

A n a l e l e

Universității din Craiova

Seria:

F i l o s o f i e

Nr. 31 (1/2013)

ANNALES DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE CRAIOVA – SERIE DE PHILOSOPHIE, nr. 31 (1/2013)
13 rue Al. I. Cuza, Craiova

ROUMANIE

On fait des échanges des publications avec des institutions similaires du pays et de l'étranger

ANNALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA – PHILOSOPHY SERIES, nr. 31 (1/2013)
Al. I. Cuza street, no. 13, Craiova

ROMANIA

We exchange publications with similar institutions of our country and abroad

Editor-in-Chief:

Adriana Neacșu, University of Craiova

Managing Editor:

Adrian Niță, University of Craiova

Editorial Board:

Anton Adămuț, Alexandru Ioan Cuza
University of Iași
Alexandru Boboc, Romanian Academy
Giuseppe Cacciatore, University of Naples
Federico II
Giuseppe Cascione, University of Bari
Teodor Dima, Romanian Academy
Gabriella Farina, Università di Roma III
Ștefan Viorel Ghenea, University of
Craiova
Vasile Muscă, Babeș-Bolyai University,
Cluj-Napoca

Niculae Mătășaru, University of Craiova
Ionuț Răduică, University of Craiova
Vasile Sălan, University of Craiova
Giovanni Semeraro, Universidade Federal
do Rio de Janeiro
Alexandru Surdu, Romanian Academy
Tibor Szabó, University of Szeged
Cristinel Nicu Trandafir, University of
Craiova
Gheorghe Vlăduțescu, Romanian Academy

Secretar de redacție: Cătălin Stănciulescu
Responsabil de număr: Adriana Neacșu

ISSN 1841-8325

e-mail: filosofie_craiova@yahoo.com

webpage: http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/analele_universitatii/filosofie/

Tel./Fax: +40-(0)-251-418515

This publication is present in Scopus database, in Philosopher's Index (USA), in European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH, Philosophy) and meets on the list of scientific magazines established by l'Agence d'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur (AERES).

CUPRINS

ISTORIA FILOSOFIEI

IONUȚ RĂDUICĂ	
<i>Raportul dintre fericire și cunoaștere la Aristotel</i>	5
ANTON TOTH	
<i>Notes on Numenius of Apamea's Ontological Fragments</i>	16
ADRIANA NEACȘU	
<i>Statutul lumii în concepția lui Toma din Aquino</i>	29

FILOSOFIE SOCIAL-POLITICĂ

ANA BAZAC	
<i>The ordinary man and the social development</i>	47
CHRISTOPHER VASILLOPULOS	
<i>The autonomy of the political theorist</i>	71
FEDERICO SOLLAZZO	
<i>Through Sartre and Marcuse: For a Realistic Utopia</i>	90
BRICE POREAU	
<i>La réconciliation après le génocide ?</i>	101

FILOSOFIA RELIGIEI

SAVU TOTU	
<i>Icon and Idol</i>	110
ANDREEA EȘANU	
<i>Evolutionism and Creationism in Contemporary America: a Case-Study in the Science versus Religion Debate</i>	123

ESTETICĂ

GABRIELA VASILESCU	
<i>Phantasia a Mediation between Perception (Aesthesis) and Thought (Noesis)</i>	147
ADRIAN IORDACHE	
<i>Nietzsche: metamorfozele esteticului</i>	159

NOTE FILOSOFICE

CHARALAMPOS MAGOULAS	
<i>The rim as the peak of awareness and Empedocles as Zarathustra: wisdom in the abyss of fire</i>	177

RECENZII

GHEORGHE VLĂDUȚESCU <i>Scepticismul grec ca filosofie critică</i> (Adriana Neacșu)	186
ȘTEFAN VIOREL GHENEA <i>Introducere în filosofie</i> (Ionuț Răduică)	190
AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS	193
CONTENTS	195

RAPOTUL DINTRE FERICIRE ȘI CUNOAȘTERE LA ARISTOTEL

Ionuț RĂDUICĂ¹

***Abstract:** In this article I describe the argumentative structure, where Aristotle reached at the two contradictory definitions of happiness (εὐδαιμονία): 1) the happiness is supreme good, an activity correlated to virtues (intellectual and moral); 2) the happiness is based on contemplation and wisdom. In this article we will demonstrate that both definitions are not contradictory, and the solution proposed by us stands on an analogy with Aristotle's Physics, where the Stagirite matches the causes to idea (the phenomena) of motion (κίνησις), so that the motion's finality to contain both the anteriority and the posteriority. Similar to this idea, the supreme happiness (which is the contemplation), hold its anteriority. By our point of view, there is proposed an interpretation, where the later in neither detached by its constitutive anterior body, nor its explicit manifestation. More precisely, through the analytic scale, all its parts are permanently connected, even is seems that its diachronic interpretation as a phenomena suggests the surpassing of some points. In reality, the historical and value surpassing of some stages (as, for example, the moral virtues to contemplation, as it is suggested on the latter part of Nicomachean Ethics), affirmed also by Aristotle's adepts, is considered by us abusive, unspecific to Nicomachean Ethics or to Aristotle's philosophy. The solution is based on the inclusivist view, but with mention that the perfected happiness has an open structure, which is able to infirm the need of practical manifestation, for instance. It results that the both critical visions are not – not entirely, at least – opposite to each other.*

***Keywords:** Aristotle, inclusivism, intellectualism, happiness.*

În lucrarea de față analizăm conceptul de fericire (εὐδαιμονία), încercând să compatibilizăm două idei aparent contradictorii din *Etica nicomahică*², încorporate în două definiții ale fericirii, pe care le vom analiza mai jos. Dar ce înseamnă, întâi de toate, această fericire? Ce presupune ea? Pentru a răspunde la aceste întrebări, trebuie să enunțăm trei problematici.

Prima dintre ele privește faptul că lucrarea *Etica nicomahică* se concentrează pe două definiții ale fericirii, considerate ireconciliabile: una

¹ University of Craiova, Romania.

² Aristotel, *Etica nicomahică*, Ediția a II-a, Introducere, traducere, comentarii și index de Stella Petecel, Editura IRI, București, 1998.

prin care εὐδαιμονία este asociată cu binele suprem, o activitate pusă în relație cu virtuțile (morale și intelectuale); și alta prin care fericirea e consonantă cu înțelepciunea și contemplația. Această ireductibilitate a definițiilor, situație pe care o vom dezvolta mai jos, este întărită pe o bogată exegeză, care se situează fie în favoarea uneia dintre definiții, fie în favoarea celeilalte.

O a doua chestiune vizează faptul că, așa cum arată o parte din critici, nu avem un termen sinonim în mod perfect cu cel folosit de Aristotel pentru εὐδαιμονία. De aceea, unii autori, pe bună dreptate, consideră că este dezirabilă distanțarea de fericirea ca stare psihologică sau chiar ca senzație¹.

O altă problemă legată de semnificația conceptului de „εὐδαιμονία” este că acesta nu este aplicat la situații contextuale concrete sau în legătură cu rezultatul unei acțiuni, așa cum am spune astăzi că schiatul sau mîncarea tradițională libaneză ne fac pe unii fericiți. Conceptul este mai complex la Aristotel, el poate fi, mai degrabă, asociat cu *a face o activitate* sau, mai exact, cu *a face tipuri de activități*, în sens analitic² (teoretic), decât în mod exclusiv cu rezultatul concret al unei activități. De aceea, considerăm că trebuie să subliniem faptul că accentul se pune pe fericirea conceptualizată, teoretizată, și nu pe fericirea desprinsă de propria structură constitutivă, așa cum s-ar întâmpla într-o interpretare utilitaristă, în care rezultatul este mai important decât ce l-a precedat.

Aristotel, în introducerea *Eticii nicomahice*, ne lasă să înțelegem că fericirea autentică necesită un mecanism sufletesc și intelectual complex, căci altminteri, în multe cazuri, cum este cel al fericirii copiilor (*EN* 1100a), care sunt considerați fericiți doar în virtutea a ceea ce vor putea dobândi în viitor³, nu vorbim de fericire reală. La fel, și alte cazuri sunt banale prejudecăți, pe care Stagiritul încearcă să le infirme, cum ar fi, de pildă,

¹ Vezi Milliken, John, „Aristotle's Aesthetic Ethics”, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*; Summer 2006; 44, 2, p. 322.

² Cf. Milliken, John, *op. cit.*, p. 322: „Pentru Aristotel, fericirea este o noțiune mai generală, care descrie modul cum cineva acționează în viață, în ansamblu; <<A acționa>> este un cuvânt potrivit aici, din moment ce fericirea este înțeleasă în termeni de activitate; astfel, fericirea nu este un rezultat final sau produsul unor activități certe; mai degrabă, ea constă din acele activități” (trad. noastră); aici accentul este pus pe „a face”, pe fericirea ca activitate, însă noi considerăm că această interpretare permite o viziune practică dominantă, lucru care este o înțelegere greșită, deoarece fericirea ca act sau în act presupune, de pildă, cel puțin o componentă de anterioritate nepractică; așadar, ansamblul fericirii, adică ansamblul acțiunii sau al procesului care o explicitează, are o sferă mai largă, prin conținut, decât interpretarea pe care o oferă Milliken.

³ Cu siguranță, Aristotel se referă aici la posibilitatea dobândirii fericirii începând cu vârsta adultă.

egalitatea între conceptul analitic de fericire și manifestarea concretă a sa (EN 1095a), sau asocierea fericirii cu plăcerea, bogăția, onoarea. Toate acestea, precum și varii forme de fericire naivă sunt false și cu totul nefolositoare cercetării pe care o întreprinde filosoful.

Investigația sa pornește, totuși, de la o premisă plauzibilă: binele pare să interfereze cu fericirea. Încă din Cartea I a *Eticii Nicomahice*, Aristotel afirmă că orice artă și știință, ca și de altfel orice acțiune și decizie, tind *in nuce* către bine specific, lucru care sugerează în definitiv „universalitatea” binelui, un criteriu deosebit de apreciat în general de Aristotel. Desigur, sunt multe diferențe între aceste tipuri de bine, astfel că este limpede că medicina va avea drept scop sănătatea, pe când meșteșugul va avea ca rezultat statuia etc. Dar, cu toate că este important și binele individual, binele colectiv, urmărit de politică¹, este, de fapt, cel mai dezirabil. Mai mult decât atât, întrucât acest bine este urmărit și de „disciplina de față”, adică etica, rezultă că ea este o parte a doctrinei politice (EN 1094b).

Mai departe, întrucât există diverse feluri de bine, ele trebuie să fie genealogic legate de un bine *sui generis*, un bine considerat suprem². Argumentul acestui bine este extras din ierhia artelor și științelor. Subordonarea unora față de altele duce la așezarea în vârful piramidei a unui bine suprem: „Dacă există un scop al actelor noastre pe care-l urmărim pentru el însuși, iar pe celelalte numai în vederea acestuia, și dacă nu orice lucru îl dorim în vederea a altceva (căci altfel s-ar merge înainte la nesfârșit, iar aspirația ne-ar fi vană și inutilă), este evident că acest scop trebuie să fie binele, și anume binele suprem” (EN 1094a).

Manifestat în viața practică, acest bine este numit fericire. Investigația care privește acest bine pleacă de la „ceea ce cunoaștem noi înșine”³, în primul rând, iar apoi „de la ceea ce este cunoscut în general”, însă e nevoie ca acela care i se vorbește despre politică, despre bine sau despre dreptate,

¹ Binele urmărit de politică rămâne însă prezumtiv ca fiind cel mai înalt, căci, deși pare că de acest bine se va ocupa politica, ea părând a se servi de alte științe, frumosul moral și dreptatea, văzute de această știință, par a fi rezultatul unor simple convenții, și nu al naturii. La fel, pot fi integrate aici binele ca formă reprezentată prin intermediul virtuților etice și binele ca formă reprezentată prin intermediul esențelor sau substanțelor dianoetice

² Binele nu se diferențiază doar prin specificitatea oferită de științe, ci și prin apartenența la categorii: la cea a substanței, avem binele sub forma intelectului; la cea a cantității, avem măsura etc. (1096).

³ „*Etica* lui Aristotel pornește nu de la inteligibil în sine, ci de la ceea ce ne este familiar, adică de la fapte brute și reface rațiunile subiacente”. (Sir David Ross, *Aristotel*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1998, p. 183).

să aibă dinainte deprinderile morale (EN 1095b)¹. Prin acest procedeu, care pornește de la fapte cunoscute, spre noțiuni mai generale, Aristotel demontează cu ușurință diversele înțelegeri ale fericirii².

Așa cum cel care *înțelege* binele sau dreptatea are o bază de cunoaștere de la care pleacă, la fel, cel care acționează în virtutea fericirii se presupune că *știe* anumite lucruri esențiale. O întrebare legitimă aici, prin urmare, este: „Cât anume și ce anume trebuie să cunoască cel care acționează în virtutea fericirii?”. Se poate pune întrebarea, în mod analog, dacă binele concret are drept suport cunoașterea anterioară a binelui absolut? Aristotel afirmă că pare greu de crezut că meșterul trebuie să cunoască binele absolut ca să devină foarte priceput în meșteșugul său³.

Cu toate acestea, realizarea binelui sau a frumosului nu este o acțiune apărută din senin și nici nu se petrece în orice împrejurare, acestea două fiind realizabile în timpul unei vieți desăvârșite. În această situație, binele concret (în act) acționează ca necesar, ceea ce este identic cu afirmația conform căreia cunoașterea bună/adevărată duce la acțiuni corespunzătoare⁴, prima fiind în relație de necesitate cu ultimele, cu acțiunile. Viața desăvârșită se realizează prin dobândirea și practicarea dispozițiilor habituale, obținute prin cunoașterea măsurii, care ordonează intensitatea pulsionilor afectelor.

¹ Explicația „propedeuticii” sale o regăsim, pe larg, în *Metafizica*: „Calitatea de a ști și de a înțelege o socotim mai degrabă ca aparținând artei sau experienței, și îi concepem pe artizani mai înțelepți decât oamenii cu experiență, admitând că, pentru toți oamenii, înțelepciunea se asociază cu arta de a ști. Aceasta se întâmplă deoarece unii - /artizanii/ - cunosc rațiunea de a fi a lucrului (αἰτία), în timp ce ceilalți oameni – nu. Căci oamenii cu experiență știu că are loc un efect, dar nu știu de ce are el loc. Or, ceilalți îl cunosc pe de ce și rațiunea de a fi a lucrului”. (Aristotel, *Metafizica*, traducere, comentariu și note de Andrei Cornea, Editura Humanitas, București, 2001, 881a)

² Dintre definițiile obișnuite ale fericirii, Aristotel le investighează pe cele întemeiate rațional. Astfel, una dintre definiții spune că binele și fericirea sunt relative la modul de viață (inclusiv în plăcere și desfătare), în timp ce alții, firile rafinate, văd binele și fericirea în onoare. Cu toate acestea, binele nu este o cantitate transferabilă, fiind dificil de înstrăinat, spune Aristotel. Binele concret nu este nici în sine, așa cum era la Platon, întrucât presupune anterioritate sau relație, de pildă. Cei care caută onoarea, spune Stagiritul, o fac pentru virtute, însă ultima nu e binele suprem „pentru că o poate poseda și cineva care doarme” (EN 1095b). Binele nu este o esență, Aristotel considerându-l ca manifestat „în atâtea moduri ca și existentul (manifestat în/prin categorii –n.n.), încât e limpede că binele nu e ceva comun, general și unic”.

³ Însă acest argument nu este suficient să ne facă să admitem că meșterul nu știe (sau nu are nevoie să știe) dinainte binele final, mai ales că binele spre care tinde poate guverna procesul de ajungere la el, prin relația potențialitate-actualitate, unde accentul pus este pe relație și nu pe actualitate.

⁴ Putem să enunțăm această propropoziție, credem noi, prin: „Cunoașterea desăvârșită duce la construirea acțiunilor necesare”.

Această teză, cum că binele, generator de fericire, este nu doar asociat cu desăvârșirea (înțelepciunea), ba chiar pus în relație de cauzalitate cu ea, constituie un nucleu ideatic, care se află în contradicție, întărită de către cei mai mulți critici, cu nucleul ideatic din prima parte a *Eticii nicomahice*. Mai precis, în Cartea I, Aristotel susține ideea că fericirea este binele suprem, fiind o activitate în acord cu virtuțile atât morale, cât și intelectuale (EN 1098a). În ultima parte, însă, în Cartea X, Aristotel afirmă că fericirea supremă (bazată acum pe contemplație și înțelepciune) este opusă – sau, în orice caz, ar exista o diferență de grad - aceleia constituită din virtuți morale și dreptate (în special, în sens juridic).

Întrucât a doua definiție cu privire la fericire, din *Etica nicomahică*, are la bază relația dintre fericire și înțelepciune, aceasta a fost considerată o viziune intelectualistă asupra fericirii, ceea ce face ca relaționarea fericirii cu virtutea morală, de pildă, să fie neclară. Mai mult, după cum arată și Gurtler, acest statut privilegiat al contemplației în raport cu virtuțile față de fericire, ar putea admite numai „cu zgârcenie” (*grudgingly*), spune Milliken, o relație între fericire și viața practică¹, reală, relație susținută cu multă obstinație până în Cartea X², ba chiar în Cartea I, unde Aristotel subliniază preeminența binelui comunității, față de cel individual, adică un bine real, concret, perceput ca atare de către popor. Mai mult decât atât, nu trebuie să uităm lucrarea însăși a Stagiritului se dorea a fi practică³.

Prin urmare, există o desincronizare atât între definițiile fericirii, cât și o contradicție în ceea ce privește relația dintre viața practică a celui care a dobândit fericirea și viața intelectuală, în special alcătuită din contemplație.

¹ Este drept faptul că această desincronizare între „viața practică”, ce conține activități specifice, și „dimensiunea interioară”, ca factor decizional, poate fi privită și prin intermediul abordărilor opozitive ale utilitariștilor și ale teoreticienilor virtuții; după cum demonstrează Jhon Milliken, utilitarismul vizează efectul (actul), însă îi scapă cauza (dimensiunea interioară), în timp ce perspectivei teoretizării virtuții îi scapă dimensiunea efectului, a actului, concentrându-se totalmente pe dimensiunea interioară, intelectuală (*Vezi* Milliken, John, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-321 și urm.). Prin intermediul acestei analize pe care o face Milliken, putem observa faptul că lui Aristotel îi scapă, acolo unde se urmărește fericirea (asociată cu virtutea), efectul practic, rezultatul, finalitatea acțională, iar acolo unde se urmărește finalitatea acțională, se observă cu mai mare dificultate dimensiunea internă (ca de pildă desăvârșirea). Conform abordării pe care o propunem aici, cele două dimensiuni, cea practică și cea intelectuală, nu trebuie neapărat să fie analoage, din motivul că ele presupun naturi (calități, în sens metafizic) diferite, însă ele pot fi compatibilizate în manieră inteligibilă prin concpetele metafizice de *potențialitate* și *actualitate*.

² *Vezi* Gurtler, Gary M, „The activity of happiness in Aristotle's ethics”, *The Review of Metaphysics*; June 2003; 56, 4; p. 801.

³ *Vezi* EN 1094a-b.

Speculațiile pe aceste teme sunt încurajate, după cum sugerează și Gurther, prin faptul că Aristotel nu suprapune conceptual și ideatic cele două teze¹.

Realizarea binelui și dobândirea vieții desăvârșite depinde însă, pe de-o parte, de conștientizarea diferenței dintre lucrurile care stau ca scop în sine și cele care stau ca scop pentru altceva și, pe de altă parte, de înțelegerea faptului că primele sunt superioare ultimelor. Fericirea pare a fi un astfel de scop în sine, pe care „o dorim întotdeauna pentru sine și niciodată pentru altceva”, spune Stagiritul (*EN* 1097a). Această afirmație a lui Aristotel complică, însă, și mai mult lucrurile. Pe scurt, dificultatea provine din întrebarea, adresată și de către Milliken: Când acționăm, acționăm pentru acțiunea în sine sau acționăm pentru obținerea fericirii? Plasarea disjunctivă a celor două „motive” pentru care acționăm vine din rolul major, firesc, pe care îl are agentul, ca subiect care *alege*, în nașterea acțiunilor. Acest rol de alegere este sugerat în toată lucrarea *Etica nicomahică*, cu și mai multă precizie atunci când vine vorba de agentul înzestrat cu virtuți. De aceea, trebuie să luăm în considerare, spune Milliken, faptul că persoana virtuoasă este un agent virtuos (*virtuous agent*), care nu se comportă după tipare prestabilite, ci, în concepția lui Aristotel, trebuie să satisfacă trei condiții: 1) să fie conștient de ceea ce face; 2) acțiunea să izvorască dintr-un caracter fix²; 3) acțiunea trebuie să fie făcută de dragul ei³. Din această analiză se poate deduce faptul că și subiectul care acționează în scopul fericirii este tot un *agent care alege*, cu și prin sine, propria fericire. Aceste mijloace de a ajunge la act, oricum ar fi el, *pentru sine sau pentru fericire*, sunt, cel puțin din punct de vedere al modului de manifestare, asemănătoare⁴.

Cu toate acestea, pentru Ackrill, *Etica nicomahică* conține și două aspecte neclare:

- 1) care sunt criteriile virtuții morale și ale acțiunii corecte?
- 2) care este cea mai bună viață demnă de urmat?⁵

¹ Vezi Gurtler, Gary M, *op. cit.*, pp. 801-802.

² Caracter în sens psihologic.

³ Milliken, John, „Aristotle's Aesthetic Ethics”, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*; Summer 2006; 44, 2; p. 322.

⁴ În privința unor argumente de istoria culturii, Vezi Comte-Sponville, André; Delumeau, Jean; Farge, Arlette, *Cea mai frumoasă istorie a fericirii*, Ed. a II-a, Grupul Editorial Art, București, 2008; aici se arată faptul că, istoric, ca obiectiv personal al individului, ideea de atingere a fericirii în sine, în timpul vieții (și nu după moarte, ca în Evul Mediu), care devine astfel o datorie față de sine a individului, se naște în Epoca Modernă, îndeosebi în Postmodernitate.

⁵ Ackrill, J. L., *Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997, p. 179.

În cazul criticii lui Ackrill, precum și în privința suprapunerii fericirii ca scop și a fericirii oarecum ca mijloc¹, e importantă, însă, anterioritatea teoretică, legată de cunoaștere și intelect. O dovadă în acest sens o regăsim încă de la început, în Cartea I, unde Aristotel încerca să găsească publicul pregătit să recepteze cum trebuie mesajul său, temându-se că un tânăr ar elimina cunoașterea, încercând să ajungă direct la act (1095a). Acest lucru arată semnificația factorului teoretic în raport cu cel practic, acțional, vizibil, raport care - și aceasta este esența argumentului nostru din această lucrare - deține o libertate desăvârșită de explicitare concretă, o libertate care depășește preconcepția că cei doi poli, intelect și acțiune, ar fi în echilibru, căci astfel s-ar ajuze din nou pe o pistă falsă în identificarea fericirii reale.

Totuși, problema acestui raport, între factorii care au legătură cu fericirea, duce implicit la un set de întrebări, anume dacă fericirea se dobândește prin învățare, prin deprindere sau prin exercițiu? Sau, mai degrabă, prin intervenția divină sau prin prezența hazardului? În tot cazul, fericirea în act nu ne este oferită de divin, însă posibilitatea ei – da. În ceea ce privește hazardul, acesta este cu siguranță exclus, căci, în acest caz, orice cunoaștere sau discuție despre virtute nu și-ar mai avea rostul, deoarece dobândirea fericirii stă ca scop alegerii deliberate a omului, adică actelor voluntare ale acestuia, a căror sferă de acțiune, deși nu este independentă cu totul de prezența afectelor și impulsivității, are ca obiect „ceea ce depinde de noi înșine și poate fi realizat de noi” (EN 1112b). Mai mult decât atât, hazardul este exclus deoarece virtuțile prin care se dobândește fericirea nu sunt un compus artificial, ci sunt date pe care oamenii au capacitatea de a le primi (EN 1103a).

Fiind obiectul alegerilor deliberate și având ca suport oarecum inconștient afectele (mânie, bucurie etc.), virtuțile funcționează ca măsuri ale acestora din urmă: „Virtutea este o medietate; în raport cu binele suprem și cu perfecțiunea, ea reprezintă punctul cel mai înalt”, spune Aristotel (EN 1107a).

Un alt argument pentru care hazardul² este exclus din dobândirea virtuții și a fericirii este faptul că plăcerea, cu care acestea din urmă se însoțesc, nu reprezintă binele suprem în cadrul actelor noastre. Plăcerea este pentru Aristotel un simplu adaos în natura binelui și ea nu poate face ca „binele suprem să devină mai de dorit decât este” (EN 1172b), transformându-l astfel în obiectul unei deliberări întâmplătoare și ineficiente.

¹ Un mijloc și pentru altceva decât acela al fericirii în mod exclusiv.

² Prin hazard, putem înțelege și lipsa articulațiilor intelectuale sau, pe scurt, lipsa cunoașterii.

De aceea, nu plăcerea este ceea ce este de dorit în sine, ci actele care urmăresc – au ca scop – activitățile însele, cum ar fi îndeplinirea faptelor virtuozose și frumoase. În acest sens, viața perfectă este echivalentă cu virtutea, în fond, cu fericirea (EN 1176b).

Un alt argument pentru care dobândirea fericirii nu se face la întâmplare este faptul că, pentru Aristotel, mijlocul cel mai elevat al acesteia este contemplația, aceasta fiind o activitate specifică rațiunii, adică celei mai înalte facultăți ale omului.

Pentru Aristotel, contemplația este cel mai înalt dintre mijlocele prin care dobândim fericirea, pentru că:

- 1) are origine divină¹;
- 2) este singura iubită pentru ea însăși;
- 3) este activitatea cu continuitatea cea mai mare²;

¹ Dacă rațiunea este de natură divină, atunci și viața dusă în acord cu intelectul va fi într-un fel divină. De vreme ce rațiunea este facultatea specifică omului, acestuia îi va sta în natură să facă din contemplație „lucrul cel mai înalt și mai plăcut” (EN 1178a). Acest mod de viață este fericirea. Cu toate acestea, problematica factorului divin este mai complexă. Deși Aristotel susține unitatea dintre filosofie și condiția umană, prima poate fi considerată ca o depășire a ultimei. Legătura dintre filosofie și condiția sa umană include în sine aici două elemente considerate separate: transcendentul și natura sensibilă a omului. Iată de ce spunem că intelectul se identifică în act cu obiectul sensibil, astfel încât, gândirea asupra acestuia ajunge, în cele din urmă, gândire în sine: „La capătul unor actualizări progresive, putem descoperi un intelect în act absolut” (Chindea, Gabriel, *Paradoxul transcendenței la Aristotel și Plotin*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2008, p. 51.), un intelect divin. Însă ce este divin și ce este uman în această experiență? Dacă divinul este inteligibil numai în măsura în care se lasă cunoscut, atunci posibilitatea individului de a duce o viață netulburată, va depinde întodeauna de această măsură¹. Astfel, pentru Aristotel, posibilitățile sale de a dobândi fericirea se leagă de destinul contemplativ al omului. Din această cauză, fericirea în act va rămâne în limitele umanului. Aceasta deoarece omul nu se poate ocupa numai de contemplație și deoarece, în aceasta, el are acces limitat la natura obiectului ei. Deși în contemplație „omul înțelege, așadar, că nu este el însuși (fericirea fiind divină – n.n.) și că altul gândește și se bucură de locul lui”, o asemenea situație nu poate, pe de altă parte, să dureze (Heinaman, Robert, *Eudaimonia and the Self-sufficiency in the Nicomachian Ethics*, Learning Company, 1988, p. 91.). Dar problema raportului dintre uman și divin, în actul contemplației, act înțeles ca mijloc suprem de dobândire a fericirii, nu este singura problemă nelămurită în *Etica* lui Aristotel. Iată de ce, în cele din urmă, în ciuda faptului că Aristotel pune în asociere virtutea morală cu înțelepciunea, aceasta nu ne ajută să aflăm concret cum poate fi ea dobândită. În plus, în ciuda faptului că Aristotel definește acțiunea bună ca un element central al vieții desăvârșite, în final, el nu ne va ajuta să înțelegem de ce contemplația este mai degrabă specifică acesteia din urmă.

² Ea este cumva întemeiată în principiul Primului Motor (*Metafizica*, 1072b). Anca Vasiliu consideră că sunt suprapuse două planuri, acel care ține de domeniul transcendenței și cel „omenesc”: Stagiritul, spune aceasta, face ca diafanul, spațiul intermediar, să fie orientat „înspre noi”, căci, în cazul lui Aristotel, motorul și mobilul se suprapun. Cele două planuri sau „entități”, dintre care una transcendențială (motorul) și una imanentă (mobilul) sunt chiar echivalente, într-un sens, ceea ce ne face să credem că Stagiritul „obligă transcendența

4) „ea nu produce nimic în afara actului pur al contemplării, în timp ce activitățile practice ne procură avantaje mai mici sau mai mari, exterioare acțiunii în sine” (EN 1177b).

5) presupune răgazul și libertatea necesară oricărei activități serioase¹:

Robert Heinaman consideră că deși virtutea, în calitate de act, fie el intelectual sau moral, este o condiție necesară a fericirii, aceasta nu poate funcționa, în primă fază, în viața omului, decât ca potențialitate, adică în cadrul dispoziției sale pentru actualizare. Astfel, fericirea nu poate fi dobândită prin virtute, dacă aceasta rămâne la nivelul potențialității².

Dacă „perfecțiunea virtuții”, inclusiv contemplația, rezidă în intenție și în actualizarea ei, unitatea celor două are nevoie de mijloace „cu atât mai numeroase cu cât actul este mai important și mai nobil” (EN 1978b). Dintre acestea, cel mai important este actul contemplației, cel la care filosoful are cel mai deplin acces.

Prin urmare, este totalmente îndreptățită o comparație, utilizată parțial de către Heinaman, cu lucrarea *Fizica*, unde Aristotel spune că mișcarea este vizibilă în act și inteligibilă când lucrul se află în potențialitate, așadar inteligibilă în concept. Prin natură, construcția în act este mai ușor observabilă, și nu construibilul în potență. Prin analogie, fericirea ca stare de explicitare psihologică³, de pildă, este mai ușor observabilă, decât condițiile care au stat la baza manifestării ei, condiții care se păstrează și care interferează cu fericirea tot timpul, căci între desăvârșire și act este o relație de necesitate.

Mai departe, pentru a înțelege apelul la potențialitate și actualitate, tot în *Fizica*, se pot separa două planuri, în privința mișcării (*κίνησις*). Primul poate fi reprezentat de zona sensibilă, vizibilă (mișcarea în act), iar al doilea de zona inteligibilă (mișcarea în potențialitate). Zev Bechler folosește

motorului devenit el însuși mobil să părăsească starea de marginalitate neutrală specifică unui <<principiu prim>> indiferent”. Într-un fel, se pare că acest principiu se „umanizează”, devine antropomorf, însă, în realitate, distanța dintre planuri, considerată anterior ireductibilă, este anulată. (Vasiliu, Anca, *Despre diafan. Imagine, mediu, lumină în filosofia antică și medievală*, prefațată de Jean Jolivet, trad. Irinel Antoniu, editura Polirom, Iași, 2010, p. 230)

¹ „Dacă independența, răgazul, continuitatea (atât cât permite natura umană) și toate celelalte trăsături ce i se atribuie omului cu desăvârșire fericit caracterizează această activitate, rezultă că ea constituie fericirea perfectă a omului, cu condiția să dureze atât încât întreaga viață să poată fi considerată desăvârșită (pentru că nimic din ceea ce aparține fericirii nu poate fi imperfect)” (EN 1177b).

² Heinaman, Robert, „Eudaimonia and the Self-sufficiency in the Nicomachian Ethics”, *Phronesis*, Vol. 33, No. 1, 1988, p. 34.

³ Prin răs, stare de euforie etc.

sintagma de „potențialitate logică” (*logical potentiality*)¹, lucru deloc contradictoriu cu ideile Stagiritului². Prin analogie, manifestarea reală, concretă a fericirii presupune și subînțelege potențialitatea sa.

La fel ca în orice proces, ca să nu mai vorbim de mișcare în sens fizic, din punctul A în punctul B, unde dominantă este incompletitudinea acțiunii, căci obiectul se află în translație dinspre ceva spre altceva, și în cazul fericirii, *ceva* este dominant, lucru care face dificil de observat – sau chiar imposibil – celelalte raporturi „constitutive” ale ei. Soluția la care apelează Aristotel este că perfecțiunea se transformă în condiție necesară a fericirii autentice, fără a mai detalia manifestările (acțiunile) vizibile ale ei. Ea deține *in corpore* toți factorii legați de cunoaștere, care premerg actului și care se manifestă cu necesitate pe tot parcursul „vieții desăvârșite”.

Analogia pe care o facem față de viziunea asupra celor două concepte de potențialitate și actualitate, din *Fizica*, are ca diferență faptul că aici este vorba de om, nu de un simplu obiect sub-lunar, căci „omul este principiul și creatorul actelor sale” (*EN*, 1113b).

În ce sens omul este creatorul care stă la originea actelor sale? Fiind o ființă rațională, are puterea de a-și alege mijloacele. Pe scurt, putem afirma că libertatea practică a meșterului se reduce la sfera mijloacelor, dar el nu are și o libertate dianoetică. În schimb, libertatea intelectuală a desăvârșitului nu exclude nici acțiunea, nici contemplația, nici racordarea la virtuți morale.

Această libertate nu presupune în mod necesar externalizarea anteriorității în toate situațiile, lucru care a creat impresia că odată cu desăvârșirea, omul devine pur contemplator și suspendă restul raporturilor practice. Dar tot Aristotel, infirmă acest lucru. Fericirea, asociată cu binele suprem, într-o activitate, acționează³, spune tautologic Stagiritul peantru a sublinia ideea, în mod necesar și acționează bine. Observăm aici, încă o dată, raportul causal între binele suprem și acțiune (rezultat). La fel se întâmplă și când *se impune o acțiune*, pentru înțelept, în acest caz acțiunea va fi în mod necesar conformă cu înțelepciunea. Astfel, din aceste argumente rezultă faptul că nu este o contradicție, indentificate de critică, între cele două definiții ale fericirii din *Etica nicomahică* a lui Aristotel.

¹ Bechler, Zev, *Aristotle's Theory of Actuality*, State University of New York Press, New York, 1995, p. 8.

² *Vezi* Aristotel, *Fizica* II, 1, 201a.

³ „În ce privește activitatea, lucrurile stau altfel: ea acționează în mod necesar și acționează bine” (*EN*, 1099a); e același lucru dacă se spune „activitatea acționează”, dar nu în sensul că acționează de la sine, mecanic.

BIBLIOGRAFIE

- Ackrill, J. L., *Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997.
- Aristotel, *Etica nicomahică*, Ediția a II-a, Introducere, traducere, comentarii și index de Stella Petecel, Editura IRI, București, 1998.
- Aristotel, *Metafizica*, traducere, comentariu și note de Andrei Cornea, Editura Humanitas, București, 2001.
- Aristotel, *Fizica*, traducere și note de N.I. Barbu, Editura Științifică, 1966.
- Bechler, Zev, *Aristotle's Theory of Actuality*, State University of New York Press, New York, 1995.
- Chindea, Gabriel, *Paradoxul transcendenței la Aristotel și Plotin*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2008.
- Comte-Sponville, André; Delumeau, Jean; Farge, Arlette, [Cea mai frumoasa istorie a fericirii](#), Ed. a II-a, Grupul Editorial Art, București, 2008.
- Gurtler, Gary M, „The activity of happiness in Aristotle's ethics”, *The Review of Metaphysics*; Jun 2003; 56, 4.
- Heinaman, Robert, *Eudaimonia and the Self-sufficiency in the Nicomachian Ethics*, ProQuest and Learning Company, 1988.
- Milliken, John, „Aristotle's Aesthetic Ethics”, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*; Summer 2006; 44, 2.
- Sir David Ross, *Aristotel*, Editura Humanitas, București, 1998.
- Vasiliu, Anca, *Despre diafan. Imagine, mediu, lumină în filosofia antică și medievală*, prefațată de Jean Jolivet, trad. Irinel Antoniu, editura Polirom, Iași, 2010.

**NOTES ON NUMENIUS OF APAMEA'S
ONTOLOGICAL FRAGMENTS¹
(Fr., 11; 12; 15; 16 and 21; des Places)**

Anton TOTH²

***Abstract:** Numenius of Apamea, a Neopythagorean, designs an ontological system which follows in the footsteps of Plato's tradition: the system is based on three ontological principles described as Gods. This study makes brief comments upon the fragments that expose the Primordial Principles and the Causes of the Universe, while invoking the Platonic tradition with which the thinker interacted. We will also present the information by using schematics which may be better reproduced by reading the discussed fragments.*

***Keywords:** Neopythagoreism, Numenius, Old Academy, Platonic tradition, Ontology*

A. The Primordial principles

1. Eusebius of Caesarea, PE., XI.18.1.1-5.3 = Fr., 11

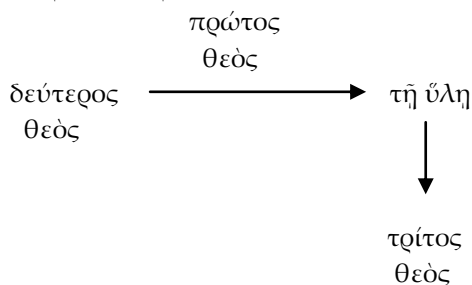
Ὁ δὲ Νουμήνιος τὰ Πλάτωνος πρεσβεύων ἐν τοῖς Περὶ τὰγαθοῦ τάδε καὶ αὐτὸς περὶ τοῦ δευτέρου αἰτίου λέγων διερμηνεύει·

Τὸν μέλλοντα δὲ συνήσειν θεοῦ πέρι πρώτου καὶ δευτέρου χρῆ πρότερον διελέσθαι ἕκαστα ἐν τάξει καὶ ἐν εὐθημοσύνη τινί· κάπειτα, ἐπὰν δοκῇ ἤδη εὖ ἔχειν, τότε καὶ δεῖ ἐπιχειρεῖν εἰπεῖν κοσμίως, ἄλλως δὲ μὴ, ἢ τῷ προῤῥαίτερον πρὶν τὰ πρώτα γενέσθαι ἀπτομένῳ σποδὸς ὁ θησαυρὸς γίνεσθαι λέγεται. Μὴ δὴ πάθωμεν ἡμεῖς ταῦτόν· θεὸν δὲ προσκαλεσάμενοι ἑαυτοῦ γνώμονα γενόμενον τῷ λόγῳ δεῖξαι θησαυρὸν φροντίδων, ἀρχώμεθα οὕτως· εὐκτέον μὲν ἤδη, διελέσθαι δὲ δεῖ. Ὁ θεὸς ὁ μὲν πρῶτος ἐν ἑαυτοῦ ὧν ἐστὶν ἀπλοῦς, διὰ τὸ ἑαυτῷ συγγιγνόμενος διόλου μὴ ποτε εἶναι διαιρετός· ὁ θεὸς μὲντοι ὁ δευτέρος καὶ τρίτος ἐστὶν εἷς· συμφερόμενος δὲ τῇ ὕλῃ δυάδι οὕση ἐνοῖ μὲν αὐτήν, σχίζεται δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῆς, ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἦθος ἐχούσης καὶ ῥεούσης. Τῷ οὖν μὴ εἶναι πρὸς τῷ νοητῷ (ἦν γὰρ ἂν πρὸς ἑαυτῷ) διὰ τὸ τὴν ὕλην βλέπειν, ταύτης ἐπιμελούμενος ἀπερίοπτος ἑαυτοῦ γίγνεται. Καὶ ἀπτεται τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ καὶ περιέπει ἀνάγει τε ἔτι εἰς τὸ ἴδιον ἦθος ἐπορεξάμενος τῆς ὕλης.

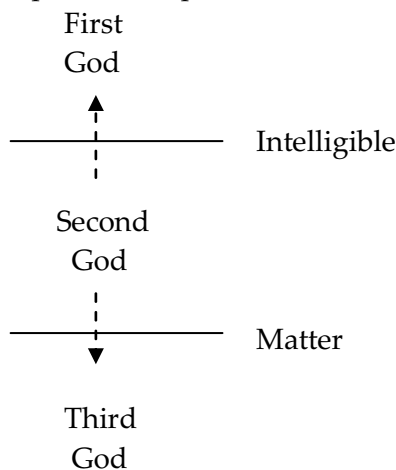
¹ This work was supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/89/1.5/S/62259, Project "Applied social, human and political sciences. Postdoctoral training and postdoctoral fellowship in social, human and political sciences" cofinanced by the European Social Fund within the Sectorial Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007-2013.

² University of Bucharest, Romania.

In the fragment preserved by Eusebius from the lost work *Περὶ τὰ γαθοῦ*, Numenius presents an ontological system constituted by θεοῦ πρώτου, followed by δευτέρου, which later becomes τρίτος after coming into contact with τῆ ὕλη which have δυάδι οὔση, but we previously read that the second God ὁ δευτέρος καὶ τρίτος ἐστὶν εἷς.



The pre-cosmic status of the Principles can be presented as follows:



i. ὁ πρώτος θεός

The terminology attributed by Numenius to the First God and his theory upon the latter may be found in other sources originating from the time of the Old Academy but also by contemporary authors.

a. Xenocrates. When talking about the Supreme Principle that was seen as Monad or as The One, the Head of the Old Academy claimed that: ὅστις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πρώτος θεός. The following characteristics were also attributed to it and they granted it a status characterized by intelligibility: ἦντινα προσαγορεύει καὶ Ζῆνα καὶ περιπτὸν καὶ νοῦν.¹

¹ Xenocrates, Fr. 213 (Isnardi Parente). L. P. Gerson, "From Plato's Good to Platonic God," in *The International Journal of the Platonic Tradition*, 2 (2008), p. 96. For the relation

b. Philo. ὁ πρῶτος θεὸς is the First Principle mentioned by Philo, as well, but its description differs from that of Numenius. Philo's First God is actively involved in the creation of the Universe: ἀλλ' ἔργον τοῦ πρώτου θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ συμπάντων πατρὸς, *Abr.*, 75,3-4. The same name granted to the First Principle is also involved in the fine criticism aimed by Philo against the stoics, in *Abr.*, 75; *Migr.*, 194 and *Decal.*, 58-9.¹

c. Plutarch. In *De Iside et Osiride*, he talks about the Egyptian myth which mentions the goal of the rites which coincides with the knowledge of the Supreme Principle: ὦν τέλος ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ πρώτου καὶ κυρίου καὶ νοητοῦ γνῶσις, ὃν ἡ θεὸς παρακαλεῖ,² identified in this text with Osiris, whose description is often hinted:

ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοητοῦ καὶ εἰλικρινουῦς καὶ ἀπλοῦ νόησις... πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον ἐκείνο καὶ ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἄνυλον ἐξάλλονται καὶ θιγόντες... τὸ αἰδὲς καὶ ἀόρατον καὶ ἀπαθὲς καὶ ἀγνόν, οὗτος αὐταῖς ἡγεμῶν ἐστὶ καὶ βασιλεὺς ὁ θεὸς...

d. Aspasius. His description is close to that of Numenius, since Aspasius called the First Principle ὁ πρῶτος θεὸς, as well:³

διὸ καὶ ὁ πρῶτος θεὸς αἰεὶ μίαν καὶ ἀπλὴν χαίρει ἡδονὴν, ἀπλουστάτης ὦν φύσεως καὶ οὐσίας... ὁ δὲ πρῶτος θεὸς ἀκίνητος, φησὶν οὐ μόνον κινήσεως εἶναι ἐνέργειαν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀκινήσιας· εἶδος γὰρ τι ἡ ἐνέργεια καὶ τελειότης.

That is why the primary god always enjoys a single and simple pleasure, since he is of the most simple nature and substance... but the primary god is changeless, he says that activity pertains not only to change but also to changelessness: for activity is a kind of [ideal] form and perfection.⁴

e. Alcinous. The Middle Platonic philosopher described the Supreme Principle by using the following terms, which include certain ideas which are also encountered at Numenius:

between Numenius and Xenocrates see E. des Places, *Numénius. Fragments*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1973, pp. 15-7.

¹ The stoics used the title of ὁ πρῶτος θεὸς, for the Universe: ὁ πρῶτος θεὸς τόπος εἶναι πάντων, Sextus Empiricus, *M.*, X.33,2-4. L. P. Gerson, "From Plato's Good to Platonic God," p. 102: "The immanence of Zeus in Stoicism has to be clearly distinguished from the transcendence of the Good or the One in Platonism."

² *De Iside* 352A2-3.

³ Cf. Numenius, Fr. 11,11-2; 12,12-3; 15,2 (des Places).

⁴ Aspasius, *In EN*, 157,12-16 (trans. Konstan); cf. Numenius, Fr. 11,11-2; 12,12-3; 15,2.

οὗτος ἂν εἴη ὁ πρῶτος θεός, αἴτιος ὑπάρχων τοῦ ἀεὶ ἐνεργεῖν τῷ νῶ τοῦ σύμπαντος οὐρανοῦ. Ἐνεργεῖ δὲ ἀκίνητος... ἑαυτὸν ἂν οὖν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ νοήματα ἀεὶ νοοίη, καὶ αὕτη ἡ ἐνέργεια αὐτοῦ ἰδέα ὑπάρχει... Ἀμερῆ...

... the primal God, being the cause of the eternal activity of the intellect of whole heaven. It acts on this while remaining itself unmoved... Therefore it must be everlastingly engaged in thinking of itself and its own thoughts and this activity of it is Form... God is partless...¹

Numenius' description of the Supreme Principle is common during his time and it touches some of the ideas presented by the authors inspired by the Peripatetic School, especially Aspasius and Alcinous. The idea of absolute inactivity is also derived from Aristotle's concept of unmoved Mover which is attributed to the First principle.² This idea is also obvious in the work attributed to ps-Archytas.³

The immutability of the First Principle is pointed out by the words τὸ ἑαυτῷ συγγιγνόμενος,⁴ which present an ontological status which is opposed to the one attributed to the Second God: συμφερόμενος δὲ τῇ ὕλη,⁵ while μὴ ποτε εἶναι διαιετός,⁶ which present this principle send an echo to the First Hypothesis on the One from *Parmenides*, where we read: μηδὲν ἔχει μέρος, οὐτ',⁷ or in the Old Academy, where the Principle of Existence was attributed the conception: ... τὴν ἀδιάφορον καὶ ἄτμητον ἀρχὴν.⁸ Later on,

¹ Alcinous, *Didask.*, 10.2; 3; 7 (trans. Dillon).

² L. P. Gerson, "From Plato's Good to Platonic God," p. 97, concludes, while talking about Alcinous' thought: "If I pass over much suggestive material in order to focus on Alcinous, it is primarily because I take as thoroughly unoriginal his account of the first principle as a conflation of the Good with Aristotle's Unmoved Mover."

³ Cf. Stob., I.41.2.29-31.

⁴ Eusebius, *PE*, 11.18.3.2. In this picture which described immutability of the First principle, Numenius can have in his mind the passage from *Politicus*, 269e5-6: αὐτὸ δὲ ἑαυτὸ στρέφειν ἀεὶ σχεδὸν οὐδενὶ δυνατὸν πλὴν τῷ τῶν κινουμένων ἀδ' πάντων ἡγουμένῳ, "Absolute and perpetual immutability is a property of only the most divine thing of all, and body does not belong to this class (trans. Fowler)." See also Philolaus, Fr., 20: μόνον δ' οὔτε κινοῦν οὔτε κινούμενον ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἄρχων καὶ ἡγεμών.

⁵ *PE*, 11.18.3.3.

⁶ *PE*, 11.18.3.2.

⁷ Plato, *Prm.*, 137d4. J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, London: Duckworth, 1977, p. 368, with reference to the First God of Numenius: "The First God... (Though in Fr. 5 he acquires most of the characteristics of the One on the first hypothesis of Parmenides)."

⁸ Speusippus, Fr. 72 (Isnardi Parente).

the idea of indivisibility was also attributed by the authors which followed the Academy to the First Principle.¹

ii. δευτέρος θεός

Before Numenius, Philo mentioned a Second God, identified with *the Logos*, which holds the capacity of resembling the elements which compose the sensible realm and which is the ἐκείνου of the Supreme God:

Θνητὸν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀπεικονισθῆναι πρὸς τὸν ἀνωτάτω καὶ πατέρα τῶν ὄλων ἐδύνατο, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸν δεύτερον θεόν, ὅς ἐστιν ἐκείνου λόγος
For nothing mortal can be made in the likeness of the most high One and Father of the universe but (only) in that of the second God, who is His Logos²

Later on, the idea of a Second God (τοῦ δευτέρου θεοῦ) was attributed to Plato by Proclus, maybe due to the influence which the Neopythagorean had on previous Neoplatonic thinkers.³ Numenius sketches the elements which comprise the image of the Second God, whose description involves terms which stress out an ontological status of involution, one which implies adjacency to Matter, which may send one to the idea of what N. Hubler had called "a fissure of a primordial being," an idea derived maybe from the neopythagoreanism like to that developed by Moderatus of Gades.⁴

By interacting with existing Matter, the Second Principle grants it unity, at the cost of its own, since the negative characteristics of Matter divide it: συμφερόμενος δὲ τῇ ὕλην δυάδι οὐση ἐνοῖ μὲν αὐτήν, σχίζεται δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῆς⁵ and because of the negligence towards the ontological status to which it belongs to: Τῷ οὖν μὴ εἶναι πρὸς τῷ νοητῷ.⁶ The language used to describe this Principle reminds one of the language used in the dialog

¹ Cf. Speusippus, Fr., 49b (Tarán); Xenocrates, Fr., 188 (Isnardi Parente); Philo, *Spec.leg.*, 1.180.5-6; Alcinous, *Didask.*, 10.13-15; Sextus Empiricus, *M.*, 10.278. Ps-Justin, *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos*, 401A; Hippolytus, *Haer.*, 4.43.4.

² Philo, *QG*, II.62,2-6 (trans. Marcus). This description of the Second God offered by Philo has similarities with the one of Numenius, Fr. 16, the inferior status of existence, described as μίμημα, imitates the superior intelligible realm, which is also an imitation of the supreme realm.

³ Cf. E. des Places, *Numénius. Fragments*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1973, pp. 23-8.

⁴ N. Hubler, "Moderatus, E. R. Dodds, and the Development of Neoplatonists Emanation," in *Platos's Parmenides its heritage, Vol. 1: History and Interpretation from the Old Academy to Later Platonism and Gnosticism*, Atlanta: SBL, 2010, pp. 115-30.

⁵ *PE*, 11.18.3-4.

⁶ *PE*, 11.18.4.1.

Timaeus that described the action of the Demiurge,¹ an action described by the verb βλέπω, although the Demiurge of Numenius looked to the opposite, towards Matter, not towards Ideas, an aspect which may suggest the method of the reversed exegesis which was also applied by Gnostics.² The finality of the relation between Demiurge and Matter describes the apparition of the Universe: "He attaches himself to and deals with the perceptible, yet still elevates it to his own character, having yearned for Matter" (trans. Turner), while the Second God, after organizing and going into union with the matter, becomes a principle of providence (ἐπιμελούμενος)³ of the Sensible Universe, an Intellect of the Sky.¹

¹ Plato, *Ti.*, 28A6-7: ὁ δημιουργὸς πρὸς τὸ κατὰ ταῦτὰ ἔχον βλέπων αἰεὶ; 29A2-3: εἰ μὲν δὴ καλὸς ἐστὶν ὅδε ὁ κόσμος ὃ τε δημιουργὸς ἀγαθός, δῆλον ὡς πρὸς τὸ αἰδῖον ἔβλεπεν; cf. Aristotel, *Meta*, 991A20-A31, esp. 991A23: πρὸς τὰς ἰδέας ἀποβλέπον; Alcinous, *Didask.*, 12.1.8-11: ἀναγκαῖον καὶ τὸ κάλλιστον κατασκευάσμα τὸν κόσμον ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐδημιουργῆσθαι πρὸς τινὰ ἰδέαν κόσμου ἀποβλέποντος, παράδειγμα ὑπάρχουσιν...

² The Gnostics described by Irenaeus (cca. 130-75 A.D.), which promoted a complex system inspired by Pythagoreanism, developed a negative cosmology characterized by the "fissure" of the primordial being. Sophia, the feminine Eon which is looking for a masculine pair which may offer the limit, is expanding (asseverabat et extendebatur) and looked (*prospiciebat*) upon the inferior regions, it falls forming the amorphous matter, which is organized as the sensible universe through the action of the Father (seen as an entity characterized by the intelligible realm):

"... whom they also term Sophia and Prunicus... he exerted and extended himself to the uttermost and looked down into the lower regions (*prospiciebat ad inferiores partes*)... he leaped forth [from his place] in a state of great impatience, [which had come upon him] because he had made his attempt without the good-will of his father. Afterwards, under the influence of simplicity and kindness, he produced a work in which were to be found ignorance and audacity. This work of his they declare to be Protarchontes, the former of this [lower] creation (*fabricatores conditionis huius*). But they relate that a mighty power carried him away from his mother, and that he settled far away from her in the lower regions, and formed the firmament of heaven, in which also they affirm that he dwells..." *AH.*, I.29,4 (Roberts).

In relation to the same subject, we present a conclusive paragraph from a study belonging to A. H. B. Logan, *Gnostic Truth and Christian Heresy: A Study in the History of Gnosticism*, London/New York: T. T. Clark, 2004 (1996), p. 22:

"The world-view of these Gnostics, as Saturninus, Basilides and Valentinus, is undoubtedly Platonic. It reflects the attempt to derive the Many from the One, and to explain the visible universe as the work of a lower god, the Demiurge, emanated from the transcendent One beyond being in terms of the inexplicable self-revelation and unfolding of the Supreme God as Father, Mother and Son. Thus is not far removed from the ideas of Syrian Middle Platonists of the second century like Numenius of Apamea, but as the fundamental concept of the self-revelation of the divine triad suggests..."

³ Numenius, by using the verb ἐπιμελούμενος hints to the description of *Zeus megale*, as it is offered by *Phdr.*, 246E4-6: ὁ μὲν δὴ μέγας ἡγεμὼν ἐν οὐρανῷ Ζεὺς, ἐλαύνων πτηνὸν ἄρμα,

iii. ὁ τρίτος θεός

While presenting the principles, Numenius tells us that: "As for the Second and Third God, he is one (ὁ θεός μέντοι ὁ δεύτερος καὶ τρίτος ἐστὶν εἷς)." This idea, which grants the Demiurge God a double ontological status reminds us of a doctrine originating in the Old Academy under authority of Xenocrates, although sadly this doctrine is only presented scarcely in two fragments:

1) τὸ γὰρ ἄνω καὶ πρῶτον ὑπάτον οἱ παλαιοὶ προσηγόρευον· ἢ καὶ Ξενοκράτης Δία τὸν ἐν μὲν τοῖς κατὰ ταῦτα καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχουσιν ὑπάτον καλεῖ νέατον δὲ τὸν ὑπὸ σελήνην, κτλ.

For what is above and first the ancient styled topmost, even as Xenocrates calls Zeus who is among things invariable and identical topmost but nethermost him who is beneath the moon...²

2) Ξενοκράτης δὲ ὁ Καλχηδόνιος, τὸν μὲν ὑπάτον Δία, τὸν δὲ νέατον καλῶν, ἔμφασιν πατρὸς ἀπολείπει καὶ υἱοῦ.

And Xenocrates the Calcedonian, who mentions the supreme Zeus and the inferior Zeus, leaves an indication of the Father and the Son.³

Therefore, the Old Academy granted a double status to Zeus: *hypatos*, which is a title in conformity with the aspect describing intelligibility: ταῦτα καὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχουσιν ὑπάτον καλεῖ νέατον, and *neatos*, which shares this status according to τὸν ὑπὸ σελήνην. Although Xenocrates doesn't mention a fissure of the primordial being, it is possible that this distinction had produced the image of Zeus, which is then identified with the Second God, which becomes double in the system of Numenius and which will relate to

πρῶτος πορεύεται, διακοσμῶν πάντα καὶ ἐπιμελούμενος; cf. Proclus, *in Ti.*, 304,25-27: "... (i.e. Numenius) in his teaching... calls the second god Zeus and Zen (τὸν δὲ δεύτερον Δία καὶ Ζῆνα)" (trans. Runia and Share). The heavenly Zeus described by Plato is identified by Numenius with the Demiurge of *Timaios*. The identification is not new, while Xenocrates is one of the first authors to see Plato's God from *Phaedrus* as being the Intellect-Monad, which he calls in the same manner as Numenius, Zen, Fr., 213 (Isnardi Parente): τὴν μὲν ὡς ἄρρενα πατρὸς ἔχουσιν τάξιν ἐν οὐρανῷ βασιλεύουσιν, ἦντινα προσαγορεύει καὶ Ζῆνα καὶ περιττὸν καὶ νοῦν, ὅστις ἐστὶν αὐτῷ πρῶτος θεός. See Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, p. 26; Dillon, *The Heirs of Plato: A Study of the Old Academy (347-274 BC)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 102.

¹ Numenius, Fr., 12 (des Places): ἡγεμονεῖν δι' οὐρανοῦ ἰόντα.

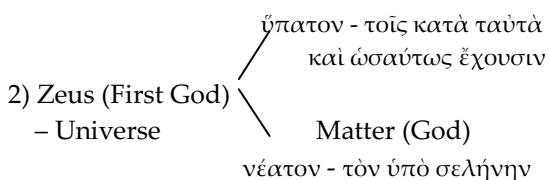
² Plutarch, *Plat.*, IX,1007F (trans. Cherniss) = Xenocrates, Fr., 216 (Isnardi Parente).

³ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* V,14, p. 405,1-2 (Stählin; trans. Wilson) = Xenocrates, Fr., 217 (Isnardi Parente); see also Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, p. 27.

the same major aspects of the two ontological realms. In this context, a characteristic of Neopythagoreanism is that it takes the Primordial Principles of the Old Academy and it grants them a secondary status, subordinated to the Supreme Principle which is granted an absolute transcendence.

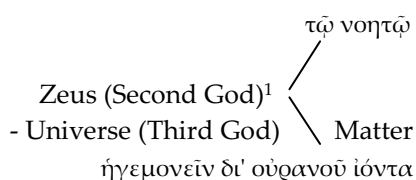
Xenocrates:

1) —



Numenius:

First God



The Platonism which follows Numenius adopted this doctrine which described a Demiurge διττὸς,² according to the two ontological aspects:

μετὰ δὴ τούτους τοὺς ἄνδρας Πλωτῖνος ὁ φιλόσοφος διττὸν μὲν ὑποτίθεται τὸν δημιουργόν, τὸν μὲν ἐν τῷ νοητῷ, τὸν δὲ τὸ ἡγεμονοῦν τοῦ παντός, λέγει δὲ ὁρθῶς·

After these men comes Plotinus the philosopher, who assumes that the Demiurge is double, the one in the Intelligible realm, the other the guiding principle of the universe, and this he affirms correctly, for in a sense the cosmic intellect too is demiurge of the universe.³

iv. τῆς ὕλης

Although Matter is not described as having the status of principle,⁴ this pre-existing element interacts with the second principle, thus receiving several descriptions:

11.18.3.3	δυάδι οὐση ⁵
-----------	-------------------------

¹ Cf. Proclus, *in Ti.*, 304,25-7.

² Cf. Numenius, Fr. 16; 21.

³ Proclus, *in Ti.*, 1.305,16-19 (trans. Tarrant); cf. Plotinus, *Enn.*, III.9,1; Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, pp. 354-5.

⁴ Numenius, Fr., 52,5-7 (des Places), Monad and Dyad are presented as being the fundamental principles of Pythagoras' metaphysics and not of Numenius.

⁵ The Dyad is identified with the Matter or the material principle, cf. *Pythagoristae*, b1a.3, Galen, *De diebus decretoriis*, 934.12-14 (Kuhn): ... τολμᾶν δὲ τὴν δυάδα καὶ καθ' ἕτερον τρόπον ἰδέαν μὲν τὴν μονάδα, τὴν δυάδα δὲ ὕλην ἄπειρον; Alexander, *in Metaph.*, 58, and in 555.25-26 attributes to Plato this idea: δυάδα δὲ τὴν ὕλην ὁ Πλάτων ἔλεγεν; 640.12-14; see Iamblichus, *Theol. Ar.*, 5,12-16. Identifying of Matter with Dyad appear later, and

11.18.3.4	ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἦθος ἐχούσης ¹
11.18.3.4	ῥεούσης ²

2. Eusebius of Caesarea, *PE.*, XI.18.6.1-10.5 = Fr. 12

Speusippus not identify the sensible Matter with the Dyad, the Dyad is only a multitude principle, a matter with an intelligible connotation, because that matter was the constitute of the numbers, cf. Speusippus, Fr., 39, 45b (Tarán), Iamblichus, *Comm.Math.*, 4,24-25 = Fr. 72 (Isnardi Parente) describes the principles of Speusippus as follows: τοῦ τε ἐνὸς καὶ τῆς τοῦ πλήθους ἀρχῆς. And Xenocrates connotes the Dyad with matter of numbers, Fr., 99 (Isnardi Parente) = Aristotle, *Metaph.*, 1087b15-16: τὰ μὲν δύο ὕλην τὸ δ' ἐν τὴν μορφήν; Fr. 101: Ξενοκράτης συνεστάναι τὸ πᾶν ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ ἀέναιου, ἀέναιον τὴν ὕλην αἰνιττόμενος διὰ τοῦ πλήθους. A critique of Aristotle to the position which make the Dyad matter of numbers, is found in *Metaph.*, 1084b28-30.

¹ Numenius gives to the Matter an irrational nature, which takes the elements of the pre-cosmic Soul. ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἦθος is a feature of the Matter, which in this context reminds us of Plato's myth exposed in *Politicus*, 272E, which presented a picture of the sensible Universe marked by the withdrawal of the Demiurge: εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ περιωπὴν ἀπέστη, producing an state of involution marked by disorder associated with: εἰμαρμένη τε καὶ σύμφυτος ἐπιθυμία, because the gods have left their spheres of government. Word ἐπιθυμητικὸν, in this context of the passage of Numenius, is marked by discussions on the Soul in the writings of Plato or Aristotle. Description of the Universe to possess σύμφυτος ἐπιθυμία, is one of the elements of the meleficent Soul doctrine in Plutarch; cf. J. Hersbell, "Plutarch's 'The animation procreation in Timaeo,'" in *ANRW*, 36.1, Berlin / New York: Walther of Gruiter, 1987, p 242.

² Presentation of Matter by that term reminds us Plato's language in *Lg.*, XII, 966d9-E2, with respect to Soul: "One is our dogma about the soul, - that it is the most ancient and divine of all the things whose motion, when developed into "becoming," provides an ever-flowing fount of "being" (ὄν κίνησις γένεσιν παραλαβοῦσα ἀέναιον οὐσίαν ἐπόρισεν)" (trans. Bury); cf. Dillon, *The Heirs of Plato*, p, 100, n. 37. Aristotle controversy with the following teachings attributed to Plato about the formation of Numbers from One and Dyad, *Metaph.*, 987b33-988a1: ... τὸ δὲ δυάδα ποιῆσαι τὴν ἑτέραν φύσιν διὰ τὸ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς ἔξω τῶν πρώτων εὐφυῶς ἐξ αὐτῆς γεννᾶσθαι ὥσπερ ἕκ τινας ἐκμαγείου "... and his making the other entity besides the One a dyad was due to the belief that the numbers, except those which were prime, could be neatly produced out of the dyad as out of a plastic material" (trans. Ross), an idea that can make a reference to *Ti*, 50E1-8. Speusippus talk about the principle of multitude as follows: καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὑγρᾶ τινι παντάπασι καὶ εὐπλαδεῖ ὕλην "... we will present such as the more fluid and very moldable matter" (Iamblichus, *Comm.Math.*, 4,21-22 = Fr. 72, Isnardi Parente). The Xenocrates' Dyad is described in two fragments, in a way that gives us a closer view than that of Numenius: **1.** Fr. 101: Ξενοκράτης συνεστάναι τὸ πᾶν ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς καὶ τοῦ ἀέναιου, ἀέναιον τὴν ὕλην αἰνιττόμενος διὰ τοῦ πλήθους. "Xenocrates (said) that everything is made up from One and the Ever-flowing, speaking in riddle (about) ever-flowing Matter, because of the (inherent) multiplicity;" and **2.** Fr. 102: Ξενοκράτης δὲ ὁ Χαλκηδόνιος | ἀέναιον τὴν ὕλην, ἐξ ἧς ἅπαντα γέγονε, προσηγόρευσε. "Xenocrates of Chalcedon called Matter ever-flowing, because of (this) all occurred." Not long time before Numenius, Philo involves a language close to the philosopher of Apameea, referring to the Soul, wich is integrated in the cosmic cycle, in *Post.*, 163,10-164,1:"... can attain substantial shape, they are destroyed owing to the constant flow of bodily substance (τῆς σωματικῆς οὐσίας αἰεὶ ρεούσης)" (trans. Colson/Whitaker).

Καὶ μεθ' ἕτερα φησι·

Καὶ γὰρ οὔτε δημιουργεῖν ἐστι χρεῶν τὸν πρῶτον καὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦντος δὲ θεοῦ χρῆ εἶναι νομίζεσθαι πατέρα τὸν πρῶτον θεόν. Εἰ μὲν οὖν περὶ τοῦ δημιουργικοῦ ζητοῖμεν, φάσκοντες δεῖν τὸν πρότερον ὑπάρξαντα οὕτως ἂν ποιεῖν ἔχειν διαφερόντως, εὐκυβία ἢ πρόσσδος αὕτη γεγυνῖα ἂν εἴη τοῦ λόγου· εἰ δὲ περὶ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ μὴ ἔστιν ὁ λόγος, ζητοῦμεν δὲ περὶ τοῦ πρώτου, ἀφοσιούμαι τε τὰ λεχθέντα καὶ ἔστω μὲν ἐκεῖνα ἄρρητα, μέτεμι δὲ ἐλεῖν τὸν λόγον, ἐτέρωθεν θηράσας. Πρὸ μέντοι τοῦ λόγου τῆς ἀλώσεως διομολογησώμεθα ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ὁμολογίαν οὐκ ἀμφισβητήσιμον ἀκοῦσαι, τὸν μὲν πρῶτον θεὸν ἀργὸν εἶναι ἔργων συμπάντων καὶ βασιλέα, τὸν δημιουργικὸν δὲ θεὸν ἡγεμονεῖν δι' οὐρανοῦ ἰόντα. Διὰ δὲ τούτου καὶ ὁ στόλος ἡμῖν ἐστι, κάτω τοῦ νοῦ πεμπομένου ἐν διεξόδῳ πᾶσι τοῖς κοινωνῆσαι συντεταγμένοις. Βλέποντος μὲν οὖν καὶ ἐπεστραμμένου πρὸς ἡμῶν ἕκαστον τοῦ θεοῦ συμβαίνει ζῆν τε καὶ βιώσκεσθαι τότε τὰ σώματα κηδεύοντα τοῦ θεοῦ τοῖς ἀκροβολισμοῖς· μεταστρέφοντος δὲ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ περιωπὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ταῦτα μὲν ἀποσβέννυσθαι, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ζῆν βίου ἐπαυρόμενον εὐδαίμονος.

This fragment rejects the idea that the first God is the Principle of the Universe: οὔτε δημιουργεῖν ἐστι χρεῶν τὸν πρῶτον and presents the relation between the First God and the Demiurge God, while the terminology used implies a relation in which the superiority of the First God is prevalent: νομίζεσθαι πατέρα of the Demiurge.¹ The First God is presented using a language which describes a total status of immovability: τὸν... πρῶτον θεὸν ἀργὸν,² by analogy with βασιλέα, while its activity and the relation with the Demiurge God is described as ἡγεμονεῖν δι' οὐρανοῦ ἰόντα.³

¹ Eusebius describes the relation between the First God and the Demiurge God in *PE.*, XI.18.13.1-19.3. In relation to the difficulties raised by this paragraph, see E. R. Dodds, "Numenius and Ammonius." *Les sources de Plotin = Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique*, vol. 5, Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1957, pp. 15-16; J. Whittaker, "Numenius and Alcinous on the First Principle," *Phoenix*, vol 32, 1978, pp. 144-54; J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, p. 368.

² Cf. Aspasius, in *EN*, b157,12-16; Alcinous, *Didask.*, 10.2; 3; 7.

³ The Intellect is identified with the principle governing the Heaven, cf. Alcinous, *Didask.*, 10.2 "... the primal God, being the cause of eternal activity of the intellect of the whole heaven... In just this way will this intellect move the intellect of the whole heaven." (trans. Dillon). This idea can be found in stoic thought, "Chrysippus in the first book of his work *On Providence* and Posidonius in his book *On the Gods* say that the heaven, but Cleanthes that the sun, is the ruling power of the world." *DL*, VII,139 (trans. Hicks), but in Aristotle's polemic against Speusippus we can find roots of this idea, cf. *MA*, 699a = Speusippus, Fr., 62 (Tarán):

Ἀπορήσειε δ' ἂν τις, ἄρ' εἴ τι κινεῖ τὸν ὅλον οὐρανόν, εἶναι τε δεῖ ἀκίνητον, καὶ τοῦτο μηδὲν εἶναι τοῦ οὐρανοῦ μόριον μηδ' ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ. εἴτε γὰρ αὐτὸ κινούμενον κινεῖ αὐτόν, ἀνάγκη τινὸς ἀκινήτου θιγγάνον κινεῖν

3. Eusebius of Caesarea, *PE.*, XI.18.20.1-21.5 = Fr. 15

Καὶ πάλιν ὑποβὰς ἐξῆς φησιν·

Εἰσὶ δ' οὗτοι βίοι ὁ μὲν πρώτου, ὁ δὲ δευτέρου θεοῦ. Δηλονότι ὁ μὲν πρώτος θεὸς ἔσται ἐστῶς, ὁ δὲ δεύτερος ἔμπαλιν ἐστι κινούμενος· ὁ μὲν οὖν πρώτος περὶ τὰ νοητά, ὁ δὲ δεύτερος περὶ τὰ νοητὰ καὶ αἰσθητά. Μὴ θαυμάσης δ' εἰ τοῦτ' ἔφη· πολὺ γὰρ ἔτι θαυμαστότερον ἀκούσῃ. Ἐναντίον γὰρ τῆς προσοῦσης τῷ δευτέρῳ κινήσεως τὴν προσοῦσαν τῷ πρώτῳ σάσις φημί εἶναι κίνησιν σύμφυτον, ἀφ' ἧς ἢ τε τάξις τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ἡ μονὴ ἢ αἴδιος καὶ ἡ σωτηρία ἀναχεῖται εἰς τὰ ὅλα.

11.18.20.1-2: ὁ μὲν πρώτος θεὸς ἔσται ἐστῶς,¹ ὁ δὲ δεύτερος ἔμπαλιν ἐστι κινούμενος²

11.18.20.2-21.1: ὁ μὲν οὖν πρώτος περὶ τὰ νοητά, ὁ δὲ δεύτερος περὶ τὰ νοητὰ καὶ αἰσθητά

ὁ μὲν πρώτος θεὸς = ἐστῶς

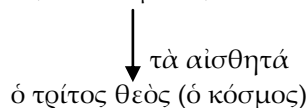
↑
τὰ νοητά

Here we may ask the question whether if something moves the whole heavens this mover must be immovable, and moreover be no part of the heavens, nor in the heavens. For either it is moved itself and moves the heavens, in which case it must touch something immovable in order to cause movement. (trans. Farquharson).

¹ If we combine the ontological status of the First Principle with immutability described by Numenius, Fr., 11, and the opposite status with ὁ δεύτερος, we are dealing with an interpretation of the first two Hypotheses from *Parmenides*: 1. 137c-142a; 2. 142e; 144e; 155e-157b, cf. J. Turner, "Victorinus, Parmenides Commentaries and Sethian Platonizing Treatise," Leiden: Brill, 2007, p 61. Regarding the term ἐστῶς, Philo, *Post.*, 23.3-4: "Now that which is unwaveringly stable is God, and that which is subject to movement is creation (τὸ μὲν οὖν ἀκλινῶς ἐστῶς ὁ θεός ἐστι, τὸ δὲ κινητὸν ἢ γένεσις)" (trans. Colson / Whitaker). In the work influenced by Semitic thought, which is an allegory to the biblical *Genesis*, *Apophysis Megale*, partially preserved by Hippolytus of Rome, *Haer.*, VI.9-18, is described a principle called 'the the seventh Power, 'which is presented as: ἡ ἑβδόμη δύναμις ἐστίν, <ὁ> ἐστῶς στὰς στησόμενος· αὐτὸς γὰρ αἴτιος τούτων τῶν καλῶν. On the divine imuability, see M. Williams, *The immovable race: the Gnostic designation and the theme of stability in late antiquity*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985, pp.44-6, 50. Alexander of Aphrodisia, in *Metaph.*, 89.1-2 gives to the Idea this status: "... (Platonists) come to be by reference to a fixed model, and that is the Idea... (λέγων τὸ πρὸς ἐστῶς γίνεσθαί τι παράδειγμα, τοῦτο δὲ τὴν ἰδέαν εἶναι)."

² A text that describes the formation of the Universe from the first three Principles in the neopythagorean tradition, is offered by ps-Archytas = Stob., I.41.2.29-31, which introduced the idea of motion, and God is presented in a manner approaching the descriptions of Aristotle: πρώτων κινουῦν ἀκίνητον (*Ph.*, 258b10-12), which relates to the two secondary principles (τῶν μορφῶν and τῶν ὕλων) by the means of the verb κινῶ, God is <τὸν> τεχνίταν and τὸν κινέοντα, Matter: τὸν ἐστῶ τῶν πραγμάτων and τὸ κινεούμενον, and the Form is defined as an activity of God τὸν τέχνην transposed to the Matter ποθ' ἂν κινέεται.

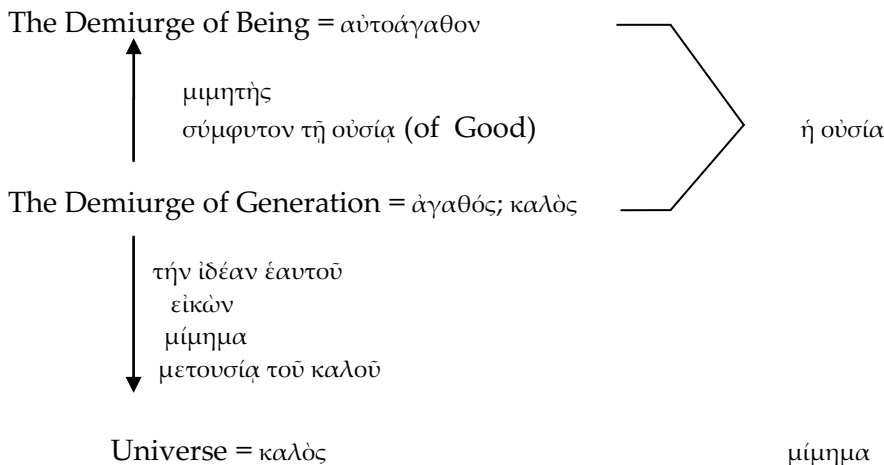
ὁ δεύτερος θεός = κινούμενος



4. Eusebius of Caesarea, PE., XI.18.22.3.1-22.5.5 = Fr. 16

Ἐν δὲ τῷ πέμπτῳ ταῦτά φησιν·

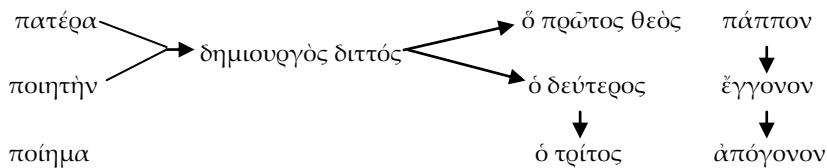
Εἰ δ' ἔστι μὲν νοητὸν ἢ οὐσία καὶ ἡ ἰδέα, ταύτης δ' ὠμολογήθη πρεσβύτερον καὶ αἴτιον εἶναι ὁ νοῦς, αὐτὸς οὗτος μόνος εὐρηται ὦν τὸ ἀγαθόν. Καὶ γὰρ εἰ ὁ μὲν δημιουργὸς θεὸς ἔστι γενέσεως, ἀρκεῖ τὸ ἀγαθὸν οὐσίας εἶναι ἀρχή. Ἀνάλογον δὲ τούτῳ μὲν ὁ δημιουργὸς θεός, ὦν αὐτοῦ μιμητής, τῇ δὲ οὐσίᾳ ἢ γένεσις, <ῆ> εἰκῶν αὐτῆς ἔστι καὶ μίμημα. Εἴπερ δὲ ὁ δημιουργὸς ὁ τῆς γενέσεως ἔστιν ἀγαθός, ἢ που ἔσται καὶ ὁ τῆς οὐσίας δημιουργὸς αὐτοάγαθον, σύμφυτον τῇ οὐσίᾳ. Ὁ γὰρ δεύτερος διττὸς ὦν αὐτοποιεῖ τὴν τε ἰδέαν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τὸν κόσμον, δημιουργὸς ὦν, ἔπειτα θεωρητικὸς ὄλως. Συλληλοισμένων δ' ἡμῶν ὀνόματα τεσσάρων πραγμάτων τέσσαρα ἔστω ταῦτα· ὁ μὲν πρῶτος θεὸς αὐτοάγαθον· ὁ δὲ τούτου μιμητής δημιουργὸς ἀγαθός· ἡ δ' οὐσία μία μὲν ἢ τοῦ πρώτου, ἕτέρα δ' ἢ τοῦ δευτέρου· ἡς μίμημα ὁ καλὸς κόσμος, κεκαλλωπισμένος μετουσίᾳ τοῦ καλοῦ.



5. Proclus, In Ti., I.303,27-304,7 = Fr. 21

Νομῆνιος μὲν γὰρ τρεῖς ἀνυμνήσας θεοὺς πατέρα μὲν καλεῖ τὸν πρῶτον, ποιητὴν δὲ τὸν δεύτερον, ποιήμα δὲ τὸν τρίτον· ὁ γὰρ κόσμος κατ' αὐτὸν ὁ τρίτος ἔστι θεός· ὥστε ὁ κατ' αὐτὸν δημιουργὸς διττός, ὃ τε πρῶτος θεὸς καὶ ὁ δεύτερος, τὸ δὲ δημιουργούμενον ὁ τρίτος. Ἄμεινον γὰρ οὕτω λέγειν ἢ ὡς ἐκεῖνος λέγει προστραφῶδων, πάππον, ἔγγονον, ἀπόγονον. Ὁ δὲ ταῦτα λέγων πρῶτον μὲν οὐκ ὀρθῶς τάγαθον συναριθμεῖ τοῖσδε τοῖς αἰτίοις· οὐ γὰρ πέφυκεν ἐκεῖνο συζευγυῖσθαι τισιν οὐδὲ δευτέραν ἔχειν ἄλλου τάξιν.

In the paragraph mentioned by Proclus there are ἀνυμνήσα the τρεῖς θεοὺς, but the information differs from the fragments of Eusebius of Caesarea:¹

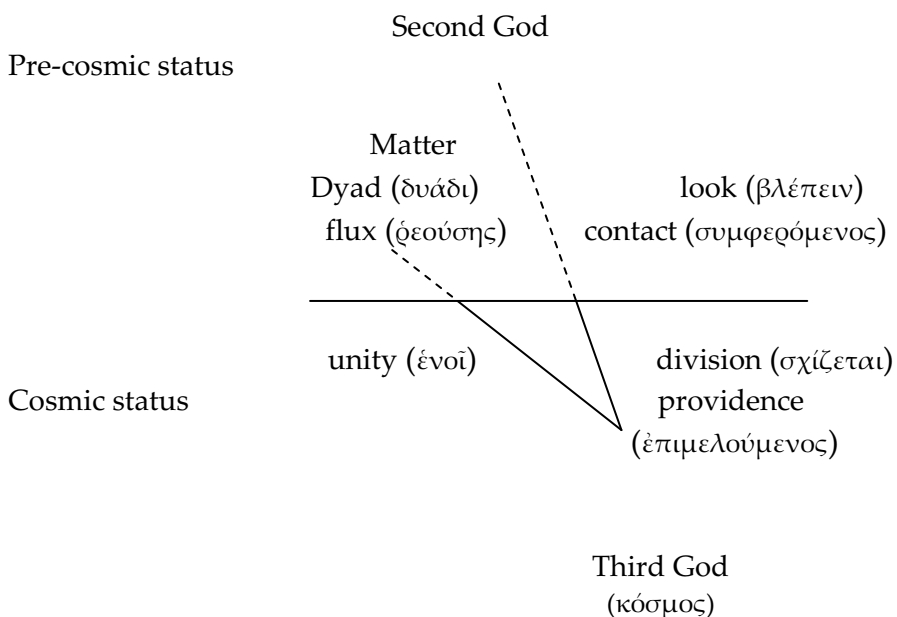


B. The causes of the Universe

Eusebius of Caesarea, *PE.*, XI.18.11-18 = Fr. 11

... ὁ θεὸς μέντοι ὁ δεύτερος καὶ τρίτος ἐστὶν εἷς· συμφερόμενος δὲ τῇ ὕλῃ δυάδι οὐσῃ ἐνοῖ μὲν αὐτὴν, σχίζεται δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῆς, ἐπιθυμητικὸν ἦθος ἐχούσης καὶ ῥεούσης. Τῷ οὖν μὴ εἶναι πρὸς τῷ νοητῷ (ἦν γὰρ ἂν πρὸς ἑαυτῷ) διὰ τὸ τὴν ὕλην βλέπειν, ταύτης ἐπιμελούμενος ἀπερίοπτος ἑαυτοῦ γίγνεται. Καὶ ἀπτεται τοῦ αἰσθητοῦ καὶ περιέπει ἀνάγει τε ἔτι εἰς τὸ ἴδιον ἦθος ἐπορεξάμενος τῆς ὕλης.

The apparition of the Third God (The Universe) from the Second One and from Matter can be described as follows:



¹ Erroneous paragraph, cf., J. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists*, p. 367.

STATUTUL LUMII ÎN CONCEPȚIA LUI TOMA DIN AQUINO

Adriana NEACȘU¹

Abstract: *This article presents Thomas Aquinas' position in the controversy about eternity of the world, as it evolved along his following works: **Scriptum super Sententiis**, **Summa contra Gentiles**, **Summa theologiae** and **De aeternitate mundi**. It argues that the different theses proposed by Thomas in these works are not contradictory but complementary. The article shows that, during his life, the philosopher approached this issue from various points of view and thus he enriched it. It points out the fact that this is an example of how St. Thomas' thought, remaining broadly very consistent with itself, it nuances from itself one work to another, becoming more complex and deeper.*

Keywords: *eternity of the world, being, nonbeing, creation, God, Thomas Aquinas.*

Punerea problemei

Problema apariției lumii a incitat interesul cognitiv și imaginația poetică a oamenilor din cele mai vechi timpuri. Popoarele primitive au abordat-o în miturile cosmogonice, care vorbesc de timpul mitic, *illud tempus*², în care zeii au creat lumea. *In illo tempore*³, socotit sacru, se revenea periodic, în cadrul marilor sărbători anuale, prin rituri speciale având rostul suprimării timpului profan – care uzează și degradează lumea – pentru ca aceasta, purificată, să poată dura în continuare (și, odată cu ea, omul).⁴ Chiar dacă *illud tempus* era înțeles ca timpul dinaintea oricărui timp⁵, el marca totuși un început al lumii, care nu era socotită eternă, ci doar cel mult ca având șansa să existe la nesfârșit, cu condiția intervenției periodice a oamenilor în momente de sacră rememorare.

¹ University of Craiova, Romania.

² „acel timp” (lat.); expresia îi aparține lui Mircea Eliade.

³ „în acel timp” (lat.); expresia îi aparține tot lui Mircea Eliade.

⁴ „...1) prin repetarea anuală a cosmogoniei, Timpul era regenerat, reîncepea ca timp sacru, deoarece coincidea cu *illud tempus*, când lumea începuse prima dată să existe; 2) prin participarea rituală la «sfârșitul Lumii» și la «re-crearea ei», omul devenea contemporan cu *illud tempus*; se năștea deci din nou, își începea existența, așa cum fusese în momentul nașterii, cu o rezervă intactă de forțe vitale.” (Mircea Eliade, *Sacrul și profanul*, trad. Rodica Chira, București, Editura Humanitas, 1992, p. 65).

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

Filosofii greci, deși multă vreme s-au folosit de mituri pentru a-și prezenta propriile concepții, au depășit ideea începutului în timp al lumii, pentru ei aceasta fiind eternă. Desigur, cu toții și-au pus problema începutului, dar începutul de care vorbesc este unul logic și ontologic, fiind totodată și sfârșit, ca un cadru închis (perfect conturat) de inteligibilitate, configurând principiul ca temei al tuturor lucrurilor, care justifică posibilitatea și chiar necesitatea de a fi și de a dăinui veșnic a lumii, chiar dacă ea, atât ca întreg cât și în părțile ei componente, este relativă, precară, lipsită de orice necesitate. Lucrul a fost posibil datorită faptului că religia greacă exercita asupra indivizilor un tip special de constrângere, care punea accent mai mult pe respectarea practicilor moștenite de la strămoși decât pe dogme imuabile, astfel încât societatea greacă, în ciuda câtorva procese celebre de impietate¹, care de fapt au fost procese politice, a acordat o mare libertate de gândire cetățenilor ei.²

Situația s-a schimbat însă o dată cu apariția religiei creștine, care, datorită și faptului că s-a răspândit în condițiile acțiunii unor numeroase culte rivale, le-a impus adeptilor ei o disciplină doctrinară strictă. Una din doctrinele fundamentale în cadrul acestei religii este creația lumii de către Dumnezeu. De aici rezultă că lumea nu poate fi eternă, căci este inevitabil precedată de creatorul ei.

Controverse între păgâni și creștini

În primele secole după Hristos, cele două tipuri de spiritualitate, păgână și creștină, au coexistat, deși într-o manieră tot mai conflictuală, care s-a transformat într-o luptă politică din ce în ce mai dură, purtată uneori cu mijloace armate. În aceste condiții, era inevitabil ca problema eternității lumii, care constituia un punct teoretic fierbinte, ce plasa combatanții din start pe poziții ireconciliabile, să suscite, mai devreme sau mai târziu, dezbateri concrete între ei. Astfel, la începutul secolului al VI-lea, asistăm la o controversă pe tema respectivă între neoplatonicianul păgân Simplicius,

¹ Ex: procesul lui Anaxagoras (prieten cu Pericle), condamnat la moarte sau exilat din Atena în 434 î.e.n.; procesul lui Socrate (critic al regimului democratic), condamnat de atenieni la moarte și executat în 399 î.e.n.

² „Trebuia să te bizui pe ceea ce făcuseră strămoșii, și suprema pietate consta în a face ca și ei. Faptul că o credință se schimba era aproape lipsit de importanță: credința se putea modifica în chip liber de-a lungul secolelor, căpătând cele mai diferite forme, în funcție de cugetarea înțelepților sau de imaginația populară. Dar lucrul cel mai important era ca formulele să nu fie uitate și riturile să nu fie modificate.” (Fustel de Coulanges, *Cetea greacă*, Vol. I, trad. Mioara și Vlad Izverna, București, Editura Meridiane, p. 243).

celebru comentator al lui Aristotel, reprezentant al școlii neoplatoniciene din Atena, și Ioan Filopon¹, și el tot un neoplatonician dar creștin, din Alexandria, unde exista un mediu intelectual extrem de rafinat, dominat de neoplatonismul păgân dar în care creștinismul, susținut nu numai cu mijloace teoretice ci și politice, se inserase destul de puternic.²

Dar problema eternității lumii depășește sfera culturii antice și a celei iudeo-creștine, ea fiind abordată și de gândirea arabo-islamică într-o perioadă de maximă înflorire, sub forma unui dialog purtat în contradictoriu peste secole în cadrul scrierilor filosofice. Astfel, după ce Avicenna, la începutul secolului al XI-lea, a susținut eternitatea lumii ca semn al perfecțiunii creatorului ei, la sfârșitul aceluiași secol, al-Gazali îi va respinge poziția în numele *Coranului*, deci al religiei, pentru ca, la rândul său, să fie combătut în secolul al XII-lea de către Averroes, cu argumente în general de inspirație aristotelică, deci dintr-o perspectivă exclusiv filosofică.³

Disputa dintre «teologi» și «artieni»

Fără să fie la curent cu cele două mari controverse precedente dar intrând în contact, prin intermediul arabilor, cu majoritatea scrierilor lui Aristotel, din care până atunci cunoșteau doar prea puține, medievalii occidentali din secolul al XIII-lea au declanșat ei înșiși, treptat, o serioasă dispută privind problema eternității lumii, dispută care a căpătat o deosebită forță și amploare mai ales în a doua parte a secolului, provocând poziții divergente chiar în interiorul spiritualității creștine. Promotorii ei au fost, se

¹ Cyrille Michon, Olivier Boulnois, Nathanaël Dupré La Tour, « Introduction » la: *Thomas d'Aquin et la controverse sur l'éternité du monde. Traités sur l'Éternité du monde de Bonaventure, Thomas d'Aquin, Peckham, Boèce de Dacie, Henri de Gant et Guillaume d'Ockham*, Traduction, présentation et notes par Cyrille Michon, avec la collaboration d'Olivier Boulnois et de Nathanaël Dupré La Tour, Paris, G.F. Flammarion, 2004, p. 35.

² De altfel, dincolo de convingerile proprii, unii neoplatonicieni au înțeles că, în noile condiții istorice, singura șansă de supraviețuire a filosofiei grecești era să accepte compromisul cu puterea. („Se știe faptul că în anul 529 [Ioan Filopon] a evitat închiderea școlii de filosofie din Alexandria (care putea avea, altminteri, aceeași soartă cu aceea ateniană) printr-un tratat, *Despre eternitatea lumii, împotriva lui Proclus*” – Alexander Baumgarten, „Notă introductivă” la: Aristotel, Plotin, Sf. Augustin, Ioan Filopon, Alkindi, Avicenna, Avencebrol, Algazel, Averroes, Albert cel Mare, Sf. Toma din Aquino, Siger din Brabant, Boetius din Dacia, Henri din Gand, *Despre eternitatea lumii*, Fragmente sau tratate, traducere din limba latină, tabel cronologic, note și postfață de Alexander Baumgarten, Editura Iri, București, 1999, p. 6).

³ Cyrille Michon, Olivier Boulnois, Nathanaël Dupré La Tour, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

pare, profesorii de la Facultatea de arte liberale din Paris¹, care, sub fascinația demonstrațiilor aristotelice, tindeau să-i acorde credit deplin logicii sale riguroase și să admită că lumea nu are un început în timp, deși acest lucru nu concorda, cel puțin la prima vedere, cu ideea creației divine.

Chiar dacă teza nu a fost, poate, formulată și susținută explicit de aceștia tocmai datorită poziției ei evident incomode în raport cu doctrina creștină, «teologii» (profesorii de teologie), care erau în general călugări ai Ordinilor de cerșetori (dominican și franciscan), aflați în conflict cu Universitatea, care nu voia să le mai acorde dreptul de predare, s-au folosit de orientarea aristotelică a profesorilor «artieni» și i-au acuzat că susțin eternitatea lumii, ceea ce, în ochii lor, ca de altfel și în cei ai majorității, însemna o erezie, adică negarea creației lumii de către Dumnezeu. O dată pusă efectiv în discuție, problema eternității lumii a început să fie dezbătută pe față cu numeroase argumente pro și contra, conform practicii timpului, care își aborda subiectele din toate unghiurile posibile, ajungând la adevărate performanțe de subtilitate a gândirii.

În cadrul controverselor iscate, poziția «artienilor» sau a «filosofilor» era de departe cea mai fragilă și mai riscantă de susținut. Căci de vreme ce referatul biblic arată fără echivoc procesul de creație a lumii, vorbind de un început al ei, este clar că acesta exprimă adevărul și că nu mai este nimic de discutat privind eventuala eternitate a lumii, care, în ciuda argumentelor logice ale lui Aristotel, trebuia acceptată ca falsă. Singura șansă pentru ei de a-și salva convingerile filosofice, era doar aceea de a sugera să se renunțe la atitudinea rigidă, care implica alegerea exclusivă a unei soluții și respingerea celeilalte, în favoarea uneia mai nuanțată, deschise, conciliante, care să accepte ambele poziții teoretice. Acest lucru era posibil în virtutea sugestiilor din scrierile lui Averroes, potrivit cărora, uneori, în chestiuni delicate, ceea ce din punct de vedere filosofic este adevărat, este fals din perspectiva credinței și invers, fapt ce a determinat formularea celebrei teorii a dublului adevăr, care, fără să fie susținută efectiv, ca atare, de către nici unul din filosofii epocii medievale, i-a fascinat și i-a atras pe destui dintre ei.²

Bonaventura: necesitatea începutului în timp a lumii

Bineînțeles, poziția teologilor era de respingere și de condamnare fermă a eternității lumii, fără acceptarea nici unui compromis. Liderul

¹ *Ibidem.*

² Étienne Gilson, *Filozofia în Evul Mediu*, trad. Ileana Stănescu, București, Editura Humanitas, 1995, p. 333.

grupării nu era altul decât Sfântul Bonaventura, cardinal al ordinului franciscan, care, prin autoritatea sa științifică, a coagulat în jurul lui forțele teologilor, aducând argumente logice puternice împotriva punctului de vedere avansat de către «artieni». Pe scurt, Bonaventura socotea că nu doar credința în mărturia Scripturii ne constrânge să respingem ideea că lumea ar putea fi eternă ci că însăși rațiunea noastră este capabilă, prin forțe proprii, să ne convingă de necesitatea ca lumea să aibă un început în timp. Pentru a-și proba poziția, Bonaventura recurge în general la procedeul logic al reducerii la absurd, care stabilește adevărul propriei teze în mod indirect, prin deducerea din teza opusă a unor consecințe considerate inadmisibile. De asemenea, el are grijă de cele mai multe ori să își aleagă drept premise ale raționamentelor teze pe care Aristotel însuși le susține în scrierile sale.

Astfel, în *Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum* (Comentarii la Sentențe), Bonaventura consideră că dacă lumea ar fi eternă, până în momentul prezent al existenței ei s-ar fi scurs deja un timp infinit; la acest infinit ar trebui să adăugăm timpul ce urmează încă să se scurgă; or, așa după cum Aristotel însuși ne spune, nu este posibil să mai adaugi ceva la infinit. Apoi, dacă lumea ar fi infinită, ea nu ar putea fi ordonată, căci, tot după mărturia lui Aristotel, infiniturile nu sunt ordonate, și orice ordine presupune un început; totuși, lumea are o ordine evidentă, deci trebuie să aibă un început. Un alt argument pornește de la premisa aristotelică conform căreia niciodată un infinit nu poate fi parcurs, așa încât, dacă lumea ar fi infinită, infinitul său nu ar fi putut fi efectiv parcurs pentru a se ajunge la momentul ei actual. Un al patrulea presupune că, în cazul în care lumea ar fi infinită, acest infinit ar fi cunoscut și înțeles, deci cuprins de o putere spirituală care îi este inerentă dar care nu poate fi infinită, deoarece numai puterea lui Dumnezeu este infinită; dar este absurd ca o putere finită să poată cuprinde infinitul. De asemenea, folosindu-se de afirmația lui Aristotel că nu pot exista în același timp mai multe realități infinite fiecare în număr, Bonaventura respinge eternitatea lumii deoarece, în acest caz, ar coexista deopotrivă infinitul sufletelor raționale, care este un infinit actual, de vreme ce sufletele sunt nemuritoare, și infinitul indivizilor umani, care este unul orientat spre trecut, căci oamenii sunt muritori. În sfârșit, după Bonaventura,

lumea nu are o ființă eternă, de vreme ce este creată de Dumnezeu din nimic, deci își are originea în neființă, care o precede și o limitează ca durată.¹

Poziția lui Toma

Scriptum super Sententiis

În calitate de autoritate teologică a epocii sale, și fiind profund interesat de orice problemă privind raporturile creaturii cu Dumnezeu, Toma nu putea să nu ia atitudine în această acută controversă. Ținând cont de faptul că el însuși era un aristotelician, iar poziția aristotelică susținea ferm eternitatea lumii, este interesant de văzut dacă și în ce fel a reușit el să concilieze creditul extraordinar pe care-l acorda Stagiritului, cu propria credință creștină, ce păreau să fie în conflict în această chestiune. De altfel, Toma nu a așteptat ca spiritele să se încingă pentru a sesiza problema și pentru a-i da un răspuns ci își expune punctul de vedere în cadrul mai multor scrieri, aparținând unor epoci diferite, semn că abordarea chestiunii statutului lumii provenea dintr-o nevoie interioară, de autoclarificare. Mai mult decât atât, de-a lungul acestor scrieri se constată o evoluție a gândirii tomiste, care dezvăluie la final o subtilitate și o originalitate remarcabile.

Astfel, în *Scriptum super Sententiis* (*Comentarii la Sentențe*), aflată printre lucrările de început ale lui Toma, elaborate în timpul primei șederi la Paris după sfârșitul studiilor, deci după 1252, acesta trece în revistă principalele argumente în favoarea eternității lumii, întâlnite în special la Aristotel, făcând referi și la Avicenna dar mai ales la Averroes. Pe acestea le împarte în patru mari clase, în funcție de premisa de la care pornesc: substanța cerului, timpul, mișcarea și agentul sau motorul acțiunii.

Prima clasă se sprijină pe ideea că materia sau substanța lumii este incoruptibilă, pe faptul că nu mai există o altă mișcare, contrară în raport cu cea specifică cerului, care să determine coruperea primeia, precum și pe raționamentul că dacă lumea ar fi fost creată la un moment dat, ea ar fi fost precedată de vid; or, vidul nu există. Argumentele bazate pe timp evidențiază faptul că acesta a existat și va exista întotdeauna, că el este o succesiune de clipe, deci că nu se poate imagina o primă clipă, care să nu fi

¹ S. Bonaventurae Bagnoregis, *Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum*, Secundi libri, d. I, p. I, art. I, q. II, in *Opera Omnia S. Bonaventurae, Ad Claras Aquas*, 1885, Vol. 2, pp. 19-24,

<http://ia700406.us.archive.org/30/items/doctorisseraphic02bona/doctorisseraphic02bona.pdf>.

fost precedată de o alta, și că este imposibil ca timpul să-i fie anterior lumii de vreme ce el nu este decât un accident al mișcării iar mișcarea este o proprietate a lucrurilor lumii. Al treilea grupaj demonstrativ introduce ideea eternității mișcării, care o implică pe cea a eternității mobilului ei (lumea), subliniind că mișcarea continuă de generare și corupție, nu s-ar putea desfășura dacă nu ar avea lumea drept fundament. Ultima categorie folosește ideea aristotelică a motorului imobil, a cărui acțiune este infinită, și pe cea a cauzei eterne, Dumnezeu, ce implică eternitatea efectului, fie că Dumnezeu acționează din necesitatea propriei naturi, fie din voință, căci și voința acestuia este la fel de eternă ca și natura lui.¹

Dar, așa după cum se obișnuia în epocă și, de altfel, în acord cu recomandarea metodologică a lui Aristotel însuși, potrivit căreia, în orice chestiune controversată, mai înainte de a trage concluzii trebuie să evidențiezi toate punctele de vedere pro și contra, Toma intervine cu o serie de alte argumente, parte din ele sprijinite tot pe autoritatea scrierilor aristotelice, care se opun celor dinainte și care par la fel de puternice ca și acelea. Majoritatea dintre ele, așa cum era și firesc, sunt puncte de vedere comune, pe care le susțineau toți apărătorii începutului lumii, și pe care Toma le sintetizează; de aceea pe unele le-am întâlnit deja la Bonaventura.

Astfel, dacă admitem că cerul, implicit lumea, își primesc substanța, și prin urmare întreaga lor ființă, de la Dumnezeu, ele îi sunt posterioare acestuia, neputând fi eterne, ca și cauza lor. Cum creația lumii s-a făcut din nimic, lumea, înainte de a fi, n-a fost nimic, deci ea a apărut doar la un moment dat și nu poate fi eternă. În cazul în care lumea ar fi eternă, numărul zilelor parcurse ar trebui să fie infinit, dar infinitul nu se poate parcurge, astfel încât ar fi imposibil să atingem ziua prezentă. De asemenea, infinitul nu poate crește, așa cum se întâmplă de fapt cu durata lumii, care își adaugă continuu zi după zi. Presupunând că lumea ar fi eternă, ar trebui să mergem cu generarea tuturor ființelor, deci să coborâm pe firul cauzei eficiente, la infinit, ceea ce este imposibil, cum admite și Aristotel. În plus, eternitatea lumii implică existența în act a unui număr infinit de suflete separate de corp; or, în *Fizica*, Aristotel arată că nu există un infinit în act. De altfel, este imposibil ca lumea să existe din eternitate, căci atunci ea ar fi egală în durată cu Dumnezeu. În ceea ce privește cerul, trebuie să admitem că are un început în timp, căci mărimea sa, fiind limitată, îi determină o putere la fel de

¹ Sancti Thomae de Aquino, *Scriptum super Sententiis*, lib.2, d. 1, q. 1, art. 5, [3475-3488], in *Corpus Thomisticum*, Textum Parmae 1856 editum ac automato translatum a Roberto Busa SJ in taenias magneticas denuo recognovit Enrique Alarcón atque instruxit, <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/snp2001.html>.

limitată, și nu se poate ca durata lui să-i depășească puterea. În sfârșit, cum natura lui Dumnezeu este identică duratei sale, și cum Dumnezeu precede lumea prin natura sa, este cu totul clar că el o precede pe aceasta și în durată iar lumea trebuie să fi fost creată la un moment dat în timp.¹

După ce trece în revistă cele mai importante argumente ale taberelor adverse, Toma sintetizează discuția și conchide că în această problemă se conturează trei poziții distincte: „Prima este cea a filosofilor care au spus că nu numai Dumnezeu există din eternitate, ci și celelalte lucruri; (...) A doua poziție este a acelor care spun că lumea a început să fie după ce nu a fost, la fel ca tot ceea ce este în afara lui Dumnezeu, și că Dumnezeu n-a putut să facă lumea din eternitate, nu datorită unei neputințe din partea sa, ci pentru că lumea n-a putut să fie făcută din eternitate, de vreme ce este creată. Ei vor să se susțină nu numai prin credință că lumea are un început ci și să se dovedească asta prin demonstrație. A treia poziție este a celor care spun că tot ceea ce este în afara lui Dumnezeu a început să fie, dar că nu se poate totuși demonstra că lumea a început, și că acest lucru este susținut și crezut prin revelație.”²

La acest ultim punct de vedere, inspirat de Sfântul Grigore cel Mare, se raliază și Toma, care-și exprimă convingerea că nu s-ar putea elabora demonstrații riguroase și pe deplin convingătoare pentru nici una din cele două poziții extreme, care susțin fie necesitatea eternității lumii fie pe cea a nașterii ei în timp. Ca urmare, Toma afirmă că toate argumentele prezentate nu sunt decât «probabile» și chiar «s sofistice», permanent susceptibile să fie răsturnate. Iar pentru a ne convinge de acest lucru, el etalează minuțios încă două serii de argumente paralele, care răspund punct cu punct argumentelor dinainte. În acest fel Aquinatul vrea să-i avertizeze pe toți partizanii uneia sau alteia din cele două poziții radicale, atrăgându-le atenția să fie extrem de prudenți și să nu-și supraevalueze demonstrațiile raționale pe care le-ar putea imagina în sprijinul convingerilor proprii.

Fragilitatea acestor demonstrații ar fi motivul pentru care, crede Toma, Aristotel a plasat eternitatea lumii printre problemele insolubile³,

¹ *Ibidem*, [3489-3497].

² *Ibidem*, [3498].

³ În realitate nu de eternitatea lumii este vorba în *Fizica* lui Aristotel, cât de eternitatea materiei, demiurgul fiind doar un arhitect și ordonator al ei, nu un creator. („... considerată însă ca potențialitate, materia nu se distruge în sine, ci în mod necesar este indestructibilă și negenerată în sine. Căci dacă ea s-ar genera, ar trebui mai întâi să subziste o materie din care să fie generată materia; or, aceasta este natura materiei, ca ea să existe înainte de a fi generată.” – Aristotel, *Fizica* (I, 9, 102 a), trad. și note de N.I. Barbu ; note, indice tematic și

căreia n-a încercat să-i dea un răspuns ferm, indubitabil, mulțumindu-se cu argumente probabile sau «retorice», fără valoare științifică. Cauza acestei incapacități teoretice a noastră, despre care Toma spune că a fost sugestiv relevată de către rabinul Moise Maimonide, se află în diferența de natură dintre diversele stadii de existență ale unui lucru, ceea ce înseamnă că nu putem deduce starea incipientă a lumii din chipul ei actual: matur, deplin constituit. Prin urmare se înșeală toți „cei care vor să arate necesitatea sau imposibilitatea începutului lumii pornind de la maniera în care lucrurile se produc în lumea deja terminată, fiindcă ceea ce începe acum să fie, începe prin mișcare, motiv pentru care trebuie ca motorul să preceadă prin durată, și de asemenea el trebuie să preceadă și prin natură, și să existe contrarii, toate acestea fiind lucruri care nu sunt necesare pentru aducerea, de către Dumnezeu, a universului la ființă.”¹

Summa contra Gentiles

Aceeași poziție este susținută de Toma în *Summa contra Gentiles* (*Summa contra păgânilor*), scrisă între 1258-1264, în perioada lungului său profesorat în Italia. Aici el se ocupă mai pe larg de argumentele celor care încearcă să demonstreze necesitatea eternității lumii, abordându-le metodic, grupându-le în funcție de elementul de la care pornesc și pe care își sprijină întreaga construcție teoretică. Este vorba de natura și acțiunea lui Dumnezeu, de modul de a fi al creaturilor, precum și de maniera în care sunt produse în general toate lucrurile în lume. Scopul declarat al acestei ample etalări este acela de a evidenția faptul că, în ciuda pretensei lor rigurozități, nici unul dintre argumente nu este capabil să demonstreze cu necesitate că lumea nu are un început și că ea a existat dintotdeauna, fiind coeternă cu divinitatea. De aceea Sfântul Toma le demontează punct cu punct, aducând în replică argumente contrare la fel de puternice, menite să le contracareze și să le arate insuficiența demonstrativă, faptul că nu imprimă nici o necesitate concluziilor lor.

În ceea ce privește atitudinea opusă, cuprinzând demonstrațiile referitoare la necesitatea ca lumea să aibă un început, deși ele apără un adevăr de credință pe care Toma nu-l contestă, și anume că lumea are, într-adevăr, un început, Aquinatul nu se ocupă de ele decât în treacăt, doar pentru a arăta păgânilor că respectiva credință are temeieri raționale destul

terminologic de Pavel Apostol; note de Alexandru Popescu ; Prefață de Anton Adămuț, Iași, Editura Moldova, 1996, p. 29).

¹ *Ibidem*.

de solide, care s-ar putea să-i sensibilizeze, și că ea nu se sprijină numai pe revelație; în rest, Toma este de acord că toate aceste argumente sunt la fel de nenecesare și de probabile ca și cele dinainte. În acest sens, merge chiar până acolo încât, la fel de expeditiv, trece în revistă obiecțiile temeinice pe care le pot ridica împotriva lor susținătorii eternității lumii, și de care apărătorii necesității începutului ei trebuie să țină cont. Punctul său personal de vedere, prin care de altfel își nuanțează poziția anterior exprimată, este acela că tot ceea ce putem demonstra este că nu e necesar ca lucrurile create să fi existat dintotdeauna, cu atât mai mult cu cât nu este necesar nici măcar ca ele să existe, de vreme ce sunt un rezultat al voinței divine, care este absolut liberă. În orice caz, Toma consideră că neeternitatea lumii se poate susține cel mai bine sau în maniera cea mai eficace luând în considerare finalitatea ce stă la baza voinței divinității.

„Într-adevăr, scopul voinței divine în producerea lucrurilor este bunătatea sa, în măsura în care ea este manifestată de efectele sale. Or, puterea lui Dumnezeu și bunătatea sa se manifestă în mod excelent prin faptul că ființele, altele decât Dumnezeu, nu au fost întotdeauna. Aceasta arată într-adevăr cu evidență că celelalte lucruri decât Dumnezeu își dobândesc ființa de la el, astfel încât ele n-au existat întotdeauna. Se vede de asemenea că Dumnezeu nu acționează din necesitate naturală și că puterea lui este infinită în acțiunea sa. I se potrivea deci în cel mai înalt grad bunătății divine să dea un început în durată lucrurilor create.”¹

Summa theologiae

În *Summa theologiae* (*Summa teologică*), marea sa sinteză teologico-filosofică, elaborată în ultima perioadă a vieții, între 1268-1273, și construită în mod sistematic pe următoarea schemă: punerea tezei, prezentarea argumentelor contra, apoi a obiecțiilor la acestea, prezentarea concluziei și, în final, respingerea argumentelor contra, concluzia lui Toma este evidentă: lumea are, indiscutabil, un început. De asemenea, el își menține poziția privind caracterul nenecesar al argumentelor pe care le avansează cele două tabere opuse, subliniind încă o dată că cele aduse de Aristotel în favoarea eternității lumii nu sunt demonstrații în adevăratul sens al cuvântului, de

¹ Sancti Thomae de Aquino, *Summa contra Gentiles*, lib.2, cap. 38, nr.15 [24769], in *Corpus Thomisticum*, Textum Leoninum emendatum ex plagulis de prelo Taurini 1961 editum ac automato translatum a Roberto Busa SJ in taenias magneticas denuo recognovit Enrique Alarcón atque instruxit, <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/scg2006.html>.

vreme ce se bazează mai mult pe supoziții și nici măcar nu urmăresc să demonstreze ceva, ci doar să contrazică opiniile diverșilor filosofi antici.¹

Ceea ce aduce însă nou această lucrare a Sfântului Toma este faptul că aici el nu se mulțumește să constate insuficiența de fapt a demonstrațiilor ci încearcă să-i confere acestora o justificare de principiu. Astfel, el argumentează că începutul lumii nu poate fi o chestiune demonstrabilă ci, reprezentând un articol de credință, acesta, prin însăși natura sa revelată, nu permite să fie în mod rațional dedus din anumite premise. Recunoașterea acestui lucru este, din punctul său de vedere, extrem de importantă, nu numai în problema respectivă ci și în oricare alta de același gen, pentru că în felul acesta creștinii nu se vor mai crampona pe argumentele raționale care le susțin credința, și care sunt întotdeauna deficitare, luând astfel șansa pagânilor de a considera că, prin discreditarea lor, au discreditat însăși credința creștină în conținutul și în adevărul ei profund.

„...trebuie spus că <propoziția > *lumea nu a existat dintotdeauna* este susținută doar de credință și nu se poate arăta prin demonstrație (...) Iar argumentul acestui fapt este că noutatea lumii nu poate accepta o demonstrație chiar din partea lumii. Căci principiul demonstrației este *ceea ce este*. Însă fiecare lucru, în funcție de rațiunea speciei sale, se separă de aici și acum, motiv pentru care se pune că universalele sunt *ubicue și eterne*. De aceea, nu se poate demonstra că omul, cerul sau piatra nu au existat întotdeauna. Tot așa, nu se poate nici pornind de la o cauză agentă care acționează prin voință. Căci voința lui Dumnezeu nu poate fi cunoscută prin rațiune, decât în privința acelor lucruri pe care este absolut necesar ca Dumnezeu să le vrea; iar astfel de lucruri nu sunt cele pe care le vrea în privința creaturilor. (...) Dar voința divină se poate arăta omului prin revelație, pe care se sprijină credința. Astfel, faptul că lumea are un început, este credibil, dar nu demonstrabil sau cognoscibil.”²

De aeternitate mundi

Chiar dacă *Summa theologiae*, rămasă, de altfel, neterminată, este printre ultimele scrieri ale lui Toma, ea nu pune punct poziției sale privind eternitatea lumii. O perspectivă deosebit de interesantă este avansată într-o mică lucrare special consacrată acestei probleme, prin care Toma se angajează direct în controversa devenită la un moment dat extrem de ardentă

¹ Toma din Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, I, trad. Alexander Baumgarten (coord.) Iași, Ed. Polirom, 2009, p. 422-423 (Q.46, Art.1).

² *Ibidem*, p. 426 (Q.46, Art.2).

dintre «artieni» și «teologi». Este vorba de *Tratatul asupra eternității lumii* (*De aeternitate mundi*), căruia i s-a adăugat postum subtitlul: *Împotriva celor care protestează*, făcându-se referire la cei ce puneau în discuție articolul de credință al creației lumii, care, în fond, trebuia luat ca atare, socotind că pot demonstra cu argumente necesitatea fie a eternității lumii, fie a nașterii ei. Lucrarea pare scrisă în 1270, imediat după ce unul dintre discipolii Sfântului Bonaventura, Jean Peckham, și-a expus punctul de vedere în cadrul unei dispute pe această temă, organizată în decembrie 1269 la Universitatea din Paris.¹ Este, de altfel, anul în care Biserica va condamna ca eretică propoziția: «lumea este eternă», ceea ce face și mai interesantă luarea de poziție a Sfântului Toma, care nu se raliază acestui decret al autorității ecleziastice ci își permite să avanseze o soluție distinctă, originală. Aceasta, inspirată de Moise Maimonide², a cărui poziție îl sensibilizase și pe profesorul său, Albert cel Mare, se apropie, în mod oarecum surprinzător³, mai mult de «artienii» acuzați de erezie decât de adversarii lor, erijați în apărători ai credinței. Ținând cont că în *Summa teologiae* problema eternității lumii a fost abordată în prima parte, putem considera că punctul de vedere expus în *De aeternitate mundi* a fost elaborat ulterior *Summa-ei*. De altfel, nu este vorba de un conflict al acestor puncte de vedere și nici măcar de o eventuală neconcordanță a lor sau cel puțin a ultimului în raport cu cele exprimate în lucrările anterioare *Summa-ei theologiae*; toate se pot, în ultimă instanță, armoniza fără prea mari probleme, numai că luarea de atitudine a lui Toma în micul său tratat, aruncă o lumină suplimentară față de poziția generală cu care el ne obișnuise, poziție pe care o nuanțează suficient de mult pentru a-i imprima o oarecare relaxare sau relativitate, evidențiind astfel complexitatea și profunzimea viziunii sale asupra problemei în cauză.

Așadar, în *De aeternitate mundi*, Toma nu mai compară argumentele pro și contra eternității sau nașterii lumii; le evidențiasse deja destul

¹ Olivier Boulnois, « Introduction » la : Saint Thomas d'Aquin, *Controverse sur l'éternité du monde, contre les murmureurs*, Traduction Olivier Boulnois, Centre national du livre, 2004, Édition numérique, <http://docteurangelique.free.fr>, 2008.

² „Maimonide (...) susține că teza eternității lumii nu împiedică deloc demonstrarea existenței lui Dumnezeu. Mai mult, ideea unei creații *ex nihilo* este indemonstrabilă pentru Maimonide, iar în sprijinul tezei eternității lumii se pot aduce argumente la fel de bine ca și împotriva ei. Eternitatea lumii este mai degrabă o ipoteză de lucru decât o certitudine. Pașii următori i-au făcut Albert cel Mare și Sfântul Toma, arătând că eternitatea lumii este o antinomie, întrucât se pot găsi argumente *pro* și *contra* fără ca acest lucru să afecteze credința creștină.” (Alexander Baumgarten, *Principiul cerului*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2008, pp. 107-108).

³ Surprinzător, pentru că, în fond, «artienii» îi erau adversari, dar, desigur, deloc surprinzător, din perspectiva onestității intelectuale a filosofului.

fragilitatea. În plus, dacă până acum începutul aceleia în timp era în poziție de concluzie a cercetării, acum este admis ca premisă, în calitate de adevăr de credință, care nu poate fi pus la îndoială. Asta pentru că Toma urmărește, de fapt, altceva. Teza pe care el o lansează și pe care vrea să o demonstreze, este una originală și totodată foarte subtilă: neîndoindu-ne că lumea are un început în timp, putem totuși admite că, deși este creată de Dumnezeu, ar fi putut fi eternă? Cu alte cuvinte: se poate demonstra, dacă nu necesitatea, măcar posibilitatea ca lumea să nu fi avut o naștere la un moment dat în timp ci să fi existat dintotdeauna? Manifestându-și intenția de a răspunde la întrebare și, în acest scop, punând la îndoială, deși numai sub titlul de ipoteză, începutul lumii, Toma părăsea poziția echidistantă pe care o adoptase față de argumentele atât ale apărătorilor necesității eternității lumii cât și ale susținătorilor necesității nașterii ei, pe care le socotise până acum la fel de inconsistente logic, înclinând să admită că punctul de vedere al «artienilor» nu este chiar atât de absurd pe cât încercau să-l prezinte «teologii», și cu atât mai puțin ar reprezenta o erezie. Așa încât, dacă față de «teologi» el își menține poziția dinainte: chiar dacă au dreptate că lumea este născută, dreptatea lor este doar pe jumătate, fiindcă susțin că se poate demonstra un adevăr ce nu poate fi demonstrat – față de «artieni» este mult mai conciliant acum: chiar dacă nu au dreptate să susțină că lumea este eternă, sau că pot demonstra necesitatea eternității lumii, ei ar fi putut totuși avea dreptate, în sensul că lumea ar fi putut fi eternă, pentru că se pot avansa demonstrații valabile care să evidențieze logic, rațional, posibilitatea eternității lumii. Sarcina pe care Sfântul Toma și-o asumă în *De aeternitate mundi*, este tocmai aceea de a prezenta aceste demonstrații.

Pentru asta, mai întâi el respinge poziția principal inacceptabilă cum că eternitatea lumii ar implica automat coeternitatea deplină, din toate punctele de vedere, cu divinitatea, ceea ce i-ar conferi lumii un periculos statut de autonomie, făcând din ea o ființă necreată, aflată dincolo de Dumnezeu, în afara controlului său, situată pe același plan cu el, căruia îi subminează astfel condiția de ființă absolută. De altfel, Toma ține să aducă în sprijinul poziției sale deopotrivă credința și convingerile raționale susținute de filosofi. „Căci dacă se presupune că ceva a putut fi veșnic în afară de Dumnezeu, în sensul că ar putea totuși să existe ceva care să nu fi fost făcut de el, aceasta este o eroare îngrozitoare, nu numai în credință, dar și potrivit filosofilor, care mărturisesc și dovedesc că tot ceea ce este într-un fel anume

nu poate fi decât dacă este cauzat de cel care are ființă în sens maxim și întru totul adevărat.”¹

În ceea ce privește propria poziție: faptul că lumea, deși este creată de Dumnezeu, ar fi putut fi eternă, consideră că ea ar putea fi infirmată în două feluri: susținându-se fie că Dumnezeu nu ar fi putut crea ceva care să fie etern, fie că acest lucru, prin el însuși, nu ar fi putut fi creat. Dată fiind însă atotputernicia divină, nimeni nu se poate îndoii că Dumnezeu ar fi putut crea un astfel de lucru. Referitor la imposibilitatea venită din partea lucrului, ea nu ar putea fi susținută în virtutea inexistenței unei eventuale materii a lui pasive, care ar fi ca un fel de posibilitate de existență pentru el, posibilitate independentă de Dumnezeu. Căci pe de o parte, postularea acestei materii ar fi o erezie, iar pe de altă parte, Dumnezeu poate face lucruri din nimic, adică fără ca ele să existe mai întâi ca potențe, în virtutea unei materii a lor pasive. Pe de altă parte, o lume eternă și, în același timp, creată, ar fi ceva imposibil prin sine însăși dacă cele două concepte, cel de «etern» și cel de «creație» ar fi contradictorii. În acest caz, ne spune Toma, părerile asupra posibilității existenței lucrului rămân încă împărțite, unii socotind că faptul acesta nu l-ar împiedica pe Dumnezeu să-l creeze, alții susținând că statutul contradictoriu al celor două concepte ar anihila posibilitatea logică a lucrului, căci el nu ar însemna practic nimic, or, Dumnezeu, deși creează din nimic, atunci când creează, creează întotdeauna ceva, nicidecum «nimic». Ceea ce îi rămâne deci de cercetat lui Toma este dacă, într-adevăr, cele două concepte sunt contradictorii din punct de vedere logic, iar atunci propozițiile: «ceva a fost creat de Dumnezeu» și «acest ceva a existat dintotdeauna» sunt împreună false în mod necesar, sau dacă nu cumva ele sunt compatibile, astfel încât, chiar dacă știm că este fals că lumea este eternă, nu este fals să afirmăm că ea ar fi putut fi eternă (dacă Dumnezeu ar fi vrut, fiindcă nici forța proprie nici rațiunea lucrurilor nu-l împiedica s-o facă eternă). În acest ultim caz, deoarece reprezintă o posibilitate perfect logică, și nu impietează cu nimic nici asupra atotputerniciei divinității, nici asupra statutului ei de creator al lumii, propoziția «lumea este eternă» nu poate fi condamnată ca o erezie ci doar, cel mult, recunoscută ca ceva fals.²

„Așadar, problema este în întregime dacă a fi creat de Dumnezeu, în

¹Toma din Aquino, *Despre eternitatea lumii, împotriva celor care protestează*, în: Aristotel, Plotin, Sf. Augustin, Ioan Filopon, Alkindi, Avicenna, Avencebrol, Algazel, Averroes, Albert cel Mare, Sf. Toma din Aquino, Siger din Brabant, Boetius din Dacia, Henri din Gând, *Despre eternitatea lumii*, Fragmente sau tratate, traducere din limba latină, tabel cronologic, note și postfață de Alexander Baugmarten, Editura Iri, București, 1999, p. 31 ([1]).

²*Ibidem*, pp. 31-32 ([2-5]).

sensul întregii substanțe, și a nu avea Un început al duratei sunt contradictorii sau nu.”¹

Evident, răspunsul lui Toma este: nu, iar argumentele lui sunt următoarele: Pentru ca cele două situații să fie contradictorii, ar trebui ca efectul să fie întotdeauna precedat de cauza sa în timp, ori ca neființa, din care Dumnezeu a făcut lumea, să o preceadă pe aceasta în durată. Or, nu este necesar ca Dumnezeu să își preceadă creația în timp, deoarece există și acte cauzale instantanee, ca încălzirea sau luminarea, în care cauza agentă nu își produce efectul prin mișcare ci în care cele două coexistă tot atâta vreme cât cauza se manifestă. Iar dacă acest lucru este posibil când este vorba de cauze ale formei lucrurilor, cu atât mai mult trebuie să admitem că Dumnezeu, creator al întregii substanțe a lumii, adică deopotrivă al materiei și formei sale, este capabil să-i confere acesteia o durată egală sieși, adică infinită. De altfel, dacă nu ar fi așa, Dumnezeu n-ar mai fi în mod desăvârșit cauză, de vreme ce i-ar lipsi, la un moment dat, complementul său necesar, adică efectul (lumea). De asemenea, nu trebuie să socotim că voința lui Dumnezeu îi precede acțiunea, sau că în el ar fi o deliberare anterioară actului, căci perfecțiunea divină exclude devenirea, astfel încât este clar că toate aceste aspecte coexistă și că, în ultimă instanță, coincid, identificându-se cu Dumnezeu însuși.²

Referitor la nimicul din care lumea a fost creată, Toma susține că el nu poate fi ceva anume, ca neființa care precede lumea în timp, ci exprimă doar faptul că aceasta, înainte de a fi creată, nu era, pur și simplu, și că ea nu-și datorează existența decât lui Dumnezeu, care, în condițiile în care el este totul, n-a făcut-o din el însuși ci din nimic. În acest sens Toma aduce mărturia lui Anselm, care compară facerea lumii din nimic cu apariția la om a întristării fără nici un motiv, deci «din nimic». Cât privește faptul că ideea creației lumii din nimic ar implica o ordine de succesiune strictă, în care întâi ar fi nimicul și apoi lumea, ceea ce ar argumenta în favoarea nașterii acesteia din urmă, Aquinatul aduce în discuție distincția dintre ordinea temporală și cea a naturii lucrurilor, astfel încât faptul că lumea apare din nimic nu înseamnă neapărat că ea mai întâi nu a fost, abia apoi fiind ceva, ci doar că, în virtutea propriei sale naturi, ea mai degrabă nu ar fi decât ar fi.³ Altfel spus, ideea că neantul este anterior lumii evidențiază doar faptul că lumea nu își este propriul ei temel și că nu are o necesitate proprie de a fi; ca urmare, ea nu poate exista prin ea însăși ci doar prin altceva decât sine, de la care își

¹ *Ibidem*, [5].

² *Ibidem*, pp. 32-33 ([6-12]).

³ *Ibidem*, p. 33 ([13-14]).

primește ființa și care reprezintă creatorul ei; „căci nu se consideră, dacă o creatură a fost dintotdeauna, ca ea să fi fost, într-un anumit timp, nimicul: dar se consideră că natura sa ar fi fost de așa fel încât ar fi fost nimicul, dacă s-ar raporta numai la sine.”¹

În urma tuturor acestor argumente, concluzia lui Toma este clară: „rezultă că nu a fost înțeleasă nici o contradicție în ceea ce s-a spus, anume că a fost făcut ceva ce nu a mai fost niciodată.² (...) Iar pentru cel care ia în seamă cu atenție cuvintele celor care consideră că lumea este dintotdeauna, reiese că ei nu consideră cu nimic mai puțin că ea a fost creată de Dumnezeu, însă nu percep din cauza unor concepte contradictorii.”³ Ea răspunde negativ la întrebarea pusă anterior și reprezintă o demonstrație implicită pentru posibilitatea eternității lumii și pentru faptul că a o gândi coeternă cu divinitatea nu reprezintă o impietate. Ca dovadă suplimentară în sprijinul punctului său de vedere, Toma aduce mărturia lui Augustin, care, deși a combătut ideea eternității lumii cu tot felul de argumente, nu a admis printre acestea și faptul că ar exista vreo contradicție între conceptele de «etern» și «a fi creat», concepte pe care, dimpotrivă, le considera perfect compatibile. În consecință, deși trebuie să admitem că Augustin are dreptate, deci că lumea are un început în timp, logica ne constrânge să fim conștienți de faptul că ea ar fi putut foarte bine să fie eternă.⁴

Concluzii

Recapitulând întreaga discuție, constatăm că se pot detecta în opera Sfântului Toma d’Aquino mai multe etape în conturarea poziției sale privind eternitatea lumii:

1. nu se poate demonstra necesitatea nici a eternității lumii nici a nașterii ei, poziție susținută pe baza analizei concrete a argumentelor și a constatării de fapt că toate acestea sunt fragile (*Scriptum super Sententiis*);
2. tot ceea ce rațiunea poate demonstra este doar faptul că nu este necesar ca lucrurile create să fi existat dintotdeauna (*Summa contra Gentiles*);
3. justificarea (nu demonstrația) faptului că nașterea lumii nu poate fi o chestiune demonstrabilă, făcută pe baza argumentului că problema

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 33 ([14]).

² *Ibidem*, p. 33 ([15]).

³ *Ibidem*, p. 34 ([17]).

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 33 ([15]).

respectivă reprezintă un articol de credință, nesubordonabil judecății raționii (*Summa theologiae*);

4. putem demonstra rațional nu necesitatea ci doar posibilitatea logică a lumii de a nu avea un început, deci faptul ca ea să fi existat din eternitate, pentru că statutul de creatură nu implică neapărat o naștere la un moment dat ci doar o dependență de ființă și o inferioritate de natură în raport cu creatorul ei, care îi este astfel anterior doar din punct de vedere ontologic și logic, nu însă și temporal (*De aeternitate mundi*).

Toate aceste luări de poziție nu sunt contradictorii ci complementare. Ele stau mărturie despre felul în care gândirea Sfântului Toma, rămânând în linii mari extrem de coerentă cu sine însăși, se nuanțează de la o operă la alta, devenind mai complexă și mai profundă, și cum, de-a lungul timpului, aceeași temă este luminată din diverse unghiuri și astfel îmbogățită. În cazul de față, în special ultima formulare, care susține posibilitatea eternității lumii, în condițiile în care episcopul Parisului condamnase deja, în 1270, ca eretică teza: «lumea este eternă», demonstrează nu numai originalitatea dar și libertatea de gândire pe care Toma, păstrând intacte cadrele generale ale dogmei creștine, a manifestat-o în întreaga sa operă.

BIBLIOGRAFIE

1. Sancti Thomae de Aquino, *Scriptum super Sententiis*, in *Corpus Thomisticum*, Textum Parmae 1856 editum ac automato translatum a Roberto Busa SJ in taenias magneticas denuo recognovit Enrique Alarcón atque instruxit, <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/snp2001.html>
2. Sancti Thomae de Aquino, *Summa contra Gentiles*, lib. 2, cap. 38, nr.15 [24769], in *Corpus Thomisticum*, Textum Leoninum emendatum ex plagulis de prelo Taurini 1961 editum ac automato translatum a Roberto Busa SJ in taenias magneticas denuo recognovit Enrique Alarcón atque instruxit, <http://www.corpusthomicum.org/scg2006.html>
3. Toma din Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, I, trad. Alexander Baumgarten (coord.) Iași, Ed. Polirom, 2009
4. Toma din Aquino, *Despre eternitatea lumii, împotriva celor care protestează*, în: Aristotel, Plotin, Sf. Augustin, Ioan Filopon, Alkindi, Avicenna, Avencebrol, Algazel, Averroes, Albert cel Mare, Sf. Toma din Aquino, Siger din Brabant, Boetius din Dacia, Henri din Gând, *Despre eternitatea lumii*, Fragmente sau tratate, traducere din limba latină, tabel cronologic, note și postfață de Alexander Baumgarten, Editura Iri, București, 1999

5. Aristotel, *Fizica*, trad. și note de N.I. Barbu ; note, indice tematic și terminologic de Pavel Apostol; note de Alexandru Popescu ; Prefață de Anton Adămuț, Iași, Editura Moldova, 1996
6. S. Bonaventurae Bagnoregis, *Commentaria in Quatuor Libros Sententiarum, Secundi libri*, in *Opera Omnia S. Bonaventurae, Ad Claras Aquas*, 1885, Vol. 2, pp. 19-24, <http://ia700406.us.archive.org/30/items/doctorisseraphic02bona/doctorisseraphic02bona.pdf>
7. Baumgarten, Alexander, *Principiul cerului*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2008
8. Boulnois, Olivier, „Introduction” la Saint Thomas d'Aquin, *Controverse sur l'éternité du monde, contre les murmurateurs*, [1] *Textum Leoninum Romae 1976 editum ac automato translatum a Roberto Busa SJ*, Traduction, édition Louis Vivès, 1857, Traduction Olivier Boulnois, Centre national du livre, 2004, Édition numérique, <http://docteurangelique.free.fr>, 2008
9. Michon, Cyrille;Olivier Boulnois ; Nathanaël Dupré La Tour, „Introduction” la: *Thomas d'Aquin et la controverse sur l'éternité du monde. Traités sur l'Éternité du monde de Bonaventure, Thomas d'Aquin, Peckham, Boèce de Dacie, Henri de Gant et Guillaume d'Ockham*, Traduction, présentation et notes par Cyrille Michon, avec la collaboration d'Olivier Boulnois et de Nathanaël Dupré La Tour, Paris, G.F. Flamarion, 2004

THE ORDINARY MEN AND THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Ana BAZAC ¹

Abstract: *The questions of this paper are twofold: how the social development – i.e. the general and contradictory evolution of society – affects the ordinary people and what these ones could do towards the objective and exterior process of development. Would be worthwhile inquiring into the problem of ordinary man since we all are influenced by the mixture where the cliché of man as every human person mastering the being tends to be surpassed by the victorious belief of the merit that solely would lead this mastering? It certainly is, and a first level of analysis deals just with the revisit of some ideologies, while at the second level, the focus on the position of the ordinary man within the social development aims at challenging the interrogations about the change of this position.*

Keywords: *ordinary people, social development, crowd, social stratification, progress, mass society, technology, globalisation, 'thirdworldisation', social control, human dignity.*

First of all, let us circumscribe the terms.

The concepts

1. *The ordinary man*

What does “ordinary” mean?

It is difficult to understand: for as we know, everyone is special for relatives and friends, and thus he/she does not conceive of him/her as pertaining to the crowd; and at the same time, intellectuals like to think that, because of their education and social place they occupy, they would not belong to the ordinary people. Consequently, we have to de-construct the ideological prejudices concerning both the storytellers – the intellectuals who consider themselves as “extra-ordinary”, thus beyond the common

¹ Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Romania.

people – and their “objects”, the possible but invisible elements of their stories.

a) The problem is who speaks about. If there is an existential distance between the storyteller and his personages – i.e. if the speaker is a voluntary or involuntary beneficiary of the social establishment, at least of the labour of the others so that he has *skholē* enough to think and write – he never forgets it, keeps it and considers the others as “they”. “They” seem to him as being not only impersonal, anonymous, indistinct (see Heidegger’s “They”), but also irremediably different from him. What he can do is only to speak *for* them¹, to teach them² and – normally, isn’t it? – speak *on their behalf*. By acting in this way, he is in the recognition³ drive, since “at least, we are all humans”, but *this recognition of last instance does not transpose into the theoretical expression*: it is rather hidden by the veils of the “scientific”⁴ ideological⁵ suppositions.

When the modern spirit began to animate the theoretical conscience, the idea of recognition become so strong that a change happened: the philosopher began to consider himself as part of the crowd of his fellow

¹ Instead of they themselves speak from their own will and related to their own experience of life.

² See *The New Testament, John*, 13,17, <http://www.agsconsulting.com/htdbv5/htdb0043.htm>: „If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them”.

³ For the concept of *recognition*, see Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807): the exterior as a thing, even though it is thought, i.e. is a “natural conscience”, is just the servitude that conscience as such must escape from.

This servitude begins from the conscience of the self-certainty in the form of the exterior world. For this reason, Hegel has named the first “natural” form of self-conscience “*amour-propre*” or egotism which refers to what is usually called ‘subjectivism’, i.e. opposition to any criteria given by the exterior, including by the others. The certainty given by the exterior is annulled by the certainty given by the conscience of the self. This negative attitude towards the exterior / the otherness/the others was described by Hegel as *wish*. This one is, au fond, the negation of everything that attacks the self-conscience. This leads to – and at the same time requires – the conscience of proving its truth to the self and against the others.

Here appears the need to being recognized by the others, and not to annul them: at the level of the self the problem is to subdue the others – who, themselves, tend to manifest their self – so that their individuality should be recognized. In this way the relationship master – slave appears as process of fulfilling this need.

See also Ana Bazac, „Merleau-Ponty: recunoașterea omului ca vizibilă și invizibilă”, *Studii de istorie a filosofiei universale*, vol. XVI, București, Editura Academiei Române, 2008, pp. 202-216 [Merleau-Ponty: the recognition of man as visible and invisible].

⁴ For the sense of this word, Husserl’s *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (1957, posthumous), Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1970, would be meaningful.

⁵ See the representation of this word in Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/index.htm>.

congeners. In fact, the modern image of “we, the people” was promoted from below, continuing the old conscience of *difference resulted from submission* and becoming the new translation of a continuous structure of domination-submission.

On a hand, the common people have become the implied sense of society as *totality*¹, but an excruciating feeling and thinking was just to give worth to both this sense of totality and the individual as detached figure of society. The result was that theories have continued to explain society only in a unidirectional manner – from the individual – and *have separated society as totality from the ordinary men*.

b) This epistemological observation serves us to mention the historical background of the notion of ordinary man. And, first of all, the tacit supposition of this notion is that it reflects, in its singular abstraction, *only a crowd of people*. The ordinary always meant the plural (ordinary men, common people), the others taken at a very general and anonymous assumption: that of their *function* to support *our* (or more correctly, *my*) existence, my passing through life. But this function was which annuls the experience to be a subject.

But the fact that the ordinary men never were the criterion of my proving true in front of life – they were only *instruments* or features, sometimes simple furniture, of the environment – is not an objective and neutral metaphysical state of the human person who would be and feel alone and his/her human identity would not need the others, but an *ideological construct*. We can here see not only the different social place of the creators of philosophical and sociological theories from that of the multitude, but also the weight of “the visible” given by the historical superposition of so many mainstream theories in the structuring of worldviews and states of mind. This is the reason of the importance of non-conformist, revolutionary manners to consider man and his environment: that of *taking out from the state of concealment* (as Heidegger expressed the truth) “*the invisible*”. Or better, that of disclosing in the life and knowledge structures the mixture of *invisible transposed into visible*, since *just this visible is what opposes the effort to disclose it*.

As a “relation of reflection immanent to the field of the problematic over *its* own objects and *its* own problems”², the capacity to see the prejudices inserted within the real, i.e. to change the place of the real, the

¹ Henri Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne. II. Fondements d'une sociologie de la quotidienneté*, Paris, L'Arche Éditeur, 1961, p. 183.

² Louis Althusser, *Lire le capital*, Tome I, Paris, Maspero, 1965, p. 25.

imaginary and the symbolic from within a coherent conception, does not so much belong to the individual (it belongs of course, but not this direct cause is what I want to stress) but to the field of ideological structures that push the individual to see them.

In this view, we may differentiate the historical images about the ordinary men in two moments – which are, however, not at all opposed to one another but are continuous –: the pre-modern, where the ordinary were the opposite class to that of the rich or noble stratum; and though this opposite class formed the most part of society, it was conceived of, for example, in the Western Middle Ages as an excessive excrescence of *laboratores*, poor and immoral beings upon the social body of those who really did matter¹.

It is significant that in the ancient times, even though a people was characterised by its origin, and all of the same origin formed a people – which is always a multitude –, in fact the dominant worldview made the difference between “us”, really sharing a community of values and level, and the ordinary men. These ones – and certainly we do not talk about slaves here – were the low people (ὄχλος), the plebeians², overabundant and rather irrational³, thus not dignified to be the subject of politics. For this

¹ See Jacques Le Goff, *Pour un autre Moyen Age. Temps, travail et culture en occident*, Paris, Gallimard, 1978, especially « Note on the tripartite society... », « The peasants and the rural world... » and « Trade and profession... ».

² Those who did not matter although they had a known origin; or, though *gentiles* – belonging to a family, a clan or tribe, to the indigenous population of a certain χώρα – they were/were considered as *homines sine gente*, without ancestors, thus ordinary.

³ See Plato, *Gorgias*, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/gorgias.html>: „men who had no more sense than children”; and Plato, *Republic*, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.3.ii.html>: „- Now will the city have to fill and swell with a multitude of callings which are not required by any natural want; such as the whole tribe of hunters and actors, of whom one large class have to do with forms and colors; another will be the votaries of music --poets and their attendant train of rhapsodists, players, dancers, contractors; also makers of divers kinds of articles, including women's dresses. And we shall want more servants. Will not tutors be also in request, and nurses wet and dry, tire women and barbers, as well as confectioners and cooks; and swineherds, too, who were not needed and therefore had no place in the former edition of our State, but are needed now? They must not be forgotten: and there will be animals of many other kinds, if people eat them. - Certainly. - And living in this way we shall have much greater need of physicians than before? - Much greater. - And the country which was enough to support the original inhabitants will be too small now, and not enough? - Quite true. - Then a slice of our neighbors' land will be wanted by us for pasture and tillage, and they will want a slice of ours, if, like ourselves, they exceed the limit of necessity, and give themselves up to the unlimited accumulation of wealth?”

It's neither Plato's solution, nor his epistemological manner to transmit it is what is important here, but his conception about the irrationality of the most of people, even the well offs (who moreover need servants – who are not slaves – “who are intellectually hardly on

reason, the ancient representation of politics had hardly gone out from the pattern of “eternal return”: the presumable and periodic power of these common people could not but generate a corrupt deviation leading to a new concentration of power (not even this one being more lasting, of course).

On the other hand, there is the modern moment, where the ordinary were not only those who worked but also those who could consume, in this way no longer being “the poor”. The modern times, and more specifically the late modernity have developed the ordinary as the *statistical* man, the *average* men: those who fuel the capitalist economic growth. But not even the rising consumption transforms them as “ours”: for they consume, for example, unhealthy food while “we” appropriate only the healthy one¹, and they put out the light on the Earth Day, but “we” are those who decide the war and armament policies, just contrary to the ecological aims.

Therefore, with the entire democratisation of consumption and manners, including the force and myth of human rights, there is a common place and continuity between the traditional and the modern images about the ordinary man: it consists in that one excludes the possibility that the common people have the capacity of uniqueness, of creativity.

c) Politically speaking, the ordinary men were been counter posed to the dominant class, or the political and economic “elite”. The pristine and permanent supposition of this class was that it would be an *ontological difference* between it and the common people². This supposition has developed two important directions legitimizing the social division: the one of the *merit* of the well-off and dominant strata (quite opposite to the

the level of companionship; still they have plenty of bodily strength for labour, which accordingly they sell, and are called, if I do not mistake, hirelings, hire being the name which is given to the price of their labour. - True. - Then hirelings will help to make up our population? – Yes”).

¹ And the consequences were known more than 100 years ago, see Charles Gide, *Principes d'économie politique* (1883), Paris, L. Lerose et Forcel, 1884, p. 415: in the same natural area, people from the poor strata live lesser than the rich, and the proportion and gravity of diseases are higher in the poor strata than in the rich ones.

Later on, and critically discussing the ecological crisis, Takis Fotopoulos stressed that “the economic and social implications of the ecological crisis are primarily paid in terms of the destruction of lives and livelihood of the lower social groups —either in Bangladesh or in New Orleans— and much less in terms of those of the elites and the middle classes, which have various ways at their disposal to minimise these consequences”, “Is degrowth compatible with a market economy?”, *The International Journal of INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (January 2007),

http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol3/vol3_no1_Takis_degrowth_PRINTABLE.htm.

² As Aristotle conceived it between slaves and slaves masters.

undeserving ordinary men), and the one of the necessary and *different functions* both parts of society play: the subdued position of ordinary men being only a result and manifestation of its own function.

The rise of modern ideology and class struggle brought a new figure re-structuring both the theories and the social relationships, that of the human rights, and this figure could no more be excluded from the representations of society. But even today they are second rank citizens, though they have all the rights formally accepted in a certain society; as well as even today there are people outside the citizenship from Western countries and who do not matter since “we can do them what they cannot do us” (Chomsky). It is so for *they have no ordinary means to decide* over their condition of ruled. From an economic standpoint, the representation of ordinary men and the consideration towards them follow the phases of modernity. I mention here only the importance of the common people during the post-war welfare state, and the tendency to rarefy this importance during the next phase, that of trans-national capital, whose neo-liberal policies we all have experienced for more than two decades. More, today we are the witness of the rise of both meritocratic and functionalist arguments of the deepening of the social division: the heterogeneous character of social structure is covered by the simple opposition between the ordinary men having no power to decide over their existence, and the powerful; the human rights are depreciated and neglected; and in fact the neo-liberal organisation of society is subordinated to the aims of the elite, promoting even an existential separation: for some ones – “the best of times”, for the crowd – “the worst of times”, as in Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859).

But politics is more than ideology – which is concentrated around an absolute, central subject that we would not have other choice than mirroring it¹ –: it is *action* whose ground is the *class struggle*, and this means that the ideology and the subject of mainstream worldviews are re-viewed and re-created “in the materiality of the class struggle”². An interesting example is the sociological turn in the philosophy and policies of science, where the

¹ Nicole-Edith Thévenin, « On naît toujours quelque part », 1993, <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/On-naît-toujours-quelque-part>.

² Louis Althusser, “Marx dans ses limites” (1978) in Louis Althusser, *Écrits philosophiques et politiques*, Tome I, Paris, Stock/IMEC, 1994, p. 512.

public, i.e. the common people are conceived of as the participant, beneficiary and desirable decision-maker of science¹.

d) Indeed, philosophy is “a laboratory, where is always brought to the proof, at abstract level, the fundamental problem of ideological hegemony, therefore the constitution of the dominant ideology”². In philosophy, the view of man was first of all universalist, since every man has the faculty of reason³. Only at the second leap, philosophy has focused on the differences in the realisation of this faculty⁴, and has developed without much questioning the social causes of these differences, i.e. by installing itself within the logic of abstract universalism⁵ joined with a pattern of social distances thought as eternal.

¹ See for example Isabelle Peschard, “Participation of the Public in Science: Towards a New Kind of Scientific Practice”, *Human Affairs*, Special Issue ‘Action and Practice Theory’, edited by Theodore R. Schatzski, vol. 17, no. 2, Dec. 2007, pp. 138-153; or Dr. Stuart Parkinson, *Science and Technology: Making a Difference*, SGR (Scientists for Global Responsibility), 2010, <http://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/sgr.org.uk/files/Manchester-scitech-difference.pdf>.

² Louis Althusser, „La transformation de la philosophie” (1976), in Louis Althusser, *Sur la philosophie*, Paris, Gallimard, 1994, p. 169.

³ See for example Heraclitus, *The Complete Fragments*, Translation and Commentary and The Greek text – William Harris, Prof. Emeritus, Middlebury College, <http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/Philosophy/heraclitus.pdf>: “2. We should let ourselves be guided by what is common to all. Yet, although the Logos is common to all, most men live as if each of them had a private intelligence of his own...80. Thinking is common to all”.

And later the famous phrase of Descartes’ *Discourse on the Method* (1637), I: “Good sense is, of all things among men, the most equally distributed; for every one thinks himself so abundantly provided with it, that those even who are the most difficult to satisfy in everything else, do not usually desire a larger measure of this quality than they already possess”.

⁴ See only Plato, *Gorgias*, 464d-465b, http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=766&chapter=93703&layout=html&Itemid=27: “it aims at pleasure without any thought of the best. An art I do not call it, but only an experience, because it is unable to explain or to give a reason of the nature of its own applications. And I do not call any irrational thing an art”; or 518c-d; or *The Republic*, II, 373a, „many will not be satisfied with the simpler way of life”, to d: „living in this way we shall have much greater need of physicians than before”.

⁵ Nietzsche and Heidegger tried to destroy this abstract universalism.

Nietzsche stated that the tragic sense of life – as it was represented by the first, Dionysian, culture (and tragedy) of the ancient Greeks – meant the opposition of the joy of life and excess of vitality to the *horrible*, to the possible tragic course of existence, emphasised by the myths; but this inclination to pessimism was not the sign of decadence; just on the contrary, the “super-developed civilisation” is optimistic, utilitarian and positivist and thinks to represent the modern victory of reason, while in fact it is the bearer of the decay of the vital force (*The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*, 1872). The modern culture is “equivocal” and “hypocritical” (*Ecce Homo*, 1888), it (through the agency of philosophy)

Finally, what is so important nowadays is the contradictory attitude toward the ordinary men even at the discursive level: on a hand, one insists on the care about them (about the reduction of their shortcomings), but at the same time it postpones the care in the name of private profit¹. Since the

involves “cultivated philistines” and moves within the academic knowledge and illusions; or society needs a science beyond the academic conformism, a dry analysis “without illusions”, but just in this way oriented towards values, and subordinated to them; a knowledge aiming at attacking the rules which have implemented the double discourse and the dissociated morals from the real life of the first industrial revolution; on the one hand, the discourses were full of compassion and selflessness; on the other hand, reality invalidated these discourses, being filled with the scepticism of the aristocratic morals towards suffering (*Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886, § 39, § 202, § 203 and § 46)

In his turn, Heidegger defined technology as *Gestell*, and this support or enframing or means was identical in the mass mechanisation and production, and in the manner to think, i.e. to un-cover truth and Being. From this standpoint, technology and Western metaphysics were thought by the philosopher as intimately related: coming from the exterior of metaphysics, technology has signalled the closing of Being, by facilitating at the same time a certain control over existence; while a non-metaphysical philosophy is to open up the Being to the human experience, and to make it intelligible. If so, both technology and metaphysics are mutual extensions. However, the problem was for Heidegger that neither technology nor metaphysics were real means of pointing out the Being, the consequences of technology being consonant with the crisis of metaphysics. Why is that? Because they are no more able to uncover Being.

Heidegger tended to surpass both the technological optimism and the simplistic pessimism, in *The Question Concerning Technology*, 1954. He suggested that technology – originating from *techne* as poiesis/ pro-duction (thus not only the instrument of man, but also an action with its own autonomy) – is *only a way* to realise the destiny of man – even though the modern technology is what seems to give the track of man and society as it would be the only way to emphasise their truth, and thus this “truth” itself being reduced by the modern technology to “the only way it opens and engraves”.

In fact, truth (evanescent) constitutes only outside the inner and simple logic of technology, through a critical reflection over the meeting between the reflection itself (concerning the human destiny) and what the being itself (simpler, the nature or existence) reveals to the human conscience. If so, modern technology has to no more be an exterior, so-called objective and inevitable logic which enframes being, but the result of man’s critical reflection in such a way that it (modern technology) really unfolds his essence.

It’s not only a question of danger the modern technology produces: or rather, just by reflecting on the potentialities of the modern technology, one could detach from the stereotypes it brings in its train. Only in such a way (this way as such is dangerous, since we stay between possibilities) our human essence – i.e. our freedom to reveal our destiny – could be understood. Technology lies within the realm of our destiny, but it does not occupy it totally, though this realm could be constituted and revealed only under the sway of technology (of what it represents).

To understand is only to learn to inquire and to hearken to the questions which reveal, Heidegger said, and this means to be conscious of the manner our overwhelming ordinary experience of technology shapes our states themselves to inquire and see.

¹ Nowadays there are agricultural techniques which have a huge productivity even without using chemical stimulants, cloned animals and growth hormones, or genetically engineered

“ordinary men” are formed by unique individuals, they have a value that no one could deny; at the same time, their life shows *as if* they would not be too worthy individuals. The present technologies develop in a way which more and more emphasises that there is no need of so many ordinary men; at the same time, the private profit needs them as consumers. In sum, ordinary men seem to be more attractive as statistic average, but less as creative individuals pretending rights, namely the right to manifest, each of them, their unique creativity.

In fact and in a paradoxical manner, the ordinary men seem to be again rejected by the present social organisation worldwide, although the mainstream ideology does not yet depreciate the myth of the abstract ordinary man.

seed and cultures marked by herbicide glyphosate. The biological and agricultural sciences are so developed that *now we know what to do* for having healthy food and life. We know in which proportions the very processed food, the artificial substitutes and simulacra of necessary matter to eat are dangerous to us. We know the proportions of fat, glucoses, carbohydrates we need or, on the contrary, which are dangerous to us. We know how much to eat without harming us.

We also know how to care of the land/earth, in length and depth.

But we face a chaotic world where, in the second decade of the third millennium, millions of people who are overweight live near millions who are *undernourished*. We speak about famine and hunger, even after nearly 70 years of the Second World War, and *obesity* is related to the waste of food, transposed into the *malnourished* situation of the poor (working poor) and impoverished middle classes (as well as to the unhealthy way of living, as sedentary or excessive regime of work). But the food waste unites with the production of an enormous quantity of unhealthy, artificial food, promoted by an aggressive advertisement. Imagine the enormous energy, creativity and material expenditures used for this production. Do they not waste the energy and matter of the production of a healthy food?

If it seems that there would not be sufficient money to invest in agriculture and food industry, but at the same time the military and armament expenditures are so high, we have to question the rationality of this repartition of expenditures. Are the military-industrial complex right by pressing for the increase of military expenditures, or are every ordinary man and woman right by reclaiming their right to food and more, their right to a healthy food?

At the level of the contradictory situation of the ordinary men, we have to notice too the “paradox of participation” they lie in: on the one hand, they are called to participate in the democratic process, while from the other hand the elite is that who instrumentalises the participatory practices, see Ioan-Alexandru Grădinaru, „The Paradox of Participation. The Power of Domination and the Power of Change”, *Argumentum. Journal of the Seminar of Discursive Logic, Argumentation Theory and Rhetoric*, Vol. 10, Issue, 1, 2012, pp. 129-140.

2. *The social development*

As it is well-known, the concept of development – in the last analysis, *acquisitions of culture and civilisation, which are successively adding and constituting a superior state of things* – is somehow synonymous with progress, put as keyword by the optimistic ideology of Enlightenment, and reflecting both the openness and possibility generated by the modern relations and values, and the transfigured interests of the Western bourgeoisie in its state of advantaged economic pioneer.

But progress is not homogeneously spread and is fully reversible. At least the last decades have emphasised the prejudice of those who took for granted the image of the continuous development as panacea.

Progress includes the level of science and technology and the one of manners¹, and also that of social relations. And from this last viewpoint, both J.-J. Rousseau – more than 300 years ago – and the present engineered singularity theory stand for the bitter conclusion that the scientific and technical development has not yet generated a benign change of the structural relationships between human beings².

Philosophy has warned us not only of the constitution and contradictory consequences of mass society as a result of modern industrialisation (Nietzsche, Heidegger) – the tendency to better submit the ordinary men to domination, through the agency of consumption, organisation and control – but also of the qualitative *limitation* of society facing the danger of its destruction because of the new quality of technology. Indeed, the atomic bomb exceeds the former scientific accumulations and surpasses the power of the man which seems to become obsolete. He was used to tests in laboratories and limited areas of experimenting, as well as to the idea that there would be good ends excusing the use of irreversible

¹ Claudine Haroche et Ana Montoya, *Former et réformer les mœurs : une question morale et politique*, http://www.upicardie.fr/labo/curapp/revues/root/32/claudine_haroche_al.pdf_4a07e3791b185/claudine_haroche_al.pdf.

² See J.-J. Rousseau, „Discours qui a remporté le prix de l’Académie de Dijon, en l’année 1750; sur cette question, imposée par la même Académie: Si le rétablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs”, in *Oeuvres complètes*, tome I, Paris, Firmin Didot frères, libraires, imprimeurs de l’Institut de France, 1866 ; and Ana Bazac, „Between aspiration and model: the social construct of the future man”, in *Proceedings of 2011 IEEE International Conference on Grey Systems and Intelligent Services (GSIS), 15th WOSC International Congress on Cybernetics and Systems*, Editor-in-chief Sifeng Liu, CD, ISBN 978-1-61284-489-3, Nanjing University, 2011, pp. 932-937.

annihilation and suffering, but the atomic bomb did away with these old preconceptions functioning as assuring pillars for the neutral scientists¹.

If armament is an excessive example supporting a critical standpoint², what about the modern medicine prescribing antibiotics already generating antibiotic resistance³ and using antibiotics in food production⁴, thus generating more ills?

But these facts are not inherent secondary damages resulting from the independent course of science and technique: “Drug companies should not over-market their products. Doctors should not over-prescribe. And antibiotics should not be used for animals that are not sick but to fatten them and thus enable higher profits”⁵.

Consequently, the core of development is and has to be not only technical (as all the supporters of the accelerating change theory consider). And, once more, technology is not at all a neutral Enframing (*Gestell*): the fact that a nuclear power plant (and not a hydroelectric power plant, as in Heidegger) is developed even on a high seismic seaside⁶, or the present excessive and absurd agricultural and food techniques, quite opposed to the traditional peasant farming referred to by Heidegger, are not only the result of the technological logic that seems to command us, but also of the *capitalist structural relations*. More, these relations too *have the function of enframing* the human mind and being, thus including the course of technology⁷. (And if so, they have to be un-concealed, don't they?)

¹ Günther Anders, *L'obsolescence de l'homme. Sur l'âme à l'époque de la deuxième révolution industrielle* (1956), Paris, Éditions de l'Encyclopédie des Nuisances, 2001.

² But armament proves to be quite opposite to the conditions and requirements of social development. Nicolas Georgescu-Roegen, “Energy and Economic Myths”, *Southern Economic Journal*, 41, no. 3, January 1975, <http://dieoff.org/page148.htm>, wrote that from the standpoint of power economy, “the production of all instruments of war, *not only of war itself*, should be prohibited completely”.

³ <http://www.boiseweekly.com/CityDesk/archives/2012/03/18/world-health-organization-antibiotic-overuse-may-cause-minor-infections-to-become-deadly>.

⁴ <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/02/21/147190101/how-using-antibiotics-in-animal-feed-creates-superbugs>.

⁵ „An End to Modern Medicine?”, *South Bulletin*, 5 April 2012, Issue 60.

⁶ See Ana Bazac, „The Problem of Inertia in the Approach of Energy”, *Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations*, 1, 2012, pp. 59-74.

⁷ But this function of enframing pertains also to *ideology*: this means that “the reality itself cannot reproduce itself without this so-called ideological mystification... the ideological distortion is written into its very essence” and emphasising “the paradox of a being which can reproduce itself only in so far as it is misrecognized and overlooked”, Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London, New York, Verso, 1989, p. 28.

The social positioning of technology and its prejudices clearly appear in the theory of accelerated technological change (including the aspect of accelerating returns¹): indeed and technologically, if something can be done, it will be so, thus no one would be responsible for its consequences; but the guiding marks of the *technological possible* and of the possibilities of man (man as *possibilitas*, Heidegger) can lie neither within the system of technology, but outside this system, nor in any enframing transformed into untouched prejudice.

There is certainly a complex and feed-backed intertwining between all the realms, domains and aspects. For example, the high level of literacy and intellectual skills was related with high rates of capitalist economic growth² and these features made the difference between the high-developed, Centre type countries, and the under-developed ones. The economic theories and policies, emerged from and representing the Centre, had a more or less tacit assumption: that this phase of “national” capitalism – i.e. of the relationships between the national capital and the national labour force whose products were sold everywhere by the national capital from the Centre type countries – will last forever, for it will always be the above-mentioned skilled specific of Western workforce. But when globalisation occurred, the fragmented economic view worked no more: a growing proportion of high value work being located in low-cost countries, high-skill people in low-cost countries suddenly become a more attractive option for companies as the higher added value resulting from the world network of labour force³.

And if at a technological level, “the twenty-first century is the age of digital Taylorism – This involves translating knowledge work into working knowledge through the extraction, codification and digitalisation of knowledge into software prescripts and packages that can be transmitted and manipulated by others regardless of location –”⁴, ought this process to be considered in a univocal manner? Since going back to the pre-

¹ Ray Kurzweil, *The Law of Accelerating Returns*, 2001, <http://www.kurzweilai.net/the-law-of-accelerating-returns>.

² See for the history of this process, Andrey Korotayev, Artemy Malkov, Daria Khaltourina, *Introduction to Social Macrodynamics: Compact Macromodels of the World System Growth*, Moscow, Editorial URSS, 2006, Chapter 6, Reconsidering Weber: Literacy and the Spirit of Capitalism, pp. 87-91, http://cliodynamics.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=187&Itemid=70.

³ See *Education, globalisation and the knowledge economy*, <http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/globalisationcomm.pdf>, p. 6.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

globalisation era and to the mechanical Taylorism of the local division between engineers and workers is impossible, let us rather re-think the social shape which these processes take.

Karl Popper imagined the “open society” as a Centre type country (where the ordinary men and women could benefit by this status through the agency of welfare state policies and – Popper insisted only on the political aspect though he presupposed somehow the economic one) where the political relations allowed free elections, thus a certain control of citizens over their representatives: this country was the generalisable model of the world, since the development of the West could but spread the Western way of life (or “values”¹). Globalisation is the process which denies this image, and the facts we are confronted with² (the general impoverishing, including those who were during the welfare state era the “middle classes” – or one speaks even about the ‘thirdworldisation’ of the majority of the population in every country and, at the same time, of the globalisation of the 1% billionaires; the increase of aggressiveness, and first of all of global warfare for resources and economic and political advantages; the incredible cynical³ behaviour of the powerful, more cynical than whenever before) require not only a fresh look over theories but also, or foremost over the relationships between the ordinary people and the social development. If evolution “is the true historical essence of the world”⁴, it is not at all an irreparable exteriority to men, and that is why the main present philosophical task is – through emphases and hermeneutics of characteristics and senses – to get the social development nearer to the ordinary men. In other words, to research how much development is useful to the ordinary people – this leading to the re-defining of development as such – and if, and how, *the ordinary people may control the social development*.

Therefore, development has a *social* character, and has to be social: its criteria do not consist in the proportion of lowering the cost of production (or of profit, since the world economy is capitalist), but in the benefits of culture and civilisation for the ordinary men could manifest their creativity.

¹ I put *values* between comas in order to underscore the metaphorical use of this word within the mainstream ideology: that of a substitute of the Western economic aims and means to realize them.

² These facts are the result of the objective directions of delocalization, financialisation and deregulation. In fact, globalization is an objective and inherent process of capitalism.

³ This word – in the meaning of Peter Sloterdijk.

⁴ E. Moutsopoulos, “Is a renewal of humanism possible today?”, *Φιλοσοφία*, 40, 2010, p. 151.

Some more words are needed here. As some hold, the ordinary man would have always been the abstract man that philosophers had in view, thus he would have been the ultimate criterion of their reasoning. In fact, not this was the case, as we know, and to cross apparently closed fields is just the purpose of philosophy. By calling *universalism* the value that would represent the ordinary man, Immanuel Wallerstein described three modern variants of universalism: the “pan-European” model of human rights, originated in Enlightenment, the “trivial” political conception of the superiority of Western representative democracy, and the “universalism of the market”, which asserts the absolute truth of the search of profit¹. Philosophy discloses each variant, as well as their concrete theories and debates which follow (the infinite economic growth and the opposite theories of de-growth²). In this endeavour of deconstruction of the imaginary of development, one could arrive at a process of “universalizing”³ by surpassing the formal levels (as the one of constitutional patriotism – Habermas), of a *shared universalism* of so many particular experiences that it could avoid the idea of the superfluous man from the standpoint of modern development. But this is already a post-modern universalism.

The ordinary man and the social development

The thesis this paper defends is that *the ordinary people have to be involved in the control of social development*. Why would this involvement be necessary?

1) In the mainstream grounding of the majority of theories taken into account by philosophy, there are two intertwined suppositions concerning the ordinary man. One is that he is the natural *object* of the natural logic of the facts – of social processes and of technology –, political decisions only reflecting this “naturalness” of things; put simply, the common people are but elements or passive objects of the strategic games of decision-makers. The

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *European Universalism. The Rhetoric of Power*, New York-London, The New Press, 2006.

² See only Serge Latouche, Why less should be so much more: “Degrowth economics”, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, November 2004, <http://mondediplo.com/2004/11/14latouche>; and John Bellamy Foster, “Capitalism and Degrowth: An Impossibility Theorem”, *Monthly Review*, Volume 62, Issue 08 (January), 2011, <http://monthlyreview.org/2011/01/01/capitalism-and-degrowth-an-impossibility-theorem>.

³ François Jullien (2008), quoted in Giuseppe Cacciato, “Intercultural Ethics and ‘Critical’ Universalism”, *Cultura*, International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology, 8(2)/2011, p. 32.

other one is that the ordinary man is the presumable *beneficiary* of the social development, thus of the political decisions; more clearly, he is an abstract, contemplative and exterior beneficiary of what happens in the world, or more precisely, the beneficiary of the objects (from the world) it represents and consists in.

A beneficiary must not necessarily be a subject, an entity which controls his environment and decisions. For example, the modern market economy is based on the fuelling of the frenzy to consume, irrespective of the meanings and consequences of this spiral of consumption: but this fuelling leads just to the increase of the *passivity* of consumers, to their integration without opposition in a process which sucks them fully.

On the other hand but in the same respect, the modern technology demands initiative and creativity, characteristics of the subject. But even in this position, the ordinary man is proper to it only in his passivity, as an enthusiastic respondent to the fragmented tasks one distributes to him.

As we know, this *fragmented* manner to treat the human species and its environment is counter-productive: but the ordinary man has nothing to do with, since no one asks his opinion. Have we not seen the answers given by the world decision-makers to the present economic and ecological crisis? Their line, with all the words covering it, was *only to continue the unsustainable growth*, the absurd search of profit that comes to bigger grips all the countries and peoples.

But what does it mean that the ordinary men are not subjects, but objects of and in the social development? If they only occupy their destined places, it means that they could only bear the consequences of these places: in short, they could be *victims*. Could an ethics talking about universalisable principles not expressly mention the problem of victims and the putting of the storyteller in the place of victims? From this standpoint, the focus on victims requires an *ethics of liberation*¹: not only of desirable universal principles and theoretical impeccable reasoning, but of *practical lines to experience a non-victim manner to live life*.

¹ Enrique Dussel in „Ethics Is the Original Philosophy; or, The Barbarian Words. Coming from the Third World: An Interview with Enrique Dussel”, *Boundary 2. An international journal of literature and culture* (Duke) No. 1, Vol. 28 (Spring 2001), pp. 19-73, <http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/c/2001-325.pdf>; and <http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/15-1/06chapter5pp153-180.pdf>; and <http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/c/1998-296.pdf>; and <http://www.enriquedussel.com/txt/From%20Fraternity%20to%20Solidarity.pdf>.

Indeed and certainly because of objective causes – which are ontological assembles of the human being (see the rarity¹) –, the sense of development was appropriated by a part of society. This part constituted the *subject* of social decisions, and it moved further in such a way as to preserve its condition of subject: although at the expense of the other part, transformed into an object. The objective causes of this situation are shrinking today². But if technology could be a more sophisticated means of subjection, and not only of freeing the common people³, what could philosophy do? To focus on the poor – as representative for the ordinary people – and *to put itself in their place*, to question the means by which they want to be subject and to arrive at practical overthrowing of their deep state of submission: “demotic ownership of the means of production and a new system of democratic allocation of resources”⁴. But practice has to be confronted with the old philosophical claim of *universal dignity of all human beings*⁵: and if this confrontation does not annul our “narrative vision of ethics” where “the care for the weak...is the central idea, its center of gravity”⁶, philosophy could be a weapon of the human dignity: moreover, as it has always been.

¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique. I. Questions de méthode*, Paris, Gallimard, 1960.

² These conditions were prefigured by Aristotle. In *Politics*, he explained the necessity of slavery by the imperfect character of instruments of production: "For if every instrument could accomplish its own work, obeying or anticipating the will of others, like the statues of Daedalus, or the tripods of Hephaestus... if, in like manner, the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre without a hand to guide them, chief workmen would not want servants, nor masters slaves", Aristotle, *Politics*, translated by Benjamin Jowett, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.1.one.html>.

³ See for example, <http://www.yalelawtech.org/anonymity-online-identity/we-are-anonymous-we-are-legion/>; *Anonymous Hacks Greek Ministry Website, Demands IMF Withdrawal, Threatens It Will Wipe Away All Citizen Debts*, 02-21-12, <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/anonymous-hacks-greek-ministry-website-demands-imf-withdrawal-threatens-it-will-wipe-away-all-c>.

⁴ Takis Fotopoulos, “Is degrowth compatible with a market economy?”, *The International Journal of INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (January 2007), http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol3/vol3_no1_Takis_degrowth_PRINTABLE.htm.

⁵ Peter Kemp, „The Globalisation of the World”, in *Philosophical problems today, Volume 3*, edited by Peter Kemp, Dordrecht, Springer, 2004, p. 24: „dignity originally concerns others, and is thereby unlike autonomy, which originally concerns the self. This is why if one transforms this idea of dignity as a quality into a universal principle for understanding the value of the human being as such, then dignity can be attributed not only to men and women as rational beings, but also to human beings who, for example, do not yet or no longer have an autonomous will, and who for this reason are incapable of controlling their own lives”.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 22.

2) The present transforming societies – In function of which criteria? According to which model? To which ends? – are parts of the present world where capitalism is the dominant system. As a consequence, they not only take over the capitalist model but they carry on policies of development within the complex of capitalist international relations.

A problem concerning the common people living in these societies is what type of creative destruction is the best for the general living standard and which would be the optimal rhythm of this? *Ça depend*, to quote Marx. If the rapid capitalist development brings in its train the rise of purchasing power and consumption and millions of former poor come to belong to different kinds of middle class – and the capitalist production supplies millions of workplaces – this thorough integration in the world capitalism seem to be profitable to them. But for sometimes economic crises occur, the workplaces could shrink and the “middle class” model of consumption could get thin.

No one desires to go back to misery. What should be done, they ask? The emergent economies – which have cheap labour force, resources and high demand (even though not all solvable) – have a high comparative advantage. But every country in the world tends to offer comparative advantages to the world capital. This is the reason of reduction of the welfare acquisitions everywhere. What remains to the ordinary people? To protest¹, but is this sufficient?

An individual making both ends meet – and a sure advantage of some countries – is the “country life”. The too much rural is certainly not good for the capitalist market², but it could help many people (although the rural poor seem to be more deprived than the urban). But could we talk about the perspectives of these people?

3) The cold analysis of the situation of ordinary people leads to the repetition of the old question: *what to be done?* The storytellers resort to the hopes in the *reforms* which could at least improve the condition of the common people (and worldwide). But, beyond the good wills of reformers, reforms are initiated from the top, following the pressures from the bottom,

¹ Mike Davis, “Spring Confronts Winter”, *New Left Review*, November-December 2011, <http://www.newleftreview.org/?page=article&view=2923>: “It is almost a tautology to observe that in BRIC-bloc countries, where popular expectations of economic progress have recently been raised so high, the pain of re-immiseration may be most intolerable. Thousands of public squares may begin to be occupied. Including one called Tiananmen”.

² „Greece and Portugal Are Too Rural”, April 6, 2012, <http://blogs.wsj.com/brussels/2012/04/06/greece-and-portugal-are-too-rural/?mod=WSJBlog&mod=brussels>.

in order to preserve the state of things as they “were settled for ever” (Dickens, *ibidem*): “If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change” (Lampedusa, *The Leopard*, 1958). Irrespective of the present period of capitalism – where reforms mean the reduction of welfare state and the increase of privileges of the few (quite opposite to the very content of what reform always meant: the mitigation of the life of the many) –, *the system as such cannot be re-formed*¹. Its essence consists of the immoderate search of profit, through intemperate production, consumption, waste of human creativity and life, and misery.

Even the ontological enframing of man – as technology – receives the footprint of the system. The same is with nature².

As if preventing this radical viewpoint about capitalism, some use the old research of W.F. Lloyd on the behaviour of people in front of different types of ownership (people do not contribute to a common good in the same measure they would to a private good that belonged completely to them³) in order to infer that the only economic stimulus of reasonable work and development would be the private property. But this one is what fragments the view about society: it externalizes its own losses and, since this is infinitely multiplied, society can no more absorb them and balance. Not even the colonization of cosmos by this type of civilization leads to the cancellation of this logic (which, sooner or later, would generate aggressions, as the science-fiction literature emphasizes).

It results the need of the *collective control* (and not of the public control managed by the state) over the ends and means of development. If the centres of decisions are (more and more) closed, as today, the ordinary people cannot manifest their subjectivity. It is a simple illusion, therefore, to think that a return of the welfare state would be possible, and realisable through the change of the leaders.

Therefore, there are two criteria to define the ordinary men – always in front of the social development –: the first is that *one denies them the possibility to manifest their creativity*, thus one denies their uniqueness; the

¹ See also Paul Mattick, *I limiti delle riforme*, http://www.weebly.com/uploads/6/7/3/6/6736569/mattick_i_limiti_delle_riforme_countdown.pdf.

² See Graham Turner, *A Comparizon of the Limits to Growth with Thirty Years of Reality*, 2007, <http://www.csiro.au/files/files/plje.pdf>: „the global system is on an unsustainable trajectory unless there is a substantial and rapid reduction in the consumptive behaviour, in combination with technological progress”.

³ W.F. Lloyd, *Two Lectures on Checks to Population*, Oxford, printed by S. Collingwood, MDCCCXXXIII, p. 19.

second is that *they are forbidden to master the leading lines of the social development.*

The collective control, meaning also the collective ownership of the means of production, is such a radical assumption that it could seem a nihilist approach to society: if the basis – which comforts the subject – is cancelled, what would remain for our entire aspiration for freedom?

In fact, *freedom is related to the manifestation of creativeness, as decisions are a form of creativeness.* And if the ordinary people are manipulated as to be only the beneficiary of consumption and entertainment, and a superficial worldview, if they are estranged from the critical thinking and from the possible alternative to be responsible for the social development, what is their freedom, what would it consist of?

Let us add to the expected observation concerning which subject and which liberty, the fact that modernity as such – i.e. capitalism – has in its essence a *nihilist* approach (grasped by Nietzsche in its negative sense¹). Just detaching from the old peasant farming and becoming a world system, thus annulling the old structures of the human experience, capitalism was a form of continuity and, at the same time, of revolutionary discontinuity (Marx) within the social development. The present trans-national phase of capitalism is not but a deepening of the nihilism of the system as such. And features of non-conformist approach regarding the *common* and the *collective control* are contained within the contradictory logic of nihilism². What could philosophy do is just engrave upon the present nihilism and thus take into account the most unspoken and overlooked trends.

To claim the freedom to control the social development is not a fact as strange as some may think. In history, thinkers have contributed to the social development just because they have had free access to the highest products of the social development, the intellectual instruments. And just because they have had free access to these instruments, they could at least try to transform the social environment according to their image about a good society for the many.

Indeed, the situation of the ordinary people – even though they were considered in a narrow concrete or universal abstract meaning – has always

¹ While Marx has insisted on the positive sense of nihilism.

² This contradictory logic consists of the destruction by capitalism of the former values and senses of community, thus opening up the possibility to re-discover them and innovate; this is the positive sense of nihilism; and at the same time, this destruction goes not only to the deep senses of community but it also consists in the annihilation of means by which man could challenge the destruction.

been the landmark of the conceptions concerning the social development. And since this situation was not good at all, thinkers aimed at improving it. But all the wishful thinking could not solve the fundamental limit of the condition of ordinary people: that of being only the beneficiary of the deeds of the powerful.

The entire tradition of the ordinary people's thought – thus also of them as such – was imbued with the idea that they could only demand, as they would be children in front of a given and inevitable environment. Their freedom could happen only within this given and inevitable environment, thus *on a small scale*.

But the social environment is the most important condition of freedom. Consequently, to want to freely choose the directions of the social environment is necessary to freedom. It is a decisive step to want to be responsible for the social environment, and it is followed by *action* if people want their will to not to be annulled.

Action implies *critical judgement* but it is more than that, it is *construction*, a “practice of composition”¹. If so, the *collective control* as such as well as the *common world*, have to be “composed”. In this work, common people learn to surpass the abstract anthropocentric view of the world by finding the *precedent of the common*². They learn to become the new prince³. Concretely, this work means political struggle, and its core is “*organizing the dis-appropriation*”⁴. But all of these are only possible, and a means to come nearer to the possible is our forging of intellectual tools.

¹ Bruno Latour, “An Attempt at a ‘Compositionist Manifesto’”, *New Literary History*, 41, 2010, <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/120-NLH-GB.pdf>.

² Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009, p. viii: „By ‘the common’ we mean, first of all, the common wealth of the material world – the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature’s bounty – ...also and more significantly those results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledges, languages, codes, information, affects, and so forth. This notion of the common does not position humanity separate from nature, as either its exploiter or its custodian, but focuses rather on the practices of interaction, care and cohabitation in a common world, promoting the beneficia land limiting the detrimental forms of the common”.

³ *Ibidem*: „Becoming-Prince is the process of the multitude learning the art of self-rule and inventing lasting democratic forms of social organisation”.

⁴ David gé Bartoli & Sophie Gosselin, *Organiser la désappropriation, libérer le commun*, Mise en ligne le lundi 14 novembre 2011, <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/Organiser-la-desappropriation>.

REFERENCES

- Althusser, L. (1965). Lire le capital. Tome I, Paris: Maspero.
- Althusser, L. (1976). „La transformation de la philosophie.” In Althusser, L. (1994). Sur la philosophie Paris: Gallimard.
- Althusser, L. (1978). “Marx dans ses limites.” In Althusser, L. (1994) Écrits philosophiques et politiques Tome I Paris : Stock/IMEC.
- Anders, G. (2001). L’obsolescence de l’homme. Sur l’âme à l’époque de la deuxième révolution industrielle (1956), Paris : Éditions de l’Encyclopédie des Nuisances.
- „An End to Modern Medicine?”. (2012) South Bulletin, Issue 60, 5 April.
- Anonymous Hacks Greek Ministry Website, Demands IMF Withdrawal, Threatens It Will Wipe Away All Citizen Debts*, 02-21-12,
<http://www.zerohedge.com/news/anonymous-hacks-greek-ministry-website-demands-imf-withdrawal-threatens-it-will-wipe-away-all-c>; and
<http://www.yalelawtech.org/anonymity-online-identity/we-are-anonymous-we-are-legion/>.
- Aristotle, Politics. translated by Benjamin Jowett,
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.1.one.html>
- Bartoli D. gé & Gosselin, S. Organiser la désappropriation, libérer le commun, Mise en ligne le lundi 14 novembre 2011, <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/Organiser-la-desappropriation>.
- Bazac, A. (2008). „Merleau-Ponty: recunoașterea omului ca vizibilă și invizibilă.” In: Studii de istorie a filosofiei universale, (pp. 202-216). Vol. XVI, București: Editura Academiei Române [Merleau-Ponty: the recognition of man as visible and invisible].
- Bazac, A. (2011). „Between aspiration and model: the social construct of the future man.” In: Proceedings of 2011 IEEE International Conference on Grey Systems and Intelligent Services (GSIS), 15th WOSC International Congress on Cybernetics and Systems (pp. 932-937). Editor-in-chief Sifeng Liu. CD-ROM, Nanjing University.
- Bazac, A. (2012). „The Problem of Inertia in the Approach of Energy”. Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations, 1 (pp. 59-74).
- Cacciatore, G. (2011). “Intercultural Ethics and ‘Critical’ Universalism”, Cultura, International Journal of Philosophy of Culture and Axiology, 8(2), (pp. 23-38).
- Davis, M. (2011). “Spring Confronts Winter”, New Left Review, November-December, <http://www.newleftreview.org/?page=article&view=2923>
- Dussel, E.: „Ethics Is the Original Philosophy; or, (2001). “The Barbarian Words. Coming from the Third World: An Interview with Enrique Dussel”, Boundary 2. An international journal of literature and culture (Duke)
 No. 1, Vol. 28, Spring, (pp. 19-73).

- <http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/c/2001-325.pdf>; or
<http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/15-1/06chapter5pp153-180.pdf>; or
<http://www.ifil.org/Biblioteca/dussel/textos/c/1998-296.pdf>; and
<http://www.enriquedussel.com/txt/From%20Fraternity%20to%20Solidarity.pdf>.
 Education, globalisation and the knowledge economy,
<http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/globalisationcomm.pdf>.
- Foster, J. B. (2011). "Capitalism and Degrowth: An Impossibility Theorem". *Monthly Review*, Volume 62, Issue 08, January
<http://monthlyreview.org/2011/01/01/capitalism-and-degrowth-an-impossibility-theorem>
- Fotopoulos, T. (2007). "Is degrowth compatible with a market economy?". *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January
http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol3/vol3_no1_Takis_degrowth_PRINTABLE.htm.
- Georgescu-Roegen, N. (1975). "Energy and Economic Myths". *Southern Economic Journal*, 41, no. 3, January <http://dieoff.org/page148.htm>
- Gide, C. (1883). *Principes d'économie politique* (reprint 1884). Paris : L. Lerose et Forcel.
- Grădinaru, I.-A. (2012). „The Paradox of Participation. The Power of Domination and the Power of Change”, *Argumentum. Journal of the Seminar of Discursive Logic, Argumentation Theory and Rhetoric*, Vol. 10, Issue, 1 (pp. 129-140)
- „Greece and Portugal Are Too Rural”, (2012). April 6
<http://blogs.wsj.com/brussels/2012/04/06/greece-and-portugal-are-too-rural/?mod=WSJBlog&mod=brussels>.
- Haroche C. & Montoya, A. *Former et réformer les mœurs : une question morale et politique*.
http://www.upicardie.fr/labo/curapp/revues/root/32/claudine_haroche_al.pdf_4a07e3791b185/claudine_haroche_al.pdf.
- Hardt**, M. & **Negri**, A. (2009). *Commonwealth*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Heraclitus, *The Complete Fragments*. Translation and Commentary and The Greek text – William Harris, Prof. Emeritus, Middlebury College,
<http://community.middlebury.edu/~harris/Philosophy/heraclitus.pdf>.
<http://www.boiseweekly.com/CityDesk/archives/2012/03/18/world-health-organization-antibiotic-overuse-may-cause-minor-infections-to-become-deadly> .
<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/02/21/147190101/how-using-antibiotics-in-animal-feed-creates-superbugs>.
- Husserl, E. (1970). *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (1957, posthumous). Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Kemp, P. (2004). „The Globalisation of the World”. In: *Philosophical problems today*, Volume 3, edited by Peter Kemp, Dordrecht: Springer.

Korotayev, A., Malkov, A. & Khaltourina, D. Introduction to Social Macrodynamics: Compact Macromodels of the World System Growth, Moscow, Editorial URSS, 2006, Capter 6, Reconsidering Weber: Literacy and the Spirit of Capitalism, (pp. 87-91)

http://cliodynamics.ru/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=187&Itemid=70.

Kurzweil, R. (2001). The Law of Accelerating Returns,

<http://www.kurzweilai.net/the-law-of-accelerating-returns>.

Latouche, S. (2004). "Why less should be so much more: 'Degrowth economics'". Le Monde Diplomatique, November <http://mondediplo.com/2004/11/14latouche>.

Latour, B. (2010). "An Attempt at a 'Compositionist Manifesto'". New Literary History, 41 <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/120-NLH-GB.pdf>.

Lefebvre, H. (1961). Critique de la vie quotidienne. II. Fondements d'une sociologie de la quotidienneté, Paris : L'Arche Éditeur.

Le Goff, J. (1978). Pour un autre Moyen Age. Temps, travail et culture en occident, Paris, Gallimard.

Lloyd, W.F. (MDCCLXXXIII). Two Lectures on Checks to Population, Oxford: printed by S. Collingwood.

Lukács, G. (1923). History and Class Consciousness

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/works/history/index.htm>.

Mattick, P. I limiti delle riforme,

http://www.weebly.com/uploads/6/7/3/6/6736569/mattick_i_limiti_delle_riforme_co_undownload.pdf.

Moutsopoulos, E. (2010). "Is a renewal of humanism possible today?", Φιλοσοφία, 40 (pp. 151-155).

Parkinson, Dr. S. (2010). Science and Technology: Making a Difference, SGR (Scientists for Global Responsibility).

<http://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/sgr.org.uk/files/Manchester-scitech-difference.pdf>

Peschard, I. (2007). "Participation of the Public in Science: Towards a New Kind of Scientific Practice", Human Affairs, Special Issue 'Action and Practice Theory', edited by Theodore R. Schatzki, vol. 17, no. 2, Dec. (pp. 138-153).

Plato, Gorgias, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/gorgias.html> and 464d-465b

http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=766&chapter=93703&layout=html&Itemid=27

Plato, Republic, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.3.ii.html>

Rousseau, J.-J. (1866). „Discours qui a remporté le prix de l'Académie de Dijon, en l'année 1750; sur cette question, imposée par la même Académie: Si le rétablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les moeurs”, In : Oeuvres complètes, tome I, Paris : Firmin Didot frères, libraires, imprimeurs de l'Institut de France.

Sartre, J.-P. (1960). Critique de la raison dialectique. I. Questions de méthode, Paris : Gallimard.

The New Testament, John, 13,17, <http://www.agsconsulting.com/htdbv5/htdb0043.htm>

Thévenin, N.-E. (1993). “On naît toujours quelque part”.

<http://multitudes.samizdat.net/On-naît-toujours-quelque-part>.

Turner, G. (2007). A Comparizon of the Limits to Growth with Thirty Years of Reality <http://www.csiro.au/files/files/plje.pdf>

Wallerstein, I. (2006). European Universalism. *The Rhetoric of Power*, New York-London: The New Press.

Žižek, S. (1989). The Sublime Object of Ideology. London, New York: Verso.

THE AUTONOMY OF THE POLITICAL THEORIST THE PRINCE AND CITIZEN-SOLDIERS

Christopher VASILLOPULOS¹

Abstract: *This article treats a relevant theme of political philosophy - the relationship between political, military and moral to Machiavelli. The author argues that Machiavelli has established not only the autonomy of politics and political theory against religious or moral justifications, but also the autonomy of political theorist, and show that Machiavelli's conviction in the superiority of citizen-soldiers qualifies him as a hyper-realistic.*

Keywords: *reason to state, citizen-soldiers, Machiavelli, political theory, political theorist, democracy.*

If a statesman feels himself obliged by 'necessity of State' to violate law and ethics, he can still feel himself morally justified at the bar of his own conscience, if in doing so he has, according to his own personal conviction, thought first of the good of the State entrusted to his care. F. Meinecke²

I. *Raison d'Etat*

Machiavelli's almost casual acceptance of *raison d'etat* and its ramifications for political action have been notorious for all of the nearly five centuries since *The Prince*. *Raison d'etat* and its operating principle, the end justifies the means, (along with other seemingly anti-moralisms or capitulations to realism), have become touchstones for what is wrong with the modern world. Even those who may believe the world is not too much with us often believe the world would be better off without the pervasive significance of the political, especially when expressed by nation-states.³ *Raison d'état* is seen as the source of most of the world's inability to confront the problems of humanity and not as a way of coping with them.

In addition to Machiavelli's famous admonitions to a would-be prince to act amorally or immorally, his emphasis on the military has convinced many

¹ Eastern Connecticut State University, USA.

² Meinecke, F.: *Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and its Place in Modern History*, Praeger, N.Y., 1965, p. 6.

³ Political scientists tend to insist on this terminology, because it balances the subjective and emotional qualities of the nation with the objective and rational-legal qualities of the state.

that Machiavelli was more (and worse) than a realist. If not the devil-prince, he was a war-lover. Moreover, Machiavelli justified war—including aggressive and expansionist war—not merely as a necessity for political survival but in pursuit of national interests, including glory.¹ So imbued with chauvinism was he that this apostle of success was able to say, "A wise prince, therefore, always avoids these forces [mercenaries and auxiliaries] and has recourse to his own, and would prefer to lose with his own men than conquer with the forces of others, not deeming it a true victory which is gained by foreign arms."² The only limit (more apparent than real) to *raison d'état*, or the preservation of the state, was nationalism. It is difficult to know whether Machiavelli would have scrupled at foreign or mercenary support to save the state, if Italian nationalism were thereby compromised. My feeling is that he might have done so *as a temporary expedient*. I will have more to say about his devotion to Italy below.

This essay argues that Machiavelli's conviction in the superiority of citizen-soldiers qualified his image as a hyper-realist. Machiavelli was not an advocate of the will to power any more than he was an advocate of one-man rule. The prince (and his *virtu*) was an effective way to confront necessity and fortune while the people were debased, a stage in the development of the nation, not a permanent fixture of civic life.³ Moreover, one of the effects of a truly gifted prince was making himself *unnecessary* by reviving the citizenry to their proper republican roles. One of the most powerful means of accomplishing this refashioning of the citizenry was experience as citizen-soldiers. The *virtu*, though inadvertently, of the prince was to create *virtu* among the citizenry.

Illustrating these points has been made more difficult than it would otherwise have been for so clear a thinker as Machiavelli due to the programmatic objectives of *The Prince*. A textual analysis of *The Prince* cannot demonstrate these conclusions, nor can it disprove them. A leading Renaissance scholar concluded: "There is perhaps the question, given Machiavelli's intense concern with the Florentine militia tradition and his belief

¹ It is sad to say that this doctrine of aggressive war ('pre-emptive war' in current terminology) has been the official doctrine of the neoconservative Bush administration. Nor should it be supposed that only neoconservatives advocate pre-emptive war. Leading political scientists, among them most notably, John Measheimer, endorse the concept as 'offensive realism.' *The tragedy of Great Power Politics*, Norton, NY, 2001.

² Machiavelli, N.: *The Prince and the Discourses*, Random House, N.Y., 1950, p. 50.

³ *Virtu* is difficult to translate. Most of the time 'mastery' or 'prowess' seems the best rendering of the term. *Virtu* is, except when clear by context, functional not moral. More on this subject below.

that only a civic militia could render a citizen body capable of maintaining its liberty, whether he did not have in mind that the prince's command of the army was a means of transforming his relations with those he governed.... But if this was in Machiavelli's mind, he did not follow it out in any detail."¹ I believe, however, one can find warrant for this view by a discussion of some of the secondary literature on Machiavelli and by an appreciation of the role citizen-soldiers played in the development of Athenian democracy, a role Machiavelli would have been aware of from Aristotle (among others). While the text itself does include some suggestions regarding the social structural context of citizen-soldiers, Machiavelli intentionally avoided an elaboration of the social and economic conditions which were necessary to citizen-soldiers and, more significantly, the political effects of having the state so self-consciously dependent upon them. Moreover, he did so fully aware *The Prince* would have been a better theoretical work had he elaborated the extra-military virtues of citizen-soldiers.

Machiavelli allowed The Prince to suffer from a studied incompleteness, because he had a greater object in mind. Not only did Machiavelli establish the autonomy of the political (and political theory) from religious and moralistic determination or justification, he established the autonomy of the political theorist, including the theorist's independence from the theoretical requirements of the work at hand. The role of the modern political theorist, which Machiavelli in effect originated, was itself limited by being engaged. The theoretical work of political theory in the hands of an engaged political theorist had an object over an above its own excellence. It, too, was subordinated to the survival of the state. The political theory of *raison d'état* was limited by *raison d'état*, not by a cautious prince but by one of the boldest theorists the world has known.

Few thinkers have been as vilified as Machiavelli. And yet despite five centuries of combing the great Florentine's writing and private life for signs of degeneracy and evil, this important point has been ignored. Perhaps there was already a surfeit of evil. To a scholarly mind, however, the mutilation of one's own work or what amounts to the same thing, a self-conscious shrinking from a work's integrity, there can few higher sins. Perhaps Machiavelli has succeeded in making many of his critics sensitive to the extra-theoretical aims of their own work, making them loath to explore this source of the self-imposed limits of *The Prince*. Perhaps another value is at play. Machiavelli is thoroughly politicized; everything and everyone is measured by the political.

¹ Pocock, J.G.A.: *The Machiavellian Moment*, Princeton, 1975, p.176. The duration of the Machiavellian moment indicates the difference between 'moment' and any discrete measure of time.

*The political matters. The non-political does not. For Machiavelli, the political theorist is a political actor, just as the prince is in some sense a theorist. Therefore his actions, including his writing, must be judged by whether they advance the interests of the polity. Thus, not only is the truth subordinated to the state; the political theorist qua citizen is subordinated to the state. Much as the theorist might wish to be judged by posterity, by morality, any other extra-political standard, there is no Erasmian retreat, no tower, ivory or stone, no contemplative escape from the political. While urging the most brutal reality upon those responsible for the state, excoriating any ruler who would escape his obligations to *raison d'état*, Machiavelli immersed his own theory (and by implication all modern political theory) in corrosive acid, not in service of truth but of political reality. This reality, for Machiavelli, is determined by the theorist's objectives, not the prince's, a reality which therefore must be hidden from him.*

To his mind the principal cause of Italy's misfortune is her lack of a national militia... The militia is not only the foundation of the new structure that Niccolo desires to raise: it becomes in its turn a criterion of history. This was the most fundamental error of which Machiavelli was ever guilty. Frederico Chabod¹

II. Too Much Autonomy: Chabod's Criticism

I suggest that Machiavelli did not make this error. I believe Machiavelli understood what Chabod claims he failed to understand about the centrality of the citizen-soldiers to his objective of revivifying Italian nationalism. Contrary to Chabod, Machiavelli appreciated the complexity of the notion of citizen-soldiers, including its embeddedness in social and economic realities and its capacity to create political realities more far reaching than Machiavelli found it prudent to spell out to any interim ruler. The strength of Chabod's interpretation of *The Prince* lies in his sophisticated understanding of not only of Machiavelli as a thinker but as a Renaissance figure. Chabod brings to his work a complex understanding of the social forces which underlay historical events. For example, consider his analysis of the political degradation of the bourgeoisie, just when they might be expected to be asserting more and more political power:

"Such pressure from above [the *Seigneurs*], coupled with a natural weariness after long civil wars and their need of leisure to devote all their energies to

¹ Chabod, F.: *Machiavelli and the Renaissance*, Harper, N.Y., 1965, p. 84.

trade or alternatively to save themselves from economic ruin, produced a gradually deadening of political consciousness in the bourgeoisie. Opposed, *albeit* covertly, by the *Seigneurs* and beset by the swarming hostile mass of the inferior orders, they renounced their past and sought an outlet for their restless energies in work, content now merely to maintain their social position. The political disintegration of the old ruling class was hastened by the departure of many of the most estimable citizens.... It was aggravated by the prevalence of the mercenary system. True, this had itself been largely a consequence—and not the least serious consequence of the moral exhaustion of the Communal classes, of an aversion which the bourgeoisie seldom overcame to an occupation that constituted a waste of precious time better devoted to business...."¹

Chabod saw that the rise of the bourgeoisie which had to some extent occurred was halted by an "alliance" of the *Seigneurs* with the lower classes. He further appreciated that the lack of political nerve, acumen, and interest among the bourgeoisie contributed to their weakness. Furthermore, he saw the mercenary system only as an aggravating factor, a symptom of an already degraded bourgeoisie. On this basis, it was easy for him to see a "most fundamental error" in Machiavelli's emphasis on citizen-soldiers. "His reasoning was based on an undeniable fact—the inferiority, military and otherwise, of the Italian states since the last decades of the fifteenth century. But instead of seeking out and thoroughly investigating the ultimate causes—the economic and political causes as well as those connected with warlike organization—of this enfeeblement...he confines himself to superficialities...."² It is important to note that Chabod agreed with Machiavelli in regarding Italy's reliance on mercenaries as a mistake. He disagreed with Machiavelli, however, regarding the remedy: citizen-soldiers. "What this Italian civilization most obviously lacks Niccolo invents—namely a militia of its own (*milizia propria*), and this is the creative act in which the vital power of his imagination is most apparent. And certainly, if partial reforms of state laws, coupled with manly virtues, had been all that was necessary to save the Italian domains and the fortunes of our civilization, the formula for salvation was to be found, in effect, in *The Prince*."³

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

One reason we have already seen: a mercenary system was a symptom of political degeneracy not its cause. Secondly, and relatedly, the conditions necessary to have effective citizen-soldiers were antithetical to having the prince:

“He [Machiavelli] fails to perceive that such a revolution in the military art must have its counterpart in a political and social regeneration. A citizen militia is an impossibility unless the State live from day to day in the inner consciousness of the people; and so the *Principate*, as he conceives it, is doomed to disaster. The mere enunciation of the new military theory must inevitably entail the abandonment of the concept of the Prince. He does not realize the fact, and he leaves his thesis uncompleted. He draws his inspiration from the examples of France, Switzerland and Republican Rome, failing to perceive that his models possess a hidden quality--the very quality that Italian civilization has now lost.”¹

This quality is of course a sense of obligation to the nation-state. In Chabod's view this sense of obligation and the sacrifice it allows for can only occur in a society that views its political system as legitimate. Legitimacy is the outcome of a continuous process not the gift of a prince, not an expression of princely *virtu*. Chabod believed Machiavelli erroneously invested the ruler with just these powers: "He is eager to see established a State which, though territorially spacious, will above all be reorganized and made secure by the virtue of its overlord, a State strong in the possession of its own militia, fortified by its ruler's clarity of purpose, practical determination and administrative sagacity...."² Legitimacy, for Chabod, can be said to exist when the complex of social forces, at least in times of external danger, resolves the contradictions and strife of political life in favor of the state. For Machiavelli, legitimacy exists when the *virtu* of the ruler has created sufficient *virtu* in the citizens to enable them to be an effective military force. While both Chabod and Machiavelli consider an effective militia as a sign of legitimacy, they differ regarding its sources. Chabod finds legitimacy in a perception of social justice based on objective socio-economic factors. For Machiavelli, legitimacy depends more on the political prowess [*virtu*] of the ruler, including the manipulation of nationalist feelings. They differed as well regarding the power of the militia. Machiavelli saw it as a way to build the legitimacy of the state, by providing citizens with national security. An effective militia would then feedback on the power of the state by giving the ruler more room to

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-7

² *Ibid.*, p. 74

maneuver among his enemies. Military power supplied *raison d'état* with its muscle.

For any of this to occur, in Chabod's analysis, required a "revolution":

"But even when the idea of a 'national army' holds his attention Niccolo fails to perceive the absurd errors into which he falls. To make the security of the State the responsibility of all, not only of the city-dwellers but also of the poor inhabitants of the outlying districts, forcing them to share the heaviest task which men can be called upon to shoulder on behalf of the community; to interest all those who live in a territory in its safety and integrity; to look for the foundation of social life in the duty of all when confronted by the enemy— this was to effect a radical change not only in the military system but in the political and moral system too.... He is unconscious of the decidedly revolutionary character with which he is investing not only the military system but the whole body politic."¹

This is the substance of Chabod's critique of Machiavelli. I have quoted extensively from it, not only in an effort to be fair and to have Chabod speak in his own words, but to show how closely his analysis dovetails with the history of ancient Athens. This is important because it demonstrates that it is not anachronistic to criticize Machiavelli using Chabod's twentieth century terms. In other words, Chabod was not unfair in his critique of Machiavelli, because Machiavelli could have been aware not only of his own Florentine history, as he undoubtedly was, but of ancient Athenian history, which he almost as assuredly was, at least *via* Aristotle. Although Chabod was not unfair, he was in my opinion wrong.

Machiavelli's treatment of citizen-soldiers stemmed from a deep appreciation of the social ramifications of their military prowess. They were not merely a symptom of social conditions, as Chabod indicated, but a cause as well as an effect of those conditions. (Chabod himself acknowledged as much by noting that Machiavelli saw militia as a "criterion of history".) The difference between Chabod's analysis and Machiavelli's is not one of levels of sophistication but a difference of the importance of citizen-soldiers as a creative political factor. Machiavelli had a deeper understanding of the consequences of citizen-soldiers than Chabod. In this regard at least, it is Chabod's understanding that is superficial. This is not to say that I believe Machiavelli paid sufficient attention to socio-economic factors which undergird all political systems or that he did not overestimate what a single political actor could do.

¹ Ibid., pp. 100-1

It is to say, if Machiavelli erred on the side of the prince's *virtu*, Chabod erred on the opposite score, seeing political activity as merely a consequence of socio-economic factors. At the same time, Chabod seriously exaggerated Machiavelli's reliance on the prince and citizen-soldiers as independent political actors. Machiavelli knew more about the conditions and the consequences of an effective citizen army than he told. Before I deal with this issue directly, I think it would be useful to sketch what happened in ancient Athens.

Even if a naturally brave and spirited man is born, his temper is changed by their institutions. Whereof I can give a clear proof. All the inhabitants of Asia, whether Greek or non-Greek, who are not ruled by despots, but are independent, toiling for their own advantage, are the most warlike of all men. For it is for their own sakes they run their risks and in their own persons do they receive the prizes of their valor as likewise the penalty of their cowardice. Hippocrates¹

III. Citizen-soldiers and the Creation of Athenian Democracy²

If one turns Hippocrates' point in the other direction, one can see that such men are likely to have an impact on their institutions as well as being effected by them. The very idea of "tolling for their own advantage" is ominous for traditional aristocracies or more forthright despotisms. Once rulers (and the social structures of authority) can no longer be unquestioned or considered self-justifying, a self-conscious sense of the political cannot be long postponed. The politicizing process, conceived as the movement from a growing dependence upon hoplite infantry to Athenian democracy, took about two hundred years. While scholars dispute the precise weights of the variables which comprise this complex process, the significance of hoplite infantry cannot be doubted. Hoplite democracy has become a common term for the socio-economic/military underpinnings of the Athenian polis.

The Athenian discovery of the political was not an outcome of philosophical contemplation.³ (It would be easier to make the case that political philosophy was the outcome of the Athenian *polis*.) The discovery of the political was occasioned by the kind of social strife, predicated upon economic hardship, which Machiavelli had lived through in the last decades of the

¹ Davies, J.K.: *Democracy and Classical Greece*, Fontana/Collins, Glasgow, 1978, p. 45.

² I have developed the argument of this section in more detail in Vasilopoulos, "The Nature and Limits of Athenian Democracy," *Armed Forces and Society*, V. 22, no.1, pp. 49-63.

³ See Meier, Christian: *The Greek Discovery of Politics*, Harvard, 1990.

fifteenth century. The most significant difference, one not lost upon Machiavelli, was the power of the Medieval Church. Using Athenian history in Machiavelli's manner and for his reasons, one can better appreciate his emphasis on citizen-soldiers and his reluctance to spell out his understanding of the social change such an army implied. Consider Aristotle's analysis:

"The first form of constitution which succeeded to monarchy in ancient Greece was one in which the soldiery formed the citizen-body. At first it consisted only of cavalry. Military strength and superiority were then the prerogative of that arm.... When states began to increase in size, and infantry forces acquired a greater degree of strength, more persons were admitted to the enjoyment of political rights."¹

It is worth elaborating the process Aristotle crystallized.

After almost a century of living with Solonic reforms, Athenians were at the brink of civil war again, a condition which made them vulnerable to external enemies, Greek and barbarian. As in fifteenth century Italy, economic progress had proceeded with unprecedented speed. A commercial revolution was well underway, wealth becoming more fluid, easier to accumulate, based more on trade than ever before. Although the economy remained largely agricultural or tied to the land in one way or another, like mining, the character of the agrarian society had changed dramatically. Surpluses existed where subsistence had been the rule for time immemorial. This was not due to anything like an industrial revolution on the land, but rather to an increase in the political/military security of the land owners. It now made political sense to have more efficient, larger farms for the same reason it made more sense to have more liquid wealth. Property and property owners now could be protected to a much greater extent than Dark Age Greece allowed.

The reason is central to our discussion of Machiavelli. From about 650 B.C. a new form of infantry developed. Hoplite soldiers, fighting in highly disciplined, tight formations, rapidly replaced more aristocratic warriors and tactics. The effectiveness of hoplite infantry meant that the *polis* could expand beyond the borders of lands controllable by chieftains and their retainers. The increased size of what were ceasing to be estates and coming to be poleis generated more wealth which in turn allowed for more hoplite soldiers. Hoplite infantry largely financed themselves. The heavy armor and weaponry which characterized their battle formations

¹ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1297, Barker, E., editor and translator: *The Politics of Aristotle*, Oxford, 1946, 1971.

required what today we would call a middle-class income. Furthermore, they would have to be economically secure enough to be able to leave their farms and towns in order to campaign.

By the time of Kleisthenes (610 B.C.) the success of hoplite infantry was undeniable but not without problems of its own. Athens was politically and geographically divided into *phratria*, mess-brotherhoods, largely derived from military units. Aristocratic families exerted their influence through the *phratria*, overcoming to a great extent what otherwise might have been a more independent citizenry. The form of the *polis* existed, but not its full realization, for loyalty was first to the *phratria*. Struggle for control of the polis became the more bitter the higher the stakes grew.

Four aristocratic families controlled the *phratria*, and therefore Athens, in much the way the mafia control their criminal affairs throughout the world. The families would negotiate their differences and try to pass on the costs of their deals to the general public, retaining a facade of legality and necessary beneficence to the non-aristocratic classes, but ruling ruthlessly in their own aristocratic interests. Wealth could multiply but political rivals would be killed in the cradle.

The solution was simple: destroy the power of the *phratria*, the legitimating cover of the aristocrats, and aristocratic rule would cease. But how? How could this be done without a civil war? Athenian aristocrats were relatively moderate. They had inculcated nearly everyone of importance into a *phratry*. The geography of Attica implied different political, economic, and social interests for the City, the Coast, and the Inland regions. The destruction of this *phratry* or that meant harm to the interests of its clients. The problem is similar to reducing defense expenditures in the U.S. Everyone outside the defense industry is in favor of massive reductions, but no one wants to lose defense-related economic benefits. So no one favors the smallest reduction which would harm constituents. In Kleisthenian Athens, even those who were not members of the four aristocratic families were suspicious of reform, despite favoring it in principle. Kleisthenes, therefore, realized he needed a systemic, not an incremental, reform. He knew, also, that such a reform would have to seem incremental or risk civil war. The people would have to support it and the aristocrats would have to see they could not obviously oppose it. The simple problem of destroying the political importance of the *phratria* required a complex solution. Ingeniously he redistricted Attica. He broke up the complexes of interests which coalesced geographically into the City, the Coast, or the Inland regions. He created ten districts, each of which would have citizens from each of the regions. The aristocratic families could no longer play

one region off against the other to maintain their control of Attica. Regarding the social (and emotional) basis of the *phratry*, Kleisthenes did nothing. But what once had been *loci* of political power now became little more than a town, country, or shore clubs. It is likely that this process took many years to implement. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how the process could have been started without an agreement in principle from the outset. It must have been clear, except to the most doltish of aristocrats, that Athens had outgrown "tribal" rule, economically and politically, if not emotionally.

"The most striking aspect of Kleisthenes' reforms is their sophistication—the use of a complex set of political institutions to effect radical social change... The machinery for ensuring that no institution of central government could represent any particular natural group, and for combining this with local democracy, is of quite a different character from these earlier examples: the introduction of 'decimal democracy' has an intellectual coherence which demonstrates for the first time the systematic application of reason to the creation of a constitution...."¹

It seems equally clear that the legitimating and liberalizing effects of Kleisthenic reforms played an immense role in preparing Athens for the ordeal of Marathon. The first defeat of the Persians can be seen as the culmination of hoplite democracy. "She showed astonishing strength, and we can be sure that, apart from Kleisthenes' leadership, this was due to the introduction of freedom and democracy."² This success laid the groundwork for its extension under Themistocles and the second defeat of the Persians. "In thirty years Athens had transformed herself from a backward state still dominated by aristocratic families into the most advanced democracy in Greece, with the principles of selection by lot for office and the sovereignty of the assembly over the leadership well established. This development was reinforced by the creation of the new navy, which shifted the military epicenter away from the hoplite class to the people as a whole."³ The twin defeat of the Persian threat allowed for the flowering of the most remarkable seventy-five years in human history. In terms central to this paper, Glotz says: "The democracy is coming to birth. Hardly born, it was strengthened by the ordeal of the Persian Wars and the victory.... Athens and Greece were saved at Marathon by the hoplites and

¹ Murray, Oswyn: *Early Greece*, Fontana, Glasgow, 1980, p. 258.

² Ehrenberg, Victor: *From Solon to Socrates*, 2d, Methuen, London, 1968 & 1973, p. 102.

³ Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

at Salamis by the sailors; the middle and lower classes had won glorious titles to support their claims."¹

Understood in this way Chabod's criticism melts away. Machiavelli did not say the *virtu* of the prince, including its capacity to extrude *virtu* from citizens, would suffice to create a powerful state. Nor did he indicate, as Chabod seems to, that the existence of citizen-soldiers would be a sign of an already transformed state. What was needed was a citizen army and a leader like Kleisthenes who could see the possibilities of reorganizing the state around such an army, possibilities which quite naturally would have escaped their view just as it would have not occurred to their aristocratic superiors.

[For the first time in a thousand years the possibility existed for] an autonomous political order which acknowledged no superior and, while accepting the universal validity of Christian norms, was adamant in insisting that their interpretation was a national matter. Sheldon Wolin²

IV. Reassessment: The Autonomy of Political Theory

Even if Machiavelli had to rely only upon Aristotle's view of the dependence of Athenian democracy on the effectiveness of hoplite forces and the increasingly undeniable claims to share power, it is obvious how much this process would have appealed to him. Consider its key factors, apart from the circumstances of unprecedented social upheaval that necessitated political action: citizen-soldiers and Kleisthenes. Both were antithetical to aristocratic values and political organization. Each represented a peculiar form of *virtu*.

Although we have employed *virtu* throughout this essay, it is now appropriate to deal with this cardinal term in greater detail. There is no single meaning for this or any other important Machiavellian term. Machiavelli was neither a semantically rigorous or a systematic thinker. Nor was he philosophically sensitive. His work was as independent from metaphysical as it was moral or religious concerns; moreover, these omissions were intended.³ Freedom from denotation allowed for the subtle play of connotation. *Virtu* took full advantage of this freedom. My reading of *The Prince* leads me to believe that most of the time Machiavelli intended *virtu* (when referring to the prince) to mean prowess or mastery. Wolin put it well:

¹ Glotz., G.: *Ancient Greece at Work: An Economic History of Greece from the Homeric Period to the Roman Conquest*, Norton, N.Y., 1967, 1920, p. 146.

² Wolin, S.: *Politics and Vision*, Little Brown, Boston, 1960, p. 196.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 209.

"Mastery...meant getting on `top' of events by following the double strategy of creating reliable instruments of action, such as a disciplined army, and of making other political actors dependent on one's own will. When successful, this strategy was equivalent to Machiavelli's definition of political power: to possess power was to be able to control and manipulate the actions of others and thereby to make events conform to one's wishes.... To know the shape of events was to be in a position to exercise prudence or foresight: to select the type of action appropriate to a given situation was to possess a sensitive and discriminating intelligence which allowed for the weighing of several factors simultaneously, as well as, a knack of imaginatively projecting possible consequences."¹

Writing for a different purpose, Malraux captured the Roman basis of Machiavelli's concept of *virtu*, contrasting it, as Machiavelli intended, with the Christian idea of virtue: "While to the Roman mind all that gave value lay in his mastery over a selected field of his personality—courage, intelligence, decision—an while every Roman virtue was a form of steadfastness, the Christian, even when capable of dying a martyr's death, knew himself for a sinner and in constant peril from the outside world; because the devil was its `prince'."²

On the side of prowess, mastery contained the ideals of valor, courage, grace under pressure, resourcefulness, leadership, decisiveness, and other "martial" attributes. On the side of intellect, mastery implied knowledge, foresight, discrimination, imagination, and incisiveness. *Virtu* bundles all these attributes and brings them to bear according to the desires and ambitions of the prince, and above all the needs of the state. Meinecke made the point:

"Machiavelli concentrated all his real and supreme values in what he called *virtu*.... Ethical qualities were certainly embraced in it, but it was fundamentally intended to portray something dynamic, which Nature had implanted in Man—heroism, the strength for great political and warlike achievements, and first and foremost, perhaps, strength for the founding and preservation of flourishing States, particularly republics.... It therefore embraced the civic virtues and those of the ruling class; it embraced a readiness to devote oneself to the common good, as well as the wisdom, energy and ambition of the great founders and rulers of States."³

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 216-7.

² Malraux, A.: *The Voices of Silence*, Princeton, 1978, p. 217.

³ Meinecke, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Implicit in the prince's *virtu* was the capacity to instill or draw from others the *virtu* appropriate to them. "This [higher] kind of *virtu* was able, by means of appropriate 'regulations', to distil out of the thoroughly bad and wretched material of average specimens of humanity the other kind of *virtu* in the sense of civic virtue; to a certain extent the latter was *virtu* of a secondary quality, and could only be durable if it was rooted in a people whose spirit was fresh and unspoilt."¹ Wolin saw the virtue of citizens as "submitting to the law."² The importance of this secondary sort of *virtu* lay in two directions. First, it implied, even while it expressed, the limitation of princely *virtu*. A solitary prince, however splendid, heroic, or perspicacious, is a contradiction in terms. So, too, was a prince who cannot control his subjects. If he were to avoid the impossibly inefficient prospect of coercing large numbers of subjects to his will, he must imbue them with *virtu*. Machiavelli "grasped the fact that popular consent represented a form of social power which, if properly exploited, reduced the amount of violence directed at society as a whole," and saved energy and resources for other matters.³ Machiavelli appreciated the superiority of the people to the aristocracy in somewhat different terms, but the upshot is the same: "It is impossible to satisfy the nobility by fair dealing and without inflicting injury on others, whereas it is very easy to satisfy the mass of the people in this way. For the aim of the people is more honest than that of the nobility, the latter desiring to oppress, and the former merely to avoid oppression."⁴

The second limit concerns the relationship of citizens to the law itself, a limit which indicates the dilemma of princely *virtu* or astuteness:

"The emphasis on 'astuteness' was a sign that Machiavelli had come to see that while the demonic energies of the hero could be creative, they could also be politically destructive. If this were true he would be a dubious instrument of the new science, less reliable than the people.... A people accustomed to living under the law soon exhibit the political virtues impressed upon them: they become stable, prudent, grateful, and reverential to the authority of the law. But while the people's virtue came from submitting to the law, the *virtu* of the prince necessarily took the form of creative destruction of laws and institutions. Hence at the stage where a republican form of government was feasible, heroic *virtu* was anachronistic."⁵

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

² Wolin, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁴ Machiavelli, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁵ Wolin, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

It should now be plain why I have emphasized the importance of citizen-soldiers to Machiavelli. For if Wolin were right, then not only will citizens have learned political virtues, they will have demonstrated the *virtu* (including the shedding of Christian impediments and the donning of at least some of the attributes of princely *virtu*: courage, steadfastness, discipline *et.al.*) necessary to implement them, just as their Athenian predecessors did two thousand years prior. Aware of their inestimable value to the state, conscious of their own abilities, and appreciative of the significance of the law in the furtherance of their fundamental desire to avoid oppression, the pressure on an increasingly anachronistic prince would have become intolerable. The prince's trump card would have to be played: a nationalistic fear of external enemies. While nationalism has an enormous capacity to sublimate internal social and political conflict, one of the reasons for its effectiveness undercuts its long run usefulness for the prince. "The utility of national sentiment lies not only in the intensity of emotion which it engenders, but in its surface resemblance to the principle of equality: all men, regard-less of wealth, station, and pedigree, share the common quality of a distinctive national identity."¹ Equality and authoritarian rule can coexist effectively only in the nightmare world of fascism or communism. Machiavelli did not contemplate or anticipate totalitarian states, even if one restricts Machiavelli to *The Prince*.

How important the long run was for Machiavelli can be inferred from an appreciation of how much of *The Prince* concerned short-run stability. The most frequently used phrase describing the purpose of the prince is *mantenere lo stato*. "This carries short-term implication; it seems to mean little more than to maintain himself in the position of power and insecurity which innovation has brought him."² As both a means and end to the Machiavellian state, national feeling was supposed to be an enduring stabilizing and unifying force in a world beset by change and indeterminacy. It would be the functional equivalent of the Church, if Machiavelli were to have his way. He did not rely on nationalism, although a prince might, for its surface resemblance to equality. His "religious" commitment to nationalism as included a substantive notion of equality appropriate to and implied by a republican citizenry, even if that citizenry were under the control (temporary) of a prince. There can be little doubt that Machiavelli saw the law as guaranteeing at least formal equality. Rising above the law, except in the case of the most dire emergency, therefore, would have amounted to treason, a crime against the state, and involved the prince in a contradiction. The very possibility, to say nothing of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

² Pocock, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

the experience of princely rule, would have made this new citizenry nervous, suspicious, and eager to contain the prince's actions. These too are expressions of political virtues.

If Machiavelli understood this process, either through his own analysis or through Aristotle's, then why didn't he say so, relieving himself of the appearance of superficiality? The answer to this lies in the nature of *The Prince* and in Machiavelli's notions of what it means to be a political theorist. Machiavelli's highly technical, cold-blooded approach to remaining in power, along with his assumption that the prince's first and foremost responsibility is an intelligent application of political resources in service of *raison d'état*, largely accounts for his being credited (or blamed) with ushering in modern political theory. It is clear that he was not (and nor did he believe it possible to be) a value-free political theorist. Machiavelli was not anticipating the supposed (and in my view trivial) insights of post-modern thought which declare objectivity impossible even as an ideal. Rather, he was denying the value of the Weberian separation of politics as a science and a vocation, on political not epistemological grounds. The purpose of political theory was to understand how to manipulate the levers of political power; not for any purpose whatever (he was neither a Weber nor an Eichmann), but in order to secure the state for its people. Apart from nationalism, which includes a particular people, what would be the point of *raison d'état*?

If political power and nationalistic purpose were inextricable for Machiavelli, so were the roles of political theorist and political actor. *The Prince* has many references to the intellectual qualities of an effective ruler. We have alluded to many already. Another concerns qualities of mind: "There are three different kinds of brains, the one understands things unassisted, the other understands things when shown by others, the third understands neither alone nor with the explanations of others. The first kind is most excellent, the second also excellent, but the third useless."¹ The understanding of things, for Machiavelli, meant the understanding of processes, of men subjected to and responding to pressures internal and external, of a world which never rested. "From Machiavelli's analysis of illusions we can see that the new science was more in the nature of a body of knowledge adjusted to a world of movement, rather than one aimed at freezing it.... The great innovation of Machiavelli was to insist on the reality of movement and change, to adopt this as his basic unifying principle."²

¹ Machiavelli, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

² Wolin, *op. cit.*, p. 213-4.

It is possible to extrude the intellectual attributes of the political theorist, as many have done. It is also possible to infer the role of political actor from the role of theorist. In other words, all effective political actors will have some of the attributes of a political theorist. At the very least they will be able to understand things when assisted, presumably by a theorist who can understand things unassisted. Similarly, all political theorists need to have some of the attributes of a political actor or at least be sufficiently sensitive to the nature of political actors to be able to communicate with them. It falls upon the theorist to tailor his message to the needs of the ruler. He must therefore be enough of an actor to at least be able to imagine what these are and how they might be met by the ruler and the political resources at his disposal. At all these decision points—many of which are extra-theoretical—the theorist must make decisions akin to those of the ruler. The scope and range of these extra-theoretical decisions circumscribe the theorist's zone of political action and identify the inevitably political nature of the engaged political theorist.

If the theorist and the ruler are part of the same polity, their strategic nationalistic goals will be the same, although in all probability differently expressed and weighted. For the prince this means that everything and everyone is subject to *raison d'état*, as the most notorious passages of Machiavelli attest. For the theorist this means that his own theory is subject to *raison d'état*, as the theorist conceives its requirements, however, not the prince. The autonomy of political theory means that a thoroughly politicized world is properly independent of moral or religious standards perhaps appropriate in other realms or other times; and epistemologically independent of metaphysical and other philosophical concerns as well, including systematic logical or ahistorical coherence. At the same time, Machiavelli was not interested in a self-contained version of political history either, at least not in a way which would satisfy a historian. What I would like to add is that the autonomy of political theory did not for Machiavelli mean that it was to be measured by its own criteria. Political theory was properly independent of the assessments of other theories and values, but it was not independent of the political. Machiavelli's thoroughly politicized universe included political theory.

It was to be at the disposal of the needs of the national state, although not perhaps quite to the same extent as other political resources. For the theorist controlled the theory. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the theorist had a superior kind of knowledge, akin to the superior kind of *virtu* possessed by the prince. Secondly, the theorist remained a political actor, whose main lever of power is the influence his theory may have. Not only

must his work be intelligible even to the point of being anachronistic, it must be implementable, by those who in the longer run will be the theory's victims.¹ The dilemma of power which bedevils the prince is known by the theorist but not by the prince at least not to the same degree or at the same time. Just as the prince becomes an unwitting instrument of the engaged theorist, the theory becomes a witting instrument of the theorist, even if this entails the weakening of the theory. The aim of the theorist was not truth, except insofar as the truth or a version of it advanced the nation- state. If withholding of the truth or a full explanation of a political process furthered the goals of the theorist *qua* political actor, the theory will suffer to the degree that the achievement of political objectives was expected.

Machiavelli's elliptical account of citizen-soldiers was the case in point. Measured by scholarly standards, as Chabod did, Machiavelli can be said to have made his "most fundamental error." His emphasis on citizen-soldiers became an unsupported assertion. Worse, Machiavelli seemed to deny the existence or the relevance of socio-economic context of citizen-soldiers, to say nothing of their revolutionary potential. If, however, we approach the topic, as I believe Machiavelli did as an engaged political theorist (or political theorist *qua* political actor), then his most fundamental error becomes a subtle ploy, leading a temporarily indispensable prince to a self-eliminating, if not fatal, duty. The prince wittingly (at least upon reading *The Prince*) would imbue the citizens with enough *virtu* to secure the peace and prosperity of the state, while he unwittingly imbued them with *virtu* sufficient for them to appreciate his anachronistic status and the desirability of a republic. They would support the prince faithfully, so long as he met their minimal need not to be oppressed. He would support them, because they were less demanding and more grateful (in the short run) than aristocrats. In the longer run, having schooled themselves in political skills and values, citizen-soldiers would come to realize, as Athenians did two thousand years earlier, that the best defense against oppression was a government run by them, not for them by another.

If, as I believe is the case, Machiavelli was aware of this process, then his reasons for treating citizen-soldiers elliptically become obvious. To tell the whole story, to improve his theoretical work, would have perhaps delayed fatally the prince's necessary reliance upon citizen-soldiers to redeem Italy and secure the national state. The test of a work on politics for Machiavelli was not the amount of truth it contained or how much it explained but how much it advanced his interests as a political actor, which in his case entailed the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

building of the Italian nation-state. To the degree the political theorist was engaged the more he became separated from the needs of his own theory and the more he became identified with the need of his nation. As Wolin emphasized Machiavelli had "a passionate commitment to the vocation of political theorist".¹ This vocation included a commitment to the Italian nation-state, a goal which overrode the scholarly requirements of his theory. For Machiavelli being "an engaged thinker" who had 'not been asleep or reveling in the fifteen years' that he had 'devoted to the study of the art of the state', meant much more than that his theory was meant to be use to political actors; it was his way of being an actor, his way of providing substance to "his *cri de coeur* 'I love my country more than my soul'".² More than his soul as a man and more than his soul as a scholar.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

² *Ibid.*

THROUGH SARTRE AND MARCUSE: FOR A REALISTIC UTOPIA

Federico SOLLAZZO¹

***Abstract.** In this article I see the “realistic utopia” as a moral and political paradigm that can orient us towards a satisfactory life in our own society. I analyse the status of realistic utopia, the chances to build it and whether nowadays movements of protest (often juxtaposed with those of the '68) are credible subjects for its completion, or not. This is the reason why it is important to analyse Sartre and Marcuse. They were two of the '68 inspiring figures, but we have to unravel their thought from the exclusive reference to that period and vogue, because still today they can provide us the conceptual tools to comprehend, and therefore to shape, the world in a realistic utopian way.*

***Keywords:** Herbert Marcuse, Jean-Paul Sartre, realistic utopia, protest, movements.*

Nowadays we are immersed in a global cultural and economic crisis. Several movements of protest have been born in front of them (e.g. the so-called *Indignados* or Occupy Wall Street), sometimes also organized in parliamentary formations, which give rise to a global contestation that is often compared to 1968 movements. However, notwithstanding the deep cultural, social, political, economical differences between these two periods, in order to try to understand if and in which measure this confronting is possible, we have to analyze the conceptual tools proposed in the '68, seeing if they are still suitable nowadays, and also if the old and current movements of protest, have really grabbed the conceptual content of that thought. In order to analyze that conceptual background, we will take here in consideration the thought of two of the *maîtres-penseurs* of that time, Jean-Paul Sartre and Herbert Marcuse.

As it is known, the main slogan of May '68 was “power to imagination”²: the idea that the empowered imagination would make possible a glimpse of authentic freedom; an idea led forward through existentialist and Marxist conceptual tools². However, the Modern development across all Western world, later increasingly extended almost

¹ University of Szeged, Hungary.

² See: G. Borghello, *Cercando il '68*. Udine: Forum, 2012, and G. Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968*. Boston: South End, 1987.

coincides with the entire globe (and in all cases, affects the entire globe) of the capitalist mode of production and consumption and, especially and properly nowadays, the explosion of the technological rationality, on which we haven't been enlighten yet. The analyses of the first School of Frankfurt and of Martin Heidegger¹ show how the imagination resulted to be useful for industrial, technical, entertainment-based applications than for the liberation of man, for the so-called system instead of its alternatives.

Regarding this, it seems to me that it still remains to meditate accurately on two famous sentences, one by Marcuse and one by Heidegger. The one from Marcuse: «A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress»; and the one from Heidegger: «the essence of technique is nothing technical»².

Indeed, it is very interesting to note that if, as Foucault showed³, power (re)produces itself through individuals and so (re)produces life (*bios*), and if nowadays we are not in a society without creativity (like in the Fritz Lang's vision of *Metropolis*), this means that this society needs the creativity to maintain itself, but a controlled creativity, as a sort of oasis, functional for this system. A confirmation of the correctness of the Marcusean analysis about the issue of the efficiency and the rationalized society (according to the model of the instrumental rationality) can absorb, transform and redirect all forms of revolt, creativity, fantasy and imagination.

However, in its essence, May '68 was an ethos of claim and imagination of a better life. But – this is the philosophical point of view – not better, directly through political and/or economical strategies, but through a philosophy of life, which produces changes in politics and economy, just as

¹ See: C. Corradetti, *The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory*. "Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy", 21/X/2011: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/frankfur/>, and M. Heidegger (1953), *Die Frage nach de Technik*. Id., *Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000, and M. Horkheimer, T.W. Adorno (*Dialektik der Aufklärung*, 1947), *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Trans. E. Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007, and H. Marcuse (1964), *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of the Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston: Beacon, 1991, and F. Sollazzo, *Sulla questione della tecnica in M. Heidegger*. Id., *Totalitarismo, democrazia, etica pubblica. Scritti di Filosofia morale, Filosofia politica, Etica*. Roma: Aracne, 2011, and Id., *Tecnologia, politica e complessità*. "Critica Liberale", 04/04/2013: <http://www.criticaliberale.it/settimanale/111591>.

² H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*. *Supra*, p. 3, and M. Heidegger (*Die Frage nach de Technik*, 1953), *The Question Concerning Technology. The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Trans. W. Lovitt. New York: Harper and Row, 1977, p. 32.

³ See: M. Foucault, *La Volonté de savoir: Histoire de la sexualité I*. Paris: Gallimard, 1976, and Id., *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.

aftermaths of itself. So the question was: how to live a «life without anxiety»¹, how liberate men and things from the *Angst*.

We know that there is a big difference between Sartre's existentialism and Marcuse's Marxism, since for the first anxiety remains an ontological condition of individual, which could at least be alleviated, for the latter angst is an historical element that oppress all individuals, and which could be historically exceeded, nevertheless, "power to the imagination" was for both a kind of utopian manifesto. Of course, not utopian because naïve and impossible to realize, but utopian in a dialectical sense: that of what is not yet present, but could be². In this way, imagination plays a central role which, however, is nowadays absorbed into and tooled from the current *status quo*, the established order of things, until the point in which alternatives become even unimaginable. This is the reason why it is interesting to analyze the utopian impulse in Sartre and Marcuse. Not to return to the conditions of May '68, which are in any event long gone and in some respects undesirable, but in order to see whether and how they can help us in understanding (and so, act on) the present situation.

In Sartre's elaboration anxiety (*Angst*) describes the individual's existential, ontological, condition, where "existence precedes essence". Sartre is profoundly influenced by Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, until he even claims that the inescapable characteristic of being-in-the-world is "just" that which exists, and cannot be otherwise³. The existent can only have a

¹ H. Marcuse (1955), *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. Boston: Beacon, 1966, p. 150.

² See: H. Marcuse, (*Die Permanenz der Kunst: Wieder einer bestimmte Marxistische Aesthetik*, 1977), *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics*. Trans. H. Marcuse and J. Sherover. Boston; Beacon, 1978, and J-P. Sartre, *Préface*. F. Fanon, *Le Damnés de la Terre*. Paris: Maspero, 1961.

³ Still, we have to note that Sartre misunderstands Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, by not understanding that for the German philosopher "*Sein ist Zeit*", being is time. It follows that for Heidegger the characters of the Being are absolutely not ontological as immutable, eternal, meta-historical, but ontological as part of the current *being* which is always *in fieri* because *is time*. See: M. Heidegger (1927), *Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006. In his review of *Being and Nothingness*, Marcuse harshly criticizes Sartre for this misunderstanding of Heidegger, and also because the Sartrean *Pour-soi* does not differentiate between the individual level and the social one, and for the thought where the mismatch between the *Pour-soi* and the *En-soi* would be an ontological situation instead of an historical one. See: H. Marcuse, *Existentialism: Remarks on Jean-Paul Sartre's L'Être et le Néant*. "Philosophy and Phenomenological Research", vol. VIII, n. 3, 1948, pp. 309-336. On the Marcusean critique of *L'Être et le Néant* see: B. Lightbody, *Death and Liberation: A Critical Investigation of Death in Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. "Minerva - An Internet Journal of Philosophy", n. 13, 2009, pp. 85-98:

<http://www.minerva.mic.ul.ie/vol13/Liberation.pdf>. Sartre and Marcuse had a confrontation

meaning because it is into the world, and cannot have one apart from it. So the only one way to have a meaningful existence is to project this by the individual.

Referring to this, Sartre writes:

What do we mean here by 'existence precedes essence'? We mean that man first exists: he materializes in the world, encounters himself, and only afterwards defines himself. If man as existentialists conceive of him cannot be defined, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself [for this] man is condemned to be free: condemned, because he did not create himself, yet nonetheless free, because once cast into the world, he is responsible for everything he does.¹

From this condemnation to be free, arises the mood that Sartre calls “nausea” in the novel with the same name.

We can recognize, in this Sartrean elaboration, Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* mark, in particular the concepts of “uncanny” (*unheimlich*) and “not-being-at-home” (*nicht-zuhause-sein*). Namely, the conception for which man never experiments the condition of the familiarity of the world, because the world in which we are thrown is not of our own making, and this produces anxiety:

In anxiety one feels 'uncanny' [*unheimlich*]. Here the peculiar indefiniteness of that which Dasein finds itself alongside in anxiety, come proximally to expression: the 'nothing and nowhere'. But here 'uncannies' also means 'not-being-at-home' [*Nicht-zuhause-sein*].²

in the article *A propos du livre* On a raison de se révolter. “Libération”, 07/VI/1964. On a possible similar background between Sartre and Marcuse see: A. Bene, *L’influence de Max Weber sur la philosophie de Jean-Paul Sartre. Újlatin nyelvek és kultúrák*. (Eds.) É. Oszetzky and K. Bene. Pécs: MTA and PTE, 2011.

¹ J-P. Sartre (*L’existentialisme est un humanisme*, 1946), *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Trans. C. Macomber. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007, pp. 22 and 29. See also: Id., (*L’Être et le Néant. Essai d’ontologie phénoménologique*, 1943), *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology*. Trans. H. E. Barnes. New York: Washington Square, 1956.

² M. Heidegger (1927), *Being and Time*. Trans. J. Macquarie and E. Robinson. New York: Harper and Row, 1962, p. 233. Under this regard, it could be interesting to note that in his work *The Theory of the Novel* György Lukács argues that the modern novel is the aftermath of the disintegrated or open modern civilization, which follows the integrated or closed civilization of the ancient world, and from which arises a character of “transcendental homelessness”. See: G. Lukács (*Die Theorie des Romans*, 1916), *The Theory of the Novel*. Trans. A. Bostock. Cambridge: MIT UP, 1971.

But this anxiety permits, or even obliges man to develop strategies for navigating through uncannies spaces, shaping the world, while he elaborates his project which defines his existence. Here, within this freedom, that for Sartre (but not for Marcuse) is absolute and ontological, the role of imagination takes place by determining consciousness to create a “real” world, insofar as it is a consciously understood world. «Thus imagination, far from appearing as an accidental characteristic, is disclosed as an essential and transcendental condition of consciousness»¹.

In Marcuse, as I have shown before, the existential situation in which the man is, is not ontological but historical. This means that the choice we are called to make marks “the realm of possibilities into the realm of reality”; indeed social theory

is opposed to all metaphysics by virtue of the rigorously historical character of the transcendence. The 'possibilities' must be within the reach of the respective society; they must be definable goals of practice.²

Therefore in Marcuse, unlike in Sartre, what matters is not ontology but history, until the point in which.

The way in which a society organizes the life of its members involves an initial *choice* between historical alternatives which are determined by the inherited level of the material and intellectual culture.³

It follows that, in order to give much freedom to the individual, it is fundamental to enlarge the borders of the social scenario in which individuals exist (starting with the conceptual ones), transcending the *status quo*, the established order of things.

Following this reasoning, Marcuse embraces the way of the power of negative (which was for him an intellectual militancy against the scientific positivism of mid-twentieth-century and the mainstream culture of the same period of the capitalist consumerism based on the technological rationality; problems which, being by far solved nowadays, have evolved into new forms): the “Great Refusal”. But this dialectic of the negative, of the refusal, based on an aesthetic foundation, establishes a social theory that is not the

¹ J-P. Sartre (*L'imaginaire, psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*, 1940), *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*. Trans. J. Webber. London: Routledge, 2004, p. 188.

² H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*. *Supra*, pp. XLI-XLII.

³ H. Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*. *Supra*, p. XLVI.

apprehension of the existing social formation but, through this comprehension it is a way to project realistic alternatives.

The *nomos* which art obeys is not that of the established reality principle but of its negation. But mere negation would be abstract, 'bad' utopia. The utopia in great art is never the simple negation of the reality principle but its transcending preservation (*Aufhebung*).¹

So for Marcuse the term utopia doesn't have a negative connotation; this degrading meaning playing throughout and in favour of the *status quo*. On the contrary, the utopian idea, as Marcuse sees it, is a negation or a refusal of the actual in favour of the *realistic possible*, and so it keeps alive the *possibility* of a world qualitatively distinct from this one by virtue of the permanent transcending of what is already given. And this commitment is a very urgent one in a world which believes that the liberty, without any distinction between the false and the authentic one, has already been achieved, without realizing the dynamics of increasing reification to which it is submitted². Philosophy, not as a particular subject among the others, an accumulation of specialised knowledge, but as a dialectical thinking, can show that things do not go this way. In fact, dialectical philosophy and imagination can present an alternative reality, which is in itself a critique of the established order of things, not merely because they imagine and speak about alternatives, but because imagination and dialectical thought can grasp reality as a whole and can delineate realistic possibilities by acting this way.

In other terms, imagination makes possible a more comprehensive, and therefore more "realistic", representation of the world. This way can draw an imaginative map reliable over the limits of the factual details (scientific realism) because it includes them in a more comprehensive overview, which is at the same time realistic (because it starts from reality) and critical (because transcends reality). This is the realistic utopia which Marcuse describes as the Great Refusal where the imaginative potential of art lies, the only authentic revolutionary potential.

¹ H. Marcuse, *The aesthetic dimension*. *Supra*, p. 73.

² See: H. Marcuse, *The Conquest of the Unhappy Consciousness: Repressive Desublimation*. Id., *One-Dimensional Man*. *Supra*, pp. 59-86. Also, modernity «reduce[s] the worker [and man in general] to the state of a thing by assimilating his behavior to [that of] properties». J-P. Sartre, *Materialisme et Révolution*. "Le Temps Modernes", I, nos. 9, pp. 1537-1563, n. 10, pp. 1-32, 1946, p. 15, my English trans.

The Great Refusal is the protest against the unnecessary repression, the struggle for the ultimate form of freedom - 'to live without anxiety'. But this idea could be formulated without punishment only in the language of art. In the more realistic realm of political theory and even philosophy, it was almost universally defamed as utopia.¹

By this way it is also possible to overcome naively objective aspirations in favour of more complicated mediations of representational forms of the world. Therefore, it would be possible to clarify that there can be progress, or even better dialectical advancement, only by virtue of the particular perspective in which we intend the world; under these circumstances, progress is not mere advancement in knowledge, but it is a change in it².

This is the reason why I believe that imagination, the realistic utopia, i.e. dialectical philosophy, always maintains its revolutionary potential, which is its fundamental critical power; also, and probably especially, in front of today globalized world.

Indeed, the present world is more complicated than the previous ones. It is an interconnected world where it is impossible to know and understand deeply and thoroughly all the interconnections and the way in which they interact between them. For example, an English citizen of the Commonwealth cannot have any clear idea about the Indian tea and the Jamaican sugar production that was required for his English ritual of tea-time, nevertheless he knows that they existed. Today, in front of the political and economic processes which set the course of the world, just few if any people (and in which measure?) can deeply decipher such processes which

¹ H. Marcuse (1955), *Eros and Civilization*. *Supra*, pp. 149-150.

² See: Th. S. Kuhn (1962), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2012. A very effective exemplification of how are the *Weltanschauungen* to build the world (notwithstanding the presence of an "already given" one) – and so more complex (which doesn't mean complicated) is an argumentation, at first giving account of its genealogy, and richer is the *Weltanschauung* in itself – is possible to find in these interesting lines: «the phenomenological experience of the individual subject – traditionally, the supreme raw material of the work of art – becomes limited to a tiny corner of the social world, a fixed-camera view of a certain section of London or the countryside or whatever. *But the truth of that experience no longer coincides with the place in which it takes place.* The truth of that daily experience of London lies, rather, in India or Jamaica or Hong Kong; it is bound up with the entire colonial system of the British Empire that determines the very quality of the individual's subjective life. Yet those structural coordinates are no longer accessible to immediate lived experience and are often not even conceptualizable for most people». F. Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991, p. 411, my emphasis.

move on different, complex and interconnected levels. The human condition in the present late capitalist and technological society is thus involved in a system that can be scarcely known and understood.

This is why it is possible and very important to use the imagination, grounded on reality but in order to transcend it (I refer to realistic utopia): we have to draw a map of reality according to world imagination and our condition in it. And what matters is not this map to be realistic in the factual details, but that it may provide us with a sense of the world that we can use for navigating through it; anyway, the factual details are always inserted in a certain paradigm of meaning, so if this were that of the realistic utopia this would ensure both a description of reality (the richer the more argumentatively complex) and its transcending¹. Due to this perspective it would be possible to have a sense of future neither optimistic (based on ingenuity) nor pessimistic (feeding conservatism), but which offers a ground for being-in-the-world: not a realistic or utopian ground, but a realistic *and* utopian one. Indeed, usually the critique directed to the utopia is the unrealistic one, but, as I tried to show, the way in which we represent the world is the way that drives our activity into the world, and this representation would be of a better quality if we were guided of an argumentative imagination which creates a “realistic utopian map” of the world; and this is not at all unrealistic. Of course, this does not mean that realistic utopia is fully achievable, if so it became blocked and lost its power of transcendence, but that it could be a very important element of the world and it cannot be absolutely dismissed as “unreal”.

To conclude, it is interesting now to quote two sentences about the movements of '68 protest, one of Sartre (based on the Parisian movements) and one of Marcuse (based on the American movements), in order to confront these remarks with the present status of the social movements of protest to which I referred myself at the beginning of this article.

Sartre:

¹ Related to the importance to have an intellectual chart of the world, is interesting to remember the Mercator's projection of 1569: it was not a true map in the sense of mimetically accurate depiction on the features figured on its surface, but the imaginary map allowed to the sailors to orientate themselves through a particular view of the world. On the importance of an intellectual mapping of the world, see: R. T., Jr., Tally, *Melville, Mapping and Globalization: Literary Cartography in the American Baroque Writer*. New York: Continuum, 2009, and Id., *Radical Alternatives: The Persistence of Utopia in Postmodernism. New Essays on the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory*. (Ed.) A. J. Drake. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010, pp. 109-121.

What is important is that the action took place, at a time when everyone judged it to be unthinkable. If it took place, then it can happen again.¹

Marcuse:

None of these forces *is* the alternative. However, they outline, in very different dimensions, the limits of the established society, of their power of containment. When these limits are reached, the Establishment may initiate a new order of totalitarian suppression. But beyond these limits, there is also the space, both physical and mental, for building a realm of freedom which is not that of the present.²

Sartre says that the value of the protest movements is to make to happen what is possible, and Marcuse – that their value is not that of being the alternative but that of showing it. Can we say the same about the present protest movements widespread in the world? Or maybe, are they either the manifestation of a “possible possible” (the realistic utopia) or, consequently, the representation of the alternative?

In the Seventies, Pier Paolo Pasolini labelled the Italian movements of protest as a bourgeois rebellion, and the same did Marcuse concerning the American movements of protest, after an initial hope in them³. The risk is that things be the same nowadays. It seems again that the protest movements are asking for the absorption of the protesters into the status quo, they protest just because they are out of it: they do not contest the power, they contest their exclusion from the power.

If things stay this way, and this is my opinion, an activation of the imagination aiming to the realisation of the realistic utopia becomes extremely urgent: in fact, a different world than this one can arise only «from *another* development [which be] Otherness (not simply alternative) which by its very nature excludes any possible assimilation of the exploited with the exploiters»⁴.

¹ Qtd. in K. Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2002, p. 1.

² H. Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon, 1969, p. viii.

³ See: H. Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*. *Supra*, and P. P. Pasolini (1968), *Il P.C.I. ai giovani!*. *Bestemmia: Tutte le poesie*. (Eds.) G. Chiarocossi, W. Siti. Milano: Garzanti, 1993.

⁴ P. P. Pasolini (1976), *Lettere luterane: il progresso come falso progresso*. Einaudi: Torino, 2003, pp. 170 and 190, my English trans.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BENE, Adrian, *L'influence de Max Weber sur la philosophie de Jean-Paul Sartre. Újlatin nyelvek és kultúrák*. (Eds.) É. Oszetzký and K. Bene. Pécs: MTA and PTE, 2011.
- BORGHELLO, Giampaolo, *Cercando il '68*. Udine: Forum, 2012.
- CORRADETTI, Claudio, *The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory*. "Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy", 21/X/2011: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/frankfur/>
- FOUCAULT, Michel, *Surveiller et punir: Naissance de la prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.
- FOUCAULT, Michel, *La Volonté de savoir: Histoire de la sexualité I*. Paris: Gallimard, 1976.
- HEIDEGGER, Martin (1927), *Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006. English trans., *Being and Time*. Trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. New York: Harper and Row, 1962.
- HEIDEGGER, Martin, (1953), *Die Frage nach der Technik*. Id., *Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2000. English trans., *The Question Concerning Technology. The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. Trans. W. Lovitt. New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- HORKHEIMER, Max, ADORNO, Theodor Wiesengrund, (*Dialektik der Aufklärung*, 1947), *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Trans. E. Jephcott. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2007.
- LIGHTBODY, Brian, *Death and Liberation: A Critical Investigation of Death in Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. "Minerva - An Internet Journal of Philosophy", n. 13, 2009, pp. 85-98: <http://www.minerva.mic.ul.ie/vol13/Liberation.pdf>
- LUKÁCS, György, (*Die Theorie des Romans*, 1916), *The Theory of the Novel*. Trans. A. Bostock. Cambridge: MIT UP, 1971.
- JAMESON, Fredric, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991.
- KATSIAFICAS, George, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968*. Boston: South End, 1987.
- KUHN, Thomas Samuel, (1962), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2012.
- MARCUSE, Herbert, *Existentialism: Remarks on Jean-Paul Sartre's L'Être et le Néant*. "Philosophy and Phenomenological Research", vol. VIII, n. 3, 1948, pp. 309-336.
- MARCUSE, Herbert (1955), *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. Boston: Beacon, 1966.
- MARCUSE, Herbert (1964), *One-Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of the Advanced Industrial Society*. Boston: Beacon, 1991.
- MARCUSE, Herbert, *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon, 1969.
- MARCUSE, Herbert, (*Die Permanenz der Kunst: Wieder einer bestimmte Marxistische Aesthetik*, 1977), *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics*. Trans. H. Marcuse and J. Sherover. Boston; Beacon, 1978.
- PASOLINI, Pier Paolo, (1968), *Il P.C.I. ai giovani!. Bestemmia: Tutte le poesie*. (Eds.) G. Chiarcossi, W. Siti. Milano: Garzanti, 1993.

- PASOLINI, Pier Paolo, (1976), *Lettere luterane: il progresso come falso progresso*. Einaudi: Torino, 2003.
- ROSS, Kristen, *May '68 and its Afterlives*. Chicago: Chicago UP, 2002.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, (*L'imaginaire, psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination*, 1940), *The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination*. Trans. J. Webber. London: Routledge, 2004.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, (*L'Être et le Néant. Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, 1943), *Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology*. Trans. H. E. Barnes. New York: Washington Square, 1956.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, (*L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, 1946), *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Trans. C. Macomber. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, *Materialisme et Révolution*. "Le Temps Modernes", I, nos. 9, pp. 1537-1563, n. 10, pp. 1-32, 1946.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, *Préface*. F. Fanon, *Le Damnés de la Terre*. Paris: Maspero, 1961.
- SARTRE, Jean-Paul, MARCUSE, Herbert, *A propos du livre On a raison de se révolter*. "Libération", 07/VI/1964.
- SOLLAZZO, Federico, *Totalitarismo, democrazia, etica pubblica. Scritti di Filosofia morale, Filosofia politica, Etica*. Roma: Aracne, 2011.
- SOLLAZZO, Federico, *Tecnologia, politica e complessità*. "Critica Liberale", 04/04/2013: <http://www.criticaliberale.it/settimanale/111591>
- TALLY, Robert T., Jr., *Melville, Mapping and Globalization: Literary Cartography in the American Baroque Writer*. New York: Continuum, 2009.
- TALLY, Robert T., Jr., *Radical Alternatives: The Persistence of Utopia in Postmodernism. New Essays on the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory*. (Ed.) A. J. Drake. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010.

LA RECONCILIATION APRES LE GENOCIDE ?

Brice POREAU¹

***Abstract:** Genocide in Rwanda occurred in 1994. Between 800 000 and one million people died. In 2012, different commemorations took place. Between past and future, Rwanda is looking for a new way to reconstruct itself. Nevertheless, one step is a burning point for the country: it is reconciliation. This concept is usually seen in a moral sense. Reconciliation is also used in political philosophy, related to justice. This article proposes to underline the sense of reconciliation in Rwanda, after genocide. In fact, in 2012, the political power signed the end of Gacaca (local jurisdictions in place to judge the genocide). As the Gacaca ended, the reconciliation had been also proclaimed. But what do people think about this proclamation?*

***Keywords:** reconciliation, genocide, Rwanda, justice, Gacaca.*

Une page est-elle en train de se tourner au Rwanda ? L'année 2012 est en effet une année lourde de sens pour le pays des mille collines. Plusieurs évènements se sont enchaînés en l'espace de quelques jours en cette fin du mois de juin. En effet, trois exemples très spécifiques peuvent être rapportés. Le premier concerne la justice. Alors que les commémorations du génocide, perpétré voici dix-huit ans, se poursuivent toujours jusqu'au mois de juillet, le pouvoir politique a officialisé la fin des *Gacaca*. La date est précise : le 18 juin 2012. Ils ont donc pris fin lors d'une cérémonie officielle au Parlement, à Kigali, en présence du chef de l'Etat, Paul Kagame. Des banderoles, aux couleurs blanc et mauve, couleurs de la commémoration du génocide, sont présentes un peu partout dans Kigali pour rappeler la décennie écoulée et la fin de ces tribunaux locaux. Ces tribunaux, *Gacaca* (prononcer Gatchatcha), se veulent réalisation d'une justice plus pragmatique afin de pouvoir juger le nombre considérable de génocidaires au Rwanda. Ils ont été instaurés voici une décennie. Ils doivent permettre *la réconciliation*.

Cette volonté très forte est même affichée, *via* ces banderoles, dès l'entrée de l'aéroport de Kigali. Ainsi, tout visiteur venant au Rwanda par les airs ne peut manquer cet événement. Nous l'avons dit, en même temps, depuis le 6 avril 2012, les commémorations du génocide restent aussi des évènements majeurs dans la vie des rwandais. C'est le deuxième exemple que nous voulons citer. Telle fut le cas de la commémoration du 11 avril dernier par exemple sur le site de l'Ecole Technique Officielle, près de Kigali

¹ Lyon 1 University, France.

(Nyanza-Kicukiro) où des milliers de Tutsi dont la plupart de cette école, ont été massacrés, durant le 11 avril 1994. Sur ce site, comme de nombreux autres, des murs où sont gravés des centaines de noms bordent les fosses communes. En juin, les femmes victimes du génocide ont également commémoré le génocide. Constituées en association, elles rappellent les souffrances extrêmes endurées. Ambiance lourde, émotionnelle, pour tous les rwandais en cette période¹. Puis, le premier juillet 2012, peut-être un regard différent, bien que lui aussi, peut-être très lourd émotionnellement : il s'agit du cinquantenaire de l'indépendance du Rwanda. C'était en effet le premier juillet 1962 que prend fin la tutelle belge. Grégoire Kayibanda est alors président de la République du Rwanda.

L'histoire difficile du Rwanda s'est rappelée à ses habitants de façon très vive. La réconciliation, suite à ces souffrances terribles endurées, est un sujet majeur du futur de la société rwandaise. La réconciliation véhicule en effet un sens moral, souvent corrélé à la religion. Ce concept est établi dans des disciplines diverses : la philosophie, la théologie, l'histoire, la sociologie, la loi, la psychologie, voire la politique. Ce concept est donc ici employé par le pouvoir politique en place, dans un sens premier qui apparaît social et historique.

Mais entre la volonté affichée du pouvoir en place de décréter la réconciliation et le sentiment réellement perçu par les rwandais, quel sens a ce concept de réconciliation après le génocide ? Cette année 2012 est peut-être une année charnière dans le développement déjà engagé il y a plusieurs années par le pouvoir en place. Entre le regard du passé, et la volonté d'un nouvel avenir, nous allons présenter un état des lieux d'un pays trop longtemps et trop souvent oublié. Cet état des lieux ne sera évidemment pas exhaustif, mais il se veut comme une photographie à un instant t en vue de mettre en relief la possibilité de la réconciliation.

Le regard du passé ou la reconstruction individuelle et collective : une réconciliation possible

Un état des lieux du Rwanda en 2012, en vue d'évaluer les directions prises pour le futur de ce pays, ne peut que débiter par une considération de son histoire récente, c'est-à-dire du génocide. Entre le 6 avril 1994, jour où l'avion du président rwandais Juvénal Habyarimana a été abattu, et qui signe le début des massacres, et le mois de juillet 1994, il y eut entre 800 000

¹Témoignages de survivants du génocide, recueillis par l'auteur en juin 2012.

victimes et 1 000 000 de victimes. La fourchette est encore importante, malgré les travaux entrepris pour tenter de quantifier les massacres, il n'en reste pas moins que ceci est aussi une preuve de l'ampleur de l'horreur qui s'est déroulée. Le génocide, d'un point de vue historique, vient en aval de la guerre débutée en 1990 entre le *Front Patriotique Rwandais* et le pouvoir en place. D'un point de vue du vécu des survivants du génocide, les quatre années de guerre ont également été un traumatisme, dont le paroxysme fut avril 1994. Presque deux décennies ont passé, mais les témoignages des survivants du génocide restent forts, poignants, comme si l'âme des nombreuses victimes était toujours criante au dessus de chaque colline du Rwanda. *Ubwiyunge* est le terme en kinyarwanda, langue nationale d'origine bantoue, de la réconciliation. Dix-huit ans après le génocide, il semble inéluctable, si la volonté persiste de poursuivre dans cette voie, que le pardon, en revanche, est néanmoins impossible. « Le pardon, s'il a un sens et s'il existe, constitue l'horizon commun de la mémoire, de l'histoire et de l'oubli¹ ».

Quels liens existent-ils entre le pardon et la réconciliation. Faut-il pardonner pour se réconcilier? En effet, les deux concepts semblent liés. Mais la réconciliation « sociale », « légale », peut se dissocier du pardon. Reste que la réconciliation au sens morale implique néanmoins le pardon, toujours au sens moral.

Nous ne poserons pas ici en détail la question du pardon, qui procède d'une pensée philosophique en plusieurs étapes, mais nous allons analyser quelques unes de ces étapes. En particulier, la question de la justice, mais aussi la question de la mémoire. En effet, ces deux questions sont très directement liées au regard du passé, et à la reconstruction individuelle et collective. De façon très schématique, la justice correspond à une possibilité de la reconstruction individuelle. Car, même si les procédés mis en place ont été d'une importance sans commune mesure en terme de nombre de cas jugés, il n'en reste pas moins que chaque cas reste un cas individuel, portant sur un ou des actes (meurtres, viols) relevant du statut pénal de génocide, liant un individu à un autre individu. En parallèle, la commémoration est un acte collectif, en cela qu'il y a une « communion » de pensées, de processions, liant un ensemble de personnes. La commémoration, même si chaque survivant a une pensée directe pour l'ensemble de ses proches, procède au delà de l'individuel, pour le collectif. Un état des lieux du Rwanda en 2012 peut donc être vu en analysant la justice d'un côté et la

¹Paul Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, Paris, Seuil, 2000, p. 593.

commémoration de l'autre. Pour cela, deux exemples précis vont être évoqués : d'une part la fin des *Gacaca*, et d'autre part, les sites mémoriels.

La justice conventionnelle en place au Rwanda, à l'issue du génocide, a montré rapidement ses limites, en terme de rapidité d'exécution des procès, en terme de moyens à disposition, tant l'ampleur des cas à juger était impressionnante. En effet, les travaux concernant la violence paroxystique qui a prévalu montrent que nombre de Hutu ont pris part aux massacres¹. Le besoin de justice, en vue de reconstruire le pays, a été la préoccupation majeure en cette période post-génocide. C'est donc au début des années 2000 que de nouvelles juridictions vont être mises en place. Une loi organique met en place² les *gacaca*. Fin 2002, plus de 750 juridictions sont ainsi réparties en 118 secteurs³. Qu'en est-il exactement de cette procédure judiciaire ?

La pratique des *gacaca* (littéralement, les « tribunaux du gazon ») fait à l'origine appel aux sages d'une colline pour régler un litige. Elle se base sur une justice participative, la population étant à la fois témoin, juge et partie. Aujourd'hui, le principe est de réunir sur les lieux même des crimes les protagonistes du drame : rescapés, témoins, criminels présumés. Tous débattent de ce qui s'est passé afin d'établir la vérité, de dresser la liste des victimes et de désigner les coupables. Les débats sont encadrés par des « juges » non professionnels élus parmi les hommes intègres de la communauté, qui prononcent des peines à l'encontre des coupables. Ce système est désormais appliqué à la majorité des accusés⁴.

Cette justice locale, avec une mise en place nationale a bien entendu laissé place à diverses critiques, tant au niveau du droit pénal, et notamment de la représentation des prévenus par exemple, qu'au niveau de la compétence par rapport au Tribunal Pénal International pour le Rwanda, basé à Arusha, dans la Tanzanie voisine, ou encore en terme d'efficacité. Ces tribunaux n'avaient pas une vocation pérenne. Ils œuvraient en outre pour la « justice reconstructive⁵ ». Ainsi, de façon arbitraire, une date a été choisie pour clore ces juridictions. Cela fait donc une décennie qu'elles ont entrepris les jugements. Les statistiques ont été élaborées plus précisément à partir de

¹Voir à ce sujet les travaux de Claudine Vidal dès 1998 avec par exemple : Claudine Vidal, « Questions sur le rôle des paysans durant le génocide des rwandais Tutsi », *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 1998 : 150-152.

²Loi organique n°40/2000 du 21/01/2001.

³*Rapport de monitoring et de recherches sur la Gacaca*, Rwanda, 2008, p. 16.

⁴Valérie Rosoux, « La gestion du passé au Rwanda : ambivalence et poids du silence », *Genèses*, n°61, 2005, p. 34.

⁵Selon le terme du président Paul Kagame dans *Politique internationale*, n°103, 2004, p. 416.

l'année 2005, où ont été recensées plus de 9000 juridictions de cellule (contre près de 750 fin 2002). Lors de cette semaine de la fin officielle de ces juridictions, Mme Domitille Mukantaganzwa, Secrétaire exécutive du Service national des juridictions gacacas, s'est exprimée ainsi : « Des travaux identiques [par rapport à ceux de l'ONG Human Right] montre que la plupart des rwandais vivent maintenant en harmonie. C'est une bonne expérience que les rwandais vont pour toujours attacher aux Gacaca¹ ».

La fin des Gacaca, bien que très récente, signe donc le regard vers le passé d'une reconstruction avant tout individuelle, à tendance collective. La réconciliation y est directement liée.

L'état des lieux que nous entreprenons pose donc tout d'abord la fin d'une justice locale, la fin d'évènements majeurs de la vie des rwandais. Si le recul concernant ces juridictions ne sera suffisant que dans plusieurs années, la volonté marquée, officielle, mais aussi réelle, de tourner une page de l'histoire (au moins judiciaire) du passé a bien eu lieu. En cela, la réconciliation est alors possible.

Pour autant, le regard vers le passé, comme reconstruction collective est toujours présent. Tel est l'exemple des lieux mémoriels.

Les commémorations du génocide débutent chaque année au début du mois d'avril. Ces commémorations ont, pour une partie d'entre elles, lieu sur les sites mémoriels du génocide. Les sites sont nombreux au Rwanda, et sont divers. Certains ont une, voire plusieurs fosses communes comme à Nyamata, d'autres n'en ont pas encore, mais des projets sont en cours, comme à Ntarama, ville située à quelques kilomètres de la première. Des murs portent les noms gravés des victimes qui ont pu être identifiées. Le contraste est saisissant entre le nombre de noms inscrits et le nombre de victimes annoncées. Plusieurs milliers de victimes pour le site de Ntarama (site d'une église), alors que seuls quelques dizaines de noms sont inscrites. Ce qui est aussi surprenant est le fait que certains sites, comme Nyamata est toujours « intégré » au sein de la ville. Une école se trouve à une dizaine de mètres du site mémoriel de Nyamata. Ce regard vers le passé, qui tente d'un point de vue historique et historiographique de s'intégrer dans la vie commune des rwandais, est un état des lieux frappant du Rwanda en 2012².

¹Entretien issu de l'article suivant : Jean Nsanzimana, « Gacaca served both justice and reconciliation », *The Rwandan Focus*, 25 juin 2012 – 1er juillet 2012. Traduit de l'anglais par l'auteur : « Same findings show that most Rwandans now live in harmony. This is a good experience that Rwandans will always attach to Gacaca courts. »

²Nous n'entrerons pas ici dans le débat historien de la notion de « lieux de mémoire », développé dès les années 1980 par Pierre Nora. Mais il nous paraît clair que cette notion est

Ces sites font partie intégrante d'une reconstruction collective, dans la mesure, par exemple, où les noms des victimes font défaut, le recueillement est alors collectif plus qu'individuel. La réconciliation semble passer par ces étapes.

Regard vers l'avenir : quel sens de la réconciliation

Le développement socio-économique et politique du Rwanda est une question actuelle depuis plusieurs années, insufflée en partie par le pouvoir en place et le président Kagame. Cette question prend une ampleur de plus en plus importante. Les liens, par exemple, entre le Rwanda et les partenaires internationaux, comme le cas difficile des liens France-Rwanda, en est un exemple. Le développement du Rwanda, en 2012, est plus que jamais une interrogation prégnante¹.

Donnons quelques chiffres, ce pays d'un peu plus de 11,5 millions d'habitants a une croissance estimée en 2011 de 7% du Produit Intérieur Brut (PIB). Néanmoins, le coefficient de Gini est à 0,468 en 2010. Si le pays se développe d'un point de vue économique (augmentation du PIB), les écarts entre les habitants se creusent (coefficient de Gini). D'un point de vue plus pragmatique, quelles sont les avancées visibles, sur le terrain, menées depuis ces dernières années. Quel est ce regard vers l'avenir ?

Nous pouvons apporter quatre exemples concernant le développement socio-économique visible² : le premier point est la sécurité. Le deuxième est la lutte contre la corruption. Viennent ensuite la santé publique et enfin l'éducation.

La présence policière et militaire est très clairement visible, et ce, aussi bien dans la capitale, que dans les grandes villes, comme à Butare, ou encore sur les grands axes comme la route reliant Kigali à Butare, puis à Bujumbura (capitale du Burundi, pays voisin). Il en est de même devant tous les monuments étatiques, lieux touristiques ou certains quartiers résidentiels. Malgré cela, il y eut en mars dernier des attentats à la grenade dans la capitale Kigali. La présence policière et militaire en a été probablement renforcée. Il n'en reste pas moins que le « sentiment de

une notion *princeps* dans le débat de la reconstruction du Rwanda, en tant que reconstruction collective.

¹Voir à ce sujet : Colette Braeckman, « Le développement du Rwanda est-il durable », *Esprit*, novembre 2011

²L'ordre des exemples est aléatoire et ne présuppose aucune importance relative de tel exemple par rapport à tel autre.

sécurité » est plus important¹, et ce, pour les rwandais, mais aussi pour les étrangers.

Le deuxième point concerne la corruption. Des panneaux disséminés dans le pays, ainsi que des annonces publicitaires télévisées incitent à refuser la corruption. Cette volonté est donc elle aussi affichée au grand jour, au sens propre comme au sens figuré. Pourtant les chiffres communiqués par l'Auditeur général Obadiah Biraro, chargé de l'étude fiscale des comptes nationaux, sont très mauvais en 2012. Les détournements de fonds sont encore plus prononcés qu'en 2011². L'annonce a été faite le 22 juin 2012 devant le Parlement. L'état des lieux du Rwanda, en 2012, c'est aussi, sur le plan économique des détournements de fonds publics, ce qui peut être effectivement, malgré la croissance observée, l'une des causes des disparités en termes d'équité.

Le troisième point est la santé publique. Rappelons là encore quelques chiffres³ : le pourcentage du PIB dévolu à la santé à doubler entre 1995 et 2009, pour atteindre 9% du PIB. L'espérance de vie à la naissance, en 2012 est de 58,44 ans en moyenne (56,96 ans pour les hommes et 59,96 pour les femmes), le taux de mortalité infantile en 2011 est lui de 64,04 pour mille enfants. Concernant l'épidémiologie des maladies tropicales, le nombre de cas de choléra par exemple est passé de 1453 en 2007 à 67 en 2009.

Face à ces chiffres, comme dans le cadre de la lutte contre la corruption, des campagnes publicitaires et d'information sont menées à la fois dans les grandes villes, à travers des panneaux d'information et des campagnes télévisées (notamment concernant l'hygiène, le lavage des mains, pour endiguer les transmissions bactériennes), mais aussi dans les villes moyennes, ou encore sur des axes fréquentés, et ce, en kinyarwanda. Comme pour la sécurité, la lutte contre la corruption, la volonté est marquée dans le domaine de la santé publique : ces efforts sont aussi perçus par la population. L'état des lieux 2012 au Rwanda pose néanmoins la question de l'efficacité des mesures prises par le pouvoir en place. Si la volonté est affichée sur le terrain, pour autant nous avons vu que la lutte contre la corruption n'est pas du tout gagnée. En serait-il de même concernant les conditions sanitaires du pays et plus généralement concernant les conditions de santé publique ? Des analyses ultérieures précises devront être menées afin de pouvoir répondre à cette question.

¹Témoignage d'habitants de Kigali en Juin 2012.

²Jean de la Croix Tabaro, « Auditor General's report shows alarming increase in embezzlement », *The Rwandan Focus*, 25 juin 2012 – 1er juillet 2012.

³OMS, *Rapports de Statistiques sanitaires mondiales*, 2011 et 2012.

Enfin le dernier exemple que nous souhaitons mentionner est celui de l'éducation. Le taux d'analphabétisation reste très élevé. Pour autant des réformes ont été entreprises. Notamment l'institution de la scolarisation obligatoire. Les moyens manquent, en revanche, pour mener à bien une telle entreprise.

Nous voyons se dessiner, de façon succincte, avec ces quatre exemples : la sécurité, la lutte contre la corruption, la santé publique et l'éducation, le regard vers l'avenir du Rwanda en 2012. Ces politiques mises en place l'ont été depuis quelques années déjà. Dans un article de la revue *Science* en 2008, le président Kagame voit déjà une possibilité de développement socio-économique majeure de son pays¹. Cette vision est toujours visible et clairement mise en exergue en 2012. Pour autant, l'état des lieux sur le terrain, ainsi que les données statistiques actuelles, s'ils laissent présager un réel développement possible, ne semblent pas attester d'une franche réussite.

Dans ce contexte, quel sens a la réconciliation ? Dans la première partie de l'article, nous avons évoqué implicitement le lien entre la justice, que ce soit le Tribunal international pour le Rwanda ou les Gacaca, et la réconciliation. Il s'agit d'un concept de philosophie politique, que l'on retrouve dans les travaux de John Rawls². Mais qu'en est-il sur le plan social, avec les difficultés que nous avons recensées.

Hatzfeld a recueilli des témoignages : « Innocent Rwiliza : « Se réconcilier avec les hutus serait s'épouser, se donner des vaches, s'apprécier dans les conversations, on ne peut y songer. Ils ont quand même coupé à s'en casser les bras sans se poser aucune question. C'est bien cela le plus extraordinaire. Des questions comme : si je coupe autant, est-ce que je vais résoudre mon problème ? Est-ce que je ne vais pas manquer un jour des avoisinants que j'ai laissés dans les marigots. Si je tue de cette façon, est-ce que je ne vais pas être tué à mon tour. Non, vraiment, on ne peut s'habituer à ce qu'ils ne soient pas posés de questions. Mais aller vers les hutus est impératif³».

L'approche individuelle est donc véritablement dissociée de l'approche globale politique. En effet,

« La réconciliation, par le pardon, semble impossible : ce n'est pas un choix délibéré, c'est une contrainte imposée par un pacte social, quelques

¹Paul Kagame, « Challenges and Prospects of advancing Science and Technology in Africa: the case of Rwanda », *Science*, Vol. 322, n°5901, 2008, pp. 545-551.

²John Rawls, *Théorie de la justice*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2009 (1987), 1 volume.

³Jean Hatzfeld, *La stratégie des antilopes*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2007, p. 261.

années seulement après les tueries. Cela signifie qu'un temps beaucoup plus long uniquement pourrait peut-être permettre l'émergence d'un nouveau Rwanda uni¹».

La photographie à l'instant t (juin-juillet 2012) que nous proposons du Rwanda a pour but de mesurer une potentielle évolution dans les années futures, aussi bien en étudiant le regard vers le passé, la reconstruction individuelle et collective, comme le regard vers l'avenir ou le développement socio-économique. Le pays des mille collines est un pays qui a de très nombreuses facettes, parfois très sombres, parfois enchanteresses, surtout complexes, mais qui apportent aussi un regard essentiel et nécessaire de notre histoire contemporaine. Enfin, l'état des lieux du Rwanda en 2012 est aussi l'aspect culturel de ce pays, et notamment les travaux de ses écrivains. Voici, pour conclure ce que note le poète Jacques Buhigiro :

L'espoir c'est croire
Aux lendemains meilleurs
Et en être heureux
Surtout croire
Que cela marche toujours
Et ceci, à tous les coups².

¹Brice Poreau, *Extension de la théorie de la reconnaissance, l'exemple du génocide rwandais*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2011, p. 192.

²Jacques Buhigiro, « L'espoir c'est croire » In : Plateforme des écrivains des Grands Lacs Africains, *Emergences – Renaître ensemble*, Kigali, Sembura éditions, 2011, p. 2.

Abstract: *In this article I wanted to point out to an extremely delicate matter that will always come up in the case of such a delicate topic, as the one presented in the title, one that spurs in the absence of a thorough understanding of the context that configured the issues of the topic at hand in the first place: such is the case of the inadequate understanding of the meaning of the icon. My approach is essentially philosophical, yet complementary to the theological one, while I am aiming to depict the difficulties posed by the approach of such a topic. As a novelty to my approach, I tried to depict the conditions in which the exertion of theological thought leads to heresy when tampered by a philosophical conception (without going into technical details, I only illustrated the sources that motivate the conceptual confusions that lead to erroneous understandings of the meaning of icon).*

Keywords: *icon, idol, philosophy, theology, logos.*

I feel obligated to make several clarifications about the title before going on to present the goals of this article. Although I will be talking about icon and idol, *I will not do so in a straight forward manner.* The subject of the article rests on the distinction between icon and idol, while focusing on the way in which we literally think. To be more exact the study will focus on the question: how do *we think* in the theological paradigm and how do *we think* in the philosophical one? That is why, in order to better describe what I meant in the title, I will focus on the *relation* between theology and philosophy during the time of the first Christian centuries. I believe that in the absence of a thorough understanding of the two ways of thought (theological and philosophical) and without the proper understanding of these domains as “exertions” of our mind, we cannot hope for a proper positioning *in the mind* of the matter that I want propose for debate. Therefore, the issue of the *relation* between theology and philosophy circumscribes the interpretation of the debate’s topic – the distinction

¹ “This paper was made within The Knowledge Based Society Project supported by the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development (SOP HRD), financed from the European Social Fund and by the Romanian Government under the contract number POSDRU/89/1.5/S/56815.”

² Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch, Romania.

between icon and idol – and that is why I propose the “definition” of theology and philosophy as “exertions” of one’s the mind.¹

Hence, we will first of all focus our attention on *how* and *why* does one have to call upon a certain “way of thinking” that characterized Greek philosophers to make the distinction between icon and idol.² In fact we will talk extensively about the *logos*, comprising all those formulations of axiomatic “requirements” which shape the technical discourse (philosophical or theological). Afterward, in order to better circumscribe the goal of this attempt to reevaluate the topic of the icon into a new perspective³, I would call “theology” a “conversation with God” and “philosophy” a “conversation with one’s self” (although the etymology of the word seems to contradict me).

In the following part of the paper I will use the suggestions of some of the great commentators of Greek philosophy, such as Jaeger, O’Brien, O’Meara, Pepin, Armstrong, to point out to the specifications needed for the conceptual configuration of the way in which one should understand why the “changing/renewing of the mind” (*metanoia*) proposed by the Greek philosophers (especially Plato and the Neo-Platonists especially)⁴ is not the same with what Christians understand by this transformation, although *one and the same* mind (*logos*) is the subject of the requirement for change/renewal and sometimes (especially in the case of so-called “Christian” Neo-Platonism) the process focuses on the same end game: “the saving of one’s soul”. I believe this problem to be a strictly a “theological” one, although the issue at hand exists implicitly in Plato’s philosophical heritage and explicitly in Neo-Platonic philosophy (undoubtedly a “religious philosophical system”, among others)⁵. The issue of “saving of one’s soul” is only depicted

¹Therefore, it is clear that I do not use the meanings of the terms „theologia” (the mystery of the Holy Trinity) and „oikonomia” (the mystery of God’s will in the history of man’s redemption).

²Although Christian theologians were known to use certain concepts (not *conceptions!*) belonging to Greek philosophy to express certain religious truths, it is still yet not fully understood that this usage was necessary in order to make a clear distinction between Christian *dogma* and its philosophical *conception*.

³ The novelty consists in the description of the terms in which the *exertion* of theological thought, being hammed by a philosophical *conception*, could lead to heresy.

⁴ Dominic O’Meara, *Plotin, Une introduction aux Ennéades*, Editions Universitaires Fribourg, Suisse, 1992, p. 18.

⁵ Denis O’Brien, *Theodicée plotinienne, theodiceegnostique*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, New York, Koln, 1993, p. 22.

in *philosophical* form when certain theologians “mishear” the Word¹. Such is the case of heretics! *Idolatry is the deafness of the mind*, although we should only accept this formulation as a working “definition”.

My goal is to place the issue of understanding the icon not as mere cult object, in the perspective of the “iconoclastic crisis”, for example, but rather in the *retrospective* of the “crisis of metaphysical thought” (if the pun and, especially, this interpretation of Greek metaphysical history are fair). In this respect, it is not the theological issue of the holy imagery (with all the connotations of the term that could be assumed by the theology of the icon) which constitutes the main point of interest in this article, nor is the “belligerence” between philosophy and theology that supersedes the stake of my article. What interests me most is to point out what I believe to be the “Gordian Knot” of *exerting* thought. What does it mean “*to think*”?!...What the “answer” *per se* consists in is not easily understood, while the consequences of this *response* make up the very “heart” of that way of thought. *By asking..., you in fact answer!* By asking, you in fact *assume* the answer!

We are always talking about a Path that one needs to follow in order to reach Truth. In philosophical thought, in the philosophy of the Pre-Socratic Parmenides, to be more exact (one should accept that we are using the term “philosophy” from the technical standstill that appeared along with the “heritage” of language by Socrates/Plato), but also in Christian theological thought, we are always faced with the choice of a “Path”. Parmenides, “The Philosopher”, tells us (presenting in fact the words of the “Goddess”) that only “two” are the ways of our thought: “is” and “is not”. It is worth mentioning that Pre-Socratic scholars admit that *the only* Path is that of “Being”², also called that “of the Truth”. Two possible paths are also proposed by Christian thought: Good and Evil, although the theological meanings are radically different³. In fact, Parmenides of Eleastates nothing more than that Truth is only reachable from the *path of reason*. Our senses, on

¹Jean Pepin, “Éléments pour une histoire de la relation entre intelligible chez Platon et dans le neoplatonisme”, în *De la philosophie ancienne à la théologie patristique*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1986, p. 62.

²This philosophic term, whose translation into modern language creates great problems, is even more difficult to comprehend when translated into a different mentality. Let us not forget that the first “translation” of any word is the expression of an *experience* of a lived reality.

³This matter exceeds the boundaries of this discussion greatly, but the importance of this parallel should be mentioned in order to contrast the two ways of thought that will be configured as speech into what we call “philosophy” and “theology”.

the other hand, prevent us from reaching the Truth. Such is not how things are for Christianity, where “senses” play a decisive role *together with* “thought” for the acknowledgment of the “Truth”.¹

Let us not forget that at that time the “philosophers of nature”, as they would be called later on, were attempting to explain the origin of the world using *a path* other than the mythical or religious ones. From an Aristotelian stand, we could say that the latter were on a quest for a “beginning” of the world explained “rationally”². In fact, the “modern” Aristotle presents a relatively precise account of the history of the type of research that characterizes Pre-Socratic thinkers. While trying to understand the origins of the universe by substantiating the latter on “something else” than an “explanation” pertaining to mythical-religious thought, the latter are said to have discovered only that “first principle” (*arkhe*) that would account for the understanding of the world’s emergence, while Pre-Socratics found that “beginning” only in something of “the mater’s nature”, the Stagirite tells us. Some of them also vaguely inferred an “*arkhe*” in the order of “movement”. “Finality”, as “the first principle” that Aristotle held so dear is said to have been his individual discovery. What we need to point out is that Parmenides of Elea doesn’t fit Aristotle’s classifications well and the same goes for Heraclitus of Ephesus (although we will leave him aside, since his “philosophy” would lead to the necessity of a different topic approach than that depicted here). And this for a simple reason! Aristotle only regarded these thinkers from the perspective of his own *philosophy*. In fact, although Pre-Socratic thought is attributed the quality of being “philosophic”, this only goes so far as it implies a separation between the latter and mythical-religious thought (understood here as “*un-rational* thought”). It is too easily forgotten that the efforts of these thinkers who are named Pre-Socratic could, first of all, be recovered as “*un-theological* thought” (in the Greek acceptance of the expression), meaning “rational”. And this is because only when the two *exertions* of the mind are opposed, as “theological/*un-rational*” and “philosophical/rational”, they will make the “deed” attributed to Socrates/Plato intelligible. It is thus clearly revealed why one cannot talk about the prime meaning of “philosophy” until Plato, who discovers our

¹For Christianity, “Truth” is a Person, not a concept. This fact radically shapes its “epistemological” perspective.

²I am making heavy use of this term due to strictly methodological reasons, which presumes a full assumption of the “embezzlement” of Pre-Socratic thought through such an intentional reading.

power of understanding the world in *language/logos/reason*¹. Language is thus the one which can help one discover the “origin” of the world and, implicitly, our own origin. But not any type of language! But the language that presents itself as a “genus” resulted from the blending of the other five “supreme genera” (being, movement, repose, the identical and the different), that which makes enables the *distinction* between truth from falsehood². *One cannot reach the truth unless he or she has reached being*, Plato writes in „Theaitetos”. Language is like a “copy” of those “*ideai*” through which the world *appears to be* for our senses. That is why, having the capacity to “reason”³, Plato’s soul is in a way⁴ this world. Understanding the world will thus mean *self-knowledge* (that which Plotinus will try to illustrate centuries later). The language/logos, an *intermediary* between the two worlds, is *cognition* as re-cognition that helps us “*rememorize*” the contact with the being. “The Truth” would thus become the “remembrance” of this “contact” with the being (*ideai/eidos*). The “epistemological” implications of this Platonist hypothesis haven’t remained without echoes in the thought of some Christian theologians.

Pre-Socratic “philosophy” was aimed at “knowing” the world, a world that remained *divine* by excellence, although its “explanations” as phenomenon were of another nature. Pre-Socratic knowledge was therefore a way of knowing the world, one that was and would remain “divine”, which could also be *understood* in a different manner by man. The Pre-Socratic “philosopher” first tried to dehumanize mythical-religious thought, an exodus from the Egypt of religious superstition. That is why the “gestures” of Pre-Socratic thinkers have different meanings for Plato and Aristotle. Both could be deemed to be “rationalist” philosophers, but the former’s thought originates in mythical-religious beliefs which are hereon “melted” in the furnace of poetic-philosophic thought, where the echoes of the “beyond” that houses the “gods”⁵ still linger, while the latter takes decisive steps towards a world that belong *to the man only*, one from which the gods are banned to a non-problematic “hither” of thought, while

¹The tree terms signify the different meanings that we bear in mind in the case of any interpretation.

²It all becomes clear when reading “The Sophist” bearing in mind the key of the “Parmenides” dialogue.

³A whole different meaning compared to the modern one, meaning the cognitivist meaning.

⁴The opposition between “sensitive” and “intelligible” is a *working hypothesis*. Plato “believes” that only in such a manner we could understand how the world *appears* to our senses that have the property of triggering “the recollection of the world of ideas.

⁵Meaning of the “force” that governs the universe.

carefully shielded by the principle of non-contradiction. "Plato's man" is still gazing towards a past that *points him* to the future, while "Aristotle's man" takes a leap from the past which obligates him *to construct* the future. The future represents the fulfillment of a "divine" ideal for the former; while for the latter it represents the fulfillment of a human goal. "Plato's man" is *autonomous*, while "Aristotle's man" is *independent*. The world of the former is the *reflection* of the face of the god embodied in his soul, while that of the latter is *the organization* of the citadel according to the rules of "rational" thought. *The exertion* of the mind is therefore "shaped" differently by the two. It is of little importance, in this context, if Plato "believed" or not in the local gods, while preaching the birth of the One-God at the same time (as one might call it according to Plotinus). Why Plato never went as far as Plotinus, one can only wonder! But, surely, he left us with the possibility of interpreting his type of interrogation as being a plural approach to our rationality (in this case, both philosophical and religious). Still, Plato does not limit "rationality" to *the exertion* of our mind to the narrow subscription of "logic"¹, nor does he drive it away from the religious ethos. *Rationality* is a product of *the exertion* of the mind², Plato tells us. He also tells us that its *origin* is unknown.³ Still, our perseverance dedicated to finding the Truth could lead us to a point where we would receive the possibility of knowledge as a *gift*.

Let us briefly return to Parmenides, "our father", as Plato called him, to make several specifications about "the divine" and, mostly, about the signification of the "signs of being" that unravel The Path followed by the thinker from Elea upon the heaving of the Goddess. Of course, it is difficult to understand what "the divine" meant for him. Still it is certain that Parmenides does more than use rhetoric in the prologue of his poem "On nature", something depicted as a mere "telltale" by those who wouldn't have been able to understand its "philosophic" message in any way other than an efficient paideic model. It is often too easily forgotten that Parmenides' creation was in fact descending from that of Xenophon's, whereas the latter was surely a virulent critic of the Greek religious anthropomorphism. He is the first to "see" divinity in the form of the "reasoned" One, as being different from the plurality of the gods that each ruled a "share" of the visible world. The plurality of the "gods" was in direct

¹We know that this modern term only covers partially and technically the philosophical exertion of the mind in an "analytical" regime (with Aristotelian meaning).

²As *dianoia* and as *nous*.

³„The seventh letter" is a written testimony of this fact.

relation to the multiplicity of the visible world. Therefore, the problem of the One and of the Multiple is more than the mere metaphysical issue found at the core of all Greek philosophy, but also the problem of religious man. It is therein that Parmenides' legacy lies! Parmenides's thought fuels the entire Greek philosophy later on, but this doesn't mean that this is the sole "path" of understanding man and the universe.

Parmenides does more than "philosophy" when "proving" that there is but a "path" one can take to find The Truth. When Plato will focus on this issue again, by *re-signifying*, Parmenides' though had already become *tradition* for the Greek metaphysics. Plato's originality consists in the way in which he *reinterpreted* the signification of Parmenides' "distinction". Aristotle's intuition of the philosopher's from Elea use of a "double" measure when explaining the world, one "according to reason" and the other "according to the senses" was correct, although he missed its "theological" meaning. Plato, on the other hand, profited as much as he could from this "ambiguity", while proposing a natural development of Parmenides' thought. Plato "re-defined" our thought as "distinction" between the visible world (which we access by our senses) and the unseen one (which we access through "reason"), but he also proposed the *participation* of the "sensitive world" to the "intelligible one". Although these terms "cover" well, from a metaphysical point of view, that which Plato could not express otherwise, the need for a new symbolic signification is more or less a need having to do with *the theological horizon*, one that is connoted by the "soul" (*psyche*). Let us not forget that Plato's "soul" was not, by any means, a reminiscence of the Pythagorean one, but rather a reinterpretation of the latter. Plato will engrave a beautiful tale "of delayed significance" on the Pythagorean canvas. "To think", first of all, means to *distinguish* between the two worlds. The soul *is* this "thinking" and the man is *this* soul. Whereas the soul is not an "*idea/eidos*", although it is of similar nature and akin to the divine, it is therefore necessary for "man" to be *such as* the divine. Plato's hypothesis is exceptional! It is thus true that there cannot be but Platonist or Neo-Platonist philosophers... *Not to accept* Plato's hypothesis means *not to accept the immortality of the soul* and, implicitly, the existence of the divine. We cannot know what this would have truly meant for Plato, but is certain that such an interpretation is not farfetched. "The new" Platonists will prove it (especially Proclus)!

Plotinus considered himself to be a "Platonist", by telling us he did nothing else but "speak the unspoken" from Plato's thought. And, to a certain extent, that is how things are. Although he maintains the identity

between “intelligence” and “intelligible”, its “Neo-Platonic” re-signification took one to places to which Plato maybe hadn’t dared. It took one to “theology”! But a *philosophical* theology! This is, in fact, the *religious* form of the “Gordian Knot” of thought! Are in fact capable of *thinking divinely*? Plato is reserved about this, but believes it to be possible; Plotinus is optimistic and believes or is convinced that it is possible; while Proclus truly believes it to be possible, so he *speaks* it without reservations (in fact he breaks the unity between intelligible-sensitive, thus breaking the relation between “soul” and “being” and leaving the “reserved” thinking of Plato behind. Still, the “belief” of these Neo-Platonist philosophers is in fact *different*.

We aren’t exactly sure what meaning to give to Plato’s distinction, Dominic O’Meara states¹. In fact, he claims, until the 18th century, when Descartes will make the metaphysical distinction between spirit (*l’ésprit*) and body, Plato’s distinction functioned as such. One should also note that Descartes’ distinction wasn’t made explicitly either. The intelligibility of his metaphysical distinction is supported, paradoxically, by the *intrinsic* non-intelligibility of the body and spirit themselves. Both Plato and Descartes were great geometers. It is interesting that both of them, although originating in radically different historic contexts, “needed” a “God” as “The Endorser” of the truth of their thinking. Although Plato doesn’t attribute any epistemic value to the body², its existence indirectly certifies the need of „the being in itself “. One should remember that “knowing” for Plato means “to reminisce” the soul’s *contact* with the „*idea/eidos*”/„the being in itself “. In this hypothesis, “the metaphysical distinction”, understood as method (in the modern understanding of the term), implies a type of philosophical *belief*. He who “believes” in the “immortality of the soul” *thinks*, meaning *distinguishes*, in order to understand one’s self. This type of understanding is, of course, *absolute* only in the hypothesis. Still one cannot *absolutely* distinguish (meaning to “unravel”, according to the etymology of the term) between the two realities, the visible and the intelligible. The contribution of the visible to the non-visible is *necessary*, so “reason” loses its “usage”, thus canceling itself. Although ontologically different, the two “natures”, the divine and the humane, have to communicate. The “Re-found truth” is a relative one, in the way it engages our thought. And, although Descartes position seems to be more nuanced, it only shifts the issue at hand to another discourse universe. We should conclude here that the same type of metaphysical distinction will

¹Dominic O’Meara, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

²In metaphysical thought, the truth is always one and unique and this is what I want to point out by writing it with a capital letter.

generate the same issue of non-differentiation between icon (*eikon*) and idol (*eidolon*), the case of the *philosophical exertion* of the mind in the *religious space*.

In fact, it is the issue of the “soul’s immortality” that will differentiate Platonists and Neo-Platonists. We know that Aristotle opposed the idea of the soul’s immortality. We also know that the stoics admitted the existence of a limited immortality (an impersonal one, originating in the union of the sage’s soul with that of the world). Epicureanism also denied the immortality of the soul, as the latter was seen as a conglomerate of atoms. Plotinus ties the issue of immortality to the “nature of the soul” (starting from the belief that the soul is not of corporal nature, thus it is not a body). *Believing* in Plato’s words, Plotinus realizes the importance of the soul’s *independence* on the body. Although arguing in favor of the soul’s immortality, he now had to reiterate on the *meaning* of Plato’s distinction. While Plato had used the Pythagorean mythology as “support” to “proving” the immortality of the soul, Plotinus will use Plato’s “hypothesis” on the immortality of the soul.

This point of the discussion makes it possible for us to *break* the “Gordian Knot”, for “to think” *also* means “to believe”. Exactly! Clearly, we are talking about “belief” in the philosophical meaning, but also in that of the Christian tradition. Whereas for Plato “to think” means “to distinguish” between visible (*oraton/aistheton*) and non-visible (*aoraton/noeton*), for the Christian “to think” means “to believe” in the *radical differentiation*, generated by “nature”, and, at the same time, in the *likeness*, according to “image” (*eikon*), between man and God. But the Christian does so by thinking/differentiating between “created” (*geneton*) and “uncreated”. This Christian *logos* is no longer the “word/*logos*” of Parmenides’ Goddess, but *The Logos* itself, which is the real God and the real Man. If “to think” has as much meaning as thinking can think itself (that is why philosophy is “man’s talk to himself”), for the Christian “to think” means to “talk to God”, meaning to *recognize* himself as being “in the image and similarity” of God.

The issue of the relation between Greek philosophy and the theological thought from the first Christian centuries ¹ (or even of the entire Byzantine period) continues to be highly controversial today. From understanding Christianity as a mere “Jewish movement”² that spread due to the “Hellenized Jews” (because it is to them that the Apostles spoke, first

¹ See A.H. Armstrong, “Platonic mirrors”, in *Hellenic and Christian Studies*, Variorum, Great Britain, London, 1990.

² Werner Jaeger, *Le christianisme ancien et la paideia grecque*, Centre de Recherche « Pensée chrétienne et Langage de la Foi », Université de Metz, 1980, p. 10.

of all), to considering the Greek *paideia* as the bearer or even creator of Christianity's meanings or to understanding Greek thought as being "the ferment" of the Christian one, there have been interpretations and many others are sure to follow.

For Nikolaos Matsoukas, philosophy is "metascience" by excellence, since although autonomous as a discipline, it is always thought "beyond" scientific thought (without denying the latter). "Before and after are not separate, but organically and functionally connected to one another. In other words, *meta* (after) constitutes the organic and continuous extension of *before* – the same function that characterizes metaphysics"¹. In this respect, philosophy is not something "disconnected" from scientific thought, meaning, from the thought of *man*, who is trying to understand *only* via his own reason. Commenting upon the apparently contradicting words of St. Gregory the Theologian upon the concept of philosophy (who states "It is not the proper thing to philosophize about God in all His glory" and "Philosophize about anything")² – philosophy taking turns here in being both demonic and useful – Matsoukas points out to a "double methodology of theological thought"...because there is "first of all, theology understood as *experire* (the understanding that God cannot be experienced like other ways of knowledge, as he is not subjected to human experience), prophetic and blessed life, then there is theology understood as the description of the life in question, of its manifestations and of the culture that it creates. This description can become the science of things lived, interpretation and philosophical reflection"³. It now becomes clear why one cannot simply talk about any *influence* of Greek philosophical thought on Christian *dogmatism*, as opposed to the argument of Basile Tatakis. The latter *only* points to the *cultural* "contact" of the two *ways of thinking*. That is why he discovers "the influence" of Greek philosophical thought on the Christian Fathers (especially to those from the Eastern world). For him, "Christianity is a new <Know thyself>".⁴ Platonism was the philosophy that almost "commanded" the development of Christianity. Still, Aristotle's works, less present in the Orient, had a significant influence here as well, especially during the period of the Byzantine "humanism". In fact, one may say that the background of the argument between Plato's supporters and those of Aristotle created

¹Nikolaos A. Matsoukas, *Istoria filosofiei bizantine*, Editura Bizantină, București, 2011, p. 23.

²*Ibidem*, p. 31.

³*Ibidem*, p. 32.

⁴Basile Tatakis, *Filosofia bizantină*, Nemira Publishing House, București, 2010, p. 49.

Christianity in direct relation with the thinking of the ancient Greeks. "Christian reason" does not claim to be self-sufficient to itself, it rather tries to comprehend the Revelation, admitting openly that "it needs the divine light and blessing" to do so. It no longer stands as an autonomous reason, "on the contrary, it is a reason that has to undergo a continuous struggle to outmatch itself, as human reason, in order to distinguish this other reason, the only real one, meaning God".¹ True! Still, Tatakis' conclusion is only partially true! We may indeed understand Revelation as "a call to the Greek from those days", which "converts" in order "to expand the rather rigid frames of his reason", as well as the ones of his "conscience". That is why Tatakis discovers "why" Christianity is a new "Know thyself!"... We could almost say that it is only in this respect that we may call Christianity "the true philosophy". Although of an exceptional cultural value, Tatakis' Byzantine Philosophy offers us "another philosophy" or rather I would say that it offers a *cultural history* of philosophy in the Byzantine space. Still, Christianity cannot be reduced to this "one sided face" of its cultural history. Although its *mystical* dimension is acknowledged, the latter is reduced to the "individualities" that may be understood in this manner (sadly, Tatakis doesn't distinguish between "individual" and "person" and, especially, between the authentic meaning of the Christian *mysticism* and the *elements* of mystic thought that may *structure* philosophical thought²). It is easy to understand, in the new interpretation horizon presented by Matsoukas, why Mihail Psellos was *first of all* a great theologian and *only then* a "master of philosophers", while Ioan Italos, his apprentice, *only* a great philosopher. The first understood that "rationalism is one thing", while "the mystical experience is another". Unable to distinguish between "a theology of the Holy Ghost's blessing" and the "scientific" one, "while replacing the Church's experience on dogmatic teachings, such as the dogma of the Holy Trinity and the Christological dogma, with philosophical categories"³, Ioan Italos strayed from the Path (that is why he was condemned by the Church after the intervention of Alexius I Comnenus).

A different horizon of the correct understanding of Christianity is the one provided by alt Stylianos G. Papadopoulos. The latter believes that the *theology* of the Early Church Fathers can only be understood as „something having everything to do with the life of the Church and with the need to

¹*Ibidem*, p. 49.

²Sadly, although one may talk about mysticism, one cannot say anything about it. While talking about mysticism, aren't talking about mysticism...

³Nikolaos A. Matsoukas, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-154.

provide answers to its problems”.¹ Providing an excellent “description” of that which we call “Father and Teacher” of the Church (which is not to be mistaken for the “numerous holy fathers and church writers”)², thus removing the confusion generated by the inadequate use of the expression “churchly literature”, which so easily confuses those unaccustomed to practical Christian life, Papadopoulos conducts an extraordinary work dedicated to unraveling the genuine Christian universe.

I have taken these short incursions in the history of ancient and byzantine philosophy in order to highlight the complexity of the topic, but also to point out to *the only* way to “knowingly” understand the Christian way of thought. Nothing can be meaningfully discussed about the icon without making the distinction between *created* and *uncreated* and without applying the “double theological methodology” of the Holy Fathers, that “sets theologians and philosophers free, so that they may have philosophical and scientific thoughts about all creation, even about the forms of experienced revelation”, but not about the triadic uncreated God, which “may only be approached through the blessings of the Holy Ghost, through theophany in creation and in history”³.

I hope that the issue of the meaning of the icon (*eikon*) appears quite clearly from this “retrospective” of philosophical thought in its dialogue with Christian thought. Nothing has since changed in the Christian way of thinking because not even a letter of that path can be changed (the distinction between created and uncreated can be thought of, but not in the meaning of making it “intelligible”; we should rather say that it can/must be assumed by our thought. “The beginning of the world”⁴ is no longer in a period of time during which he once lived, rather a “time” with and through which “we began” *being!* Man is a microcosm, meaning he “recapitulates” the entire world. The only “Path of Being/Truth” consists in the *living* of this given time. *How* or *why* is another story.

Therefore, by not mistaking the ways of exertion of our mind, philosophical or theological⁵, we will be able to avoid conceptual confusions and, mostly, to adequately understand the issues that appear when we

¹Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, *Patrologie*, vol. I, Editura Bizantină, Bucuresti, 2006, p. 85.

²*Ibidem*, p. 21.

³Nikolaos A. Matsoukas, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

⁴The efforts of the Greek philosophers, especially those of the Pre-Socratic ones, have an undeniable cultural value, but the authentic meaning of the “beginning” can only be understood in the Christian explication.

⁵Let us not forget Matsoukas’ statement on the “double methodology”.

apply them to topics that belong to religious belief, but which can also be discussed from a philosophical.

*Eikon*¹ is not a “re-presentation” of the “nature” seen by man through reason, rather an “image”² that testifies to man’s *deification* (*theosis*) through faith. That is why when the theological distinction between created and uncreated³ is not known or understood correctly, we understand why *eidolon* is the adoration of the created *in the condition* of the uncreated. Meaning a *sad* confusion between The Living God with one of his creations, on one hand, and a tragic *surrender* of man to his Face, on the other.

REFERENCES

- Armstrong, A.H. "Platonic Mirrors." *Hellenic and Christian Studies* (Variorum), 1990.
- Jaeger, Werner. *Le christianisme ancien et la paideia greque*. Metz: Centre de Recherche Pensée chrétienne et la Langage de la Foi, 1980.
- Matsoukas, Nikolaos A. *Istoria filosofiei bizantine*. București: Editura Bizantină, 2011.
- O'Brien, Denis. *Theodicée plotinienne, theodicée gnostique*. Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1993.
- O'Meara, Dominic. *Plotin. Une introduction aux Enneades*. Suisse: Editions Universitaires Fribourg, 1992.
- Papadopoulos, Stylianos G., *Patrologie*. Vol. I., București: Editura Bizantină, 2006.
- Pepin, Jean. *De la philosophie ancienne à la théologie patristique*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1986.
- Tatakis, Basile. *Filosofia bizantină*. București: Nemira Publishing House, 2010.

¹In order to understand the meaning of icon sees *Teologia icoanei*, an excellent work by Leonid Uspenski.

²The issue of the meaning of the “image” in philosophical thought is another delicate matter, yet one that exceeds the boundaries of this discussion.

³Philosophy is the closest way of thinking whose exertion implies the rational acceptance of a “beyond”, understood as “the beginning” of the universe.

EVOLUTIONISM AND CREATIONISM IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA: A CASE-STUDY IN THE SCIENCE VERSUS RELIGION DEBATE¹

Andreea EȘANU²

***Abstract:** Since Charles Darwin published his controversial book *The Origin of Species* in 1859, and the theory of “common ancestry and descent with modification” severely clashed with the dogmatic position of the Christian Church concerning the origin and history of life on Earth, the conflict between evolutionists and creationists has continuously thrived all over Europe and the United States of America. In this paper I seek to illustrate the complexity of the issue starting from the main historical phases of the dispute recorded during the last century in the United States of America. Then I will address the intricate background and some of the reasons why it has become so delicate and controversial, stressing on the variety of the positions involved. In the last part, I will see what this particular debate brings to the general understanding of how evolutionary science and theistic religion stand one in respect to another in contemporary society.*

***Keywords:** evolutionism, creationism, Darwin, science, religion.*

In 1859, the British naturalist Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, a very controversial book that, in spite of its modest scientific claim that biological life as we know is the result of a long process of evolution from a common ancestor, has been immediately taken for a metaphysically reductionist theory that undermines Christian theology. Darwin’s dispute with his dogmatic contemporaries is well-documented, both in his letters and in several publications of the time³, but I shall not refer to that. It is interesting to point out, however, that the metaphysical interpretation of Darwinism has soon spread in Europe and the United States of America, and it slowly transformed evolutionism into a kind of doctrinal atheism, meant to disrupt theistic beliefs by denying the existence of God as Creator of life on Earth and as Designer of the amazingly complex and perfectly adapted biological species populating our planet. In America, for instance, there is a

¹ This paper was supported by the strategic grant POSDRU/89/1.5/S/62259, Project *Applied social, human and political sciences. Postdoctoral training and postdoctoral fellowships in social, human and political sciences* co-financed by the European Social Fund with the Sectorial Operational Program Human Resources Development 2007-2013.

² University of Bucharest, Romania.

³ Cf. Mircea Flonta, *Darwin and after Darwin* (in Romanian), Bucharest: Humanitas, 2010.

long history of controversy. Several neo-protestant churches have held during the last century and still claim today that Darwinism poses a huge threat to Christian faith, and it should be banned on grounds of heresy. On the other hand, reputed evolutionary biologists and philosophers of biology (e.g., Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett etc.) use the metaphysical interpretation of Darwinism as a strong argument against theism. Since the idea of a “blind” evolutionary process from a common ancestor makes the concept of Creator and Designer of the natural world unnecessary, theism is rationally questionable; and since the idea of such an evolutionary process is backed up by enough empirical evidence, theism is actually unjustifiable.

Given this misplacement of Darwinism on both the theological and philosophical fronts, an interesting social phenomenon emerged. If we look at what happened in the United States of America during the last 50 years, we can easily observe that the problem of how to understand evolution has considerably turned into a political issue. In the most recent years, supporters of the “Intelligent Design” movement, for instance, have launched neo-creationist ideas through public relations campaigns, using even media and parliamentary lobby. This shows bluntly that at stake is not a critical dismissal of Darwinism, but rather a full-fledged ideology that does not even address Darwinism. Instead, it relies on public rhetoric. The same, however, can be observed among partisans of the “rational atheistic” doctrine as well, who endorse the rhetoric of science and state that atheistic commitment is a logical consequence of embracing the theory of evolution by natural selection. Obviously, atheistic commitment is not a binding consequence of embracing the theory, but only a possible consequence of adhering to the metaphysical interpretation of it. Using the rhetoric of science is just as questionable as using media campaigns in order to influence public opinion. But why is it there such a terrible ideological clash between evolutionism and creationism in America?

1) A brief historical sketch

The idea of life that produces new life all by itself and evolves through blind and random mutations during long geological eras seemed very strange from the very beginning, back in the 19th century. Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species* was received with considerable skepticism all over Europe and America, and when the Royal Academy of Science awarded Darwin the Copley Medal in 1864, the president of the academy cared to stress that the theory of evolution was not among the

scientific merits that entitled Darwin to receive the distinction¹. In America, a good friend of Darwin's, the botanist Asa Gray tried to react to the wave of public disbelief by publishing "Natural selection not inconsistent with natural theology: a free examination of Darwin's treatise on the origin of species and of its American reviewers" (1861) and defending Darwin's theory from the main objection of atheism. However, the skepticism persisted and the general impression was that evolution really contradicted the theistic world-views of Christian Americans.

The clash became even more notable at the beginning of the 20th century, when in 1925 the American public faced a curious case – a Tennessee legal trial, informally known as the „Monkey Trial”, against a high school science teacher, John Scopes, who was accused of violating the local law that forbade teaching evolution in public schools. Soon the trial reached national coverage and polarized opinion. The entire debate from Dayton's Tennessee legal court is documented to the finest detail in a fascinating book, *Summer for the Gods: the Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion* (1997) by Pulitzer winner Edward E. Larson. As Larson points out, the ending of the trial was fairly ambiguous. The high school teacher was found guilty, but he was acquitted due to a legal technicality that had nothing to do with the issue at stake. However, the prosecution made a very confident press declaration immediately after the trial:

“Is the Bible true? is the question raised by the Tennessee law, and that question is answered in the affirmative as far as this trial can answer it.”²

John Scopes did not manage to turn the general sympathy into his favor, but his case slowly started to stir the conservative American society and during the following years his trial had a significant influence on the public perception of evolutionism. Larson's assessment is instructing in this respect:

“The pace of anti-evolution activism actually picked up after the trial (especially in the South), but it encountered increased popular resistance everywhere. Arkansas and Mississippi followed Tennessee in outlawing the teaching of human evolution, for example, but similar legislation lost in many other states, particularly in the North and the West.”³

¹Mircea Flonta, *Darwin and after Darwin* (in Romanian), (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2010), p. 200.

²Apud Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion*, (New York: Basic Books, 1997), p. 198.

³Edward Larson, *op.cit.*, p. 269.

Nevertheless, the Monkey Trial was followed by almost 40 years of public silence. The explanation for this might be two-fold. First of all, heightened parental concern led high school textbooks publishers and teachers to avoid the topic of Darwinian evolution in print or in classroom and, thus, it steamed down public polemic. Secondly, the US Supreme Court consecutively struck down, in the following years, religious instruction, mandatory praying and Bible reading from schools¹. Creationist advocates were, thus, equally shut down. The idea of a “creationist science”, meant to balance the theory of evolution with a valid scientific alternative, came only after 1960 and maybe as a consequence of the fact that Biblical conservatism was seriously loosing ground during that time.

In 1961, an engineering professor from Virginia Tech, in San Diego, published *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical record and its scientific implications*, a book intended to give scientific grounding to the six days creation, described in the book of *Genesis*. Henry Morris became very popular once his book went out and soon became a leading voice of the American creationist movement. Scientific creationism was rapidly absorbed by the conservative Protestant Church, and Morris was given the head of an entirely new research institute – The Institute for Creation Research. His program was ambitious, uncompromising, and aimed at proving that modern science had a solid Biblical foundation. It is important to stress at this point that the emergence of “creation science” or “scientific creationism” in the mid 1960’s was indeed a significant moment, because it seemed to move the debate of evolution against creation on an entirely different field, *i.e.*, the field of scientific research. In this new light, the Darwinian claims about the long history of life and the descent with modification were not seen not only as atheistic, but also as scientifically questionable. Morris held that science can prove Biblical creation. He strongly believed that Biblical historical narratives were, undeniably, facts. Also, he argued that the cluster of difficulties faced by the theory of evolution should bring us closer to embracing a creationist point of view which, in his mind, seemed less problematic.

But to call the Bible the “queen of sciences” and to rely on Biblical geology and anthropology as facts is, obviously, an extravagance. Nevertheless, Morris’ ideas spread and he managed to gain as least as much attention as the Scopes Trial did back in 1920’s. He even seemed to involve more social actors: *e.g.*, scientists, who felt compelled to respond to Morris’

¹ Edward Larson, *op cit.* p. 270 and Larry Witham, *Where Darwin Meets the Bible. Creationists and Evolutionists in America*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.), p. 34.

rejection of Darwinism, the National Academy of Science, and even politicians. The democratic drive of the American society made it possible to argue that creationist science should deserve a balanced treatment. Since there are two conflicting theories, of which neither is thoroughly confirmed, neither should be banned from the public; thus requires the “democracy of knowledge”. Another significant moment that favored the spreading of creationist science came in the 1970’s, when the religious rights issue also managed to defuse into politics. This, however, proves a very ambiguous understanding of creationism. Although justified by invoking religious rights, when presented to the public, creationism claimed to be scientific. But Morris’ theory was not scientific and in this respect the National Academy of Science made its point clear in 1984 in a public criticism.

The 1980’s witnessed a deflation of creationist ideas on the public scene. First, it was the reaction of the National Academy of Science in 1984, then, in 1987, it was the decision of the US Supreme Court that deemed the mandates of “balanced treatment” unconstitutional. However, the deflation was not as smooth as expected and, in fact, it prepared a new wave of creationist offensive during the 1990’s. This latter period is worth discussing because the debate finally tackles the issue of “ideology” in science. If Morris had insisted that Biblical *Genesis* was fact and, therefore, creationism was a scientific theory, the 1990’s creationism changed its focus, arguing for a different position: it is not that Darwinism is wrong because the book of *Genesis* is right. Darwinism is not wrong; but it is *incomplete*, because it obliterates the intelligent design that exists in nature. This position started to gain sympathy after Philip Johnson’s book *Darwin on Trial* (1980) was published. Johnson rejected strong creationism (*i.e.*, the six days creation), and implicitly suggested a weaker creationist theory, rebuilding from William Paley’s 18th century argument from order or universal harmony. According to Paley, the universe is too perfect and harmonious, like an exquisitely precise clock, so that it is hardly possible to be the outcome of chance. Therefore, it is reasonable to hold that evolution might be the result of an intelligent plan, put to work from the very beginning by a superior being. Starting from here, Johnson made the case that theism and evolution do not contradict each other, and only Darwin was the one who left room for confusion when he claimed in a non-scientific manner that evolution is a “blind” and purposeless process.

Once Johnson’s opinions reached larger audiences, at the beginning of the 1990’s, Darwinism started to be apprehended more as a metaphysical

doctrine on the lines of philosophical materialism than as a scientific theory, and soon was to be mistaken in the public perception accordingly.

So, even if the Darwinian “descent with modification” might be a good naturalistic explanation for how life evolved, Darwinism still fails to ground its own assumptions about the *purposelessness* and *randomness* of evolution. According to Johnson, there is not enough empirical evidence to claim that evolution is a process like that; this is a metaphysical claim and, even if Intelligent Design is not a complete theory either and has its load of metaphysical commitments (*i.e.*, about a universal designer and their plan), assuming the democracy of knowledge, it should be given equal credit as scientific theory and equal access to the public. What we have here is a more sophisticated and engaging argument than what Henry Morris had in mind back in the 1960’s and the consequences of Johnson’s line of thought were to be seen not long after his book was published¹.

The Dover Trial, from 2005, gives an interesting insight into how sophisticated the argument for creation has become during the last decades. As the Scopes Trial a hundred years ago, the one in Dover was also a court trial about teaching evolution in public schools. Eleven parents sued the Dover Area School District for its policy of favoring Intelligent Design over Darwinism in ninth grade science classes. To this trial participated also Michael Behe, a biochemistry professor and author of the very controversial book *Darwin’s Black Box* (1996). Michael Behe argued for the Intelligent Design hypothesis building his position, not on the standard argument from order, but on the “irreducible complexity” of natural phenomena. He claimed that the complexity of life on Earth is irreducible to small evolutionary changes favored by natural selection during long historical periods, so it must be the result of a pre-existing plan. But that plan is *not necessarily* God’s plan. In first instance, Behe’s statement is correct. There are cases in which natural selection does not produce complexity, but rather simplicity, so natural selection *alone* cannot account for the entire amount of complexity in nature. But this does not mean that complexity is altogether irreducible. In spite of these observations, the outcome of the Dover trial is puzzling: Michael Behe did not argue for creationism, but the decision against teaching Intelligent Design in biology classes was grounded on the faultiness of confusing creationism with science. Instead, Michael Behe’s argument was

¹ As Larry Witham documents: “In 1995 the Alabama Board of Education passed a measure requiring that a disclaimer be affixed on the inside cover of biology text-books, and the argument that «no one was present» to see life begin and that «evolution was a theory, not a fact»” (*op.cit.*, p.64-65)

both scientifically questionable – since irreducible complexity is a theoretical hypothesis still lacking solid confirmation, and scientifically *plausible* in its criticism of natural selection. However, this aspect of Intelligent Design theory was not at all taken into account.

If we are to draw a moral from this short historical survey of the debate on evolution in the United States of America, it is often the case that most of the important public attitudes follow a path of ideologically safe moves. In the Scopes Trial (1925), the biology teacher was found guilty of spreading heretical evolutionist ideas, but he was eventually acquitted – the accusation of heresy was, in fact, too hasty to be taken seriously, but the overall public was given the expected decision. Similarly, in the Dover Trial (2005), Intelligent Design was exposed as unscientific and it was removed from the curriculum of Pennsylvania’s public schools, as it was actually expected. But Intelligent Design is not necessarily the same with Biblical creationism, and the case of Michael Behe’s position proves it pertinently. But the fact was overlooked.

Moreover, Biblical creationism finds its way back in the school curriculum and in the public attention whenever the “democracy of knowledge” seems to be threatened in America – as if nothing happened during the last one hundred years with the science of evolution, and neglecting the fact that certain formulations of “Intelligent Design” theory, less committed to theism, are more plausible than Biblical creationism. Looking underneath the surface of this debate looks like a very messy business that no one is really willing to undertake. But what is it there?

2) The main positions and oppositions

In this section I will try to emphasize the main positions involved in the intricate debate of evolution *versus* creation in contemporary America and highlight some of its most salient presuppositions. The section will provide a critical assessment of the complex dispute and it will be followed, in the last part of the paper, by an evaluation of the manner in which these discussions seem to stir the more profound issue at stake: how natural science and theistic religion stand one in respect to another in contemporary society.

It is claimed that Darwin’s theory of evolution challenges Biblical creationism. But the debate does not concern a simple opposition. In fact, if we try a brief systematization, it turns out that there are at least five relevant positions:

- a) “Young Earth” creationism

- b) Progressive creationism
- c) Intelligent Design
- d) Darwinian agnosticism
- e) Rational/new atheism

(i) and (ii) are explicitly theistic, (iii) is implicitly theistic, (iv) is implicitly non-theistic, while (v) is explicitly atheistic.

The “Young Earth” creationists hold that Darwinism is false. According to them, *Genesis* is the authentic “book of science” that offers valid empirical information about the origins of the universe. A good illustration of this position is to be found in Henry Morris’ popular Biblical geology from *The Genesis Flood* (1961). Morris together with J. C. Withcomb claim that the Creation of the entire universe took place less than 10.000 years ago and it happened precisely as it is described in the Bible: a fall triggered the second law of thermodynamics and a flood laid, in a single year, most of the geological strata. More recently, a group of people from San Diego’s Institute of Creation Research are struggling to back up the Young Earth hypothesis with new convincing empirical data. “The biggest problem we have, in my estimation, is the light-travel-time problem”¹, because the speed of light seems to show that the universe must be older than what the Biblical chronology recommends, given that it takes at least tens of thousands of years for light from distant stars to travel to the human eye². Nevertheless, the Institute of Creation Research has not abandoned the quest for a plausible explanation and still argues for a “science of creation”.

An important but largely ignored aspect is that Young Earth creationism is not known to the public. Some recent sociological surveys have shown that the American public is not creationist in a doctrinal sense, although it embraces Young Earth ideas in high percentage³, but mostly ignorant. A major survey from 2000 commissioned by the advocacy group *People for the American Way* (PFAW) confirmed this fact. Half of the respondents have never heard of creationism. So, the interesting thing behind (i) is that Bible fundamentalism and creationism are not properly dissociated by those who hold creationist beliefs. Young Earth creationism, although struggling for scientific recognition, is spread in America mainly because it is confused with Biblical conservatism. This explains why extreme creationists, like the geologist Kurt Wise, director of the Creation Research Center at

¹ Danny Faulkner, “The State of Creation Astronomy”, *Pittsburgh PA* (August 3-8 1998), <http://www.icr.org/article/creation-astronomy-state/> (accessed February 22, 2012).

² Cf. Larry Witham, op. cit., p. 54.

³ There were 44% according to a 1996 Gallup survey.

Truett-McConnell College in Harvard, are overcritical to the idea of a “democracy of knowledge” based on religious rights. Young Earth creationists seem to be offended when religious issues strike in and blur the problem of Creation.

The second position is progressive creationism. Progressive creationists, unlike “New Earth” ones, stick to the Darwinian story of life, but they deny that evolution is a self-generated and self-sustaining process. Progressive creationism holds that a pre-existing supernatural being created and still maintains life on Earth through immutable laws of nature and pure acts of creation. Richard Bube, an engineering scientist at Stanford University, gives a brief description of this position: “Evolution can be considered without denying creation; creation can be accepted without excluding evolution.”¹ The biologist Keith Miller shares a similar point of view, rejecting the so-called “materialism” of Darwin’s scientific mind. The latter, Miller holds, is the “wisdom of our time, cloaked in scientific authority, which states that natural causation excludes the divine.”² Progressive creationists seek to find a place for God in a natural world governed by the laws of evolution. As a doctrine, it is based on the idea of “progressive creation”. Creation did not happen all at once, but, at the beginning of the universe, God started the engine of evolution and put it work. From time to time, he can choose to correct and repair it if things do not go according to the plan. So, progressive creationism concedes that life is the result of an evolutionary process, but also holds that God can intervene at any time by *fiat*. The latter part makes progressive creationism a form of conservative creationism because it presupposes that God can, ultimately, *override* evolution in certain circumstances and create spontaneously. For instance, progressive creationists find proof of the divine action by *fiat* in the appearance of discontinuous phenomena in the history of life, such as the emergence of human consciousness, for which there seems to be no unquestionable Darwinian explanation. The *fiat* assumption is fundamental and it distinguishes progressive from Young Earth creationism in a substantial manner: unlike progressive, Young Earth creationists are not committed to multiple and arbitrary divine interventions. In fact, such an idea would heavily contradict their scientific pretenses. Progressive

¹ Richard Bube, “We Believe in Creation”, <http://sermons.logos.com/submissions/82742-WeBelieveInCreation#content=/submissions/82742> (accessed February 22, 2012).

² Keith Miller, “Theological Implications of an Evolving Creation” www.icla.org.ph/IMG/pdf_Miller_EvolvingCreation.pdf (accessed February 22, 2012), p. 3.

creationism, even if apparently more moderate than its rival, is in fact more radical and conservative.

How is this position reflected in the American society? Religiously, it seems that progressive creationism fits better Biblical interpretation than Young Earth creationism, in spite of the latter's straightforwardness and literal adherence to the story of *Genesis*. Progressive creationism presents Creation both as a "natural mechanism" and a miracle. At a 1992 Bible conference held in Chicago, to which approximately a hundred Bible scholars attended, it was concluded that progressive creation is the best association of "Biblical and scientific particulars"¹. Socially, the 1996 Gallup survey on the topic showed that 39% of the large American public and 40% of the scientific community are ready to accept that "humans developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God guided this process, including humankind's creation"² even if this position is problematic on more than one level. First of all, it is far more ideological than Young Earth creationism, by engaging religious faith and the issue of "miracles", and second of all, it seems to make very little sense because it raises the naïve question: in what sense is evolution by natural selection a law of nature if it can be overridden by *fiat* anytime a supernatural being decides it is the case? These complications may explain why in the Gallup survey from 1996 the public adherence to progressive creationism (39%) is smaller than to the Biblical standard idea of Creation (44%). It is also relevant to stress that the scientific community's appraisal is much higher in the survey (40%, compared to 5% that stick to Biblical standard creation) maybe because progressive creationism exhibits a dialectic that is attractive to an educated mind. Progressive creationism is often promoted by invoking both religious rights and the democracy of knowledge, but this is not found inconsistent by its supporters.

The third position to be distinguished from (i) and (ii) is the Intelligent Design movement or the so called "new creationist wave", often confused especially with progressive creationism. It propagated during the 1980's in the United States of America mainly through Philip Johnson's *Darwin on Trial*, the popular book I have mentioned in the previous section. The "new creationism" rejects God's intervention by *fiat* and replaces it with the concept of *design*: "complex order requires a designing intelligence, [since] mere chance and necessity fall short of accounting for our world"³, but

¹ Apud Larry Witham, *op. cit.*, p.51.

² Apud *ibidem*.

³ Taner Edis, "Great Themes, Narrow Constituency", in *Why Intelligent Design Fails: a*

this designing intelligence is non-interventionist. Intelligent Design seems to push theism almost to its limit because it depersonalizes the designing force that stands behind natural order. However, this step is necessary in order to preserve a coherent concept of “natural law” – as something that encapsulates necessity and cannot be overridden. Intelligent Design engages more convincingly the scientific debate than progressive creationism because it keeps clear on what the laws of nature should be like, and seeks to *prove* pre-existent design. However, it gets a really unclear public perception: is Intelligent Design really about God? Is it really a creationist doctrine? Given its bizarre positioning at the outskirts of theism, one could pertinently wonder: are there any theistic assumptions/intuitions preserved and, if yes, what do they look like?

For instance, Philip Johnson holds that for the sake of explaining natural and organic diversity, Darwin’s descent with modification is a plausible reduction, but such a reduction does not entirely dismiss the existence of God. Johnson’s claim is that Darwin wrongly attached to the epistemological justification of his theory (*i.e.*, an inference to the best explanation) the metaphysical commitment to materialism. But if we take a closer look at Johnson’s argument itself, we can easily file the same objection. His argument is no less than a reiteration of William Paley’s 18th century argument from order, or Thomas Aquinas’ 13th century argument from universal harmony. This means that, if we go beyond the scientific import brought by new theories in biology and biochemistry (like Behe’s “irreducible complexity”) Johnson’s argument for Intelligent Design still looks like a *philosophical* argument. There is no doubt that Johnson himself is arguing from a philosophical point of view in spite of his criticism of Darwin’s, only that he is not a reductionist.

The argument rests on an implicit assumption that is very likely to have gone wrong even in Thomas Aquinas’ version and probably later on in modern versions of the same argument. In Thomas Aquinas’ words the argument from harmony is the following:

“We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it is directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is directed by the archer.

Therefore, some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.”¹

Aquinas’ argument for intelligent design is suggesting that inanimate objects (like the planets) could not have ordered themselves (*i.e.*, got themselves into the orbits they have), because they lack the intelligence to do so. Yet as the planets are aligned so perfectly, this means it must have been done so by a being with the intelligence to do so. Now although humans are intelligent, they cannot move planets, so that leaves us with God. In his *Natural Theology* (1802), William Paley made a stronger case for intelligent design, starting from Aquinas’ argument and providing extensive and finely grained biological knowledge, the best that one could provide in the 18th century. For instance, Paley argued that the human eye is as complex as a watch or a telescope, requiring all the parts to fit precisely for achieving vision, and this only shows that it was designed by an omnipotent Creator. However, the argument from order has a logical flaw that immediately highlights its theistic assumption. From the fact that each unintelligent or inanimate object in the universe is put to work by an intelligent cause, it does not follow that *all* the unintelligent or inanimate objects in the universe are put to work by the same intelligent cause, unless we suppose there could be only one such cause, *i.e.*, only if we assume theism. Even if all intricate watches are made by an intelligent craftsman, still, it does not follow that all watches are made by the same craftsman.

In the end, the doctrine of Intelligent Design might be preserved by embracing a weaker position: the organized behaviors of unintelligent objects and beings could be explained by means of an intelligent plan, be it generated by a supreme being or otherwise, therefore there *still* are no blind processes in the natural world². The fallacious step is removed, for instance, in Michael Behe’s mousetrap argument (Behe, 1996) and in William Dembski’s probabilistic argument from information theory (Dembski, 2002), in the sense that no supreme being is assumed there. In this sense, “Intelligent Design” is not necessarily a creationist philosophy. A supreme cause is something that cannot be properly inferred from the complex informational design of natural phenomena. If it is inferred, then Intelligent

¹ *Apud* Steven M. Cahn (ed.), *Classics of Western Philosophy*, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing House, 2002) p. 420.

² For a more encompassing discussion of Intelligent Design, see William Dembski and Michael Ruse (eds.) *Debating Design: from Darwin to DNA*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Design fails as a *practiced* science¹ and remains a philosophical position, with ideological ramifications; but if it is not inferred, then Intelligent Design might be discussed as a theoretical hypothesis regarding how natural complexity is actually generated.

The fourth position in the debate is Darwinian agnosticism. Moderate scientists like Stephen Gould (1997) or Eugenie Scott (2005) try to react to the creationist offensive by focusing on Johnson's seminal point: science should not be mixed with theistic religion because science is just about facts. Darwinian agnostics call for a clear-cut distinction between the science of evolution and everything else that people might believe about the origins of life. The theory of evolution is silent about matters like Creation and as a theory concerning facts of nature it cannot offer any proof or disproof of God's existence. Eugenie Scott illustrates this point in a very straightforward manner:

"Most of the time there is no religious position on how fluids get through a cell membrane. What is more, biologists and Earth scientists labor under a double standard. Why is evolution singled out for this kind of treatment? No one is pressuring physicists, nobody is pressuring astronomers, to come into the class and say 'Now we're going to study the solar system, and historically people thought the Sun went around the Earth, but now heliocentrism is our best theory – but you don't have to believe it.'"²

It is mistakenly believed that Darwinian agnostics are the ones who forge the opposition between science and religion. In 1997, in an American talk-show that caught the public attention called *Firing Line*, Eugenie Scott was faced with this confusion: "Just as I don't want a fundamentalist teaching that God created the world in a science class", Scott said, "I don't want a philosophical materialist teaching students that there's no possibility that God created it."³ Ever since Darwin's *Origin of Species*, the public debate has focused on whether Darwinism rules out God, but Darwinism is not about that:

"Scientists have to be careful with their words. If you use words in a way that does not allow theists to retain their faith, you are making the same mistake that Morris (...) and all these old-fashioned anti-evolutionists, are making.

¹ Cf. Matt Young and Taner Edis, "Preface" in *Why Intelligent Design Fails: a Scientific Critique of the New Creationism*, (New Brunswick, NJ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2004), p. X.

² Larry Witham, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

³ *Apud* Marla Freeman, "Surviving Darwinism", *The San Francisco Chronicle*, (December 19, 1997), <http://www.discovery.org/a/73>. (accessed February 22, 2012).

They're saying, 'You've either got to be an evolutionist or a religious person, but you can't be both.'"¹

Scott stressed that people might find reasons to believe in God and still hold that natural history is Darwinian because science does not contradict religion, it simply focuses on something different. Nevertheless, most Christian denominations (like the Catholic Church) not only in the United States of America, but also in Europe, actually hold that Christian faith is compatible with scientific Darwinism² and this is indeed something that Darwinian agnostics reject. The thing is that the "compatibilist" view is simply silent on the fact that, in order to make it compatible, Darwinism must be *interpreted* in a theological manner. Agnostics are explicitly against interpreting Darwinism in any particular manner, even though "theologies make a huge difference in the analysis of evolutionary proposals" – as the historian Mark Noll points out³. The way people understand evolution is in many cases dictated by implicit theological commitments, assimilated through tradition and culture. That is why, when perceived properly, agnosticism is too rarely considered an option. Every tradition with a conservatory view of the Bible has rejected evolution, while the more liberal ones, even though they have no formal impositions against the theory of evolution as such, maintain that God must be preserved as the fundamental principle of life on Earth. Neutrality is hardly attainable, especially in the public debate, where the cultural and religious background weights more than in theoretical debates.

The last position I must to emphasize here is probably the most reactionary. The new/rational atheists believe that the theory of evolution provides solid and persuasive arguments against all (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv). The new atheism is perhaps what Johnson envisaged when he vehemently pointed the finger at Darwinism and called it "materialistic philosophy". Partisans of this philosophy, such as Richard Dawkins or Daniel Dennett, claim that all the previous positions can be proven wrong using solely Darwinian arguments. In response to (i), atheists argue irrefutably that Earth's geological history is longer than what the book of *Genesis* suggests and this is shown by fossil records found in old geological strata; to (ii), they reply that descent with modification illustrates unequivocally how evolution can be blind and purposeless; to (iii), they say that Intelligent Design cannot be a scientific hypothesis as long as it relies on (ii) and to (iv), that

¹ Larry Witham, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

² Mircea Flonta, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

³ *Apud* Larry Witham, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

agnosticism does not pay attention to all the consequences that Darwinian evolution imposes on our entire world-view, whether they were intended by Darwin himself or not.

The main distinction that both Richard Dawkins (2006) and Daniel Dennett (2006, 2007) make is between *order* and *design*. For instance, the flight pattern of a flock of wild ducks shows an ordered distribution, with no pre-existing design; the order in the flight pattern is actually spontaneous. According to this line of thought, we can go to a larger scale and hold that there is no conceptual impediment to conceive the order in the universe, without pre-existing design¹. In fact, nature is full of examples of order emerging spontaneously – e.g., thermodynamic processes that locally decrease entropy, from galaxy formation to the crystallization of salt. This should be corroborated with the observation that spontaneous order can be generated even experimentally in the laboratory for local phenomena (Stuart Kauffman, 1995, 2011). So there is no solid reason to speculate about design when other explanations might come handier.

The distinction between “order” and “design” manages to question the scientific pretenses of Intelligent Design, but the rest, however, is more problematic. Rational atheism simplifies the part that religion and the belief in a supreme being might play in human life. It is not at all obvious that Darwinism should turn people into atheists. For instance, people might find it *morally* relevant to believe in Divine justice and afterlife. There are moral arguments for the existence of God² and these are very different from the cosmological ones (i.e., the argument from order or the argument from harmony). Also, people might find it important to attach a *transcendent* meaning to their existence, precisely in the sense that it is not to be elucidated by looking at facts around us. Atheism is not only about denying design. It is also about denying other things, for it speculates that nothing beyond the horizon of facts could be possibly conceived. However, Darwinism does not imply that. And even if the naturalist reduction would hold, it still does not follow that the concept of a supreme being is *meaningless* in itself.

Nevertheless, rational atheism should not be seen only as a faulty philosophical interpretation of Darwinism. It is in fact a reaction to the strong creationist wave that hit during the last 50 years, in the USA. It is militant and, perhaps, aggressive in rebuking religion altogether, but it also proves

¹ Daniel Dennett, “Atheism and Evolution”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Atheism* edited by Michael Martin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) p. 140.

² Like Immanuel Kant’s argument for the purpose of moral behavior, from *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793).

something. Religious faith can be often reductive, intolerant and ignorant towards scientific progress and towards alternative world-views that the development of science might inspire in the long run. Otherwise, science has nothing to do with atheism.

3) Science and religion

The discussion about evolution seems to be pervaded in all its aspects by a more fundamental opposition – the opposition between evolutionary science and theistic religion. Darwinian evolution, unlike the mechanics of fluids or the theory of gravity, seems to touch important and deep popular convictions that belong to religious tradition, like the belief in the Biblical *Genesis*, the belief in a unique, supreme Creator and the separate creation of species or the intervention by *fiat*. This deep opposition sets up boundaries in the worlds of professional science and theology, but it also sets boundaries in the large population, even more shifting than those observable in professional communities: boundaries between scientists and the public, between theological cultures, between degrees of acceptance among the general public, between science and the overall “postmodern” rejection of the idea of scientific unquestionable *truth* in favor of a so-called “democracy of knowledge” etc.

In this final section, I will try to give a contour and a critical assessment to this intricate clash between science and religion starting from the case I presented in the previous two sections. What are to understand from this in terms of how science and religion, the two fundamental paradigms of the modern mind, relate to one another? In order to address the matter systematically, I will use a polymorphic model, inspired by Ian Barbour's book *When Science meets Religion* (2000). There is not only one manner in which science and religion interact in the contemporary society, but in fact several.

The most evident manner of interaction is the *warfare* situation. It is illustrated by the radical confrontation between new atheists and type (i) and type (ii) creationists. The new atheists are publicly aggressive towards the theistic background of Christian tradition and claim that creation dogmatism undermines science and scientific thinking through religious propaganda. On the other side, creationists reply that the theory of evolution is only an approximate theory, and it does not deliver the *whole* truth, if any, about the history of life on Earth. In spite of a much desired “democracy of knowledge”, the polemic seems to focus on the concept of *truth* and since

truth is uncompromising, the issue of who has it is a very sharp one. This might explain the escalation of the ideological conflict: the involvement of public rhetoric, parliamentary lobby and the unwarranted appeal to the rethoric of science.

To the *warfare* situation we often observe a moderate and defensive reaction: religion and science are “two distinct ways of knowing”; they are separate and they do not overlap, so they should not dispute *truth*. Science is about facts, while religion is about values and beliefs. Many academics advocate for the *independence* situation because it provides a political amnesty. It has partisans both among Darwinian agnostics, but also among moderate Christian dogmatics. However, this situation is not fully satisfactory because socially the “two ways” simply overlap:

“This simple map for «two ways of knowing» (...) does not keep the crossroads flowing smoothly. Science and religion can easily operate in their two separate modes in the laboratory and in the sanctuary, but in society they actively mingle. They meet in culture, education, and politics, and the debate continues: Who draws the line between facts and values? How do we decide what is scientific knowledge and what is religious or philosophical knowledge? Which is more valid — expert opinion or common sense?”¹

The physicist Steven Weinberg (1994) offers a deeper and more provocative image of how science and religion overlap when addressing fundamental questions. It is not only the social aspect. The meaning of religion is given by what the believers hold to be their beliefs. The most popular idea among believers of most religions is that their faith should provide answers to questions about the origins of life and of the universe, *i.e.*, metaphysical answers. They seem to fail to notice that some of these questions have slightly moved away from religious grasp towards different fields of inquiry. Now many of them belong to science: scientific disciplines such as cosmology or evolutionary biology have integrated these questions into a way of thinking that replaces metaphysical belief with empirical hypotheses. From this, it is easy to conclude that the problem of understanding how religion stands in respect to science is not pushed forward only by the radical, conservative communities that want to “stick to their truth” and call for a democratic right to religious freedom. The issue goes far deeper because the overall representation of religion seems to be in question. A proper analysis should point that the root of conflict lies, most probably, in the resistance of many religious groups, not only Bible

¹ Larry Witham, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

fundamentalists, to rearrange their cluster of beliefs. In other words, religious systems should be willing to revisit some of their commitments under the acknowledgement of confirmed scientific facts. This situation shows that science and religion cannot be *fully* independent, although to an important extent they should be.

The third situation is *integration*. It is often held that, since independence is not entirely attainable, either science should be absorbed within religion, or religion absorbed within science, in order to dissolve the issue. The supporters of Intelligent Design, for instance, condemn the spreading of naturalism and reductionism in the scientific practice and call for an integration of religion into science. This strategy is sometimes aggressive, as we have seen from Philip Johnson's arguments. By contrast, Michael Behe's more moderate position tackles on the reductionist worldview of science. But, recent critiques addressed to "philosophical naturalism"¹ seem to provide the Intelligent Design movement with a measure of intellectual legitimacy and an unexpected momentum for the aggressive strategy against naturalism²: "the conjunction of naturalism with the belief that we human beings have evolved in conformity with current evolutionary doctrine (...) is in a certain interesting way self-defeating or self-referentially incoherent."³

There is, however, an even more moderate version of Intelligent Design that seeks to absorb, rather than dismiss, the Darwinian theory of evolution. In this moderate interpretation of Darwinism, evolution might actually help to solve traditional theological issues, like the issue of "theodicy" (Francisco Ayala, 2007). Theodicy puts forward the following dilemma: if God cannot prevent evil from happening in the world, then God is not omnipotent; if God can prevent evil but does not, then God is not

¹ "Naturalism, in recent usage, is a species of philosophical monism according to which whatever exists or happens is *natural* in the sense of being susceptible to explanation through methods which, although paradigmatically exemplified in the natural sciences, are continuous from domain to domain of objects and events. Hence, naturalism is polemically defined as repudiating the view that there exists or could exist any entities which lie, in principle, beyond the scope of scientific explanation." (Arthur Danto, "Naturalism" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* edited by Paul Edwards, New York: The Macmillan Co. and The Free Press, 1967, p. 448).

² Cf. Matt Young and Taner Edis, "Preface" in *Why Intelligent Design Fails: a Scientific Critique of the New Creationism*, (New Brunswick, NJ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2004), p. x.

³ Alvin Plantinga, "Introduction" in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, (edited by J.K. Belby, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 2.

benevolent. God is omnipotent and benevolent. But evil exists. How come? Ayala claims that evolution by natural selection can solve the problem by showing how the pain and suffering of living creatures is accountable in terms of natural mechanisms like “survival of the fittest”¹. Of course, Ayala’s position is reserved and, in this respect, very different from other versions of Intelligent Design: such compatibilism does not reject Darwinism, but to the contrary the unpurposeness of evolution is shown to actually serve a theological purpose. The only major difficulty is that it is misleading to claim that evolution by natural selection is correct as scientific hypothesis because, besides being empirically adequate, it is also consistent with the theological argument from “the existence of evil”. It seems that compatibilism blurs the concept of what scientific theories actually *prove* – given that a scientific theory could hardly have anything to say on the theological matter of why evil exists in the world. This integration situation shows how compatibilism often relies on a theological interpretation of Darwinism – a position attacked by Darwinian agnostics on good grounds but, as we have seen in section 2, with little reception.

The last situation I intent to present is a very weak variant of integration. In Ian Barbour's terms it is called *dialogue*. Although more democratic than other integration variants, *dialogue* seems to be very unclear². In what manner could religion interact with scientific research and vice versa? Ian Barbour refers to the “complementarity” of scientific knowledge and religious insight. On one hand, there are scientists who rely on religious insight, but this insight is never confirmed or infirmed by research; their hypotheses are (*e.g.*, phenomena and facts of nature could show us design, but obviously not a designer –the old problem of Thomas Aquinas' argument from universal harmony). On the other hand, science cannot really answer questions about the meaning or the value of life; the belief in a supernatural being, however, might. But does this mean that religion is complementary to science? What would their *genus proximum* be in this case? It is problematic to say “knowledge”, because religion does not seem to be about knowledge at all, but about meaning and value. To say “world-view” is equally problematic because science can be separated from any underlying metaphysics and practiced in the most agnostic spirit, as Darwin himself did

¹ This topic was rapidly absorbed within the philosophical community and several developments can be found in Gaymon Bennett *et. al.* (eds.), *The Evolution of Evil*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2008.

² Cf. Mircea Flonta, *op. cit.*, pp. 255-256.

during a significant part of his life. As long as the “dialogue” rests on such category mistakes, it is most probably that it will fail.

It is often appreciated that the *independence* relation between science and religion is a way of marginalizing religion in a secular society¹, and solutions like *dialogue* or *integration* look both more preferable and popular. But, in fact, *independence* makes more sense in most contexts. *Dialogue* seems a solution in terms of political democracy rather than a serious reflection on how science and religion could actually stand one in respect to the other, while *integration* is often aggressive or distortive.

The polymorphic model I have in mind borrows from all the situations illustrated here: warfare, independence, integration, dialogue. It does in fact justice to the observation that there is no *fully* satisfactory concept that catches the relationship between science and religion in contemporary society – not normatively, and not even descriptively. But it does catch a dynamics that underlies this relationship. When seen statically, the polymorphic model resembles a lot to the Galton's photographic plates² – if we are to use a metaphor from Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Lecture of Ethics* (1929). It is a partial overlapping of distinct states. In a sense, science and religion are at war over questions that seem to be transient from one field of inquiry to the other; in another sense, they are independent given there is no *genus proximum* – *i.e.*, facts and values are not comparable since they do not share properties; nonetheless, it seems that neutrality is something quite impossible to achieve both socially and culturally and that is why, in a certain sense, science tends to become part of religion or vice-versa, depending on who is doing the integration or leading the debate. If we focus on dynamics, it is obvious that the leading position is always transient because integration is counter-balanced by warfare that leads to splitting, independence and then dialogue. But dialogue usually fails due of its “complementarity” inconsistencies, and opens the door to integration again, since independence is too unstable to prevail.

All the positions from (i) to (v) discussed in the section 2 could be identified as reference-points or states in the dynamics of the polymorphic model, while the arguments (the “pro’s” and “con’s” for each) could describe actual transitions. A brief example: the transition from Progressive creationism to Intelligent Design is a very interesting one. Progressive

¹ Cf. Mircea Flonta, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

² “As Galton's process ultimately blurs, at least to some extent, the sharpest of features, Wittgenstein's aim in following this model is not to produce definitive essence...” (Nana Last, *Wittgenstein's House*, NY: Fordham University Press, 2008. p. 128).

creationism is illustrative for attempting complementarity in understanding science and religion. However, the consideration of the natural world as both miracle and natural fact generates a lot of confusion, and in the model the position becomes dynamically unstable (see the criticisms regarding the concept of “natural law”), until Intelligent Design comes into picture. Intelligent Design dismisses the issue of miracles, and provides a dynamic equilibrium in the debate of science *versus* religion by both attempting integration (either in Behe’s or Ayala’s sense) and managing to block independence arguments (*e.g.*, Eugenie Scott’s). However, both integration strategies (Behe’s or Ayala) can be overturned by strong warfare positionings, like the strong reactionary atheist positions of Richard Dawkins’ or Daniel Dennett’s. In this light, the equally strong and militant Biblical conservatism manifested during the last decade in the United States of America is predictable.

So, once we properly identify the positions and the dynamics of their relations, the historical phases of the debate in the US of America can be mapped onto the theoretical dynamics of the polymorphic model in a manner that might generate interesting predictions. This could be done also for other historical dynamics, from other societies. I will not undertake the endeavor here, however. I will close by stressing that the intricate evolution *versus* creation debate from contemporary United States of America provides a valuable case-study for the more encompassing science *versus* religion debate. It makes both the polymorphism and its dynamics transparent, to an extent that an abstract discussion could probably not do. It also shows that a meta-reductionism concerning the manner in which science and religion stand one in respect to the other in contemporary society is actually impossible.

REFERENCES

Ayala, Francisco. *Darwin’s Gift to Science and Religion*, Washington: Joseph Henry Press, 2007.

Barbour, Ian. *When Science Meets Religion*, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2000.

Behe, Michael. “Self-Organization and Irreducible Complexity: A Reply to Shanks and Joplin”. *Philosophy of Science*, 67, 155–162, 2000.

Behe, Michael. *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, New York: The Free Press, 1996.

Bennett, Gaymon, Hewlett, Martinez J., Peters, Ted, and Russell, Robert John. *The Evolution of Evil*, Göttingen : Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008.

Brooke, John Hedley. "Science and Secularization". in *Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion*, edited by Peter Harrison, 103-123. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Bube, Richard. "We Believe in Creation".

[http://sermons.logos.com/submissions/82742-](http://sermons.logos.com/submissions/82742-WeBelieveInCreation#content=/submissions/82742)

[WeBelieveInCreation#content=/submissions/82742](http://sermons.logos.com/submissions/82742-WeBelieveInCreation#content=/submissions/82742) (accessed February 22, 2012).

Cahn, Steven M. (ed.). *Classics of Western Philosophy*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing House, 2002.

Danto, Arthur. "Naturalism". in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* edited by Paul Edwards, 448-450. New York: The Macmillan Co. and The Free Press, 1967.

Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species*, London: John Murray, 1859.

Dawkins, Richard. *A River out of Eden: A Darwinian Way of Life*, New York: Basic Books, 1995.

Dawkins, Richard. *The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe without Design*, New York: Norton, 1986.

Dawkins, Richard. *The God Delusion*, New York: Bantam Books, 2006.

Dembski, William, and Ruse, Michael (eds). *Debating Design: From Darwin to DNA*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Dembski, William. *No Free Lunch: Why Specified Complexity Cannot Be Purchased without Intelligence*, Lanham, MD.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.

Dennett, Daniel. "Atheism and Evolution". in *The Cambridge Companion to Atheism* edited by Michael Martin, 136-148. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Dennett, Daniel. *Breaking the Spell: Religion as Natural Phenomenon*, NY: Viking, 2006.

Dennett, Daniel. *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meanings of Life*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995.

Edis, Taner. "Great Themes, Narrow Constituency". in *Why Intelligent Design Fails: a Scientific Critique of the New Creationism*, 9-19. New Brunswick, NJ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

Faulkner, Danny. "The Current State of Creation Astronomy", a talk presented at the *Fourth International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, PA, (August 3-8, 1998)*, <http://www.icr.org/article/creation-astronomy-state/> (accessed February 22, 2012).

Flonta, Mircea. *Darwin and after Darwin* (in Romanian), Bucharest: Humanitas, 2010.

Freeman, Marla. "Surviving Darwinism". *The San Francisco Chronicle*, December 19, 1997, <http://www.discovery.org/a/73>.(accessed February 22, 2012).

Galton, Francis. "Composite Portraits". *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, no8, 132-142, 1878.

Gilkey, Langton. *Nature, Reality and the Sacred: the Nexus of Science and Religion*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

Gould, Stephen, Jay. "Impeaching a Self-Appointed Judge". *The Stephen Gould Archive*, http://www.stephenjagould.org/reviews/gould_darwin-on-trial.html (accessed February 22, 2012).

Gould, Stephen, Jay. "Nonoverlapping Magisteria". *The Stephen Gould Archive*, http://www.stephenjagould.org/library/gould_noma.html (accessed February 22, 2012).

Gould, Stephen, Jay. *The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections in Natural History*, New York: Norton, 1980.

Gould, Stephen, Jay. *Wonderful Life: the Burgess Shale and the Nature of History*, London: Penguin, 1989.

Harrison, Peter. *The Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Johnson, Philip. "The Origin of Species Revisited". *Constitutional Commentary*, 7, 1990.

Johnson, Philip. *Darwin on Trial*, Westmont, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980.

Larson, Edward. *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion*, New York: Basic Books, 1997.

Kauffman, Stuart. "Approaches to the Origins of Life on Earth". *Life*, 1(1), 34-48, 2011; [doi:10.3390/life1010034](https://doi.org/10.3390/life1010034).

Kaufmann, Stuart. *At Home in the Universe: The Search for Laws of Self-Organization and Complexity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Last, Nana. *Wittgenstein's House*, NY: Fordham University Press, 2008.

Miller, Keith, "Theological Implications of an Evolving Creation," *Perspectives in Science and Christian Faith*, 45 (September 1993), 150-60.

Morris, Henry, and Withcomb John. *The Genesis Flood: The Biblical Record and Its Scientific Implications*, Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1961.

Numbers, Roland, L. *The Creationist: from Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design*, Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Paley, William. *Natural Theology: selections*, edited and with an introduction by Frederic Ferré, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1963.

Plantinga, Alvin. "Introduction" in *Naturalism Defeated? Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument Against Naturalism*, edited by J.K. Belby, 1-14. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.

Pennock, Robert. (ed.) *Intelligent Design, Creationism and Its Critics: Philosophical, Theological and Scientific Perspectives*, Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 2001.

Pennock, Robert. "Biology and Religion" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Philosophy of Biology*, edited by David Hull and Michael Ruse, 238-256. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Pennock, Robert. *The Tower of Babel: Evidence Against the New Creationism*, Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 2000.

Scott, Eugenie. *Evolution vs. Creationism: An Introduction*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005.

Vitzthum, Richard. *Materialism: An Affirmative History and Definition*, NY: Prometheus Books, 1995.

Weinberg, Steven. *Dreams of a Final Theory: the Search for the Fundamental Laws of Nature*, London: Vintage, 1993.

Witham, Larry. *Where Darwin Meets the Bible. Creationists and Evolutionists in America*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. "A Lecture on Ethics". *The Philosophical Review*, 74, 3-12, 1965 (1929).

Young, Matt, and Edis, Taner. (eds). *Why Intelligent Design Fails: A Scientific Critique of New Creationism*, New Brunswick, NJ ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

Young, Matt, and Edis, Taner. "Preface". in *Why Intelligent Design Fails: a Scientific Critique of the New Creationism*, edited by Matt Young and Taner Edis, ix-xii. New Brunswick, NJ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

Young, Matt, and Strode, Paul. *Why Evolution Works and Creationism Fails*, New Brunswick, NJ ; London: Rutgers University Press, 2009.

PHANTASIA, A MEDIATION BETWEEN PERCEPTION (AESTHESIS) AND THOUGHT (NOESIS)

Gabriela VASILESCU¹

***Abstract.** The present paper aims at analyzing the creative force of phantasia, as it reveals itself in various works of art. The concept of phantasia defines the affectivity stirred in the mind of the spectator immediately after ceasing the physical contact with the image, sound, form or colour. This psychological state is opposed in meaning to the apatheia, as pathe (the affectivity) is associated with the affects, which are, in their turn, bound to the bodily perception and senses. Pathe gives dynamism to the phantasia triggered at the end of the sensorial contact and it stimulates the illusions. Only the human being, in its ephemeral passage through existence, can experience the state of phantasia. This specific state is the mingle of perception and judgement which leads to a certain "impression" that we can relate to the illusion, appearance or the fiction we delude ourselves with but which, at the same time, constructs our identity in the realm of culture. The two ontological levels – dream and reality – will never be conciliated; on the contrary, they will eternally keep on alternating in the illusion of fiction. Through this illusion we give life to imaginary things and events and this strive draws together both perception (aisthesis) and thought (noesis). When perception fades away, representation sheds its light on forms, contents, colours, sounds, words, all these being the fittest tools for the artistic expression. Yet each chimeric frame we bear inside is nothing but our cultural identity, "the measure" (as Protagoras said) of our phantasia or, consequently, of the illusion we lived in and we imagined in and by culture.*

***Keywords:** Phantasia, illusion, imagination, chimera, culture.*

The concept of *phantasia* defines the affectivity stirred in the mind of the spectator immediately after ceasing the physical contact with the image, sound, form or colour. This psychological state is opposed in meaning to the *apatheia*, as *pathe* (the affectivity) is associated with the affects, which are, in their turn, bound to the bodily perception and senses. *Pathe* gives dynamism

¹ Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Romania.

to the *phantasia* triggered at the end of the sensorial contact and it stimulates the illusions. The way our soul quivers reveals, as Plato implied, “ascension”, a “solicitude” which can speak for our individual sensitivity. This specific state is the mingle of perception and judgement which leads to a certain “impression” that we can relate to the illusion, appearance or the fiction we delude ourselves with but which, at the same time, constructs our identity in the realm of culture.

In his work, *Truth or Knockouts*, Protagoras saw man as “the measure of all things: of things which are, that they are, and of things which are not, that they are not”. Referring to the title of Protagoras’ essay, we can infer that man is the only creature which can equally reveal the truth and demolish it as if the two intentions were comparable in value. The disjunction from the title can have, in this case, a similar meaning with a conjunction in which both elements are supported with the same ardour. Man cannot see anything else but what he knows and this measure is a proof of our collective heritage. We measure “all things which are” from within our own cultural frame, which is both our inheritance and our burden in life. However, “things which are not” belong to the realm of fantasy and fiction and denote the passage from the physical world to the imaginary one as they represent visions about a possible (but not real) universe.

Philo of Alexandria described the blessed state of the human being having a mystic experience, the communion with their divine nature: “And this is the order of things according to nature, when the mind, being entirely occupied with divine love, bends its course towards the temple of God, and approaches it with all possible earnestness and zeal, it becomes inspired, and forgets all other things, and forgets itself also. It remembers Him alone, and depends on Him alone.”¹

Plotinus confesses a similar mystical ecstasy; moreover, this philosopher believes that salvation can be achieved through one’s seclusion within oneself and the distancing from the impure shell of the earthly body. Only the Soul can contemplate virtue, justice and moderation and those who can grasp them are overwhelmed with joy and wonder as they have reached the true Beauty: “This is the spirit that Beauty must ever induce, wonderment and a delicious trouble, longing and love and a trembling that is all delight”².

¹ Philo (of Alexandria), *The works of Philo: complete and unabridged*, vol. II, trans. [Charles Duke Yonge](#) (Peabody, Mass. : Hendrickson Pub, 1993), 404.

² Plotinus, *The Ethical Treatises*, vol. I., trans. Stephen MacKenna (London: Philip Lee Warner publisher to the Medici Society, 1917), 82.

Only beautiful souls are truly able to see Beauty, to “tremble” and feel “delight” to raise the divine within themselves to the universal divine. In contrast, “an ugly Soul” is “dissolute, unrighteous: teeming with all the lusts; torn by internal discord; beset by the fears of its cowardice and the envies of its pettiness”¹.

Plotinus refers to a wonderful beauty which he believes to belong to a superior world, a spiritual reality which streams from the “Intellectual Principle” which can be found beyond the corporal, as the body is the root of all passions and desires. The wonderful Beauty represents for Plotinus the spiritual state in which the Intellect exalts the divine side of the human being. According to Porphyrius, Plotinus even confessed that he was ashamed for having a body and was striving to free his soul by communion with the Universal Life-Principle. The human beings could break free from the bonds of materiality by following their hopes and striving to reach perfection, the Absolute. Such an endeavour cannot reject *phantasia* as it is the way to surprise ourselves in wonderful and ridiculous contradictions: “The fact is that in our ordinary way of speaking we allow ourselves to be driven into most ridiculous and wonderful contradictions”². The amazing thing is how we give birth to our ideas about what we see, hear, feel or smell, those appearances about things around which we consider true: “Man is, as you declare, the measure of all things — white, heavy, light: of all such things he is the judge; for he has the criterion of them in himself, and when he thinks that things are such as he experiences them to be, he thinks what is and is true to himself”³.

As Socrates implied opinions accompany all human states: “The wine which I drink when I am in health appears sweet and pleasant to me”⁴ the sensation experienced is given by a healthy part of the body as all human experiences are influenced by the harmony of the body and its corroboration with a healthy mind. Thus a harmonious mind can lead to truth and justice while “he who has been driven into crooked ways; from the first he has practised deception and retaliation, and has become stunted and warped. And so he has passed out of youth into manhood, having no soundness in him”⁵.

¹ *Ibid.*, 83.

² Plato, *Theaetetus*, with introduction and analysis, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Rockville, MD: Serenity Publishers, 2009), 102.

³ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 136.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁵ *Ibid.* 129.

The wise men have the most trustworthy opinions according to Plato: "I say that they are the physicians of the human body, and the husbandmen of plants — for the husbandmen also take away the evil and disordered sensations of plants, and infuse into them good and healthy sensations — aye and true ones; and the wise and good rhetoricians make the good instead of the evil to seem just to states; for whatever appears to a state to be just and fair so long as it is regarded as such, is just and fair to it"¹.

Plato's criticism is driven towards poets and story-tellers who deliberately mislead the people: "Because, if I am not mistaken, we shall have to say that about men poets and story-tellers are guilty of making the gravest misstatements when they tell us that wicked men are often happy, and the good miserable; and that injustice is profitable when undetected, but that justice is a man's own loss and another's gain—these things we shall forbid them to utter, and command them to sing and say the opposite."²

The poets' illusion eludes the strive for justice as it serves for simple stories with no moral implications, however, as Plato counsels for bringing to the public eye stories about brave, moderate, pious and free men "Did you never observe how imitations, beginning in early youth and continuing far into life, at length grow into habits and become a second nature, affecting body, voice, and mind?"³ He asks and, as imitation builds characters, "Neither should they be trained to imitate the action or speech of men or women who are mad or bad; for madness, like vice is to be known but not to be practised or imitated"⁴. In spite of Plato's opinions, modernity will raise these characters to a privileged status as they will become heroes for tragedies and comedies.

Imitation in the work of artists, those remote ghosts of the eternal truth seem to Plato as being condemned to fault, illustrations of ignorance and thoughtlessness as the present the knowledge for one thing instead of another and create an inherently false perception. The fault is attributed to unthinking which casts the mind outside reason and drives it away from the world of Ideas.

Nevertheless, Plato does not reject all poetry and has a clear vision on the importance of the poets in his Republic. For instance, in putting

¹ *Ibid.* 121.

² Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (Forgotten Books, 2008), www.forgottenbooks.org, 104.

³ *Ibid.* 109.

⁴ *Ibid.* 109.

myths into rhyme the poets should keep in mind that a “God did what was just and right” , and should refrain from implying that gods might have been mistaken or exaggerated in their punishments: “but that those who are punished are miserable, and that God is the author of their misery—the poet is not to be permitted to say; though he may say that the wicked are miserable because they require to be punished, and are benefited by receiving punishment from God”¹.

The way people imagine beauty “would appear also to lie in the interval between pure being and absolute not-being”². Such a generous interval encourages the formation of models in one’s soul which cover the vast array from human to the divine and are useful to the city and to its rulers. The Muse which is beloved to the people can bring delight through poems, a “charm” which is useful to both the rulers and the life of the citizens.

In the 5th part of his *Republic*, Plato enlarges upon the concept of “illusion”, the charm in a painter’s work which makes it different from craftsmanship: “A painter will paint a cobbler, carpenter, or any other artist, though he knows nothing of their arts”³. That can happen because the painter, just like all artists, “can do all things because he lightly touches on a small part of them and that part an image”⁴.

Some can easily be deluded by the imitator as they are “unable to analyse the nature of knowledge and ignorance and imitation”⁵, however, “we ought to consider whether here also there may not be a similar illusion. Perhaps they may have come across imitators and been deceived by them; they may not have remembered when they saw their works that these were but imitations thrice removed from the truth, and could easily be made without any knowledge of the truth, because they are appearances only and not realities”⁶. We can infer from this that imitation has its own power – it can create an illusion, it is the charm enfolding the spectator who can no longer think of what really is, but of what appears to be. Still, in Plato’s view, the illusion maker does not create, but imitates: “Then the user of them must have the greatest experience of them, and he must indicate to the maker the good or bad qualities which develop themselves in use; for

¹ Plato, *The Republic*, 89.

² *Ibid.* 224.

³ *Ibid.*, 378.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 378.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 378.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 379.

example, the flute-player will tell the flute-maker which of his flutes is satisfactory to the performer; he will tell him how he ought to make them, and the other will attend to his instructions?"¹.

Such obedience applies also to the eye or ear of the audience in art seen as imitation which can trigger stronger or fainter illusions, according to the degree in which the spectator's mind is inclined to accept influence.

In his reference to the cathartic value of art, Aristotle maintains Plato's idea that illusion can have an educative function and it can bring delight and recreation. Furthermore, following Plato's implications, music can be perceived by the audience with different degrees of intensity. Some of its effects on a hearer's soul can be fear or pity whereas "enthusiast" songs are the most appropriate for soothing such feelings: "Fear and pity may be aroused by spectacular means; but they may also result from the inner structure of the piece, which is the better way, and indicates a superior poet. For the plot ought to be so constructed that, even without the aid of the eye, he who hears the tale told will thrill with horror and melt to pity at what takes place. [...] we must not demand of Tragedy any and every kind of pleasure, but only that which is proper to it"².

From the previous quotation follows that such illusion as that created by tragedy can uplift the spectator's soul to the magnificence of a hero's actions upholding positive moral values. In tragedies, "thought" has the role of generating emotions: "such as pity, fear, anger, and the like; the suggestion of importance or its opposite"³ and "The element of the wonderful is required in Tragedy. The irrational, on which the wonderful depends for its chief effects, has wider scope in Epic poetry, because there the person acting is not seen"⁴. "The wonderful" is desired by the audience, "as may be inferred from the fact that every one tells a story with some addition of his own, knowing that his hearers like it"⁵. The hunger for "wonderful" is augmented by the charm or illusion of the impossible; people choose impossible stories which convince to be true over possible stories which are hard to believe. The absurd of a story makes it even more desirable because, in this case, what people cannot achieve in their everyday existence is brought to life in the illusory world of the stage. "But once the irrational has been introduced and an air of likelihood imparted to it, we

¹ *Ibid.* 383.

² Aristotle, *The Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher, (New York: Cosimo classics, 2008), 24-25.

³ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

must accept it in spite of the absurdity. Take even the irrational incidents in the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus is left upon the shore of Ithaca. How intolerable even these might have been would be apparent if an inferior poet were to treat the subject. As it is, the absurdity is veiled by the poetic charm with which the poet invests it.”¹

Aristotle believes that the Reversal of Situation (*Peripateia*) which had been brought to stage by Sophocles to change the relation between the divine and the order of events, is made more complex by Euripides, who combines it with the Recognition: “A Complex action is one in which the change is accompanied by such Reversal, or by Recognition, or by both”².

Peripateia will exalt the imagination of artists to come securing its position in modernity. In modern drama, *Peripateia* will often emerge in the very first act to increase the spectators’ interest in the development of events. As Émile Faguet noticed, “Comme les Grecs, nous prenons dans une âme humaine une force simple que nous donnons comme le caractère tout entier, écartant le reste, et cette force, une fois connue du spectateur, reste, telle qu’il la connaît, jusqu’à la fin”³. The illusion of *Peripateia* will open more ways of projecting feelings to a public who are eager to discover all that surpasses the boundaries of allowable and brings forth what is inherently human.

For Plotinus, experiencing beauty induces “wonderment and a delicious trouble, longing and love and a trembling that is all delight”⁴.

Human soul has similar feelings when loving, as it is the case with the admiration for a beautiful body that all can see, but not everyone is struck by its charm. For Plotinus, however, it is the soul that gives beauty to the body. Only the divine inside the human Soul can ensure its communion to the eternal Beauty.

The chimera of bodily beauty can “darken” and “cast gloom over” Intellect, for Hades, the blind god, dwells both among shadows in the Inferno and in the world of the living. Our world can therefore be mended only to enrich the Soul: “Withdraw into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful yet, act as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful: he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until a lovely face has grown upon his work. So do you also: cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring

¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

² *Ibid.* 19.

³ Émile Faguet, *Drame ancien, Drame moderne* (Armand Colin, Paris, 1898), 190.

⁴ Plotinus, *The Ethical Treatises*, 82.

light to all that is overcast, labour to make all one glow of beauty and never cease chiselling your statue, until there shall shine out on you from it the godlike splendour of virtue, until you shall see the perfect goodness surely established in the stainless shrine”¹.

This labour for reconstruction described by Plotinus is meant to bring the human close to the imaginary model and to Beauty, as Beauty can only be seen by those who are beautiful themselves. Imagination (*phantasia*) leads every “sculptor” who carves his own self and shines upon his earthly shell the beauty inside. For Plotinus, the awe towards the divine is the measure of one’s existence and intellect. Humans need to perfect themselves by taking the path of the divine and leaving behind all that is alien to the divine, all that burdens the spirit holding it back from the reach of freedom. Thought (*noesis*) is favoured thus as a way to grasp meanings without the help of the polluted body. Pure souls will abandon the “daub” added to them in the moment of their birth, but other souls will find themselves forced to bear their muddy daub for an indefinite existence. This is how Plotinus can give expression to the ineffable, by means of his *phantasia*.

Renaissance brings full freedom to *phantasia* bringing together both works of art that illustrate ideals of mankind and passions for the pagan Antiquity. Don Quixote is the ultimate expression of cultural illusion as all action happens at an imaginary level with no connection to reality. The world of illusions takes shape in the mind of the troubled Knight of the Sad Countenance fuelled, nevertheless, by his innocent belief in the power of good, purity and other uplifting values he trusts in spite of the sad performance he shows to the people around. It is still a manifestation of *phantasia* which reveals the illusion of unfulfilled love. By remaining painfully far away from his imaginary realm, Don Quixote becomes a herald for the condition of heroes in the modern novel.

The two ontological levels – dream and reality – will never be conciliated; on the contrary, they will eternally keep on alternating in the illusion of fiction. It is exactly this illusion that stimulates the character’s progress through action regardless of the painful strokes cast on him by reality and by the other people who fail to understand his “madness”. Don Quixote’s ideals and sadness are expressions of the human chimeras and failures in general. His aspirations find echo in the existential crisis of the modern soul. The dramatic mask of the man who fought windmills and herds of sheep has become the embodiment of the innocence which throws

¹ *Ibid.*, 88.

the weak against the harshness of life. By his sacrifice, Cervantes' character becomes an eternal hero of "irrational visions" which will become the main failures of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Thus, Don Quixote has become the embodiment of the illusion you follow in painful but naïve and tender solitude. N. Râmbu said: "Fascinat până la delir de lumea adevărului, a binelui, a iubirii, a frumuseții și a tuturor valorilor pozitive, Don Quijote este altfel decât restul oamenilor care sunt orbi din punct de vedere axiologic."¹ ("Fascinated, up to a state of delirium by the world of truth, goodness, beauty and other positive values, Don Quixote is different from all other humans who are blind from the perspective of axiology" – our translation). For the people blind to values, reality is here and now. Don Quixote's solitude can belong to any one of us when fighting for an ideal which is not shared by the others. The Knight of the Sad Countenance fulfils his illusion in gaining recognition for his way of seeing life through a personal axiology. He is a prototype for a human ideal and for a way of living, a sublime lunatic walking the world in any time, space or circumstance.

The fact that such a character driven by his idealistic illusion has universal value, reintroduces the belief in the existence of a world of fascination, and of our own ideas unseen by the others. It is a duality similar to the one proposed by Plato, where the world perceived through senses was just a shadow of the eternal world of Ideas. Nevertheless, we must never forget that, what we build in our minds adds to our personal culture and from this follows that "o lume care va continua să râdă de Don Quijote este demnă de râs."² (a world still laughing at Don Quixote itself deserves to be laughed at). We might add that, if we cast away the illusion, Mambrino's helmet becomes a simple shaving basin!

Giving up illusions means giving up your own culture. This is a warning coming from the pre-Socratic philosophers themselves, from Mysos who describes the illusory existence of the mortals: "Ignorance and talkativeness bear the chief sway among men. Opportunity will be the most powerful. Cherish not a thought. Do not be fickle or ungrateful"³. Mysos, according to Diogenes Laërtius, recommended a likable behaviour and the likable, the beautiful will be an ideal the modern people drive towards by creating more and more elaborated cultural illusions.

¹ N. Râmbu, *Valoarea sentimentului și sentimentul valorii* (Cluj-Napoca: Grinta, 2010), 15.

² *Ibid.*, 31.

³ Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. C. D. Yonge (London: Henry H. Bohn, 1853), 42.

For more than twenty years, taking as compass the intensity of imagination, Gaston Bachelard strived to put together various artists like: Chagall with his painting and his Bible with all the prophecies he had imagined, Claude Monet with his water-lilies from Île-de-France, Vincent van Gogh and Rimbaud, who gave freedom to words and meaning to vowels, "Porteur de blés flamands ou de cotons anglais"¹, Henri de Waroquier with his Oedips, sculptor Eduardo Chillida and his "iron spells", Louis Marcoussis for whom divination is an advice for the future, and Albert Flocon's landscape where he illustrated a vegetal "will of power"². Here he uses as a metaphor "the water of the eye where the pupil is a well and on the circles of the iris float boats with sails"³. In his view on the universe, the primordial elements are transformed in life: man is rock and woman is earth.

When writing about Flocon's engravings, Gaston Bachelard addresses the eye as the eye can understand both the truth of form and the truth of mass⁴. The impression imprinted in his soul by Flocon is comprised in a "testament" of the engraver: for the engraver, all that is mild in life must become rough in his work and thus he will show the world a rough mildness⁵. For the engraver Albert Flocon, forms can be compared to an initiation: the form that has just been carved will further give birth to the true forms⁶. Flocon's favourite "tools" for depicting the links of consciousness are certain motifs: the rope, the spider web, the loop made of paper or cardboard and the snail shell. The loop becomes a symbol of tenacity and stability while the snail shell is a spiral piercing the clouds⁷. One can find here symbols of ascension, power and the life going on after death. Such force of imagination brings Flocon close to Constantin Brâncuși for whom the diamond shaped "beads" of the Sky Column represent the rebellion against death. As Grigorescu noticed about the Romanian sculptor, "Din vechiul simbolism al Coloanei Cerului, el nu a reținut decât elementul central: ascensiunea ca transcendere a condiției umane" ("From the ancient symbolism of the Sky Column, he retained only the central element: ascension as an attempt to transcend the human condition")⁸ Insisting on the

¹ Gaston Bachelard, *Dreptul de a visa* (București: Univers, 2009), 136.

² *Ibid.*, 74.

³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁸ Dan Grigorescu, *Brâncuși și arta modernă* (București: Dalsi, 2001), 140.

relation between mask and face, Gaston Bachelard sees the artificial as a means to defend what was both a way to assert a new life and a rebirth¹. The mask helps us to accomplish our right to duality and is thus a means to sooth the pain of alienation. By dissimulation the human being can surpass communication breakdowns and create the illusion of novelty and regeneration.

For Sartre, words are the main mean to express *phantasia*: “Depicting real objects with real words that were penned with a real pen, I’d be hanged if I didn’t become real myself!”² Such a way of assuming oneself is as if that person would watch oneself “from outside like a stone” (*comme une pierre*)³. “The human reality which is I assume its own being by understanding it”⁴. Moreover, “Being will be disclosed to us by some kind of immediate access-boredom, nausea, etc., and ontology will be the description of the phenomenon of being as it manifests itself; that is, without intermediary”⁵. When existence has no meaning, “he is afraid and would like *not to be there*; but his responsibility pursues and overpowers him, and that is why he forces himself to forget as quickly as possible his moment of Nausea. But *he is there*, he feels that his existence is unjustified, and *he is of necessity afraid*”⁶. This fear refers to the identity and responsibility imposed by any cultural being who “depicts” his work according to his own imagination.

Phantasia in its uniqueness can encompass a projection of the future world. To imagine such a projection does not mean to come closer to the world perceived by senses, but to get near the inside world of imagination. This is how Borjes depicted the world beyond the colours seen by eyes: “Un homme fait le projet de dessiner le Monde. Les années passent: il peuple un surface d’images de provinces, de royaumes, de maisons, d’instruments, d’astres, de chevaux, de gens. Peut avant de sa mort, il s’aperçoit que ce patient labyrinthe de formes n’est rien d’autre que son portrait.”⁷

¹ Gaston Bachelard, *Dreptul de a visa*, 183.

² Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Words*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1964), 160.

³ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Routledge., 2002), XXIV.

⁶ R.M. Alberes, *Jean Paul Sartre: philosopher without faith*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1961), 30.

⁷ J.L. Borges, *L’auteur et autres texts* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 213.

Each labyrinth of forms, the illusion we bear inside is nothing but our cultural identity. The way we imagine the future is the consequence of the values we have appropriated and observed, conditioned by the society, but reflected by our own personality. From this follows that everyone holds the hope for his own Utopia. As Oscar Wilde warned us, "A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing". However, "when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail"¹.

Illusion means sacrifice; it is a curtain covering what you wish to replace from reality. It is a cloth for protection which drives away discontent by comforting our mind with the thoughts we like. Through this illusion we give life to imaginary things and events and this strive draws together both perception (*aisthesis*) and thought (*noesis*). When perception fades away, representation sheds its light on forms, contents, colours, sounds, words, all these being the fittest tools for the artistic expression.

Without much warning, illusion transforms what seemed to belong to the individual world in a common property which offers itself to those who receive it. Those who are opaque to its charm or lose their illusions are the disappointed ones. To refuse illusion means to refuse living, feeding itself, breathing the air around, but if we cannot accept dying of starvation, we must return to the illusion given by culture. As Constantin Noica said, "doar prin cultură capătă omul investirea de a deosebi în sânul realității și de a rândui ceea ce a văzut."² ("Only by culture can the man receive the ability to distinguish the elements of reality and to order what he has seen" - our translation).

¹ Wilde, O., *The Works of Oscar Wilde*. vol.8, New York: Lamb Publishing Co, 1905, 148

² Constantin Noica, *Devenirea întru ființă* (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1981), 15.

NIETZSCHE: METAMORFOZELE ESTETICULUI

Adrian IORDACHE¹

Abstract: *The present article outlines Nietzsche's views on art. In this respect, it reveals the fact that Nietzsche's opinions about art are constant, but not consonant and homogeneous. His aesthetic insight is rather protean, that is what is first a metaphysical outlook turns then into a rationalist-skeptical one and finally it gains the features of an aesthetic physiology. The aim of this study is to trace the basic outlines of the evolution of Nietzsche's thinking by revealing the various aspects of art as well as they appear in Nietzsche's philosophical system.*

Keywords: *Nietzsche, art, aesthetics, metaphysics, physiology, life.*

Introducere

Arta a trezit dintotdeauna interesul filosofilor. Aceștia, din Antichitate și până în zilele noastre, au fost fascinați ori tulburați, consolați sau revoltați de artă; cu o atitudine critică sau binevoitoare, ei au reflectat asupra artei, au încercat să-i înțeleagă misterul, să-i surprindă esența.

Friedrich Nietzsche a fost și el fascinat de artă, fapt ce se reflectă clar în scrierile sale. Acestea sunt impregnate de artă atât prin stilul adoptat, un stil foarte muzical, aforistic și presărat cu imagini poetice memorabile, cât și prin numeroasele referiri la artiști (îndeosebi muzicieni), la anumite opere de artă sau la artă în general.

În studiul de față vom încerca să trasăm coordonatele generale ale evoluției gândirii estetice nietzscheene, urmărind în principal ideile despre artă în general, despre muzică și arta plastică, în special.

Metafizica artei

Prima scriere importantă publicată de Nietzsche se numește *Nașterea tragediei din spiritul muzicii* (1872). Compozițional, această scriere cuprinde 25 de paragrafe distincte, precedate de o „Prefață către Richard Wagner”.

¹ „Constantin Brancoveanu” University of Pitesti, Romania.

În această fază timpurie a gândirii sale, teoria nietzscheană despre artă se întemeiază pe conceptele de „apolinic” și „dionisiac”, două stihii ale naturii, care sunt în conflict și din a căror împăcare a luat naștere tragedia greacă, ucisă mai apoi de „socratismul estetic”. Arta apare în cultura greacă în trei mari ipostaze: artă apolinică, artă dionisiacă și, prin confluența acestora, artă tragică. Sub influența măștrilor săi într-ale filosofiei și muzicii - Schopenhauer și Wagner - Nietzsche atribuie aici muzicii o dimensiune metafizică: muzica este unica artă ce ne poate oferi cunoașterea supremă a esenței lumii.

S-a remarcat adeseori că teoria nietzscheană despre artă este în această perioadă profund îndatorată eșafodajului metafizic schopenhaurian. Atât la Schopenhauer, cât și la Nietzsche estetica este strâns legată de metafizică: pentru a înțelege ideile estetice trebuie să apelăm neconținut la presupuziții metafizice.

Nietzsche preia distincția schopenhaueriană (de sorginte kantiană) dintre *mundus phaenomenon* și *mundus noumenon*, dintre lumea fenomenală, aparentă, inconsistentă și lumea numenală, esențială, a Voinței primordiale. Ea, Voința primordială, veșnic suferindă și sfâșiata de contradicții, are nevoie de viziunea fermecătoare și înveselitoare oferită de aparență. Lumea aparentă este un fel de balsam pe care și-l creează această entitate supranaturală spre liniștirea suferințelor sale primordiale. Așadar, printr-un act artistic original, Voința primordială creează lumea aparentă, pe ale cărei coordonate ne naștem, trăim și murim; această lume aparentă are unica menire de a oferi un fel de *show* sau *entertainment* întru izbăvirea de suferință a regizorului primordial.

La nivel micro, adică *omenesc, prea omenesc*, tragedia are o menire asemănătoare. Combinând mitul tragic și muzica, ea oferă o înțelegere consolator-terapeutică ce permite spectatorului depășirea condiției sale întristătoare de ființă supusă suferinței și morții și identificarea cu esența veșnică a vieții, ceea ce duce nu la pesimism, ci la dorința de a trăi.

Pentru a-și face aceste idei cât mai explicite, Nietzsche apelează în cartea sa la anumite opere de artă plastică. Este vorba de celebra pictură a lui Rafael, *Schimbarea la față*, precum și de gravura lui Dürer, *Cavalerul, Moartea și Diavolul*.

Referința la primul tablou, *Schimbarea la față* (vezi imaginea 1 de la sfârșitul articolului), apare în secțiunea 4 a *Nașterii tragediei*¹. Este un tablou

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nașterea tragediei*, în *Opere complete 2. Nașterea tragediei. Considerații inactuale I-IV, Scrieri postume (1870-1873)*, ediție critică științifică în 15

alcătuit din alăturarea a două scene distincte, ce se originează în două texte biblice diferite (Matei 17; Marc 9:20-27), caracterul omogen al acestei lucrări constituind subiectul unor discuții aprinse. În partea de jos a tabloului apare un copil posedat, înconjurat de un grup confuz și agitat, format din ucenici, familie și simpli privitori. Textul biblic ne spune că Isus își ceartă ucenicii pentru că, din cauza necredinței lor, nu au reușit să vindece copilul. În partea de sus a tabloului se vede schimbarea la față a lui Isus de pe muntele Tabor în prezența apostolilor copleșiți de cele văzute. Isus plutește deasupra muntelui însoțit de Moise și Ilie.

Nietzsche consideră că cele două niveluri ale picturii lui Rafael ne pot ajuta să înțelegem modul în care arta apolinică poate să reprezinte, să includă și să depășească dionisiacul. În primul rând, Nietzsche transfigurează *Schimbarea la față* prin identificarea personajului care plutește cu Apollo, zeul ce strălucește și radiază, zeul aparențelor și manifestărilor vizuale.

Trebuie subliniat, cu riscul de a ne repeta, că în concepția lui Nietzsche realitatea empirică este o simplă aparență sau iluzie creată de Voința primordială întru izbăvirea sa continuă de suferință; totodată, visul este aparența aparenței, prin urmare, o potolire și mai profundă a setei primordiale de aparență.

Nietzsche îl invocă pe Rafael pentru a exemplifica „acea depotențare a aparenței în altă aparență” pe care artistul renascentist o reprezintă în tabloul său „alegoric”¹.

În interpretarea lui Nietzsche, Rafael zugrăvește aici tocmai „procesul primordial al artistului naiv și, totodată al culturii apolinice”². Jumătatea inferioară a tabloului – în care îl vedem pe băiatul posedat, înconjurat de o mulțime agitată – oglindește veșnica suferință primordială, unica rațiune a lumii. Avem aici o primă aparență ca reprezentare simbolică a Voinței primordiale, veșnic suferindă. Din această aparență se înalță acum viziunea unei alte aparențe (jumătatea superioară a tabloului) în care totul plutește într-o pură beatitudine și într-o contemplare eliberată de suferință: lumea apolinică a frumuseții. Tabloul simbolizează artistic două lumi opuse, dar necesare una alteia: lumea apolinică a frumuseții și tot ce se ascunde sub ea – cumplita înțelepciune a lui Silen („Cel mai bun lucru pentru tine îți este

volum de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 1998, p. 29.

¹ *Ibidem*.

² *Ibidem*.

total inaccesibil: să nu te fi născut, să nu *fii*, să nu fii *nimic*. Al doilea însă este – să mori cât mai repede¹).

Apollo, personajul central al tabloului (pe care îl vedem în partea superioară), apare, în interpretarea lui Nietzsche, drept divinizarea noțiunii de *principium individuationis*, prin care se realizează mântuirea prin aparență a Voinței primordiale. Prin gestică lui sublimă, Apollo ne arată că lumea chinurilor este necesară; ea îl determină pe individ să-și construiască o viziune eliberatoare, iar apoi, cufundat în contemplarea ei să-și găsească liniștea mult dorită.

O altă operă de artă plastică evocată în *Nașterea tragediei* este gravura lui Dürer, *Cavalerul, Moartea și Diavolul* (vezi imaginea 2 de la sfârșitul articolului), cu al cărei nume Nietzsche a fost deseori asociat. *Cavalerul, Moartea și Diavolul* oferă un puternic contrast cu tabloul lui Rafael, *Schimbarea la față*. În timp ce pictura lui Rafael sugerează izbăvirea prin intermediul unei minunate străluciri radiante, prezentare a *Schein als Schein*, Nietzsche invocă gravura lui Dürer pentru a intensifica sentimentul determinării ferme în absența oricărei speranțe. Într-o lume încremenită și înfricoșătoare, cavalerul din gravura lui Dürer își continuă drumul ferm, fără a-i păsa de Moarte și Diavol. Analogiile sunt evidente: lumea cenușie, lipsită de viață este Germania timpului său (anii 1870) care a eșuat în banalitate, care nu a știut să se conecteze la spiritul culturii tragice grecești, iar cavalerul înzăuat este Schopenhauer, care, datorită lucidității și dorinței sale de adevăr, era pentru Nietzsche un model demn de urmat. El constituia o rază de speranță pentru proiectul nietzschean de reînnoire și purificare a culturii germane.

Interpretarea nietzscheană a gravurii lui Dürer marchează îndatorirea față de Schopenhauer, dar și îndepărtarea de el. În concepția schopenhaueriană, arta și religia oferă două modalități pentru suspendarea, liniștirea sau eliminarea voinței iraționale, eliberându-ne astfel de suferință. Schopenhauer creează o imagine dezolantă despre lume, o imagine în alb și negru, ca cea a lui Dürer. Pesimismul atât de influent al lui Schopenhauer nu oferă perspective de reînnoire culturală, ci, în cel mai bun caz, o resemnare eroică în fața suferinței lumii. Putem admira determinarea sa temerară, dar Nietzsche voia ceva mai mult și a întrezărit această posibilitate în „focul magic al muzicii” wagneriene, ce reprezintă transformarea (poate transfigurarea) lui Schopenhauer. Această transfigurare duce la o nouă imagine: „dar cum se schimbă dintr-o dată acea sălbăticie, descrisă

¹ *Ibidem*, § 3, p. 26.

[*geschildert*] mai sus în culori atât de închise, a obositei noastre culturi, când o atinge vraja dionisiacă! [...] Zăpăcite, privirile noastre caută ce s-a dus: căci ceea ce văd ele s-a înălțat, ca dintr-o scufundare, în lumina de aur, atât de bogat și verde, exuberant de viu, nostalgic de incomensurabil”¹.

Nu trebuie să trecem cu vederea faptul că tânărul Nietzsche își exprimă în această primă carte speranța cu privire la renașterea întru muzică a unei noi culturi germano-elene. Aici, Wagner joacă un rol esențial: spiritul tragic elin renaște în „opera completă de artă” (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) a lui Wagner, noua tragedie. În acest sens, muzica lui Wagner este o adevărată revoluție culturală, deși nu este înțeleasă ca atare de contemporani. În special această pledoarie pentru opera wagneriană este cea care ulterior va provoca repudierea de către Nietzsche a *Nașterii tragediei*.

Arta, sub semnul suspiciunii

Anul 1878 marchează trecerea la o nouă etapă a gândirii și creației nietzscheene – o etapă în care Nietzsche se eliberează de influența schopenhauriano-wagneriană, conturându-și din ce în ce mai pronunțat propriul drum în filosofie. Apar cărțile: *Omenesc, prea omenesc* (1878, 1879 și 1880), *Aurora* (1881), *Știința veselă* (primele patru părți - 1882).

Aceste scrieri, se detașează net de operele nietzscheene anterioare atât prin forma aforistică în care se prezintă, cât și prin conținutul ideatic propriu-zis. Nietzsche nu mai crede în existența unei lumi metafizice, a unui *lucru în sine* aflat în spatele fenomenelor: „Poate recunoaștem că lucrul în sine este demn de un răs homeric: că el părea atât de mult, chiar totul, și e, în fond, gol, adică golit de sens”². Contrastul cel mai frapant vizează știința și arta. Primatul acordat artei în general și muzicii în special în perioada *Nașterii tragediei*, este transferat acum în mod clar științei³. Într-o lume lipsită de transcendență, eliberată de iluzii metafizice, arta nu mai are un rol primordial, ci doar unul secund față de știință și rațiune. Muzica nu mai are capacitatea de a ne dezvălui esența lumii, devenind o artă *omenească, prea omenească*.

Gândirea nietzscheană a acestei perioade capătă trăsăturile unui raționalism-sceptic. Nietzsche repudiază orice tentativă de promulgare a iluziilor metafizice. Arta trebuie privită cu suspiciune, deoarece inoculează

¹ *Ibidem*, § 21, p. 87.

² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, I, în *Opere complete 3. Omenesc, prea omenesc I și II*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 2000, §16, p. 31.

³ Giorgio Colli, *Postfață la Omenesc, prea omenesc, I*, ed. cit., p. 552.

oamenilor nostalgia unei lumi metafizice inexistente. Liberul cugetător trebuie să reziste „efectelor supreme ale artei care produc în el o rezonanță a coardei metafizice de mult amuțite”¹. Adevărul lumii poate fi dezvăluit progresiv de către știință, nu de către artă. Acest adevăr poate fi tulburător și dureros, dar trebuie să-l acceptăm cu luciditate, fără a-l mai „îndulci” prin diverse și fanteziste paliative estetice. Numai astfel individul își poate dovedi integritatea caracterului intelectual.

Marele reproș pe care îl face Nietzsche artiștilor, în *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, este că ei au elogiat și chiar au crezut în erorile religioase și filosofice ale omenirii.

Acum Nietzsche devine suspicios cu privire la modul în care Rafael, dar și alți artiști pot fi folosiți pentru a promova trăiri și sentimente religioase într-un context aparent secularizat. El ne arată modul înșelător prin care arta, chiar fără a face acest lucru explicit, pregătește drumul pentru religie.

Nietzsche începe să înțeleagă faptul că tabloul *Schimbarea la Față* de Rafael nu poartă emblema atemporală a artei apolinice, așa cum credea în *Nașterea tragediei*. O exemplificare a acestei schimbări apare în *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, unde critică introducerea în artă a lumii de dincolo. Chiar dacă tablourile lui Rafael pot fi interpretate în mai multe feluri, Nietzsche subliniază că asemenea opere de artă n-ar fi fost niciodată create dacă artiștii (sau patronii lor, sau publicul lor) nu ar fi crezut cu ardoare în lumea de dincolo. El sugerează că fiecare artă are o bază metafizică. Dacă în *Nașterea tragediei*, Nietzsche credea că tabloul lui Rafael, *Schimbarea la Față*, exemplifică modul în care arta poate expune un adevăr metafizic, în *Aurora* el vede arta ca fiind mult mai strâns legată de timp și istorie. Astfel, se respinge din principiu concepția la care aderă și Burckhardt, potrivit căreia anumiți artiști și operele lor își ating valoarea supremă independent de timpul și locul lor. *Schimbarea la față* îi apare acum - iar istoricii contemporani ai artei tind să meargă în aceeași direcție - ca fiind nu o desăvârșită operă de artă, ci mai degrabă una de tranziție, ce se ivește din încercarea lui Rafael de a experimenta un nou stil. În 1884, Hristos din *Schimbarea la Față* (pe care în *Nașterea tragediei* îl interpreta drept Apollo) devine în interpretarea nietzscheană „doar un mic și fanatic călugăr”, iar magnifica plutire a acestuia este redusă la o simplă „fluturare”².

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, I, ed. cit., § 153, p. 101.

² Friedrich Nietzsche, *KSA 11, Nachgelassene Fragmente: 1884-1885*, Sommer-Herbst 1884, 26 [3].

Dar care mai este menirea artei, în această lume eliberată de iluzii metafizice? Mai are ea vreo valoare? Pentru Nietzsche, menirea și valoarea artei rămân acelea de a ne face să acceptăm cu seninătate și bucurie viața. Artă „ne-a învățat în decursul mileniilor să privim cu interes și plăcere viața sub orice formă și să ajungem până într-acolo cu simțirea noastră, încât să exclamăm în cele din urmă: *Oricum ar fi, viața e ceva bun*”¹. Acest îndemn al artei de a ne bucura de viață, se transformă într-o necesitate a cunoașterii. Viața nu trebuie doar contemplată, ci și cunoscută; propria viață trebuie să capete valoarea unui instrument și a unui mijloc de cunoaștere². Această viață trăită sub semnul unei permanente auto-disecări cognitive nu este, după Nietzsche, lipsită de plăcere, deoarece „nici o miere nu-i mai dulce decât cea a cunoașterii”, iar „norii disperării atârând deasupra ta trebuie să-ți servească drept uger din care o să-ți mulgi laptele pentru întremarea ta”³.

În *Călătorul și umbra sa*, Nietzsche ne prezintă afinitățile sale muzicale. El formulează aici, într-o manieră concisă, judecăți pertinente despre Bach, Händel, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann⁴. Din această suită de mari muzicieni lipsește bineînțeles Wagner; știm însă că pe el îl vizează Nietzsche atunci când critică, pe un ton sarcastic, muzica „ultramodernă” cu care este contemporan: „Această muzică ultramodernă, cu plămânii ei tari și cu nervii ei slabi, întotdeauna se sperie mai întâi de ea însăși”⁵. Tot pe Wagner îl vizează Nietzsche atunci când se referă la muzica de operă, pe care o cataloghează drept o „aiureală”: „Pentru cel ce nu vede ce se întâmplă pe scenă, muzica de operă este o aiureală; precum aiureală este comentariul neconținut la un text pierdut. Ea cere în mod expres să avem și urechile acolo unde ne stau ochii; prin aceasta

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, I, ed. cit., § 153, p. 101.

² *Ibidem*, § 292, p. 161.

³ *Ibidem*; aceeași imagine o întâlnim în poezia *Despre sărăcia celui mai bogat*, în *Opere complete 1. Poezia*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 1998, p.121: „Cândva strigam la nori / să-mi ocolească munții, - / cândva grăiam «mai multă lumină, beznelor!» / azi îi momesc să vină: / scâlțați-mă-n beznă cu ugerile voastre! / - vreau să vă mulg, / vaci ale cerului! / Înțelepciune caldă ca laptele, rouă dulce a iubirii / eu revărs peste pământ”.

⁴ A se vedea mai ales §149, §150, §151, §152, §155, §157, §159, §160, §161, §165 din *Călătorul și umbra sa* (în Friedrich Nietzsche, *Omenesc, prea omenesc*, II, în *Opere complete 3. Omenesc, prea omenesc I și II*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 2000).

⁵ *Ibidem*, § 166, p. 418.

însă o violentăm pe Euterpe: această sărmană muză vrea să-i lăsăm ochii și urechile acolo unde le au și toate celelalte muze”¹.

Stilul interpretativ modern, un stil tragic-dramatic, nu face decât să imite gesturile tipului de „păcătos”, așa cum este el imaginat de creștinism, adică „meditativul pățimaș, pășind încet, cel hărțuit de chinul sufletesc, fugarul îngrozit, gonitorul fascinat, cel ce se oprește disperat în loc – și tot ce reprezintă în mod obișnuit semnele marii păcătui”². Astfel, păcatul a ajuns și în muzică. Însă nu orice muzică se pretează la acest gen de interpretare, nu orice muzică poate fi determinată „să vorbească într-un limbaj dramatic”³. Aplicarea acestei interpretări la muzica mozartiană, exemplifică Nietzsche, ar fi „un păcat împotriva spiritului, a spiritului senin, însoțit, delicat, ușuratic al lui Mozart, a cărui gravitate este o gravitate binevoitoare, iar nu înspăimântătoare, ale cărui figuri n-au de gând să sară de pe perete spre a-i speria și pune pe fugă pe cei ce le privesc”⁴.

Încă de acum se conturează la Nietzsche idealul postwagnerian al unei muzici senine, inocente: „Cu cât nutrim o mai mare afecțiune față de muzica serioasă și de valoare, cu atât mai mult, poate, suntem în anumite ceasuri biruiți, vrăjiți și aproape topiți de contrariul acesteia; vreau să spun: de acele extrem de simple melisme de operă italiană, care, în ciuda oricărei uniformități ritmice și a oricărei puerilități armonice, par a ne întâmpina din când în când cu tonuri precum sufletul muzicii înseși”⁵. Aceste melisme italiene ne readuc în minte primele acorduri muzicale ce ne-au încântat sufletul în copilărie și ne fac să trăim acut sentimentul pierderii irevocabile a fericirii paradisiace a copilăriei. Din acest motiv, muzica italiană „ne atinge coardele sufletului atât de puternic cum nu-i în stare s-o facă nici prezența cea mai opulentă și mai gravă a artei”⁶.

Aparența protectoare a artei

În *Știința veselă* opoziția dintre știință și artă, ce fusese rezolvată în *Omenesc, prea omenesc* și *Aurora* prin repudierea artei, este soluționată prin faptul că cei doi poli își pierd din rigiditate, confluând reciproc într-o știință artistică, nemorocănoasă, veselă. Totodată, se conturează și mai clar idealul

¹ *Ibidem*, § 163, p. 418.

² *Ibidem*, § 156, p. 416.

³ *Ibidem* § 165, p. 418.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Ibidem*, § 168, p. 419.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 420.

nietzschean al unei muzici sudice, vesele și grațioase, opusă apăsătoarei muzici germane.

În *Prefața* ediției a II-a, scrisă în 1886, Nietzsche își celebrează redobândirea sănătății după o lungă perioadă marcată de boală și suferință. El este recunoscător bolii și suferinței pentru revelarea unor adevăruri esențiale și profunde¹. Boala este pentru Nietzsche un extraordinar mijloc de cunoaștere. Nu există pentru el o cunoaștere profundă fără experiența bolii, iar orice sănătate de tip superior trebuie să fi trecut prin boală; numai cel care a depășit crunta experiență a bolii a dobândit o nouă sensibilitate. „Din asemenea bolire grea, chiar și din lunga boală a suspiciunii grele, revenim nou-născuți, cu pielea schimbată, mai susceptibili, mai diabolici, cu un gust mai subțire pentru bucurie, cu un cer al gurii mai fin pentru toate lucrurile bune, cu niște simțuri mai dezmozite, cu o a doua, mai periculoasă, inocentă în bucurie, mai copilăroși totodată și de o sută de ori mai rafinați decât fuseserăm vreodată mai înainte”².

Nietzsche are acum repulsie de „marele tărăboi de bâlci cu care «omul cult» și locuitorul marilor orașe se lasă violentat astăzi de artă, carte și muzică, întru «plăcerile spirituale», cu concursul suplimentar al unor băuturi spirtoase!”³. El nu mai suportă „strigătul teatral al pasiunii” și se îndepărtează de „tot acest tumult și talmeș-balmeș al simțurilor pe care plebea cultivată îl îndrăgește, dimpreună cu aspirațiile sale spre sublim, elevat, turbure”⁴.

Gânditorul german declară că are nevoie de o altă artă: „o artă zeflemitoare, ușoară, improvizată, dumnezeiesc de neperturbată, dumnezeiesc de artificială, care palpâie, ca o pară jucăușă, adânc într-un cer fără nori”⁵. Este vorba de „o artă pentru artiști, numai pentru artiști”⁶.

Arta trebuie să fie un balsam pentru rănilor încă neînchise; ea trebuie să ofere seninătate și voioșie: „avem nevoie de orice artă nebunatică, plutind în aer, dansând, zeflemisând, copilăroasă și fericită, pentru a nu pierde acea *libertate de deasupra lucrurilor* pe care idealul nostru o pretinde de la noi”⁷.

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Știința veselă*, în Friedrich Nietzsche, *Opere complete 3. Aurora, Idile din Massina, Știința veselă*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 2001, *Prefață la ediția a doua*, § 3, p. 246.

² *Ibidem*, p. 247.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁷ *Ibidem*, § 107, p. 329.

Onestitatea și veracitatea sunt foarte nocive; roadele cunoașterii nu mai sunt dulci ca mierea, așa cum credea în *Omenesc, prea omenesc*. Unui astfel de convalescent îi repugnă voința de adevăr, „această sminteală adolescentină a iubirii de adevăr”: „astăzi, pentru noi, trece drept o chestiune de decență faptul că n-am vrea să vedem totul despuiat, să ne implicăm în toate, să înțelegem și să «știm» totul”¹.

Arta apare aici ca un remediu vital față de cunoaștere. Nietzsche vede în voința de cunoaștere o voință de moarte; pasiunea cunoașterii este „thanatos”. Cunoașterea este pentru individ un mijloc de aneantizare. Pentru a nu distruge viața este nevoie de o limitare a voinței de cunoaștere. Acest rol îi revine artei. Arta este identificată de Nietzsche cu o aparență protectoare, singurul refugiu din fața pasiunii cunoașterii. Dacă pasiunea cunoașterii ne împinge către cunoașterea „fondului” Ființei (*Grund*), care nu este altceva decât un abis (*Abgrund*), înțelepciunea supremă nu constă în a te arunca în hău, ci a rămâne la suprafață, învăluit de aparența protectoare a artei². În acest sens, Jean Granier afirmă că „arta este sanctificarea iluziei și a minciunii în măsura în care iluzia și minciuna constituie singurul spațiu în care viața – și o dată cu ea, omul – ar putea să se dezvolte fără a fi ucisă de fulgerul Adevărului”³.

Dacă n-am fi avut posibilitatea de a ne replia în oaza ficțiunilor noastre antropomorfe, atunci am fi pierit demult în deșertul pe care instinctul cunoașterii ne impune să-l explorăm: „Dacă n-am fi aprobat artele și n-am fi născocit acest fel de cult al neadevărului, atunci înțelegerea minciunii și a falsității generale, care ne este dată azi de știință – înțelegerea iluziei și a erorii ca o condiție a existenței cunoscătoare și sensibile –, n-am putea-o deloc suporta. *Onestitatea* ar avea drept urmări greața și sinuciderea. Acum însă, onestitatea noastră dispune de o forță contrară, care ne ajută să evităm asemenea consecințe: arta ca voință sănătoasă de aparență”⁴.

Filosofia ca artă

În anul 1883 Nietzsche scrie primele două părți ale capodoperei sale, *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra*, iar în următorii doi ani elaborează și ultimele două părți. Aceasta este o adevărată operă de artă filosofică, în care se

¹ *Ibidem*.

² *Ibidem*, Prefață, p. 248.

³ Jean Granier, *La problème de la vérité dans la philosophie de Nietzsche*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1966, p. 521.

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Știința veselă*, ed. cit., § 107, p. 328.

întrepătrund poezia, muzicalitatea, imaginile, ideile filosofice. Cartea, în sine concepută „artistic” de la *personajul central* până la *eterna reîntoarcere*, este puțin interesată *de arta* propriu-zisă, făcând referiri tangențiale la seducția și terapeutica *prin artă*.

Nietzsche se folosește magistral de puterea seducătoare a artei pentru a înfrânge împotrivirea cititorilor săi; el urmărește să-și implanteze gândurile direct în mintea acestora, sperând că ele ar putea să prindă rădăcini și să se dezvolte.

Din spusele lui Zarathustra, înțelegem că și aici muzica are un rol vindicativ și consolator; ea simbolizează depășirea bolii și înțelegerea semnificației autentice a *eternei reîntoarceri*.

Din spusele lui Zarathustra reiese că muzica are un rol vindicativ și consolator; ea îl ajută pe Zarathustra să depășească boala și să înțeleagă semnificația autentică a *eternei reîntoarceri*¹. Pentru Nietzsche, muzica este valoroasă în măsura în care are puterea de a consola, de a vindeca sufletul chinuit și suferind. Or, unul dintre motivele pentru care Nietzsche refuză muzica wagneriană este acela că această muzică induce ascultătorilor săi o stare de nervozitate și agitație. Muzica trebuie deci să aibă o funcție terapeutică, ea trebuie să-și vindece ascultătorii, nu să-i îmbolnăvească. Această concepție este expusă foarte clar și în capitolul *Despre marele dor* din *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra*: „Dar tu dacă nu vrei să plângi, nici să-ți reverși tristețea purpurie: atunci va trebui să cânti, o! suflete al meu![...] – căci iată-te: tu arzi, visezi, tu sorbi cu sete toate izvoarele adânci cu murmurul consolator, tristețea ta se liniștește în fericirea cântecelor viitoare! ”².

Între Nord și Sud

Din 1886 și până în fatidicul an 1889, activitatea creatoare a lui Nietzsche este extrem de intensă; el scrie: *Dincolo de Bine și de Rău* (1886), *Despre Genealogia moralei* (1887), Cartea a V-a din *Știința veselă* (1887), *Cazul Wagner* (1888), *Nietzsche contra Wagner* (1888), *Amurgul idolilor* (1888), *Antichristul* (1888), *Ecce Homo* (1888, apare în 1908), *Voința de putere* (1887-1888, rămasă neterminată).

În *Dincolo de Bine și de Rău*, Nietzsche adâncește antiteza dintre Nord și Sud, dintre nordul sumbru și sudul idilic, reconfortant – antiteză prin care Nietzsche opune muzica wagneriană, prin excelență o muzică nordică,

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra*, introducere, cronologie și traducere de Ștefan Aug. Doinaș, Editura Humanitas, 1997, III, *Convalescentul*, § 2, p. 295.

² *Ibidem*, *Despre Marele Dor*, p. 299.

apăsătoare, și muzica sudului, o muzică grațioasă și voioasă, ce induce ascultătorilor săi seninătate, vigoare și bună dispoziție.

În fragmentul 240 din *Dincolo de Bine și de Rău*, Nietzsche descrie uvertura la *Maestrul cântăreți* a lui Richard Wagner ca fiind „o artă pompoasă, supraîncărcată, greoaie”¹. Această muzică îi apare lui Nietzsche „când învechită și străină, când aspră și juvenilă, la fel de capricioasă uneori pe cât de fastuoasă și tradițională alteori, nu arareori poznașă, dar mai deseori dură și brutală”². În acest fragment muzica și germanismul își dezvăluie reciproc trăsăturile esențiale într-un fascinant joc al oglinzilor: „Muzica aceasta, în sfârșit, nu are în ea nimic frumos, nimic sudic, nici urmă din delicata seninătate a cerului meridional, nici un dram de grație sau de dans, și cu atât mai puțin vreo voință de logică [...]; o înveșmântare greoaie, ceva barbar și solemn cu bună știință, o scânteiere de savante și venerabile giuvaiere și dantele; ceva german, în sensul cel mai bun și cel mai rău al cuvântului, adică multiplu, inform și inepuizabil; o anumită vigoare germană, o abundență sufletească ce se ascunde fără teamă sub rafinamentele decadentei, de-abia acolo simțindu-se în largul ei; o emblemă veritabilă și autentică a sufletului german, suflet tânăr și în același timp îmbătrânit, răscopt și prea bogat în viitor. Acest gen de muzică exprimă de minune părerea mea în privința germanilor: ei sunt de alaltăieri și de poimăine, - ei n-au încă un Azi”³. În concepția nietzscheană, muzica wagneriană exprimă însăși germanitatea, iar reproșurile pe care Nietzsche le adresează acestei muzici – cum că aceasta n-ar avea nimic sudic, nimic senin, grațios, dansant și că ar fi un amestec de arbitrar, barbarie și solemnitate – vizează implicit caracterul specific al acestei națiuni. Totuși, acest fragment este, în cadrul operei nietzscheene, ultimul în care se atribuie germanismului un „poimăine”, adică speranța într-o viitoare mediteranizare a unei mult prea nordice culturi germane.

Muzica și Sudul se îmbină în *Dincolo de Bine și de Rău* într-un vis anticipator al viitoarei muzici „mediteraneene”. Nietzsche se autocaracterizează drept un iubitor al sudului, un meridional nu prin origine, ci prin credință. El dorește cu ardoare eliberarea muzicii de sub influența Nordului și ivirea unei noi muzici, a unei muzici „supragermane”

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dincolo de Bine și de Rău*, traducere de Francisc Grünberg, Editura Teora, 1998, § 240, p. 170.

² *Ibidem*.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 170-171.

și „supraeuropene” care este mai profundă, mai crudă, mai revigorantă și mai senină decât muzica germană¹.

Estetica înțeleasă ca „fiziologie aplicată”

În scrierile anului 1888, *Cazul Wagner* și *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, estetica devine sinonimă cu o „fiziologie aplicată” în ale cărei judecăți sunt precumpănitoare caracterul viguros sau maladiv al artei².

Muzica wagneriană pică testul etico-fiziologic al lui Nietzsche: ea nu aduce ascultătorilor săi seninătate și voieșie, ci, dimpotrivă, îmbolnăvește, este maladivă și decadentă, un fel de hibrid creștino-german ce luptă împotriva instinctelor vieții. „Temeiul meu, «mon petit fait vrai», este că nu mai pot respira ușor când această muzică [muzica wagneriană n.n.] începe să acționeze asupra mea, că numaidecât piciorul meu se supără și se revoltă împotriva ei: ce vrea de fapt întregul meu trup de la muzică, în general? [...] Eu cred că pretinde să fie ușurat, ca și cum toate funcțiile biologice ar urma să fie accelerate prin ritmuri ușoare, curajoase, zburdalnice, sigure pe ele, ca și cum viața aspră și grea și-ar pierde greutatea prin melodii aurii, delicate, plutitoare. Melancolia mea vrea să se odihnească în ascunzișurile și abisurile *perfectiunii*; pentru asta au nevoie de muzică. Dar Wagner te îmbolnăvește”³. Nietzsche reiterează ce spunea în *Știința veselă*, și anume că are nevoie de „o artă admirabil de artificială, care pâlpaie ca o flacără curată într-un cer fără nori”⁴. Arta capabilă să îi ofere mult dorita „seninătate”, Nietzsche o vede întruchipată în muzica lui Bizet.

Nietzsche elogiaza muzica lui Bizet pentru că, ascultând-o, capătă un sentiment de bună dispoziție și o stare generală fizică bună: „Pot spune că orchestrația lui Bizet este aproape singura pe care o mai suport. Cealaltă orchestrație, care deține primatul astăzi, a lui Wagner, brutală, factică și naivă în același timp, permițându-i să se adreseze tuturor celor trei simțuri ale sufletului modern deodată, cât îmi este de nefastă! O compar cu un sirocco. O sudoare nesuferită mă invadează. S-a sfârșit pentru mine cu vremea bună. Această muzică a lui Bizet îmi pare perfectă. Se înfățișează cu o alură lejeră, suplă, grațioasă. Este amabilă și nu-mi provoacă sudori”⁵.

¹ *Ibidem*, § 255, pp. 191-192.

² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, în vol. *Cazul Wagner. Nietzsche contra Wagner*, traducere de Al. Leahu, Editura Muzicală, 1983, p. 89.

³ *Ibidem*; vezi și *Știința veselă*, ed. cit., § 368, p. 434.

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, ed. cit., p. 111; vezi și *Știința veselă*, ed. cit., p. 247.

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Cazul Wagner*, ed. cit., p. 34.

Nietzsche formulează în continuare una din tezele fundamentale ale esteticii sale târzii: „Tot ce-i bun este lejer, tot ce-i divin aleargă pe niște picioare delicate”¹.

Totodată, Nietzsche apreciază că muzica lui Bizet îl face mai fecund din punct de vedere filosofic: „Adevărul este că de fiecare dată când ascultam «Carmen» îmi părea că devin un filosof, un mai bun filosof decât în timpul obișnuit: deveneam atât de indulgent de fericit, de ludic, de asiduu”². În acest context, Nietzsche scrie unele dintre cele mai frumoase rânduri care au fost formulate vreodată cu privire la strânsa legătură dintre muzică și filosofie: „Ați remarcat că muzica liberează spiritul? Că înaripează gândirea? Că te face pe atât de filosof pe cât ești de muzician? Cerul mohorât al abstracțiunii pare brăzdat de fulger; lumina devine îndeajuns de puternică pentru a evidenția «filigranul» lucrurilor; marile probleme devin atât de apropiate încât pot fi cuprinse; îmbrățișăm lumea ca și cum am fi pe vârful unui munte. Tocmai în acest fel definesc eu patosul filosofic. Și fără să-mi dau seama, îmi vin în minte *răspunsuri*, o puzderie de probleme *rezolvate*, un noian de înțelepciune ...”³.

Raționamentul lui Nietzsche este foarte simplu: tot ce are valoare mă face fecund, muzica lui Bizet mă face fecund, deci muzica lui Bizet este de valoare⁴. Reciproca este la fel de valabilă: „Efectul dăunător al artei wagneriene demonstrează slăbiciunea ei profund organică, corupția ei. Ceea ce este desăvârșit te face sănătos. Ceea ce este bolnav te face mai bolnav. Stările de criză fiziologică în care îi transpune Wagner pe ascultătorii săi [...] constituie o negare a artei sale”⁵. Concluzia generală a acestui raționament este următoarea: „valorile estetice se bazează pe valorile biologice”, iar „senzațiile de satisfacție estetică sunt senzații de satisfacție biologică”⁶.

Opera lui Bizet înseamnă pentru Nietzsche despărțirea de „nordul umed”, „de toate cețurile idealului wagnerian”. Ea are ceea ce este potrivit țărilor calde: uscăciunea și limpezimea cerului. Cu muzica lui Bizet intrăm într-un alt climat; ea exprimă o altă sensibilitate, o altă seninătate. Muzica lui Bizet este o muzică veselă, dar aici nu este vorba de veselie franceză sau germană, ci de cea africană: fatalitatea planează permanent, fericirea este scurtă, subită, fără reținere. Nietzsche îl invidiază pe Bizet pentru că „a

¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 34-35.

² *Ibidem*, p. 34.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 36.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Din primele însemnări la «Cazul Wagner»*, în *Cazul Wagner*, ed. cit., pp. 129-130.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p.130.

îndrăznit să-și asume o asemenea sensibilitate care nu și-a găsit până acum echivalentul în limbajul Europei civilizate” și se referă „la caracterul ei meridional, ardent”¹.

Nietzsche concentrează întreaga sa concepție despre muzică într-un imperativ categoric: „Trebuie să mediteranizăm muzica”². Această mediteranizare a muzicii constă în reîntoarcerea la natură, la sănătate, la voieșie, la tinerețe, la *virtute*³.

Parcurgând aceste scrieri nietzscheene, observăm clar opțiunile gânditorului german: acestea se îndreaptă către o muzică lejeră, veselă, dansantă, o muzică sudică, opusă muzicii grave și apăsătoare a lui Wagner.

Concluzie

Gândurile lui Nietzsche despre artă sunt constante, dar nu consonante și omogene.

Există totuși o idee subiacentă ce străbate ca un fir roșu toate formele și ipostazele în care apare și se metamorfozează gândirea sa estetică: arta trebuie să aline suferința și să potențeze dorința de a trăi. Diferă însă perspectiva din care este privită această idee: dacă în primele scrieri avem de-a face cu o perspectivă metafizică, iar în cele din perioada de mijloc cu o perspectivă raționalist-sceptică, în ultimele scrieri perspectiva este mai degrabă fiziologică. De fapt, întreaga filosofie a lui Nietzsche, marele suferind și bolnav, poate fi privită și ca un elogiu adus vieții, sănătății, dorinței de a trăi.

BIBLIOGRAFIE

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Opere complete 1. Poezia*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 1998;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Opere complete 2. Nașterea tragediei. Considerații inactuale I-IV, Scrieri postume (1870-1873)*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 1998;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Opere complete 3. Omenesc, prea omenesc I și II*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 2000;

¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Cazul Wagner*, ed. cit., p. 36.

² *Ibidem*, p. 38.

³ *Ibidem*.

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Opere complete 4. Aurora, Idile din Messina, Știința veselă*, ediție critică științifică în 15 volume de Giorgio Colli și Mazzino Montinari, traducere de Simion Dănilă, Editura Hestia, Timișoara, 2001;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Noi, filologii*, traducere de Vasile Muscă, Editura Dacia, Cluj, 1994;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Nașterea filosofiei*, traducere de Mircea Ivănescu, Editura Dacia, Cluj, 1992;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Știința voioasă. Genealogia moralei. Amurgul Idolilor*, traducere de Liana Mănescu, Alexandru Al. Șahighian, traducerea versurilor de Simion Dănilă, Editura Humanitas, București, 1994;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra*, introducere, cronologie și traducere de Ștefan Aug. Doinaș, Editura Humanitas, 1997;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Dincolo de bine și de rău*, traducere de Francisc Grünberg, Editura Teora, București, 1998;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Despre genealogia moralei*, traducere de Horia Stanca și Janina Ianoși, postfață de Ion Ianoși, Editura Echinox, Cluj, 1993;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Cazul Wagner. Nietzsche contra Wagner*, traducere și prefață de Alexandru Leahu, Editura Muzicală, București, 1983;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Antichristul*, traducere, note și postfață de Vasile Muscă, Editura Biblioteca Apostrof, 1996;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Ecce Homo*, traducere de Mircea Ivănescu, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 1994;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Voința de putere. Încercare de transmutare a tuturor valorilor*, traducere și studiu introductiv de Claudiu Băciu, Editura Aion, Oradea, 1999;

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Aforisme. Scrisori*, selecție, traducere și prefață de Amelia Pavel, Editura Humanitas, 1992.



Imaginea 1: Rafael, *Schimbarea la față*, circa 1518-1520. Pinacoteca Apostolica Vaticana, Statul Vatican (Roma).



Imaginea 2: Albrecht Dürer, *Cavalerul, moartea și diavolul*, 1513. Gravură. Städelesches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main, Germania.

THE RIM AS THE PEAK OF AWARENESS AND EMPEDOCLES AS ZARATHUSTRA: WISDOM IN THE ABYSS OF FIRE

Charalampos MAGOULAS¹

Abstract: At the 17th International Conference on General Relativity and Gravitation in Dublin, Stephen Hawking admits he was wrong: even though he supported for some thirty years the theory that nothing can escape from inside a black hole, he just revealed that black holes allow after all the information to come out. Material and radiation, once trapped within the black hole, are lost. This area where everything – but not the information – disappears is framed by a boundary called event horizon. If the black hole is the abyss, the event horizon is the step next to the rim. If only information can escape from the abyss – let us call it “beyond” or simply “death” – there must be someone who collects this information, otherwise there is no information at all; someone who stands at the rim of the pit. The metaphysic allegory is already activated: a Zarathustra being the will to power and aiming at the final transvaluation of all values, stands before the event horizon, decides to betray life in favor of wisdom, jumps into the burning black hole, his Asha Vahishta, bravely enters the ground of negative – the land of not-being – in order to reach the transmutation; it is not the transmutation of values but the transmutation of the principle which gives value to the values: the best truth of death communicates the substance of life. In that case, the definition of Zarathustra’s action is not but a methodological inversion: considering the black hole as an ontologically stable essence, we will produce the narrative of its opposite, the essence to be found outside the abyss. The abyss is a tool, a scheme, a metaphor. Although a construction or a hypothesis, the abyss is the privileged place of the divine loss. In the case of Zarathustra’s evaporation, we cannot help but feel the gap: who is going to narrate Zarathustra’s fight for eternal return? No one else could do this but a poet observing the action at the rim of the pit – e.g. Hölderlin or Arnold. However, according to Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* we should create the idea of a Third Man who observes the observation of the poet and stands away from the black hole. Thus, the semiotic reduction never ends. Is that nevertheless the meaning – i.e. product of decodification – of the eternal return?

Keywords: black hole, the rim, information, event horizon, Zarathustra.

Each of us is a bottomless pit, and this bottomlessness [sans-fond] is,

¹ National School of Public Health, Athens, Greece.

quite evidently, opened over the groundlessness [sans-fond] of the world. In normal times, we cling to the rim of the pit, over which we pass the greatest part of our lives. But Plato's Symposium, Mozart's Requiem, and Kafka's Castle come from this groundlessness and make us see it. . . the myths themselves, like religions, at once have to do with this groundlessness and aim at masking it: they determine it and give it a precise figure, which at the same time recognizes the groundless and, in truth, tends to occult it by fixing it in place. The sacred is the instituted simulacrum of the groundless.
Cornelius Castoriadis

There is a proverb in Greece saying that “the human soul is an abyss” and implying the unknown and unfathomable of human nature: thoughts, desires and instincts, which are actions of the respective functions of the human spirit, are sometimes a terra incognita even for the subject who acts. In Castoriadis’ passage on the bottomlessness of the human being, the curious observation is that the rim of the pit is considered as a normal situation in which we pass the greater part of our live, although an edge is by definition a marginal and critical – and sometimes obviously transitional – state of things. Actually, each of us seems to stand at the rim of two interconnected pits: the first one has to do with the origin of matter, the existence of a creator and death; the second one is our effort to comprehend and reply to these questions by determining our movement in space and time according to our mentality, preferences, competences, weaknesses and limitations.

However, as Castoriadis argues, we have allies, but at the same time enemies, in that effort: religion and myth, having complementary roles, offer explications and alleviation of the metaphysical agony. Science, following a parallel path, interprets –nonetheless never definitely– some phenomena, slight pieces of the truth, if there is one. Finally, art and philosophy –Plato, Mozart and Kafka– express intuitively the experience of both abysses, bring the human being in contact with their bottomlessness and accompany him in his oedipal loneliness. Given that the roles of each category of human mental activity (i.e. religious, mythological, scientific, philosophical and artistic) are not distinguished and the fields of interpretation are diffused the one to another (e.g. Noah’s Deluge as part of the history of Judaism and as myth, Darwinism and Intelligent Design as scientific –or so-called– theories), we

could propose on the one hand a metaphorical approach of a scientific discovery and on the other hand a scientific explanation of a myth (or a plausible clarification of a religious allegory). Moreover, as our perception of the world is based on antithetical couples (e.g. good and bad, light and darkness), it is possible to get to know what or who is at the rim of the pit, if we define what it is inside.

To begin with, let us conceive the pit, the biblical and mythological chaos, as a black hole. Stephen Hawking, although he supported for some thirty years the theory that nothing can escape from inside a black hole, revealed a few years ago that black holes allow after all the information to come out. Matter and radiation, once trapped within the black hole, are lost. Let us call "death" the loss of the matter. Adam and Eve, living in an imperishable paradise, knew nothing about life and death; they could not look upwards because the sight of God was terrible and thus impossible; they could not look downwards because there was nothing there to see; so they stood at the rim of the pit. Then they ate the apple, became mortal and were thrown into a black hole where everything disappears, so they forgot their previous life.

Two are the crucial questions: a. what kind of knowledge did they acquire just between the eating of the apple and their expulsion from paradise, when they forgot what they learned, and b. what is left from them. No religion answers to the first question; Castoriadis says that religions mask the groundlessness of the abyss. The answer to the second question is, according to the laws of quantum physics that information can never be completely wiped out, that a piece of information escaped the black hole and reached us: the remembrance of the fall, the original sin or, in other words, the explanation –as e.g. the Orthodox Church claims– of why babies cry when they are born, the genetic information, DNA. The piece of information that escaped the black hole was after all the genetic information which is at the same time matter and non-matter, just like the digital texts in a computer or the sound of the human voice. DNA is transmitted from generation to generation just as the original sin: biologically, through the birth, and mentally, through the education (family, environment and religious doctrines).

The collector of that piece of information is the founder(s) of religion or the constructor(s) of myths. Even though they are not entirely aware of the quality of that piece of information to be transmitted, they declare they know the truth of life and death, they profess they know the origin and the destination of the mankind and they build narratives and institutions on

everyday life (i.e. ethics, legislations) based on that knowledge of the prism of events before and after. That is how they get involved in the groundlessness and how they do mask it.

Notwithstanding this “privileged” approach of information, the human history contains examples of individuals who stood at the rim of the pit and gathered what a black hole, the abyss, expels, without having the intention to explain and dispel the fears of the ignorant people (e.g. the myth of Zeus thunders) or perpetuate them and gain from them (e.g. Hell and Pope’s indulgences). Myths and religions, overlapping one another, tend to sustain the human being and cover the abyss, while some individuals (i.e. poets and philosophers), standing at the rim of the pit, (have to) aim at overcoming the human nature (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, IV, On Superman): Zarathustra’s very example activates another metaphor, which this time proposes an interpretation of Nietzsche’s *eternal recurrence* through the same cosmological theory and opens the way for the poetic approach of the pit.

This extraordinary man, Zarathustra, accepts methodologically the death of God, because if he is still alive, no values can be transvaluated, no becoming is possible, for he is the creator and the master of the abyss and the abyss is static, the abyss is oblivion. The 36th of Zarathustra’s songs incites: “Man forget what is hard for you and throw it to the abyss. This is the divine art of oblivion”. Nevertheless, something is coming out of the abyss. Black holes show us that if we drain the matter, what is left is information, the archive of human social activities. Information is the positive, which can return; on the contrary, the negative cannot return, it is matter. The lesson of eternal recurrence is that the negative cannot return (Deleuze, 2002: 270). Nietzsche’s philosophy, cosmologically examined, indicates that the becoming, the positive, is to be found in the information –let us call it again DNA– not in the matter. The Superman, who, standing at the edge of the abyss, collects information, can be either a physical scientist (who elucidates cosmogony) or a poet (who conceives it intuitively). That is how sciences and poetry (and philosophy) are opposed to myths and religion: they have a dynamic approach of the abyss, they do not consider it motionless and thus explicable or even already explained. Abyss is therefore, granted that human nature is not eternally constant, a socially-mediated term. That is why sciences and poetry (should) endeavor to transvaluate the values which are established by myths and religions through interpreting unilaterally the abyss.

However, in the case of the scientist, the problem of collecting the information emanating from the abyss resides in human theory of knowledge

and its limits: from time to time random pieces of the great abyss puzzle come to light, the one contradicting the other or the previous ones, and it is doubtful whether someday we will reach the truth of our origin and our destination. The movement from particular to general presupposes an unfalsifiable induction, which is, according to Popper, impossible, given that nobody can predict the future and formulate laws that would be verified in all circumstances (Popper, 1959: 27-30).

Hence, if we refuse myth constructors, religion founders and scientists the right to stand at the rim of the pit and announce what is inside the abyss, the only means to stop living an unexplored life is to trust a poet or a philosopher or maybe someone who is both. Zarathustra –or rather Nietzsche’s persona– is someone who wants to overcome human barriers and bridge the gap between mortal and unknown. He responds bravely to the question: why should we choose the accidental, the becoming, the multiple instead of the invariable, the being, the unique, which are represented in every religion? For these are the objects of joy (Deleuze, 2002: 270-271). These are the philosophical joy. Zarathustra, being the will to power and aiming at the final transvaluation of all values, stands before the rim, next to event horizon, the boundary that frames the black hole, decides to betray life in favor of wisdom, because he knows that it is the only solution for someone who really wants to pass through the negative in order to communicate the positive, jumps into the burning abyss, his Asha Vahishta, bravely enters the ground of negative –the land of not-being– in order to reach the transmutation; it is not the transmutation of values but the transmutation of the principle which gives value to the values: the best truth of death makes the substance of life emerge. The antithetical couples function in that very way: that is how he kills God and all systems of values developed around him through his own death.

Notwithstanding Zarathustra’s knowledge and will at the rim of the pit, he knows very well that he cannot be the one, he knows it is not his time, he can be the cause but not the fact. “Your fruits are ripe, Zarathustra, but you are not ripe for your fruits” (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, II, The most Silent Hour). This action must be original, pure, and consequently presupposes an unconditional principle, the peak of the hierarchy of ideas, according to Plato’ *Republic*. Being a poet and a prophet does not unhook him from mortality. That is why he gives his place to Dionysus.

Zarathustra knows on the one hand that, when someone is immature, he still loves and hates. He uses the example of the most famous Jew, Christ, who would have abandoned his doctrine if he didn’t die too early (*Thus Spoke*

Zarathustra, I, Voluntary Death). On the other hand, he reasons that one should be always ready for life and death and realize when it is the best time to die. In consequence of this stoic argument comes the introduction of the self-sacrifice which will destroy the idols. The biggest challenge is already tragically prepared at the edge of the abyss. The scenery of the bringing in contact of the human being with his long-standing abyss needs just another person to be completed: him, who will register the fall of Dionysus into the black hole, him who will be blessed by the God to transmit the new order of values to the mankind. There is only one constraint: Dionysus cannot die.

Empedocles, the wise savior of Agrigento, he who declined the government of the city, although his fellow-citizens offered it to him and preferred, following the platonic ideal, to be a philosopher than to be a ruler, is the ideal delegate of Zarathustra's vision, as Dionysus is immortal and the self-sacrifice is impossible for him. There is a legend saying that Empedocles threw himself into the abyss of Etna, just to prove his immortality to his disciples. Another legend narrates that he became immortal when he touched the fire of the volcano, but a bronze sandal of his was thrown back and proved the opposite. Always something escapes the abyss, the black hole, a piece of information, an image, or rather, a trace of the abyss. Moreover, Empedocles doctrine on transmigration of the soul, its reincarnation, explains his faith in eternal recurrence and his decision to abandon life in favor of wisdom. He climbed therefore the Mount Etna and stood at the event horizon, at the rim of the pit, and waited for two poets to describe the journey of his spirit and write down his words.

Hölderlin's Empedocles makes himself prey to the citizens of his country; after he taught them the truths of life and the means of good governance, he forgives their ingratitude, delivers his body and his blood to them and seeks for the death which will be his apotheosis on earth. The last lesson to give is his upward fall, a Socratic sacrifice, a political action of philosophical consistency. However, Empedocles is described by Hölderlin as weakened person despaired by the envy and the ungratefulness of his people. Obviously, this is not the image of a Zarathustra whose motive to die is the final cause to meet the abyss and explore its mysteries and not some personal reasons. His love for the fellow-citizens became hate. A Zarathustra should not have this kind of sentiments. Possibly Empedocles is not Zarathustra's chosen one. That is why Hölderlin's tragedy *The Death of Empedocles* was left unfinished: possibly Hölderlin was not absolutely convinced of the idea of eternity and had doubts whether Empedocles was the philosopher who would carry the torch of wisdom and truth.

The response to that question comes some fifty years later. Arnold's *Empedocles on Etna* is the album of the philosopher's wisdom in that very moment of his fall. Empedocles, finally as Zarathustra, raises the right questions and receives the answers from the flame of the volcano. Castoriades' argument on the rim of the pit finds in poetry a devoted follower. First of all, the role of the sacred, of myths and religions in determining the human fate, and therefore the human action, is revealed by Empedocles' analysis and ironic utterance. He, like Nietzsche, sneers at the human weakness and anticipates its overcoming (Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna*, Act I, Scene II):

*The Gods laugh in their sleeve
To watch man doubt and fear,
Who knows not what to believe
Since he sees nothing clear,
And dares stamp nothing false where he finds nothing sure.*

*Is this, Pausanias, so?
And can our souls not strive,
But with the winds must go,
And hurry where they drive?
Is Fate indeed so strong, man's strength indeed so poor?*

Arnold's *Empedocles* remains sceptic to Pausanias' adherence to the trite interpretation of phenomena, which can not be explained through science or logic (Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna*, Act I, Scene II):

*But I will also say, that when the Gods
Visit us as they do with sign and plague,
To know those spells of time that stay their hand
Were to live free from terror.*

and approaches the meaning of the abyss, or rather its content, the second pit, the personal, which can be called soul or mind (Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna*, Act I, Scene II) :

*Spells? Mistrust them.
Mind is the spell which governs earth and heaven.*

*Man has a mind with which to plan his safety;
Know that, and help thyself.*

Finally, the philosopher proposes the process of the eternal return, what is the actual outcome when someone falls metaphorically into a black hole and dies. As Hawking states, everything disappears in the black hole but the information. What is after all the information? Empedocles concludes that each part of us returns to its origin. However, the mind, the ruler of earth and heaven, the real abyss, is in the state of a constant becoming, never stops developing and eventually becomes the subject of eternal recurrence (Arnold, *Empedocles on Etna*, Act II):

*To the elements it came from
Everything will return.
Our bodies to earth,
Our blood to water,
Heat to fire,
Breath to air.
They were well born, they will be well entomb'd!
But mind? . . .
[...]
But mind—but thought—
If these have been the master part of us—
Where will they find their parent element?
What will receive them, who will call them home?
But we shall still be in them, and they in us.
And we shall be the strangers of the world,
And they will be our lords, as they are now;
And keep us prisoners of our consciousness.*

This final suggestion on the action of the mind, which keeps us prisoners of our consciousness, possibly unveils the boundary of our capacity to identify the pit. The function of the mind permits us only to know its inexplicability. Thus, it seems to be impossible to acknowledge the exact nature of the abyss and therefore the nature of the eternal return. Nevertheless, we can draw out of Empedocles story a symbolic image or an allegory regarding the theory of knowledge in philosophical context, which could possibly give us an idea of the recurrence through the pit: a philosopher at the rim of the pit described the abyss, his description is

interpreted by a poet, who stood at a little distance from him, and delivered to us, who could put ourselves in a position next to the poet. This sequence of observations and interpretations is the eternal return of mental activities within the great pit which is called history of ideas.

REFERENCES

- Arnold, M. (1852), *Empedocles on Etna. A Dramatic Poem*, London: The Ballantyne Press, 1896.
- Deleuze, G. (1962), *Nietzsche et la philosophie*, Athens: Plethron, 2002.
- Nietzsche, F. (1885), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Athens: Faros, --.
- Popper, K., *The logic of scientific discovery*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959.

RECENZII

Gheorghe VLĂDUȚESCU, *Scepticismul grec ca filosofie critică*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2013, 173 p.

Specialist de renume în istoria filosofiei, cu deosebire în filosofia antică, profesorul și academicianul Gheorghe Vlăduțescu ne oferă drept cel mai recent rod al meditațiilor sale o lucrare consacrată în întregime scepticismului grec. Preocuparea sa pentru această școală de filosofie nu este nouă, astfel încât, de-a lungul timpului, i-a acordat importante capitole sau un număr apreciabil de pagini, în volume precum: *Filosofia în Grecia Veche* (Albatros, 1984), *O istorie a ideilor filosofice* (Editura Științifică, 1990), *O enciclopedie a filosofiei grecești* (Paideia, 2001). De asemenea, profesorul Vlăduțescu s-a ocupat îndeaproape și de mult timp (1987) de editarea lucrărilor lui Aram Frenkian, ale cărui studii extrem de valoroase: „Scepticismul grec și filosofia indiană”, „Acolo unde este fum, este și foc”, „Prefață și introducere la Sextus Empiricus, Opere filosofice 1”, le-a reunit, la Editura Paideia, sub titlul *Scepticismul grec* (1996). De altfel, nici în această lucrare autorul nu uită contribuția celui mai important elenist cu studii filosofice de la noi din țară, la analiza fenomenului scepticismului grec.

De fapt, în noua sa lucrare, academicianul își propune să realizeze o istorie a ideii critice în filosofia antică greacă, care se întâlnește deja la primii filosofi dar pe care scepticii au ilustrat-o într-un mod exemplar. Teza pe care acesta o promovează și de la care pornește este aceea că toate filosofii istorice au depotrivă o dimensiune constructivistă și o dimensiune criticistă, pe care fiecare dintre ele le manifestă în proporții specifice dar neapărat complementare. În orice caz, fără criticism, care presupune întotdeauna, ca pași succesivi, detașarea și alegerea, mintea omului, implicit gândirea filosofică, nu ar putea să construiască nimic autentic, nimic valoros.

În ceea ce privește filosofia greacă, Gheorghe Vlăduțescu susține că ea dezvoltă ideea criticistă prin atenția pe care a acordat-o conceptelor de *îndoială (aporia)*, *suspendare (epokhê)* și *măsură (metron)*. Primele dintre ele sunt bine evidențiate încă de Parmenide, care se îndoia de părerile muritorilor și le suspenda tocmai pentru că ele nu sunt vrednice de crezare, instituind logica strictă a rațiunii drept criteriu al adevărului și descoperind astfel gândirea ca măsură. Prin dezvoltarea sugestiei parmenidiene, Protagoras va stipula că omul este măsură a tuturor lucrurilor a căror experiență o are, căci numai în această calitate, de măsură, ar putea el să o asimileze și să și-o asume.

Promovate la început oarecum separat, toate cele trei concepte vor fi „articulate metodic” de către Socrate, care, prin suspendarea cercetării asupra principiului tuturor lucrurilor și prin „ironie” – „deopotrivă, îndoială și suspendare,” orienta gândirea exclusiv asupra omului și, implicit, asupra ei însăși. Aceasta i-a permis apoi lui Platon în dialogul *Parmenide* să desfășoare o amplă critică a gândirii, căci el se întreba acolo cum putem trece de la Unu la Multiplu, cu alte cuvinte „cum gândim existența ca fiind”, ceea ce marchează o profundă criză a ontologiei dar este, în același timp, „marea întrebare a metafizicii” și deci actul ei propriu-zis de naștere.

În acest mod, ne explică profesorul Vlăduțescu, deși se desfășura în plan secund, criticismul „predetermina programatic” construcția ontologiei și a metafizicii în filosofia greacă. În fapt, critica platoniciană este un program de anvergură, care va fi urmat apoi de către toți ceilalți filosofi, în primul rând de Aristotel, care îl aplică „ousiologic” dar mai ales prin dezvoltarea aporeticii, „logica însăși a metafizicii”. În ceea ce-i privește pe sceptici, prin critica lor asupra filosofiilor pe care le considerau drept „dogmatice” deoarece presupuneau că „adevărul este posibil”, și prin exercitarea îndoielii (*aporia*) asupra capacității minții noastre de a atinge realitatea lucrurilor, ei tocmai această aporetică au împins-o la extrem.

„Chiar dacă scepticii se dezlegau de tradiție pentru a se individualiza înfruntând-o, metodic, mișcare firească, aduceau aporeticii noi determinații, făcând-o, prin adăugarea de subtile nuanțe, încă mai operațională. Dacă și cât erau potrivnici tradiției, scepticii o făceau pentru a o relansa, trecută prin proba de foc a unei critici dusă, adesea, la limită. Dar marea tradiție greacă putea fi reconfirmată nu numai prin dezvoltări de „școală” ci și, poate că, într-un fel, mai cu seamă prin aducerea sa la treapta zero a judecății.” (p. 8).

Marcând în felul acesta elementele de continuitate și discontinuitate în cadrul filosofiei grecești și evidențiind marea importanță a demersului sceptic de suspendare a judecății pentru supunerea la probă a capacității cognitive a minții noastre, profesorul Vlăduțescu întreprinde apoi o analiză extrem de aplicată a modelului sceptic de interpretare a lumii și a condiției noastre umane, prin raportare permanentă la filosofii etichetate ca „dogmatice” de exponenții acestuia. De altfel, el ne atrage atenția că atitudinea critică a scepticilor față de filosofii tradiționale sau față de cele contemporane lor nu este deloc accidentală ci consecventă și sistematică, ei ridicând astfel la rang de metodă o trăsătură constitutivă filosofiei în genere. Iar în calitate de metodă, scepticismul este un „exercițiu al minții asupra-și, o critică a puterilor sale”.

Dimensiunea „metodică” a criticii sceptice față de filosofiele „dogmatice”, face ca scopul acesteia să nu fie unul „de respingere și, deci, de substituire” ci acela de reevaluare, de o mai bună delimitare și individualizare, ceea ce îi permite fiecărei concepții filosofice un loc inconfundabil în reconstituirea întregului filosofiei, imprimându-i un caracter complementar față de toate celelalte. Drept dovadă stă faptul că scepticii nu îi condamnă pe „dogmatici” nici în bloc și nici în integralitatea afirmațiilor lor ci își nuanțează critica, urmărind să găsească printre ei precursori ai propriei lor poziții. Așa este cazul, mai mult sau mai puțin pe drept, al lui Heraclit, Democrit, Protagoras și, mai ales, Platon, a cărui Academie, în evoluția sa temporară către probabilism, s-a apropiat extrem de mult de viziunea scepticilor.

Autorul ne prezintă pe larg motivele de îndoială (*aporia*) ale scepticilor, cele care justifică suspendarea judecății (*epokhé*). Dincolo de varietatea acestora, punctul lor comun este că fiecare dintre ele realizează o critică atentă, aplicată a diverselor noastre cunoștințe, obținute atât prin experiența obișnuită cu lucrurile cât și pe calea pretențioasă a științelor precum aritmetica, geometria, astronomia. Pornind de aici și prin convergența tuturor, scepticii realizează, în fapt, o critică a conștiinței, a posibilității acesteia de a da seamă de lume, precum și o critică a capacității și virtuților de comunicare ale limbajului. Astfel, ei supun exercițiului „zetetic” (căutător, cercetător) conceptele de bază cu care operează în mod obișnuit mintea noastră dar care sunt, în aceși timp, și cele ale filosofiei: „Zeu” (*théos*), „principiu” (*arkhé*), „cauză” (*aitia*), „întreg” (*holon*) „parte” (*méros*), „corp” (*soma*), „schimbare” (*metabolé*), „mișcare” (*kinesis*), „repaus” (*stásis*), „spațiu” (*topos*), „timp” (*khronos*), număr (*arithmos*), încercând să răspundă, printre altele, la întrebarea dacă ele reprezintă niște simple convenții umane sau exprimă natura însăși a lucrurilor.

Totuși, Gheorghe Vlăduțescu subliniază că scopul etalării numeroaselor motive de îndoială nu este câtuși de puțin blocarea minții în această stare de extrem disconfort intelectual ci depășirea ei către *ataraxia*, liniștea și seninătatea sufletului, dobândită prin înțelegerea faptului că aparențele lucrurilor, singurele la care, probabil, avem acces, ni se dezvăluie în maniere profund contradictorii. De altfel, pentru cei mai mulți dintre sceptici, suspendarea judecății nu presupune încetarea cercetării naturii lucrurilor, ci dimpotrivă, intensificarea acesteia, pentru a putea răspunde în cunoștință de cauză și argumentat la orice aserțiune a „dogmaticilor”.

Plasând *ataraxia* în condiția de scop (și totodată de „principiu generator”) al suspendării judecății, scepticii dezvăluie dimensiunea etică a

poziției lor filosofice, care dezvoltă o înțelegere specifică a conceptelor etice fundamentale precum binele și răul, virtutea și viciul, cărora le evidențiază profundul (co)relativism și complementaritatea, ceea ce și justifică, o dată în plus, „avertismentul” sceptic față de liniștitoarea „ispită dogmatică” și necesitatea lui *epokhé*. Îndemnând însă la suspendarea judecății în vederea dobândirii liniștii sufletești, scepticii nu pretindeau că îi învață pe oameni arta de a trăi, despre care considerau că nu există; căci pentru a exista cu adevărat, ea ar trebui să se sprijine pe cunoașterea naturii reale a lucrurilor, a ceea ce este în sine bine și rău, etc.; or, am văzut că nu putem avea câtuși de puțin certitudinea unei asemenea cunoașteri.

Negând că ar deține secretul vieții fericite, scepticismul evită pericolul dogmatizării propriei poziții și, deci, a degradării lui doctrinare, păstrându-și astfel rolul de terapeutică a minții și a sufletului, efectuând deopotrivă o lucrare de „higienizare” teoretică și alta de instituire metodică a ideii critice. „Scepticismul grec este și una și alta, ele, totuși, neputându-se separa, cel mai adesea. Era și în contra dogmatismelor (sau a filosofiilor care păreau a fi astfel), dar mișcarea aceasta era doar propedeutică, de la o critică a cunoștințelor în forma îndoielii, trecând la aceea a cunoștinței; mișcare crucială.” (p. 112)

Cartea profesorului Vlăduțescu are și o „Addenda”, la fel de importantă ca și conținutul ei propriu-zis, fiind structurată pe următoarele secțiuni ideatice: expunerea vieții și poziției doctrinare a principalilor reprezentanți ai scepticismului grec: Pyrrhon din Elis (365/360 - 275/270), Timon din Phlius (315?-225?), Ainesidemos din Cnossos (sec. I î.e.n.), Agrippas (sf. sec. I - sec. II e.n.), Sextus Empiricus (sf. sec. II e.n.); prezentarea principalelor școli „dogmatice”: Aristotel și aristotelicienii, Epicur și epicurienii, stoicii, așa cum erau ele receptate și criticate de către sceptici; evidențierea interpretărilor romane ale scepticismului, realizate de Cicero și Aulus Gellius; punctarea diverselor reluări ale poziției sceptice în filosofia modernă prin: Montaigne, David Hume și Kant; analiza reevaluării hegeliene a scepticismului; trecerea în revistă a semnificației conceptului de „*epokhé*” de la Sextus Empiricus la Husserl; relevarea receptării scepticismului în filosofia românească de-a lungul timpului prin: Dimitrie Cantemir, Eufrosin Poteca, Eftimie Murgu, G. Dem Teodorescu, Mircea Florian, P. P. Negulescu, Ștefan Zeletin și Aram M. Frenkian.

Constatăm deci că autorul nu se mulțumește să rămână cantonat în spațiul cultural al antichității ci lansează numeroase punți peste timp, urmărind destinul scepticismului cu mult dincolo de mediul elen al genezei sale, de-a lungul diverselor forme în care s-a înveșmântat ideea critică în

gândirea filosofilor moderni și contemporani. În felul acesta el reușește să ne ofere într-o manieră sintetică, extrem de concentrată și, totodată, precisă, un tablou amplu și revelator al scepticismului, care tinde, ambițios, spre completitudine.

Sprrijinindu-se pe o importantă bibliografie dar, mai ales, beneficiind de întreaga experiență de cercetare a profesorului Vlăduțescu, desfășurată de-a lungul a decenii, asupra istoriei filosofiei, această carte este încă o ilustrare a subtilității, profunzimii și anvergurii de gândire cu care autorul și-a obișnuit de multă vreme cititorii, deopotrivă studenți, profesori și cercetători filosofi, care, cu siguranță, o vor primi ca pe un regal filosofic.

Adriana Neacșu (University of Craiova, Romania)

Ștefan Viorel GHENEA, *Introducere în filosofie*, Craiova, Editura Universitaria, 2011, 158 p.

Lucrarea *Introducere în filosofie*, a lui Ștefan Viorel Ghenea, conține un spectru tematic care introduce cititorul în lumea acestui fundamental domeniu de cunoaștere care este filosofia. Cititorul poate fi „începător”, elev de liceu, student în primii ani de facultate, sau acela care pur și simplu vrea să înțeleagă, într-o manieră sintetică și punctuală, noțiuni de bază ale filosofiei. În sprijinul acestei ultime categorii, cartea are un conținut esențializat, exprimat cât mai clar, concentrat pe domenii filosofice ca ontologia și metafizica, precum și pe subiecte precum: ființă, existență, conștiință, materie, spațiu, timp, determinism, libertate, responsabilitate, divinitate, sacru etc. Toate acestea sunt abordate din perspectiva mai multor autori, aparținând unor diverse curente filosofice.

Modalitatea concisă și esențializată, folosită în această carte, permite o viziune de ansamblu asupra chestiunilor discutate, ceea ce duce la o mai bună înțelegere, însă, poate și mai important, permite problematizarea din partea cititorului – de altfel, textul conține și „întrebări și teme de reflecție”, care îl orientează pe acesta către punctele nodale. Lucrarea chiar stimulează interogația, meditația, prin care subiectele pot fi aplicate (asociate) cazurilor concrete personale (prietenie, onoare, datorie etc.) sau temelor publice contemporane (eutanasia, avortul etc.).

Abordarea punctuală a fiecărei teme în cadrul lucrării *Introducere în filosofie* parcurge în general mai multe etape. De pildă, în cazul domeniului metafizicii, expunerea pleacă de la etimologia termenului, ajunge la diverse

utilizări ale lui (utilizarea primă de către Andronicos; utilizarea tradițională: cunoaștere a cauzelor prime și a principiilor lucrurilor; utilizare recentă: investigația care trimite *dincolo de* obiectul așa cum este el abordat prin metodele științelor), trece la sensuri ale metafizicii (caracterizare a realității și a existenței ca întreg, ca totalitate, diferită de elementele constitutive particulare; explorarea predilectă a suprasensibilului), la teze care contestă metafizica (Rudolf Carnap, Alfred Ayer etc.), până la argumente globale în favoarea metafizicii (necesitatea sa teoretică ce se originează în tendința către unitate etc.).

Aceeași metodă este folosită și la capitolul despre conștiință. Autorul pornește, în acest caz, de la etimologia cuvântului, după care prezintă categoria filosofică a conștiinței, apoi problema conștiinței la John Searle (pentru care cea mai importantă întrebare este „cum anume este produsă conștiința de către procesele neurobiologice din creier?”), conștiința ca obiect de studiu al științelor, adăugând în final întrebări și teme de reflecție, precum și fragmente esențiale din lucrarea lui Searle, *Problema conștiinței*, texte care vizează interpretarea filosofului american la următoarele subiecte: definiția conștiinței, relațiile dintre conștiință și creier, caracteristicile conștiinței, erori cu privire la conștiință.

În acest capitol, Viorel Ghenea notează faptul că în filosofie conștiința este unul din principalele subiecte de studiu, că filosofii i-au acordat numeroase semnificații (facultate a minții, mod de reacție la stimuli, autocunoaștere, introspecție, sursă de idei sau proces mental) iar procesul de semnificare va continua și în viitor. În același timp, el consideră că epicentrele problematice, care au generat diverse interpretări ale ei, constau din întrebările: 1) „Cum poate un subiect să devină obiect al propriei observații ?” (e vorba de modul în care poate avea loc introspecția), și 2) „Orice stare mentală este însoțită în mod necesar de conștiință?”. (p. 70).

De asemenea, autorul notează faptul că, în timp ce, în filosofia clasică, conștiința făcea diferența între om și animal, în sensul că ea juca rol de suport al adevărului, al identității persoanei și al moralei, datorită căreia primul era considerat superior celui alt, în prezent, conștiința este obiect al filosofiei minții, fiind percepută ca principala caracteristică a minții. În acest sens, este remarcat faptul că interesul pentru aspectele metafizice ale conștiinței este scăzut, fiind, în schimb, crescut pentru relația stări mentale-conștiință (p. 70). În acest sens, filosofia minții înregistrează pentru conceptul de conștiință următoarele sensuri: are însușirea, datorată capacității minții, de a reflecta asupra sa; este o proprietate generală a

stărilor mentale; are capacitatea de a califica o acțiune din punct de vedere moral (p. 71).

Din punctul de vedere al schimbărilor fundamentale în înțelegerea conștiinței, astăzi conștiinței nu i se mai recunoaște natura transcendentă și, în același timp, aceasta nu mai este considerată o formă superioară a mentalului, „care face posibilă reflecția asupra existenței psihice interioare, ci ca fiind un complex de stări mentale diferențiate calitativ, ce poartă amprenta subiectivității” (p. 71).

Cu toate acestea, nu doar punctul de vedere al filosofiei minții este prezentat în carte ci se evidențiază, de asemenea, faptul că o pleiadă de științe – chiar dacă unele servesc perspectivei filosofiei minții – încearcă să răspundă la întrebarea: „Ce este conștiința?” – științe precum biologia, genetica, biogenetica, neurologia, psihiatria, cibernetica, informatica, statistica, psihanaliza, psihologia, psihiatria și multe altele.

La fel ca în întreaga lucrare, cititorul este invitat și în cazul multiplelor definiții și concepții asupra conștiinței, să compare, să aleagă, să argumenteze, lucru care îi oferă șansa să înțeleagă noțiuni și problematice fundamentale, precum și să dobândească un spirit critic mai avansat.

Cartea *Introducere în filosofie*, a lui Viorel Ghenea, duce la un câștig concret – fie că e vorba de înțelegere, fie că e vorba de spirit critic, profunzime etc. – pe care cititorul îl poate folosi în chestiuni cu care se confruntă în viața personală sau în societate, prin apartenența sa naturală la tematica publică a nevoilor, a deficitelor și, în general, a alegerilor cu care se confruntă societatea românească, ca orice societate deschisă, aflată în mișcare.

Ionuț Răduică (University of Craiova, Romania)

AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS

CHRISTOPHER VASILLOPULOS

Eastern Connecticut State University.

83 Windham Street, Willimantic, Connecticut 06226, USA.

<http://www.easternct.edu/>

vasillopuloc@easternct.edu

BRICE POREAU

Lyon 1 University,

43 boulevard du 11 Novembre 1918,

69622 Villeurbanne cedex, France.

<http://www.univ-lyon1.fr/>

poreau_brice@yahoo.fr

FEDERICO SOLLAZZO

University of Szeged,

6720 Szeged, Dugonics tér 13, Hungary.

<http://www.u-szeged.hu/english/>

p.sollazzo@inwind.it

CHARALAMPOS MAGOULAS

National School of Public Health, Athens,

196, Alexandras Avenue, Athens, 115 21, Greece.

<http://www.nsph.gr/default.aspx?page=home>

magba05@yahoo.com

ANA BAZAC

Polytechnic University of Bucharest,

Splaiul Independentei nr. 313,

sector 6, Bucharest, Romania, CP 060042.

<http://www.upb.ro/>

ana_bazac@hotmail.com

ADRIANA NEACȘU

University of Craiova,

St. A. I. Cuza nr. 13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.

<http://www.ucv.ro/>

aneacsu1961@yahoo.com

SAVU TOTU

Romanian Academy, Iasi Branch,
No. 8, Carol I Blvd., Iasi, Romania.

[http://www.academiaromana-is.ro/
sabintotu@yahoo.com](http://www.academiaromana-is.ro/sabintotu@yahoo.com)

ANDREEA EȘANU

University of Bucarest,
Bd. M. Kogălniceanu 36-46, Sector 5, Bucharest, Romania, 050107.

[http://www.unibuc.ro/
aesanu2@yahoo.com](http://www.unibuc.ro/aesanu2@yahoo.com)

ANTON TOTH

University of Bucarest,
Bd. M. Kogălniceanu 36-46, Sector 5, Bucharest, Romania, 050107.

[http://www.unibuc.ro/
tothanton@yahoo.com](http://www.unibuc.ro/tothanton@yahoo.com)

GABRIELA VASILESCU

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti,
Bd. Bucuresti, no. 39, Ploiesti, Romania.

[http://www.upg-ploiesti.ro/
gabrielavasilescu52@yahoo.com](http://www.upg-ploiesti.ro/gabrielavasilescu52@yahoo.com)

ADRIAN IORDACHE

„Constantin Brancoveanu” University of Pitesti,
Calea Bascovului 2 A, Pitesti, Romania.

[http://www.univcb.ro/
aiordache09@yahoo.com](http://www.univcb.ro/aiordache09@yahoo.com)

IONUȚ RĂDUICĂ

University of Craiova,
St. A. I. Cuza nr. 13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.

[http://www.ucv.ro/
ionutraduica@yahoo.com](http://www.ucv.ro/ionutraduica@yahoo.com)

CONTENTS

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

IONUȚ RĂDUICĂ	
<i>Relationship between happiness and knowledge in Aristotle</i>	5
ANTON TOTH	
<i>Notes on Numenius of Apamea's ontological Fragments</i>	16
ADRIANA NEACȘU	
<i>World status in Thomas Aquinas' conception</i>	29

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

ANA BAZAC	
<i>The ordinary man and the social development</i>	47
CHRISTOPHER VASILLOPULOS	
<i>The autonomy of the political theorist</i>	71
FEDERICO SOLLAZZO	90
<i>Through Sartre and Marcuse: For a Realistic Utopia</i>	
BRICE POREAU	
<i>Reconciliation after genocide?</i>	101

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

SAVU TOTU	
<i>Icon and Idol</i>	110
ANDREEA EȘANU	
<i>Evolutionism and Creationism in Contemporary America: a Case-Study in the Science versus Religion Debate</i>	123

AESTHETICS

GABRIELA VASILESCU	147
<i>Phantasia a Mediation between Perception (Aesthesis) and Thought (Noesis)</i>	
ADRIAN IORDACHE	
<i>Nietzsche: the metamorphoses of the aesthetic</i>	159

PHILOSOPHICAL NOTES

CHARALAMPOS MAGOULAS	
<i>The rim as the peak of awareness and Empedocles as Zarathustra: wisdom in the abyss of fire</i>	177

REVIEWS

GHEORGHE VLĂDUȚESCU <i>Greek skepticism as critical philosophy</i> (Adriana Neacșu)	186
ȘTEFAN VIOREL GHENEA <i>Introduction to Philosophy</i> (Ionuț Răduică)	190
AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS	193