



STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS
BABEŞ-BOLYAI



PHILOSOPHIA

2/2011

YEAR

LVI (Volume 56) 2011

MONTH

AUGUST

ISSUE

2

S T U D I A
UNIVERSITATIS BABEȘ–BOLYAI
PHILOSOPHIA

2

Desktop Editing Office: 51ST B.P. Hasdeu, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Phone + 40 264-40.53.52

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Issue Coordinator: ION COPOERU

Publishing Date: August, 2011

NEW WARS AND NEW FORMS OF VIOLENCE: CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL STAKES OF THE IDEA OF PEACE

MONIQUE CASTILLO*

ABSTRACT. Fear of violence seems to become a prevailing political driving force. There is a lot of talk nowadays about the transformations that hallmark the practices of violence, with regard to the “new wars” and especially to urban violence. But at the same time, we can see that these changes in violence take place in a world that claims to be more and more peaceful and pacifying, in a world where security tends to become the supreme societal value, the dominant public good of all communities. A strange cohabitation is settling in: on one hand, a self-regenerated frenzy of violence feeds and perpetuates fear as a factor of destabilization; on the other hand, the obsession with security leads to types of politics intended only to fight against the fear of violence.

Keywords: new conflicts; urban violence; symbolic and cultural stakes of war and peace; relational politics

Introduction: sense and power

For Plato, the place of the soldier is written in the eternal order of things: the heart (the courage), the power to fight in order to preserve the just order of the world. Power and sense are connected. One has to act “so that whatever is just to be powerful”¹.

Kant prophesies in 1784 the establishment of a Society of Nations that will put an end to the wars of conquering and prestige. The soldier-citizen is no longer animated by honor but by the desire for peace. One has to act “so that whatever is just to be powerful”.

Hegel perceives, at the same time as Clausewitz, the novelty the French revolution introduces in the world: wars become national and popular and thus moral. Soldier’s ethics is the nationalism which allows his country to play a role in world history. Modern state (as it was achieved in Europe) needs to impose its power as the engine that gives sense to the rest of the world.

Nowadays we see in various ways that we have arrived at the end of this history of a “simple” collaboration between sense and power. The question of war and the question of citizenship have become strangely complicated.

* *Université Paris Est, France, Adresse email : castillo@univ-paris12.fr*

¹ Pascal, *Pensées*, fragment 298, éd. Brunschvig.

It is not simple for the ordinary citizen to understand what the military does, especially since they do not make war anymore, that is they do not make national wars in the common sense. It is difficult to imagine the present-day complexity of the job, when threatened populations are civilians and not soldiers, when the enemies are often difficult to identify and battles are not fought against states but against mobile and covert networks. It is difficult to understand that the biggest enemy is unpredictability. It is difficult to understand especially the new importance of the ethical component of the job, which gives the operations of interposition the purpose *to create legitimacy*, because this is the necessary condition for a democratic citizenship to be able to make itself recognizable in a globalized world.

If the man-at-arms must subordinate all his actions to the political, diplomatic and ethical imperatives of legitimacy, the citizen has difficulties just accepting the idea that violence can create legitimacy. Thus, he denies the man-at-arms, without knowing it, the *symbolic legitimacy* which the latter needs most, since the validity of an action is given from now on by the symbolic force received by this action in the public arena.

Men-at-arms and civilians notice almost the same thing: we have the feeling of being at the same time at the end of a culture and in the gestation of another. A culture comes to its end and another begins: *the whole problem consists in the fact that we don't know if the abandonment of one culture will allow the other one to succeed*. And here lies a factor of incertitude, of insecurity and of crisis (on all levels: on the level of the modernization of the state, of the national educational reform or on the level of justice).

Let us clarify the meaning of the words:

“Sense”: the reasons to fight, to give birth to children, to progress and to assign goals to oneself.

“Power”: it results from the legitimacy given to the use of force. Power is not simply the force, but the force legitimized by the sense.

I - On the alleged Tripartition of the world

Toffler's classification: it gives meaning to the American idea of Revolution in military affairs. Societies of knowledge will make “counter-wars” and this is part of their legitimization (war on terrorism, for example).

After the wars of mass destruction, specific to the industrial age of technology that ends in the 20th century, the “war on knowledge”, the “cyberwar” or the war of the information should follow, the war that elaborates the so-called “intelligent” weapons and whose goal is less to destroy humans than to destroy the knowledge that allows them to make war. Three civilizations, or three “Waves” as they call it, divide the world, each one representing in its own way three economic revolutions. The first one is agrarian, the second one is industrial and the third one, which is still at its beginnings, is that of the exploitation of knowledge. The first type of

civilization, or “the first wave”, is based on natural resources, the second one is based on mass industrial production and the third one is based on “cerebral force”. In political terms: pre-nations, nations and post-nations coexist. The third wave or the society of information needs for its economic prosperity mainly “knowledge convertible in richness”. “What it needs is to have access to the world’s data banks and telecommunication networks and to control them²”. In the field of communications, knowledge is power: the power to influence and to control.

*Pierre Lévy’s classification*³ chosen by General Francart in his book (p. 308).

Oral societies: representations are in relation to life and they are perpetuated by the emotion they are charged with. Time is conceived as cyclical and a sentence must be reproduced and repeated aloud in order to succeed.

Written societies: the thought pattern is logical and linear, intelligence is situated at the level of analysis, of reasoning and of synthesis. Science is the dominant way of cognition and knowledge, beyond acquired knowledge, becomes subject of analysis and examination. Time is conceived in a linear manner, as progressive history. We think and act in this type of societies.

Computerized society is gaining ground, whether we like it or not. It is based on a digital culture which includes all means and all fields. Intelligence becomes action by anticipation thanks to a knowledge based on modeling and simulation: “We must think the mutations of sound and image in connection to those of the hypertext and of the artificial intelligence. Connections and reinterpretations will take place along unstable contact zones, through the enchainment and the throwing together of new devices that will be created by a multiplicity of actors. The new hypertextual or multimedia writing will certainly resemble more to a show editing than to the classical writing, where the author was concerned only with the coherence of a linear and static text (...). With the creation of the digital network and the extension of its usages, television, cinema, written media, informatics and telecommunications will see their boundaries almost completely dissolving in favor of the circulation, combination and metamorphosis of the interfaces on the same cosmopolitic territory”.

Three major ideas: information is action; anticipation creates sense; our era is that of the war of the sense : “the meaning that each protagonist gives to “his” war creates a real *war of meaning*”⁴.

This war of meaning offers several directions for reflection.

- the symbolic (cultural) dimension of the new forms of violence
- the societal stakes in peace
- the identity-related challenge in European context

² Alvin et Heidi Toffler, *Guerre et contre guerre. Survivre à l’aube du XXIème siècle*, Paris, Pluriel, 1994, p. 350.

³ Jean-Loup Francart, *Maîtriser la violence*, Paris, Economica, 2002, p. 308.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 330.

II - New wars and the symbolic dimension of violence

Fear of violence seems to become a prevailing political driving force. There is a lot of talk nowadays about the transformations that hallmark the practices of violence, with regard to the “new wars” and especially to urban violence. But at the same time, we can see that these changes in violence take place in a world that claims to be more and more peaceful and pacifying, in a world where security tends to become the supreme societal value, the dominant public good of all communities. A strange cohabitation is settling in: on one hand, a self-regenerated frenzy of violence feeds and perpetuates fear as a factor of destabilization; on the other hand, the obsession with security leads to types of politics intended only to fight against the fear of violence.

a) violence and ideology

We often talk about “the end of war” in order to account for the mutations that affect the use of violence, the transformations of violence. We then talk about conflicts of low intensity: increase in the number of indirect confrontations (taking of hostages, guerrillas, attacks...) which target only indirectly the sovereignty of a state, not by a frontal attack and not with the same weapons as his, but by targeting the civilians in order to spread confusion and fear, to discredit the governments (and the armies), to cause the demoralization of the populations and to ruin their confidence on the protective force of the state. *The goal is not as much to impose directly its own force but to destroy the force of the enemy by destabilizing its defense system and by imposing the terrifying perspective of an inexhaustible reservoir of violence for an endless war.*

But it has been said also that these new forms of violence are “new wars” that pit against each other organized factions (extremist groups, sects, rebel factions or dealers...) which organize themselves in transnational networks and which inspire the fear of an internationalization of conflicts. They have three main characteristics:

- They are “private” wars
- They are asymmetrical wars
- They are inexpensive wars

These new wars remind of the violence outbursts specific to the medieval era or to the Thirty Years War, when civilians (being the main targets) enrolled in order to increase their chances of survival.

They are asymmetrical wars, where the weak aims to reverse the asymmetry at his advantage, by using weapons that would demoralize and disorientate the enemy. Victimism is a strategy that plays on the emotional registry and that aims to delegitimize the strongest as the guilty one. In asymmetrical wars, the weak has every interest in playing on the registry of ideology. Ideology has two characteristic forces:

- The immediate and blind support of compassion: Robespierre has used it. The poor is identified with the pure and the just (perfect), and this allows to transform sufferance in tenfold multiplied violence as the unlimited right to refer to violence

(for Arendt, pity, regarded as a motive of the virtue “proved to possess a capacity for cruelty higher than cruelty itself⁵”.)

- Ideology also has the power to make itself unclassifiable. It renders its cause absolute and unquestionable, it is always right. In fact, Georges Sorel describes it in his book *Reflections on violence*: the revolutionary action cannot be wrong because it is an attempt: even its failures are part of its learning.

Today, ideology takes advantage of the additional resources available through the media: this leads to exaggeration. Hence the search for an extreme atrocity in violence in order to impose a mediatic image of the self and to destroy the image of the other. It is necessary to have a lot of dead people and live tortures as if it were necessary to have a critical mass of credibility; it is necessary to have unjustified and unpredictable sufferance. The hyper-terrorism is not some violence from a different age, it incorporates firstly and in a redoubtable manner a remarkable cynical mastering of the art of acting on images and thus on mentalities.

Let us bring forward the question of knowing what exactly brings fear in these new practices of violence. What seems to feed especially the feeling of insecurity is the fact that *violence becomes once again a means of private subsistence available to any adventurer*. Unlike the image of the soldier, of the knight or that of the duelist, the image of the crime technician targets primarily civilian populations because they are defenseless. One talks about the fact that violence has settled down into a routine in order to signify the fact that it nourishes a will to power that intends to compete with the “normal” social success: “the way the war has settled down into a routine suggests more and more a style of life that continually reinforces the supremacy of the warrior over the political actor... These types of warrior, however varied, are inspired by a common war-oriented imaginaire, where which violence has the virtues of an instrument for promotion⁶”.

b) The symbolic dimension of urban violence

The *symbolic* dimension of violence seems to be able to make this process endless rather than stopping it. Thus, constantly causing fear to an individual or to a group of individuals means a lot more than endangering him: it means destabilizing his way of living, of thinking and of feeling, it means challenging an entire culture. It means exercising a global challenge over a collective reality. And maybe this is what becomes both incomprehensible and difficult to tolerate in the new practices of violence: an extreme physical materiality in the actions, allied with an extreme abstraction in the ends: how to destroy the intention that one lends to another? At this stage, the abstraction is not used to legitimate but to render endless the process of outburst of violence, as if the physical destruction of the other’s difference was possible. There are schools, in France, where the successful students are marginalized by a general contempt, as if there was a desire to physically destroy intelligence.

⁵ Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1990, p. 89.

⁶ Luis Martinez, *La Guerre civile en Algérie*, Paris, Karthala, 1998, pp. 371-377.

Let's go further in order to understand that suburban violence acts like a true "war of the sense". The consumerist individualism is generally incriminated in order to explain the suburban revolts. The wrong is maybe more socially profound. Because individualism is not made of just one piece and it has become once again inventive and diligent. It is no longer the sensual, vulgar and gorged individual who has become a model for the social dynamics: it is the successful individual, because he is capable of mobilizing himself. This is a characteristic of the so-called "post-industrial" societies. In these societies, the individual is a rare and in demand resource, because he is a resource capable of self-transformation. It is the individual who has become creator of sense because he dominates the domain of codes and symbols.

At the beginning and even in the middle of the 20th century, the need for sense could be expressed in work (the legitimacy of the father in the family), in war (the heroism of the son), in the contribution to world's stability (the woman and her courage to maintain the familial and social unity against wind and tide). Nowadays, sense is given by inventiveness, which has become the talent to combine influences (knowledge, ways, expectations)... Sense feeds on communication of the sense and on the unpredictable inventiveness of reactions. The individualism that we reproach so much to the current generations exercises itself also by a perseverant work and a need of recognition that is never satisfied.

Consequently, the legitimization of power changes. For if the self-created and self-maintained personal success tends to impose itself from now on as the legitimization of the power to win, it allows to throw a different light on the frenzy of the ultra-violence or on the practice of harassment through violence. There is, certainly, a connection between violence and exclusion; all observers agree on this. But we lack reformed conceptual tools to conceptualize the exclusion and also to conceptualize success in the context of the new globalization. We are not dealing with conceptualized visions of reality but with feelings: the feeling of exclusion as well as the feeling of insecurity are emotional reactions; they are dangerous because they respond to simple impressions in a blind, unpredictable and unreasonable manner. The feeling of exclusion differs from the feeling of inequality in the fact that inequality consists in occupying a place that is inferior to that of the others on the same value scale: wage-related inequality is explained in the common vocabulary of the merit, for example. On the other hand, the exclusion consists in not being able to share the same value scale (unemployment, for example, prevents me even to have an unequal salary, because I don't even share the competition for merit). While inequality, in democracy, can be surpassed, as Tocqueville showed very well, through the same imaginaire of the equalization of conditions (I can easily imagine that I could earn more money if I wanted to: by getting a new degree or by working more, and that helps me to tolerate my condition), the exclusion does not even allow me to share the same collective imaginaire: the fact is that I am simply not needed, I am not inferior, I am out of the game.

Therefore, why the appeal to violence? If we postulate that the absence of a future consists in the impossibility to participate to the new image of power, which is that of the symbolic action or of the influence by sense, we understand the rage brought about by such feeling of helplessness. We understand perhaps better that violence goes for abstractions, if the symbolic power is the one that is targeted, the power to act on the symbols in highly media-oriented societies, in other words, if it is a war of the sense. Attempting to destroy entities or substances like “modernity”, “Occident”, “society of consummation” etc. means to transform violence in a parallel power, a parallel economy, a different zone of preserved “chances”, desperately efficient and tragic, it also means to destroy a symbolic and cultural power of action from which oneself is excluded.

c) The vicious circle of the de-legitimization of power

The war of the sense has the genius of the vicious circle, because it proves the incapacity of politics by destroying politics. If the authority does not react, violence gains in impunity; if the authority fights back with the same weapons as violence does, it falls outside the law and loses any legitimacy. Habib Souaïdîa, for example, has lived, in *La sale guerre*⁷, the horrors of the civil war when the state fights back with the same weapons that terrorism uses.

Urban violence reveal in a painful way this vicious circle of the de-legitimization of power. When it serves only to express a feeling of injustice, violence aims at reestablishing law; it is a means to obtain a right and it stops with this conquest. But when it is established as a pure instrument of de-legitimization, it starts from an injustice like from a pretext for destabilizing the power according to an endless process. This is the vicious circle that creates the incomprehensibility: the rebellious individual rejects the system whose values he does not want to share (the educational system, for example), but he does so *by prejudging that he would be rejected* by this system. Thus, any young people take the choice of the ghettoization and they rise against injustice in one single movement. They take possession of a neighborhood by spreading terror in it, they expect prestigious gains from the violence (money and girls), but they allow themselves such behaviors by judging themselves victims of a world that does not accept them, of a socialization (by schooling) that excludes them: they thus violently fulfill a sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy. They thus “prove” the incompetence of the state or of the communes by producing it....

Partial conclusion: the mutations of the violence are disconcerting for a political analysis and disconcerting for a strategic analysis. They prevent the notion of enemy to be spotted.

Let us move to a second source of reflection: the fact that war soldiers also have to become peace soldiers. What pacifism must we put forward in order to legitimize their action?

⁷ Habib Souaïdîa, *La sale guerre*, Paris, Gallimard, 2001.

III- Societal stakes of peace

The request for peace changes; *one does not simply poses the problem of knowing what makes peace possible (technically and militarily possible), but what makes peace acceptable and desirable*. The question on the possibility of peace is added to the question of its legitimacy. Peace is no longer simply the victory, peace must be a project; peace is not simply an outcome, it must also be a beginning, to the point of imagining today, in addition to the right of making war (*jus ad bellum*) and to the right that regulates the leading of war (*jus in bello*), a new right which would be called the right to restore the possibility of an organized life after the war (*jus post bellum*) (according to the expression of Michaël Walzer⁸). A strategic function of the creation of the peace-to be would be added to the management of the war itself.

In an article dedicated to the question of military effectiveness faced with terrorism, General Valentin, former commandant of the multinational security force in Kosovo, confirms the feeling of this transformation of the role of peace by asserting that “victories are no longer simply military, but they are evaluated from now on according to the peace they establish” and that the fight against terrorism must be placed on the field where “influence and persuasion are more efficient than destruction”⁹.

It is starting from this point that we can put pacifism into question, on the basis of the representations of peace that can pretend to have what General Valentin calls “a more efficient persuasive force of destruction”. In other words: what conceptualizations of peace can be considered as reconstructive and can constitute a credible “*post bellum*” denouement? In order to briefly lead this research, classical representations of peace can serve as a guiding principle: peace through the empire; peace through the law and peace through the balance.

a) The peace through the empire

Theoretically, realizing peace through an empire represents a pretty radical solution because it confides to an absolute sovereign force (either the force of a state, either the force of a state coalition) the care to render war impossible. For example, nuclear weapon has been the opportunity, in the middle of the 20th century and during the Cold War, to consider that the exclusivist domination of an empire could by itself avoid the apocalypse, the most eminent quality of an empire being the force to eliminate all its rivals.

Presentation

Nowadays, and since we are looking for an attractive peace for its reconstructive capacities, we are brought to replace the old militarist approach of the empire by a convivial image. Empire must be openly synonym with pacifism. We find this idea in what an English political scientist, Robert Cooper, calls a “voluntary imperialism”

⁸ Michaël Walzer, *Guerres justes et injustes*, Paris, Folio Essais, 2006.

⁹ In the newspaper *Le Figaro*, Paris, January 23rd 2006.

or “cooperative empire”¹⁰. It is no longer an imperialism through constraint or through colonization, but an imperialism through attraction. Such imperialism, which is also called “postmodern”, takes two forms.

1) “Voluntary imperialism of the global economy”. It is the form of an adhesion to a vast civil society, a planetary extension of the model of the market presented as the scheme of an indefinitely extensible activism, principle of an open world, a model of personal liberty that can be imitated for everyone.

2) “The second form of imperialism can be called the imperialism of neighbors”. It is about remedying the instability of a state by a military and police presence, and also by a medical and juridical presence, by creating a sort of voluntary protectorate. The expectation is the same: engaging the taste for peace by a possible dynamic of access to prosperity.

Analysis

What to think about this benevolent imperialism? What Pierre Hassner also calls the “gentrification of the barbarian”¹¹. This liberal pacifism has the virtues and the imperfections of its own limits. It is a *technical* model of peace production and not a cultural or moral model. For an exhausted and wounded people, it could be a reconstructive opportunity. But on the condition that it would value for what it is, that is a simple technique of reorganization of the civil society, and not a subjection to a cultural, moral and political order. It is limited to the sphere of the means, which are means to obtain prosperity and well-being. It is a model of management of energies. But it is misleading to identify mass consumption to a sort of cultural truth of liberalism, and this identification represents a weak point of Fukuyama’s book on *The end of history*, because it presents the homogenization and the standardization of the mores by the same consumption modes as an accomplishment of peace in the occidental style, what leads to reducing culture to an exclusively instrumental relation to objects, while culture has the vocation of being a practical relation to the others.

On the other hand, the other limit of this pacifism is related to the threat of terrorism: liberal pacifism does not have the power to “achieve the gentrification” of all barbarians and this pacifism itself can be tempted, as Robert Kagan¹² writes, to choose the path of weapons in order to defend liberalism itself.

b) Peace through law

Let us explore now the second classic model of peace in order to examine its new update: the model of peace through law.

¹⁰ Robert Cooper, *The postmodern State. The new liberal imperialism*, <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,680117,00.html>

¹¹ Pierre Hassner, *La Terreur et l’empire*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2003, p. 398.

¹² Robert Kagan, *La Puissance et la faiblesse. Les Etats-Unis et l’Europe devant le nouvel ordre mondial*, Paris, Plon, 2003.

Its most famous origin is that of the Peace Projects elaborated by the philosophers of the 18th century, and especially the *Project of Perpetual Peace* of Kant that predicts the constitution of a Society of Nations in Europe that would have the vocation to expand progressively to the entire world, until it forms a vast “Alliance for the peace”, a sort of United Nations Organization in order to favor arbitration instead of war. Although this model still generates incredulity, it has had an effectiveness whose political modernity should not be forgotten: it has imposed the idea that peace, and not war, was the normal state of international relations and that the sovereigns, in the future, will be judged according to their capacity of creating a politics of peace rather than exhaust their people in perpetual wars. The idea of producing peace by law and by cooperation between states identifies peace with a progress of civilization, whose beneficiary is the entire human species.

We might say that, in a certain way, juridical pacifism was achieved in Europe, since Europe, as Cooper underlines it¹³, considers war as a political failure. Yes, but without forgetting, Cooper continues, that outside Europe, the jungle laws are those who are imposed.

Since we argue on a *reconstructive pacifism*, on a “*post bellum*” pacifism, let us ask the question if there is today an updated and attractive version of this model that could transform the return to peace into a durable and consensual project.

Presentation

There is today a reviviscence of juridical pacifism, <inspired by Kantianism>, that consists in the idea of a world public space, that would be able to give to all actors the same right to a public argumentation.

1) According to the German philosopher Habermas, the idea of an international public space corresponds to the globalization of democracy. Nowadays, supranational actors are the ones that form a surveillance space of the states and that make the prerogatives of the sovereignty to lose ground. The media, the intellectuals, the NGOs, the humanitarian organizations, the organizations for human rights protection and religions actors would thus become little by little true citizens of the world, in search for common regulation opposable to states.

2) Intellectuals, jurists, journalists, writers can form a public space that unites them in the same demand for common rules, oriented towards a transnational organization of law. Such pacifism can be qualified as a “pragmatic” one, in the communicational sense that consists in *exercising an action on others by means of speech*. What should we understand by “transnational”? First of all, to impose to the states the respect for personal freedom, to put the humans rights above states’ sovereignty. Therefore, it is about the largest application possible of the equality of all people before the law, by generalizing the path of the arbitration according to norms acceptable by everyone. “The communicational infrastructure of a democratic

¹³ Robert Cooper, *op. cit.*

public space has the function to transform social problems into debate topics and to allow citizens to refer at the same time to identical topics of the same importance, by bringing contributions or by simply adopting an affirmative or negative position in relation to news and opinions¹⁴”.

This model regards the emergence of a world of “post-national” citizens. Everyone can perceive himself as a “citizen of the world”, provided that he would adopt a so-called “post-national” posture, that no longer refers to a community of language and destiny, but simply to the adoption of the principles of human rights. Citizenship is getting “cerebralized” and can be identified, on a transnational level, to a solidarity between Strangers, “abstract solidarity based on law”.

3) There is also an utopian version of the promotion of future citizens of the world, the version that dreams of a world democracy via the internet and of the creation of a cybiont, a “planetary being of a superior organization level, a being emerging from the action of humans and constructing them in return¹⁵”. Apparently, a revolution is taking place: human brains would be just a part of a vast “thinking network” which comprises the totality of human brains, computers and means for the changing and dissemination of the information. And, thanks to the communication technologies, technique would cease to be domination, in order to become *interaction*. Technique and culture would thus be called to reconcile in the gestation of a new world, designated with the term of “noosphere” (sphere of the idea or “mind kingdom”). Two Americans, John Arquila and David Ronsfeld, have created the idea of a “Noopolitics”, in which the media-related *softpower* would progressively replace the traditional *hardpower* of the states¹⁶.

Analysis

What to make of the attractive or reconstructive value of these two versions of peace through a new world citizenship?

In the second case, the ideal of planetary solidarity given in a technological or economical version makes us think of a generalized conditioning of our species rather than of an appeal to will and energy. Peace would then be the result of a conditioning generalized by a perfect mastering of the technique of communication. The peak of its success is to render public opinion accomplice of its own conditioning, of its own submission. Of course, one cannot deny the fact that peace in future will live from a certain communicational consensus, but that also implies that the regime of citizenship will be divided into active and passive citizens: active citizens are those who have the competence to publicly argue and to have an influence on decisions; passive citizens are the simple onlookers of the debates on television, the representative atoms of the public opinion.

¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *La Nation, l'Europe et la démocratie*, 2000, Paris, Revue « Cultures en mouvement ».

¹⁵ Joël de Rosnay, *L'homme symbiotique. Regards sur le troisième millénaire*, Editions du Seuil, 1995, p. 137.

¹⁶ John Arquila and David Ronsfeld, *The Emergence of Noopolitik: Toward an American Information Strategy*, USA, National Research Defense Institut, (1999).

The first model, that of a public space of argumentation, is of a real interest in the possibility of overcoming the simple technique of communication through a real ethics of communication. And since it has been proved that we are entering in a society of information and of knowledge, a more and more larger part of the intellectual life could consist in a practice of argumentative interactions by which the comprehension of certain common problems could be elaborated in common. It is an internationalist dimension that should be favored in an academic context.

Given this, the model finds its limits in the aggressive manner of imposing the supra-nationality to the states and, for Habermas, clearly against them, and in the very big abstraction of the principles of a post-national citizenship. Because this public space of discussion and of media-related expression does not include the most intimate and profound reasons for living, which are life projects oriented by a final goal. He adopts as a basis the priority of the just over the good, that is the priority of right over ethics. It is a space of cohabitation established exclusively on general, normative principles because they are rational.

c) Peace through balance or multilateralism

Multilateralism is a political, strategic and military challenge. It recognizes the equality of the states and it expects from their juxtaposition that it avoids the submission of all the states to a unique and unilateral imperial force.

At this stage of the reflection, it is Europe's self-confidence or Europe's crisis of self-confidence that can determine the future contents of the question, as well as in the answer.

Identity-related challenge in European context

a) Identity challenge

Up until recently, the claims of legitimacy were getting "politized", nowadays they are getting "culturalized", by identifying themselves with psychological, affective, identity and civilization-related mental facts. They express feelings of anxiety, resentment, anomie and they are in search of a public recognition, often by appealing to a victimary logic. The difficulty of foreseeing future conflicts consists in the flexibility of the terms "identity" and "identity". An identity claim is a need for "recognition", it is a dangerously flexible notion because the need for recognition can be affective and psychological, social and professional, ethical and religious, or can even include all these levels at the same time (but the identity is distinct from the religious¹⁷).

An extension of the risks of crisis takes place from the moment the questions of legitimacy break the ordinary political framework of the legal action, when the use of violence ceases to provide a readable and detectable political goal,

¹⁷ Zaki Laïdi, *La grande perturbation*, Paris, Champs Flammarion, 2006, p. 407-408.

upon which it is possible to act since this goal is negotiable. All the difficulty consists in acting upon what's un-negotiable. We are on this side of what is politically negotiable when violence only serves as a means of expression (graffiti, sexual or racial aggressions, destruction of public buildings etc.). We are beyond what is politically negotiable when violence becomes a sacralized means of destruction of a nation from the rise up to the intolerable. (terrorist actions deliberately exaggerated).

The culturalization of conflicts shifts the battle field in minds, representations and symbols. We acknowledge the fact that we enter, today, in what we could call *a culture of the fear of the other*: fear of the child because he becomes a despot, fear of the student because he de-socializes himself, fear of the people because it is manipulated by media, fear of the neighbor because he manifests its otherness through hostility etc.

Now, this fear of the other generates a specific pacifism that is signaled by a sort of post-heroic moralism¹⁸ (Herfried Münkler) and that is often related to a form of nihilism. He opts for a radical disengagement: he asserts the relativity of all value systems in order to refuse the fact that they can be reasons for dying, but he denies at the same time that they are reasons for living and he gets satisfaction in praising the difference through indifference. Of course, he refuses any apology of war, but he feeds a false culture of the peace, illusorily reduced to a simple lack of interest for the way the world goes.

Such pacifism translates maybe what Fukuyama calls the “decline of European civilization’s self-confidence” or “the relativist impasse of modern thought” which realizes that it lacks the “necessary intellectual resources for defending itself”.

This type of summary pacifism is encouraged by the medias, which de-politicize the questions of war and peace by reducing them to emotional and compassion phenomena¹⁹. Medias create the illusion that there is a virtual pacific community that would cultivate same apolitical amoralism, by reducing politics to morality and morality to feelings.

Analysis

One can reproach a major deficiency to this pacifism of the balance of cultures: “for a stable and equilibrated political reality to exist, diversity and equality are not sufficient, something “in common” also needs to exist, in the form of a shared engagement... The multiple polarity cannot pretend to incorporate a moral ideal unless it is sustained by a normative engagement that is not included in it”²⁰.

An apolitical moralism is not sufficient: it is necessary that peace remains a political reality, in the strong sense of the word, that of a world where several entities accept to live together in a world that could be common to everyone.

¹⁸ Herfried Münkler, *Die neuen Kriege*, Rowohlt Verlag, Reinbeck, 2002.

¹⁹ “When the media takes over the states of violence, there are no more losses, only victims”, F. Gros, *Etats de violence*, Paris, Gallimard, 2006, p. 240.

²⁰ Monique Canto-Sperber, *Le Bien, la guerre et la terreur*, Paris, Plon, 2005, p. 201.

An additional reason to reinforce an internationalist vision. Instead of the identitary passion, whose effect treating its own culture as a dead language, the capacity, in each nation, to develop an interactive concept of its own culture – by conceiving it as an ensemble of potential relations with other cultures – could correspond to a true “plurality”, which has nothing to do with an ordinary relativism but which conceives the world, according to a characteristic that is often quoted, not as what is above us or behind us, but “between” us. There lies maybe the measure of a pacifism that would not be abstractly moralizing, but ethically realistic. “The world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time. The public realm, as the common world, gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other, so to speak²¹”.

Conclusion : The perspective of a relational politics

Between the perspective of a world disaster and that of a unilateral world empire, it's not impossible that the European scale would choose to promote a different politics, less imperialist than relational. This still remains a challenge for the future: that states, cultures and religions no longer see themselves as entities closed upon themselves, but as systems of *relations* to other states, cultures and religions. Conceiving a national (or regional) patrimony as the sum of the relations *created* with other nations (or regions), overrunning the simple formal respect of international common laws by the creation of substantial *connections* between communities is still highly utopian, but maybe utopian fecund... It is not impossible that one day Europe would extract a feeling of unity from the sum of connections that compose it. And then, somewhere in the future, the question of the meaning of the military action will be asked again. “In a world that is tempted to conceive symbolic patrimonies like objects of power, that wills engaged in pitiless battles tend to appropriate themselves, a relational approach of cultures, practicable in the intercultural exchanges field, allows to found a new modernity of the relations. Maybe a relation to the idea of peace²²”.

²¹ Hannah Arendt, *Condition de l'homme moderne*, Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1983, p. 63.

²² Monique Castillo, *Connaître la guerre et penser la paix*, Paris, Kimé, 2005.

LE VISAGE DÉSAPPROPRIÉ. LA FONCTION LIBÉRATRICE DU DÉDIRE CHEZ EMMANUEL LEVINAS

CODRUȚA FURTUNĂ*

ABSTRACT. The Dispossessed Face. The Liberating Function of the *dédire* in Emmanuel Levinas' Philosophy. This article deals with levinasian face revealed as a pneumatological intersubjective intrigue of self-dispossession. The face as illeity becomes a neutral symbol that makes from its epiphany a disturbing event. The language shown in the event resides in a continuous deny of the communication having the structure *Dit-Dire-Dédire*. The face preserves the absolute strangeness of the Other as a Third Person that has nothing to do with the phenomenological "there is".

Contrary to the common opinion that makes from Levinas' philosophy one of abstract judaism, Marc Faessler, Guy Petitdemange, Michel Dupuis argue on the hypothesis that the pattern of the self-dispossession and of the ethical proximity lays in the christic kenosis. The levinasian self is incarnated as a pure passivity always exposed to an immemorial and exceeding responsibility. This aproach of the christic kenosis opens a new path of research in levinasian philosophy.

Keywords: face, responsibility, dispossession, self, trace

Introduction

*« Il sait à peine d'où tu viens
Malgré le ride qui te marque (...)
Lui doit être loin sur la route. »
(„Visage”, Pierre Reverdy)*

Le visage proposé par Emmanuel Levinas porte les signes de la mort de la première et de la deuxième personne : le « je » et le « tu » des philosophies du dialogue deviennent la troisième personne - l'illéité - une l'étrangeté foncière à partir de laquelle le visage s'insère dans le monde en la traversant en haut et en bas. L'advenue de visage comme un « ille » signifie son anonymat absolu comme coupure imminente du temps, comme un « autrement qu'être » vide et vif qui « dérange la signification mondaine » (HAH 47) car le visage « n'est pas du monde » (TI 13). Le caractère énigmatique de ce visage assure son anonymat même s'il est reconnu sous les figures du prochain où il demeure. Autrement dit, c'est proche des figures de l'autre qu'on doit chercher, selon Marc Richir, la mise de la phénoménologie:

* Dept. of Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University, Str. M. Kogalniceanu, 1, 400084 Cluj-Napoca, Email: furtuna_codruta@yahoo.com

« Répérer ces phénomènes et les Wesen sauvages qui les accrochent à la transcendance de monde : telle est la tâche propre de la phénoménologie comprise comme « éidétique transcendantale sans concept »¹. Cette authenticité de la pratique phénoménologique doit nous conduire vers l'origine phénoménologique du langage. Au cours de ce repérage des Wesen sauvages, le langage dévoilera sa propre structure schématique : au niveau thématique du discours –le Dit, au niveau pré-originel, pré-réflexif- le Dire et au niveau du chiasme instituée par l'expérience du sublime- - le Dédire.²

La lecture du visage comme triple hypostase qu'on propose ici, sera en concordance avec la kénose christique : le denument du Fils de Dieu de Sa gloire divine et Sa manifestation comme homme. Contrairement à la plupart des commentateurs lévinassiens, qui considèrent sa philosophie comme une pure abstraction, il y a des penseurs qui ouvrent le chemin pour la valorisation philosophique de la kénose dans l'œuvre d'Emmanuel Levinas. Mais cela est un chemin au commencement. L'argument plus fort pour telle hypothèse reside dans l'attitude lévinassienne même :

« Jean Borel : Je me demande s'il n'y a pas dans le message chrétien lui-même, quelque chose que nous ne supportons pas. Dans votre article „Dieu et la philosophie”, vous écrivez : ”Moi responsable je ne finis pas de me vider de moi-même. Accroissement, infini dans son puisement ou le sujet n'est pas simplement une prise de conscience de cette dépense, mais où il en est le lieu et l'événement et, si on peut dire, la bonté” (*De Dieu qui vient à l'idée*, p.120). Moi je ne peux pas, en lisat cela, ne pas penser en tant que chrétien...

Emmanuel Levinas : - ... à Jésus Christ...

Jean Borel- ... à la kénose, a tout ce que l'on dit dans notre tradition sur la kénose.

Emmanuel Levinas : - J'accepte la kénose. Absolument. »³

Le visage désapproprié reprend la triple hypostase du visage christique, créant ainsi son propre langage sous la forme Dit –Dire-Dédire.

On voudra traiter ici des manières sous lesquelles le visage devient reconnaissable sous les figures d'autrui.⁴ Egalement, on décrira la façon dans laquelle la perspective du « Il » renvoie à ce point de vue extérieur et impartial où les autres termes de l'intrigue éthique cohabitent pourtant, en tant qu'oubli de soi. Leur mort équivaut aussi à leur individuation mais seulement parce que la mort sera toujours la mort de l'autre qui la transmet. Cette troisième personne se traduit aussi par l'*intemporalité*, l'*impersonnalité*, l'*immémorialité* laquelle rejette en dehors d'elle toute contemporanéité de la première et de la deuxième personne selon les voies *obliques* de la philosophie apophatique.⁵ Notre impuissance de convertir l'ineffable du « Il » en discours se place au cœur d'un paradoxe : le visage désapproprié s'approprie à travers autrui et lui préserve son unicité sans le transformer dans un terme moyen.⁶

¹ Cf. M. Richir, *Phénoménologie et institution symbolique*, Jérôme Millon, Grenoble, 1988, p.303

² Pour le chiasme instituée au moment du sublime, voir Marc Richir, idem

³ Emmanuel Levinas, *Transcendance et intelligibilité*, Labor et Fidés, 1996, Genève, pp.55-56

⁴ « Emmanuel Levinas- On dit : Le visage de l'Autre. Mais je dis du prochain ce que le chrétien dit probablement du visage du Christ. ... ! » , Idem, p.57

⁵ Vladimir Jankélévitch, *La mort*, Flammarion, France, 1997, pp.34, 64

⁶ Pour une étude détaillée concernant la réussite de Levinas de maintenir l'unicité d'autrui contre toute forme de totalisation, d'intégration dans un système idéaliste, voir Jean Vioulac, *Le visage défiguré. Le rapport à autrui dans la métaphysique hégélienne*, rev. *Philosophie*, no 85, Les Editions de Minuit, Paris, 2005

1. Les hypostases désappropriées de l'illéité

En effet, en ce qui concerne l'altérité levinassienne, il s'agit d'un visage en triple hypostase : le « je » du besoin, en train de se defaire de son ipséité, le visage du prochain qui pour Levinas ne serait pas un « tu » (le signe de la réciprocité), mais toujours un « vous » qui préserve l'écart et la dignité du « Il » et le visage de l'Autre transcendant et immémorial qui échappe à une conscience caractérisée par la production des rétentions ou des protentions. L'Autre reste latent en tant que triple hypostase du visage énigmatique. L'illéité peut prendre la figure d'autrui-simultanément s'absolvant de toute prise de forme : son visage n'est ni la figure, ni la forme de l'absence qui devrait confirmer une présence cachée du transcendant ; c'est cet « Il » qui signifie par lui-même dans la nudité la plus pure car son visage est le trou du regard : il peut être saisi dans les yeux du prochain à condition qu'on n'observe pas la couleur de ses yeux et qu'on ne demande d'y regarder comme on regarde un portrait figé. Le visage en troisième personne ne dévoile pas seulement un Neutre impersonnel⁷ mais il se voile sous l'unicité de l'expression d'autrui par laquelle il signifie son propre abandon. La notion d'abandon nous renvoie vers la désappropriation de soi parce que l'illéité est abandonné à la fois à l'être (on traitera plus loin de la liaison entre la bonté de l'illéité et de la création comme acte gratuit de sa retraite pour qu'un être puisse surgir) et à soi-même. Si l'illéité s'abandonne soi-même à l'être, il s'abandonne aussi à son pouvoir destructif de telle sorte qu'il s'y anéantit jusqu'à l'absence : son dénuement va jusqu'à la désappropriation dans l'abandon du caractère transcendant – le sacrifice de sa Gloire : « Lui qui est de condition divine n'a pas considéré comme une proie à saisir d'être l'égal de Dieu. Mais il s'est dépouillé, prenant la condition du serviteur, devenant semblable aux hommes ».⁸

C'est à partir de ce dénuement que l'intrigue intersubjective levinassienne prend son sens en tant que responsabilité face à l'autre – séparation et dissymétrie des termes de ce jeu le quel assure le Dédire incessant de toutes les hypostases prises par le visage. Notre propos vise de souligner la conversion de la transcendance absolue⁹ du visage en passant par un processus de désappropriation de soi, dans la plus profonde

⁷ Silvano Petrosino, Jacques Rolland, *La vérité nomade. Introduction à Emmanuel Levinas*, La Découverte, Paris, 1984, p. 99

⁸ Voir Ph 2, 6-11

⁹ D'une part, la qualification de la philosophie levinassienne comme porteuse d'une « théologie cachée » et en tant que tel, responsable d'un éloignement du désirat scientifique et rigoureux de la phénoménologie husserlienne dont Levinas se revendique : voir Dominique Janicaud, *Le tournant théologique de la phénoménologie française*, Editions de l'Éclat, Paris, 1991, pp.15-35. D'autre part, les penseurs tels J. Greisch, P. Ricœur, R. Kearney pour lesquels le « tournant théologique » de la phénoménologie levinassienne ouvre des possibilités nouvelles pour penser le phénomène religieux justement grâce à la faille présente entre la méthode phénoménologique et ce dont elle doit témoigner. De ce côté, le démarche d'E. Levinas rend compte d'une phénoménologie herméneutique diacritique qui permet le passage de l'immanence (le Même) à la transcendance absolue (l'Autre) comme *trace*, c'est-à-dire retournement vers l'origine ou vers les Écritures. (TI 3) Son but rend compte d'une voie qui moyenne entre les extrêmes : voir Richard Kearney, *Vers une herméneutique diacritique du passage. En dialogue avec Jean Greisch*, dans Cappelle Philippe, Hébert Geneviève, Popelard Marie, *Le souci du passage. Mélanges offerts à Jean Greisch*, Ed. du Cerf, Paris, 2004, pp. 23-40

intériorité des structures constitutives du sujet. Si le projet lévinassien se conduit par un souci perpétuel de préserver l'altérité radicale de l'autre, dire que dans la désappropriation de soi, extériorité et intériorité ne font qu'une ne signifie pas le trahir mais suivre les pas d'Emmanuel Levinas : celui de n'attribuer point le visage à tel ou tel contexte d'interprétation, à telle ou telle tradition de pensée mais dire, selon une formule de J.Derrida, *a(-)dieu*¹⁰ à toutes les déterminations culturelles que peuvent recevoir ce visage quelconque. Le visage reste anonyme.

La dépossession se passe à la fois pour d'une subjectivité constituée dans les premières textes lévinassiens selon le modèle du repli sur soi (son ouverture repose sur l'appel de l'autre qui naît au cœur de l'hypostase du soi) et pour une altérité dépouillée pour proférer cet appel sous la « forme » de la responsabilité. Si l'hypostase pose le soi comme la survenue d'un domaine privé dans l'être, la désappropriation le destitue et le de-situe de cette position privilégiée de telle sorte que *l'illéité* semble se confondre avec *l'il y a* : le visage se condense dans un point sans dimensions, un *entretemps* « entre le Crépuscule où se perd (ou se recueille l'intentionnalité la plus extatique mais qui vise toujours trop court) et l'Aube où la conscience revient à soi, mais déjà trop tard pour l'événement qui s'éloigne. »¹¹ *L'illéité* devient un *il y a* au sommet de son dénuement.

Le visage s'insère donc comme l'intervalle creusé entre l'appel survenu de la transcendance absolue de l'autre et la réponse du sujet lévinassien en tant qu'assumer de sa propre réponse (investi à son tour par cet autre) qui renvoie vers le prochain. L'appel peut être reçu en tant que tel parce que le visage ordonne d'un ordre personnel dans l'effacement de son départ même : « Transcendance -pur passage- elle se montre passée. » (EDE 195, 211) : L'étrangeté du visage assure donc en même temps la désappropriation du « sujet » et de l'autre en s'écartant de tous les deux termes; elle préserve son éloignement qui garantira la liberté des termes (par un assujettissement au dénuement) et sa propre capacité de s'excepter de tout ordre prédéterminé. Autrement dit, le visage remplit la fonction de l'Autre et il échappe au Même et à toute tentative de l'englober pour acquérir un statut- sa liberté de jeu assure en ce sens le désir infini d'un non-lieu qui est le visage même : « Le désir métaphysique n'aspire pas au retour, car il est désir d'un pays où nous ne naquîmes point. D'un pays étranger à toute nature, qui n'a pas été notre patrie.(...).désir sans satisfaction qui, précisément entend l'éloignement, l'altérité et l'extériorité de l' Autre ». (TI 23)

¹⁰ Si cet *a(-)dieu* serait selon Derrida, premièrement un salut, on pourrait le recevoir comme une invitation au lecture du visage en dépassement du cadre soit judaïque, soit hellénique, soit husserlien de la formation lévinassienne, un adieu, donc, un prétexte de nous débarrasser des étiquettes attribués à l'œuvre lévinassienne comme étant exclusivement philosophie de l'altérité, et troisièmement, un à-Dieu qui pourrait constituer un autre prétexte pour élever cette problématique au-delà de toute prise de position, dans la fidélité paternelle de l'œuvre lévinassienne même : dans *l'autrement qu'être* de l'évasion éthique ou dans la liberté du dédire.

¹¹ E. Levinas, *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger* (EDE), Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, p. 211

2. Les niveaux de la désappropriation de soi

Maintes fois, Levinas souligne que l'épiphanie du visage survient d'un « ailleurs », d'un « au-delà » qui ne doit pas être pensé comme un arrière-monde, mais précisément comme *trace*, c'est-à-dire, un autrement qu'être qui n'est pas du tout un être autre, mais un pur *autrement*, ni être, ni non-être : « Être en tant que *laisser une trace* c'est passer, partir, s'absoudre. »¹²

D'un part, au niveau vertical, le visage signifie son surgissement comme « visitation » (défaite de la forme plastique, de tout image) et traumatisme de l'éblouissement de sa propre irruption dérangeante dans le monde. D'autre part, au niveau horizontal de la manifestation, le visage s'insère historiquement dans des contextes culturellement et socialement déterminés. Pourtant, la signifiante du visage levinassien devient accessible à partir de la voie apophatique mentionnée auparavant : ni transcendance absolue, ni immanence ou ce que Levinas nomme « la troisième voie exclue par ces contradictoires » (HAH 58). La nudité du visage doit être comprise à partir de sa vie paradoxale (désappropriée mais personnelle, anonyme mais ayant un statut) qui luit dans la trace de son passage (de l'effacement de son passage) : « L'ordre personnel auquel nous oblige le visage est au-delà de l'être. *Au delà de l'être, est une Troisième Personne* qui ne se définit pas par le Soi-même, par l'ipséité. Elle est possibilité de cette troisième direction d'*irrécititude* radicale qui échappe au jeu bi-polaire de l'immanence et de la transcendance. Le profil que, par la trace, prend le passé irréversible, c'est la profil du « Il ».¹³

En effet, si l'illéité s'exclut de toute tentative de totalisation et rend unique le visage rencontré d'autrui, c'est parce qu'elle repose à l'origine de toute altérité : « Le mouvement de rencontre ne s'ajoute pas au visage immobile. Il est dans ce visage même (...). Mais le visage tout ouvert, peut à la fois, être en lui-même, parce qu'il est dans la trace de l'illéité. » (HAH63). Cette intrigue de la troisième personne rend compte d'une proximité « éthico-religieuse » (F.Guibal) qui renvoie le sujet levinassien vers l'assumer de l'irrémissible responsabilité pour autrui.

La proximité occupe une place centrale vis-à-vis du thème de la désappropriation de soi si on pense que c'est à partir d'elle qu'autrui réveille le moi pour lui renverser la conscience et le vouer à sa destruction. Il n'y a plus de distance entre le moi recevant et le moi qui obéit à l'ordre.¹⁴ Le but du philosophe français, ne consiste pas à prouver d'aucune façon le « mécanisme » de cette assignation car l'éthique est « l'optique spirituelle »¹⁵ par excellence, donc la relation avec autrui serait « une religiosité ou un consentement au mystère du visage d'autrui » (TI60).

Cet espace intersubjectif d'où le commandement éthique d'accueillir le prochain est proférée, comporte trois niveaux .

¹² E. Levinas, *L'humanisme de l'autre homme* (HAH), Fata Morgana, Montpellier, 1972, p.60

¹³ idem, p. 59

¹⁴ « suppression de la distance que comporte la conscience de ... » (AE 113). C'est à ce moment que le moi devient responsable malgré soi-même.

¹⁵ E. Levinas, *Totalité et infini, Essai sur l'extériorité*, (TI) M. Nihoff, La Haye, 1971, p. 61

D'un côté, un abaissement de l'illéité dans l'investissement du visage d'autrui : le moi alourdi sous le poids de l'être (le plan ontologique) est interpellé face-à-face par autrui « encore mon contemporain » (EDE 215) dont le visage provenant d'une dimension de la Hauteur de l'Infini, lui découvre son encombrement et inaugure la conscience morale : « Mais, dès lors, Autrui n'est pas simplement une liberté autre pour me donner le savoir de l'injustice, il faut que son regard me vienne d'une dimension de l'idéal. Il faut qu'Autrui soit plus près de Dieu que Moi. »¹⁶ C'est ici que la proximité du prochain devient le lieu sans lieu où se constitue en se dé-stituant de sa position première, l'ipséité.

D'autre côté, il y a un abaissement d'autrui vers le sujet en lui transmettant la désappropriation. Dans ce sens, subir l'investissement d'autrui ne signifie pas détenir une idée de son altérité (car le visage est une expérience pure, non conceptuelle) mais témoigner de l'urgence de l'assignation reçue, par son propre exposition au prochain (le tiers). En outre, pour qu'autrui puisse décentrer le moi, il devrait avoir supporté à son tour le même mouvement d'investissement/de désappropriation provenant de l'immémorial de l'illéité. Ce processus devient ordre (pour le moi) justement comme défection de la phénoménalité de son visage, sensibilité, vulnérabilité exposée à la blessure de celui qui sollicite « peau a rides, trace d'elle-même » (AE 175), « vieillissement, mourir » (AE 141) ou perte de toute intentionnalité. L'abaissement d'autrui vers le moi traduit la désappropriation de ce moi simultanément avec l'irruption du soi pour placer celui-ci dans une permanence de sa perte qui ne lui permet pas d'acquérir une place du repos mais le livrant à sa condition originaire d'otage. La proximité tourne en obsession pour un prochain qui « n'apparaît » pas mais qui trouble par un commandement dont il ne fut pas l'agent. L'altérité d'autrui dans la trace du visage déjà passé, s'éprouve comme une misère capable de fissurer le moi afin que le soi puisse surgir. Le visage d'autrui serait à la fois supplice et exigence dans sa condition d'otage de l'illéité qui l'investit et du moi qui l'obéit. En effet, si le visage de l'Autre réalise la désappropriation, c'est à l'intermède d'autrui qui fonctionne comme principe de dénudation¹⁷ par lequel l'illéité s'exprime. Pourtant, autrui ne devient pas un simple moyen et garde l'unicité que Levinas souligne chaque fois, justement par le consentement à son dénuement.

Troisièmement, le moi dépossédé et porteur de la responsabilité reçue, est transposé vers les autres. Il a acquiert son identité au prix de sa dépossession.

3. La substitution dans la mort

Le problème de la substitution hante l'œuvre lévinassienne parce que c'est la voie par laquelle le soi devient le point de mire de toutes les fautes, même pas commises et se trouve réduit au rien, exposé sans échappe, sub-jectum, sous « le poids de l'univers » (AE 183). La notion de substitution trouve sa portée en soulignant

¹⁶ E. Levinas, *En découvrant l'existence avec Husserl et Heidegger (EDE)*, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, Paris, 1988, pp. 173-174

¹⁷ Gérard Bailhance, *Le sujet chez Levinas. Fragilité et subjectivité*, PUF, Paris, 1994, p. 71

encore la désappropriation car elle renforce deux idées. Premièrement, il s'agit dans la substitution, d'une pure gratuité : le sujet se substitue à l'autre sans qu'il attende que l'autre se substitue à lui et dans cette manière il s'individue. La désappropriation de soi devient une re-appropriation. Par cette voie, le sujet montre l'unicité de son élection. Deuxièmement, son position comme irremplaçable ne lui permet pas d'acquérir un statut tel le moi transcendantal kantien promoteur des lois morales, mais fait en sorte que sa tâche soit plus écrasante : personne ne peut se substituer à lui mais il a à porter la responsabilité pour tous ceux qui l'interpellent jusqu'à son extinction. Il s'agit d'une responsabilité qui viole le sujet en l'encombrant sous des exigences toujours croissantes. L'antériorité de la responsabilité sur la liberté ne permet pas au sujet de choisir à répondre à l'appel du prochain; il n'y a pas de choix moral car la responsabilité débordé toute intentionnalité de la conscience (devenue conscience « contre-courant »)¹⁸ en la renversant par son immémorialité. On est dans le cœur d'un paradoxe : d'un part, le soi est élu pour se substituer, d'autre part, il ne pourrait pas se substituer s'il n'était pas élu mais son élection se défait pour devenir simultanément dé-position au moment où la présence du prochain annule toute prétendue acquisition de statut.

Le Soi serait constitué selon le modèle de la passivité originaire où sa gloire coïncide avec l'effacement de toute tentative de produire son infinition autrement qu'à travers son abaissement. Cette condition de réceptivité renvoie vers la notion de création ex nihilo qui chez Levinas implique la possibilité d'existence des êtres hétérogènes, sans le péril d'être totalisés; la « créaturalité » repose sur la passivité/disponibilité de la créature d'être affecté par un transcendant qui lui permet de se garder dans sa séparation sans que cette séparation annule sa dépendance vers la source de l'affectation. Loin de nommer l'auteur de la création, le philosophe français la place dans l'espace de sa gratuité créatrice dans l'élan de la pure bonté sans fournir des garanties de son œuvre toujours en guise de se faire, ni des certitudes.¹⁹ Le retraitement de l'illégitimité face à l'être jusqu'à l'absence, pour lui permettre de se manifester, souligne cette bonté « qui se démentirait en se proclamant ». (EDE 213) Si la merveille de la création consiste dans le créer d'un être moral (TI 61) capable de recevoir une révélation (TI 69) du visage, toutes les descriptions lévinassiennes d'une subjectivité se substituant à tout prix à l'autre relèvent plutôt d'un soi au-delà de toute moralité –la marque du pur désintéressement.

Pendant la substitution, le soi garde son structure « d'Autre-dans-le-Même » justement au point de n'arriver jamais au Même, au point de se tenir à l'écart entre un « malgré moi » et un « pour autrui », dans une déchirure de sa propre vie éthique ou de sa mort ontologique. La non-réciprocité nouée dans la substitution renforce la direction univoque de son poids: seulement le soi est responsable de tous. Sa

¹⁸ Emmanuel Levinas, *Entre nous*, Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1991, pp. 132-143

¹⁹ "Levinas ne fournit aucune démonstration, ni aucune preuve de l'acte créateur. La créaturalité est une trace énigmatique qui n'autorise que le *peut-être*", Simonne Plourde, *Emmanuel Levinas. Altérité et responsabilité. Guide de lecture*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1996, p. 146

place le rejette déjà au-delà de l'être, dans l'incondition du persécuté, de l'étranger vulnérable chez un soi qu'il ne peut pas détenir. Il est jeté même au-delà du désintéressement dans l'assumer de sa tâche où il prit sur lui toute la responsabilité envers autrui, répondant de son persécuteur incarné par le quelconque autrui. Comme on a déjà mentionné, le soi ne peut pas prendre aucune initiative, il est déjà revendiqué avant de pouvoir décider, son psychisme devenant un « grain de folie » possédé par l'Autre qui fait éclater l'identité de ce qui reste en lui du Même.

La substitution lévinassienne signifie un recul devant toute formulation d'accusation vers celui qui en est substitué, au profit d'une expiation qui n'entre pas dans les catégories de l'activité et de la passivité (AE 183) mais assume sa passion²⁰ gratuite en tant qu'étrangeté foncière dont on a parlé dès le début : « Le persécuté est expulsé de son lieu et n'a que soi à soi, rien dans le monde où poser sa tête ». (AE 155) Les termes activité - passivité traversent constamment l'œuvre lévinassienne. L'activité signifie de côté de l'être et de la tendance de totaliser l'étant sous un thème, à l'ontologiser. La passivité (en particulier voir *Autrement qu'être*) accomplit l'action inverse, d'empêcher la totalisation des étants, de les rendre libres, par un mouvement de réduction qui va jusqu'à l'extinction du sujet.²¹ La passivité joue le rôle de la sphère passive husserlienne donnée comme synthèse passive- s'imposant au delà du consentement de la conscience. Pour Husserl, la passivité pré-réflexive est un *Urdoxa* à valeur d'évidence absolue-évidence qui contredit ce que les synthèses actives donnent à un ego insuffisamment réduit. Les synthèses passives libèrent l'ego de sa position transcendantale pour le transformer en témoin de la destruction des actes conscientes. La destruction provient de l'Inconscient phénoménologique et expose le sujet à une passivité absolue sans qu'il puisse s'en dérober. De la même manière fonctionne la passivité lévinassienne : elle détruit tout trace d'idéalisme d'un sujet -maître de soi (dans le Dit thématique) et le livre à la perte de tout sens déjà constitué en l'invitant de le recréer. Le sujet expie la faute de l'autre selon des lois de la sphère passive pré-originelle (le Dire)- des lois qui dépassent toute éthique ou toute interprétation éthique. Cette logique paradoxale de la désappropriation de soi ne peut pas être soutenue qu' à l'intermède de la kénose christique.

On peut conclure à ce point, que l'hypothèse de Michel Dupuis selon laquelle « la structure kénotique de l'identité correspond bien à la structure éthique (au sens lévinassien) de l'identité »²² peut être soutenue jusqu'au point où le sujet

²⁰ « ...Qui est cet événement incessant de sujétion à tout, de substitution, le fait, pour l'être, de se dé-prendre, de se vider de son être, de se mettre « à l'envers » (...)", AE 185

²¹ C'est le dédire qui accomplira cette fonction comme chiasme langagière entre le dire pré-originel et le dit du thème courant

²² v. M. Dupuis, Raphaël Gély, *Les figures levinassienne de la kénose*, dans *Emmanuel Levinas et l'histoire*, sous la direction de Natalie Frogneux et Françoise Miès (éds), Les Editions du Cerf, Presses universitaires de Namur, Paris-Namur, 1998, pp. 357-361, Guy Petitdemange, *Ethique et transcendance*, idem, ou M. Faessler, *Dieu, autrement dans le Cahier de l'Herne*, C.Chalier, M. Abensour, (éds), L'Édition de l'Herne, Paris 1991, p.361

expié incessamment pour les autres. Il n'y a rien d'éthique dans cette exposition au mal gratuit. Le problème éthique ne peut plus se poser au moment où le dénuement du sujet se confond avec *l'il y a*, sans que le sujet y avait décidé. C'est-à-dire, l'illéité a joué contre le sujet en lui imposant passivement, pré-réflexif, une responsabilité écrasante, qu'il n'anticipait et qu'il ne voulait pas : il était déjà élu à être responsable. Il s'agit d'une élection qui dépasse le bien et le mal de l'éthique. Le mal est absolu : seulement un sujet qui assume l'inassumable peut lui faire face et expier pour ceux qui ne peuvent pas lui faire face. Le fonctionnement du visage comme triple hypostase rend compte de la kénose, mais la question est de savoir en quelle mesure on peut juger la désappropriation du visage en termes éthiques. Il y a quelque chose d'éthique dans la kénose christique ?

Le mouvement initial d'abaissement de l'illéité se prolonge à travers l'inquiétude de la proximité d'autrui, dans un abaissement du soi au niveau de la corporéité en tant que souffrance- possibilité de recevoir généreusement la mort pour autrui jusqu'à prendre sur soi sa faute et en tant qu'exposition sans défense à l'outrage de l'autre. Dans ce sens Levinas souligne que la proximité traduit l'incarnation d'une subjectivité libre à condition qu'elle ne trouve plus de repos chez soi et qu'elle se garde dans la trace produite par l'ouverture du visage d'autrui (fût-elle l'ouverture de l'extinction).²³ Jusqu'ici, le soi levinassien semble être au dessus de toute morale parce qu'il est pourchassé chez soi même quand il est responsable de la responsabilité du prochain ; « existant au delà de sa mort » (EDE 215) signifie la réponse que le soi assume pour s'approcher de l'Infini qui le sollicite dans la visage du tiers. Cependant, l'assumer déborde toute intention de l'assumer car, dans l'excès de responsabilité, le supportant ne sera jamais quitte envers le supporté. D'où le tragique de son in-condition : dans la proximité de l'Infini aux prix de sa mort dont il doit se défaire pour la dire dans le Dit de la vie de l'être à la rencontre des exigences croissantes du prochain; prochain qui empêche quand même la liberté du moi sacrifié par sa présence même ; cette présence encombre l'accomplissement du dénuement final. On remarque ici un des sens paradoxal de l'abandon du sujet. Abandonné par l'illéité, il est obligé à persévérer dans l'être malgré l'appel creusé dans les trous de visage comme l'ultime l'exigence : une invitation à mourir.

D'ailleurs, le sens de la désappropriation vise l'absurde²⁴ parce que, d'un part, il est un mouvement de fissure jusqu'à la destruction de toute ce qu'il y a de subjectif, d'autre part, il sollicite le « sujet » dépossédé de se préserver en tant qu'unité cohérente (déjà défaite, en fait) face à autrui. En contexte levinassien, cette continuité équivaut à une condamnation à la nuit de *l'il y a* où la lourdeur de l'existence attrape le sujet sans issue. L'« horreur de l'il y a »²⁵ exclut tout reste de privatisme, elle dépersonnalise et livre le sujet à la « densité du vide » (EE 104), à

²³ E. Levinas, *Intrigue de l'Infini*, Flammarion, 1994, p. 200

²⁴ Sur le jeu dont l'illéité se joue / joue le sujet, v. R. Callin, op.cit

²⁵ E. Levinas, *De l'existence à l'existant (EE)*, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1990, p. 98

l'obscurité qui le submerge au-delà l'ordre de l'investissement, par le visage d'autrui. Se maintenir dans la désappropriation de la désappropriation qui est cette indistinction, signifie aussi se garder dans la trace de l'infini lequel fait visible encore une fois le visage du prochain à travers son invisibilité même. C'est par la nuit commune que l'illégitimité coïncide avec l' il y a .

Le sujet devient un « a-sujet » selon l'expression de Stéphane Mosès, pris dans un arrachement perpétuel à soi et poussé à la limite n'ayant et n'étant plus rien mais encore malade d'un Autre qui le pourchasse : responsable de la mort d'autrui d'où sa propre mort lui vient, il est questionné dans sa responsabilité de survivant même. Pour ces raisons, certains commentateurs ont considéré qu'il serait impropre de parler encore d'une subjectivité chez Levinas ; si on voulait garder le terme subjectivité, on devrait restituer le vide (en deçà et y inclus la négativité) constitutif de son Non-Lieu. Ce vide serait le chemin que le « je » doit parcourir pour s'éloigner de soi, pour poursuivre l'illégitimité, et pour se retrouver (ou être retrouvé) brisé. De plus, cette façon de questionner et d'être questionné dans l'absence de toute réponse atteste le témoignage de la gloire de celui qui dévisage par son départ : ce serait « le temps qu'il faut à un „ Je ” pour avouer ce qu'il est au bout de son épuisement : rien ».²⁶

La relation du « sujet » à la mort serait encore arrachement car il n'y a pas de mort que celle d'autrui dont il est responsable depuis toujours. Le rapport à la mort ne s'enracine pas dans l'angoisse, mais il est un pur « rapport émotionnel », une « déférence » (DMT 25) née de l'oubli de soi et de don de soi pour un autre mourant encombré par son visage. Au cas où la mort de la subjectivité comme désappropriation aurait un sens, ce sens lui serait conféré par prendre sur soi la mort de l'autre, ce qui signifie finalement, transcender la mort et se libérer de tout autre et de soi.²⁷

Si pour Levinas, la mort ne se phénoménalise que dans le face-à-face avec autrui, c'est pour se transformer dans un autre appel à la responsabilité de ne pas le laisser seul face à sa propre mort. Le moyen d'apparaître du visage relève de la révélation d'une parole inaugurale inscrite dans la trace de son passé; la façon de se produire de la révélation serait une droiture du face-à-face du premier venu, un éblouissement. Pourtant, la manière de signifier de ce visage brise la corrélation entre signifié et signification pour faire entendre son appel dans un langage de l'irrécitité lequel définit la « relation latérale » (EDE 198) avec le passé irréversible d'où l'ordre est proféré. Brièvement, tandis que, dans la droiture de son exposition, le visage lance l'appel dans l'instant par l'irrécitité de son langage silencieux, le

²⁶ v. Jacques Rolland, *Le sujet épuisé*, dans *Levinas*, édition & présentation de Danielle Cohen-Levinas, Bayard, Paris, 2006, p. 320

²⁷ « C'est ma mortalité, ma condamnation à mort, mon temps à l'article de la mort, ma mort qui n'est pas possibilité de l'impossibilité mais pur rapt qui constituent cette absurdité qui rend possible la gratuité de ma responsabilité pour autrui », DMT 133

visage ne devient qu'une insinuation de l'éternité, ce qui pour Levinas est la condition même de l'irréversibilité du temps. « Tout est hier », dit le roi mourant d'Eugène Ionesco. Le visage est le hier sans possibilité de retour²⁸; le paradoxe c'est qu'il oblige encore dans le maintenant dans un langage qui ne se dit que parmi les mots.

C'est la leçon que nous donne M. Ponty. Le langage est indirect, il inaugure la relation latérale avec *quelqu'un* qui se voile dans l'allusion et qui reste autonome en son sens en deçà de la manière dans laquelle il est entendu. Ce langage équivaut à un cheminement parmi « les choses non dites » mais il dépasse le simple silence ou, il fait vibrer le silence en dépassant les différents dits dans lequel il se trouve transposé (de la côté levinassienne) « comme le geste dépasse ses points de passage ».²⁹ Si pour M. Ponty le langage est lui-même un être qui englobe en soi tous les sens, pour Levinas, le langage signifie en déstructurant, en étant rien, en laissant libres les sens mais en les convoquant vers le visage parlant qui remplace le langage. Ce qui revient à la même chose: le rien devient devant le visage nu, le *quelqu'un* qui se dit lui-même. Le langage serait alors le seul sujet de l'écoute et de l'attente.

Ce langage « u- topique » trouve son lieu « topique » justement dans la trace de sa perte.³⁰ D'ailleurs, dans ce contexte, les deux propos, levinassien et merleau-pontien, semblent se ramener au même niveau de langage (pas au même totalisant levinassien) même s'ils semblent s'ignorer.³¹

4. Le langage kénotique de l'illéité. La liberté du Dédire

Le langage levinassien s'enracine dans le surgissement ambivalent d'une parole inaugurale présente comme trace- proximité mais à condition de l'éloignement - dans l'épiphanie du visage. L'infini est celui qui ordonne la responsabilité pour l'autre. Le commandement équivaut à un Dire originel qui appartient à la gloire de l'illéité, dont le Dire est le témoin. L'ordre vient de l'illéité et par l'ordre l'illéité se glorifie soi- même (dans le Dire). Le Dire assure une référence constante à l'autrement qu'être en tant que défaite perpétuelle de la métaphysique de l'être. Le seul but du Dire est de glorifier l'illéité.³² Pour ce raison, ce langage traduit « un refus de la communication », et « une résignation au risque de la faute et de l'incertitude » (AE191). Le Dire remplit alors, la fonction fondatrice laquelle explicite le sens de cette livraison gratuite du soi vers l'autre: il est « dédicace », « sincérité » (AE 223) et révélation, propéhtisme –permettant ainsi à l'Infini d'échapper à toute forme d'objectivation. Le Dit apparaît de la nécessité du Dire de se trahir pour que son appel soit entendu et de la soumission à sa reprise dans un thème sans y rester. Le

²⁸ En suivant Husserl, le hier et l'aujourd'hui ont déjà eu lieu dans le passé primitif

²⁹ M. M. Ponty, *Le langage indirect et les voix du silence*, dans *Signes*, Gallimard, Paris, 1960,

³⁰ E. Levinas, *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence(AE)*, Martinus Nijhoff, La Haye, 1978, p. 279

³¹ « Deux gestes culturels ne peuvent être identiques qu'à condition de s'ignorer l'un l'autre. », M. Ponty, *Idem*, p.112

³² « Avant de se mettre au service de la vie comme échange d'informations a travers un système linguistique, le Dire est temoignage, Dire sand Dit, signe donne a Autrui . », AE 235-236

Dire pré-originel se subordonne à son thème (le Dit) pour qu'un langage soit possible. Autrement dit, la soumission du Dire au Dit phénoménologise le langage en tant que *prégnance symbolique*.³³ L'excès du Dire sur ses différents Dits tourne, par rapport à la trace de l'illéité, en proximité du Dédire ; il est le « chiasme originel »³⁴, le hiatus (Marc Faessler), l'entre-dit par lequel la signifiante de la parole originaire surgit. Il préserve en même temps l'ambiguïté d'un langage provenant d'un passé révolu de l'Enigme (de l'illéité). C'est pourquoi, le langage lévinassien « se parle » mais ne se dit pas si par un Dit on comprend la traduction de ce langage dans une pensée qui pourrait s'en approprier à travers un système de signes d'une langue déterminée.³⁵ C'est à partir du Dédire que s'exprime, au-delà de toute dissimulation (le Dit) et de toute révélation (le Dire), la désappropriation du visage en tant qu'effacement de ses traces de l'horizon du monde. Dans ce sens, la vraie vie du visage serait cachée pour celui la cherche dans une prise de position (ontologique) tel un abri fut-il celui de la demeure, de la jouissance ou du travail. Le Dédire témoigne de l'hauteur la plus élevée de l'Infini justement parce qu'il libère la transcendance de sa gloire pour la convertir dans la plus humble dépossession.³⁶

Le pouvoir libérateur du Dédire provient du fait que le langage éthique dont il constitue le sceau, ne s'enracine ni dans l'éthique, ni dans les expériences philosophiques (AE 191) mais dans une dimension pneumatologique.³⁷ La liberté que le Dédire assure provient de la manière dans laquelle se déploie le procès de désappropriation au niveau de la subjectivité devenue « la subjectivité poumon » (AE 276) contenant plus qu'elle ne peut contenir, capable de recevoir et d'être inspirée- (le Dit) dans/par la respiration (Le Dire) d'un autre transcendant. Sa « structure » en tant qu' « Autre-dans-le-Même » bénéficie de la liberté à condition qu'elle s'y assujettisse en obéissant à l'ordre qui la renvoie vers autrui ; pour cette subjectivité diaconique l'ordre coïncide avec son accomplissement et l'éludation signifierait la perte de liberté.

Cependant, la liberté d'un tel sujet semble être redoublée de son propre poids écrasant : il est inspiré par un autre qui lui donne la possibilité de donner par le renversement de sa conscience au-delà et en deçà de toute initiative. Par conséquent, exposition au tiers devient une défaite de sa propre liberté jusqu'au point où on ne la revendique pas parce que, chez Levinas, l'antériorité immémoriale de la responsabilité

³³ v. Ernst Cassirer, *Filosofia formelor simbolice*, vol. 1, *Limbajul*, Paralela 45, Pitești, 2008. La prégnance symbolique exprime la tendance de la pensée d'intégrer une chose au domaine du sens faute du pouvoir de l'intuitionner

³⁴ Etienne Feron, *De l'idée de transcendance à la question du langage. L'itinéraire philosophique de Levinas*, Jérôme Million, Grenoble, 1972 p. 204. Voir aussi le sens du chiasme selon M. Richir, idem

³⁵ v. J.L. Chrétien, *Traduire l'intraduisible* dans *Emmanuel Levinas. Positivité et transcendance*, PUF, Paris, 2000, p. 311

³⁶ «Le Très-Haut bascule dans le langage le plus dépouillé.» V. Guy Petitdemange, *Ethique et transcendance* dans *Levinas*, idem, p. 133

³⁷ R. Callin, *Levinas et l'exception du soi*, PUF, Paris, 2005, p. 363

rend inutile toute tentative de s'en libérer car elle exprime la liberté même. La respiration de la transcendance du visage en tant que « dé-claustration » (AE 278) inspire le moi en le destituant par une exposition signifiant la passivité originaire de l'« expiration absolue » (AE 229) de la mort pour autrui et par autrui. En ce sens, la mort du sujet levinassien n'usurpe pas le place mondaine d'autrui tandis qu'il « ne se trouve pas de lieu même dans son propre volume, ni dans la nuit ». (AE 276) Son élection (« charge écrasante mais inconfort divin ») (AE 57) ajoute à la subjectivité dépossédée, la possibilité d'en témoigner en prononçant le « Me voici ! » par lequel la Gloire de l'Infini rend son propre témoignage. A l'intérieur de son langage, l'illégitimité maintient l'incertitude de son passage. Cette incertitude rend compte du Dédire qui empêche la corrélation Dit/Dire de fonctionner systématiquement de telle sorte qu'un sens originel ne puisse surgir. Le visage désapproprié est un visage libre à cause du pouvoir du Dédire de fonctionner en tant que chiasme qui libère le Dire (le sens prophétique) de son Dit (le thème ontologisante).

Le Dédire souligne à ce moment l'abandon de soi à ses pouvoirs de faire face à un accroissement de dette envers le prochain et l'asymétrie constitutive de la relation avec autrui: « sécurité dans l'insécurité, en repos sous le couvert des ténèbres » (AE 276). Même si ce soi est rivé sans défense aux demandes des autres auxquels il se substitue, il est livré aussi à une communauté du dédire ou de la bonté fraternelle. Cette communauté que Levinas souligne notamment dans *Totalité et infini*, est porteuse d'un espoir éschatologique de la paix dont l'annonciation passe par un *entre-dit*³⁸ creusé par la visitation du visage, au-delà de toute recherche de liberté. Le moyen d'être de cette communauté dépasse les alternatives de l'être et du non-être et s'insère comme un exercice du pur pardon de la gratuité non comptabilisable, « sans traces ni souvenirs » (AE 199). Le Dédire dans la trace du visage ne peut plus être fixé dans les différents Dits et, en même temps garde la possibilité d'être inscrit et repris sous ces Dits par le travail d'interprétation de cette communauté langagière. Sa liberté gagne l'effectivité parce que le Dédire représente la limite phénoménologique de toute écriture en tant que négativité de sa propre lisibilité, qui confirme l'excédent de l'Autre sur le Dit. La trace altéritale, toujours effacée dans le renouvellement apporté par chaque sujet dont il doit remplacer en responsabilité, constitue ce Dédire même : ni Dit, ni Dire, mais leur réduction permanente, afin qu'un *entretiens* qui « sépare l'inspiration et l'expiration, la diastole et la systole du cœur battant sourdement contre la paroi de sa peau » (AE 172) puisse percer le silence de l'arrachement à soi.

La problématique de la désappropriation présente à l'intérieur de la constitution de la subjectivité prise en tant qu'exigence infinie de répondre au visage d'autrui, s'ouvre vers un possible éclaircissement dans l'hypothèse vivement discutée aujourd'hui

³⁸ Cet *entre-dit* symbolise l'impossibilité du dédire de fonctionner autrement que sur les figures de l'excès inspireur (du verset) v. Marc Faessler, *L'au-delà de la narration*, dans *Emmanuel Levinas et l'histoire*, sous la direction de Natalie Frogneux et Françoise Miès (éds), Les Editions du Cerf, Presses universitaires de Namur, Paris-Namur, 1998

par des penseurs tels Marc Faessler, Guy Petitdemange, Michel Dupuis : le modèle du dénuement subi par le sujet lévinassien serait la kénose christique.³⁹ La plus forte raison (qui s'ajoute à celles déjà mentionnées auparavant), pour plaider en faveur d'une constitution kénotique de la subjectivité lévinassienne serait le problème de l'incarnation comme réceptivité absolue de tout demande venue d'ailleurs jusqu'à sa déchirure. Même si pour le philosophe français accepte le fait que la kénose pourrait avoir à affronter le danger d'une immanéntisation de la transcendance⁴⁰, donc de sa perte, ses analyses d'*Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence* nous offrent des arguments suffisants pour soutenir une telle hypothèse :

La sensibilité est « d'orès et déjà incarnée » (AE 123), le corps est « contraction et éclatement de la subjectivité » et « rend l'autre car cet autre est le cœur » (173), la corporéité repose sur la dépossession de soi, le sujet incarné n'est pas un « concept biologique ». Ajoutons que le Soi qui se substitue aux autres est « d'inavouable innocence », qui rend compte de la bonté originelle de la création (AE193) ; il « s'absout de soi », « se libère de tout autre et de soi », il est « plus ancien que l'Ego (...) il ne s'agit pas pour le Soi, dans son être, d'être. Au-delà de l'égoïsme et de l'altruisme, c'est « la religiosité du soi » (AE185) ainsi que ce soi relève de l'humilité et de la condition du serviteur que la kénose suppose. Le soi se définit comme un subir incessant, sa souffrance est une « souffrance inutile » (EN 100) parce qu'elle ne fige pas dans l'ordre du monde; elle n'est pas approchable à partir de l'espace historico-politique et d'aucune comptabilisation. C'est la « Passion de Soi » qui perce l'histoire pour se faire source de toute non-intentionnalité ou de conscience « contre-courant renversant la conscience » (EN 70) car elle est « le fait *d'autrement qu'être*, sujétion qui n'est ni néant, ni produit d'une imagination transcendantale. »(AE 185) De plus, le soi est « le pneuma du psychisme »(AE 182), il « précède tout événement subi ou mené par un sujet ». Sa souffrance est une « pure brûlure » qui donne sens à la souffrance même en l'inversant par la « gratuité de la substitution », la « gratuité du sacrifice », « gratuité intégrale » qui est désintéressement (AE17).

Ce mesianisme lévinassien s'adresse à chaque individu pour lequel la souffrance de l'autre devient un projet à accomplir même avant qu'un ordre soit entendu. L'impuissance de se dérober du commandement face à l'indésirable prochain perd sa pesanteur ontologique si elle est convertie éthiquement. Dans l'ordre éthique, pour Levinas, toutes les personnes sont réciproquement redevables avec cette qualité messianique laquelle fait éclater l'impérialisme du moi. Si «le Messie c'est moi, le

³⁹ v. M. Dupuis, Raphaël Gély, *Les figures lévinassiennes de la kénose*, dans *Emmanuel Levinas et l'histoire*, sous la direction de Natalie Frogneux et Françoise Miès (éds), Les Editions du Cerf, Presses universitaires de Namur, Paris-Namur, 1998, pp. 357-361, Guy Petitdemange, *Ethique et transcendance*, idem, ou M. Faessler, *Dieu, autrement* dans le *Cahier de l'Herne*, C. Chaliier, M. Abensour (éds), L'Édition de l'Herne, Paris 1991, pp.411-420

⁴⁰ M. Faessler soutient que l'incarnation, loin d'être une immanéntisation, est un « dérobement » traduit par la discrétion de l'Autre qui ordonne sa bonté autant que prise en charge d'autrui à travers une métaoia .

Messie c'est toi »⁴¹, cela est possible grâce au fait que le visage repose sur une illéité vide qui crée une intrigue intersubjective asymétrique permettant de dire « moi », « toi » mais se tenant toujours à l'écart de l'entre-deux. De plus, pour Levinas, la singularité de l'autre s'appuie sur l'exception représentée par l'illéité en tant qu'absolue étrangeté de sa vocation apophatique. Celle-ci ouvre l'espace d'une reconnaissance sans demande de reconnaissance –la liberté du dédire pour ceux pour lesquels la communication échappe à l'échange des informations au profit « d'une vie dangereuse comme un beau risque à courir », soit-il le risque « du malentendu » . (AE 190)

5. Conclusion

On pourrait dire que la problématique de la désappropriation de soi renforce celle de la responsabilité située au centre de la démarche lévinassien mais ne s'y réduit pas. En deçà et au-delà de la convocation du sujet dans l'instant de la responsabilité inéludable pour un autrui auquel il doit faire face, la dépossession de soi apporte une « envie de la mort » impossible d'être comblée au service du prochain et qui porte, inscrite en soi, la part du silence.⁴² Pour Levinas, l'insupportable liberté de la mort ne peut être « attestée » que dé-dite, la où la vie s'absente d'elle même. Si cette vie est la mort par la désappropriation de soi, le désir de l'Autre perd son sens exactement là un on garde le bon sens du vivre.

Levinas dénonce tout au long de son œuvre et particulièrement à travers la désappropriation de soi, le fait d'être comme réalité impropre, tel le *das Man* heideggérien : on y vit mais on ne sait pas si ç'est ça la vie. L'invitation lancée par le philosophe français vise le Dédire continuel- propre à celui qui demeure im-propre- pour cheminer vers l'illéité de l'Autre- un autre impersonnel qui nous façonne selon son propre visage personnel. Le façonnage comporte notre dé-figuration qui peut nous apparaître impropre mais qui peut aussi bien s'avérer notre propre oublié depuis toujours. Le message lévinassien du visage désapproprié et de son Dédire libérateur peut s'avérer être un habitus quotidien si on consent librement à l'évasion de *l'autrement qu'être*.⁴³

⁴¹ Françoise Miès, *Asymétrie et réciprocité : qui est le Messie ?*, dans Michel Dupuis, *Levinas en contrastes*, De Boeck Université, Bruxelles, 1994, pp. 119-135

⁴² v. Guy Petitdemange, *Ethique et transcendance. Sur les chemins d'E. Levinas*, dans *Levinas*, idem, pp.107-139

⁴³ *Investing in people!* Ph.D. scholarship, Project co-financed by the SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT 2007 - 2013. **Priority Axis 1.** "Education and training in support for growth and development of a knowledge based society". **Key area of intervention 1.5:** Doctoral and post-doctoral programs in support of research. Contract nr.: **POSDRU/88/1.5/S/60185** – "INNOVATIVE DOCTORAL STUDIES IN A KNOWLEDGE BASED SOCIETY", Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

CAN LUCK EGALITARIANISM BE REALLY SAVED BY VALUE PLURALISM?*

EUGEN HUZUM**

Abstract. In this paper I discuss a frequent reply to what is usually called ‘the harshness objection,’ or “the abandonment objection” to luck egalitarianism. This objection has been used by Elizabeth Anderson to argue that luck egalitarianism is not, in any of its versions, an adequate interpretation of the (egalitarian) ideal of social justice. According to the luck egalitarian reply discussed in this paper, luck egalitarianism can be saved from the harshness objection by value pluralism. After a few short considerations on luck egalitarianism, on the harshness objection invoked by Anderson, and on the pluralism as a strategy of dealing with this objection, I will try to show that, in fact, luck egalitarianism cannot be saved from the harshness objection (only) by value pluralism.

Keywords: luck egalitarianism, the harshness objection, value pluralism, distributive justice, solidarity, compassion

1. Introduction

In one of the most discussed and debated studies in current political philosophy, “What Is the Point of Equality?,” Elizabeth Anderson launched a severe criticism against the philosophical current she called – and which is commonly referred to ever since as – ‘luck egalitarianism.’¹ Luck egalitarianism, Anderson tried to show, is not and could not represent, in any of its versions, an adequate interpretation of the (egalitarian) ideal of social justice.

In this paper I will discuss a frequent luck egalitarian reply to one of the main arguments Anderson has put forth in order to build her point of view: the argument usually called the ‘harshness objection’ or, sometimes, the ‘abandonment objection.’ According to this reply, luck egalitarianism, or at least a certain type thereof, can be saved from the harshness objection by value pluralism. To be more precise,

* This work was supported by the Romanian Research Authority CNCSIS–UEFISCSU [project number PNII–IDEI 1997/2008: „Equity, Responsibility, Solidarity. The Demands of Moral Reconstruction in the Post-Adhesion Romanian Society”] and by „Wissenschaftliches Forum” (Konstanz University, Germany).

** Gh. Zane Institute of Economic and Social Research Iași, Email address: eugenh76@yahoo.com

¹ Elizabeth Anderson, „What is the Point of Equality?,” *Ethics* 109, 2 (1999): 295-302. Anderson has come again with explanations, reformulations and additions of the luck egalitarianism critique in “How Should Egalitarians Cope with Market Risks?,” *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 9, 1 (2007): 61-92. But in this paper I will refer mainly to her criticism from “What is the Point.”

by the fact that pluralist luck egalitarians can morally legitimate the help given to the persons responsible for causing their own disadvantages in the name of other values than distributive justice (especially solidarity or compassion). Shlomi Segall² and Daniel Markovits,³ for example, are among those who have supported this idea. My main goal in this article is to show that this idea is problematic. In other words, I wish to argue that luck egalitarianism cannot be saved from the harshness objection (only) by value pluralism.

The study is structured in four sections. The first three present brief outlines of luck egalitarianism, of Anderson's harshness objection against it, and of pluralism as a strategy to respond to this objection. The main goal of the study is carried out in its fourth section. Here, I present the main reasons why I consider that value pluralism is not a successful strategy in defense of luck egalitarianism against the harshness objection.

2. Luck egalitarianism: a very short introduction

By 'luck egalitarianism' Anderson called one of the most representative projects in current moral and political philosophy. The project was initiated by Ronald Dworkin and was continued, developed, or reformulated especially by philosophers like Richard Arneson, G. A. Cohen, Eric Rakowski, or John E. Roemer. Other important contributions to this project have also come from philosophers like Brian Barry, Julian Le Grand, Thomas Nagel, Hillel Steiner, Larry Temkin, Peter Vallentyne or, more recently, Teun Dekker, Carl Knight, Shlomi Segall, George Sher, and Zofia Stemplowska. The main purpose of the project is to reconcile distributive justice (equality) with individual choice and (moral) responsibility. More exactly, the project seeks to identify the most acceptable distributive egalitarian ideal which does not legitimate, in the name of justice, the compensation of the disadvantages the individuals are personally responsible for. Luck egalitarians, as well as (at least) some libertarians and conservatives, believe that an ideal requiring the compensation of these disadvantages cannot be an adequate ideal of distributive justice.⁴ Why?

² Shlomi Segall, "In Solidarity with the Imprudent: A Defense of Luck Egalitarianism," *Social Theory and Practice* 33, 2 (2007): 177-198, Shlomi Segall, *Health, Luck, and Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 58-73.

³ Daniel Markovits, "Luck Egalitarianism and Political Solidarity," *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 9, 1, (2008): 271-308.

⁴ In fact, this is one of the main objections from luck egalitarians, libertarians and conservatives, to the Rawlsian theory of justice. See, for example, Richard Arneson, "Primary Goods Reconsidered," *Nous* 24 (1990): 429-454, Richard Arneson, "Rawls, Responsibility, and Distributive Justice," in Marc Fleurbaey, Maurice Salles and John A. Weymark, eds., *Justice, Political Liberalism, and Utilitarianism: Themes from Rawls and Harsanyi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 80-107, Ronald Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 5, or John Kekes, *The Illusions of Egalitarianism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 46-47. The Rawlsian theory is not, however, without defense in front of this objection. See, for example, Michael Blake, Mathias Risse, "Two Models of Equality and Responsibility," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 38, 2 (2008): 165-200, or Samuel Scheffler, *Boundaries and Allegiances. Problems of Justice and Responsibility in Liberal Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Because such an ideal contradicts one of the intuitions about justice considered to be one of the firmest and widely accepted: the intuition that the persons responsible for causing their own disadvantages lose their right to help from the other members of society. If other values such as charity, solidarity, utility or efficiency, recommend helping them, yet, from the perspective of justice, we owe nothing to these persons. Justice requires that each person take individual responsibility for the costs of his own choices. It is unfair that these costs be covered by the other members of society, either totally or partially.

Although luck egalitarians agree on the necessity and desirability of their philosophical project, they do not share the same opinion when they answer its fundamental question: what is the ideal of justice which best reconciles the egalitarian intuitions and the intuitions about individual choice and responsibility? The philosophers involved in this project have defended ideals of distributive justice which are quite different in their details. The most important egalitarian ideals of this kind include equality of resources (Ronald Dworkin), equality of opportunity for welfare (Richard Arneson), equality of access to advantages (G. A. Cohen), equality of fortune (Eric Rakowski), or equality of opportunity (John Roemer).⁵ The explanation for these diverse positions among luck egalitarians is, among other things, that they also give different answers to other two questions crucial to their project: 1) Are we morally responsible for our actions?, and 2) When can a person be legitimately considered responsible for the disadvantages he suffers in society? In other words, these egalitarian ideals are based on different conceptions of individual responsibility. Most luck egalitarians seem to be optimistic in what concerns the answer to the first question: in their opinion, we do have free will and we are, therefore, morally responsible for our actions. Still, G. A. Cohen declares himself agnostic on this matter.⁶ Also, just like some of the libertarians and conservatives, Eric Rakowski seems to think that the simple fact that a person chose a certain action is enough to legitimately qualify him/her as morally responsible for the unfortunate consequences of that action (and so, for that person to lose his right to compensation from the other members of society).⁷ However, Rakowski's position is singular among luck egalitarians. Despite some formulations which suggest the contrary, most luck egalitarians have a much more demanding, complex and gradual conception of moral responsibility. To them, a person can be considered legitimately as morally responsible for the unfortunate

⁵ See, for example, Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue*, Richard J. Arneson, „Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare”, *Philosophical Studies* 56, 1 (1989): 77-93, G. A. Cohen, „On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice,” *Ethics* 99, 4 (1989): 906-944, Eric Rakowski, *Equal Justice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), or John E. Roemer, *Equality of Opportunity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

⁶ See, for example, G. A. Cohen, ”Equality of What? On Welfare, Goods, and Capabilities,” in *The Quality of Life*, eds. Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 28, or G. A. Cohen, “Luck and Equality: A Reply to Hurley,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 72, 2 (2006): 442.

⁷ Rakowski, *Equal Justice*, 73-87.

consequences of his actions only if those actions were the result of a ‘genuine’ choice, a choice performed in ideal conditions of freedom and fairness. In the absence of these conditions, either totally or partially, people cannot be considered legitimately as (completely) responsible for their actions. But when does a choice qualify as ‘genuine’? Again, luck egalitarians have different answers to this question. Yet, I believe that I am not too far wrong when I say that most of these answers are, in fact, different interpretations of one and the same condition: (ideal) equality of opportunity (in the substantial sense of this concept).⁸

As I have shown above, luck egalitarianism has a number of affinities with libertarianism and conservatism on the relationship between distributive justice and individual responsibility. But there are also some specific differences between luck egalitarianism and libertarianism or conservatism which cannot be overlooked. One of them has already been mentioned: usually, luck egalitarians share a conception of moral responsibility very different from that of libertarians and conservatives.⁹ Another important difference is that, unlike libertarians and conservatives, luck egalitarians uphold not only the idea that disadvantages resulting from actions for which individuals are personally responsible are not unfair, but also the idea that the disadvantages for which individuals are not personally responsible are unfair. In fact, this is, in various interpretations, the fundamental idea behind all the ideals of distributive justice advocated by one or another of luck egalitarians. In its ‘standard’ formulation, this fundamental idea says that inequalities due to *option luck* are fair, whereas inequalities caused by *brute luck* are unfair.¹⁰ Thus, from the perspective of these ideals, the fundamental requirement, or at least one of the fundamental requirements of justice, is to “eliminate the influence of brute luck on distribution. Brute luck is an enemy to fair equality and, since genuine choice contrasts with brute luck, genuine choice excuses otherwise unacceptable inequalities.”^{11,12}

⁸ On the luck egalitarian conceptions of responsibility, see especially Serena Olsaretti, “Responsibility and the Consequences of Choice,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* CIX, 2 (2009): 165-188, Nicholas Barry, “Reassessing Luck Egalitarianism,” *The Journal of Politics* 70, 1 (2008): 136-150, or Susan Hurley, *Justice, Luck and Knowledge* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2003).

⁹ For a conservative conception on individual responsibility, see Kekes, *The Illusions of Egalitarianism*, 32-36.

¹⁰ The distinction between *brute luck* and *option luck* was introduced by Ronald Dworkin in “What is Equality? Part 2: Equality of resources,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 10, 4 (1981): 219. Usually, luck egalitarians understand by *brute luck*, essentially, the luck that does not depend in any way on individual choice or control, whereas *option luck* refers to the luck resulting from the individual’s genuine choices. I say ‘usually’ because some luck egalitarians have recently reformulated this distinction. For example, Shlomi Segall understands by *brute luck* the outcome of actions (including omissions) that it would have been unreasonably to expect, in the normative sense, to be avoided (or not to be avoided, in the case of omissions) by an agent (Segall, *Health, Luck, and Justice*, 20).

¹¹ Cohen, „On the Currency”, 931.

¹² For a more detailed introduction to luck egalitarianism than that offered here, see especially Carl Knight, *Luck Egalitarianism: Luck, Responsibility, and Justice* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), or Richard J. Arneson, “Luck Egalitarianism – A Primer,” in Carl Knight and Zofia Stemplowska, eds., *Responsibility and Distributive Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 138-161.

3. The Harshness Objection against Luck Egalitarianism

“What is the Point of Equality?” presents several arguments in order to demonstrate that luck egalitarianism does not represent an adequate interpretation of the egalitarian ideal of social justice. Among the most important are, for example, the argument that luck egalitarianism promotes a misguided, distributivist, conception of equality, the argument that it represents a moralist theory (and even paternalist in some of its versions) of distributive justice, the argument that implementing its requirements would lead to intrusive measures on the part of the state, the argument that luck egalitarianism has harmful consequences on the self-esteem of the victims of bad brute luck, or the argument that the reasons offered by its advocates in favour of compensating these individuals are incompatible with the respect for their dignity (these reasons being an expression of pity rather than compassion). Luck egalitarians have tried to address all these objections, more or less convincingly.¹³ However, here I am concerned only with the (pluralist) luck egalitarian reply to the ‘harshness,’ or ‘abandonment’ objection. Moreover, in my opinion, this objection is the most important pillar of Anderson’s argumentation against luck egalitarianism. So, I am not surprised that the attempt to respond to this objection was the top priority for most luck egalitarians.¹⁴

At the basis of the harshness objection is, among other things, an intuition about justice different from the one invoked and accommodated by luck egalitarians in their theories: the intuition that there are cases where justice – and not only solidarity, utility, or any other social value – requires us to help even the persons morally responsible for causing their own disadvantages. Such cases are, for example, those in which at stake are the fundamental needs of an individual, or even his life. According to this intuition, in such situations, the requirements of justice are, or should be, blind to individual responsibility.

¹³ I have to say that I myself am not convinced that all of Anderson’s criticism is justified or fair to all versions of luck egalitarianism. Also, it is worth mentioning that Anderson’s are not the only objections to luck egalitarianism. For other objections to this philosophical project see, for example, Christopher Lake, *Equality and Responsibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Timothy Hinton, “Choice and Luck in Recent Egalitarian Thought,” *Philosophical Papers* 31, 2 (2002):145-167, Hurley, *Justice, Luck and Knowledge*, Maureen Ramsay, „Why Luck Egalitarians should have Abandoned the Attempt to Reconcile Equality with Responsibility,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 4 (2005): 431-450, Matt Matravers, *Responsibility and Justice* (Polity Press: Cambridge, 2007), or Nicole Vincent, “What Do You Mean I Should Take Responsibility for My Own Ill Health?,” *Journal of Applied Ethics and Philosophy*, 1, 1 (2009): 39-51.

¹⁴ However, as Segall himself has shown (in “In Solidarity,” 179-188), most of luck egalitarians have failed, from various reasons, in this attempt. It is no accident that the attempt to answer the harshness objection still represents a fundamental preoccupation of luck egalitarians. See, for example, Teun Dekker, “Choices, Consequences and Desert,” *Inquiry* 52, 2 (2009): 109-126, Zofia Stemplowska, “Making Justice Sensitive to Responsibility,” *Political Studies* 27, 2 (2009): 237-59, Kok-chor Tan, “A Defense of Luck Egalitarianism,” *The Journal of Philosophy* CV, 11 (2008): 665-690, or Kristin Voigt, “The Harshness Objection: Is Luck Egalitarianism Too Harsh on the Victims of Option Luck?,” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 10 (2007): 389-407.

As is suggested by its name, the central point of the objection is that, by refusing them any right to assistance, luck egalitarianism treats the victims of bad option luck much too harshly. For example, from the perspective of luck egalitarianism, persons with serious injuries or disabled by car accidents caused (only) by their own carelessness are not entitled to the medical care they need. In other words, society is not obliged to offer them even the emergency medical care. In a similar situation are, from the perspective of luck egalitarianism, persons affected by their 'genuine' choice to reside in regions with a high risk of natural disasters. Even the persons who 'genuinely' chose health-threatening professions (such as firefighters, members of the armed forces, police officers, miners, farmers or fishers) are not entitled, from the perspective of luck egalitarianism, to the medical care necessary for the diseases resulted from practicing these professions. Not lastly, Anderson argues, luck egalitarianism does not justify any kind of (social) help for the persons who voluntarily sacrificed their opportunities in order to care for dependants (such as children, sick or disabled people), or for the persons living in misery and destitution as a result of voluntarily risking and losing their fair share of natural wealth.

It is true, Anderson admits, that some versions of luck egalitarianism are less harsh than others. These less harsh versions are, in essence, those which are based on a more demanding, complex and gradual conception about moral responsibility/option luck. But as long as we accept that individual responsibility is not an illusion, even these 'softer' versions of luck egalitarianism leave some persons with no protection from justice. But, Anderson argues, "justice does not permit the exploitation or abandonment of anyone, even the imprudent."¹⁵ In other words: since it legitimates the exploitation or abandonment of the persons responsible for causing their own disadvantages, luck egalitarianism is not an adequate ideal of (egalitarian) justice.

4. The Pluralist Reply to the Harshness Objection

One of the most important arguments against egalitarianism as a theory of distributive justice is the levelling down objection. The objection, raised by Derek Parfit, upholds that egalitarianism is an unacceptable ideal of justice because it legitimates not only the equalization of welfare by improving the situation of all members of society or by improving the situation of those who are less well off, but also the equalization of welfare by reducing the welfare of those who are better off or even by worsening everyone's situation.¹⁶ This objection convinced many philosophers that egalitarianism is not an adequate ideal of distributive justice. But

¹⁵ Anderson, „What is the Point,” 298. Anderson is not the only one to argue in this way against luck egalitarianism. For similar arguments see, for example, Marc Fleurbaey, "Equal opportunity or equal social outcome?," *Economics & Philosophy* 11 (1995): 25-55, or Samuel Scheffler, „What is Egalitarianism?," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31 (2003): 5-39.

¹⁶ Derek Parfit, "Equality and Priority," in *Ideals of Equality*, ed. Andrew Mason (Malden: Blackwell, 1997), 202-221.

not some egalitarians. I am referring here especially to Larry Temkin, who tried to convince us that egalitarians do have a solid reply to this objection.¹⁷ Temkin brought two arguments in this direction. The first is that the levelling down objection is motivated by a principle which, although *prima facie* plausible, is unacceptable (at least because it is incompatible with moral ideals like autonomy or freedom). I am referring here to the principle called by Temkin ‘the slogan’: the idea that one situation *cannot* be better or worse than another *in any respect*, if there is *no one* for whom it is better or worse *in any respect*.

But it is Temkin’s other argument that is of interest to us here. According to this argument, reasonable egalitarians do not think, in fact, that levelling down is acceptable, although they surely do accept that it is a requirement of distributive justice. This is because “any reasonable egalitarian is also a pluralist. Equality is not the only thing that matters for an egalitarian. It might even not be the utmost ideal for him. It is an ideal, though, among others, with an independent normative meaning.”¹⁸ Besides, the fact that the ideal of distributive justice has unacceptable implications is not, in Temkin’s opinion, a valid argument against it, since other social ideals, too, have such implications. What these implications really show is only the fact that the ideal of distributive justice is not the only ideal which should be implemented in society. In other words, in Temkin’s opinion, the main lesson of the levelling down objection is not that equality cannot be an acceptable ideal of distributive justice, but that “we should be pluralist about morality.”¹⁹

The luck egalitarian pluralist reply to the harshness objection formulated by Shlomi Segall and Daniel Markovits is, in essence, an adaptation of Temkin’s reply to the levelling down objection. Thus, in Segall’s formulation, the reply says that “luck egalitarianism can escape the abandonment objection if, when applied in social politics, it is completed by other moral considerations (including other justice-related considerations), such as those of social solidarity.”²⁰ Unlike distributive justice, social solidarity recommends helping the persons responsible for their own disadvantages in meeting their fundamental needs, including those disadvantaged in this way due exclusively to their own carelessness. Consequently, Segall believes, “luck egalitarians can satisfy the abandonment objection by invoking some moral grounds independent of distributive justice.”²¹ Like Temkin, Segall refers here to those luck egalitarians who are pluralist in the sense that they believe that fairness or distributive justice is

¹⁷ See, for example, his works *Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), “Equality, priority, and the levelling down objection,” in *The Ideal of Equality*, eds. Matthew Clayton and Andrew Williams (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 126–161, or “Equality, Priority or What?,” *Economics and Philosophy* 19 (2003): 61–87.

¹⁸ Temkin, “Equality, Priority or What?,” 63.

¹⁹ Temkin, “Equality, priority, and the levelling down objection,” 155.

²⁰ Segall, “In Solidarity,” 177.

²¹ Segall, “In Solidarity,” 188.

only a component of social justice and only one of the moral values we must take into account in designing public policies. More importantly, to these luck egalitarians, distributive justice is not a trump or uncompromising value, but one that can and should be traded off against other moral values or considerations. In other words, in their opinion, in certain circumstances, some of these values such as solidarity, compassion, respect for people, utility, privacy, autonomy, and so on, should prevail over distributive justice in decisions regarding social policy.

In Markovits's formulation, the pluralist reply says that luck egalitarianism does not require poor choosers always to bear the burdens of their choices, no matter how terrible these burdens become. It does not uphold, for example, that the persons responsible for causing their own misery should simply be abandoned in destitution. Luck egalitarians only argue that distributive justice requires or recommends this. This statement, however, does not oblige them to recommend the abandonment of the victims of their own recklessness: "Distributive justice represents, after all, only one side of a wider scheme of obligations people owe one another, and some of these obligations may speak where distributive justice is silent or, in certain circumstances, may even weigh heavier than distributive justice. In the case in question, humanitarian considerations – which are triggered by absolute need and are, therefore, blind to matters related to responsibility – require helping even the most reckless of us, once their condition worsens to a certain point. Although a luck egalitarian must admit that such a humanitarian help implies some inequalities (because, unlike other people, the neediest of those who make bad choices avoid taking responsibility for them), he can accept without problems that, in certain circumstances, compassion legitimates these small and unsystematic breaches from strict equality required by humanitarianism."²²

In short, the pluralists' reply to the harshness objection is, therefore, as follows: Anderson is wrong when she argues that luck egalitarians do not offer any protection to the victims of their own carelessness. It is true, luck egalitarianism offers no protection to these people on behalf of justice. But most luck egalitarians are pluralist. More precisely, they do not think that distributive justice is the only, or at least the most important, virtue of a good society, a virtue that should always prevail over the demands of other social virtues. On the contrary, these egalitarians consider that, at least in some situations, such as those involving the meeting of the fundamental human needs, justice must grant the top place to solidarity or compassion in designing social policies. So, these luck egalitarians agree (and can justify the idea) that society must guarantee the satisfaction of fundamental needs even for the persons morally responsible for causing their own misfortunes. In other words, Anderson's objection does not affect these egalitarians. As a matter of fact, it only undermines an unreasonable, 'monist,' version of luck egalitarianism.

²² Markovits, "Luck Egalitarianism," 281.

5. Is the Pluralist Reply an Adequate Reply to the Harshness Objection? Some Skeptical Remarks

In the pluralist reply to the levelling down objection or to the harshness objection there are, doubtlessly, many ideas that are true or at least plausible. For example, it is true that most luck egalitarians are pluralist. These luck egalitarians can indeed justify even the help for some categories of persons responsible for causing their own misfortune, including the victims of carelessness. Also, the idea that any reasonable political philosopher must be a pluralist about morality and desirable social values is more than reasonable. Distributive justice is by no means the only value, or at least an uncompromising value of public policies (as long as by 'distributive justice' we understand justice in the distribution of the material goods or resources of a society). However, the idea that the justification for helping victims of their own negligence in the name of solidarity or compassion saves the pluralist luck egalitarians from the harshness objection is at least problematic.

Why? First of all, because, as we have seen, the harshness objection is not meant to demonstrate that luck egalitarianism is an inadequate conception of morality, but an unacceptable conception of *distributive justice*. What Anderson holds against luck egalitarians is not the fact that they cannot morally justify the help for victims of carelessness, but the fact that they cannot justify it on behalf of their conception of *distributive justice*. As a consequence, the fact that pluralist luck egalitarians can justify this kind of care on behalf of other values than justice, be they solidarity, compassion or any other desirable social value, does not help them at all to reject the harshness objection. Moreover, value pluralism does not demonstrate in any way that luck egalitarianism represents the best interpretation of the ideal of distributive justice. Pluralism does not logically imply luck egalitarianism. There is no contradiction in being a pluralist about morality but non-luck egalitarian about the adequate ideal of distributive justice.

In order to really escape the harshness objection, luck egalitarians have only two options: either to show that there are, or that we can develop, versions of luck egalitarianism which can justify *in the name of distributive justice* the assistance in meeting their fundamental needs for all the victims of bad option luck; or to demonstrate that the harshness objection is a weak objection against an ideal of distributive justice (more precisely: that the fundamental intuition about justice behind this objection is questionable). But the pluralist reply does neither of these. True, the pluralists do suggest that the harshness objection is not a reasonable objection against luck egalitarianism. Segall, for example, tries to reject Anderson's criticism on the ground that it "seems to suggest that she places the burdens of any imaginable aspect of political philosophy on the shoulders of distributive justice. Anderson claims to demonstrate that 'luck egalitarianism generates injustice,' but in fact she only shows (at best) that luck egalitarianism leads to just policies but which are undesirable for other reasons."²³ But Segall's argument is, again, problematic.

²³ Segall, "In Solidarity," 191.

On the one hand, it is doubtful that the harshness objection is based on a too much demanding attitude towards the requirements of justice. At any rate, it does not imply ideas such as that justice should justify the compensation of any imaginable type of social disadvantage,²⁴ or that justice is an all-inclusive value, or the only social value. All this objection suggests is a much less dubious idea: the idea that between the demands of justice and those of other social values, such as solidarity or compassion, there is or should be not only differences, but also similarities.

On the other hand, neither the second part of Segall's statement is problem-free. Segall does not offer any argument in its favour. There is nothing in this statement to throw at least a shadow of a doubt on the reasonability of the ultimate intuition behind the harshness objection: the intuition that there are situations where justice – and not just solidarity or charity – requires helping even the persons afflicted by their own carelessness. Moreover, Segall's statement is (at least partially) implausible. *Pace* Segall, at least some of the examples invoked by Anderson within the harshness objection, such as that of the persons disadvantaged as a result of practicing a dangerous job, demonstrate that, in fact, luck egalitarianism generates injustice. A policy of abandonment for these people is doubtlessly an unjust policy, and not only a policy undesirable for other reasons.

Finally, the pluralist reply does not respond to the harshness objection as a whole. The only goal, or at least the fundamental goal of the pluralist reply is to demonstrate that (most) luck egalitarians can morally legitimate (though not in the name of justice) even the social help for the victims of their own carelessness. But, as we have seen, the harshness objection does not refer only to the victims of carelessness, but to all types of victims of bad option luck. One of its tenets is that luck egalitarianism is harsh not only with the victims of carelessness or recklessness, but also with persons where such accusations might not be reasonable or unexcusable: for example, with some of the persons who suffer as a result of practicing jobs known as dangerous, or some of the persons who sacrificed their opportunities in order to look after dependants.

However, what is most important is not the fact that pluralism is only a partial reply to the harshness objection, but the fact that it cannot respond convincingly to it (except in part, at best). It is possible – and even quite probable – that many of us think that the pluralist reply to the objection of harshness towards the victims of their own carelessness is a very good reply of luck egalitarians. In other words, it is very likely that our intuition tell us, in this case, what it tells luck egalitarians too: that, indeed, just like the persons disadvantaged as a result of some actions we usually

²⁴ On the contrary, Anderson has argued in favour of a sufficientist theory of distributive justice, much less demanding than luck egalitarianism. According to this theory, which Anderson calls 'democratic equality,' justice does not require the compensation of all disadvantages for which individuals are not personally responsible, but only of those disadvantages which impede them from functioning as equal citizens in a democratic state (Anderson, „What is the Point,” 316-337).

see as immoral, these people do not have any right to our help, and that their assistance cannot be legitimated in other way than in the name of such social values as solidarity or compassion.²⁵ The situation changes dramatically, however in the cases like that of people who suffer as a result of dangerous jobs. Most likely, this time, intuition tells most of us what it tells Anderson too: that, despite their responsibility for causing their own disadvantage, these persons are in fact entitled to compensations from society and that luck egalitarianism is an unacceptable conception if it morally justifies these compensations only in the name of solidarity, compassion, utility, or any social value other than justice. In other words, the pluralist reply does not work in the case of this type of victims of bad option luck.²⁶ Even only for this reason, it does not represent, in fact, a strategy able to really escape luck egalitarianism from Anderson's objection.

²⁵ I do not share this intuition. On the contrary, I am among those who consider that this intuition is problematic, especially because it is based upon a questionable transition between two types of responsibility: the ones Thomas Scanlon called *responsibility as attributability* and *substantive responsibility*. A person is responsible for an action in the former sense if that action can be attributed to him legitimately. On the other hand, to say that a person is substantively responsible for his actions is the same as saying that he is the only one to bear the costs (or enjoy the benefits) of those actions. For details on the problematic character of the transition between these two types of responsibility, see, for example, Thomas Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1998), 248-294, Anderson, "How Should Egalitarians," 256, or Vincent, "What Do You Mean," 43-49.

²⁶ As a matter of fact, in an attempt to save luck egalitarianism from the objection of harshness towards persons with dangerous jobs, Segall adopted a different strategy than pluralism, one which allows luck egalitarianism to legitimate the compensation of these persons in the name of distributive justice and not just of solidarity, compassion, social utility, etc. In essence, this strategy consists in the reformulation of the concept of *brute luck* described in Note 11. See Segall, *Health, Luck, and Justice*, 19-24.

PRINCIPLISM *VERSUS* UTILITARIANISM IN TRANSLATIONAL MEDICINE ETHICS

MIRCEA LEABU*

ABSTRACT. Translational medicine is a rather new research area, as it was mentioned for the first time in 1996, in the PubMed publication index, while bearing as a motto “From bench to bedside”. Its complexity and novelty manage to raise a series of problems, in both medical and bioethical terms. The intricacy of translational medicine resides in the implication of several related research areas, such as tissue engineering, gene therapy, cell therapy, regenerative medicine, molecular diagnosis etc, all of them aiming to orientate current biomedical knowledge toward new effective drugs and medical approaches, while the increase of patients’ beneficence is closely looked upon. The promises of several research areas in translational medicine draw certain pressures upon biomedical studies and researchers, pressures made by research policy makers, politicians, patients, entrepreneurs, and also by the civil society and which bring several ethical challenges to all the above-mentioned stakeholders. Therefore, making good ethical decisions is mandatory. In this paper, I wish to discuss translational medicine ethics from the perspective of principlism and utilitarianism and also suggest rationales for considering the two theories on bioethics as complementary rather than conflicting. A parallel shall be drawn between the four principles of bioethics (acknowledged either by the Anglo-American or by the European principlism) and utilitarian bioethics, which are considered mere tools serving the same purpose: patients’ welfare.

Keywords: bioethics, translational medicine, principlism, utilitarianism, ethical decision-making.

Introduction

I shall begin my article with a truism, for which I kindly ask the readers not to judge my approach too harshly. Throughout our entire life, existence gravitates toward three verbs. The first one is the verb **to be** and it begins its action before we can even become conscious of what is happening to us, which is our moment of birth (and, who knows, maybe even earlier). The second one is the verb **to have**, and it gradually insinuates itself into our lives, as we realize that *to be* depends on the possession of resources, or so it does in physiological terms mainly. Finally, we have the verb **to do**, and the following reflections try to address the interrelations between this last verb and the other two, in terms of ethical and deontological approaches.

* *Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine, “Carol Davila” University of Medicine and Pharmacy & Department of Cellular and Molecular Biology, “Victor Babes” National Institute of Pathology, Bucharest, Romania*

Addressing the relationship between *to be* and *to do*, I may affirm it is accompanied by an intrinsic morality, even if we were to analyze it from the primitive perspective of an uneducated person for whom *to do* means “to make a living”. *Doing* in order to *be* involves a moral relationship, even without being one hundred percent aware of it. If we take the case of an educated person, whose *doing* could become the only reason for *being* (the ideal situation), i.e. one *is* in order to *do*, the impregnation with morality became obvious. The relationship between *to do* and *to have* needs to be qualified, and that claims the intervention of ethics. In my opinion, *to do* with the aim of gaining goods (that is as a reason of *having*) is a profoundly immoral attitude. Moral is *to have* as a consequence of *to do* (meaning to possess as a result of an activity performed in order to fulfill our human condition). For such an attitude to be embraced, an ethical education is needed along with the building of strong characters. Such an ethical education would provide with generosity the meaning of human existence.

Furthermore, I shall transfer the above comments from the personal life to the professional realm, by asserting that professionalism cannot be defined in the absence of the verb to do. No one can work in any profession without doing something for it every day. However, only he who does not work does not err. How to avoid making mistakes in a profession is taught by deontology, which guides us toward correctness. This field is necessary but not always sufficient though, particularly when it comes to very complex working areas. Therefore, ethics is once again needed, because it has the capacity to identify what is the right path to follow.

Once having considered the reflections above, we may return to the topic under debate: translational medicine and the ethical issues arising from its development. Due to its complexity (as we shall later see), translational medicine is one strong example of area where deontology is widely required, while ethics confers upon it the sufficiency to guarantee the right attitude for the professionals working under its umbrella, an attitude specific to a human being, according to its highest meaning.

Basics of translational medicine concept

This locution, “translational medicine”, is rather recent, appearing as such for the first time in PubMed in 1996 [1]. The coining of the term and its definition as a concept and research field were due to the attempt of rushing clinical applicability of basic research results and knowledge deepening in biomedicine. In the last fifty years, the development of our knowledge in medicine, at the cellular and molecular level, has grown exponentially. The scientific research results increase the knowing-how and the knowing-that [2]. That raises our concern about knowing-what is ethical to be done. The motto of translational medicine is „from bench to bedside”. Translational medicine could represent a subterfuge to reduce the pressure made on biomedical research in order to urge the clinical application. However, it could also represent a camouflage for speeding clinical tests in medicine under the pretext of still being a scientific research. In these circumstances, it is obvious that translational medicine is an area sensitive to the ethical issues.

It is difficult to trace a firm border between the basic research in medicine and translational medicine. The more difficult as, for the most promising research directions the translation of the results into the clinical practice (as shown the tests on laboratory animals and even the attempts on human subjects) was unconvincing and sent back to the development of the knowledge by basic research, to increase our understanding on biological events at the cellular and molecular level. Nevertheless, one issue is more or less vocally recognized: our knowledge is not developed enough in mechanisms governing the biological events exploited in the translational medicine areas to let us ignore the risks. Medicine professionals (researchers and clinicians) have to avoid events such as the deaths of Jesse Gelsinger [3] or Jolee Mohr [4], despite the investigation results having been different in the two cases. Therefore, risk management in translational medicine is a very important ethical issue [5].

The complexity of translational medicine resides in the various research areas subsumed, such as: gene therapy, tissue engineering, cell therapy, immunomodulation of the cell behavior and the interaction control of therapeutic bio-material with the recipient body, regenerative medicine and molecular diagnosis. It is easy to draw a conclusion by observing (even superficially) that all the mentioned research areas and the studying directions elicited by them are intertwined and cannot be considered independently. The translational medicine concept was coined precisely in order to overcome the temptation of artificially segregating the various research fields in biomedicine. Finally, the most up-to-date corollary target followed in current medicine is personalized medicine. Without reconsidering the old dictum, attributed to Armand Trousseau (1801-1867) and which states that “there are no diseases, there are only sick people”, we cannot think ahead and neither can we push forward the advancement of medicine.

Therefore, we are forced to insist on the importance of speeding our knowledge completion in medicine, especially in translational medicine, in order to increase our progress in making basic research results applicable into clinic as swiftly as possible. In other words, we are condemned to push ahead the development of a research domain highly sensitive to ethics (in both theoretical and applied forms), and we are constrained to find solutions for the wisest ethical decisions. Fortunately, bioethics (at present needed more than ever) has „anticipated” its own necessity and has consequently developed itself over time using respectable brains along the 20th century and, after World War II, its advancement was imposed by the historical events (social and professional ones respectively).

Principlism *versus* utilitarianism

There are several ethical theories applicable in biology and medicine. In this paper, I will approach the basics of two of them (as a matter of fact, the most commonly used ones) and their helpfulness in ethical decision-making: principlism and utilitarianism.

Essentially, principlism is grounded on four *prima facie* principles, and both Anglo-American and European principlism theories use as a fundament four principles. However, although the first principle is identical in both principlistic approaches, the names of the other three differ. We should consider those principles in the two approaches to see whether the nuances are or could be explainable.

The Anglo-American principlism defines the following four principles [6]:

1. Autonomy
2. Beneficence
3. Non-maleficence
4. Justice

It is not our purpose here to explain or comment the significance of these principles; there are several papers dealing with analyses and/or criticism of the theory [see for example refs. 7-12].

For the European principlism the stipulated four principles are [13, 14]:

1. Autonomy
2. Dignity
3. Integrity
4. Vulnerability

Our concern here is to analyze if the two principlistic approaches are clearly differentiable, if they are conflicting in an explainable manner, or if they are intertwined and convergent, therefore making the duality of the principlistic approach unnecessary. Firstly, in both Anglo-American and European concepts of principlism the principle of autonomy is recognized from a Kantian perspective, considering the human being as an end-in-itself. There is no contradiction here! Concerning the other principles, a brief analysis would suggest that within the principle of beneficence, human dignity is respected. On the other hand, by following the principle of non-maleficence, human integrity is protected in terms of both the integrity of the person performing the action and that of the person targeted by it. Finally, anyone can assert that real justice has to take care of people's vulnerability (including that of the poor – in terms of social analysis, or the vulnerability of sick people and their caregivers – due to their despair). Moreover, the four principles in any of the two principlism concepts become effective by a plethora of subsumed rules and norms. I may encourage the readers to try any kind of analysis on any of those rules and they will easily find intertwinements and convergences which create a real ethical network in the principlism usage within applied ethics.

Considering the swift analysis above, I believe an effort is necessary to wisely combine the two principlistic concepts even though the resulting one were grounded on a total of five principles: autonomy, dignity, integrity, vulnerability and justice. A putative critic, claimed by the fact that principles of beneficence and non-maleficence spring in the Hippocratic Oath, could be overcome by commentaries like the ones above, but leded more profoundly.

We should now focus on the basic aspects of utilitarianism. The concept belongs to the broader moral theory of consequentialism. The utilitarian moral philosophers think in terms of consequences, switching from the ethical notions of right and wrong to the non-ethical ones of good and bad. The utilitarian ethicists perceive as being moral those actions, judgments or decisions that are considered to be good, in the sense of producing happiness or well-being [15, 16]. The target of the utilitarian bioethicists is to maximize the good and minimize the bad of any act, judgment or decision [17].

It is easy to observe that the utilitarian view on morality is accountable for at least two principles of the Anglo-American concept: beneficence and non-maleficence. Consequently, it is difficult to find contradictions between the utilitarian maximization of the good and the principle of beneficence. It is similar if trying to analyze the relationship between the utilitarian minimization of the bad and the principle of non-maleficence. However, for a significant period of time there were contradictions between principlism and utilitarianism because the latter considered the human being as the only subject for impartial consideration in ethical analysis and decisions. The huge development of biomedicine and the complexity of the ethical issues raised by that progress determined the utilitarian bioethicists to widen their concern spectrum and to increase: (i) the variety of consequence types, (ii) the meaning of good and bad, (iii) the stakeholders considered as worthy recipients of impartial consideration, and (iv) the solutions for the maximization of the good and the minimization of the bad [15]. Therefore, the convergences between principlism and utilitarianism became more and more evident and the two concepts have to be considered simultaneously in ethical analyses and decisions. The applied ethics proved that neither principlism nor utilitarianism are sufficient for analyzing an ethical issue in biomedicine and for making a rational decision [15, 18].

In conclusion, whichever method is used during an ethical decision-making process, both principlism and utilitarianism have to be considered, and it is unreasonable to ignore any of them [19].

Ethical issues in translational medicine

In my opinion, a global approach concerning ethical issues in translational medicine is unproductive due to the great complexity of the field. That is why I will divide my commentaries by considering individually three of the research areas subsumed to this new field of biomedical research, which seem to be most sensitive to ethical issues and which also have raised the most extensive debates.

Ethical considerations on gene therapy

Gene therapy is generally defined as an action targeting insertion, correction or removal of a specific gene in a cell or a type of cell in order to treat a disease. The specific intervention could be done on either germ line cells or somatic cells.

The second approach needs taking care of the ethical rules regarding studies on human subjects, developed by most medical codes in bioethics. More sensitive in terms of ethics is the first approach, which should trigger a real ethical debate.

Broadly speaking, gene therapy is destined to correct a mutation producing a disability or threatening the life of a person. Despite the progress registered by our knowledge in the field of genetics and gene handling in biomedical research, very few steps in clinical application of those developments were taken. Therefore, the risks remain highly challenging and translational medicine needs to manage those uncertainties. This task is even more difficult as there are two unfortunate experiments to be found in the gene therapy clinical application history [3, 4]. Several questions could be formulated:

1. How far can we push the limits in defining the acceptable risks?
2. How could we define an authentic informed consent in the field?
3. How can we define the border between gene therapy and genetic enhancement?

The debate in search of an answer to the first question would highlight the fact that the acceptable risks in gene therapy treatment of lethal mutations are different from those acceptable in the case of non-lethal mutations. Moreover, it would also prove more ethical to support the efforts to develop research and to find solutions for treating diseases induced by lethal mutations. However, that is not a totally moral decision according to principlism, although it could be encouraged by utilitarianism. Therefore, it is ethical to develop research in any gene therapy direction, but we have to take care of the risks when deciding about clinical application. Research is needed even for a better knowledge of the cellular and molecular mechanisms targeted by the putative clinical applications and this progress will reduce the risks, will increase our ability to control and modulate the biological events and will increase the chances to obtain medical achievements.

The answer to the second question became essential in the context of the informational revolution in our times. The access to information corroborated with the vulnerability of the sick and that of their caregivers could easily result in vain hopes. Is it moral for the professionals to discourage people in accepting risky clinical interventions? Can such kind of discouraging action be part of the informed consent procedure? These new questions together with the third one listed above represent truly challenging ethical issues in need of serious debate.

Ethical approaches in tissue engineering

Tissue engineering is dealing with the *ex vivo* creation of living tissues or parts of organs in order to obtain final biological products compatible with the recipient's body needing them. This objective is a very complex one in both medical terms and from an ethical point of view [20-23]. Beside the debate about the ethical *versus*

non-ethical issues raised by the *ex vivo* creation of tissues or parts of organs [21] other aspects concerning the types of organ tissues needed to be tissue engineered could also be challenging. Is it necessary to make efforts in doing live body parts for those that could be successfully and effectively replaced by artificial devices (such as hands or legs)? This is a question with a difficult answer, especially if the analysis is done in terms of phenomenology. That means that even if principlism and utilitarianism are carefully considered, the final ethical decision is not necessarily the most rational one.

Again, in the tissue engineering research area, despite many promising results, the clinical application remains difficult to be accomplished. In this context, the first two questions listed under the previous subsection are also applicable to this area. On the other hand, some of the area-specific ethical challenges could involve the following [24, 25]:

1. Special risks induced mainly by the fact that a started intervention attracts irreversible processes that could follow a right pathway for repair or an unexpected wrong one;
2. Questionable benefits not only because of uncertainties mentioned under point 1, but also considering the level of the needed costs;
3. Cost reflections on the principle of justice (the access to clinical procedures is limited by those costs);
4. The putative donors of the samples for both research and clinical tests could be subjects of exploitation.
5. Finally, problematic issues appear when mixing human with animal materials due to cultural and religious beliefs and customs.

All the above-listed ethical issues lead to the conclusion that careful, well-informed debates are required. These have to involve every stakeholder (professionals, patients, caregivers, civil society representatives, politicians, research policy decision-makers, entrepreneurs etc.) in order to achieve the best and most rational ethical decision.

Ethical concerns in cell therapy

More than any other research area in translational medicine, cell therapy seems to be the most controversial one in terms of ethics. Cell therapy roughly means correction, repair or regeneration of diseased tissues by a transplantation of functional cells. Ethical debates in cell therapy became critical in the case of stem cell usage, because mature functional cell utilization draws ethical concerns more or less similar to those existing in the other research areas of translational medicine (source of the cells in the case of allogeneic transplantation, cultural and/or religious apprehensions toward xenotrasplantation, risks etc.).

To date, three types of stem cells are theoretically available for cell therapy: embryonic stem cells, adult stem cells and induced pluripotent stem cells. As to the ethical debate, the most controversial issue remains the usage of embryonic stem cells [26-29]. The controversy based on the obtaining of embryonic stem cells for research and/or therapy has triggered professional, cultural and religious reactions. The most debated issues are about defining the personhood of an embryo and the act of killing [26, 30]. Perhaps in this moment it is really difficult to reach a rational ethical conclusion to these matters. In the future, the expected advancements in our knowledge of embryology and in the stem cell research development will allow us to find solutions to the ethical challenges of the cell therapy area. Fortunately, the controversies of this debate were accompanied by the efforts of the research scientists to find alternative sources for stem cells [31-33]. Despite the fact that the alternative sources for stem cells do not obviate the need for embryonic stem cells [34], they are being helpful in cell therapy research by allowing advancements in the stem cell biology and by overcoming many of the ethical issues. However, the results obtained when using stem cells in alternative sources still have to be confirmed by studies on embryonic stem cells. At least for this kind of control experiments human embryonic stem cells are very much needed as we speak. Therefore, both the ethical debate and the efforts to reach rational decisions represent a fundamental goal.

Beside the above considerations, as for the other two research areas mentioned earlier, the risks involved by the clinical application of the results obtained in cell therapy research development raise real problems both in terms of medical practice and ethics.

Principlism or utilitarianism in translational medicine ethical decision-making

Any ethical debate is helpful if ended with the adoption of a final decision or, at least, a recommendation to be considered and respected. In the context of our topic the question to arise would be the following: "What does the decision-making process have to consider: principlism or utilitarianism?" We should remember that in translational medicine one inevitable concern is the risk factor, and I suggest searching for an answer to the above-mentioned question by analyzing the risk threats. No activity is risk-free. The problem consists in knowing what acceptable level of risk there is behind one act or another. This problem should represent the main goal of the present analysis: to find out what is the acceptable risk in one area of translational medicine or another, in one clinical act or another. Could this level of acceptable risk be determined by following principlism or utilitarianism exigencies? Risks mean precautions elicited by the respect of autonomy, dignity, integrity, and vulnerability. Risks mean putative violations of the principles of beneficence, non-maleficence and justice. These last putative violations also come in contradiction with the objectives of utilitarianism. Therefore, a superficial analysis of the risk threats in translational medicine is enough to suggest that a rational ethical decision

must consider both principlism and utilitarianism, no matter what decision-making method is being used. That further suggests not only that a unified principlism concept would be helpful, but also that one concept unifying principlism and utilitarianism needs to be elaborated. This unified concept or framework could be entitled utilitarian principlism (similar to the unified theory created by John Edmund Hare and named “utilitarian Kantianism”). Moreover, the ubiquitous presence of the risk factor in every area of translational medicine justifies the idea of upgrading the precautions from the status of simple rules to that of principles.

Other questions regarding ethical decision-making in translational medicine could target the stakeholders responsible for the analysis, recommendations and/or decisions. Does an ethical decision in translational medicine have to be the result of a professional or a wide social debate? Could the civil society be a referee or a stakeholder in ethical decision-making in translational medicine? These questions are righteous due to the current information revolution and to the development of science and technology, which increases people’s expectations of the power of medicine, expectations that put enormous pressure on scientists, clinicians, research- and health-policy makers, and on the entrepreneurs.

In my opinion, all these categories of people, together with other appropriate representatives of the civil society are eligible as stakeholders in the process of ethical decision-making. That might prove to be an impediment in the process of ethical decision making, but through a wise management policy and a multiple-level approach of the process it would turn out to be a rational and acceptable end.

Concluding remarks

Making an ethical decision in any area of translational medicine is a difficult task and it seems to be even more difficult than in other fields, due to the medical and ethical complexity of this new biomedical research direction.

Any ethical decision regarding the challenging issues of translational medicine must consider a large number of stakeholders and needs a wise management of very clearly defined procedures in order to finalize the decision-making process in a reasonable amount of time, which is far from being an easy thing to do.

However, no matter how big the difficulties, translational medicine needs good and rational decisions destined to ensure patients’ protection and to allow the advancement of science and technology, which would finally lead to the progress and development of human society as a whole.

Acknowledgments

This paper is partly supported by the Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOPHRD), financed from the European Social Fund and by the Romanian Government under the contract number POSDRU 64153, and by the National Authority for Scientific Research, Grant No. 208/CP II/20.10.2010.

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STUDY REGARDING BUSINESS ETHICS IN THE ROMANIAN ORGANIZATIONS

BOGDAN L. BLAGA*, ROXANA C. CORDOȘ**

ABSTRACT. The paper presents some of the results of a qualitative research that focuses on business ethics within the Romanian organizations. The research instrument that has been used was the interview, being investigated those members of the society who have been considered able to offer relevant information about the business environment. There are presented the results regarding the importance of ethics in the Romanian organizations, the existence of a Code of ethics, who is responsible for its elaboration, some proposals for having a more ethical business environment and so on.

Keywords: business ethics, code of ethics, organization, interview, business environment.

1. Introduction

The ethical issues in management are complex due to the extent of consequences, multiple alternatives, mixed results, unpredicted events and personal implications.¹

Ethics in management is basically on the trust relationship between the two parties that interact; trust actually means to diminish the risk and to protect the rights and interests of those affected.

2. The hypotheses of the research

Starting from defining the issues to the studied we can formulate a series of hypothesis with respect to the aspects that will be approached. Once having these hypotheses we can transform the marketing issues into the research's objectives.

H01: Ethics does not play an important role in the Romanian business, in the opinion of the majority of the interviewed subjects.

H02: Most of those interviewed consider that the Romanian organizations do not take into account ethical aspects.

* *Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Machines Building, Department of Management and Systems Engineering, also having a PhD in Theology from the Univeristy of Wien; B-dul Muncii 103-105, room M304, Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

** *Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Machines Building, Department of Management and Systems Engineering, B-dul Muncii 103-105, room M304, Cluj-Napoca, Romania*

¹ LaRue Tone Hosmer, *The Ethics of Management*, IRWIN, Homewood, Illinois, 1987, p. 14.

- H03: The main proposal of the interviewed persons for a more ethical business environment in Romania is the elaboration of an ethics code within the organization.
- H04a: Ethics is important in their organizations, according to the majority of those interviewed.
- H04b: Most of those interviewed consider that ethics is important in their organization because the business is thus profitable.
- H05a: A maximum of 25% of the studied organizations have an ethics code.
- H05b: In the majority of the studied organizations that have an ethics code, this is elaborated by the managerial team.
- H05c: In the majority of the studied organizations that have an ethics code, this is reviewed once a year.

3. The type of investigation that has been chosen for the research theme

The exploratory research represents an initial study, with different complexity levels, meant to clarify, define and identify the basic aspects of a problem.

This research focuses on “the attitude and points of views of the subjects with respect to business ethics. It is a descriptive research, which has used “face to face” investigation in order to have a better control on the conditions during the interviews. Thus, the operator could clarify a series of questions with a higher level of complexity, offering the subjects explanations and guidance, obtaining correct answers.

4. The elaboration of the research instrument

The interview protocol has been elaborated based on the objectives of the research. We can find open questions (addressed to the active process of the subject’s memory, verifying and testing what is stable, consolidated in the behavior and knowledge of the subject) and closed questions (dichotomic, multidichotomic and scale responses).

- The question should be as short as possible, meanwhile clear and concise;
- The question should be elaborated in such a way that it is avoided a predisposition of the subjects to offer a certain answer;
- The ability of the subjects to answer certain questions has to be taken into account;
- The question should not be threatening or unpleasant.

There are introductory questions, crossing ones, filter, control and identification questions.

The funnel technique has been used, meaning that there is a cross over from general to particular, the subject having to answer general questions at first and then particular ones.

The interviews took place at the organization's headquarters, between June-August 2010, lasting between 30 minutes and 1 hour and 40 minutes. Each interview has been recorded, transcribed and finally analyzed.

5. The sampling

The size of the sample was 25 subjects. A non-aleatory sampling has been used, based on reasoning, which means that there were interviewed those members of the community that were considered the ones able to offer relevant information for the business environment, thus we cannot talk about a representative sample, the conclusions referring only to the investigated sample, without extrapolating them.

6. The results of the research

Further on there are presented the results obtained within the research. The interview protocol starts with a general question regarding the subject's point of view with respect to the role of ethics in the Romanian business. The hypothesis was H01: "Ethics does not play an important role in the Romanian business, in the opinion of the majority of the interviewed subjects."

In the figure below it can be noticed that in 72% of the cases, representing 18 interviews, the subjects consider that ethics does play a role in the Romanian business environment, even if this role is less significant, while 7 subjects, representing 28% of the total state that ethics does not play any role.

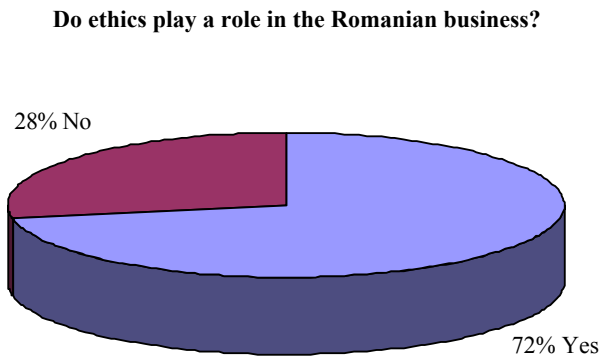


Figure 1. The role of ethics in the Romanian business

The interviewed persons motivate the answer to this question in different ways. Those who believe that ethics does play a role in the Romanian business environment argue as follows (in a decreasing order of the frequency of their appearance):

a) ethics represents an essential component in the development of a business (4)

„Ethics can be compared with professionalism in every domain. From my point of view it means to respect yourself and to be concerned about the way you behave in your relationship with the collaborators [...]. Ethics is a way towards welfare in the business environment.” [INT 2]

„Ethics is essential in a business relationship; even initiating a business is being done by taking into account the behavior of those who represent the company.” [INT 7]

„Ethics means to trust your partners in the business environment. Without ethics one cannot properly function. You have to be certain that whatever you’ve achieved you can capitalize. It is a matter of correctness.” [INT 15]

„You cannot talk about a solid base without ethics, without a system of values to which you report yourself to when you own a business.” [INT 17]

b) the need for respect in inter-human relationships (2)

„Ethics plays a very important role due to the fact that, in time, this can be seen in the respect that you gain and secondly, by respecting the ethical principles in the relationships with the others you learn how to be organized and serious. This is the role of ethics.” [INT 16]

c) the compliance with the ethical principles is an obligation (1)

„Ever since the big companies came with their global policies, we have been bound to implement and adjust them. Within the multinationals they make you, they teach you to behave ethically.” [INT 4]

d) ethics represents a reference system, a part of the management of a business (1)

„I believe that ethics has to be a reference system. It does not mean that everybody does what is written there, but it is an ideal thing that we will never achieve, but at least we know where we stand.” [INT 24]

The subjects who consider that ethics does not play any role in the Romanian business environment have the following arguments, presented as follows in the decreasing order of their appearance:

a) people have no character (3)

„Everything changes, people change. They forget where they came from; they don’t have anything saint anymore, thus the business changes [...]. Gradually, the decrease of the importance of ethics in the last years...if at the beginning a look, a word, a handshake was important, no they don’t matter.” [INT 3]

b) the legislation does not encourage an ethical behavior (1)

„The gentlemen’s agreement should be taken into account, but in this country not even the written contracts are not respected. Here, if you sue, it will take years until the end, and then there will probably be left nothing to cover the damage from. Here stops business ethics.” [INT 10]

c) people are only focused on money, on getting profit (1)

„Business people only focus on money: I have to earn money because this is the reason why I have a business. It is not important how; it is a Machiavelli thing like: the purpose justifies the means.” [INT 6].

d) lack of education (1)

„The great majority of entrepreneurs did not attend any management courses. In my opinion, training in the field of management is important in the establishment of business relationships based on trust, confidentiality, ethical principles. That is why business ethics in the Romanian environment plays a small role.” [INT 21]

e) the Romanian business environment ignores ethics (1)

„Romania is a market that does not demand something like that.” [INT 18]

The next question refers to the measure in which the Romanian organizations take into consideration ethical aspects, a question that started from the hypothesis that “Most of those that have been interviewed consider that the Romanian organizations do not take into account ethical aspects”. The results obtained show that for most of those interviewed, ethics is taken into consideration.

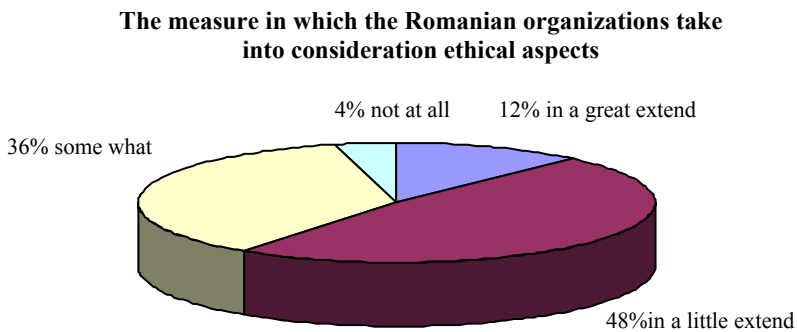


Figure 2. The measure in which the Romanian organizations take into consideration ethical aspects

It can be noticed that the interviewed persons state that ethics is taken into account especially within multinationals or big companies, while the majority of firms do not.

The subjects have been asked offer proposals so that the business environment becomes more ethical. The hypothesis was: “The main proposal of the interviewed persons for a more ethical business environment in Romania is the elaboration of an ethics code within the organization”. It is noticeable the fact that each interviewed person came up with at least one proposal.

Proposals for a more ethical Romanian business environment

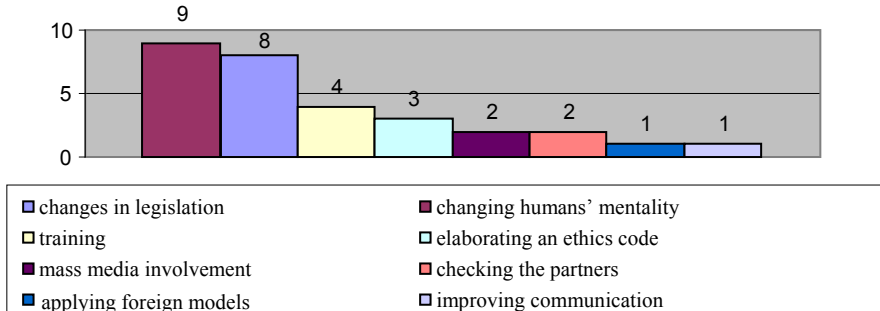


Figure 3. Proposals for a more ethical Romanian business environment

For the investigated sample, the proposal with the highest frequency is the change in the humans' mentality.

„It all comes down to the people...they need to find their values again.” [INT 3]

In the decreasing order of the frequency of the appearance, the next proposal was the change of legislation, being included here the elimination of bureaucracy and the need for sanction to be applied for deviations from ethics.

An important place belongs to the proposal for education, through course on ethics, the creation of some organizations in the field or the initiation of group meetings discussing on this issue.

The proposal included in the hypothesis occupies only the fourth place.

Question four in the interview investigates if ethics is important in the organizations represented by the interviewed persons. Probably out of complaisance, 24 out of the 25 interviewed subjects have answered yes to this question. Out of this reason we believe that this question should be removed from the further researches, even if the answers correspond to the hypothesis according to which “Ethics is important in their organizations, according to the majority of those interviewed”.

Is ethics important within your organization?

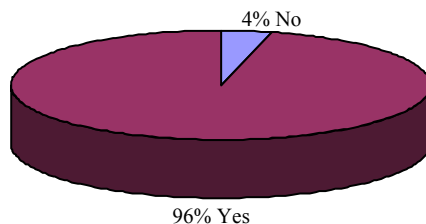


Figure 4. The importance of ethics in the investigated organizations

„Most of those interviewed consider that ethics is important in their organization because the business is thus profitable” is the starting hypothesis in motivating the importance of ethics in the investigated organizations. The answers show that profit is barely on the third place, the same place with two other reasons – gaining new business partners and a pleasant organizational environment.

The motivation of the importance of ethics in the organization

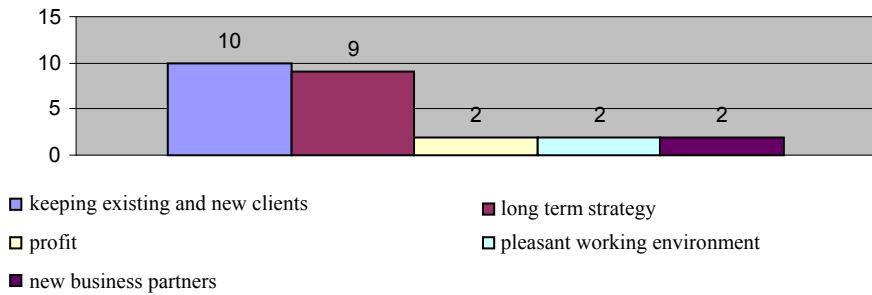


Figure 5. The motivation of the importance of ethics in the organization

Do you have in your organization an ethics code?

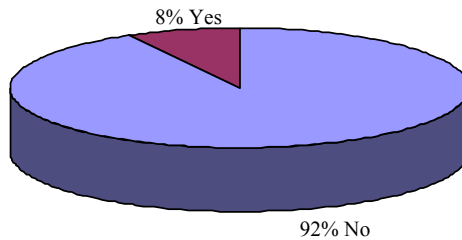


Figure 6. The existence of an ethics code within the organization

The next question refers to the existence of the ethics code within the organization. Only two companies of those investigated have an ethics code, representing 8% of the total number of organizations included in the sample. One of the companies is about to elaborate an ethics code. The result is similar to the hypothesis according to which maximum 25% of the studied organizations have an ethics code.

It has to be mentioned that in many of the organizations included in the sample, some of the ethical principles are included in other internal rules of in the working contract.

In both organizations, the code has been elaborated by a top management team, which corresponds to hypothesis: “In the majority of the studied organizations that have an ethics code, this is elaborated by the managerial team”.

The ethics code is reviewed periodically, as the subjects state.

„It is reviewed twice a year, after an annual training which consists of a three hours test to which you have to answer correctly to all questions, otherwise you're suspended until you pass the test. The trainings are online, you have to log on to the link, there are a series of slides followed by questions. If you give a wrong answer, the program returns to the slides.” [INT 4]

7. Conclusions

One conclusion of the qualitative research is that ethics is beginning to play a more and more important role in the Romanian businesses (or at least it has to play such a role).

What needs to be changed? The starting point is the person, manager or employee, who- besides the seven years education – extremely important – has to gain knowledge that are specific to the investigated field. It is likely possible that the changes would become noticeable after a longer period of time, but ethics should become a *modus Vivendi* for the business environment.

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LE MELANGE DES LANGAGES. UNE SOURCE DES CONFLITS TRANSDISCIPLINAIRES

MARCEL BODEA*

ABSTRACT. The Mix of Languages. A Source of Transdisciplinary Conflicts. Epistemological criticism will be applied in those cases when the claims of certain constructs to represent a particular kind of knowledge are not legitimate. The communication of knowledge in society must be made in a correct way. We understand correctness as “justness and neutrality towards knowledge”. However, there may be political, ideological, religious, or other interests in promoting certain kind of knowledge, which weaken the foundations of a society based on knowledge. Certainly, The incompetence, the lack of culture, the existential or value-engagements, the material interests extend from incorrect information to disinformation and cheating, and reach as far as manipulation and recruitment. Therefore the timeliness of the proposed research topic is supported, on the one hand, by the recognized value of knowledge in society, and on the other hand, by the parasite phenomena which accompany the presence of knowledge in society - imposture, deception, credulity, hidden interests - which ask for an immediat response of the community directly involved in cognitive actions: philosophers, scientists, theologians, etc. In a society based on knowledge the *critical attitude towards everything that pretends to represent itself as knowledge*, and implicetly *towards the consequences of such claims* is a deontological and ethical demand.

Key words: explication; knowledge; language; communication; ethics values; interdisciplinarity

Dans l'esprit analytique de la demande de clarification conceptuelle, nous acceptons dans le contexte de cette analyse la distinction entre éthique et morale: «Faut-il distinguer entre morale et éthique? [...] C'est par convention que je réserverai le terme d' «éthique» pour la visée d'une vie accomplie sous le signe des actions estimées bonnes, et celui de «morale» pour le côté obligatoire, marqué par des normes, des obligations, des interdictions caractérisées à la fois par une exigence d'universalité et par un effet de contrainte.»¹

Motivations épistémologiques et éthiques

La perspective éthique de notre analyse est la suivante: la forme d'utilisation du langage dans certaines circonstances peut être considérée «un fait éthique». L'explicitation de la connaissance est une forme spécifique d'utilisation du langage

* Department of Philosophy, Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, bodeamarcel@hotmail.com

¹ Paul Ricœur, *Ethique et morale*, 1990 - <http://pierre.coninx.free.fr/lectures/ethiquemorale.htm>

qui, dans des conditions qui seront précisées par la suite, peut constituer un fait éthique. Elle reflète une situation réelle, contemporaine, au niveau de l'explicitation des connaissances, des résultats d'un domaine de spécialité dans un autre domaine de spécialité ou au niveau du langage commun. Comment exprimer par exemple des résultats scientifiques dans un langage philosophique, théologique ou naturel? Comment des résultats scientifiques sont valorisés (dévalorisés) idéologiquement, professionnellement, éthiquement, etc. par l'explicitation?

L'utilisation du langage – dans la communication quotidienne, en presse, à la radio, à la télévision, dans les écoles, à l'université, dans l'activité de recherche et de publication, etc. – est fréquemment accompagnée par des manifestations immorales. Celles-ci vont de la vérité moitié dite, au mensonge, à la désinformation, à la manipulation, etc., constituant un risque majeur pour une société basée sur la connaissance et implicitement pour une société basée sur la communication, telle qu'elle est généralement la société contemporaine. Par exemple, dans les publications, les intérêts peuvent viser, d'une manière mélangée ou isolée, une reconnaissance sociale, professionnelle ou institutionnelle, etc. Le plagiat sans scrupules «copier-coller» est reconnu comme un acte immoral. Il en est de même, si le plagiat est nuancé ou bien masqué: c'est le vol d'une idée, c'est l'appropriation non-déclarée de ce qui n'appartient pas à celui qui plagie, sans avoir d'importance comment ultérieurement, au niveau du langage, l'idée est présentée comme sa propriété intellectuelle. Certes, il y a un consensus largement accepté sur l'immoralité du plagiat dans n'importe quel de ses formes. Dernièrement dans la société roumaine, on trouve de plus en plus des réactions positives concernant le dévoilement de cette forme de vol. Dans ces cas, l'image de celui qui plagie se trouve affectée au niveau éthique. Il s'agit de mettre en doute non seulement l'intégrité professionnelle de ces personnes, mais aussi son intégrité morale.

Il y a de plus en plus d'autres formes de manifestation au niveau du langage, dont le statut éthique devrait être mis en discussion. Un tel exemple est le manque de qualité professionnelle dans un domaine qui est promu avec la prétention de compétence. Dit simplement, c'est soutenir d'avoir quelque chose, dont on n'a pas. Les situations «à la limite» sont rares, le plus fréquentes étant celles représentées par un niveau superficiel de compétence, mais qui sont soutenues avec une force d'autorité dans le domaine. Il est difficile pour quelqu'un de prétendre être un médecin, alors que ses compétences sont au niveau d'un compendium de «médecine familiale». La situation est tout à fait différente quand quelqu'un a dans un champ de spécialité une culture scientifique au niveau de la popularisation scientifique, et avec seulement ce bagage des connaissances il s'approprie les compétences de ce domaine, pour élaborer une thèse de doctorat avec des prétentions d'interdisciplinarité. Il y a des cas d'incompétence «bien camouflée», des personnes qui, maîtrisant un domaine de connaissance, joue avec les mots pour cacher leur superficialité dans un autre domaine de connaissance. Quels sont leurs buts? En suivant la où il est possible l'évolution des publications de ces personnes, il est possible d'observer la promotion et

la consolidation d'une image «d'autorité pluridisciplinaire» dans un cadre institutionnel ou/et communautaire. Un autre but peut être le désir d'originalité et de promotion au niveau interdisciplinaire d'une thèse de doctorat, des certaines articles ou livres. Certainement, si en apparence des tels intérêts peuvent être considérés mineurs, leurs conséquences au niveau social ne le sont pas, au moins à un certain niveau institutionnel et de communauté intellectuelle. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous croyons que des tels intérêts entrent dans la sphère de l'éthique. Dire, à ces niveaux de prétentions scientifiques, que l'on sait de quoi on parle ou qu'est-ce qu'on écrit quand les connaissances sont vagues, superficielles et approximatives, nous croyons que c'est un «faux intellectuel» et qu'il entre dans la sphère d'un «fait éthique». Si face au phénomène du plagiat, comme forme «d'imposture intellectuelle», les réactions sont plus promptes et de plus en plus fréquentes (en raison de la facilité de déconspiration), face à la promotion de l'incompétence professionnelle comme forme «d'imposture intellectuelle» il n'y a pas encore chez nous une réaction systématique. N'est-ce pas qu'il est temps de changer les choses? Le plagiat est non seulement un fait éthique, mais aussi un fait juridique. Nous en avons la conviction que démasquer l'incompétence professionnelle dans certaines circonstances où elle est promue avec la prétention de compétence, devrait commencer, au moins, avec *un jugement éthique*. Il n'est pas lieu d'illusions. Il faut reconnaître que dans la société roumaine actuelle un jugement éthique est quelque chose de mineur, un syntagme presque vide de contenu, une appréciation de valeur qui peut être passée de vue. Une telle «mise éthique» serait tout de même un premier pas. Si la société de demain ne sera pas nécessairement plus morale, mais plus sensible à la morale, le chemin choisit ne finira pas dans un cul-de-sac.

Ceux qui pourraient avoir des réactions face à l'imposture intellectuelle dans un domaine sont ceux qui ont les compétences dans ce domaine. Le plus souvent dans ces cas, leurs attitude est celle d'ignorance professionnelle, éventuellement, sur le coup, de rejet critique de ce qui a été dit ou publié sans conséquences dans le plan d'une attitude publique au niveau de la communauté scientifique. Les raisons sont multiples. D'abord, les spécialistes ont d'autres priorités et entrent généralement en dialogue seulement avec des spécialistes du domaine. Ensuite, une attitudes critique publique demande du temps et de l'effort. Dans tels cas la critique ne vise pas l'information des spécialistes dans un domaine, mais la sensibilisation d'un certain publique, avisé et instruit, qui n'a pas les compétences nécessaires au contrôle scientifique dans ce domaine scientifique. Ce qu'il faut faire c'est démasquer l'incompétence d'un domaine de spécialité à ceux qui ne sont pas spécialiste dans ce domaine. Cela est principalement une forme d'explicitation de la connaissance, qui n'est ni facile ni rapide. Dans ce contexte, seulement une motivation éthique pourrait déterminer une «réponse» publique. Il y a tout de même une certaine indifférence des spécialistes pour les aspects éthiques considérés d'intérêt secondaire par rapport aux priorités strictement professionnelles. Mais de tels attitudes «de réponse», fréquemment négligées, peuvent impliquer des mises et des coûts sociaux

importants. Malheureusement ces cas ne sont pas rares. Par exemple, dans certains milieux socioculturels des Etats Unis, cela a conduit à des débats dans la presse et à la télévision, à des conflits ouverts, des procès juridiques fortement médiatisés et même des interventions politiques et des actes de violence. Des tels manifestations sociales, diverses et conflictuelles, légitiment à notre avis des questions tel que: «Faut-il assumer une responsabilité sociale de l'utilisation illégitime des langages par le mélange de ceux-ci, suite à une utilisation sans soins et superficielle, au manquement de compétence assumée/non assumée, ou même suite à la distorsion consciente due à la manipulation des langages, tendancieusement orientée vers certains intérêts personnelle et de groups, etc.?» Plus encore, il paraît légitime de poser la question, au-delà d'un niveau supérieur celui «d'assumer la responsabilité»: «Devrait-il exister une *éthique* de l'interdisciplinarité au niveau des langages?». Est-ce que la différence entre faire des choses dont on n'est pas habilité et parler des choses dont on n'a pas la compétence nécessaire est si grande? Il est bien connu que souvent la parole a une force sociale plus grande que l'agir.

La base de la fondation théorique et éthique de l'analyse

La philosophie analytique par sa spécificité de clarification conceptuelle et méthodologique est, principalement, à la base de la fondation théorique de l'analyse proposée. Nous croyons qu'en premier, les résultats concrets de la recherche doivent s'appuyer sur des *études de cas* au niveau des *langages*. Nous allons accepter deux permises: «Le langage d'une communauté est le milieu de n'importe quelle forme de connaissance», et respectivement «Il y a des formes et des produits de la connaissance accompagnés d'une composante éthique». En partant de là nous allons argumenter l'affirmation suivante: «L'utilisation du langage dans la communication interdisciplinaire de la connaissance doit être accompagnée par des attitudes éthiques».

Voilà des exemples importants pour l'explicitation:

- l'explicitation du langage scientifique/théologique en langage philosophique, avec relevance pour la problématique philosophique
- l'explicitation du langage philosophique en langage scientifique/théologique, avec importance pour l'obtention des clarifications conceptuelles en science ou en théologie
- l'explicitation des certaines procédures et résultats scientifiques en langage éthique, avec relevance pour la problématique du chargement avec des sens au niveau social
- l'explicitation des certains problèmes et solutions éthiques d'un langage éthique en langage scientifique, pour la valorisation éthique de l'activité même de la recherche scientifique

Hypothèse de recherche

La formulation des certaines hypothèse doit se faire à partir de certaines réalités, de ce qu'on croit rélévat dans une société basée sur la connaissance, par la communication de la connaissance et, du moins implicitement, basée sur une éthique de la connaissance et de la communication de celle-ci. Deux hypothèses de départ paraissent s'imposer. L'une, dans une perspective épistémologique: «Dans une société basée sur la connaissance, les résultats scientifiques, autrement dit la connaissance scientifique, a une importance et priorité par raport à d'autres formes de connaissance». L'autre, dans une perspective éthique: «Les débats concernant le sens éthique des recherches et des résultats scientifiques des aplications techniques sont de plus en plus présentes dans la vie sociale» (Il este question principalement du type actuel de société occidental-américain, mais qui peut être retrouvé aussi en Russie, Chine, Japon, de même qu'en autres pays). La médecine, la génétique, la psychologie sont considérées sciences complexes, à côté les sciences économiques, les sciences de l'environement, les sciences juridiques, les sciences de la nature, etc. et font paraître nécessaire, pour l'existence d'un futur même de l'humanité, leur encadrement dans une vision éthique. Mais, tout commence avec la moralité de l'homme: de celui qui fait la recherche, de celui qui applique les résultats de la recherche et, avec la même responsabilité, de celui qui communique, dans une forme ou une autre les connisances.

Le caractère interdisciplinaire de l'approche – une perspective éthique

Nous ne pouvons pas parler d'interdisciplinarité sans communication entre les domaines, sans le passage d'un langage de spécialité à un autre langage de spécialité ou au langage naturel. Mais, cette «condition nécessaire» de l'interdisciplinarité n'est pas si «innocente», si «neutre» qu'elle paraît, elle n'est pas la saturation d'une condition logique ou épistémologique. Il y a des situations, ni moindres ni mineures, pour lesquelles les «engagements linguistiques» ne suivent prioritairement des buts cognitifs, mais des buts d'une nature différente. En conséquence, dans ce type de *clarification conceptuelle et critique épistémologique*, nous voyons éventuellement la possibilité d'un encouragement d'une nouvelle forme d'éthique appliquée: l'éthique du langage.

Les objectifs de recherche résumés ainsi sont: l'analyse de l'explicitation de la connaissance, la critique des formes d'explicitation et les attitudes éthiques. Par la suite nous allons présenter de manière succincte une motivation épistémologique des risques cognitives et communicationnels des «mélanges des langages» comme possibles sources des conflits transdisciplinaires et en même temps comme possibles attitudes éthiques négatives. L'argument épistémologique a comme fondement une intention de recherche, motif pour lequel la présentation sera faite dans cette perspective.

Explicitation de la connaissance dans une société basée sur la connaissance et la communication -une forme de l'interdisciplinarité

Langages spécifique. Explicitation de la connaissance

Le concept de *connaissance* est présumé comme non problématique. Les controverses épistémologiques sur l'existence d'une connaissance en mathématique, philosophie, théologie seront contournées par la référence à des résultats remarquables de ces domaines, nommés au sens large «connaissances».

Là où il y aura des prétentions de connaissance d'un certain type qui ne sont pas légitimes, il y aura une critique épistémologique. La prétention de «scientificité» du créationnisme scientifique est un des exemples et constituera l'objet d'une étude de cas.

L'épistémologie et les clarifications conceptuelles méthodologiques de la philosophie des sciences, constitueront principalement la base du fondement du projet de recherche proposé.

Nous allons accepter la prémisse suivante: «Le langage d'une communauté est le moyen de toute forme de connaissance». Dans ce projet de recherche, les langages spécifiques de référence sont: les langages spécialisés des sciences de la nature et de la société, le langage formel-mathématique, le langage philosophique et le langage naturel.

L'explicitation de la connaissance n'est pas une opération analogue à la traduction d'une langue naturelle à l'autre. Elle est une activité cognitive complexe qui cherche la modélisation et l'interprétation des résultats par la transgression interdisciplinaire des domaines de spécialité au niveau du langage.

N'importe quel domaine d'activité qui a comme finalité la connaissance – ayant des activités de base comme: l'acquis des nouvelles connaissances (les sources, la fondation, la validation), les clarifications conceptuelles et méthodologiques, la structuration formelle des connaissances – a son propre langage.

Un objectif social important d'une société basée sur la connaissance est l'accès d'un large public aux résultats des spécialistes. Cette activité cognitive spécifique, de communication correcte et pertinente au niveau des connaissances d'un domaine de spécialité est nommée *explicitation de la connaissance*.

Par l'explicitation de la connaissance nous ne devons pas comprendre exclusivement la réduction de celle-ci à une activité de «popularisation» par laquelle les idées ou les résultats remarquables d'un domaine sont mis dans un langage naturel et rendus accessibles à un public relativement instruit.

Evidemment, cette forme d'explicitation de la connaissance doit être prise en compte parmi d'autres formes d'explicitations. Au niveau de la communication des connaissances, la formulation des certains résultats d'un langage de spécialité dans un autre langage de spécialité, est considérée «explicitation». Un exemple classique constitue la modélisation mathématique en physique: le passage d'un langage à un

autre implique nécessairement l'explicitation. Un autre exemple est l'explicitation d'un langage scientifique dans un langage philosophique, avec une relevance pour la problématique philosophique, respectivement, le passage d'un langage philosophique à un langage scientifique, ayant une importance pour la clarification conceptuelle en science.

L'activité d'explicitation comme activité de clarification des certains résultats (nouveaux ou difficiles) est possible à l'intérieur même d'une discipline, comme clarification faite dans le langage de spécialité de la discipline ; nous n'aurons pas ici en vue cet aspect. Dans une société basée sur la connaissance, «la popularisation scientifique» comme forme d'explicitation parmi d'autres, a une valeur d'impact social très important, en raison de quoi nous allons lui accorder une attention spéciale.

Le minimum d'exigences demandées par l'activité d'explicitation

Expliciter philosophiquement des connaissances scientifiques ou expliciter scientifiquement des analyses et des généralisations philosophiques, nécessitent certaines compétences scientifiques et philosophiques. Etant une activité d'explicitation, l'accent tombe sur le domaine dont se fait l'explicitation. Une condition minimale de l'explicitation cognitive doit satisfaire le «feedback du contrôle»: par exemple, l'explicitation philosophique des certains résultats scientifiques ne peut être erronée de point de vue scientifique ; autrement dit, elle ne peut être critiquée au niveau scientifique par les spécialistes de ce domaine. Cela nécessite une claire familiarisation, et non seulement une vague approximation, avec le domaine dont se fait l'explicitation, de tel façon que les résultats explicités soient compris de manière précise, dans l'esprit du domaine «source». Cette exigence est valable pour n'importe quel «sens» d'explicitation.

En ce qui concerne le projet proposé, cela implique une préparation dans la spécialisation philosophique et scientifique, pour assurer l'expérience nécessaire dans l'analyse critique de l'explicitation de la connaissance.

Les principales objectives du projet. L'interdisciplinarité

Le projet consiste dans une recherche, à travers des études de cas, pour montrer la manière dont se réalise l'explicitation, ses difficultés et ses limites, au niveau des *langages différentes*. Voilà l'exemple d'une étude possible: «La théorie mathématique du chaos déterministe – modalités d'explicitation en physique, en philosophie, au niveau de la connaissance commune.» Ainsi, dans une société basée sur la connaissance, sont mises en évidence: la manière dont les connaissances d'un domaine peuvent être communiquées et intégrées dans d'autres domaines et la manière dont la connaissance devient largement accessible au niveau social. De cette manière, l'activité d'explicitation a un caractère interdisciplinaire, étant une condition nécessaire de l'interdisciplinarité. On ne peut pas parler d'interdisciplinarité sans une communication entre domaines, sans le passage d'un langage de spécialité à un autre langage de spécialité, ou au langage naturel.

La description, l'explication et l'interprétation, comme activités cognitives, sont des thèmes de recherche philosophique fréquemment abordés. De point de vue épistémologique, *l'explicitation de la connaissance* dans la forme esquissée, comme type autonome d'activité cognitive, est peu analysée. Mais, comme «produit fini», par exemple comme littérature de popularisation ou comme littérature pseudo-scientifique, elle en est bien représentée.

La nouveauté du projet est orientée en deux directions:

- une activité de clarification conceptuelle-épistémologique de *l'explicitation* basée sur des études de «cas normaux»
- un examen critique des formes d'explicitation avec référence aux études de «cas pathologiques».

L'actualité du thème. Facteurs d'impact

La communication de la connaissance dans la société, en entendant par cela la manière dans laquelle les connaissances arrivent aux divers groupes sociaux, des groupes qui ne sont pas spécialisés dans le domaine visé, doit se réaliser correctement.

Par cela, nous entendons «justesse et neutralité par rapport aux connaissances», c'est-à-dire une présentation qui ne fausse pas leurs significations par rapport à leurs domaines de provenance. Dans la perspective de certains intérêts sociaux cognitifs, de tels exemples sont représentés dans la littérature de popularisation de bonne qualité, par «des cas normaux». Ceux-ci sont importants pour la société basée sur la connaissance. Il y a aussi, malgré la bonne intention de la promotion de la connaissance, des exemples de «cas pathologiques» dus à l'incompétence: il s'agit d'une présentation scientifique incorrecte ou inappropriée par rapport au domaine de destination. Il y a dès fois, dans la promotion des certaines connaissances, des intérêts politiques, idéologiques, religieux ou d'une autre nature, qui affaiblissent la fondation d'une société basée sur la connaissance. Un exemple actuel, déjà mentionné, est le créationnisme scientifique. Un autre exemple actuel est le révisionnisme historique de la négation de l'holocauste. La liste peut continuer avec des formes aberrantes comme les sectes scientologiques, les universités de sciences parapsychologiques, le commerce avec les *perpetums* mobiles, etc. Dans tous ces exemples, il y a la prétention d'une légitimation cognitive. Ces exemples, sont des «cas pathologiques» différents de ceux basés sur l'incompétence. Bien sûr, il n'est pas rare, que l'incompétence, l'inculture, les engagements existentiels, les intérêts matériels, etc. se croisent dans la génération des cas pathologiques. Ceux-ci vont de l'information erronée à la désinformation, à l'escroquerie, jusqu'à la manipulation et l'affiliation. Ainsi, l'actualité du thème proposé est d'une part, soutenue par la valeur reconnue de la connaissance pour la société et d'autre part, par les phénomènes parasites qui accompagnent la présence de la connaissance dans la société: l'imposture, la tromperie, la crédulité, les intérêts cachés, qui demandent une réaction immédiate de la part de la communauté directement impliquée dans des activités cognitives: les hommes de sciences, les philosophes, les théologiens, etc. L'impact des attitudes arrivées à temps est socialement supérieur aux actions réparatrices tardives.

Nous avons la conviction que dans une société basée sur la connaissance, une *attitude critique face à tout ce qui a la prétention de représenter la connaissance*, et implicitement, *face aux conséquences indues par de telles prétentions*, est un impératif déontologique de l'activité même de la recherche philosophique.

Les objectifs de recherche sont synthétisés comme il suit: l'analyse de l'explicitation, la critique des formes de l'explicitation et l'importance de la communication de la connaissance dans la société, sont à notre avis, en accord avec les objectifs du projet cadre. Les résultats préconisés peuvent avoir une applicabilité immédiate, ils peuvent influencer les opinions et peuvent soutenir une société basée sur la connaissance et non pas une société basée sur la pseudo- connaissance («la connaissance» *présentée* de manière incomplète, erronée, dénaturé, tendancieuse).

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VALUE - MEANING, POSITION, AND FUNCTION - WITHIN THE SIGNIFYING SYSTEMS. A CRITICAL APPROACH TO THE CONCEPT OF (SIGN) VALUE IN JEAN BAUDRILLARD'S SEMIOLOGICAL THEORY*

DANA DOMSODI**

ABSTRACT. My paper addresses the question of sign-value in the context of Jean Baudrillard's critique/theory of semiology. This concept pertains to the conceptual genealogy of the Baudrillardian simulation theory. Our aim was to disclose the position of this concept (from a semiological perspective) in the Baudrillardian theories and to offer some insights related to the relevance of sign-value to the field of social theory once it is used in analysing and understanding the functioning and the constitution of second order signifying systems at the societal level. The article deploys itself in five argumentative steps: 1) sign-object – complicity/entanglement between value and meaning; 2) the critique of the political economy of the sign (dual line of fight: against the Marxist theory of value and the Saussurean theory of the sign); 4) developing and radicalization of it's critique against the classical theories of the sign 4) beyond reference – the emancipated pure structural game of value and 5) the birth of the theory of simulation (the other 4 points being related to the genealogy of this concept).

Key words: sign, commodity, sign-value, code, simulation, structural law, theory of value, semiology

Ferdinand de Saussure dreamed of a science that will be concerned with the life of signs within the realm of social life - he called this science semiology¹. One important part of this future (at that time) science will be the linguistics. Moreover, the discoveries of linguistics will play an essential role in the analysis of the function and the meaning of signs within the social life. Decades past, and in the 1960's semiology was already a real science with a large and diverse sphere of objects of interest. Almost everything (from the literary text, dreams, commodities to the more complex social and cultural realities like politics, fashion, etc...) was analysed in the terms of signifying systems. Everything became a sign and could be integrated

* The author wish to thank for the financial support provided from the program co-financed by THE SECTORAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, Contract **POSDRU 6/1.5/S/3** – "DOCTORAL STUDIES, A MAJOR FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HUMANISTIC STUDIES".

** *Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Str. M. Kogalniceanu, 1, 400084 Cluj-Napoca, Romania.*
Email: dana_domsodi@yahoo.com

¹ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique generale*, Ed. Payot et Rivages, 1967, p. 33

within a structured system of meaning. All around (especially in the social sciences, but not only there) there was one hegemonic discourse – the discourse of semiocraty. The natural counterpart of this state of things was the emerging of a series of theories that would try to dismantle the all encompassing presuppositions and theses of this discourse. Semioclasts of every type and diverse intellectual backgrounds issued each in their terms, a critical attack against the structuralist semiological paradigm. We shall be concerned here, with the Baudrillardian critique of the sign and the structuralist semiological approach (this Baudrillardian critique of the sign is also the starting place of his theory of sign-value), but more precisely with the baudrillardian critique of sign-value. The Baudrillardian critique against both the Saussurean theory of the sign and the Marxist theory of value is situated in a larger critical context of a theory that would dismantle the metaphysical and idealist presuppositions that ground the semioocrat attitude.

Jean Baudrillard remained in the history of recent critical thought as the theoretician of simulation. We shall not discuss here the theory of simulation, but rather address a problem that regards and relates to the Baudrillardian (and theoretical) genealogy of this concept – namely the concept of value, sign-value in particular. It may appear unjustified to posit the concept of sign-value at the root of the simulation theory, but we think that a just and comprehensive account of Jean Baudrillard's concept of sign-value will sustain this in a convincing manner. We will only add here that the transformation and the development of sign-history can be read through the dynamics of value (both in a semiological and Marxist sense). Our thesis is that value is central in understanding the movement and destitution of signification within the Baudrillardian sign-theory and this directly relates and informs the theory of simulation. Moreover, we think that understanding the concept of sign-value enables a more substantial comprehension of the simulation-theory. We shall address these hypotheses in a more detailed manner in the context of this text. The question of sign-value does not only particularize Baudrillard's researches, but also create a particular theoretical space within the (post)structuralist French sixties. This Baudrillardian critique of the sign makes room for itself within other types of sign-critiques (we have in mind here the Derridean critique of logocentrism and sign, the Barthean developments of the Saussurean project of semiology, Julia Kristeva's attempt to replace the sign with the text in a theory of *semanalyse* – to name just a few). Our discussion will follow a theoretical path that leads from empirical considerations to more abstract ones. We shall start from the succinct discussion of the status and critical relevance of sign-objects and finish with a more abstract analysis of the Baudrillardian sign-theory and sign-value.

Objects as signs within the language of consumption

The story begins with the Baudrillardian interest for the system of objects (of consumption) – interest that will transform into a full grown critique of the consumer's society. Between the two Baudrillardian phases the theory of sign-object interposes itself, playing the role of a veritable *point de capiton* (in the sense of the

lacanian anchorage point, a type of signifier/concept that pins down a discursive structuring of meaning and articulates the two above mentioned theories). Now, as the semiological critical apparatus influences the analysis of the consumption object turning its object into a particular type of sign, the reverse can be argued for also – the critical apparatus of the political and economical analysis of the consumption process (within the all encompassing capitalist mode of (re)production and consumption) touches the sign, opening a space for the critique of the political economy of the sign. We can anticipate things and advance the hypothesis that Baudrillard's critique of the sign is basically the result of a cross-reading of Marx against Saussure and vice-versa – the end point of this process being the Baudrillardian theoretical separation from both these authors. But how exactly does this cross-reading function? And in what context does this happen? Our answer is that, what Baudrillard does is precisely to translate (with pertinent theoretical cautions) the Marxist theory of value into a semiological universe informed by Saussurean concepts, this translation being both the object and the method of the critique of the sign (objects). The larger context will be the baudrillardian attempt of reconstructing the social logic „cette logique n'est pas du tout celle de l'appropriation individuelle de la valeur d'usage des biens et des services [...], ce n'est pas une logique de la satisfaction [...]; c'est une logique de la production et de la manipulation des signifiants sociaux“². How relevant is this type of analysis, on which presuppositions resides, what conclusion can be drawn from it – these are but a few of the problems that we shall try to discuss here.

From an analytical point of view, but also to maintain the required conceptual rigour, one must cautiously distinguish between terms and concepts within the Baudrillardian theory of sign-value. Probably the most important differentiation concerns the famous Baudrillardian triad of *objects - commodities/signs/sign-objects*. The above mentioned triad refers to three different social logics, as Baudrillard would argue. Before we address the elements of the triad mentioned above, it is useful at this point a small detour through the Baudrillardian definition of the *object per se*. maybe the best place to start is this Baudrillardian statement: „l'objet aura été pour moi le «mot de passe» par excellence“³. Of course there is at play here a theoretical interest for the object that cannot be limited to a single area of research, but rather implies an interdisciplinary approach that traverses semiology, anthropology, psychoanalysis and critical theory. The object *per se* gains in Baudrillard's texts the status of the Radical Other, the depositary of an Evil Genius, the fatal limit to the power of modern subjectivity. The object (particularized as a commodity, or sign-object, or sign, or whatever) is that what drives and seduces thinking hiding in the plain sight of various theories that claim to tame it. It is that that forever escapes all attempts of final theoretical resolutions. But let's return now to the elements of the triad, namely to various hypostases of the object.

² Jean Baudrillard, *La société de consommation. Ses mythes et ses structures*, Ed. Denoël, 1970, pp. 78-79

³ Jean Baudrillard, *Mots de passe*, Ed. Pauvert, Paris 2000, p. 11

Objects or rather objects as commodities pertain to the classical Marxist critique of political economy and its afferent theory of value – commodities designate „an external object, a thing which through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind“⁴ and posses at once (but considered under two different perspectives) a use value and an exchange value (the *substance* of value being *necessary social labour time* using Marx’s own terms). The sign stands for the *form sign* (as a type of abstraction that needs to be deconstructed, a form of repressive semiological micro-structure - that under the pretence of designating the real- is in fact, obeying the constraints of the laws of sign-value, and thus, fragments the real and reconstructs it according to a process of semiological valorisation of the labour of signification, thus merely simulates it) rather than the innocent union of a signifier with a signified; signs (as constitutive units of signifying systems) refer to a critical social-theory framework that makes use of a critical semiological approach to society (understood as a complex multi-layered structure composed of various overlapping signifying systems of different orders). Finally, when it comes to sign-objects things tend in becoming even more complicated: because their usage points in at least two complementary directions: first to the logic of the consumer’s society and second to a theoretical complex that combines saussurean semiology with the Marxist theory of value, namely the possibility of a political economy of the sign (but we will return to this later), moreover sign-object stands for the fact that „in late capitalism the commodity has fused with sign (commodity- sign), a manoeuvre that has the consequence of liquidating all kinds of Marxist ‘truths’ from use value to alienation“⁵. For analytical reasons we chose to treat separately the parts composing the triad, but it needs to be added that, in fact, we are dealing with a unitary (and complex) concept of object that is traversed by three different types of logics (codes) that require at least three different types of readings. As an analytical precaution, we must add that we are not concerned here with the distinction between ‘dead objects’ (Baudrillard refers here to the sign-objects pertaining to the simulational and semiological orders) and ‘living objects’ (objects within the order of symbolic exchange, they stand for non-economical relations, and don’t posses a value generated through the mechanisms of negative differentiation) relevant for the problem of symbolic exchange, nor are we dealing with the object of seduction, gifted with an evil genius, that through its fatal strategies challenges the sovereign figure of the subject.

One of the first questions that appears is how does an object/commodity start to function as a sign, or more correctly how does a commodity fuse with the sign? In order for something to function as a sign it must enter or, rather, already be part of a signifying system governed by a code that generates and assigns value, thus enabling the social constitution of meaning or signification. Baudrillard argues that the system of (sign)objects (of consumption) is in fact a signifying system, which

⁴ Karl Marx, *The capital*, Vol. I, Ed. Penguin Classics, London 1976, p. 125

⁵ Ed. Richard G. Smith, *The Baudrillard dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, 2010, p. 162

means that besides their social utility, objects possess also a meaning, this dual nature enabling them to function both as different types of useful/exchangeable objects/commodities and as signs. Moreover, within the logic of consumption the object is crossed by three types of value: use-value, exchange value and sign-value. Before we advance further an observation (of Barthean origin) imposes itself: in the case of linguistic signs we have two planes – one of content (the realm of concepts) and one of expression (the realm of acoustical images); on the other hand in the case of sign objects (objects of consumption) we also have two planes – one of utility/functionality of the object and one of signification⁶. One other point should be added to this observation: in the case of signs, the relation between a signifier (realm of expression) and a signified (realm of content) is arbitrary, but in the case of objects we have two different types of relation: if we analyse through the lens of its utility we can state that the relation between object and function is not arbitrary; on the other hand, if we analyse the object in relation to its social meaning (the social standing that objects comes to refer to) we will see that there we have an arbitrary relation (no natural rapport can be established between the two) between object and meaning. In the context of a Baudrillardian semiological approach to the capitalist consumer's society, commodities are theoretically constructed and interpreted as sign-objects read as different types of coded difference – the process of consumption being in fact a massive and coercive process of repressive signification through the medium of sign-objects, that acts as a moralizing matrix of social control, with characteristic system of values that assign value and position within the social hierarchy, moreover, it is a contemporaneous disciplinary structure that generates and disciplines a new category of productive forces⁷.

The system of sign-objects is governed by the logic of sign value or the logic of difference (in Baudrillard's terms). Besides this type of logic, Baudrillard identifies yet another three types of logics: the functional logic of the use-value (the logic of practical operations), the economic logic of exchange value (the logic of equivalence) and the logic of symbolic exchange (the logic of ambivalence)⁸. These four kinds of logics (mutually exclusive in nature) cross, and in this process, constitute the *object* in four different manners – we can speak of a *pure* sign-object of consumption only if that object is deprived of all its determinations as a tool, symbol and product.

But what exactly is the nature of sign-object once it is deprived of its use-value, exchange-value and symbolic exchange value? For what does the object stand for? Of what exactly is it a sign? The Baudrillardian answer to this question is - for social position – attained through a social system of meaning governed by a social code of standing. Basically, when an object is read as a sign (that as a commodity can be bought after being produced) then its function is to pin and assign social

⁶ Roland Barthes, *Elements of semiology*, Ed. Hill and Wang, New York 1986, p.41

⁷ Jean Baudrillard, *La société de consommation. Ses mythes et ses structures*, Ed. Denoël, 1970, pp. 113-114

⁸ Jean Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Ed. Gallimard, Paris 1972, p. 64

position, in a constellation with other signs that together form one's *symbolic capital* (using Bourdieu's terms). The radical and debatable thesis of Baudrillard is that social meaning and position is generated only through the manipulation and accumulation of sign-objects and ultimately through the play of sign-values. Under the economical and political determinations of consumption one can read the logic of social production „d'un matériel de différences, d'un code de significations et de valeurs statutaires“⁹. The standing value, which in good old Marxist fashion pertains to the dominant social class, ensures a particular type of domination situated beyond the economical and political one, but constructed on these two. It is at play here some sort of social alchemy (Baudrillard would have us convinced by this) that transmutes all other types of value in sign value. The symbolic capital attained through the accumulation of sign-values (statutory value) would be the semiological correlate of the economical capital accumulated through the appropriation of the surplus value, moreover sign-capital is a capital superimposed on the economical capital. Only through this type of value one social subject accumulates symbolic capital and social status. A succinct account of Baudrillard's thesis would be that social domination is not achieved only through political and economical domination, but also through signs, this thesis being supported by one of most respected baudrillardian critique, namely Douglas Kellner „the analyses of sign-value will provide new insights into how social domination takes place“¹⁰. Moreover, a critical semiological approach to the consumer's society should criticize exactly this type of domination and dismantle the mechanisms, practices and theories that sustain it. The capitalist accumulation of value is not realized only through economical and political means, but also through a semicratic system that generates its own particular values and its own particular type of domination. And relative to these types of signs Baudrillard states that they must burn under the unforgiving eye of the critic, adding that burning the signs does not immediately constitute a critical semiology, but becomes just that, once we pass over the apparent transgressive and destructive character of the formula and come to understand that „Baudrillard posits a 'structural revolution of value' that combines convertible elemental relations from political economy and semiology in a political economy of the sign“¹¹.

Before we advance further let's dwell a bit longer on the question of sign value as the outcome of the social transubstantiation of exchange value and surplus-value. Sign-value is the result of a special kind of labour (social labour) that is not to be mistaken for the economical process of extracting surplus value, but is rather some kind of „statutory consumption“ (using Jean Baudrillard's own terms)¹² that

⁹ Ibid., p. 77

¹⁰ Douglas Kellner, *Jean Baudrillard. From marxism to postmodernism and beyond*, Ed. Stanford University Press, California 1989, p. 24

¹¹ Ed. Richard G. Smith, *The Baudrillard dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, 2010, p. 190

¹² Jean Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Ed. Gallimard, Paris 1972, p. 131

discards any economical value, inscribing itself in a different type of social exchange. Through this process of statutory consumption, all other types of value that an object can and surely has are transformed or rather, destitute and replaced with the sign-value. This is possible only because the table of the four types of logics (that traverse the object which were mentioned above) is not a „static typology, but one of conversions, reconversions and transit“¹³ from one type of value into another, all depending on the *reading* that we apply to the object. One final point should be addressed here. We know that for Marx the value of a commodity is in fact the social labour incorporated in it. Which is then, the substance of the sign-value or semiological labour of valorisation? One possible answer will be „ce travail social de production des signes“¹⁴, or in more concrete terms – abstract social labour of signification. Value (namely structural value) regulates and generates meaning (referential *value*) that becomes incorporated, positioned and accumulated (in short a material for valorisation), and by reversion the meaning of a sign refer to nothing but its value. Referential value and structural value (within the sign-form) balance each other as complementary forms of the form value of the sign. Or to put it differently, the meaning of a sign is the mere fact that it can be a means of valorisation. If Saussure distinguishes between signification and value (signification is the union of a certain signifier with a certain signified, and value is the position each signifier or signified occupies in the system according with the laws of negative differentiation), in Baudrillard’s Marxist account of sign-value the reference and the structural value are both just forms of value (structural and referential) that become entangled and inter-dependent – being in fact one and the same thing, namely social position). And this is in fact one way (of many to come) in which Baudrillard directs the Marxist theory of value towards the Saussurean theory of the sign and vice versa.

The complicity between the order of production and the order of signs – the critique of the political economy of the sign

After this quite long detour through the Baudrillardian theory of the sign-object, we shall follow him down a path more theoretical and abstract that starts with his definition of semiology as political economy of the sign (a contemporary order in which political economy becomes entangled with the process of signification and the functioning of language, up to a point in which no separation between the two is possible) and of signification as a coded abstraction, the production of differences and sign-values being a collective process of production and reproduction of the code of political economy¹⁵. The code must be interpreted here as a matrix that generates laws of equivalence due to its structural manner of deployment. The same code of values and the same differential logic are at play in the two orders

¹³ William Pawlett (ed.), *Jean Baudrillard. Key sociologists*, Ed. Routledge, London 2007, p. 22

¹⁴ Baudrillard Jean, *Pour une critique de l’économie politique du signe*, Ed.Gallimard, Paris 1972, p. 132

¹⁵Ibid., p. 100

(signification and political economy). In both cases it is value that which permits the exchange of elements among themselves according to the code of equivalence. The code plays a central role in the emergence of value from both systems: „C'est la ruse du code de se voiler et de se produire dans l'évidence du valeur"¹⁶. This code is in fact the code of production of meaning and reality, the final outcome being the end of the real that it's replaced by its own simulation. Meaning must be produced and reproduced and the real must accommodate that form of meaning and that law of value and no other or disappear. In fact, political economy of the sign stands for the conjunction of the second order semiological mechanisms of signification with the Marxist theory of value.

At this point starts the full deployment of the sign-critique and the cross-reading of Marx and Saussure one against the other in the Baudrillardian theory. The founding moment of this theory would be the positing of the coincidence of form between sign-form and commodity-form¹⁷ (the structure of the sign as it is conceived in the Saussurean manner allows its comparison with the commodity-form). Baudrillard draws a relation of equivalence between the signifier and the exchange value on one side, and the signified and the use value on the other, and this theoretical move allows him to use the same critique against the Saussurean model of the sign (signified is nothing but an alibi for the signifier) and against the Marxist form of commodity (use value is but an alibi for the free circulation of exchange value): „valeur d'usage et besoins ne sont qu'un effet de la valeur d'échange; signifié (et référent) ne sont qu'un effet du signifiant"¹⁸. Conceptualizing the sign-value leads to revealing of the capitalist ideology as the *form* that traverses both the orders of signification (production of meaning) and material production. This statement follows two entangled lines of critique: one directed against the Marxist account of use-value (altogether with the Baudrillardian critique of the Marxist theory of value within the capitalist mode of production) and one directed against the Saussurean relation between signifier and signified. In both cases we are dealing with two types of forms that inform and enforce each other through some kind of power fusion at the level of the social. What unites these two lines of argumentation is a common deconstruction of ideological presuppositions. In both cases we are dealing with an ideological (uncritical) use of use-value (by Marx) – alibi for exchange value, on one hand, and signified (by Saussure) – alibi for signifier, on the other hand.

One major flaw of Marx's (in Baudrillard's view) analysis was his overlooking of the metaphysics and profound ideological character of the use value itself; in Marx's terms: „the mystical character of the commodity does not arise from its use-value"¹⁹. What escaped to the sharp Marxist critique was the fact that use value isn't less

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 175

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 149

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 164

¹⁹ Karl Marx, *The capital*, Vol. I, Ed. Penguin Classics, London 1976, p. 164

ideological and mystifying than the exchange value. In fact, use value is just an alibi for the exchange value, its systemic supplement, both types of value being generated by the same bourgeois system of political economy. In Baudrillard's view the Marxist critical failure can be depicted as the inability to move beyond the law of value pertaining to the capitalist mode of production, this resulting in the Marxist blindness to the fact that the use value is „produite par le jeu de la valeur d'échange“²⁰, thus pertains to the same bourgeois capitalist mode of production. Use value was there only to conceal the awful truth that what is exchanged (in production or consumption) is done only in the virtue of the same value-form, utility being just another mode of equivalence and exchange. The system of political economy generates the value form (dual sided), use value being just the other side of exchange value. In Baudrillard's view the same can be stated about the relation between signifier and signified. The same mode of production applies both to the commodities and to signs, on both sides a code exists that governs the dynamics of value (be it semiological or economical). Moreover, the order of political economy supplements itself at the level of the subject with an order of representation that is its most effective accomplice. The form of representation (referring to the place and the function of signs and signifying systems) parallels and mirrors the form of capitalist production. They rise and fall together as specific forms characteristic to the western modernity in an obscure and undisclosed complicity, „il faut voir que les deux ordres sont inséparables et que, si paradoxal que cela paraisse, la *forme/production* n'est pas davantage soumise à une analyse radicale chez Marx que la *forme/représentation*“²¹. Failing to accomplish this task, Marxism remain but a faithful *mirror of production* (in Baudrillard's own words), that doesn't go beyond (in theory or praxis) the capitalist order of production. On the plane of signification we discover that things work also like this, given the fact that one must produce meaning in the same way one must work to produce goods and one can communicate and signify through commodities just like with signs. However, once the commodity becomes a sign-object the reversibility mentioned before becomes a singular internal logic of the sign-object. Signification as a *situs* of valorisation produces and leads to accumulation in a system of political economy of semiological nature, and to answer a pendant question on the lips of the reader: yes, there also exists a fetishism of the signifier translated as the capture of the subject in the infinite play of coded difference misread as production and accumulation of *real* social meaning (and relation) or as real accumulation of knowledge of the *real*, „it appears that Baudrillard is offering us a universal fetishism wherein signs are everything; as a result, our belief in any reality behind (within) the sign could be seen as 'ontological fetishism'“²². This last sentence brings us to the second line of critique: signifiers can move freely just because there are signifieds that stand for something real that can be grasped and circumscribed at the end of every process of signification.

²⁰ Jean Baudrillard, *Le miroir de la production*, Ed. Galilée, Paris 1985, p. 21

²¹ Ibid., p. 13

²² Paul Hegarty, *Jean Baudrillard: Live theory*, Ed. Continuum, London 2004, p. 25

The signified is just a so-called detour through reality that has the same function as the need in the system of political economy: „the signified has meaning not in relation to one signifier but as an effect of meaning generated through signifier relations of negative difference; needs are effects of industrially and artificially produced differences between objects; needs can't be pinned down to specific objects that satisfy them since they are system elements“²³. The system of production generates the system of needs, the *value-form* generates use values and an exchange value, and in a similar way, the coded signifying system generates signifiers and signifieds in a unitary deployment. The signified and the referent are produced by the system of signification, having no other reality beyond that of the system that generated them: „the play of signifiers generates the illusion of a stable signified, the play of signs generates the illusion of reference“²⁴. The world (that extra-linguistic reality that supports the play of signifiers) is nothing but an effect of signification and hasn't any ontological status per se, once it is constructed and grasped through a signifying system that assumes the function of designating it. The designated and signified *real* is just an immense credibility reservoir that credits the movements of every signifying system (in this case the system of language, but any system of meaning can be criticized using a similar line of argument). Baudrillard adds that even the separation between the world and the language is but a form of untrue founding narrative that should be deconstructed as any modern meta-narrative. The decoupage of the real is made through a specific modern form (sign-form as unity between signifier and signified) and this form is not the only one, nor an innocent one – it is loaded with metaphysical presuppositions and relates to a specific modern eurocentrist cultural model. It is important to mention here that Baudrillard does not state that there is no world outside the various signifying systems (he believes that there is most certainly one and that it can be grasped through the grid of symbolical order/exchange – understood here as a world-reading, interpretation and designation what stands outside the systems of value), just that, that world has nothing to do with the simulational/fake one generated by value signifying systems. But what does this mean? And what are the consequences of such theorizations? In short, that the world we signify is but a simulation of the real, an intention (charged with value) directed towards the real. To signify means to cut up and fragment at will the real, and to reconstruct/reproduce it according to the rule of the code. In the parlance of the sixties, for Baudrillard, signification was just another form of disenchantment of the world understood as destitution/separation/de-realisation of/from the real through various simulative processes. From these theoretical positions Baudrillard begins his critique against the Saussurean theory of sign and signification. Due to the fact that this critique directed against the classical Saussurean theory of the sign interests and helps us better understand the nature of sign value, let's follow it more closely.

²³ Ed. Richard G. Smith, *The Baudrillard dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, 2010, p. 191

²⁴ William Pawlett (ed.), *Jean Baudrillard. Key sociologists*, Ed. Routledge, London 2007, p. 23

Against signs: Baudrillard versus Saussure

Before we direct our critical attention towards Baudrillard's critique of the Saussurean theory of the sign it is only fair to listen and recall (in a succinct manner) Saussure's side of the story. We shall present here the core of linguistic theory of the sign (in Saussure's own terms) that is the main target of Baudrillard's critique. Saussure defines the sign as that which unites an acoustical image (signifier) with a concept (signified), adding that „le lien unissant le signifié et le signifiant est arbitraire”²⁵. The theory of linguistic signs (defined as language facts) engenders some interrogations regarding the definition of some corollary concepts. Relevant for our analysis are the problems raised by identity, value and unity. Saussure states that „la notion d'identité se confond avec celle de la valeur et réciproquement”²⁶, in fact identity is value in the context of the law of equivalences. If two terms have the same identity (are equivalent), then they can be exchanged one for another, this means also that they have the same value attached to them. One of the conclusions that Saussure draws from here is that, in fact, value is analysable under/in relation with three different aspects: unity, reality, identity. The fact that value is a crucial component of the language can be derived also from the Saussurean statement that language itself is a *system of pure values*, in which the combination of the two orders (the order of sounds and the order of thinking) produces a form. The connection between value and signification is for Saussure very complex, given the fact that under its conceptual consideration value is in fact the condition of signification. Even in the Saussurean theory of linguistic value the similarities with the Marxist theory of value are more than evident. To prove this, let's take a closer look at the way in which Saussure explains how a value is constituted: „Les valeurs sont constituées par une chose dissemblable susceptible d'être échangée contre celle dont la valeur est à déterminer et par des choses similaires qu'on peut comparer avec celle dont la valeur est en cause”²⁷. Under its conceptual consideration value is, for Saussure, constituted from relations and differences with the other elements of language. This Saussurean description of value is very similar in form with the Marxist dissociation between use value and exchange value, this situation being in fact an argument in favour of the Baudrillardian approach and critique of language value in the larger context of political economy (of value), at least as a departure point. Value has in Saussure's theory a material aspect also and this can be summarized in two propositions that support each other: first – the value of letters (but also sounds) is purely relational and differential (in a negative manner – a specific minimal unit of language is what all the others around it are not a= non-b, non-c, etc...) and second, value itself is but an effect of the relations of opposition. Saussure adds that the process of differentiation functions only in a negative manner and this excludes the possibility of any positive language term „dans la langue

²⁵ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique generale*, Ed. Payot et Rivages, 1967, p. 97

²⁶ Ibid., p. 153

²⁷ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique generale*, Ed. Payot et Rivages, 1967, p. 159

n'existe que de différences sans termes positives. [...]Un système linguistique est une série de différences de sons combinée avec un série de différences d'idées²⁸. There is only one positive fact in language and that is the sign itself – even if sounds and concepts are defined in a negative differential manner, the union between a certain acoustical image and a certain concept is a positive fact according to Saussure. Before we redirect our attention towards the Baudrillardian critique of Saussurean theory of the sign and value, let's take a look at some conclusions that can be derived from the Saussurean theory of value. First of all, value is an effect of the system of language, the play of differences and relations of oppositions within the system generate the values of each term. Although value is one of the conditions of possibility for signification, the two of them are different in nature in the context of Saussurean theory.

The bone of contention between Baudrillard and Saussure is situated at the level of the theory of the arbitrariness of the sign. Baudrillard reproaches Saussure that he misplaced the nature of the arbitrariness of the sign, stating that in fact „l'arbitraire du signe n'est pas dans son immotivation, mais [...] dans le fait même de poser l'équivalence entre tel Sa et tel Sé. L'arbitraire est dans l'institution fondamentale d'une corrélation exacte entre tel Sa discret et tel Sé aussi discret²⁹. This exact correlation can be done on account of the structural effectiveness of the value. One cannot posit the same relation between two terms conceived in an ambivalent manner. Each term is assigned a certain value and this value is correlated with another one, both negatively and differentially generated, their correlation being a positive fact (the sign) that is the minimal unit of the order of representation. Not even the object can escape to this power of designation and repressive determination: „le repérage de chaque chose ou de chaque être comme élément signifié du système devient une préoccupation de tous les instants³⁰. Baudrillard's argument is that no sign can be ambivalent through signification and thus, cannot enter in a symbolic exchange with the real. If ambivalence functions conjunctively, then signification is always disjunctive. To better understand this, we can take the Bataillean way of reasoning regarding *la part maudite*. For something to have a value it is necessary that it has just one value (one position in the system) and cannot be at the same time also something else. Ambivalence in the context of signifying systems, is always expiated (the accursed part) in order for a precise term to have a precise correlate, signifier and signified playing according to the rules of equivalence and value. For example, let's think of a commercial advertising some travel agency. They will surely use in their commercial a very bright sun that watches over a paradise-like beach. This advertised sun must be that of joy and good disposition, of bathing and fortune... It cannot be *also* the *real* sun of drought or burn or sickness. Baudrillard's thesis is that every signifier functions in exactly the same way. We know now that things are

²⁸ Ibid., p. 166

²⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Ed. Gallimard, Paris 1972, p. 180

³⁰ Alain Gauthier, *Baudrillard – Une pensée singulière*, Ed. Lignes, 2008, p. 31

quite differently than this narrow designation. In the end, „the real object in the world (the referent) has no essential relation to the way in which its sign is formed“³¹ and in this way, always eludes a final pinning to the map of language.

There is another point that should be taken in consideration: Saussure talks about signifier and signified, he does not use the concept of referent. Benveniste is the one who introduces the concept of referent (as having an extra-linguistic status) stating that in fact, between the signifier and the signified there is a co-substantiality of nature, so it is necessary the introduction of a third term (the referent) that should stand for the real. Baudrillard dismisses this solution adding that „la coupure ne passé pas entre un signe et un référent «réel»; elle passe entre le Sa comme *forme* et, d'autre part, le Sé et le Rft, qui s'inscrivent ensemble comme contenu, l'un de pensée, l'autre de réalité, sous le signe du Sa“³². Within the sign-form, the bar that separates the signifier from the signified is also a bar of exclusion, with the sole purpose of keeping out any extra-linguistic element. The signifier is a form because in just another form of abstraction, of semiological reduction of a more rich substance. Baudrillard's critique touches both Saussure's and Benveniste's theories. In one theoretical shot representation and reality are cut up by the play of signifiers. The referent is nothing more than our representation of the real, our image of the real world. It is just purported intention towards things, an intention that assigns a certain value and a certain place to everything. The same code that governs the signifying system becomes the principle of reality (the matrix of generation) for the real itself, the code informs and generates the real. The real of signification is just a form of simulation, an effect of the code.

Intermezzo

Let's pause at this point, just enough to catch our breath while we summarize the line of arguments presented above. This theoretical pause is needed for at least two reasons: 1) the Baudrillardian theory of sign-value does not stop here, but rather continues down a more radical path and 2) after this stage of theory, what was the genealogy of the concept of simulation becomes the full grown theory of simulation. In fact, we are witnessing a shift in the Baudrillardian thought that can be concisely described as the passage from the theorizing of the semiological „division of the real to the disappearance of the real“³³. The political economy of the sign was the mark of the division between signs and the real, simulation stands there as reality only because the real itself has disappear through over-signification and over-valorisation, we are now beyond the political economy of the sign, being caught up in the carousel of the structural law of value. Up until this point one could read in Baudrillard's writings a sort of complicity (at the level of the sign) between value and meaning (understood as referential value). Within the theory of simulation

³¹ Mike Gane, *Baudrillard's bestiary. Baudrillard and culture*, Ed. Routledge, 1991, p. 63

³² Baudrillard Jean, *Pour une critique de l'économie politique du signe*, Ed. Gallimard, Paris 1972, p. 184

³³ Richard J. lane, *Jean Baudrillard*, Ed. Routledge, London 2000, p.72

value detaches itself from meaning that has become only value's alibi. The sign divorces (beyond the point of any possible reconciliation) the referent; the political economy of signification disappears in favour of the pure structural game of value. As we have shown value plays a central role in the Baudrillardian semiotic theory from the beginning encompassing all the valences of the sign: if for Saussure sign has value and meaning, for Baudrillard the sign has referential *value* and structural value. In this sense we can comprehend why simulation is in fact the final emancipation (at the level of the sign) of the structural value from the referential one.

Baudrillard's critique of the Saussurean theory of the sign and the critique of political economy of the sign pertain to the genealogy of the simulation theory constructed in a poststructuralist framework whose strongest consequence is the conceiving of the real only as an effect of the structural play of value – the real as its own simulation. In the case of the system of exchange value, the effect of the real (the argument of objectivity) is the system of needs and of use value. In the case of the signifying system, the effect of the real appears at the level of the signified (who apparently cuts up a precise portion of the real) and of the referent. For Baudrillard, unlike Saussure signification has a relation of direct implication with the value attributed to the signifier. If for Saussure the signification was the mental concept or the idea attached to the acoustical image corresponding to a certain signifier, in the Baudrillardian theory, value is in fact the one that determines/generates meaning (which, in this way becomes just a structural effect) if we take into account that the value of a sign (dissociated by the value of the signifier or the signified) is relative and established in a negative-differential manner from all the other signs of the system. Then, meaning does not connect the real with the system; meaning is just a question relative to its situation in the structure, its existence being of the same nature as that of the sign. The real remains forever outside of the signifying system, which in its turn hyper-signifies the real reducing it to a mere simulational model, „la plus haute fonction du signe est de faire disparaître la réalité, et de masquer en même temps cette disparition“³⁴. The real – understood as reference, or signified, or object of designation – becomes a kind of hyper-sign (presence in the system by delegation through a special kind of sign – the referential signs) secreted by the system of signs. The real doesn't have any ontological relevance or precedence relative to the signifying system that wishes to designate it in a way or another.

The structural game of value

As we already stated value plays a central role, being a veritable *point de capiton* of the process of signification. Value permitted the exchange of the elements among themselves on account of equivalent value, at the same time allowing also the exchange of the elements against the real. But value got greedy and here Baudrillard adds that „la valeur référentielle est anéantie au profit du seul jeu

³⁴ Jean Baudrillard, *Le crime parfait*, Ed. Galilée, Paris 1995, p. 20

structural de la valeur ³⁵. The signs no longer exchange themselves against the real, but only against themselves. The signs mirror only each other. This is the order of simulation. We are beyond the order of representation and of the real, and this is why we cannot have a representation of simulation: „la simulation est articulée, chez Baudrillard, à une forme d'écriture, à une théorie de la séduction, à une critique de l'objet symbolique – mais, pas à une morale de la représentation³⁶. It must be mentioned here, that there are four stages of simulation and four types of simulacra: „*counterfeit*: is the dominant scheme of the classical period, from the Renaissance to the industrial revolution; *Production*: is the dominant scheme of the industrial era; *Simulation*: is the reigning scheme of the current phase that is controlled by the code³⁷; Baudrillard later adds the order of the fractal simulacra which is the one that corresponds to our postmodern time, in which the real is generated and produced according to the minimal models generated by the code. The correspondent types of simulacra are „1) the phase in which the image is the reflection of a basic reality; 2) it masks and perverts a basic reality; 3) it masks the absence of a basic reality; 4) it bears no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum³⁸ (the viral metonymical proliferation of all reference at infinity it is the era of the simulation of simulation) throughout the medium of a viral and fractal dissemination of value.

What tends to happen, Baudrillard argues, is that in each phase of representation a former, dominant conception of the real is taken as the reference model of the current (already out of date) reality. These stages don't have historical pertinence; they are in fact more like a theoretical deployment of a trajectory of hypotheses. Baudrillard's critique of the semiological order situates itself at the third and the fourth level mentioned above. Baudrillard criticizes even the modern theory of representation stating that the first moment of the conceptualization of the real world was in fact the first moment in the beginning of its disappearance. Every stage of simulation started with the adding of something to the real. The most subversive thing added was in fact value itself.

Value is but a form of augmentation of the real, which turned out to be the reproduction of the real in completely different terms. The more valuable the real become, the less is meant something. Through signifying systems (but not only) and the process of signification (in truth a veiled form of a more pertinent understanding as process of valorisation, understood as value assignation), the real „is immediately produced as Virtual reality; and in the Virtual the referent disappears³⁹. The real has only the status of a hyper-sign, the sign itself not having any world beyond or

³⁵ Jean Baudrillard, *L'échange symbolique et la mort*, Ed. Gallimard, 1976, p. 18

³⁶ Francois Cusset, *French Theory. Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze & Cie et les mutations de la vie intellectuelle aux Etats-Unis*, Ed. La Decouverte, Paris 2003, p. 254

³⁷ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, ed. Semiotext(e), New York 1983, p. 23

³⁸ Ibid., p. 4

³⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *Why hasn't all already disappeared?*, Ed. Seagull Books, 2009, p. 41

before it. What prevails here is the structural dimension of value in the face of the referential one. In a semiological perspective what matters is only the position of a sign and the relations it enters with other signs. The structural play of signs (or better signifiers) engenders an immense process of de-realization (to use Blanchot's terms). In this sense Gary Genosko reads Baudrillard's critique of the political economy of the sign as a „most tightly opened attempt to come to terms with formalist readings of signification as a symptom of repression“⁴⁰. Value represses ambivalence; the semiological order represses the symbolical one that returns in the form of a spectre that haunts the semiological order.

Let's turn our attention for the last time to the Baudrillardian distinction (of Saussurean descent) between the structural dimension of value and the referential one (the structural dimension regards the exchange of elements between themselves and the referential one relates to the exchange of signifying elements against something situated outside the signifying system – namely, the real). As we have already seen, Baudrillard argued that we are dealing with the dissolution of the referential dimension in favour of the structural one. Signs have emancipated themselves from meaning, being only subjected to the rules of the structural play of value (this play itself being conditioned by the lack of exchange between signs and real, between signifiers and signifieds). This is in fact the second repression signs operate. First there was the repression of the symbolic ambivalence in favour of semiological equivalence (the precise correspondence between a particular signifier and a particular correlate signified) and now we have a second reduction in which signification is repressed under the reign of pure systemic value. We pass beyond the order of signification (and of representation) into the order of value (and of simulation). This second order semiological revolution that goes beyond the classical conception of the sign alters in a very significant way the nature of the objects that fall under its sphere. The signs that exchange only against themselves and not against the real are a different type of signs than the old Saussurean ones that obeyed the law of equivalence. At the stage of structural play of value we are dealing with a principle of indetermination (uncertainty) that is reproduced and imprinted in the circulation of signs by the code that governs the system they belong to: „émancipation du signe: dégagé de cette obligation «archaïque» qu'il avait de désigner quelque chose, il devient enfin libre pour un jeu structural, ou combinatoire selon un indifférence et un indétermination totale, qui succède à la règle antérieure d'équivalence déterminée“⁴¹. Simulation is the phase beyond the political economy of the sign, beyond the order of production and representation, beyond exchange between the signs and the order of the real. The free movement of the structural law of value became the movement of the real, or rather the destitution of the real in favour of its own simulation.

⁴⁰ Gary Genosko, *Baudrillard and signs. Signification ablaze*, Ed. Routledge, London, 1994, p. xiv

⁴¹ Jean Baudrillard, *L'échange symbolique et la mort*, Ed. Gallimard, 1976, p. 18

The sign becomes nothing more than a pure value in endless circulation. This circulation does not generate an accumulation of meaning, as the classical structure of the sign did. Of course, this cannot be done without a clever cunning of reason from the value's part. Value travels under the guise of signification, as does the new form of the sign under the form of its classical account. What happens is an analogical move to the one Baudrillard described when he stated that in the classical economical political account of the sign the signified was just a mere alibi for the signifier – after the structural revolution of value a new form of sign arises and that form hides itself under the shadow of the old destitute form of the sign. Moreover, if we follow the Baudrillardian account of the structural revolution of value until its last consequences it becomes clear that this new sign-form cannibalized the old sign-form, and in this way succeeds in internalizing on the same plane the old double-plane dichotomies. This happens for two reasons: first of all, within the frame of the political economy of the sign, value was still conditioned by the laws of equivalence and exchange against something posited as the *real*, once these laws become obsolete (as it does in the case of the order of simulation where no exchange with the real is no longer possible) value is liberated by equivalence restrictions; and second, for the structural stage of value to function it needs the alibi of the old meaning-instituted disjunctions (between signifier-signified, sign-referent, etc...), but this implies the existence of two types of planes that no longer exist separately – their external separation has been internalized under the hegemony of the structural code of value.

Conclusions

In the case of Jean Baudrillard's theories one must pay great attention in positing final conclusions or closed readings. The Baudrillardian universe is highly infused with poetic resolutions that shine through even his most abstract theoretisations, every theory is only a possible passage to many other. What we tried to do in this text was to follow Baudrillard thought along his travels with the concept of value, sign-value. In Baudrillard's case critical semiology turned against one of its core concepts, namely value. We found this relevant because we believe that this type of research particularizes the Baudrillardian thought within the frame of the (post)structuralist French cultural landscape of the sixties.

Sign-value has a particular history that becomes relevant for our analysis starting with the Saussurean theory of the sign. After receiving clear delimitations and being given (by Saussure himself) a great importance, the concept of value fell under the veil of ignorance from the part of the theorists. Of course, everyone that studied the Saussurean theory of language made himself a moral (not just theoretical) duty to mention a few things about value, but this has been done without any relevant adding or adjusting to the original Saussurean theory. On the other side of the theoretical spectre (namely in the political economy) there was a full grown Marxist critique

of the capitalist form of value. A gap stood between these two conceptual frameworks until Baudrillard arrived and turned one against another, by rereading both of them under the same critical move, although it's critique against Saussure exceeded the theory and critique of political economy of the sign. What followed was a critical dismantling of the similar value-forms that the sign and the commodity shared. The semiological mediated theory of representation and the classical Marxist theory of value both fell under the unforgiving critical deconstruction of a common-corpus of the political economy of the sign. But Baudrillard did not stop here and continued to follow critically the movement of value even within its structural revolution ruse. The movement of the sign-value lead Baudrillard to the theories regarding simulation and simulacra. Simulation is in fact the ontological form that value takes once it fulfils its structural revolution.

But what was the phenomenon that called for a reassessment of the concept of value? Once the project of semiology turned from a future science to an actually existing one, new complex signifying systems (second and third order systems of meaning), signs and objects fell under its sphere of research. The concept of value needed a new conceptual delimitation – a new definition, a new model to make sense of its functions and consequences. And this is exactly the conceptual space that Baudrillard turned his attention to. Value could not just be relegated to the space of structure because it has come to inform the space of reference also. When it comes to sign-value, we must abandon the old Saussurean scheme of systemic relevance of this particular concept. Value stepped out of the internal determinacy of the coded signifying system that generated it and infused the social, cultural, economic, political realities with its own agenda of deployment and control. The process of signification is a process of valorisation. And where valorisation intervenes accumulation will surely follow and with it some form of capital with its own value laws. And there where accumulation establishes itself as social process of accumulating symbolic capital, a new form of domination (this time of semiological nature) will surely arise. But value can always switch sides or even turn *rogue* and fight for its own emancipation from the burden of reference. If once it fought on the side equivalences and determinations, it can very well fight on the side of indetermination and simulation (understood as a postmodern form of extermination of the real). Value is a central peon of the semiological theories, one through which we can measure the structural revolutions that took place in that space.

A short and concise summary of our account of the Baudrillardian value-theory trajectory would look something like this: 1) sign-object – complicity/entanglement between value and meaning; 2) the critique of the political economy of the sign (dual line of fight: against the Marxist theory of value and the Saussurean theory of the sign); 4) developing and radicalization of it's critique against the classical theories of the sign 4) beyond reference – the emancipated pure structural game of value and 5) the birth of the theory of simulation (the other 4 points being related to the genealogy of this concept). Of course, as always something haunts this order of value,

namely the symbolical order (the order beyond fixed equivalence and value – the order of the symbolic ambivalence). It is in the name of this symbolic exchange that this form of signs (value infused) must burn and with them an entire metaphysics of value that gone mad resulting in a full grown (meta)simulation of the real.

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THE LACK OF A DEDUCTION: KANT'S OPINION ON ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF CATEGORIES

ANCA-GABRIELA GHIMPU*

ABSTRACT. This essay argues against Kant's reproach to Aristotle's deduction of categories as formulated in *The Critique of the Pure Reason*. In the first part we try to summarize the philosophical context in which Kant formulates his reproach, while in the second part we focus on Aristotle's perspective underlying philosophical aspects in the light of which Kant's objection seems unfounded. The most important aspects which our argumentation is based on are: first, we are dealing with two different philosophical intentions (categories of being *versus* categories of the understanding); secondly, Kant's reproach turns against him, so to speak, as he does not provide a principle of deduction either.

Keywords: categories, apriori concepts, understanding, metaphysical deduction, transcendental deduction

Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to analyze a small but important Kantian remark towards Aristotle's list of categories of being:

Aristotle's search for these fundamental concepts was an effort worthy of an acute man. But since he had no principle, he rounded them up as he stumbled on them, and first got up a list of ten of them, which he called categories (predicaments). Subsequently, he believed that he had found five more of them, which he added under the name of post-predicaments. But his table still had holes. Further, it also included several *modi* of pure sensibility (*quando, ubi, situs* as well as *prius, simul*,¹) as well as an empirical one (*motus*²), which do not belong in this ancestral registry of the understanding; derivative concepts were also included among the primary ones (*action, passio*³), and several of the latter were entirely missing⁴.

Kant, in his *Critique of the Pure Reason*, considers his own result in the same matter – a deduction of the categories - by far a real success. He thinks he has found the complete list of categories in a perfect scientific way which makes his approach superior to that of Aristotle.

* Babeş-Bolyai University, Dept. of Philosophy, Str. M. Kogalniceanu, 1, 400084 Cluj-Napoca, Romania

¹ The concepts of *when, where, position, priority and simultaneity*.

² That is, *motion*.

³ *Action and passion (affection)*.

⁴ Kant, *Critique of the Pure Reason*, Paul Guyer, Allan W. Wood (editors), Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 213.

Kant's Perspective

Aside from formal reasons⁵, Kant himself referred to his famous predecessor when trying to elaborate his own list of categories, comparing his approach with that of Aristotle and then identifying his theoretical intentions with those of the latter; in other terms, he admires Aristotle's intention (as he shares it) but he criticizes his way of achieving it. Our analyze starts from the point in which Kant refuses to accept a ready-made list of categories which was, in his opinion, rhapsodically obtained. At the same time, the German philosopher is convinced he is able to overcome the so-called "rhapsodic" method of the ancient by finding a scientific criterion in order to "obtain" the "right" list of categories, that is, the complete list of the most general *a priori* concepts of our understanding.

In order to see if the Kantian reproach is legitimate we need first to clarify some aspects concerning the philosophical intentions we have mentioned in each case. The *Critique of Pure Reason* aims at investigating the possibility of *Metaphysics* as science⁶ which implies an evaluation of the possibility of human knowledge in general, followed by an understanding of the limits of its extension. There is no other way to do that than identifying the transcendental principles that each of our faculties of understanding is based on: sensibility, understanding (intellect), imagination and reason. According to them, the *Critique* becomes an architectonic, that is, a systematization of all knowledge organized as it follows: the Transcendental Aesthetic studies the pure principles of the sensitivity – space and time, *a priori* intuitions and conditions that make possible or "build" the framework of any of our experiences; then we have the Transcendental Logic, which consists of two parts, first one dealing with the *a priori* concepts of our understanding (Analytic of Concepts) and the other one with the *schematism* of imagination - *schemata* representing *a priori* procedural rules with principle value by which pure concepts or categories apply to phenomenal objects. The Transcendental Dialectic deals with reason and its objects, as the most expansive of our faculties by its capacity to possess *Ideas* which cannot be experienced as objects (for example, Soul, World, God).

A certain cognition needs to acquire scientific value; in order to do that it has to take the form of a judgment because any science consists of judgments, and not just any judgments, but synthetic *a priori*. Synthetic judgments, since only such

⁵ A comparison between Aristotle and Kant can be theoretically grounded not only in the remark we take in discussion here but also in the whole structure of both *Organon* and the *Critique of the Pure Reason*. For instance, the two main parts of Kant's Logic, the Transcendental Analytic and the Transcendental Dialectic, correspond to the two books of *Organon*, the *Analytics* and *Topics*; we can establish others structural similarities between their subdivisions as well, for instance, the Analytics of concepts, in which Kant deals with categories, corresponds to the Aristotelian treatise of *Categories*.

⁶ Which we may say it corresponds somehow to Aristotle's intentions in his writings gathered under the name of *Metaphysics* where he seems to believe in the existence and the necessity of a science that studies the first principles of beings; but the sought science, because of the special nature of its object, Being *qua* Being, remains an intended project rather than a constituted science (we follow Pierre Aubenque in this interpretation in *Le Problème de l'Être chez Aristote*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1962)

knowledge is extensive (enriches knowledge) and *a priori*, since they must be universal and necessary to be solid knowledge and to be recognized as scientific law. Once established that only *a priori* synthetic judgments are scientific, Kant is engaged in demonstrating their possibility. What surprises one in *a priori* synthetic judgments⁷ is that they unite two different notions by adding a predicate to a subject without including the latter in the former; in other words, they make a connection between two completely different elements, with a necessity that guarantees by itself such connection. This necessity is given by something outside the judgment, namely the "X principle". As far as judgments based on experience, experience itself represents that "X" as cause of its legitimacy. But experience cannot play the same role for *a priori* synthetic judgments, because their necessity cannot be extracted from experience. Kant will demonstrate that their possibility is given in sciences like mathematics and physics by the pure intuitions of space and time, and generally by the subject that carries out the synthesis. Up to this conclusion, however, Kant has to solve other problems: first, to investigate the possibility of synthesis as a linking process of the manifold of sensitive data that form our cognitions. Kant tries to accomplish that by studying imagination as a faculty dedicated to the synthesis of the manifold, but also by analyzing the possibility of *apperception* as the ultimate principle of all syntheses, the synthesis making possible all other syntheses.

A manifold of sensitive intuitions bound by the imagination faculty is not yet a cognition without the interference of a concept which brings to unity the various representations making it recognizable and communicable knowledge. There are concepts of maximum generality enabling the entire activity of thinking. Identifying them will enroll in Kant's overall effort to discover the principles of transcendental synthetic knowledge and experience in general. Once the *a priori* elements of sensitivity (space and time as forms of intuition) are established, the next step would be finding those concepts that explain the full use of our understanding which means, more generally, determining purely *a priori* thinking.

In the search and identification of categories, Kant must meet requirements without which his approach would not have scientific accuracy. Such concepts must be pure (not mixed with anything empirical), they must belong entirely to the realm of thought and not to the sensitivity), must be primary and have the highest degree of generality so one is certain of their non derivation from others and their enumeration must be complete. Since Kant is guided by the idea of a whole, the unity of intellectual *a priori* cognition which can be divided into its fundamental concepts, bringing them together in a table of categories is the form in which Kant will display the system of pure understanding. These concepts can also be reached in an unsystematic manner, but in Kant's opinion this is inconvenient as one can not know precisely when the procedure is complete because it identifies concepts only occasionally. Transcendental philosophy, by contrast, wants to search them

⁷ Unlike the analytical or explanatory ones in which the predicate is already contained in the subject; this type of judgment is based on the non-contradiction principle.

based on a principle. Finding these concepts, says Kant, engages us in a work that must be coordinated by a concept or an idea. Intuitions, concepts and judgments are all representations. Of the three, only intuitions have direct relationship with their object (as a unique representation of it), while concepts and judgments stand for more representations - which means that they are unity principles. Concepts and judgments are therefore ways of cognition by which we learn more about the object than by mere intuition, because they refer to other representations, either intuitions or concepts⁸. Concepts and judgments link in a single “superior” representation the various representations of an object. They link them in one unit. In this case, we must see how many types of links can be made by our intellectual faculty, that is, to identify the functions of unity in judgments. Judgment represents for Kant the supreme model of unity, the “archetype” of the link. We have to see then in how many ways judgments unify. That will result in an appeal to logic, because logic gives us an accurate description of the types of judgments. From this point on, Kant has one more step to take to reach the categories. He does this by way of analogy with classical logic; the fact that our intellect gives us all the possible types of unity in judgments is enough for Kant to consider that the same types of unity are represented by the pure concepts of understanding. The difference is that the logical judgment reduces various representations to concepts, giving them analytical unity, while in transcendental logic concepts synthetically reduce intuitions to unity. In other terms, the judgment operates with ready-made concepts (as synthesis precedes analysis and concepts never arise analytically) while transcendental logic teaches us the pure synthesis of representations. In this case any *a priori* cognition has to take the following steps: first we must have pure intuition data (as we have seen already, sensitivity is in charge of this matter); this “material” has to be processed, accepted and conjoined in synthesis (the function of imagination) and this synthesis has to be brought to the unity of the concept which comes to the activity of the understanding. In this stage of the process, categories appear.

We saw that in reaching the most general concepts of understanding, Kant was inspired by classical logic, taking the classification of judgments⁹ as a clue to the discovery of all pure concepts of the understanding. Following the analogy with the table of all possible types of judgments he organizes categories in a table of four groups: of *Quantity* (Unity, Plurality, Totality), of *Quality* (Reality, Negation, Limitation), of *Relation* (of Inherence and Subsistence, of Causality and Dependence and of Community or reciprocity between the agent and the patient) and of *Modality* (Possibility-Impossibility, Existence-Non-existence, Necessity-Contingence¹⁰. Kant

⁸ Concepts are best used in judgments, being themselves a sort of judgment as well, as far as linking multiple representations - therefore everything related to the intellect can be reduced to a judgment.

⁹ In logic, judgments are classified by the following criteria: by *quantity* in universal, particular and singular, by *quality* in affirmative, negative and infinite, by *relation* in hypothetical and disjunctive and by *modality* in problematic, assertoric and apodeictic. This classification was first made by Aristotle so Kant does owe him at least the “clue” to his metaphysical deduction of categories.

¹⁰ *Critique of the Pure Reason*, pp. 212-213.

seems convinced that this table is complete and that it answers all the conditions he himself established. First of all, he considers it systematically deduced from a common principle – the faculty of judgment. Then, his catalogue¹¹ is composed only of primitive (non-derived from others), pure (non-empirical) and of maximum generality concepts as required:

This division is systematically generated from a common principle, namely the faculty for judging (which is the same as the faculty for thinking), and has not arisen rhapsodically from a hap-hazard search for pure concepts, of the completeness of which one could never be certain, since one would only infer it through induction, without reflecting that in this way one would never see why just these and not other concepts should inhabit the pure understanding.¹²

The so-called metaphysical deduction of categories being fulfilled, Kant will move on to the transcendental deduction which does not concern us here. We hold only to the fact that his approach will demonstrate the objective validity of categories and will show that they make possible all knowledge and experience in general, having no other application than to objects of our possible experience. While he finds the Greek philosopher's intention of great value, Kant criticizes his achievement as he has proposed a simple list of categories which is not based on any principle and therefore rhapsodic. As said before, the attempt to gather them simply by collecting each of them from different occurrences is still a methodical way, but not at all accurate. In other words, Kant reproaches Aristotle the lack of a principle, along with the fact that he has listed and not inferred, and hence the list of categories is itself full of inconsistencies: it is incomplete (ten categories and five *postpraedicamenta*¹³), it contains three elements that are sensitive and do not belong to pure thinking (time, place and position), some of them are not elementary, but derived (action and passion); overall, they do not meet the requirements which Kant began his research with.

Aristotelian Perspective

Before analyzing the legitimacy of such a reproach, we first have to reinvestigate Aristotle's philosophical intentions along with other non-intentional aspects as far as a theory of categories.

¹¹ We can sense Kant's pride at discovering such a perfectly symmetric table that seems to cover the entire extension of the human understanding. In each group of categories, we have the same number of categories, namely three, the third being somehow the synthesis of the first and the second. The table can be divided in two parts: the first two classes (of Quantity and of Quality), which Kant called *mathematical*, refer to objects of intuition in general and have no correlates, while the second group of categories, the *dynamical* categories (of Relation and of Modality) relates to the existence of these objects, either in relation to one another, or to the understanding.

¹² Kant, *Critique of the Pure Reason*, p. 213.

¹³ Aristotle, *Categories and Interpretation*, translated by Leroy Finley Smith, Academy Guild Press, 1959, 10-14. The *postpraedicamenta* are the multiple senses in which things are said to be *opposed* (as correlatives to one another, as contraries to one another, as privatives to positives, as affirmatives to negatives), to be *prior* or *simultaneous* and the six species of *movement*.

Categories are described in the first book of *Organon*,¹⁴ the famous Aristotelian treatise in which the philosopher presents a list of ten:¹⁵ substance (*ousia*), quantity (*poson*), quality (*poion*), relation (*pros ti*), location (*pou*), time (*pote*), position (*keisthai*), habit (*echein*), action (*poiein*), passion (*paschein*). The technical term used by Aristotle is *katêgoria* which means predication, and that is what the treatise seems to describe: the most general predicates by which being reveals to us in the act of predication and by which any discourse becomes possible. Aristotle's approach seems ambiguous to a modern logician:

The *Categories* is a work of exceptional ambiguity both in purpose and in content. Two major ambiguities are especially noteworthy. In the first place it is unclear whether Aristotle is classifying symbols or what they symbolize, words or, in a very wide sense, things. This is a question which has exercised commentators since ancient times¹⁶.

But most of commentators agree to the fact the Aristotle has a realistic understanding of the categories in the sense that they correspond to real objects and they are part of his ontological efforts towards building the frames of a new science¹⁷ that studies Being *qua* Being and its most general determinations. At the same time, they result as a necessary step forward from the historical reevaluation of his predecessors' theories which employed different categories in their attempt to describe the principles of all existent¹⁸ without paying any particular attention to them. In any case, a discussion of the Aristotelian categories, of the context in which they appear and of the intentions animating it can be very complex as shown by their long career in the history of philosophy but does not concern us here. We can only summarize here the interpretive direction to which we adhere and which offers us the argumentative structure to disagree in fact to the Kantian reproach.

¹⁴ *Organon* means "instrument".

¹⁵ *Categories*, 4, 2a, *The Topics*, 1, 9, 103b instead, presents as the first of the categories not *ousia* which is traditionally translated by substance, but *what-it-is*, or essence which is the equivalent for *ti esti*.

¹⁶ William and Martha Kneale, *The Development of Logic*, Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 25. Aristotle first classifies the semantic relations between notions and correspondent names then the types of substances (individual and universal) and accidents (universal and particular). These precede the classification of categories (*praedicamenta*), to which Aristotle refers as *ta legomena*, meaning "things that are said" but with this nuance that they are "said of". This expression allows us to consider that Aristotle had in mind not only the logical or the linguistic aspect but also and especially the ontological aspect by which categories reflect reality. Plus, the examples he takes are always common existing objects with paradigmatic value: man, horse, ox, white, etc. But the most important reason is that he precisely states in *De interpretatione* (16a3) that words stand for concepts and concepts *signify* objects, being the first ancient philosopher to lay the foundations of a theory of meaning.

¹⁷ But a science has a unique object while Being *qua* Being, in the multiplicity of its senses, cannot be the object of a unique science. This is one major difficulty in Aristotelian metaphysics.

¹⁸ For example, the pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides of Elea explains in his poem *The Way of Truth* that Being is one, eternal, unchangeable, immobile, perfect etc.; then, in depicting the Parmenidian One he is obviously applying different categories in the negative form (*ungenerated, timeless, indestructible* etc.) like the most natural thing to do; before Plato's *Sophist*, where we find a dialectic deduction of five Great Kinds (Being, Motion, Rest, Sameness and Difference), it seems that it never crossed philosophers' minds, as far as we know, to consciously use categories beyond the strict purposes of their various approaches and to investigate those categories for themselves.

First of all, the main difference between Kant and the Ancient thinker is that the latter understands by categories the genera of being, as reflected in the human language¹⁹ while the former tries to present a table of the most general determinations of our thinking. Aristotelian categories are objective in the sense that they truly represent the most general characteristics of objects by which things present to us just how they are. They have both ontological and logical value. They are concepts that correspond to real things which are always particular while our language is universal. But we have no other but this linguistic and conceptual possibility to refer to things due to this ontological imperfection: things are particular and infinite, while language is limited to a certain number of words to be used. Nonetheless, Aristotelian categories, even considered in their generality, always refer to a particular type of being, be it substance, quality, quantity or any other type. Aristotle is a realistic philosopher who wants to generalize what appears to ultimately belong to the common sense. Kantian categories, on the other hand, are subjective in the sense that they do not “show” us what and how things truly are, but only what our mind “makes” of them in the process of knowledge, but they are objective as far as they “constitute” the possibility of any objects; in other words, they do not describe reality (which in itself will remain unknown to us²⁰), they describe the way our understanding “builds” this reality.

Our first reason to disagree to the Kantian reproach is to be sought in the difference of intentions that separates the two philosophical approaches. But first we have to point out what we think they have in common. Both of them are concerned about the scientific nature of their research and each of them tries to set the bases of a new science: the ancient thinker projects a metaphysical science that deals with the most general principles of being²¹, a science which eventually would explain better and not contradict our everyday experience; the latter is concerned with a science establishing the limits of the legitimate use of our intellectual faculty in its applicability to experience and, at the same time, a form of criticism of its tendency to overstep its formal conditions²². So we see that both philosophers have in common this special relation with the experience which both credited to a certain point as a delimitating criterion for avoiding any exaggerations in metaphysical speculation. Aristotle does not seek to exhaustively define the extent of the human intellect but to list those forms by which existence is expressed by our language. Indeed, Aristotle has “built” his list of categories by an inductive, *a posteriori* method, and probably his discovery was facilitated somehow by the structure of the Greek language²³.

¹⁹ Aristotle is the first to discover the signifying function of the human language; unlike other philosophers, Eleatics for example, who thought language simply reveals Being in its true nature, he places the *meaning* as an intermediary between words and things.

²⁰ This is what Kant tries to say by his famous distinction between *phenomena* and *noumena*.

²¹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, translated by Richard Hope, Columbia University Press, 1952, IV 1, 1003 a 21.

²² But Kant understands it as a natural tendency of the human reason which cannot be denied but only has to be made aware of its intellectual possibilities which are “designed” for application to objects of experience, this limitation being a part of our human condition.

²³ We recognize its importance but do not want to fall back into a grammatical reinterpretation of categories, attempted by Trendelenburg in the past (*Geschichte der Kategorienlehre*, Hildesheim, Olms, 1979).

He simply noticed that the same verb, namely “to be” (*einai*), when used as copula it gets different meanings depending on context. But an *a posteriori* method might have seemed natural in an ontological approach which is heading towards pure being and not towards pure thought.

The theory of categories has an ontological foundation like most of the distinctions that have become the “trademark” of Aristotelianism: substance and accident, matter and form, potentiality and actuality). The distinction between substance and accident, which is due to Aristotle’s efforts to overcome sophistic *aporias* that rendered impossible any coherent discourse (for example, in the sophists’ ontological view everything was accidental; it did not recognize any essentiality to being which implies that everything can be true just because it can be said, even facts invalidated by common sense and daily experience).

Another significant aspect is that Aristotle has a flexible approach of the categories and does not claim that the list of ten²⁴ would be the only possible and complete list. Moreover, he sometimes invites us to continue the research on categories leaving the impression that his approach *should* be continued and even improved²⁵.

But the most important aspect in the light of which the rhapsodic method of Aristotle is not only justifiable but also meaningful, is the very relationship between Being and categories. Being can be spoken of in many ways receiving a special meaning in each category. But Being *qua* Being is not their genus and the categories are not its species. If Being were a genus, then we could have a definition (*horismos*) of each category, as prescribed by Aristotle himself: for every species in general the right definition is given by its proximate genus (*genos*) and the differentia (*diaphora*) which divides and specifies it. Therefore, the Being cannot function as the deduction principle of each category which would then be defined by the “genus” being and a specific differentia (differentiating each species of category). If Being were a principle then all categories could be deducted one by one from this unique principle and thus we would have their complete list. But Being in itself is not a genus, nor it can be defined (because it would require another genus superior to it and would involve itself in the definition; but Aristotle clearly established that a correct definition should not repeat in its content what is supposed to be defined).

Being makes its presence rather felt in the homonymous²⁶ way of using the verb *to be*, being nothing in itself apart from signifying either the substance or some determination concerning the substance. Therefore, outside the multiple ways

²⁴ The list of ten categories is mentioned only twice: in *Categories*, 4, 2a and in *Topics* 1, 9, 103b.

²⁵ *Categories*, 7, 8b.

²⁶ It appears that in his earlier works Aristotle conceived the relation between the substance and the other categories as one of homonymy and later on as an intermediary between synonymy and homonymy - the analogous way in which categories relate to a unique term (*pros hen*) which, in this case, would be the substance. In this sense, we evoke the famous example of Medicine: things belonging to different genera (a medical instrument used in the process of healing, the doctor as an efficient producer of health, the idea of health as guiding the doctor’s or the therapist’s activity, the physical exercises maintaining it etc.) have something in common: they all play different parts in the same “scenario” of this particular science (*Metaphysics*, IV, 2, 1003a 34 – b6).

in which it shows itself, Being *qua* Being evades somehow any scientific discourse; thus, categories can only be identified in their various occurrences and only afterwards gathered into a general list. In other words, we believe Kant was not right in thinking that categories are deductible from a principle, especially if we consider the categories of being. Same thing goes for the categories of understanding: their possibility of deduction remains problematic, as Kant's approach also lacks a principle, his deduction being based only on analogy. If Aristotle's method is rhapsodic, then maybe we should not blame him, but rather reconsider the nature of being and our possibilities of expressing it.

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DER RAUM DER EINBILDUNGSKRAFT: DER VISUELLE UND DER PHÄNOMENALE GEDANKE*

MARIA JOÃO DURÃO**

ABSTRACT. The Space of Imagination: Visual and Phenomenal Thinking. Phenomenology and psychology are dealt within visual thinking, expressed in *disegno* and in the phenomenal experience from the moment of apprehension of physical space by our senses - where different systems communicate -, to the cognitive events interpreted through the lens of archetypical phenomena. Conceived, either as inspirational or as pre-existing form, the phenomenal is interactively chained to perception-reflection processes, as in the case of both conception and re- presentation of eye and light “analogues”.

Keywords: *disegno*; drawing; architecture; vision; imagination.

Metapher der Einbildungskraft

Si puo conchiudere che esso disegno altra non sai che una apparente espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che si há nell'animo, e di quello che altri si è nella mente imaginato e fabricato nell'idea.¹

Ohne Licht wären die Augen nutzlos. Aber auf der mit Sonne beschienenen Erde hat das externe Licht im Laufe unserer biologischen Entwicklung, Anpassungen und Umwandlungen der physischen Organe des menschlichen Wesens gefordert.

Über die intellektuellen und spirituellen Fähigkeiten oder Erkenntnisorgane bildend, hat die Menschheit die Datendeutung der Gefühle verglichen, welche sich in manchen Fällen kulturell unterschiedlich äußern.

Die italienische Renaissance z. B. provozierte eine grundsätzliche Änderung im Verständnis der Zeichnung, indem sie das Prinzip bestimmt, dass die Zeichnung eine wahre Repräsentation der dreidimensionalen Welt sei und ein Fenster zu dieser Welt, und somit zu einem wesentlichen optischen Werkzeug zur Praxis der Architektur wird. So wurde eine neue Form eingeführt, wie wir das repräsentieren, was um uns ist, als Brunelleschi die erste Zeichnung in linearer Perspektive machte, eine *costruzione legittima*, die sich der beobachtenden Szene ähnelt, aber nicht wie unser wahrnehmendes System funktioniert, obwohl sie genug Informationen enthält, sondern als überzeugende optische Repräsentation anzusehen ist.

* Eingeschlossen im Forschungsprojekt der Nachpromotion, finanziert von der Stiftung für Wissenschaft und Technologie (FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia) Portugal.

** Faculdade de Arquitectura, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, mjdurao@fa.utl.pt

¹ G. VASARI, *Le Vite dei piu eccelenti pittori, scultori e architetti*, Roma: Newton, 1991.

Bei der Erstellung der Zeichnung der Battistèro di San Giovanni, – eine so realistische Szene, in der der Zuschauer, aus einem bestimmten Gesichtspunkt blickend, in der realen Szene anwesend zu sein scheint – erzählt uns Manetti², sein Zeitgenosse und Biograph, Brunelleschi sei dabei eine Analogie zur beobachtenden Sache aufzubauen. (Fig. 1)

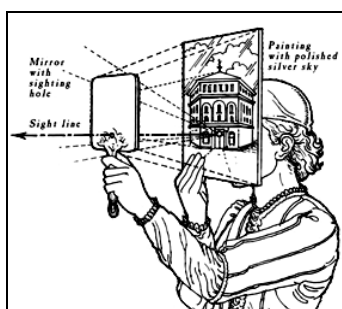


Fig. 1. Perspective Machine-Brunelleschi, info.aia.org

Ähnlich wie bei der artikulierte Ausdrucksweise, welche erlaubt, komplexe Ideen mit oder ohne physischer Anwendung zu entwickeln, wird, im architektonischen Objekt verkörpert, das Zeichnen benutzt, um Ideen zu erforschen und Theorien zu entwickeln oder über sie zu spekulieren, wobei sie als ‘Raum eintreten’, damit der Architekt mit Lösungen ohne Einschränkungen auf das zu erbauende Objekt, erfinden, träumen und forschen kann. Das *disegno*, sagt Vasari, sei nicht mehr als ein Ausdruck und eine sich im Geiste befindliche Erklärung der Auffassung, die man sich im Geiste vorstelle und in Gedanken fabriziere.

Als Inspiration der Auffassung entworfen und als vorexistierende Form der Bildung, verbindet sich das *disegno* mit der mentalen Repräsentation, unabhängig von der vorhergehenden und bedingenden Verwicklung. Die Idee kann durch den kreativen Gedanken produziert werden, weshalb sie sich mit Flexibilität der technischen, beschreibenden und erzählenden Natur und dem Ausdruck anpasst, aber sie durchläuft eine Dimension seelischer, idealisierter und metaphysischer Sinne und himmlischer Schöpfung.

Zwischen dem Bild und der Absicht des Gedankens bildet sich eine Beziehung, in welcher das *disegno* das strukturierende Element ist, abgeschaltet von der relativen Bedeutung des Machens.

In der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts war es Sitte, als ‘Idee’ nicht nur den Inhalt der künstlerischen Einbildungskraft zu bezeichnen, sondern auch deren Kapazität, so dass sich die Anschauung der ‘Idee’ die der *immaginazione*³ näherte.

² A. di T. MANETTI, *The Life of Brunelleschi*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1970, 42-46.

³ E. PANOFSKY, *Idea: a Concept in Art Theory*, Columbia: University of Southern California Press, 1968.

Der visuelle und der phänomenale Gedanke

Das Zeichnen hat die Macht zu vermitteln: es übersetzt Beobachtungen, konkretisiert kognitive Abläufe, ermöglicht die Interaktion zwischen der Wahrnehmung und der Reflexion. Die grafische Visualisation – beim Einfangen der Phänomene oder bei deren Aufhellung – dient als Fahrzeug für den Aufbau des visuellen Gedankens sowie für das Verständnis seines Entwicklungsprozesses.

Die kognitiven Phänomene dieses Gedankens setzen, nicht durch eine Orientierung am Produkt oder am sofortige Ergebnis begrenzt, die Entwicklung einer didaktischen, kognitiv formulierten Zeichenerörterung voraus. Die dem Prozess geschenkte Aufmerksamkeit begünstigt die notwendige Verknüpfung zwischen dem visuellen Gedanken, seiner Idealisierung und Aufnahme.

Es gibt eine Gesamtheit des Fühlens, über welche die Verallgemeinerung des Körpers und des Anderen - von Merleau-Ponty als eine Tunika von Nessus mit Verwachsung zum Körper identifiziert - steht. Dies ist ein Bild von extremer Annäherung der Wahrnehmung des Verhältnisses der Welt und des Menschen an das Objekt. In der Sinnesherrschaft erkundet Merleau-Ponty⁴ eine sehr alte Anschauung der Wichtigkeit des Taktgefühls, indem er sie in die Herrschaft der Phänomenologie bringt, der zufolge alle Sinne im Augenblick der Wahrnehmung 'berührt' werden müssen. Um die Sterne und die Sonne zu sehen, ist es notwendig, sie mit dem Blick zu berühren, aber damit die Augen sehen, ist es notwendig, dass auch sie, den restlichen Sinnen gleichtugend, berührt werden. Es ist übrigens kein Zufall, dass die Wissenstheorien den Sinn für haptisch halten. Das Gefühl des Taktes wurde immer als Ausgangspunkt für die Anschauungsanalyse gehalten. Platon, Plotin und Aristoteles begannen mit dem Vergleich zwischen dem Visuellen und dem Taktgefühl um auf die Unterschiede ihrer philosophischen Perspektiven zu kommen.

Für Platon ist die Vision schon die höchste Gabe, so dass die universellen Auffassungen dem 'Auge des Geistes' oder dem 'Auge der Seele' zugänglich werden. Platon hielt das Auge für eine Metapher des Wissens, wodurch die Vision die Handlung der Bilder- und Einbildungsproduktion zusammenruft. Die Allgegenwart der Anwesenheit des Geistes in der Vision wird auch in den Worten Rudolf Steiners⁵ offenbart, für den das Universum, von innen gesehen, Licht ist, während es, von außen betrachtet, spirituelle Wahrnehmung und Gedanke ist. Die Rede über den Kosmos, die Gestirne, die Sonne, den Himmel, den Tag und die Nacht, die Monate und die Jahreszeiten, die Tagundnachtgleiche und die Sonnenwenden, den spekulativen Naturcharakter des Universums waren nur durch die Vision möglich, nach Worten von Platon eine Art Wissenschaft⁶.

⁴ M. MERLEAU-PONTY, *Phenomenology of Perception*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.

⁵ R. STEINER, *Truth-wrought Words*, New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1979, 148.

⁶ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 47 b, London: Loeb Classical Library, 1981.

Die Metaphysik Aristoteles wird sich noch mehr an die Vision und den Intellekt nähern. Auf diesem Pfad wandert Leão Hebreu, welcher – in Gegenposition zum Takt, was für ihn ‘materielle’ oder ‘körperliche’ Sinne sind – als ‘spirituell’ vor allem das Sehen und auch das Gehör bezeichnet, welche wir als einzig fähige Sinne haben, die die externe Schönheit der Figuren, Farben, angemessenen Zusammensetzungen oder des Lichtes⁷ zu würdigen wissen. Der vorsokratische Heraclitus hatte schon erwähnt, dass die Augen treuere Zeugen als die Ohren seien und der Neuplatoniker Jamblico, für welchen die Vision eine *epistème*⁸ ist, kam darauf zurück, den Visionssinn mit der Aktivität des Gedankens und des Erlangens des Wissens in Beziehung zu bringen.

Obwohl die griechische Philosophie glaubte, die Vision würde die erste Quelle des erworbenen Bewusstseins über die körperlichen Sinne und die Aufnahme mit der Denkfähigkeit in Zusammenhang bringen, war der Gebrauch dieses Begriffes nicht so streng wie es im Westen der Fall war. In der Renaissance baute das Wiedererlangen des griechischen Gedankens mit der Erfindung der perspektivischen Repräsentation die Vision in das Zentrum der wahrnehmenden Welt und oben in das hierarchische System der Sinne ein.

Mit den modernen philosophischen und wissenschaftlichen Gedanken des 17. Jahrhunderts erörtert Descartes das Problem der Vision mit dem Takt, da dieser dem Irrtum gegenüber weniger empfindlich ist als die Vision. Die Vision jedoch wurde weiterhin als universellste und edelste aller Sinne betrachtet. Berkeley hielt unabweislich daran fest, dass für die Kooperation des haptischen Gedächtnisses die visuelle Wahrnehmung der Materie, der Entfernung und der räumlichen Tiefe notwendig sei, während Hegel behauptete, dass die Vision der einzige Sinn sei, der das Gefühl für räumliche Tiefe ermöglichen kann. Der visuelle Raum knüpft sich an den dreidimensionalen Raum, der sich uns jederzeit darbietet. Der Begriff, den wir von der Beziehung vom Innern zum Raum aufbauen, ist keine Widersprechung zur äußeren Welt. In Wirklichkeit setzt die Wahrnehmung mehr als seine einfache Eintragung der Information und das Hinterlegen einer Abbildung, die sich in unserem Gehirn einprägt, voraus: in ihr wird die Information gefiltert und die Resultate werden in für uns sinnvolle Register geleitet.

Die Verteidigung, dass die Wahrnehmungen ‘unbewusste Folgerungen’⁹ seien, basiert auf die Aussagen, dass die Sinnessignale nur als Ergebnis der durch die Lehrzeit festgesetzten Verbindungen bedeutend sind, als dass die neuronischen Signale gelesen und gelernt werden müssen und dass der größte Teil der Aktivität des Nervensystems nicht durch das Bewusstsein dargestellt wird. Auf gleicher Weise folgert in diesem Ablauf das visuelle System durch die Kombination verschiedener Informationsquellen

⁷ L. HEBREU, *Diálogos de Amor*, Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1983 (1535).

⁸ JAMBLIQUE, *Protreptique*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1989.

⁹ H.L.F. von HELMHOLTZ, *Treatise on Physiological Optics*, Rochester: The Optical Society of America, 1924-25.

die Dimension der Objekte. Unbewusste Folgerungen über die Dimension/Distanz der Objekte sind automatisch und fordern keine bewusste Anstrengung. Bei der Zurückziehung der Erfahrungen mit Abbildungen und bei der Handlung von bewegenden Objekten in naturellen Zusammenhängen, zog die 'ökologische Optik' von Gibson vor allem die visuellen Fluten und die Gewebe-Tönung in Betracht, wobei die netzhäutigen Abbildungen und die verständnismäßigen Abläufe fast ignoriert werden. Die Erkundung der Wahrnehmung des Objektes basierte sich auf die Annahme, dass die Eigenschaften des erhöhten Ranges unveränderlich mit der Drehung und der Bewegung seien, Grund, weshalb diese Unveränderlichkeiten nützlich für die Entwicklung der berechnenden Vision sind. Wenn jedoch einerseits in der Herrschaft der wahrnehmenden und sinnlichen Mechanismen die Mobilität der ursprüngliche Vektor ist, der die Bedeutung der Wahrnehmung des physischen Raumes prüft, ist die Farbe die direkteste und unmittelbare Wahrnehmung.

In der Studie über die Phänomonologie der Wahrnehmung bezeichnet Merleau-Ponty die Mobilität als Sphäre, in der die anfängliche Bedeutung jeder Aussagekraft dargestellt wird. Die den sinnlichen Aspekten des Raumes erteilte Aufmerksamkeit zieht den Begriff 'Zuflucht' mit sich, der sich in körperlichen Experimenten zentriert als Epiphänomensfreiraum angesehen wird.

Die Kapazität unseres Umfeldes in körperlicher Dimension als Begriff zu erlernen, wurde von Giambattista Vico¹⁰ vorgebracht, welcher bei der Herausforderung des Rationalismus von Descartes und der Trennung von Körper und Geist verteidigte, dass die Sprache, der Mythos und die Gebräuche das metaphorische Vermächtnis der ursprünglichen Erfahrungen des menschlichen Seins ausmachen.

Das *ultimum sentiens* und die *Leidenschaften* des Lichtes

Empedocles versicherte, dass das Auge das Licht der Sonne sehe, da es ja auch leuchtend sei. Diese leuchtende Ausstrahlung fand in Euclides eine mathematische Erklärung: als visueller Strahl repräsentiert, wird die Verbindung zwischen dem Auge und dem Objekt durch die geometrische Abstraktion einer geraden Linie gemacht. Democritus rechtfertigte die Vision als Ergebnis der Übertragung der *éidola* oder *simulacra*, vom Objekt zum Auge, wobei so die Erklärung für die Reflexion des Bildes in der Pupille gefunden wurde. Das Eintreten des extremen Lichtes wurde von Alhazen bewertet, für wen die Vision nur möglich ist, wenn diese in das Auge eintritt. Auf dieser Weise wurde das Auge, welches man mit himmlischen Feuer ausgestattet bezeichnete, als *camera obscura* identifiziert, erwähnt von Euclides und vollständig beschrieben von Alhazen (Fig. 2).

¹⁰ G. VICO, *Ciência Nova*, Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 2005.

¹⁰ ALHAZEN (Ibn al-Haytham). *De aspectibus. Opticae thesaurus Alhazeni Arabis libri septem...*, F. Risner, Basel, 1572, in D. LINDBERG, *Theories of Vision, from Al-Kindi to Kepler*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, London, 1976.

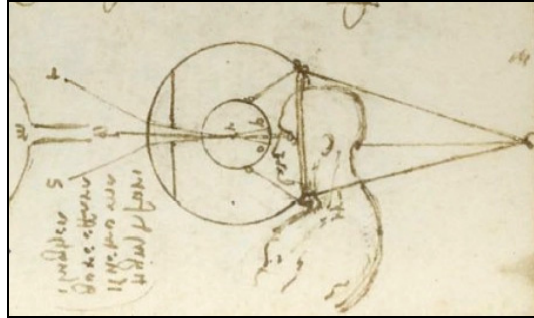
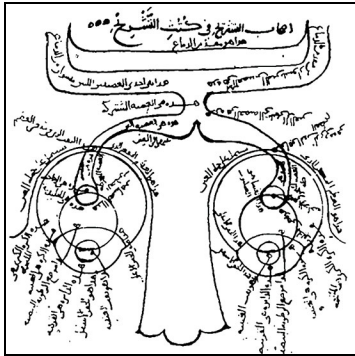


Fig. 2. ALHAZEN, Das visuelle System von einer Kopie von Kitab al-Manazir, MS Fatih 3212, vol. 1, fol. 81b, 1080, Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul.

Fig. 3. Leonardo DA VINCI, Das Auge als *camera obscura*, MS D, fol. 3V, Bibliothèque de L'Institut de France, Paris.

Die analogische Vereinigung mit dieser Kamara und dem Auge wurde erst 400 Jahre später, dank der erfinderischen Kapazität Leonardos, gemacht (Fig. 3). Außer den von Leonardo realisierten Studien über das Verhalten der Pupille sind seine Erfahrungen mit dem Vergleich des Auges mit der *camera obscura* in seinem Abkommen über das Auge klargestellt, die dazu beigetragen haben, das optische Verhalten zu erklären.

Alhazen argumentiert, dass zum Vervollständigen der visuellen Handlung die Formen, nachdem sie gebrochen sind, über den *humor vitreus*, voll von visuellem Geist, zum optischen Nerv geleitet werden. Im gewöhnlichen Nerv vereint werden die Formen durch *ultimum sentiens*¹¹ wahrgenommen. Was beim *ultimum sentiens* geschieht sind nicht die Formen des Lichtes und der Farbe, sondern sein Eindruck, seine Wirkung, seine Empfindung, wie die des Sehnerves und der Berührung. Die ausführliche Erklärung des Auges und der Vision wurde von Kepler ausgeführt, der, obwohl er klargestellt hatte, dass sich die Vision aus der Fixierung des Bildes in der Netzhaut ergibt, für die Philosophen die Erklärung des Mysteriums des umgekehrten Bildes hinterläßt. Das durch die Einstellung des projizierten Bildes in der Retina erklärte Mysterium braucht eine Interpretation des Geistes. In der Eigenschaft Keplers bildet das von Descartes gezeichnete Auge eine optische Vorrichtung, welche zu einer Bildung des realen Bildes in der Retina führt. Seine Zeichnung über die Entstehung des Bildes in der Retina ist in einer Veranschaulichung von *La dioptrique* in der Anatomie des Auges und in seinen Begriffen über die visuelle Aufnahme aufschlussreich (Fig. 4).

¹¹ ALHAZEN (Ibn al-Haytham). *De aspectibus. Opticae thesaurus Alhazeni Arabis libri septem...*, F. Risner, Basel, 1572, in D. LINDBERG, *Theories of Vision, from Al-Kindi to Kepler*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, London, 1976.

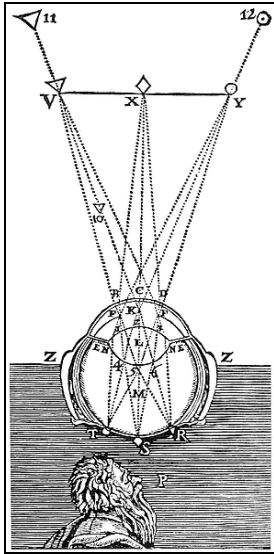


Fig. 4. DESCARTES, 'La Dioptrique', 1637.

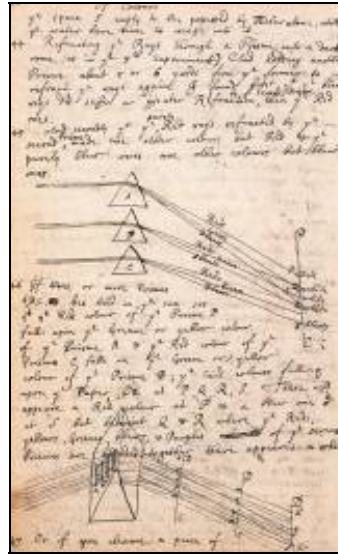


Fig. 5. NEWTON, Erster Druck der Theorie von Licht und Farbe, Cambridge, 1669.

Die äußere Wirklichkeit ist auf dem oberen Teil des hellen, leuchtenden Bildes dargestellt, wo drei geometrische Formen aufgelegt sind und durch welche die in der hinteren Membrane der Retina projektierenden Strahlen laufen, und zwar so verschoben, dass der Philosoph die drei in ihr projizierten Formen ersieht. Es ist notwendig, den Geist hinzuzurufen, die *res cogitans*, damit die externe Substanz des Lichtes, die *res extensa*, den Verlauf der Vision ermöglicht. Die Epiphyse-Drüse, als reptilhaftes drittes Auge, antique und zentral, wird zur Bildung des Treffpunktes der Dualität Geist-Materie.

Die Wahrnehmung über die Vision verlangt eine kognitive Handlung der Entstehung des Bildes. Um zu sehen ist ein Hilfsmittel zur Einbildung nötig und jede Wahrnehmung benötigt eine Bewegung, einen Teilnahmewunsch um dem Gesehenen Bedeutung zu geben: dies war die zentrale Fragestellung der Vision der Farben, die Goethe gegen Newton stellte. Im *experimentum crucis* (Fig. 5) enthüllt die Analyse des mit Prisma, nach dem Gesichtspunkt der Physik und nicht mit der Natur geprüften mentalen Entwicklung hergestellten Solarspektrum, Phänomene von Vision, Licht und Farbe.

Anders bei Goethe, der seine Experimente nicht auf physische Messungen, sondern auf eine konkrete und exakte Einbildungskraft basierend entwarf, in welcher man mit einem fühlenden Auge sieht und einem sehenden Auge fühlt. Die Farben 'Handlung und Leidenschaft des Lichtes' entstehen durch die An- und die Abwesenheit des Lichtes: reduziert durch die Anwesenheit des Dunklen, erzeugt das Licht hellere Farben aus dem Gelben, Orangen und Roten, wenn die Dunkelheit durch das Licht beleuchtet wird, erzeugt es das Blaue, Indigoblau und Violett. Durch das Prisma

gesehen, erscheinen sie, sich an einer oder anderen Grenze ergänzend. Mechanische Modelle ablehnend und stets die Transformation und die Selbstbildung der Denkkorgane hervorhebend, versuchte Goethe die Natur des Lichtes und der Vision über deren Effekte - die Farben - kennenzulernen.

Das beflügelte und wiedereingebildete Auge

Das Cícero zugeteilte Motto *Quid tum* (und nun? und dann?) wurde von Leon Battista Alberti in seiner für Mateo de Pasti angefertigten Medaille angepasst (Fig. 6). Mit dieser Devise ist das Sinnbild des beschwingten ägyptischen Auges verbunden, Symbol des allwissenden Göttlichen und des transformierenden Geistes, fähig, dem Motto mit Einbildungskraft und kreativem Traum verlangenden Behauptungen zu antworten, so dass erfunden werden können. Diese Kapazität, sich Traumobjekte einzubilden, verkörperte sich in der Entwicklung der in dem Alberti¹² *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* zugeteilten Werk von 1499 gefundenen zusammengewürfelten Strukturen. Solche Erzeugnisse sind aus in Form kinetischer Elemente hergestellt, die durch morphogenetische Bewegungen wie menschenähnliche Einheiten wirken.

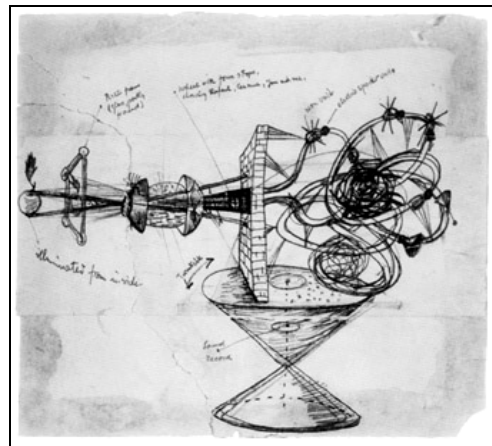
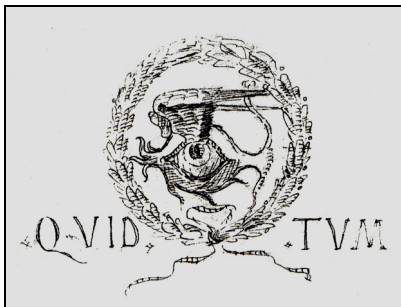


Fig. 6. 'Quid Tum', Della Famiglia, Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale, cod II. IV. 38.

Fig. 7. Frederick KIESLER, *Visionsmaschine*, Musée des Beaux Arts de Nantes, 1938-1942.

Dieses Paradigma bildet das Körperliche und das Geistige, so wie es mit den Visionsmaschinen von Friedrich Kiesler (Fig. 7) geschah, welche dafür vorgesehen waren, zu demonstrieren, dass die Vision eine durch die absolute Erfahrung bestimmte Fähigkeit ist und demzufolge nicht ein reales, sondern eher ein symbolisches Objekt

¹² L. LEFAIVRE, *Leon Battista Alberti's Hypnerotomachia Poliphili Re-Cognizing the Architectural Body in the Early Italian Renaissance*, MA : MIT Press, 2005.

erlernt. Wir sehen durch die absolute Koordination der menschlichen Erfahrung und selbst so ist es ein empfangenes Bild, was für den Visionssinn wahrnehmbar ist und nicht das reale Objekt. Das entstandene Bild des Objektes versteckt das reale Objekt. Deshalb geben wir nicht mechanisch die uns umgebene Welt wider; wir brauchen kreative Kapazität, um sie zu erlernen.

In der Macht des Designs und der Architektur wurden Bionik und *Biomimesis* immer als Grundsätze, Systeme oder biologische Abläufe integriert, zusammentretend als eine Art Begriffe aus der Natur abzuleiten und diese in Technologien umzuwandeln. Wir erlernen den physischen Raum durch Sinnesdaten, wo verschiedene Zeichensysteme nebeneinander gleichzeitig existieren und im Gespräch kommunizieren, denn die Körper ziehen die Materie in Mitleidenschaft und diese wiederum beeinträchtigen die Körper, in einem dynamischen System, das in biologischen und umweltlichen Mächten dazwischengreifen und deshalb teilen die Architektur und die Biologie Terminologie: man sehe den Fall von ‘Haut’, ‘Muskel’, ‘Skelett’, ‘Höhlung’, ‘Organismus’, ‘Membrane’.¹³ Die Absicht, das Verhalten der anderen Körper an neue Technologien anzupassen, ist nicht neu: die Chinesen mit der Seide vor 2000 Jahren und noch nicht so lange her, Leonardo mit der Erfindung der Flügel, die das menschliche Fliegen ermöglichen.



Fig. 8. Astronaut Ulrich Walter-ISS Spacelab D-2 Mission, 1993, Deutschen Zentrums für Luft- und Raumfahrt www.dlr.de.

¹³ M. J. DURÃO, “Embodied space: a sensorial approach to spatial experience”, SPESIF- Space, Propulsion and Energy Science Conference Proceedings, Von Braun Centre, Huntsville, AL.: *American Institute of Physics Journal*, 2009.

Ohne Flügel, aber in Situation der Unbedachtheit wird die Vision in der Erkundung der Objekte beeinflusst, vorallem wenn die Position des Körpers umgekehrt ist. Wenn die Schwerkraft auf Erden die Orientierung unserer Körper längs dreier Achsen bestimmt, so erhöht sich die Nummer auf mindestens sechs Achsen in Atmosphäre, der Mikro-Schwerkraft.¹⁴ (Fig. 8)

Für Kant benötigt die Orientierung die Interpretation einer Richtung, die aus einer Synthese des Körpers und der lokalen Zeichen herruht. Schwaller de Lubicz definiert ‘Synthese’ nicht als ‘eine Gruppe von Elementen, die sich koordinieren um ein neues Alles’, sondern als Virtualität, die z.B. das Geschehene mit einem Keim rechtfertigt, welcher in sich einen zukünftigen Apfelbaum befindet. Und über den Sinn der Synthese, den die pharaonischen Weisen ‘Intelligenz des Herzen’ nannten, erklärt er: “Unser Sinn der Synthese präsidiert an unserem ganzen Sein und an unseren Verhaltensweisen (...). Wenn wir nicht das synthetische Wissen der Richtungen in uns hätten, könnten wir uns nicht bewegen. Bei Ausbleiben dieses syntetischen Sinnes könnten wir niemals handeln und trotz unseres Auges niemals sehen, da wir nichts, von allem was leuchtend ist, unterscheiden könnten.”¹⁵



Fig. 9. “Hemisfèric”, Santiago CALATRAVA Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias, Valencia. Photo M. J. Durão.

¹⁴ DURÃO, Maria João, “Color in Space Architecture” Proceedings of the World Space Congress, Reston, Virginia: *American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics*, 2002.

¹⁵ R. A. Schwaller de LUBICZ, *La Quête alchimique de R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz*, Milano : Archè, 2006, 249-250.

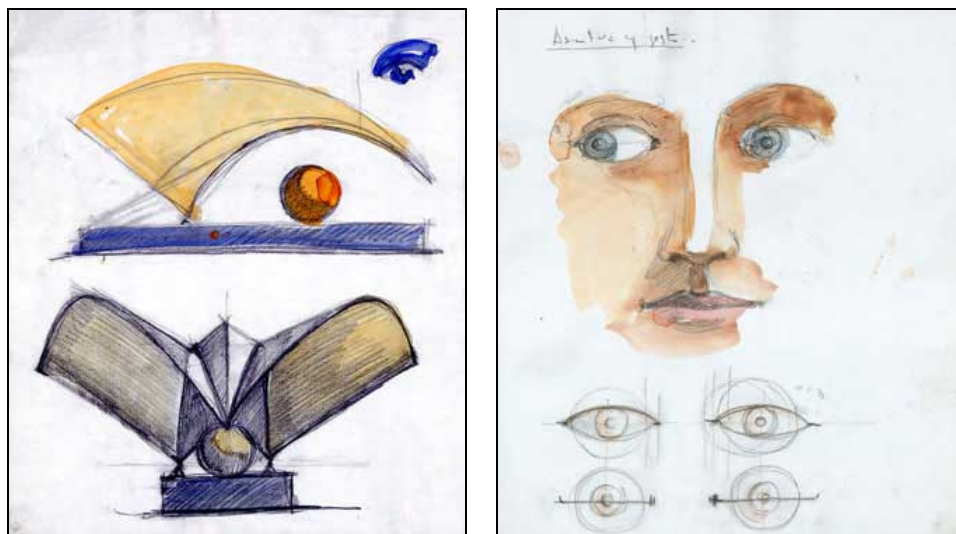


Fig. 10. Zeichnung von Santiago CALATRAVA für “Hemisfèric”, Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias, Valencia.

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Fig. 11. Zeichnung von Santiago CALATRAVA für “Bird sculptures”.

© Santiago Calatrava archives

Die von Santiago Calatrava sich auf die Studien des Verhaltens des menschlichen Auges basierende (Fig.9) erschafften Räume sind für die tiefen Resonanzstrukturen des menschlichen Wesens bestimmt, so dass dieser sich, in Übereinstimmung mit einem von der Ganzheit des Seins zu erkennendem Muster, ‘zu Hause’ fühlt. Im Erlebnis der physischen Räume bewegen sich die an den Objekten vorbeiziehenden Körper, stehenbleibend, flatternd, berührend, in radikalen Bewegungen, auf die Lichter und Schatten reagierend, die räumliche Sprache desidentifizierend, mit symbolischen Bedeutungen ausgestattet, einige ihrer architektonischen Strukturen als ‘Analoge’ des Auges funktionierend¹⁶ (Fig. 10; 11), während das Auge der Einbildungskraft das Fließen des Raumes aufnimmt und diese Strukturen mit den in dem persönlichen oder kollektiven Gedächtnis ruhenden Bildern konfrontiert, in einem Flug ähnlich wie dem, bei welchem man sich aus der kreativen Einbildungskraft Paul Klees hervorkommenden Diagramm löst. Das Auge Klees ist bildend, schaffend, Visionserzeuger und unaufhörlichen Werdens, wo der optische und nicht optische Weg mit der Vorgeschichte des Sichtbaren untereinander auf einem metaphysischen Weg für die Schaffung des Bildes als Entstehung eingreifen.

¹⁶ M. J. DURÃO, “Body in Weightlessness: Cartography of a Sentient Place”, *Artitextos*, 07, Dec. 2009, 47-61.

Beim Gebrauch der Wahrnehmungsbereiche und des Gedanken, so dass sie gegenseitig in sich treten, schaffte es Goethe, sie als urförmige Phänomene zu vereinigen, die – um verstanden zu werden – neue Wahrnehmungsorgane und die Einbildungsmitwirkung verlangen. Laut ihm, realisiert sich die Aktivität der Vision als kognitiv und bildendes Ereignis, in Anwesenheit einer ‘Sinneseinbildungskraft’ und daher verlangt die Vision mehr als ein physiologisches Organ, ein internes Licht, eine visuelle, bildende in Bedeutung verwandelnde Sinnesempfindung. Das Auge, das im Verlauf von Ägypten bis Alhazen und Descartes, mit Goethe sich verdunkelt hatte, wird wieder leuchtend damit das Licht des Geistes im Licht der Natur fließt zur Schaffenshandlung. Auf der Suche nach diesen *Urphänomen* entdeckte Goethe eine Phänomenologie der Natur, den Gedanken Vasiliu¹⁷ bestätigend, laut welchem der Druck der Formen (Farben) durch das Auge übermittelt und empfangen wird, in einer Leidenschaft der Diaphanhandlung, die einzige, die fähig ist, vom Auge tatsächlich aufgenommen zu werden.

¹⁷ A. VASILIU, *Du Diaphane*, Paris: Vrin, 1997, 65-66: “L’empreinte des formes (couleurs) est ainsi transmise et reçue à son tour par l’oeil (dans son propre diaphane), et la “passion” subie par celui-ci constitue en effet, une “passion” que l’on pourrait appeler une passion-de-l’acte-du-diaphane, le seul qui soit effectivement à même d’être perçu par l’oeil”.