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CUPRINS – CONTENT – SOMMAIRE – INHALT

DOSSIER LIFE TURN

| | |
|--|----|
| TAMÁS ULLMANN, Approches phénoménologiques du phénomène de la vie | 3 |
| LEONARD LAWLOR, A New Possibility of Life: The Experience of Powerlessness as a Solution to the Problem of the Worst | 17 |
| PETER A. VARGA, Brentano's Influence on Husserl's Early Notion of Intentionality | 29 |
| DEODÁTH ZUH, How do Categorial Representations Influence everyday Intuition? On Husserl's early attempt to Grasp the Horizontal Structure Of consciousness | 49 |
| HORAȚIU CRIȘAN, Transcendental Phenomenology and Phenomenology of Life | 63 |
| VERNON CISNEY, Duration and Immanence: The Question of a Life in Deleuze | 71 |
| OVIDIU-SORIN PODAR, Différences et chiasmes de la vie. Christianisme et phénoménologie chez le dernier Henry..... | 85 |

VARIA

| | |
|--|-----|
| MARIA DIACONESCU, The Concept of Empathy in Philosophy and Psychotherapy | 105 |
|--|-----|

| | |
|--|-----|
| MARIA GYEMANT, La metaphore: Ecart et substitution..... | 117 |
| NICOLAE MORAR, Derrida's Structure of Law and its Political Application... | 133 |
| MOHAMMADREZA TAHMASBI, Beyond the Transparent Mind a Foucaultian Approach to Artificial Intelligence..... | 149 |

BOOK REVIEWS

| | |
|---|-----|
| La multitude introuvable. Quelques remarques concernant le nouveau sujet de l'histoire (VAL-CODRIN TĂUT)..... | 159 |
| Martin Endreß – <i>Alfred Schütz</i> , Konstanz: UVK, 2006, 156 S. (ŞTEFAN NICOLAE)..... | 163 |
| Rüdiger Safranski – <i>Romantik. Eine deutsche Affäre</i> . München: Hanser 2007, 415 Seiten. (UTE MICHALOWITSCH)..... | 167 |

APPROCHES PHÉNOMÉNOLOGIQUES DU PHÉNOMÈNE DE LA VIE

TAMÁS ULLMANN¹

ABSTRACT. The phenomenon of life indicates a worrying problem for all philosophies of consciousness, because the living activity of an organism surpasses obviously the constituting capacity of the observer's consciousness. Although phenomenology is a philosophy of consciousness, it has a lot to say about the problem of life. The article aims to outline the main possible ways of a phenomenological approach to life: it distinguishes noematic, noetic, egoic and horizontal approaches. Even if the diversity of these possible ways can not be unified in a general theory of life, the analysis of the different approaches seems to offer a good starting point for an interdisciplinary (philosophical and scientific) treatment of the problem.

Keywords: animal, organism, life, reflecting judgement, corporeity, instinct intentionality

Au XIX^{ème} siècle le problème de la vie est devenu une question centrale aussi bien pour les sciences que pour la philosophie. Néanmoins le traitement de la question a mené presque inévitablement à une antinomie: on a considéré le phénomène de la vie ou bien dans le contexte du mécanisme, ou bien dans celui du vitalisme. La phénoménologie a ouvertement rompu avec cette tradition, car elle a eu, dès le début, un intérêt différent: elle s'est intéressé toujours à l'énigme de la conscience et non pas à l'énigme de la vie. On peut dire tout de même que la phénoménologie offre un accès fondamental au phénomène de la vie. Non seulement parce que c'est par excellence la phénoménologie qui ouvre la voie à tous les phénomènes possibles, parmi eux aussi au phénomène de la vie, mais plutôt parce que la phénoménologie a beaucoup de choses à dire sur la *diversité* du concept de la vie.

La phénoménologie dépasse sans doute l'antinomie entre vitalisme et mécanisme, mais se heurte, de sa part, à une autre antinomie. La différence fondamentale pour la phénoménologie se creuse entre les actes de la conscience et les phénomènes psychiques. Or, entre l'eidétique de la conscience pure et le psychologisme (c'est-à-dire ontologie naturaliste) se trouve un domaine

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presqu'indéfinissable: celui de la vie organique. Tous les deux côtés essayent d'assimiler et d'intégrer le phénomène de la vie dans leur propre contexte. A partir du contexte de la conscience pure nous trouvons partout des consciences primitive, ou même des monades primitives (vie animale). A partir du contexte naturaliste la vie organique semble être un mécanisme complexe, à deuxième degré, mais tout de même un mécanisme (un mécanisme auto-constituant et auto-organisant doté des programmes quasi-mécaniques qu'on appelle des pulsions). Même si la phénoménologie semble être capable de dépasser une fausse antinomie entre mécanisme et vitalisme, elle se heurte constamment à une autre antinomie, à celle entre la pulsionnalité organique et la conscience pure. Dépasser cette antinomie semble être vraiment difficile, pourtant c'est la tâche véritable d'une philosophie de la vie.

La structure «ego-cogito-cogitatum» indique les grandes lignes de toutes les recherches phénoménologiques. Suivant cette structure et suivant la division entre le côté noétique et le côté noématique nous pouvons parler de plusieurs voies phénoménologiques vers le phénomène de la vie. 1) Une approche «noématique» montrerait tout d'abord la spécificité d'un système organique, d'un être vivant comme objet devant nous. 2) Une approche «noétique» éclaircirait la vie de la conscience, la vie en nous, c'est-à-dire le dynamisme de la temporalité et la formation du sens, et mènerait sans doute vers une sorte de l'instinct transcendantal. 3) Une approche égoïque concentrerait sur l'aspect existentiel de la vie, sur la vie authentique de la personne. 4) Finalement une approche horizontal - comme tout noème indique un horizon de son apparence, un monde - concentrerait sur la totalité vivante et deviendrait ou bien une phénoménologie de la nature (une version de la cosmologie), ou bien une phénoménologie de la culture (basée sur le concept du monde de la vie).

I. Approche «noématique»

A.) Kant

Quant à la détermination philosophique de l'être organique la *Critique de la faculté de juger* de Kant est incontournable. La nouveauté de la troisième critique provient d'une distinction fondamentale, à savoir de la distinction entre le jugement déterminant et le jugement réfléchissant qui se transforme plus tard en la distinction célèbre entre connaître et comprendre. Le jugement déterminant subsume le particulier sous l'universel qui est donné en tant que concept, règle ou lois. Nous reconnaissons le particulier, nous le classifions, en d'autres termes nous déterminons le donné selon un concept de l'entendement. Cependant il y a des cas où seulement le particulier est donné et la faculté de juger doit trouver l'universel: c'est le domaine du jugement réfléchissant.

Il y a des phénomènes dont la reconnaissance ne mène pas à la connaissance. Par exemple je reconnais un cygne, c'est la tâche de jugement déterminant. Mais il en reste une sorte d'excédent de sens, un surplus qui ne peut être transformé en

connaissance. La beauté de cygne, son mouvement gracieux est un surplus de sens qui excède la connaissance selon les concepts de l'entendement. La vie, la vivacité du cygne, le fait qu'il est un animal, c'est-à-dire un corps vivant, non seulement un corps physique, mais un corps organique est également une sorte d'excédent de sens qui ne peut pas être saisi par les concepts et les règles de l'entendement. Les phénomènes esthétiques et les phénomènes organiques s'insèrent selon la *Critique de la faculté de juger* dans le contexte de la finalité. Le principe de causalité qui joue un rôle central parmi les catégories de l'entendement, nous permet de porter un jugement de connaissance. En revanche, l'idée de finalité (finalité esthétique, finalité naturelle) qui est absent de la table des catégories, ne nous permet pas de connaître, mais seulement de réfléchir, de comprendre, de donner de sens.

Ce n'est pas la différence «causalité / finalité» qui nous intéresse ici, mais plutôt la différence entre connaître, d'une part et réfléchir ou comprendre de l'autre. Même si l'on renonce à la description finaliste de la nature de Kant, nous trouvons dans la deuxième partie de la *Critique de la faculté de juger* une approche magistrale au phénomène de la vie. Kant montre comment la réflexion sur un être vivant et sur la nature organique excède le contexte de la causalité: la vision mécaniste est trop étroite pour nous faire découvrir toutes les lois cachées de la nature. La raison reconnaît dans l'observation de la nature que la compréhension d'un vivant, la réflexion sur la vivacité, n'est possible qu'en considérant qu'en un organisme vivant tout est réciproquement moyen et fin. Je résume trois moments importants pour notre tâche dans le raisonnement de Kant:

1) *Le renversement du concept de la causalité.* Un être organique s'organise lui-même, en raison d'une force auto-formatrice et non pas, comme une machine, d'une force extérieure. Un organisme est capable de différents processus que l'on ne peut pas expliquer par la causalité: conservation de soi, croissance, procréation, etc. Le concept de causalité implique un caractère temporel: la succession irréversible. Pourtant il est clair que même s'il y a des déterminations et des conditionnements causaux entre les organes, la succession dans l'ordre temporel est impossible. Dans le développement organique ce qui sera la forme ultérieure, c'est-à-dire «l'effet» détermine déjà le processus, «la cause», pour ainsi dire rétroactivement. Sinon il s'agirait d'une simple machine mécanique, par exemple d'un horloge. Comme Kant écrit dans le §64: «une chose existe comme fin naturelle quand elle est cause et effet d'elle-même».²

2) *Le renversement de la relation tout-parties.* Le tout cause les parties et les parties causent le tout. En plus les parties en elles-mêmes sont également des tous, des organes eux-mêmes organiques. Et les organes ne produisent pas seulement le tout, mais également des autres organes. L'arbre n'est pas seulement un

²Kant: *Critique de la faculté de juger*. trad. A. Renaud., Paris, Aubier, p. 362.

agrégat ou un ensemble des feuilles, de tronc, des branches, des racines, mais unité entière. La plante est un petit monde, organisé systématiquement autour d'une finalité interne. Kant donne trois caractéristiques: «Pour une chose en tant que fin naturelle, on exige dès lors, premièrement, que les parties (quant à leur existence et à leur forme) n'en soient possibles que par leur relation au tout.» [...] «[I]l est requis pour cela, deuxièmement, que les parties de cette chose se relient en l'unité d'un tout à travers la manière dont elles sont mutuellement les unes vis-à-vis des autres cause et effet de leur forme.» [...] «[I]l est exigé que ses parties se produisent réciproquement dans leur ensemble, aussi bien selon leur forme que selon leur liaison».³

3) *Individu*. D'autre part un arbre se produit toujours comme un individu, c'est-à-dire il n'est pas simple juxtaposition des parties (*partes extra partes*). Or l'individualité organique se diffère clairement de l'individualité objective. Cette dernière est relative à un concept et à une position spatio-temporelle, tandis que l'individualité organique est l'individualité au sens vrai: elle a la capacité de s'organiser d'une façon productive et indépendante de la causalité. Kant résume: «Dans un tel produit de la nature, chaque partie, de même qu'elle n'existe pas par l'intermédiaire de toutes les autres, est pensée également comme existant pour les autres et pour le tout, c'est-à-dire comme instrument (organe) [...], elle doit en fait être considérée comme un organe produisant les autres parties (chaque partie produisant par conséquent les autres et réciproquement) - ce que ne peut être nul instrument de l'art, mais seulement un instrument de la nature, telle qu'elle fournit toute matière aux instruments et ce n'est que dans ces conditions et pour cette raison qu'un tel produit, en tant qu'être organisé et s'organisant lui-même, peut être appelé une *fin naturelle*».⁴

L'analyse des êtres organisés vivants nous fait sortir de discours causal, mais n'introduit pas des nouvelles catégories. *La considération de la nature organique ramène le jugement des phénomènes objectifs à nos propres facultés de connaître*. Le phénomène de la vie ne peut pas être saisi par les concepts, il échappe toujours à la fixation conceptuelle. Le phénomène de la vie, tout comme le phénomène esthétique «donne à penser», il mobilise notre faculté de jugement réfléchissant. La considération objective de la nature ramène le jugement à une considération subjective, à un jugement réfléchissant.

B.) Heidegger

Dans le deuxième pas je voudrais brièvement présenter une autre approche de la vie organique, à savoir celle de Heidegger. C'est dans un cours de semestre d'hiver 1929-30, consacré, sous le titre *Les concepts fondamentaux de la*

³ *Ibid.* pp. 364-365.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 366.

métaphysique,⁵ en particulier à la question du monde, que Heidegger considère le problème de l'animalité. Selon sa thèse principale l'homme est «configurateur du monde» (Weltbildend), tandis que l'animal est «pauvre en monde» (Weltarm) et la pierre est «sans monde» (Weltlos).

Ce texte extrêmement intéressant (selon quelques commentateurs le chef-d'oeuvre secret de Heidegger) témoigne d'un changement remarquable dans la direction de la pensée heideggerienne. Par rapport à *Sein und Zeit* ce n'est plus l'être-là en sa *concrétude* qui est en question ici, mais plutôt son essence *métaphysique*. Pour déterminer cette essence métaphysique de l'être-là, Heidegger le contraste avec un autre manière d'être dans le monde, avec celle de l'être animal.⁶ Je voudrais limiter mon analyse sur quelques concepts et problèmes du raisonnement heideggerien: il s'agira de la méthode d'approche de l'animalité; de la spécificité de l'organe; et du rapport de l'animal à son monde environnant.

1) *La méthode de compréhension*. La thèse de la «pauvreté en monde» de l'animal n'est pas et ne peut pas être tiré d'un examen empirique de l'animalité, mais, d'autre part, elle ne peut pas être non plus une idée spéculative. L'idée de la «pauvreté en monde» s'appuie sur une *pré-compréhension* de l'être de l'animal. Le point de départ de Heidegger est l'insuffisance évidente des explications mécaniques de la vie et la nécessité de refonder - par les moyens de l'ontologie fondamentale - la pensée sur le phénomène de la vie. C'est pourquoi il lui faut tout d'abord réfléchir sur les possibilités philosophiques de l'approche de ce phénomène extraordinaire.

Le résultat - du point de vue méthodologique - est un amalgame quelque peu étrange: une sorte de circularité qui me semble être plus profonde que le cercle herméneutique présenté par *Sein und Zeit*. La pré-compréhension de l'essence de l'animalité ne peut être réalisée qu'à partir de la compréhension de l'homme en tant que configurateur de monde (Weltbildend), et, inversement, l'essence «métaphysique» de l'homme, son caractère de «configurateur de monde», ne peut être entièrement compris qu'à partir de l'animalité. C'est devant l'horizon de la mode d'être animale, du rapport animal au monde que nous commençons à voir la spécificité du rapport humaine au monde. Heidegger est, sans doute, en train de développer ici une sorte d'anthropologie, une anthropologie basée sur l'ontologie fondamentale qu'il laisse pourtant tomber plus tard.

⁵ Heidegger: *Concepts fondamentaux de la métaphysique. Monde - Finitude - Solitude*. Trad. par D. Panis. Paris, Gallimard, 1992.

⁶ Je voudrais signaler une différence remarquable entre la direction de l'intérêt de Kant et celle de Heidegger: lorsque Kant parle de l'organisme vivant, il prend ses exemples concrets uniquement de la sphère végétale, son exemple préféré est l'arbre; en revanche pour Heidegger, c'est plutôt la vie animale qui est exemplaire parce qu'il s'intéresse avant tout au problème de l'être-dans-le-monde. Et pour comprendre l'être-dans-le-monde de Dasein humain, la spécificité de la relation animale au monde est plus éclaircissante que la vie végétale.

La thèse concernant la mode d'être de l'animalité offre d'abord une approche apparemment négative. La pauvreté en monde de l'animal semble être pauvreté avant tout par rapport à l'homme. Le monde est pour l'homme un horizon constamment ouvert et approfondissable jusqu'à l'infini, tandis que pour l'animal le monde est restreint, sa relation au monde n'ouvre pas un horizon infini, avec des étants sans cesse nouveaux, mais un horizon fini, c'est pourquoi l'animal n'a qu'un monde environnant (Umwelt). Cependant la différence entre les deux modes d'être n'est nullement graduelle et quantitative, d'autant plus que quelques organes des animaux sont souvent plus développés que les organes humaines (surtout au niveau de sensation et perception).

La négativité de la pauvreté en monde signifie une sorte de privation. L'animal est privé de quelque chose sans qu'il soit par cela moins développé ou plus primitif. La différence entre la mode d'être humaine et la mode d'être animale n'est pas graduelle, mais structurelle. L'animal a un monde, et en même temps n'en a pas. C'est ce que signifie que l'animal n'est pas sans monde, mais pauvre en monde. Que l'animal ait un rapport quelconque au monde, ouvre la possibilité de la compréhension, mais - logiquement - seulement à partir de l'ouverture humaine au monde. L'homme peut, sans doute, se transposer (sich versetzen) dans l'animal. Il ne s'agit pas d'une Einfühlung, d'une sorte d'entopathie mystérieuse, mais de ce que Heidegger nomme pré-compréhension de l'animalité. Cette pré-compréhension ne s'appuie pas sur la transposition des sentiments ou sur une capacité mimétique, mais justement sur la *compréhension de rapport animal au monde* à partir de notre rapport au monde.

2) *Le caractère de l'organisme.* Afin d'écarter toute conception mécaniste de la vie Heidegger insiste sur la différence ontologiquement fondamentale entre l'essence de l'ustensile (Zeug) (les outils, les instruments, les machines) et l'essence de l'organe. Le caractère instrumentale d'un outil, son utilité à quelque chose implique un horizon des rapports de sens (Bewandtniszusammenhang), son caractère maniable renvoie à un «manipulateur», à un être qui - en utilisant cet outil - lui donne sens. L'organe sert aussi à quelque chose, c'est indéniable: l'oeil est pour voir, le nez est pour renifler, etc. Cependant le «être pour voir» de l'oeil n'est pas une propriété qui se rajouterait après coup à son matériau organique, mais l'oeil est lui-même ce «pour voir». L'organe ne sert à quelque chose, comme un ustensile, mais il est une aptitude (Fähigkeit) à quelque chose. Pour pouvoir sortir la compréhension de l'animalité du contexte instrumentale d'une biologie quasi mécanique, nous devons approcher l'organe à partir d'une aptitude préalable. L'aptitude à voir n'est pas un donné, un fait biologique, l'aptitude est plutôt une sorte de condition - nous pourrions dire - «quasi-transcendantale» de développer l'oeil. Une aptitude, par exemple aptitude à voir, n'est pas donc une simple prestation, mais l'être-apte est «un facteur constitutif de la façon dont l'animal est

en tant que tel - constitutif de son être.»⁷ Et c'est ainsi que nous arrivons à la thèse centrale de Heidegger: ce n'est pas parce que l'animal a des yeux qu'il peut voir, mais au contraire il a des yeux parce qu'il peut voir. Cette thèse est parallèle et structurellement similaire à une thèse concernant la finitude et la sensibilité humaine: ce n'est pas parce que l'homme a un corps qu'il est fini, mais au contraire, l'homme a un corps et des sens, parce que son intuition est finie (*Kant et le problème de la métaphysique*). S'il avait une intuition créatrice, il ne serait pas renvoyé à la sensibilité corporelle.

Le caractère organique de l'animalité s'insère ainsi dans un contexte plus large: l'aptitude à voir est une sorte de condition «transcendantale» d'avoir des yeux. C'est ce que Heidegger appelle une «possibilité», un «pouvoir-être» spécifique à l'organe qui le distingue de toute autre ustensile. Heidegger dépasse ici l'horizon de Kant en tant qu'il suppose une sorte de sphère quasi-transcendantale même pour l'animal, tandis que Kant s'est contenté de considérer l'être organique de l'extérieure et de nier la possibilité d'une explication mécanique et causale. Cette sphère quasi-transcendantale s'exprime par le concept de l'aptitude: il ne s'agit pas seulement de distinguer le niveau de l'organe et celui de l'organisme (cela complique déjà énormément la description et rend impossible du coup une description causale), mais de distinguer également l'organe et l'organisme d'une part et l'aptitude de l'autre. Ce n'est pas l'organe qui a des aptitudes, mais ce sont les aptitudes qui font développer et qui «ont» des organes. En d'autres termes, l'organe est la réalisation effective du transcendantal dans le domaine de la vie.

La structure que nous venons de présenter, c'est-à-dire le dédoublement des niveaux et la fondation quasi-transcendantale de la vie organique, apparaît sur plusieurs points. Non seulement le fonctionnement des organes renvoie à un arrière-plan quasi transcendantale, à l'aptitude, mais également le dynamisme de l'organisme. Ce dynamisme implique outre la possession statique des organes, aussi l'énergie de les faire fonctionner. C'est ce que Heidegger appelle possibilisation (*Ermöglichung*). Il y a une poussé dans chaque système organique, et ce qui rend possible cette poussé, c'est la pulsion (*Trieb*). Cette conception de la pulsion n'a rien à voir avec celle de la biologie. La pulsion, comme Heidegger écrit, n'est rien de présent (*vorhanden*), mais elle est au service d'un projet (*Entwurf*) qui ordonne a priori tous les comportements de l'être vivant. Le statut transcendantal de la pulsion s'exprime dans l'idée que c'est elle qui rend possible l'aptitude, qui est, à son tour, la condition de possibilité de l'organe. La série de la fondation transcendantale est donc la suivante: pulsion - aptitude - organe.

Un exemple tiré des travaux de J. von Uexküll (*Biologie théorique* - 1928) montre le rapport essentiel entre l'aptitude de l'organisme et les organes. Il a

⁷ Heidegger, *op. cit.* p. 344.

constaté que chez les amibes, les organes se forment, momentanément, en fonction du besoin. Les organes végétatifs de l'amibe ne sont pas permanents (tandis que ses organes de se déplacer sont fixes). Il se forme à chaque fois - cite Heidegger - «autour de chaque bouché une poche qui devient d'abord une bouche, puis un estomac, puis un intestin, et enfin un anus.»⁸ Cette exemple montre que les aptitudes à manger, à digérer, etc. précèdent les organes correspondants.

3) *Le comportement de l'animal*. Le concept de la pulsion et celui de l'aptitude ouvre la voie pour la compréhension du rapport spécifique de l'animal à son monde environnant. Ce rapport s'exprime dans le comportement. Dans la manière dont l'homme se rapporte au monde il n'y a pas de limitation, c'est une ouverture «infini», tandis que l'animal est d'une certaine façon limité par son environnement. C'est pourquoi au lieu de «Verhalten» Heidegger utilise le concept «Benommenheit», parce que ce dernier exprime mieux le retenu spécifique de l'animal. La caractéristique spéciale du comportement animal est la «Benommenheit» (accaparement, étourdissement, stupeur). C'est l'état de l'animal d'être pris dans son environnement spécifique, de sorte qu'il n'est pas ouvert au monde. Il s'agit donc d'une certaine privation de toute possibilité de percevoir (vernehmen) quelque chose comme étant quelque chose. En d'autres termes la caractéristique essentielle de l'animalité est l'absence de possibilité de *se rapporter à de l'étant en tant qu'étant*. Et cette absence justifie précisément pourquoi cet étant peut l'entraîner de cette façon. Ce qui donc distingue profondément la mode d'être animale de celle de l'homme, c'est que l'animal est fermé à toute manifesteté de l'étant. «L'animal - écrit Heidegger - est pour ainsi dire suspendu entre lui-même et l'environnement, sans que l'un ou l'autre soit éprouvé *en tant qu'étant*.»⁹

La structure transcendantale de cette mode de vie ne rend pas possible à l'animal de percevoir les choses. Un animal ne «voit» pas les choses. La Benommenheit, l'essence fondamentale de l'organisme, prive l'animal de la manifesteté de l'étant. L'animal est incapable de percevoir l'étant en tant qu'étant. La relation avec son monde environnant, cette sorte de demi-ouverture au monde est projeté par une structure pulsionnelle. Pourtant cette même structure lui rend possible d'être excité par certains être et par certains événements de son monde environnant. Il y a donc une relation profonde et surtout «préalable» entre ce qui excite l'animal et ce qui est affecté en lui, et cette relation est pulsionnelle.

La description heideggerienne de l'animalité montre très clairement comment le problème (l'impossibilité de saisir l'essence de la vie) ramène la pensée à elle-même. Pour saisir l'animalité il n'y a d'autre moyen que la comprendre à partir de notre existence. C'est ce que Kant a exprimé de telle façon que l'interprétation du problème de la vie organique nous ramène à nos facultés, c'est-à-dire à notre

⁸ J. von Uexküll: *Biologie théorique*. Berlin, Springer, 1928. p. 98.

⁹ Heidegger, *op. cit.* p. 362.

jugement réfléchissant. Le phénomène de la vie donne à penser, mais reste, en même temps, inépuisable.

Je pense que ces deux approches, celle de Kant et celle de Heidegger, présentent bien la difficulté extrême de la conceptualisation et de la description du phénomène de la vie. Tous les deux creusent une abîme entre la mode d'être humaine et la mode d'être de la nature physique. Chez Kant c'est la différence entre le caractère suprasensible et éthique de l'homme, d'une part, et le caractère causal et déterministe de la nature, de l'autre. La troisième antinomie dans la *Critique de la raison pure*, celle entre liberté et causalité présente cette différence de la façon la plus claire. Chez Heidegger le point de départ de l'ontologie fondamentale toute entière est la distinction aiguë entre l'existence et la *Vorhandensein*, entre la mode d'être humaine et la mode d'être des choses. Le phénomène de la vie organique signifie aussi bien pour Kant que pour Heidegger un cas spécial qui ne s'insère ni dans l'une ni dans l'autre de leurs catégories fondamentales: un être organique n'est pas déterminé d'une manière causale, mais n'est pas libre non plus (Kant), la mode d'être animale ne peut être saisie ni par les existentiels du *Dasein* humain, ni par les catégories de *Vorhandensein* (Heidegger). Le phénomène de la vie échappe apparemment aussi bien à la liberté et à l'existence qu'à la causalité et à la *Vorhandensein*. C'est pourquoi son approche montre vraiment des difficultés extrêmes.

Une fois la différence établie, le phénomène de la vie ne peut être abordé qu'ou bien de l'un ou bien de l'autre côté, ou bien en dépassant le contexte causal, ou bien en donnant une description privative. Kant dévoile un «plus», Heidegger un «moins». Kant montre comment le phénomène de la vie présente un surplus par rapport à la nature physique (sans être en même temps déjà liberté de nature suprasensible), tandis que Heidegger, d'une manière opposée, montre comment la vie animale est moins que l'existence humaine (sans être en même temps une sorte de *Vorhandensein*). Toutes les deux descriptions restent ainsi, et d'une manière nécessaire, négative.¹⁰

¹⁰ La négativité nécessaire peut être expliquée par une distinction kantienne qui - en apparence - n'est pas liée directement au problème du phénomène de la vie: c'est la distinction célèbre entre *intellectus archetypus* et *intellectus ectypus* (76.§. de *Critique de la faculté de juger*). Selon Kant notre entendement est nécessairement discursif et renvoyé à la sensibilité tout aussi bien qu'à la conceptualité, néanmoins nous pouvons nous représenter très bien une autre sorte de l'entendement, un entendement intuitif qui, en tant qu'il est capable d'intuitionner directement les choses, n'est pas renvoyée à la discursivité. Cet entendement intuitif saisit les phénomènes directement, en d'autres termes il est un avec les choses qu'il intuitionne. Pour les penseurs comme Kant et Heidegger l'entendement intuitif en tant que possibilité pour la pensée est frappée d'interdiction. Par contre les penseurs comme Schelling ou Bergson prennent pour point de départ l'entendement intuitif: Schelling sur la base d'une imagination productrice et de l'intuition transcendantale, Bergson sur la base d'une intuition qui est une aussi bien avec la durée qu'avec l'élan vital. Je pense que c'est un point stratégique où les voies se séparent. Pour une pensée discursive il ne

II. Approche «noétique»

Après avoir vu comment le phénomène de la vie ramène la pensée à elle-même, à son caractère existentiel ou à son faculté du jugement réfléchissant, considérons maintenant une autre approche. Je vais appeler celle-ci «approche noétique», parce que cette manière de penser tend à découvrir le phénomène de la vie au sein de la conscience elle-même. Je vais présenter cette voie sur la base de quelques idées husserliennes. La découverte de la vie au sein du fonctionnement de la conscience implique toujours le dévoilement des «zones d'obscurité». Il s'agit de la corporéité, de la temporalité et de l'intentionnalité instinctive.

1) *Corporéité*. Husserl s'occupe la première fois du problème de l'animalité dans les *Idees II*. Sur la base de la phénoménologie transcendantale on peut établir les trois ontologies régionales, dont les grandes lignes sont esquissés dans la deuxième tome des *Idees*. Entre la région de la nature physique et la région de la sphère de l'esprit nous trouvons la région de l'animalité. Cependant Husserl ne s'occupe pas ici de la vie organique, mais uniquement de la vie psychique. Ce qui est intéressant pour lui, c'est l'aspect psychophysique de la conscience et non pas le phénomène organique de la vie. Ces analyses portent plutôt sur la corporéité: non pas sur la corporéité générale de l'existence humaine, mais sur le rôle que la corporéité joue dans la perception.

Il faut attirer l'attention sur le fait que le phénomène de la corporéité, de l'incarnation n'était pas intéressant ni pour Kant, ni pour Heidegger. Husserl ouvre, sans doute, un nouvel aspect de la description phénoménologique avec la découverte de la corporéité dans la perception. Et en même temps il faut voir que la spécificité de l'existence corporelle sert d'analogie pour la compréhension de l'animalité. Chez Heidegger la compréhension de la vie animale s'appuie sur la différence dans les deux modes d'ouverture au monde. On pourrait dire que chez Husserl c'est la corporéité qui ouvre la voie vers la compréhension générale de la vie et aussi vers la compréhension spéciale de la vie animale.

2) *Temporalité*. Sans vouloir entrer dans les détails je renvoie ici à un texte célèbre de 1933 intitulé «Téléologie universelle», dans lequel Husserl présente clairement l'importance de la pulsionnalité au sens du temps. «Je n'ai pas alors parlé du moi et n'ai pas caractérisé cette intentionnalité comme égoïque (au sens le plus large d'intentionnalité de vouloir). C'est plus tard que j'ai introduit l'intentionnalité égoïque en tant que fondée dans une intentionnalité non-égoïque ("passivité"). Mais est-ce que l'*ego* des actes et des *habitus* d'actes qui en naissent n'est pas lui-même

reste que l'approche négative qui essaye de saisir l'essence de la vie organique sans pour autant retomber dans le piège du biologisme ou dans celui du vitalisme. Les moyens de cette approche sont la conceptualité «négative» (le vivant organique n'est pas causal, mais n'est pas non plus existentiel), les analogies et les métaphores. La pensée intuitive suit une autre voie.

en développement ? N'avons-nous pas le droit ou le devoir de présupposer une intentionnalité pulsionnelle universelle qui constitue unitairement tout présent originaire comme temporalisation constante et pousse concrètement de présent en présent, de sorte que tout contenu est contenu du remplissement de la pulsion, et est visé avant le but ; de sorte encore que, dans tout présent primordial, des pulsions transcendantes de degré supérieur pénètrent dans chaque autre présent et les relient tous les uns aux autres en tant que monades?»¹¹ Il s'agit donc de l'unification ou de la fusion des différents «présents» et dans un double sens: d'une part dans le flux temporel d'une seule monade, d'une seule conscience temporelle, d'autre part parmi les différentes monades. Le découlement du temps immanent aussi bien que l'harmonisation et la rythmisation des temps différents repose donc sur une «pulsionnalité».

3) *L'intentionnalité pulsionnelle*. Nous savons bien que le concept de la motivation joue un rôle important dans la description phénoménologique de la constitution. Au sein de la sphère transcendantale de la conscience nous devons supposer des rapports motivationnels au lieu des relations causales. Cependant avec la naissance de la phénoménologie génétique naît également la dimension «passive-génétique» de la motivation transcendantale. Et même si cela semble être à première vue étrange, à travers le concept de la motivation passive réapparaît dans la phénoménologie le concept de l'instinct et de la pulsion. Tout comme le concept de la genèse, celui de la pulsion doit aussi être considéré comme transcendantal et non pas comme psychologique.

A partir de 1921 Husserl a une tendance plus en plus claire à décrire l'association, le principe général de la synthèse passive, comme une pulsion. La *Triebintentionalität* devient ainsi le «principe de l'association des affections». (Ms. C 10, p. 20)¹² La pulsion n'est pas seulement un renvoi à quelque chose, mais elle est aussi l'énergie intentionnelle qui lie ce qu'elle associe dans le renvoi et l'unifie en synthèse. Comme Husserl écrit: «au niveau originaire, le moi est moi instinctif avec des buts instinctifs non-dévoilés». (Ms C 13 I, p. 6.)¹³ L'approfondissement génétique de la structure intentionnelle mène donc à la découverte d'un fondement ultime dans la pulsionnalité transcendantale.

La pulsionnalité ne signifie pas simplement une autre manière de rendre compte de l'intentionnalité opérante. Elle sert à cela, sans doute, mais elle a également un rôle plus fondamental. La pulsionnalité permet de décrire plus clairement le moi passif et réceptif selon les trois composantes de la sphère

¹¹ Husserliana XV. pp. 594-595. Cité et traduit par Didier Franck : *Chair et corps*. Paris, Les Editions de Minuit, 1981. p. 154.

¹² Cité par B. Bégout: *Pulsion et intention. Husserl et l'intentionnalité pulsionnelle*. In: *La pulsion*. dir. J-C. Goddard. Paris, Vrin, 2006. p. 168.

¹³ Cité par B. Bégout, *op. cit.* p. 176.

hylétique, à savoir selon l'impression originaire, le sentiment de plaisir et de peine, et la capacité kinesthésique. C'est la pulsion qui sert de point de passage entre ces trois moments et c'est elle qui assure leur unité. Il n'est donc pas exagéré de dire que l'intention pulsionnelle forme véritablement l'infrastructure de la vie de la conscience.¹⁴ La pulsion est donc l'arrière-plan commun pour toute sorte d'articulation hylétique: 1) elle éclaire le déroulement hylétique impressionnel (toute affection est en même temps une excitation de type pulsionnel); 2) elle détermine le processus sentimental (à tout Gefühl est lié une pulsion corrélatrice motivée par le Gafallen ou Missfallen); 3) quant au mouvement kinesthésique la pulsion prend la forme de l'impulsion.

La vivacité en toutes ses formes recèle chez Husserl une sorte de pulsionnalité: dans les mouvements et les efforts corporels, dans la proto-constitution temporelle et dans la sphère passive-affective il met au jour partout des traces d'un soubassement pulsionnel. On peut donc constater que le rôle de la pulsionnalité est loin d'être secondaire dans la phénoménologie de l'intentionnalité. C'est la pulsion qui assure la cohésion ultime entre les éléments qui se synthétisent dans le processus de l'expérience. Le concept de la vie semble être profondément lié à la vie de la conscience, à la conscience qui éprouve la vie en elle-même.¹⁵

III. Approche «égoïque» et « approche horizontale»

Afin de compléter la topologie de la phénoménologie de la vie je vais esquisser brièvement deux autres approches fondamentales en plus de l'approche noématique et de l'approche noétique.

Il faut souligner deux caractéristiques remarquables de la théorie husserlienne des pulsions. 1) Même si dans l'approfondissement des aspects de la passivité Husserl arrive presque partout à un soubassement pulsionnel, cette sphère pulsionnelle ne signifie jamais pour lui une sorte de «nature en nous». A travers la découverte de la pulsionnalité il ne relie pas la vie de la conscience à la Nature comme totalité vivante. 2) L'aspiration vers le vrai, fondée dans la vie pulsionnelle, ne signifie pas seulement une téléologie rationnelle qui se joue dans la sphère théorique de notre vie. Cette aspiration implique également *la volonté de véracité* qui ouvre la sphère pratique-existentielle de notre vie, c'est-à-dire exprime la tendance à être meilleur, à être un homme vrai, juste, sincère. Le concept de la vie dans ce contexte dépasse les

¹⁴ «Du fait même que toute synthèse associative originaire dans le présent vivant fluent comme proto-temporalisation s'accomplit sous une forme avant tout pulsionnelle, à cette pulsion se lie inmanquablement, dans la sensibilité hylétique du sujet expérientiel, une «résonance affective» (un Gefühl déterminé), et l'amorce d'une tendance kinesthésique, d'un mouvement incarné qui cherche soit à se rapprocher de l'affectant, soit à s'en éloigner.» B. Bégout, *op. cit.* p. 178.

¹⁵ C'est l'idée fondamentale de l'auto-affection de la vie que Michel Henry a élaboré dans sa phénoménologie.

implications ontologico-biologiques et entre dans une dimension existentielle. La vivacité devient ainsi le synonyme de l'authenticité, de la liberté, de l'ouverture.

Au lieu de la vie corporelle, temporelle, pulsionnelle de la conscience nous pouvons parler à ce niveau de la vie de la personne. Il suffit de renvoyer ici aux aspects existentiels de la pensée phénoménologique: à l'aspect éthique de l'auto-méditation chez Husserl, au concept de l'authenticité de Heidegger, au troisième mouvement chez Patocka, au mouvement de la transcendance, de la liberté et de l'ouverture, etc. Dans ces contextes la vie signifie pour ainsi dire la «vie de l'âme», l'être juste et authentique, l'être consciente et responsable. C'est pourquoi j'appellerais cet aspect du phénomène de la vie l'approche «égoïque».

Comme tous les phénomènes apparaissent dans un contexte plus large, dans un horizon, il n'est pas étonnant que le concept de l'horizon même recèle des renvois au concept de la vie. Or, on peut parler du monde comme horizon des horizons en deux sens: on peut considérer le monde comme nature, mais aussi comme culture. Tous les deux aspects montrent une affinité profonde avec le concept de la vie. 1) Les traces les plus élaborées d'une phénoménologie de la nature vivante peuvent être trouvées chez Merleau-Ponty dans ses leçons sur la philosophie de la nature entre 1956 et 1960¹⁶ et également dans l'ontologie dynamique présentée dans «*Le visible et l'invisible*». Une telle phénoménologie de la nature a le mérite de donner un nouveau sens au concept très ancien de la cosmologie. 2) La culture comme système dynamique peut être également considérée du point de vue de la vie. C'est sans doute le concept du monde de la vie sur lequel une telle approche peut être basée. La vie dans le concept «monde de la vie» n'est pas une sorte de qualification superficielle: il s'agit chez Husserl vraiment de la vie dans un monde communicatif-intersubjectif. C'est exactement cette vie dans le monde de la vie qui porte la totalité de notre vie consciente.

Quels sont les conséquences que l'on peut tirer de ce raisonnement? 1) Tout d'abord que la phénoménologie, même si elle se concentre sur l'analyse de la conscience et ne s'occupe pas des questions biologiques, a beaucoup de choses à dire sur la diversité du phénomène de la vie. Les quatre approches phénoménologiques qu'on vient de présenter prétracent une topologie phénoménologique pour le traitement du phénomène de la vie. 2) Tous les aspects mentionnés pourraient fonder les autres sans pour autant être «l'aspect fondamental». On pourrait prendre le concept de l'animalité aussi bien que la vie authentique de la personne pour point de départ d'une phénoménologie de la vie. 3) La phénoménologie ne cesse pas de lutter avec le problème du dynamisme des synthèses qu'elle analyse: elle parle du dynamisme de la temporalité de la conscience, du dynamisme des synthèses passives, du dynamisme de la corporéité, etc. Il faut établir tout de même une différence capitale:

¹⁶ M. Merleau-Ponty: *La Nature. Notes, Cours du Collège de France*. Paris, Seuil, 1995.

TAMÁS ULLMANN

il faut distinguer le concept du dynamisme de celui de la vie. Un système physique peut très bien être dynamique sans pour autant être vivant. La vivacité est plus que le dynamisme. Or, la phénoménologie de la vie doit pouvoir saisir la vivacité de la vie, son caractère auto-organisant, ou, avec un terme plus prometteur, le caractère auto-poétique de la vie.

A NEW POSSIBILITY OF LIFE: THE EXPERIENCE OF POWERLESSNESS AS A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE WORST

LEONARD LAWLOR*

ABSTRACT. This essay is part of an attempt to determine a new mode of existence, an ethics, for humans. It consists in reversing the idea of the worst, which is unconditional “impassage”: “don’t let anyone in; don’t let anyone out!” As a reversal, the new mode of existence turns us into friends of passage, a people who love the world so much that they will let everyone without exception enter and let everyone without exception exit. They say, “Let’s tear down all the wall and open all the doors!” The reversal comes about by focusing on the transcendental experience of powerlessness.

Keywords: life; phenomenology; Bergsonism; globalization; Derrida; Deleuze; friendship.

Perhaps it is cliché to speak of signs. But it is a sign that, today, there are people who kill themselves in order to kill others, leaving no one behind. We are compelled to ask this question: what is a suicide bomber? Without much reflection we can start to find an answer. A suicide bomber is a martyr who opposes himself or herself to the technologization of the world. The sign called the suicide bomber indicates that we are witnessing today a return of the religious (the martyr) and the enclosing movement of globalization (technologization). The religious and globalization complement one another, forming a mirror image of one another. Both the enclosing of globalization and the return of the religious *know no limits*. In their efforts of marketing and conversion, in their efforts, in a word, of *conquest*, both globalization and the religious are forms of war; indeed they are forms of total war, and even worse they are forms of total war disguised as peace. Our “today” is defined by this formula: “war without war.” The total or global nature of this disguised war leads to what I am calling the problem of the worst. The problem of the worst is *the* problem of our “today.”¹ In the simplest

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¹ This essay is part of a book project, which will focus on Deleuze and Guattari; it is to be called *There Will Never be Enough Done: An Essay on the Problem of the Worst in Deleuze and Guattari*. The Deleuze and Guattari book will be a kind of Part II to “*This is not Sufficient*”: *An Essay on Animality in Derrida* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). What unites the two books or parts is the problem of the worst. Both of these books will then be incorporated into a book project called *Memory and Life: An Archeology of the Experience of Thought*. The title, “never enough,” comes from *A Thousand Plateaus*, where Deleuze and Guattari speak of there never being enough writing in the name of the outside; see Gilles

terms, the problem of the worst is apocalypse, total violence or total suicide. If our “today” is defined by a disguised total war, then the problem of the worst is so bad *today* that it requires that we make every effort to find a solution. Before it is too late, we must find a way to change the signs.²

Now, what I am going to present today constructs the beginnings of a solution to the problem of the worst. Here is how I shall proceed. The first section will start with the idea that what essentially defines a limit is divisibility. By means of the essential divisibility, we shall be able to present the formal structure of the problem. As we shall see in a moment, the problem can be presented in two reversible versions. What is important to see in this first section is that the problem of the worst, being a superlative, is a hyperbolic problem. But the essential divisibility of the limit leads to an obvious question. What is the foundation for essential divisibility? The second section will attempt to answer this question. It will explain why the limit is fundamentally divisible. Here we shall rely on phenomenology and Bergsonism. Both phenomenology and Bergsonism have discovered, in their own ways, a fundamental or transcendental experience. The basic experience each philosophical movement has discovered is the experience of powerlessness, or, even more precisely, the experience of blindness. The abyss of blindness grounds the essential divisibility of the limit, and therefore it grounds both the problem of the worst and, as we shall see, its solution. The third section will attempt to construct a solution to the problem of the worst. It will return to our “today,” which, as we have already pointed out, is defined by globalization and the religious. If our “today” is defined by “war without war,” then the solution would lie in the direction of “peace without peace.” The mechanism of the solution lies in reversal. And if the problem is hyperbolic, then the solution must also be hyperbolic. But there is more, and this is where we shall conclude. If the suicide bomber is the persona essentially connected to the problem of the worst, then we must look for another persona connected to the solution. We must look for a new mode of existence, *a new possibility of life*.³ If the persona of the problem of the worst is someone who

Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2, Mille plateaux* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), p. 34; English translation by Brian Massumi as *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 23. Hereafter cited with the abbreviation MP, with reference first to the French, then to the English translation; at times, I have modified the English translations. My thanks to Carolyn O’Mara for proofreading the text and for providing many helpful comments about the ideas.

² In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari define a sign in the following way: “Signs are not signs of things; they are signs of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, they mark a certain threshold crossed in the course of these movements, and it is in this sense that they must be conserved” (MP 87/67-68, English translation modified).

³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu’est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991), pp. 70-71; English translation by Graham Burchell as *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 72-73. See also Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, tr., Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), p. 122. See also Michel Foucault, “De l’amitié comme mode de vie,” in *Dits et écrits IV* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), pp. 163-167; English translation as “Friendship as a Way of Life,” in *Essential Works of Foucault, Volume I: Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, ed., Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1997), pp. 135-140.

treats everyone, the whole world, including himself, as the enemy, then the solution of peace without peace must imply a mode of existence that treats the whole world as the friend. This friendship would not be the friendship among brothers (it would not be fraternity), it would not be the friendship of philosophy (it would not be the philosopher-king as the friend of the idea); it would not even be the universal love of all humanity. No, the persona that I am trying to envision -- as in a prophetic dream -- is a friend of the outside.

Although I have referred to the movements of phenomenology and Bergsonism, you can probably see already that all the thinking in which I am engaged derives from the “generation of the incorruptibles” (as Hélène Cixous has called them), that is, from the thinking of Derrida, Deleuze, and Foucault. We are able to group these diverse thinkers under one title because, it seems to me, their thought diffracts like a spectrum from one point. The point of diffraction is this: the attempt to think together the force of organic, living singularity (the event) and the force of inorganic, dead universality (mechanical repetition).⁴ An incorruptible connection necessarily brings these two forces together around a *minuscule, indeed infinitesimal hiatus* that forbids any gathering together into a unity or into a one and that forbids that the two forces separate from one another.⁵

⁴ Derrida says, “Will this be possible for us? Will we one day be able to, and in a single gesture, to join the thinking of the event to the thinking of the machine? Will we be able to think, what is called thinking, at one and the same time, both what is happening (we call that an event) and the calculable programming of an automatic repetition (we call that a machine). For that, it would be necessary in the future (but there will be no future except on this condition) to think both the event and the machine as two compatible or even in-dissociable concepts. Today they appear to us to be antinomic.” These two concepts appear to us to be antinomic because we conceive an event as something singular and non-repeatable. Moreover, as we have seen, Derrida associates this singularity to the living. The living being undergoes an affection and this affection gets inscribed in organic material. The idea of an inscription leads Derrida to the other pole. The machine that inscribes is based in repetition; “It is destined, that is, to reproduce impassively, imperceptibly, without organ or organicity, the received commands. In a state of anaesthesia, it would obey or command a calculable program without affect or auto-affection, like an indifferent automaton.” The automaticity of the inorganic machine is not the spontaneity attributed to organic life. It is easy to see the incompatibility of the two concepts: organic, living singularity (the event) and inorganic, dead, universality (mechanical repetition). Derrida says that, if we can make these two concepts compatible, “you can bet not only (and I insist on not only) will one have produced a new logic, an unheard of conceptual form. In truth, against the background and at the horizon of our present possibilities, this new figure would resemble a monster.” The monstrosity of this paradox between event and repetition announces, perhaps, another kind of thinking, an impossible thinking: the impossible event (there must be resemblance to the past which cancels the singularity of the event) and the only possible event (since any event to be so must be singular and non-resembling). Derrida concludes this discussion by saying: “To give up neither the event nor the machine, to subordinate neither one to the other, neither to reduce one to the other: this is perhaps a concern of thinking that has kept a certain number of ‘us’ working for the last few decades.” This “us” refers to Derrida’s generation of thinkers: “the incorruptibles.” All the quotes come from “Le ruban de machine à écrire,” in *Papier Machine* (Paris: Galilée, 2001), pp. 33-104. English translation by Peggy Kamuf as “Typewriter Ribbon,” in *Without Alibi*, edited, translated, and with an Introduction by Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 71-160.

⁵ For more on “a minuscule hiatus” (*un écart infime*), see Leonard Lawlor, *The Implication of Immanence* (Bronx: Fordham University Press, 2006).

This connection is so powerful that all of us are powerless before it. The force of the event and the force of repetition communicate in a moment of weakness or powerlessness. We must start with this moment of impotency.⁶ There in the experience of powerlessness lies the problem of the worst as well as its solution. Let us now turn to the formalization of this problem.

I. The Formalization of the Problem of the Worst

While the worst alludes to the old problem of the theodicy (the best possible world as in Leibniz), we must say that the problem of the worst does *not* consist in the worst possible world. It consists rather in the *loss* of the world itself. Here we could quote Deleuze and Guattari, from their 1991 *What is Philosophy* (and when we hear the word “loss” in their works we should always make the association to Proust: in search of *lost* time); speaking of us today, Deleuze and Guattari, say, “*We have lost the world*, which is worse than losing a fiancée, a son, or a God” (QP 72-73/75, my emphasis).⁷ Or, we could quote Derrida writing about Paul Celan in his 2003 *Rams*, “the world is gone, I must carry you.”⁸ Both of these quotes allude to the event, in Western metaphysics, of Platonism being overcome. The world, the second world, the world in itself or essential world is gone, lost, leaving only *this* world.⁹ Before losing the essential world, we would have called this world the “world of appearance.” Yet, without an essential world behind it or above it, we see that *this* world is no longer unified; it is cracked, fragmented, with borders everywhere. The problem of the worst arises then because what defines a crack, a fragment, a border, or a limit is *essential divisibility*.¹⁰ Divisibility

⁶ To speak like Heidegger, there lies the danger as well as the saving. Quoting Hölderlin, Heidegger says, “Where the danger is, grows the saving power too.” See Martin Heidegger, “Die Frage nach dem Technik,” in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1954, Zehnte Auflage, 2004), p. 39; English translation by William Lovett as “The Question Concerning Technology,” in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1977), p. 34.

⁷ This passage is cited in François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze, une philosophie de l'événement*, p. 68.

⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Béliers* (Paris: Galilée, 2003), p. 67; English translation by Thomas Dutoit and Phillippe Romanski as “Rams,” in *Sovereignities in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), p. 158.

⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust et les signes* (Paris: Quadrige, Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), p. 137; English translation by Richard Howard as *Proust and Signs* (New York: Braziller, 1972), p. 101. Hereafter cited as P, with reference first to the French, then to the English translation.

¹⁰ For more on the concept of the limit with which we are working here, see Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), p. 55; English translation by Paul Patton as *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 37. Deleuze says, “Here, limit, *peras*, no longer refers to what maintains the thing under a law, nor to what sets an end to it [*termine*] or separates it; but, on the contrary, it the limit is that on the basis of which the thing is unfolded [*se déploie*] and unfolds all its potency [*puissance*]. *Hybris* stops being simply something that can be condemned, and *the smallest becomes the equal of the greatest* as soon as it is not separated from what it is able to do” (Deleuze’s emphasis, translation modified). Or one should see Jacques Derrida, *Aporias* (Paris: Galilée, 1996, p. 44; English translation by Thomas Dutoit as *Aporias* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 20. Here Derrida says, “The non-passage, the impasse or aporia, stems from the fact that there is no limit. There is not yet or there is no longer a border to cross, no opposition between two sides: the limit is too porous, permeable, and indeterminate.”

means that the limit is porous, allowing things to mix that should not mix. The mixing together of things that are impossible cannot be stopped. The divisibility of the limit therefore exceeds everyone's *power*: I am *unable* to hold the limit closed and stop *entrance* and I am *unable* to hold the border closed and stop *exiting*.¹¹ This formula gives us two reversible versions of the powerlessness in the face of the essential divisibility of the limit. The two versions arise respectively from the thought of Derrida and from the thought of Deleuze and Guattari. If we follow Derrida, we see the inability to stop entrance (the door opens and intrusion occurs); if we follow Deleuze and Guattari, we see the inability to stop exiting (the door opens and escape occurs).

The worst is a problem insofar as it is a reaction to the powerlessness that comes with the porous limit. In order to see how the problem of the worst comes about, let us look at the inability to stop entrance *first*. The worst occurs when I cannot keep all the others from entering *in*, when I am too weak to protect myself from all of those who might *contaminate* me, and then I react – this immediate reaction is precisely the worst one -- by sending all of them *outside* to such a degree that I kill them and myself, all of us. The worst is the suicide of all, of everyone and everything, the whole world (“tout le monde,” to use the common French idiom).¹² Here we can provide a second meaning to the loss of the world: pure self-destruction.¹³ As in Derrida whose terms (“contamination,” for instance) we were just using to formulate the problem, the worst in Deleuze and Guattari arises from the essential divisibility of the limit. But here in Deleuze and Guattari, in contrast to Derrida, but *not* in opposition to him, the worst occurs when I cannot keep all the others from getting *out*. Now, with Deleuze and Guattari we turn to the other version of the formula of the powerlessness in the face of the essential divisibility of the limit: the inability to stop escape. The worst, in this case, occurs when I cannot keep all the others from getting out, when I am too weak to protect myself from all those who might *flee*, and then I react -- this immediate reaction is precisely the worst one – by pushing all the others toward the *inside* to such a degree that I kill them and myself. The worst occurs when there is total capture or no way out.¹⁴ But in either case, with either Derrida or Deleuze, the problem of the worst consists in the reaction to the experience of powerlessness; it is a *super-reaction* that unconditionally arrests passage: don't let them in; don't let them out --

¹¹ The use of the verb “to hold” here refers to the hand. The solution to the problem of the worst implies, as Deleuze and Guattari would say, a “deterritorialization of the hand”; it also requires a deterritorialization of the mouth.

¹² Here we could raise the exemplary problem of what defines a person who takes his or her own life in order to take the lives of others: suicide bomber or martyr? But the worst is worse than a suicide bomber.

¹³ “Pure self-destruction” is a phrase I am borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*. See MP 201/162.

¹⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka, Pour une littérature mineure* (Paris: Minuit, 1975), p. 19; English translation by Dana Polan as *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p. 10, my emphasis. Hereafter cited as K with reference first to the French, then to the English translation.

with no elsewhere and no future. Simply the problem of the worst is *unconditional im-passage*.

Before we turn to the fundamental experience that grounds the problem, let us anticipate the *solution* to the problem of the worst. The *solution* to the problem of the worst, which would be either the least bad (Derrida) or the best (Deleuze), would also arise from the essential divisibility of the limit. The worst and the best are inseparable.¹⁵ The best is not transcendent; the worst is not a fall from some sort of perfect state.¹⁶ Therefore, whenever we approach the best, we are also very close to the worst.¹⁷ So, given the essential inseparability of the best and the worst, let us start with a *reversal* of the worst in order to understand the least bad or the best. And indeed let us start with Derrida's terminology. If the worst consists in the reaction of not letting all the others *in*, if we can define it, in other words, as unconditional inhospitality, then the least bad would be the reaction of letting all the others in unconditionally, that is, the least bad as *unconditional hospitality*. In contrast to Derrida, but *not* opposed to him, Deleuze and Guattari would say that the best consists in "following a line of flight." But here too we would have to be hyperbolic in our reversal. We would have to up the ante on flight and make the line unconditional.¹⁸ So, if the worst consists in the reaction of not letting all the others *out*, in other words, as unconditional capture, then the best would be the reaction of letting all the others out unconditionally, that is, the best as *unconditional flight*. But, as we shall see, it does not matter whether we adopt Derrida's conception or that of Deleuze and Guattari, whether we speak of unconditional hospitality or unconditional flight. What is at issue is to let everyone no matter what or whom *in*; what is at issue is to let everyone no matter what or whom *out*. What must be thought is *unconditional passage*.

II. The Fundamental Experience of Powerlessness

As we can now see, both the formalization of the problem of the worst and its solution depend on the idea of passage. A limit is essentially divisible because it lets pass. As the word "passage" suggests, with its connection to the word "past," the divisibility of the limit is grounded on the experience of time. Here we must return to philosophical discoveries made at the beginning of the Twentieth Century; these discoveries are irreversible. We must return to phenomenology and Bergsonism. We know that Husserl had placed time at the very foundation of

¹⁵ As Deleuze and Guattari say, "there is the best and the worst in the rhizome" (MP 13/7).

¹⁶ On the specific kind of fall in Deleuze, see Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon. Logique de la Sensation* (Paris: Editions de la différence, 1996 (1981)), pp. 54; English translation by Daniel Smith as *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), pp. 67.

¹⁷ With this inseparability of the best and the worst in mind, we should recall the famous statement from Heidegger (quoting Hölderlin): "where the danger is, grows the saving power too." See Martin Heidegger, "Die Frage nach dem Technik," in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1954, Zehnte Auflage, 2004), p. 39; English translation by William Lovett as "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1977), p. 34.

¹⁸ Deleuze and Guattari say that the line of flight is absolute and yet local (MP 474/382).

consciousness; he had given it a transcendental status, a status that, we know, Heidegger would take up and radicalize. But like Husserl and Heidegger, Bergson had placed time, through his concept of the duration, at a foundational level. What we are seeking is the fundamental experience, even the intuition, which grounds the essential divisibility of the limit.

In a longer version of this essay, I reconstruct the descriptions of time that we find in both Husserl and Bergson. In order to save time here, I am only going to summarize these descriptions. Of course, even with the fundamental experience of time, we must start with a reflection on experience in general. If we reflect on experience in general, what we cannot deny is that experience is conditioned by time. Every experience, necessarily, takes place in the present. In the present experience, there is the kernel or point of the now; this point is something like the “eye” of present perception. What is happening right now, however, must be described as an event, different from every other now ever experienced; there is alteration. Yet, also in the present, the recent past is remembered and what is about to happen is anticipated. The memory and the anticipation consist in repeatability, which results in continuity. Because the present being experienced right now can be immediately recalled, it is repeatable and that repeatability motivates the anticipation that the same thing will happen again. Therefore, what is happening right now is also *not* different from every other now ever experienced. *At the same time*, the present experience is an event and it is not an event because it is repeatable; *at the same time*, the present experience is alteration and it is not alteration because there is continuity. This “at the same time,” this simultaneity is the crux of the matter. The conclusion that we must draw is that we can have no experience that does not essentially contain these two forces of event and repeatability in a relation of disunity *and* inseparability. They necessarily pass into one another with the result that we can say that the absolute is passage.¹⁹ But this claim that the absolute is passage is not the only conclusion we are able to draw from the description. We can also say that the memorial aspect of the experience of the present, so to speak, closes the eye or even gouges it out. The fundamental experience therefore we have described is the experience of blindness, the intuition of a blind spot, and with this spot, all of a sudden the temporal description has become spatial. The blind spot would make passage possible for things that are contradictory or impossible. The spot would constitute a limit that is essentially divisible between past and present. Through this blind spot, what is outside would be able to force its way in, and through this point, what is inside would be able to force its way out. No one would have the power to stop this passage.

III. War Without War

The secret of the description that we have just seen lies in the idea that any medium of sameness heterogenizes. Earlier we had seen that the problem of

¹⁹ Edmund Husserl, *L'Origine de la géométrie*, traduction et introduction par Jacques Derrida (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974 [1962]), p. 165; English translation by John P. Leavey as *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry: An Introduction* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989 [1978]), p. 149.

the worst consisted in a reaction to the inability to stop others from entering and in a reaction to the inability to stop others from exiting. Now we are able to explain why these two inabilities exist. No one is able to stop entrance because the medium between self and others is temporal. The medium is temporal because experience is fundamentally or transcendently temporal, and that means that experience always consists in a potentially universal and repeatable trait, which can be distributed to all the others. The repeatability or iterability of the trait allows for continuity between me and others, and it forbids the separation that would protect me from others getting in. *And*, no one is able to stop exit because, once again, the medium between self and others is temporal. The medium is temporal because experience is fundamentally or transcendently temporal, and that means that experience always consists in a potentially singular and non-repeatable trait, the event. The singularity or event-character of the trait allows for variation between me and others, and forbids the homogenization that would protect me from the others getting out. The limit or threshold or border or crack or hiatus between me and others divides in order to include and it divides in order to exclude. There is an inseparable doubleness, a doubleness in which the event or heterogeneity violates repetition or continuity *and* the repetition or continuity violates event or heterogeneity. This radical violence takes place in a zone of imperceptibility. When I intuit this zone, my eyes are too weak to discern and separate. We are so weak therefore that we cannot stop continuity from turning into heterogeneity and we cannot stop heterogeneity from turning into continuity. We are so weak that we cannot stop others from entering and we cannot stop others from fleeing. With this violence at the root, this fundamental violence, we have not however encountered the worst. The worst, we recall, is a hyperbolic reaction, a super-reaction to this inability. To the point of total suicide, it unconditionally excludes and it unconditionally includes. The worst is not radical violence; the worst is total violence. The suicide bomber says, "Don't let the others, none of them, not even me, enter in; don't let the other, none of them, not even me, exit out!"

Now, let us make the problem of the worst more concrete by returning to our "today." As at the beginning and just now, we raised the question of the suicide bomber. We defined the suicide bomber as a martyr who kills himself in order to kill others in order to oppose technologization. This definition led us to two aspects of our "today." On the one hand, our "today" is defined by the closure of globalization and, on the other hand, it is defined by the return of the religious. Now, in relation to these two aspects, let us appropriate some ideas presented by Derrida, and by Deleuze and Guattari. In his 1994 essay, "Faith and Knowledge," Derrida notes that after the end of the Cold War, the religious returns.²⁰ Derrida stresses that the return of the religious is not a simple return of the *religious*. The return involves in fact a "radical destruction" of the religious.

²⁰ Jacques Derrida, "Foi et savoir," in *La Religion*, Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo, editors (Paris: Seuil, 1996), pp. 57-58; English translation by Samuel Weber as "Faith and Knowledge," in *Religion*, Jacques Derrida and Gianni Vattimo, editors (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 42-43, paragraph 37.

Derrida claim about the return of the religious involving a destruction of the religious is complicated. However, the simple idea is that the religious is being destroyed due to a pacifist movement of universal fraternization, the reconciliation of “men, sons of the same God,” these brothers basically all belonging to the monotheistic tradition of Abrahamic religions. With this reconciliation, there would no longer be a need for religions in the plural. Derrida thinks that the movement of fraternization is in fact a movement of pacification. The declaration of peace among the Abrahamic religions is also a pacifying gesture, but, *and this point is important*, it is pacifying in the sense of subjugating. Referring to Rome, Derrida speaks of a kind of religious colonization, the imposition “surreptitiously [of] a discourse, a culture, a politics, and a right, to impose them on all the other monotheistic religions, including the non-Catholic Christian religions.” Beyond Europe, the aim would be to impose, in the name of peace, “a globalatinazation [*mondialatinasation*]” (FS 58/43, paragraph 37). Clearly, Derrida here is aligning the return of the religious with the very movement of globalization. Although the pacifying movement has peace (pacification) as its explicit *objective*, its implicit *aim* is subjugation (pacification again), and we must recognize that this aim is a negative war-like aim. For Derrida, the movement of peace in the return of the religious is “war by other means”; he says, “The field of this war or this pacification is without limit” (FS 58/43, paragraph 37). Derrida therefore reverses Clausewitz’ famous saying (“war is politics by other means”) into “politics is war by other means.”

But Derrida of course is not the only one to reverse Clausewitz’ saying. In the 1980 *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari speak of our “current situation” and in this regard, they seem prescient (almost thirty years ago, before the word “globalization” or the French word “mondialisation” exist). As is well known, one of the primary concepts invented in *A Thousand Plateaus* is “the war machine.” This is a complicated concept, but suffice it to say that a war-machine is a collectivity (the example they always provide is the nomadic tribes sweeping into Europe from the East), that is, a collectivity which tears down walls and crosses borders. The *objective* of the war-machine is the destruction of molar and rigid states, the destruction of the state apparatus, but the *aim* of the war machine is positive, in a word, creativity. Even though the war-machine has a negative relation to the state apparatus, Deleuze and Guattari stress repeatedly that the state apparatus is able to appropriate the war-machine for its own aims. In the appropriation of the war machine by the state, the objective of the war machine is war and destruction (the negative objective), but the aim of the state apparatus is peace and conservation. The state appropriation of the war machine then results in limited wars in order for the state to achieve its aims, which are *political* aims. Here, repeating Clausewitz, we can still say that war is politics by other means. But the *World Wars* of the Twentieth Century imply something else, something like *total war* (and we should associate this phrase “total war” with totalitarianism). The fascist appropriation of the war machine in World War II maintained the war machine’s negative objective of destruction, but it also took destruction as its sole aim; its aim was solely negative and here we can say that war is nothing but war.

But after World War II, in our “current situation,” as Deleuze and Guattari say, there is the worldwide expansion of capitalism and technology (in a word, “globalization,” as we say now). The expansion results in the war machine being worldwide; the states then become parts of the worldwide war machine. In the “current situation,” however, the objective of the worldwide war machine is not war but peace. This kind of peace, Deleuze and Guattari say, is the peace of Survival or Terror. In other words, the worldwide war machine takes peace as its objective, while its aim remains negative, the aim of destruction.²¹ In still other words, *before*, the aim was peace and the objective was war or destruction; *now*, the aim is destruction and the objective is peace. The war machine now being worldwide no longer has qualified enemies; it aims its destruction at “the unspecified enemy” (MP 589/471). Being unspecified or homogenized, the enemy is everyone, the whole world (“tout le monde,” to use the common French idiom again). This general and therefore anonymous name, “the enemy,” is the death sentence; enclosing the whole world in a globe, it makes destruction total, total suicide. Therefore, as Deleuze and Guattari do, we can reverse Clausewitz’ saying: today politics is war by other means (MP 525/421, MP 583/467).²² Our “today” is an epoch of unlimited war disguised as peace, which we can call, as we did at the outset, “war without war.” This formula for our “today,” “war without war,” brings us to our conclusion.

IV. Conclusion: The Friend of the Outside

By means of the two aspects of our “today,” we are now able to provide titles for the project underway here.²³ On the one hand, we are attempting a deconstruction of globalization (which is made possible by technologization). It is well known, and I have mentioned this word twice already, that the French use the word “mondialisation” to speak of the event of globalization. But this word, as is easily seen, speaks of the world. It could be translated into English as “worlding.” With the idea of an essentially divisible limit, we are trying to think

²¹ See Deleuze, *Negotiations*, pp. 177-182. In a control society, the barriers of confinement and discipline have come down; yet one is still enclosed insofar as one’s movements are always under surveillance and therefore controlled. Therefore, as we see today with the so-called “war on terror,” everyone is potentially under surveillance, everyone is being controlled.

²² Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), p. 197; English translation by Alan Sheridan as *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage, 1977), p. 168..

²³ We are able to construct other titles for what thought must be today. Most generally, the thought required by the problem of the worst is a thought of the absolute as passage (or the absolute as duration) (cf. MP 617/494). More specifically, we can call this thought of the absolute “the thought of the outside” (*la pensée du dehors*). The outside however is life, but not life alone, in separation from death; the outside is life in its resistance to death (“Bichat’s zone”). We require a new thought of life because the problem of the worst is a problem of death. The thought required today then must be a thought of life, and not a thought of being or of what is otherwise than being. As a thought of life, it must be a thought of immanence, and not a thought of transcendence. And even though what is required is a thought of immanence, it must still be a thought of the event, the “to come.” One thought of the “to come” is indeed the thought of the worst, the loss of the world, apocalypse. But there must be another thought of the “to come.” There must be another concept, which opens up for us a new mode of existence, a new way to live, elsewhere.

about a different kind of space than the homogeneous space of the globe. Following Derrida, we could use the French word “*espacement*,” spacing; or, following Deleuze and Guattari, we could speak of the earth. But, on the other hand, we are attempting a deconstruction of the religious. While the etymology of the word “religion” remains obscure, what is clear is that it concerns a “*ligare*,” as in the word “ligament”; it concerns a bond or link. Yet, such a deconstruction seeks the link – this link is the essential divisibility of the limit – that is prior to and larger than the link between man and man and between man and God. It seeks to open the link to everyone, to the whole world. It seeks this largest link because the worst is precisely the attempt to make the link as small as possible. It is the attempt to make the link disappear entirely. While the worst concerns death and more death, deconstruction concerns life and more life.

Now it is possible to approach a solution. A solution to the problem of the worst lies only in one direction. Today, in order to eliminate the worst from happening, we must reverse the formula of “war without war.” Instead of the world being one of “war without war,” let us turn our world, at the least, into one of “peace without peace.” How? We have seen that we are too weak to stop those who contaminate us from entering in and we are too weak to stop those who flee from exiting out. Yet, there is strength in our weakness. Even if we are too weak to stop entrance and to stop exit, we are also strong enough, we have enough force, to let the others in, we are strong enough to let the others out. Letting passage happen changes the manner in which the others are coded. Instead of everyone being coded, indeed, super-coded, as the enemy, now let us super-code everyone as the friend. The idea of unconditional friendship brings us to the primary definition of the friend of the outside, the mode of existence that is the reverse of the mode presented to us by the suicide bomber. The friend of the outside is defined as the one who embodies the weak force.²⁴ A weak force is defined as a power to let happen, a power to be powerless, an ability to be unable. Like the suicide bomber, the friend of the outside has a super-reaction to powerlessness. Just as the suicide bomber is blinded, the friend of the outside is blinded. Just as the suicide bomber is not able to discern friend from enemy, the

²⁴ I am borrowing the idea of a weak force from Derrida. In the Preface to his 2002 *Rogues* (called “Veni”), and this is the place where he says this as far as I know, Derrida defines a weak force as “this vulnerable force, this force without power [*sans pouvoir*] [that] opens up [*expose*] unconditionally to what or who comes and comes to affect it.” See Jacques Derrida, *Voyous* (Paris: Galilée, 2003), p. 13; English translation by Michael Naas and Pascale-Anne Brault as *Rogues* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. xiv. And while Deleuze or Deleuze and Guattari never speak of a weak force, we must recognize however that, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, they attribute the creation of a new regime of signs to the Jewish prophets who were able to turn their passivity into a passion, who were able to turn God’s word that orders death, they were able to turn that death sentence into a password (MP 155-157/124-125). They were able to turn a lack of power into force. In this privation of power -- the “*sans pouvoir*” that we saw in the Derrida quote -- there is something positive. Derrida seems to appropriate here Benjamin’s idea of “a weak messianic power,” found in his “Theses on the Philosophy of History.” See Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, tr., Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 254.

friend is not able to discern friend from enemy. Yet, in the moment of indiscernability, the friend is not the suicide bomber. The friend of the outside says, "Open all the borders and doors! Open all the factories, all the schools, all the barns, dams, and slaughterhouses! Let everyone without exception exit and go out!" We can see who this friend really is. Everybody will say that this unconditional passage is not possible; no one could deny that! Yet, the friend of the outside is the one who denies what everybody knows. The friend of the outside is the idiot.²⁵ Simply, he or she is the friend of everyone, the whole world. This friend of everyone, however, is not the philosopher-king, not the friend of the idea, by means of which all the friends are hierarchically ranked and ordered. Nor is this friend of everyone the one who embodies the universal love of humanity.²⁶ That love is no better than the anonymous enmity of the worst. This friend is no friend of anonymity. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive friendship without the name; friendship is inseparable from naming.²⁷ The friend of the outside then *is* not the friend of everyone. Rather, he or she *becomes* everyone. The friend of the outside becomes everyone by seeking to find the name that properly defines every single thing, the name that is proper to every singularity. Earlier we spoke of the secret of the medium that heterogenizes. The secret in fact lies in the name that is at once event and repetition, in the name that remains singular in its universalization. Unlike the general name which gives the death sentence, the proper name – the singular name that never compromises with its universalization -- is the password of friendship. But this is not all we can say about the friend who becomes the whole world. Although he or she is conscious of the becoming of everyone, of the whole world, although he or she undergoes joy in the search for the right name for every single other, the friend of the outside also knows with a disturbing clarity (this is a kind of clairvoyance, "as in a dream") that the solution of unconditional passage is only the mirror image of the problem of unconditional im-passage. The friend knows that there is always and must be violence; peace can and must be without peace. Therefore, the friend of the outside suffers constantly from bad conscience.²⁸ He or she knows that *never* will there be enough written or thought in the name of what resists the worst violence. He or she knows that the signs must be changed, before it is too late, so that we can believe in the future, so that we can believe in something to come.

²⁵ See Deleuze, *Différence et répétition*, p. 170; *Difference and Repetition*, p. 130. See also Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, p. 61; *What is Philosophy?*, pp. 62-63.

²⁶ See MP 244/199.

²⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Politique de l'amitié* (Paris: Galilée, 1994), p. 281; English translation by George Collins as *Politics of Friendship* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 251.

²⁸ The friend of the outside also experiences joy in the constant striving, in the constant waiting, knowing that there will always be a future.

BRENTANO'S INFLUENCE ON HUSSERL'S EARLY NOTION OF INTENTIONALITY*

PETER A. VARGA**

ABSTRACT. The influence of Brentano on the emergence of Husserl's notion of intentionality has been usually perceived as the key of understanding the history of intentionality, since Brentano was credited with the discovery of intentionality, and Husserl was his disciple. This much debated question is to be revisited in the present essay by incorporating recent advances in Brentano scholarship and by focusing on Husserl's very first work, his habilitation essay (*Über den Begriff der Zahl*), which followed immediately after his study years at Brentano, and also on manuscript notes from the same period. It is to be shown that (i) although Brentano failed to enact a direct influence on Husserl's notion of intentionality (much in line with K. Schuhmann's claim), (ii) yet the core of Brentano's notion remained operative in Husserl's theory of relations, which is seemingly influenced by John Stuart Mill and Hermann Lotze. This investigation is intended as a contribution towards the proper understanding of the complexities of Husserl's early philosophy.

Keywords: intentionality, history of; theory of relations; Husserl, Edmund; Brentano, Franz Clemens; Mill, John Stuart; Lotze, Hermann

Introduction

The aim of this article is to examine the possible influence of Brentano, who was a teacher of Husserl, on the formation of Husserl's notion of intentionality. This goal, a seemingly innocent historical undertaking, is burdened with many difficulties, most of them resulting from the *Rezeptionsgeschichte* of this question.

Intentionality is, for Husserl, an all-encompassing question; and for many it seemed that Husserl's notion of intentionality is best to understand from a historical point of view. A manifest candidate for these investigations was Franz Clemens Brentano, who, at the same time, re-introduced the term "intentionality" into modern philosophy and, as a teacher of Husserl, played a key role in turning Husserl's attention from mathematics to philosophy¹. The presumed influence of Brentano on

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¹ A detailed, and, probably, the most authentic third-person account of Husserl's special personal relationship towards Brentano is to be found in Malvine Husserl's retrospective *Skizze eines*

the formation of Husserl's notion of intentionality therefore quickly became the Holy Grail of the researchers. The quest has been abruptly ended, however, by Karl Schuhmann, who proved² that it was rather the various debates of inside Brentano's circle of disciplines, especially a book by Kazimierz Twardowski³, the Polish-born logician, what exercised a decisive influence on the young Husserl's notion of intentionality. This discovery even led to the claim that "Husserl did not get his concept of intentionality from Brentano as is generally supposed to be the case, but rather developed it in the context of his reflections on Twardowski's well-known work."⁴

What this essay intends is, as a first characterisation, a more balanced view of Brentano's influence on Husserl's early notion of intentionality. In order to achieve this, I will first briefly revisit Brentano's account of intentionality to establish, what an influence could possibly consist in. To uncover the influence of Brentano on Husserl, I will consider the period *before* the supposed influence of Twardowski. I will therefore investigate the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, the only extant part of Husserl's *Habilitationsschrift* in 1887, for signs of influences. The essay will conclude with an evaluation of its results from a broader perspective.

I – Revisiting Brentano

Brentano is usually considered as the one who re-introduced the notion of intentionality into the modern philosophy.⁵ The work and the passage that is most often quoted in respect to this discovery, is the beginning of a chapter from the *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* of 1874:

Jedes psychische Phänomen ist durch das charakterisiert, was die Scholastiker des Mittelalters die intentionale (auch wohl mentale) Inexistenz eines Gegenstandes genannt haben, und was wir, obwohl mit nicht ganz unzweideutigen Ausdrücken, die Beziehung auf einen Inhalt, die Richtung auf ein Objekt (worunter hier nicht eine Realität zu verstehen ist), oder die immanente Gegenständlichkeit nennen würden. Jedes enthält etwas als Objekt in sich, obwohl nicht jedes in gleicher Weise. In der Vorstellung ist etwas vorgestellt, in dem Urteile ist etwas anerkannt oder verworfen, in der Liebe geliebt, in dem Hasse gehaßt, in dem Begehren begehrt usw.⁶

This passage, no matter how many times it was cited, does not occupy a central position in the *Psychologie*. It is touched in the course of searching for a

Lebensbildes von E. Husserl (published in Schuhmann, 1988). The first attempt to evaluate the relationship between Husserl and Brentano that is based on their correspondence is done by H. Spiegelberg (Spiegelberg, 1978).

² Schuhmann, 1991a

³ See K. Twardowski, *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, (unveränderter Nachdruck der 1. Auflage, Wien, 1894) (Philosophia Verlag, München: 1894) (The original edition of the book is, due to the low number of copies printed, now practically unavailable.)

⁴ Mohanty, 2004, v

⁵ See Baumgartner, 1985 for an example of such classical account of the history of the notion of intentionality.

⁶ Brentano, 1973, 124-125

demarcation criterion between two groups of phenomena, the psychical and physical phenomena. Before it, Brentano has already proposed some criteria, but he is unsatisfied with them, as they did not provide a positive and uniform characterisation of the phenomena in question. Though he seems to be content with the present proposal, he will nevertheless continue to establish further criteria (amongst them the spatial localisation of physical phenomena). Of course it does not exclude at all that the main focus of later interest could be on Brentano's re-introduction of the notion of intentionality; and, concerning that, it must be said that both Brentano seems to be conscious of that he is doing a re-introduction of a mediaeval philosophical notion into contemporary use, thereby justifying the retrospective characterisation of his achievement as a rediscovery, and, furthermore, even a cursory glance at the coming literature, especially in the circles of phenomenology, suffices to show how much impact his rediscovery indeed had.

The exact content of Brentano's original notion of intentionality is, however, less trivial to establish. A first look at the passage cited above would suggest that Brentano's account of intentionality consists in the claim that the object of the presentation is somehow contained in the presentation itself. A major consequence of this claim would be that the object is then devoid of independent existence, i.e. its existence is linked to that of the presentation. This rendering of Brentano's position is reinforced by the received interpretation of his work. As Roderick Chisholm, the main protagonist of Brentano's rediscovery for the analytical philosophy in the 1960s put it:

These passage contains two different theses: one, an ontological thesis about the nature of certain objects of thought and of other psychological attitudes; the other a psychological thesis implying that reference to an object is what distinguishes the mental or psychical from the physical. According to the doctrine of intentional inexistence, the object of the thought about a unicorn *is* a unicorn, but a unicorn with a mode of being (intentional inexistence, immanent objectivity, or existence in the understanding) that is short of actuality but more than nothingness.⁷

What Chisholm calls “psychological thesis” is definitely indubitable: Brentano *expressis verbis* claims that it is the “intentional inexistence” which “characterizes” the psychical phenomena. Moreover, in the *Psychologie* the introduction of the notion of intentionality occurs, as I have already mentioned, in the context of a search for a criterion of the division between psychical and physical phenomena. He considers intentionality to provide a positive characterisation of the psychical phenomena, and refers back to it many times.

Concerning the second thesis of Chisholm, the passage seems to provide equal justification. Brentano speaks about “inexistence”, “immanent objectivity”, and, in a rarely cited sentence phrase, he adds that “the object is not to be understood as something real”.

⁷ Chisholm, 1967, 201

This thesis of the received interpretation, however, has been recently came under fierce criticism in the literature on Brentano.⁸ The main occasion not to content ourselves with Chisholm's second, ontological thesis is provided by a retrospective remark of Brentano in 1906, responding to a criticism made by one of his former disciplines. In order to understand Brentano's response, we must first familiarize ourselves with the critique itself.

The introduction the notion of intentionality seems to succeed in delineating the psychical phenomena. The main feature of these phenomena therefore consists in their reference to a certain object. However, the above characterisation does not succeeded in describing the reference itself. It is undeniable that presentations are always presentations of something. But it could be argued that the objects, which are intended by the presentations, necessarily possess such properties that are incompatible with the ontological thesis outlined by Chisholm. E.g. when I have a presentation of an actual apple tree, then the object of my presentation is the apple tree itself, existing in the physical world. It is an essential property of this apple tree that it exists in the unmodified sense of the word, i.e. without any restrictive qualification. Though I can have a presentation of an apple tree whose existence is "short of actuality but more than nothingness" (like when I present myself an apple tree that does not really exists, e.g. an apple tree that is merely thought of), that presentation would differ from the former one. Brentano's account of intentional reference thus, it seems, substitutes the object *qua* intentional object (an object that is merely thought of) in place of the object of an intentional relationship.⁹

This same critique was presented by Alois Höfler, a former discipline of Brentano, on the psychologist's congress in 1905, Italy, in which Brentano himself could not participate due to his failing health. When Brentano was informed about that by Anton Marty, he protested with strong terms:

Von dem, was Sie über Höflers Äußerungen sagen, war mir dies über „Inhalt“ und „immanentes Objekt“ der Vorstellung befremdlich. [...] Es ist aber *nicht meine Meinung*

⁸ First by A. Chrudzminski (Chrudzminski, 2001; see p. 22 n. 14 for the sign of a possible first occurrence of the interpretation debate), then, for different reasons, by M. Antonelli (Antonelli, 2001) and W. Sauer (Sauer, 2006). We will have occasion below to examine the latter two critiques.

⁹ This critique needs some refinement in order to precisely address Brentano, since he draw a line between phenomena and things in the real world. Brentano would probably consider the apple tree *qua* physical entity to be the subject matter of pure natural sciences, to which the presentation of the apple tree stands merely in a signitive relationship; or at least he would claim that the properties we normally ascribe to the apple tree itself (like its colour, shape etc.) are only physical phenomena which stand merely in an indirect relationship with the physical entities that are explored by the natural sciences. Therefore in my critique I should distinguish between the apple tree *qua* physical entity and the physical phenomena forming part of its "appearance". However it does not endanger the above argument since the argument could be reformulated using the example of sound (*Tone*) that is *expressis verbis* called physical phenomena by Brentano, and yet it is possible to directly stand in an intentional relationship to it (without worrying about the underlying natural mechanism that can be outlined by the natural sciences). As the debate between Höfler and Brentano seems to ignore this subtlety, I will not change my example.

gewesen, daß das immanente Objekt = „vorgestelltes Objekt“ sei. Die Vorstellung hat nicht „vorgestelltes Ding“, sondern „das Ding“, also z.B. die Vorstellung eines Pferdes nicht „vorgestelltes Pferd“, sondern „Pferd“ zum (immanenten, d.h. allein eigentlich Objekt zu nennenden) Objekt. [...] Das „gedachte Pferd“ als Objekt genommen, wäre Gegenstand der inneren Wahrnehmung, die das Denkende wahrnimmt, wenn dies mit dem Gedachten ein Paar Korrelative bildete, da korrelative ohne einander nicht wahrnehmbar sind. Das, was als primäres Objekt empfunden oder vom Verstand universell als primäres Objekt gedacht wird, ist aber doch nicht Gegenstand der inneren Wahrnehmung. Entweder müßte ich der primären Vorstellungsbeziehung gar kein Objekt und gar kein Inhalt zugeschrieben haben, oder ich konnte ihn nicht = „gedachtes Objekt“ gleichgesetzt haben. Ich protestiere also gegen die mir angedichtete Albernheit.¹⁰

Brentano claims here quite clear that the critique is mistaken. But what does he bring forward in defence of his claim? In the last sentence of the citation, writing from the distance of thirty years, Brentano claims that either he has not ascribed any object to the presentation, or he has not equated it with the “thought object.” Since he has definitely spoken about the object intended by the presentation, it remains the claim that he had not equated the object of the presentation with the “object that is merely thought of”. This claim is also contained in the second part of the citation.

Brentano's protest, which was usually ignored as a self-defensive distortion, or a lapse of memory, has been recently taken up by some scholars who claim that Brentano was in fact right about his former position, i.e. Chisholm's second, ontological thesis is mistaken. There are several arguments in favour of this recent change in interpretation¹¹, but the one provided by Mauro Antonelli stands out of them, since it also provides an explanation of what the “object that is merely thought of” could consist in. The argument of Antonelli could be demonstrated even on the above retrospective remark of Brentano: “The horse that is merely thought of”, says Brentano, “would be an object of the inner perception when it perceives the thinking.” But, adds Brentano, the primary object (i.e. the real object intended by the presentation itself) “is not perceived by the inner perception.” This somewhat cryptic remark becomes clear when we consider that the horse, being a physical object, is perceived by the outer perception (which is the perception in the normal sense of the word). The “horse that is merely thought of” and the horse as such therefore must be different. But it does not mean that the “horse that is merely thought of” does not exist or it does not have any significance for the theory of perception. *It is given in the inner perception when we perceive the thinking (i.e. the perception of the horse) itself.* Antonelli claims that it is possible to understand Brentano's position in the *Psychologie* along these lines. He calls the “horse that is merely thought of” intentional correlate, which might be only a terminological clarification, but it paves the way for a concise formulation of his interpretation: intentional correlates are different from intentional objects. The former are given by the inner perception, which, according to Brentano, accompanies every perception itself; and they are

¹⁰ Brentano an Anton Marty (17.3.1905) (Brentano, 1962, 87-89)

¹¹ See note above.

therefore parts of the consciousness in the strict sense of the word. The intentional objects, on the other hand, are the *objects proper*, they are not part of the perception in any sense of the word, and, in case of non-existing objects, they do not exist at all. Brentano's theory of intentionality, therefore, does not fall a prey to such a straightforward objection Höfler (and many others) proposed.

This short review of the current historical research concerning Brentano's introduction of intentionality has, I believe, provided some important lessons for the present investigations: The received view of Brentano as the one who has rediscovered intentionality for the contemporary philosophy is, despite of every divergence in Brentano's own intention, basically justifiable. But there is one important addition which is easy to overlook: *the real challenge in Brentano's conception of intentionality is to provide such an account of the relation between the presentation and its object that avoids the devastating consequence of Chisholm's second thesis*. Brentano, at least according to some recent interpretations, did exactly that, and this complexity is to be taken into account when examining the possible emergence of Brentano's notion of intentionality in other authors.

Let us now turn our attention to Husserl.

II – Looking for Traces of Intentionality in the Habilitationsschrift

As I have already mentioned, the recent *consensus* puts the decisive period in the formation of Husserl's notion of intentionality at 1894¹², and it is usually claimed that Husserl has seldom cared about intentionality as such in the *Über den Begriff der Zahl* or in the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*¹³. While it is undeniable true, a closer look at these works could uncover that Brentano's concept of intentionality has not failed to bear its mark upon the young Husserl. In this section I will attempt to identify traces in the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, the only extant part of Husserl's *Habilitationsschrift*, which could tell about how, and in which extent, Husserl was influenced by Brentano's concept of intentionality.

There are two sporadic locations in the *Über den Begriff der Zahl* where Husserl speaks about questions concerning the intentionality.

In a footnote annexed to his introductory examples Husserl makes *in passim* a short claim concerning the relation between the presentations and their objects:

¹² It is the year in which Husserl authored the *Intentionale Gegenstände* (Hua XXII 303-348), on the occasion of his acquaintance with K. Twardowski's new book (see n.). Some of the philological uncertainties by the editor of the Hua XII concerning the origin of this work (see esp. p. XLIX) were amended by K. Schuhmann (Schuhmann, 1991b).

¹³ Most recently by C. Ierna in his excellent survey of Husserl's early philosophy: "In 1894 Husserl will be deeply concerned with the issue of intentional objects, but at the time of *ÜBZ* and *PA* it hardly plays any role. In fact, in both of these works the expression « intentional object » is used only once: *ÜBZ* 36/317, later taken over in *PA* 45/45." (Ierna, 2006, 57-58) R. D. Rollinger also bases his presentation of Husserl's position towards Brentano's notion of intentionality on later texts, namely on the *Logical Investigations* and on Husserl's essay on intentional objects of 1894 (Rollinger, 1999, 50sqq). Th. De Boer distinguishes between intentionality as possessing immanent contents and intentionality as a directedness towards an objects, and maintains that the second sense of intentionality appears at Husserl only at 1894 (see De Boer 1978, 51)

Es bedarf wohl kaum Erinnerung, daß wo es sich um objektiv-wirkliche Dinge handelt, diese doch durch Vorstellungen in unserem Bewußtsein repräsentiert sein müssen. Der vorgestellte Inbegriff verhält sich dann zu dem intendierten Inbegriff der wirklichen Dinge, wie sich auch die Vorstellung eines einzelnen wirklichen Dinges zu diesem selbst verhält.¹⁴

Husserl also makes a cursory reference to the conceptual apparatus of the intentionality in the course of his critical investigations:

Gewiß ist es richtig, daß es sich bei der Bildung von Zahlen wie auch von Vielheiten in concreto nicht um ein passives Aufnehmen oder ein bloß heraushebendes Bemerkens eines Inhaltes handelt; wenn irgendwo, so liegen hier spontane Tätigkeiten vor, die wir an die Inhalte knüpfen. [...] Ein auf die sämtlichen Inhalte gerichtetes einigendes Interesse und zugleich mit und in ihm (in jener gegenseitigen Durchdringung, wie sie psychischen Akten eigen ist) ein Akt des Bemerkens heben die Inhalte heraus, und das intentionale Objekt dieses Aktes ist eben die Vorstellung der Vielheit oder des Inbegriffs jener Inhalte. In dieser Weise sind die Inhalte zugleich und zusammen gegenwärtig, sind sie *eins*, und mit Reflexion auf diese Einigung gesonderter Inhalte durch jene psychischen Akte entstehen die Allgemeinbegriffe Vielheit und (bestimmte) Zahl.¹⁵

Though both citations appears in the text unconnected with their direct context, they can be made to bear on the main argument of the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, and even on an important issue of the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*. As it is widely known, Robert Sokolowski convincingly argued that Husserl's analysis of the collective connection (*kollektive Verbindung*) is already an example of constitutional analysis.¹⁶ Although Sokolowski has based his argument on the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*, his results shed a different light on the corresponding parts of the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, which are now usually investigated as being possible precursors of the constitutional analysis in the *Philosophie der Arithmetik*. This could lend an important role to two passages cited. Most recently Carlo Ierna has used them to prove that the constitutional analysis of Husserl already involves higher-order objects.¹⁷

However it is important to distinguish between advances concerning the constitutional analysis of the presentation of numbers, and concerning the more general notion of intentionality: The *Über den Begriff der Zahl* is intended by Husserl as a study of the particular kind of presentations that lay beneath our concept of the number,¹⁸ i.e., a study in a particular kind of intentionality, and it is Husserl's advance in this field that is usually emphasized. However it is also possible to ask which general view on intentionality is manifest in this work; and it would be a *petitio principii* to claim that Husserl's advances concerning the presentation of multitudes go hand in hand with his advances concerning a general view of intentionality. Quite contrary, it will turn out that Husserl's inventive analysis of the origin of the

¹⁴ Hua XII 298 Anm. 1

¹⁵ Hua XII 316-317

¹⁶ See Sokolowski, 15sq. This interpretation has its origin in a self-interpretative remark of Husserl (Hua XVII 90sq).

¹⁷ A claim that De Boer denies (De Boer, 1978, 25). See Ierna, 2006, 61.

¹⁸ Cf. Hua XII 298

presentations of numbers co-exist with his less developed and less articulated general notion of intentionality.

In fact, when the two citations are investigated from this point of view, they prove to be less conclusive than from the point of view of the aforementioned constitutional analysis. First of all, it is uncertain what kind of distinction Husserl intends to signal with his use of “intentional object” in the second citation. Is “intentional object” the same as the single object of the intentional act, or is it its “intended” object (two use the terminology of the first remark), or its “presented” object? The distinction between “intended” and “presented” objects itself seems to be problematic, at least in its present form. The representational relationship between the presented and intended object, displayed in the first citation, will be later seriously attacked by Husserl himself, and it is also to remember that Brentano drew a different line between phenomena and real world things, namely that he restricted the intentional relation to the domain of the phenomena.

The most serious problem with this two sporadic occurrences is that they fail to have any connection with either their intermediate context or with the conceptual apparatus of the rest of the work, and the passages themselves do not explicate their terms. Any further interpretation of these remarks is bound therefore to make unwarranted presuppositions on the meaning of its terms. It is probably the best to consider these passages to be what their immediate positions in the text suggests: one occasion of a common sense truism, and one incidental reference to a conceptual framework which is itself not employed by Husserl.¹⁹

There is, however place in Husserl's work, namely his excursus into the theory of relations²⁰, which provides a natural occasion to elaborate on the question of the *intentionality as such*, and Husserl actually takes this opportunity to do so. The interpretation of this excursus is, though, less trivial than it seems.

III – Interpreting Husserl's Theory of Relations: Intentionality and Encompassing

At first glance, it would seem that in elaborating his theory of relations, Husserl simply relies on James Mill to conceive relations as contents of the consciousness, and then involves the Brentanoian distinction between physical and psychical phenomena to classify relations, according to the *Relationsphänomenon* itself, into physical relations (content-relations) and psychical relations. The latter class of relations thus “intentionally encompass”²¹ its *fundamenta*. Husserl then treats the collective connection (*kollektive Verbindung*) as psychical relation and goes on to explore its structure and exact role in the formation of the concept of numbers.

¹⁹ This said, I think that, in order to establish his claim, Ierna (see note) pushes these passages to their limits. Some of his readers might have been conveyed the impression that he relies there on the main course of argumentation of the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, while that is in fact not the case.

²⁰ Hua XII 328-331

²¹ Cf. Hua XII 329.27

The interpretation of this excursus is, however, a bit more tricky. In order to uncover it, I will first consider what is really implied by Husserl's reference to Mill's theory of the relations, then I will investigate how it is possible to cast out the theory of intentionality in the terms of a theory of relation (as did by Brentano himself), and then I will attempt to determine the exact position Husserl seems to take.

At the beginning of the excursus, Husserl claims that, though there is no universally accepted theory of relations, a commentary of John Stuart Mill on his edition of a book of fathers suffices us to understand what relations really are. Husserl then quotes the text of J. St. Mill in German:

Objekte, physische oder psychische, sind in Relation zueinander vermöge eines komplexen Bewußtseinszustandes, in den sie beide eintreten, auch für den Fall, daß der komplexe Zustand in nichts weiter bestände als im Denken an beide zusammen. Und sie werden aufeinander in so vielen verschieden Weisen bezogen, oder, mit anderen Worten, sie stehen in so vielen distinkten Relationen zueinander, als es spezifisch verschiedene Bewußtseinszustände gibt, von denen beide Teile ausmachen.

Any objects, whether physical or mental, are related, or are in a relation, to one another, in virtue of any complex state of consciousness into which they both enter; even if it be a no more complex state of consciousness than that of merely thinking of them together. And they are related to each other in as many different ways, or in other words, they stand in as many distinct relations to one another, as there are specifically distinct states of consciousness of which they both form parts.²²

Although after this citation Husserl expresses his possible debt to Meinong by a reference to his *Hume-Studien II*, the insistence of Husserl on the lack of any accepted theory of relations has bought him the anger of Meinong when he sent him a copy of the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* in 1891.²³ However, there is a far bigger problem with this reference to Mill, namely that *it deceptively suggests that Mill's notion of relation is in accordance with Brentano's classification of phenomena, and, more specifically, his theory of intentionality*. This deceiving suggestion might be further accelerated by the translation's rendering of *physical-mental* as *physische-psychische*.

Let us take a closer look at the issue. The cited text, as I have already mentioned, is in fact from John Stuart Mill, who annexed several commentaries to his father's work. This situation would make it hard to establish the exact position

²² German text according to Hua XII 328-329, English original according to Mill, 1868, 10. The same citation also appears, with slight deviations in punctuation, in a manuscript of Husserl (K I 32 / 3b).

²³ In the corresponding part of the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* Husserl opted for an English citation and omitted his reference to Meinong, which might have contributed to avoid the indignation of the latter (expressed in a letter to Husserl at 19 June 1891, see BW I 129). (The *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, though printed, never was available in bookshops.) Ierna has also noted that in the *Über den Begriff der Zahl* Husserl has copied the verbatim translation of Mill's text from Meinong (Ierna, 2006, 63)

implied here, but the remark by J. St. Mill is, fortunately, extensive enough to address the general theory of relations it relies on:

In order to make quite clear the nature of this peculiarity, it will be desirable to advert once more to the double mode of signification of concrete general names, viz. that while they denote (or are names of) objects, they connote some facts relating to those objects. The fact connoted by any name, relative or not, is always of the same nature; it is some bodily or mental feeling, or some set of bodily or mental feelings, accompanying or produced by the object. (...) The peculiarity in the case of relative names is, that the fact connoted concerns two objects, and cannot be understood without thinking of them both. It is a phenomenon in which two objects play a part. (...) Now, when in a series of phenomena of any interest to us two objects are implicated, we naturally give names expressive of it to both the objects, and these are relative names. The two correlative names. The two correlative names denote two different objects, the cause and the effect, or the parent and son; but though what they denote is different, what they connote is in a certain sense the same: both name connote the same set of facts (...). This set of facts, which is connoted by both the correlative names, was called by the old logicians the ground of the relations, *fundamentum relationis*.²⁴

The complex state of consciousness, referred to by Husserl, is thus the *fundamentum relationis*, in virtue of which we give relative (correlative) names to the corresponding objects (and we name these names as “relation”). The overall problem with this conception is that it *already implies a theory of reference* and therefore it is incompatible with the claim that the relationship between the presentation and its object is supposed to consist in the “intentional inexistence” of the intentional object in the presentation. Let us look at the details of this problem!

After referring to Mill, Husserl goes on to classify the relations based on the complex state of consciousness. Husserl takes the “thinking together”, as described by Mill, to mean the encompassing (*Umfassen*) two or more contents, which Husserl calls “fundaments” of the relation. Now it is possible, says Husserl, that this encompassing occurs intentionally or not intentionally. Apart from a reference to the corresponding parts of the *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt* and the manifest use of Brentano's *termini technici*, Husserl says comparable little on what this difference of encompassing is supposed to consist of:

Eine jede [*sc.* eine physische] Relation ruht auf „Fundamenten“; sie ist ein komplexes Phänomen, welches in einer gewissen (nicht näher zu beschreibenden) Weise Teilphänomene umfaßt; aber keineswegs umfaßt eine jede Relation diese ihre Fundamente intentional, d.h. in jener spezifisch bestimmten Weise, in der ein „psychisches Phänomen“ (ein Akt des Bemerkens, Wollens etc.) seinen Inhalt (das Bemerkte, Gewollte etc.) umfaßt. Man vergleiche z. B. die Art, in welcher die Vorstellung, die wir Ähnlichkeit zweier Inhalte nennen, diese selbst einschließt, mit irgendeinem Fall der intentionalen Inexistenz, und man wird anerkennen müssen, daß es sich um ganz verschiedene Arten des Einschlusses handelt. (...)

Jede dieser Relationen repräsentiert ein eigenartiges „psychisches“ Phänomen (in der hier zugrunde liegenden Bedeutung dieses Terminus) und gehört mit Bezug darauf in dieselbe Hauptklasse. (...)

²⁴ Mill, 1869, vol. II. pp. 8-9 (I suppose that the 1878-79 edition (see Hua XII 582) is a reprint of the 1869 edition.)

Auf der anderen Seite steht eine zweite Hauptklasse von Relationen, welche dadurch charakterisiert ist, daß hier das Relationsphänomen ein „*psychisches*“ ist.²⁵

Husserl will later complain that he has here confused the relation itself (the relational attribute) with the fundamentals of the relation, that is, he has confused the contents that are encompassed with the phenomenon that results from the encompassing.²⁶ While that complaint is undeniable true, the bigger problem is that Husserl seems to forget that intentionality is not solely a special mode of encompassing, but a *mode of encompassing which is introduced in order to account for the relationship between the presentation and its objects*. It is, of course, possible to further investigate the structure of the complex state of consciousness, and the “thinking together” of the contents could be, naturally, analysed in terms of the special mode of “inexistence” which is peculiar of the intentional acts. This analysis, furthermore, will go beyond what Mill intends, and it will further necessitate to distinguish between the parts which form the complex and the resulting complex (as it is exactly signalled by Husserl's retrospective critical remark). However, when Mill explains the origin of the relation via a complex state of the consciousness, he already supposes that the components of this complex state gives rise to names which denote real objects (and connote the components themselves), in other words, he *already makes use of a theory which substitutes the theory of intentionality*.

IV – *On the Possibility of a Relational Account of Intentionality*

Quite interestingly, Brentano's concept of intentionality could be well harmonised with a theory of relations which is very close to that of Mill – *though not in the way Husserl attempted*. Even more interestingly, this was presented by Brentano himself in the course of his lectures on psychology. At that time Husserl was already in Halle, though some signs indicate that he, at least to some degree, must have been familiar with Brentano's conception of intentionality as a relation.²⁷

²⁵ Hua XII 329-330

²⁶ In the *Philosophie der Arithmetik* he says: „Um nun unseren Sprachgebrauch zu fixieren setzten wir fest, daß unter « Relation » jenes komplexe Phänomen, welches die Grundlage für die Bildung der relativen Attribute bildet, und daß unter « Fundament der Relation » [...] jeder der bezogenen Inhalte zu verstehen ist.“ (Hua XII 67) Even more telling is another retrospective remark made by Husserl: „Meine Unterscheidung in der *Philosophie der Arithmetik* zwischen primären Relationen (oder besser verknüpfungen, Komplexionen) und psychischen (intentionalen) Relationen scheint Verwandtschaft zu haben mit Meinongs Unterscheidung zwischen realen und idealen Relationen (und Komplexionen). Zunächst bemerke ich, daß ich in der genannten Jugendschrift das Wort Relation im Sinn Mill's nehme und demgemäß mit Komplexion identifiziere. [...] Und diesen Bewußtseinszustand selbst nenne ich dort (wenig passend) Relation, und erkläre ausdrücklich, daß er nicht bloß als ein intentionales Erlebnis, als ein Akt zu fassen sei, sondern als gleichwertig mit Phänomen überhaupt. Zwei Inhalte sind in Relation, zwei Inhalte sind Teil eines Phänomens, sagt also dasselbe.“ (K I 19 / 16a The manuscript itself is not dated. Schuhman conjectures (see *Husserl-Chronik* p. 31) that it might have been written on the occasion of the above mentioned correspondence with Meinong in 1891.)

²⁷ Brentano lectured on descriptive psychology three times between 1887/88 and 1890/91. Husserl was in the possession of a (partial) college note from the 1887/88 lecture of Brentano made by Dr. Hans

Let us see how Brentano himself has explained intentionality in terms of a theory of relations in his 1890/91 *Psychognosie* lectures, just four years after Husserl had studied at him.

1. Vor allem ist es eine Eigenheit, welche für das Bewußtsein allgemein charakteristisch ist, daß es immer und überall, d.h. in jedem seiner ablösbaren Teile eine gewisse Art von Relation zeigt, welche ein Subjekt zu einem Objekt in Beziehung setzt. Man nennt sie auch „intentionale Beziehung“. Zu jedem Bewußtsein gehört wesentlich eine Beziehung.

2. Wie bei jeder Beziehung finden sich daher auch hier zwei Korrelate. Das eine Korrelat ist der Bewußtseinsakt, das andere das, worauf er gerichtet ist.

Sehen und Gesehenes,

Vorstellen und Vorgestelltes (...) usw.

Bei diesen Korrelaten zeigt sich, wie schon Aristoteles hervorhob, die Eigentümlichkeit, daß das eine allein real, das andere dagegen nichts Reales ist. So wenig ein gewesener Mensch, so wenig ist ein gedachter etwas Reales. Der gedachte Mensch hat darum auch keine eigentliche Ursache und kann nicht eigentlich eine Wirkung üben, sondern indem der Bewußtseinsakt, das Denken des Menschen gewirkt wird, ist der gedachte Mensch, sein nichtreales Korrelat, mit da. Trennbar sind die Korrelate nicht von einander, außer <wenn sie> distinktionell <sind>.

(...) 3. Erläuterungen des Ausdrucks Objekt: etwas innerlich Gegenständliches ist gemeint. Draußen braucht ihm nichts zu entsprechen. Zur Verhütung von Missverständnissen mag man es „inwohnendes“ „immanentes“ Objekt nennen.²⁸

This text, which is usually considered as a manifestation of the *received view* of Brentano's theory of intentionality, can be interpreted along the lines of the new conception of his theory of intentionality. This interpretation, which was pioneered by Werner Sauer²⁹, is basically a re-investigation of Brentano's underlying theory of relations. When we read at Brentano, that “*Wie bei jeder Beziehung finden sich daher auch hier zwei Korrelate*“, it is compelling to take in in the sense of the classical, simplest theory of relations, namely that Brentano here speaks about the two entities which are related to each other. „*Diese Sichtweise auf Brentano zu übertragen – says Sauer –, heißt aber, den Aristotelischen Hintergrund*

Schmidkunz (archival signature Q 10). Moreover, there exists some preserved notes taken by Husserl, probably from Brentano's 1884/85 WS lecture on *Elementary Logics and its Necessary Reform*, which already present intentionality as a relation: „*Die Relationen auf psychischen Gebiet [...] I. Die intentionalen Relationen Solcher gibt es 3 Klassen: Vorstellungen, Urteile, Liebe und Haß. [...] Von diesen Relationen gilt der Satz, daß ihr einer Terminus real, der andere nicht real ist. II. Die Relationen der Gleichheit und Verschiedenheit. Die Verhältnisse der Quasi-Gleichheit. Auf diesem Verhältnis der Quasi-Gleichheit beruht der Begriff des Wirklichen. Quasi-Gleichheit besteht zwischen dem zeitlich Modifizierten und dem nicht Modifizierten, ferner zwischen dem intentional Modifizierten und dem, was nicht modifiziert ist. (Immanentes Objekt – das äußere Objekt, das diesem entspricht). Das nicht Modifizierte im Unterschied vom Modifizierten heißt das Wirkliche.*“ (K I 19 / 3a)

²⁸ Brentano, 1982, 21-22

²⁹ See Sauer, 2006

*seines Denkens über relationale Sachverhalte zu ignorieren.*³⁰ According to Aristotle, claims Sauer³¹, there is a categorical difference between the substances related to each other (like Simmias and Socrates) and the relational properties considered as unary predicates (like “smaller-than”, “greater-then”). A relational state of affairs thus consists of two *relata*, that is, two substances, and two *correlata*, that is, two entities existing only in a modified sense. This makes it easy to interpret the case of intentional relation: One of the *correlata*, as Brentano said, is the act of the consciousness. As with every relation, always exists two correlates. The second *correlatum*, which always exists, is an inseparable part of the conscious act: “the seen”, “the presented”, „*das, worauf er [der Bewußtseinsakt] gerichtet ist*“. But it is only a *correlatum*, not the related substance itself!

Now, it is the *correlata* which always exists, and the *relata* could easily be non-existing. What are these *relata*? Let us look very closely what Brentano says in the opening paragraph of the citation: „*es [das Bewußtsein] immer und überall [...] eine gewisse Art von Relation zeigt, welche ein Subjekt zu einem Objekt in Beziehung setzt.*“ The *relata* are the subject and the object, the latter of them could easily be non-existing (like the centaur). “*Es ist nun leicht, das hinter der ontologischen Deutung der Intentionalitätsthese beim vorreistichen Brentano stehende Mißverständnis herauszustellen: Es ist einfach die Verwechslung der Korrelate mit den Relata*“ – concludes Sauer.³²

The similarity between this explanation of the intentional relation and the theory of relation Husserl is seeking to find in Mill is manifest: the *relata* are related in virtue of contents in the consciousness. It would be therefore eminently possible to reconstruct Brentano's relational theory of intentionality in the framework of the theory Husserl is pursuing: it is the complex state of consciousness in virtue of which an external object stands in relation to the subject. However, Husserl takes a totally different path when he tries to consider intentionality as a particular way of the togetherness of the contents.

V – Some Refinements in Husserl's Manuscript Notes on Mill and Lotze

Husserl, it seems, both oversees that Mill's theory of relations already implies a particular view on the relationship between contents of the consciousness and objects, a question which is supposed to address by intentionality itself, and he also missed the opportunity to rely on Brentano's conception of intentionality in the

³⁰ Sauer, 2006, 21-22

³¹ See Sauer, 2006, 21-23

³² Sauer, 2006, 23. A further advantage of his interpretation is that it makes clearly visible where the difference between Brentano's early (the so-called pre-reistic) and later (the so-called reistic) position really lies: In both phases Brentano denied that a relation necessitates the existence of two *relata*. However, in his later phase he thought that the second *correlatum*, the inseparable part of the conscious act is merely a fictional entity resulting from the abuse of language. When doing so, Brentano has essentially returned to Aristotle's position, who warned against the supposition of a *correlatum* in the case of the thought-relation. (Cf. Sauer, 2006, 22sq)

terms of a very similar theory of relations. The importance of this recognition is, methinks, not to identify some kind of “error” on Husserl's side, but to gain insight into how complex, how multi-faceted his early thought was, and to recognize how many separate influencing factors are present at the same time. I will return to the possible lessons such recognition could provide later.

I have already highlighted that Husserl conceives intentionality as a special way of encompassing contents. Let us further investigate this special role of intentionality! In a manuscript note which stems from a convolute written in the years around the completing of the *Über den Begriff der Zahl*, Husserl is clearly aware of the disadvantages of John Stuart Mill's constant references to outer objects in his psychology:

Dann geht es Seite 58 Gomp<erz> weiter:³³ „Es gibt in alle dem was die das Verhältnis bezeichnenden Worte ausdrücken, nichts, was sich nicht in Zustände des Bewusst<eins> auflösen ließe; wobei äußere Gegenstände ohne Zweifel durchgängig als die Ursachen vorausgesetzt werden, die einige dieser Bewusstseinszustände hervorrufen und Geister als die Subjekte, die sie insgesamt erfahren, wobei aber weder die äußeren Gegenstände noch die Geister ihr Dasein anders als durch Zustände des Bewusstseins kundgeben.“

Dieser Hinweis auf äußere Ursachen welche einige jener Bewusstseinszustände welche das Fundament im Sinne M<ill>'s bilden, hervorrufen, haben doch bei der Beschreibung des allgemeinen Charakters der Relation nichts zu tun. Jedenfalls gehören sie nicht zum Begriff der Relation überhaupt. Dieser beständige Hinweis auf äußere Gegenstände trübt die Darstellung in der Logik [sc. das Werk von J. St. Mill]. Darum ist eben die Darstellung in der Analysis [sc. das Werk von James Mill] besser und wissenschaftlicher, da sie sich direkt an die Phänomene hält und darum psychologischer ist.³⁴

An expression of dislike is, of course, in itself insufficient as a delineation against an unwanted consequence of a philosophical position. It is to be asked whether Husserl succeeds in constructing a concept of relation which avoids this pitfall and which clarifies the position that is assigned to intentionality in his early theory of relations.

An another note in the above-mentioned convolute of manuscripts further corroborates that for Husserl the focus was on the being-together of the contents:

Mill gebraucht den Ausdruck Bewusstseinszustand (state of mind) in demselben Umfang wie wir den Ausdruck Phänomen. Es ist also nicht etwa ein geistiger Zustand als psychischer Akt derjenige, was hier gemeint ist. Ich betone dies hier, weil in der Tat eine Reihe hervorgehender Philosophen die Beziehung als 'psychisches Phänomen' angesehen haben. So zum Beispiel Lotze. Nach der Mill'schn Erklärung fällt der Begriff Relation zusammen mit dem Begriff des Ganzen in dem weitesten Sinn. Inhalte stehen in Relation wenn sie Teile eines Ganzen bilden; welcher Art übrigens dies Ganze sei; <gestr. ohne

³³ The sentence cited by Husserl appears at p. 58 of Th. Gomperz's “authorised translation” of J. St. Mill's *Logic* (Mill, 1872, vol. I p. 58), in the middle of the chapter on relations (Book I Section III Chaper IV, §§ 10-11). Husserl was in possession of this series by Th. Gomperz (archival signature BQ 318a).

³⁴ K I 32 / 6b

sinnliche> die Beschränkung die Mill macht, das nämlich nur zwei Inhalte gegeben seien, ist unnötig, ja hinderlich.³⁵

Unlike in his retrospective critique, which was cited above, here Husserl is keen to classify relations as phenomena. There is though a certain crumbling in his terminology: he calls the opposite class “mental state”, “psychical act” or “psychical phenomenon”, so it might be helpful to consider what Hermann Lotze, whom Husserl mentions as a representing the opposite view, says about relations (*Beziehungen*): „jede Beziehung, indem sie zwei Glieder verbindet, enthält den Gedanken einer Stellung jedes dieser Glieder innerhalb dieser Beziehung selbst, und die Stellung braucht nicht für beide dieselbe zu sein, sie wird im Gegentheil am häufigsten verschieden, das eine Glied das Umfassende, Ganze, Bedingende, das andere das Umfaßte sein, der Theil, das Bedingte.“³⁶

Husserl's opposition to Lotze is curious, since by postulating two positions (*Stellungen*), each for the corresponding *relata*, Lotze seems to imply a quite similar theory of relations. In order to identify what Husserl is combating in Lotze, an another location could be helpful (also recorded by Husserl in his manuscript): „[solche Beziehungen]...entstehen, wenn unsere ganz willkürliche Aufmerksamkeit irgend zwei Elemente oder vielmehr deren Vorstellungen mit einander in eine ihnen selbst ganz gleichgültige und unwesentliche Berührung bringt.“³⁷ Although this characterisation is offered by Lotze only in respect to a certain class of relations, Husserl, not unlike other philosophers in their relationship to their contemporaries, perceives only what is very similar to his position, and focuses clearly on the remaining difference: though it would be possible to draw a parallel between Mill's and Lotze's theory of relation, there is a remarkable difference, namely that Lotze's requires the active taking of a position by the consciousness (this seems to be intended by his chosen term „*Stellung*“).

What Husserl combats in Lotze is therefore his involving of an active moment of the consciousness. Against that, Husserl conceives the relation purely as some contents being together: “the notion of the relation coincides with the notion of the whole, taken in the broadest sense.”

It is finally to be examined whether this theory of Husserl, considered to be as close to the simple being together of contents as it is possible, is capable of accounting for the intentionality. First of all, it should be noted that Husserl, as it was already highlighted, misses the opportunity, prelineated by Brentano himself, to account for intentionality as a relation by considering the contents of the

³⁵ K I 32 / 42a

³⁶ Lotze, 1874, 22. The first part of the sentence, along with a reference to „*Logik* 22“ is noted by Husserl in the above-mentioned convolute (K I 32 / 17b). An edition of this book of Lotze (²1880) was in Husserl's possession (archival signature: BQ 285).

³⁷ Lotze, 1883, 18. The whole passage is noted at K I 32 / 17b with the reference „*Dictate über Metaphysik Seite* 18“. Husserl was in possession of a copy of this edition (archival signature: BQ 283)

consciousness to be the corresponding *correlata*. Instead, Husserl opts for treating intentionality as being merely a mode of encompassing, of incorporation, of “inexistence.” Meanwhile, as I have mentioned in the beginning of this section, he seems to neglect the conceptual apparatus of intentionality when speaking about the relationship between presentations and its real-world object.

It might seem that the use of intentionality purely as a mode of encompassing, though not faithful to the intention of Brentano, is still a conceptual possibility. This is however not true. By introducing intentionality as a mode of encompassing Husserl posits a difference in the simple being together of the contents, originally envisaged by Mill. This difference implies different strata in the complex state of consciousness, since, to confine ourselves to Husserl's own examples, the willing and the willed definitely belongs to different layers. The use of intentionality as a mode of encompassing therefore tends to break up the simple structure of the contents of the consciousness and implies a structure that is similar to the structure of the act and its object. *It is only that Husserl does not treat this structure as being responsible for the relationship between the act of the consciousness and its object.*

VI - Conclusions

The claim that Brentano's notion of intentionality has influenced Husserl is, much in line with Schuhmann's characterisation, false. But, it has turned out, *both parts* of this claim are false, i.e. *Brentano's notion of intentionality differs from what it is usually supposed to be, and it was not Husserl's thinking about intentionality that Brentano's notion of intentionality has influenced.* Brentano's concept of intentionality has not failed to exercise an impetus on Husserl's thought: Not only that Husserl makes occasional use of Brentano's technical terms related to intentionality, but he also tries to preserve the intentional inexistence as an operative concept when constructing his theory of relations. There is however a noteworthy difference: Husserl is not inclined to resort to the theory of intentionality when thinking about the relationship between the conscious acts and their objects.

The history of Husserl's notion of intentionality, and of his early philosophy in general, it seems, could be even more complicated than we would incline to think. I interpret these results as a call to a more differentiated account of the development of Husserl's early philosophy, and of his notion of intentionality in particular. The question might be asked why it is important to be aware of the heterogeneity of the sources and the complexity of the formation of Husserl's notion of intentionality. The importance of this recognition, methinks, stems from the fact that the development of Husserl's notion of intentionality is not only a piece of conceptual history, but a clue to the evaluation of his early work.

The early work of Husserl has seen many evaluations, sometimes quite rejective, focusing on the question whether Husserl's position is to be characterised

as realistic³⁸, metaphysically neutral³⁹ or idealistic.⁴⁰ Among the many factors such evaluations should consider, one is Husserl's notion of intentionality (or, in other words, his position about the relationship between the conscious acts and their objects). I believe that an investigation that incorporates the complexities hidden in this notion could show that many evaluative conclusions are, to a certain degree, *premature, because they disregard the heterogeneity of the traits in Husserl's thinking about the problems of intentionality and the transient nature of the (often aporetic) reconciliations he tries to achieve.* Such an investigation might also prove that all of these uncertainties and difficulties, are, much in accordance with Husserl's own characterisation, arrived at a satisfactory solution only after his breakthrough to transcendental phenomenology in 1906.

It is this longer investigation the present article has hopefully contributed to.

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| Hua XII | Edmund Husserl: <i>Philosophie der Arithmetik (1890-1901)</i> (Husserliana XII) (hrsg. Lothar Eley) (Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag: 1970) |
| Hua XVII | Edmund Husserl: <i>Formale und transzendente Logik. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft.</i> (hrsg. Paul Janssen) (Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag: 1974) |
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| Husserl- Chronik | Karl Schuhmann: <i>Husserl-Chronik. Denk- und Lebensweg Edmund Husserls.</i> (Husserliana Dokumente I) (Martinus Nijhoff, Den Haag: 1977) |

³⁸ As it was widely conceived by Husserl's contemporaries in the so-called "phenomenological movement" of Göttingen and München. (See Stein, 2002 for a vivid account of that.)

³⁹ As advocated by D. Zahavi (see e.g. Zahavi, 2002).

⁴⁰ Most recently by J.-F. Lavigne, who claimed that a hidden subjective idealism is already present in Husserl's work before 1906. (Lavigne. 2005, e.g. 223). I think that the heterogeneity and inconclusiveness of the early writings renders such univocal judgements less tenable. For an illustration of that in this case, see H. Jacobs' critique of Lavigne's use of the *Psychologische Studien II* (Jacobs, 2007, 79-80). (It could be further added that the page in the *Psychologische Studien II* on the distinction between phenomenal and transcendent thing bears a question mark by Husserl (see Hua XII 444 ad 111:5-20); and also that this distinction is incompatible even with Husserl's own analysis about spatial perception in the preparatory notes for the *Psychologische Studien II*, which imply that the spatial object could not be equated with the sum of its intuitions (see Hua XXII 275:9-19, 282).)

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PETER A. VARGA

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HOW DO CATEGORIAL REPRESENTATIONS INFLUENCE EVERYDAY INTUITION? ON HUSSERL'S EARLY ATTEMPT TO GRASP THE HORIZONTAL STRUCTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

DEODÁTH ZUH¹

ABSTRACT. Beginning with the book of Robert Sokolowski about Husserl's concept of constitution the *Philosophy of Arithmetic (PA)* have been revisited as an important document of Husserl's constitution-theory. It is not only an unripe sketch but a work that even formulates one of the most progressive thoughts of Husserl's later philosophy. In my analysis this statement will also be true, if we concentrate on the second part of Husserl's book and on the text that was meant to build the opening section of the second volume of this early treatise of Husserl. These works are focused on a problem of the later Husserl, namely how everyday life is the base of using signs, symbols and idealized concepts and how this world also becomes transformed by these means: so the whole problem-complex of the interaction of intuitive and ideal-conceptual. If we take into account that Husserl wants to clarify the basis of symbolization as such in the *PA*, then it is not surprising that he handles these problems. But it is surprising that he comes very close to the results which were obtained in the late 20s and 30s. This will be clear if we are attent to some points in Husserl's 1892/93 text about the concept of space. I will conclude that he abandoned these very progressive results, because he had realized, that his mood of analysis wasn't sufficient to go in this direction already.

Keywords: structure of consciousness, proper and improper presentations, the ground of symbolization as such, the basic levels of constitution, time-relation, logical equivalence, the logic of signs, unintuitive intuition.

In my lecture² I try to list some texts and excerpts of manuscripts of the early Husserl that can build a starting point towards a later conception of him, what I call „*the horizontal structure of consciousness*”. This term is taken from the vast analysis of Husserl's research manuscripts about the problem of time (taking the

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² I owe my colleague and friend Péter András Varga from the Doctoral School of Phenomenology in Budapest the deepest thanks for the comments made on my lecture and the useful suggestions to transform it in a more detailed study. I also wish to thank Prof. Ion Copoeru, Prof. Leonard Lawlor, Prof. Dermot Moran and Dr. Tamás Ullmann for their questions that lead me to present here a clearer version of my paper.

Leuven Archive signature „C”) by Toine Kortooms, who designates it as a considerable change in Husserl’s view about the architecture of knowledge.

The main reason of this change is the fact that Husserl has made a strong distinction between the domain of sensuality and the domain of the ego in his later time-manuscripts, and has dealt not only with inner, but also with outer time-consciousness, intersubjectivity and the composition of the social universe, and so the complex phenomenon, that he calls: *life-world*. Husserl so get rid of the distinction of different levels of consciousness, which are „stacked on top of one another” (*Ph.T*, 241.) So he was able to abandon the „fine infinite regresses” of different type from his time-lectures and other manuscripts, like the most aporetic ones written in the Schwarzwald resort of Bernau. But not only, he had the opportunity, to speak more clearly about the problems of passivity, association and sedimentation, which are not supposing the sphere of the ego, but are able to influence it.

What I have to underline is that the description of the structure of consciousness is not only motivated by a deeper occupation with the problem of time, but this is the most important research field, that makes the different and more and more complicated ways of constitution easily comprehensible, inner time being the first level. *But in the later manuscripts these levels are only ways of methodic lucidity and not the structure of consciousness as such.* The description of the levels of constitution as a kind of methodic freedom to instaurate clarity and the structure of consciousness are not the same. The architecture of knowledge is although one of the most important problems, but it was too complicated for Husserl to examine it on the basis of his earlier manuscripts being nevertheless present in these works too. But the deeper use of the phenomenological method have delayed the dissection of the highly complicated genetic problems, like the ones of the constitution of society and history.

I try to figure out, that Husserl’s late dealing with the problem of the life-world as a ground for the theories of the European sciences has been already present in some works and manuscripts about mathematics (more exactly arithmetic and geometry). But it wasn’t called life-world, and also had nothing to do with an explicit or implicit crisis of any sciences. It was only the document of an obsessive thinking about the foundation of mathematical proceedings of knowledge. That is why Husserl already speaks about the necessity of genetic analysis, but evidently says nothing about the level of genetic constitution. That was possible only through the development of the phenomenological method and at first only in the second half of the first decade of 20th Century.

At first I have to demonstrate that the problem of time (as the basic level of descriptive analysis) is present in both parts of Husserl philosophical debut-work, the *Ph. Of Arithmetic*, then I mention an annex to this text about the theory of signs. This will lead us to some fundamental analyses from 1892/93, which will introduce explicitly the problem: how scientific representation influences everyday intuition,

and how a horizontal structure of consciousness is strikingly present in Husserl's early proceedings towards the problems of the Philosophy of Mathematics.

*

Husserl mentions in a way more neglected chapter of his *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, namely the second, entitled *Critical developments* (containing the germs of the refutation of his contemporary works— cf. *PA*, 22ff)³, that a main disease of the theories of number is, that they make use of the hypothesis of the narrowness of consciousness in a highly exaggerated manner. And it can be formulated like this: We can have only a single presentation (*Vorstellung*)⁴ in the present time, or we can have the presentation of only a single content in the same moment. (cf. *PA*, 26.) As he says: it really can be true in one perspective: our attention in the process of intensive concentration can focus only on a limited set of objects, or in a momentary perceptive act, we can count hardly beyond three. But if this was the most important point in the formation of the concept of number, it would undermine the sensible treatment of the whole problem.

In the early interpretation of Robert Sokolowski (in the *Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution*) this second chapter of the *PA* has a basic role in the prehistory of Husserl's constitution-theory. After Husserl refuses the false use of the hypothesis of the narrowness of consciousness, he mentions the importance of time-relations or temporal relations in the researches focused on the concept of number, although his argumentation is quite sketchy and finally culminates in a negative conclusion.

But Husserl states the following: „If we took solely the description of the phenomenon, which is at issue, when we present a multitude, then we would surely also count with the temporal modifications the single contents they endure, albeit regularly they fall out of consideration” (*PA*, 31.) Husserl outlines two moments of this „temporal standpoint” as necessary condition for numbers:

„1) It is indispensable that partial presentations in the presentation of a multiplicity or number be found simultaneously in our consciousness, and

2) Almost all presentations of multiplicity and at any rate, all presentations of number are results of processes. They are wholes which arise successively out of elements” (cf. *PA*, 32.).

But the *meaning of the concept of a multitude* isn't affected by this grounding fact! *Contemporality (a) and succession (b)* as temporal characters are necessary but they only depict how the phenomena „they are as such”, but not what „they are for” (*PA*, 31: *Phänomen als solchem* and *wozu es uns dient*). Husserl

³ This is one of the earliest documents of Husserl's philosophical development. It was originally a part of his habilitation thesis.

⁴ I translate the German term of *Vorstellung* with the English word *presentation*. In choosing this solution I follow the suggestion taken from Carlo Ierna's review of Dallas Willard's translation of the *PA*. See: Ierna 2008.

formulates it also like this: The „content of presentations of numbers and multitudes” is not affected by temporal relations. The cause of this negative conclusion is that Husserl at this stage delimited the *psychological description* and the (logical) *supplying of meaning*. They are not correlate, but separate ways of proceeding. Husserl deliberates this question, but makes no explicit decision, which way to follow.

Sokolowski argues, that this is the section, where Husserl brushes the first, and most elementary level of constitution, named beginning with the famous Göttingen-lectures on the „Main Parts of Phenomenology and the Theory of Knowledge” as „time-consciousness”. But although this problem is not worked out, it nevertheless have „made itself felt”. (*HCC*, 25.) Then Sokolowski enroles an other hint in his work: the theory of constitution is not even present in germs in the second part of the book about the philosophy of arithmetic, which handles the difference of proper and improper concept of number. In Sokolowski’s interpretation these are mere psychological studies affected by premisses of *Gestalt*-theory, which lack the framework of constitution. They treat the difference of proper and symbolic presentation, but they are overlapping the very core of the problem: „the constitution of symbols as such”. (*HCC*, 35.)⁵ If we take into account the nerve of Sokolowski’s argument, then we are able to say, that the missing link in the second part, which could have conferred to it the stamp of proto-constitutional analysis, would have been *an amplified discussion of the problem of temporal characters*. This is a complete lack in the second part.

I try to state then the contrary, that temporal analysis is not pushed aside in the second part, but also used as an important way of argumentation. I mention that is really true: literally no time-analysis is present in Chapters ten to thirteen. If we want to give the proof of this statement, we’ll have to review the hypothesis of the narrowness of consciousness as it appears in the mentioned part of Husserl’s book.

As the author underlines in the tenth chapter of the same work (the first of the second part), this problem of the narrowness is quite similar to some theses of *Wundt*’s physiologic psychology, like the one that asserts, that we are not able to grasp more than a dozen sensually given elements. But this fact makes no influence e. g. on the concept of infinite numbers. The problem lies here somewhere else: we can also speak about quantities that we aren’t able to present to us, and we can do it without greater problems; and even more: the most secure sciences, like mathematical sciences are grounded on concepts „that properly speaking are not given” (*PA*,

⁵ We have to mention, that not Robert Sokolowski was the first, who have spoken about the role of constitution in the *PA*. Husserl himself contured it in the first part of his 1928 work about *Formal And Transzendental Logic* (in a general looking back upon his former views) that the basis of the clarification of arithmetical concepts, has to do with the problem of constitution. Although he starts with the expression of a certain discontent („[...]my *PA*[...] as unripe as it was a work of a beginner” – *FTL*, 90:33–34.), mentions the following: „It was so, in the sense of my later usage, a phenomenological-constitutive investigation, and at the same time it was the first work to make the „categorical object-matters” of the first and higher degree[...] understandable through «constituting» intentional activities, as the product of what they *originaliter* occur, so in the originality of their sense.”(*FTL*, 91:5–12.)

192:25).⁶ Husserl sees it inevitable to examine here different ways of presentation, that are in function in our consciousness, and states that beside the proper there are also improper or only symbolic ones. This is the main topic of the next Chapter.

Husserl is truly radical even in the first paragraphs of this Chapter Eleven: „Every description of an object of intuition has the tendency to replace its real presentation with a substituting sign-presentation.” (PA, 194:1–3.) It’s hardly a miscellaneous topic, but a most primitive matter of fact. But then Husserl states something much more baffling.

In this manner of speaking proper or directly given (*eigentliche*) presentations (*Vorstellungen*) and improper, symbolic or surrogate (*uneigentliche*) presentations can affect *each other*: not only a properly presented object leads to different ways of improper presentation, but improper presentations are also – and quite naturally – *able to surrogate on the proper presentation of the same object*. Arithmetical symbolization couldn’t be conceivable without accepting this fact, otherwise it would be only a way of research full of boundaries, that undermine its efficiency all of the time. „But nobody feels hindered by these boundaries.” (PA, 192:18-19.) How can we explain this miraculous fact? How can we comprehend this fully challenging problem? Husserl’s answer is although not quite conclusive, gives an important view of the question:

„I also point out, that proper and the belonging improper presentations are standing in a relation of logical equivalence. Two concepts are logically equivalent, when the object of the one is the object of the other too, and vice versa. That for the sake of our judgement-interests the symbolic presentations can surrogate to the widest degree on the corresponding proper ones is due to this circumstance.” (PA, 194:35-37.)⁷

⁶ The very first phrase of the 1890 text about the theory of signs – Husserl names it „the logic of signs”, or speaks about a theory that „falls within the sphere of logic” (cf. *Sem* 340:6.) – poses something similar through a partly rhetoric question: „But how can we speak about concepts, that we properly not have, and how isn’t it absurd that the most secure of the sciences, Arithmetic has to be grounded on concepts like those?” (*Sem*, 340:2–5.)

⁷ Almost the same is delivered in *Semiotik* about equivalence, but here the author goes a step further and treats this problem in the sphere of the division of signs or in more generally in the region of signs. He did not change his conception about this problem, but enters it from a different side. Here he says: „Two signs are equivalent, when they design the same object or respectively the same sphere of objects in a different way, performing this through a pair of different external or conceptual means.” (*Sem*, 344:21–24.) But this study is enriched by an other hint: *equivalence is not something like the sameness of meaning*. Husserl says that meaning is something that could be the object of definition, but there exist relations of equivalence (sign-equivalence) that can’t be defined. „A direct external sign has no meaning that can be expressed in that sign, so it can’t be defined.” These direct external signs are like „the proper names, the names for abstracta, the sign 1 and so on.” (*Sem*, 344:31–33.) It is not a miracle so that the most complicated abstracta have no proper definition. It is also clear that Husserl is not a philosopher to adopt a vague meaning-theory to solve the problem of improper or „highly elevated” concepts.

This theory, that equivalence is not the sameness of meaning is similar with the view of Frege from the *Über Sinn und Bedeutung* what he seemingly abandoned later. (See: Rosado Haddock 2000).

This widest degree of surrogation means then the following in the case of presentation of multitudes: we turn to symbolic presentation also in the situations where we have the intuitively given one. „Often we stick to symbolic presentations even if we could have built a proper presentation of a multitude; and were we couldn't, we won't perform everything possible to have a proper one.” (PA, 195-196) We'll handle us so with pleasure to surrogates, because – notwithstanding with the fact that they are intuitively fading, or simply absent – are setting off a securer way to count or to calculate. And this is true not only in the sphere of exact knowledge (like the presentation of endless collections), but wide-spread in everyday life too: the good wife, runs the business of the household through a series of surrogates, without ever knowing the mechanism of surrogate presentation processes.

But what is the connection between these seemingly totally different or „very distant” (PA, 198:23) ways of presentation? We underlined that they are both quite natural processes, but still not know, what's the main reason of their miraculous interaction. Husserl puts this question in a brief paragraph of Chapter Eleven. But formulates it a page earlier quite after mentioning once more the hypothesis of the narrowness of consciousness (cf. PA, 197:1-10):

„The subsumption under the general concept of multitude, which is given by the use of the name: set, could be resulted solely in symbolic way. But were is – and that's the question yet – the ground and the pillar of symbolization?” (PA, 197:13-17.)

It seems, that Husserl is completely conscious of the necessity of posing the question: what is the ground of symbolization, and if we reformulate it: what is the ground of *symbolization as such*? Which is exactly the point Sokolowski misses!⁸

Husserl then further expounded the same thesis also in an 1908/09 lecture on the difference of old and new logic (cf. Rosado Haddock 2008).

⁸ Once more we have to refer to the text of *FTL*. In the above-quoted paragraph Husserl also argues, that his early description of constituting processes had to deal with the formal aspect of building a multitude. Here he says, that „The formal in these disciplines lies in this [Husserl alludes to the basic feature of „intentionality” – my insertion: Z.D.] relationship with «object-matters at all», something at all [Husserl's emphasis] in the widest generality, what holds every objective determination undetermined.” And then he adds: „These basic concepts are (in my later usage) syntactical formations *in forma*, syntactical work-out-forms [*Ableitungsformen*] of the empty something.” (cf. *FTL*, 91:20–26.) Some lines below Husserl then states, that this is the realm of the „empty-region of something at all” (*FTL*, 92:4.)

This is an undubitably difficult passage. But we have to look apart from two aspects: 1) Husserl mixes here the terminus of „intentionality” with the project of the *PA*, but evidently it was not the purpose of this work to introduce it, or to reformulate it; 2) Husserl reconsiders his early writing through the looking glass of his theory about the forms of „empty presentation” (*Leervorstellung*), which was a problem that occurred at first in a sketch of a project of research in 1906. (cf. his diary-note from 25.09.1906 in the famous *Personal Notes/Persönliche Aufzeichnungen*) where he named it the „Phenomenology of empty intentions” (*Phänomenologie der leeren Intentionen* – cf. *PeAuf*, 442. ff)

But it is sure, that we have to treat the project of the *Philosophy Arithmetic* as an early attempt to describe the problem of concept-building *as such*, or at least we have to take it as a step in the direction of constitutive analysis. The grounds of symbolization „as such” (as the *PA* formulates) and concept-building as such (as the retrospection of *FTL* formulates) are evidently the same problems,

And then gives a clue to solve this difficulty: „the subsumtion under the set-concept is not produced in a momentary immediacy, but rather in the properly expectable psychical activity, which is at all attainable and namely: *the successive apprehension* (when also not the unitary holding together) *of all the parts of the set.*” (cf. *PA*, 198:13-20.) In this way Husserl’s answer recapitulates one main feature of time-relation: succession (and slightly criticizes the „dogma of the narrowness”). But then he goes forth: this would build a bridge between the properly given presentations and the very distant symbolizations, because: these successive characters are standing closer to the former. It is true that we can present ourselves only a limited amount of objects. But in the process of counting and collecting the new elements are built upon the ones that „swim more and more away to the background of consciousness” and at a certain end they disappear totally. (cf. *PA*, 198:25-32.) This is very similar to the important character of the phenomenon, Husserl later called „primary memory”. *Succession* still holds the elements which were flown away, and makes this *not like an act*. Just as in the case of primal memory the part-apprehensions remain in the consciousness but are more and more weaker. That is why we are using presentations of an improper manner, and this is the main reason why these holded, but fading presentations are stimulating symbolization, which means: *acts*. Then these are „serving the properly strived, but unaccomplishable unity of a real collection”. (*PA*, 199.) Succession is then a quite important characteristic of our consciousness, and is hardly an act, which is the main character of symbolization.

But the meant-to-be missing link is present: the very time-like succession-principle, or a basic feature of the most primitive way of constitution. But it is true that Husserl leaves these analyses unfulfilled, and never mentioned „time” or „time-relation” at this point. But we can’t deny the presence of constitutive processes if the basic, and most uncomplicated layer of constitution is part of the argumentation.

This raises the question whether every act of symbolization is the same? We can say, that in principle they are truly similar: as Husserl indicates they strive a unity, even if it is unaccomplishable, that means: even if we know that it couldn’t be ever accomplished. But this implies differences in the type of the signs, used in the process of symbolization-acts. Signs and symbols must be categorized after their use and their degree of accomplishment. This was the topic of one of the texts Husserl wanted to include in the never redacted second volume of the *Philosophy of Arithmetic*, the first chapter of which was meant to wear the title of „*On The Logic of Signs*” (henceforth cited after the German subtitle as *Semiotik*). Here he handles the problem, that also the most abstract concepts (that could never be intuitively given)

even though the first attempts were „unripe”. Husserl wanted to characterize the transcendental basis of formal conceptualization also in an before 1890. His habilitation work about the *Concept of Number* had the partial goal of proving (that was literally his 7th thesis), that the use of irrational and imaginary numbers in every domain have’t been „logically justified” already (cf. *ÜBZ*, Beilage, 339.) But there he didn’t undertake to examine the root of this problem, only argues, that it is extremely strange, that we use them as if it were sure, that they have been logically justified.

are available for symbolization and so he follows a roadmark taken from the renamed Chapter Eleven of *PA*, that *unproper* and *general* presentations are not the same. (cf. *PA* 193. footnote; 194:11–12.) That is why both concrete and general presentations are apt for symbolization, and why the presentations have to be treated in the same manner. At the end of *Semiotik* Husserl speaks about the most mysterious *abstracta*, like „God”, „external objects”, „real time”, „the other’s soul”, and contends that they are comprehensible only because of the use of surrogate presentations, that means, signs and symbols, because their intuitive givenness is hardly possible. (cf. *Sem*, 365.)⁹ But their ultimate givenness is transmitted also by presentations, even if they are the weakest, unproper ones.

In the *Semiotik* Husserl makes clearer what the common feature of proper and unproper presentation really is, and quite after the paragraphs on the division and subdivision of signs. At first he states that the abstracta like „God”, „external objects” etc. are those that can’t be ever intuited, so the presentation of them is handled by blind psychologic rules, and there we don’t use the so-called „motive of knowledge” (*Erkenntnismotiv*), but just a „psychologic mechanism” (*Sem* 358.) We don’t know that we insert a surrogate in the row of our presentations, but we are blindly using it. The most interesting fact is that it is as productive as the application of a proper presentation: it is not something, that hinders knowledge, but quite the contrary. Husserl mentions that this is a „metaphysically remarkable” (*Sem*, 358:31) matter or this is a very remarkable „teleological feature of our nature” (*Sem*, 359:2.) But then he turns away from this manner of analysis, because these metaphysical problems do not concern our argumentation, where no metaphysics is present. That kind of „metaphysical” or „teleological” argumentation is like the adoption of a Humeian or Darwinian standpoint: speaking about capacities or activities of the soul (*Tätigkeit der Seele* – *Sem*, 358:35.) to keep the human species on the right way of evolution and progress. But „what we strive and have to strive here is to logically enlight this matter of fact” (*Sem*, 359:5–6.)

Husserl says that we don’t have to express our doubt about this investigation. That is because the mechanism of the psychological, and even even blind psychological rules could be logically clarified. We’ll understand it better if we take the work of these rules *as a not so exact name or denomination for the problem* and not *as the method of analyzing the problem itself*. It is paradox to speak about the logical clarification of an unlogical (psychological) performance, but it is not senseless. That will be clear if we take a deeper look in the „inner construction (*innere Bau*)” of judgements that are not leading to knowledge, but have the „exigence of being true” (cf. *Sem*, 359:10–14). If we take into account what Husserl formerly said about the judgements that we use as presenting something given

⁹ This section of the *Semiotik* had been also analyzed in Ierna 2003, 191. ff. and Schuhmann 2004b (2001), 274 ff.

without being aware of its givenness, then these judgements are those that are based on improper presentations instead of proper ones. Husserl then asserts:

„With other words it has to be possible to give a parallel running logical proceeding that explains the mechanism of this judgement-process, and somehow grasps it as if it were reasonably invented by the same [logical proceeding – my insertion: Z.D.]. That helps us to comprehend, why every not logical process must after all work as a logical, and that is the logical explication that above we were speaking about.” (*Sem*, 359:14–21.)

This verdict is extraordinary rich in contexts. But we have to underline only something that is important for our study. It could be nevertheless misleading what Husserl says, because he goes further as the beginning and the end of the *Semiotik*. There he has spoken about the fact that proper presentations are those that are intuitive presentations, and the improper ones are those of the symbolic character (like in the *PA*). But here is something new. Treating the ground of symbolization „as such” Husserl was led to the thought that these presentations have similar inner architecture. This consists in the fact that intuition and symbolic activity are not structural counterpoints, and that a symbolic presentation acts as if it were a proper one, borrows and uses its structure. This „as if”-relation is crucial. Husserl refers to it also a page earlier but he expounds it not further, because he goes forth with the project he has already begun: the project of the division of signs and turns to the scientific use of them (cf. *Sem* 365. ff), where the use of a surrogate is most of the time conscious, because the sign itself is an artificial product. This „as if”-relation would be the key moment of the interaction of proper and improper presentation and of the „laws of proper and improper thinking” as he puts it in the 8th Chapter of the *Logical Investigations*.¹⁰ It is the „imaginative” moment, which is revealed here, but it isn’t seen as the imaginative moment of a categorial act, only something that designs how the improper plays the role of the proper.¹¹

¹⁰ See: *LU II/2*, §§ 59–66., 710. ff

¹¹ Husserl’s distinction between the proper and improper presentations is definitely guided by distinction of intuitive and symbolic in the *PA* and the other works that belong to the research on the concept of number. In a study Karl Schuhmann suggested the interpretation that this conception was modified in the 1894 paper about the *Intentional Objects /Intentionale Gegenstände*. He mentions that in 1893 Husserl still identified „proper” and „improper” with intuition and representation (or sign) and even at the beginning of the year 1894 in a brief note. (See Schuhmann 2004a [1991], 16th footnote) But then Schuhmann gives no explicit explanation, in what distinction was this original pair of concepts changed. We can only suspect, that this new theory comes with Husserl’s description of *assumption* and *general assumption* in the *Intentional Objects* where we faced that the assumptions are working in an improper way, which means, as if (*als-ob*) they were completely present. That assumptions are not liminal occurrences is proven by those general assumptions that are able to rule not only a man’s mind and concepts, but a whole discipline or science. And these are also relations of „as-if” (*Als-ob*) see. Schuhmann, *op. cit.*, 128 ff.

In my opinion this interpretation is not exact. I have three arguments to defend my assertion: 1) Husserl used this „as if”-relation principle (as we have seen above) in the textbody of *Semiotik*; 2) The *MBR* quoted below puts it clear, that Husserl considers insufficient the omnipotence of the distinction after the

The stating of the structural kinship of proper and improper presentation is though a much more progressive result than the *Semiotik* it suggests. Because this will be later a main character of constitution having less (time-consciousness) and much more complicated layers (like kinesthesia, history, scientific idealization and even art) which in everyday life are mixed up.

And so the mentioned most complicated *abstracta* of the *Semiotik* (for those we have only the hope of ever being properly present) have then another feature what only the later Husserl describes: they are the most complex objects of constitution! But they can be objects of one and the same consciousness, which is operating with a two-sided mean of presentation: and so these two presentations are influenced one by the other. This is also clear from the fact, that Husserl in the *Semiotik* recapitulates an idea, he formerly alluded to: that we are not every time conscious of using surrogate representations, but we use it so naturally as proper ones. But this adds a problem to the case, and really a problem already drawn into analysis: how can these means of presentation influence each other. If the key to this problem is in temporal analysis, then it can be true, that Husserl here not uses what he has already used in the printed text (the meant-to-be first part) of the *PA*.

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Two years later Husserl reviews the complex of symbolization from another angle, and this is the perspective of genetic analysis, which in the 20s became a higher level of constitution in his phenomenology. I will draw attention upon two texts from 1892/1893: one about *the multiple meaning of the terminus space (a)* and the other about *the space of intuition (b)*. The latter evidently treating a problem mentioned in the first.

(a) Husserl here discovers a problem about different spheres of Mathematics. In theories concerning space and in geometry we have not the same concepts about our field of research, although this field is one and the same. Husserl goes even farther and prepares four meanings of the concept of space: 1) The space of everyday life, we encounter all the time; 2) The space of the theory of pure Geometry; 3) the

scheme intuitive-symbolic; 3) Husserl then used the distinction of intuitive-symbolic even in his 1902/03 lecture on *General Theory of Knowledge* where he says that „In a certain sense we can «think» really everything and all: and namely in the sense of improper thinking, of the merely symbolic.” (*Lect 02/03*, 177. *et passim*) In this way Husserl sometimes runs ahead to some conclusions that were defended later (1 and 2) and in other cases steps back to some earlier views (3). After the discovery of the double way of intuition as sensual and categorial intuition in the second part of the *Sixth Logical Investigation* he had a better frame to analyze the problem. Here he makes the distinction between proper and improper through his new theory and says that „the laws of proper thinking are understood as the laws of categorial intuition after their pure categorial forms.” *LU II/2*, 720:9–11. and the laws of improper thinking have the „character of improper categorial intuitions” *op. cit.* 725:4. which is also the sphere of the mixed presentations: „Where we speak about mere symbolic thinking, we have mostly these mixes in sight.” *Op. cit.* 725:14–15. But this could’t have been a decisive factor if he step back to the original distinction from the times of *PA* and *Semiotik*. “Artlessly it could be also a difference of the genres used by Husserl. A lecture have to be didactically simplified not alike a rigorously systematic treatise.”

space of applied Geometry (like the arts of measuring and geodesy and other natural sciences); and 4) the space of Methaphysics, the so-called transcendental space. (cf. *MBR*, 270.) And then adds: „We have here to deal obviously with a genetic graduality of formation, and our task is to research it properly.”(*MBR*, 270:32–271:1) The author poses here questions very similar to the ones appearing in the *Crisis of European Sciences*: which kind of presentation is grounding for the creation of exact sciences. But he formulates it in the manner of the *PA*: what is the ground of abstraction for these sciences? It is then a straightforward reaction that Husserl goes another time through the problem of symbolic and proper presentations.

In the following paragraphs he enters this analysis. And makes a so far not heard distinction. „*We identify not by all means the opposition of intuitive and conceptual presentations with the one of proper and symbolic presentations.*” (*MBR*, 272:35–37.)¹² Improper presentation is not evidently a *concept* and *intuition* is not evidently proper. This means again that using a sign is not equal to using a concept. And it is because in sciences we use concepts which are proper, but we can make in sometimes only with signs which are not proper. That raises the problem of the formation of concepts and judgements, but Husserl then puts this problem aside, although it was contured: this would be the task of a genetic research.

(b) In the other text about the *space of intuition* he gives a differently fashioned description and says, that every presentation of space is a complicated togetherness of qualitative and quasi-qualitative moments. The different mood of speaking about space is attainable only by the analysis of the material or content of a judgement. Husserl mentions that:

„I think that I see something, what I don't see, but what I am only judging to be existant. The material of this judgement is an unintuitive intuition.” (*AR*, 282:25–27.). And then: „The presentation of identity of the object mediates. I am sensating unequal angles, but I conclude to equality.” (*AR*, 282:34) These paradox formulations are little bit concretized in the following, when Husserl indicates: at first we have the given intuitions in perception and phantasy, and then we have the „signs”, which are „joining” (cf. *AR*, 283:17–25.) the former moments. But this happens – and that's of utmost importance – *not plainly in this direction*. „Intuitions and thoughts are intimately connected.” (*AR*, 283:24) And so the way is free, for a much more radical statement:

„Between the space of intuition and the space of geometry there is, as we have seen, not merely a difference of intuitivity or non-intuitivity, but also a series of difference of content. In the following, if we speak about the space of intuition we have to make a certain *reservatio ment<is>*. By closer observation we'll recognize, that space as a whole is no intuition, but already a logical unity, that stands on conceptual presentations and is attained through the judgement of the intuitively given. Space is not a simple content, as a quality of color, which could be

¹² See also *footnote nr. 10* of this paper.

intuited as such.” (AR, 283:25–32) The standpoint is clear. In most cases we are in obscurity, because the distinction of conceptual and intuitive is not so simple as the recognition of intuitive and symbolic. We are not only lead by symbolic presentations, but some given elements of our knowledge are from the beginning on logical unities and not intuitions, and have the possibility of faking us. This problem needs a radical clarification, and so we have to make a certain „mental holding back”, a *reservatio mentis*.

In in the spirit of this radicality: „The space, and already the space of the common mind, is az ideal entity, and always only parts of that are accessible for intuition. In every moment of perception, remembrance and phantasy-activity only a part of the infinite whole is intuitive,” (AR, 283:35–284:2).

Husserl says, that also the common mind and consciousness has been already using ideal entities. That’s the first from its functions. And this is the case of the very complicated intuitions of space: they are influenced by the ideal concepts or judgements of sciences, even if even don’t know how these concepts are formed. But if we consider the former analyses, that is because we tend to use signs all of the time instead of intuitive presentations, also where we have the possibility of such intuition. So we not even notice, that we are passively using a concept in our speech, a concept, that comes not from us, but from the reflection of others.

We have to emphasize some points in Husserl texts. At first that also in 1892/93 he have not already possessed the fundamental distinction between content, act and object, and at second, that he couldn’t have been fully clear about the later problem of „intentionality”. Theses questions were treated only beginning with the 1894 article about the *Intentional Objects* – apparently an exhausting critique of Twardowski – and respectively in 5th *Logical Investigation*; but naturally we can’t assert, that these works have solved the problem. But we also have to add an other hint: Husserl wasn’t even in possession of a precise description of the structure of categorial acts. At first he have dealt with this in the second part of the *6th Investigation*, where he could finally sketch the basic connection between *intuitive* (which are *sensual* and *imaginative*) and *categorial* moments of an appehending act. And finally: in 1893 he hasn’t been aware of the main scheme of apprehension as the animation of an apprehension-content by a intentional apprehension. But all of these element were present in his thought if only in a non-concrete manner, and without the view of the whole horizon of the problem.

This horizon was fully opened by the deep analysis of time-relations and then the discovery of the genetic constitution, and this permitted Husserl to come back to his earlier views. But this process have taken nearly 30 years, and as we know Husserl wasn’t convinced that he have exhausted every detail. But something is nearly sure: Husserl was pretty clear about the direction of his researches, only – and I conclude –hasn’t felt able to go in this direction already.

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- PA* *Philosophie der Arithmetik. Logische und psychologische Untersuchungen* in: *Husserliana XII*, 5ff.
- Sem* *Zur Logik der Zeichen (Semiotik)* in: *Husserliana XII*, 340 ff.
- MBR* *Ms. K I 50/8a – K I 33/33-35a = <Merfache Bedeutungen der Terminus Raum>* in: *Husserliana XXI (Studien zur Arithmetik und Geometrie*, hrsg: Ingeborg Strohmeier, Nijhoff, Den Haag, 1983. 270ff)
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- Lect 02/03* *Allgemeine Erkenntnistheorie. Vorlesung 1902/03* (=Husserliana Materialien III. hrsg. Elisabeth Schuhmann, Kluwer AP, Dordrecht/Boston/London
- PAuf* *Persönliche Aufzeichnungen* In: *Husserliana XXIV*. Hrsg. Ullrich Melle, Nijhoff, Den Haag, 1984. 442. ff.
- FTL* *Formale und transzendente Logik* (=Husserliana XVII, hrsg. Paul Janssen, Nijhoff, Den Haag, 1974.)

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TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY AND PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE

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ABSTRACT. We will focus on the relation between transcendental phenomenology and phenomenology of life by analyzing Marc Richir's position and his essay of refounding the husserlian transcendental phenomenology. The discussion of his transcendental reduction of the ontological simulacrum as a way to a brand new transcendental domain and his proposal of a new individuation theory in phenomenology will give us the opportunity to discuss *transcendental* life under different auspices than in Husserl's or Fink's work. We will conclude by critically analyzing the limits of such a radical theory, which is the body as the bearer of all life, including the transcendental life.

Keywords: transcendental phenomenology, phenomenological reduction, Marc Richir, ontological simulacrum, individuation, body, transcendental life.

Introduction

We will begin with defining the sense in which we use the term *transcendental* phenomenology. Phenomenology is named transcendental because it concerns the constitution of the world and everything related to it by a transcendental subjectivity or intersubjectivity, if we are to consider the later stages of the husserlian phenomenology. With Husserl as the founder of transcendental phenomenology, it seems that there would be no further "originality" after he has imposed the method and founded what we call now transcendental phenomenology, even though the method was subjected to some changes within Husserl's development of thought. This is certainly not the case because the transcendental method was challenged by Eugen Fink and recently radicalized by Marc Richir. Transcendental phenomenology has therefore a genealogy that we can take back to Kant and then extend, through the proper husserlian founding, to Eugen Fink and Marc Richir.

The originality of the post-husserlian phenomenology lies presumably only in the content, in the infinite extension of the phenomenological analyses to the different fields of the transcendental domain. But together with the challenge of the method proposed by newer transcendental phenomenologists, we notice that the content of the domain also changes, in addition to the newer fields within that were discovered. The phenomena do not remain the same after modifying the method and after the attempts at re-founding the transcendental phenomenology.

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Life and moreover transcendental life are approached and analyzed differently in recent transcendental phenomenology. They have a quite different meaning than previously. In this paper we will focus on the developments brought by Marc Richir in his attempt at re-founding the husserlian transcendental phenomenology and the consequences these have on the phenomenological concept of life.

Transcendental Life and Ontological Simulacrum

Firstly, Richir raised doubts about the transcendental domain and about the extent and radical character of the transcendental reduction as described by Husserl. He sees both the husserlian phenomenology and the heideggerian phenomenological ontology as being trapped in the same onto-theological paradigm as the one that they criticize². Both the *Dasein* and the transcendental ego are seen as relicts inside a brand new research field that does not need these concepts in order to be researched and developed. This “metaphysical substraction” is more criticized in Heidegger’s attempt at re-founding philosophy in *Sein und Zeit*, that in Husserl, the latter having for Marc Richir the excuse of the concrete phenomenological analyses³ that he assiduously practiced throughout his life, as the quantity of archive documents clearly demonstrate.

In his early book *Recherches phénoménologiques*⁴, he treats the question of the *phenomenality* and of the phenomenological individuation by reconsidering the necessity of the radical character of the phenomenological reduction. In these two volumes, in addition to the husserlian critique, we can also find the beginning of the strong critique of Heidegger, that he will continue in his following volumes such as *La crise du sens et la phénoménologie*⁵ and *Meditations phénoménologiques*. As he later confessed in the book *Phénoménologie en esquisses*, in the *Recherches phénoménologiques* he tried to “reconquer” the transcendental domain of phenomena lost by the phenomenology along the development of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology. One of the three main concepts introduced in the *Recherches* is the ontological simulacrum (*simulacre ontologique*), that is based on the old Kantian distinction between the ontological and the transcendental domain and also the Kantian concept of the transcendental illusion. The radicalized version of this difference takes us to a new phenomenological reduction, developed also in the *Meditations phénoménologiques* and *L’expérience du penser*, and to a brand new distinction between the phenomenon and its *phenomenality*. The ontological simulacrum is what a properly practiced transcendental phenomenological reduction

² Marc Richir, *Phénomènes, temps et êtres*, Editions Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 1987, p. 22.

³ As Richir clearly acknowledges in the Introduction to *Phénoménologie en esquisses*, Husserl’s use of the term *Kleingeld*, as referring to the way phenomenological analysis should be conducted is relevant. See Marc Richir, *Phénoménologie en esquisses*, Editions Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 2000, p. 7.

⁴ Marc Richir, *Recherches phénoménologiques*, I-III. Fondation pour la phénoménologie transcendantale, Ousia, Bruxelles, 1981.

⁵ Marc Richir, *La crise du sens et la phénoménologie*, Editions Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 1990.

needs to reduce. This reduction is in a way similar to the husserlian reduction that seeks to approach the world without the assumption that the world actually exists. But in this case it is not the world that is the object of the reduction, but the simulacrum itself that reveals as an ontological simulacrum the result itself of the husserlian reduction: the transcendental ego with its *immortal* transcendental life.

This apory of the transcendental ego is caused by the impossibility of the apparition or phenomenalisation of the transcendental ego as such *a priori*, but only through the apparition of a psychological ego, which it determines as an *a priori* of a given *a posteriori*. This psychological ego throws doubts on the pure transcendental nature of the transcendental ego, and this has always been a matter of concern for the phenomenological tradition. The concept of the ontological simulacrum is introduced for the first time in reference to this pseudo-duality between what is properly phenomenizing and what *a priori* conditions this phenomenalisation. The husserlian transcendental subjectivity appears together with a certain non-concordance in its own apparition as a psychological subjectivity. It shouldn't be a psychological subjectivity, despite its apparition as one. Everything happens as if the unapparent, which could not in principle phenomenize itself, becomes suddenly apparent. Therefore what appears contains simultaneously an ontological illusion, the illusion of a present being. From this general description of the structure of the ontological simulacrum, the author attempts a transcendental phenomenological description of the simulacra, this having a phenomenal dimension which relegates us to the "phenomenal dimension as such and in general". This is due to the fact that "the dimension of the phenomenon as such communicates profoundly with the dimension of the transcendental as such". The phenomenon as part of the phenomenological transcendental field is crossed by an auto-generated reflexivity that assures its transcendental autonomy: it phenomenizes itself always *a posteriori* as the appearance of an *a priori* appearance. The latter is defined as a transcendental illusion which phenomenizes itself only *a posteriori* and which references itself as appearing *a priori*, retro-jecting itself *a priori* starting from its reflection in the phenomenon.

The ontological simulacrum consists in the *ontologization* of this pure *a priori* and corresponds as an ontological phenomenon to the *a priori* transcendental illusion. It is therefore "the phenomenon considered as a pure ontological manifestation of the invisible or the inapparent as such"⁶ and is through this directly similar to the mythical thinking and indirectly to the metaphysical one, which is made possible through the first one. The transcendental illusion, on which stands all the questioning related to the ontological simulacrum and transcendental individuation, refers in Richir's phenomenology at a presupposed transparency or coincidence of the *a priori* and *a posteriori* domains, in which the *a priori* appears *a priori* as a pure *a priori* and generates through this apparition the model or the matrix of the constitution of the *a posteriori*, which is thus reduced to the status of a copy or

⁶ Marc Richir, Marc Richir, *Recherches phénoménologiques*, I-III, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

repetition of the a priori. Still, this coincidence cannot ever be realized and it is moreover presupposed only having the a posteriori as the starting point, as that which is already phenomenised and through this already reflected the a priori transcendental illusion, which could not have appeared otherwise. What defines the phenomenality of the phenomenon, the way of appearing of the phenomenon, is the “originary distortion of the appearance”⁷, which consists in the ultimate impossibility for the phenomenon to phenomenize a priori the transcendental illusion. Only a phenomenological transcendental reduction can bring to the same level the pure a priori apparition of the a priori and the transcendental illusion, which presupposes the transcendental field as a condition of possibility. The transcendental foundation of this transcendental field is according to Richir double⁸: firstly, the phenomenon is to itself its own fundament and secondly the phenomenon is phenomenizing with the *illusion* of its own fundament. The illusion of this transcendental illusion is properly said the transcendental subjectivity, that is, the phenomenologically reduced appearance of the ontological simulacrum. From an ontological point of view the simulacrum appears as an illusion that there is an origin of the appearance that can appear at its turn, appearing *as a phenomenon* that can generate other phenomena, thus reversing the order of the transcendental-phenomenological genesis from the a posteriori to the unapparent a priori to an ontological order of genesis that starts with the pure a priori⁹ (nothingness, one, Being) and ends with the a posteriori, which will be irremediably interpreted as being, thought or phenomenon, clearly in the ontological sense. The confessed assumption in this doctrine of the ontological simulacrum is on the one hand that the appearance and the transcendental cannot deliver by themselves the truth about themselves, the latter being ultimately tied to the illusion and on the other hand that the transcendental cannot appear other than under the disguise of the ontological *as if* (comme si, als ob)¹⁰. As a sort of a definition, Richir argues that the transcendental is in a sense the illusion that takes itself as its own object¹¹.

Even if in the *Recherches phénoménologiques* the reduction seems more abstract, intimately tied with the thinking capacity, although permitting the access to an unfamiliar “transcendental domain” for the readers of Husserl, later on the phenomenological reduction that grants the access to the phenomenological domain will be called hyperbolic and architectonical. We refer to the volumes *Méditations phénoménologiques*, published in 1992, which aims at re-founding the phenomenology through a phenomenology of language and *L’expérience du penser*, published in 1996, in which different types of symbolical institutions are considered, including the mythological and philosophical one. Here the

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 45.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 63.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 64.

phenomenological reduction is very clearly related to a kind of death in regard to what Richir calls the “symbolical institution” (*institution symbolique*), this meaning the human system of references, encompassing myths, traditions, ways of behaving, practices, in which we all already live and which seems perennial and without discernable origin. Through the reduction the access is granted, for only one instant (*en clignotement*), to what is beyond and pre-determines this symbolical institution, more precisely to the phenomenological movement of its foundation. The phenomenological life experience, “vivre” thus seized is different from the husserlian one because it includes a huge non-present part, this meaning absent content and intentional references to a transcendental past and future, defined as one that an ego never lived and will never be able to anticipate.

Individuation theory

The major difference concerning the reduction in regard to the reductions proposed by Husserl and Fink is its dependence to affectivity. What Richir calls the experience of the sublime is closely related with affectivity. The hyperbolic *epoche* is a non standard *epoche* compared to the classical husserlian one. It consists in “suspendre et à surprendre, à même les apparitions et les apparaissants, les structures intentionnelles elles-mêmes, à la fois pour dégager, chaque fois, ce qui est le type propre de leur Stiftung, et pour accéder à ce que nous nommons le phénomène comme rien que phénomène”¹². The reduction and its “moment” when “les apparitions se désancrent de toute réalité pré-conçue (déjà-institué)”¹³ is to be found in the *exaiphnes* of a phenomenological *blink* which is described, since the *Recherches phénoménologiques*, as a “revirement immaîtrisable”¹⁴, accessible to all human beings and not only to phenomenologists (thus expressing his opposition towards Heidegger, for whom only the chosen, authentic ones can arrive at such an experience). In phenomenology we only to make only an “anamnèse (volontaire) propre” of this “moment” that cannot be provoked, nor maintained.

In Richir’s phenomenology we find a proximity between the inter-aperceptive life that gives access to the phenomenologist to what he calls “concretudes phénoménologiques” and a sort of death experience. Despite of his strong criticisms of Heidegger and the way he sees death in *Sein und Zeit*, or more precisely life through the experience of assuming one’s death, Richir still needs a moment of oscillatory passage through the experience of death in order to re-found the transcendental phenomenology. It is this experience that will be called the phenomenological sublime in the book *Du sublime en politique*¹⁵. Not only the phenomenologist is the only one among philosophers or even humans to be called

¹² Cf. Marc Richir, *Phénoménologie en esquisses*, Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 2000, p. 478.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 480.

¹⁴ Marc Richir, *Recherches phénoménologiques*, IV-V. Du schématisme phénoménologique transcendantal, Ousia, Bruxelles, 1983.

¹⁵ Marc Richir, *Du sublime en politique*, Payot, Paris, 1992, p. 394-396.

to live this experience and then analyze what could be inter-perceived (*entre-aperçu*) in the transcendental blink (*clignotement*).

The distinctions mentioned earlier make possible a new doctrine of transcendental individuation that explain the phenomenological origin of the world we live in, that is of the symbolical institution we were born in and grew in. In sum, the whole phenomenalisation movement originates in a transcendental *schematism* seen as a *phenomenologisation organ* (“organe de phenomenalisation”). In our eyes this complex individuation doctrine is inspired from quantum physics, in which particles appear and disappear, without remaining in an existent state, having thus a transcendental and not an ontological behaviour. An additional reason for this is the fact that Richir was a physicist before becoming a philosopher.

At the level of the transcendental organ of phenomenologisation is to be found the ultimate possibility of individuation. The phenomenologist, through the transcendental reduction, is able for an instant, during the instant of the inter-aperception (*entre-aperception*) to grasp, through the self-reflexivity of the schematism itself, the process of transcendental individuation, which is, to use the French term, a “*batement en éclipses*”. Like the particles in quantum physics, the phenomena appear and disappear, without being captured in an ontological state. At this level we cannot speak of time anymore, but instead of a process of temporalisation and spatialisation. Like Husserl and Heidegger before him, Richir attempts at re-founding the doctrine of original temporality. A dualism between the daily, objective and natural time, which has an instituted character and transcendental temporalisation is derived from the phenomenological experience. Without a radical, hyperbolic and architectonical reduction, we cannot have access, as phenomenologists and philosophers, to the transcendental experience of time, which reveals the oscillatory presence of the phenomenologist’s self (*ipse*) marked by a transcendental past and a transcendental future in which the self never lived nor will ever live. This future and past are not the ones of the phenomenological institution, which also seem as having far origins and ends. The latter are uniform in their structure, similar to the husserlian temporality with its retentive-protentive present in continual and uniform flow. The transcendental past and future are not uniform; a presence cannot be inserted in them and flow through a series of aperceptive presents.

This critique of Husserl and Heidegger on the issue of transcendental time brings Richir to a development of his doctrine of language as being temporalized at different levels and at different rhythms. Of course, life and death could be taken only as words that are symbolically instituted and that have a “condensed” sense¹⁶, that are “*condensés symboliques*” that can hide through their familiarity the phenomena that lie beyond them. Life and death are opposites, according to Richir, only from the perspective of the symbolical institution and not from the phenomenological perspective. The concrete and factual way we live is according

¹⁶ Marc Richir, „Vie et mort en phenomenologie“, *Alter*, 4, p. 347.

to different “temporalisation rythms”¹⁷. Life and death are therefore, in our living, mixed and difficult to discern. If temporality is not to be conceived as uniform anymore, the deep levels of our daily “living” become a lot more complex. This movement from the abyss of the transcendental to the concreteness of the living (“*vivre*”) is made by Marc Richir in order to analyze the phenomenological structure of life, of the *vivre*. What is given in the latter are known components: sensations, affections, affectivity, passions and thoughts. These are identified through language, in his terms, they are “*êtres de langage*”, language being the transcendental origin of the languages and of all the senses that the apperceptions may contain.

Body as Bearer of Life

Living is therefore not living something present, in the present moment, but living on multiple levels and according to different ages, no matter what our actual or real age is¹⁸. Phenomenologically, we can find in ourselves simultaneously childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. In his proposal of a short phenomenological treatise of living and dying (*Court traité phénoménologique du vivre et du mourir*) Marc Richir takes the above mentioned components of the “*vivre*” and analyzes them phenomenologically. What is remarkable is that all these analyses that represent ultimately a confrontation with the most familiar things, like the self-reflexivity of the tact, the extension of my affective disposition to the world or the fact that thinking occurs where something is not implicit anymore, do not need a radical transcendental reduction or a new individuation/phenomenalisation doctrine to be accomplished. They are simple analysis that require only a lack of biases, those acquired mainly through our education and idiosyncrasies in the way we think. Richir main assumption in these analysis is that any concrete living is at the same time an incarnated living (*vivre incarné*)¹⁹. The example of sensations shows us that our senses, phenomenologically speaking, are temporalized according to different rythms, following the way our *Erlebnisse* are temporalized. The vision seems almost instantaneous and touching and tasting take a lot more time²⁰. This temporalisation that individuates the sensible makes it possible the surviving of the sensible in the reminiscence, where the classical example is of course Proust. The paradox of the sensible, identified here, consists in the opposition between the ephemeral character of the sensible and the slow rhythm of its temporalisation, which exceeds the temporal boundaries of the human life.

In this movement from the transcendental *exaiphnes* to what we can experience and reflect on in a lot less radical manner we could also see the husserlian movement from the transcendental ego to the embodied/intersubjective ego, that finally ends with the body [Leib] and its “powers”. The bearer of the sensations,

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 346.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 347.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 349.

affections, affectivity and passions is obviously for Marc Richir neither the transcendental ego, because the latter as *ipse* is completely “de-localised” and “de-centered” in the exercise of the hyperbolic phenomenological epoche²¹, nor the transcendental schematism, because this is anonymous and only makes possible the individuation of phenomena, but the body in its phenomenological understanding as *Leib*, different from its objectivation as *Körper*. The question of thoughts and of their relation with the body still remains, given the fact that in all the philosophical tradition the two have been opposed and in Richir’s phenomenology too, thinking in its anonymous form as *le penser* has been the correspondent of the phenomena in their phenomenality, the phenomenality of the thinking having the capacity of “waking up”²² the phenomenality of the phenomena.

In the volume *Le corps*²³, as in the article mentioned above about *le vivre*, Richir treats all these components as pertaining to the body. Given the phenomenological sense in which the body is understood, that meaning as irrepresentable and illocalisable and moreover as being present in all types of phenomenological *Erlebnisse*, in perception as well as in phantasy, dreaming, remembering, anticipation, it results that the body can be the bearer of the thoughts as well as of the other components of the *vivre*.

On one hand the ontological simulacrum seems from an architectural point of view far away from the question of the body. On the other hand, determining the body as the bearer of life (*vivre*) and establishing a transcendental phenomenological body as *the* body, seems close to a form of ontological simulacrum. Certainly, the genesis of the transcendental body as the bearer of transcendental life is phenomenological, that is, obtained through a phenomenological analysis and reiterable experience by every new phenomenologist. As Husserl seized it and Merleau-Ponty developed, there is a great amount of invisible/unperceptible merged with the visible/perceptible, in the perception itself. The fact that I cannot see my whole body is the origin of the concept of transcendental body, which transcends the domain of perception and is based on the assumption that the types of *Erlebnisse* belonging to the perception had been overvalued in the husserlian phenomenology.

The fact that life is to be conceived and understood in transcendental phenomenology on the side of the transcendental and not the ontological, that to *live* does not mean to exist and that the phenomenological body is the ultimate bearer of life is the inevitable conclusion at which we arrive.

²¹ Marc Richir, *Méditations phénoménologiques*, Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 1992, p. 81.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 99.

²³ Marc Richir, *Le corps. Essai sur l'interiorité*, Paris, Hatier, 1993, p. 10.

DURATION AND IMMANENCE: THE QUESTION OF A LIFE IN DELEUZE

VERNON CISNEY¹

ABSTRACT. The questions that my paper shall pursue are: 1) What path leads from Deleuze's early writings to his latter-day conception of a life, and 2) What can such a conception of life mean? Our path will trace a reversal and a return, respectively, through phenomenology to Bergson. For Deleuze, a genuine concept of a life is thinkable, only when the phenomenological subject, which Deleuze considers an illusion, has been jettisoned, reabsorbed into the flux of immanence. This implies a return to a century-old philosophical renewal, namely, the reformulation of the experience of time.

Keywords: immanence, duration, Deleuze, Bergson, a life (*une vie*)

“No one has hitherto laid down the limits to the powers of the body...”² or, as Gilles Deleuze paraphrases, “we do not even know what a body *can do*.”³ Spinoza's words mark for us the spacing of a question, one that, though not often explicitly posed in Deleuze's texts, nevertheless pervades, just beneath the surface, the entirety of his work: “What can a life be?” Such an exigency is arguably the legacy left behind by the French philosophers of the 1960's.⁴ Giorgio Agamben, in an essay entitled “Absolute Immanence,” famously notes that the coming philosophy “will have to take its point of departure in the concept of life...”⁵ Deleuze, in his brief and final essay, confronts this question, and introduces the concept of “a life...” framing it in parallel with what he describes, with Félix Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, as a *pure plane of immanence*. But the plane of immanence in *What is Philosophy?* serves more as a site of concept creation, the pre-philosophical field

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² Spinoza, *Ethics*, III, 2 Proof.

³ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 39.

⁴ It is important that the final philosophical engagements of Deleuze and Foucault focused on the concept of life. These essays are: Gilles Deleuze, “Immanence: A Life,” *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, Trans. Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001); and Michel Foucault, “Life: Experience and Science,” Trans. Carolyn Fawcett with Robert Cohen, *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984: Volume II: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James Faubion, series ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1998). The same holds for Derrida, whose final interview is entitled, “Learning to Live Finally: An Interview with Jean Bimbaum,” in Jacques Derrida, *Learning to Live Finally: The Last Interview*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, (Hoboken, NJ: Melville House Publishing, 2007).

⁵ Giorgio Agamben, “Absolute Immanence,” *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, ed. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 220.

presupposed for the creation and relation of concepts, rather than a plane of existence. The questions that my paper shall pursue are: 1) What path leads from Deleuze's early writings to his latter-day conception of a life, and 2) What can such a conception of life mean? Our path will trace a reversal and a return, respectively, through phenomenology to Bergson. For Deleuze, a genuine concept of *a* life is thinkable, only when the phenomenological subject, which Deleuze considers an illusion, has been jettisoned, reabsorbed into the flux of immanence. This implies a return to a century-old philosophical renewal, namely, the reformulation of the experience of time.

The dawn of twentieth century philosophy can best be described as a plethora of conceptual rifts, brought about perhaps by the sense of urgency one finds in early twentieth century thinkers. It is well-known that this moment in history faced what has come to be called a *crisis of foundations*; the *queen of the sciences* had been beheaded, and yet, no successor had assumed her throne. In the field of mathematics, but also in the sciences, in logic, in philosophy, and in art and culture, the *raison d'être* had been uprooted. The task of the philosopher in the early twentieth century was to address this crisis. While some philosophers, the precursors of what has come to be known as the "analytic tradition," sought to found philosophical endeavor in a more rigorously formulated conception of logic, others, such as Henri Bergson and Edmund Husserl, followed by Martin Heidegger, sought to reestablish the foundational status of philosophy in a reformulation of ontology, an ontology more appropriate to the richness of existence as it is lived, thus returning to the sciences the ontological basis they required. Bergson, no less than Husserl, structured this reformulation in an ontology of duration and of consciousness (in the broadest imaginable sense of the word). Both Bergson and Husserl sought a reformulation of the concept of time, one grounded more appropriately in experience itself, and both based their respective methodologies on a structure of intuition (though these structures, to be sure, were markedly different). For reasons of chronology, we begin with Bergson.

I. Bergson and Duration

At the height of his career, Bergson enjoyed something of a celebrity status. Edouard Le Roy, a contemporary, writes in 1913, "There is a thinker today whose name is on everybody's lips, who is deemed by acknowledged philosophers worthy of comparison with the greatest..."⁶ And Joseph Solomon, in 1911, writes of "the curiosity and admiration he [Bergson] has aroused in wide circles in [...] Europe and also in America."⁷ One of Bergson's most famous concepts is his concept of duration, which is introduced as early as his *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*,⁸ in 1889, but which guides the entirety of his work.

⁶ Edouard Le Roy, *The New Philosophy of Henri Bergson*, trans. Vincent Benson, (London: Henry Holt, 1913), 1.

⁷ Joseph Solomon, *Bergson*, (Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1912), 5.

⁸ The English translation of this title is *Time and Free Will*.

As Leonard Lawlor notes, the challenge of Bergsonism is “that we must think in terms of duration.”⁹

Bergson’s concept of duration is inherently connected to his concept of intuition, which marks the method of the philosopher. Deleuze notes, “without intuition as method, duration would remain a simple psychological experience.”¹⁰ All knowledge is either relative or absolute. It is relative if it is conceptual, in the sense that the concept, as Bergson understands it, is an abstraction from the object itself, highlighting a particular aspect of the object, but one that is conceptualizable only insofar as it is shared by other objects. Thus, multiply the concepts as we like, and we shall still remain on the outside of the object, still finding only greater and more precise degrees of generality. The concepts are merely symbols that, he says, *translate*¹¹ the object to me. This knowledge, Bergson thinks, is not without its own value and domain—this domain being the realm of the natural sciences, the only possible method of which is the method of *analysis*, of concept abstraction and appropriation. However, it is erroneous to assume that this method is proper to the study of philosophy. The philosopher, for Bergson, is a metaphysician, in the sense that she does not seek relative knowledge, always circumspective, but rather knowledge that penetrates to the very essence of the thing, to wit, absolute knowledge. Intuition is the method whereby this becomes possible. To use Bergson’s metaphor, metaphysics is the science that does not employ translation, but speaks rather with perfect fluidity the language of each object of study. He thus defines metaphysics as “*the science which claims to dispense with symbols.*”¹²

The most familiar example that Bergson could use, and indeed does, is the intuition whereby each of us becomes intuitively sympathetically aware of our individual person existing over time. Looking inward, he claims, we find within ourselves a flux that goes beyond any comparison we can produce. He refers to it as a “succession of states each one of which announces what follows and contains what precedes,”¹³ but it is clear from his other claims that this formulation does not adequately articulate the specificity of this flow. The states are animated with a “common life”¹⁴ in such a way that any attempt to punctuate the flow, to distinguish individual *nows*, one from another, is merely a falsification of or abstraction from the flow itself.

Bergson, for numerous reasons, has difficulty in attempting to describe this flux. Psychologists, he notes, attempt to describe the dynamic nature of the *Ego* in conceptual terms of individual psychic states. Bergson, however, has already

⁹ Leonard Lawlor, *The Challenge of Bergsonism: Phenomenology, Ontology, Ethics*, (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), ix.

¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 33.

¹¹ Henri Bergson, “Introduction to Metaphysics,” trans. Mabelle Andison, *The Creative Mind*, (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1946), 187.

¹² *Ibid.*, 191.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 192.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

foreclosed the possibility of employing the conceptual method of analysis, for any philosophical pursuit. And this foreclosure, if it were not certain before, is much more so in the case of duration, due to the very nature of what a concept is (again, as Bergson understands it,) and of the nature of this duration itself. The concept abstracts, generalizes, and makes static, (which is the error of the psychologist), imposing permanence into arbitrarily chosen *slices*, so to speak, of the whole, thus persuading that the whole has been reconstituted in terms of its parts. Such, however, cannot be the case, as the parts themselves have been falsified or *translated* in the course of the analysis. The attempt to think the temporal self of the duration in conceptual terms has led to what we might call a “double danger,” with empiricist and rationalist interpretations as its poles. The empiricist seeks to isolate disparate individual psychological states, bring them together under what she calls the “ego,” yet in the end discovers that this ego always eludes and escapes conceptualization, and thus concludes that the ego itself is meaningless, what he calls the “empty phantom.”¹⁵ The rationalist, however, in response to the elusiveness of the ego, asserts nonetheless the absolute unity of the person, as the locus that binds together and unifies the various states. It is, he claims a “form without matter,” which he says, could not “characterize a living, acting, concrete personality.”¹⁶ Conceptual analysis is thus ruled out according to Bergson. We find ourselves mired in a quandary, as intuition cannot, it seems, serve as a descriptive method, any more than can analysis. How then does Bergson locate the self?

The self seems to be, in its very essence, the duration that one finds in intuition. Having ruled out conceptual analysis, Bergson assesses the benefit of employing metaphoric images as a way of approximating the nature of duration. He concludes that, though no individual image will provide a *picture* of the duration, nevertheless, taken together, the various images might help to locate a point of convergence. And images, for Bergson, work more appropriately than do concepts, because unlike concepts, which are always static, images can represent movement. He thus offers what we might call the “insufficient metaphors.” The first is an image of time as a thread taut between two spools, unwinding from one, onto the other. The second is the image of a color spectrum, consisting of a multitude of imperceptibly transitioning shades. The final image is one of an infinitely compressed point of elastic, which is gradually drawn out into a line, focusing on its path or its movement. All three fail to grasp the duration, because they, and (any other image will do the same), express either unity or multiplicity, but cannot represent both. Duration is at once “variety of qualities, continuity of progress, unity of direction,”¹⁷ and no image (even less a concept), can represent it. The images serve to delimit the zone of indeterminacy to an infinitesimal point, which Bergson calls a point of “convergence.”¹⁸ But this convergence cannot be conceived as

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 204.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 195.

overlap, as when the logic student draws her Venn diagrams on the chalkboard. The images after all are mutually exclusive—each emphasizes aspects that others exclude, and excludes aspects that others emphasize. The convergence, for Bergson, is the tension, the attunement of the mind required to think the images at all. Multiplying the images focuses the convergence, which can then be seized in intuition.

We note, however, that the method of intuition is the method of the metaphysician, of the philosopher, strictly speaking. The task for the philosopher is not to be shut up in “exclusive self-contemplation,”¹⁹ but to dispense with symbols in the pursuit of absolute knowledge. As Deleuze notes, intuition is “the movement by which we emerge from our own duration, by which we make use of our own duration to affirm and immediately to recognize the existence of other durations, above or below us.”²⁰ What Bergson referred to as the *tension* or *intensity* is important in this case. The intuition of one’s pure duration puts one, not in the realm of isolated subjectivity, but in contact with a continuity of durations, accessible in varying intensities, the limits being weakened intensity, purely scattered homogeneity, and the infinitely intensified duration of eternity, which he calls an “eternity of life.”²¹ Intuition is Bergson’s method of discovering duration, which occurs at various levels at various intensities, and through which is opened the possibility for absolute knowledge.

II. Husserl and the Absolute Foundation

Despite Bergson’s stint of overwhelming popularity, it is also quite clear that this status was short-lived, and Bergson, by the mid-1920’s, had fallen out of favor in most academic circles. His affinities with certain quasi-mystical tendencies engendered a fecundity within his thinking that provided critics with an array of charges: badly posed mysticism, irrationalism, and obscurantism, among many ideological and political accusations as well.²² His fate was worsened by a very public engagement with Albert Einstein in 1922, after which it was widely agreed that Bergson had come out the weaker of the interlocutors.²³ In 1985, Leszek Kolakowski claims that Bergson’s legacy has “survived only as a dead classic,” and “that today’s philosophers [...] are almost entirely indifferent to his legacy.”²⁴ It is not clear that there is any one factor that brought about the demise of French Bergsonism in the early twentieth century. What is clear, however, is that a decisive farewell took place in the event that was Husserl’s baptism into French thought.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

²⁰ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 33.

²¹ Bergson, “Introduction to Metaphysics,” 221.

²² Bertrand Russell was one of the more noteworthy of Bergson’s critics.

²³ For more on this historical discussion, see Suzanne Guerlac, *Thinking in Time: An Introduction to Henri Bergson*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 12-13; and Keith Ansell Pearson, *Philosophy and the Adventure of the Virtual: Bergson and the Time of Life*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 55-65.

²⁴ Leszek Kolakowski, *Bergson*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 2.

This event was of course the Paris Lectures, given at the Sorbonne in February of 1929, assembled in 1930, and published as the *Cartesian Meditations*. As Foucault notes, this event “marked the moment: Phenomenology entered France through that text.”²⁵ Levinas’ first essay on Husserl appeared in the following months,²⁶ followed over the next few years by several others. 1930 saw the publication of Levinas’ *Théorie de l’intuition dans la phénoménologie de Husserl*, which, famously, had a profound impact on Jean-Paul Sartre²⁷ who, in 1933, wrote his brief essay, “Intentionality: A Fundamental Idea of Husserl’s Phenomenology,”²⁸ followed, in 1936 by his famous *La Transcendance de L’Ego*. Merleau-Ponty’s *Phénoménologie de la perception* is published in 1945, followed by his more ontological works, inspired by the later writings of Heidegger. By this time, there was, as they say, no turning back. Phenomenology, through the lens of the existential movement, had overtaken French thought. Whatever initial intellectual disagreements Husserl had had with Bergson, Husserl, it seemed, had carried the day.

Husserl’s philosophy underwent many transformations throughout the course of his career. His *Logical Investigations*, though inestimably important for philosophy in the twentieth century, maintain a preoccupation with concerns of logic and epistemology, based in the structures of consciousness and intentionality and for this reason, the concepts elucidated therein tend in the direction of stasis. Over the next few years, Husserl began to believe that phenomenology held a myriad of wealth for understanding all the various dynamic fields of experience and knowledge. Simply put, experience far exceeded what Husserl himself had allowed. Thus, in the wake of the *Investigations*, Husserl became engrossed in the question of the experience of time, which would push him into the direction of the transcendental phenomenology of the *Ideas*, and would preoccupy much of his work throughout his life. He began to think of time as the fundamental experiential framework from which all experiences are constituted. As such, he held, it was of fundamental priority for phenomenological study. Husserl’s time-consciousness structure is what Deleuze appears to be reversing in “Immanence: A Life...” and so we now turn to a brief exposition of this structure.²⁹

The *time-consciousness* lectures, as they are now called, were delivered as the final part of a four-part course in February of 1905 at Göttingen.³⁰ In paragraph 25,

²⁵ Michel Foucault, Introduction, *The Normal and the Pathological*, by Georges Canguilhem, (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 8. This introduction is an earlier version of Foucault’s aforementioned final essay: “Life: Experience and Science.”

²⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, “Sur les ‘Ideen’ de M.E. Husserl,” *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l’Etranger*, CVII (1929), 54th year, no. 3-4, March-April, pp. 230-65.

²⁷ See Simone de Beauvoir, *Adieux: A Farewell to Sartre*, trans. Patrick O’Brian, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 157, as well as Ronald Hayman, *Sartre: A Life*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 97.

²⁸ *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, vol 1, no 2, May 1970, pp 4-5.

²⁹ Husserl is a prolific writer, whose project was far-reaching, and I realize that I am painting with very broad strokes in my descriptions. I hope to have represented responsibly his position.

³⁰ John Barnett Brough, Translator’s Introduction, *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time (1893-1917)*, by Edmund Husserl, (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991), xiii.

Husserl mentions his notion of the “living present,”³¹ which *is*, put simply, Husserl’s structure of time consciousness. Husserl formulates the living present in response to what he takes to be inadequacies among psychologists in describing time in its experiential flow.³² The living present for Husserl consists of the primal impression, “what is signified by the word *now*, insofar as it is taken in the strictest sense.”³³ The primal impression is the ever-renewed, punctuated now moment, the moment of perception, strictly speaking. But the living present consists, in addition to the primal impression, of a halo, thickened with what Husserl calls *retention* and *protention*. Retention is a memory, but not in the sense that we normally use the term, as in a recollection of a past event; rather retention is a memory still living, still connected to the moment of primal impression, still being perceived. Likewise the living present contains an element of protention, a consciousness of expectation. But again, this expectation is primary; it is not the expectation of awaiting a friend, but more immediate—in perceiving the bus approaching the bus stop, I stand, expecting it to pull over and let me on. It has little to do with reflection. The living present, Husserl’s structure of temporality, has as its absolute center, the primal impression, and is thickened with a halo of memory and expectation.

As I have hinted, it is in Husserl’s exploration of the phenomenology of time-consciousness that he comes to develop his notion of absolute subjectivity. That is to say, time-consciousness pushes phenomenology into the transcendental realm. In the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*, Husserl, following Hume’s lead, had denied the very possibility of experiencing anything like a pure subjectivity, or pure ego.³⁴ In the Second Edition of 1913,³⁵ however, Husserl writes in the Foreword, “I no longer approve of the rejection of the pure ego,”³⁶ stating however, that he has left the arguments in truncated form in order to sustain the dialogue into which he and Paul Natorp had entered on the subject. However, his claims in the Fifth Investigation with respect to the ego, are footnoted with the claim that “I have since managed to find it...”³⁷ In the time-consciousness lectures, paragraphs 34-36, Husserl provides an argument for the necessity of this discovery.

³¹ Edmund Husserl. *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*. Ed. Martin Heidegger. Trans. James Churchill. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1964), 77.

³² Brentano serves as his chief opponent in this critique and reformulation. However, whether or not Husserl realizes it, in his critique lies a criticism of the Western model of time dating back to Aristotle. See *Physics*, IV.9, where Aristotle describes time as a succession of now points, which serve to measure change. For Aristotle, there is no time without change, and no change without time. This punctilinear model of time, coupled with the incapability of early twentieth century psychology to conceptualize a different sort of memory, to wit, Husserl’s notion of *retention*, led to the obvious insufficiencies of Brentano’s account of time. This is what Husserl sought to overcome.

³³ *Ibid*, 92.

³⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations Volume II*, ed. Dermot Moran, trans. J.N. Findlay, (New York: Routledge, 1970), 92.

³⁵ Contemporaneous with *Ideas I*.

³⁶ Husserl, *Logical Investigations Volume I*, 8.

³⁷ Husserl, *Logical Investigations Volume II*, 353 n8.

Each object of consciousness, he claims, is, in some sense, a process—it exists over time, and is continuous in time, which is to say, *as* a process (which, of course, does not preclude the possibility of change over time). At root, this first premise claims that nothing whatsoever can be conceived as existing at any particular now point, *except* as part of a larger process. Secondly, any object, of logical necessity, is either static or changing; any moment of stasis can open up to alteration, and any moment of alteration can crystallize into a stasis. The constitutive phenomena themselves, however, bear no resemblance to other objects of consciousness. Each phase of its flux is a “continuity of shading,”³⁸ such that no particular phase can be conceived as continuous succession. On the contrary, what we find in the constitutive phenomena is the paradox of continuous alteration. It is thus senseless to say that the phenomena do exist, and *did* exist before, (as the ego is the timeless sourcepoint). Nevertheless there is a certain sort of continuity to be ascribed to it, namely, a continuity of flux, consisting of the structure of the *before*, the *now*, and, it would seem, the *not yet*. Even if it may appear as though this structure would itself be a succession, Husserl claims that this is not the case. The structure itself, of before, now, and not yet, is itself, timeless, unchanging. It is filled out in an ever-changing stream of consciousness, but the structure itself maintains its form. This is the “absolute subjectivity,” having “absolute properties,”³⁹ describable only metaphorically as “flux” or “flow.”

III. A Philosophy of Immanence

Avowed torchbearers of the phenomenological tradition, such as Heidegger,⁴⁰ Merleau-Ponty, and Derrida, have offered many sophisticated critiques, reformulations, radicalizations, and deconstructions of the Husserlian project. By comparison, Deleuze’s critique actually seems quite simple: Husserl’s structure of time-consciousness is, in the end, a structure of transcendence and, though it would seek to provide a thoroughly phenomenological account of experience, any philosophy of transcendence will of its very nature exceed the limits of experience and will thus falsify or “denature” immanence. Deleuze finds a companion in his critique in a most unlikely source, namely, Jean-Paul Sartre’s 1936 *La transcendance de l’ego*. Deleuze calls this essay “decisive,” and claims that Sartre exposes therein the conditions according to which a philosophy of immanence must be undertaken: “an impersonal transcendental field, not having the form of a synthetic personal consciousness or a subjective identity—with the subject, on the contrary, being always constituted.”⁴¹

The Transcendence of the Ego, published in 1937, is one of Sartre’s earliest and most groundbreaking works. This early engagement with Husserlian

³⁸ Husserl, *The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness*, 99. Brough’s translation here uses the word ‘adumbrations’ in place of ‘shading.’

³⁹ *Ibid*, 100.

⁴⁰ Heidegger’s *ecstatic temporality* is structurally similar in many striking ways to Husserl’s notion of the living present.

⁴¹ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 98-99.

phenomenology emphasizes both the extent to which Sartre's project was indebted to Husserl's, and at the same time, the great difference between the transcendental phenomenology that Husserl had erected, and the existentialist ontology of freedom that Sartre was beginning to formulate. In some ways, the essay marks this transition.

The guiding contention of Sartre's essay is that the transcendental ego is not found in consciousness, or behind consciousness, but rather, if it is discovered at all, it is discovered only beyond or outside of consciousness, constituted, as a transcendent object in the world. Early on, the element of Husserlian phenomenology that had most captivated Sartre was the spontaneity of consciousness. Consciousness is defined by its intentional structure, its inherent capacity to 'burst toward,'⁴² to explode outward, in a perpetual spontaneity, an unceasing act of self-transcendence and escape. Husserl's claim that the ego is required in order to explain the primordial unification of consciousness is, for Sartre, fundamentally mistaken, precisely because of the structure of intentionality. This structure, by its very definition, makes impossible the discovery of a substantial, unifying *I* behind consciousness. Consciousness is conscious *of*—this is Sartre's battle cry. It is always transcending, so if the ego is discovered at all *by* consciousness, it can only be as a transcendent object. He claims that, although Husserl acknowledges that the transcendence of the ego is of a different sort than that of objects of consciousness, this changes nothing. In the end, it is admittedly a transcendent, and it is precisely the factual existence of transcendent objects that phenomenology has suspended in the *εποχή*. "Let us be more radical," he claims, "and assert without fear that *all transcendence* must fall under the *εποχή*."⁴³

Moreover, he denies Husserl's assertion that the ego is somehow required to unify consciousness. Consciousness unifies itself in the consciousness of other consciousnesses, present and past, and Husserl's time-consciousness structure already shows this, according to Sartre. We saw already that in Husserl's living present the primal impression is always accompanied by memory. Sartre explains this, not in terms of an absolute subjectivity, but in terms of "'transversal intentionalities' which are concrete and real retentions of past consciousnesses."⁴⁴ Consciousness unifies itself in being conscious of an object, and in being conscious of *having been* conscious of that object. Consciousness is thus unified in the objects, [Back to the things themselves!] rather than an absolute timeless interiority.

Finally, the transcendental ego would, given its factual reality, serve a pernicious end—it would divide consciousness, and "tear consciousness from itself [...] The transcendental *I*," he claims, "is the death of consciousness."⁴⁵ It would,

⁴² Jean-Paul Sartre, "Intentionality: A Fundamental Idea of Husserl's Phenomenology," *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, vol 1, no 2, May 1970, pp 4-5.

⁴³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego: An Existentialist Theory of Consciousness*, trans. Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989), 51.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 39.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 40.

in one sense, hypostatize what can only be described as pure spontaneity. In another sense, it would impose a fissure in consciousness itself, thus divesting consciousness of its *absolute*—and we must take care to note Sartre’s unique sense of *absolute*—status. Sartre’s sense of *absolute* entails that pure consciousness is conscious of itself. But not as a self-reflective act, but as a pure immediacy, “all lightness, all translucence,”⁴⁶ on a level where Being and appearance are no longer distinct. This is perhaps difficult to parse out, but we may state that for Sartre, the consciousness that is conscious of itself can be expressed in this manner—as an awareness of an awareness, where Husserl’s formulation is perhaps expressible in this way—an awareness of the *I* in its act of awareness. For Sartre, not only is this, as we have seen, a falsification, but it is one that takes away from consciousness that which is most fundamentally its own, its absoluteness. Therefore, Sartre concludes, being an unnecessary entity, one that falsifies and divides consciousness, one that can be posited only in an act of transcendence, there is no room for the transcendental ego in a philosophical methodology that deems itself to be, in the manner of William James, a “radical empiricism.”

Sartre’s essay ends with a list of “Conclusions,” but these conclusions are far more than a mere “taking stock” of the critique he has leveled—occupying fourteen pages, they mark rather the ontological field that has been exposed, which Deleuze repeatedly notes as an example of a plane of immanence.⁴⁷ Sartre calls this field the “Transcendental Field,”⁴⁸ which, purified of the egological heaviness under which it had been bound, “recovers its primary transparency.”⁴⁹ The transcendental subject is reabsorbed into the field itself, as a constituted object, not as a factually real entity behind consciousness. Thus purified, consciousness finds once again its absoluteness, in two senses of the term. It is absolute in the sense that it is a *nothing*. Consciousness itself has no contents, but consists in perpetually bursting forth. And yet, it is an *all* as well, as it is consciousness of all those things transcendent to it. The chimaeras of psychological states, which on the basis of the language we use would seem to point towards inherence and from here to interiority, are to be described purely in terms of *act* and *performance*. Thus what Sartre has describe is a sphere of pure immediacy, or what he calls “pure spontaneities,”⁵⁰ to anticipate Deleuze, we might say “pure movement.” The field is impersonal, asubjective, and is determined only by its spontaneities, its burstings, which are determined only by themselves. For Deleuze, this essay is the key to moving beyond

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁷ See, for example, Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 98-99; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 47-48; Gilles Deleuze, “Immanence; A Life...,” trans. Anne Boyman, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life...*, (New York: Zone Books, 2001), 26, 32n2.

⁴⁸ Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, 93ff. This is another concept that Deleuze will take up and use.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

the limitations of the subject. This essay is the movement of the reversal, the reversal that “restores the rights of immanence,”⁵¹ and clears the way for something new. We turn now to the discussion of immanence as found in *What is Philosophy?*

The issue of the plane of immanence is raised following the discussion of the concept of the concept, what a concept is. The plane of immanence is a conceptual plane, (which is not to say that the plane itself is a concept). Rather, it is the prephilosophical plane that is presupposed in the institution of any philosophy, in the creation of any system of concepts. To understand why, we need to take a short detour through the discussion of the concept. Every concept is a multiplicity of components, and is in fact defined by these components, which are “heterogeneous components traversed by a point of absolute survey at infinite speed.”⁵² The components are united in that each one of them shares some degree of overlap with at least one other component. In this space of overlap, the components are indistinguishable, and these zones of indeterminacy serve as bridges or ties that unite the components, and hence the concept, together. Every concept has a history, but also has a becoming. (And on this point we will begin to see the plane of immanence being employed). Its history is the way in which the concept has been employed through various planes, various philosophies. The becoming is the way in which the concept connects and relates to other concepts on the same plane. The history and becoming may or may not be the same for any given concept. For instance, Husserl’s cogito is a concept that operates on a plane with concepts such as *εποχή*, reduction, and eidetic variation, while Descartes’ cogito operates on a plane with concepts such as the Natural Light and continuous creation. Husserl’s cogito thus shares with the other concepts on the plane a becoming, but not a history. The components of concepts themselves are concepts, and the concepts reach out to one another. This reaching out, this interaction is why the plane of immanence is required.

This plane, as we have said, is a conceptual plane, but not in the sense that it is itself a concept—it is precisely that which defies conceptualization—but that it is required for the interrelations of any configuration of concepts. It is prephilosophical. This does not imply that it is non-philosophical, but that concepts must always refer to a non-conceptual understanding.⁵³ Philosophy, they claim, constructs, but construction presupposes two things: 1) the site of the construction, and 2) that which occupies the site. This being the case, philosophy is the creation of concepts, *and* the institution of the site. The problem of thought has always been, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the infinite speed of thought—the way concepts relate to one another, the way, when necessary, new connections are

⁵¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 47.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵³ Heidegger and Descartes are two good examples. Heidegger invoked what he calls a preontological understanding of being. And for Descartes, that thinking entails being is so obvious that it is not even up for grabs.

instantaneously formed and old ones, no longer required, slip out of being. The speed and movement of thought require, according to Deleuze and Guattari, a milieu that itself moves, that *is* movement, we might say. To elucidate, they employ the metaphor of the wave: “Concepts are like multiple waves, rising and falling, but the plane of immanence is the single wave that rolls them up and unrolls them.”⁵⁴ A wave rises and falls, peaks, and levels off. Its surfaces can touch at any point, encompassing multiple points in one intersection, and just as quickly as this intersection is formed, it can be undone. The wave, we might say, is nothing more than the movement of its surfaces. The plane of immanence is the presupposed milieu of movement—its very life and purpose is this movement that brings concepts into interplay. With this in mind, we see in *What is Philosophy?* a clearer turning away from Husserl’s phenomenological structure, and more specifically, the structure of the subject as the internal time-consciousness structure. Movement is precisely what cannot be sacrificed in our image of thought, and for Deleuze and Guattari, movement is the very element that is and must be sacrificed in the positing of the transcendental subject. Daniel W. Smith writes, “when one says that the field of consciousness is immanent *to* a transcendental subject, one is already erecting the subject as an element of transcendence that goes beyond the flux of experience.”⁵⁵ Immanence becomes immanent *to* a transcendent, in whatever sense, religious or secular, of the word. “When misunderstood in this way, the plane of immanence [...] is a simple field of phenomena that now only possess in a secondary way that which first of all is attributed to the transcendent unity.”⁵⁶ This could very easily be a description of Husserl. We recall that the subject is *timeless*, but that its internal structure is such that it imposes, or constitutes time *in* experience, because this is what it is its very nature to do. Deleuze reverses this structure: “Ce n’est pas l’immanence qui est « à » la conscience, mais l’inverse.”⁵⁷ For Deleuze and Guattari, the movement itself is primary, and must remain so.

IV. An Image of A Life...

Notice, that everything we have said thus far regarding immanence has to do with immanence as a movement of thinking, a conceptual plane, rather than a plane of existence. Why then, in 1995, in Deleuze’s final essay, does he claim, “We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE, and nothing else.”⁵⁸ Something has shifted, it seems, though it is not clear what that might be. The primary theme

⁵⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 36.

⁵⁵ Daniel W. Smith, “Deleuze and Derrida, Immanence and Transcendence: Two Directions in Recent French Thought,” in ed. Paul Patton and John Protevi, *Between Deleuze and Derrida*, (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), 47.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁵⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu’est-ce que la philosophie*, (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991), 50.

⁵⁸ Deleuze, “Immanence: A Life...,” 27.

that dominates the early part of the essay is a familiar one. He writes, “What is a transcendental field?”⁵⁹ It can be distinguished from experience in that it doesn’t refer to an object or belong to a subject...⁶⁰ The driving theme is the a-subjective consciousness that is proper to the plane of immanence. With this in mind, he again draws the distinction between his brand of transcendental empiricism and any system of knowledge having to do with the subject/object distinction. He once again emphasizes that immanence is immanent to nothing, except for itself. Immanence is immanent only in immanence. But again, these themes have been laid out elsewhere. What has changed that engenders the declaration of immanence as “a life”? There is one word introduced, used only once, and used in such a manner that one can easily pass over it quickly as obvious. Yet, this word is a technical term for Deleuze, such that its use is not and cannot be accidental or arbitrary: duration. Immanence, he says, is a “qualitative duration of consciousness without a self.”⁶¹ This word, duration, is new in describing immanence. Not one time through the course of the chapter on Immanence in *What is Philosophy?* does the term appear. Yet here, in the opening lines of the essay, it is used to characterize immanence. This term is the introduction that makes possible the shift to defining immanence in terms of a life.

Duration, in Deleuze’s *Bergsonism* text, is defined as “an internal multiplicity of succession, of fusion, of organization, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination, or of *difference in kind*; it is a *virtual and continuous* multiplicity that cannot be reduced to numbers.”⁶² Duration is not indivisible, rather, its divisibility consists in a perpetual heterogeneity—it divides by changing the kind of thing it is. For Bergson, the past and present differ, not in degree, but in kind. Duration might then be defined as succession which differs from itself.⁶³ And indeed, in an early essay on Bergson, Deleuze defines duration as “*what differs from itself*.”⁶⁴ Immanence is pure movement, but Deleuze and Guattari also refer to it as “pure variation,”⁶⁵ or we may even say that immanence is pure immediacy, as the significance of the movement of immanence is that it instantaneously brings concepts into contact with one another. Thus, A Life, as Deleuze conceives it, is immanence, infused with duration. The use of the indefinite article is important. It does not mark an empirical indeterminacy, but a determinacy by the transcendental field, by immanence itself. It is the indeterminacy of the individual, which is to say that it is not *his* life

⁵⁹ This points back to Sartre’s essay.

⁶⁰ Deleuze, “Immanence: A Life...,” 25.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 38.

⁶³ This again distinguishes Bergson’s duration from Husserl’s time-consciousness. For Husserl, retention marks a now that was, but is no more. It is in the mode of shading off, but it retains the temporal impression, the temporal stamp, that it received when present in the mode of primal impression.

⁶⁴ Deleuze, “Bergson’s Conception of Difference,” ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina, *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974*, (Los Angeles and New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 37.

⁶⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 39.

or *her* life. It is not *the* life belonging to this or that subject. But this particular indeterminacy marks the determination of the singular. A life is a pure plane of immanence, pure immediacy, pure variation, suffused with duration which is the constant movement of differentiation.

V. Conclusion

What can a return to Bergson mean? Deleuze asked this question in 1988, and he offered this as a response: “A ‘return to Bergson’ does not only mean a renewed admiration for a great philosopher but a renewal or an extension of his project today, in relation to the transformations of life and society...”⁶⁶ A return to Bergson is the extension of his project. And this speaks to the way in which Deleuze always approaches the history of philosophy, as a counter-historian, actualizing a virtual that has never been actualized before, in a grand experimentation of thought. In the famous conversations between Deleuze and Claire Parnet, Deleuze describes his own method: “I liked writers who seemed to be part of the history of philosophy, but who escaped from it in one respect, or altogether: Lucretius, Spinoza, Hume, Nietzsche, Bergson,” and he goes on to say, “Bergson, of course, was also caught up in French-style history of philosophy, and yet in him there is something that cannot be assimilated, which enabled him to provide a shock, to be a rallying point for all the opposition, the object of so many hatreds...”⁶⁷

At the dawn of the twentieth century, there stood two opposing philosophies of consciousness. One presented an ontology of duration, memory, and the *élan vital*. The other presented an ontology of the transcendental subject, the *εποχή*, and of constitution. One triumphed, while the other was marginalized and in many ways, forgotten. A return to Bergson implies tracing the trajectory that Bergson’s thought might have taken, to extend it into a relevant discussion with today’s crisis, which Agamben has identified as the question of life. What can this extension bring? What can Deleuze’s final reflections on life be? Perhaps an opening to explore the frontiers, to unsettle and dislocate anything that we unreflectively take to be a ‘given’ of human nature. Perhaps to question, with Spinoza, and with Deleuze, to explore what a body can do.

⁶⁶ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, 115.

⁶⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 14-15.

DIFFERENCES ET CHIASMES DE LA VIE. CHRISTIANISME ET PHENOMENOLOGIE CHEZ LE DERNIER HENRY

OVIDIU-SORIN PODAR¹

ABSTRACT. The question of life is the whole Henry's preoccupation in phenomenology. But the least tree books introduced a radical change by a rigorous theological Difference between the pure Self-affection of the Absolute Life, and the light concept of self-affection for the passivity of the human living. This turn accomplished the subversion of the ontological Monism by a Double between the invisible manifestation of Life and the World's appearance. But it open too a development concerning the relations of Father and his Archi-Son, the First Living individual, the Logos who is the only one being called as Real Chiasm. Into the consubstantial Trinitarian Persons first, but also *Ur-Chiasm*, which means that every human living as Son of living God is born in a transcendental mediation of His Logos. Getting *out* of this Chiasm, forgetting the Life as Origin institute the ego's existence like sin and Care. For his salvation, the Logos assume the kenotic Incarnation Chiasm, which assure, by a theological Reduction as faith and praxis of Christ's Words, a second Birth, a baptismal Chiasm.

Keywords: radicality and passivity of life; monism; double appearance; theological difference.

1. Renversement du Monisme onto-théo-logique

Le dogme chrétien s'est développé en tant que théologie «conceptuelle» par polémique, afin d'écartier toute compréhension moniste (*i.e.* hérétique) du mystère du salut et de la déification. Ce Monisme onto-théo-logique contre lequel le dogme chrétien a forgé son langage hellénisé, mais en renversant tout de la Grèce, est bien repérable encore dans une «philosophie chrétienne» qui depuis les médiévaux jusqu'à nos jours demeure irrémédiablement enfermée dans les catégories closes d'une «vision» trop mondaine et dans le déploiement d'une phénoménalité qui ne révèle que de l'Etre et du Monde. Seulement, le christianisme ne se propose pas et n'a rien à voir avec la structure de ce milieu de l'ek-stasis, intervalle intentionnel spatio-temporel d'extériorité, de la donation des choses, des phénomènes pauvres et de droit commun², de la donation de et dans l'apparaître du visible. Dès son début, la confession de foi chrétienne ne met rien autre chose en évidence que cette rupture d'avec le monde, dans un renversement qui replace l'homme dans sa condition véritable de vivant sachant de quel Invisible, d'Où en effet il reçoit sa vie.

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² J.-L. Marion, *Etant donné*, PUF, 1997.

C'est bien contre ce Monisme que Michel Henry accomplit son dernier tournant, son dédoublement des concepts³, pour faire surgir le kérygme christique, en réduction sous le coup de la modernité, par une philosophie de *la vie du Soi vivant en son Chiasme avec la Vie*. Le triptyque du dernier Henry dévoile «la Voie, la Vérité et la Vie»⁴, le Logos qui s'est «fait chair»⁵ pour nous *réduire* de ses «Paroles»⁶. Il nous montre l'effectivité d'une approche non-philosophique du christianisme, programme rempli non par une phénoménologie historique⁷, mais par la seule capable et susceptible de répondre à une telle question, c'est-à-dire une phénoménologie radicale, qui demeure à la fois tributaire de ce courant philosophique, mais de laquelle elle s'écarte décisivement, dans ses traits les plus importants. La tâche d'une phénoménologie de la vie est ainsi de repenser, *phénoménologiquement*, l'auto-révélation, dans sa possibilité la plus intérieure, transcendantale, dans ce qui la rend effective, dans la matière phénoménologique dont toute auto-révélation est faite, en laquelle elle s'accomplit et peut s'accomplir – dans la chair pathétique de la vie qui, se révélant à soi-même, parle d'elle-même. M. Henry affirme d'une manière «apodictique» qu'une phénoménologie authentique ne saurait avoir d'autre «objet» que la Vie divine s'éprouvant elle-même dans son Ipséité et donnant, dans cette auto-affection, naissance au Verbe-Christ et aux hommes transcendants comme Ses «Fils». Ainsi, la Révélation de Dieu «le Père» en le Christ constitue l'Avènement d'un Chiasme d'Incarnation, une «révolution» incomparable qui rompt avec toutes les manières de penser.

Phénoménologie de la vie et christianisme sont ainsi congruents au point que la Réalité dont il s'agit en eux étant la même, cette question n'est pas seulement celle de la Vie et de sa phénoménalité propre, mais, dans son originalité impensée, celle de *la relation chiasmique de la Vie au vivant*. C'est au christianisme que revient d'avoir institué une telle question avant même qu'elle puisse devenir celle d'une phénoménologie de la vie. À cet égard, elle fait corps avec une dogmatique qui semble s'imposer à la pensée comme une contrainte étrangère. Mais cette passivité de la pensée à l'égard d'un contenu dogmatique renvoie à une passivité beaucoup plus fondamentale: *à la passivité du vivant à l'égard de la Vie*. C'est là que surgit la question commune au christianisme et à une phénoménologie de la vie, la question de la relation de la vie au vivant comprise comme intérieure au procès de phénoménalisation de la vie et, en fin de compte, comme identique à lui⁸.

³ P. Audi, *Michel Henry*, Les Belles Lettres, 2006, p. 216.

⁴ M. Henry, *C'est moi la Vérité. Pour une phénoménologie du christianisme*, Seuil, 1996 (désormais *CMV*).

⁵ M. Henry, *Incarnation. Une philosophie de la chair*, Seuil, 2000 (désormais *Inc.*).

⁶ M. Henry, *Paroles du Christ*, Seuil, 2002, (désormais *PC*).

⁷ «Derrière et à sa faveur se glisse une certaine conception de la phénoménalité, celle-là même qui se présente d'abord à la pensée ordinaire et qui, du même coup, constitue le préjugé le plus ancien et le moins critique de la philosophie traditionnelle. C'est la conception de la phénoménalité qui est empruntée à la perception des objets du monde, soit, en fin de compte, l'apparaître du monde lui-même», *Inc.*, p. 47.

⁸ À vrai dire, il est possible pour Henry, même si, en ensemble, il ne retient qu'un seul langage, de souligner un aspect par quoi cette question semble relever plus particulièrement de la dogmatique, et un autre par lequel elle semble relever de la phénoménologie. Ce double aspect se découvre dès que nous remarquons qu'il est possible de le parcourir en pensée «dans les deux sens»: «de la vie au vivant», et ici sans doute

2. Il est d'abord décisif de marquer le «dispositif»⁹ de lecture: le **Double** de toute phénoménalité, le clivage Vie-Monde sur lequel se calquent tous les autres clivages que les monismes (techno-scientifique, structuraliste-linguistique, psychanalytique, etc.) gardent en oubli: Chair-corps («*seule notre chair nous permet de connaître quelque chose comme un corps*»¹⁰), Soi-ego. «*Avec le christianisme surgit l'intuition inouïe d'un autre Logos*»¹¹, non pas le Logos grec de la phénoménalité du monde, mais le Logos de la Vie dont la phénoménalité est la substance phénoménologique de cette vie elle-même, son étreinte pathétique, sa jouissance¹². Il s'agit avec le Double apparaître du fait que la Vérité de Vie diffère, tant par essence que par manifestation, de la vérité du monde, le premier trait capital de cette Vérité étant qu'elle ne diffère en rien de ce qu'elle rend vrai. Tout ce qui se montre dans le monde est étranger au vivre de la vie. On va comprendre que l'apparaître du monde n'est pas seulement indifférent à tout ce qu'il dévoile, mais encore, «il est incapable de lui conférer l'existence»¹³. Avec l'idée d'une Révélation pure sans écart et différence entre ce qui se montre (essence) et la manière en laquelle se montre (manifestations, ou énergies pour les théologiens), par conséquent d'une révélation dont la phénoménalité est la phénoménalisation de la phénoménalité elle-même, nous sommes en présence de l'essence que le christianisme place au principe (archi-logos) de toute chose: «*Dieu est cette Révélation pure qui ne révèle rien d'autre que soi. Dieu se révèle*»¹⁴.

Un recours à la phénoménologie ne se révèle fécond que s'il est capable d'opérer ce renversement, en tant que *réduction théologique (de la transcendance) du Monde à (l'immanence de) la Vie*, du monisme de toute la pensée, en substituant au Monde de l'Être, à l'inhérence de l'être-au-monde, une phénoménologie (liturgique) de la Vie¹⁵. C'est ce renversement qui nous conduit à la théorie extra-ordinaire, d'une Donation en partage aux Soi de l'auto-révélation de Dieu qui ne doit rien à la phénoménalité du monde, mais la rejette bien plutôt comme foncièrement étrangère à sa phénoménalité propre, comme une *irréductibilité radicale* à toute

c'est la dogmatique qui en sait plus dans la mesure où elle serait la Parole même de la Vie; ou, au contraire «du vivant à la vie», de nous-mêmes donc, et là c'est la phénoménologie qui peut nous aider; cf. l'article de M. Henry, *Le christianisme: une approche phénoménologique?*, republié en *Phénoménologie de la vie*, tome IV, *Sur l'éthique et la religion*, (désormais E&R), PUF, 2004, p. 95-111.

⁹ G. Agamben, *Qu'est-ce qu'un dispositif?*, Payot-Rivages, 2007.

¹⁰ *Inc.*, p. 10.

¹¹ *PC*, p. 94.

¹² Non dans le Logos grec en lequel ne prennent forme que des significations ou des concepts, des représentations ou des images, qui parlent et qui raisonnent à la manière des hommes, qui pensent comme eux. Mais dans un Verbe plus ancien et qui, avant tout le monde concevable et là où il n'y a encore aucun monde, parle à chacun, dans cette chair qui est la sienne, dans ces souffrances comme dans l'ivresse d'exister - «le Verbe de Vie», *Inc.*, p. 28.

¹³ *Ibidem.*, p. 61.

¹⁴ *CMV*, p. 36-37.

¹⁵ C'est d'ailleurs, pour nous, le sens ultime d'une subversion liturgique opérée par J.-Y. Lacoste, *Expérience et Absolu*, PUF, 1994.

forme mondaine de connaissance et de science¹⁶. «À Dieu compris comme son auto-révélation selon une phénoménalité qui lui est propre, un accès n'est susceptible de se produire que là où se produit cette auto-révélation et de la façon dont elle le fait». Ce n'est pas la pensée ni le monde, intentionnels, qui nous manque pour accéder à la Révélation de Dieu, bien au contraire, c'est seulement quand la pensée fait défaut, par ré(con)duction à la Vie, que peut s'accomplir l'auto-révélation de Dieu. Où s'accomplit cette auto-révélation, sinon «dans la Vie, comme l'essence de celle-ci», comme l'essence de cette auto-révélation? «Car la Vie n'est rien d'autre que ce qui s'auto-révèle... le fait même de s'auto-révéler, l'auto-révélation en tant que telle»¹⁷. Le renversement pense la préséance de la Vie sur la pensée de l'ex-istence moniste, le retournement concerne un élargissement radical du concept de phénoménalité.

La Vie en tant qu'auto-révélation se révèle elle-même, et tout cela n'est possible que parce que son mode de révélation *ignore* le monde et son «au-dehors». Définitivement pour Henry, «vivre n'est pas possible dans le monde», la Vie ne jette pas au-dehors ce qu'elle révèle, elle le tient en soi et le retient dans une étreinte si étroite que ce qu'elle révèle, c'est elle-même. La Vie s'étreint, s'éprouve sans distance, sans différence¹⁸. Dans l'auto-révélation de la Vie prend naissance la Réalité «*impressionnelle dans l'effectuation phénoménologique de son auto-impressionnalité*»¹⁹. Que le contenu de la Vie, ce qu'elle éprouve, soit la Vie même, renvoie à une condition plus fondamentale, l'essence même du «vivre», à un mode de révélation dont la phénoménalité spécifique est la chair d'un pathos, une matière affective pure, dont tout scission, toute séparation se trouve radicalement exclue. Dieu est Vie qui ne se montre jamais dans le visible du monde, impossible de l'y apercevoir, mais nous avons pourtant un accès. «*On n'accède pas à la vie, à sa propre vie, à celle des autres, à celle de Dieu, par le moyen des sens*»²⁰, mais seulement *dans* la Vie et *par* elle-même. La présupposition décisive revient à dire qu'en tant qu'auto-révélation, c'est la Vie elle-même qui parvient en soi en chaque Soi. En elle, c'est elle-même qui accomplit la révélation, c'est elle-même qui est révélée. C'est parce que c'est la Vie elle-même qui parvient originellement en soi, et cela en tant qu'elle est auto-révélation, qu'elle vient en premier. Rien et personne ne pourront jamais parvenir en elle si son parvenir dans la Vie ne s'appuie sur le propre parvenir de la Vie en soi, si son parvenir dans la vie ne s'identifie au parvenir originel de la Vie en elle-même.

¹⁶ À voir le très éclairant article d'Henry, *Ce que la science ne sait pas*, dans *E&R*, p. 41-51.

¹⁷ *CMV*, p. 39.

¹⁸ M. Henry, *Phénoménologie de la chair. Philosophie, théologie, exégèse. Réponses*, p. 143-193, une réponse à Emmanuel Falque, p. 174, dans Philippe Capelle (éd.), *Phénoménologie et christianisme chez Michel Henry. Les derniers écrits en débats*, Cerf, 2004.

¹⁹ *Inc.*, p. 82.

²⁰ *PC*, p. 134.

3. La Vie phénoménologique absolue est la Vérité de Dieu dans son Auto-Révélation. Dieu est la Vie, Dieu seul est la Vie, il n'y a qu'une seule Vie, celle de Dieu, l'unique essence de tout ce qui vit (*i.e.* mono-théisme). Il ne s'agit pas d'une essence immobile à la manière d'un archétype idéal, mais d'une essence agissante, se déployant avec une force invincible, source de puissance, puissance d'engendrement immanent(e)²¹ à tout ce qui vit et ne cessant de lui donner la vie. Dieu est l'essence de la Vie, il est d'essence de Vie, «*car la Vie n'est rien d'autre que ce qui s'auto-révèle... le fait même de s'auto-révéler, l'auto-révélation en tant que telle*»²². L'essence de la Vie et celle de Dieu ne sont qu'une seule et même essence. Cette apparente tautologie implique que c'est la Vie (essence) qui accomplit la révélation (manifestation), qui révèle, mais aussi que ce qu'elle révèle la Vie, c'est elle-même. Dans la vie et seulement dans la Vie *l'essence de la manifestation est la manifestation de l'essence*.

À l'auto-révélation de la Vie, l'Ipséité originelle et essentielle lui appartient comme ce qui la rend possible. C'est un Soi singulier qui s'étreint lui-même, qui s'affecte lui-même, qui s'éprouve lui-même et jouit de soi, sans différence de l'étreinte dans laquelle la Vie se saisit et s'empare de soi, n'étant que le mode selon lequel elle le fait, de telle façon que la vie ne peut s'éteindre soi-même et ainsi se révéler à soi dans la jouissance de soi, qu'en générant en elle ce Soi qui s'étreint lui-même comme cette effectuation phénoménologique. Ce Soi singulier dans lequel la Vie s'étreint elle-même, ce Soi qui est le seul possible selon lequel cette étreinte s'accomplit, est le Premier Vivant. L'Archi-intelligibilité de Dieu est l'essence même de la Vie absolue, le mouvement de son auto-génération en tant que son auto-révélation en son Verbe intérieur à ce mouvement, comme le mode (*tropos* hypostatique) même selon lequel ce mouvement s'accomplit. Le Verbe est l'Archi-Intelligibilité de Soi de la Vie de Dieu. Aucune Vie n'est possible qui ne porte en elle un premier Soi vivant en lequel elle s'éprouve elle-même, aucun vivant n'est en dehors de ce mouvement par lequel la Vie vient en soi en s'éprouvant soi-même dans le Soi de ce vivant. «*Pour autant que l'auto-donation de la Vie absolue en laquelle il est donné à soi s'accomplir effectivement en lui, tout Soi se trouve être du même coup un Soi réel*»²³. «*La vie est incréée. Etranger à la création, étranger au monde, tout procès conférant la Vie est un procès de génération*»²⁴.

²¹ Dans le christianisme, «Transcendance» veut dire «*l'immanence de la Vie en chaque vivant*», PC, p. 54 (souligné par nous). À voir concernant le concept henryen de *Transcendance* et sur son statut, l'article de F. Khosrokhavar, *Michel Henry ou l'intériorité radicale*, p. 57-77, et également sur l'*immanence* l'article de Y. Yamagata, *L'immanence et mouvement subjectif*, p. 129-140, en D&G. Aussi les remarques de S. Laoureux: «Ce qui nous interpelle, c'est uniquement la revendication de leur statut phénoménologique», «Sur le fond de référence au christianisme, les derniers travaux se présentent comme la description la plus complexe et nuancée de la structure de l'immanence», *op. cit.*, p. 209 et 210.

²² CMV, p. 39.

²³ Inc., p. 261.

²⁴ PC, p. 107.

C'est la Vie qui génère tout vivant concevable. Mais on ose pourtant élargir, sans le risque d'un contresens henryen: *c'est la Vie qui procède tout esprit/souffle/pneuma concevable*. Cette génération du vivant, la Vie ne peut l'accomplir que pour autant qu'elle est capable de s'engendrer elle-même, de même que la procession de l'esprit ne peut l'accomplir que pour autant qu'elle est capable de se procéder (d')elle-même. Dieu en tant que Vie est relation *des* Soi. Il n'est pas du tout absurde de concevoir la Trinité à travers la phénoménologie de la Vie, alors qu'on a accusé Henry de ce manque même. *Seul un monothéisme trinitaire peut échapper au monisme*. Cette Vie est incréée, elle est inengendrée en tant qu'auto-engendrée, mais elle est aussi «*procès de génération*»²⁵. Auto-Procession de Soi par l'Auto-Génération de Soi, la Vie ne peut l'accomplir que pour autant qu'elle est capable de s'engendrer et de se procéder (d')elle-même. Le Père seul est capable de s'engendrer Lui-même en tant que Vie In-engendrée de son auto-génération, In-procédée de son auto-procession. Les relations d'Auto-Procession et d'Auto-Génération se jouent à l'intérieur de Dieu lui-même, en tant que génération du Premier Vivant au sein de l'auto-génération de la Vie et procession du Seul Procédé par seul le Père au sein de l'auto-procession de la Vie. Ce qui est généré dans la Vie en tant que Premier Vivant le christianisme l'appelle le Fils premier-né, ou le Fils unique. Ce qui est procédé dans la Vie en tant que Premier Souffle Donateur de Vie le christianisme l'appelle Saint Esprit. La Vie absolue, en tant qu'elle s'engendre elle-même et que, ce faisant, elle engendre le Premier Vivant, le christianisme l'appelle le Père. Le Père – entendons par là le mouvement que rien ne précède et dont nul ne connaît le nom par lequel la Vie se jette en soi pour s'éprouver soi-même –, le Père engendre en lui éternellement le Fils, le Premier Vivant, Celui en l'Ipséité originelle et essentielle de qui le Père s'éprouve lui-même²⁶, mais il procède aussi, étant le Seul à le faire²⁷, le Soi hypostatique du Souffle de la Vie. C'est dans l'Auto-génération en tant qu'Archi-naissance de l'Archi-Fils, l'Archi-Logos, que le Père s'auto-procède en tant qu'Archi-procession du Premier Souffle. *Le Verbe est ainsi le Chiasme du Père et de l'Esprit dans l'intériorité consubstantielle et périchorétique des Soi de Vie. La Différence théologique des Soi se produit à l'intérieur de leur réciprocity chiasmique consubstantielle*. Génération et Procession sont les modes mêmes selon lesquels la Vie s'accomplit des Soi aussi anciens que le Père, comme Lui il se tient au Commencement. Le Verbe n'est pas le premier vivant engendré par la Vie au cours d'un processus qui aurait commencé sans lui, il est dans l'auto-engendrement de la Vie ce par quoi et ce comme quoi cet auto-engendrement absolu devient effectif. L'Esprit n'est pas le premier souffle procédé par la Vie au cours d'un procès qui aurait commencé sans lui, il est dans l'auto-procession de la Vie ce par

²⁵ *Ibidem*.

²⁶ *CMV*, p. 76.

²⁷ On se place ici, évidemment, du côté de la théologie orthodoxe. Orthodoxe pas seulement par rapport à la théologie occidentale (*Filioque*), mais surtout *ortho-doxe* par polémique dogmatique contre le monisme.

quoi cette auto-procession absolue devient effective. Non pas contingents, le Premier Souffle et le Verbe Premier Vivant sont au contraire les premiers parmi tous les souffles vivants qu'engendre la Vie, étant *intérieurs et consubstantiels* au sens fort à l'auto-engendrement/procession de cette Vie, et cela comme son auto-révélation, cette Vie ne peut s'accomplir sans eux comme eux ne peuvent s'accomplir sans elle.

Cette venue incessante de la Vie, son éternel parvenir en soi est un procès sans fin, un mouvement. Dans l'accomplissement éternel de ce procès, la Vie se jette en Soi, s'écrase contre Soi, s'éprouve soi-même, jouit de(s) Soi, produisant constamment sa propre essence pour autant que celle-ci consiste dans cette jouissance de soi et s'épuise en elle. Ainsi la vie s'engendre-t-elle continûment elle-même. Ici s'accomplit l'effectuation phénoménologique active du venir en soi de la vie comme venir dans le s'éprouver soi-même en lequel réside tout vivre concevable. C'est la façon dont la Vie absolue vient en soi dans une Archi-passibilité propre à l'auto-affection pathétique de tout «vivre» concevable, c'est l'Archi-pathos de cette Archi-chair qui se trouve présupposé en toute phénoménalisation de la vie et ainsi en tout vivant²⁸. La Vie demeure éternellement en soi. La Vie est Demeure Eternelle.

4. Le Fils Originare

«Dieu a fait l'homme à son image et à sa ressemblance: Dieu étant la Vie, l'homme est un vivant»²⁹. Henry joint ici une conception entièrement nouvelle de l'homme aussi, sa définition à partir de la Vie, constitué par elle, l'homme vivant, invisible, charnel – *«invisible en tant que charnel»*³⁰. *«Nous le savons parce que nous sommes des vivants et qu'aucun vivant n'est vivant s'il ne porte en lui la Vie non comme un secret inconnu de lui mais comme cela même qu'il éprouve sans cesse, comme cela en quoi il s'éprouve comme sa propre essence et sa réalité même»*³¹. Pour autant qu'une telle relation de la Vie au vivant concerne non plus le rapport de Dieu à lui-même (une seule Vie en trois Soi), mais son rapport à l'homme, elle se produit comme génération de l'homme transcendantal au sein de l'auto-génération de Dieu. Aucun vivant (*adam-eve*) sans la Vie. Une loi qui, décryptée sur l'essence de la Vie absolue, concerne toute vie possible. *«Pour autant que l'auto-donation de la Vie absolue en laquelle il est donné à soi s'accomplir effectivement en lui, tout Soi se trouve être du même coup un Soi réel»*³². Ce qui est généré dans le Vie en tant qu'un homme est appelé ainsi «Fils de Dieu». Naître, ce n'est pas ici venir dans le monde (même pas celui de la Création), mais venir dans la vie, et ainsi, dans une chair, car «la vie révèle la chair en l'engendrant, comme ce qui prend naissance en elle, se formant et s'édifiant en elle, tirant sa substance phénoménologique pure, de la substance même de la vie. Une chair impressionnelle et affective, dont l'impressionnalité et l'affectivité ne

²⁸ *Inc.*, p. 243.

²⁹ *PC*, p. 109.

³⁰ *Inc.*, p. 29.

³¹ *PC*, p. 104.

³² *Inc.*, p. 261.

provient jamais d'autre chose que de l'impressionnalité et de l'affectivité de la vie elle-même»³³. Venir à la vie, *entrer en elle*, c'est accéder à cette condition extraordinaire et mystérieuse (*i.e.* mystique, invisible), d'être désormais un vivant charnel. Loin que la vie soit incapable de prendre chair, elle est la condition de possibilité de celle-ci, loin d'être incapable de recevoir la vie, la chair en est l'effectuation phénoménologique. Car notre chair n'est rien d'autre que cela qui, s'éprouvant, se souffrant, se supportant soi-même et ainsi jouissant de soi selon des impressions toujours renaissantes, définit notre condition des vivants de la chair du Souffle même de la Vie.

5. La Différence théologique

«Le vivant ne s'est pas fondé lui-même, il a un Fond qui est la vie, mais ce Fond n'est pas différent de lui, il est l'auto-affection en laquelle il s'auto-affecte et à laquelle, de cette façon, il s'identifie»³⁴. La Vie est plus que l'homme, plus que ce qui fait aux yeux de la pensée classique son humanité, plus que raison et langage; la Vie qui ne dit mot sait tout en tout cas beaucoup plus que la raison ; chez l'homme aussi bien qu'en Dieu. Mais – c'est là une autre thèse absolument décisive du christianisme – la Vie est également plus que l'homme compris de façon adéquate en tant que vivant. *Le vivant n'est ni en périchorèse ni consubstantiel à la Vie au sens fort, tri(u)nitaire, mais co-naturel et con-génial de cette Vie*. La Vie est plus que le vivant. Le vivant ne parvient dans la vie que sur le Fond³⁵ en lui du parvenir originel par lequel la Vie parvient en soi. «*La non-réciprocité est le trait décisif de la nouvelle relation fondamentale que nous venons de découvrir, la relation intérieure et caché de l'homme à Dieu, plus exactement de Dieu à l'homme*»³⁶. Henry fait ici une distinction capitale entre un concept fort, naturant, et un concept faible, naturé, de l'auto-affection³⁷, qui marque la différence entre l'homme et la Vie phénoménologique absolue, car le concept fort ne convient qu'à Dieu, comme auto-donation et auto-révélation d'une affectivité transcendantale pathétique et ainsi d' «*un passage absolu*»³⁸. Aucun vivant ne s'est pas apporté soi-même dans cette condition de s'éprouver soi-même. «*La non-réciprocité désigne la génération immanente de notre vie finie dans la vie infinie de Dieu*»³⁹. Le Soi singulier s'auto-affecte en étant cette identité de l'affectant et de l'affecté, mais il n'a pas posé lui-même cette identité. «*Le Soi ne s'auto-affecte que pour autant que s'auto-affecte*

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 174.

³⁴ *Phénoménologie matérielle*, Paris, 2004², p. 177.

³⁵ «Le vivant ne s'est pas fondé lui-même, il a un Fond qui est la vie, mais ce Fond n'est pas différent de lui, il est l'auto-affection en laquelle il s'auto-affecte et à laquelle, de cette façon, il s'identifie», *Phénoménologie matérielle*, Paris, 2004², p. 177.

³⁶ *PC*, p. 44.

³⁷ *CMV*, p. 135.

³⁸ R. Kühn, *Le Passage Absolu. De l'affectivité comme la seule certitude possible*, p. 141-167 en *D&G*.

³⁹ *PC*, p. 46

en lui la Vie absolue»⁴⁰. Du coup ce Soi est déterminé essentiellement par la passivité à l'égard du procès éternel de l'auto-affection pure⁴¹ de la Vie qui l'engendre et ne cesse de l'engendrer, une passivité qui le met dès le Commencement à l'*accusatif passif*!, faisant de lui un Moi, et non un Je, et ainsi, passif vis-à-vis de soi-même⁴², «la passibilité d'une vie finie puisant sa possibilité dans l'Archi-passibilité de la vie infinie»⁴³. La Différence théologique exprime ici la Transcendance de l'Immanence Pure de la Vie par rapport à l'auto-affection de l'immanence de la vie du vivant dans laquelle il vit sa passivité.

6. Le Chiasme Originnaire

C'est ici que se découvre la raison pour laquelle le rapport de l'homme transcendantal à Dieu n'est pas un rapport direct, mais seulement *medié par et en le Verbe*, condition de tous les autres fils, car, si aucun vivant n'est possible que dans la Vie, il l'est dans l'Archi-Fils, et en lui uniquement, comme Ipséité essentielle impliquée en tout «s'éprouver soi-même» d'un Soi. Cette condition de s'éprouver pathétiquement soi-même, qui est l'essence de tout Soi concevable, aucun Soi ne la tient donc de lui-même mais seulement de la vie et de l'Ipséité originelle en laquelle elle s'éprouve dans le Soi du Premier Vivant. Être un Soi n'est possible que dans le Logos, de même que ma Chair n'est pas ma chair, mais la Chair du Christ⁴⁴. L'Archi-Fils précède tout Fils comme l'essence préexistante et préétablie sans laquelle et hors de laquelle ne saurait s'édifier quelque chose comme un Fils, comme un Soi vivant, comme ce Moi transcendantal que je suis. Premier-Né dans la Vie et Premier Vivant, l'Archi-Fils détient l'Ipséité essentielle en laquelle l'auto-affection de la vie parvient à l'effectivité, et c'est dans cette Ipséité seulement et à partir d'elle que tout autre Soi et ainsi tout Moi transcendantal vivant sera possible. Fils de Dieu, l'homme ne peut l'être donc qu'en tant que «Fils dans le Fils»⁴⁵. Dans le christianisme, la génération du Premier Soi Vivant dans l'auto-génération de la Vie est l'archétype de tout Soi vivant concevable et ainsi de l'homme. Je ne me suis apporté moi-même dans cette chair, mais j'ai été apporté en elle dans la venue en soi de la Vie révélée à Soi dans l'Ipséité du Premier Soi. C'est dans la chair de ce Premier Soi que j'ai pris chair, que je suis venu dans la condition d'un homme⁴⁶. C'est la façon dont la Vie absolue vient en soi dans une Archi-passibilité propre à l'auto-affection pathétique de tout «vivre» concevable, c'est l'Archi-pathos de

⁴⁰ *CMV*, p. 136. C'est elle, dans son auto-révélation, qui le donne à lui-même, c'est elle dans son étreinte pathétique qui lui donne de s'étreindre pathétiquement et d'être un Soi.

⁴¹ Auto-affection pure qui pour nous n'a rien du monstre métaphysique dont M. Richir accuse, *Fragments phénoménologiques sur le langage*, Millon, 2008, p. 11.

⁴² Non pas un attribut *métaphysique* posé par la pensée, mais une détermination constitutive; ce Soi s'exprime spontanément à l'accusatif. Un accusatif qui n'implique aucune accusation d'un moi par l'autre, mais résulte de sa génération, du don de la Vie.

⁴³ *Inc.*, p. 243.

⁴⁴ *Archi-christologie*, article cité, p. 127, en *E&R*.

⁴⁵ *CMV*, p. 141.

⁴⁶ Cf. l'article *La vérité de la gnose*, p. 131-145, en *E&R*.

cette Archi-chair qui se trouve présupposé en toute phénoménalisation de la vie et ainsi en tout vivant⁴⁷.

La relation de la Vie au vivant est donc une *relation originellement chiasmique*. Le Fils Originnaire, de même que tout Fils transcendantal, parvient à la vie en partage de la Vie par la Médiation du Verbe, qui est ici Chiasme Originnaire. Le vivant parvient de la Vie en s'appuyant sur le propre parvenir de la Vie en soi, en s'identifiant à elle en Chiasme, et seulement en Chiasme. Archi-intelligibilité est le Verbe de Vie en laquelle cette Archi-intelligibilité de la Vie s'accomplit, elle est la chair en laquelle le Verbe de Vie se fait identique à chacun des vivants que nous sommes les hommes⁴⁸. Immanence transcendante et Trans-passibilité intra-passible⁴⁹ à tout vivant, l'essence d'un Soi tel que le nôtre n'est possible que dans cette Ipséité du Verbe qui le précède, sans être apporté lui-même dans cette condition d'être ce Soi qu'il est sans pouvoir le faire⁵⁰. Naître à la vie, naître à soi-même⁵¹, venir dans la vie, venir de la vie, et à partir d'elle, de telle sorte que la vie n'est pas le point d'arrivée mais le point de départ de la naissance, c'est-à-dire venir à la vie à partir de cet auto-engendrement de la Vie absolue qu'est le Père. Comment cette naissance se produit-elle? C'est précisément à cette question décisive que vient de répondre la théorie de la génération du Premier Vivant, dans l'auto-génération de la Vie phénoménologique absolue. C'est uniquement parce que là où s'accomplit toute venue en soi et toute vie concevable de par la puissance de la Vie absolue qui s'apporte elle-même en soi, « *cette venue originnaire en soi-même s'accomplit dans le pathos originnaire de sa pure jouissance de soi – dans l'Archi-Pathos d'une Archi-Chair – que partout et nécessairement, partout où une vie viendra en soi, cette venue sera identiquement celle d'une chair, la venue en soi de cette chair dans l'Archi-Chair de la Vie* »⁵².

Aucun Soi n'est possible qui n'ait comme substance phénoménologique, comme sa chair, la substance phénoménologique et la chair de l'Archi-Fils. Le Christ n'est pas d'abord le médium *entre* l'homme et Dieu, il est d'abord le médium entre chaque Moi et lui-même, ce rapport à soi qui permet à chaque Moi d'être un moi, car tout Moi qui se rapporte à soi est dans un *accroissement de soi comme auto-affection* où il touche à soi dans sa chair phénoménologique vivante. Dans ma chair, je suis donné à moi-même, mais *je ne suis pas ma propre chair*, mais une chair vivante qui celle de l'Archi-Logos. « *Quelque chose comme une chair ne peut advenir et ne nous advient que du Verbe* »⁵³. La génération du vivant dans la Vie est celle de notre Soi transcendantal dans l'Archi-Soi de la Vie absolue,

⁴⁷ *Inc.*, p. 243.

⁴⁸ *Inc.*, p. 28.

⁴⁹ C'est la manière radicale pour nous de compréhension de la transpassibilité de Maldiney.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 128.

⁵¹ F.-D. Sebbah, *Naître à la Vie, naître à soi-même. À propos de la notion de naissance chez Michel Henry*, p. 95-116, en *D&G*.

⁵² *Inc.*, p. 174.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 27.

dans son Verbe, et, identiquement, celle de notre propre chair dans l'Archi-Chair du Verbe. Impossible de parvenir jusqu'à quelqu'un sinon à travers le Verbe-Christ, impossible de toucher une chair sinon à travers une Chair originelle, laquelle dans son Ipséité essentielle donne cette chair, donne à se sentir soi-même et de s'éprouver soi-même, lui donne d'être une chair. Le Moi n'est *ancré* (X) en lui-même que par la force de l'Ipséité essentielle qui, le donnant à lui-même, en le liant à lui-même dans son étreinte pathétique, a fait de lui ce Moi qu'il est à jamais.

En cette Archi-Ipséité de la Vie advient non seulement la possibilité de chaque vivant en tant que Soi, mais il y a encore ceci que, grâce à cette ipséité en laquelle il se rapporte à lui-même, touche à chaque point de son être, s'éprouve lui-même et jouit de soi, ce vivant n'est pas seulement un moi mais celui-ci, ce Moi irréductible à tout autre, éprouvant ce qu'il éprouve et sentant ce qu'il sent, à la différence de tout autre. Non pas parce que ce qu'il éprouve est différent de ce qu'éprouve tout autre ou parce que ce qu'il sent est différent de ce qui sent tout autre. Mais parce que c'est lui qui l'éprouve et qui le sent. Lui, irréductiblement différent au sein d'une seule et même vie, d'une seule et même Ipséité. Et cela parce que *«telle est l'essence de l'Archi-Ipséité dans la vie absolue que, donnant à tout ce à quoi elle se donne de s'éprouver soi-même, elle en fait, dans l'effectivité phénoménologique de ce «s'éprouver soi-même», un Soi absolument singulier et différent de tout autre»*⁵⁴.

Apodictiquement, personne (aucun Soi hypostatique) n'est possible sinon dans l'Ipséité qu'engendre la Vie absolue en s'éprouvant soi-même dans son auto-affection originelle. Être un Moi transcendantal vivant, un Individu, dans l'extrême originalité de la pensée chrétienne, c'est être dans une relation avec la Vie, une relation qui a lieu dans la Vie et qui procède d'elle, sans laquelle aucun «vivre» ne serait pas possible⁵⁵. L'intuition abyssale du christianisme marque l'Ipséité transcendantale comme condition de l'Individu aussi bien que la Vie, qui est le premier *principium individuationis* qui fonde toute Ipséité et ainsi tout Soi transcendantal. Comprendre l'Individu à partir de la co-appartenance originaire de la Vie et de l'Ipséité, dans cette connexion décisive, c'est de comprendre chaque Moi transcendantal à jamais *distinct et irremplaçable dans l'Archi-naissance de l'Ipséité qui est le Logos de Vie*, avant tout moi, avant tout individu. De surcroît, comme Celui qui donne cette vie, car avant de conduire les vivants à la Vie, il conduit la Vie jusqu'aux vivants⁵⁶. Aucune réciprocité donc entre ce deux termes, car cette réciprocité ne concerne que la relation d'intériorité de la Vie absolue et de l'Archi-Fils, dissymétrie qui marque ainsi l'écart infini qui sépare le Verbe-Christ des autres hommes. Mais seulement d'intériorité en union chiasmique. À la réversibilité de la Vie et de son Ipséité en leur intériorité réciproque s'oppose radicalement l'irréversibilité de la relation de

⁵⁴ Cf. l'article *Le Berger et ses brebis*, p. 165-177, en *E&R*.

⁵⁵ À voir l'article de L. Ucciani, *Le destin de l'individu n'est pas celui du monde*, p. 225-238 en *D&G*.

⁵⁶ *CMV*, p. 161. La génération de l'Archi-Fils dans l'auto-génération de la Vie absolue rend possible la génération de tout vivant concevable.

l'Archi-Fils à tous ce qui tiendront de Lui et de son Ipséité originelle la possibilité de leur Soi. Le Chiasme Originnaire fait ici toute la Différence théologique.

7. L'Oubli Originnaire

Pourquoi l'homme a perdu la notion de son essence et de sa condition véritable, «pourquoi les fils ne savent plus qu'ils sont les fils»⁵⁷ vient maintenant à comprendre en proposant *la Chute comme une Sortie du Chiasme*. A l'intérieur de ce procès de la vie se faisant Ipséité, Soi, l'occultation de la condition de Fils coïncide-t-elle (position que théologiquement on en trouve explicitement chez Maxime le Confesseur, par exemple⁵⁸) de façon paradoxale avec la genèse même de cette condition, car c'est dans la naissance du Moi que se tient la raison cachée pour laquelle ce Moi ne cesse d'oublier cette naissance, précisément, sa condition de Fils. Être ce Soi vivant *sans passer* par l'Arche triomphale, par le Chiasme de l'Archi-Ipséité en laquelle tout Soi est jeté en soi pour être ce vivant qu'il est à jamais, tel est le scandale (*i.e.* Chute originnaire) qui coïncide cependant, depuis, avec l'expérience la plus ordinaire.

«Tout pouvoir se heurte en lui-même à ce sur quoi et contre quoi il ne peut rien, à un non-pouvoir absolu»⁵⁹. Que chacun de ces pouvoirs soit à la disposition du Moi-Je «voilà ce à l'égard de quoi le Je n'a aucun pouvoir, ce qui lui est octroyé sans qu'il y soit pour rien... C'est l'impuissance absolue du Je à l'égard du fait qu'il se trouve en possession de ce pouvoir, en mesure de l'exercer»⁶⁰. Le Je n'est donné à lui-même que pour autant qu'il est un Moi, transcendantal, vivant, donné à lui-même dans l'auto-donation de la Vie absolue. *Le Pouvoir du Soi vivant est de se garder en Chiasme d'avec la Vie en reconnaissance de la Différence théologique*. Tout pouvoir dont il dispose est donné à l'ego dans le procès même par lequel il est engendré comme moi dans l'Ipséité de l'Archi-Fils. Il n'y a d'ego-corporel que celui d'un Fils-charnel, d'un Moi transcendantal vivant, mais l'ego n'est pas le double du moi, de même que le corps n'est pas le double de la chair qui le porte. Devenant de passif actif, mais sans l'agir intra-passible, en étant libre d'exercer chacun de ses pouvoirs, l'ego *s' imagine* qu'il possède ces pouvoirs, qu'ils sont les siens, en un sens radical, et ainsi il se considère aussi bien comme la Source et l'Origine de son être même. (La tromperie, le mensonge de la Genèse, chapitre 3 tient à proposer à Adam-Eve de *vivre comme Dieu*, donc de méconnaître la Différence entre la Vie Infinie et le vivant fini, décision qui aura comme conséquences l'ouverture des yeux, le *voir* de l'ek-stasis du Monde).

⁵⁷ *CMV*, p. 170.

⁵⁸ Il y a un rapprochement plus envers ta tradition théologique orientale, voire orthodoxe, de la phénoménologie henryenne. *Le Dieu, la chair et l'autre*, PUF, 2008, d'Emmanuel Falque le confirme car en restant dans le cadre de la tradition occidentale (d'Irénée à Duns Scotus) il n'arrive pas à assumer la radicalité de la démarche d'Henry, qu'ailleurs on la définit même comme critique du Monisme théologique.

⁵⁹ *Inc.*, p. 248.

⁶⁰ *CMV*, p. 173.

«Ainsi naît l'illusion transcendantale de l'ego, illusion par laquelle cet ego se prend pour le fondement de son être»⁶¹. Semblable illusion consiste justement dans l'oubli de la Vie qui en son Ipséité le donne à lui-même et du même coup lui donne tous ces pouvoirs et capacités, l'oubli donc de sa condition de Fils. La falsification consiste à faire de la donation à soi du Soi et de tous ces pouvoirs l'œuvre de cet ego lui-même. La première cause de cet oubli, c'est donc l'illusion transcendantale de l'ego qui vit l'hyper-pouvoir de la Vie, l'auto-génération en tant que l'auto-donation, comme le sien propre, alors que «livrée à elle-même, une vie finie est impossible. Précisément parce qu'elle ne porte pas en elle le pouvoir de vivre, notre vie ne peut vivre que dans la vie infinie qui ne cesse de lui donner la vie»⁶².

Or cette première cause renvoie déjà à la deuxième, car cette illusion n'est pas totalement illusoire en effet, dans sa part de «réalité» et de «vérité» qu'elle comporte. Seul le statut phénoménologique de la Vie absolue explique l'illusion transcendantale de l'ego; c'est uniquement parce que, invisible par nature, radicalement immanente et ne s'ex-posant jamais dans l'«au-dehors» du monde, cette Vie se retient tout entière en elle-même que l'ego l'ignore, lors même qu'elle exerce le pouvoir qu'elle lui donne et qu'il s'attribue. *Seule la Vie peut expliquer la «réalité» du péché.* Mais une autre conséquence se noue immédiatement: la dissimulation de cette Vie invisible dans l'ego ouvre tout grand l'espace du monde et le laisse libre devant lui et pour lui⁶³. Plus cachée se tient la Vie dans l'ego, plus ouvert, plus disponible le monde. La Sortie du Chiasme, l'Oubli Originnaire de la Vie, la Chute, le Péché, instaurent l'ek-sistence mondaine d'une vie oubliée. Le Monisme explique ici la permanence de L'Oubli. *Dé-lier le Chiasme instaure le dé-lire du Soi en ego d'existence.* L'ego s'y jette, se projette vers ce monde et ses choses, devenues l'objet unique de sa préoccupation, et ainsi, oublieux de son Moi, l'ego se soucie du monde. Une fois qu'il a perdu sa condition de Fils, l'ego ne porte de l'intérêt que *sur* ce qui se tient *hors* de lui. Le système dont l'ego constitue l'alpha et l'oméga, le système de l'égoïsme transcendantal veut dire ce Je Peux fondamental qui possède comme tel la capacité de se pro-pulser vers tous ces biens, de les acquérir, et à la limite, de s'identifier à eux et d'en jouir – désir qui n'est possible que comme et dans l'angoisse⁶⁴ et la folie⁶⁵ – dans un rapport qui revêt précisément la forme du Souci, d'une Vie en ruine, d'une Chair cor(ps-)rompue.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, p. 177.

⁶² *PC*, p. 105.

⁶³ Une double dissimulation. D'abord celle de la vie dans le monde. Et deuxièmement, surtout à titre de *dissolution*, celle de l'individualité de l'individu dans le mouvement de perte dans la vie impersonnelle, dans le romantisme. A voir *GP*.

⁶⁴ Et, quelle *folie!!!*, de l'angoisse jusqu'à l'obsession de soi par soi. A voir l'article de B. Forthomme, *La folie est-elle affective?*, en *D&G*, p. 79-94.

⁶⁵ Quelle serait-elle la *folie* de l'homme (*folie des folies, tout n'est que folie !*) si ce n'était pas le *je* manquant le *moi-pontifex* de la co-présence avec l'Absence (car *aveugle*) du *Tu?*, voir H. Maldiney, *Penser l'homme et la folie*, Millon, Grenoble, 1991, p. 145-186.

Ainsi s'opposent radicalement deux façons pour l'ego de se rapporter à soi, deux modes hétérogènes de ce rapport, «*le rapport à soi de l'ego dans le souci de soi*» et «*le rapport à soi de l'ego dans la vie*»⁶⁶, s'instaurant entre eux une relation d'exclusion réciproque. Parce que le Soi véritable qui rend ultimement possible cet ego ne paraît jamais sur le devant de la scène et se tient en deçà du spectacle, ce n'est pas de lui que l'ego se soucie. Impossibilité qui tient de la structure même du Souci se projetant dans cet «au-dehors» où aucun Soi réel ne se tient jamais. Plus l'ego se soucie de soi, plus il pense à lui-même, plus sa véritable essence lui échappe, plus il oublie sa condition de Fils. Telle est la situation cruciale d'où résulte la polémique passionnée dirigée par le christianisme contre le Souci, une critique qu'on ne peut comprendre que si on se réfère aux présuppositions fondamentales du christianisme concernant la Vérité. S'oppose ici, selon Henry, *l'homme du monde*, et *l'homme qui n'est pas du monde*, mais appartenant à la Vie, dans une opposition⁶⁷ qui ne tient pas d'abord à une différence de comportement (toujours sous le risque du monisme mensonger), mais aux structures auxquelles ils se réfèrent. D'où l'opposition, aussi, entre deux trésors, selon celui qu'on amasse dans le monde au lieu de l'édifier dans la vie.

L'oubli de soi de la Vie avec son corollaire, l'oubli de soi du Soi généré dans l'auto-génération de celle-ci, voilà ce qui explique en fin de compte l'oubli par l'homme de sa condition de Fils ; de cette façon «*l'oubli par l'homme de sa condition de Fils n'est pas un argument contre celle-ci mais sa conséquence et ainsi sa preuve*»⁶⁸. Cela explique encore ce fait non moins extraordinaire qu'en dépit de l'exercice constant du Je Peux, cet ego, ce Je n'en oublie pas moins constamment sa condition d'ego de même façon qu'il a oublié sa condition de Fils. Précisément, parce que l'homme a oublié sa condition de Fils, c'est sa propre condition de Soi qui lui échappe. Mais plus profond encore que l'oubli du rapport du Soi à lui-même est celui qui habite son rapport à la Vie. À l'antécédence de la Vie sur tout vivant, et ainsi, à l'antécédence du Premier Soi sur tout Soi particulier correspond l'oubli le plus radical. Dès là, venir pour de bon dans le monde, c'est s'y proposer comme un cadavre, *corps* réduit à son extériorité pure. *Le Monisme dû à l'Oubli reste la preuve du Double, de la Différence théologique, de même que, et surtout, celle du Chiasme Originnaire annulé.*

8. Le Chiasme d'Incarnation

Aucun Père véritable (la Vie) ne se donnant à voir dans le monde, la venue du Christ dans une Chair *habitant* le Monde, a pour but de rendre le Père manifeste aux hommes, et ainsi de les sauver, eux qui ont oublié ce Père et la Vie. Le Chiasme d'Incarnation est possible car le propre du Verbe-Chiasme est de prendre et de rendre chair déjà bien avant tout oubli (lui qui est aussi le seul à pouvoir être appelé Chiasme de la chair du Monde, on pense ici encore à saint Maxime le

⁶⁶ *CMV*, p. 181.

⁶⁷ «La relation entre le monde et notre propre vie s'y propose sous la forme d'une opposition radicale entre le visible et l'invisible», *PC*, p. 22.

⁶⁸ *CMV*, p. 189.

Confesseur avec sa théorie des *logoi*). Mais plus qu'une possibilité, le Chiasme d'Incarnation est le nécessaire transcendantal pour faire sortir le vivant de l'Oubli qui l'a fait sortir du Chiasme Originnaire. *L'Incarnation du Verbe est sa révélation, sa venue parmi nous*, son auto-révélation, dont l'œuvre est d'accomplir la révélation de Dieu⁶⁹. Proposer un salut, c'est rendre donc manifeste le Père, révéler la Vie oubliée jusqu'à la levée du corps (*i.e.* Résurrection) de la Chair assumé par le Verbe. La seule condition du salut serait le Verbe incarné, fait chair, le Christos, le Messie.

La théologie phénoménologique du Christ, concernant la question de son apparition, marque d'abord une thèse essentielle du christianisme, à savoir qu'«aucun homme n'est le fils d'un homme, et pas d'avantage d'une femme, mais seulement de Dieu». Car «la naissance ne consiste pas dans cette succession des vivants présupposant chacun la vie en lui, elle consiste dans la venue de chaque vivant à la vie à partir de la Vie elle-même»⁷⁰. Il n'y a de Fils qu'en tant que Fils de la Vie. Mais il est le seul à pouvoir le rappeler, car il est le Seul Fils qui peut encore porter ce Nom, car seulement lui est et demeure Chiasme en soi. C'est le Christ incarné qui définit avec une rigueur absolue sa relation d'intériorité phénoménologique réciproque, puisque le Fils ne se révèle que dans l'auto-révélation du Père, tandis que, l'auto-révélation du Père ne s'accomplit que dans et comme la révélation du Fils. Le rapport primordial Père-Fils n'est pas seulement ce rapport dont l'essence est constituée par la Vie, il n'est pas seulement ce rapport dont l'essence génère les termes, elle les génère encore comme intérieurs l'un à l'autre, de telle façon qu'ils co-appartient l'un à l'autre dans une co-appartenance plus forte que tout unité concevable, dans l'unité inconcevable de la Vie dont l'auto-engendrement ne fait qu'un avec l'engendrement de l'Engendré. Selon cette intériorité phénoménologique réciproque, le Fils est le pathos du Père comme le Père est le pathos du Fils, à titre de co-appartenance originelle⁷¹. «La réalité dont parle le Verbe de Vie, c'est la Vie elle-même dont il est l'auto-révélation de la réalité effective ; le Christ n'est rien d'autre que la connaissance que Dieu a de lui-même, l'auto-révélation de la Vie absolue»⁷². *Ipsissima verba*, «ce discours du Christ sur lui-même constitue l'Archi-christologie», «l'authentique Archi-christologie de la Vérité»⁷³. Ainsi la structure du témoignage que le Christ porte sur lui-même est triple: comme témoignage qui provient de l'Archi-Fils, qui porte sur lui l'Archi-Fils et dont la possibilité réside dans la condition de l'Archi-Fils. Et ainsi, rendre témoignage de la vérité, c'est la Vérité qui se rend témoignage à elle-même: celle d'être généré dans l'auto-génération de la Vie absolue comme le Premier Vivant en l'Ipséité essentielle de laquelle la vie s'auto-engendre éternellement. «C'est Celui qui l'a envoyé qui témoigne pour lui»⁷⁴.

⁶⁹ *Inc.*, p. 24.

⁷⁰ *CMV*, p. 100.

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, p. 113.

⁷² *PC*, p. 114.

⁷³ *Archi-christologie*, p. 114, 118, en *E&R*. Pas n'importe quelle christologie déjà, même philosophique, à voir Xavier Tilliette, *La christologie philosophique de Michel Henry*, p. 171-180 en *D&G*, mais précisément cette seule christologie à l'usage des guillemets.

⁷⁴ *PC*, p. 84.

Ce qu'il en est de la condition de Fils et ainsi de la naissance chiasmique dans la Vérité de la Vie, nous le demanderons au Christ lui-même, car c'est lui qui se donne comme «la Vérité de la Vie». Le discours que le Christ tient sur lui-même, comme le contenu essentiel du christianisme, ne vaut pas seulement pour le Christ mais concerne aussi bien tous les hommes dans la mesure où ce sont, eux aussi, de Fils. En fait des Fils, il n'y en a que dans la Vie, engendrés par elle. Tous les Fils sont Fils de la Vie et, pour autant qu'il n'y a qu'une seule Vie et que cette Vie est Dieu, ils sont tous les Fils de Dieu. «*C'est uniquement parce que la Vie a engendré en elle le Soi du Premier Vivant que dans cette Vie et dans l'Ipséité du Soi, où elle s'éprouve soi-même, sera désormais possible tout vivant concevable – en tant que Soi vivant*»⁷⁵.

Remarquable est le fait que c'est précisément en parlant de lui-même que le Premier-Né, l'Archi-Fils transcendantal, se révèle capable, en plaçant son Archinaissance dans la Vie au principe de toute naissance concevable, de conférer à celle-ci sa signification véritable. Une «*corrélation originaire entre la chair, la venue dans la chair et l'auto-révélation de la Vie absolue en son Verbe*»⁷⁶. Pour assurer le salut aux hommes, le Verbe Chiasme originaire prend la chair finie déchue du vivant qui a oublié la Vie, dans une seule hypostase, le Christ, qui est le deux à la fois. L'entre-deux est tout les deux (natures): le l'Archi-Soi du Fils Premier Né et la chair finie apparaissant visiblement comme corps dans le monde, assumée dans l'Ipséité divine par kénose dans l'économie divine. Le Chiasme d'Incarnation rappelle le Double de la manifestation dans sa propre union hypostatique, de même qu'il rappelle le Chiasme Originaire de la Différence théologique.

9. Réduction théologique et Chiasme baptismal

La seule possibilité pour l'homme de surmonter cet Oubli radical, possibilité qui ne signifie rien d'autre que le salut pour de rejoindre la Vie absolue de Dieu, la Vie éternelle est d'apercevoir enfin la Vie dans la seule Parole qui peut la révéler grâce et identique au Chiasme d'Incarnation. «*Si la Vérité de la Vie est irréductible à celle du monde*»⁷⁷, ce n'est plus la vie qu'il faut mettre en réduction, mais de réduire le monde pour reconduire la vie oubliée à l'Irréductible de Vie. C'est ici qu'éclate le caractère révolutionnaire du christianisme, sa totale originalité, car pour lui l'homme n'est pas un être-du-monde, ni au sens naturel, ni transcendantal. La réduction théologique⁷⁸, enfin une méthode au service du sujet phénoménologique, est ainsi le sens de l'a-cosmisme de la phénoménologie radicale d'Henry, le sens du renversement du monisme au non-intentionnel, la contre-réduction comme «saut» même du vivant dans la Vie absolue⁷⁹. Il s'agit de «croire» ce que le Christ dit sur lui-même, c'est-à-dire non à l'admettre comme «vrai» dans la vérité de la

⁷⁵ Cf. l'article *Archi-christologie*, p. 113-131, en *E&R*.

⁷⁶ *Inc.*, p. 189.

⁷⁷ *CMV*, p. 78.

⁷⁸ On essaye de radicaliser en perspective henryenne la «réduction théologique» déjà proposée par J.-Y. Lacoste, *La phénoménalité de Dieu*, Cerf, 2008, p. 28.

⁷⁹ Rolf Kühn, *Radicalité et passibilité*, Harmattan, 2003, p. 191-125.

pensée et ainsi du monde, mais à se le rendre «consubstantiel», tout en gardant la Différence théologique dans la Vérité de la Vie, dans sa chair phénoménologique et dans sa jouissance.

Ainsi le christianisme renverse, encore une fois, mais non pas d'une manière axiologique, mais comme une sorte d'exclusion des éléments qui font la conception moniste régnante. C'est une autre essence phénoménologique qui définit l'homme transcendantal chrétien et son cogito, une autre vérité, un autre mode de phénoménalisation qui constitue sa réalité substantielle, la chair phénoménologique qui est sa chair, et non pas le monde qui n'a aucune chair et où aucun vivre n'est possible. «*C'est ainsi que la condition humaine se trouve bouleversée au moment où elle ne reçoit plus son être de la lumière du monde en laquelle les hommes et les femmes se regardent, luttant pour leur prestige, mais de sa relation intérieure à Dieu et de la révélation en laquelle consiste cette relation nouvelle et fondamentale*»⁸⁰.

Dans cette substitution radicale «*d'une généalogie divine à la généalogie naturelle*»⁸¹, l'homme doit être compris à partir de sa naissance chiasmique dans la Vie absolue de Dieu lui-même, engendré dans l'auto-engendrement de cette Vie et ne puisant son essence qu'en elle, un homme semblable au Christ – il y a une «*affinité essentielle entre la création originelle de l'homme et l'Incarnation du Verbe*»⁸², *i.e.* le Chiasme même –, l'homme image de Dieu⁸³. Vivants, nous sommes des êtres de l'Invisible et nous ne sommes intelligibles que dans l'invisible et à partir de Lui, dans l'Archi-intelligibilité qui est celle de la Vie, de l'Invisible⁸⁴. C'est là ce qu'on appelle l'intuition décisive d'une phénoménologie radicale de la Vie, qui est celle du christianisme: comprendre l'homme à partir du Christ, compris lui-même à partir de Dieu, car «*la Vie a le même sens pour Dieu, pour le Christ et pour l'homme*»⁸⁵, tournant ainsi le dos à tout usage moniste de l'analogie. «*Ce que disait l'Incarnation du Verbe dans la condition d'un homme, c'était donc, en fin de compte, la génération transcendantale de tout Soi, charnel vivant dans ce Verbe, c'était la vérité transcendantale de l'homme*»⁸⁶.

«Co-héritiers» de la Vie, nous ne le sommes que dans l'Archi-Fils, et c'est en Lui et par Lui seulement que nous devenons nous-même Fils, les «enfants» adoptifs de la Vie. Les multiples fils (*i.e.* *multitude*) le sont dans le Fils et c'est la raison pour laquelle ils ne seront sauvés qu'en s'identifiant à ce Fils, lequel est identifié au Père au sein de leur intériorité réciproque. C'est cette double identification, la naissance éternelle du Fils et la naissance des fils dans le Fils, qui constitue le

⁸⁰ PC, p. 43.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, p. 55.

⁸² *Inc.*, p. 331.

⁸³ *CMV*, p. 127. Etant un vivant, une essence de l'homme différente de celle du Christ ou de Dieu apparaît comme impossible, dès que l'homme est compris comme Fils et très explicitement comme Fils de Dieu.

⁸⁴ *Inc.*, p. 125.

⁸⁵ *CMV*, p. 128.

⁸⁶ *Inc.*, p. 370.

fondement du salut chrétien, «*l'intériorité phénoménologique réciproque de tous les vivants dans le Soi unique de la Vie absolue, dans l'intériorité phénoménologique réciproque de ce Soi et de cette Vie, du Père et du Fils*»⁸⁷.

Il s'agit d'abord, pour l'homme perdu dans le monde, de *s'apercevoir* dans sa condition véritable, celle d'un *vivant qui ne tient cependant jamais de lui-même sa condition de vivant*. C'est ce qu'on propose d'appeler réduction théologique. Vivre cette passivité radicale d'un moi transcendantal vivant, donné à soi dans une vie qui ne se donne pas elle-même à soi, mais qui est donné à soi dans la donation à soi de la Vie absolue qui est celle de Dieu, c'est «*cette condition de l'homme comme Fils précisément qui permet son salut*»⁸⁸. «*Retrouver dans sa vie propre la Vie absolue, voilà qui n'est possible précisément que dans la vie elle-même et dans la Vérité qui lui appartient*»⁸⁹, non dans la venue en soi de sa vie à lui, laquelle est incapable de s'apporter en soi, mais dans la venue en soi de la Vie absolue, laquelle est seule susceptible de le faire, de s'apporter en soi et de se donner à soi dans la puissance et dans la jouissance d'une auto-donation et d'une auto-affection effective. Il n'y a de vivant qu'en tant que Fils, mais il n'y a de Fils que celui de cette Vie unique et véritable, Fils généré dans l'hyper-puissance de cette Vie absolue de Dieu.

Et pourtant la plupart des textes du Nouveau Testament ne l'entendent pas ainsi: Fils de Dieu, l'homme n'est pas, mais c'est ce qu'il doit «*devenir*»⁹⁰. Il ne l'est plus par l'Oubli, mais il a la possibilisation de le devenir, par revenir à Lui. Le devenir homme de Dieu (Chiasme d'Incarnation) fonde le devenir-Dieu de l'homme: une *déification* (Chiasme Originare) par salut (Chiasme baptismal-eucharistique, pré-eschatologique⁹¹, par réduction théologique); une possibilité du salut comme unité en chiasme de notre chair avec la chair du Christ, qui suppose préalablement «*que l'unité du Verbe et de la chair soit possible et se réalise d'abord là où le Verbe se fait chair, dans le Christ*»⁹².

Est Fils de Dieu, celui qui ne commet plus le péché, et dans cette mesure il ne se sépare plus de Dieu. *Il vit en Chiasme. Il vit le Chiasme, c'est le Chiasme même qui vit en lui*. Être né de Dieu et le garder en soi sans se séparer de lui et ainsi sans tomber dans le péché, c'est cette signification du concept de Fils de Dieu qui marque le salut de l'homme. Croire que Jésus est le Christ et que le Christ est consubstantiel au Père, c'est cela être Fils de Dieu, en ce sens nouveau. Une filiation d'adoption qui provient de quelque devenir radical, de la transformation de celui qui, dans son identification à la Vie, reçoit d'elle son salut. Deux thèses décisives affleurent ici. D'une part, l'idée que le devenir spirituel du Fils dans sa condition véritable de Fils

⁸⁷ *L'expérience d'autrui...*, p. 162, en *E&R*.

⁸⁸ *CMV*, p. 192.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 193.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 203.

⁹¹ Le Chiasme eschatologique, final, se passera enfin de tout obstacle ek-statique. Ce serait le Chiasme de déification, la face-à-Face sans aucun voile. Jusque là, il en reste encore le temps qui reste...

⁹² *Inc.*, p. 23.

de Dieu, d' «enfant de la promesse» promis à une Vie incorruptible, n'est possible que sur le fond de cette condition préalable de vivant né dans la Vie dans le mouvement même par lequel la vie vient en soi. C'est en tant que Fils et parce qu'il est tel, que le Fils perdu peut retrouver une condition qui était originellement la sienne, et que, pour cette raison même, il ne fait que retrouver. *Le devenir susceptible de lui ad-venir présuppose dans le vivant un Avant-absolu auquel ce devenir ne fait que re-venir*. Revenir à la Vie, re-naître, voilà la possibilité de principe toujours présente à celui qui est déjà né de la Vie. «*Une re-naissance est ainsi impliquée en toute naissance*»⁹³.

Une ultime difficulté se tient devant nous. Que la possibilité de re-naître à cette Vie absolue qu'il a oublié en se perdant dans le monde, subsiste en celui qui la tient de sa naissance transcendantale et la porte en lui-même comme ce qui ne cesse de le donner à lui-même, voilà qui n'est encore qu'une possibilité précisément. C'est l'Oubli que l'ego doit vaincre (réduction du monisme) s'il s'agit pour lui de re-naître (en tant que Soi en Chiasme). Cette seconde naissance n'advient qu'à la faveur d'une mutation s'accomplissant à l'intérieur de la vie elle-même, la mutation décisive par l'effet de laquelle la vie propre de l'ego se change en la Vie de l'absolu lui-même. Sans aucun savoir théorique, ne devant rien à la vérité du monde⁹⁴, «*l'auto-transformation de la vie voulue par elle, constituant dans un faire et qui la reconduit à son essence véritable, c'est l'éthique chrétienne. Faire la volonté du Père désigne le mode de vie dans lequel la vie du Soi s'accomplit de telle façon que ce qui s'accomplit en elle désormais, c'est la Vie absolue selon son essence et son réquisit propre*»⁹⁵. Pratiquant la miséricorde envers ses frères, et plus radicalement, vers ses ennemis – la seconde naissance consiste dans un *faire* dans la réalité invisible de l'action, œuvrant l'Amour qui commande la Vie –, l'éthique (ascético-mystique) chrétienne replace le vivant dans la Vie absolue qui lui a donné la vie dans sa condition de Fils, dans un agir qui accomplit son salut. «*Dans l'œuvre de miséricorde, et c'est en quoi elle est une œuvre, s'opère la transmutation décisive par laquelle le pouvoir de l'ego est reconduit à l'hyper-pouvoir de la Vie absolue en lequel il est donné à lui-même*»⁹⁶, et ainsi c'est n'est plus moi qui agis, c'est l'Archi-Fils qui agit en moi. «*Seule l'œuvre de la miséricorde pratique l'oubli de soi en lequel, tout intérêt pour le Soi étant écarté et jusqu'à l'idée de ce que nous appelons un soi ou un moi, aucun obstacle ne s'oppose plus au déferlement de la vie dans ce Soi reconduit à son essence originelle*»⁹⁷. Oublieux de son ego dans l'agir miséricordieux, il n'est plus rien d'autre en ce nouvel agir que sa donation à lui-même, Soi dans l'Archi-Donation chiasmique de la Vie absolue et dans son Archi-Ipsité.

⁹³ CMV, p. 207.

⁹⁴ S'il y a une *vérité de la gnose*, c'est que le rapport de l'homme à Dieu ne passe pas par le monde, cf. l'article d'Henry, *La Vérité de la Gnose*, p. 131-145, en *E&R*.

⁹⁵ CMV, p. 209.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 213.

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 214.

Une éthique qui n'est que la façon dont il convient de vivre ce lien⁹⁸ qui est le christianisme comme la «religio» en laquelle l'homme est destiné à être ce «*vivant généré dans l'auto-génération de la Vie absolue, ne vivant que de celle-ci, ne pouvant accomplir sa propre essence que dans l'essence de cette Vie absolue*»⁹⁹. Mais accomplir cette essence, c'est une pratique, et précisément, à la différence de toutes philosophies et de toutes religions, le christianisme est avant tout une pratique¹⁰⁰, la praxis de ceux qui, s'éprouvant eux-mêmes dans l'épreuve de soi de la Vie infinie et dans son amour éternel, s'aiment eux-mêmes d'un amour infini et éternel, s'aimant eux-mêmes en tant qu'ils sont des Fils et s'éprouvent comme tels. «*Dans la pratique du Commandement d'amour, c'est la Vie absolue qui donne le Fils à lui-même en se donnant à soi qui agit, de telle façon que, dans cette pratique, c'est Dieu lui-même qui s'auto-révèle, qui s'aime lui-même de son amour infini*»¹⁰¹.

mercredi, le 13 août 2008,
en la fête de la translation des reliques de saint Maxime le Confesseur

⁹⁸ Cf. l'article de M. Henry, *Ethique et religion dans une phénoménologie de la vie*, p. 53-67, en *E&R*.

⁹⁹ *CMV*, p. 233.

¹⁰⁰ M. Henry, *Auto-donation. Entretiens et conférences*, p. 139.

¹⁰¹ *CMV*, p. 237.

THE CONCEPT OF EMPATHY IN PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

MARIA DIACONESCU¹

ABSTRACT. The present study explores the evolution of empathy in philosophy and professional practice of psychotherapy, counselling and social work, which are by extension hermeneutics applied to interpersonal relationships. The crucial part of this evolution is the concept of *as if*, the distinction between *you* and *me* in the experience of empathy. A contemporary understanding of *as if* requires that we differentiate empathy from empathetic identification, projection, and sympathy. In Greek philosophy these distinctions are not perceived, and they remain largely unrecognized in contemporary researches in the fields of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), psychology, and philosophy. The *as if*, however, is clearly present in both Carl Rogers' client-centred psychotherapy, which subsequently evolved into person-centred psychotherapy, and the phenomenology of empathy as elaborated by Edith Stein. It is also important to establish a more precise understanding of *here and now* in relationship and dialogue with the other who provides us with the experience with which we empathize. With this enhanced understanding in psychotherapy, counselling and social work, we take leave of the comfortable episteme of knowledge and we enter the fluid and complex episteme of communication.

Keywords: empathy, as if, here and now, primordial and non primordial, empathic identification, projection, sympathy, episteme of communication, otherness.

If hermeneutics is the story behind the word or the narration that sustains the meaning of the word and confers its connotation², then **psychotherapy, counseling and social work** are, by extension, hermeneutics applied to interpersonal relationships. Hermeneutics employs the following terms: *text*, *subtext*, and *context*, whereas in psychotherapy, counselling and social work the preferred terms are *content* and *relation*, *verbal* and *extra-verbal* in the context of the professional practice of interpersonal communication. In daily life, at a certain moment in a relationship we may feel joy and fulfilment and everything seems to converge. In another context we may experience disorientation and sense that something is not

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² Aurel Codoban (2004), *Semn și interpretare, O introducere postmodernă în semiologie și hermeneutică*, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, p.78.

right in the relationship. What we think contradicts what we say; it disappears either by what we do or what we feel in a given moment or it fades away beside the context. Living with seeming contradiction, uncertainty, or astonishment, and responding with humour, irony or cynicism to these enigmatic experiences draws my attention to the fact that we are confronting the shifting sands of inevitable pragmatic paradoxes. In psychotherapy and social work these paradoxes are called *interpersonal conflicts, ethical dilemmas* or *discrepancies*.

In the following study I intend to explore the meanings of the concept of empathy and the evolution of these meanings. The most fully developed interpretations supporting the concept of empathy come from Carl Rogers, “the father of empathy”. In terms of philosophy Rogers can be considered the initiator of a positive hermeneutics in psychotherapy: *client-centred psychotherapy*, which subsequently evolved into *person-centred psychotherapy*.

Empathy, as conceived by Rogers³, means that I feel the inner world of the other with all his/her personal feelings and meanings “*as if*” these were my own world of feelings and meanings without losing the quality of the “*as if*”. Empathy means that I feel the anger, fear or confusion of the other “*as if*” these were my own feelings without allowing my own anger, fear or confusion to interfere. However, if I “put myself into another's shoes” in order to see how I do in fact feel “in another’s shoes”, it means that I attribute my own feelings and meanings to the other. This is not empathy; this is projection⁴. In its conscious variant this projection is expressed in the first person as “I feel...” or “for me it means... “. This kind of conscious projection has the potential to generate sympathy and solidarity because I assume responsibility for my own feelings and meanings without projecting or inserting them unconsciously into the “another’s shoes”. To allow myself to walk in “the another’s shoes” or to fall off my own chair⁵ when the other is fidgeting or is moving erratically on his/ her own chair, suggests that I have lost the quality of “*as if*”. This is not empathy; this is empathic identification.

While researching the course of empathy in **philosophy**, four terms have held my attention: 1. In the contemporary Greek *empathia* conveys the sense of reacting emotionally in an exaggerated way, of “being affected” or “being moved”⁶,

³ Kirschenbaum H., Henderson V.L. eds., (1989), *The Carl Rogers Reader*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, New-York, p. 226-229: there are different levels of empathic understanding, positive regard/ unconditional acceptance, and authenticity. Only the presence has the quality of the “to be or not to be”: to be or not to be in psychological contact, in relation.

⁴ As explained further in my paper.

⁵ Richard Bandler and John Grinder (1979), *frogs into PRINCES - Neuro Linguistic Programming*, ed. Steve Andreas, Real People Press, Moab, Utah, p.81: If you believe that you have to have empathy, that means that you have to have the same feelings that your client does in order to function well as a therapist.

⁶ Bailly, 1950, *Dictionnaire Grec Francais*, Hachette, Paris: ἐμπαθία.

as opposed to *apatheia* which means “being unaffected” or “being unmoved”⁷ in Greek philosophy. This sense of empathy, of *empathic identification*, is similar to the meaning in Greek philosophy⁸ and the present NLP⁹ meaning. 2. *Maieutike*¹⁰, “the art of craft of the midwife” which views the discovering of truth and the method used by Socrates in his philosophical discussions with his disciples, 3. *Einfühlung*, “*empathy*” in English, derived from the German language and phenomenology, which appears in various places in the work of Edmund Husserl, and holds a central place in Stein’s *phenomenology of givenness*, 4. *Intuition*, as described by Henri Bergson.

*Maieutike*¹¹ or „art of the midwife” in the Socratic dialogues and *empathy* in the helping relationship both deliver truth from within the other person and facilitate self-understanding and knowledge. No man can know himself since it is impossible to look at oneself from without.¹² Very close to the sacredness of heart¹³, the genuine or authentic, the sincerity of feelings and thoughts become a touchstone both in the art of *maieutike* and in the art of empathic understanding and communication. Otherwise the personal and professional relationships become mere business relationship, mercantile, marketing, social or political activism: we conquer, sell, disseminate, persuade. This is pure sophistry. *Maieutike* and empathy can both develop into a state of being, an art, if they are carefully nurtured and cared for as an attitude rather than being conceived as skill and exercised as technique.

Socrates equated *self-knowledge* with discovery of truth¹⁴: remembering through dialogue what already exists within each of us. *Maieutike*, the attitude that is basically epistemic, takes care in a dialogue to ensure that fruits of authentic thoughts should be revealed and at the same time it limits or dissolves idle fancies and vain imaginings. After more than 2000 years, we can revise and expand our understanding of self-knowledge to mean discovering the potentialities, bearing in mind the infinite potentialities and inestimable pearls of wisdom latent within each of us, partners in dialogue and relationship. Empathy, like *maieutike*, takes care and nurtures the efforts of intuitive search for knowledge of potentialities that are concealed in every human experience no matter how profane it might be. Like

⁷ Francis E. Peters (1993), *Termenii filosofiei grecești*, ed. Humanitas, Bucuresti.

⁸ Plutarh: 30D, Bailly, 1950, *Dictionnaire Grec Francais*, Hachette, Paris: ἐμπαθεία, translation in Romanian language: Alexandru Baumgarten; *mimesis* of Platon: Francis E Peters, 1993, *Termenii filosofiei grecești*, p.170; Rockwell Geoffrey, 2003, *Defining Dialogue. The Orality of Dialogue: From Socrates to the Internet*.

⁹ Note 5

¹⁰ Chețan Octavian, Radu Sommer coord. (1978), *Dicționar de filosofie*, ed. Politică, Buc., 1978, p.430; Platon, opere VI (1989), Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, Buc. 1989, *Theaitetos*, p.181-311: pf.151a, 161e;

¹¹ Truax, C. B., Carkhoff R. R. (1967), *Towards effective counseling and psychotherapy: Training and Practice*, Aldine Pub. Co., Chicago, p. 329.

¹² Ives Colby, H. (1974), *Portals To Freedom*, George Ronald, Oxford, p.34, from sayings of Abdu'l-Baha.

¹³ *Voice of intuition* in Bergson, *intuitive* in C.G Jung, *intuïton* in Nossrat Peseschkian, *daimon* in Socrate.

¹⁴ Meaning, significance, profound and authentic sense.

maieutike, empathic understanding, if it maintains its limits and is not seduced by or dissolved into the other's world, possesses the gift to dissolve prejudices and clichés, currently known in social work as “barriers of communication” and in psychoanalysis as “projective identification”.

The meaning of *empathy* in phenomenology, mainly in the explicit **phenomenology of empathy** elaborated by Stein, seems to approximate the modern meaning of empathy in Rogers' work. Stein's phenomenology of empathy is a phenomenology of *givenness*, an offering as a gift: the otherness and the experience of otherness are given to us in a direct, *here and now*, concrete way. If we are lucky or trustworthy, even the personal experiences lived by others who offer them to us are given to us as a gift. Stein researches the phenomenon of givenness, particularly the present relationships that sustain it, starting with the problem, which is basic to philosophy: the perception of others and their personal experience¹⁵. Since empathy has to do with the understanding of what is *here and now*, Stein begins her investigation with the condition “if” and the question¹⁶: in what sense does this understanding *has* the primordial character of our present experiences? This question invites us to the next one: in what sense does this understanding *relate to* the primordial character of our present experiences? That is, how empathic understandings affect us who empathize with the other?

Actual and *one's own* are the meanings of *primordial character* that I use throughout this work. Primordial, as I understand it, answers the question: What am I doing *now*? What am I doing *now* in an experience, which is remembered or previous to the present moment of time, right in this moment, or in a future moment, anticipated or imagined. Certainly, that I shall experience sometime in the future is what could be actual; the primordial nature of these experiences is futuristic, that is, potential or virtual. For example, if I have lived or live experiences of addictive, erotic, mystical nature, etc., these experiences have a past primordial nature, respectively a present one. If I read something about these experiences, then the experience of reading is a primordial in nature. If I hear an account or report about these experiences, then the experience of listening to that report has a primordial character. If I see a film, then the experience of seeing the film assumes primordial character. The experiences about which I read, hear, see or those that are happening in my presence have non-primordial character for me because they are neither my actual nor my own personal experiences.

Stein makes it very clear that all our own acts and experiences happening *now* have a primordial character, and she compares empathy to the primordial character of representational acts of remembering and fantasizing, acts in which

¹⁵ Edith Stein (1917/ 1989), *On The Problem of Empathy*, translated by Waltraut Stein, PhD., ICS Pub., Washington, D.C., p.1, §§ V,: perceiving of foreign subjects and their experience.

¹⁶ Stein, *idem*, §§ 6: there is still the question of whether empathy has the primordality of our own experience.

our own experiences are given to us, offered as gifts, in non primordial manner. She demonstrates that empathy, although it does not have the character of an external perception, is a kind of perception because it has the primordial character of a presentational act¹⁷. Stein differentiates between the primordial nature of our own experience, the primordial with regard to the contents of this experience, as well as the primordial of the subject who lives this experience; although she does not dedicate enough time to clarify the differences. As I understand it, the primordial of our own experience pertains to the *what I am doing, the event that I experience*; the primordial of the content of this experience pertains to *the meanings and feelings that I experience or live in this experience*; and the primordial of the subject pertains to *the present ego who actually lives the experience*.

Between the acts of empathy and the acts in which our own experiences are given in a non-primordial manner there is a well-known analogy¹⁸. For instance, remembering a personal joy is primordial as representational act: remembering happens *right now and here*. Certainly, in this representational act of remembering I can *live again, live in* the joy that I have lived at some time in the past experience, but the content of the joy is not primordial and corporal or bodily present in the act of remembering. The present non-primordial indicates a past primordial or a *now* which occurred previous to the present moment of time. I, the subject of this act of remembering, can look back on the joy that I experienced in the past. That joy becomes an intentional object for the present ego that is the subject of the present act of remembering. The present ego *is with and within* the past ego. Thus, the present ego and the past ego appear as subject and object in relation to each other. Although an awareness of identity exists between them, the present ego and the past ego do not coincide¹⁹. Remembering always remains a representation of a non-primordial subject who is distinct from the subject who is actually remembering. The contrast is initially obvious when the past experience suddenly turns up in the memory and the primordial subject relates to this experience as to an object. The contrast is obvious also when making the present – past delineation and returning from *the living in* the joy felt in the past; the present ego relates again to the remembered experience as to an object. Stein demonstrates that this distinction is maintained even when the primordial subject *lives* in the remembered experience, and with this explanation she differentiates her ideas from the previous theories describing empathy.

With representational acts of fantasizing, the problem of empathy seems to become very complicated because Stein introduces into her theory the concepts of neutralization and positioning from the phenomenology of Husserl. The existing

¹⁷ Perception is a presentational act, not a representational one.

¹⁸ Stein, *idem*, §§ 7-8.

¹⁹ I am the same and always other, that is changing.

accounts connecting remembering and fantasizing, and the act of empathy and fantasizing are not the purpose of this study. They are worthy of in-depth examination in another study. Without immediate verification of the understanding gained, every act of empathy or intuition risks becoming pure fantasy. The only way in which we can verify the empathic understanding that we have gained is by verbalising this understanding, *here and now*, in relationship and dialogue with the other who gives us the experience with which we empathise. In this way we allow the other to immediately point out to us the errors of understanding that we inevitably commit. It is no accident that verbalising our understanding is so important in the Rogers' psychotherapy. With this aspect or attribute we remove ourselves from the comfortable episteme of knowledge, and we enter into the fluid and uncomfortable episteme of communication.

Returning to Stein... she describes the empathy associated with acts of remembering as a kind of perception that is a primordial presentational act and she distinguishes it as present experience and non primordial regarding its content²⁰. Husserl simply calls it *apperception by apresentation*²¹, but Stein really describes it, and in so doing, she manages to by-pass the linguistic carcass of phenomenology. The contrast between the *I* who empathises and *the other, the you* who gives me the living experience with which I empathise as a gift - implicit in the *as if* of Rogers - is the key to understanding Steins' concept of empathy. As we have already seen, *as if* is present in the psychotherapy of Rogers²² as well. Unfortunately, this contrast has remained almost unobserved and insufficiently clarified in the majority of research in psychology and philosophy²³. *As if* is already present in Husserl as an ego that coexists *now* in *there, as if I were there...* my primordial ego constitutes the other²⁴. *As if I were "there"* in the other person's position implies very clearly that Husserl maintains the positioning of myself "here". Jean-François Lyotard²⁵ attracts attention with transcendental solipsism in Husserl as well as on the fact that it tends towards understanding of the other even if Husserl did not resolve this problem in his researches. Lyotard says that *empathy* in Husserl's work, innovates a relationship of reciprocity in which the transcendental concrete subject discovers himself/ herself with surprise as an *other* while he/ she is *another* for his/her fellow human being. That is, *as if I perceived my fellow human being as an object and Husserl wonders how it is that I perceive him/ her as an alter ego.*

²⁰ Stein, *idem*, §§10-11.

²¹ Edmund Husserl (1994), *Meditații Carteziene, O introducere în fenomenologie*, ed. Humanitas, p.145,155.

²² 40 years after Stein's PhD thesis on the problem of empathy published in 1917.

²³ Space and time do not permit me to present them in this study.

²⁴ Husserl, *idem*, p.155, 159.

²⁵ Jean-François Lyotard, (1997), *Fenomenologia*, Editura Humanitas, 1997, p.47, 75.

After these clarifications, let us investigate further how Stein describes empathy compared to acts of remembering²⁶. In the *first stage*, when the experience of the other suddenly appears before me, this experience seems like an object to me. For instance, the pain, which I read in the face of the other person I initially perceive as an external object. *Second stage*: when I explore in depth what this pain implies or means, *I inquire into its implied tendencies*. That is, I make the effort to get closer to the other's state²⁷ as I do when something is given to me as a present from a full heart. When I receive the presence and the pain of the other as a sincere gift, the content of the experience with which I empathise pulls me inside and my perspective changes: *the content, having pulled me into it, is no longer really an object*. I do not perceive the other person's pain as an external object. In this situation, I am no longer orientated towards the content, to the other's pain as an object, but towards the object of the pain and the subject living the pain: *I am with the subject of the content in the original subject's place*. I look from inside this pain and *alongside* the subject who has given me his/ her experience. *Stage three*: only after successfully executed clarification, does the content again face me as an object.

Something similar happens with remembering, with the major difference being that the subject with whom we empathise is *another* than the subject of the acts of empathy who empathises. Stein makes it very clear that the two subjects are not united by an awareness of identity as are present, past and future subjects in the acts of remembering, anticipating, fantasizing of our own experiences²⁸. While I *live in* the other person's joy, Stein continues, I do not feel primordial joy. Joy of life, which I feel in empathy, does not come from my ego, nor does it have the character of the past primordial as in the joy I remember, nor is it pure fantasy without actual life. The *other* subject is primordial although I do not experience him/ her as primordial. In my non-primordial experience, says Stein, I feel, *as if* I were led by a primordial one not experienced by me but still there, manifesting itself in my non-primordial experience.

Stein further analyses empathy by bringing into the discussion philosophical theories and she describes the way in which it is experienced and understood the other consciousness. The description of empathy as *inner participation* in Theodor Lipps' theory is without a doubt equivalent to the description of the highest level of empathy in Stein's theory²⁹, that is, step 2. Here, in this second step, we are *with* the subject who is *the other*, and we are orientated *towards* the object of his or her experience. The fact that the subject of remembering, anticipation and empathy is not an object in step 2 of these acts and experiences it is in accord with Stein concepts. However, she does not agree with Lipps when he maintains that there is a

²⁶ Stein, *idem*, §§ 10 și 12.

²⁷ Stein, *idem*, §§ 10, try to bring another's mood to clear givenness to myself.

²⁸ Stein, *idem*, §§ 10.

²⁹ Stein, *idem*, §§ 12, 13.

complete coincidence with the remembered ego, the anticipated, fantasized or empathized ego and the premise that this ego would become one with the present subject³⁰. Stein asserts that Lipps confuses step 2 *living in* or *towards* with the transition from non-primordial to primordial experience. There is a difference between non-primordial joy (npj) - I live now in the joy which I have lived sometimes in the past - and primordial joy (pj). - I am happy now because the joy I have lived sometimes in the past. Something comparable happens with empathy only that instead of the remembered ego, it is *the other*. I am happy for the joy of *the other*, or for the joyful news the other has brought to me, or for the other as a person. But in this situation we are not dealing with empathic understanding of joy. I can take pleasure in somebody else's joy without empathically understanding this person's joy and it is not necessary to take pleasure in the other's joy in order to understand empathically the other's joy. Stein agrees with Lipps when he maintains that a primordial experience can be added to an empathic experience, but she does not agree with him when he maintains that empathic experience, in order to become full or positive, is conditioned by this addition. Consequently, the fact that "something in me" would oppose the empathy in order to become primordial experience, that is, negative empathy in Lipps' theory, is unfounded given Stein's clarification of the contrast implicit in *as if*.

Lipps considers that empathy to be complete if the distinction between the *other* and *me* disappears, exactly what Stein does **not** recognize as empathy. She states that Lipps' error lies in describing empathy as the sentiment of unity, *feeling of oneness*³¹; that is the confusion regarding forgetting myself, through which I can abandon myself to any object, or lose myself or my ego in the object. Strictly speaking, says Stein, empathy is not a feeling of oneness. She further describes the sentiment of unity in relation to empathy. Although it is possible that the same event makes us rejoice without exactly the same meaning of joy for each of us, it is also possible to feel my own joy while empathically understanding the joy of the others and to see it in the same way. Empathically I attain the parts of joy which are obstructed in my own joy, which in turn awakens my own joy, and only now do we have a complete coincidence of what is empathised³². Not by the sentiment of unity, says Stein, but through our acts of empathizing with others, do we experience others: that is, the feeling of oneness and the richness of our own experience becomes possible through empathy.

In the work of Peter Nilsson, the most recent philosophical work on empathy³³ that I have accessed, the concept of primordial character of the experience and the

³⁰ The primordial subject who experience the *actual and own* acts of remembering, anticipation or empathy.

³¹ Stein, *idem*, §§ 17-18.

³² Stein, *idem*, §§ 130: through empathy what is "sleeping" in us is developed.

³³ Peter Nilsson (2003), *Empathy and Emotions. On The Notion of Empathy as Emotional Sharing*, Umea Studies in Philosophy 7, Gunnar Andersson, Ingvar Johansson and Sten Lindstrom eds., Department of Philosophy and Linguistic, Umea University, Sweden, p. 84, 86.

contrast implied in *as if* from Stein's analysis of empathy remains vague. Under these conditions, there is little wonder that Nilsson understands empathy analysed by Stein as representational act, which, as we have already seen, is not at all in her thought or intention. What misleads Nilsson is the fact that Stein, in describing empathy, uses the analogy of representational acts, mainly the analogy of the acts of remembering. Nilsson omits the facts that *analogy* means *as if in*. As if in acts of remembering, acts of empathy unfold in 3 steps. The fact that in step 3, *the object of pain* from step 2 becomes again *pain as an object*, an object of its own acts of representation or reflection, does not mean that acts of empathy are acts of representation. Nilsson mentions the statement made by Stein, that in concrete situations people do not always pass through all 3 levels of empathy; rather, they might stop at one of the lower levels; that means 1 or 3. Consequently, it is no surprising that for some people empathy means predominantly perception, that is, step 1, while for others it is predominantly representation, that is, step 3, and for still others a mixture of perception and representation.

What stops people from moving towards the highest level of empathy (step 2)? Perhaps it is the fear of dissolution of ego, or of *empathic identification*³⁴, or the fear of losing the quality of *as if* which is completely missing in Lipps' understanding of empathy. As we have already seen this loss means to allow yourself to melt into "other's shoes" or to fall off your own chair when the other is fidgeting on his/ her own chair³⁵, in other words to continuously see the world with the eyes of the other. The fear of changing - that the joy or pain of the other could awaken the joy or the pain dormant within you - is yet another obstacle in reaching step 2 of empathy. That is exactly the primordial experience about which Stein and Lipps speak, one that could be added to the non-primordial experience. It is the fear of what hermeneutics in a philosophical sense calls *understanding that changes your life*. It is the fear of what Fritz Riemann calls "changing when the otherness of the partner becomes difficult to accept". Stein and Lipps concur when they describe the obstacle in reaching the highest level of empathy as a contagion, also called transference of feeling or imitation: a child cries when it sees another child crying, we look for pleasant company in order to lift our own spirits, etc.

Stein uses the term *empathic projection*³⁶ to describe and analyse empathic acts by which otherness³⁷ is constituted in our own consciousness. This term has created confusion in much of the research in psychology and it has been the source of interminable controversy and criticism of the way in which philosophy

³⁴ In its extreme form, fear of intimate or close relationship, is described by Fritz Riemann (1961/2005), *Formele fundamentale ale angostei*, Ed. Trei, Buc., p.24-69: as a consequence, self-determination and delimitation of ego are excessively and one-sided valued.

³⁵ Riemann puts the melting ego in connection with the fear to be yourself, p.70-121

³⁶ Stein, *idem*, §§ 69, 79, 80, 81, 88, 93, 95: projecting ourselves into/ empathically project myself into.

³⁷ Stein, *idem*, §§ 122: as my own person is constituted in primordial spiritual acts, so the foreign person is constituted in empathically experienced acts.

conceives empathy. In both psychology and psychotherapy *projection* is known as a defensive mechanism of the ego. „To see the straw in the eye of the other person without seeing the log in your own eyes” is an excellent description of projection³⁸. Projection of your own needs and feelings onto another person, to put yourself in another’s shoes in order to see how you feel there, undermines the efforts of empathic understanding. The meaning of projection in psychotherapy is also found in phenomenology. In psychotherapy³⁹ projection has the same meaning described by Stein in such terms as: surrogate, attribution by association and analogy. If we place ourselves in somebody else’s ego, says Stein, and we obliterate this ego or crush it while we surround ourselves with the situation of the ego which we replace, we create one of those so-called “own” experience. Then, if we lease to the replaced ego his/ her own place, and we attribute to him/her our “own” experience we acquire the so-called knowledge of his or her experience. Stein calls this process, which compensates for the failure of empathy, surrogate, replacement or fake empathy, fiction or attribution.

As far as sympathetic feelings are concerned, Stein notes that for Max Scheler there is no difference between sympathy and empathy⁴⁰. As Stein describes empathy - *living in* - it is a non-primordial experience that anticipates a primordial experience, while sympathy - *living with* - is a primordial act⁴¹. In Stein’s theory empathy is primordial as a present experience, and non-primordial as content: for *me* the experience with which I empathise is non-primordial. Only the acts of empathy are *actual and my own*. The experience with which I empathise is *actual and owned* just by the person with whom I empathise. Stein states that it is not necessary that the joy with which I empathise and towards which I have sympathetic feelings be similar in content. With regards to quality, they are certainly not similar because one is non-primordial and the other is primordial. Experience with which I empathise is not an actual and own or personal experience; in this sense for *me* it is “unreal” or “ghost-like” and I live it *as if* it were real for *me*. Through empathy I recognise and accept the primordial character of *you* and *your* experience, the *otherness* and of its experiences, as I recognise and accept the primordial character of *myself* and of the experiences I live.

³⁸ Nossrat Peseschkian (1979/ 2005), *Povești orientale ca instrumente de psihoterapie/ Oriental Stories as Tools in Psychotherapy*, UT Press, Cluj, p.53.

³⁹ Paragraph 3 of this paper.

⁴⁰ Stein, *idem*, p. 122, n. 27: notes regarding Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, 1913: Scheler interprets the understanding of in- (or, as he says, after-) feeling (empathy) and fellow feeling in the same way. Stein, p. xiv: Scheler considered Stein’s analysis so pertinent that he referred to it three times in the second edition of his work *The Nature of Sympathy*, 1923.

⁴¹ Stein, *idem*, §§ 14

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LA METAPHORE: ECART ET SUBSTITUTION

MARIA GYEMANT¹

ABSTRACT. The purpose of this paper is to argue that there is a strict connection between the negativity of language such as it was exposed by Ferdinand de Saussure and the possibility of the metaphor. We will try to reverse the common point of view that situates the metaphor inside an established language as one of its figures by showing that it is not language that generates the metaphor but the metaphor that generates language. Following in the definition of the metaphor the guiding lines of two crucial linguistic phenomena, deviation and substitution, we will prove that all language that respects the condition of its negativity is originally metaphorical.

Keywords: language, metaphor, deviation, substitution, linguistic sign, negativity

Il y a deux façons de définir la métaphore: soit par rapport aux autres figures de style, à l'intérieur du domaine de la stylistique ou de la rhétorique, soit par rapport au langage courant. Une définition qui met la métaphore en relation avec les autres figures de style serait une définition classique qui indiquerait le genre et la différence spécifique. Selon une telle définition, la métaphore est, par exemple, une comparaison dont les deux termes sont unis en un seul. Une telle définition peut nous donner une idée de ce qu'est la métaphore à l'intérieur d'un langage déjà connue, mais ne jette aucune lumière sur la possibilité d'existence de la métaphore, ni sur sa relation avec le tout du langage. Ce deuxième type de définition, qui met la métaphore en relation avec le langage en général, constitue la question que je me propose d'aborder dans la première partie de mon texte.

La plupart des définitions linguistiques de la métaphore tournent autour de deux termes essentiels: écart et substitution. Prenons comme exemple l'énoncé métaphorique suivant:

Paul a pris racine dans le jardin.

Pour mettre en évidence les deux perspectives, celle de l'écart par rapport à une norme et celle de la substitution dans un même contexte de deux mots dont un est métaphorique, nous allons comparer cet énoncé avec deux autres:

La rose a pris racine dans le jardin.

et

Paul est immobile dans le jardin.

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Le premier des trois énoncés est métaphorique. Les autres deux ne le sont pas. Si on met en rapport l'énoncé métaphorique avec le premier énoncé non-métaphorique, ce qui est mis en évidence c'est l'écart. Cet écart s'instaure entre un sens propre de l'expression "prendre racine" et un sens figuré de la même expression. Le fait que nous parlons d'un sens ou de l'autre est déterminé par le contexte dans lequel on utilise l'expression. "Prendre racine", dans le contexte où il y a une rose dans un jardin, est utilisée dans un sens tout à fait usuel. Si on considère, cependant, le contexte où Paul est dans le jardin, parler de "racine" implique un certain sous-entendu : on sait que l'expression ne doit pas être prise au pied de la lettre. Ainsi un écart s'installe entre un sens pris sans réserve, que le contexte justifie entièrement, et un autre sens qui présuppose une certaine distance interne, justement à cause du contexte qui lui est impropre. Cette distance interne implique un dédoublement dans la pensée du sujet parlant. Il doit penser à deux choses à la fois. Ces deux choses sont, d'un côté l'idée d'immobilité présente dans le troisième énoncé et de l'autre l'expression métaphorique "prendre racine" qui l'implique, et qui est venue la substituer dans le même contexte. Autrement dit, si cette fois on met en rapport l'énoncé métaphorique avec le deuxième énoncé non-métaphorique ce qui est mis en évidence est la substitution. A ce point nous sommes prêtes d'avancer l'idée qui sera essentielle pour notre argumentation, notamment le fait que l'écart et la substitution sont les deux faces du même phénomène. Tandis que l'écart se heurte entre un sens propre et un sens figuré qui sont déterminés par les variations de contexte, la substitution est mise en évidence en gardant le même contexte et en faisant varier le mot qui vient exprimer l'idée d'immobilité.

L'ambition de ce texte sera d'argumenter que la métaphore est l'origine et la structure essentielle de tout langage significatif et non, comme il est d'habitude entendu, un phénomène interne et subordonné au langage. La théorie de la négativité du langage, avancée par Ferdinand de Saussure sera un précieux point d'appui pour notre démarche. Nous allons prendre comme point de départ l'Introduction de Gérard Genette aux *Figures du discours* de Pierre Fontanier², où la notion d'écart est mise en rapport avec ce qui pourrait constituer une norme dans l'analyse du langage. Fontanier essaiera, en s'appuyant sur l'écart et la substitution, de mettre en rapport d'intersection les tropes et les figures de style, afin que la métaphore soit comprise comme une figure-trope, définie aussi par l'écart à une norme que par la substitution consciente et contrôlée, qui conserve le terme substitué comme implicite dans le terme métaphorique. Dans un deuxième temps, nous allons reprendre la critique de Patricia Schulz, qui, dans son article *Saussure et le sens figuré – ou pourquoi la métaphore n'existe pas*³, démontre à partir des *Ecrits de linguistique*

² Fontanier, Pierre, *Les figures du discours*, Paris, Flammarion, 1977.

³ Schulz, Patricia, *Saussure et le sens figuré – ou pourquoi la métaphore n'existe pas*, www.info-metaphore.com, article d'abord publié in *Les Cahiers du CIEL*, "Saussure et le sens figuré", 2003, Université de Paris 7, UFR E.I.L.A.

*générale*⁴ de Ferdinand de Saussure qu'il n'y a pas de sens à parler de métaphore, justement parce que la structure négative du langage ne permet ni l'existence d'une norme par rapport à laquelle s'opère l'écart métaphorique ni la substitution d'un certain mot par un autre, moins usuel, dans un contexte donné, vu que tous les mots se définissent seulement négativement, par leurs oppositions, et que par conséquent, ils sont tous équivalents. Enfin, dans une troisième partie, nous tâcherons, toujours dans la logique saussurienne, de récupérer les deux notions, écart et substitution, en leur donnant un sens neuf. Nous nous proposons de montrer que l'écart ne doit pas être compris comme le corrélat d'une norme, mais comme la seule chose positive dans le langage, de même façon que la feuille de papier est la seule partie matérielle d'un texte. Si le texte n'existe pas sans ce support, de l'autre côté la feuille ne fait pas vraiment partie de ce qu'on met sous le concept de texte. De même, l'écart précède et fait possible toute expression car il constitue l'espace virtuel de tout autre langage qui aurait pu être itéré au même moment, écrit sur la même page.

§1. La métaphore à l'intersection de la figure et du trope

Les figures du discours, un des plus importants traités français de rhétorique, sera notre point de départ dans l'analyse de la métaphore. Dans ce texte, Pierre Fontanier se propose de prendre comme point de référence non pas le discours comme un tout, ni le mot, qui est l'unité la plus simple du discours qui relève encore de sens, mais la figure elle-même, qui peut apparaître à tous les niveaux du discours. Ainsi, la première démarche sera de définir le plus précisément possible ce qu'est une figure. Selon Fontanier, "les figures du discours sont les traits, les formes ou les tours... par lesquels le langage... s'éloigne plus ou moins de ce qui en eût été l'expression simple et commune"⁵. Il y aurait, donc, une expression qui constituerait la norme, et par rapport à laquelle la figure serait un écart. Mais il faut déterminer selon quel critère peut-il être décidé si une expression constitue la norme ou l'écart. Deux réponses sont proposées dans l'Introduction de Genette aux *Figures du discours*. L'expression normale et normative doit être simple et commune. Donc le critère sera ou bien la simplicité de l'expression, ou bien sa propriété d'être plus usuelle que d'autres.

Dans un premier temps, au sens figuré qui caractérise la figure sera opposé le sens usuel. La norme serait ainsi l'usage, l'écart "le fait brut d'employer tel mot plus fréquemment que ne l'emploie la langue commune"⁶. Mais la difficulté devient tout de suite évidente si l'on essaie de définir ce qu'on entend par "usage". Car il est difficile d'établir quelle est la fréquence normale avec laquelle une expression apparaît dans le discours. D'abord quelle serait l'unité de mesure pour une telle démarche? En quoi pourrait-on mesurer la fréquence de l'apparition de l'expression

⁴ Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Ecrits de linguistique générale*, Paris, Gallimard, 2002.

⁵ Fontanier, Pierre, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

⁶ Genette, Gérard, "Introduction" in Fontanier, P., *ibid.*

dans une langue? Et même si nous convenons sur un mécanisme artificiel, par exemple combien de fois par jour un certain nombre de personnes représentatives pour une société qui parlent telle ou telle langue emploient telle ou telle expression, cela ne clarifierait en rien la question de savoir quand ladite expression est utilisée en sens commun et quand en sens propre. Cela impliquerait qu'on utilise déjà le critère qu'on essaie de définir. Ainsi, décider entre le sens propre et le sens figuré serait une question dépendante de l'intuition de chaque locuteur, et non de certaines règles fixes. Et, même s'il était possible d'établir ainsi un critère scientifique qui partagerait entre sens propre et sens figuré, l'analyse ne serait valable que pour un moment déterminé dans l'histoire de la langue. La langue, pourtant, évolue sans cesse. Ce qui est à un certain moment usuel peut devenir avec le temps une expression très rare. De l'autre côté, une expression qui, à un certain moment, est étrange, et par cela est perçue par les locuteurs comme une figure, peut, grâce à une utilisation très fréquente, se transformer en un sens propre et rentrer par cela dans la langue commune. Il devient évident ainsi que la fréquence ou la rareté des occurrences d'une expression dans la langue ne peut pas constituer un critère sérieux de partage entre le sens propre et le sens figuré. Car il est impossible de décider quelle est la position d'une expression par rapport à l'usage, lorsque même le fait d'être usuelle ou non change. Et, si d'un côté, "les figures les plus hardies dans le principe cessent d'être regardées comme figures lorsqu'elles sont devenues tout à fait communes et usuelles"⁷, il est aussi vrai que "les figures sont aussi *dans* l'usage, et qu'il s'en produisent plus en un jour de halle qu'en plusieurs séances d'Académie"⁸. En résumant, l'usage ne peut pas constituer la norme car il ne peut pas être défini et, même s'il l'était, il n'expliquerait rien par rapport à ce qu'est un sens figuré, vu qu'il y a autant de sens figurés que de sens propre dans la langue commune, et que les premières peuvent se transformer en dernières sans que leur usage soit compromis.

Il faudrait, donc, faire appel à l'autre possible critère: la simplicité de l'expression. Une expression est figurée si on peut lui opposer un autre sens, littéral. Ainsi, toute figure implique une certaine complexité, car on peut penser en son cas à au moins un autre sens dans lequel elle peut être utilisée. Ainsi, si je dis que quelqu'un a un cœur de lion, je penserai toujours à deux choses: au lion, qui aurait certainement un "cœur de lion", évidence qui vient tellement vite à l'esprit qu'elle peut passer inaperçue, et à la personne à laquelle j'attribue les qualités du lion à travers cette expression. Il y a deux évidences: qu'un être humain ne peut pas avoir littéralement un cœur de lion, car il n'y a que le lion qui pourrait l'avoir. Et, donc, deuxième évidence, que le sens de l'expression "cœur de lion" relève ici d'un écart par rapport à son usage naturel. Une expression simple n'aurait pas besoin du passage par un autre sens. C'est par cette complexité que certaines expressions peuvent être identifiées comme figurées.

⁷ Genette, G., *op. cit.*, p. 9-10.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Mais à ce point il y a une distinction qui s'impose et sur laquelle Fontanier va insister dans son ouvrage. Il s'agit de la différence entre trope et figure. Car s'il n'y a pas un sens littéral auquel nous pouvons opposer le sens écarté d'une certaine expression, il s'agira d'un trope, et non pas d'une figure. A l'idée d'écart, qui définit tout trope, soit-il figure ou non, il faut ajouter l'idée de substitution. Si on opère un écart de sens parce que l'expression littérale manque, il n'y aura pas de figure. La figure résulte d'une opération rationnelle de substitution, par laquelle le sens littéral est gardé en filigrane dans le nouveau sens. "Le critère du trope c'est le changement de sens d'un mot, et à ce titre, certaines figures seulement sont des tropes; mais le critère de la figure c'est la substitution d'une expression à une autre, que le rhétoricien doit pouvoir restituer mentalement pour être en droit de parler de figure: et à ce titre, certains tropes seulement sont des figures."⁹ Le principe de substitution vient donc délimiter dans les formes d'écart de sens celles, qui constituent des vraies figures qui relèvent de l'art de la rhétorique. Mais par cela, par cette "obsession substitutive qui marque la rhétorique des figures"¹⁰, la voie est ouverte vers la théorie de la négativité du langage, car le sens de toute figure ne sera pas dans son expression, mais dans l'écart entre les deux sens: le sens figuré et le sens propre. "Il y a, donc, ceci d'exemplaire, dans la rhétorique des figures", affirme Genette, "qu'elle *figure*, à son tour, un mouvement nécessaire, constitutif, de la pensée du langage et de son exercice même. Sans le pouvoir de se taire ou de dire autre chose, il n'est pas de parole qui vaille"¹¹. Même si la thèse de Fontanier ne va pas si loin que celle de Saussure, même si pour lui les mots et les sens sont bien positifs, cette idée de l'écart qui s'entrevoit, qui subsiste dans le terme qui résulte du processus de substitution, fait que les limites de cette positivité sont brouillées comme dans le cas de deux photos superposées sur la même pellicule. En gardant présentes à l'esprit ces dernières remarques, je passerai maintenant à la prochaine étape de mon argumentation, la critique saussurienne de la possibilité d'un sens figuré et les conséquences que P. Schulz tire de cette position.

§2. La métaphore n'existe pas

En 1996, les manuscrits de Ferdinand de Saussure, qu'on croyait perdus, ont été retrouvés. Ainsi, la véritable pensée du linguiste suisse nous parvient, cette fois non plus par le biais de ses disciples, mais directement. Et parmi ces nouveaux textes, publiés sous le titre d'*Ecrits de linguistique générale*, il y en a certains, notamment les paragraphes 23-27, qui portent sur notre problématique, à savoir si un sens figuré est possible. La position de Saussure semble très tranchante: "Il n'y a pas de différence entre le sens propre et le sens figuré des mots (ou: les mots n'ont pas plus de sens figuré que de sens propre), parce que leur sens est éminemment

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

négatif"¹². J'essaierai d'expliquer d'abord en quoi consiste la négativité du langage, telle que la conçoit Saussure, pour construire ensuite, en suivant l'argumentation de Patricia Schulz, la critique de la possibilité de la métaphore selon les deux points qu'on a établis comme déterminants: l'écart et la substitution.

Comme toute science, la linguistique doit isoler la plus petite partie analysable de la langue, posant ainsi les bases de son objet. Cette unité essentielle dont traite la linguistique est le signe linguistique ou le mot. Il est unité dans les deux sens du mot, car il constitue, d'un côté, l'élément le plus simple de la langue, mais, de l'autre côté, il est "une chose double, faite du rapprochement de deux termes"¹³, il unit en soi le son et l'idée. Il faut remarquer que cette unité n'est pas la correspondance entre un fait matériel et un fait mental. Le son n'est pas moins mental que l'idée, car il ne s'agit pas du son en soi, mais de l'effet qu'il a sur le psychique humain. "Le signe linguistique unit non une chose et un nom, mais un concept et une image acoustique. Cette dernière n'est pas le son matériel, chose purement physique, mais l'empreinte psychique de ce son, la représentation que nous en donne le témoignage de nos sens; elle est sensorielle, et s'il nous arrive de l'appeler "matérielle", c'est seulement dans ce sens et par opposition à l'autre terme de l'association, le concept, généralement plus abstrait"¹⁴. Donc le son est posé ici comme phénomène, et non comme fréquence sonore. De son côté, le concept ne peut pas être pris indépendamment de son image acoustique, car dans ce cas il serait du domaine de la psychologie. En descendant au-dessous du signe linguistique comme unité d'une image acoustique et d'un concept, nous sortons du domaine de la linguistique pour entrer dans la physique ou dans la phonologie, du côté du son, et dans la psychologie, du côté du concept. Après avoir délimité le domaine de la linguistique par rapport à ces autres sciences, il reste à fixer les termes avec lesquels elle va opérer. Saussure pose ces termes de la façon suivante: "Nous proposons de conserver le mot *signe* pour désigner le total, et de remplacer *concept* et *image acoustique* respectivement par *signifié* et *signifiant*"¹⁵.

Il est indispensable pour une science de délimiter son domaine et de poser et définir positivement les termes avec lesquels elle va opérer. Mais après cette première démarche, Saussure procède à réduire une par une ces coupures dans la masse de la langue pour isoler le signe linguistique, et dans le signe linguistique pour isoler le signifiant et le signifié. La coupure entre signifiant et signifié est purement théorique parce que le signifiant ne signifie que s'il y a un signifié à signifier et, de même, le signifié ne peut pas être signifié par autre chose que par un signifiant. En choisissant les termes "signifiant" et "signifié", Saussure fait plus qu'éviter la confusion entre le signe linguistique comme totalité et le signe en général comme quelque chose qui indique une autre chose, situation dans laquelle

¹² Saussure, Ferdinand de, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹³ Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Cours de linguistique générale*, Bibliothèque scientifique Payot, p. 98.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

le signe serait synonyme du signifiant. Par ce choix terminologique, Saussure met en évidence la différence intime qui brouille l'identité du mot, car les deux composantes ne sont rien au-delà de leur rapport réciproque. Le signe linguistique *est* le signe signifiant, mais seulement en tant qu'il indique quelque chose de plus qu'une simple chaîne sonore, en tant qu'il fait signe vers quelque chose d'autre, qui ne pourrait jamais arriver à la conscience de quelqu'un sans passer par le biais du signe devenant par cela signifié. La séparation entre signifiant et signifié est tout simplement un outil dans l'analyse du langage, un outil qui sera écarté dès que la structure du signe linguistique devient claire, dès que ses deux faces deviennent des connaissances acquises. Car en connaissant ce que sont le signifiant et le signifié, nous devons assumer aussi leur interdépendance indépassable. Si la séparation est prise au sens fort, nous sortons tout simplement du domaine de la linguistique. "La langue est encore comparable à une feuille de papier: la pensée est le recto et le son le verso; on ne peut découper le recto sans découper en même temps le verso; de même dans la langue, on ne saurait isoler ni le son de la pensée, ni la pensée du son; on n'y arriverait que par une abstraction dont le résultat serait de faire de la psychologie pure ou de la phonologie pure"¹⁶.

Maintenant la nature du signe linguistique semble plus claire. Mais en vérité les vraies difficultés n'ont pas été encore formulées. Car qu'est-ce que ce signe linguistique sinon une relation? Mais cette relation met ensemble deux termes qui n'ont rien de positive, qui ne se définissent que par cette relation même. Le signifié "maison" n'est rien en soi, ne peut même pas être pris en considération sans le support verbal ou écrit. Mais la mise ensemble de ces lettres, de ces sons, n'est rien en soi. La seule positivité de la maison est celle de l'objet qui constitue la référence de l'expression, or cet objet est entièrement extérieur au domaine de la linguistique. Quand quelqu'un entend une langue qu'il ne connaît pas, il ne saura pas dire où finit un mot et où commence le prochain. Il ne pourra même pas se rendre compte s'il y a là du sens du tout. Cependant, dès qu'il connaît au moins une partie des mots de cette langue, c'est-à-dire dès que certains sens viennent faire des coupures dans un flux sonore amorphe, il pourra isoler même les mots dont il ne connaît pas les sens. Tout de suite s'installera la différence entre une langue et n'importe quel bruit. Ainsi, le sens instaure dans la chaîne signifiante les différences qui font possibles les signes linguistiques. Mais, si on essaie d'aborder le problème du côté du signifié, il devient aussi claire que rien de positive ne vient s'ajouter à une chaîne sonore pour en faire des mots. Au contraire, le sens est dépendent de sa matière sonore, car il est introduit par les différences qui s'opèrent à l'intérieur de celle-ci. En effet, le sens du mot "bœuf" par rapport au sens du mot "neuf" existe grâce à la différence entre deux sons: b et n. Si ces deux sons étaient en réalité deux façons de prononcer le même phonème, alors toute différence de sens entre les deux mots serait abolie. Par conséquent, un sens devient déterminé grâce aux oppositions au

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

niveau du signifiant. "Ce qui importe dans le mot" montre Saussure, "ce n'est pas le son lui-même, mais les différences phoniques qui permettent de distinguer ce mot de tous les autres, car ce sont elles qui portent la signification"¹⁷. Ainsi nous pouvons affirmer qu'à l'intérieur du signe linguistique rien ne peut être posé positivement, il n'y a pas de vrai contenu ni au niveau du signifiant, ni au niveau du signifié, car les deux n'existent que dans leur rapport réciproque. Nous reviendrons sur la question de la relation signifiant/signifié dans la dernière partie de notre texte, où nous allons expliquer pourquoi et en quelle mesure cette relation est un entrelacs.

Les racines de la négativité du langage se trouvent déjà à l'intérieur du signe linguistique. Mais la négativité devient évidente au moment où nous faisons l'opération inverse à celle faite tout à l'heure. Jusqu'ici nous avons accentué les coupures "verticales" dans la masse de la langue, isolant ainsi le signe linguistique. Puis, à l'intérieur du signe, nous avons effacé la coupure "horizontale" qui séparait le signifiant et le signifié. Ainsi, nous avons découvert que le signifiant et le signifié ne sont rien en dehors de leur relation car, dès qu'on les prend séparément les deux se dissipent dans une chaîne incohérente. Maintenant, en faisant l'opération inverse, nous allons effacer les coupures théoriques qui séparaient verticalement les signes linguistiques. Par cette opération, c'est la présupposée ligne horizontale, séparant la chaîne continue du signifiant de celle du signifié, qui est mise en évidence. Cette fois, une toute autre image de la langue se forme devant nous, une image qui ressemble à "l'air en contact avec une nappe d'eau: si la pression atmosphérique change, la surface de l'eau se décompose en une série de divisions, c'est-à-dire des vagues; ce sont ces ondulations qui donneront une idée de l'union, et pour ainsi dire de l'accouplement de la pensée avec la matière phonique."¹⁸. Il conviendrait, maintenant, analyser chaque couche en soi, celle du signifiant d'un côté, celle du signifié de l'autre, pour voir s'il est possible de rencontrer quelque chose comme une unité positive. Ainsi, nous constatons que la même règle s'applique aux deux niveaux: une unité, soit-elle signifiante ou signifiée, ne peut se définir que par ce qu'elle n'est pas. Ainsi, le son b se définit par le fait de ne pas être ni a, ni c, ni n'importe quel autre son possible. Il peut être prononcé différemment, il peut être écrit de façons complètement différentes sur papier ou en pierre, en couleur ou transparent. Il restera toujours le même son, la même lettre, car ce qui suffit pour constituer sa substantialité est le fait de ne pas se confondre avec a ou c. De même, le signifié "maison" renvoie immédiatement à une infinité d'autres signifiés qu'il n'est pas, et qui le délimitent selon le contexte, par exemple "porte", "fenêtre" ou encore "château", "demeure", "bâtiment" etc. Comme le remarque Saussure, "dans l'intérieur d'une même langue, tous les mots qui expriment des idées voisines se limitent réciproquement: des synonymes comme *redouter*, *craindre*, *avoir peur* n'ont de valeur propre que par leur opposition; si *redouter* n'existait pas, tout son

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

contenu irait à ses concurrents"¹⁹. Mais une chose qui ne peut se définir que par ce qu'elle n'est pas n'a rien de positive. Car la moindre positivité serait suffisante pour définir la chose positivement. En ce sens, le langage est entièrement négatif. Les différences précèdent toute positivité. Pour résumer, nous allons reprendre la phrase de Saussure: "1. Un signe n'existe qu'en vertu de sa signification; 2. une signification n'existe qu'en vertu de son signe; 3. signes et significations n'existent qu'en vertu de la *différence des signes*."²⁰

En s'appuyant sur cette conception du langage, Patricia Schulz démontre, dans son texte, *Saussure et le sens figuré – ou pourquoi la métaphore n'existe pas* que si nous acceptons le caractère négatif du langage, alors parler d'écart et de substitution, donc de métaphore, n'a pas de sens. Nous avons essayé de montrer que la métaphore comprise comme écart implique un changement de sens, car l'écart se produit entre un sens propre et un sens figuré. Or, le sens figuré n'est rien d'autre que le résultat des changements que l'utilisation dans un contexte inhabituel impose à un sens propre. Ainsi, dès qu'on parle de changement de sens, la question est implicite de savoir si le contexte de l'expression est habituel ou inhabituel. Par conséquent il y a une certaine normalité, par rapport à laquelle la métaphore serait l'écart. C'est précisément cette idée qu'il y aurait une norme, une utilisation normale des expressions, que Schulz rejette. "L'emploi métaphorique est fondamentalement un emploi "anormal" – faire une métaphore, c'est utiliser une expression "hors norme" -, par opposition au "propre" qui, lui, est le *représentant de la norme*"²¹. Mais la norme n'est jamais formulée explicitement en aucun traité de spécialité. Car si intuitivement nous sommes convaincus de l'existence de la métaphore, et nous la reconnaissons immédiatement, définir ce qu'est l'emploi véritablement normal d'une expression est moins évident. En réalité établir une règle, la norme d'usage pour telle ou telle expression, sera toujours une démarche artificielle par laquelle on décrète "qu'il est ainsi". Pourquoi serait-il moins étrange de dire que la rose a pris racine? Est-ce qu'une rose serait plus susceptible de *prendre* racine que quelqu'un qui s'appelle Paul? Comment serait-il possible de contrôler toutes les implications d'une expression et d'en extraire une règle scientifique de l'usage le plus simple? Selon Schulz, "le scientifique, pour être crédible, ne peut, comme le remarque Saussure, partir "tout à fait empiriquement et machinalement, de l'impression "*qu'il en est ainsi*"²². Il faudrait plutôt rejeter l'hypothèse qu'une norme qui ferait la différence entre sens propre et sens figuré est possible. Par cela, pourtant, la métaphore perd sa dimension d'écart et devient équivalente à tout autre type d'usage.

Un autre argument par lequel Schulz déstabilise la métaphore comme réalité positive du langage s'appuie sur l'aspect substitutif de la métaphore. Si la métaphore existait, elle serait la substitution d'une expression à une autre, selon une

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

²⁰ Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Ecrits de linguistique générale*, op. cit., p. 37.

²¹ Schulz, Patricia, *Saussure et le sens figure – ou pourquoi la métaphore n'existe pas*, op. cit., p. 3.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

règle qui mettrait en évidence l'écart entre le sens propre et le sens figuré d'une expression. Dans un contexte donné, une expression est remplacée par une autre expression qui, étant inhabituelle pour ce contexte, relève d'un sens figuré. Mais cette idée de substitution présuppose "non seulement la présence de deux termes, mais la priorité de l'un (qui est donc l'équivalent de "zéro") par rapport à l'autre"²³. Or, il y a ici encore une fois une règle complètement artificielle qui déciderait qu'un des deux termes est "plus normal" que l'autre. En imposant une telle règle, nous accepterions une certaine positivité du langage au niveau du sens propre. En ce point s'accroche la critique la plus profonde de la métaphore. Car, d'après Schulz, "le sens figuré dépend d'une certaine manière de concevoir le sens – manière que Saussure appelle lui-même "positive"²⁴. En effet, sans une unité positive de sens comment serait-il possible l'écart entre sens propre et sens figuré? Qu'est-ce qui changerait dans le sens propre, pour créer l'écart, s'il n'y a, dès le début, rien de positif qui pourrait changer? Est-ce qu'il y a quelque chose qui change vraiment *dans* le sens de l'expression "prendre racine", dans les deux exemples que nous avons considérés? Il semble plutôt que cette expression ne contient en soi rien de positif, son sens étant déterminé par le contexte, par les autres expressions qui l'entourent et qui déterminent son sens. Les mêmes questions se posent pour l'aspect substitutif de la métaphore. Une substitution ne peut s'opérer que si quelque chose de positif est remplacée par une autre positivité. Sans positivité il n'y a pas de substitution, et, pourtant, toute expression, soit-elle métaphorique ou non, n'est déterminée que par l'opposition avec toutes les autres expressions qui pourraient se trouver à sa place. Substitution et changement du sens se rapportent à une norme, or la norme implique une certaine positivité du langage. La norme est quelque chose qui ne change pas, un point fixe auquel se rapporte tout changement. Or, une telle stabilité ne peut être trouvée dans le langage, où, d'un côté, la même chose peut être nommée par plusieurs mots, et de l'autre côté le même mot peut nommer plusieurs choses. "Pour en avoir du figuré, il faudrait localiser dans le sens des mots les propriétés du monde – propriétés qui constitueraient alors l'état de "norme", quelque chose qui devrait *être*. Or, en linguistique il n'y a que des différences"²⁵. La linguistique saussurienne exclue la possibilité de tout écart et de toute substitution prises dans le sens présenté jusqu'ici. Or, en dehors de l'écart et de la substitution, la métaphore n'existe pas.

§3. Tout langage est métaphorique

Pour récupérer la métaphore je me propose dans cette dernière partie de mon texte de regarder l'idée d'écart sous un angle complètement différent sans sortir de la conception saussurienne sur la langue. La position de Saussure par rapport au sens figuré, telle que nous l'avons montrée plus haut, semblait finale. Mais, 300

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

pages plus loin, dans le même livre, nous trouvons le passage suivant, qui met cette position fortement en question: "Plus de figures! C'est un beau programme, qu'on a vite fait de mettre sur le papier. Et que faut-il pour mettre ce précepte en pratique? Peu de chose, simplement n'employer que des expressions répondant aux absolues réalités du langage, classées d'une manière infaillible."²⁶ L'ironie de Saussure est ici frappante, surtout qu'elle est aussi dirigée vers ses propres propos. Car, selon la théorie de la négativité du langage, il est impossible d'établir non seulement quelles sont les "absolues réalités du langage" mais aussi quelles sont les expressions qui leur correspondraient. "Proscrire la figure", continue Saussure, "c'est se dire en possession de toutes les vérités, autrement vous êtes radicalement hors d'état de dire où commence et où finit une métaphore"²⁷. Nous observons que la critique de Schulz contre la métaphore et la critique de Saussure contre l'abolition de la figure aboutissent de façon surprenante à des conclusions proches: pour Schulz la métaphore requiert une conception positive du langage, pour Saussure, si la métaphore n'était pas une figure, seule un langage positif pourrait établir son statut. Il y a ici une nuance très subtile et difficile à saisir. Pour Schulz la métaphore implique une norme et la norme implique un contenu positif du langage. Pour Saussure, cette situation est aussi condamnable que pour Schulz, mais avec la mention qu'elle résulte justement par l'abolition de la métaphore telle quelle devrait être comprise: comme figure du langage. Pour Schulz, la métaphore doit être abordée par rapport à un langage qu'on présuppose comme ayant un sens propre. La présupposition de normalité est toujours présente dans son argumentation contre la métaphore. Il n'y a pas de métaphore car la métaphore supposerait un écart par rapport à un certain type de langage qui ne permet pas d'écart en général, car tout écart le figerait dans une positivité qui lui est impropre. De l'autre côté, Saussure inclut la possibilité de la métaphore dans sa conception négative du langage et s'en sert justement pour rejeter l'idée d'un langage positif, du fait que "les absolues réalités du langage n'offrent pas de mystère pour les néogrammairiens"²⁸. S'il n'y avait pas de figures, la métaphore n'en serait pas une, et donc aucune différence ne saurait exister entre métaphore et le reste du langage. En fait, la négativité du langage est utilisée aussi pour, que contre la possibilité de la métaphore.

Pour résoudre ce problème, je reviendrai, encore une fois, à la négativité du langage, pour l'aborder cette fois du point de vue de la valeur. Nous avons démontré qu'à l'intérieur du signe linguistique rien de positif ne peut s'imposer. "Mais", affirme Saussure, "dire que tout est négatif dans la langue, cela n'est vrai que du signifié et du signifiant pris séparément: dès que l'on considère le signe dans sa totalité, on se trouve en présence d'une chose positive dans son ordre"²⁹. Cette chose positive n'est rien d'autre que la valeur du signe. Mais sa positivité n'est

²⁶ Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Ecrits de linguistique générale*, op. cit., p. 233.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Cours de linguistique générale*, op. cit., p. 166.

pas la même que celle d'un objet réel. Car la valeur n'est rien d'autre que l'écart qui sépare, et par cela qui détermine les signes linguistiques. Mais qu'est-ce que concrètement la valeur? Elle pourrait être confondue avec le signifié ; pourtant, ce n'est pas le cas. Car le signifié prend son sens à l'intérieur du mot, par rapport au signifiant, alors que la valeur met en rapport le signe entier avec les autres signes linguistiques. La valeur dépasse la dimension du mot, constituant pour le signe linguistique ce que le signifié constitue pour le signifiant. Pourtant, si valeur et signifié avaient un contenu positif, ce contenu serait le même concept. En réalité, cependant, le concept ne se définit qu'en relation et par ses oppositions, et donc, ni la valeur du signe comme totalité ni le signifié en rapport avec le signifiant n'ont aucun contenu. Après une série d'exemples, Saussure conclue que "dans tous ces cas nous surprenons, donc, au lieu d'*idées* données d'avance, des *valeurs* émanant du système. Quand on dit qu'elles correspondent à des concepts, on sous-entend que ceux-ci sont purement différentiels, définis non pas positivement par leur contenu, mais négativement par leurs rapports avec les autres termes du système"³⁰. Selon Saussure, "d'un côté, le concept nous apparaît comme contre-partie de l'image auditive dans l'intérieur du signe, et, de l'autre, ce signe lui-même, c'est-à-dire le rapport qui relie ses deux éléments, est aussi, et tout autant la contre-partie des autres signes de la langue"³¹. La positivité de la valeur du signe linguistique est de tout un autre ordre que celle d'un contenu. Cette positivité est seulement la contre-partie de la négativité des éléments qui composent la langue. Tout comme le blanc de la feuille de papier met en évidence le noir du texte, tout autant la valeur des signes linguistiques met ceux-ci en évidence les uns par rapport aux autres. La positivité de la valeur est la positivité d'un rapport.

Voyons maintenant comment Saussure définit cette notion essentielle pour la théorie de la négativité du langage, la notion de valeur: "toutes les valeurs semblent régies par ce principe paradoxal. Elles sont toujours constituées: 1. par une chose *dissemblable* susceptible d'être *échangée* contre celle dont la valeur est à déterminer; 2. par des choses *similaires* qu'on peut *comparer* avec celle dont la valeur est en cause. Ces deux facteurs sont nécessaires pour l'existence d'une valeur"³². Et plus loin: "de même un mot peut être échangé contre quelque chose de dissemblable: une idée; en outre, il peut être comparé avec quelque chose de même nature: un autre mot."³³. Et voilà comment nos deux critères de définition de la métaphore resurgissent ici pour marquer non seulement une partie, mais le langage dans sa totalité. Car dire qu'un mot peut être échangé pour une idée, veut dire en réalité qu'il peut être échangé *pour une idée ou une autre*. Que, donc, l'idée qui lui est associée peut varier sans préjudice pour la valeur du mot dans la phrase. Reprenons notre exemple:

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

*Paul a pris racine dans le jardin.
La rose a pris racine dans le jardin.
Paul est immobile dans le jardin.*

L'idée associée à l'expression "prendre racine" dans le premier exemple n'est pas la même que celle du deuxième exemple. Pourtant, les deux phrases sont aussi cohérentes et aussi correctement construites. De l'autre côté, dire qu'un mot peut être comparé selon sa valeur à un autre mot ne signifie rien d'autre que la possibilité de la substitution d'un mot par un autre. Nous voyons ainsi ressurgir, à côté de l'écart, aussi la substitution. Car, dans notre exemple, "prendre racine" a la même valeur qu'"être immobile" et donc peut le remplacer avec succès. Revenons sur ce point à Patricia Schulz qui dans son livre *Description critique du concept traditionnel de "métaphore"* constate qu'il y a deux types d'écart métaphorique selon l'extrémité de l'écart que nous prenons comme fixe. Après avoir analysé un nombre d'exemples similaires aux notre, Schulz conclue: "résumons que nous tenons à instaurer une différence entre un détournement d'un premier type, qui consiste à voir la métaphore comme le détournement d'une expression M de son usage habituel, et un détournement d'un second type, où la métaphore consiste dans le fait qu'une idée "b"est présentée de façon détournée ou indirecte"³⁴. Il s'agit du point de référence que nous prenons pour mesurer l'écart métaphorique. Si nous prenons comme référence M, l'expression métaphorique, cela veut dire plus précisément que nous prenons comme référence le signifiant. Ainsi la métaphore devient cette figure selon laquelle le même mot peut signifier deux choses différentes à la fois. L'écart s'insinue ainsi entre les deux sens auxquels renvoie le signifiant respectif. Il y a dans ce cas un excès de sens qui trouve son expression dans le signifiant déjà existant grâce au nouvel arrangement dans lequel se retrouve le signifiant. Si nous prenons maintenant comme référence le sens de l'expression, c'est-à-dire le signifié, l'écart se retrouve au niveau du signifiant car il y aura deux expressions qui renverront à un même sens. Il y aura dans ce cas là une affluence de signifiant et, par conséquent, un manque de signifié. Mais une fois que nous considérons ces deux façons de concevoir la métaphore dans le paradigme saussurien du signifiant et du signifié, il devient clair que là où il y a un manque de signifié c'est à cause d'un surplus de signifiant, et là où il y a un excès de sens c'est par un manque de signifiant. C'est-à-dire, dans un paradigme binaire, comme celui du signe linguistique, tout manque d'un côté peut être remarqué seulement parce qu'il y a un excès de l'autre côté et inversement. Autrement dit, la métaphore par manque et la métaphore par excès sont l'envers et l'endroit du même mouvement métaphorique qui est le mouvement qui fait que le langage est vif dans la parole des sujets parlants. De même que toute surface concave implique la surface convexe qu'elle provoque si nous regardons l'autre côté, la métaphore par excès n'est qu'une autre

³⁴ Schulz, Patricia, *Description critique du concept traditionnel de "métaphore"*, Berne, Peter Lang SA, Editions scientifiques européennes, 2004, p. 70-71.

façon de regarder la métaphore par manque. Et, sur le fond de la métaphore, le signifiant et le signifié relèvent leur structure d'entrelacs.

Je conclurai sur une dernière question. C'est notre thèse que le langage est par excellence métaphorique. C'est aussi la thèse de Rousseau, qui, dans son *Essai sur l'origine des langues* montre que le langage naît non comme soif de vérité, mais engendré par la passion. Pour soutenir sa thèse, Rousseau fait appel à l'exemple suivant:

"Un homme sauvage en rencontrant d'autres se sera d'abord effrayé. Sa frayeur lui aura fait voir ces hommes plus grands et plus forts que lui-même; il leur aura donné le nom de *géants*. Après beaucoup d'expériences, il aura reconnu que ces prétendus géants, n'étant ni plus grands ni plus forts que lui, leur stature ne convenait point à l'idée qu'il avait d'abord attaché au mot géant. Il inventera donc un autre nom commun à eux et à lui, tel par exemple que le nom d'*homme*, et laissera celui de *géant* à l'objet faux qui l'avait frappé durant son illusion. Voilà comment le mot figuré naît avant le mot propre, lorsque la passion nous fascine les yeux, et que la première idée qu'elle nous offre n'est pas celle de la vérité"³⁵.

L'idée de Rousseau selon laquelle le langage naît de la passion et non par le biais de la raison est consistante avec nos propos. Car s'il s'agit d'un trop plein de vécu, celui-ci risque d'accabler le sujet, faute de sa mise en expression qui le rend à la conscience. La mise en expression entame la passion et la rend supportable pour celui qui est en cause. Si le langage naît par le trop plein, par l'excès de la passion, il est nécessairement métaphorique. Notre argument ne se résumera pas à reproduire les propos de Rousseau selon lesquelles les premières langues sont plus poétiques que celles plus récentes. Ce que nous voulons montrer c'est que les premières paroles sont métaphoriques en vertu de leur double façon de signifier, mise en évidence par Jacques Derrida dans *De la grammatologie*³⁶. Car si l'homme de l'exemple de Rousseau nomme ses semblables *géants*, il n'installe pas par cela une métaphore, mais un écart métaphorique entre propre et figuré. C'est dans cet écart que s'origine sa parole. Mais entre quoi et quoi s'installe cet écart, si avant lui il n'y a pas encore ni du propre ni du figuré? Quand l'homme nomme ceux qu'il rencontre *géants*, il le fait de bonne foi, parce qu'il est persuadé que ceux qu'il voit sont des géants. C'est seulement ultérieurement que se produira la correction. L'écart initial n'est donc pas entre *géants* et *hommes* comme deux sens qui ont la même référence. Car cela advient seulement ultérieurement. Le vrai écart, celui qui mobilise le langage, s'installe entre le sens figuré du mot "géants" attribué aux hommes, et le sens propre de l'utilisation du mot "géants" comme illustration de la peur qui mobilise le langage. "Si la peur me fait voir des géants où il n'y a que des hommes, le signifiant – comme idée de l'objet – sera métaphorique, mais le signifiant de ma passion sera propre. Et si je dis alors "je vois des géants", cette

³⁵ Rousseau, J.J., *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, Paris, Flammarion, 1993, p. 63-64.

³⁶ Derrida, Jacques, *De la grammatologie*, Paris, Minuit, 2002

fausse désignation sera une expression propre de ma peur"³⁷. Nous voyons, donc, que rien de positif ne peut être identifié dans cette première métaphore au niveau du sens. Il y a, bien sur, une référence réelle, les hommes rencontrés dans le chemin, mais elle n'est pas de l'ordre du langage. Dans le langage de notre premier sujet parlant, il y a un signifiant qu'il vient d'inventer, "géants", dont le sens naît seulement entre les deux extrêmes: le figuré de l'inadéquation à la situation réelle, et le propre de la peur qui l'a fait surgir.

Ainsi, l'écart et la substitution ne sont plus dérivés, ne sont plus vus comme des dérapages par rapport à une norme. L'idée de la norme, avec sa conséquence, l'aspect positif du langage, n'entrent plus en discussion. Car l'écart précède la possibilité de toute expression. En ce contexte écart et valeur sont synonymes. Les mots n'ayant rien de positif en eux-mêmes, ils trouvent leur consistance dans leurs rapports réciproques, donc dans les écarts qui se forment entre eux. Une opposition présuppose un écart, donc un espace libre qui peut être occupé successivement par des termes opposés. Ainsi, le langage n'est possible que sur le terrain d'un écart. Dans ce sens, l'écart constitue l'espace commun des deux signes linguistiques qui ne créent que l'illusion d'une positivité qui pourrait engendrer une norme. Tout mot pris individuellement présuppose, donc, une distance par rapport à lui-même, car il implique négativement tous les autres mots qui l'entourent et le délimitent. Tout mot appelle à l'esprit le langage en sa totalité, sous un mode non thématifié. Ainsi, "la langue étant ce qu'elle est, de quelque côté qu'on l'aborde, on n'y trouvera rien de simple; partout et toujours ce même équilibre complexe de termes qui se conditionnent réciproquement"³⁸. Mais si tout terme de la langue se constitue dans son écart par rapport aux autres termes, si tout sens s'établit seulement négativement, en impliquant tout ce qu'il n'est pas, si aucun mot ne signifie rien s'il ne peut pas être remplacé par au moins un autre, si, enfin, la valeur des mots s'établit *entre* les mots, puisqu'elle n'est pas intérieure et figée, mais relative, ne serait-il pas justifié de tirer de la négativité du langage la conclusion tout opposée à celle de P. Schulz: tout langage est écart à soi-même et par cela, métaphorique.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 390

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 168-169.

DERRIDA'S STRUCTURE OF LAW AND ITS POLITICAL APPLICATION

NICOLAE MORAR¹

ABSTRACT. It has often been said that deconstruction leaves Derrida with nothing positive to say about politics. Critics of Derrida think that the application of deconstruction to politics fails because it overlooks the distinctiveness of political structures. By framing this paper from a case study into the theory of *aporias* in law and politics and back to the question of apartheid, I argue for a way in which Derrida's deconstruction is at play both only on a theoretical level and also on a practical level as a corrective to a given political situation.

Keywords: Derrida, Mandela, deconstruction, *aporia*, politics, structure of law, apartheid.

Many scholars have noted that since 1968, the period when Derrida wrote his essay "The Ends of Man,"² the threshold between the political and the philosophical has shifted and actually no longer demarcates two perfectly distinguished entities.³ Something new has appeared that links *the essence of the philosophical to the essence of political*.⁴ However, one might be puzzled by the effectiveness of the application of some philosophical concepts to a concrete political situation. Therein resides precisely the main critique of Derrida's detractors. Their argument is that when one extends the structure of deconstruction from writing, to the spheres of law, ethics, and politics, one thereby exceeds all given political structures and renders them unproductive because one overlooks their specific distinctiveness.

It would therefore be legitimate to ask, with Simon Sparks, if Derrida's approach to politics could have, "within the political institution of so called Western thought, a particularly *praxical* application?"⁵ He answers, "This seems

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² This essay was translated by E. Morot-Sir, W. Piersol, H. Dreyus, and B. Reid and published in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 30(1969):1, pp. 31-57

³ Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy write about a reciprocal involvement. "The political is no more outside or prior to the philosophical than the philosophical in general, is independent of the political." in "Opening address to the Center for Philosophical research on the Political," *Retreating the Political*, ed. Simon Sparks, (NY: Routledge, 1997), p.109-10

⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. A. Bass, (Chicago : UCP, 1982), p. 111

⁵ Simon Sparks, "Introduction: *Politica Ficta*," in *Retreating the Political*, p. XX

unlikely.”⁶ The reason is that the aporetic structure of deconstruction leads inevitably to the ordeal of undecidability. Thus, political intervention gives the impression not only of hopelessness but also of being paralyzed and “not knowing where to go.”⁷

In addition, as Derrida notes, the space of politics should be a space of just politics, which “one could call *juridico-ethico-political*.”⁸ In other words, Derrida emphasizes here that the structure of law cannot be understood outside of two main limits. What are the limits that Derrida confers to the space of politics?

Caputo understands the way in which Derrida delimits or deconstructs the space of politics as a movement “back and forth between undeconstructible justice and deconstructible law.”⁹ Moreover, Caputo says that Derrida’s paradox consists in the fact that what limits the process of deconstruction is also what enables the movement. If Derrida’s limits of politics do not disable political action, the question becomes: how does Derrida allow for the praxis of politics?

This is the framework inside of which my paper aims to challenge the question of the politicization of deconstruction and to indicate that even though deconstruction does not provide a fully normative framework, it nonetheless defines boundaries to political actions. In so doing, Derrida’s analysis of the structure of law is a privileged example that fully displays deconstruction at work not only on a theoretical but also on a practical level.

To achieve this, I will first describe a case study related to the experience of apartheid in South Africa. On November 7, 1962, Nelson Mandela was convicted of incitement and sentenced to life imprisonment. His discourse, as many scholars have remarked, is not simply an “originary trace of human dignity, [...] drawing from heterogeneous headings in Tribal lore and European law”¹⁰ but also a case that discloses the limits of a legal system. Second, after having observed how a historical system of law can produce injustice, I will move on a theoretical level, in order to abstract the structure of law. Thus, following Derrida, I will point out the question of incalculable justice and undecidability. This interrogation, which involves three difficult *aporias*—the Epoché of the rule, the hunting of undecidable, and the urgency that obstructs the horizon of knowledge—revolves around the ethical-political implications of deconstruction. Last, fortified by the outcome of the case study and by the theoretical model of law, I will return with Derrida to the initial example of apartheid to see whether or not his deconstructive method has a *practical application*.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit, (Stanford: SUP, 1993), p. 12

⁸ Jacques Derrida, “Force of law,” in *Acts of religion*, (NY: Routledge, 2002), p. 232

⁹ John Caputo, “Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics,” *Research in Phenomenology*, 21 (1991):1, p. 8 Martin Matušík calls this movement “a shuttle between the universal (deconstructible laws) and the singular (undeconstructible justice).” In Martin Matušík, “Kierkegaard’s Radical Existential Praxis,” in *Kierkegaard in Post/Modernity*, ed. M. Matušík and M. Westphal, (Bloomington: IUP, 1995), p. 255

¹⁰ Stephen Curkpatrick, “Ethical Discourse in an age cognizant of perspective - Reflection on Derrida’s “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, in Admiration,” *Sophia*, 40(2001):1, p. 81

1. Case Study: Nelson Mandela

"Why *this* man? Why *this* country?"¹¹ asks Susan Sontag. There are many possible answers to these questions but I will focus here on three points of convergence. First, Mandela is exemplary "because of who he is, how he has behaved, and what he has said."¹² Mandela *forces admiration*, as Derrida thinks, not simply because of his life struggle, but also because of his indefectible admiration and defense of values such as liberty, human rights, and democracy. Second, the case study of apartheid has the advantage of mixing all the elements of politics and to reveal on a pre-theoretical level what Derrida conceptualizes as limits of politics. Third, as Mandela thinks, the notion of law, the notion of justice should not be mere memories but promises.

If one were asking what difference one person can make in the face of injustice, violence, human rights violation, poverty, and disease, Kofi Annan would answer "by citing the courage, the tenacity, dignity and magnanimity of Nelson Mandela."¹³ This lifelong struggle against apartheid transformed him into a *freedom fighter* holding unshakable convictions even when he was sentenced to life in prison. He is certainly *the most vital symbol*¹⁴ of resistance against the tyranny of apartheid.¹⁵

Apartheid was a political and legal system based on racial segregation. In South Africa, it began in 1948, and until it was finally dismantled in 1993, it was founded on a large system of legislature defining categories of population on a criterion of color. Thus, a non-white person would not be allowed to marry a white person,¹⁶ much less to have sexual relations with a white person.¹⁷ Moreover, it was mandatory for all citizens to be registered and to be divided following a color criterion. This racial segregation was visible not only in public spaces, (such as schools, places of employment, etc.), or in the use of public transportation or emergency medical transport, but it was even more salient than this, in that the government dictated by law that inhabitants of the "homelands"¹⁸ were no longer citizens of South Africa.¹⁹

¹¹ Susan Sontag, "This Man, This Country," *For Nelson Mandela*, ed. Derrida and M.Tlili, (NY: Seaver Books, 1987), p. 49

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Kofi Annan, "Foreword," in *Nelson Mandela in his own words*, (NY: Little, Brown and Comp., 2003), p. XIII

¹⁴ Nelson Mandela, "Introduction," *The Struggle is my life*, (London: IDAFSA, 1978), p. 1

¹⁵ In Caputo's words, "Law's without resistance, undeconstructible laws, represents the nightmare of perfect terror. [...] it is necessary, for the sake of justice, to break the law and even to spend some time in jail." John Caputo, "Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics," p. 5

¹⁶ Amendment to the prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949)

¹⁷ Amendment to the Immorality Act (1950)

¹⁸ The *homeland system* was mainly implemented in order to remove to the black population their South African citizenship. Thereby, the white people would have become the demographic majority in the white South Africa and the black people only "guest laborers" supposed to hold a temporary work permit. If a black were not working in the white homelands (87% of the territory) and not hold a work permit, he could not live there. Thus, 80% of the population (the black population) had for living no more than 13% of territory of South Africa.

¹⁹ The Black Homeland Citizenship (1970)

It is against this system that Mandela revolts. He understands the necessity of protesting, opposing, and fighting to change an “immoral, unjust and intolerable”²⁰ law. Therefore, “to overthrow oppression” becomes Mandela’s highest aspiration. However, does Mandela force admiration either by having inspired this combat for an unconditional liberty or by the values he has admired? For Derrida, “the two have the same focus, they reflect upon each other.”²¹ In other words, “he becomes admirable for having, with all this force, admired, and for having made a force of his admiration, a combative, untreatable, and irreducible power.”²² Mandela does not merely admire laws, or rules, even less the unjust laws of the apartheid system, but he admires rather what he considers should be the basis for all laws. In this light, he thinks that the Magna Charta and the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man are not simply “what the West carried on with itself, in its own name”²³ but even more the legal framework that should set up all other laws. However, Mandela’s struggle shows that in the case of apartheid, the West is in a spectacular opposition with itself and does not take into consideration the *radical otherness* of the black. For the white inheritors of the West living in South Africa, the human rights, that have been a way to protect the vulnerable in their civilization, seem to be obsolete.

If we return to the question of the exemplarity of Mandela’s fight for liberty, we now have more elements to understand that he reveals “a spectral haunting, in which the West, it seems, is at war with itself in its laws and institutions pertaining to human rights and dignity.”²⁴ In other words, Mandela points out that the tradition that once promised justice is a source of injustice in South Africa. In this way, Mandela becomes “the specter of justice that haunts European law, made and preserved for human dignity, yet inadvertently underpinning the presuppositions of apartheid in Eurocentric humanism.”²⁵ There is a deep inability in the structure of law to perform an act of universal justice and an even greater inability to recognize a minimum of human dignity in all the subjects under its protection. For this reason, Derrida says that “apartheid was a European creation”²⁶ that displays the internal contradiction of our civilization and of our way to assert rights. The case of apartheid is important for Derrida because it highlights not only the internal limit of our civilization but also the way in which all political elements are mixed in a pre-theoretical situation.

The second feature of Mandela’s discourse lays out three main signs about what he considers the mutual involvement of reflection and practice. First, the

²⁰ Nelson Mandela, *The Struggle is my life*, p. 144

²¹ Derrida, “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, In Admiration,” in *For Nelson Mandela*, ed. Derrida and M.Tlili, (NY: Seaver Books, 1987), p. 15

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Derrida, “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, In Admiration,” p. 16

²⁴ Stephen Curkpatrick, “Ethical Discourse in an age cognizant of perspective - Reflection on Derrida’s “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, in Admiration,” p. 84

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Derrida, “Racism’s Last Word,” *Critical Inquiry*, 12(1985):1, p. 294

African National Congress which succeeded in 1944 to the South African National Congress, was one of the political organizations that organized the resistance against apartheid during the time of oppression. Despite this positive political change that witnesses an optimistic political unity of African peoples, despite the fact that years later Mandela has succeeded in promulgating the Charta of Freedom, he did not cease to protest so long as he and his people did not receive equal social treatment.

Their Charta claims for equal rights such as equal distribution of the land and of the country's wealth, for equality before law, for security, for education, for peace and friendship. Even though Mandela has foreseen the uniqueness²⁷ of this moment and the fact that "for the first time in the history of his country the democratic forces irrespective of race, ideological conviction [...] have discarded radicalism, [...] and united in a common program of action,"²⁸ he has refused a simple alliance with the white liberals. The role of this Charta was to give a new form of unity to the South African nation. However, the government did not become a representative government, black and white, and for this reason it was not the expression of the will of the entire nation. Moreover, Mandela understood and avoided the last strategy of the white oppressor which was to move the debate regarding apartheid into a legal framework where the white minority had the monopoly of decision. He was aware that a legal system that has already produced apartheid once before is not a legal system that could deliver them from this form of violence.²⁹

Second, Mandela never gave up his admiration for a democratic society. One might be surprised that he has supported democracy even after having the experience of this political model, misrepresented and misused by white people who arrogantly dreamed of 'civilizing' Africa. However, the democracy Mandela admires is the one "before the arrival of the white man."³⁰ While telling his own story to the Court, he shows how during *good old days* "his people lived peacefully, under the democratic rules [...], and moved freely without let or hindrance. Then the country was ours, in our own name and right."³¹ Thus democracy is not an imported political truth that belongs only to the white, but it was already "in a society that was primitive."³² Therein dwells "the seed of revolutionary democracy" that inspired Mandela's lifelong political struggle.

Third, for Mandela, this conflict was *between the law and their conscience*. The standards of Government "fell below what the civilized world would expect"³³

²⁷ Nelson Mandela, *The Struggle is my life*, p. 53

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54

²⁹ Mandela understood the necessity to appeal to an external form of normativity that the South African Government has already adopted. This is the reason he constantly made reference to the Charta of Universal Human Rights and to universal values such as human dignity. This method has been used also by anticommunist movements such as the Polish Solidarity or the Czech Charta 77.

³⁰ Nelson Mandela, *The Struggle is my life*, p. 141

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 141

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 145

because they have completely disregarded their requests. In other words, they refused to consider their objections against segregation; they also refused to reflect on the solutions the African National Congress proposed for the *forthcoming Republic*, and they, therefore, left the black population with no other choice than protest against this situation or betray their conscience. Ultimately, the Government has forbidden their last democratic possibility of resistance and promulgated a law stipulating that all action of protest against the law was considered as an offense.

Mandela asks: “Were we to allow the law which states that you shall not commit an offence by way of protest, to take its course and thus betray our conscience and our belief? Were we to uphold our conscience and our beliefs to strive for what we believe is right, not just for us, but for all the people, [...], and thus transgress against the law?”³⁴ The structure of government did not simply overlook the black population but also deprived it of all legal possibility to resist, to manifest, and to express their disagreement. Thus, the men of honesty, the men of purpose, the men of public morality and conscience had only one answer. It “was a duty to cry out against this discrimination which was essentially unjust.”³⁵

Last, for Mandela, the just law, justice in general, is a promise that has to be realized. For this freedom fighter, this promise was one of the forces of his struggle against racial domination. It was a duty always yet to be accomplished. “His duty to the public and his belief in the morality of essential rightness of the cause for which he stood”³⁶ have always attested to this promise for a just future. Mandela’s deep awareness of justice as a promise gave him the force to end the declaration of the trial when he was sentenced, by calling posterity as the witness of his innocence.

In short, the case of apartheid is meant to demonstrate how Mandela’s example represents a spectral site regarding the question of law. On one hand, it reveals the inherent legalized violence in the apartheid system. On the other hand, it makes public the difficulty for any legal structure to be fully universal and rightly applicable to a political subject. Last, Mandela’s case is a powerful testimony that justice is a promise not yet achieved but always to come. Despite his unjust trial, his strong belief embraces the idea that posterity will always be there to judge the criminals. After having presented the case of apartheid as an intertwining of legal elements, we move towards the theoretical question of Derrida’s structure of law in order to differentiate and to highlight their significance.

2. The Structure of law

What does the philosophical questioning of the political imply for Derrida? One might find a possible answer to this opening question in *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today’s Europe* where Derrida writes: “ethics, politics, and responsibility,

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 144

if there are any, will only ever have begun with the experience and experiment of the *aporia*.³⁷ The implication would be that the political *has to* pass the test of deconstruction, *the testing of the aporia*, in order to allow for a possible political action. An investigation regarding the possibility for a practical political intervention of deconstruction cannot be performed outside of the aporetical structure. Moreover, the experience of *aporia* is related to the (infra)structure³⁸ of undecidability as the “experience or experiment of the possibility of the impossible.”³⁹

Before laying out the structure of undecidability as the very way in which politics can be characterized, our first move will be to describe what one might call the *aporias* of the political. These apparently radical contradictions “involve the institution of social relation, the event of foundation that produces society as such.”⁴⁰ In a similar fashion, Derrida would say “that the deconstructive questioning is through and through a questioning of law and justice, a questioning of the foundation of law, morality, and politics.”⁴¹

In his article, “Force of Law,” Derrida presents three complex *aporias* that manifest how he puts the political, as justice, to the test of deconstruction. The first *aporia* emphasizes that while justice has to follow “the generality of a rule, a norm, or a universal imperative,”⁴² each decision requires a different and *fresh judgment*. For Derrida, one cannot claim to make a *just* decision as long as one simply follows a rule or a law. In a strict sense, *there is no decision*.⁴³ In order for a judge to make a just decision he has to “reconstitute the act of interpretation, as if, at the limit, the law [*loi*] did not exist previously – as if the judge himself invented it in each case.”⁴⁴ In other words, a just decision is at the same time *regulated* and *without regulation*. A just decision has to make reference to the law but also has to bracket and to reinvent the law through a new interpretation. Thus, every decision faces a moment of undecidability as its condition of possibility.

The moment of undecidability leads us to the second *aporia*. The question of undecidability, *often associated with deconstruction*, should not be understood in a logical sense, as a Kantian antinomy. Thus, the undecidable is not “an oscillation

³⁷ Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, trans. P.A. Brault and M. Naas, (Bloomington: IUP, 1992), p. 41

³⁸ We cannot debate here the question of the undecidability as *structure* or *infrastructure*. More details: Saul Newman, “Derrida’s deconstruction of authority,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 27(2001):1 and Noah Horwitz, “Derrida and the Aporia of the Political, or the Theologico-Political Dimension of Deconstruction,” *Research in Phenomenology*, 32(Sept., 2002):1

³⁹ Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading*, p. 41

⁴⁰ Noah Horwitz, “Derrida and the Aporia of the Political,” p. 157

⁴¹ Jacques Derrida, “Force of law,” p. 235

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 245

⁴³ One should recall here that for Carl Schmitt also the political decision has to free itself from all normative ties because in a normative procedural legal framework, “the autonomous moment of decision recedes to minimum.” Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1985), p. 12

⁴⁴ Jacques Derrida, “Force of law,” p. 251

between two contradictory and very determinate rules, each equally imperative.”⁴⁵ In this sense the respect for equality and universality must also take into account heterogeneity and singularity.⁴⁶ Derrida prefers the term *aporia* rather than antinomy because if the latter involves “contradictions and antagonisms among equally imperative laws,”⁴⁷ the former entails a constitutive experience of impossibility. What does Derrida mean when he uses this overloaded concept *of experience of impossibility*?

It has been said that the experience of the impossible “is the least bad definition of deconstruction.”⁴⁸ On the one hand, as Caputo and Scanlon point out, the experience of the impossible has to be understood as our deep desire to go “where the method proscribed by modernity prohibits; to cross this limits, to defy the border control, to think the unthinkable.”⁴⁹ On the other hand, for Derrida, one has to begin with the impossible in order to be set in motion. Moreover, this motion is a perpetual transgression because one thinks outside of what can be thought, according to the inheritance of the Enlightenment. It thinks the unthought, the non-passage, or as Derrida says, the *aporia*. Thereby, Derridean understanding of the impossible plays not simply a conceptual role, but also a structural one. Moreover, as long as the aporetic structure is applied to a variety of objects (gift, forgiveness, etc), the impossible becomes articulated as undecidability, as pure gift, as pure forgiveness, as pure hospitality, etc.

In this light, one might say with Derrida that the *ordeal of the undecidable* puts the subject in the impossibility of making a decision [*un sujet ne peut jamais rien décider*].⁵⁰ Even if a decision passes the impassable test, the phantom of undecidability will be always *caught, lodged* in every decision.⁵¹

The second *aporia* cannot be dissociated from an idea of infinite justice. Derrida claims that the idea of justice as an infinite attempt always *to come* implies the other as recipient of my address. “The *Idea of justice* is infinite, infinite because irreducible, irreducible because owed to the other – owed to the other, before any

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 252

⁴⁶ John Caputo writes in his article “The Hyperbolization of phenomenology” that “the opposite of undecidability is not decision, but programmability, which obviates decision by reducing decision to the conclusions of a set of premises.” in *Counter-Experiences: Reading Jean-Luc Marion*, ed. Kevin Hart (Notre Dame: Notre Dame UP, 2007), p. 75

⁴⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Aporias*, trans. Thomas Dutoit, (Stanford : SUP, 1993), p. 16

⁴⁸ J. Caputo and M. Scanlon, *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*, (Bloomington: IUP, 1999), p. 3

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Jacques Derrida, “Force of law,” p. 253

⁵¹ I deliberately avoid introducing here one of the synonyms of the phantom of undecidability: *khora*. Unfortunately, we cannot do justice to this important Derridean concept within the framework of this paper. However, one should at least point out the close relation with the notion of undecidability. For Derrida “the politics of *khora*, [is] the absolute indeterminacy, which is the only possible groundless ground for a universal, if not for reconciliation, at least for a universal politics beyond cosmopolitanism.” Richard Kearney, “Dialogue with Jacques Derrida,” *Philosophy Today*, 48(2004):1, p. 9

contract.”⁵² However, two questions deserve to be raised here. First, is justice *always* a relation to the other? Second, is justice always and necessarily a justice *to come*?

Derrida clearly says that unlike laws, which make the claim of universality, “justice always addresses itself to singularity, to the singularity of the other.”⁵³ In this analysis of justice as singularity, my responsibility for the other appears in the *straightforwardness of the welcome made to the face*. In this sense, justice cannot be reduced to a pragmatic legal calculation or to fair distribution. If we measure, estimate, or gauge responsibility, in other words if we render it finite by giving up “the infinitude of responsibility, there *will be* no responsibility.”⁵⁴ Thus, justice is a relation to the other⁵⁵ revealed by its very asymmetry.

The second question regarding the meaning of a *justice to come* leads us to the third aporia. However, does this mean that for Derrida the *idea of justice* is a Kantian regulative ideal or a pure advent? Derrida argues against these fixed horizons of expectation as long as they are defined as infinite progress or as a period of waiting. For him, as in the case of apartheid, justice cannot wait. In other words, the third aporia revolves around the urgency of justice. “A just decision is always required *immediately*, right away, as quickly as possible.”⁵⁶ Thus, all moments of decision or performative actions are *finite moments of urgency*.

What kind of judgment could one make if one does not possess all the necessary knowledge for a decision? Herein lies a paradox. A performative action cannot be just “except by grounding itself [*en se fondant*] in on conventions and so on other performatives.”⁵⁷ Therefore, a performative action will “always maintain within itself some irruptive violence.”⁵⁸ For this reason, *the overflowing of the performative*, justice is a possibility *to-come*. “The *to-come* of justice ensures that it remains present in law and its institutions only as a possibility and not as an expectation of idea regulator.”⁵⁹ In this sense, the structure of justice is inseparable from a certain form of promise or from a certain form of messianism.⁶⁰ How does Derrida understand this form of messianism?

For Derrida, the messianic, or messianicity without messianism, plays a double role. On the one hand, this form of advent appears in the *Specter of Marx* in

⁵² Jacques Derrida, “Force of law,” p. 254

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.248

⁵⁴ Jacques Derrida, “Remarks on deconstruction and pragmatism,” in Ch Mouffe (ed.), *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, (NY: Routledge, 1996), p. 86

⁵⁵ Derrida usually quotes Levinas’ definition of justice: “la relation avec autrui – c’est a dire la justice,” *Totality and Infinity*, (Pittsburg, DUP, 1969), p. 89 – in Derrida, “Force of Law,” p. 250

⁵⁶ Derrida, “Force of Law,” p. 255

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 256

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Roberto Buonamano, “The Economy of Violence: Derrida on Law and Justice,” *Ratio Juris*, 11(June 1998):2, p. 173

⁶⁰ “It is also why messianism is inseparable from justice.” Jacques Derrida, “Deconstruction of actuality,” *Radical Philosophy*, 68(Autumn, 1994), p. 32

the context of desire for an impossible justice. Hamlet understands that law stems from vengeance. Derrida asks, therefore, “Can there be a quasi-messianic day for a justice that will be infinitely heterogeneous as its source?”⁶¹ Derrida, through the definition of justice as messianic, opens a possible expectation for a pure justice unstained by violence.

On the other hand, justice is messianic because it is an opening for the future, “the coming of the other as an advent of justice, but without horizon of expectation and without prophetic prefiguration.”⁶² The other, the singular, is an event such that “no anticipation sees its coming.”⁶³ By introducing this ethical dimension, Derrida does not only problematize the space of politics, but even more he designates one of its limits. In other words, as Caputo notices, deconstruction *takes place in the interval that separates the undeconstructability of justice from the deconstructibility of law*. This interval is “the distance between the singular – which is somehow beyond or in excess of the law and the universal.”⁶⁴ Thus, the singular, the event, the unforeseeable, is the undeconstructible justice which plays the role of one of the limits of politics.

Moreover, the idea of justice means openness, and thereby it founds the political. The *double bind*⁶⁵ of the aporetic structure reminds us that justice is “the experience of absolute alterity.”⁶⁶ On one side one has to calculate, to negotiate, and on the other side, one has to demonstrate respect for an incalculable justice. This Derridean double gesture does not only show that the political (decision, law, justice) must always be thought with respect to an impossible experience but also that all excess is “very close to the bad, even to the worst.”⁶⁷ Thus, before applying the theoretical outcome of the second section of our paper to the particular situation of the South African apartheid, we should sum up the main characteristics of the structure of law. A privileged way to achieve this is to return to the initial question of this section and to apply it to the particular level of politics.

What kind of experience is this experience of *aporetic politics*? At the first sight, it seems to be an impossible experience, a non-experience, or “an experience of the nonpassage.”⁶⁸ It is important to point out that for Derrida this experience “is not necessarily negative.”⁶⁹ Why does Derrida push for a positive aporetic outcome? For him, the question of politics should not be understood in antinomic terms because it does not involve logical contradictions that can be

⁶¹ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, (NY: Routledge, 1994), p. 21

⁶² Derrida, “Faith and Knowledge – Two Sources of “religion” at the limits of reason alone,” in *Acts of religion*, (NY: Routledge, 2002), p. 56

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ John Caputo, “Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics,” p. 8

⁶⁵ Derrida, *Aporia*, p. 15

⁶⁶ Derrida, “Force of Law,” p. 257

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Derrida, *Aporia*, p.12 “Aporia is a nonpath.” Derrida, “Force of Law,” p.244

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

overcome. "The contradiction of equally valid and necessary propositions found in an antinomy is solved by showing how it is *apparent or illusory*."⁷⁰ In contrast, the *aporia* becomes the constitutive element for all possible experience showing constantly the *double relation*⁷¹ between thought and action. We could say with Derrida that the condition of possibility of politics is its own "condition of impossibility."⁷²

The aporetical political situation is an experience that we try to overcome but that we will never surpass. It is an *interminable experience* and in this sense it is directly related to our decision and responsibility. "The condition of possibility of this thing called responsibility is a certain *experience or experiment of the possibility of the impossible*."⁷³ If this *aporia* is the very condition of our ethical and political responsibility, our moral duties will have to be *duties that must owe nothing in order to be a duty*.

Last, as we have seen, the structure of an *aporia* as well as the structure of law discloses an endless experience. In the case of justice, this experience is a singular experience of the other. In other words, it is a relational *difference*.⁷⁴ On one hand, it is a relation "to what is other, to what differs in the sense of alterity, to the singularity of the other – but *at the same time* it also relates to what is to come, to that which will occur in ways which are inappropriable, unforeseen, and beyond anticipation."⁷⁵ Derrida would argue that this openness to the future as a promise is the condition that makes possible the event and thereby the political event as decision, justice, and responsibility. This leads to the last part of our paper where we attempt to see whether or not our theoretical model can be applied to the apartheid system.

3. A political application of deconstruction

As we have seen with Caputo, deconstruction is a movement that constantly traverses, explores, investigates, studies, or analyzes the space between its two conditions of possibility: first, "the deconstructability of the law or of legitimacy" and second, "the undeconstructability of justice."⁷⁶ This interval is the "distance between the singular and the universal."⁷⁷ If we make a thought experiment and place

⁷⁰ Noah Horwitz, "Derrida and the Aporia of the Political," p. 158

⁷¹ Derrida's famous name for this double relation is the *double bind*. This double gesture can be found in the main part of Derrida's writings. For more details: Derrida, *Aporia*, p.15-6

⁷² Jacques Derrida, *Aporia*, p. 15

⁷³ Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading*, p. 41

⁷⁴ "Without lateness, without delay, but without presence, it is the precipitation of an absolute singularity, singular because differing, precisely, and always other, binding itself necessarily to the form of the instant, in *imminence* and in *urgency*: even if it moves towards what remains to come, there is the *pledge* [le gage] (promise, engagement, ..., and so forth)." in Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, trans. P. Kamuf, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 31

⁷⁵ Jacques Derrida, "Deconstruction of actuality," p. 31

⁷⁶ John Caputo, "Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics," p. 8

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

our case study in this interval, not only will the failures of apartheid be highlighted, but moreover the limits that Derrida delineates to politics will play as a corrective to this situation. In other words, if one takes into consideration that deconstruction moves between the “failed universal and the inaccessible singular,”⁷⁸ one would have to consider these two limits not only as bottom lines outside of which reigns an economy of violence but also as conditions of possibility for a different politics.

There are three main points that I would like to emphasize in this last section. First, as Derrida shows, the question of political performativity needs to be legitimized within a whole nation. Second, each black person has to be understood as “the place of a categorical imperative”⁷⁹ for whom I carry “a responsibility without limits, incalculable, and before memory.”⁸⁰ Last, I will address the question of the limits of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa.

Derrida writes that in South Africa, despite the establishment in 1955 of The Charta of Freedom, “this constitutional law had not only, both in fact and in practice, taken the form of a singular coup de force, but this violent act at once produced and presupposed the unity of the nation.”⁸¹ This performative constitution was not only a bad coup or a bad blow but even more a failure because “it had only a particular will, that of a part of a population, a limited sum of private interests, those of the white minority.”⁸² Its violence resides in its own fiction, in its own simulacrum produced by the fact that this constitutional performativity proclaimed *what in the form of a constative act it merely claims*. Derrida thinks that in order to avoid its originating violence, a performative act has to be founded on the basis of conventions equally shared by the entire population. He highlights that in South Africa not only were general conventions not respected, but the violence was too important and the distribution of wealth too unbalanced. Moreover, this violence of the origin “found a pathological proliferation of juridical prostheses destined to legalize to the slightest details the effects of fundamental racism, of a state of racism, the unique and the last in the world.”⁸³

In spite of the Charter of Freedom which states that “South Africa belongs to all its inhabitants, black and white,” these differences prove how the general will of the entire nation has failed to realize *the impossible universal*. For Derrida “the will of the entire nation, in any case the general will, should erase itself from all empirical determination.”⁸⁴ In other words, this *quasi-transcendental* of an impossible universal should never be fixed in a historical situation, a political

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16

⁷⁹ Derrida, “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, In Admiration,” p. 27

⁸⁰ Derrida, “The Force of Law,” p. 24 7

⁸¹ Derrida, “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, In Admiration,” p. 17

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 18

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20

structure, as something that could be achieved in a certain way, but it has to be always to come.

Derrida shows how a political intention can never be fulfilled by an immediate meaning, which “must constantly extend beyond the historical, national, geographical, linguistic, and cultural limits of its phenomenal origin.”⁸⁵ This is the reason why he claims that everything should begin by uprooting. Thus, Derrida would say that the structure of law [the political in general] despite *the historical place of its formation or formulation, of its revelation or presentation*, is a kind of structure that “tends toward universality.”⁸⁶

The second limit that Caputo assigns to deconstruction is the undeconstructability of justice. He continues, “This is what makes deconstruction possible, indeed is inseparable from it.”⁸⁷ How does Derrida apply this notion to the South African case?

On one hand, we have seen that a mere conformity to the law does not insure justice. The example of apartheid strongly proves this fact. Only a *fresh judgment* that would completely abolish, and not reinvent, the apartheid laws of the South African legal system could escape from this perversion. In this light, a just decision is certainly not a calculation, or a simple procedural application, but more than ever it has to pass the ordeal of the undecidable “in which our respect for the universal trembles before *the unique singularity of the unsumable example*.”⁸⁸

Derrida notes that the respect for the law implies an obligation of respect for the other “in his singularity.”⁸⁹ Thereby, for Derrida, when Mandela speaks about the conflict between the law and his conscience, he confirms that his conscience of law is based on an interior principle that recognizes this limit of singularity. Justice is infinite, irreducible because owed to the other, *to the coming of the other as always other singularity*. Therefore, we could say with Caputo that “the undeconstructability of justice has to do with the impossibility of singularity.”⁹⁰ If justice exists, it has to be a *hyperbolic demand* for the other.

On the other hand, as Mandela thinks, justice is a promise. In other words, justice is that messianic moment never fully achieved and always to come. This idea of justice cannot be fixed in an historical moment or reduced to a horizon of expectation. This is the reason that Diane Enns understands justice as a corrective to apartheid, so long as it is an emancipatory promise for the liberation struggles.⁹¹ This is the only form of justice that for Derrida allows “a universalizable culture of

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22

⁸⁷ John Caputo, “Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics,” p. 8

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10

⁸⁹ Derrida, “The Laws of Reflection: Nelson Mandela, In Admiration,” p. 37

⁹⁰ John Caputo, “Hyperbolic Justice: Deconstruction, Myth, and Politics,” p. 16

⁹¹ Diane Enns, “Emancipatory Desire and the Messianic Promise,” *Philosophy Today*, 44(2000), p. 181-184

singularities, a culture in which the abstract possibility of the impossible translation could nevertheless be announced.”⁹² However, after all the violence of apartheid, is this future South African society possible without reconciliation?

In 1995, the South African Parliament signed the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act. Is this act of reconciliation of the South African society the result a pure political will or of “a miracle”⁹³ as some have said? In other words, did the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process lead to reconciliation and healing?

Lyn Graybill emphasizes that South Africa’s choice was rather to “pardon” than to “punish” the criminals of apartheid. Mandela as the figure of the great reconciler motivated this exceptional choice. Did this political institution realize its goals? Despite a criticism for compromise “between the morally ideal and the politically possible,”⁹⁴ the commission led, “if not to perfect reconciliation, then at least to the possibility of coexistence in this once deeply divided society.”⁹⁵ However, Derrida raises two questions regarding the effectiveness of the pardon or of this process of forgiveness. First, is “the scene of forgiveness a personal face-to-face, or does it call for some institutional mediation?”⁹⁶ Second, does one forgive as long as his forgiveness is not “beyond the exchange and even the horizon of a redemption and reconciliation?”⁹⁷

Derrida thinks that forgiveness can be engaged only between two singularities, and as long as the third element mediates, one may speak about reconciliation, but not about pure forgiveness. Thus, for Derrida, forgiveness has nothing to do with the public or political sphere. Moreover, Derrida says “forgiveness should never amount to a therapy of reconciliation.”⁹⁸ If forgiveness enters into a system of exchange it does not simply annihilate itself but even more it loses its purity and unconditionality. Thereby, it fixes itself in an object and forgets its vocation, which is to forgive the unforgivable. Derrida concludes by pointing out his powerlessness regarding a decision that should be made between “a hyperbolic ethical vision of forgiveness and the reality of a society at work in a pragmatic process of reconciliation.”⁹⁹ The two poles are irreducible and between the ideal and the empirical, the latter should always *refer* to the former.

In conclusion, one might say that the case of apartheid shows how deconstruction is at play, not only on a theoretical level when it abstracts and limits the structure of law [the space of politics], but also on a practical level when its

⁹² Derrida, “Faith and Knowledge – Two Sources of “religion” at the limits of reason alone,” p. 56

⁹³ Desmond Tutu, “We are going to make it,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 30, 1994

⁹⁴ Lyn Graybill, *Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*, (Boulder: Rienner Pub, 2002), p. 177

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), p. 42

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 51

main elements function as correctives to a given political situation. It has often been said that deconstruction leaves Derrida with nothing positive to say about politics.¹⁰⁰ However, at least in the apartheid case, one has to acknowledge the productive force of deconstruction to intervene and to involve itself in politics.¹⁰¹

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¹⁰¹ I am grateful for the numerous discussions I had with many people on this topic. Particularly, I want to thank Martin Matušík, Dan Smith, Vern Cisney, and Damon Boria for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. I would like to dedicate this paper to two Derridean fellows of mine: Sebastian Big and Bogdan Honorius Micu.

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BEYOND THE TRANSPARENT MIND: A FOUCAULTIAN APPROACH TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE*

MOHAMMADREZA TAHMASBI**

ABSTRACT. One of the most important events in the twentieth century was the invention of the computer. From the beginning of the computer era, some scientists have held that computers can think and act like human beings. Based on this view, these machines have mind and we are justified to say that these are intelligent machines. Behind this effort, there is a fundamental philosophical attitude. I will argue that: 1) modern philosophy and the most important notion of it, cogito, are foundations of this project which is named Artificial Intelligence; and 2) based on a Foucaultian vision, the hyperbolic version of Artificial Intelligence is impossible.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Cogito, Phenomenology, Transcendental ego, The unthought.

Introduction

Artificial Intelligence, abbreviated as AI, is a branch of the Computer sciences which deals with the imitation of human intelligence. The goal of scientists devoted to AI is to make a machine which can express the intelligent abilities of human beings, such as speaking, learning, problem-solving, argumentation and doing everyday duties.¹ These efforts are based on a similarity between the human mind and machine. The crucial problem in AI is related to the degree of similarity between the two and should therefore categorize three differing versions of AI. For determining the version of AI, we should encounter to three different questions. Firstly, is a machine capable of intelligent activities? Secondly if a machine can, does it carry out intellectual activities in the same manner as humans? Thirdly, if a machine does intellectual activities similar to human beings, are we justified to say that machine has a mind? If we say yes only to the first question it means that we accept the weak version of AI. If we say yes to the second question it means that we accept the strong version of AI. Finally to say yes to the third question means that we accept the hyperbolic version of AI in which a machine can express itself in a similar manner of intelligence as human beings. Based on this

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¹ Born, 1988, pp. VII-VIII.

position, AI has psychological properties and mental states such as sensation, consciousness, and volition in that we can say machine has mind.²

The hyperbolic version of AI which has not yet been established is still a matter of philosophical controversy.³

For achieving hyperbolic AI we should program machines to be able to speak, learn, work and argue like a human does. For this purpose, we need a fundamental ground which is based on the optimal clarity of the human mind. We can attain hyperbolic AI if our knowledge of the nature of the human mind is complete in that we can say it is completely transparent and lucid for us. For example, in order for our supposed machine to use language and speak like human beings, we must be confident in knowing every process which is required in using language by human beings. It should be considered that, it is not necessary to know all aspects and mechanisms of human mind now, however, we must be confident that we are able to know all things about human mind, namely; there is no anything which is unknowable for our knowledge. In philosophical term, the main problem in hyperbolic AI is the possibility of acquiring complete transparency about human mind and knowing everything about it. The apparent mind is the most important foundation for hyperbolic AI, and the non-thought aspect can make this project impossible.

Modern thought not only follows this transparency, but believes it is possible. Rene Descartes as a father of modern philosophy was passionate for clarity and lucidity and his cogito was a symbol for his desire.

The Transparency of Cartesian Cogito As a Foundation For Hyperbolic AI

In first meditation by means of hyperbolic doubt, Descartes claimed that there is nothing in the world. Then, in second meditation, he found his Archimedesian point in cogito sum. After this success he wrote "But I do not yet know clearly enough what I am, I who am certain that I am."⁴ Following this question he tried to discover his quiddity. At first, he rejected the traditional definitions of human nature, like reasonable animal, then he denied that he is a body because of the hyperbolic doubt. After rejection of all possibilities, he found his answer:

I am, I exist, that is certain. But how often? just when I think; for it might possibly be the case if I cease entirely to think, that I should likewise cease altogether to exist... I am, however, a real thing and really exist; but what thing? I have answered: a thing which thinks.⁵

Hence, Cartesian ego is a thing which only thinks. Coplestone writes "all he intended to assert was that the I whose existence I assert in cogito ergo sum is a

² Lycan, 1999, p. 7.

³ For discussion about philosophy of Artificial Intelligence see Boden, Margaret A. (1992).*The Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence*. Oxford:Oxford University Press.

⁴ Descartes, 2003, p. 72

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 73-4.

thinking thing”⁶. But it should be considered that, thought for Descartes compromises all mental acts. “But what then I am? A thing which thinks. what is a thing which thinks? It is a thing which doubts, understands,(conceives),affirms, denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels.”⁷ So, Cartesian ego is equivalent to cogito which is equivalent to mind. Since cogito is a thought which thinks itself consciously, Cartesian ego or Cartesian mind is thoroughly consciousness and nothing more, so it is completely lucent and transparent. Yet there was a problem for him in how the human mind could error? He answered to this question by means of incongruity between understanding and volition:

Whence then come my errors? They come from the sole fact that since the will is much wider in its range and compass than the understanding, I do not restrain it within the same bounds but extend it also to things which I do not understand⁸.

Hence, arriving at the error is not related to the obscure aspect of things and mind, and there is no point which is unavailable for human consciousness. In only one position of Meditations, Descartes asked himself about being a dark point which is not lucid for him? “perhaps there is in me some faculty fitted to produce these ideas-(ideas which appear to me to proceed from certain objects that are outside me)-without the assistance of any external things even though it is not yet known by me”.⁹ In fact, he asked himself if there is a thing which is not reflected by cogito and is the source of human’s errors? Finally, he got rid of this problem by use of theological notion, The God. “He-God-cannot be a deceiver”¹⁰. Because we are assured that God is not deceiver, we are justified to believe in everything which is clear and different for our thought or consciousness.

For Descartes, the human mind totally is reflected by cogito in that there is no unknowable aspect in it and it is infinite and completely clear for us. Also In the Cartesian system, none of the intellectual activities relates to body. So, if mind is clear and transparent to me, the mechanism of all intellectual and thoughtful activities will be clear. Therefore, based on Cartesian vision , ego is equivalent to transparent cogito, and the roots of all intelligent actions and behaviors of it, is grounded in its consciousness. Hence the Cogito is a foundation of hyperbolic AI. Descartes himself, knew that all things about human have not been discovered in his era, but he strongly believed in the possibility of attaining maximum transparency about human and his mind. He demonstrated his hope by establishing the tree of knowledge in which each science has its special position. His tree of knowledge was based on Cartesian metaphysics which is established upon cogito. In Cartesian view, in all branches of knowledge, human can attain clear and different notions

⁶ Copleston, 1985, p. 94

⁷ Descartes, 2003, p. 75

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 93.

and thus enable us to explore the human mind completely. He tried to do this duty by writing a special psychological treatise; *The passions of the soul*.

After Descartes, cogito has been survived in modern thought. In twentieth century when computer scientists devoted their efforts to AI, Cartesian cogito as a conscious and transparent ego was re-formulated in Husserlian thought as an apotheosis of modern philosophy.

Edmund Husserl: The Transparent Transcendental Ego Against The Non-Transparent Life-World

Three centuries after the Descartes' *Meditations*, Edmund Husserl formulated his philosophy as the apotheosis of modern thought. His philosophy, like his antecedent, Descartes, is intended to clarity. Husserl believed in the possibility of clarity and set his philosophy as the philosophy of consciousness. The most important point in Husserlian system is phenomenology. Based on his view, philosophy is a science and phenomenology is its method. Husserl believed that phenomenology is a pure science which deals with consciousness. He was thinking that the nature and structure of human consciousness had not been unravelled by his time. Husserlian phenomenology was an effort devoted to discover the structure of human consciousness.

After Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Emmanuel Levinas considered his phenomenology as the apotheosis of the philosophy of cogito.¹¹ His effort for overcoming the gap between subject and object, and establishing objectivity based on subjectivity, was the other version of Cartesian project. He accepted that Descartes was right when he wrote that cogito sum. When I doubt everything I cannot doubt my conscious act, and I cannot deny that I am. Phenomenology corresponds with the Cartesian method. The first step of phenomenology is *Epoche* which is identical with normative doubt. "The aim of both is to expose the transcendental structures of consciousness itself."¹² Consciousness is intentionality or aboutness. All acts of the human mind, such as seeing, hearing, and even loving are intentions toward something. The concept of intentionality is a Husserlian version of cogito, but instead of thinking of an ontological position of mind as a thoughtful substance as Descartes did, Husserl preferred to consider the structure of mind. Consciousness is not similar to other things in nature and is a unique thing. phenomenology, as Husserl considered it, was the description of consciousness, so the most important subject of this science was ego. Husserl himself considered phenomenology as an egology. As a result of egology, he found out that transcendental ego is a stream of consciousness and ego is equal to intentionality.¹³ Husserl accepted the Cartesian notion of mind; *ego cogito cogitatum* - a mind which thinks and at the same time is an object of the act of thinking (a mind thinks itself).

¹¹ Moran, 2000, p. 16

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 136

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 168-9

But he rejected that ego is a part of nature as Descartes assumed, ego is completely different from nature. The relationship between ego and consciousness is a special one. The consciousness has ego rather than there being an ego which produces consciousness. Ego or subject of knowledge is identical with a stream of consciousness¹⁴. Hence, Husserlian ego, like Cartesian ego, was completely transparent and clear and there is no turbidity in it. The mind which Husserl discovered by phenomenology was truly and fully transparent. Consciousness and I are the same, and I am nothing but consciousness.

When Husserl tried to answer this question of how human knows other minds, he referred to horizontal intentionality. When my consciousness encounters with another mind, my intentionality is no longer vertical such as when I encounter with things. Horizontal intentionality in contrary to Vertical intentionality as it does not objectify others. I intend to another mind as a subject like me, not as an object like a thing. All human minds have horizontal intentionality, and an aggregation of horizontal intentionalities produces an intersubjective space which Husserl named as a life-world. In relation to all acts of knowing in subject, life-world is a priori from all experiences and knowledge. The foundation of all our experiences formulated in our consciousness is established in life-world. All phenomena are known and experienced on that ground, and the life-world is a context which is correlated to all our conscious experiences. Objects, persons, facts, values, numbers and all knowledge which we acquire, are abstracted from life-world which is a priori from them. Hence, life-world is a framework of all epistemological activities of the human mind, and objectivity is plausible on the base of it. Life-world is experienced by subject as a whole, and is the absolute foundation for all philosophical, scientific, and moral functions. It is an interwoven context, which all conscious aspects of the human mind such as social, political, scientific, philosophical, aesthetic, mythological, emotional, and judgment value are founded upon. But, is it possible to describe the life-world by means of phenomenology? This is the most important question. Husserl tried to do this, but any description of life-world should consider it as an interwoven whole unique context each part of which has a complex and poly-sided relationship with other parts in that it cannot be isolated from them. In addition, for acquiring philosophical knowledge of the life-world, we need to know all historical forces which have shaped the civilization on which the life-world is dependent. Husserl was unsuccessful, and finally he concluded that , culture, tradition, and traditional conventions determine life-world. “when we are thrown in to an alien social sphere, that of Negroes in the Congo, Chinese peasants, etc. we discover that their truths, the facts that for them are fixed, generally verified or verifiable, are by no means the same as ours”.¹⁵ Hence, there is not one life-world for all human cultures, and each culture has a special life-world which justifies

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-2

¹⁵ Husserl, 1969, p. 139

objectivity by its special manner.¹⁶ As a result, although Husserlian ego was established in a completely transparent position, this ego or transparent stream of consciousness is rooted in the non-transparent and the unclear context which is not lucid for human consciousness. This non-transparency is the strongest obstacle for achieving hyperbolic AI and it can be expressed elaborately based on the philosophy of Michel Foucault.

Foucaultian approach to the fundamental notion of hyperbolic AI

Commentators of philosophy of Michel Foucault believe that we cannot easily classify his ideas by use of commonplace notions and thoughts which were prevalent in his time. His earlier thought was affected by the innovation of the notion of the unconsciousness by Sigmund Freud and the studying of the relationship between knowledge and economics by Karl Marx. In his later thought, the influence of Heidegger and mostly Nietzsche becomes apparent as well. In general, commentators have divided his thoughts to two periods; archaeology (early Foucault) and genealogy (late Foucault). Although this division is useful for knowing Foucault's writings, there actually is not a real gap between the two periods of thought. In fact, Foucault in his later thought (genealogy) reanalyzed his early works. In genealogical writings, he returned to central concepts of his archaeological writings especially around subjection and objection. Hence, we can see a connection between the two periods. Generally, his efforts were limited to determine the philosophical and historical conditions of the rise of a modern notion, i.e. human, which simultaneously is the subject and the object of knowledge. These considerations may help us to approach the fundamental notion of hyperbolic AI, i.e. transparent ego (completely knowledgeable mind) by building upon the achievements of Foucault. In, *The order of things*, Foucault said: "the I think does not, in its case, lead to the evident truth of the I am"¹⁷. This proposition is based on Foucault's statements about analytic of finitude and rising human as a modern notion. He believed that during the latter part of the eighteenth century, one of the most important epistemological changes occurred. This momentous change permitted the rising of human and represented the finishing of the classic era and simultaneously rising of the modern era. Foucault did not give precise argumentations about the causes of this change but this transfiguration caused the rise of a being that is at the same time the subject and object of knowledge. In other words a being that is both spectator and spectacle.¹⁸ In modern episteme, human is posited in a vague position. On the one hand, three momentous things; life, labor and language have formulated his concrete being. This is based on the idea that human has been placed as an animal in the animal kingdom, using language for speaking, and as a

¹⁶ Moran, 2000, p.182

¹⁷ Foucault, 1997, p. 324

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 312

worker animal, trapped in complex relationships which are founded on his needs and his labor that is used for satisfying those needs. On the other hand, because he is placed on a double position (subject and object of knowledge) he wants to know himself, and he is going to acquire knowledge about the something which causes his concreteness. Based on these realities, the vague position of human being is formulated. His knowledge reminds him that rules and the laws of life, labor, and language are formulating his concrete being while at the same time his aim is to acquire positive knowledge about them. Biology, economics and philology are modern sciences by which human is going to obtain positive knowledge about himself. His positive knowledge shows that life, language and rules of production are a priori from his concrete being. He who is a living thing that is under the dominancy of the laws of life, and is captured by the laws of production. In addition, he uses and transfers words which have been used long before him. For speaking he must follow the rules of a language which is imposed upon him. There is a kind of apriority which is not able to wipe out by any means¹⁹. While some special rules are formulating and shaping my existence, how can I put them in bracket and explain them? While modern subject lives, works, speaks based on the laws of life, labor and language, his aim is to know these laws positively.

The modern themes of an individual who lives, speaks and works in accordance with the laws of an economics, a philology, and a biology, but who also, by a sort of internal torsion and overlapping has acquired the right through the interplay of those very laws, to know them to total clarification-all this themes so familiar to us today and linked to the existence of human sciences are excluded by classical thought.²⁰

As Professor Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow said: “Thus man emerges not merely as both subject and object of knowledge, but even more paradoxically, as organizer of the spectacle in which he appears”.²¹

Positive knowledge which explains the laws of life, labor and language, reminds the human that he is limited by these laws. By means of physiology, anatomy and neurology, we know the unavoidable fundamental limitations of our biological structure. By knowing the rules and laws of production, we understand that human is completely occupied by it. For example he is alienated from himself because of the conditions of industrial production, and similarly our knowledge about language says to us that senses cannot be transferred because of the structure of language in which we use. Human knows well, these limitations are not avoidable and reducible. But modern human reacted to this situation relently. He used the limitation as a foundation for positive knowledge and changed it to an advantage. He accepted the limitation not as an exterior determiner, but as a fundamental finitude

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 313

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 310

²¹ Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 29

which is placed in human innately and make possible positive knowledge. Based on Foucault's vision, the definition of the analytic of finitude, which we can find the apotheosis of it in philosophy of Kant, is the limit of knowing which is rooted in human as a ground for positive knowledge. In analytic of finitude the existence of human can make a foundation for determination of something which can show him his finitude. In fact, limitation is on the one hand as a finitude and on the other hand as the source of all truths. "This attempt to treat factual limitations as finitude and then make finitude the condition of the possibility of the all facts is an entirely new notion".²² There is a special relationship between the limitation of human knowledge, and life, language, and labor; since he is trapped by them, his knowledge is finitude, also the finitude of our knowledge is the cause of our positive knowledge of language, labor, and life. For modern thought, language, labor, and life which have their special beings, historicities, and rules make the knowledge infinitude, and conversely the limitation of knowledge permits us to acquire the positive knowledge of them. The analytic of finitude which is a remark of modern thought presents a kind of knowledge about the quiddity of human being that three double concepts are involved in it. Transcendental dimension of human correlates empirical dimension of him, and in the same way cogito correlates of the unthought, also the retreat correlates the return of the origin.²³ Hence, in virtue of modernity the human is known "as surrounded by what he cannot get about (the unthought), and yet as a potentially lucid cogito, source of all intelligibility"²⁴. These doubles are characteristics of human being in modern era, and the ways for knowing him. Hence, the relationship between cogito and the unthought is a characteristic of human being.

The Unthought And The Impossibility of Hyperbolic AI

Foucault believed that the centre of modern thought is cogito. Although the modern cogito is rooted in Cartesian cogito, Foucault separates modern cogito from Cartesian cogito. Descartes considered the cogito as a general form of thought and aimed to save his thought by means of it. As soon as he could consider the cogito as a rigid base, he could obtain the desired standard for deliverance of error and illusion. Therefore Cartesian cogito is against the field of error and illusion and is not rooted in that field.

In modern cogito however, thought-conscious-of-itself and whatever, within thought is rooted in the unthought. As a matter of fact, both cogito reduce all things to thought, but in comparison modern cogito assigns thought to an inert network of something which cannot be thought.²⁵ Foucault writes that in Husserlian thought the unthought is a primary and introductory ground in which human must order and shape himself. The unthought which is the unthought aspect of human is the foundation for

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 315-7

²⁴ Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p.31

²⁵ Foucault, 1997, pp. 323-4

the act of thinking.²⁶ As mentioned, Husserl at the end of his phenomenological efforts reached to the conclusion that the objectivity which is attained by transcendental ego is founded on the life-world that cannot be clear and transparent for the human mind. As a result of Husserlian`s works; “Husserl`s disciplined phenomenological description led him to see that all explicit experience of objects takes for granted a background of practices and relations to other objects”²⁷. Hence, in Husserlian phenomenology thought refers to the unthought and founds itself upon it by continuously reinforcing the priority of the unthought to cogito.²⁸ This priority re-interpreted by Foucault. A human being is placed in an organism which he cannot completely penetrate into by his thought. He uses a language which is much older than him and cannot dominate over it, and thus his needs and desires are imposed upon him. All of them are necessary conditions for thought, and the act of thinking is impossible without them. For this reason, it is necessary to make transparent and clarify the unthought, if human being wants to attain the complete understanding of himself. However, since the unthought is a foundation for thought, it retreats, and it cannot be absorbed by cogito. The totality of human being is understood based on the unavailable field. Hence, “the modern cogito is not so much the discovery of an evident truth as a ceaseless task constantly to be undertaken afresh”²⁹. Modern human is a kind of being in which there are two aspects, one is reflected in cogito and another is not reflected in it. The human thought is captured in and circumscribed by an unthinkable field. Therefore, there is no precise description about human being in modern episteme.³⁰ Foucault says: “How can man think what he does not think”³¹. How the thing which is unthinkable can be thought. The human being can think and speak only by means of things which are beyond his thought, so it is impossible for him to clarify it by means of his thought and language. Hence, “the I think does not, in its case, lead to the evident truth of the I am”.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Cogito is circumscribed in a dark field which cannot be thought, and for this reason cannot be reflected by cogito. The dark region is the foundation and root of cogito and the ground for act of thinking. Cogito neglects the non-thought aspect of human being so it is not equal to the totality of being of human. Artificial Intelligence, which has been founded upon cogito, cannot think and speak like a human being, since the field which can make possible for a human to think and speak is remote for his thought and data processing.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 327

²⁷ Dreyfus&Rabinow, 1982, p.36

²⁸ Foucault, 1997, .pp.325-6

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 324

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 326

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 323

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RECENZII – BOOK REVIEWS

**La multitude introuvable. Quelques remarques concernant
le nouveau sujet de l'histoire**

Chronique de l'action implacable et dramatique du pouvoir, témoin de la violence comme horizon indépassable, la philosophie politique cherche les dernières années de reconfigurer son espace théorique. C'est dans cette logique qu'on peut lire la *Fabrique de porcelaine. Pour une nouvelle grammaire du politique*¹, l'un des dernières livres d'Antonio Negri. Le volume réunit plusieurs leçons données par l'auteur au Collège International de Philosophie.

En partant de la question: comment les catégories modernes du politique peuvent être soumises à une critique et comment élaborer une nouvelle grammaire de la politique, Antonio Negri constate le caractère homogène des théories politiques modernes. Selon le philosophe italien, la modernité politique est bâtie sur une interprétation univoque du pouvoir en tant que structure transcendante ou souveraine. C'est pour cela que toutes les théories modernes se closent dans une sorte de dialectique du pouvoir, impossible à dépasser. Soit on prend le pouvoir et on est condamné à devenir une image de celui-ci, de lui ressembler, soit on nie le pouvoir et l'on essaie de reconfigurer l'espace politique comme un lieu du non-pouvoir. Evidemment, l'intention de Negri est d'échapper à cette dialectique. Cette opération est rendue plus facile par le fait que Negri est convaincu que la modernité, en tant que grille de lisibilité de l'histoire, est finie.

¹ Antonio Negri, *Fabrique de porcelaine. Pour une nouvelle grammaire du politique*, traduction de Judith Revel, Éditions Stock, 2006.

Antonio Negri s'inscrit sans doute dans la série des penseurs qui ont critiqué l'inventaire conceptuel de la modernité. Mais, Negri ne veut pas démontrer que la modernité s'est progressivement érodée à cause de son destin nihiliste, il pense qu'elle est absolument finie. Selon le philosophe italien nous vivons maintenant dans la postmodernité, une époque qui se détache, radicalement et sans possibilité de retour, de la modernité.

La césure qui sépare d'une manière irréductible la modernité du post-moderne est déterminée par plusieurs phénomènes qui ont une autonomie relative, c'est-à-dire seulement du point de vue analytique. Il s'agit en premier lieu de la *dissolution de la souveraineté et de sa conversion dans la biopolitique*. La crise de la transcendance se manifeste en tant que *globalisation*, qui renferme le premier processus. L'élément décisif en est l'émergence du *travail immatériel*.

Le concept de «travail immatériel» a été inventé par le groupe politique italien connu sous le nom de *Potere Operaio*, dont Negri fut l'un des principaux animateurs. Ce concept essaie de capter le changement du travail en force de production sociale. Selon Negri, la dématérialisation du travail signifie que cette activité humaine doit être comprise en premier lieu comme une nouvelle forme de subjectivation, la seule efficace dans le capitalisme. Du point de vue de la généalogie historique du terme, «travail immatériel» renvoie à Marx, qui note dans *Grundrisse*: «Le développement de la grande industrie a pour conséquence que sa base, à savoir l'appropriation du

temps de travail d'autrui, cesse de représenter ou de créer la richesse. Le travail immédiat en tant que tel cesse d'être le fondement de la production, puisqu'il est transformé en une activité qui consiste essentiellement en surveillance et régulation; tandis que le produit cesse d'être créé par le travailleur individuel immédiat et résulte plutôt de combinaison de l'activité sociale que de la simple activité de producteur».

Mais, si dans la postmodernité se manifestent des éléments ou des processus d'une radicale nouveauté, cela ne signifie moins que cette époque n'est pas captive dans la logique du développement du capitalisme. Dès le début du livre, Antonio Negri examine les diverses positions philosophiques qui se sont rapportées au moment présent. Le philosophe italien critique vivement les thèses qui dramatisent l'action du capitalisme au point de n'envisager que des solutions messianiques pour lui faire opposition. Si Negri rejette ainsi les stratégies de Agamben et Derrida, il prend comme fil de développement de la nouvelle grammaire politique les théories de Foucault et Deleuze. Car, si la vie est renfermée par le capital, la solution n'est pas d'attendre, pour la libérer, un événement qui va bouleverser sa logique dominante, mais de développer une contre-hégémonie. C'est précisément dans ce point que la stratégie théorique de Negri se précise. Avant de tracer les nouvelles règles du politique, il faut premièrement déterminer le sol qui va soutenir tout l'échafaudage.

Le mécanisme qui déjoue la hégémonie capitaliste et assure en même temps une résistance immanente est la multitude. Mais, c'est précisément avec l'inscription de la multitude au cœur du raisonnement de Negri que sa construction d'un nouveau langage politique devient fluctuante, sinon obscure. Sans doute, il y a beaucoup d'explications concernant les fonctions et les usages de la multitude et

c'est peut-être cette multiplicité même qui fait que les strates de ce concept se soutiennent et se minent réciproquement.

La première fonction du concept de multitude est d'établir un sens trans-subjectif de l'action humaine et de lui reconnaître un potentiel révolutionnaire. Au début de la sixième *Thèse sur Feuerbach* on peut lire: «Feuerbach résout l'essence religieuse en l'essence humaine. Mais l'essence de l'homme n'est pas une abstraction inhérente à l'individu isolé. Dans sa réalité, elle est l'ensemble des rapports sociaux». Suivant Deleuze, Negri affirme «qu'il existe une activité subjective qui traverse le réel, quelque soit le degré de colonisation auquel celui-ci est soumis de la part du capitalisme, et qu'il existe par conséquent une virtualité, parfois une possibilité réelle, de transformer cette nouvelle subjectivité en résistance».

Mais comment fonctionne le transfert de l'individualité vers son multiple révolutionnaire? Il s'agit ici d'une règle d'agrégation transférée du corpus législatif de l'histoire? Dans ce point Negri préfère de rester silencieux et de bombarder le lecteur avec les multiples occurrences du principe de différenciation.

Sans doute, la multitude doit se composer «d'innombrables différences internes, qui ne sauraient être réduites à une unité ou à une identité singulière», pour mettre hors circuit le principe souverain d'unification. Mais cela n'empêche pas de constater la difficulté de penser une multiplicité sociale capable de fabriquer son *commun* tout en maintenant ses différences internes.

La multitude semble donc être une structure dynamique qui produit le liant social. Elle s'oppose au concept de classe ouvrière qui définit seulement un certain type de structure sociale, limitée du point de vue historique, car la classe ouvrière appartient au moment industriel de l'histoire.

En outre, la multitude se délimite du concept de peuple, car celui-ci est le résultat d'une opération souveraine. En fin, la multitude signifie toute autre chose que la masse, car la masse n'est qu'un opérateur politique créé rétrospectivement. La multitude ne peut être saisie, ni expliquée dans les termes du contrat juridique.

Si la multitude peut échapper aux mécanismes implacables du capitalisme c'est parce qu'elle s'identifie avec un stat de profondeur intouchable par la logique dominatrice. Comme le montre Negri dans un livre écrit avec Michel Hart et intitulé justement *Multitudes*, pour assurer un bon fonctionnement de ce principe il faut lui donner le pouvoir d'une nouvelle race: «Ces singularités agissent en commun et forment ainsi une nouvelle race, c'est-à-dire une subjectivité coordonnée politiquement et produite par la multitude». Et cela n'est possible que si l'on identifie ce concept avec la force de la vie: «la multitude est la force non formée de la vie, un élément de l'être. Telle la chair, la multitude est elle aussi orientée vers la plénitude de la vie. Le monstre révolutionnaire qui a pour nom multitude, et qui apparaît à la fin de la modernité, veut continuellement transformer notre chair en nouvelles formes de vies».

C'est à travers ces multiples opérations d'identification de la multitude avec la vie en tant que instance autonome d'autodifférenciation que le concept s'assure le statut de subjectivité créatrice. Mais il semble que seulement les principes de fonctionnement de la subjectivité ne sont pas suffisants pour que celle-ci passe à l'acte. Negri essaie de dépasser la vieille logique de la révolution qui ne se déclanche

qu'après une accumulation consistante d'injustice. Selon lui, la subjectivité multiple est déjà un moment privilégié de l'histoire. À la page 210 de *La Fabrique de porcelaine* on peut lire: «La révolution est une accélération du temps historique, la réalisation d'une condition subjective, d'un événement, d'une ouverture qui concourt à rendre possible une production de subjectivité irréductible et radicale».

Lors d'un entretien avec Eric Alliez intitulé *Peuple ou multitudes?*, Jacques Rancière exprime son point de vue, concernant l'usage du concept de multitude, selon lequel cette notion résume une sorte de retour de la politique totale: «Le concept de multitude oppose à celui de peuple la requête communiste: que la politique ne soit pas une sphère séparée, que tout soit politique, c'est-à-dire en fait que la politique exprime la nature du tout, la nature du non-séparé: que la communauté soit fondée dans la nature même de l'être en commun, de la puissance qui met de la communauté entre les étants en général».

Même si on partage l'élan contestataire d'Antonio Negri, ses efforts pour construire une alternative à l'hégémonie de l'Empire, nous ne pouvons pas nous empêcher de constater le caractère inopérant de son raisonnement. Le lecteur ne peut être jamais assuré que son concept de multitude n'est rien de plus qu'un petit dérèglement du principe souverain, une erreur de parcours de l'odyssée triomphale du capitalisme.

VAL-CODRIN TĂUT

Martin Endreß – Alfred Schütz, Konstanz: UVK, 2006, 156 S.

In der kontinuierlich wachsenden deutschsprachigen Schütz' Rezeption des letzten Jahrzehntes stellen Martin Endreß' Analysen einen unübergehenden Referenzpunkt dar. Einflussreicher und vom Autor selbst programmatisch weiterentwickelter Linie anthropologisch-pragmatischer Argumentationsstränge kommen ausgearbeitete Entwicklungen zu, die sich durch unschwer einsehbare Auseinandersetzung mit Schütz' wissenssoziologischer Problematik profilieren lassen. Dass seine Auffassungen hinsichtlich der Frage nach den Sinnstrukturen der Lebenswelt und deren Bedeutung für die Übersetzung als Transzendenzbewältigung andere Akzente als die Ethnomethodologie setzt, wird stets ausführlich dokumentiert.¹ So gelingt es Endreß in seinen Arbeiten in Anknüpfung an Schütz' Theorie der „Sinnprovinzen“ Elemente eines „allgemeinen Musters alltäglicher menschlicher Weltorientierung“² aufgrund der Transformation von Unvertrautem ins Vertraute hervorzuheben. Sodann führt Endreß' These nicht zur Umwandlung *einer* Wirklichkeit in selbstständig strukturierte „multiple realities“, sondern zu einer strukturellen Homogenität der Lebenswelt, die interkulturelle Verstehensprozesse fördert.

¹ Vgl. u. a. „Vertrauen und Vertrautheit. Phänomenologisch-anthropologische Grundlegung“, in M. HARTMANN & C. OFFE (Hg.) (2001) – *Vertrauen. Die Grundlage des sozialen Zusammenhaltes*, Frankfurt/M: Campus, 161 - 203; *Vertrauen*, Bielefeld: Transcript, 2002; „Die Einheit multipler Sinnordnungen in der sozialen Wirklichkeit“ in M. KAUFMANN (Hg.) (2003) – *Wahn und Wirklichkeit – Multiple Realitäten*, Frankfurt/M: Lang.

² ENDRESS 2002: 65.

Angesichts erscheinender „Alfred Schütz Werkausgabe“ prägt sich die vorliegende „Einführung“ als unabdingbarer Begleittext aus, dessen thematischer und konstant nuancierter Aufgabe es nahe liegt, einen strukturierten und umfassenden Überblick über Schütz' Gesamtwerk zu verschaffen. Trotz anfänglich vorgeschlagener Gesamtorientierung, geht es Endreß weder um eine einleitende und biographisch eingebettete Perspektive,³ noch um Darstellungen Schütz' facettenreichen Denkdukus.⁴ Demgegenüber nähert Endreß nun auslegend textimmanent Schütz' Schriften mit Bezug auf sein „wissenssoziologisches Profil“ an, vollzieht eine präzise Auswahl erklärungsbedürftiger Begrifflichkeit und bietet dadurch eine durchaus homogene Deutung an.

Selbst die eröffnenden Überlegungen über Schütz' Vita gewinnen aus der Perspektive einer freizulegenden phänomenologisch begründeten Wissenssoziologie neue Signifikanz. Die Aufsätze aus den 40er Jahren decken beispielsweise, so Endreß, nicht nur eine wissenssoziologische Problematik auf, sondern sie führen zugleich die Diskussion auf Lebenserfahrungen der Emigration („Der Fremde“, 1944) oder der Rückkehr von der Front des I. Weltkrieges („Der Keimkehrer“, 1945) zurück (S. 21ff). An dieser Stelle nur kurz erwähnter Wichtigkeit dieser Studien (darunter auch „Gleichheit und Sinnstruktur der sozialen

³ Vgl. M. BARBER (2005) – *The Participating Citizen. A Biography of Alfred Schütz*, Albany, NY: SUNNY.

⁴ Vgl. M. ENDRESS (1999) – „Alfred Schütz“, in D. KAESLER (Hg.) – *Klassiker der Soziologie*, München: Beck, 334 – 352.

Welt“, 1957) wird später (S. 119ff) eine am Spannungsverhältnis von *Vertrautem* und *Unvertrautem* orientierte Interpretation gewidmet.

Schütz' Werk ist vor allem durch den Wiener Ökonomiker Ludwig von Mises, Max Weber und Edmund Husserl beeinflusst. Während im Fall von Mises und Weber grundsätzlich die handlungs- bzw. sinnerfassungsorientierten Untersuchungen (S. 32, 44 bzw. 34f, 45) den Rahmen wissenssoziologischer Überlegungen bilden, räumt Endreß eine beherrschende Abgrenzung von Husserl ein.⁵ Einerseits übernimmt Schütz den Lebensweltbegriff, die Struktur der Typisierungen oder das Appräsentationsphänomen, distanziert sich aber andererseits erheblich von Husserl'schen „transzendental-philosophischen Geltungsansprüchen“ (S. 41). Diese theoretische Kluft ist prinzipiell an der Rekonstruktion der Sinnsetzungsprozesse abzulesen, solange Intersubjektivität und Sozialität als „invariante Strukturmerkmale alltäglicher Wirklichkeit“ (S. 117) gelten. Auf diese Weise soll, so Schütz, eine bewusstseinsorientierte *Konstitutionsanalyse* des Sinnphänomens durch eine *Strukturanalyse* der Sozialwelt ergänzt werden, zwei aufeinander bezogene Argumentationsschritte also, die Endreß anhand Schütz' *Sinnhaften Aufbaus der sozialen Wirklichkeit* (1932) thematisiert (S. 70ff).

Zugleich strukturanalytisch und wissenssoziologisch relevant ist die von Transzendenzen und Sinnprovinzen erschließende Kontextualisierung lebensweltlicher Sinndifferenzierung. Wenn sich *zeitlich-räumliche, soziale* und *außerall-*

tägliche Transzendenzen durch „Hier“ und „Jetzt“ der biographischen Situation strukturieren lassen, bringt, so Endreß, die Aufschichtung der Sozialwelt eine *kognitive* Unterscheidung zum Ausdruck (S. 89). Wichtig für die anvisierte Besprechung Schütz' wissenssoziologisches Zugriffs ist aber offensichtlich die Möglichkeit zu schildern, wie die Transzendenzen im Alltag *bewältigt* bzw. wie die Wirklichkeitsbereiche *überbrückt* werden können. Nach Endreß schließt die Transzendenz zugleich den Zusammenhang, die Einheit der Lebenswelt mit ein, sofern Schütz auf „Appräsentation“ als fundamentales Strukturphänomen der Wahrnehmung (S. 92) hindeutet. In dieser Hinsicht besteht dann die Wirkung appräsentativer Verweisungen (*Merkzeichen, Anzeichen, Zeichen* und *Symbole*) darin, die *aktuelle* oder *grundsätzliche* Unerfassbarkeit des appräsentierten, transzendenten bzw. anderer Sinnprovinz zugehörigen Gliedes zu vermitteln.

Streng methodologisch mit der Problemkonstellation der Sinnprovinzen ist, so Endreß, Schütz' Strukturierung der Welterfahrung nach *Relevanzen* gekoppelt, die ihrerseits für das Interesse an jeweiligen Schichten der Lebenswelt ausschlaggebend wird. Denn die Relevanzen beziehen sich nicht auf eine ontologische Struktur der Welt, sondern auf die biographische Situation des Individuums (S. 105). In diesem Zusammenhang *wissen* wir in der natürlichen Einstellung, *dass* die Lebenswelt relevantunterschiedliche Perspektivierungen (durch Sinnprovinzen) aufweist, die aber aus dem Blickpunkt aktuell zugänglichen Erkenntnisstils *unvertraut* bleiben (S. 114). Forschungspragmatische Schwierigkeiten tauchen aber erst dann auf, wenn zwei sinnprovinzabhängige Erkenntnisstile ineinander übersetzt werden, oder Endreß' Begrifflichkeit nach (S. 115), wenn *Unvertrautes* ins *Vertraute*

⁵ Für eine kritische Analyse dieses Einflusses vgl. F. WELZ (1996) – *Kritik der Lebenswelt. Eine soziologische Auseinandersetzung mit Edmund Husserl und Alfred Schütz*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

transformiert wird, da es hier offenkundig eine „Transformationsformel“ fehlt. Die *prinzipielle* Übersetzbarkeit des Unvertrauten erklärt Endreß nicht durch Rekurs auf syntaktische oder semantische Besonderheiten der (Ziel- oder Ausgangs-)Sprache.⁶ Es sind die Strukturen sozialer Wirklichkeit (S. 116), die nicht nur der Kommunikation bzw. der Übersetzung Rechnung tragen, sondern ein „fraglos gegebenes Wissen“ als „Vertrauensressource“ bilden,⁷ das mittels des Appräsentationsphänomens zugänglich wird. Demnach entsteht ein *tertium comparationis*,⁸ das einerseits jeder Übersetzung zugrunde liegt, und andererseits die sinnhafte Einheit der Lebenswelt zum Vorschein kommen lässt.

Diese Schlüsselidee Endreß' bedarf allerdings im Rahmen einer „Einführung“ eines Hinweises auf die Sprachproblematik. Damit wird primär Schütz' Unterschied von *Apperzeptions*-, *Appräsentations*-, *Verweisungs*- und *Deutungsschema* gemeint,⁹ die in jede Beschreibung appräsentativer Verweisungen, und erst im Fall der Transzendenzbewältigung, miteinbezogen sind. Diese Artikulierungsprozesse sind für die Binnenstruktur der Übersetzung unmittelbar anwendbar, um genau das Hervortreten von Sinnstrukturen in und durch Übersetzungen aufzuzeigen. Auch

ohne solche Vertiefung hat aber Martin Endreß die aktuellste und deutlichste Einführung in Schütz' Werk offeriert, wonach aktuelle Forschungsweisen seit langer Zeit stillschweigend verlangen.

ȘTEFAN NICOLAE

⁶ Die höchstens, so SRUBAR, ein zugleich „fremdes und vertrautes Dritte“ aufweisen könnte. (Vgl. I. SRUBAR (2002) – „Strukturen des Übersetzens und interkultureller Vergleich“, in J. RENN, J. STRAUB, S. SHIMADA (Hg.) – *Übersetzung als Medium des Kulturverstehens und sozialer Integration*, Frankfurt/M.: Campus, 323 – 345.

⁷ ENDRESS 2002: 20f.

⁸ Vgl. SRUBAR 2002: 327f.

⁹ A. SCHÜTZ (2003) - „Symbol, Wirklichkeit und Gesellschaft“, in: ders. *Theorie der Lebenswelt* 2, ASW V. 2., hg. von H. KNOBLAUCH, R. KURT und H. G. SOEFFNER, Konstanz: UVK, 117-221.

**Rüdiger Safranski – *Romantik. Eine deutsche Affäre*. München:
Hanser 2007, 415 Seiten.**

Das im Jahr 2007 veröffentlichte Werk über eine der bedeutendsten Epochen in der deutschen Kulturgeschichte ist das letzterschienene des anerkannten Philosophen Rüdiger Safranski, welcher sich seit Jahrzehnten mit seinen Ausführungen zu deutscher Philosophie und deutschen Autoren einen Namen gemacht hat. Der Verfasser nennt den Gegenstand seiner Untersuchung im Vorwort:

*Es geht in diesem Buch um die Romantik und um das Romantische. Die Romantik ist eine Epoche. Das Romantische eine Geisteshaltung, die nicht auf eine Epoche beschränkt ist. Sie hat in der Epoche der Romantik ihren vollkommenen Ausdruck gefunden, ist aber nicht darauf beschränkt; das Romantische gibt es bis heute.*¹

Es ist bereits deutlich die Zweiteilung zu sehen, die an dieser Stelle vorherrscht. Das Werk ist in zwei Bücher eingeteilt, das erste Buch beschäftigt sich wie oben schon ersichtlich mit der Romantik als Epoche, das zweite Buch hat das Romantische zum Zentrum. Diese beiden großen Bereiche sind ihrerseits wieder in Kapitel unterteilt (insgesamt in achtzehn; um genau zu sein ist das erste Buch in elf, das zweite in sieben aufgliedert). Safranski beschäftigt sich somit nicht nur mit dem Zeitabschnitt zwischen dem Ende des 18. bis ca. in die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts, sondern beleuchtet auch eingehend die daraus resultierenden Ideen und Denkweisen bis hin zur 68er-Bewegung des 20. Jahrhunderts. Es scheint dem Autor wichtig zu sein, klarzumachen, dass die

Romantik die Strömung in Philosophie und Literatur ist, die die weitesten Auswirkungen auch auf nachfolgende Generationen hat, aus diesem Grund ergibt auch die chronologische Gliederung des Werkes Sinn.

Das erste Kapitel des ersten Buches widmet sich den Anfängen des romantischen Gedankenguts, welches mit der Philosophie Johann Gottfried Herders beginnt. Vor allem Herders Sammel-tätigkeit von Volksliedern und anderen Kulturzeugnissen, sowie seine Vorstellungen von Natur, dynamischer Geschichte und demokratischem Patriotismus haben die späteren Romantiker geprägt.

In der Folge geht Safranski (zweites Kapitel) auf die Französische Revolution ein, die natürlich nicht nur für Deutschland sondern für das gesamte Europa eine entscheidende Entwicklungsrolle gespielt hat. Die jungen Romantiker wurden beeinflusst von der Idee, dass „[d]ie Veränderung der politischen Institution [...], so hoffte man, den besseren, den freien Menschen endlich zum Vorschein bringen [würde]“². Die anfängliche Euphorie währte allerdings nicht lange, die Abschaffung von Herrschaft führte nicht zur erwünschten Freiheit sondern zu Terror und Gewalt. Somit wurde in einem weiterführenden Schritt erkannt, dass nur die Kunst, das Ästhetische den Menschen frei machen könne, wie Safranski ausführt.

Das dritte und vierte Kapitel behält der Autor den zwei einflussreichen Philosophen Friedrich Schlegel (und seiner Ironie-Auffassung) und Fichte (mit seiner Ich-Philosophie) vor. Erstmals werden

¹ Rüdiger Safranski: *Romantik. Eine deutsche Affäre*. München: Hanser 2007, S. 12. In der Folge zitiert als: Rom.

² Ebda, 34.

auch die Begriffe „Romantisieren“ und „progressive Universalpoesie“ eingeführt, die als Motto für die (Früh)Romantik dienen können.

Die folgenden beiden Kapitel (fünf und sechs) können weiters als Einheit gesehen werden, da hier der Verfasser der Abhandlung seine Schwerpunkte auf die Literatur der Romantik setzt, vor allem auf das literarische Programm von Tieck, Wackenroder und Novalis, die als beispielhafte Vertreter dargestellt werden. Es werden literarische Motive und Symbole (die ewige Nacht, die blaue Blume, um nur zwei anzuführen) mit Textnachweisen aus den besprochenen Originalen erläutert.

Religion, Mythologie, Politik und der Nationsbegriff, ebenso wie dem Spannungsverhältnis zwischen Normalität und Langeweile wendet sich Safranski in den nächsten vier Kapiteln zu. Hier muss bemerkt werden, dass diese Begriffe im Sinne der Romantiker erklärt und ihre Anwendung in literarischen Texten (zum Beispiel bei Hölderlin) beschrieben werden. Es ist zu erkennen, dass vor allem Philosophie und Literatur in dieser Epoche so stark Hand in Hand gehen, was der Autor einleuchtend zu erklären weiß.

Das letzte Kapitel des ersten Buches setzt den Schlusspunkt zur Romantik als Periode, indem E.T.A Hoffmann und Joseph von Eichendorff als letzte Romantiker dargestellt werden, da deren literarische Texte allerdings schon merklich vom Programm ihrer Vorgänger abweichen.

Das zweite Buch beschäftigt sich mit dem Romantischen; dazu Safranski: *„Die beste Definition des Romantischen ist immer noch die von Novalis: Indem ich dem Gemeinen einen hohen Sinn, dem Gewöhnlichen ein geheimnisvolles Ansehen, dem Bekannten die Würde des Unbekannten,*

dem Endlichen einen unendlichen Schein gebe, so romantisiere ich es“³.

In Kapitel zwölf werden die großen Kritiker beschrieben, die den Romantikern vor allem eines vorwerfen, nämlich ihre Ideen nicht verwirklicht zu haben. Hegel und Heine werden hier vom Verfasser genannt, die erkennen, dass sich die Romantik als Ära überlebt hat.

Als Weiterdenker der Romantik wird Richard Wagner von Safranski im folgenden Kapitel angeführt. An die Überlegungen der Romantiker, dass Kunst ein Ersatz für Religion sein kann, und dass Mythologie als Gemeinsamkeit der Kulturen gelten kann, knüpft Wagner an. „Mythisches Erleben sei für Wagner ein gesteigertes Erleben, welches bis zur Entgrenzung, somit zum höheren Sein führe“⁴, wie Safranski erläutert.

In Kapitel vierzehn kommt die Beziehung zwischen Wagner und Nietzsche zur Sprache (Rüdiger Safranski hatte sich bereits in seinem im Jahr 2000 publizierten Werk mit Nietzsche beschäftigt.⁵). Hier werden dem Leser vor allem die Begriffe des „Apollinischen“ und „Dionysischen“ auseinandergesetzt, wobei für Nietzsche die Wagner'sche Musik als Inbegriff des Dionysischen, des Gefühls der Einheit des Lebendigen gilt.

Die Wiederkehr der romantischen Aufbruchsstimmung wird im nächsten Teil erklärt, indem der Begriff des Lebens und der Jugend als neuromantische Begriffe eingeführt werden. Die poetische Mystik entspringt Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts der Sprachkrise, welche sich im Schreiben Hugo von Hofmannsthals und Rilkes auszudrücken scheint.

³ Ebda, 13.

⁴ Vgl. ebda, 271.

⁵ Vgl. Rüdiger Safranski: Nietzsche. Biographie eines Denkers. München: Hanser 2000.

Die letzten Kapitel (fünfzehn bis achtzehn) widmen sich eingehend der Gefahr der politischen Romantik. Die Gefahren, die eine Vermischung zwischen Romantik (die durch Weltfremdheit geprägt ist) mit Politik, zeigen sich nicht nur im Ersten Weltkrieg, sondern auch in der Katastrophe des Nationalsozialismus. Safranski geht hier vor allem der Frage nach, was die Nationalsozialisten wirklich aus der Romantik übernommen haben, und kommt dabei zum Ergebnis, dass romantische Ideen wie z.B. über Volk und Volkskultur, die Bildung einer deutschen Nation übernommen wurden, allerdings nur teilweise und modifiziert. Zuletzt geht der Autor auf die 68er-Bewegung ein, die zwar nicht romantisch sein wollte, dennoch eindeutige Züge zeigt, nämlich, wie der Autor es ausdrückt, „eine Romantik der allumfassenden Befreiung“⁶.

Abschließend wiederholt der Autor die wichtigsten Punkte des zweiten Buches in einer Art kurzer Zusammenfassung.

Im Vorwort stellt sich der Autor selbst das Ziel, die Gesamtheit der Romantik als Epoche und das Romantische zu analysieren. Ohne Zweifel ist die Ausführung eines solchen Vorhabens auf knapp 400 Seiten ein durchwegs schwieriges.

Der Autor hat sich intensiv mit dem gewählten Thema beschäftigt (was eindeutig ersichtlich ist) und hat eine genaue Recherche vorgelegt. Das beweist nicht nur die umfangreiche verwendete Literatur (sowohl aus dem Bereich der Philosophie als auch der deutschsprachigen Literatur), sondern das beweisen auch die eingestreuten Zitate. Diese Textbeispiele heben sich für den Leser durch die kursive Schreibweise ab, und sind somit leicht zu erkennen, sie untermauern die Ausführungen oder belegen diese anschaulich. Zusätzlich sind in den Fließtext kurze biographische Angaben zu

den besprochenen Philosophen oder Autoren gemacht, allerdings nur solche Angaben, die für den Leser und das weitere Verstehen unbedingt notwendig sind. Somit vermeidet Safranski unnötige biographische Abschweifungen. Die Arbeit ist chronologisch aufgebaut, was sich aus dem Thema heraus ergibt. Was dem Verständnis zusätzlich noch entgegen kommt ist, dass immer wieder Zusammenfassungen des bereits Erläuterten eingeschoben bzw. Rückverweise gemacht werden.

Dennoch, und hier teile ich die Meinung Ulrich Greiners⁷, vergisst der Autor (wenn er den Anspruch auf eine ganzheitliche Darstellung erhebt) entscheidende Aspekte der Romantik: die Malerei wird total vernachlässigt, Musik bleibt auf Wagner beschränkt und der europäische Blick, zum Beispiel auf die englische Romantik fehlt ebenso.⁸

Die Frage stellt sich zusätzlich, welches Publikum Safranski anzusprechen versucht. Für ein Fachpublikum scheint mir der Beitrag zu unwissenschaftlich zu sein. Diese Aussage begründet sich durch den Stil des Verfassers, der Anekdoten der behandelten Personen in den Text einstreut und sich weiters zu leidenschaftlichen, subjektiven Äußerungen hinreißen lässt („Eichendorff ist kein Dichter der Heimat, sondern des Heimwehs, nicht des erfüllten Augenblicks, sondern der Sehnsucht, nicht des Ankommens, sondern der Abfahrt.“⁹). Sein Stil lässt sich manchmal zu sehr vom Stil der Romantiker selbst inspirieren, was den Lesefluss zwar nicht unterbricht, und in weitestem Sinne sympatisch wirkt, in einer wissenschaftlichen Untersuchung

⁶ Rom, 390.

⁷ Ulrich Greiner: Die Verzauberung der Welt. In: Die Zeit, 61 (2007), 37, S. 59.

⁸ Vgl. ebda.

⁹ Rom, 214.

erscheinen gewisse Formulierungen¹⁰ jedoch fehl am Platz.

Sollte die vorliegende Schrift für eine breitere Öffentlichkeit gedacht sein, muss beanstandet werden, dass verwendete Fachtermini nicht immer erklärt, sondern ihre Kenntnis vorausgesetzt wird. Der Kant'sche Begriff der Vernunft, auf den immer wieder Bezug genommen wird, wird von Nichtspezialisten schwer in Verbindung zur Textaussage gesetzt werden können.

Ein Einwand muss zusätzlich noch erlaubt sein. Niemand würde der Romantik absprechen, nicht ein Höhepunkt in der Geschichte der deutschen Kultur, der Geistesgeschichte zu sein. Inwiefern aber genau die Romantik alle weiteren Epochen so stark beeinflusst hat, wie Safranski es darstellt, muss bezweifelt werden. Selbstverständlich hat diese Geisteshaltung auf die nachfolgenden Generationen eingewirkt, aber das ist eine natürliche Entwicklung. Jede umfassende Idee ist Basis für eine neue Idee, die sich entweder als Gegensatz zum Vorhergegangenen versteht und diese ablehnt, oder jene aufgreift, weiterführt, etwas hinzufügt und verändert. Hier wird es teilweise so dargestellt, als ob ausschließlich die Romantik eine Wirkung gehabt hätte.

Insbesondere das Ende von Rüdiger Safranskis Werk ist sehr ernüchternd. In der Zusammenfassung lässt sich der Autor doch zu sehr zu einer belehrenden Rede hinreißen. Die Erwartung des Lesers, eine Schlussbemerkung im Sinne einer wissenschaftlichen Untersuchung z.B. in

der Art einer Zusammenschau zu erhalten, wird leider enttäuscht. Die plötzlich verwendete Wir-Form („Romantik [darf uns] nicht verloren gehen“¹¹) und die Mahnung mit erhobenem Zeigefinger („[w]enn wir die Vernunft der Politik und die Leidenschaften der Romantik nicht als zwei Sphären begreifen und als solche zu trennen wissen [...], dann besteht die Gefahr, daß wir in der Politik ein Abenteuer suchen, das wir besser in der Kultur finden“¹²) wirken irritierend und wenig überzeugend.

Abschließend muss gesagt werden, dass sich der Autor wahrscheinlich zu viel vorgenommen hat, der vorliegende Band kann allerdings durchaus als Einführungswerk dienen und gibt einen fundierten Überblick über die Romantik und das Romantische.

MAG. UTE MICHAJLOWITSCH*

¹⁰ Ebda, 28: „Und darum kann man von Herders Gedanken auf offener See sagen: Sie sind schon romantisch, weil sie uns einstimmen auf das Schaukeln der Dinge im Strom der Zeit“; Ebda, 237: „Wo gehobelt wird, da fallen Späne. In Jena gehört Hegel noch zu den Spänen. In Berlin ist er inzwischen denen, die hobeln, bedeutend näher gerückt.“

¹¹ Ebda, 393.

¹² Ebda, 392.

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