Nasenraum eingeführt werden kann. Ist die Zunge durch das Zungenband behindert, kann dieses mit einem Messer eingeschnitten werden, dass die Zunge entsprechend flexibel wird. Damit lässt sich dann die Nasenatmung von innen regulieren. Mit dieser Zungenstellung können auch weitere Funktionen des Organismus, so manipuliert werden, dass Nerven und vor allem die "Schicksalsdrüse" (Gammenthaler 2021: 420), d. h. die Hypophyse oder Hirnanhangsdrüse, "Elixier" produzieren, welche "zur Unsterblichkeit führen" (Gammenthaler 2021: 421). Mittels des Khecari Mudras lässt sich der Rachen mit der Zunge verschließen und "die ‚Soma‘ genannte Flüssigkeit", "der Nektar der Unsterblichkeit" (ebd.) lässt sich im Kopf bewahren und

konzentrieren, da er nicht in den Magen abfließen kann und dort dann zersetzt wird. Durch das Soma wird ein Levitieren im Weltinnenraum (Gammenthaler 2021: 425, siehe auch Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 3, 72ff), in der großen absoluten Leere (Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 3, 41; 4, 3), ein Wandeln auf dem leeren Pfad (ebd. 3, 3) möglich. "Wenn die Energie (prana) in den Haupt-Energiekanal (sushuma vahini) und der Geist (manas) in die Leere (shunye) eingetreten ist, dann sind für die Kenner des Yoga alle Handlungen (karma) ohne Basis (nirmulayati)" (Hatha-Yoga-Pradipika 4,12).

Auch in der chinesischen Alchemie, dem "Weg des Goldenen Elixiers" im Kontext des Taoismus (Der Lehre des Weges) und im Besonderen im Neidan, der inneren Alchemie des Taoismus, werden ebenfalls ähnliche Prinzipien und Techniken beschrieben. Z.B. im Text "Tai I Gin Hua Dsung Dschü", den Schulprinzipien der Goldenen Blüte, welche auf das richtige Atmen fokussieren, heißt es: "Ohne Rhythmisierung des Atems kann man die tieferen Geheimnisse nicht bewirken" (Anonym 1994, 101). In den taoistischen kosmogonischen Spekulationen bezieht sich die Leere (Wu) niemals auf etwas Nichtexistierendes, sondern ist nur Relation mit dem Dasein (You) zu verstehen. Und die Leere entsteht, wenn das Auge nicht sieht und das Ohr nicht hört (Ommerborn 1996, 92f). C.G. Jung bezeichnet den Taoismus auch als "chinesische Yogaphilosophie" (2011, 54), mit dem Ziel der Geburt des "pneumatischen Menschen" (ebd.). So lässt sich eine Linie zwischen den antiken Vorstellungen des Pneuma, der Verbindung aller Dinge als Teil eines großen Ganzen (Annas 1992, 19f), über alchemistische Vorstellungen bis hin Yogapraktiken oder auch den ausser-atemgeratenen Bergsteigenden ziehen. Was sie verbindet sind nicht das Erleben einer Spiritualität oder Frömmigkeit in Bezug auf eine nicht erklärbare transzendente Wirklichkeit, sondern das direkte Erleben einer Immanenz, die durch die Praxis des Ausatmens entsteht. Das Ausatmen macht das Subjekt leer, es läßt sich nicht mit Pneuma, dem "göttlichen Geist", auf, sondern es entsubjektiviert sich. Es empfindet sich als ein Teil des Ganzen und wird dadurch unsterblich.

IV. *n* Artikulationen und transversale Konnexionen

In der folgenden offenen Synthese werden keine Doubletten des Nomadischen, der Alchemie oder von qualitativen Erfahrungen der Immanenz etc. beschrieben, sondern es werden Vervielfältigungen des Glatten, der Spekulationen über die Leere, des End- und Formlosen erschaffen. Diese *n* Artikulationen und transversale Konnexionen dienen dazu dem oK zusätzliche Schichten hinzuzufügen. Die Differenz zwischen dem Nomadischen, der inneren Alchemie oder den qualitativen Erfahrungen der Immanenz einerseits und den organischen Subjektivierungsweisen andererseits besteht darin, dass die oK aufbauenden Praxen Entnahmen, Abtrennungen und Entsubjektivierungen vorbereiten, die "aus der Entfernung transversale Konnexionen, inklusive Disjunktionen, polyvoke Konjunktionen induzieren" (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 369), sodass das Individuum partial leer wird, frei von Signifikanten und Signifikaten, frei von Interpretationen wird – auch auf die Gefahr hin, dass der oK als "entartet", "armer Irrer" oder "Penner" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 219) gebrandmarkt wird.

Eine Schicht des oK ist, mit Rückblick auf die beschriebenen Praxen, mit der räumlichen und sinnlichen Wahrnehmung verbunden. Denn das Hineingehen in den glatten Raum setzt, im Gegensatz zum Verorten im gekerbten Raum, ein Auflösen der Onto-Photo-Logischen Aneignung (Laruelle 2014, 13, 57ff) voraus: So wie die ontologische Vorstellung von Männern und Frauen, diese auch hervorbringt, bringt auch die Onto-Photo-Logie eine bestimmte Repräsentation der Welt zum Vorschein. So wie die scheinbaren körperlichen Unterscheidungsmerkmale von Männern und Frauen wirkmächtig sind, dass sie die Stelle des Wirklichen einnehmen und zu quasi natürlichen Voraussetzungen bzw. zur scheinbaren binären Ontologie werden, wird auch die Wahrnehmung der Realität zur Kopie von normativen und räumlichen Symbolordnungen. Dabei ist bei der ontologischen Vorstellung von Männern und Frauen nicht der Phallus oder sein Fehlen, d. h., die Biologie das Fundament dieser Weltsicht, sondern der

Diskurs, der die Einteilung in männlich und weiblich organisiert (Butler 2003). Die Onto-Photo-Logische Aneignung ist nichts anderes als der Mechanismus, durch den sich die Produktion und Normalisierung von Wahrnehmung über die Repräsentation des Realen vollzieht. Insofern hat die Onto-Photo-Logische Wahrnehmung auch eine symbolische Dimension. Sie basiert nicht auf der freiwilligen Entscheidung ein Ereignis zu erfahren, sondern auf der vorreflexiven Einordnung des Gesehenen, welche das Gesehene klassifiziert und identisch macht mit Ideen der Wirklichkeit (Laruelle 2014, 13). Eine in sich selbst umkreisende Reflexion entsteht: Interpretationen, die von sich selbst bereits Interpretationen sind und bevor die Wahrnehmung erfolgt, sind die Sinne vom Begriffsapparat schon vorbestimmt. Die Welt wird so wahrgenommen, wie sie bereits beschrieben wurde (Horkheimer/Adorno 1991, 101). Wenn aber beim Umherschweifen Begegnungen mit dem Unbekannten stattfinden, entwickelt sich "von einer Begegnung zur nächsten eine Karambolage, und die Entstehung einer Welt, das heißt des Aggregats von Atomen, die von der ersten Abweichung und der ersten Begegnung in einer Kettenreaktion hervorgerufen wird" (Althusser 2010, 47), erneuert sich. Dadurch, dass auch jede Begegnung nicht hätte stattfinden können, begründet sich auch eine Nicht-Materialisierung der Begegnung, welche auf nicht stattgefundenen Begegnungen, die Leere von Begegnungen, verweist. D. h., die nichtstattgefundenen Begegnungen emergieren sich nicht nur in einer glatten Alterität als Deterritorialisierungen, sondern das Zufällige, Unbestimmte, Absichtslose begünstigt auch eine Wahrnehmung, welche die Bedeutungsproduktion selbst begrenzt und der Moment der "Durchquerung der Realität oder des Übergangs durch einen bestimmten Tunnel zur anderen Seite" (Laruelle 2014, 179), in die Leere wird ermöglicht. Diese andere Seite birgt durch die Leere gleichzeitig die unendlichen Möglichkeiten von Begegnungen mit allem in sich. Diesen absichtslosen Begegnungen fehlt die Beziehung zum Territorium, weil in ihnen sich das Viele, Grenzenlose, Zufällige spiegelt. Die Vielschichtigkeiten der nichtstattgefundenen Begegnungen vermitteln Einheiten in unendlichen Variationen, die – in Zeit

und Raum als Bewegung gedacht – den Eindruck einer stetigen Transformation des Momentes direktional statt dimensional erzeugen (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 663): Die Vergangenheit verbindet sich mit der Gegenwart, die Leere mit der Vielheit, das Einzelne mit dem Ganzen. Nicht-euklidische Labyrinth entstehen, indem der leere Raum eingeschlossen ist und der "Metabolismus des Unendlichen" (Guattari 2014, 21) kontaminiert die Überlagerungen der Schichten transversal. Diese Praxis des Organlosen als Loslösung des Bewusstseins vom Objektiven ist eine non-onto-photo-logische Übung, die verlangt, dass Begegnungen, Ereignisse als eigenständig behandelt werden, als reine Erfahrung außerhalb von Bestimmungen, Einordnungen, Zielen, Zwecken. Statt sich die Betrachtung der Umwelt als einen fetischistischen Realismus vorzustellen, der sich auf das Absichtsvolle stützt, ist das Hineingehen in den glatten Raum eine Umkehr dieser Ordnung. Nicht mehr der gekerbte Raum simuliert Realität, sondern das Hineingehen in den glatten Raum wird zum Ereignis der Defundierung und Diffundierung (N.N.2020). Daher markiert die Leere auch eine Distanz zu denjenigen Orten und Vorstellungen, von denen es nicht möglich wird, Linien zu ziehen. Wenn das "Bewusstsein [...] sich in Schauen auf[...]löst" (Hua-Yang 1794, 158), entsteht eine "unendliche Leere", die "ohne Entstehen, ohne Vergehen, ohne Vergangenheit, ohne Zukunft" (ebd.) ist.

Eine zusätzliche Schicht des oK entwickelt sich, neben seinen metallurgischen Legierungen (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 568-574), durch das Pneumologische. Dabei lassen Atemübungen – im übertragenden Sinn – Strukturen der Subjektivität oxidieren, sich auflösen. Die beschriebenen Techniken führen allerdings nicht wie in den antiken Vorstellungen zum Pleroma, dem Glanz- und Lichtmeer als Sitz einer Gottheit, sondern zu einer Verdunkelung, einer Trübung des Objektiven. Ähnlich wie in mittelalterlichen Gottesdiensten die zugezogenen Altarvorhänge den Blick auf das göttliche Geheimnis verhinderten und plötzlich aufgezo-gen wurden, um die Imagination von Jesu Christi in Gestalt von Brot und Wein sichtbar zu machen, zeigt sich jedoch im Ausatmen, im

Atemanhalten lediglich das Mysterium, das sich dem Eindeutigen, dem Sprachlichen, der Erklärbarkeit entzieht. Die Trübung ist wie die Transluzenz, sie lässt das klare Licht übersehen, aber zugunsten der Erfahrungen, die durch Verdunkelungen, d. h., durch ansteigende Dichten auf sich aufmerksam machen. Das, durch die Verdunkelung, Unsichtbare ist auch nicht einfach das andere des Sichtbaren, "die äußere Dunkelheit des Ausschließens, sondern gerade die innere Dunkelheit der Ausschließung, dem Sichtbaren selbst innerlich, durch die Struktur des Sichtbaren definiert" (Althusser/Balibar 1972, 30). Insofern sind Verdunkelungen selbstzerstörerisch, weil sie überhaupt nicht zu einem wirklichen Abbild werden. In Verdunkelungen entstehen keine Bilder von Bildern, keine Reproduktionen, Referenzen, Simulationen oder Selbstvergewisserungen, sondern es entsteht deren Auslöschung. In den Erfahrungen der Opazität und der Entsubjektivierung bedroht die Dunkelheit diejenigen Beziehungen, die uns an das Reale binden (Szepanski 2018), weil sie Vielheiten modellieren, Erfahrungen entfesseln, die letztlich aufhören "irdisch zu sein, um kosmisch zu werden" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 446). Dieses Intensiv-Werden ist ein Experimentieren mit geschlossenen Augen und wie bei bildgebenden Halluzinogenen geht es beim Umherschweifen oder bei Atemtechniken nicht darum zu ergründen, warum sich die Wahrnehmung verändert, sondern es geht um die Wirkung der Substanzen, welche die Veränderungen produzieren. Es geht um die Erfahrung des Leeren, das nicht mehr begrenzt und begrenzend ist, es geht um das Vergessen der Zeichen und das Auslöschen des Codes des furchtbaren Alphabets (Deleuze/Guattari 1977, 184). Es geht also darum die Intensitätsaggregate dort aufzuspüren, wo sie niemand vermutet und dort hinzugelangen, wo es leer wird, um molekular, äonisch, organlos zu werden. Denn "das Leben ist umso intensiver und kraftvoller, je anorganischer es ist" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 607). Im Aufspüren des Unbekannten, im Erfahren des End- und Formlosen, im Aushalten der Erschütterung der Sinne, durch die "Koppelung der Sensationen" (Deleuze 1993, 44) entsteht das was übrigbleibt, "wenn man alles entfernt hat" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 209).

Diese offene Synthese schließt mit der Überlegung, dass der oK ein entleerter Körper ist und dessen Leerheit das Entstehungsprinzip und der Ausdruck einer Abkehr von organischen Zwängen, dem Identisch-machen, ist. In diesem Zustand der Entsubjektivierung gibt es nicht eine Wahrheit, sondern n zählige Erfahrungen, deren mannigfaltigen und unendlichen Spiegelung zu Überlagerungen, zum Infiniten, zu einer totalen Irrealität werden und letztlich in die absolute Leere führen. In diesem leeren Raum bleibt das Äußere, das Objektive, wenn es in das Innere gelangt, leer, weil nur Distanz, Abwesenheit und die Leere als letzte Grenzüberschreitung herrscht. Solche Intensitäten von Enträumlichung und -zeitlichung bringen alles Multiple zum Einen als "Unendlichkeit von Modifikationen" (Deleuze/Guattari 1992, 346). Hierbei wäre weiter zu fragen, wie die Immanenz der Welt – als "eine unilaterale Halb-Mystik, die die Welt nur braucht, um den Realismus und den Determinismus zu bekämpfen, mit dem sie beladen ist und von dem die transzendenten phänomenologischen Mittel und ein mit einer Prothese [den Organen, d.V.] versehener Körper eine Vorstellung geben" (Laruelle 2014, 153) – weiter zu dechiffrieren wäre.

ANMERKUNGEN

¹ Diese Kategorisierung hat weder den Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit noch auf Feststellung. Auf den Komplex des Klangerzeugens, Tanz und Ektase wird hier nicht weiter eingegangen. Für eine ausführliche Darstellung vgl. hierzu Paulus 2020 und Szepanski 2020.

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The Temptation of Exteriority: Paradigmatic and Dramatic Examples of the Narcissistic-Paranoid Structure of the I, as a Structure of Exteriority

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Abstract

The argumentative approach of the present article is built around a pillar idea – that of the *exteriority* of the human I. This exteriority, far from being a vague, abstract or speculative one, is, on the contrary, a concrete, well articulated one, being, therefore, a well “structured” exteriority. I have shown that the essence of this structure of I’s exteriority is the *projection* or *projective identification* with an *image* from *outside*. For this reason, I called this structure of the exteriority, the *narcissistic-paranoid structure* of the I, while the *outside* projection of the image represents the very specifics of the *paranoid* mechanism, and the attachment, identification or *falling in love* with these images/projections from the outside represents the very specifics of the *narcissistic* mechanism. Using a key of psychoanalytic interpretation, I highlighted that the *primary* or *intrapsychic identification*, that is, the identification with one’s own image reflected in the mirror, as it appears in the Myth of Narcissus, constitutes the pattern on which the *secondary* or *interpsychic identifications* with the reflected images of *things* will be grafted, so as it appears in the “prisoners” of the Allegory of the Cave. The Allegory of the Cave and the Myth of Narcissus, seen in analogy, therefore represent the paradigmatic and dramatic exemplifications of the narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I, as a structure of exteriority or *ex-centricity*. I then reported the two allegories to “The Mirror Stage”, Jacques Lacan’s most important psychoanalytic contribution to the constitution of the I. I have thus shown that the I is formed by *doubling in the external mirror*, that is, by identifying with one’s own image from the outside, which is an *ideal* image. This ideal image of the I is based on the conflict, *duality* and asymmetry between the *motor* system (bodily reality) and the *visual* system (the projection of bodily reality into an idealized and illusory image, in a *gestalt*). This very identification with an image in the mirror, from the outside, through which the subject believes that he “spots” himself, he “sees” himself and thus establishes himself (“I see myself, therefore I exist”), will constitute the *genesis* of the I. It is about the genesis of a “*mask*”, that is, of a false, external

and illusory identity. This *intrapsychic identification* with one's own image from the outside, having rivalry and aggression with oneself as a specific feature, will constitute the *pattern of intersychic identifications*, rivalry and aggression with other people. Finally, I have shown that in this identification with an outside image resides the *drama of the exteriority* of the human I. I have illustrated this drama through the *Allegory of the Cave*, the *Myth of Narcissus*, the *Myth of Original Sin*, as well as through the Romanian poem, *The Boar with Silver Fangs*, showing that the price paid for this ancient and dangerous temptation of exteriority is always death.

Keywords: the I, structure of exteriority, narcissist-paranoid structure, projective identification, image, intra and intersychic identification, allegory of the cave, myth of Narcissus, mirror stage, drama

1. Exteriority as a projective-paranoid structure of the I in the “Allegory of the Cave”

No one has ever seen themselves. For this reason, everyone looks *elsewhere*, projecting themselves on the *outside*, in a strange and radical *exteriority* or *ex-centricity*. Therefore, we can state that a certain form of *paranoia* characterizes the entire human species, humans being tempted to see more outside than inside. The specificity of this paranoid form consists of the notorious fact of “not taking the beam out of one's own eye, before attempting to take the speck out of the other's eye”. It seems, indeed, that our own “beam” stuck in our eyes so blinds our inner vision that it suddenly triggers our outer one. Blind within, here we are pointing the finger outward, our paranoid “pointer” becoming, paradigmatically, the ignorant and reflexive compensatory gesture, always outwardly oriented from the inability to see the reality within.

But it is not this paranoid form of ignorance that Plato was referring to in the “Allegory of the Cave”, when he stated that the human being suffers from a fundamental blindness, that of not seeing the world of reality, allowing to be captivated, “enchanted” or hypnotized by the world of shadows, that is, of mental images projected outwards and confused with reality? It is in this ignorance that the drama of the “prisoner” in Plato's cave actually resides – in the inability to “see” or distinguish between mental images and reality, these mental images thus ending up being confused with reality and replacing it.

I will further show, by using a psychoanalytical interpretation key, that the name of this ignorance is *paranoid projection*, whereby the I of the human or the “prisoner” in the cave always projects the light outside of himself, as a shadow or mental image that obscures reality, thus projecting, for thousands of years from the cave of history, false lights, false tracks and false solutions to a single problem, which is basically the human himself, respectively his I – the *projective mechanism* behind these projections/images.

This projective-paranoid mechanism, so specific to the I or the “prisoner” in the underground, was therefore referred to 2400 years ago by Plato in the “Allegory of the Cave”, when he showed that the *fundamental*, respectively *mental* disease that the human being suffers from is ignorant imagination, whereby his I projects onto the walls of the mind cave the images/copies of things, mistaking them for reality. Plato can therefore be considered the first philosopher in the European space who talks about the *crucial confusion*¹ *between the mental image and reality*, respectively between the *imaginary* (mental) realm and the *real* one (See Ardelean 2019, 107), confusion through which the individual becomes sick of imagination, taking the images of things as reality, just as in the cave the prisoners, tied by the neck, hands and feet, so that they could only look/project *ahead*, confuse the shadows/the images projected by the fire in the cave with reality.

“Behold! human beings living in a underground den [...] Here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets”. (Plato 2010, 1)

In this scam or “enchantment” resides the blindness of the human being, captivated by the projections or projected images that he confuses with reality. The “disenchantment” would then, for Plato, consist of the “unchaining” of the prisoner's gaze so that they no longer look/project only ahead, on the wall of the cave, but can turn or “twist” their gaze behind the cave, towards the light source or projection of

shadows/images from the cave. There would be two twists, the first being the twisting of the gaze towards the fire behind the images. This fire or artificial light, equivalent to mind or intellect, does not represent the real light of true/"intelligible" knowledge, but only the projection of phenomenal/"sensitive" or illusory knowledge, i.e. that "speleological truth" or cave truth of which Heidegger spoke. Therefore, only the second turning of the gaze, towards the Sun behind the fire, equivalent to the exit from the cave, "would mark the transition from the 'speleological truth' to the 'heliological truth', i.e. the transition from the level of shadow, image or conditioning of the prisoner at the level of light, reality, freedom, unconditioning or unchaining". (Ardelean 2019, 108)

If the light of the Sun is natural, not produced by humans, the light of the fire in the cave is artificial, produced by the human mind, reason for which he must at least know the "projection" of the fire in the cave, turning/*twisting the gaze towards this fire that is our mind - the source of all projections, shadows or reflected images of things*. Through this, Plato refers to something essential, namely that before knowing what we call "reality", it is important to see *who* the one behind reality is, who the one that knows the reality is. Thus, the "disenchantment" primarily targets knowledge of self, for which it is mandatory to start with the "disenchantment" of our I; that is to say with "unchaining" the prisoner so that he can turn/twist his gaze to what resides behind the "sensitive" eyes, behind the eyes which are "enchanted", captivated and hypnotized by their own projections or images confused with reality (See Ardelean 2019, 109). In the absence of this "disenchantment", any knowledge, even the so-called objective one, is vain, blind and useless, Nietzsche clearly affirming in this sense:

"We are unknown to ourselves, we knowers, we ourselves, to ourselves, and there is a good reason for this. We have never looked for ourselves – so how are we ever supposed to *find* ourselves? [...] We remain strange to ourselves out of necessity, we do not understand ourselves, we must confusedly mistake who we are, the motto 'everyone is furthest from himself' applies to us for ever – we are not 'knowers' when it comes to ourselves." (Nietzsche 1994, 3-4)

And this because, like the prisoners in Plato's cave, enchanted by the projections of the reflected images of things

that they confused with reality, placing themselves in the sphere of illusion, we, in turn, “enchanted, hypnotized by the projections or reflected images of our I, end up confusing it with reality, instituting one of the greatest illusions, the illusion that the I could have its own identity or reality, that ‘I’ could be identical with ‘I’, that ‘I’ could be identical with me” (Ardelean 2019, 110).

Therefore, the “disenchantment” or “disentanglement” of our I consists in seeing that the I is not a structure of identity or reality, but an *imaginary projective-paranoid structure*, based on identification with an image of reality, Plato's great merit being to emphasize this crucial confusion between image/projection and reality, whereby the projective-paranoid structure of the I tends (1) to *confuse* the mental image/projection with reality, (2) to *attribute* reality to the mental image, and then (3) to *replace* reality with a mental image.

In this blindness lies the specificity of the projective-paranoid structure of the I - in the replacement of reality with a mental image/projection that becomes more important than it, the I being, in Platonian terms, no more than a “copy”, a “shadow” or an “image” of reality, i.e. a confusion between mental image and reality, through which *the paranoid I, the “enchanted” I, and the hypnotized I presents itself as reality, when actually it is no more than an image*. This projective-paranoid structure of the I, together with the *narcissistic* one, which I am going to approach, circumscribes not only a *blindness*, but also a *drama* at the level of the entire human condition or the entire condition of the “prisoner”. It is about the *drama of exteriority*, that highlights the *radical exteriority or ex-centricity of the I*, as projective-paranoid structure, this exteriority being, as I will show, the source of all misunderstandings, conflicts, and dramas in the intra and intersubjective space.

Given that this projective-paranoid structure of the I always projects the light outside, towards something or someone else, it can be seen, according to the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan², as a “site of contestation”, in the meaning that the I does not recognize what is inside him, but sees it outside, projected in the other. In another words, the I projects, sees or recognizes outside, in the other, what it does

not see or recognize in himself. The I has thus “a paranoiac structure because it is the site of a alienation” (Lacan 2006, 137) through which “an internal desire/thought/feeling is displaced and located outside the subject, in another subject” (Lacan 2006, 154).

2. Exteriority as a narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I in the “Myth of Narcissus” and the “Allegory of the Cave”

No one has ever seen their own face. This terrible truth makes everyone look for it somewhere else, projecting its shadow outside, where it is more “visible” and more “light”, trying to “catch” or immortalize its image/reflection and thus, on the basis of that image, to establish itself and postulate: “I see myself, therefore I exist”.

Who does not recognize themselves in the myth of Narcissus, the one who, seeing his face reflected in the mirror of a lake, falls in love with his own image? What we know less, however, is the significance of Narcissus's drama, closely related to the illusion of the image which he allowed himself to be seduced by and which, *doubling him in the external mirror*, alienated and imprisoned him in an image that had become a tomb, intimately connected to the tragic end of Narcissus, to which I shall return.

In order to better understand the projective-paranoid structure of the I, we must complete it, by referring to its hard core, with the *narcissistic structure of the I*, highlighted by Jacques Lacan in his famous study on the *mirror stage*. This narcissistic structure, the “subject” of all paranoid type projections, refers, of course, to Narcissus, the one who falls in love with his own reflected image/projection, confuses himself, and identifies with it, and becomes the “Other”, this very *self-alteration*, constituting the genesis of the I (cf. Ardelean 2019, 117), in the sense that the “Other”, i.e. *the Image, respectively the Exterior creates the I*, alienating it in the shell or “mask” of a false and illusory identity.

Thus, the I, as a narcissistic structure, is constituted, according to Lacan, by identifying with its own reflected image, which produces it. We are talking here, from a psychoanalytical point of view, about the *primary/intrapsychic identification*, i.e. the unconscious identification within the space of one individual's mind. This primary/intrapsychic identification will represent the pattern of the *secondary/interpsychic identifications*, which refers to the identification in the space of the intersubjective relationship between people. (cf. Nasio, 1992, 110-133). If Freud's intrapsychic identification refers to the unconscious identification of the I (A) with an image/object (B) in that unconscious space, A (the I) identifying itself and becoming B (the image/object), in Lacan the perspective is reversed, B (the image/object) producing A (the I), intrapsychic identification meaning in Lacan's conception that the image/object with which the I identifies, becomes the cause of the I (cf. Nasio 1992, 111-112).

The Myth of Narcissus can thus be seen in analogy with the Allegory of the Cave due to the *mechanism of identification with an external image*, i.e. the confusion between image and reality. The difference is that if the myth of Narcissus it is about *identifying the subject with his own reflected image*, i.e. *primary* or intrapsychic identification, then, on a retrospective analysis, we can say that the Allegory of the Cave it is about *identifying the subject with the reflected images of things*, i.e. *secondary* identification, grafted onto the pattern of primary or narcissistic identification.

How in both allegories it is the projective identification of the I with something outside of it, either with its own reflected image (the case of Narcissus in the primary identification) or with the reflected images of things in the cave (the case of the "prisoners" in the secondary identifications), we can therefore affirm that the *narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I is a structure of exteriority and ex-centricity par excellence*, as long as *the outside projection of the image* represents the very *quintessence of the paranoid structure*, and the attachment, identification or *falling in love with one's own*

images or mental projections represents the very quintessence of the *narcissistic structure*.

Thus, the I, i.e. “Narcissus” or the “prisoner” in the cave, is nothing but the result of the primary identification (from the “mirror”) and secondary identifications (from the “cave”), being simultaneous: 1) the one who unconsciously projects his own images outside, 2) confusing them with reality, by erasing the border between mental and real, in order to finally 3) identify, fall in love or attach to these images, as if they were real, objective, the I assuming them and saying: “I am the image”, that is, the “Other” who thinks he “*looks like*” him. Therefore, the projective identification of the I, based on the confusion between the mental image and reality, can also be seen in the form of the confusion between what is similar (the image) and what is different (reality), *the I being the result of the confusion between the similarity at the level of the imaginary and the difference at the level of reality*.

From here also derives the mistrust in the possibility of knowing of the I, situated, for example, by Plato at the level of ignorance of the “prisoner” in the cave, and by Jacques Lacan at the level of narcissism or the imaginary in the mirror stage. Thus, the confusion between image and reality, initially established, in the space of European philosophy, by Plato, is taken up in psychoanalysis under the name of projective identification, whose mental or intrapsychic pattern is projection, “psychoanalysis showing that the structure of the I is not a structure of identity of the type I=I, but a structure of identification with an image from outside, the I becoming a structure of exteriority and alterity par excellence, of the type I=Other” (Ardelean 2019, 111), in which the “Other” produces the I.

3. Exteriority as a narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I from the “Mirror Stage”

What becomes extremely relevant in the context of *projective identification* with an image, through which the I becomes the “Other”, by virtue of the fact that the “Other”

produces the I, is *the Mirror stage*³, Jacques Lacan's most important psychoanalytic contribution, which accounts for the narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I, validates both the allegory of the cave and the allegory of narcissism on a scientific as well as on a clinical level.

Considered the reference point of the entire Lacanian work, the mirror stage (*stade du miroir*) represents a solid and scientific argument in the sense of the "disenchantment" of the I, through which Lacan reveals its imaginary, illusory and external structure, named by him "the paradigm of the imaginary order"⁴, in which the subject, like Narcissus, is "permanently caught and captivated by its own image" (Evans 2006, 118). It is, therefore, enough to see one's self once to become captivated, blinded and hypnotized by one's own mirrored image, as constitutive moment of self-alterity, which represents the *cause of imaginary alienation or alteration in the mirror*. The mirror stage refers thusly to the drama of Narcissus in its deepest sense. That sense of helplessness, of vital insufficiency of the child, of prematurity, which will constitute the cause of Narcissus's dual, dialectical or conflictual relationship with himself, respectively the cause of the *duality and conflict between his own image and the reality of his body*. (cf. Lacan 2002, 76). But what duality or conflict is it more precisely about?

Lacan refers here to the conflict between the child's *motor* and *visual* system. Given that the child's visual system is more advanced than the motor one, this allows the child to see his image in the mirror as a whole, as *gestalt*, before reaching control of body movements. From here follows a contrast between the uncoordination of the body, experienced as a fragmentary body, and his own image, seen as a whole. This contrast then creates a *duality, a rivalry, an aggressive and dialectic tension between subject and image*, tension which is "solved" by identifying the subject with the image (cf. Lacan 2002, 76).

This discrepancy between the specular image, which reflects the body as a unit, as a whole and coordination, and the reality of the body, in which there is no unity and coordination of movements, will be felt dramatically and aggressively. It is this asymmetry "which *lies at the basis of the first form of discrepancy*

between image and reality” (Ardelean 2017, 10). In other words, the asymmetry between the imaginary, as a whole image of the body, and reality, as fragmentation, uncoordination of body movements, will generate for the first time the conflict between *what should be* (the ideal I) and *reality, what is*, the I being the result of this discrepancy, asymmetry, and conflict, “resolved” by the identification with the reflected image – the “Other”, as origin of the I (cf. Lacan 2002, 76).

The constitution of the I takes place, therefore, through the process of identification with one’s own reflected image (*image spéculaire*), moment described by Lacan as being one of gleefulness, in the sense that “the child’s jubilation is owed to his imaginary triumph in anticipating a degree of muscular coordination which he has not yet reached in reality” (Lacan 1988, 79). Thus, the temptation of doubling in the imaginary and external mirror is for Lacan of a negative nature because of the hypnotizing and captivating effect of the reflected image. This reflected image, perceived as a whole, as *gestalt*, as a unit, in contrast with the fragmented body, is considered by Lacan a simple illusion of integrity, having as main effect the alienation of the subject in its image. Furthermore, this alienation constitutes the basis of the subject’s aggressiveness towards and rivalry with his own self. (cf. Lacan 2002, 79). Thus, *the constitution of the I through identification with an image from outside of itself, brings to life a structure of rivalry of the subject with itself*, which presupposes, then, aggressiveness and alienation.

The I is formed through identification with the reflected image, named by Lacan “primordial identification with an ideal image of the I” (Lacan 2002, 76). Through this identification the I and the reflected image, form the *prototypal dual relation*, which is fundamentally narcissistic. The child identifies with the ideal image of himself and fixes himself in it as into a frame or “stature”, by saying: “the image is me”, even if this image is situated outside of him, in his exterior (cf. Ardelean 2017, 12). This is what Lacan calls the primordial identification with the ideal image of the I; image which, unable to ever be reached, will trigger aggressiveness and rivalry with one’s self, which is narcissism.

Narcissism, defined as “the erotic attraction to the specular image” (Evans 2006, 123) is an *ambivalent* formation, which has a double nature, *erotic* and *aggressive*, as it appears in the myth of Narcissus. The erotic nature is given by the attraction or the falling in love of the subject with the image or the *gestalt*. The aggressive characteristic is given by the contrast, the duality, the rivalry, or the conflict between the whole of the reflected image and the fragmented body. Aggressiveness is thus constitutive of narcissism, in the sense of that continuous rivalry with one’s self. It is the subject’s attempt to maintain the identification formed in the mirror stage, when “the infants sees its reflection in the mirror as a wholeness, in contrast with the uncoordination in the real body; this is experienced as an aggressive tension between the specular image and the real body” (Evans 2006, 6). Hence, this narcissistic identification with the reflected image implies the ambivalence of the erotic and aggressive elements, “*erotic aggressiveness*” being considered by Lacan the fundamental ambivalence of narcissism, which all the other forms of identification will later fix onto. Given this ambivalence, narcissism can easily glide from the extreme pole of self-love to the opposite pole of self-destruction – “narcissistic suicidal aggression” (cf. Evans 2006, 6), as it is found in the myth of Narcissus.

The narcissistic identification with the reflected image represents at the same time, in Lacan’s conception, the fundamental cause of the subject’s alienation within a shell of foreign, false and illusory identities through which the I becomes the “Other” from its very origin. In this sense, the I does not represent more than a mere sum of successive identifications, which is an “Other” for himself, because the subject will find himself primarily in the “Other”, be it his own image in the mirror, or his image in the “Other”.

The mirror stage shows, therefore, that the *I is the result of a misunderstanding (méconnaissance)*, because it introduces the subject into the imaginary order, as a radical exteriority in rapport with the subject. Thus, in the imaginary order, says Lacan, “self-knowledge (*me connaissance*) is synonymous with misunderstand (*méconnaissance*)” (Evans 2006, 112), because the process by which the I is formed in the mirror stage is at

the same time the institution of alienation from the *symbolic* determination of being. *Méconnaissance* is also “the structure of paranoiac delusions”, which are described by Lacan in terms of a “*méconnaissance systématique de la réalité*” (Evans 2006, 112). Operating solely in the register of the imaginary, which is that of images or “luminous shadows”, the I cannot have and cannot receive any *real ontological status*, but only an imaginary one, of appearance, delusion and illusion, the main illusions of the imaginary being “wholeness, synthesis, autonomy, duality and, above all, similarity [...] so the order of surface appearances which are deceptive, observable phenomena which hide underlying structure” (Evans 2006, 84).

Elaborating his theory on the formation of the I between 1932 and 1953, in close connection with his research on narcissism, paranoia and aggressiveness, Lacan establishes the following conclusion: the I is reduced to narcissism, as an imaginary order. The constitutive of the imaginary order is, as we have seen, the primary identification with one's own image, as the basis of secondary identifications with other images, through which the I becomes the “Other”, thus making possible the narcissism, the aggressiveness and the self-rivalry. All these constitutive elements of *narcissism* highlight, according to Lacan, a *universal feature of the I*, closely related to the phenomenon of *paranoia*. It is about that misunderstanding (*méconnaissance*) or “misrecognition” by which the I does not recognize what is inside it, but sees it outside, projected into the “Other”. Through all these narcissistic and paranoid elements, we can therefore affirm that the I appears as a narcissistic-paranoid structure.

The mirror stage thus represents not only the most important Lacanian contribution, but equally the most important psychoanalytical contribution within the framework of the “disenchantment” of the I. By proving the I to be no more than *an image, a projection or a narcissistic-paranoid structure*, Lacan deconstructs the claims of knowing the I and reveals in this way something of extreme significance, which is that the I *is not compatible to knowledge within the “conscious-perception” framework* (cf. Lacan 2002, 80).

4. The drama of exteriority: the I as a “montage” around a “black hole” or a perforated glance

After the 1960s, considered the third period of the Lacanian conception⁵, the French psychoanalyst resumes the dialectic from the mirror stage, observing that it is not enough for the subject to see his image reflected outside, respectively in the mirror or in the “Other”. Thus, what matters is the existence of a *hole* in this image: “I can see my image in the mirror, but what I cannot see is my own gaze” (cf. Nasio 1992, 71).

The existence of this hole refers to the existence of a *libido* that remains hidden from view. For this reason, libido breaks, perforates or holes the image, and in front of this hole, says Lacan, anguish arises. On this hole in the image will be grafted the “impulsive desires”, which the narcissistic-paranoid I will project outside, investing them. The I thus appears composed of a set of invested images that circulate around a hole, around a void, or around an *absence*; it is a “*montage*” around a hole. This real hole is the cause of the narcissistic montage, and the invested images allow accommodation to this void (cf. Nasio 1992, 72).

Reframing the Lacanian argument, we can say that the subject sees his image reflected outside, in the mirror or in the “Other”, but *what he does not see*, “*blinded*” by his own image, is the very central point - the source of his own gaze or projection, which is Desire. The desire that is projected from an existential void or vacuum is, therefore, this very “real hole”, this very “black hole”. It is the source of projection or gaze, and what the subject does not see, blinded by the light of his own image, is this very void, this very “*black hole*” of his gaze – Desire.

This can take a tragic turn, as it appears in the Myth of Narcissus, the character who best accounts for the narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I. Thus, looking at his face reflected in the mirror of a lake, Narcissus falls in love with his own reflected image and, consumed by longing, desire and pain that he could not reach the young man in the image, throws himself into the water that reflected him, thus dying. The drama and tragedy of the human condition illustrated in the Myth of

Narcissus resides in the fact that *the human cannot see himself directly*, but only indirectly, through means of the reflected image, fact which implies an alienation, an alteration, a “split” or a splitting of the human being, on the basis of which aggression and self-rivalry become possible.

The fact that *he sees but does not see himself*, does not see his void or “black hole” from which he looks, will make human to identify with an image, with an “Other”, and say “I am That”, in the desperate attempt to come into being, to establish itself through the reflected or ideal image. This ideal image gives the human the illusion of unity with himself, this very illusion of unity making possible the “capture” in an ideal image from outside, which hides from him the void or “black hole” of Desire, as the source of the images/projections.

It is useful to remember in this regard the significance of an almost forgotten aspect – the fact that in the Greek world it was forbidden *to look ahead*. Taking this aspect into account, we can then truly understand the prophecy made by the Greek sage Teiresias at the birth of Narcissus, according to which Narcissus will have a long life *if he never looks at himself* (cf. Biedermann 1992, 235), prophecy which came true. The interdiction that Narcissus, tempted, disregarded – that of looking at himself or mirroring himself, basically represents the interdiction to look outside ourselves, any exterior, through its lack, being deceptive, seductive and tempting – thus altering and alienating us. The prophecy also represents the interdiction to look at ourselves through the “sensitive” eyes, or mirror, i.e. through external images, because they hypnotize us, inoculating *the belief that reality is placed outside*. For this reason, the human will always tend to run outwards, in an attempt to “catch”, to capture or to establish himself inwardly, resulting in a conflict between inside and outside, between subject and image. This conflict will be “solved” by confusing the subject with the image outside of himself, this confusion causing Narcissus to end tragically in his exasperated attempt to unite in reality with the chimera of the image outside of himself, which was obviously an impossibility. Hence the drama, the tragedy of Narcissus, derived from the helplessness,

the impossibility to unite with oneself or to immortalize oneself through the “sensitive” image/mirror.

Similarly, the original interdiction from the Garden of Eden, that of *not* tasting the fruit of knowledge except at the price of death, anticipates the same dangerous temptation: the temptation of exteriority, the trap through which the human, tasting the fruit, *goes outside of himself*. Thus, “original sin” means nothing more than the “*sin*” of *changing or modifying our perception, that is changing the inner perception into the outer perception of things, the price paid for this temptation of exteriority being death*.

Therefore, the temptation of exteriority, that is, the temptation of the human being to look at or know himself from the outside, is the oldest temptation, reiterating the same dangerous temptation of the I: the temptation of doubling in the imaginary or external mirror of things, in which to see (one’s self) is actually equivalent to dying, since the price paid for this temptation always seems to be the same - death. From this temptation of exterior doubling ultimately derives the drama of the human I, for we cannot die definitively except in our exteriority.

Finally, this ancient and dramatic temptation of the I’s exteriority can be illustrated by referring to a famous Romanian poem, “*The Boar with Silver Fangs*”, written by Ștefan Augustin Doinaș⁶, which is another paradigmatic and dramatic illustration of the narcissistic-paranoid structure of the I’s projections.

The Silver fanged Boar

*A Levantine prince quite enamored with hunting,
some dark-hearted forest was travelling through
and making his path with great effort and grunting,
he said, while on bone-flute he merrily blew:*

*– Let’s hunt through these forests, untrodden and
daunting,
the silver-fanged boar who’s ferocious and wild,
who changes his fur every day, as he’s molting,*

and changes his hooves, and his glass eye reviled....

*– Oh, master, the servants with trumpets would say,
that bloodthirsty boar does not travel through here.
It's better to chase down the antlers to slay,
or red colored foxes, or hares that are near....*

*But smiling and certain the prince passed ahead
and carefully gazing at trees and their hues,
he left in his lair the young deer full of dread,
and the sparkly eyed lynx who'll smile for a ruse.*

*Through beech woods he'd trample old weeds to the
ground:*

*– Just look how he turns! We have closed in for good
on this silver-fanged boar, not too far, hear his sound:
come over, let's hit him with arrows of wood!...*

*– My lord, it's the stream through the woods, tall and
lush,
the smart servant said, as he laughed with a roar.
But the prince turned around and replied only: – Hush...
And the water did shine like the fang of a boar.*

Under elm trees he'd hasten his scattered old train:

*– You see how he's puffing alone and unreal,
the silver-fanged boar over meadow and plain:
come over, let's hit him with arrows of steel!*

*– My lord, it's the grass that with boots we would brush,
the bold-looking servant would say like before.
But the prince turned around to reply only: – Hush...
And the glistening grass seemed like fangs of a boar.*

Under firs, he would cry pushing them to the peak:

*– You see where he's finding his lair and his shire,
the boar from old tales, of whom old people speak:
– come over, let's hit him with arrows of fire!...*

*– My lord, it's the moonlight which night fears can't
quash,
the servant said laughing, despising and sore.
But turning around the prince only said: – Hush...*

And the moonlight shone bright, like the fangs of a boar.

*Alas! under rays of the pale stars at dusk,
as he crouched for a drink, his knees slowly sagged,
there charged a huge boar with his piercing sharp tusk
and the prince through the red dust he savagely dragged.*

*– What strange looking beast so bloodthirsty and vicious,
is stopping the hunt for my silver-fanged boar?
What black bird is crying in moonlight so listless?
What wilted old leaf shakes my soul to its core?...*

*– My master, that boar with the fangs as of silver,
that same had you pierced, and with blood you're awash.
The dogs chase it now – can't you hear? by the river... But
turning, the prince whispered quietly: – Hush.*

*You take the old horn, and just blow without pause
to sound till I'm dead, to the sky clear and prime...
Right then from the ridges a big moon arose,
and the horn made its sound for a very short time.*

(Doinaş 2020; translated by Daniel Ioniță)

Beyond the classical and insufficiently questioned interpretation of the poem, that of the aspiration towards the ideal, I would propose another interpretation, through which Ștefan Augustin Doinaş seems to realize the fact that this aspiration towards the ideal in the absence of an “initiation” that makes you see not only what is in *front* – usually a beautiful, bright image, which belongs to the narcissistic-paranoid projection of the I –, but also what is *behind* – danger, risk, death –, every human attempt is doomed to failure. Doinaş surprises, therefore, in his famous poem this idea of the *exteriority or ex-centricity of the narcissistic-paranoid I*, whose fundamental vice – the projection of its faculties and searches only externally – also becomes the fundamental drama of the I, that of being, sooner or later, crushed by the very projection and materialization of one's own chimeras. Thus, blinded by the projection of his own images that obscure his reality and refusing to hear the voice of reality, in the symbolic form of lucid “servants” who warn him that he has fallen into the net of the

image, the prince of the Levant, the poetic equivalent of Narcissus and the “prisoner” in the Cave, ends tragically, crushed by the “hoof” of the materialization of his own chimeras.

The poem also suggests something very symptomatic of our human condition, related to the meaning or direction of the search. Thus, if all people are searching, in one form or another for something, the question is whether they are searching in the right direction. The anecdote about a man who loses his key and is asked by a passerby if he lost it there, in that place, is extremely significant in this sense, to which our man honestly answers: “*No, but there is light here*” (cf. Carrière 1998, 354). This answer indicates the symptomatic tendency of human to search and orient his faculties only externally, i.e. where it is more “visible”, “easier” and more “light”, thereby missing the essential, the “key”, which is himself. For the human being, who seeks knowledge only externally and has not sought within, so that by not knowing oneself, how could one find what one seeks? Avid to conquer the universe, the world, the outer space, the human being does not realise that in the meantime they have lost the “key”, the inner space. Blind and without knowing, the human being is actually searching for oneself.

NOTES

¹ This issue, the Gordian knot of all issues, was actually intuited and approached, in various ways, by all major world philosophies and religions, in permanent attempts to reach reality and become free from the “spell” of image or illusion.

² Jacques Lacan is considered the most loyal, but also the most nonconformist interpreter of Freud’s work. A man of great culture, Lacan widened the horizons of psychoanalysis, by introducing concept from the spheres of philosophy, linguistics and mathematics.

³ The term of mirror stage was initially formulated by the psychologist Henry Wallon, as a stage between six to eight months in which the child perceives its “I” in space. Donald Winnicott, Henri Wallon, Paul Schilder, René Zazzo, Françoise Dolto, Jacques Lacan are among the most important psychologists, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts who highlighted in their research the role of specular reflection in the configuration of the “I”.

⁴The psychological life has, according to Lacan, three dimensions: the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. The imaginary order is related to the images of the “I” in the mirror stage. The symbolical order, specific to humans, is related to the function of speech/language, to the law which

governs the unconscious – the unconscious being seen as a structured language. The real order is more difficult to name, because it goes beyond the imaginary order, and the symbolic order, it being similar to the Kantian object itself.

⁵ The first period of Lacanian psychoanalysis is between 1932-1935, and the second period between 1953-1958.

⁶ If it is true, according to several testimonies, that the poem was written in 1945 (the year the Second World War ended), then we cannot exclude the symbolic connection, at least, with the atrocities committed by Hitler's war "hunt" in pursuit of his "ideal", "ideal" which, materializing, ended up becoming one of the most monstrous and terrifying dramas and traumas in the history of humanity.

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Attitude esthétique et unité de l'expérience

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Abstract Aesthetic Attitude and Unity of Experience

Generally understood as a particular dimension of the aesthetic experience, the aesthetic attitude is linked to a division of the experience to which this article dedicates a critical examination. Distinct from the ordinary and practical experience, the aesthetic experience would find in the attitude of the same name the guarantee of an insularity that recent researches in cognitive psychology have made definitively inadmissible. But the recognition of a continuity between the ordinary experience and the aesthetic experience was not always accompanied by a re-examination of the traditional concepts of the aesthetic. In this perspective, it seems necessary to clear the conditions of possibility of a reintroduction of praxis in the aesthetic experience itself, by reconsidering its objects from their perceptive environment.

Keywords: aesthetics experience, contemplation, disinterestedness, action, perceptual background, judgment

1. Le problème de l'attitude esthétique

Que la possibilité d'une expérience esthétique ait été historiquement conditionnée par un processus d'inhibition, c'est ce que la simple expression d'attitude esthétique suffirait seule à faire valoir. Loin de se réduire à la détermination d'un genre particulier de réceptivité ou de se confondre avec la sollicitation d'une action spécifique, l'attitude esthétique est, dans son concept même et jusque dans ses applications empiriques les plus courantes, le nom d'une injonction, d'un ordre, en tout cas d'une décision. Les définitions les plus élémentaires de l'expression reconnaissent, en effet, sans difficulté cette situation paradoxale où un objet est non seulement constitué comme tel par l'intention qui le vise, mais encore baptisé du nom de

l'attitude qui le considère. Nous « adoptons » une attitude que l'on appelle esthétique et nous produisons, nous créons par une singulière orientation de notre regard une identité entre un objet et une expérience¹. Par l'attitude esthétique, nous faisons passer un objet de simple objet du monde parmi les autres à un objet *esthétique*.

Quelles qu'aient été les tautologies qu'ont pu parfois produire les définitions de cette attitude, aucune n'est parvenue à dissimuler pourtant ce que nous avons nommé, au fondement de l'expérience esthétique, une inhibition, tout au moins une retenue². Le silence religieux des salles de concerts, l'obscurité dans laquelle nous nous sommes habitués à voir des films, le calme solennel des musées, la solitude ordinaire de la lecture, témoignent, bien au-delà de la constitution progressive de ces dispositifs dans l'histoire, de la formulation tacite d'une interdiction, de l'établissement d'un seuil que ces pratiques mêmes nous dispensent de franchir. Cette inhibition, cette réserve, est avant tout celle qui, devant un objet esthétique, nous empêche d'agir, cette bienséance, garantie par une constellation d'exigences sociales inaperçues, qui nous somment de demeurer à distance de l'objet et de le contempler seulement. Plus encore, ces dispositifs nous rendent impossible, sinon aberrante, l'invention d'une autre relation à l'objet esthétique que celle prescrite par les nomenclatures de cette expérience, que l'on a quelquefois pu concevoir comme l'adoption d'un certain point de vue sur un objet (Beardsley 1988 [1982], 163). Ce qui servirait d'ailleurs le mieux à nous convaincre de notre inhibition est le malaise que nous procure aujourd'hui l'idée d'une solidarité entre l'appréciation des œuvres d'art et la théorie de l'action.

Difficile à dater et malaisément imputable à une décision isolée, l'inhibition qui est devenue pour nous le terreau de nos expériences esthétiques a reçu sa forme philosophique la plus conséquente dans la définition kantienne du jugement de goût. Peut-être le contresens de l'esthétique a-t-il été, après Kant, de confondre, dans le concept de désintéressement, deux exigences contraires, celle du jugement et celle de l'expérience. Par un glissement insensible, l'absence d'intérêt délimitant sans ambiguïté le profil d'un jugement (Kant 1968, § 2, 204), est

devenue le nom d'une expérience. Il est vrai que le passage de l'un à l'autre s'opère quelquefois insensiblement dans le texte kantien lui-même, comme à l'occasion de l'examen du sublime mathématique, lorsque certaines formulations de Kant semblent donner une priorité à l'expérience : « ceci peut aussi suffire pour rendre compte de la stupeur (*die Bestürzung*) ou de cette sorte d'embarras (*Art von Verlegenheit*) qui, comme on le rapporte, saisit le spectateur lorsqu'il pénètre pour la première fois dans l'église de Saint-Pierre à Rome (*den Zuschauer in der St. Peterskirche in Rom beim ersten Eintritt anwandelt*) » (Kant 1993, § 26, 130/1968, 252). Mais il appartient cependant à ses continuateurs d'avoir systématisé ce passage, sans le formuler comme tel, au point d'appliquer à une expérience spécifique ce qui valait, en toute rigueur, pour les conditions d'une appréciation. De ce point de vue, c'est certainement la réception de Kant qui a le mieux contribué à entériner l'inhibition de l'expérience esthétique. Remarquable est, chez Victor Basch par exemple, l'absence de tout examen du jugement esthétique dans un article intitulé, en 1921, « Le maître-problème de l'esthétique ». Le désintéressement y devient le caractère de l'attitude esthétique qui confère au sentiment un rôle constitutif (Basch 1921, 5). Si « avant tout, l'attitude esthétique réside dans la *contemplation* » (Basch 1921, 9), l'inflexion textuelle opérée par Basch, pourtant lecteur de Kant, aura sur *La Phénoménologie de l'expérience esthétique* de Mikel Dufrenne la plus grande influence. Acceptant sans reste sa distinction des cinq attitudes possibles de l'homme (pratique-sensible, intellectuelle, morale, religieuse et esthétique), Dufrenne reconduit dans le même mouvement la confusion entre le désintéressement du jugement et celui de l'expérience, pour opposer ainsi strictement « la contemplation à la praxie » (Dufrenne 1953, 527).

Traversant les traditions philosophiques (Dickie 1964, 56-65), ce déplacement du concept de désintéressement de la sphère du jugement à celle de l'expérience a eu pour conséquence la prise au sérieux d'une distinction entre deux sortes d'expérience, qui retrouvait en partie l'antique division entre la *vita activa* et la *vita contemplativa*. D'une part, l'expérience ordinaire, commune, parfois qualifiée sans grande rigueur de quotidienne,

qui désignerait tout à la fois, et peut-être paradoxalement, une expérience indifférente, inattentive à la réalité extérieure, et une autre, qui serait engagée dans un rapport pratique, utile, pragmatique au monde. Contre cette expérience ordinaire, l'expérience esthétique viendrait, d'autre part, introduire une toute autre relation à la réalité dont le propre est de se porter sur des objets d'un autre ordre et en opposition à ce premier type d'expérience, indifférent ou pratique. Si des voix s'élèvent aujourd'hui pour réviser cette opposition d'un point de vue cognitif (Schaeffer 2015, 12), ou politique (Rancière 2004, 52), la force toujours vive de cette distinction dans le champ de l'esthétique en rend toujours difficile le dépassement.

Distinction commode et propre à entretenir la sacralité des choses de l'art, puisque l'expérience esthétique y est pensée en un rapport d'incommensurabilité avec l'expérience ordinaire, ce partage de l'expérience conduit à la formulation d'au moins deux méprises.

La première d'entre elles a été de se donner une notion trop lâche de l'expérience ordinaire. Rarement définie comme telle³, elle sert de miroir déformant à une expérience qui s'en détache sans que les conditions et la nature de ce décrochage ne soient explicitement formulées. Que l'art soit un « agrandissement de la vie » (Henry 1988 [2005], 70), et par là le dévoilement de son essence, ou que l'expérience esthétique se pense comme « don de soi » (Dufrenne 1953, 532), c'est encore fonder naïvement la distinction sur une expérience ordinaire dont on sait peu et qui ne présente pas d'autre fonction que celle d'être une utile inconnue.

Une seconde méprise pourrait être identifiée, du côté de l'expérience esthétique elle-même, dans la fortune phénoménologique du terme de communion. Ce n'est pas seulement que le mot contienne en lui-même une confusion conceptuelle irréductible et peu susceptible d'une résolution rationnelle, mais c'est qu'il a servi indistinctement, dans le champ de la phénoménologie, à décrire le processus de l'expérience esthétique autant que celui de l'expérience dite ordinaire. On se souvient de l'usage qu'en faisait Merleau-Ponty dans la *Phénoménologie de la perception*. La communion était ce qui, par-delà les « préjugés de la pensée objective », nous

assurait, dans la perception du monde naturel, d'une union entre notre corps et les choses (Merleau-Ponty 1945 [2005], 376). Servant ici à caractériser ce que la phénoménologie esthétique nommerait l'expérience ordinaire, la communion est aussi bien ce qui semble définir, à l'inverse, la spécificité de l'expérience esthétique. De Dufrenne (1953, 530) à Ingarden (1969, 46), la communion atteste d'une séparation radicale entre les miracles toujours reconduits de l'expérience esthétique et les impuissances de l'autre, ordinaire et demeurant à la marge de ses objets.

Le problème que nous voudrions poser consiste donc à penser les conditions d'une unité de l'expérience qui n'ait pas pour conséquence l'annulation du concept d'attitude esthétique ou, si l'on veut encore, à saisir la possibilité d'une attitude esthétique qui ne se paie pas au prix d'un déchirement maladroit et difficile à recoudre entre deux règnes introuvables de l'expérience. Au lieu de penser l'avènement, toujours un peu magique, de l'expérience esthétique à partir d'une expérience supposément ordinaire, il s'agit de comprendre ce qui dans l'attitude esthétique elle-même, et par conséquent dans l'objet qu'elle vise, conditionne une expérience unifiée malgré la valeur différenciée des objets qui la composent.

2. L'obstacle esthétique : contemplation, enclave pragmatique, désintéressement

Trois concepts fondamentaux de l'esthétique ont sensiblement contribué à scinder l'expérience. Celui de désintéressement, tout d'abord, a fait l'objet en philosophie analytique de nombreuses discussions. La synthèse qu'en a proposée Gérard Genette s'efforce de ne retenir, en suivant littéralement le choix de George Dickie, que quelques doctrines (Genette 1996). Tout se passe comme si le désintéressement kantien s'était constitué, presque sans questionnement, comme un concept fondamental de l'esthétique dont la remise en cause entrainerait avec elle la disparition du domaine. Cette crispation, que l'on évalue sans peine à l'omniprésence du concept dans toute la littérature esthétique (Schiller 1964, 295), s'est pourtant accommodée d'une interprétation partielle du texte kantien en faisant de la définition du jugement de goût selon la seule qualité

le tout de l'*attitude* esthétique, terme dont la grande extension permet de laisser dans l'ombre les facultés proprement esthétiques que l'on accepte de reconnaître à titre essentiel.

Cette réduction au désintéressement, de l'attitude esthétique, n'est pas sans manifester une certaine ironie de l'histoire. Il est étonnant en effet de constater qu'un concept axiologique issu de l'empirisme anglais se soit imposé comme le fondement indiscutable d'une attitude dont le propre est d'inhiber l'action. Jerome Stolnitz attribue à Shaftesbury l'application du vocabulaire du désintéressement au problème de la perception, là où il relevait encore chez Hobbes du domaine de l'éthique et de la religion (Stolnitz 1961, 132). Dans ce contexte, les premiers développements de l'« Analytique du Beau » de Kant dressent explicitement la satisfaction sans intérêt contre la faculté de désirer qui, au lieu de s'appliquer à la seule représentation de l'objet, se lie, par l'intérêt, à la représentation de son existence (Kant, 1968, 204). Ce qui est donc affirmé dès le deuxième paragraphe de la *Critique de la faculté de juger*, rétablit ce que le premier avait pu sembler omettre, à savoir la distinction entre un jugement de goût et la possibilité d'une action. Distinct de la faculté de connaître dans le premier paragraphe, le jugement esthétique l'est de la faculté de désirer dans le deuxième, grâce à l'introduction d'une négation, ou plutôt d'une absence : « *ohne alles Interesse* ».

Ce refus de la poursuite d'un intérêt dans la satisfaction déterminant le jugement de goût a donné aux esthétiques de l'*attitude* une dimension inévitablement normative. Les définitions du désintéressement illustrent explicitement cette hybridité. Jerome Stolnitz caractérise l'attitude esthétique comme « l'attention et la contemplation désintéressées et sympathiques de tout objet de conscience, quel qu'il soit, pour son seul intérêt »⁴. Si le désintéressement signifie ici le fait pour le sujet contemplant de ne se proposer aucun autre but que de contempler, le profil de ce désintéressement suppose tout ensemble qu'il y ait, d'une part, la possibilité – réprimée – de la poursuite d'un autre but et, d'autre part, que le refus de cette possibilité soit en quelque sorte exigé par l'attitude esthétique elle-même en son expérience. L'attitude esthétique est bien ici l'expérience que l'on choisit d'avoir, celle que l'on décide de

provoquer avec l'illusion, maintenue par la fiction d'un sens proprement esthétique, de ne se conformer jamais qu'aux injonctions de l'objet.

En réalité, il n'est pas exclu que la forme descriptive que revêtent les définitions de l'attitude esthétique (« l'attitude esthétique *est* l'attention désintéressée... ») soit motivée par l'influence qu'a sur nous les dispositifs esthétiques, c'est-à-dire l'ensemble des lieux, des actions institutionnelles et des comportements historiquement conquis dans l'appréhension des objets esthétiques. L'évidence avec laquelle nous faisons silence au concert et l'idée d'une écoute attentive portée exclusivement sur l'objet musical nous dissimulent une exigence laborieusement quoiqu'imparfaitement satisfaite au cours des trois derniers siècles. Si l'on considère le désintéressement du point de vue où il s'oppose à l'action (et cela n'est qu'un de ses revers ; Kant 1968, § 5, 210), il est certain que ce sont davantage les dispositifs esthétiques que notre décision individuelle – ou même la nature de l'objet – qui nous y conduisent. Que l'écoute musicale interdise, par l'aménagement particulier des salles de concert, le mouvement du corps, ou que l'espace des musées se prête assez mal au déploiement d'une relation autre qu'immobile et dévouée avec les œuvres, cela nous fournit de bonnes raisons de croire que l'injonction esthétique, exemplairement manifestée dans l'attitude du même nom, adoucit la contrainte qu'elle porte avec elle en se fondant dans le jeu des pratiques instituées⁵. Si l'hypothèse d'une inhibition au fondement de l'attitude esthétique a pu séparer, dans la pratique courante, des arts aussi proches que la musique et la danse (Barbaras 1998, 38), cela signifie que l'inhibition dont il s'agit n'est pas autre chose que l'effet sur notre comportement de dispositifs clairement hostiles à la reconnaissance d'une relation entre l'appréciation esthétique et l'action.

On voit ainsi, sous l'horizon de ces dispositifs, ce qui solidarise le désintéressement et la contemplation. Autre concept fondamental caractérisant le jugement esthétique, la contemplation est introduite par Kant au paragraphe 5 de l'« Analytique du Beau » à l'occasion d'une comparaison entre les trois satisfactions que présentent l'agréable, le bon et le beau. La formulation kantienne établit non seulement la contemplation

comme un caractère de la satisfaction que l'on prend au beau dans la perspective d'un jugement de goût, mais elle l'introduit également comme la marque d'une restriction, presque d'une économie. Kant écrit : « le jugement de goût est *seulement* contemplatif (« *bloß kontemplativ* » ; Kant 1968, § 5, 209). En lui se trouvent moins de déterminations que dans une satisfaction relevant de l'agrément ou du bon. En effet, le désintéressement, coextensif à la contemplation, se distingue par le retranchement qu'il exige de la part du sujet, par le dépouillement d'un certain nombre de représentations que les autres satisfactions déploient. Devenu, par la médiation des lectures successives de Kant, le propre de l'attitude esthétique, le concept de contemplation radicalise encore davantage que celui de désintéressement l'écart entre l'expérience esthétique et l'expérience ordinaire, en donnant à cette dernière la forme toute tracée par la tradition d'une *vita activa*.

La contemplation ne bornait pas seulement l'expérience esthétique à une dimension unique et discriminante de l'existence, elle contribuait surtout à rendre impossible toute espèce de communication, de passage entre l'expérience esthétique et l'expérience ordinaire, alors soumise aux exigences de la pratique. Il est vrai qu'Aristote nous avait habitués, dans un tout autre contexte, à penser la distinction entre les deux genres de vie sous la forme d'une alternative exclusive (Aristote 1993, 454), et la contemplation esthétique a été travaillée de l'intérieur par le souvenir de cette ancienne division. L'attitude esthétique relevait ainsi d'une expérience qui exagérait sa différence contemplative en se mesurant à une expérience plus pauvre dont elle devait s'exclure par principe. Le partage consenti entre deux genres d'expérience était régi par une loi d'exclusion réciproque qui attribuait aux objets esthétiques une valeur particulièrement prestigieuse. L'opposition des expériences impliquait une hiérarchie conséquente des objets qui leur étaient propres. Aussi, l'expérience ordinaire n'était-elle pas mieux définie que ses objets et avait pour tâche de représenter, dans le vague d'une négation, ce que l'expérience esthétique n'était pas.

Beaucoup d'esthéticiens s'accordent encore aujourd'hui sur un caractère négatif de l'attitude esthétique. Aidée par ces

déterminations historiques du concept de contemplation – qui le poussent à se penser par opposition directe à l'action – l'expérience esthétique semble souvent ne pas pouvoir franchir le seuil de la pratique sans risquer de se perdre elle-même. On pourrait ainsi se demander dans quelle mesure les requalifications récentes de l'expérience esthétique, comme expérience intégrée à la vie commune et à ses différentes fonctions psychologiques, ne permettraient pas aussi de penser la possibilité de réponses esthétiques actives. L'affirmation essentielle de Jean-Marie Schaeffer selon laquelle « l'expérience esthétique fait partie des modalités de base de l'expérience commune du monde », en cela « qu'elle exploite le répertoire commun de nos ressources attentionnelles » (Schaeffer 2015, 12), ne doit peut-être pas nécessairement conduire à la position d'une « une enclave pragmatique » de l'expérience esthétique.

Plutôt que de concevoir l'action comme une restriction de la richesse attentionnelle propre à l'attitude esthétique – qui se caractérise par une réduction du critère de sélectivité (Schaeffer 2015, 51-76) – ne faut-il pas penser, par-delà les limitations théoriques que nous imposent les dispositifs esthétiques, une expérience esthétique qui inscrirait dans son horizon propre la possibilité d'une action ? Bien que focalisée sur certains aspects de l'objet, l'action n'en est pas moins déterminée par un environnement d'objets qui oriente inévitablement sa nature et sa signification. C'est pourquoi, la division de l'expérience a certainement été encouragée par la sous-estimation de l'environnement des objets esthétiques. La question devient alors celle de savoir ce qui nous permettrait d'avancer la possibilité d'une action au sein même de l'expérience esthétique, pour rendre compte jusqu'au bout d'une unité de l'expérience.

3. Conditions de l'unité de l'expérience et fonction esthétique de l'arrière-plan

L'omission la plus récurrente des théories de l'attitude esthétique consiste à se donner – en préservant ainsi la division de l'expérience – un objet sans voisinage. La contemplation, solidaire d'une communion avec l'objet, s'isole de tout ce qui risquerait de perturber son exercice, elle réalise ce prodige phénoménologiquement intenable d'une attention sans arrière-

plan. En nous détachant des objets qui entourent celui de notre contemplation, nous réduisons à sa plus simple expression les motifs possibles de l'action. Le monde se dépeuple autour de nous pour laisser à un objet mis en valeur par des dispositifs esthétiques le privilège de la solitude.

On sait ce que la philosophie d'Ingarden a pu faire en ce sens. L'émotion originale (*die Ursprungsemotion* ; Ingarden 1937, 73) ne marque pas seulement le changement d'attitude qui nous fait passer de la perception d'un objet réel à celle d'un objet esthétique, elle est cet arrêt qui « s'accompagne d'un étouffement partiel ou même d'un écartement complet des vécus actuels concernant les choses et les affaires du monde réel environnant » (Ingarden 1937, 75). Cette mise à l'index de l'entourage de l'objet esthétique se fonde sur au moins deux présupposés. Le premier, que nous ne traiterons pas spécifiquement ici, réside dans la reconnaissance d'une différence de nature entre l'objet réel et l'objet esthétique. Le second présupposé nous concerne davantage. Il est celui qui postule, du point de vue subjectif, la possibilité d'une indépendance parfaite et sans reste de l'attention à un objet à l'égard de tous les autres et, du point de vue objectif, le refus de donner à l'arrière-plan de l'objet esthétique une fonction esthétique et structurelle.

Parce que vivant dans un monde autre, l'objet esthétique entretiendrait avec les éléments circonstanciels et souvent provisoires qui l'entourent un rapport – à peine une relation – d'indifférence ontologique. Le mur qui supporte un tableau, la salle ou le jardin qui accueillent une sculpture, les bruits et les conditions acoustiques qui perturbent et permettent tout à la fois l'écoute d'une musique, toutes ces réalités périphériques n'auraient aucune place à occuper dans l'expérience spécifiquement esthétique. Sans statut propre ni fonction bien établie, l'entourage des objets esthétiques participe seulement de ce que l'on a appelé des dispositifs, sans que ces dispositifs n'aient été véritablement considérés pour eux-mêmes et dans le rôle qu'ils jouent dans la constitution de l'objet esthétique (Schaeffer 2015, 73-74). On voit, dans ce partage des objets, par quel arbitraire de la volonté esthétique nous nous proposons de discriminer au sein de notre champ perceptif, et cela contre les données de l'expérience elle-même. Nous fermons les yeux sur

des objets qui sont tout aussi présents que les autres mais qui doivent avoir pour nous une présence moindre, une présence réduite à l'accompagnement, tout au plus à la mise à la valeur.

Cette division volontaire de l'expérience se méprend toutefois sur la nature des conditions auxquelles doit satisfaire un objet esthétique. Un objet esthétique est, comme tout objet de l'expérience, intégré à un environnement d'objets dont il recueille sa fonction et son sens. L'isolement d'un objet dans l'expérience est inconcevable et c'est ce que Husserl reconnaissait dans l'examen de la modification d'inactualité dont l'opération était conditionnée par le fait que « toute perception de chose a ainsi un halo d'intuitions d'arrière-plan » (Husserl, 2018, 102). L'inflexion d'Ingarden a donc été d'exagérer, dans le cas de l'attitude esthétique, la possibilité d'une suppression de l'arrière-plan portée jusqu'au point d'un « quasi-oubli (*Quasi-Vergessenheit* ; Ingarden 1937, 75) ». La précaution avec laquelle il se garde d'affirmer cependant une annihilation totale de cet arrière-plan pour le vécu actuel devrait nous inciter à repenser la fonction de l'arrière-plan dans l'attitude esthétique et, par là même, nous donner les moyens d'une unification de l'expérience.

Le peu d'attention dont a fait l'objet l'arrière-plan dans l'examen de l'attitude esthétique témoigne en réalité d'une confusion entre l'objet esthétique et l'œuvre d'art. Considérée pour elle-même, l'œuvre d'art est sans arrière-plan, elle ne s'inscrit dans aucun monde d'objets, en un sens elle n'est pas une donnée de l'expérience et, pour cette raison, échappe à la perception. Nous ne percevons jamais des œuvres d'art mais des objets esthétiques qui manifestent dans notre expérience cet objet que l'on nomme œuvre d'art et qui, dans son isolement essentiel, se soustrait à l'expérience. Ce que l'on perçoit au concert, ce n'est pas la *Suite lyrique* de Berg ou, au musée, *La Tristesse du roi* de Matisse, ce sont ces œuvres transformées en objets esthétiques par les dispositifs qui les soutiennent et qui nous en fournissent l'occasion d'une expérience. En devenant un objet esthétique, l'œuvre d'art n'altère pas son « essence » mais observe simplement une loi qui n'appartient pas à sa nature, loi selon laquelle tout objet doit se donner sous l'horizon d'un arrière-plan. C'est l'expérience que nous faisons des œuvres – et cette affirmation n'a pas de sens à proprement

parler – qui transforme les œuvres en objets esthétiques. L'objet esthétique c'est, pour ainsi dire, l'œuvre d'art qui accède à la perception et qui se plie aux conditions irréductibles de l'expérience. Plus précisément, c'est l'œuvre qui se plie aux exigences des dispositifs esthétiques. Aussi, pour être perçue et faire l'objet d'une expérience, l'œuvre d'art doit-elle se mêler à d'autres objets et devenir un objet esthétique. Pour elle, la présence d'un arrière-plan est ce qui détermine sa transformation en objet esthétique.

Dès lors, une conséquence s'impose. L'attitude esthétique n'est pas simplement cette décision – aidée par les injonctions des dispositifs – qui transforme un objet en objet esthétique, c'est ce qui donne à une œuvre d'art les conditions de sa manifestation sous la forme d'un objet esthétique. Mais l'objet esthétique doit être considéré sans retranchement, c'est-à-dire dans cette part prise à l'entourage qui le constitue et qui le distingue fondamentalement d'une œuvre d'art, insoumise comme telle à l'arrière-plan et aux conditions de l'expérience. La conséquence, pour nous, est la nécessité de reconnaître à l'arrière-plan son inscription dans la nature même de l'objet esthétique et de fournir, par-là, les conditions d'une action dans l'ordre de l'esthétique.

Cette conséquence n'est pas sans contribuer à l'atténuation de l'écart qui pouvait exister entre l'expérience esthétique et l'expérience ordinaire. C'est même, plus radicalement, sa pertinence qu'elle semble confondre. Chez Ingarden, l'arrière-plan de l'objet esthétique appartenait tout entier à la sphère des objets visés par l'expérience ordinaire. L'émotion esthétique avait cette capacité d'interrompre « le cours 'normal' des vécus et des activités concernant les objets du monde réel environnant »⁶. Cela revenait, en d'autres termes, à reconnaître une proximité spatiale des objets de ces deux expériences – et même une certaine contiguïté temporelle dans le passage de l'une à l'autre⁷ – tout en maintenant une différence radicale de nature entre ces objets. Le problème, peut-être insurmontable sans artifice, qui se posait à ceux qui donnaient à la division de l'expérience un rôle constitutif dans la définition de l'attitude et de l'objet esthétiques, était celui de penser les conditions du passage d'une expérience à une autre *sous la*

contrainte d'une coprésence de leurs objets respectifs. On comprend ce que la sacralité de l'expérience esthétique a pu faciliter à cet égard. L'objet esthétique vivait dans le monde des objets ordinaires comme une relique dans un lieu profane et l'on résolvait par les seuls symboles un problème qui refusait de se poser en termes d'objet.

La reconnaissance d'une fonction esthétiquement constitutive de l'arrière-plan revient, autrement dit, à formuler une loi de continuité. Ce qui nous empêche d'attribuer intuitivement à l'arrière-plan des objets esthétiques ce rôle essentiel est certainement l'habitude que nous avons de réduire, dans le domaine esthétique, la question de l'arrière-plan à celle de la fonction ornementale. Le problème de l'ornement devrait peut-être nous indiquer une voie. Objet limite dont la fonction oscille, comme en témoignait la situation historique du *De Architectura* de Vitruve, entre élément structurel et artifice symboliquement décoratif, l'ornement est tout à la fois *kosmos* et *parergon*, composante essentielle d'un ordre et ajout superflu d'une structure. On sait ce qui solidarise étymologiquement les verbes *ornare* et *ordinare* ; le traité de Vitruve l'atteste. L'*ordinatio*, premier des cinq éléments de l'architecture, est « l'adaptation convenable des mesures des membres de l'ouvrage pris séparément et, pour l'ensemble, l'établissement de rapports aboutissant à la symétrie (*ordinatio est modica membrorum operis commoditas separatim univarseque proportionis ad symmetriam comparatio*) », (Vitruve, 1990, 14). Et on lit dans le chapitre consacré aux ornements des colonnes, dont les entablements font partie : « de cette façon chaque élément garde la place, le type et le rang qui lui sont propres » (*ita unaquaque res et locum et genus et ordinem proprium tuetur*) » (Vitruve 2003, 10). L'ornement est, du point de vue de la structure, ce dont un objet pourrait se passer sans cesser d'être lui-même et ce qui contribue à cette structure même. Toutefois, Hans Sedlmayr rappelait la relation de dépendance qui existe entre l'ornement et ce qu'il orne, en soulignant la fonction distinctive de l'ornement : « on ne comprend plus que l'ornement distingue ce qui mérite d'être orné » (Sedlmayr 2005, p. 43). Envisagé par Jean-Marie Schaeffer dans sa fonction de préfocalisation, l'arrière-plan retrouverait, sous une autre forme, cette charge distinctive

propre à l'ornement. L'arrière-plan singularise et met en valeur l'objet esthétique mais n'appartient pas à l'objet qu'il distingue et c'est certainement de là que vient le principal malentendu quant à son statut.

Tout en partageant avec l'ornement une capacité à distinguer l'objet qu'il n'est pas, l'arrière-plan semble pâtir en même temps d'un handicap. Si l'ornement confère à l'objet orné une plus grande valeur en se dotant, par rapport à lui, d'une valeur moindre, il semble toujours intégré à l'objet et comme scellé à lui. En musique, un ornement est ce qui s'immisce entre deux notes pour accroître le sentiment de leur liaison, il est ce qui intensifie une relation entre deux ou plusieurs hauteurs au point de se fondre dans le profil mélodique même. Il n'est pas en dehors de la mélodie ou de la phrase, mais en elles. Loin de s'intégrer à l'objet, l'arrière-plan n'occupe, au contraire, que ses dehors, il paraît à la marge et tout, en lui, contribue à l'exclure de l'objet esthétique. En peinture, on sait à cet égard quelle autonomisation du tableau à l'égard de son environnement la généralisation de la peinture sur chevalet par Jacques-Louis David a pu produire, et à laquelle des Impressionnistes comme Renoir répondront en revalorisant les arts décoratifs (Kisiel 2019, 55-67).

De nombreuses situations perceptives et artistiques témoignent ainsi en défaveur d'une extériorité esthétique de l'arrière-plan, en premier lieu desquelles se trouvent celles qui mêlent ensemble, et en une même expérience, différents arts. L'union intime de l'architecture et de la sculpture, exemplairement attestée à partir du XIII^e siècle selon Viollet-le-Duc, a pour conséquence de donner à l'édifice architectural la fonction d'un « entourage » pour la statuaire (Viollet-le-Duc 1866, 162). Ici, l'objet qui constitue l'arrière-plan est une œuvre d'art dont l'exclusion du champ esthétique conduirait à supprimer par là-même le caractère esthétique de l'objet actuellement visé. L'arrière-plan architectural conditionne la signification esthétique de la statue de la même façon qu'une longue habitude culturelle a fait, comme l'a montré Meyer Schapiro, que « la marge régulière et le cadre soient des caractères essentiels de l'image » (Schapiro 1983, 12). Dès lors, affirmer qu'une statue tient sa pleine signification esthétique de son emplacement au

sein d'une architecture, c'est reconnaître que l'arrière-plan architectural n'est pas réductible de l'expérience que l'on fait de la statue, de même que la musique est irréductible de l'expérience qu'implique la représentation d'un ballet pantomime ou d'un film. Que ces usages de la musique soient déterminés par l'exigence d'intelligibilité, comme dans la pantomime⁸, ou par celle de la création d'une atmosphère spécifique, comme au cinéma⁹ (Deleuze 1985, 311-312), ils ont toujours pour but de sceller entre eux, au point de les rendre esthétiquement inséparables, deux objets dont l'un risque toujours d'être renvoyé dans les marges de l'arrière-plan.

Si certains objets esthétiques peuvent aisément constituer l'arrière-plan d'autres objets esthétiques et contribuer à leur signification, c'est qu'il existe au sein de l'objet esthétique lui-même une dépendance constitutive à l'égard des objets de l'entourage, qu'ils aient ou non une valeur esthétique initiale. Ce qui se manifeste à travers les exemples de l'architecture et de la sculpture, de la musique et du cinéma, doit valoir pour tout objet qui forme l'environnement de l'objet esthétique, des murs de la salle de musée aux conditions visuelles et acoustiques du concert, en passant par la disposition spatiale des écrans dans une installation vidéo contemporaine, où l'effet des images projetées est constitutivement attaché au dispositif global qui les accueille (Bellour 2012, 132). Ces exemples ne montrent pas seulement qu'un objet esthétique l'est en vertu d'un environnement qui lui est homogène et auquel il s'intègre comme l'élément d'un tout, mais qu'il appartient à l'expérience que nous en faisons de s'inscrire toujours par-delà les seules limites de l'objet lui-même.

Si l'on accepte donc la distinction établie plus haut entre l'œuvre d'art et l'objet esthétique, c'est-à-dire entre un « objet » qui ne se soumet pas aux conditions de l'expérience et un second qui s'y plie pour manifester le premier, nous devons intégrer l'arrière-plan à l'objet esthétique. Il appartient à l'essence d'un tel objet de se donner au milieu d'autres objets et, plutôt que de penser l'arrière-plan comme le décor inessentiel et, pour tout dire, ornemental de l'objet esthétique, il est nécessaire de l'inscrire au processus de son expérience même.

La reconnaissance très tôt acquise du caractère structurel de l'ornement dans l'*ordinatio* d'un objet doit ainsi être étendue à

son arrière-plan (Hamlin 1916, 7). Il n'était pas dans l'intention de Husserl de diviser l'expérience en introduisant la modification d'inactualité par laquelle le mouvement de la perception relègue alternativement dans l'inactualité des objets faisant encore quelques instants avant l'objet d'une attention actuelle. Au contraire, c'était une façon de lier les objets entre eux en unifiant les profils différenciés de l'attention ; chaque strate de l'attention ne détermine pas une expérience spécifique et exclusive de toute autre, c'est de la liaison entre chacune d'elles que se constitue une expérience. C'est ce que font apparaître certains développements que Husserl a consacrés à ce dernier concept. L'intérêt qui guide l'attention à se porter sur un objet est toujours aussi déterminé par l'intérêt qui se porte à son arrière-plan : « non seulement l'objet vers lequel l'intérêt est tourné de façon primaire, mais l'entourage lui-même exerce un attrait sur l'intérêt » (Husserl 2009, 106). L'objet esthétique est toujours conditionné par un entourage qui n'est pas seulement un résidu d'expérience ordinaire, mais le champ sur lequel se fonde notre expérience esthétique. Si la salle d'exposition n'est pas une détermination artistique de l'œuvre d'art, elle est une détermination esthétique de l'objet esthétique. Elle ne l'accompagne pas seulement comme une condition inessentielle et contingente, elle le constitue comme objet esthétique. Et si l'entourage de l'objet est amené, par la nature fondamentalement contingente des dispositifs, à se transformer, cette contingence est encore une détermination qui appartient à l'objet esthétique, insuffisante à altérer la solidarité constitutive qui existe entre cet objet et son arrière-plan *du point de vue de notre expérience*.

Aussi, la division de l'expérience nous dissimule-t-elle les conditions mêmes de l'expérience que nous faisons des objets esthétiques. C'est pourquoi, l'expression d'expérience esthétique n'est pas sans ambiguïté. Elle nous conduit, d'une part, à concéder la division de l'expérience en esthétique et en ordinaire et elle contribue, d'autre part, à nous faire oublier la fonction esthétique de l'arrière-plan. L'expérience esthétique est, en effet, toujours ramenée au rapport exclusif et insulaire qu'elle entretient avec son objet, et rabattue sur la fiction d'une contemplation communiant. Ici, l'expérience esthétique produit une coupure au sein d'une expérience dont il a fallu reconnaître

l'unité pour préciser la définition de l'objet esthétique et afin de s'ouvrir aux conditions d'une appartenance de l'action à l'attitude esthétique.

4. Conclusion

Il nous appartient encore de formuler ces dernières conditions à titre prospectif. Le domaine de la sensibilité, au sein duquel l'esthétique s'est inscrite depuis ses commencements (Baumgarten 1998, 121), constitue, plutôt qu'un obstacle, une condition à la reconnaissance de la dimension active de l'attitude esthétique. La sensibilité nous fait agir et un versant non négligeable de l'esthétique du XVIII^e siècle en a reconnu le fait. Seulement, un autre versant a préféré privilégier en elle, au point de l'absolutiser, la part la plus immobile et la plus étrangère aux mouvements du corps. Si la sensibilité esthétique s'est figée dans les exigences de la contemplation, c'est en se rappelant l'emprise que notre corps a sur la vie active (Aristote 2004, 531), cette vie dont l'abandon devait signer notre entrée dans le monde de l'expérience esthétique. La division de l'expérience témoigne ainsi de cette désolidarisation de la sensibilité à l'égard de l'action, comme si l'attitude sensible qui fonde notre appréhension des objets esthétiques ne pouvait pas être aussi une attitude active prolongeant, au lieu de le rompre, l'élan gagné par la sensibilité.

La sensibilité ne cesse pas lorsqu'une action naît de son mouvement, elle se continue plutôt en se réalisant. Des efforts ont été fournis en phénoménologie pour penser une dimension fondamentalement active du sentir. Erwin Strauss l'a affirmé avec force en assumant une « connexion interne » entre le sentir et le mouvement propre à la vie (Strauss 1956, 239). Et Maldiney de rappeler ce qu'une telle position engage quant aux relations d'essence entre la musique et la danse : « musique et danse sont intérieurement accordées et concordées l'une à l'autre, comme le sentir et le se mouvoir » (Maldiney 2013, 195). Après une lecture de Paul Valéry, Renaud Barbaras a noté le caractère fondamentalement manquant de l'objet esthétique en sa présence, et c'est cette lacune qui attise en nous un désir de « combler le manque de l'objet », soit par une action qui le reconduit, soit par une action qui en crée un autre (Barbaras

1998, 28). L'agir est ainsi lié à un manque dans l'ordre du sentir. C'est pourquoi l'action n'est ni ce qui s'oppose au sentir, ni ce qui se présente comme la simple possibilité d'un prolongement, mais ce qui le constitue en le comblant.

Toutefois, cette unité de la sensibilité et de l'action n'est peut-être pas rigoureusement fondée, dans l'ordre esthétique, sur un manque de l'objet, et rien ne dit que la fonction de l'attitude qui le vise soit effectivement de le combler. Bien sûr, l'objet esthétique, comme tout objet, ne se donne jamais lui-même en sa présence pleine et sans reste. Mais ce manque concerne avant tout la présence de l'objet pris en lui-même et non le degré d'intensité de la sensibilité qu'il produit. L'objet musical, littéraire ou cinématographique est un objet fuyant, insaisissable comme objet total et le tableau se joue de l'errance toujours reconduite de notre regard. Si l'objet manque à lui-même dans l'expérience que nous en faisons, l'intensité du sentir, elle, plutôt que d'être signée par un manque se caractérise par un trop plein au contraire. La sensibilité en régime esthétique se caractérise par un surplus de sensations et ce surplus, au lieu de s'opposer aux sensations de la vie active, s'en sert pour réaliser cette sensibilité. C'est ici que prend son sens l'inhibition dont témoignent les dispositifs esthétiques, qui ont eu historiquement pour fonction de nous épargner ce débordement de la sensibilité en en supprimant les conditions. Puisque la possibilité d'agir y est dès l'entrée neutralisée, la sensibilité s'adapte en conséquence et finit par écarter jusqu'à la possibilité même de son débordement.

Par là, l'attitude esthétique n'est plus seulement cette pose que l'on prend, cette conversion du regard que l'on se propose soudainement face à un objet et destinée à demeurer dans la seule sphère du sentir, c'est l'état d'une sensibilité en trop plein et sur le point de céder qui se réalise dans une action, qui se rattrape en elle. On voit ce qu'une telle définition doit au refus d'une division de l'expérience. Tant que l'expérience dite esthétique maintient son opposition radicale à l'égard de l'expérience ordinaire et active, l'attitude esthétique se fonde sur une sensibilité mutilée d'une partie d'elle-même, séparée de l'action qui, dans les cas de trop plein, la conserve. Par l'unité de l'expérience, fondée ici sur l'inscription de l'arrière-plan dans la

constitution esthétique de l'objet, l'attitude esthétique devient ce qui atteste d'une liaison essentielle entre le sentir et l'agir, déchargée de l'injonction des dispositifs qui demeurent encore, pour nous, le cadre toutefois non exclusif de notre expérience esthétique.

NOTES

¹ Cometti, Morizot et Pouivet (2000, 83) : « Vous pouvez aussi *adopter* à l'égard du tableau une autre attitude, une 'attitude esthétique' » ; voir aussi Kelly (2014, 222).

² Le terme d'inhibition, aussi radical par l'expérience qu'il suggère que métaphorique par le domaine dans lequel il se trouve appliqué, a été utilisé par Renaud Barbaras au sujet des rapports qu'entretiennent la musique et la danse. Barbaras (1998, 38) : « la danse précède l'art chorégraphique : elle apparaît dans toutes les civilisations, elle accompagne spontanément chez chacun l'audition d'un rythme au point qu'on peut se demander si notre aptitude à écouter sans danser n'est l'effet d'un long travail d'inhibition ».

³ Quelques travaux ont toutefois consacré à l'expérience ordinaire une étude spécifique et conceptuelle, voir Bégout (2005).

⁴ « *Disinterested and sympathetic attention to and contemplation of any object of awareness whatever, for its own sake alone* », cité par Dickie (1964, 57; nous traduisons).

⁵ Valéry (1960 [1923], 1290) : « Au premier pas que je fais vers les belles choses, une main m'enlève ma canne, un écrit me défend de fumer. (...) Devant moi se développe dans le silence un étrange désordre organisé. Je suis saisi d'une horreur sacrée. Mon pas se fait pieux. Ma voix change et s'établit un peu plus haute qu'à l'église, mais un peu moins forte qu'elle ne sonne dans l'ordinaire de la vie ».

⁶ Ingarden (1937, 74). Plus loin (76), l'émotion originale marque « l'arrêt du cours de nos activités ordinaires de notre vie quotidienne », et de façon plus explicite encore (77), « une émotion originale occasionne – et c'est la fonction la plus importante – un *changement d'attitude* : le passage de l'attitude naturelle de la vie pratique à une attitude spécifiquement esthétique ».

⁷ L'émotion originale qui signe l'attitude esthétique ne vaut que « pour un instant (*nur für einen Augenblick*) » (Ingarden 1937, 74).

⁸ Angiolini 1761, 4 : « c'étoit une espèce de Déclamation, faite pour les yeux, dont on redoit l'intelligence plus aisée aux Spectateurs par le moien de la Musique qui varioit ses sons, suivant que l'Acteur Pantomime avoit dessein d'exprimer l'amour ou la haine, la fureur ou le désespoir ».

⁹ La musique de film a cet avantage sur la musique des pantomimes, ou même sur celle des films muets, de pouvoir introduire une situation de non correspondance entre les images et les sons, gagnant par là une autonomie qui interdit définitivement de la penser comme pur accompagnement.

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Institution symbolique et rapport à la norme

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Abstract

The Symbolic Institution and Its Linkage to the Norm

This paper reflects on the distinction between autonomy and alienation. Such an approach considers Cornelius Castoriadis and George Bataille's prior fundamental contentions in both *The Imaginary Institution of Society* and *The Psychological Structure of Fascism*, respectively. On one hand, Castoriadis sets the question of a possible legislation of the Self, in spite of an identification with the ideal of plain consciousness. In contrast, Bataille postulates a "productive homogeneity" that shall explain "collective identity" by the means of a materialistic theory. Nonetheless, such an image or representation of identity as "One" neglects a critique of its foundation in terms of a "symbolic institution". Subsequently, Marc Richir's early work will be taken into consideration.

Keywords: Castoriadis, Bataille, Richir, autonomy, law

1. Introduction

Dès qu'on pense à l'émergence de la Loi, vient à notre esprit le problème de sa validation dans les termes d'un Contrat Social, comme si l'on avait toujours affaire à l'illusion d'une instance instituante, voire un principe d'unité de ce qui est institué par la suite. Or, ce récit originaire est produit en même temps qu'il produit autant de manières d'énoncer le lieu abscond de cette naissance symbolique à laquelle se rapporte la société. D'où le problème qui se pose : *dans quelle mesure la subjectivité entretient-elle l'institution de son rapport à la norme ?*

Cette inquiétude sera initialement motivée par Cornelius Castoriadis dans « L'institution imaginaire de la société », plus précisément, au cours du chapitre intitulé « Autonomie et aliénation » concernant la possibilité de la

législation de soi. Dans ce sens, la question sur la représentation du rapport à la norme nous engagera vers une première voie d'analyse, autour de la différence entre hétéronomie et autonomie. D'une part, le Moi apparaît comme étant surdéterminé par un principe inconnu de législation dont il n'est pas l'originnaire, à savoir l'inconscient. De l'autre, le Moi soi-disant « autonome », apparaît comme l'instance qui détermine son action en vertu de sa pleine conscience et de sa volonté. Certes, la proclamation du Moi qui est posée et qui se pose suivant le partage entre hétéronomie et autonomie, ne peut pas exaucer la tension d'une expérience subjective ancrée dans le rapport matériel au corps, ce que Castoriadis avertit comme étant la condition de possibilité pour participer au sens articulé du monde. Ainsi, on trouvera une première impasse dans la représentation normative, dont la projection excessivement singulière expose immédiatement l'ouverture de sa différence au collectif. Dans un deuxième mouvement, on réfléchira à une analyse complémentaire au sujet de l'aliénation, cette fois rapportée à la société. Ce faisant, Castoriadis poursuit le schème basé sur la critique de l'identification avec l'Être, au profit d'une compréhension accrue du rapport à l'Autre. Néanmoins, selon nous, le principe d'homogénéité productive développé par Bataille apportera davantage d'éléments pour une interprétation matérialiste du sens attribué à l'identité collective. Autrement dit, d'après la convergence qu'il s'agira d'exposer par la suite entre les thèses de Castoriadis et de Bataille, le devoir-être en tant qu'exigence d'identité avec le principe d'homogénéité productive sera débattu quant à sa régularité comme dispositif, c'est-à-dire, en tant que norme dont l'évidence n'est pas remise en question ; or ce *va de soi*, au sens d'une *clarté* apparente de l'identité en fonction d'un énoncé qui légifère sur l'acte de chaque individu, nous permettra de comprendre comment l'aliénation peut être rapportée au niveau collectif. Cependant, un troisième stade de notre discernement mettra en relief l'écart réflexif grâce auquel il est possible de renouveler l'exposé sur le sens accordé à l'institution symbolique, afin de repérer chez Marc Richir la trace d'une pensée dans laquelle la définition de l'expérience humaine ne peut être dissociée d'une quête pour la liberté. Il revient à nous

de poser les jalons pour la reconstitution réflexive du rapport à la norme, dont la visée fondamentale sera traversée par l'impossibilité de capturer l'altérité.

Ainsi, une réponse provisoire à notre questionnement peut être énoncée comme suit : *l'adhésion collective à l'illusion d'une visée transparente, en tant que principe d'identité de soi à soi, engendre l'aliénation sociale.*

2. Le Moi, entre autonomie et hétéronomie

Il nous semble propice d'élargir nos recherches sur la cause de l'obéissance à la loi (Zúñiga 2021), vers une remise en question de l'écart non interrogé qui oppose le Moi à l'Autre ; plus précisément, il revient à nous de comprendre comment le Moi façonné par la norme est en mesure de s'acheminer réflexivement vers un processus de subjectivation qui *ne peut avoir une maîtrise intégrale de l'altérité* (Poirier 2016). L'ipséité est à ce titre confrontée au regard hétéronome, voire à une loi provenant de l'extérieur. Sur ce point les analyses de Castoriadis semblent situer le clivage entre le Moi et le Ça¹ : « Si à l'autonomie, la législation ou la régulation par soi-même, on oppose l'hétéronomie, la législation ou la régulation par un autre, l'autonomie, c'est ma loi, opposée à la régulation par l'inconscient qui est une loi autre, la loi d'un autre que moi. » (Castoriadis 1975, 150) En d'autres termes, lors de son interprétation de Freud, Castoriadis met à jour le chiasme qui travaille l'ordre de la représentation de la Loi : d'une part, la place y est accordée à l'Autre en tant que principe d'hétéronomie, c'est-à-dire l'inconscient prend ici le dessus du conscient ; de l'autre, lorsque l'autonomie s'annonce comme loi que *l'on se donne*, l'inconscient apparaît alors comme étant déterminé par le conscient. Castoriadis tient à clarifier ce point, car le type de lien défini dans les termes de l'hétéronomie, présuppose non seulement la surdétermination des pulsions par rapport au registre « conscient », mais qui plus est, il est à l'origine du trouble relatif au Moi quant à la faculté de *se poser vis-à-vis des représentations imaginaires concernant l'ordre du monde*. Selon Castoriadis, l'autonomisation de l'imaginaire prend donc le devant sur la teneur du réel, au point même de barrer son accès au *désir* :

La caractéristique essentielle du discours de l'Autre, du point de vue qui intéresse ici, c'est son rapport à l'*imaginaire*. C'est que, dominé par ce discours, le sujet se prend pour quelque chose qu'il n'est pas (qu'en tout cas il n'est pas nécessairement pour lui-même) et que pour lui, les autres et le monde entier subissent un travestissement correspondant. Le sujet ne se dit pas, mais est dit par quelqu'un, existe donc comme partie du monde d'un autre (certainement travesti à son tour). Le sujet est dominé par un imaginaire vécu comme plus réel que le réel, quoique non su comme tel, précisément *parce que* non su comme tel. L'essentiel de l'hétéronomie – ou de l'aliénation, au sens général du terme – au niveau individuel, c'est la domination par un imaginaire autonomisé qui s'est arrogé la fonction de définir pour le sujet et la réalité et son désir. (Castoriadis 1975, 151)

Ainsi, l'aliénation dont il est question correspond à la place vide du sujet qui ne peut faire le *pas* vers son implication affectée de sens dans le monde ; c'est-à-dire que le Moi ne parvient plus à subvertir le rapport hétéronome vis-à-vis du discours de l'Autre dans les termes censés être ceux de sa parole. La dérive pathologique de ce constat aliénant va jusqu'à la suppression de l'ipséité ; l'existence schizophrénique en est la preuve, du moins si l'on suit la justesse des propos entretenus par Henri Maldiney dans *Penser l'homme et la folie*². Si on reprend le fil de cette réflexion, le Moi témoigne de sa capacité à *faire avec* le *Ça* ; en d'autres termes, il y va de reconnaître son caractère foncièrement autostant, en vertu de quoi il peut poser sa différence³. Quant à la manière d'agir sur lui-même, le Moi engage sa capacité à repérer les nuances de la réalité désignée, de telle sorte que le devenir demeure une tâche intarissable : « Le Moi est l'acte de s'égaliser en se dépassant soi-même de l'inconscient au conscient, de la nature à la liberté, et d'*exister* son propre *fond*, qui est la première expression du ça. » (Maldiney 2007, 114).

Or la pensée de Castoriadis ne vise pas l'évacuation de la dimension imaginaire au profit d'une absence de l'Autre en tant que source présumée de l'aliénation, comme si par un acte de pleine possession de soi le Moi ne serait pas réfléchi dans la reconnaissance effective de ses limites. Le sujet ne peut certainement pas tenir à l'automatisation du discours de l'Autre qui parle à sa place, au risque de se perdre dans l'hétéronomie, dans les termes de Castoriadis ; cependant, il lui échoit la conscience de sa dimension contingente grâce à laquelle il en a

à faire : « Le sujet en question n'est donc pas le moment abstrait de la subjectivité philosophique, il est le sujet effectif pénétré de part en part par le monde et par les autres. » (Castoriadis 1975, 158) Si l'on revient aux concepts d'hétéronomie et d'autonomie qui font le partage respectif entre l'aliénation et la « législation de soi », force est de constater que l'inconscient et le conscient ne s'ordonnent pas totalement d'après cette dualité présomptive : « Ces caractéristiques (hétéronomie, autonomie) ne consistent pas en une « prise de conscience » effectuée pour toujours, mais en un autre rapport entre conscient et inconscient, entre lucidité et fonction imaginaire, en une autre attitude du sujet à l'égard de soi-même, en une modification du mélange activité-passivité, du signe sous lequel celui-ci s'effectue, de la place respective des deux éléments qui le composent. » (Castoriadis 1975, 154) Autrement, d'après nous, la question du rapport à la norme ne peut pas être évacuée, au prix d'un dilemme qui pourrait déplacer la tension immanente à l'épreuve de la conscience par la représentation du discours de l'Autre ; or, l'écart relatif au *processus de subjectivation*⁴ met hors circuit toute présomption d'un sujet plein. Il faut insister sur ce point : le recours à l'imaginaire n'est pas un choix à ne pas faire au profit d'une législation lucide de soi ; néanmoins, la manière de concevoir la représentation du rapport à la norme intègre le problème des différentes modalités de l'image que l'on se fait de la norme, y compris donc de sa déterminabilité variable, compte tenu de l'activité ou passivité du Moi. En conséquence, l'image de premier niveau qui reprend une *fiction d'absolu* d'après laquelle le sujet obéit sans poser de résistance à la norme, correspond au genre de fascination qui assaille le Moi lorsqu'il agréé sans résistance à la représentation d'un objet commun d'amour, à savoir, celui de l'idéal de Moi conçu en tant que simple fait de l'existence. (Zúñiga 2021, 186)

L'aliénation étant saisie au niveau individuel, elle doit également impliquer l'analyse de sa dimension collective, car non seulement le fait de poser sa différence dans le monde concerne le Moi, mais relève simultanément du poser de soi. Ce faisant, Castoriadis nous rappelle opportunément à quel point le corps est bel et bien la charnière entre l'ipséité et la quête

intarissable de sens dans le monde, en défaut de quoi, l'autonomie ne serait pas concevable :

Enfin, il n'est qu'en apparence éloigné de notre propos de rappeler que cette union du sujet et du non-sujet dans le sujet, la charnière de cette articulation de soi et de l'autre, c'est le corps, cette structure « matérielle » grosse d'un sens virtuel. Le corps, qui n'est pas aliénation – cela ne voudrait rien dire – mais participation au monde et au sens, attachement et mobilité, pré-constitution d'un univers de significations avant toute pensée réfléchie. (...) La vérité propre du sujet est toujours participation à une vérité qui le dépasse, qui s'enracine et l'enracine finalement dans la société et dans l'histoire, lors même que le sujet réalise son autonomie. (Castoriadis 1975, 157)

Certes, la subjectivité à l'épreuve de son autonomie ne peut s'abstraire du fond qui sert à l'institution de sa capacité réflexive, à défaut de quoi, toute possibilité d'accès au monde de la différence signifiante lui serait épargnée. Dès lors, l'ouverture de la singularité expose immédiatement l'impossibilité de son hermétisme dans les termes d'une conscience claire de soi.

3. Homogénéité et hétérogénéité : vers une possible analyse de la foule

Il nous semble pertinent d'orienter notre réflexion vers la représentation du rapport à la norme concernant les phénomènes associatifs de masse, tout en questionnant nos travaux précédents sur les conditions de possibilité d'obéissance à la loi (Zúñiga 2021). Au paragraphe précédent, il a été possible de repérer la duplicité immanente à la dimension pratique du Moi lorsque celui-ci s'investit dans l'acte de poser sa différence dans le monde. On a ainsi pu évoquer deux issues possibles pour le problème de la « législation de soi » : la première relève d'une surdétermination du discours de l'Autre par rapport au discours propre, ainsi comprise comme « aliénation », selon les termes de Castoriadis ; la seconde, dès lors qu'elle présuppose une approche dite « consciente » du sujet, implique le concept d'« autonomie ». Néanmoins, d'après Castoriadis, on aurait tort d'affirmer une conscience tout-à-fait transparente de soi comme équivalente au concept d'autonomie, car le discours de l'Autre est *toujours déjà là* en tant que condition de possibilité associée à l'investissement

subjectif dans le monde : « C'est parce que l'autonomie n'est pas élimination pure et simple du discours de l'autre, mais élaboration de ce discours, où l'autre n'est pas matériau indifférent mais compte pour le contenu de ce qu'il dit, qu'une action intersubjective est possible et qu'elle n'est pas condamnée à rester vaine ou à violer par sa simple existence ce qu'elle pose comme son principe. » (Castoriadis 1975, 159) Cette approche discursive semble donc poser les bases d'une définition du social constituée par l'action intersubjective : « L'inter-subjectif est, en quelque sorte, la matière dont est fait le social ». (Castoriadis 1975, 160) Ce sens collectif saisi à partir du rapport intersubjectif entre les discours est d'autant plus spécifique qu'il relève aussi de la dimension temporelle ; de ce fait, le *social-historique* est constitué par des rapports synchroniques et diachroniques. Compte-tenu de ce foisonnement discursif, aussi variable selon les termes spatio-temporels, encore faut-il fournir des éléments qui puissent nous aider à comprendre l'aliénation du collectif par rapport à lui-même. L'autonomie, on a dit, pourvu qu'elle soit investie dans une prise de conscience progressive à l'égard de l'impression initialement passive sur l'autre, n'implique pas la dissolution de l'auto-positionnement du Moi. Or la question demeure de savoir ce qu'il est de cette prise de position collective à l'égard d'une norme dont il faut en principe être conscient, tout comme la question revient aussi à saisir la définition d'une hétéronomie dite « sociale », et Castoriadis de dire : « C'est que l'aliénation, l'hétéronomie sociale, n'apparaît pas simplement comme « discours de l'autre » - bien que celui-ci joue un rôle essentiel comme détermination et contenu de l'inconscient et du conscient de la masse des individus. Mais l'autre y disparaît dans l'anonymat collectif, l'impersonnalité des « mécanismes économiques du marché » ou de la « rationalité du Plan », de la loi de quelques-uns présentée comme la loi tout court. » (Castoriadis 1975, 161) Ce passage interpelle l'approche critique de l'image première qui a été entamée précédemment, où il était question de comprendre le type d'affectivité qui mobilise le lien immédiat entre le Moi et son idéal, à savoir celui qui s'y crée avec l'objet commun d'amour, selon les termes de l'interprétation freudienne énoncée dans « Psychologie des foules » : « Qui veut agir sur elle n'a nul besoin

de mesurer la logique de ses arguments, il faut broser 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) La foi liée à l'image de l'autorité ne tient donc qu'à la force de l'impression, de telle sorte que le doute n'est plus là. Or, lorsque Castoriadis énonce « la loi de quelques-uns présentée comme la loi tout court », il évoque la norme dans sa teneur logico-formelle, hormis donc le fondement sur le droit naturel et les conditions matérielles de son applicabilité « comme loi ». Sur ce point, la pensée fichtéenne contenue dans la *Doctrine de la Science* de 1812 (*Bildlehre*) fait une critique sur la manière dont la loi est perçue en tant que fait (*Tat*) de conscience sur l'enchaînement opératoire à l'œuvre entre les causes et les conséquences : « 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) Cependant, la visée réflexive dont il sera question par la suite, se rapporte à une connaissance autre que celle de la loi « tout court » ; celle-ci ne pourra émerger à son tour qu'à l'aune d'un processus engagé dans le dévoilement de ce (*X*) qui détermine le regard de la loi : « Nous ne pouvons atteindre une telle image (du savoir) par une observation immédiate du fait (*Tat*) même du savoir ni non plus de manière empirique ; en effet, c'est dans cette observation immédiate que consiste le voir effectif ; le voir est entièrement immergé en lui-même, absorbé et déterminé par la loi qui régit la vision d'un tel voir *X* ; le voir est assujéti à cet *X* et ne peut s'en détacher. De cette façon, l'acte de voir voit *X* mais ne se voit pas lui-même en *X*, et cela aussi sûrement qu'il est le voir de *X*. » (Fichte 2005, 35)

C'est-à-dire que la variable *X*, dès lors qu'elle nous donne à comprendre la surdétermination formelle à l'œuvre dans la manière de projeter le regard en tant que loi, peut être parachevée par la réflexion de Bataille sur « La structure psychologique du fascisme » (Bataille 1989), plus précisément en rapport à l'analyse concernant « l'homogénéisation de la société ». Quant à l'identification des rapports humain à un

principe opératoire d'unité contenu dans une loi, Bataille se prononce :

Homogénéité signifie ici commensurabilité des éléments et conscience de cette commensurabilité (les rapports humains peuvent être maintenus par une réduction à des règles fixes basées sur la conscience de l'identité possible des personnes et de situations définies ; en principe, toute violence est exclue du cours d'existence ainsi impliqué). La base de l'homogénéité sociale est la production. La société homogène est la société productive, c'est-à-dire la société utile. Toute élément inutile est exclu, non de la société totale, mais de sa partie homogène. (Bataille 1989, 137)

Ce passage reprend de nombreux points critiques préalablement esquissés à propos du lien formel entre une subjectivation spécifique et la « réduction des rapports à des règles fixes ». Aussi, l'on peut repérer la particularité du questionnement introduit par Bataille, dans la mesure où il propose une critique sur la construction de l'identité en fonction des conditions matérielles qui rendent possible la production des normes. On peut alors comprendre à quel point cette nouvelle forme d'aliénation décrite dans les termes de la production est constituée selon un critère de commensurabilité. Comprendre l'emprise matérielle de l'« homogénéité individuelle » peut bel et bien être rapporté sur le plan collectif. Bataille est très précis lorsqu'il énonce l'impasse majeure de celui qui ne peut s'approprier de cela même qu'il produit : « Chaque homme, selon le jugement de la société homogène, vaut selon ce qu'il produit, c'est-à-dire qu'il cesse d'être une existence *pour soi*, il n'est plus qu'une fonction, ordonnée à l'intérieur des limites mesurables, de la production collective (qui constitue une existence *pour autre chose que soi*). » (Bataille 1989, 137-138)

L'existence « pour soi » est ainsi limitée, voire arraisonnée par le dispositif qui tient à la reproduction du schème prescrit dans le processus de production. Une issue possible de l'*homogénéité*, voire de l'aliénation matérielle, dès lors que l'identité entre celui qui produit et celui qui possède les moyens de production n'est plus là, semble être celle de l'artisan⁵, selon Bataille : « Mais l'individu homogène n'est véritablement fonction de ses produits personnels que dans la production artisanale, lorsque les moyens de production sont

relativement peu coûteux et peuvent être possédés par l'artisan. » (Bataille 1989, 138)

Mais selon Bataille, l'État n'est que le représentant de l'homogénéité sociale-productive ; il est ainsi conçu par rapport au besoin primaire de sauvegarder son unité. Étant donné la menace qui pèse sur l'Un, il semble sensé, selon Bataille, de mobiliser une pensée de la norme dont le but consiste à contrecarrer la possibilité de l'effraction sociale⁶, dans les termes d'un impératif en pleine possession de son droit à se faire valoir *comme Droit*, et dont l'enjeu consiste à installer le schème logico-formel de la cause-effet (d'où que l'on puisse rapporter cette prémisse à la devise positive que l'on adosse à Hans Kelsen : *Gesetz ist Gesetz*⁷). Par opposition, suivant l'analyse de Bataille, toute activité et toute expression qui relèvent d'une intensité variable⁸ dont le but n'est pas celui de la production⁹, sont ainsi redevables à l'*hétérogénéité sociale*. Cette instance qui se définit à l'extérieur de la limite signalée par l'*homogénéité*, rassemble, selon Bataille, plusieurs phénomènes, tels que le *sacré* en général, toute dépense érotique qui n'aurait pas de valeur comptable, la violence, la démesure, la folie, etc... *L'existence sociale du monde hétérogène* peut être conçue d'après un dualisme fondamental, concernant les extrêmes qui ne peuvent être atteints : soit celui d'identité glorieuse dont le regard parcourt du haut vers le bas (donc, la monarchie), ou bien celui de la déchéance caractérisée par l'impossibilité de l'ascension (regard du bas vers le haut). Ainsi, l'attraction et la répulsion de l'improductif, dans la mesure où chacun de ces mouvements expose les extrêmes au-delà desquels l'interdiction en tant que norme positive ne peut être franchie, situent l'Un productif en tant qu'homogénéité sociale qui se veut être préserver par l'État. Paradoxalement, l'implémentation de la norme requiert l'énoncé de l'interdiction comme condition de possibilité de sa mise en épreuve, car autrement, l'interprétation positive¹⁰ du Droit ne pourrait voir le jour : « Or le *devoir être* pur, l'impératif moral, exige l'être *pour soi*, c'est-à-dire le mode spécifique de l'existence *hétérogène*. » (Bataille 1989, 147) Bataille identifie ainsi l'*existence hétérogène* décrite par le mouvement d'attraction, dans les termes d'une « instance royale » adossée à la

présomption de l'« être » d'où découle le « devoir être » qui régit la production matérielle de l'« existence homogène ». Selon Bataille, la mise en œuvre du Droit positif par l'État dégrade l'exaltation et l'attirance affective : « Mais l'État n'est en réalité que la forme abstraite, dégradée, du *devoir être* vivant, exigé, au sommet, comme attraction affective et comme instance royale : il n'est que l'*homogénéité* vague devenue contrainte. » (Bataille 1989, 147) En termes freudiens, ce « deuxième stade » du rapport collectif à la norme déplace l'adhérence immédiate à l'« objet commun d'amour », cette fois vers la direction interprétative d'une forme qui fait abstraction de l'affectivité imputée au Moi idéal évoqué dans le premier moment de nos analyses.

Jusqu'ici, il a d'abord été question de penser l'écart qui fait lumière sur la différence entre soi-même et l'Autre, pourvu que l'on intègre dans ce registre interprétatif sur la connaissance du rapport à la norme (au sens possible d'une *législation de soi*) une image première de la fascination affective suscitée par l'objet commun d'amour. Subséquemment, il a été possible de mettre en évidence l'impasse qui échoit au Moi ne pouvant plus en faire avec le Ça. Ici, le recours à Castoriadis nous a permis d'identifier la passivité moïque à l'« aliénation ». Aussi, faut-il reconnaître la limitation de notre compréhension sur l'aliénation, compte tenu de son interprétation au niveau collectif ; la difficulté se pose également par rapport à la possibilité d'intégrer cette version dans une critique sur la manière dont la norme¹¹ tend à s'imposer comme critère fondamental de l'unité étatique. Or la régularité associée à l'accomplissement de l'existence homogène sur la base de la productivité, dès lors qu'elle s'y instaure par contrainte sous la régularité d'un dispositif qui « va de soi », entraîne l'apparence de transparence et donc la possibilité de l'aliénation collective.

4. L'écart de l'institution symbolique : entre aliénation et liberté

On a suivi de près l'argument qui consiste à mettre en valeur une pensée de l'aliénation, concernant l'analyse du Moi en rapport au lien entretenu avec son idéal, tout comme la compréhension des conditions matérielles qui rendent possible la production de l'homogénéité sociale. Maintenant, il est

possible de remarquer l'impasse de toute visée qui se veut pleinement consciente de soi, dans la mesure où le dire demeure toujours entre l'ipséité et sa différence, d'où l'impossibilité d'une appréhension du social par le sujet philosophique. Or, on cherchera à comprendre dans quelle mesure cette appréhension demeure illusoire, de telle sorte que le parcours réflexif du fantasme mettra en évidence l'écart qui est nécessaire pour rendre possible l'accès au désir.

Ainsi, on peut énoncer la difficulté qui consiste à définir une conscience pleine de soi, tant sur le plan individuel que collectif ; et Castoriadis de dire : « Jamais une société ne sera totalement transparente, d'abord parce que les individus qui la composent ne seront jamais transparents à eux-mêmes, puisqu'il ne peut être question d'éliminer l'inconscient. » (Castoriadis 1975, 166) De ce fait, l'opacité ne pourra jamais être dissoute, parce qu'elle demeure en tant que fond des rapports effectifs au social historique, d'où l'impossibilité d'en prévoir son issue dans les termes d'aliénation ou de liberté : « C'est un rapport (au social) d'*inhérence*, qui comme tel n'est ni liberté, ni aliénation, mais le terrain sur lequel liberté et aliénation peuvent exister, et que seul le délire du narcissisme absolu pourrait vouloir abolir, déplorer, ou voir comme une condition négative. » (Castoriadis 1975, 167) Mais le désir détourné de la compréhension effective des rapports au *social historique*, une fois dévié de son ancrage matériel, voire corporel ou charnel, risque de viser uniquement le fantasme de la formalité normative, au profit de l'illusion contenue dans l'Être : « Elles (les lois de la chimie, la physique ou la biologie) ne sont aliénation que dans les fantasmes d'une idéologie qui refuse ce qui est au nom d'un désir qui vise un mirage – la possession totale ou le sujet absolu, qui en somme n'a pas encore appris à vivre, ni même à voir, et donc ne peut voir dans l'être que privation et déficit intolérables, à quoi elle oppose l'Être (fictif). » (Castoriadis 1975, 167)

En conséquence, notre parcours relève le défi d'une issue face à l'automatisme possible de l'institution symbolique, dont les normes véhiculent *toujours déjà* un rapport spécifique au social historique, soit comme acquiescement de l'indétermination liée à la facticité, soit comme tentative (vouée

à l'échec) qui consiste à colmater l'écart entre l'ipséité et sa différence. Néanmoins, une nouvelle représentation, dont la portée réflexive est sensée véhiculer la critique du rapport à la norme absolue, doit suspendre indéfiniment la croyance à une société transparente à elle-même ; en d'autres termes, cette nouvelle image *sans dessein ni dessin* ne doit pas incorporer la présomption de la droiture logique entre les faits et les conséquences ; à défaut de quoi, la représentation consent d'y demeurer dans l'hétéronomie préalablement définie dans les termes de Castoriadis.

Pour ce faire, encore faut-il préciser que l'institution symbolique, dans la mesure où elle est l'ensemble des possibilités de dire¹², n'est certainement pas vouée à l'aliénation, quelle qu'elle soit :

Et, pas plus que je ne peux appeler aliénation mon rapport au langage comme tel – dans lequel je peux à la fois tout dire, et non n'importe quoi, devant lequel je suis à la fois déterminé et libre, par rapport auquel toute déchéance est possible, mais non inéluctable –, il n'y a pas de sens à appeler aliénation le rapport de la société à l'institution comme telle. L'aliénation apparaît dans ce rapport, mais elle n'est pas ce rapport – comme l'erreur ou le délire ne sont possibles que dans le langage, mais ne sont pas le langage. (Castoriadis 1975, 169)

Certes, une institution ne s'exauce pas dans la spécificité de l'interprétation « langagière » par rapport au système symbolique qui lui est spécifique (y compris du Droit) ; cependant, l'enjeu de notre analyse consiste à revenir sur sa dimension constitutive, afin de comprendre la détermination *toujours déjà* à l'œuvre, en tant que « symbolique au second degré » :

Nous rencontrons le symbolique, bien entendu, dans le langage. Mais nous le rencontrons également, à un autre degré et d'une autre façon, dans les institutions. Les institutions ne se réduisent pas au symbolique, mais elles ne peuvent exister que dans le symbolique, elles sont impossibles en dehors d'un symbolique au second degré, elles constituent chacune son réseau symbolique. Une organisation donnée de l'économie, un système de droit, un pouvoir institué, une religion existent socialement comme des systèmes symboliques sanctionnés. (Castoriadis 1975, 174)

Il faut donc réintégrer la réflexion qui consiste à situer la différence fondamentale entre l'Être et l'apparence du dire

immanent à l'épreuve de toute institution symbolique (concernant donc sa spécificité comme système de droit, économie, etc...), de telle sorte qu'une distinction puisse restituer notre compréhension entre ce qui demeure énoncé dans les termes d'une apparente fixité dans l'Être (non reconnue comme telle), et sa différence comme accès à l'Autre de cette identité. Sur ce sujet spécifique, le problème relève pour Marc Richir - dans « Phénoménologie et Institution symbolique » -, de trancher entre la reconnaissance du devenir lié au signifiant et la croyance dans la destinée humaine. En d'autres termes, l'identification au dire, dans la mesure où elle définit l'institution symbolique dont il est question, en est la source, soit de la liberté, soit de l'aliénation dans la figure de l'irréversibilité (non reconnue en tant qu'apparence). Selon Richir : « C'est dire que, si l'institution comporte toujours le risque de la capture symbolique, elle ne l'implique pas *ipso facto*. La croyance que la démocratie institue le social en transparence (de l'institué à l'instituant) rend la démocratie comme pratique à la fois possible et impossible, possible comme horizon d'un sens à recréer sans cesse à l'infini, impossible puisque l'adéquation de l'institué à l'instituant en ferait une épouvantable tyrannie symbolique. » (Richir 2018, 528)

Richir en tire les conséquences sur cette compréhension de la « tyrannie symbolique », dans la mesure où la présomption de souveraineté qui tient au constat de l'institué (État, système de Droit...), aussitôt lié au fondement « instituant », risque de fixer l'histoire de ce rapport, en vertu de quoi, la production de sens demeure incertaine. Inversement, l'impossibilité de capter un récit unique par rapport au lien entretenu avec l'instituant (non rigide), implique son ouverture dans les termes d'une apparence que l'on crée et qui doit être reconnue comme telle. Il faut insister sur ce point : selon Richir, l'institution symbolique ne peut devenir totale en aucun cas, car son auto-affirmation est vouée à l'échec¹³. C'est face au péril d'identification avec le dispositif symbolique devenu automate, dont les effets du récit unique restituent un rapport apparemment total à l'instituant, que l'on peut effectivement parler d'aliénation. Sur ce point précis Castoriadis et Richir semblent converger dans leur intuition intellectuelle : « L'aliénation se présente d'abord

comme aliénation de la société à ses institutions, comme autonomisation des institutions à l'égard de la société. Qu'est-ce qui s'autonomise ainsi, pourquoi, et comment – voilà ce qu'il s'agit de comprendre. » (Castoriadis 1975, 171)

Par rapport à une telle fixation du sujet dans un discours « pétrifié », c'est-à-dire reproduit en tant que manière de « dire » qui découle d'une institution devenue dispositif, Lacan se réfère à « l'absence de parole » et à la « prolifération des discours stéréotypés : « L'absence de la parole s'y manifeste par les stéréotypies d'un discours où le sujet, peut-on dire, est parlé plutôt qu'il ne parle : nous y reconnaissons les symboles de l'inconscient sous des formes pétrifiées qui, à côté des formes embaumées où se présentent les mythes en nos recueils, trouvent leur place dans une histoire naturelle de ces symboles ». (Lacan 1966, 280)

Pourvu que la parole ne soit pétrifiée, c'est-à-dire reproduite en tant que projection de la place que l'on accorde au discours de l'Autre par la seule voie de l'imagination¹⁴, une possibilité demeurera pour l'avènement d'une autonomie relative, car on l'a vu, la présomption d'intégrité contenue dans l'Être n'en est pas non plus la réponse pour la quête soit de l'autonomie, soit de la liberté (collective ou individuelle). Cependant, l'effet du discours issu de l'institution symbolique ne peut jamais valider son rapport à l'instituant figuré une fois pour toutes. Ainsi, l'erreur de l'institution symbolique livrée à sa répétition coïncide avec l'illusion de l'identité à soi. Or l'approche au processus de subjectivation doit être conçu autrement, non pas comme référence entretenue avec les figures stagnées dans le dire d'un système, mais plutôt comme possibilité qui demeure ouverte à l'avènement de sa différence. L'écart doit être ainsi préservé en tant que phénomène du sens se faisant pour l'humanité, entre soi-même et l'Autre, entre institué et instituant, entre ce qu'il y a et ce qu'il n'y a pas ; et Richir de dire :

L'expérience humaine n'est donc humaine, véritablement (et non "animale" dans ce qui fait la capture symbolique au sein de ce que nous avons nommé l'"animalité symbolique" de l'homme), que si elle est expérience de la liberté, expérience de l'écart irréductible entre ce qu'il y a, et qui lui est donné, et ce qu'il n'y a pas, qui se réserve dans une non-donation que rien de prédestine à la donation,

et qui reste indéfiniment à temporaliser/spatialiser en phénomènes de langage. (Richir 2018, 529)

Le fait d'entretenir l'écart de la non-identité à soi, dans la mesure où il engage une expérience consciente de la liberté¹⁵, présuppose le fait d'aller au-delà de toute satisfaction inféodée par un objet ; aussi, un tel écart se situe en-deçà d'une demande inconditionnée dont la projection tient au lieu de l'Autre comme principe instituant. Cet écart irréductible de l'expérience humaine en est la condition de possibilité qui contraint l'avènement du désir¹⁶.

5. Conclusion

L'écart de la non-identité à soi a été mis en évidence au fil de notre réflexion. Il présuppose d'une part la critique de l'hétéronomie en tant que rapport à la Loi de l'Autre dont le discours « parle à la place du Moi », et d'autre part, la critique du rapport à la norme par la fixation de l'institution symbolique soi-disant « autonome », dont la mise en suspens implique la croyance dans un Être instituant comme principe d'aliénation. Or cette « apparence véridique » à force de répétition, dès lors qu'elle est reconnue en tant qu'apparence, devient paradoxalement le fondement de ce qui est institué par la suite. Dans ce sens, pourvu que la donation entre ce qu'*il y a* et ce qu'*il n'y a pas* ne soit pas rabattue au rang de l'instituant unique, la possibilité de la liberté demeurera ouverte.

NOTES

¹ Castoriadis annonce la suite de ses propos quant au clivage apparent entre autonomie et hétéronomie, par la maxime freudienne « *Wo Es war soll Ich werden* ». Ainsi, selon la démarche classique que l'on adosse à la deuxième topique, le Moi serait principe de volonté, conscience, tandis que le Ça serait le représentant de l'inconscient. (Castoriadis 1975, 150)

² « Embarqué dans le convoi – ici cahotant – des effets et des causes, le moi consiste de l'entrecroisement de nombreux états de choses : il est *fait*. La subversion du Soi est encore plus intime : il est *pu*. Le schizophrène a cessé de se pouvoir. Il se trouve dans une injustification totale où il est impossible de rendre possible celui ou celle qu'il est dans sa facticité. Il ne transcende plus l'étant vers le monde. Sans le dépassement de tout l'étant vers le monde, dont elle fonde la signifiante en ouvrant le projet, la présence ne peut pas plus se comporter à soi, aux autres et aux choses que ne le peuvent les choses. Seul un

Soi qui est au monde à dessein de soi peut se comporter et se rapporter à... » (Maldiney 2007, 227)

³ Fichte entend par cela l'ouverture de la dimension pratique que le Moi peut poser par lui-même, c'est-à-dire, le Moi pose ses propres bornes et témoigne par cela de sa faculté à discerner et limiter la réalité : « Dans la mesure où le Moi s'oppose un Non-Moi, il pose nécessairement des bornes (Schranken) et il se pose lui-même à l'intérieur de celles-ci. » (Fichte 1999, 129)

⁴ Il est nécessaire de mettre à jour une définition aussi centrale pour la suite de nos développements, dans la mesure où un tel *processus* concerne la reconnaissance de l'écart de réflexivité du Moi, compte tenu de l'« inféodation de l'imaginaire par le symbolique », mais qui plus est, d'après Jacques Lenoble, de la capacité à « mettre en acte l'impossible identité de soi à soi », par la voie du désir. Autrement dit, de par sa condition désirante, le Moi doit pouvoir inscrire son manque dans l'ordre du langage : « Si, dès sa naissance et sa prise dans le langage, il est supposé structuré par cette irréductible « loi » de la non-identité de soi à soi, il est parallèlement capté par une image identitaire, par une figure unitaire qui le rend captif d'une forme de méconnaissance de sa division constitutive. Mais l'option de Lacan est de considérer que l'exigence normative portée par la règle de subjectivation trouve à s'auto-réaliser à travers la dialectique du désir qui s'incarne dans l'ordre du langage. A travers l'expérience du langage, le sujet cherche à se poser comme objet du désir de l'Autre, et la mise en échec de cette auto-position (limitation par le nom-du père) produit la négation de la négation, c'est-à-dire l'inscription de la limitation dans le sujet (sujet divisé par la barre du signifiant). » (Lenoble 2015, 5-6)

⁵ Cela ne va pas sans rappeler le texte de Martin Heidegger « Die Frage nach der Technik », quand il décrit le processus de production caractéristique de l'industrie moderne, qui diffère de celui des générations précédentes qui n'étaient pas arraisonnés par le dessein de la technique contemporaine (*Gestell*) ; tel est l'exemple du bûcheron requis par l'industrie consommatrice des matières premières destinées à leur transformation imminente, le bûcheron n'étant plus qu'un engrenage de l'opération qui consiste à consommer la nature, tout comme la force de travail : « Die Umlaufende Rede vom Menschenmaterial, vom Krankenmaterial einer Klinik spricht dafür. Der Fortswart, der im Wald das geschlagene Holz vermisst und dem Anschein nach wie sein Grossvater in der Gleichen Weise dieselben Waldwege begeht, ist heute von der Holzverwertungsindustrie bestellt, ob er es weiss oder nicht. Er ist in die Bestellbarkeit von Zellulose bestellt, die ihreits durch den Bedarf an Papier herausgefordert ist, das den Zeitungen und illustrierten Magazinen zugestellt wird. » (Heidegger 2004, 21-22)

⁶ « En principe, l'homogénéité sociale est une forme précaire, à la merci de la violence et même de tout dissentiment interne. Elle se forme spontanément dans le jeu de l'organisation productive, mais elle doit être sans cesse protégée contre les divers éléments agités qui ne profitent pas de la production, ou en profitent insuffisamment à leur gré, ou, simplement, ne peuvent supporter les freins que l'homogénéité oppose à l'agitation. Dans ces conditions, la sauvegarde de l'homogénéité doit être trouvée dans le recours à des éléments impératifs capables d'anéantir ou de réduire à une règle les différentes forces désordonnées. » (Bataille 1989, 138)

⁷ Ainsi, l'État normatif relève le défi de l'unité dans les termes de l'ordre coercitif : « En tant que mise en ordre (Ordnung) du comportement humain, l'État est identique précisément à cet ordre de la coercion 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)

⁸ « Les éléments hétérogènes provoquent des réactions affectives d'intensité variable suivant les personnes et il est possible de supposer que l'objet de toute réaction affective est nécessairement hétérogène (sino généralement, du moins, par rapport au sujet). Il y a tantôt attraction, tantôt répulsion, et tout objet de répulsion peut devenir dans certaines circonstances objet d'attraction ou réciproquement. » (Bataille 1989, 142)

⁹ Soit dit en passant, le texte de Georges Bataille étant paru pour la première fois en 1933, décrit certainement le type d'intuition intellectuelle ayant servi à Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari au développement du concept de *Corps sans organes* : « Le corps sans organes est l'improductif ; et pourtant il est produit à sa place et à son heure dans la synthèse connective, comme l'identité du produire et du produit (...). Il n'est surtout pas une projection ; rien à voir avec le corps propre, ou avec une image du corps. C'est le corps sans image. » (Deleuze et Guattari 2005, 14) « Les forces d'attraction et de répulsion, d'essor et de décadence, produisent une série d'états intensifs à partir de l'intensité = 0 qui désigne le corps sans organes. » (Deleuze et Guattari 2005, 28)

¹⁰ « 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)

¹¹ Au sens cette fois-ci d'un « impératif moral » intégré dans la construction d'une identité collective que l'on associe à l'*Un* productif de l'homogénéité sociale, dont le mouvement logique trouve une assise dans le premier moment concernant la législation de soi.

¹² L'institution symbolique nous ramène au « dire », selon Yasuhiko Murakami : « Mais le caractère du sujet comme institution symbolique devient clair dans son rapport à la communication et à d'autres institutions symboliques. Il est nommé 'dire'. » (Murakami 2002, 147)

¹³ « Le siècle nous a appris, et nous apprendra encore, sans doute, hélas, jusqu'à l'atroce, que l'homme ne s'institue pas *ex nihilo*, d'une institution symbolique devenue aveugle parce que se voulant totale, s'annihilant comme tautologie, l'auto-affirmation vide et mortifère d'elle-même, tendue par une volonté so-disant souveraine. La tautologie symbolique comme dispositif (*Gestell* heideggérien) quasi-machinique (mais cette « machine » est sans plan, c'est la machine de Kafka dans la Colonie pénitentiaire) : tel est le suprême danger de notre temps. » (Richir 2018, 531)

¹⁴ L'automatisme de l'institution symbolique, dans la mesure où il provoque la répétition d'images livrées à leur pouvoir de fixer la parole dans un discours « hétéronome », entraîne l'aliénation de la société : « L'aliénation, c'est l'autonomisation et la dominance du moment imaginaire dans l'institution, qui entraîne l'autonomisation et la dominance de l'institution relativement à la société. » (Castoriadis 1975, 197)

¹⁵ « Tu ne peux te trouver libre, sans trouver simultanément, dans la même conscience, un objet auquel doit s'appliquer la liberté. » (Fichte 2005, 79). Ainsi, le désir ne peut pas être défini sans une expérience libre de la conscience ; « Le désir vaut pour toute raison finie : celui qui veut être délivré du désir veut être délivré de la conscience » (Fichte 2005, 190).

¹⁶ « C'est ainsi que le désir n'est ni l'appétit de la satisfaction, ni la demande d'amour, mais la différence qui résulte de la soustraction du premier à la seconde, le phénomène même de leur refente (*Spaltung*). » (Lacan 1966, 691)

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A Study of the Consequences of Secular Morality With Emphasis on Mackie's Perspective

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Abstract

Secular morality is perhaps one of the most important approaches in the philosophy of morality, which one of the most prominent proponents of it is John Mackie. By arguing any value as subjective, he considers moral precepts independent of God's existence. The purpose of this article is to examine and evaluate Mackie's secular morality approach and then to show its consequences. The method of this research is a library-based theoretical analysis and argumentation, which is done by studying, examining and analysing Mackie's concepts, propositions and arguments in his works. In this article, it will be argued that considering morality rules and values as subjective, as well as assuming the atheist claim that God does not exist as true, morality will lose its meaning, rationality and comprehensiveness. Secondly, any moral practice and, consequently, morality is deprived of any rational basis. Thirdly, an atheist cannot adhere to morality throughout his life in all circumstances. Given the critiques and challenges that Mackie's theory faces, it follows that the secular morality does not provide the necessary commitment to human morality.

Keywords: secular morality, Mackie, subjectivity, moral values, atheism.

1. Introduction

The relationship between religion and morality, or the existence of God and the existence of morality, is a topic with a long history, and various debates and opinions have been raised about it. In general, the encounters of philosophers and thinkers with this issue can be divided into two groups. The first group are the proponents of religious morality, who believe

that morality depends on religious teachings and that if God does not exist, morality will lose its meaning and rationality. The second group believes in non-religious or secular morality, which believes that morality is transcendental and its meaning and rationality do not depend on the existence of God. Meanwhile, John Mackie (1917-1981), one of the most prominent critics of theism, denies the dependence of morality on the existence of God. He strives to do so by rejecting the objectivity of moral values and emphasizing the subjectivity of any value, including moral values.

Among the critics of secular morality are John Edmund Hare and Richard Swinburne, who in turn have examined the consequences of secular ethics. (Swinburne 2008, 7-15). However, it seems that the criticisms made by them are not comprehensive and complete, as more cases can be included in their list. The purpose of this article first is to describe the secularist approach to morality, relying on Mackie's theories and claims, to show the consequences of this approach and to examine the criticisms and challenges ahead.

In this paper it will be argued that if, according to Mackie's view, we consider moral judgments and values to be merely the manifestation of emotions and dependent on the mind, and do not consider them to have any objective or external basis, morality will lose its meaning, rationality, and comprehensiveness. If there is no God and moral judgments are merely a reflection of human emotions throughout history, every human being can question these judgments and define a new morality commensurate with his or her emotions. If there is no God in the universe, according to what rational reason or reasons should a person keep his commitment to morality in critical and difficult living situations and go beyond his own benefit for the benefit of others? On the other hand, if sentimentalism is true and also if there is no God, what rational justification is there for concepts such as devotion, sacrifice, and martyrdom? Such concepts in an atheist belief system are devoid of any meaning or rationality.

2. Mackie's secular approach to morality

Mackie believes that we cannot consider the human race in unity as one. Also that, it is meaningless and absurd to believe in unity between human choices and actions. Hence, he considers man to be pluralistic and diverse. From this explicit multiplicity and diversity in the history of mankind, Mackie concludes that, first, the unnatural laws of the universe are man-made, and second, that there are no single, absolute laws about human beings. On the other hand, he believes that this multiplicity explicitly calls into question the objectivity of moral values. Because moral laws can be objective if they are not plural (Mackie 1977, 122). In other words, he considers the necessary condition for the objectivity of moral values to be the unity of those values and their lack of diversity and plurality. With unity being clearly in question, believing in the subjectivity of moral values seems to be the most rational path. Now, does the objectivity of having moral values on the one hand and the existence of God on the other, have anything to do with the meaningfulness and rationality of moral judgments or not?

In his various works, Mackie questions the existence of God and makes arguments against belief in God. This is while he repeatedly insists that "there is no objective value" (Mackie 1977, 15). Nevertheless, he not only considers the existence of morality in atheistic societies to be possible, but also considers the morality of these societies to be quite meaningful and rational. To enact moral laws in society, he suggests that people should reach and follow a united morality for their community in a collective and universal decision (Mackie 1977, 147). But before that, it is necessary to consider his main claims about morality, as well as the chief basis for his arguments, which we will consider below.

In his renowned book on morality, entitled *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* (1977), Mackie's main claim puts emphasis on the point that since there is no God and so (in a sense), there is no objective value; firstly the discovery of moral values will be meaningless because of their objectivity, and secondly, any kind of value to this approach becomes subjective. As a result, instead of discovering values, they should be

invented and validated. He uses a number of arguments to prove his claim.

Generally, Mackie's arguments on morality can be divided into two categories. The first category is his counter-arguments, which mainly focus on the proposition that "there is no objective value" (Mackie 1977, 15). In this statement, he addresses all the values in the world and discusses each in details. But in this paper, we will only analyse and examine moral values.

To reject the objectivity of moral values, Mackie uses five arguments:

“... (1) Relativity, (2) queerness, (3) supervenience, (4) knowledge of the supervenience relation, and (5) patterns of objectification in our language ...”. (Mackie 1977, 49)

Among the most important of these are the "relativity" and "queerness" arguments. The aim of every one of these arguments is to deny the objectivity of moral values. For example, the relativity argument, is based on the fact that in the world, there are different moral rules and values in different societies, times and even different social classes. It may often be the case that a single deed have different values in different societies. It may be moral in a society at a particular time, but not moral in another society or time. An act could be regarded as moral in the royal class but would be regarded as a normal act in the middle class. Mackie argues that this multiplicity and diversity of moral precepts contradicts the objectivity of values. Because the requirement for a value to be objective is its unity (Mackie 1977, 36).

Furthermore, on his queerness argument, Mackie argues that if we consider moral values to be independent of the mind and give them an external existence, it will require the acceptance of metaphysical and epistemological queerness. In other words, to consider moral values as objective is to believe in unknown beings that cannot be recognized by human cognitive powers. And so it follows that the objectivity of moral values can be equated with the unrecognizability of those values (Mackie 1977, 38). The detailed discussion of these arguments is beyond the scope of this article.

The second category of Mackie's arguments for morality is devoted to positive arguments which considers any value to be subjective, and accordingly, morality being one of the existing values, will be subjective too. He considers morality to be a matter of the subject, so he does not inherently give identity to the moral act, but assigns the originality of the matter to the agent of the act. In other words, moral values are nothing but the desires, tendencies, and emotions of human beings, which throughout history have been known as morality after corrections and advances by human beings (Mackie 1977, 231).

If we take such an approach in analysing and interpreting moral rules and values, naturally "good and bad" and "good and evil" will not be a feature of those actions, but it is the agent of moral action that relates to good or evil. Mackie claims good and evil will be a product of the agent's action, rather than the intrinsic feature of the action itself, in the sense that value is a subjective concept. In examples such as "lying is wrong", "torture for pleasure is undesirable", or "Respect for others is desirable" not all are real and describe a feature of the universe, but are entirely dependent on the human thought; independent of the mind, they are devoid of any value, whether positive or negative.

Morrison has elaborated on a similar view to Mackie in his paper "God, and the basis of cosmological morality" published in 2011. He believes that morality is nothing but responding to the social and biological pressures of man throughout history, which have been shaped by man himself. This view is somehow called "Evolution Theory of Morality". Evolution Theory has been dominated over many aspects of our lives, including morality. In particular, this view affects morality in three domains: 1) descriptive ethics, 2) normative ethics and, 3) metaethics. According to the third one, which is related to our concern, although evolution theory doesn't entail moral anti-realism or subjectivism about moral values, but many philosophers maintain that this view can provide some evidence against the existence of objective moral values and so this view is more compatible with subjectivism (Street 2006). On the other side, there are some philosophers claiming that moral objectivism is compatible with the evolution theory of

morality. So we can believe in the evolution theory of morality and moral objectivism at the same time (FitzPatrick 2017). This debate is beyond the scope of this article. However, the main point here for us is that if we accept the evolution theory of morality shows the truth of moral subjectivism or at least provides some evidence for it, then it seems that all the following consequences also will apply to someone who holds “God doesn’t exist” and “evolution theory of morality is true”. This is because the core idea of this essay focuses on two propositions: first, “objective moral values do not exist”, and second, “God doesn’t exist”. Hence, for our purpose, the way we want to argue for the first proposition doesn’t matter. It is worth mentioning to say that some of the following consequences would be applicable even we accept moral objectivism. Later, we will back to this point.

3. Consequences of Mackie’s secular morality

As already mentioned, the basis for Mackie's claims are two propositions: 1. God does not exist, 2. Moral values are subjective. Each of the consequences that will be discussed below, can be associated to one or both of Mackie’s claims. In other words, the aim in this section is to evaluate the merit of Mackie’s secular morality.

3-1. The first consequence

One of the most important consequences of Mackie's view of morality is that it is not comprehensive enough to account for the whole human life. In other words, an atheist will not have a reason to be moral in many situations. An example can better illustrate this point:

Suppose Saeed is the procurement administrator in a company. The CEO of the company is Karim who is also Saeed’s brother-in-law and so they are closely related. As Karim’s fully trusts Saeed, he does not demand an invoice or receipt for each of the purchases for the company. One day, Karim asks the procurement administrator which is Saeed, to buy a piece of equipment, and allocates Fifteen thousand dollars as the initial budget, so that he can buy the required piece as soon as

possible at the lowest price available in the market. The next day, Saeed acts according to the request, to find the price of the goods to be exactly Fifteen thousand dollars in the market. Before the purchase is made, Saeed accidentally encounters a person who sells exactly the same product with the same desirable quality at a price of twelve thousand dollars due to the urgent need for cash. Saeed also seizes the opportunity and buys the piece at a price of twelve thousand dollars, thus three thousand dollars out of the Fifteen thousand dollars given to him will remain. We all know that morally, Saeed should inform his boss about this and return the extra money to him.

Incidentally, Saeed had a debt of three thousand dollars to a person, and by the weekend was his last chance to repay his debt, otherwise legal action will be taken and he could be sent to jail and he will lose reputation. On the other hand, there is no other source for him to get his hand on such money and pay his debt. Saeed is completely aware of the fact that taking this money without the CEO's permission is an act of theft and clearly an immoral act. The other aspect of this situation is that he is confident that it will not be possible for anyone, including Karim, to be informed about this issue.

Saeed is a person who is known for being rational among those around him, and it is rare for him to close the door to logic in his decisions under the influence of emotions. Accordingly, he is convinced that if he takes the money that covers his debt without others knowing, he wouldn't feel any guilt. At the very least, this is how he thinks before removing this amount (apart from the fact that it may be something else, and ultimately, in the post-operative position, the torment of conscience will take hold of him). To completely consider the aspects to this example, Saeed does not believe in God and afterlife, and has based his life solely on existence in this world.

Keeping in mind the descriptions and assumptions Saeed's features and belief mechanism, that there is no God, the most important question raised here is that whether returning the three thousand dollars is logical or not? And what decision would he make in this situation? Let us review the important parameters of the given example:

A) Saeed is desperate for three thousand dollars.

B) Should Saeed use this money to repay his debt, no one has a way of knowing.

C) Saeed thinks that taking this money would bring him no feelings of guilt in the future.

D) Saeed knows that this act is immoral.

E) Saeed is an atheist.

The question that arises here is why Saeed should not take the money he needs with all the above-mentioned conditions and why should he tell the truth to Karim? What is the reason or reasons for Saeed to be honest in this situation and to choose a moral act appropriate to this situation, i.e. to return the remaining money to the CEO and tell the truth?

It should be noted that to appropriately answer these questions is to question this claim of the article in this part that there is no reason to always be moral for an atheist especially when it comes to some special circumstances. We now need to examine and analyse these conditions.

"Why might an atheist commit a moral act?" This question is to be answered in this section, and any comprehensive answer to this question is to be examined in the context of the above example. If none of the answers to this question apply to Saeed's situation, it will be proved that Saeed has no reason to stay morally bound in the specific circumstances mentioned. Obviously, if this is proven, it will be argued that the atheist will not be moral in certain circumstances. Now it is time to mention and explain the possible answers to this question:

A) Self-satisfaction or avoiding the feeling of guilt: this means that the atheist individual, under the influence of the society's dominant culture, believes an act like theft to be far from human dignity and so avoid committing the act. In other words, if he steals, he would feel undignified and guilty afterwards, and so he would not commit the act. In many European societies, for example, moral practices such as honesty in practice have been institutionalized, so many people are committed to honesty in their actions.

B) Moral reciprocal expectation: In the sense that a person is morally oriented on the basis that in return for his moral

actions towards others, those around him are also morally bound to respect his rights.

C) Fear of social punishment: This point is also clear, because a person may be morally inclined not to fall into the trap of legal punishment.

D) Taking advantage for other purposes: an atheist might commit the moral act in order to gain some other kind of profits. Take an electoral candidate as an example; he might do a moral act like building a hospital in order to gain votes.

E) Establishing social order: meaning an individual who seeks a serene life under the implementation of a social order, would avoid non-moral acts in order to prevent any disruptions to this order to maintain peace himself and others.

Here are a few things to keep in mind: Firstly, committing a moral act by an atheist may not solely be for a single reason, but as a result of more than one or even all of the reasons mentioned above. And so, we are not trying to say every committed moral act corresponds to only one of the above reasons. Secondly, if we take a comprehensive view towards the above mentioned reasons, we can associate them all in some way to "peace of mind" or better yet to "selfishness" (not in the negative sense of the word). But the distinctions made above will facilitate our analysis for a better examination of the current situation. And lastly, the above reasons are not exclusive to atheists and it is possible to relate every one of them to a theist as well. But in our opinion, the theist will have more reasons than these five factors. It is relevant to proceed with the mentioned example and study each of the factors in Saeed's special situation. As mentioned earlier, if these morality reasons, are comprehensive enough to include individuals that it claims, but none of them apply to Saeed's situation; it can logically be concluded that this is a rational action for Saeed in those circumstances to deduct the company's carried-forward budget without CEO's awareness to pay his own debts.

The first of the five reasons mentioned above cannot be true for Saeed in persuading him to carry out the moral act of returning the remaining money. Since, according to what we

know from our example, he is not an emotional person and that his rationality dominates his emotions; and as such, emotion or the fear of guilt is likely to be ineffective on his decision. Before taking the money, he would contemplate that such a move will certainly not bring about feelings of remorse or guilt. According to what has been mentioned before, it's possible that after stealing, Saeed would be caught by guilty conscience feelings. But should be noted that here the discussion is essentially about the moment before the act; accordingly, since before doing the deed, he contemplates no feelings of guilt, the element of self-satisfaction or guilt avoidance, would not work for him.

The second reason which could prevent Saeed to commit theft is moral reciprocity. But obviously such an issue has no place on this situation as no other individual is observing his behavior and basically he has the belief that no one will ever find out about his actions.

The third factor was the fear of social punishment. But as mentioned in the case of Saeed, it is quite certain that no one will ever become aware a certain amount of money has been taken.

The fourth motivating factor for the atheist to perform a moral act was to use it for some other purpose, which still does not apply to Saeed here. As we know, his benefit is in not doing a moral act, rather than staying moral, so returning three thousand dollars to the CEO will not be of much benefit to him.

The last reason is to maintain the social order which obviously has nothing to do with Saeed's situation. By taking away three thousand dollars, he will not be interfering with the social order that is in place. We must certainly bear in mind that this option is only meaningful if he is a proponent of social orders.

Considering the five factors that motivates the atheist to perform a moral act, the example above helped us demonstrate a situation where none of the factors could prevent the atheist from doing something immoral. Hence, we revisit the main question: "What is the reason for Saeed to be moralist in these circumstances?" Mackie argues that God does not exist, and that morality is a reflection of human emotions, and is therefore entirely subjective. According to Maki's definition of

morality, as well as the analysis of the above five factors in Saeed's situation, no reason will be there to stop him from taking the three thousand dollars.

If the above argument is true, an atheist will not be moral in many similar situations. But this is against the purpose of social morality. One of the most important features of social morality should be its comprehensiveness, so that it covers the individual in all situations, both social and individual. But as we have seen, the atheist may not adhere to morality in many circumstances.

3-2. The second consequence

If we do not consider morality to be anything but a reflection of human emotions and desires according to Mackie's view, actions will not be different from each other. Hence, the distinction between deeds will depend solely on the distinction between the emotions of the subject. Considering this, if a person enjoys torturing others, it is not immoral for him to be tortured (Gansler 1998, 25).

William Lane Craig (1949-) criticized the secularist approach to morality in his interview which was held at Massachusetts University on 2008. He used the following example to illustrate the point:

We have seen many instances of a cat finding a rat, playing with it so much and clawing it to the other side every now and then until the rat dies of injuries and suffering. Here he argues that if there are no differences between man and animal, and both are merely combinations of molecules and atoms, what difference could possibly be there between a cat torturing a rat and a human torturing another human which leads to suffering and eventually to his death?

Morrison responds to this criticism by saying that for humans, what makes the act of torturing against morality, is the "pain and suffering" and that "enduring unnecessary pain and suffering is an incorrect affair." But animals are unable to comprehend this proposition, and therefore, such an act is not wrong for them (Morrison 2011, 26).

In critique of Morrison's argument, propositions such as "it is wrong to tolerate unnecessary suffering" are moral

precepts that will not be absolute at all, assuming there is no God and no objective morality (Mackie's two main assumptions). For example, it is true that the statement "it is wrong for me to endure unnecessary suffering" is also true and perhaps absolute. But such a proposition in relation to others will not have this feature. It is easy to say that I never want to endure unnecessary pain and suffering. But this proposition about others will depend solely on my emotions. It may be fun for me to endure the pain and suffering of others and it could give pleasant feelings to me. According to Mackie, as well as Morrision's definition of morality, a person who suffers from unnecessary suffering and is pleased with it should not have done anything immoral.

The important point here is that if God does not exist and morality is not objective, different actions such as "torturing others for pleasure" and "drinking tea to quench thirst" are actually invariant deeds. According to Mackie, deeds in themselves have neither positive nor negative value, but are essentially devoid of any value. Therefore, if a person enjoys torturing others (and how many times we have seen that in the outside world, there are examples of this statement) and sentimentalism is true, we should not consider torturing him immoral. Unless we define, by convention, what morality is and according to that, his or her work is not moral. It is important to say that the key element here is that there is no objective moral values. So if someone who do not believe in God but holds moral value as objective, this critique doesn't applicable for him.

John Edmund Hare (1949-) argues in his book *God and Morality* that if God does not exist, we would have no value or judgment to guide our lives. He considers God to be the only meaningful factor in human life and believes that it is beyond this meaning that values such as morality emerge. If there is no God, there will be no (objective) value, and if there is no value, morality will be devoid of rational meaning. It is according to this particular way of interpretation that Dostoevsky (1881-1821) in his famous novel *Crime and Punishment* says: "If there is no God, everything is permissible." Tabatabai (1904-1981) also has a similar view. He considers moral rules and values to

be among the credits of the soul. Credits in Tabatabai's intellectual system are of the type of secondary philosophical concepts that have no external concrete aspects, but the source of its abstraction is the outside world. He believes that there is a direct relationship between religious abstraction and mental abstraction, and since the abstractions of religion is brought to guide the abstractions of the soul, the abstractions of the soul is guided by the abstractions of religion, and morality is one of these abstractions (Tabatabai 1987, 47).

3-3. The third consequence

According to Mackie, morality is equal to human emotions, which have been gradually formed by them throughout history. Considering this point, just as human emotions can be very different and even contradictory, morality must be pluralistic according to Mackie's view, and therefore we must use the plural form of the word "moralities" instead of the word morality. But that will have many consequences. If we proceed with such an approach, everyone should create their own morality based on their emotions, and this would not lead us anywhere but to a chaos.

Perhaps someone wants to say that human being has a particular "moral sense" which produce and hold particular moral values, the values we all know and perform in our lives (Radcliffe 2014, 17). This claim can be true just in one sense. There are many persons in history that have been killed and tortured by other people just for some inadequate reasons and even just for pleasure. How we can believe that those people had (and for now have) moral sense and something like benevolent? So it seems that we can say that those people have this sense just in this meaning that they have this sense for people they love, not for all. And this is obvious that this restricted sense of moral sense will not help us to maintain that all people really do have such moral sense, because those who have this restricted sense of moral sense just act and do on their pleasure, not moral sense. Since killing and torturing the people they love do not make them happy, they don't want them to be killed or be tortured.

3-4. The fourth consequence

Rationally, in different circumstances, an atheist's commitment to morality is meaningless. It is because, in many circumstances, his material gain will be risked and this will be inconsistent to his materialistic worldview. Concepts like sacrifice, devotion, martyrdom and other acts which have material disadvantages, will have no rational support in the materialistic worldview. If there is no God, and human beings will cease to exist in any form after death and have no afterlife, then what rational factor could there be for them to overlook their own life or belongings for their peers? One can argue that certainly there are cases where atheists may act that way and make sacrifices in favor of their peers. We can say that these people do moral acts because they do have a moral sense and benevolence. Maybe an atheist can scarify his or her life for an unfamiliar person, and we know there are such people. However, it seems that such an action can be considered as rationally contrary to their worldview. If this world is the only opportunity for a person to live, and if nothing is behind this world to receive the list of deeds at the end of the day, what rational reason is there for a human being to give up his own benefit for the benefit of another? Any loss, material or spiritual, for an atheist is a loss that cannot be compensated and at no time will that have a positive outcome for him.

Perhaps 'Commitment' is one of the significant factors of a moral living in that it is more difficult to live morally than to be immoral. The heart is the place of commitment, and the human heart does not accommodate things that it does not believe in and does not accept from the heart and has no convincing reasons for. Having said all that, what assurance and basically what rational support is there for an atheist to remain committed to moral principles when a critical and emergency situation puts his life or gains at risk while non-morality will have no social or material disadvantages for him? Perhaps to be bound by morality in normal situations is not difficult (although it is), but being bound to follow morality in difficult situations like war, famine and etc. requires a fundamental and reasonable commitment. Therefore, the most important thing that can obligate a person to be moral in all

sorts of situations is commitment; and this not only seems more rational and justifiable for faithful and the theist, but also much more accessible to the believer and God-worshiper.

Two important points here must be addressed. First, one can say sentimentalism could be rational in doing moral acts (Radcliffe, 2014). We, also, believe that a sentimentalist could be rational in doing according to moral values. But our concern here is about a person who believes in atheism not merely sentimentalism. The first and fourth consequences emphasize only the second proposition Mackie holds, namely atheism. So, if someone is a sentimentalist and believes in God, we do think that he or she could be rational in doing according to moral values in all situations and his or her morality would be comprehensive. However, if someone is an atheist, whether he is sentimentalist or not, he or she would not be rational in many circumstances to be moral (see sections 3-1 and 3-4).

Second, one can say in a difficult situation, the situation depicted in consequence 3-1 and 3-4, although non-transcendental obligation for atheist will be failed, transcendental obligation for theist will be failed also (Gaskin 1978, 28). In other words, in those situations, the weakness of our will cause our failures for being moral. However, this response is completely misleading. We are not talking about our will and its power to perform moral actions here. Instead, we are talking about our theory about morality just “in principle”. It is more rational and appropriate for an atheist, according to section 3-1 and 3-4, to be immoral in many circumstances. So, his or her view about morality, *in principle*, doesn't comprehensive. But a theist, who believe in God and afterlife, could in principle be moral in all situation, even those depicted in section 3-1 and 3-4.

4. Conclusion

From all the criticisms and challenges raised about Mackie's point of view, the following conclusions could be drawn:

1. An atheist has no reason to be a moralist in numerous life situations. This causes secular morality to fail having the

required comprehensibility to cover all the different kind of situations and circumstances.

2. According to Mackie, there is no objective value and all values are subjective. The consequence of this is nothing but the relativity of morality. If we believe in the relativity of morality, it is necessary not to consider any action immoral, because morality will no longer have a single and absolute meaning.

3. According to Mackie's claim that moral values are subjective, it is not possible to distinguish actions in terms of value, so their differences should be considered only on the basis of differences in the subject.

4. If there is no objective distinction between actions, then there will be no objective criterion for evaluating actions. Hence, moral concepts cannot be considered as righteous deeds.

5. According to Mackie's approach to morality, the nature of moral matters will depend entirely on human emotions. As a result any individual or faction can create a particular moral system to themselves and according to their own emotions. It is obvious that this will bring about nothing but chaos.

If according to Mackie's theory we do not consider morality as anything other than human emotions and desires, there will be no rational justification for moral living. Because the basis of morality is emotion, and emotional matters cannot be examined on the basis of rational and logical criteria. As a result, firstly, there will be no rational obligation to be morally oriented, and secondly, any rational support for morality and associated rules and values will be taken away.

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Addressing the Problem of Individuality in the new African Metaphysics

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Abstract

The new African metaphysics, called Consolationism, does not focus on collectivism like the old metaphysics. It aims at uncovering the driving force behind historical progress. Mood is identified as the driving force. Mood is defined as yearning and yearning as the desire for perfection. Mood is derived from Force, the traditional African notion of being, which defines being as mobility or dynamism. But like concept of force, mood is entangled and entrapped in idealism. Individual human subjectivity is substituted with an objectified spiritual principle, called Eternal Mood existing outside nature, as the driving force of historical processes. The problem with the new metaphysics is that it alienates human creative will in an external spiritual force. Thus, it renders human beings passive and inactive, or simply as puppets of the spiritual forces. Individual human beings are deprived significant roles in history's playbook of meaning-making and constitution of experience. Therefore, this article investigates how the notion of yearning or mood can be reinterpreted to empower the individual human subjective will to create one's existence and realize it in materiality. Human beings rather than spiritual force drive the historical process via their material labour. The work offers a critique of Consolationism.

Keywords: mood, force, consolationism, individuality, subjectivity, yearning, being, freewill, community, consciousness

1. Introduction

It seems best for this analysis to start with a brief distinction between individualism and individuality, to unravel the logical connection between them, since individuality is a central concept in this work. But it is important to first note that the distinction of these notions was not theoretically important until recently. The attempt to distinguish between

individualism and individuality broke out mainly as a response to Western criticism of collectivist systems in Oriental and African societies. These scholars attempted to show that individual liberty was possible in the collectivist systems. They also attempted to show that individualism (represented as Western ideology) is different from individuality (represented as universal human attribute). However, it is unlikely that these two terms are mutually exclusive. For the purpose of this article, it is unnecessary to review the literature on this subject.

Generally speaking, individualism may be defined as a set of beliefs, ideas, and practices that prioritises the subjective autonomy, personal freedom and individual rights of persons in a way that entails equality of liberty and rights for all people. Individuality, on the other hand, refers to the subjective characteristics that make a person unique and different. Those who emphasise this alleged difference argue that “Everybody has individuality, but not everybody participates in a culture of individualism”, which is a statement of the fact. What they mean here is that individualism is a pattern of living whereas individuality is a quality of unique selfhood (Johnson and Johnson 2010). Joy Hendry (2017, 202) puts it a little differently, that individualism connotes self-assertion and individual rights, while individuality is about the opportunity for a person to develop one’s course of interests. The aim is to show individualism as a negative tendency to pursue one’s interests at the expense of other people, while individuality is a forefield to contribute to collective existence. In fact, Hendry sees individualism (defined as self-assertion and expression of individual rights) as a universal anomie.

The former [individualism] I see as having arisen in many societies in response to increasing complexity and anomie, not necessarily as a measure of the sophistication or civilisation of that society, as some would have it, but perhaps better described as a strategy for survival (Hendry 2017, 202).

In other words, individualism is a strategy for surviving in a bad society rather than an ideal. Ada Agada (2015, 189) shares this sentiment, that increasing unfoldment of individualistic tendencies in African society is a sign of failure of society and a strategy for survival in an unjust society.

There is a problem with this view. First, individualism is not necessarily about leading one's life without regard to others' interests as some hold. One can be individualistic while giving others' interests priority over one's own, but one would do so based on one's own free choice. This differs from collectivism that imposes precedence of others' interests over oneself regardless of one's choice. So, individualism is about autonomy and free will rather than selfishness. Second, it is ludicrous to see how some scholars attempt to define individuality without emphasising the autonomy and freedom of the will, upon which individual rights are founded. Individualism is a necessary consequence of individuality. The latter is a recognition of the unique subjective experience that is exclusive to oneself; the former is a conceptual framework that arose because of the latter as a theoretical basis to deepen the latter. This is the logical connection between the two seemingly distinct notions. The differential development of individualistic consciousness is basically a question of self-awareness or self-discovery, which some societies made it more difficult than others. Here, too, individuality is about the uniqueness of the self and its freedom. Individuality is the substructure and at the basic of human reality; individualism is the superstructure and an unfoldment at the level of society. In this sense, individuality translates to individualism and vice versa. This works focuses on the substructure – the basic.

Neither individualism nor individuality is possible in the African understanding of being. Since there is no individuality, claim to freedom of choice outside the narrow alternatives endorsed by the community was considered a vice in the continent. African society was prone to denial of individual freedom, personal autonomy, individual rights, and for a long time much of the continent ran state enterprises to keep faith with its understanding of being as wholeness. Much of the individual rights found in the constitutions of African states are colonial imposition rather than homegrown experiment, and they are still being challenged in some parts of the continent.

The problem of individuality in African philosophy is rooted in its notion of being. Discourse on being is precisely about the questions of 'what is' and 'what it means to be'. Being

is a crucial question of existence. Whether there is one or many, freedom or determinism, subjective or objective reality, mind or matter, physical or spiritual, nothing or something are fundamental problems of being. The various system of religion, code of ethics, and mode of knowing are developed in pursuit of these ontological questions. Ultimately, whether there is an independent human subjectivity, and whether such can be an authentic mode of being, are fundamental questions of existence. The type of political and economic systems a society adopts depend on how it answers these questions. This article addresses this question in the following sections. First, it highlights how the problem of individuality arose in the traditional African metaphysics – whereby the individual was substituted for the community. Second, it shows how the new African metaphysics inherited this problem and reinforced it by further emasculating the individual in terms of subsuming human subjectivities in an objective spirit. Third, I address this problem by restoring the individual human person to its place in the world and explain how its independent existence can be a source of addressing the crisis of existence in Africa.

2. The Old Metaphysics: Being as Force

The concern with the problem of being in African philosophy is traceable to Placid Tempels (1959, 52) who asserted categorically that being is “force”. Force describes the idea of being in Bantu thought of central, eastern and southern Africa (Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya 2021, 43). According to Tempels, force is the active principle in matter and ubiquitous in the universe. This principle is a necessary attribute of matter in terms of being inseparable and indistinguishable from it (Tempels 1959, 50-52). In this way, being cannot be objectified as transcendent and cannot be conceived outside matter. Conversely, matter itself is inconceivable without force – because force is the animating property in matter. Force is the essence of matter.

The immediate successor to Tempels was Alexis Kagame. He agreed to everything that Tempels said about the notion of being in Bantu thought. But he went further to categorise being after the following hierarchical order – *Muntu*

representing human intelligence, *Kintu* representing animal, plants and ecosystem, *Hantu* representing space and time, and *Kuntu* representing modality – with human intelligence as the highest manifestation of force (Masolo 1994, 87). He further translated “force” or “being” to indigenous Bantu language to mean “Ntu”. Force or *Ntu* is the principle that binds all the categories of being as the common denominator of all things. *Ntu* is the universal category of being. Subsequent analysis of Bantu thought in central, eastern and southern Africa followed in the footsteps of Tempels and Kagame (Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya 2021, 45). In parts of central and west Africa, discourse on being followed the pattern set out by Tempels and Kagame (Ekei 2014, 34). Subsequently, the categories of being became more spread out, refined and hierarchized following from deities as the highest category of being to guiding spirits, ancestors, human beings, animals, plants, and the inanimate (such as minerals, etc.) as the least (Unah 2002, 5-6, 12-13). Yet, the human person occupies a crucial place in the scheme because of its moral agency, which is absent in other categories. All categories of being exhibit consciousness at different rates.

From here it is obvious that the conception of being in traditional African metaphysics is one in which being is viewed as the fundamental reality ubiquitous in the universe. It is the primordial element that is prior to everything else. It is the source of all things and without it nothing could exist. Magobe Ramose (2005, 36) opines that the world is the concrete unfoldment of being. Since it is an unfoldment of being, the universe exists as a unity of being. In this sense, being is wholeness. The authentic mode of expression of being is as a cluster or community (Francis 2016, 66). This is popularly expressed as, “I am because we are” (Mbiti 1969, 109). Individuality is represented as a negation of being. This conception is summarized in this statement, “To be is to be in mutual complementary relationship (ka so mu adina) and its negation is to be alone (ka so mu di)” (Asouzu 2011, 42). Individuality as a mode of expression is a negation of being. As Arabiah Attoe (2022, 52) argues, “the nature of being, if it must be fully expressed, must involve a relationship with others.” In fact, he argued that individuality is a fundamental

contradiction of the idea of being because the existence of other individuals implies interaction necessarily (70). This is how the problem of individuality arose in African philosophy. The conception of being as wholeness necessarily resulted in the treatment of individuality as vice. Since wholeness expresses the true nature of being, individuality was to be repudiated. African society was modelled to promote wholeness and suppress individuality in all its modalities. Hence, the emphasis of African philosophy was on communalism and even socialism.

The characterisation of being as force came with a lot of challenges because it does not unravel the mechanism by which force transforms itself and matter. The characterisation of force in African philosophy literature is quite amorphous and opaque that one begins to wonder how precisely force embodies, drives, and transforms matter? There is nothing in the book to show how force is able to achieve its feat of unfoldment and transformation in matter. The best explanation African philosophers have given is that force is a spiritual entity (a sort of Kant's noumena) – out of the reach of the senses. Since this is the case, it becomes impossible to pinpoint exactly how force (spirit) achieves its goals. Over the years, African philosophers appear to be satisfied with the status quo until Agada came up with an explanation of how force interacts with matter. But, in doing this, he complicated the problem of individuality – by objectifying being or force as an independent reality, called Eternal Mood, that subsumes all individual subjectivities.

3. Theory of Mood: from Force to Mood

Agada's discourse on theory of force is captured in his philosophy called "Consolationism". In his philosophy, Agada changes the nomenclature from "force" to "mood" (Agada 2020a, 112) – precisely – to enable him achieve his goal of describing the suprasensible activities of force. In transforming force into mood, he was able to change the character of force as a 'passive dynamic element' to a 'active dynamic element'. Rather than being a living element that animates matter as in "force", it becomes the revolutionary element that transforms matter as in "mood". So, in Agada, "force" (spirit) and matter become one

and synonymous (Agada 2015, 71) as against the previous stance in literature that kept force/spirit/mind and matter separated. Spirit is no longer lurking in the activities of matter, but it is now embodied in the external strivings of matter called “yearning”.

Mood, according to Agada, is the “originary intelligence” that is contemporaneous with the universe (Agada 2015, 62). Mood is the enfoldment of mind and matter, of emotion and reason, and of joy and sadness (Agada 2019, 9; 2020a, 116). Mood is the essence of the universe in its totality. It is the preconsciousness intelligence out of which unfolded mind (consciousness) and matter. Agada (2015, 150) opines that “mind and matter are outputs of mood.” He calls matter “solid mood” (Agada 2015, 72). Owing to this characterisation of mood as contemporaneous with the universe, mood is eternal – because the universe itself is the inexhaustible unfoldment of mood. Eternal mood is the yearning of eternity and eternity is the totality of yearning of the universe in all its manifestations and ramifications. Yet, “Eternal Mood is outside nature” while in solidarity with nature (Agada 2015, 96). This objectifies Mood as something independent and objective in contradistinction to objective nature or matter “yet in solidarity with nature” which is a fragment of Mood (Agada 2015, 96). The yearning of being is teleologically guided by the desire for perfection. Attoe (2022, 67) opines that without predetermined purpose yearning of being would be impossible – because yearning is specially directed towards a predetermined end.

Meanwhile, just as there is Eternal Mood (which is the totality of yearning of the universe), there are moods of the fragments of being that constitute the universe (Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya 2021, 54). Hence, we have the mood of plant, mood of stone, mood of animal, the human mood, etc. These individualized moods are the reflections of the mood of the universe – which is the Eternal Mood (Agada 2015, 25). The individualized moods are hierarchically arranged from inanimate matter with the human mood as the highest. Mood is becoming, which gives us the idea of motion. Agada (2015, 125) opines that “change is the desire of mood.” In desiring change, mood is propelled in consciousness (or into consciousness) to

attain higher phases of itself – instantiating itself in different forms and modes that Agada calls “Consolation”. Attoe (2022, 55, 67), however, disputes this account of self-directed evolution of mood and rather argues that mood is able to progress from one stage of development to another owing to its series of interaction with other things-in-the-world (actors and factors) out of necessity. Thus, historical progress is an outcome of interaction of the universal mind with matter in diverse forms and is sustained in interaction.

Mood is the substance that drives historical process. As Agada (2015, 96) tells us, “Existence is the operation of the creative impulse of the Eternal Mood as consolation in the world.” Mood is the primordial element that “directs conscious and unconscious behavioural patterns in living and non-living things” (Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya 2021, 50). It is the “primordial intelligence ubiquitous in the universe and characterized by yearning” (Agada 2019, 4). The world is the unfolding of mood via yearning. Yet, it is in the human yearning that mood is revealed. As Agada (2015, 25) puts it, “The human mood is a reflection of the mood of the universe.” The human intellect or mind, the human consciousness, is the most advanced stage in the development of mood (Agada 2019, 14; 2020a, 115; 2020b, 148). The yearning of the universe is tied to the human will. Hence, “if humans yearn nature yearns too” (Agada 2015, 70). Human yearning is constituted in the desire for change. Sadness is basic to mood but in yearning the sadness is transformed as joy. Human mood shares in this universal sadness that characterises mood (Agada 2020a, 115). Since mood is characterised by yearning (which is defined as the desire for change), the human mood which is constituted in the universal mood seeks a change of the status quo from the basic sadness to its opposite state, namely, joy. In attempting to change the course of history for himself, he simultaneously does so for the universe as a whole. So, mood is ultimately constituted in the human will. It is humans who seek to change the world to better their lot. When mood rises unto concrete physical existence in matter, it does so through human yearning.

Every material object is a projection (creation) of the human intellect but then the mind was able to transform

matter because the mind itself is emotive. All that the human mind causes to come into concrete existence is due to the response of the human intellect to the primordial instinct, that is, emotion, embedded in the intellect. Agada (2015, 61) maintains that “Emotion [is] the primal energy of that which yearns.” Emotion itself is the yearning of consciousness called mood – an embrace of joy and sadness (Agada 2015, 37; 2018a, 237). Being is mood or moodiness and it is lined with basic pessimism at its roots. On the account of this moodiness, yearning becomes the “essence of existence” (Agada 2015, 10). Mood is yearning (Agada 2015, 76). That is to say, being is yearning. Things exist basically as mood (yearning), that is, as a confluence of joy and sadness. Yearning is the oscillations between joy and sadness, which Agada calls the “dialectic of mood”. Existence is a continuous act of yearning. To be is to yearn. It is in yearning that being realizes itself but without ever attaining perfection (Agada 2019, 5; 2020a, 112). Hence, the yearning continues *ad infinitum* and be every time at the point of consolation. This is so because “the goal of consciousness as it lifts itself from an unconsciousness directed by primitive intelligence is not the attainment of happiness but the fulfilment of consolation” (Agada 2015, 11).

The point here is that being or existence consists in yearning. All beings are yearning beings. The yearning is characterized by the fact that human existence is accentuated by/with pessimism, that is, despair, disappointment, and anxiety. This pessimism is basic because it is rooted in the being of man. But in yearning one finds consolation. Agada (2015, 62) maintains that “the sadness is basic, but the joy is real for that which yearns.” One who does not yearn does not find consolation. As it is rightly observed, “The aspirations of the human mind and human endeavours in general constitute projects aimed at finding meaning in a life where we often encounter meaninglessness” (Agada 2018b). Consolation here refers to that which justifies one’s effort or belief, that which gives hope and meaning to one’s life projects, and that which gives satisfaction for one’s effort – despite despair and disappointment that characterizes all existence.

One has to understand that the yearning of being, here, is centripetal. This is because Agada, just as the African philosophers before him, does not place high premium on individuality. For him, individuality is an affront to being. He argued that “the community is superior to the individual” (Agada 2015, 188). Individuality is the sign of the failure of the community, and it is a path to nihilism (Agada 2015, 189). The community is the outward vector of all the individualities subsumed under it. This does not mean that Agada denies the existence of individuals outright as expressed in some radical views in African philosophy. Rather, he argues that the individual is without meaning in the world except he/she finds it in the community. He argues that it is necessary for the individual to seek an alignment with the other to form a community, where meaning-making would be possible (Agada 2015, 189).

This is a familiar line that most African philosophers share. In the African philosophical tradition, views inspired by the ubuntuists, complementarists, consolationists, conversationalists, and communalists are agreeable that even though being is constitutive of opposite values, such opposite values are in mutually inclusive relationship (Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya 2021) – because of their character to yearn for each other. Yearning is the innate character of being (Agada 2015, 24; 2020b, 148). The opposites are symbiotic and complementary because of their subjective implication of each other and their characteristically incomplete nature (Asouzu 2007, 52), which being explores via centripetal yearning (Ibanga and Peppe 2022, 19). This centripetal yearning as an imprinture of incompleteness is what is designated elsewhere as the “nausea of ontological incompleteness”, that is, the deep thrust and upheaval to interlock with the other and realize oneself in the unity of being (Ibanga 2020a, 15-16). This yearning of being also has epistemological dimension in which in the upward thrust for synthesis being attains higher levels of self-consciousness by going beyond its former state of self-knowledge (Ibanga 2022, 50-51, 53-54).

African philosophers, generally, believe that the original state of being is wholeness, which signifies harmony and balance (Ekei 2014, 111; Attoe 2022, 53-54). It was

individualization of being that led to fragmentation and disharmony. Being seeks to restore this original state of being through the individuals' yearning for one another. Being is a process of "constant motion and evolution of being towards harmony and wholeness" or perfection (Attoe 2022, 54). In other words, a state of disunity and strife contradicts the original nature of being, thus, being seek the restoration of this original state by reconciling the other (opposite) to itself. In the process, "the yearning of the opposites allows for momentary instantiation of different phases of being in its inexhaustible ambivalence" (Ibanga and Peppe 2022, 19). This complementary and ambivalent character of being is implicated in its internal and external relations (Asouzu 2007, 52; Ekei 2014, 196). Thus, in the African philosophical tradition, emphasis is placed on centripetal mutuality of values – epitomized in the community.

Leaving it at this point will make it appear as if it is the free individuals who jointly or cooperatively yearn. But Agada is presenting a picture of a rigidly determined human will – which is the outstretching of the notion of force that independently animates and instantiate things. Mood is fully determined from the beginning towards the goal of perfection like Hegel's Absolute Spirit. The Eternal Mood, which Agada (2015) summarily defined as God (79, 93, 113, 117), is the one that yearns through the yearning of being (74, 96, 296) – particularly the human yearning (97, 109, 236). The world is the coming to be of Eternal Mood (Agada 2020b, 148), and the human mind is its most advanced stage of development (Agada 2020a, 115). Human beings are the incarnate of the Eternal Mood, who along with other phenomena in the universe are the fragments of the universal mood (Agada 2015, 236; 2019, 4). In their fragmented existence, they carry the seed of the universal mood in their individualities that remains connected to the Eternal Mood that causes them to yearn for unification with the universal mood of being.

The human being as an embodiment of the Eternal Mood makes him/her part and parcel of the universal mood. The human being possesses mood, a primal element that predates human evolution, which rises to self-consciousness in

human yearning (Agada 2019, 14). Hence, Agada says “if humans yearn nature yearns too” (Agada 2015, 70). Human consciousness is the most advanced development of mood (Agada 2020a, 110). The yearning of individual beings is not their own yearning but the activity of the Eternal Mood – which like the community is the totality of all yearnings. The yearning of individuals is in service of the universal mood epitomized as the community. So, the notion of mood, like force, deprives the human person freedom of the will. The human being is redundant, passive, and incapacitated. One is condemned to a dependant stead where one waits continuously for external spiritual force for consolational intervention in one’s affairs instead of doing something to change one’s situation. This is the wretch situation that the new African metaphysics, Consolationism, puts man by depriving him of his freewill and externalizing it as Eternal Mood.

4. A Reinterpretation of Mood: from Communal to Individualistic Mood

The consolation philosophy, particularly its notions of mood and yearning, is a revolutionary attempt to reinvent African ontology and gnosis in service of human advancement. It points out the futility of human existence while highlighting the possibility of meaning-making in consolation. It tries to give spirit (which is so prominent in African philosophy) a place in a truly philosophical thought by describing its original nature and explaining its workability. But like the old African metaphysics it tries to transcend, consolation philosophy takes human being for granted and ultimately deprive it a place in the world by denying it freewill. Instead, like Hegel’s objective idealism, it externalizes the human will in the objective Eternal Mood called God. This compromises the being of man and weakens his place in the world. Despite this deficiency in the conception of the being of man in relation to being in general, theory of mood remains a leap forward in the discourse of being in African philosophy. However, the task before the post-consolationist African philosophers like me is to revamp the metaphysics and return man to its rightful place as the centre of being. This is the task envisaged in this article.

One must go back to traditional African metaphysics to trace the individuality of mood since it was in the interpretation of the traditional metaphysics that Agada derived his concept of mood (Agada 2020a, 109). The notion of vital force deeply characterises traditional African metaphysics. Most African philosophers accept that force is the foundation of being and being-in-itself; and that it is the defining element that makes being possible (Tempels 1959, 52; Ogugua 2007, 29). This is a vertical-hierarchical structure that defines the relationship of the various aspects of reality/being. Force is recognized as the governing principle of life – the common denominator of all beings, the element that links an individual being to all others, the source of all beings and it is being-in-itself. In this regard, God, spirits, ancestors, human beings, animals, plants and minerals have been identified as manifestation of force (being) in individuated forms (Unah 2002, 5-6, 12-13). This shows that all things have common origin in force. This further implies that all aspects of reality are forces (beings) in specialized forms. However, traditionally, African philosophers have been presenting force as wholeness and implicate wholeness as the only true form through which force express itself. From this interpretation, community emerged as the only authentic model for African experience. Individuality is broadly condemned as the path to anarchy and nihilism, or simply as a Western phenomenon. Sacrificing one's individuality in service of the community is extolled as a virtue. This is the anchor point for Agada's understanding of mood, simply, as a communal yearning, or as the Eternal Spirit looming large in the consensus of the community.

But with the individuation of force into variety of existents, force no longer exists in the form of wholeness, that is, undifferentiated. Although Agada denies the reality of being individuation by insisting that plurality of being is illusionary and not real (Agada 2020a, 115). Individuation of force into diverse forms creates unequal capacities in the individual forms based on the complexity of their expressions. Ikechukwu Ogugua (2007, 30) posits that there are different levels of "complexity and intensity" among beings, which makes all beings not to be on the same level. This is reflected in the Igbo

aphorism: *egbe bere ugo bere nke si ibe ya ebela nku kwaa ya*, let the kite perch let the eagle perch if one says the other should not perch let his wings break. The kite and the eagle have different capacities. These unequal endowments of beings have been given various explanations. On the one hand, Ogugua explains that the differential endowments are due to the differential level (intensity) of participation of beings in the source of being (30). This is expressed in the Ubuntu maxim “I am because we are”, which apportion importance to an individual depending on the level of participation in the community. On the other hand, Munamoto Chemhuru (2016, 43-45) explains that the differential endowments are function-related, that is, one’s level of complexity value-wise is pre-determined in alignment with the function of one’s ontological placement in the scheme of things.

The two explanations are partially correct and incorrect. Both are correct in terms of viewing activeness in society and the value that accrues from one’s activeness as the marker of one’s importance in the scheme of things. African economic philosophers interpret the ‘activeness’ as human labour, which is incorrectly interpret as “communal work” (Nyerere 1968, 108; Dukor 2007, 59; Anyaehie 2007, 350). Conversely, the view of ontological placement as a static phenomenon or framework appears to fossilize beings. This is an incorrect view, and this is due mainly to the fact that the process of individuation of being is viewed from the lenses of predeterminism that renders beings as fixed to their places *a priori*. This is essentially inconsistent with the dynamic ontology found in African thought, which prizes mobility and change as the real character of being.

The underlying current in African philosophy is that ‘to be is to belong and to participate’ in existence. Now, the question is: how does one participate in existence? Pre-consolationist African philosophy argued that one participates in existence through one’s community, in communal work (Ekei 2014, 167). Agada accepted this view of which he redefined as universal mood (Agada 2019, 4). That is, one participates in existence via yearning. He took it further by saying that the human yearning does not belong to the individual (Agada

2020b, 148). Human consciousness is the highest stage of the development of the Eternal Mood, and that consciousness (which is an exclusively human attribute) is the Eternal Mood attaining self-knowledge (Agada 2019, 14). So, like Hegel's Absolute Spirit, Eternal Mood is participating in history through human conscious actions. This is a total denial of human individuality.

Being the objectified Mood, the human person is predetermined to a fixed limit (time and place), an ontological placement, of which he can do nothing to change. In this regard, the human person is not a change-maker or meaning-maker because change and meaning belongs to the category of the eternal. This experience incapacitates the human person since he/she lacks the creative will to change his/her condition. His/her human creative will had been externalized in the form of an object Mood and represented as the consensus of the community. So, the human being cannot participate in the historical process because he/she is passive or, simply, a puppet. Hence, Agada (2019, 7) designates human beings to armchair position merely as "observers of themselves and nature." This is an incorrect view of what 'participation in existence' means in the actual sense.

A correct analysis of the traditional African notion of being reveals that participation in existence is from an individual level. The notion of ontological placement of beings as fixed to the constellation of Force or Mood does not correspond with the mobile ontology in African culture. This is rather a Christian category imported into African philosophy – the view of being in the Book of Genesis whereby the Creator-God fixed the creatures to their predetermined places in the scheme of things. The imposition of Christian category on African ontology was possible because the pioneers who midwived African philosophy – Placid Tempels and Alexis Kagame – were church fathers. Their original idea cascaded down to later generations of African philosophers whose works on African ontology are mostly footnotes to the pioneering works of Tempels and Kagame. Agada also inherited this problem in his conception of being as Mood as he states that "In consolationism, the traditional African notion of vital force

becomes mood” (Agada 2020a, 112). Innocent Asouzu designated this problem as “the Tempelsian Damage” to African philosophy – namely, the imposition of Western (particularly Christian-Aristotelian) categories on African thought – and denounced the idea of objectified being in authentic African thought whether called “force” or “mood” (Asouzu 2007, 182-201).

In the original African thought, it is evident that the individual human subjectivity is not substituted with either the community or an objectified spiritual principle. The community exists as a collective of individuals but not as a substitution of the individuals. The relation between the part and whole, one and many, individual and community has proven to be a hard nut to crack for many African philosophers. Partly, because of the Tempelsian Damage that objectified the community (the whole) as objective being existing independently in opposition to the individual. One can only correctly account for the differential complexity of individuated beings if one views it from an evolutionary perspective. Force is individuated as specialized forms and modes of being, which account for the emergence of individualities or subjectivities. First, force is individuated as minerals (or inanimate matter). At that level it transforms itself through the initial vital force that is inherent in itself and by drawing from the forces of other beings, it becomes more intense and attains some level of complexity thereby ascend the ladder of evolution. This is possible because everything is potentially alive – life-impulse (or force) is implanted in the inanimate that transforms it through eternal yearning into the animate thing (Agada 2015, 80). Then, from mineral to plants to animals to human beings to ancestors to guiding spirits, and finally, to gods. At each level of the force manifestation, there is an intra-level transformation and upwards movement. At the levels of plants and animals, the force transforms from simple to complex sophisticated form before it could finally ascend the ladder to the next level. The complexity and intensity of one’s subjectivity accounts for one’s elevation through the ladder. This is called “ontological progression” of beings (Menkiti 1984, 173). In thrusting upward, it attains higher levels of self-consciousness or self-

knowledge. This process is called “epistemological progression” of beings (Ibanga 2022, 50-51).

This nullifies the idea of “ontological placement of beings”, which fixes individuals to specific place, time, and conditions *a priori*. It reveals that in the African understanding of being forces (beings) are hierarchically placed and ontologically-epistemologically progressive in vertical upward sense. There is unequal valuation of beings in African thought. This unequal placement of beings comes attached with unequal importance of the beings based on their stations in the scheme of things. Ogugua (2007, 32) remarks that one gains more power, strength and place of importance in the scheme of things as one ascends the levels in the hierarchy of being/force. One ascends the hierarchy through hard-work and achievement (Dukor 2007, 59; Anyaehie 2007, 350). This understanding of being ultimately filters into daily lives of the people – social, political, and economic. The idea that the deeper the intensity and complexity of one’s energy (force) the likelihood of one climbing unto the next stage on the ladder of force (being) translates into the individuals intensifying one’s energy (force) at work in order to climb upward the economic ladder of life. In this manner, “The poor through personal achievement could ascend to the rich class and the rich could descend to the poor class easily” (Anyaehie 2007, 351). Hierarchization of being is the source of individuality, class differentiation and historical progress in African thinking (Ikegbu 2006, 97). The hierarchical ontology impels individuals to “work towards acquiring” and enhancing their place in life (Ogugua 2007, 33). The idea of mobility as the essence of being spurs people to struggle and excel in their life endeavours.

From the analysis, one can see that the hierarchical ontology is essentially individualistic, and it is the source of non-equality. This does not obliterate the community. The community is the consortium of interests common to all the individuals within a given space. These common interests are not objectified and made to substitute individual human subjectivities. On the contrary, the individuals continue to test the validity of the universals in relation to their subjectivities. This can lead to the dissolution of the community if the

universals are found to undermine the individual subjectivities. The reality of the community is filtered through the individual subjectivities of its members. This has been the practice throughout African history, where communities abandon or change deities, revolt against authority, leave one community and join another, etc. This is an acknowledgment of the right of an individual to seek a higher station in life, and that where one finds oneself is one's choice. One therefore has the right to decide the level one wants to belong, and once one chooses a higher station one must justify it with work while responding to the corresponding moral obligation attached thereof.

The African hierarchical ontology that recognizes individuality of beings and their differential ontological placements and progression on the ladder of being correlates with the notion of yearning in the new African metaphysics without the toga of idealism. Yearning is the source of human progress and great achievements. Yearning is prior to human existence, but it is the building block of reality in terms of its capacity to energize and determine phenomenon (Agada 2018a, 241). Mood is yearning and is expressed, in Agada's view, as the universal spirit that subsumes all individualities. In contrast, yearning is the expression of our individuality. I am because I yearn. My being is constituted in my yearning. In yearning I become the object of my desire. One who is shut out from yearning is accordingly shut out from finding consolation which consists in the projects one realizes. Agada (2015, 192) posits that it is "consolation [that] confers objective worth on human existence." The objects one acquires (and the creations of one's intellect) are the consolations for one's yearning and the objectification of one's worth in material terms.

Yearning is made manifest at the level of the individual. The Igbo adage states: *uche bu akpa onye obula nya nke ya*, wisdom is like a bag which each person carries one's own. Wisdom, here, is defined as 'philosophical yearning' (Ibanga 2022, 44). It is in one's individuality that mood or yearning is expressed. One cannot have one's mood expressed in proxy, nor can one yearn on the behalf of another. Even God could not yearn for, or on behalf of, the human being. Yearning is derived from one's individual moodiness. God can only yearn with

yearning individual and does not impose one's will on the human person. This is expressed in the Igbo aphorism: *onye kwe chi ya ekwe*, if one wills then his/her God wills. Also, a Yoruba aphorism states: *orisa ti ngbe ole ko si, nitori apa eni ni igbe ni*, there are no gods who support a man in his idleness, a man's greatest support is his own arm. The "arm" is, and symbolizes, the instrumentality of yearning for consolation. Yearning is an expression of one's individuality, that is, self-consciousness. I yearn therefore I am. Yearning is inseparable from being. Consciousness is the experience of the objective by the subjective, and it is always personal (Ibanga 2020b, 159-160). Yearning is the expression of self-consciousness. State of inertia implies that mood is not yet conscious of itself (Agada 2013, 257). Once mood becomes self-conscious, it yearns for joy of being. Experience of joy and sadness is first and foremost an individual experience because of its primordially to human existence. Agada (2018a, 236) asserts that "Joy and sadness are active components of the human phenomenon and dormant components in objective nature."

"To be is to yearn and to yearn is to be mood" (Agada 2020b, 148). Human being is constituted in his yearnings, and it is the constitution of his yearnings. Human yearning is not purely a mental activity rooted in emotion as Agada opines. The yearning of the human person is the concrete acts of work that the person undertakes for himself and society. The consolation that comes to oneself is a product of one's labour. It is through human labour, whether exerted physically or mentally, that the human person can bring himself into existence. Yearning allows man to objectify himself in the object of his work, in the things he creates, and in the things he acquires. It is in the things one brings into existence through the work of one's hand that one's yearning (mood) is objectified. The objects one creates through one's labour represent one's existence in concrete terms. This is how yearning can be interpreted as the process of human self-creation.

The objects we see in society are the product of human yearnings but, importantly, they are the stamp of their individual subjectivities and concrete realization of their mood or existence. In contradistinction to Agada view, these objects

are objectified free acts of the human will – because he talks about self-creating that is not derived from the human freewill rather exertions of external forces beyond human control (Agada 2019, 10). The objects of our yearnings are not external to us as product of external forces. They are the concrete objectification of our individualities and subjectivities in matter or existence. It is human beings that will reality into existence. Every inch of the object we create represent the full embodiment of our self-consciousness viz. the totality of our yearning in relation to it. The reward for our yearning is not to be doled out to us at a later date in a post-dated paradise. We are presently constituted in our yearnings. We either yearn or perish. For, we can only realize our existence if and only if we yearn. This is what it means to say, ‘to be is to yearn.’

5. Conclusion

The notion of yearning clearly aligns with the notion of being in traditional African philosophy but in this article, I go beyond it to assert the individual person, rather than the community, as the carrier of the gene of creation. All concrete reality is a product of the yearning mind of individuals, and forms of consolation for the individuals, who mediated them into existence. One is driven into seeking to transcend pessimistic posture of life, the despair that characterizes society in terms of the yearning that deeply defines one’s being. The yearning for a better society is the emotionality of one’s being. It is also the drive of the individual to seek power and glory. This is a clear departure from the traditional understanding of historical process as a communal force that subsumes the energies of the individual persons while rendering them inactive. In this post-consolationist discourse, instead of the communal force or eternal spirit transforming society, it is the yearning of individuals, politically and economically, to overcome despair and to objectify their effort in their yearnings that lead to social transformation.

Human being is a creature of mood – “the being whose entire life is characterized by sadness and joy” (Agada 2018a, 256) – who at the innermost being is pessimistic but whose “pessimism carries one over into optimism” (Agada 2015, 218).

The sole quest of human beings is to transform pessimism into optimism through their yearning. In yearning we come to life and realize the meaning of our existence. It is the duty every person to draw from the emotionality (or moodiness) of one's being to yearn. This duty cannot be abdicated to the community or God. It is in yearning that one can find social, political and economic consolations to overcome despair. One who does not yearn does not find these consolations; for the consolations are basically products of one's yearning. Agada (2013, 257) points out that "a beginning that is yearning must have an end that is consolation."

In economic terms, yearning can be defined as enterprising, and the one who yearns as an entrepreneur. To yearn, therefore, is critical to the development of the African continent in all its ramifications. If Africa must develop, then it must yearn. Agada (2015, 76) asserts that "the driving force of that which yearns is intellectual love, the desire for creation and replication." The dream to objectify oneself in materiality (i.e., the desire for self-creation and replication) is that which ignites the yearning. This desire and its actualization in the act of yearning is self-development and the aggregate of which accounts for community-wide development. But yearning would be expressed at the levels of individuals; for it is the individual who yearns, that is, seeks fame, happiness, better standard of living, good jobs, just wages, etc. Human yearning in Africa must express itself in the form of political change, social transformation, economic development, minority and women rights movements, human rights activism, futurity concerns, and several other ways that the mood of Africans must be expressed.

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Manufacturing Coherence: On the Ricoeurian Symbolism of Grading

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Abstract

Grading is one of the most recognizable and pervasive practices of formal education. Still, many philosophers have failed to offer an effective framework through which to interpret the meaning of a student's academic grade—at least in the sense of what both students and educational stakeholders ought to take a given grade to mean. For several decades, scholarship has come to revolve around being “pro” (grades are meaningful) or “anti” (grades are meaningless) grading. It is proposed here that conceptualizing grades as Ricoeurian symbols resolves this debate. Grades are symbolic in that they are denoted by a direct, primary, literal sign, but the sign (e.g., “A,” “B”) points at a second, “inexhaustible intentionality” produced by interpreting one's cultural milieu. The symbolic meaning of grades can be understood properly, yet imperfectly through the dialectic of Ricoeur's “ideology” and “utopia.” It is shown that grades are subject not to some transparent, yet polysemic, meaning to be accepted or rejected *simpliciter*. Rather, grades are inevitable cultural symbols and must be subject to hermeneutic interpretation. Ricoeur's dialectic is a powerful framework for educators to use utopic thinking to critique social ideologies in pursuit of the common good—even though a non-ideological approach is impossible.

Keywords: ideology and utopia; critique of grading; grading practices; Paul Ricoeur; symbolism; meaning of grades

1. Introduction

Recent educational literature has once again taken aim at standardized testing and the uncritical use of the normal distribution in educational decision making (e.g., Dudley-

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Marling 2020; Bloniasz 2021). However, standardized assessments typically overshadow the analysis of grades. Graded homework, presentations, and unit exams are all examples of assessment at work in the much more familiar setting of the everyday classroom. The present paper is concerned with how the results of those non-standardized assessments are communicated to educational stakeholders, particularly in the form of symbolic grades.

Here I will argue that grades ought to be thought of as Ricoeurian symbols that operate between ideological structures and utopic social imagination. In doing so, I will offer an account of what grades ought to be taken to mean after applying an interpretive framework borrowed from 20th Century philosopher Paul Ricoeur – namely the dialectic between ideology and utopia. Ricoeur provides a strong theoretical basis for moving beyond the basic empirical question of what grades have been taken to mean and instead his collection of work offers one initial toolbox for how to predict and shape the meaning of grades in the future to produce desired educational outcomes. In the end, it should be clear that grades 1) are not transparent or easily interpretable, 2) perpetuate negative power structures, and 3) are not removable because they are merely proxies for other cultural structures. However, through utopic visions, the functions of grading can improve in utility and impact.^{1 and 2}

2. The Symbolic Character of Grades

In the simplest sense, grading refers “to the symbols assigned to individual pieces of student work or to composite measures of student performance on report cards” (Brookhart et al. 2016). For now, I intend to use the word “symbol” in the colloquial, non-Ricoeurian sense, where there is some signifier that stands in for some definable judgment of the supposed merit of a student’s behavior in achieving a prescribed task. Most traditional grading models tend to determine the grade, regardless of the grade symbol used, via a weighted percentage, where some assignments are deemed to be more important (e.g., a final exam) and others less important (e.g., homework). These performance scores on assignments are then combined in

some way into a symbol to communicate, more or less, how the student did in the semester on a transcript or report card. It should be noted that there is enormous variation in how grading is actually done, not only in terms of metric scales but also what ought to count toward a final grade and how they should be communicated to educational stakeholders—those stakeholders being parents, students, other teachers, companies, and so forth (Brookhart et al. 2016).

While grades are typically referred to as symbols, the word “symbol” in this context is typically taken to mean something that stands in for something else—mainly “A,” “B,” or “C” is standing in for some reference. Grades are certainly symbols, but I claim we ought to look to the work of Paul Ricoeur to understand the complexity found in symbolism proper. Rather than a symbol merely being something that stands in for something else, Ricoeur defines a symbol “as any structure of signification in which a direct, primary, literal meaning designates, in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary, and figurative and which can be apprehended only through the first” (Ricoeur 2007, 13). As such, we can make a distinction between a sign and a symbol; every symbol is a sign, but not every sign is a symbol. In Ricoeur’s words, signs “are expressions that communicate a meaning; this meaning is declared in an intention of signifying which has speech as its vehicles...[e]very sign aims at something beyond itself and stands for that something” (Ricoeur 1972, 14). The sign in grading is the actual signifier of some transparent reference (i.e., the letter grade itself might refer to a 50/50 on an exam). Signs hold only manifest meanings and, therefore, are first-order predicates (e.g, ① is an “A”). A symbol, on the other hand:

conceals in its aim a double intentionality...a first literal intentionality that, like every significant expression, supposes the triumph of the conventional sign over the natural sign...[b]ut upon this first intentionality there is erected a second intentionality...[which is] opaque, because the first, literal, obvious meaning itself points analogically to a second meaning which is not given otherwise than in it (Ricoeur 1972, 15).

As such, the meaning of the symbol is “inexhaustible,” in that it must be contextualized and interpreted within its proper symbolic universe which has no ‘ground floor.’

We see here why interpreting grades as we normally do is problematic. If one is convinced that grades are symbolic in the Ricoeurian sense (i.e., the literal “A,” “B,” etc. points at some transparent meaning beyond itself that then allows for the emergence of inexhaustible interpretable meaning), we cannot accept the idea that an “A” is better than a “B” or an “A” represents expertise, *simpliciter*. In doing so, we collapse the symbolic character of a grade into the Ricoeurian sign, which “naturalizes” the symbol and makes the intrinsic ambiguity of the symbol transparent. The richness of its meaning is reduced and lost and we come to value the phenomenon “picked out” by the sign over the double intentionality not produced *in* the sign but *through* the sign. In this way, naturalizing the symbol to the sign makes it clear why students cheat, why they memorize and forget content, and so forth: the rich interpretive experience of learning is collapsed into being one and the same as the mark on the page.

The defense of pitching grades as Ricoeurian symbols is remarkably practical. The opposite of my claim is that there is a transparent, exhaustible interpretation of grades. Several recent papers have systematically investigated this question through thorough literature reviews. Schinske and Tanner (2014) reviewed major themes for what grades are thought to mean: “transparent institutional communication tool,” “motivator for student performance,” and “feedback tool.” They demonstrated through extensive educational and psychological research that no single or combination of these produces a valid interpretation for the function of grades. In response to this study, an even broader, more systematic review looked at the purposes of grading. Brookhart et al.’s (2016) 100 year empirical and theoretical review of grading was able to conclude that grades are a “multidimensional measure that reflect mostly achievement of classroom learning intentions” (i.e., a symbolic universe in a given cultural milieu) and “not unidimensional measures of pure achievement.” Thus, grades empirically have been shown to be more than merely signs,

because they are not transparent, nor readily interpretable across contexts. They must, however, have a sign, which is where our shared assumptions come in and threaten to reduce meaning to that sign.

3. What is a Symbolic Universe?

We must now consider the meaning of a “symbolic universe” before returning to the symbolic universes that give grades interpretable meaning. For the purposes of this paper, “[a symbolic universe is the system of] intuitive assumptions [which] channel lower generalized meanings, namely specific concepts and opinions concerning facts and objects of the social and physical world, values...beliefs, [and] attitudes” (Salvatore et al. 2018). A symbolic universe has at least two critical characteristics relevant for the present study: 1) their effect is pre-semantic in valence (Valsiner 2013; Salvatore et al. 2018) and 2) a symbolic universe functions as the “universe of sense” in that they “envelope the entire field of experience, rather than single parts of it” (Salvatore et al. 2018).

A symbolic universe is pre-semantic in that its constitutive assumptions are socially implied *prior* to us articulating them and therefore tint our linguistic prowess. As Ricoeur argues in a 1978 article, “[i]n other words, a pre-symbolic...stage of real life can nowhere be found. Symbolism in general is not a secondary effect of social life; it constitutes real life as socially meaningful” (Ricoeur 1978, 51). A symbolic universe encompasses our cognitive sphere, in that it mediates our agency in the world because it is being taken as an assumption—it is pre-semantic. Borrowing from Ricoeur’s idea of symbolically mediated action, we need to recall that “[t]he so-called 'real' process already has a symbolic dimension” (*idem*); in fact, as he writes in *Time and Narrative* “[b]efore being submitted to interpretation, symbols are interpretants internally related to some action” (Ricoeur 1984, 58).

Though there are broadly held pre-semantic assumptions, that does not mean that each of us has the same interpretive meanings based on those assumptions. Rather, in a given milieu, there exists “a plurality of symbolic universes” (Salvatore et al. 2018). Each symbolic universe emerges as a

single instance of interpretation of a given cultural milieu which emphasizes some dimensions, but de-emphasizes others (Salvatore et al. 2018; see also Cobern and Aikenhead 1997). When considering how grades are interpreted in the United States, the best we can do is use abductive reasoning—there is nothing straight forward about a grade as its meaning comes from a plurality of symbolic universes.

Grades are literally the weighted culmination of a student's performance on predetermined (either explicitly or implicitly), normative educational tasks. Those tasks are teleologically directed toward some end defined by their educational context. Thus, the symbol of a grade is the interpretation of the student's ability to behave in accordance with a milieu's teleological end; the symbolic dimension of a grade emerges from a given symbolic universe that extends beyond the transparent, definable reference. The meaning of the grade is interpreted via the social milieu and is not clear from the sign. This raises the question of how to analyze, critique, and improve the meaning and function of grades given any social milieu.

4. The Meaning of Grades Using the Ideology and Utopia Dialectical Framework

Conceptualizing grades as a Ricoeurian symbol is valuable because we can draw on other frameworks to understand the indirect meaning of grades from a milieu, rather than concerning ourselves with the empirical question of whether a given grade means ①. Ideology and utopia is the dialectical framework I believe provides the most practical hermeneutical analysis for what a given grade means and how to critique or improve the functional use of grades.

Both ideology and utopia are seldom concepts that are carefully defined. Less frequently are they presented to have congruence with each other in terms of social reality. Paul Ricoeur and Karl Mannheim remain the only two 20th century thinkers to treat both concepts as a dialectic in a systematic way (Sargent 2008). While each thinker's treatment of each concept and how the concepts interact with each other deserve close analysis, for the purposes of this paper a mere paraphrase

is sufficient.³ It should also be noted that I will not concern myself in this work with the argumentation supporting or refuting these frameworks, as the undisputable truth of these frameworks is not essential for my project as pitching grades a symbolic but aids the reader as a helpful guide (i.e., consider them to be methodological in character).

On the surface, ideology can be seen as any structure of beliefs, set of images, or implicitly and explicitly stated norms or narratives that determine the identity of a group. More specifically for Ricoeur, ideology has three characteristics: one negative and two positive. In a negative sense, Ricoeur draws on Marx in claiming that ideology is *prima facie* the “distortion” or “inversion” of a given symbolic universe, but ideology is not distortion *simpliciter* as Marx would argue (Ricoeur 1986, 1-4). In the positive sense, ideology acts as a mechanism for “legitimation” and for “identification” in a social space (Ricoeur 1986, 310).

Grading has all the poles of ideology (i.e., distortion, legitimation, and identity). Distortion, as mentioned, is the ability of an ideology to close the gap between what the narrative says and how things really are—with the narrative either being explicitly false or something that improves on the truth. Ideology’s distortion answers the question of why we have meanings of grades that are empirically false but *feel* as if they were true. Saying grades are a function to determine and communicate educational merit and something that motivates students to fulfill the promise of schooling is attractive. The reality is much more troublesome.

The first remnant of marks to differentiate students were first referenced in the historical record of the United States by the 7th president of Yale University, Ezra Stiles, in a diary footnote which described the differentiating marks as descriptive adjectives (Smallwood 1935). The truth of the grading narrative that is typically left out is that grades were not a novel idea: they were the standardization of evaluation techniques already used. Most early colleges graded students not with letters or numbers, but by the social standing of their family (Smallwood 1935); Harvard University was an example of this practice (Eliot 1923).

When grades became normalized at the turn of the 19th century as education became a widespread practice, grades and formal schooling became part of the same ideology. When dramatically expanding a program and making that program compulsory (which started in 1852 in Massachusetts), how do we know whether or not school is worth the resources and time? Grades closed the gap between the truth that schools taught material in a formalized, pastoral-like setting (e.g., lecture) and the narrative dealing with the value of school.

These realities might make us question why grades were not rejected outright or at some point in the past. The reason is because grades *legitimize* the bureaucracy of formal schooling and provide an *identity* for a specific group. Formal school becoming legitimized in part by grades is because they give us a tangible, commonsensical metric for what the task of formal school is taken to be. Regardless of the content picked, we go to school to learn something. With grades, if we wanted to, we could test students on a topic when they enter school and then retest them when they're done with their lessons. If that mark goes up, we can assume school had something to do with it.

Since we do not expect people going to school to already know the material they're supposed to be learning, we just assume students do not have that knowledge. As such, as the narrative goes, a grade is just a metric of 1) how well the school was able to teach a student and 2) assuming students always try to learn the material, how much the student learned and how capable they are at learning in a given area. If a school can produce students who get As, Bs, Cs, etc, we can supposedly know a school is doing its job; thus, since a good number of students do well, then a given student's particular performance is a reflection on something about them (i.e., the school is working just fine, the poor performance says something about the student).

The most important component of ideology for Ricoeur is that ideological narratives create an identity; likewise, this is the most pressing component of the ideology of grading in contemporary education. As Lampert (2013) and Lemann (2000) note, modern education and so called "Meritocracy" are fundamentally linked. The winners of education, in a

meritocracy, are the ones who supposedly ought to have prominent social positions; those who get the highest grades and best test scores appear to be the smartest and hardest working and, therefore, are then thought of as being qualified to help run the course of society in some prestigious role. Recalling that grading marks were originally used for the purpose of ranking students by their family's social status (Smallwood 1935; Eliot 1923), grades were a natural fit.

The ideology of grading stems from their creation of an in-group of those who have succeeded based on their capability and merit and an out-group of those who have failed based on their inability and foolishness; this trend plays out on a broader educational, sociological, and moral level as Sandel (2020) accounts. Grading practices are incredibly difficult to reform, because the unmasking of ideologies is only bad for those who benefit from them the ideology the most—namely, those who justify their standing in society based on their supposedly superior intellectual and general ability as legitimized by grades. In Mannheim's words, "the decline of ideology represents a crisis only for certain strata, and the objectivity which comes from the unmasking of ideologies always takes the form of self-clarification for society as a whole" (Mannheim 2015 [1936], 236).

When it comes to trying to reform grading, not only are some of the most powerful at risk of losing part of their legitimacy if anything was meaningfully dismantled, it is incredibly difficult to imagine a world with a different ideological structure; we, ourselves, operate within and internalize such a structure. The mentality that "we don't know how to do school without grades" is a strong one; how do we think of reforms if we are products or discarded members of grading-as-ideology? For Ricoeur, the solution for this paradox is in utopia. As he writes, "the only way to get out of the circularity in which ideologies engulf us is to assume a utopia, declare it, and judge an ideology on this basis" (Ricoeur 1986, 172).

Utopia is an initially, non-ideological narrative that is logically distant from the present circumstances but is theoretically realizable. Utopias are non-ideological in that they exist, to use Ricoeur's word, "nowhere" in social reality but are

instead a plurality of narratives that interact to challenge what presently is the case. More specifically, a utopia can be thought of as having three characteristics: offering escapist fantasy, portraying “an alternate form of power,” and allowing for “the exploration of the possible” (Ricoeur 1986, 310). Utopias do not distort reality since they have no concrete degree of reality (i.e., they do not “improve” on facts), they do not legitimize affairs (i.e., they delegitimize ideology), and they do not create identity (i.e., they do not usually say *who* is going to take positions of power in an alternative, but merely an ambiguous “we are going to be better off”).

The negative side of utopia comes via fantasy. For someone at the bottom of an ideological power structure, those who benefit from an ideology can be lost in a utopic vision without taking tangible steps to enact change (Ricoeur 1986, 310). At the top of an ideological power structure, “[f]antasy is the way a utopia is seen by someone who rejects the utopia” because it is not a utopia *for them* (or maybe be led to believe that the utopia is not for them; Sargent 2013, 7).

Let’s explore each of these cases. Suppose the present world with standard grading practices. Someone who is systematically devalued via grades might consider this utopia and internalize it. She might say to herself “there’s nothing wrong with me, I’m not stupid grades don’t matter.” While it is true that there is nothing wrong with her from an intellectual standpoint, it is not empirically true that grades have no bearing on that person’s future or perceived value in the United States, generally. As such, she might reject the ideology of grades for emotional self-esteem, but still allow for the ideology to perpetuate and classify her in or out of the identity group created by grades.

From the perspective of someone who is at the top of the grading ideology (e.g., a technocrat), she might be sympathetic to arguments against grading for having been through the process, but, explicitly, she might claim that we “must be practical” and grades “serve a lot of important roles in society.” In looking closer at these statements, it is not that she is painting herself as benefiting from grades being in place, but rather she is willfully preserving the legitimacy of the

ideological social structures that grading perpetuates (e.g., hierarchical business structures, high paying, technocratic jobs, and so forth).

The positive components of utopia are that we can imagine what life could be like under different hierarchical and non-hierarchical power structures, as well as exploring those power structures in possible, but not real, worlds. Utopia in these forms allows us to juxtapose possibilities with our present ideological structures and pick out what specifically is problematic. When we consider a world with no grades, we can ask “what are we being relieved from”? Perhaps it is having our value essentialized by a symbol that is a proxy for our potential value in the market. Perhaps it is a society who perpetuates the wealthy in positions of power based on the guise of hard work in merit. Perhaps it is the idea that we can pinpoint, more or less accurately, the intellectual capability of someone and then compare that person to someone else—essentially making an existential claim about their personhood. There is no correct answer and will depend on the person doing the reflecting within the ideological and utopic dialectic.

5. (Inevitable) Issues of the Ideology and Utopia Framework

There are two risks of this ideology and utopia framework: 1) the case of someone offering a heavily tainted utopia or 2) the case of a utopic vision becoming successful and collapsing into an ideology. The first I am less concerned about than some might be. Like Ricoeur, Mannheim, and Sargent, I believe that “[a] utopia reflects hope, desires, a dream of improvement” (Sargent 2013, 11). As such, even one that is tainted is one worth considering and potentially working toward. For example, a utopia might be one where the effects of global climate change are mitigated. To work toward this utopia, perhaps we use the forces of capitalism to try and bring about green technology. This utopia might be severely tainted in that it doubles down on the very economic system that drove the climate crisis to begin with, but the component that “we want a world without climate change and global catastrophe” is a thread that may lead in the right direction. As such, I feel no

need to advocate a sense of purity in hoping for the future, because ideological structures make any type of hope increasingly difficult as its hegemony increases.

The second worry is more troublesome, namely because it is inevitable. Specifically, there is an inevitability that a utopian vision is successful and becomes an ideology. This can presumably take two forms: one where a utopia is achieved but reinforces the strength of an existing ideology or the utopia dismantles an ideology and becomes an ideology in and of itself.

Let's apply each case to grading. First, consider that we remove grades all together without really rejecting the components we are trying to reject (e.g., meritocracy, increasing the commodification of education); grades, as an inherently interpretable symbol, will just be replaced with something else. Consider those who reject grades and instead advocate for standards-based grading using "excellent, satisfactory, unsatisfactory" on a rubric. Is such change distinct from current grading in a way that makes a difference? I should think it is not, since the symbolic universe, which gives the meaning to the symbolic "thing" (e.g., letter grade or something of the sort), is still there.

The other way a utopia can become an ideology is by "shattering" an ideology and then replacing it with new narratives (Ricoeur 1986, 273). For example, suppose for the sake of argument that part of the Enlightenment's project was to supplant religion in order to live a rational, evidence-based life (i.e., create a complete account of Naturalism). Western society, in small parts, has come to reject religion for being non-objective and instead embraces science. The irony, of course, is that science as a general enterprise is based on the assumption that induction is true—which we have no rational reason to think is true due to David Hume's famous is/ought distinction. As such, if the reason for rejecting religion is that it requires faith and science was the alternative because it is "purely objective," the utopia of a scientifically driven world collapsed into an ideology that shares many of the same features as previous theologies (for example, see Otto 2012 [1904] for a thorough comparison of naturalism and theology). The important thing to note is that ideology and utopia are

constantly in a dialectic. We should not expect utopian thinking to bring about an end of history, as others have thought, but rather expect those possible alternatives to shed light on what is not working now.

6. Conclusion

This paper must restrain from giving a final word on how we ought to proceed with grading as an educational practice, because providing a “correct” direction would undercut the exact framework that is being argued for here. However, one thing is clear: grading plays a drastic role in many societies and is poorly understood. I intended to demonstrate that grades are Ricoeurian symbols that take their interpretable content from a social milieu and, presently, operate as an ideological narrative and tool that support unjustified meritocratic hierarchies. I cautioned that getting rid of grades will not solve the problems we have uncovered hermeneutically as long as the systems that grades are used to prop-up continue to exist without being questioned. I then finished by proposing a framework, based on the work of Paul Ricoeur, to evaluate proposed meanings of grades that are created by people or institutions and show how interpretations can be improved upon through utopic visions. While grades will stick around, educators have an obligation to be aware of the work they take on and how they as practitioners, and the institutions they work for, partake in many of the United States’ social ills.

NOTES

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented in 2021 at the “Paul Ricoeur on Collective Identities” conference. Feedback was incorporated to this paper where appropriate and I thank the attendees for their comments and general reception.

² I have constrained myself to the United States for the purposes of this paper.

³ See Sargent (2008; 2013) for comprehensive reviews of Ricoeur and Mannheim in relation to the field as a whole.

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Dostoevsky and Arendt on the Crisis of Tradition

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Abstract

In this paper, I shall pursue two goals. Firstly, I will demonstrate that H. Arendt's early analysis of the origins of totalitarianism was anticipated in many ways by F. Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, specifically Dostoevsky's description of Raskolnikov, who is placed in a marginal position of social isolation as well as deprived of traditional orientation. Raskolnikov's crime follows from an attempt to compensate for this lack of traditional orientation, with speculative rational constructions that provide alternative values and orientation. Arendt's analysis of the origins of totalitarianism, in similar vein to Dostoevsky, is concerned with individuals' isolation from the common sense of a given political community, a common sense that provides orientation and values for every member. Being isolated from common sense (and, consequently, from others) and thus not able to disclose the common world, people are forced to substitute intersubjective disclosure of truth with what she describes as 'logicality' of thought, a mere logical consistency, which eventually leads to justifying such phenomena as genocide. Secondly, I shall demonstrate how Arendt's early thought goes beyond Dostoevsky's diagnosis. While Dostoevsky had attained a conservative standpoint stressing the role of a pre-given tradition and religion, Arendt investigates the condition of possibility of the common sense demonstrating that communication among individuals who are capable of accepting other's point of view ("thinking from other fellow's point of view") can serve to rebuild common sense.

Keywords: Arendt, Dostoevsky, tradition, rationality, isolation

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Introduction

The study of crisis has become a recurrent feature of European thought starting from the 19th century: a number of thinkers are convinced that European societies are undergoing an extended period of crisis and decadence. The list of possible diagnoses and solutions is manifold and varied ranging from nihilism (Nietzsche), systematic oppression, and capitalistic systems of production (Marxism) to the ‘rebellion’ of the masses (Ortega y Gasset) and crises of sciences (Husserl). One particular area of diagnosis that will be of interest in this paper identifies the progressive isolation of individuals both from each other and commonality of tradition as the core reason for such a crisis. This original line of thinking reveals an unexpected alliance: in this paper, I will argue that both H. Arendt and F. Dostoevsky, while being drastically different in regard to their overall aims and style of thinking, converge nonetheless at a number of points. Both of them are convinced that the crisis is, first and foremost, a crisis of the tradition that integrates individuals into community, and supplies them with values and orientation. Most importantly, both Arendt and Dostoevsky Offer compatible explanations of such a crisis

In the first part of this paper, I will demonstrate how Raskolnikov – the main character of Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* – commits his crime under the condition of severe isolation from others, and how Dostoevsky demonstrates the corruptive effect this isolation has on Raskolnikov’s thinking. In the second part, I will demonstrate that Dostoevsky’s conclusions, in many ways, are paralleled by Arendt’s early analysis of totalitarian regimes and what she calls “logicality” of thought which replaces the need to talk things through with the fellow man. Finally, in the third part, I will argue that Arendt, unlike Dostoevsky, also shows us a way of rebuilding and rehabilitating tradition.

1. Reason vs. Tradition in F. Dostoevsky

Crime and Punishment was ingeniously designed to demonstrate to the reader a yet unseen type of crime, or, rather, a new phenomenon that modernity brings into life. This

crime is not a crime of passion, it is not a result of a meaningless and inhuman cruelty or cynicism; neither does it follow from a mistake or misunderstanding. This crime, as Dostoevsky seeks to demonstrate, is *theoretically induced*: it comes from reason, from meditations on “a certain book” (Dostoevsky 2001, 463, translation modified); Raskolnikov first justifies his right to commit the murder by proving that it is acceptable and even desirable, before carrying out his theoretical conviction. Razumikhin (one of the characters in the novel and who, as we are about to see, often expresses opinions that are close to Dostoevsky’s) claims that what is “really original” about this crime is that it sanctions the “bloodshed *in the name of conscience*,” which is “more terrible than the official, legal sanction of bloodshed...” (Dostoevsky 2001, 472)

The theory itself is relatively simple and, up to a certain point, inessential. Before committing a murder, Raskolnikov writes an article in which he claims that a difference can be drawn between ‘ordinary men’ who are obliged to follow the norms of law and morality, and ‘extraordinary men’ who have an ‘inner right’ to overstep the boundaries established by laws and moral norms when they deem necessary. By virtue of their unique and outstanding nature, extraordinary men are entitled to commit what is generally conceived of as crimes if their ends justify the means. As Raskolnikov himself puts it, “the discoveries of Kepler and Newton could not have been made known except by sacrificing the lives of one, a dozen, a hundred, or more men, Newton would have had the right, would indeed have been in duty bound ... to eliminate the dozen or the hundred men for the sake of making his discoveries known to the whole of humanity.” (Dostoevsky 2001, 466) Later on, Raskolnikov further specifies that it is not simply to say that outstanding goals make extraordinary men, and consequently sanction crimes; it is the ability “to stoop and pick it [power] up” (Dostoevsky 2001, 740) for one’s own goals that does the trick.

This idea is hardly new. In fact, it is hardly modern at all: One can easily think of Greek sophists and the famous Glaukon-Socrates debate in Plato’s *Republic*. But Dostoevsky’s claim, and the focal point of his attention, does not so much concern the *content* or *validity* of this idea, but rather the fact

that somebody actually decides to act on it *if he becomes convinced that it is valid*.

To understand this peculiar point, we should start by realizing that Raskolnikov's theory was never contested with regard to its rationality or validity throughout *Crime and Punishment*. The collapse which it incurs, or 'the punishment', has no distinct rational articulation; it is not framed as an 'argument' against theory. Raskolnikov remains convinced that his theory is valid until the very end of the epilogue (where Dostoevsky claims that abandoning his theory is a topic for a different book). Moral and psychological suffering which Raskolnikov immediately identifies as punishment ("Surely it isn't my punishment coming upon me? It is!") (Dostoevsky 2001, 171) is not seen as something that undermines the theory; Raskolnikov sees it as an argument against *his* extraordinary status, against *his* personal entitlement to murder: "If I worried myself all those days, wondering whether Napoleon would have done it or not, I felt clearly of course that I wasn't Napoleon" (Dostoevsky 2001, 741). Other characters, such as Razumikhin, Sonja and Porfiry, also offer no arguments. The theory isn't criticized argumentatively by Razumikhin, who discusses the article with Raskolnikov, or by Sonja, to whom Raskolnikov has confessed; even Porfiry Petrovitch, after ironically toying with Raskolnikov's theory, has nothing of substance to object to Raskolnikov's coherent explanations.

For other characters, however, the lack of rational weaknesses did not prove the theory acceptable. Instead of their reasons against the theory, Dostoevsky shows us their intuitive, pre-rational and even wordless repulsion: Razumikhin cannot believe his ears when he hears Raskolnikov explaining his theory, Sonja is outright shocked by it, Porfiry dismissively renounces it as 'stupid' – without offering any reason, he views it as something that is not worthy of serious rebuttal. This difference between Raskolnikov and other characters is crucial. If the characters remain *attentive* to this pre-rational intuition even though it has no clear rational content, for Raskolnikov the lack of such content also means this intuition lacks any binding power; consequently, Raskolnikov remains blindly

devoted to the power of his argument and eventually brings it into reality. This is what makes Raskolnikov's crime so unique: it is not a crime that violates this or that particular traditional norm. It is a crime that follows from rebellion, that puts the power of one's own reason over tradition, and does so not only in theory, but in the real life. Consequently, Dostoevsky's way of denouncing Raskolnikov's theory in many ways follows from the demonstration of how attempts to neglect this wordless, pre-rational intuition (an intuition that might lack a clear rational foundation) devastates and impoverishes one's own existence, leading Raskolnikov to moral and existential alienation. As Opuł'skaia notes, Raskolnikov's rational triumph is dramatically contrasted with his 'moral' collapse. (Opuł'skaja 1973, 321)

First of all, we can see Raskolnikov's self-alienation. Raskolnikov was not a sociopath: Dostoevsky paints a picture of an extremely proud but also emphatic individual with "good inclinations:" he cares deeply for mother and sister; he is concerned with the injustice of the world and has a lot of compassion for the innocent and wounded. His friend, Razumikhin, says that "he has a noble nature and a kind heart" and is capable of "generous impulses." This portrait does not incline us to believe that Raskolnikov is a natural-born murderer; on the contrary, one could assume that he should have found the very idea of murder thoroughly repulsive. Dostoevsky illustrates the inner rejection of murder with the help of dream. Raskolnikov dreams about being a child that witnesses a brutal murder of a horse. Being overwhelmed with this experience ("Good God! he cried, 'can it be, can it be, that I shall really take an axe, that I shall strike her on the head, split her skull open ... that I shall tread in the sticky warm blood, break the lock, steal and tremble; hide, all spattered in the blood ... with the axe.... Good God, can it be?'"), he decides to abandon the crime, but soon his theory comes back in force. This dream, as Dostoevsky writes in one of his drafts, is "a law of nature that we don't *know* but that screams in us." (Dostoevsky's draft, 7; 137). By committing murder, therefore, he alienates himself from this law and, consequently, from those good inclinations that he once harboured. After the

murder, he loses his sense of reality and self-identity: he cannot understand whether he is hallucinating about something or not; he does not know whether he really commits the murder; ('Well, you all say,' ... 'that I am mad. I thought just now that perhaps I really am mad, and have only seen a phantom') (Dostoevsky 2001, 525). Towards the end of the book, Raskolnikov realizes that by murdering the old moneylender, he has mutilated himself: "Did I murder the old woman? I murdered myself, not her! I crushed myself once for all, for ever..." (Dostoevsky 2001, 743).

Furthermore, this self-alienation is paralleled closely with alienation from others. The theory that treats most people as "material that serves only to reproduce its kind" (Dostoevsky 2001, 467) reduces others to instruments, use values in a context of a goal that is set by an unusual individual, which is a move that by itself balances on the edge solipsism. But before the crime, this was just a theory. The crime that was meant to prove that Raskolnikov belongs to the privileged caste transforms this theory into something more: the murder traumatically seals his philosophy substituting the theoretical isolation from others with a factual one. Now, Raskolnikov's isolation concerns not only his ideas and cognition, but the whole scope of his existence. He suddenly realizes "...that he would never again be able to speak of anything to anyone" (Dostoevsky 2001, 413) he feels that "all who met him were loathsome to him" (Dostoevsky 2001, 467). Even those closest to him – his mother and sister – are now painfully far, even alien to him ("Mother, sister—how I loved them! Why do I hate them now? Yes, I hate them, I feel a physical hatred for them, I can't bear them near me.... ") (Dostoevsky 2001, 245). At the same time, he by no means loses the need for others; Svidrigailov, Maremeladov and Porfiry (in different places) all claim that Raskolnikov needs "air" and "company." In the same way, Sonja recognizing the depth of Raskolnikov's alienation emphatically asks: "How can you live without others?" (Dostoevsky 2001, 467), translation modified). It is this sense of "uncoupling and dividedness" with humanity that makes him confess to Sonja and, in the end, turn himself in.

Raskolnikov's reasonability, in such a way, turns out to be nothing but stupidity. Faced with enormous expenses, his theory bankrupts even without needing any reasons against it – *it just is stupid* no matter how logically non-contradictory it is. The roots of this stupidity stem from Raskolnikov's neglect of this wordless, pre-rational intuition that renders his theory so appalling to others, an intuition that tells them that something is completely off with such a theory, before they start thinking about the argument against it. This intuition is, in a sense, *unmistakable*, but not because it offers some sort of an apodictic proof that cannot be doubted; rather, it delimitates the space of what can be meaningfully said (here Dostoevsky seemed to anticipate Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*).

To understand the nature and the source of this intuition more thoroughly – along with the danger of unconditional trust in reason, we should take a brief look at the wider context of Dostoevsky's work. In many ways, the core of Dostoevsky's thought was formed during the hard days of katorga where he, being for the first time in his life surrounded by common, non-privileged people, was shocked by the magnitude of their separation from 'intelligentsia,' the upper class of educated individuals who participate in mental labour; as Frank notes, years of „isolation and enmity from which he had suffered all through his prison-camp years, powerfully affected the subsequent cast of Dostoevsky's ideas;“ (Raskolnikov, who undergoes the same experience in the epilogue, reiterates Dostoevsky's own intellectual path; the narrative of his redemption amounts to recovering of the ability “to identify himself with the others, morally and emotionally” (Frank 1987, 144).

Dostoevsky saw the origin of this split between intelligentsia and common people in Petr I's reforms that were trying to Europeanize Russian society (Dostoevsky 1861, 5): aimed at the educated part of Russian society these reforms were implemented from the top, in a voluntaristic fashion, instead of relying on the organic development of people. Thus, they have remained alien to the common people who have retained their “originality” despite the transformation of the elite (Dostoevsky 1861, 6). Dostoevsky, unlike the previous

generation of conservative thinkers (Dowler 1982, 90-91), admitted the value and necessity of Petr's Europeanization saying that it has expanded Russian "sight" and "field of action," (Dostoevsky 1993, 29) deepened Russian self-knowledge (Dostoevsky 1993, 149) and gifted it with science, a gift that was accepted "with gratitude" (Dostoevsky 1993, 23) Dostoevsky drew no inspirations in the idea of returning to some idyllic past. But the momentary price for these achievements was the alienation of the educated part of Russian society from its "soil" – the common people (Dostoevsky 1993). Being imbued with *pride* Russian intelligentsia started believing unconditionally in their superior, unique status and learned to despise common people who represented, for them, a lower level of life. *They no longer listened to the ordinary people as if people had nothing to say.* Dostoevsky describes the growing sense of alienation between these two groups in one of his notes within *Diary of a Writer*: "One of the most typical traits of Russian liberalism is horrible contempt towards the people and in addition to that a horrible lording over the people..." (Dostoevsky 1971) Intelligentsia and people are divided by "by an impassable gulf" (Dostoevsky 2004).

Dostoevsky's thinking about the significance of this "gulf" was strongly influenced by Herder (through his colleague and friend Grigoryev) and his criticism of universalistic approaches to societies (Scanlan 2011, 159; Dowler 1982, 44). Herder starts with an assumption that societies occur and develop as a response toward particular settings of the world and make no sense without the context of this response. Individuals, their identity, and their ways of making sense of the world are seen as equally context-dependent: we become who we are only by inheriting the common tradition, its customs, norms, worldviews, mythology, fundamental ideas and 'cosmogonies.' The attempt to treat individuals as universalistic, self-standing creatures is thus grossly misguided. Dostoevsky enthusiastically endorses this thinking, which has served as the foundation of his theory of 'pochvenicestvo:' according to Dostoevsky, the 'soil' ('pochva'), the tradition that has been forged for generations introduces us into values, orientations, a sense of justice (the law of the earth,

as Dostoevsky puts it) and purpose; being generated by the historical life of the community, it gives us a sense of identity and belonging to others. *My* orientation makes it possible for me to orient in *my* environment; as Scanlan puts it “different soils produce different plants bearing different fruits.” (Scanlan 2011, 201)

Unlike the previous generation of Russian conservative thought, Dostoevsky and other *‘pochvenniky’* no longer understand tradition as a fixed system of norms and prescriptions treating it instead as an organic process. As another close to Dostoevsky *‘pochvennik’* – Strakhov – puts it, ‘under the term soil are meant those basic and distinctive powers of a people which are the seeds of all its organic manifestations. Whatever the phenomenon is...be it a song, story, custom, or a private or civil form, all these are recognized as legitimate, as having real meaning, in so far as they are organically linked to the national essence.’ (Strakhov 1862, translated by Dowler). So, the tradition does not refer us to some fact or some period in past but to the *essence*, the *principle* according to which periods occur and succeed each other. Thus, *pochvenniky* offer us a much more dynamic notion of tradition, which accounts for the need and possibility of change; *they* prefer “progress and life...” over “stagnation and sleep” (Dowler 1982, 95). The only point is that this change must be *organic*: as a product of the historic life of a community, it must *follow* from the situation instead of being deduced from some abstract theoretical postulate; as Dowler puts it, “[c]hange was inevitable and desirable but was legitimate only when it took place within the constraints of tradition” (Ibid., 110). Otherwise, it will always remain an alien, undigestible element. (In *Crime and Punishment*, Razumikhin who stresses that any kind of social change cannot be based on detached theoretical constructions but must remain in a dialogue with the animated society and its historical life expresses this view.) In this sense, the ideology of the native soil is, in the first place, an ideology of unity that seeks to reconcile different social groups by stressing the indebtedness of any particular project to the context when it has arisen.

So, the tradition – what following Barnard’s interpretation of Herder, we might describe as a “historical and cultural continuum” (Barnard 1989, 31) – is not based upon fixable entities ‘in’ us that we must simply accept or deny; it cannot be summed up as a set of coherent sentences formulatable by a single isolated individual. For Dostoevsky, belonging to the tradition is rather based on intuitive comprehension, intuitive merging with the folk tradition the most crucial element of which is the pre-rational, pre-conceptual openness to the others, genuine caring for their lives and aspirations. He describes this intuition in *Brothers Karamazov*, where Alyosha experiences the feeling of belonging that Dostoevsky describes as follows: “There seemed to be threads from all those innumerable worlds of God, linking his soul to them, and it was trembling all over ‘in contact with other worlds.’ He longed to forgive everyone and for everything, and to beg forgiveness. Oh, not for himself, but for all men, for all and for everything. ‘And others are praying for me too,’ echoed again in his soul” (Dostoevsky 2009, 463) (Alyosha that kisses the earth here echoes Raskolnikov’s similar act of repentance, which symbolized giving himself over the court of the soil.) We can see, therefore, how this pre-reflective, pre-rational sense of unity, which consists of our dialogical attentiveness to others, an ability to hear others and value them “as ourselves,” fills the life with meaning and a sense of belonging, putting us in direct contact with others. Taken in itself this attentiveness is indeed “unreasonable,” (Dostoevsky 1995, 241) i.e., it cannot be rationally grounded by an isolated, monological consciousness; but it is by understanding ourselves as outgrowths of the same soil, as caring for others and being cared by others, we can disclose warmth and intimacy of a shared life.

What Dostoevsky demonstrates (both philosophically and stylistically), in other words, is that our voice obtains its meaning and situatedness only by blending with the polyphony of other voices and remaining connected with others and the common world – the soil – where it happened to grow. Being confronted with the magnitude of the gulf separating the common people and intelligentsia back in the days of his

katorga, he has realized that the richness and depth of a single individual is “unassimilable to any prefabricated sociopolitical vision and unamenable to any totalizing scheme” (Ruttenberg 2008, 27). So the alienation from people cannot be overcome with the help of constructing theories and making observations, something Dostoevsky describes as “looking upon” people, but with the help of living “with people,” i.e., by sharing their lives and caring for them. Dostoevsky’s polyphonic method of narration, which entitles characters to “their own directly signifying discourse” (Bahtin 1984, 6) and frees them from the strict subordination to the goals of the plot, was meant to make exactly this kind of “living with” possible; later on, it has further crystallized into a number of philosophical points described above.

Isolation from tradition and the common people proves to be corruptive. Placed in this detached position, intelligentsia might not recognize this corruptive impact and praise instead its privileged and self-sufficient status. It substitutes the reliance on tradition with the unconditional trust in reason: being deprived of its dialogical interconnectedness to others, intelligentsia relies only on itself and its private power of argument. As Dostoevsky stresses in Pushkin’s speech, this self-sufficiency is an illusion: no matter how useful and correct rational constructions and knowledge are ‘in themselves,’ they can never compensate for isolation. Any kind of genuine thinking must remain in touch with the soil, attaining the depth and significance in the context of its historical situation rather than being free-floating speculation. By substituting the nourishing power of the tradition and dialogue with others with the naïve belief in its own self-sufficiency, intelligentsia dooms itself for disorientation; the knowledge it elaborates will always suffer from idleness, emptiness, and speculative, abstract character. The Russian intellectual, says Dostoevsky “will never understand that the truth is first of all within himself. How could he understand this? For a whole century he has not been able to be himself in his own land. He has forgotten how to work. He has no culture... For the time being he is only a blade of grass torn up by his roots and blown through the air” (Dostoevsky 1880) In other words, thinking

that does not arise from the ‘pochva’ or soil will never be able to clarify its own situation and its own significance because from the very beginning it forgets one’s own “truth;” such thinking would amount a ‘torn up blade of grass’ that occurs and disappears without any impact. Only by reconciling the detached elite with the people “the redemption of the whole” (Murav 1992, 6) can be reached.

Furthermore, this isolation is never complete. One way or another, an individual still remains dependent upon the tradition and others (for Dostoevsky this means that no one is lost completely, and anyone retains a chance of redemption). Bakhtin has explicated this line of thinking perfectly stressing that Dostoevsky intentionally does not demonstrate us Raskolnikov’s article while demonstrating how the idea of the article is perceived and lived by other characters. By doing this Dostoevsky once again contrasts “monological” content of Raskolnikov’s theory and private character of his argumentation and its real-life “dialogical” motivation that sources directly from Raskolnikov’s relations with his sister, mother, and Sonya. Only in the course of interactions with others “Raskolnikov’s idea reveals its various facets, nuances, possibilities, it enters into various relationships with other life-positions. As it loses its monologic, abstractly theoretical finalized quality, a quality sufficient to a single consciousness, it acquires the contradictory complexity and living multi-faceness of an idea-force, being born, living and acting in the great dialogue of the epoch and calling back and forth to kindred ideas of other epochs.” (Bahtin 1984, 31) Dostoevsky also demonstrates that Raskolnikov’s own decision to commit murder retains the implicit dialogical, intersubjective motivation: only after he received the letter from his sister (which, again, increases his alienation), the abstract “arithmetic” of his theory is transformed into a driving force of his life (Kirpotin 1970, 83). So, even though his theory does not contain any sort of dialogical aspects, it itself remains essentially motivated by dialogue and, thus, can never be finalized into complete isolation.

By creating the figure of Raskolnikov, Dostoevsky was trying to create an epitome of Russian intelligentsia

transposing these social, intellectual and, most of all, spiritual problems into a picture of the struggling disoriented student; Raskolnikov is a “hero of the modern age.” Indeed, it is not hard to find in Raskolnikov all the traits and phenomena that troubles Dostoevsky. Raskolnikov is a student, a participant of the intellectual labour, and thus a member of the intelligentsia. As part of this privileged group, he finds himself completely detached from people: he does not understand them and is not understood by them (to stress this alienation, Dostoevsky often describes various misperceptions of Raskolnikov’s sufferings – e.g. “many of them took him to be drunk” (Dostoevsky 2001, 80)). He is also extremely prideful: he despises the people (“their ugly faces”) and puts himself above them. Finally, he lacks a clear sense of identity (“who am I?”). But Raskolnikov is not only an example but also *an experimental model* for Dostoevsky: based on the figure of Raskolnikov, he shows us what *could* happen (and what has already started happening) if this isolation progresses and radicalizes. Raskolnikov is not only isolated from common people and tradition – he is placed in complete isolation from others. His family is far away from him, he has very few friends and barely participates in social occasions. Even before the crime, Raskolnikov consciously kept distance from society – in university, for example, he “kept aloof from everyone.” (Ibid., 100) Furthermore, Dostoevsky also describes Raskolnikov as “crushed by poverty” (Ibid., 7) he wasn’t able to meet even his basic needs, let alone help his mother and sister.

And since he is even more radically isolated than most people, he also has to rely more radically on private, non-dialogical reason. Again, Raskolnikov’s ideas were hardly unique. Dostoevsky explicitly admits that, referring us in one of his letters to Katkov to “strange, *‘incomplete’* ideas which go floating about in the air” (Dostoevsky 1996) Even the theory itself wasn’t unique – J. Karjakin, for example, mentions that “the generation was obsessed with napoleomania” (Karjakin 1996, 98-99) (hence, Porfyri’s ironic question ‘Oh, come, don’t we all think ourselves Napoleons now in Russia?’) (Dostoevsky 2001, 476). This is the logical result of isolation from the tradition that forces intelligentsia to rely on reason and produce

all sorts of hollow intellectual constructions. But what makes Raskolnikov stand out, as I have claimed earlier, is his decision to act upon those ideas. The murder transforms what has been a merely theoretical stupidity into an existential stupidity, which now appears as an organizing topic of Raskolnikov's life. If before these 'modern times', isolation from the tradition has led to the occurrence of abstract ideas detached from life, now these abstract ideas themselves violently imposed themselves as reality and *become* reality. Acting upon his theory means *finalizing* his isolation and *rupturing* the very structure of his being with others; from *merely conceptual inability* to articulate and appreciate the constitutive nature of our being with others, he has arrived at the *existential amputation* of such a being. There is no simple way back from here: he cannot abandon his theory as a failed experiment, but instead has to rebuild his life from scratch through moral resurrection and suffering. Dostoevsky, in such a way, demonstrates that the tendency to rely on reason (a product of isolation) can, at the same time, potentially reinforce this isolation in a radical way.

Crime and Punishment should be seen as a *sinister warning* against what might follow if reconciliation between the intelligentsia and people does not happen, if this corruptive isolation of thinking from the soil and others progresses and radicalizes. If we place too much trust in reason and stop being attentive to tradition and others, we are left unprotected from moral and existential collapse. The first signs of such radicalization have already been noticeable in in Dostoevsky's Russia; but Dostoevsky, of course, was far from realizing how much further this radicalization can progress.

2. Logicality vs. Common sense in H. Arendt

H. Arendt is rarely (if ever) compared to Dostoevsky: these two thinkers come from very different backgrounds, operate with different methods and conceptual tools, and proceed from different assumptions. Arendt herself, as S. Boym stresses (Boym 2005, 106), has come to conclusion that Dostoevsky's dialogical openness is opposed, by the very definition, to the public domain that was interested in. But if

we compare their views on the status and crisis of tradition, a number of crucial similarities immediately show up.

To elaborate on such similarities, I will start with a brief outline of Arendt's notions of common sense and reality. According to Arendt, the sense of reality is guaranteed by the fact that individual senses disclose the same world and the same objects in different ways. The special sense coordinates the activities of the other senses and transforms them into a perception of one specific object; combined together, private senses serve as the foundation of a sixth sense that is common to everybody: "[w]hat since Thomas Aquinas we call common sense, the *sensus communis*, is a kind of sixth sense needed to keep my five senses together and guarantee that it is the same object that I see, touch, taste, smell, and bear." (Arendt 1981, 50) Arendt adds to this Aristotelian understanding of the sixth sense a more significant intersubjective aspect. The real guarantee of the existence of the object is not the unity of my perceptions, but its appearance to other humans, although the "mode of appearance may be different" (Ibid). Others help us to separate illusion from reality and evaluate the latter appropriately. The context of these different "modes of an appearance" will therefore still be the same for everyone who perceives this appearance because they live in the same intersubjectively verified world (Ibid.). Everything that belongs to it attains its natural or common perspectives owing to the very process of communicating with others, which means a constant specification of reality and a readiness of thought to adapt and grasp the changes in it. The process of verification is not simply a transformation from reality to a common reality. Instead, it is the way reality and truth as such are discovered (Ibid.)

This means that disclosure of reality is not an automatically guaranteed fact but an intersubjective achievement: sense of reality is essentially associated with a never-ending process of refinement, verification and coordination among plurality of perspectives. It is the outcome of actual, historical acts of communication with other people: through daily activities and interactions with others, my world acquires heft, tangibility, and a natural hierarchy. For Arendt, in such a way, the common sense is not so much a movement of

cognition as it is a movement of communication, of agreeing with others to attain a shared attitude towards the world; it is not a universal a priori law of my access to the world but rather an intersubjective praxis of securing such an access. Common sense functions as a medium of communication among people: because they exist in the same homogenous space, communication and ordinary interactions among people are basic processes that usually cause no complications. People are able to understand each other's intentions easily because there is a normativity common to everyone, which reveals what should exist and how exactly it should exist. Withdrawal from this means destroying the plurality of perspectives, its richness and the very possibility to be certain of reality. It is for this reason that Arendt says that common sense is a "political sense par excellence" (Arendt 1994, 318).

But since the common sense is not an abstract structure of one's own mind but a result of actual interaction with fellow men, it can not only be changed but also damaged, or even lost. Arendt, just like Dostoevsky, sees the loss of this sense of common reality, our connection to others, as one of the ills of modern times, something Arendt describes as "bankruptcy of common sense." In the modern world where "work" (the process of creating lasting elements, 'hinges' of the world) has been substituted with "labor" (the cyclical activity aimed at the life-maintenance and immediate consumption) (Arendt 1998, 47), where political regimes rely on propaganda and terror (see, for example, Arendt's "Ideology and Terror"), where "our categories of thought and standards of judgment" (Arendt 1994, 318) – something Arendt calls "crutches" (Arendt 1968, 10) of our thinking or "yardsticks by which to measure" (Arendt 1994, 321) – has been bankrupted. We are left deprived from the means of establishing the common world; as a result, common sense, the very feeling of a common world, had vanished. As Arendt puts it, "[w]e live today in a world in which not even common sense makes sense any longer." Under this condition, establishing normal communication between two people – the process that constitutes common sense – stopped being an ordinary procedure; social institutions, common normativity and traditions were no longer able to serve as a regular medium

of communication. Left without this common ground, people find themselves separated from each other; they “either live in desperate lonely separation or are pressed together into a mass.” The intersubjective relations become almost mechanical or “automatic” (Arendt 2006, 89-90): while interacting with each other, they still lack mutual understanding, an ability to establish any kind of significant bond or a sharedness of their world.

This pathology of the common sense is immediately followed by the pathology of thinking: being isolated from others, people tend to substitute a real act of communication with vacuous logical consistency, an ability to form a sequence of several propositions – something Arendt calls “logicality” (Arendt 1973, 472) If thinking loses this touch with others, it also loses its connection to truth because truth, says Arendt, must reveal something whereas logicality by itself is sterile and concerns only interactions of judgments. And since disclosure of truth is inseparably linked to interaction among different perspectives, individuals that find themselves cut off from others are no longer able to introduce anything genuinely new into their system of judgments, which makes any kind of substantial reconsideration or alteration of their perspectives impossible. Reliance on private logical consistency, the growing level of rigidity and inertness mark a self-encapsulation of thinking and robs it of its ability to attain experience and learn anything. To illustrate this phenomenon, Arendt cites Luther’s claim, that the lonely man “always deduces one thing from the other and thinks everything to the worst.” There is nothing that can stop this merely logical deduction from the inside (Canovan 1995, 91): when thinking is replaced by a systematic deduction of rules, the absolute sequence of which cannot be interrupted, the possibility of going beyond the limits of its private logic is destroyed. So, by losing contact with others and the common reality around us, we also lose “the capacity of both experience and thought” (Arendt 1973, 474).

According to Arendt, this tendency to rely on one’s own logical capacities creates a fertile ground for the occurrence and spread of dominant ideologies of the 20th century. A distinctive feature of such ideologies is their ultimate totality. According to

Arendt, they resolve “all the riddles of universe” (Ibid., 457) by reducing them to one fundamental problem, whether it is the struggle of social classes for means of production, or the struggle of races for survival. This fundamental problem essentially works as a general rule, under which other, more specific rules are subsumed: everything in the world, appearances, historical events and the future, in an ideological context, gains its meaning only as a result of its relation to a fundamental problem. Ideology interprets reality as the “unfolding” of some “process which is in constant change” (Ibid., 469) and the “idea” of ideology becomes immanent logic, according to which historical “movement... is set into motion” (Ibid.) Phenomena of the world lose their being “for themselves” and are reinterpreted in light of ideological goals: they are “automatically assumed to signify something else” (Ibid., 471) gaining a certain “epistemological basis” supplied by ideological explanation.

This all-encompassing power of ideological explanation is what finally destroys the very possibility of actual experience: by reducing to the “idea” of ideology past, present and future with the whole range of its perspectives, ideology isolates us from everything new *in advance* or *a priori*; by having an ambition to explain *everything* theoretically, it excludes *anything* that can give us reason to reconsider our positions. By doing that, ideology substitutes reality, with all its concreteness and uniqueness that can teach us something, with a “truer” reality, reality that does not require communication with others and intersubjective revelation of what is really but that can be entirely deduced from the fundamental problem set by it. This process of deduction and subsuming *a priori* covers the whole world: “...after ideologies have taught people to emancipate themselves from real experience and the shock of reality by luring them into a fool's paradise where everything is known *a priori*.” (Arendt 1994, 356) The intersubjective disclosure of truth becomes completely and irrevocably substituted with private deductive operations excluding the basic need to cooperate with others. With regard to logical consistency, any kind of *theoretical* need for others is excluded; we know what

reality and history is all about even without needing others to confirm or disconfirm it.

Others, who are supposed to be listened to and reveal their perspectives, something we have no access to without communication, do not appear in ideological thinking. Instead, humans are understood as the means by which History or Nature reach their goals (Arendt 1973, 356). Mutual understanding among people has already been secured by the ideology, owing to the fact that the area of their interaction and understanding is ultimately narrowed to the limits proposed by meta-thesis. In reality, however, this kind of “understanding” only isolates people from each other. Interaction in this sense is not a contact between two independent people, or individuals in need of finding a common ground, but only the interaction of the “cogs” (Arendt 2003, 29) of history. Others are not given as possessing their own agency, as individuals whose perspectives are equally valid as any other perspectives; instead they are given within the context of the fundamental ideological project and they have their meaning and status defined exclusively in terms of this fundamental project. This means that the destruction of common sense by ideology leaves humans completely alone, without any possibility of making actual contact with their fellow man: Even though others are present in our daily interactions, they are present as such soulless ‘cogs’ and never as others.

Under this condition of complete isolation from others, people have no defense against radical evil. If ideology delimitates something like “dying class” or “races unfit to survival,” then the idea of mass murder is *only logical*: they must be killed if *the cause*, or *the greater good*, is to prevail. Since the premise of ideology lies beyond any possible doubt, there is nothing that can wrench us out of this succession of claims and save us from the evil; “[t]otalitarianism,” claims Boym recognizing the intuitive affinity with *Crime and Punishment*, “pushes further Raskolnikov’s maxim that everything is permitted” (Boyml 2005, 603). The almost connatural resistance to murder (all the more so mass murder) is explained as irrational resistance – as either cowardice or stupidity – that needs to be suppressed and overcome. The

tendency to rely on reasons might fail each of us: not everyone is capable of giving solid arguments against such a murder off the top of one's head. This doesn't mean, however, that everyone who has no ready-made arguments against mass murder would automatically engage in it – normally, we, people, have this 'unmistakable' feeling that something is completely off with the idea; we don't even consider this idea as a *truth-candidate*, neglecting it as meaningless before deliberating about it. Something entirely pre-reflective but nonetheless convincing resists reducing this neighbor family to some abstract and desperate representatives of an unfit race. Normally, it is common sense – something that discloses us reality and that was built, among other things, in interaction with this family – that makes this reduction *seem mad*. But what distinguishes the 20th century and what makes this type of crime possible is that this pre-reflective trust to the common sense (or, in other terms, to the tradition) is revoked, which renders everything that displays logical connections reasonable and, potentially, acceptable.¹

We can see, therefore, that Arendt's diagnosis displays some remarkably similar traits to that of Dostoevsky's.² First of all, Arendt proceeds from similar assumptions. Just like Dostoevsky she sees tradition as an *intersubjective achievement*, not some cognitive set of self-obvious valid statements about reality. Our ability to make sense of the world and ourselves is directly dependent upon attentiveness to the tradition that itself is not reducible to a set of arguments. Just like Dostoevsky (but for different reasons), Arendt believes that this tradition and our connection with others are weakened in modern societies. But most importantly, both Arendt and Dostoevsky agree on the danger that follows from such a weakening: in a situation where thinking stops being communicative, where it stops taking into account actual perspectives of others and common sense, it becomes unbound, vague and speculative. As a result, this kind of vague, unbound thinking can potentially justify a set of theoretical propositions that can never be even remotely meaningful or acceptable in a wider context of human existence. The crimes that follow from such free-floating thinking finally rupture our connection to

others and burn every bridge that can lead us back to them. We can see, therefore, that Arendt also sees ideological thinking as a product *and* a reinforcement of isolation at the same time.

3. From Returning to Rebuilding

It should be stressed, however, that this similarity between Arendt and Dostoevsky is a similarity in diagnosis. They arrive at this conclusion, from very different perspectives, and offer different ways of resolving this crisis. Investigation of this difference will not only further clarify their accounts, but also emphasize the progress that European thought has achieved over the half a century which separates *Crime and Punishment* and Arendt's early thinking.

Let's first return to Dostoevsky in more details. Dostoevsky believes that two factors are responsible for the crisis. The first is sociological, which has already been discussed – Petr I's reforms have violently separated people and intelligentsia. The second factor is more abstract and inconspicuous, but ultimately more significant for Dostoevsky functioning as a sort of a *leitmotiv* in many of his writings. It consists of a Christian assumption that detachment from the tradition constitutes a sort of a *sin*: intellectuals are guilty of being too proud of themselves (Cicovacki 2005). After attaining this privileged and renewed position, they have started to think of themselves as autonomous, independent agents; they assume that they are capable of governing themselves without need of any external law. Such major characters, like underground man Stavrogin, Ivan Karamazov, and Raskolnikov, share this peculiar trait of being proud up to the extent that they thought themselves the only authority they required; all of them are self-absorbed, egoistic, and all of them are lost in the world and isolated from others. This second factor is a much more severe problem than the first, since it does not source from the external environment but from human nature as such; consequently, there is no receipt against pride other than individual remorse, which cannot be caused by the environment, but must follow from the inside. As Cicovacki puts it, "The monster that Dostoyevsky recognized in Siberia, which turned him against his own earlier convictions, was

humanity's proud nature. The sinners, the poor, and the innocent are victims of mindlessness, misery, and injustice, but the wicked are victimized by a greater evil: pride. Ignorance can be removed, poverty eliminated, injustice corrected. But pride? How can we fight pride?" (Ibid., 2005).

With this, another important point comes up: for Dostoevsky, the crisis of a tradition is a crisis of an individual that mistakenly breaks away from tradition, but it is never a crisis of the tradition itself. The tradition, while being different from culture to culture, shares nonetheless the essentially Christian core that has taught us to "love our neighbour as ourselves" (Dostoevsky 1994). This core is innate to every human being as it is nothing but a "gift" of God, which Scanlan aptly describes as "initial structural endowment" (Scanlan 2011, 88). While recognizing the possibility and need for changes in the tradition, Dostoevsky stresses that this incorporation must happen in an "organic way" based on dialogue with others. And our attentiveness to others, the sense of unity and belonging is an ineradicable, "innate" aspect of every human existence; we can walk away from this God's gift but we can never eradicate it completely from ourselves. Thus, every major character of Dostoevsky's works – no matter how deep he falls into the abyss of isolation and vice – retain this possibility of confessing and returning to others. So, in this sense, historically contingent and external isolation from others might provoke the belief that others are not needed at all; it might spark pride and the illusion that we can settle with ourselves and the rationality of our own minds. But this crisis, strictly speaking, is never a crisis *of* tradition but rather a crisis that follows from the attempt to deny it. Consequently, the solution to the crisis of tradition always lies through individual remorse, abandonment of pride, and a return to others. Human beings, in other words, are of course free to deny the tradition at self-mutilating cost, but they have no need in rebuilding it. Being given as a sort of theological revelation, as a gift that can be accepted or denied but never corrupted completely, the tradition is always there to return to. This perspective has its natural limits: it might have looked acceptable in the 19th century where the crises of tradition were still limited to a

number of individuals, while the bulk of the nation – the ordinary people – were seen as an unshakeable cornerstone of the tradition. The experience of 20th century totalitarian regimes, of course, tests this assumption, showing us that significant groups of ‘ordinary people’ were, at the least, tacitly complicit with the crimes of the regime. In this case, it is no longer a crisis of individual misfits or rogue elements, but involves a full-blown crisis of the tradition and its power to integrate and settle people in the world. In light of these events, Arendt’s perspective makes much more sense. Coming from transcendental and phenomenological traditions of thought, Arendt does not rely on the innate character of the common sense, but investigates the condition of its possibility. For Arendt, interactions among individuals, communication *actively constitutes* common sense, the feeling of the common world; so, instead of blending in theological implications or revelation and viewing our belonging to the tradition as something that is theologically secured, she interprets it as an intersubjective achievement. For this reason, Arendt is able to deploy a much richer analysis of the pathologies of common sense; but most importantly, she offers us an explanation of how it is possible to actively rebuild (and not just ‘re-accept’) the tradition that has lost its grip over us. This rebuilding project has occupied Arendt throughout her career: early on, she tried to demonstrate how genuine thinking, “thinking from the standpoint of somebody else” can perform such a task, while later she has passed over this function to the capacity of judgement. This latter part of her thought on judgement has already received a lot of attention from various scholars; to name but a few, the works by R. Beiner and M. Canovan serve as a useful guide on how reflective judgement can re-build the common sense. In what follows, however, I will concentrate on Arendt’s early thinking about thinking, first because it is a relatively under-investigated topic, but mainly because it will supply us with further parallels to Dostoevsky’s work and continue to add to the relation between logicity, isolation, and genuine thinking.

In particular, we can look at Arendt’s unpublished lecture entitled “Philosophy and Politics” from 1953. The basic problem described in this lecture is Socrates’ trial. The

problematic character of the trial reflects the larger problem of the relationship between the philosopher and the plurality. Socrates spoke with his judges in the same way he spoke with his friends. He “addressed his judges in the form of dialectic,” (Arendt 1953, 79) asking questions and seeking answers to them in an effort to arrive at the truth. In reality, discussion in a court was not the kind of dialogue to which Socrates was accustomed. He was used to a dialogue among friends. Faced with judges, however, he was addressing a plurality. Dialectic is not suited to this kind of task, because it is preoccupied with the quest for truth. Inside the courtroom, persuasion aimed at shaping opinion is more appropriate. Truth, which is a traditional area of interest to the *sofoi*, or wise man, loses its essential characteristics to a degree when it enters the public space, where it can be seen and judged by the multitude, because “the moment the eternal is brought into the midst of men it becomes temporal” (Ibid.) Interaction with the public excludes the very possibility of dialogue, a succession of questions and answers, united in a desire to find the truth. In public settings, thought loses its own inherent context; the way it was achieved, its inherent *responsibility*, and quest for truth, and instead turns into opinion, at that a merely subjective one. Because of all these losses, the rivalry among opinions takes the form of persuasion, which according to Arendt “does not come from truth” (Ibid.). The rivalry among them takes the form of violence, a collision among different effects (even though it is expressed in speech): “To persuade the multitude means to force upon its multiple opinions one's own opinion; persuasion is not the opposite of rule by violence, it is only another form of it” (Ibid.).

According to Arendt, a key feature of Socrates's approach is his attempt to reveal the truth hidden in the opinions of judges. Unlike Plato, he did not discount the value of *doxai*, opinions. Arendt gives her special attention to the primordial connotations of this Greek word “*doxa*,” which have been lost in translation: “*doxa*” comes from “*dokei moi*,” meaning “it seems to me.” “It seems to me” refers to our position in the world, and seemingness assumes some point of view and, as such, is significantly different from illusions,

although it is not “something absolute and valid for all” (Ibid.). Such subjective seemingness is combined with “commonness” (Ibid.) of the world, i.e., the recognition that despite any differences, “both you and I are human” (Ibid.) living in one, objective world. Objectivity is always present in the subjectivity of opinions, since the latter is a consequence of a common object presented to different people with different perspectives. Socrates’s dialectic was aimed at this concealed objectivity. It was an attempt to reveal the truth hidden in every opinion.

Thinking in itself is a mean of communication that can turn a subjective opinion into a truthful one, provided that the speaker understands and accepts the condition of his opinion: his point of view from which his view “seems.” Admitting his ignorance and the inability to achieve complete knowledge, Socrates believed that truth is revealed to mortals only through an appreciation of the limitations and the conditionality of truth. This discovery led him to an understanding of the necessity of communication. Uncovering the truth of a companion is only possible by learning from what point of view his opinion seems to be right, which is an impossible task without a style of rhetoric and questioning which has no other motive than the desire to understand. The main task of “talking something through” (Ibid., 81) is therefore not to dismiss the opinion of one’s companions, but to “reveal *doxa* in its own truthfulness” (Ibid., 81). In this way, it is possible to achieve a common truth for all who are involved in a discussion and to replace a competition among opinions with dialogue. This is the only way of achieving compromise in the mortal world, where no final truth is possible and, therefore, any form of coercion or tyranny by truth is excluded. The necessary condition for such a conversation is the absence of any clear goal for the discussion and any specific “interests” related to it. Dialogue is a form of communication among friends. For this reason, Arendt calls the *maieutic* method political capacity per se (Ibid.), and says that friendship as such is a form of political organization.

For Arendt, the most distinctive characteristic of politics is its concern with the common world. In “Philosophy and Politics,” she interprets friendship in an Aristotelian way, as a relationship based, for the most part, on talking something

through with someone else. It mainly consists in discussing *doxai*, their points of *view* which *a priori* assures them that they live in the same world. The common world can become common owing to an equality that makes their views equally relevant and, as well as the need to live together. In discussing their opinions, friends find a way of reaching consensus by uncovering the truth hidden in their opinions. They begin “to constitute a little world of its own which is shared in friendship” (Ibid., 82). Friendship in this sense is truly the highest political relationship, which can build or rebuild a common world, because friendship is connected with equalization of friends in relation to the public realm, i.e., an equalization of their claims to be right. Socrates’s project consisted of trying “to make friends out of Athens’s citizenry” (Ibid.) with the help of thinking and good-natured dialogue, because the citizens of Athens understood the public space to be a place of competition and mutual struggle. Socrates wanted to replace this space of contending opinions by “equalizing” (Ibid., 83) communication and achieving understanding. Arendt clearly states that the capacity to see “the world (as we rather tritely say today) from the other fellow’s point of view—is the political kind of insight par excellence” (Ibid., 84) (the same formulation she used to describe Eichmann’s thoughtlessness). In fact, Arendt claims that “If we wanted to define, traditionally, the one outstanding virtue of the statesman, we could say that it consists in understanding the greatest possible number and variety of realities...as those realities open themselves up to the various opinions of citizens” (Ibid.). Socrates wanted every citizen to take up this activity as his own responsibility. According to him, this was the “political function of the philosopher” (Ibid.). This point is especially important, since common sense can be ruined — and indeed has been ruined — in the 20th century. This type of thinking, however, offers a potential means of rebuilding it.

4. Conclusion

We can see, in such a way, that Dostoevsky can be considered a forerunner to Arendt’s analysis of the collapse of the common sense and tradition. Both Arendt and Dostoevsky

are concerned with isolation of individuals from others, but most importantly, both of them believe that this isolation has a corruptive impact upon our ability to make sense of the world, substituting the traditional orientation in the world with logically coherent but hollow rational constructions. Following from the isolation of individuals, this substitution can also drastically reinforce and radicalize the substitution, thus opening up a way to catastrophe. But even though they both agree about the importance of dialogical thinking and tradition that is opened up through such thinking, Arendt arrives at the problem from a very different angle. She no longer relies on a religious foundation of the tradition, and analyzes instead the concrete historical ways of transferring the tradition, and equally concrete historical dangers to such transferring. Being no longer bound by the religiously and morally laden demand of returning to others, Arendt's "thinking from the standpoint of somebody else" – unlike Dostoevsky's version – is guided by the need to "*constitute*" the common world. It *creates* rather than *preserves*; it moves forward rather than reminds us about something we have left behind. This is because Arendt's "post-metaphysical" thinking is a much more modern phenomenon: it is a product of the time, which (for better or worse) largely proceeds from the fact that there no longer are any "general standards to determine our judgments unfailingly, no general rules under which to subsume the particular cases with any degree of certainty" (Arendt 2018). There is no longer hope of finding some foundation that would *secure* our interactions with others. As Boym puts it, the answer to the task of winning back the commonality of our no longer lives through "the invention of a national tradition, or the resacralization of the disenchanting modern world and a prescriptive enforcement of moral rules" (Boy 2018, 362). In this sense, Arendt's early thinking on thinking from the very beginning is faced with a task of orienting ourselves in this new situation; it is an attempt to offer us a way of "mov[ing] freely without crutches" without "pillars and props" (Arendt 1968, 10) relying on one thing only – our never-ending need to constitute this "little world" that we can share.

NOTES

¹ In one of her letters, Arendt even discusses Dostoevsky in this regard: “why should I not kill my grandmother if I want to? Such and similar questions were answered in the past by religion on one side and common sense on the other. (...) Both answers don't work any longer, and this not only because of these specific replies- nobody believes in hell any longer, nobody is so sure if he does not want to be killed or if death, even violent death is really so bad- but because their sources, faith on one hand and common sense judgements don't make sense any more (...) If this common sense is lost, there is no common world any longer“ (Arendt to McCarty, August 20, 1954 in *Between Friends*, 22); this point was also discussed by Benhabib, Arendt's Eichmann in Jerusalem (2000).

² S. Boym has also demonstrated that the emphasis upon the dangers of isolation and importance of attaining the ‘other's point of view’ also approximates Arendt with other Slavic thinkers such as Shklovksy (Boym 2005) and Shalamov (Boym 2008) .

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Performance and Pedagogical Principles of Heinrich Neuhaus through the Prism of Philosophical Hermeneutics

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Abstract

The name Neuhaus has become a legend in piano pedagogy. Raising a galaxy of talented pianists (Richter, Gilels, Vedernikov, and others), Neuhaus applied various methods in his teaching practice, the basis of many of which were hermeneutic theories. Neuhaus repeatedly said that the main component of a musical work is its artistic image, and that this ideal image, enclosed in the material framework of the text, should be deciphered and interpreted in the spirit of the author, in the style of the era of its creation. Neuhaus approached this issue, involving philosophical hermeneutics resources but resolving them in a musical key. Thus, from the point of view of musical science, he developed purely philosophical hermeneutical concepts – the hermeneutical circle, the whole and the part, the form and content, and others.

In this work, Neuhaus' performance and pedagogical activities are examined through the prism of hermeneutics. Hermeneutical ideas and theories that were developed in the pedagogy of Neuhaus are studied.

Keywords: musical hermeneutics, Neuhaus, interpretation, musical text

1. Introduction

“...understanding is an act not only of intelligence, but of the whole human spirit”
(Alekseyev 1986/7, 73)

Heinrich Neuhaus created the pianistic school at the Moscow Conservatory in Soviet times¹, which became the cradle of dozens of talented performers. He developed a unique in its quality system of piano pedagogy. Being a gifted performer, Neuhaus in his pedagogical practice used both the rich

experience of the European piano school (he studied in Vienna with Godowsky) and his own methods. A distinctive feature of the Neuhaus' educational system was its creation and existence based on philosophical principles. Neuhaus' philosophical views were extremely deep and interesting precisely from the point of view of their application to piano pedagogy and performance. Often, Neuhaus philosophically explicated even the simplest techniques, not to mention large-scale formative concepts. Neuhaus, as a performer and teacher, faced several crucial problems, one of which was the most complex and multi-level relationship between an author, a text and a performer. This question of understanding the work was one of Neuhaus' main areas of thought. In different periods of his activity, he found various answers to this question and tried to consider it from different points of view. In his thought, the main point of reference was always the essence of the work, that is, its artistic image.

2. Artistic image

Neuhaus began his book *The Art of Piano Playing*² with a chapter, which he called "The Artistic Image of a Musical Composition". What was an artistic image for Neuhaus? He said in the book that an artistic image is the music itself (Neuhaus 1973, 7). He further elaborated that the artistic image is the music, the live musical speech with its regularities and consistency (ibid.). Thus, Neuhaus put equal symbols between music, an artistic image, and a musical speech. In order to understand the musical speech, to cognize the artistic image, and therefore to interpret the music itself, certain means are necessary, which Neuhaus reflected on. He found them, compared them, and brought his intuitive guesses to the perfection of a harmonious philosophical system.

Neuhaus certainly was a philosopher of music and since, by the nature of his activity (he dealt with the interpretation of musical texts), hermeneutics occupied a large place in his philosophy. Neuhaus never spoke of hermeneutics as a philosophical system and did not even use this term, but almost everything he said about music was connected with a musical text, with its interpretation, with its performance, and this

means that it somehow affected hermeneutical ideas. During his performing and teaching activities, Neuhaus developed a peculiar philosophical and aesthetic system of concepts, which are comparable with philosophical hermeneutics' ideas.

3. Neuhaus' hermeneutical ideas

Cognition

The central concept of hermeneutics is the following idea: the world is such as I understand it. This idea is also applicable to the musical sphere. In this case, we can reformulate it as follows: music is such as I understand it. Here, however, it is necessary to place emphasis not on the understanding subject, and not even on the object to be understood, but on the very act of understanding. From this perspective, the above-mentioned formula takes a completely different shape and volume, when the act of cognition is focused on understanding. Neuhaus developed this form in relation to the understanding of music.

It should be noted that cognition, in the broad sense, for Neuhaus, was primarily an experience. He says: "All knowledge is at the same time an experience" (Neuhaus 1973, 28). That is, the understanding and cognition of an object are possible only through entering into sensory contact with that object. Neuhaus applied this position to music too. According to his views, a sensual experience is the most necessary component for understanding a work and accordingly, for its correct performance. Neuhaus says: "The absence of such experience, and still more of any experience whatsoever, results in soulless, formalistic music and an empty, uninteresting performance" (ibid.). Thus, the sensory experience, as Neuhaus called it, is a necessary matter for the performance. However, it is not the only one. For Neuhaus, cognition had a two-component nature. He required his students: "not only to feel the music, but also to enforce their feelings with the understanding" (Milshtein 1988, 279; my translation). If the experience for Neuhaus meant to feel, then what does this understanding mean? What is this understanding and why should it be the basis of a sensual experience? Neuhaus answers this question: "We attempt to

find in the very substance of which music is made a confirmation and an explanation of our undoubted and intense musical experience. This cannot fail to affect performance; when one delves deep into one's perception of what is beautiful, and attempts to understand its origin, how it arose and what was its objective cause, only then does one grasp the infinite order of art and one experiences a new joy because intellect throws its own light on what was perceived directly by the senses" (Neuhaus 1973, 176).

So, first the feeling, and only then the analysis, and not vice versa! Neuhaus repeatedly confirms this: "Deficiencies of instinct i.e. of talent must be made good by reason" (Neuhaus 1973, 89) and "... if so-called intuition is not enough, then you have to use analysis" (Neuhaus 1973, 125).

In order to understand better the nature of cognition, it is necessary to turn to another phenomenon of Neuhaus' thinking – to the idea of talent.

Talent

Talent was one of the themes that really excited Neuhaus. He thought a lot about the phenomenon of talent and came to some conclusions, quite interesting from the point of view of both art and philosophy. These conclusions have a very close connection with hermeneutics.

Like cognition, talent for Neuhaus also had a two-component essence. However, if cognition to Neuhaus was equal to experience and analysis, then talent was "passion plus intellect" (Neuhaus 1973, 24). Neuhaus said that passion in this equation is "an inconvenient *X*, which they³ simply discard, not knowing what to do with it" (ibid.). Neuhaus understood very clearly that talent was not only the "cerebral properties" (intelligence), but also something else, the same "inconvenient *X*". What is this? Why is intelligence not enough for a talented interpretation and performance? Apparently, Neuhaus shared the views of Plato, who said that: "the poetry of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen" (Plato, *Phaedrus* 245a). Neuhaus' point of view on this question was very close to the above dictum by Plato. Neuhaus says that: "...whoever is moved by music to the depth of his soul, and

works on his instrument like one possessed, who loves music and his instrument with passion, will acquire virtuoso technique; he will be able to recreate the artistic image of the composition; he will be a performer” (Neuhaus 1973, 29).

Neuhaus called this “inconvenient *X*” passion, and for him it was apparently a component of talent, which has the same, if not more, significance than intelligence. He said: “This, I believe, is the picture of any and every successful labour if a man is possessed of a true passion, of wish multiplied by will” (Neuhaus 1973, 123-124) and “the tremendous importance of intensive will-power, passion, determination to forge ahead in order to reach the goal one has set oneself” (Neuhaus 1973, 213).

Neuhaus understood that passion is some quality in the field of intuition and subconsciousness. However, there was another component in the understanding of music, which Neuhaus also referred – a phenomenon of preunderstanding.

Preunderstanding

Preunderstanding is the initial judgment of what is to be known, a preliminary and uncritical understanding of the object of cognition. According to Gadamer, preunderstanding is a necessary element of understanding. Consciousness, when intellectually and emotionally completely purified, is not capable of cognition. Heidegger also showed that the interpreter must more or less be connected with the text (Gadamer 1977). However, for the realization of preunderstanding, the interpreter must possess a certain amount of knowledge, existing in different levels of consciousness. Understanding, especially in such an area as music, always is based on a certain baggage of knowledge, feelings, etc.

Preunderstanding in music

Boris Asafyev, in his book *Musical Form as a Process*, reflected on this phenomenon and came to the following conclusions: musical perception depends on the amount and quality of musical intonations already existing in the human mind. Asafyev called this *intonation reserve*. In every moment of the listening to music, there is a complex process of

recognizing or not recognizing even the smallest elements of musical texture in the consciousness of a listening person. This process is a comparison or identification of new musical objects with already known ones. The consciousness accepts the familiar object, which has been heard once before, as a native one. An unfamiliar sound combination produces a repulsive effect; the consciousness accepts it as a kind of a chaotic invasion. It is interesting that over time, with constant meetings with these same elements, the consciousness begins to perceive them as familiar ones and accepts them.

Some types of musical expression give way to others. Asafyev called this phenomenon “the struggle of intonations for existence”. This musicologist gave a very important place to the problem of perceiving music as a process of preunderstanding, and based on his observations, he drew quite ambitious conclusions for the entire development of musical culture: “Without the gymnastics of remembering, there is no progress in the perception of music and there is no evolution of musical culture. And memorization is unthinkable without the activity of comparing, distinguishing and highlighting of sound combinations during their alternation” (Asafyev 1971, 21).

Preunderstanding by Neuhaus

Neuhaus’ preunderstanding could be compared to *a priori knowledge*. Because, if the preunderstanding presupposes a certain temporary process, then *a priori knowledge* is some kind of already existing presence. Neuhaus understands it as a combination of knowledge, feelings, and subconscious sensations of a musician and explained it in this way: “Before beginning, to learn an instrument, the learner, whether a child, adolescent or adult, should already be spiritually in possession of some music; he should, so to speak, carry it in his mind, keep it in his heart and hear it with his mind’s ear. The whole secret of talent and of genius is that in the case of a person so gifted, music lives a full life in his brain before he even touches a keyboard or draws a bow across the strings. That is why Mozart as a small child could “at once” play the piano and the violin” (Neuhaus 1973, 1).

Neuhaus says how a gifted musician has “acquaintance” with a new music piece: “There, apparently, an instantaneous and subconscious process of “work at the artistic image” takes place” (Neuhaus 1973, 17). This is considered subconscious, because it assumes that a talented musician has all the music in the subconscious memory. Here is what Neuhaus says about this: “the greater the musician, the greater his capacity to approach music like an open book, the less the problem which working on the image represents for him” (Neuhaus 1973, 8). He added that this happened instantly because the appeal to this subconscious memory occurs simultaneously, *per saltum*. It is because of this *per saltum* perceptibility, that Neuhaus calls the first acquaintance with a piece as “grasping” and says that: “the difference between this first ‘grasping’ and the following performance is only that ‘the spirit is clothed with flesh’ – everything, that is predetermined with conception, feeling, inner ear, an understanding (an aesthetic-intellectual) becomes a performance” (Neuhaus 1988, 30; my translation).

What kind of a skill is this “grasping”? Is it a natural gift? Oddly enough and no matter how we would expect this from Neuhaus’ idealism, he never determines it as a gift - unconditional and stable. On the contrary, Neuhaus persistently and often mentions this “grasp” as a quality that can and should be developed.

“Grasping” and its development

In order to be able to “grasp” a piece of music, as Neuhaus puts it, a musician needs: “intelligence, imagination, inner hearing (!), temperament, etc., as well as the purely technical abilities of the student” (Neuhaus 1988, 30; my translation). Neuhaus did not speak about any gift, or about natural qualities⁴. On the contrary, he insisted, precisely that “success in work on the ‘artistic image’ can only be achieved by continuously developing a student musically, intellectually, artistically, and therefore pianistically, otherwise there will be no embodiment!” (Neuhaus 1988, 31; my translation). Neuhaus methodically detailed this approach. According to him, it was required to develop hearing potentials, to familiarize the students with musical literature, while forcing them to “get

accustomed” to one author for a long time, to develop theory (harmony, polyphony, etc.), “to develop fantasy with successful metaphors, poetic images, analogies with the phenomena of nature and life, especially mental, emotional life” (Neuhaus 1988, 31; my translation). As a result of such a comprehensive development, a student “must be able to tell, to say in words much that is significant ... from the point of view of musical-theoretical analysis ... to supplement and interpret the musical speech of the work” (Neuhaus 1988, 31; my translation). That is, to express verbally the artistic essence of the composition. However, this is unthinkable without an understanding of the artistic image. For this process of understanding, Neuhaus proposed some methods with a hermeneutic basis.

Neuhaus’ hermeneutic circle

The hermeneutic circle in philosophy is a metaphor, describing a dialectical character of understanding a text or any other phenomenon. It is one of the most basic concepts in hermeneutics. In antiquity and the middle ages, this method was widely used in philology and exegetics. Much later, it was enshrined in philosophy by Friedrich Schleiermacher.

Its basis is the principle of text analysis, based on the dialectics of the part and the whole: an understanding of the whole consists of an understanding of the parts and an understanding of the parts requires a preliminary understanding of the whole. From this point of view, the understanding of the text is a movement in a circle from the whole to the part and from the part to the whole.

The hermeneutic circle in music is the principle of understanding a text, based on a constant, repeated return from the whole to the part and from part to the whole. This dialectical approach allows the musician to concentrate on the part as a structural unit of the whole and on the whole as a kind of multi-level construction. In the process of working on the principle of the hermeneutic circle with a constant return from the whole to the part and vice versa, the ability to increase widespread text coverage is developed. There is the possibility of simultaneous concentration and deepening into the smallest

part of the structure – into a unit and the ability to cover the entire mass of the work.

Although Neuhaus did not specifically mention this anywhere, his theory of the whole and the particular almost coincides with the theory of the hermeneutic circle. What is this Neuhaus theory? Its most interesting component consists in almost simultaneously coverage of the whole and its parts, down to the smallest details. This simultaneous perception of a musical piece as a whole, which seems unrealizable in music (after all, music is a time-unfolding phenomenon) turns out to be for Neuhaus not only possible, but also a normal and even the desired phenomenon. So, “processual and substantial understanding” (Bogin 1993), that is “linearity” and “blockiness” are combined in Neuhaus’ thoughts.

In his book, Neuhaus cites words from the apocryphal letter of a Mozart’s friend, about how Mozart composed music: “Mozart said that sometimes, when composing a symphony in his head, he became more and more elated and finally reached such a state that it seemed to him that he could hear the whole of his symphony from beginning to end at once, simultaneously, in a single instant! (It is before him like an apple in the hollow of his hand.) He then added that such moments were the happiest in his life for which he was prepared daily to thank his Maker” (Neuhaus 1973, 49). Neuhaus concludes: “For anyone who knows anything at all about the psychology of the creative process, what Mozart said here is an example of the highest gift of the human spirit, that gift which defies words and before which we can only bend our heads in wonder and adoration” (Neuhaus 1973, 50).

For Neuhaus, such a vision and sensation of the whole is one, if not the main condition for the perfect musical performance. Here are Neuhaus’ words about his student, Sviatoslav Richter: “that’s why I so much admire the rhythm of Richter’s performances: one feels clearly that the whole work, even if it is of gigantic proportions lies before him like an immense landscape, revealed to the eye at a single glance and in all its details from the eagle’s flight, from a tremendous height and at an incredible speed” (Neuhaus 1973, 48).

For Neuhaus, the ability to see the whole was not only one of the main signs of performing talent, but also the quality of intelligence: “the more intelligent the pianist, the better he can manage a large-scale composition, and the more stupid he is – the less well he can manage it. In the first case it is perspective thinking – i.e. horizontally; in the second case it is short-term thinking - i.e. vertically” (ibid.).

Considering the relationship between the whole and its parts, Neuhaus clearly gives the priority to the whole, explaining that it is “first of all” and that “otherwise there can be no complete idea of the composition, no complete image” (Neuhaus 1973, 21). Neuhaus proceeds from the fact that “at the level of sensory knowledge, in almost any contemplation, we always deal with the presumption of wholeness” (Avtonomova 1991, 105). Thus, the whole bears the semantic meaning of the artistic image because it has philosophical significance. However, the parts of this whole – on the contrary, although they contain all the basic properties of the whole, have more musical, theoretical, and even narrowly pianistic significance. Neuhaus proposes to decompose the music piece into “components – a harmonic structure, a polyphonic structure... to dwell particularly on the decisive “turnings” of a composition..., *on the main landmarks of the formal structure*” (Neuhaus 1973, 21). In addition, Neuhaus offers to consider separately the conceptions of main and secondary, for example – melodic line and accompaniment.

The concepts of the whole and parts to Neuhaus, embodied in the theory of the hermeneutic circle, were connected closely with the concepts of form and content.

Form and content as hermeneutic concepts

One of the main principles of hermeneutics is the principle of the unity of form and content. Moreover, the proponents of hermeneutics believe that the content is not only enclosed in a form, like an idea in matter: “Means of expression of the text are the empirical objects, meaning is an ideal one” (Bogin 1993, 137), but also encoded in it. Therefore, hermeneutics sets its task as the disclosure of the meaning

inherent in a work or, in other words, the decoding of content enclosed in a form.

In musical aesthetics, the concepts of form and content have similar meanings. The content (meaning) is realized using the formative means of music. For this reason, one of the most important tasks of the interpreter is the search for the performing means, which would most accurately and fully match both the content of the work and its form⁵: "... a performance can be good only when all the infinite variety of means available to the performer are made to concord fully with the work performed, with its meaning, its content and first and foremost with its formal structure, its architecture, its actual composition, with that specific organized tonal material which we are to turn into a performance" (Neuhaus 1973, 40). That is cognizing the idea (content) and realizing it materially, which means to embody the form corresponding to this idea. This unconditional and idealistic philosophical approach, oddly enough, was refuted by Neuhaus himself. From the point of view of musical hermeneutics, matter was primary for him. Not more important than the content, but primary. His point of view was very clearly revealed in performance. Neuhaus says: "The musical material gives birth to the form" (Neuhaus 1973, 226). This means that the material, the work itself reveals its meanings in the process of the interpretation, without the need for reflection on the part of the performer. For this "birth" of the content, Neuhaus suggests applying an interesting method. It consists in a long and continuous repetition⁶ of even the simplest and shortest phrases of a work (Neuhaus 1988, 27). Such a simple technique is advised by many musicians, as well as by theater artists. In the process of this continuous repetition, an interpreter, intuitively, out of dozens of possible variants, finds the most suitable intonational embodiment of the artistic content embedded by composer or poet in the form.

In his teaching activities, Neuhaus attached great importance to work on form and content and believed that the earliest music education should include necessary knowledge about these phenomena. Neuhaus said that at the very first piano lessons, teacher must demand that even the smallest children have a performance style (form) that exactly matches

the character (content) of the music. That is, a little performer, from a very early age, should realize the most important goal of a musician – to bring form and content into unity. Neuhaus advised using folk music for this, as the “emotional-poetic” origin was most pronounced in it.

Neuhaus - “the creator of a musical word”

For Neuhaus, a word, ontologically, had a uniquely primary meaning in relation to music. He says: “... the piano is, after all, only a mechanical box, a wonderful, an amazing box, on which it is possible to express anything one wants, but a box, and to “humanize” it requires infinitely more effort than does the lovely, living, flexible, ever-ready and infinitely expressive, most human and marvelous invention of man - the human word” (Neuhaus 1973, 57). Moreover, Neuhaus considered poetry not only as the basis of music, but also as the philosophical fundamental principle of absolutely any art: “...the core of any art, its deepest essence and innermost meaning is poetry” (Milshtein 1988, 286; my translation).

For Neuhaus a musical texture was always associated with a word, with its literary and poetic expression. This was clearly felt in his performance, so critics wrote about the “talking” technique by Neuhaus (Milshtein 1988, 263). He requested the same, that is, intonational expressiveness from his students in their lessons. Here, Neuhaus seemed to be confronted with a hermeneutic obstacle for himself, which finally, he could not resolve. This is the problem of verbal illustrating of music.

Illustrating

Despite the fact that Neuhaus had the conviction that poetry is the fundamental principle of any art and that poetic word is the heart of any art work, he repeatedly spoke out that words should not be applicable to explain a musical work. He called it “illustrating” and put a negative meaning to it. Neuhaus said that it was possible: “to supplement and interpret the musical speech of a work (but God forbid to fall into banal ‘illustrations’)” (Neuhaus 1988, 31; my translation).

Milstein wrote that the pedagogical task of Neuhaus was not to “illustrate music with words, but to ‘suggest’ for students the right image, ‘extract’ the necessary feeling from his emotional memory and activate his creative imagination. Comparisons and commensurations, as it were, ‘turn on’ in the student that ‘photocell’, which, according to the apt observation of Neuhaus, is able to translate the phenomena of one world of perceptions into another” (Milshtein 1988, 295; my translation).

Neuhaus insisted that he was against “illustrating” music and revealed his thoughts in the spirit of Susan Langer as follows: “Any music is that particular music only, $A = A$, by virtue of the fact that music is a complete language, a clear expression, that it has a definite immanent meaning and hence its perception and understanding do not need any additional explanations or interpretations in word or picture” (Neuhaus 1973, 26). Then he says: “But we have in our brains a ‘photocell’ ... which can translate the phenomena of a given world of perception into another ... That’s why for people who have the gift of creative imagination all music in its entirety is programme music (even the so-called pure music devoid of programme) and at the same time does not need any program, since it expresses in its own language the whole of its content” (ibid.).

Therefore, Neuhaus quite clearly and specifically expressed the idea that music as a language is self-sufficient and does not need to be translated into any other language. Arguing about it, he wrote in his book: “I never illustrate music” (ibid.). In the same chapter, he gave a completely unexpected example from Beethoven’s *cis-moll* sonata op.27 *Quasi una fantasia*, from its second part, where in the first bars he saw “an opening cup of a flower ... and leaves drooping on the stem” (ibid.). In addition, here, Neuhaus cites List’s words about this part: “une fleur entre deux abimes” (a flower between two abysses), which he liked and which he found very appropriate for this music. That is, in fact, Neuhaus had precisely illustrated the music. Neuhaus himself was aware of this contradictory approach and said: “Such are the antinomies of our art” (ibid.).

Apparently, Neuhaus very vividly and even painfully realized the tragic difference between a poetic language and a simple, ordinary, everyday language, as Huizinga wrote: “Only he who can speak the art-language wins the title of poet. This art-language differs from ordinary speech in that it employs special terms, images, figures, etc., which not everybody will understand. The eternal gulf between being and idea can only be bridged by the rainbow of imagination. The word-bound concept is always inadequate to the torrent of life. Hence it is only the image-making or figurative word that can invest things with expression and at the same time bathe them in the luminosity of ideas: idea and thing are united in the image. But whereas the language of ordinary life – in itself a working and workmanlike instrument – is continually wearing down the image-content of words and acquiring a superficial existence of its own (logical only in appearance), poetry continues to cultivate the figurative, i.e. image-bearing, qualities of language, with deliberate intent” (Huizinga 2002, 133). This is why Neuhaus consciously did not want to mix the language of art and the language of life: “Everything that is “indissoluble”, inexpressible, untranslatable that lives in a man’s soul, everything “subconscious” (frequently it is “supraconscious”) is the domain of music. This is its source” (Neuhaus 1973, 28).

The artistic image of a music work, according to Neuhaus, cannot and should not be enclosed in the rigid and uncomfortable frames of an ordinary word. Besides the fact that it is harmful to art, it is also useless: “Music is a tonal art. It produces no visual image, it does not speak with words or ideas. It speaks only with sounds. But it speaks just as clearly and intelligibly as do words, ideas or visual images. Its structure is governed by rules, just as the spoken language, the composition of a picture or the architecture of a building” (Neuhaus 1973, 54).

Neuhaus believed that music has its own language, which you just need to be able to understand and that for those who understand this language, the musical text is extremely clear: “composers write very accurately what they hear and want to hear from those who perform their work” (Neuhaus 1973, 161). Everything else that is foreign to this text can only

harm the correct interpretation, and therefore was prohibited for the performer.

In addition, Neuhaus attributed to the alien the unnecessary, in his opinion, details from the life of composers, which can only harm the performance.

4. Hermeneutic application on the phenomenon of the author and its inappropriateness according to Neuhaus

If we take a hermeneutic approach to this question, Neuhaus stood at a completely opposite position with respect to the founder of this theory, Wilhelm Dilthey. According to Dilthey, the interpreter should do the grammatical and historical preparatory work (Dilthey 1996). Neuhaus says: "... that is probably why no biography, not even the private correspondence or memoirs, or even profound psychological research can give such a clear impression of an author as can "his deeds", in other words his work" (Neuhaus 1973, 219). That is, according to Neuhaus, all the work, seeking out the meanings of a music outside it is simply meaningless. Neuhaus absolutely did not want to consider a work as "an author's life act", as Dilthey considered it (Dilthey 1996). He wanted to see this work as some kind of substance divorced from the author.

However, Neuhaus was a musician-philosopher, and he understood that it was impossible, completely unthinkable, and even harmful to absolutely break away from the phenomenon of the author and the era: "an insufficient understanding of a composer's thought or of the style of an era, can have an adverse effect on the main elements of music: tone and rhythm" (Neuhaus 1973, 46-47). A complete separation from the phenomena of the era and the author leads to excessively free treatment of the text. This is also indicated by classical hermeneutics: "The canon of the hermeneutic autonomy as a positive determination requires compliance with the autonomy of the text, which is taking into account the intentions of the author. As a negative determination, this law prohibits arbitrary interpretation of the author's text" (Kolesnikov 2010, 408). Therefore, everything that lies outside the text was considered superficial, excessive, and harmful by Neuhaus. The

naturalness, simplicity, and logic of musical speech – this is what Neuhaus put forward in the first place: “The phrase of Neuhaus was unsophisticated and clearly delineated. Each phrase he performed ‘breathed’, each phrase was fully felt; it flowed naturally, like water from a spring, directly from the soul. Neuhaus resolutely avoided any pretentiousness that only destroys the logic of musical speech” (Milshtein 1988, 263; my translation). To this conviction by Neuhaus, the following saying by Tolstoy is close in spirit: “an artist should have three qualities: sincerity, sincerity, and again sincerity” (Neuhaus 1973, 200).

5. Conclusion

Music is a text and, being a text, requires hermeneutic decisions. Neuhaus developed and proposed such solutions. They are valuable in that they were the result of the deep philosophical thoughts and based on a long and fruitful pedagogical experience. The hermeneutic methods of Neuhaus were thought out in detail and formed a system that has both philosophical and pedagogical values.

Each hermeneutical position developed by Neuhaus and having its fundamental prototype in classical philosophy finds its refraction in his teaching practice. Thus, we have examined the ideas of Neuhaus about the hermeneutic circle, preunderstanding, and form and content. Finally, all of them are solved only in the light of Neuhaus’ theory of talent, which he defined by the presence of two qualities: the ability to “grasp” instantly the musical image of a work and the ability to integrate instantly a review of the work. These two qualities have the same idea of the *per saltum* interpretation. Neuhaus, in his teaching practice, had vast experience in observing his students, who for all their individual dissimilarity, had the same quality – namely, the ability to interpret instantly the text. Neuhaus quite rightly concluded that this ability is activated by inspiration and can exist only in the spirit of talent and passion for creativity. Realizing that contemporary musicology cannot explain the phenomenon of talent, he still spoke of this phenomenon as an objective reality. Neuhaus, as a gifted teacher, trying to solve this issue, proposed a system of

measures for developing this talent of “*per saltum* interpretation” and applied this system in practice. Therefore, hermeneutic tasks grow and became, thanks to Neuhaus’ thinking, a musical-philosophical system that affected all of the most fundamental aspects of a musical performance. Neuhaus felt and understood hermeneutics not as an applied science, which concerns only a text, but as a basis for understanding the most important component of music – the artistic image. It was this understanding that laid the foundation for the fruitful pedagogical activity of Neuhaus and made him a great hermeneut teacher.

NOTES

¹ It is impossible not to mention the fact that Neuhaus worked in a difficult time for the development of philosophy. Philosophical materialism was the only officially supported form of thinking in the Soviet Union. In Soviet times, hermeneutics was considered as a purely idealistic science. Therefore, it almost did not develop.

² This is the only book by Heinrich Neuhaus, in which he outlined all his pedagogical theories and aesthetic views. It has a subtitle: *Notes of a teacher*, giving an idea of the main direction of Neuhaus’ activity.

³ Music scholars

⁴ “Even more!” Neuhaus said in statements about the crucial importance of talent in art: “So long as I go on teaching I shall stop my ears so as not to hear this reply” (Neuhaus 1973, 22). As an artist and musician, Neuhaus certainly could not help but understand the significance of the natural gift in art, but as a teacher, he could not agree.

⁵ In his pedagogical work, Neuhaus, speaking of the unity of form and content, used such a metaphor: “a tunnel has to be dug at both ends” (Neuhaus 1973, 99), that is, realizing the opposite nature of the idea and matter, content and form, the two-component essence of the work, try to work simultaneously on both.

⁶ Neuhaus liked to paraphrase the Latin proverb: *repetition is the mother of persuasion* (Repetitio est mater persuadendi). In this case, repetition is the mother of artistic truth.

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Le contemplateur Guillaume de Saint-Thierry et ses sources

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Abstract

The Contemplator Guillaume de Saint-Thierry and His Sources

The Western 12th century is considered by some scholars to be "the golden age of contemplation" (Jean-Marie Déchanet). William, Abbot of Saint-Thierry († 1148), fits this description perfectly, being a contemplative par excellence. Drawing mainly from his writing *De contemplando Deo*, the present paper will attempt to identify the specific elements of his teaching and the sources that may have influenced William in the unspeakable register of contemplation (θεωρία).

Keywords: *theoria*, *contemplatio*, Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor, Eriugena, Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, Monastic Tradition

L'évêque Eberhardus de Bamberg (1100-1170), dans sa controverse avec Gerhohus de Reichersberg (1093-1169) concernant les questions christologiques, raille explicitement les écrits des auteurs grecs invoqués par son correspondant : « *Minus authenticum est quod a Graecis vos accepisse dicitis* » (Eberhardus de Bamberg 1854, 555). En effet, Gerhohus est un intermédiaire entre la traduction des textes de Jean Damascène et Petrus Lombardus, qui affirme quelque part : « *Propter quem intellectum cavendum, prohibet Joannes Damascenus dici hominem deificatum, quem tamen confitetur esse Deum* » (Eberhardus de Bamberg 1855, 1082 ; Buytaert 1950, 323-343). Il est surprenant de voir la manière dont Petrus Lombardus se

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réfère à cette citation, lorsqu'il affirme : « Unde Ioannes Damascenus : 'Non hominem deificatum dicimus, sed Deum hominem factum' » (Petrus Lombardus 1981, 65). Or, cette manière de comprendre le passage de Jean Damascène change radicalement les données du problème. L'idée de Lombardus n'est nullement contraire à la tradition, mais elle renverse le sens initial de la séquence qu'emploie Gerhohus, qui se rapporte fidèlement à la tradition patristique. La même idée (présente chez Petrus Lombardus) est reprise, entre autres, par Thomas d'Aquin : « Damascenus dicit, in III libro, 'non hominem deificatum dicimus, sed Deum humanatum' » (Thomas Aquinas 1952, 104 ; Markov 2015a, 364-390 ; Markov 2015b, 391-427).

Mutatis mutandis, on rencontre une situation similaire encore plus proche de nos jours. Il est bien connu que l'ouvrage *Periphyseon* d'Érigène est tributaire, du point de vue non seulement des idées, mais aussi de la structure, aux écrits de Maxime le Confesseur (580-662). Dans son œuvre, le Christ constitue également la clef de l'univers érigénien. A ce propos, É. Jeauneau observe avec justesse que « Maxime a également communiqué à Jean Scot son réalisme christologique » (Jeauneau 1987, 358), et ce qui l'illustre le mieux, c'est l'appropriation par l'Irlandais de la conception maximienne sur la θεωσις.

Il me paraît significatif de signaler, et je dois cette observation à Schmitz-Perrin (1998, 436), que l'excellent exégète de l'œuvre érigénienne, Willemien Otten, dans son ouvrage *The Anthropology of Johannes Scottus Eriugena* (Otten, 1991), ne dit rien sur l'idée de la divinisation de l'homme. Il est vrai que les Latins n'ont pas parlé de *théosis* : « Sondant le vocabulaire théologique, Jean Scot Erigène constate que la θεωσις est un terme plutôt rare dans la théologie latine, 'in latinis codicibus rarissimus est usus', constat dont il avoue ignorer la raison » (Schmitz-Perrin 1998, 435). Cet auteur cite G. Madec (1988, 73-137), qui a inventorié toutes les références augustinienne dans le *Periphyseon* d'Érigène. Aucune mention de l'idée de la déification chez Érigène, semble-t-il, ne se réfère à Augustin (Schmitz-Perrin 1998, 436).

Il est bien évident que la vision d'Érigène sur les questions théologiques et philosophiques change radicalement au moment de sa rencontre avec les textes de ce « philosophe divin » : *Maximum monachum, divinum philosophum* (Iohannes Scottus 1996, 13). Dans les yeux d'Érigène, c'est Maxime qui transmet la doctrine de la déification (θέωσις) : « Maximum monachum diuinum philosophum [...]. Condensationem hic dico non earn quae facta est per incarnationem sed earn quae fit per theosin, id est per deificationem, creaturae » (Iohannes Scottus 1996, 13). Quelle que soit la position de certains exégètes, Érigène utilise un sens profondément patristique de la doctrine sur θέωσις (Iohannes Scottus 1996, 57), en considérant que l'homme tout entier, corps et esprit, se déifie : « An forte sensus ipsius nominis (quod est ΘΕΩΣΙC), quo maxime graeci utuntur, significantes sanctorum transitum in deum, non solum anima sed etiam et corpore, ut unum in ipso et cum ipso sint » (Iohannes Scottus 2003, 217).

I.

Cette situation, pas du tout singulière à l'époque, confirme le fait que les temps des carolingiens, qui tenaient en haute estime les œuvres de Grecs – « les sources très pures et très abondantes des Grecs » ; ou « le nectar sacré » (Jeauneau 1987, 24) – étaient peu à peu disparus en Occident. C'est dans le contexte de telles attitudes hostiles de représentants des Latins envers les Grecs – dont la plupart infondées, parce qu'ils ne connaissaient pas ces doctrines –, le père dominicain M.-D. Chenu affirmait, d'ailleurs, dans son fameux livre *La théologie au douzième siècle* qu'au XIIe siècle que « l'Occident éprouve une instinctive répulsion pour la vision du monde et pour l'anthropologie des Pères Grecs » (Chenu 1957, 12). Malgré le prestige de l'auteur dans le domaine des études médiévales, sa thèse n'est valable qu'en partie (sinon entièrement fausse), parce qu'il existe assez d'exemples qui contredisent cette affirmation bien trop générale et risquée. Un contre-exemple nous est offert par l'un des plus représentatifs penseurs du siècle en question, Guillaume de Saint-Thierry († 1148). Qui plus est, tout un ordre, celui des cisterciens, auquel Guillaume

a finalement adhéré, vient contredire l'affirmation du dominicain Chenu. Au fond, « ce qui caractérise le courant cistercien, c'est qu'il fait passer la réflexion ascétique et mystique au premier plan, renouant ainsi avec la richesse patristique que la logique et la dialectique du temps pouvaient avoir tendance à éclipser » (Trottmann 1995, 99).

Dans la tentative de trouver une justification en faveur de l'affirmation de M.-D. Chenu, la seule raison qui nous est apparue comme plausible est qu'il se rapporte aux dialecticiens de ce siècle, en particulier Abélard et Guillaume de Conches, qui se sont prononcés plus d'une fois contre la doctrine des Pères et même des Écritures.

La thèse du père Chenu nous semble être contredite par Guillaume de Saint-Thierry dans l'ouverture même de sa *Lettre aux Frères du Mont-Dieu* : « Vers les Frères du Mont-Dieu, par qui la lumière de l'Orient et l'antique ferveur religieuse des monastères égyptiens – le modèle de la vie solitaire, le type de la vie céleste – se répandent dans les ténèbres occidentales et dans les froidures des Gaules » (Guillaume de Saint Thierry 1985, 144-145). On verra en ce qui suit que cette *orientale lumen* répandue par les cartusiens de Mont-Dieu se fonde sur une anthropologie étrangère à l'augustinisme, notamment celle de Grégoire de Nysse.

Selon le modèle réalise pour la première fois en Occident par Érigène – auteur que Guillaume connaissait très bien depuis l'école même – à savoir la synthèse entre la doctrine des Pères grecs et latins –, l'abbé de Saint-Thierry essaie de réaliser quelque chose de similaire dans ses textes. Il le dit explicitement déjà dans la Préface à son *Expositio super epistolam ad Romanos*, où Guillaume se présente lui-même non comme l'auteur du texte, mais plutôt comme un compilateur de textes des Pères, surtout Augustin, mais aussi Ambroise, même Origène, et d'autres Docteurs de l'Église et maîtres contemporains (Guillaume de Saint Thierry 2011, 111).

Alors, outre l'influence certaine qu'ont eu sur l'abbé de Saint-Thierry Jérôme, Ambroise, Augustine, Grégoire le Grand, Sedulius, Lactance, Isidore de Séville et d'autres auteurs de langue latine, on retrouve également dans les écrits de Guillaume « une dépendance directe et massive à l'égard de la

tradition grecque, de Plotin à Denys, en passant par Origène, Grégoire de Nysse, Maxime le Confesseur » (Leclercq 1977, 50).

Il est possible que Guillaume ait pris contact avec les idées et même avec les textes d'Origène par l'intermédiaire des œuvres d'Ambroise, cet occidental dont les textes présentent souvent des « réminiscences origénistes » dont parle J.-M. Déchanet (1942, 47). Au XIIe siècle les manuscrits contenant les écrits d'Origène ne sont pas aussi rares qu'ils le deviendront au XIIIe siècle. J.-M. Déchanet affirme que « les cités universitaires, comme Laon et Reims, possédaient, à n'en pas douter, la majeure partie des œuvres qui sont parvenues jusqu'à nous » (Déchanet 1942, 47). C'est surtout dans les écrits de maturité de Guillaume, tels que *Expositio super Epistolam ad Romanos* et *Expositio super Cantici Canticorum* que les emprunts à Origène sont considérables, les textes de l'Alexandrin étant, le plus probablement, connus grâce à la traduction de Rufinus. Cependant, contrairement à l'option d'Origène, *l'Exposé sur le Cantique des Cantiques* de Guillaume n'est pas un commentaire allégorique, mais moral (*sensum moralem aliquem*).

Jean Scot Érigène est, sans doute, l'auteur dont les écrits et les traductions Guillaume avait lu à l'époque déjà de ses études à l'école de Laon. Les exégètes parlent même dans ce sens de « l'érigénisme » de Guillaume (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1959, 46). A l'aide des accomplissements intellectuels de ce penseur, le futur abbé de Saint-Thierry s'est familiarisé avec des doctrines orientales, issues notamment des écrits de Grégoire de Nysse, de Denys l'Aréopagite et de Maxime le Confesseur, auteurs de langue grecque que l'Irlandais a traduits en latin. Léopold Malevez parle même d'une certaine influence des *Ennéades* de Plotin sur Guillaume, mais une influence indirecte, à travers le filtre d'Augustin, Grégoire de Nysse et Maxime le Confesseur (Malevez 1932, 178-205). On a, d'autre part, des exégètes qui doutent que l'abbé Saint-Thierry ait subi l'influence des auteurs traduits en latin par l'Érigène, n'étant tributaire qu'aux auteurs de langue latine, et en particulier à saint Augustin ; une influence due à Plotin par le biais des textes des auteurs mentionnés serait une exagération,

vu qu'on ne connaît pas une influence directe du néoplatonicien sur Augustin, Grégoire de Nysse ou Maxime.

Il est presque certain que l'abbé Guillaume se sert de la traduction faite par l'Érigène au texte de Grégoire de Nysse, *De hominis opificio* (Saword 1974, 394-398), où il trouve une anthropologie qui est étrangère à l'esprit augustinien. Qui plus est, dans ses textes, Érigène observe que, au nom d'Augustin, « la résistance latine » s'exprimait de plus en plus nettement contre les doctrines de « Grégoire le théologien, Maxime et Ambroise » (Iohannes Scottus 2003, 29-30). En outre, il y avait des Latins qui parlaient déjà des « 'erreurs et les hérésies' de Jean de Damas, récemment introduit en Occident » (de Ghellinck 1914, 160). Joseph de Ghellinck, dans une note, nous fait savoir que l'abbé « Guillaume de Saint-Thierry n'avait guère été beaucoup plus modéré à l'égard de saint Maxime le Confesseur (*Disputatio altera adversus Abaelardum*, lib. I ; PL. CLXX, 288 AB) » (Ghellinck 1914, 160). D'abord, il s'agit du volume 180, et non 170, du PL, ensuite, il n'est pas question ici de Maxime le Confesseur, mais plutôt d'une confusion, naturelle à cette époque-là où les textes grecs n'étaient pas connus directement, mais par l'intermédiaire des florilèges. Au côté des Latins qui n'appréciaient aucunement les auteurs grecs, le plus probablement « un adversaire d'Abélard » (Chenu 1957, 286), à savoir Ps.-Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, considérait que c'est Maxime le Confesseur lui-même qui est responsable des erreurs du dialecticien Abélard: « Id trahere videtur a quodam Maximo, quem puto graecum fuisse, quem et Joannes Scotus usque ad haeresim imitatus est » (Ps.-Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1855, 298; Chenu 1957, 287). Le contexte et la coïncidence de noms sont intéressants, mais ce n'est pas Guillaume de Saint-Thierry qui fait une telle affirmation. De plus, il apparaît que, dans ce contexte, il ne pourrait s'agir de Maxime Confesseur, mais de Maxime de Turin (fin du IV^e – V^e s.). Cette hypothèse – identifier le Maxime du texte d'Abélard avec Maxime de Turin – est plus récente et mise en discussion par A. Levy (2006, 121), qui identifie dans une homélie de Pâques d'Abélard le nom du dit Maxime de Turin. Il est fort possible que ce soit vrai, mais, assurément, ce n'est pas ce Maxime qui « a été imité jusqu'à l'hérésie par Jean Scot ».

L'anonyme du XIIe siècle avait, en quelque sorte, une perspective juste des choses.

Comme nous l'avons déjà dit, il y a des aussi exégètes plus circonspects en ce qui concerne l'influence des penseurs grecs sur Guillaume de Saint-Thierry. Par exemple, Rozanne Elder, dans le cadre d'un colloque organisé à Oxford en 1973, considérait que « les influences attribuées à Plotin et à Maxime le Confesseur relèvent d'hypothèses qui ont été stimulantes il y a trente ans, mais en faveur desquelles on attend encore des preuves » (Leclercq 1977, 52). A partir de la remarque de Rozanne Elder, nous allons essayer en ce qui suit de souligner quelques thèmes présents dans les textes de Guillaume et qui sont, à notre avis, empruntés de manière directe ou indirecte à la doctrine des Pères grecs.

II.

Le XIIe siècle, celui où Guillaume a vécu, est considéré par certains exégètes comme « l'âge d'or de la contemplation ». Jean-Marie Déchanet distingue, à l'intérieur de ce siècle, trois courants principaux :

1. *le courant bénédictin*, qui s'épanouit sur la spiritualité de la Règle de saint Benoît ; spiritualité qu'il dépasse d'ailleurs ou plutôt prolonge ;

2. *le courant érémitique*, qui s'inspire des Pères du désert et rejoint, sinon leurs performances ascétiques, du moins leur zèle pour la *theoria*, la contemplation dans l'amour ;

3. *le courant victorin*, plus spéculatif et qui annonce les écoles des siècles suivants (Déchanet 1953, 1948). A plusieurs égards, Guillaume nous apparaît plus proche du second courant, parce que l'essence de la vie contemplative suppose un écart par rapport aux occupations distrayant l'âme de la contemplation ; donc, une sorte de renonciation au monde. Par conséquent, il faut une organisation du temps et des activités où prévalent l'ascèse et la prière ; cela implique du temps libre, du répit (*quies, otium, vacatio, sabbatum*) pour *lectio, meditatio, oratio* et *contemplatio* (Guigues II le Chartreux 1970). Similairement à la pratique adoptée jadis par les ascètes au désert de l'Egypte, les moines du XIIe siècle recouraient à des prières généralement courtes et fréquentes, mais qu'on pouvait

prolonger « sous l'inspiration de la grâce », selon la parole de saint Benoît (Leclercq 1953, 1947).

Malgré leurs dissensions, l'abbé de Saint-Thierry avait probablement accepté l'affirmation de Guillaume de Conches conformément à laquelle *Universitas* (dans le sens d'univers, selon l'acception d'Honorius d'Autun) est un cosmos, et sa contemplation est délectable (*delectabilis*) (Guillaume de Conches 1938, 146). Dieu Se fait connaître dans les théophanies, c'est-à-dire Il se manifeste dans le visible aussi (*De contemplando Deo*, §§ 4-5). Et la théophanie par excellence, c'est l'Incarnation du Verbe dans la personne de Jésus Christ. La prétention de connaître Dieu en dehors de Sa manifestation, à savoir dans Son essence, est un geste d'arrogance suprême de la part de l'homme (*De contemplando Deo*, §§ 16-17).

II.1. Selon une définition dans le dictionnaire, le concept de « contemplation » renvoie à une double histoire, grecque (*theoria*) et latine (*contemplatio*). Le passage de *theoria* à *contemplatio*, comme d'ailleurs toute la transposition du vocabulaire théologique grec dans le vocabulaire théologique latin, s'accompagne d'une mutation du contenu lui-même. Frédéric Nef considère qu'on pourrait rendre cette mutation, en grandes lignes, dans les termes suivants : tandis que *theoria* est un concept d'origine philosophique et qui maintient une certaine ambiguïté entre la théologie et la philosophie, *contemplatio* est un concept solidaire de la théologie chrétienne latine, plus précisément d'une sous-partie de celle-ci, la théologie spirituelle (Nef 2007, 325-332).

Le terme latin *contemplatio*, qui vient de Cicéron (*De natura deorum* I, 14, 37) et de Sénèque (*Epistulae morales ad Lucilium* 95, 10), traduit donc le terme grec de *θεωρία*. Initialement, le terme de *θεωρός* avait plusieurs sens, dont le plus utilisé était celui de *spectateur* ou *qui regarde un spectacle*, aspect qui implique une certaine solennité, mais aussi le sens de *remplir une responsabilité sacrée* : « ancient etymologists, from Plutarch on, generally supposed that the first part of *θεωρός* was *θεός*, thusmaking *θεωρός* to mean originally 'one who goes to perform some service to a god' » (Bill 1901, 196-197). D'autre part, « le mot *contemplatio* est dérivé de *templum* »

(Lebreton 1953, 1683). Si l'on part de cela, alors le contemplateur cherche en dehors de lui-même l'objet de la contemplation, et le monde entier n'est rien d'autre que le temple de Dieu ; d'autre part, son propre corps n'est que le temple de l'Esprit Saint (1 *Corinthiens* 3, 16 : « Ne savez-vous pas que vous êtes le temple de Dieu et que l'Esprit de Dieu habite en vous ? »).

Pour certains exégètes, « le mot *theoria* exprime un idéal, reflète une mentalité. Il était absent du vocabulaire des Pères apostoliques. Il ne fera son apparition qu'avec Clément d'Alexandrie et Origène » (Špidlík 1976, 358). En effet, dans l'école alexandrine, *theoria* est un terme de plus en plus utilisé ; par exemple, chez Clément il apparaît 84 fois. La tendance ascendante se manifeste également dans le *Corpus Dionisiacum*, où l'on trouve environ 50 occurrences du terme et de sa famille lexicale (Van Den Daele 1941, 78). Toutefois, le terme enregistre une véritable explosion dans les œuvres de Maxime le Confesseur, avec plus de 800 occurrences (Lemaître 1953, 1762). Évidemment, les textes d'Origène (et surtout la tradition qu'il a engendrée) ont représenté l'une des principales sources ayant contribué à la cristallisation de la doctrine chrétienne, fréquentée tant par les Pères grecs de l'Église que par les auteurs latins ultérieurs qui ont eu accès à ses textes. Au nombre de ces derniers on compte Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, lecteur attentif des écrits de l'Alexandrin.

Bien que, dans l'espace chrétien, Clément et Origène consacrent l'utilisation de ce terme, selon Th. Špidlík, dans la philosophie grecque il a déjà une histoire précise qui descend jusqu'aux textes de Platon et d'Aristote. Ce qui est intéressant et à la fois significatif, c'est le fait que la pénétration du terme *θεωρία* dans l'Occident latin, par le biais des textes des auteurs chrétiens, précède les premières traductions latines de la *Métaphysique* d'Aristote (*Metaphysica vetustissima*).

Depuis l'antiquité même, la vie contemplative (*θεωρητικὸς βίος*) représente le mode idéal de vie de l'homme. Malgré cela, l'un des philosophes représentatifs de l'Antiquité classique grecque, Aristote, qui discute largement cet aspect, surtout dans son *Ethique à Nicomaque* et dans l'*Éthique à Eudème*, n'offre aucune image de la vie quotidienne du

contemplatif (Dudley 1982, 387). Cette situation peut avoir plusieurs explications, que J. Léonard (1948, 148) mentionne également, selon lesquelles soit le Stagirite n'aurait pas voulu dévoiler ses propres expériences intimes soit il était tout simplement incapable d'exprimer avec précision la nature secrète de la contemplation, soit il n'avait pas formulé encore assez clairement la question pour lui-même, car les discussions autour de la *θεωρία* étaient uniquement intellectuelle, sans nulle application dans la vie quotidienne. D'autre part, John Dudley semble ne pas être d'accord avec ces suggestions, en considérant, au contraire, que la *θεωρία* constituait la principale activité de l'Académie et plus tard du Lycée (Dudley 1982, 406).

Le sens premier du terme *θεωρία* est celui de « regarder » : « le théôros n'aurait donc été primitivement rien d'autre que le 'spectateur' » (Aristote 1970, 848). Il s'agit donc d'un regard « comme au théâtre », ou comme à une fête religieuse. Il convient de rappeler ici qu'en Antiquité le rôle du spectateur, au théâtre mais notamment aux fêtes religieuses, n'était pas un rôle passif, comme il est le cas, le plus souvent, à présent, mais il comportait un degré d'implication, de participation du « spectateur » à cet événement.

Aristote compare la contemplation de l'univers à l'admiration qu'éprouve un spectateur devant un spectacle (Aristote 2017, 195). Ce sens large du terme *θεωρία* est complété, dans les textes mêmes du Stagirite, par un autre sens, plus étroit, technique, qui signifie notamment l'emploi des connaissances, du savoir (*ἐπιστήμη*) que possède déjà, à un certain moment, un sujet donné (Dudley 1982, 389). Ce sens restreint ne se retrouve que dans un passage de l'*Ethique à Nicomaque* (VII, 1146b 31-35), mais aussi dans la *Physique* (VIII, 255a 33-255b 5). J. Dudley a bien raison quand il souligne que cet emploi du savoir s'accompagne de la reconnaissance des principes déjà familiers au sujet. *Θεωρία* est opposée à l'état habituel (*ἔξις*) de connaissance. L'état habituel est, potentiellement, exercé de manière active, par l'*ἐπιστήμη*, qui constitue la *θεωρία* (Dudley 1982, 390). Donc, au sens étroit du terme, la *θεωρία* représente l'utilisation (l'actualisation) d'une *ἐπιστήμη* qu'un sujet possède déjà.

Outre ces deux sens, on retrouve également chez Aristote un troisième sens du terme de θεωρία, à savoir l'acception de « observer », « examiner », « étudier » (Aristote 2017, 570). Sens toujours large, qui, à notre avis, est proche du premier, « regarder », « voir », avec quand même des nuances.

John Dudley souligne que « les interprétations les plus courantes de la θεωρία excluent Dieu. Harold H. Joachim, par contre, paraît soutenir que l'homme est Dieu quand il contemple » (Aristote 1962, 387 ; Dudley 1982, 387). L'auteur cité ci-dessus trouve un argument pour sa thèse dans *l'Éthique à Nicomaque* (X, 8, 7-8), où Aristote affirme sans équivoque que « l'activité de Dieu, qui en félicite surpasse toutes les autres, ne saurait être que théorétique. Et par suite, de toutes les activités humaines celle qui est la plus apparentée à l'activité divine sera aussi la plus grande source de bonheur. Un signe encore, c'est que les animaux autres que l'homme n'ont pas de participation au bonheur, du fait qu'ils sont totalement démunis d'une activité de cette sorte [...] l'animal n'a part à la contemplation. Le bonheur est donc coextensif à la contemplation » (Aristote 2017, 555-556). Alors, l'activité du dieu d'Aristote consiste dans la contemplation de soi. Quoi d'autre pourrait-il contempler ? Si cela est vrai, il résulte que l'activité parfaite de l'homme, comme imitation de l'activité de dieu, consiste à contempler dieu. Ce qui signifie que dans *l'Éthique à Nicomaque* l'objet propre de la contemplation, c'est dieu (Dudley 1982, 396).

En conclusion, θεωρία représente donc pour le Stagirite une connaissance extraordinaire, inhabituelle, dont l'objet de contemplation est dieu. Toutefois, malgré son plus grand désir, l'homme ne peut pas contempler dieu, du moins dans cette vie, *in via*, sans cesse. Pour vivre, il doit entreprendre aussi d'autres actions non-contemplatives, pratiques. L'homme complet est supposé donc combiner les deux activités : *practica* et *theoria*.

Depuis toujours, le couple *action – contemplation* décrit une tension dans l'être humain, entre les deux dimensions : corporelle et spirituelle. La sagesse parfaite, dit un contemporain de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, Hugues de Saint-Victor († 1141), consiste à unifier les deux, à savoir conjuguer la « jubilation de la contemplation » avec la « fertilité de l'action »

(Poirel, 2007, 81-119). Considérée dans ce sens, l'opposition action – contemplation structure de manière profonde la pensée médiévale, car elle résonne avec d'autres oppositions banales, assez hétérogènes, mais globalement analogues : matière et esprit, sensible et intelligible, visible et invisible, temporel et éternel, *mundanus* et *supramundanus*. D. Poirel considère que la même tour analogique conduit l'exégète Hugues à superposer de nombreux couples analogiques, tirés des Écritures, auxquels il donne la même signification : « Duo enim sunt genera nominum secundum has duas exercitationes licitas : aedificantes ad contemplativos, sustentantes ad activos. Hae sunt duae vitae et duo populi et duo testamenta, Lia et Rachel, Jacob et Israel, Petrus et Johannes, Martha et Maria, sinistra et dextra, lana et linum, hordeum et frumentum, aquo et vinum » (Hugues de Saint-Victor 1854, 483). Même si l'on accorde une primauté nette à la vie contemplative, aux dépens de la vie active, Hugues de Saint-Victor met un accent tout particulier sur la complémentarité et sur l'insuffisance de chacune d'elles prise séparément (Hugues de Saint-Victor 1854, 655-657). En conclusion, du moins au XIIe siècle, la pratique, l'action ne représentent aucunement un obstacle à la contemplation, bien au contraire, elles se complètent heureusement. En ce sens, à partir de quelques fragments de *Epistola aurea* (§§ 277-281), où l'on parle de *sagesse* et de *science*, Matthieu Rougé considère que l'abbé de Saint-Thierry « comprend la sagesse comme la vertu de la vie contemplative et la science comme la vertu de la vie active, qui a pour objet les réalités temporelles » (Rougé 1999, 161). Dans un registre différent, « la theoria philosophique exprimera donc l'effort d'échapper aux conditions temporelles de cette vie, La praxis chrétienne est au contraire éminemment 'historique', liée à la venue du Christ en chair, engagée dans le présent. Mais elle conduit à la theoria, elle revalorise le temps en rattachant étroitement à l'éternité » (Špidlík 1976, 364).

II. 2. Sans aucun doute, « l'école de la contemplation reste la vie monastique » (Leclercq 1953, 1936). L'homme ne peut pas se livrer à l'acte de contemplation sans une préparation spéciale, sans ascèse. La vision n'arrive à tout moment, en tout

lieu, comme dans la mystique rhénane. « La contemplation est un don de Dieu beaucoup plus que le fruit de l'effort humain guidé par l'enseignement du Seigneur, surtout de son enseignement public » (Lebreton 1953, 1687). Normalement, ne peuvent parler de Dieu que ceux qui ont été dignes du regard (θεωρία) sur Dieu. Pour un Père de l'Église qui, croyons-nous, a influencé en quelque mesure Guillaume de Saint-Thierry, Maxime le Confesseur (580-662), « la contemplation ou la θεωρία constitue la méthode propre pour entrer dans la connaissance du mystère. La μυσταγωγία s'effectue au moyen de la θεωρία. Maxime emploie plusieurs fois l'expression θεωρητική μυσταγωγία » (Bornert 1970, 324). D'autre part, pour le théologien byzantin, θεωρία signifie les différentes interprétations spirituelles, anagogiques d'un texte biblique. A cet égard, le prieur Thalassios demande à Maxime une interprétation anagogique (ἀναγωγή) des divers textes bibliques (κατὰ τὴν ἀναγωγικὴν θεωρίαν) (Maxime le Confesseur 2010, 118-119). Qui plus est, on arrive au sens spirituel des Écritures par une « contemplation unique qui suit l'explication anagogique » (Maxime le Confesseur 2010, 286-287).

Il convient ici de faire une précision. A notre avis, la θεωρία maximienne, tout comme celle dionysienne, que Maxime assume et développe, ne peut pas être considérée comme un simple procédé interprétatif, comme on serait tenté de croire, parce qu'elle transcende tout ce qu'on peut saisir et transposer par le discours. Θεωρία est plus proche de l'étape de l'illumination que d'un acte herméneutique proprement dit ; elle représente plutôt un état dans lequel se trouve à un moment donné la personne engagée dans l'ascension spirituelle, ce qui signifie que θεωρία ne saurait pas appartenir à la sphère de l'herméneutique, entendue dans son acception classique, mais à l'*expérience* ressentie à un moment donné. Il y a au moins un texte maximien qui vient soutenir cette thèse, celui dans lequel le théologien byzantin affirme que, tout comme le corps, « l'esprit, dans l'acte de la prière, perd toute matière et toute forme », c'est-à-dire meurt, « de même que le corps en mourant se sépare de tous les biens de cette vie, de même l'esprit qui au sommet de l'oraison meurt lui aussi quitte toutes les représentations qu'il a du monde. Car sans mourir de cette

mort-là, il ne saurait se trouver et vivre avec Dieu » (Maxime le Confesseur 1945, 112-113). Dans un pareil état, qu'atteignent des personnes ayant acquis un certain progrès spirituel, parler d'un procédé purement herméneutique serait absurde. Maxime, en tant que l'un des Pères qui « scrute avec l'Esprit les profondeurs de l'Esprit » (« ἐρευνᾷς μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος ») (Maxime le Confesseur 2010, 118-119 ; Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 239), parle dans ses écrits d'une « pensée apostolique » (Maxime le Confesseur 2010, 202-203), ce qui signifie qu'on ne peut pas comprendre le texte des Écritures sans avoir directement reçu de Christ le savoir (Maxime le Confesseur 1973, 218), par l'Esprit Saint. Guillaume de Saint-Thierry se situe fort près de l'affirmation maximienne quand il dit que « les Écritures, en particulier, demandent à être lues et pareillement comprises, dans l'esprit qui les a dictées » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 238-239).

Selon Maxime le Confesseur, Moïse représenterait l'action, tandis qu'Élie constituerait le modèle de la vie contemplative, parce que celui-ci a été enlevé jusqu'aux cieux (Maximus the Confessor 2014a, 265). Élie est donc la preuve claire de l'« acte herméneutique » par excellence, il incarne lui-même la *θεωρία*. Dans ce contexte, une phrase attribuée à Évagre le Pontique nous semble résumer dans une formule lapidaire tout la doctrine orientale relative à la contemplation : « Si tu es théologien, tu prieras vraiment, et si tu pries vraiment, tu seras théologien » (Évagre le Pontique 2017, 275).

Il nous paraît donc évident qu'on se trouve devant deux grandes traditions (philosophique et théologique), qui utilisent de manière différente le terme de *θεωρία*. Les deux traditions ont communiqué l'une avec l'autre et on peut même dire, à la rigueur, que l'une dérive de l'autre (du point de vue terminologique). Toutefois, des différences visibles se sont progressivement manifestées avec l'évolution historique du christianisme.

La contemplation est, d'habitude, une « activité » s'exerçant sur des « objets ». Du point de vue philosophique l'« objet » le plus élevé et le plus digne de la contemplation est Dieu. D'autre part, cet « objet » de la contemplation n'est rien d'autre que l'objet même de la foi chrétienne : Dieu, autant qu'il

nous est révélé par Jésus Christ, dans Sa personne, Sa vie et Ses œuvres.

Le concept de dieu qu'on trouve dans les textes d'Aristote n'est point identifiable au « Dieu vivant » des chrétiens. Un tel exemple – de différenciation nette entre l'aristotélisme et le christianisme – nous est offert par père M.-D. Chenu (1957, 122) lorsqu'il affirme que « les Pères avaient fait une critique sévère de la définition aristotélicienne de l'âme. Le Ps.-Grégoire de Nysse (Némésius) est le pivot de cette résistance en plein moyen âge, et donc pour son immortalité (*De natura hominis*, PG 40, col. 560) ». Donc, malgré la tentation de soutenir cette identification (entre le dieu d'Aristote et celui du christianisme), comme le fait John Dudley, la position est impossible à accepter, du point de vue philosophique mais surtout théologique.

II. 3. Cette brève incursion dans les deux traditions qui utilisent le terme *θεωρία*, nous l'avons considérée nécessaire pour intégrer plus facilement Guillaume de Saint-Thierry au sein de l'une de ces traditions.

Aucun argument ne laisser penser que l'abbé de Saint-Thierry aurait été l'adepte de la contemplation philosophique (aristotélicienne) ; tout au contraire, il se situe sans équivoque dans le paradigme *théorique* d'Origène, Denys, Maxime et Erigène. Tout comme dans la doctrine des Pères de l'Église, chez Guillaume, la vision ne se fait pas avec « les yeux charnels » (*De contemplando Deo*, § 5), mais avec ceux « intérieurs » (« mes yeux intérieurs » – §§ 3, 5, 6 ; von Balthasar 1959, 186 : « Le voir avec les yeux de la foi, qui sont de véritables yeux, donnant une vision objective »). En outre, « Guillaume donne souvent le même sens aux expressions : 'connaître Dieu' et 'voir Dieu', ainsi dans le *Miroir de la foi* : 'Voir ou connaître Dieu, c'est être semblable à Dieu ; et lui être semblable, c'est le voir ou le connaître' (*Le miroir de la foi*, 107, p. 179) » (Desthieux 2019, 364-365).

L'analyse ci-dessus, consacrée au paradigme *théorique*, ne s'est nullement proposé de marginaliser une tradition du moins aussi importante pour le christianisme occidental en ce qui concerne la contemplation, à savoir l'augustinisme.

Frédéric Nef considère que saint Augustin, avec sa doctrine sur la *contemplatio*, est tributaire d'abord au stoïcisme latin, mais aussi à Plotin (Nef 2007, 327). Dans la postérité d'Augustin, deux directions contemplatives se sont précisées : d'une part, une branche *intellectualiste*, dont les représentants prestigieux ont été Eckhart et Dante, et, d'autre part, une branche *affective*, représentée de manière bien exemplaire par Thomas Gallus (Nef 2007, 327). Sans doute, les écrits d'Augustin sont une des sources principales de Guillaume et en particulier la *Lettre 147 à Pauline* et *La Genèse au sens littéral*, chapitre XII. Toutefois, concernant la *visio Dei*, certains exégètes considèrent que « la pensée d'Augustin semble avoir été flottante. Si, dans la *Lettre à Pauline* et *La Genèse au sens littéral*, il admet la vision de Dieu face à face dès cette vie pour Moïse et Paul, à d'autres endroits, il affirmera que 'Moïse malgré ses désirs n'a point obtenu cette vision' (*La Trinité* II, XVI, 27, BA 15, p. 251), et il réservera cette vision à la vie future » (Desthieux 2019, 365).

Nous n'avons pas l'intention d'introduire dans notre analyse la tradition augustinienne, nous ne faisons que signaler son existence et le fait que Guillaume, même s'il la connaît, ne lui est pas redevable en ce qui concerne sa conception de la vision. Le sens fort du mot « vision » est illustré très clairement par Guillaume, qui affirme que : « Dans la Trinité le Père et le Fils se voient mutuellement, leur vision réciproque est l'unité de leur existence » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1959b, 97). Mais pour Guillaume, l'unique médiateur, « l'auteur de tous les biens, le Christ, il goûte d'abord son retour à Dieu » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 2015, 181). Mais il faut tenir compte du fait, souligné par Déchanet, que chez l'abbé Guillaume « la connaissance de Dieu – du mystère de Dieu – passe par le Christ » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 408).

On trouve, sans doute, dans la personne de l'abbé de Saint-Thierry un bon connaisseur de la culture de son époque et un excellent théologien mystique, dont la doctrine s'édifie autour de la contemplation de la Sainte Trinité, *par l'intermédiaire de Jésus Christ*. D'une manière très adéquate, à son tempérament affectif – que l'exégèse considère comme une constante rencontrée chez les mystiques occidentaux – s'ajoute

la mentalité spéculative des Pères grecs (Déchanet 1942, 16). Guillaume se réfère ainsi à trois degrés de la contemplation : recueillement intérieur, la perception par l'âme de la propre qualité, la « contemplation du Créateur invisible » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 2011, 55). Cette contemplation on ne peut la réaliser que *par* et *dans* le Christ, ou, pour citer la belle expression de H.-U. von Balthasar, « l'unicité concrète de Dieu ne peut, dans le monde, être représentée que par l'unicité du Médiateur, l'homme concret Jésus-Christ (1 *Tim.* 2, 5) » (von Balthasar 1959, 191), ou, selon l'affirmation d'un exégète de l'œuvre de Guillaume, « le Christ, par son humanité, par son humilité, par son humiliation, par le ministère de sa médiation est le chemin qui conduit vers le Père » (Rougé 1999, 305). On a donc affaire chez Guillaume à une *mystique christologique*, étant donné que « Jésus est donc pour nous le modèle idéal de la contemplation » (Lebreton 1953, 1683).

C'est donc à juste titre qu'il parle dans *De contemplando Deo* de la « contemplation de ta bonté » (§ 1: « contemplatio bonitatis tuae ») et, dans la *Lettre d'or*, de « la contemplation des amabilités de Dieu – puissance, force, gloire, majesté, bonté, béatitude, ces perfections tout aimables qui brillent d'elles-mêmes au cœur du contemplatif – amènent sans peine l'homme qui s'y arrête à l'amour divin » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 362-363), ce qui signifie qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une vision de sa *face*, mais de ses *perfections*.

« Il est la suprême essence, d'où provient tout être ; la suprême substance qui échappe aux catégories du langage » – (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 380-381). Or, en l'absence des catégories pour l'exprimer, pouvons-nous connaître Dieu tel qu'Il est, dans Son essence ? Qui plus est, Guillaume s'appelle lui-même : « moi qui ne te vois pas » (*De contemplando Deo* § 2 : « me non videntem te »). La vision directe de l'essence divine est impossible, car nous ne pouvons pas voir l'essence des choses qui nous entourent, et d'autant moins l'essence divine. Toute essence n'est saisissable que si elle se concrétise dans un corps. Dans le cas de *visio Dei*, la solution est christologique : on ne peut voir Dieu que par l'intermédiaire de Jésus Christ, « Il est l'image du Dieu invisible, Premier-né de toute créature » (*Colossiens* 1, 15). Le rôle du Christ dans cette connaissance est

crucial, puisque nous, les hommes, n'avons vu que Lui, le Verbe Incarné, car « Nul homme n'a jamais vu Dieu ; seul le Fils unique, qui est dans le sein du Père, en a parlé » (*Jean* 1, 18). Les Écritures expriment aussi avec clarté la réciprocité qui existe entre le Père et le Fils : « Nul ne connaît le Fils sinon le Père ; nul ne connaît le Père sinon le Fils et celui auquel le Fils veut le révéler » (*Matthieu* 11, 27 ; voir aussi *Jean* 10, 30 : « Mon Père et moi nous sommes une seule chose »).

Or, la révélation dont parle les Écritures et que le Christ rend manifeste (la bonté et l'amour du Père pour les hommes) doit être le fondement de toute la doctrine sur *visio Dei*.

Pour les exégètes occidentaux, la vision de Dieu « ne sera réalisée qu'au ciel. Elle est impossible sur terre. La vie contemplative ici-bas ne peut consister pour l'homme qu'à s'entretenir dans le désir de cette vision et à s'y préparer : l'une de ses définitions les plus fréquentes est le terme même de *désir* » (Leclercq 1953, 1946).

Toutefois, chez Guillaume la contemplation est plutôt un désir, une aspiration vers Dieu, comme l'ἐπέκτασις dans les écrits de Grégoire de Nysse. L'épectase est un désir infini, elle est indissolublement liée à l'attribut de l'infinité de Dieu. De même, l'épectase est un désir/ une aspiration à la vision/ la connaissance totale de Dieu, qui ne s'accomplit jamais, ni même *in Patria*. Il s'agit d'un caractère progressif de cet avancement, mai qui *n'arrive jamais à la fin*. Guillaume dit en ce sens : « Or chercher la face de Dieu, chercher à connaître Dieu [...] chercher cette face continuellement » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 164-165), ou encore : « L'amour alors de progresser jusqu'à reproduite quelque chose de cet amour qui a rendu Dieu semblable à l'homme » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 362-363). Dans un autre endroit, il dit : « Et puisque cet Être ineffable ne peut être vu que d'une manière ineffable, que celui qui veut Le voir purifie son cœur. Car nulle ressemblance corporelle n'en peut donner une idée à celui qui dort, aucune forme sensible à celui qui veille. Ni la raison, ni ses recherches ne sauraient Le voir ou L'atteindre, mais seulement l'humble amour d'un cœur pur. Et c'est là cette face de Dieu que nul ne peut voir et vivre en même temps pour monde. C'est là cette beauté qu'aspire à contempler quiconque désire aimer le

Seigneur son Dieu de tout son cœur, de toute son âme, de tout son esprit, de toutes ses forces » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 382-383).

En vérité, « la tradition contemplative du monachisme occidental est caractérisée par une paix profonde : elle connaît les élans mystiques, mais dans une atmosphère de sécurité, d'équilibre, où la contemplation n'est elle-même qu'une aspiration au "repos" » (Leclercq 1953, 1948). Guillaume confirme cet avis, même dès le titre du *Billet d'envoi*, où il parle de « *sabbatum delicatum* », et la référence semble être à *Esaië* 58, 13 : « et vocaveris *sabbatum delicatum* ». De même, pour l'abbé, la contemplation est un *delicatum otium*, « délicieux repos » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 136-137) et même un « fécond repos » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 152-153 et 364-365). Mais l'observation de Leclercq ne saurait pas être réduite au seul monachisme occidental, parce qu'on retrouve une idée similaire dans les écrits de Maxime le Confesseur : « L'admirable c'est de voir la stabilité toujours entraînée et fluente, et le flot perpétuel toujours préconçu d'en-haut par la Providence » (Maximus the Confessor 1994, 368). Maxime utilise les expressions du type oxymoron quand il se réfère à ce sujet, par exemple « mouvement stable » (Maxime le Confesseur 2010, 287) et « repos perpétuellement mobile » (2010, 65 et 321). La source de Maxime en est Grégoire de Nysse, qui dit que « stabilité et mobilité sont la même chose » (Grégoire de Nysse 1968, 272 ; Plass 1984, 177-190 ; Blowers 1992, 160-165).

Cet état paradoxal mais non moins réel qu'atteignent les (bien)heureux s'appelle-t-il *théosis* (chez les Grecs) ou *union* (chez les Latins) et Guillaume le décrit grâce à un mouvement réciproque cher à Maxime (exprimée par l'expression *tantum - quantum*) qui anime en même temps la créature et le Créateur : « l'homme de Dieu mérite de devenir, d'une manière ineffable, inimaginable, non pas Dieu certes, mais cependant Ce que Dieu est : l'homme étant par grâce ce que Dieu est en vertu de sa nature » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1985, 354-355).

C'est la raison pour laquelle nous tenons pour injuste et sans appui textuel l'affirmation de J. Hourlier selon laquelle

Guillaume « se distingue comme étant *peu ascétique*, mais surtout mystique » (Guillaume de Saint-Thierry 1959a, 43). Cette remarque typique est tributaire à une distinction scolastique latine postérieure à Guillaume, entre l'ascèse et la mystique, entre la mystique et la théologie. Cependant, la tradition orientale qui elle a influencé de manière décisive Guillaume ne les a jamais distinguées : « Il n'y a donc pas de mystique chrétienne sans théologie, mais surtout, il n'y a pas de théologie sans mystique » (Lossky 1990, 7).

En définitive, une telle approche ne fait que négliger l'effort *ascétique* qui prépare la *théosis* espérée par le théologien contemplatif. Il n'y a pas en bond direct vers l'union avec Dieu, par-dessus l'effort ascétique de purification et d'illumination. Avant la *contemplatio*, il doit toujours y avoir de l'*actio*, selon la leçon déjà enseignée par les sources grecques de Guillaume.

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Visio latronis conversi (Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius, caput XXIX): The Vision as a Purifying Act: Some Comparative Considerations

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Abstract

The inconsistent New Testament representations of the afterworld left a generous space of manifestations for the author interested in the state of the souls after death. At the crossroads of afterworld descriptions in the Hebrew and Graeco-Latin culture and exploiting theses of the canonical or heterodoxic Christian theology, *visiones animarum* are throughout the Early Middle Ages a literary pattern. Initially inserted in comprehensive works, then as autonomous texts, the pattern was meant to illustrate aspects related to particular judgement, the topography of the afterworld, punishments and beatitudes reserved to the souls, etc. Though the *Divina Commedia* is considered a chronological limit and an artistic peak of the medieval *visiones animarum*, this literary lone remained equally attractive in the (immediately) subsequent period. In the lines below, I aim to analyse the vision featured in chapter XXIX of *Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius* from the perspective of the topic specific to the genre and the purpose of visions as literary texts and acts of the spirit.

Keywords: *visiones animarum*, Saint Francis, *Actus Beati Francisci...*, the afterworld, soul, purification

1. Introduction

The natural curiosity concerning what is next after the final act of our life has been exploited in almost all the fundamental works of universal literature. With visions or even travels to the afterworld, characters such as Gilgamesh, Hercules, Ulysses, Aeneas, Saint Paul or Dante during the Christian era are credited. Upon enumerating these famous

names, we must consider that – from the end of Antiquity throughout the Middle Ages (but also afterwards), with some exceptions, more or less complex visions had or were ascribed to simple, ordinary individuals. Starting from texts that enjoyed a wide circulation – like *Apocalypsis Petri* or *Apocalypsis/Visio Pauli* (the last was mentioned among the list of the apocryphal texts in *De explanatione fidei* in 382) – based on an entire arsenal of motifs reprised from the Hebrew and Graeco-Latin cultures and that (at the same time) used books and passages of the Old and New Testament (*Genesis*, *John's Apocalypse*, Lk., 16.19-31, 2Cor., 12.2-4 etc.), created over time an actual literary pattern improperly called *visiones animarum* (for they are genuine travels of the soul in the afterworld). As a structure, such a text would be summarised as follows: a very ordinary individual, taken over by sleep or – within a critical pathological state – crossing an episode of “apparent death” temporarily loses the use of bodily senses. During this episode, he travels – always accompanied by a guide – through the spaces of the afterworld: hell, paradise, and, sometimes, intermediary regions between the two extremes. Coming to his senses, he relates his vision and – as the case may be – radically changes his lifestyle. As a general valid purpose, the *visiones animarum* aim to induce in the target public (comprising not only religious people) an attitude as conforming as possible with the precepts of Christian ethics through the diverse representations of what follows after the episode of the particular judgment after death – good or bad, as a reward or a punishment.

The texts of this category were initially included as fragments in more comprehensive works. We may quote an entire series of visions as autonomous texts starting with *Visio Baronti* at the end of the 7th century. A particular narrative structure, various themes, motifs – reprised, enriched, modified, or nuanced by the dogmatic theses they reflect – and purposes are common to multiple productions included in this “genre.” Concerning the Middle Ages visions, *Divina Commedia* is considered a chronological limit and an artistic peak, which does not mean that this narrative pattern did not remain equally dynamic and attractive. It was also used after Dante's work, especially in the (immediately) subsequent period.

The lines below reflect a short text describing a journey to the afterworld, a fragment included in *Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius* (chap. XXIX). It was ascribed to Ugolino Brunforte and written between 1327 and 1337; it was translated into Italian towards the end of the same century and became well-known and intensely read under the name *I fioretti di San Francesco*. In my analysis, I will refer to the Latin text re-established by Paul Sabatier (Sabatier 1902). The fragment in chapter XXIX recounts the vision/journey to the afterworld of a former thief converted to a better life who became a member of the Friars Minor. It is perhaps not insignificant to compare this vision – in its fundamental elements – with recurring elements specific to this “genre” to determine whether the purpose of elaborating such a text is the same and if the narrative structure is also altered compared to the traditional pattern.

2. Vision summary

Of the three robbers converted by Saint Francis through Angelo – a novice who became, through his merits, a “guardian” (*guardianus*¹) – the last survivor subjects himself to a drastic penitential regime, at the end of which he has a vision which (as narrative structure) is part of what we call *visio animarum*. One day, after the celebration specific to the canonical hour of the Matins, contrary to his habits, he felt the need to sleep (the text says *tentatio somnolentiae* as if he thus transgressed the divine precepts). He fell into the temptation and, during his sleep, became the subject of a *visio animae* during which he crossed a seemingly infernal space (or at least whose features suggest the inferno) and then visited a place that may be assimilated, by all means, to paradise.

In the first space, accompanied by an angelic spirit, he fell from the top of a high mountain with sharp stones and large rocks into the abyss, rolling down from stone to stone until he reached an immense plain covered with thorns and brambles. He then entered a burning furnace and crossed a slippery bridge while serpents, scorpions, and dragons flowed underneath. With the angel's help, he got to the middle of the bridge, and then he grew wings to fly; he knocked at the gate of the place he had entered and managed to get in following an

intervention by St Francis. The vision ends with the command to return to Earth for seven days and atone and then to return to the world of the blessed forever. It is precisely what follows: the chapter ends with a brief description of the moment when Saint Francis comes from paradise to accompany the soul of his departed brother to eternal happiness.

3. Brief comparative analysis of the themes

It is worth noting that, just like in all the other visions, there is an *auctor narrator* and an *auctor scriptor*. The *Auctor scriptor* is Ugolino Brunforte (cca 1260-1345), a Friars Minor member who reunited in *Actus Beati Francisci et sociorum eius*, a series of stories regarding the great deeds of the Order's founder. The *auctor narrator* is the guardian (*guardianus*) of the community where the "beneficiary" of the vision lived and to whom the latter told of his ecstatic experience. It is, thus, an account of account, not directly from the source, as it occurs with most visions (e.g., Curma's vision featured by Augustine in *De cura gerenda pro mortuis* or many of the visions recounted by Gregory the Great in *Dialogues IV*, or *Visio Tnugdali* written by Marcus de Regensburg, etc.). The detail is significant insofar as the *auctor narrator* is in charge of the contents. In contrast, the *auctor scriptor* – through his personal view of the story – may direct the reading of the chapter by highlighting or enshrouding others. Or, in this case, we cannot even ascribe the contents to the "beneficiary" of the vision.

In the ancient Graeco-Latin literature, only the heroes made journeys to the afterworld: Hercules, Theseus, Orpheus, Ulysses, Aeneas, etc. In the medieval *visiones animarum*, the protagonists of these journeys are ordinary individuals of the lower middle class – Barontus, Fursa, Wetti, Tnugdali, etc. – whose biography holds nothing spectacular. I wonder whether this should be related to the famous verse of Lk., 10:21 (*Confiteor tibi, Pater... quod revelasti ea parvulis* etc.). In Plutarch, though, there are two analogous situations: in the vision of Thespesios/Aridaios (*De sera numinis vindicta*, 22-33) and that of Timarchos (*De genio Socratis*, 21-22, where Timarchos seems to be an invented character). Anyway, the protagonist of this ecstatic journey is equally bland; hence, the author does not "bother" to tell his name, not even his friar-

name. He mentions that he is a former thief converted at the initiative of St Francis and the efforts of a fellow friar, Angelus (“Angel”); he survives his fellow companions before the conversion, and towards the end of his life, he has the joy of this vision. Nothing else seems to count in this character’s life but the fact that, once he became a member of the Order, he observed their way of life to such an extent that he practised asceticism flawlessly: *ter in septimana panem et aquam tantummodo manducabat ... contentus tantum una tunicula incedebat discalciatus* etc.

In all the medieval visions, the main character is accompanied by² a secondary one whose role is to explain to the protégé what he encounters in the afterworld and guide his path. The source of inspiration for this function is, beyond doubt, John’s *Apocalypse*, though angels appear to accompany characters in the Hebrew literature of the Old Testament. Archangel Raphael appears as a secondary character in *The Book of Tobit*, or *The Book of Enoch*, 22, not included in the canon. The same archangel Rafael is featured in later versions (9th-10th centuries) of *Apocalypsis/Visio Pauli* (replacing archangel Michael in older versions) or in *Visio Baronti*, probably due to his name – Rafael/Raphael means “God cured”/Deus sanavit. In our case, it is an angel, *angelus*, which should be seen as part of a pair along with the Angelus who contributed to the character’s conversion. The message would be that if Angelus – namely, an angel – led the three robbers from a despicable life to one lived rigorously in the spirit of asceticism, an angel, too (*angelus* in the text), would lead them to the gates of paradise. From that point on, contrary to what we may expect (in almost all the visions, angels/archangels go into heaven with the soul they guide), only Saint Francis is the friar’s guide. He is the one who delivers the final warning and comes from paradise as a psychopomp character to accompany the deceased’s soul to eternal happiness.

Almost all previous visions entail a numbness of the senses. It may be due to a pathological state causing the temporary loss of the sensitive faculties – as in *Visio Baronti* or *Visio Tnudgali*, whose main characters suffer from collapsing, comas, or catalepsy. It may be due to sleep, as with Sunniulfus, as recounted by Gregory of Tours in *Historiarum libri decem*,

IV.33 (2006, I, 265), with *Visio Wettini* (Dümmler 1884, 267-275) and, of course, with this vision. The fact that for the extramundane – essentially spiritual/immaterial spaces – the language is still specific to sensory experiences used to describe our experiences with the material world is due to theories that assumed the corporeality of the soul (Tertullian, *De anima*), the “double” senses (Origen’s thesis analysed in Rahner 1978, 133-163), or three perceptive levels (Augustine, especially *De Trinitate*, XI; *De Genesi ad litteram*, XII). The second perceptive level – *visio interioris* or *visio spiritualis* – may be assessed in very different contexts: when the corporeal senses are inactive (as dreams while sleeping; as hallucinations within pathological states; as predictions in trances) or when the five senses are operant, but experiencing an intense feeling (fear, desire, etc.). In Augustine, the universe of spiritual vision is immaterial, of similarities, irrespective of the generating causes and circumstances of these visions: dreams, delirium (natural causes), ecstasies, visions (spiritual causes) where subjects lose totally or partially the use of the five corporeal senses. The spaces of this universe are crossed by something resembling the body (like in a dream), and this *simile corpori* perceives through similarities of the senses (*De Genesi ad litteram*, XII, 32.60). However, given their spiritual nature, the joy or pain experienced is authentic, like in a dream. I will not feature the details of all these theories here: it is enough to state that they have found extensive use in describing the afterworld. Furthermore, because they belong to the highest *auctoritates*, they prevent us from reading the *visiones animarum* through the lens of figurative language exclusively.

Consequently, at least based on Augustine’s thesis of *visio spiritualis* or *visio per spiritum hominis*, we should read *ad litteram* almost everything that happens to the protagonist in the afterworld. In most visions, his attitude is passive: like in John’s *Apocalypse*, the main character records what he sees in the extramundane spaces; he experiences feelings of bitterness, compassion, or joy; he is amazed and asks questions to decipher the meanings of what he perceives. Few are the visions where the protagonists are subjected to punishments per se: as examples,³ the first case is that of Saint Jerome. In his vision in *Epistula XXII ad Eustochium*, he complains of having been

whipped for proving to be more of a Ciceronian than a Christian. The most illustrative example remains that of Tnugdali in *Visio Tnugdali* – the angel abandons the character several times and leaves him to suffer some of the punishments he deserves (according to Christian ethics); each time, though, he cures him of all the injuries caused by physical pain. It is precisely what happens in the text I analyse here; the character experiences some punishments, but the angel's interventions cure him every time. Tnugdali's punishment occurs in a definite infernal space, while the friar's experiences happen in a less concrete area. If we read these parts in relation to the last sentence of the chapter ("Saint Francis came to him, and conducted his soul to life eternal in the kingdom of the blessed"), we would assume it was purgatory rather than hell. We should also note that the purpose of the vision is, in this case, to purify the soul and prepare it for a happy life, which is in dissonance with the declared or suggested purposes of previous visions.

In most visions, authors focus on the moment when the soul leaves the body and the subsequent instances. In *Visio Baronti*, for example, there is even a size/shape of the soul, which Barontus sees as a young bird when it steps from an egg (*ut pullus aviculae, quando de ovo egreditur*). We find the same comparison, with different nuances, in Athanasios the Great, *Vita Antonii*, 66 (available in the Latin Occident due to the translation made by Evagrius Antiochenus) or Gregory the Great, *Dialogorum liber/Dialogues*, IV.11. Furthermore, in many visions, the soul leaving the body is followed by an ardent conflict between angels and demons: each group claims the soul by invoking its merits or faults. Naturally, the dispute is solved by consulting a higher authority (in *Visio Baronti*, Saint Peter) and always by saving the soul in question. However, this moment is not featured in the short vision analysed here. The author is not interested in the dispute that may work as a judiciary procedure: as he falls asleep, he goes to the afterworld on top of a mountain. Something similar happens in the above-cited Sunniulf's vision: the abbot falls asleep and finds himself in hell, on the banks of a river of fire.

Particularly in autonomous visions (not included in more comprehensive works), topography plays a unique role. The

afterworld is divided into two cardinal spaces – heaven and hell – to which a third and even a fourth intermediary space was added. It all began with an interpretation of a thesis by Augustine (featured and commented in Le Goff 2014, 97-109), according to which the regions of the afterworld are populated by four categories of souls: the very bad, the not very bad, the not very good, and the very good. Except for these intermediary categories, the state of which is between happiness and pain⁴, the very bad and the very good go to hell and heaven, respectively, based on a topography connected with genuine taxonomies of sins and merits. Hence, hell and heaven are also structured according to a hierarchy varying from one period to another, from one author to another. For instance, in *Visio Tnugdali* (written in 1149, comprising one of the most articulate and logical topographies), hell has two levels⁵: the higher hell is for the souls of those guilty of murder, perfidy, pride, greed, robbery, etc. (a special place with harsher punishments is reserved to those who committed these sins but were men of God); the lower hell comprises the non-believers and those who did not hope in the divine mercy; at the very bottom of hell there is Lucifer, *princeps tenebrarum*. There is then the “moderate punishment of the not very bad” and the “plain of joy” for the not very good. Symmetrically, heaven has levels of holiness separated by walls: the glory of spouses, martyrs, people of God, chaste persons etc.; on top of this hierarchy is the Creator himself. However, Ugolino Brunforte does not seem concerned with such thick details: to him, the afterworld is bipolar: there is a place of punishment (featuring a steep mountain, a plain full of thorns and brambles, a furnace and a bridge) and a place of reward (seen as a city)⁶. Concerning the pace of punishment, it may be hell or purgatory; besides the demons around the furnace, nothing else suggests hell; there is only one sin mentioned (compared to the more or less complex taxonomies of the previous visions), related to a biographical episode of Saint Francis (predicting a famine). As for paradise, the author of the vision is interested only in the presence of former Friars Minor members (especially Saint Francis and his first two disciples, Bernardus and Egidius). It is a way of saying that the rigours of the Regulation are a guarantee of eternal life, where never-ending joy replaces the temporary suffering of

the mundane world. The noble wealth of paradise will compensate for the assumed poverty. Saint Francis no longer wears the tunic specific to the order but “a most wonderful cloak adorned with beautiful stars” *chlamide toto stellis pulcherrimis decorato*⁷.

Before reaching heaven’s gates, the protagonist must cross a bridge underneath which monstrous creatures loom. Concerning medieval Christian literature, Ciccarese (2003, 145, n. 26) believes that Gregory the Great used this motif for the first time in his *Dialogues*, IV, 37.10. Still, we cannot correlate this *pons probationis* and the Chinvat bridge (Culianu 1979), connecting the earth and the sky in the Zoroastrian culture. Anyway, associated with the river of fire (a Jewish motif, as per Culianu 1979), *pons probationis* becomes a recurring topic of visions. It is present in *Visio Sunniulfi*, *Visio Baronti*, *Epistula X Eadburgae abbatis* by Bonifacius (of 717) etc.; in *Visio Tnugdali*, there are even two *pontes probationis* in two distinct spaces: one in hell, and the other in the median region between hell and heaven. This bridge functions like a selection grid because it is incredibly narrow (sometimes associated with other obstacles: nails, as in *Visio Tnugdali* or the fact that it is shiny, thus slippery, like the bridge within the vision I study here). Only the righteous can cross it, while those burdened by sins end up in the river below for their temporary or eternal punishment⁸. The protagonist of the vision in *Actus Beati Francisci* reaches the middle of the bridge with angelic assistance; abandoned there, he prays for divine mercy. The first two pairs of wings growing from his prayer are wasted because he hastens to the angel. He had the patience to wait for the last pair to develop fully and enable him to fly.

Not only did this unusual image draw my attention, but that it took 150 years for the wings to grow (at least according to the protagonist). This period is perceived and measured differently in our world: the entire vision lasts from the Matutinum to the Prima, canonical moments a few hours apart. In *Navigatio Sancti Brendani abbatis* (chap. I), a similar thing occurs: fifteen days in *Terra Repromissionis Sanctorum* are a year in our world. I have tried to interpret this difference (Anonymous 2018, 230-238) from both Augustine’s perception of the time and mostly Boethius, and the differences between the

profane and the sacred time (Eliade 1963), between χρόνος (physical, measurable time) and καιρός (*tempus speciale*, characteristic to mystical experiences and theophanies). However, the details provided by Ugolino Brunforte are too few to extend here the same ideas as for *Navigatio Sancti Brendani abbatis*. Moreover, *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*, the more extended time is the profane (χρόνος), the reverse of what happens here. However, Mircea Eliade's conclusion is still valid: "For religious man time too, like space, is neither homogeneous nor continuous" because he lives in two types of time (Eliade 1963, 68).

The narrative ends with the protagonist returning to our world for seven⁹ days, "much against his will"/*cum taedio*. Thus, the author reprises another recurring motif of the visions *contemptus mundi*/the contempt of the world experienced by those who felt eternal joy. At the end of the seven days, the fever got the best of him, and he died; subsequently, Saint Francis led him to paradise.

4. Conclusions

Ugolino Brunforte has a great insight into the medieval world of visions/*visiones animarum* and these texts' defining themes and motifs. The ultimate purpose of these productions was the betterment of the behaviour of those reading or listening to the story (by featuring in as many details as possible the punishments entailed by the transgressions from Christian morals, as well as the rewards for the ones worthy). These works are especially welcomed in religious settings; thus, the author must have been familiar at least with the most famous of them – not only *Visio Tnugdali* – a best-seller of its time (with over 40 translations into vernacular languages between the mid-12th century, when it was written, and the early 15th century). He features the same episodes of the protagonist's actual suffering with the consent of the angel accompanying him in his journey. Furthermore, it is worth noting the personal touch of the author concerning the common themes: he suppresses some (e.g., the soul exiting the body, the dispute between angels and demons), he compresses others (e.g., the absence of hell, the very brief presentation of paradise, and the topography of the afterworld in general). He features

others from the perspective of adapting all the themes to the purpose ascribed to the vision by himself as the *auctor scriptor* or by the protagonist when he told his experience.

To understand it better, we must differentiate between the account of the vision and the purpose of the vision as such. Whereas the goal of the story is almost invariably¹⁰ the one mentioned above (to induce a desirable change of attitude and behaviour from the readers or audience), the purpose of the vision is more nuanced. Some visions aim to radically change the protagonist's lifestyle (*Visio Tnugdali*) or specific aspects (*Epistula XXII ad Eustochium* by Jerome). Some visions wish to convey a severe message to the protagonist's entourage (in *Visio Wettini*, where Wetti dies right after accounting his experiences) or visions granted to the "beneficiaries" as a reward for a worthy life (*Visio Salvii* in *Historiarum libri decem*, VII.1, by Gregory of Tours). The text I analyse here has none of the goals above: Ugolino Brunforte has a two-fold purpose for the vision. Firstly, it confirms the idea that the honest observance of the Order's Regulation is a guarantee of accessing the blessed life after death (the vision of chap. XXIX is thus consonant with the one featured in chap. XXII). Secondly, the vision has a purifying function; namely, through the suffering experienced during the vision, the soul expiates all residue of guilt and directly joins the paradise with many other blessed souls. It is expressed explicitly, though briefly, in the last sentence of the chapter: "After seven days, [...] Saint Francis came to him and conducted his soul to life eternal" after being purified by that vision with the angel's guidance (*in visione predicta angelo ducente purgatam*). Therefore, the long but temporary suffering in purgatory no longer takes time after death but is anticipated and condensed in the anthumous experience of a vision lasting a few hours.

NOTES

¹ Of German origin, used in medieval Latin, the term *guardianus* designated in The Order of Friars the person in charge of managing a local community, unlike the *custos* and *minister* referring to the higher hierarchical levels (The Order of Friars Minor 2019, 5-8).

² With some minor exceptions (*Visio Salvii* in *Historiarum libri decem*, VII.1, by Gregory of Tours, featuring two angels; or *Visio Fursei* in *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, III.19, by Bede the Venerable, where there are three angels).

³ The goal of my comparisons is to be illustrative, not exhaustive.

⁴ At least as an intention: in most cases, suffering is mitigated and temporary.

⁵ There are divisions of hell described as early as the third century, in *Apocalypsis/Visio Pauli*, featuring a well where fall all those who did not believe in Christ's incarnation; or later, as in *Visio Drythelmi* (Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, V.12), when an angel warns Drythelmus that the upper parts of hell and the lower parts of heaven are not the actual hell or heaven; all souls here must wait for the Final Judgment.

⁶ A recurring theme in the medieval *visiones animarum*. M.P. Ciccacese (2003, 32) identifies the first description of paradise as a city in *The Book of Enoch*, 14. 8-25, and he believes this fragment was a source of inspiration for the entire Christian literature.

⁷ The passage reminds me of another brief vision within chapter XXII of the book: a novice who wanted to leave the Order because he hated the simple tunic saw, in a vision, St Francis along with a multitude of disciples, all in bright attires; the curious novice is told that "these splendid vestments have been given to us in exchange for the coarse tunic we wore with so much patience."

⁸ For the visions written after *Epistula X* by Bonifacius, according to Ciccacese (2003, 364, n. 17), they associate the *pons probationis* with purgatory, not hell.

⁹ The number should be interpreted according to its symbolical value. As per Isidore of Seville (*Liber numerorum qui in Sanctis Scripturis occurrunt*), seven is associated with the present life and, of course, with the Holy Spirit and its seven gifts.

¹⁰ Some of the visions presented by Gregory the Great in *Dialogues*, IV, may be seen as exemplified supporting opinions on salvation.

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The Problem of Tyrannicide in the Monarchomach and Leaguer Political Discourse During the Reigns of Charles IX (1560-1574) and Henry III (1574-1589)

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Abstract

The French Wars of Religion saw the problem of tyranny and the ways to address it take the center stage in French political thought: until this period, it could have remained a subject of abstract speculation, but that was no longer the case in the tumultuous years between 1562 and 1598. Confronted with a hostile central government, both the Huguenots and the Catholic League were forced to think of concrete steps to be taken in order to remove an unsuitable (“tyrannical”) king and of a way to justify and legitimize such a radical measure. For this purpose, the Huguenots and the Catholic League removed the ultimate sovereignty in a kingdom from the person of the king to the people as represented by its magistrates and assemblies, who could depose an incorrigible tyrant. Yet, there was a final and decisive action someone could take in order to be rid of a tyrant, namely, slaying him, but, in this, the positions of the Huguenots and of the Catholic League diverged: the former rejected this option, the latter accepted it. This paper aims to analyze the manifestations of the concept of tyrannicide in the ideology of resistance devised by the Huguenots and Catholics during the reigns of Charles IX (1560-1574) and Henry III (1574-1589), while trying to answer why the latter were willing to accept an action which was so antithetical to the sacredness surrounding kings in sixteenth-century France and to their own Catholic faith.

Keywords: tyranny, tyrannicide, french wars of religion, Huguenots, Catholic League

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1. Introduction

While often a subject of theoretical discussion in medieval political thought, the question of resistance to tyrants and of tyrannicide became acute in the sixteenth century with the advent of the Reformation, when the Reformers were confronted with Catholic monarchs determined to repress the new faith. Tyranny manifested through unjust acts which injured only the material interests of the subjects was one thing, and in such a case the Reformers may have limited themselves to Luther's first recommendations, prayer or flight. But tyranny directed against the faith was a different matter altogether: it was something for which the Protestants were very much prepared to countenance the possibility of rebellion. Consequently, Luther acknowledged that active resistance was permitted if the laws of the Empire allowed it. Then, there was the declaration of the magistrates of the city of Magdeburg, who took up arms against emperor Charles V in 1550, which became the standard reference of Protestant theories of resistance. The ascent of Mary Tudor in England and the persecution she unleashed led to a wave of exiles, who produced the first polemical tracts advocating resistance against persecuting tyrants: John Ponet, in particular, seemed to go even as far as admitting the possibility of tyrannicide by private individuals.

In France, Calvin and his adherents tried to operate within the limits of the law and, in their opinion, resistance against a legitimate king could be carried out only by the lawful magistrates of the kingdom and only in accordance with their authority. For the French Protestants, the most important magistrates, and the ones most authorized to resist tyrannical abuses, were the princes of the blood: for this purpose, Calvin and other Protestant pastors carried out an intense propaganda campaign trying to persuade the first of these, Antoine de Bourbon, king of Navarre, to lead such an action. But the Protestants had misjudged Antoine's devotion for their cause and all their attempts to win him over came to naught. It is in the context of the frustration caused by Antoine's refusal to join the side of the Reformation that Theodore Beza made an allusion to tyrannicide, as the possibility of a lawful action led by the king of Navarre seemed remote (Jouanna 1989, 131). Yet, this remained

an extremely isolated case: even after the first war of religion broke out in the spring of 1562, with a Huguenot rebellion led by the prince of Condé, there was no talk of even resisting the king, let alone of the possibility of killing him.

During the first decade of the religious wars, the Huguenots tried to portray their rebellions in loyalist terms, directed not against the king himself, but against a coterie of evil advisers, who were both persecuting the Protestants and despoiling the kingdom, while usurping royal authority: at least, this was the official line as presented in the propagandistic texts issued by Condé himself. That does not mean that, during this period, there had not been any texts advocating resistance to tyrannical kings: such texts were written, but they were far from the mainstream of Protestant political thought, sometimes, in case of the most embarrassing ones, openly disavowed by the Huguenot leadership. However, there was a gradual radicalization of the Huguenots' relationship with the Crown of France, over the first three wars of religion, and this was reflected in some political texts of lesser importance, coming from the lower ranking members of the movement, and who argued for resistance against tyrannical kings. Even though the Huguenot leadership still stuck with the conventional argument – that they were not actually fighting against the king –, it could be argued that these texts prepared the groundwork for the “monarchomach” texts published after Saint-Bartholomew.

2. The Hesitations of the Huguenot Monarchomachs: 1573-1579

The role of Saint-Bartholomew's massacre in the development of the monarchomach literature has been amply debated: it seems to us, although one can see traces of the same kind of argumentation in tracts published before 1572, that the massacre made the notion of actively resisting a tyrannical king, and even deposing him, acceptable to most Huguenots. Their resistance theory was based on the idea of placing the ultimate sovereignty within the people, who could exert it against an errant king through its individual magistrates or through representative assemblies such as the Estates General.

All three of the so-called “monarchomach triumvirs”, François Hotman, Theodore Beza and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, were in agreement over this issue, although they might differ in some details, like the exact procedures for the deposition of kings or the exact importance attributed to the magistrates and to the representative assemblies in their constitutional models. But, if deposition of tyrants was taken into consideration and accepted, based on the reasoning that Christian monarchies, and in particular that of France, were fundamentally contractual and the people retained a right to withdraw its allegiance if a king broke the conditions of his ascension, on the other hand, tyrannicide was still frowned upon. Despite this, there are some hints in the monarchomach works that they were tentatively considering this possibility, although it never came to open endorsement.

In his work *Francogallia*, François Hotman argues, based on the alleged custom from the Merovingian and Carolingian periods, that “the kings of France were established by the consent and the will of the people, rather than by hereditary right”; consequently, the same people had “full power and sovereign authority (*souveraine autorité*) to depose them” (Hotman 1574, 59-67). In most of the examples provided by Hotman, this authority of the people manifested itself through stripping the king of his office, even exiling or imprisoning him; there is a single case of so-called “tyrannicide” mentioned by Hotman, that of Childeric II from the seventh century. Hotman provides no definitive judgment in this case: on one hand, he clearly implies that Childeric had deserved his fate for becoming “insolent, proud and presumptuous”; on the other hand, the circumstances of his murder, perpetrated by a nobleman called Bodilo in order to avenge a private wrong – having been sentenced by the king to corporal punishment without a trial –, would have hardly constituted what the theorists of resistance regarded as a justified tyrannicide. There is no insinuation that Bodilo had acted on a calling from God or that he had been mandated by the people to carry out the punishment of the king: on the contrary, his personal motivation is clearly pointed out by Hotman. Why was such a controversial case not obscured by Hotman, especially since he

did not lack for other examples, when depositions were carried out without recourse to regicide? A possible reason could be found in Hotman's antiquarian scruples, who felt compelled to cite all the cases of deposed kings from Frankish history. When mentioning the deposition of Childeric I, during the fifth century, Hotman makes a brief reference that this course of action was pursued as an alternative to simply slaying the erring king: "his subjects could no longer bear the detestable debaucheries which he committed with their daughters and not wanting to kill him, they deposed him" (Hotman 1574, 67). Could the implication of this statement be that the tyrannical king could have been executed by his people if the latter chose to do so? In the chapter on the deposition of kings, Hotman remains ambiguous and makes no firm commitment one way or the other, but, at a later point, he asserts that "the kings who by evil practices and deceptions oppress this saint and sacred liberty (...) break the most holy right which has ever existed between men, and rip apart the ties of all human society" (Hotman 1574, 107). Although Hotman does not openly condone tyrannicide, the gravity of the offence inherent in tyranny may suggest that all possible remedies, including regicide, could be considered. However, it is clear from Hotman's description of the role of the Estates General that he envisions the deposition of a tyrannical king in constitutional terms, which should negate the recourse to more violent means like regicide: the constitutional structure imagined by Hotman implies by default the king's submission to the decisions of the Estates, not necessarily in the sense of a willing agreement, but meaning that the deposed king was deprived of any means to forcefully oppose the Estates. In such a political structure, despite some isolated allusions to this possibility, which I have mentioned above, tyrannicide simply does not have a place, since it is never required. Is there a level of naivety in Hotman's argument? Without any doubt, but the same could be said of his description of the powers of the Estates General, which is both ahistorical and politically unrealistic. It was, indeed, absurd to assume that a king would meekly accept a sentence of deposition passed against him by an assembly of his subjects, or that the respective king would find no way to wage war against

his revolted subjects: but *Francogallia* is, rather, an expression of the monarchomach constitutional idealism, looking for ways to get rid of a tyrant, but without fully acknowledging the practical implications of such an act. Hotman acknowledged that rebellions did occur and his most illustrative example are the events surrounding the League of the Public Weal, a coalition of nobles which revolted in 1465, during the reign of Louis XI. Because that League put the concept of “public good” at the core of its governmental programme and its members claimed to be acting as representatives of the whole kingdom, a whole mythology of this war emerged in French public conscience, mythology which came to the fore during the Wars of Religion. However, this rebellion, according to Hotman’s description, occurred in the context of the degradation of the original constitution of the kingdom, due to the constant undermining from the Capetian kings: the rebellion took place in the absence of an Estates General, the institution usually responsible for calling to account a tyrannical king, and its main goal was the convocation of the respective Estates. Nor was its goal, according to Hotman, the deposition of the king, despite the misgovernment of Louis XI: instead, the rebels “sent ambassadors and letters to Paris, to the Parlement, to clerics, and to the rector of the University, asking them not to think that this army was gathered to commit violence against the person of the king, but to bring him to reason and to exercise the office of good king, as the consideration of the public good demanded it” (Hotman 1574, 173-174).

If François Hotman was so shy to talk about tyrannicide, one could assume that this could have been caused by the fact that he based his argument from *Francogallia* mainly on his interpretation of Frankish and French history: there were not many regicides in this history and one had to go back to the Merovingian era in order to find some examples. But, when analyzing the texts of the other two monarchomachs, Beza and Mornay, we find that both of them were equally not inclined to condone tyrannicide, even though they relied in their works on Biblical precedents, Greek and Roman history and the history of other European states, which could have provided them with much more instances of this sort.

In the words of Donald Kelley, Beza's *Right of Magistrates*, "took off from Calvin's view of resistance as well as the Magdeburg Confession" and "had a more religious orientation and depended more on the martyrological conception of 'cause'" (Kelley 1983, 309). Therefore, Beza focuses on transgressions against divine law as the first defining trait of tyranny (although not exclusively). He argues extensively that such commands, which are against God's law, should not be obeyed, but, instead, actively resisted, and extends this recommendation to secular injustices, as well. Although prayers should be the first resort, Beza denies "that is illicit for people oppressed by a manifest tyranny to use lawful remedies together with repentance and prayers" (Beza 1970, 11). On the contrary, no oath of loyalty could prevent a people from taking action against a tyrant, if that oath was in clear contradiction with equity and reason, because every people had a right to self-defense. However, the cancellation of this obligation fell upon the lawful magistrates of a kingdom, not upon private individuals, who were still bound by their previous obligations. And, more so, this resistance was not supposed to go as far as removing the tyrant from his throne, but only to prevent unjust commands from being carried out. Deposition was the responsibility of institutions such as "the Estates or those who held legislative power in that kingdom or empire": only they had the power to "repress and punish" a legitimate tyrant (Beza 1970, 20-24).

Some of the examples provided by Beza to justify this argument do involve the death of tyrants at the hands of the people's magistrates: thus, Beza mentions briefly that the Spartan ephors "chased out some of their kings, and punished others with death", but he elaborates much more on the case of the Biblical king of Judah, Amaziah. When asking whether Amaziah's killing was carried out by sedition or by right, Beza establishes what he considers to be the standards necessary to be met in order for a regicide to be considered lawful: Amaziah "was not killed by his servants", but by "a general league of those of Jerusalem", in the open, by "a public authority, and not by some sudden revolt", while the cause of his slaying "was not some private hatred, but his impiety, in direct contradiction to

the main part of his oath” (Beza 1970, 31-32). From this, it could be inferred that, according to Beza, a regicide carried out at the command of a sovereign assembly, against an unrepentant king, for a just cause and for the sake of public good, could be accepted. One needs to consider the fact that Beza, relying so much on Biblical sources, had to find a way to accommodate the examples of regicides from the Bible, which would not always follow constitutional procedures. How important was this can be inferred from the fact that Beza makes no mention of Edward II or Richard II from English history, although he would have had the opportunity when he praised the English constitutional arrangement, with a Parliament bridling the power of the king. Both Edward II and Richard II were two clear cases of overthrown tyrants, whose deposition was carried out by coalitions of nobles whom Beza would have clearly regarded as the kind of magistrates entitled to resist a tyrant, but the suspicions of murder that surrounded their deaths in prison likely offended Beza’s political and religious sensibilities. In this regard, it is quite conspicuous that all the examples of depositions provided by Beza from the history of contemporary states (from Denmark, Sweden, Scotland, the Empire, or France during the Merovingian and Carolingian dynasties) end up, at worst, with the deposed rulers imprisoned, but not killed. However, the tyrant “violating all human and divine laws” was guilty of the greatest lese-majesty (Beza 1970, 48): this might seem to suggest that Beza could envision the capital punishment for such a terrible offence, but, when he discusses the king’s rapport with the people subjected to his rule following a contractual agreement, the punishment meted out in case of tyranny is forfeiture of his kingdom, paralleling the forfeiture of a fief in feudal law: “the emperor himself, as we have shown, owes homage to the empire, of which he is the first and sovereign vassal (and this must be more true or at least as true for the condition of kings with respect to their kingdoms), and, without doubt, as we have shown that is the practice everywhere, they lose their fiefs if they commit some felonies up to the point of becoming manifest and incorrigible tyrants” (Beza 1970, 52). Beza also referred to the example of David, who, while persecuted by Saul, spared

the life of the latter when he had him at his mercy: this happened, according to Beza, “because Saul still retained the royal throne, and David had no authority to take the kingdom from him, nor his life, which belonged to God and to the Estates of the kingdom” (Beza 1970, 56-57).

Just like Beza’s *Right of Magistrates*, Mornay’s *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos* relied on a combination of scriptural, historical and juridical arguments to make its case in favor of resistance. The main difference between the two works consists in the lesser emphasis placed on the role of the Estates General, in *Vindiciae*, as the main institution entitled to depose a tyrant: following the Catholic-dominated Estates from Blois, in 1576, the Huguenots undoubtedly realized that the Estates might not be the instrument they were hoping for in order to curb the religious persecutions. Donald Kelley describes *Vindiciae* as “a further radicalization because it was more abstract, more Biblical (and less institutional) and because it countenanced resistance on an international basis” (Kelley 1983, 309). Anne McLaren also argues that *Vindiciae* “opened the door to tyrannicide still further”: she based this assertion on *Vindiciae*’s use of the language of metamorphosis, in order “to deploy the conventional, albeit deeply felt, early modern antithesis between humanity (allied to God) and bestiality (allied to the devil)”. In this context, a tyrant becomes the equivalent of “predators and monsters” and, because he has abandoned his humanity, “it then becomes the duty of all people, even from beyond the ranks of the children of God, to preserve humanity from his depredations”: by “counterpoising man and beast”, Mornay “refers to natural law to extend the remit of those who might lawfully raise the sword against a tyrant, now defined as a beast in human guise” (McLaren 2006, 47-48). But the evidence that *Vindiciae* accepted the possibility of tyrannicide, in the right circumstances, is not based only on the use of such dehumanizing metaphors: first and foremost, it is the nature and the gravity of the crime (tyranny) that makes possible to consider such an option: because, on one hand, it allows for the most serious punishments and, on the other hand, makes it impossible, or at least extremely ill-advised, for

manifest tyranny to be tolerated, as it could lead to the destruction of the commonwealth.

The relationship between king and subjects is based on a set of fundamental conditions, which have been established since the Biblical kingdom of Israel and continued, according to the author, until the sixteenth century: the original sacrality of the pact between king and subjects was regularly reinforced by the coronation oaths which kings took after assuming the throne. It is clear that, by binding the king with such obligations, strengthened both by a millenarian tradition and by divine sanction, any attempt to break them was akin to sacrilege: “If the king should grow haughty on the basis of royal power and violate the public laws, and finally disregard the fealty he has given, then obviously by that very right he is considered to be condemned by that worst anathema, with which the church once condemned the Emperor Julian the Apostate” (Brutus 2003, 136). Probably the most damning trait of the tyrant was his deceitfulness (something which anticipates the rhetoric of the Catholic League, which would constantly emphasize this alleged trait in Henry III): “the adroit tyrant wants to appear to be what the king actually is. Since he knows that men are inflamed by love of virtue, so he understands that they are to be deceived by the shadow of virtue” (Brutus 2003, 145-147). Therefore, there are some statements in the text that show that *Vindiciae* was taking the option of armed resistance much farther than *Francogallia* or *Right of Magistrates* were prepared to do, albeit not without certain limitations. *Vindiciae* may have declared that “tyranny is not simply a crime; it is the chief and, as it were, a sort of summation of all crimes”, but this definition did not translate into an absolute license for those willing to oppose it. Whatever measures were taken to address the issue, they had to remain confined within the limits of the law, namely, they could be only what was permitted “either by right or just force” (Brutus 2003, 155). Therefore, the slaying of tyrants without title is categorically lawful, as it is clear from *Vindiciae*’s reference to the Athenians Harmodius and Aristogiton or the Romans Brutus and Cassius – and this rule clearly applies to anyone, not just to the official magistrates. But such punishments could

be extended to tyrants by practice, after all other recourses had been exhausted: a legitimate monarch who would slide into tyranny would place himself outside the boundaries of the law that otherwise protected even the most humble subjects and, thus, be “guilty of high treason against the kingdom or empire”: the implication of this charge is undoubtful, since high treason had always been a capital crime. *Vindiciae* states this in most uncertain terms when arguing that the tyrant could be “most justly punished according to the Julian law on public force” and, therefore, it is lawful “to move against him with force, guile, and every stratagem of war, as if against one who has been judged an enemy of the country and commonwealth” (Brutus 2003, 156).

Consequently, *Vindiciae* contains many more examples than *Francogallia* or *Right of Magistrates* of impious monarchs who met an unfortunate end due to their misdeeds, and uses a much harsher language with respect to tyrants, sometimes coming closer to the tone of the Catholic League. But since the tyrant is “judged an enemy of God and men” (Brutus 2003, 155), his destruction could be the result of a direct divine intervention or could be brought about by the earthly forces of the commonwealth tasked with repelling the tyrant. Some of *Vindiciae*’s examples are not classical tyrannicides, but cases of God’s retribution: Saul “was called a rebel by Samuel and eventually suffered the penalty for rebellion”, Jeroboam was punished with the death of his son, then “his whole race was extirpated by the act of Baasha down to the last male”, “Herod condemned Christ Himself, as if He had aspired to the kingdom” and, as a result, “he perished wretchedly and lost his own kingdom”, Julian “deserted Christ for the pagans; but shortly afterwards he suffered from the avenging right arm of that same ‘Galilean’” and contemporary monarchs who persecuted the Reformers “perished in the midst of their crime, and in the very act; others are borne from their triumph to the tomb” – a likely allusion to the deaths of Henry II and Mary Tudor (Brutus 2003, 24-26). The examples of the overthrown Roman tyrants, like Nero, Caligula, Domitian and Commodus, are brought up to illustrate the fate of those who “desired either to claim for themselves the honours due to God alone or to take them from God” and therefore “theirs were always horrible

deaths” (Brutus 2003, 29). The death of the tyrant, in such cases, is not the act of a mere mortal wishing to avenge injustice, not even that of the magistrate acting in his capacity to remove the source of misgovernment, but a cataclysmic event, the ineluctable outcome of the clash between the proud tyrant and God. But the people itself is entitled to resist, on the basis of the covenant between God, king and people, which made the last two responsible for each other’s behaviour: in restraining or punishing a king contravening God’s law, the people would act as God’s own agent and thus fulfill the obligations they assumed through their covenant. But this punishment was not to be carried out by the “whole multitude – that monster with countless heads”, who lacked both the wisdom and the authority to make such a decision, but by those who “have received authority from the people – the magistrates, clearly, who are inferior to the king and chosen by the people, or constituted in some other way” (Brutus 2003, 45-46). This is due to the fact that private individuals were not responsible for the fate of the whole commonwealth, which was not entrusted to them: the people can act against a tyrant only as a corporative whole, which automatically excludes any act of single-handed resistance.

Does *Vindiciae* extend this right of punishment to include the execution of the deposed tyrant? The example provided by *Vindiciae*, that of the biblical queen Athaliah, is not conclusive in this regard, because “she had usurped the kingdom of her grandsons”. This kind of tyrant, who lacked legitimate authority, was not protected by custom and law in the same way a lawful ruler was, and could be lawfully slain. Other Biblical examples of tyrannicides, like “Ehud who killed King Eglon of Moab” or “Jehu, who killed King Joram against whom he was fighting, extirpated the line of Ahab, and put to death all the followers of Baal” (Brutus 2003, 61-62), cannot constitute a general endorsement of such an action, because they were perpetrated at the express command of God. The cases of extraordinary individuals, answering a divine call, cannot provide a precedent or establish a constitutional rule, since “those clear signs by which God was accustomed to confirm the extraordinary vocation of these heroes are for the

most part lacking to us in this age” (Brutus 2003, 171). There might be a specific reason why *Vindiciae* singled out Athaliah, a queen, as the only example of tyrant who was slain after a specific legal procedure and not as an extraordinary event instigated directly by God: it is likely a veiled attack against Catherine de Medici, whose black legend was fully developed after 1572 and whom the Huguenots blamed for Saint-Bartholomew. Outside of an extraordinary authorization by God, the fate of a tyrant is to be decided by institutions such as the Estates General, as “on its authority kings were removed to monasteries for reasons of extravagance, idleness, or tyranny, to such an extent that whole lineages were deprived of succession to the kingdom” and which had the right “to expel a tyrant or an unworthy king, or to consign him to his relations and to establish a good king in his place” (Brutus 2003, 86). Mornay’s description of the role of the Estates indicates that the fate of a deposed king is to be either exile, or some form of imprisonment: he makes no mention of him being put to death, even following a lawful sentence. *Vindiciae* also refers to the example of Manlius Capitolinus – who came into conflict with the Roman Senate, was accused of aspiring to kingship and executed –, claiming that it will be lawful to “pass the same sentence” on the tyrant (Brutus 2003, 156): but since Manlius was a former Roman magistrate, no longer in office at the time of his sentencing, he would classify as a “tyrant without title”, in whose case there was little doubt that he could be resisted or killed by anyone, even private persons. *Vindiciae*’s references to the fate of two Roman emperors, Nero, the *bête noire* of Christian historiography, whom the Roman senate sentenced “to be an enemy of the commonwealth, and condemned him to death”, and Vitellius, who was, by command of the same Senate, “ignominiously mutilated, pulled through the city, and put to death” (Brutus 2003, 161) could be taken as an unambiguous endorsement of tyrannicide; so is his mention of the ahistorical example of Arbaces – an Assyrian general, in the account of the Greek historian Ctesias, quoted by Diodorus Siculus –, who “killed Sardanapalus, who was distributing provisions amongst women and lavishing royal resources on prostitutes” (Brutus 2003, 167). On the other hand,

contemporary examples are less bloody, namely, “Christian in Denmark, Eric in Sweden, and more recently still to Queen Mary in Scotland”, all monarchs who were deposed and imprisoned, but whose lives had been spared (in case of Mary Stuart, only at the time *Vindiciae* was written). Even the case of Edward II of England is given a “constitutional make over”, with the role of the Parliament in his deposition being significantly enhanced and Edward’s ulterior death in prison being conveniently glossed over. Despite *Vindiciae*’s virulence against tyranny, the endorsement of tyrannicide is clearly cautious: the only examples brought up to support it are not only far removed from the period when the text was written, but they are also some of the worst monarchs in the historiographical tradition of the sixteenth century. They could just as well be considered an educational warning to contemporary kings (who obviously would not want to be compared with the likes of Nero), and not a model of regicide to be followed in contemporary contexts.

Overall, the three major texts of the monarchomach corpus from the 1570s are extremely hesitant when discussing the issue of tyrannicide, and the historiographic consensus, at least with regard to *Francogallia* and *Right of Magistrates*, that the Huguenot monarchomachs rejected tyrannicide, is entirely correct. Only *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos* seems more open to the idea of slaying a tyrant, but, even in its case, there is no systematic analysis of the issue. Rather, there are occasional references that appear when *Vindiciae* discusses the punishment of tyrants: but it is worth noticing that this punishment is regarded as part of the process of removing the tyrant from power, instead of a fulfillment of justice. In his work *De Regno et Regali Potestate*, William Barclay refers to *Vindiciae* when he accuses the Catholic League of having borrowed the arguments of the Huguenots, because *Vindiciae* was the most radical of the three. Barclay did not make a clear distinction between deposition and tyrannicide, and, as we can see from the examples mentioned above, *Vindiciae* did not always establish this distinction either. It is true, though, that the scarcity of those examples and their temporal remoteness leaves room for doubt. At the same time, the monarchomachs’

treatment of the king as the first magistrate of the kingdom and their normalization of the discussion about deposition resulted, according to Paul-Alexis Mellet, in a desacralization of the king and “the development of the theories of tyrannicide once Henry de Navarre was in position to assume the throne of France” (Mellet 2007, 357). The Huguenots and the Catholic League desired each other’s destruction, but, through a strange turn of events, the monarchomach discourse on resistance prepared the ground for the unprecedented attacks of the Catholic League against Henry III.

3. The Radical Rhetoric of the Catholic League: 1589

The issue of tyrannicide became a political reality in 1589: in reaction to Henry III murdering the duke Henry de Guise and his brother, the cardinal Louis de Guise, in the castle of Blois, the Catholic League, through the voice of Sorbonne, proclaimed the deposition of the king – something that the Huguenots never did with respect to Charles IX, after Saint-Bartholomew. Therefore, the rhetoric of the League did not limit itself to abstract speculations on the rights of the subjects, but it was actually put into practice, in a propaganda campaign aiming to persuade the French public opinion to contribute to the elimination of Henry III from the political stage. Nicolas Le Roux argued that “Saint-Bartholomew constituted the peak of this form of exterminating violence that the Catholic preachers called for, and the long memory of the event played a part in the preparation of the minds for the tyrannicide” (Le Roux 2006, 76). There had already been a constant degradation of Henry III’s prestige during the 1580s, both due to his personal failings and due to his unwillingness to carry out a policy of relentless repression against the Huguenots. Claude Haton described how “in 1581 the religious radicals in his parish refused to take part in public prayers for an heir, desiring Henry’s ‘death and the extermination of his entire lineage’”, which shows that “ordinary people, who surely had no acquaintance with the new Protestant literature justifying tyrannicide, were already imagining the king’s death in the early 1580s” (Carroll 2009, 235). In 1589, the anti-Huguenot violence of the Catholics from the preceding decades was going

to be directed against the treacherous king: this juxtaposition between the image of Henry III and the image of the heretic led to the conclusion that they could and should meet the same fate. Henry III was not, formally, a Protestant, but for the Catholic League this was only a deception, a mask which fell off with the events at Blois. In support of this notion, the Catholic League could appeal to the Church tradition that condemned those Catholics who favored heresy or merely failed to suppress it: and there was no doubt in their minds that Henry III had allied himself with the Huguenots, something which the League propaganda openly asserted. On 7 January 1589, the Sorbonne not only that it declared Henry III to be deposed, but also authorized the rebellion “for the conservation of the Roman Church”, because the king had violated public faith by assassinating the Guise brothers, “to the prejudice of the Catholic religion, the edict of Holy Union and the natural liberty of the Estates of the kingdom” (Le Roux 2006, 162). As pointed out by Janine Garrisson, “the League system would have made France a veritable theocracy, for the French people, the kingmakers themselves, swore ‘to believe as the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church believes, and to live and die in that belief’, and it was obvious that only the ‘Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic religion’ would be ‘permitted, received, and professed in this realm’” (Garrisson 1995, 315). As we saw when discussing this matter in *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*, it could be a short distance from advocating resistance against tyrants to urging their murder. The fiercest attacks against Henry III, including the calls for regicide, came from the Parisian clergy associated with the League: François Pigenat, *curé* at Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, was the first to call for tyrannicide on 9 January 1589, when he asked his audience whether “there was not someone amongst them to avenge the death of the duke by putting the tyrant to death” (Le Roux 2006, 98). According to Tatiana Debbagi Baranova, because the political accusations against Henry III may have seemed insufficient for some to justify the virulence of the attacks, the League transformed the political confrontation into a religious one, where the fallen king is depicted as an earthly avatar of the devil; in these circumstances, defaming the king becomes the obligation of

each preacher (Debbagi Baranova 2012, 107). There were more than two hundred pamphlets published in Paris against Henry III until his assassination on 1 August 1589 and they cover the king in insults, hurling every accusation possible, in an attempt to tarnish his image, laying thus the groundwork for the future regicide (Bernard 2011, 245-247).

One of the first pamphlets published in the aftermath of the Blois assassinations, called *Le Faux visage descouvert du fin Renard de la France. Ensemble quelques anagrammes et sonnets*, dating from 15 January 1589, depicts Henry III as a Machiavellian figure, in a stark contrast with that of the saintly Christian knight, the duke of Guise: with the motto “tyrannicidae praemium detur” on the first page, the text of the pamphlet asks plainly “what loyalty can you have for this tyrant who had the one who maintained and preserved his crown against the outrages of the heretics stabbed, without any respect for the holy assembly of the estates?” (*Faux visage* 1589, 7-8). Despite the implications of the text’s motto, *Le Faux visage* does not include a direct call for regicide, only an appeal to “avenge” the two Guise brothers and an argument for Henry’s automatic exclusion from the Christian community, as someone who consorted with “the pillars of Satan, the heretics and the *politiques*” and, because of this deed, became unworthy of the name of Christian. The text is addressed mainly to the French clergy, “messieurs les ecclesiastiques”, which explains why, although the author calls for the rejection of Henry III as both king and fellow Christian, he remains ambiguous on the matter of regicide: the clergy could be expected to raise their voices against the tyrant, following the many Biblical precedents, to preach the fight against him regardless of personal cost, but not to personally shed his blood. One of the most active propagandists of the League, Jean Boucher, published, likewise, a pamphlet called *La Vie et faits notables de Henry de Valois, maintenant tout au long sans rien requérir*, a brief biography of the king from the perspective of the rebellious League, whose alleged purpose was “to destroy the Church of God”: therefore, amongst all tyrannical crimes, Henry III was guilty of the worst, the one which should immediately attract his deposition. According to Boucher, Henry III’s entire reign was marked by

attempts at accommodating the heretics, at the expense of the Catholic Church, and by despoiling the people to satiate the greed of his favorites, living the life of a “Caligula, Elagabalus and Nero” (Boucher 1589, 34), the most salacious examples of tyrants from Roman history – and who all ended up overthrown. Not just your typical tyrant who oppressed his subjects, Henry III is a monarch who practiced sorcery (Boucher 1589, 48-49): the murders from Blois were merely the culmination of a monstrous career. What fate Boucher had in mind for Henry III is implied at the end of the pamphlet, when the author refers once again to the king as “Nero” and expresses his hope that, with the help of God, the people of France will overthrow “this yoke of tyranny which burdened them for fourteen years and make the Catholic Church regain its shine and splendor in France” (Boucher 1589, 63-64).

Regardless whether a text argued openly for regicide or not, portraying a monarch as a persecutor of the Church was bound to lead to that outcome. In the words of Nancy Lyman Roelker, in such circumstances, “it became not merely legitimate but meritorious for anyone to assassinate him, without any special authorization” (Roelker 1996, 187). But one can encounter open calls to regicide, as well: for instance, in texts like *Origine de la maladie de la France avec les remedes propres à la guarison d’icelle, avec une exhortation a l’entretienement de la guerre*. In this text, beset by heresy, France was in need of salvation and, therefore, “one need not fear sacrifice his own life and that of the tyrant for the preservation of the faith and for the public good”. The coronation of the king, the oaths of loyalty his subjects had taken are not absolute in the author’s opinion: his vision is that of a contractual monarchy, where a king was to be obeyed only as long as he faithfully fulfilled the duties of his office. There is a clear incompatibility between an unworthy individual and the office of kingship, which justified the deposition of unsuitable monarchs. The author of the pamphlet asks rhetorically “what proof of his valiance has he ever given against the enemies of our faith?” and concludes that “with his hypocrisy and simulated religion, he has only deceived and cheated us” (*Origine* 1589, 8). The solution to this problem was Henry’s

imprisonment in a monastery, but the pamphlet makes a clear allusion that regicide could and should also be an option, when pointing out that the king's life could be ritually sacrificed "to those whom he had wretchedly killed" (*Origine* 1589, 9).

For the League, Henry III became only Henry de Valois, "tyrant", "apostate" and "perfidious", and the destruction of all symbols associated with him in Paris provided the image of a symbolical death in anticipation of his physical assassination on 1 August 1589. Nicolas Le Roux refers to the effects of this iconoclastic fury that seized the Parisian crowds in the aftermath of the Blois murders as a "virtual death" of the king, whose function was to "restore the order of God in a city that saw itself as a new Jerusalem besieged by the forces of evil" and, therefore, rid the capital "of the stains that a king now stripped of his authority and turned into a mere individual had inflicted upon him" (Le Roux 2006, 98-99). Basically, all the traces of Henry III had to be eradicated and this process continued until his death: on 5 April, the same Sorbonne removed the name of the king from the mass, replacing the words "Pro Rege nostro" with "Pro Christianis Principibus nostris" (Le Roux 2006, 162-163). And, even though the official pronouncements of the League were trying to steer clear of the radicalism of the preachers and of the Seize – a political group controlling Paris and guilty of some of the worst excesses of the League –, echoes of it could be found amongst its upper ranks: a letter of Jacques de Diou, abbot of Orbais, to the duke of Mayenne from 17 April 1589 in which he briefly and frankly wished that his master would "exterminate completely" that tyrant (Henri III) together with Henry de Navarre (Zwierlein 2015, 58-59), is revealing for the true feelings of the League leadership. Other pamphlets also expressed their desire for the downfall of the king, but they urged Henry III to admit his crimes and abdicate voluntarily. Such was the case of *Response de Dom Bernard doyen de l'oratoire de S. Bernard des Feuillantins lez Paris, à une lettre à luy escrite & envoyee par Henry de Valois*, written by the dean of the feuillant monastery, dom Bernard de Montgaillard. Dom Bernard referred to the king as "traitor to the Catholic faith", "excommunicate (...) removed from the body of the Church like a putrid member",

“parricide”: since the text was addressing the king directly, the author urged him to abdicate in order to expiate his sins, but he also presented him with the fate of Biblical tyrants, “the stubborn Pharaoh, the arrogant Antiochus and the hopeless Herod” – as a reminder to the king of what befell the rulers who rose up against God (Montgaillard 1589, 49-52). Dom Bernard clearly accepts a right of revolt against a tyrant, but the fact that he asks Henry III to abdicate would suggest that the Sorbonne’s deposition from 7 January had not persuaded all the League’s supporters. It is conspicuous that Dom Bernard threatens the king with divine punishment, not with assassination. Coupled with the efforts made by diverse pamphleteers to prove that the oaths sworn to Henry III were invalidated by his crimes, Dom Bernard’s hesitations show how entrenched was the prestige of the French monarchy in the French society and how much effort the League had to expend in order to put the theoretical discussions about deposition of hypothetical tyrants into actual practice. The sentence of excommunication which the League was hoping to obtain from pope Sixt V – which was supposed to confirm the *de facto* excommunication incurred, in the opinion of the League, by Henry III for the murder of a cardinal - was particularly important, because, according to many Catholic opinions, the pope could invalidate an oath of loyalty and it would have eased the League’s efforts to keep severing the ties between the Frenchmen and their king; but also because, in the words of Paul-Alexis Mellet, at the moment the excommunication was formally pronounced, the regicide was no longer the task of a particular subject, but of God Himself, directly or through a providential man (Mellet 2006, 6).

The most important political tract of the League during this period was Jean Boucher’s *De justa Henrici tertii abdicatione*: it presented several similarities with the monarchomach works, which was remarked by their contemporaries and made some historians to argue that the monarchomachs served as a source of inspiration for the anti-royalist Leaguer rhetoric. Others, such as Cornel Zwierlein or Arlette Jouanna, suggested that these common ideas can be attributed to a common scholastic culture. However, as pointed

out by Arlette Jouanna, the Leaguers diverged significantly from the Huguenot monarchomachs by “assigning to the civil power the exclusive goal of making the unity of the faith triumph” (Jouanna 2013, 332). What Boucher and the monarchomachs had in common was the idea of the sovereignty of the people, the concept of a conditional contract between people and king and the legitimacy of resistance and deposition if the contract was broken by the king. What is peculiar about Boucher’s work is that he “eliminated the monarch from the contract between God and the people” and “any individual member of the *respublica* was not only justified, but required to take up arms to remove a tyrant who had ignored and violated God’s laws” (Holt 2005, 134; see also Baumgartner 1975, 123-144). Unlike in the Huguenot works, where, at best, we have only hints about the legitimacy of tyrannicide and do not make it a significant subject of discourse, Boucher’s analysis of the matter “was perhaps the very first theoretical development of a theory to legitimate the tyrannicide of a crowned living king, not a prince or a king in general, but even directly addressing the specific person of either Henri III or Henry de Valois” (Zwierlein 2015, 148). For Boucher, it was the religious sanction what made the act of tyrannicide legitimate, a sanction that came from two authority sources: the Sorbonne, which had long regarded itself as the ultimate scholarly arbiter in matters of Catholic doctrine, and the pope. Boucher was not entirely on solid ground here, because, while the Sorbonne acted according to his expectations, proclaiming the king’s deposition, the pope Sixt V did not and, in fact, delayed the pronouncement of a formal excommunication against Henry III, although he expressed a clear disapproval over the murder of the cardinal de Guise. In such circumstances, as pointed out by Cornel Zwierlein, the League “needed a legitimacy basis for action as autarkic as possible”, which resulted in the development of “a quasi natural law of tyrannicide, independent from the pope and any other authority” (Zwierlein 2015, 150). In Sophie Nicholls’ analysis, “*De Justa Abdicatione* presented the case for the legitimate assassination of a tyrant based on the existence of a Roman-legal contractual relationship between king and people”, where the sentence of deposition is passed by the

people or the Church and, consequently, the would-be assassin would act on it, albeit under divine inspiration (Nicholls 2021, 68-74). This causal link is a distinctive feature of Leaguer thought and the way of solving the dilemma raised by the Huguenot monarchomachs, that of the uncertainty involved in the claims of a divine calling and the difficulty of distinguishing between frauds and individuals truly inspired by God: for Jean Boucher, the will of the faithful people or the sentence of the Church express the divine will and expose the tyrant to any kind of attack.

Nicolas Le Roux argues that the actual calls to murder prior to 1 August 1589 were rather rare, because, for many Catholics, it was up to God to punish the evil king, and the authorities of the League proclaimed openly the legitimacy of tyrannicide only after Henry III's assassination (Le Roux 2006, 99). The observation is correct but, even in their absence, the demonization of Henry III, with the incredible litany of misdeeds attributed to him by the Leaguer propaganda, served the same purpose: a demonic king, which consorted with the devil, could have only one fate, death and damnation, and it was the duty of any good Christian to carry it out. In the words of Janine Garrisson, killing a tyrant "became a good work, automatically meriting salvation" and the individual carrying out this deed, Jacques Clément, had God on his side (Garrisson 1995, 314). Since one of the major themes of the Leaguer propaganda was that Henry III had indulged in demonical practices like sorcery (*Les Sorcelerics* 1589), it was easy for the League to claim that his killer "had providential inspiration and authority": since the devil was present in Henry III, then God had to be present in Jacques Clément "for any act so momentous as the murder of the great and powerful" (Ranum 1980, 70). A pamphlet from 1589, called *Le Tyrannicide ou mort du tyran*, published in the aftermath of the king's assassination, describes the regicide as an act commanded by God himself, because "God wished to help France and deliver it from its suffering" and therefore called "a savior, a man with the body and soul clothed in virtue" (*Tyrannicide ou mort* 1589, 11-12). Paul-Alexis Mellet argues that the fact that the pamphlet was approved for printing by "Messieurs du Conseil

de la Sainte Union des Catholiques” gives a precise idea about the atmosphere in Paris during the League’s control (Mellet 2007, 47). Consequently, preachers and pamphleteers were called to justify the action of Jacques Clément (Babelon 2009, 437). A pamphlet called *Discours véritable de l’estrangé et subite mort de Henry de Valois*, published anonymously by a “a monk of the order of the Jacobins” claimed that the regicide occurred with “divine permission”. The pamphlet depicts the image of a France brought to the brink of physical and spiritual destruction by Henry III; what moved Jacques Clément to action was “the total ruin and burning of the kingdom of France” and “the calamity of the people” but, even in such circumstances, Clément is presented as not having taken action until directly called by an angel of God to do so (*Discours véritable* 1589, 3-4). Basically, for the League pamphleteers, in order to be commendable, the tyrannicide must have a religious justification: it is not a human institution which passes the sentence in this case, but God himself who delivers the people from tyranny and saves the Church. Another such work, called *Les propheties merueilleuses advenues a l’endroit de Henry de Valois, 3. de ce nom, jadis Roy de France*, depicts the former king as a demonical figure and the French civil war as part of the Biblical struggle between good and evil: a king who transformed from “the elder son of the Church” into the “elder son of the devil” could, obviously, no longer command any allegiance from true Christians. Therefore, he deserved to be “deprived of Crown and scepter”: the author points out that a tyrant could be imprisoned or driven into exile, but his references to Henry III as a modern equivalent of Nero and Julian the Apostate imply a much harsher fate. Consequently, the end of Henry III is treated as a miracle carried out by God, his death having been preordained. Clément is not mentioned directly in this text, but the implication would be that the Jacobin monk was the instrument of divine punishment.

4. Conclusion

The cause for the difference in approach between the Huguenot monarchomachs from the 1570s and the Catholic League can be found, to a great extent, in the different political

context: the Huguenots' discussion of the deposition of tyrants remained purely theoretical. They did get to put into practice their notions of resistance, first during the 1560s – when the reality of their rebellion was cautiously hidden under the pretext that they were merely seeking redress, from the king, for the injustices they were enduring –, then after Saint-Bartholomew. However, they never found themselves in a position where they could attack the king openly and personally and ask for his overthrow: the Huguenot party never included a radical faction as influential as the Parisian *Seize* in the Catholic League, which was the main driving force in the campaign against Henry III and his successor. On the contrary, the Huguenot leading personalities had a vested interest in not pushing things too far and keep the possibility of reconciliation with the king open, regardless of the vituperations from *Right of Magistrates* or *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos*. Unlike the Catholic League, which relied on Sorbonne's declaration and the hoped-for excommunication from Sixt V, the Huguenots had no grounds on which to dispute the legitimacy of Charles IX, nor did they manage to obtain control of the appropriate institution, the Estates General, which, in their opinion, was the only one entitled to pronounce a sentence of deposition against the king.

For the League, on the other hand, their conflict with Henry III was transformed into an apocalyptic battle between good and evil, between the kingdom of Christ and the domain of Satan, with the religious future of France at stake. As a demonic king, Henry III could obviously no longer be "the most Christian king of France", regardless of his lineage and the laws of the kingdom. And, more importantly, the Catholic League was offered the chance of seeing the tentative theories of tyrannicide turn into reality with the deed of Jacques Clément. It also came easier for the League to call for tyrannicide, because they fought against Henry III mostly on religious grounds: although the list of Henry's misdeeds included what one could call "secular crimes", acts of injustice without a particular spiritual implication, they did not weigh as much as the spiritual accusations brought against him. The Huguenot monarchomachs did not dwell too much on the

possibility of avengers raised by God to punish tyrants and prefer to focus on constitutional solutions: for the League, on the other hand, caught in a battle with eschatological implications, for the salvation of France, Jacques Clément's deed is a reenactment of the Biblical tyrannicides, a miracle, even, and it is on these grounds that the League pamphleteers attempt to justify it.

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Biotechnologies and the Case of Surrogate Motherhood: Axiological Implications and Their Connection with the Law

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Abstract

Science and technology have had groundbreaking advancements especially in recent years, and this is a cause for concern for both legal specialists and the specialists in the field of (bio)ethics and medicine. The situations that arise as a result of these developments make us wonder whether the person is a subject of law, an object of research, a part of a contract and so on. This paper aims to analyze the (bio)ethical and legal consequences of the use of new technologies for human bio-improvement in surrogacy and at the same time to reflect the epistemological space of moral dilemmas that are intrinsically related to research and scientific experimentation. Ultimately, any technical discussion must go through the filter of axiology, which we will do further.

Keywords: bioethical dilemmas, normality, surrogacy, axiology, family, epistemology

1. Introduction

We live in postmodern times, that bring along profound and permanent changes in all fields of human activity (Lamm 2013), where science and technology are advancing rapidly (cf. Colang 2018). The current Covid-19 crisis, that impacts human way of life on the entire planet, and the attempts to find solutions in order to put an end to a pandemic that causes

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thousands of deaths every day, lead us to ask ourselves questions about the meaning of life, of saving others and so forth. As it is well known, man is a unique and unrepeatable being, the only being that we know of gifted with reason and morality. However, history has shown us that human actions, and especially scientific discoveries are not always used in a positive manner, but sometimes for what seems to be a Machiavellian purpose of destroying or harming others only for the sake of doing harm, or perhaps out of *barbarism* (Colang 2018). An example in this regard are the atomic bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki and also the chemical, biological, nuclear and radiological weapons the humanity is still developing nowadays. At the same time, we can enlist here the Nazi experiments and all their barbaric implications – the work of man, who claims to appeal to science in the name of evolution and progress. All these aspects indicate a kind of infatuation of human beings, who claim to be civilized and to have reached a certain degree of sophistication. Due to science and the technologies associated with it, man has created a paradox: the more technologically advanced we are, the more we seem to move away from axiological ideals.

The new fields of research that have become more and more highlighted are linked to the human nature and implicitly to the decryption of the human consciousness; as it is known, the decryption of the human genome has determined the occurrence of more and more problems that man wants to solve, such as: the human longevity, the human bio-improvement, the creation of artificial intelligence and so on. Under these conditions, both the legal framework and the (bio)ethics come to supervise the actions of the individual, so that science does not turn against man or not to be used for barbaric purposes. Insofar as in postmodernity values are relative and often used only for pecuniary purposes, then let us no longer be surprised, as John Gray (2009) states that science promotes the cult of anthropocentrism, and with it the idea that man is above nature and that he can change it as he pleases. Hannah Arendt is even clearer on this topic: „Not only has the progress of science ceased to coincide with the progress of mankind (whatever that may mean), but it could even spell mankind's

end, just as the further progress of scholarship may well end with the destruction of everything that made scholarship worth our while. Progress, in other words, can no longer serve as the standard by which to evaluate the disastrously rapid change-processes we have let loose.” (Arendt 1972, 132)

In this article we aim to talk about the issue of biotechnology from an ethical / legal perspective, in one word, from an axiological viewpoint. First of all, we are interested in the morality of the creation and development of new human bio-improvement technologies, especially the medically assisted human reproduction technologies (Huidu 2017). As this is a sensitive topic, we will try to highlight the perspectives of different epistemological approaches in the field of biotechnology, but we will also focus upon the jurisprudence of the ECHR. No activity can take place without morality. Beyond codes of conduct, specific bioethical approaches, law and conventions, there must always be an axiological dimension related to *elementary moral values* (Morar 2011). Morality is key to the proper perception of this article.

The method we use in order to make the analysis of the proposed topic is by referring to *the ethical matrix for evaluating technologies* formulated by Beauchamp and Childress (2019), called *the principled method* or the basic four principles of bioethics. This is the widest used method, today, to analyze the axiological implications of biotechnologies. According to this method, we will first present the basic arguments supporting and combating surrogacy, in order to assess how these arguments, influence the application of the general principles of law.

2. Bioethical and Postmodern Approaches about Normality

In this part, we will address *the issue of health*, more precisely of the individual who is considered *normal* in society. Our thesis is that *the medical normalcy* is not only psychosomatic, but also social. Ultimately, depending upon how the individual is perceived in the social life that is beyond his medical problems one must consider how he interacts with *others* and how he is perceived by *others*. So, in this sense, we

see the problem of normalcy as actually being a problem of how the subject is perceived; therefore it is a problem in the space of *otherness*.

Normalcy is defined (Levit Ades 2022) as something that is a trait of most people or is generally accepted by society. Normalcy means, in terms of surrogate motherhood, having children with one's spouse, during married life. Lack of normalcy might mean, in a traditional society, having children out of wedlock. In postmodern society, this is not the case, as the family is perceived as being the same, qualitatively speaking, both in the case of married or unmarried people.

Normalcy might also mean to be monogamous and only have children with one's partner for life. Surrogacy, on the other hand, means that one's children are born by another person than the man's wife/female companion, which might not be regarded as normal, again, depending on the type of society we refer to.

Partially, the lack of normalcy in surrogacy is given by the fact that the child does not have the same genetic identity as its social parents. The genotype or genomic identity is the complete hereditary genetic identity.

As Jackie Leach Scully points out in her research on the human condition and how we perceive the problem of medical normalcy, that is, what it means to be normal or abnormal, by extension, the biomedicine can no longer just look at the human diversity technically, but it must be in accordance with the principles of bioethics, as philosophically applied as possible, in order to arrive at the fundamental question of *the human condition* (Downie & Macnaughton 2007, 58-60).

In this sense, the author shows us: "Bioethics can therefore no longer avoid questioning the meaning of terms like 'normality' and 'abnormality' as they are used within biomedicine and bioethical debate. The need to do so has become more acute, especially in terms of biomedicine's ideological function, because recent advances in genetic medicine and the implementation of the Human Genome Project (HGP) have shifted the perspective from which the relationship between genomes and identity is considered" (Scully 2005, 49-68). Thus, starting from here, we must

understand that the way we look at *the human nature* is also reduced to a certain ideology. In fact, it must be borne in mind, as Jean Bethke Elshtain (2005) pointed out, that the perception of the human being, especially the ideology in which he or she is viewed and understood, cannot be broken from the social, philosophical, theological, more precisely the axiological context.

Thus, *the normalcy*, seen as a kind of *concept in itself*, cannot be qualified only medically, exclusively, but it must also be regarded as ethical, because the purpose of a diagnosis is social: “Philosophers and cultural critics indebted to Christianity among whom I number myself, are poised as a matter of principle and faithfulness in a tension between *contra mundum* and *amor mundi* in ways that may be fruitful or frustrating, or both. This tension begins with the recognition that uncritical identification with the currents of one’s own time is easily understood because so many of those currents speak to real human needs, fears, and desires, and the goods associated with these” (Bethke Elshtain 2005, 155). So, beyond axiological interpretations, the human life must not be reduced to a certain ideology, but it must be seen in its social depth, where the individual struggles with his fears.

According to the World Health Organization, normalcy, seen as health, is the complete condition of physical, mental and social well-being and not just the absence of an illness or infirmity (cf. Saracci 1997). Thus, in these terms, we must see the condition of the human being beyond his psychosomatic aspects and look at it in social terms; because most discrimination starts from here, from the way we look at the *Other*; therefore, it all comes down to a discussion about the otherness. In this sense, there were various sociological interpretations that showed how the human being was discriminated according to his condition, or simply out of financial interest (cf. Colang 2018, 124-146).

3. Surrogate motherhood: bioethical dilemmas

Infertility has been considered a disease by the World Health Organization since 2009. Internationally between 10 and 15% of couples are infertile, and 40-45% of women are relative. The woman is the only being capable of giving birth –

at least that's what the holy books and the traditional perspective of biology supports. Over time, however, new technologies have changed the way people are in the world, and some fields "come in handy" to help people, in order to make their lives easier, and so on; whether it's about medical technologies that helps man recover faster from an illness, whether there are the ICT technologies that help man communicate in real time with other people in other parts of the world, these artifacts were created in order to help man in all of his activities. From this perspective, Pinker (2007, 76) shows us that: "The way language works, then, is that each person's brain contains a lexicon of words and the concepts they stand for (a mental dictionary) and a set of rules that combine the words to convey relationships among concepts (a mental grammar)". Accordingly, in the game of communication it is essential not to forget that the means of communication should help us to socialize more easily, not to become addicted, not for them to become, practically, a goal in itself. At the same time, throughout history it has been found that man can use new technologies in order to harm other fellow men.

The surrogacy motherhood is not a new concept in history, since from the ancient times people have been helping each other to have heirs. With the development of medically assisted human reproduction technologies, however, the data of the problem have changed; the human individual and the life of the human being are reduced to simple parts of a contract within the surrogacy motherhood.

In 1975, an advertisement in a California newspaper for a couple with infertility problems called for a woman's help to be artificially inseminated for a fee. In 1976, lawyer Noel Keane drafted the first surrogate maternity contract / agreement, and also creates the Surrogate Family Service INC. With the advent of the in vitro fertilization, surrogacy motherhood takes on another dimension, in the sense that from this moment on, the biological connection that existed until then with the surrogate mother is broken. The first reported case occurred in 1984: the ovules of a woman without a uterus were transferred to the uterus of another woman who later gave birth to a child with

whom she had no genetic connection (Utian, Sheean, Godfarb, and Kiwi 1985).

Starting from here, moral / ethical as well as legal problems occurred; the legislation of each country raises the issue in one way or another: either the decision of the surrogate mother takes precedence regardless of the situation and whether there is a genetic link or not, or the genetic link prevails, as the delivery of the “finished product” is key especially when there is a blood connection between the natural mother and the child.

The (bio)ethical dilemmas that arise in the context of surrogacy derive from the way we relate to the birth itself: on the one hand there is the issue of concluding a contract; on the other hand, it relates to a commercial transaction as the child and life themselves are treated instrumentally, as the object of a contract. Other ethical dilemmas that arise in the context of surrogacy are related to the human trafficking, the organ trafficking of juveniles born to a surrogate mother, and so on.

All existing ethical theories developed by philosophical traditions refer to the way in which we must act in order not to harm our neighbor, his or her dignity, his or her rights or freedoms. Even if we talk about the ethics of virtues, the Christian ethics, about the Kantian ethics, the utilitarianism or the ethics of care (Vlad 2019), we must keep in mind that our neighbor is always a person and not a thing or tool easily manipulated by the will of each of us.

The human beings have rights, and the right to dignity cannot be alienated. As the human being is considered to be the object of a contract, he or she decays from his or her status, i.e. that of subject or person, to that of object. In this sense, we forget the essential, as Kant also pointed out, namely that the humanity is holy (Kant 2015).

4. Surrogate motherhood: legal approaches

Before proceeding to talk about the legal implication that surrogacy entails, we must first discuss *the correlation between the theoretical bioethical and axiological discourse and its applications in the field of law*. First of all, Romania does not have a comprehensive legislation regarding surrogacy, and the

existing one is not ready to solve the complex problems that surrogacy raises. Therefore, the courts, when solving such cases, must refer to the general principles of law. These principles are not only legal rules, but also basic ethical guidelines. This is where the connection between bioethics and law is made, because bioethics gives consistency to the general principles of law regarding surrogacy.

Second, *the international dimension of our research* is given by the fact that we will analyze cases that have been solved by other courts, in countries such as The United States of America, that have more evolved legislation on the topic and can be an inspiration for legislators and courts worldwide. Also, the problems that Romania faces today in its legislative system regarding the topic of biotechnology, surrogacy, and regulation is the same problem that all countries have. Therefore, this paper addresses topics that are topical not only for Romania but for a larger audience internationally.

The first case in history that brings surrogacy to the forefront is called Baby M (In re Baby M - 109 N.J. 396, 537 A.2d 1227, 1988). Since then, an increasingly number of states have raised the issue of surrogacy motherhood, referring to the legality of this action and its (commercial or not commercial) purpose, whether the issue of human trafficking occurs, whether it violates the human rights and so forth. The legal perspectives that occur in the context of surrogacy motherhood differ from country to country; in some countries this practice is being accepted and therefore legal, and in other countries this practice is considered to be illegal.

In addition to these issues, there is also the issue of the parties concluding the maternity contract, as they are on the one hand natural persons and on the other hand legal persons (clinics specializing in medically assisted human reproduction). Another aspect refers to the object of the contract, as it must be handed over after birth in order to be registered as the son / daughter of the contracting persons, as the surrogate mother gives up the parentage.

In the jurisprudence of the ECHR, there are a series of cases that invite debates on human rights that bring to the fore situations such as: can a homosexual couple turn to a surrogate

mother? What is the status of both parents towards the child obtained through surrogacy motherhood, as there is only one donor? Are the ECHR decisions, while respecting the human rights, really moral?

In Romania, the surrogacy motherhood is not regulated, but the term “surrogate mother” is provided in a ministerial order (M.O. no. 377/2017, published in the Official Gazette no.24 of January 10, 2018); however, according to the Civil Code, “the natural person has the right to dispose of himself or herself” (Art. 60 of the Civil Code); this is an article that has the same provisions as Art. 26, paragraph 2 of the Romanian Constitution. Carmen Ungureanu analyzed the legal aspects of surrogacy motherhood and she emphasizes that in Romania the purpose of such services must be without a monetary benefit, given that Article 66 of the Civil Code states the following: “of patrimonial values of the human body, its elements or products are struck by absolute nullity, except for the cases provided by law” (cf. Ungureanu 2019).

Therefore, “although a woman can provide services as a surrogate mother, she cannot claim payment for them, because otherwise she would give a patrimonial value to her body. So, the surrogate mother carries a pregnancy for someone else for altruistic reasons. More precisely, the surrogate mother, animated by the desire to help an infertile couple who eagerly wants a child they cannot have otherwise, sacrifices herself out of generosity and kindness, exposing herself to serious risks that may affect her health and sometimes even her very life, without receiving anything in return if it were offered to her, because that would impact his dignity (Ungureanu 2019). In reality, the surrogacy motherhood is a market where “the economic laws of supply and demand operate” (Nicolescu 2018, apud. Ungureanu 2019).

From the above, it can be stated that there is a certain lack of legislation in the field of surrogacy motherhood, indirectly admitting the use of surrogacy motherhood. We therefore infer that the absence of a clear specification in this field determines the natural and/or legal persons to act at will, as most often the persons who “mediate” such contracts are the ones who enjoy the “benefits” of such actions.

5. Conclusion

We brought up a number of issues related to the surrogacy motherhood to highlight a number of bioethical dilemmas that focus upon the dignity of the human being, the fact that the human beings are often considered to be the object of a contract and in no case the subject thereof. The new medically assisted human reproduction technologies also bring along a multitude of problems to which the (bio)ethics and the legislation must respond and provide solutions in order to avoid serious human rights violations.

For the most part, the discussion takes place in the space of Kantianism, even if it is technical and tends to be viewed only technically. However, when it comes to the human life, especially in relation to new human assistance biotechnologies, it is very obvious that the issue can only be debated in the last instance in the field of axiology. At the same time, the substantive discussion again cannot be treated other than morally. From a legal viewpoint, things can be crystal clear, but the sensibilities of these activities will always remain moral and they will simply be thought and debated axiologically. Ultimately, from an epistemological standpoint, there will always be solutions for bio-improvement, human perfecting and human retouching. Certainly, the technique will advance and promote values that often tend to contradict a much more natural view of life.

We emphasize the fact that the surrogacy motherhood arouses controversy both at the level of the scientific community that analyzes the morality of such actions and also from the standpoint of legal specialists.

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